

Stella Moon

Samantha Lara

She arrived at the doorway to his life, and she brought
light ...

Day 1

She stands on his doorstep, her silhouette carved flawlessly into the dawn. Her hair whips around her face in the fervent wind as stars begin to disappear into the pale morning sky. She is completely motionless, but for her hair, and she simply stands and waits. He watches her from the shadows and he can feel it intensifying. The wind blows harder as the last star disappears and the sky turns orange. She takes a step over the threshold towards him as sunlight explodes over the horizon. Light hits her from behind, so bright he is momentarily blinded. The whole world turns white. Then, as quickly as it came, the light lessens, and he is left with a piercing clarity and an ache in his heart. The beautiful woman reaches for his hand.

Day 7

'Richard! Come look!' The voice cuts through his thoughts, causing every atom of his being to explode into supernovae. An amused smile spreads across his face at his own reaction. As his heart rate quickens, he pushes his chair from the desk and walks through to the balcony. The soft white light from the bedroom embraces every curve of her body. She is wearing nothing but one of his t-shirts that comes to just above her knees, and even from the door he can see the goose bumps that cover her long legs. She is staring up at the sky, her long

hair softly stirring across her back like pale silk curtains in the wind. He steps onto the balcony and stands beside her, his fingers brushing against hers.

‘What am I looking at?’ he asks.

Her head still tilted towards the stars, she closes her eyes and sighs. A slow smile spreads across her face.

‘It’s the first full moon of November, did you know?’ She keeps her eyes closed and he doesn’t speak. ‘I checked, in the paper. I didn’t expect it so soon.’ A tiny frown creases her forehead.

His eyes seek out the moon amongst the black blanket of sky. He is surprised to find comfort in its perfect symmetry and warm glow as it floats between the random sprinkle of stars, dim and lifeless in comparison.

‘Want to know something tragic? They say that some of those stars are already dead.’

‘Richard.’ She cuts him off. ‘That’s exactly the sort of thing that beautiful men say to beautiful women to seduce them into romance.’ She gives a hint of a smile. Suddenly her voice becomes softer, her delicate accent becomes stronger, and her words seem to float through the air as he tries to catch hold of them. ‘But do not trust the stars, Richard, they will deceive you. Around the world there are people gazing up at them, fantasising and idolising, night after night. But how can we possibly know if those pinpricks of light that we so often seek solace from are actually stars, or merely light travelling through the universe? We do not realise, until we have already relinquished our trust, that we just gave ourselves away to nothing. Travelling light. A dead star. There’s nothing romantic about a dead star, Richard.’

She stops suddenly and her voice drops to a whisper.

‘The moon, however ... she does not deceive. She comes and she goes, month after month. Waxing and waning on her 30-day cycle. Transparent, predictable, naked in her rhythm. She never changes.’

SAMANTHA LARA

She turns to him, the moon in her eyes, and gives a tiny smile. 'A dead star is not a tragedy. Not compared to her.'

A tear runs down her cheek.

Day 12

He awakens to sunlight flooding in through the door and up onto the bed. He rolls over and watches. Her legs are tangled amongst the white waves of sheets. The pillow gently cradles one side of her face, her hair fanned out behind her. As he watches, her eyes dart around under their lids. A vein in her neck twitches. A little crease appears between her eyebrows. Then without warning, her eyes flutter open and stare straight into his. She blinks, taking a second to orientate herself, and when her eyes focus they stare straight into his soul.

They stay in bed all day, wrapped in sheets, wrapped in music, wrapped in each other. They lie there until the sky darkens and the moon becomes clear. She holds such grace, such certainty in the sky. He struggles to believe she has already begun to wane.

Day 17

He notices a change. On the outside she is the same, but behind those eyes, for the first time he notices a darkness. A shadow. Creeping in to dampen the shine. It makes him want to grab her by the shoulders and shake her until it all falls out and nothing but light remains.

She smiles, but her eyes have begun to fall.

Day 24

She is thin, fragile. The image of her full, laughing face is emblazoned on his mind, but that is all it is: a memory. Her once round face has become frail and tired. She speaks of the endlessness of life.

'Day after day, month after month. Life is the longest thing we will ever know, Richard. So why does it feel like it is slipping away?'

It rolls ahead of her, rolls through time, as she floats behind. There is nothing she can do and she knows it.

Day 30

She is gone. He searches the entire house, looking for some trace, some hint that she has been there. That she shone light upon the darkest parts of his soul and taught him not to be afraid. That she existed at all.

He searches but there is nothing. Not a trace.
It is as empty as the night's sky.

She arrived at the doorway to his life, and she brought light ...

And then she left, leaving darkness behind.

Samantha Lara wrote this in 2010 when she was in Year 11 at Queensland Academy for Creative Industries in Queensland.