

Jessica Clayton
Topics Utopia/Dystopia
Project proposal

Initial idea

An anthology of poems that tell a story of the post-apocalyptic world following one main character with one or two breaks from her perspective. The poems open on the destruction but the actual cause of the catastrophic event will be revealed in later poems. The end of the world was brought upon by a totalitarian-esque misanthropic organization whose goals are to bring about the destruction of humanity entirely and start their purge through man-made earthquakes induced simultaneously around the world. The piece has a heavy focus on human emotions and visceral feelings/imagery rather than the actual storyline itself but there is a linear series of events with themes of loss and rebirth. The poems will transition and tie into each other through the motif of a soundtrack or album. This musical theme is portrayed through relationships and the sounds of decimation, currently, the working title is *Soundtrack of the Apocalypse* but is most likely going to change since it is too close to the name of the slayer album.

Format

For now, the project will take the form of something akin to a comic but not long enough to be a graphic novel. It will be four to five poems due to time constraints but ideally, it would be 8-13 poems, long enough to be an album. This will be the start of the full anthology. There is not a set amount of pages I have in mind since I have not finished writing the poems and some are longer than others. Each line of the poem is not going to be illustrated individually but rather only focusing on the lines that are the most descriptive and with the emotional imagery. The illustrations will most likely just be line work, some shading, and minimal color due to time but again, ideally, it would be full color.

Characters

Mercy: The main character, a survivor who provides the perspective of the majority of the story while experiencing loss.

Delaney: Mercy's wife who dies in the second poem.

The doomsday organization: The group functions somewhat like a pyramid scheme and those on the bottom recruited prior to the destruction on the promise/guise of salvation at the cost of blindly following the orders of the elusive higher-ups. The leaders of the organization want to eradicate the earth of humans since they believe that humanity is the root of all problems (heavily focused on the environmental crisis) and the only way to repent and solve the issues is to commit genocide. Their first part of the plan to wipe the earth of humans is the earthquakes, the second is to send the bottom recruits that function as foot soldiers to the ruins to slaughter the

survivors, and lastly, the mass suicide of the organization members. Those recruited are not aware of the true intentions of the group they've joined so their blind commitment to them is more of an act of preservation.

Random footsoldier: provides the perspective of those who joined the organization, helping shed light on how those who joined are not evil and that the situation is not black and white.

Research/influences

While my idea has a central problem the focus will not be on the ins and outs of it, it is merely just a tool to display emotions and beliefs. Despite it not being the central focus or being explicitly explained in any of the poems I am researching various topics to base the organization on. The major influences are the pyramid schemes, Jonestown/cults, Hotel Rwanda, Tesla's earthquake machine, and the Anthropocene.

Poems (some currently unnamed)

Intro track

We watched as the world fell
I held her as she cried
perhaps to her, I seemed resilient and tenacious
but I knew
the foundations shook
covering my own trembling
I could feel our hearts beating as one
threatening to leap out of our chests as we braced for impact
and then
the world was quiet
our own blood pumping is the kick drum on the soundtrack of the apocalypse
the screaming and wailing of many heard outside provided the choir

even after the dust settled
and the rubble was picked clean
and this became our new norm
the music played louder than ever
amplified by those long gone
singing their siren songs
calling for their breathing brethren to come home
and when they do, we do
the drums will fade out
and the next song will begin

Her world falls

I remember your grip
how firm your grasp on seemingly everything was
tightly you held onto me
enough to bruise
despite my black and blue skin
and your tear-stained cheeks
with watery mascara smeared all over your and my face
I felt safe
no matter what you held fast

your delicately thin fingers used to taper down to ridiculously long nails
long have the days gone since they been meticulously painted
red lacquer completely chipped off
I used to laugh at how impractical they used to be
but
seeing them like this
blunt, cut short with jagged edges, and caked blood mixed with dirt underneath makes me yearn
for when your hands looked like yours
dainty hands meant for painting or piano now calloused and scrapped

I remember when I felt your grip loosen
hands I always thought would be there slid off
desperately I tried to place them back on my skin
hoping you'd clutch me like I was on you

a duet becomes a solo

I may in the future find another if there are still others
but their hands won't fit mine like mine fit yours
would their hands even be as lovely?
even if their hands felt like home
their heart may not beat in tandem with mine
it would be a new rhythm but not ours
no
nothing could ever compare to the music our bodies made together
in the wreckage
in our nervousness
the music was still sweet

False prophets

The emergency sirens roared
readying the crowd
flashing lights set the stage
the anticipation built and swelled till the air was thick
this is what they, I, had been waiting for

the tune was familiar
or so we had thought
vehicles plastered with symbols that indicated our saviors were here
for some, the excitement was far too much
they rushed the trucks hoping to be the first ones to find salvation

neon and alarms halted as men in armor dismounted
we realized what we thought was a song of deliverance
was in actuality
a battle cry
a call for the lambs to the slaughter

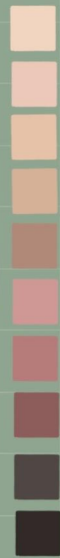
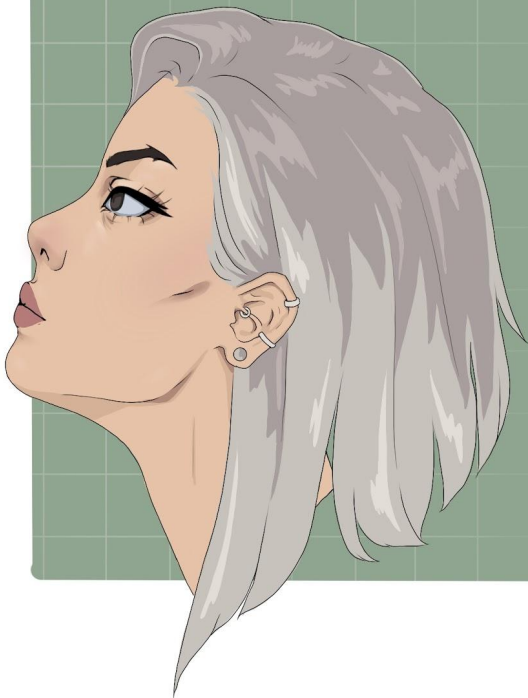
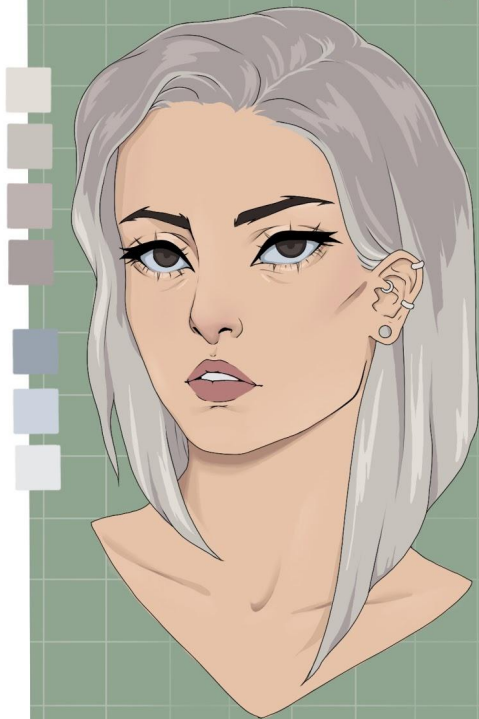
the stomping of boots carried the tempo
as violent shrieks of pain set the tone
until gunfire was the only vocalist on display

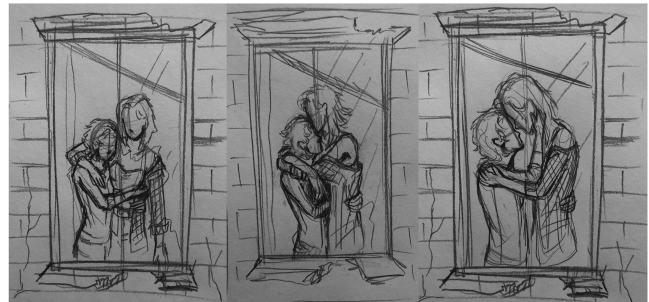
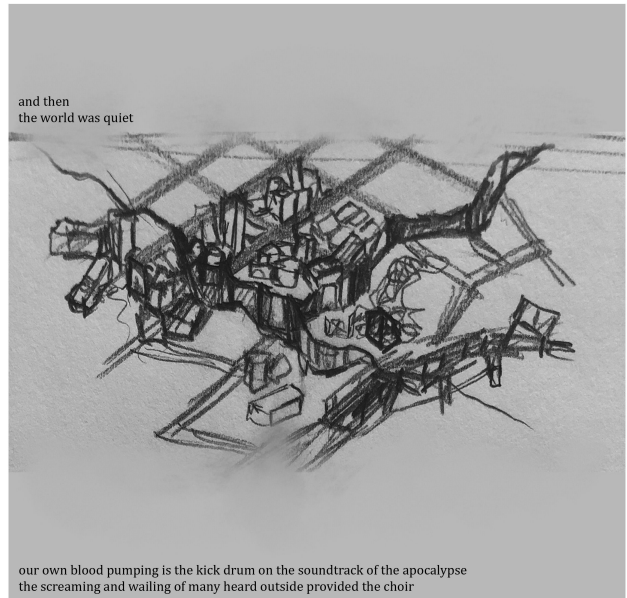
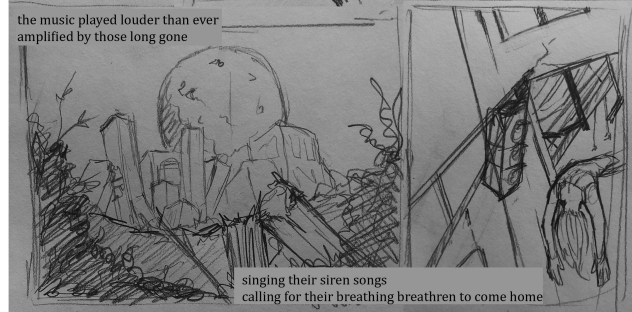
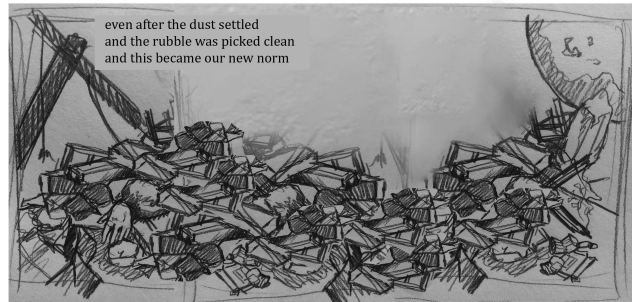
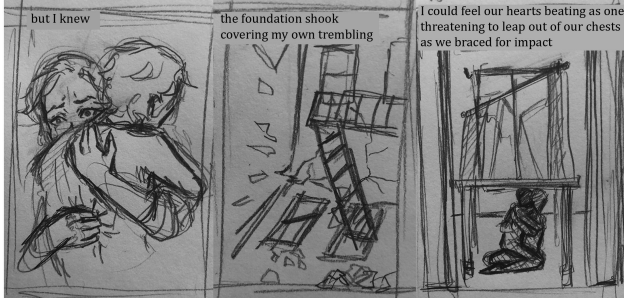
ending the same way it began
with men returning to their trucks readying themselves for their next venue
sirens blaring in the distance
a tuner to remind us we were not worth saving
quiet moans and muffled sobs fade in



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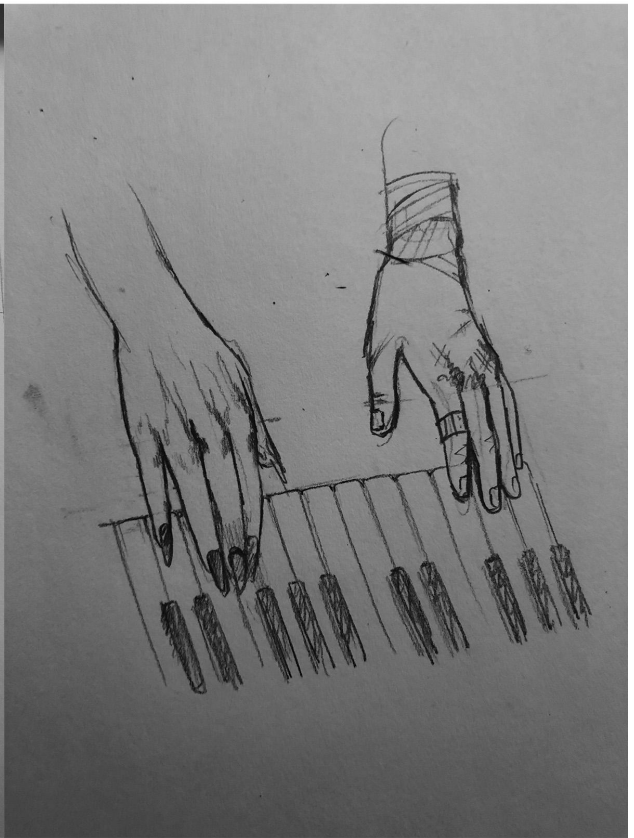


TIGHTLY YOU HELD ONTO ME

W/ LEFT O FOR MASCARA
I FELT SAFE



NO MATTER
HOW YOU
HELD FAST



MARCH 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Week 1	27 project proposal & concept art
28 project proposal & concept art	29 project proposal & concept art	30 essay for lecture jess crying	31 project proposal & concept art			
		February 2021 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	April 2021 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30			

APRIL 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 project proposal & concept art	2 Week 2 Calendars/ Project Proposals Are Due / One on Ones	3 continue storyboarding & writing poems
4 continue storyboarding & writing poems	5 continue storyboarding & writing poems	6 finish poems	7 start final drawings for first poems	8 cont.final drawings for first poems	9 Week 3 Post Progress on Canvas/ Morning or Afternoon Zoom Meetings mental breakdown	10 cont.final drawings for first poems
11 finish first poem images start second ars bibliography	12 storyboard third draw for second	13 storyboard third draw for second paper proposal lecture	14 storyboard third draw for second	15 finish second start thrid final	16 Week 4 Post Progress on Canvas / Second One on One cont. third	17 cont. third finish any story- boards left
18 draw for third finish storyboards ars thesis	19 finish third start fourth	20 draw for fouth essay due for lecture	21 cry	22 draw for fourth	23 Week 5 Post Progress on Canvas / Morning or Afternoon Zoom Meetings draw for fourth	24 finish fourth start fifth and final
25 draw for fifth start editing completed pieces ars outline & bib	26 draw for fifth editing completed pieces	27 draw for fifth	28 finish fifth	29 mental breakdown	30 Week 6 Post Progress on Canvas / Optional One on Ones edit	
		March 2021 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		May 2021 Su M Tu W Th F Sa 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		

MAY 2021

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						1 cry while editing																																																																																				
2 cry while editing	3 cry while editing	4 finish	5 final paper lecture	6	7 Last Class! Final Projects Are Due!	8																																																																																				
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