

Michelle by BRITTANY RIVERS

Michelle was the kind of girl who would eat ice cream during the winter and drink hot chocolate during the summer. Michelle was the kind of girl who would walk through the fresh powder of snow even if it meant walking in the grass. She would always tell me that she would rather get frostbite in her toes than have her footprints lost in the masses. Michelle was the kind of girl who always said stuff like that. Michelle was the kind of girl who, even if it was over a hundred degrees, would wear a long sleeved T-shirt because she said short sleeves make her arms look fat. That was a total lie, though. Michelle was so thin, short, and pale that she'd make me so jealous sometimes. Michelle was the kind of girl who was naturally skinny, something about a high metabolism, or something. Maybe that was the reason Michelle was considered an "outsider." Maybe it was those sayings she would always quote from some dead unknown author that made people stop and wonder what planet she's from. Maybe it was the way she walked; she shuffled her feet which reminded me of that alien off of the Looney Toons . . . Marvin, I think that was his name or Mark, something like that. Michelle told me once, "Rachel, I don't mean to be different; it's just the way I am. It's both my blessing . . . and my curse." And then, I remember, she fell quiet and didn't say anything at all until we reached the old skating rink where we hung out a lot. We didn't hang out a lot after we reached high school, though, because Michelle was always so sick and tired. Every day, after school, we'd go and hang out for only a few hours. Then she'd ask me to leave because she suffered from insomnia and could only rest during daylight hours. Michelle was the kind of girl whose body would go to sleep when everyone else was awake. Michelle wasn't the kind of girl everyone's used to. Michelle wasn't a beauty queen, even though I thought she should have been. Michelle wasn't someone who you could ignore. When Michelle walked into a room, you took notice of her whether it was good or bad. Michelle isn't someone who frowns, and trust me, I've known her since we were in diapers; I know what I'm talking about.

Man, if Michelle was a class, I'd sure as hell get an A. I think I know her better than I know anything about anyone in my family. Michelle was different and that's why I found myself falling in love with her. But it was that day, that horrible day that shook my dream and drug me straight down into the hell of reality. It was a cold March day. I always hated March. It was a dumb month that couldn't decide if it wanted to be spring or winter so while it decided it made everyone in it suffer. Cold. Hot. Cold. Hot. Actually, I'm not clever enough to think of that saying on my own. It was Michelle who used to say it as we were growing up. Although that saying really doesn't apply to March anymore. January is now like July and vice versa, the months are all confused including March. Why can't things from my childhood stay the same?
(...)