

# Oneirata

Hastings High School  
2019

WRETCHED

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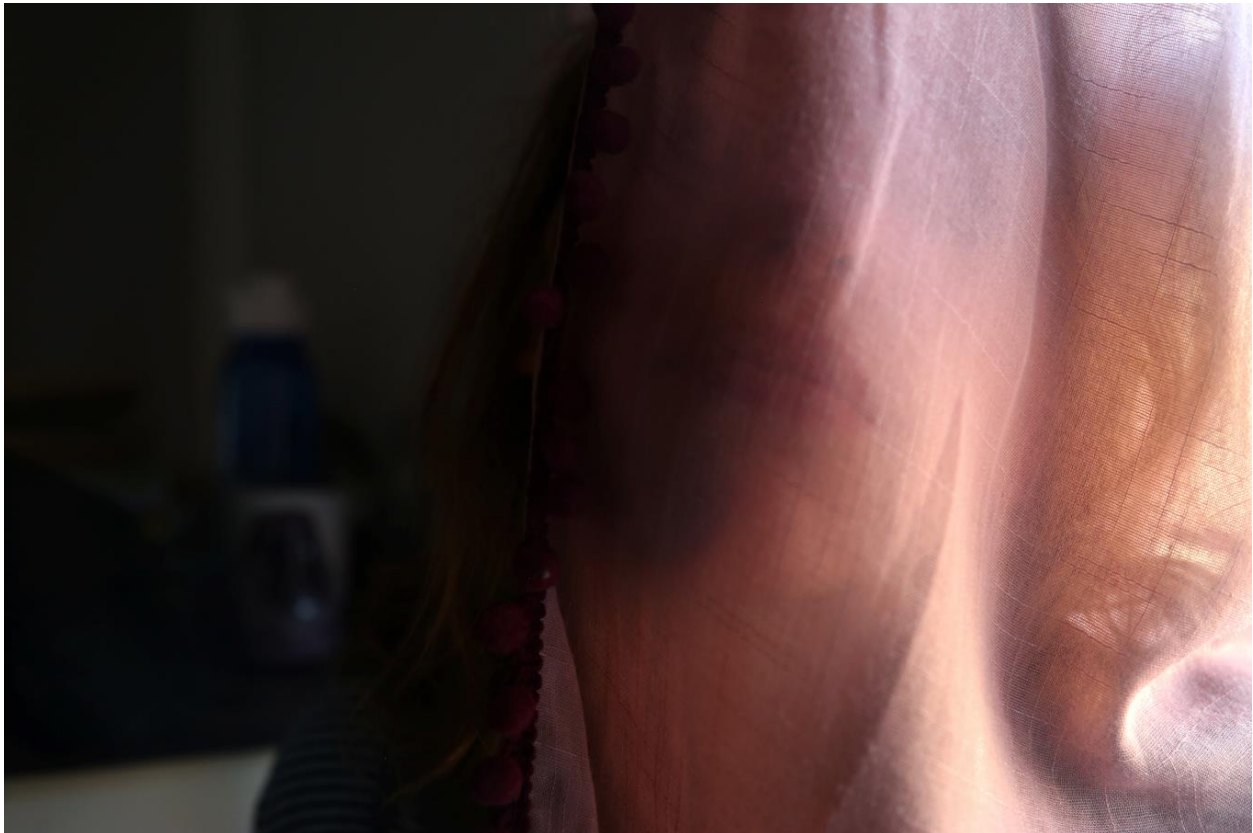
Thank you to all who submitted their work. A special thanks to the following students who worked on this publication: Aniela Cohig, Clay Haddock, Jordan Faragallah, Caleb Painter, Mina-Claire Paz-Le Draoulac, Catherine Sarfaty, and Kojo Sheng. This issue would never be what it is without the wonderful art submissions from Ms. Gilbert’s AP Art students, and thank you to Nidia Ferrara for putting the book together. Be on the look out for “Write Night” (aka Creative Writing Club) announcements in the Fall and submit your work to [hastingslitmag@gmail.com](mailto:hastingslitmag@gmail.com) at any time.

Happy summer, everyone! And don’t forget how nice it is to write ☺  
-Ms. Walters

The old man sat down on the bench as he looked up at the dead trees as the snow came down as gently as the leaves once did. He thought about how he was back when he was a boy. He thought of how life was so simple back then and how he had no cares in the world back then. He remembered when he would wake up in the morning and stare out the window. He remembered when the sun shined and the birds sang as he played outside. He remembered the flowers that were blooming: the roses, the violets, the daisies and more. He remembered how he would play around in the fields with all the other children. He remembered the trees that were in bloom that he would always look up at and admire. He remembered swinging on the swing he had as the breeze blew through his golden hair.

As he sat under the trees, though, he remembered yet more. He remembered how he had gotten older. He remembered all he had learned throughout the years. He remembered how he left his home in search of a new one, as well as how he found one much like his old home. He remembered how his house started to fill as his family grew larger. He remembered how every day he woke up and was surrounded by so many people he cared about who cared for him all the same. As the old man closed his eyes he remembered that life wasn't so bad.

ALEX MANGANIELLO



ADRIANA CUIBUS

## CANCER

I have not seen her for many years, not felt the papery brush of her skin nor the tweed caress of one of her hugs. Boston itself is brighter than I remember, the air stickier. When I was eighteen, the streets were almost quiet, but now they twitch almost uncontrollably with a constant stream of noise. The buildings are overgrown, too tall for my liking, and the youngest ones shimmer with steel and metallic glass in a way that hurts my eyes.

So when I saw her, wedged between two much younger office buildings who looked as if they were about to consume her, I was almost relieved. Her face was as I remembered it-- maroon brick strewn with deep freckles of ivy, a bronze nose adorned with words I never bothered to read.

But when I dared to step closer, to allow her to consume me within her mothball-encrusted lips, I realized some things were off. The welcoming whine of the dark grey telephone that had once rested on her mahogany shoulder was gone, replaced by an artificial chirping that bored into my ears in a way that bordered on unbearable. The elegant blue barn swallows that would occasionally seep through her plaster pores and dart around within her intestines were gone entirely; she did not even seem to have made any efforts to replace them.

Worst of all, her golden brown knuckles, barely within my line of vision, seethed with a glowing cancer worse than any I'd ever seen. Gingerly, I shuffled towards the mass, not knowing how she'd allowed such sickness to blatantly make its home on her body. The cancer was smooth, its translucent surface not unlike that of the towering office buildings that had begun to infect most of the city.

I did not know when the epidemic had begun, but its effects were more dramatic than I had first feared. In the place between the white and the iris of her left eye, I found another cancer. This one was smaller, its horrific glow even more dramatic. When I jabbed at it with the very tip of my finger, to see if it would break, its glossy surface contorted, the colors warping and shifting into an image I could not identify. In numerous other parts of her body, I found more and more growths, each louder and shinier than the last.

I could tell that she had not yet begun chemotherapy to treat the illness, for her hair was the same as it ever was. Though the flaky ivory strands could have used a dousing of soap and water, not a single hair had fallen out; not a single bulbous root hovered at the surface of her skin. I wanted to yell, to order her to banish the cancer from her immune system, but something deep within me told me that she would not listen. Her eyes, their colors more faded than I remembered, told the story of something like defeat. I could feel her breathing and her heartbeat beneath my loafers, however, though the air conditioning's hum (surely another side effect of her ailment) was beginning to overpower the insistent thump.

As I trudged out of her mouth once more, about to fling myself into Boston's humid abyss, something very queer began to happen. Her pulse, which had always been almost uncomfortably hurried, began to slow down. As I lingered on her horsehair doormat, trying to sneak in a last goodbye to my dear friend, the heartbeat skipped, then stopped entirely. I knew that she had been lingering on the threshold to death for some time now, but now her demise felt concrete. The only creatures within her immune system that remained, postmortem, were the cancers. They leered at me from within, eyes narrowing at my retreating figure. I did my best to push them to the back of my mind. My dear friend, my

longtime companion, was gone. I knew this death was irreversible and so I did not put up a fight. My arthritic bones were too fatigued anyway.

Boston was even louder as I abandoned my friend's corpse, the sky pumpkin colored and surprisingly small in comparison to the gawky adolescent skyscrapers. I remembered, in my youth, watching the sun set languidly over the Charles River. I was surrounded by old friends back then, friends made of brick and limestone and slate, but they had all perished long ago. Now, too many young buildings (who had been born to replace my friends) blocked my vision with their lanky limbs of metal; I could not glimpse even the sparest flicker of water no matter how much I craned my neck.

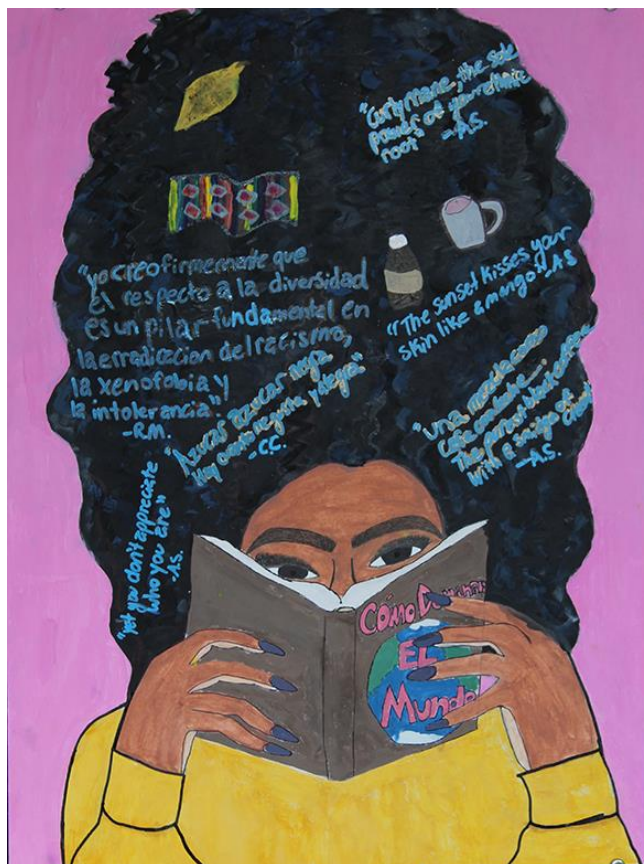
Now, surrounded by garish taxi cabs and overly jubilant tourists who flagrantly jaywalk, I reach into my pocket, uncovering a cancer of my very own. It is smaller than my friend's but glows just as insistently. My daughter, Lydia, spread the virus to me on a frigid Christmas morning. Seeing the eagerness in her eyes, I did not try to argue. Lydia contracted the cancer long ago, as did her copper-haired children (children who I try to see myself in but cannot bring myself to). Now, this tumor, this *thing*, hovers on my person at all times. Its glow mingles with the cells of my skin and the threads of my clothes. And I know it is only a matter of time before I, like my friend before me, succumb to the ailment, ceasing to exist.

ANIELA COHIG



LILI PERIH





KAYLA LEIVA

AUGUST, 2008

In August I used to carry a jar to capture fireflies,  
eyes darting to a small flash,  
jumping up to *catch*,  
giggling as light glowed orange  
between the crevices of my fingers,

depositing them in the jar, fifteen at least  
crawling up the glass walls,  
and running back home  
to set them free in my yard;  
maybe they'd decide to stay and live  
among the June bugs and moths.

My hands had a metallic smell  
as I made my rounds about the house, grinning,  
counting each flicker of light,  
sometimes twice—  
hopefully there were more than yesterday

under the jagged mint leaves, close to the ground  
and up in the great green maple—  
checking behind the guelder-roses until  
I retreated to the porch;  
my mom made me wash my hands but  
the scent of insects lingered in that jar.

MIA VEEFKIND



ANI LEFEVRE



DONNIE TANKAYAN

The boy has just moved to the new town, to the new school. He knows nobody. This hasn't been the first time that he has had to move, and it most certainly won't be the last. With his father's job, he has to move constantly. It is usually difficult for him because just as he is getting used to people in his new school, he is forced to pack up all of his belongings and go to a different town and a different school again. Typically, he will last a full school year before moving again. He is always switching schools. How is the boy supposed to make friends when before he can get used to a school he is going to a different one? It is impossible for him to get used to his school, so he has given up trying altogether.

Every time he walks into his new classroom, he immediately goes to the back of the room so no one will notice him. He sits there the entire day waiting for the bell to ring. He waits, sitting at his desk, holding all of his things. Since he is getting older and always going to new schools, people have already found their "group" that they will most likely be friends with until high school. This, in turn, makes it harder for him to join these "groups" because of the tight bonds that people will make with each other. When the bell rings for recess, he goes outside and sits alone on the swings. He swings back and forth, back and forth until the period is over. There isn't anything else that he can do. He doesn't have anyone to play with so he is stuck playing by himself. He sits on the swing and watches as people run past him playing, laughing. It's not that he wishes that he had someone to play with, he just wishes that he could stay at a school long enough to where he might have an actual chance at making a friend that lasts. It's not like he's upset that he doesn't have anyone to talk to, he just wishes that it could be different. That maybe he could find one or two people that he enjoys playing with during recess. But that hasn't happened for him yet. To be completely honest he doesn't think that it will ever happen. But that's okay, he's fine with that. He thinks that it makes him unique compared to other children.

Other children come up to him and ask him why he is always moving and he always responds to them the same way. He always answers them saying that because of his father's work he is always moving to different places. He doesn't really know what else to do because he knows that no matter how hard he tries, he is going to finally get used to a school and find a group of friends that he likes, but then he's going to have to move again because of his father's job.

KRISTINA CARUSO





SUN HWA TAMASHIRO



ISABELLA WYNNE-MARKHAM

## MIRACULOUSLY GORGEOUS UNICORN

*After C.A.*

You first think it's just a carnival game  
But the only thing going through your head

When you first see the narwhal is terror  
Your first instinct is to move away

Trying to make sure she can't see it  
Trying to escape its irresistible fluffiness

She looks over at what you're so obviously trying to hide  
It's too late she's seen it

She screams grabbing the attention of nobody  
Except yourself she yells to you

*Dad we have to get the unicorn*  
You looked too quickly to realize it but it's even worse

Hanging from the hook, stuffed fully  
Its rainbow eyes sparkle the plethora of colors on its mane

*Its a scam* is all you can say to her pleading eyes  
The hoops are half the size of the basketballs

And besides even if they weren't  
Your high school days are over

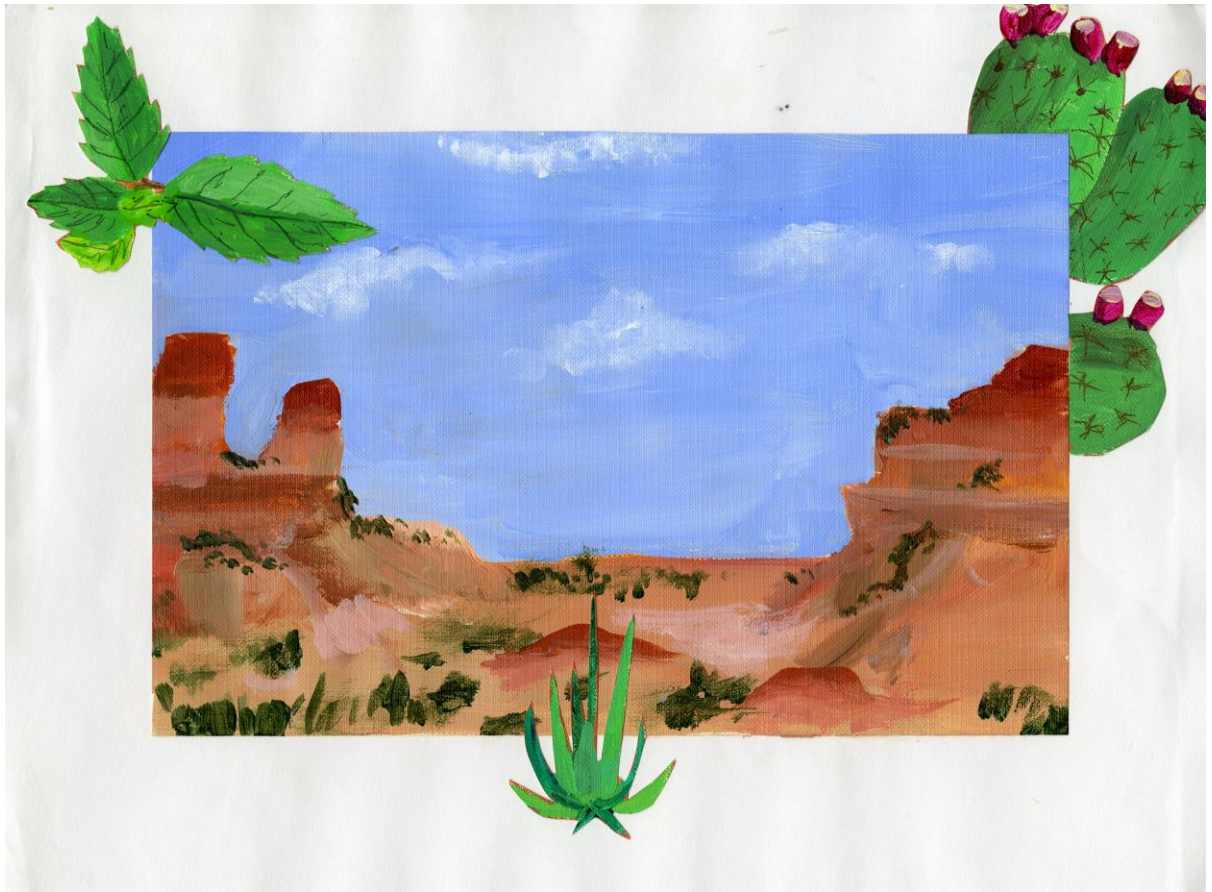
Your shot has deteriorated since then  
It won't work it can't work

You see your sympathetic but disappointing face  
In the reflection in her eyes

She releases the air in her lungs in an instant  
Spewing vapor into the cool night air

Right in front of you  
*Fine.* The look of defeat on her face  
The half love and half horror we feel for the ones closest to us  
Who we want not to harm and prefer not to spoil

MASSIMO DEFRANCESCO



Both by LIZZIE OLSEN



The forest stretched for miles in every direction, brimming with wildlife and plant life. Jaguars freely roamed the forest, spread throughout the land from north to south. They ruled the forest, their spots allowing them to become one with the shadows, absorbing the background until an onlooking animal could not see the difference. Their mighty roar echoed for miles, causing small animals to stir and panic. The forest provided for all, with murky and clear rivers crossing the landscape. The forest provided the sweetest of fruit and an abundance of prey, awarded in a difficult yet rewarding process. Living in the wild was never easy, filled with an ongoing struggle to find the next meal or place to sleep. The forest became smaller, people toppled the mighty trees that once shaded the land. The once never ending landscape became filled with scars of human interaction, great phrase!! portions of forest cleared and marked by the stumps of trees left in the ground. The scars continued to grow, slashing and burning through the surrounding forest, destroying the homes of the small critters hiding in the trees. Next came the trucks, hauling away the trees that provided shade for a sleeping jaguar on a humid summer day. The trucks replaced the mighty roar of the jaguar, inducing fear in animals for miles when it sounded the horn. Next came the cattle herds, spreading throughout the cleared land, grazing on the land that the jaguars once hunted on.

The jaguars were hungry and unaware of the risk of hunting the cattle and the retribution they will face. The farmers had little mercy when they encountered a jaguar, killing the powerful beast and selling its parts to a local store. The jaguars received little mercy when hunters targeted them for their fur, taking away the spots that once let the mighty jaguar disappear into the forest, hiding among the shadows. Rumbling highways began to cross over the land, just like the rivers that the jaguars swam in on a hot summer day. The remaining forest became parks, a small remnant of the vast forest that the jaguars once called home. The forest still remembers the jaguars, as do the lands beneath the roads that bear the prints of their ancestors, as do the trees who bear the claw marks of the jaguars, now supporting a door frame in some far away town. The jaguar skin rug that rests on the floor of a giant mansion was once a mighty creature, but its fur bears the shadows of the forest and the sunlight still sparkles on its golden fur. The jaguar remains frozen in time, its lifeless eyes gazing off into the distance at the once mighty jungle that it once called home, the last thing it ever saw.

CAITLIN GUILFOYLE





DEREX VAVRA

RESPONSE TO "I HEARD A FLY BUZZ - WHEN I DIED" BY EMILY DICKINSON

Death awaits  
As she so desperately desires to sleep  
Everything is stiff  
But one

The last living thing watched  
She stayed concentrated on the fly  
Bzzzzzzz bzzzzzz

No crying but dry eyes  
For the fate is accepted  
by those who once loved  
For in time those will forget

She gave up her belongings, arranged for certain  
For she sees the light  
But only hears the fly

EVE ARONOFF





GRIFFIN JOERGER

### CREATIVE WRITING RESPONSE

Can you even begin to picture the endless possibilities of feelings that someone initially irrelevant may be experiencing when they enter your metaphorical bubble? At what point do you realize that they too have a metaphorical bubble, filled with people they love and people they hate and memories and feelings and experiences which shape each individual action, question and response? Is it when you speak to them, or when you touch them, or when you have a conversation with them, or is it when they mention their daughter or mother or brother and suddenly they are separated from your bubble put into their own bubble alongside that mentioned daughter, mother or brother.

It is nearly impossible to treat every individual with the respect they deserve in consideration of their unknown circumstances. However, recognizing the information void and treating strangers accordingly is vital to act properly towards others.

A few weeks ago, my mother and I drive to Baltimore to visit college campuses. In anticipation of the city's vexing parking situation, we took an Uber into downtown Baltimore. As the black Honda Civic approached, we hustled into the back seat of a cardboard-lined, artificial-tree scented car and raised eyebrows at one another. Within minutes, my mother struck up a light conversation with the driver, while steadfast searching the Yelp app for the "Best crab-cake in Maryland". Looking over at her phone, I clicked on the first restaurant listed and scrolled to images. Unsurprisingly, downtown Baltimore was home to many crab-cake restaurants, each boasting a perfect score on Yelp,

which made our decision all the more difficult. I asked the driver if he could recommend a crab cake restaurant. Abruptly he began talking about how much he loved crab cakes, and how long it had been since he had one.

Immediately changing from his bright and charismatic voice, the driver told us that he had a son who also loved crab cakes. He told us he had not seen his son in fourteen years and only knew he was okay because of the Youtube channel he live-streamed every Monday at five who also loved crab cakes

In that very moment, the Uber driver was pulled from my bubble and dropped into one of his own, standing beside the son I imagined. Rather than acting as a supplementary character, an extra in the life of Juliana, I imagined the driver as his own person. By mentioning his child, he created a backstory for himself and immediately shaped my perspective of him.

I believe that Bradley's goal in writing his poem was to draw attention to people like barbers, who have more going on in their lives than initially apparent. In Larry Bradley's poem, he shapes the reader's perspective of seemingly irrelevant people, symbolized by barbers, as they read his poem. Each line creates more and more context for the reader to mentally place the protagonist.

After reading the poem, "Barber," I began acknowledging the people I would ordinarily ignore, like construction workers, security guards, cross guards and even strangers I passed on the street, imagining the various life stages they might be going through. The pivotal Uber ride I experienced weeks ago opened my eyes to how different everyone's circumstances are, and how little can be assumed about people. Everyone has their own thoughts, ideas, and memories which are impossible to guess. Treating everyone with the same respect and kindness despite their economic or social status is a necessary step in the development of a progressive and moral society, which Bradley alludes to in his poem "Barber".

JULIANA OCHACHER



SUN HWA TAMASHIRO

AQUILA

you told me i was like an eagle  
and simple as that, i believed you.

I felt as if I could  
tie my shoelaces together  
hang them on my neck  
take off my shirt  
and jump from  
rooftops  
with you holding my hand

you told me that you loved me  
you said that i was fervent  
while biting your fingernails until you bled



raking the small of my back with  
the soft young flesh on your beds

and you told me you would jump too  
but, when i began to fly  
and i looked behind me to tell you  
i was in love too, you sat  
on the rooftops looking at your damaged shoes

MINA-CLAIRE PAZ-LE DRAOULEC



SUN HWA TAMASHIRO

### CHARLIE AND HIS CHOCOLATE

The golden ticket,  
oh, how it holds  
the memories  
Charlie loves the most.

Torn and covered with dust,  
worn out and ragged.  
Hung high on the wall,  
Charlie's greatest accomplishment,  
that trumps all.  
Not wanting to get up,  
he leaves his bed with a crawl.  
The factory's lights flicker on.  
The machines,  
groggy from their sleep,  
power up to start their wild rumpus.  
He looks out the window,  
passed the aged stores  
And the tall buildings,  
until he spots the small house  
that gives him mixed feelings.  
The rundown house is  
what he holds dear,  
even though it is not near.  
He remembers the single bed and Grandpa Joe.  
Oh, how he missed him,  
but would not let anyone know.  
For he was alone in this world.  
Willy Wonka had given up his throne,  
and his family left him, suddenly,  
on his own.  
He carries his days out,  
at the Wonka Bar.  
Basking in the aroma of candy,  
the little kid inside him comes out to play.  
But he is not a little kid anymore,  
he is a man.  
Nay, he is the candy man.  
Once the day is done,  
the machines are resting,  
the candy,  
ready to brighten up a child's day,  
and once the Oompa-Loompas tumble off to bed,  
Charlie heads upstairs,  
thinking of the dreams that lie ahead.  
He sits in his bed while his thoughts consume him.  
He stares at the ticket, only a sliver of gold left,  
and Fears  
Did a chocolate bar give his life value,  
Or will it always remain unclear?

CAROLINE GUNTHER





GRACE MOON

### MODERN MELANCHOLY

I saw the empty faces of those in New York City  
    hollowed out eyes reflected by street lamps within dark shadowed hoods  
    stamps of freckles and bursting pink bubbles of acne  
who were clothed in the alleyway musty air  
    hiding in the corners with pipes against cracked lips, dry with winter  
    smoke swirling around the silhouetted bodies in wavy wisps like graceful dancers  
    with pointed toes, puffy costumes and bright lipstick  
who were trapped in their bewildered wandering  
    lost in the checkered roads, only one of the millions crammed into  
    rusty buildings- neon was splashed like noisy jazz on the signs  
    surrounding apartments lined in wispy curtains  
who were addicted to the glow of technology  
    permanently waiting for the buzz that trickled pleasantly down their spines  
    as the screen cast light to draw in weary eyes and illuminated  
    the colors of fading chartreuse skin  
who desperately kissed the rims of bottles

licking the last of the alcoholic saliva from glassy lips and stumbling along  
the dirt-smudged sidewalks lined in cigarettes curled up like petals  
feeling free and mischievous  
who hide imperfections in powder  
Like fuzzy peaches cut deep to the pink flesh, beyond recognition,  
black watermelon seeds plucked out of the watery red,  
lines denting the peels of bananas  
protecting the soft interior  
age crumpling the skin inwards  
who knew nothing mattered  
they'd end up a pile of milky bones in smooth coffins  
or ashes spread into swirling wind  
the black and white of forgotten patterns

CAROLINE ANDERSON



JACKIE COLLINS

How much patience do I need to corrupt this cadence?  
How much cadence in this poem do I need to find why my drive can't kill all these snakes?  
How many snakes do I need to kill with this bell I found from the bellows from beneath?

Now let the bell ring, ship the Guinea fowl in a steam ship with the promise it could be a king.  
Copper statues in the west promised us all a new life, but I still can't hear freedom ring.

Now I'm alone in the mountains since everyone left my nest for this poetic idol across the pond.  
Call it golden calf since these other Guinea fowls just like me are squawking at it like it is a god.

I could fry up some eggs from my nest,  
but the marine-peppered concrete sidewalk is already doing that just fine.

I could declare two things:  
innocence is non-existent and ignorance makes me not able to craft closet wine.

I'm praying for stress to stop preying on my brain.  
But coyotes are still on the prowl; the apocalypse: I should proclaim this day coyote day.

You can rip out my rib and create another guinea fowl anyways.  
Steal a golden apple from the dirt, and then we can meet at the temple to plan our escape.  
The cult awes to the queen of the liar; the same copper statue to which the Guinea fowl prays.  
For the wax you put in your ears cannot even stop the siren's song on the radio in replay.

I've roamed this desert for answers and you know what I got?  
You make your own answers and life is equivalent to a game a chess:  
in check; no pawns, one knight, a queen, and your last rook has just been caught.

Some red goat keeps following me;  
stealing others away and wants me to join his trough.

In fact, let me tell you two stories and I'll let you know why.

So once the red goat sensed a false prophical plague coming soon, so  
he slaughtered an innocent lamb since its heart was as good as new.  
Azrael knocked as the corpse began to rot.  
Then the goat baked bread on rock, but  
Azrael caught the lie and he casted the goat into desert to wander and Azrael flew.  
For the moral is if you reap what you sow, you'll be howling like a coyote at the moon.

And once I heard an old tale  
about a craftsman and his son.

Exiled on an island

since he was just trying to help others escape their own labyrinths.

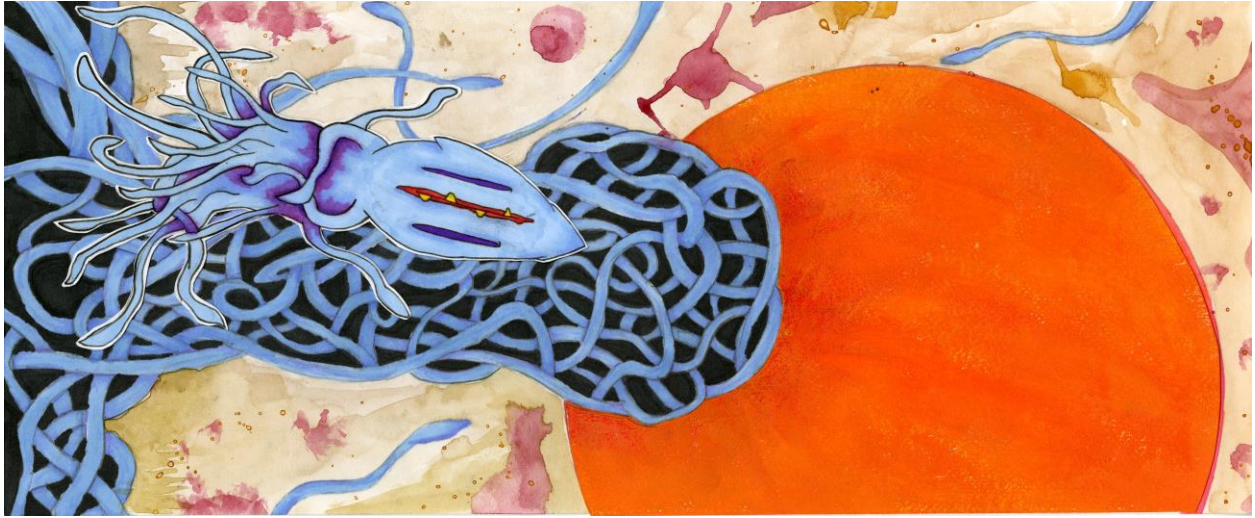
Then with earth, wax and feathers he crafted an escape:

a pair of wings so he could have a chance to just drift away.  
He warned his son not to fly too high  
or too low,  
and maybe telling him was a catalytic mistake.  
For I'm not on the outside looking in, nor am I on the inside looking out.  
I am in the dead center looking all around.  
For even if a Guinea fowl could fly  
like Icarus it would eventually drown.

CHRISTOPHER SCARGLATO



DONNIE TANKANYAN



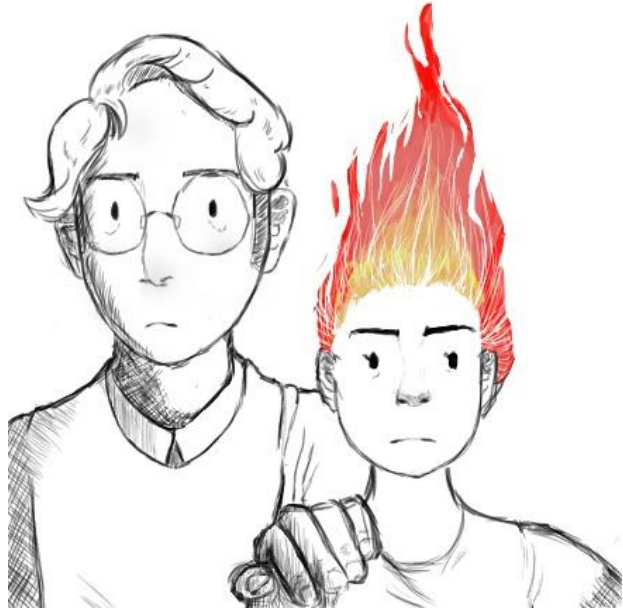
RILEY OSBORNE

### SEA OF SORROW

When I went to the battlefield I saw:  
Rotting corpses littering the ground  
Piled high in the sky  
Stained with blood new and old,  
Scraps of metal from the titans of mass destruction  
Wedged deep within the crevices of the steaming earth,  
Half lifeless bodies emanating distant cries for help  
That dissipated in the screaming bellows of the wind,  
Faceless Death roaming the fields of marionettes  
Forsaken by their comrades  
Who laid beside each other's sleeping bodies,  
Hands with the skin slowly peeling off  
Protruding out of the cold shadowy skull  
Of the silently weeping Mother Nature.

THOMAS PANNETT





SUN HWA TAMASHIRO



DONNIE TANKAYAN

## A Kid's Guide to Writing a Kid's Guide

Come up with a bad idea. It will only be funny to you, but you will not want to exert yourself by coming up with anything better. You will wait awhile, and your sister will complain about all of her homework. You will tell her that you have homework too, and then she will say: Then why aren't you doing it? You will need to prove to her that you really do have homework, so you will start to do it.

Write the first paragraph of your guide and decide that it is just decent enough to leave as is. You will then decide that a reward is in order for working so hard for almost five entire minutes. You will spend an hour doing absolutely nothing and revelling in every second of it, and then you will begin to stress out as you realize how much homework you have. Your sister will join you in complaining about the high school workload, and neither of you will end up working for quite a while after that.

Force yourself to turn back to your work and laboriously write another small paragraph. Your family will call you over for dinner, and you will feel immensely relieved that you have been spared the agony of continuing. You will eat the pasta and sauce that they have laid out with enthusiasm, and you will pretend to yourself that you have finished your homework. When the meal is finished, you will become irritable and snap at your mom when she asks, Are you done with your homework? She will leave you to brood, and upon checking your watch you will manage to rally yourself and write more.

Try to get into the flow of the writing. You will not be able to because you will find the verb tense awkward and distracting. After several minutes, you will realize that you have not been writing anything since you are too distracted by verb tenses. After several more minutes, you will decide that you are really getting nowhere in your work and would have more success after taking a short break. You will take a short break.

Realize that it is getting late and unwillingly follow your feet back to your chromebook. You're not done yet, your sister will ask mockingly. You will respond with some rather impolite words and note that she is still working as well. She will shrug her shoulders, not really caring, and you will realize after a moment that she is just trying to annoy you. You will turn back to your homework and forget what you had planned on writing. You will decide that it will come back to you with the help of a little chocolate. Remus Lupin would approve, you will think.

Finish your kid's guide with whatever energy you have left in you. You will read it over and see that you have over-dramatized everything that you have written, and that very little of it is actually true. You will decide that this requires stating, so you will add a final paragraph containing this disclaimer in it. You will end this paragraph by writing 'the end' at the end.

KATHLEEN ROTMIL-ESER



JOHN LECKY

## THE HORROR

### Characters:

**Peter:** Father of Rose, grandfather to Michael. Peter is in his mid-sixties, and sees monsters. He thinks that the Monsters he sees are real, however.

**Rose:** Daughter of Peter, mother of Michael. She cares for Peter, but wants to get him help.

*A kitchen is arranged centerstage. Next to it is a dining room. A man sits at the table in the dining room reading a paper. In the kitchen a woman is making something in a pot. The man (Peter) is hunched and appears tired. The woman (Rose) appears tense in her posture.*

**Rose:** Michael's friend is over today.

**Peter:** (*Absentmindedly*) How old is your son?

Rose: *(In irritation that Peter doesn't know Michael's age)* Michael is nine, and his friend is ten.

Peter: Remind me to tell her the rules later.

Rose: *(She pauses before speaking)* I don't think that she'll stay long enough for that.

Peter: Okay, but the next time that she is here, I will.

Rose: Sure.

Peter: And you'll remind me to tell her the rules.

Rose: Yes. *(She brings a cup into the dining room, and sets it down while speaking)* And here you go. Do want sugar?

Peter: I know what you're doing.

Rose: What?

Peter: You're buttering me up. You are treating me like a prince this morning so that I'll accept your apology.

Rose: Apology? For... *(An understanding look dawns over Rose's face)* For Monday night? You want me to apologize for what happened Monday night!

Peter: Yes. You treated me like I was the one ruining this house. I'm protecting it!

Rose: Do you understand what will happen if you do that again?

Peter: If I save your life!

Rose: If you fire your shotgun in the house! If you shoot up the walls!

Peter: You mean if I kill a horror hell-bent on killing us!

Rose: The police will come, and they will take you away, and maybe that will be better for you!

Peter: Rose! *(He has a wounded air to him)*

*Rose walks back into the kitchen, and begins to furiously stir what is in her pot.*

Rose: Did you get much sleep last night?

Peter: *(Putting down the newspaper)* Well no, actually. I had to stay up until three guarding the door.

Rose: *(Walking into the dining room)* Was it the monsters again?

Peter: (*Matter of factly*) Yes, actually. I saw one outside so I got my shotgun and guarded the door.

Rose: Dad, you really should get more sleep. Tomorrow, I'll guard the door.

Peter: But last time I checked on you at two and you were asleep! They usually start showing up at two!

Rose: Do you think you could maybe fend them off with a shovel or something? I don't want to have to explain to the police again why my shotgun "fired itself".

Peter: (*As if explaining something very simple to a child*) If the horrors get close enough so that I can use a shovel, we're all dead. Besides, that horror I shot last time was going for Michael.

Rose: Please don't use that word Dad. Please just call them monsters. Horrors scares Michael.

Peter: He needs to realize the threat! He needs to realize why his grandfather isn't sleeping! And if he gets scared, better scared and alive than calm and dead.

Rose: Dad!

*A pause ensues. Peter deliberately lifts up his newspaper. Rose nervously kneads her fingers on the table. She then turns and goes back to the kitchen and begins washing dishes in the sink. Suddenly, a young girl appears in the doorway of the kitchen. At her shoulder is a Michael, who is also young.*

Girl: Hi Michael's Dad.

*Peter whirls around in his seat, extremely on edge. He relaxes when he sees who it is. The seat makes a noise, and Rose rushes into the dining room, also relaxing when she sees who it is.*

Peter: (*He pauses a moment to catch his breath, than speaks in a voice for young children*) Hello. Are you Michael's friend? (*He leans in conspiratorially to the Girl*) I'm his grandfather.

Girl: Michael says that you have a Head Disease and that you see monsters and you don't sleep and you stay up all night with a shotgun and you shot it once.

Rose: Michael!

*Peter stands up threateningly and takes a step towards the children, who turn and run, giggling. Rose tries to take Peter's arm and sit him back down but he shrugs her off and takes a step away from her.*

Peter: What have you been telling Michael?

Rose: To not repeat what I say to anybody.



Peter: Rose! There's nothing wrong with my head. I do this to protect you!

Rose: *(In exasperation)* Dad! There is something... messed up in your head. The monsters, they, there not real! *(She finishes this pleading, begging Peter to believe her)*

Peter: The only reason you're here to complain about me is because I guard your bedroom every night.

Rose: I love you, Dad. but I need you to help me help you.

Peter: What do you mean?

Rose: I... I scheduled a doctor's appointment for today. It's a long drive so we have to go now.

Peter: For what? *(Rose looks at him in confusion)* Whats the Doctor visit for?

Rose: For... your head. *(She shrugs apologetically)*

Peter: The doctors isn't safe! I won't endanger you by going.

Rose: I won't leave you Dad, but I will help you.

Peter: What's that supposed to mean?

Rose: I'm not going to leave like mom, running-

Peter: *(Very angry)* Don't bring up your mother!

Rose: Please! *(Getting emotional)* We need to do this! What if... what if Michael has to go to the bathroom in the night and you...

Peter: And I what! Say It!

Rose: *(She buries her head in her hands, than lowers them and speaks tremulously, as if on the verge of tears)* Shoot him?

*Rose does begin crying, but in a constrained fashion as if she were trying with all her might not to. Peter gets up out of his chair, and goes to put an arm around Rose's shoulders. He adopts a tone that one would use if talking to a small child.*

Peter: You know what Rose. I'll go to this doctor. I'll even leave my shotgun in the car. Okay? We can even go get some ice cream.

Rose: Thank you. We'll go in ten minutes. Michael is going to be picked up by his friend's mom.

Peter: Alright. You should probably calm down before we get to the doctors.

Rose: Yes. *(She goes into the the kitchen, puts her head into her hands, and begins sobbing quietly)*

*Peter picks up his newspaper, then puts it down. He cocks his head as if hearing something, and his eyes fixate on the corner of the dining room. He gets out of his chair and pushes himself into the corner of the room.*

Peter: The horror is here! Stay in the kitchen Rose, I'll go to get my gun!

Rose: No! Dad! *(She runs into the dining room, but Peter races out a second before. Rose sighs and takes a phone out of her pocket. Dials something and holds it up to her ear)* Yes I would like to report someone who is mentally unstable. *(Pause)* Yes he has a gun, but he is not threatening me. He has... he is seeing things.

*Peter runs back into the dining room brandishing a shotgun. He fires into the corner, and Rose screams. Peter walks to where he fired and kneels, turning something invisible over with his hand. Rose edges towards him. Michael runs through the doorway, sobbing, and embraces Rose. Rose gently pries him and and shoos him back through the door, were his friend is peeking into the dining room.*

Rose: Dad, can I have the shotgun.

Peter: But what if another one comes?

Rose: I'll use it.

Peter: Why do you want it?

Rose: *(She takes a ragged breath before speaking)* The police are coming to, um, talk to you, about this.

Peter: No, they can't.

Rose: Dad, please...

Peter: They can't take me. Than who will protect you?

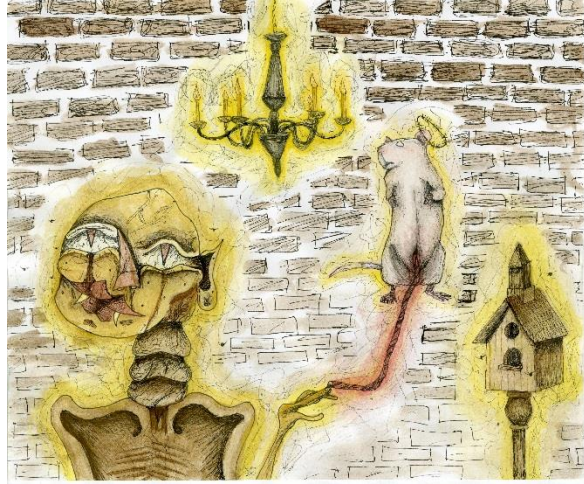
Rose: We'll protect ourselves. Please Dad.

Peter: Will you lock the doors?

Rose: Every night.

*A siren starts wailing in the background. Peter gets up, puts down the shotgun, and walks to the door. He turns back as if to say something, but doesn't.*

BO HOPWOOD



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