

CANUCKLING 2022



DREAMS
AND
NIGHTMARES

VOLUME 67

-Jade
03-25-22

CANUCKLING 2022



VOLUME 67

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"Dreams & Nightmares"

by Zachary Conroy

(Digital Art)

DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES

Volume 67

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

CANUCKLING

2022

**AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
First Place 2021**

**COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION
Silver Medalist Award 2021**



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

The *Canuckling* magazine, though not quite as ancient as the school, was first published in 1955 with Ms. Marie O’Brien as the General Adviser and Ms. Frieda T. Bockius as the Art Director. We are proud to be a part of this tradition, now celebrating our sixty-seventh anniversary year, as we graduate a class of over 300 bright, talented students.

(Photo by Kristyn Rosen.)

2022 CANUCKLING STAFF

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English and Creative Writing Teacher

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Max Hathaway
Jonnathan Josias
Anthony Manzano
Jayden Rodriguez
Amaya Nicole Shallo

Special thanks to Kimberly Dawson and her
Art classes for providing many of the wonderful
student visual images.

Policy

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

Colophon

Canuckling 2022, the literary-art magazine of North Plainfield High School, was printed with a press run of 125 copies on 28# laser stock and bound by GMPC Printing of Clifton, NJ. The software used for the layout of the *Canuckling* is Microsoft Publisher. The font types used in this issue are Chiller and Rockwell.

Cover

Darla Serrano, a senior, created the drawing “Dreams and Nightmares” with pencil for the front cover.

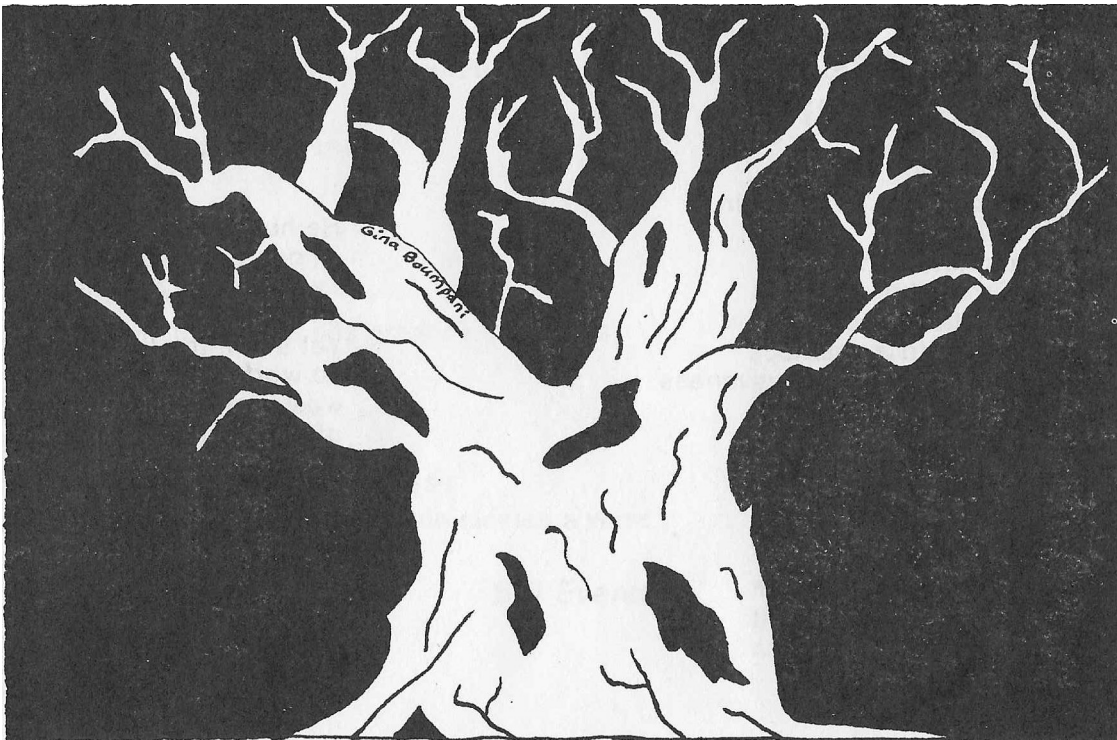
BLAST FROM THE PAST

From Canuckling 1987: *Cycle of Seasons*

The Night

Greg Huska

The night is black,
The sky is clear
And the air is still.
There is no noise, no sound.
There are no people...nothing
But the night.



Art by Gina Boumpani



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***Static** as a section represents the changing from one channel of thought to another with the noise of static heard in between like that on a radio.

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***Sonder** is a term coined by John Koenig and is defined as “The realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own.”

DISCONNECT



"Hanging by a Thread"

by Isabella Serrano

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

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musings on sonnet 18

a.a.

shall i compare thee to a summer's day?
you are warmth
you are familiarity
you soak my afternoons in nectar
fruit blossoming at every street corner
you are now forgettable
and i preferred you when age didn't cruelly rot us inside out
this life decomposes in october
and we are reborn

An Ice Cream a Day Attracts Cavities

Saionni Patrick

I remember it like it was yesterday, I had seen a video on positive vibes coming to people through the use of affirmations so I thought why not give it a try and I decided to repeat the affirmations:

“I don’t chase, I attract. I don’t chase, I attract. I don’t chase, I attract.”

For about two days in a row, this random kid (who I’ve seen around the school a couple of times but have never actually acknowledged) had decided to talk to me on my walk home. I was alone because I told my sisters to walk home without me so that I could do corrections with Mr. Li for a test that I had previously bombed a couple days before. Adding onto that, I had an 84.4 in his class instead of a 79.42 because I came after class to fix my mistakes. However, this was the least of my worries since there was another quiz the day after my corrections were done.

Since there were PSATs for that day, I was eating lunch during eighth period. Now, normally this wouldn’t be a problem, but I had lunch period five and could already feel my stomach eating at the rest of my organs since I hadn’t eaten since six-thirty in the morning that day. We basically had to test for the first five periods and shocker, fifth period was my lunch. Although it was late, it was still a nice experience since there were not as many people as there usually were and there was even extra food. To make it even better there was even left over Italian ice!

I also had this amazing nap in class after I finished the English section of the test. But back to what I was saying earlier. Remember the kid I mentioned earlier? Yeah, meeting him was an odd experience to say the least. He was like:

“Aye bro, wassup bro? How are you, bro?”

“I’m good and you?”

“What kind of boys are you into?”

“Uh-, I dunno, it doesn’t really matter to me...”

“Huh?”

“Any I guess...”

“Oh, what grade are you in?”

“Tenth.”

“Tenth?”

“Yeah.”

“Oh, okay.”

This guy had to be in at least eighth or ninth grade. Yet, he was still almost taller than me. He went back over to his friend and I heard him say, “She’s cute. Should I ask her out?”

That was all it took. I did not like where this conversation was going and I sure as heck was not about to answer a follow up question, so I sped walked my way out of there, making sure that he and his friends didn’t see which house I went into. I then proceeded to hide in my house away from the doors and windows until I heard their voices fade. Once the adrenaline finally settled in my body, I then decided to take another nap when I finally sat down. Other than the fact that I was completely caught off guard by someone actually finding me appealing to the eye (despite my purposeful attempt to wear baggy and plain clothing to avoid said situations), I thought that it was a good day. I think the higher powers wanted to cut me some slack and give me at least one day out of the year to relax when I’m not getting harassed or tormented by something or someone so overall, I think the day was odd but in a good way.

I think the worst part about this whole thing is that I didn't even get to consider the fact that I hadn't even told him my name, and I didn't even know his! He was about to ask me out and he didn't even know a single thing about me. Looking back on it, I probably should have run a little bit faster but hey, I guess it is what it is. Perhaps next time eating an apple a day will keep the people away.



“Eyes Looking at You”

by Samantha Borja

(Acrylic Paint)

Memories through Time

Jonnathan Josias

Thinking back to the first day of school
I had no idea what this year would put me through
All my beginnings will end
But I still want to pretend
That things aren't over

Happy times spent in the locker room
And the melancholy tears as the last whistle blew
Not because we lost the game
But because I thought I knew
How fast time flew

I hope that these 4 years
Will live on forever in my heart

All these shards fly right past my face
Each holding a memory
A cherished moment of my past
That I hope will stay inside me
I try to see where all these shards will go
But they reach too far in the unknown
Will I keep my memories through time

I remember entering that classroom
Hesitating fearing what I got myself into
But in this class
I had a blast
And learned so much

I remember that final huddle
And we said that we're Canucks till the very end
But is it to the end
Or is it when the memory rends

I wish that time was fair
So all this time won't fade in the air

As I try to move to my future
Suddenly my back turns
And as if it was a dream
My memories stood in front of me
Miserably I reach out with my hand
But as if they were of sand
Will I keep my Memories through Time

Time is what I'm desperately fighting
Cause I fear what the future will hold for me
If I could just live in my past memories
Then I won't have to see my memories die before me

As I painfully walk forward
Stairs appear before me
Stairs made from these glimmering shards
All of which hold a memory
I open my eyes and finally see
My past does not hold my memories
Will I keep my mem-

As I walk towards a new future
The shards fly in front of me
These shards don't reside in my past
But they reside inside of me
As long as I live and my heart has a beat
These shards will always be inside me
I am my Memories through Time



Destruction of Dreams

Bianca Osorio

Death and ashes raining across the land.
Our land absolutely decimated,
gone away and left alone in the sand.

His great unfinished symphony dreamland,
he watched as it blew up, devastated.
Death and ashes raining across the land.

The boy stared in awe at it, sword in hand,
his home completely disintegrated.
Gone away and left alone in the sand.

The newly made president goes to stand,
to fight for the place that he created.
Death and ashes rain across the land.

A king who wants to help his friends as planned,
is dethroned, incredibly frustrated.
Gone away and left alone in the sand.

As he dies he warns about what they planned,
he smiles and welcomes death, long awaited.
Death and ashes raining across the land,
gone away and left alone in the sand.



“Blurred Visions”

by Amaya Nicole Shallo
(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Freedom from These Shackles

Kristobal Olivares-Gonzalez

Life isn't about events; it's about how you feel during those moments. From birth, we all have a route laid upon us. We follow instructions and get most things handed out to us except for those who are less fortunate. We go to school and get older with time. Then one day, we're all grown up. The path that we had to follow just vanishes. It's like the music just stopped and we have to choose a new song but can't decide what to play. It's our choice to determine what we want to do with our lives.

No more pushes and shoves in the right direction, we just have to go. Although it can seem like newfound freedom, it can be challenging. Whatever path you carve can each come with its own problems. No one said life was easy and the positions you can be put in may be difficult to get by. It can be draining, but it's all an experience. There will be good times and bad, the whole point of it is to be entirely present. You must experience and feel everything for what it is.

"For there is never anything but the present, and if one cannot live there, one cannot live anywhere." This was a quote stated by Alan Watts. The past doesn't exist for it already happened. The future doesn't exist for it hasn't happened. All there is is the present moment. This is the past, this is the future, this is now. What you decide to do affects everything. You are the creator of your own reality and you need to be ready to take the position once you graduate.

As the creator we can control most, but not all. Things are going to change whether we're ready for it or not. Everything isn't in our control but only our own self. We have the power to control how we feel and what we think. We can do what we want and we can be who we want to be. It all depends on how badly you want it. Success doesn't get handed out to you; you need to be it. You need to embody your best self and work for your own happiness. You weren't born to please others so do everything for yourself. If you know better, do better. Don't let anyone tell you what you can and cannot do. Have faith and trust in yourself and what you want shall manifest itself.



"Free Falling" by Danny Garces Palacios
(Colored Pencil)

An October Walk

Aldo Martinez

Tonight's harvest moon shines its light on you.
You who walks with a heart of purely sin.
Follow me and once again become new,
I see the night greets you with a warm grin.
Rare it is when the moon spares some mercy,
Walk and let that rest on your heavy soul.
For whatever reason you are worthy.
Keeping secrets makes the mind into coal.
But on this fall night, YOU have been chosen,
Above all others, sisters and brothers.
Take your new chance, leave your old life frozen,
The moon grants you a shot like no other.
A new body, your old skin was well worn.
Washed away your regret, you are reborn.



"Outside In"

by Tiffany Saquisili Paida

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

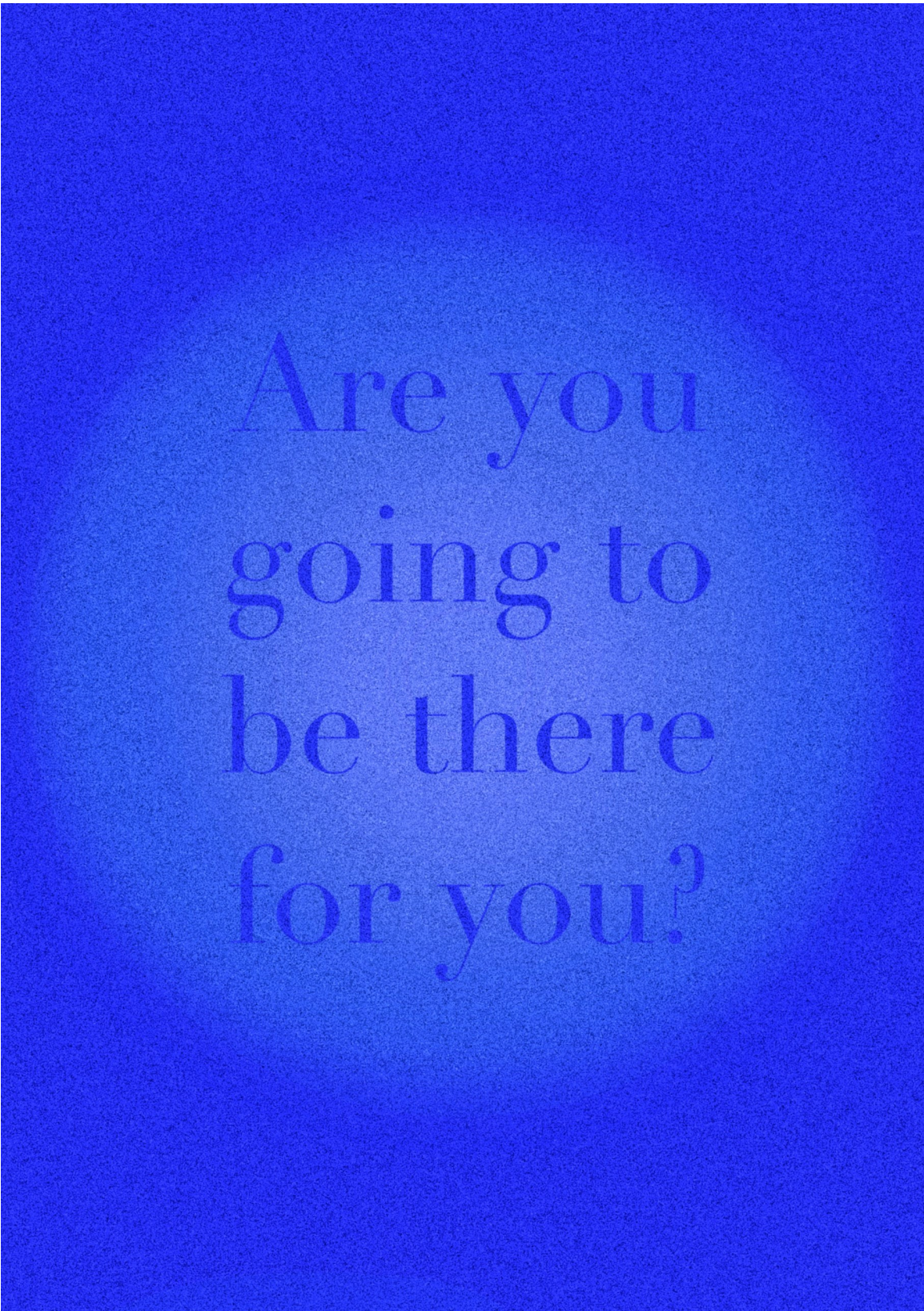
relinquished denial and terminally eternal hope

a.a.

someday i'll take care of myself
someday before i rot in the salt of the sea
someday when i sleep and awake
at a constant rate

someday i'll pour a cup of tea
and from all my problems, i'll flee
just you and me

hand in hand
we won't be limited to our dreamscapes
someday



Are you
going to
be there
for you?

“Are You Going to Be There for You?”

by Karla Guevara-Duarte

(Digital Art)

Next Stage

Jonnathan Josias

As I start to move onto the next stage of my life
I look back and see what made me what I'm meant to be

A long time ago
I was all alone
With no place I could truly call home
My heart was cold and empty
No sign of warmth
As I walked through my stale world

I despised myself
Yet was afraid of change
Cowardice flowed through all my veins
I knew
There was nothing I could do to become new

Yet with a gleam
You came to me
Changing the way I saw all things

My once frozen heart
Warming up and thawing out
Thanks to the warmth you provided me

As I start to move onto the next stage of my life
I look and see what you meant to me
Changing my dark view into one of light
Though our paths have never crossed since that time long ago
Our memories will always live inside my heart

I remember a time
When I couldn't move
Weighed down by all of my mistakes
I was pinned to the ground
By all my regrets
With no way to run away

There was no way to escape
Nor was there a way to hide and wait
And soon I
Began to go back to the place I dwelled long ago

Then suddenly
It dawned on me
I forget all of my success

All the work I've done
The progress I've made so far
Won't be hidden behind all my scars

As I start to move onto the next stage of my life
I smile and see how much I have changed
From the days when I was cold and pained
Though doubt exists inside my soul trying to drag me down
I won't forget the progress I have made so far

I start to move to the next stage
I won't forget how much I've changed

The next stage stares right at me
My new life's waiting for me
My past is gone it's time for me to move on

I begin to move onto the next stage of my life
I don't know what future's waiting for me
But I won't just sit and wait to see
I look back just one more time
And begin to shed tears
All the paths I took are ingrained in my memory
I've become the me that I was always meant to be

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS



"Pathways of Life"

by Jennifer Van Buren

(Colored Pencil)

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In Your Dreams

Saionni Patrick

The soft brisk air floated around me. The smell of fresh lavender and oak clouded my nose. My eyes shot open.

"D-did it work?" I silently questioned as I frantically began searching for them.

"I guess not."

My head lowered in defeat. I could not continue the warm feeling that I had once felt, my attempt at revisiting them had **failed**. The buzzing of incoming thoughts had died down around me leaving me in the shadows of the dark void above. I sat down as it projected a small segment of what I had once seen.

"You're too good at this. Where are you?" I called out to them.

"I'm over here, my **love**," they chuckled before disappearing again.

"What? No, you are no-"

"Boo!"

That cloth that smoothly aligned their body, with that familiar scent, I could feel it again. It sent a warm feeling bursting through me.

"Y'know, I'm not normally one to believe in predestination, but with you it feels like what we have has already been put in place for us," they smiled. "So, I'm really glad that you chose me to **escape** with you."

"Me too."

A smile lit up my face as a rush of heat circulated throughout it. As we began strolling along, I slowly came to realize what was going to happen. And before I could think about what I was going to say, I spat out: "I wish that you were real! Then I could find you. And we could hug for real and talk about nothingness for hours. W-we could be **happy**, together!"

The sigh. That antagonizing realization that we wouldn't have much longer together. The tears that began welled up as we walked farther down the pebble covered roads. **She** was going to gain consciousness...

"Maybe, but y'know there's always a chance that someone out there like me could find you."

"But no one there knows me like you!"

"Maybe you just haven't met the right person yet. Are you sure?"

The pause. The air tensing the longer we walked.

"I-, am not sure."

"No one ever expresses it, they just **pretend** like I'm not there, and besides none of it ever feels **real**!"

"Well, you do love me, right?"

"Of course I do; you are **my world**." I was saddened by the defeat.

"I'm sure many other people love you as well. Maybe they just may have a hard time expressing it."

"I doubt it, most of the time I don't feel like they do."

"I know, but many of them don't know how else to love you."

"Maybe you're right."

"...I know that you don't want me gone, but we should make the most of the time that we have left together."

continued next page

Our paces synchronized as we began walking towards an empty clearing that seemed to only light up towards the middle.

"And, I won't be gone forever, love."

"Please stay! We can find another way! I don't want you to leave! I don't want to lose you, not again."

Despite my constant urge to want to fight back, I could no longer control my movement. I kept walking as I gained an understanding about what was happening. It was too late. Upon our arrival to the center, they paused to look at me.

"Don't cry love, it'll only be for a little and I'll return to you in a different **light**."

That touch. Their hand rested on my cheek before lifting my face to reach their gaze.

"Can I ask you something?" they asked, placing a hand on my cheek.

"Anything."

"Promise me that you'll never forget me?"

The departure. The thick atmosphere around us. The silence that had boomed in my ears.

"I-I promise."

They smiled before resting their head against mine.

"I love you."

"I love you, too."

The emptiness. The lump in my throat that made me feel sick. The shockwave of sadness that spread throughout the core of my body.

She's starting to wake.

My body felt numb, the clip had ended, and all I was left with was emptiness and sorrow. I wiped my eyes and turned around. There **she** was, staring right back at me.

"Y'know what has to happen now, don't you?"

She smiled smugly at me.

"You don't have to do this!"

"Oh, but I do. But you don't exactly have to fight me on this," she bargained sarcastically. "I could erase your memory, you could return to consciousness and I could move along with my aaammazing day."

"I won't let you make me forget, not this time!" I said with small tears pricking the corners of my eyes.

She chuckled deeply before grabbing her stomach. "Don't be stupid! Gosh, it so hard to believe we share the same cells. I delete about 3 thousand memories an hour. This pathetic memory is just like any other pointless one."

"No, it isn't, we were finally hap-"

I couldn't move, she had gotten to me, and all I could do was fall limp next to her. She had already removed it from me. My happiness, my smile, the **warmth**, they were all gone. No traces of them could be found. They were completely destroyed.

"I wonder how you manage consciousness when you forget such tiny details such as this one. I move at 13 milliseconds per-," she paused. "You're crying. H-how d-did you, you are expressing emotion?"

"I don't understand. Stop this at once!" she commanded lifting me by my shirt. "Y-you are unbelievable! You may be causing her to cry!"

"**Her** body cannot understand why she is reacting in such a way..." She shook me violently.

I couldn't hear her. I couldn't hear anything. Everything inside me was burning with emotion and I had no control over any of it. The small flare of hope and light that wished to protect with all my might was taken from me. Stolen. Never to return. This battle was already over before it had even started.

"You are acting as if I have killed someone you love!" She paused again. "Y-You've fallen in love with them, haven't you?"

"Answer me!" She took my face in her hands to look at hers. "This has gone entirely too far!"

"You've caught feelings for someone who does not even know of your existence, heck, they don't even exist!" She began to drag me, pulling me farther into the dark abyss. "I'll make sure this never happens again."

"I'll delete your feelings and your memories!" she snarled before snickering. "Maybe I can find a way to delete you too while I'm at it."

And just like that it was over. She was awake with no recollection of the dream. All love that she had for them, broken, just like that. Any reminder of any and every relishing moment had disappeared taking a small part of her with it. There was nothing left, no sorrow, no pain, no remorse. Just the small idea that something that was completely within her grasp had just slipped completely through.

I shot up having been startled by my alarm clock. My teary eyes glanced around the room. I was home in my bed and I had been crying in my sleep again. The occurrences from my dream only faintly floating around my mind. I hit the snooze and sat up a bit.

My heart ached and my body felt empty. Something was definitely off, but I didn't know what. I had forgotten something without realizing what I had forgotten before forgetting it. Trying to remember only seemed to push more of the thought out of my head until it all felt like a blur. I turned to my side and glanced around the room. The posters of them, the keychain plush that I received as a birthday gift, it all felt dull, now looking at it. The dream I had. It seemed as though I didn't dream of anything at all. I glanced around the room again before laying down and looking at the ceiling. Surely, I hadn't lost interest in them. I couldn't have. I mean, just a day ago I was looking at another poster to potentially buy for myself. It didn't seem logical, but I just couldn't bring myself to think about them in such a way anymore. I popped up again startled by the alarm that read: "Hurry, you'll be late for school, so you'd better get up!"

I quickly wiped my eyes and hurried for the bathroom. I desperately wanted to remember what I dreamt about but to no avail could I. All I know is that whatever I dreamt about was something that I wish I never had forgotten.

"The Faces of Dreams"

by James Contreras

(Acrylic Paint)



The Cycle

Jayden Rodriguez

You ever wake up and wonder about why you're here?
A question like that could bring the uninitiated to tears
That empty feeling in your gut that you have no purpose
regardless of whatever you've accomplished
it's got you feelin' hopeless
Memory of past mistakes flooding in at once
it's got you thinking of the what if's, and the could've's,
it feels like it lasts for months
Like a constant cloud over you with nothing but rain
filling you up with anger and pain
Until it all explodes whether that be internally or externally
causing you to lash out at whoever
no matter if they had something to do with how you feelin B'
The worst part is the aftermath
you come to understand what you did in your blind wrath
all the people you hurt
and all the people you left in the dirt
it eats at you constantly
only adding to your feelings of anxiety
It's a damn shame really
you had so much potential and opportunities but you wasted them
and now all you got is nightmares that make you go numb
they leave you gnawing at yourself for a release of this feeling
one that deep down you know will never leave your being
It's a constant cycle that gets worse with each completion
will you fight it or fall to this internal lesion
I wish I had the answer
but that's a question meant for you and your sense of depletion



“Carried Away”

by Alexis Monroy Cantero
(Watercolor and Sharpie)

The Ring

Estrella Arriaga-Garcia

As the sun is setting across the water
And the wind is fluttering your dress
We're running along the shore
the soft sand beneath our feet
I'm holding your hand trying to catch up to your speed
And then suddenly you're not there anymore

You're standing so beautiful in front of the red sky
this is a moment worth being alive
The water dashes to your feet
then you splash some towards me
All I'm focused on is your smile as you're giggling
I started thinking, is it time to offer her the ring?

The seagulls soar quacking away
From the dark clouds closing in
The ocean starts to grumble
and madly move its waves
I see you struggling to keep your balance
I stretch my arms to catch you
But it was too late

The rain poured heavily as I stared at the ocean
I get on one knee with the ring in my hand
Tears went down my face
I threw the ring as far as I could into the water
And that was my goodbye



"Aquatic Dreams"

by Iram Malik

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

il trittico oneida: my inner child's last words

a.a.

i. prelude: a drowned reflection in shades of blue

the last summer at the old house
everything seemed to levitate at night
there were tall beings 'round every corner
just out of sight and mind
made of celestial flesh
and bones of stardust

the air smelled like sweet smoke
lemongrass and a burning body
the spontaneous combustion
of who we once knew
and what we have known

at four-twenty-two
i look out into the wild, wild night
from my pitch black house
and see the world in shades of blue
stars of gold and swirls of indigo
a home for that child left behind
for that child that burned down
with the brick house on the sloping road

as soon as the lights come on,
natural comfort withers
and the creatures lurk once more

ii. nocturne: evocation of the skinwalker

i've flipped every switch
pulled every plug
turned off every device
and buzzing still surrounds me
shaking my soul incessantly

backlit by headlights
a coyote on its hind legs
looks up at my window
a being i've danced with
in star-sprinkled dreams before

red glowing eyes
pierce through the pane
promising returned innocence

the child has run away

iii. finale: the basement

soaked pink carpeting
the flood brought on by the crone
birdbeaked beings marching the halls
living in the hollow behind the walls
truth dulled by smoke
scratching up through the stone floor

behind three closed doors
decay and dirt lead into the unknown
of a world i will never get to see

in this house built on lies
lives the child they lost

sung to sleep in the thick air
of some season between the estival and hibernal
the news drones on about
the body found in a locked safe
at 40.630706787109375
-74.42292785644531



“Into the Vast Sky”

by Karla Guevara-Duarte

(Digital Photo)



"Crawling Through" by Jasmine Agyemang
(Oil Crayon, Sharpie, and Watercolor)

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STATIC



"Masked Feelings"

by Roberto Mejia Quezada

(Colored Pencil)

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King Midas' Mistake

Tatiana Sarmiento

There once lived a king who presided over his kingdom in solace. He was vastly rich, but many did not know where his riches came from. His name was Midas. King Midas had a gift desired by many around the world. He had obtained this gift when his generosity was seen by the god Dionysus, deeming him worthy of such an extraordinary trait. When Midas first obtained the gift, he was overcome with joy. He was very excited about his gift. Unfortunately, this did not last long. The repercussions of Midas' gift lurked around him, and he didn't notice until too late.

King Midas' gift was the ability to turn anything he touched into wax. Candle wax, to be specific. Everyone realized, what use is a wax flower or a wax jewel? However, people began to love the ideas of wax figures around the kingdom.

Midas went around his palace, touching everything in his point of view. He loved the feel of wax upon his fingertips. Many people also lavished the thought of candle wax. The first day was amazing. King Midas was turning many items in his palace into wax, and his kingdom marveled at the delight. Many other kingdoms were interested in paying a high price for wax items; they deemed it a delicacy.

Why King Midas chose that everything he touched turned into candle wax, no one knows. By the time that the next day had arrived, half of the kingdom had turned into a wax figure. King Midas arose from his slumber in an uncomfortable state. His bed had turned to wax, and his figure left an imprint in the wax. He went to take his morning sip of water, but found that it had also turned into wax as soon as the liquid touched his lips. Midas was very displeased with this. He was starving, but there was no way he could eat!

Midas then began to walk around his kingdom. He soon found that his clothes had turned into a waxy substance as well and had hardened itself to his body. He made the mistake of touching some plants and trees, which caused them to turn into wax figures as well.

"Oh, whatever will I do! I dread this gift! Why didn't I pick a substance like gold?" Midas cried out to himself.

continued next page

Suddenly, a drastic heat overcame the kingdom. Midas had displeased the gods, who had given him such a gift. They felt he was being unappreciative. In response, they projected a massive heat, which would melt all the wax in the kingdom.

Everything around Midas began to melt. It was a horrifying sight. The people who Midas had gifted wax figures watched in terror as their precious items melted. Midas ran back to his kingdom, but it was in turmoil. Suddenly, he felt someone behind him.

“Father, what is happening?” King Midas’ daughter asked. He turned and reached out to her, not realizing what would happen. HE watched his daughter turn into wax, and then she began to melt.

Midas cried out to the gods, “PLEASE!” He resented the gift, and would do anything to get rid of it.

Then Dionysus appeared before him. He understood Midas’ pain, and wanted to give him another chance.

“You must give up your royal status in order to undo what has been done. If you agree, you will wake up in 3 days as a humble farmer with no memory of being king, but all will have returned to normal, including your daughter,” Dionysus told Midas.

Midas was shocked. He certainly did not want to give up his status, but he also resented what he had done.

“I’ll do it,” Midas agreed.

Dionysus clapped, and suddenly he was gone. Out of nowhere, Midas felt himself fall out of a dream, and then he awoke in a wooden bed in a common house. He could not realize if the dream was a real occurrence or not, so he continued to do his farmer duties as he felt that he had always done. Nonetheless, the commoner Midas refused to allow wax into the home, as he held an unknowing resentment for it.



"Uprooted"

by Somfenna Enwerekove
(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Musings from the Class of 2022

"You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them." - Maya Angelou

"The lockdown really helped me grow up and mature. For most of us it was a wakeup call. The lockdown taught us a lot about ourselves and pushed us in the right direction to better ourselves. Sadly, the lockdown was also hitting us hard and holding us down under immense pressure. There was the constant fight against ourselves questioning everything, everyone, and the world itself. But even though we went through all of that, we are still standing here today, stronger, wiser, and better than ever before. We are the next generation of leaders and world changers."
-Isaiah Ward

"I do not want to... talk about how this [the pandemic] influenced me in a bad way. What I really want to talk about is how I adapted to it and became better. What I mean by this is that I was able to learn how to become independent with school work, at work, even just going out. It brought out the mature person in me. It taught me how to have responsibilities and how to multitask."
-Navani Cruz

"Coming from a Third World country, my parents have taught me that my freedom and education are not to be taken for granted. If any of the four years of high school have taught me something, there will always be an obstacle, but how you overcome it depends on your upbringing. Are you a person that sees the cup as half empty or as half full? After this time of COVID and personal loss, I still see the glass half full."
-Jessica Atubi

"New beginnings bring new opportunities. Scholarships, jobs, career choices—they're all big decisions one has to make and they're not easy ones. It's the decision that will pave a new road into my soon to be adult life, where more doors will open. I will chase my curiosity, chase the development to become a better person for myself, wherever that leads me. No matter what door I walk through, I will always remember that as long as I do my best, it's good enough. I'm not going to doubt myself in what I'm capable of doing, and I will strive to work for something bigger than myself."
-Jeremy Baldeo

"I believe that overall we did not make what we could not control ruin everything for us. But in fact we learned to cope and work on ourselves and not let it affect us. Yes it was very hard, but at the same time we decided that it would not set any of us back."
-Abdelrahman Fayed

“Going into ‘the real world’ with more responsibilities and high expectations, people don't hand out careers. If you want something you have to work for it and develop the qualities and skills you need to show your uniqueness. Allow your opportunities to take you into more opportunities. Advance your skills so that you can gain from the experiences they give you. I hope you use your gift, whatever that may be, to continue and make yourself proud. Don't rely on your story to make your future, rely on your story to make a better you. We've all been through things but the outcome is what you make it...no matter the path you choose to take.”
-De'ona Hathaway

“I decided that I was going to treat this part of my life as a lesson. A lesson to prove to myself that I can hold my own grounds and become stable with who I am and what I have become. I took charge of my life and made sure that even if this were to happen again, it would not affect me this deep because I will always remember that I have myself.”
-Amber Rodriguez

“There were moments in my life when I wanted to give up, lose all hope in humanity, and my faith in the world started to crumble. But in those moments of “weakness,” I found I had to be the strongest. I needed to show the world what I was made of and just because I grew up differently than others this made me no less than anybody else. I knew I had to fight every step of the way proving that I belong at the top and that I will be the greatest I can ever be. The inspiring actor Sylvester Stallone once said, ‘You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't how hard you hit; it's about how hard you can get hit, and keep moving forward. How much you can take, and keep moving forward.’”
-Marvin Cruz

“With the pandemic and the distancing from reality, anxiety made an impact on my life. It filled me with panic and an uncontrollable nervousness. I formed a relationship with God, I began to read, I went on long walks, and I became healthier, physically and mentally. I didn't want to let myself stay in a dark place and lessen who I was. Although it seemed impossible, I still managed to grow to become the person I am today. There will be situations in your life that feel impossible to get through, but I encourage anyone who ever feels this way to find the strength in yourself and in others to overcome it. Never let yourself be reduced by the events that happen to you.”
-Andrea Cardona

“It seems like yesterday that I was coming to school on my first day as a freshman back in 2018. But we'll always have that feeling. No matter what we accomplish or where we go in life, it's going to feel like yesterday that I was laying in bed typing this essay. It's going to feel like yesterday that I was throwing my cap into the air at graduation with a diploma in hand. It's going to feel like yesterday that I was moving my things into a dorm at Kean University. It's all going to feel like yesterday, and as of right now, it's time for a new beginning.”
-Dennis (DJ) Frazier, Jr.

Congratulations to all of the Class of 2022!

musings on liebestraum no. 3 in a-flat major

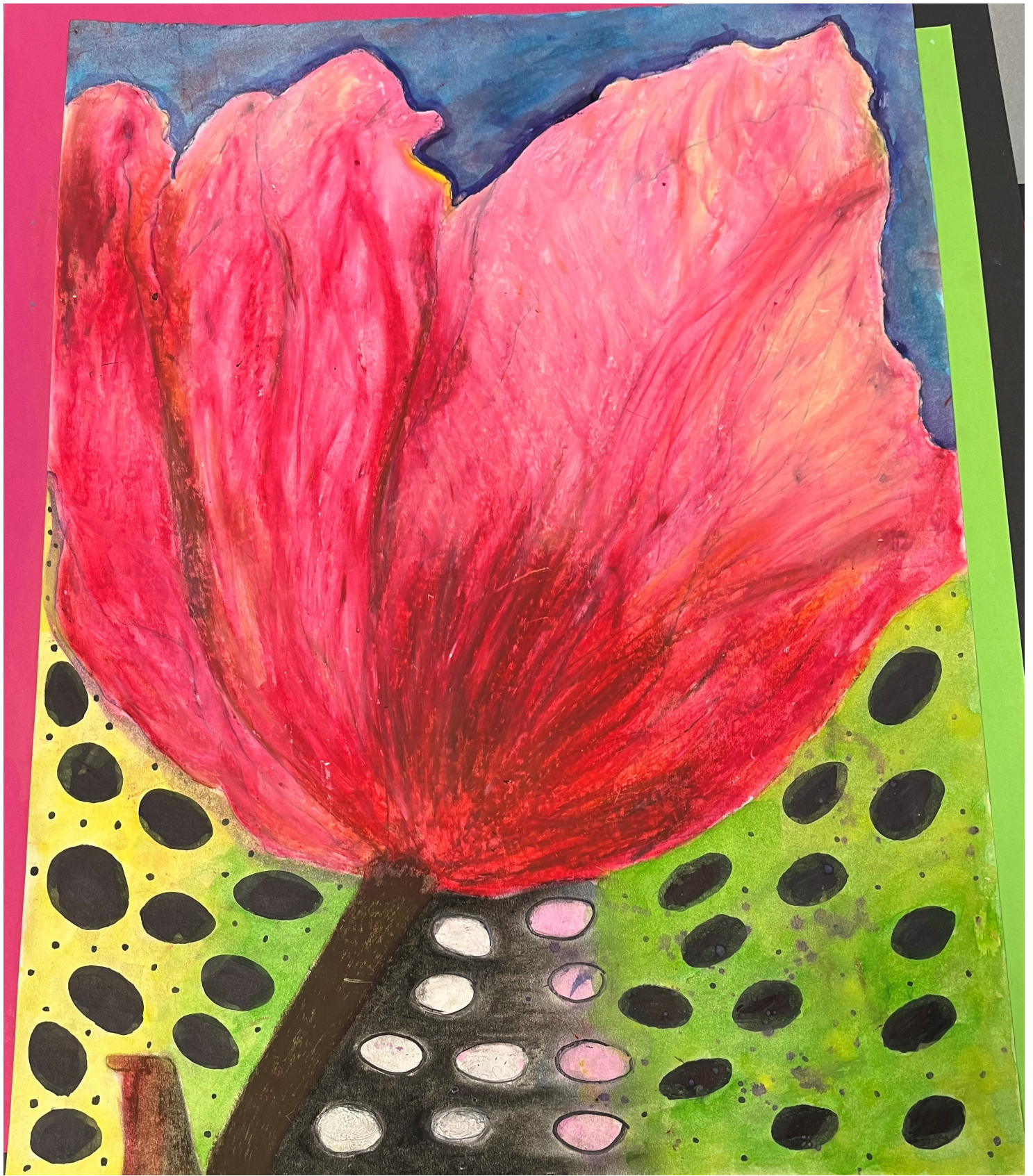
a.a.

my heart blooms
it blooms like hibiscus in thick humidity
it swells like an irritated wound
it bleeds like a bitten berry

my heart races
racing as if being chased by hunters
my heart pulsates
pulsating, contorting as if in pain
and not the ecstasy you lay upon me

with your music, your dark eyes
your forehead on mine as we dance
as we breathe in everything between us
swallow the aspects of this world, blooming

like hibiscus in thick humidity



"A Flowering Gesture"

by Nancy Escobar Lara

(Oil Crayon, Sharpie, and Watercolor)

Wings

Jonnathan Josias

I try to fly but my wings are being weighed down
Right now they're heavy but one day I know
I'll soar like them through the sky
If I try

Through watching them from the ground
I wanted to try my wings out
But mine are heavier than all of theirs

The more I begin to worry
The more these wings seem to hurt me
The weight makes me want to cry and fall down

So I started to try to be
The best me that I can be
And when my worries fall off me
I'll soar through the skies feeling nothing but glee

I try to fly but my wings are being weighed down
Hurting my soul and I don't know how
I'll make it through this day
But I'll stay strong and push through anyways
I try to fly but my wings are being weighed down
Yet through all this somehow I believe
One day I'll soar through the skies
If I try

I wish I could soar through the skies
Where my worries can no longer find me
But for now I'm still confined to the ground

When I think back to my mistakes
That left me in this weakened state
This weight makes me want to scream and curse my fate

So I will fight to try to be
The best me that I can be
And when I find peace inside me
I'll be able to soar through the skies worry free

I try to fly but my wings are being weighed down
Cause my mind won't let me forget how
I failed all those times in my past
Yet my future is now I'll shed my past someday
I try to fly but my wings are being weighed down
Yet in the near or far future I know
Someday I'll soar through the skies
If I try

Through time I feel the weight is falling away
I can see myself soaring someday
My past isn't gone
But I'll beat it someday

I try to fly though my wings are being weighed down
Although my feet are barely off the ground
Someday I'll soar through the sky
If I-

When I try my wings will soar through the sky
Leaving my pain and worries behind
I'll be the king of the skies
The clouds my throne
And all birds my servants
Someday I'll fly and my wings will glide through the sky
Today they're wobbling but someday I know
I'll never cry in the skies
When I fly

Midnight Wins

Genesis Rivas

The sun is a sign of calamity,
One ray of sunlight is enough to kill
The deep slumber and the dream amity.
With the sun out, the world cannot be still,
Blinded from below and pierced with heat waves,
Face tomato red with perspiration,
My clothes are melting and the burn remains,
It's God's indestructible creation.
When the sun falls and the colored sky fades,
A new light rises from the shadows a
Crescent shape distinguishable in glades.
The beauty and peace are vivid this way,
Among darkness, the gatekeeper of stars,
And carries out the silence from afar.



"Off in the Galaxy"

by Aldo Martinez

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Dreams Are Like Fire

Saionni Patrick

Dreams are like a **fire**,
They burn bright and keep you warm,
They help with sight and to weather storms,
They shine bright even when you mourn.

As more wood that is added, the more fire grows,
They grow and grow, expanding as they heat up everything around them.
Growing. Expanding. Growing. Expanding. Growing... until they don't.
Their flames die out with strong gusts of wind and large rain storms.

When they are extinguished they leave ashes,
The worlds revolving around them end with flashes. Their flames slowly fade.
Then it is quiet. A darkness has risen and has kept any signs of light hidden.
There is no sign of anything anymore.

The once beaming light has now ghosted its surroundings.
Taking all hopefulness with it,
The area around the rising smoke becomes foggy and dull,
The hopeful become hopeless, as the silence swallows the world around them.

And then there is another storm, and lightning begins to strike.
From place to place it hops. Creating a force enough to relight the flames.
And then it **strikes**. Not the slightly burnt wood but a tree. The tree falls and begins
burning brightly.
Leading right to the ashes, reigniting them.

The flames grow larger and larger, gaining the passion that they have once lost.
It storms again and this time the rain and wind does not put out the flames.
Instead it only grows stronger, and the flames don't die out.

Dreams are like **fire**, they make us feel warm inside.
And when we are cold,
Relighting them, to feel that warmth again,
Makes all the difference.



“Tongue of Fire”

by Nathalie Chicaiza

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

two crows

a.a.

uncanny
how can i replace her?
i am a mirror
while she is a knife
holding your bleeding reflection

you can't fix anyone
but you can take care of yourself

an old bird's sanity, '59

a.a.

she waters weeds tenderly
as if they're her companions
lion's teeth and thistle pricks

she eats coins from countries that no longer exist for supper
she sleeps in a cog in the old clock tower
and periodically rings the carillon
for a free thrill

she prances through the sands of an hourglass
decaying abominably
clinging onto sepia memories of '59

time is a desert
and she is a bird caught in its heat
time is a symptom
and she is bedridden with its cause

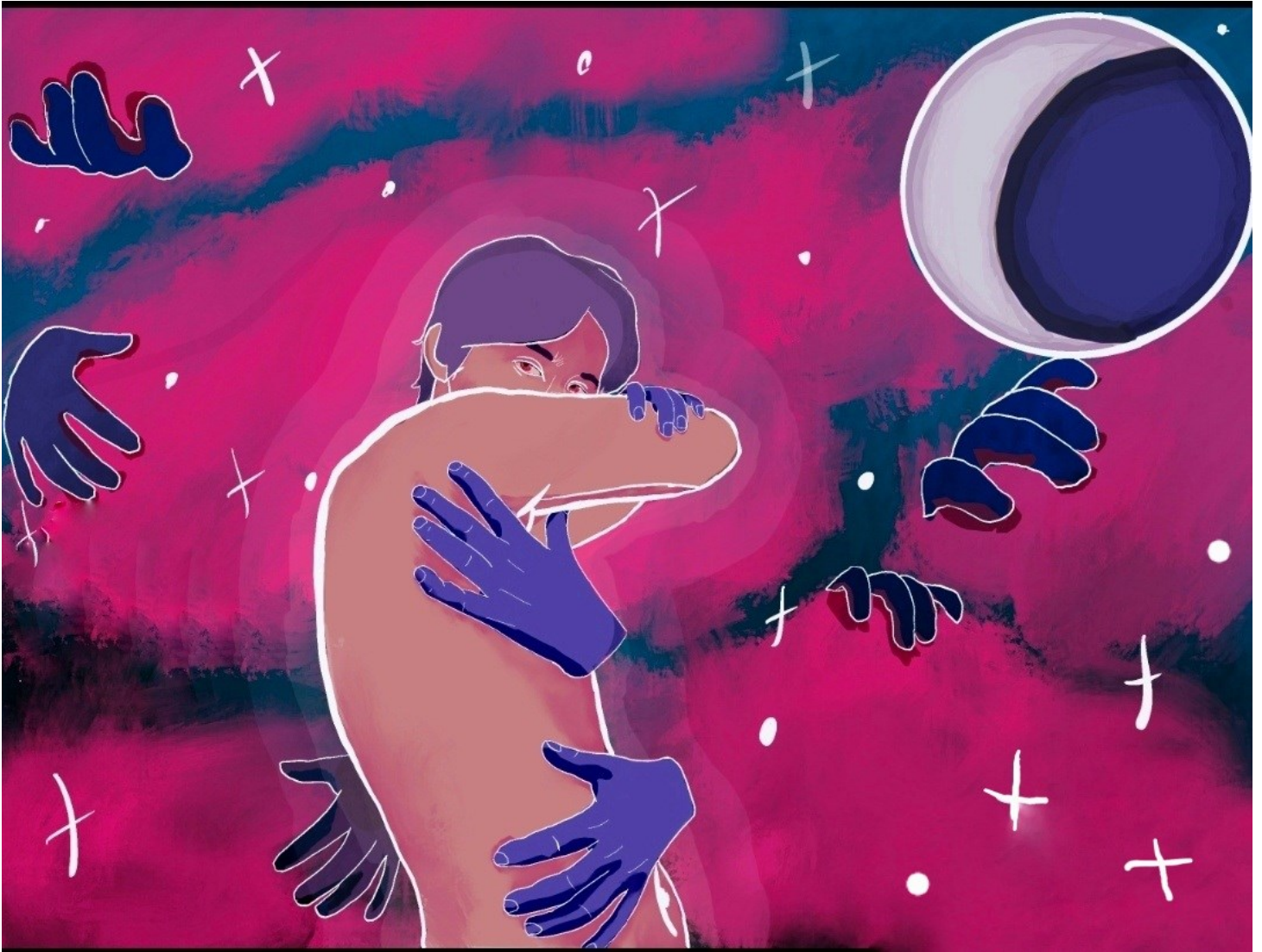


"Ghost in the Wall"

by Jeimy Garcia

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

SONDER



“Universal Love”

by Zachary Conroy

(Digital Art)

Why'd You Have to Go Out Like This?

Bianca Osorio

"Why am I here?" I ask myself. I'd been wandering for what felt like hours in the endless hallways and corridors that were the backrooms of the ice-skating rink. I came across a door, and I've been standing at it for a bit now but I'm not sure why. There are many rooms like this one all around. They have people in them, people who've died. Each room corresponds with the way the person died, so there's thousands, possibly millions of these rooms.

After a bit more staring and waiting, I finally walked in. Like all the other rooms it has light blue walls and some kind of white flooring. In this room though there were pieces of tile hanging off the shelves in a way that reminded me of a store. They were all different colors, shapes, and sizes. There were three people in this room, two guys and a girl. The guys were both white, one had black hair and the other had dark brown hair. The girl had tan skin and dark brown hair.

Like any other curious person, I walked up to one of the racks of tiles. The girl immediately walks up to me and asks, "What are you looking for?"

"Oh, I don't know. I was just looking," I answer.

"Ok. Just be quick please!" I look around for a bit and find two very pretty looking tiles. I don't know which one to choose so I keep looking at them. After a while the girl comes back and asks, "Are you done yet?"

"No but-" She cuts me off.

"Then I'm going to need you to GET OUT." She looks up at me with red in her eyes and I run out the door. I run down the maze of hallways and corridors and find the exit. I look behind me and she's still running after me, her face twisted in a smile straight out of a horror movie. I can see behind her the two guys from that room, trying to grab her and bring her back there.

I ran out and into the rows of seats in the ice-skating rink. The lights aren't on and the faint greenish-blue glow coming out of the rink and the seats are still present like before. People, or rather ghosts, are still skating around or hanging out in the seats. They seem oblivious to my running around. I look behind me and she's there but she's so much grayer than when I first saw her. After a lot of running, I finally make it to the main entrance of the rink and I run out the first door then the next. Once I run out the lights have magically turned on and there's no one inside anymore, though I can still hear her pounding on the door.

Unlike her, I can leave because I'm not dead. They're stuck in there forever, bounded by a contract. You can go into this place and come out once you sign but if and when you die, you'll be forced to stay here for all eternity because of it. After I hear the commotion die down, I open the door. The girl isn't there anymore so I walk through the second set of doors.

continued next page

When I walk through, I'm met with a very familiar face. I can see them flash in my mind. Their creamy orange mullet and blue eyes, their freckles and fun smirk. I miss them. What I saw in front of me was them but it was their ghost. Like my description but so gray. Their eyes were red, so red it felt like they were lasers boring holes into my skin. Their entire bottom half was gone. They had died here, in this awful place. Why I still come back, I don't know. I just want to see them normal again.

At that moment bright white light surrounded me and I was taken back in time. I landed in a cafeteria, the cafeteria of our old high school. I can see them so I walk up to them.

"How's your day been going, Charlie?" I ask.

"It's been good! How about you? You look like you've just seen a ghost." Little did they know that I had. I hadn't seen them like this in so long. Instead of a mullet their hair was short and puffy. Instead of a smirk there was a bright smile. So full of hope and happiness, I can't believe this was them once.

"I'm fine. You know you should consider getting a mullet."

"A mullet?" they ask. I forgot they didn't really know what that was before.

"Yeah! It's short in the front but long in the back," I explained.

"Oh! I think I get it! So about the thing you were talking about yesterday, when did you want to go to that ice-skating rink?" I then remember what day today was. Today was the day they would sign their afterlife away.

"Ummm, I guess after school is ok." *Or not at all* was what I wanted to say but the words wouldn't come out. It felt like there was some invisible outside force trying to stop me from saying anything, from saving them. Once again, the bright light surrounded me and I landed right outside the rink.

I hear footsteps coming closer and closer until I see Charlie come around the corner.

"Oh hey! There you are. I was waiting for you," they said. "Sooo, why'd you wanna bring me to an ice-skating rink?" Their eyes are so curious, but I don't want to tell them why but my mouth had other plans.

"I wanted to show you something. Come and hold my hand." They come over and hold my hand. Their hand is warm and full of life. Oh, how I missed that feeling. "Well, here goes nothing." I open the door and that same thing happens again. Outside you look and it's bright inside but once the doors open, it's dark and that mysterious greenish-blue glow is back.

There's a person standing at the second front door, it's the contract you sign to get in. I see Charlie walk through the second door and walk up to that person. I watch them sign, unable to move almost like there's tar sticking me to the ground. I just want to go and tell them not to sign before it's too late.

Once they sign, I realize this is just a loop of my life. I'm doomed to relive my mistakes over and over to teach me some sort of lesson. I just want to know where it all went wrong. Why'd you have to go out like this, Charlie?



"Room 409"

by Marcos Mayoral

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

I'll Be
Saionni Patrick

I won't straighten my hair
Or lighten my skin
I am fine, I'm perfect within
I am strong, strong without a doubt
Even though sometimes I am forced not to open my mouth
You will. listen. and set me free
Because nothing you say will make me want to change me
We will sit here proud and free
Your words will leave no scars,

I'll be.



"Most Beautiful"

by Darla Serrano

(Pencil and Sharpie on Canvas)

the augurs of july

a.a.

there is a rooster that lives
behind my house
that cries on sunny days
every hour on the hour
like some possessed clockwork
an automaton punished by the sun

come november
the rooster's caws and crows
are muted by biting cold

pastorale

a.a.

i sit in this bath that will hopefully boil these feelings out of me
steeping and stewing in tears
in spiced and herbed placebo

you held the skeleton key to my mind
one you stole and earned

i want your hands
plunged through my chest
digging to my boiling core

i want to be chapped
irritated and emaciated
by rage and confusion

indifferent to my surroundings
thrashing like a blinded dog
only motivated to destroy
by my own fears

turning a blind eye
i take what's mine



“Bursting Through”

by Justin Chicaiza

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Thousand

Jonnathan Josias

In the future far away I'll remember my joy from that day

Before I thought I had everything that a man could possibly need

Yet you appeared in front of me

And changed everything

How could I have been so blind

How could I not have known

What my life was missing

Yet now everything has changed

And for certain I know

I have everything I need

When I look back on that day

And I see my face light up this way

I'll smile

I will laugh

Like I did that day

A thousand years aren't anywhere near

To enough to forget what you did for me

I thank you again

I never would have realized how empty my life was if not for you

Your lively smile and your happy laugh

Warmed up my life too

If you didn't approach me
Didn't talk to me
My world would be lifeless

Yet now everything has changed
And for certain I know
I am truly living now

When I look back on that day
And I see the life come to my eyes
I will walk
I'll stay strong
Like I never did

A thousand fails aren't anywhere near
To enough to make me lose heart like before
I thank you again
When I look back on that day
And I see you smile once again
I'll remember all you did while you were here
A thousand tears aren't anywhere near
To enough to take the joy you've given me

When I look back on that day
And I see my eyes light up this way
I'll smile
I'll stay strong
Just like you once did
Ten thousand souls are the amount that you touched
When you walked this earth although your life was short
We thank you again

Flores

Pablo Rivera

She caresses the green leaves of her plants
The only thing she feels connected to
Waters and showers them with her chants
Take care of them is all she likes to do
Purple and red tulips cover her lawn
In the summer the perennials sprout
In the fall her sunflowers glow at dawn
Tomatoes ripen and she picks them out
Pretty roses are constantly blooming
To cut and display her flowers she loves
Sits out front to see her plants, it's soothing
Winter comes it's time to put away her gloves
Her plants shrivel and wilt, it's time to go
She awaits the spring for her soul to glow



"Helping Hands"

by Aliyah Langevine

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Playtime
Bianca Osorio

I remember a time I saw friends' faces.
Big, toothy grins,
Big playful spirits.
But now they hide behind masks,
Not just literally.
They hide their feelings and thoughts.
They hide their smiles and frowns.
They're afraid of judgement.
We should go back
To the time when
People didn't care as much
Go back to playtime



"The Carrot and the Apple"

by Jasmine Agyemang

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Good Night

Aldo Martinez

Tuck me in one more time
Like you did when all was fine.
In my mind, I can't find the peace I need,
Happiness is never guaranteed.

I have counted up all the sheep,
Rounded them up,
But I still can't go to sleep.

Read me a story one more time,
Make it special, make it rhyme.
The clock taunts me because my eyes I can't close
What I'll do, not even heaven knows.

Say, won't you speak up?
I can't hear you,
My tears I have to clean up.

Hold me close one more time,
A sense of mind isn't worth a dime
when your thoughts are your worst enemy,
I swear they'll be the end of me.

I wish to dream tonight, to disconnect
I wish to create my own reality where I define what's correct.

Wish me sweet dreams one more time,
Your nurturing words were always so sublime.
I need someone to tell me all is safe and sound,
But who do I look for when you're not around?



"Sunset Road to Dreamland"

by Natalie Palate Castro

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

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Grade: 12



Name: **Karla Guevara-Duarte**, Photographic / Art Editor

Grade: 12



STAFF

Name: **Alejandra Garcia**, Photographic / Art Editor

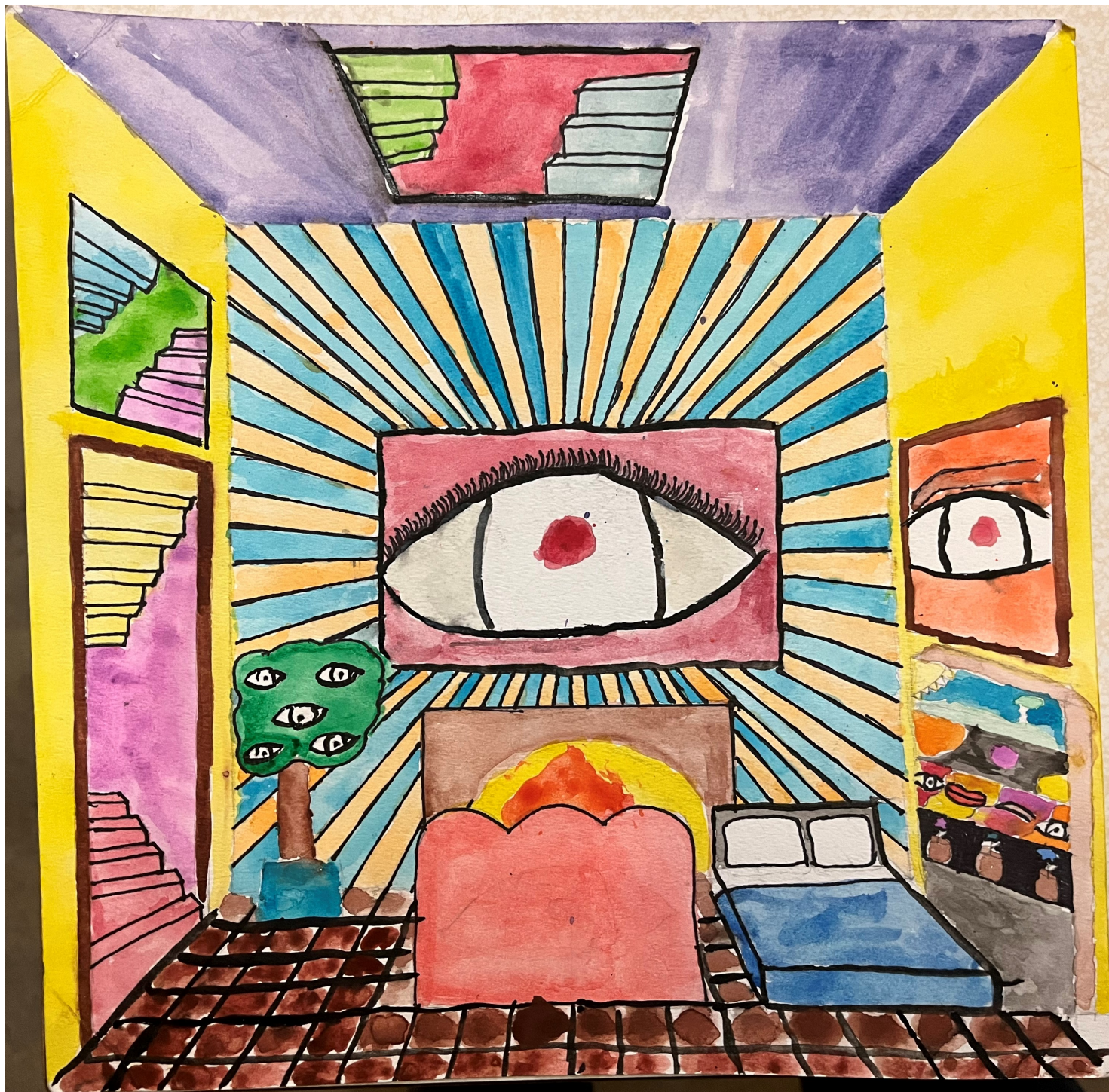
Grade: 12



Name: **Zachary Conroy**, Photographic / Art Editor

Grade: 10





"Eyes of the World"

by Eimy Mena

(Watercolor and Sharpie)

Scary World
Mr. John DeLaurentis
Canuckling Club Adviser & Creative Writing Teacher

Have you been fearful of the world today?
Have people hurt you in different ways?
Has your hope waned in these times?
Has your outlook been devoid of rhymes?

We're living and seeing discrimination
People not respecting origination
But this is not a time to fill up with hate
Because your declaration of self can abate

It's a scary world,
But we must stand tall
Time to make some changes
Love and honor install

There may be horror like in a Poe tale
When we see times when unity fails
But we must stand together strong as one
To tear down division and make it run

We need respect and honor in this world
To champion our diversity, see it unfurl
There's no one better than anyone else
Love each other and see how hearts melt

Teach the children and show the way
Give them hope for a brighter day
This world needs some rays of hope
Respect each other so all can cope



DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES

VOLUME 67

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NORTH PLAINFIELD, NJ 07060

your time
is still too
soon my
love

-Jade
03-25-22