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Staff writers and**Photographers:**

Abril Castillo
 Alice Cerutti
 Alberto Sueiro
 Alejandro Herreros
 Ana González
 Ana Martín
 Anastasia Cuevas
 Carla Bach
 Carla García
 Cayetana Calvo
 Diana Osete
 Eline Deparis
 Helena Durbán
 Inés Chinchilla
 Iñigo Poza
 Irati Acha
 Irene Aldabaldetrecu
 Irene Filgueira
 Isabel Calviño
 Joaquín Moreiras
 Júlia de Pablo
 Juliette Pelletier
 Karel Bergia
 Lara Veramendi
 Leticia Morales
 Luis León
 María Alcázar
 María Camps
 María Torrejón
 Mariona Blanch
 Mariona Risquez
 Mathilde Durouseau
 Meritxell Risquez
 Mireia Font
 Noémie Roux
 Paula De Mercado
 Romain Detheve
 Sara Borsari

Layout Editors:

Carla Bach
 Karel Bergia
 Paula De Mercado

“Students Who Change the World” by Abril Castillo

Student activism ranges from the biggest actions, like creating an organization, to the little acts of kindness we do every day to improve our world. These are three teenagers who decided to improve our world through peaceful demonstrations:

#RepresentationMatters

Greta Thunberg

Greta Thunberg is a Swedish teenage activist for Climate Change. Her mission began in 2018, when she started “Strikes for Climate.” Thunberg began skipping Friday classes to protest outside the Swedish Parliament. Her actions spread thanks to social media, and now teenagers all around the world have joined her cause, starting mass demonstrations everywhere.

"We showed that we are united and that we, young people, are unstoppable." - UN Youth Climate Summit, New York City, September 21, 2019

Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai is an education and women rights advocate in Pakistan. Her fight began when she was 11 years old, as she was being forbidden to study due to the Taliban control. She began reporting for the BBC, and this caused the Taliban to put a death threat over her head. She got shot in 2012, when she was 15 years old. Luckily, she survived, and in 2014 she became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, at just 17 years old.

"I raise my voice – not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back." - UN Youth Takeover, New York City, July 12, 2013



Shiden Tekle

Shiden Tekle is part of the organization, The Advocacy Academy, a Social Justice Youth Movement for young people from South London. He and his friends got tired of the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of black people in the media and decided to recreate famous movie posters. Another activist group, Special Patrol Group, printed them and placed them at bus stops and billboards in Brixton.



“We decided to put black faces in the big movies, and challenge people’s perceptions and assumptions.” - London, March 2018

These goals may seem unachievable, but there’s so much all of us can do for our communities. Find a local NGO, non-governmental organization, volunteer at your school's solidarity acts and events or just start trying to aid those around you. Devoting your time to improve others' lives is a truly fulfilling experience and it helps build

dedicated and kind communities and a better world.

“Alair’s Tragedy” by Ana Martín

I had finally come home, all I wanted was to sit with a cup of tea, on my favorite sofa, with a blanket next to the fireplace and a good book on that cold winter day. The exhibition of Roman patricians and plebeians in the history museum had left me exhausted. I had been examining paintings all day and one of them seemed familiar, like if I had already seen it somewhere but I wasn't sure where. I stopped thinking about everything, I went to my room, showered, got changed and had dinner, but my mind was stuck on that painting of a very handsome patrician named Alair whose face seemed sad. At his right was his wife, a noble girl named Rosella daughter of a very important Roman general. I was about to sit down when I suddenly remembered, the book my grandfather left me contained that story, I ran to get it and began to read.

“In the city of Pompeii lived a patrician named Alair, he was loved by all, brave and cared for everyone but a horrible tragedy occurred to him. His father died and at the age of 20 he took his patrician position. Alair had to marry before 21 to continue keeping his title and be able to support his mother and sister. He learned that his father had already promised him to a noble woman named Rosella. Although they were not married, they still bought a very large house with many rooms with only the servants missing. So Alair went to the agora to buy slaves. While walking he saw her, the prettiest girl his eyes had ever seen was walking through the streets, so he began to follow her. Suddenly, she fell to the ground down a steep street. He ran out to help her, he took her hand, they looked into each other's eyes and discovered that it was love at first sight. Her name was Coralia, her hair was in a long black braid, her eyes were green and she wore a long white robe typical of noble women.



Two weeks passed and he saw her everywhere, the circus, the theater ... until one day they decided to meet in an abandoned building to talk. He told her that he loved her and that he wanted to be with her. Since she was a noble woman they could turn their dream into reality and be together but everything changed when Coralia burst into tears and told him that she was not a noble but a humble commoner. Alair, at first did not know if what he felt was anger over her lie or sadness because he loved her. When he came out of his confusion he told her that he did not care about her social position, that they would go together to another place to be able to live a quiet life both together.

However, they did not realize that someone was listening to them and that someone was none other than Rosella's father. The day when they would escape arrived, when they were about to leave the army stopped them, killed Coralia and forced Alair to marry Rosella or his family would go next. The next day he married Rosella and spent his whole life thinking about Coralia, the only woman he had truly loved in his life. I ended up crying and I understood that sad face of Alair and I fell asleep wondering what it would have been like to have that adventure.

“Love Hurts” by Lara Veramendi

I want to start this story with a question: What is love? Well, allow me to tell you something. Love isn't what movies tell us, love isn't what our best friend says and isn't what we write in our diaries. Love is nothing and everything at the same time and that's what makes it so special. If someone tells you that love is the easiest thing, he or she is definitely lying because love is easily complicated. You might not understand this at first but eventually you will.



Jess, Jessamine, Jessi... She was tallish, blonde, athletic, pretty and even she hadn't found love. She was waiting for that prince in shining armor that never arrived. She had fallen in love and everything had gone wrong. What she thought was love was a lie. She was heartbroken and had lost hope. But in the end, we all never stop waiting for our prince or our princess.

That beautiful day she took her bag, gave her mother a kiss and left with nothing on her mind. Everything changed when she saw Lucas, the perfect gentleman boy that she met at the beach. But everything changed and what was love had turned into an obsession and she couldn't stand him at all. Then, Chase appeared in front of her. The boy who was her most intimate friend who had lied to her making her think he was in love with her so he didn't break her heart. However, he did in the end. In the end, she saw Alex the boy she had friend-zoned so many times.

Obviously, the first one getting closer to her was Lucas. She remembered:

"Dear Diary (8/19/2018):

Today I went to the beach with my sister. I can't wait to tell you I was going to do an introduction but I met somebody. His name is Lucas and he is a true gentleman. I spent an hour looking at him when I decided to come closer and ask him for his Instagram. In the end, he invited me to ice cream. Can you believe we have the same ice cream taste "YOGURT"!!! We walked through the beach but nothing more... I supposed I will have to wait a little bit more for my first kiss."

Jess held Lucas's hand remembering those hopeful words in her diary. She told him that she loved him but not in the same way as he did. She explained to him that it didn't matter what he did in her heart she knew he wasn't the right one. After those words, they hugged each other and went to class.

At recess, she came closer to Chase, who was listening to music on the stairs. She sat next to him and remembered:

"Dear Diary: (7/22/2018):

I couldn't stop crying for an entire day. Why would he do something so terrible to me when I thought he loved me. I should never have told him that I loved him and definitely should have noticed that he was pretending being in love with me. He has even told me that he did that for my own sake so I wasn't heartbroken. I am never going to forgive him for what he has done."

Remembering those broken and sad words Jess said: "I forgive you." Chase was shocked he knew he was an idiot and he didn't deserve Jess's forgiveness. He had been a really bad friend. Moreover, their friendship wasn't over. Jess's friendship was the most important thing in the world to Chase and he was not going to lose it again. After all that Jess stood up and went back to class.

Before classes, Jess ran to her sister's best friend house Alex. Once he stood in front of her she remembered:

"Dear Diary (11/17/2018):

Today I had an interesting conversation with my sister's best friend Alex. He asked me if I had already had my first kiss. It was like if he knew I was expecting it. I bet my sister told him. The thing was I that I told him I didn't. My cheeks blushed and now I really regret not lying to him. He was there rested on the railing of the porch with the wind moving his black hair. The most interesting thing was that he was surprised. After he left, I couldn't avoid smiling. I don't know why."

Alex was standing in front of Jess expectant. Remembering those words Jess kissed Alex. He was the one and her heart knew it. He was the one next to her when she was heartbroken for Chase, the one that encouraged her to ask Lucas for his phone number, the one that has always cared about her. Jess was afraid and happy at the same time, It was difficult for her to know but now it was easy to choose. When he reciprocated back with a kiss she felt relieved.

Well, as you might see. Love is easy to find, the difficult part is to know the difference between friend-love and love-love. That day Jess won everything, two friends and Alex's heart.



“Serendipity” by Irene Aldabaldetrecu

I watched a drop of rain slowly slide down the window, my pinky following the trace it left behind. And then another one fell. And yet another one. I looked straight ahead as the downpour blinded me to the street in front. What had appeared to be so impossibly close a few seconds ago now seemed to be so far away, the fingerprints I had left clashing with the otherwise transparent glass, a subtle reminder of the barrier that kept me from going outside.

“Ella, my dear, have you finished today’s reading assignment?”

I jerked up from my seat as soon as I heard my mother’s voice, afraid she might have caught me loafing around. In doing so, the book I was holding suddenly slipped from my hands and fell noisily on the ground. Before I could even react, my mother had somehow picked it up, gasping aloud as she examined the now crooked cover of the novel. “What did I tell you about reading books like this?” she blurted, holding the book right in front of my face, “How did you even get it anyway?” I shook in discomfort, my eyes dropping down aimlessly as I waited for her anger to dissipate. Hopefully. “You’ve gone out without my permission, haven’t you?” She dropped the book onto a nearby desk, almost throwing it against the wooden surface. “I want you to dispose of this nonsense right away,” she said as she walked out of the room.



Once again, I was left alone, even though I knew deep down that it would not last long if my mother were to check up on me again. I sighed. At least it hadn’t been as bad as it could have.

I stepped outside of my house for the first time since picking up the book from the library, my hands shivering under London’s cold winter rain as I tried to unfold my umbrella. It took an hour-long walk to reach the nearest underground, but I was tempted to take the long route if it meant I could spend a few more seconds wandering around our quiet neighborhood. However, the thought of my mum waiting for me to go back home, glancing at her wristwatch with growing impatience, made me quicken my pace with every step. It had been no longer than forty-five minutes before I finally arrived there.

I walked towards a nearby bench, a sticky, filthy piece of wood that I immediately regretted sitting on. It was obvious I had not got used to the tube yet, as I fidgetted incessantly in unexplainable anticipation. I got up. Sat down. Regretted it once again. The few that were next to me seemed rather indifferent, their eyes glued to their mobiles. I took my old Blackberry out of my pocket, a single text message showing up on the screen.

“Have you thrown it away?”—Mum

I didn’t dare leave it unread, so I responded with a rushed “just a minute”. As soon as I did, the increasingly louder sound of the tube arriving took me aback, my trembling fingers doing their best not to drop down my phone as they did with the book. I took a step forward and got in the train just in time before the doors began to close behind me, an image that left me wondering what it would have been like if I had been a few milliseconds too late. A stupid thought, I know. But having gone outside of my neighborhood for no more than a couple of times that year, it was one I simply couldn’t escape from.

“Wait!”

I turned around and saw a young girl run towards the already closed doors of the train. She started hitting them incessantly, hoping that they would miraculously open. I panicked, seeing as she had no chance of getting in. “Please, someone help!” I screamed. I felt my face heat up as everyone turned towards me, a moment that seemed to last forever until a man was kind enough to press the open button. I could have come up with that earlier.

“Thank you so much!” said the girl, sighing in relief as I did too. As the tube finally set off, the girl stumbled and bumped into me, grabbing the bar I was holding on to before hitting anyone else.

“Oh, I am so sorry!”

“I...I-it’s okay” I responded. She smiled. She had a pretty smile. “What’s your name?” she asked.

“Me? Oh, m-my name is Ella. And you a—”

“I’m Zoe. You live here, don’t you? I mean, because of your accent. I really like it. I’ve always wanted to have a British accent, but it’s so hard to imitate! You gotta teach me someday. You know, if we see each other again. Which probably won’t happen. Or maybe it will, who knows. I...I’m sorry,” she said, chuckling.

“I get too carried away sometimes. I hope I didn’t scare you.”

“No, it’s okay.”

“Well, that’s good news. People are usually holding themselves back from slapping me across the face after I’ve talked to them for this long. You cannot imagine how hard it is to find people with this much patience.” She smiled once again, her rosy, plump cheeks sprinkled with freckles, her sparkling blue eyes filled with joy. “It’s totally my fault though. Sorry if I’m being obnoxious, I just can’t help it.”

“N...-N-No. I mean yes. I mean.... I don’t mind if you talk.” I answered, my mind trying to come up with something more to say. “You’re not from here, aren’t you? Where—”

“Oh, I have to get off here!”

Before I could even say goodbye, she had already disappeared right in front of my eyes, leaving me with nothing more than a little wink and a cheeky grin.

I kept walking, splashing through never-ending puddles of water, my old sneakers soaked wet. “Almost there. Just keep going faster,” I told myself. Mum was waiting for me. Mum had been waiting for me for hours. Mum had sent me about ten text messages. Mum was mad.

Finally, I arrived home. However, my mum wasn’t the one awaiting me. A lorry was parked outside, a bunch of brown boxes covering the street. A family was standing right beside the house opposite mine: a curly, pink mop of hair stood out from the otherwise black-haired individuals. As if reading my mind, she turned around and caught me staring at her, my eyes too slow to look elsewhere. At that moment, I froze. Her unmistakable blue eyes lit up in recognition.

“Ella!”

As she ran towards me, a hand suddenly grabbed my wrist. She immediately stopped, her troubled expression a mirror image of what was in store for me.

Gazing out of my bedroom window was apparently all I could do back at home. Probably because I no longer had the energy to do anything else. "I could study," I thought. It wasn't that I could. It was that I had to.

I looked at my right hand, traces of my mother's nail polish visible amongst the redness of its swollen surface. Tears began to spring into my eyes; my pride, however, would not let them slide down.

I don't want to pretend it was as dreamy as I often pictured it to be, but I nonetheless felt that pull from its gloom, from that which still draws me to suburban London's cold and lonely nights. The eerie darkness that tainted a city I barely knew. The sole star I was able to look at that felt more like an imperfection than whatever it was supposed to be. As if it hadn't earned its place, as if its existence was a mere coincidence. In fact, it probably was. What about mine? Was I more than just a fluke? Did I serve any purpose at all? Was I like that star, occupying a random place in this world where I just stood still?

All of a sudden, abrupt knocking sounds brought me back to earth. I stiffened. A few seconds after, I heard the same sounds again, even louder this time. I shiver ran down my spine as I realised they came from my window. I stood up and looked down, my jaw dropping down from what I had just seen.

It was her.

"Zoe!" I screamed. I opened the window and found her crawling up the wall, the only thing she could hang on to being a couple of small holes. "Well, it did take you long! I'll be surprised if your neighbors aren't at your doorstep after all the noise I've made!" she exclaimed. "Are you crazy? Get in!" I scolded her, pushing her into my room. Once she was inside, I immediately regretted doing so. "W...W-What are you doing here?" I asked, my heart throbbing hastily. "Oh, I was bored so I felt like checking up on you," she answered, a bright smile flickering across her face. I was speechless. "Zoe, what you have just done was so dangerous! You could have slipped and who knows w—"

"You've never even tried jumping out of it, haven't you?" she said, raising her eyebrows teasingly. "It really isn't that high off from the ground. You must really be afraid of heights."

"Well, my mum has always told me I'd end up breaking a few bones if I ever tried to get out of our house in any way except through the door."

"Huh, your mum's a little... brusque." She looked around my room, disappointed at how painfully dull it was. "So... What do you want to do?" she asked. I blinked. Did she actually say that or was my mind playing tricks on me?

"Me? What about you? Aren't you supposed to be at home? Your parents must be worried."

"Oh, my parents aren't home tonight. And my little brother didn't let me change the channel. You can't imagine how tired I am of watching the same cheesy cartoons over and over again! I wonder if he'll ever get bored of them, though I doubt it." she chuckled. "Wait, where was I? Oh, yes. Let's go outside."

"I can't, I'm sorry," I blurted. "I'm grounded. I can't leave my room until my mother says so."

Turning a blind eye to what I'd just said, she swiftly jumped out of the window, my eyes open wide in shock. "Are you coming or not?" she insisted.

I stood there for what seemed like hours, my mind torn between what I knew I had to do and a reckless temptation. If it had been any other person, I wouldn't have thought twice about it. But there was that girl, that girl who didn't wince when she looked right into my eyes, her defiant gaze fixed on them until she got what she wanted: a "yes". "I knew it." Her smile did not vanish.

The cold breeze hit me like a stone. Arms wrapped around my stomach, I walked forward with small, calculated steps, my aimless eyes diverting back to Zoe as she led me, her carefree attitude contrasting with my bizarre uneasiness. We kept strolling across a path we made up as we went along, a brooding silence solely disrupted by our uneven footsteps.

"Do you go to school nearby? I am going to attend the one that's nearby here."

I looked up at Zoe, her tiny freckles visible under the lampposts. "No, I...I don't go to school. I study at home. With my mum, I mean," I responded. "Oh. That's cool," she murmured. "Though you don't know what you are missing. School itself might be a bore, but I wouldn't be able to live without any classmates. They really are the only ones who make high school worthwhile." I had neither classmates, nor friends. But maybe I had just made one. Was Zoe a friend? Could I go as far as to say that? "I guess she is," I thought. Friends talk. Friends hang out together. That's what we were doing, weren't we?

"Ella, can I ask you a question?"

"Yes, go ahead."

"Are you...happy? Like, right now." What a weird question.

"Yeah, I suppose." I shrugged. I knew I didn't know the answer to that. "Cool," she muttered. It was weird seeing her so quiet. "So, I suppose we could hang out sometime?" she asked. "I can't. I know I can't," I told myself. I knew it wouldn't be possible. I knew it wouldn't matter if I said no. I knew she would move on, I knew she would meet new people she could actually befriend. I knew.

"Sure."

At that moment, I realized I had left my phone back in my room. I kept walking.

“TEA” by Karel Bergia

Push. Pull. Once again. Push. Pull. One. Two. The ropes of the instrument squeaked.

Sara let out a small scream of frustration, as she rolled her eyes. Luckily, her roommate wasn't here, or she would have mistaken her with a crazy person. The blue-eyed girl had been practicing her cello for two hours now. She was exhausted, but it wasn't over. TEA had told her to keep going, so there was no way she was stopping before the time scheduled. Or TEA would be mad again, and Sara wanted to avoid that as much as possible. It wasn't fun when TEA was mad... She usually decided to throw things everywhere, and she made Sara say all kinds of stuff she didn't want to say. Sara let out a new sigh and carefully laid her cello on the floor, in a way that it was stabilized. She turned on her control panel, just brushing her wrist with her thumb. A blue light appeared right above her hand palm, and the perfect face of TEA came on as the virtual screen turned on.

“TEA...” she asked, almost begging her to answer. “Please? Give me the reason again...”

As soon as Sara finished her question, an automatic robotic woman's voice came out of the panel.

“It's been calculated. If you do even a minute less than three hours today, you will fail your exam. Understood?” Sara nodded.

There was no reason why she wouldn't listen to TEA... She was always right after all... She didn't have a choice anyway. The girl took her cello and had a long sigh to make sure to focus once again. Push. Pull. Once again. Push. Pull. One. Two. Three.

Sara was late. Again. TEA was yelling her to wake up and hurry. The young girl was exhausted, but she really had to take that exam... She grabbed a brush and started going through her long brown hair, before taking a simple jean and a shirt that she tucked in. She was ready to leave out of the room, but TEA suddenly stopped her.

“And your bag? I thought we had that regulated. We practiced together on your morning routine. If I'm here, you're not supposed to forget anything,” the robotic voice soliloquized.

Sara nodded as she bit her lip, knowing it was a big mistake to forget something. “I'm sorry, TEA. I'll be careful next time.” She said, making it look like she wasn't upset. But she knew that was also useless, since the system was into her head...

The girl finally rushed out of her college dorm room.

She ran through the hallways, not being careful with her surroundings. She suddenly stumbled into a guy, and all her stuff fell onto the floor, her sheets of paper falling all around the hallway. Sara held her head, feeling a sharp pain in her brain. She winced a little, but it quickly disappeared. The girl didn't notice TEA's voice had finally shut up. She emitted a sigh of frustration and rolled her eyes, looking up at the guy she ran into; he was the cutest. Feeling a weird sensation, Sara held out her hand and tried to smile.

“Jdje jeivnc vefivn.” She blocked, shocked by what just came out of her mouth.

He looked down at her and raised an eyebrow, before chuckling and walking away from her, in the rudest way. Sara's body refused to move. She didn't know what was happening. She was feeling empty, emptied of her feelings, of her personality, of her reason. A bit like if she was becoming a robot... TEA's voice wouldn't come back, as hard as she focused.

The girl stood there, in the middle of the hallway, her sheets scattered all around her, with absolutely no reaction.

A few minutes later, Sara was in class. How? No idea. Why? Not a clue. She was just sitting at her usual place, as her teacher was giving the sheets for the test.

She clapped into her hands a couple of times to have their attention.

“Alright, you all, I’m going to limit your access to the Moon for the test. You have one hour to reply to all of the questions. Good luck.” She finished as she sat back at her desk, and pushed the enter button of her control panel, which appeared from her wrist.

Immediately, all the students in the class closed their eyes for a second, before opening them again. All their iris into their eyes had turned purple. They were disconnected from the Moon. Sara’s breath started to increase its pace, as she panicked. Why hadn’t she felt the heating feeling thingy into her body when everyone was disconnected from the Moon? And why hadn’t TEA wish her good luck before the test like she would usually do, before disappearing with the Moon?

Sara let out a quiet moan of incomprehension, and she held her head, keeping it down so no one would notice her still blue eyes. She started to try and remember what happened... In vain. The only thing she could think of is how she felt completely empty and reactionless without TEA’s voice. Sara gave a long sigh as she finally realized what was happening; TEA was gone, the Moon was gone. She was disconnected. She was alone.

She gave the test back to her teacher, or rather the blank sheet, as she left the class. She carefully looked down as the teacher would only reactivate the Moon when they’re out, and Sara’s eyes were still that light blue color. She had failed the test, and probably the year, but it certainly wasn’t her main problem at that moment. As soon as she was out, she rushed towards the exit of the college, and the dorm rooms; she opened her door quickly and slid in, making sure her roommate wasn’t here. She threw her bag onto her bed and rushed towards her roommate’s desk. Sara didn’t have a computer, she didn’t need one. The moon and TEA would do everything she needed for her: Internet, messages, calls, social medias. But luckily her roommate was a vintage person, so she loved collecting old stuff: iPhone, computers, everything from the 2020’s years. Sara opened the laptop, and frowned, wondering how it could work. After a few minutes of rumination, she finally found the power button and rolled her eyes.

“Okay that was the easiest, actually.” She said for herself. It reassured her to realize that she could speak again. Maybe there was a time of adaptation after a complete erasing of the system?

The laptop finally powered on, and Sara looked through the virtual desk, until she found something called “internet”. At least she knew what that meant... She opened the window and started typing into the search engine, anything that could relate to what was happening to her.

“The Moon”. A Wikipedia page, some news articles about its convenience, the president giving his first speech in 2056 about how the Moon would be distributed worldwide, right after it’s invention. Nothing about a possible disconnection. Unless...

After a few hours of intense research, the young girl finally found a website, deep into the Internet, which was talking about a disconnection.

“The Moon, or the slow descent to hell.” said the title.

Sara frowned, a bit surprised. It was the very first time she encountered something which goes against the Moon. Since she was born, the girl has had a chip inserted inside of her body, which helped her do everything through an IA. As far as she could remember, no one ever discussed its convenience. But thinking about it, yes, it was weird... Criticism usually was everywhere...

The website was completely blank, apart from a link. Sara, without even thinking, approached the cursor of her mouse to the link and clicked.

Everything went black. She fell from her chair. The last thing she remembered was the sound of the laptop crashing at her feet, and nothing. A complete void.

Sara slowly emerged from her unconsciousness, but her lids were too heavy for her to open her eyes. She had a weird pasty taste in her mouth, and her whole body felt like marshmallow. How much time had passed? An hour? A day? A week? Maybe even three? Sounds started to come to her ears, and two voices came out of nowhere.

"She'll wake up from the virtual world soon..." said a female voice, with a British accent.

"I told you she would be a good fit..." replied the other voice, a low-pitched one, making Sara think that was a man. Sara, hearing those words, panicked and tried squirming. That's when she felt the ropes around her wrists, tightening them to the seat. None of them seemed to notice.

"You were right and now we can send our system worldwide. We're finally going to rule over them..." she said before chuckling in a way that gave Sara chills all over her back.

"Exactly. The link was a great idea, just like the virtual world, Samantha. Now we know the chip works. TEA will help us control all their minds and actions. The world will soon be like that virtual one. Now come on, time to erase her mind! We must make sure there won't be any real defaults like the website... There won't be any way out of it."

Sara let out a scream which only resonated into her mind, and felt a needle thrusting into her skin. She fell into the void of unconsciousness once more.



“What a Young Girl Shouldn’t Know” by Anastasia Cuevas

“Please, stop touching things, Kate” The voice of Mr. Jacks called from the kitchen; at the same instance she pulled her hand away from the crystal box.

During the time it had taken Kate to figure out the next step, Mr. Jack had taken her to a small apartment at the center of the village not far away from the airport. She had wasted time, energy and her patience; after all, the old bulldog didn’t understand the word silence. However, after just following Mr. Jacks around kilometers away from the airport and its force field, they arrived to the small village they have often seen before. He seemed like he knew the place well, they easily passed streets, ignoring the lack of life, for then entering an apartment, and being oblivious to the fact they were breaking laws.

Mr. Jacks had found boxes of tea in one of the cupboards, and fixed the electricity so they could warm up some water. She was impressed. She estimated that Mr. Jacks could be older than fifty and, somehow, was well informed about survival methods. While the man was occupied she decided to walk around the small apartment, touching everything which looked interesting. Now, she sat in the couch the living room owned, sneezing twice by the sudden burst of dust which came when she sat down.

While the bulldog’s bark was the only noise filling the room, she got lost in her own thoughts, where she travelled back in time to that horrible day when her life changed forever. She let herself go back in time, to when all of this started. She still could hear the gunshots and her parent’s scream from two months ago, when they were separated, when they were kidnapped by the N.E.G.O., at least that’s how they called themselves now, the New Earth Government Organization. She fled quickly reaching the airport and then the force field. She then looked at her partner.

“Mr. Jacks?” Kate called, the oldest green eyes at the instance landed on her.

“Yes?” He replied, leaving his tea on the floor, so he could give her all his attention. Of course, not before petting his dog.

“Why... Why were you in the airport?” She nervously asked, some of her fingers tapping her cup.

“Honestly, dear, I... I-I was looking for my son, he was taken away from me the day the N.E.G.O. teams attacked.” The man whispered, looking straight to the broken television in front of them.

“You have a son?” She asked amused, her eyes wide in surprise. That was something she hadn’t expected. Mr. Jacks lightly laughed, as he stood and walked around the room, stopping in front of the crystal box she had been taking away from.

“Yeah, I have a son and I used to have a job too, before all of this happened” The oldest started, opening the box and pulling something out of it, his dog at the instance walked around his legs. “Sometimes, just sometimes,” he continued, as he walked to the main door, her eyes behind his every move. “I wonder what will have happened if I had never met you, Kate, I mean...” He laughed again. “You just saved my life.” He then opened the main door where a tall man of formed muscles, blonde hair and green eyes was waiting; a sharp smirked over his face.

The cup between her hands dropped to the floor smashed into pieces, not because she saw the gun in Mr. Jacks hands, but because he recognized the face in the N.E.G.O. uniform, the face of the man who kidnapped her parents.

She was paralyzed, the cruel memories repeating themselves once and again in front of her eyes, watching as the blonde soldier slowly walked around the room. Mr. Jacks had closed the door once the man had entered the apartment, however, he stood still in front of it to ensure that she couldn't escape even if she tried to run for it.

"It's been long since the last time I saw you, Kate. Your parents send their regards." The N.E.G.O. Commander cruelly commented, making her at the instance snap, pushing herself down to not jump over the man.

"What did you do to them?" She hissed. Her hands where held into strong fists, feeling her nails penetrate her skin deeply, her left foot already forward in warning she will attack him, if necessary. The blonde chuckled before answering.

"Don't worry, they have been quite a help in our weapon industry," he replied. His smirk as sharp and cruel as the first time he showed himself in the apartment, like if kidnapping someone was normal in this world. Well, who knew? A lot of things have change in a short period of time.

"How dare you?!" She spat. "You disgusting mon-" However, her insult was aggressively interrupted when a rough, gloved, hand held her throat.

"Shut up! Don't you know who you are talking to?" The green eyed soldier threatened, his fingers pressing over her throat, capable of leaving dark marks. And, even though, she couldn't breath and knew she was mercy of death's hands, she dared to narrow her dark eyes to him and curl her lips in a playful smile.

"It's..." She gasped for air, still with her smile decorating her profile. "The-e... T-tru-uth" She finished and promised she saw pure fire over the man's face, and for a moment she regretted such choice.

"Xander, that's enough" Mr. Jacks voice came between them, a taut edge to it. The blonde man at the instance set her free, with a push. She fell back against the mattress behind her.

"As you wish, father," Xander mumbled, passing his gloved hand down his side, making sure to show her he was disgusted by the act of touching her.

"Fa-ther!?" She tried to shout in surprise but it was reduce in to a hoarse sound. She will admit it, now that both men were next to each other and she had time to watch, they did look very alike, nearly as if the soldier was a younger clone of Mr. Jacks. Both men ignored her, as she saw how Mr. Jacks walked to his son and this soldier slightly dropped his head in respect, betraying how Xander might possess something called feelings.

"May I remind you we need her alive, or else all this will have been for nothing thanks for your childish behavior!" The oldest shouted pressing his gun lightly against the N.E.G.O. symbol on his son's uniform.

“Yes, I understand, I will not do it again” The younger man replied.

“I hope you don’t, we don’t want to pass through that again” Mr. Jacks softly pronounced, one of his eyebrows lifted to make his point deeper, before turning to her. A sweet smile over his face, as he slowly walked to her; she at the instance started to drag herself backwards before meeting the arm of the coach. “Come on Kate, you don’t have to be scared. We are doing this for your own good, believe it or not.”

“Liar!” She spat. “You filthy liar. I’m not going to fall, not again,” she confessed, before looking to the hand with the gun.

“Darling, please, just list–“ However, it was too late, she had kicked him in his side. Just where she remembered the man telling her a tale about how he had a deep painful injury in the past. Mr. Jacks screamed in pain, as he dropped the gun.

“Dad!” Xander shouted, running to his father, giving her the opportunity to escape.

“You idiot! Get her!” She heard Mr. Jacks shout, before a loud bark went through the room. She shut the door just before the dog could reach her, she blindly ran down the corridors looking for some stairs or lift or just anything. But just when she turned the first corner she was faced with soldiers of the N.E.G.O. they clearly saw her as she turned around and ran the other way.

Honestly, she couldn’t see any escape when she met with Xander at the other side.

Her feet just wanted to move, as her eyes went round everywhere, from the soldiers, to Xander and back the same trajectory. Xander had ordered the soldiers to not move, with a light movement of his head.

“Kate don’t run, we don’t want to hurt you” Xander unemotionally told her, like if it was a phrase he was programmed to say.

“Liar! Liar! Liar!” She accused, closing her eyes and palms tightly.

“You know what!?” The Commander shouted, rage been exposed through his voice. “I’m out of patience over your childish decisions. We were commanded to be nice, to try to bring you in without harm. But I’m not allowing you to escape again.” She opened her eyes, faced with the same sharp smirk Xander presented himself with at the doors of the apartment. “After all, they only said to try to bring you with no harms” It was those cruel words which made something snap inside Kate, making her eyes move over to a window in front of her.

She looked back to the commander and sent him her own smirk, challenge written all over it, before looking back to the window. Xander understood it at the instance.



“The window!” He shouted, starting to run to her directions, the soldiers following his command. But it was too late; she had started to run before he could even talk. The glass shattered as it yielded to her force; as she fell over the floor she was grateful she had noticed they were only in the second floor. However, as she stood she felt a sharp pain over her arms and leg, her eyes at the moment fell over the piece of glass standing out from her arm, blood starting to drop and stain her jersey.

She ignored the pain as much as she could as she looked up to the window meeting Mr. Jack’s worried look.

“Ka-“ He tried to call her, but she ignored him, turned and started to limp her way out of the alley, pressing her hand round her deep wound. “Kate! You can’t run! You know you can’t!” She heard him shout, she stopped some seconds, looked back and just smiled.

“But I still can try!” She shouted back, starting once again to get away, knowing it was useless after all, she was injured and hurt, there was no way out of this mess.

Well, humanity has always believed in something called hope, maybe it was time she did too. A new adventure had just opened its doors to her.

“Aranda de Duero, European Wine 2020” by Júlia de Pablo

Do you like wine? Of course not. Since you are a minor, you cannot drink alcoholic beverages. However, there is a entirely fascinating world and hugely exciting experiences around wine culture: beautiful landscapes, underground wine cellars, avant-garde architecture and top-notch cuisine designed to pair with wine, which is very enjoyable even if you can't drink wine. You can find all these experiences in my hometown, Aranda de Duero, which has recently been named European Wine City 2020.

My hometown, located in the mid-north part of Spain, has been designated European Wine City by the European Wine Cities Network on October 30, 2019. This is an award that yearly selects a European wine city, which must have part of its economy founded on wine, important wine tourism resources and a broad wine culture. Due to this award, Aranda de Duero will carry out a wide program of cultural, tourist, academic and outreach activities throughout the year 2020. The main act will be the Duero Forum 2020, a meeting point for professionals from the wine sector, where researchers and general public will learn about the latest progress and experiences related to the ecological growing of the vine. This forum will be held in spring, and it will be preceded by the city attendance in different fairs, such as the International Inland Tourism Fair (INTUR), in Valladolid; the International Tourism Fair (FITUR), in Madrid; and the Mirandeses Flavors, in Miranda do Douro, Portugal. In addition, projects remembering the wine's background in the city will be developed, such as the exhibitions 'The Wine Through Pottery' or 'Letters and Wineries', and a conference on the architecture of wine in the town, addressing the underground cellars' framework that pierce its historic center.

At the same time, a series of not-so-serious activities, aimed at people's fun and enjoyment, will be scheduled. Gastronomy will be present thanks to the Tapas Contest or the Gastronomic Days of the Roasted Lechazo (baby lamb). Culture will also arise with the Night Watch (street theatre and museums open at night), the University of Burgos's Summer Course, the Music Bands Contest, or the Sonorama Ribera Music Festival, which is one the best-known music festivals in Spain. Sports, entertainment and fun will not be missed at the River Duero Canoe Wine Descent, the Aranda Fiestas (local main festivities), or the Wine Harvest Festival. All these previous activities revolve around wine and its culture, but the Envero Awards, where the best wines of the year are honored, are eagerly awaited by wine producers.

Despite all these scheduled activities, you can also have fun doing activities on your own. You can visit some of the many wineries where the excellent Ribera del Duero wine is produced. Many of them offer guided tours of their facilities, where you can learn about the wonderful winemaking process. You can also take pleasure in the architecture of some wineries. The avant-garde architecture is present in some of the Ribera del Duero wineries, as an additional claim for wine tourism. In Gumiel de Izán, just 10 kilometers north of Aranda, you can visit Portia Winery, an impressive star-shaped building well integrated into the landscape, designed by Norman Foster's studio. A little further, in Peñafiel, about 40 kilometers to the west you can find Protos Winery, which is known as the first wine-making winery in the Ribera del Duero. This winery combines avant-garde with tradition, because we can find in it both wide-open and luminous spaces made of wood and glass by Sir Richard Rogers, as well as underground galleries pierced in the foothills of the castle mountain.



Nevertheless, it is not necessary to travel to find impressive underground wine cellars. Under Aranda's historic center subsoil, there are a countless number of underground cellars, manually excavated during the Middle Ages. They were built mainly during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when Aranda became one of the main wine producers in northern Spain. You can go down to these underground cellars through a deep and long stair. They are between eight and eleven meters deep, and about three meters wide by two- or three-meters high inside. In Aranda, one hundred and thirty-five underground cellars are inventoried, many of them joined together and only separated by a simple wooden door, forming an intricate maze of tunnels. Nowadays, wine is no longer made in underground cellars, but it is possible to visit these amazing 'wine caves' to have a quick overview of what they were.

Altogether, this series of scheduled activities, whether aimed at culture, tourism, education or dissemination, along with the chance of doing countless other tourist or gastronomic activities around the culture of wine, makes my hometown, Aranda de Duero, a European Wine City 2020 where none of its visitors will be disappointed. The official program will include a professional forum, important fairs, exhibitions and conferences, all related to the world of wine, of course. The alternative program, but also official, will include gastronomic days, theater, courses and music. Needless to say, as in any event taking place in Spain, fun and fiesta will be almost ubiquitous. Nevertheless, we will get serious for the Envero Awards: we cannot forget that wine is the main character. In conclusion, you can always enjoy wine tourism in Aranda, but the concurrence of all these activities due to its designation as European Wine City 2020 will make this year a special year. Are you going to miss it?



“Venice: Real Life Atlantis?” by Sara Borsari



In November, Venice had to fight against a heavy flood of water, trying not to drown.

The water started to come on November 12th because of a strong whirlwind in the Mediterranean Sea. This provoked high tide that hit the city causing the water to rise to 6'0".

However, this was not the first time because another meteorological phenomenon like this happened in 1966, when the water reached 6'3".

This recent waterflow caused a lot of fear among the people, but also a great discontent. In fact, the city had a huge economical loss regarding the artistic and cultural heritage; places like Saint Mark's Basilica, the Ca' Pesaro International Gallery of Modern Art, the Doge's Palace and many historical buildings are still in danger.

Another side of the economical loss was also in the tourism asset, since it's Venice's first source of income. But even shops, communication, public transport (like the well-known gondolas, but also ferries), hotels, restaurants and houses have been shut down or destroyed.

The mayor and politicians tried to act as soon as possible to make Venice live again.

Their first move was to continue a suspended project, called MOSE (like Moses the character in the book of Exodus in the Bible, since they both had to face water). MOSE consists in dam, an engineering work made of rows of metal gates that rise over normal tide condition, preventing water from invading the city. It had to be finished by 2016, but the project got blocked.

On November 18th, the water mark was up to 2'5" and Venice was slowly coming back to its normal condition, but this was only the more relevant part of the situation in Italy, because that's been a period where many floods were damaging the whole nation.

Now, after a month the city is safe and sound, but they are still trying to manage how to save San Marco, because the materials inside the basilica have been eroded by the saltwater. The cost for the restoration of



all the art works inside it is a total of 3 million of euros. However, the mayor asked to national funds for dozen of million of euros to restore the city and its lagoon, comprehending all the city's beauties and everyday places.

Not surprisingly, scientists think that in one hundred years Venice will sink. But this time, the marvelous city avoided its doom, and has yet to become a real-life Atlantis.

“La Marató” by Abril Castillo

The Fundació La Marató de TV3 was created in 1996 by the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation to raise awareness and funds for biomedical research on various aspects. Each year, its committee chooses a disease or group of diseases to be the main topic. Then, they carry out an extensive mediatic and educational campaign with events all throughout Catalonia.

Its most important event is a 15 hours long broadcast in TV3, Catalonia’s public media company. During the emission there are interviews with testimonies of the disease(s): people suffering from it, their family members, doctors and scientists. Celebrities of all kinds: musicians, actors and athletes, come together to provide the entertainment side of the broadcast. Simultaneously, thousands of volunteers are attending the calls from donators or helping with technical support.

This year they chose “Rare Diseases.” These affect at most five people in 10,000 and vary greatly in their nature; but all of them are serious, chronic, progressive and disabling. Altogether they affect up to 7% of the general population. Most rare diseases, approximately 80%, are genetic; many are also hereditary. Therefore, most are untreatable, and diagnosis is difficult because there’s little known about them.

Their campaign always highlights testimonies of the topic. The three main testimonies this year talk about three different rare diseases: Morquio, which affects bone structure and development; Fanconi anemia, which increases chances of developing cancer and Congenital melanocytic nevus; externalized as a large quantity of moles, as well as some bigger than usual (around 10-20 centimeters in diameter).

These are only a few examples of the thousands of rare diseases affecting people from all around the world. There are other testimonies like this, as well as more information about La Marató’s history and projects, in their website (which can be read in Catalan, Spanish and English). I would encourage everyone to take a look at it to get informed about the cause. Those of you who are able to, please donate because it’s an extremely relevant issue.

Website: <https://www.ccma.cat/tv3/marato/>



“November 24th, a Date to Remember” by Mireia Font

My family and I always loved Freddie Mercury and his music. In fact, my dad went to see him with Queen twice: one time in Dublin and the other in Barcelona, both during his last tour with the band in 1986. I've written this in honor of him, because on November 24th, 2019, we remembered the 28th anniversary of his death, caused by the AIDS on 1991.

Everything started in 1970, when Freddie and two guys, Bryan May and Roger Taylor, went together to create the legendary band Queen. The band wasn't complete until a new member arrived, John Deacon. Since then, they had a lot of success around the world. They played a lot of types of music, such as: rock, pop, funk, disco..., but was the sound that made Queen a unique band.

Through his career, Mercury wrote a lot of amazing songs and, with the band, he made a lot of varied and eclectic albums, for example: “A Night at the Opera”, “Innuendo”, “A Kind of Magic”, and “News of the World”.

Freddie was a showman. He looked like he was giving the best of him in every song and every concert that he did. The best of all is that he enjoyed it. For me, this is the definitive example of a rock star.

If we focus on his private life, he was gay, and he wasn't ashamed of it. When he was diagnosed with AIDS, he kept working as hard as always and he didn't want people to worry about his illness; instead he wanted to be known as one that gave entertainment until his latest days.

I think that we need to keep Queen alive. We can't forget the amazing pieces of art that they produced. I am sure that we won't, because one of the things that I will tell my future children is that Freddie Mercury will always be one of the best singers in the world.



“Romanticism: the Age of Emotions” by Alice Cerutti

Romanticism (also known as the romantic era) was an artistic, cultural, literary and intellectual movement that had its roots in the Europe of 1800.

This movement was in contrast with the previous one: the Age of Enlightenment. The Age of Enlightenment was based on reason and the evidence of the senses. On the contrary, Romanticism (just like the name suggests) was based on romantic and sentimental events, focuses on humans' emotions and feelings and admires and celebrates nature, beauty and imagination.

ART IN THE ROMANTIC ERA

Art in this era is extremely influenced by the artist's inner world and particularly focused on the discovery of it. During this period artist have a strong relationship with nature and they are so inspired by it that in many paintings it seems like it is a character itself. Their thoughts alternated from catastrophic and angsty to positive, peaceful and joyful. We can really see the influence thoughts and feelings had in a painting called Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog by Caspar David Friedrich from 1818, oil on canvas. In this painting, that represents a man (the wanderer) standing on a cliff above a foggy sea, we can really feel the motions the painter wanted to convey. The man (who many believe represents the painter himself) stands on the cliff, mesmerized by the view almost as if it were a spiritual experience leaving you wondering what he might be thinking about.

ROMANTICISM IN GERMANY

In Germany we have the man who is considered the father of Romanticism Friedrich Schlegel a philosopher and author who wrote *Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie*, published in 1797, talks about greek poetry and *An Dorothea*, published in 1799, talks about philosophy. Caspar David Friedrich who's painting *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* was presented in the paragraph before, was also a big part of the movement.

ROMANTICISM IN FRANCE

One of the most iconic paintings that represents romanticism in France is *Liberty Leading the People* (in French: *la Liberté Guidant le Peuple*) painted by French artist Eugène Delacroix in 1830, oil on canvas. This painting depicts every French social class guided by Marianne, a personification of the nation of France who in this painting also represents freedom. Romanticism also reached its peak in France thanks to Madame Staël who published her work *“De l'Allemagne”* in 1813 making Romanticism really popular in the literary field. Other important writers were Lamartine, de Musset and Gautier. Important painters were the already mentioned Eugène Delacroix and Théodore Gericault.



ROMANTICISM IN ITALY

Romanticism in Italy developed later than in England and Germany but it gave us really important works, especially in literature. One of the most important authors was Alessandro Manzoni who wrote *The Betrothed* (in Italian: *I Promessi Sposi*), a novel about two young lovers, Renzo and Lucia, prevented from marrying by the petty tyrant Don Rodrigo, who desires Lucia for himself. Another milestone in Italian literature is Giacomo Leopardi who published his poem "L'Infinito" (Eng: infinity) about a man staring at a hedge blocking his view imagining infinity behind it. A really important artist was Francesco Hayez who painted one of the most famous paintings of the romantic era in Italy: *The Kiss* (Italian: *Il Bacio*), 1859, oil on canvas. This painting shows two lovers kissing and it became so famous that the painter decided to re-paint it three other times making little changes in each.

ROMANTICISM IN SPAIN

Spanish Romanticism has one big artist: Francisco Goya. This artist gained a lot of credit in Rome but did great works in Madrid, like the fresco of the dome of San Antonio de la Florida. He also painted many paintings such as *El tres de Mayo de 1808* (English: *The Third of May 1808*) and *La Maja Desnuda* and *La Maja Vestida*, two paintings that represent the same woman in the same position respectively naked and with clothes.

"A classical work of literature can never be completely understood. But those who are educated and educating themselves must always desire to learn more from it." - Friedrich Schlegel.

“The Fall of the Berlin Wall” by Luis León

One phenomenon often thought of is that of change. What better way to talk about it than with the Fall of the Berlin Wall, which has just celebrated its 30th anniversary in November. Why was it built? What was it there for? What did it mean? These are questions that arise when we begin to delve into its history. But most importantly, is something similar happening right now? These are some of the questions I look forward to answering within this entry. A difficult task, I must admit...



The construction of the Berlin Wall dates back to the aftermath of World War II, where 40 million people died. It proved to be devastating for everyone, but its consequences were especially felt in Germany, which was ravaged by war, and surrounded by all sides. World War II constitutes the single most important event in the 20th Century, and one might even say that this century ended on November 9th, 1989, but why is that? The Wall of Shame was more than a concrete construction. It was a symbol that represented the two halves of the world: communists and capitalists, the two powerhouses at the time.

In 1945, the German Reich fell, and the 4 victors had to decide the fate of the German state. The 4 powers that defeated Germany (The United Kingdom, France, The United States and The Soviet Union) agreed on what to do with what was left of it: they would split the country into 4 pieces. However, since Berlin (where the German government had formerly been) remained in the Soviet part, they made an exception there. They too would divide the city into four parts, leaving an oasis of democracy in the midst of a communist desert.

Problems began to arise when the time came to introduce a legitimate German government for the Germans. Tension had already been building up between the Allied powers (mainly the United States) and the Soviet Union. In other words, the Cold War had already begun. And so, the Allies joined their pieces of Germany into what became known as the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Soviet Union maintained its satellite as the Democratic Republic of Germany. In spite of the communist ideals of the time, the situation looked grim for the East Germans: they lacked individual rights, had no private property and lived in a highly militarized state. Communism wasn't so good after all, so many East Berliners migrated to their Western counterpart. The situation soon spiraled out of control, and the East German government soon had to establish some sort of "checkpoint" to serve as a bottleneck for emigrants. This made some people resort to clandestine methods to chase freedom, going so far as to build a balloon in order to escape. Then the Soviets decided something had to be done: they would build a wall, and forbid people from crossing the border. This is how the Wall of Shame came to be.

Berlin was most definitely the crown's jewel, a small-sized world if you will say so. All the tension that erupted in the appropriately named Cold War built up the in city's streets. The Cold War, which was named by the influential writer George Orwell, was no conventional war by any means. It was a war of action and

as I said before, Berlin represented the world at the time on a smaller scale. When that wall fell, a chain reaction followed, that eventually collapsed the Soviet Union, even if it was doomed from the beginning. The arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev to presidency was promising for the Soviets. He tried to make the country more “open” and “transparent” with a series of reforms, appropriately nicknamed “Perestroika” and “Glasnost”, but he was only delaying the inevitable. The fall of that wall, of that symbol, made it all go to waste. It made people realize that change had finally arrived. This is what happened on the night of the 9th of November in 1989. People kept organizing manifestations and causing trouble, so the government decided to give a press conference, where they would publicly announce that the border was now open. Doors opened. Families reunited. The Germans were whole again. The symbol fell, and all of communism fell with it. This is the importance of the Berlin Wall.



After this event took place, the United States reached its peak. Globalization finally became a thing, free trade was finally permitted everywhere, and the U.S. had the world for itself. However, we always seem to fight each other for some reason. You see, the prestige and power acquired by the U.S. made another side enter the stage: the Islamic World, threatened by the sudden rise of a completely different culture. It seems as if we were fated to have two sides constantly fighting each other, doesn't it?

If we think about it, there is another wall nowadays, located in Gaza, near Palestine, that follows similar principles, separating the two cultures that I mentioned before, the West and the Islamic World. Is history repeating itself? Unfortunately yes it is. Let's all hope that this wall doesn't take 28 years to be taken down.



Dancehall? “ by Mariona Risquez

Dancehall is a type of music from Jamaica that was created during the 1970s because of the political, social and cultural changes that this country experienced, but it didn't become popular until the 1990s. For some people, dancehall is an evolution of reggae. During the beginning of its creation, some artists that stood out were Sugar Minott, known as the creator of this type of music, or Frankie Paul.

The name of dancehall comes from the Jamaican pubs or parties where people could hear and dance to typical Jamaican music.



This music had its turning point in 2003 with some artists like Get Busy and Sean Paul. However, Kevin Lytle, with his song “Turn me on” made dancehall international. Nowadays, singers from all over the world make dancehall music, for example, Rihanna with “Work”, or Major Lazer with “Blow that Smoke”, or a Spanish singer named Bad Gyal with so many dancehall songs in Spanish, “Fiebre”, or even in Catalan, “Independent”.

Dancehall has been criticized because of some homophobic and sexist lyrics, but today lyrics have evolved, and they are used as a method of female empowerment or of the LGBTIQ+ collective.

Dancehall is not only the type of music, but it is also really related to a dance style that is called the same.

This dance style is characterized by having influences from the African and Caribbean dances, it is danced normally in “crews” or groups of people and it reflects empowerment. Each crew has its own dance style and has its own movements. There is a difference between men's and women's dance movements; men move the shoulders more, on the other hand, women move the whole body, specifically their hips and their bottom. For lots of dancehall dancers, this style is all about attitude and positive energy.

There are some important Dance Hall choreographers such as Blacka Di Danca, that has choreographed “X” from Nicky Jam and J.Balvin. She has also choreographed “Work” from Rihanna and Drake with Tani-sha Scott, “We Found Love” from Rihanna and “Hotline Bling” from Drake.

I have experienced this type of music and dance, therefore I would like to share my sincere opinion about it. I started to dance Dancehall when I was passing through a complicated moment in my life because I was trying to accept myself, and dancing made me do it really quickly, so I have a special bond with the dancehall. Everything evolves and music does it too.

http://www.gangalee.net/dancehall_info.php

“Who Said Dreams Don’t Come True?” by Carla Bach

"Just like me, a lot of kids wish to be famous singers, soccer players, dancers... and just like I did, by the time they're teenagers they don't believe that's possible anymore. But, although I may never reach fame, I never even thought about being able to professionally record a song either.



A few months ago, the director of our school choir gathered all of us together and told us the amazing news... we were going to record the school's hymn. Suddenly, we felt how a wild amount of energy was taking over all our emotions, and we started to jump and hug each other. We were so happy. However, the date in which we had to go record it never came, and we lost all hope.

We knew nothing about the song and the recording session for weeks, and then, one day the director came and told us we were going to record the following week. Everyone was so excited, you could feel the happiness just by looking into our eyes, some even started crying (just happy tears of course).

As the day approached even our director got nervous. The day came and while we were on our way we started warming up our voices. Once we got there we found ourselves speechless, a really rare thing in us. I felt like I found a part of myself that I hadn't even thought I might have. I had the same feeling a kid has when they go to the park, just perfect.

Nevertheless, that wasn't the only surprise I got... We recorded the song and when we were done, the director told us a part was missing. At first, we just thought we had to sing inside the booth together again, but suddenly, he said 'No, I was saving it for a solo singer, would you like to do it, Carla?' My body froze, I surely wasn't expecting that.

Although I've always loved singing, I never thought I would get the chance to do it solo. Just thinking about it is frightening because I suffer from stage fright. But, all my friends encouraged me and after 10 minutes, they convinced me to do it. It's an experience I'll never forget, it was amazing, for the first time in forever I let it all come out, and it felt like heaven.

To all those little kids out there I'd say: 'Don't let a senseless fear stop you from doing anything, YOU CAN DO IT. And don't let anyone tell you otherwise. Don't give up on your dreams, because who said dreams didn't come true?' I may not be famous, and I may not become a singer, but I'll fight for it and know that I did everything I could, even if I didn't achieve it. Because the important part of it all isn't if you reach your destiny, but all the adventures you have on your way.



“Don’t Waste Time” by Maria Torrejón

"Shrouded in golden leaves,
we wait.

The world doesn't end at sunset
and only dreams

limit themselves to things.

Through a labyrinth of blank hours

time leads us on

as autumn falls

over our house, our patio.

Shrouded in a relentless fog

we wait, we wait:

nostalgia means to live without remembering
the word we are made of.



Quessep, Giovanni. Being Is Not a Fable. 1968

I find a relation with the poem and the picture. When you see the picture, it takes you to the end of the world and it is saying not to waste time. When you read Quessep's poem it is saying that the autumn comes and the time goes fast.



“Everything a Smile Hides” by Irati Acha

“Smile when your heart is aching”, that’s what Jimmy Durante says in his song “Smile”. I took this picture, on November 1st this year in Zamora, Spain. My great-grandmother appears in it. She’s 93 years old and she’s my mother’s grandma.



She’s one of my greatest supports and she has given me a lot of advice during the time we’ve been together. We don’t see each other very much because Zamora is two hours away from Madrid, where I live. Her name is Concha and she was born in a village named Arcenillas in 1926. Her mother died when she was a baby and she left school when she was 11 to work at home. Her father, Gregorio, had a farm and some cultivations, and he had some workers when they had to harvest them. When harvesting time came, my great grandma had to make food for almost 20 people when she was just a teenager! Once, when she was at her village’s town fair dance, she met a very handsome boy that told her to

wait for him, because he was going to marry her. She found that very sweet, and a bit unbelievable, but she waited for him for 10 years, and they finally married. This boy was called Aníbal, and he had a huge lung problem, that bothered him during his whole life. Concha had to take care of him and rear her 3 daughters, sending them to school far away from home, weaving their clothes and working very hard at home for them. When she was 45 years old she became a grandmother and she moved to Cordoba (a city far away from where she lived, and in those times the journey was even longer than now, that’s about 6 hours) for a few months to help her eldest daughter, Lourdes, my grandma. When all her daughters started living by themselves, she continued working at home, cooking for herself and her husband, who had a chocolate factory at home because he was ill and couldn’t work in the countryside. Concha took care of Aníbal until he died,

in 2003. She didn’t consider herself a very loving person, but she told me that she loved him very much.

Even though losing Aníbal was a heavy blow, she continued living at her house in her tiny village. But, when she got older, she was afraid of being there on her own, so she decided to leave her house and move to Zamora, the province’s capital, to a nursing home where she could be looked after.

I think my great grandmother is one of the bravest and the most determined people I have ever met. She’s been an example for me since I was very young and I believe she’s proud of me (or at least, that’s what she told me).

Everything a smile hides is the title of this piece because sometimes we don’t value the smile of the people we love, and we should think more often about what they’ve been through and how beautiful is that we are able to make them smile.



“The Life Path” by Helena Durbán

To have a path is secure,
as long as there's someone
willing to get off the beaten track,
even if that leads to the unknown.

To believe in a path,
that is written already,
means to forget about the faith
of what one wants in their route.

To follow the path,
means to be safe
but perhaps it's worth going out
for a once time in a lifetime.

I ask myself
how my life path is
and I come to agree
that I'd rather not have one.



“Made for Love” by Juliette Pelletier

"And what if
I've never been myself
My true self
Screaming for help
Because I am lost
Too often I feel lost
And where is my past
My memories
My feelings
They old and they new
And I see this child
Who believed in future
That life is beautiful
Now I discretely remember
' I don't have all the clues '
Life is beautiful
But I don't have all the clues
For the moment I breath
I try my best I look for peace
Perhaps I have too many desires
My lust for life is the definition of myself
Today I have the world for me I have time
And if today is tomorrow
I trust my destiny made of Love"



“Frozen II” by Ana Martín

Frozen II has been a success since its release on the 29th of November 2019. In the first three days of its release over 850,000 people had already watched it. However, is it really worth watching it?

The first Frozen film released 6 years ago in 2013. That was the beginning of Anna and Elsa’s story, who are two sisters that lost their parents because of a boat accident where they both drowned. Elsa, who is the oldest, has ice powers that, except for her parents, nobody else knew about. After her parents death she was crowned as Arendelle’s queen but her powers are revealed and she runs away leaving Arendelle in a permanent winter. Her sister Anna, during her sister’s coronation, meets a prince named Hans, who at the end turns out to be a bad person. After Elsa ran away, Anna leaves Hans in charge and she embarks all alone on an adventure to look for her sister. During this time she meets Kristoff, a guy who sells ice, and his reindeer Sben. She also meets Olaf and some trolls. Long story short, everything turns out well.

In this second film we learn about their parent’s death, where Elsa’s powers come from and other facts that were not revealed in the first movie.

In my opinion, this film is worth watching because of the great animation, great soundtrack and we learn more about these two adventurous and incredible princesses. This might sound childish but this film transmits great and valuable morals in an entertaining and fun way for young and old people.



“More Than a Concert: a Festival” by Paula de Mercado

"Singing, dancing, spending time with your friends and watching the performances of your favorite artists; is there anything better?"

This summer I had a experience of a lifetime. I went to my first festival, an event that lasted two days and had the performances of artists such as Liam Payne, Louis Tomlinson, Morat, Lola Índigo or Don Patricio.

I am a person that listens to any type of music so when I heard about this festival I knew that I had to go. I talked with some friends I had met in a camp and we were all very excited about this opportunity, so the next step was to convince our parents.

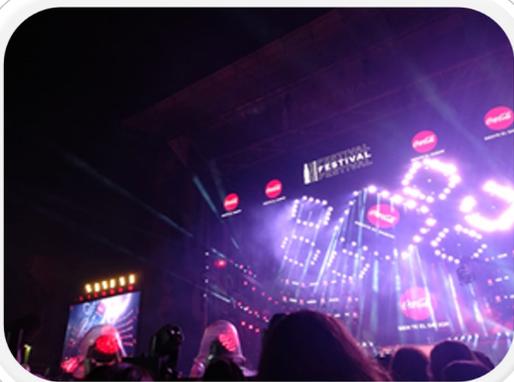
It wasn't very difficult to convince them as the tickets weren't expensive and we were all behaving well in order to please our families.

As we are not quite eighteen years old, we needed a special ticket (for underage people) and when we arrived to the place (it was outdoors) we were given a special bracelet that made it more comfortable than carrying your tickets all day long. It seemed that the bracelet was just for that and of course as a future souvenir; our surprise came when we saw that when we were at any stand (especially the ones with games) we were asked to pass the bracelet through a special device they had. We later discovered that we were given points each time that happened and that we could win prizes!

What I thought that made it unforgettable (apart from my friends and the performances) was that there were some games and attractions. I rode on a Ferris Wheel! I got very nostalgic when I rode a bumper car as I hadn't done it in ages.

Since Coca Cola was the sponsor, there were some recycling games that encouraged us all to recycle their products.

Other amazing thing is that there were some food trucks where you could have a huge variety of food, from pizza to noodles or waffles. The best part of it was that it was food from well-known brands like Burger King or Papa Johns.



But hold on because there are even more amazing things: there was a zone where you could get your hair done, a fake tattoo and even festival makeup.

I spent these two days singing, taking pictures and laughing and I would definitely like to do it next year. I really encourage you to live these experiences because you tie bonds with your friends and also you can shake your body all day long! As Coca Cola says, I definitely tasted the feeling of a festival.



« **Oriol Maspons** » by Mariona Blanch

"Art flourishes wondrously in the museums of Barcelona all over the year, but especially in Autumn when a wide range of exhibits come about in this European city. Last autumn, was no different than other autumns except the fact that an exposition captivated me in a very special way. This exposition was called Useful Photography (Originally Fotografia útil) and displayed a broad range of photos by the Barcelonan artist Oriol Maspons, who passed away in 2013, leaving all his productions as legacy and heritage to humanity on its whole. That's why, MNAC, the National Museum of Art of Catalonia, decided to classify the 7,000 printed photographs Maspons' family had preserved after his death, in order to create an exposition that invited visitors to travel through more than 50 years of Spanish history.

Oriol Maspons was a photographer who tried to break the mold in the artistic field of photography when photography was conceived as something only creative and experimental, something that, aesthetically, was an incentive for people to feel something in their insides. But Maspons dedicated his entire life to make the world understand that photos could move people too by being the vital evidence of a truth that not many wanted to hear or even see. He shows us the world as it is, sometimes a crude reality to cope with, other times a better reality. He proudly declares himself not a big enthusiast, a devotee in aesthetic on account of the fact that he believes in sustainable photography, in photos that merely exist to document today to those that will come tomorrow. He also calls this useful photography, in an attempt to talk about the reality, as photos are worth a thousand words. Without filters, masks, and costumes photographs are able to show the essence of truth.



To conclude, I do strongly believe that Maspons seized and captured change, which is the quintessence of history. In the end, his photos are the testimony of the history of a nation, that in very little time, suffered exponential transformations. Photos voice bluntly and boldly, since Maspons knew that the best weapon to defeat falsity is bringing truth to light.

« How to Deal with Stress » by Noémie Roux de Bézieux

Stress is something that surrounds us in our daily lives and more than one person out of two in the world is stressed every day. On a daily basis, there are many little things that make us stressed! For example, when we have three exams in just one day, when you have to speak in front of your class or your entire year. But maybe stress can be beneficial or maybe we can learn to manage this stress.

Let's first define stress: it is a normal reaction of the body that allows us to adapt to a situation outside our comfort zone.

It should be noted that stress operates in two stages: the acute reaction and the chronic reaction. When stress affects us immediately, it is called acute stress, while when it manifests itself over a long period of time, it is called chronic stress. Acute stress is the most known and widespread and the one that affects us the most. It's also the easiest one to cure and relief. If you are a victim of chronic stress, this article won't help you and it's better to see a psychologist.

There are also two types of stress: good stress and bad stress. When we talk about good stress, we are talking about mild and positive stimulation. It is short-lived stress. The main result is increased energy and a desire to fight it.

If you want to move mountains and take an entire team with you if the goal to be achieved is fully in line with your personal aspirations, and if, at the end of the day, you feel you have accomplished a lot, it is because you are suffering from positive stress.

On the contrary, bad stress leaves no respite: it follows you all day long like a suffocating feeling. This stress doesn't even leave you alone at night and can keep you awake or give you nightmares. This is the most common stress, unfortunately.

It tires you, therefore, and makes you irritable. You lose your appetite, or you eat badly to compensate, especially too sweet to unconsciously seek a little comfort. This can go as far as burn-out, that is, to a point of no return, where it will be impossible for you to act.

While looking for stress solutions to help us all, I got a little lost on blogs that were no more reliable than each other, but there was one thing that caught my attention: food. Eating is something we do every day and if by eating we could relax. Some foods have a real impact on our mood. You can probably guess, junk food is very bad for your mental stability while eating for example avocados, blueberries, pistachios or dark chocolate can help relieve tension and relieve our stress.

To cope with stress, you should follow this advice:

Take care of yourself - eat healthily, exercise and get sleep



Find support by talking to others

Make social connections

Take a break from what is causing you stress

Avoid drugs and alcohol

I hope this will help you to deal with stress and move on with your life. Keep in mind that you are better than what others say and don't let your failures get you down.

“Global Warming” by Mathilde Durousseau

"Wouldn't it be better to be able to wear t-shirts and sunglasses in winter? To sunbathe on a beach while drinking a cocktail in November 2100? How could only a few degrees change everything and be so dangerous for humanity and wildlife?"

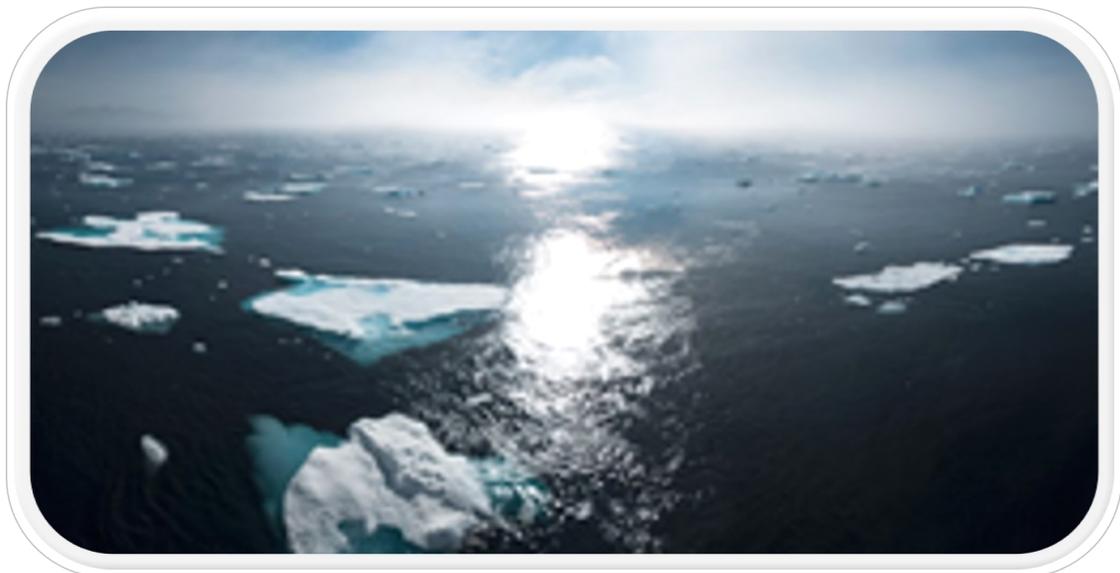
Since the last century, the global temperature on earth has increased by about 1.62°F. That seems to be nothing and not important at all...

Hurricanes, floods, heatwaves, warming oceans, endangered species, shrinking ice sheets, decreased snow cover, sea levels rising, increased precipitation rate and ocean acidification are all consequences of global warming.

They are all results of the Greenhouse Effect, the warming that happens when sunlight reaches the Earth's surface, where the energy is partly reflected back to space and partly absorbed by greenhouse gases and reflected in all directions, warming our planet.

Why is it related to us, humans? How could we be responsible for the Greenhouse Effect? We can't control sunlight! We can't do anything against the most abundant one, water vapor. What about the other ones, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O)? We are responsible for the massive amount of these gases in the atmosphere, because we spread them every day in the air by using motor vehicles or airplanes, heating our homes, producing electricity and clothes, warming water, growing fruits and vegetables, and transporting products.

Fortunately, we can make a difference. All of us can make a difference. We can pay attention to our energy and water consumption, sort our waste and stop using our cars for short distances in the first place.



“Nature vs Nurture” by Helena Durbán

ARE WE THE SLAVES OF OUR PAST?

Why do we react in certain ways, or where have our traits of character come from and how do we resemble our parents in the way we think, or act, is something that a wide range of people might have asked themselves during their lives. Do genetics influence how our personality is, or is it the atmosphere in which we live? Most of us would agree that a mix of both aspects is what actually shapes us. Nevertheless, which one has a greater impact? Are we able to escape from some genetic inheritances, or are we already meant to be like we are because of our past generations?



While it is undeniable to say that our genetics are a mix of our parents, whose genetics are, at the same time, the cocktail of their parents' genetics, it comes without saying that how we are treated and the ambience in which we live in helps stimulate or reduce certain traits of character. As the NY Times explains, many experiments have been done with twins. These babies were separated the day that they were born and grew up in completely different situations, nevertheless their personality characteristics were similar. For example, some experiments have led to the conclusion that genetics influence more the sexual orientation of kids or the illnesses that they are more likely to have. Moreover, our physical traits are determined by our genetics. Following this experiment the answer would be that nurture affects more than nature.

Nevertheless, it is important to continue reading about these experiments, as it is also said that, depending on



the way that we are raised, some genes are more likely to manifest than others. With reference to nurture influencing mental illnesses; kids that are raised with authoritarian parents or more violent ones, are more likely to become aggressive in their future and probably generate responses such as depression or heart attacks. The religion we believe in or the political party that we follow shape our character and, these aspects, are definitely mostly determined by our nature. The psychologist Nancy Segal doubts that

there is one element that really shapes our way of being, however she does say that many aspects come from how we are raised.

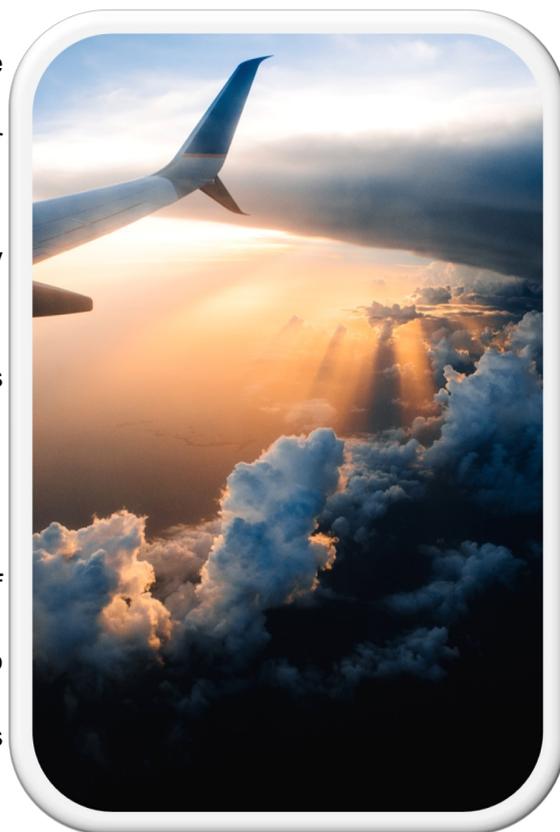
So, again, are we the slaves of our past? This question seems to not have an accurate answer, scientific studies, psychologists and experts seem to not have come to a conclusion.

Although our genetics influence how we are, the atmosphere in which we live affects us as well. So, don't worry, you might still have a chance to escape from your past!



“25 Curious Facts About Travel and Planes” by María Camps

- 1) Did you know that the food in planes is much saltier than the one that you eat at home? This is true and it is because the tongue doesn't get as much flavor when you're in the sky as when you're at any place at the level of the Earth.
- 2) The Boeing 727 mystery - it was a normal flight when suddenly someone in the middle of the flight hijacked it. We don't know how or why but no airport was able to connect or communicate with the plane.
- 3) Traveling can make you more creative.
- 4) Las Vegas, Nevada, has the biggest number of hotel rooms in the world.
- 5) The pilot and co-pilot always eat different things just in case one of them is in a bad condition from their meal
- 6) Planes are the safest transport in the world.
- 7) Monaco is the second smallest country after the Vatican.
- 8) Science has proven that traveling can boost your happiness
- 9) The most visited country in the world is France
- 10) Traveling is not always expensive, you can travel by car, bus...
- 11) Greece has over 20,000,000 tourists visit annually.
- 12) Canada has more than 3,000,000 lakes... that's more than the rest of the world combined!
- 13) Desert occupies 90% of the Libyan territories.
- 14) Norway is the best place in the World to observe the Aurora Borealis.
- 15) In Italy, there is a small fountain with wine instead of water.
- 16) Jet lag is worse when you're traveling from west to east.
- 17) San Marino is the only country that has more cars than people.
- 18) It's illegal to feed pigeons in San Francisco.
- 19) Travelling promotes brain health.
- 20) Honolulu is the only place in the U.S. that has a royal palace.
- 21) Monaco is smaller than Central Park in New York City.
- 22) Hartsfield-Jackson Airport in Atlanta is the world's busiest airport.
- 23) All the money that people throw into the Fontana di Trevi fount is collected every day and donated to several charities.
- 24) The longest nonstop flight in the world is from Sydney to Dallas. It's around 16 hours long and covers approximately 8,500 miles.
- 25) The most expensive hotel room in the world costs \$83,200 a night at the Royal Penthouse Suite in Geneva at Hotel President Wilson.



“Celebrating Halloween in Miami” by Romain Dethève

"I have been lucky enough to go to Miami in late October with my family. We took the time to celebrate Halloween there as it should be. I have always dreamed about going to the United States during this period of the year. Indeed, as a French, we do not celebrate Halloween or, at least, not the same way Americans do. I want to share my one-week experience in Florida with you in this article. First of all, I will describe what has impressed me in the city. Then I will focus on the Halloween party itself.



Miami is an astonishing city. What I love the most is the fantastic weather. As a matter of fact, the temperature in late October in France is about 50 degrees Fahrenheit while it is 80 in Miami! It felt as if my summer vacation was not finished. If I had been told that one day I would swim in the sea at the beginning of November, I wouldn't have believed it. Moreover, the beaches are exceptional, especially South Beach.

I also adore the fact that there is a lot of different cuisines. You can eat Mexican food one day, pizza or sushi the next, and Cuban the following day. Furthermore, there are many Latin restaurants because nearly sixty percent of the population is Hispanic. It allows us to discover many food specialties without leaving the US. Little Havana was the best place to learn and explore Cuban culture. The last thing that really stood out was the importance

of art. Indeed, there is a whole district named Wynwood, where you can find painted walls all over the place.

Even if we were not there for a long time, we also took the time to shop. Indeed, there are many great malls in Miami, such as Dadeland Mall, where you can find a Cheesecake Factory restaurant if you are a fan of tasty desserts.

Now that we talked about how the city is, let's talk about D-day! The Halloween parade took place on Lincoln Road, which is one of the main streets in Miami Beach. It was amazing to see the different decorated restaurants. There were cobwebs and jack o' lanterns everywhere on the floor and tables. It looked like Disney sets. Not only were decorations remarkable, but people's costumes were too. Some were extremely innovating. For example, I saw people dressed as rainbows, Aladin, Pennywise, Star Wars characters, and even as baby Trump! I would have never imagined that so many people would have dressed up and walked down the street.

Moreover, not only children were costumed, but adults and elders as-well. In France, we would never have seen adults do such things; they would have been too embarrassed and would have claimed it was only for children.

Obviously, we were not just there to admire other people's outfits, but also to join them in the parade. We found a costume store near the main street. I was dressed up as Freddie from the movie, Friday the 13th.

I want to conclude by saying that it was a delightful experience and I strongly recommend to all those who can go there, not to hesitate. I had so much fun discovering a fantastic city. I cannot wait to go back!

“Mexico, the Ancient Paradise” by Meritxell Risquez

This summer I had the privilege to travel to Mexico, one of the most amazing places with lots of ancient cultures.

One of the things that amazed me the most was the big structures made of stone and painted in many colors. Nowadays it's easy to imagine how to build a 213 ft tall building, just as the Sun pyramid in Teotihuacán, is easy but at 300 AD it's harder to imagine. What did they use? What was their culture? What did they believe in?

Mayan culture is one of the best known ancient cultures. They started as a colony in Yucatan between 2600 BC and 1800 BC but they were strongest between 250 AD and 900 AD. During this time period some of their biggest and more famous structures were built; such as Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque which was built between 615-683 AD for the funeral of one of their rulers K'inich Janaab' Pakal.



Mayans are also known by its famous calendar or by how smart their citizens were. They were one of the first ancient cultures to study mathematics, astrology and other sciences, such as medicine. They based all their knowledge on what they could observe such as the stars or the sun, creating their structures in a specific way to create images depending on the equinox or solstice and what the sun was during that period. They also believed in the cyclical nature and believed they were 3 states, Earth, Underworld and heavens above, in a different way than Catholicism.

They thought life on earth was just suffering and all they did was prepare to be able to go to the heavens above and that's why, for them, sacrificing someone or being sacrificed was an honor.

They believed in many gods and each one had a specific task in society like Chac, the god of water and rain. Whenever they wanted something to happen, like the rain, for example, they build a pyramid with their name, prayed, gave gifts like food or animal sacrifices and, rarely, human sacrifices.

One of the most famous Mayan inventions are numbers, like 0, expressed with dots or lines; or their calendar, based on the sun, the moon and the planets. This calendar also has a kind of horoscope, but it divides the year in 20 periods.

Some cultures from all over the world have been created based on the Mayans like the Aztecan one or ours, and I think it's really important to be aware of our past and be curious about it. Advances start with someone's curiosity.



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