





The Infinite Imagination of Time

**Story by: Olivia Rathsack, Student
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You never know how much time you have spent on the nonsensical, the trivial, the petty until it becomes your only currency. The pandemic arrived like a tsunami, rushing waters tearing and destroying everything in its path. Work, school, and community events vanish into thin air. Who knew the world could be so drastically changed in the span of what seemed like minutes?

I was in my freshman year of college when I was suddenly thrust back home into a world of online learning and communication. Although online learning was difficult and most of my professors had no idea how to restructure their classes, I began to notice the time. The time that I had lost that very same semester enclosing myself in my dorm room, not wanting to begin anew yet again. Regretting the missed opportunities to traverse the town and discover new experiences that would allow me to further explore myself. While reigniting my deep-rooted adoration of the wizarding world, I found myself wishing for Hermione's time turner, so I could go back and do all the things that I could no longer do for fear of the virus.

I began to feel overwhelmed by the amount of time I now had. I had lists and lists of things that I have been wanting to accomplish, things that I have been wanting to learn, read, watch, write, create. It was a cornucopia of endless possibilities, and I had to dive in if I ever wanted to make any progress. I went for my first love, the thing I knew would bring me joy in a time where joy was hard to come by: reading. I had a bookshelf stacked with unread books, and I consumed them as if they were air. Red, White, and Royal Blue, Crescent City, An Ember in the Ashes, Turtles All the Way Down, and many more dousing my anxieties in fantastical realms, cheesy romances, and other people's problems. One after another, I read and read, submerging myself in fictional worlds and problems and wishing for the time before everything turned upside down, for the time when everything made sense.

I began to create. I painted clay pots covered in flora and canvases portraying life and vibrancy. I wrote poetry and drafted ideas for a book I have always wanted to write about elves and a mythical world of pirates, heartbreak, war, and found family. I wanted to make something beautiful in a gray lifeless world, and I started to live in my imagination, in a world that was not my own. Whether that was through TV shows and movies I had never carved out time to watch, through my art, or the stories I was reading and writing. I realized I was attempting to escape the harsh realities of my life that only a few weeks ago was completely normal. Yet I felt so much freedom in my actions. I no longer felt like Atlas bearing the weight of the entire sky on my shoulders.

Artists:

**Christopher Ehlert, Student
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire**

**Kaela Greenfield, Student
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire**

View all the pieces in the *Healing Reflections* [online gallery](#).