



The Thickness of Time

Diana Drozdik

Gasping for breath, I reached upwards, towards the only light I could see in this dark place. The spiders crawled along my sides, running away from something.

My knees sunk further into the mud while I hunched over on all-fours and I gave in to the lightness of my head. In it, my dreams danced close and far between consciousnesses.

‘Wake up! You lazy bum, we’re going biking today.’ My phone vibrated against my head and I found myself sleepy in bed.

I lifted off the mattress, my feet meeting the floor. Then I was suddenly on a bike, pedaling lightly as my friend swayed intensely behind me.

We glided on a wide curve, almost drifting. We jumped our bikes over the speed bumps with sheer enthusiasm. The euphoria erupted between us as we laughed from the thrill. The wind caked our faces and we licked it off with pleasure. I adjusted my hair from my face that the wind decided to plaster as my friend caught up.

In the summers of 2013 and 2014, we biked the perimeter of Richmond in its entirety and if we were ambitious enough, we came back to New Westminster and biked the Greenway biking

route to Vancouver. It was a long journey, but it was enough to escape the city lifestyle we lived on the daily.

‘We’re in Steveston, alongside UBC’s rowing facility. This is my friend Drumstick’ she said as she videotaped me with her selfie stick mid-stride.

I caught myself smiling as we sang our own versions of the songs we knew. Doing them justice with our experienced voices. My voice tickles and start to fade as the feeling of something crawling on my hand snaps me out of the karaoke.

We’re at Surrey Central Mall, drinking an Orange Julius she insisted on. The original Orange Julius. Alongside a Mozza burger, despite my complaining.

‘We need to eat and drink the same thing!’

But why? I really want a root beer float.

‘So we can share the same experience and enjoy ourselves even more!’ With such sentimental reasoning, how could I argue back? So that was that.

Flash back, we’re two virgins in a biology class dissecting a frog. We share our desire in being virgins with no intention of dating anyone, ever.

We discussed how gross boys are while she



Photo by Jaiden Dembo

holds the leg of the frog and playfully ‘karate chops’ our nearby classmates... and then proceeds to wear it like a moustache. Totally humane, I know. We were in grade 10, sure, we weren’t the most mature high schoolers, but we had fun. We fed off each other’s energy. She looks at me with a crooked smile. Without asking I know she wants to take over the biopsy. An almost devilish expression takes over her face, at least it appears to be.

Flash forward, we’re at KPU, her feet are kicked up against stained glass. Her posture is lax. Light is coming from the windows, but the room is dark.

Something crawls up my throat and exits. ‘You look like an evil villain, but you also look like a millionaire’ I tease her. She smiles, ‘One day I’ll look down from a similar window once I’ve made it big.’ She then laughs a stereotypical evil laugh with her arms raised above her head. I laugh alongside her and look down.

We’re at the top of the Hellevator, an amusement park ride. I’m quiet with overwhelming fear.

I scream, ‘let me down!’ to the employee who definitely can’t hear me. I find a camera right next to my face.

‘Wow, we’re really high up aren’t we? Look at the people! They look like little ants.’ I tell her to shut up.

She flails her feet around in the air, while gay with excitement. And then waves down to the little ant people below. We whoosh down to the ground with plenty of time for my heart to almost give out. I promise her I’ll never go on it again, but she’s rallied the P.N.E. employee against me and they both cheer me on. And we’re off again.

There are many times I’d like to believe she is joking about going sky-diving or cliff-diving, because I know who would go with her: me, despite my immense fear. At the time this fear felt overwhelming but now, it pales in comparison.

A flash of light obscures my view, and we’re tumbling down, two friends side-by-side. One friend who is wary of everything and the other who is afraid of nothing.

The stickiness of that sentence clings to my body. It weighs me down.

‘We’ll face your fears together!’ she says. Being afraid of nothing invertedly means not being afraid of death itself.

I’m falling into the mud. Is it mud though? I’m not sure. It’s sticky and thick. Smells a little bit metallic. It’s too dark to tell. What else could it be?