

# ementia

volume ii, issue ii

NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS



THE **BIG  
READ**



a  
literary  
teen  
zine  
published  
to  
uplift  
&  
represent  
creative  
sublime  
young  
adults

teen services



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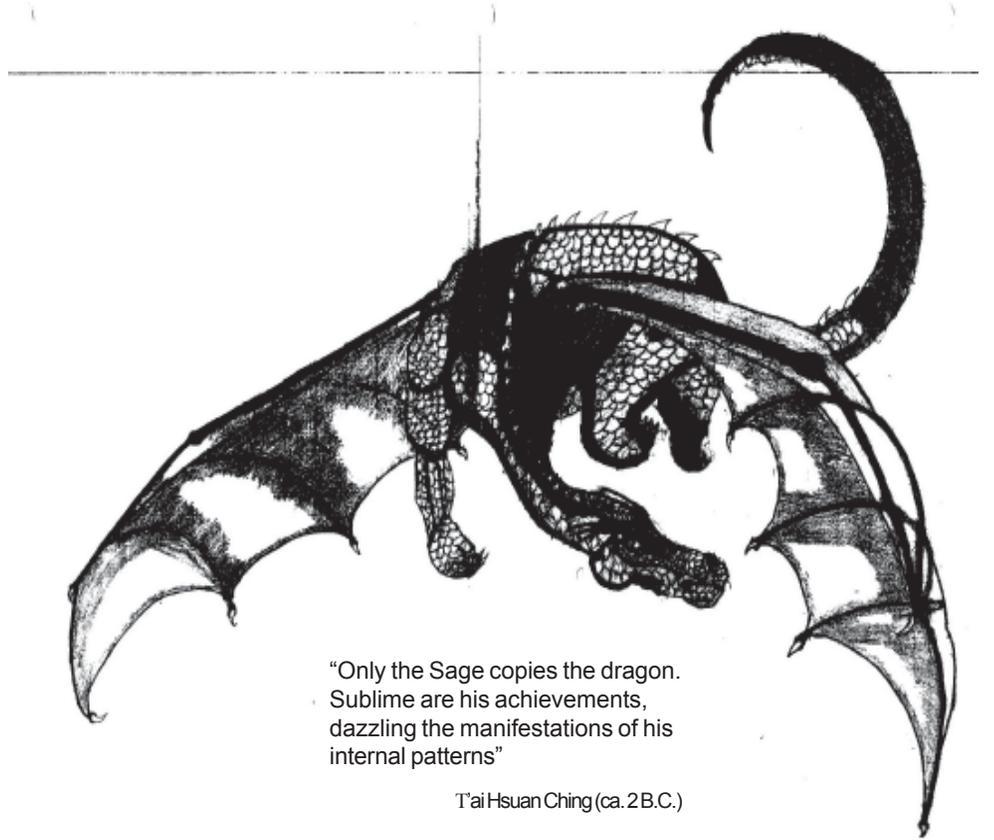
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# elementia



volume 2,  
issue 2  
spring 2007



“Only the Sage copies the dragon.  
Sublime are his achievements,  
dazzling the manifestations of his  
internal patterns”

T'ai Hsuan Ching (ca. 2B.C.)

"This is me,  
a writer, a poet."  
-Matthew Morefield

# elementia

creative sublime young adults

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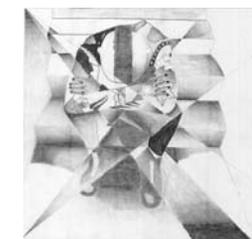
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# elementia

creative sublime young adults

creative force

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in college, i drove a two-door toyota celica. it was blue and i sped around town with an array of stickers on my bumper. Sayings. Gestures. Hopes. Dreams. my favorite of all, was one that read: The only Constant is Change

it is true, indeed

over the course of two years and four issues, I have witnessed elementia change dramatically... it's become an entity all it's own

while I have always believed in the creative process...

it is now inimitable truth—to me...

visions—no matter the size or complexity, can be fulfilled.

small ideas can become vehicles of change...platforms of hope...speakers of truth...fulfillment of reverie...

it is my hope that this magazine is testimony to that among other things.

Enjoy.

ps. I must extend a special thank you to Kasey Riley... thank you for believing in this project; you're an ambassador of change.

angel jewel dew

learn explore enjoy create connect



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InGenius Press is a private publishing firm founded to publish texts and foster a new business ethic of activism.

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## featured young adult artist maddie miguel

maddie is 14 years old. she attends shawnee mission northwest. here's a glimpse into her world:



photos provided by maddie miguel

### what inspires you?

I would have to say all sorts of music, literature, and poetry. I'm mainly inspired by the world around me and what it's doing that makes me irritated or joyful. The fuel for my drawings comes from just being in school. Certain people also inspire me, but I can't possibly name all of them because it would take too long.

### what are your favorite books? favorite movies?

My favorite book so far would have to be Dreamland by Sarah Dessen. I just love how she captures a teenager's life so brilliantly. My favorite movies include Chocolat, Psycho, The Sandlot, The Breakfast Club, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Napoleon Dynamite, Matilda, and Mean Girls.

### what are your hobbies? what do you do for fun?

My hobbies include writing songs, painting, and drawing in my little notebook. Some other things I like to do would be singing in the Allegro choir, playing the bass clarinet and handbells, listening to music, watching TV, and surfing the internet. I'm also making a movie with some of my best friends that are great actors, off the set crew people, and make-up and hair artists. The movie doesn't have a title yet but it's a comical horror flick that I hope will enter an amateur film festival.

### where do you see yourself in five years?

I picture myself in the college of my dreams. A school that I can go to that will have good zoology and herpetology classes as well as art classes. I want to major in zoology and minor in art.

## how to submit your writing to elementia...

### contributors' guidelines fall 2007

elementia will welcome submissions from young adults ages 12-20

**June 1 through September 1, 2007.**

all submissions should be typed, and in 12pt Times New Roman font. No more than 3 submissions per person.

·Submissions must be original work and must be accompanied by a submission form.

·Submissions of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, graphic stories, and illustrations accepted.

·Submissions can be turned in at any Johnson County Library Youth Services, select area

schools, and/or mailed directly to: Central Youth Services Attn: elementia submission 9875 W. 87th St Overland Park, KS 66212

submission form & complete submission guidelines can be found at [www.jocolibrary.org/elementia](http://www.jocolibrary.org/elementia)

background art by maddie miguel



©





## WhyMe?

Leah Chesbrough

Sad  
Hiding  
Anger  
Heart beating faster  
Sweating  
Embarrassed  
Foul Friends  
Ganging up on me  
Frightening  
Victim  
Bullied  
Wanted popularity  
Gossip  
Crying  
Anxious to leave  
Run away  
Needed to vent  
Hot  
Yell  
Their fault  
Not an angel  
About to burst  
Wanted to be understood  
Lacked support  
Determined to stay away  
Desired answers  
She gave me anger  
I wanted to give it back.

wanted to give it back.



## Unwrapping My Future

Erika Davee

Anxiously tearing open the  
shimmering sealed package  
Ignoring the red symbols  
that embellish the wrappage  
Considering this cookie holds  
my future unknown  
Depending on the message  
I'm sure to cheer or moan  
My Mom opens one of Happiness  
My Dad opens one of Success  
My sister found a  
Life of pleasure and riches  
Surprisingly, I unwrap my future to find  
A cookie with its own mind...  
Brace yourself for troubles  
and life's intricate glitches



## Look Through the Window

Tyler Wysong

Inside the window, a family you'll see  
A mother, a father, brothers, and  
dogs as earsplitting as can be  
But this family is the best  
Superior to all the rest  
Because this family has a bond  
We're all rather fond of  
Stick together through harsh times  
Not afraid to help each other out by providing a few dimes  
We all progress in our lives, climbing to new heights  
But we're not afraid to help battle in each other's fights  
They are always the greatest to roe  
So you just look and see  
And that's what you'll find  
Inside the window, this family will always bind



## Untitled

Ally Heisdorffer



“It’s your turn,” Addison grumbled, her voice muffled by the pillow she was planted into. Her eyes were crusted with sleep and she shifted her head over a little to avoid the drool puddle she had accumulated during the night. This bed was far from being as comfortable as the one in her flat on the Upper East side of Manhattan, but it would have to do for the time being.

“Addy, you’re totally useless,” Noah responded. His tone was sharp, like the ends of those cutting knives kept out of reach in the upper shelves of the kitchen downstairs. He often contemplated stabbing his mother in her sleep while he chopped vegetables for his stir-fry, but he kept this detail to himself.

It had gone on like this for two months now. Every morning at six, Addison and Noah Janish would take turns moving their 57-year-old mother to avoid bedsores. They would give Ms. Janish a drink, then try to slip out back to the comfort and warmth of their own beds, but never with any luck. Ms. Janish would insist she was now awake and, please, have a seat and visit.

Both Noah and Addison were more devastated by the fact that they were forced to leave their comfortable and leisurely lifestyles for their negligent mother rather than the fact that the cancer they found in her left breast had metastasized beyond the point of being able to be cured. In Noah’s opinion, the idea that his mother may have no more than one year left on her biological clock was like tasting ice cream for the first time; smooth and creamy, sweet and satisfying.

After the doctors mandated Ms. Janish to be bedridden for the remainder of her life, Addison felt the moral obligation to return to her small home town in Iowa and make an effort to make her mother’s slow and painful death just a little more peaceful, but these early mornings were killer. Now she was only wishing to return to her two-bedroom, spacious flat with hardwood floors, a large dining area, and spa-style bathtub. Instead of waking up to bustling streets and steaming Starbucks, she heard a stinging silence. There was a gracious view of corn out her bedroom window as well as the elderly neighbor’s undergarments swaying on the clothesline.

Noah, too, felt extreme disappointment with his current surroundings. It was difficult enough to leave his lucrative job in San Francisco, but to have to take care of the mother who never bothered to take care of him was an almost unbearable task. He longed for the seclusion of his previous lifestyle. He hated his family, but hated being with them even more.

“Addy! Get up!” Noah yelled as he pulled the comforter off his half-asleep sister in an attempt to rouse her.

“Damn it Noah! Fine, I’m up. I’m up.”

Addison sat up, groggily. Her hair stood up on end and her eyelids were working against gravity to lift open. She stumbled out the doorway and down the hall to her mother who was laying wide awake, wondering if this would be the day she would finally muster up enough courage to explain why she had abandoned them all those years ago.





Being young is hard;  
often feeling all alone.  
Your hair is a mess  
and your face is  
breaking out.  
Being young is hard  
You aren't quite sure of your friends,  
you're stressed out;  
don't know if you're being "cool".  
Being young is hard.  
Trying so hard to be calm,  
when you want to scream.  
Having pressure from your friends,  
being young is hard.  
Needing to decide what's right  
Trying to succeed  
Fitting in is hard----but try.  
Being young is hard

A Haiku on  
Fitting In  
Anonymous



She draws them on  
Her hands  
Her beautiful hands  
She draws them on  
her legs  
Her lovely legs  
She draws them all over  
her body  
Her beautiful body  
They watch her  
They tell her  
You're too fat  
Don't wear that  
They tell her to  
dye her hair  
Her lovely hair  
That color  
Do this  
And you'll be in  
You'll be one  
of them.  
She eats what they tell her  
A fourth bagel  
Plain  
A half salad  
No dressing  
An energy bar  
Nothing else  
Now they say  
Barf it up  
She does  
This goes on  
She changes  
no one  
recognizes her

Untitled  
Sophie Poppie





## Superhero

Mary Galvin

On the outside I am a Superhero,  
A lively, ambitious girl anyone can count on.  
No matter the risk, anguish, or pain it causes me,  
I will do anything I can to help others with a smile on my face.  
On the inside however is where I console my secret identity.  
I am lost, hurt, self-conscious, and ashamed.  
I have bruises and scars to show the effects pain has put on me.  
I slowly mend, but never will disregard.  
I am two completely different people but never let the other self show.  
Everyone knows a superhero never reveals her secret identity.

## The Importance of a Name

Brooks Anthony

Though I am not great  
I have become a name\*  
The problems I've faced  
The tasks I've completed  
Have made me this name

Even when the tides are turned  
I have become a name\*  
Even when I fail in my trials  
I have become a name\*  
My name is no other's  
My name is my own

For no other shall share the name I possess  
Many can try, but none shall succeed  
I may be heckled and possibly harassed  
But my name will never be confined  
This name I have made for myself  
And above all else  
I have made my name ... me.



# Freedom of Speech

Zoë Christianson

There are people in this room  
that don't deserve to be here.

Exhibit A's intimate circle  
gathers 'round the VIP computers  
designated for those  
who manage,  
for lack of any other skill,  
to commence their daily whispering war.

No one bothers to mention  
how easily the room echoes  
unless I am the speaker.

Exhibit A slides down from her lofty throne of a broken table  
and strides to our corner as an angel pats her on the back  
for committing the holy deed  
of speaking to those who do not own spirit wear  
and attend football games.

She glares at me disdainfully  
and forces a smile.

My only shortcoming  
is loving what I do.

If I did much other than write  
I would be content to share her mother's chocolate cake  
and tell her just how much talent,  
how much wit,  
how much sarcasm  
she's scrounged from all 23 of her IQ points.

I've written for a lifetime.  
My overseer has taken snapshots for her mommy  
to post on her refrigerator  
beneath her "A" in Home Economics  
and the coloring book page  
she scribbled in  
at the tender age of five.

She smiles distantly and regretfully informs me  
that she had to change a few things  
about my writing.

"Just work with me here."



*She*, naturally, has no problem  
with any work of art I could produce.

But the parents,  
the administrators,  
the overpaid snobs,  
the hypocrites,  
what of them?

I've told these people numerous times,  
"I don't write to paint over the dull spots  
and make believe that nothing gray ever happens in  
this world."

She flips her hair and says,  
"That's awfully judgmental of you."





## Death Changes Everything

Naduish Whitely

Does it end where it all began?  
Since the death of my mother  
Something inside is broken  
from deep deep  
within  
I feel like I've sinned  
Thoughts ramble through my head  
I feel like I too want to be dead  
Yes it's wrong  
it's not right  
But my senses appear to be vanished out of sight  
Where shall I begin?  
Do I start over?  
How do I cope with the changes that death brings?



## I wish

Rabi Hemayoun

On a cold February evening I learned one of life's biggest lessons: appreciate what you have at present because once it's taken away from you, all you'll have left are memories. For me that 'it' was my fifteen month old niece, Bano.

"Thak, Thak," I hear noise coming from across the hallway. I look over at the clock on my side table, reading 1:35 a.m. As I dash out of bed and rush through the wooden door, I hear my sister Mana (Bano's mom) yelling, "Deervaza kholo, jaldi," open the door, quickly. By the time I make it across the hallway to my parents' room, I see my parents, and Mana, with Bano held close to her chest, getting ready to leave the house.

As they gather their things, I look deep into Bano's big hazel eyes. I don't see a baby who has brain damage, kidney failure or even the flu, but I see the same baby that was taking her first steps just a few months prior. This same baby would reach out her arms and wobble to the front door just as I came through the door from school. As I get deeply lost in those eyes, the two black pig tails, and the red chubby cheeks, I hear my sister talking to me. After forcing my mind to come back to reality, I hear my sister telling me to take Bano to the car.

I, being the youngest of six children, did as I was told. I took Bano into my arms and started my way down the cream carpeted stairs. As I was going down the stairs, I held her chubby hands and continued to take her to the car, not knowing that it would be the last time that I would ever hold her. Just as I reach the car, I see Mana running out the front door and getting herself fastened in my parents' Black Avalon. I try my best to hold back the tears. What happened in the next few minutes is a blur: the scent of red chili peppers burning, phones with their loud, obnoxious rings going off, tears streaming down faces making a stain of their own on clothing, and tissues scattered everywhere.

The events of that morning didn't hit me until that afternoon. After coming back from school, my sister Amina and I were standing in the kitchen talking about what occurred earlier. While we're talking, my older brother Haroon walks in from the garage door to tell us the news that would start a flood of tears from our eyes. Bano had passed away.



We immediately got ourselves together, at least as much as we could, and headed out the doors to go to the Children's Mercy Hospital because that's where Bano had taken her last breaths. It was on the way there that we were made aware of how everything had happened. On the way to the hospital was when Bano actually passed away, in her mom's arms. Everything else that happened that day I can't even bring myself to think about again.

This was the day that I learned my biggest lesson: to appreciate everything I have because I never know what the future holds. I have always heard people tell me this but it really didn't click for me until I lost something that I loved the most. I can't really say that I didn't appreciate Bano, but I can say that I wish I had done a lot of things differently. I wish I could go back to the summertime when I spent the days at Bano's house. I wish I could get the chance to get up when I was watching the best movie ever, just to make Bano a bottle of milk. I wish I could turn the clock of reality back to when I was living in the moment, living like I would not ever see any of my loved ones again, living like it was just them and me, living like it would be our last day. I just wish to have that little angel wobbling around our house with that unforgettable smile, and unimaginable personality. I guess I can't always get what I want, or need, but still, I wish ...

## Mirror of my soul

Bethanie Powell

My mind confused. My body unable to move. My blood gone cold. My face turns pale. I look in the mirror to see no one no reflection the reflection that I once saw was that of a girl that was fake had no love for anyone but herself my life has been nothing but one big lie trying to hide what I own as a name the name that pierced my soul.

## Here I am

Justin Boicourt

I'm here,  
But  
No one sees me.  
I walk through,  
Invisible  
Like the truth  
Behind the mirror.  
For me,  
They have blind eyes  
Of icy blue.  
To get in  
I jump the fence.  
The spotlight hits me  
Shot  
On sight.  
I'm done trying.  
Throw in the towel.  
Focusing on me,  
My future's bright  
I'm still  
Alone,  
But I'll change that.  
They want riches?  
Ten years  
I'll be back...



## What's Inside of You?

David Henderson

“To Strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”  
Thou shalt never give up,  
What is rightfully his,  
Never whimper away from fears,  
Never give away their tears,  
Fight for what is right,  
Inside the brightest of light,  
We shall all have,  
The strength to carry on forever.

## Outside Looking In

Connor Rice

My head tends to spin  
Because I'm on the outside looking in  
My heart starts to yearn  
The secrets of friendship I wish to learn

I want to be inside  
And to be filled with pride  
I can imagine myself in there  
With the warm refreshing air  
I'm in a situation that I can't win  
Unless I am taken in  
By a friend or enemy  
It doesn't matter to me

## Locked Out

Anonymous

I look at them around me  
Those who with my choices disagree  
My eyes drop  
They're staring  
Quickly judging what they see.

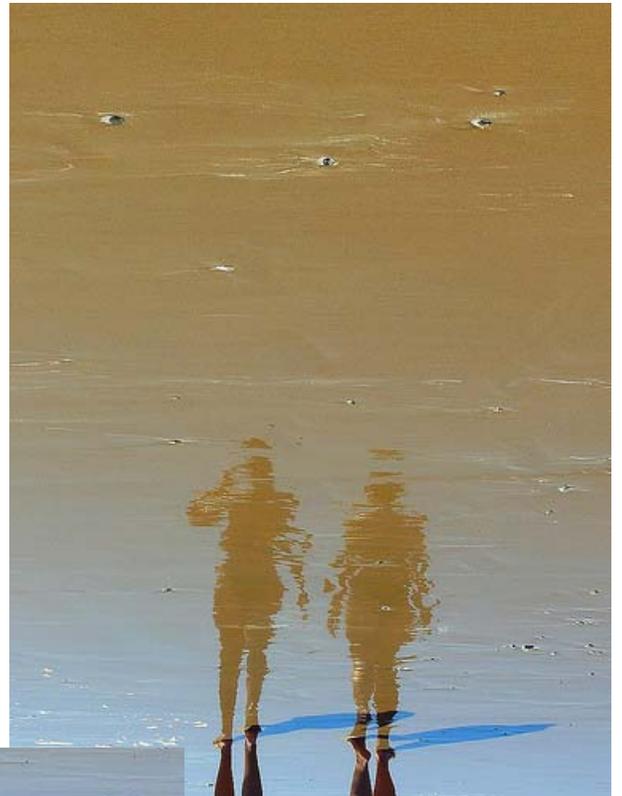
Alone am I to every degree  
I never use the pronoun "we"  
I'm different  
Too different

Locked out without a key,

I am a work in progress  
Who am I? I'm left to guess  
Unfinished  
To be perfected  
And that makes them love me less.

I feel trapped in a cage  
It's an overwhelming stage  
High school  
The teen years  
What lies on my next page?

I will figure myself out  
With your help or without  
Eventually  
In time  
This is what I write about.





## Could It Be Better Tomorrow?

Matt Logan

An act of courage is what I call,  
 In the eye of a parent a plummeting fall.  
 An hour-long lecture will send him on his way.  
 It just seems like another reason to run away.  
 These are words of wisdom you should borrow.  
 It will be better tomorrow.

An argument now begins to start.  
 And I try to dodge the piercing dart.  
 The pressure seems to raise me up,  
 Then just seems to watch me drop.  
 These days are happy, but filled with sorrow,  
 I hope it will be better tomorrow.

Responsibilities tougher, with more and more;  
 Only just to be filled with stress galore.  
 It all seems too hard to swallow.  
 Maybe, just maybe it will be better tomorrow.



## Window

Margie Delich

When you look into a window  
 What do you see?

A face staring back at you,  
 As happy as can be

You ask the face a question  
 Why do you smile so much?

The face laughs, Ha! Ha!  
 I locked you out of the house.

## Broken

Joe McGuffin

To you I'm broken  
 To you I'm like a flavor that wouldn't last  
 You took one bite  
 And spat me out real fast  
 Now this mark remains and it will never ever go away

To you I'm broken  
 I stretched myself across the world  
 Pushing my limits for your entertainment

And you had the nerve  
 To call out my weaknesses  
 And drag me through the dirt

To you I'm broken  
 To buy the truth and  
 Sell a lie is the last  
 Mistake before you die

Goodbye

This is the last





## An Outsider

Alyx Delgado

My outside a shy, colorless human being  
Soft spoken and gentle as can be  
How I appear “perfect” and “flawless” as can be.  
However my only flaw may be how I have another person  
Wanting to be set free...

The Inside of me stirring and churning wild as can be  
Looking and searching  
Seeking a way out  
A path out to be that wild girl spoken of, but never seen  
To simply be set free into the jungle of the world  
I'd have pals and buddies, even a set group of friends  
How outrageously crazy that would be

O' well that's all locked up inside of me  
Now back to perfect little ol' me  
Not a tear can be seen  
Not a wrinkle on me

Yeah I'm sure that's me

## Just a Thought

Kelly O'Neill

I don't know why,  
Maybe it was just a thought.

Less it was not to just sit here,  
And have my mind rot.

Writing on paper,  
With the scratch of pen.

Thinking of nothing,  
'Cept the thoughts of men.

My mind an empty corridor,  
And yet still full.

Strings all around me,  
And yet none I can pull.

I couldn't tell you why,  
Maybe it's dull.

Speaking of nothing,  
With a mind so full.

## Untitled

Jakob Yedo

When you go to a new school  
you just want to be cool  
And you want to make friends  
But when you get near you  
always seem to hear  
“man that kid is weird”





## Journey

Drake Myers

On a journey,  
 Without reasons,  
 Conforming to the changing seasons,  
 Flowing like a great song,  
 Thoughts of things grow ever long,  
 Mountains passing,  
 Some dreams crashing,  
 While others come to birth.

Souls have toiled,  
 And wrought, and fought,  
 And thought with me,  
 But I have changed,  
 And grown around them,  
 Like a tree grown twixt a house,  
 Like a fighter looking for open skin,  
 Unchanged by them,  
 But yet still changed,  
 I have changed by changing myself.

I am a rough sketch of my influences,  
 My mother, father, and teachers,  
 I am a catalogue of memories,  
 They have shaped me from clay,  
 And in even just one day,  
 I could be shaped again,  
 But not today,  
 I've decided to harden.

Now I shape myself,  
 What I will become is my choice,  
 I want to be me,  
 Not a version of me for someone else,  
 A version of me I stand for.  
 A version of me that is my mind,  
 My mind's eye, myself as I see me,  
 And I'll never again change for others.  
 I'll be me.



## Window

Rosie Bellinger

Unaware, small,  
 Self-sufficient, put together  
 Strong, very smart,  
 Follower, talker,  
 Experienced, funny,  
 Selfish, make-up

Fully aware, medium  
 Self-sufficient, fairly put together,  
 Weak and strong, just smart,  
 Leader, opinionated,  
 Talker, inexperienced,  
 Funny, serious,  
 Caring, natural



## Suddenly

Matthew Moorefield

Why does each day repeat in the same way? You constantly rise, in the morning only to fall asleep, forever, without warning. The day after day routine, was just a blink of an eye, between beginning and end. Now you are alone, not a single friend. The mass of darkness allows no hope, you try to find a place to think, but it's gone and without it, there's no way to cope. But it's incomprehensible that everything passed in a blink. You tell yourself to move, and find answers from someone. When you try and move, you are in some sort of groove that holds you in place and there's nothing that can be done. Sitting there, thinking this, reminds you of life, when you used to only do what was routine, in fear of the unforeseen, the rut that you called life, was really a strife. A problem that couldn't be solved, because you were used to it, used to the pattern, where your life fit, this unseen force caused your life to be unresolved. When it ended without warning.





## Turning Life Into an Art

Rachel Franklin

What are we here for?

Might there be a purpose that is more?

Maybe only time can tell the true meanings of our lives; it doesn't lie.

That's the power behind our efforts that continue till we die.

We were made to serve a changing world, and gallantly we do.

The thousands of years - time behind the tears, whew!

Creation was just the start.

Now human beings have turned life into an art!

Struggling to prove ourselves, trying all our life.

In our head are the most ambitious thoughts that could lead to joy or strife,

We are not satisfied with all that we have done,

And as we get better, out more ideas come!

Our thoughts will not reach their peak,

Bigger and better, it's our destiny to seek.

But while our valiant lifelong search goes on,

Many more ideas are lost or gone.

Preserving our history is a part of shaping our future, and it must be done.

Hoping that some day past and present will be one.

But, as the human art continues, we never know what is in store,

We can only hope our race's ventures will be more.



Every summer I had to go down to my aunt and uncle's house in Nebraska. There was never anything to do. They didn't live near any kids or other people to accompany me. They didn't feel like they needed cable TV or internet because they were just all-around boring people. Every summer I had to go there because my mom was killed in a scuba diving accident involving a pack of disturbed penguins and my dad goes and drills for oil on a rig every summer. That leaves me with no one except my boring ol' aunt and uncle. Every day I would sleep as late as I could to hopefully make the day go by a little faster; then I would go exploring in the forest. There wasn't ever anything interesting in the forest, but literally that was all there was to do. After a day of lengthy and pointless and boring activities in the forest, I decided I should probably go back to the house for another subpar dinner. As I was approaching the opening of the forest that my uncle had cleared, I heard a loud crash. Immediately I was excited. I hadn't heard anything but my voice or my aunt's and uncle's voices the entire month I had been in Nebraska, so anything got me excited. All thoughts of dinner had left my head, and I was focused solely on finding out what that noise was from. I ran through the dangling branches, approached a giant hole in the ground with smoke bellowing out of it, looked down through the cloudiness and saw what became apparent as a UFO. And sitting right on top of it was a blue and white extraterrestrial. He looked sad and ashamed. For some reason I knew not to be afraid, and I tried to talk to him and ask him what was wrong. I just wanted to find out if we could communicate. He didn't respond to my greeting or questions. He just sat there, legs and arms crossed, head looking down. After about a minute of silence he shook his head and said, "My life is over." I'm not sure if his native language was English or his brain could just do any language necessary to communicate with other beings. Curiously I asked what he meant by saying that his life was over? It turns out he was an adolescent alien that stole his parents' ship for a night out on the alien town without them knowing it, and he crashed it right there in the forest. The UFOs of his kind had tracking devices on them, and he explained to me that within a matter of minutes his parents would be there to pick him up, and then he was going to be in some serious trouble. After he explained the whole situation to me, we sat in silence for about a minute. He took out some kind of alien drug and offered it to me. He said he didn't want to talk to his parents sober. I declined. Anyway, about 5 minutes later, a tractor beam came down and picked him up. The crashed ship disappeared almost immediately after he left. I decided not to talk about my experiences with the alien to my aunt and uncle. I just went back to the house and ate my worse-than-subpar meal in silence.



Artwork by Maddie Miguel



## Dr. Suess-Athon

Nick Wassmer

When so many things stop and they clatter, up in the jabambaway things hip, hop and shatter. For up in this place a great WHO lurks about For the little who-whoians ask and they pout. For the lorax knows best, so the Lorax puts those who-whoians to the ultimate test!! For the lorax shows those who-whoians whose who is the best. In this process the cat and the hat shows up to watch as a guest, but in the midst of it all, the Truffula trees are crashing with a great fall!! There's fish out of water, that's no good, no good at all. Someone must do something! Call in the butter ball! The battle has started, yet surprisingly ends for lorax yells stop!!! Can't we all be friends? So just like that that battle was called off, and the who-whoians returned home as the war began to doff. If it weren't for the lorax the day would have been bad, for the all the who-whoians seemed to be glad. And that was the end of the struggle among which was dealt by the lorax with only a small glitch. For that was the test which ended in one small hitch. There was no best, no best at all. For every who-man and women must know, the best is not possible without starting a brawl. For up in the jabambaway arose such a squall.



I felt as big as a mountain with the bolt cutters slung across my shoulders. Three weeks ago, when the summer had reached its solstice I had found them packed deep down in the trunk of my car. I uncovered them like an ancient artifact and swore I'd find a terrific use for them in a few days time, but uneventful weeks had passed and summer was drawing to a bleak close. I promised myself today would be different.

I dressed quickly in the clothes my mother had laid out for me and rushed downstairs to drink two gallons of water as quickly as humanly possible--all Dasani. I knew that it was important to stay hydrated in the summer. My neighbor's dog almost bought the farm a few years back because they locked it outside for a few weeks without water. But it was only a couple days later after they returned that the dog contracted rabies and began terrorizing the neighborhood's children. But no matter, I gave the dog a silent toast for the lessons he had taught me. I had finished my water, but something was still amiss. I panicked for a moment and then ran upstairs to grab my sweatbands. I couldn't believe that I had almost forgotten them. I ripped my car keys off the counter and set my wheels in motion for a grand pleasure trip.

One thing was still left to be determined though, what to do with myself. I could go pick up chicks on the Plaza or go check out the new housing developments in the inner city, but instead I just opened my glove compartment and pulled out my last RC Cola of the summer. Like an elixir from a native American, an idea formed in my mind that was fit to seize the day. I finished my RC Cola with a final sip and a toast to D.H. Lawrence, turned off the radio, and set my eyes on the road.

I didn't have to drive far to find my first victim. A stop sign at the edge of a boulevard shined brightly in the sun's rays. Alighting from my car, I removed my bolt cutters and set to work. I clipped away at the stop sign until it was a triangle. A fit of laughter clutched my lungs as I pictured driver after driver mistaking the stop sign for a yield sign. Oh, this was too good to be true, I thought, and drove on to emasculate more and more stop signs.

Slaving away on my umpteenth sign, a police officer noticed my efforts. I was dripping with moisture and thrilled to have nearly saturated all of my sweatbands. The officer asked me what I was doing. I told him not to worry about it and he drove off. But five signs later two cop cruisers were hot on my tracks, but I had to do one more. I got to work, but knew I couldn't finish when I saw bicycle cop staring down at me from the top of a hill. I ran to a house and rang the doorbell. A little girl came to the door. I gave her instructions to hold my bolt cutters and stand down on the corner of the street while I went in to use the telephone. She obliged and I laughed deeply for the first time of my callow existence. The cops arrested her and as she rode away in the car, her hand pressed against the window longingly, I felt badly, sort of.

I get hit in the face... a lot. Dodge balls, basketballs, volleyballs, tennis balls, doors, walls, bird crap, baseball bats, rogue hands, flying sand, and just about anything else you can think of. Everything just seems to have an affinity for my face. One minute I am running in gym class, and the next a stray softball nails me square in the left cheek. This is probably why my I.Q. is dropping drastically. I was put in accelerated classes when I was in elementary school, which was a wonder because my parents are idiots. My mother is a file clerk for an insurance company, but gets yelled at because she clusters the letters L M N O and P into a single folder that she calls the Lmnop file. And my father hasn't obtained his driver's license yet, but not by the lack of trying. He has taken the written exam one hundred and twenty nine times. You might think that, by chance, he would pass once or the employees at the D.M.V. would find a heart and pass him. But no, my dad is perpetually studying and the guy at the D.M.V. is still an asshole. Out of that came me. I was the "best and the brightest," my mother used to say. She might have been talking about the light bulb in the lamp in my room. On the box it said "the best and brightest" and she believed every word. My family's one chance to escape the dunce cap, me, has been hit in the head four hundred sixty three and a half times. The half was when a tetherball glanced the side of my head. All of this has lowered my I.Q. by thirty percent and I am now "below average" in my class. Once my test came back, the principal of my high school suggested to me and my parents that we should see a doctor, preferably a specialist. He didn't know that my father couldn't drive and my mother wouldn't be home before the doctor closed due to her filing and re-filing. So I'm stuck. I am sliding down the mountain of knowledge that I desperately want to ascend. Sadly, in the time that I have written this, I have been hit in the head three times, once by the bathroom door and twice by large textbooks falling from the top shelf of a book case. With those books came an epiphany. I am going to wear a bicycle helmet to preserve the last of my scattered brain cells. It's the perfect plan.

Untitled  
Perry Gross



Untitled  
by Max Fallone

Bullets flew through zombies like needles through cloth, and doing as much damage. The four soldiers were the last of their platoon; the rest had long since fallen to the swarms of the undead. They had since found out that their assault rifles had no effect, now only firing to cover up the ceaseless moaning of the zombies.

One by one they ran out of bullets and hope. As the crowd of walking corpses closed in on their prey, the soldiers resigned to their fate. Was this really how it was to end? Defenseless, outnumbered, and surrounded? And as a final insult, they would soon join the black army's ranks as one of their lost souls. They would become the very thing that they had fought to defeat.

As the first zombie reached them and prepared to deliver the fatal bite, a bare foot collided with the side of its skull, shattering its brittle cranium like so much glass.

Only now did the soldiers notice the new combatant, dressed in traditional martial arts uniform, his black belt stained crimson with the blood of the undead. His eyes were the very antithesis of the glossy white, purposeless eyes of the zombies, which held nothing but a window into madness. This warrior's black eyes held an obvious purpose, and that purpose was *justice*.

Without a word the fighter went about his grim work, hands and feet destroying the walking dead with cometary force. On more than one occasion he took down two or more foes with a lone kick. With each victory, the horde thinned, and eventually dispersed.

“this warrior's  
black eyes held  
purpose... justice”

The invincible evil, the undefeatable force that had blanketed the world in a shroud of darkness, was starting to lose ground. The soldiers looked upon their savior, in awe of his martial prowess. He had achieved with his bare fists what entire armies couldn't do with machine guns and grenades. Without waiting, the warrior moved to leave, his one-man crusade against the undead forces not yet complete. Maybe it never would be, but he couldn't stop now, not while the evil still lurked just beyond the next corner...

“Wait!” one private managed to say. He couldn't have been older than twenty. “You might need this,” he said. The tiny man held out a six-inch combat knife. The warrior took the knife and looked at it as if he had been given a toothpick. With unpracticed politeness he handed the weapon back. “I already have the most powerful weapon imaginable,” the fighter said as he flicked a piece of zombie gore off his shoulder as if it were nothing more than a wayward piece of dust. “And that weapon is in *me*.” With that, he turned around and walked off toward the distant but ever present moans of the undead scourge, his hands clenched into fists that held the power to destroy worlds.



drawing by Dylan Spencer

There is a world so different than ours  
Where elves walk with man and have mystical powers  
And in this world, on the streets of a small castletown  
There you'd find the most honorable rogue around  
It was home to the King of Thieves.

With his cobalt-blue hair and his ears pointed high  
He robbed in robes the color of the midnight sky  
Taking only from the rich, giving the poor what he could  
You could consider him a kind of elven Robin Hood  
And he was the King of Thieves.

In the dead of the night, he could enter a castle  
The guards were unharmed - they weren't a hassle.  
He robbed the barons of their gold that shined  
And the next day, the destitute dined on their wine  
For he was the King of Thieves.

Through a twist of the fates, a girl was brought  
From our world to his; her mother she sought.  
The King took her in and gave her shelter  
On her quest, he happily agreed to help her  
She befriended the King of Thieves.

And so, on this strange girl's quest for her mother  
The King told her as they grew fond of one other:  
"You've done what I'd thought impossible to do.  
Surely, there's no better thief than you:  
You stole the heart of the King of Thieves."

She returned his feelings; on each other they'd depend  
But as they say, all good things come to an end.  
The girl found her mother, who then sent her home  
Back to the world she belonged to; the King was left alone.  
She had to leave the King of Thieves.

Life after for the King didn't feel the same  
Those happy feelings from her presence, he couldn't regain.  
He put off thievery for a while to think things through  
But he'd known all along what it was he must do  
To mend the heart of the King of Thieves.

Back home, the girl missed the King of Thieves as well  
She felt life without him was a living hell.

I've run through grasses and cut them down  
With my new Kokiri sword.  
I have only twenty-five rupees,  
So the shield I can't afford.  
Once I've purchased this wooden defense,  
I'll meet the Great Deku Tree  
And start my quest to save the princess  
Whose name begins with a "Z."

I somersault across Hyrule Field  
With my emerald stone in tow,  
Practicing shooting with my slingshot  
(I'm too little for the bow.)  
Through the marketplace to the mask shop,  
The man sells a mask to me  
Which I'll sell to the guard at the gate  
By targeting him with "Z."

Past the gate into Goron City,  
I approach the king Goron,  
But he will not help me with my quest  
'Til I play Saria's Song.  
Then he'll give me a magic bracelet  
And I'll pick up bombs with ease.  
I'll bust boulders and save the princess  
Whose name begins with a "Z."

I've conquered earth and I've conquered fire  
Now only water remains.  
I've climbed up mountains, swam through rivers  
Yet my tunic has no stains.  
I whistle Zeida's Lullaby with  
Water pouring down on me,  
And enter into the great Domain  
That's name begins with a "Z."

The Zora princess has been kidnapped!  
The King scoots to let me through.  
With a fish I enter the belly  
Of their Lord Jabu-Jabu.  
In his gut I find the boomerang,  
Which fills me up with glee.  
But where to put it? I can't decide, I guess  
I'll go with right "C."

She casts the Ocarina of Time  
Into the moat as she flees,  
But Ganondorf is in hot pursuit.  
Knocks me down. I skin my knees.  
I will unlock the Temple of Time,  
The stones: my mystical keys.  
Next thing I know, I'll meet the sages  
After seven years of "Zs."

## Rain of Mortality

Zoë Christianson

I killed a tree writing notes last night,  
but the question ravaging my mind  
does not relate to the fine points of progressivism.  
Even I, as little as I live, am too distracted to get this right.  
I take a seat on the steps of my porch  
and let the rain run the glue out of my hair.  
I take pleasure in ruining the only part of me a nameless girl cares to love.  
I think I shall do nothing these next few weeks  
but sit here and wait for spring.  
But there might not be a spring this year.  
I haven't decided if I like me enough to stick around long enough  
to find out.  
I am guilty of so many crimes inside my head.  
With one more year of parental supervision  
everyone around me  
is starting to come clean.  
Some girl loves some boy and blah and blah  
but they've only had sex, blah blah  
but never made love.  
She wonders if premarital sex makes her a whore.  
She'd better do it again  
just to be sure.  
Every step of the way, she's asked me if I've ever known what it feels like  
to want someone,  
to not know if I'll be strong enough  
to say "no."  
I ask her if she's ever read the story of my life  
and she reminds me that I haven't written it yet.  
One more thing I have to do  
that requires too much time,  
too much paper.  
She tells me that she still loves Jesus  
But she can't go back on forsaking God

## Bloom

Grace Martin

Different: not the same as another.  
My "friends" and I, we're different from each other.  
They are cool; I am not.  
I am lame; they are hot.  
Even when they're wrong, people think they're right.  
They like the day; I like the night.  
I always lose; they always win.  
I stick out; they blend in.  
Normal...the only definition I've got,  
Normal...something I'm not.  
Fitting in is what every girl wants.  
Instead of that, I get teases and taunts.  
But if being cool means doing dings and drink,  
Normality is not for me, I think.  
Bloom: to appear unexpected, in surprising degree.  
Bloom...sounds like something for me.  
I'm through with being a no one; it's time for the world to see  
I'm going to be a someone, so someone will see me.  
You won't know when, maybe far, maybe soon,  
But look out world, 'cause someday I'll bloom.

## Make It What You Want

Hailey Cannon

Wake up  
Do my hair  
Put makeup on  
So they don't stare

Wait a minute  
Nothing's wrong with me  
I have friends  
And a family

Whoa, good thing I didn't keep goin'  
That almost turned out like another  
teenage poem

You know the ones  
With darkness, death, and despair  
Ones with "I hate my life, it's just not fair!"

Don't get me wrong, I've written a few  
like that in my day  
Some poems like that are great  
But why write about sadness  
When there's so much more to say

Why should I write about war and hate?  
Yes things go wrong  
But the rest is great!

My grades... awesome  
My boyfriend... couldn't be better  
I'm not gonna be another teenager  
With a gun and a letter

I want to grow up, have a life,  
Get a great job,  
And be somebody's wife

Don't dwell on the problems of today  
Live for tomorrow  
And you'll make it somehow,  
Some way

## Inside Out

Rachel Pedichio

Sometimes things are not the way they seem  
Say an M&M for instance, its candy coated on the outside  
But chocolate in the inside.  
Some say they are lonely in the inside  
But so busy out there.  
Some look in the mirror and see a whole new person  
Some try to hide their true identity as if some authority was after them.  
Nobody knows how people feel on the inside  
But they can tell on the outside.



## See Through Glass Bowl

Keegan Conrad

All the things inside of me, swimming in my soul,  
Show on the outside, like a see through glass bowl,  
My clothes are colorful with a comfy fit,  
Showing my humor, style, and wit,  
My athleticism is shown also by my clothes,  
Basketball shorts and all,  
But the most important trait of me,  
Shown by how I act,  
Is my kind, loving soul,  
Which you can see like punch,  
Like a see through glass bowl.

## Real World

Maddie Miguel

This is the real world  
With limited freedom, and lots of things to fear  
Where you can't get away from the truth  
This is where violence lives, and people follow you  
Where guns are triggered at any time or place  
The tears will roll on a sorrowful face  
People sometimes assumedly think  
That the real world is in the city streets  
But sometimes it's in the neighborhoods and schools  
The truth will always find you  
In the news or at your desk  
As there's killings and bomb threats  
Confused love  
Getting mugged  
Dealing with disappointment  
Learning that it just ain't worth it  
This is where reality isn't blurred or bleeped out  
Where people use their right to shout  
It's not safe in the school hallways  
Bullies see their prey run away  
Money is wasted on precious useless things  
They show off their wealth through stupid bling  
Relationships are getting pretty short  
He'll leave you like the one before  
Here, trust is hard to find  
People will control your mind  
A loving heart will easily brake  
Earthquakes will destroy when it shakes  
Natural disasters have been hurting  
Political power just isn't working  
Pure innocence of a child destroyed  
Nothing left to fill the void

## Death Changes Everything

Sarah Jones

It's hard to understand and agree with this quote, unless you've experienced a great loss. My friend, Paige Winters, died in a plane crash and it's been the hardest thing I've ever had to deal with in my entire life.

Her death truly has changed everything.

One less girl in our grade, in our group, in our lives. But the thing about Paige is that she wasn't just a girl, she was everybody's friend. Paige had the biggest heart ever and there was nothing she could do to make you dislike her. Paige or as I called her, "Poogie", had to be the happiest person I'd ever met. She always gave the best guy and fashion advice, so anytime I needed help in those areas I knew I could count on her to help me and let's face it, I have either a guy or fashion problem daily.

And that's the worst part. I can never go to her again.

Paige isn't here anymore and it's not like she's on vacation, she's not coming back. I'll never be able to listen to Paige's cute squeal or hear her laugh, I won't get to watch her graduate with me, I won't see her beautiful smile, but worst of all, I won't have Paige as a friend.

Paige's death has changed everything.

It has changed the way I feel towards my friends. I never want to be in a fight, I never want them to leave without hugging me first and letting them know I love them, and I want to spend as much time as I can with each and everyone of them, no matter how close we've been in the past. In fact, I feel that way towards everyone. It has changed the way I feel about traveling and about movies. I can't watch a movie that involves a plane crash because I just start to cry.

Even when our huge group of friends is together there always feels like something's missing. Some girls say it's Paige's stories that are missing or Paige's laugh, some guys say it's the way she was always so energetic, but I don't think it's one or two things that are missing, I mean we're missing a person. And not just any person, a person who gave me a million-plus reasons to adore her.

Paige is what's missing.

Every little thing that made her who she was, that's what's gone.

Watching her parents try to cope with the loss of their 16 year old daughter has made me change the way I talk and act towards my parents. Paige's death has opened my eyes to all the other issues going on around me. It's even changed the way I feel at school.



I can't even go into the jewelry room because that's where Paige used to pull me out of class with a fake pass just so I could roam the halls with her.

I used to sit in jewelry everyday and every time the door would open I'd look for Paige or I'd wait for her to tap on the back door window. It may seem a little extreme to be upset by that, but when I saw Paige behind that window every day it's hard to look at it and know that I'll never see her face again. It's the little things that I have the most trouble with. Little things like the way she wore 2 tank tops under her shirts or the way she'd always get lost, even if she was just driving to North.

But the thing I miss the most is how Paige always tried to get everyone together. She was friends with so many different kinds of people and she made us one big group. As this year started, we weren't all as close and then Sunday, August 27th, Paige's plane crashed. It took each and every one of us by surprise. When I answered my phone that morning and heard what had happened, I was speechless. I wanted to say something, anything, but I couldn't. My friend Annie came and picked me up and we went over to the Andersons' where we met up with a huge group of people who knew and loved Paige. My heart felt like it was ripped out and shredded to pieces.

Watching the Winters stay so strong, telling stories about Paige and with the support of my friends, the pieces are slowly starting to make their way back together. But there is still a huge hole that will never be completely filled, no matter how many good things happen.

Every day I think about Paige.

Some days I laugh, thinking of the dorky things she used to do and some days I cry, but each and every day I'm thankful. I'm thankful for knowing Paige and having her in my life, even if it was only for a few short years. And I'm thankful for everything she ever did or said and for changing us all. She brought us all back together and even though she's not physically here she continues to change us. She's helped all of us mature, she helped two guys quit smoking, and she helped us all become better people just by knowing her.

None of us will ever be the same, which is why I couldn't agree more with those three words: "Death changes everything."



## Greiving

Rachel Franklin

Silent torture works the best,  
As if one's memories were weights,  
Weighing down the trudging steps  
Echoing as darkness waits.

Thoughts concealed to pass the test of time,  
So no mortal dared to dream  
Now come flooding in at midnight's chime,  
Making your aching heart scream.

You brush away a mourning tear,  
And hold close to you all you know dear;  
You reach out, but no one grasps your hand.  
And without support you cannot stand—

Trying your hardest to deny,  
But yet carry it on till you die.  
It's all mixed up, too much to bear:  
Anger, love, hate, and despair.

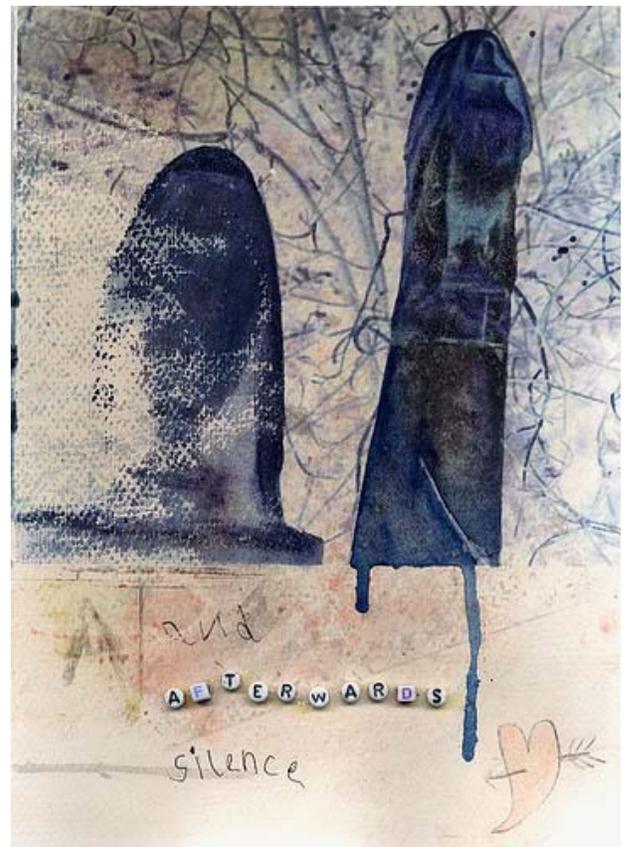
Most losses are spared no tears;  
But you shall grieve for this throughout the years.



## Untitled

Jessica Sutter

I've taken this road  
So many times  
Seen these things  
Over and again  
I'm getting tired  
Of singing the same old lines  
And getting to the fork in the path  
And thinking it's the end  
I'd just like to thank you  
For all that you've done  
You've shown me you can't be trusted  
Nor can anyone  
You've proven that my dreams will only be  
Inside my head  
You've told me that my song's been sung, and it's over  
My last chance has passed  
It's all thanks to you  
That my hopes are dead  
So thank you for telling me  
That fairy tales are fantasy  
Thank you for making me  
The person you see  
Thank you for crushing my dreams  
Shattering trust  
Telling my secrets  
Letting hopes rust  
Breaking my heart  
And doing it again  
But now it's all been said  
All said and done  
Gotta move on now  
Gotta get back to where I was  
Just one last thing  
I'd like to thank you for  
Thank you for proving  
That there's no such thing  
As a happy ending

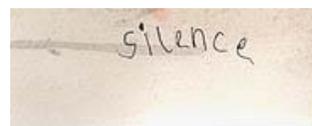


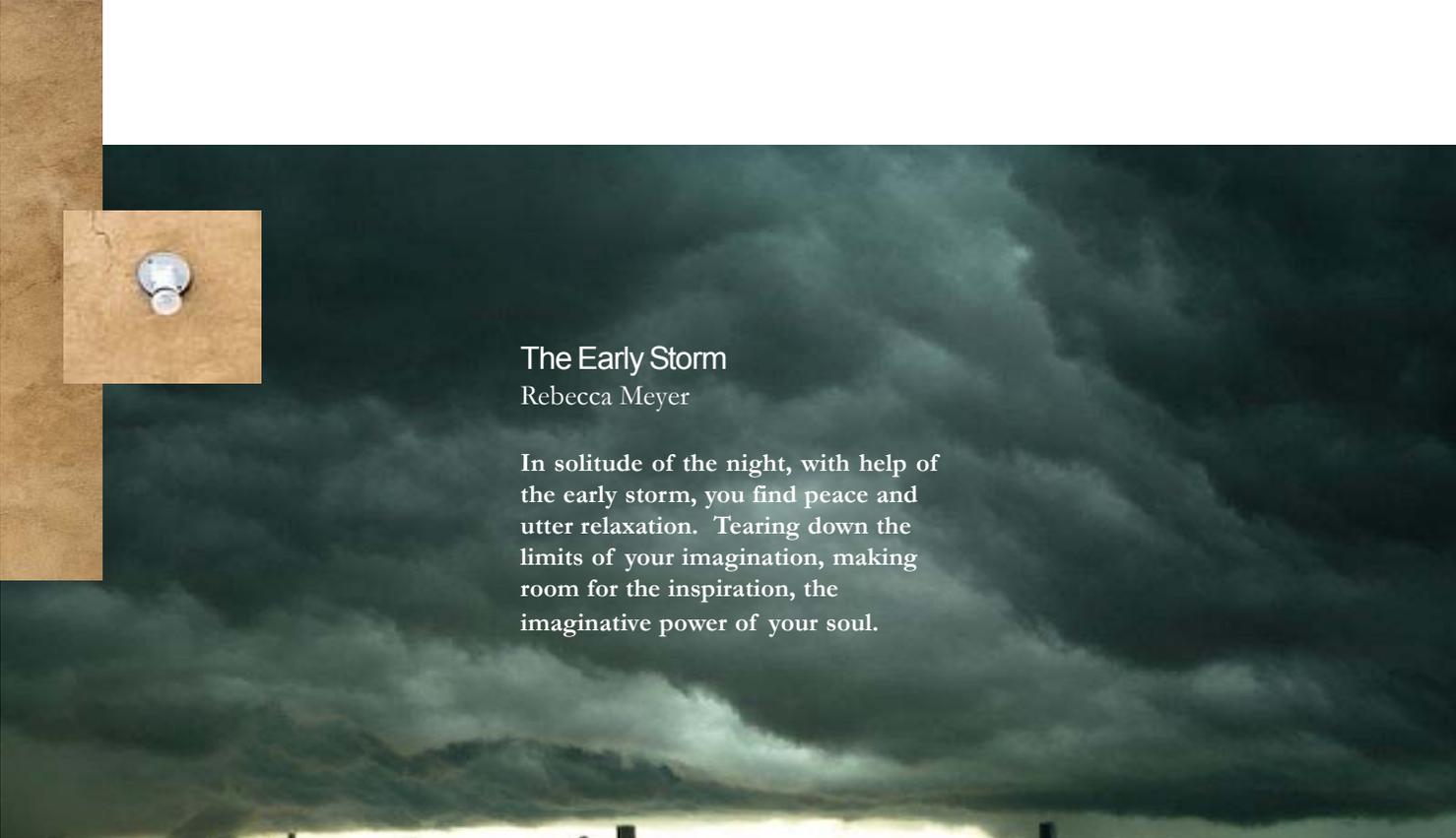


## Untitled

Anonymous

You say it makes no difference who I am  
and how I choose to express it.  
You'll say this through clenched teeth.  
You'll say this and you'll tell yourself  
It's better that I take my time -now-  
better that I get it out of my system.  
Looking back on all of life's regrets  
you regret never teaching me to make a decision  
or to take a risk.  
I suppose said risks have to be the ones you like.  
I'll take your advice  
and say what I will.  
You'll be okay.  
You say this now.  
But I know when this is over  
and the damage has been done  
you'll fight your tears and pray  
someday  
some boy will come along to silence me.  
Passively  
You'll punish me  
for not sharing in the dream  
you have for me.  
It's not lust, neither love nor humanity  
it's nothing more than emotional immaturity,  
a sturdy umbrella that protects you from anything  
and everything you can't explain  
enough  
to control.





## The Early Storm

Rebecca Meyer

In solitude of the night, with help of the early storm, you find peace and utter relaxation. Tearing down the limits of your imagination, making room for the inspiration, the imaginative power of your soul.



## Behind a stone cold shell

Dusti Lewis

Get behind the eight ball she said, which I had yet to understand. She said it meant to look ahead to the future. I sat there contemplating this saying for a while, and as I fell into a deep slumber my thoughts ran free. Thinking of our future--followers of the savior Jesus--why can't we speak of him in school?

Wanting to scream his name to the heavens, but silence is to be kept. We pray. Pray for this law to be changed. It works. Halleluia. We speak about Jesus with joy, no longer having to be quiet. Several are saved, what a joyous day. This perfect moment fades as the bell rings. I raise my head from my desk--a tear rolls down my cheek, still praying in silence. Hoping, contemplating, asking--will the future ever change?

Staying in my stone cold shell.



## You Opened My Eyes

Hannah E. Jenkins

I was blind and you opened my eyes.  
I was blind to deceivers, and you showed me them. I was blind to true love, and you showed me it. I was blind to forgiveness and you did it for me. I was blind to the truth, and you revealed it all. I was blind to you God. And you touched my eyes and for the first time I can really see.



## An Open Letter to Joseph Conrad

Jess Holmes

Dear Mr. Uber-Goth

*I don't pretend to understand the intricacies within the mind of any literary genius, but I've got to let it out...your endless pessimism is bringing me down.*

*Now as an IB geek, future English major, highly dorky bookworm, I don't mind admitting that in the beginning, I found Heart of Darkness quite good. But I am over one hundred pages in now, and you have used the word brooding exactly seven million, four hundred and twenty thousand, six hundred and four times. If you call me an exaggerator, I will call you a hypocrite. There is a darkness in the air. There is a darkness in the wilderness. There's a darkness in you. There's a darkness in me.*

*There's a darkness in ALL of us...*

*Joseph, buddy, we get it. The world is encapsulated in a giant, brooding darkness. Or maybe your mind just is.*

*It's not the wordiness. Honestly, give me Dickens any day. In fact your writing is quite eloquent. It's just that I have been brooding over the grove of death that is your book for a week now, and I have been filling out the gloomy and confusing jungle that is Mr. Pulsinelli's symbolism chart the whole time, and I would simply like you to enlighten us, Mr. Conrad, as to exactly what, in the name of the Almighty Uber-Goth, is this darkness? Racism? Nightmares? The human psyche? Sifting through pages and pages of impenetrable symbolism? For the love of God, Joseph, spit it out.*

INDEX TO FIRST LINES

*Your book is not only tiresome and repetitive...it's downright depressing, and I'm sick of it. Why don't you go for an afternoon walk in the sunshine? Buy an ice cream for Christ's sake. Or if you can't do that, go exploring through the African jungle, and with a bit of luck you'll become one with the interminable miles of silence that it apparently takes you twelve pages to talk about.*

*Alright, I'm bordering on harsh. There's some sort of brooding darkness in your heart, and I ought to show a little empathy or at least provide some constructive criticism. So, fine, here are a few ideas. Food for thought.*

- 1. Stop reading Dickens. You'll never be wordier than him, so don't even try.*
- 2. Buy a thesaurus and look up the following words: dark, impenetrable, brooding.*
- 3. Stop referring to people's faces as "masks of death." There's a reason you have no friends.*
- 4. Don't spend fifty pages trying to get us to fathom an "unfathomable enigma." It's an enigma. And it's unfathomable. You said so yourself.*
- 5. Don't capitalize Shadow. You're not Wordsworth, and you're not romantic.*

*And if none of that helps, try a little opium. It worked for Coleridge.*

*Happy Brooding,*

*Jess Holmes*



Drawing by Maddie Miguel

## Our Beasts

Erin Ashley

It was quiet like it always was. Not dead quiet, you could still hear the waves and the insects. I sat on the beach, my hands clasped around my knees. I had buried the last of them in the cavern, then sealed it shut. Now it was just me. Maybe this was good, now I couldn't get blamed for things I didn't do. But all I can remember is the expression on little Micah's face. She had been so scared, she held my hand the whole night, begging me not to go. I told her she was going someplace better, she'd see her family again. She must have believed me, because she died looking happier than she ever had living. I wish I could have given her more; she was my responsibility. She wasn't actually my daughter, of course, I'm too young for that. We were outcasts, but I didn't care, she was the only company I needed.

It was hurting again, where that thing had attacked me, right over my heart. The beast is dead now, after killing all of us for no reason. It never ate the bodies. It found plenty else to eat, small as this place is. It only attacked us, and left the corpses to rot. But I killed it, so it doesn't matter now. I sat on the beach 'til dawn. The signal fire was barely smoldering, so I got up and threw more sticks on it.

A flock of square clouds rested on the horizon again, but they turned and left like always. One didn't, though, it just kept coming closer, and my hand closed over Micah's locket. It was warm in the fresh sunlight, and it shone despite the dirt covering it. I stood up and waved. The great ship came, and I just kept waving, tears running down my face.

For everyone lost... and Micah.



“it was  
hurting  
again...  
right  
over my  
heart”





## Reminiscence

Abigail Blick

There once was a man named Ed. Ed had a wife and three kids and worked at a very successful job. His life was perfect. But as time went on, his children grew up and went off on their own to form their own families, but soon Ed became a grandfather. And once again, life was perfect. Season by season, his children and grandchildren across the nation would come visit him. But Ed was growing older and at the age of seventy-eight, Ed's wife died. His heart was broken. Ed finally decided that his time of success was over and his time to retire was now. With nothing to do, he could travel around the country and visit his children's families, like he had never done before. But after years of traveling alone, Ed was tired - mentally, physically and emotionally - so Ed went back to his home and stayed there.



Alone. Ed still got his seasonal visits, but it wasn't enough. Ed. Was. Sad.



One day, when Ed went to the park and sat on a lonely bench next to a playground to think about his life, a little blonde girl, about the age of four, came up to the bench and sat on the opposite end. Slowly, but confidently, the little girl inched her way across the bench toward Ed. Wobbling to stand, the little girl stared directly, at eye level, at Ed's face. Very politely she asked Ed why he had so many bumps on his face, putting each of her tiny fingers into the crevices of his wrinkles. After sitting in silence pondering why a little girl would ask such a thing, Ed turned and looked the little blonde girl in her huge curious eyes and said in a secret whisper, "Because they mark all of the many blessings I've had throughout my life."

"Davidson! That tree is flying! It's going to crash into your house," Gary warned me. "You're right, Mr. Franklin, and here, it's coming in for a landing," I replied with calm reserve.

Gary Franklin has dementia. He has been my next-door neighbor since I was seven years old. He has never called me David, my real name. He insists upon calling me Davidson. He often has a listless expression on his face, suggesting that not much is going on up there. In fact, Gary Franklin, a former financial banker, is a mathematical genius. I'm certain he can still do Sudoku puzzles in his sleep. The unfortunate fact is that instead of seeing an incredibly intelligent man, outsiders see only a blank skull controlling a small feisty being.

Gary Franklin could not hurt a fly. He stands at 5 ft. 8 in. and weighs in at about 160 pounds. People don't pay much attention to Mr. Franklin, mostly because they don't want to. The aides at his nursing home neglect him and take a surprisingly hostile approach to calming him. Such hostility and confusion once led him to hold a male nurse hostage with a rubber knee-reflex hammer. In turn, the "aides" called the police and threatened to press charges. While the charges were eventually dropped, that sort of methodology seems all too simplified. Human beings are humans whether they are five years old or seventy-five years old. Human beings are humans whether they are wealthy, active financial bankers or bedridden hospital patients. With the onset of the later stages of the illness looming, there will certainly be some ensuing challenges. Mr. Franklin may very well forget who I am, or where he is. But that is no excuse for simply forgetting a human being.

Your Blue Side

David Webster



Once upon a time, in a land far far away, there were two kingdoms. The Thintassia Kingdom was led by King Blue Man, and all of the people tried to be like King Blue Man and eat as little as possible. "Skinny is beautiful, skinny is beautiful," the King would exclaim; the crowd would go wild. Food was outlawed in Thintassia Kingdom, but the occasional grotesque plebian would sneak a one-hundred-calorie pack, or even a blade of grass. Despite their boney beauty, sadly, the kingdom was dying.

On the island across the sea, there was the Obesintopia Kingdom. Queen Lardmia would exclaim every day, "Big is beautiful. Big is beautiful." The crowd would go wild. All day every day the entire kingdom would eat. Portion control was outlawed, as were all diet products, even diet coke! Despite their massive beauty, unfortunately, the Obesintopia people were dying of heart failure and clogged arteries.

One day, King Blue Man was discussing with his royal attendants. One of them spoke up: "King Blue Man, I hear across the sea Queen Lardinia is making everyone very fat! I believe it is our duty to reform the brutish people, and make them skinny and beautiful." King Blue Man thought and thought: "I believe you are right! We shall make a plan." He thought awhile longer, then said, "We must steal all of their food and throw it in the sea, thus making them skinny just like us.

"Hooray!" the attendants cried. "We can make the whole world skinny, too." The next day, King Blue Man ordered his terribly skinny army to board the boats and attack the Kingdom of Obesintopia. All was going as planned until they reach the island. As they snuck up on the Obesintopia people and prepared to steal their food, they realized they did not have the arm muscle to lift even the smallest Big Mac!

"Oh No!" they cried, "What ever shall we do?" After much thought, the Thintassia army decided to all work together, and ten at a time lifted the bits of food. Unfortunately, Queen Lardinia rolled over and noticed the tiny people taking her food! "Terrorists, Terrorists!" she cried, but no one in her kingdom was fast enough to catch the Thintassian army.

After the army retreated, the Obesintopians were outraged, and an all-out war began. Because of the lack of strength from either side, the war was slow going. Finally, Queen Lardinia came up with a plan: "We shall eat the little people." The crowd went crazy.

As the little people came to attack that day, the Obesintopians held their place, taking bites at whatever came their way. But alas! Two can play that game. The little people bit right back! By the end of the battle, all people were missing body parts, but the little people were bigger, and the bigger people were smaller. Not able to tell who was on which side any longer, they decided to make amends, and live as one happy healthy-sized Kingdom.



## Oh Snow

Jack Stelzer

Snow is deceiving. It likes to play hard-to-get. Like so many other things in life, I have developed a love-hate relationship with the whole idea of snow. The “dog days” of summer reach their finale, the leaves start falling, and everyone excitedly awaits the first snowfall. It’s like we call snow’s cell phone twenty times and *it* doesn’t pick up. All we want is snow so we can play football at night in the company of the finely manicured lawns of Kansas City Country Club, so we can drive out to the hills at Corporate Woods to go sledding, and most of all, so we can extend our two-day break from school into an extended vacation courtesy of the white stuff.

Then it comes. It’s the moment we’ve all been waiting for. Girls run down in the basement yelling, “No school!” The crowd erupts from the couch, pausing their current viewing of “Click,” and everyone runs upstairs, looking outside at the white beauty stacking up on the ground soon to be joined by the sheet of flakes dancing their way down. The door swings open and everybody begins dancing in the snow as Talib Kweli blasts from my pal’s red Alero. Everything is perfect for the moment. You get to do as you please, and you get to top it off by coming home to a lit fire and a glass of hot cocoa.

Eventually reality sets in. It’s going to be a harsh, brutal winter. Who cares if it snows anymore; of course, it will. For months to come, I am going to be frigid when I wake up in the morning. My nose will be sniffing, and my car will run like an untamed beast. Now when the snow comes, it comes, and it stays on the ground for a time too long to measure. The slush on the ground is putrid, and suddenly I am wishing for the warmth of Playa del Carmen. Playa del Carmen? Ok, I think I can wait for the snow to melt.



## Green Sanctuary

Karen Lieffring

Come with me into these memories  
Where grown-ups are not allowed  
Across the deep concrete river  
Where in giant hollow owl's eyes  
You can hear the hidden bears' growls.  
Beneath high branches curved like arches  
Their leaves intertwined  
Like a patchy living ceiling  
For this green chapel  
This childhood hidden haven  
Where magic seems alive and well.  
Moss carpet murmurs of its comfort  
With each bounce step  
Engulfing stone pews more and more  
with every passing year  
Only the stone-bound sacred maiden  
On her altar of stones and roots  
Remains untouched by vegetation  
Erosion unknown to her downcast face.  
Believed to be held under a spell  
While waiting for a love unknown.

In dreams a white she-wolf  
Guides me the way back to this place  
While ravens overhead remain  
As my centennials of the forest.  
Where the wind whispers gently,  
"Stay here and I'll protect you  
Remain within and we'll keep you safe."

A secret sanctuary  
I still cannot truly claim as my own  
For time has passed swiftly  
As the rainwater through the creek bed  
And the deed for that sacred  
Land has changed hands  
Yet still it remains in me  
Among the pool of memories in my head  
That I can dive into when the outside world  
drives me mad.  
A sanctuary for all time  
For all who wish to join  
Simply close your eyes and follow me  
Across the dry concrete river beds.

It was raining outside, and our weary Traveler was on a gravel road, walking. With a large sack slung over his shoulder, he crept along at quite a slow pace, monotonously shifting his weight from one foot to the other. He had no cloak, and so he was drenched in the cold rain. The sky darkened and a loud clap of thunder was heard. Our Traveler desperately sought for shelter, but could find none. He walked, his boots pounding into the mud until it seemed that his feet were bare, and that someone had covered his appendages in thick, grey sludge. How our Traveler hated it. Way off in the distance, he finally saw a single light, and a small flame of hope rose up within him. He was renewed with strength to reach that light and possibly warm shelter and food, for our Traveler had not eaten for days, as his supply of rations had long ago run out. He marched along at a slightly faster pace, wanting greatly to reach the house- it was a house, our Traveler had just not recognized the outline at the present time. He trudged along for a much longer time than he had expected, for the light seemed to be up the road only a little. However, it had taken him (as he saw it) nearly three hours to reach the old house on a hill.

Our Traveler finally met the base of the hill on which sat the house. He climbed, and it was an easy climb, as the hill was neither very long, nor steep. As he approached the house, he looked back down and saw the grey snake of a road he had been traveling for a millennium. He reached for the large green copper door-knocker, and it fell off. The large noise that was not the rain startled our Traveler, but he did not stay in that state for long, and he quickly knocked on the heavy wooden door. It opened. He was greeted by a young girl of minute stature.

Our Traveler asked, "Are your parents home?" The girl made no response. "Young girl, are your parents home?" he repeated, staring down at the ice-eyed child. Still not a sound. "May I please come in? I have been traveling for quite a long time, and it is raining. Please, I implore you."

"How goes it?" said a stem voice from behind the young girl. Our Traveler had been completely focused on the young girl and did not see a rather large man walk up behind her. He paused for a moment. He looked over the man standing behind the young girl. He was very tall and rotund, and he had a scruffy look about him.

“Well, I have been traveling, and I would like to seek refuge from the rain for a short while, if you would be so kind.”

The large man eyed him for a moment. “Very well then, you shall be welcome in our home for as long as the rain continues.”

Our Traveler was ecstatic and began to thank the tall man profusely, but the tall man cut him off abruptly. “I will show you to your room, and tonight you may dine with our family. This,” he pointed a small table with five chairs, “is our dining room, and my wife will make dinner.” They walked further into the old house and went down a single silent hall. The tall man pointed to the door at the end of the hall on the left. “That,” said he, “is your room. You may go in now if you wish to rest.”

Our Traveler eagerly went into his room, and thanked God for this shelter and these people. Inside it was rather old and plain, but not at all uncomfortable. Of course our Traveler would have liked to be home, but that was impossible. He took off his wet clothes and set them next to the small coal heater in the corner of his room. He lay on his bed and took a single deep breath.

After a fair amount of time, he put on his now dry garments once again, and a young boy (older than the girl, however) called at his door and told him that dinner had been made. He walked out of his room and to the dining table. He sat down at the fifth chair. It was only then that he realized that the table was in a pentagonal shape. It struck him as rather odd, but he did not think of it for long. The wife soon came out of the kitchen with long mousy black hair and a stained checkered dress. She looked somewhat ragged, but so did the rest of the people in this home.

She served a rather fatty beef in a small portion with thin gravy and some beans. It may not have been the most appetizing meal to you or me, but to our Traveler it was quite sufficient. After a silent meal, our Traveler began to look around the room. It was almost the same as his room--small, plain, with old pine paneling all around. He saw in the wall behind the tall man was a door. It was a very plain door as was everything else in the house, but for some unknown reason it struck him as odd.

“Where does that door go to?” asked our Traveler. Although the room was silent up until this remark, it seemed as though the room fell under an oppressive, crushing spell of absolute silence. The wife instantly got up and began to clean the table as if nothing happened.

The young boy began to stare off in a different direction. The ice-eyed girl stared at him, and finally the large man spoke, “That is none of your concern. You are not permitted to even attempt to touch that door.” Every syllable uttered from out his lips was laden with black contempt.

“I’m sorry,” our Traveler whispered as quietly as possible. He was not even sure he heard himself let alone the tall man. He rapidly got up and went to his room, where he soon fell asleep.

The rain continued for weeks.



Eventually the floodwaters made it so that the only land accessible was the hill, for they had risen and made a moat around the house. Each day was conducted in almost silence. Our Traveler spent his time in his room writing in his journal or sometimes he would sit at the dining table and read or stare out the windows into the rain. The monotony of this life pounded into his mind like a sledgehammer; every day when he awoke he felt melancholy settle in his bosom.

One day after dinner, after everyone else was asleep our Traveler awoke with a start and was sweating unbelievably. As if controlled by some strange power he ran as fast as allowed by human physiology to the door. He stopped and stared for a brief half-moment that seemed to last forever. It is so strange how such a small space can be stretched into a vast amount of time. He reached for the handle. It was cold. He opened the door and found nothing. It was a room completely void of everything imaginable. At first look it seemed that the walls were of the same paneling in the house, but even those melted away. He turned around suddenly and the whole family was standing in the door screaming as loudly as possible in incoherent tongues that mixed and mingled together in a writhing chorus.

The tall man slammed the door. Our Traveler ran at the door, but it was turned to mist.

Not even mist. Nothing.

Nothing existed at all within this so-called room. He sat, or so he thought he did, on what he thought was a floor and was nothing.

Ages passed. Civilizations rose and collapsed. Cities were born and decimated. Eternity passed. Another eternity came and went. He never moved. He existed in a world where he was not allowed to exist. Each of his senses was disconnected. He could see, but there was nothing to see, and his eyes could not transmit anything to the mind. He could feel, but there was nothing to feel. He could hear, but there was nothing to hear. He could smell, but there was nothing to smell. He could taste, but there was nothing to taste. He could think, but there was nothing to think of, and even his thoughts were not able to be processed by his mind. In a way his mind was not even communicating to itself. His body had needs, but it needed nothing. He thought, but thought of nothing. He wanted something, but wanted nothing. He was nothing, and the nothing was him.

Our Traveler became a disembodied person that existed and did not exist at the same time.

Forever waits beyond the Doorway.



## War That Can Not Be Won

Taylor Haviland

*We are all rugged people,  
and through out soft degrees.  
Many a mean have shouted,  
Many have fallen too their knees.  
We think we're at war with others,  
But wrong because we are at war  
with ourselves,  
A war that has long begun  
A war that can not be won.*

## Haiku

Heather Martin

Hatred melts away  
Madness peels back from my  
Wrongs are diluted

Accompany me  
To a place so far away  
Let us reside there

Sit in wait of me  
Yet we are still together  
Take long walks with me

Hatred knows no bonds  
No shackles of contempt  
Free as the bluebirds

## Dear Whom Ever Cares to Listen

Andre Stevens



I'm a new york kid. there i was born and raised. outside on the block that's where i spent most of my days, but now my vision's in a haze. my mom said, what i'm going through is just a phase, but i know now that's not the case. without my dad my heart has an empty space-i can't remember the last time i seen my father's face. it's like i'm drifting out to outer space-my life is kinda bad, i want some other kid to take my place. i'm like a man without a face. either they don't notice i'm there or about me they just don't care. life is just not fair. if i don't get my dad now, a war i will declare. if i ever see my dad again i will cry tears of joy and tears of pain. tears of knowing without him i will go insane. tears of fear that one day he will forget my name. i see other kids spending time with their dads. except for me. is this my punishment? is this what i get for being a menace to society? my sisters will eternally cry with me. not a hug not a kiss not a simple goodbye. i wanna tell my dad to his face that i love him before he dies. my dad is getting closer and closer to death. just thinking about it i can not sleep. i cannot rest. i wish i was a octor so i could heal him. it's just pissin me off that god's slowly trying to kill him. the only thing i have to lean on is my music. this pain I'm feeling. nothing could ever soothe it. life is death. and you live to die. without my dad all i can do is sigh. this isn't a song. it's how i feel. i don't write about anything that i don't feel. that's real. now i'll close this letter with my own painful seal.

(To my dad who once walked beside me but now starts to fade in the pain filled mist called corruption)



## Untitled

Andre Stevens

Scream. yellin all the time. a chill pill Is what you need to find some. I like to bury myself very deep within my mind. You say i'm mental, but i'm sentimental when it comes down to my rhymes. you just take my rhyme book and throw them away all time. I love you you're my mother, you always been there for me, but you know writing rhymes and producing music has always been my destiny. you said no matter what happens you will always stand next to me, but not just only me, but our whole family. I love you and my sisters a lot. you guys are the only thing i've got. instead of thinking about people getting stabbed killed or shot. I just want you to know I love ya'll a lot. I'm smart but I make bad choices. inside my head I hear many voices. I hate how people can be so simple minded. by the truth there severely blinded. fear is like a wall and they hide behind it. I shall feel no fear as I walk threw the valley of death of my crimes and wrong doings. to you people I must confess my soul is not eternally blessed. life is like a test and im trying my best but never the less I always seem to fail. I used to think school was a prison but without any bail. but god can only tell what the future holds for me. I pray for a better life. I just beg and plead. the people at connections are really fun to be around. its really funny when Mitch stomps on the ground. you know what I found, I found a open door I can finally walk threw. come with a couple of friends on the side. coming to this school was like the best choice I could ever make. it's a good feeling. I won't allow anyone to take it. I just let the words flow out of my mouth and on to the paper. I just attach them to the pages as if my words was a stapler. I consider myself as the king of free style. when I get lost in my music I feel like a free child. President Bush is now said to be to be a lame duck he's burying himself a deeper hole and seems to be stuck. he's wanting to send more troops in to Iraq but it's not like he's fighting on the battlefield so I think that decision is whack. but then again it could hopefully end the war so they can get out of Iraq and not go back there any more. Just like New Orleans and the hurricane. bush is the one to blame. he could have told those people to evacuate way before the hurricane came. the feeling before that, will never be the same. they're burnt by the sorrow and constant pain.

"I consider myself... the king of free style..."



## Box of Color Pencils

Rebecca Meyer

While walking in the art store today.

I overheard a color pencil box  
With many things to say

“I don’t like the Red,” said the Orange  
and Green said, “Nor do I”  
and no one likes Yellow  
But no one knows just why

“We are a box of color pencils  
that don’t get along.”  
Said Blue to all the others  
“Something here is wrong.”

Well, I bought that box of color pencils.  
And I took it home with me  
And laid out all the colors  
So the color pencils could all see

They watched me as I colored  
With Red and Blue and Green  
And Black and White and Orange  
And every color in between

They watched as Green became the grass  
And Blue became the sky  
The Yellow sun was shining bright  
On White clouds drifting by

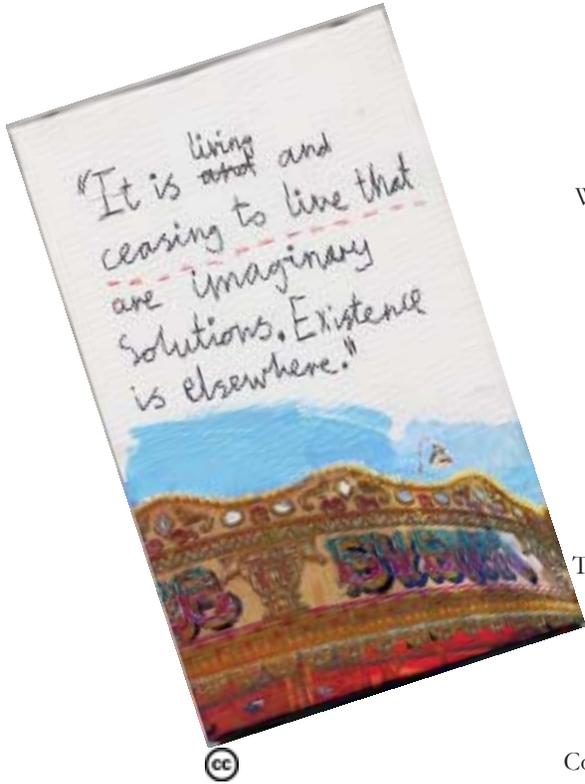
Colors changing as they touched the paper  
Becoming something new  
They watched me as I colored  
They watched until I was through

And when I finally finished  
I began to walk away  
And as I did the color pencil box  
Had something new to say

“I do like Red,” said Orange  
and Green said, “So do I”  
and Blue you were terrific  
so high up in the sky.

“missing”

end







## Graced Darkness

Jaden Gragg

“A breath, a sigh, she closes her eyes,  
hearing the forest sounds around her,  
yonder the sun set the sky on fire,  
burning, burning,  
the stars flew higher...”

### Bedtime stories

I hear my mother’s voice crawl around my ears,  
and nestle in my heart,  
I remember this small sad song,  
about the sky burning down,  
but her words will protect me,  
her sweet sugary voice.  
This night is mine, and we’ll spend it together.

Every night, she tucks me into sleep,  
and her voice carries me across the moon to my dreams,  
I dream of her and her songs, comfort, love.

My mother’s hands are soft as they trace my body, soft and slow,  
She leans over and kisses me and whispers something in my ear,  
her voice is raspy from singing.  
I don’t know exactly what she’s saying, secrets in my ear.  
But I think she said “I’m sorry  
One of her long black locks  
fall across my face and give a grin.  
Then a giggle slips from my throat.  
Mama’s so silly sometimes.  
She only looks at me with a sad, sad smile.



We both sit there on my bed,  
sharing a long moment of silence.  
For me it is peaceful, and sleepy,  
but Mama is staring out the window, looking so distant.  
A chilly wind blows into my room  
moving strands of hair away from her face.  
Mama stands up, above me.  
I think she is going to give me one final kiss,  
but she just stands, towering above me and waits.

I feel the air change in the room,  
I look up at my momma.  
She reaches a long, ivory arm down, graced by darkness.

Her fingernails grab me,  
scratching, hurting.  
Fear is wild in her eyes and in mine.  
She shakes her head and her beautiful black hair falls out,  
all over the floor,  
and howls a song that makes me shake.

I see a different person behind her dark solemn eyes,  
that used to laugh and dance, used to sing,  
Twisting harder, I feel my breath come shallow. I can’t scream.  
The last thing I hear is my mother’s voice  
coming slowly from the mouth of the monster.  
and she sings,  
sweet and slow and perfect, like it always is.

“A breath, a sigh, she closes her eyes,  
hearing the forest sounds around her,  
Yonder the sun set the sky on fire,  
burning, burning,  
the stars flew higher”



## Screaming Secrets : A view from

Jillian Beyer

She fell on top of me, burrowed her face in my fluff, hands smacking the down inside of me, legs kicking, wriggling, growing restless at the foot. Every night I gave her comfort, she told me her secrets, whispered in the meekest of voices of the taunts and the teases and the tortures of the day. I was her alter of which she prayed, confessed, sinned, repented.

Lips would press into me, so hard I feared sometimes I would burst and my ethereal contents would escape and whisper the secrets I held into the air, giving her confidences away, but rather I became the two sides of the red sea, and her faces Moses, and her tears the staff, parting me.

Sobs left streaks, streaks became stains, no more was I white, but tainted. Not just of her make-up and dirt and skin, but of her secrets and thoughts and emotions. Tainted so I could never be returned, not that I would ever wish to be. Shelves told no secrets, gave no importance. I was never washed, never wiped, never wet. The water, she feared, I feared, would steal the secrets taking them to the sewers beneath the city to be shared.

Or fear I would lose a feather- a frightening memory forever lost. No, that would never do. Today was no different than yesterday, no different than tomorrow would be. I kept my oath, kept her confidence. But eventually the secrets smothered her, taking her, left her lying still, secretless.

## Pain

Breanna Hollingshead

Have you ever felt pain?  
Pain so deep inside of you  
Pain only you can feel.

Growing up I had times of physical  
and mental pain,  
through it however, I have gained.

Growing up I went through more pain  
than anyone can imagine.  
people talking about, laughing at me.

I put other people through pain  
becoming bulimic and anorexic,  
I was a stick...

I burned myself when I got stressed.  
We moved many places  
life was a mess.

For others pain is different,  
but for some it's the same.



painting by Tabitha Jenkins

## Normandy

music & lyrics by Phil  
Roach

*A soldier dies on the battlefield on a beach in Normandy just barely old enough to shave and just off papas knee buried in the ground with theses final words*

*[Chorus]*

*Dear ma and pa im doin fine here overseas I send my love from me and John and the company now I gotta go gotta run don't you worry bout me cause im headed to Normandy*

*The telegram arrived to that farm house in Louisiana with a bag of his belongings and his little note she opens it and then she reads*

*[chorus]*

*Sittin down and cryin holdin that letter tight she thought of her little boy she used to hold at night standin up and wiping her tears as the thoughts of him flashed by*

*[chorus]*

*That was 65 years ago that my mom lost my dad she mourned him every day rememberin what she had in that in that old PFC that was my dad*

*[chorus]*

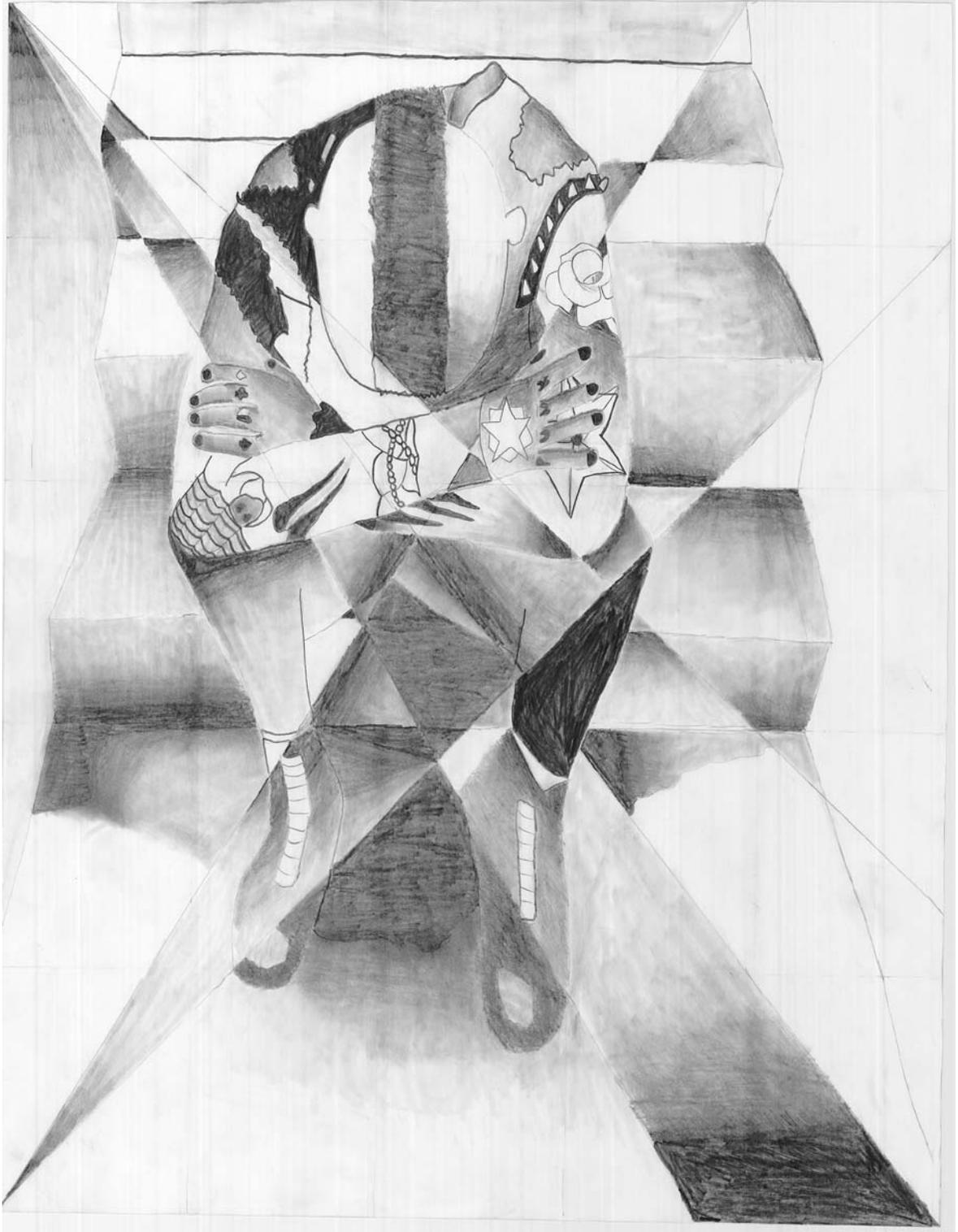
*A soldier that dies on the battlefield to saint peter he shall tell one more soldier reportin sir ive served my time in hell but before I go do me this little favor tell my*

*[chorus - dear]*

*A soldier dies on the battlefield on a beach in Normandy just barely old enough to shave and just off papas knee buried in the ground on the beach in Normandy a boy who died to be free sayin*

*[Chorus]*



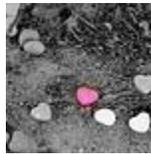


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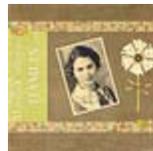
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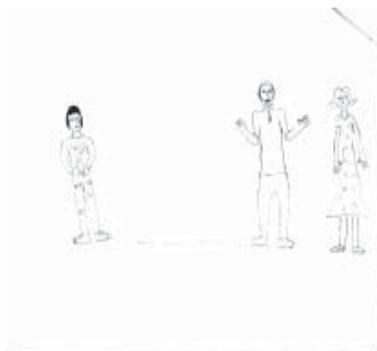
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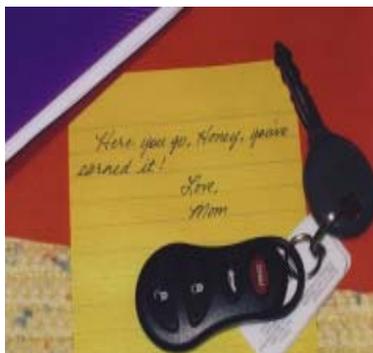


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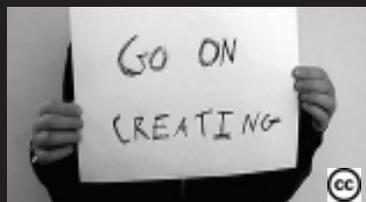


drawing by Grace Martin

I just want to know  
why everyone's so  
caught up in trends  
that always end?  
~Sophie Poppie



drawing by Maddie Miguel



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