

Twenty-five Years Apart

By Taylor R.

He was twenty. She was twenty. Yet twenty-five years apart.
Different lives, different existences, same disease. Related and similar,
yet different. His shell of translucent skin stretched
over a visible skeleton. His lungs
thick and sticky turning to sludge, drowning within. There were oxygen tanks.
There were tubes feeding into his stomach. His world
hanging on by a thread,
until it didn't. He was twenty. Only twenty.
His bones leaving no imagination to minds eye,
now lay under lush oak trees of memory. Memory and stories reiterated
when she visits. She is twenty. Sitting under the oak
the wind brushed on her shell of sturdy, sun-kissed skin.
Deep within her lungs thick and sticky, yet transforming. Her shell
exposing a different reality. Healthier, happier yet the same. Same yet
different. The blossomed air rushed into her shallow yet
resilient lungs.
Stories of him told by the father, unfamiliar.
Her robust body contrasted by his cold bones under the oak trees.
The unfamiliarity of captivity lingers in her mind.
Same disease, twenty-five years later. A world of uncertainty, rewritten.
A chance for hope. No tubes, no oxygen tank, just
a new embodiment of Cystic Fibrosis. The father told stories of him.
He cradled her under the stars praying. Praying for a future.
Sitting under the oak tree, her glistening skin is different.
She frolicks down the hill, a hill where many of the past lie.
A past defined by sickness, a future ahead of her, shining to illuminate her face.
A light so close. Her eyes sparkle.
Her legs swiftly began to fly. Her lungs blossom, tended by the gardeners who
supply her with seeds. Seeds of hope. Seeds of resilience.
A new embodiment of Cystic Fibrosis.