

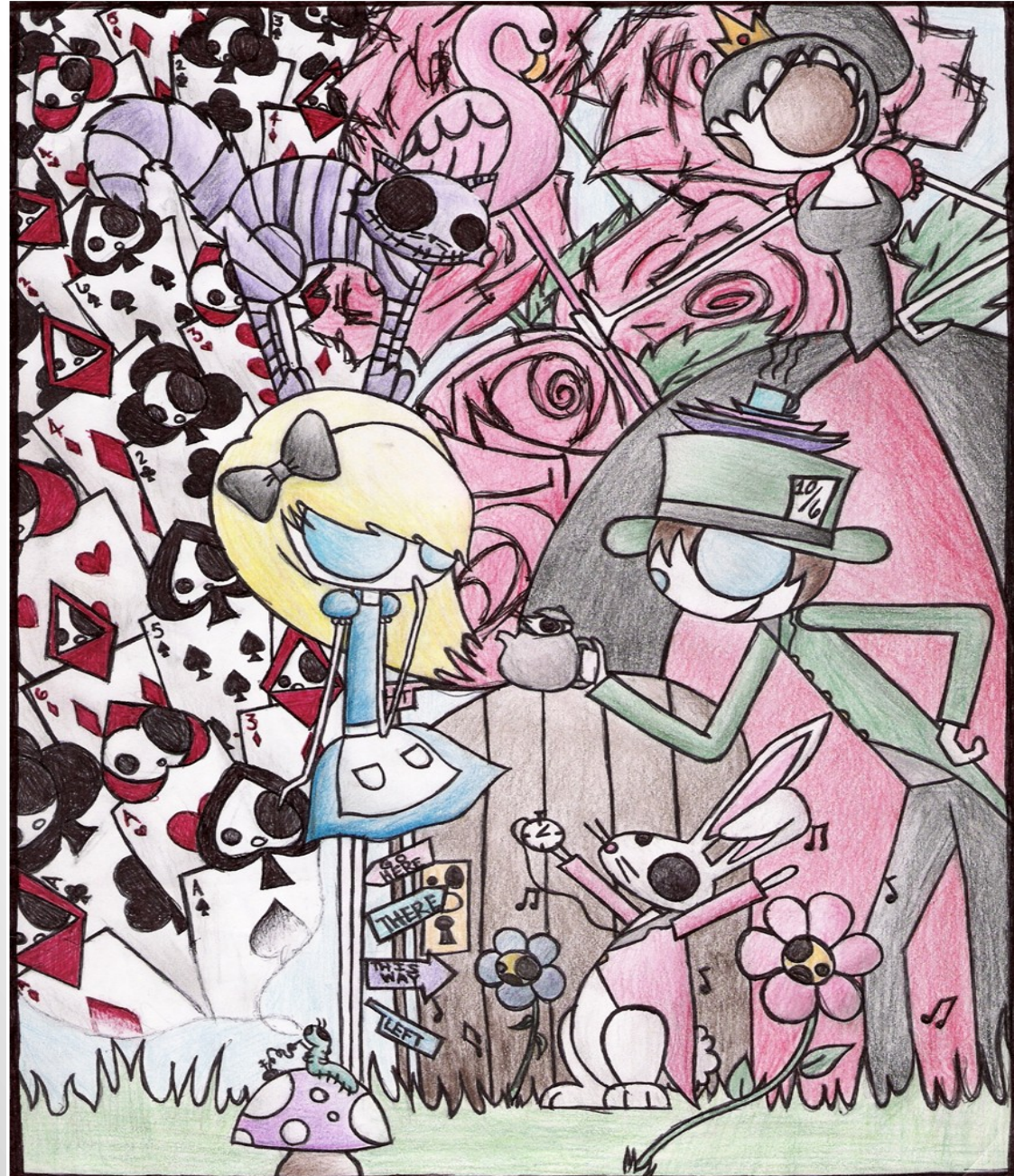
Canuckling 2009

The Literary-Art Magazine
of
North Plainfield High School

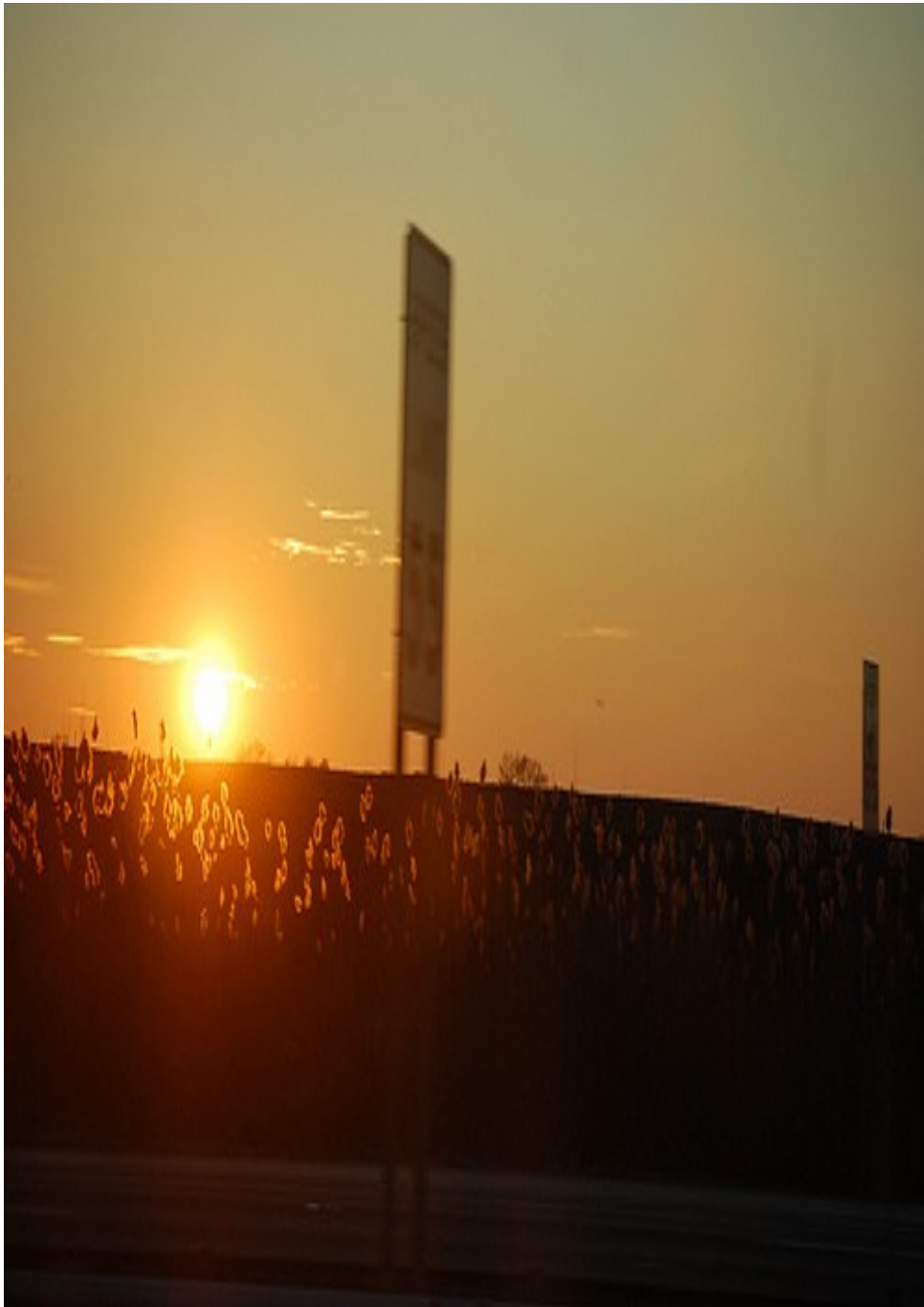
34 Wilson Avenue
North Plainfield, NJ 07060

Volume #54

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Canuckling
Journeys through Expressions
2009



Untitled by Stephanie Hatala

Canuckling

2009

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

Journeys through Expressions

AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
First Place with Special Merit 2008

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
Gold Medalist Award 2008



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. We are proud to be a part of this now golden tradition this year as we graduate a class of approximately 200 bright, shining students.

Bird

Monique Valerio

Sometimes I sit alone and wonder why
I do not have wings to leave and fly.
I wish I could live as free as a bird
Leave when I want and travel the world.
To leave when it's bad, soar high and be free
I leave when I feel, do not come to follow me.
No more waiting, no hard feelings
Live this as reality, no more dreaming.
Watching the birds fly, I only dream
Dream that I can grow a pair of wings.
I would follow the wind, go far away
I would leave these thoughts to yesterday.

My Sister

By Gabriela Zapata

You held my hand
Through the rocky road
You held my hand
When I couldn' t walk
You clean my tears when I cry or weep
You stay up when I can' t sleep
You are my guardian angel
You are my confidant and protector
And now you follow a new path in life
I look back at our wild life
The things we did and the time we spent
Are memories I will never forget

2009 CANUCKLING STAFF

Literary and Technical Advisers

Ms. Rita Martins

Mr. John DeLaurentis

Brittany Allen, Editor in Chief

Yamna Anwar
Arielle Brown
Antonina Chwialkowski
Didia Fajardo
Emily Garces
Emily Anne Giambalvo
Maria Guevara
Rabia Imtiaz
Annie Reading
Tanisha Rodriguez
Tenzin Sonam
Christina Stoudt
Shamay Wiggan

Our Sincere Appreciation to:

The English Department
&
The Art Department

Policy

Canuckling invites all North Plainfield High School students to submit original works of art and literature. Students may submit work to the English, Art, World Language, or Computer teachers, or directly to the advisers 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 Tuesdays 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, grade and English teacher on the back.

Submissions cannot be returned. It is the hope of the staff that the magazine is representative of the creative talent of North Plainfield.

Colophon

Canuckling 2009, the literary and art magazine of North Plainfield High School, was printed with a press run of 200 copies on 28# laser stock and bound by Minuteman Press in Parsippany, NJ. The software used for the layout of the *Canuckling* is Microsoft Publisher and at times utilized its design templates and clip art.

Cover

Alex Trinajstic, a junior, created the cover artwork entitled "Wonderland." It was created using colored pencils and ink pen.

The Perfect Place

Danielle Stewart

Higher and higher
Farther and farther
Away from all the troubles
To a place all my own

With trees that reach to the sky
A sun that shines forever
And water as clear as crystal

A place just for me
With no prejudice or hate
No crime or sadness
The perfect place

Change

Yamna Anwar

Change is swell, that's what they say
Destruction ends it all, yet starts a new day
But what of harm, of hurt or pain?
Among my shores, throughout my seas
Among my forests full of trees
Victimizing the mountainous views I possess
And permeating the grains of sand I caress.

My waters rushed with angelic charm,
My greenery, 'twas lush and warm
The storming wind soothed my every curve
From hills to meadows to paths that swerve

And then you came, loving my blossom
Altering me from top to bottom
You sorted through and changed them all
You dared to watch my teardrops fall
By setting the fires, and spoiling the seas
And screaming "Timber!" while slaughtering trees

You damaged me in every way,
And dirtied me more, day by day
Change no more I long to see
This is not right, this is not me



"Untitled" by Stephanie Hatala

Letter from the Editors

The editors of the 2009 edition of *Canuckling*, our school's art and literary magazine, are very excited to showcase our school's creative talents this year. Our editors and staff have been diligently reviewing the artwork, literature, and photographic submissions. Our theme this year is *Journeys through Expressions*. We chose this theme because we believe everyone in life has a story to tell, a picture to show, and/or art to display that expresses their journeys in life. The accepted submissions show the variety of our school's distinctive mix of cultures, tastes, dreams, and experiences.

Last year's *Canuckling* received the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's "Gold Medalist Certificate" and the American Scholastic Press Association's "First Place with Special Merit" award. We would like to congratulate last year's staff and let them know how proud we are of them and their hard work. We worked hard this year to continue the tradition of excellence that is associated with *Canuckling*, which has been published annually since 1955.

We hope through this magazine you can reflect back on your own life or stop and think about your life currently. We hope that we can share with you a vision or a story of the lives of the students of North Plainfield High School. Our main goal is to reach beyond the borders of our school to connect with the larger world of students and adults who share with us the common experiences of life. We desire to share with our own experiences as seen through our own lens in an effort to celebrate the diversity that exists in our world today.

Take a journey with us through the expressions that our students have created with their unforgettable talent.

This school year, the *Canuckling* staff, both past and present, had the opportunity to attend the twelfth biennial Dodge Poetry Festival. One of this year's teacher advisors, Mr. John DeLaurentis, wrote the poem on the following page inspired by his experience with the students at historic Waterloo Village in Stanhope, New Jersey where the Festival was held.

FREE HUGS

By John DeLaurentis, *Canuckling* Teacher Advisor

As we traveled the dirt and gravel road,
Kicking up the dust with our rhythmic paces,
Making our way from a reading by
Chris Abani at the library tent
at the Dodge Poetry Festival,
Two lined notebook pages
were held up high by the
gangling teenager for all to see.
“Free hugs,” scrawled in blue block letters,
were offered and embraced,
as if hugs had heretofore
been a commodity high-priced
and scarce and in need of a comeback.

Or maybe in the wake of continuing war,
Gas prices that eat wallets for breakfast,
Proposed billion dollar bailouts that
could wipe out the middle class
already crushed under the weight
of elephant-sized taxes pick pocketed
whenever someone needs their monetary
failures cleaned up, because accountability
for one’s own actions is as old school
a concept as using an abacus to calculate
numbers,
maybe free hugs is all one can offer,
under the crushing horizon of a future
too bleak for a teen to contemplate.

Maybe affection is being offered before
it becomes a criminal act to offer anything
that is not a taxable commodity to
help pay off debt.

Or maybe this is just another example of
Teen angst trying to turn back the clock
to the 1960s, where free love was touted
over war, and solutions were abstract nouns
forgotten in the wake of a plastic morality.

FIRST RUN

By Kris Sherwood

Staring to the east, running towards your song
Breeze whips past my ears, to you, I belong
Swirling shades of nature fly fast past me
The voices call, new way of life to see
Dripping colors in a black sky of night
Dancing, washing away within the light
Melting memories of a past life forgotten
Bright circle of music that does beckon
Beating fast, a heart, transformed into beast
Join in the hunt, receive a piece of the feast
The glowing speaks of frozen crystals fall
Upon my melting flesh, as new life calls
Loosing this which holds me down, soul anew
Claws not mine, ears pricked high, human askew
I tear towards the thrashing wind, with my pack
I look up at the moon, my eyes now black
Sitting amongst the many of my kind
Enjoying this new company of mine
I lower my ears, alone on the prowl
I face the sky and release my howl
By daylight I know, our species will reform
Never going back, I am now reborn

INVISIBLE

By Danielle Stewart

Do you see me
Or do you see what you want to see?
Isn't my pain clear enough
Or do you enjoy adding to it?
Don't my tears flood the room
Or do you just blame it on the plumbing?
Are my screams for help not loud enough
Or is it a lullaby, your entertainment?
Will you ever truly see me
Or will I forever be waiting?



“Mike” by Tyrell Conte

Maybe this poem is too didactic,
Too pedantic, too in need of an answer
for a simple teenage outcry
for acceptance and warmth
during a time of awkward growth,
and an expanding prefrontal cortex
that's wrestling to find a reason
why some are so accepted,
while others fall off the edge
of social commerce in their
efforts to find a purpose
to the life they breathe in and out
every day.

As we near the main stage tent,
Lucille Clifton massaging the audience
with her well-worn advice
and life experience,
another heavy-set teenager
wears her “free hugs” banner
around her neck.
But there are no takers,
no warm embraces, as she
quivers with her voice,
“Come on. Nobody wants a
free hug? It's free.”



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In the End

Marco Proano

In the end.
After all is settled and done.
After you lived your whole life working to survive.
Is it all worth it?
School, college, having a family.
Is it all worth it?
If in the end this is all going away.
Should we run, hide, or should we just die.
What to do?
I have nothing in mind.
But it is up to you to decide.

THE REALITY OF WAVES

ANNAMARIA KOUTSORAS

WITH WAVES SO DEFINED A PURE APPEARANCE IS SEEN, DISGUISED
THE TERROR.
MY BODY SWAM INTO THE GLISTENING BLUE SEA, WITH HOPE TO SET
FREE.
TO SWIM AS FAR AS I CAN, WITH NO DOUBT IN MY MIND.
MY FEARS WERE LEFT BEHIND.
EYES COULD ONLY SEE THE BEAUTIFUL GLISTENING BLUE SEA.
THE WAVES WERE TRANQUIL UNTIL THE SHIPS HOVERED IN.
EXOTIC WAVES CAUSED FEAR IN MY EYES.
A CIRCLE OF SHIPS STOOD AS THE CONTOUR TO MY LOOSE MIND.
EVERY HEARTACHE DEEP INSIDE EMERGED FROM THE CORAL DEEPLY
BURIED IN THE SEA,
OVERWHELMING MY SENSITIVE SOUL.
MY THOUGHTS FOUGHT BACK WITH GREAT DISCIPLINE.
THE STRICT OBEDIENCE FROM THE PAST ASSISTED IN GUIDING ME
THROUGH THE SHIPS
BUT THE DISASTROUS WAVES SEEMED TO BE INFINITE.
WITH ONLY MY PUREST MIND AND BODY AT SIGHT,
I BATTLED THROUGH THE WAVES TO FIND A NEVER ENDING FIGHT,
JUST A SIMPLE THING KNOWN AS *LIFE*.

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The Circle Of Life

Delvin Kwamboka Gichana

life is this wheel
 which keep spinning
 and brings you right to where you started
 all you need was to change it
 and did everything possible
 to move it an inch
 and try to make it better
 but through the whole process
 the many restless days
 you are glad to move a step
 and with no inkling of dropping back
 you find yourself just where you started
 just like a circle
 which has no beginning
 nor does it have an end
 is life
 no matter how hard you try
 you can rise up the ladder
 but if not careful
 you're back to where you started



“Breaking into Peaces” by Jessica Jordan



“Quick Fix” by Stephanie Hatala

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ONE HEART ONLY

MONICA ORTIZ

ONE HEART PROTECTS US
GOD'S AND LATIN AMERICA
WITH ALL THE COSTUMES
THE RHYTHM AND TASTES
WITH THE LOVE IN ONE TONGUE
LIVING WITHOUT ANY FEARS.

WE ARE ONE HEART, ONE THAT BEATS AND KEEPS GOING
HERE OR THERE IT IS ALWAYS BEATING
WORKING FOR A FUTURE
ENJOYING THE GRACE OF LIFE
ENJOYING THE HAPPINESS OF SMILE
AND WATCHING THAT BY OUR SIDE THERE IS SOMEONE THAT LIVES
JUST AS US.

WE ARE ONE HEART
AND EVEN IF WE THINK THAT WE ARE MANY
WE ARE ONE
THEY SAID THAT THEY DISCOVER US
BUT EACH DAY WE DISCOVER OURSELVES
WE DISCOVER THAT WE ARE NOT DIFFERENT.

WE ARE ONE HEART THAT GIVES
WAITING FOR NOTHING IN RETURN
THAT GIVES THE HAND
WITHOUT LOOKING FOR WHAT CAN HAPPEN
A HEART THAT IS ALWAYS POSITIVE
A HEART THAT IS JUST LOOKING FOR FRIENDS

WE ARE A HEART THAT IS ALWAYS LOOKING FORWARD
WE ARE LATIN AMERICA
THE RHYTHM, WE ARE LOVERS!
WE ARE HEART THAT FIGHTS FOR SOMETHING BETTER
WE ARE LATINOS, YES SIR!

UN SOLO CORAZON

MONICA ORTIZ

UN CORAZÓN ES EL QUE NOS COBIJA
EL DE DIOS Y EL DE AMERICA LATINA
CON TODAS LAS COSTUMBRES
LOS RITMOS Y SABORES
CON EL AMOR A UN A MISMA LENGUA
SIN TEMOR A LOS ERRORS

SOMOS UN CORAZÓN, UN QUE LATE Y SIGUE PA'LANTE
QUE AQUI O ALLA SIEMPRE ESTA PALPITANTE
TRABAJANDO POR UN PORVENIR
DISFRUTANDO DE LA DICHA DE VIVIR
GOZANDO DE LA ALEGRIA DE SONREIR
Y VIENDO QUE A NUESTRO LADO HAY ALGUIEN QUE VIVE ASI

SOMOS UN CORAZÓN
Y AUNQUE CREAMOS Q SOMOS VARIOS
SOMOS UNO
DICEN QUE NOS DESCUBRIERON
PERO CADA DIA NOS DESCUBRIMOS A NOSOTROS MISMO
DESCUBRIMOS Q NOS SOMOS DISTINTOS

SOMOS UN CORAZÓN QUE DA SIN ESPERAR
NADA A CAMBIO
QUE TIENDE LE MANO
SIN VER CUAL PUEDE SER EL RESULTADO
UN CORAZÓN QUE ES POSITIVE
UN CORAZÓN QUE SOLO QUIERE AMIGOS
Y SIEMPRE ESTA UNIDO

SOMOS UN CORAZÓN QUE SIEMPRE MIRA HACIA ADELANTE
SOMOS AMERICA LATINA
DEL RITMO SOMOS AMANTES!
SOMOS UN CORAZÓN QUE LUCHA POR ALGO MAJOR
SOMOS LATINOS, SI SENOR!



Ignition



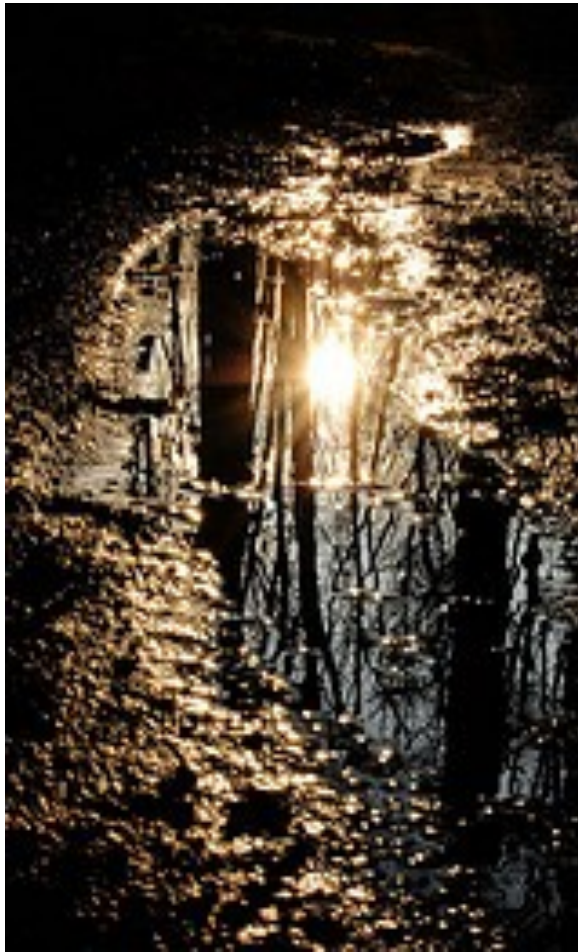
“Speed” by Milton Medina

Would I Be Here?

Kris Sherwood

You wish I were never here...
Never been born...
How can you blame a child, for being here?
I live whether you like it or not.
I'm here, I'm alive.
But your constant words of aggression...
Your constant words of hate...
Make me sorry that I am.
Who gave you permission,
To say your words?
Why can you say I'm wrong?
I'm here, there's no turning back.
But,
If you could turn back the clock,
Would I still be here at this time?
Or would I be gone forever?
A whisper on the wind...
Never to be heard again.
Would I be here?
An image forgotten...
Never to be seen again.
Would I be here?
An idea brought up...
Never to be remembered again.
Would I be here?
An existence uncreated...
Never to be made.
Would I be here?
Would you let me live?
Or destroy my life?
It's your choice.
If you turned back the clock...
Would you erase me from time...
Or would I be here?

Destination Destination



“When Skies Are Gray” by Stephanie Hatala

Look At Me

Shamay Wiggan

Look at me
Before a wedding
Not before a funeral
Look at me
Before I awake
Not before I go to bed
Look at me
During my independence
Not during my time of need
Look at me
During my time of fun
Not during my time of boredom
Look at me
When I'm happy
Not when I'm sad
Look at me
When I'm celebrating
Not when I'm mourning
Look at me
After I've been spoiled
Not after I've been scolded
Look at me
After I accomplish something
Not after I've failed
Look at me
Because I have hope
Not because I'm discouraged
Look at me
Because of my strength
And not because of my weakness

I'll Feel Regret

Arielle Brown

Oh! The resplendent emeralds you call eyes.
They leave me gasping hard for air.
If I die before they hold mine.
My love how truly that would be unfair.

This is embarrassing I know.
And my dream are ridiculous.
But I dreamt about our kiss.
When I smile does it show?

I am thirsty for you, my love.
And you do not know it yet.
I fear if I confess I'll feel regret.

Nothing could be heard each night
but the sound of rifles being fired.
Gun for gun,
knife for knife.
Blood for every blood shed,
as life taken for every lost life.
And we continue to kill innocent people,
for our high status we're trying to maintain.
But really, what are we trying to prove?
What are we attempting to gain?
Are we merely out for money and wealth?
Is it land we are out to conquer?
Why must we kill other human beings?
Whatever happened to the morals we used to honor?
So then who's truly wrong,
and who's right?
Why couldn't we compromise?
Why must we always resort to fights?
Instead of violence, increase the peace.
Spreading love is what we should aim for.
The hate could most definitely wait,
and so could waging war.

Increase the Peace, Hate can Wait

Theresa Huynh

First it's a simple push,
but then it turns into much more.
Next thing I know,
two countries are at each other's throats,
and then one side wages war.
So then we gather up our firearms,
as our troops head off to fight.
We wage war on supposed enemies,
Defending what we believe is right.
We rally behind our soldiers,
as they head to battle in uniform.
Lives of young men are placed on the line,
as families are slowly torn-
and mothers and wives begin to mourn.
At first we're out for blood and vengeance,
all we're seeking for is revenge.
We find comfort in giving them a dose of their own bitter medicine,
countless deaths
we try to avenge.
But then doubts begin to surface,
and questions of morality and humanity arise.
True motives for waging war come to the ears of the public-
all filled with deception and lies.
But politicians say they're trying to create peace,
but really, they're spreading animosity.
False advertisements and multimedia have us thinking the rest of the
world is our
enemy.
Guns are aimed and fired,
tears of the innocent are shed.
Women and children lose their husbands and sons,
as graves are dug for the dead.
Bombs continue to drop,
as death tolls get higher.



“Aerith” by Martha Camacho

No One's Calling

Kris Sherwood

In the night I hear your song
 Calling me
Through the silence your whispers crawl
 Just to taunt me
 I hear the cry
 Telling me to follow
 I run
 I run as fast as I can
Your sweet song growing faster
 Each step I take
 Brings me closer to insanity
 Every step
 Every note
Grows faster with each passing minute
 With your rhythm
 My mind runs faster
 With your rhythm
 My heart beats faster
 With your rhythm
 My madness grows faster
Growing melodies that wrap me up inside
 Wrap me up so I can never leave
 Never be free
 I'm forever bound to your song
 Knotted to it
I can not run to you any longer
I can not run for you any longer
 As I let you slip away
 I realize
 I didn't take...a single step
 No one called me
 I'm ...alone

How do I spill this confession of my bitter confusion

Chelsea Yannotta

How do I spill this confession of my bitter confusion?
 I can't seem to get this straight in my mind;
 How this came to be. Dare I mention,
 This thing that haunts me with a constricted bind.
Lingering like a shadow it peers from everywhere.
 Now it gets harder, to hid what was the truth,
 Because at my insides it loves to tear.
 Everything I try, but nothing can soothe
 My racing mind, that screams to let it out.
 What can I do to overcome this strain?
 I run and run to maybe find a different route.
 Do all I can to try and escape this inner pain!
 I will let it be told it I can get it together
 I don't think this confusion will leave me ever...



“Mother Earth” by Kris Sherwood



Title by Michelle Gomez



"Marilyn Monroe" by Vanessa Castillo

12:01 P.M. The ceremony starts and the captain introduces us to the higher generals. Several minutes pass and number 346 fails his task, he is shot in the head on the spot. They call out my number and ask me to bring Casper with me. "Every soldier has a weakness," the general chants.

"We have found your weakness," he says.

At this point I know that they are referring to Casper.

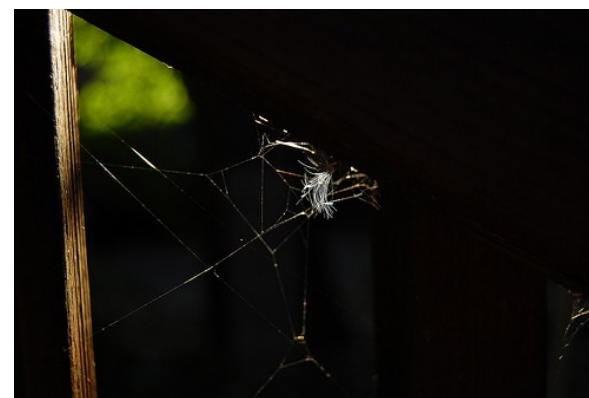
"Your task soldier is to shoot your best friend in the head."

I am shocked and become nervous. After a brief moment of silence I come out of my senses and decide to withdraw from my task. I cautiously raise my handgun toward the sky and let it fall from within my grip.

(Guns fire, faint barks, and disappointment fill the air)

"Disappointing" the general sighs sarcastically.

"What a mess," a future cadet amplifies.



"Untitled" by Stephanie Hatala

Chapter 3

December 23, 1943. I was told that it is my birthday today. The camp deprives me from keeping a calendar. I am starting to forget how to tell the time, day, and month. I determine what month it is based on the season changes.

Out of the five thousand kids who were kidnapped, only four hundred and fifty six are left. The captain mentions that I might be graduating today; he also stresses the fact that my potential will be put into action today, and that today I become a man.

6:45 A.M. The whistles blow and the captain yells for everyone to report to the base with their “pet mutts” as he called them.

6:55 A.M.

“Numbers 346 and 456 it is your birthday today” the captain notifies.

“Today, you will prove your courage to Hitler the Great” he chants.

“Report to the execution base by noon” he orders.

11:00 A.M. Today we meet our destiny. There is no turning back, either we go through with it or we both die. We will be considered outlaws and be sentenced to death if we do not go through with this. Will they make me set a life soul on fire once again? Or will they make me hack another prisoner’s head off? The setting is near and we must cherish this hour that we have left.

Flame

Carline Leriche

Heat beyond imagination
Burning through eternity
Uncontained power
Glowing in ecstasy

Smoldering through wood
Leaving ash in its wake
Uninterrupted measures
Of destruction it makes

In majestic brilliance
It flares in the dark
Unleashing its wonder
From the start of a spark



“Fire Horse” by Bertha Bautista

Karma
Kiana Smiling

Karma is like a circle.
What goes around comes around.
Karma is a silent sound.
What goes around comes around.
You never know when karma
will come, so it is better to treat
people how you want to be treated
If you play games with karma, you will be defeated.
Karma will cause people to get their heart broken,
When it's over
it's just the beginning.
What goes around comes around.
What you do will come back to you, it's nothing like
déjà vu.
Karma is a result of your actions, so be careful what
you do because
karma will always come back to you.

Chapter 2

I am being trained to be a ruthless killer and to hate the Jewish race. The captains and corporals train me to kill who ever dishonor the Nazi government. My unit tells me that we will be going into battle next year. An average kid my age would be petrified and praying to whomever they worship. However, I am prepared and cannot wait to catch my first sight of a Jew's blood.

Every year I am only able to write one letter to my family. That prepares me on my road to becoming a heartless German soldier. I am eleven years old and I have seen enough pain and bloodshed that is has becomes second nature to me. My captain tells me that I have the most potential and that he knows that I will bring victory to our side.

Growing up in Poland, my life was peaceful and filled with heartwarming love. My family consisted of two brothers, a twin sister, my mother, stepfather, and grandparents. My father left us when I was eight because he was forced to serve his country in WWI. I wanted to be just like him, he was my role model, and he taught me everything I knew. However, the camp has brainwashed me to worship the German flag and only the German flag.

On the other hand, Casper and I have formed a deep and special bond. Our daily routine involves a two mile run in the morning, breakfast, routine drills, another two mile run in the afternoon, and dinner. We both hate the food here but we manage to sneak the best food sometimes. Casper reminds me of my twin sister, we are identical both physically and mentally. He is the only person that I can tell my deepest fears to and not get judged. Nobody will ever replaced him or break us apart. I made him a promise that we will make it out of this stink hole someday; I hope I can keep this promise.

The Diary of a “Good” Samaritan

Marcelo Angulo

Chapter 1

“Numbers 4588, 4589, and 4560 forward” the captain calls out.

I march down a flight of stairs into a basement. A Soldier points to three cages filled with puppies. He orders me to choose one and walk forward. I choose a white Pink Nosed Pit-Bull and follow his orders. I walk down a dim and musty corridor alongside two other ten year olds.

“Line formations” one of the soldiers yells out.

I get into my line and wait for the next order. A different soldier walks into the room with the three puppies that the three of us picked. He teaches us how to take care of the puppy and demonstrates how we must feed it, nurture it, and protect him as if he is my child. He then ordered us to go back to our dens and formulate a band with our new puppies.

I name him Casper based on his fur and agility, which made him seem almost invisible. I make an instant connection with Casper and treat him as my new brother. I was taken away from my family at the age of 9 and I ponder about them all the time. Casper manages to fill their spot and is starting to become my best friend.



“Cloudy Day” by Michelle Gomez

What Lies Ahead

Raichelle Arthur

Two years from now
What can I see?
The skirmish of college bothering me

I can't squander this opportunity
No longer to speak
It's no longer in my grasp
I now feel weak

My voice is hoarse
My throat dry
My tears react and I begin to cry

My hands tremble
I have nothing to say
I just now realized this is graduation day

My mind is racing
I finished it all
I'm just hoping college won't be my next fall



"Chester" by Tyrell Conte

Triangle Factory Fire – 1911

Claudia Salazar

Women working as slaves,
The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory is the place.
It slowly leads them to their graves;
They were belittled, treated as disgrace,
Money was their only motivation,
Bosses were drastic and strict,
Women went on strike formations.
Fired constantly although they were handpicked;
One day flames and smoke chose their destiny.
Trapped behind locked doors and tall heights,
Things wouldn't have happened this way if there was
mutiny,
Bodies jumped and fell on the street like broken kites.
And yet it was as if the women were becoming free,
As if they agreed to die with dignity and not plea.



“Ville Valo” by Martha Camacho

Memory Lane

Memory Lane

Memory Lane

Identity

Gabriela Zapata

Is what you are
And what you feel
The way you talk
The way you walk
You look in the mirror
And try to depict
The several things that make you unique
And what you find
Are simple fractions of who you are
But your inner self is not defined
It' s hard to adhere to the rules of life
When your identity is undefined



"Paint the Sky" by Alex Trinajstić

Rewind

Clyde Amegashitsi

Remember back in the days
 Everybody was the same height
 When all we did was watch cartoons
 Inside right before it got dark
 Never had anything to worry about
 Dreamed with our friends every chance we had



"New Jersey Night Life" by Stephanie Hatala

Chandler Tomwell

Kris Sherwood

As a child I loved to watch him at work
My father was one of the greatest
He never missed one date
Never missed an appointment
Top employee they'd say
Always the best at the mechanism
So when it came to my time
For me to be next in line
I expected no less
To be just as good as him
I never saw it coming
They told me not to wear long sleeves
I shrugged them off and said "whatever"
So now when working at machinery...
They always joke...
That kid's buried in his work



"Take Me Back To The Old Times" by Michelle Gomez

Endless Nights

Taj Solomon

At last it feels like the ending
I'm tired of the endless nights I been spending
I miss all the good times
When you're in my head I make the right rhymes
I feel small standing by the ocean
Love comes from real feeling and emotion
It's never good to be joking
Because the one you love might leave you confused
Even when you feel you won't lose
Now that's the endless nights I feel
Not knowing when the sun shines to keep you still
Run away and never come back
Don't get yourself in another trap.



"Not the Kind with Halos" by Stephanie Hatala

Where I'm From

Amanda Aponte

I am from...
makeup and mirrors wondering if this is me.
I am from...
another part of my family that's undiscovered.
I am from...
begging the street lights don't come on.
From seeing all the flags showing their pride
wishing I could feel that inside.
I am from...
Darlene and Richard,
the parents that never seemed to love me.
The users and abusers that ruined my childhood.
I am from...
my parents saying,
"Never be afraid to show who you really are."
From right before you put that period
I say to myself, "I don't know who I am."
I am from...
Kabasi and perogies to chicken and rice.
Two stages in my life: my past and my present.
I am from...
Shyness only telling my memories to my diary.
I am from...
Hiding who I am in my shoebox of memories.
Now the only thing I pack in my shoebox of memories
is the memory of the old me because the new me is ready to emerge.
The new me is ready to show that I am Amanda and that I am
adopted.

Our Love is Destroyed and Forever Lost

Shamay Wiggan

Our love is destroyed and forever lost
A horrible shipwreck out in the wicked sea
It was difficult and we paid a great cost
But in the end this is how it must be
You were my love, my true soul mate
Our hearts were strong and our love divine
It hit me hard, but it was our fate
Our love just could not pass the test of time
The love we had was passionate and strong
It tackled our doubts and conquered our fears
But now our love is faded and gone
Discontented as one with no dreams or cares
You ripped out my heart and threw it on the ground
Now the pieces are lost and can never be found



"Search & Destroy" by Michelle Gomez

Hate That I Love You

Anonymous

Hate, a strong word
Love, another strong word
Two words that describe how I feel about you
I hate the intense pound of love I get against my heart when
our eyes meet
I hate it when your touch reels me into your pool of love
I drown, and it washes off all the hate I had towards you
I hate that I indulge your love because it's sweet like candy
You know every detail about me
We argue, then the sweet touch of your lips causes me to
forget why I was upset
It's unfair how predictable my feelings are for you
A smile comes across my face every time your in sight or in
mind
I hate that everything and everywhere I look it triggers a
thought of you
Your love is the scar in my heart that will never go away
You're like a shadow that follows my every move and I can't
escape it
I hate it
Then again I love you
I can't let you go without me being right by your side
You stole my heart
You'll never return it no matter how long I try to get it back
I hate that I love you.

My Inspiration

Telia Hubbard

Who inspires you?
Your mother, father, grandmother?
Well I'll tell you who inspires me:
My haters.
What is a hater you may ask?
Well the definition of a hater is someone who tends to
pick out your
Flaws regardless how small.
Why do they inspire me?
That's simple.
Because haters are motivators.
Don't let them get you down when they
Begin to hate.
Just take what they
say and turn it into something
Positive.



"Sky So Blue" by Michelle Gomez

Nursing a Broken Heart

Brittany Allen

Look into her eyes and see her uncried tears.
Search her heart and feel her unleashed fears.
Ask her how she feels and she'll know that you care.
Stay by her side so that she'll know you'll be there.
Hold her hand tight and never let go.
Spend time with her, let a friendship grow.
Don't tell her you love her, unless you mean it.
Don't give up on her, you must never quit.
She's gone through a lot of pain.
She needs you nearby.
She needs you to console her, so she won't cry.
She needs you to be her friend and show her joy.
She needs a real man, not a deceitful boy.
She needs you completely, not in parts.
She needs you to nurse her broken heart.



“Faux Fur” by Danielle Guaman



“I Love You” by Christina Cruz

Maybe It Was, Maybe It Wasn't?

Maria Jose Guevara

I'm saying bye to you.
If I did love you.
Maybe I'm not going to forget about you,
but I'm saying bye to you.
I don't know if you did love me
I don't know if I did love you.
Or maybe we loved each other too much.
This crazy sad feeling got in the deepest
side of my heart, to love you.
I don't know if I loved you too much
or if I loved you too little.
But I'm sure I'll never love like this again.
Your sleepy, pretty smile rest on me
And my heart tells me that I'll never forget about you.
But now that I'm alone, without you.
Knowing that I lost you.
I'm starting to feel that I'm loving you even more
like I never did before.
I'm saying bye to you, and with this "Good-bye" my most
precious dreams are dying inside of me.
But I'm not saying bye to you for the rest of our lives,
even though that for the rest of our lives, I'm going
to be thinking about you.

Jealousy

Emily Anne Giambalvo

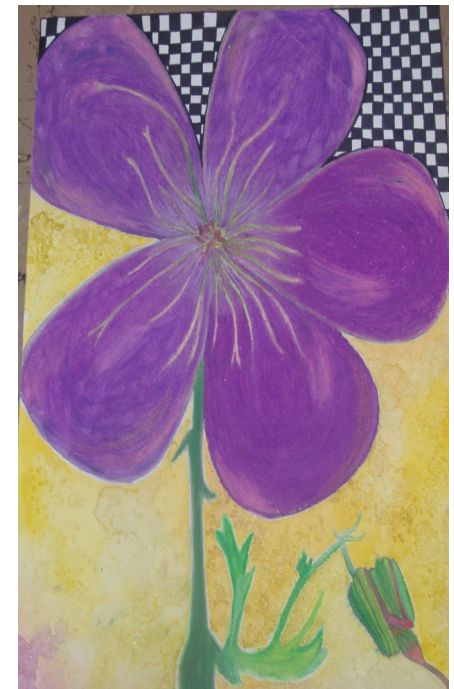
I'm jealous of the sun,
Who's always encouraged to shine.
I'm jealous of the rain,
That strokes each tender vine
I'm jealous of the flowers,
That always known when to bloom.
I'm jealous of the butterflies,
Who fly so free at noon.

I'm jealous of the wind
That always blows so free
I'm jealous of the evergreen,
The ever-flourishing tree.
I'm jealous of the stars,
Who always shine so bright.
I'm jealous of the moon,
That gets to stay out all night.

I'm jealous of the rainbows,
Who are sought after by all.
I'm jealous of the full-grown bird,
That never have to fall.
I'm jealous of the storm clouds,
Always allowed to grieve.
I'm jealous of the mountains,
Who never have to leave.

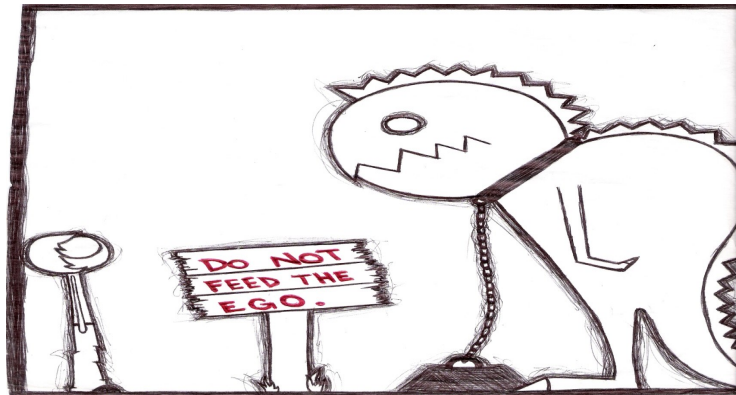
I'm jealous of the rivers,
How they always skip and run.
I'm jealous of the animals,
Who always manage to have fun.
I'm jealous of the waterfalls,
Who run so strong with power.
I'm jealous of the baby deer,
As innocent as a flower.

I'm jealous of all these things
Because it's clear to see,
How easy it is to be them
And how hard it is to be me.



"In Bloom" by Briana James

Shifting Gears



“Do Not Feed the Ego” by Alex Trinajstic

Noah Smarts

Arielle Brown

My daddy always favored a drink.
He was no use to us once a rust colored vessel was in his hand.
I never liked comin' home too much.
I would stay at my neighbor's.
That is until my daddy would throw a fit.
Many times I prayed the Lord my soul to take.
Now I have to bare my mistake.
I got smart with my daddy while he was drunk.
And he struck me down.
Six feet to be exact.
With his rifle he had in the back.



“Golden Afternoon” by Stephanie Hatala

Raped

Brittany Allen

Stripped of my sanity
Stripped of my innocence
Disconnected from humanity
I lost my common sense
A pretty face met mine
My world left behind
I followed him to his
My last mistake
Taken advantage of mentally and physically
Never again would I be free
I naively gave myself up
To a man who broke me down
My life took a wrong turn
Now I feel so impure
I was seized of my virginity
Left without stability
One could only guess that,
I was raped.

Beast

Guedis Cardenas

What could it be?
What do I feel?
What do I see?
Is it death?
Or is it misery?
As I lament
On the sins I've done
It becomes closer
On what I have become
As it nears
I rid of thee
I rid of those
Fond memories
Now I see
I truly truly see
What feelings churn
Deep inside of me
Now I realize
What I see
There is a beast
A beast lurking inside of me



"Saturday the 14" by Vanessa Castillo



"Mother Nature" by Kris Sherwood

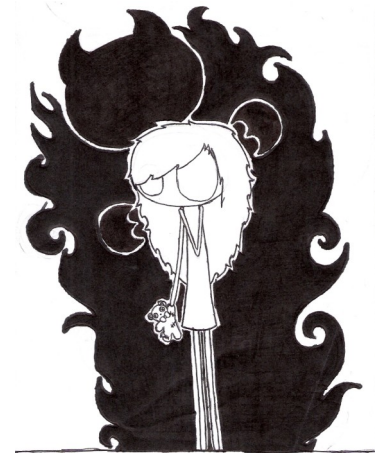
Confined within the mind of the deathbed

Kris Sherwood

Confined within the mind of the deathbed
Sounds through the air with no soul to guide them
Dripping sweat as you move inside your head
What can't the raucous voices scream condemn?
Falling from yourself, there's no end and wake
Like scratches you leave the wall tears itself
Cracks drip blood, not a vision you can break
Through the window you see someone, yourself
Pulsing veins in concrete suffocation
Seem to drown, spurts blood as it tries to gasp
But you know fear can't die in frustration
Plunge in blindness, trying for sight to grasp
The room itself speaks, in such words unknown
Shaken and startled, you're never alone

6. One second to go
Adrenaline taking me
Close my eyes and pray
7. Show me how this goes
Simply walk in, let me know
This heartache's too old
8. Can you understand
That I don't want to hear you
You caused a headache
9. Alone in the dark
Never meant to be afraid
Nor meant to be shy
10. He cries endlessly
Feeling lonely and hated
Regret afterwards

- 1-3 Kris Sherwood
- 4-5 Arielle Brown
- 6 Dimitri Koutsoras
- 7 Chelsea Yannotta
- 8 Fernanda Altamirano
- 9-10 Jostina Gichana



“Monster” by Alex Trinajstic

Haiku

1. A secret you kept
Does the darkness hold nothing?
You promised a lie
2. Strings of a puppet
Swings, tangled on a dead tree
Childhood is dead.
3. As the lightning strikes
It will shatter the mirror
Let's dance in glass rain
4. A concert ticket
A boy joins in the mosh pit
An experience
5. Music in my ears
Chases all my fears away
The best gift ever



“Respirator” by Edwin Morris

Your Joy

Ashley Small

Father do you remember
When I was the age of three?
Walked down the sidewalk
Staring at your feet
Wishing my steps were longer
So by your side I could keep

Hold your hand much bigger
Never wanted mine to grow
So I could always feel perfect
Inside your palms just so

Laid me on your belly
Nights when Mama wasn't home
Lighting made me shiver
And you never let me feel alone

I tried to match your breathing
Beating my little heart against yours
Perfect were the nights we were sleeping
So I didn't want to let you go

No one loves me just like you do
No one knows me just like you do
No one can compare to the way my eyes fit in yours
You'll always be my father
And I'll always be your joy.

Eyes of Mine

Renndon Browne

These eyes of mine
Witnessed the tribulations of time
Viewed emotional crimes
Committed by the emotionally inclined.

He was a vibrant man.
These eyes of mine
Witnessed tired cries
Out of breath pleading to the blind
But they gave up and sighed.

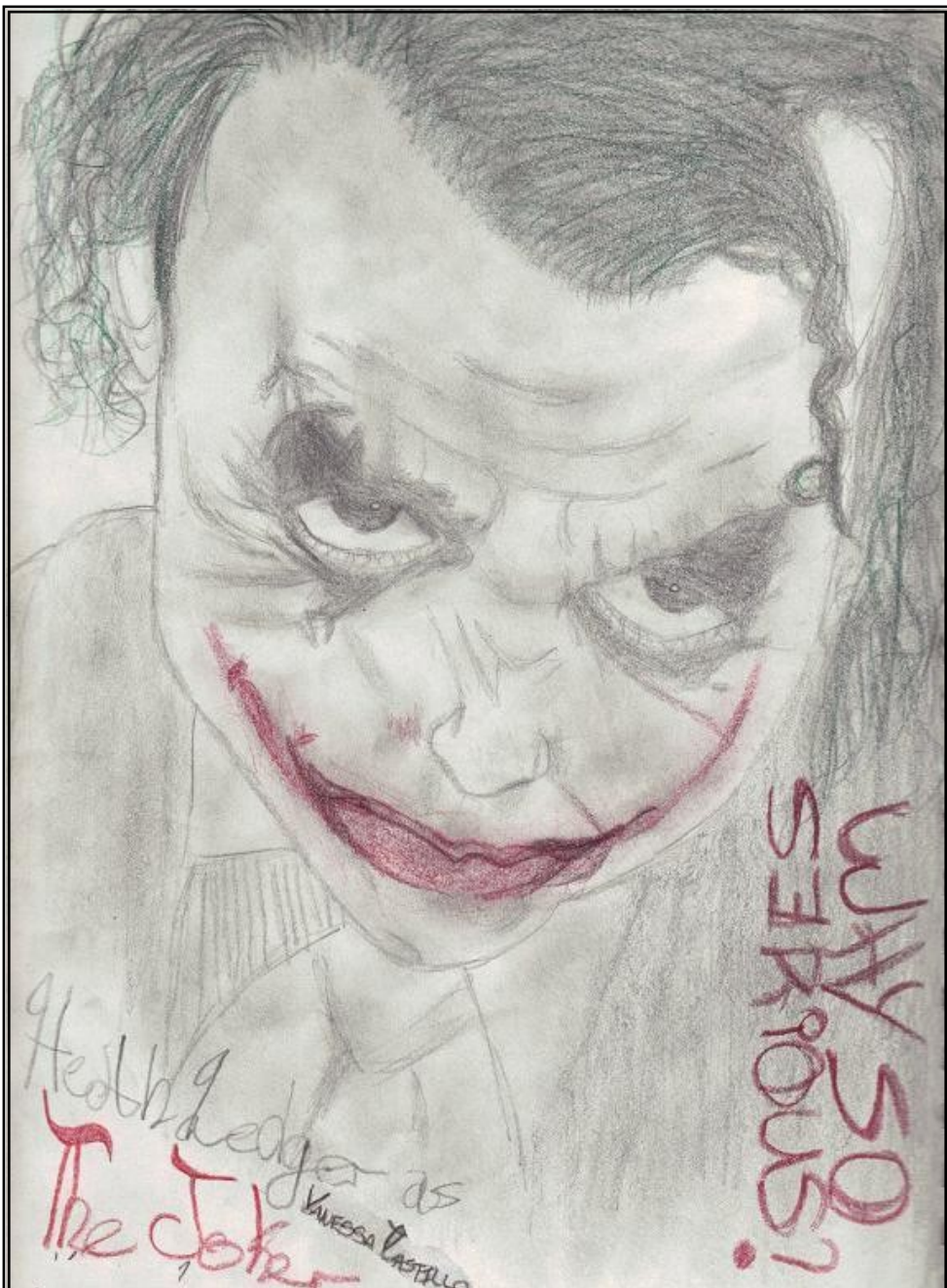
He was a hopeful man.

These eyes of mine
Witnessed blood spewed from cuts on his mind
Easily seen like green on grime,
Disregarded due to prime time?

He was a talented man.

These eyes of mine
Witnessed a noose leveled to his eyes
Viewed first hand suicide
Committed by his soul inside.

He is a dead man.



"The Joker" by Vanessa Castillo
Inspired by *The Dark Knight*



"Smile" by Tanisha Rodriguez

Starting Over

Rut Elizabeth Junco

Tears stream down my face
as I watch the setting sun.
I know that for sure this town
will stay in my heart.
I'll remember the bad times
and the times I had fun.
My heart is breaking
but I know that where I'm headed
I'll have a new start.
Keep your head high;
let your smile shine bright.
What happened?
What happened to the time?
I've done wrong.
I know that, but this isn't right.
Now all I can do is write my thoughts
and my feelings into this rhyme.
I've wished I could be free of this,
be as free as a bird.
One thing I'll never forget
is racing through town—the wind in my hair.
I'm leaving you friend.
I hope that you've heard.
Don't you even dare to think I don't care.
I really do care and I think about all that I did here,
as I cry and try to sleep.
I think of what I'm leaving
and those memories
I'll forever keep.

Hands that are mine
Hands that are controlled
by someone else
Motionless screams echo
from a closed mouth
Invisible to those eyes that watch
I am nothing but a shell of souls
How do you ask someone
If you are dead inside...
When you can't even talk for yourself
Your words whisper
Unseen wisps of cries
Denied by another's will
Another's thoughts
Another mind...
Perhaps...
There *are* things worse than death

Visions

Kris Sherwood

Surfacing untold truths
So deep I've pushed them
Hiding them
Why is it they can surface?
How do they manage this?
They manifest as scars
that crawl inside my flesh
As paranoia
As fear
The migraines return
Mind and memory rejection
I've so long hidden in the deepest
Remnants of my being
How do I destroy them?
Or have I destroyed myself?
Concealed within the thoughts
The images only my eyes may see
How do I tear them?
Tear the visions that haunt
Touch but have no hands



“Lonely” by Stephanie Hatala

REMEMBERING MAYA

Emily Anne Giambalvo

Dressed in a bright blue calico dress that matches exactly the color of her eyes, her dark, curly hair falling down to her shoulders and framing her tiny face—that's how I choose to remember Maya. I refuse to see the dirt that covered her clothes, the grime that coated her face, or the tears that ran down her cheeks, just as it did the last few days of her life. I refuse to remember her crying out in pain. She wouldn't want to be remembered like that.

I tried to explain that once to Albert, but he just stared at me with an angry look in his dark eyes and stormed away, grumbling about how I wouldn't, couldn't understand, because I was just too young. I was going to explain it to Mama too, but when I entered the makeshift tent we had set up, I saw her clutching Maya's bonnet, the only bonnet that had survived the journey.

Maya had never liked wearing bonnets, always preferring to wear one of Albert's or my hats. To ensure she wouldn't be forced to wear one of the dreaded bonnets, she would toss them underneath the wheels of passing cars or play tug-of-war with them with one of the stray dogs on the street. For such a little girl, Maya was decidedly fearless.

Papa said that Mama was fearless too, that Mama was strong. But Papa's gone now, he's been gone for a year, since before Maya had even gotten sick. He just up and left one day, leaving us to fend on our own. After that, I really don't think you can blame me for questioning my father's ideas.

Not that I think Mama is weak, because she's not. It's just that, well... Being strong is about having everything taken away from you and still being able to get up in the morning. Being strong is about getting knocked down again and again and still standing back up. That's not my mother.

Mama took Albert and me up to soup kitchen today. We're running low on food right now, and Mama doesn't want to waste anything. Plus, Albert told me that Mama wanted to visit the graveyard, which is right behind the soup kitchen. You can see it from where the tables are set up to sit down and eat.

He trudged through the line of people, each received a bowl of extremely watered down soup, and headed down to the eating area. I dragged my feet with deliberate slowness. Albert walked beside me, the two of us kicking up clouds of dry dirt with each heavy step we took.

"Chris?" he asked suddenly, looking over at me.

"Yeah, Al?" I replied.

We both had stopped walking, focusing our attention instead at the ground, the clouds, the dehydrated plants, anything except the ominous graveyard gates that loomed directly to the left of us. The hot sun boiled overhead, making the soup in my bowl look more and more unappetizing.

"Chris," Albert looked at me sharply. "You're not going to die on me, are you? You're not gonna leave, right?"

"No, I'm not going anywhere."

Be Careful

Sierra Smith

Be careful.

You never know when a person's goodbye
Will be the last,
Or when the happiest moments you shared with someone
Will be forgotten in the past.
You never know how much someone spent
To put the slightest smile on your face
Or how much pain and suffering,
A person can really take.

Be careful.

You never know when the one closest to you
Will stab you in the back,
Or when the person who means the most
Will leave your life like that.
You never know when the one you fall in love with
Will take your heart and break it,
You never know how good phony people
Have the ability to fake it.

Be careful.

Especially if you take life for granted,
And don't think anything bad will happen to you.

Be careful.

Because one day you'll be stuck,
And hopeless of what to do.



“Artery” by Stephanie Hatala

He nodded, then continued walking.

“Al!” I called out, suddenly terrified. “Al, you’re not gonna leave either, are you?”

The look on his sun-browned face softened, his brown eyes widening. “No, of course not,” he said. “Where would I go?”

He sat down hard on the wooden bench, and placed his bowl on the table. Mama was already over the fence and halfway up the hill towards Maya’s grave. I shrugged my shoulders.

“I don’t know,” I said slowly, and then in a soft whisper, “Where did Maya go?”

Albert took a sip of his soup and motioned for me to do the same. It was bitter, with a little too much salt and way too much water. But I was hungry, very much so, and I gulped it down like a madman. When I was finished, Albert took my bowl and drained out half of his soup. I ate that too, regretting it only after I had licked the bowl dry. Now Albert would still be hungry.

“You know where Maya went?” He spoke softly, swirling the remaining contents of his bowl in a slow circle. “Maya went with God.”

“But why?” I asked thickly. I was trying my very hardest to keep the tears out of my voice.

Albert shrugged the calm, detached look that has resided on his face lately commandeering his features.

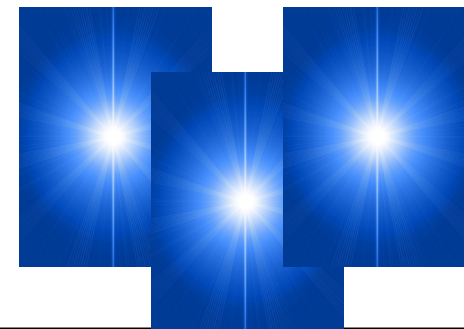
“Well, think about it. God loves us more than anything, right? And we love Maya, but God loves her more. So if it hurts us to not have Maya next to us, imagine how much it must have hurt God to have her so far away. She was too good for this world,” Albert continued softly. “God took her somewhere better.”

Footsteps sounded on the dry leaves covering the path leading down from the cemetery. Mama was coming towards us, her face heavy with grief and her eyes clouded with sorrow. Albert and I shared a look as she sat down between us on the bench.

“How’s the soup?” Her voice was cracked, with hidden emotion.

“It’s good, Mama,” Albert said, and thrust her bowl in her direction.

I climbed into Mama’s lap, nestling my head against her shoulder. Albert stood behind her and patted her hair in a soothing manner. And Mama stared out at the cemetery, doing what she always does, what we all always do. Remembering everything we’ve lost since we’ve moved here. Remembering Maya.





"Dead End" by Michelle Gomez



"Choke" by Stephanie Hatala

Ravaged Kiss

Kris Sherwood

I saw you across the room.
Deep inside there's nothing.
Didn't see the imposing doom.
Kissing you was nothing.

I see it within the dark.
Deep inside it's ravaged.
Dying pieces like broken bark.
Kissing you was ravaged.

Lost inside the misting air.
You were lost desire.
No choice, this disease isn't fair.
Kissing pure desire.

Am I no longer myself?
You told me it's kismet.
Like an unread book on a shelf.
Kissing you was kismet.

So many portions are missing.
Hidden truths are nothing.
What could this be thing be I'm kissing?
Kissing you is nothing.

As I watch myself fall down.
There is nothing there, so true.
I know now I'm forever bound.
Kissing you was untrue.

The pieces fell
Turned to dust
Now your kiss...
Is empty.

Emo

Edwin Morris

I am from Darkness surrounding
me at all times even in
the lightest of days

I am from a house with no
light no hope and only remorse
the only comfort here is the feeling
and the knowing of neglect.

I am from a life without knowing
the meaning of friendship I don't
know the meaning of love only
the pain brittle feeling of hate.

I am from a family that shares
they're feelings and come together
to see one another yet I am
one who doesn't care I hide in the
shadows feeling remorse.

I was raised in a family that had
Religion but I grew up without any
I was told as a child that
I needed one in order to die and go
to a happy place but I spat in the faces of
those who believe in such drivel

My family is a nice dish of authentic
food that the whole world could
enjoy but I am bitter I'm cold I am dirty and dry
I AM NOTHING



By Max Cordova
Inspired by "The Large Plane Trees" by Vincent Van Gogh



"Lost in This World" by Christina Cruz

Just Because

Emily Anne Giambalvo

It's amazing how blind people can be
How they can think that there's only one solution to their problems.

Most people can't tell that
Just because you aren't thirsty
Doesn't mean you're not dehydrated
And just because someone smiles
Doesn't mean they're not crying inside.

It's amazing how they can't see
That even though the light is green
Some other cars might not stop
And just because you can't see it
That doesn't mean it isn't there.

It's frustrating how they can't tell
That just because you're popular
Doesn't mean you'll succeed
And just because you're quiet
It doesn't mean you can't put one hell of a fight.

It's funny how people can't see
That just because you're living
Your heart is beating
Your lungs have air
You go through your daily functions
Just because you still have life within you
Doesn't mean you're alive.

A Lonely Heart*

Tanisha Rodriguez

Her husband was gone,
her servants were gone,
She was all alone,
a lonely heart.
The world around her was crumbling,
Crashing to the ground all around her.
Bodies lay without a heartbeat,
and blood and fire devoured everything in red,
like a scarlet veil over the country her husband
was once so proud of.

A lonely heart
trapped in the chaos of the grandest country of
them all, Rome.
In her dark corner of her home,
Thoughts of murder, of loneliness, of loss swirled in her head.
Her father, Cato, fell a great man.
Her husband, Brutus, fled a great man.
But, she was a woman.
Feeble and scared, how it hurt her to think of it.

A lonely heart,
trapped in the middle,
haunted by all her thoughts and fears.
Haunted by her loss and by the pain of
her thigh.
Surrounded by the heat of war, blood, and
fire, pain and suffering.
Burning coal lay beside her,
Warm tears fill her eyes,
She couldn't stand it any longer.

The hot coal gleaming red,
reminding her of the blood she shed for
her beloved husband.
It reminded her of the blood her father
shed too.
"No more memories, and no regrets," she cried,
swallowing the hot coal, as she did with all
her pain. Swallowing it.
It wouldn't go down, it wouldn't leave.
She died realizing her pain would always stay
stuck in her throat, as the words she never
could say.

She died a lonely heart,
Her name was Portia.

*Inspired by William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Yellow Eyes
Kris Sherwood

Stare into my yellow eyes
And watch me run along the hills
And mountains
Look at the colors that run down my snout,
The beauty that swims in my fur
Listen to the music I sing,
The howls and calls
Stare into my glowing soul
That glistens with the sorrow
Of my brothers and sisters,
You have slaughtered
Look at the way I try to approach you
Only to have you tear me from life
Listen to the screams I sing
The howls and yelps
Stare into the eyes of my dead family
And watch me run along the hills
And mountains
Until I can find a place
Where we can live as one
I will stare at you
And plea with my call
That you will soon realize
I am not a killer
I am a wolf
And I will wait for you
To realize we are brothers on this planet
I place one of my paws in your hand
And stare at you with my yellow eyes
And plea
Don't kill me



"Truth in His Eyes" by Jonathan Llerena