

- FEATURED POET -

AUTUMN PHILADELPHIA - JACOB PATTON

I am one of the oldest cities in the Americas,
Yet I am only in adolescence on the global stage,
I have seen the seasons cycle over a thousand times,
I am the Laurel Hill cemetery fading from green to red, yellow and orange,
I am in the goosebumps you get when the cold breeze flows into your window,
I am the single apple tree on Cecil B. Moore dropping its fruit,
My tallest buildings disappear into the rain clouds and fog,
My rainclouds drop the cold water that gets into your hair and eyelashes,
My trains get overrun with the returning college students,
My empty buildings become Halloween stores for six weeks,
The feline citizens make homes in my crevices and alleys for warmth,
The people who are eccentric even by my standards gather at Tattooed Mom,
The first Ginkgo tree on this continent drops its old leaves and they twirl to
the ground,
The Rocky statue is swarmed by runners who embody my spirit,
I am little rougher and more weathered than other cities and so are my people,
But we take all those who come to me seeking shelter and community.



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Doodle by Marlon Borrow

Vanguard and the Future of CCP News Paulina Reyes	Page 2
Speeches from Fridays at Fetterman's	Page 4
10 CCP Students Attend NABA Convention in DC	Page 10
Snack Rack, Food Security Promises Ashton Arellano	Page 12
The Idea of Hajile II Ava Hampton	Page 14
Shades of Rain A.R.I. Spice	Page 16
Featured Poet: Autumn in Philadelphia Jacob Patton	Page 20

VANGUARD AND THE FUTURE OF CCP NEWS

PAULINA REYES

There still has not been minimal activity on the Vanguard, the original student newspaper I had worked on the last two semesters with Max Hassel. Meanwhile the Independent has continued to stand as the revolutionary student newspaper on its own. We have collected students' opinions, letters, stories, and poetry. From horoscopes to word puzzles we have slowly created the medium that could have been produced on the Vanguard if Dr. Generals, the Community College President, and Jenevia Weaver, the Head of Student Life, put into focus what student writers want:

- a place to publish original student works,

- a free platform where we report student news and activities on the CCP campus,

- and a newspaper that speaks of our education reform and SGA activities with Frank Scales, Angie Orozco-Rasique and Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini.

The delay in finding a new advisor for the Vanguard has felt like a halt that required student writers like me to keep pushing for a resolution for the future of the Vanguard. This campus needs an outlet for student reporters, journalists, and writers alike. A blog, a comic strip, or a movie review, we need a

place where students can let their creativity shine and work on their investigative journalism skills.

The fact that the Vanguard has not been given the attention it deserves to find a new advisor to get started right at the beginning of the semester is still baffling to me and the rest of The Independent team. The Independent is doing its best, with 8 publications and our recent literary edition, we have humbly gathered our campus interests in student reporting once again. It could be so much more if this school valued funding us properly and gave us our proper newsrooms, print in color even. So, what is stopping the Vanguard from taking so long to be back up and running? To start the student newspaper again, we need not one but several advisors who are well-versed in the field of journalism, communications, and multimedia at the Community College. We need an active, paying position for advisors to put in the time students need to guide this newspaper to be everything it deserves and can rightfully be.

After countless emails with Mrs. Weaver, and uninvited office visits in which she was in a meeting, I have yet to hear a response on what will become of the Vanguard. I have emailed her asking for support for

student journalists like me. No response. I have asked her who would be potential student editors on the Vanguard. There was still no response. She eventually told me it would all be announced soon.

If the Vanguard were moved into the Communications Studies and Mass Media Department (CS&MM) at CCP, the student news would be valued as a program for journalists to get experience in reporting and do incredible endeavors. Journalists here would have experience and training that they could carry on after they graduate. We could connect with Multi-Media and do documentary journalism and podcasts.

The Vanguard would operate as real newsroom, made up of student editors, with a team of advising editors, well paid and respected in the Communications department as our own Journalism program. Media and film students, photographers, artists, and journalists need a space to put their work and invest in projects. If we were to have this support as a classroom space and trained, the students can produce their project ideas, they would be able to publish it in the newspaper, working and transforming the Vanguard if the students put in their work.

The students have been putting in the work as well, the Independent is just a taste of what the student journalists, writers and creatives can do here with what we have. Imagine

all we could do if the school properly supported our journalism and storytelling here at CCP. If we had funding and changed the way the Vanguard ran, teachers in the communications department may be more interested in helping students if they just made it their own program.

The Independent is in a silly predicament of having complete editorial freedom. Dr. Generals may not like this newfound freedom of speech for students. Due to this, The Independent may face threats of defamation, "we will cross that bridge when we get there." It is risky for The Independent to run without an advisor on campus, yet this will not stop students from writing and saying what they believe must be improved for a better college experience here at our community college. For now, we can only hope for the best, be thoughtful with our words, and report the facts we know are true.

Student journalist M.P. Hassel has gotten into contact with the nominated future Faculty Advisor of the Vanguard Anyabwile "Aaron" Love, who is a professor of the Black Studies program, Liberal Arts honors program, and advisor to All Black Student Alliance. We'll see from there. ♡

GOT A PROBLEM? TELL ME ABOUT IT.

Write a letter to the editor:
preyes11@student.ccp.edu

SPEECHES FROM FRIDAYS AT FETTERMAN'S

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) hold Peace Vigils outside the office of US Senator John Fetterman at 200 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia every Friday from 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm. Hundreds have listened to speakers from different faiths, chanted, and built a memorial those killed in the Gaza violence since October 7.

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JAYSON MASSEY, CCP Student and Activist

My name is Jayson Massey and I am here to talk about how the oppressed here are like the oppressed in Palestine. Two examples come to mind that illustrate how Philadelphia residents have experienced some of the abuses that the Palestinians have suffered over the past 70 years.

Example one: it seems like every new Philadelphia mayor goes and “cleans up Kensington.” I thought about this, and I realized that this is an inhumane way of thinking. Sure, you can clean up people. You can provide people with showers and clean clothes. When you say you're cleaning up an area, but what you're really doing is displacing people, then you're not cleaning up. What you're doing is simply abusing people as a performance. To look “tough on crime.” That must mean treating the dispossessed as vermin. You punch down on them, come then say to regular people that since you're “taking care” of these lowly people, that you deserve more power. Sickening!

Mayor Parker has done this ritualized dance in May. Yes, some people found help, and most found their broken lives even more in shambles. These people were forced to move away to a different place. Unfortunately, this has not resulted in solving the issues that these people have. And at a Narcan training, I found out that my zip code is second in drug overdose deaths. What has happened is that the poor souls in Kensington have moved away to other areas. Neighborhoods with less help available. Fewer resources. Still homeless. Still on drugs. And with hope running very low.

To me, there's not that much of a difference between a Kensington tent settlement and a Palestinian refugee camp. The Philadelphia mayor and the IDF treat people in these situations in a similar way. What's worse is that now, per The Philadelphia Inquirer, the police are treating people with Narcan who don't need it, triggering withdrawal symptoms in unhoused, sleeping people. They are creating a parade of suffering in the name of cleaning up.

In fact, the IDF says that they are “cleaning up” terrorism. Per NPR, nearly 60% of buildings in Gaza were damaged or destroyed. 87% of schools in Gaza have been hit or damaged. The U.N. estimates that as many as 10,000 people may be buried under 37 million metric tons of debris, 800,000 metric tons of asbestos and 7,500 metric tons of unexploded bombs.

Some cleanup!

My second example is older. It is something horrible that happened, but we don't talk much about it even though the Philly comedian Kevin Hart made a movie about it. I will give you some details about the group, and you guess who I am talking about. Per PBS, formed in 1972 as a “back to nature” commune, this group was associated with the Black Power movement, and mixed the beliefs of Black nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and anarcho-primitivism in advocating for the return to a hunter-gatherer society devoid of modern technology and medicine. Originally called the Christian Movement for Life, reporters called this group a “cult” and later as “terrorists.”

Living together in a home in West Philadelphia's Powelton Village, the group's unorthodox lifestyle led to conflicts with neighbors and clashes with the police. And in 1978, officer James Ramp was killed in a shootout with group members and the police. Nine of the members were later convicted for this murder, and eventually the remaining members transitioned to Cobbs Creek area of West Philadelphia. Tensions boiled over in 1985, after many complaints about loudspeaker broadcasts and health hazard concerns, the city of Philadelphia used force to evict the group from their row house.

How much force? Well, after a day of police teargas, firehoses, and 10,000 rounds of ammunition in the group's fortified home, City authorities order military-grade explosives to be dropped on the house from a helicopter, which resulted in the tragic deaths of eleven people (including five children) and the destruction of 61 homes.

Later, it was discovered that authorities decided to “let the fire burn..” Sometimes, as kids, we'd sing a very coarse song;

The roof, the roof, the roof is on fire

We don't need no let that mother fucker burn

Burn mother fucker, burn!

It's like a nursery rhyme. Just like Ring Around the Rosie is about the Black Plague (!!!), this rhyme reminds me of MOVE.

To hear that a city ORDERED the destruction of an entire city block is something we don't talk about much. The 60 other families have had the unique and unwanted experience of having a government eliminate their living quarters under the guise of doing a necessary and totally justifiable task.

I talk sometimes with folks about policing, and certainly, this is THE EXAMPLE of why militarizing policing is a bad idea, but there are other factors at play.

Once you strip away their humanity, you can now indulge every dark urge and pretend that you NEEDED to do that.

We NEEDED to blow up that hospital.

We NEEDED to blow up the row home.

We HAD to get THOSE PEOPLE. Hamas, MOVE, Communists, immigrants, whoever. Same fascist formula, just different dispossessed people. The rationale is the same. If that's what you're doing, you're choosing domination over humanity. Empathy has left the building.

Those are my two examples. You may say to yourself, what is the solution to this? Let's state the problem first. The main issue is a lack of empathy. Empathy is worn away by greed, misinformation, and envy.

Clearly, greed is at play in Palestine. The desire for more land to develop fuels a giant military machine that flattens the indigenous people. Colonization is not new. Of course, [AFSC.org/divest](https://afsc.org/divest) gives you the rundown of who benefits from the IDF's lust for arms. I mean, part of why the police is militarizing is that the government has surplus arms to just give away, making room for shiny new arms.

The greedy then embarked on a campaign to "market" for new sources of cash. Misinformation is designed to stop people from doing moral things. The misinformation always casts one group as less than, and another group as "heroes" or "patriots" who spread the misinformation. It makes them feel important. Once that's done, it's easy to continue spreading suffering and profiting from it.

Then envy kicks in. Once you have a group pit against another group, they will act on this misinformation to oppress the other group and even hurt the other group for greed. This is a vicious cycle.

There are two remedies. One is real vulnerable conversation.

Natalie told a story about a canvassing job she did. The people she canvased were Hispanic, and they asked her why she was voting for Kamala Harris. We're voting for Trump they said. She told them a story about her family. That her parents moved here and that her father when he moved here people from Mexico take care of him. And come when Trump came on the scene, he was so incensed that he would say horrible things about Mexican people he said those were untrue!

The only people who helped them when he moved to America were Mexicans and he could never support anyone that was against Mexicans. In

fact, her father's last words to her were to for her to stop Trump. And then he went shortly afterwards into a coma. So, she quit her job and went into organizing and canvassing to tell people to vote against Trump.

Yes, that was a really vulnerable conversation. It was deep and powerful which is why I'm repeating it here. The other thing that has to happen now, the second remedy, is great action. Natalie took a huge leap. The thing that has to happen, whether you're talking about harm reduction, or demilitarizing the police, or a ceasefire in Gaza, is that more and more people have to take this big leap into big action. We have to get people off of the bench, and out of the stands, and into the game. We know this, but now, we just talked about the tool to enable that.

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LEE, University of Pennsylvania Student

My most recent endeavors have been showing solidarity with the Palestine movement as someone who is active in the Korea movement, and exploring the interconnectedness of our histories within a framework of peace and liberation.

"Koreans know occupation".

I'll share an excerpt from a statement from NoDutDol, an anti-imperialist organization centering Korea, on Korea's solidarity with Palestine.

"As anti-imperialist Koreans, we stand unequivocally with Palestine, its people, and its armed resistance against the Zionist occupation. Since 1948, when over 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their ancestral lands, the Palestinian people have resisted annexations, bombings, segregation, displacement, and massacres. This is neither a two-sided conflict nor a war: it is an occupation and a genocide.

As Koreans whose homeland is divided, we know that imperialism is our common enemy. Following our liberation from Japanese colonialism and the beginning of independent socialist construction in Korea, the US split our country in two and indiscriminately bombed and killed our people. There is a reason the Nakba and the division of Korea both happened in 1948, backed by the same imperialist interests."

Contextualizing the global nature of history shows us how Palestine and Korea both tell stories of anti-colonialism, the struggle for self-determination, and fight for people's democracy. Around the same time as 1948's Nakba, the seeds for the Korean War were sown and in 1950 the Korean War burst into reality. Just as the British signed the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to "establish a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, two American

colonels took thirty minutes to look at a map of the Korean peninsula and drew the 38th parallel division, a decision that has still divided our nation.

Both Palestine and Korea face a divided reality, with no free travel across the border for Palestinians and Koreans and no right to return. The blocking of aid to Gaza by America is reminiscent of economic sanctions and travel bans placed by the US upon North Korea. Both nations and people have faced dehumanizing propaganda.

Furthermore, both are places that are US issues and geographically strategic sites for the US hegemony. Israel and South Korea have served as places for US military presence in the Middle East and East Asia, continuing Cold War era aggression targeting the Middle East and China. Despite most Americans wanting an end to the Palestinian genocide, the U.S. government supports Israel and supplies its arms – the U.S. empire, all in all, is not a democracy.

The Korean War is still one of the most destructive conflicts to exist in modern times. The civilian death toll is proportionally one of the highest, and over four million lives were claimed over the course of three years of absolute destruction and relentless bombing of the North by the U.S. air force.

No official peace treaty or end of war declaration has ever been established, leaving the two Koreas in a constant state of war to this day. The lack of resolution has had tremendous impact even on the kind of politics accepted in South Korea, as Cold War National Security Laws established in 1948 are still in effect today and provide grounds for squashing even marginally progressive political movements from gaining legitimacy.

As we have seen with escalations in NATO's focus on the Pacific region and emphasis on the US/South Korea/Japan trilateral alliance, North and South Korea have served as an outlet for US aggression and militarism in the Pacific region. South Korea hosts the largest US military base abroad, yet is supposed to believe that this is purely for South Korea's protection and safety regardless of the US' explicit tensions with China. Increasingly aggressive joint military exercises between the US and South Korea is reflected in the exercises held by the US and Philippines in the West Philippine Sea, as China and Russia hold their own in the same oceans. This and all escalations in the Pacific show us that the modern cold war is dangerously poised to become hot, and this facade of peace has been an oppressive, war mongering tool serving the US' goal of instability and expansion.

With this understanding, Korea Peace Now! Philly has mobilized to speak on Penn's campus about this shared anti-colonial and anti-imperial

struggle and showed up in solidarity at Palestine rallies, joining hands with other anti-imperialist organizations for these mobilizations, such as Anak-bayan Philly, an anti-imperialism Philippines organization.

As Koreans stand in solidarity with Palestine, we are also preparing for similar events to occur in East Asia in the near future. There have been a series of significant escalations from all sides in regards to China - Taiwan relations and North - South Korea relations, and a war in one region would spark conflict in another. The U.S.' military presence in East Asia is significant and growing in preparation of these conflicts under the guise of moral upstanding and containment. ♡



For more information contact Terry Rumsey of the Fridays@Fetterman's Vigil Organizing Committee at terry@greenseedsgrants.com or 484.326.1370

Going forward, the vigils will be held every Friday from 12:15-1:15 to demand that Senator Fetterman publicly support an immediate, permanent ceasefire by Israel in Gaza that is aligned with U.S. House Resolution 786.

The American Friends Service Committee, the Brandywine Peace Community, and The Simple Way have endorsed "Fridays@Fetterman's"

10 CCP STUDENTS ATTEND NABA CONVENTION IN DC

J BARRY JOHNSON

For the first time ten (CCP) Accounting and Business majors attended the NABA (National Association of Black Accountants, Inc) Eastern Region Student Convention on September 28th, 2024 in Washington, DC. The Convention was hosted by Howard University and was attended by over 500 students from 4 year Colleges and Universities from Boston, Mass. to Richmond Virginia. NABA, Inc. consist of 48 Professional Chapters and over 160 Student Chapters. NABA is the largest minority association of accountants in the United States.

Each Professional Chapter supports and sponsors University and College Student Chapters. For example, the Philadelphia Professional Chapter members support Student Members at Temple U, Drexel U, Villanova U, LaSalle U, West Chester U, Lincoln U, Delaware State U, Shippensburg U, Rutgers U- Camden, and CCP. NABA's Mission is Empowering Black Business Leaders at every step in the journey. NABA accomplishes it mission by offering Free Student Membership, Access to Industry Leaders and Networking Events, Exclusive Educational Resources, Career

Support, Leadership Development, Continuing Professional Education Credits, Exclusive Access to NABA's Career Center and Scholarship Opportunities. NABA, Inc. awards over one million dollars in student scholarships every year. NABA, Inc. is supported by the Big 4 major Accounting firms, Fortune 500 companies, Accounting State Societies and many others.

On Saturday, September 28th, at 6am, CCP students Katie Barnes, Jasen Chasteen, Dave Hansen, Keren Gomez, Kijanna McDowell, Donny Mutiva, Shabnam Nawazi, Selena Ryland, Vuochhen Sambath, Vincent Zheng and Prof. J Barry Johnson boarded the two bus load of students at Temple University headed for Howard University 's Business School. During the day the students participated in Onsite Interviews, a Career Expo, numerous sessions for student development, Emerging Leaders Program powered by KPMG, a Fashion Show, Scholarships, Men and Women of NABA Network sessions, Lunch, a Reception and plenty of FUN. The Buses returned to Temple U at 11pm. 🍀



From L to R students
Kijanna McDowell,
Dave Hansen,
Donny Mutiva,
Prof. J Barry Johnson,
Shabnam Nawazi,
Vincent Zheng,
Vuochheng Sambath,
and Keren Gomez

From L to R students
Keren Gomez,
Shabnam Nawazi,
Prof. J Barry Johnson,
Vuochheng Sambath,
Vincent Zheng



L to R students Vuochheng Sambath, Vincent Zheng, Prof. J Barry Johnson, Shabnam Nawazi, Donny Mutiva, Dave Hansen, Kijanna McDowell

SNACK RACK, FOOD SECURITY PROMISES

ASHTON ARELLANO

Formerly known as the Snack Rack, Roary's Market is to be the improved and promising new initiative to expand food security on campus. The current Snack Rack is in S1-12 on the first floor of the Winnet Building. In past years, the Snack Rack provided students with snacks to help them through the day, as well as "meal bags they could take home to their families." That said, the meals were typically just a bag of chips and a milk that was sometimes spoiled.

This makes sense. For the last two years, their budget had been \$2,000, all meant to account for over 8,000 students. But the sudden increase in Snack Rack budget from \$2,000 to \$38,292 this year has had nothing to show for it. The more I dug into this issue, the fewer answers I found, and the more questions I was left with. Emails exchanged between faculty and students familiar with the issue revealed that, in addition to the recent budget increase, the school is actively seeking more funds as well as food donations to support the initiative. We are now 8 weeks into the school year and still have not seen improvements or changes from the chips and dairy of past years.

This article had started as a simple piece on the revamped campus snack rack, it would only later

evolve into something far more complex. My initial task was straightforward: gather information about the new policies to combat food insecurity. However, what should have taken a few minutes, and one conversation, quickly turned into a drawn-out search for answers all of which were embedded in layers of administrative tape. I, along with many other students, were jumping through hoops, navigating an endless maze of emails, committees, and excuses. This is a troubling thought especially with food insecurity being a real problem in Philadelphia, a problem that the school administration has been looking to take direct action against as of this year. Our search for answers began with Assistant Dean Richard Kopp, the editor of our paper M.P. Hassel had been in contact with him. It was through emails exchanged that we were given the impression that Roary's Market would be under the Hospitality and Management Department. Where it would then be placed within the Sandra E. Klein Cube. Kopp had noted that Chef Richards and Lynsey Madison would be the ones to spearhead this operation. But when we went to go find out more, we would only be left chasing our own tails. The apparent plan set in place was not privy to those actually working the Klein

Cube. For starters Chef Richards was no longer employed by the college. To which the program would instead likely fall under Chef Andy Marin, who still believed the program fell under the direction of Jenavia Weaver, the Coordinator of Student Life. We learned from Dean Nicole Rayfield that "Chef Marin has just returned from sabbatical... he would not be aware of this project but will be involved as needed." Still, Chef Marin was blindsided by this plan. And turned out that the same market would stay in S1-12.

From here all we ever got from Weaver was "Please send your availability to me for Friday. I can try to assemble that team together and we can all meet." To which a meeting would never arrive. We have been sidestepped countless times, but that would not stop us.

Already the school is advertising in large, laminated sheets throughout main campus "Roary's Cafe is now Open Monday thru Friday." Yet,

ask any student around and most would not even know such a program existed.

The location of our new and not-so-improved Snack Rack remains in S1-12, and as of right now, is still a work in progress. Belinda Pierce, Director of Single Stop and the Student Care Network had informed students that the Snack Rack future location in the southwest side of Winnett Building will be under renovation in the spring of 2025 until that fall. There will be an actual Mini-Market in place and students will get to check out their items at the check-out. The school will keep track of how many students and snacks will be accounted for tracking purposes. The J-number will be recorded with each swipe. The snacks will be free of charge, they will continue to be food donations from places.

If you're hungry go and get your grub at S1-12, we will keep you in the loop with updates to come. 🍌

SGA: SURVEY OF STUDENT CONCERNS

Student Government wants to know all about the best and worst parts of your student experience. Your feedback will tell us how together we can improve life **for all students**. Give us your honest opinion. Let's make a change!



The bench where she sat was cold on her ass. She willed her body to quickly warm the spot as her hands and legs shook; the cold wasn't entirely to blame for that.

She had been waiting 17 minutes thus far. She thinks she got the time right, but she double-checked (or quadruple-checked, at this point) in her head, just in case.

If Hajile had class at 1:30, and it ended at 3, then by 3:05 he should've been out of the building and on his way home. It's 3:20, and she hasn't seen any sign of him yet. The newspaper she'd been peering up from listed the political happenings of the week in bold, black, belligerent letters; homicide there, robbery there, genocide here, there, and there... She really couldn't give a shit, where was he? Did she miss him? How? She'd been watching like a hawk at everyone that crossed her path so far. Did he not go to school today? She stared at the letters on the paper in spite, cursing them for taking her attention away from him. Her heart faltered a little bit. Her scars itched.

She heard his footsteps before she saw him. Before she could think why, her head snapped up at the sound and her eyes - and heart - followed. They both beamed at the sight.

She quickly got up and put herself directly in his path. Clumsily - not with too much effort, either - she collided into him. Both of their arms reached out to brace each other, and when Hajile's square hand held the small of her back, her blood rushed to all parts of her.

"Oh my god! I'm so sorry!" Hajile spat out automatically, red from embarrassment. He had already spewed the words before he could look up and see who it was he crashed into. When his eyes met hers, he paused for a bit.

She looked at him with such hope, such fierce emotion, it confused him. She took his look of confusion as secret confirmation that he recognized her. He remembered her. He knows her. He might feel the same way, too.

"Hi" she said, a gleaming smile on her face. "How are you?"

"Oh, I'm good, thank you. Are you okay?"

Her heart fluttered. So caring! So soft and tender. She wanted to be engulfed in his tenderness. She wanted him to hold her in his soft, strong, safe chest. She wanted to touch his shoulders, his arms. She wanted to hold his hands. She wanted to interlace their fingers. She wanted them

She paused for a bit, lost in her thoughts. She came to when the silence became deafening, the awkwardness shaking her from her daydream.

"What?" she said, still in a bit of a haze.

"Are you okay?" He said laughing. His smile sent shock waves throughout her. How could anyone concentrate on anything at the sight of something so beautiful? She averted her gaze to the ground and concentrated on what she'd say next,

"Where are you off to?" She was looking at his shoulders now.

"Oh, um, I just got off class. I actually have to go to my next class now. Have a good one!"

Her heart sank. That was a lie.

He didn't have another class after this, unless she miscalculated. What did she miss? How could she have made such an error? This time was supposed to be for the two of them. Why was he lying? How could he lie like that to her?

What was the truth? How did he feel? She looked to his face for a hint of an answer, but by the time her eyes caught his, Hajile was off. She felt the lingering wind of his departure like a soft slap to the face.

Her wounds reopened and hot honey poured from them. The temperature of the honey should've cauterized the lesions at this point, but it didn't; she felt every bit of its boiling embrace and the pain every previous wound had possessed. Those maliced hands were on her again, clawing away at her skin, her core. They laughed as they did so, and the echoes vibrated in her joints. Now they hurt too.

She collapsed, the pain overbearing. The echoes and her own muted voice bounced erratically off the walls inside her,

'How? Why? Again?'

'Please, no, don't...'

'How many times?'

How many times had she been here before? From how many wounds does the honey pour from? How many more scars must be torn into her skin before the tissue ceases to function?

She sobbed; her gasps for air had mentions of Hajile, but not in the same as before - These gasps were ballads of a love lost, of a heart broken, and in tune with the percussions of her slaps to the thigh, hiccups, and sniffles, she became a melody of sorrow once again.

Her salty tears didn't sting her wounds, and as she watched them drop

on her skin, she thought of water; she'd always liked bodies of water, even as a child - she remembered floating in a lake some years ago, the water rippling around her, and she felt as if she was laying in the palm of the hand of God. She remembered the squirrels as they leaped up and over and through the trees surrounding her, she remembered the little chirps the birds made as they flew above her, the water was so cool, the air a perfect temperature, and there was hardly any harsh wind, either. The water lapped through her fingers ever so softly, and it wasn't until her fingertips lightly brushed the prickly skin of one other when she quickly withdrew her hand -

She opened her eyes and stared at the dark concrete underneath her. She wanted to go to the lake, into the palm of God. ♡

SHADES OF RAIN - A.R.I. SPICE
Shade of Lapis

It was raining the day Tilly decided to go exploring.

Rainy days were a favorite in her family, but all of her sisters, and her brother, all had different habits.

The oldest, Cosie, read by candlelight and then eventually fell asleep with the smell of vanilla and firewood wafting around her room. The middle, Essie, listened to soft jazz while baking. Lots of baking. By the time she finished, several pies, dozens of cookies, breads, and muffins were left in her wake, and she would start the fire and watch dramas on TV. Ellis, the one boy, liked fishing when it rained, because then all the old men weren't out, and the fish swam wildly towards the surface searching for fruits falling from the trees. As for Tilly, the youngest of all, she loved a good rainy day adventure. It started early, the soft tapping against her window as the sun was rising. She could smell the vanilla as she stretched, letting her feet hit the ground for the first time that day. Ellis banged her door open, already in his waterproof fishing gear, hook, tackle box, and all.

"It's a rain day, Tilly!"

A smile crept up her spine and nestled its way to her face. "Rain day."

She found her tall rubber boots, strategically placed in the back of the closet right under the long blue raincoat that Tilly loved. The outside was navy blue and the inside yellow and it had pockets that could fit a whole book in it. Ellis waited for her at the door, so they could walk down the road together.

Essie caught them at the door. "Take some tea. It's supposed to rain all day and it gets chilly in the afternoon."

Essie was on the phone, talking to a friend who wanted baked goods,

There was also banana bread on the counter cooling, and Ess, being the good big sister she was, cut two slices and sent the two on their way. The driveway was long and paved with cobblestones. It was a pain to drive down, but fun enough to walk. Their father had been planning on replacing it with concrete, but he hadn't gotten to it yet.

"So, which direction are you heading in today?" Ellis kicked a rock.

"I think north. I haven't been past the oak tree bend in a while."

"That should be fun."

"What about you?"

"Old man's creek."

It was called that, not because it was a creek, but because the lake was frequented by old men and all they talked about was how it used to be a creek back in the day but global warming had expanded it so that now it was about a quarter of a mile across. Ellis only went to three or four fishing ponds on the regular. Old Man's, Ocean Creek, named because it fed into the ocean, Cave Falls, and Bubbles. Of the four, Tilly enjoyed watching Bubbles, which had earned its name because, from the view of the trees. All the lily pads and lotuses looked like bubbles floating in a blue-green sky. Cave Falls was most likely the most adventurous though; A waterfall that flowed into a pond, but because of the depth of the cave and Tilly's lack of a lantern, she hadn't ventured in yet. Some day though. Some day she would.

Tilly and Ellis parted ways and Tilly started off north up the only paved, carroad. She walked at least a mile up the road, passing the oak tree bend in a half hour. She continued walking until an off-road path caught her eye. It was lined with grass instead of dirt, but it was a path, because puddles of mud gathered in odd spots, like someone had gone down this path before. On closer inspection, a branch from a tree planted on one side was tied to a tree on the other side, like that certain someone wanted attention drawn away from it. This only grew Tilly's curiosity. She ducked under the branch and started following the grass path.

The trees that lined this path were different from the ones on the main road. The main road had bushy green trees that flourished when it rained. Inside this path, tall white birch trees filtered in with the green trees. Its bark was thin and papery, peeling off very easily. Tilly pocketed a sample, interested in drying it for later.

in drying it for later.

She was in no rush, so she walked slowly and quietly enough to see chipmunks crossing her path, calling to each other as they built and rebuilt their nests. The ground was also wet enough that worms were breaking the surface. The further she wandered, the more birds sang, hovering just inside the tree line, waiting for the rain to stop so they could swoop in to take the worms.

This path continued for a while until Tilly found herself rounding a corner into a clearing, empty except a large tree in the center. It was large and had thick leaves so that when Tilly stood under it, she couldn't feel the rain as much. The roots bubbled out of the ground almost as far as the canopy above. She started circling the trunk, scanning for ways to climb it when the rain started falling harder. It rained so hard that if she wasn't under the cover of the tree, she wouldn't be able to see her hand in front of her face. She sighed.

"Looks like I'll be staying here for a while."

She did find a way to climb the tree and climbed to a height she liked, nestling herself inside some sturdy branches. Now was the time to pull out that banana bread and tea from Essie. The tea was mostly savory but had a sweet aroma to it, like the way vanilla smells versus the way it tastes. It wasn't exactly Tilly's vibe, but it wasn't bad. Of the four, Cosie and Essie liked sweets the most, although Essie tended to like more of a savory drink. Ellis ate anything that kept him full.

Tilly took out her adventure journal and started mapping her journey. She started with continuing the map of the world she knew, landmarking the oak tree and the entrance of the grass path. She flipped to another page and wrote down what animals and birds she'd seen, and then she tried to identify the tree she was currently sitting in.

The rain stopped falling so hard, letting a mist rise from the ground and tinting the world blue.

It took Tilly a while to write down everything she was thinking. She was so enraptured in her thoughts that she didn't hear the snapping of twigs on the outer edge of the clearings. She didn't notice a thing until she was being stared at.

"Hey. Who are you?" 🐾

<h1>CCP INDUSTRY NIGHTS</h1> <p>WHEN November 4TH 7PM</p> <p>WHERE Good Dog Bar <small>224 S 15th St, Philadelphia, PA 19102</small></p> <p>MORE INFO ON INSTAGRAM @CCP_INDUSTY</p>	<h1>21+</h1> <p>WHO CCP STUDENTS IN RESTAURANT AND FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY</p> <p>AT THE DOOR NO COVER TIP IN CASH</p> <p>20% OFF CHECK WITH PROOF OF EMPLOYMENT AT RESTAURANT OR IN FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY</p> <p>FUTURE EVENTS NOVEMBER 27th 7PM LOCATION TBD</p>
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CCP Students that work in the restaurant and food service industry are invited to the first of many CPP Industry Nights! This 21+ event will be held at Good Dog Bar on Monday night, November 4th at 7PM. Students will receive a 20% discount on their tab with proof of employment in the food service industry (such as a paystub, digital payroll app or ID card). Students in 'the industry' are in the unique position of being caught between the demanding work of food service and heavy workload of pursuing a degree. At the same time, students can appreciate the inner machinations of the industry, the human connections made through it, and how it has allowed many students to support their journey through higher education. CCP Industry Nights gives students an opportunity to have a good time, make new friends in the industry and connect students to help each other in and out of the classroom. For more information and announcements for future Industry Nights, follow our Instagram @CCP_Industry, see you there!

This event is STRICTLY for those ages 21 and over. CCP Industry Nights does not condone underaged drinking and is not affiliated with Community College of Philadelphia.