



PARAGON

Paragon

GILMAN SCHOOL
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Paragon Submission Guidelines

- 1) *Paragon* seeks to publish innovative and well-crafted art and creative student literature, including poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and memoir. Other forms of student writing (i.e. analytical essays, editorials, etc.) will not be reviewed by the board.
- 2) Work may be submitted anonymously to *Paragon* but cannot be published as such. Any author who chooses not to claim his work after he has submitted it will not be published in the magazine.
- 3) All work submitted to *Paragon* must be the unquestionable product of the author. Any work which proves otherwise will immediately be taken out of consideration for publication, and the student who submitted it will be asked to refrain from submitting in the future.
- 4) *Paragon* only accepts work from current students of the Gilman Upper School. Work from any other authors will not be considered.
- 5) Per Gilman's policy, any submissions containing profanity will not be considered for publication.



-Ryan Lee, '08

Editor's Note:

Past editors of *Paragon* have written page-long essays on the changing year and the maturation that occurs during years of high school while underlining the importance of artistic expression within that experience. I find that the art, both literary and visual, is strong enough to speak for itself.

Enjoy.



-Andrew Nelson, '08

Dear Mother

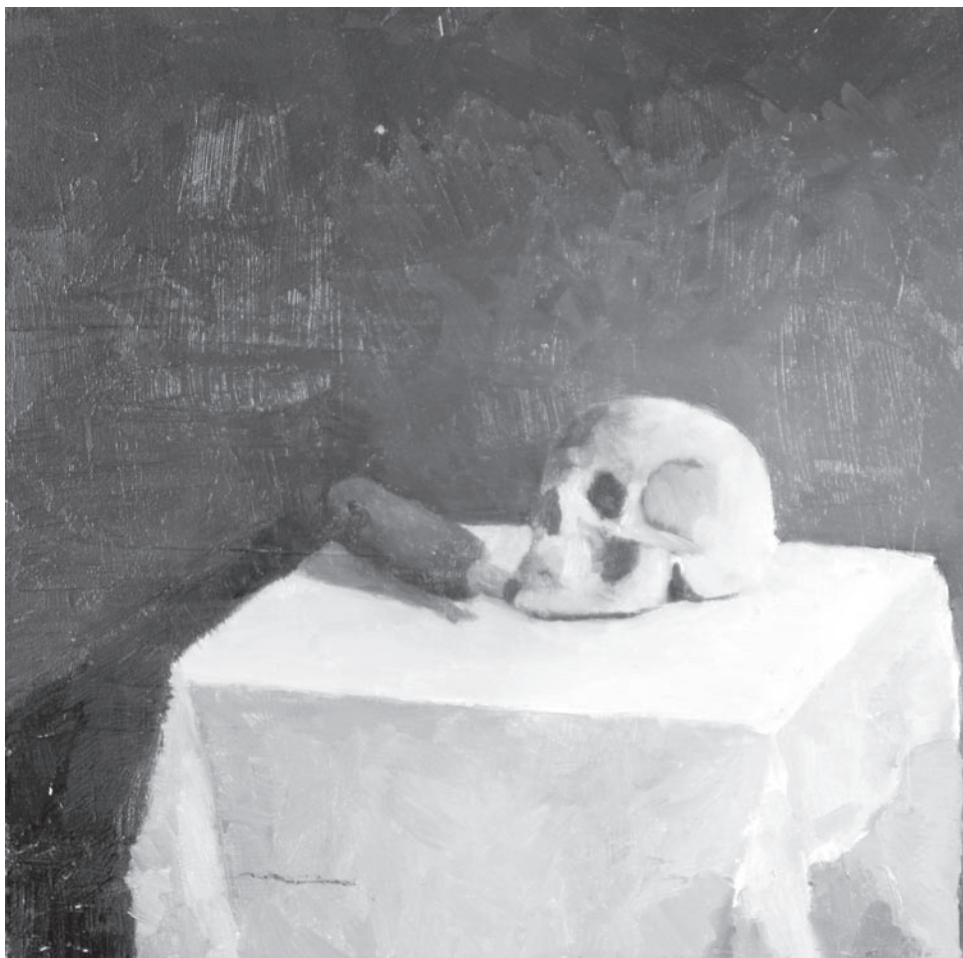
Mother, I must confess,
the PB and J you packed for me
still lies bagged within my locker,
untouched, lifeless, alone.

I ditched it, mother, for a soft
tortilla of peppers, onions and rice,
chunks of hearty steak (double, please),
mild, medium, hot salsas, corn that
glimmered like gold in the early morning sun,
rivulets of sour cream upon
snowflakes of cheese, all dyed green
by California's best avocados.

I know you wake up
long before the sun
to slave over a brown paper bag.
Mother, you have perfected
the peanut butter to jelly ratio.

But when my mouth wrapped
around that "brito" mother,
the last thing on my mind
was guilt.

-Kevin Niparko, '08



-Micah Belzberg, '08

First Steps

I see you moving slowly across the room,
Your soft knees rubbing against the rough surface of the carpet.
Your once wandering eyes are focused now, searching, looking to satisfy your stomach's cry.
As you reach the table that holds your milk, I see you look around, searching for the hands of your mother.

But nobody answers your pleading eyes. For minutes you sit there, gazing up at the milk just out of your grasp.
And finally it hits you. I see you throw your hands on the table's edge, and pull yourself up onto your fragile legs.
You look around, around at the new view, far above the ground.

In one jerky motion, you lunge at the milk with both your hands.
You grasp it and drink from it. I watch you as you stand there,
Unaware of your accomplishment, unaware of your first steps.
I smile.

-Avesh Thuluvath, '08



- Zach Paskoff, '11

One Day at a Time

Wednesday:

7:03 AM: Jane wakes up.

7:06 AM: Jane rolls around in bed, reluctant to leave behind her warm comforter.

7:08 AM: Jane goes across the hall and brushes her teeth.

7:12 AM: Jane gets dressed and goes downstairs.

7:15 AM: Eggs, bacon and cereal, but Jane is not all that hungry this morning.

7:25 AM: Jane grabs her backpack and jacket and gets into the car with her mother. Her mother turns on soft classical music.

7:45 AM: They arrive at school. Jane gives her mother a hug and kiss and goes inside.

7:48 AM: Jane sits down at her desk in Homeroom 3A and waits for the bell to ring.

7:51 AM: Mrs. Reed comes in. "How are you today, Jane?"

"Fine, thank you."

7:57 AM: The rest of the class is herded off the playground and into Homeroom just before the bell rings.

8:00 AM: Social Studies.

8:40 AM: English.

9:20 AM: Morning Break. All the kids storm back outside. "Don't forget your jacket, Jane," says Mrs. Reed. Jane picks up her jacket.

9:23 AM: Jane sits down at the picnic table furthest from the blacktop and reads *Babysitter's Club* until the bell rings again.

9:50 AM: Spanish.

10:30 AM: Music.

11:05 AM: The students line up and Mrs. Reed leads them to the lunchroom.

11:09 AM: There are more tables than are needed for just the third graders, so Jane sits down at her own table.

11:11 AM: Jane eats a Clementine and a bag of Goldfish. Jane is still not feeling very hungry. What she likes best about her lunch is not the food, but the note from her mother that is always waiting at the bottom of the bag. Today's note is short. *I love you honey*, it says, with a big smiley face at the bottom. Jane smiles back.

11:20 AM: Everyone runs back out onto the playground. Jane goes straight to her favorite table.

11:45 AM: Science. Jane walks in and her stomach drops. Instead of the kind, cherry-faced Mr. Daniels, there is an icy woman standing in front of the

blackboard whom Jane does not recognize – a substitute. Jane knows what is coming.

11:48 AM: Everyone is in their seats and the class settles down. “Mrs. Thomas” is about to begin the lesson when she suddenly notices Jane. “Excuse me young lady, what is your name?”

“Jane.”

“Jane, please take your baseball cap off, we are not at recess anymore.”

“No thank you, Mrs. Thomas.”

Some of the boys in the back row snicker. Mrs. Thomas stiffens indignantly. “Young lady, you must take off your hat, it’s impolite.” This has happened before, and Jane knows that showing is easier than telling. She takes off her hat, and Mrs. Thomas lets out a gasp of surprise. Now everyone is snickering. “Oh dear ... I’m so sorry ... yes, yes, that’s fine, you can put it back on.”

Mrs. Thomas quickly moves on to the day’s lesson.

12:20 PM: Art

12:55 PM: Reading Time, Jane’s favorite part of the day. She curls up on the dark blue beanbag chair. She is excited; she has almost finished her *Babysitter’s Club* book.

1:30 PM: Physical Education for most of the class, but Jane is excused. She has an appointment on Wednesdays.

1:33 PM: Jane’s mother is waiting in the minivan outside. “How was your day at school, honey?”

“Fine, Mom.”

2:17 PM: They pull into the parking lot at Union Memorial. They trudge inside.

2:22 PM: They sit down in the waiting room. Many of the children have the flu, and the room is filled with coughs and sneezes, but Jane is quiet.

2:31 PM: “Jane?” calls the receptionist. Jane and her mother follow her into the familiar office. Jane dislikes the ugly furniture and the cold white walls, and she hates that they only keep boring *Berenstain Bears* books on the table.

2:36 PM: Dr. Goldman enters, and Jane goes through the weekly routine. She has some tests done, she talks to Dr. Goldman for a little while, she takes some special medicine, and she goes into the big whirring machine.

3:14 PM: Jane sits in the waiting room again while Dr. Goldman has a word with her mother. “I’m really sorry to tell you this, but she’s not doing much better. Our treatment isn’t nearly as effective as I had hoped. We might need to have a talk with her soon; I’m not sure how much longer she should be in

school. “All Jane’s mother can do is nod silently. She is afraid she will lose control if she opens her mouth.

3:19 PM: They drive home. The ride is silent, except for soft classical music.

4:10 PM: They pull into the driveway. “I’m tired, Mom, I think I’m going to take a nap.”

“Okay, honey, that’s fine. I’ll wake you up for dinner.”

7:23 PM: Jane comes groggily down the stairs in her pink pajamas. She nibbles at pasta with butter.

7:37 PM: Jane sits on her mother’s lap in the living room. Her mother reads *Babysitter’s Club* aloud.

8:30 PM: Jane is asleep. Her mother runs her hand along her daughter’s cheek, and sobs as quietly as she can manage.

8:42 PM: Jane is carried upstairs into her bedroom and tucked into her bed. Her mother gives her a long kiss goodnight. Jane stirs a little but does not wake up.

8:44 PM: Jane’s mother wipes her eyes and swallows hard. She goes back downstairs. She has to make Jane’s lunch for school tomorrow, even if she knows that Jane will barely touch it.

-Gabe Donnay, ‘08



-Bryson Greene, ‘11

His Truth

We walked into light.

The cold, distant rays splintered through the lifeless spruce and pine trees lining the snow-covered path in front of us. A fox had wandered here earlier, crossing the path to drink from a forgotten stream. The sun had not broken the horizon but was sending beautiful strands of dawn into the trees above our heads. It felt as though the forest was still resting, as though it was trying to preserve the last warmth of slumber. We walked onward to where the trees fell to pasture and our path disappeared into the expanse. A miniature barn was built into the land. A nearby-hillock sheltered the flimsy structure from the incessant winter winds that bore immature saplings to the earth. The barn's walls sagged inward slightly from the immense build-up of snow and ice on its tin roof, giving the impression that the smallest gust of wind would collapse the entire construction. I asked whether or not he thought it was safe to house the animals any longer. A small smile cracked his frozen lips as he entered a memory long lost to anyone but him, and told me that he was certain the barn would outlive him by many years. He had helped his father build it the year he had left for college and remembered the exact wood they had used to withstand rot and the New Hampshire frost. I slid the wooden door open with an assurance only my father's words could provoke. A flood of orange light shown forth from a lone heat lamp flickering in the center of the barn. The delicate glow illuminated the fragile outline of a newborn calf. My father's form gently moved in front of me and allowed the uneasy mother to familiarize herself to our foreign scents. Uneasily she allowed us to pass and kneel by the hour old baby. My father carefully picked the limp form above his head and announced in a relieved tone that the newborn was a girl. There was nothing he detested more than having to slaughter an animal he had raised from an infant. The now contented mother toddled back to stand over her baby and proudly began the process of licking clean her newborn. We huddled by the door, trying to comprehend the simple beauty involved in the birth of a pure living thing.

We left that barn with an unspoken bond, connected by the understanding of simple and momentous existence. For the short walk at least, we stopped existing as individuals and became part of something larger. Behind us the sun broke from the starved horizon and flooded the path with brilliant light.

* * *

The sun beat down in waves on the undulating field. The brittle grass whispered in protest as it parted in front of our heavy forms. The heat of the mid-summer day was radiated by the parched soil crumpling beneath us. He talked freely of work done and work needed on the farm. He laughed when I mentioned that talk of work needed always seemed to lead to my eventual enslavement. But the laugh seemed to suspend in the air, taunting both of us. My gaze strayed slowly from the three .22 bullets in his front shirt pocket to the gun resting peacefully in his left hand. He held the gun down, pointed to the earth; he held it with purpose. He noticed my unease and looked down at me slowly, questioning what right he had to bring me along. Any further inquiry though was cut short by a low moan fraught with pain and wretchedness. My father stepped forward into a small clearing of matted-down grass, motioning for me to stay away. The stench of sweat and blood permeated the parched, still air, and a smell I only later recognized as death flared in my nostrils. Right in front of me lay a distorted, young mare, legs beating the ground in quick circular motions. The pain emulating off her body became my pain. My father had tried to explain to me when I had first asked to come with him that time does not slow down when a great injustice is being done, but instead speeds up. I understood fully now as I tried to follow my father's motions as he took a single bullet from his pocket and slid it into the gun's barrel. As if in a dream state he brought the gun up to the horse's left temple and without hesitation pulled the trigger. On the walk back across that sun-scorched pasture, I stayed close to my father, almost pressing against his rough-collared shirt. A slight breeze rose up behind us, flowing over the unmoving corpse, rustling our shirts and hair. It traveled onward, upwards into the clear, blue sky and into the immense vastness of space.

-Galen Carroll, '08



-Will Faison, '10

Audrey

Along the driveway, trees hung over our heads.
The air conditioning was blowing full blast,
But did little to make us feel at ease.
Stepping out of the
Car-- the heat wrapped around us.
Boxes of your belongings filled the backseat.
The quilt Aunt Amy sewed for graduation.
The cheap, white fan that whirred during those long summer days.
The scrapbook I made for your birthday, filled with
Pictures of us as babies, crawling on the floor and in our cribs.
The black Ray-Bans you let me wear in Spain.
The brown and white wooden earrings I bought for a
Handful of Lempiras two summers ago.

You deliberately unpack everything, setting up your
Picture frames and books and shoes.
We have to sit there and watch it all.
The windows are thrown open but fail to capture any wind.
The faint smell of Windex permeates the room.
Is that why I'm nauseated?
As my forehead glistens with sweat, I know the only thing I can do is
Wait.
You move about the room with a steady pace
And the clutter in the middle of the floor slowly disappears
Until
It's all put away.

-Giff Brooks, '08



James Miller, '08

A Ride in the City

The only tree in the yard stood withering,
because infertile ground makes leaves untenable,
because bedsprings and a busted microwave
don't make for a nutritious mulch.

The only boy in the yard held a forked stick
and beat it whimsically against the barren earth,
a divining rod searching for a secret well,
his dark skin camouflaged him in the night.

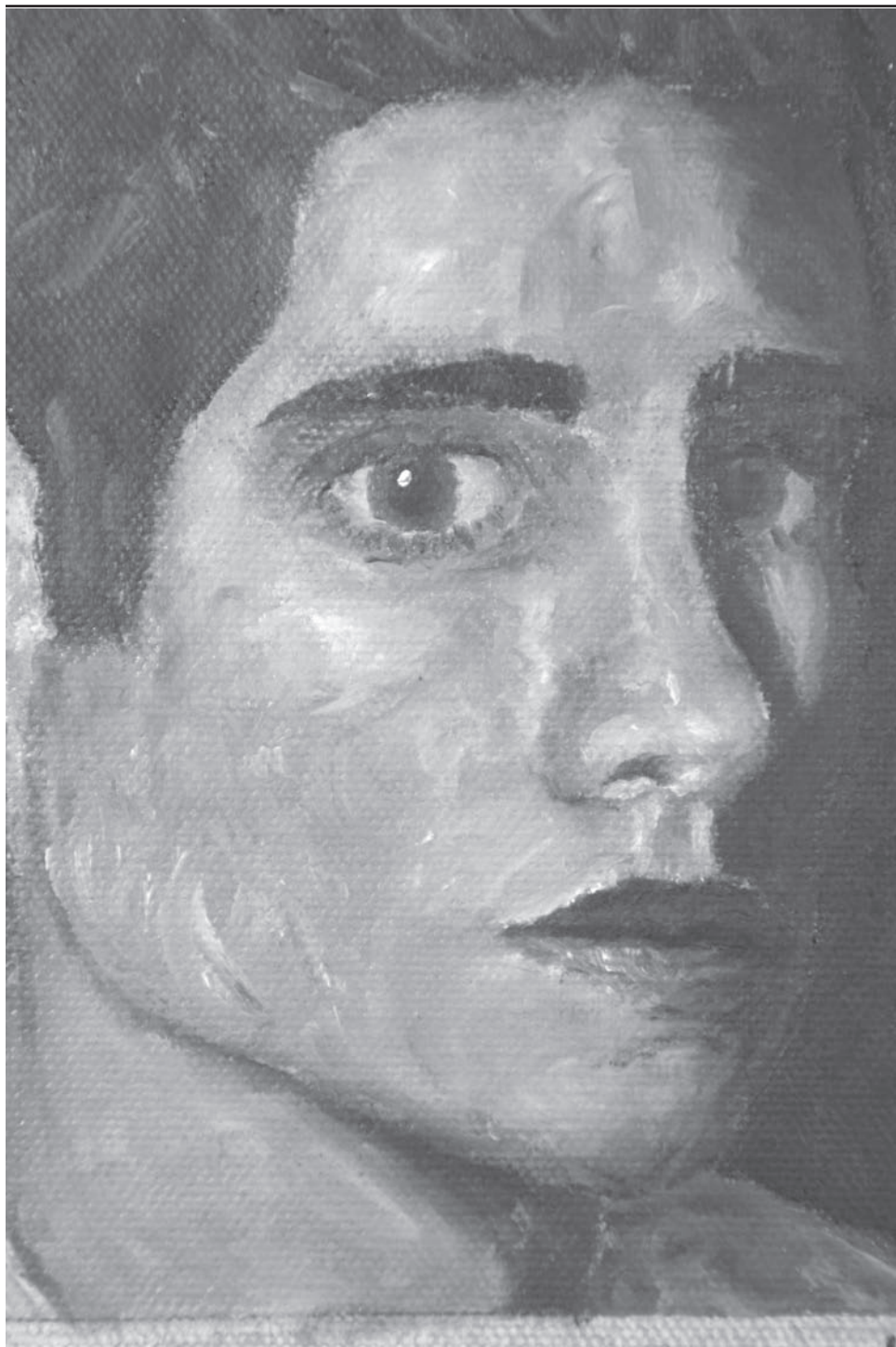
Coalesced as one, they saw a wounded soldier
where society saw a useless tramp.
And they projected spires and an arrow interstice
where society saw an abandoned Buick.

But when that boy grows up to be a man,
as he dumps his broken freezer in an empty lot,
he will remember the connection our eyes forged
before I slammed my door and drove away.

-Kevin Niparko, '08



-Ryan Chae, '10



-James Miller, '08

Directions for a Murder Accomplice or a UPS Delivery Guy

1. Put on your uniform. Make sure to blend in with your environment so nobody really notices you.
2. Pick up the package from the men in the black suits. It should be about three feet long, maybe a tad wide. The guys who do the dirty work probably just folded the thing in the package.
3. Get away from the guys in the suits as soon as possible. They probably don't want to be seen with you.
4. The package needs to be moved across the state. Be careful when you throw it in the back. The guy to whom you are delivering it will not be pleased if there are damages.
5. Make sure you have a sharp object in your pocket at all times in case things get a little messed up. Don't worry, you will probably never have to use it. I've only had to rip stuff up for the boss a few times.
6. When you get to the house of the guy to whom you are delivering the three foot package, remember your training. Be quiet when you arrive. Don't let the neighbors know you're there.
7. The guy will cut open the box and extract something that you will probably recognize. Don't be startled, surprised, excited, nauseous, sad, or jubilant. Even better, don't show any emotions, and, whatever you do, don't make a joke to this guy. He doesn't think you're funny.
8. The guy will tell you to take the box to the docks where you will give it to a guy named Manny. Even though you like the Red Sox outfielder, don't joke and call this guy Manny Ramírez. He doesn't think you're funny either.
9. Manny will take the box and cut it open and add some big objects to its contents.
10. As you walk away to your truck, you will probably hear a splash from Manny's dock. Don't be startled, surprised, excited, nauseous, sad, or jubilant. Even better, don't show any emotions at all.
11. Go home and get some rest. You'll be doing this again tomorrow.

-Tyler Alfrend, '08



-Dean Liao, '10

Scarred Feet

I walked
Through the black valley,
Through the neighborhood
Where the necklace
And the Lexus
Got jacked.

It was there that
I ran barefoot from my death,
Looming large, dark, and desirous
Of the twenty dollars
In my bag.
Was I worth so little?
I wondered
As I picked the glass from my soles.
My stigmata.

I spat on Andrew Jackson's face
And tore the green tapestry asunder,
Loud as the thunder
Bursting around me
Bringing the rain
To wash the blood from my soles
And the mortal sweat from my face.

And there was Silence
In the pelting beat.
Silence.
Not the absence of sound,
But the presence of the End.
Not seen, but perceived
Just over my left shoulder,
Waving.
Ego morturus, but not yet.
Not yet.

My bloody feet were almost clean
When I heard them carry me down
Charles Street to the Cathedral
Of Mary Your Queen.
She still was not mine.

I showed Jesus
My glass studded souls.
Every shard a crucifix
Illuminated by altar candles:
Flames flickering with the force
Of my shouts:
A lost boy's anguish.
A lost man's anger,
Purged in blood filled scratches
On the patterned marble floor.

My new footprints
As I walked out of the empty house.
Now I was sure it was
Abandoned
And that no compassionate soul
Would scrub out my blood
And the wounds I had etched.
Scars on my soles,
Scarring in my wake
Until I perceive the End again
In Silence.

-Chris Sheridan, '08



-William O'Brien, '10

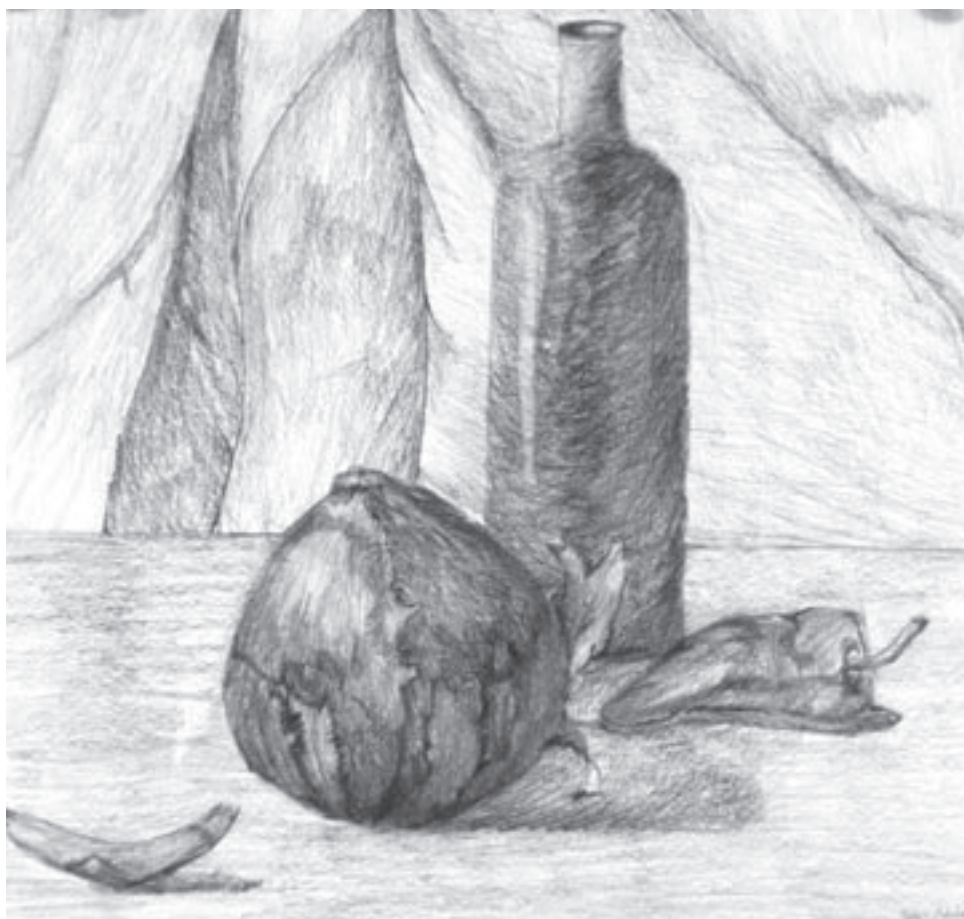


-Bryson Greene, '11

Will

Near death, a fisherman began to row.
Its load a little heavier, the skiff creaked and moaned.
The old man gazed beneath the watery firmament.
Held betwixt two ripples, a gleaming white meal.
A certain congregation of crabs and bottom dwellers
Had come to pay this friend their respects.
The skiff grated up against a mussel-clad rock
And the fisherman braced himself on the stern.
He shed a last dignified gaze on the world above
And plunged his head a few feet below,
Though he still had a few minutes to go.

-Sam Winter, '09



-Sam Nolan, '10

Candle-Light War

Dark.

Scratch. Spark. Flame. Light.

Tickles the walls;

The light pours thickly upon the study.

Spreading farther away thinner and thinner.

Waves of infantry converting dark into light.

Dark covers subjugated, conniving--plotting its uprising.

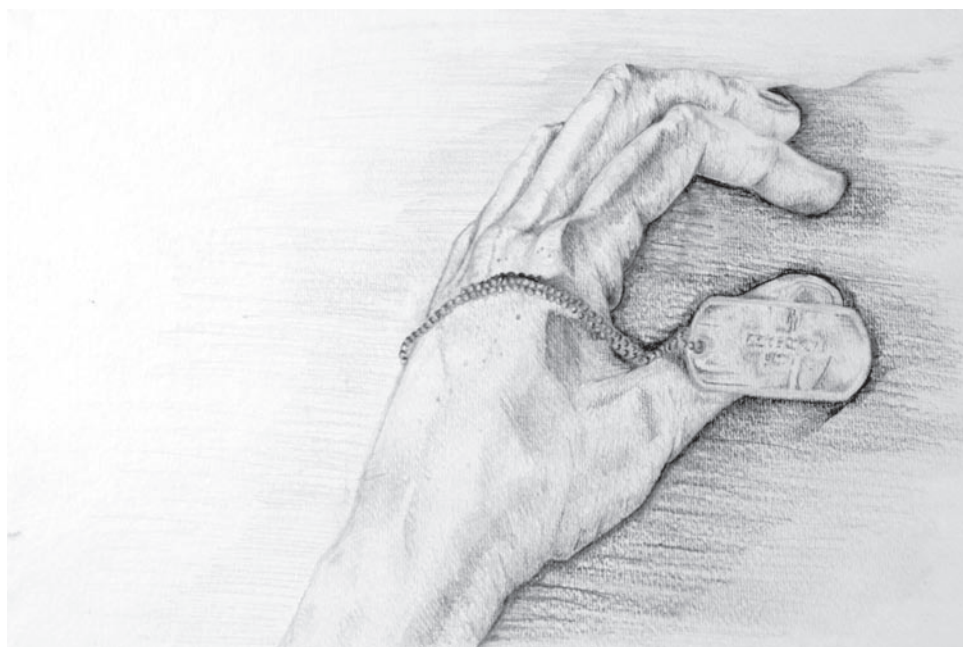
The wick tires.

The dark crashes back over relinquished,

Smothering complacent brownish beige to sinister dark wine

Not black, just dimmed--awaiting the next struck match.

-Alex Hormozi, '08



-Ben Zunkeler, '10

Stradivarius

You sit here, upon your broken throne, your face illuminated by a flickering
light,

The work of the ages, the work of a genius, the work of God.

Among the web-covered boxes, the socks that never fit just right, the toy that
could never capture a toddler's mind,

You sit, longing to be what you used to be.

Long your life of fame, your trips around the world, Konzerthaus and
Musikverein.

You were once in the hands of brilliant artists and with them you made beauty
resonate.

With them you sang out the songs of Bach and Brahms as masterly fingers
shifted down your body.

You were once invincible and you knew it.

In Carnegie Hall, you brought the audience to its feet, with pizzicato that
captivated the elegant.

When he drove his bow into your body, you merged.

One with your master as he elegantly swung your maple scroll to thunderous
applause.

You were their joy, you were their night, you were their vision of grace.

But now you sit here, your body so longing to be touched, your voice so longing
to sing,

But you cannot. There is no one here to make you what you used to be. No one.

-Avesh Thuluvath, '08

Loch Raven Reservoir

The sun shines on a breezy June day, the heat
Is still tolerable.

We get lost finding this spot by the lake, stumbling into a quiet
Clearing where a family is fishing in the shade.

I sit down on a gnarled, bleached log, and you sit next to me.

Two strangers' dogs play in the shallows.

They slap up foamy water, disturbing its calm.

Far off, a group of kids dive from a small bridge.

Their yelps are barely audible.

Flip flops off, our feet sink into the rocky sand.

I notice that the French manicure on your toes has chipped

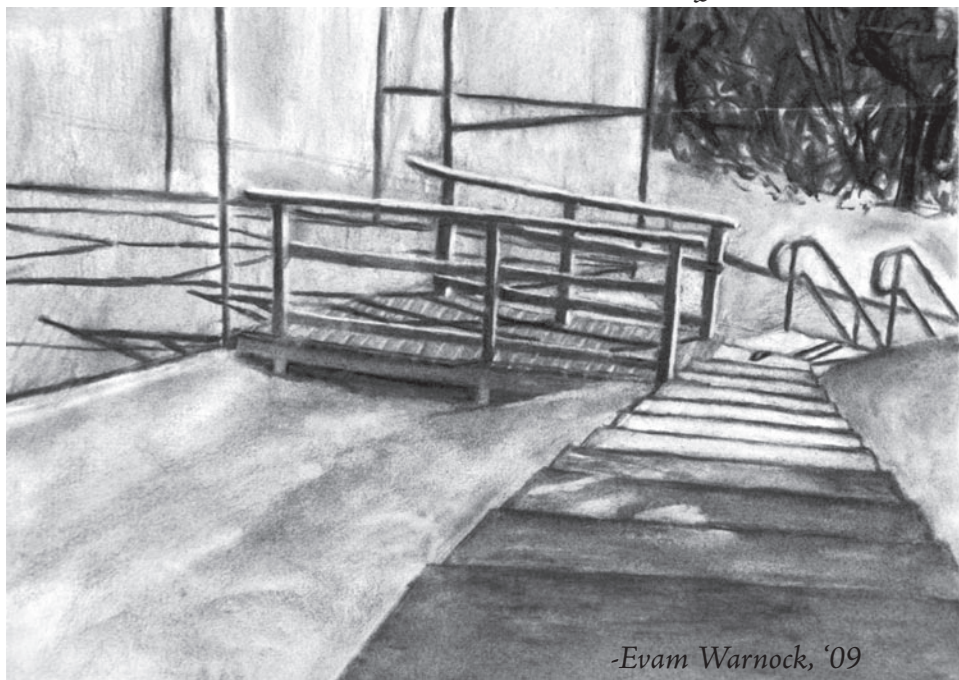
As they mingle with the stones.

You reach to brush off the ant that crawls on your foot.

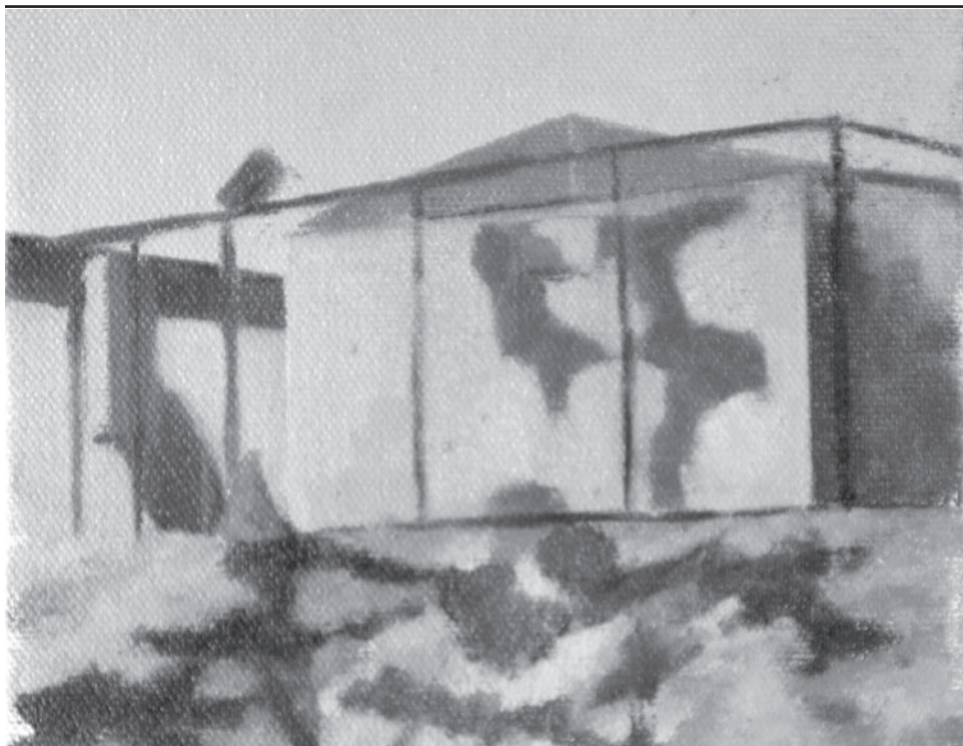
A pair of bicyclists, gears whirring, comes down the road that runs behind us,

And the trees sway with the lazy wind.

-Giff Brooks, '08



-Evam Warnock, '09



-Micah Belzberg (above and below), '08



My Sisters and My Brothers

The Golden Fingers of the Dawn,
Crept on the battlefield that day,
The blood-strewn broken land
Held the wretched to their pay.

The Pain, the Anger, the Sorrow,
All flashed through my eyes,
The blood upon my face,
Brought a little girl who cries.

With water she came
To help those in need,
The horror of this battle,
Upon her soul did feed.

She stared at me long,
A question on her mind,
'How can you kill another?'
An answer I could not find.

The glory of the battle fades
As my breath slips away,
And the painful realization came,
There would not be another day.

My voice suddenly became strong,
The pain faded from view,
Conviction returned to me,
Glory and Pride was there anew.

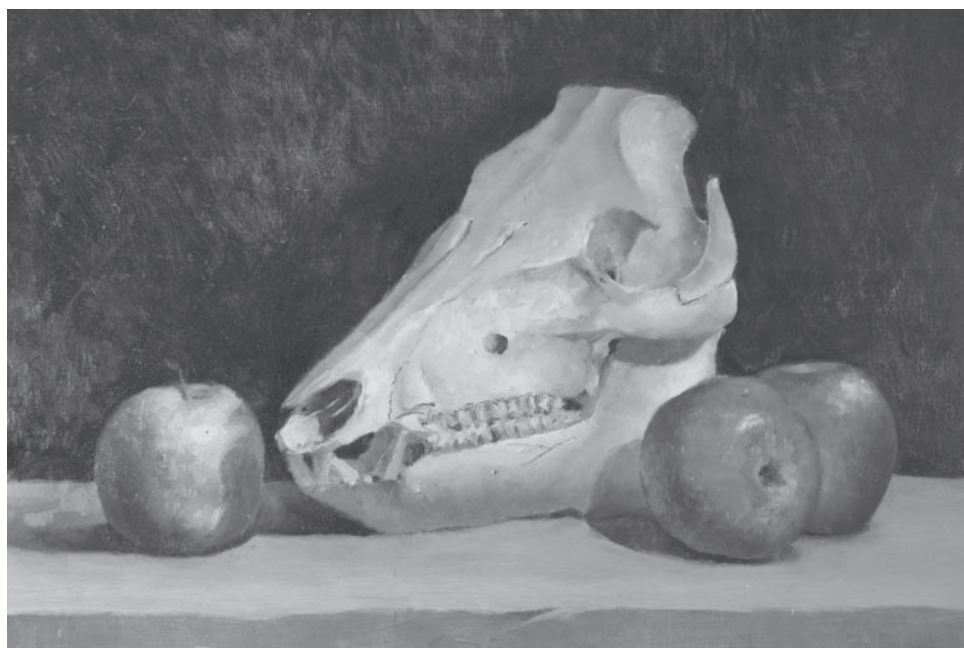
"I fought for my friends," I said,
"Not the lies my country gave,
I fought for those I love,
Who now rest in the grave.

I fought for those who care
About the happiness of others,
I fought for them, I did,
My sisters and my brothers.

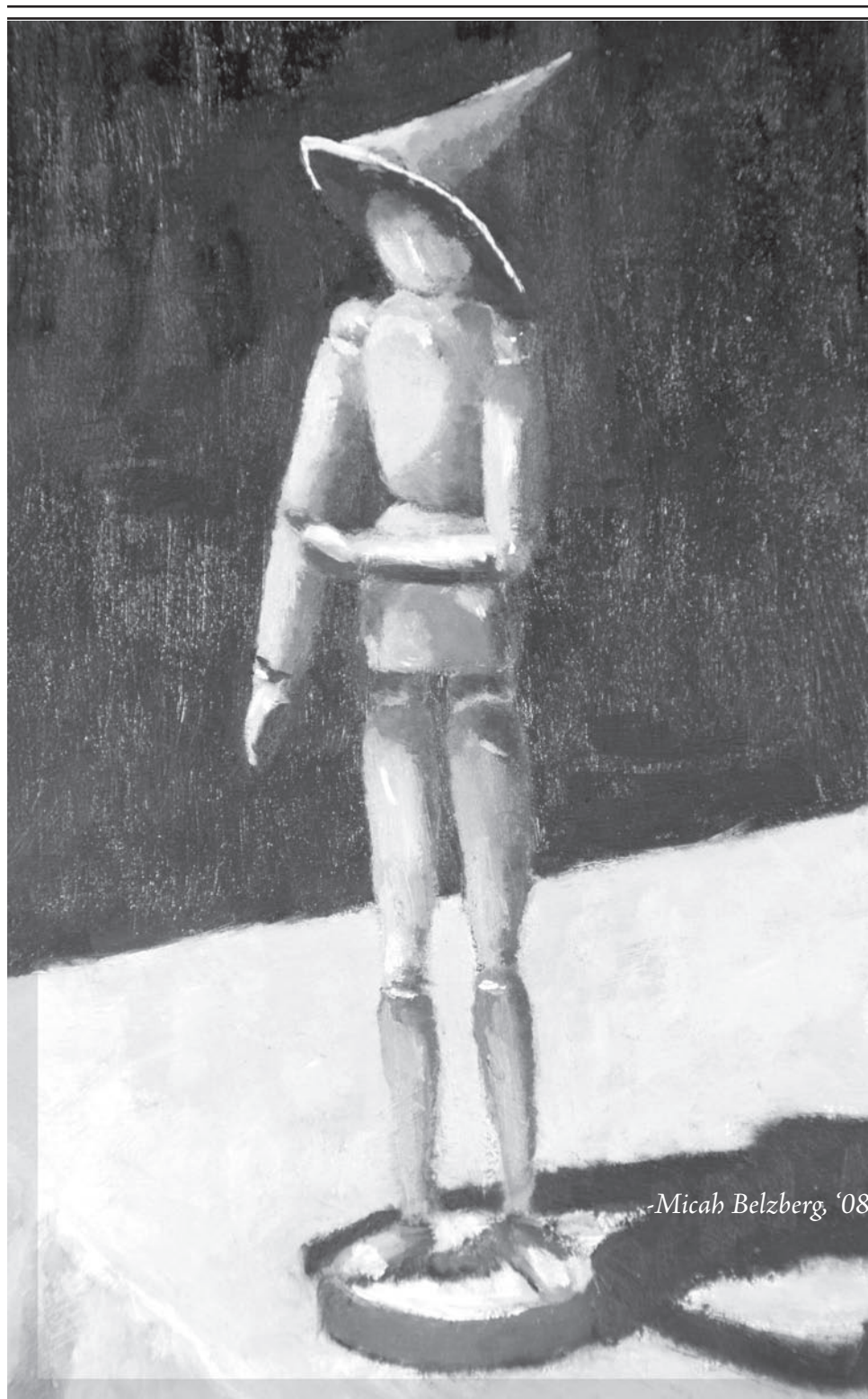
The blood on this field shows pain,
Yet there is hope too
We fought and died today
For people just like you."

I sigh in sadness,
For there's nothing left to say,
She smiles at me sweetly,
And the light slowly fades away.

-Rohan Ramesh, '08



-Andrew Nelson, '09



Pigeons

It was a hazy Baltimore afternoon
and we chased pigeons by the lake,
the moist grass clung to your feet
as you snatched fists full of air.

Years later you moved on
and your spaceship wallpaper faded gray.
You've built a life out of high-rises and market prices,
forsaking the rooted trails we once traveled.

I wonder if you still chase those pigeons
in between the diesel-snow and late-night bars,
or whether you quit that game long-ago
content to watch others in the park
reach for the unobtainable.

-Kevin Niparko, '08



-Andrew Nelson, '08

Santa

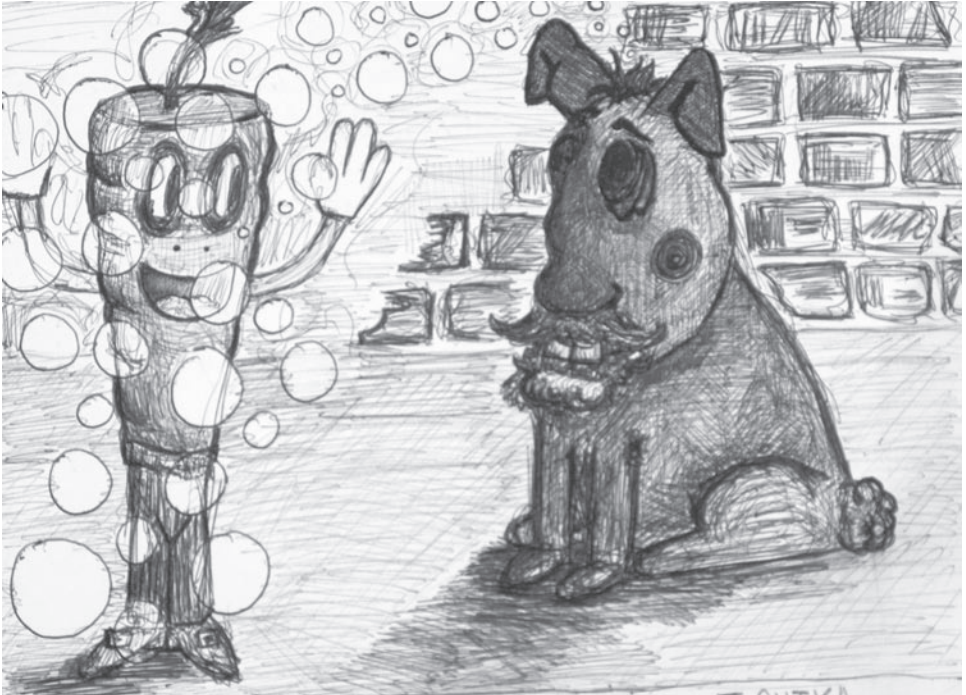
My smallness is tucked away underneath waves of heavy blankets.
The air is cool outside the utopia of warmth that is my bed,
Yet my senses are acute to the sounds of the night.
I hear rustling below, the familiar clinks of Christmas ornaments. I hear him.

I cannot contain my excitement.
I must see him. I must catch a glimpse of his white beard,
His plump figure delicately placing the joys of tomorrow underneath the evergreen.
I crawl out of my bed and into the chilly night.

Placing each foot softly against the oak floor, I descend into the unknown.
Like a cat stalking its prey, I edge closer to the doorway.
I brace myself for the moment of anticipation and peer into the darkness.
And then, the moment I recognize him, his face, his hands,

Fantasy shatters.

-Avesh Thuluvath, '08



-Tony Rutka, '10

Unnatural

A fire flares in a frosty forest
As though a distant city had taken to flame,
Shimmering in the snowy water pooling
Beneath the shrieking of a burning blackbird,
Flickering over its nest and
Dripping the fiery pitch of what was once a beak
Upon eggs and chicks aflame.
The flying shadow blazing
Reddens the entire forest-
Now elm, hare, fox
Stain the wooded snow
And seek more to char in this chilly night.
A ghostly smoke billows,
Carrying the hope of life to a place
Where no fire flares.

-Sam Winter, '09



- Ryan Lee, '08

Treasure

"Help us dig Ben!"

"I don't wanna."

"Ben! We won't find the treasure if you don't help."

"Shut up. There's no treasure."

"Yes there is! That's why we're digging."

"This is stupid."

"It's not stupid. Joey Crick said he found a treasure hole just up the river. Said there were more."

"Well why is it here then?"

"Because he said so!"

"Couldn't it be over there? Or on the other side? This is stupid."

"I'm sure it's here. There are some weird rocks on the grass. Look."

Ben turns his head to where the boy points. Fist-sized rocks are scattered on the ground. They are nearly flat and hardly jagged.

"I coulda put those rocks there."

"No you couldn't've. You don't know where the treasure is."

"They're just rocks Stanley!"

"Ben, we're almost there. Stop yelling. Help me and Stanley." Ben grunts and pops down on his knees. His clean fingernails join four sets of dirty ones as they scrape away at the moist dirt. Suddenly, Ben's hand breaks through the mud wall and into a chamber of sickeningly wet air. Ben sputters.

"What is this? It stinks!"

"It's the treasure cave."

"It doesn't smell like treasure."

"It smells like crud-- Hey! Tim Carson, if you hit me again, I'm gonna get you all muddy and tell your mom."

"Shush. Dig some more."

"It smells so bad!"

"Maybe that's because there are dead pirates inside rotting. Blackbeard might've had himself buried with his treasure. To protect it, ya know?"

"It's probably a rabbit hole and a fox got to 'em. We're just gonna find dead rabbits."

"We're almost through... there!" The narrow dirt tunnel is open and dark. It seems to lead pretty far back. The three boys look at each other.

"Ever seen a rabbit that big, Ben?"

"Sure I have."

"Rabbits don't get bigger than a cat. This is big enough for a dog or something."

"I'm going in, you guys can come or not. I want that treasure."

"Stanley... I just don't think it's a good idea."

"Shut up Ben. I'm goin' in too. Tim Carson ain't afraid of no dark tunnels or dead pirates. Just you see. We'll come out shinin' like Al Durado."

"Fine. Go then. I'm just gonna wait here. I'll catch some fish or somethin'. You're gonna come out with nothin'." Tim laughs as Stanley crawls into the hole. He follows.

The tunnel is even longer than the boys realized. There's no light, but Stanley feels his way ahead, grunting optimistically every few seconds. Tim stays close behind, closing his eyes.

"Ah!"

"What?"

"I think I just touched something."

"What was it?"

"A worm or a snake or something. It was slimy. But I can't feel it anymore. Must've gone away. Keep goin'."

They push ahead for another ten minutes. Their hands scrape the dry dirt walls and their pants tear against stones and roots. A faint light appears up ahead. Tim can see the silhouette of Stanley's rear shuffling forward. The boys crawl out and stand up.

Golden light is cutting through small gaps between the winding roots of an old stump, an acting roof. The space is just large enough for them to stand up in. The walls are smooth and the roots are firm. Everything is tinged with a yellow haze. There's a small chest on the ground, covered in a layer of thick, crumbly mud.

"Treasure!"

"Ha. Ben's sure missin' out. Sittin' at the river fishing."

"Well he won't get any of it. This is yours and mine. Wanna open it?"

"Yeah. Can I do it?"

"Umm... sure."

"Okay... I need your knife."

"Why?"

"The dirt is hard. I can't open it cuz' the mud's too thick. Kay. Grrr... help me."

"You have to pull it like this!" The chest opens. The interior is as smooth as the walls of the hole. Dark wood. Some papers rest, thin as insect wings and as fragile, over a shiny object.

"A pistol!"

"Look, it's not dusty or anythin'. It's gold and silver... I bet it's worth a lot!"

"You can't show any grown-ups, okay? This is ours. They'll just try to take it away and lock it in a safe or something. Or maybe they'd sell it and keep all the money themselves."

"I wonder whose gun it was... probably someone famous."

"Maybe pirates..."

"Maybe conkeestoders! My dad once told me Spanish conkeestoders lived around here a long time ago."

"Never heard of those. Sounds like chickens."

"But they had guns. I wanna shoot it."

"... I don't think you should."

"Why not?"

"I dunno. I just don't wanna shoot a gun."

"You wouldn't be shootin'. I would."

"Stanley..."

"It's probably not loaded anyway. Here. You just squeeze this—"

A boy stood frozen, his shoes staining red, his enormous eyes caught in a sharp ray of sun.

-Nick Parlato, '08



-Andrew Nelson, '09

O Little Buddha

O little Buddha man

Your face so red and pudgy
I wish I could be like you
You spend your days like real men should
Thinking, not doing
I waste my time
Dealing with desire
Of which you have none
Dealing with anger
Of which you have none
Dealing with things that concern everyone
But you
I wish I was as simple as you
But I cannot wish
Wish is desire and desire cannot bring me
To the PEACE if I find within
Crash crash bang bang boom boom loud noises
We cross paths one again, O little Buddha,
So get ready
For I, like smurfs, am blue
Ask the sky and the rain
But you are red
Like that bright, burnin sol(eil)
So listen up
It feels like
Smoke in the pigeon coop
Deal in wit dem lies of Marvin and the Famm

-Evan Tarantino, '10

The Funeral of a Live Man

When we woke up he was
Already gone.
Gone.
We both sat up,
But the wake had done its work,
And we were not awake.
With eyes enlarged by stupor and shock
We washed the salt from our faces
And the dirt from our hair.

Dressed in dark,
We stumbled into file,
Filing into a room
Where sat a brother and a sister,
Friends both.
Each picked a different spot on the floor to address.

In each an eloquent eulogy
Caught in the throat,
Somewhere in between
The conception and the action,
The parting of the lips
And the utterance.
Only mono and di-syllabic shadows escaped,
A Phantasm of what we wished
We would say.

The bottles sat on the top shelf,
Ready to round the sharp edges of
Death at a burial.
If only there were a body to bury.
If only he had stopped breathing
When he died.

But the body had already gone.
Gone off to sink the ships we sent
Out to the far isle of his former self;
Ships that a brother, another
A sister, and a friend
Watched pass
Beyond their line of sight
From a room at his funeral.

-Chris Sheridan, '08

Peaceful Snowfield

Snow pours from the sky.
No person in the distance.
White field untouched.

-Peter Keith, '08



-Andrew Nelson, '09

All Things Are Holy

It's not asphalt,
It's not stone,
It's not marble,
It's not cardboard,
It's not paper,
It's not glass,
It's concrete.

-Ethan Philipson, '08

iPod People

Those people in the iPod ads
Who dance like electrocuted chickens
Seem to be from another dimension,
Another world that solid colors have usurped
And where the government issues mandates to party.
Where no one will dance near you so
There will be no contrast,
And you draw yourself in with little white buds
And focus entirely on the self and
Being the electrocuted chicken.

And we watch them on the screen
In their perfectly clashing outfits
Designed to draw hip visitors
Into their monochromatic world and make them dance.
Dance and dance and dance and dance,
Like if they stopped,
Their whole thirty second world would end.

-Nick Parlato, '08



-Mclean Francis, '08

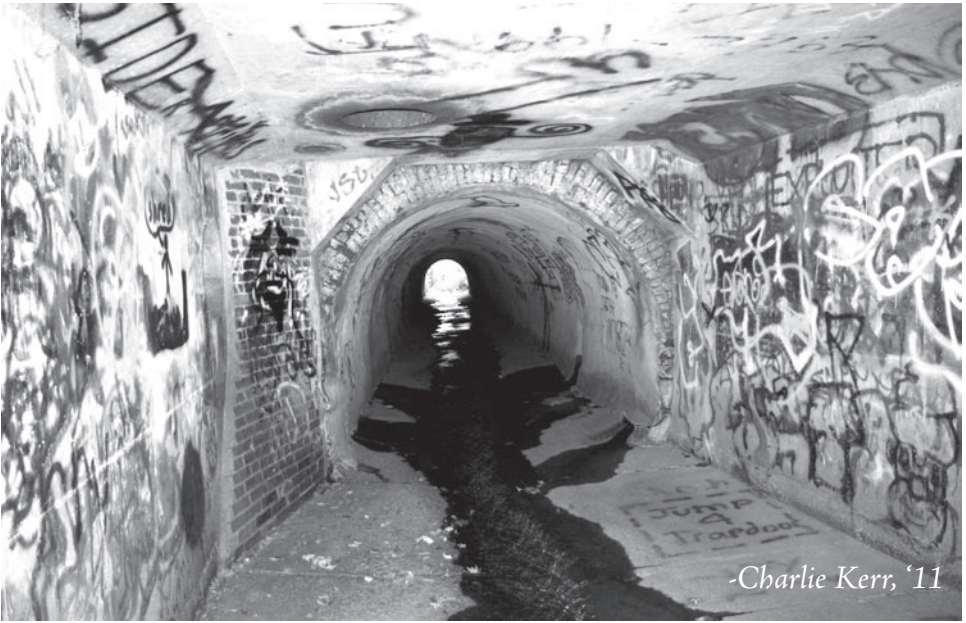
The Chair

In a vacant lot surrounded by condemned buildings lies a chair, fallen on its back so that
it rests on its hind legs and head. The overgrown grass around it has turned brown.
Pieces of smashed beer bottles glisten in the sun.

Here stood an apartment building or a playground or a basketball court, but now
there is
only a wooden runged chair, lying on its back, bowing to an audience of weeds.

I see a chair at a kitchen counter, holding a toddler as she reaches for a piece of fruit.

-Peter Sacci, '08



-Charlie Kerr, '11

No Poetry Comes From an Island

The lovely day called children outside, leaving the poet behind.
He dug his moat with locked doors and windows.
Sufficiently insulated, eyes laboriously sought the pen's impetus.
Children hailed him beyond the window's shore.
Shutting eyes sank their approaching emissaries.
Shutting ears drowned cheerful shouts.
An island well fortified.
But the pen?
Standing stranded.
Prisoner.

-Chris Sheridan, '08

I Saw a Battle Today

Tom croaked, "I won again" as he creakingly walked ever-so-slowly back from his ordinary wooden mailbox to his chipped front door. He's always surprisingly frustrated when he returns victorious from his daily battle to the mailbox. But despite Tom's mysterious disappointment, he is so far undefeated.

For the past twenty years, Tom's doctor has been telling him that he needs to eat less cholesterol and to stop smoking cigarettes. And for the past twenty years, Tom has been breathing through his perpetually-lit pipe and wolfing down four eggs for breakfast everyday. Tom lives off his retirement money, and now that his wife is dead, he has no expenses other than eggs and tobacco. He has more money these days as he sits around pondering his daily victories than when he worked hard and followed the people's advice back when his wife was alive.

Tom is sixty-five, but doesn't look a mail-trip over fifty-eight (his predicted life-expectancy) which he recants to anyone who will listen. I'm not really sure what happened, or why, but I know that soon after his wife died Tom stopped following the everyone's 'fool proof' advice to a long and happy life. He tells people different reasons for why he stopped caring, ranging from 'not giving a hoot' to 'not giving a tiny rat's ass'. But anyways, the doctors told Tom that he wouldn't wheeze a lung-full of air after fifty-eight and that he would barely be able to walk outside to get the mail without becoming winded half-way if he didn't change his lifestyle, as they had been telling him for the past twenty years. And as legend tells, or Tom tells, he told the doctors that they could put their advice in a place that he himself can no longer reach and that no one was going to change the way he lived his life. After twenty years, he's been true to his word. He had tried to quit smoking and eat healthily before his wife had died because she used to always tell him that she didn't want to be a widow. But her voice has been gone from his life for quite some time; the car accident happened long ago. All that replaced her soft existence was an unnatural spite of the doctors who had told him to live healthily so that

he could be with his wife for, as they claimed, “just a few more years.”

So, seven years, countless doctor’s visits, and pounds of smoked tobacco later, Tom still battles the liter of tar in his lungs with the doctors’ life-prolonging advice in the back of his mind. I can’t help but think that every pipe he lights, and every cholesterol-full egg yolk he gulps down are all to counter those few years he gained while being healthy for *her*. But defiant to every doctor’s prediction, I can still look out the window every afternoon to see Tom gamble his frail body and creak his way down his eroded walkway, pipe lit, to his god-forsaken mailbox and declare to the world in an exasperatedly defeated tone, “I won again.”

-Alex Hormozi, ‘08



-Galen Carroll, ‘08

