

dreams
that
never
left the
front porch





CANUCKLING 2018

DREAMS THAT NEVER LEFT THE FRONT PORCH

VOLUME 63

**CHECK OUT THE *CANUCKLING* WEBSITE:
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DREAMS THAT NEVER LEFT THE FRONT PORCH

VOLUME 63

**THE LITERARY-ART MAGAZINE
OF
NORTH PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
34 WILSON AVENUE
NORTH PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY
07060**

**CANUCKLING
2018**

**AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
FIRST PLACE 2017**

**COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
SILVER MEDALIST AWARD 2017**

3 Dreams That Never Left the Front Porch

STAFF

Alexandra Novillo, Editor-in-Chief

Grade: 12

Favorite Quote: *“Thank you for the tragedy.
I need it for my art.”* - Kurt Cobain



Mobolaji Fowolo, Literary Editor

Grade: 11



Veronica Vega-Diaz, Photo/Art Editor

Grade: 11



Brian Yumiguano, Photo / Art Editor

Grade: 10

Favorite Quote: *“We need not to be let alone. We need
to be really bothered once in a while. How long is it
since you were really bothered? About something **important**,
about something **real**.”* - Ray Bradbury



STAFF PHOTO



OUR ADVISER



Mr. John DeLaurentis

5 Dreams That Never Left the Front Porch



North Plainfield High School was founded in 1896. Its first graduating class boasted three students. Many residents of North Plainfield and the neighboring town of Plainfield had favored the merger of the two communities, an annexation idea paralleling United States-Canada theories in vogue at the time. With North Plainfield located just north of the brook, it was popular to refer to the community as “Little Canada.” Thus, high school students became known as the Canucks, and the school adopted a bearded lumberjack as its mascot.

The *Canuckling* magazine, though not quite as ancient as the school, was first published in 1955 with Ms. Marie O’Brien as the General Adviser and Ms. Frieda T. Bockius as the Art Director. We are proud to be a part of this tradition, now celebrating our sixty-third anniversary year, as we graduate a class of approximately 200 bright, talented students.

(Photo by Kristyn Rosen.)

2018 CANUCKLING STAFF

Literary and Technical Adviser:

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English and Creative Writing Teacher

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Mobolaji Falowo, Literary Editor

Maria Gonzalez, Literary Editor

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Brian Yumiguano, Photographic / Art Editor

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Kristine Olivares

Camille Paduganao

Julia Pacheco

Stephanie Portillo

Logan Reid

Katherine Sandoval

Irvin Solis

Alejandro Yumiguano

Special Thanks to the English department

7 Dreams That Never Left the Front Porch

Policy

Canuckling invites all students of North Plainfield High School students to submit original works of literature and art. Students may submit work to the English teachers, or directly to the adviser throughout the school year. All submissions are catalogued and subsequently judged for content and form on an anonymous basis by the editorial staff. The staff meets on Thursdays to read and select submissions. Every effort has been made to ensure originality. Each student may submit as many pieces as he or she wishes. We ask that students place their name and grade on the back. Submissions may not be returned. It is the hope of the staff that the magazine is representative of the creative talent of North Plainfield High School.

Colophon

Canuckling 2018, the literary and art magazine of North Plainfield High School, was printed with a press run of 225 copies on 28# laser stock and bound by GMPC Printing of Clifton, NJ. The software used for the layout of the *Canuckling* is Microsoft Publisher. The font types used in this issue are Copperplate Gothic and Perpetua.

Cover

Alyssa Andrews, a junior, drew the illustration on the cover with colored pencils.

Adviser's Note: Get ready to read a captivating collection of original work from the students of North Plainfield High School. Please note that the works contained within these pages express the creative musings and thoughts of high school students. The speakers of the poems or the characters in the prose pieces are not necessarily a reflection of the writer's own experiences. They are creative expressions.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

We, the editors and dedicated, diligent staff of the Canuckling Club, are overwhelmingly excited and pleased to present to you our latest 2018 edition of North Plainfield High School's literary art magazine, the *Canuckling*. Throughout the course of the year, the Canuckling Club has met frequently, devoting their time, effort, talent, art and passion into making this year's *Canuckling* better than ever! Students of North Plainfield High School have created a strong collection of literary, artistic and photographic submissions. Each submission was carefully and openly analyzed by the staff members to decipher pieces that would perfectly fit the theme of the *Canuckling* this year, *Dreams That Never Left the Front Porch*. As teenagers, some of us starting and others ending our high school careers, a strong value that keeps us dedicated and motivated are our dreams and aspirations. As artists our dreams are what keep us going and to see beyond the bigger picture. We see beyond obstacles that life will face us and aspire to reach our dreams, dreams that started right at home, that never left the front porch.

As Editor-in-Chief, alongside a dedicated, hardworking and an imaginative team of editors and staff members, I would like to congratulate the Canuckling Club on its success this year. I am extremely proud of each and every one of you for your hard work, talents and passions that you have so generously shared with all of us. We thank you for your contribution and time spent creating this lovely issue of the *Canuckling* and emphasize that your hard work will never go unrecognized. This year we undoubtedly continued the tradition of the Canuckling Club and the *Canuckling* which has been published since 1955. We would like to thank staff members of previous issues on providing examples and stepping stones for us to continue. We thank you for the legacy you have given us that we have followed, and for those after us to continue to follow.

Unquestionably, we would like to not only thank but serve our utmost appreciation and respect for our adviser, Mr. John DeLaurentis. He has devoted his time, tools, knowledge and creativity into turning our dreams for the *Canuckling* 2018 into a reality. Thank you for motivating and encouraging us to share our innermost, vulnerable emotions and recognizing our talents. As a very strong component of our team, you have helped us further ourselves through our hard work this year. We could never thank you enough for all that you do.

We invite you with us on our journey through our creative minds and imagination. We hope our words motivate and resonate with you, to uplift you, and encourage you to share your dreams with us all. We hope your dreams take you far into depths and realms within yourself that you have never encountered. We encourage you to not only expand your dreams beyond the front porch, but also beyond the world and all it has to offer around you.

Alexandra Novillo
Editor-in-Chief

(Alexandra Novillo, our Editor-in-Chief, will be graduating this year. She has been a part of the Canuckling Club since 2015. We thank her for all her contributions throughout the years and wish her well as she starts the next chapter of her life.)



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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN



"Letters to People Behind Windows"

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)
(Nathaniel Barreto is in twelfth grade.)

Star Shoes

Jane Crowther

The irony lies in the ease with which you threw me away, as opposed to the difficulty with which I've thrown away all your little things.

There's your old locker, the one I used to decorate with drawings that consumed my hours (which you likely discarded months ago without a second glance). Here are the pictures we took in that New York photobooth, which somehow escaped my notice when I hastily got rid of all our old Polaroids and letters. My prom dress, the gorgeous, glittering blue one, still hangs in my closet. I should sell it, but I haven't gotten around to it yet. I grimace every time a song from our deleted playlist comes up on shuffle, especially that one by Yoko Ono. I left all your old clothes in a box on your doorstep. I returned the boots that I meant to give to you as a birthday present, that I hoped would light your face up with the smile I can hardly remember now. I threw out that pink satin jacket you gave me the day you asked me out. Most of the paraphernalia is gone now, with the exception of a few things here and there that I couldn't part with. I wonder how many of my things you've kept, if any. Your glass piggy bank, which you left at my house the night we went to that concert, still sits on my desk. I want to smash it, maybe with a hammer, maybe by dropping it, but I doubt it would do any good. I push it under a pile of papers, telling myself I'll deal with it later.

The night you stopped by to return my fur coat, I asked you if you wanted me to bring you your old band tee, and you told me to keep it. But realistically, why would I want to? The idea of wearing your old clothes seems almost morbid. After all, any sense of "us" is dead. The sweet memories have been outweighed by the bitter ones, but both linger in my mind like gnats. I can destroy and dispose of all the physical relics, but I can't chase your silhouette from the back of my mind. Believe me, I've tried.

(Jane Crowther is in twelfth grade.)



Tongues

Denys Delacruz-Espin

At the age of 3, I was fluent in my mother's tongue passed down from her parents
It's the language that wraps itself around my veins
I have mourned over the death of this diligent language throughout the years
I've stood against those that dared mispronounce my native words
I have faced intellectuals that have told me, my language shall not be spoken in class
Causing the feeder of ravens that lay inside of me to wake

My native tongue is my sword that stands as tall as the Inca Empire once did
Ready to once again feed the eagle that dares
Disrespect the worlds I have inside of me
I will not shut my mouth when it comes to my native tongue
Because it's the language that was forced down the throats of my ancestors
And I have found my voice through them to speak up for those who will not

My language is not only to be learned for its curses
But for its beautiful accent
Te amo means I love you
I can connect two distant languages in the matter of seconds
Spanish is not just a skill to put down on my resume
It's the honor that has shaped me into the young woman I am today

Now, I want to encourage bilingual speakers,
To speak their language with excellence and pride,
To embrace their accent,
And not change the pronunciation of their names
Making it easier for white mouths to hold
Because enough blood has been shed for our language to be considered unimportant

(Denys Delacruz-Espin is in eleventh grade. She likes to read and write poetry. She will be living her best life this upcoming fall.)

Interior

Julia Pacheco

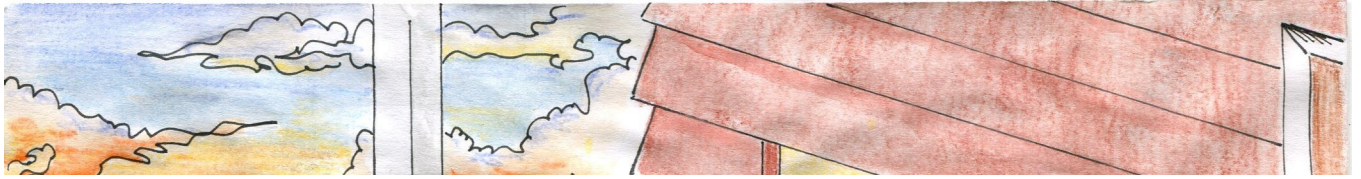
I wish you could see the inside of me
But all you see is a regular wall
I wish you could know the inside of me
But you don't think that's important at all

You focus on the outside
Happy, energetic
What about the inside?
Lazy, confused

Walls are the foundation of a house, right?
Why don't you try to knock them down at least?
I'm not as confusing as I may seem
I wish you could see the inside of me

(Julia Pacheco is in twelfth grade. She was a drum major for the NPHS Marching Band and will be attending Rutgers University in the fall. In her spare time, you can find her with friends, playing music or freaking out over fictional characters. She really likes memes and anime. Follow her on Instagram @xuap.)





Feelings You Never Had

McKenna Dougherty

Lately, I've been
looking over photographs
How can a person so perfect pay attention to me
I love you and day by day, **I love you** even more
my feelings increased
to a point where I think, life got better than any movie or fiction
I smile so hard, I get scared of you not loving me anymore
you're a beautiful soul and in your eyes, I found *passion*.
Then it all started to crumble.
You didn't pay attention to me anymore
My feelings for you were decreasing
Because the feelings you "had" for me were never there.
You messed me up... bad
You used up my love for your happiness
And since all of my happiness is gone

you left...

You left without even telling me
You assumed I was okay
Well you were wrong
And now since you took my happiness
I'm in the state that you were in before you met me

weak

(McKenna Dougherty is in ninth grade. She likes Winter Guard, dogs, and thrift shopping.)



“Flying Solo”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

This Type of Love

Kimberly Perez

The first few days we began to speak again
All it was was constant Love and appreciation
Through bright screens and small keyboards.

The feelings I portrayed in response to yours
Were not fake at all.

Speaking to you again was like the sudden rush
You get from riding a roller coaster that is on
Its way up and drops down in less than a second.

Adrenaline, anxiety, excitement. Excitement
To have you back in my arms again.

You made me feel as if I was a perfect cut diamond
In the middle of the rough and as if I was made
Just for you, but then I started to reminisce
About all the things you have done to break me.

Broken to the extent where I was not able to reciprocate
The acts of Love given to me.

The excessive love you threw at me made me
Rethink my decisions and what I did to gain this
Heavy baggage of what you call Love again.

But your Love felt like home; comforting, loving,
Caring and for some reason the doors are wide open,
The window glass is shattered, and there is someone
Else in that bed.

Expressing my Love and standing by you this
Time felt like an old memory coming back and crawling
Under my skin to make itself at home.

Did I finally get past all the veins, arteries, bones,
And muscles to get to his heart? Did I finally
Tuck on a loose string that was weak enough to
Release? This is what I asked myself every time you
Left and came back to me.

On a scale from I'd die to be with you to why
Did I go back again? I was unsure.

You were like the wings I used to fly with and chase
The perfect Love, but little did I know you were the
One slowly cutting, tugging, and pulling them away
From me without my conscience being present.

It was like he came to my front doorstep, peeked in, and
Left as he pleased, just like this so called Love he
Made me believe we had.

Days later, I began to recognize the endless
Cycle of this love which was loving, hurting, leaving,
Then coming back as if we had just met.

I was not aware of what was unwinding right in
Front of me, but after all the countless months of
Endless heartbreak, I had an epiphany.

A message I received from a part of my heart
That could no longer take the stabs to the vena cava.

A change of mind in the middle of this cycle.

This Love is untrue and convenient.

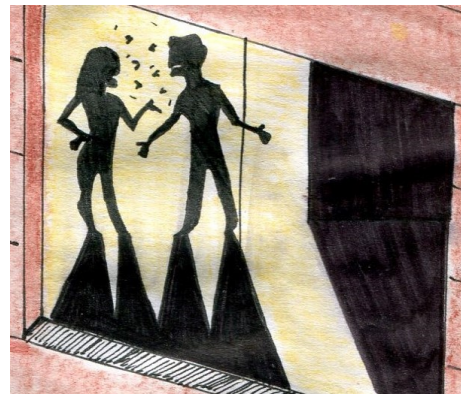
This is the type of Love no one wants because it
Keeps us on our toes with a feel of unease.

The type of Love where you were made to believe
That You were the problem

The type of Love that made you unsure of who you
Are because it puts you in situations where you
Have no clue which way to go, which way is right,
Or which way will make everybody happy.

But that's the thing about this type of Love, it is
Not supposed to make you happy.

(Kimberly Perez is in twelfth grade.)





How to Sleep: A Wikihow Tutorial for An Exhausted Insomniac

Demetrius Acevedo

I so desperately want to sleep
Seriously speaking
I have never slept well before
Sleeping is for weaklings

I was never as strong as you
You slept twelve hour days
And I had rarely slept for five
Yet I am weak you say

I cried last night thinking of you
Till I saw who I was
And I continued to cry on
My own shoulder because

I have you to thank for beauty
You to thank for ugly
Never have I ever at all
Had you to thank for me

You eat at securities till
They're insecure again
Then you would call us once a year
Spoke last when I was ten

Glad you're gone I've been so happy
Glad that you're not around
My family and I are just fine
Sleep's never been so sound

(Demetrius Acevedo is in eleventh grade. He enjoys acting, singing, and writing. He is captain of the cheerleading squad at NPHS. Demetrius' dream is to be an actor on Broadway when he is older, and plans to also pursue a career in advertising.)

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The Do Over

Esthefany Arbizu

I will continue to let you get to me
I will continue to let you walk all over me
over and over again

I will let myself get to myself and I
will continue to love this pain and I
will continue to repeat this
over and over again

I don't know why, I don't know when or where
I just know I do, I do, and I do
and everything will be okay one day

One day I'll wake up with you by my side
and realize that I fought for you and here you
are now because you fought yourself for me too

But until that day comes when you're by my side
I will continue to let you get to me
and walk all over me
over and over again

I will continue to let me get to me and
this pain will continue to be until the day
comes that I wake up by your side

(Esthefany Arbizu is in twelfth grade. She loves her sweets, especially chocolates. Most of her time is consumed by her friends, taking risks, and being adventurous.)



Wise Woman

Angel Hernandez-Garcia

You gave me the life that I really need
You said one day I will become a man
I will be more than just a man you'll see
I will make you proud and I know I can
You are wise even with the words you say
And those words are carved deep into my soul
They remain inside me onto this day
And I just realized that they make me whole
I will appreciate the things you've done
I will never forget times together
You are unique, you are the only one
To make my bad days a whole lot better
If I ever found the fountain of youth
I would spend all eternity with you

Words to the Apprentice

Angel Hernandez-Garcia

My soul withers slowly but yet it shines
My creativity could start it all
Late to programs waiting for father time
My thoughts get bigger than a carnival

Give my paper another pencil
To show my use of the English lexicon
Give my ideas another canvas
To show what they have been painting

Let me paint the world only using words
No more da Vinci but more of myself
And disperse the words I'm able to say
To another novice to surpass me

(Angel Hernandez-Garcia is in tenth grade. He likes drawing and creating rap lyrics in his spare time. He is comedic in his own way and he likes creative writing to show the creativity in his words.)

Lies

McKenna Dougherty

Your lips tell the simplest of lies
How much you love me
I'm beautiful in your eyes
How gullible can I be

I've forgiven before
I'll forgive again
always coming back for more
Perhaps I live for the pain

Why can't I just say no
Pack up my things
Finally let go
Stretch out my wings

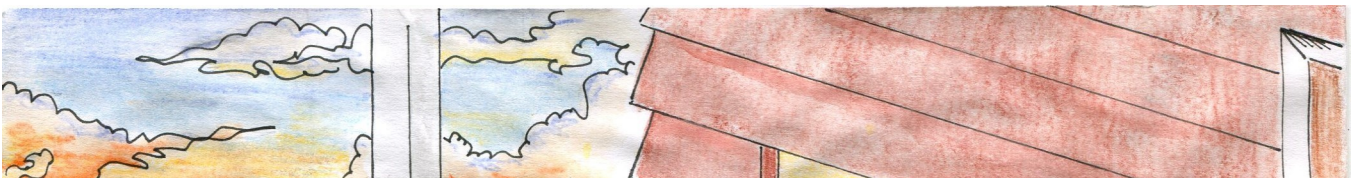
My brain tells the simplest of lies:
I need you, without you I'll die

Mute

Jasmin Guillen

He told her two truths, she typed him one lie.
What will it be? Stay free or commit crime?
What can he do when she just makes him cry.
He's only on her mind just to waste time.
You're tearing his heart out, please confess.
Scared of you, he can't help, but stay dead.
He's there. Where are you? He's there nonetheless.
Come untie him. He's hanging by a thread.
Can you please be a little bit stronger?
You don't have to pretend to be all fine.
'Cause you just need a little bit longer.
You're only a man, step out and whine.
Help, 'cause he's moving at the speed of light.
Are you just a coward, or will you fight?

(Jasmin Guillen is in ninth grade. She loves to draw and write. She loves things to be simple and enjoys life as best as she can.)



Cold Shoulder

Samantha Guerrero

Yes, I am a girl
Yes, I get emotional
No, I am not weak

Walking into school
Dress coded, showing shoulders
And now you can't "speak"

What did that boy say?
Men are born to do magic
Just men? Only men?

Well then you are wrong
See woman can create life
Not just be your wife

Females are magic
Without us you can't exist
Yea literally

So what can you do?
Besides shaming our gender?
Wow you have no clue

(Samantha Guerrero is in eleventh grade. She LOVES ketchup, her dog Spike, and the color blue. She spends most of her time listening to Kodak and eating waffles. She likes Creative Writing because she can express her thoughts in a healthy way.)



"Blooming Magic"

By McKenna Dougherty (Digital Photo)

Five Stages

Kristine Olivares

Grief

Aw man, I lost you
In this world of suffering
Alone without you

Stage 1: Denial

Burning memories
Please just let this be a dream
Please just stay with me

Stage 2: Anger

Rage consumes me whole
Losing control of my mouth
Words pelt like bullets

Stage 3: Bargaining

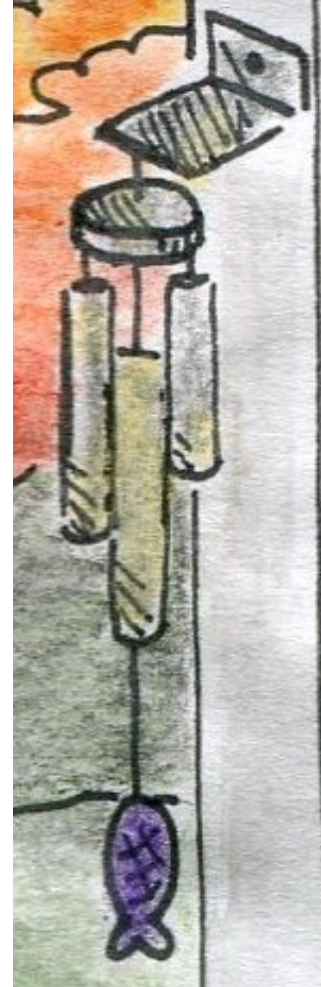
We can fix this please
Come back I'll do anything
Let's just try again

Stage 4: Depression

In your eyes I drown
Filled with guilt
Just vast emptiness

Stage 5: Acceptance

I lost you, that's fine
We both needed closure right
Now we will find peace



(Kristine Olivares is in tenth grade. She like to eat the spaghetti to forgetti her regretti. When she isn't stuffing her face, you can find her eating cheese and watching Internet memes. She has a vast knowledge of *Shrek* movies. About 69% of the time when she isn't making herself a joke, you can find her writing and drawing on walls. Oh yeah, she loves the word oof. Turn to page 72 for her poem called "Oof.")

A FORBIDDEN ROSE



“Breaking Through”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

A Forbidden Rose

Jenifer Hildalgo

In the dark night
They were like a silently rising moon
Floating in the sky.
I understood at that moment

I couldn't take my eyes off of them
They were special people.
Underneath beautiful flowers
There are thorns

I couldn't help falling in love
With what was under the thorns.
I'm too ugly to even think
about touching them

To be wrapped
In that velvety world of darkness
Would never be granted.
You will always be wrapped

Up in beautiful thorns,
and become an evil flower
Won't you?
In that world of darkness

Would you become the only great,
cold moon?
Completely out of reach?
I want to touch...

I want to be
a special person.
White porcelain skin, like a bisque doll.
beautiful hair, big eyes like diamonds.

I will become something else,
I will be beautiful
with a beautiful life.
I will be suitable, for you.

Until the moon
Dances back into my night
and you will be
in

My
Reach.

(Jenifer Hildalgo is in eleventh grade. She likes to draw what she feels and put this face on as a strong Christian to everyone. She wants to live her life for Jesus and let people take whatever they want from that.)

I wrote this last minute but

Adriana Rojas

let's get one thing straight,
this isn't a love poem.
A "here is why I love you"
come up with metaphors to make the feeling sound beautiful,
describe you as something extraordinary.

This isn't a hate poem.
A "we broke up and I wanna write you into the villain"
compare you to natural disasters
anything destructive.

This isn't a blame poem.
A "look at me; you broke me"
should've never..
let's point fingers.

This isn't a justification poem.
A "things are like this because.." "
balance the beam
when it's never been about revenge
although sometimes I wish it was
because then..

This isn't a delusional poem.
A "we should keep trying and this is why"
spill a list of reasons why we're still here
and call it fate.

This isn't a rewrite of us poem.
A "*Damn* this hurts; let's adjust the lighting"
edit the story a bit
let the bitterness overcome me,
ruin your chances with anyone
just to keep you *here*.

This isn't a reminder poem.
An "I know I can be.. but.." "
anyone else would be lucky to have me
rejoice your memory of all that I am
and carve myself into enough - for you.

This isn't a false blessing poem.
An "I wish you the best"
cover up the hurt
encourage you to move on
call it "being the bigger person."

This isn't an I want you back poem.
An "I miss you. We had it right once and we can get it right again"
let the memories of what once was cloud your judgement
a plea for you to come back
and call it *love*.

This is an honest poem.
A "currently still hurting and I think that's okay"
even though I'm not-
numb to the pain
and maybe Three Days Grace *was* right.

This is an honest poem.
A "spent nights crying"
not only in my bedroom,
it's *that* bad
complete mess
I mean it's *that* obvious.

This is an honest poem.
An "I still have the memories because I can't bring myself to delete them"
Wait, this is an honest poem
Okay, I deleted them that day and recovered them a few hours later even though I refuse to look at them
Damn, this is an honest poem
Alright yes I looked at them once or twice. Maybe ten times after since I'm being honest.

This is an honest poem.
A "when I read poems about love I think of you"
not love poems
I mean poems about love
the good and bad
and maybe *that's* love.

This is an honest poem.
An "I can't help but think of you when I go to that place or hear that song"
try not to go there anymore
take a different route
skip the song whenever it comes on.

This is an honest poem.
A "we were never really over"
removing the label
will *not* change the item.
Maybe it *was* toxic
maybe it *was* unhealthy
but it was us and it worked
until - it didn't.

This is an honest poem.
An "I miss you sometimes"
reminisce about who we were
try and convince myself things happen for a reason
until I actually start to believe it
until - I don't.

This is an honest poem.
A "damn, I pray this feeling goes away"
wouldn't wish this upon anyone
the "not even my worst enemy" cliché
it's really *that* bad.

(Continued next page)

This is an honest poem.
A "sometimes I wonder if you pray for it"
to someone,
something,
anything you still believe in
hoping - it's us.

This is an honest poem.
A "this poem is anything except..
lovely
spiteful words
anything except what it was -
wasn't.

This is an honest poem.
A "here's how I feel right now"
this is how it is.

This is an honest poem.
An "I'm actually not sure how I feel"
don't know if I'm sad or just less happy
but this poem?
it isn't supposed to reflect *any* of it.

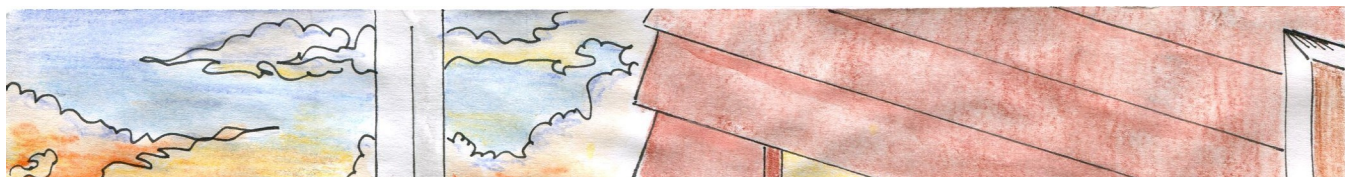
This is an honest poem.
Not a "things I *should've* said"
but an "I never knew *what* to say"
an "I still don't know."

This is an honest poem.
An "I'm not completely over it"
things have changed
but the feelings haven't
learn that things like these don't have a set deadline.

This is an honest poem.
An "every part of me wanted to be able to spill my emotions without it seeming like I wanted to convince you of something"
which is to say,
this *isn't* a poem for you
this *isn't* an "I hope you read this one day."

This is for me
and all the things that I am allowed to say
without it making
a sound.

(Adriana Rojas is in twelfth grade. She likes how there are no limits to what you can write.)



If I Die Young

Stephanie Portillo

If I die young
Tell the world about my music
Tell them all that I could do and all the things I ruined
Tell them I sang myself to sleep every night to keep from crying
And then I sang myself to sweepstakes when I was singing in the choir
Tell them I cry and fight and lose and lie and win and love
Break hearts and die in the name of love
For song, and light and life and in the name of love itself
Tell them that I said, "Love is bad for your health"
Tell them I said that love is the most powerful force in life and that it could never die
Tell them I will lie for love and love will lie
If I die young
Teach the kids about their skin
Teach them to embrace their out's and take care of their in's, walk across the planes and sing
my name off the highest mountains
Tumble down, dust off and do it all again
Tell my family it was destined and that it's okay to mourn
The loss of the joy that I brought to this Earth
Tell the woman that I've known since birth
That I've manifested into the roots of her womb
The rivers on her wrist
And the night skies in her eyes
Kiss her on her hands and give her a pen to write
Hold her close and brush her hair behind seashells so that she could hear my voice and
remember the love that waved out of my being onto the shore
Rejoice
If I die young, no. I'll never die
My music will play, and everyday, I will be alive

(Stephanie Portillo is in tenth grade. She loves to write poetry about real life events of her experiences, and try to bring to life other people's experiences to bring light on what she believes needs to be. She enjoys the laughs of her friends, and spends her time writing poetry or abstract painting. She believes that art, like poetry, has no limitations nor rules.)



Boyhood: A Play in Six Acts

Demetrius Acevedo

Act I:

I was born today
Weighed 3 pounds and 2 ounces
Wow, I almost died

Act II:

I'm six and happy
Innocence left me last year
Well where has he gone?

Act III:

I'm twelve and aware
Confused on the inside though
I think I like boys

Act IV:

Fourteen and hiding
Fifteen and parents now know
Oh I love you too

Act V:

Sixteen and in love
However cliché that sounds
Kiss, then, death from stress

Act VI:

I am a grown boy
Next year I must graduate
Real world, I fear you.

Just Friends

Stephanie Cornejo

Harmless I thought you can be
But you just build anger inside of me
You see,
Your loving words and compassion
Make no sense when
you perceive us to be friends.
You say you love me,
And I'm fine with that
But then you're with
another girl pledging allegiance
As if it's okay to leave me just like that.
Your compelling words make it seem
Like everything's okay
Because we're just friends,
But you can't seem to see that
You're breaking me again.
The love we have is different,
Although we know that
But my visions are getting blurred
When I think about just being friends.
I'm sorry I'm mumbling again;
But I can't fathom this any longer
Not you, but this.
I'll always remember your smile
When I'd say something facetious.
For this I will remember always,
We're just friends.

(Stephanie Cornejo is in eleventh grade. She loves to sing and write poetry when she's not procrastinating on doing her homework.)

Sorry, Sorry, Sorry, and Sorry

McKenna Dougherty

I'm madly in love with you, but you aren't in love with me anymore. I'm afraid I'll always just be tracing your steps, not even able to love you, nor touch you. I sit in pain because I knew once that you said I love you and meant it, it hurts like hell because I miss you so damn much. The sun and the stars are separating us, I've been way too far from you. I have nothing left of you, just pictures. Wonderful smile, that was my favorite thing about you. I have to stay away from you, as they say; or else I'll get hurt more. I can't bare to see myself whimper, over a boy who doesn't even love me back. You don't give a damn about me, but surprisingly I still love you. I used to smile all the time when I was with you and it was real, now I act like I'm fine around you; but it's time to tell you I'm not fine. Sorry, but I can't get enough of you, and I'll love you till my love runs out, or even when my love isn't enough. Sorry again, I'm so attached, it'll be that way for a very long time. All I can say is: I'm sorry but I'm in love with you, I can't change that, you were the best thing that has ever stepped foot into my life.



“Love Reaches”

By McKenna Dougherty (Digital Photo)

The Rose Still Grows

Jeremiah Thomas

Inspired by Tupac Shakur

I am the rose in the concrete
Nature's Laws were wrong,
Proving the odds by showing people were even

Looks may be deceiving
Love has lost its meaning
The word friend is extinct

We all live in a fantasy
We're addicted, used and conflicted
Misusing our influence

Started off as a rose
The ground tried to swallow me
I'm trying to blossom

The vines won't grow anymore
I'm lost in a found world
Long live the rose that grew from concrete

(Jeremiah Thomas is in tenth grade. You can never catch him without headphones in his ear. He likes Netflix, early morning cartoons, and being a ladies man. He's an introspective writer and likes creative writing because it helps express his feelings.)

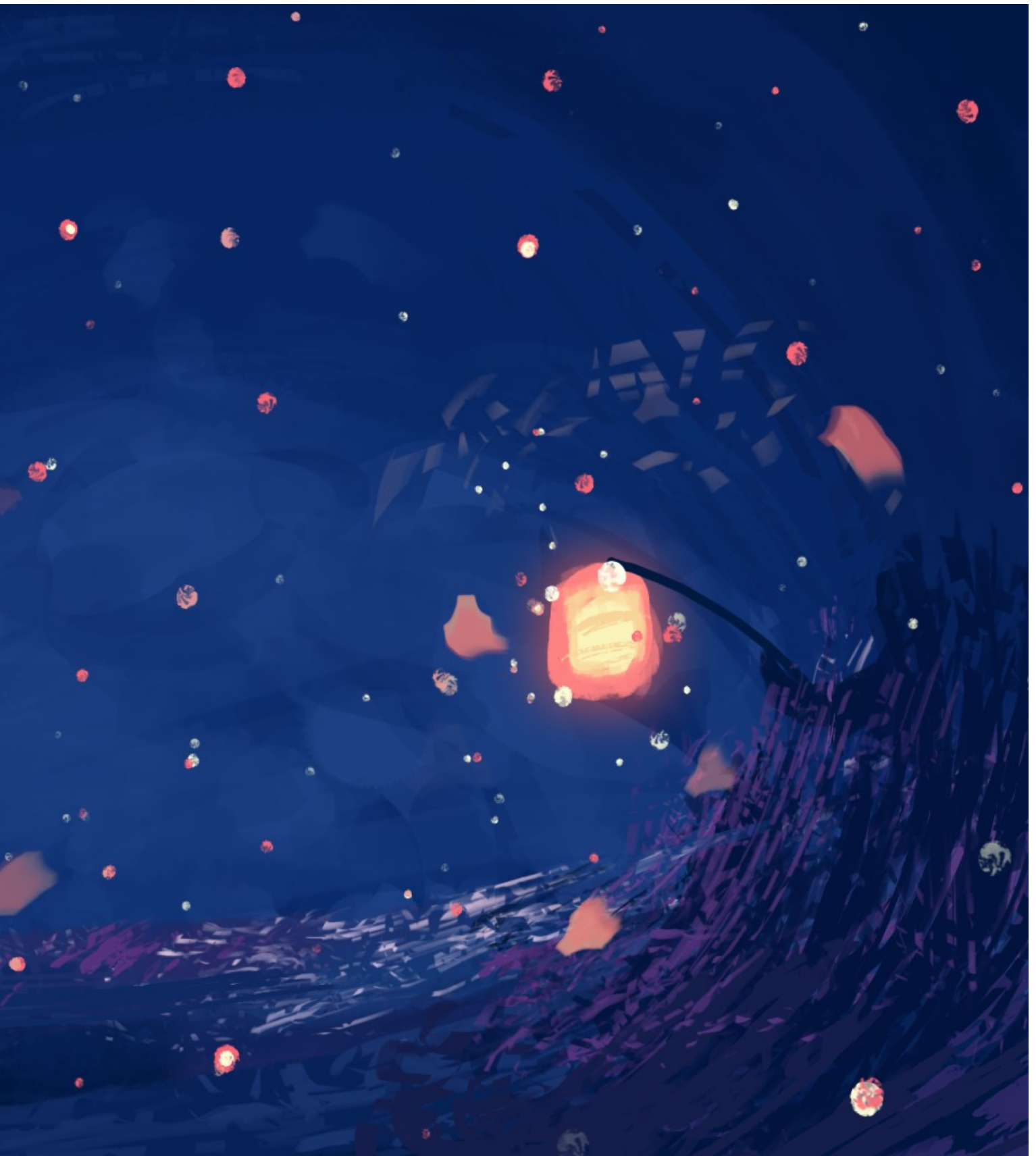


“Star Monger”

By Rikka Del Rosario (Painting)

(Rikka Del Rosario is in twelfth grade.)

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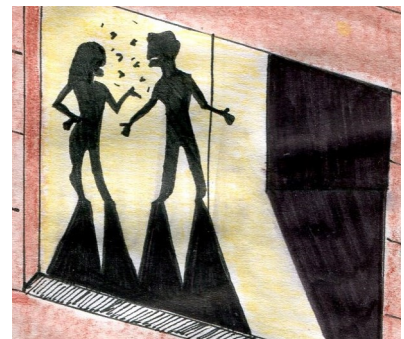


Lessons that can never be taught

Samantha Merendino

Throughout life I was taught so many things from how to tie my shoes to coloring inside the lines. But I couldn't have been taught the most important things in life. Like how comparing myself to others is going to tear me to shreds one day. I've learned that perfection isn't going to result in happiness. And I eventually realized that acting heartless isn't going to fix my broken heart, and the person who broke me cannot fix me. Like how when you break a mirror and put it back together you'll never see the same person staring back at you again, because once you're broken you can't go back. There is no undo button in life and you're always going to regret something that you did, but when you can't go back and change it then what? You'll end up dwelling on it for days and days until it breaks you. I'm just coming to realize that love cannot be taught, it just happens. And sometimes the person you love may never love you back. I wish someone taught me that falling in love with the wrong person can feel like chaining an anchor to your ankles and jumping into the ocean. And I always wish someone looked me in the eye and told me that I wasn't too difficult to love, it just takes the right person. These types of things just cannot be taught. I wish I knew that you're not going to have closure with everyone. Sometimes especially the person you love. You'll fight and never speak again. Then the words they said to you will burn your throat more than the substance you're drinking to try to forget because you know they meant the very thing they said to you in the heat of the moment. And you know if they really ever cared they would've come back. But when they don't, you'll cry, you'll blame yourself for days on end. But you eventually figure out that you can't blame yourself for the inevitable. Another thing I have learned the hard way is that not all wounds heal. Sometimes we just learn how to stop picking at them. But eventually they'll scar and will always remain on your skin. And other people cannot be used as medicine because people are temporary and you'll never know when they'll decide they don't want to be with you anymore. And happiness should not be put in someone else's hands because they'll drop it every damn time. I wish I knew earlier that the most important lessons in life could not be taught.

(Samantha Merendino is in twelfth grade. She loves to read and write poetry. She will be attending College of Saint Elizabeth this upcoming fall.)



Sopho Moronic

Angel Hernandez-Garcia

Chop, Mops, please stop putting greens on the countertop
You're messing up your ego and rounding up all the corrupted cops
You'll pay the price, because they decide if they want to take your life
One finger on the trigger and you won't be able to think it once or twice
The gat blows, the red splatters staining your black clothes
The bullet spins fast you won't expect where it's at though
You're that slow, and now the rats know all your misfortunes
They won't be looking at your body because you're not important
But you are to your mother, and you might just say the same
She gave you everything and all you bring to her is shame
You might just get your fame in the news stories with your name
You don't have any lives left so this life is your only game
I don't say this just to you, but I say this to the others
The younger generation so that they don't have to suffer
Like my brother, I'm the role model to his eyes
I'm the only guy alive because he looks up to me with pride
And the people that tell lies is the thing I most despise
You're just following these people because you're not yourself inside
Stop yourself from doing this or soon you'll start to die
You're not this different person so take the mask off your disguise



SPORADIC EUPHORIA



“The Sparks of Euphoria”

By McKenna Dougherty (Digital Photo)

Sporadic Euphoria

Alexandra Novillo

We were both insane upon occasion on two different spectrums
The only similarity between our opposing minds
That could never click nor intertwine
The way they were never meant to be
Irregular and irrational intervals of ecstasy and bliss.

I am so indulged in you I cannot help myself
Our breaths sync as our lips dance to the beat our hearts pound
I could hear the music through your chest
I was suffocating for air and my toes were becoming numb
Without hesitation, I continued to dance.

Tell me all I am and everything I stand for is a lie
You'd grip at my neck and tell me I am not who I say I am
But who am I?
We are strangers.
You never knew me
Denial has taken your sight away
You can't see me, You never did
Jealousy and insecurities made you deaf
You can't hear me, and as much as you claim you did, you never will.

(Alexandra Novillo is in twelfth grade.
She likes creative writing because it is a
way to release her inner most feelings
into an art.)





The Revolt of the Homosexual

Demetrius Acevedo

We who love men's bodies cry when you speak
I who love man's body drown in my tears
They who love women's bodies call me weak

I was little when the stairs caved in, creak
Fell into a nasty hell full of my fears
We who love men's bodies cry when you speak

A spot on his neck a place my lips seek
Your hate laid softly on my wooden bier
They who love women's bodies call me weak

Surprise! Horrified, promised not to peek
At you who fears I stare to make you stir
We who love men's bodies cry when you speak

It is not your attention that I seek
To make the fact so explicitly clear
They who love women's bodies call me weak

If I must repeat this I may just shriek
Not because I am weak just simply queer
We who love men's bodies cry when you speak
They who love women's bodies call me weak

Not the End

Esthefany Arbizu

You, or no one can help
This is my rock bottom
Wishing I could change this part, but
It ends in the autumn

Spinning, tossing, catching, dancing
Things I cannot do but
Tonight I will just be glancing
Regrets roaming around

When will I ever learn my lesson
Do I even care? Yes
But I do this to myself, why?
I am just a big mess

See I play this game in my head
I am doing just fine
And BOOM! Everything comes crashing
It is time to resign

Leave my head, leave me, please just go
I am trying, I am
Please do not leave me alone
We are already damned

This cannot be my rock bottom
Everything is just wrong
Let's just toss and spin, dance tonight
Together we are strong

Prince Antonio

Angela Miranda

Antonio Perez is one of the many members of the royal family. He has a huge palace that he shares with his father, grandmother, and servants. King Roberto, Antonio's father, is beginning to become very old, which is starting to affect the kingdom of Spain. This called for the crown to be handed down to Prince Antonio. Tomorrow, Prince Antonio would become King Antonio of Spain. The thing about Antonio is that he sticks to himself and isn't the most outgoing, which is what his father believes. To others, this is not how he is at all.

Everyday when the king leaves the palace to handle daily situations throughout the kingdom, Antonio leaves the palace. His father is not knowledgeable of this since he's pretty sure that no kid would want to leave such a beautiful palace where you could literally get it all. He also doesn't like the fact of him leaving the palace because it could put him in danger. Antonio puts on his ragged clothes he has laying in the back of his closet and dresses himself as a new person. Instead of the expensive fabric he wears from head to toe on a daily basis, he puts on some old, poorly made clothes the villagers wear. He heads to the same spot everyday at eleven in the morning. He sits under the bridge on top of an old crate just near the shoe maker shop. Antonio watches the village people be and reads a book which brings him absolute happiness. A head pops out of the edge of the corner. Antonio sees the head out of the corner of his eye and doesn't mind it. It happens again. He starts beginning to become worried that someone has found out who he actually is.

"Who goes there?" shouted Antonio.

A boy around his same age popped his head out and Antonio instantly felt a feeling he's never felt before. It was a good feeling.

"Um hi, my name's Julian, sorry for bothering you, bye," said the unknown boy.

"Wait, who are you?"

"My parents own the shoe shop over there. Who are you?"

"I'm um Juan," responded Antonio hesitantly since no one has ever asked before.

They then talked for hours until the sun went down. Julian later confessed that he knew who he was and always admired him from afar because he was way too nervous to even make eye contact with him. Julian also said how he knew if someone found out how he liked the same sex he wouldn't be accepted and most likely shunned by the whole village. For as long as the village has been ruled by Antonio's family there was only one family structure allowed. Everyone loved the opposite sex and that is what is accepted and correct for them. Anything else was wrong and a disappointment. Their conversation was so deep they both got lost in time. Antonio then realized he had to return to the palace before his father returns at midnight. Antonio rushed to the palace and made it on time. He got ready for bed and went into his grandmother's room to say goodnight.

"*Hola mijito*, what's with the smile on your face?"

"What smile?" responded Antonio quickly before she could've suspected anything.

"You met someone, didn't you?"

"What? How? I was literally in this palace all day."

"Oh you think I don't know?" she said with a giggle. "Come on, I might be an old lady but I see a lot. So was it a girl?"

"Um no actually.

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“So what was it.”

“I met a boy and talking to him felt like something unexplainable. I don’t know just being with him made me feel something.”

“Ah, I knew this was going to happen. *Mijito*, you’ve fallen in love.”

“No, no I can’t. Dad wouldn’t approve. My coronation is tomorrow.”

“This is who you are, he has to.”

Suddenly, Antonio heard his dad calling for him throughout the echoes of the halls.

“Goodnight *Abuela*, thank you. I’m coming.”

Antonio rushed out the room and ran into his dad by the stairs.

“Son, I want you to meet someone,” his father said.

“Who?”

Up the stairs came a man and what seemed to be his daughter. They both were dressed in royal clothes.

“This is King Ernesto of Albania with his daughter, Princess Elena. Since your coronation is tomorrow, every king needs a queen. Therefore, I’ve arranged for you to be married tomorrow as well,” his father responded.

Antonio did not want to let alone be married, yet even worse to be forced to marry someone he has no feelings towards. He didn’t want to disappoint his father so he just nodded and returned to his room for bed. He stayed up all night just thinking. He thought mostly about Julian. His grandmother was right. He was in love. At that moment he knew what he had to do. He then fell asleep and woke up the next morning an hour before his coronation, which was at noon and put his ragged clothes on. Antonio ran to the bridge and hoped to see Julian. Antonio spotted him cleaning some shoes outside his family’s business and grabbed his arm in a hurry and ran with him back to the palace. Julian asked many questions but Antonio just ignored them all. Once they reached the gate of the palace, both of them ducked under a bush and Antonio finally explained to Julian what happened last night. He told him about his father making him marry a princess and how he did not want to follow through with it. He also had a plan to fix this. Once he told Julian about it, Julian was in on it as well.

From the bushes, they could see what was going on. The palace seemed so chaotic with all the guests arriving and servants all over the place. Antonio found a way to sneak into his room with Julian. Julian stayed in the room while Antonio got ready and went outside where his coronation was being held. All the guests were seated and his father and everyone else were all ready to begin the ceremony. Before the ceremony, his father spoke to him about ruling the village and how he’ll do wonders for it. The ceremony began and Antonio was supposed to be getting ready to be crowned and married while his dad was giving the speech and Princess Elena beside him. Instead of getting ready, he ran to his room and got Julian. He made it back to when he heard his dad announce, “And now I present to you, your soon to be king, Prince Antonio!”

Antonio brought out Julian with him. Before his dad and the guests could react, Antonio said, “Hi everyone. I am honored to be your king but before that I want you guys to know who the real me is. I’m in love with this person right here. His name is Julian. Marrying someone you don’t truly love is what’s wrong, not marrying the same sex. Our village shouldn’t be close minded to care about what others think. Everyone has to accept themselves. Love is love.”

(continued next page)

The guests were speechless and seemed a tad confused. His father surprisingly didn't seem disappointed. After a long pause, his father finally responded with, "I'm very proud of you son. Standing up for what you believe in even though it's not exactly what I had in mind is great. I knew you were going to do wonders for this village."

The guests cheered and Antonio was finally pronounced king with his Prince Julian. Antonio took with him a valuable lesson that he will carry with him for a long time. It is not pretending to be something or someone you're not to be accepted by others that is important, but it is staying true to you and accepting yourself for who you really are that is. The village then continued to grow and prosper leaving everyone to feel comfortable with themselves and be inspired by each other.

(Angela Miranda is in twelfth grade. Emotions never came easy to her, sometimes she could not even comprehend what she felt herself, and being sentimental was not in her nature. Because of the Creative Writing class, it showed her that she can take a pencil to paper and pour herself onto it. You can see that her writing not only tells meaningful stories, but sends a genuine message that others in similar situations can relate to. She finds herself being more open about who she is; writing down the most honest and raw thoughts of hers. Not only does writing bring her to her purest form, but also it makes her come alive.)

A Collection of Haiku Poems

Alejandro Yumiguano

Reality

"Hey, what time is it?"

"You have a watch, you check."

"Thanks for all the help."

Can't Be

"You are beautiful"

Says he, the mighty old tree.

Now she is happy 😊

Her Beauty

She laid there, asleep

Her breath was warm and alive

She is now happy

Not for Me

A lobotomy

Throws the depression out, but

Kills your soul as well.

His Duty

Here's a list of things

You must do before you leave.

Don't bother me, bye!!!!

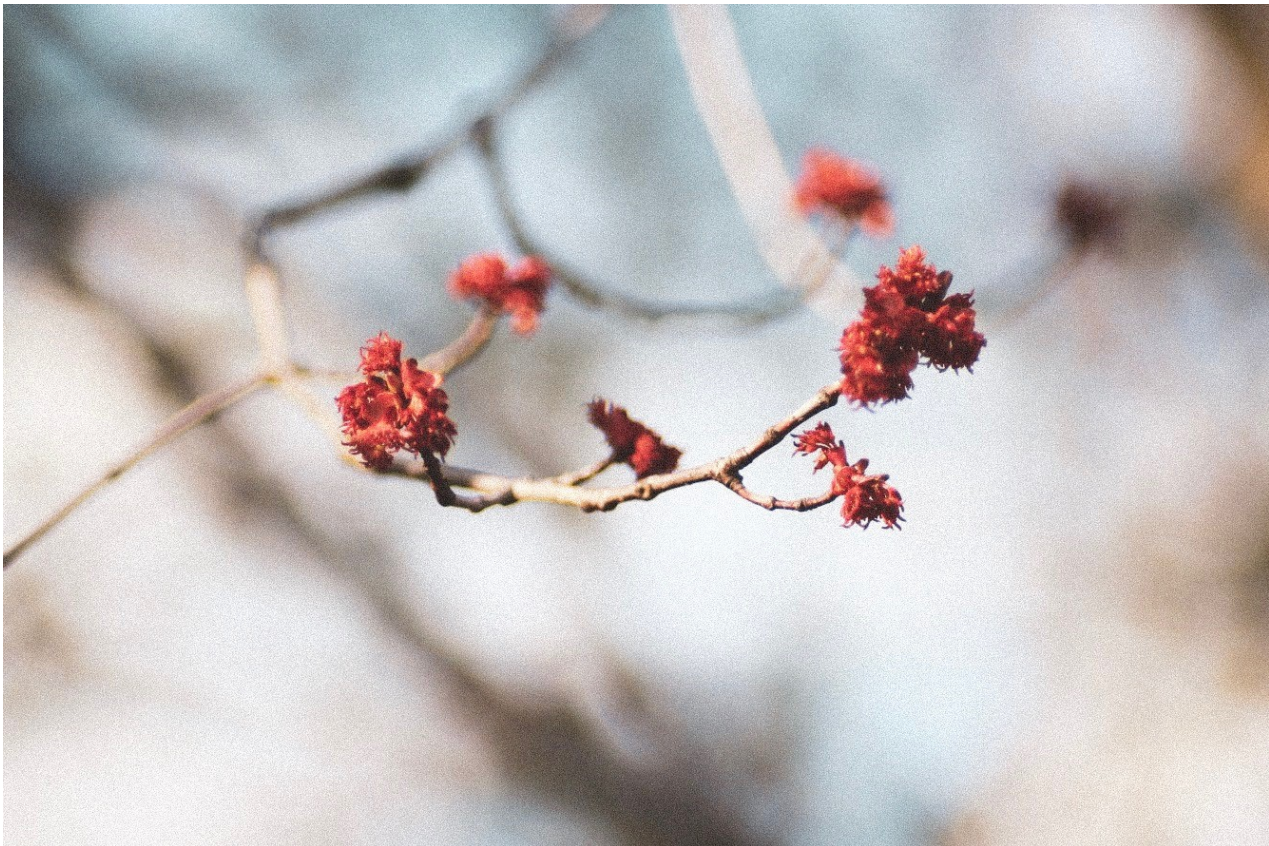
(Alejandro Yumiguano is in twelfth grade. He will be attending New Jersey City University in the fall. He is most notable for co-leading the marching Canuck's percussion section to a nearly undefeated season. When he isn't in the music room playing a million different instruments, he's at home playing Persona 5 or Fortnite with his three friends. Please follow him on Instagram @lifelesspotato1.)

Nature

Chelsea Toaza

From the gentle sway of the trees give life
Flowers bloom also beautiful to see
The season cuts so deep like a long knife
The ocean, the trees, the grass, life, the sea
In natural peace all of life is born
So much to see it appeals to the eye
To live and die still we have to all mourn
As a kid I always wanted to fly
In nature I always felt so alive
The hopeful heart dives into the night time
Waiting for the sun to go down past five
darkness could not settle, and stars would chime,
When July spreads her wings and shines so bright
Nature casts out the darkness and brings light

(Chelsea Toaza is in tenth grade.
She's very small with a big imagination. She likes creative writing because she can share her imagination and her feelings.)



“The Awakening”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

The Ramen Noodle Phenomenon

Jane Crowther

"I feel like I'm dead. I mean, this must be what the afterlife is like," I interrupt the silence in the car, and she laughs.

"You sound insane," she says with a smirk, and I frown.

"I wasn't joking," I mumble, "but never mind."

"No, no, wait. I want to hear your explanation. Why do you feel like that?" she asks, sensing that I'm offended.

I would explain, but the thing is, I'm at a loss for words. I can't accurately describe the phenomenon, so I sit quietly as I try to form a coherent thought.

"Is it because it's so peaceful?" she offers, and I nod.

This is only a crude description, though. It isn't so much a feeling of peace as a lack of any feeling at all. The moments seem to blur together, and I've lost all perception of time. It's as though I'm detached from my own body, and when I scratch the back of my head I feel nothing at all. I'm growing increasingly numb, and I'm not sure whether or not this is a result of the frigid night. The car could crash at any moment, and I doubt whether I'd notice. I should be scared, but I'm not; I've accepted the situation and the fact that it seems as though it may not end.

This is why I feel dead. I've lost the ability to think logically, and the road seems to stretch on infinitely in both directions. Maybe this is some sort of purgatory, but it's not painful, so I doubt it. I remember that I'm a person, and that I have lived a life for years up to this point, but I can't recall any specific details or memories. All I know is this car, those street lamps, and the girl sitting next to me. She's familiar, and her presence comforts me, but I can't quite put my finger on the reason why.

I have no recollection of when, but we somehow end up on a carpet in some house, scarfing down ramen noodles. I don't taste them. One moment the Styrofoam cup is full, then I blink and it's empty. I must have eaten them, but I feel no different. I can't smell anything either, my hearing is fuzzy, and that numbness has yet to fade. The only one of my senses that completely remains is my sight, through which I see a person, who must be me, performing tasks which I have no control over.

I mechanically stand up, look in the mirror, and don't know who the person staring back at me is. My passiveness from earlier transforms into a mild panic as I wonder whether this will ever end. I look at the girl from the car, who sits on the carpet with her ramen, and observe that she seems perfectly unaware of my situation. I would explain, would try at least, but when I open my mouth I cannot make any words come out.

"Do you want to listen to some music?" she asks, and I manage to nod in response.

"Alright, what about the playlist you made for me?" I nod again, and in a few moments I register new sounds which have to be music, but I don't understand them. Though I attempt to focus on the sounds, in hopes that they'll bring me to my senses, it's almost as if I'm listening to them underwater.

Nightmares

McKenna Dougherty

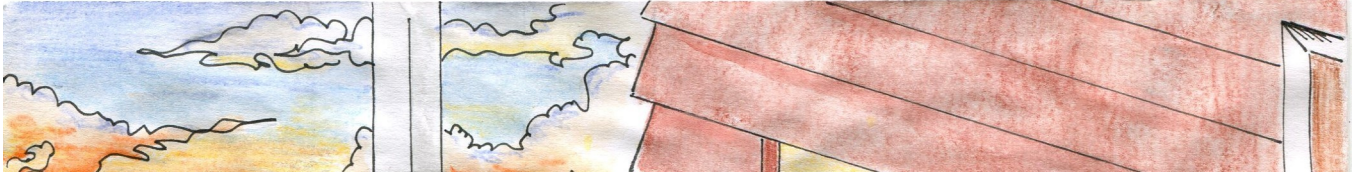
Nightmares hurt.
emotionally, and physically
I've been woken up so many times
haunted by pain,
By you.

I've woken up with a headache,
a heartache, or both.
I don't understand why my mind
has such a vivid picture of you

It feels like a gunshot through my heart
Or me drowning in a pool full of the tears I shed for you.
I've dreamt them so many times,
It feels like I've lived them.

But
There are the good dreams too.
happy ones where everything is fine.
But those hurt Even more.
Because when I wake up,
I can feel them being
pulled away from me
By the Morning.





Shut Up

Brian Yumiguano

The scream of my thoughts
The shrills of my people
As though I'd been caught
Running down from the steeple

Running down like red wine
Shrills shaky and singular
Like strings on a long line about to break

The red wine hot and sticky
Burns like fire down your throat
Sticky like hickeys
Pounding like the whale under my boat

Pounding like my heart on the wall
The wall of the door where mom is screaming
The scream of my thoughts

Cape May

Brian Yumiguano

A breeze of salt, wet and still
As the boat rocks
as I sway back and forth
seagulls giggle with delight
children chirp with laughter
I hit the sandy and soft shore
staring at the clouds
white wisps of cotton
here I sat in the great Cape May
A breeze of salt, wet and still

(Brian Yumiguano is in tenth grade. He was accepted into a world class drum corp and will be going on tour throughout the summer. He loves to work with computers and has built his own for gaming purposes.)



“Cape May”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

Contemplations

Michael Matos

I hated it, the agonizing deafening sound.
Silence. It was inevitable.

Music, TV, books, computers, all to avoid
the one thing that killed bringing the thoughts away.

Even socializing. An antisocial pessimist, look at the irony.
I see too much, think too much, know too much-
what the human mind can comprehend.

My head's in the clouds, constantly judging others
misperceptions of life and pushing it to the back of
my head.

My beliefs are different than others, I am told.
A world where a person's outer shell
apparently gives a full representation of
who they really are, where a man is stepped
over on the cold hard pavements of cement.

My contemplations a mirror of my personality,
yet the light's too dim for me to be seen.

For I am not seen in the light of day, I come alive
in the dark cold nights, society has me thinking
some type of way,
I'm a vampire to the normality lights.

(Michael Matos is in tenth grade.)

Oblivious

Jeremiah Thomas

So unmindful, unconscious, unaware
So oblivious to things around you
You sit at the wall for hours and stare
Ears closed mind closed only if you just knew

PAY ATTENTION!

She screams for hours
I do not listen
Argue argue argue

Please do not disturb I'm in my own mind
I cannot see the hints or the straight lines
Still don't know where to go or who I am
So unmindful, unconscious, unaware

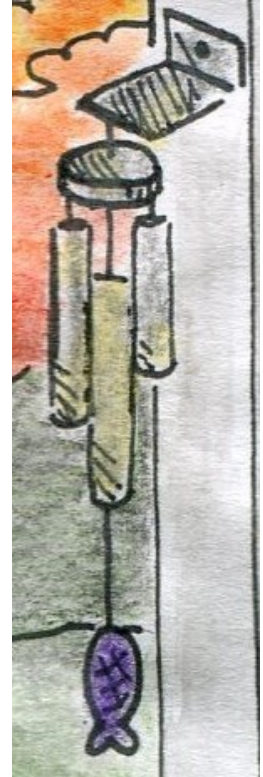
Do Us Part

Jasmin Guillen

Not a word, this love will last us till day.
We are lovers painted red in disgust.
We do not want to wake up with a name.
Is there any more we need to discuss?

Nothing to fear.
Liars play pretend.
Will we be together,
Till tomorrow?

Even when our colors fade again,
Even when our hidden truths do us part,
Even if it is all only a dream;
Not a word, this love will last us till day.



IF ONLY.....



“Bound Together”

By McKenna Dougherty (Digital Photo)

If Only...

Melanie Salgado

If only we had the courage to fight the pain
Only if the world wasn't dangerous
to lay in bed in peace
But it wouldn't be the same every day.

If only depression wasn't a problem, if it didn't exist
If only people weren't fake, so we don't have to hide it
I can't, the people think what if everything was different to see
The world in color, no more anxiety,
no more problems to face.

But there is no such place like that
We all feel like the Mad Hatter when it comes back
If only feelings didn't exist,
If only broken hearts weren't haunting us every night.
If only everything could stop.

If only we could all burn in a fire, would we all feel?
What if heaven sent us down for every little mistake?
Trade your love for other people to be saved.
If only everything was nothing.
If only we could see things differently.

If only we weren't scared to be ourselves.
Weren't scared of being who we truly are.
Being gay, lesbian, straight, bi, it shouldn't matter,
we are all people staying strong as people at the end.

If only illness weren't able to become real.
If only we knew what it was gonna be
You think it's all right to be feeling trapped in a little box in
the middle, falling in love, trying to hide it's not worth it.

If only we didn't have to lose control, only if, what if?
What if it all goes into flames?
Was everything that you did not worth it at all?
Become the bigger person.
Only if we could always feel like that.

(Continued next page)

If only we were out of pain, love, hate, just everything.
Just think, probably we could be actually happy
and not faking everything
You said you would help, but since we have a cold heart,
you gave up on it.
Why waste your time?
Take it all on thought.

If only we could just breathe
Just pretending to be happy is hard enough you'll see
"It will be fun" they said,
"Just smile, ignore it," they said
If only that was true what they said.

Only if...if only...but what if?
The question that would never be responded to correctly.
Because things happen and if only...

(Melanie Salgado is in ninth grade. She skates and she's always crippled. She likes sushi and writing. Creative writing is the way she expresses herself. She loves music and being herself. She loves memes and loves being annoying. She loves to draw and laughs at her own jokes. And she loves Netflix and horror things.)

Her Isaiah Medina

As a young man tries to focus on schoolwork
during a week break,
He is interrupted by flashing
Pictures of...
Her

Blocking every ounce of concentration
He is left to imagine the details
of her face, her body, her voice
Her voice

It calls him...hauntingly
In the halls she passes without a second glance.
Sits next to him in classes and
never has she given him thought

(Isaiah Medina is in tenth grade.)

How he wishes to be by her side
If even for a moment

Dreams

Sheiry Ibrahim-Georgi

It's sad how dreams die
People grow up and think it's impractical
So they put their hope to the side
Halfway up the ladder

But it was too far up
So they came back and let their dreams shatter
They won't pick up the broken pieces
Because they're afraid of getting hurt

They learned from their aunties and nieces
Maybe they'd try if they saw the end result
But they didn't
They gave up because it was based on hope

They dream as children
But they're considered childhood dreams
Never look into it see what it achieves
Now it's adulthood and jobs with little pay

Jobs that they hate
And continue hating every day
Now their dreams are just at night
Thinking of becoming actors or astronauts

Oh well, sleep tight
This should teach you not to give up now
To keep going
Show people your success, make them say wow

(Sheiry Ibrahim-Georgi is in tenth grade. She like Chinese food, procrastinating, and listening to music.)



Mother Dug

Demetrius Acevedo

Dear Diary,

Mother had always promised me that she would be the person to bury my body if she were to ever find me dead.

"If I may find you dead, the shovel will be ready by my side! You'll be in the ground in the next hour after your death!" she would always say.

In our religion funerals are forbidden. Only burial is acceptable. I had time and time again explained to my mother that she would never have to bury me. If anything, I would have to bury her. She was older after all, and more fatigued. To this she would always grunt and point out her rather young features.

There was this one day. I'm not sure how long ago it was, whether it be yesterday or the week before yesterday. I have lost track of time. Rain rushed out of the clouds and onto the ground and heavy puddles were forming here and there. Mother had let me go outside with my boots and my raincoat and my best friend Frankie, who was two years my senior.

As I was about to leave my house, my mother called me over to her. "Adam," my mother said, "You must be back before supper."

"Why can't I stay out later, Mother?" I asked imploringly.

"You are only thirteen darling. You mustn't stay out so late, especially in this rain."

"Okay, Mother," I said gloomily as I closed the front door behind me.

Frankie stood outside of my yard impatiently in the rain. He was very tall, towering over me by at least a foot. He wasn't very bright, but my intelligence made up for the both of us.

"Your mother treats you like a baby," he said, looking at how bundled up I was.

"And your mother doesn't?" I said sharply.

To this he stayed silent and we began to walk in the rain. There was a single ray of sun poking out from the mass of grey clouds in the sky. But it was far away. We would get no sun that day. Frankie always clenched and unclenched his hands when it was raining, which I found completely strange. He also didn't speak that much, but he said once that I was his favorite person nonetheless. His mother said that he talks to me the most. Mother thought that he was strange, and so did a lot of people. But Frankie was special. To me at least.

"Where would you like to go?" I asked him on that day.

"Ice cream," he said.

"It is raining."

"There is no bad time for ice cream."

"Okay. Fine. We will go for ice cream." I had remembered that my mother had given me money days before, and I would be able to pay for both Frankie and myself.

The ice cream shop was called Dirty Joe's, and was not that far away. We arrived in as little as ten minutes and sat down in our favorite booth. Our favorite flavor of ice cream was 'Cup of Dirt,' which tasted better than it sounded. Joe the Ice Cream man came to our booth and asked us what we wanted even though he knew already. He brought us both our cups of dirt, but I asked for no whipped cream.

“Why won’t you get whipped cream?” Frankie asked me. His upper lip was covered in chocolate when he asked me the question.

“I never get whipped cream. It tastes bad.” I scooped out a spoonful of ice cream and began to chew on a chunk of chocolate.

“Cups of dirt always taste better with whipped cream,” Frankie said. “By itself it’s just dirt. And I’d assume dirt doesn’t taste all that good.”

I stared at Frankie for a while after he had said that. Not because he was weird but because his eyes, despite being brown, were very captivating. Anyone could get lost in Frankie’s eyes. His eyes were the color of dirt, too. A rough, compact, dark brown.

“Adam, are you okay?” Frankie had asked.

“Huh?” I said. “Oh, yeah. I’m fine.”

I looked around the ice cream shop for a while, waiting for Frankie to finish his ice cream. I didn’t finish mine because I got too full. We got out of our booth and I went to pay Mr. Dirty Joe. We left the shop and the ray of sun was closer than it was to us before. It was following us, but the sky was still crying heavily.

“I’d like to go to the rock farm,” Frankie said.

The rock farm was a place that Frankie and I had created when we were little. It was a path of rocks on the playground that made a huge circle around the bigger center rock. During the spring and summer we would always balance on the rocks and have contests to see who could stand on one the longest.

“It is raining,” I said again.

“The rock farm is for all sorts of weather,” Frankie said rather impatiently.

“Okay,” I said.

We walked to the playground quickly as well, and ran over to the rock farm. The rocks were there, protruding from their spots in the ground at different angles. Frankie started to run around the perimeter of the rocks. The rocks were large, more like small boulders than anything else. I, too, started to run around the perimeter. We both began to laugh uncontrollably, lost in the fun of it all. It was pouring rain, and we were laughing. Smiling. Having fun.

Then I remember tripping. My foot had gotten too far in front of the other and I had fallen forward. I remember there being a sharp pain on my head, probably from one of the rocks.

I woke up later that day I assume. I had heard the sound of nothing, and that is what woke me up. I kicked out my legs and put my arms in front of me. I was touching wood on all sides. I was in a confined space of wood. When I kicked at the wood, dirt would seep in through the cracks in the wood around me and fall onto my face. A ray of sun was shining through a crack in the wooden slat. And then I realized.

I was in my casket.

My mother was telling the truth. She said she would bury me if she found me dead, and that is what she did. Except I’m not dead; she just thought I was.

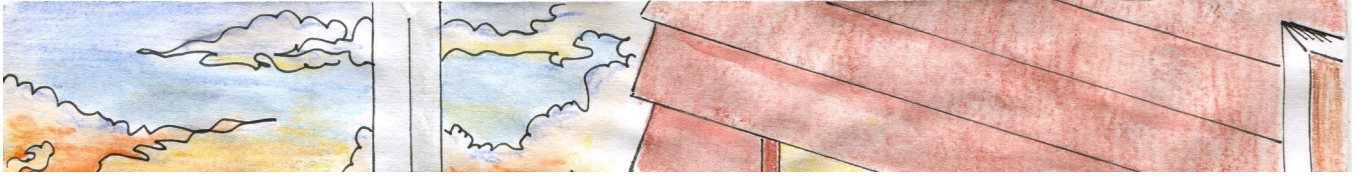
Frankie was also telling the truth as well.

Dirt doesn’t taste good without whipped cream.

I write this from my grave with panic, and I don’t know when or if I’ll get out.

Yours,

Adam Lance



10 Things and...

Veronica Vega-Diaz

1. I never like the way you smelled. Yet I still held your scent on my lips because you are unparalleled.
2. What you put me through burned the deepest parts of my body. The way you put your hands on me – making me feel like somebody.
3. I hate the fact that you were too much of a coward to do it face to face so instead you used your texts as a fireplace to burn the “can we end whatever this was” messages into my empty parking space.
4. That empty parking space is where my heart should be. But now there’s only lost memories of you and me.
5. Don’t come to my door because you no longer have the key to my loving nature anymore.
6. Why was I traded in for that whore? I’m sorry I didn’t mean whore. NO I MEANT WHORE! because I’m not the one who started this World War. I’m just going to walk out the stage door because I don’t think I can be in this play anymore.
7. Was she worth it? Was she worth breaking up friendships and that split second of attention you thought was endless?
8. Tell me why we didn’t last because I thought we were having a damn blast but I guess you just weren’t ready for our relationship to broadcast.
9. I know I deserve better so why do I still want you like any teenage girl wants a heartfelt love letter.
10. You always called me mean but what do you know you’re only sixteen. What was truly mean was you trying to be my vaccine but instead fueling my fire with your gasoline.
11. Forget it, let’s put an 11 because you still don’t understand why your existence makes me scream. You make me feel like a child and how reality crushes its dream. So please for now extract your poison from my bloodstream and go find another daydream.



“Washed Away”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

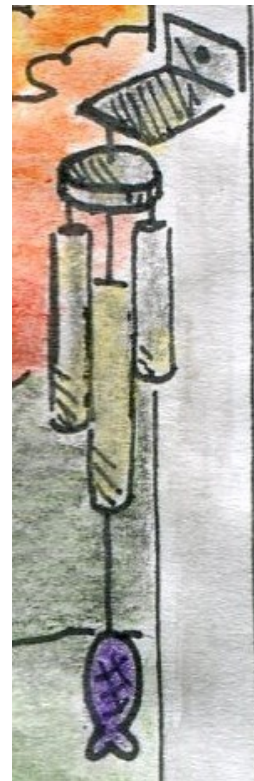
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To: The Boy That Broke My Heart

McKenna Dougherty

I've had a lot on my mind, and if I hold it in any more,
I think I'm going to burst.
You probably don't know this but
It hurts, you know,
Wanting you to open your mouth
And explain... in person,
Why you had to hurt me
But instead, you are quiet, and my feelings are locked inside
Destroying my rationality, sanity, everything about me
And all I can do is sit here
Waiting for you to say something
Hoping for you to do something
Something, somehow, some way
To unbury the dead weight holding me down
Anything to make me turn sane.
But you don't,
But you can't,
You're too scared,
I'm scared,
And I'm left here feeling it all,
And nothing at all.
It hurts, you know,
Wanting to be everything you need
And instead, I'm the one needing you
The one destroying myself over you.
Words cannot describe how I feel everyday,
It hurts, you know
When you hurt me.
There are things you do that break me that you don't know about.
Just by looking at you and thinking you're not mine anymore
And that I'm not yours
Just when I thought I was fully back together again,
Everything turns to complete crap
You are breaking me.
It hurts, you know.
So yes,
I am afraid --
Of the words I cannot say,
And the feelings I can't convey.
It hurts, you know.
Always hiding from you
I miss you

From: mc.



Homeless People

Abraham Guillen

The violent rays come crashing into sound
The heavy bags pull their vision down
Rags of the world embrace their frown
In the lonely night they live out loud
In the quiet

Silenced voices tremble in their vocals
Sing the songs no one knows the words to
A different beat that sends them shaking
Little coins chain their dreams, they feel like a victim
In the quiet

Dirt covered feet walk across the silence
Their society's skin in tatters, the fires all too vile
Price tags equivalent to prideful badges
Flames like roses waver in suspense
The weak hearts don't know what it meant
By that burning passion in those trash cans
The steady will to live
A torn flag raised to the wind
They finish, rip the clothes to find life again
In the quiet

Yet even the silent flames burn bright

Under a bridge somewhere
A bridge lost to the eyes
Out of the light where no one cared
Silhouettes reimagined their image

Underdogs scream inside and listen
Burning, the individual only can save themselves
But cannot tame the lion in the cell
Give it food, survivability its wealth

So I gaze into the darkness
The faint desire shines there
Never will the flames of the homeless
Be looked that way again
Somewhere underneath that bridge

Where the lost gather and shred
Off their loose skin
To ignite anew
Breaking the chains once again
Flames emitting from trash cans

(Abraham Guillen is in twelfth grade.)

The HBIC

Demetrius Acevedo

The boy in closet speaks only fragments
Boy in closet gets cut off while speaking
Boy in closet makes easy attachments
Boy in closet found what he was seeking
A way out since he was claustrophobic
Boy did not know this 'til he could not breathe
All of this cluttered air making him sick
The boy in the closet began to seethe
'Til he escaped closet and met new boy
Fell in love and met his best friend as well
Soon he spoke full sentences all with joy
Then he soon forgot why he even fell
He soon found that he could silence a crowd
With a voice that was once not all that loud.



Haiku Poems—Spanish

Brenda Monge

Que?

Oh querido, que
Que has hecho con mi corazón?
Oh no otra vez, adiós

Porqué?

Me puedes decir
Porque siempre vienes y te vas?
Yo te quiero aquí.

Wow

Pensé que te tenía
Pero todo era una mentira
No te quiero ahora

Atrás

Te estoy extrañando
No eres nada más que sin valor
Te amo pero te odio

Donde?

Te quiero ver
Todavía piensas en mí?
No lo creo...

Adiós

Me doy por vencida contigo
No lo intentaré más
Siempre te amaré...

Haiku Poems—English

Brenda Monge

What?

Oh dear loved one, what
What have you done to my heart?
Oh not again, bye

Why?

Can you please tell me
Why you always come and go?
I want you right here.

Wow

I thought I had you
But everything was a lie
I don't want you now

Back

I'm missing you now
You are nothing but worthless
I love you but I hate you

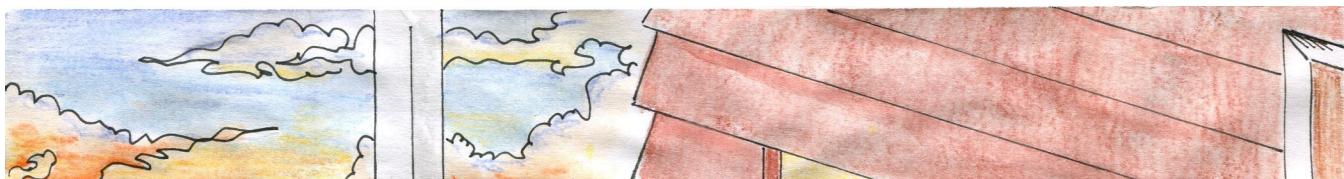
Where?

I want to see you
Do you still think about me?
I do not think so...

Bye

I give up on you
I am not trying no more
I'll always love you...

(Brenda Monge is in twelfth grade. She likes the Creative Writing class because she can express her feelings through writing.)





The Abused

Esthefany Arbizu

You exposed my youth into the darkness
Grasping your hands, leaving me with your mark
You left me with nightmares and the madness
Now I can't let go so I fall apart

Deep inside me
This delusion,
I know it's true
You never left

It's hard to disclose these thoughts that I hold
You left me with no choice but to let you
Trace every beautiful part of me so
You exposed my youth into the darkness

Rewind

McKenna Dougherty

All I want is to rewind back to the times
When we texted all night,
And we hung out at every competition

Those were the good times,
When I was actually happy
I feel like we drifted apart too fast

Your love for me didn't last
I was heartbroken the day you texted me,
You texted me how you really felt

I've been going downhill ever since then
I just want to rewind,
Back to the time when you loved me.

Intolerance

Angel Hernandez-Garcia

The smile on your face
And all your other perfections
Are unique and they show
That they can get my attention

I don't want to lose you
Life without you is the hardest
I will get you back
And for you I'll fight regardless

Of the Circumstances
To keep you safe, I won't show fear
Destined to protect you
I will be there to wipe your tears

You give my life meaning
I will walk every road and route
And if you want me gone,
I will chew the forbidden fruit

Nobody will stop me
And I will use your eyes to guide
Me out of the abyss
And arrive safely by your side

You have much to live for
With me you will see tomorrow
No more pain from you
I will not tolerate your sorrow



Share

Demetrius Acevedo

The sun peeks through the blinds in Dr. Miller's office. The AC is on and blowing cold air into our faces. Dr. Miller's office is always so cold. It could be 90 degrees outside and still remain below freezing in Dr. Miller's room. Dr. Miller likes to be cold, but me and Alyssa hate the cold. It makes us angry. We prefer warmth over anything else. But there is never warmth whenever Alyssa and I go to the same place together. We hate each other. And we are always with each other. We are identical twins after all. Our parents still make us match even though we're both seventeen years old. Old enough to make our own decisions, old enough to take care of ourselves. And yet, we are both still brought to a psychiatrist. Weekly. But there is nothing wrong with us. Nothing.

"Alyssa, is there anything in particular that Joanna has done this week to make you angry?" Dr. Miller says to Alyssa. Not to me though. Only to Alyssa. Dr. Miller always speaks to Alyssa first.

We sit on Dr. Miller's blue couch in his blue room with his blue walls and his blue windows and his blue curtains and his blue carpet. Blue isn't comfortable. Blue is cold.

"Yes, but when has Joanna ever *not* made me angry?" Alyssa says.

"Excuse me!" I interject, but Dr. Miller puts up his left hand, signaling for me to quiet down.

"Joanna, let Alyssa continue please," Dr. Miller says.

"Thank you," says Alyssa, giving me one of those sarcastic and disgusting smiles that I hate. What sucks is that her smile looks exactly like my smile, so I can't even make fun of it.

"Anyway," she continues, "Joanna is so mean to me! She eats all of my food, talks to all of my friends! I think she's trying to take my boyfriend away from me!"

To this I gasp, and Dr. Miller says, "And why would you say that, Alyssa?"

"Because it's true!" Alyssa says. "Just ask Joanna! She'll tell you."

"Okay," Dr. Miller says. He picks up his mug of coffee that's been sitting on his coffee table in the middle of the room. Steam emerges from the coffee cup. Warmth. Comfort in a cup. I would kill to be at least a little warmer. "Joanna. Is any of what Alyssa just said true?"

"Well, Chris likes me better!" I respond. "*I have the better personality. The better stature. I carry myself better!*"

"We carry ourselves the same!" Alyssa says. "Just admit it! You want everything that I have, you bitch!" Alyssa flails her arms into the air in frustration and then slaps her hands down onto her lap.

I can't help but gape my mouth open in awe. Alyssa has never cursed at me before. This is new territory. For the both of us.

"Mother likes me better!" Alyssa continues. "And so does father. No one likes you. They told me. They think that you-"

"Joanna, relax-" Dr. Miller begins, but Alyssa cuts him off.

"I'm Alyssa, Dr. Miller. ALYSSA! That is Joanna!" she says, pointing to me, in my ugly plaid skirt and grey buttoned up blouse.

Dr. Miller stays quiet for a moment, then says, “I apologize. I’m usually better at differentiating your voices. I must just be tired today.” He writes down in his notepad for a little bit and then looks back up at us. “Our time is almost up. It’s five minutes until 3 o’ clock. You know what I think you both should do?”

“What?” Alyssa and I say in unison. We then groan in disgust. We hate when we do that. We hate being reminded that we’re twins.

“Go into the bathroom and look in the mirror. Look at your twin through the mirror and simply say ‘I love you.’ Then, you both may leave.”

We do this every single time we leave this room. We go into the blue bathroom and look into the mirror that is outlined with blue wood and we say “I love you” even though we hardly mean it when we say it. The only way that we’re able to leave is if we say it at least once to each other every week.

Reluctantly, Alyssa and I stomp our way to the bathroom, open the door, enter, and close it. We turn to stare in the mirror. Blue eyes. Freckles. Dimples on our chin. Brown hair, blonde highlights. I think we’re beautiful, as much as I’d hate to say it out loud.

“I love you, Alyssa.” I see my mouth move to form the four words. It doesn’t hurt as much to say it now as it did when we first started coming to see Dr. Miller.

“I love you too, Joanna,” my reflection says back at me. But it was also my mouth that moved to form the words.

The eyes that Alyssa and I shared blinked once, and a single tear escaped our left eye and trickled down our left cheek. Then, with a simple wave goodbye to Dr. Miller, we leave, closing his office door behind us. The office door is engraved with letters that Alyssa and I have seen all too often:

-DR. HENRY MILLER, MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER SPECIALIST-



“Two Are One”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

Oof

Kristine Olivares

You are a dark cloud hanging over me
A beast within me, you make me your prey
Haunting me day after day, let me be
I'm sorry but I just don't want to play

Please just stop
Anxiety
You're wrapping around me
Constricting my lungs

Suffocating, my hands begin to shake
You cut me open and show your work
Exposing the damage you caused inside
You are a dark cloud hanging over me

He/Him

Demetrius Acevedo

He acts like he skips meals by accident
But does he really? Or I thought he did?
The soul inside his body's paying rent
Or is auctioned off to the highest bid

Oh, his heart and hands
Almost as cold as his bedroom.
Ten degrees.
He's freezing.

He hasn't slept in a couple of days
Since you keep him up to talk with himself.
How did it take you this long to realize
He acts like he skips meals by accident.

Football Game

Esthefany Arbizu

I fell asleep on your lap again, and
I can't seem to get you out of my head
I felt your chest, I heard your breathing and

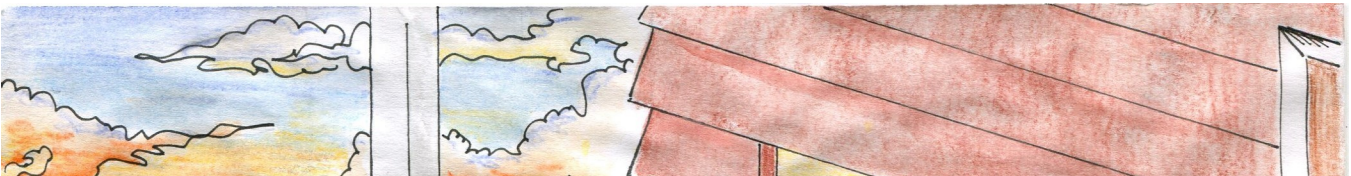
What did I do? I'm sorry we held hands
It hurts me so bad that you left unsaid
Don't do this, it was a misunderstanding

Sorry I feel this way, please understand
I'm sorry this is all over my head
I felt your chest, I heard your breathing and

I want your fingers in between mine and
Don't, don't think this is fake, I won't mislead
Don't do this, it was a misunderstanding

Just sit with me tonight and hold my hand
Tell me everything, leave nothing unsaid
I felt your chest, I heard your breathing and

I felt you, I felt you squeezing my hand
Your heartbeat rushes, this is what you dread
Don't do this, it was a misunderstanding
I felt your chest, I heard your breathing and...





“Hope for New Growth”

By Nathaniel Barreto (Digital Photo)

Go Forward

Song Lyrics by John DeLaurentis, Teacher of English and Creative Writing

(This song was performed at the Fourth Annual Creative Writing show:

Mirror of the Imagination on June 1, 2018.)

Are you walking down the path you should?
Is your life showing all you could?
Tremendous talent you do possess
When will you take the time to assess?

You have your dreams that guide your path,
Choose to focus on the good, not wrath
Only you can help your destiny,
For it to happen, open your eyes to see

(Chorus):

Go forward, and conquer the world
Ignite your passions to succeed
Go forward and conquer the world
Make a difference and plant a seed

You have the light deep inside your soul
Shine it bright, have courage, be bold
Ignite the world with a positive flame
Doing good is better than fortune and fame

When you face those trials and pains,
Overcome them by the cleansing rains
Wipe away those tears and move your feet
Let joy and hope overcome that defeat

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dreams
that
never
left the
front porch



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