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Volume 70

The Bellarmine Review

The Bellarmine Review

Spring 2012, Volume 70



The Literary Magazine of Fairfield College Preparatory School

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We desire to publish poetry and prose that is: clear, concise, and evokes the senses, taking the audience to the writer’s imagined place through strong images, and a good sense of rhythm. It is believed in Jesuit education that an academic endeavor may be an encounter with the divine: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*. That is to say that in the authenticity of our written thoughts we may unknowingly stumble on truth. Our intent is to give our students’ words a place to land, serving as an accomplished venue to acknowledge their lived truth.

Colophon

The text of this book is composed in Footlight MT Light, with accented text in italicized Times New Roman. The typeface used for the cover is Perpetua.

The Bellarmine Review
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Prose

One More Bite

Daniel Sanchez '12

"¿Abuela, que haces?" The potent odor fills the small Miami apartment. My favorite food, picadillo, simmers in the pan while congestive saliva forms in my mouth. Picadillo is a multilayered dish, consisting of many ingredients: beef, spices, potato, egg and various others. Like this succulent dish, I am also very diverse. While picadillo has three main ingredients, the main ingredients in my life are integrity, curiosity and compassion.

My Cuban grandmother has always said that picadillo is food for the heart. The love and compassion embodied within her picadillo are also main ingredients in me. They waft through the air when I take care for my disabled brother, Eric, or my French-Canadian grandmother with advanced Alzheimer's. Without this diversity of experiences, life would be bland. Like picadillo, I bring a smile to people's faces and keep a sense of kindness and love within me.

Eric storms through the house in a raged panic, his thought process reluctantly following behind.Through any difficulties he experiences, I try to jump in quickly and give him a quick laugh or a smile. I pull on my blue-hooded Snuggie and matching bright blue socks to cheer him up, making him come back to his senses and realize things aren't that bad. I support any project that my brother conjures up and offer tips and suggestions to help him along. When dinner is served and we consume the picadillo, I talk to my brother about his day hoping to cheer him up as much as the food does.

My other grandmother, Therese Pellerin, is the most beautiful woman to come out of the farmland of Quebec, Canada. Her beauty and strength remain unsurpassable even in her old age. When I was a child, I often thought of her as a superhero. She now seems to have lost most of her powers. However, I love her just the same. I sit watching her rocking in her chair in perfect tempo. Laughter bursts through her heart when I ask how the baby doll in her hand is doing. She pauses, then smiles to say the baby is

very pretty. With every stroke she gives to the doll, I feel a peculiar gentle touch on my head; for I was once that baby in the arms of my memère. Even though she can't physically eat my Hispanic grandmother's picadillo, memère will always remember, deep in her consciousness, all the times I surrounded her with love and compassion.

The plate steams onto my face while my senses are bombarded by a variety of strong flavors and scents. It is a wonder how closely this meal parallels my life. While mainly consisting of beef, potato and egg, "picadillo" and I share the extra ingredients of love and compassion. We are multidimensional in our abilities to bring happiness to others. I raise my head from my plate and look at my brother, loving him and accepting him for who he is. I peer at my stoic grandmother with compassion and reverence. A smile slowly glides across my face; as I take just one more bite.

Doing the Right Thing

Steve Dominick '12

The mixture of both sweat and fresh rain seeped into the driver's seat of my father's Chevy Suburban after a tough fall lacrosse practice. My car had been in the shop, so I was forced to pilot the unfamiliar beast my family calls, "The Whale". Exhausted and eager to get home I cautiously backed out of my spot inch by inch while trying to be as quick as I could. The scenario was similar to that of a complicated geometric equation, taking each angle into thought as to how I could complete the 90˚ turn in the mammoth car. As I cut the wheel for the last time, there was a sudden, unfamiliar jolt. At once a terrible feeling in my gut appeared and once again the beads of sweat came down my face which was now flushed with embarrassment.

Cursing, banging, and swirling with unfamiliar emotions I was faced with a moral dilemma, should I stay or go? The parking lot was dark and desolate, and for that one split moment I thought of fleeing; to forget anything that had happened.

After fifteen minutes of searching, and asking for the owner of the car, I found the victim of my own mistake. Calm but assertive the middle-aged man examined the football-sized dent on his new Audi A-8. We exchanged information, and he kindly thanked me for finding him. I was truly unsure of what the future would bring.

Months passed, and insurance claims were made in order to cover the $2000 repair needed to fix the fully aluminum door of the Audi. At this point I had tried to get over the embarrassment of the accident, as all my teammates, friends, and family had heard about it. Then, the first day of Christmas break I received a call from the man whose car I had damaged. He told me since it was the holiday season, and he was inspired by my actions, he wanted to give me a cash reward. Once again this unfamiliar feeling came over me. The thought of receiving a reward felt absurd and I thought, "This must be a joke!"

As I took a seat at the kitchen table to look at the first articles of mail from 2011, I saw a letter addressed to me. I carefully opened it, and there was a check for $250. Receiving the money did not seem right, so I figured the military foundation my lacrosse team sponsors would make better use of it. What gave me the insight that chivalry is rewarded was the tiny memo section from the man, which read, "For doing the right thing." I know I won't always be rewarded for doing the right thing, but I do know that the sense of honor and pride that comes with doing so is indeed priceless.

The Nature of Our Subsconscious

Matthew DiMaria '12

Have you ever contemplated the interplay between science, nature, the human mind, and our existence? How interconnected organelles and innumerable microscopic molecules work in such cohesively organized ways? Life is amazing, complex, and awe inspiring. My studies over time have only compounded my questions and yearning to learn and discover more.

Science has become my passion. A particularly fascinating aspect of science that has developed much over the years is the human brain and cognitive function. The human brain is capable of performing the most extraordinary tasks, some of which we understand, but much remains a mystery. Some scientists have asserted that much of the vast potential of the human mind remains untapped. Cognitive science, including perception, speech, emotions, and problem solving, I believe are pathways to realize humanity's ultimate potential.

One fascinating phenonemnon of the human mind is dreams. Transcending into the subconscious recesses of the mind, dreams can become almost an alternate reality for some people. For other people, an insight into the future or reflection of the past. Regardless, everyone dreams at night. From a scientific perspective it is a succession of rapid eye movements, typically from ten to twenty minutes, occurring between one to two hour intervals. According to the cognitive perspective, during rapid eye movement, brain activity surges and dreams often involve "sorting through" information of your day. The biological perspective asserts dreams are the brains way of making sense of random activity. However, this doesn't account for repeated dreams and other inconsistencies with this assertion. An exact reason for dreaming does not exist. Personally I find the resilience and perceived reality of some dreams interesting. Several years ago, an unfortunate accident

within my family resulted in a series of dreams that stimulated my curiosity. While playing outside with my younger brother, he suddenly collapsed. It was later identified that he suffered from an electrical disorder in his heart that caused a cardiac episode. Later, through genetic testing, we determined that I suffer from the same syndrome. The image of his fall and subsequent period when he was unconscious produced painful images that ran rampant throughout my dreams for weeks. I vividly felt the connection to reality in my dreams, yet many times reality seemed to degenerate into pure fiction. I couldn't understand why one night it would be the fall in slow motion, and the next it would be my brother chasing me around with a knife before he collapsed. Why does the mind conjure up such irrational images mixed with perceived reality?

The complex nature of the brain is an amazing thing to study, however it seems the deeper one digs, and the more questions become present. I firmly believe that dreams somehow have an important place in our lives though that reason is shrouded in mystery.

Fight of the Night

Matthew DiMaria '12

The cacophony of alarms at the station ripped through the silence, shattering my sleep. As I swing off the cot, my feet hit the cold, the damp floor; reality set in. Now on a mission, I fight off fatigue in a frantic rush to the ambulance. Cool air clears my head, and I glimpse people rushing all around me. I hop on the rig and I find myself rolling out into the summer night.

In my mind, I hear, "You are to be a servant of the people," when thinking back to my first day of EMT class. There, I learned to assess and control patient airways, circulations, and respond to diverse emergencies. The job was about keeping cool in tough situations. Would tonight be the test?

As the siren blared and we flew past cars, I felt a thrilling shot of adrenaline run like fire through my veins. The radio crackled next to me: "50 year old male; angina pectoris." The siren was cut as we screeched to a halt in front of a quaint suburban house. I snapped on my gloves and jumped out with my gear in tow.

"Hurry, he's over here!" The voice of an anxious wife guided me to a diaphoretic man clutching his chest.

"Good evening sir, how are you feeling?" As I calmly spoke, I looked for his body language to give me a sign of physical and mental responsiveness.

"Been better chap, my chest hurts."

He seemed competent; his breathing however was shallow and his pulse thready.

"Would you be able to point to where the pain is and describe it?" I listened meticulously for his response while delivering oxygen and noting his cool, clammy skin.

"It's in the center and radiating to my arm," he replied. I palpated the area and documented his prescribed nitroglycerin. Determining the situation as serious, we expedited transport procedures.

"Daddy, where are you going?" The innocent voice of his daughter stuck in my mind as we loaded him into the ambulance.

"I'll be all right precious, just going for a ride; you take care of Mommy now, you hear?"

Suddenly, he decompensated into cardiac arrest. Immediately I began to bag him with supplemental oxygen and initiate compressions as we flew down the freeway. I can still hear his daughter's piercing shriek of terror and see her look of convoluted amazement that her dad perhaps had lied. This was no longer the same exciting thrill as before--a man now lay in our care in a situation of life and death. The ambulance shook in rhythm to my compressions. With each artificial breath pumped into his lungs, I visualized the cycle of oxygen running though his arteries. With each compression, I thought of the force artificially attempting to restore adequate perfusion. I pondered his family and the despair they must be feeling. And the man? What cherished memory was he grasping while fighting for his life? I became invigorated, inspirited by a desperate hope. Sweat now beading down my face, siren blasting, ambulance vibrating, and my partner shouting updates to the hospital--this was it. I battled to make a difference in the story of the man's life. Everything seemed to slow down in my mind in a last stand of resuscitation. Despite the disarray, my mind and heart became overwhelmed with a sense of purpose, a love for life and a love for the man, named Roland. I will fight this night until I collapse from fatigue. I will be "a servant of the people" but I will serve with my heart, and with love.

Book vs. Nook

Matthew Connelly '12

Surprisingly enough, my parents switched over to the "Kindle" and "Nook" fad within months of the technology being released even though I have yet to invest in one of these devices. However, I have seen many benefits of these e-readers that have tempted me into joining this craze.

When I tried reading a chapter of a book on my father's Nook, I felt like I was flying through the pages at lightning speed. Holding the words in the palm of my hand was magical, and it felt like I could read ten times faster. My Uncle, who got one as well two Christmases ago, said he reads two to three books a month on them -a notable increase from his previous one book every month and a half.

The other obvious benefit is that you can carry the words of 1,500 books in the palm of your hand! The access to that much information at once is incredible. Not to mention access to the World Wide Web and the ability to download books wherever you go.

When I read a book, however, I like to be alone so that I can enter a new world that the author has created. I shut my phone off, (since I can't read a page without getting a text message which I am obligated to read,) and go up into the quiet comfort of my room. People these days cannot focus on one thing at a time. Parents think it's an increase in ADD and they need to severely medicate their children almost to a point of sedation. But what the problem really is, is that everyone has a screen in their pocket which can show you all the news and headlines you could possibly want. If I read a book, I want to read the book! I don't want to be able to buy 1,000 other books while I am in the middle of reading one. Let alone access the internet through something that is supposed to be a book.

Recently, I was on Amazon.com looking for a copy of the ESPN book that was just released. I spent a gift card that my neighbor gave me for Christmas and bought it. After a week of waiting in excitement and anticipation, it finally arrived at my door step. I had been thinking about it all week, and when it finally came I was overwhelmed with excitement. I tore open the box and immediately started flipping through the pages. The vivid colors reached out and grabbed my eye, the distinct smell commonly associated with a local coffee shop, the touch of the soft cover, my name immediately engraved into the first page promising its return after being lent out.

The book is mine, and reading it is a full physical experience.

This joy is not something that I get from pressing "download" and the pages magically appear behind a plastic screen. Look at the way we listen to music today. When someone wanted music in the past they'd buy an LP at the record store, they'd have friends over, sit around the record player and enjoy the whole album. People would pass around the big floppy sleeves guessing if David Bowie was really a man, or maybe staring in awe at the motorcycle bursting out of the ground of Meatloaf's "Bat Out of Hell." Nowadays we just go right on our iPhones to download the latest hit single and listen to it with our headphones in, or our noise cancelling headsets on.

You simply just can't match the full physical paper book. Its magical to look up at a collection of books you have accumulated over the year and just think: Those are all mine, and I read them all. Look at the colors of the spines that blend together like the knowledge you have accumulated from reading them. Or, maybe you'll look at how your interests have matured from the Hardy Boys series to Made In America, Bill Bryson's study on modern American language. Either way you look at it, I'll keep my books.

The Daily Commute

Chris Stachurski '12

Early in the morning on a late August day, I stood on the platform for the first time waiting for Fairfield Prep's "school bus" to arrive at the stop. I stood there with some of my fellow students, their ties loose and their backpacks ready alongside complete strangers, their ties also loose, briefcases in hand. These veteran commuters had much more experience over us Fairfield Prep students. These other groups were adults making their daily ride into the real world, a journey we were just taking steps toward entering.

After an elongated wait, I finally saw the grand metal caravan arrive; a seven car Metro North train rolling up to the platform. Once the double doors opened, a new world of different types of people, experiences and lessons became available. This also proved true of the four years I spent at Fairfield College Preparatory, where an ample amount of opportunities and teachings have guided me to make the most out of whatever life delivers on distant platforms.

Because of taking the train each and every day, I became more observant, hearing a distinctive voice and following it through the crowded car to its source. It also requires a tremendous amount of patience, especially when hearing the foreboding "ding," knowing that some "five to ten minute delay" is about to rearrange your schedule.

But above all, taking the train taught me to just go with whatever life decided to drop in my lap. Like when a train was delayed for up to an hour, only to be canceled in the long run due to "police activity," my commuting friends and I decided to go get dinner at one of the restaurants down the road from the train station, and proceeded to find 79 cent jumbo slushies at a small gas station we would have never known

existed had we stayed on the platform, waiting with all the annoyed business men and women for the 6 pm train that never came.

Similar to the part of my life that revolved around the Metro North train schedule, Prep also presented me with a bounty of opportunities that would ultimately help build my character. But just like the hidden treasures of Fairfield that the unpredictable train schedule helped me to discover, I would need to actively go out and sign up for the retreat or seek out the coach of a sports team in order to get involved. Thankfully my desire to explore and experience my surroundings stayed with me as I went from the train station each morning to Fairfield Prep. I was able to get involved in the Kairos retreat and become one of the leading members of the editorial staff of The Bellarmine Review. I played soccer, a familiar sport, for two years which led to the discovery that I could excel as a track hurdler as well. All things that will mold the man I will eventually become as I leave through the double doors of the train for the last time as a Prep student.

Art

Salvatore Tartaglione ‘12

“My father was very sure about certain matters pertaining to the universe. To him, all good
things–trout as well as eternal salvation–come by grace and grace comes by art and art does not
come easy.”
– Norman Maclean, A River Runs Through it

It was a hot August day and the river was rushing through my legs as I tied the fly that my father had tied himself on the end of my line. The wilderness was alive with music from birds chatting back and forth. It seemed like any other day in Pennsylvania but for me this day was special. My brother had just shipped off to college and I was the only child left in the house.

My father took me on a short fishing trip with his good friend “Cowboy” before football and freshman year started. It was the last day out on the river and I was upset due to the fact that I hadn’t caught one fish on a dry fly yet. I had been trying over and over again for that perfect cast the last three days. Cowboy, who was also a fishing guide, was mentoring me as I casted each line.

“Ten o’clock, two o’clock” he would say. The fish were biting but I just didn’t have the ability or quickness to hook one as its small mouth surfaced to engulf my fly, sitting motionless on top of the water. My hands started to cramp as the slick line passed through my fingers. The waiting was unbearable. All I wanted was this fish but they kept nibbling at my line like they were trying to taunt me. I felt the sense of defeat lingering as the last few hours of daylight were running out, but I had to stay out there. I kept repeating to myself, “I have to catch this fish, I have

to catch this fish."

We were alone out there in Pennsylvania. There were no houses around and the sunlight was our guide. We spent three nights out there with no electricity or, a roof over our heads. Trees surrounded us for miles on all sides. I would notice my dad looking back in my direction with every cast I took like he was trying to motivate me. The sun was disappearing behind the tree-tops resembling as a clock ticking for how much time I had left to throw in the white flag and surrender.

I had to do this by myself, with no help from anyone else. I wanted this fish more than anything. I could imagine at that moment. I wanted to make my father proud. I could barely see my fly when the beautiful slick rainbow trout surfaced. I lifted my light rod and felt the strength of the fish on the opposite side of the line. The strength of the wild. The reel whistled as the trout was running with my fly. Tired, the fish gave up and surrendered itself to my net. The joy inside was radiating out of me. I saw the proud look on my father's face as the sun finally gave in to darkness. I gently released the colorful rainbow trout back into the cold, crisp river. Its body slowly regaining life and passing through my hands. Fly fishing is not a hobby or a sport, it's a beautiful art, I thought to myself. As we left, I followed my father, fly rod in hand, into the darkness of the wilderness.

The Ants Beneath Our Feet

Kyle Banquer ‘12

If one kept walking on the long neglected road, nothing would seem out of place. The ground would be coated in dust and sand. The sun would sear you like an ant under a magnifying glass, in a desert. The absence of any life, no trees, plants, or animals would remind you that you walk this road alone. The monotone of the entire landscape; the sandy brown of the earth and the blue-tinted sky, hidden entirely behind grey clouds, would remind you of what happened; why there were ruins of stores and homes dotting the landscape; why you’ve been alone for all this time.

However, if one were to follow the footprints and drag marks that led to the long abandoned building, one would find a rather unorthodox sight. Inside the long abandoned nuclear reactor, a cathedral to mankind’s wasted potential, were two men. One was against the slopped wall, keeping his hands busy rolling a cigarette. The other lay parallel to the ground, as a coffin would in a burial plot.

The man standing up quickly stiffened as the ghosts of his past once again barraged his sanity. His hands began to tremble and his half rolled cigarette slipped from his fingers onto the second man lying on the ground, coating his chest in a fine layer of tobacco. Soon, though, the specters vanished as the quiet night sky once again consumed the world. The man breathed freely again, ignoring the troubles that had been on his mind a mere moment before.

“Well son of a bitch!” the man said, his southern drawl seeping through the gaps in his teeth. “That was my last leaf! Ah, crap. I didn’t mean to make a mess all over you.” The man lying down didn’t respond. “’Course you didn’t notice. You’ve been asleep for a long time. ‘Been wonderin’ if you’re gonna

wake up." The man reached into his jacket and pulled out a cigar that looked like it was even older than he was: discolored and warped, with a smell somewhere between kerosene and body odor. He threw it aside, in revulsion and disgust. "You ever wonder how we got into this mess? No, of course you don't. You're more dead than a Satanist at church." The smile quickly vanished from the man's face, as the age lines once again grew on a face that looked older than it was. "I 'member. I don't want to 'member but I do. I mean, we made a monster, killed it, but made a bigger monster that just ended up biting us in the rear.

"You 'member them Easterlings? Them ones who ate nutin' but rice? Well, they use to be true, just as much as me! Then we helped them grown up. We put our comp'nies there so they work and we pay 'em for cheap! They were just as big as us when them fat cats mucked it up. Them ones bought all our debt. We couldn't pay it off-they owned us."

The man reached once again into his jacket. From its shadows he produced a medium sized glass bottle of a substance with a consistency like urine. He pulled the stopper out, and in one swift motion, downed a significant portion of his own alcoholic poison.

"Now, no man here would ever want to make that adjustment, but we could adapt. But no, them elites couldn't! All them factories over the oceans would be worthless! So they bribed the politicians and we went into a war that no one wanted to fight. Them Easterners didn't like that. They launched their missiles at us. We launched ours at them. Hell, everybody launched their missiles at everybody. They say the skies burned for days. Everybody died. 'cept us, the soldiers stuck in lil' boats on the ocean." The man finished his drink, and threw his bottle down into a swirling mist of combustible gas, residue from when the power plant used to be in use. He picked up his rolling paper that he had dropped earlier, and knelt down and moved the tobacco

from the man's inanimate body back into the confines of the paper.

"Them rich men got their war, but at e'rryone's cost. Hell, them nukes took them cities off the map before them billionaires could go there and spend their money. So what do they do? They demanded compensation, and took over the wasteland this country had become. They was no politicians. Not like they was running the country good, but still. Them businessmen ran it like a darned business, with taxes. They made us pay for everything- land that was ours before the war? They wanted a lease on it. Our things? They had us rent 'em. They made us pay for everything. Everything. No, not even them crops that you grew and harvested belonged to you.

We was mad. We was mad and those of us who held on to our guns during the- oh I don't know, ten year intermission of war- we fought. We fought the rich men and their fancy tanks and aero-planes with makeshift weapons duct taped together. We fought our friends, who was choked by a snake with lies and false promises of ownership in order to fight for a cause that they ain't have supported. And wasn't it one hell of a fight. They had guns, we had Radcans. Both was just as deadly. They had a leader. Whoever he was, he ruled like a dictator. And us fighters wanted to change that. That's where I met you, actually. Do you 'member? Boy, you and your gun was the reason we're here hiding from the last of them! The changing of the guard!"

The man allowed himself a chuckle as he finished rolling his makeshift cigarette. He took out a match and struck it on his boot, lighting the cigarette and illuminating the hollow reactor, the missing panels from the sloped walls that let in the stars of the night sky, the sandy floor that covered a birthplace of humanity's worst ideas. The end of the paper tube spouted embers and glowed a comforting, fiery light.

"Changing of the guard. That was a hell of fight, not like

either of us would forget.

Hell, you made sure you didn't forget. Wrote everything you could down on your lil' typewriter, up until you lost your mind. Just bad mem'ries, you know? Would make me not sleep at night. But hell, it's not like I sleep now.

7 June 2048

It's the fourteenth year in the artic providence. It's cold and miserable, but I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. It's the only place that I could ever call home, the only place where I could ever raise a family without having to worry about being enslaved by bills we can't pay. My wife and I served together, but now we have to be apart. I'm on the front lines, and my beautiful wife stays home, caring for our daughter, and in her free time scavenging for anything that could be of use. I only see her when I'm on leave and through the letters we write. I miss her, and love her so very much. My daughter and her are the reasons that I'm fighting.

The absence of falling bombs and radiation make this place more ideal to live in than anywhere else in the wastes. It's the quiet boondocks of a war machine that only exists because of necessity. But that's only during leave. For the other eleven months, I spend my time in my hazmat suit, standing in tents, looking at maps, and then going to places on that map. Once I'm there, I'm hiding behind the carcasses of burnt out cars to return fire when we can afford to use those oh-so-coveted bullets. We have to be careful with the little ammo we have though. Unlike the enemy, we can't mine for the metals to make bullets. Only officers like me get guns, but even that's more of a formality. Instead of wasting rounds we can't replace, we fill any can we find with the most irradiated air we can find (which happens to be what we're breathing). Pressurize the air, strap on a charge, cap it with Ceran wrap, and throw it over. Once it hits the ground, the metal breaks the enemy's suit and violates the skin, the irradiated air

gets into the bloodstream. Instant cancer. It's an awful way to die, but sure is cheap.

We fight in a wasteland, in the outskirts of cities that were once monuments to civilization; Between ruined buildings, and in roads that have been reclaimed by the arid Wasteland. We fight in from ruin to ruin, waging a war of attrition with an enemy that doesn't wish the same. The place is a mess. So many nukes were dropped on the cities, even a minute from your hazmat suit would expose you to enough radiation to make your body decay on the molecular level. An open wound means you have ten seconds to live. Ten of the most agonizing seconds that mankind has ever had to experience. Even the toughest of men scream like little girls, crying for their mothers and for the hands of death to cradle them.

But no, Death plays with his food.

Out of our desperation we created a monster out of a can. We've filled battlefields with the screams. We've tormented our kin in ways that not even Tartarus can dream of. All within seconds. But the irony of it all is that we're reluctant to admit we're monsters, even more reluctant to admit that we're at the mercy of a monster so cruel that the only way we can win is to fight with fire.

Humanity disgusts me.

12 July 2048

They gave me a new hazmat suit today. Not yellow and baggy this time, but the color of sand, tight fitting, and elastic. The idea was that the suit would reseal after a breach, that it would close faster than the irradiated air could get in. They said that it would soon be standard issue, but it was the only suit in camp. There has to be something more. At least I'll look good when St. Peter sends me to hell.

20 August 2048

I can't explain how vigorously my hands are shaking right now.

The bastards ambushed us. They were waiting in the middle of the road. We were walking away from the city when they pounced out from behind a barricade of car wrecks, their rusted exterior contrasting with the rare blue cloudless sky that hung over the hardened Wasteland. They shot at us with guns. Real guns. Not just Radcans. They shot at us. I dove into a ditch along with three other men. We launched our Radcans over. We must have gotten somebody because someone was screaming. Then their gunfire stopped. I heard footsteps. Someone running towards us. I drew my knife from my boot and took out the man just as he got in sight. It turns out that he was carrying a metal box that fell as his body did. Once it hit the ground it began to make odd noises and flash strange lights. We realized what it was too late. When it blew up, the shrapnel hit all of us. Fortunately, my new suit kept me safe. The other two weren't so lucky. As the invisible gas enveloped us, it found the open wounds of my two comrades and made its way into their bloodstream.

And then the screams started.

Those ten seconds have always been the hardest to bear, but this… this was much worse. For the first time in my life I prayed. I prayed to a God that had allowed all of this destruction and suffering to exist. I prayed that it would end.

But it didn't. This was no Radcan. This was something worse, something that drew out screams of pain and misery as one would draw poison from a wound. And the screams went on. Every second felt like an hour. Every minute a lifetime, and every hour an eternity. An eternity that was filled with the screams of those who deserved a quick death. "Make it stop!" I screamed. 'Make it stop! Make it stop!" it was the only thing I could say. I screamed in a different type of pain.

God knows how much time passed. I don't know how long I was there, helpless to move, paralyzed by a cognitive torture. But the screams did stop, that is, after the audible convulsions of

desperate men impossibly trying to take a breath.

They say when they found me, they toyed with putting me down, like a sick dog. I don't blame them. I was curled in a ball, rocking back and forth, crying. Can you imagine a grown man like me crying? They said that I just whispered the same thing over again and again. "Make it stop, make it stop." Now I'm in a hospital bed, stuck here for the past month for "psychological trauma."

This war has to stop. When I get out of here, they're going to pay and answer for the death they've caused. If the head of the serpent is cut off, the body shrivels up and dies.

[Unknown date]

I've walked for far too long to give up now. I'm not giving up. Even if there's an army in front of me. I'm in the back of a truck at the moment, on my way to the monster's lair. I know that-

"I know this part of the story." The redneck man exclaimed to the entirety of the nuclear ruin. The flames of his cigarette were just about to smother themselves underneath the ash that they had knowingly produced. The man took the sheets of paper he had been reading and folded them back into the pockets of the man on the ground, feeling for just a second how cold his skin was. The man's goose bumps began to sprout as he went to lean against the wall of the metal sarcophagus.

"Can't read much after that" The man said as he threw the remnants of his cigarette to the ground, causing the low lying air to let out a hiss. "Doesn't matter though, I was in that truck that you were, just driving. We both wanted th' same thing, the death of the enemy's leader, but we had different motivations. So there you were, screaming in the back of the truck. Sayin' the same thing over and over again- "Make it stop, make it stop, make it stop."I had to pull over and drag you into the front seat, you calmed down eventually. 'Had to leave the rear cargo though,

don't know if it would blow or not, after all the thrashing of yours with all them black boxes.

We got to the front gate of where the enemy based his fight. 'Head of us was something that I'd never seen before. A building. An actual building standing on its own! I couldn't believe it! My pap used to tell stories 'bout them, how they worked with the air, like a needle with thread. It was there in the middle of the abandoned city, at the end of the bombed out streets lined with ruined houses and broken dreams. In between the smoldering craters, and the dead weeds wedged through the cracks of the sidewalks. But anyway, front gate. 'Was the only type of security that they had. Maybe that they thought it was enough. Ha!

So the guy at the gate began to talk. 'Where's you're cargo?' The man asked. 'Rebels got us and took it. Knocked us out and took our uniforms,' Is what you answered. Nice job with that by the way, improv and all. 'The Rebels? Ha!' the gate man said. 'We crushed them before the war started. Now they just make it worse!'

'What do you mean?'

'Well they won't win! We just make it worse for them so they'll give up sooner! That's why we have the bombs, you know? Why we're gonna destroy them in their safe haven. Hmph! Not so safe anymore!'

'What safe haven?'

'You didn't know? They have a stronghold tucked in the middle of nowhere. Up north I think.' And then you shot. One pull on the trigger of your six shooter.

Even after we got out you were still shouting. You were mad. Could hear it in your words. 'This man… this man is no man. No man with a sense of humanity would slaughter a group of women and children who were at most guilty by association. There's… there's nothing left for me to fight for. Yet, I still want to fight. No one can be a victim, even though we're all monsters

that are making scarier monsters out of our grievances and desires. We've all terrorized and been terrorized, but even wretches like us shouldn't suffer at the hands of a man who plays God. And so, I'll fight. I don't want to fight but I fight. And now we have a chance to stop this, all of this. It's my last fight. And it's going to be the biggest fight of them all.'"

"I don't know where the heck you got that assault rifle, but I wasn't complaining. I felt like Rambo, running through them ritzy hallways of that skyscraper, you know, taking care of business. Not like anybody knows who Rambo is with them movies destroyed by bombs and all. And so we went through the building until we got in the elevator. And we went up. Up, up, up, up. It was an awkward silence, to say the least. But then I asked, 'You know, odds are we're going to die. We might as well know each other's names.' All you did was laugh. 'Name? We have no name. Mankind ripped it from us when they stole our humanity.'"

"I honestly couldn't tell if you were raving mad or not. But this wasn't time to ask. The doors opened, and waiting to meet us was a pistol that fired only one shot in vain before you kicked it out of its owner's hand. The doors opened wider to reveal a man. A short man, thin and scrawny, with tousled hair and a child's face. He would seem almost ordinary if it weren't for his eyes; yes black with malice, dark as night, with irises that danced like hellfire. He stood in a room with no walls, not outside, but with glass. 'Was like he was floating on the sky. He had a simple desk, with stacks of paper in them in and out trays. But you pinned the hydra and all its heads to the floor, and talked.

'You've got a lot of explaining to do.'

'Oh?' The man replied, in a voice laced with cruelty malice, and mockery.

'it's time you answer for the genocide you've been waging.'

'Genocide? You are mistaken. Genocide is the mass murder of someone of the same race. This is nothing more than the disper-

sion of pests. An extermination of the inferior, if you will. Pests don't feel sadness. Pests don't feel happiness, nor pain. In mankind's time, bugs were steeped on and crushed underneath shoes without a second thought. And even now, nothing has changed. You and I are human. But only I am man.'

'You're no man, you're a monster.'

'What's the difference between man and monster? Both bring success to themselves at the expense of others. The monster survives by being feared, drawing attention to himself and feeling accepted through the fear of others. Man seeks attention as well, but acts rashly to achieve it- through acts of intellectual grandeur, or more often, taking someone else's life in order to inflate their self image. You, sir, are the monster! No, a monster's slave, fighting in vain for a cause that you wouldn't support if you had the choice. Even if you were on my side, your hands would be tied and you would be forced to act as an abomination in order to seek acceptance in a society that is built upon doing the same through war.'

'You call yourself a man, but no one with any sense of humanity would kill innocents! You're the monster!'

'Why? Because I kill people in order to give a purpose for others? It's because of all this death that my people work in factories, mining for supplies that you rebels can't even dream of obtaining. Your death keeps us alive!'

'You killed my family! You erased An Eden for those who didn't want to be involved in this! You took it off the map! You ripped from me the only things in this world that I loved and cared about.'

'And because of that another family lives!'

'Is it really for that family though? No. It's for you. You claim to be helping them by killing us, but in reality, you're nothing. You're soul-less. What makes you think that you're so much better than everybody else?'

'Because my word decides who lives and who dies. Before I was a man, but I've made myself a God! I control everything! If I wanted, I could tell all of Babylon to kneel, and they would, because they have no other choice! They need me to survive!'

'You're a sickness. A plague of inflated, bad ideals. A plague that needs to be wiped out.'

'I'm not the sickness, I'm the cure! A cure that treats the humanity of the human condition!'"

"And that's where you pulled out your gun. Your eyes were like a dam, holdin' back the waterworks, 'bout to burst. Your face was a mixture; remorse, guilt, pity, hatred, and anger: it was all there.

And then the warmonger spoke his last:

'My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:

Words without thought never to heaven go.'"

"And then you shot. And there lied the bastard. Then you turned to me as a different man. One who didn't know what to do. I don't blame you- your world was no more. You took a deep breath, and you spoke to me the words that have haunted me since I left that place: 'Nothing is as painful to the human mind as a great and sudden change.' Then you did it. You put your gun to your jaw and did it. I'm not sure if it was the monster inside of you or the victim you were forced to be that made you do it. Either way, you were gone. But you died a hero."

"I took your body and got out of that place. Dunno how but we did. I wish you stayed here though. The Wasteland could have used someone like you."

The man pulled himself away from the walls of the metal sarcophagus and brought his mourning body down towards the dead hero that lay on the floor. Tears from the man's face fell onto the dead man's forehead, as the man began to cry.

"But now they can decide what to do for themselves."

The man reached into his jacket one last time in between his

sobs and pulled out a match. He went to strike it on the sole of his boot, which stood at attention in the middle of the low cloud of gas. The moment before the man lit the match he spoke: “They can decide, they’re free. We’re free.”

The Ignorant Pancake Dream

Brandon Marquis '12

"To be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge."
—Benjamin Disraeli, Sybil: Or, The Two Nations (1845)

Russ Icah is a man who enjoys his pancakes. The fluffier, the warmer, the stickier, the more butter, the better. To every man's vice is his downfall.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

Russ reached over and pounded his alarm quiet. It said 6:50 AM, December 2nd. He lifted his sheets, and slowly got out of bed. You know you're old when you can't get up as quickly as you used to, he thought. He turned, to see his wife, but she was not there.

The aroma of sweet smelling pancakes permeated the room. Russ smacked his lips happily, and rushed to throw on his clothes for work. He leaped over the staircase, almost knocking his son out of the way. When he had sat at the table, his wife gave him a warm smile and put a stack of pancakes in front of him.

"You know," she said, "If you keep eating those pancakes, you're gonna become one!"

"Mmf, mooomf mumfff. YUM! Num yummy," Russ said intelligently as he wolfed down his breakfast. He thought something weird about the pancakes. Like something was different.

He kissed his wife goodbye, patted his son on the head and raced out the door.

Driving on his way to work, he waved to all of the polite aliens and werewolves on the way. For some reason, Russ wasn't even surprised by the weird pedestrians.

"I love this town," he said. "Everyone is so nice!"

"You're right!" said a deep voice. Russ looked up, and the

sun winked at him.

"But you're gonna be late Mr. Russ!"

Russ looked at the time, and noticed he'd be late; Mr. Sun was right. He decided to take the mountain road as the short-cut into the city. Right before merging onto the road, a wrapped mummy cut Mr. Icah off in his Black SUV causing Russ to swerve off the road to his death. In Russ' panic, he flung his door open and jumped out of the falling car as he closed his eyes and prayed.

One second passed. Twenty seconds passed. Forty seconds passed. BOOM! His car crashed at the rocky bottom. But he did not.

He looked down as he was suspended in the air. Flap, flap, flap, he heard. He looked behind him, and to his astonishment, were two very large, white-feathered wings!

"My wife must have made magic pancakes!" He exclaimed as he effortlessly did a summersault. "This changes everything!"

Russ flew to work and mooned his boss. He then flew to his mother's house to prove he didn't amount to a "fermenting pile of good for nothing compost." He flew to his mistress's house to kill some time. He even had the audacity to scare a little kid on the street. His wings may have made him look like an angel, but his conduct did not. But Russ didn't care; the magic pancakes had given him powers somehow. And he could use them as he pleased.

"Who cares? I'm awesome now!"

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

Russ reached over and pounded his alarm quiet. It said 7:00 AM, December 2nd. He lifted his sheets, and slowly got out of bed. You know you're old when you can't get up as quickly as you used to, he thought. He turned, to see his wife, but she was not there.

Russ was putting on the work name tag, "Icah, Russ", when

the aroma of sweet smelling pancakes permeated the room. Russ smacked his lips happily, and rushed to throw on his clothes for work. He leaped over the staircase, almost knocking his son out of the way. When he had sat at the table, his wife gave him a warm smile and put a stack of pancakes in front of him.

"You know," she said, "If you keep eating those pancakes, you're gonna become one!"

"Wings, here I come!" Russ muttered to himself.

Russ happily wolfed down the Magic Pancakes.

"See ya', Hon!" Russ said as he ran and jumped out of the kitchen window to go on more flying adventures.

Sadly, Russ never realized that was a dream. Instead of flying, he became what he ate.

The World Outside

Jack Stow ‘12

I can’t remember how long it has been since I have seen the light of day. The last thing I remember is the front yard of a humble house, the beings of white uprooting me, dragging me into the darkness of said house, and being cast onto my side, unable to move and my face pink with fear.

Everyday I hear the sounds of feet; creaking steps play a piano’s symphony that rings out through the wooded walls. From outside this prison of mine, I hear the muffled laughter and tears of children, the sound of television, and occasional new voices, different then the voices of the beings of white. All these sounds to find their deaths on my cold, concrete floor. A room so dull of pitch, filled with these echoing, eerie sounds.

From what I can make out in the dark, despite being unable to move, I can see a few nails and screws littered on the ground. I see boxes of which I know not what is inside, but being alone with my thoughts, my imagination drives me to believe the worst. So I continue to lay here, the smell of gasoline and sawdust ever present in this world of fearful uncertainty.

My time in solitude has made me ponder what my purpose is, or was. I wonder why the beings of white that haunt the walls outside leave me here. Alas, my life is not in my own hands, for I can not move, and can not call for help, as every time I try, I feel as though my mouth is sealed shut.

As the years pass, I continue to dread my own existence. One day, however, one of the walls begins to rattle. From the corner of my eye I can see the wall start to lift off the floor. A bright light bursts through the open wall. The beings of white pick me up, carry me back outside, and put me back into the ground with the other plastic flamingos.

Poetry

Sand Monsters and Nice Sprites

Ben Brown '12

Can we pretend, if just for a moment

That we're two little kids playing in our very own

Sandbox?

I, in my Thomas-the-Tank-Engine overalls

Covered in dirt, stale food, and drool,

And you in your adorable summer dress, plastered with

Big sunflowers. That large yellow sun hat on your head that covers part of your eyes,

And as always, your fire-engine red galoshes.

We'll always be playing games.

Using the sand to make castles (the ones with the little tiers for the archers)

And I'll make a sand monster.

I'll put rocks in his face for eyes,

And a recently-mashed grasshopper for hair,

And you'll tell me he's ugly, and it's gross, and you hate it

And I'll fall back on my overalls and cry for a while

Because I made him for you.

Then you'll walk away.

Taking your time to climb out of the sandbox

Because the walls are still a little too high for you.

And I'll sit there in my now muddy sneakers that light up when I stumble around.

And I'll start to play with the few blades of grass that have warred their way

Through the wet sand and reached nirvana on the surface.

Still sniffling

I'll pick my chin up and look around for you (but I won't have seen where you've run off to).

I'll look down, and press the anthill by my knees

Back into the sandbox and then dig it back up again and rebuild it

Because you told me once,

If you crush and anthill, then it's going to rain

And I don't want it to rain on you, ever.

I'll look at my sand monster, grasshopper and all

And realize I hate it too.

It's hideous face crumbling as the sand dries in the sun.

I'm not even sure why I thought you'd like it at all in the first place.

I'll stand up (one leg at a time; then one arm, and next, the other)

And I'll kick it in.

All of it.

My shoes'll start to glow and flash, and the sand will fly everywhere,

Including back into my face.

And the tiny rocks in my eyes get me crying again, and my stomps now match the

Syncopation of my sobs.

One.

Two.

Three.

Four sobs.

Five malicious steps in, until there's nothing left but a muddy pile of sand, sticks, and pebbles.

It's right then,

Right as I'm ready to throw myself down in umbrage

I feel two warm arms snake their way around my waist

And clasp themselves over my stomach, pressing my back to you.

Then I'll turn around and see you standing there, holding out your fist

And in it, slightly crumbled, is a small, golden buttercup flower.

(It's for you!)

It's for me, you'll say.

(So you don't get sad anymore!)

So I won't get sad anymore.

And I'll take it.

I'll look in your eyes, and tell you I love you.

And you'll lean over and kiss my cheek, now etched with streaked tears that have

Burrowed their way through the dry dirt and sand on my face.

You'll take my hand, and squeeze it,

And we'll both climb out of the sandbox

And have to grow up again.

And realize we can't ever really go back to those days

But we can always pretend together,

If just for a moment.

All Ashore that's Going Ashore

Ben Brown '12

Look at them.
Walking together, arm in arm.
Some even linked at the lips
As they board.
The trumpets sound, the cannons fire,
And the whooping and hollering can be heard even by my desolate ears,
Locked away in my musty room,
Miles upon miles from their mirth.

They are jubulant.
Ignorant, and blissful.
But I, I am a retired captain.
Sworn never to sail again.
Never to set foot on what
Broke me in the first place.

Each night, I lie awake,
Swimming not in the salt of the sea
But my own tears.
My stomach uneasy, not from malnourishment,
But my nightmareish memories.
And I sit.
And I stare.
And I wait.
Until dawn comes again,
To remind me,
I'm still so alone.

I swore upon my good ship,

Nestled in the depths,
Cooed by the tides and currents,
I'd never sail again.
Not for anything in the world.
Not even for my ship back,
My love.

Each time I feel like I'm past,
Each time I feel like I've been revived,
The waves come pounding at my heart.
I hear them, as always, first soft, like baby's breath, then louder, and louder,
And LOUDER AND LOUDER UNTIL THEY'RE ROARING AT MY HEART LIKE A LION BEFORE ITS KILL.
And I FEEL each wave.
Each wave bigger, and stronger, than the last.
Beckoning me back.
Crying terrible, bloody screams at me to set foot on deck again,
And be in love once more.

But it's more than the black spot stopping me,
It's the knowlege that she has no use for her captain anymore.
She's sunk,
Burried in the soft sand below this world,
And I am extraneous.
As usless as I feel.

But regardless of how much I howl in pain and discomfort,
And shove my sheets over my head, curled up inside,
I can still hear them cheering,
Laughing, like we used to.
I can still hear them boarding her,
And her captain calling them aboard.

The Right

Daniel Sanchez '12

The dire-wolf lay dead in front of Jon
Baby pups nip and yawn
The search begins for their new peer
The soul passing from the antler of the deer
Entwined within the head of the wolf-
Bastard Snow lay knee in the white
For King Stark on his mount awed from the sight
Plight is looming as wealth is turning
To know that Bastard snow will be coming
Stripped from land and exiled from Winterfell
His home, The Wall, is all he must know now
To take the vow of Black becomes the soul reason
To leave the black would be death and worse, treason
True, the army of Stark will await
A day for a kingslayer to take
Adorned in gilded steel
Bastard Snow will remain in the white
Until Queen Stark has had enough of his sight-
And the day comes where Lannisters and Snows will unite
To teach the frailty of fight-
To take back what is right

Blue Skies Grey Eyes

Kyle Banquer ‘12

Beyond Flanders’ Fields

I lie against a poplar tree

The flowers slowly blossom

As I drift in endless sleep.

You and I are waiting,

As the clouds are floating by

We both laugh as we point at

All the things we see up high.

And then I slowly rise

Against a dull facade of grey

The raindrops shower downward,

Soaking dreams from yesterday.

Mary and Her Tree

Sergio Cruz ‘14

Man in every stage passes by this place,
They see you but turn their face,
Thye move on to other matters down the hill,
Hoping they’ll return, but it’s not likely they will.
Your blue veil is green from years of wear,
And you must be awfully lonely, standing there,
Your only friend and oak, large and old,
It seems to be ablaze, colored red and gold.
And this tree, must be humbled,
To know, you his friend, will never stumble,
a grand sight, with a seat for those who take it.
A grand sight, only God could have made it.
And if this is true, why have I not spent time,
With this trio minus one, friends of mine,
How do I long to mirror this tree.
Ablaze, he knows what he must be.
And you the statue, strong and stable,
My faith would be the same if I was able.
So on this day I will take a quick trip,
To have my questions answered and get a few tips.

From my trusted tree like no other,

And surely receive guidance from Mary my Mother.

Surviving the Tempest

Chris Stachurski '12

As the shallow lights of the morning engulf the small town by the sea,
A lone fisherman prepared to make his ends meets.
After checking his forecast and gathering his tools,
Our humble farmer of the sea set out to harvest his jewels.

While he walked through his village, still blissfully in bed,
The fisherman wondered to himself how he became so misled.
"All the others get to sleep while I must go out each day,
To only ever bring back what to my debtors I must pay"

As the sad solemn fisherman approached the community docks,
He went to his skipper and undid the locks.
And after loading his gear he looked back with a sigh,
For he hated the work at hand and just wanted to cry.

The day, it went slow and the fish, there were few,
But the fisherman froze out of fear of what emerged from the blue.
His weather report was faulty, that which swore clear skies,
For the dark, monstrous storm clouds were proof of its lies.

The fisherman, now panicked, tried to fortify his ship,

For the storm was a heard of horses, approaching so fast it was too late to quit.

It finally arrived and with it torrential rain in great blasts,

And our fisherman looking for a sign, feared that today might be his last.

At the same time on a cliff, perched high above the town,

Lived another lonely man who was too about to drown.

But where our fisherman was locked in a battle with the hostile,

The lighthouse keeper skirmished lamely with the bottle.

This man, pathetic, helpless, and lost in the dark,

Was truly alone without souls to make needed remarks.

The man knew he was tasked with a crucial job he need do,

But just did not feel appreciated or motivated enough to come to.

But there was still hope, a single light in the abyss,

For this lost man did want a life full of bliss.

So despite his feelings, what he had grown up to know,

The man climbed up the stairs to start up his show.

The light was magnificent, a sight oh so great,

that it caught the eye of the fisherman, who had accepted his fate.
And soaked to the bone, with his trembling hands,
The fisherman survived the storm and arrived safely on land.

Astor Place

Nick Martucci ‘13

I saw him playing his guitar,
the guitar he worked ever so hard for.
the sound of the instrument
shone his emotion,
in every belligerent note he played
filling the dry air
that the 6 Line brewed as it escaped behind me.
His focus,
so minimal to the disarray around him
as if simplicity was nothing
but mere reality.
The notes
echoed through the dark subway,
now lighting up the entire station walls
so everyone can see
what I saw.
I then was brought to
a world.
where desire was minimal
and I, for once, was happy.
This is what I saw
in Astor Place.

A Tuesday Morning in La Jolla

Nick Martucci '13

why can't this be everyday
as I stand here
leaning on this old fence
high above as the rays of the sun reflect off the abyss below me
lightening up the water so the eye can see
nature's beauty.
the clean air smoothens out the day,
the crisp echo of the waves down below
cleans all emptiness in the air
and fills it
with serenity.
a serenity
that can lift me
high up in the sky
above every Palmetto
and every person down below.
above the divine abyss,
as Neptune himself sits.
I'm on the wings of Icarus now
soaring through the air,
above all that endures me below.
the sun is stronger
as it shines against my spiraling face,
guiding me too close to its rays
melting away my wings.
I'm falling now,
the cool air winding around me
as I plummet down into the abyss.
…

I open my eyes to find myself
still standing against this abrupt old fence
looking down at the abyss
as the sea lions entertain the other people around me.
it is still serene, though,
but perhaps overwhelming.
And its only Tuesday morning
here in La Jolla.

The Reoccuring Dream

Jairo Martinez '14

I had a dream last night,
Of waves crashing against the sea,
Apollo's chariot flying out of sight,
And you lay right beside me.
Your face was a blur,
I knew not who you were…

Our gaze turned to the sky.
Wondering, wishing, waiting,
For what? I knew not why.
And you lay there giggling,
As our touch grew close,
You said "In due time, almost."

Tonight I dream again.
The sky with fire, a masquerade;
Couples smile dancing twain.
And there you were, face a shade.
Behind that mask, secrets lie;
I plea, you smile, "not the time."

Another night, another dream,
Of darkness, nothing but I,
And you, face a blur, a scheme,
Is what you hide! "Omen why,
Haunt a lonely man? Siren,
Be gone! Loveless I'll wizen."

And in that dream that night she
Said, "Fear not, heed my advice,
If love is what you seek be,
Patient, persevere, think twice;
For I'll love thee, but until this,
Time, dream and bethink this night's bliss.

An Opened Life

Kevin Greene ‘12

I crack the spine and see letters jumping, crying screaming for my attention.
I caress them one by one with the gentle glare,
each letter more intriguing than the last.
I begin to move swiftly,
picking up speed the more I digest.
Surroundings begin to melt away
and I am falling slowly into a hectic world of thoughts, visions, dreams.
Without a grasp on reality i am lost.
Scenes of lore obscure what is truly there,
but I can’t tell the difference anyway.
Finally I end up in a faint memory,
a day from years past.
As I jump into the pool on a warm summers afternoon,
I awake, and all is the same as was in the onset.

I crack open the book that rests on my lap.

Small Crowd in Manhattan

Chris Conway '13

The city smiled back at us, we knew;
The Empress of the world and we were her children.

An adolescent congregation to restlessness and recklessness,
Not out of lack of care, but innocence: simply, there was nothing to concern us.

What was worry?
Every corner illuminated.
No moment spent alone.

Manhattan wouldn't close her eyes as long as we stayed to the pavement.

To Hear the Sounds

Rob Salandra '12

Sitting on the same rock edge,
Watching the same snow fall,
Listening to the same natural beauty,
But who is hearing this transcendent noise?
Who comprehends the sound?
Which of us feels the uplifting soul?

Not I, not yet.
Now, it is you,
My guide, I can only observe.

One day, I only hope,
I will listen to this beauty
And I will hear its serendipitous tone,
I will discover what only oneself can,
I will be in a different realm,
Away from those far below,
Who only listen and nod in ignorance.

Black and Grey

Nikolas Cirillo ‘13

So bright and green
The sun’s golden sheen
Like King Midas himself the sun is above me
Sitting on a shelf
So blue, so cloudy
Casts the light in every way
Oh how I wish to stay
And never return
To the black and gray

A great sage among students
Still grows, but with prudence
For the scars of its hide
To us confide
Its secrets of the past

The glinting grass
As if polished brass
The light flickers
Like a candle
Water drips on a sponge
The heat soaks in
Drop by drop
And to my chagrin
I stand with a hop
It’s time to return
To the black and gray

Diamonds are from Evil

Jack O'Connell '14

A man in love with a woman went down to a kneel He said,
"Here is a ring; it shows how I feel It is a promise of faith and
token of love"
It was profuse in weight but in history above She marveled
at the size and looked her man in the eyes Then they toasted
oblivious to a nation's demise

A price is paid in pain for the diamond she owns in the African
country of Sierra Leone Where "rich soil" is a reality bear-
ing pearls at the shoe Domineered by the sun sitting on skies
of blue Lavish in verdant mountains and trees huddled as for-
est Wealthy in elegance but in tranquility the poorest Because
when precious pearls pervert man like Gollum They lead not to
prosperity, but an issue so solemn

Rebel forces emerge funded by jewels
Armed kids guarding bases instead of in schools Separated
from families, estranged from peace With a knife and whisk
pocketed, without the police Rebel groups treat murder like the
act of blinking Obliterating lives without even thinking Honest
citizens witness carnage and traumatic gore Fighting an end-
less, futile, and savage war Victims starve for a voice but dia-
mond money maims the larynx And consumers allow this like
negligent parents

While the countryside detains miners with only a basket That
slaves working in water would trade for a casket Knowing if

a gem is stolen from the heart of the Earth They'll be shot to the dirt for every dollar it's worth Leaving no choice but to fuel these engines that are massacres With Rebel Leaders at the wheel whenever bad occurs By day, languish and heat become standard When tyrannical times will end remains a question unanswered By night comes a proud army chant, gunshots, and a thud As if digging in the mud was worth shedding blood

Then smuggled bound for Belgium in perfect timing Where they accept a diamond as long as its shining No matter the bodies it's blown nor the evil it's sewn The west builds the throne for the nefarious groups in Sierra Leone

As for the man and the woman, things didn't get worse nor better They just went about life thinking diamonds are forever Meanwhile the man's buck afflicted a nation of wretched, glum people A pity he didn't know that these diamonds are from evil

Five Guys

Jack McPadden ‘13

My first bite,

all heaven sings,

I try to comprehend

how such a masterpiece was made

by human beings!

The sweet taste is love

in my mouth,

And is soon followed by

my drink, where it goes

throughout.

Awoken from my daze with,

“Do you want fries?”

I remember I was only

fantasizing about my first bite,

my first burger from Five Guys.



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