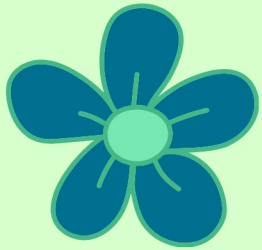


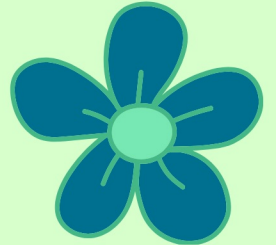
ISSUE #8

JAN 15TH, 2026



Wildflower Post

Newsletter



TODAY'S WRITER

Alianna Andrews

Alianna Andrews is a student at the California High School in San Ramon. She has been interested in any and all forms of storytelling from a young age.



The House

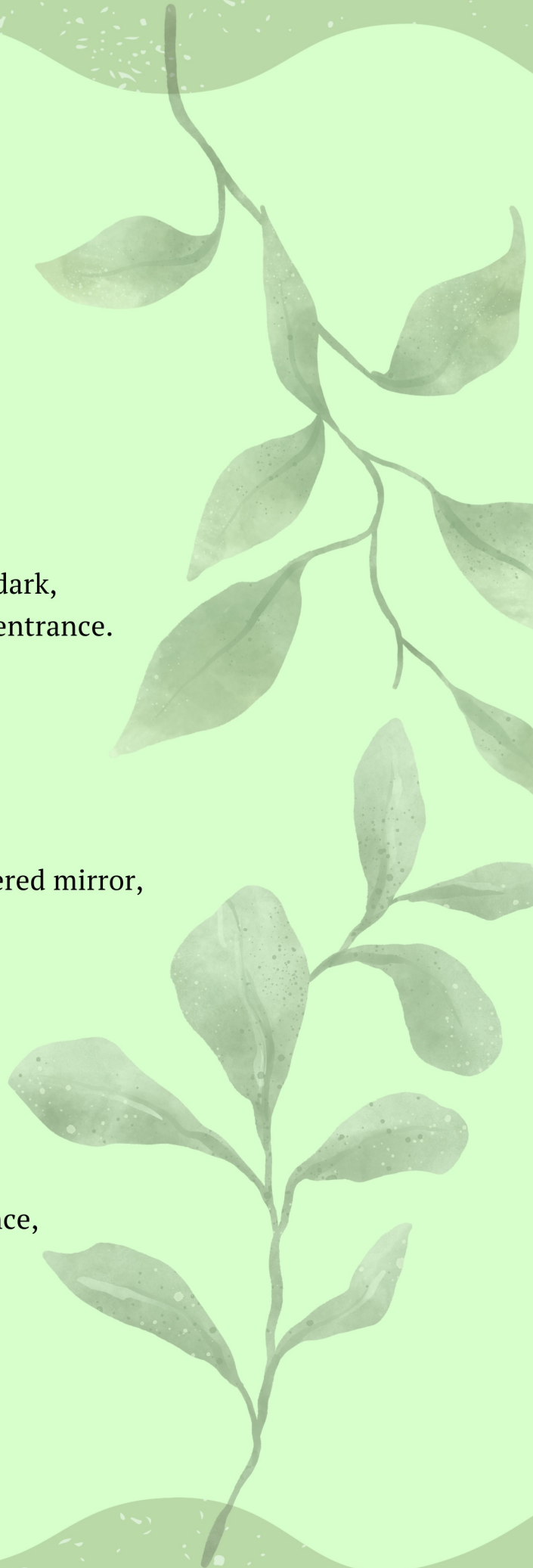
ALIANNA ANDREWS

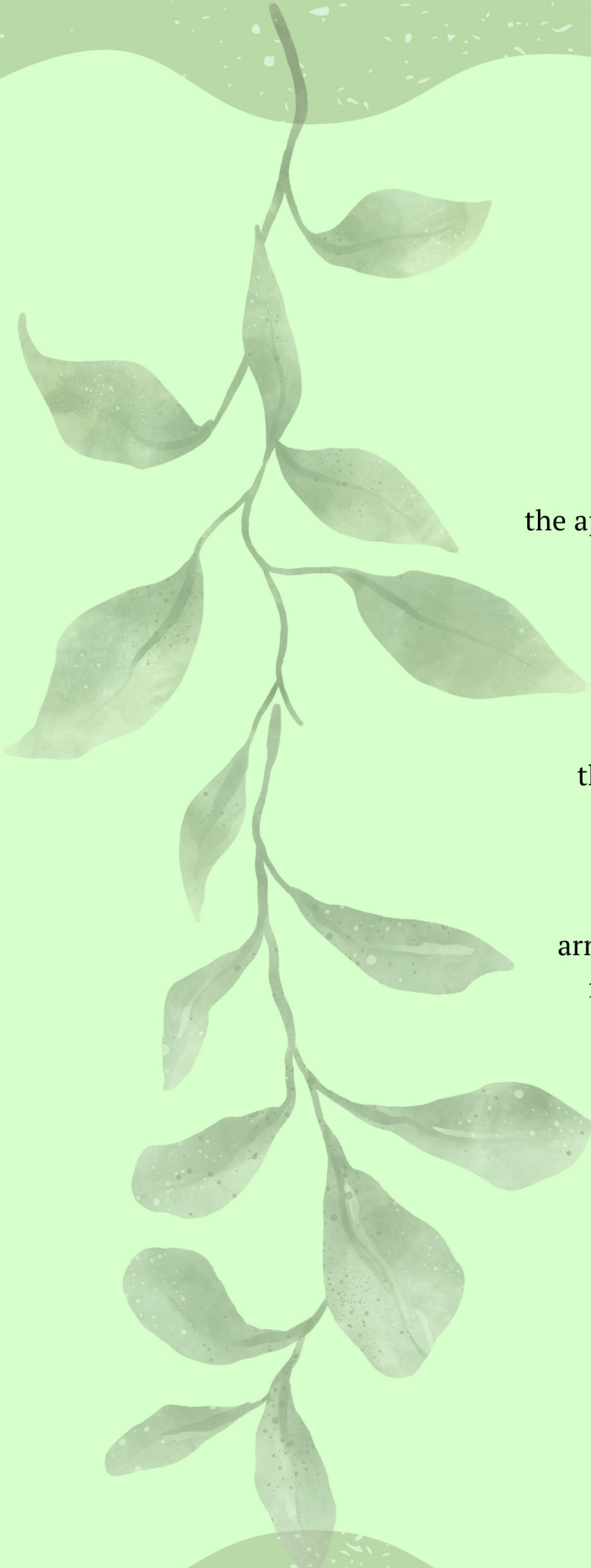
You're up before dawn again,
telling me the lights are warming up,
that the house is filling,
that you can feel them breathing in the dark,
watching, waiting for you to make your entrance.

But the only audible breath in here
is yours—
Shallow. Frantic. Scared.

You do your makeup in the nearly shattered mirror,
stroke by trembling stroke,
painting the face you wore
when the world still wanted you.
You tell your reflection,
Hold still.
It doesn't.

In the hallway, you rehearse your entrance,
chin lifted, your smile too wide,
pausing for applause that never arrives.





*They're clapping.
You whisper.
Can you hear them?
Can you hear me?
They miss me.*

I don't know how to tell you
the audience left ages ago,
the applause you're waiting for moved on
to brighter, younger stars.

I don't know how to tell you
the seats in the house are empty,
their ghosts quieter
than the dust settling on your gowns.

Still, every night,
you stand at the top of the stairs,
arms raised high, eyes blazing with the
fire of a spotlight long extinguished.

And when you bow
to the silence
that swallows your name,
I swear
for a moment
the house really is watching.
And it bows back.

And you turn to me
and grin.
See? I knew they'd come back for me.