

(Dedicated to Alma, Ceci, Sean, and Yousef)

Trusted Friends

I have only ever known you as Alma, but to everyone else
you are Marlenny. Neighbors since the age of five,
I remember when we would run around in the backyard on Easter
breaking confetti eggs on our families' heads.
We have continuously drifted in and out of each other's lives
But that childhood bond can stretch for miles, and never break.

I remember when I first met you Ceci. Shy and quiet, but when you
spoke, it was with a confidence like none other. Your soft heart
kept my wild one grounded all through middle school, and
when you said you were moving to New Mexico, I knew
I had to make you something special, a yearbook of our friendship,
that showed how much I would always love your friendship.

As we entered high school, we grew to be more than just friends
and you became like a sibling to me, Sean. You are the older brother
I never had and just a call away, whether it be for a ride to rehearsal
or to downtown Houston on a Friday night. You are always ready
to defend my honor whether, I want you to or not. You remind me
that I'm not alone, that I always have my big brother to fight alongside me.

I kept to myself in class until I was put into a group with you.
You introduced yourself as Yousef, and the more you talked,
the more I was awed at how different you were from my other friends.
A world traveler from Egypt, a great conversationalist
who loves discussing taboo subjects like religion and politics.
You are the nicest person I have ever met.

Alma and I grew up next door to each other and found ourselves together.
Ceci and I faced the same struggles in the rough world of middle school,
and it was on the rough road of life that Sean and I both got our permits.
Then it was at that community college down the road
where Youssef made my world sparkle! My friends have supported me
and shown me that, if we work together, we can get through anything. These four
will stick by my side and distance will never diminish the love they feel for me.