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Patience

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Description

A short piece of creative nonfiction about my grandma teaching me how to play solitaire in the wake of Hurricane Irma.

Keywords

Cedarville, creative writing, nonfiction, Emma Foster

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About the Contributor

Emma Foster is a junior English major at Cedarville University. She lived in Florida before transferring to Cedarville.

Nonfiction

PATIENCE

EMMA FOSTER

Grandma sits at our dining room table, her expression as worn as the deck of cards she holds in her hand. By now, the winds have stopped howling and the floodwaters have subsided, but the electricity has been out for two days. Our house is the only house in the neighborhood with running water, and my Grandma's house might be flooded.

When she places the cards down, the Kings, Queens, and Jacks stare up at me with blank eyes. They look different to me: I've seen anxious looks in my parent's eyes ever since the forecasters announced Irma had suddenly veered west directly through Florida. The cards are battered like the house across the street that lost its back porch to a tornado passing by. I sit down next to Grandma, watching her conduct a military strategy to take her mind off the battle we've all been fighting for the past week.

Eager to show me how order is established, Grandma resets the cards in their columns, totaling twenty-eight cards, seven revealing themselves to the ceiling. Black meets red in opposing patterns. The kingdoms are scattered, each card succumbing to the rules of the match, but for once, there seems to be order.

I follow Grandma's directions, developing a strategy. I keep the game going until the black Queens I betrothed to red Kings for my benefit are taken back to their kingdoms. She watches me put the cards in their proper piles and create absolute organization amid the chaos of outside. Grandma stares out the window at the bare wreckage with eyes like the paper eyes of the Kings, fixed on nothing.