



Starved

By: Tahseen Ayesh, Milan Jordan, Ezra Goldenberg, & Sanaa Groomes

Tahseen Ayeesh

I can't imagine what it might be like to live the life of the nourished. I was raised in a small cabin in northwest Germany. It wasn't until I was quite big where I had seen my first fish from the river across the cabin. I had convinced myself that the fish were no different than me and my younger brother, so I had forbidden myself from killing them. I had remained under this illusion for quite some time until I had realized that we had run out of food. It was as if the crops had ceased to grow, this realization would push me into desperation, so much so that I would return to the river and begin to look for fish. Sightings of fish were far in between, and all of the fish had become malnourished. I had begun to frighten at the idea of death.

When I was young, I was constantly told "If you don't eat, you'll die." As a young child, this sounded like nothing but a threat, but now I had finally understood. It had been two days since we had eaten, and I had begun to believe that things like anorexia, malnourishment, and death were soon to knock on my door.

"Emilia, are we going to starve?" My younger brother said. He rubbed his stomach.

"No, I'll go out to look for food today." I replied. A feeling of exhaustion had come over me, but I had no excuse. Again, I would venture for fish. I would walk up the river until I reached a town. The town was Cochem, a lively town. However, today the town's atmosphere was off putting. When I entered the town, It was as if the town was deserted. I began to shake in fear at the idea that something terrible had happened, and I had just walked into it. Before I could come to a conclusion, I would hear talks of famine and starvation from the top of the hill, the church. When I had reached the doors, I peeked inside. The town guards were rationing out what was left of food. It felt that God was looking directly at me for a moment, then I noticed the line.

The line had trailed outside and down the hill. Defeat, I couldn't bear it, but then a thought came across my mind.

"A FIRE ON TOP OF THE HILL. FIRE FIRE FIRE." I begin to shout, the townspeople begin to parade out of the church and around to see the fire, including the town's guards. In the middle of the chaos, I ran into the church and took what was left of the rations and put it in a basket I had brought to collect fish. Later, I would return to the cabin. I hadn't known how much I had taken from the townspeople, nor did I acknowledge that the majority of the townspeople would later starve at my hands. All I had known was that I had felt an exhaustion that I hadn't felt before.

"Emilia!" My brother said, He ran out of his room and embraced me. A big smile came across my face. As we had begun to eat what I earned, I had realized that the townspeople of Cochem would have my head on a pyke. This realization would stunt my mind for days, until someone arrived at our door. A man, well dressed. His beard was well kept, and his head was clean shaved. The man looked familiar. I began to fear that he was in Cochem on that day.

"Nice to meet you ma'am, my name is Hans. Me and my family live near the dock and Cochem, and due to the period of famine that Cochem is facing we have run out of food. Would you have any to spare?" A feeling of dread came over me, I began to shake. "Of course, give me one moment." I replied, I had closed the door and peered through the window for anyone else. Paranoia came over me, I was convinced that the man was returning with a weapon of some sort, prepared to redeem his town of the former days. I ran into the kitchen and grabbed the basket I had used to collect fish, and a knife. My hand shook at the door handle, "Here you go," I said. I handed the man the basket with my right hand, knife in my left. "God bless you, Thank you." He replied. A smile came over the man's face and he looked into the basket. Opportunity, I had

pierced through the basket and into the man's chest. The man dropped the basket and put both hands over his chest. I pierced the man's chest again, then another, and another, and then another. As many times as it took until I could no longer imagine my own head on a pyke.

The corpse, formerly known as Hans, had collapsed to the ground. A feeling of unease convinced me to drag his body into the lake alongside the knife I had used.. "Emilia, what was that sound?" My younger brother said. He laid on the ground right in front of the cabin and faced the clouds. "Maybe a tree fell into the lake." I awkwardly smiled at him, I had hoped my smile was enough to ease his curiosity.

The next few days I would lay sickly in bed, paranoid. I would constantly check the window, afraid that someone might come looking for Hans. I would continue to remain in this anxious state until I had realized I hadn't eaten. I would finally leave my room once more to find my younger brother eating at the table. I smiled, and again set out for food. I would walk around Cochem, and into the forest until I came across a cabin similar to my own. Desperation and famine would cause me to knock at the door.

"Excuse me, I'm Emilia. I live in a cabin just like this one east of here. I was wondering if you had any food to spare." I smiled at the young girl in the door, she appeared to be the same age as my younger brother. "Of course," The young girl replied, and then smiled back. She closed the door the same way I had done before. A set of eyes peered through the window. I begin to laugh at the realization. The silence was eerie, I had stared down at the door. When I was young, my father had always told me that it was kill or be killed. That the fish in the river would grow big like sharks and murder us whenever we came close, so we had to kill them. I was no fish nor am I Hans. I wasn't a shark either. I deluded myself in the time that I had that I

was a hero, that not only had I saved myself but my younger brother as well and this time would be no different.

The young girl would once again open the door, but before the door was opened completely I shouldered the door, and tangled my hands around the young girl's neck. I had squeezed, as much as my weak body could muster. The girl first started, then struggled, and then silence once again. I had forgotten why I had come in the first place, food. I had welcomed myself inside and there stood a man, two times the size of me. Again, I shook in fright at the idea of death, but before I could relax the man would swing his axe and strike me in my shoulder. I began to run, then walk, and then came to a stop. I came to a stop right before the river. My shoulder was warm, the blood covered what had been a white blouse. I fell to my knees, and right before the river. "Emilia, are you hungry?" I heard a voice from behind me, the corpse of a boy I had known. My younger brother. I hadn't cried, however, I had long known that he had died in an accident alongside my father, and that my visions of him were simply hallucinations.

The silence alongside the blood had ceased. The sound of footsteps filled my ears, and once more I had believed that god had looked directly upon me. However, I was mistaken. A crazed man stood above me, I had scoffed that I believed I would survive. The man began to slice me, arms, legs, even the ears. It didn't matter. I was far too exhausted to struggle. No, I didn't want to struggle. This was normal now, when the world faced a period of famine. Cannibalism was a natural occurrence, oh how unfortunate. I could only imagine what it might have been like to live the life of the nourished. How great I would have been, only if I was nourished. What an angel I would have been, only if I hadn't greedied for a life I couldn't have.

Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice! One technique I chose was to use first person POV. I chose this because I wanted to

make the reader feel as if they were speaking directly with my character and feel the same feelings they had felt without having to speculate. It helps the reader feel more immersed and allows them to understand the characters' feelings deeply. I had originally decided to make this decision after I read "Tilly," by Kevin Liu. This book used the first point POV and had very good descriptions of how the characters felt about Tilly and what characters looked like, for example Jessica.

Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice! In the majority of my story, I use smaller sentences. I chose this because it's easier to write actions than it is to have longer sentences that describe things. I've always been better at describing one's actions in a story so I believe that this decision was better for me and my writing. I did include longer sentences however when I did describe what things looked like.

Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice! I constantly repeat the description of my character being fearful or startled by things. I describe my character as paranoid and frightful. I believe this description is important because it highlights how unstable my character is because of their situation. The lack of food does not only cause starvation but mental instability and I believe repeating and constantly describing my character as frightened, paranoid, and startled, etc highlights the effects of the endemic.



Milan Jordan

I've never known what it feels like to be hungry. I've always had what I needed. In fact I have always had exactly what I wanted.

My father sat in the chair tensely with a weary expression. As he rose from the sofa I felt his shoulders intensify even more. I could tell by the wrinkles on his forehead that whatever he was hearing over the phone wasn't good. "So that's it? We're just giving up?" He said. He put the phone down and ran his palm over his head before walking out the room meeting my worried mother. I had no idea what was going on. I know that times have been rough recently but I didn't think it would affect us.

My father re-entered the room but this time with my mother. I could see the tears pooling at the brim of her eyes. She sat at the corner of the sofa that I was sitting on while my father began to pace the room back and forth. She began to talk to me with a very gentle tone. As if she thought her words could hurt me. I refused to hear any bad news. Not at times like this. I refused. I tried my hardest to block out all the sounds of her voice. She was saying something about a drought, how there weren't enough resources for the company, and how things won't be the same for us.

"I'm sorry." She said. None of that was what I wanted to hear so I refused to believe it.

"We are sorry." She said again. She must've taken notice of my reaction to this horrifying news because she and my father exited the room I was lying in.

I didn't feel bad for not giving them a response. I didn't feel bad for being in denial of the horrifying news that they shared. I didn't feel guilty for feeling like they were responsible for something that they couldn't control.

I mean I had every right to. I had lost everything. My father had lost his business. We had lost everything we had during a drought of food. I was going to starve.

I've never felt like I didn't have what I needed. I've never even felt like I didn't have what I wanted.

My father owned a company that produced fresh produce. Grocery stores were filled with fruits and veggies with his name on them. He had connections to farms to provide him with the food and he just put his name on them and sold them. Everything was so good until those farms couldn't provide us with any food anymore. They said that there weren't as many crops growing and that they needed the small abundance of food for themselves and their families.

It repulses me that they didn't even consider that my father's business would crumble. I can't believe that they would just abandon him like that and leave us with nothing, but it is okay, for nothing has ever affected me.

I do not feel concerned about the loss of our business, the lack of food, or the stress that is now put on our family. Nothing has ever affected this family.

We're moving out today. Mom says we can't afford to stay anymore and be able to purchase food at the same time. We're moving to the east side of town. The side of high poverty. I still have high expectations though, it couldn't be that bad.

When we arrived at the house I immediately noticed the small size of it. There was a kitchen the size of my old closet, and there was no separation between the living room and dining room. In fact I don't think that this house could even fit two rooms. The house smelled like molded cheese and there was dust everywhere causing sneezes to fill the whole home. We heard a knock on the door and my father opened it to reveal a small frail disgusting looking woman.

"Hello! I saw you moved in this morning, I live next door. I know we don't know each other yet but I was wondering if you had any food or money that you could spare. You know times are-" then she was cut off by the door that my father slammed in her face. This is not the kind of house I was expecting.

It has been 42 days since we've been in this house that I still cannot claim as a home. Mom goes out everyday to get food. The amount she brings home has gotten smaller and smaller every day. It doesn't really matter though because I have lost my appetite. The neighbors harass us for not sharing the food that we have. They call us names, throw things at us, and they even sometimes wake us up in the middle of the night. Dad has come down with a horrible cough. We don't have any money to get him proper medicine, but it's just a cough.

It's been 17 more days. Father's cough has gotten worse. In Fact it isn't a cough anymore, it's more. He is unable to breath, his eyes are watering, and he cannot move. Mother cries every night, she thinks I do not know but I do. I hear her almost silent sobs through the night. Mom says his sugar is low and he needs something to bring it back up. There barely is enough food to get one full meal let alone enough to get something with sugar. Besides, even if there was, we don't have enough money.

I haven't left the house in 16 days. I don't have the motivation to but mom wanted to stay home and look after dad so she sent me to go retrieve the food for the day. I slip on my heavy coat and put on my shoes to be ready to leave the house. It has been months since I have put on the coat. It feels good to have it on again but I can't help but drown in the sadness that washes over me. This coat brings back memories to the time where I had everything I wanted. The time where I never had to worry about anything like a dying father or a lack of food. I tuck my hand in the pocket and I feel a cold piece of thin plastic. I pull out the plastic and I am shocked to see a chocolate bar. I am brought with so much surprise I lose my ability to breathe for a moment. I quickly shove the chocolate which is now considered gold back in my pocket. After everything I've been through, nobody deserves this but me.

As I was walking towards the door to leave I passed my parents room. I saw my fathers sickly body and my mother leaning over it. It nearly saddened me to see her so sad and to see my father doing so bad. I felt the chocolate bar again in my pocket. I felt guilty for not giving it to my father. I know he needs it. I know it could help him but that doesn't mean that I don't deserve it too. Why does he get luxury items just because he's sick? This chocolate is mine, I found it in my coat.

I received a few scraps of scrawny fish from the food vendors and I could smell them as I walked home. They didn't smell the best. In fact they didn't smell good at all. They smelled disgusting but that was the common smell of food today. I had to walk home fast and hope I wouldn't be robbed or killed for the resources I am carrying. I had the fish in one hand and my other hand was in my pocket clutching the Chocolate that I would feast on later.

I began to hear footsteps behind me. This was unusual considering that there wouldn't be many people coming this way. I began to speed up in fear of what the person behind me would do. It was obvious that I was carrying food and not many people had that. I hear the steps come closer. I began to run. I ran and ran and ran not even paying attention to where I was going, and ofcourse I heard a body running behind me. I felt a branch beneath my foot and felt my body hit the ground. I felt cold hands connect to my wrist and the bag of fish snatched from me. Then those hands were gone.

I stumbled into the front door rushing to my mother to tell her what had happened. She looked at me with fear and then she broke down

“That’s was it. That was all we had left. Our money is gone!” She said

I stared at her blankly. I was just robbed and she’s the one who’s crying? She began to pace back and forth. I could hear her voice getting shakier and shakier. She looked sick. She looked like her life had been ruined. She finally looked defeated. I guess she finally had enough and she walked away from and into her and my father’s room.

I felt my stomach rumble. I also felt faint. Everything started spinning. I suppose I shouldn’t have done so much running on an empty stomach. I sat on the the mattress that layed on the mattress that was my lousy excuse of a bed. I haven’t eaten in hours and it looked like I wouldn’t eat for what could be days now, months, or maybe even years. As I shift my body I hear the crinkling of the plastic that belonged to my chocolate bar. I couldn’t help myself. I just couldn’t. I began to feast on it. I savored each drop of it letting the richness of it soak through my taste buds. I could feel the chocolate melt around my mouth but I didn’t care. Nothing matter but me and my chocolate bar that I had already finished devouring. My sweet euphoria was interrupted by my mother fumbling into my room

“Your father!” she said. “Your father is dead. I have nothing left.”

It was hard to understand her through her sobs. She began to throw more words at me but it was all incoherent due to her violent sobbing. I tried to hide the chocolate bar wrapper and

the chocolate surrounding my mouth before she could see me through her tears but it was too late. The sadness and dwelling on her face turned into disgust as she looked at me. She looked at me as if she smelled something rotten.

“I cannot believe you. After all your father and I did for you!”

She began to move closer towards me. I tried to swallow my breath but I couldn't.

“You knew your father was sick. You knew he was dying and you knew you could've helped. Where did you even get this from? What would make you do something like this?”

I couldn't even respond to her. This is the first time I've ever really felt bad. I didn't expect my father to die. I didn't know that she would blame me. I didn't even expect her to find out about the chocolate but I don't think she understood that I couldn't come up with a response.

“You are no daughter of mine.” She said.

None of this felt real anymore. Everything was pink and spinning. Those words felt faint. This whole situation was faint. I felt faint. I couldn't feel my own breath.

Then everything went black.

Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

I chose to write in first person. This was so that I could show the narrator's selfishness and that the reader could see it clearly. First person gives unlimited access to the narrator's selfish thoughts and that is the whole point of the story so I thought that this would work best.

Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

I used pretty short sentences. I did this because I thought that it could show the narrator's thought process better. The narrator doesn't really think of anyone but herself so her feelings about everyone else are not very thoughtful or she just doesn't really care. The shorter sentences that she narrates show that she doesn't care because she's not really thinking about it. If I used long and wordy sentences it would look like she cared a lot and that is the opposite of what I am aiming at. An example of this is when the story narrates "It's been 17 more days. Father's cough has gotten worse. In fact it isn't a cough anymore, it's more. He is unable to breathe, his eyes are watering, and he cannot move. Mother cries every night, she thinks I do not know but I do. I hear her almost silent sobs through the night." The short sentences show that the narrator isn't having very big feelings about what the people around her are experiencing.

Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

A description that played an important role is the narrator's description of the neighbor who knocked on the door. The narrator says "We heard a knock on the door and my father opened it to reveal a small frail disgusting looking woman." This shows that the narrator has no sympathy for people even though she knows that everyone including her is experiencing difficulties.



Ezra Goldenberg

Willow hurried home, clutching the small bag so hard her hands were white. These nutrition blocks were so rare that any person, friend or foe, would kill both her and El for a single one.

As she walked down the barren and polluted streets, Willow couldn't help but think back to before the crises, a habit she had been failing to put an end to. They were the same streets she used to walk on everyday to drop El off at school, vibrant with trees, ivy, and friendly people going about their days. She looked at them now, cracked and burning in the twilight glow of the city. There was rubble where there used to be houses, skeletons of trees and bushes, and cars that have been stripped or forgotten sitting on the side of the road.

As Willow neared the compound, she saw the residents' suspicious eyes pick her apart. Willow and El were staying with a large group of people who were by no means friends, but provided necessary protection from the cannibals that roamed the city. There were about 7 of them, including Willow and El, and she barely trusted a single one. They stayed in a house that was relatively large and mostly untouched by the crisis. What was so eerie about the city was that everything still worked, the people were just dead. They had running water, electricity, and almost all the other amenities you'd expect a house to have.

Willow slid her key in the lock and turned, pushing the door open. Every day, El runs down the stairs to greet her, and hopefully get something to eat. El did not run down the stairs today. Willow tentatively stepped inside and asked Daron where she was. Daron was one of the only people in the house she somewhat trusted. He was a middle aged man, probably somewhere around 40, but Willow didn't know for sure. He was always kind to her, since he had lost kids of his own early in the crisis.

"I haven't seen her at all today. She's probably still in her room." Daron was sitting, hunched over at the wooden table in the living room. She moved to the stairs to find El. "What's in the bag?" Willow stopped short, already halfway up.

“Something for El, not that it’s any of your business.” Willow had seen what hunger does to people. Daron was usually reserved and peaceful, and she was trying to gauge if he would try and take it from her. Willow knew he was hungry, but she needed this food for her and El. Without her, El would starve. Willow couldn’t imagine her baby girl wasting away as hunger consumed her. Willow pictured her daughter with sunken eyes, pale skin, her small frame motionless in some alley, and her resolve hardened. She debated giving him some, but she couldn’t risk the whole house knowing what she had found. The nutrition blocks were handed out years ago by the government, and were not only filling, but packed with vitamins, minerals, and nutrients so potent that one could last you a week. She had found 6. She watched his eyes flick from her to the bag, and she held her breath. Daron stood up and walked away. Willow watched him until he was out of view, exhaled, and turned to find El. She would lock their door tonight.

Willow and El shared a room on the second floor of the house, and that’s where she found El, laying on the bed. “There you are sunshine! You worried me when you didn’t come downstairs. Why are you hiding up here?”

She looked up at Willow with big, innocent eyes. “Mama they were scaring me... said they’d...” El’s voice trailed off, and her eyes left her mothers.

Willow grabbed El by the shoulders. “Hey, look at me. Who, and what did they say?”

El’s soft voice dropped to a haunting whisper. “Rorge and the others. They were gonna kill and take our food.”

Willow reflexively inched away from El, her mind running through the consequences and dangers of Rorge, and how much merit his threats had. They could’ve just been trying to scare her, they have before, but never something this extreme.

“Don’t worry about it El, they didn’t mean it. Nothing bad is gonna happen to me, I promise. I’m gonna head back downstairs and grab some water. Are you thirsty?”

She nodded no, but Willow could tell El was still worried.

On the way back down, she heard rustling from Rorge’s room. Rorge was the strongest one in the house, and possibly the dumbest. He always put his fists first, and Willow knew eventually he’d get himself killed. The rest of the house didn’t care much for brains. They followed Rorge around like dogs, and treated him like a king. He was an inmate before the crisis, but broke out pretty early on. He’s never told anyone what for.

When she got to the kitchen she ran into Daron again, who was chugging water. Many people chugged water to try and fill the hole in their stomachs, but it never lasted. He avoided eye contact with her, right up until she turned to leave.

“If you don’t give me some, I’ll tell Rorge what you found.” He leaned in closer. “You know what Rorge would do for those nutrition bars, right? He’d flay both you and your daughter alive if he meant he gets to eat for a month and a half.”

Willow knew he was right. It wasn’t worth calling his bluff. She couldn’t stand up to Rorge, especially not with his goons behind him. But the bars were too valuable to give away.

“Okay Daron, I’ll give you half a bar, but that’s it, and you shut up about it.” Daron looked visibly relieved, and sighed a breath she didn’t even realize he was holding.

“Hey! Willow!” A booming voice called from down the stairs. “Daron here says you have some food, and boy are we hungry. So you’re going to share...right?”

“Buzz off, Rorge. Find something to eat for yourself. I have a daughter up here to take care of.” Willow thought about her options. She could give them some of her food, but they

might just take all of it, and she couldn't risk that. She wasn't intimidating, and couldn't protect herself, El, and the nutrition bars. She had seen enough starving people to know that Rorge couldn't be reasoned with. She scooped El up and propped her on her feet.

“Okay sunshine, We gotta go. Rorge and Daron and all the others are bad guys now. We're gonna head outside, far away from here. Grab only your most precious things.” Willow grabbed the bag of food, and threw in the few canned items she had in reserve. She grabbed her flashlight, knife, two full bottles of water and two more empty ones. When she looked back at El, she was holding her teddy bear and the chocolate bar Willow found for her birthday.

“Oh come on Willow, just come out and talk to us! I'm sure we can work this out peacefully.”

“C'mon El, out the window, now!” There was a fire escape that ran to the street, and she needed to get her and El down there fast. She helped hoist El out, before running over and locking the bedroom door. Not long after, she heard it rattling.

“C'mon Willow, just let us in, we're not gonna harm ya, we just want a little snack.”

With one last glance over her shoulder, Willow crawled out the window and down the ladder. She heard Rorge shouting at both her and El, taunting them, but she didn't look back.

“Mommy, won't the monsters come after us?” El looked even more scared in the sunset glow.

“They might, sunshine. But I'll be here to protect you. Always.”

* * *

They were running out of food. The nutrition bars had lasted a while, but El just finished the last one. They weren't pretty, and El always had trouble choking them down.

"Aren't you gonna have one mommy?" Willow looked at El and offered a weak smile.

"I already had mine this morning, I'm plenty full. Why don't you go back to your book? I want to hear all about how cool Zorra's dragon is when I get back." Willow had found some books at an abandoned corner store a week ago, and they helped to keep El occupied while she looked for resources. They were staying at a very small, old abandoned apartment, but it was quiet, had running water, and was easily defensible. She set out into the streets, but she hadn't found anything to eat in weeks, and in a few days El would need food again. Willow would need to eat again. Willow was constantly stuck between getting food for herself or getting food for El. While she would always put El first, if Willow was weak, she couldn't protect or provide for either of them. Willow needed food, and she wanted to find it today.

She heard them. Their soft footsteps on the dusty carpeted floor. They were waiting for her or El to mess up. Willow stole a look through the three small slits in the locker as they moved around her home. Willow's muffled breath was loud. Too loud. She quickly caught herself, taking a shaky breath inwards and holding it. Outside, she saw his head snap to face her and she felt her heart jump into her throat. She was scared. Scared to get carved up, scared to know she would be feeding a savage, but mostly scared that she would leave El alone. The man took steps closer to her. Willow braced herself for a fight she knew she wouldn't win. Already she had seen three men with insanity in their eyes, and it would be a miracle if she could even take down one of them. His hand tentatively reached towards Willow, who was running out of breath. The man

threw open the locker next to Willow, and with a frustrated grunt, shuffled away. She waited another five seconds for good measure, and carefully exhaled.

Annotation #1 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

One technique I used was large amounts of imagery, mostly in the beginning of the story. "She looked at them now, cracked and burning in the twilight glow of the city. There was rubble where there used to be houses, skeletons of trees and bushes, and cars that have been stripped or forgotten sitting on the side of the road." Imagery is super important to immersion and also to help the reader imagine what I'm thinking about as I write. The first time I read a dystopian story with a lot of imagery was Scythe, by Neal Shusterman. In the very beginning of Scythe, Shusterman throws you right into an action scene and sets it up with a lot of descriptive words and details.

Annotation #2 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

Another technique I used was a third person point of view. I did this because I knew I would have to introduce and explain multiple new characters, and it's much easier to do that in third person. Writing in first person can also be tricky, because you need to write your main character's thoughts IN your main character's thoughts, which can also be hard to do consistently.

Annotation #3 - In 50-100 words, describe a technique you use in this piece. Why did you make that choice, and what impact does it have on the reader's understanding of the story? Make sure to quote a phrase or sentence from your writing. Bonus points for explaining how another author influenced your choice!

Another technique I used was nicknaming El sunshine. El is Willow's hope, love, and good incarnate. She is her reason to keep going, to stay civil, and to find food. Sunshine is commonly associated with warmth and goodness, Thus sunshine is the perfect nickname for this character. Nicknaming her sunshine also helps to build the reader's sympathy and attachment towards Willow and El.



Sanaa Groomes