

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

## Bemoans & Bounties

What is a fair price for survival?

they said we were ones brave enough to do what others could not  
a necessary sacrifice for the future  
they said the earth would be rebuilt anew  
the promise of Eden  
for the promise of our sworn loyalty

yes, for I am brave enough to do what others would not  
for I would do anything for my children  
but  
in the new world, the one I helped build  
would my family see me as a hero?  
or as a beast who took the souls of families no different than ours

perhaps I am the behemoth I fear my wife sees me as  
I fear that in my efforts to do right  
I have created more destruction  
for us, the infantry  
the sirens and tires driving over rubble  
drown out the endless melody of execution  
yet never loud enough to deafen the sounds of my sins

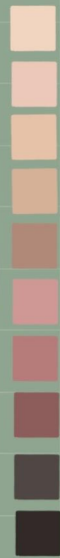
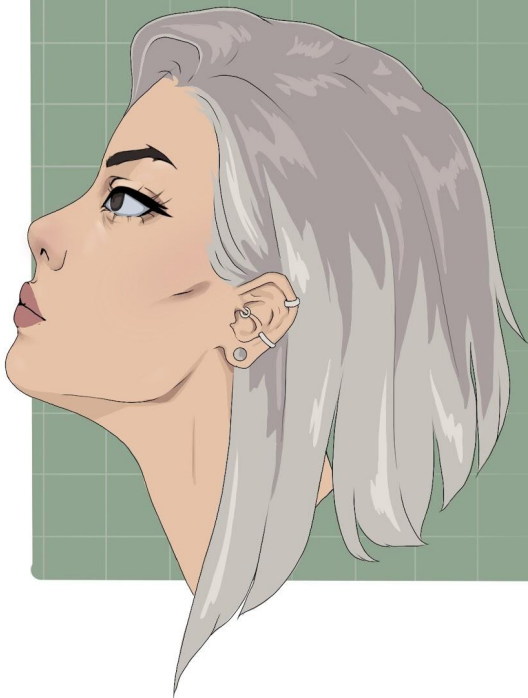
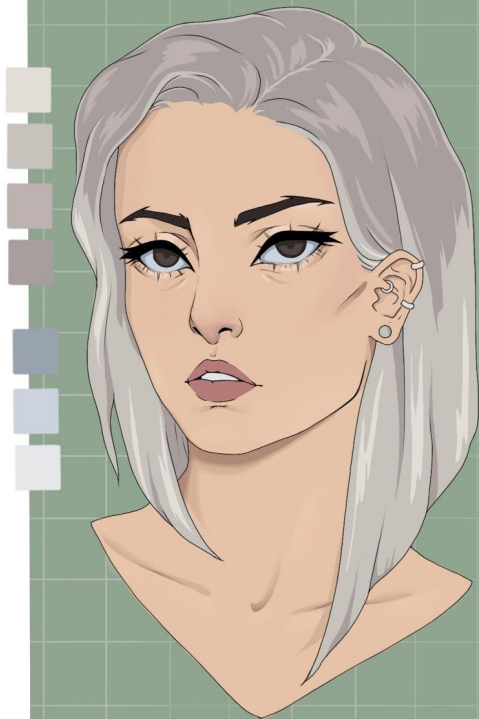
as we tour around the world  
moving from show to show  
leaving behind those considered weak by the commanders for their unwillingness to join  
a world born of blood  
it becomes more clear  
with each respite from the carnage  
I realize  
I am the coward and others pay my debt

They said it would fall  
and it did  
they said we would

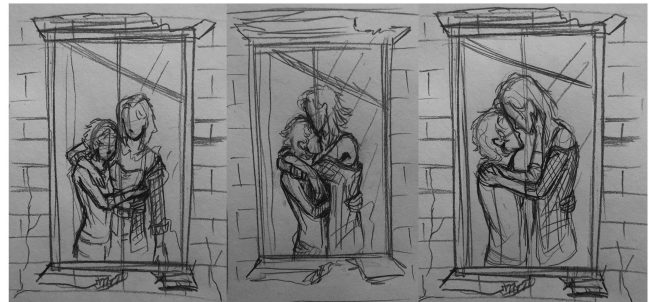
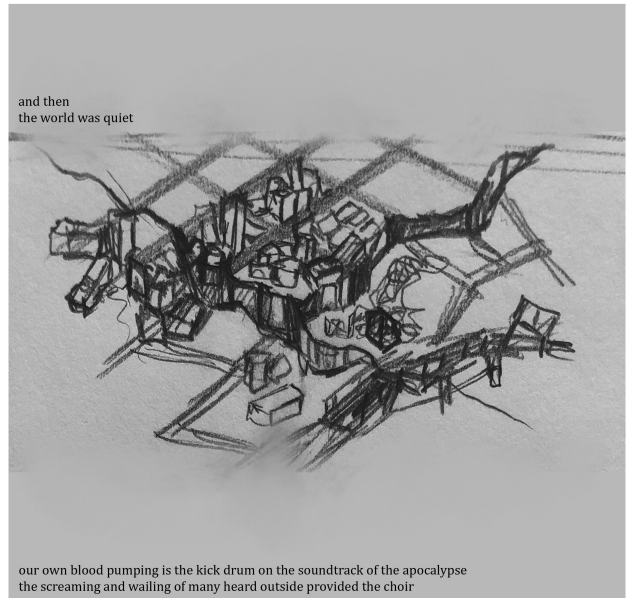
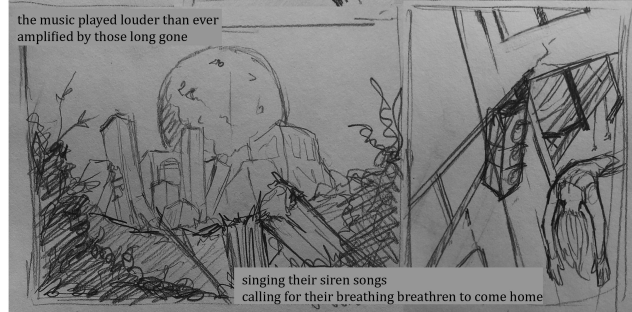
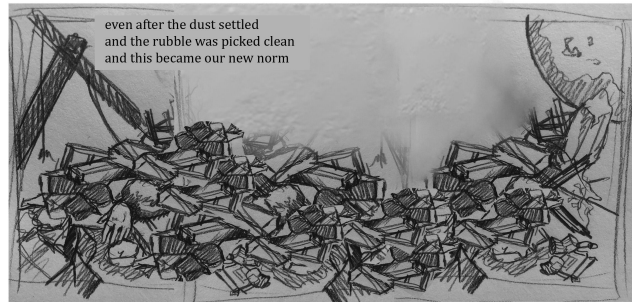
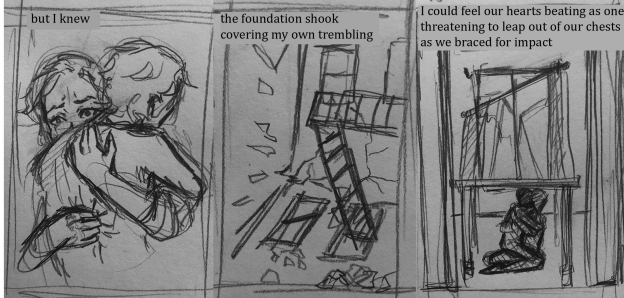


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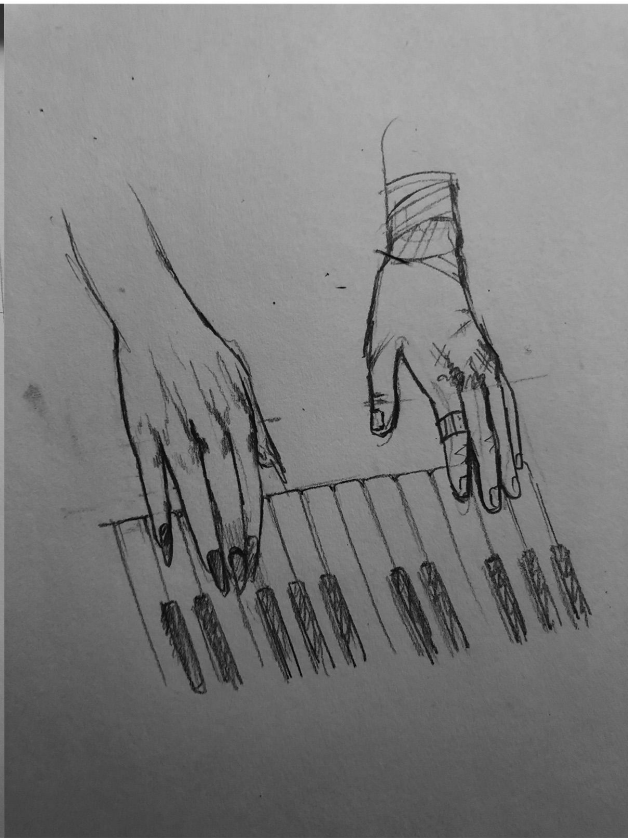


TIGHTLY YOU HELD ONTO ME

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

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