



# JUXTAPOSITIONS

**CANUCKLING 2013**  
**VOLUME 58**





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# JUXTAPOSITIONS

**Volume 58**

THE LITERARY-ART MAGAZINE

OF

NORTH PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

34 WILSON AVENUE

NORTH PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07060

# CANUCKLING 2013

AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

First Place 2012

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

Gold Medalist Award 2012



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 in hardcover 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 in its 58th year, as we graduate a class of approximately 200 bright, shining students.



# 2013 CANUCKLING STAFF

## Literary and Technical Advisers

Mr. John DeLaurentis  
English and  
Creative Writing Teacher

Ms. Chelsea Howson  
English Teacher

Elizabeth U. Okereke, Editor-in-Chief  
Jason Lee, Literary Editor  
Kaitlin Rink, Literary Editor  
Veronica Attis, Photographic/ Art Editor  
Milena Contreras, Photographic/ Art Editor

## Staff:

John Attis  
Victoria Attis  
Amelia Baijnath  
Charlotte Brockway  
Ali Greene  
Breanna Leverett  
Shatori Morgan  
Brian Ngobidi  
Michael Small  
Anne Tang  
Lena Zhu

Special Thanks to the English and Art Departments

## Policy

*Canuckling* invites all North Plainfield High School students to submit original works of literature and art. 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 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 cannot be returned. It is the hope of the staff that the magazine is representative of the creative talent of North Plainfield.

## Colophon

*Canuckling 2013*, the literary and art magazine of North Plainfield High School, was printed with a press run of 100 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. The font type used throughout this issue is Perpetua and Perpetua Tilting MT.

## Cover

Elizabeth U. Okereke, a senior, took the photo on the cover and used computer manipulation to alter the photograph.



# Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

All of the editors and dedicated team members of the Canuckling Club are extremely excited and eager to bring to you the 2013 edition of the *Canuckling*, North Plainfield High School's literary-art magazine. Throughout the year, our staff has met frequently to put time and effort toward making this year's *Canuckling* an impressive and inspiring collection showcasing the artistic and literary talents of our students. We have endlessly reviewed innumerable artistic, literary, and photographic submissions in order to choose those that would reflect our chosen theme for this year: Juxtapositions. This year's issue tackles the theme of opposing sides that contrast yet balance each other. Our four subcategories are: The Wait/Weight of a Generation, Dark Light Bright Shadows, Walking through Heaven While Going through Hell and Being Close from Afar. As students, writers, artists and photographers, we often feel the push and shove of opposing sides. We wrestle with who and what we want in life and the decisions we have to make every year. The works in this year's issue comment on the idea of the things that we feel juxtapose each other. As you step forth into this issue, we hope that you recognize the harmony in our diverse community. We are juxtapositions in the purest forms, coming together to create this wonderful work of art.

We thank the staff members who developed previous issues of *Canuckling* for providing examples from which we learned and adjusted, and we would like to congratulate them on their admirable work. As the editors and leaders of a team of hardworking, dedicated, and committed staff members, we would like to congratulate the Canuckling Club on its success this year. As editors, we are extremely proud of your effort, your attendance, your critique, and your contributions to truly making our collaborative work a masterpiece. For being each other's strength, and for working harmoniously and supportively with each other, with us, and with our advisers, we thank you. This year, we undoubtedly continued the tradition of the Canuckling Club by giving time and dedication to our school's literary magazine, which has been published annually since 1955. Surely, with our success, we have made those who dedicated themselves to *Canuckling* in the past very proud of our work. We also wish the best of luck to next year's Canuckling Club, and we are sure that the future members of this team will continue our tradition of excellence and commitment.

Unquestionably, our advisers, Mr. John DeLaurentis and Ms. Chelsea Howson, deserve our sincere gratitude, appreciation, and respect for guiding us this year and providing the tools with which we were able to make our vision of *Canuckling* 2013 a reality. Thank you for helping us, for providing the technology and answers we needed, and for encouraging us to continue to work hard and stay on track toward our goal. As a very strong component of our team, you have helped to further our talent and hard work this year.

We welcome you on this journey with us through our creative minds. We hope our words inspire and uplift you while making you ponder the beautiful, opposing nature of life. We hope you never forget us as the artists we have grown to be. Finally, we hope you enjoy our treasured juxtapositions.

# STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Name: Elizabeth U. Okereke, Editor-in-Chief

Grade: 12

Zodiac: Gemini

Superpower: To fly

Currently listening to: Paramore, Emarosa, Cody Simpson, Disclosure

Favorite Poet/ Author/Book: Langston Hughes, Dan Brown, *Cathy's Book* by Stuart Weisman, *Jellicoe Road* by Melina Marchetta, *Habibi* by Naomi Shihab Nye

Dream Job: Creative director/ Artist/ Writer/ Poet/ Designer/ Humanitarian



Name: Jason Le, Literary Editor

Grade: 9

Superpower: To fly

Zodiac: Leo

Currently listening to: "Shake It Out" by Florence and the Machine

Favorite book: *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson

Dream Job: The President of the United States



Name: Veronica Attis, Photographic/ Art Editor

Grade: 10

Superpower: Flying

Zodiac: Aquarius

Dream Job: Actor/ Voice Actor

Currently Listening to: "Don't You Worry Child," by Swedish House Mafia

"Cosmic Love" by Florence and the Machine

Favorite Books: *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *Page by Paige* by Laura Lee Gullledge



"Calm Water" by Milena Contreras



# STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Name: Milena Contreras, Photographic/ Art Editor

Grade: 11

Zodiac: Virgo

Superpower: To read people's mind

Currently listening to: "Mirrors" by Justin Timberlake,

"Blue Jeans" by Lana Del Rey

Dream Job: Fashion stylist for a magazine



Name: Kaitlyn Rink, Literary Editor

Grade: 11

Staff Members:

Name: Victoria Attis

Grade: 10

Superpower: To bring my imagination to life

Zodiac: Aquarius

Dream Job: Author/Poet

Favorite Author: Tehereh Mafi

Currently Listening to: "Clarity" by Zedd, "That Power" by will.i.am, "Don't Want This Night to End" by Luke Bryan



Name: Charlotte Brockway

Grade: 12

Superpower: Singing (Vocal Abilities)

Zodiac: Aries

Currently listening to: Breaking Benjamin

Favorite Poem: "Self-Pity" by D.H. Lawrence

Favorite Book: *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson

Favorite Author: Gordon R. Dickson

Name: Ali Greene

Grade: 10

Zodiac: Cancer

Superpower: To turn things and myself invisible at will

Currently listening to: Asriel

Favorite book: *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott

Dream Job: Game design

Name: Brian Ngobidi

Grade: 11

Zodiac: Libra

Superpower: Time Manipulation

Currently listening to: Cage the Elephant,  
Mayday Parade, The Used

Dream job: CEO

## OUR ADVISERS



Mr. John DeLaurentis



Ms. Chelsea Howson

## AND SOME OF OUR TALENTED STAFF



WE HOPE YOU ENJOY  
CANUCKLING 2013!



# BLAST FROM THE PAST

From *Canuckling* 1970

# Broken Glass

Arlene De Maris

it is because of me  
he has become a stranger in his own home,  
an enemy to his own side,  
a madman to his loved ones.  
i've lost his family, and i've lost his soul  
yet i provide  
his life substance, his comfort and warmth;  
the only warmth he knows  
he drains me, and i fill him,  
he caresses me, and beats his wife;  
cherishes me, and torments his children.  
he loves me, and i take his hopes and dreams  
to dash on the crags of despair.  
i turn his blood to fire,  
his heart to ice,  
his nerves to water,  
his vision to blindness...  
but when my life is through and every ounce  
of my soothing magic and fiery terror  
is gone,  
he shatters me on the dark pavement  
and my pieces fill the night  
with the glitter of a thousand  
pure diamonds.



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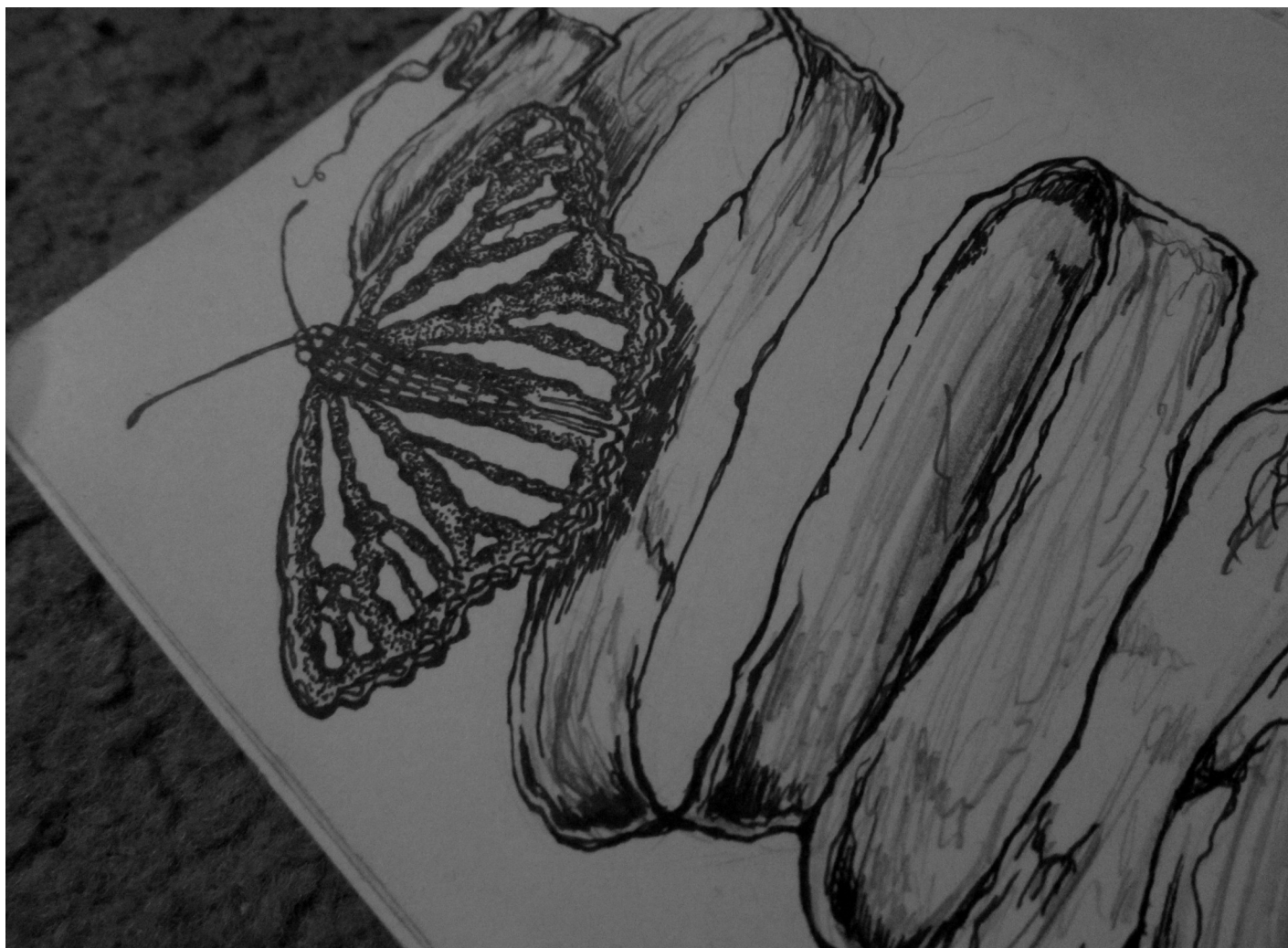
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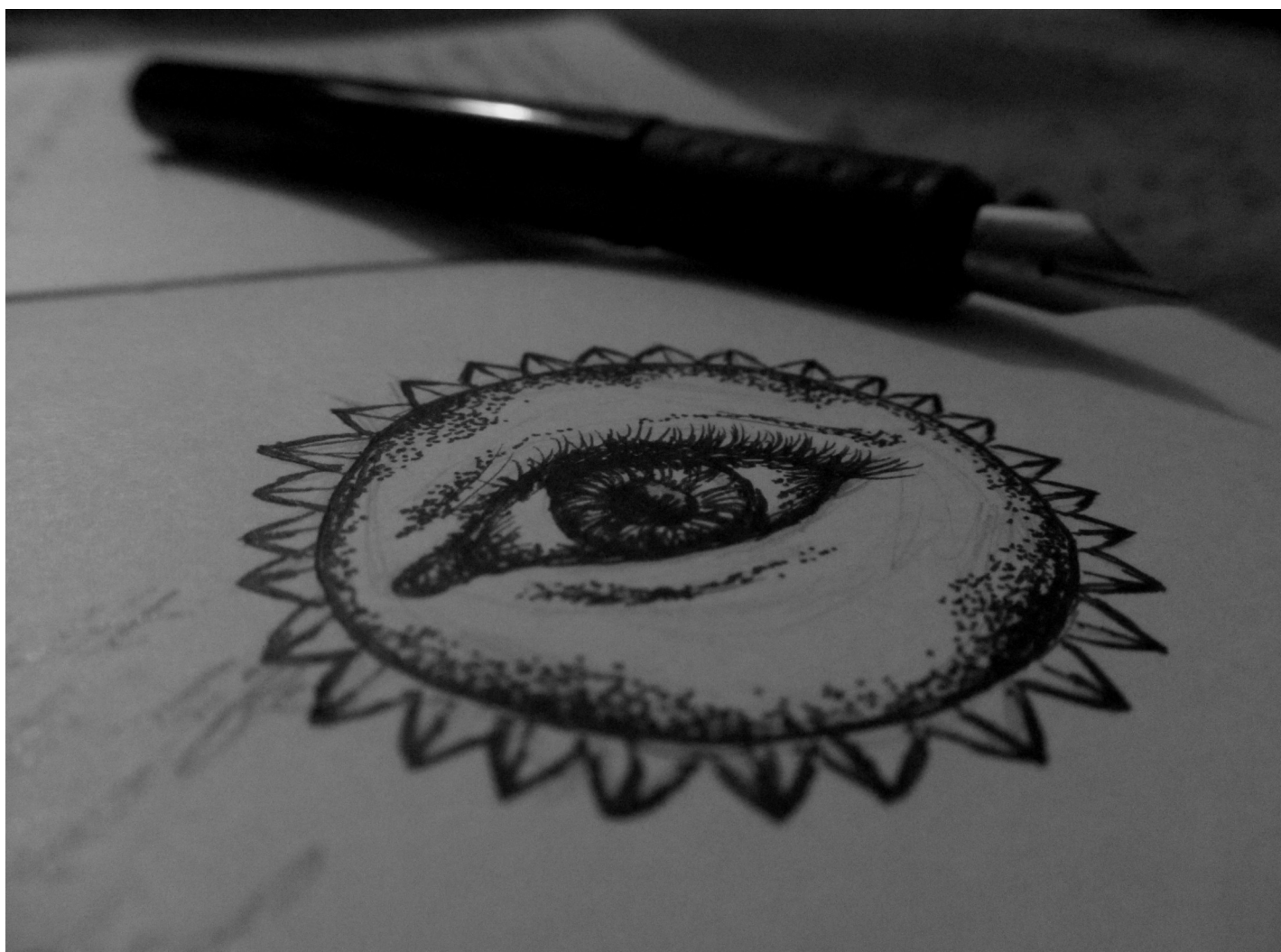


# THE WAIT / OF GENER



“Butterfly” by Elizabeth U. Okereke (Photo of Ink Drawing)

# WEIGHT A ACTION



“Eye Pen” by Elizabeth U. Okereke (Photo of Ink Drawing)





# DOMINANCE

Robert Sullivan, Jr.

It's the main difference between man and boy.  
What separates the strong from the weak  
Many people feed off this  
People die  
Dreams are shattered  
We'd kill for it  
We pray for it  
Yet somehow it is always taken from us.  
It goes back and forth  
Like a ball being passed around  
Passes around carelessly.  
If you don't have it you're an outcast  
If you do you're popular  
It determines who wins  
And who loses  
Gangs fight for this  
What we don't realize is  
When the war for it is over  
It was never worth it  
And no one wins  
Dominance

# PRIDE AND DESPAIR

Charlotte Brockway

I am not proud  
At least I have reason not to be  
My country is enshroud

I may be lost in the crowd,  
Blind to pride, but this is true of me  
I am not proud

Not with power or money being plowed  
*Why* is money the dream to being free?  
My country is enshroud

I wouldn't fight to be one with the crowd,  
Or politics, or wasted trends hardly worth it to see  
No, I am not proud

Pride should be a flag one deems endowed  
But where will that pride lead in the true colors of thee?  
My country is enshroud

Pride must be of some worth, unbowed  
Can we not all agree?  
But, I am not proud  
My country is enshroud





# UNFORGETTABLE

Alyssa Evans

The generation we live in is unforgettable

The people the problems, everything

We worry more about our material

And nobody seems to stay the same

Getting drunk at a young age

Having nothing to look forward to when you turn the page

In life, we walk too fast

And never take time to absorb the scenery

Unforgettable people

Unforgettable problems

Unforgettable moments

Everything

Dreams are getting crushed

By that one little rush, thinking he loves you

No one above you

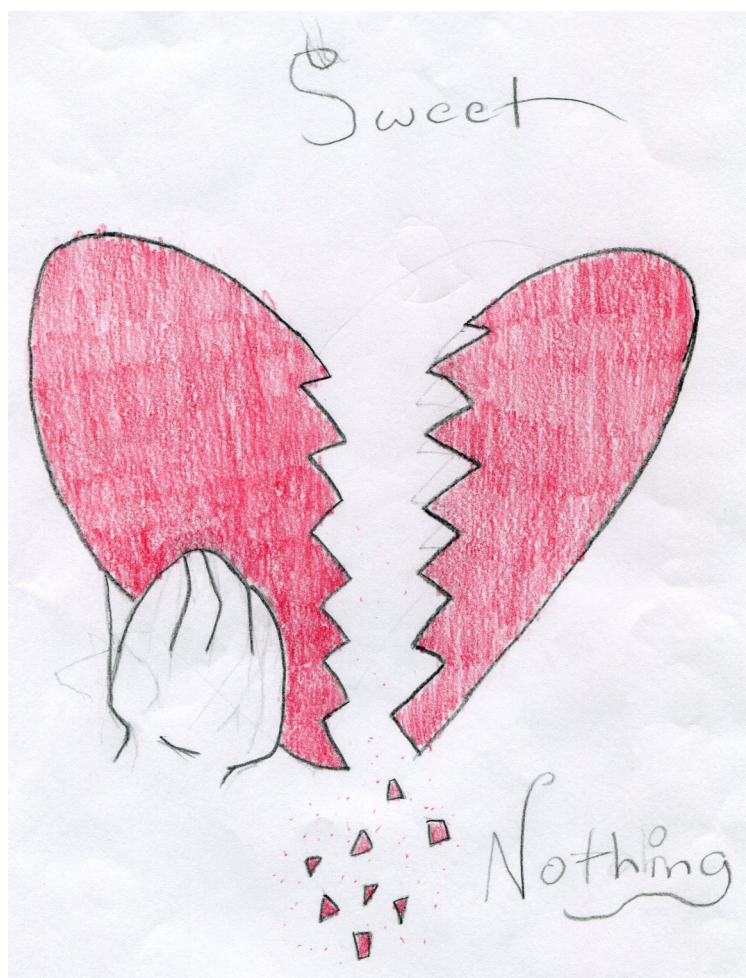
Pregnant at 16

What do you mean?



Don't rush through your life  
You only live once  
Don't throw your life down the drain  
You're insane

Unforgettable people  
Unforgettable problems  
Unforgettable moments  
Everything



**“Sweet Nothing”** by Victoria Attis (Colored Pencil Drawing)





## DOWN THIS ROAD

Robert Sullivan, Jr.

Every day I make something out of nothing,

And every day I keep on running,

Clearly this is a surprise

Come on now open your eyes,

Every day feels like a cloudy day

But nothing really goes my way

If you're down you got to try,

Cause when you're up,

It feels like you could fly,

Let's keep it real,

I know how you feel,

Because the life we live in,

It's so surreal,

I'll tell you the stories that I've told

Trust me I've been down this road

Down this road

Down this road

Trust me I've been down this road,

Yeah,

I know the feeling of being weak,

I know the feeling of being asleep,

Not knowing what's going on  
But be awake and strong,  
I know the feeling of being strong,  
Not caring if you're right or wrong,  
You have the power to protect your heart,  
How you get to the end is because of the start,  
Let's keep it real  
I know how you feel  
The life we live is so surreal,  
I'll tell you the stories that I've told  
Trust me I've been down this road,  
Down this road  
Down this road  
Trust me I've been down this road  
Up and down  
Down and up  
You got to hold on  
Don't ever give up  
I'll tell you the stories I've told, trust me  
I've been down this road,  
Down this road  
Down this road  
Trust me I've been down this road.







# LATE FOR PRACTICE

Johanna Canales

“And we are never, ever, getting back together! ‘Cause you go talk to your friends..!” Tuning out the horribly out of pitch singing coming from the driver, I went back to reading *Ethan Frome*. The old guy is thinking of kissing the girl when Marge suddenly hits the breaks.

“What the hell are you doing, Marge?” Marking the page I’d just finished, I tried to see what had caused my crazy guardian to delay our arrival at school further.

I was fumbling for my glasses when she answered, “There’s a tree in the road. We’re going to have to take the scenic route.” My glasses turned out to be on top of my head.

“Damn it! We’re going to be so late! Why could you have just picked up your supplies after dropping me off?” Marge made and sold jewelry, nothing too fancy though, as most of her supplies came from the clearance section of Michael’s. “What time is it?”

“It’s only 8:40—we’ve still got plenty of time before you’re singing or whatever it is your club does starts.”

“It’s Concert Choir, Marge.”

“What ever, you still won’t be that late. You’ve still got twenty minutes ’til practice starts, Dave. No need to have a hissy fit.”

Grumbling about my worries over being punctual didn’t equate to having a hissy fit, so I tried again to submerge myself in the pathetic love story of an already married man with his niece-in-law or whoever Matt was.

However, just as I read the part where Ethan acts like a jealous creeper while watching the girl talk to some snobby rich kid, I looked up and noticed we were going in the opposite direction of the high school. “Marge, where the hell are we going? The school’s in the other direction!”

“Just got a text from Jamie saying he has some extra supplies that he doesn’t need.”

“And you couldn’t have picked them up after dropping me off?”

“He’s gotta leave for work in fifteen minutes. He said that I could get ‘em tomorrow, but you know I have those necklaces that I want to finish tonight. Besides, his house is only five minutes from here.”

*And I’m going to be more than five minutes late*, I thought. Miss Brown, the choir’s instructor is going to kill me. She locked the door at exactly 8:45, and that was only because she liked chewing out anyone who didn’t arrive on time. If you hadn’t arrived by then, you had to hope a janitor was passing by and would let you in.

After chatting with Jamie for a couple of minutes and making me carry every box of wire and beads, we finally were off toward the school. I was starting to believe I’d only be ten minutes late when again Marge stopped the car. “What is it now?”

*Grumbling about my worries over being punctual didn’t equate to having a hissy fit.*

Looking up, I saw what had caused her to start turning the car—again. Another tree had fallen: this time, on top of a car. It looked new, and I felt sorry for whoever owned the vehicle. But I didn't have time for sympathizing. If Marge took another route, I'd end up twenty minutes late.

"Wait, Marge, stop the car. I'll just walk the rest of the way." I figured if I hurried, I'd get to the school in fifteen minutes.

I waited until she'd stopped the car close enough to the curb before heading toward the school. To my surprise, I made it there in ten minutes. But when I made it there, the place seemed deserted.

After looking around for a couple of minutes, I'd gotten a text from Adri telling me that practice was cancelled because Miss Brown's daughter had gone into labor, which reminded me about the *Ethan Frome* essay due the next day.

I sent Adri a reply and started to call Marge when I remembered what she'd told me before we'd left the house. She was taking the car over to John's to get looked at, and I needed to get myself a ride home.

I got a lot of excuses after sending out a text to the few friends I had who I knew could drive, and I realized, I'd have to walk home. Plus I still hadn't even started my essay. Even if I ran all the way, it would still take thirty minutes for me to get home. But without a ride, I was stuck to walking, so sucking it up, I decided that it would be better to start walking instead of moping.



**"A Cause for Lateness"** by Milena Contreras





# BURDEN

Dante Davis

It enters my veins  
The strongest of all, pains...  
That have plagues my fragile heart  
To the end, and from the start...  
You cannot see it, but you feel its poison sting...  
Some cannot bare it, but it makes others sing...  
Some seek it, to make themselves strong  
But, little do they know, that it is very wrong...  
It's a revolting beast, who is always thirsty  
Kills from the inside, and shows no mercy...  
I see it in some, from young to old  
It controls our mind, and we do what we're told...  
All it every did was leave a huge hole  
Shattered my heart, and crumbled my soul  
I'm addicted for life, and I know it too well..  
I'd rather be alone, burning in hell  
Like an angel, who fell from above...  
Why, did I ever have to fall in love...





**"Keeping Them Out"** by Amelia Baijnath (Colored Pencils)







# **BROTHER AND SISTER**

Victoria Attis

We taunt each other  
Scream and shout  
We're brother and sister  
Without a doubt

We hurt each other  
With painful words  
We yell loudly  
So our voices are heard

I hit you, you scream  
You tell our dad  
Dad scolds me again  
He says I've been bad

Sent to our rooms  
We're grounded again  
This house has been poisoned  
Full of sin

I'm drowning, I'm drowning  
In my own selfish desires  
You're sinking, you're sinking  
We both have gotten tired

Tired of the pain we've caused  
To family and friends  
Out of breath from yelling  
We're wondering when this will end

Maybe if we reach out to each other  
And lend a helping hand  
Our hearts would be filled with joy  
Repaired and working again

We could stop our sibling rivalry  
Become pure as white doves  
Hug and make up, holding hands  
And teach each other how to love

I might not always admit it  
But I love you  
Because we're brother and sister  
Through and through





# THE YOUTH VOTE

Elizabeth U. Okereke

You are debating, misstating, creating  
Facts and figures that sounds so nice.  
I am waiting, we are waiting,  
My generation is weighting  
The issues your public relations manager  
Assigned to our age group  
Restating you platforms and overrating the system.

Bail outs, bust outs, burn outs galore.  
What is left for us? What dreams are left for us?  
They have been sucked dry by a harsh reality.  
A youthful future of uncertainty  
Is this all we have left?  
Is this the America I'm fighting for?

Is this the road where we find each other-  
A fork in the road lengthened  
And strengthened by our generational gaps-  
Always waiting for the right time  
To weigh different issues?  
Do we want entirely different things?



Let this be our fork in the road,  
At least we are on a path.  
We know what is happening.  
We see ourselves, ready and waiting.  
Our voices are weapons, our words armor plating.

People survive.  
America survives.  
Americans survive.

And live,  
A life worth living.



**“Branching Out”** by Amelia Baijnath





# PROCRASTINATING

Nia Dove

Working is draining my soul  
I'm a procrastinator at heart  
From birth till I'm old  
Procrastinating is an art

I'd rather watch TV  
Talk to my friends  
And do whatever is easy  
But this work will never end

I'm a procrastinator of the highest kind  
It's simply what I do  
I'm pretty bad at managing time  
It's pretty cool too

But I hate when it catches up with me  
I start to run faster  
I just want to be free  
Happily ever after

Sometimes I guess  
I should try  
This work is important  
But I keep asking why

# OLDER IS BETTER

Mercedes Rodriguez

The 20's were full  
Of musicals and bright lights,  
Jazz, and pianos

The 70's is  
Where I want to be, punk rock  
Inspired style

The 80's looked fun!  
Blondie, The Sex Pistols, and  
The Misfits killed it!

The 90's were great  
The Ramones, Nirvana, and  
Rancid brought new life

This era is sad  
Drake, Lil Wayne, and songs about  
Sex, drugs, and bitches.





# TO PERM OR NOT TO PERM

## *A Hamlet Parody*

Elizabeth U. Okereke

To perm or not to perm-that is the question:  
Whether it is nobler in the mind to embrace the kink  
The twist outs, the rollers and the de-tangler  
Or to take a hot comb to those sea of curls  
And by pressing, end them. To perm, to relax –  
No more – and by relax to say we end  
The flat iron's heat of a thousand suns or  
The singe of the scar above your ear  
Women everywhere demand yet detest.  
To perm, to relax – perchance to fight for the right  
to whip my hair back and forth.  
Yes, there is the catch. For the perm  
Chases away the freedom of the fro'  
The kindness of the kink, the courage of the curl  
To keep us from wandering into unknown territory.  
And thus the maintenance of the hair  
Casts shade over brave thoughts  
To further delay the breakthrough  
Of a fresh weave- Soft you now, curly locks  
Be all my perms remembered.



# MY COUNTRY TIS OF THEE

B.

*We stand once again to recite the melody  
we've been singing religiously every year since elementary school.  
When I decided to look closer into this staple song,  
As I analyzed it further, I begin to apply it to this country's current events*

*My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty*

Ha!

What *liberty*?

When more money is being put into Incarceration then Education?

What *sweet land*?

When greed and violence plagues our streets

When our children's childhoods are being robbed of their happiness

Replaced with bombings and war, overwhelmed with recessions and controversy.

The song revealed a misconception:

A misconception that is instilled in every child, adult, creature and being in the world.

That we are free.

It hides its duplicity behind a mask named society.

We blame society.

When the truth is—we are society.

Do we not populate the earth?

Do we not share our opinions?

But yet we continue to blame society

Which is in turn blaming ourselves, instead of correcting our wrongs.

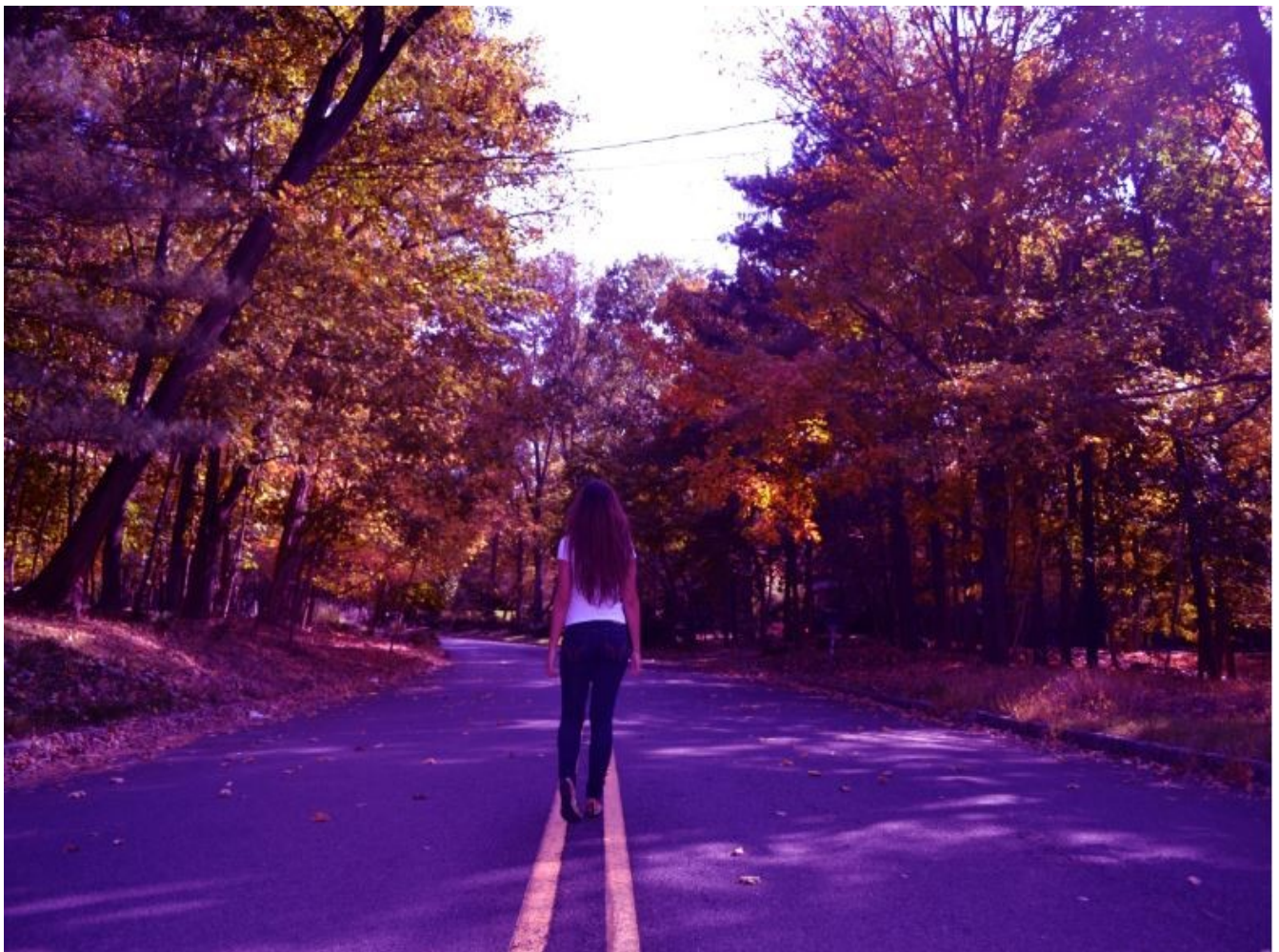
This melody and the events occurring in the country

have shown me that all that glitters is not gold, and

All that flies is not free.



# D A R K L I G H T,



**“On the Road to Freedom”** by Shyla Shulca



# BRIGHT SHADOWS



**“Two Toward the Future”** by Shyla Shulca



# MALE VS. FEMALE: GENDER NORMS AND SOCIETY

Elizabeth U. Okereke

Expectations from each gender are based on stereotypes. A long standing stereotype in the world has been that men would be the hunters and the breadwinners of the family and women would be at home with the children. Men are supposed to be strong and women are supposed to be weak and dependent. As seen in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, Edna Pontillier is living in the 1800's when women were strongly expected to marry, have children and be the proper "mother-woman," or a woman who worships her husband and children. She is expected to be home and behave conservatively. Unlike her husband, Leonce who comes and goes as he pleases and criticizes Edna's parenting abilities once he arrives home.

*Expectations from  
each gender are  
based on  
stereotypes.*

The stereotypical ideals of males and females in society are shaped and molded by the media and old traditions. For example, in the media of the 1940's and 1950's women were portrayed as happy housewives. In advertisements during that time period, they almost always were portrayed standing behind the man with a vacuum cleaner in one hand, a child on the other hand, and a smile on their face. In the media today there are many underlying stereotypes, such as in action movies where the woman's role is to merely be a love interest to the leading man. It raises the question, why is it not a leading woman? Is it uncomfortable for men to see a strong woman who can fight on screen? Old time traditions mold these ideals because children almost always learn from their parents. Sentiments about women and men's roles are passed down through generations until a solid education in sexism can break the cycle.



Society relies on gender norms to preserve a sense of control and power. Men who follow the gender norms often try to control their women. They want them to be obedient. In relation to the text, *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen, Nora is treated like a child by her husband. She realizes the way she has lived her life is perpetuated by the way her father treated her, which certainly kept to traditional expectations of women's roles. Nora's husband, Torvald, liked to have things a particular way in the house, such as not seeing Nora eating macaroons or doing heavy knitting. Torvald liked to have a sense of control over things and Nora played into this whenever she wanted something. She let him call her his "little squirrel" whenever she wanted money to go shopping. Society relies on gender norms to keep the control and power among the men in society. Gender norms were strongly perpetuated by the media in the past. In today's society it is more underlying in the media. Ultimately gender norms are used to keep control over women. It implies that women are controllable and need to be dependent on men in order to survive.



**"More to a Rose than Meets the Eye"** by Amelia Baijnart





# THE BARBIE CHILD

Cindy Aldana

Oh, little one,  
For you are an illusion.  
A make-believe,  
A show.  
For you are a Barbie.  
You contain beauty,  
But burdens.  
Little one, you are plastic,  
Plastic, not easily broken,  
But easily hurt and in pain.  
For I know you tuck away your sorrows,  
And wear that simplistic smile.  
For others may not see through,  
I notice,  
For I have worn my smile.

Child, why are you in so much pain?  
For your appearance gives off joy,  
A little girl, with everything in the palm of her hand.  
What haunts you when you try to sleep at night?  
Do the gods play an unfair game?  
Or... mortals themselves, for they cause the worst pain,  
A game cheated by mortals,  
No values, just a win and a loss.

Child, you have so much to hide,  
Make-up to cover,  
Clothes to yield,  
And tissues to heal.  
But, do not feel shame,  
You are wise,  
The light will come.  
The darkness will be gone,  
Child, one day you'll be fine.





**"Flowers on the Wall"** by Jose Lopez-Mendez (Pencil Drawing)





# BEAUTIFUL TRAGEDY

Dante Davis

If you saw me today  
What would you say?  
Would you look at me with sadness?  
Or would you think I had given into this madness?  
Maybe you would look at me with disgust  
Don't blame me—I was created from your distrust  
Yeah, it's true, you made me  
But, at a cost—did you think it was free?  
With my heart full of hate  
Was just the right weight  
For the building of thee  
But truly, this is not it?  
No, there is more  
A little bit more...  
A couple of stitches  
I remember, though—the laugh of some witches  
Or was that you and your friends?  
That soon began to bend  
Now you are alone...  
But, as your creation,  
I still love you...



# OUR MIND

King Sullivan

Loved  
Hated  
Known  
Misunderstood  
Happy  
Sad  
Would  
but never could  
Acceptance  
Rejection  
I always thought I should  
Together  
Alone  
On my own  
Accused  
but never guilty  
Innocent  
but never free  
Listened to  
but never heard  
Always silent  
but so many words  
Understood  
but still confuses  
Confused  
yet all knowing





# FRAGMENT (CONSIDER REVISING)

Elizabeth U. Okereke

I.

I despise you, Thesis Statement!  
In this relationship you are nothing if not  
Frustrating, irritating, and slightly intimidating  
In constant need of extension and attention  
And invention and revision. Who do you think you are?  
Selfishly coming in and taking all the attention  
Away from me and the rest of my paper!

II.

You are almost as bad as your brother, Conclusion.  
Never around when I really need you,  
With your name constantly in the air,  
the source of the town gossip during the fall term.  
We are fighting and tormenting each other but cannot break up,  
A breakup at this stage in the game would mean a stressful divorce  
From me and A, my long term on again and off again  
And off again and on again and off again partner.

III.

We have driven down a road rockier than the Poconos yet  
I see slivers of hope in our fragments.  
We can go to couples therapy with a specialist,  
A well known figure in the tumultuous area  
Of broken thesis statements, a beacon of hope and terror,  
The Honors English Teacher.

IV.

It has taken four long weeks, one long semester  
With our one hour sessions, twice a month  
Our relationship is mended, commended, gracefully defended.  
This fragment, this shred, this wounded cut  
Healed and revealed my subconscious reflections.  
I no longer despise you but adore and appreciate your efforts  
To bring harmonious consistency to my every exposition.

# THE PORTRAIT

Cindy Aldana

The Elders had instructed her to paint a portrait  
When her masterpiece was finally complete,  
How they damned her;  
They had striven for perfection  
But the brush had never created the image  
Their disapproval had sucked the life from the portrait  
There was nothing left, but the sorrow that had overtaken

How they never understood her art,  
And only saw her interpretation as diverse  
Oh, how they could not see the color; they simply saw black and white  
They could only see the wrong, blinded from the right  
Her masterpiece was shamed,  
How the reflection was disappointed;  
They could never see the goodness within





# VOICES

Shatori Morgan

I hate the sound of it  
The way it changes  
The way it lingers in your ear  
How you can tell the difference  
Between your teachers and that cashier at McDonald's

The arguing, lying, yelling, screaming, whispering  
It's pointless  
It leaves headaches  
Migraines, nauseating  
Confusing, distinguishing accents  
British, German, Russian, Spanish, Italian,  
African, Asian, or even American  
I don't want to hear it  
Give me silence.



# THE ITEM

Cindy Aldana

Do not open the box,  
Keep it shut,  
For the box contains evil and sorrow.  
Hide it, be gone from sight,  
It will hurt, it will spread fear,  
As it is believed to.  
This item will ruin,  
For something new is shamed,  
Approval is rare,  
This item may not be treasured,  
But looked upon as a mistake.

The mind will resemble,  
No hope in being let out,  
Stuck in a box,  
Stuck in a cage,  
For will it ever come out?  
Why must we have hatred toward the uncommon?  
Is the item unworthy of acceptance?  
It will have good use,  
For you must see,  
One day, the box will open.  
It will come out.





# POLAR STRANGERS

Shatori Morgan

I can see you but you're not there  
Where are you? Are you there?  
Why can I see you and you can see me  
But you're not here and I'm not there  
How do I know your face and you know mine  
But we never met before?  
How do I know you exist but  
You never passed my eyes  
As I never passed yours  
I look in the mirror, I see you  
You look, you see me  
My eyes are yours  
Your eyes are mine  
As we are polar opposites  
In skin and hair  
I see you in me  
You see me in you  
I do not know the touch of your hand  
The sound of your voice  
Or the smell of your hair  
Oblivious to your presence  
As if it has happened before  
I can't describe it

Any other way  
I wouldn't know you  
If you passed me by  
As if you live in my dream  
I live in yours?  
What a sick dream?  
Why can't you confront me?  
Let me know that you are here?  
Stop playing your games and  
I will too  
Are you hiding from me  
Am I hiding from you  
Scared much?  
For what?  
I don't want to be stuck  
In your dreams  
Let me out  
I want to be free  
I will unlock the door for you  
Hell, I'll give you the key  
If I can find you  
You'll find me



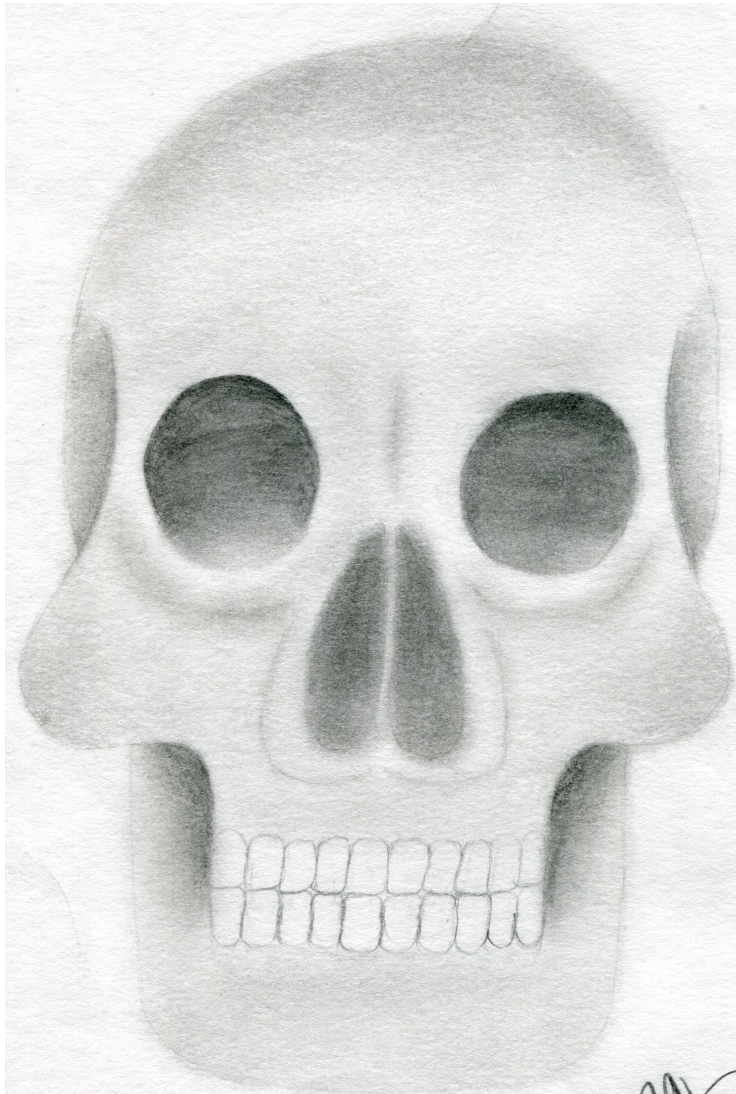


# WALKING THROUGH HEAVEN



**“Blue Moon Series: The Night”** by Elizabeth U. Okereke (Painting)

# WHILE GOING THROUGH HELL



**“Inside the Cranium”**

by Milena Contreras (Pencil Drawing)



# GRANDMOTHER, MAY I

Elizabeth U. Okereke

*I've known rivers:*

*I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the*

*Flow of human blood in human veins.*

*My soul has grown deep like the rivers.*

-Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (1922)

I.

Grandmother.

I have grown old on this plantation

With my children in the cotton fields.

The snow has taken my heart

And the summer has taken my fear.

My old bones are creaking lovely

For the day I thought I was born

I would be a free black bird

But I am trapped, tortured, and forlorn.

But over the white fence, I see the river.

I see the river and it calms me so.

II.

Mother.

I have seen you birth babes.

Babes, so dark, so young,

Who know nothing but the sun on their back

And a whip at their hides

And the master at their tongues.

Have you seen my Grandmother?

My Grandmother has seen the rivers.

She's run on the African soil.

She's fed the babes of the world.

She's grown her hair long

To wade in the river.



III.

Daughter.

I have seen you run through the field.

Running from your Mother,

Running from your Grandmother,

Running from the master's whip

And straight into the river.

You've become one with the river

And it calms me so.



**“Over the White Fence”** by Milena Contreras





# THE ESCAPE

Cindy Aldana

Walk in,  
You're not in danger anymore.  
It's a portal,  
Not a mirror or a window.  
You're fine now,  
No more pain, no more sorrow.  
You'll finally get what you want,  
And it's what you need.  
To run away, to escape,  
So you won't have to walk into the world barefoot,  
Where your feet burn, blisters on the bottom.  
For once, you've got your shoes to keep you safe.

Child, let this be adventure,  
When the world burns,  
You won't take part.  
The world is not safe,  
For flames burn,  
But you, you will live on.  
Escape, for you are the future,  
For not this world,  
But one that will prosper,  
Where the colors flourish.

# ONLY YOU

Kelly Moodry

I forget all the things that you've said to me,  
Hurtful words, pain stabbing and making me weak  
But your love overpowers every thing I need  
I need you, only you

Don't act like I don't know what you did,  
I love you even though you meant to do it,  
And now that I see the brighter side,  
I still need you, only you

Only you make me feel the way I do,  
My love is the same as my hatred towards you  
Now nothing could break us,  
But we're hanging by a thread  
But I need you, only you

Walk away in the night to think you can get out,  
But you always come crawling back  
Because you can't live without me,  
Only me

I can only tell you one thing now,  
If I didn't love how you yelled, but loved  
I forgave, and forgot







# THE GIRL IN THE PHOTOGRAPH

Dante Davis

She was the definition of perfection, at least in his eyes...

Every strand of her midnight black hair  
only added to the fact that her skin was utterly flawless...  
Her eyes were a majestic forest green that gave off a small twinkle,  
that illuminated the darkness in the photo...  
She held up a peace sign that was complimented with a small smile,  
that was so warm and inviting...  
He wanted to meet this girl...just to tell her of the admiration he felt...  
Maybe he would even be able to touch her silky hair...

He would have to begin his search in the morning though,  
as the last glimmer of sunlight faded from the horizon,  
the young boy walked quickly through the night...  
He reached his seemingly abandoned home, and crept inside...  
He quickly went into his room, making sure not to wake his mother...  
The bed of his room invited him for a good night's sleep and he gladly accepted it,  
wrapping himself in warm blankets, and letting his eyes flutter shut...

He awoke to a faint tapping... it was the girl...  
she stood outside his window with that same inviting smile...  
He arose and went to her... in somewhat of a trance-like state...  
he pressed his hand against the ice cold window,  
and stared at that gorgeous face of hers...  
She began to frolic away from the window, spinning and giggling,  
then she waved for him to come closer,  
those eyes of hers gave such a seductive look...

Without a moment of hesitation he opened the window and climbed out,  
slowly moving towards her...

She daintily spun into the street,  
and stood there with arms open towards him...

He quickly went towards her,  
realizing that this may be his only chance to touch her...

As soon as he touched the tips of her fingers,  
she faded into a light mist...

He did not notice the car hit him...

he did not feel a thing...

It was too quick, too instantaneous...

As the young driver stepped out of the car,  
he took in the full realization that the boy was dead...  
but there was something that caught his eye...

In the boy's hand was a photograph of a beautiful woman,  
her hair was a dark red, and her eyes were an intense hazel color  
that gave the appearance of a burning fire...

She was holding up three fingers...





# A LONELY TALE

Johanna Canales

What a lonely tale made of bad dreams  
A place where nothing is as it seems  
This is a tale of mice and men  
Follow me to the lioness' den  
So the small man can reap what he reams

Temptation's smile is so mean  
Crooked men, each with their own scheme  
A tree with no leaves is now barren  
What a lonely tale...

Traveling along a dried up stream  
From this sadness we'll never wean  
Weren't we so naïve back then  
Hey, tell me our story again  
For our dreams have been ripped by the seams  
What a lonely tale...



# BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Tiana Rosa

Behind closed doors, she is still there.  
Cobwebs of secrets choking the air.  
Cracks in the wood where nails could fit through  
She hopes it could pour in her eyes too  
As she heard the small paper heart tear.

She saw them in the streets shouting prayers  
That never mattered, they're everywhere.  
But she bled because of what they knew  
Behind closed doors.

The confession, the rejection spared  
Nothing. The soul could no longer bear  
To live with the fact and the pain grew.  
It flooded the walls leaving no clues.  
A blank map left for the key so rare  
Behind closed doors.





# **BOTH**

Shatori Morgan

Dark red hair smells like  
Cinnamon  
Blondie smells like  
Vanilla  
Tall to pick me up  
My height, pick you up  
Make me laugh, make me cry  
Make me think, make me try  
Tell me things I want to hear  
Telling me lies  
Telling me things  
So I can be near you again  
You might be the one  
You might be the one to make me leave  
The tears are rolling, entertainment  
I find myself choosing between my heart  
And my love  
I don't need this  
I need you, both

# POWERLESS

Cindy Aldana

I have stared at the stars for hours,  
I used to be fantasized by your powers.  
But, the same gets tiring,  
It's no longer worth admiring.  
You used what you had,  
And made the inner monster even more sad.

You always got what you wanted,  
And that's why I'm being haunted.  
I can't live knowing,  
That you're still glowing.  
I know I always said you shined brighter,  
But you killed the inner fighter.  
You said I could've always been it,  
Sadly, I just could never take the full hit.

I was under,  
While you were the thunder.  
I gave you my hand,  
Waiting patiently in demand.  
But, you're full of it,  
So you quit.  
Against my will,  
I'm still here,  
Waiting for my love to disappear.





# HER FOOL

Brian Ngobidi

Love lost  
The worst kind

What is the point of looking for it  
When it's so hard to find  
Yet so easy to lose

The places you hope to find it  
It's never there  
You end up looking and acting like a fool

I'm not a fool...  
Deep down inside,  
I'm an emotionless,  
Hopeless romantic.  
Desperately looking for love  
Looking for affection  
Looking for emotion.

I feel I have found her.  
YET, she thinks I'm a fool  
She doesn't see.

With those big, beautiful eyes.  
The same eyes that can look into my heart,  
My soul.  
She cannot see.



Her ears,  
Which were perfectly placed  
Upon her head by god himself,  
Cannot hear what I try to say  
She cannot hear what I TRY to say  
She cannot hear.

Her lips,  
The same lips used  
To French her Angelic Comrades,  
Spew venom in my direction.  
Her words burn my empty chest  
My heart turned to ashes.

I have found love  
Yet she has found a fool.  
Oh...  
If she only knew...  
But she doesn't  
She doesn't know...



# BEING CLOSE



“The Camera’s Eye” by Milena Contreras

# FROM AFAR



“Nature’s Eye” by Milena Contreras



# SOME COSTS OF HEROISM

Kaitlin Rink

Beowulf was—is—everything a little kid wanted to be. He was a hero, like Superman or Batman, except *twelve*.

That's how old he was when he took down the monster Grendel and Grendel's mother. It was the most bizarre thing you ever saw—a skinny sixth grader lifting a sword almost as big as he was and weighing almost twice as much, leading fourteen huge guys who looked like they were hopped up on dragon blood. When both the monsters were dead, the Danes tried to give him nearly everything of value they had. He refused. It wasn't like they had much left of anything, considering Grendel destroyed and ransacked nearly every castle in Denmark.

Ever since then, he's been the recipient of unwanted attention. Fashion magazines and trashy gossip rags alike would constantly say stuff like, "What's Beowulf doing?" "What's Beowulf wearing?" "Why is he dating that girl" She's not even hot!"

He doesn't care for any of it, of course, because that's just not his thing. He's an honest-to-god hero, not a self-serving jerk who can't stay away from the camera for too long or he'll suffer from withdrawal.

What does he care for, though, is leading people. He was pretty much born to lead, like he was born with his ridiculous strength. He runs for class president every year, and he wins every year. I'm always VP. It's been that way since middle school.

Beowulf was—is everything a little kid wanted to be.

"You're a leader too, Wiglaf. You need to take advantage of that," he always tells me. When Beowulf tells you to do something, you do it. Honestly, it's a bit scary. Sometimes I think people trust him too much, even if he does tend to be right and usually knows what he's doing.

\*\*\*

The dragon appeared in the spring of our junior year, and all of Geatland looked to Beowulf. News anchors all over the world calmly asked the questions—sometimes (calmly) begging for an answer when the writers wanted more viewers—*Is Beowulf going to kill the dragon?*

The government was sweating. They really couldn't ask a minor to go fight a deadly monster. Thought the odds were in his favor—one university actually did the math and published an entire article on it—thought there would be way too much opposition. I even saw a cartoon while browsing through a newspaper of the prime minister being chased by housewives with pots and pans accompanying an article poking fun at the very vocal, very angry people (who, funnily enough, seemed to mostly really *be* housewives) who seemed to be outraged at the fact that anyone could ask a "boy" to do the military's job.

But the problem was, the military really couldn't do anything. The dragon had destroyed billion dollar tanks and a ship, and killed something like two thousand people, including civilians. All of this chaos occurred within a week. Other people—can't really say anyone else; some people would be brave



or crazy enough to do it—would go nuts from the pressure. But if they did, no one would ask them ever to do anything. Not even fix the roof. A week for Beowulf, though, was enough time—maybe a little too much time. When he finally spoke to the reporters, his “yes” was all over the Internet before 10. He said he was going with some of these crazy strong guys. Later, though, he asked me to go along.

“Beowulf. This isn’t a lovely picnic on a lovely summer day with wine and cheese and sausages and sandwiches and ten different kinds of little cakes,” I told him. It was really the only thing I could think of for the moment; otherwise, my mind was completely empty.

“I know what I’m asking you to do, and what I’ve said I’m going to do. But for one thing, these guys aren’t going to really help me. They just want to be on TV and all that. You’re the only person I can trust. And, to be honest, I don’t know if I’ll make it.” He winced at saying this. It wasn’t that he was a real macho guy who thought sharing his sincere feelings was for weak, simpering girls and that stuffing nerds into supply closets counted as an extracurricular activity. He’s an honest guy, but like any hero, he wasn’t about to admit that he thought he was going to fail. What do you say to that?

“What? Then why would you—what makes you think?”

“I think I’m, you know, losing it.” He obviously didn’t want to say “magical power” (like hell he would, even if that was what it really was) or even “power.” It would sound ridiculously cheesy and too much like a movie. “I’ve heard about it, you know—people sometimes born with these—” he waved his hands around in lieu of the *word*—“They either fade or a person loses them entirely as they mature. So...” he trailed off, for maybe the first time in his life at the loss for words and confidence.

“Of course I’ll go—can’t run away now, can I?”

“You can always run away,” he said, not really a whisper, but so low it took a moment to understand what he said.

\*\*\*

My mother, though she didn’t really believe in stuff like destiny and fate, let me go. I had expected a fight and then having to sneak out, but that didn’t happen. Instead, she said, with more bitterness than a veteran talking about watching their friends die in combat, “Who said I could stop you?”

That was all I could think about as we neared the dragon. Looking back at the men, I did a quick head count. Fourteen of us left. As soon as I turned my head, I’m sure one or two more left as quickly as they could, thinking that they were slick. We knew they were going to abandon the mission; it was that fact that we based our real attack plan around. It still irked me more than it should have. Every time I looked back at them, more would be gone. By the time we reached the dragon’s cave, it was just the two of us. How disgusting was it that they couldn’t even stick around long enough to say they’d see the dragon?

Beowulf drew the giant’s sword, and I drew mine. The dragon hadn’t waited for us. Looking at it, its eyes had a wicked, stone-cold intelligence in them, nothing like what survivors had described. Its scales were dark, but in the bleary early morning sun, they glinted a blue, purple, and green where the light hit them.

The creature itself was terrifying, massive and all claws and teeth and leathery wings. It knew we were there. It had known we were coming, it told us in that weird way that dragons talk, without really





making any sound at all. I shivered.

While I was listening to it speak, Beowulf had crept forward and struck one of the forelimbs. The dragon tried to swat him, but he was too fast.

They were both fast, and I was starting to feel useless, remembering everything we went over, every painstaking detail. Why did we go over all of that if that just wasn't happening?

As I looked for a way to get into the fray, Beowulf suddenly was thrown back down some ways from the direction we came, a mess of blood. All I could see was blood. The dragon was a mess of blood, too. It beckoned me and mocked me. It really didn't have to. I was going for the chest, where there was already a gash. It was but a scratch, but if I could get to it, it'd be dead and everything would be okay.

I don't remember too much after the last thought. All I really remember is blood and helicopters and *he's dead*.

So I locked myself in a room, writing and rewriting and rewriting and I'll probably be rewriting everything that happened forever, because it'll never feel right not to have my best friend looking over my shoulder, giving my ideas and making the story sound better in the smallest ways. Never right again.



**"Towering Over"** by Milena Contreras

# MONSTERS

Alyssa Evans

They want to see you scream and run  
You called your parents but they are done  
You search and search for them under the bed.  
But you don't know they are inside your head.  
All they wanted was a little fun

The monsters run and hide away  
No matter how hard you try they stay.  
They will live on inside you forever  
They want to see you scream and run.

They are all real and live inside us.  
You can never close the door shut  
They take over us and sometimes win.  
That's what Stephen King says with a grin.  
They don't care if you act like a nut  
They want to see you scream and run.







**“Heart and Crown”** by Jose Lopez-Mendez (Colored Pencil on Black Construction Paper)



# I'LL LOVE YOU BETTER NOW

Shatori Morgan

I could spend my whole life  
Looking for the one, the right one  
I would be wasting my time  
You said you needed a break  
A break from us  
You said, "It's me, not you"  
It wasn't you, but me  
I take the blame for us  
Falling apart  
You were right  
From the start  
That I needed to play a part  
In a relationship that consists of two  
Not three or one, just me and you  
I'm glad you gave me another chance  
To be near you  
To kiss you  
To care for you  
I miss you  
I will love you better now





## LESSONS FROM LIFE

Barbara Valderrama

You should never cry for someone who will never cry for you.  
Sometimes you may think you love someone,  
but you really don't – you only liked him.  
Just because you like someone doesn't mean he will like you back.  
You can never forget what someone did to you,  
but you can always forgive him.  
People come and go, but  
REAL people will always stay.

## I WISH

Victoria Attis

I wish you weren't gone  
I wish you were here  
I wish you were by my side  
I wish I could see you  
I wish I could hold your hand  
I wish I could be with you  
I wish I wish I wish  
I wish every day and night  
But no matter how much I wish for you  
I will never see you again

# NOBODY

Shatori Morgan

The old phrase, “Nobody is perfect”  
Well I’m a nobody, I am perfect  
But I have problems  
People who are perfect, don’t have problems  
The only people who don’t have problems  
Are dead  
But their problem is that they are dead  
And they are not people anymore, not alive and well,  
But people who are dying, are they slowly becoming perfect?  
As soon as we are born, we are dying, becoming a nobody, a perfect nobody  
But you are dead and you have a problem  
You’re dead, therefore not perfect  
So I think everybody and nobody is perfect  
You are a nobody



**“Watch Your Tracks”** by Milena Contreras





## DEAR ROMEO

Victoria Attis

My heart aches for your touch.  
I want to see you, dear.  
I am depressed without you here.  
Let's meet together. A secret rendezvous.  
No one else, just the two of us.  
I will have to disrespect my parents by telling them lies.  
To get what we want, we're risking our lives.  
But I can't stay away from you much longer.  
I'm so weak without you; you make me feel stronger.  
Your kisses from the book are the best anyone could ever receive.  
You're so amazing, I almost can't believe  
we met.  
You make me feel as beautiful as a flower.  
I wish our parents didn't have so much power  
over us.  
Why can't they just trust  
our love?

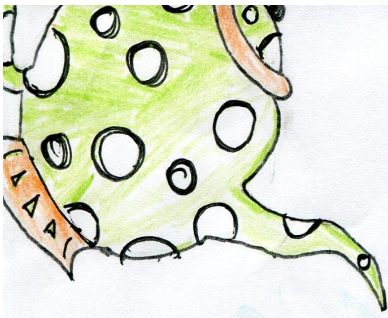
From, Juliet

## LOVE NOTE

Dante Davis

If you ever find this, I want you to know...  
I love you more than I could ever show  
These days with you, have brightened my life  
They have taken away all of the strife...  
I am no fairy-tale prince, I do have my flaws  
I wish I weren't a monster, with such vicious claws  
I dream of you, every night  
I just want to hold you, very tight...  
An army I would fight  
Just to see one sight...  
Your beautiful face is all I want to see  
I just want you to be happy and free  
You'll never be alone, you'll always have me  
I hope our love, lasts for eternity...





# POUR ME TEA!

Amelia Baijnath

Pour me Tea! That's how it starts.

The kettle whistles, blows steam and then parts  
With this beautiful substance at hand  
This palatable wonderland.  
One sip and I'm down the rabbit hole.

This addiction out of control  
One more cup as I spiral down.  
To another place where I fall farther and down.  
In Memories and Misery  
Fantasy, Delight and Mystery.  
An overwhelming wave of thought  
Emotions and crazed laughter onslaught  
This nightly delirium  
this disease  
IN SOMNIA  
conceived by tea.

This warm callous friend  
Let me be.

Hijack my senses  
Overload my thoughts  
Stunt my growth  
Flow from the pot.  
Set me free  
Sweet Catastrophe

Oh how I bow at your feet  
LORD CAFFEINE.







# **CANUCKLING**

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