

Inner Beauty



Onward & Upward

Wilson High School 2024-2025 Literary Journal

“Onward & Upward”

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The Haunted Shack

Chapter One: Pilot

In Jack's living room, a bunch of news reporters stood around with their microphones and cameras pointing at him, eager to find out the story of what happened to him and his late friend Liam.

News Reporter: Hello Jack, my name is James Brooks. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. We would like to talk to you about your experience at the haunted shack.

Jack: Ok... what do you want to know?

News Reporter: Well... everything, from start to finish.

Jack: hm...

(flash back)

(Jack speaking) It was June 14th, a day I'll never forget. I was a YouTuber who filmed abandoned and haunted house content. I did it because that's what was popular at the time and what paid the bills. Of course, they were all fake. I never really believed in that kind of stuff and, before my encounter with the haunted shack, I had already filmed several "haunted" and abandoned videos, so I didn't think this one would be any different.

(starts recording)

Jack: Hello guys! It's Jack here and I'm with my great friend Liam and we are on our way to the haunted shack. I know you probably heard all the stories about people going missing and never to be found again but I can assure nothing of the sort is going to happen to this ghost hunter.

(recording ends)

Jack: (walks towards Liam) Was that good?

Liam: Yeah, that was good man. Hey, do you really believe those stories? You know about the ones when people go missing.

Jack: Of course not man. Those are just silly legends made to scare people, nothing more. Do you believe them?

Liam: No... of course not.

Jack: Good. Come on, we need to speed it up. I want to make it there before dark.

(10 minutes later)

Liam: We've been walking for a while, are we almost there yet?

Jack: The GPS says we're 30 minutes away.

Liam: Don't you think we should find shelter and call it a night? I mean it is getting dark.

Jack: But we're almost there.

Liam: Yeah, but think about it: if we get there late and we stay the night don't you think the fans will expect for something to happen while we are sleeping? Do you really want to do all that acting tonight when we can just save it for tomorrow?

Jack: Yeah, I guess you're right. Let's find a place to crash.

Chapter Two: The Arrival

(Jack Narrating) That night we quickly found shelter in a cave. It wasn't bad, just a few insects here and there. We got out our yellow LED light to keep the insects away and drifted off to sleep. The next morning, we woke up bright and early to head to the haunted shack to brainstorm some ideas on what to do during our YouTube video. We brought a bunch of equipment to stage the video and make the shack actually appear haunted.

Liam: How far away are we from the shack?

Jack: I don't know, the GPS stopped working.

Liam: Maybe it's a sign, you know? That we shouldn't be doing this.

Jack: Don't tell me you believe that place is actually haunted? What YouTuber do you know that doesn't stage their videos?

Liam: Yeah, but people actually have gone missing here. I heard there was a guy named Simon Elvis that went camping out here, encountered the shack, and was never to be seen again.

Jack: How do we know for certain that that was real? I mean they never even showed pictures of the guy.

Liam: I guess you're right but –

Jack: Of course I'm right. Wait *(points in distance)*? Is that the shack over there?

Liam: *(looks in direction Jack is pointing at – says to himself)* It would appear so.

(Jack continues narrating) Upon arriving we examined the shack, it looked just as creepy as it was described in the articles.

Liam: Oh... this looks –

Jack: Cool, right? *(walks towards the shack)*

Liam: Creepy.

We walked into the shack to place tiny cameras and “ghost equipment.” I had tweaked the equipment to make them go off when I wanted them to so it would appear that there was a ghost in our presence.

Jack: Hey Liam, look what I brought.

Liam: *(turns to face Jack)* Is that a Ouija board!?

Jack: Yup! We're gonna use it tonight.

Liam: We shouldn't be messing around with that thing.

Jack: Awe, don't tell me you're scared, Liam.

Liam: So what if I am? That's dangerous.

Jack: How dangerous can it be? I mean it's just a board, I doubt this thing even works. I mean they use it in movies and nothing ever happened to them in real life.

Liam: You don't know that.

Jack: Whatever, let's finish setting up.

After we were done setting up around the house we decided to take a walk to do some finishing touches on how things are going to play out in the video that night.

Jack: Ok! I think we're all set, our video will be the most popular this year.

Liam: Yea I guess so, not many people dare to come out here.

Jack: Yea. because they're just a bunch of scaredy cats.

Liam: Or they just value their life.

Jack: What's your problem dude? If you didn't want to do this then you shouldn't have come, especially since you've just been negative since we arrived.

Liam: I do, I just think we should be a little more careful. I mean a Ouija board? That's a death sentence. We don't want to summon anything that's not already there.

Jack: I already told you that thing isn't real, we aren't gonna summon anything because ghosts don't exist, get that through your head. Now you're either with me or not, so are you coming?

Liam: (short pause) Yes.



Chapter Three: Strange Occurrences

(Jack narrating) After our argument we walked back to the shack in silence. I felt bad for yelling at Liam, I knew he was just worried about me and I shouldn't have discredited him for that.

Jack: Hey man, I'm sorry for yelling at you back there I just –

Liam: It's fine.

Jack: Are you sure? I mean –

Liam: I said it was fine.

Jack: Ok.. But if it makes you feel any better, I won't use the Ouija board.

Liam: *(glances at Jack briefly, then quickly looking forward)*

The sun started to go down so we started walking back from the woods to the shack to start recording the video. The walk back to the shack didn't feel as long, which was weird given that we were walking for over 30 minutes before we decided to head back from the woods.

Something in my gut was telling me that something wasn't right but I quickly suppressed that feeling. I told myself that Liam's stories and worries were just getting to me but I couldn't shake the feeling that the shack wanted us there and I also couldn't help but feel drawn to the shack as well. I decided not to tell Liam the feeling I was having because I really wasn't in the mood for an "I told you so" and I didn't want anything to stop us from going along with our plans, besides, I don't believe in ghosts.

(Jack and Liam outside of the house)

Jack: Okay, so I put the camera on the charger before we left so it should be fully charged now.

Liam: Hm.

Jack: Come on man, don't tell me you're still mad.

Liam: I never said that.

Jack: Well, you're acting like it.

Liam: I'm fine man, really. Let's go inside and get started.

Jack: Alright.

Upon entering the shack it was cold, to the point I started to get goosebumps. I could tell Liam had noticed it too but he didn't say anything. He just walked over to where we had the camera charging and picked up some of our gadgets. We had to make fake ghosts and creaking sounds. I tried to tell myself that what I was feeling was normal because it was dark outside and temperatures were bound to drop, but it was summer and even at night the temperature doesn't drop that much.

Liam: Shall we get started?

Jack: Yeah.

Liam: Ok, rolling in 3... 2... 1...

Jack: Hello guys. It's Jack and I'm back. We are currently in the haunted shack. We were unable to come here yesterday due to how late it was getting and we wanted to start a little sooner before the sun went down but we are here now and we are getting ready to do some investigating. We're going to start on the first floor, make our way to the second floor, then we're going to save the allegedly most haunted place in the house – *(pause for dramatic effect)* the basement.

(Liam stops recording)

Jack: Was that good?

Liam: Yeah, that was really convincing and enticing.

Jack: I hope so. Ok, let's start the actual investigation.

Liam: Ok, I have the equipment.

Jack: Ok, we should start in the living room.

Liam: Sounds good to me.

(in the living room)

Liam: Ok, you ready?

Jack: Yeah.

Liam: Alright, 3... 2 –

(creak)

Liam: Did you hear that?!

Jack: Yea..

(Liam and Jack look around then at each other)

Jack: Did you play one of the sound effects?

Liam: No?

Jack: Are you sure?

Liam: Positive.

Jack: Mhm, Ok... that sound must have been because the house is old. Let's start again.

Liam: 3... 2... 1...

Jack: So, I am currently in the living room of the shack. Now some of you guys might not know this but it's said this living room is the second most active place in the house after the basement and the activity usually occurs after the sun goes down. As you can see over here we have a spirit box to help us communicate with the spirits here. There's said to be over five that are in this place *(walks out of living room into dining room)*. Over here is the dining room and this is one of the less active places in this entire shack.

The living room looked like how any abandoned building would look. Worn down wall paper, broken furniture, and the smell of mold.

Liam: I guess they're only hungry for blood, am I right.

Jack: That wasn't funny.

Liam: I'm sorry.

Jack: *(exits dining room to hallway)* Down there is the kitchen which has the door to the basement and over here is the stairs that lead to the second floor. Ok let's contact some ghosts.

(recording ends)

Chapter Four: Trapped

Jack: Okay let's head back to the living room to contact these ghosts (*makes ghost noises and comes toward Liam*).

Liam: Haha...

(in living room)

Liam: Ok, starting in 3... 2... 1...

Jack: Ok guys, So this is our Electronic Voice Phenomenon and this is what we're going to use to communicate with any potential ghosts or spirits. How it works is you ask questions and if they respond we will hear it through this little gadget. Now we won't be able to have full conversations because usually only one word at a time can be picked up but we'll try our best to ask some relevant questions.

(flash forward)

James Brooks: Wait, so during your time there up to this point you didn't experience any extreme kind of encounters with anything in that house?

Jack: Nope. That's why I stayed there and proceeded with my video.

News Reporter 1: Did you ever post the YouTube video?

Jack: No.

News Reporter 1: Will you ever?

Jack: No.

James Brooks: If it's ok with you we'd love to take your video and post it to prove to people that what happened out there actually happened.

Jack: I don't need to prove anything to anyone.

James Brooks: Oh I know, but if the video is out there then people will be discouraged from ever visiting there. I've seen a few young people talk about wanting to do their own investigation there just to prove that you're lying.

Jack: I'll think about it.

News Reporter 2: Ok let's not get side tracked.

James Brooks: You're right, Jack, please proceed.

Jack: Ok.

(flash back)

Jack: Ok so we heard that there was a girl named Sarah living here, is that true? Answer with a yes or no.

Electronic Voice Phenomenon: Yes...

Liam: (*backing away*) Holy sh*t dude!

Jack: Were you murdered?

Electronic Voice Phenomenon: Yes...

(smash coming from the basement)

Liam: What was that?!

Jack: Let's go check it out...

Liam: What? No!

Jack: Come on, I'm sure it's nothing.

Liam: If it's nothing then we don't need to check it out.

Jack: Come on Liam.

Liam: Ugh. Fine.

(Jack and Liam walk to the basement door)

Liam: Open it.

Jack: Why me?

Liam: Um, because you're the one that wanted to go down there?

(Jack opens the door)

Liam: Ok now go down there.

Jack: What? I already opened the door.

Liam: Do I have to remind you again whose idea it was to go down there?

Jack: Well you're the one with the camera and light so it only makes sense for you to be the one to go down there.

Liam: Fine...

(Liam and Jack walk down the stairs slowly)

Liam: *(whispering)* I don't have a good feeling about this.

Jack: *(whisper)* shh dude, just keep walking.

(Liam and Jack make it to the bottom of the stairs)

Jack: You check over there and I'll check over here.

Liam: Wait no, we shouldn't split up.

Jack: Why?

Liam: Because that's how people die in horror movies.

Jack: Well good thing this isn't a movie.

Liam: I'm serious dude!

Jack: So am I.

(Jack turns and walks away)

(Jack narrating) Sometimes I think back to that moment and wonder if I had just stayed with him things wouldn't have turned out how they did. When I was walking away from Liam, I had this pit in my stomach and I was feeling like something bad was going to happen, but I just told myself that it was just my nerves telling me that because I was scared. While I was looking around I heard what I thought was Liam calling to me.

Liam: Jack, I didn't see anything over there, I'm headed back up stairs.

Jack: Ok, I'm coming too.

(Jack narrating) I couldn't have been more wrong.

(Jack goes up the stairs and closes the door behind him)

Jack: Liam? Where are you?

(Jack looks around the first floor of the house)

Jack: Liam? This isn't funny, come out.

(Liam still in the basement)

Liam: Jack? I didn't see anything over there, what about you?

(Liam walks in the direction Jack went)

Liam: Jack? Are you there?

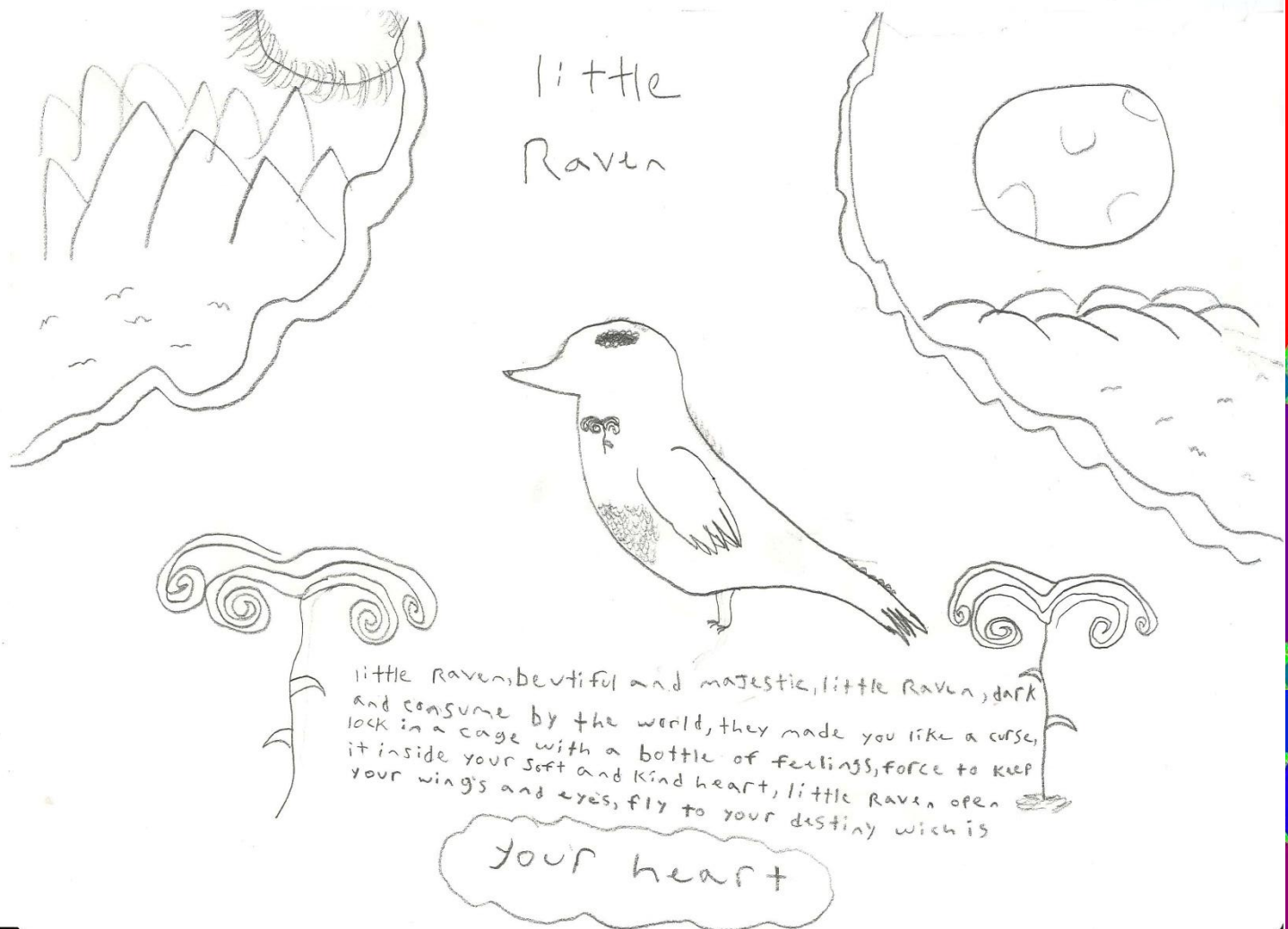
(Liam hears footsteps coming from above)

Jack: *(muffled)* Liam!

Liam: JACK, I'M DOWN HERE!

(Liam runs up the stairs and realizes it's locked)

Liam: *(banging on the door)* JACK OPEN THE DOOR!



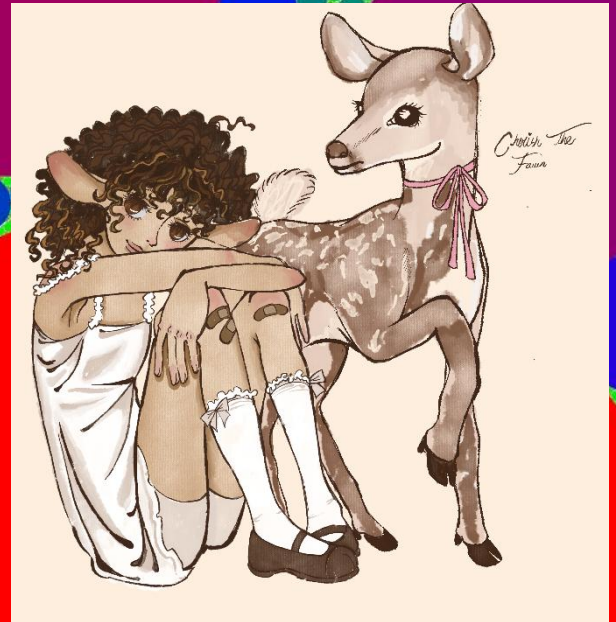
Cinnamon

Upon a rug, a ball of silken fur
With eyes of emerald that shine so bright
I hear the steady engine of your purr
A gentle sound that echoes through the night

Your tiny paws perform a rhythmic dance
As if you chase a ghost across the floor
You hold my spirit in a playful trance
And standing there wanting for more

although your sharp claws catch upon my sleeve
You hunt the shadows darting through the halls
A web of tangled yarn you start to weave
Then rest beside me when the evening falls

No golden prize could ever be so fine
But I am glad this little soul is mine



Hey coach, I've lingered too long upon this bench
Watching the game, my heart outside the play
Unspoken dreams and silence hopes entrenched
Unrequited love that will not go away.

Counted the petals, they love me they love me not
Each heartbeat echoes softly in my chest
Cheering in the shadows, hoping for my shot
Lacing up hope and hiding the rest.

Yet in this waiting, patience takes its hold
I grow in silence, learning from the pain
A little NPC in your story, shy but bold
Still holding to the plot, through loss and gain.

On the bench I wait, Hope calmly burns bright
Love me, Love me not, here I will still fight.



I admire track it keeps me going
I do a lot of easy things sometime
I still go to practice, even when it is snowing
When it hits 5:30, you know we are out of time.

My coaches are very consistent
They don't give up on us
And some days when we're not persistent
They don't bother to fuss.

They don't let us stop in the middle
I run out of breath quick
They get mad when we fiddle
And when I start to run, I feel sick.

I love track and all the good and bad that comes
with it
Gotta make sure you put your all and don't quit.

For I Love Thee

when i look into your eyes
the world feels quite like it's just me and You
we stand together under the beautiful night skies
just to be with you i feel so brand new

Your voice is gentle it makes me smile
i think about You all day
even when time feels hard for a while
yet You still manage to put a smile on my face
everyday

as time goes on my love for You is still the same
i wish i could see You everyday
being with You makes me feel so warm and safe
You make my worries fade away

i will forever and always love You and that's true
i will always stay right next to You



When i'm around flowers, i feel real good
Even off in a distance, they are cute
It feels like reliving a childhood
Hearing someone in the breeze play a flute

When seeing them put together it's neat
But when cut, mixing small and big sizes
Most likely the breeze is like a sweet treat
Touching can make a lot of surprises

No soil can keep it from dying fast
Too much water makes it hard to maintain
A lot of weeds often leads to more tasks
Much work is OK, it's hard to explain

Take a step back and watch and admire
Right decisions creates a whole empire



we love the beautiful view of the beach
the loud crashing waves make me want to sleep
enough shells to fill our buckets each
such a beautiful view i'll want to keep

the hot beach's sand my bare feet burn
but i adore the fresh soft breeze oh lord
this is the best summer trip i have earned
can't think of a better place i've adored

i despise the overly crowded space
when other beach goers are in the way
i really hate sand all up in my face
kids throwing sand is ruining my day

the beach is a calming, unstressful place
left behind, the sand still holds our foot's trace.



I love how time just slowly drifts away,
While watching the skies that constantly change
throughout the day.

The way the clouds move softly and smoothly
through the calm air,
A quiet mesmerizing scene that sets.

The soothing stillness that comes as morning begins
to set
And gentle gold begins to fill the skies.

The rush that comes as daylight starts to arrive,
As day light ends and evening takes place.

The golden sky slowly fades to dark blue.

The cookie, so flavorfully tasty
And the chocolate is so sweet,
So good but it was made very hasty
Made with the world's finest wheat

The cookie warms up your gigantic heart,
Its intensely chocolatey filling,
Oh what a beautifully well done art
With its incredibly mellow feeling,

But sometimes it can be really tough,
And it turns out to be very brittle
Having cookies with edges very rough,
Or burned off corners from time kept little

Making burned cookies is terribly bad
Making the people who consume them sad.



Lego Poem

In my childhood, the only toys I would ever buy were Legos.

I would always build the best things. But they'd always break though.
They took over my mind, and almost in no time my house was buried in those.

Over time, my builds might've broken, but I still enjoyed building Legos.
When I was younger, I would build a lot for hours and hours until I'd get tired.
Lego blocks are fun and creative to use.

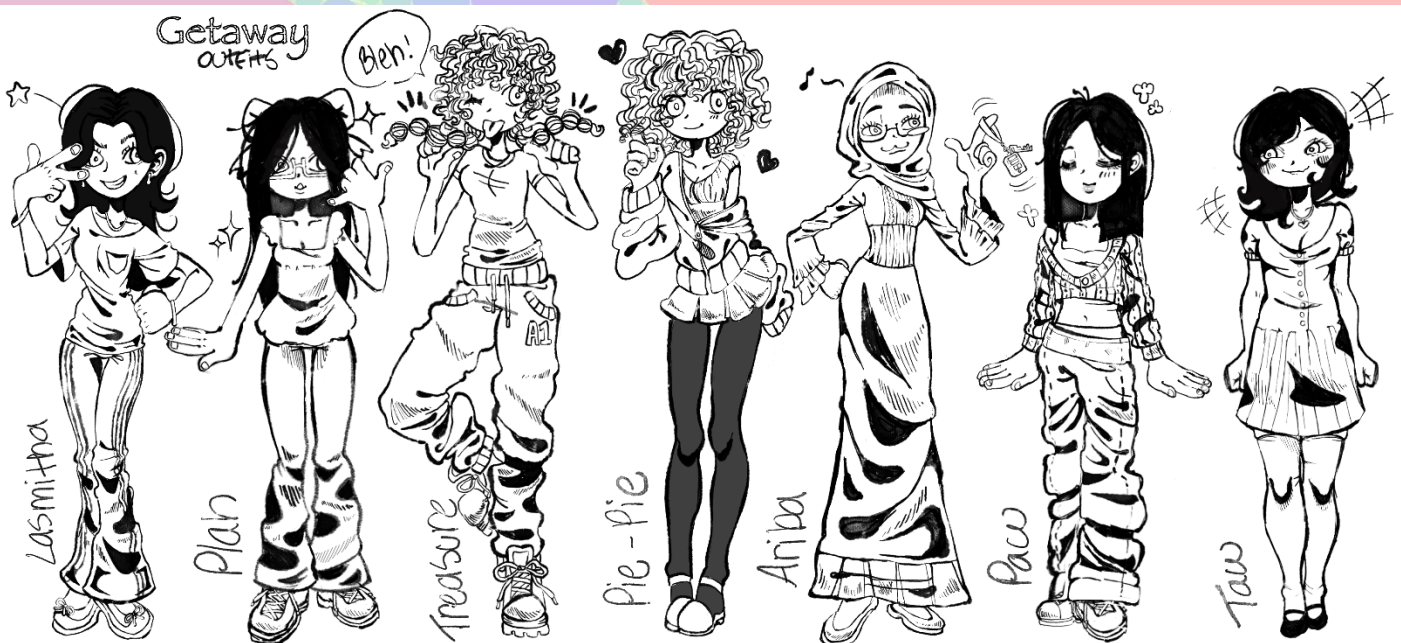
I would always wonder when the next time I could buy more Legos.

After all that time building, I would start to hunger.
Who knew simple bricks would be such a fun blunder!?

I once decided to build with an all yellow set of Legos.
While I was building them, I tripped and hit my elbow.

Luckily the build hadn't broke, so I kept building my Lego.
It was long work, but it was all worth it. I couldn't finish the head though.

Legos are an art form, so don't be torn over no/lack of ideas.
Legos are the best toy to use to express yourself. It is art that will breach your heart in no
time.





A Dad's Love

He never says much, but i understand
His love shows up in things he'll do
A steady presence, a guiding hand
Even when words don't come through

He works through days that feel too long
Just to make sure i'll be alright
His silence still feels soft and strong
Like a quiet, constant light

He doesn't need to say "i care"
It's in the way he stays close by
In every moment he's always there
In every low, he helps me try

And even when we don't agree
His love still stands, unshaken and free.

I feel so calm beneath the gentle light
It lifts my heart and lets my spirit stay
The world around me softens, warm and bright
And all my worries slowly drift away

I Love the beauty shining in my sight
A quiet glow that paints a peaceful face
It whispers calm and holds me through the night
A hidden, warm, and softly glowing place

Sometimes the shadows stretch and linger long
And I am left alone within the night
These heavy thoughts can make my feelings wrong
And turn my heart to something cold and tight

Yet still I chase the light with every day
It brings me peace in every gentle way



Games of challenge bring me such great delight,
The games are very vast and linear.
Great and big landscape that is very bright,
The screen so bright it blooms much shinier.

The experience is so immersive,
The challenge is the best stimulation.
The beauty of games that are recursive,
Are ones that have my full dedication.

Sometimes games are slow and give off boredom.
At times fill me with unexpected rage.
I dislike many games that have whoredom,
It makes me want to go on a rampage.

Nonetheless games provide escapism.
Filling free time with its imagism.



My Friend Jadiel

My friend Jadiel stays quiet through the day
But drops the joke that hits you out the blue
He laughs and lets the moment drift away
Then watches all the chaos just like you

He plays badminton fast out on the court
Then watches Sonic racing on the screen
He keeps his focus never falling short
And watches Creepypastas dark and mean

He sticks to the similar shows that's the same
Won't try new games just play what he once knew
He replays levels mastering each game
While others chase what's different fresh and new

He's quiet kind a friend who's always there
A steady presence showing how much he cares





Good vibes when I step on to the green field,
With quick skillful movement, I lead the play
Through teamwork, passing, scoring is revealed
Competitive hearts strive to win the day.

Fun moment, as we laugh and freely run
Athletic strength is shown in every stride,
Dynamic plays unfold beneath the sun
Thrilling moments that we feel deep inside.

You boldly showed your moment on the stage,
Where score boards fail to capture all the heart
Where more than headlines printed on a page,
The bitter loss or hard-fought driven start.

Here, rhythm guides each step a steady beat,
Through inspiration, game becomes complete.

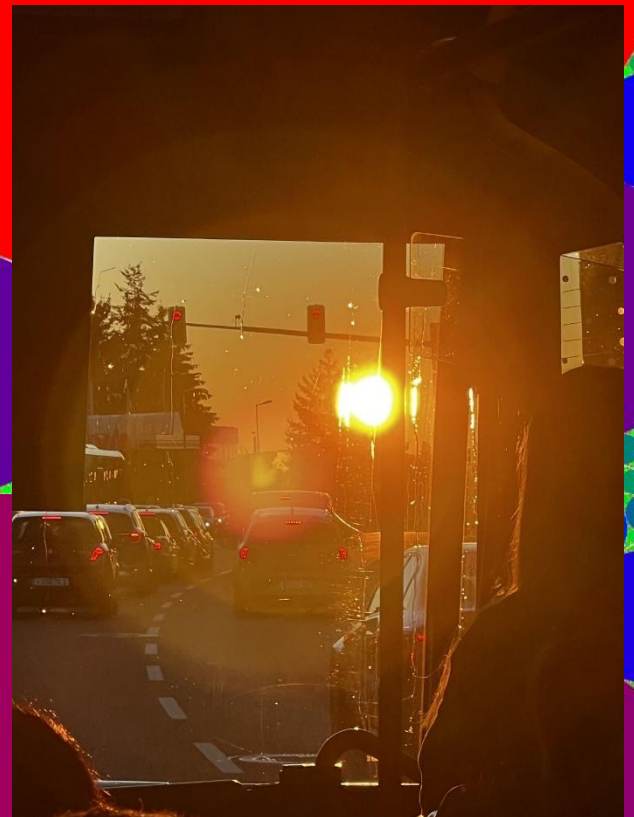
French Fries

I love nothing more than eating French Fries
pulled up to the spot, for the prize I sought
I need to get that good crispy large size
Therefore that is what I made sure I bought

Burger King Fries are the most delicious
The tastiest fries are super crispy
People think that they are not nutritious
The best I had were from Mississippi

Older brother took me to get a meal
But all of the items were freezing cold
All it made our dinner not so ideal
We could tell that all the items were old

When I get my Fries they have to be hot
Next time I need to hit a different spot



A Singer's Performance

As the judge came in and sat in her seat,
I smiled to myself, feeling at ease.
Inside my head, I memorized the beat,
then opened my eyes and did what she pleased.

As I start to sing, a smile formed,
because the judge saw what I had in store.
I felt the excitement as I performed,
given that I've never done this before.

Minutes passed by and my throat felt so dry,
a quick frown formed onto the judge's face.
I got so nervous, I began to cry,
and ran off stage because I needed space.

I took a deep breath and counted to ten,
then told myself that I could try again.



Teenage Passion

Dressed in black and white like stars in the night
And her smile as warm as the shining sun
Her scholarly beauty pulls me in tight
Even the dull moments with her feel fun

For someone so intertwined with the dark
She speaks her honest words so filled with love
Which fills my soul with an eternal spark
And our love free like a soaring black dove

A horrid obstacle stands between us
A barrier of time that plagues our lives
But prevailing these hard trails is our trust
Our trust cutting these barriers like knives

However I hope this is just the start
In hope that I may always give my heart



