

Artist Statement:

I remember when I was 17, the first time I picked up a pen to write something fictional, to write something creative and poetic, was shortly after listening to Neutral Milk Hotel's second album: *In The Aeroplane Over The Sea*. They were a band from Ruston, Louisiana, not too far away from where I live, and I thought I would give them a try, being that they were a local band. I was immediately caught by the lyrics -- songs about ghosts, dead babies, carrot flowers, love and anger, and regret. To this day, the song "Oh Comely" off of this particular album has been embedded in my brain. It was because of this song, I wanted to create imagery with words to form substance. I wanted to write a piece that would give me the same feeling as this song had done, and not only for me, but for others as well. I didn't realize until later, until recently actually, that subconsciously, I've been wanting to make a connection between the reader, the narrator, and the writer. I wanted the reader to be able to relate to the narrator, as much as I was able to connect to the narrator of this song.

So this was the reason why I wrote my first poem, but my reason and urge to write a fictional piece shortly came after reading Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Chronicle Of A Death Foretold*. I was amazed at his ability to combine the real world with the magical world. I found myself in a place far away from the café I was sitting in, in a place consisting of sentences about love, death, sadness, time, and guilt. The world we live in now consists of all these aspects of life, and yet I wanted to escape to a place consisting of the same pieces of this real world. It's this mirroring, I find, that I'm drawn to.

With fiction, the reader has the opportunity to explore events that may have happened in the real world, that could have happened in the real world, and that could possibly happen in the future in the real world. The readers are allowed to escape, allowed to imagine a place that could be very similar to the one they live in now or it could be a place that is nothing close to the one they live in now. The writer has the opportunity to do the same, and I think this is why I write fiction -- to combine creativity and logic (or illogic) to show the similarities, whether subtly or obviously, between worlds, people, and emotions. It's this ability to give a different perspective that is appealing and this ability to create a piece of fiction, no matter how fictional it is, to show how close to reality it can be.

Relationships. I think this is why I write the fiction that I write -- about loneliness and the relationships that come with loneliness, and to be more general, I'm interested in the quirks and kinks found in relationships. There is also one existing -- whether it exists between the character and another character, a character and her or himself, or a character with the environment. There are several other relationships too -- between the writer and the text, the narrator and the reader, the narrator and the writer, and the reader and the writer. There is always a relationship. And within this realm, I'm drawn to the psyche -- to getting into the mind of why a character does this or that and why can the reader relate? The reader can relate, perhaps, because the emotion is true, no matter how unusual the circumstance, the emotion is human and relatable in some way.

Additionally, as I explore the concept of loneliness, I am gathering that it is through this feeling of loneliness, where people can open up, or close themselves up even more, or are

torn between these two actions, and all of these aspects can lead to a variety of events. All of these events can still relate to human emotions, no matter what world they take place in. I strive to push and explore within this realm to form relationships within the text and outside the text. And I believe that even through isolationism and alienation and loneliness, people are still trying to communicate whether they know it or not -- through the psyche and through their actions, this can be revealed.

This is why I write fiction now and this is why I write this particular fiction. And I write this, knowing that this can change in the near or distant future -- that maybe I would like to explore a different area, such as crime and relationships, or social fiction, pleading the world to change, or an all out comedic piece, just wanting everyone to laugh and be happy, forgetting what it is like to be lonely.