

**1. What made you choose this piece for pulp MAG?**

There was some encouragement from my prof, but I think I would have done it anyway. I'm really proud of this piece. As of right now I think it's probably my best short story.

**2. Is there anything in particular that you're proud of about this piece, or that you learned while creating it?**

I think what surprised me the most was how emotional it made me while writing. I feel like that shouldn't be surprising given its content, but I don't usually get too choked up by my own writing. I guess it ended up being a good outlet for me to sort of release some of the emotions I was holding back. It was a difficult story to write at times, but at the same time it was very healing.

**3. Where did your inspiration for this piece come from? What is the piece's "story"?**

I wrote this story following the very sudden death of my horse, Halo. Halo was the best thing that had ever happened to me, and losing her, especially so out of the blue, was so devastating, and it felt like I'd lost everything. The grief I felt from it was intense, and was (and still is) working its way into a lot of my writing. I wasn't ready to write directly about losing her, but my grief was still very fresh at that point and I was having a hard time coming up with a story that didn't involve it somehow.

I really like writing fantasy, and stuff with fantasy elements so that's kind of why I took it in the direction that I did. Writing this story was really difficult at times, but I think having that element of fantasy and surrealism made it a little easier. The story came from a really dark and personal place, but getting to explore it in a more fantastical way made it a little more fun and bearable.

**4. What messages/themes do you want viewers to pull from this piece?**

The main message I wanted to convey with this story is that there's always a chance to move forward after losing someone. From my own experience, it often feels like things are never going to get better. Grief is messy, scary, and it takes us to some dark places.

Moving forward and making peace can take a while, but it is possible.

**5. "A Long Way Home" includes a wide use of different metaphors and symbols—the monsters, the waterfall, and of course the home the story is based on. What inspired you to choose these specific symbols for this story? I'm especially interested in the use of the monsters and how they represent regret.**

Honestly, I'm not really sure how it all came about. The monsters were sort of derived from my own experiences with grief. Grief and the guilt that comes with it is hard to get away from, so I wanted to have something that reflected that. There's probably a lot of different ways I could have written it, but I really wanted something that felt very spooky and eerie as a way of showing that Kat was haunted by Hailey's death.

The waterfall and the home initially didn't actually start out as symbols, but as I developed the story that way they kind of wound up that way. The reason I chose a waterfall specifically was actually pretty arbitrary— I just think they're really pretty. But that scene was all about coming to terms with Hailey's death and as I started writing it ended up being more of a representation of the peace and tranquility that Kat could have if she were to let go of her guilt.

**6. What does your creative process or practice usually look like?**

It usually looks like coming up with a concept that I get excited about and think about non stop. Eventually I get to the point where I have enough content to work with, and that's usually when I put pen to paper.

**7. What sorts of things inspire you?**

All kinds of things. I get a lot of inspiration from other pieces of media. Books, tv shows, video games, and whatnot. But I draw a lot of inspiration from my own life as well, especially with my short stories.

**8. How long have you been creative?**

Pretty much my whole life. My Grandma is an artist, so she started teaching me about art from a really young age. Once I learned how to write I got really into that as well.

**9. Have you ever been published before? Where can we find your work?**

This is actually my first time being published! So right now, nowhere. I'm trying to get my work out there though, so keep an eye out.

**10. Do you plan on continuing your creative pursuits into the future? If so, what does the next project look like for you?**

I definitely plan on continuing to write stories. Right now though, my priority is to focus on school so my next projects will likely be stuff I write for class. I do have a couple bigger ideas for novels that I really hope to share with the world someday.