Clara’s World

Clara heard booms and crashes and sounds that she couldn’t really describe. All she knew was that it was loud. Louder than anything she had ever heard. The noise though isn’t what captured her though. It was hues. The red and the gold and the blue and the green. She didn’t know what the colors were. All she knew was that they were beautiful. There were all these colors exploding in the dark background after booms shot up into the air. She didn’t how this explosion of color came from just a small bullet, but it was exciting, and exhilarating to watch. Then she woke. It was the morning after the craziest dream she had ever had. She longed for days after to have another, to see the hues, to see a different world from her own.

Clara’s world was bland and boring. It was bland and boring because it had no color. No one actually knew what colors were in her world because they had never seen them before. The only “colors” they saw were white and black. Not like in movies though. There were no hues. There were no gradients. The black was called the outline because it outlined everything, and the white was called the background because without the outline, everyone’s mind and surroundings would be as blank as a piece of paper. There couldn’t be a world without the outline because without it there was just simply nothing.

Clara was a girl with an outline of about 5 foot 4 and a slim figure. She was 18 years old, and she had glasses. These glasses made her different than the others in her world though. They helped her see the sharp, clean outline clearly when they were on, but without them the lines became blurred. She quite liked seeing things blurred though. That way she got to see this weird gradient between the background and the outline. It was unlike any other image, and it was only for her. The hues reminded her of the ones from her dream, except without the color. She never knew what to call that gradient though because no one knew of it. She felt like this made her special, but because she got to see something others couldn’t it made her question things.

Clara’s curiosity about the gradient and the colored gradient from her dream started to make to wonder. She never knew why she hadn’t questioned things earlier in her life, but her memories of the past were always blurry for some reason. This was something else that she was curious about. Why did she have so many issues trying to remember her life before turning 18. After debating for some time after having the dream. Clara decided she would ask her parents about their world, and how it came to be.

“Stop asking so many damn questions!” yelled her mom.

“I will if you answer them” Clara calmly answered back. “Why are you getting so angry. I’m just curious.”

“Because I don’t know the answer, Clara.”

“What do you mean”

“I mean my memory is as blurry as yours. Don’t you think I’ve questioned things too? After a while you just stop caring and just do what your outline is supposed to do.”

“What does that even mean?” Questioned Clara.

“I mean don’t you just feel drawn to a particular role in this world. We each have a specific job. I am your mother, and your father is your father. Our job is to care for you and that is what I am drawn to do.”

“Don’t you want to go out and do things ever. I feel as if we’ve been in this house with the same routine for ages mom. I wake up and go to school, come home and eat dinner, go to bed and repeat. I feel as if I’ve been 18 my whole life.”

“Thats because our memories are blurred Clara. I’m just the same as you, but I don’t care to question things anymore. I like being your mom and I am content, so please just stop all this and be content too.”

“It’s not that easy...,” Clara sighed as her mother looked into her black eyes pleading. “...but I’ll try.” She finally gave in.

Clara’s world had no history according to her unhelpful mother and as she asked around all she got were funny looked and outlines telling her not to worry about it too much. “Just do your job” they all seemed to say. This lack of answers and lack of care made Clara afraid she would keep on forgetting her memories until she was pushed to conform to her society never care again.

Clara went to school for the next day's thinking and trying to come up with an idea on how to get answers. She was eating lunch by herself when a boy her age came up to her. She hadn’t ever seen him before. His eyes looked different from everyone else’s though. They were a hue. The type of hue she saw when she took her glasses off, except her glasses weren’t off right then.

“I’ve heard some things about you” he whispered.

“What do you mean, I don’t even know you.”

“I heard you’re questioning things.”

“Maybe...are you?”

“Have been for some time. That’s why I haven’t been at school much lately. Been tryin to figure some things out.”

Clara found this weird. She could’ve sworn she knew everyone in her town and a boy with eyes like those were hard to miss. However, he was the first outline she’d met who didn’t wave her off at the first question she asked. Clara could use any help she could get and as mysterious as he seemed, he seemed to want to help.

“What’s your name?” Clara asked.

“Devi...It’s nice to meet you--Clara.”

“How’d you know my name.”

“I know things.” He baited her.

“What things? Do you have some answers?”

“I’ll show you.”

Clara felt afraid again. She wanted answers, but there was something off about this boy and his eyes frightened her. Her curiosity fought her fear from within until one finally prevailed.

“Let's go now” she replied.

Clara loved hiking. Yes, it was a form of exercise that helped keep her outline slim, but it was more about exploring than anything. Most of the people she knew never ventured outside their homes as if there was a boundary they were scared of crossing. She wondered if that was why she knew everyone in her town. They never went places. Maybe the other places is where Devi came from. She felt like maybe there were other outlines farther away and that maybe they had the answers she was looking for. Maybe that was where Devi was taking her. They hiked the tallest mountain in Clara’s world which was on the edge of town. It seemed like forever by the time they reached the top. Finally though, they made it. Clara couldn’t help but smile after their accomplishment. She gathered her breath and looked around. She didn’t really see anything. Just the background, Devi, and some rocks at the top of the mountain. Her smile turned to a frown. Questioning her decision to leave home with this weird-eyed stranger. He noticed her concern.

“Don’t worry. Just stand up here.” He pointed to a large rock. It was the highest point on the mountain.

“Why don’t you first?”

“That paranoid huh?” He jumped up on the rock and hung a hand down for her to grab. She tentatively took it. A wave of heat rushed down her spine when she touched him, but his hand was ice cold and felt almost dead. His outline also kind of looked a little dead when she thought about it. She shrugged off this hot and cold feeling and stood on top of the rock. Ignoring the flags, telling her to run from him.

Clara looked over the edge of the mountain. Something was different though. It was blank. There were no outlines of trees or rocks or other plants below. Just an endless abyss. Her heart was pounding. She was both excited and afraid of what the emptiness could mean. With a smile, she turned to Devi.

“This is incredible! How did you find this?”

“It’s a passageway.”

“What do you mean?”

“The background lets you fall from world to world. You’ll see.” He pushed her. Hard.

The rush of heat came from his touch again as she screamed. Her glasses fell off and she couldn’t see the mountain's outline anymore. It was a blurry smear. Clara started to panic as she fell far and hard. From up above she could barely make out one of the colors from her dream. It was vibrant but blurred without her glasses. It was red. She fell for what seemed like forever. The mountain took forever to climb, but surely the bottom was near. The only thing Clara could do was embrace the idea of answers waiting at the bottom. Whatever that meant. It felt like she had been falling forever when she finally hit the bottom. Everything went blank.

Clara woke up falling again. This time the background looked different. It wasn’t blank anymore. It was a beautiful hue. She didn’t know what to call the blue sky known on planet Earth and she hit the bottom again. Panting, she looked around at her surroundings. She wasn’t in the background anymore. The trees around her had an outline, but they had something else. Dimension and colour. Clara’s vision wasn’t blurry anymore. She saw a world very different from her own. She didn’t see the background anymore. She didn’t see the outline. Instead, she saw a place with 3D shapes and colors. She saw a lot of new things all at once. Clara then realized there was something in her hands. Her hands looked different. They looked alien and had the weirdest texture. In them though was a notebook. She opened it. On the inside, she found something incredible. A whole world filled each page. New characters on each as well as mountains and oceans and houses on some. The most detailed of drawings filled the pages in a black outline.

Clara felt a sense of familiarity. All she could think was that it looked so much like her home. That’s when she noticed an almost empty page somewhere halfway through. The only thing drawn on the page was a pair of glasses. It was the only blank page in the whole notebook. It was as empty as the background of Clara's world would be without the outline. As empty as the abyss she fell into.

Clara couldn’t even make sense of what had happened before she could feel the sort of force that bonded her to the book. She felt as if those 2D glasses were her 2D glasses. Clara panicked. She started to feel sick. Her vision started to blur again, and her body started to ache. The book was erasing her existence, and she knew it. So, she ran. She ran as fast as she could away from the book under her circumstances. Through the trees, she noticed her left hand was gone. Then the right. Her arms were disintegrating in front of her. Then her left foot melted off. She couldn’t run. A familiarly unusual hot and cold force started pushing her back and she grabbed hold of a rock to prevent it, but it was too hard to bear. There wasn’t any wind, but somehow the air picked her up and pushed her back to where she came from. Clara clawed at the air screaming and panicked. She yelled “HEL---” and then the book ate her and dropped closed again.

Clara was falling again. All she could see was colorless abyss. She thought this was her old home, but as she fell farther and farther, she started to feel heat. It got hotter and hotter. She didn’t know what to think until she realized she couldn’t see the outline of her hands in this world either. In fact, she couldn’t see her outline at all. She was just background. She had no shape anymore and her mind slowly detached from her body. It was as if she was erased from a piece of paper. Forever a blank page.