

URSIDAE

WEST HIGH LITERARY MAGAZINE

2021-2022



Cover Art By: Gauge Raifsnyder

Lost and Found

By: Chloe Tschetter

With the same eagerness that a child sifts through lost and found...

And it was only a few winters ago your name graced the tag, and through wear and tear the ink from your pen has yellowed and washed away. So maybe someone colder than you took that patched up jacket, passed it like a fable and took better care of it long before you even thought to look. Now you'll just have to walk through the snow, hugging tightly to yourself with the assertion that your skin can bear the cold. And the bins will be overturned and in your clouded exhales you'll begrudgingly admit that you missed that clearance jacket you once swore you'd never wear.

But seasons are temporary.

You'll find someone new, walk someone else's miles and wear the soles out of their shoes. And sooner or later you'll forget. Find a replacement, bloom into Spring. Sometimes I hope that you'll always be left wondering where that hand-me-down jacket, with puffy sleeves and faded hues, went. And I know you'll never realize it was deeper in those bins than you ever cared to look, wedged between mistakes and fondness so deep it blends into the other forgetables and avoids your sight.

And it will stay there.

Collecting dust

Collecting stares

Collecting use from those who never will and never have cared

Dormant, naive, hopeful for next winter

Clueless to the fact that you perhaps grew a few inches.

Untitled

By: Anonymous

Often, I find myself quite envious of those privileged enough to live in blissful ignorance, those who weren't forced to look outside the cage that binds society from a young age. This eternal state of ignorance, appears as a mask, rarely ever allowing reality to seep through the cracks. Unbeknownst to the endless privilege that engulfs them, those living in ignorance, never feel a flicker of doubt. Never questioning why the world turns, simply accepting that it does. However arguably worse, the gullibility that paired with oblivion. How easy it can be to convince them of whatever you please. Sure, morally this may lay in a grey area, as does everything regarding morality. Is it really that awful to convince them to bring change to the world? This, a question that can never be answered, regardless of the opinions of others. In the end all you will ever find is an opinion. A belief varying from one to another, with no definitive answer. With that knowledge, only someone filled with foolish desires would worry about the morality of their actions.

The little girl who always raised her hand, everyone aware she knows the answer. She carefully scribes her spelling words each night. Each mark fueled by the change at another perfect score. She gives her all to everyone, in turn, they take, I need... need... I need... All she knows is to give. She's aware she is running out of things to give. She has to give them something, pieces of herself. The girl, no longer quite as little, is finally being repaired. She finds the glue to fix her broken puzzle. Remembering safety for the first time in years. Of course her safety comes with stipulations, but that's fine. She'll do anything for more glue to put her puzzle back together. For months she forms into the mold that is being demanded. For months she severs the trust of others, lying to everyone. Eventually with more and more stipulations, the reins of her freedom grow taught. She returns to a perpetual state of fear, worrying about every breath, every thought.

Once again she was wrong. In turn, she learned. She grew. Not soon enough she saw the world from a new lens. She learned that kindness brings great trust from others. If she offers to listen when others feel they aren't being heard, she will hear the secrets of the world. She remembers something she used to say frequently, "fake smiles take you miles." With this memory she laughs. Now it holds a far different meaning than ever before. She uses it as a reminder to the oblivion of the world, to tell people what they want to hear, keeping everyone complacent as the world rotates. She watches and listens patiently, waiting. She knows her day will come, when someone's lie tumbles to the ground dragging the facade that everyone else hides behind to the ground with it. When the fragile web of social hierarchy begins to fall, she will simply watch with an occasional snide chuckle. After all, they brought this annihilation all on their own, each and every one, burdened with some form of unwelcome guilt.

The Families Candles

By: Cami Welsh

She still remembers when all three candles were lit. Those days were filled full of light and laughter. Smiles from tiny faces, love from mismatched eyes hidden behind mismatched glasses, and warmth spread through her entire body. Yes, she remembers fondly of when all three candles burned brightly through the day and night. That was when she had her husband by her side. His tall and lanky presence always not too far behind her shadow. His cheeky smirks and horrible jokes always there to lift her mood. His love, that of which had burned higher and brighter than any roaring fire she had ever seen, a constant. That was when her boy was still just that; a boy. Her son, a small being that brought big changes to her life. Her little boy, whose curiosity knew no borders and held compassion that spread beyond those with cognitive thinking. That was when her family still lived in one house. She thinks back on those memories with crinkled eyes and a cracked heart. For as much as she could remember when all candles were alight, she also remembered when the first flame blew out. She remembers being so stricken with grief that she could not get up off the floor from where she collapsed. She remembers screaming so hard and crying so much that she vomited. She had only sent him off several months ago, his most recent letter coming in just yesterday. He had sounded so excited about his invitation to the Drimspell, a community that allowed only a select few to enter. She wanted to deny it, she yelled out her disbelief, but the candle could not lie.

Her son, her tiny one, her golden child, was dead.

She was stricken for days, her own flame flickering in understanding. Nothing could convince her to leave the bed, not even her husband's best attempts could rile her up. All she could think about was her son, and what could have possibly happened to him. He was only a boy, and the thought both broke her more and made her giggle. He always hated being called a child, even when he was one. His face always lit up in anger, burning red from denial. He was no longer one when he left, but he would always be a little boy to her.

Her little boy.

That time in her life was truly and utterly dark, and it only got darker. Her husband was curious. His questions were not answered in a way he saw fit. Nothing satiated him and his burning curiosity over his son's death. He left less than a year after the candle burned out, saying he was only going to find the truth for what had happened and would come back with a warm smile and open arms. It took two weeks, this time, for the candle's flame to

(cont.)



Art By: Liam Heenan

go out. The second time wasn't any better than the first, as for this time she had no support to catch her when she fell. It took her years to build up the strength to smile. Years to finally unlock and open the door to the room that held the candles, as the mere sight of the solid wax would send her spiraling all over again.

Now though, she can enter the room and only have melancholy enter her heart.

She can look at the photos without tears blurring her vision. A smile, a real smile, settled upon her face as she gazed at the past faces of her loved ones. Her eyes filled with contentment over her decision. Her hands hovered over the dissipated flames, as if she could still feel the warmth they once permitted. She looked around the room and sighed deeply. With one last smile, the third and final candle flame burnt out.

A flicker, and the youngest candle lit once more.

Five Stages of Grief

By: Kassie Anton

(an excerpt)

Faded love letters hide under my bed with emotions directly from the heart. A few bled, some with lipstick, others with stained tears, and the rest shredded up. How could our love disappear? You made me hurt and it was real. Tears rang out of me with the hands that never paid attention to the spiral of my thumbs or the tender lines of my palms. You promised, if its meant to be faite would bring us back together, I'm not naive but instead desperate. I could scream and shout *we bring each other back together, we. Alternatively, I isolate, sitting quietly, crying through quivering lips thinking. I couldn't accept the tragic thing of seeing my other half clearly not see me.*

"Anger" could not properly express the way the blood in my veins boiled or the bitter taste that it lingered with. I want to hate you. I wish when you're left alone your mind traces back to me and burns the way my body did for everytime you laid your hands on me. I just desired to be loved. I just wanted you to be happy too. Happy with me. Any words of encouragement away from my love curled my lips and tainted my tone. I simply did not feel this way, perhaps selfishness replaced joy. Devastation only withdrew from the fact that it was the truth, the worst part being I meant it. "Happy" is a reality that would never exist if I was in the picture.

You resemble honey. With hair, streaks of gold and your eyes flecked with brown. Sometimes as sweet as honey too and as delicate as the fluttering wings that made it. However as time progressed the honey began to stick and my lips became slack with my nose runny. No matter how many times I pleaded for you to stay, my apologies poured out thick as honey. You looked like the smell of honey and no pain, all I wanted was a taste, and now you've left me addicted. I desperately *need you. Your touch. To place your finger tips in the roots of my hair, it's nobody if not you. There are no other fish in my sea, you told me I was special.*

I had always imagined sadness as a shade of blue, the kind that tickles the underside of a bruise until it develops into a deep purple, overstaying its welcome. After our departure, the rose colored glasses revealed the many colors hidden from our world together. Dim, even dull with darkness shrouding it, depression had a color too.

I still missed you, nevertheless, the scares your touch left stung. Feeling of your cold palm against my face, the sight of my blood on your hand that dripped from my lips onto the floor. You were a field full of roses, until I eased closer, things became more clear. Without rose colored glasses in the flower garden you had thorns. I accepted them, when you began to poke me, blood ran down my face similar to my tears now. I thought love was beautiful, filled with happiness, but if that was true, why did it hurt so much?

Before drifting off I create a scenario so intimate with details of you to comfort my mind with. Possibly even trick it. If only believing you are right next to me would somehow work its way into my dreams so I can still have that glimpse of you. It's really not my fault I tried to stop loving you. I found other voices to whisper in the night. Regardless I lost you. The fantasies I made out were instead the idea of what we could have been. To change I need to look inward, not towards your love. And to heal trauma and dense conditioning in my mind, there's only one way to the root; deep down I know it's not through you. Perhaps we're better apart. Hurt people can't help other hurt people.

Roses on the Tear-Stained Paper

By: Em Coulter

Sat down, she stared,
Stared at the cream colored paper in front of her
The feelings bottled up,
The tears started streaming down

Her hand reached,
Shakily grasping the pen as her emotions flowed out
The ink stained the paper,
Ever so slowly flowing into the unabsorbed tears,
Turning words into meaningful blobs of black

She didn't care that her neat paper now blotched of emotions,
She could care less,
Purging it out was all she needed,
Purging it out was all she could do

As it came to a close,
Her final words spilled out,
She folded the paper into thirds,
And placed 3 white roses on top,
Sealing the letter for the next person to find

Sat down, she stared
Stared at the cream colored paper in front of her
The feelings calmed down,
The tears dried up

That was the last we heard from her,
That letter,
And the roses on the tear-stained paper

Heads Are Red

By: Savannah Snyder

Roses are red,
violets are blue.
I go crazy just thinking of you.
My heart explodes when your name is read,
and I'm accepting the risks, though others have fled.

Now here you are having dinner with me,
sitting on a spot by the dock.
I reach into my bag, now it's too late to flee,
and the crows around us start to flock.

Now the sunset's red,
and the river runs blue.
It's, oh, such fun dismembering you!
And now look at you, so very dead,
but don't worry dear, I'll keep your head.

I pick up your pieces and throw them in the lake,
then turn to go take a seat.
I take out the chocolate desert I baked,
and dig in, celebrating my feat.

The river is now red,
and our blanket is blue,
it's starting to get late, I know just what to do.
I fold up the blanket and pick up your head,
and smile to myself, feeling accomplished and fed.

I put the phone to my ear, rehearsing my lines.
Oh my God, this is getting fun.
I continue weaving in more and more lies,
Finally, the job's almost done.

Your blood bled red,
and my tears fell blue.
At least the judge believed it, God, he's a fool.
Now I lay your head beside me in bed,
and fall soundly asleep, with no tears shed.

Entries

By: Gage Cook

(an excerpt)

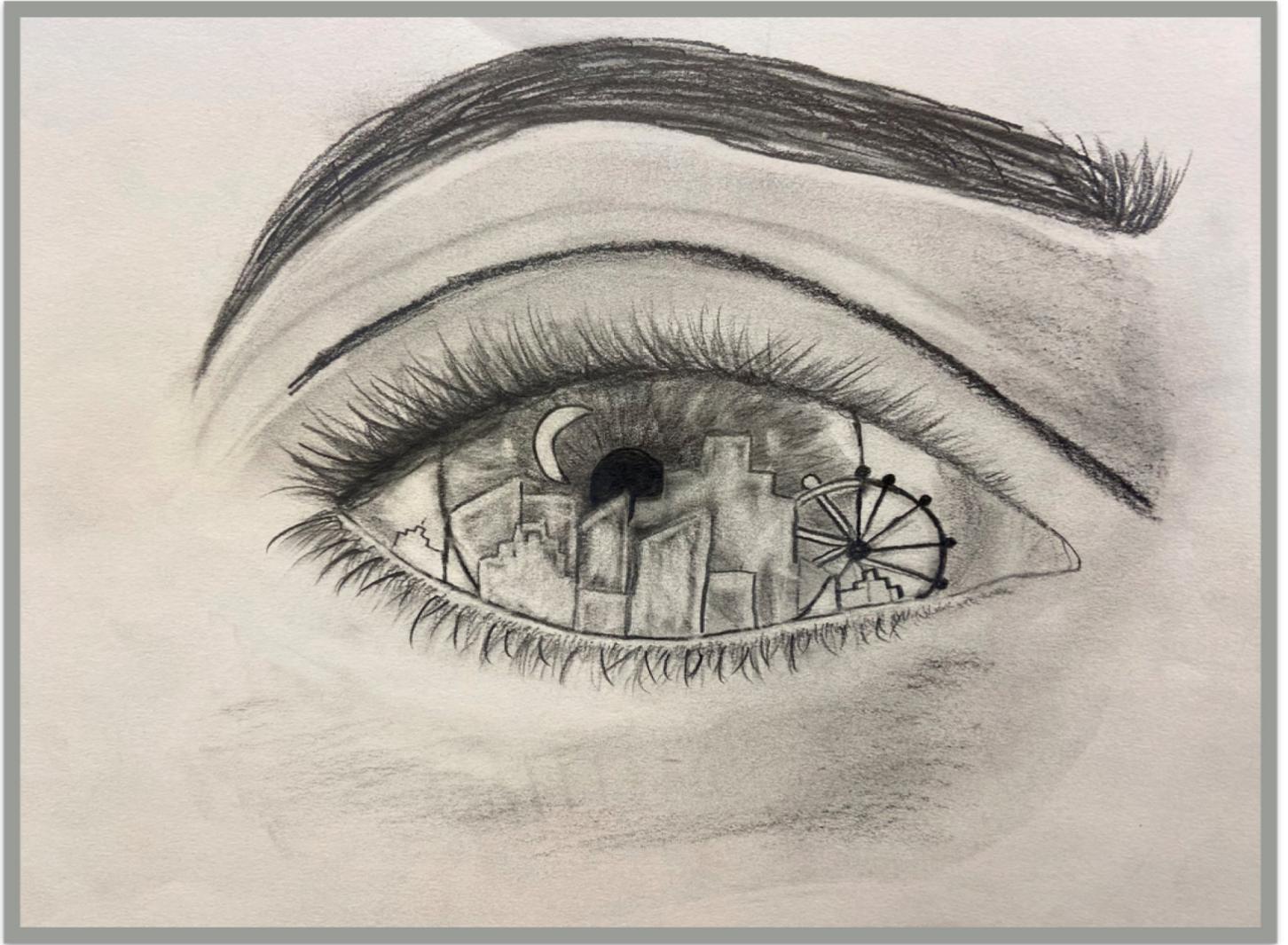
Day 0 : I am deciding to enter various entries into my codex. I feel it is the only way to channel my emotions effectively. My home was crumbling around me; buildings and houses were falling to the ground. I thought to myself that this was the end of humanity. As I made it to my transport, I began to see visions of what had happened to my family. I had been married to my husband for almost seven years. We had an adopted son, who was such a handsome young man. He had just graduated from the Academy of Galactic Exploration from the Aviation Sector. When he began to walk the stage to earn his diploma and pilot license, the alarms rang loud, making noise just about anywhere. We ran out of the school's campus, sprinting towards our transport. I was running just a little faster than my husband and son. An explosion. I looked back and saw them, suffering under piles of debris. I saw their tears mixed with their blood. When I boarded my transport, I felt that I should just stay here and die. I will write more entries as the days pass. For now, I am traveling through the darkness of space, looking for somewhere to survive.

Day 4 : Today, I have reached the structure, which is actually an abandoned NASA Space Station. Its entrances seemed to be intact, so I flew the EEP into the station's small hangar. Soon after entering the station itself, I began to wander throughout the corridors of the structure. The way that this place was built tells me that this could have been a prototype that later led to the construction of the International Space Station! Instead of floating through the hallways like the passengers did throughout the ISS, I walked on the floors of this station. As I wandered through these different hallways, I saw a door slightly ajar. I wanted to look into this room, but I decided to finish up this codex entry and sleep in the bunks that were in the room across the hall.

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01010000 01101111 01110111 01100101 01110010 00100000 01101111 01101110 00101100
00100000 01110010 01110101 01101110 01101110 01101001 01101110 01100111 00100000
01100100 01101001 01100001 01100111 01101110 01101111 01110011 01110100 01101001
01100011 01110011 00101110
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Day 5. : After entering the room, I searched for some sort of light switch. When I eventually turned the room's lights on, I saw the most fascinating thing! It was an old CDC 6600, one of the first supercomputers ever manufactured! I have a huge knack for old computers and similar machines. At this point, I was writing strands of code due to my overwhelming boredom. I began to write a short program that I could talk to using certain inputs. "Hello, Human!" my laptop said in an annoying voice, which was mostly high pitched. As I wrote more lines of code into my laptop, I began to think; *What if I could talk to something? What if I could create something to talk to? That's when I came up with an incredible idea!*

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01010011 01111001 01110011 01110100 01100101 01101101 01110011 00100000 01010010
01100101 01100010 01101111 01101111 01110100 01101001 01101110 01100111 00101110
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Art By: Nayana Sah

Too Late

By: Ian La Vé

I don't think I'm going to survive. Everyone won't survive.

OXYGEN 100%

I prepare my makeshift suit and refill my retired tanks. Once used for the sick and people in need; now only to delay the inevitable. I grab my solar umbrella and set off.

OXYGEN 98%.

I begin checking my house for leaks. Radiation leaks. Where the sun shines. So far so good. My neighbors on the other hand were not so lucky. I guess it pays to have a sunroom. Perfect for absorbing the unfiltered radiation; cooking the residents' manor like a microwave. My house on the other hand was turned into a makeshift lunar base with tarps and hoses that I've looted. House checks out.

OXYGEN 89%

Order broke down. Government tried to provide care before the end. A God damn umbrella. Riots raged through the streets, through the Rookery, through Northwestern Memorial, and through the Mart. Places that held oxygen tanks raided. Places of peace and health. We aren't even human if we wish to leave the weak to rot and suffocate. My regrets still haunt me.

OXYGEN 75%

Life has vanished. That cruel mistress, Mother Nature, gave up. She watched the last of her creations cling to false hope. She did not weep. She sang our requiem. A requiem of past ignorance and anger for our mistakes, Environmental mistakes. We thought we had time, but then the first hole appeared. A hole in the ozone. The people denied it and, like all humans, greedily carried on. If only we had listened. If I had listened.

OXYGEN 55%

Then the water was as contaminated, as contaminated as the plants sucking in the irradiated sunlight. Looting is the only lifeline to us "Rats". As the world broke the "Rats" emerged. The rats. The bottom feeders. The humans who feasted on the corpse of civilization. We killed the world. Sole and plundered for what? For money? For survival? For our future? Even now we hunt our own kind. Setting traps. Just have to be careful when looting. Unlike me.

OXYGEN 40% BREACH

Tripped a trap. Rusty harpoon breached my tank; my O₂ and hope dissipated. A lazy drift into the nothingness of atmosphere. Damn.

OXYGEN 20% CRITICAL

I can't breathe. Hyperventilating. Fear leads my hands; shaking and fumbling. I. Have. To. Escape. No afterlife fits for the sins I committed, for the dead children left in hospital beds.

OXYGEN 5% CRITICAL

Home, family, once safe home, now wisps, now nothing. Eternity of nothingness awaits to me and my mind is lost. Time is coming to a crawl, and I could pray, but no god comes to mind, nothing, nothing comes to mind. No listen, no one, not to a Rat. I can sit and awaiting death, but I must try and seeing the door, seeing home, a slow fade of life and light and cling and empty. Almost. There. Too. Late

OXYGEN 0%

No Longer Men

By: Amanda Fagan

On a bright Monday morning, four teenagers step into a busy hallway, complaining of too-short weekends and research projects. At first glance, there is nothing to indicate they are anything but normal--but if one of their teachers were to look hard enough, they will see that one of them is favoring her left leg. If they were to look, they will see the dark circles that tell stories of long, sleepless nights. They will see that their smiles never quite reach their eyes.

What they will not see is the war these four fight behind closed doors. They will not see that one of them can lift a thousand times her weight. They will not see that another can summon lightning from his fingertips. They will not see that they are fighting a losing war with powers they are not designed to wield.

They will not see it, but that does not mean it isn't there.

When the bell rings, a girl who runs at the speed of sound stumbles out to her car. She sits in the driver's seat but doesn't put in the key in the ignition. Instead, she sits and stares at her hands, imagining phantom blood staining her fingers. Her right leg taps against her seat in a blur, unable to sit still for another moment. Her left leg stings, but the pain is dulled. For a long time, she only sees red coating her hands. Most of it was hers. When she saw it, she was shocked to find it wasn't gold. She and her team are unstoppable creatures of unparalleled powers. To think themselves to be wayward gods would be the next logical step. So why shouldn't she believe she bleeds like them?

Late at night, a boy with lightning arcing through his veins sits in his backyard, staring at the sky. His eyes are glassy, his hands trapped under his back. If he frees them, there will be nothing stopping him from attempting to release the power welling up inside of him. Desperate to distract himself from the crackling trapped beneath his skin, he launches to his knees and prays for mercy from a god he fears has none left for him.

In a different house across town, an innocuous plant sits on a dining table. A boy no older than sixteen sits beside it, staring at it like it could offer him answers. With a shaking finger, he reaches out and touches a blooming petal. He touches it and watches it wilt, watches it decay into dust. Soon it spreads to the rest of the plant until there is nothing but ash and dirt in the pot. He sighs, pulls his gloves back on, and thanks any deity that has taken pity on him that his father doesn't hug him. In fact, when his father shouts that he corrupts everything he touches, he has no idea just how right he is.

(cont.)

In the house of a girl who throws cars like darts, the distinct sound of something being crushed echoes down the hallway. She clenches her fist around her calculator, ignoring the way it crumples like paper in her grip, and curses her inability to just work a single math problem. Her fingers twitch as she throws the remains of the calculator toward the window. It punches through the glass, landing somewhere outside with a distant thud and the crying of a car alarm. She does not notice. She pushes herself to her feet, resisting the urge to tear her room apart, and pretends her only stressor is tomorrow's math test.

The next morning, none of them show up for school. Instead, they pile in a car and drag themselves off to battle. When they fight, no one sees the teenagers beneath the bloodshed. When the battle is done, they'll wipe off the gore and grime and stumble home, where no hero's welcome will be awaiting them. No, the only thing waiting for them is angry parents and missed assignments. As soon as the battle is done, they stagger back to normality, or at least the pretense of it.

There is one certainty that remains in their lives:

They are not gods, but they are no longer men.

Legacy of Legends

By: Annie Condon

(an excerpt)

The sound of the horse's hoofbeats was muffled due to the soft, wet earth, but there was also an unfortunate side effect: the animal left a clearly visible trail everywhere it ran, which Guinevere knew only too well would prove to be her downfall, should the Fidelians come after her. And of course they would- in fact, it was likely they'd already tracked her to the woods.

She dug her heels into the horses sides, ducking underneath a branch as she passed by yet another great oak tree. A sharp sound caught her ear: a man's shout, coming from somewhere behind her. Far behind her, yet not far enough to be out of her earshot.

They're getting closer.

At last, through the trees, she caught sight of the little wooden hunting cabin, the very place she'd been looking for. She would barricade herself inside, then perhaps find another way to escape, or wait until her pursuers gave up the chase...

Who was she kidding? They would never give up the chase. Not as long as that long, cloth-wrapped bundle remained in her possession. That, after all, was the point of all this. Guinevere by herself, queen or not, would never warrant such a frenzy. Guinevere with the bundle... that could be dangerous for them.

She could get rid of it, just pick it up right now and toss it into the trees. If they saw she no longer had it, perhaps they would leave her alone. They would find it, no doubt, and then she would be free.

But the very thought felt like a betrayal. Arthur had kept it safe for so many years- the least Guinevere could do now was carry on his mission. Or at least allow another to do so...

She dismounted the horse in front of the cabin and stumbled inside, tripping over her skirt. She landed hard, but ignored the pain and stood up, and bolted the door behind her.

She hadn't yet had much of a chance to cry for Arthur. She did so now.

Guinevere collapsed to her knees, racked with sobs, tears pouring out onto the wooden floor. She cried for Arthur, and for all the knights of Camelot whose bodies would burn with the kingdom, and for the old wizard Merlin, now no more than a memory. She cried for the people, her people, once the free folk of Camelot, now all either dead or slaves of wickedness.

(cont.)



Art By: Ninel Gutierrez

What had gone wrong? How had such a magnificent kingdom fallen in so little time, barely even putting up a fight? And how had such a grand king...

No, she couldn't even finish that thought. All Guinevere could do was sob, kneeling on the floor, waiting for the Fidelians to come and end her, and yet there was something stirring at the back of her mind, something she had yet to do. What was it?

Her eyes fell on the bundle of red cloth, discarded on the floor some three feet away. There was still one thing to be done, one hope she could keep alive. Slowly, Guinevere crawled to the bundle, her hand closing around it. She cradled it in her arms as she crept over to the fireplace.

One last time, let me look upon it.

With care she unwrapped the cloth, revealing a long-bladed sword, the hilt black inlaid with gold, the blade straight and unadorned. It didn't look like anything special, but Guinevere could feel something as she held it, a sort of well inside her, filled with power... Was this the feeling Arthur had always spoken of?

Guinevere paused to examine, to admire, then a man's shout from outside brought her back to reality. Her head snapped upward.

They're almost here. They've nearly got me.

Laying the sword aside, she gritted her teeth and began pulling up the hearthstones.

The job didn't take long; her terror spurred her onward, granting her strength she had never known before. Every fingernail had broken by the end, and blood dripped from the tips of some of her fingers, but in front of her, she had a hole- a hole of sufficient size to fit a sword.

With reverence, Guinevere lifted the sword again. Now, to throw the Fidelians off the scent.

She swiftly removed her cloak, disregarding the red wrappings lying on the ground and instead wrapping the sword in the purple fabric that had once sat around her shoulders. She would have to find something to hide within the red wrappings, something to make them think it had been a decoy all along... But for now, the sword.

Guinevere took the sword gently in her hands and leaned down, placing the purple-wrapped sword carefully in the hole she had made. It fit perfectly, as if fate itself had made that hole. A tear dripped from her eye as she laid eyes on the long bundle for the very last time.

"Farewell, Excalibur," she whispered.

Then she covered it with the hearthstones again.

Hot -N-Ready

By: Maxwell Arvanetes

Ignatius stood outlined against the tarmac, neon lights illuminating his plasteel armor.

The blue of his metallic suit glowed orange with the lights before him.

His boots stomped against the pavement. Ignatius' hand, cold and rocklike, reached forward, pulling at the door's hilt and slamming it against the wall of the structure.

The figure shifted forward ending his march at the countertop.

A scared boy, not much older than 15, stood in horror as the Knight placed a gauntleted hand into a pocket.

The boy forced out a whimpered "S-s-s-sir, what could I g-g-g-get you?"

Ignatius laid Honest Abe's ugly mug on the counter and barked, "One Pepperoni Hot-N-Ready."

The boy quickly yanked the green piece of paper off the stainless steel surface and, with a loud mechanical clink, the note disappeared into the mechanism.

With a wave of his magical hand, the boy pulled a familiar orange box, steaming from the heated ovens and laid it on the table with the utmost care.

Ignatius snatched the box and strode through the glass door.

The boy, still shaking, stared in awe as the endless darkness consumed the knight draped in blue.

A Soul Full of Art

By: Alyssa Pohle

And each blank canvas makes me long for your lashes to paint
with every blink.

The brush moving gracefully along the textured surface
as you paint your soul.

A soul so colorful that you must invent your own shadow
to make it realistic.

A soul so beautiful that the brush makes
no mistakes.

A soul so selfless that as soon as it's done
you give it away to the next.

You then paint another,
and another,
and another.

1942

By: Raygen Metcalf

Shiny diamonds and gold smuggled to Holland
Stiff and silky fabric held us together
I couldn't understand why we were crossing seas
I was already so happy in Germany
Although the fright and shout I could hear through our dark windows

Scary men beating people on the streets
Hide and Go Seek became a frequent game
Running! Running! The Hendricks Cottage was set to a hot flame!
The summer of 1942 was bringing no more Jews

My clothes are always dirty and my skin always smells
Momma dyed our nappy hair blonde
To hide from the scary men
Daddy said we have to play pretend
The smell of bleach burned our noses
We are staying in an attic
Four of us squished together
Mice running over our stomachs all night
Stupid Cat! Stupid Cat! They almost found us!

Family found a farm
Lots of animals
"Baacackkk baacakkkk"
Chickens sang in the mornings
Brought us eggs for celebration
Crunchy shell fell apart in my hands
So did my family when the war was at an end



Art By: Nashantee Deputee



Art By: Kendra Miller

Broken Glass

By: Laureyana Hoffman

I am flying. I am flying through the pouring rain and I am floating. I am floating through the misty sunrise of a land forever stuck in a frozen increment of time, and I am singing. I am singing a song sent directly from angels and I am flying.

I am flying and it is raining and I am singing and I have become one with the sky. Its rain is my tears and its clouds are my wings and I am flying. My worry does not exist, and yet, I am crying. And I am flying.

I fly, I float, I gleam, and I shimmer, I shimmer like broken glass stained a hundred different colors. Beautiful, shattered, broken and cracked. And I cannot be fixed. No, not glued back together or made whole again.

It is impossible.

For whatever broke me, whoever and when, stole little white shards of my body. I cannot be whole.

Instead, I will pick up my pieces, every shattered little shape, and assemble them into a messy mosaic made up of my soul. A mosaic made up of pieces fit to cut through the moon, and its pieces will shine and glitter like stars beneath the rays of the sun. and I will stand back and admire my work. And I will let my soul fill with pride because even though no mortal person could fix me, I did it myself. And I will smile with pride, and I will spread my wings wide, and I will get up and fly.



Art By: Alexis Hartford

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