

# UC Merced

## The Vernal Pool

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Boxes

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## Boxes

I laid in bed. My room was dark. The faint lights of the outside only penetrated slightly in this small encased box of a room but did not disturb the darkness that accumulated as the sun left. The anime poster was the only decoration that I had on my white walls. My nostrils still smelled the watermelon scent from the once lit candle. My room was small and cramped.

Shelves filled with colorful books and pens. My bed was quite comfortable, but the light blue sheets did not stop the goosebumps that covered my body. The day had been great until I heard those words from the television.

The words echoed in my ears in replay mode. The words were, “you are right, you don’t get it. They gave up on her. They just buried an empty box in the ground and moved on, had lattes, saw movies. They just lived their lives. And all the while their daughter was out there... all alone and in pain.” The words echoed as I grabbed the pillow from under my head to stifle the scream that erupted deep within the recess of my body, heart, and mind. My eyes were blurry, the tears brimmed down like a river wetting my cheeks. I clenched the pillow tightly as the words still echoed in my head. I then pulled my black mascara stained pillow off from my face and breathed in.

Images flashed one neuron firing after another. I heard faint sounds of laughter. Faint smells of burnt rice filled my senses. I was taken back into the world that I once had. I was there standing in that house. The exterior was old and adobe like. The rusted white fence was in the same spot with little green weeds that entwined themselves around it. The sun was high in the sky illuminating everything it had touched. I saw my small two-year old brother butt naked, his round tan cheeks wobbled as he ran away from my mother. My sister was sitting on the vibrant

red couch, her small tan hand had held a colored pencil. Her eyes were focused like a possessed demon in her drawing. The surface of the paper had lines and colors of red, yellow, and pink. In the distance, birds chirped as they sang. Their songs were carried by the wind, that had entered our window. The bitter scent of burnt onion wafted in the small living room, as I heard my father's booming laughter echo. I was here, this was home. I approached closer to them and spoke, but no sound was heard. I blinked, and the smells, sounds, and images slowly faded.

One action. One word can bring forth change into someone's life. The reality is that we are all boxes. We are either buried behind or taken unforgotten. Many people do not understand. I don't expect you to understand the level of reality this may hit a lot of people around us. They may ride the bus. They are the cashiers in our convenience stores. They can be anyone. No one notices because there is no name tag labeled in big red letters saying, "I was buried 10 years ago" or "I was recently buried." They have been forgotten by their blood. Their kin. Ironically, the people that are *supposed* to stay. Their kin moved on like any other day even if the box being buried wasn't meant to be.

Nothing can be done about it. We are boxes that move on because reminiscing about the old times will only bring forth more haunting dreams. Sometimes, the lucky boxes become unburied and then all is well because they were not forgotten. Others, though fate is not so lucky. They remained buried as the years pass. The weight of the dirt getting heavier and heavier. At some point, gets so heavy that no one can unbury those forgotten boxes. That is life. That is the cruel fate of reality.