



IMAGINE

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**What  
are you  
looking  
for?**



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*Emulation of Hanging Fire*

I am fourteen  
but almost fifteen.  
Good grades, positive attitude,  
care and support are all I need  
to display.  
But the expectation of receiving,  
the necessary conversation to fill  
the holes in a human soul  
is dependent on truth.  
How can people live without?

I am in a fairytale  
with castles and conflict.  
Unknown to the silent cry  
that is devastation and destruction.  
But the gates are open  
to education.  
And guided by curiosity and necessity  
I start to fill my holes with  
integrity and the perspective  
of value in your culture.  
How can people live without?

Nobody truly can understand  
the worth of advice  
until the eleventh hour.  
When all that is known is  
the personal effort put into  
the greater good.  
When your travels conclude  
And appreciation allows you to distinguish  
the price of a smile  
by emotional value.  
How can people live without?

Lily Sherwood



Jessica Denet



Thomas An

*Diverged Ideas from Bees and Their Keepers*

The human keeps the bees  
 Locked up in a crate,  
 For only him to see.  
 For only him, they see.

He wears a mask for his protection  
 To guard him  
 During inspection,  
 So he cannot notice the weakness in their wings.

If they try to fly away,  
 A potent potion  
 He sprays.  
 They have no hope for any better days.

He thinks he's great  
 Because of the honey they make,  
 But a father does more than taste.  
 He strengthens wings for flying high.

Elliot Fuerst

*Beauty*

*What are the differences between pretty and ugly? To me, we all look the same, and who's to say we are pretty or ugly without getting to know us? To me, physical beauty is a stupid concept that we all made up because someone wanted to assert their pride. Isn't that what beauty really is? Just pride. These were my thoughts as I sliced open her abdomen and prepared to rid it of the jelly fat.*

Celia Spana



Claire Doonan



### *Aloe Blacc: Life Example of Motivation and Temperament Management*

Some people use music as a tool for motivation to do an unpleasant task, as it is shown by many athletes working out, or a student doing homework. Also, some people might think of music as a method of relaxation when performing the task that not only motivates them to finish the already started task, but also slightly relaxes their minds with the method of multitasking. But I have recently experienced a deeper effect on my mind, as music has had a massive effect on not only the way I see life, but also my thought process in tough situations.

I have to sincerely admit that my personality does not generally base on any type of thought processes or “do the right thing” stuff. I know myself, and I am not close to being the “perfect teen” or anything like that, as I base my decision making on my emotions a little bit too often, giving place to unpleasant situations where a troubling event ends up happening, not necessarily having to do with fists nor violence, but with an unfriendly exchange of ideas. But that is just me, and I don’t try to change my character, as my decision making will now and always be based on my inside feelings and opinion.

I have been recently listening to a song I many times hard to in a beat headphones commercial, in where Kevin Garnett, an extremely inspiring veteran basketball player for the Brooklyn Nets gets booed by the other team’s fans, and is ultimately forced to put a song called “The man” by Aloe Blacc, and takes off the headphones when enjoying the enthusiastic screams of his fans in Brooklyn, displaying the words in the screen “hear what you want”. This commercial has had a very significant effect on the way I now see life, and think through my decision making before reacting to a tease.

It was then shown on a bus prank, taking place on December 20<sup>th</sup> of 2013, where I noticed the effect of the song on my actions. As it was finally Friday, I was heading to my friend’s house on a bus that did not correspond to my house, where I and my four friends got on to reach our destination. I then noticed that the bus randomly had most of the people I hated the most in the whole high school, and sat quietly avoiding some reactions that would had caused true violence on the bus. I was then being teased by an anonymous person who I have wanted to react to a long time ago, and stayed quietly as I decided to take off my iPad mini and listen to the song of the commercial, as I had downloaded from the internet, to keep me calmed from the teases, and instantly felt a slight contact from a piece of clay on my head, and decided

to ignore it to avoid problems.

I played the song repeatedly 3 times throughout the bus trip, as I saw my friends laugh, because the anonymous person made a form of man's parts with the clay, which then put on my head for one second. The song itself prevented an ugly confrontation between me and the kid, as I kept calmed and listened to the words of the song carefully, trying to ignore all the signs of frustration in my mind. Finally, when it was over and we all got out of the bus, one of my best friends Jordan Salem looked at me, and said the words "hear what you want," as he shook my hand congratulating me for my actions, giving me a great feeling, as I knew he saw the commercial with me a couple of days back, giving me the feeling like I now was "The man," as the song lyrics repeatedly says.

Santiago Poveda



Thomas An



Angie Martinetti

### *Fear*

Fear.  
 Fear comes in different ways  
 Acrophobia – fear of heights  
 Nyctophobia- Fear of nights  
 Xenophobia – fear of strangers  
 Friggatriskaidekaphobia- Fear of Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Sweat running down your face  
 Cheeks as red as tomatoes  
 Don't run, face it  
 Whether it's a fish or a shark  
 A cat or a dog  
 Fear Comes  
 And fear goes  
 Go with the flow  
 They smell fear  
 Will fear consume you?  
 Or will you consume fear?  
 As a wise man once said  
 "Thou who is not fearful, only fears one thing, fear itself"  
 But Fear can be a good thing  
 It all depends on the person  
 For some, heights are scarier than a clown with pie  
 For others an opportunity to touch the sky  
 Or for some strangers are creepy and weird  
 While others look at them as funny guys with beards  
 But how you face it isn't a big deal  
 Just use it to fuel yourself and eat it like a meal

Adam Eljamal

I am not timid, afraid, unsociable, or dismissive, and I am not skinny!

Skinny is a word I am not fond of; it does not categorize who a person is; however, “not skinny” has defined me, at least in my mind.

“Skinny” was never a concern for me through fifth grade. I had many friends, was President of student government, and was an accomplished dancer for my age being in classes with girls three years older than I. The day I realized that I would meet new people in middle school the next year, I saw a different girl in the mirror, a girl I didn’t want to be anymore. Fitting in with my peers in school became a concern for me, but I thought about dance automatically, knowing that I was not a size two, muscularly toned, or, in other words, your stereotypical dancer.

My insecurities flooded my mind not only as I walked down the school hallway, but also at my dance studio, or what I call my second home. Every year there was a recital, and one of the best classes during the year was costume day. It was full of excitement, anticipation, and the assurance that you were going to look fabulous on stage. All of the older girls were getting child sizes, and mine was the only costume with the massive, strangely distinctive, capital “A” for adult. My broad shoulders, round tummy, and chubby cheeks never held me back as a performer. I soon proved myself to be more than a ten year old who could move to music; I was a technical dancer who displayed all of my emotions into every movement choreographed.

Acceptance into new dance opportunities made me think, “Why me?”, “Do they pity me?”, or “Are they just saying that?” because of the insecurities and how “not skinny” has defined me.

During one of my dance recitals, I walked onto the stage and saw the audience’s faces. They were thinking, “She’s not pretty. Her lines aren’t elongated and lean. How could she be a good dancer? She is NOT skinny!” As these thoughts crossed my mind, I stumbled. The performance was over; I couldn’t recover. But dance is my passion! How could I fail? After I was struck by that realization, I made sure I nailed every move and proved that I can dance circles around anyone who is a size two.



Over the years, I have learned that being concerned with others' judgments is pointless. Passion is what drives us, to achieve what others think you can't do well. I am living proof. If I stopped dancing because of what people expected in a dancer, such as being skinny and long legged, then I would not have broken the wall many get stopped by every day. Being heavier in today's society is tough; being heavier in the dance world is even tougher. It makes you a strong and confident advocate for yourself who will never let a trait such as weight dictate your life. And now, not being affected by others' perceptions is what personifies me, not being "not skinny."

"Not skinny" is a prison. "Not skinny" restricts. "Not skinny" destroys dreams. But not mine. Although I have thought that wherever I go I will be judged because of my weight, I am an athlete, I am built a certain way, and there are ways to ignore others' judgments, and for me, that is dance.

"Not skinny" is a mere hurdle that I will have to jump over for as long as I am dancing. I know I am not your stereotypical dancer. I'm not lean, muscular, or light, but I am the dancer I want to be.

I am not timid, afraid, unsociable, or dismissive, and I am not skinny! I am unstoppable. I am me!

Olivia Pagano



Samantha Alvarez

*Hope*

Alone in dark  
 No way out of this maze of despair  
 Lost  
 All alone in the dark  
 Stumbling around  
 Trying to find your way home  
 And as soon as lose you all hope  
 You find true light  
 The light of warmth and happiness  
 You have escaped the threats of others  
 Now you must learn about the world  
 They didn't tell you about  
 Alone in the New World  
 All alone  
 Surviving on your own  
 Without the light  
 Shining your path to success  
 Wandering through the maze  
 Called the real World  
 Nothing you know is true  
 Years and years of lies  
 Living on lies, surviving with them  
 You find other survivors  
 Trying to find the light  
 Crucial and vital decisions are  
 made  
 Our teamwork will be our rise  
 Or our demise  
 Sooner or later  
 We will find the light  
 Or the light finds us  
 After years of searching  
 The light is found  
 But most of us are gone  
 The light causes us to remember  
 The first time we felt the light  
 The light has revealed the truth behind everything  
 We have found the hope and happiness  
 Hope is what keeps us together  
 What builds relationships  
 And friendships  
 After all the disasters  
 And all the catastrophes  
 There will be hope to shine  
 And free us from our  
 Reality



Thomas An

*This I Believe*

I believe in the power of the threshold.

I believe that we are all on the verge of something, anything, fundamental to our existence; that we are all on the bow of the Titanic, arms outstretched, ready for life to free us, to take us, to carry us to the next stage of our being.

But what matters is when we are ready to jump.

It's the puzzling power of the unknown, the utter ambiguity that hinders people from advancement; the tarnished memories of one's past that won't relinquish their grip on an individual's emotional state of mind.

Although the timeframe from threshold to threshold differs, the time eventually runs out, just like how the sand in an hourglass ceases to pour.

Picture this- you are in a room with one door in front of, and one behind you, the latter of which is the key to your comfort zone, your safe haven of familiarity where you have existed for a reasonable amount of time. The urge and eagerness of mankind to embark on an adventure propels you to open the door in front of you, which, to your aghast realization, leads to an empty, dark pit of nothingness, an immeasurable space of either seconds or hours, days or years. Your attempts to return to your oasis are fruitless and of little avail, as the door is locked and the key lost the second that your mind became set on opening the door in front of you. It is through this door, this trench of uncertainty, that all new opportunities are housed, floating amidst the sea of mystery that deters people from savoring their lives and voyaging into unfamiliar territory. You are locked in a paralysis of discomfort, unable to further exercise your rationality and autonomy apart from the single choice to jump, the choice that makes you shiver and your heart catch in your throat. Apart from all else, what defeats you the most is that it is the necessary choice, the non-negotiable.

It is this intangible fear of the uncertain, the uncharted, that attempts to pull us back towards our comfort zones, while simultaneously drawing us nearer and nearer to the edge, the verge

of what one may deem to be good or perceive to be bad, the glass of water that quenches the thirst of curiosity.

Everyone needs to jump eventually; if they spend their lifetimes waiting, they watch their windows of opportunities close, and as they close, the weight of the possibilities left unfulfilled burdens those who fail to venture onwards.

One cannot admit oneself to remain fastened to the lower stages of moral and social development while the rest of society does backflips, just as how an individual cannot stand still in the midst of a stampeding mob. If we ever strive to advance further in our lives, we need to summon the courage necessary to move on to the next threshold, some of which may be adorned with luxuries, and others of which might be rickety and difficult to steady oneself on. Sometimes we may jump and find no threshold at all, in which case our chain of existence would have been broken. For all of these thresholds, all of these checkpoints, collectively form our lifetimes, in which each stage brings something new, something unexpected. And it is this sense of expectancy and anticipation for something unanticipated and unexpected that drives humanity to do the unthinkable, to strive for more, and to relish the time that has been allotted by some divine power to each phase of existence, for one is never certain if there will be a threshold to catch an individual once they brace themselves to jump.

That's why with every jump, with every audacious action of dauntlessness, one ought to point up to the heavens of optimism and fly.

Ella Eisinger



Alex Heinrich





Lindsey Castillo

### *The Body*

#### **Skin**

Pampered and unblemished, decorated with precious jewelry.  
*Permanently dyed from the sun's harsh rays, decorated with scars from past struggles.*

#### **Knees**

Smooth, tanned, and protected by designer jeans.  
*Rough, flawed, and covered in dirt.*

#### **Fingers**

Strengthened by constant texting, freshly manicured.  
*Weak as thin twigs, barely able to hold the surrounding sand.*

#### **Bones**

Strong, well nourished from a nutrient-rich diet.  
*Barren, threatening to break the brittle barrier.*

#### **Smile**

Artificially perfected, whitened and straightened.  
*Crooked, yellow, and broken.*

#### **Eyes**

Polished with expensive mascara and eyeliner,  
*Deep with sadness, but glimmer with a speck of hope,*  
 Searching for excuses to get out of homework.  
*Shining with strength, eyes of a survivor.*

#### **Soul**

Beyond visual differences  
 Despite past experiences,  
 We all dream  
 We all love  
 Our hearts all beat to the same rhythm.

Sarah Barnett

The crescendo of heels tapping down on hard wood, syncopating the rhythm of a mix of flutes, violins, and trumpets, resonated through my bones. The synchronized feet fell so precisely and in unison that it seemed that there was no leader among them; it seemed that the whole ensemble was one giant drum pounding again and again. Their feet whispered secrets about a culture. The swirls talked about a dance that unites people across borders, across centuries and across the stage. There is beauty that can't be touched--beauty that can't be seen and beauty that can only be felt in your veins. I didn't know that particular type of beauty until the day I saw Mexican Folkloric dance in the *Palacio de Bellas Artes*. The music took me to the sunlight, the warmth, the excitement, and the clear Mexican coasts. This world was full of colorful skirts and flowers. All female dancers had black hair with decorative head pieces, gold earrings, white skin, long eyelashes and red lipstick on the rim of their smiles. They bounced, barely touching the ground as if they were bare-footed and stepping on hot sand. They seemed to be floating but from far away you could hear the powerful impact their strapped-shoes made with the floor. Their skirts mimicked the flight of a monarch butterfly, which like me migrated away from its home destined to return.

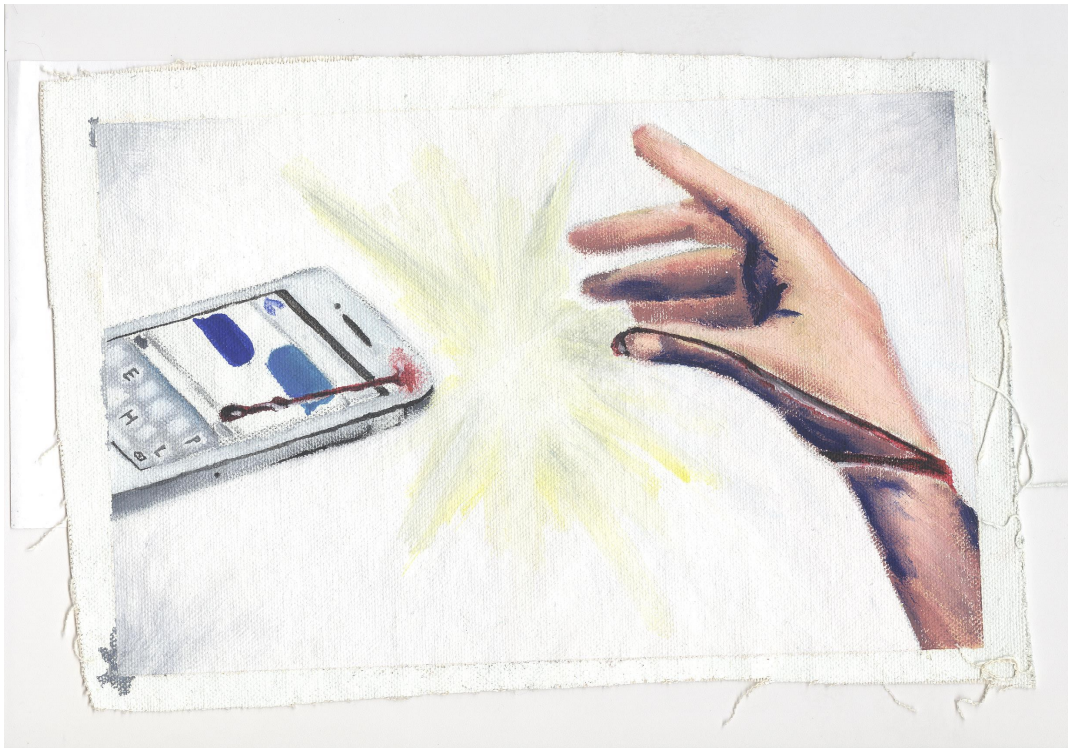
After six years in the United States, I had to adapt to a new language and in the process of assimilation, forgetting where I came from. Amidst a fog of new sentence structures and new faces, I was lost in a new world of snow and air conditioners. The beauty of my culture had been frozen, and it took a reunion with dance to re-ignite that sentiment of appreciation. I had thirsted to be in touch with my roots again because encountering a new country had left me conflicted. I became not a mix of cultures, but a single individual whose inner values were left intact. My journey back to my identity began with an audacious raise of a hand, asking the director if I could learn to dance. Even if this was in Queens New York, this was the closest I had ever been to Mexico.

"Of course you can join. Just follow the dancers," was the reply. My eyes focused in on the footwork and the posture of the dancers. A posture that indicated that strength, role model, and that my job was to accurately depict women and their contributions to society. A posture that was more than shoulders pressed back, but a pose that said "I am a leader" and "I am strong." A courageous figure that was not afraid to lose count, was not afraid to be judged, and was not afraid to move in different directions. While doing the multiple spins, I too felt like a

sophisticated woman, forced to move with grace and elegance. As the music started, the “Huapango” melody, rose to the surface and we began.

This dance remolded a stereotype that I first met here in the states, it contradicted the idea that your environment can limit the way in which you flourish. When I dance I show the audience my music, culture, and the beauty of my country, and when I go and watch others dance, I know their culture is beautiful too. With this in mind, I know that I can travel, meet, and solve problems in different places without forgetting my city. In college I will keep the same attitude, and as a leader encourage others to never lose their inner city. The song “Mi Ciudad” takes the audience through the Mariachis that lurk at night, the Black “charro” hats with silver pebbles on the edges, the colorful pinwheels, bravery and romance. There is a beauty that can’t be touched, because it’s passion from within.

Aura Gomez-Tagle



Heeyeon Kim

*Winter New York*

As the snow dances on the green grassy ground,  
 And plow trucks are ships that travel throughout the night without a sound,  
 There is no school today.  
 The kids cheer and say "Hooray!"  
 Hooray!  
 Hooray!  
 The town used 75% of their budget plan for snow  
 We are 50% only through the winter year  
 The snow keeps on piling up on the old  
 And I hear that we will have snow  
 On Monday, Wednesday, and Sunday  
 There is only one snow day left!  
 He He, one snow day left  
 He ha, one snow day left  
 ONLY ONE SNOW DAY LEFT!  
 At this rate,  
 The snow will be higher than the empire state.  
 People can't go to work,  
 And there is some snow that is not cleared off the roads yet.  
 People are storing food as if the end is near.  
 The end is near!  
 The end is near!  
 The pipes moaning and the water frozen,  
 I feel like a pioneer in the 1800's.  
 As I approach outside,  
 Into the crisp and cold air,  
 The air smells like BBQ,  
 The snow on my tongue is watery.  
 The snow is a rock,  
 The snow is more pure than quartz,  
 The snow is soft as a pillow,  
 The sun is hiding behind the dark clouds,  
 The snow on the streets look like the top-  
 ping of a crumb cake,  
 The kids on my block cheer for joy.  
 The trees look like something from a calendar,  
 The park benches are sleeping under the sheets of snow,  
 The cars are buried in hill formation,  
 I shovel and hack at the ice and snow.  
 In my free time, I play,  
 I frolic in the fields  
 And go sled riding.  
 Just yesterday, I was on the snow  
 Slipping, sliding...Splat!  
 I love the snow,  
 I love the snow,  
 SNOW!

Vito Gonnella



Angie Martinetti





Angie Martinetti

### *Home in a Hobby*

When I was two years old, I was enrolled in a finger-painting class. By the time I was seven, I had successfully graduated to the more demanding, muscle-straining pottery course. In middle school, my charcoal-smudged, abstract self portrait hung in the hallway for all to pass by on their daily skip to gym. Art has always been part of my life, and the creativity that enables me to be expressive through various mediums is tremendously encouraged by both family and friends. Art is something I not only do for grades or pleasure, but for release... It is easier to breathe when I am able to shed the usual stresses that accompany growing up.

There are unique things about this love of mine, but like many others loves, it is complicated. When I was younger, I dreamed of one day being able to spend my life on the beach with a canvas and homemade oil paint- wasting the day away mixing, blending, and gradating until I concocted intricate pieces. However, as I grew older and discovered the intriguing world of psychology, the competitive field of journalism, and even the slightly daunting area of neuroscience, it became apparent that I was meant to divert to a different road.

Yet, deciding that my career path would not be one oriented around art never destroyed the passion I felt for it. I knew there was no way I would ever willingly give it up, even if it meant trading in a palate and brush for a white coat in the future. Luckily, before forcing myself to push it out of the way completely, I realized I didn't have to. More importantly, I realized that life isn't all about the job you ultimately choose. Life is about enjoying all there is to enjoy- living every moment (away from the proverbial desk) to the absolute fullest. Essentially, I began to appreciate the greatness of a good old fulfilling hobby.

As someone who takes her studies very seriously, I found that I have often had the worst form of tunnel vision- the type that solely allowed me to envision future me excelling at my future profession, earned by a tireless work ethic. I have recently come to see that just as important as focusing on the future, is relishing the pleasures of the present. Gripping tightly onto passions that do not necessarily connect to one's occupation is not harmful, but healthy. So my sketchbook sits on the night table, and an array of pastel-colored pencils are in the drawer- or scattered on the floor when I have fallen asleep doing what always makes me smile.



Amanda Friedman

Jennifer Barragan

*Saving Captain*

Oh Captain! My Captain! how I yearn to tell  
Of why you're leaving here; the reason why you fell.  
But here I sit, completely still, the words silently screaming,  
The words I wrote on Day One of the day I should be seizing.

Oh Captain! My Captain! you have set me free.  
You have broken my coy shell; you've pulled me from the sea.  
With gasps of air I've come to life, but all that's left of you  
Is someone to place the blame; blame that is not true.

My Captain does not answer, for he can't hear my screams,  
But I will make them heard. I've learned to be extreme.  
With that, I climb the mountain; look down on those he's helped,  
Call out with strength and courage, for my gratitude must be felt.

The door to leave is open, but there he stops his tread.  
For he can feel the love, and acknowledges the dread.  
And now his time has come, to rise up, the bugle trills.  
We will follow "carpe diem". We will follow our own wills.

Mihoko Sakanaka



Jessica Denet

*I Miss You*

Cold, dark, vacant eyes.  
 Staring back into mine.  
 Love. I felt it so deep.  
 So blindly that I couldn't see.

Words. I wish weren't said.  
 Pain. That's pounding my head.  
 Friends. A word that's no more.  
 That part I know is for sure.

My beauty. My dear beautiful girl.  
 Please look my way. I can't take anymore.  
 My angel. My guardian sent from above.  
 I miss you. I wish I could fix what I've done.

I let you in. To play my game.  
 I wish I could change. All those things I said  
 I never meant to hurt you. Never meant to ruin a  
 Friendship I wish could've last.  
 But I can't go back.

My beauty. My dear beautiful girl.  
 Please look my way. I can't take anymore.  
 My angel. My guardian sent from above.  
 I miss you. I wish I could fix what I've done.

I love you.  
 I'm sorry.  
 I can't change.  
 My feelings.  
 But I could've held them at bay.

I love you.  
 I'm sorry.  
 I can't change.  
 My feelings.  
 But I do regret what I said.

My beauty. My dear beautiful girl.  
 Please look my way. I can't take anymore.  
 My angel. My guardian sent from above.  
 I miss you. I wish I could fix what I've done.

Adriana Darcy



Tereze Camaj



### *Happiness?*

What is life? Honestly, and why is that question often considered the “ultimate” question? Well, think about it. We are humans. We are by far the most intelligent life forms on the planet. That being said, the amount of *things* we have the potential to do, make, explore is infinite. Life is not long enough to do everything! Music, for example, in itself is far too expansive and diverse to completely explore in a single lifetime. The history of cinema or literature... no one can truly be an expert on either much less both of those fields because there is so much to them and they are constantly becoming larger and larger. These are all things constructed by human culture. You don’t see orangutans or mountain goats showing interest in the fine arts. It isn’t so much that these other organisms don’t *care*, but they do not possess the mental capabilities to even comprehend the concept of research. Humans have fascinations. While other relatively intelligent animals like dogs, apes, and certain birds in captivity seem to demonstrate basic interests (e.g. painting or athletics), all of these interests are a part of human culture. No parrot has ever legitimately yearned to change the world, though.

They say “live life to the fullest”. Please do this. Don’t waste time like some idiots do, such as myself, wondering about why we are here. Go out there and fill that short life of yours with as much stuff as you can. And make sure it’s stuff that you like. While sometimes necessary, I personally would never take a job simply to pay the bills. I refuse to make a “living” answering phone calls and sitting in a cubical. Even if I make what most people consider a small salary, I would rather spend my days in the arctic or in the rain forests of South America discovering new species of plants and animals and submitting my work and findings to corporations like National Geographic. I like that. You know what else would be fun? Researching the psychology of human sexuality while composing acoustic rock music on the side. That’s a nice life. For me, at least, but for you that may be boring. You may be unsatisfied with that kind of life. You may not even consider that a life at all. Fine. No one is forcing you to pursue something of that sort.

Where is all of this coming from? Is this all common knowledge put into more words than necessary? Perhaps. Everyone is different. In today’s society, that couldn’t be more true. Someone growing up in Haiti or Zimbabwe has far less potential for success than does a person born and raised in the United States or Canada. But are people living in America happier than people living in Haiti? In all honesty, probably not. So are they really more successful? First world nations, with the United States being a prime example, present tremendous opportunity

for individual success. That is why American parents tell their children that they can do anything they want as long as they put their minds to it. But Haitian parents most definitely do not tell this to their children. You really can't do a great deal growing up in a third world nation because there is such limited opportunity for success and prosperity. Sure, it's possible, but a third world nation isn't going to be filled with top level primary school systems and world class institutions of higher education. The necessities just aren't there.

Why is the average Nigerian teenager likely happier than the average American teenager? It's simple. As previously established, America (among the developed nations of the world) provides so much opportunity for success to its youths. So what builds up in the youths? Pressure! You must live up to your country's high standards and achieve the American dream! Otherwise you are a failure who has not used his country's provisions wisely. Insecurities run rampant among adolescents in America who are in the stage of mental development which Erikson would call *Identity vs Role Confusion*. These teens are trying to figure out who they are and where their place is in this world. But the media gives them their standards. Be skinny. Get good grades. Sing as well as Justin Bieber. Hit a baseball like Jeter does. And when young people believe they have failed and have not lived up to these standards, they punish themselves! You can't blame a girl for wanting to get a nose job when *models* on the covers of high fashion magazines all have perfectly flat nasal bridges. Because she is not what the media wants her to be, her own physical characteristics cause her to be emotionally unhealthy. Are kids in Haiti worried about all that? Most of them are more worried about where their next meal is coming from.

Oftentimes you'll see on television traditional African dances and celebrations on dirt grounds and think that they look ridiculous. But they are happy. They embrace the virtues of family and human companionship, and use those virtues to stay happy albeit living in poverty. We are humans. We are smart. Yet so few of us understand that we can use these big old brains to create our own happiness. Most of those who actually do, don't really know how. The key is to embrace your sources of happiness and celebrate them! I love singing and learning about psychology. As such, I research it vigorously and aspire to put my name in the psych textbooks. That's my *goal*. Not my requirement to be a successful human being. As long as I can sing and study psychology, I'm happy. I don't care if I'm not a complete psych whiz at the time of my death. In fact, some areas of psychology bore me. So I will fill my mind with the areas of psychology that interest me. My goal will always be to contribute to the scientific

community, but if I don't, at least I'll be able to say that I enjoyed my studies. That is good enough for me.

Back to the idea of humans being so distinct from the rest of the animal kingdom. Bad things happen. People, pets, relationship, corporations, cars die. But we are people and it is 2014. Practically anything that we lose, we can rebuild. Even the controversial sensation of love can be rebuilt again and again throughout life. Because of the infinitely expanding capabilities the human race has, the only surefire way to stay happy is to constantly seek out what gives you that rush of dopamine (AKA makes you feel happy). In all seriousness, do what you love. Don't beat yourself up over failure. Because the only way a human can truly fail is if they either commit suicide, or don't fill life up to the brim with exciting things. Failing a test does not mean you are stupid. Losing your job, girlfriend, and apartment does not make you a failure. It means you have failed a bunch of times. But if you give up on life at that point, then you are on your way to becoming a true failure. If you fight and hold your head up high, then you are winning. And you'll be a hell of a lot happier fighting to stay afloat than you'd be if you simply gave up- and you'd also be infinitely more likely to persist and get your life back on track.

No matter what, there will *always* be problems. The best way to deal is to always reach towards the light at the end of the tunnel. I'm creating a problem for myself right now by staying up past midnight writing this instead of studying for my calculus test tomorrow. I am going to fail it. But the school year is almost over and I can always retake it. I'm doing something that makes me happy. Maybe it will cause me to ignore academic obligations which may make me feel crappy later, but having known that I wrote this will always make me happy, and the crappiness isn't permanent. You make sacrifices for yourself. If I fail out of college, I'll be in deep trouble, but I can always give it another shot and reconcile things. Sadness is never eternal unless you beat yourself up! Don't do that. Everybody has the potential to win, to live a happy life, to be something as long as they don't give up. It's a cliché statement but it's true; if you don't work towards personal fulfillment, you won't be happy. Strive to live up to *your* standards, not society's. Only then, working for a corporation dedicated to powering your own happiness, can you truly win the game of life.

Alex Tostos

*whoever said i was beautiful?*

my heart is a barren wasteland.  
it's a muddy brown from all the dirt that's settled in,  
black with the ashes that once fuelled a fire of joy.

beauty and compassion were the first depart;  
this was not their home called Heart,  
it began to stumble and jumble,  
tumble then crumble.  
it was jenga,  
pulling wrong pieces until it goes.  
boom  
and is nothing.

it is just an organ.  
one with a teasing tick,  
as if it is testing me  
to see  
if how long it'll be  
until i break.

Deanna Penna



Shannon Zuccarelli





Ayeena Simoy

### *Onions*

Humans are like onions. They are so complex and have so many layers. You just keep peeling and peeling until you reach the core and that core is the person in their purest form. We are too quick to judge others when we meet them or see them for the first time. We don't think of them as a person with memories, thoughts, dreams, opinions, families, likes and dislikes. We don't think about those layers. We don't think about how what we are seeing in front of our eyes is only a small fraction of who that person is. We need to remember that the world does not revolve around us and that other people are just as important as ourselves.

Nadia Saghei

Four Cossack soldiers  
Carry the rioter away.  
Her body suspended-  
Echoing Antigone's cries for freedom.  
The flags drop in  
Surrender.  
Militiamen tread  
On the hopeful blue and yellow.  
Blackened.  
Charred.  
Until the two colors morph into three.  
A monotonous mass of uniformity.  
The walls of Westernization crumble  
And suffocate all in their midst.  
Reminiscent of the Red.  
A past that becomes the present,  
A cyclical harm of Fate.

A figure of oblivion labeled as Putin,  
Unconquerable.  
Insufferable.  
Has guided his Ship of State  
Safely into the Crimean harbor,  
Unaware of the tidal wave of emotions  
That Creon's hubris had unleashed.

Unyielding  
Popularity craving  
Power hungry  
Criminal.

Blinded and insensitive  
To the stabbing lamentations of his people.  
Pushing further west.  
Bulldozing through basic liberties,  
Fueled by the egoistic need to display Russia  
In an ever-shining light.  
All under the justification of a questionable vote.  
As though ruthless oppression  
Would forever silence the public-  
A fallacy of origin.  
A leader's rule is porous.  
Intimidation creates but a temporary cloud  
Where the rays of divine law inevitably shine through.

**Antistrophe**

To what extent is man truly free?  
A country divided cannot stand  
Without civilian support, the root to effective government.  
Law on earth, meant to ensure obedience to law above.  
But arrogance, a disease infesting the minds of great leaders,  
Only reminds the world  
Where true power lies.  
And while guns may end a life on earth,  
Only upon death, does life begin  
And judgment rights the wrongs of mortal sins.

Dillon Bogart, Ella Eisinger, Matthew Konigsberg, Jeffrey Solomon



Shannon Zuccarelli

### *An Enlightening Contradiction*

Tradition, honor, discipline, and excellence. The broken cogs of this wretched machine whose function is to prepare our youth for their futures. Even when it cranks out the same product every time it is still thought to work properly. Yet, the true meaning of function is creating something unique and never before seen, even if the sagacity of those in power prevents them from this truth. How can something be said to operate if it can't craft any sense of individuality? As conformity is the bane of humanity and the desolation of amendment. Unassumingly yielding the same result only hinders the ability for that result to improve or continue to function in the future.



Shannon Zuccarelli

I am here. The mechanic who sees the smoke emerging from this machine, equipped to remedy its glitch. Told nothing is wrong, I must fix it in secret, hiding the tweaks I make. They must see how a machine should work before they critique this work, as their judgments are clouded by conformation bias. Oil the parts, let them flow how they want, go where and with whom they want. Allow them to work freely, void of the outside's meddling, yet full of its potent inspiration. The only way for something to be treated with moral worth is to give it the autonomy it craves. I am the shepherd, the captain, of the products, leading them in the direction of freedom, where their courses are theirs to choose.

They've seen me. I must take caution. They are discontent with my improvements and they are coming for me. They think I'm tampering with their creation, fearing change and revolution, that their product has been corrupted. Yet, to the latter they are correct; it's too late, they've been changed forever for the better. My success has been evinced by this new creation of free thought and choice. A product born of nonconformity, prepared to last as an independent. My work has been done, my impact left, as I have replaced these ancient, broken cogs with ones more suited for humanity: freedom, individuality, imagination, and intuition.

Evan Burger



*The Closer You Get the Less You See*

Too close to examine...  
 Their voices, their voices  
 Pound inside my head  
 Sparring with the others  
 To ensure they are paid heed.

A mind so crowding,  
 Their words so potent,  
 Keep advancing.  
 Blazing a trail impossible to quench,  
 Engulfing the mind,  
 Leaving it charred black .

Can be so confusing.  
 They poison the thoughts  
 And try to penetrate the wall  
 Erected in my conscience.  
 Alas, my defenses are feeble  
 And it does not take long to climb.

Is it possible to relinquish,  
 To submit my control,  
 Oh even the little I had!  
 To an alien domination,  
 Do I commence my servitude?

Am I so fragile, so feeble?  
 That my temperament can stand  
 An invasion of voices,  
 Voices not my own.  
 Do I writhe in my seat?  
 Or do I stand?

The farther I stepped,  
 The more that I saw.  
 I conquered the commanding voices,  
 Banished them from my mind,  
 When I find the courage to stand and say  
 "Oh Captain, My Captain."

Cassidy Marriott



Angie Martinetti

-actualization

# I'm looking

for...



# Respect

# Brain.

Rest

# Digfoot

Something to make  
life worth it forgiveness

## Loyalty

SOMEONE <sup>a roommate</sup>  
Happiness 😊

## Happiness



# An Open door

Swag

new best friend

# hair tie

Something to look for

# Reward

\$1,000,000

A way to love

Waldo

myself

my remote

# Inspiration

Myself

cake

## People who

actually care

A good burger



SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS

If found please return  
to 123 mulberry place or  
call 555-5321.

## Motivation





*Too Beautiful*

Sometimes  
 I refuse to take pictures of beautiful things  
 Or write them down  
 Or tell anyone I saw them  
 Simply because  
 They are too beautiful.

Sometimes  
 I want my memories  
 To be mine  
 And I won't allow anyone  
 To take my experiences  
 Because they are too beautiful for them.

Sometimes  
 I do take pictures of beautiful things  
 And write them down  
 And tell the masses I saw them  
 Simply because  
 I want them to understand the beauty.

Sometimes  
 I want my memories  
 To be everyone's memories  
 And I allow everyone  
 To take my experiences  
 Because nothing is too beautiful for them.

Sometimes  
 I wonder when I went insane.

Sydney Mueller



Amina Naddschar



George Miyajima



*I Didn't Cut My Hair*

Kindergarten was full of new people, new surroundings, and new burdens. Imagine a small child in age, even though the tallest in her class, entering an unfamiliar room and attempting to adjust to this newly structured society composed of other children and colors that were brand new. Now at that age, stressing over the completion of homework packets and having a test to study for that is worth at least half of your grade every other period, is not the average concern. The added struggles of volleyball practice, doing laundry, and attempting to avoid the younger brother (who serves as a delightful distraction) in all of seven hours (give or take) is also not part of the five-year-old lifestyle. But the peer pressures of trying to make friends and being accepted is definitely an influence.

There was this girl in my class, her name was Jessica. She was really short, fair skinned, and had long, brown, curly hair like me. We sat next to each other at a table of four near the windows and away from the teacher's desk. It was close to our cubbies in the back of the room. I remember we were doing an activity that required markers and scissors. Back in the day, we all preferred to use the skinny Crayola markers because we could bite off their tops. Don't ask me why, but it was a talent we all valued. During the activity, when everyone was busy chewing away and coloring in their masterpieces, Jessica asked me if she should cut her hair. Being the naïve girl I was, I told her she would look good with shorter hair. I had thought she meant her mom would take her to get her hair cut professionally later on, but evidently she was just as professional because she picked up a pair of scissors and used them to sever a small section of her hair from her head that was probably about an inch in length. I thought she was so cool for doing that and wanted to do it too.

Jessica even recommended that I do it to myself like she had just done. I was just about to do so when my teacher, Mrs. Ruto, came over and stopped me. She never yelled at anyone, but she had asked what had happened and called my mom. She had thought the hair on the floor was mine, even though it wasn't. I told my mom I didn't do it when I got home because I feared that if I told the truth and blamed Jessica in school, we wouldn't be friends anymore. My mom believed me, but advised me to not do everything Jessica did if the action wasn't discussed at home. Jessica and I stayed friends on and off because she easily jumped from friend to friend, but that experience was one of the first times I was exposed to peer pressure and the stresses that kindergarten had to offer.

Lily Sherwood



Mariana Molero-Zambrano

*Alone in the Dark*

I feel as though I cannot live where there is no light,  
 No luminescence.  
 I'll die if I'm in darkness,  
 That darkness that once had hold of me.

But the problem is,  
 Some of the people I care about  
 Are in that void, that eternal bottomless pit,  
 Seemingly inescapable.

I want to save them.  
 To pull them out with whatever strength I can muster,  
 Yank them from that hell of a place.  
 No one deserves to be there, no one deserves to suffer.

But if I do,  
 I'll be consumed in it,  
 That horrible, rotting feeling.  
 I won't be able to get out, not like I did before.

Though, I think I'd rather be alone in the dark  
 Than have the people I love, the people that mean so much to me,  
 The very people who brought me back from a time of such despair,  
 Be stuck there instead.

Angie Martinetti

*Beautiful Girl With A Broken Soul*

I am a beautiful girl with a broken soul  
 Afraid to show people the real me  
 You never realize there are different sides to a person  
 Like a book  
 You look at me and judge me  
 But remember NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER

I gaze into your eyes and they give me  
 hope  
 Hope to believe that someone is out there  
 Believing in me and waiting for me to  
 spread my wings  
 I wait and think about looking in your eyes  
 And realize  
 YOU are the one who is waiting for me to  
 spread my wings  
 To show people there is more to me than a  
 beautiful girl with a broken  
 soul

I run through the never ending halls and  
 find you  
 I run into your arms and say "thank you"  
 while you nestle me in a warm  
 hug.

I look up into your eyes and you lead me to  
 doors and tell me to spread  
 my wings

I go silently and step out onto a black plat-  
 form

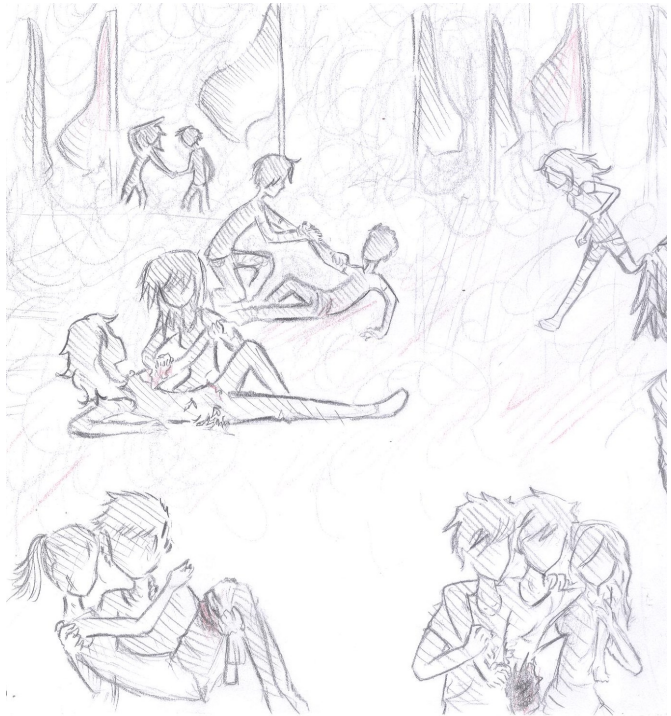
Curtains open and I'm in shock to see so  
 many people  
 But one face stands out and makes me smile  
 YOURS

I pick up the microphone and listen as the soft music starts  
 And I think to myself spread your wings you beautiful girl with a  
 broken soul

Because someone finally believes in you and gives you hope  
 "You are my guardian angel so please don't change  
 I think you are great just the way you are so why would a fight change  
 that?"

I sing along with the music knowing that you are giving me the strength  
 In my mind I look for a reason for me so I can never give up hope  
 But all I can see is you staring at me while the soft music plays and I  
 imagine

I am singing this song to one person and one person only  
 YOU



Katelyn Daher

*The Lower End of the Spectrum*

In this empty field of dreams made stray, I ponder where my ideas went fray.  
 Sitting on the grassy field I'm the epitome of solemnity.  
 Questioning what has ever been, now left to pick up shard pieces of a fools misfortunate sin.  
 But why must elation turn to desperation and jubilation to sorrow,  
 Shall I feel such emotions come morning morrow?  
 Will the sun still shine and the earth still spin?  
 And when sunset arrives will the golden rays still ascend?  
 When shattered by pain will my heart still mend?  
 And will my ideals and thoughts through this process be bent?

Yes but of course for rhetorical questions like these will have been answered,  
 Yet my frets still linger like a festering cancer.  
 For my mistakes do not mark an end but a beginning you see,  
 My errors make more strength and confidence for me.  
 However I'm masked by loves hollow sympathy  
 Makes my heart beat faster than the Phil Harmonic symphony.

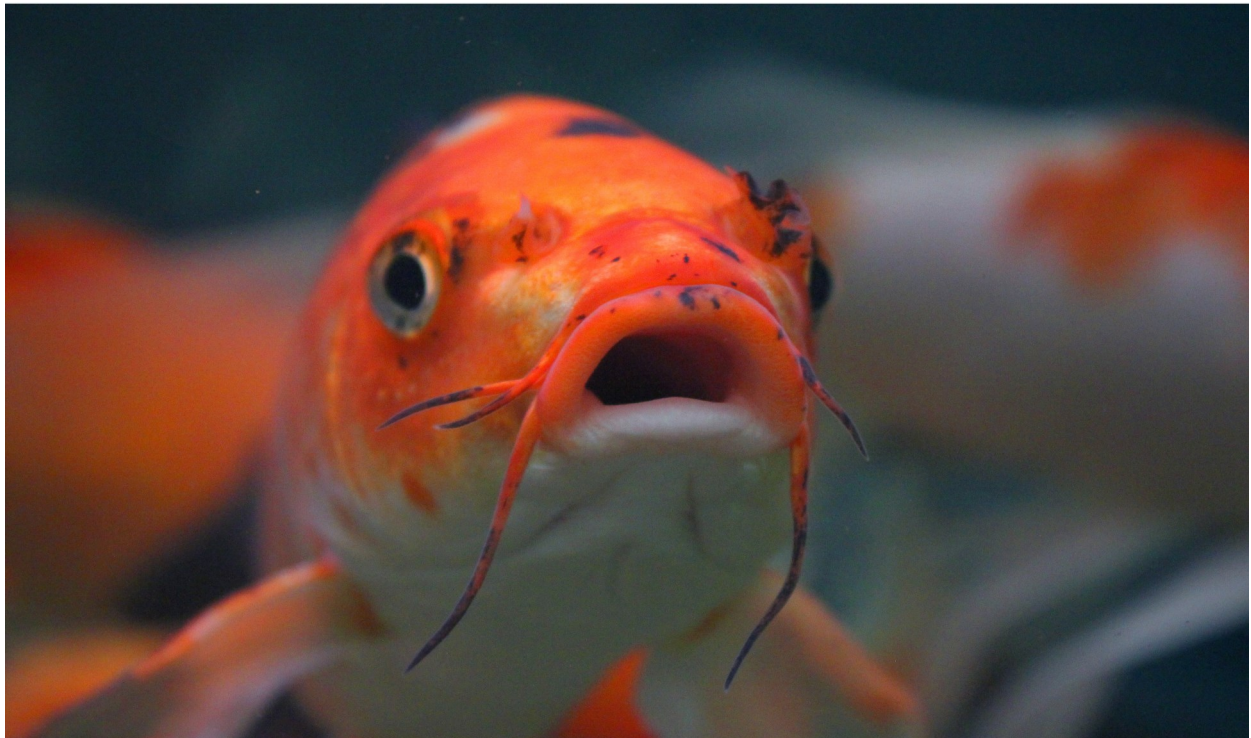
But my sin has not been severe  
 But actually just worrying about those to me who are dear.  
 Endless nights spent nervous and upset,  
 Why do I feel that my pain is some sort of debt?

I feel as if I have done something horrible to have this happen to me,  
 However it was just nature's way of telling me this is what has to be.  
 But losing a loved one should never be this torturous feeling like a maze of confusion;  
 Even memories and pictures do not create a lasting illusion.  
 Why must all love end in pain and all life ends in death?  
 And why must it feel as if my questioning sobs go towards ears that are deaf?  
 Deaf not because of ignorance nor annoyance but non-understanding,  
 Are the answers I seek too high and demanding?  
 The sorrow in my heart is so tremendous  
 It feels like a time bomb waiting to explode,  
 While others around me share in ignorant bliss that I simply loath.  
 I want to be rid of this ache, this horrendous feeling,  
 So I'm on a quest for an alternative way of dealing.  
 I feel hollow and empty, not knowing where to turn next,  
 I feel as if death has me tangled in a horrible hex.  
 Too young to realize and too old to not know,  
 Why life takes you up incredible highs, and pitiful lows.  
 Feeling alone in the battle of death and life,  
 Knowing you're being played, like a puppet under the grim reapers spite.  
 My pain is a well trained soldier knowing just how to break me;  
 Pushing certain buttons that pull out my emotions for all to see.  
 Somber silent sobs secretly sneak upon my face,  
 Pushing their way through my eyelids breaking my rock hard outer case.  
 There are happy memories though that fill up my mind,  
 Thinking of my grandpa's heart that was so gentle and kind.



I try to remember the good moments though this task is tough,  
As though good times are being locked away by a barbwire wall so rough.  
When my family members have finished or hidden their grieving process I still am not ready,  
To let go of the past or burdens that weigh me down so heavy.  
For it actually not be my readiness but my overall ability,  
To un-strap this load from my back and return to humility.  
For such worries do not fit into any society  
And this just adds to my stress; my troubles; my anxiety.

Kyle Lefkowitz



Thomas An





### *Those People*

Lindsey Castillo

You know those people...  
 The ones where you just, you brighten every time you're with them.  
 They make you feel some way;  
 It's a type of feeling that can't really be explained.

There's something about them,  
 You can't exactly put your finger on it.  
 But it's strong, a good strong, kind of like a nail hammered into a wall.  
 It keeps you stuck there.

But you don't mind it,  
 Hell, you love it.  
 Because they have that thing to them; it just,  
 Jerks you out of that dark, murky part of your mind.

Whenever you feel like nothing,  
 Like you're worth no more than a forgotten balloon floating away in the sky,  
 They're able to puff you back up,  
 Put some air into your once deflated rubber.

It's truly amazing, what they can do  
 Even to someone like you,  
 Who believes they cannot do anything remotely exceptional.  
 They make you motivated to do more, to be more.

These people, you never want to let them go.  
 They're the ones you want to cherish forever  
 Because they make you feel this way,  
 And it's a feeling you, not on your own life, would ever want to lose.

For me, these people,  
 They just peeled me open, and poured happiness into my soul.

Angie Martinetti

*Memoirs*

Roses stick, look at my skin.  
 Kind heart, damaged brain, meaty hands.  
 Plain on the outside, explosive imagination.

Celia Spana



Tonianne Mangone

*Anger*

Bated breath and clenching teeth  
 Terrifying violent pictures blur in your head  
 Your eyes narrow, pulling the strings at point blank  
 Breaking the peace in half with the sword of injustice  
 The desperation builds like a tower and consumes you  
 The little man in your head screams for your victory  
 Your eyes become empty black sockets, once used for sight and knowledge, now used for war.  
 Riveting fear circles your head until your anger washes over you.  
 The little man is pounding.

Kathryn Marsh

*Cookies*

Making cookies. It requires  
Ingredients, such as flour,  
Some sugar, chocolate chips, and some power.  
For the electric mixer of course.  
Without that, it would be as hard as lifting a horse!  
I plug it in the socket,  
I take my hands out my pockets,  
And start to make the dough  
Beginning with butter... eggs... to the fridge I go!  
I put the result on the trays.  
“Now to the oven” I say.  
Minutes, as seconds, they pass  
The timer rings. “Wow that was fast!”  
I look in the oven and I see the batter.  
I look at the sweets and say “Cookies, what’s the matter?”  
Overcooked! Burned! All of them are!  
The temperature knob was pulled a bit too far...

Demetrious McMullen



Tonianne Mangone

## *Skidding*

You have to have an iron stomach to repeatedly go around a circle at 50 miles per hour. Wheels screeching, I could feel the car at the limit of adhesion with the tires digging into the asphalt. In control, I dumped the clutch, mashed the gas and flicked the wheel. The rear tires kicked out, and the smell of hot rubber filled the cabin. Now it was a balancing act with the car in a slide. By modulating the gas and steering, I was able to keep traveling in a perfect arc around the skid pad. The moment when I catch and hold the slide is my nirvana. With no time to think, I had to move my hands at lightning speed, predict where the car was traveling and determine how much steering it would take to keep it that way. Having practiced for hours, my doubt was replaced by confidence. Perhaps my instructor realized this as well for I was suddenly and unceremoniously “graduated” from the skid pad, to the track at Lime Rock Park. It seems that whenever I start to feel comfortable, I shift to a higher gear. Now, I would be conquering the most technical speedway on the Eastern Seaboard.

Quite humbled, I watched from the back seat as the instructor whipped the car sideways around the track. I actually like taking a backseat approach to new things. This kind of perspective is important when learning about something. I will take my time, carefully research what I need to do and, when I finally think I'm prepared, execute. I set high standards for myself and now they were being tested like never before.

I was amazed at how loud and violent it was on the inside, yet, to anyone watching from the outside, the car's motion seemed smooth and elegant. The instructor was effortlessly throwing the car into corners at insane rates of speed and then thrashing it sideways. At the same time, he asked me questions as if we were strolling through the mall. I tried to mask my nervousness.

I watched and waited until it was my turn to drive. Driving on the track was a big deal for me, let alone getting to drift through turns. I positioned the seat to how I liked it, gave a thumbs-up to the track worker, and sped off out of the pits.

After a warm-up lap, the tires were hot. I reached 120 mph as I neared the end of the front straight. Turn 1, a right-hand, decreasing radius. If I didn't slow down enough, I would shoot



off the track midway through the turn, total a rather expensive car and, as far as my parents are concerned, have completed my racing career. And so, I drifted around it. I quickly applied the brakes. The tires chirped as I repeated to myself the same mantra I learned on the skid pad: dump the clutch, mash the gas, flick the wheel. The rear of the car whipped around. I counter steered into the spin and got on the gas--hard. I was in total control with only two tires hugging the asphalt as I skidded into nirvana.

Skidding is probably no way to go through life. After taking on the challenges of my academic and athletic career, as well as dabbling in entrepreneurial business, I feel as comfortable as I did graduating from the skid pad. It has always been important to me to push boundaries. I have been that way since my parents found me testing the limits of my Sit 'N Spin. I know that the road ahead will require new skills to keep me on-track. I'm eager to learn and have a feeling that the ride will be as exhilarating as it is enriching. My foot is on the gas.

Josh Kaidanow



Jessica Denet

*Another Philosophy of Life*

Life is measured by one's actions,  
 Not one's questions towards the universe  
 Whether it be adventurous stories  
 Or a quote that stands for all of eternity  
 For the soul has hosted countless shells  
 Always hosting with prior experience  
 We are nothing more  
 Than shells for the soul  
 Walking gardens full of seeds  
 Ideas that lengthen the soul's endless life

Or

We can be walking oceans  
 A refuge for fish, giving life and food to all.  
 But not all things are greener on the other side  
 Because as we can let life flourish,  
 We can also drown life away  
 Letting it sit at the bottom.

Out of sight, out of care.  
 You and I,  
 Personas alike,  
 Are nothing but repeats  
 Clones of our ancestors.

But always with new spices  
 Ready to unlock our true potential  
 Our true soul  
 And share it with the world  
 Because *that* is the goal of the soul  
 Become known, loved, cherished, applauded,  
 Until heaven greets those who have exceeded that  
 goal.

So do what you feel best,  
 Live your life,  
 Let each new chapter of your life  
 Be a picture of what's to come in the afterlife.

But the road to such fertile soil  
 Does not come without cost  
 Because nothing is free  
 The most expensive things in our lives  
 Are not paid in gold or green paper  
 But in blood, sweat, tears  
 And test our faith, determination  
 Challenge what our soul stands for  
*Until* the will of the soul is nothing but ashes



Shunsuke Tachibana



But the soul is strong in many  
And is willing to take the risk.  
When they show what can be done  
Others rise to the challenge.

But I digress  
I can write epics on what a soul's journey is  
And never truly get it right  
Simply put, never put your head down  
Always rejoice  
And when challenges stare you down  
Always look up to heaven  
And pray, and pray  
And stand up to the plate  
Always rejoice  
Always

For the soul is the ultimate guide  
A seeker  
Rejoice.

Adolfo Viruet



Angie Martinetti

*Unexpected*

The fear  
 of waiting for our loved ones  
 to return home from war  
 is like a knife in the back.  
 No one knows what to expect  
 the good,  
 or the bad.

No one ever knows  
 when,  
 if at all  
 they will ever see their father  
 or their husband  
 again.  
 Yet that special day  
 when the unexpected happens  
 is the day  
 no one will ever forget.  
 It's the moment that sparks  
 the rest of their life  
 as a family  
 again.  
 The surprise  
 the denial  
 believing it's a dream  
 is the best miracle  
 life has to offer.  
 Tears of joy swimming down  
 the children's faces  
 the wives' faces  
 are like a waterfall  
 that never stops flowing.  
 Jumping up in to their  
 father's arms  
 never wanting to be  
 let go,  
 ever  
 again.

After months away  
 in danger  
 with the possibility of dying,  
 he's finally home.  
 No more worries.  
 No more sadness.  
 Just happily ever after  
 again.

Ally Huhne



AJ Magee



*A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words*

“M-mom...” It had been mere seconds. Mom, smiling, stepped out the door to fetch the mail. She didn’t close it all the way, and Carrie, my baby sister, scampered out before I could catch her. She’s only two, just started walking. She ran past Mom, into the street, right in front of a big blue pickup truck. I’d never seen Mom move so fast.

Carrie was on the sidewalk, safe, and Mom was sprawled on the street, a dark liquid spreading out from where her head had connected first with the car, and then with the street. It had been mere seconds.

I walked into the clearing surrounding Mirror Lake. The old swing still hung on its tattered ropes, somehow being able to find the strength to hold three or four screaming kids. I sat on a bench until the clearing emptied of everyone; except me. I reached out and grabbed one of the ropes; it felt weathered, old, but strong. I had loved swinging on this when I was a kid, almost 13 years ago, now. Growing up, turning 17... you realize how much you miss being able to run around in your underwear trailing a batman cape. You realize how much you miss your mom bandaging your scrapes and kissing them better, instead of pointing to the bathroom and saying, “You know where we keep the antiseptic.”

I come here when I want to remember. All of the things I did as a kid, the best memories I have include this swing.

When I was born, my dad sat here for an hour before going to the hospital, just to think, to breathe. He told me later that it had all made perfect sense then. That after sitting in this swing for an hour he knew he would be a good dad. When I was graduating middle school and I had to give a speech. I messed up badly and ran here to sulk and wallow in self pity. I remember Mom coming up to me and putting her hand on my head, fingers laced in my hair.

“Nobody’s perfect, Zander. Everyone makes mistakes. The sooner you realize that, the happier you’ll be.” I sat down on the left side of the swing and pushed my feet against the ground. The familiar rhythm of the swing’s movement brought on another wave of nostalgia.

Julie Sancartier



Claire Doonan

### *Dust*

The difference a single day can make  
 Is measured not by the hours that are wrought;  
 But by the future that grows from its wake  
 And empty space that thrives on lack of thought.  
 For as time turns the tall mountains to dust  
 So too are we reduced to lack of will.  
 The strongest iron bars proceed to rust  
 The potent mirth of life loses its thrill.  
 What once was strong and tall has lost its light  
 The warmth that dwelled within is long away;  
 For when one lays the future in plain sight  
 Time seems a tedious thing to keep at bay.  
 So it will take a subject to its care  
 To keep and hold but nevermore to share.

Sarah Ryan

*I Define Me*

I  
 An extraordinary woman  
 With a masters in education  
 A flourishing foundation  
 Always ready to help  
 But, she does not define me

II  
 A strong man  
 With a degree in engineering  
 A successful career as a major league baseball player  
 Managing an extremely dexterous team  
 But, he does not define me

III  
 An adventurous girl  
 Leader of her class  
 An all-star in sports at age seven  
 Determined when it comes to any project  
 But, she does not define me

IV  
 A champion boy  
 Thriving in school  
 A talented athlete  
 Victorious in baseball, football and basketball  
 But, he does not define me

V  
 An energetic girl  
 With an impressive GPA  
 A varsity cheerleader as a freshman  
 An advanced tumbler  
 Developing into a well-rounded woman  
 I define me

VI  
 A good friend  
 Trustworthy with every secret  
 Ready to give you a laugh  
 And a sturdy shoulder to cry on  
 I define me

VII  
 I define me  
 I always have  
 And I always will  
 Not my parents  
 Not my brother  
 Not my sister  
 Me  
 I define me

Anonymous



Adriene Chadwick



*The Machines*

T'is an incredibly ominous sign,  
That machines control everything we see  
Endure their help, but don't let them define,  
Do not allow control of you and me.  
Computers will lead our society,  
And shall mitigate the human factor.  
We must not reside in anxiety,  
While we let machines, to us, detractor.  
They lack emotions, and humanity,  
Giving no preference to those in need.  
While we are blinded, by our vanity,  
They will ignore people's life out of greed.  
But do not haste to depose these machines,  
Since they are useful to us by all means.

Amr El-Azizi



Giana Hubbard



“Just keep cycling through the air...YES... LIKE THAT! The longer this flight lasts, the more obnoxious of a medal you can take home! Fly for the gold!” The shrill voice in my head, which I affectionately attributed to my “mental track coach,” would ring in my mind as I sailed through the air during my long jumps. Though her orders were often extreme, my body would twist, stretch, and contort to fulfill her every demand.

My mental coach, who stomped and shouted angrily around my mind during every track and field event, was the secret to my success. Yet, one ominously cloudy afternoon at a small, relatively low-stakes meet, she went silent. For reasons I still can't fully identify, she abandoned me mid-jump, and I lost control of my body. Instead of landing safely on my side, as I always had before, I landed flat on my back. Pain surged up my spine as concrete seemed to seep between each vertebra and congeal to a solid. I vividly remember lying all bent and misshapen in the sand pit- helplessly watching my track career combust right before me.

In the first weeks of recovery from a spinal fracture, I felt utterly lost. How could something so catastrophic have happened to innocent me? Whatever the answer, one thing was clear: it was my fault. My mind, my body, and my mental coach had fallen out of sync just seconds before my disastrous landing. I was the only person to blame for the fracture in my L5, the embarrassing brace squeezing my middle, and the premature end to my track career that seemed all but inevitable. The idea that I had failed myself was a new type of pill to swallow, one that tasted bitterly of self-resentment. Pessimistic thoughts from doctors and loved ones only further soured its already acrid flavor. Nobody seemed to think I stood a chance of returning to the sport I truly cared about.

Much of what I had known, loved, and believed in seemed to be slipping through my grip. I hated myself for failing, my doctors for being brutally realistic, and my parents for being unable to ease my physical and mental pain. I thought often of the pendulum theory- the idea that fifty percent of life is better than normal while fifty percent is worse- and pitied myself for being in the middle of a bad swing. There seemed to be nothing to do but sit and wait for life to stop beating me up.

Eventually, though, it occurred to me that my problem was really one of perspective. I made a conscious effort to see life's bad stuff merely as good stuff in disguise. My broken back taught me that being on that scary side of the pendulum, where monsters live in the woods and molten lava fills the ocean pits, can be a blessing. Hardships make you think. While recovering, I had plenty of time to ponder the things that mattered to me. I thought about my passion for the long jump, and how spectacular it would feel to jump again after sitting for months on the living room sofa. Non-stop icing and repetitive physical therapy would all be worth it, I concluded, if they helped get me back on the track.

As someone who has successfully made it back onto the other side of the pendulum and is now a record-holding athlete, I look forward, in some ways, to the next time I find myself in an uncomfortable phase of life. I am no longer afraid to go through hard times or new experiences, for I know that the gloomier pole of the pendulum is just waiting for me to take control and, once again, shed light on its darkness. Bring on vulnerability: I can now appreciate time spent questioning, contemplating, and, well, sitting on the ground as much as being in flight.

Amanda Friedman



Giana Hubbard

*An Unfair Farewell*

A true hero has fallen,  
 Leaving us all behind  
 To writhe in agony of a loss  
 And to face the consequences  
 of a greater authority.

The mirth brought about by  
 the Dead Poets Society has  
 vanished,  
 Leaving us all behind  
 To break the ties of friendship  
 And attempt to move along.

His death, seemingly a decay-  
 ing tree fallen in a forest,  
 Covered up by wild animals in the brush  
 Blamed on the innocent man with the chainsaw  
 Falling upon other trees, collapsing the weak but only  
 shuddering the strong.

His life, a small rebellion encompassed and sup-  
 pressed in a world of realists  
 Everyone, selfish, not carrying on his legacy for the  
 hope of their own safety  
 Not wanting to disrupt the typical way of things  
 But not speaking out means letting him lose, and that  
 hurts.

We must let his ideals melt away,  
 Blame the innocent to satisfy guilt  
 Continue on as if nothing happened  
 Back to the way things were.

His footprints were planted strongly into the ground  
 And we followed the leader  
 But now the rain has washed the prints away  
 And there is nothing left

But I will not forget.

Silvia Buonocore



Rachel Carr-Repetti



*Stepping on Sand Castles*

The petite ghosts of girls with  
Bags under their eyes and cigarettes  
Cocked between thin, wind-chapped  
Lips whisper sotto voce into my ear  
To watch out for boys with  
Footsteps like panthers and  
To pack more sand onto my arms  
Because high tide is coming and  
Despite the fact that I'm as strong as  
The ground beneath your feet, even  
The earth loses its footing sometimes

Cyle Rockoff



Angie Martinetti



*Journals from Spain*

It's my second week in Spain. I'm wearing black Alice and Olivia shorts, my most comfy grey and white striped t-shirt, and my black Supergas. My hair is in a messy ponytail because I woke up and changed quickly when my host mom knocked on my door and asked if I wanted to go out with her today, plus something else that I really just couldn't understand. I sort of make out that I need 6 dollars for wherever we're going. I grab a 20 euro because, obviously, I haven't gone to the bank and that's all I have left. Then I leave with my host mom, Rosa, who is dressed in yoga pants and a pink shirt. I take a look at her and realize that her outfit is indeed very different from her usual dress and heels. As we walk, my host mom tries to make small talk about the weather, I think, and her granddaughters, Marlina and Carlota. We walk for a good 5 minutes and then come upon a park that's enclosed by a wall, which is also very weird. My host mom goes up to some guy in a uniform at the window and tells him I need to pay. A different woman comes out from the window and brings me over to a little automated machine, which is all in Spanish. She asks for my money, but when I don't understand she turns to my host mom who says, "seis, seis euros, yo digo." I throw out a quick "oooo" and hand her my 20-euro. The lady gives me a look of annoyance and puts my money in the machine, presses a few things on the screen, and then stands back. All of the sudden coins, on coins, on coins start to drop out of the machine. Great! I reach to take all my coins and put them in my bag, which now weighs 50,000 pounds. As I also take the receipt and stuff it in there somewhere, my host mom and I start to walk again and she tries to explain the park to me. I nod my head and follow her, not really understanding. We then enter a building, walk up a couple flights of stairs and enter a random door that leads to a dance room with mirrors lining one side of the wall. I stand awkwardly by Rosa as she goes up to a couple of her friends and starts talking to them, while simultaneously putting her bag down on a chair. I quickly note that everyone is in workout clothes, not their "Saturday best" like me. I also note that there is a girl playing around with a computer attached to speakers. Then, the same girl starts to play music, walks up to the front and shouts something in Spanish that makes everyone stand up and spread out facing the front of the room. All of the sudden I realize what is going on: I am in the middle of a zumba class. I am at a zumba class, in Supergas, with my host mom. I watch a teacher hip thrust and gyrate to Latin-techno music. I also watch my host mom try to hip thrust as well. I also try to hip thrust, but fail miserably because I cannot dance for my life. Unfortunately, my lack of Spanish skills has me head bopping off to the

side. After the class is over, I am sweating profusely, mostly because it's 100 degrees in that room. My host mom and I walk out of the building while her friends pester me with questions about America. They ask if we have "zumba-zumba" there. Then my host mom says she has to take a shower, and leaves me with her friend who is in a bikini trying to sunbathe. I sit there and play solitaire on my movil while my host mom takes, what seems like, the longest shower of her life. My host mom finally emerges, and gives me a very detailed tour of the whole "park", which takes a good hour. After, she asks me if I want to go to the pool later that night, to which I respond "si" because I didn't know what else to say, and that seems to make her happy. We finally make the trip back home, which is when I finally pass out.

Even though at the time I was completely uncomfortable, I now look back and laugh. In its own way it's comical how my host mom thought that bringing me to a zumba class would be a great bonding experience. I know her intention was good. I also think about how I was uncomfortable and embarrassed that I couldn't keep up. But, then I think of my host mom trying to keep us as well and how she ended up doing her own thing. I think me going with my host mom helped lay down a foundation for our relationship. Now every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday my host mom talks to me about her Pilates classes. We have this connection based on our love of exercise classes that we're able to build on. I can see now, that even when I think I look completely ridiculous, it doesn't matter as long as I can feel comfortable with myself.

Victoria Tiburzi

### *The Attic*

Did I ever mention how much I loved my grandma's attic? It was old and musty, but I loved it regardless. I like old things, they make me feel good inside. I have this weird...ability. When I touch things I can feel and see their history; the happiness they once held transfers its memories to me, small things like photographs and jewelry. But one day I went to the attic and I picked up something that had almost struck me dead of a broken heart. It was a wedding ring.

Celia Spana



Jessica Denet

*Today...*

So I stand here today  
 Not knowing every day  
 What exactly I have planned.  
 I planned on having fans  
 Being a musician in a band was the plan  
 But no.  
 Bachelor's degree is required.  
 I'm just sick and tired.  
 Ever since I was young  
 I knew what I wanted to do,  
 Playing music on stage  
 Was my only aspiration.  
 But that is not the occupation  
 That every parent has in mind.  
 College is just 4 years.  
 College is just a name on a paper.  
 This society is run by people who are forced to go to college  
 Not knowing what their true dream is.

Thomas An

*Let Her Go*

We met for first time on the school bus, where I first noticed her stunning beauty. That day was the unquestionable, best day of my life, and 2013 was the best year. You want to know why, because that's the year I got to know the most beautiful, benevolent woman I have ever seen, her name was? This year I got to know how she felt about me, as I recently learned that there is no such thing as true love. True love, folks, is a fantasy that adults tell you is true so you won't kill yourself when you're younger. I am not saying all of this out of anger this is from a real life experience, this doesn't mean I am an angry man with problems. But this story is not about how much love is false, no; this story is about how a girl so lovely and kind broke a fragile heart yearning for love and compassion.

The beginning of this story could start when I started talking to her. That was a great day, actually every time I would talk to her felt like I was in the air flying. We really wouldn't talk about very important things; we would start talking about funny or controversial topics. When I was talking to her, she didn't seem interested in the conversation. So the natural thing that I would do in that situation was to start talking, funny, and make her laugh, but that always ended badly with a grin or no expression. Some days she wouldn't even care about me, and not even recognize that I am there. That made me feel like crap, but the other days that me feel like I was in the sky because we made small talk from time to time in class, but it was only topics for class.

If I had to describe this girl in one sentence it would be "perfection". She has the best smile and the funniest laugh that made me laugh too. She was the most perfect girl I have met in my life, the funny part is, I...don't...know...WHY. I tried to think of what I like about her, but when I try to do that my mind finds too many things to name. It's like I couldn't explain why I like this woman, a man once said that when you cannot explain love, it's because it is true love, a feeling deep inside you that tells you that you were meant to be with that person for the rest of your life. This is true love, at least that's what I thought, at one time. That day, that one day, the day my head and heart spun into a dark abyss, when my heart broke into a million pieces by the woman I thought could help repair it. My heart, body, and soul is like an empty shell of man without her, it's like the farther I go from her, the more I start to lose my mind, little by little. In me writing this I hope one day, that she would see this and finally realize how much I love her. Her name is happiness, kindness, perfection, her name is LOVE. And I let her go.

Anonymous



*Untitled*

Blood shot eyes  
Flirting with  
Religious disposition,  
A rabid  
Canine with carnage  
Stuck between its teeth  
Resembling the ghosts of  
The butterflies you gave me  
That lie torn wing  
From wing and leg  
From leg  
On the red velvet lining  
Of my ribcage because for some  
Reason your name  
Plays like scratched vinyls over and  
Over and over  
Like crows relentlessly screeching  
“Furthermore”  
And implying the perpetual  
Hymn of broken viola hairs  
And drums with bellies  
Carved into like  
A cesarean mother, birthing  
Something like the demons that  
Tap dance atop  
Pianos but not quite  
Because from between  
Those legs emerged a  
Butterscotch jaw line  
And copper streetlamp  
Eyes and coils of hollywoodian  
hair  
And hands that could  
Mold my body like molten steel  
And I suppose I’ve  
Fallen in love again

Cyle Rockoff



Caitlyn Brown

*I Found Somebody*

I am fifteen,  
after all this time,  
I found somebody who I can relate to.  
Someone who listens to my problems  
and doesn't offer criticism for the things  
I do wrong.  
When I have a bad game,  
he doesn't tell me I should have shot  
more.  
He doesn't care about my social sta-  
tus,  
and I don't have to be friends with him  
on Facebook.  
I found somebody.



Rachel Carr-Repetti

He is always there  
when I need him.  
We don't like the same foods,  
but it doesn't matter.  
He will always eat what I am eating.  
I found someone who makes me smile,  
just by doing the simplest of things.  
Someone who has taught me  
as much as I have taught him.  
I have had someone in the past like this,  
but I can't remember.  
I found somebody.

I don't have to call  
or check in with him  
when I am going to be late.  
We don't share the same dreams,  
but we have the same wants  
and our goals are the same.  
I don't know if I found him  
or if he found me.  
We both have dog names,  
but only one of us is a dog  
I found somebody.

Max Scoli



Daniel Schapiro

The men and women of Wall Street, with their business suits and briefcases, proceeded to their so-called “meeting” in the Green Room. They sat around the table patiently, making not so much as a sound. The man situated at the head of the table remained quite still until the final attendee had arrived. He took note of her entry, allowed her a moment to sit down, and finally advanced toward the opposite wall where there hung a portrait of General George Washington. He moved across the room with such grace and elegance he hardly disturbed the tranquility of the current environment. Once he reached the painting on the other end of the room, he lifted it from its hook, revealing a small keypad embedded in the wall. He typed in what seemed to be an infinite amount of numbers and with the push of one last key, found the wall slowly shifting toward the right. The group remained silent until the last of the wall had moved to unearth the real Green Room.

With their eyes fixated on the newly formed entrance, the businessmen rose abruptly and rushed towards the door. They charged there with such aggression that the current serenity had dissipated, unleashing a new kind of animosity, one that was released only in the presence of the strongest of desires. It were as if the scent that drifted from the doorway had developed an irresistible quality to its character; a certain kind of affinity that compelled the group to enter and subsequently never made them want to leave. This smell bound itself to the nostrils of each man and woman in the room, luring them towards the source.

Inside this room was a fully stocked vault; cash was piled up to the ceiling, sleeves of coins were stashed away in hundreds of drawers, and treasures of all sorts filled every crate that could fit. Madness lingered on the bones of the businessmen and within seconds was bursting through their skin, forcing them to breathe money as though it were air.

The masses flocked towards the cash as vermin would upon seeing their prey. They ripped through each pile, unleashing their beastly nature and restless hunger. This, however, grew into a thirst for consumption and soon enough they were popping pennies, snorting stacks and mortally drunk on dough. A woman's skin had turned a mucky yellow as gold oozed from her pores. A rapacious man uncovered the sleeve of his tux to reveal a tattoo of his bank account number. Another cried out that the only men she wanted were Jackson and Benjamin. They were so high they didn't give a damn about inflation. Their hands knew only the touch of their



wallets and what they contained. They injected coins into their skin, so that nickel and copper, coursing through their veins, would replace the blood in minutes. The image of money was forever imprinted in their brains and it was stamped in the site labeled “addiction”. The contents of the vault fulfilled every desire, every fantasy, and every man and woman had felt empowered by each piece of paper.

Like all good things, however, their monetary endeavor eventually came to an end. Once they had finished their routine and adjusted themselves to the current reality, the businessmen left the Green Room, returning to their homes in the city. They greeted their families, tucked in their children, and proceeded to bed as if the events from earlier had not occurred. The men and women had, again, successfully gone about their schedule without getting caught and they were therefore deserving of a restful sleep. And in their own idiosyncratic way, they did enjoy a peaceful night because they were unsuspecting of the world. Their attitude that night mirrored how they felt in the Green Room; they were the unconquerable territory that was so remote and so highly secured that nothing proved to be a threat. But, regardless of its security, all “invincible” lands are penetrable and Wall Street had been infiltrated by every stock broker’s nightmare: the stock market crash. Stock prices significantly declined during that night and with each hour, the heart rate of each businessman dwindled as if the two were synchronized. In their deep sleep they lay, all through the night, unaware of the tragedy that had struck; and, alas, they would remain oblivious to their misfortune because when the stock market finally crashed, the hearts of each man and woman of Wall Street ceased to beat eternally.

Alexandra Franco



Shannon Callagy



*Purple Hands*

It's not easy to relive these memories, when I have to, that is.  
 A dying man, wishing to reveal himself, before his clock hits the hour of twilight,  
 In order to cleanse oneself before the next life. The reason I walk down memory lane, something I wish not, is to confess to myself, a person seeking the orange utopia.  
 Confess to me that I'm only human, that the sin had emerged from a desperate heart.  
 Such a sin painted my mind blue; all conscience drowned away  
 By the ever-looming tsunami, ready to choke those who pray to Him in doubt.  
 Such sorrow blinds you, and you find yourself shouting in the dark.  
 I scream questions and cry for answers, but void and echo in response;  
 Such doubt blankets the soul with blood red, a color full of anger  
 Twists my emotions, finding myself in limbo, lost between the damned and hopeful.  
 But I listened to the music of the hopeful, ever blissful and forever loving



Olivia Listokin

And I saw hands, blinded by sight, touched me, embraced me, and something divine occurred.

All the tears I've held tight, all the bottled rage, is unsealed, overflows and attacks my Savior. I Try to help, but I'm pushed back by tremendous force, the shunning of my savior. I cry at night Listening songs of the heart, for the memory of the pain I released. Being the Box, Pandora Suffered. But, as the hours passed through me like lead, it turned to weeks, months. Soon, I felt lost, but grateful. I had lost the lavender savior, graceful in her step, and I felt distressed, deep in blue. Returning to the world of green and brown, I determine what must happen, in order to repay Her. Either find her, the true her, and ask for forgiveness, or leave this sleeping dog be.

Adolfo Viruet



Rachel Carr-Repetti

### *The Journey*

What are you looking for,  
That makes life worth living  
That you want with your very core?

Maybe it's attaining happiness, finding the one,  
Or maybe it's going to college, getting your dream job.  
Or maybe it's smaller, like living life to have fun

For me it's the voyage,  
The long road ahead,  
The end doesn't matter, only the journey

I look to live life, doing what I can,  
To learn and discover, to enjoy and to play,  
To know that I lived.

Some say the ends justify the means,  
But those people undervalue the journey, the travels in between.  
Yet, you're allowed to search for whatever you wish to acquire,  
So the question is, what do you desire?

Amr El-Azizi





**Did you  
find what  
you were  
looking for?**