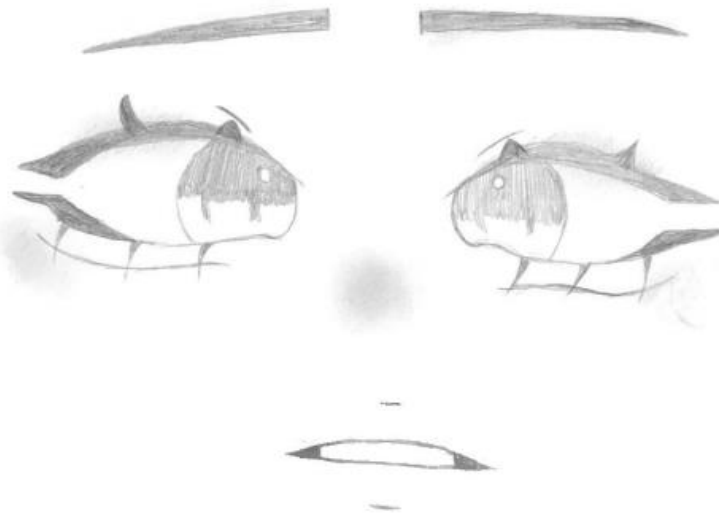


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Sometimes, all we need is to look people in the eye!

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A friend can be chuckling or smiling, yet deep down inside is pain and suffering. They could be boisterously laughing, yet deep down inside, their souls are being consumed by utter loneliness. And if we are sensitive enough, if we care enough, we might want to pay attention to them, and we might be able to notice more.

Have you ever looked at your friend, brother, sister, mother, or father straight in the eye lately? Have you ever looked longer than they noticed you? What's in those eyes? What did they tell you?

As a famous saying goes, "The eyes are a mirror to one's soul", it does not pain us if we could slow down a bit in life, if we could cherish those moments we spend with our friends and loved ones, and if we could "see" them more as human beings with emotions, stories, and struggles. Perhaps this is our way of saying, "I feel you. I see you. You are not alone."

Because sometimes, all we need is to look people in the eye, to show that we care, and that we are willing to lend a helping hand. After all, aren't our eyes a symbol of honesty and truth? That, at times, we fail to conceal our vulnerability and sadness through speech or pretentious smiles and laughs because of so many painful emotions our eyes unveil?

This sketch, using pencil, was selected from a collection of artwork (drawings and sketches) produced by children between the ages of 7 and 14 during a Children's Art Day held on 05 July 2025 in Bool, Culaba, Biliran, the Philippines. Consent was given by Keeley's parent/guardian for this sketch to be published in Simbolismo. Bionote is not required, and this description was developed from a brief conversation with Keeley and her aunt, Jocelyn Canama, after the event.