

*An Eyeball Above*

By Sophia Estee

Perspective enables years and generations to stretch across one infinite plane where memories mix. Perspective is nothing more than the simple appreciation of the people in a place—a place that will always remain, even after the people are long gone. Through an eyeball, time is transcended. They are both suspended in mere air—they can be seen, felt, and heard but not touched. The eyeball's capabilities expand beyond just vision. Emerson says it is able to intertwine humans with nature and a sense of spirituality. I believe that the immersion of humans, nature, and memory creates their own divine, which can only be appreciated by an eyeball. For it is nothing but sees all.

A mother, her mother, and her mother's mother walk along the wooden edge of the sea wall, past the once seemingly boulder-sized rock, and sit on a stone bench side by side. The eldest's hands are cool to the touch, even at this time of year. The buttery orange light of 7 pm in a month, somewhat smelling of June, illuminates the tips of their noses, the rose of their cheeks, and the darkness of the tops of their heads.

The sun has scorched their shoulders, and blonde hair whispers fly in the wind. The women sit, silently watching the sun slip down toward the dunes of the island across the bay, through the shadows of the reeds, and laps the white caps of the waves hitting the shoreline.

They contemplate the walk across to the dunes, for it is low tide, and they have not done that since- they don't know quite when. The oldest is incapable, but suddenly, there they are. Wading through the water, a white dog runs up and down the coast. Chasing something too small to see, it disappears through the dip in the dunes.

The eyeball follows as they can no longer touch the sandy bottom and begin to stroke across. They reach the edge and begin to search the sand for shells of a conch size. Only the eldest finds one, holding it up to her ear. The eyeball cruises closer, wishing it could hear the soft crash of the waves inside the shiny spiral.

Above the eyeball fly squawking gulls with their wings spread wide, and below, piping clovers tip-toe over hermit crab's holes. Moon jellies begin to glow under the sea's surface. Pink replaces the orange, and the first hints of dusk absorb the shadows. A school of minnows swims by faster than the eye can see. Hermits emerge from their holes, only to scurry back down again—seaweed dances around specks of sparkling sand.

All of a sudden, something white darts in, sending them scattering. A little girl with dusty blonde curls stands barefoot on the jetty's edge with a long net in hand. Next to her stands another girl, a little bit smaller than the first, who dangles a hot dog from a fishing line. The first scoops up the treasures from her net, revealing one flopping fish in the palm of her hand. She kisses it and drops it back into the ocean.

The second stands a bit too close, almost slipping on the wet seaweed. The hotdog falls from her grip and is swept away by the current. She begins to cry. *How will the crabs come?!* She whines. The first pats her back and hands her the net. They sit on the furthest rock, their feet kicking the darkness that rests beyond the drop. They babble about what creatures may be lurking below, blissfully unaware of the one above. They know nothing of age or years or numbers; they live in the now without a care in the world.

The eyeball softens at the sight of their kicking feet, wishing it could stay just a little longer on this view. For something nags at its long lashes. It knows it is *nothing*, so why does it feel *something*? The sight is too sweet to stay.

On the very end of the jetty stands a rather tan man with a pepper mustache in cutoff khaki shorts and a dirty white visor covering no hair. His eyes fold on either side and his skin is spotted. He casts his line into the setting sun, and a smile appears on his face as the tip of the rod dips down. An older man in a navy and crew striped polo, the mother's mother's husband, takes it from him and reels it in. But it's lost, gone back home where it belongs. And suddenly, the older man in the striped polo is gone, too, and the rays of the sun are too strong to see where he went. The eyeball strains to follow his footsteps but to no avail. He has gone where nobody can see, for only those above have the details to describe. His wife stands up from the bench, walks across the jetty, and follows him.

The little girls disappear around the bend of the bed of grass and trees in the middle of the bay. When they return to the other side, they are not so little anymore. They stand tall and proud, walking a fluffy dog on a bright red leash. Their legs are longer. Their smiles are still there, but are quicker to fade now. They unclip his harness, and he runs into the water, biting at the crests of the waves and pounding his paws into the sand. The eyeball lingers, knowing the delicacy of what it sees. It remembers what once was.

The youngest of the three women on the bench goes after the little girls, leaving her mother behind. But it's alright; she finds her own husband, and they cast and cast and cast until the moon is above them and the stars can be seen. They point out Venus and head down the rocky path to walk back home.

On the way, they pass the old tire swing. The rope is frayed, and the branches are nimble like their bones. Yet they yearn to get on despite the fear of it snapping. They laugh as they carefully swing back and forth, seeing the bay at the crescendo. The sliver of moon wanes above, its light revealing a bright blue iris that reflects the water below. But they do not notice, for they are too focused on the life before them. The life they have worked hard to not only create but to maintain. The life they dreamed they would one day live. They continue their walk home as the rope continues to swing back and forth like a pendulum.

Perspective has allowed me to look back years and years into time, yet all in one specific space. I am able to transform memories and photos into one cohesive time frame, the now of the eyeball. There is power in combining multiple aspects of a place and the people that make it into one sort of short film clip. The all-knowing and all-seeing perspective adds to this sense of power and allows it to be accessed by multiple generations. However, the eyeball does limit the scene at the same time in the sense that only visual aspects can be transcribed.

It would feel unnatural to be able to assume direct thoughts and emotions through the observations of said eyeball. The eyeball is less like a God and more like a lens. It can capture the light, figures, and landscape but not the inner monologues, desires, and dreams. These can only be assumed through the depiction of moments. The eyeball itself has no dreams or desires—It is simply a mere observer of what is sure and steadfast.