Dive

By Sophia K.

The gym was empty, the fluorescent lights humming overhead. Saidie bent her knees, gripped the volleyball, and served. Over and over. Each strike rang through the quiet space like a heartbeat. She was a star—her serves precise, her dives flawless—but tonight, something felt… wrong. Her Grandpa wasn't there cheering her on.

A shiver ran down her spine. Goosebumps prickled her arms as a cold breeze brushed the back of her neck. She froze. The gym doors were locked. No windows were open. And yet… she heard it. Footsteps. Soft, deliberate, following her.

She shook her head, saying, “I have to lock in!”, but the moment she went for a dive, something felt odd. All of a sudden, Sadie's stomach dropped as she felt herself being sucked into the ground. Before she could even comprehend what was happening, she landed with a thud, groaning in pain.

“Where…am I?”

As she gathered her thoughts, Sadie observed the boxy, dark room she sat. As her eyes adjusted to the darkness, Sadie thought she could make out the outline of a door. In the pitch black, she outstretched her arms and began looking for an exit. As she brushed past each wall, she came to a terrifying realization: every time she touched a new one, the wall directly behind her disappeared.

“Sadie…” she heard, whispering from the emptiness behind her.

Right at that moment, she felt something creep down her back. She was horrified out of her skin, but her volleyball instincts kicked in, realizing she needed to focus to find a way out.

“Sadie…I see you,” she heard, the whisper louder and much closer than before.

Taking a deep breath, Sadie scanned the room, starting from the ceiling, making her way to the floor. She came to a terrifying realization: she had to walk towards the voice, to find the way out. She walks towards the voice, and begins shuffling to see if she can find a door. Just as the voice is right next to her ear, she successfully finds a trap door, and jumps down.

Saide ends up in a different room, but this one gave her a gut feeling. She feels something, but this time it is two see through walls, one separating her from the dead, and one from the living. She realizes the voice was coming from the side of her ancestors. As the voice gets closer. She looks for the voice and realizes her body is not what she normally sees, she sees a blue luminous light shining up to her ankles. She was half ghost.

She saw her Grandpa, it was her Grandpa who was calling her name, her Grandpa was the mysterious voice! “Grandpa! Grandpa! I haven’t seen you in years! Oh how I missed you grandpa!” she said. Grandpa says to Sadie “Oh Sadie, I have missed you dearly as well. But don't worry about me, everyone comes and goes, you have to focus on yourself and be the best version of yourself everyday. You have the memories we have made together treasure those,

and I will treasure mine.” As Grandpa backs away she sees all of her ancestors behind Grandpa. As she looks down trying to hide her tears she sees she is fully human now, and that there is a portal leading back home. Sadie said one last goodbye to all her ancestors, and went through the portal. The portal sends her right back to where she was standing before on the volleyball court. She thinks about Grandpa's words and realizes he is right. Sadie thinks in her mind “Of course, I will miss Grandpa, but he is right” After that Sadie did realize that sometimes we need to move one.