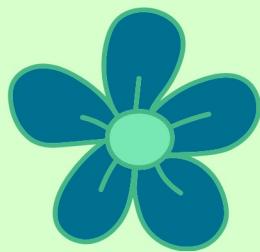


ISSUE #8

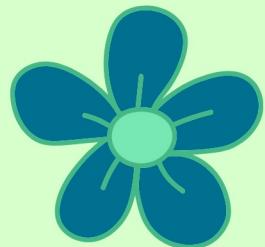
JAN 15TH, 2026

---



# 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*

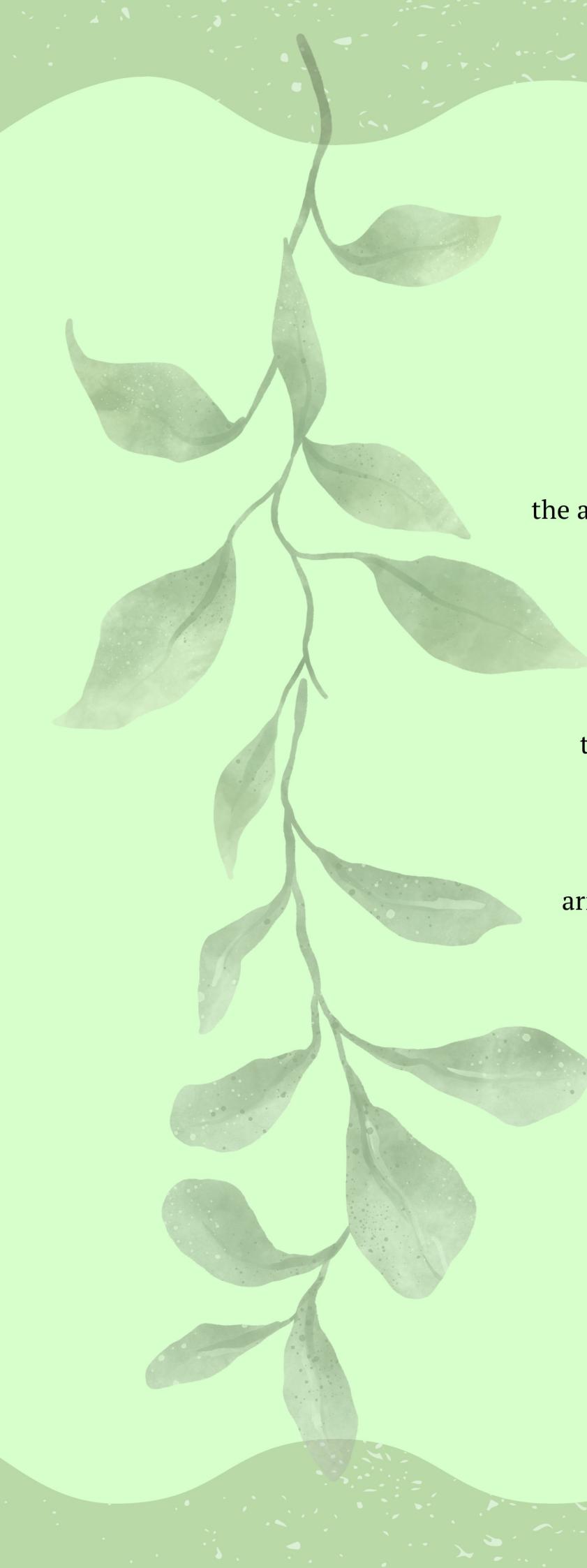
ALIANNA ANDREWS

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.*