

There are many places that may have been washed away by the tide, yet the people's memories of them still live on. Whether they are hidden or passed down is up to them; they are the deciding factor of the city's longevity.

Global warming and climate change was what led to the metropolis' downfall, but it was once a bustling, lively city dominated by culture and tourism. People either lived here or admired the beach, despite the irony that it would once consume the land. There were two parts making up the grand city, Miami and a small island connected by a bridge, Miami Beach. The two were barely apart, yet were instantly different. The suburban and downtown areas of Miami contrasted the island's commerce, touristic and expensive residencies. Even an entire avenue known as Lincoln Rd entirely dedicated to stores and restaurants, a magnet to the sightseer was something rare in the mainland.

While the rising tides loomed ahead with impending doom, the overwhelming majority regarded it of little importance. However, with every majority, there is a minority, who strives for a solution. One may not notice at first, but the events of the past and present are eerily similar. The cause I recall from a hazy past of a story told by my grandmother is one of over a century ago. The island's main high school, Miami Beach Senior High, and many locations around the city were dedicated to a seemingly small movement. Mangrove seeds changed the city's perspective of rising sea levels, even if it caught the people's attention for a glimpse in the place's history. It started in the school. Students went to class, catching sight of various cups taped to the wall filled with water. Upon closer inspection, they see the beginnings of a mangrove. Indeed, mangroves were placed in cups and nourished every day for a few months. These started to spread, and everyone knew they had seen them everywhere. The public library, the local Starbucks, among other places in the famous tourist centerplace. Shortly thereafter, the majority were given to the students of the Miami Beach Senior High. In their hands, a small tree growing in a cup. Two thousand students now had the responsibility of saving the island. It may seem like a stretch to trust in such youth. Consequently, they did not believe in the idea of their homes being sunk in their lifetime.

Mangroves are special trees that prevent coastal erosion, which also prevents rising sea levels. Coastal erosion occurs after the effects of strong storms, hurricane winds, and floods. For some, it was one of the solutions to climate change. They were the protectors of the island. Their aid would mean one step closer to a better future. As one would think from putting trust in students, some students decided to plant them in front of the school instead of their homes, the intended place. Logically, it would protect where they lived, but every factor leads to another, no matter how insignificant or ineffective it may seem. Some were planted in homes, some were given to the older population, but every tree counted, no matter whose hands it was in.

As the years passed, the winds grew stronger. Hurricanes began to occur more frequently which made the Okeechobee Hurricane of 1928, one of the deadliest hurricanes to ever hit Florida, seem weak. There was a change in hurricane categories, with categories 6 and 7 being added. While the Okeechobee Hurricane was responsible for at the very least, 2000 deaths and winds of over 220 kilometers per hour (145 miles per hour), hurricanes followed with extreme strength. The mangroves had grown significantly, and fulfilled their purpose as best they could. Meanwhile, the people fled up north, some outside of the state. The city began to lose its light.

Alas, here the story brings us to the present. Despite the city's initial end, one can see the impact that their once good-for-nothing past led up to. Within its ruins, the rubble of collapsed

buildings makes up tiny islands that surround the state's coast. Miami Beach Senior High has largely collapsed due to the weakened concrete after the passing of a century; books are found floating or sinking near what was once the public library; perhaps the Starbucks can still be seen. Mangroves dot every island; and if the city's efforts had been greater, they would have had more time. Time is costly, and the small trees have contributed their part. Even in a post-apocalyptic state, boats pass by and are struck by what they see. Miami and its island, Miami Beach shall be an example to strive for solutions, no matter how big the problem may be. After all, the mangroves have guarded what remains of state's coastline, and will continue to do so for generations to come.