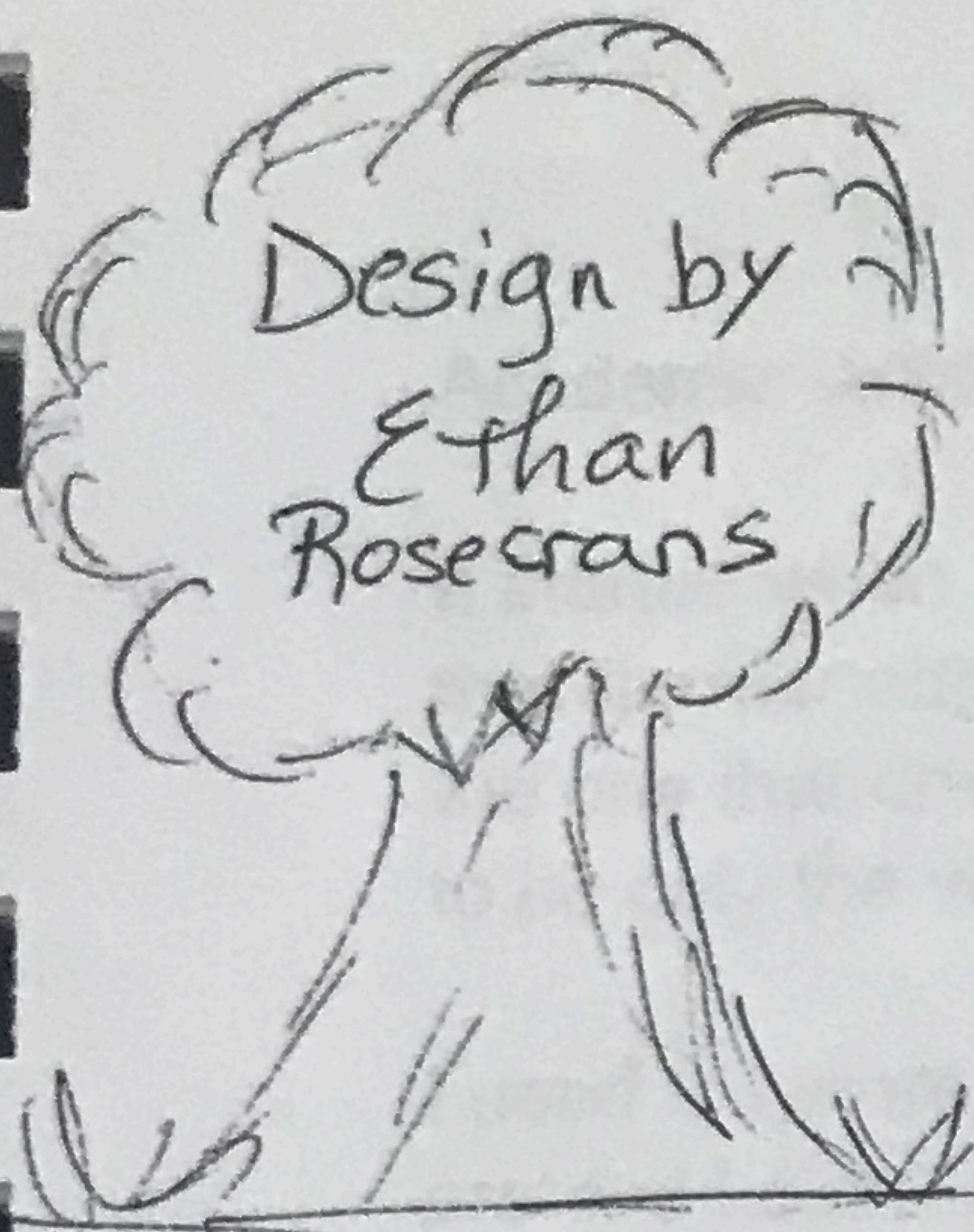


M.R.H.S



Cover: Lucy Bates



SAND. SCRIPT

Back Cover:

Naranjn Bold

CREATIVE WRITING
2022-2023
CLUB

Grace L

Jordan W

Naranjn B

Quill A

Leyla H

Ethan R

Via F

Savannah E

Vaughn

Eming

Lisa D

Jasper H

Talia T

Ashley S

Jade M

Avianng

Advisors:
Lisa Forte - Doyle

Academic Validation

It started when I was young,
that familiar edge,
the one that drives me
to be only the very best.

I used to ignore it,
pretend I didn't care,
that I was happy with marks and scores that could compare.

But it got to a point,
I couldn't turn a blind eye.
The competition seeped into my bones, my mind,
my life.

Today, it controls me,
lingers just out of sight,
tells me to cancel plans,
that I need time to study tonight.

My teachers, friends, family
all tell me; "congrats".
That I work myself so hard, to get these scores back.

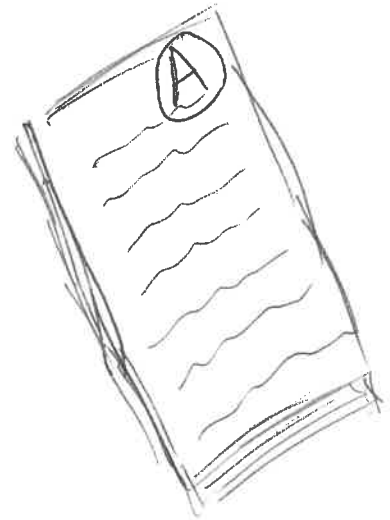
So why am I not happy with A's?
Why not with near-perfect scores?

Even the 100's, the extra points, and praiseful report cards
don't leave me aglow.

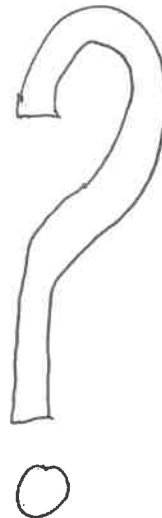
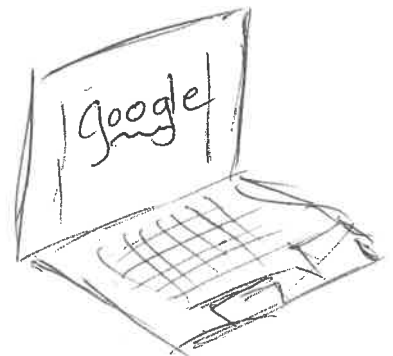
For every question wrong, and point deducted
feels like a wound in my chest.

Why? Well, I just don't know.

Ashley Smith



ASPEN



In Theory

Toss a stone into the air and then just wait until it falls,

Split a moment into minutes- bounce a sentence off the walls,

Take a picture in your mind of all the books in all the halls!

Better polish up your mind or I'm afraid it's gonna rust,

I feel like Britain in the six-teens cause I never see the dusk!

No, never?

No! Never!

I try to learn my lesson because time is such a treasure,

I'm so far under the sea that I get crushed by all the pressure,

Maybe a whale- maybe a flea, but never higher- never lesser,

Walk a mile in my shoes but every inch you gotta measure!

Why be weeping rain when just a thought can change the weather?

Why have such dark nights when all the stars can shine forever?

You can plague my mind with hatred but my words will make me better,

Went to college with the knowledge of each and every letter,

Took a class on rhyme and reason- now I'm teachin' the professor!

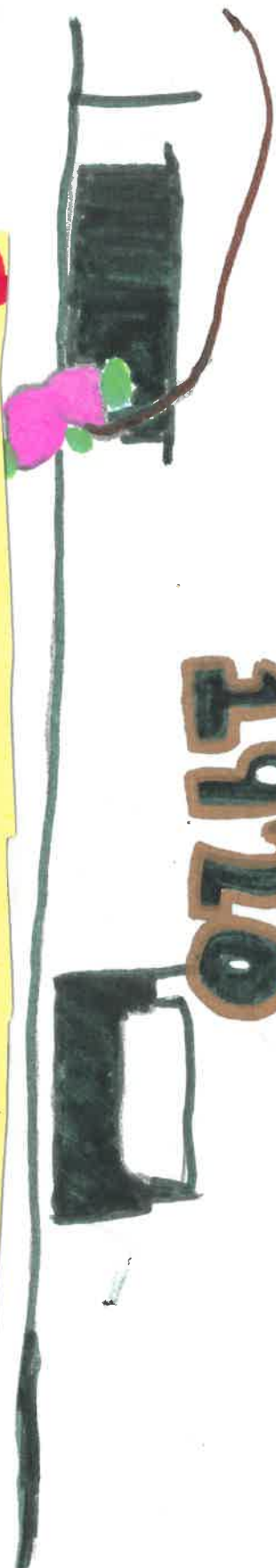
-Jude McMahon



Paris, France

1920

SARA ROZA



37

SHAKESPEARE AND COMPANY



Shakespeare and Company
bookstore

Between This World and the Next

Opening the window, I climb through; out and onto the roof
I hold onto the drainpipe, planting the outsoles of my Vans on either side
Ivy is beginning to grow; deleterious, even though it is beautiful
Moss hugs the grimy shingles...if you scratch the side of the house, there would be dirt and crumbling bits of wood under your fingernails...
I jump, I am falling
Landing soundlessly in the lifeless flowerbed...
Nobody knows where I am
I am evanescent
Jumping over the split rail fence
And running through the tall, rippling grass
There are snow flurries in the frigid air
I can see my breath like smoke
My sneakers leave a vestige on the yellowing pine needles collecting snow
In my ears I can faintly hear the surf breaking over the rocks of the bay as I run through the pine and cedar tree forest; towering high, high, above me
Already, in my mind's eye I can picture the frothy foam; the mermaids' souls washed ashore, expurgating the wrongdoings of the world... forgiving me...
I overlook the bay
Usually it is covered in smog from the city just beyond the coastline
But today I can make out the sanguine sun turning to a golden-rod yellow
My sneakers rest in the tired gravel of the bluff
Although it is fragile, it supports my weight, holding me up
I look down and out over the precipitous drop
Shrubs lace the steep slope leading a path
Their roots buried beneath the dirt and stones
Just like my sneakers, resting under the bluff's tired gravel
Swallows dip and glide in the sky, skimming the surface of the water
I am flying with them
I **am** one of them...
Nobody knows where I am
I am evanescent
I am rocking back and forth...between this world and the next

~grace elizabeth
Jan. 28, 2023

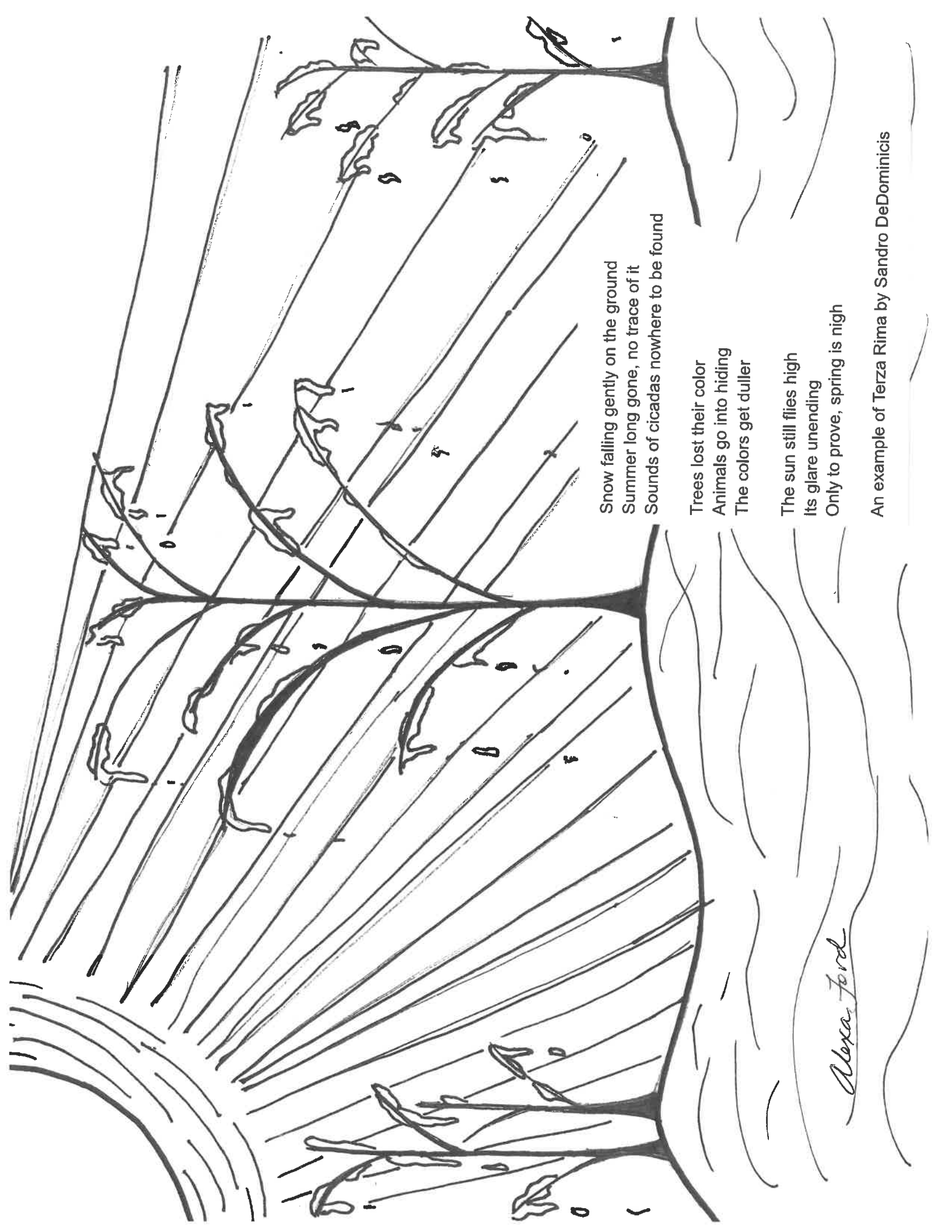
Leaving

I've never experienced heartbreak.
At least one that's hurt so bad.
But here I am.
Trying to hold onto this drug you've attached me to.
Trying to not let go of you.
I'm clingy, I understand.
But life without you is something I can't stand.
I feel like I'm holding on too tight.
I'm not ready to leave.
Like a baby bird being forced to leave the tree it's known
To learn to fly on its own.
But I'm not ready to be alone.
The thought of you and me together is better than the thought of home.
Because *you* are my home.
But I know you're gone and everytime I walk the path we used to walk on
I'm reminded of what I loved and lost.
I'm reminded of what used to be mine and of something I can't have anymore.
The memories hurt, and so do you.
I regret doing everything I've done with you.
But I don't.
I just say that I do, because being angry at you is better than the thoughts I've had.
Knowing what I've loved so badly has finally gone at last.

They say if you love something to let it go.
And if it comes back, it's yours, but if it doesn't, it never was at all.
So here I am.
Trying to let you go.
But still hanging onto the idea that you'll be back.
But even though I know
That you're the one holding back.
And even though I know,
You're the one pushing me away,
I still really want to stay.

-Savannah Eldredge





Snow falling gently on the ground
Summer long gone, no trace of it
Sounds of cicadas nowhere to be found

Trees lost their color
Animals go into hiding
The colors get duller

The sun still flies high
Its glare unending
Only to prove, spring is nigh

Alexa Ford

An example of Terza Rima by Sandro DeDominicis

The Last Ring of Hope

The explosion of colors flies through the sky
Each person watching as unique as the fireworks
Any clouds in the sky get lost
Amongst all the color
The sound is so bold that it will ring
The New Year is set in with hope

Except the bundle of hope
Flies away in the sky
The man has lost the ring
Everything else continues as usual, with fireworks
Still going off in every color
The man flees the area to search for the shiny silver color that is lost

He must alert others to search for the ring that is lost
Drifting away is strength, passion, and hope
A grey wave crashes over, sucking away all the color
Once filled with light is now a dull sky
The sadness becomes internal fireworks
Then all of a sudden, his phone begins to ring

The wake-up call of the ring
Is his girlfriend, he can't tell her about the treasure that is lost
Once he picks up, he can hear an echo of the fireworks
You can hear in his voice the loss of hope
The way he feels is entirely different than the joyful sky
He looks out and can see her coat, and its bright Barbie pink color

Once he hangs up, a flash of silver shimmers; the ring's color
It's too good to be true; he sees the blue velvet color of the box of the ring
Just as the joy inside him sparks, the fireworks dull out in the sky
Could it really be the lost
Ring that empowers so much hope

The second that he grabbed hold of the ring, there was a strand of fireworks

Overjoyed with excitement, his mind feels like fireworks
Now he must find the neon pink color
Everyone is chaotically leaving now that the show is over, and finding her has little hope
But there were oceans full of less hope of finding the ring
He will find her soon; she won't be forever lost
As soon as he sees her, he runs over there quicker than a rainbow lasts in the sky

When she said yes, the sky shined a little brighter, and his body was shaking like fireworks
No longer a ship lost at sea; now his gloomy gray world has been filled with color
The way the ring sparkles on her hand brings hope

quilts

bitter bleak shadows dance tonight
their motions quick and slow in time
with bleary fearful limbs
from down the hall some light spills in
consoled by quilts, begin to nod

ambivalent shadows dance in light
their halting limbs contort in time
with nothing but their own accord
from down the hall some light spills in
consoled by quilts, a shelter flawed

Quill Adamsons



James Macbrat

Anger, the black snake

anger, the black snake

It is only human nature,

over the angry pool of blood and circles

burning back or a flaming sword, an apparition

without human semblance or significance. The

of Hampstead Heath. Soon my own anger was

explained and done with, but curiosity remained. How

of the anger that had been there was always an element

heat took many forms: it showed itself in satire, in

of the anger that had been there was always an element

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of the anger that had been there was always an element

Talia Tambolles³² Perez

What is Love?

It's everywhere,
Visible to the magnanimous and hidden from the blind.
It weaves its way past the vines that embrace old concrete cracks,
Through the waves of water that caress the shore in delicate laps,
Alongside the shadows that tiptoe to accompany their sunlit partners.
It's contagious,
seeping from a summer smile to defrost a sullen face.
It mends a bandaged heart so it pumps with benignity,
thunders in spirit with a vital storm,
and its raindrops fall to help the wilting rose flourish again.
It's a disease that is immune to immunity,
accepted by the sociable woman
yet still touched by the man who lingers in solitude,
for what is benevolence if it can't spread like a tidal wave?
What is love if its spark can't dwell on the wick of a heartstring?

Emily Gray



George Bailey, I'll love you till the day I die.
Since the day I whispered in your bad ear,
Sitting high on the stool, watching you work,
I knew you were the one for me.

The glorious night we reconnected,
In the old historic high school gym.
From dancing all night to singing down the sidewalks.
You were the one for me.

Reminiscing on the night you brought me to the run-down house,
Throwing stones and wishing on a dream.
That one day would turn into our beautiful loving future.
You were the one for me.

Getting married and sharing the love with our children,
My love for you only grew.
With the bad times, come the good times, above all,
We sure do have a wonderful life,
Where you are the one for me.

Elizabeth Bruce

Bobbi Braz on Bass Guitar

Likes jazz, *Hamilton*,
and the music from *Guardians of the Galaxy*
Detests k-pop, techno, DJs,
and everything they stand for

Loves Marvel and Star Wars
Hates the Percy Jackson movies
and other bad film adaptations

Likes playing bass,
being in band,
being in theatre,
And belonging

Hasn't found her people
Scratch that, she has found her people
Is teased
Is made fun of
And doesn't fit
Scratch that, she knows where she fits in now
Doesn't know very much, in the big scheme of things
Okay, that's probably true.

Has a love/hate relationship with Google,
the internet,
And autocorrect

Draws fanart
Would write fanfics
LOVES shipping
Don't you dare
insult shipping in her presence
Is a fangirl

Unhealthy obsession with axolotls,
cowbell, saxophone,
and LEGOs
Is a nerd

Is still figuring out who she is
But that's OK
And hates being asked about her sexuality
Because she doesn't know yet
and that's ok.

Brothers • By Jason Elhilow

Polar opposites, total contrasts;
Nothing about us is the same.
Siblings are like this, we are like this,
No matter who we became.

He likes pizza.

I don't.

He loves rock.

I prefer pop.

On every subject you could name,
We differ.

No matter the destination,
We always go in different directions.

But is this bad?

Which one is right?

Does speaking your mind excuse poor language?
Should curating my responses stop me from being honest?

These questions linger deeply,
The contradictions are clear.
Yet when we actually work together,
Something happens, something truly dear.

The power of teamwork,
The power of siblings, of brothers.
Our distinctions build on one another,
Knowing we could never be without each other.

Mercury
by Jordan MacRoberts

Closest to the Sun,
Mercury spins
No stormy weather,
Or freakishly strong winds

Spinning like a merry-go-round,
Its surface warm and gray
1,408 hours on Earth,
Worth a single Mercury day

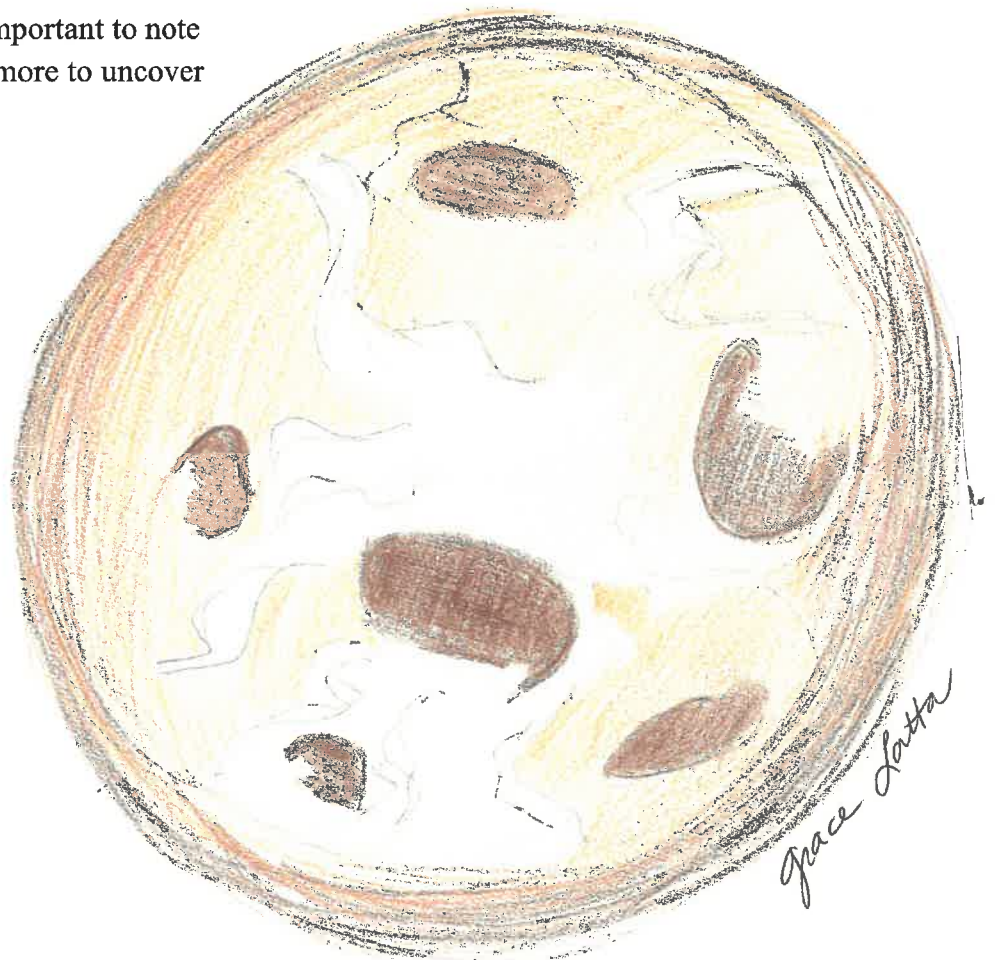
Mercury is shrinking
Nine miles smaller than 4 billion years ago
But with how small Mercury is
There are only 3,032 miles left to go

Named after the Romans' fastest God,
Mercury moves quicker than all others
long days and short years are important to note
But Mercury still leaves much more to uncover

What Nowness Feels Like

Cold wood on my asscheeks
Fingernails tapping on keyboard
Sounds of shoes hitting the linoleum
Lights.
Laughter of friends
Incessant laughing
Beautiful smiles
Beautiful spirits.
Noticing my own breath
Realizing that my heart still beats
Hoping that life can be this simple for a long time.
Oscillating between the past and the future
And bringing my mind back again to the nowness
Water that I take for granted
A warm hum in my stomach
My body knowing that it is hungry
My mind knowing that it is active
My soul knows that it wants to expand.
Satiated.

Edrian Wright



A sand flea lives here? A sand flea lives in this little sand heap?

No, no, no, *this* sand flea doesn't live in any sand heap; *this* sand flea lives in *this* sand castle.

Really, a sand castle, you say? It sounds like a big hassle.

Yes, yes, a sand castle I say, and really it's not much of a hassle for Mr. Sphea. You could even think of it as more of.. a palace! Especially when he takes out his special chalice; his special chalice only comes out during the Christmas season.

Why does a sand.. flea.. have a special chalice?

Well, I mean, who doesn't have a special chalice? And remember it's not any special chalice, it's his Christmas season chalice. He uses it when he's feeling adventurous. Once he takes out his special chalice, he suddenly gets the urge to wonder about, just like Alice. Don't even get me started on the adventures of Mr. Sphea.

Wait, but I wanna know about the adventures of Mr. Sphea.

Really? Then follow me!

Just look around, of course there are no trees; we stand on a huge pile of sand, which makes up the beach! If we even try to think about all of the things Mr. Sphea has accomplished, our brains would explode, as if they were demolished. But here I am about to tell you what he's done, I guess if it's just some of what he's done, your brain should stay as one. Let us start off by simply looking around, you can see what he's done with the place, it's rather profound. Though there isn't much of one, check out the backyard! It might be hard, but just look around; do you see anything unusual, so much so that you might be bamboozled? Just behind this palace, what do we have for us? Just a few fossils, and they belonged to men of great status!

Fossils? What kind of fossils? Like, fish fossils, you know, since we're on a beach?

No silly! They're dinosaur fossils!

That's, like, colossal!

Ha ha! I knew you'd be surprised, but let's look somewhere else, and avert our eyes. Don't you see his incredible decor? It's red and green, like the wreaths you hang on your door!

Ring! Ring!

Just a moment I'm getting a call! Oh dear, oh dear I can't continue this after all! I'm in a rush you see, but just remember if anyone asks you, 'Who exactly could this crazy flea be?', I want you to reply, 'Well of course you know who, it has to be Sphea!'

By Katie Towns

The Box

I'm stuck in a box.
A clear, glass box.
Everyone can see me.
And I can see them.
But I can't go anywhere.
I can't talk to them.
I can't move.
This box is restricting me.
I can't do the things I want to.
I can't say what I want to say.
Only those closest to me can come in.
Come in and leave.
But sometimes they can't.
I'm trapped in the box, alone.
With my anxiety.

-Savannah Eldredge



Grasping The Mind

Perhaps to think, as I had been thinking these two days, of one sex as distinct from the other is an effort. It interferes with the unity of the mind. Now that effort had ceased and that unity had been restored by seeing two people come together and get into a taxi-cab. The mind is certainly a very mysterious organ. I reflected, drawing my head in from the window, about which nothing whatever is known, though we depend upon it so completely. Why do I feel that there are severances and oppositions in the mind, as there are strains from obvious causes on the body? What does one mean by "the unity of the mind." I pondered, for clearly the mind has so great a power of concentrating at any point at any moment that it seems to have no single state of being. It can separate itself from the people in the street, for example, and think of itself as apart from them, at an upper window looking down on them. Or it can think with other people spontaneously, as, for instance, in a crowd waiting to hear some piece of news read out. It can think back through its fathers or through its mothers, as I have said that a woman writing thinks back through her mothers. Again if one is a woman one is often surprised by a sudden splitting off of consciousness, say in walking down Whitehall, when from being the natural inheritor of that civilisation, she becomes, on the contrary, outside of it, alien and critical. Clearly the mind is always altering its focus, and bringing the world into different perspectives. But some of these states of mind seem, even if adopted spontaneously, to be less comfortable than others. In order to keep oneself continuing in them one is unconsciously holding something back, and gradually the repression becomes an effort. But there may be some state of mind in which one could continue without effort because nothing is required to be held back. And this perhaps, I thought, coming in from the window, is one of them. For certainly when I saw the couple get into the taxi-cab the mind felt as if,

There's this boy/There's this girl

There's this boy.
A lot of people know him.
But don't really **know** him.
Y'know?
Like they see him pass by, and they know his name and they know his face, but they don't **know** him.
I **know** him.
At least, from what he has told me.
And I'll admit, I don't **know** everything.
But I **know** enough.
I **know** how much **effort** he puts into everything, how he puts others first, and doesn't worry about **himself enough**.
I **know** him personally, and I **love** him.
But I don't love how he doesn't show his **emotions enough** like any **living** being should.
How he feels like he's a **burden** when he tells others his **problems**.
And it's **not his fault**.
But **you** and I have **problems**, don't we?
We **all** do, no matter whether we want to **admit** it or **not**.
So none of us should be **ashamed**, right?
But we **are**, aren't we?

There's this girl.
A lot of people know her.
But don't really **know** her.
Y'know?
Like they see her pass by, and they know her name and they know her face, but they don't **know** her.
I **know** her.
At least, from what she has told me.
And I'll admit, I don't **know** everything.
But I **know** enough.
I **know** how much she **cares** about everyone and everything, but yet doesn't **care** about **herself enough**.
I **know** her personally, and I **love** her.
But I don't love how she feels like she **isn't good enough**, how she **tries** and **tries** but she still feels like she hasn't accomplished **anything**.
Yet it's **not her fault**.
But a **lot** of people feel like they **aren't good enough**.
A **lot** of people **don't** seek **help**.
Why?
A **lot** of people **feel** like **this**.
It's **common**.
So **why** don't we get **help**?

It's because we **feel ashamed**, isn't it?

Anonymous

Butterflies

*When the sun crawls out from behind the earth's horizon
It fills you with a feeling of warmth
Yet this is ill compared to the presence of another
The intoxicating tenderness of a person you admire
A person you adore
A person you would die for
These are the feelings that arise
When you first meet eyes
The look you strive for and the person you're alive for
This is the feeling of love
Starting with a flying dove
Soaring into the sky as the symbol of love*

Blake Noonan

The 5 Senses of Peace

Via Ferer

I breathe in and out.
5 things I can see.
Days without war.
People coming together for peace.
The earth cooling instead of heating.
A place with less combat.
There are hugs and no hits.
4 things I can feel.
Love coming down like sun rays.
The warmth of kindness, smothering me.
Forgiveness all around.
The touch of someone taking my hand.
3 things I can hear.
A silence when the world stops screaming.
Laughter instead of tears.
Words of love replace words of hate.
2 things I can smell.
The scent of poppies cover the sulfur.
Apple pie floods the air.
1 thing I can taste.
Fresh air while running free.

Lucy in the Basement with a Mouse

I see Lucy
Adventurous and free
She caught a mouse
And brought her gift to me

Ethan Rosecrans and Via Ferer

Via
Ferer

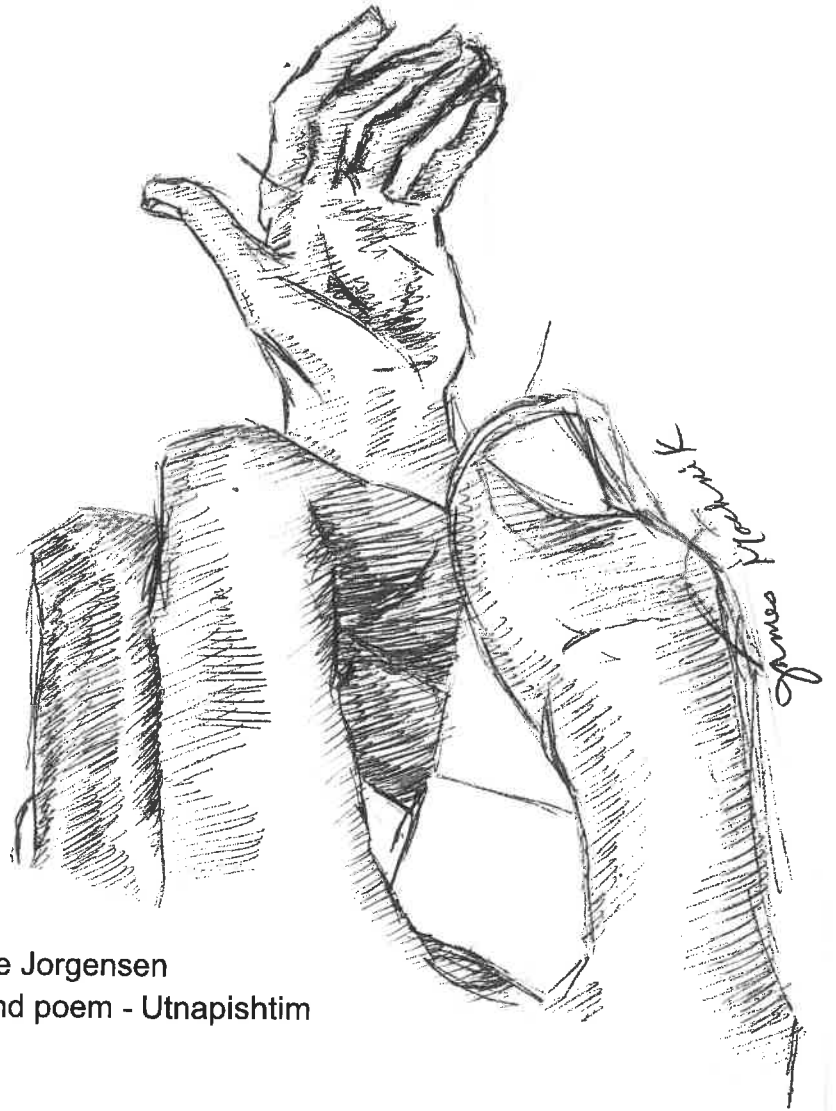
SpongeBob
Square skirt



Utnapishtim

The one who survived the flood
Who knew the secret
Allowed to go beyond
And built a ship
And knew about death itself
And how to save a life
Light is borrowed from the blind
And through loss learned
Love is wrung from our heart
And is the only way to eternal life
Compassion burns
Forever
Among dead flowers and farewells
Compassion is our god's pure act
And an everlasting gift.

Shelby Mainini



Hope Jorgensen
Found poem - Utnapishtim

We are spoiled, Immortality is an act of loneliness,
Unbearably living with sinners and dying flowers.
You know the pain of grief as do I.
Everlasting friendship is a precious seed, watered by compassion
When roots could not grow, we must bring back life
You plead to the Gods to relieve your pain.
Contemplate the tiredness and loss this excursion may bring,
Only then will you be granted the peace you come to find.
Why do you bury yourself with cruelty?
Relieve yourself and look deeply.
Look deeply for the plant.
All grief will be forgotten, and you will find light.
Pricks are bitter but life is a blessing

My Brother

I am guilty.

October 1st, 2021 was the day my brother died.

Though I feel like a piece of me died too.

It was a beautiful calm day in the fall.

That was until late afternoon when we received a call,

Mom and I at the Stop & Shop checkout line,

In the end, you were checking out too.

The cart rolled away, the phone dropped to the ground, and mom fell in shock and pain.

I was confused and lost. Stuck in disbelief until I heard the words for myself.

I am guilty of not saying goodbye.

The world went quiet. Everything was dark.

You left such a huge mark.

Who's going to teach me how to parallel park?

I am guilty of missing you.

You were 21 when you left,

The young age of freedom.

You had so much life ahead,

But now you are dead.

I am guilty of wishing you were still alive.

Playing video games and listening to music,

Memories of you keep me going.

I know deep down that you are now glowing.

This life without you is still so new,

I am guilty of feeling like I might forget you

Going to school and traveling around,

Humans have no certain time on this ground.

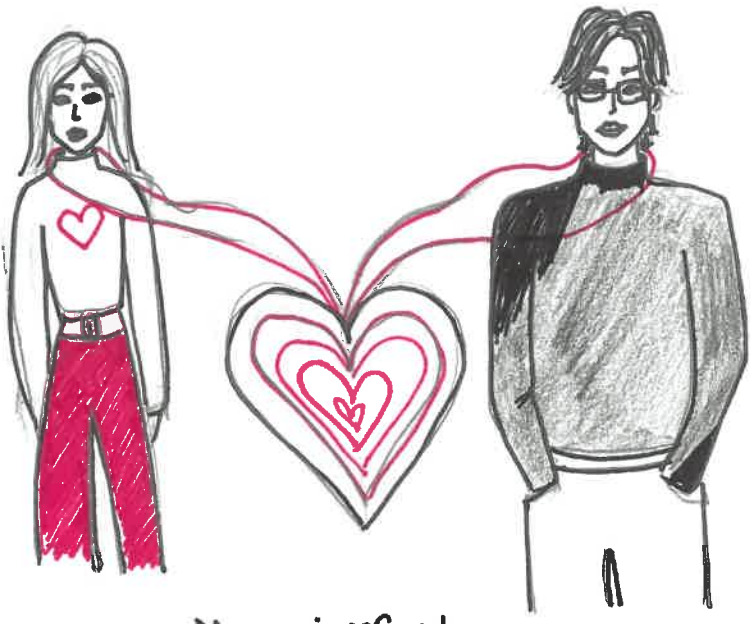
I am guilty of taking life for granted

It's almost been a year since you left,

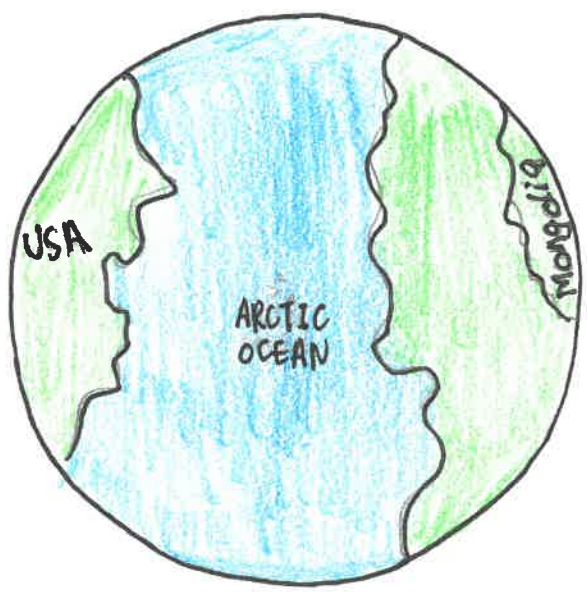
Though time has no meaning when grieving.

I am guilty of not telling you how much I love you.

Elizabeth Bruce



Narany♥Sukhe



417 days together

Me before you

Чамтай учирхаас өмнө

1. I did not like the winter
2. Before I met you
3. Now you are the one
4. Who keeps me warm in the winter
5. Who holds my heart out of the cold
6. I did not like the summer
7. Before I met you
8. Now you are the one
9. Who shields me from the scorching sun

10. Хав харанхуй сэтгэлийг минь гэрэлтүүлэгч
11. Сэтгэлийн минь нар минь
12. Чи минь хол байгаа хэдий ч
13. Бодолдоо үргэлж үгүйлэн санаж байдаг юм шүү
14. Зуун зуунд үргэлжлэн урсах бидний хайр
15. Холын хол орших ч
16. Зүрх сэтгэлдээ
17. Үргэлж хамтдаа

For my beloved ones

Naranjn Bold

1/29/23

South Chatham, MA, USA

Me before you

Translation for the Mongolian part.

The brightest light of my dark life
The sun of my heart
My thought of the day,
Dream of the night
Forever with my love by my heart,
Our heavenly love will exist for thousands of years.

Flowers for you

A dried rose
A shadow of life
Of what it once was

It was a seedling
then it grew
Changed
Became

It was a bush
Thriving
With leaves of green
And buds peeking through

The buds
Still shy
Insecure
But they grew and learned

They become flowers
A deep red
Silky smooth
Epitomizing beauty

Then it was chosen
Chosen to serve another purpose
Besides just being beautiful
To send a message and become a reminder

A message of love,
Of care
A reminder of unity
Of togetherness

Then the color slowly faded
Became a different red
That silky smooth feeling
Gave in to the lack of water

It dried
And became brittle
But it still serves a purpose to this day
A message, and a reminder

Of love
Of care
Of unity
Of togetherness
-Anonymous

My father's sister died
I didn't feel that sad
I think I was just shocked
Like a soft punch to the gut

It was unexpected
I suppose I was upset
But not in the way
In which someone would notice.

I didn't even cry,
Just went back to my TV show
You might think that makes me
Cold-blooded, emotionless.

In truth I think I was
Just shocked and lost for words
I'd never had this happen
So I didn't know how to act.

Am I supposed to cry?
Am I supposed to wail?
What is expected of me?
Am I supposed to grieve?

I hadn't gone through this before
I didn't know how to feel
I just wanted to go back
To my TV show.

Perhaps I wanted to
Avoid talking about it
Perhaps I just didn't
Know what to say.

What is expected
Of a person who has learned
That their loved one had died
Are they supposed to mourn?

One a year it comes back up
My father and grandfolks seem sad
I try to avoid talking about it
Of course I miss her,

I just don't know how to grieve.

Bobbi Braz



Sandscript Meeting Pass-Around Story #1

A waffle sits on the counter. It is covered in whipped cream and strawberries. It's calling my name, "Lisa, Lisa! Come eat me! I'm delicious!" I was on a new diet and needed to resist this waffle. He was really beautiful, though! I began to drool and... BOOM! No more waffle. This began a three-year journey to consume all waffles that I came across. My dignity was long forgotten as I feasted greedily on waffles. Well, gluttony **was** a sin, always my favorite sin. The journey was not one of haste. I made my way through the works of waffle toppings, too. This morning, a smile grew across my face as I cherished every moment and savored every bite of my delicious breakfast. All of a sudden, the waffle grew legs and started running away! I chased after it, determined to sink my teeth into my mouth watering meal. Eventually I gave up. I finished my wonderful pancakes and ate the syrup bottle. YES, the bottle.

THE END

Sandscript Meeting Pass-Around Story #2

I go into my teacher's cabinet. There sitting on the shelf is a box of graham crackers and two tubs of frosting. My favorite snack! The food that sparks joy in my body, preparing me for my draining day-to-day life! The almighty grahamwich! Tears of joy spring into my eyes and I fight the urge to fling myself at such a treat. Grasping a plastic knife, I watch through the ocean in my eyes as I spread the frosting onto a graham cracker. My mouth waters just gazing upon the delicacy my hands are blessed with holding. With each bite of this revolutionary snack, I gain more and more power. After consuming a box of graham crackers and two tubs of frosting, there is no stopping me from my full potential. Wings sprout from my back, my feet turn into paws, and I begin howling for my pack. It's time I reunite with my true kind. It doesn't take long for them to find me. I feel at home with them. I have finally found my place. Now I can eat my favorite snack every day for the rest of my life with my pack of grahamwich wolves.

Declan

Goodbye

I ran through the woods
I could hear the ocean
Then I stopped and stood

I looked out at the surrounding beach
Seagulls flew around me
Their feathers so white, they seemed to be bleached

I stared at the pale sky
I felt light inside, I felt free
I realized I didn't want to say goodbye

Declan is so very loud
Everywhere can his voice be heard
You could hear him from a cloud

Declan is mad cute
He always looks so good
You should see him in a suit

Declan's last name is Russell
But don't let that frighten you
He doesn't have any muscle

Nate Andreasson

Grace Latta

Snails

Snails leave gooey trails
Slowly slipping across leaves
I like to collect them in my water pail

Tiny swirly shells
Different neutral tones
From their underside they expel gels

Icky little creatures
Many people don't enjoy
But I like their features

Hope Jorgensen

Terza
Rima
poems

you better have brushed
you must follow this one simple
rule. Stay right
under me, fool
Come on over
glorious berries
don't miss a day



any roof, crunching in the snow his boots shine as if they glow. When Santa flies away, I can hear Santa's boots stomping on my roof, crunching in the snow his boots shine as if they glow. When Santa flies away, I can hear Santa's boots stomping on my roof, crunching in the snow his boots shine as if they glow.

Katie Towns

WINGS

Someday I will fly
Someday these wings of mine will be free
And I will be who I was always meant to be

~grace elizabeth
April 7, 2023



Forgotten Dreams

What happened to our
youthful daydreams,
Where princesses and fairies
and knights and dragons
joined us in our adventures
The days that magic ran freely and
imagination came without a cost

Tian Jamieson

Jamdung-Pon e Beach

Jamaica Jamaica- the land I love.
The land of wood and water,
A place that's a gift from above,
The only country that makes me just a little calmer.

The sun, the palm trees, and my family
The steady breeze in Mandeville.
Paradise with a little calamity.
"Hey, Grandma! Uncle put jerk chicken pon di grill!"

There's no place like Jamaica,
My home away from home.
Welcome to Jamdung-pon e beach mi goh chill lata.
The place where my heart will forever roam.

Britanya Bucknor



The Naughty Naarwhaal

**Nancy the Naarwhaal went out to the mall
She stole some lipgloss, getting caught was a close call
While swiftly swimming to make her way out
An employee behind her began to shout**

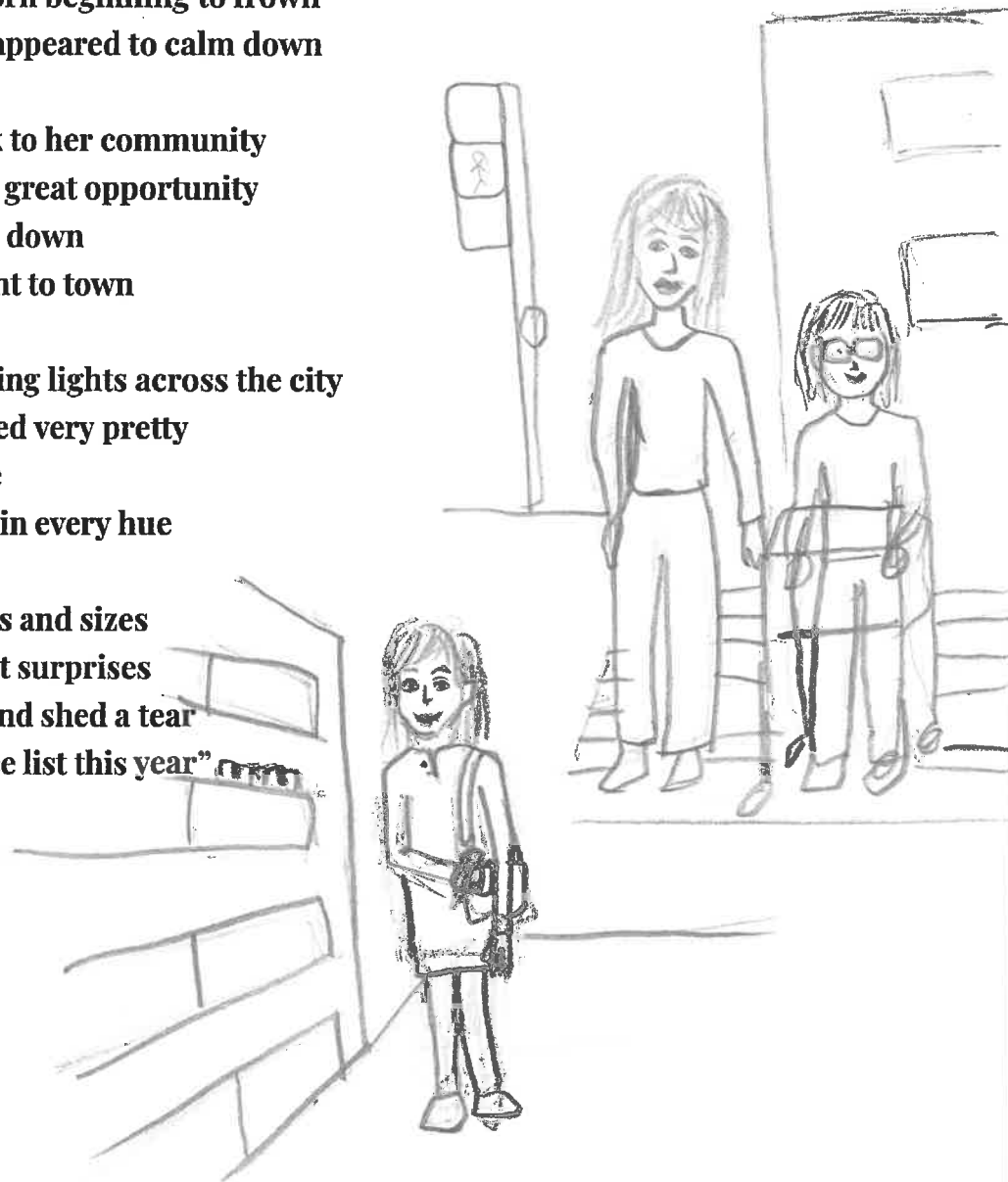
**They escorted Nancy and called her mother
Nancy's Christmas presents were confiscated one after another
She cried and cried, her horn beginning to frown
A few ideas arose and she appeared to calm down**

**Nancy decided to give back to her community
Doing something good is a great opportunity
An hour after the sun went down
Was when Nancy really went to town**

**The night was spent stringing lights across the city
She had to admit they looked very pretty
Red, green, white, and blue
Houses and trees twinkled in every hue**

**Marine friends of all shapes and sizes
Came out to see these sweet surprises
Nancy's mother came out and shed a tear
"I think you'll make the nice list this year"**

By Hope Jorgensen



Sestina -

A Beach Day

A beautiful day at the beach,
A kitten party,
A large picnic spread across the sand,
Food and drinks for all to share.
All of the cats are dressed in their shades and bathing suits,
A huge wave crashed on the shore, Splash!

A wild cat beach party,
Along the shore full of sand to share,
All the cats danced under the water in their Suits, splash!

Elizabeth Bruce

An ice cube is placed in the glasses of fruit punch, and splash!
A warm sunny day was spent with friends at the beach.
Two of the cats in matching pink bathing suits,
The music played loud at the party.
The cups of fruit punch were passed around to share.
The cats played in the warm sand.

Leaving beautiful, colorful warm sand,
The cats go into the ocean making a splash.
Two of them sitting on the duck raft to share,
As the day went on a large cat crowd filled the beach.
Jimmy Cat had arrived, the life of the party
All decked out in his floral swim Suit.

Thankfully no cat showed up in their birthday suit!
Rocks, shells, and sand.
A fish jumped out of the water to join the party.
Jimmy Cat dove down after the fish, splash
The cats sure do love the beach.
Kitty Soft Paws laid out towels to share.

She even left out sandwiches to share.
All across the shore were rainbow-colored suits
A flock of birds flew above the beach
Landing on the fresh sand
The cats came out of the water, splash
A cat and bird party!

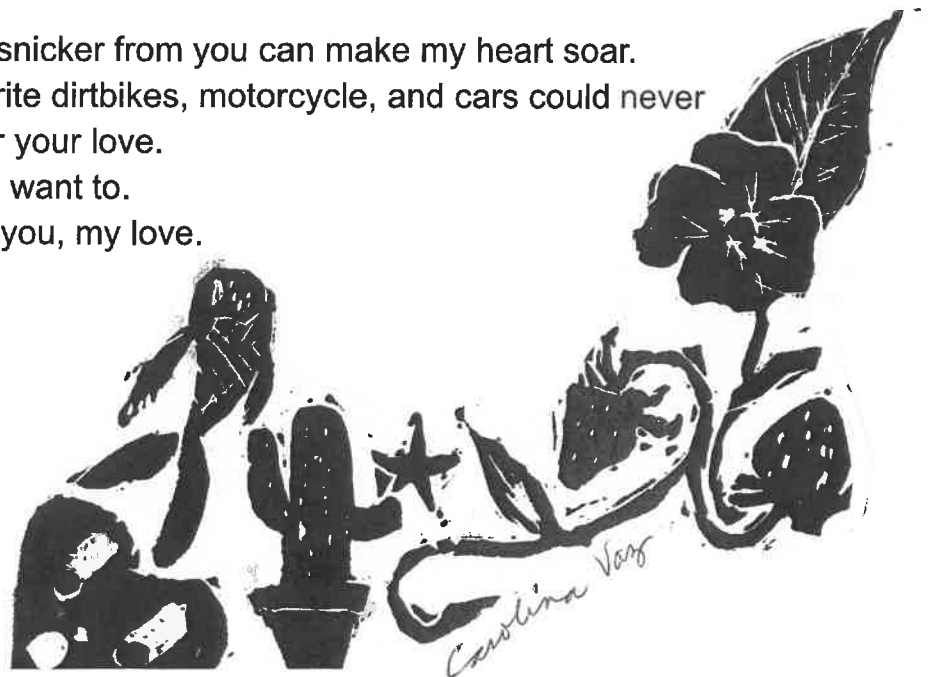
A fun cat Party.
Jimmy brought out his cookies to share,
Kitty Soft Paws throwing one down to the birds, Splash!
The cats lay in the sun, catching tan lines in their swim Suits.
Laying on the spread-out towels in the sand.
The sunset along the coast of the beach.



Picture Perfect

I'm over the moon for you, darling.
You don't have to worry about me not loving you.
I told you I'd love you forever, and that's what I shall do.
"Til death do us part."
I shall stay by your side, through thick and thin, through life or death.
I'll always be there for you.
I'd paint the sky for you, dear.
I'd paint it pinks, reds, blues, oranges, purples, even.
Purple.
Your favorite color.
I'll paint the oceans, sunrises, sunsets, the midday sun, the flowers.
I'd paint it all for you.
I'd paint every spot on the canvas of life, not missing a single speck, not one line
out of place.
Making it perfect.
I will make it perfect so your perfect hands, hair, eyes, knees, teeth, nose... so
every part of you will glow at how perfect it is.
But you'll never glow bright enough.
You'll only glow bright enough when you realize how perfectly amazing you are.
How your laugh brightens the room, how the small but noticeable twinkle in your
eyes could make me double over because of how much love I have for you.
It's unbearable, really.
It's funny, even.
How the smallest little smile or snicker from you can make my heart soar.
How even the roar of your favorite dirtbikes, motorcycle, and cars could never
compare to my heart roaring for your love.
But I can't stop, because I don't want to.
Because I'm over the moon for you, my love.

-Savannah Eldredge



Branches bare in winter, moss
frozen all
icy chills of wind bring snowflakes
floating on the breeze
the bird nest is empty now
holding only empty
it will hold chicks
home to bird nests in
spring and summer, and may be
fall
like stalactites
but ice
all ice and water
distinct light
funny like when
looking through
cold and thin as a twig; be careful it is
made of twigs
Rooted in the ground, surviving all the snowstorms, never swaying, reaching up to the sky
frosty
patches
of
lichen
could
scrape
off
easily
cold green lichen is all that
survives
icy chills dripping down
could do some damage
"you'll shoot your eye out"
one little bird, one little
chip in this branch, frosty
blowing through the
cold gray sky
ices will drip with water
in spring when
they start to melt +
clear



Bobbi Braz

CHILDREN OF THE LAKE

On silver summer days, when no clouds graced the sky and gold tinged the very air, a field at the center of a small town felt like heaven on earth. Nearly every child spent long days congregated at the field, participating in tag or hide and seek, or crowded around a boy with a book whose voice dripped with honey and watermelon juice. These were days to be fondly looked back on when one wanted to feel the magic they'd lost with age. The ticks which clung to the tall grass and the late-evening mosquitos weren't considered and once or twice a child would disappear for a week or two. Those children would be barely an afterthought until their unnoticed return. He or she would simply slip back to the group as if they'd never been gone.

But we aren't here to talk about the field. For, just a few miles away a lake had a much more interesting story to offer. You see, perfect places on perfect days are not without their flaws and the lake was the place where the flaws gathered. It was itself a magical place, where the water was so clear you could see right down to the rocky floor at the deepest points, and more often than not mist clung to the surface of the water on damp nights. A rainbow or a star would show on the still surface and old trees leaned over the edge of the shore to see their reflections. At a particular clearing on the furthest edge of the lake (every aspect of the town was judged by its relation to the field, the townspeople's crowning glory), gathered four or five outcasts. They had been shunned from the field for various reasons, a summer homer who hadn't earned entry over the winter months, a girl who cheated at duck duck goose, and a boy who had never quite recovered from his weeks of absence. There were others, they were too new to know though, or too stubborn to say why they weren't allowed in on the whimsy. They called themselves the Children of the Lake and they resented the Fielders.

On a particularly fine day, Goose, who'd gained the nickname for her fall from grace, decided it was time to swim. Half-finished food was strewn out on a blanket near the water, a picnic packed by the New Girl's mom, and a bit of crust clung to Goose's shorts when she stood. The Children of the Lake, who had tired of running home every time they decided to swim, had begun to store their swimwear in the hollow of a tree, and the kids all crowded around it to find whichever suit would fit them best (the Children of the Lake shared everything). Silently, Lone Star, who was named for the tick which had given him the allergy that sent him to the waterfront, flicked the squished-up crust from Goose's shorts. He'd skipped out on most of lunch on account of his allergies and he felt a tad faint, though he wouldn't admit it.

Lily had been sent to the Lake for her cowardice when the other children passed around a stolen bottle of brandy and she was eager to prove the Fielders wrong. She was thankful to be able to pass off the nickname as something cooler to the new kids, but the others knew it was short for Lily Liver. She was always the fastest to accept a dare and the first to try something she thought could be dangerous. In a pair of swimming trunks and a half top she was in the water

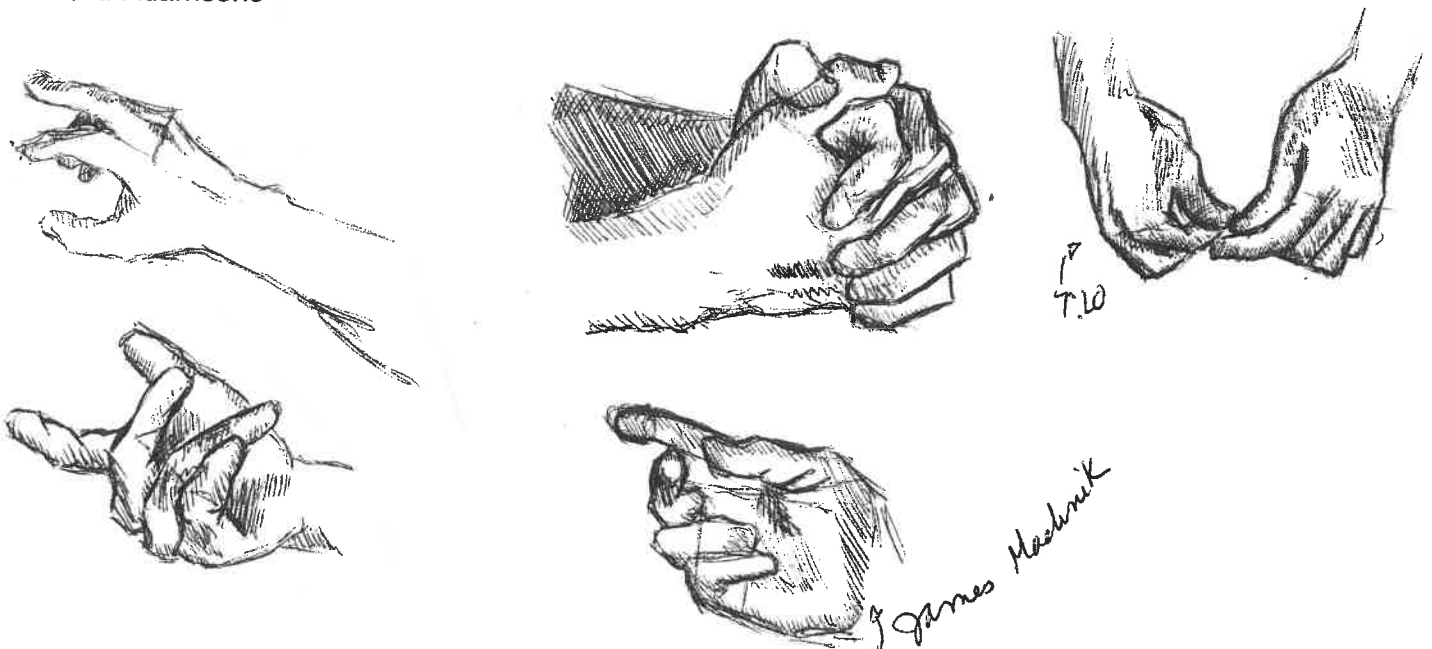
before the others. As the first, Lily got to choose what water game they'd play and excitedly she suggested the rock pile they'd started last night.

Slowly steeping in the crystal water, the children dove down deeper and deeper until their ears stopped popping, Lily always the one to show up a new record. Contraire, a short girl who refused to reveal why she left so was named for her contrarian attitude, had swum to the middle of the water and was determined to dive deeper than Lily. The Children of the Lake had all gathered around her to witness the esteemed feat. Contraire closed her eyes when she dove as, in all her Lake summers she'd never gotten over the sting of water in her eyes. She had just barely reached the bottom and could barely think over the pressure headache forming in her temple when she reached blindly for a rock. Instead, her hand clutched something soft and fleshy. She opened her eyes and tried to scream at the sight but only water entered her lungs, flooding air out of her and into the water.

She violently kicked at the depths, trying to get far far away from the hand protruding from the sand. When she had broken the surface and coughed all the water out of her lungs, she frantically described how she had held hands with a corpse. At the news, Lone Star, who had already felt ill, lost his grip on consciousness and began to sink. Instantly, the Children of the Lake jumped into action. They may have never admitted it, but they had a stronger bond than any Fielder could ever hope to feel and none of them were ready to let anything befall one of the others. The boy who had a summer house in town and who went by Posh, would have broken half of the Lake Children's records had they been timing him, but in his mission to get help, he hadn't the time. Tattle, the newest member of the group and the strongest swimmer dove down to stop Lone Star's descent.

The Children of the Lake had disbanded by the next summer, becoming Fielders by order of the adults in town. Even if they wanted to keep their titles as outcasts and Lakers, the events of the summer previous had prompted a new rule: nobody under fifteen was permitted at the lake without supervision. The death of two kids will do that.

Quill Adamsons



"Caelum Periculosum"
By Corinne Pina

The sky is beautiful.
At dawn, at dusk-
sunrise, sunset.
The moon,
stars
clouds.

What a sight to see (it is);
the eye of the storm.
The swirling, storming world can stop
for you and your warmth.

Lightning strikes.
(FLASH! BOOM)
The world goes light
then white,
then gone.
FLASH!
BOOM!

How can a sky that struck her down
have beauty
and love
and care?

A beautiful,
horrible,
dangerous sky.
But lightning struck; beware!

FLASH! BOOM!
An onlooker sees
the sky in all it's beauty.
The beauty of the lightning strike
that killed another so easily.



Killing, hurting,
lighting is
Oh, such a beautiful sight.
But beauty for one is the pain of another,
and as one prepares to die,
another loves the sky.



An Ode to the Stars

Your steely gaze
and pale bright glow
Dotted in the sky
With silent calm nobility
an all-seeing eye
I quiver and tremble
At your wisdom
and I succumb to your grace
Oh how I wish to join the stars
As my final resting place

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

#1

Yesterday

You
Me
The warm sun
Freezing cold water
Grains of sand
And rocks

The smell of the salty ocean
Crabs washed ashore
What more could I adore?

Shells
Broken and whole
We search for the pretty ones
Walking past the torn

The sky
So blue and clear
The cool breeze
Makes me feel no fear

All that is left of the beauty
Is yesterday

Yesterday's sand
Yesterday's shells
And my hair messed up by the breeze.

Anonymous

Still Arianna

Two-year-old me wouldn't remember being surrounded by adults,
Being told by doctors that I wasn't going to make it to a full-term

Five-year-old me would be so happy,
That the girl I sat next to on the first day of school is still my best friend,
But she wouldn't understand that we are attending colleges on opposite coasts

Six-year-old me would be confused,
About why I am not living the same life as Hannah Montana,
But she would love the colorful sparkly dresses that I wear for special occasions
And I want to protect her from society's loud standards around women's bodies

Nine-year-old me would love,
That I still listen to the same music; it was the soundtrack of my childhood,
And that those artists are still sharing their rhythms

Ten-year-old me would appreciate,
That Olive Garden is still my favorite restaurant,
And that I fought against society's standards and pressure,
So that I can still enjoy my favorite foods

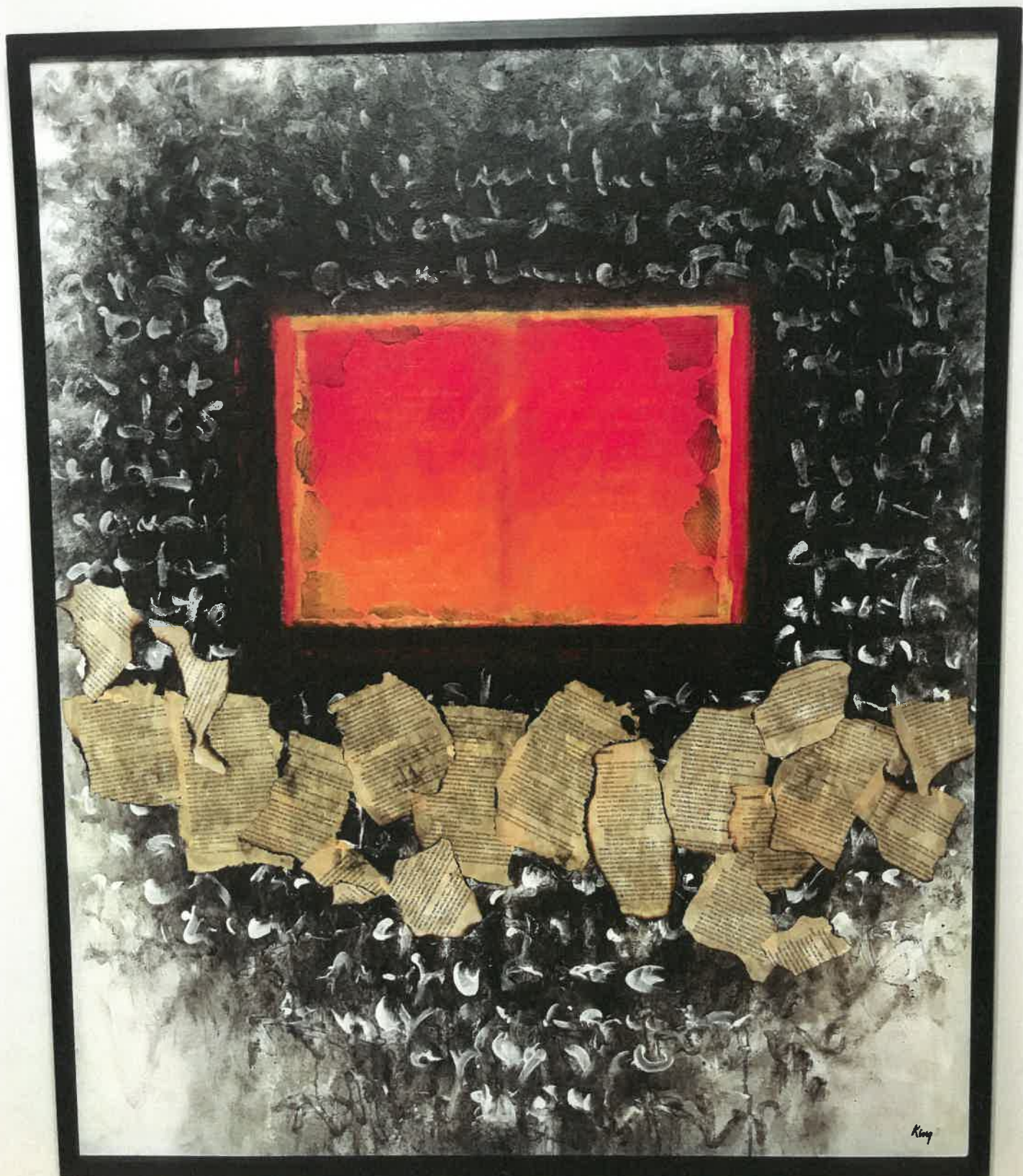
Twelve-year-old me would feel comfort,
Knowing that picking up a good book still can take me away from reality for a second,
And that the library is still one of my favorite places in my hometown

Fifteen-year-old me would be so proud,
That I am still here
And that I spent the last two years advocating for teen's mental health at my school

Seventeen-year-old me is still growing, healing, and learning
But she is so excited to see what the future brings

~Arianna Carchedi

Fahrenheit 451



King

Burn (inspired by the Fahrenheit 451 painting)

If they burn I'm burning with them

Every word erased is a world forgotten

Every page torn tears my a piece of my heart off with it

Every flicker of flame awakens the primitive desire to be FREE

The words are illegible like an ancient code riddled with confusion

I grasp for them, clinging onto the remains

Hot to the touch,

Hot with the cold rage of the oppressor and the oppressed

Too hot I can only bear to cling to the ash that rains down blanketing the world in
a smothering white

But

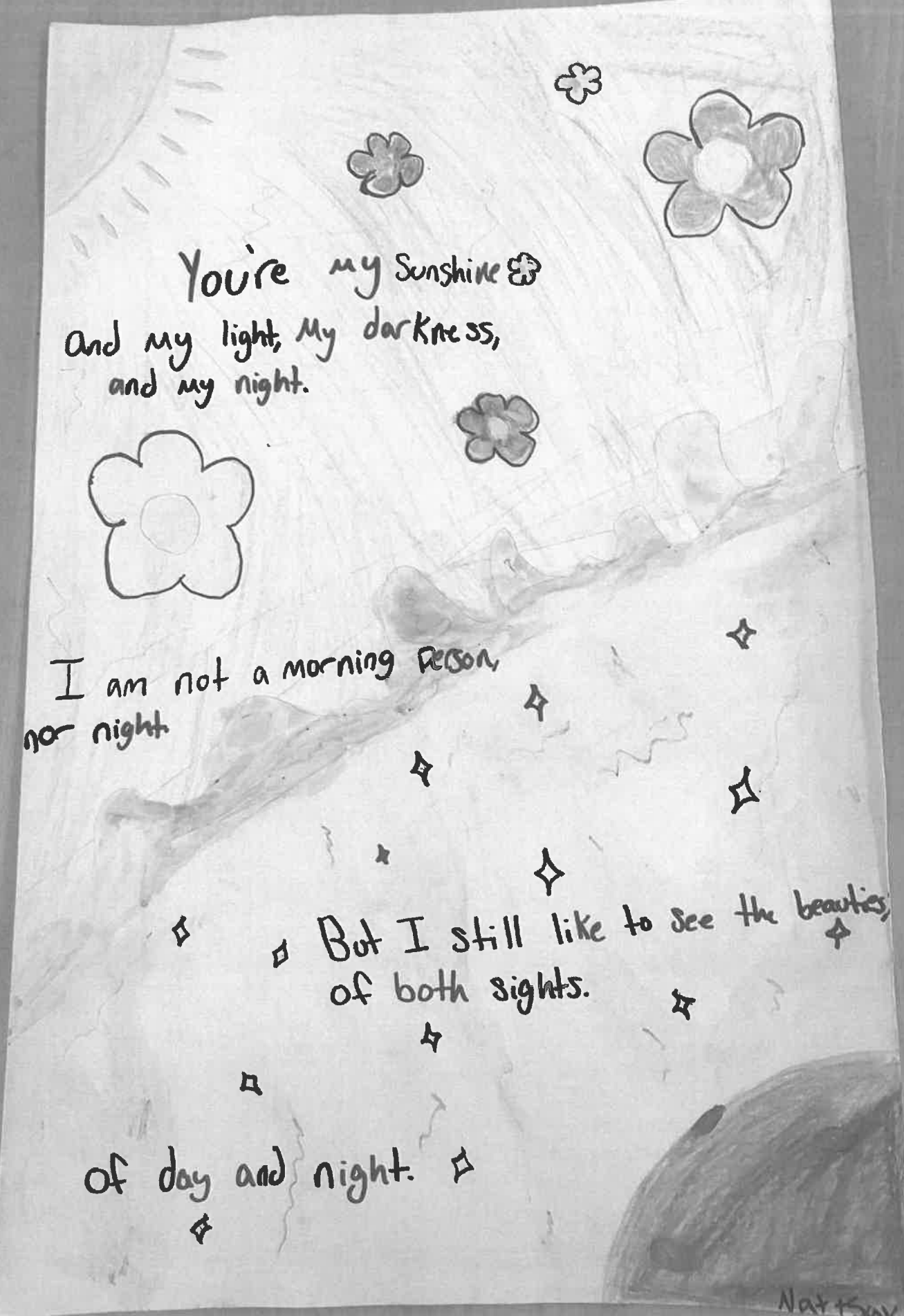
They are gone

No chance of return

But I know that ain't the last of them

And I'm not burning until they ALL burn

Abby Considine



You're my Sunshine ☼
and my light, My darkness,
and my night.

I am not a morning person,
nor night.

But I still like to see the beauties
of both sights.

of day and night. ✧

Nat + Sav

Natalia Robbins & Savannah Eldredge

Flowers

I

Artificial flowers placed around
The only smell is the fluorescent candle burning.
Imitation at its finest
The sight is bright

II

Springtime has just arrived,
The flowers have blossomed yet again,
Bright colors explode like a sunset

III

The little girl forms a collection
Picking the flowers from the field one by one
Handing them off to her loved ones

IV

The little girl comes skipping out
From her concert
Clutching the flowers her grandparents handed her

V

The joyous young woman
Catches the bouquet
Her boyfriend looks on
They are the next ones to be

VI

Gently the flowers are placed into her hair,
Delicate and pure,
As she gets ready for her big day

VII

He hands off the flowers
Along with the card that sits next to it
'Happy Anniversary,' it reads

VIII

The family heirloom vase holds
Yet another week of flowers
Picked up on a Friday evening

IX

Flowers lay by his
Gravestone
Watered by tears

X

The flowers fill her living room,
Attached to them are sympathy cards
Although her favorite bouquet is wilted.
The last ones her dear husband gifted her.

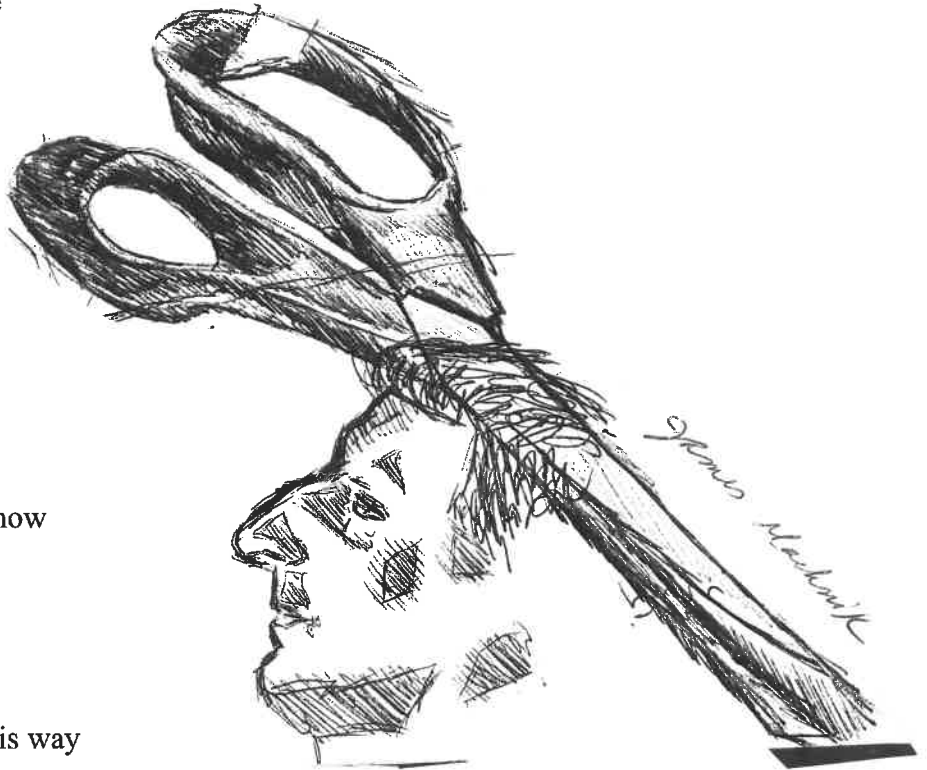
Chloe Horan



Gilgamesh's loneliness

Alone as he had never been alone
Motionless without an answer
Apart from everyone else
Through the darkness
Where there was no light
When it seemed there was no end
To loneliness
Time and space were uneventful now
He felt overcome with pain
And drifted on the sea of death
He was just a man who had lost his way
Thick was the darkness
And there was no light
Only the companionship of grief

Grace Latta



I must be at peace.

How must we borrow light from the blind?
How must one not lose by their own hand?
How must I be at peace, when Enkidu, my friend has died
Enkidu was a blind man,
A person I could when in need draw light from.
I only want to bring him back to life,
Back to me.
But perhaps it is impossible.
Perhaps I fear the end of his journey, the end of our journey.
Perhaps the only nourishment needed is grief.
Perhaps I need to know how much it costs to lose a friend.
I have been through grief.
I want to bring him back to end my loss but,
Even if there will be more of pain,
I must be a blind man who learns to borrow light from Gilgamesh
I must be one who does not lose by their own hand.
I must be at peace with loss.

Marissa Dennis

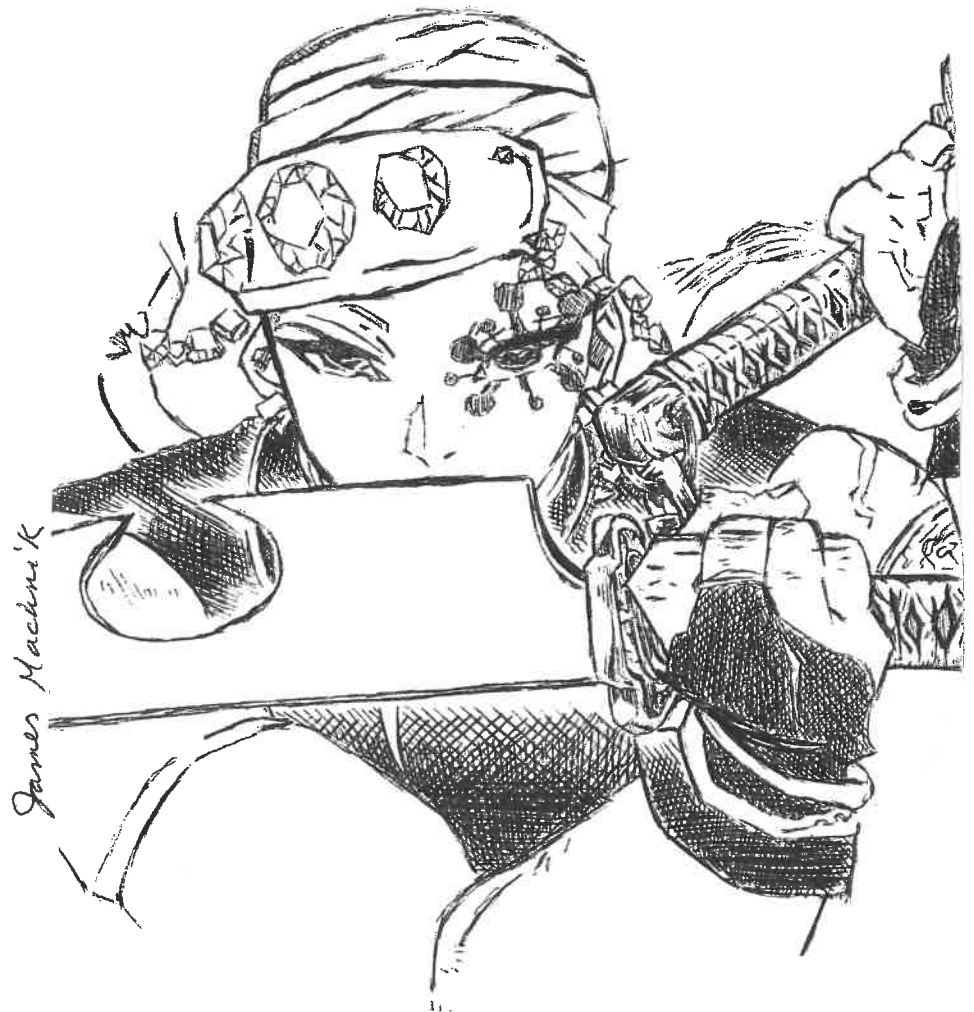
Contained

The memories replay on a loop in her head, this never really ends,
She can put a smile on, and push the anxious thoughts down instead,
She feels things too deeply, maybe she's an empath?
These thoughts consume her every waking moment,
Then, they even flood her dreams,
Where she is left questioning what her unconscious mind is trying to warn her

Tears well up in her eyes, creating a new river from spillage
Before she drowns, send a lifeboat
And the burning in her throat feels like a fire that could burn up an entire village
This feeling especially makes her want to hide,
In the comfort of her room,
Where this overwhelming mess of a burden is contained within its walls

But don't worry about me,
I may shake but I will not fall

~ Arianna Carchedi



When death strikes

A constant possibility
Lurking around the corner
Haunting the vulnerable
And the occasional strong

How Death strikes

It depends on Death's mood
Some days quickness is more Death's style
Other days bring slow agonizing pain

Maybe sometimes Death is indecisive

Allowing someone to seemingly recover before mercilessly
And cruelly
Ending

Maybe death is sorry

Sad for each life taken
Regretting what death means
For many

Bringing hopelessness

Emptiness
A gaping hole previously filled by the life of the dead
Forever changing and never the same

But without death, there is no life

Like how there is no cake without sugar
Or how there are no rainbows without rain
Or treasure without trash

Death starts the cycle

So even if death is sorry
Death must take
To keep the circle spinning
To bring the value of life to meaning

Some may try to run

And Death may drearily follow
Sorrowed by the essential task
Going to be fulfilled

Fear of Death brings more sorrow

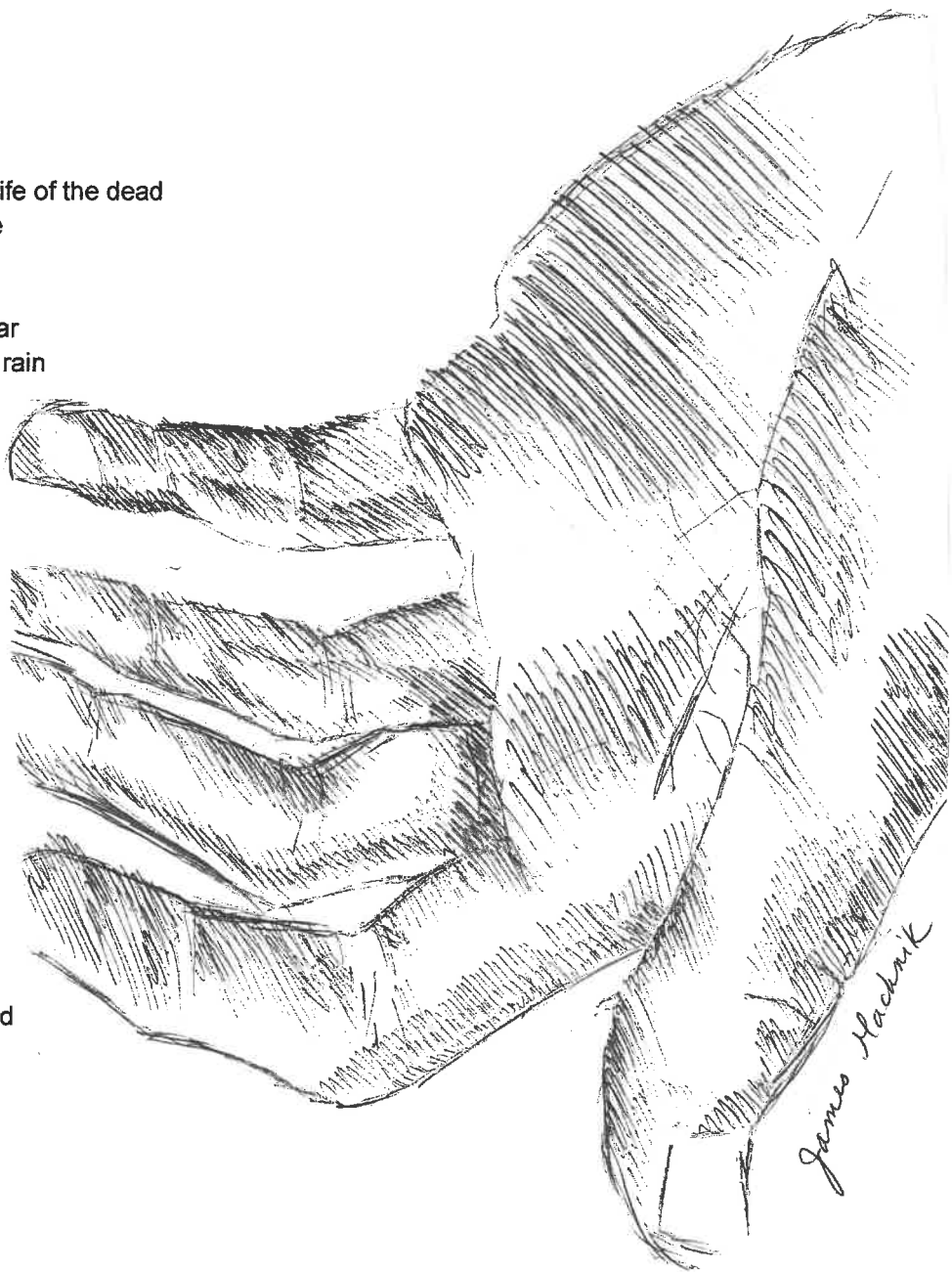
At least for Death
Most don't understand the sacrifices;
Life's need for Death

Without Life, Death wouldn't be needed

But nothing would change
So for the sake of Life
Death works on

Death and Life

Dancing together
The reliance makes each inseparable
Coexisting
Together
-Emma Eldredge



THE RIGHT PERSON by Via Ferer

Once upon a time there was a girl who let this boy into her heart...

That girl is me and I thought about him everyday.

His laugh, his smile, his kiss.

But then, all of the sudden... not even cpr could save my heart.

He needed time.

Right person, wrong day.

Every time I saw him, I felt complete.

Even when he dated her.

Everyday, I thought about him.

His remarks, his eyes, his hugs.

But he needed time.

Right person, wrong week.

Our freshman year.

I went to homecoming and I saw him there.

There he was, kissing her on the head.

Even then, I wanted him to be happy.

I thought about him the whole dance.

His voice, his arms, his love.

Yet, he needed time.

Right person, wrong month.

He came to my school every afternoon.

As I got in my car, I watched them smile.

I didn't care, let him be happy without me.

That's what selflessness is.

I thought about him on the car ride home.

His breath, his hands, his clasp.

Only, he needed time.

Right person, wrong year.

I heard they broke up in whispers.

You'd assume I would say, "This is my chance."

But instead.. I said, "Wow."

I thought about him the whole night.

His heart, his affection, his lips.

Right person.

Was it the right time?

But then.. I thought about myself.

How upset I was when he was gone.

How I felt when he went to her.

Was he ever the right person?



Red Embers Ascending

Buildings engulfed in flame,
Black smoke filling the lungs of the world,
seeping through the open windows,
overpowering the barely breathable air,
Infinitely rising,
expanding upon the blank
canvas that the buildings have become.
Eventually nothing will be left but red embers,
ascending into the smoky night sky.

Dan McDonough



A Little Life

That little cabin there,
sitting upon a hill,
it looks so perfect from here,
like a decoration on a window sill.

Covered in a dusting of snow,
and adorned with white lights,
its people dance in the kitchen windows.
The fireplace and radio create Christmas delight.

How cold it is out here
and how warm it must be in there.
How I long for moments as sweet as those,
ones of love and care.

Oh, it makes me think
of all the time wasted.
Days spent away from those I love,
and nights barely tasted.

Why am I struggling over daily strife,
when I could be enjoying such a
perfect little life?

Ashley Smith

Afghan Landay

They have not talked in years, full of lies
The photos are vestiges of the friendship that died

My peace is loving you
A silky languid blue
With subtle waves
And golden sand
Reflecting summer's hue

And when the daylight says goodbye
And darkness claims the sky
The stars and dreams
Upon the sea
Dance with noble moonbeams

But if angry clouds appear
With thunder rumbling near
Our lovely sea of peace and dance
Won't submit to fear

Waves grow tall with thrashing violence
A battle so loud we forget of silence
But then the clouds retreat
In shameful defeat
And our ocean eases and sways

My peace is loving you
With simple waves to and fro
That idly sing their tune
Strength to save, strength to kill
My love forever true

Talia Tambolleo Perez

One day
I woke up in hell

The sky was black
And the moon was high in the sky at 6:00 a.m

The clouds were purple
And cows with laser eyes spun 'cross the sky as if on a screen
Techno, remixes, and k-pop were all that played on the radio

But there was variety!
Hard rock, Mozart, top 10 cowbell hits
Thunderstorms, train whistles, and opera
All playing simultaneously, of course

The world was on fire
And everyone was nothing but their skeletal systems,
Which glowed black in the fire
That was the only skin they had.

Cats turned inside out into octopi, with rows of razor-sharp teeth
Birds were nothing but skeletons
Coughing up feathers
Flapping their wings wearily,
Trying to keep from plummeting to the ground.

Hotter than the surface of the sun,
But colder than Antarctica
Flames frozen in crystals of ice

Aloe is the only way to cure hypothermia
Poison ivy is delectable, and used in spaghetti sauce
Goats are the size of elephants and rule the world

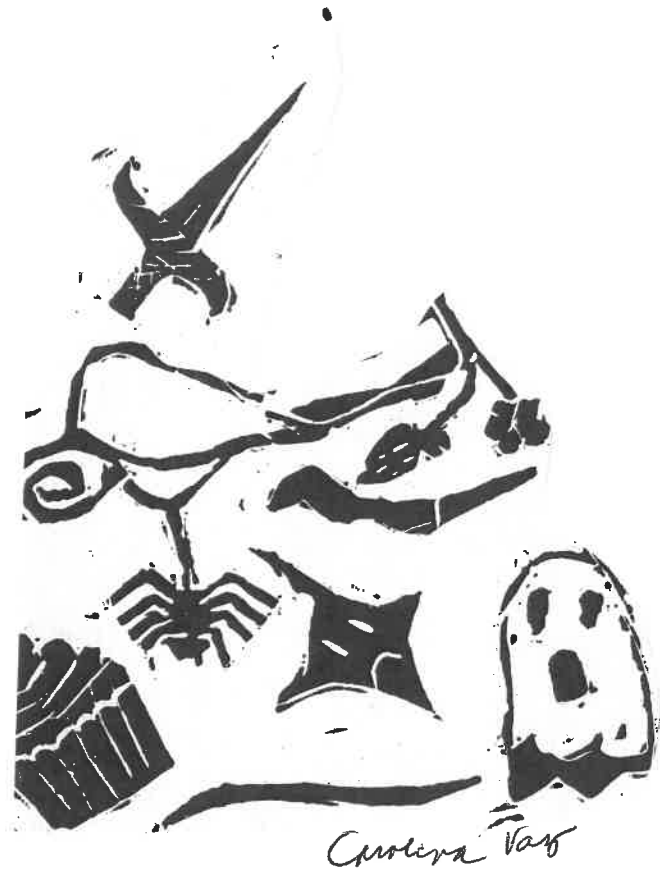
Our society is run by axolotls
They are at war with the platypuses
Who are teal,
Wear fedoras,
And have inexplicable theme music that starts
Whenever they walk in the room

Then I walked into a sewer waterslide
And blacked out at the landing pool

I woke up in bed
And the alarm was blaring.
I was late for school

Now that was hell.

Bobbi Braz



Hyperfocused

In reality I am a bag of bones
Clicking incessantly with every breath and
Never stopping to remember that everything
Has to come to an end because
When I think about the end
My bones turn blue
And to solve this
Adolescent ridden nightmare I tried to
Understand it between different mediums
So I wandered and stumbled to find the
Magical mystic and
Student of Neptune
Inquired of him to tell me what death was like
But he only responded with the neutral
Ignorance that bliss brings
Saying that I have already experienced
It before I was born
Even after this
I am still scared
To die.

Edrian Wright

Wise Wife

His aged wife,

Like a servant.

Hardly knew her shufflings and faithful silence.

Hardly knew her as a person,

Yet he was all she needed.

Read the mood and return to peace.

Asleep to hostile irony.

Drawn back to death.

Was she only a companion?

Lucy Mawn

A Worked Wife

Was she all he needed for a companion?

Over her frail protest, like a servant.

He hardly knew her as a person.

Men are deceitful and incapable of peace.

She has learned to read her husband's moods.

Suffering fastened onto her.

In her shuffling, wake him, hold the door, touch him; the aged wife.

His wife baked loaves remarked with hostile irony.

His wife whispered:

Knowing that she has come so far.

Elizabeth Bruce

Utnapishtim Silent Wise Wife

Emily Coughlin

A downcast servant

An aged wife

Gilgamesh takes pity on the door holder

Her companionship was all her husband needed

A navigator in the shadows she was

Learning to read the Husband's moods

Her words burning in Utnapishtim

Silently ordering him

All she gave was a frail protest

No battle, no cries

A quiet command

Utnapishtim's Wise Wife

Like a servant

She learned to read

Her husband's moods.

Only there to hold the door,

Taking orders day by day.

An aged wife in her shufflings

And her faithful silence

Whispered to her husband, saying:

He has come so far.

Have you forgotten

How grief fastened onto you

And made you crave some word,

Some gesture, once?

Lauren Upson

G
I
L
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H

Holiday Happiness

by Jason Elhilow

A home:

Colorfully colorless,

Surrounded by a thick blanket of snow,

Holding its inhabitants hostage.

A man:

Trapped inside,

Listening to the world,

Watching the wonderland from his windows.

A radio:

Twin antennas shot into the air,

Fiery red, unlike the man,

Who waited for something to come and reignite it.

A smile:

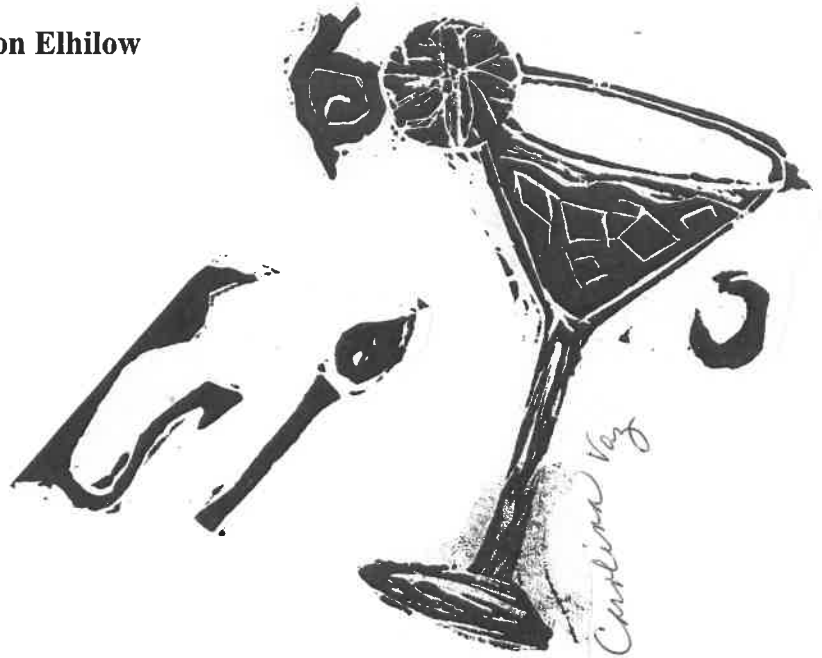
The message is too good to hear,

"It's Christmas," it said,

And he let out a cheer.

Happiness was truly near; the fire reignited.

The holidays were here.



Exercising

Sand Sand Sand

Slowly seep up floors rising

Aggression aggression my possession something possessive

Sweet sweet anger sweat out of veins

Honey run cold on ice.

Cave into the way oceans breathe

Skull hollow on broad beaches

Skulls hollow of leafless branches

Oxygen Oxygen Oxygen

Take me out

Live through in out me

In out and through me

Breathe.

Breathe the soul life is living

Sand sand sand slowly sinking

Heartstrings on fire

Only for you I work; sweat the sweet stains out

Breathe breaths breathe

Oxygen.

Edrian Wright

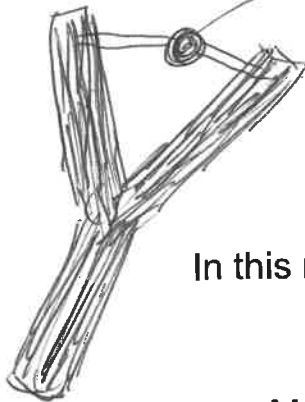
The Need for Victory

Lift me up from this paternal worry
"Show him once and for all that his son was worthy"
To make amends and win at last
To save me from my criminal past

My chances are small, but it exists
For if I don't win, Baba, you might put me up for adoption
"I was going to win. There was no viable option"

Taking my sanguine hands
And closing them to pray for your love
Talking relentlessly to Allah up above
Hoping that these winds of change will
Overpower your heartless will
And take this kite straight to your heart, my Baba.

- Edrian Wright

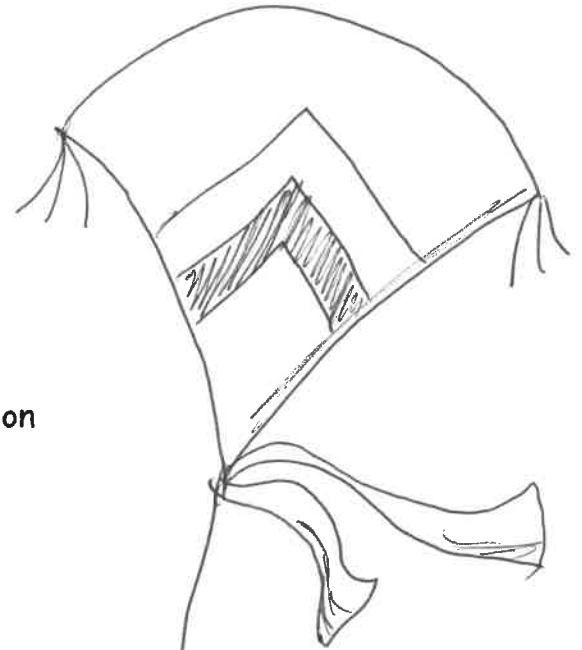


Ryan Borthwick
1/18/2023
Afghanistan Landay Poems

He stood sling in hand defending me
In this moment, so brave, I know he is scared for us

"I ran because I was a coward."
My life's culminating moment, I did nothing

We were in this together, friends
When I returned to Baba, It was changed, strangers



The End of an Era • By Jason Elhilow

I remember the end of an era.

I remember the day so clearly.

The year: 2018.

The feelings: painful.

I remember the innocence.

I remember my friends.

We would play in the yard.

We would flee the grasp of responsibility.

I remember when it happened.

I remember being pulled into my home.

My parents sat us down.

My siblings and I watched as they knelt.

I remember how it was said.

I remember why we were told.

“We are getting a divorce,” they said,

And our bodies went cold.

That was the end of an era.

That was the end of my (and our) childhood.

And the journey since then has been one of discovery.

One where I have learned to live with the past

One where I have learned to live with my memories.



Unison

The Paintbrush

Dancing across the surface

In unison with its partner, Thought

Both dancing

Swirling, twisting

Being led on by the bystander Emotion

Often Emotion jumps in and dances around,
changing the entire dance
shifting what once was

The Paintbrush and its partner
dancing along to the serenade
that Inspiration is conducting

A dance tightly woven

Oops.

A single slip, a change in unison,
a splotch of paint splatters the page

Thought often realizes the mistake and evolves
Changes
For the sake of Paintbrush

Their dance continues

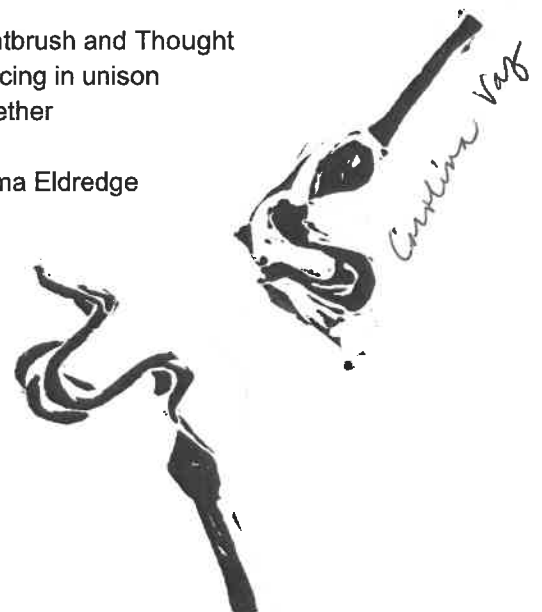
Till Thought stops listening to Inspiration
And Paintbrush runs out of paint

Paintbrush and Thought

Dancing in unison

Together

Emma Eldredge



Amir and Hassan, Sultans of Kabul

Decay circles the hill that sits high atop.
Dwindled down due to decades of walls being drubbed by Earth's weapons.
The rust is like a plague that only destroys and multiplies.
Although there still remains a hill on the brink.
A hill that has provided a home for a pomegranate tree

Two young boys, one that is of wealth and the other a peasant
When the Sun rest, the two children would met as one
Under the pomegranate tree where they were believed to be equals
On a summer day, one of the boys marked the fruit-bearer
Forever claiming its life as their own
With the assertion came a promise of royalty to rival even the heavenly
"Amir and Hassan, sultans of Kabul"

The pomegranate is one of the many bearers of life
Eventually life will come to an end
Out of jealousy, the child with wealth couldn't obtain what the peasant had
The attention gathered by the peasant was something that the other desired
One pomegranate slinged after another
A slippery mess soaked the two in striking sadness
The bond between the two remained inside the last fruit
Thrown in spite and
"Crushed against his own forehead"

Jordan Charlot and Owen Davis

NEVER ~ LAND ✨

Getting higher and higher
I'm sitting on the couch
Twisting the wire
My boyfriend next to me
He grabs my hand
And he says
"Let's get away from here"
And I don't know what the hell he means
Does he mean from all these flashing lights?
Does he mean away from life?
Away from this city?
I jerk away
I don't know what he's saying
I figure I should go though
I turn to face him
And he smiles
And I smile back
And he says
"Never-Land"
Except you see,
Never-Land will never exist for him and me
It's just too good to be true
In the end I always have to say goodbye
Peter Pan always makes me cry
Life is not a perfect fairytale
Life is not just the cereal you buy at a grocery store
Life isn't real sometimes
Life gives you the worst cards
My boyfriend is giving me his hand
I take it
It's warm
It's squeezing mine
We jump from the window
Falling
Fa
Il
I
N
G
Before we hit the ground
We're flying now

So high
Higher than I've ever been
Higher than me twisting the wire on the couch
And then we dissolve into colors
Passing through worlds
I see pieces of my life
I see myself... when I was here before
Swimming in the ocean; with the flying fish
Talking with the mermaids
Running through the woods
Barefoot
Free
Peter Pan is right next to me
Then he's gone
Then I'm gone
Then it's gone
Breaking through the rainbow onto the sandy shore
Is this real?
Am I real?
Am I here?
Am I inside myself?..
And then I hear someone saying my name
Very far away
So distant
Then I'm awake
Staring up at the ceiling
And I realize I was never there
I realize I'm still here
Laying on the couch
My boyfriend has his arms around me
He's holding me tightly
If I can't stay in Never-Land
Maybe I can stay here
I wish though
Oh how I wish
That maybe...
Maybe next time
When I start to disappear
And when I'll slip into that world
Such a blissful place
I keep wishing..
That Maybe this time I can stay forever....

~ grace elizabeth

Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue

I don't enter the tent easily. Pushing past the hoard of people I mutter a quiet "excuse me" and take in the crowd. The only thing that keeps me grounded is my mom's tight grasp on me as I hold her hand. I have to be the youngest person there, besides my little brother. Numerous people old enough to be my grandma look at me with masked faces, but despite that I know what they are thinking: "*Did her parents force her to come here?*" But maybe some are glad to see a younger face.

It doesn't take long for us to find our seats, and I try to get comfortable despite the fancy but uncomfortable clothes I've donned for tonight. The dark and rainy summer sky makes me grateful for the looming white tent above me, although it does nothing to block out the chill. I just hope this performance is promising, and by the sounds of the musicians warming up it will be. Because right now the most interesting thing happening is the yummy ice cream I'm consuming at an inhuman rate. I'm excited no doubt, but let's just say I don't have high expectations. Sure I'm in band and everything, not to mention the biggest jazz fan ever, but nobody can replicate the original bedazzling baritone of Frank Sinatra. Right?

Soon the lights dim and a blue spotlight focuses on the big band that's congregated center stage. I spot trumpets, trombones, saxophones, everything essential to jazz. But then the star himself steps out. Amidst the thundering applause I'm taken aback by the likeness and dazzling grin he projects to the crowd. I'm close enough to see his piercing blue eyes the original was revered for. I don't know why I'm so surprised, an impersonator's job is to impersonate, but standing before me is Sinatra in the flesh. "*Look (my name), it's your boyfriend*" my mom teases. I just roll my eyes, and after a few introductions the music begins.

While I don't recall the order, some of his liveliest songs kick off the show. *New York, New York*, *Come Fly With Me*, *Luck Be a Lady*, *You Make Me Feel So Young*, and more. The big band sound is intoxicating, and Brian Duprey's voice even more so. I'm grinning ear to ear and all my focus is on the performance. The tent full of reserved older people has come alive, and I wonder if they are recalling their younger days when they had to listen to Sinatra through records, radios, or even a live performance. I almost envy them and try to imagine myself experiencing some of the best jazz produced at the time that it was. The best I can do is sing along with them to Sinatra's classic hits.

The performance is going spectacularly and another song ends. I smile as I hear a familiar chord signaling the next song to begin. *Fly Me To The Moon* echoes through the tent and a wave of nostalgia rolls over me. Brian/Frank/Duprey/Sinatra sings it with as much grace, elegance and charm as the original, and I hardly notice as tears begin to run down my face. It brings me back to when I was seven years old discovering Sinatra and jazz musicians alike on the radio, introducing me to a medium and music that has stuck with me throughout my childhood and teenage years. As much as I try to discover new genres, that has been the one I always come back to. The one where I know my favorite songs are waiting for me, to cheer me up or enjoy a good time with. The genre that drove me to join the jazz band, where I am

discovering new jazz forms and music regularly. I'm glad the tent is so dark but I'm willing to bet some others were impacted like I was.

The performance comes to a close with the classic but bittersweet *My Way* reminding the audience that the real Frank Sinatra is long gone but his legacy lives on. A line that sticks with me is, "Regrets, I've had a few. But then again, too few to mention." And that's something I've taken away from Sinatra and re-enacted by Brian Dumprey. To live life to the fullest and by the end look back without regrets, but if you do to learn from them. Because if I regret anything, it definitely won't be getting to listen to a live Frank Sinatra impersonator, who if only for a moment, brought back to life one of the greatest entertainers that ever lived!

by: anonymous

Seeds Poems by Anonymous

School

study, panic, worry, joy
encased in steel beams

Starer

caught staring at the starrer
with unstarer eyes
how does it feel

Secrets

remember being little
when we used to lock our secrets up
now we dare you to read them



Jeff Hauck
Amir+Hassan
1/18/22

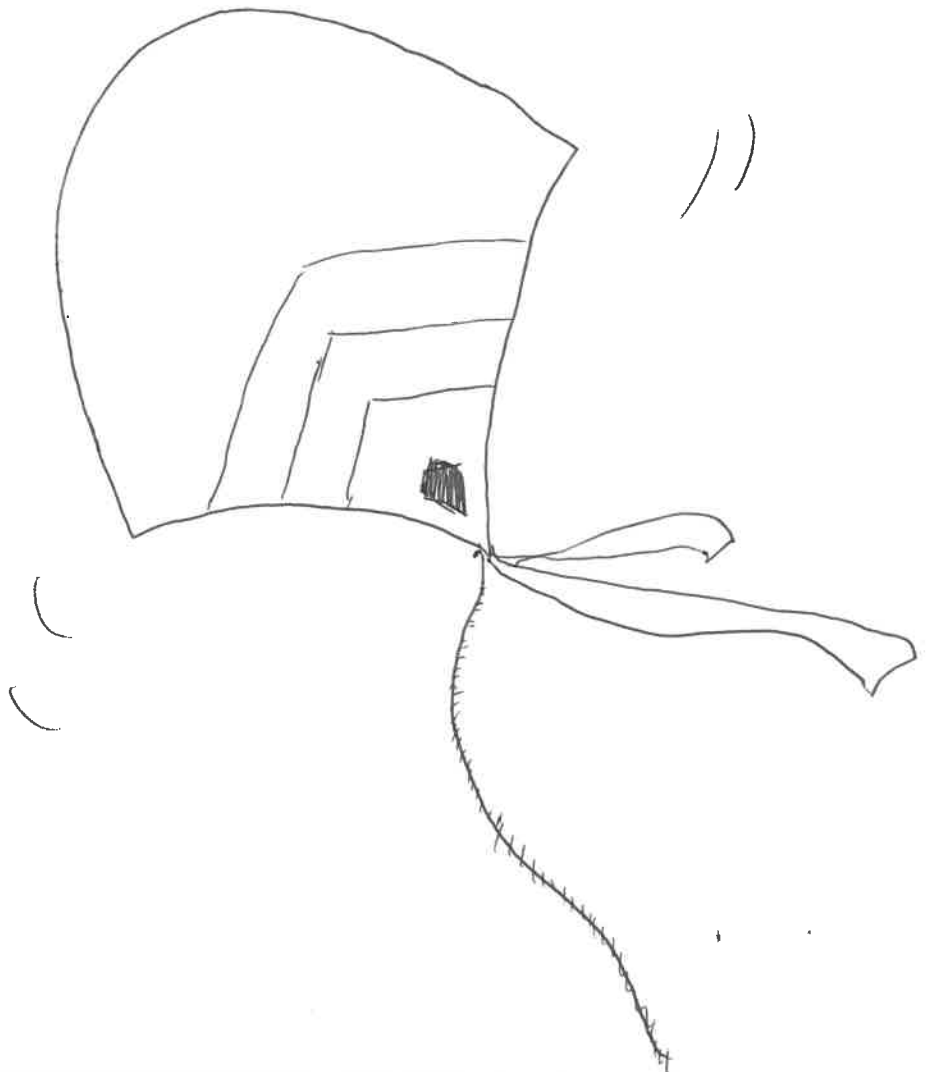
A loyal comrade, he was
Full of dedication
Hopelessly Devoted
To a broken boy
Who could never seem
To return the gift
Of love & admiration
Hassan had given him
Yet the boy
Still dreamed
That even after years
They may find each other
Once again
In the land
Where they had once been
"faithful friends".

A silent coward, he was
Desperately attached to Hassan
Yet too engulfed
In himself
And his shattered mirror
He called "life"
Filled with guilt
"He's not my friend!"
"He's my servant!"
Had he really thought that?
Of course not
An angry boy
Will be rude
To the world
To his loyal comrade
To himself

How could a boy
Like Amir

Love a boy
Like Hassan
Like a brother?
How could Hassan
Love a boy
Like Amir?

Love creates love
But it also
Can destroy itself
And it only breaks
When each person
Simply cannot see
Their true worth



The Valleys of Coruscant

By Aedan Leahey

The valleys of Coruscant (core-oo-sah-nt) were colder than usual. They seemed eerier than they did most nights. The chilling, lonely breezes could erect goosebumps on even the most fearless warriors. The grass was bright green, although you couldn't tell in the dark of the later hours. The foulest stench was in the air; the funk of fourteen-thousand years drifted through the ghostly wind. Animals slept soundly as if nothing was happening.

As the hooded figure emerged from hiding, its opponent knew what it was. Its opponent stood confidently, but inside, she was riddled with doubt. She had heard of these before but had never seen one with her own eyes. She had heard rumors of the horrors that followed the footsteps of one of these creatures, and she knew the consequences of a single wrong move. She couldn't see its eyes but knew it could see hers and any ounce of fear loitering in them. She refocused as it took the first move.

The Sith Lord drew its weapon with a swan's grace and an angry bull's aggression. Even the ignition of its lightsaber had the mental impact to make a Rancor (Ran-core) stop and second guess itself. Its saber was about double the size of a normal one, and it had three golden rings on both ends. It had a barred window in the center of the hilt, that revealed the source of pain and terror across countless planets. The kyber crystal (K-eye-ber) shined through the window as if it wanted to escape. The Jedi knight took her stance, ignited her own saber, and the duel began.

It had the audacity to throw itself at her with a confident spinning attack (0:32-0:35) that left their blades as the only thing between them. Its hood flew off its head as it advanced to her position. She started to freeze as horror looked her right between the eyes. The fall of its hood revealed an almost disfigured, bald head with intense veins and scars covering its head and face. It was an ashy grey color that disgusted the Jedi in front of it. But that wasn't the thing that disturbed her most. In place of its right eye, a deep depression of a socket remained. To the left of the divot was an eye of a sickening yellow color. Its pupil seemed almost broken as if you sprayed squid ink into the water- or broke the yolk of an egg in a bowl. There was no eyelid on the left eye, only scars from where it would've been above and below its look. The hatred in its eyes communicated to her brain as it plagued her mind and masked the focus and intent she had prepared.

The sounds of war rattled through their brains as they dueled in the plains. The Sith used an odd, two-handed technique that the Jedi had never seen before, let alone

studied. She held her own, though it was an uphill battle. Its approach was extraordinarily aggressive; her blocks and parries were weak compared to his slashes and spins. If the Sith was the “big bad wolf,” she was the piglet in the house made of sticks. Although his moves were aggressive, they were elegant and sophisticated. It danced and pranced as if he were a ballet dancer but rounded back in for his devastating attacks. She was appalled with the skill and form of such a monster compared to her inferiority.

Eventually, they came to a point where she could see it in its full mangled glory, such as how they were at the beginning of their duel. Their sabers were pushing back against each other. As she became almost entranced in its hypnotizing eye, it began to conjure a putrid sound from the back of its throat. It spat thick, maroon blood in her face. Distracted, she let her guard down as it lept over her and chopped her ponytail right from her head. It took steps back from the fragile Jedi Knight, cradling a tired arm to her chest. It swung her ponytail in its fingers, taunting her. It cackled and giggled and coughed up more blood as she stared at him. She stared with vulnerability. She stared with frustration. She stared with confrontation. She stared with intensity. She stared with anger. She almost instinctively released yellow waves of thunder from the five fingertips that weren't tired beyond belief at the Sith. Blinded by its ego, it did not foresee the attack and was propelled into a large tree that caught fire as collateral damage.

She sensed force energy fading and midi-chlorians (mi-dee-klore-eeans) dying as she began limping away to her ship. She heard sounds that caused her to trip and fall onto the grass; she realized her sense of *where* the force was fading was misdirected.

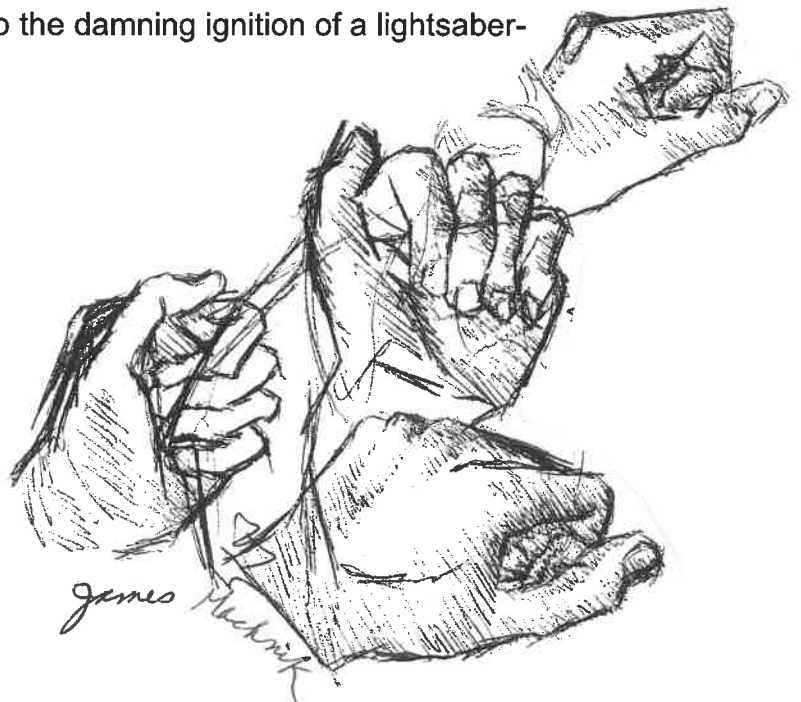
She heard a light rustling in the grass and leaves

That got louder

Then a metal clasp releases something

And as she turned around, she listened to the damning ignition of a lightsaber-

Then, ***another***.



Lost

my mom proudly tells
everyone she is a missionary

She went to china
to save an orphan

then to south africa
to hold hands with the children

next was kenya
to pray for the sick

finally was cuba
to feed the hungry

she does God's work!
where will she go next?
we call her Nothando

Full of love

But little do they know
each time she's left
we've stay behind
watching from bedroom
windows
crying

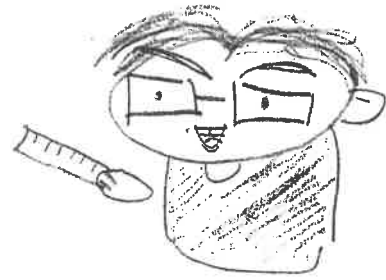
because she couldn't save her own children

Tian Jamieson



#2

Constant Struggles



Alex Varnish

How do people make life look so easy?

I mean some days don't you just feel like not doing anything?

Like even if you woke up that day, you wouldn't be productive.

Life has constant struggles that some days don't seem worth fighting though.

With school, I don't have a choice. I have to get out of bed and go anyway.

Half-asleep in each class, looking forward to leaving.

That was my day today.

Doesn't it sound pathetic?

Being so excited to leave a place? How could somewhere be so depressing that you want to leave so badly?

I guess I'll have to get used to it. You'd think by the 10th grade I would have by now.

Sometimes I wish I was a dog. They get to lay around and be lazy all day.

Watch the birds out the window flying high in the sky, squirrels collecting nuts, the sun changing positions every hour.

It must be so nice to be a dog.. But also boring. Dogs can't talk, or have friends, or decide anything in their life. I wouldn't like to be locked inside by myself all day long.

I would rather deal with my constant daily struggles instead.

I thought I was complaining, how did I get here?

-
Anonymous

This is a war zone. Everywhere you look, snowballs have been smashed against doors, sliding down the walls. Windows are broken and shutters lie on the ground. Strings of fairy lights are shattered and lay mangled on the ground. Everywhere, there are stockpiles of tightly packed spheres stacked behind houses or old busted-up cars whose windows and doors have been busted in with spheres of ice. Flags, frozen and snow-covered, hang everywhere limply, with designs that are barely visible under the sheets of ice and frost. Some of those designs are tagged with spraypaint on the doors of old cars and the once-perfect houses. Once, this place- this horrible, awful, icy dystopia- was perfect. Not too long ago, it was a picturesque lane of houses, all matching in some way or another, whether it be in architectural style, color, or foliage outside in the gardens. In the winter, trim and tinsel decorated every house on the lane. Snow fell in perfect sheets on the rooftops, and icicles dripped down from every overhang like icing.

Let me start over.

This is, or at least, was Sugarlane, in Sugarland, a magical place where all dreams came true. Everything was perfect, pulled right out of a picture book or a department store display case. In winter, frost delicately settled on the boughs of the evergreens, making them twinkle in the morning light. Fairy lights of all colors hung from the trees and golden stars sparkled atop them. In some windowsills, you would see menorahs with anywhere from 1-9 candles lit, depending on the time of month. Little kids would play on the floors in front of blazing fires with dreidels or marbles. Stockings hung from fireplaces and smoke puffed out the chimneys. Presents were delicately wrapped and hidden somewhere where the prying eyes of curious little kids could never find them.

Then, one day, everything changed.

It was a particularly chilly day in December. A teenager bundled up in a parka and snowpants was using the snowblower to clear out their family's driveway. They had earbuds in, and were listening to loud music. They couldn't see past the snow goggles they were wearing, and they had just finished clearing out the driveway and making a little path to the road. However, a big chunk of ice was stuck in the chute of the snowblower. The teen cursed as they muttered angrily and tried to unstuck the ice block. Little did they know, a young boy was out playing, straying close to the road. Finally, the snowblower started up again and the chunk of ice flew out. Unfortunately, the boy was waddling across the street when the ice chunk hit him square in the stomach. If his mother hadn't made him put on five layers, one of which was a puffy parka, he probably would have died. But, the ice block still knocked him to the ground. Fortunately, he was wearing a big puffy hat, a thick scarf, and his parka hood on top of that. His head landed in the snow. But, his gut still felt as though it had just been punched. The teen didn't see or hear anything, and, satisfied that the snowblower was now unstuck, went inside to warm up and have a cup of cocoa. But, before they could get inside, a blow landed smack in the middle of their back.

Furious, they turned around, lifting up the snow goggles and pulling out the earbuds. In the snow, the little boy sat up, tears streaming down his red face. "That hurt," he said, his voice tinged with tears.

"Yeah, well, so will this, punk," said the teen, and hurled another ball of tightly packed snow at the little boy's face. He screamed, and then began sobbing slightly quieter. The teen smirked, and then trudged back to their house, their loud music blasting into their ears.

Suddenly, the little boy's mom, Caroline, came out the door to see what had happened. She spotted her son lying on the ground. She brushed off his face, hers frozen with terror. His nose was bleeding and his face was cold as ice, but he was still breathing. She patted the sides of his head. "Jimmy? Jimmy, darling? Are you alright?"

Little Jimmy's eyes slowly fluttered open.

"Huh? Wha-what happened? Where am I?"

"You're right outside your house, baby. Momma's here. Momma's right here." She hugged him tight and stroked his cold, icy wet hair. "Who did this to you, baby?"

Jimmy sniffled and murmured something inaudible.

"Huh? Speak louder, baby."

"Them," Jimmy whispered.

"Who?"

"Them." Jimmy's voice was cold as his finger that he pointed to the teenager's house.

Caroline then knew what she had to do. She stood up and brushed off her skirt. She was freezing cold, but her love for her son and the anger for what *anyone* might do to him blazed like a bonfire inside and kept her warm. She helped Jimmy up out of the snow. "Go inside, baby. Momma's gonna take care of this." She patted Jimmy's back and he ran inside, waddling contentedly. Caroline then took a deep breath, brushed herself off again, and then started across the street. She rang the doorbell on the house of the accused.

"Go and get the door, Raine," came a nasal voice from inside.

"Ugh, whatever, Mom," said the teenager called Raine. They opened the door to see the fuming face of Jimmy's mother. They answered in a deadpan tone: "And what can I help you with, ma'am."

Jimmy's mother glared and smacked a snowball dead center in the middle of Raine's face. They fell backwards, blood slowly trickling down from their nose, mixing with the snow powder like syrup on shaved ice.

"Take that as a lesson," said Caroline, glaring as she brushed off her skirt, "that *no one* is to mess with my Jimmy. Understood?"

Raine did not respond but for a groan of pain.

There were some trials after that. Caroline and Raine were both found guilty to some extent- Caroline more than Raine. But the outcome of the trials did not matter. The damage was done. The anger of the people, and their fury of the injustice -whether it was the injustice of a teen "attacking" an innocent child or the injustice of a woman "acting hatefully against a non-binary teen"- sparked a revolution. It did not matter whose side you were on, Raine's or Caroline's, everyone wanted revenge. The citizens' fury turned the year round climate cold and frozen. And that was how the war began: with an overprotective mother's unnecessary actions against a teenager who did nothing wrong.

And now, because of that simple quarrel, the picture-perfect world called Sugarland became a hellish dystopia.

Bobbi Braz

The Figure

I stayed up late working on some papers and started getting tired. My small alarm clock on my nightstand beside my bed labeled 11:43 p.m., so I went to bed. After a few minutes after I lay down, I realized tonight was quieter than usual. Typically when I try to sleep, dogs bark at each other, or people throw late-night parties and make so much noise that everyone in town could probably hear it through the whole street, but tonight, none of the above; I found it strange, but I didn't think anything of it because it was very late at night. I started to doze off until something in the other room fell over, making a stifled *thump*, but it was loud enough to alarm me for a quick second. I thought it was my imagination until I heard footsteps, but these footsteps sounded off. They weren't the sound of shoes nor the pitter-patter of feet. They were more aggressive and sounded more fleshy and loose; when I heard the sound, a scene of dread came over me.

I didn't open my eyes, for whatever was coming towards my open door could see that I was awake and would feel the need to attack. The floorboards creaked and squeaked as its walking became running, then stopped when it reached my door. It just stood there for a few seconds, and then it started moving again. the steps became more frequent, almost like they were crawling towards my bed. My eyes remained closed. The creature sat beside my bed and ran one of its hands across my bed sheets. My instinct was to get up and run, but I couldn't. Its hands were very boney and frail. My heart felt like it was beating out of my chest, and I hoped it didn't notice. I felt its arm rise, drop onto my chest, and gently press. It took a long, heavy breath and exhaled for a few seconds. He leaned in towards my ear, and I could feel his breath on my neck, but it wasn't warm; it was cold, like gusts of wind that always sends chills through your body. I wondered if I would die tonight, hoping this was all just a bad dream. It whispered, "I know you're not asleep."

Paxton Kuras



it's the first thing you run to on
red or white, of christmas as a little kid, 452-254
who came up with the idea
the stockings go up in
that holds families gifts, december, it's the part of your childhood
that makes you remember,
they get filled up and stuffed

In a dense, dark forest

Sara Roza

tall green pines surround a quiet, windy road.

The ice shielded cobblestone streets change in color,
as a blizzard, wild and beautiful, roams the outside air.

The smell of sweet sugar plum begins to fill my nose,
as I approach my destination.

It isn't long before the snow covered roads turn into marshmallows.

My taxi ride turns into a sugary, gelatin dream,
as I float down the puffy, saccharine driveway.

I audibly gasp at the sight of the magical house my eyes are laid on.

The roof, uneven but beautiful, sits with whimsical, white snow atop.

Gumdrops, purple and red, perfectly decorate the roof.

Licorice lines the exterior of the cookie house

and beige frosting peaks through the cracks of the cozy, magical looking home.

My curiosity and sweet tooth are what motivate me to knock on the M&M door.

3 knocks are followed by a few echoed footsteps.

And then I am face to face with someone I've only known in a fantastical world.

The man before my eyes is the gingerbread man.

He's bigger than I would expect but welcoming as he greets me with a soft smile.

The cookie cutter man invites me into his candy home,

and the fireplace crackling catches my attention.

Everything smells like cinnamon, and there's a black cat curled up in the foyer.

The man offers me coffee, which I accept, and leads me into the common room.





Moonlight Calling

Moonlight calling out to me
 I hear you clear as day
 but I close my eyes and don't react
 I turn my head away
 Instead, I head for the dancing lake
 Now I can finally breathe
 Moonlight coursing through my veins
 I'm drowning with the reeds

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

~~James Newman and again an Emily, Brontë as a Paley
 Brontë blazes out and proves its presence. But certainly
 it cannot itself be to prove. Well, however, one reads
 of a witch being ducked, or a woman possessed by devils,
 of a wise woman selling hawks, or even a very re-
 markable woman who had a mother, then I think we are
 somewhat in the position of a novelist, a suppressed poet, of
 some kind of thing, as Jane Austen, some Emily
 Brontë, and the like, came out on the stage, or
 appeared on the highways, crazed with the
 torture of being had out by her to. Indeed I would
 venture to guess that Anne who wrote so many poems
 without signing them was often a woman. It was a
 woman, Edward Fitzgerald, I think, who made
 the ballads and the songs, teaching them to her
 children, beguiling them with them, or the
 length of the interregnum.~~

~~This may be true or it may be false, who can say,
 but what is true in it, so it seemed to me, reviewing
 the story of Shakespeare's life, as he made it, is that
 any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth
 century would certainly have gone crazy, shot herself
 or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the
 village, half-wild, half-wizard, feared and mocked at.
 For it needs little skill in psychology to be sure that a
 highly gifted girl who had tried to use her gift for
 poetry would have been so thwarted and hindered by
 other people, so tortured and pulled to and fro by her own
 contrary instincts, that she must have lost her health and
 sanity to a certainty. No girl could have walked to Lon-
 don and stood at a stage door and forced her way into
 the presence of actor-managers without doing herself a
 violence and suffering an anguish which may have been
 irrational, for chastity may be a fetish invented by cer-
 tain societies for unknown reasons, but were none the
 less inevitable. Chastity had then, it has even now, a
 religious importance in a woman's life, and has so~~

Kapka
 Thompson

About a dozen kites fly up in the sky
But they fall down in the blink of an eye
The strings are sliced with shards of glass
Oh how their time in the sky was short to last
"They fell from the sky like shooting stars, with rippling brilliant tails,
showering the neighborhood below"
Amir and Hassan were sure to not let their kite string go
They held on tight, mesmerized by the fight up in the sky
Amir's kite danced among with the wind, longer than he was used too
Down to the last second, their kite flew
"You won, Amir Agha! You won" shouted Hassan
"We won! We Won!"
The cuts bled as they found their new home among Amir's hands
They were worn as gold rings that displayed his victory for all to see
Congratulations from all hummed around him
But Baba's was the one only he cared about
That kite was the key to Baba's heart

- Arianna Carchedi



Claustrophobia

I cannot breathe
This space is so small
And yet it is so big
So small I am folding in on myself
So small I am tucking my head to my chest
My heart is pumping loudly; it is screaming
I dig my fingers into my hair
This space is so tight
The air in here is so thin
The walls are pressing in on each other
The ceiling is pressing down on me
I am pressing myself into the floor
I take short, sharp breathes
In and out; rattling, shaking
If only this fear was rational and did not exist
If only I could escape
If only I could breathe
This space is so big
And yet, it is still so small

~grace elizabeth



Free at Last

Is it not normal to want to die
to think you'll finally live?
To join him in the heavenly sky,
with nothing left to give

Then if heaven and God are truly real
Why not make the reunion quick
Instead of wasting all your years
Waiting for your heart's final tick

The sweet glow of heaven's day
The emerald trees dance and sway
In the lingering wind, and hum to me
A joyous swishing symphony

All I want is peace and rest
And to gently close my eyes
While exhaling my fleeting breath
Maybe to be free is to die

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

Sandscript Meeting Pass-Around Story #3

The golden potato shed its last ounce of childhood as a golden halo appeared around its head. Calloused hands wrapped their way around the potato and placed it on his head. The golden potato appeared to glow under the effervescent morning sun. It shimmered and shone past all the shadows in his home. The golden potato was full of sorrow, though, because a melancholy song began to play and the hands moved the potato to a cutting board; the golden potato got chopped up. It received no funeral, no remembrance, and no grief from anyone. It watched from the afterlife as the man who gruesomely chopped him up ate him. He was angry at the man. SO angry. He knew the only revenge was to join the evil ghost family. He then could possess the man and the day would be his. "Carpe diem," the golden potato whispered as he chose his own path. For once in his life, the decision was his.

Sandscript Meeting Pass-Around Story #4

In the fridge lived a block of cheese, a couple of carrots, a whole assortment of grapes, and a number of hot dogs. The drawers were their homes, decorated with napkins. Their furniture consisted of cups, tupperware, and utensils. One knife felt out of place, like she didn't belong; she was the butter knife. "Oh, how can I be called a knife when I'm not even sharp!" She cried herself to sleep. I know Frankie Fork will never look at me the way he looks at the other knives, she thought sadly. Even though she was sad because her cheese friend ignored her, she knew that if she made friends with the great french fries, she would be happy. She decided to learn a new language! She knew also that she didn't want to learn some languages, especially French because as a British knife she despised the French.

THE END

What They Call

I know what it means.

Let me tell you, soft as the voice of a holy dove,

Yet harsh as the nature that gave me it,

This is mine.

All those who hear it shall judge upon it,

All those who listen may know.

This is my name, that which can never be stripped away,

That which is mine in truth.

In all the words to ever flow from my lips,

This is that which defines me.

As all legends are nothing but tales of a wandering mind,

This name is a legend, a word that shall echo in the halls of the heavens,

And this is that which they call when I leave,

This is that which only I know,

Yet that which all shall speak,

This is real, solid, everlasting,

As me.

-Jude McMahon

You could kill me and I would say thanks
As I already feel dead when you disappear

Emily Coughlin



Bobbi Braz on Bass Guitar

Likes jazz, *Hamilton*,
and the music from *Guardians of the Galaxy*
Detests k-pop, techno, DJs,
and everything they stand for

Loves Marvel and Star Wars
Hates the Percy Jackson movies
and other bad film adaptations

Likes playing bass,
being in band,
being in theatre,
And belonging

Hasn't found her people
Scratch that, she has found her people
Is teased
Is made fun of
And doesn't fit
Scratch that, she knows where she fits in now
Doesn't know very much, in the big scheme of things
Okay, that's probably true.

Has a love/hate relationship with Google,
the internet,
And autocorrect

Draws fanart
Would write fanfics
LOVES shipping
Don't you dare
insult shipping in her presence
Is a fangirl

Unhealthy obsession with axolotls,
cowbell, saxophone,
and LEGOs
Is a nerd

Is still figuring out who she is
But that's OK
And hates being asked about her sexuality
Because she doesn't know yet
and that's ok.

The Right Thing • By Jason Elhilow

In a world of one or the other,
I feel like neither.
In a world where there's money or justice,
I have to choose either.

But no matter where I go, what I want,
The torment of others will direct me,
Tell me where to go, who to be,
How to be.

I stand outside Sal's,
Wondering what to do,
Scared of the consequences.
Scared of who I will become if I choose.

Do I stick with my people?
Do I stick with there's?
Do I do something?
Yes. The answer is yes to all of them.

Now I live with what I've done,
I live with who I am.
But do I regret it, do I hate what I did?
I'm not sure, I'm really not sure.

So at the end of the day,
One question remains.
Only one thing to ask myself.
Did I do the right thing?



a walk in the woods

A place of solace,

And of quiet and calm.

I've befriended all the trees,

A stroll along a wooded path.

The quiet brings me peace.

I love being out here,

Breathing in the freshness of the air,

Looking up at the birds, soaring through the sky,

Landing in the elegant trees,

Where the birds dwell

The leaves crunch softly where I step,

Leaving the evidence of my path.

The deeper I enter, the harder it makes to turn back,

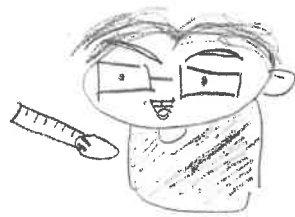
For my mind has settled into tranquility,

Surrounded by the simple, peaceful life around me.

Vaughn Jamieson

Dotty Walsh

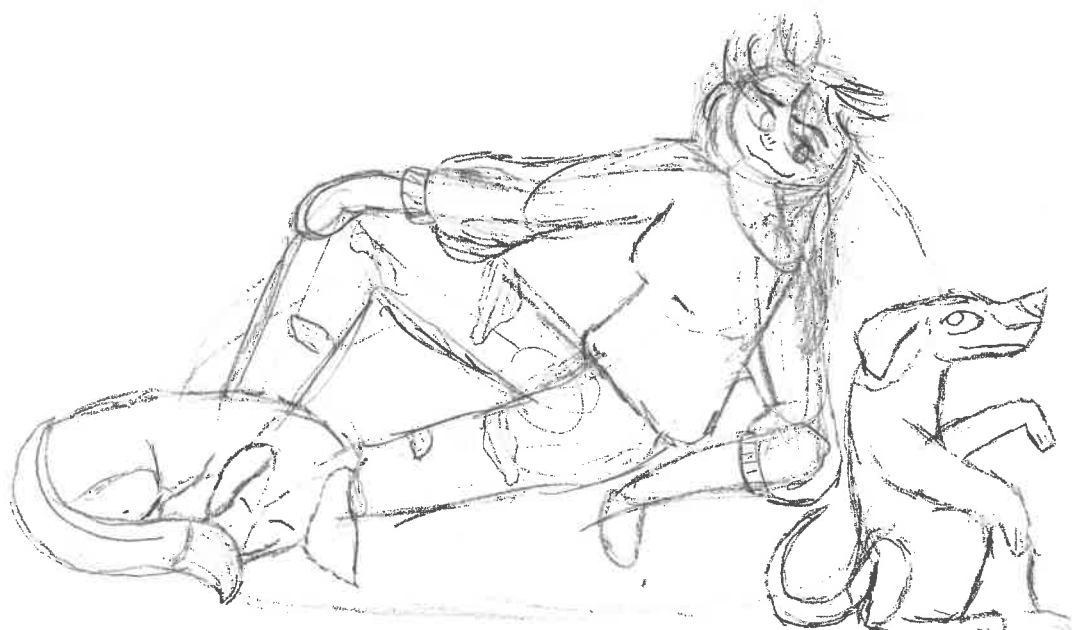
Alix Vermaak



"I" before "E", ~~except~~ after "C",
and when sounding like "A", in a neighboring way,
and on weekends and holidays, and all throughout May,
and you will always be
wrong no matter what you say!!!



...
- that's a
difficult rule...



Dear Mom and Dad

He always gets away with things
You give "The Excuse"
something with the meaning
hidden or not-so-hidden
"why bother? He won't change"

Why did you bother with me then?
Why did you yell at me when I acted out?
Why did you correct me when I spoke impolitely?
Why did you stop me from chewing and speaking at the same time?
Why did you sit me on the stairs when I went out of line and refused?
Why did you make me realize that lying was bad?

Why don't you make him realize that lying is bad?
Why don't you send him to the stairs when he steps out of line and refuses?
Why don't you stop him when he chews and speaks at the same time?
Why don't you correct him when he is impolite?
Why don't you yell at him when he acts out?
Why did you give up before you seemingly even tried?

You tried and succeeded with me!
It is true it's not comparing apples to apples
I like to read and write and craft
He would rather play a sport
He would want to watch the action-packed, lengthy, Avengers Infinity War
I would prefer the action-story-based Black Panther,
Iron Man,
Black Widow,
or maybe Captain America

He would prefer to choose the longer movies
Gaze at the screen till his eyes would fall out
I wouldn't mind a series instead
With breaks and interludes
To go get a snack
Without needing to press pause

He chooses what he wants
Won't take no for an answer
Won't take less
Often won't take more
I am more flexible with my choices
willing to compromise.
I will take more
Often will take less

The fact is we are different
But we both love video games!
Except...
he cries and whines when he cannot play
I just accept the fact
And carry on

A 10-year-old,
that still hasn't learned to not get his way
I learned
I evolved
When I whined I was shut down by you
He was not
He is not
Why?
-Your daughter

break
stupid
weird
fat
childish
wish

Sticks and stones may break my bones,
But words burn me more than a glue gun
And the scars remain much longer.

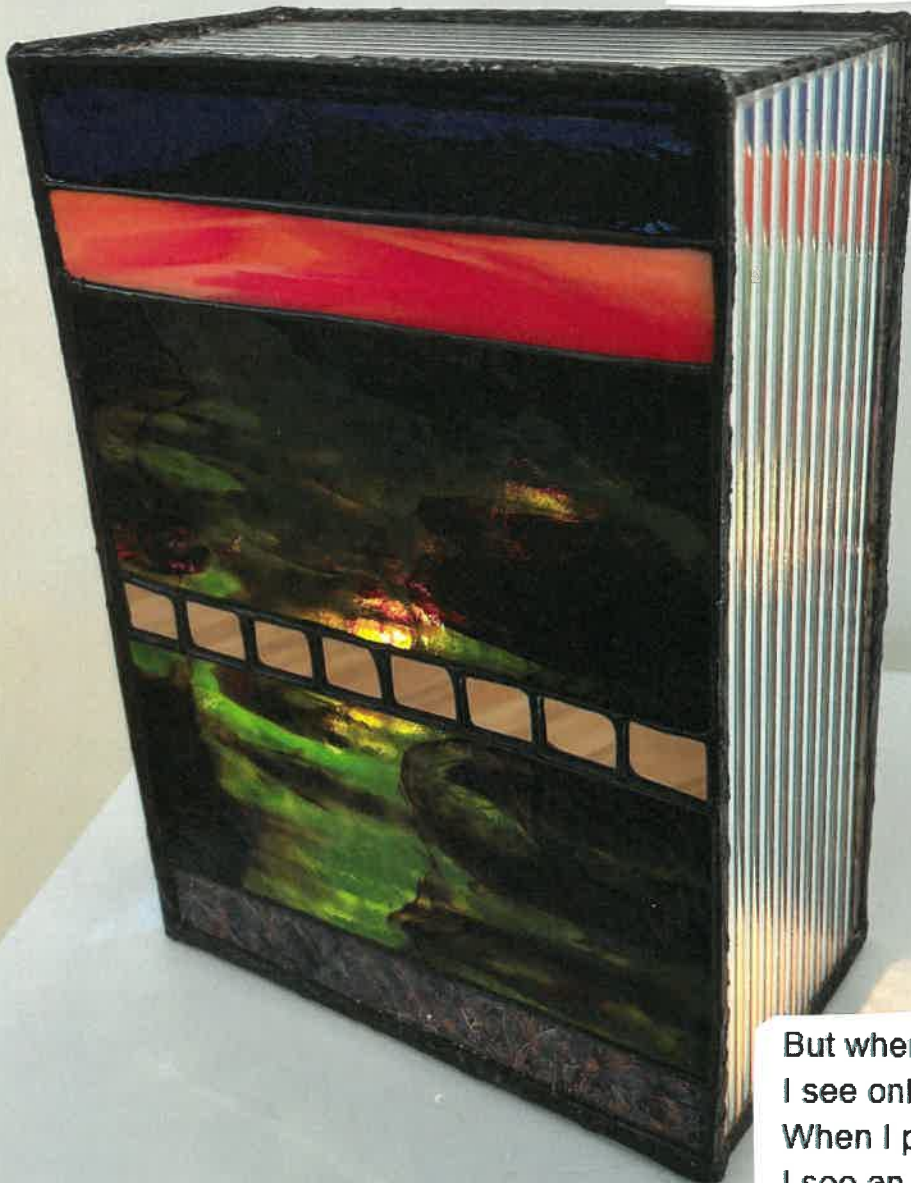
Bobbi Braz

stupid
fat
childish
wish

A Glowing Tale

The book stands upright,
its pages glowing from within.
Like a stained glass window,
stolen from a chapel of antiquity,
it tells a story.
Its words read like a mosaic.
Imaginary text lines the pages,
handwritten notes decorate the margins.

This is a book loved,
treasured,
and admired.
One whose spine wrinkles with
each use.
Its stained pages and dog-eared corners
tell of the beauty within.

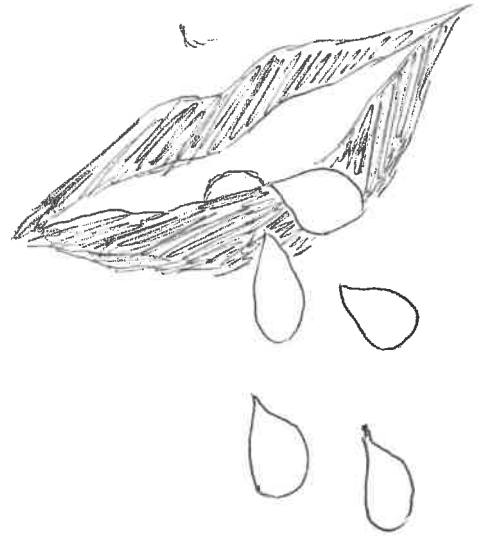


But when I peer inside,
I see only a light.
When I peel back the cover,
I see an empty glass skeleton,
but nevertheless,
a singular bulb persists in the center,
representing the spark,
the electricity
of words.

Ashley Smith

Hanahaki Disease

Being in **love** is nice.
Especially when they **love you** back.
But that's **not** the case here.
He **doesn't love** me back.
So I **have to pay** the **consequences**.
Everytime that I **breathe** in, it's **shallow**.
And **everytime** that I **cough**, it **needs** to be in my **hands**.
To see if **any** of them **came out**.
The **flower petals**, I mean.
But if I'm **unlucky**, **full flowers**.
They **fill** my **lungs**.
They're **suffocating** me.
And I **can't stop** it.
They'll **keep growing**.
The purple roses are **killing** me.
But...
It's **his favorite flower**.
So I'll let it kill me.
Like a part of **him** will be with me **forever**.
Whether **he loves me** or **not**.
As the roots grow, I **suffer** in **silence**.
While my **love** for **him** continues to **burn**.
Burning like a **wildfire**, but no **wildfire** can **kill** these **flowers**.
This **love**.
This one-sided love.
It's going to kill me.
Because **loving you** is the **best** kind of **self-destruction**.



Hanahaki Disease.

-Savannah Eldredge

My mind is a vast ocean, shifting solitary thoughts to the coastline;
Casting the sun to sleep on my distant horizon.
Letting my words draw over like the white tops of waves.
Letting me be the person I want to become if I succumb to the water below.
Edrian Wright

Oh my nucleus,
 my lovely nucleus made up of protons and neutrons,
 with pillowy clouds of electrons
 floating freely like birds!
 I take your mass by mass by adding
 protons and neutrons, and oh
 how I love to!
 I take your charge by subtracting
 your electrons from protons.
 You make me feel glad then sad,
 positive then negative.
 What a funny relationship we
 have.

Ashley Smith

Rosecrans and Ferer
 Do you dare
 To pronounce their names
 Without a care?

anonymous

Never Ending Cycle

the Strand. Old waves of gold and silver
 back to mind and before I connected
 to white—it used to be said that at the same
 old Professor—unwillingly into
 the venerable congregation had gone into
 the outside of the chapel remained. As you know,
 the domes and pinnacles can be seen, like a sailing
 ship, always never moving, lit up at night and
 miles far away across the hills. The present
 the quadrangle with its garden, and the old
 buildings, and the chapel itself was made
 the grasses waved and the foliage rustled. **Teams**
 of oxen. I thought, must have had some
 wagons from the countries, and then the
 the grey blocks in whose shade the men stand
 were posted in order out of it and the
 women thought their place for the first time
 were here for the first time.
 the old and the new. **Every Saturday**
 poured gold and silver
 into their ancient fists
 flowed into this court perpetually
 level ditch
 dig and drain
 money was poured liberally
 from coffers of kings
 queens and great nobles to ensure hymns
 sung and scholars taught
 when the age of faith was over
 only the gold and silver flowed now

Jasper Hayes

To Change or Not to Change

Navigate through the journey to change.
It can be easy, simple even.
Or not.
You can be ignored, or overlooked.
So why try?
We try to give back to the communities,
Which have given so much.
Opportunities begin to arise,
When collaboration is key.
Eager and excited,
Fulfilling the need for change.
It makes the heart happy.
The soul.
We chose to change.

Anonymous

This is a "Found" poem created by the words taken from
a Cape Cod Chronicle article about our school food pantry

Art of Words

Words are words but words are talking.
Talking is words but so is reading, so am I reading my own mind or talking to myself?
I can't read minds, people would think I'm insane.
But if I talk to myself, I'm crazy.
But crazy people love other crazy people so maybe that's why I'm friends with you.
But if we are crazy then we've lost our minds.
Where have they gone?

-Savannah Eldredge

Over here and there
They're everywhere
The world is ours and theirs

Ethan Rosecrans

Without you

By Olivia Ferer

Without you... it's hard to breathe
I don't know why
I take deep breaths in and out
Yet I'm still hyperventilating

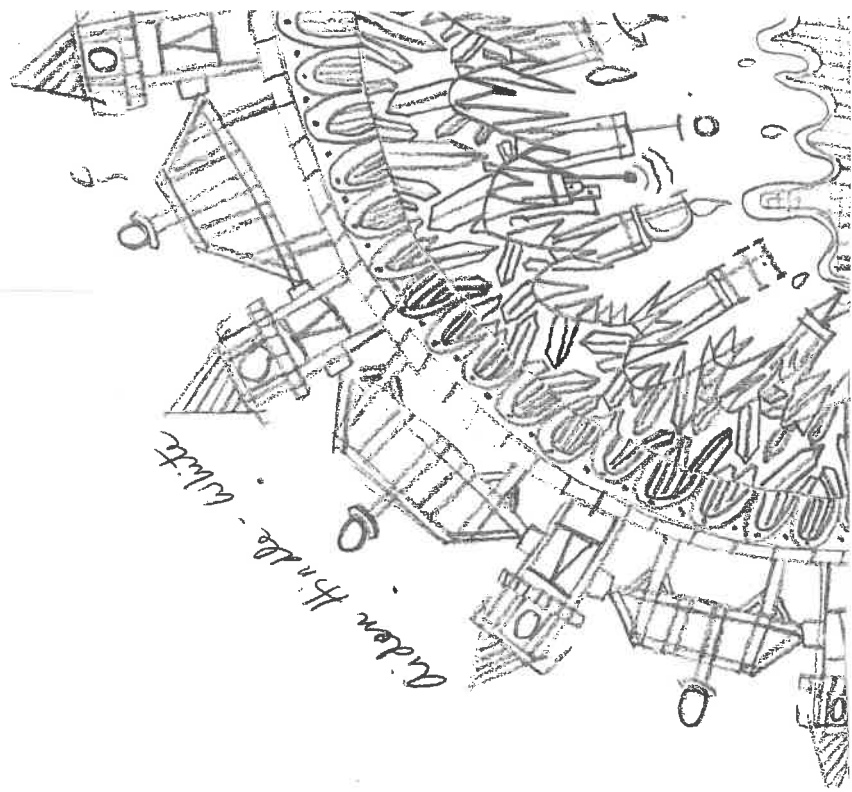
Without you... I can't sleep
I don't know why
I think about a childhood memory
Yet you're still my only thought

Without you... I can't focus
I don't know why
I chew gum and clench my fists
Yet all I can focus on is you

Without you... I can't eat
I don't know why
I make food that I love
Yet I feel nauseous

Without you... I can't function
I finally know why
You're all I can think about
You have my heart and soul

Without you... I am incomplete
I now know why
You are my second half
You make everything okay



Burning by Tian Jamieson

Our home is on fire
and i'm stuck inside.
my brothers have escaped,
safe and secure
outside
the burning building.
they watch the house
with tears in their eyes
because they can't help
or else they risk becoming
lost themselves.
but in eight months
i will leave the flames behind
i'll join them on the other side
and we can all be safe

Hope Jorgensen

For The Love of Water

Swallow me whole and wash away the pain of today
Bottle me up and distill the fine flaws that reside within me.
Let me cascade from above, give life to those below
Watch me seep and replenish until I eventually diminish.

Soak me up soft soil and sand
Let me help you grow straight to the sun sweet buttercup.
Catch your breath and let me trickle down your throat
I can save you, I can help you I swear...

I swear...For the love of water, save me too.

Only The Water

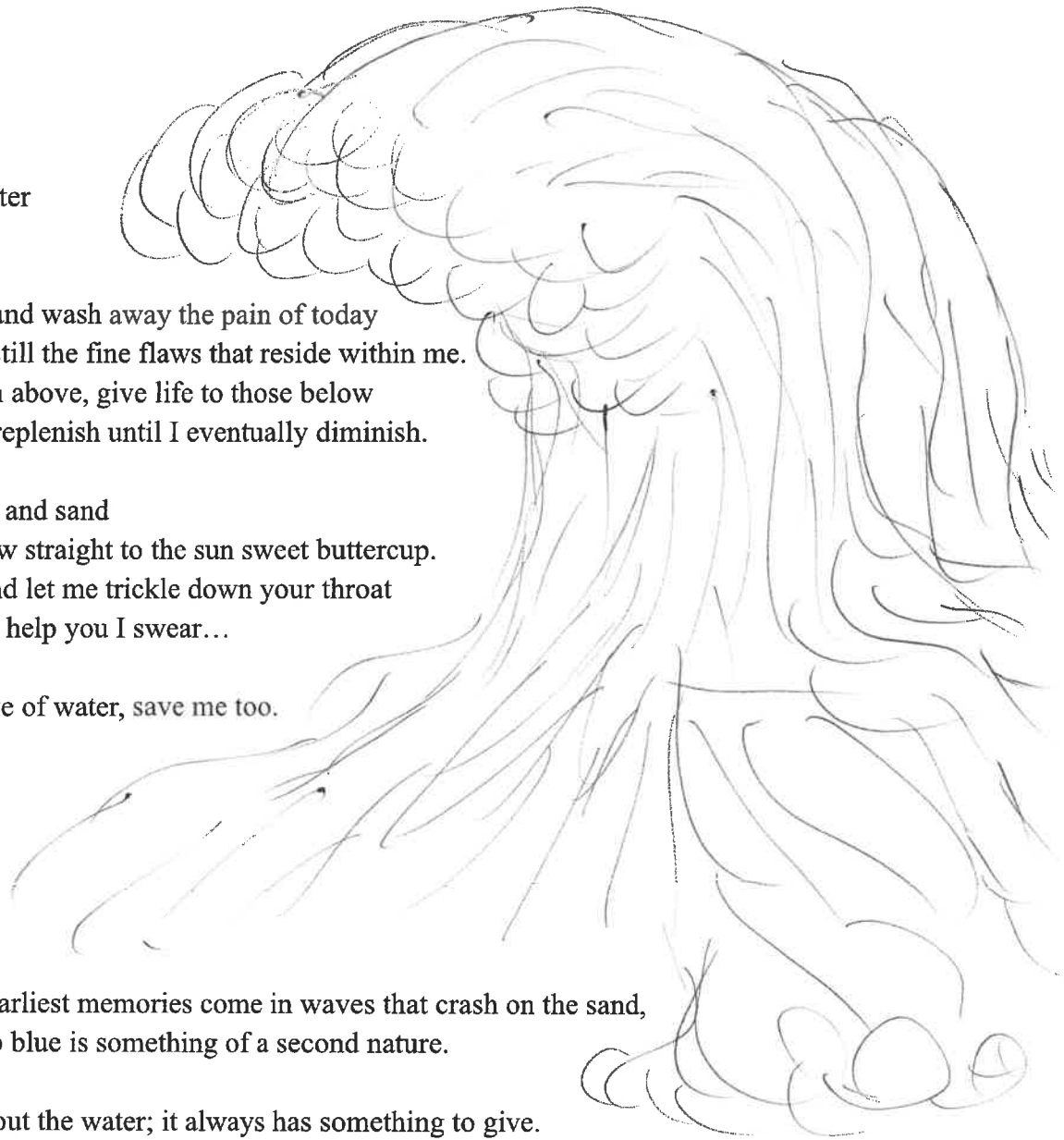
In my lifetime, my earliest memories come in waves that crash on the sand,
My love for the deep blue is something of a second nature.

A thing beautiful about the water; it always has something to give.
In darkness, when chaotic twilight has lost its luster, the water remains to shimmer,
And in the storms I have lived through in my life, the water stood firm in its nurturing.

Only the water knows the strength it takes to be me
Only the droplets can cloak the tears that mean to break me
The water is the breath that life lives through.
It's the memory that never wanes; the ripples that never fade.

And in the water, I see my reflection, slowly changing.
Slowly healing.

Edrian Wright



If I were a locksmith
I would have many problems
My moral code would have to be stronger than my greed

I would have many problems

My will to keep my job would have to be stronger than the alluring call of the sweets

I would have many problems

My clothes would be much more colorful, as would everything else

I would have many problems

My positivity would have to block the urge to write something too graphic

If I were

What am I?

What will I be?

I don't know

No one does

Someone could guess

But may be wrong

I am a piece of clay

But also the potter

With a wheel spinning out of control

Minimal control over what I will be

I am the clay

Out of control

For now

But then I'll be baked

Burnt in the kiln

Stripped of impurities

Given control

No longer unsure of my future shape

No longer “If I were”

Only “I will be”

“One day”

-Emma Eldredge

Meant to be.

He [redacted] were not
 like [redacted] than she was. She had the quickest sense,
 and [redacted] she had a taste for [redacted] the stage
 do [redacted]
 [redacted] for [redacted]
 [redacted] public dancing and
 was [redacted] in
 act too. He hinted [redacted]
 [redacted] in her early days [redacted]
 dinner in a tavern or room, the streets at midnight?
 Yet [redacted] to feel [redacted]
 [redacted] of men and [redacted]
 [redacted] she was very young, odd, like
 [redacted] with the same grey
 [redacted]
 manager took pity on her; she found herself with child
 [redacted] and [redacted]
 [redacted] of the poetic heart when caught and
 [redacted] a woman's soul, [redacted]
 [redacted] called at some [redacted]
 [redacted] now keep outside the [redacted]

[illegible]

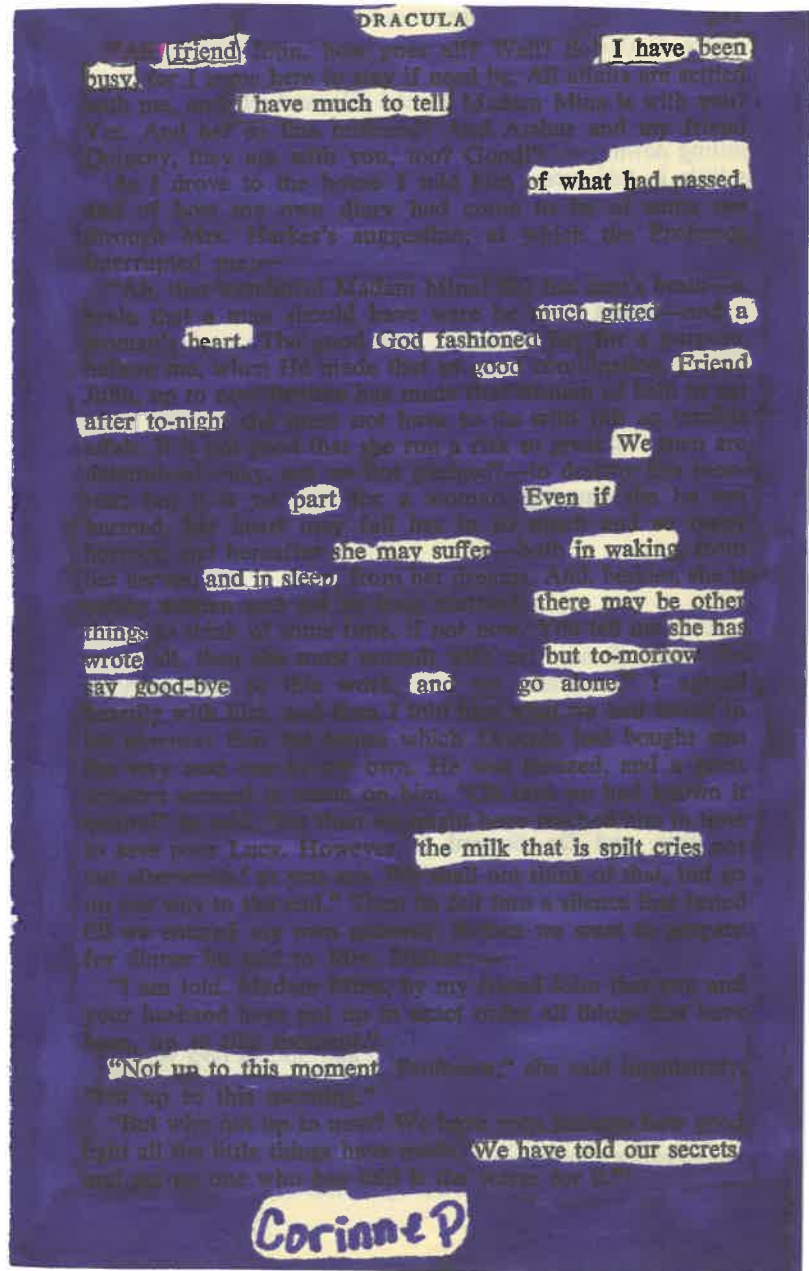
Savannah Edrwe

January 31

{Weightless~}

I heard the birds in the trees over my head today walking to work. They were noisy but a beautiful type of noisy. When I lifted my head up, they were flying away and I started smiling because those birds were so happy. I think what made them so beautiful even though they were just simple cow birds, was the fact they were weightless...there was nothing holding them or keeping them from flying. I wish that will be me some day. Breaking away from the life I live now; winging it; beating through the clouds to where I want to go, having no one hold me down anymore...being weightless. Weightlessness is freedom and freedom is magic and magic means believing that I can do the impossible...

~grace elizabeth (journal entry)



Elizabeth Bruce

Santa's House

The moon casts light over the glistening snowfall.
The house is hit with a sudden squall,
The wind blows the snow, leaving fresh powder for the morning.
I can't sleep listening to old Santa snoring.

Waking up early to see if the elf's on the sleigh,
I could sit here all day watching them play.
The warm smell of fresh cookies for the big jolly man,
I hope Christmas comes as fast as it can!

Though this is the busiest time of year,
It is important to spread some holiday cheer.
Gifts piled high,
All thanks to the big bearded guy.

Christmas decorations are everywhere,
One light bulb on the string flickers out, making me want to swear.
The reindeer practice taking off in the air,
The sleigh is full of toys and stuffed teddy bears.

Christmas eve comes once a year,
A big night to see all the magical reindeer.
Santa is ready in his sleigh,
Prepare all for a wonderful Christmas day.

Ho!
Ho!
Ho!

I remember leaving the house I loved most,
Forcing the room I nurtured to adapt a hollow soul.
Left to taste the full emptiness of Earth.
The starlight saturated seven nights wandering.
And all I wanted to do was find a way to you;
Home.
Edrian Wright

Lost in Us

We are dangerously close
Lying next to each other
Our fingertips touch
Then our hands fold in on each other's
Lying on the cold pavement
Staring at the black sky
It swallows everything else but the stars
And we turn our heads
And we are face to face
Our heartbeats increase
And then you lean in to kiss me
And we fall into each other
We are lost in the starry sky
We are lost in this darkness
We are lost in space
We are lost in here where there is no gravity...where there is no destination
Where there is just us...where we are lost...Lost in us

~grace elizabeth

I am a crayon.
My tip is dull and flat.
The children use me very roughly.
They rub me all over the mat.

Via Ferer

Black Shuck
Beware the black hound
She only wants
To help

Quill Adamsons



I'll Keep the Memories

Is it really only memories now—
those days spent on the sand?
You held me in your arms.
A perfect little world,
now sitting on a shelf.

All those years of happiness that came
before the pain.
Childlike, stupid, and innocent,
I would have followed you to the end.
I suppose it's all I knew how to do.

But the unhappiness settled in,
making itself a home in ours.
Smiles—
cut jagged and sloppily pasted on,
but I didn't want to pretend.
That's the difference between you and me.

Now, all that's left are phone calls,
numbers dialed and forgotten,
hollow muttered words.
But I'm older now,
I've realized
"I love you" should be shown not spoken.

Yes, it pains me,
just as it does you.
But I can't leave the door open forever.
It's getting colder and I need to move on.
But don't worry, I'll keep the memories,
safely hidden away and unbroken.

For now, this is goodbye.
You're a different person now,
and so am I.
But, don't worry, I'm happy now.
I hope someday you can find that for yourself.

By Ashley Smith

PS. The door is closed, but you can always knock.

this is a metaphor

If I keep on this path
I must face the consequences of
Sneezing in a silent hallway

Quill Adamsons

Nature's Forces

Natures forces carry me
I seem to move along
A dreadful sight of wilting trees
They sing a mournful song

Crystal rivers once had lept
and I too used dance
But dried-up banks, years unwept
And tears left up to chance

Gilded leaves fell with grace
But now they fall with force
Gilded leaves once would race
Gilded they are no more

Nesting birds dive and sweep
Across their once-green land
Nesting birds begin to weep
at the touch of human's hand

Natures forces carry me
I can not move along
A dreadful sight of long-lost beauty
I sing its mournful song

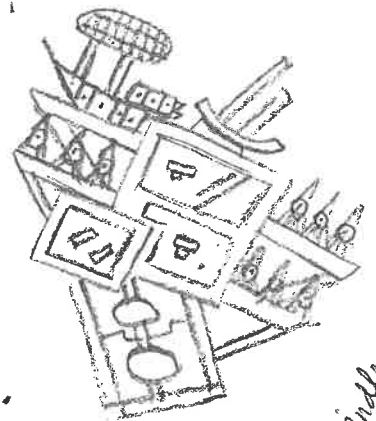
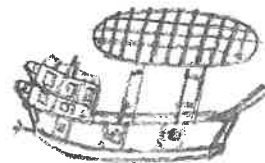
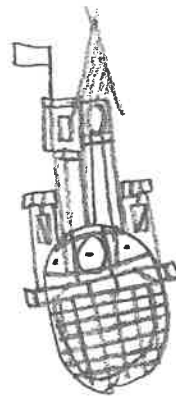
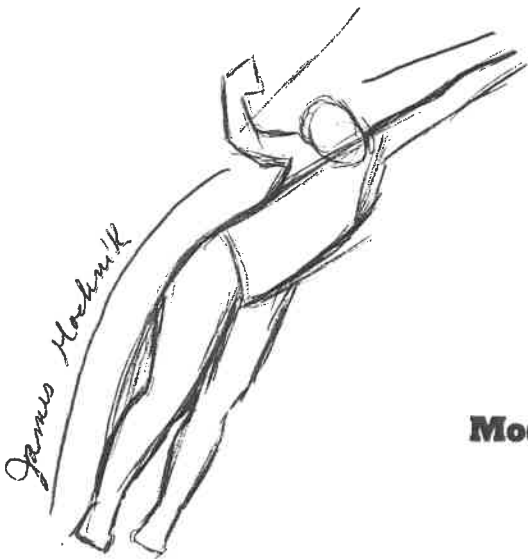
By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

- Jasper Hayes

In my [redacted] domesticity prevailed. The [redacted] midwife, who had been called in, was wheeling the perambulator carefully in and out of the door. Back to nursery went the coal heaver who was folding his empty sacks on top of each other; the women who keep the great green soap was adding up the day's washing; the housewife in red mittens. But so engrossed was I with the problem you have put upon my shoulders that I could not see even these usual sights without referring them to one centre. I thought how much harder it is

I can't look away when your lips look like that.
 Red, pink, glittery.
 I love it all.
 "I look so weird!"
 You say it all the time.
 And if weird is the new kind of sexy, then I have to agree.
 Aphrodite took her time with you.
 Getting every little bit of you just right.
 Making you illegally beautiful.
 All the things that make you imperfect make you, you.
 Just so, so perfect.
 Like you were made for me.
 You make my life perfect, so I pray to God every night to keep you here with me.
 Even if I'm not Christian.
 But God has answered one of my prayers.
 Which is to be here, in this life.
 With you.

Anonymous



Aiken Hinde - white

Modernist Absurdist Poem -

Fruity fierce flavor blast,
 Flawless perfection
 Fantasies of a rainbow complexion.
 Famous fancy tropical Fruit.
 Fun flashes of fresh
 Frogs, flowers, and fireworks not as flavorful.
 Squeaky freaky fruity tutti sweeter than fudge
 Friends like you and me, are fabulous and free.
 To feast with forks, not your feet.
 Forbidden fantastic fruit.

Elizabeth Bruce

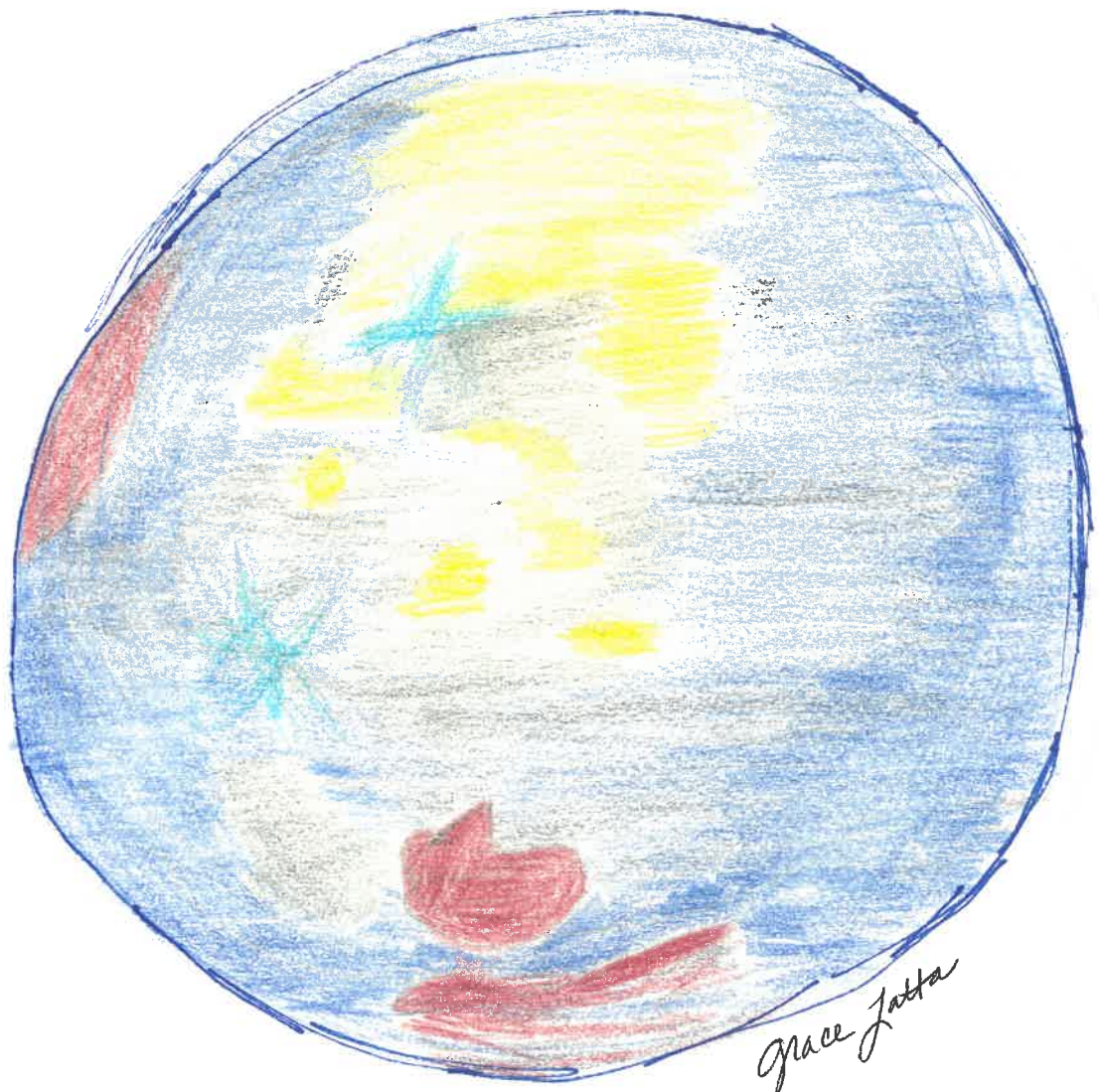
mercury

closest to the sun,
its size, like the ball of energy that we call our "moon"
its name, inspired by the roman messenger god

some people believe that when it's retrograde, it messes with our minds
they say "Mercury is retrograde for the next week, I'll feel better and back to normal soon"
all that power in an opal-like tint and silvery shade, a variety of craters and lines

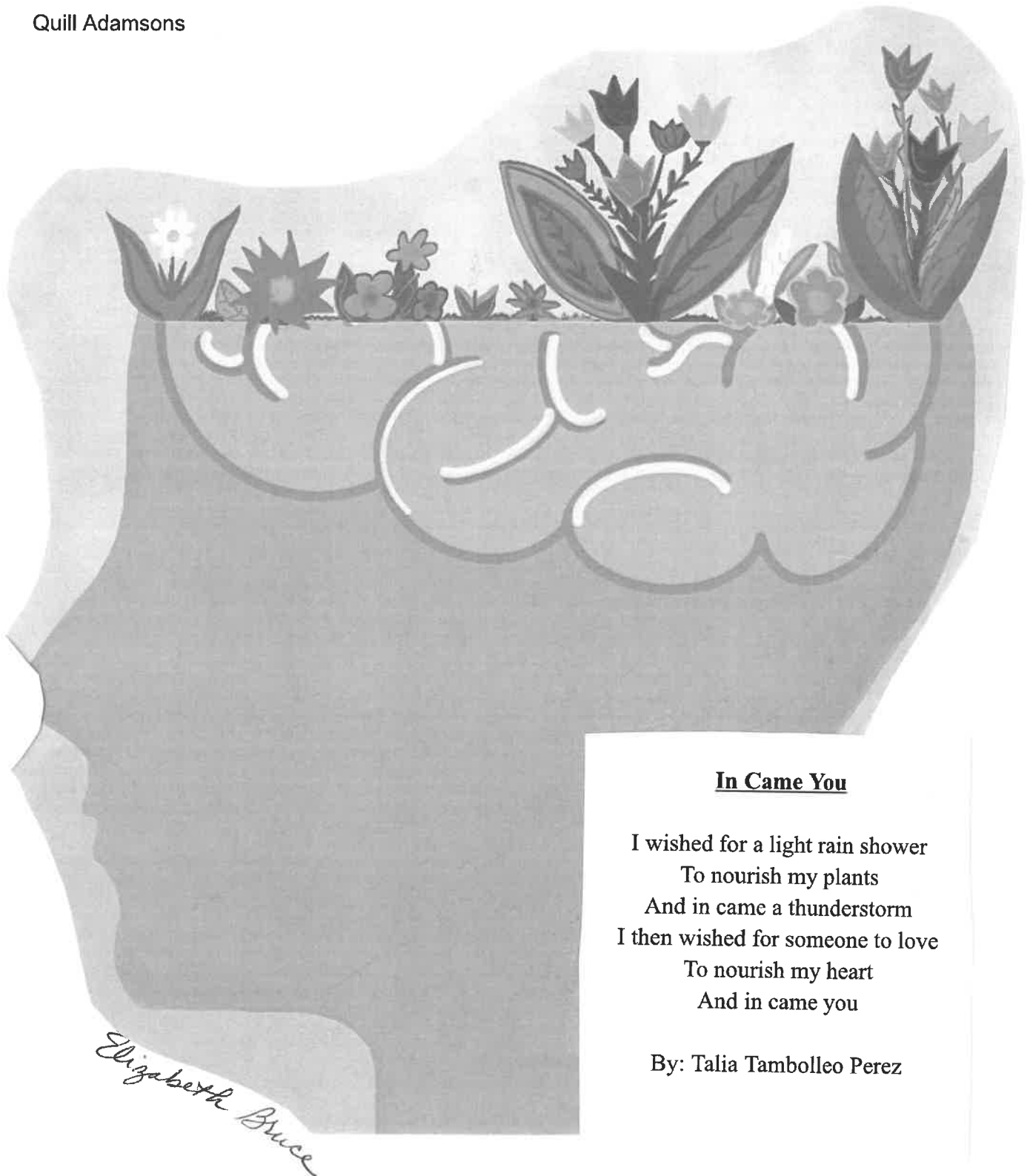
sulfur, water, and ice make up its surface
but deep deep under, you find its metallic core
with temperatures so hot no organism can survive

Arianna Carchedi



He lost his mind on the carnival ride so he swallowed his pride and spilled the pills from the man he'd killed. The institutions wouldn't take him, they didn't think they could wake him, didn't think they could make him take a break by the lake. His family felt no shame, for it wasn't them to blame. But his friends saw him through a different lens, he was a means to an end. An insanity plea (for a fee) was his final hope, so naturally he went on a spree.

Quill Adamsons



In Came You

I wished for a light rain shower
To nourish my plants
And in came a thunderstorm
I then wished for someone to love
To nourish my heart
And in came you

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

Living Forever.

Living forever **isn't** a **blessing**.

You still **need** to work **every day**, you still **need** to make money and **live** a life.

You can still get **sick**, you can still contract **diseases** and **illnesses**.

You can have a **life** sentence in jail and watch the stone walls **crumble** around you before your **heart stops beating**.

And your **heart can't stop beating**.

It's **forced** to continue to **beat** as everyone and everything else **dies** around you, as their **own heart stops beating**.

You're **forced** to watch as your loved ones **die**, a **blessing** that you **cannot** receive.

As you are **forced** to live a life that you **don't want** anymore.

A life that **can't** end.

You **hate** it, but you **can't stop** it.

Even if you **tried**, your body would somehow heal itself, and every doctor that treats you would claim it as a **miracle**.

A **miracle** that you should be **thankful** for, they say.

You still grow old as life **continues**.

Your back still **aches** and you gain more wrinkles the more time is added to your **never-ending** life sentence.

You grow **fragile** and **weary**.

The sun gets **hotter** and more plants and animals **die**.

You get to **experience** it **all**.

And you **can't stop** it.

Because you're **cursed**. **Believe** me,

Living **forever** isn't a **blessing**.

-Savannah Eldredge



A Little Life

That little cabin there,
sitting upon a hill,
it looks so perfect from here,
like a decoration on a window sill.

Covered in a dusting of snow,
and adorned with white lights,
Its people dance in the kitchen windows.
The fireplace and radio create Christmas delight.

How cold it is out here
and how warm it must be in there.
How I long for moments as sweet as those,
ones of love and care.

Oh, it makes me think
of all the time wasted.
Days spent away from those I love,
and nights barely tasted.

Why am I struggling over daily strife,
when I could be enjoying such a
perfect little life?

Ashley Smith

Aperture; in the style of Wallace Stevens

I.

Eyes opening for the first time
Not knowing yet what the criminal world
Has in store for a precious baby.

II.

The only thing that brings
A mother's deep-set eyes,
Vast, with canyons of love,
to rest
Is her sleeping child.

III.

In the eyes of the one,
Only stardust could reflect
The depth of his pupils
Sparkling and broken.

IV.

The bulging and back and forth
Of eyes succumbing
To a snow white;
Still.

V.

Watching a flurry of eyes
Chase after one another;
Finding the perfect set in yours.

VI.

Beautiful and sparkling
Only the new toys recently unwrapped
Can produce the twinkle in
Those round, big eyes.

VII.

Eyes turn grim and black
Forced to ignore the looking back
Of her demons in the complex hallway

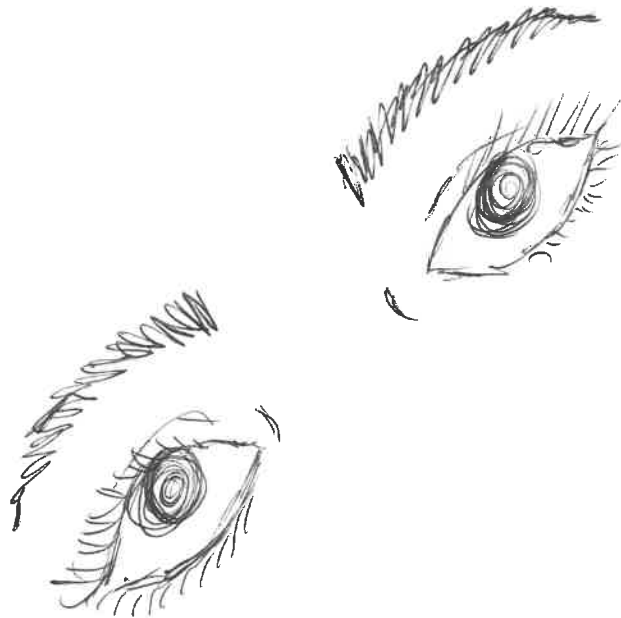
VIII.

Stare stare stare
Glance and realize that when making eye contact
There is only one eye to look at.

IX.

2 sets of eyes sit together
Off on the right of Jupiter
Pondering on whether it is
Civil or chaotic twilight.

Edrian Wright

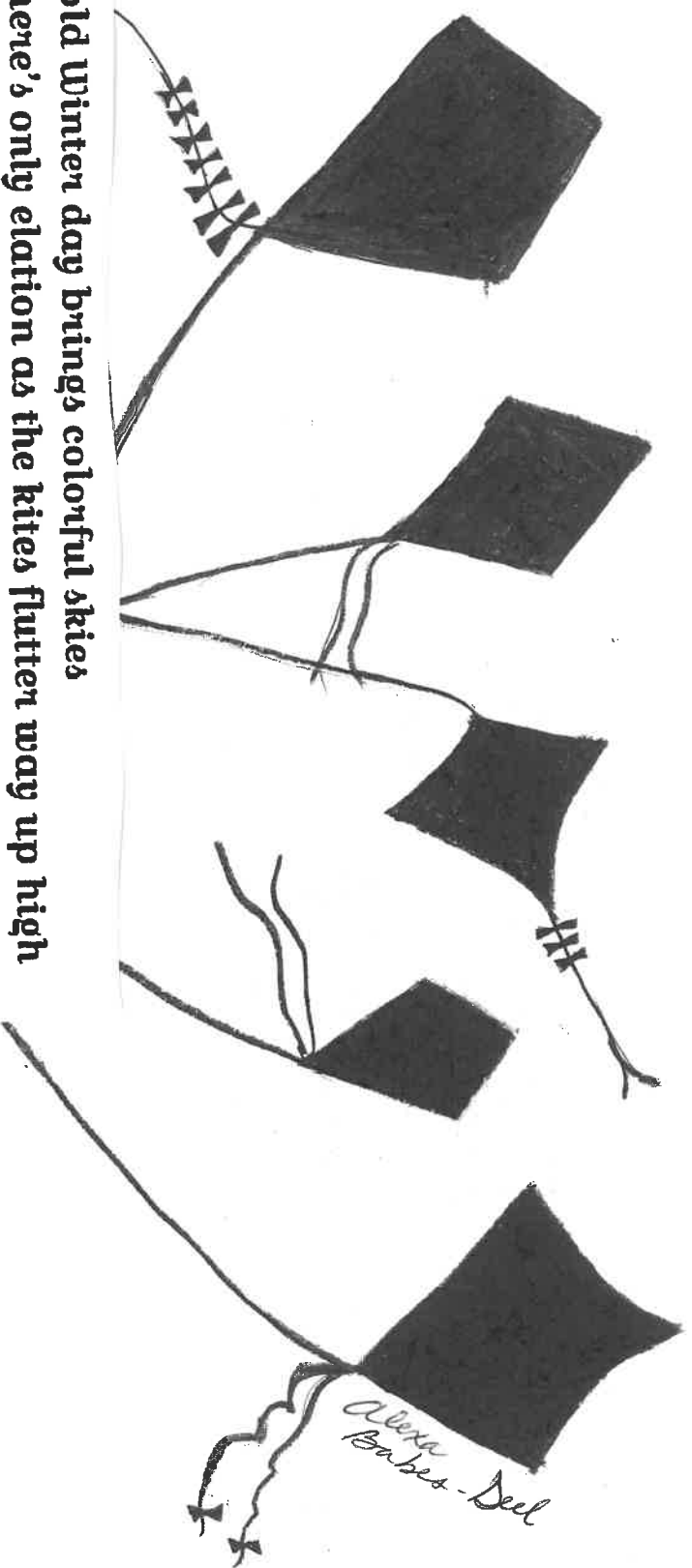


The Kite Runner Landays - Caleb Haarmann

- Cold Winter day brings colorful skies
There's only elation as the kites flutter way up high

- The ground rumbles with emphatic stomps
Kite runners all sprinting recklessly for the grand prize

- A kite as a kite is freed from its tether
The papercraft glides down to the ground like a feather



Ode to Uranus by Talia Perez

Uranus is cool
Uranus is fly
But when people make fun of Uranus
It cries

Uranus is much more
Then a silly name
Uranus is a planet
With questionable fame

Uranus is green
Uranus is dull
Uranus has thirteen
Rings on its skull

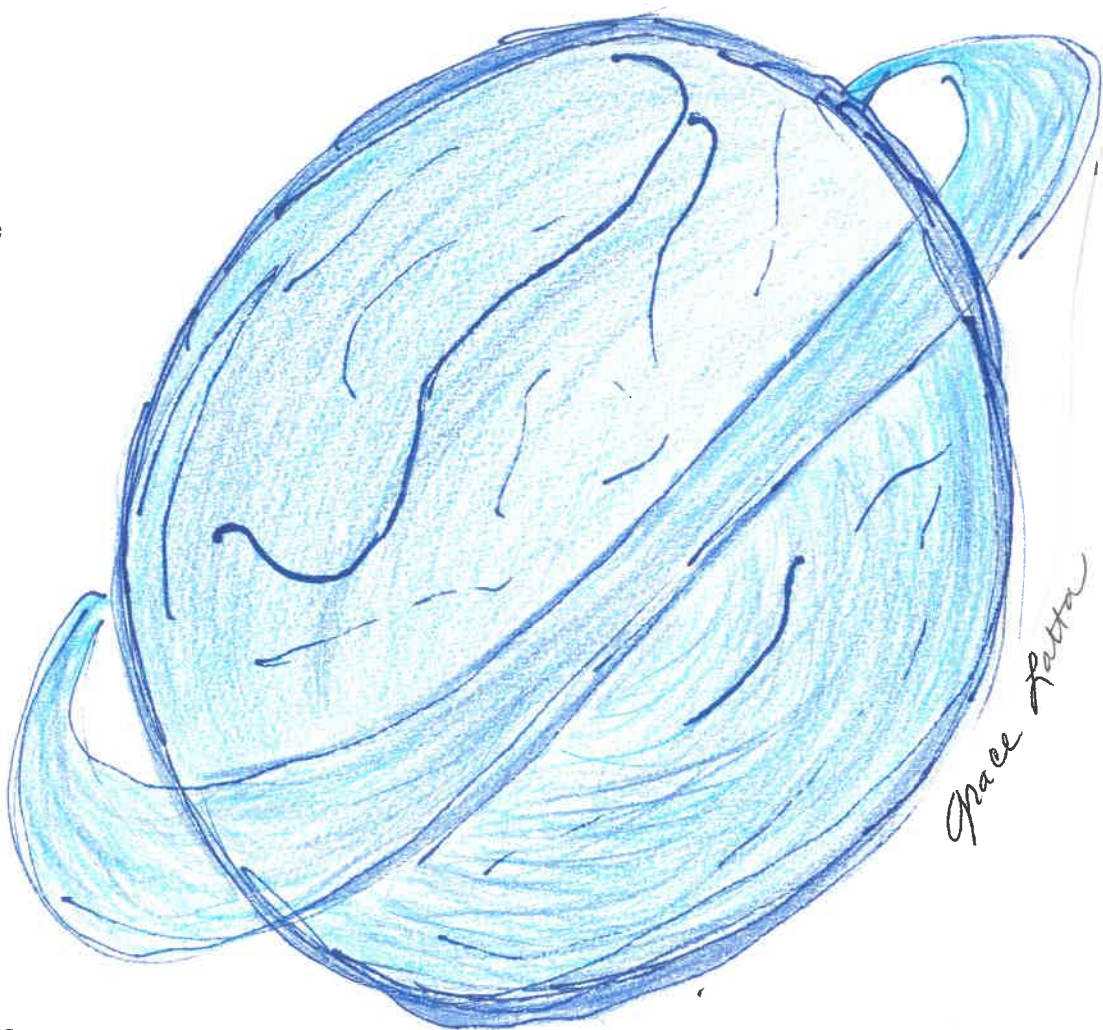
Uranus is the 7th
planet from the sun
Uranus is cold
Uranus is fun

Uranus smells bad
It has a strong stench
it smells of rotten eggs
Uranus is a wench

Uranus is pronounced
A slightly different way
Sometimes called Urinus
But the original always stays

Uranus is leaking
Scientists say
Uranus is gassy
I love it that way

(Uranus is scientifically leaking gas, like the actual planet is leaking)



Why Prometheus Doesn't Cry

Because he saw man's hope and gave him a guiding hand.

Because he heard man's prayer and gave him an answer.

Because from his view, up there on the cliffside, he watches terror turn to triumph.

For man evolves.

Because man wields a tangerine flame to fend off the shadows that darken his domain.

Because man makes bright candlelight to guide his kin to the glory of the future.

Because man forges armor from iron and silver to aid his fellows in battle.

Because man blows hot glass into intricate sculptures and presents them to his children.

Because man's spirit blazes like a forest fire, unrelenting and untamed.

Because man holds his child in his arms as he sits by the hearth in the cold winter.

Because man was taught to use his gift for good.

For man is good.

Because man's gift to him is his pride.

-Jude McMahon

It's chaotic.
Some people might hear
Just crashes and noises
But I think,
I belong

Bobbi Braz

I used to be a stream of consciousness
Cyclical, never stopping.
Always in a loop like an unsupervised clock.
It takes effort and time to separate yourself from your thoughts.
And I'm still learning,
But I am healing.
Edrian Wright

The Tale of Saul Funion

by Talia Perez

The house was noted across town as being the most intriguing house. It was two stories with a pointed, cone shaped roof, with firetruck red shingles, and the door was a vibrant pink, akin to the pink most closely associated with Barbie. However, besides those two peculiarities, the house was relatively normal.

The day began just as any other. Saul Funion rose from his rickety twin bed and carefully slipped on his favorite pair of woolen socks. He loved them because they were like gloves but for his feet. A place for every toe. Saul suffered from having two left feet, so many socks he tried on were ill-fitting. But these ones weren't. If there was ever an occasion to give a gift to Saul, it was almost 100% certain that these specific type of socks would be one of his only requests. Often times they were at the top of his list.

Many would accuse him of being one day short of interesting, his birthday being February 28th in a year that had the 29th, but in the same breath they would accuse him of having weird tastes. To each their own, thought Saul, but he strongly believed that *he* was the normal one. Often times he found himself defending his food preferences claiming that,

"I'm sure other people prefer sunbutter to peanut butter." To which his opposition would reply,

"Yes Saul, but those people usually suffer from nut allergies and have no other option. Of course they prefer sunbutter to possible death."

And from there Saul would remind everyone, despite it not having to do with anything pertaining to his argument, that he suffers from an banana allergy, proving exactly nothing. Some of his other outside of the box favorites include Funions, (hence his appropriately given nickname of Saul Funion. No one knows his real last name) Charleston Chews, plain Greek yogurt, raisin bran muffins, and anchovies on pizza. Normal, right? What makes these choices so abnormal is his intense love for them. Nothing else would be acceptable. If you presented a plain cheese pizza to Saul, he would simply scoff, as if plain cheese pizza was the most disgusting thing in the world.

He was also accused of being weird for a number of different reasons, some of which he couldn't help. It's not his fault he's an only-child, left-handed, has two left feet, believes that nice guys finish last, says "I see the light," every time he fell, "I'm just Joshin' you," after every joke, and laughs with the laugh track of disturbingly unfunny pieces of media. He couldn't help it. It's just the way he was born.

Of course, there were some things he did that he thought didn't help his desired image of "normal" guy. For example, his dream was to be on every game show. He would regularly rebel against his 8:00 pm bed-time, and hide under his covers with his computer screen dimly lit, as it always was, to answer Jeopardy questions along with the contestants. However, he always regretted his late nights of answering "What is...?" and often wondered if this behavior fell under the "bad boy" category, and if he should be curating his image to better fit his obviously rebellious tendencies. But as the day progressed, and in the comfort and solitude of his home,

Saul felt no need to put up a "normal guy" or "bad boy" persona, and that's just how he liked it. Him just being himself, in his two story home with a firetruck red roof, and Barbie pink door.

The Person They Call Marilyn

By Ashley Smith

"Lights, camera, action",
I hear at all times.
Sitting in front of the camera,
with a wall of faces behind.

My only job is to be someone I'm not,
put on a new face at each dawn of light,
and pretend
to smile for their leering eyes.

But, they don't know of my struggles,
what I've seen, the things I'm told to do.
They can't spot the emptiness in my eyes,
the loneliness shining through.

They don't know of the dark alleys,
the small bags exchanged for my soul,
the remnants of white lines
that forever stain my dream and goal.

They don't know who I am.
They know the version I let everyone see,
the shimmering flash on the silver screen,
the captivating beauty believed to be me.

But then again, neither do I.
All I know is the same person they see.
Sometimes I wonder how I'll turn out.
Is this really who I'm meant to be?

Maybe I am forever doomed,
chained to this life I lead.
Maybe I am forever an image
No one ever fulfilling my need.

Maybe my body will always belong to the world
my soul to those dark alleys, my eyes to the flashing lights,
Maybe my mind was left with the bright little girl I once was.
The one who dreamed, the one who had sight.

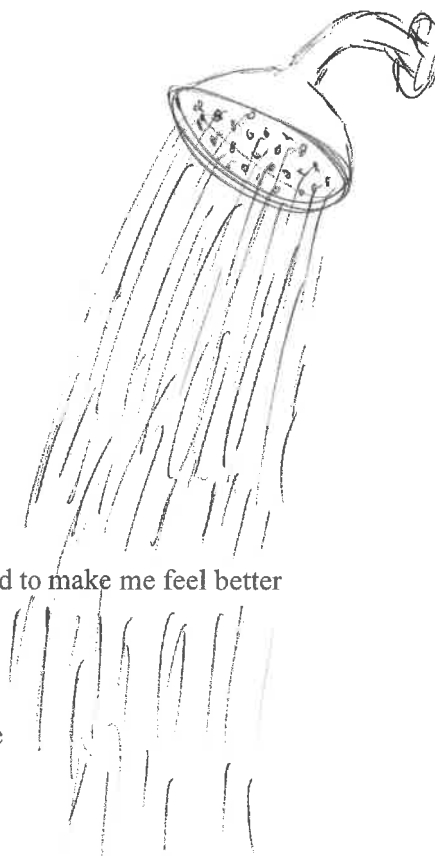
I wonder what she would say to me now.



Shower Water

I am lying on my bed
My body feels so tired
I am lying on my bed
Wrapped up in my towel
I touch my shoulder
My skin is smooth and soft
My body is so tired
I touch my face
Taking a shower was supposed to heal me
The hot water sinking into my warm skin was supposed to make me feel better
Not worse
I am holding back from heaving
I am holding back from crying
The steam rising in the bathroom... I could not breathe
I wanted to fall asleep and close my eyes
Fall to the shower floor
Curl into a ball
Slip away into unconsciousness
Forget this sick feeling swallowing me
I am lying on my bed
Feeling drained
Feeling so tired
Feeling my eyelids begin to close because they are so heavy
So very heavy

~grace elizabeth



Wilting

*As I walk towards a broken home
my head aches with every step
My conscious realizing that i'm pacing towards trauma
My mind was a flower once
Blooming with creativity
Yet the world has deprived my flower of light
It can't survive without it
Despite the imminent end
It still tries to raise its petals a little higher
Clinging to the possibility of survival
Yet with each day passing by
A petal falls
And so does a piece of my mind
This flower is Wilting*

Blake Noonan

Afghan Landay

Loving him was grey, neither black nor white,
But leaving him was red, angry, and filled with fright

Marissa Dennis



Too Good at Apologies

they're always sorry
until they do it again

Tian Jamieson

Isabelle

Isabelle is a dancer
She is quite good
Like the reindeer Prancer

Very smart
Does well in her classes
But not with art

She has been my friend
For many, many years
A friendship which I hope will never end

Katelyn Groves

does it occur to you?

Does it perhaps occur to you
That there are things going on in a girl's body
Which may consume more time in the bathroom?

Does it perhaps occur to you
That some people can't change in five seconds flat
That there may be mental conditions hindering people from finishing tasks quickly?

Does it occur to you
There are other, more intelligent ways to prove yourself?

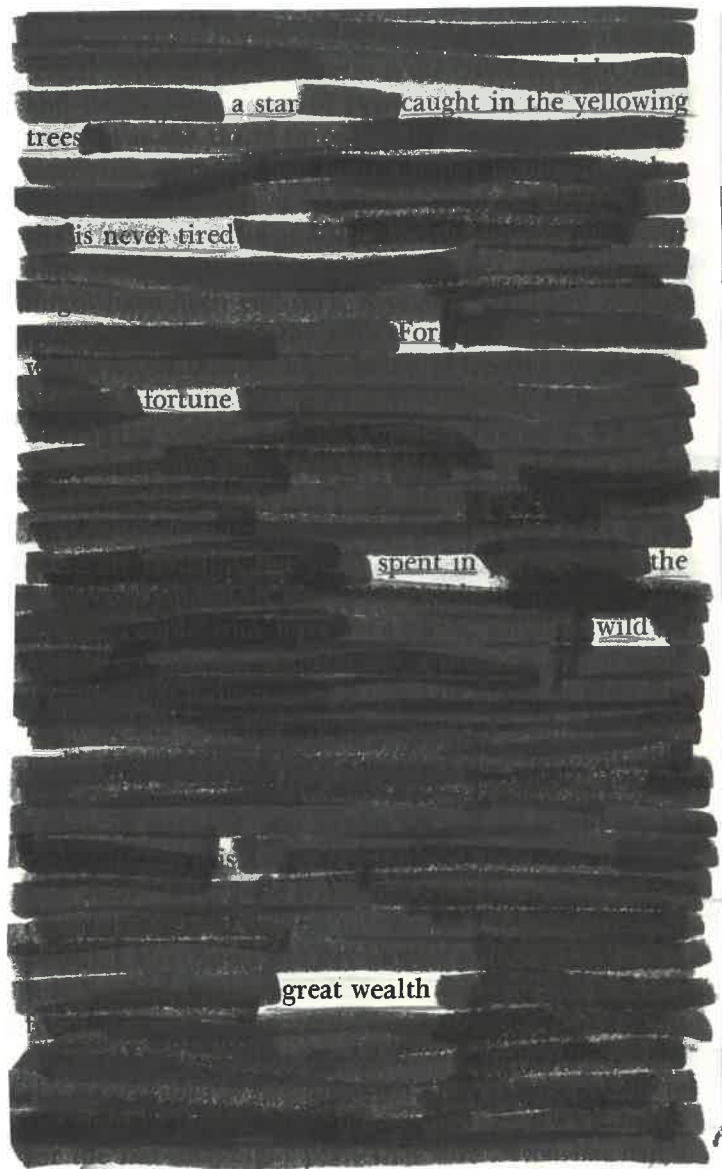
Does it occur to you
People have different strengths?
For example:
If we were in an art class
Or a writing class
Or anything creative
You would be appealing to me for help
And I would answer,
Silently judging your dumb, unintelligent queries.

It would be my element.
My time to shine.
And you'd be the one uncomfortable.

Does it occur to you
That perhaps you are not the teacher's pet?
And if you were to simply change rooms
I would be on top?

For me, the best part of the sports event
Is the intermission where you can get snacks.
And perhaps for you,
The best part of the performance
Is the halftime
Where you can get snacks.

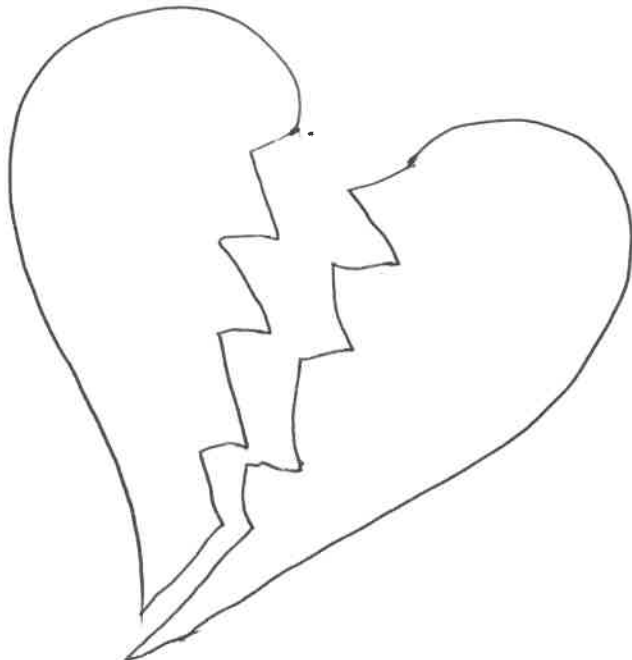
Bobbi Braz



Broken Promises

You promised me you wouldn't leave.
You promised me you would teach me how to ride a bike.
You promised me that all my nightmares would disappear when I'm older.
I'm older now.
You promised me that you wouldn't leave unless I wanted you to.
I wanted you to stay, you left me anyways.
You said you would never leave.
And now I'm alone, wishing I could be in your arms, like how it used to be.
Now I'm in my room crying, remembering what we used to be.
Knowing I could have called you at any time like it was nothing.
You promised me that when we got older, you would buy me all the nice things I want.
You promised we would figure out our future together, and we would get through it together.
Just you and me, forever.
But we aren't growing old together anymore.
You promised you would always make me happy when I get sad.
And I'm sad now, but you're nowhere to be found.
Where did you go?
Are you happier without me?
You promised me that everything would be ok.
And I'm sick of pretending that it is.
You promised that you would always love me.
I just don't believe that anymore.
You promised me that you would make me my favorite tea the next time you came over.
I'm still waiting.
You promised me that we would continue being friends.
And now I'm waiting, still waiting, for you to finally text me first.
And I'm waiting for you to fulfill those broken promises.

-Savannah Eldredge



I'm sorry.

Why? I broke up with you, I should be sorry.

I'm sorry for missing you.
I'm sorry that I'm holding on.

Don't be sorry.

But I am, I don't want to let go.

But you've moved on.

I know. I'm sorry.

**Don't be sorry, that's what I wanted you to do.
I've wanted you to move on.
I know you wouldn't if I kept being nice, so I was mean.**

Thank you.
For everything.

You're welcome, now pass on what I have taught you.

Taught me?

I've taught you about love.

Huh, I guess you did.

**You used to be so shy.
I broke you out of your shell so you could flourish.
Show everyone what you've become.**

I guess in a way you molded me into who I am now.

**No.
I've just shown you who you could be.
Who you are is up to you.
I was just along for the ride, watching you grow.**

I don't want you to leave.

**I know, but people come and go.
I didn't want to leave either, but I did.**

Thank you for everything.
Just know you made me stronger, and you kinda are a part of who I am.
You've taught me so much and made me feel things I didn't know I could.
You have influenced me so much.
I love you.

I guess you could say you've won the war of who loves who more.

I guess.
I hope we meet again.
In this life, or any other.

**So do I.
Goodbye.**

Goodbye.

...

...
I love you too.

Anonymous

Emma Eldredge Blackout poem

DRACULA

191

He thought he saw
Someone
Something terrible
Something to overwhelm

The horror
The fearful mystery
The fear since a tumult

I was hysterical,
Threw myself,
held my hands,
implored him again

He took my hands,
and eat
he held my hand
and said

My life,
Barren
lonely
Full of work
not time

But
I have been summoned here
I have known
Ind
Feel
onliness

belive
come
all of hope

ope of women still left
whose lives suffer
I promise you
I will do all that I can
all to make your life
overwrought and over-anxious

"He thought he saw some one who recalled something terrible, something ~~which led to his brain fever~~." And here the ~~whole thing seemed to overwhelm me~~. The pity for ~~Jonathan~~, the horror which he experienced, the whole fearful mystery of his diary, and the fear that has been ~~haunting me~~ ever since, all came in a tumult. I suppose I was hysterical, for I threw myself on my knees and held up my hands to him, and implored him to make my husband well again. He took my hands and raised me up, and made me sit on the sofa, and sat by me; he held my hand in his, and said to me with, oh, such infinite sweetness:

"My life is barren and lonely ~~one~~, and so full of work that I have not had much time for friendships; but since I have been summoned to here by my friend John Seward I have known so many good people and seen such nobility that I feel more than ever—and it has grown with my advancing years—the loneliness of my life. Believe, me, then, that I come here full of respect for you, and you have given me hope, hope, not in what I am seeking of, but that there are good women still left to make life happy—good women, whose lives and whose truths may make good lesson for the children that are to be. I am glad, glad, that I may here be of some use to you; for if your husband suffer, he suffer within the range of my study and experience, I promise you that I will gladly do all for him that I can—all to make his life strong and manly, and your life a happy one. Now you must eat. You are overwrought and perhaps over-anxious. Husband Jonathan would not like to see you so pale; and what he like not where he love, is not to his good. Therefore for his sake you must eat and smile. You have told me all about Lucy, and so now we shall not speak of it, lest it distress. I shall stay in Exeter to night, for I want to think much over what you have told me, and when I have thought I will ask you questions, if I may. And then, too, you will tell me of husband Jonathan's trouble so far as you can, but not yet. You must eat now; afterwards you shall tell me all."

After lunch, when we went back to the drawing room, he said to me:

"And now tell me all about him." When it came to speaking to this great learned man, I began to fear that he would think me a weak fool, and Jonathan a madman—that journal is all so strange—and I hesitated to go on. But he was so sweet and kind, and he had promised to help, and I trusted him, so I said:

what he like not
is not to his good.
Therefore
you must

you shall not speak
I shall think
you will not

I began to fear
me
a weak fool
a madman
so strange

the Monster in my head

What is following me?

Sh!

Be quiet

Keep it all in your head I remind myself

Isn't most of what I go through all in my head to begin with?

My head is a scary place to be

Yet it's my home

My comfort

How can something so terrifying be that pinpoint of return?

I am consistent in nesting away in my thoughts

Constructing them piece by piece

Tucking myself in bed

Attempting to hide from the monster

Burying further

Burying deeper

Beneath the blankets

Here it is warm, red

I am swimming in a clear bowl

Kicking to the surface

But I can't reach it

My fingertips touch the cool air

Then slip beneath again

I can't swim

I am weighed down by these invisible chains

I can't seem to break free from them

I am weighed down by these soaked clothes

I can't seem to change out of them

Because there is no goddamn key

Because there is no way of drying off

If I open my eyes will it go away?

No, my eyes will fill with water

Will all of this madness go away if I scream?

No, the madness will get madder

Feeding the monster

The piercing ringing in my eardrums will get louder

And L OU DE R...

What is following me?

Why won't it go away?

Why can't it leave me be

In my god-awful head?

Is there a way to get out of here?

Is there anyone who's on the other side?

I press my hands against this warm, red, place

I press my hands against the very bottom of the bowl

Wanting to get away

To get out of my head....

TO GET OUT OF MY HEAD

I don't want to stay here anymore

Just get me out...please

~grace elizabeth

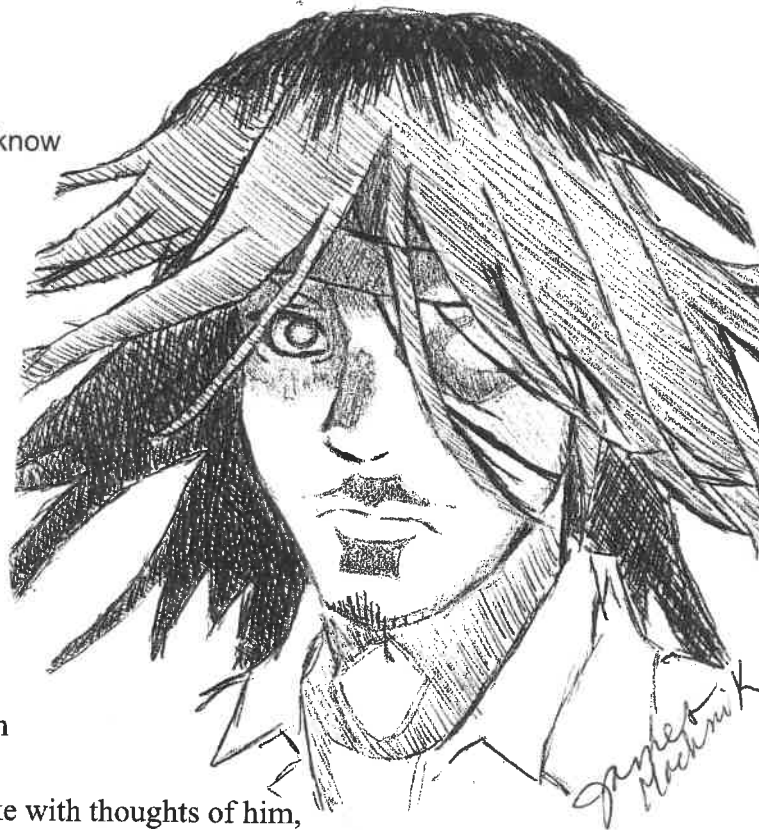
Simple on the Outside, Complicated on the Inside

No, this is not your typical Thanksgiving,
No, this is not the type when people come over,
No, this is not the type when you go to relatives
No, this is not one big happy family
No, this is not when you see family you don't even know

This is when it is just my parents
No traveling,
No huge production
Simple
Simple is what it is
But not simple,
Not simple at all,
Complicated is what it is
Not exceptionally easy to describe.
A sea of mixed emotions floods over the dock,
Rocking back and forth.

One side is seldom discussed.
Lies to cover lies,
A book full of mysteries
I'm trying to solve.
The other side,
Simple and complicated too.
We are no longer all together,
My grandfather joins my cousins,
And their grandparents,
But us, no
Not us
Not invited
No, this is not your typical Thanksgiving,
But it is mine,
And I might as well accept it.

Chloe Horan



Crush

I wake with thoughts of him,
The only thing on my mind

Heart fluttering with nerves,
Stomach twisting with butterflies.

I steal glances across the room,
Hoping that maybe today, he'll glance back

I analyze each little detail from every interaction we have:
Was that smile reciprocation?
That laughter a clue?

I talk to him and I don't know what to say,
Suddenly conscious of each thing I do.

I analyze every word received in return
Hoping to read between the lines and find he feels this way too.

Jordan MacRoberts

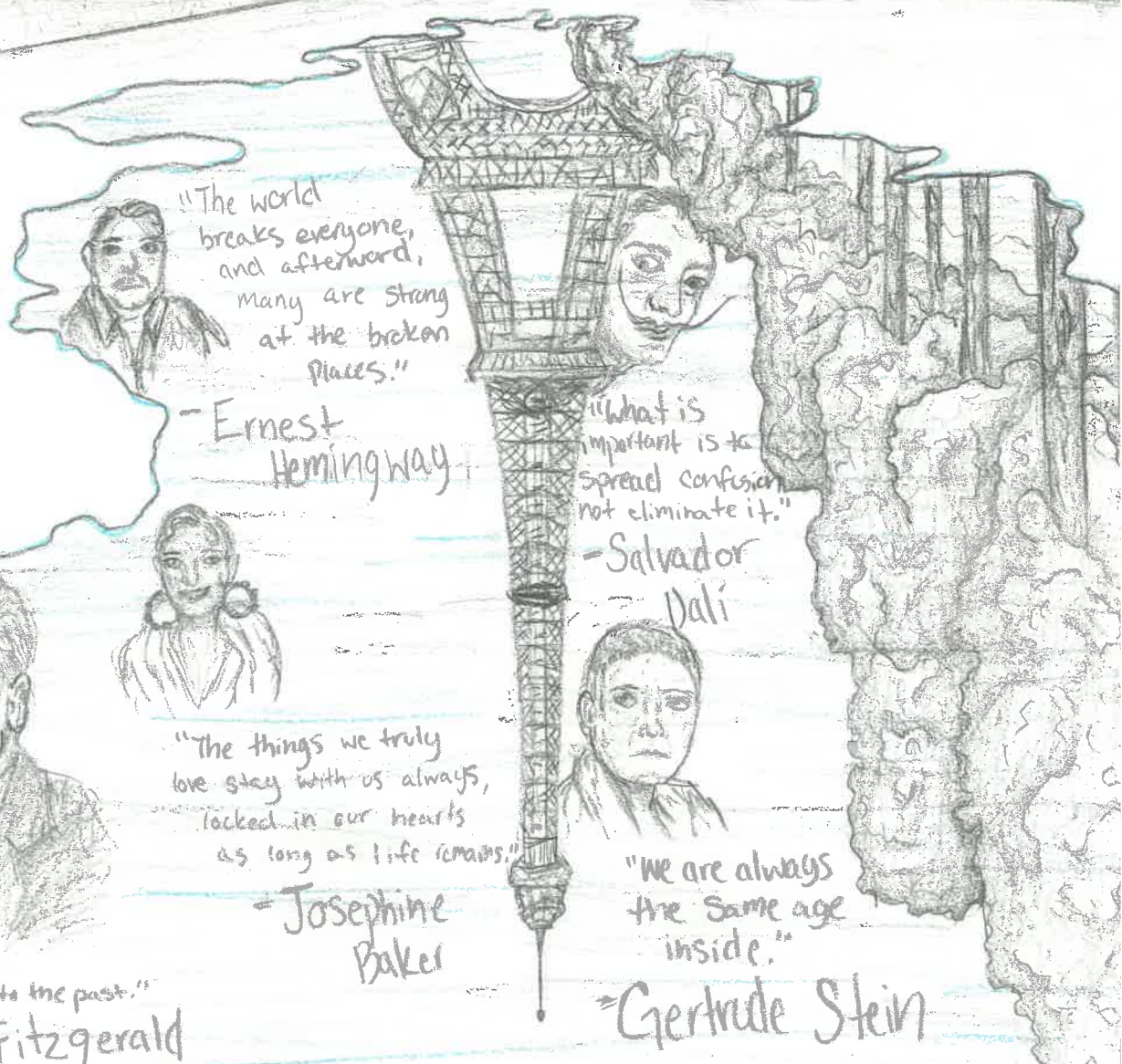
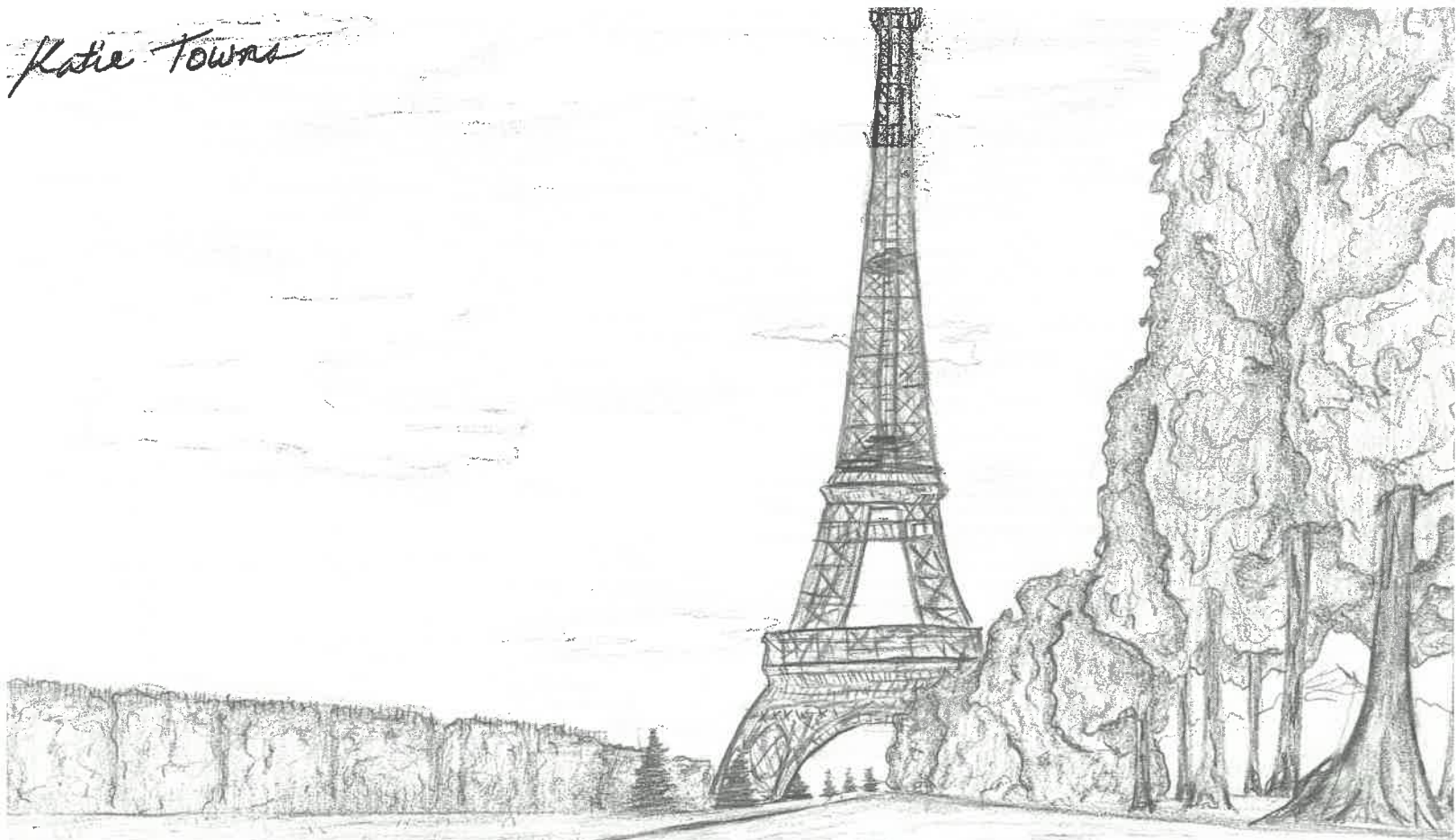


My Sister, Venus

Love is seen as hot and steamy between intimate life partners,
but this is not always the case.
It's a strong connection, sisterhood.
My sister is very pretty.
She longs for love.
She gets kind of lonely.
It feels like she is 38 million miles away sometimes,
but she is my favorite.
My sister and I are the same height.
People say we are twins.
I don't think so.
She is very bright and lovely,
while I am often covered by clouds.
People say she IS hot and steamy,
but she feels welcoming and warm to me as her light is the brightest in my sky.

By Via Ferer

Ratie Towns



"The world
breaks everyone,
and afterward,
many are strong
at the broken
places."

- Ernest
Hemingway

"What is
important is to
spread confusion,
not eliminate it."

- Salvador
Dali

"The things we truly
love stay with us always,
locked in our hearts
as long as life remains."

- Josephine
Baker

"We are always
the same age
inside."

- Gertrude Stein

"So we beat on,
boats against the current,
borne back ceaselessly into the past."

- F. Scott Fitzgerald

Dad

With your seemingly infinite supply of baseball caps
You practice every night while watching tv
Your set list from that Kenny Chesney concert
That's all country music and cringey love songs by Dan & Shay (blech)
Even though you listen to Ed Sheeran sometimes
And I get very tired of listening to Kenny Chesney
We still can rap along to Hamilton together
And look forward to it next March

I can guess what movie is on
And then you'll correct me if I'm wrong
We can whisper the quotes together
And you'll get annoyed when you're a word off
It's funny.

You can say you want to watch Andor
I can say I really don't
But we can still watch the latest Marvel mini-series.
And I'm glad we can do those things.
I'm glad we have shared interests.
I'm glad we get along.

Mom

You aren't necessarily the fun parent
You're definitely more responsible
And you don't always let me have all the candy and other junk I want
But you care about me.
You make sure I don't stay up too late
Even though I usually still do.
You care,
And it's nice to know you check on me.
You tell me not to eat too much so I don't get a terrible stomachache
I sometimes do anyway

But you know the things I want for Christmas
And my birthday
And you get me (mostly) all the LEGOs that I want
And all the plants
Even when they're taking over the house

And when I need to talk
Or I need advice
Or I'm stressed and I don't know what's going on,
You're there
To give me advice
And a hug
And I feel better.

We would talk for a long time
And then you'd sing to me
And then I'd try to fall asleep
You'd rub my back
And I'd try to fall asleep
We could talk about whatever
Have long conversations
About what we're doing over the weekend,
Or schedules,
Or schoolwork and rehearsals.
I miss that.
We've grown apart in that way, but we're still close,
And I'm glad for that.

Bobbi Braz

Cupid's Intent by Via Ferer

I do love you, honest.

But I can't have you.

Our love is a type so strong that it is forbidden and enchanted.

Cupid's intentions were mischievous.

He planned differently than I.

But even still, my heart is yours.

Forever.

You are always in my mind.

We are one.

I love you.



My love.

I miss you.

Nothing can fill the **ache** in my heart.

The ache where you once resided.

The space you **used** to fill up.

It's **empty** now.

It's empty, like an **empty** classroom.

You could hear a pin **drop**, in an **empty** classroom.

Where students are **supposed** to be, but none are found.

Like how you're **supposed** to be in my **heart**.

But you **aren't** found.

Because you **aren't** there.

It's so **empty**.

So lonely.

Because you **left**.

It's **empty**.

My love,

my heart is **empty**.

The space is **only** for you.

But it will **always** be **empty**.

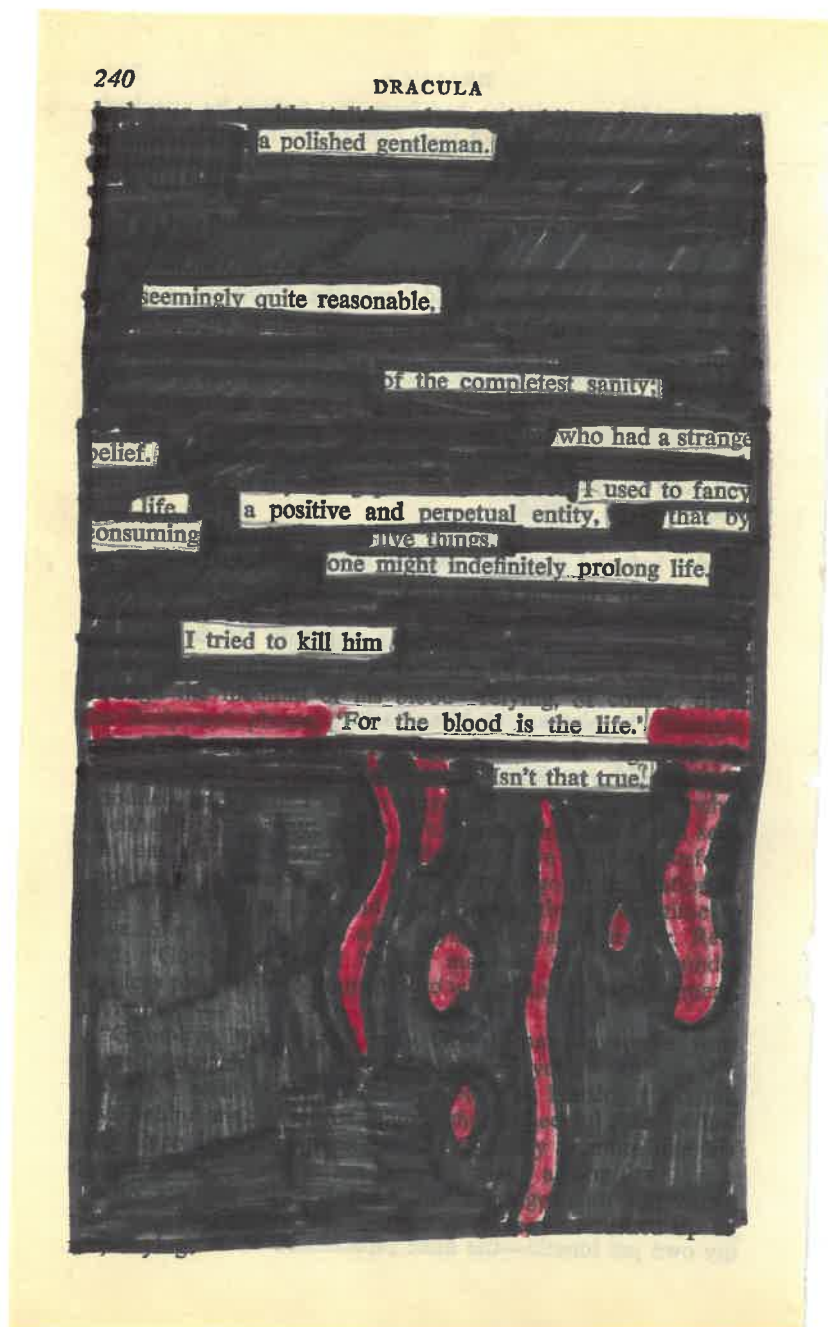
Because you're **never** coming back.

The Grim Reaper and I - a short story

The night was cold and dark. Rain trickled down and left me drenched. The air felt dense with every breath I took. I walked down the dim-lit street. For weeks prior I had hoped and prayed for rain, but now that it was here... The world seemed like it would end. My life had always been this way.

I woke up on the floor the next morning. I felt warm, covered in a blanket that my roommate must have placed. I sat up and winced as my head pounded. As I got off the ground, I nearly tripped over my feet. Every step I took was more and more wobbly. What had happened last night? I hardly remembered what I ate for dinner, forget anything after that. My body was heavy, shoulders drawn to the floor. I wondered what was to come in my despair.

Via Ferer



Abby Considine

Blinded

You played me, and i fell right into your game
 my love became my blindness,
 dreams into painful nightmares
You smiled and flirted, and i naively followed
 But with every compliment was another string,
 every smile had a shadow
You were a puppet master and i- Your puppeteer
 You manipulated my motions with every lie
 my every thought became about You
You lied to me, did you think i wouldn't notice?
 Yet you knew i didn't want the truth,
 that i wouldn't go looking for it

Until one day I did.

But it hurt too much to blame you
So I declared Myself to be the villain,
because in truth,
I should have seen you for what you are

Tian Jamieson

Afghan Landays

As a daughter of an immigrant mother I love her
But as a human I hate her

Looking into her eyes is like looking out at the sea
Waiting for an answer from God to finally breathe

Alisha Germosen

Words

Through life, all you'll know is words

Words spoken, words heard,
Whispered, written, read

Said with a smile,
Later shouted through tears

Words said with passionate conviction,
Soon with no emotion at all

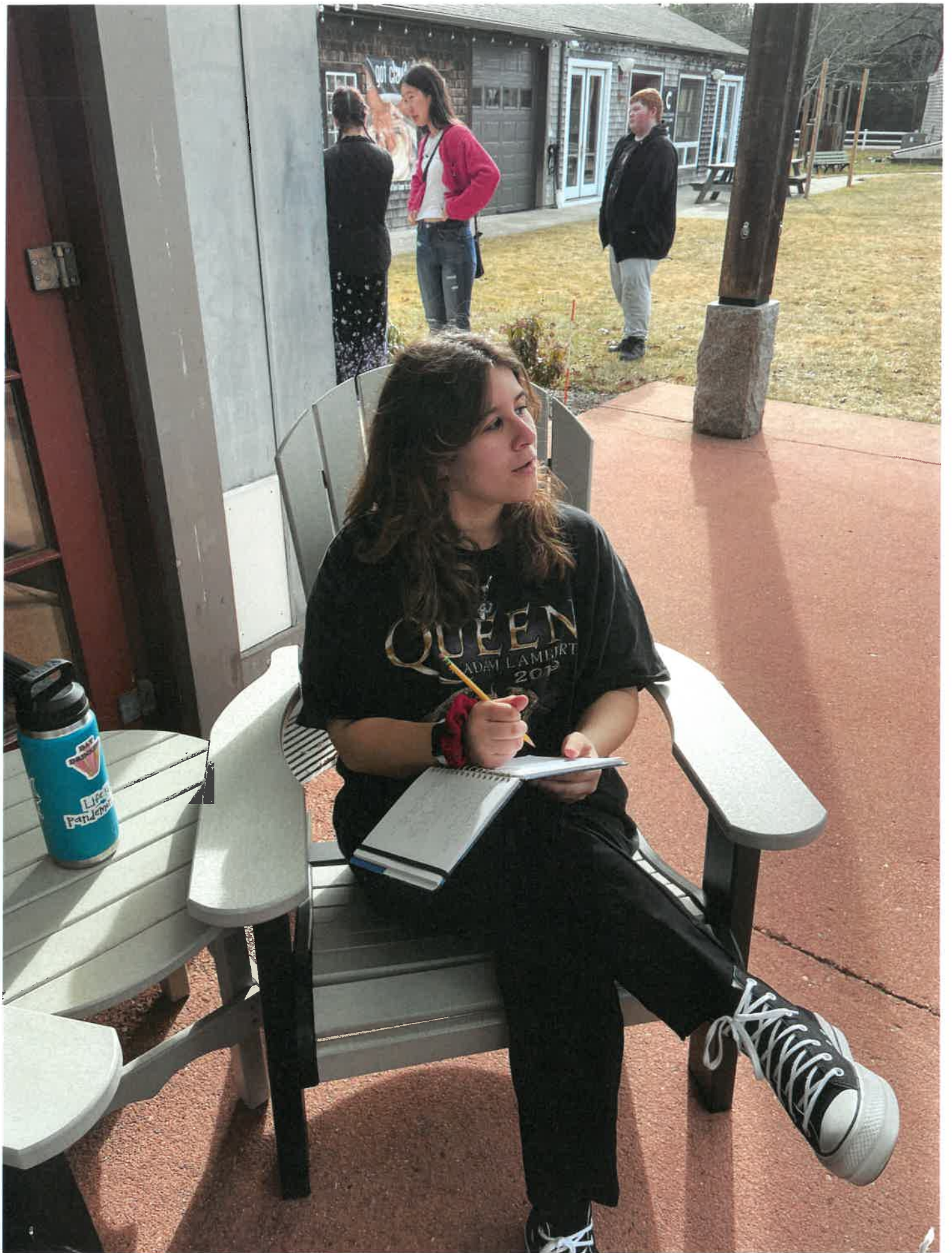
In the end, words are all you'll have

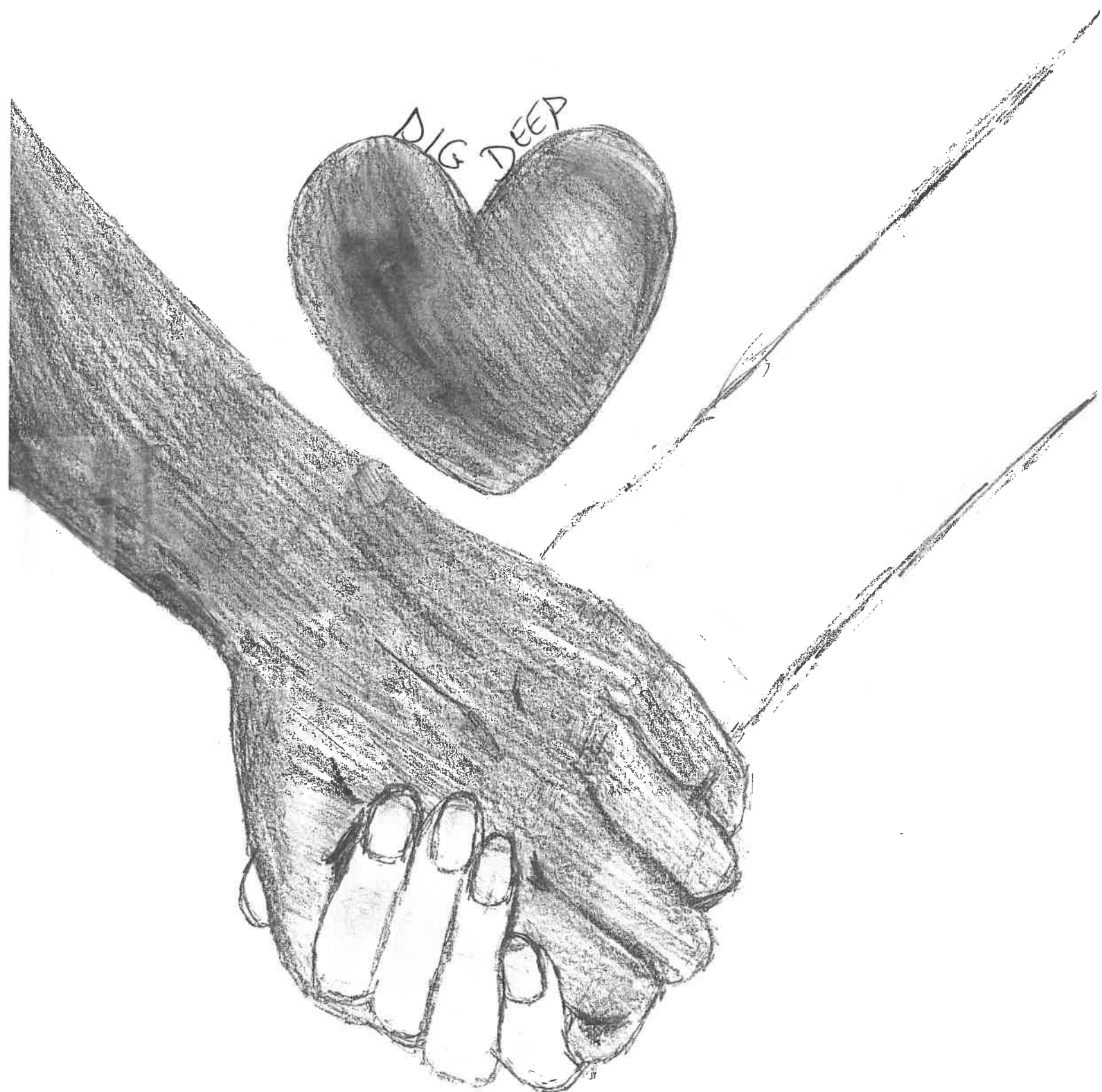
Words of love, or of hate
Regretful, some gone unspoken

Everywhere all around you,
Inescapable and all-encompassing

Jordan MacRoberts







DIG DEEP

Love is hidden.
It goes quietly on every day,
without making a fuss.
It's so shy that we don't think we see it
all that much.

But believe me when I say
love is everywhere.

It's in the silent smiles,
exchanged between strangers,
and the rainy nights spent in bed.

It's in the patter of tiny feet on playground steps,
and the swing of two hands intertwined.

It's in the quiet hum of someone's favorite song,
and the budding flowers that can't wait for spring.

It's in you and me,
even on our bad days.

There's never an absence of love in our world,
you may just have to dig deep to find it.

By: Ashley Smith



Waves Crashing

Waves crash down with a powerful force
Gray hazy dream, struck by rain, I drown in love
For you

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

Jordan MacRoberts

12/13/22

On a little plot of isolated land, far away from anything else, there was a graham cracker house with a pink door. The path to the home was made of cracks full of grass and dandelions during spring, later covered in snow by winter. The door knob was practically glued on, having fallen off many times before. It was nearly impossible to twist open, but the inhabitants made do.

Three sour patch people lived in the house with the pink door. It was small but sturdy, the inside cozy and warm. It had no chimney, nor a fire place, but the sour patch people had plenty of blankets. When it got too cold, they would make blanket forts and play very volatile matches of UNO.

The inhabitants of the house with the pink door kept holiday decorations up year round. The walls indoors were covered in lights and above the entrance hung a wreath which fell nearly every time the door was opened. An unsuspecting guest to the house once even got practically crushed by it. There also sat many decorations on the house's roof, which seemed to not like hanging on. They'd slide right off as if they were ice skaters trying to perform an impressively quick trick.

The sour patch people loved to sled. As soon as the first snowfall of winter began, they'd use the sled outside to practically fly down a nearby hill. They'd race from their home to be the first to slide down, making it nearly a competition each year. They also liked to test how many of their friends they could fit on the sled, one year managing to fit eight total. They loved to sled and have fun, but they loved their little house more.

A Day at School

The day starts with a morning alarm buzzing
I roll over onto my arm to check the time
just five more minutes of sleep
getting up is such a struggle
I just need one more snuggle.
I take a deep breath and sigh
rubbing my eyes and putting on my glasses
I head upstairs and reach underneath the cabinet to brush my teeth
getting dressed and ready I think I need some coffee to keep me steady
driving to school and listening to music
a set schedule every five days.
I meet my friends in the team room and say good morning
the first bell rings giving a warning
the school day has begun.

First class is boring and I think I hear someone snoring
the teacher is going on and on
he's been talking for way too long
a kid in the back of the class started to rap
Is it too early to take a nap?
The next two classes fly by
all I can think about is lunchtime
a sandwich and some fruit salad that is all mine
many laughs and jokes shared
do I even dare stare at the school lunch?
The last two classes go by slow
the pile of homework has only grown
I wait for the weekend to come
Only to be woken up tomorrow morning by that same annoying alarm clock.

Elizabeth Bruce

We Are Strangers Now.

I know we are strangers now, but I can still name Mustangs and Lambos in the streets.
I know we are strangers now, but I still pinch with my thumb and middle finger,
just how you taught me.
And I still get the Four for Four at Wendy's, like your mother got us one time at your house.
But I don't share my nuggets with anyone anymore.
I still hear your voice telling me to walk faster across the street,
even though I don't really remember what you sound like anymore.
But your laugh, oh, your laugh.
I remember your laugh as easily as I remember the melody to my favorite song.
I heard somewhere that when people die, they don't really ever die
until they are thought about for the last time.
And even though we are strangers now, I still think about the car rides as we drove to my house,
with you laughing in the back seats with my brother.
Oh my brother, he loved you more than anyone else.
What a shame you two are strangers now.
Strangers with an intertwined past.
A shame you let us become strangers.
But no matter, strangers or not, I won't let you die.
If you die before I do, I'll let you live on.
In my thoughts, in my heart, and in every word I write. <3

-Savannah Eldredge

Time

*As the clock strikes five i peer over at my lover
Her eyes gaze into mine
The eyes are glazed and dull
Yet they still love me
Throughout this life of mine
Never have i felt this way with another*

*The moment of happiness which will be forgotten in years to come
Still captivates and makes me numb
Despite this fleeting moment of life
i gaze into my lover's eyes
And realize i'm happy i tried*

Blake Noonan

As a little girl,

I stared at the
endless ocean

Now, chasing dreams
with the ocean
guiding me

Naranjn Bold



THE RIGHT PERSON by Via Ferer

Once upon a time there was a girl who let this boy into her heart...

That girl is me and I thought about him everyday.
His laugh, his smile, his kiss.
But then, all of the sudden... not even cpr could save my heart.
He needed time.
Right person, wrong day.
Every time I saw him, I felt complete.
Even when he dated her.
Everyday, I thought about him.
His remarks, his eyes, his hugs.
But he needed time.
Right person, wrong week.
Our freshman year.
I went to homecoming and I saw him there.
There he was, kissing her on the head.
Even then, I wanted him to be happy.
I thought about him the whole dance.
His voice, his arms, his love.
Yet, he needed time.
Right person, wrong month.
He came to my school every afternoon.
As I got in my car, I watched them smile.
I didn't care, let him be happy without me.
That's what selflessness is.
I thought about him on the car ride home.
His breath, his hands, his clasp.
Only, he needed time.
Right person, wrong year.
I heard they broke up in whispers.
You'd assume I would say, "This is my chance."
But instead.. I said, "Wow."
I thought about him the whole night.
His heart, his affection, his lips.
Right person.
Was it the right time?
But then.. I thought about myself.
How upset I was when he was gone.
How I felt when he went to her.
Was he ever the right person?

Nature's Tranquility

In nature's realm, I often roam
And find a peace that feels like home
The trees and birds, they sing to me
And in their beauty, I am free

The wind whispers a gentle sound
And I am lost, my feet unbound
I walk the path less traveled by
And feel my spirit start to fly

In solitude, I find my voice
And in my heart, I do rejoice
For in this quiet, stillness creeps
I find a truth that I can keep

The world around me fades away
As I embrace this quiet day
And in my heart, I start to see
The beauty of simplicity

In every leaf and blade of grass
I find a world that's made to last
And this world, I find my place
A place to rest, a sacred space

By: Talia Tambolleo Perez

Why Can't I?

Why can't I be good enough
To excel in life
Reaching your high expectations for me
And doing
Even more
But why are they so
Ridiculously high
Do you really expect
All of that from me
A thirteen-year-old
Little girl
Who is not even old enough
to have a job yet
Yet somehow
I should never
Make a mistake
And when I do
I shall never
Forget about it
You would never
let me forget
You yell at me
Compare me to others
I guess that's why my confidence
Is so low
How much lower can I go
Until I come crashing down
Hitting rock bottom?
I can't anymore Dad
You expect too much from me
And I can't
Do it all
Maybe I shouldn't care
But maybe I should
Care more
Would that fix it all
Or would I still not
Reach your perfectly high standards?

Chloe Horan



Fives

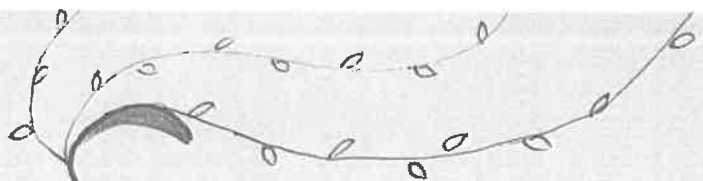
They say life comes in threes,
But when it comes to you- it's in fives.
Five years of drowning,
Five years of tears,
Five years of loving you from a distance.
But can my heart handle another five?

Every time I see you,
I make a promise to myself-
I will be sensible.
I will be stronger.
I will survive.
...Only it never seems to go that way.

Your words twisted around me, coaxing me to follow you.
You told me if I fell, you would catch me.
But instead, five times, I fell into your trap

So today I'm burning the memories of you and me,
banishing them from my mind,
and praying this time it will work

Tian Jamieson



Spring is full of storms n' such,

the clouds cover the sky.

The rain comes down and washes the
ground -

the dirt turns into mud.

But then the roots grow in the ground -
the stem will ascend.

A flower buds and then the petals
grow out and extend.

Bella M.



Between This World and the Next

Opening the window, I climb through; out and onto the roof
I hold onto the drainpipe, planting the outsoles of my Vans on either side
Ivy is beginning to grow; deleterious, even though it is beautiful
Moss hugs the grimy shingles...if you scratch the side of the house, there would be dirt and crumbling bits of wood under your fingernails...
I jump, I am falling
Landing soundlessly in the lifeless flowerbed...
Nobody knows where I am
I am evanescent
Jumping over the split rail fence
And running through the tall, rippling grass
There are snow flurries in the frigid air
I can see my breath like smoke
My sneakers leave a vestige on the yellowing pine needles collecting snow
In my ears I can faintly hear the surf breaking over the rocks of the bay as I run through the pine and cedar tree forest; towering high, high, above me
Already, in my mind's eye I can picture the frothy foam; the mermaids' souls washed ashore, expurgating the wrongdoings of the world... forgiving me...
I overlook the bay
Usually it is covered in smog from the city just beyond the coastline
But today I can make out the sanguine sun turning to a golden-rod yellow
My sneakers rest in the tired gravel of the bluff
Although it is fragile, it supports my weight, holding me up
I look down and out over the precipitous drop
Shrubs lace the steep slope leading a path
Their roots buried beneath the dirt and stones
Just like my sneakers, resting under the bluff's tired gravel
Swallows dip and glide in the sky, skimming the surface of the water
I am flying with them
I **am** one of them...
Nobody knows where I am
I am evanescent
I am rocking back and forth...between this world and the next

~grace elizabeth

Jan. 28, 2023



Leap of Faith

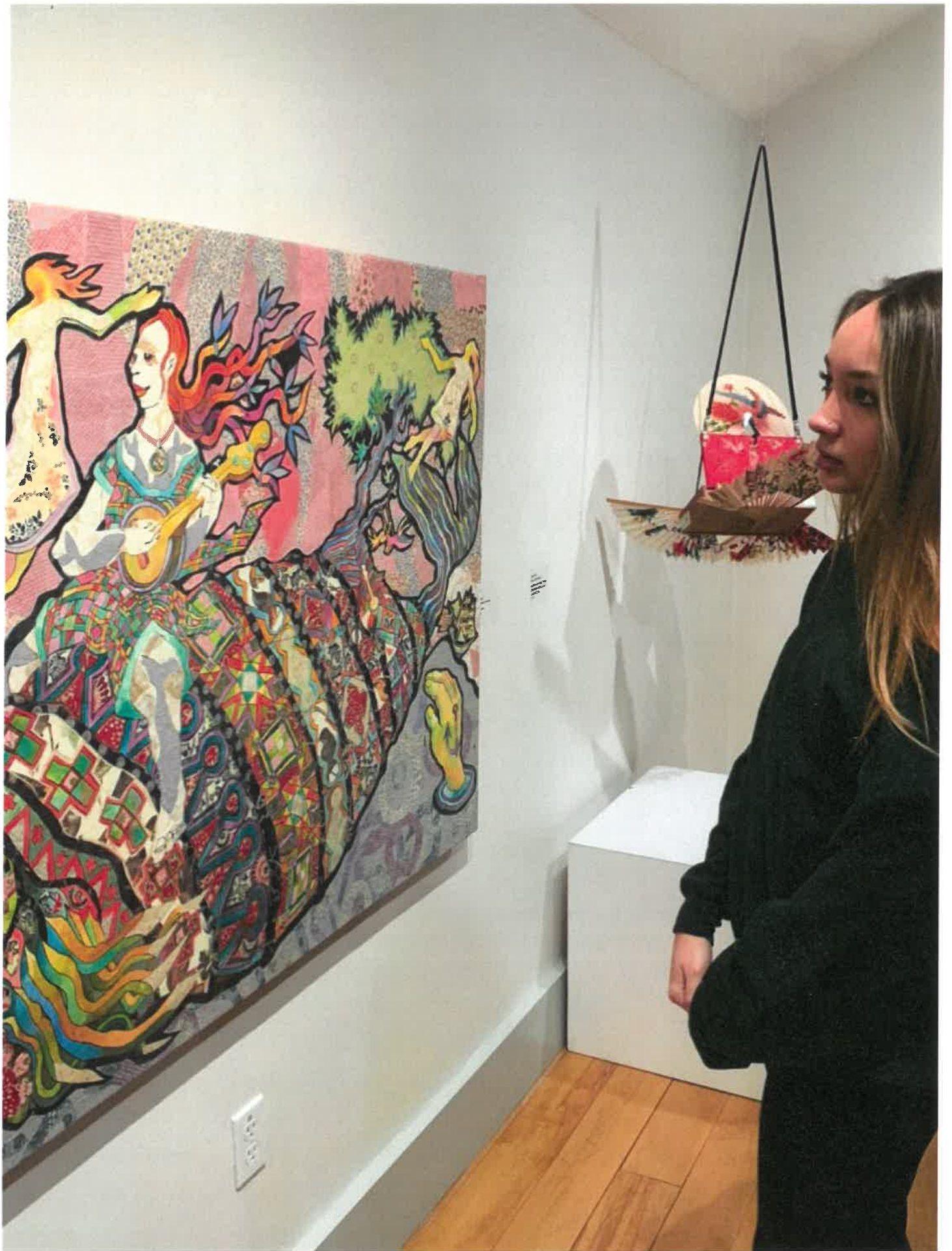
Hidden by perspective, buoyant in the air
We got the full story, but the curiosity doesn't end there
The words written on the fans
Are the words of a new artist and a past poet,
Intertwined to create a new story
A unique piece, separate from its original glory
To create something new
And depending on your view,
You'll read a different set of words
And it's important to mention: every detail placed with intention

The colors on the fans create a peaceful image for your eyes,
Florals and a set of flying birds
Everyday items transformed to create a message of rawness
What does that word represent?
Is it the truth?
Even when you would like to protect the truth from the world,
for as long as you can,
Holding it close like a comforting hug,
Afraid to disappoint,
others can find peace in your truth, connection,
But you'd have to give up that protection,
Take that leap of faith

The fans are out and on full display, nothing is hidden
The handwriting turns to scribbles
Now, rawness is encouraged...not forbidden

~ Arianna Carchedi

Written in response to Lauren Kalita's sculpture at
The Cotuit Center for the Arts



Stereotype

I want to fit the teenage stereotype.
I'm tired of being called unusual or weird for reading books and not vaping.
I'm tired of feeling like I have this role to fill, yet I can't fill it.
Feeling like I need to do those things to feel like a teenager.
Because I don't feel like one.
Are they right?
Do I need to vape, and drink, and smoke, to really feel like a teen?
Or is the world just moving too fast.
Too fast for me to even see.

When I look back in my teenage years, will I be disappointed?
Knowing I didn't go to parties and didn't feel the joy of getting high.
Knowing I didn't risk my life for something so addictive, so hard to let go.
But knowing I had friends who did.
What pushed them to do it?
Would I still feel this way if I knew what happened to them?

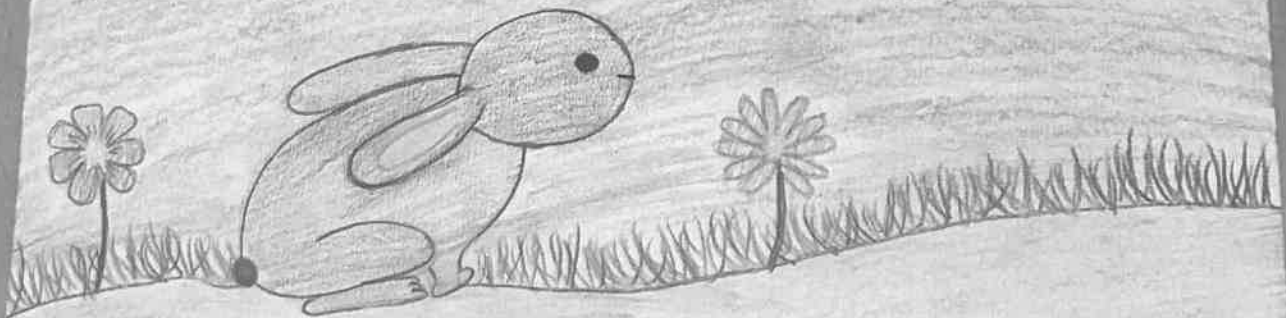
But then again..
Look at my parents.
They tell you not to do it yet they do it themselves.
Tell me, what's stopping me from doing it?
Words?
When have those ever worked?

They have cigarettes, they have drugs and weed, they have sex.
They steal and do things they shouldn't.
They have and do everything a stereotypical teen would.
So are some adults actually stereotyped teens?

Or are we growing up too fast?

-Savannah Eldredge

The newly born flowers
bloom under the light of
the Sun



In the tall grass
Where the rabbits run

Vaughn Jamieson

Where is everything? Where is everyone?

Lost
Gone
Not coming back
Lost
But never found
Disappeared

Someone across an ocean
Slipping from life's grasp
Barely remembered by the young mind fighting the Atlantic's distance
Winning a few battles
But losing the war
Memories slipping

Something that was on a backpack
Tied on strongly
Real well
Only possibly removed purposely
Gone
Taken by an unknown stranger

Someone that was at home
One week strong and playful
The next
Slow
Pained
A companion gone

Something that was put on a table
Made with love and care
Slipped slowly
Seemingly in slow motion
Shattered
Pieces scattered and spread across the floor

Someone across the road
A kind and familiar face
Sudden red and white lights pierce the sky; sirens screaming
The next time he is seen cold
Dressed unlike he would ever dress
Awkward, not himself

Something sold
Great memories spread thin with gaps
A child's patchwork
Big Blue
Sitting on Dad's lap
Feeling grown up "driving"

Someone misplaced
Growing apart
Never the same as it was
Lack of time
Evolved into lack of friendship
And Closeness

Lost
Gone
Not coming back
Lost
And never found
Disappeared

Some may come back
Not the same, but still back
Others are gone forever
Separated by the line of life and death
Memories fading
Gone
-Emma Eldredge

How to End the World • By Jason Elhilow

Climate change:

A myth.

Our pain and suffering are driven by ourselves,
Are driven by separation.

War:

A target.

"Them versus us," we think.

"No, you're the problem," we shout.

Pandemics:

A conspiracy.

Lack of care for others is a fundamental flaw.

It is a problem bigger than we will ever know.

Hate:

A way to kill.

Together, these ideas are poisoning us.

Together, these beliefs are destroying our humanity.

This is how to end the world.

Call Me What You Like- Lovejoy

"And I've found that the road to happiness is paved/ With rows and rows/ Of very tempting parking spaces"

And even if the road does go on and on, we all chose to believe there's an ending to that continuing road.

That if we continue to follow the yellow brick road, there will be gold at the end of the rainbow.

Mind you, in physics, we learned that rainbows are full circles, the ground just gets in the way.

But if you're high enough, you can see it all.

But that's what the people who go in those parking spaces see.

They see that there is no end, no gold, no official 'happiness'.

We just go on believing that there is.

They give up and see that it's an endless circle.

You 'find your true happiness' but end up wanting more.

And if you don't have what you want, you aren't happy.

And most people believe that there is only one way to be happy.

That the yellow brick road has only one direction.

Yet they knew they could step off that road.

They could find their own path.

But some people laid down in those parking spots and refused to get up.

All because they were too scared of the woods that lined those roads.

-Savannah Eldredge

Based on the lyrics of "Call Me What You Like" by the band Lovejoy.

A Phoenix

I think we both knew that our relationship was going to crash and be set on fire,

But we didn't move,

Because it was just a matter of time to see who got more burns

Though I truly wish you the best in life,

It's taken me years to admit that,

Because it felt as if my heart was stabbed by your knife

My past with you is like a tattoo

I am stuck with it whether I regret it or not

But not all endings are bad,

Sunsets are proof of that

~ Arianna Carchedi

The light morning breeze,
flushed with the smell of
blooming flowers,

stops me in my tracks,
ruffling the trees.

It holds promises of warmer days
and eventually summer to
come.

Winter is over,

Let Spring be Sprung!



Ashley Smith

It's closing in around me
I grasp for land, my last anchor
Swelling and swelling
I reach towards the overwhelming sensation of nothing

I try to stay afloat
But I'm starting to sink
Deeper and deeper
The surface, any hope, fades from view

Everything feels fuzzy
My insides much like mush
Turning and turning
My stomach grows sick and weary

Deeper still
I gasp for air, for another chance
Sinking and sinking
I search for one last breath

One last reprieve
Far out of my reach
Slipping and Slipping
My final ambition lost

Jordan MacRoberts

Phantom green

daffodils and blue-
bells, [redacted] tugged at [redacted].
The [redacted] building, carved like ships' hulls
among [redacted] clouds.
[redacted] phantoms [redacted]
glance [redacted]
[redacted] over [redacted]
terrible fealty leaping, as its way is, out of the heart of
the spring. E. V. Rieu —

[redacted] soup. Dinner was being [redacted]
[redacted] Far from [redacted]
on evening [redacted] October. E. V. Rieu [redacted]
his things [redacted] there was [redacted]
was a [redacted] The [redacted]
transparent [redacted] trans-
parent [redacted] might have been [redacted]
the plate itself. But the [redacted] pattern. The plate was
[redacted] green [redacted]
[redacted] suggesting the [redacted]
[redacted] and sprouts curled and yellowed
at the edge, [redacted]
There [redacted]
human nature [redacted]
prunes, [redacted]

Ashley
Smith

THE SUN

I love its warmth on my hair

I love the way its rays touch my skin

I love the life it brings to flowers

I love how the sunflowers face its heat and don't burn at all

I love the way it casts light on our dark world, and the oceans glistening as far as one could see

I love how the trees grow towards its warmth and cover the life beneath as they hope to one day reach it

I love how it watches me grow as time goes on

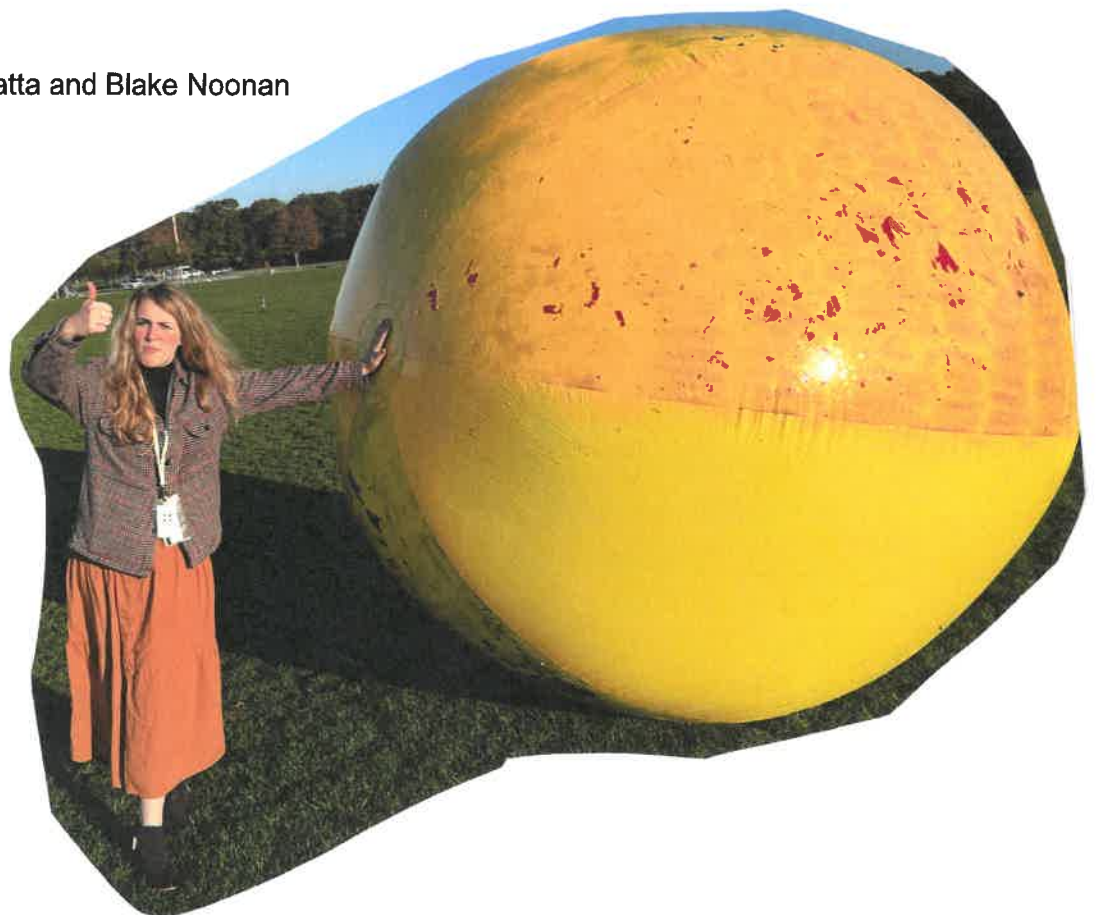
I love how it shines its light across my face, giving me hope for the next day

I love the way it always rises across the horizon casting beautiful colours across the sky

I love how even as it sets, the same colours appear throughout the world

I love the sun.

Written by Grace Latta and Blake Noonan



Spring will spring

The birds will sing

A new day to begin

A crow crows

The wind blows

The dreary night comes to
a close

The sun has risen

From it's nighttime prison

A daily tradition

Untill the sun once more must go



My First

I don't remember what you felt like.
The taste of your lips against mine.
Your arms around my shoulders, shielding me from the world.
I'm not sure if I want to remember.
But I know what I want to do.
I want to thank you.
You were my first.
My first kiss, my first love.
Nothing more, nothing less.
But you were also my best friend that stuck by my side.
And yes, it's true and yes, I know we have gone our separate ways.
But it doesn't hurt me any less to say this.
I'm over you.
The wound you gauged into my heart has healed, but the space you once occupied
hasn't.
And though I'm over you, I won't forget you.
You and I have memories that no one could replicate if they tried.
And though you may not feel the same, I still love you.
I will never love you like I used to, nor will I ever love you like a partner again.
But I still care for you like I used to.
Because you were once there for me.
The shoulder I could cry on and spill my heart out to.
And though I don't feel like I could do that now, I just want you to know.
I won't ever forget you.

-Savannah Eldredge

(This is about my first love, not second.)



Lucy Bates

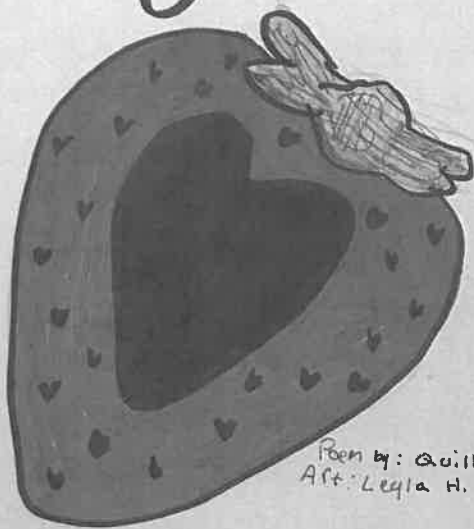
The Fat, Red Headed Monster

Deep into the snowy woods
There's a house
Not a house like any other
It's filled with lots of red color
Covered with mints, M&Ms, sprinkles and dots.
Lots and lots more too
A big red monster lives in this big red house
He has furry skin and twizzlers for fingers
You would think he's mean as he lingers
But he's not
In the house he has couches made of gummies
When he eats too much, it always hurts his tummy
With marshmallows on top
The monster has been eating them non stop
He has beds made of starbursts
And his closet is filled with red shirts
Everything he owns is red
Because he loves the season where you can make cookies and sled
He loves presents and snow
He loves when the weather is 10 degrees below
Also the joy and cheer
And after Christmas is New Year's
But most of all he loves seeing family and friends
Until winter ends again

By Riley Hesse



The other day, I
Cut in half a
Strawberry to
Find its heart
Was missing



Pen by: Quill A.
Art: Leyla H.

Queen of Taco Bell

My mom never cared to cook, so fast food was our comfort and our pride.

Life became too busy for mother, and a home cooked meal was laborious, so drive-throughs and cheap thrills were daily routines.

The neon icons flashing a f@#\$d up future; their soft yellows and reds glow on my face as I make my decision.

Our busted gray jeep named Besty murmuring a soft hum as the Queen of Taco Bell demanded no tomatoes in her Soft Taco Supreme.

In retrospect this way of living seemed somewhat comical, a trip into darkness finding a greasy safe haven.

But mother, you remind me of the fast food you fed me;

Cold-hearted and not mine; impersonal.

I was forced to love you when I don't know what love is.

I took your tomatoes when you did not want them!

And it is not fair to not love you but regardless I will eat.

I will eat

I will eat

I will eat.

Edrian Wright



Emma Eduey