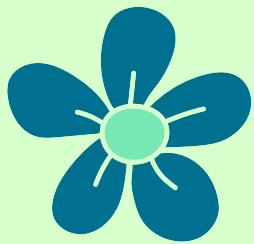


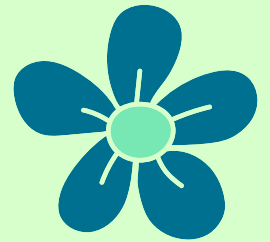
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Newsletter



TODAY'S WRITER

Alina Jiang

Alina Jiang is a Chinese American writer and poet from Virginia. She is an alumna of the Kenyon Review Young Writers Workshop and the Sewanee Young Writers' Conference. Her work has been recognized by the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards and has appeared or is forthcoming in *Skipping Stones*, Moonstone Arts Center, *Bridge Ink*, and other publications. She received first place in the Virginia Writers Club's 2025 Teen Nib Competition for nonfiction.

Glass

ALINA JIANG

My grandma bends to pick up a jagged piece of the glass bowl I dropped. As she picks it up, the glass slices into the palm of her hand. She flinches, her grip loosening, and it falls again, shattering into thousands of tiny shards of glass. She clutches her wrist, moving quickly to the sink to rinse her hand under cold water as blood threads down the drain.

“Alina,” she says. “Help me.”

I jump to my feet and run toward the medicine cabinet to grab gauze for her hand. After she finishes rinsing, I wrap the gauze tightly around her palm. She winces, and it only makes me wrap it tighter.

Later, I watch my grandma as she is on her hands and knees, trying to pick up the little pieces of glass too small to sweep with a broom. She’s wearing her prescription glasses but still squinting. Her forehead is painted with wrinkles, a testament to the years she worked.

When does a person become so close to death that no one can touch them? When did the river become so wide between us that it grew impossible to reach the person on the other side? When did my ability to be with her in her suffering cease?

I ask myself all of this but still come up with no answer. She’s still on the floor. I can almost hear the creaking of her joints as she reaches for a little piece under the table. I wince and look away.