

Movie Score

Whenever I would watch films, the thing that stood out to me the most was not how vivid and realistic the scenes and characters were, but rather, how strongly the music resonated with me. To me, a song could paint a better picture than anything else could. Without it, scenes would lack a vital part of what brings them to life:

music that accompanied the most powerful scenes.

For my wild card, I chose to paint a picture of some of the most significant moments in my life, using five emotionally-stirring musical pieces as my guide. I wanted to combine my love of music and language while also

so my wild card serves as a small peek into the best and worst parts of me. To get the full effect, I encourage anyone reading this to listen to the song that corresponds to each story.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8-hwFKQhplJCRBsUqLgFqVFfNr9Kqb1>

Arrival of the Birds

The Cinematic Orchestra

There was something beautiful about being whisked away in the dead of night, especially when I knew I was being saved. I could only stare, wide-eyed, at my home as my grandfather drove farther and farther away from it, and I could only stare, wide-eyed, at the ground below me as it grew smaller and smaller the higher our plane rose in the sky.

Black clouds soon turned pink as sunlight spilled onto them, and I thought of the warmth of my mother, whom I had missed dearly. I thought of the last goodbye I said to her before she left for America, leaving me alone for five months. I thought of the anger of my father and tears in my eyes. I thought of how happy I was to be plucked from my bed at the young age of five to be brought God knows where.

Anywhere but here.

She was.

Thank God she was.



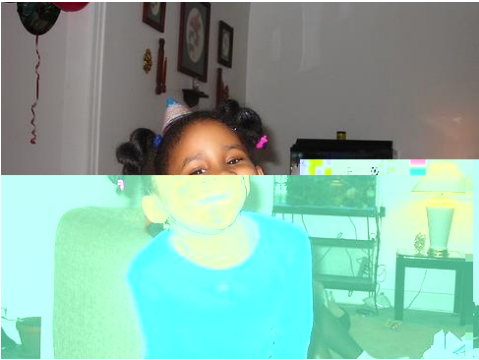
My mother and me after moving to America

Domestic Pressures

The Theory of Everything

New York City was unlike anything I had ever seen in my entire life. There were no palm trees, no gravel, no shabby wooden houses, and there were certainly no mangoes or bananas hanging from the boughs of the few trees I saw scattered here and there. Gray buildings towered over my mother and me, and an unfathomable number of bodies knocked against my own, no matter how closely I stuck to her side. With every breath I took, I inhaled stale cigarettes, honey-roasted peanuts, and what at the time smelled like month-old garbage.

row after row of cold, hard faces. And when I realized that I was invisible in this new world, just like everyone else, a smile spread across my face. I was in a world full of people who had yet to learn of my existence, and I loved it.



Me grinning widely on my 7th birthday

Autumn Love

Thomas Bergersen

I can vaguely remember the days leading up to the birth of my little brother, and yet, funnily enough, I can hardly remember life without him. I do recall begging for a sister, as though my parents could miraculously choose which genes they wished to give to their unborn child. I wanted someone soft like myself: someone who would join me in the corner of my bedroom, someone I could read to. Somehow, I was aware of the fact that a brother would only bring chaos into my peaceful life.

Before he even left the womb, my brother would bully me relentlessly stomach, and coincidentally, her morning sickness would worsen whenever she looked at me. My brother kept me away from the one person I wanted to know that I existed. I never wanted my brother; before my brother was born, I had already resented him.

Still, when my mother gently passed him over to me as we lay in the hospital bed, I felt my breath catch in my throat. I was aware of the fact that I held a tiny menace in my arms, but in an instant, all of his sins against me were forgiven.



Holding my brother for the first time

To Build a Home

The Cinematic Orchestra

There was something heartbreaking about being whisked away at the beginning of summer, especially when you knew you would never see your home again.

I waved goodbye to the tall skyscrapers and the broken roads and the hooting pigeons and my old life. In my mind, I kissed every cold face I saw and hugged every corner store clerk. And I felt my soul weep and weep, hearing the faint splash of its tears against the gray pavement beneath my small feet.

me

When we arrived in Georgia, my eyes found the trees, the little birds, the red clay, and my family.

I will always regret looking up at the sky that day. I will always regret making that promise.

I wish

I wish it had been blue that day.



My family and me one winter in Georgia

Love Hurts

Yiruma

In the summer of 2015, my new world fell apart. I lost the peace I had, and I lost part of my soul. The summer before I began my first semester of college, love fled from my home, and my parents went their separate ways. I fell out of touch with my family and friends, and I hid myself, ashamed of myself for existing.

That summer changed me completely. I tread upon the ground for months as an empty, smiling vessel, and when I was alone, I wept silently.

I mourned for my parents and my brother and my family and for the part of me that died in those months.

It still pains me to talk about it, but this experience, just like all the others, is part of who I am.

