

# MacGuffin

Olean High School  
2018-2019  
Literary Journal

MacGuffin  
is a publication of the Olean High School  
Creative Writing Group  
2018-2019, Volume 1

Editor  
MacKenzie Sakala

MacGuffin (Noun)

-an object, event, or character in a film or story that serves to set and keep the plot in motion despite usually lacking intrinsic importance.

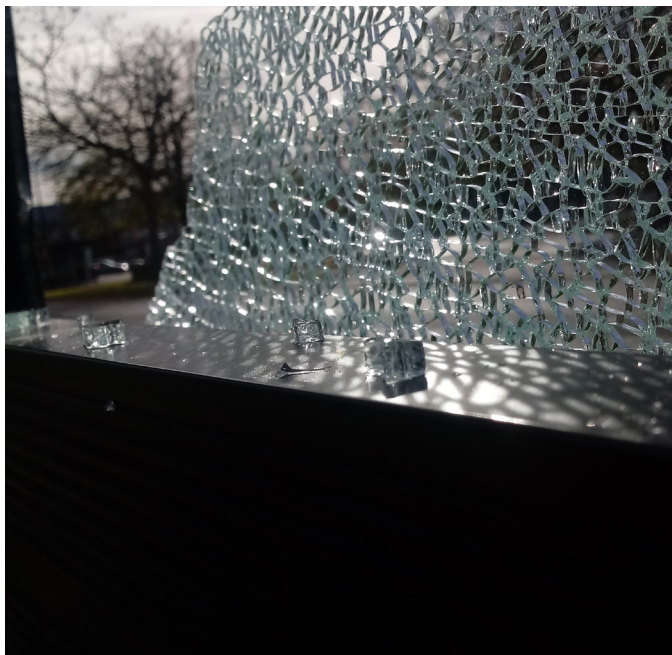
-Merriam-Webster

Call for manuscripts

The MacGuffin has an open deadline. Manuscripts and all forms of artwork can be submitted at anytime. Manuscripts should be prepared using MS Word. All parts of the manuscripts should be double-spaced. All submissions must be electronic. Short stories and creative nonfiction submissions should not exceed 500 words. Poems should not exceed 25 lines.

Please submit work to  
ohslitjournal204@gmail.com

Cover art by  
Tahj Coleman



Photograph  
~Shattered~

Un-American Activities

I am a pioneer of hysteria  
Living in a witch hunt  
I refused a sense of terror  
Lying only to seek  
My silence  
They were living in paranoia  
Nestled in the human mind

## Joel Graves

Any story, if told correctly  
To the right person,  
At the right time,  
Can be a good story

Twenty years ago, someone  
Died. I don't know who,  
But I do know this,

That person had friends;  
That person had family;  
That person was young and was old;  
Even if he "died young."

That person did things they regretted,  
That person did things they were proud of,  
That person did things they didn't think about.  
That person changed people they didn't know  
In ways he wouldn't consider  
That person changed people intentionally,  
And unintentionally.

That person lived a life and did many things,  
I still don't know their story,  
I probably never will, but  
I think you still found it interesting.

Tahj Coleman



## Jaimee Chastain

A snake abandons her young  
Since on their own they thrive  
She, after realizing she's unneeded,  
Forever leaves their lives

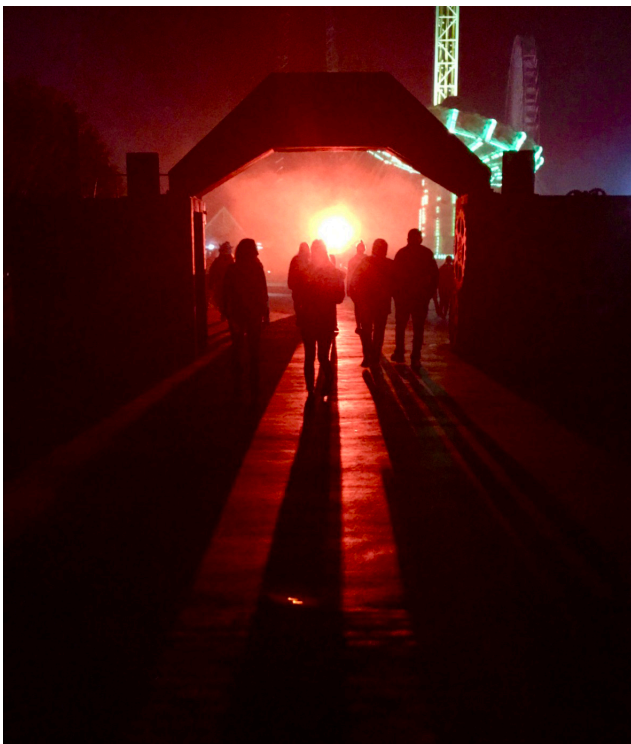
Like a snake abandoning her young,  
I deserted you to thrive  
You hated me for it, said you needed me,  
But I forever left your life

I have no recollection  
Of the moments you made me laugh  
I cannot remember if I was ever happy  
Or if my grin was all an act

I have no recollection  
Of consoling you on rough days  
I cannot remember what it sounded like  
When you said my name

But now you're happy  
And now I'm fine  
Like a snake with her young  
I allowed you to thrive

Christopher Halsey



~Jace~



## MacKenzie Sakala

I'm awake  
I'm always awake  
I hear every creek and crack of the house with my self-diagnosed  
Insomnia

And there is this one sound I always hear.  
It's you Mr. Whitenoise,  
Sometimes you're a fan and sometimes you're a heater.  
Didn't you know you're supposed to lull me to sleep?  
I'm supposed to hear your tuneless hymn as I fade farther away into a  
world of dreams?

Instead Mr. Whitenoise, you keep me up.  
Giving me crazy ideas like writing a poem about you. I've already spent  
half an hour thinking of a title.

"Insomnia" or "I'm awake" or "inability to sleep," but none of those suit  
the purpose of this poem.  
They are merely summaries of what I'm saying.  
I need something that defines both you and me, because that is what  
this poem is about.

Your endless hum and my endless wake. Our imbalance. I don't do what  
you ask of me and you can't do what so many have asked of you.

So tell me, Mr. Whitenoise, what is our title?

Lemonade

I pop open a can that I'd left in the sun  
Maybe it's been too long  
I take a long, warm sip  
She bites my tongue  
She leaves an old, candied  
Sour taste in my mouth

She tells me my own stories  
A child running in the dandelions  
Two friends scuffing their knees

A red and white checkered sheet  
Under the old oak tree turned yellow  
Where they set down their little basket  
two sandwiches  
two napkins  
Two cans of lemonade

She smells of hot sunny days  
And she sounds like the County Fair  
Like she should be standing next to the Ferris wheel

Then my can spills over  
And she runs in the cracks of my front porch  
Things always get sticky  
Summer's ending anyway  
Maybe I should drink water instead

Mikailyn Gronemeier



~Sweetwater Trail~

# Aaliyah Bruner

## A Distastrous Fantasy

I dipped my toes in unknown water  
Blind to the waves that would slowly pull me in  
Almost as if I was driftwood  
Floating so aimlessly deeper into the warm tides

The further I drifted the more I realized  
Just how beautiful the treacherous depths truly are  
This unknown body of water  
Would soon be my calm, blissful, home

I only want to be pulled in further  
Anxious about what I might find next  
Every smooth wave has its secrets  
That I am longing to hear

Every hour I drift out  
The more I realize  
I did not go to the water myself  
The water came to me

Kyleigh Peterson

Close Minded

Walking around in a house

No windows

No doors

No thinking at all

But there is no way out

No changing your mind

No thinking a different way

Trying to find a way out

## Madalynn Graves

### The World Through a Small, Moving Window

Lying in my Aunt's car,  
From this angle,  
All I can see is the black, starless sky.  
I can convince myself that there is nothing else;  
Just this car and its contents.  
Just the ground we drive on.  
The rest of it is unnecessary,  
And I'm very sure that it falls away behind us  
and only exists under us, not ahead.  
Just now.  
Just this.  
Just us.  
But now, I can see the lights from passing cars;  
Not the cars themselves,  
But the light that they give off,  
And I start to believe in the rest of the world again.

## Ethan Dalton

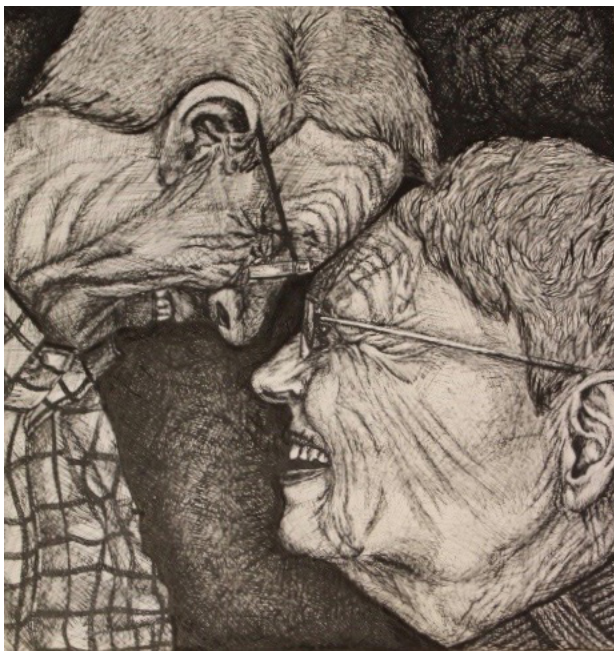
### The Shoe Thief

Don't let the name fool you.  
I don't steal shoes,  
I simply take each pair out for a spin.  
Some ask why I do it,  
And I simply point out that  
Each and every person complains  
Believes that they are the owner of the world's worst pair of shoes.  
I simply wanted to investigate who was right,  
And, as it turns out, we all are,  
And yet, none of us are.  
Of all the shoes I've borrowed,  
I have never once found a comfortable pair of shoes.  
Each pair will blister your feet in different ways,  
And the suffering induced by each blister may be relative to the person,  
But the pain is irrefutable.  
In that case, why do we keep walking?  
I'm led to believe that we put up with our shoes because  
Even when they tear our feet to shreds,  
We can't help but be somewhat proud of them deep down.  
That pride, and the desire to show the world  
Each of our wonderful, irreplaceable shoes,  
Is what makes us keep walking.  
So at the end of the day,  
I return to my own pair of shoes  
Just as lovely and terrible as everyone else's  
And continue my stroll

Joshua Billingsly Jr.



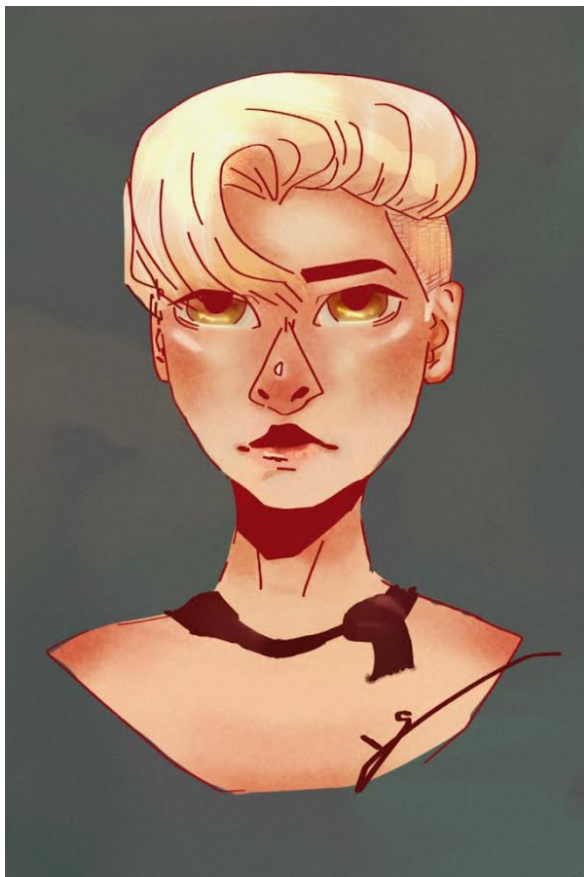








Iris Shreve



~Jack~

## Tenaya Ramadhan

### La fille vierge

I don't have a name that rings softly like a church bell off of the lips.  
I don't have long, silky, blonde locks of hair that flow off my shoulders.

I don't have a delicate, slanted, and defining nose.

I don't have deep, crystalline, sky blue eyes.

I don't have sleek, proportionate eyebrows.

I don't have long, curled, flirtatious eyelashes.

I don't have plump, succulent lips, dripping with honey.

I don't have cheeks decorated as if with the powder of a rose.

“How strange,”

you exhale as I watch the whiskey dissipate off of your breath and into  
the air.

“How strange! A girl with

no face,

no story,

no name.”

For I have nothing to tell to a man who does not take the time to ask,  
but merely insists on knowing me.

# Makenzie Milligan

## A Mess

A mess.

My life is a mess, I am a mess.

I'm sitting here and watching other kids work on their projects

And yet again I can't seem to focus.

My mind is wandering, and I don't know where it might lead.

I'm back to thinking about what I've forgotten.

All I can do is think since I've left my distractions at home.

So here I am, all I have is a sheet of paper, a pen and my thoughts

And wherever my mind leads me.

A beautiful makeshift distraction.

Procrastination is the ultimate option

When starting a mind revolution

When I should be focused on the important stuff,

But, being focused on the writing revolution is exhilarating

But now's not the time because I really should be focused on the important stuff.

But why?

I once read a poem that asked, "who could teach when there are such lessons to be learned?"

Taylor Mali

How am I expected to sit and focus when there are lessons all around me?

Joshua Billingsly Jr.

Where I'm From

I am from waking up to the smell of coffee brewing in the early  
morning.

I am from a school where they carry clipboards and watch over us as if  
we were test subjects.

I am from doing "tests" for my teacher as she writes down every action  
that is made.

I am from a school that holds the record for most fist fights in one day.

I am from being called "Simba" in the halls to now just Josh.

I am from being well known, to having to start over completely.

I am from being able to go outside in the winter to feeling the sunlight,  
to now feeling the bitter cold wind that touches the bone and seeing  
snow.

I am from going outside in the summer and running through the grass  
barefoot to finding sand spurs in my feet and clothing.

I am from the "love bug" season.

I am from hearing the thunder storms in the distance and seeing the  
lightning striking across the sky to reaching far away places in the blink  
of an eye.

I am from feeling the sand between my toes and hearing the waves crash  
upon the shoreline as I close my eyes to be relieved of life's stressful  
times.

I am from being loud and mysterious, to now silent and mischievous.

I am from a loving family. The type of love that makes you feel warm  
inside.

I now play a part of the spectator role.

"Where are you from?" You might ask.

## Cassidy Sawyer

### The Sun Went Down

The sun went down last month,  
And it never came back up.

It has been dark and cold,  
And nobody is ever seen around.

I have been hiding inside my house,  
And I keep hearing these strange noises outside.

I hear knocking on the boarded up window,  
I don't know what could be out there.

Through a hole I see something strange.  
Its eyes look dead, and body stiff.

That thing is not human  
I don't know what it could be...



## Veronica Ferry

### Sinking

It is a weightless feeling;  
no earth and no sky, just nothing.  
It's peaceful in this place,  
no worries or cares, you're weightless.

Then it comes crashing down.  
You're pulled left, right, up, and down.  
Which way is up? Can I escape from here?  
Bam! A wave crashes in,  
emotions swirling like the tide.  
Crash! One hits from above  
Pushing you further from the surface.  
Crack! You're head hits a rock  
As the waves push you further away.

Here you are again.  
Weightless in the dark sea  
as the light from above disappears.  
It's peaceful here. The weightless feeling,  
no worries or cares.  
Then it comes crashing down.

Ocean

The water blue with fish  
It's quiet  
Shells hit my feet  
I relax on the sand bar

When I look back,  
this wave knocks me back  
to shore.  
The waves start to crash on  
Shore, tides start to  
change.

Waves after wave they  
Hit the shore  
BOOM, BOOM.

## Jessica Chastain

### Before I wake

What if I said I loved you?  
Would you stray farther away leaving me vacant and wounded?  
Or would you linger and draw me in further to utter bliss?

What if I said I needed you?  
Would you dismiss me and plea with inevitable rejection?  
Or would you take my hand and hold me like you had with others.

Love,  
Your innocence to this emotion mortifies me being.  
And if by the work of a greater hand you returned my sentiment,  
I will seal my eyes and beg to never wake from this dream.

Perhaps I do love you,  
Due to the ache only slyly approaching at the sight of you,  
The pang of need and desire fulfilled only by dreaming of you.  
What if I hate you.

I hate how you don't recognize me,  
How you don't appreciate me, love me.  
I hate that you don't need me...  
Oh, the lovely appeal to drift off and imagine you do.

To dream that you knew I loved you, and you didn't deny.  
My heart pulsates at your words of reciprocation,  
And only then will I declare my love for you in an unachievable, fault-  
less moment,  
Before I wake.