

# Intertext

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## Section Intro: Resilience

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## R E S I L I E N C E

Resilience. A word found in the character traits vocabulary list of middle schoolers everywhere. A word that some of us are likely tired of hearing. Yet it remains relevant and inspiring when witnessed. Resilience happens after the fact, after trauma. It demonstrates a willingness to grow in response to hardship, to face adversity, recover, and learn something along the way.

Looking back, especially as a bit of a pessimist, it is easy to get bogged down by all the hate, violence, and suffering we see around us. Just this past year has been traumatizing. The COVID-19 pandemic alone is responsible

for the anxiety, isolation, and loneliness of so many. There have been countless devastating acts of hate in the past year, and politics feel like a high stakes soap opera.

Despite all of this, a year is too long to experience no growth, no development of character. We have a hard time believing there is anyone who hasn't shown at least a thread of resilience during the course of the last year. To have learned nothing new is impossible. Those of us who are students are learning to learn in new ways. People have learned to fight injustices more effectively across physical distances via the Internet and social media. Our grandparents have

learned how to use Zoom and FaceTime, something they never would have even tried to do if not for COVID-19. More and more churches are beginning and continuing to stream services, a move that has been historically resisted. After years of begging, class sizes in elementary schools are finally smaller. Large groups of people are considering universal basic income—people who would have laughed at the notion previously. Public health is viewed differently. Public health policy and promotion is *better*. Not adapting to the situation was not a choice.

The predisposition for resilience is rooted in genetics but cultivated through situational encounters. Resilience has become a part of the human experience, ingrained in us through millennia of natural selection. Without it, humanity likely wouldn't have made it this far. So, resilience isn't unique. We see the same capacity for resilience in ourselves. Hearing others' stories reminds and encourages us to stand up and brush the dirt off our own knees when we fall down, too.

This past year has given everyone the opportunity to be resilient. We hope the following pieces will showcase the capacity for resilience within yourself and encourage you to continue learning and growing despite current hardships.

Guiv Lederer's "My Server, My People" describes finding community despite the circumstances created by COVID-19. Through heartfelt and personal descriptions of the members of this community, and the atmosphere within it, we can see the author and his friends create something meaningful that helped them get through the most isolating days of the lockdown.

David Harvey's "Comfortably Hidden" discusses the societal shift away from in-person interactions to virtual ones, and the way that the pandemic has only exacerbated this shift. Harvey encourages us to make a point of building real-world relationships despite the comfort of maintaining the virtual status quo.

"Fight or Flight: The Biology of an Anxiety Attack" by Alesandra "Sasha" Temerte depicts the reality of anxiety. On a biological and mental level, anxiety attacks require a unique kind of endurance. Temerte describes the struggle of not being able to take the wheel, and simply having to wait for the fog to pass.

"The Day I Left" by Nidaa Aljabbarin and "Arrowhead" by Ibraheem Abdi are part of a collection of poems created by the Narratio Fellows for a project called Intertwined Journeys. These pieces were all authored by young refugees who now live in the Syracuse area. Inspired by specific objects, each of these poems reflects on past experiences and identity, touching on themes of war and family.

In Christian Abdo's "No Cancer," we're told the story of a group of friends coming together to support one of their own who is facing serious adversity. Sometimes the hardships faced by one person can reach others, and it is important to offer support, and endure with them.

Again, right now, the world is in a collective state of resilience. We hope these pieces inspire you to be resilient for yourself, for others, and with others. And, we hope you gain a larger appreciation for the subtle resilience this year has brought out in all of us.

—Lydia Engel and Jeanette Orlando

Layout by Jeanette Orlando. Photograph by Julianna Markus.