Rosemary is a second-year Ph.D. student in English. Upon graduation, she hopes to relocate to Texas and teach at The University of Texas at Austin, her alma mater. Her husband is an IT technician for the City of Pullman, and full-time student in the MIS Department. They have three furry children: one bulldog and two cats.

A Winston red, tucked gingerly into the corner of a black-mustachioed mouth, dances, up and down, as we sit, talk, sip coffee.

"Remember, mija? Yo, con pelo negro, sin canas?" He's asking, between short inhales, if I remember when he was young, when his hair was black, no white hairs. I watch his smoke swirl and slither above now thin and barely peppered hair.

But that was years ago. Now, my pungent smoke drifts up alone like small, gray ghosts escaping pursed lips, nostrils. Deadly, like a pistol in my mouth, my own finger on the trigger.

Inhale, exhale, not too deep. I'll catch it back at my throat... no, deeper. Yes, where fear takes root, burrows and destroys a wish that parents live forever.

Then, bad news from far away. Mother: "It's Daddy. It's his heart again. We didn't want to worry you."

Inhale, exhale, thick, full smoke. Head rushing, tears welling, here, not Texas. Here, up North, 1,535 miles from Home. Suddenly, the distance becomes a truth that little girls face. Innocence is lost when one day, Daddy's in a hospital and can't remember you.