

Story (Full Prose)

For character profiles, please press [here](#).

For specific lines of each character, please press [here](#).

For Timeline, please press [here](#).

For Finished Animation, please press .

Animation done

Animation not done yet

It is morning already. School, in its dreadful glory, is not this important. Teeth brushed, half breakfast nibbled, other matters completed zoned out. “Good morning, Ma. Have a good day at work. Bye, Pa.”

School goes as usual. My friend is intriguing. We discuss trivial matters regarding school. How does one find that interesting? No matter. I laugh at whatever joke he makes. Something about school, still. Do these people not have a life outside of school? Friend is nice, but our thought processes seem to differ, him seemingly liking when I study him and reflect.

Perhaps I am supposed to act as a ‘normal’ being like him. Then finally, the bell rings. My friend seems happy that instead of listening to the teacher in class fully, we had spent the time in an apparently more ‘interesting’ way. I do not manage to catch the bus. I do not try to. I see it moving away and do not run. I will rather wait for the next.

After getting up and down the next bus, I walk along the street. The place is crowded, as usual. I groan internally when I notice the ‘Under Maintenance’ sign hanging under the block’s lift. When the lift is in maintenance, like it has been for the past few days, people living so high up have to climb so much.

I huff and puff my way up to the ninth floor. I hear a nasal sound. Some birds make those sounds, you know? I have been hearing it for days now. I have to get my ears checked. The sound gets annoying.

I fish out a storybook from a bag. A pretty thing it is, really. It talks about illusions and selves in an alternate universe. Something looks off. Why does the guy on the cover look exactly like Friend? The braces, the slightly off-centre smile... It can’t be. A very weird coincidence. Friend does look like the ‘average male teen’ depicted in stories. Quite funny, I suppose.

I flip it open. It has ninety nine pages. That feels off. It would have been better at 100. Ending at nine makes it seem good, but not good enough to feel real. 100 feels more natural, in my opinion. Why does our room have to be on the 9th floor? I sit down.

My room is very messy. I blame my questionable thoughts regarding cleanliness. Finishing the book, I go over to my desk to clean up the place before Ma comes over to scold. I find a tiny plant I do not remember seeing before. Well, it is probably some present my parents have bought in an attempt to teach me discipline. Even though my parents have such a boring cause, at least the plant is pretty, its yellow leaves blinking slowly in the shadows.

My parents, working in the same place, have come home together. They knock on the door.

“Let me in, dear,” Ma said. “I’m very tired.” They walk in the moment I open the door, drenched in sweat. We talk over dinner, and then we each retreat into our respective domains to complete our work. I love spending time with my parents. They are wonderful people, and make me feel alive. I fall asleep being distracted from work.

The next day again. Everything goes as usual, same as the day before. Things do not go smoothly, but that is the norm of many lives. Mine is one that I wish to forgo. There is no reason to be alive. Everyone drones on, like captive apes plucking out their fur.

The sun has started setting already by the time School ends. It ends so late sometimes. Someone catches my eye. My friend. He waves at me, and I wave back. He smiles at me, dark teeth catching the sunlight. Why are his teeth purple? Oh right, he is under the shadows, plus he was saying something about braces. I smile back, as expected, and continue on my way.

*Friend, friend, The Human loves you
The Human talks lots with you
But what are you*

“Hey Ma!” I notice my mom has quietly come home. “How are you back so early from work? It isn’t night yet.” She smiles at me, eyes a pure milky white. Her cataracts have gotten worse, or have they always been that way?

“Let me in, dear. I’m just a bit tired from climbing the stairs.” Ma says. So nice of her to ask permission even though the door is already open. She enters. Surprisingly, without sweat. I suppose she had finally improved her stamina. The lift HAS been broken for so many days... Friend appears behind her, wanting to talk. Have I told him where I lived? I suppose so. I let him in too. The room fills with the scent of dead trees. Oh right, Friend loves plants and animals so spends time after school in quiet, random public gardens.

Ma, ma, you smile like a wolf

*and you're as kind as can be
But what are you?*

Ma and Friend seem to know each other even though I haven't introduced them before. Maybe they have met somewhere. There are some ants on the floor, leading through the wall. Friend snatches nine of them up for himself, and hands another nine to my mother. My heart palpitates. Friend and Ma flicker. I shake my head. No, I will not think. They are interested in saving plants and animals so are open to eating insects. They are interested in saving plants and animals so were open to eating insects. Yes. That is it.

"Sorry, I'm... not hungry." We talk for a long time, with me gradually forcing myself to shut out their gruesome liking for certain foods.

*Ant, ant, you are everywhere
Hold me down when the wind pulls
But what are you?*

Then Ma and Friend say they had to leave, they have work to do. Funny, Friend. We see each other at school, and it's the weekend. Where do YOU have to go? I shut the window behind them. Aww, a bird! It whispers into my ear. A pretty sapsucker. Wait, birds talk? Well, the bird seems nice enough. Maybe it was trained in a circus. It mumbles. Something about wood rotting, only to fall apart. Did the wood the bird had been pecking been decayed or something?

*Me, Me, pretty thing I am
I try to warn The Human
But The Human does not wish to see*

School again. I go to school. Friend is there, laughing brightly, teeth glinting like in a toothpaste ad. "Hey Friend! Nice meeting you Friday evening." I said. Friend looks confused.

"Huh? I was... sick on Friday. I didn't even get out of the house the entire day. My mom never let me... Are you okay?" I stare at Friend. Friend looks put off. Oops. A grave mistake. Speaking of what he had said, am I imagining things? Never mind. I feel very tired anyways.

After the school day, I walk back home. ...'Friend' asks me to let...'it' in. I shake my head. No.

*'Friend', 'friend', knocking every moon
Your teeth are Chameleons
But The Human does not wish to see*

'Friend's' face flickers. It dissipates. Sapsucker morphes from the wooden table. It grinds, "Finally, oh dear human,

accepting of what you see
Clarity is key to long lives
No matter how hard it makes it"
I am contemplating its words when it opens its mouth again.
"You live, fearful or not
Is that not quite enough?
You live, hurting or not
Why would you not agree?"
I stare at it for a second. Why would one believe that? I certainly do not.

"At least death is blank, a life of pain hurts" I reply. The bird opened its beak once more.

*"Death is an universe destroyed
You do not know what's coming
but life is a trap planned out
Isn't what we know better than the unknown?"*

I look away from it. "The way to get to death may be more painful than life can ever be. And if I fail, what would people think." I murmur. Sapsucker quietens, deep in thought.

We stay in silence for a while.

I suddenly smell dead wood. Ahh, 'Mother' is here. But 'Mother'... she does not look like her anymore. Her skin is waxy, thin. She smiles a gruesome smile. "Let me in, dear, let me in. You have always let us in, why not tonight? We look the same," she says. I shake my head. Not today. I will not let in... whatever these are. A phrase catches my attention. 'Look the same', she had said. Yet she looks gruesome.

No. No. NO. This was who I have been seeing everyday? Or are there more? What is Sapsucker? Why does 'it' know everything? Why have I heard its voice ever since I saw 'Friend' last evening? Whispers of poem, dismissed.

What is real?

Sapsucker notices my physical reaction to the turmoil. Or maybe he notices it mentally.
*"The brain, a wonderful thing is it not
Changing the fabric of reality
I believe so that as many worlds as beings
Exist in this place I call insanity"*
Sapsucker says.

"Why do you talk, Sapsucker? If you are not one of them, how can you speak?" I ask.

Sapsucker answers,
*"Evil and good you know are intertwined
I am them and true while they hide
Telltale signs are around if you choose
You have known and known from your mind"*.

Sapsucker smiles, forlorn suddenly. I stare at it for a few seconds. I am about to question that when everything starts to... fade. I am out before I could probe.

I awake. Everything feels too real to be fake. I look around. 'Mother' and Sapsucker are gone. In Sapsucker's place is a note.

'Mother' appears in a flicker of light. Doubt, it seems, will never leave.

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Character profiles

For Story (Full Prose), please press [here](#).

For specific lines of each character, please press [here](#).

For Timeline, please press [here](#).

- 1) [Narrator \(Main Character\)](#)
- 2) [Sapsucker \(Supporting Character\)](#)
- 3) [‘Mother’ \(Minor Character\)](#)
- 4) [‘Friend’, Friend \(Minor Character\)](#)

Narrator (Main Character)

Age: 13-19 years old

Gender: Female

Looks: Skinny, Any skin tone (artistic freedom for Animators)

Personality: Detached, but suppressing emotions when the uncanny occurs

Relationships:

- *Sapsucker*: Denial, then cautious acceptance. Narrator views Sapsucker as the living form of something that she wants to block out at first. However, after she and Sapsucker confer (talk) for a while, she learns to accept him, especially due to his saying of the line “*Evil and good you know are intertwined | | I am them and true while they hide | | Telltale signs are around and you know it*”. This line shows Narrator that Sapsucker is being aware, truthful of what is happening, leading to trust (not blind trust though).
- *‘Mother’*: Cautious acceptance and denial, then rejection. ‘Mother’ symbolises the doubt that Narrator feels. The same doubt that makes us feel that even loved ones are hiding something and are against us.

- 'Friend', Friend: Acceptance that things are the way they are, then rejection. 'Friend', Friend symbolise the need for Narrator to conform. At the start, Narrator thought that they could not be without conforming to societal standards, but later learns that they can.

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Sapsucker (Supporting Character)

Age: Ageless

Gender: Preferably male

Looks: A bird. A pattern similar to this.



Source: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Williamsons_Sapsucker/id

Personality: Mysterious, sounding like it always hides something, and at the same time like it is telling the truth, forlorn (just not pessimistic) and waiting to see what happens, observer, 'awareness'

Relationships:

- *Narrator*: Curiosity and observation. Sapsucker is Narrator's awareness. It merely points out different perspectives that Narrator is trying to block out, its own judgement.
- *'Mother'*: Awareness. Sapsucker is aware that 'Mother' is doubtful. It just wishes to see how long it would take for Narrator to accept it.
- *'Friend', Friend*: Awareness. Sapsucker, once again, is aware that the need to conform ('Friend', Friend'), is merely an illusion that Narrator has fallen for.

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'Mother' (Minor Character)

Age: 20-30 years old

Gender: Female

Looks: Transitions from the 'generic' mother (motherly voice, calm, pleasant) to a horror equivalent (animators choice)

Personality: Cunning, spooky, manipulative, 'doubt'

No relationship details will be added for 'Mother' as this is a minor role. However, notes will be given to voice actors as needed.

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'Friend', Friend (Minor Character)

Age: 13-19 years old

Gender: Male

Looks: The 'average' student (Friend, early 'Friend'), then grotesque version of him (later 'Friend')

Personality: Judging, Shallow, 'societal expectations'

No relationship details will be added for 'Friend', Friend(Minor Character) as this is a minor role. However, notes will be given to voice actors as needed.

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Character Lines (Specific)

For Story (Full Prose), please press [here](#).

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For Timeline, please press [here](#).

- 1) [Narrator \(Main Character\)](#)
- 2) [Sapsucker \(Supporting Character\)](#)
- 3) ['Mother' \(Minor Character\)](#)
- 4) ['Friend', Friend \(Minor Character\)](#)

1) Narrator (Main Character)

Lines which aren't Narrator's have been cancelled as Narrator needs to understand the story right to convey emotion.

It is morning already. School, in its dreadful glory, is not this important. Teeth brushed, half breakfast nibbled, other matters completed zoned out. "Good morning, Ma. Have a good day at work. Bye, Pa."

School goes as usual. My friend is intriguing. We discuss trivial matters regarding school. How does one find that interesting? No matter. I laugh at whatever joke he makes. Something about school, still. Do these people not have a life outside of school? Friend is nice, but our thought processes seem to differ, him seemingly liking when I study him and reflect.

Perhaps I am supposed to act as a 'normal' being like him. Then finally, the bell rings. My friend seems happy that instead of listening to the teacher in class fully, we had spent the time in an apparently more 'interesting' way. I do not manage to catch the bus. I do not try to. I see it moving away and do not run. I will rather wait for the next.

After getting up and down the next bus, I walk along the street. The place is crowded, as usual. I groan internally when I notice the 'Under Maintenance' sign hanging under the block's lift. When the lift is in maintenance, like it has been for the past few days, people living so high up have to climb so much.

If elderly lived on the higher floors, I doubt they would go out of the house much now. I huff and puff my way up to the ninth floor. My poor parents. They are in even worse physical condition than me, and they will already be tired from their full day jobs. I hear a nasal sound. Some birds make those sounds, you know? I have been hearing it for days now. I have to get my ears checked. The sound gets annoying.

I chuck my bag into a corner of my room and fish out a storybook. A pretty thing it is, really. It talks about illusions and selves in an alternate universe. Quite funny, I suppose. My parents, working in the same place, have come home together. They knock on the door.

~~“Let me in, dear,”~~ Ma said. ~~“I’m very tired.”~~ They walk in the moment I open the door, drenched in sweat. We talk over dinner, and then we each retreat into our respective domains to complete our work. I love spending time with my parents. They are wonderful people, and make me feel alive. I fall asleep being distracted from work.

The next day again. Everything goes as usual, same as the day before. Things do not go smoothly, but that is the norm of many lives. Mine is one that I wish to forgo. There is no reason to be alive. Everyone drones on, like captive apes plucking out their fur.

The sun has started setting already by the time School ends. It ends so late sometimes. Someone caught my eye. My friend. He waves at me, and I wave back. He smiles at me, dark teeth catching the sunlight. Why are his teeth black? Oh right, he is under the shadows, plus he wears black braces. I smile back, as expected, and continue on my way.

~~Friend, friend, The Human loves you~~
~~The Human talks lots with you~~
~~But what are you~~

Finally, I reach home and enter my room. My room is very messy. I blame my questionable thoughts regarding cleanliness. Why does our room have to be on the 9th floor? I sit down. Remembering that I had a storybook to finish reading, I fish it out of my bag. Something looks off. Why does the guy on the cover look exactly like Friend? The braces, the slightly off-centre smile... It can't be. A very weird coincidence. Friend does look like the 'average male teen' depicted in stories.

I flip it open. It has ninety nine pages. That feels off. It would have been better at 100. Ending at nine makes it seem good, but not good enough to feel real. 100 feels more natural, in my opinion. Finishing the book, I go over to my desk to clean up the place before Ma comes over to scold. I find a tiny plant I do not remember seeing before. Well, it is probably some present my parents have bought in an attempt to teach me discipline. Even though my parents have such a boring cause, at least the plant is pretty, its red leaves blinking slowly in the shadows.

~~Plant, plant, you're alive and well~~

~~Perhaps too much really~~
~~But what are you?~~

"Hey Ma!" I notice my mom has quietly come home. "How are you back so early from work? It isn't night yet." She smiles at me, eyes a pure milky white. Her cataracts have gotten worse, or have they always been that way?

~~"Let me in, dear. I'm just a bit tired from climbing the stairs."~~ Ma says. So nice of her to ask permission even though the door is already open. She enters. Surprisingly, without sweat. I suppose she had finally improved her stamina. The lift HAS been broken for so many days... Friend appears behind her, wanting to talk. Have I told him where I lived? I suppose so. I let him in too. The room fills with the scent of dead trees. Oh right, Friend loves plants and animals so spends time after school in quiet, random public gardens.

~~Ma, ma, you smile like a wolf~~
~~and you're as kind as can be~~
~~But what are you?~~

Ma and Friend seem to know each other even though I haven't introduced them before. Maybe they have met somewhere. There are some ants on the floor, leading through the wall. Friend snatches nine of them up for himself, and hands another nine to my mother. My heart palpitates. Friend and Ma flicker. I shake my head. No, I will not think. They are interested in saving plants and animals so are open to eating insects. They are interested in saving plants and animals so were open to eating insects. Yes. That is it.

"Sorry, I'm... not hungry." We talk for a long time, with me gradually forcing myself to shut out their gruesome liking for certain foods.

~~Ant, ant, you are everywhere~~
~~Hold me down when the wind pulls~~
~~But what are you?~~

Then Ma and Friend say they had to leave, they have work to do. Funny, Friend. We see each other at school, and it's the weekend. Where do YOU have to go? I shut the window behind them. Aww, a bird! It whispers into my ear. A pretty sapsucker. Wait, birds talk? Well, the bird seems nice enough. Maybe it was trained in a circus. It mumbles. Something about wood rotting, only to fall apart. Did the wood the bird had been pecking been decayed or something?

~~Me, Me, pretty thing I am~~
~~I try to warn The Human~~
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School again. I go to school. Friend is there, laughing brightly, teeth glinting like in a toothpaste ad. "Hey Friend! Nice meeting you Friday evening." I said. Friend looks confused.

~~"Huh? I was... sick on Friday. I didn't even get out of the house the entire day. My mom never let me... Are you okay?"~~ I stare at Friend. Friend looks put off. Oops. A grave mistake. Speaking of what he had said, am I imagining things? Never mind. I feel very tired anyways.

After the school day, I walk back home. ...'Friend' asks me to let...'it' in. I shake my head. No.

~~'Friend', 'friend', knocking every moon
Your teeth are Chameleons
But The Human does not wish to see~~

'Friend's' face flickers. It dissipates. Sapsucker morphes from the wooden table. It grinds,
~~"Finally, oh dear human,
accepting of what you see
Clarity is key to long lives
No matter how hard it makes it"~~

I am contemplating its words when it opens its mouth again.

~~"You live, fearful or not
Is that not quite enough?
You live, hurting or not
Why would you not agree?"~~

I stare at it for a second. Why would one believe that? I certainly do not.

"At least death is blank, a life of pain hurts" I reply. The bird opened its beak once more.

~~"Death is an universe destroyed
You do not know what's coming
but life is a trap planned out
Isn't what we know better than the unknown?"~~

I look away from it. "The way to get to death may be more painful than life can ever be. And if I fail, what would people think." I murmur. Sapsucker quietens, deep in thought.

We stay in silence for a while.

I suddenly smell dead wood. Ahh, 'Mother' is here. But 'Mother'... she does not look like her anymore. Her skin is waxy, thin. She smiles a gruesome smile. ~~"Let me in, dear, let me in. You have always let us in, why not tonight? We look the same,"~~ she says. I shake my head. Not today. I

will not let in... whatever these are. A phrase catches my attention. 'Look the same', she had said. Yet she looks gruesome.

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I believe so that as many worlds as beings
Exist in this place I call insanity"*~~
Sapsucker says.

"Why do you talk, Sapsucker? If you are not one of them, how can you speak?" I ask.

Sapsucker answers,
~~*"Evil and good you know are intertwined
I am them and true while they hide
Telltale signs are around if you choose
You have known and known from your mind"*~~

Sapsucker smiles, forlorn suddenly. I stare at it for a few seconds. I am about to question that when everything starts to... fade. I am out before I could probe.

I awake. Everything feels too real to be fake. I look around. 'Mother' and Sapsucker are gone. In Sapsucker's place is a note.

'Mother' appears in a flicker of light. Doubt, it seems, will never leave.

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2) Sapsucker (Supporting Character)

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But what are you*

*Plant, plant, you're alive and well
Perhaps too much really
But what are you?*

*Ma, ma, you smile like a wolf
and you're as kind as can be
But what are you?*

*Ant, ant, you are everywhere
Hold me down when the wind pulls
But what are you?*

*Me, Me, pretty thing I am
I try to warn The Human
But The Human does not wish to see*

*'Friend', 'friend', knocking every moon
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*Finally, oh dear human,
accepting of what you see
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*Death is an universe destroyed
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Exist in this place I call insanity*

*Evil and good you know are intertwined
I am them and true while they hide*

*Telltale signs are around if you choose
You have known and known from your mind*

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3) 'Mother' (Minor Character)

"Let me in, dear. I'm just a bit tired from climbing the stairs."

"Let me in, dear, let me in. You have always let us in, why not tonight? We look the same,"

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4) 'Friend', Friend (Minor Character)

"Huh? I was... sick on Friday. I didn't even get out of the house the entire day. My mom never let me... Are you okay?"

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Timeline

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Dates	Who does it concern?	What will be done?
31 October 2026	Everyone who auditions	Recruitment of Voice Actors.
31 October 2026 to 31 December 2026	Voice Actors	Recording of lines.
(concurrently) 31 October 2026 to 31 December 2026	Sound Designers, Audio Mixers, Storyboard Artists, 2d Character Animators, Background Artists, Video Editors	Recruitment of Sound Designers, Audio Mixers, Storyboard Artists, 2d Character Animators, Background Artists via Casting Call Club and Discord if possible.
31 December 2026 to 31 January 2027	Audio Mixers	Editing of recorded lines into a single audio file.
31 January 2027 to 31 April 2027	Sound Designers, Audio Mixers, Storyboard Artists, 2d Character Animators, Background Artists	Audio file sent to Sound Designers, Audio Mixers, Storyboard Artists, 2d Character Animators, Background Artists for them to start their work.
31 April 2027 to 15 May 2027	Video Editors	Animation combined with audio, ensured it syncs.

15 May 2027 to 30 June 2027	Video Editors	Short form content to be posted on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram is edited from final full short film.
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