

2019 MCC Creative Writing Contest

First Place - Fiction Category

"Hysteria" by Rachel Showers

Nova nervously paced the length of her apartment, moonlight illuminating her lavender hair. She glanced out her window at the decaying city, her building just as decrepit as the rest. She was way to time after all the years the brutal weather pounded against it. She

against her government, she might be the next person to disappear. Nova was assigned to this very apartment at age 18 and she would live here until she died.

She plopped down on the couch, drumming her fingers against her thighs as she anxiously awaited the arrival of her very own AI unit. Ever since the outbreak of Malady, the government

had to be a lie. Her government never had truly benign intentions. She tried to warn her friends, but no one cared about anything anymore.

A banging on the door jarred her from her thoughts. It was here. Cautiously, she opened her door and peeked into the hall to find nothing but a small black box sitting on the floor. Odd. Her fingers ran along the sleek surface as she brought it inside and opened it slowly. Initially, it was empty, but the sound of static quickly erupted from the box.

She dropped it as it shook violently, the motion making the entire floor tremble from the sheer force of it. A bright blue flash temporarily blinded Nova and she shielded her eyes with her hand. Once the light subsided, she saw a tall man standing where the box was, his dark eyes giving her a once over. He wore an elegant black suit that was almost as black as his hair.

She elected to ignore him as much as she could while she showed him around her rather bare apartment.

they had started.

erred not to fight him this late at night.

The next morning when Nova woke, the smell of pancakes immediately hit her nose. Normally, ecstatic for another week. She rolled out of bed and headed towards the kitchen, finding Damien at the stove instead of her girlfriend.

partner made them.

Damien sat at the table with Nova, resting his chin in his hand. He stared at her with such intensity that she thought he may be analyzing her for weaknesses to exploit. She preferred to avoid confrontation so she stayed silent for the rest of her breakfast. Nova was never really good at socializing anyways.

Fortunately for her, Damien stayed out of the way for the most part. He was actually pretty helpful in terms of chores and cooking, more than willing to lend a hand wherever she needed it.

to. However, trouble did finally come when she tried to leave to meet her partner.

touching. She took a step back from him, shocked by his sudden aggression. Upon observing her

green eyes were grey, glassy, and sunken into her sockets. Her skin was pallid, seeming as if it was going to flake away at any moment.

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