

Lola - Original Creative writing by Taiwo Alabi (Level 3 English)

I don't understand what went wrong. I don't even think I can remember when it started to go wrong. One minute I was her *pequeño tesoro* whom she adored and couldn't be without, and now, I'm just a *tetua verguena* wandering aimlessly around her house. She used to stare at me for endless hours watching as I sat by the wooden desk situated in the corner of our retro living room, looking through the latest *Diosa!* magazine. She used to watch me walk down the cracked pavement towards our brightly-coloured house through the centre of the white symmetrical window frame. She used to walk past my bedroom door every half an hour spying on me like *un acosador*. She paid attention to every single detail of my life so much that anyone would think I was dying! But that all changed... I can't remember when or why. All I know is that it was all so sudden it's almost as if all the good times were just a dream.

This morning I woke up and did the usual. Make my bed, brush my teeth, get in the shower, get dressed and put the kettle on. Sometimes I don't even know why I bother putting on the kettle. It's not as if two minutes of bubbling hot water could make a great difference to the constant silence that filled the air every single day. Anyways, I spot a letter with a red label propped on the doormat. I look to my left only to notice the cause of my screwed up and unfortunate present, bugged up in her usual spot like an old worn out rag that's been long gone forgotten about. I wait patiently in hope that she'd get up to pick the letter or at least acknowledge it (it does seem quite urgent and important) but neither of that happens. Defeated, I breathe a heavy sigh and trudge towards the door, pick up the unusual looking envelope and examine it, trying to work out what it might be about. Of course. I should've known. Another bill. This is the eleventh one in the space of two months and every time I remind her or let her know she'd scream at me *¡Sal de mi cara, estúpida chica! Todo es culpa tuya de todos modos* and I'll just turn around and walk away. It hurts just as much as the first time every time but I just keep trying and trying for a reason I can't seem to figure out. Sometimes, I wish I'd just disappear or just run off into the wild and become one of the *ciguapas*¹. They seem to have it easy. I can't do that to Oscar though. I mean yes, *abuela's* around to take good care of him but she isn't as strong as she was. I'd miss him too much anyways.

My day begins. Here I am standing in the middle of the corridor watching the students of Rutgers High swarm around like bees in a beehive. The stench of failure suffocating the cold thin air, so thin you'd think any minute now it the force of the flapping wings would rip it into a thousand pieces. It is just like my last high school, not a single thing has changed. The teachers, the classrooms, the students - all the same. The canteen, the cliques, the clubs - all the same. The rumours, the lies, the *bullshit* - All. The. Same. It's almost as if I'm a record player stuck on repeat. I mean think about it. *You wake up every morning, dreaming of an escape from this living hell and when you finally find a way out (or at least you thought you did) it all turns out to be cock and bull.* What on earth did I do to deserve this? Why do things

¹ Mythological creature of Dominican folklore. They are commonly described as having human female form with brown or dark blue skin, backward facing feet, and very long manes of smooth, glossy hair that covers their otherwise naked bodies. They supposedly inhabit the high mountains of the Dominican Republic.

keep going backwards instead of forward? Why do I keep drowning in this never-ending sea of grief?