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Outside

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OUTSIDE

Maddie Derryberry

“PINK LEAVES ESCAPE THE ASYLUM,” LINGERED THROUGH MY LOST MIND FOR MOST OF MY ADOLESCENT YEARS. IT WAS A DIARY ENTRY I HAD MADE, BACK WHEN I THOUGHT DIARY ENTRIES WERE COOL. I was a wanderer, always sort of seeking the happiness yet there were always plenty of obstacles. My voice was noiseless, the world spun far too fast, and all the memories were false. Man, I never thought I'd see the other side of the hill. Now, this isn't a story about a screwed up kid, or how my mother couldn't raise me, or anything too sad. This is a story about how I started inside, and found my way outside; I'm still outside.

I remember being about fourteen; my glasses rested at the end of my nose, my freckles spoke louder than I could, and most everyone saw, but never really investigated. I wasn't interested in much, nor was I too worried about my lack of fascination. I really liked the color maroon, that's about it. A lot of time passed and my person didn't change all that much. High school was weird for me, because that's when you're supposed to start forming some kind of idea about your life or whatever, right? There are all sorts of curriculums and studies that just taught me I'm better off reading a good book than paying attention. It sure didn't help, but it definitely gave me a few laughs and a couple of really cool friends, so High School wasn't a complete burnout, I guess.

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People, like myself, and maybe you, I don't know, they realize you just have to keep going through society until you've found yourself at the outskirts, the place where you could be whatever you wanted, and not have a worry. Yeah, I spent a lot of my life waiting around angry, because I would rather be in my room listening to The Velvet Underground, or even some funky rap, anything but having to vaguely listen to someone's remark about the news, or their accomplishments. But I learned - I'm still learning, that I don't have to just settle and conform, I can go beyond what I'm taught, or what I have to observe every single day. It saddens me that not a lot of people see the other side of this man-made wall; I wonder how it'd be if they saw all the other colors I see that aren't on the color spectrum, how I've learned to think with rationality, but just as well without it. I'm already happy, but I still wander because I like it. Open

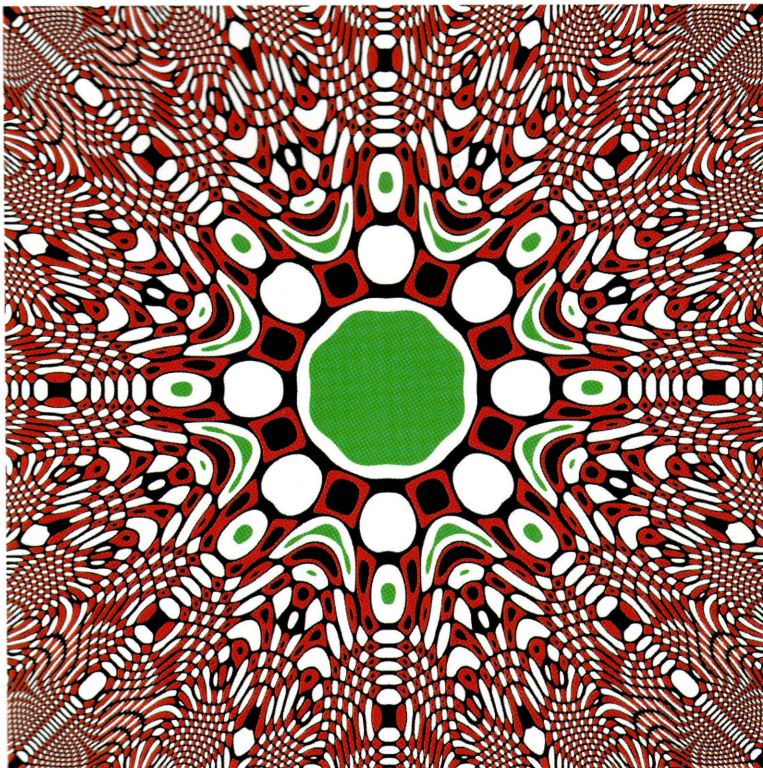
your eyes, don't make sense sometimes. It's alright I promise. Dance with no music, fall in love twice, and definitely don't think too hard.

You've figured out already that I'm not the most structured being, and a lot of people don't like that. They ask, "What are you doing with you life?" or my favorite, "You can't just hope everything will work itself out, you have to do it yourself." Sure, I've reconsidered some things, but for the most part I fall right back to my beginning philosophy. I don't need to get to any finish line I just need to keep going, happily, and pick some people up on the way. This place we've built is so disgusting, and I could go on and on about how much I hate a lot of things. I did that, for years. Until I noticed it's a whole lot easier to just see the things that please my eyes, to listen to the leaves blowing in the wind rather than the cars on the road. I'd be blind if I looked at everything that was

before me, and deaf if I let my ears listen to everything I was told.

I'm a young kid, naïve? Probably. But, I've learned a lot from the short time I've been here, useless and useful. Being inside the head I'm constantly in, I could be one screwed up kid. But, I've taught myself otherwise. After I have endured this much, I can see that my existence is worth something. Just a single short writing has managed to mentor me all while my head still spins. I'm the pink leaf in this asylum of reality.

I'm happier outside.



TEA PARTY Christopher Arthur