

The fleeting years of my childhood were dripping with magic. Stories of gnomes and fairies, mermaids, wizards, monsters and gifted heroes who taught me how to navigate through life. These fairy tales molded me into who I am today and still resonate deep within my mind. However, the difference between my younger self and my present self's relationship with magic is that I can no longer believe in it. This breaks my heart.

Children have the incredible capacity to believe in what they cannot see. They believe in Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy because they are told they exist and have no reason to think otherwise. Children live happily in a life full of wonder, yet as they grow older, they begin to lose this ability to believe. Adults tend to get tangled in a web of facts, only allowing themselves to believe in something if there is proof, constantly needing to prove existence or reason.

Yet, there is something that many people never grow out of believing, some even grow into it: religion. Religion is a mindset, a lifestyle, a belief and support system, a relationship with a higher power, a deeper connection or understanding or even an explanation or escape. It is an individual experience that so many people put their full trust in. But they do this without proof. There is no evidence of the existence of God just as there is none for unicorns. So why, as we age, do we leave behind the belief of magic, but continue to have faith in God?

With this idea in mind, I created a short illustrated story to explore one's relationship with faith and fairy tales. I wanted to express the necessity of a child's exposure to these stories, and show the balance of the significance of religion in one's life. The style and bright colors I chose for this work reflects how I saw the world around me as a child. I wanted to embrace the interlacing of faith and fairy tales, and encourage adults to reconsider their willingness to let their childhood wonder go.

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FAITH &
FAIRY TALES

Preface

This story is meant to highlight the progression of a young girl's relationship with her faith and her belief in fairy tales. This is not meant to invalidate any religion or belief, nor is it implying faith or God is a mere story. I recognize and respect any and all religions and their influence and importance. This is also not to tell anyone who or what to believe in. Every individual has the right to their own opinions and beliefs. My one goal with this story is to return the possibility of a child-like wonder to those who may have lost it

Faith & Fairy Tales

By Sophia Andrade



The sun was setting over the small town on a Sunday evening, and the fairies were starting to come out of hiding for the night. A young girl, who had been impatiently waiting for them all day, put the finishing touches on the house she had built for the fairies to rest.

“Adeline! Come set the table for dinner!” Her mother called from the house.

The girl was disappointed and begged her mother to let her play longer.

“The fairies will be there tomorrow,” she said.

Reluctantly, Adeline said goodbye to the fairies and ran inside to help.

Adeline and her mother peacefully laid out a warm meal on the table. The smell was so delicious it made the girl's stomach grumble. She could hardly wait to eat, but her mother swiftly stopped her before the first bite hit her mouth.



"Say Grace, Adeline." Adeline and her mother held hands across the table, thanked God for their meal, and finally began eating the food.

Adeline had been collecting food scraps in her napkin throughout dinner. Once she was excused from the table, she immediately slipped through the front door to leave the scraps for the troll under the porch stairs.



Adeline and her friends were walking home, huddled around the small tooth in Adeline's hand. It had fallen out earlier that day during lunch while she was eating carrots. She wanted to get home as quick as possible to put it under her pillow.

"You're so lucky!" Exclaimed Avery, "the Tooth Fairy is gonna bring you money and you're gonna be rich!" Adeline and her friends squealed with joy.

"The Tooth Fairy isn't real."

The girls turned around to see Lila frowning at them, arms crossed. They asked what she meant.

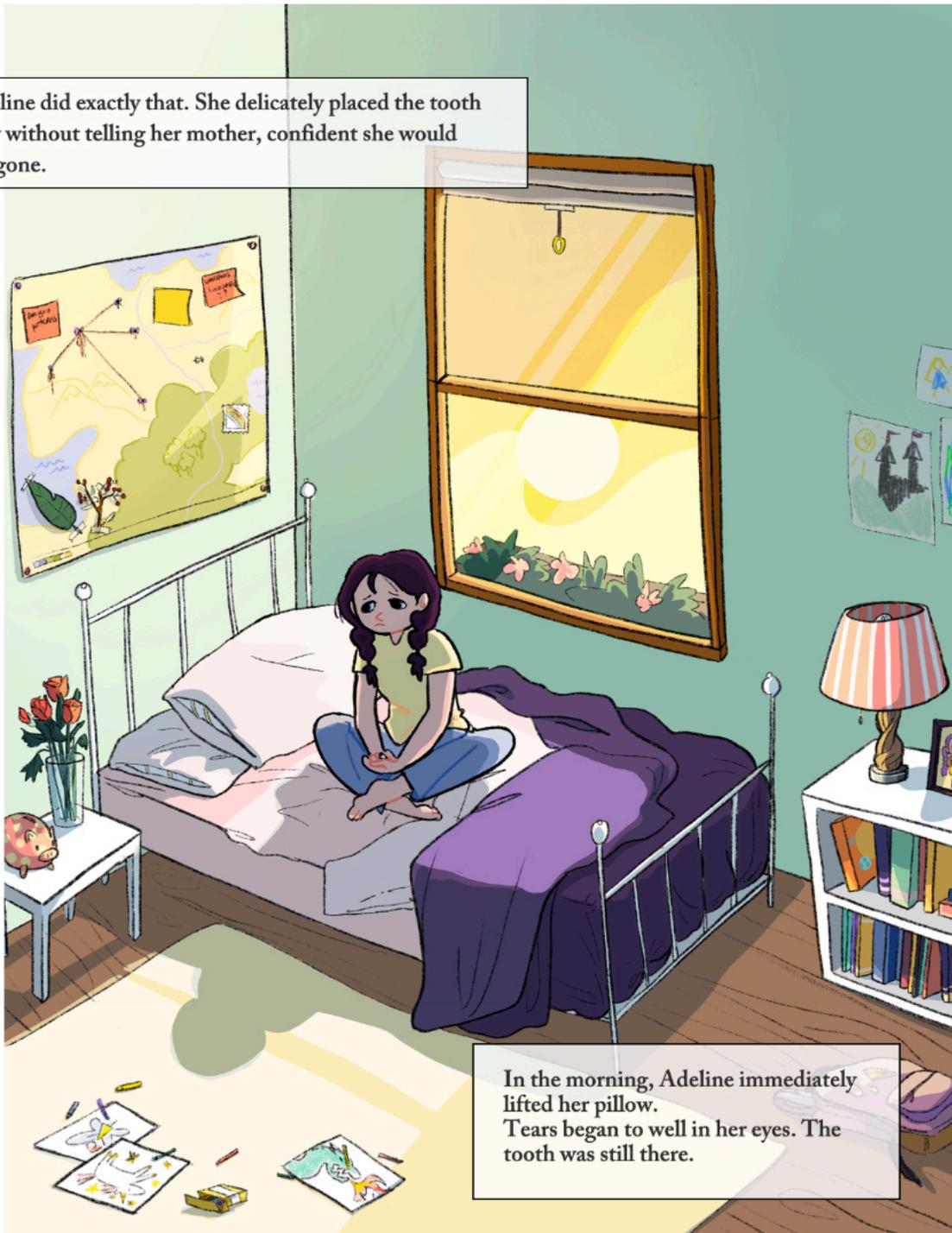
"Duh, everyone knows it. The Tooth Fairy doesn't exist, our parents are the ones who put money under our pillows," she said, while rolling her eyes.

Adeline shook her head. "No way! You're lying!"

"Fine, if you don't believe me, don't tell your mom that you lost your tooth. See what happens."



That night, Adeline did exactly that. She delicately placed the tooth under her pillow without telling her mother, confident she would wake up with it gone.



In the morning, Adeline immediately lifted her pillow. Tears began to well in her eyes. The tooth was still there.

Adeline sat on the end of a dock with her friend, Jona, their legs dipping into the cool water. "My sister woke up at 5am yesterday to try to catch the Easter Bunny hiding eggs in our yard," Jona said, tossing a stone into the pond.

Adeline giggled, "I remember when I used to do that, stay up all night to try and see the Easter bunny, or Santa Clause. I always fell asleep."

"Yah, crazy how we used to believe in all that stuff, Santa, the Tooth Fairy, God, Mermaids."

"Yah," Adeline paused. "Wait, did you say God? God is real," she said confused.

Jona looked over at her. "No He's not, my dad said God is just an excuse people use when they don't like what science says. It's just another story, like dragons and unicorns."

Adeline threw a rock as far as she could, "My mom used to tell me God created all those creatures."

"Did you believe her?"

"Of course."





Her mother pulled her in for a hug and stroked her hair.
“We may not always understand, but we must have faith in His plan. Everything happens for a reason.”

It was a dark night and grey clouds rolled towards the small town; a thunderstorm was imminent. Adeline and her mother sat on the couch in their living room.
Her mother was sick.
“I don’t understand.” Adeline was shaking her head, “Why would He let this happen?”
She tried to hold back the tears as her mother grasped her hand and smiled gently.
“Only God Himself knows why He does what He does.”
Adeline was angry, confused, and hurt. “If God was real He wouldn’t allow this, He’s supposed to be good.”

Adeline held tightly to her mother’s hand, her grasp weakly returning the gesture.
“I see Him, Adeline. He’s here.”
Tears streamed down Adeline’s cheeks. Her mother’s hand wiped them away with a trembling thumb.
“Don’t lose Faith. Believe.”



Adeline desperately tried to keep the car driving straight as the windshield wipers fought against themselves to keep the snow away. It was dark, and she couldn't see past her headlights. Her heart raced as the car lurched slightly to the side before she was able to straighten it out again. Adeline gripped the steering wheel and whispered a prayer. Suddenly, a bright light appeared in the distance. Squinting, Adeline could just make out a tall, stone church with light pouring from the glass windows. She thanked God as she pulled as far into the driveway as the snow would allow, covered her face in her scarf and rushed against the wind to the tall oak doors of the church. After one knock, the doors slowly swung open. A rush of warm air sent a wave of relief. The church was mostly empty except for a man sitting in one of the pews by the doors, who looked up when Adeline entered.

"It's bad out there."
Adeline nodded while using the heat of her breath to warm her hands. "The spirits must be angry."
The man looked at her quizzically. "The Holy Spirit?"
Her cheeks flushed. "Well, um, not exactly. I mean the Elements. Spirits of the Earth. My mom used to tell me stories of beings that controlled the weather."

He nodded, amused, and motioned for Adeline to take a seat beside him. He reached out his hand and she took it.
"My name is Samuel"
"Nice to meet you."
"The pleasure is all mine," he said.

“Oh, Sam, it’s beautiful.”
Adeline held back tears as she took in the room around her; the delicate white crib, the mobile above the small mattress with flying fairies, the unicorn rocking horse.
Adeline squeezed the baby in her arms one last time before placing her gently in the crib.
“I’m so happy you like it,” Sam whispered. He wrapped his arms around Adeline’s waist.



On a warm Friday evening in the summer, Adeline sat in a large blue armchair with her daughter in her lap, reading aloud.

"Mommy, what are those?"

Adeline looked up from the story and out the window. The sun was almost completely set. Small, flickering lights weaved their way in and out of the tall grass of the lawn.

"Those are the fairies," she explained, "They come out at night to play."



“Wake up! Wake up! Santa Came!”
Adeline groggily sat up in bed to see her daughter tugging Sam’s hair. Reluctantly, Adeline removed herself from the comfort of her blankets and pulled Ana off her father. Together, they all made their way downstairs and into the living room. Ana squealed and took everything in. The chocolate milk was almost completely gone, the cookies were nothing more than crumbs, the carrots had been nibbled, and a pile of gifts had been left under the tree. Adeline cuddled up on the couch with Sam, and they smiled as their daughter began ripping wrapping paper off the first box.



"MOM! I'm Dying!"

Adeline rushed into the room spinning Ana around to face her, swiping her hands across her forehead and cheeks, "What's wrong, what happened, are you hurt?" Tears were streaming down the young girl's cheeks. She held out her hand, and in her small palm was a tiny tooth. Adeline smiled.



"My teeth are falling out! Im dying!" Ana wailed. Adeline shook her head reassuringly.

"No Angel, that's completely normal," she wiped the tears away from the girls eyes with her thumb, "Now we'll put the tooth under your pillow while you sleep, and the Tooth Fairy will come and replace it with a surprise."

Ana's eyes widened.

"The Tooth Fairy?"

"Yes, Angel."



Adeline watched curiously from her seat in the living room as her daughter tiptoed into the kitchen, looked frantically around her, climbed onto the counter, and removed the bottle of honey from the cabinet. Slowly, she lowered herself back to the floor and made her way to the front door.

“Where do you think you’re going?”

Ana paused midstep. She suddenly perked up and put on her biggest smile. “Jackie and I are going unicorn hunting!”

Adeline eyed the honey, “and what’s that for?”

“Ms. Penny said unicorns love honey.” Obviously.

Adeline smiled and nodded. “Alright then, be back before dinner or I’ll send the dragon after you.”

Ana’s eyes widened, “Dad?”

“Dad.”



Adeline put the cookies in the oven and closed the door. She began to set the timer when she noticed a figure next to her. Ana was leaning against the doorframe, arms crossed. "Everything okay, Angel?" She furrowed her brow. "Mom, is God real?" Adeline paused. She set the timer, silently took a seat at the table, and waved to her daughter to do the same. "Why do you ask?" "Jackie doesn't believe in Him, and said that if he was real evil wouldn't exist. Do you think He's real?" Ana's eyes were filled with confusion. "Well," she said, "I do. I believe He saved my life, more than once actually." "Why didn't He save Grandma's life?" Adeline was silent. She could feel her eyes threaten to water, but she shook them away. "I don't know. But that's okay. We will never know the reasons for God's plans, we just have to have faith." Ana was clearly still struggling. Adeline put her hand on her daughter's.

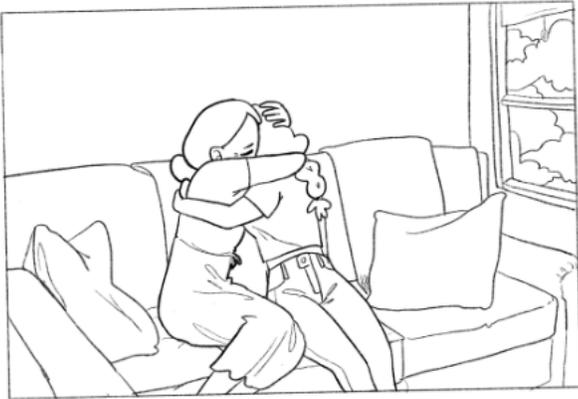
"Do you believe?" Ana looked surprised by the question. "Your relationship with God is your own. No one can tell you what that is, you have to figure that out for yourself. I am always here to help, but you have to decide whether or not to have Faith in Him." Ana smiled and nodded. She was still confused, but less so, and she was comforted by her mother's words. In time, she'd come to find the answer to her own question, in her own way. "I love you, Angel, no matter what." "I love you too."

CONCEPT ART

Adeline (child)



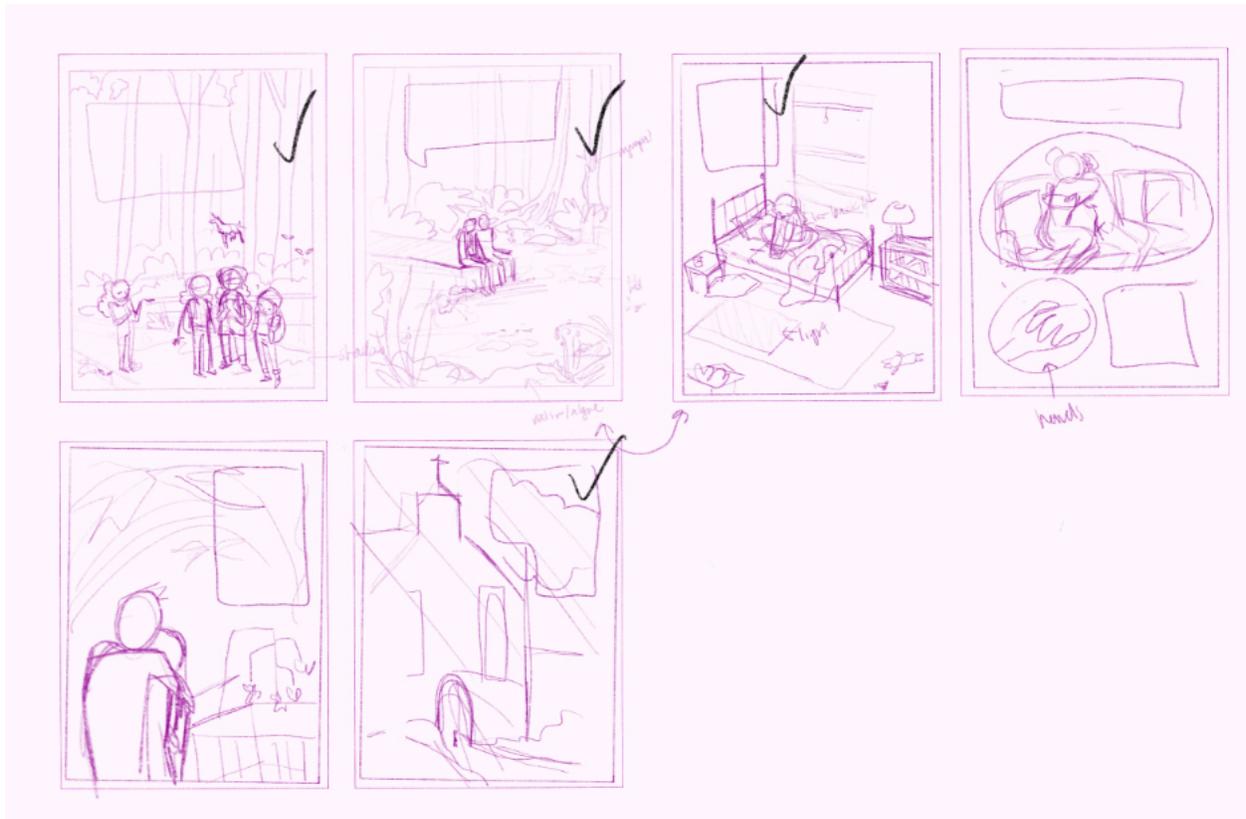
Style Exploration



Color Study



Thumbnails



Adeline (teen)



Line Art



Adeline (adult)

