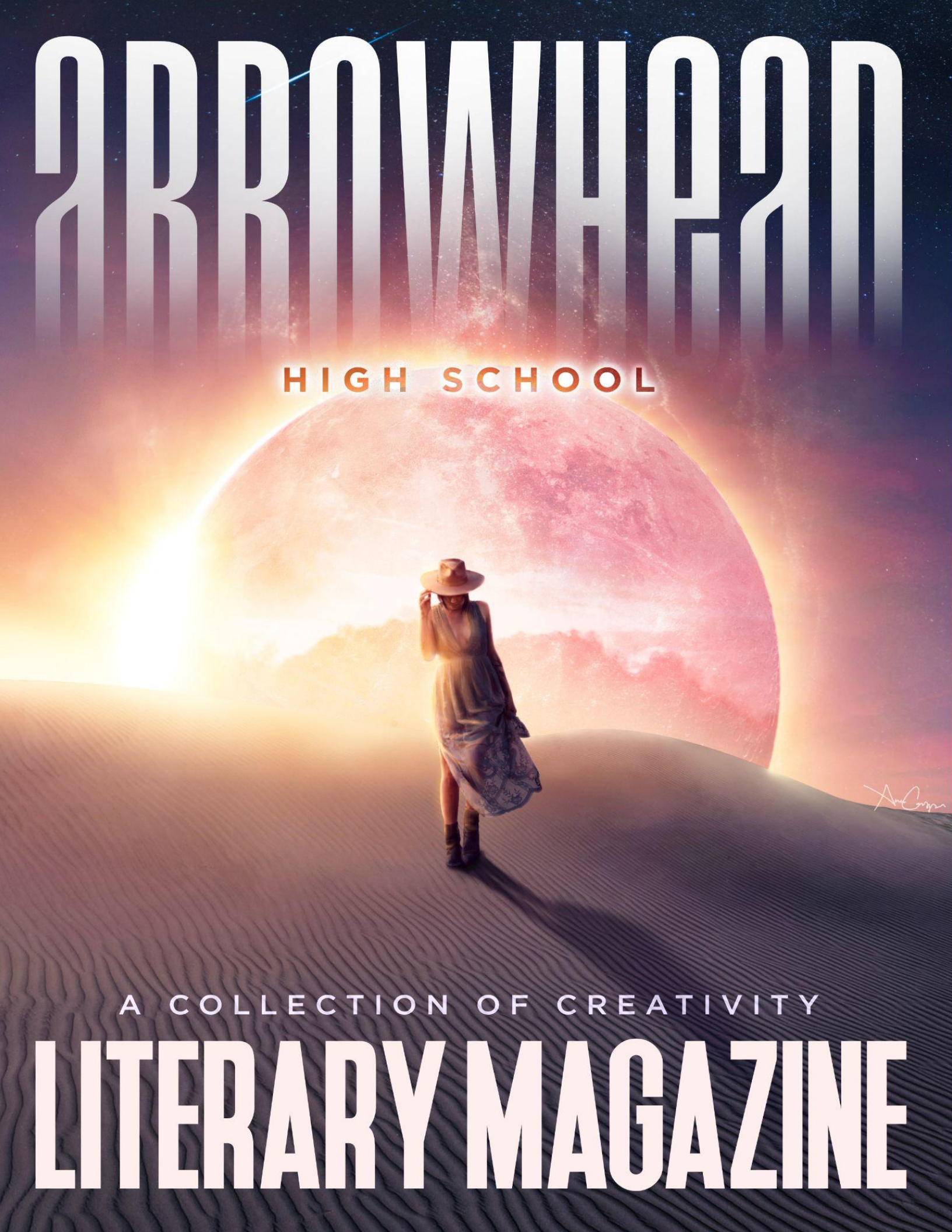


# ARROWHEAD

HIGH SCHOOL



*And Cooper*

A COLLECTION OF CREATIVITY

# LITERARY MAGAZINE

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# AWARD WINNERS

*Students who went above and beyond the expectations were chosen by the editors to receive a cash prize or certificate.*

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# POETRY

## **The Trees, The Girl and Me**

**By Maddie Marseo**

*On the shore line of Lake Michigan there  
is a lighthouse,  
and the only true life that lingers here are  
the trees, the girl, and me.  
The cool morning air breathes life into her  
body,  
and pasture's tall grass reaches above her  
knees.  
Each blade sways in harmony with one  
another,  
and vibrant shades of life complement her  
serene light. She watches the water in  
awe,  
hypnotized by the rhythm of the ripples.  
Small waves crash with every gust of wind,  
on the crest of each wake there is a  
sparkle that enchants her.  
She sits in the open as nature encases  
her,  
illuminating her world.  
She wants to understand, learn,  
and appreciate every aspect of life.  
The way the trees dance with the breeze,  
and how the water hums in the distance.  
The way the birds sing small tunes,  
and the colors of the sky.  
With every minute she becomes closer with  
life,  
and I become closer with her.  
Nature holds the girl in her arms,  
and together they stay.*



**Photo by Mason Krznarich**

## **The Cabin**

**By Hayden Ersbo**

Drops of rainfall over the quiet atmosphere of Manitowish Lake, deep in the Northwoods of Wisconsin.

A chain of lakes woven together like a spider web, traveling by boat it seems to never end.

As morning comes the waters resemble glass, ripples in the water appear as a bald eagle dives for a fish.

The sight makes you wonder, is there a more peaceful place on Earth?

As we cut through the waters on our pontoon, we stop to fish, endlessly casting lures into the lily pads.

We picture a musky gobbling down our lure, Unfortunately we only catch long hair-like strands of weeds.

The boat glides over logs in the dark shallow waters of the lake, on our way we swim in the warm blue waters

As we long for excitement, we climb aboard the jet ski and begin to tube.

Each of us whipped around, flying over the water like a bird in the wind.

As I look out in the distance, I see the powerful machine has flipped over.

We decided to perform our nightly channel swim, not just the five of us, but also my dog.

Boats make wake the size of ocean waves, making our journey exhausting.

We finally make it to the other side and Red, the dog, isn't fazed.

A long day of swimming and fun come to an end. Beep Beep Beep...the alarm sounds at 6:30 in the morning.

We must leave the serene landscape for the treacherous golf course.

The eerie drive to Timber Ridge Golf Course creates a frightened look in our eyes.

Our stomachs grumble with hunger as we pull into Kwik Trip.

Woosh...the ball dodges everything, nearly missing trees and bushes.

My blood boils as the bogeys are piling on.

Some of us play better than others.

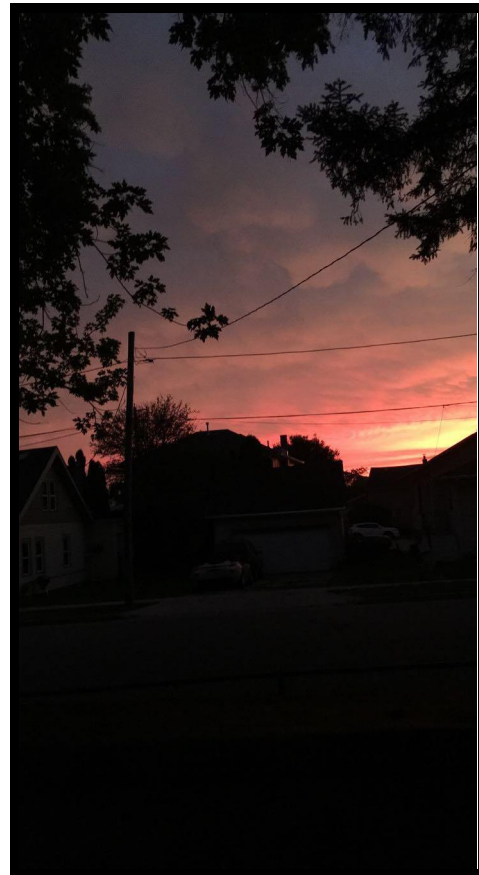
Nick stays calm as he wins the tournament in dramatic fashion.

As we return to the cabin we climb aboard the boat, we set off for the open water.

We devour our pizzas like animals after a long and grueling day.

The cool water washes all our golf course frustrations away.

We sit back and relax, wishing to stay at the cabin forever.



**Photo by Rachel Gebhard**

## Sunshine After a Storm

By Branigan McCloud

Anger and disappointment were  
built inside of me,  
after a long day of catching  
nothing cast after cast.  
I take a deep breath and feel my  
surroundings,  
there are a million aspects  
around me so I focus on one  
detail at a time.

The water calmly pushes  
around me as I sit,  
taking a moment to look at my  
surroundings.  
I feel the cool water on my legs,  
inside the kayak there was a  
puddle from splashing water.

The bright orange light in the  
sky was beaming down,  
lighting up everything in its path.  
The silky sheet of clouds in the  
sky,  
was the only thing between us.

Anger was just a disguise,  
for the beauty that was beyond  
that thin layer of clouds.  
It is always around us hiding,  
you just have to take off its  
mask to see.

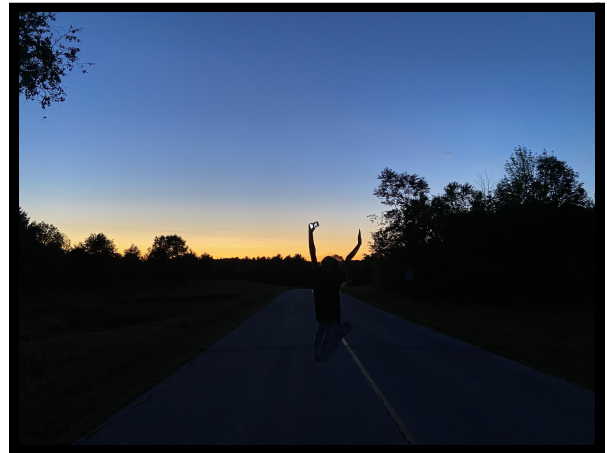


Photo by Joanne Brack

**Water**

**By SK**

*As I gently take steps,  
the warm grainy sand finds its way  
between my toes.*

*The cool breeze off the lake blows my hair,  
making it dance like a bunch of fairies.*

*The cool breeze travels up my spine making  
me shiver,*

*I'm cold.*

*I reach for his hand,  
our fingers interlock into one.*

*We feel the waves splashing up on our  
ankles,*

*The mist gets our pants wet.*

*The small seagull likes birds waddle,  
Their tiny feet leave imprints in the wet  
sand.*

*The deep grey clouds role in taking over  
the blue,*

*The deep blue water starts to rise.*

*Look way out,  
you can see where the sky and water kiss  
and become one.*

**High Above Chicago**

**By Max Steffen**

High above the chaos,  
with the streets beneath my feet.  
I only see a lonesome tree,  
amongst the human fleet.

High above the people,  
who are rushing about.  
I smell the bark, the sap, the soil.  
The bugs on branches shout.

High above the crowded streets,  
as day morphs into night.  
The green amongst the dimmest grey.  
The city's source of light.

High above the corner store,  
where it feels the city's chill.  
I feel remorse, it's all alone.  
Earth's hardest swallowed pill.

High above the dying home,  
concrete starts to fall.  
My eyes close, I begin to dream.  
A world with much less walls.

High above the jungle,  
where men were not as mean.  
The water smiles, the bushes dance.  
Like nothing I've ever seen

High above the wild,  
I fly like a bird in song.  
I sing about a better world,  
and where it all went wrong.

High above the fluffy ghosts,  
I wish this were all mine.  
But the only thing I truly see  
is one brown lonely pine.

High above the chaos,  
my eyes begin to cry.  
The lonely tree no longer stands.  
Oh why, cruel world,

oh why?





Photo by Joanne Brack

## **Wings of Faded Hope**

**By Abigail Mandick**

The thunderous noise of the black  
and white city rages on.

People perform the same routines  
day in and day out.

What a boring life it must be?  
What once was a world of beauty and color,  
is now a sickly gray shell of itself.  
I fly around, zigzagging around cars, and  
skyscrapers. My antennae sways with the  
breeze.

The dimmed sun shines dully on my  
intricately, colorful wings.

As I fly, people hardly take any  
notice of me, and it makes me wonder

Why?

Is there really no more joy left in this world?

These people have lost their way.

I fly endlessly, hoping for glimmers of hope,  
to strike happiness in someone's eyes,  
a sign to show me not everyone and  
everything has lost its color.

"Mommy look!" I hear.

I fly towards a little girl, bursting with joy at  
the sight of me.

"What is it?" she asks her mother.

Her mother looks at me and says to her  
daughter, "Something...different."  
I thought for a moment, that maybe, I had  
found something special.

Something that could help restore the  
world's beauty.

But just like that, in the blink of an eye. I  
was trapped.

Trapped in a little glass jar with holes poked  
on the lid.

The little girl screamed at her mother, "Let it  
go!" but the mother would not.

She looked at her daughter and said, "This  
thing doesn't belong in our world."

The hope I thought I found, turned against  
me — a cruel joke made at me by the  
universe.

My once beautiful wings fade to gray, and  
the thunderous noise of the city rages on.

## **Paradise**

**By Carson Neigum**

As I open the balcony doors to the wonder  
of Maui,  
the warm sun rays pierce through the  
clouds to gently touch my sleepy face.  
The cool ocean breeze reminds me that I'm  
in paradise.  
I take a deep breath and can feel the warm  
sea air fill up my lungs.

As I walk down to the beach,  
the vibrant, green palm trees sway in the  
soft, quiet breeze.  
The warm, white sand forms around my feet  
as I stroll closer to the ocean.  
I smell the cool water and can almost taste  
its saltiness.

As I take in the wonder of my surroundings,  
the most perfect rainbow glistens over the  
water.  
The vivid colors shine and light up the grey  
stormy sky.  
I know it's beauty brings a smile to all the  
life that sees it.

As I admire the beauty of the ocean,  
I see small waves forming not far from the  
shore.  
I see them roll and turn as white as the  
clouds.  
I picture the tiny colorful fish that explore the  
sharp, picturesque coral below.

As I peer out as far as the eye can see,  
I notice the vast ocean glimmering like the  
starry night sky.  
I notice the seemingly untouched Island of  
Moloka'i in the distance  
and imagine how peaceful it must be.



**Photo by Carson Neigum**

## **FENCES**

### **By Dennis Fanning**

What is the wonder of nature,  
to a child living in a prison?  
In an orphanage with bars on windows,  
with a fence that keeps you in?

Where is the wonder of nature,  
when you can't see past your dirty window?  
When your view of nature is clouded,  
by cement walls and brick buildings?

Locked inside, there is no wonder.  
Fenced in, there is no nature.  
Confined, there is no freedom.  
Alone, there is no hope.

But then one day everything changes.  
I am 11.  
Fences disappear.  
I am adopted.

I now have a family and my family loves nature.  
They teach me the wonder of it by camping,  
hiking, exploring.  
They show me the beauty of it by traveling,  
climbing, soaring.  
The world is bigger and more stunning than I  
could have ever imagined.

Now I cling to my dad on a mountaintop, a sheer  
cliff inches away.  
The roaring Colorado River rushes in a perfect  
arc below.  
The desert land stretches out so far in front of  
me I can't even see where it ends.  
I feel the mighty wind blowing up from the deep  
gorge beneath.

There is nothing surrounding me but miles of  
soft blue sky and rocky land.  
The emerald green river showing off as it rounds  
the bend.  
Boulders the size of cars look like tiny pebbles  
from my rocky perch.  
I am so high above the ground that birds below  
me dance and glide and search.

Nature is smiling and asking me, "Where are  
your fences now?"  
Nature is boasting, "Can you see my beauty?"  
Nature is screaming, "Can you feel my  
freedom?"  
Nature is asking, "Do you now understand my  
wonder?"



**Photo by Dennis Fanning**

## **Morning Mountain**

**By Tanner Bence**

It all  
begins  
quite early  
and the chilly wind  
whistles through my body.

Although, peace overflows my senses.

The sound of silence floods the mountains  
in Vail Colorado, even though hundreds of people  
gather to experience the beauty of the morning  
mountains.

The sky's  
ranges with a white  
and blue to the yellow  
shine of the sun, as I wonder,  
Is there anywhere else I'd rather be.  
The warmth on the sun presses against my cold  
face  
as it comes up from behind the mountains in the  
distance.

The view  
opens my eyes  
beyond their limits.  
Unexplainable, even a picture  
couldn't do the justice. The elevation  
takes my breath away but the thought of  
being at the best place on earth leaves me  
breathless.

My skis  
meet the snow,  
as the chairlift reaches  
the peak of the mountain.  
The groomer engraves the  
snow placing a corduroy pattern into it.

A smile  
reaches from  
ear to ear, as I begin  
sliding down the smooth slope.  
The feeling of laying the first arcs  
in the snow: the one I wish would never go away.

The  
sensation of  
the first run leaves  
me in awe. My body, filled  
with chills, slowly begins to  
warm. The satisfaction lives beyond my  
wish but I accept this with much gratitude.

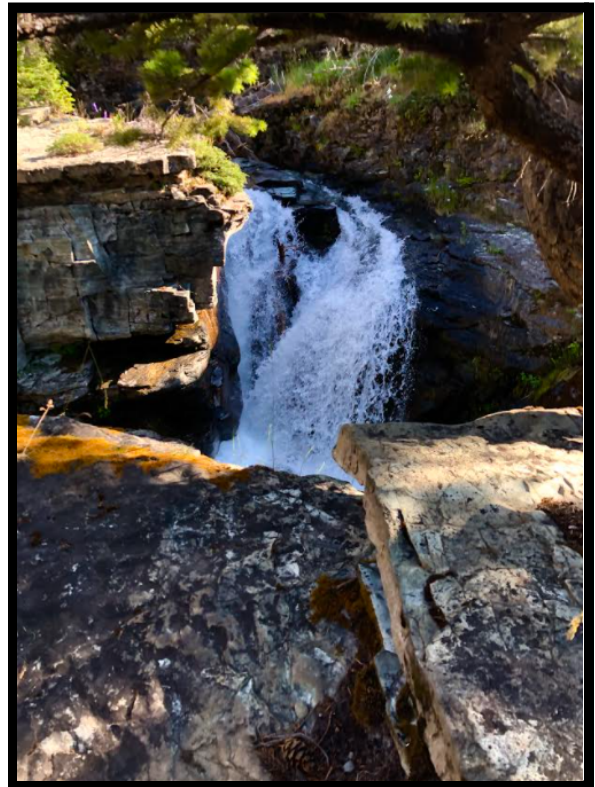


Photo by Aeden Shallue

## **Muertos**

**By Kevin Jiang**

A ghostly hand bursts from the  
ground, it's thin and bony  
Like grandma's fingers, dry and  
cracked all the way.  
I remember her favorite food, a hot  
bowl of chicken soup  
From the ground blooms a specter,  
it's thin and delicate  
It asks "did someone say chicken  
soup? I laugh  
Grandma looks a lot thinner than  
before.

## **The Roar**

**By Paxton Reading**

The bright sun peaks out from behind the monstrous mountain, through the trees the sun glistens.

As we walk the trail I hear the snap of twigs and crunch of pine needles under my feet.

The wind whistles through the trees with the chatter of the squirrels and the chirps of the birds.

In the distance the sound of the waterfall pounds like the heartbeat of the world.

In wonder of this beautiful place, I go into a trance thinking...

“Colin, stay on the path!” my mom says, snapping me out of my thoughts.

We continue to walk; the altitude starts to get me. It feels like I'm trying to breathe through a thick mask, trying to inhale as much air as possible. Almost there.

As I turn around the last corner the sun hits me; my eyes adjust, and I stare in awe at the gorgeous waterfall.

The water rushes down the rocks, creating the roar that we can hear for miles, smashing into the lake at the bottom creating massive waves, crashing into the rocky shoreline.

The trees towering over me creating a fragrance like no other.

I take a deep breath and savor the sweet moment.

The red sun setting slowly.

Glowing down on a wonder of nature, illuminating the night sky. As we go back down the mountain I catch one last glimpse of the sun disappearing behind the marvelous mountain.



**Photo By Paxton Reading**

**Wild Frontier**  
**By Alec Phillips**

*I can't see the beauty below me,  
the cliff rolls down the steep  
mountain.  
The leaves of the evergreens so perfect,  
engulf the beauty below in a dark  
shadow.*

*I lift my gaze from below me  
I can see the other side of the valley.  
The glare of the rocks so bright,  
you wonder why they call it  
Yellowstone.*

*I hear the roar of the water,  
as it falls down the mountain.  
I can see the river twist and turn,  
the water splashing and crashing.*

*I hear the whisper of the wind carrying the  
sound of nature.  
The sound of the breeze is calming my  
thoughts.  
I can finally see what nature is capable of,  
on this old Western Frontier.*

*I feel the sun beam down on me.  
  
My muscles are relaxed and my skin is  
warm.  
I have to leave soon,  
but I can't forget this memory*

**Years of a Bird**  
**By Annaliese Bero**

Amidst the sea of green, there lies a single  
spot of blue.  
Though fragile, so much depends on that  
spot.

What started as a full moon turns into a  
quarter,  
and the fragile egg starts to crack.  
Piece by piece the shell breaks  
Finally, life bursts out.  
Out comes the frail little being...  
defenseless against any predator.  
Vulnerable to the dangers of the woods.

The moon returns to its full state.  
Now twice the size, and learning to survive.  
Wandering away from home.  
Scavenging for food on the forest floor.  
Mom high in the tree,  
jumping out of the nest.  
Siblings following along.  
Taking the big leap.  
Flapping your wings,  
and hoping to be okay.

The moon, now an oblong form.  
A newfound faith in itself,  
no longer fearing flight.  
Fending for itself.  
Soaring great distances in the sky.  
Building a home for its family.  
Teaching the young how to survive.  
Independent and capable.

Finally, the moon is nowhere to be seen.  
Little ones fly away.  
Feeling all alone.  
Finding it hard to fly.  
Stranded at the bottom of the tree.  
Unable to see,  
struggling to survive,  
old frail bird,  
defenseless against any predator.  
Vulnerable to the dangers of the world.

**The Wonder of Waterfalls**  
**By Sarah Larson**

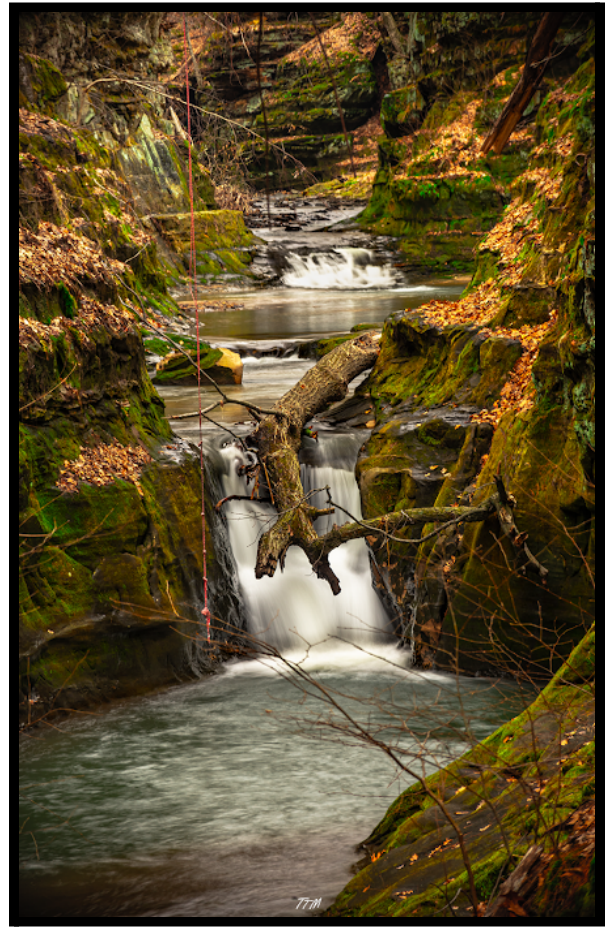
Walking into Pewits Nest,  
I could feel the time of leaving my mind.  
I could hear the faint rushing,  
the water smashing.

The spring breeze rushed through my fine  
hair,  
turning my face to a pale red.  
The fresh air gave a rush of adrenaline as  
we walked,  
pushing me farther in the wonder of what  
would come next.

We got to the falls as I looked down I could  
see the most beautiful thing,  
the crystal blue water hitting the rocks with  
a smash.  
As if they had a clear propose,  
the water moves in perfect rhythm.

Down by the falls, the canopy of green  
glowing trees enclosed us in,  
the light would break the canopy every time  
the wind would rush through.  
Showing glimpses of the spring sun,  
the tall trees would move in the rhythm like  
ballet dancers on stage.

You can see the leftover imprint of the  
people before,  
in the red rope that dangled over the  
perfect pool of water.  
The mossy rocks from the water hitting and  
then leaving behind the residue,  
making the climb back harder than before.



**Photo by Sarah Larson**

## **The Songs of Nature**

**By Sidney Heberlein**

The brilliant morning sun creeps through the tattered, bug-covered blinds as I slowly drift to consciousness. Outside, boisterous creatures hum the alluring songs of nature, establishing the calming ambiance.

I wander outside, the pebbles scrape my shoes, the crisp crackle of fallen leaves crunch with every step. Nature's songs, now bolder, trill in my ears and guide me into a state of newfound wonder.

The remote wooden cabins, set on magnificent Muskie Lake in northern Wisconsin, seem like settlers' shelters from centuries past, like little lake houses laboriously lined along the water.

I walk towards the pier, the drip of a fish hook splashing into the undisturbed water. "Reel it in!" shouts my uncle. They finally caught one. The unfortunate fish flops frantically, stripped from its habitat. But, it lives another day; the fish makes a splash, gladly returning home.

Like the lucky fish, I, too, must return home. I survey the surrounding roads as I snap back to reality. Still, my mind wanders to the wonders of the wooded sanctuary up north.

As I awake the next morning in the familiar coziness of my covers, mournfully, cars, not creatures, chirr outside.

## **Blissful Bluffs**

**By Avery Snedden**

*Looking out the backseat window, I feel shivers.*

*The large stone bluffs filled with greenery appear more abundant as I move closer. As I dance out of the minivan, I get a whiff of the crisp summer breeze.*

*Trembling to the top of the large mountain-like structure, the air becomes more difficult to breathe with each step up. As I look to my left at the golden horizon, the sky glistens, like jewelry in a showcase.*

*Where the air is light and has a sweet taste, I can see the winding rivers below. Drops falling from the canopy saturate my shirt, as I look around at the endless beauty surrounding me.*

*The steep stretching walk down was eerie, causing the hair on the back of my neck to stand up as I make my way down. Shivers ran down my spine when I made it back to the minivan, dancing and music was the script for the rest of the night.*



## Signaling a New Day

By Sierra Pellegrini and Sophia Weitner

### **Rising Sun.**

The crystalline morning rays hover over me.  
I soak in the eager haze, almost tasting it.  
Painting a vibrant hue across the sky,  
golden shimmers of light fade into darkness.

Bright pinks, oranges, and yellows glow,  
bringing me peace.

Sunsets are to me a comfort, a reminder of  
beauty left in the world.

The broad streaks of color throughout the  
sky show me how amazing the universe is.

The cool, evening breeze surrounds me as I  
sit watching the Colorado sky turn pink and  
purple.

The dimming sun slipping behind the tall  
mountains, signaling that a new day is up  
ahead.

I hear the fading chirping of crickets and  
bugs as the dark night grows closer and  
closer. **Setting Sun.**

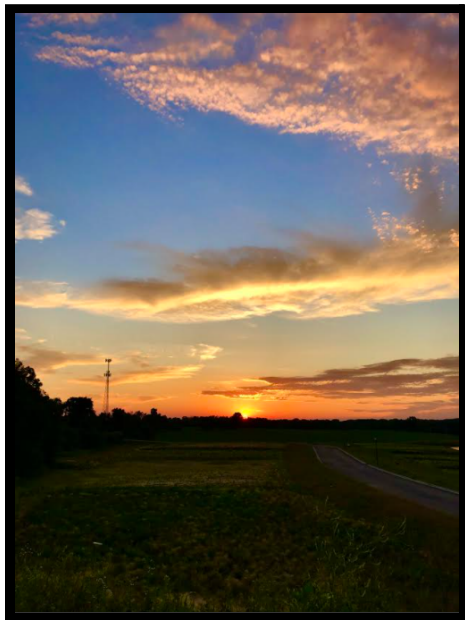


Photo by Aeden Shallue

## Baseball

By AJ

*What am I?*

*I am a sphere made of tanned leather.*

*I am wite leather stitched in red.*

*I am used for the joy of many people.*

*I see the batter's hands tightening on the  
handle of the bat.*

*I see the field with its crisp white painted  
lines.*

*I see the roaring stands!*

*I see the excitement!*

*I smell the grass freshly mowed in its  
perfect checkered pattern.*

*I smell the burgers and brats.*

*I am the thrilling urge to scream!*

*I am the loyal, dedicated fans.*

*I am the hardworking players that make a  
team.*

*I am the field.*

*I am the beauty of baseball!*

## **Beauty is Pain**

**By Jade Stefan**

*The dark, cold, Wisconsin water is still,  
and allows the pontoon to slice the lake like a knife.  
We must travel to the island by boat,  
as we cover our exposed skin from the frigid winds.  
Bundled up in sweatshirts two sizes too big,  
my cousins and I stumble off the boat like newborn  
giraffes.  
After placing overnight bags inside,  
I grab the lighter to ignite the dry, wooden logs that  
lay in the campfire.  
My loved ones gather around the brightly-lit fire, as  
the dazzling stars dance in the black sky above.  
We hear the waves crash into the dock,  
as the leaves of the surrounding trees dance in the  
minimal breeze.  
We take in the absence of city lights,  
as the large burnt orange moon peeks through the  
darkness on Shawano Lake.  
So large we could reach out and touch it.  
My mom wishes for a better view,  
as she walks with a spring in her step towards the  
dock.  
She stumbles as she seizes the moment with her  
camera, falling on the rocks and scraping her shin.  
We rush her inside to wipe off the fresh blood  
as she proclaims, "I'm okay, let's go back to the fire."  
Disappointed is an understatement when we glance  
at her phone,  
as the photo itself is not worth the blood sacrificed.  
We chuckle returning to the open-air,  
as we savor the remainder of warmth the fire  
brings.  
The moon had humbled us once again,  
learning that beauty comes with pain.*

## **The Euphoric Dream**

**By Ashley Fancher**

The cool, brisk air fills my lungs with every  
breath I take. The air is idyllic. Still.  
Flourishing, verdant evergreen trees  
surround my sight with snow on the tip of  
every branch. It was like setting my eyes  
upon a divine sight.  
I was in a dream.  
I have a panoramic view of the snowy valley  
below. The sight entrances me.  
In the distance are vast, majestic  
mountains.  
I was seeing a dream.  
Silence reigned over the mountain. It  
seemed lifeless and took the breath of eyes  
upon it. Still.  
The mountain's spirit lay dormant. It's  
heavenly presence sweeps through my  
mind.  
I walked through the pristine, white snow, it  
sparkled as the sun hit it.  
I was walking on a dream.  
I yearn for the days where I can go back to  
the mountain. We are acquainted.  
The vivid colors are entangled in my mind.  
The colors that remind me of the first time  
we met.  
I was living the dream.  
Hallucinations cloud my mind and I am  
snapped back into reality.  
The mountain is no longer dormant. Anger  
takes over as fierce winds move the trees.  
The spirit of the mountain lays awake.  
I was once in a dream.



**Photo by Aeden Shallue**

## **Lover Akin**

### **By Anonymous**

I am in a tumultuous sea.  
Black waters rise to embrace me,  
To pull me to the deep  
Where icy, slapping waves will toss my body and  
trash my soul.  
Violent obsession -  
Wishing to swallow me whole.  
As the waves kiss my face,  
They nip and bite.  
As the waves roughly embrace,  
Taste my skin and tears,  
They spill into an asylum -  
The refuge of my lungs -  
To silence my screams  
And revel in darkness  
Where they emerged.  
Stormy ocean,  
My dark lover akin with Hell.

The icy currents,  
They rashly gambol  
In the deep.  
They tumble and twirl  
In an anxious ballet.  
They're comets shooting through space,  
Ribbons lost to the wind,  
And when they collide  
All their force turns to chains.  
Chains that tether me to the deep.  
Frigid chains wrought with my anguish,  
Taunting my despair.  
I am trapped in a tumultuous sea.

I am an apprentice of Sisyphus,  
A sister of Tantalus,  
A daughter of Asphodel.  
Doomed am I,  
To the confines of this  
Black, eternal abyss.  
Must I surrender to it?  
My jailor, my killer?  
Must I go without my last friend  
In this world, forgotten,  
The horizon?  
Have I ascertained that  
The stars are so emphatically  
Beyond my reach  
I may never admire them again?

The world around me is  
Lightless and lifeless.  
The world around me has  
Ensnared me in the depths.

I know if I fight I will drown,  
But I will drown either way.  
So I fight.  
I contort in my vast cell;  
Praying the abyss  
Will sympathize with my pleas.  
I fight and I fight;  
I fight until the waters  
Taste of iron.  
I fight and I fight;  
I fight until Hestia has fled -  
Her eternal flame extinguished.  
I fight and I fight;  
But I can fight no more.  
I fight and I fight;  
Until sand tickles me.

Like the soft flutter of first love,  
The warm sanguine trickle  
Of blood sacrificed  
By Eros's bolt;  
In pain I have found solace.  
The bank of a welcoming shore  
Knelt by my feet.  
Worshipful saviors -  
Faithful deposits of  
Color and warmth  
In this desolate abyss,  
Raise me  
To the horizon I beg for.  
I plead with you  
Faithful deposits of  
Color and warmth:  
Slice through  
These shackles woven tight.  
Pull me from the deep,  
Raise me to a warm home  
And nurture my soul.  
Gentle friend,  
Let me be whole.  
Let the sun kiss my face  
And let the grass caress me.  
Let rain by the wine in my cup  
And let your fruits be my banquet;  
Let me revel in the open Earth.  
I plead with you  
Warm island,  
My lover akin with hope.

I plead with you  
My Clair De Lune.

## **All Dried Up**

**By Lauren Porter**

The ground is as dry as coal.  
The sun beats and melts our skin.  
The ground looks like rust, dark brown and dry,

Shoes smell like hot rubber, burning our noses.  
We walk on what feels like asphalt.  
Following a map in a foreign state.

With water on our back, Lexy and I start the  
adventure up,  
but first, we traverse through the rocky terrain.  
With every step there comes a "Crunch,"

One too many turns and end up on the steep,  
rocky trail.  
Cacti sit alongside us, watching as we sweat.  
Legs pull, ache and burn as we complete  
another incline.

Hill after hill, mountain after mountain, with little  
to no shade.  
We take sips of water to cure our thirst.  
We stop at the only shade on the mountain.

Lexy sits, as I pace to keep from cramping.  
Sunscreen sweat off, we apply more to keep our  
skin from blistering.  
We are determined to finish what we started.

As the peak in in sight, a burst of adrenaline hits  
us,  
we rush up to view what feels like the top of the  
world.  
Tired and dehydrated, all drifted out of mind,

We see buildings that look like sheds,  
houses that look like dust,  
cars that look like chaotic ants.  
Perhaps we won't ever be back.  
Afterall, moments only happen once.  
So, we take it all in with a breathe,  
Breathing out we exhale our gratitude for this  
beautiful world that we call home. How beautiful  
is our world

## **The Beauty of The Island**

**By Mason Krznarich**

High up in the mountains of the British Virgin  
Islands gazing,  
into aquamarine water, the salt aroma fills my  
nose.

Mile by mile, I ascend up the mountain in our  
van;  
the wind gets stronger and now I only smell a  
faint smell of the salty water.

The bottom of my feet throb in pain; I climb the  
steep hill,  
as I sit in silence. My jaw drops when I get to the  
top.

The motor still running, I jump out of the van to  
look;  
and stare into the dark green treetops and the  
cascading blue water.

The sun beats down on my already red face,  
as my eyes squint to see the beauty of the  
island.  
The admirable land dances in the wind,  
I see repairs happening after the hurricane  
ripped through the land.

The gravel crunches as I walk over it to get back  
to the car,  
as the motor gets running again I stop for one  
last picture.

The car starts rolling and the engine gets hot,  
as we roll down the hill back to the ship.  
The land flattens out and my ears crackle once  
more,  
as my eyes start to close I wake up to the sound  
of the ship's horns.

The loud blast of Disney horns sounds we slid  
out of the car one by one,  
as the ship's horn still blasts my ears we say our  
final goodbyes.

The ship departs from the beautiful island of  
Tortola,  
as I waste every bit of energy running to the top  
to wave goodbye.  
The night falls and fireworks boom from the top  
deck, as we set sail to another adventure  
tomorrow morning

## **The Crisis**

### **By Anonymous**

I am a human being,  
My heart beats, my brain thinks, my vessel is working  
I am a citizen,  
I go to school, I go to work, my life is moving  
I am a person,  
My friends are with me, my family is present, my heart is full  
However, despite knowing what I am  
I am confused.  
I can see who I am, I know who I am, but at the same time I can't.  
I am lost in this world, I am lost in my world.  
I am a human being,  
But what does that mean?  
Who are you asking?  
I am a number,  
One in seven billion people, born to live.  
I am a life,  
One in seven billion people, living to die.  
I am a soul  
Living in a vessel, to be freed when my time comes.  
I am a vessel  
A temple of flesh and bone, a roadmap of blood and cells, a home for my mind.  
I am a human being  
I am a citizen  
I am a person  
I am somebody who's never been a person before,  
But does that really matter to anyone else but me?  
I am a number  
I am a life  
I am a soul  
I am a vessel  
I am special, but I am small  
I am different, but I am uniform  
I am new, but I am recycled  
I am what I am  
Until the bitter end  
If that's the case, then why do I care so much?

## **Untitled**

### **By Virus Mennen**

I am not a person who fits into the crowd,  
for to stick out is my route  
I am not kind to others, for I have a tendency to smother them without a single mutter  
I am not one to speak up and shout, but to read the situation before one single word comes out  
I am not the type of person to speak my thoughts, for most stop when my thoughts are caught  
I am not someone who likes to share my work, for everyone who reads seems to leave hurt  
I am not interested in drama, for my brain makes it seem like watching a lama  
I am not a person to eat unhealthy food, for unhealthy seems to do everything but good  
I am not turned away by a long book, for I find joy in making my brain shook  
I am not using my time to make my grades better, for grades to me are just a letter  
I am not living a life without excitement, but everyday my body feels a bit frightened  
I am not bothered by comments of others, for peoples opinions are for another  
  
I am not a sheep but I am a wolf  
If you comment sly, I might eat you alive  
Slowly but surely you will start to cry  
In the end I won't even care when your heart dies

## **I Remember**

**By Gabriella Zalewski**

*To my past self...*

*Do you remember the overwhelming feeling of utter sadness?*

*Do you remember how hopeless you felt, with nowhere to go but down?*

*Do you remember when you got that phone call from Mom?*

*Do you remember how your stomach dropped to the floor?*

*Do you remember how you thought you would never be okay?*

*You would never be able to live without him.*

*The one person who made me feel confident.*

*The one person who could brighten any mood.*

*The one person who loved to play cribbage more than anyone else.*

*The one person who drove to play cards most mornings no matter the weather.*

*The one person who always peeled my oranges even if I could do it myself.*

*The one person who made me Cheerios with blueberries and added extra sugar in my bowl when Nana wasn't looking.*

*The one person who delivered the paper every day just to get some exercise.*

*The one person who told me I was getting more beautiful every time he saw me.*

*The one person who always watched tv with me before bed.*

*The one person who was most excited to see me when we came to visit.*

*The one person who was there to support me no matter which path I decided to take in life.*

*The one person I didn't get to say goodbye to.*

*Losing him was the hardest thing.*

*I didn't think I would be okay.*

*I didn't think I would be able to handle the pain, it would be too much.*

*I didn't think there would be a night that I didn't cry, every time I thought about him.*

*Sometimes when I call Nana I still think you'll pop on the phone to say hi to me, or that your name will be on the letters she sends*

*I wish I could talk to you.*

*I wish I could hear your voice one last time.*

*I wish I could hear you tell me how proud you are of me.*

*I wish you could watch me walk across the stage at graduation.*

*I wish I could give you the biggest hug, you used to hold me so tight.*

*I wish I could have you back.*

*I wish that I could have all of this, but I know I can't,*

*I know that I won't be able to*

*But with time,*

*The pain has slowly decreased.*

*It's not gone, it never will be.*

*But I know and have accepted I will never be able to talk to you again.*

*I know you are happy.*

*I know your pain is gone, you stayed so strong.*

*I know you stayed strong for us.*

*I know you are watching over me with every step I take.*

*I know you miss us too.*

## **Once Upon a Time**

**By Alicia Bouton**

Once upon a time...  
There was a girl, young, blonde hair,  
blue eyes  
She didn't know where she went wrong  
or where she went right  
Why did Daddy never come home to  
meet her?  
There's a picture Mommy printed out  
when she was little  
Daddy and his dog  
Where is Daddy?  
Does he love this dog more than he  
loves me?

Once upon a time...  
The guy Mommy met is always coming  
in and out  
He used to be nice, bringing over  
puzzles and coloring books  
Now he just gets mad and yells  
Mommy has a new baby in her stomach  
But he doesn't like that

Once upon a time...  
Mommy divorced the mean man  
I only see Brother every other week  
Its quiet, so still in here  
No more yelling, it's an uncomfortable  
norm.

Once upon a time...  
Mom tells me we are moving to a place  
called Oklahoma  
It's so far away  
I have to leave my friends, family,  
brother, everyone... behind  
We are moving for a man I have only  
met once  
At least when I met him he was nice

Once upon a time...  
The man lied, he lost his nice  
personality  
I don't see Mom much anymore  
The Mom I once knew was left in  
Wisconsin  
I feel alone, trapped, forgotten  
No friends, no Brother, no Mom, no  
Everyone  
Just me  
Who do I tell about the mean kids at  
school?

Once upon a time...  
Continuous bullying is breaking me  
down  
Yet someone threatened to beat me up  
They told me where I lived  
Finally, Mom cares again

Once upon a time...  
Mom turned back to not caring  
I told her I hate the lying man  
He mentally abuses me  
Mom says he doesn't mean the words  
he speaks  
I just want to go home

Once upon a time...  
Mom broke up with the lying man  
Grandpa is here to take us  
Home has never felt so good

## Untitled

**By Cara Wellentin**

### *The Man Above*

*A little girl in this big world, admires those  
around her.*

*She feels scared, sitting in her room alone,  
laying on her bed.*

*But when she finds Him, she finds herself  
and her self-worth.*

### *Mother*

*From birth my mother cares, just like her  
own mom cares for her,  
nothing but love, carried down, during the  
hard and easy times.*

*"Hey mom, how's grandma?" She's gone  
honey, she says balling.*

### *Grandma*

*Sitting on her lap, she looks up, admires, with  
eyes wide open.*

*She smells her perfume, like brown sugar.*

*Nothing bad can happen.*

*She repeats herself. She repeats herself no  
less than eight times. Why her God?*

## Anchor At the Bottom

**By Dakota Williams**

Distorted truths, I was hemmed in.  
Unconscious feelings; he linked to me.

Broken together, he sank my heart.  
His boat rocked. I was the new anchor.

At rock bottom, hard truth hit.  
I cut the rope; anchor no more.



**Photo by Caroline Martin**



**Untitled**

**By Jordan Reneau**

The night was young growing older  
The air was fresh  
The moon was bright and shining  
The chatter and laughter of everyone  
brighten the mood  
The the grass was green even, thought it  
was dark the moon brought enough light to  
see it  
We walked up from the dock towards the  
house  
Going step after step  
I notice a little patch of grass  
I thought it would be a great idea to just go  
and lay there with her  
I grabbed her hand a guided her to the  
patch  
We laid down on the soft perfectly cut grass  
As we looked up we realized we were in the  
perfect position and place to see the stars.  
As if the stars were lined up on purpose for  
this night.  
We were in a patch between where the  
trees cOnnected, and there it was, just a  
little circle that we could see the stars  
From behind us was some flitters of light  
from the house  
Down by the dock you could ever softly here  
people talking  
The wind was perfectly warm  
There was not one mesquite harassing us  
It was just me and her  
And I look at her as she laid right beside me  
She has this beautiful smile  
Her eyes were the most perfect blue  
especially what the moon and bright stars  
Then I looked back at the stars and just laid  
there

While my heart began to experience  
something I never experience with a person  
My heart felt at ease  
The situation left my body In complete  
happiness  
Eventually we did get back up as people  
from the dock came up



**Photo by Jordan Reneau**

**December 31, 2020**

**By Oliver Lee**

I feel as if the whole world is laughing at an inside joke and i'm the only one who doesn't understand.

i am stumbling through life—

please, god, help me up.

do i believe in god?

gods kept me alive when i was twelve and i never thanked them for it.

do i thank people, for saving my life?

i used to scoff at people who believe in god, but why not?

it's comforting, in a way.

i don't know if god-with-a-capital-g is the one i believe in,

and none of the traditions or rituals or beliefs appeal to me.

("i believe he exists, i just don't think he needs to be worshipped.")

(i have seen too much evil to believe in god.)

still, i hope someone is out there, tallying the world's sins,

a silent observer, incapable of interfering, recording for all of eternity;

a silent observer, cheering me on, whispering his hands through my hair, the only thing he can do

to help me through this dark night.

i used to believe only one person in the world loved me unconditionally. but it turns out i took that for granted, and she doesn't. and yet others seem to. i had to open my heart to see it, but others opened theirs in response.

i think people actually like me.

i want people to like me.

i want to spread love and kindness and i want love and kindness in return.

i don't think that makes me greedy. i think that makes me fair.

what is fair? what is justice? we seem to be struggling with this concept for quite some time.

an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind. (there are other senses. and maybe a change of scenery would do us some good.)

it's almost 11pm and i still have much to do. but perhaps that will be done in 2021. i think i will sign out for the year.

**Untitled**  
**By Virus Mennen**

*Pretty place, I hold the hand of a person I  
cannot escape*

*Pretty eyes, he is staring right at my face, his  
brown eyes tame*

*Beautiful, her face soft like rain, but she's hiding  
all the pain*

## Life

**By Jack Rovin**

With no map, I can't find my path. My  
compass cracked, I lose my mind.  
Fear builds and I'm afraid. Where should I  
go? I wish I knew.  
Life's stressful n' decisions are hard,  
especially  
picking a major.

## Comic

**By B.K.**

*Laughter swells, my joke landed  
I smile with pride at my success  
It's funny when I do that voice  
When I nail that one impression  
They like when I play the jester  
So I keep my struggles at home*

## Untitled

**By Delany Bennett**

My grandmother  
with a delicate voice,  
almost like glass,  
always sharing stories.  
Stories you can see through the wrinkles on  
her face.  
Wrinkles like a map,  
a map of intertwining cities, places, and  
people.  
Stories of her family members, her mother,  
father, and siblings,  
most who have passed but alive in her  
mind.  
Stories of her old friends and her life when  
she was younger.  
Reciting the stories while she sits on her  
favorite couch,  
the couch so old yet worn in perfectly from  
everyone who has sat on it.  
She sits there with her eyes so blue and  
wide almost like a frosted lake,  
smelling like cigarettes and perfume,  
a strong perfume that reminds me of rain  
and flowers.  
She ends her stories and she smiles,  
reminiscing on memories she will never  
forget.

**Even the Sun Needs Her Moon**  
**By Madeleine Sayaovang**

I am the sun blooming behind the morning clouds.

I endeavor to also make flowers bloom,  
To help lost souls start their day.

But I too need, as the sun needs its moon,  
I too need a reason to bloom.  
He is my moon, my reason to bloom;  
To bloom, not into a flower, but to bloom into  
a beautiful soul.

**A Mans Best Friend**  
**By Jacob Groth**

When I take my dog for a walk I feel at ease.

As I walk I can feel the winter breeze.  
My back shivers as I hit a gust of wind.  
The snow crunches under my feet.  
J. Cole fills my ears as I walk to the beat.  
My dog tugs me along at a fast pace.  
As I become unable to feel my face.  
I take a right turn, on the way towards home  
When I walk my dog, i'm never alone.

**I am Human**  
**By Jamilah Arabiyat**

*I am human. With likes and dislikes.*

*I dislike rude people and like cats.*

*I dislike mushrooms but like pickles.*

*I dislike hamburgers but like pasta.*

*But I'll eat whatever I'm given.*

*I am human. A human who listens to music that is styled to my emotions.*

*For good days there's "Good Days". For exam days there is instrumental music.*

*I am a human with wild music taste. I do not have a favorite artist or even a favorite genre.*

*I am a human who listens to everything and anything, from R&B to Rap to Latin to Pop*

*I am a human who has dreams. Dreams that, in my opinion, are achievable*

*I am a human with a dream to become a nurse. To become someone who can help others.*

*I am a human who dreams of traveling. Of visiting at least two countries in every continent. Of learning languages and understanding cultures.*

*I am a human with a big family. A family that lives all over the world.*

*I am the oldest of 8 siblings, despite being the shortest, they all look up to me as a role model*

*I am a daughter of immigrants from Jordan. The country, not the shoe*

*The child of hardworking people who strive for a better future.*

*I am a human who appreciates family and friends. One who appreciates hard work and kindness. One who appreciates sacrifice and equality.*

*I am a human being.*

## Darkness

**By Zachary Fitzgerald**

The black of darkness in a deep hole  
Covered by dirt, I can't escape  
I reach forward but deeper I go  
My eyes have now become useless  
My senses have become blurred  
I don't know where I am  
I see a beam of light  
And a hand reaches towards me  
My ears ring with the sound of a middle school  
bell  
The light grows bigger  
And my mom tells me, "wake up, time for school!"

## Untitled

**By Anonymous**

*When I go driving with friends,  
It feels like you are just flowing through the air,  
Hovering above the ground.*

*The smell of gas at the gas station,  
Seeing the open roads in the dark,  
It feels like we are the water flowing in a river.*

*The music coming through the speakers,  
Hearing the tires on the ground,  
Hitting the bumps in the roads.*

*We all are having fun,  
We all are excited,  
We want to keep going forever.*

*Going out and getting food,  
All talking about how nice it was,  
Talking about the night being euphoric.*

*As the night ends we all drive home,  
We put the cars in our garage,  
We all fall asleep with smiles on our faces*

## The Little Things

**By Nataile Makovec**

I am the little things  
The fresh scent of fresh clothes out of the  
dryer  
The warmth of the inside after a long day  
out in the cold  
The first sip of coffee in the morning  
The feeling when someone remembers  
something you told them  
The moment you realize you still have time  
to sleep before your alarm goes off  
The song you forgot existed  
The perfect nap  
The random burst of laughter you get when  
you remember a funny memory  
The smile you see on someone you love  
The colorful sunset after a day of cloudy  
skies

I am the little things  
The little things that brings people  
happiness



**Photo  
By  
Lucas  
Brown**

## **Yaya Showed Me Everything Would Be okay**

**By Anonymous**

**Award Winner**

I remember how everything was a deep gray in my eyes.

The royal blue sky, the kelly green grass, the skyscraper trees toppling over me.

I remember slowly driving home in the sterling convertible with the top locked and closed.

Always closed and locked, blocking me from the beauty that the world brought.

I didn't want to see it. I couldn't see it.

I remember how I felt. Grief-stricken.

Blinders on while driving the agonizing 20 minutes it took to get home.

I remember the way I walked in the door. Slowly, almost zombie-like.

I slugged my backpack down, and stared out the window. Exhausted.

I remember counting up the days that had passed since her funeral.

Sixteen. The same number in years that I was alive.

I remember walking out the back patio door.

I looked to the gray of the sky, and quietly prayed in my head for god to bring me something other than misery.

I remember the clouds moved slowly to reveal the bright sky, as if parted by the hands of Moses himself.

The sun shined down. Warming my soul. I knew it was her, and I cried.

She was always able to turn heads when entering a room.

I remember how I felt.

The tear washed over me, I felt clean. I walked to the tallish green grass, and I sat in it.

I remember somehow it was soft yet spiky.

It hadn't been cut since she passed, so it tickled when I layed down.

I looked up at the new cloudless sky, and I talked to her.

I remember it all felt different. She was everywhere, and in all the colors.

My mood shifted from a dark, melancholic blue and into the yellow of her favorite corduroy jacket.

I remember thinking it was strange how fast my mood shifted.

I saw the world bright and in vivid color.

I remembered how she showed me that kind of beauty should always be noticed, and never overlooked.

I thought of her. My grandmother. My Yaya.

The woman who was part of the Little Rock Garden Club back in Arkansas, and the West Little Rock Optimist Club.

Her obituary stated, *She instilled in her children and grandchildren a sense of wonder about the world.*

I remember gardening with her, and how she taught me never to take the flowers for granted.

Their beauty in her hazel eyes was recognized as therapy.

I remember getting in my car.

I unlocked the convertible top. I opened it up.

The day was brighter than heaven, where she now resides.

I didn't put on sunglasses. I wanted to see the world in color, with no possible filter.

I drove aimlessly for hours, talking to the royal blue sky, the kelly green grass, and the skyscraper trees.

Everything was so beautiful. She was so beautiful.



**Photo By Anonymous**

**I Will Never Forget**

**By Anonymous**

**Award Winner**

I remember the way your hands felt in  
mine

I remember how your face would twitch  
every time you fell asleep in my arms

I remember the times you came over to  
see me in the dead of night

I remember how your hands felt on my  
waist as we slowly danced in the empty  
parking lot

I remember every single kiss, hug, and  
touch you gave me as if it was yesterday

I remember the way your voice used to  
crack wherever you said

“I love you”



**Photo by Aeden Shallue (Award Winner)**

# SKINNY POEMS

*SHORT POEMS CONSISTING OF ELEVEN LINES. THE FIRST AND ELEVENTH LINES CAN BE ANY LENGTH BUT THE LAST LINE MUST USE THE SAME WORDS AS THE FIRST. THE SECOND, SIXTH, AND TENTH LINES ARE IDENTICAL.*



Untitled

*By Jacob Bleuel*

*That feeling,  
uncontrollable  
freezing  
incredible  
stupid  
uncontrollable  
broken  
tears  
wrenching  
uncontrollable  
Feeling that*

Who You Are

*By Greta Harms*

I found myself broken  
Painful  
Memories,  
Tough  
Setbacks,  
Frustrating  
Nights,  
Hot  
Tears  
Broken. I found myself

Untitled

*By Ashley Fancher*

*Award Winner*

She didn't know any better,  
Bruises,  
Mistreatment,  
Tears,  
Abuse,  
Crying,  
Alone,  
Abandonment,  
neglecting,  
Bruises,  
she didn't know any better.

Life Worth Living

*By Elizabeth Andrews*

*You are alive  
hopeless  
but  
awake,  
sadness  
hopeless  
searching  
for  
purpose  
hopeless  
Alive you are*

Earth

*By Autumn Fohey*

A suffering planet  
destroyed—  
burning  
crumbling  
melting  
destroyed-  
trashed  
torn  
polluted  
destroyed—  
A planet suffering

The Little Things

*By Sarah Bierman*

*We forget to notice,  
moments  
laughter  
love  
lust  
moments  
joy  
jokes  
jealousy  
moments  
we forget to notice.*

Untitled

*By Lauren Johnson*

*Flashing Lights  
spinning  
dancing  
laughing  
singing.  
spinning  
falling  
dreaming  
feeling.  
spinning  
lights flashing*

Angel of Death

*By Kia Lofy*

I see the numbers  
climbing  
heavy  
tired  
fighting  
climbing  
slowed,  
labored  
breathing  
climbing  
I see the numbers

*You called me Crazy*

*By Logan Block*

Is it not normal?

Abuse

mental

physical

neglect

abuse.

Depression

anxiety

degradation

abuse.

It is not normal.

*Banshee*

*By Henry Koller*

*Cries of women,*

*hurting,*

*roaming*

*the earth.*

*Saddened*

*hurting*

*screams,*

*HELP,*

*not returned.*

*hurting*

*cries of women*

*Let Down*

*By Sophie Illman*

*I Fell in love with a Dream*

*lost*

*disappointed*

*shattered*

*heart,*

*lost*

*fragmented*

*fading*

*used*

*lost*

*A Dream I Fell in Love with*

*Broken Pieces*

*By Alyssa Francis*

broken pieces in —

heart

shattered —

fragile

weak

heart —

tears

alone

memories —

heart

in broken pieces.

Harmful Individualism

By Mary Quinn

It's not that hard  
Masks  
protect  
everyone  
It's  
proven.  
Shouldn't  
be  
political.  
Masks,  
It's not that hard

Untitled

By Max Salaja

What really happened?  
media  
turns  
blind  
eye,  
media  
misdirects  
truths,  
lying  
media  
Really, what happened?

Heartbreak

By Isabelle Hooge

What is heartbreak?  
Terrifying  
Loss  
Sadness  
Depression,  
Terrifying  
Pain  
Crying  
Forgetting,  
Terrifying  
What is heartbreak?

Untitled

By Ryan Parkinson

The true struggle is the one against yourself  
Doubts  
Nervousness  
Weakness  
Reflection  
Doubts  
Stupid  
Boring  
Weird  
Doubts  
The true struggle is the one against yourself

Untitled

*By Grant Sievert*

I lie in bed,  
Awake,  
Thinking,  
Procrastinating,  
Dreaming,  
Awake,  
Can't  
Fall,  
Asleep,  
Awake,  
I lie in bed

Untitled

*By Ben Kobiske*

*Life with virus*

*Panic*

*Spreading*

*Everyone*

*Dreading*

*Panic*

*Danger*

*No*

*Escape*

*Panic*

*Virus with life*

# ONE SENTENCE POEMS

**Untitled**

**By Logan Block**

They all expect the best;  
they don't know what it could put me  
through,  
but it's time to consider that,  
Maybe,  
I don't want to be the best  
Anymore.

**Untitled**

**By Sara Fredrickson**

*Flames dance fireside  
at twilight  
and warm hearts to remember  
days of happy and fun stories.*

**Untitled**

**By Sophia Illman**

Knowing that this was not what I wanted,  
I knew I had to  
Let you go.

**Untitled**

**By Lana Logelin**

*The day your best friend leaves,  
the day your life seems to be filled with loneliness  
only to get home,  
to a room that is empty  
now,  
everything is different*

**Untitled**

**By Madeline Bertram**

*The dark sky,  
late night conversations,  
listening to music  
driving the countryside –  
no destination in mind,  
nothing else matters.*

**To him, but to her; but be, to her**

**By Meagan Swanson**

To him, she was everything;  
but to her, she was nothing;  
to him, she was worth anything;  
but to her, she was worth nothing;  
to him, she was a masterpiece;  
but to her, she was a landfill;  
but he, wanted to show her the greatness  
she possessed;  
to her, his words meant everything.

**Untitled**

**By Annaliese Bero**

*The home  
of many memories,  
both good  
and bad,  
so simple  
yet so sad,  
easy to leave  
the place you once loved*

**Untitled**

**By Connor Dunn**

The perfect stranger you ran into years ago,  
still passes through your mind  
with every single  
waking day

# SIJO

*TRADITIONAL KOREAN POEMS CONSISTING OF THREE LINES.*



### **Shattered glass**

**By Ashley Fancher**

*Her reflection seems perfect. Her life is put together.  
Her mirror is clear and her parents show her off to their friends.  
But, the glass shatters when she tries to be someone she is not.*

### **Burning Sage**

**By Kenna Koller**

Her presence filled the room with a dewy glow. Sage was her name.  
Her name the color green, her lush voice the color tangerine.  
I visit her at night, watch her flames dance, her smoke rise, her ash fall.

### **Exhausted Love**

**By Lessee Stockinger**

*The one way you would love me. We keep this oath, but I'm tired.  
We're lonely to everyone. This silly love, labeled as "friends."  
I love you, but we're a secret. That was your choice. This is mine.*

### **Who Do I Love?**

**By Elizabeth Andrews**

I love you for more reasons than I can tell. You make me live.  
Your love will never fail me. I'd jump between stars for you.  
I turn around, facing the mirror, and I see my true love.

### **A Widowed Grandmother**

**By Maile Beck**

Award winner  
*She never unlocks the door to welcome reminders of what she's lost.  
She stands alone in her house that was once so lively.  
As her mind slips, she wonders when her husband will come home.*

### **Ava**

**By Gianna Konen**

Five years old, her beaming smile brightens the world. My cousin.  
Together we laugh, dance, sing, and play as if nothing matters.  
Dwarfism—scary in this judgmental world, I will protect her.

## **Life Without You**

**By Alena Lippold**

*Oh, how I wish I could be with you, at least one time more.*

*Dad, I long to see you someday. Maybe at Heaven's door.*

*Yesterday, I dreamt of your warmth. And I loved you, just as before.*

## **Last Day of School**

**By Tallen Van Lare**

I sprint off my bus after the last day of elementary.

I throw open the door and whip my backpack on the floor.

To hear Mom say, "how was your day? Summer school starts tomorrow!"

## **Forever and Always**

**By Nataile Berens**

*Yesterday I saw him, walking, taking photos, talking, being his social self.*

*Today, Opa's here with me, watching from above.*

*I love you, forever and always.*

## **Our Spot**

**By Savannah Kastner**

The crunch of the leaves. The blanket-like softness of the grass under our feet. The dancing bellflowers swaying to the sounds of the wind.

His hand reaches out, pulling me closer to the green pine tree: our spot.

## **The Hunt**

**By Charlie Wesley**

Running through the woods like I'm being hunted. I can't look back .

I don't know if I'm going to make it. I'm praying for the best.

I see the finish line, just steps ahead, I'm almost done.

## **The Snow**

**By Sydney Stemper**

She was like snow, beautiful at first glance, but cold to touch.

But the longer you hold onto snow, the more it begins to change.

She melted in his touch, and he knew that this would happen.

### **Safety Net**

**By Sydney Shutz**

*Like the moon saves the tired sun, the heavy rain saves the dry flowers.*

*The knight saves the young princess from the wicked, corrupt castle.*

*Two choices, my life in your palm, one to save me and you chose wrong.*

### **Untitled**

**By Oliver Lee**

The rain falls like the sky's tears, biting our hands, linked together.

I promise that I won't run, as long as you stay with me.

No Christ here, but still a baptism. Our sins wash down onto pavement.

### **Growing Up**

**By Justin Heineck**

Happiness, laughter; no worries. Toys, food, sleeping; no worries.

Learning new things; games, sports, all fun. Play all the time, no worries.

Learning, ugh. No time for games, sports. Always busy with new worries.

### **Untitled**

**By Joshua Otte**

**Award winner**

*Grandpa found someone to fill the void after he lost Grandma.*

*Someone to take on vacation and to spoil with his wealth.*

*It's too bad because he's deceived, she's only there for the money.*

### **Tongue**

**By Sadie Mason**

I see mouths are moving, but all I hear are muffled sounds.

When I talk they look shocked, so I close my mouth and keep quiet.

This foreign land became my new home and took my tongue away.

# ESSAYS

## **Sanctuary of Nature**

**By Anonymous**

I stood atop of the monstrous cruise boat as we gently glided into port at St. Martin in the Virgin Islands off the coast of Florida. I stopped playing basketball on the top deck and had to admire the world around me. Ahead, picturesque mountains towered me, clouds covering them for miles. Behind me, I still heard the flow of the water as if I was right on the shoreline of a beach.

All I could see was green and blue; I was immersed in nature. I was so drawn to the wonders of the scene around me that I forgot I was posted 200 feet up. Time dissolved before we awaited to exit the mechanical ship into the vast opening of nature. I was in a trance, nothing existed around me, no other players on the basketball court and no thoughts of the wonders of the cruise ship, as I examined every peek and stream far away.

I wasn't even on the ground yet to have the most amazing experience anyone could dream of. Kayaking down a river with my family, skimming the water as we paddled toward a sanctuary. As we arrived we saw a haven full of life. Hermit crabs inched around the dirt, bugs of all sorts drumming in the nature around us.

Snorkeling was a gift given to me as I experienced a breathtaking life. The ocean floor was covered in life of all colors. How could something that doesn't move be so full of life. Sea animals collected in their colorful homes of coral. A crab even found a home made of a plastic container left in the bottom of the reef. There was no way I could have ever imagined a place like this without being here first. Imagining about life, nature and beauty there is one thing, seeing it and living it is a much greater gift.

Even riding in jeeps along the shore with not much life in sight still felt like there was so much alive around us. We passed through muddy puddles made by the rain the day before. Surrounded by trees from our left and right. Headed back to the shore to ride along the sand that crumbled beneath your feet as if I sauntered on a solid cloud.

Being drawn away from a mechanical ship full of technology to admire the nature around you can only be done with the most beautiful places on Earth. Places of life and sanctuaries of nature. This was one of the first times I really took the world in from around me.

**Look Up**  
**By Ella Evenson**

*It was a warm, summer night in Presque Isle, Wisconsin. I was up north with my family—eager to wake up the next day to go home and see my friends. I walked around the cabin attempting to receive at least one bar of service. I could not stand being in the middle of nowhere for one more night.*

*“El, why don’t look up from your phone and enjoy the sky? The stars out here are not like the ones at home,” my dad said.*

*I thought, how could the stars out here be different than the ones in Hartland? They’re just stars.*

*Barefoot and slightly skeptical, I walked down the stairs to the pier where my family stargazed. I sat down next to my dad and peered up at the sky.*

*I had never seen anything like it before. There were thousands of stars covering the black canvas sky. There was not a single cloud. I could hear the ripples of the lake water crashing against the pier, and I could feel the warm wind blowing against my face.*

*I saw satellites flying in the sky — something I had never seen before.*

*I saw hundreds of shooting stars.*

*I saw the Milky Way.*

*I saw the “bright stars” we call planets.*

*I was in awe, but I was also shocked. I couldn’t believe I had never even looked up at the sky the days we were at the cabin. I hadn’t looked up from my phone and absorbed the beautiful things around me.*

*“Beautiful isn’t it?” uttered my dad.*

*Yes, gorgeous, I thought. I was too invested in the glimmer of the sky above me to answer his question out loud.*

*The stars that night were more than just stars. They were a wake up call. They taught me to never take any moment for granted, and to look up at the environment around you once in a while. It can change your perspective on the importance of nature, just like it did mine.*

## **Clear Blue**

**By Little Kaz**

As I step out of the car, I hear the snorkeling guide shout, "Everyone going on the Turks and Caicos snorkeling adventure at eleven o'clock, please sign-in and take a seat on the yellow boat."

After all the tourists signed-in and found a spot to sit, the snorkeling guide began to pass out snorkeling gear and told everyone to clean the goggles and the mouthpiece. Nasty.



**Photo by Little Kaz**

We left the dock and were heading out to the first stop to snorkel along the barrier reef. As I jump into the cold, clear blue, Atlantic Ocean surrounding Turks and Caicos, I see thousands of little orange dots in the water that almost sting as I touch them. I asked the snorkeling guide what the tiny orange dots in the water were.

He said, "They are baby jellyfish, but if you swim to the bottom, you won't see them because they only stay at the surface until they get bigger."

"Wow, that is so cool," I replied.

As I am swimming back to the boat, I hear the guide shout, "If anyone wants to see a reef shark come over by the drop off zone."

I wanted to see this shark so badly because I have never seen a shark in the ocean before. So I turn myself around and start swimming as fast as I can to get there before the shark swims away, and I got there just in time. I started to swim down to the bottom to try and see the reef shark, and when I got to the bottom, there was nothing but colorful fish and coral.

So, I continued to swim around the area to look at all the other wildlife in the ocean, and as I swam to the other side of a huge piece of coral, I saw the reef shark. The shark was only two or three feet away from me and I didn't know for sure what it would do, so I tried to stay calm and limit my movement. As I'm trying to stay as still as possible, the guide tapped on my shoulder from behind and scared the crap out of me. He was telling me to go over and touch the shark. I thought he was crazy if he thought I was going to touch a shark. I mean who touches a shark in the Atlantic ocean. If the shark was in an aquarium then sure I will touch it, but not in the Atlantic ocean. Who does that?

This was an incredible experience that I get to remember and share for the rest of my life and I am thankful for my uncle giving me this extraordinary, wonderful, once in a lifetime opportunity.

## An Alaskan Sled Adventure

By Anonymous

*As the humming of the helicopter comes to a stop, I peek out of the foggy window to see the infinite wonders of Juneau's snow-covered valley. The crisp air pierces my skin and nips at my already rosy cheeks as my foot sinks into the white Alaskan snow. I hear a gasp from behind me, but I can't seem to take my eyes off of the sight in front of me. The miles of fluffy snow, sky-high mountains, and bright sun peaking through the stormy clouds, illuminating the tips of the mountains is mesmerizing. Eventually, I am forced to break my trance, and my eyes scan over to see the pack of huskies, waiting for our arrival.*

*Excitedly, the other explorers and I all run over to where they lay. The huskies stand when they sense us approaching and are eager for attention. I reach my hand out to pet the thick, gray fur, and I picture what it feels like through my gloves. Tough and cold. A worker calls us over to show how the sleds work: "Pull slightly one way to turn," he explains while demonstrating with the ropes, "and release the slack to speed up." The worker helps us all into the sled, looks at his watch, whispers a command to the alpha husky, and walks off. We are all amazed when the leader of the pack makes one tug and the rest of the group falls in line.*

*As we ride along the boundless trail, I can't help but think about the ageless stories that lie within these grounds. I can see the humongous mammoths trekking across the vast mountains. I can hear the fierce wolves, howling and battling for dominance. I can smell the fish, tactfully caught by the mighty black bears. I can feel the ground shaking as the large moose search for their next meal. I can taste the salt from the Gastineau Channel, following the wind to reach me.*

*My thoughts are interrupted by the abrupt stop of the wooden sled, and I know this means it is time to go. As I return toward the helicopter, I stare at my feet, leaving footprints in the snow. I smile; I too am now written into the ageless story of Juneau, Alaska.*



## My Name

**By Lauren Roberts**

The name Lauren means crowned with laurels, which is an evergreen tree and bush mostly found in tropical areas. Other meanings of the name are “victory of wisdom” and “sweet honor.” But, the name Lauren means so much more.

It is the color blue, a bright sunny sky on a summer's day. Someone who has two personalities, calm on one hand, and energetic and fun-loving on the other. Lauren is the music of nature. It is the enjoyment of the simple things in life.

When my parents found out I was a girl, they narrowed down their list of possible names. Laurel and Lauren. the name Laurel sounded too formal and unfit for a baby; they wanted the name to be more relaxed, so they went with Lauren.

Lauren is claimed to be a less feminine girl's name. One study conducted by the Journal of Human resources even claimed that females with the name Lauren are more likely to be attracted to science and math, which are considered more masculine subjects, than other women with more feminine names.

If you ask any of my friends or family members, you will find out that I am not the girliest girl in the world. I am not graceful. Most days, I would rather do something physically active or competitive than have a spa day. In school, my favorite subjects are both math and science. So, Lauren is a fitting name for me.

Blue. That is the color Lauren reminds me of. Blue is a calming but also upbeat and positive color. Lauren is the name of somebody who is overall a relaxed person, but can also be the life of the party at times. Blue is a color that comes in many shades, like dark navy, which represents the calmer side of Lauren, and electric blue, which represents the wild, fun side of Lauren. Lauren is a bright blue, sunny sky in the summer, someone who just lives in the moment and has a positive outlook on life. Someone like me.

Lauren is the lovely sound of birds chirping and the wind blowing the leaves of the trees; her alarm clock in the morning. Lauren is somebody who could discover something new and fascinating in her own backyard. Lauren is somebody who loves nature; somebody who would much rather spend time outdoors enjoying everything nature has to offer, from its flowing rivers to its highest mountain peaks. Lauren is me.

Lauren. I love my name. I wouldn't want to change it to anything else. It is perfectly fitting for me as a person. Lauren is forever a part of me, something that I will forever embrace.

## The Meaning of a Simple Name

By Kayla Esslinger

*My name means pure. It means beloved. It is a day on the beach. A clear blue sky with the sun beating down on you, certain to give you a blistering sunburn. The salty waves splashing up onto the shore as giggling kids build sandcastles in the warm sand.*

*It is a warm, freshly dried blanket that can be tightly wrapped around you as you drink hot chocolate. A great comfort after a chilly day. It is like the number 4. The number of seasons there are. Each one has a different, but unique personality.*

*It is a welcoming name. Like the color lilac. It is like a rose, delicate and graceful—but sharp if you cross her wrong.*

*It was inherited from no one. It was made up by a book. What to name your baby girl. It would be nice to have an inherited name. To take after their personality. To be a mini version of them. But instead, I got a name from a baby book.*

*Not even my middle name is named after someone. Madison. As in the city. It is where my parents started dating. It is the closest I will get to being named after something. Named after my parents' discovery of their love.*

*There is no way of shortening my name. Kay just reminds me of 'every kiss begins with Kay.' Ayla is already a name. Although it suits me, I can only ever be Kayla. A thick, chunky name. The "K" and "AY" using too much of your throat. Almost making it sore and scratchy.*

*It would be nice to have an actual nickname. To be able to act like a different person with each variation of it. One nickname for my family. A different one for close friends to call me, who have seen all four seasons of me. For now, Kayla seems to be a good fit.*

## **Bill of Rights and Me**

**By Evelyn Evans**

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Freedom, by definition, means the right to do as we please without restriction. Students should have the same rights as adults do because not only does censorship limit creativity but it also takes away our voice. It not only restricts how we write something, but also what we can write about.

So many teens and kids all around the world wish they had a voice about anything and everything around the world, including politics, empowerment, changing the world, and just issues that anyone can and should speak out about. Just because we are younger does not mean we are not mature enough, or don't know enough about a subject or problem, to not have the same right of freedom of speech just as every older generation than us does. We have the same rights, and we have a voice, just as we all do, that deserves to be heard. No matter what the topic, if there is passion about something, a person or problem that needs to be changed and talked about, we should have a voice.

So many young people throughout history have been woken up to realize freedom of speech gives the power to speak up for others and having the responsibility to speak out against injustice. There was always someone who was willing to speak up and fight for change that American society has progressed, and now we have seen and learned from those role models and realized we need to speak up and talk about what we believe and see in.

Freedom of speech to me means being able to talk about an issue, speak and voice opinions, and express ideas or opinions without fear of victimization by the government. I am so glad we have this law and are able to speak without fear especially teens, because everyone's voice matters.

## The Great American Flag

By Evan Nyhouse

*Four years ago, when the leaves started to change from healthy green to vibrant yellows and orange, I had freshman football practice on a warm Friday afternoon. Firefighters were at the edge of the field and were getting ready to wave the huge flag for the first home game of the varsity season.*

*I remember it like it was yesterday, my classmates were getting ready for the event we call Hawksfest, which is like a fair where kids can play games before the football game starts. As the firefighters started to bring the flag down after their test run, they called my team over to hold the great American flag so it would not touch the ground while getting folded up. As I grabbed the flag I realized what an opportunity I just had - to be able to hold something with so much power and so much history. I realized what the American flag truly means to me and my country.*

*I am so thankful that in America we can go to school, play any sport that we want, and be free to enjoy fun events like Hawksfest. Unfortunately, people in our country forget how well we have it to live in our country and how we are free to do almost anything that we want within the law. Many people in our country take being able to do almost anything we want for granted because so people around the world never get to experience what it truly is like to be free. I think of the men and women who served and are currently serving who fought and are still fighting to protect the wonderful country that allows us to do activities including the freedom of speech, and the freedom to assemble.*

*When the game started that night, being surrounded by my friends, I truly felt like I understood what it is like to be American, I felt proud to stand for my country while singing along to the national anthem and proud to learn the sacrifice that it took to build America into what it is today.*

**I see**  
**By Lauren Johnson**

I see a bright red, blue, and white flag blowing in the wind. The stripes and stars continuously waving at me while I stand with a group of people, all with hands over the heart.

I see people kneeling in a church, using their freedom to praise the religion they choose. There's no worry in my mind that they're doing something wrong as I myself pray to God before I fall asleep.

I see a handgun lying in the drawer of a father's bedside table ready to be drawn at the sight of danger. His family lives comfortably knowing they have the right to bear arms and are being protected.

I see crowds of people stretched out over public streets, using the right of speech and assembly to protest for what they believe in. I am confident that their messages will be heard, and history will be made.

I see an innocent woman in front of a court, one hand on the bible, waiting patiently to tell the judge her side of the story. She knows the law protects her to defend herself to a jury.

I see the stripes and stars of that same red, white, and blue flag steadily blow back and forth in the breeze. I stand with the rest of the US Citizens, thankful for what the Bill of rights allows for us

## Life As We Know It

By Ben Kaczmarek

*Every time I go up north to my grandparents' house there are trail cams everywhere and coyote traps in the woods. We set those traps out there to keep our dogs safe and away from danger. In November and December, my family goes and sits outside for almost twelve hours waiting for a deer, turkey, wolves, bears, or even cougars.*

*But for me, I enjoy the feeling of firing a high-powered weapon. Something is exciting and electrifying about shooting a Remington shotgun. One pull on the trigger can send dozens, even hundreds, of tiny, lead pellets downrange toward the target.*

*Beyond the noise and the kickback, the experience when shooting a gun, there is something that happens to my mind and body. Shooting a gun feels empowering and makes me feel more confident and safe.*

*In the Bill of Rights, the second amendment is the right to bear arms. If this amendment is taken away, it will have a huge impact on me because shooting targets at a range is my way of relaxing and relieving stress. But without guns, it would be very difficult for me to do those things.*

## Too Young to Know

By Sidney Heberlein

My mother tells me, “You’re too young to have an opinion about this. Most of this stuff doesn’t even pertain to you.” We painfully watch the first presidential debate as I, desperately, try to convince her that my opinion is worth listening to. I’ve researched, thought, and made my decision. But, apparently, I’m still too young and uneducated about these “grown-up topics.” The First Amendment guarantees my right to speak, no doubt; but what is it worth when nobody will listen?

My friends tell me, “You’re so quiet all the time.” Why do I keep to myself? They’ve told me I’m too loud, that I should think before I speak. They’ve said I’m too young, too uneducated to form a real opinion. Maybe they’re right; after all, I’m just a little kid. It doesn’t really matter what I think.

Maybe they’re wrong, though. My aunt has told me, “You don’t have to follow in your parents’ footsteps. Be your own person!” She’s right. Why should I pretend to agree with their every statement in an attempt to avoid any arguments? I have since found the answer: I shouldn’t.

I wish someone had told me years ago, “Keep talking. Your opinion is valid. Someday, someone will listen.” Freedom of speech means nobody can shut my voice out if I’m loud enough. It means I can talk until I can’t, and express my endless opinions to the world.

The events of the recent election have told me this: it doesn’t matter what anybody says to me. I’m never too young to have an opinion, a voice. The First Amendment doesn’t spell out an age, only a right. The endless political duels have instilled in me a sort of new anger, a strong desire to be heard that I have never felt before. The Bill of Rights guarantees the right of freedom of speech to me. How can I stay silent?

## Thank you, Grandpa

By Elizabeth Olshanski

*He carries a pistol on his waste. He shoots at targets to practice his aim. He holds countless bullets on his vest. He travels the world by ship. He dresses up in army green. He is prepared to fight. He is not malicious. He is not a threat. He is not scary. He is the pride of our country. He is my Grandpa Lee.*

*Bang. Bang. Bang. The sound of gunshots ring his ears as he prepares for the worst. Protecting the USA, serving the U.S. Navy ships, protecting naval bases, guarding embassies, and providing a prepared quick strike force as he serves in the Marine Corps. He protects. He helps. He risks his life for this American soil.*

*Now, he tells me about what it was like. What it means to him. I remember the time my elementary school celebrated Veteran's day. I called him on the phone a week prior asking him to be there so we could celebrate his name: Lee. The excitement in his voice, the pride he felt, the tears of joy I heard through the phone. The day couldn't come sooner for him.*

*There he is. Walking down the hall representing our country. He notices the Marine Corps shirt I wore. "Wow, Ellie! Thank you for inviting me. Thank you for letting me come," he spoke. He wasn't the one that should be thanking me, for I was the one that should give thanks to him. Thank you, Grandpa Lee, for giving this country a place we feel pride, security, and thankfulness.*

*Without the Bill of Rights, our country wouldn't be where it is today. No right to bear arms, no rights of people, no freedom. Our country would be lost without these ten Amendments, so thank you to my Grandpa Lee, our veterans, James Madison, and many others that have made our United States of America the beautiful country it is today.*



## **I'm Told Rules are Made to be Broken**

**By Olivia Boray**

I'm told I have the freedom of religion; yet I'm mocked with a headpiece on, my places of worship burned down. The government decides which religion is their favorite, depending on what I wear, and what I preach, on who fits.

I'm told I have the freedom of speech; police shooting crowds say otherwise, when we speak up, they can't even look us in my eyes. Speaking out in 2020, saying what is right, the police then gas, everyone in sight.

I'm told I have the freedom of press; however, I'm only shown what they want me to see, the same three topics shown on TV. Biased news stations, brainwashing those who view, Gen Z doesn't believe the lies, if only they knew.

I'm told I have the freedom of assembly; curfews put onto cities to prevent this, Americans getting together, the cops shoot and they don't miss. Getting justice for what I believe in, if only the government would listen.

I'm told I have freedom of petition; the government doesn't hear me scream, standing outside the White House, I can see the President beam. I'm finally using my voice, knowing the risk, my freedoms are being limited, how will it be fixed?

## The Foundation of Freedom

By Eli Javier

*Planting hundreds of American flags on Memorial Day, beside those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for ours, and the world's freedom in the second world war gives me a lot of time to think. All their names, etched into stone, fill the walls. Everything passes through my head, the atrocities, the families, and the magnitude of this armed conflict. I think of what they gave their lives to defend. They fought for the basic rights of millions. The right to freely speak my mind, practice my religion, the freedom of the press, and countless more.*

*My grandparents just barely remember the occupation of their country by the Japanese empire. My grandmother's family had to quarter and serve enemy troops in their house. My grandfather was forced to learn the language of the invaders in elementary school. Even though they lived in another country, America defended their freedom when their inherent rights were violated.*

*Later on, my grandparents, along with my father, escaped under the rule of an authoritarian. They immigrated to the United States. Living here now, their rights have been solidified and defended under centuries of precedent. They no longer worry about losing their freedoms.*

*The Bill of Rights has created the base upon which this country has been able to improve itself. These freedoms are still constantly being cited to protect us. While the government remains far from perfect, the American people can trust and rely on the protections of this centuries old document and those that defend it. That's why I believe that the bill of rights is the foundation of freedom.*

**I Am Not**  
**By Anonymous**

It's a complex task to figure out who you are, and we all must do it at some point during our lives. I'd say with certainty that it's much easier to figure out who you are not.

It's easy for me to state that I am not a fan of the global state of affairs. From climate destabilization, to economic crisis, to nuclear disarmament not working in the slightest, to so many other socio economic problems that we need to fix.

Furthermore, I could also state truthfully that I'm not an entirely happy individual, but then again, aren't we all? There's good and bad, that's how it goes I suppose? I am also not a traditional teenager I suppose.

I know, it sounds cliché and angsty, but I mean it in a true sense. I don't relate to my peers well, as I've probably mentioned, but honestly? I feel like many people around me just think about themselves or are concerned with really small matters when we have more stuff to worry about.

Another thing that I'm not is a long distance runner. Like, seriously! Comical indeed, but how the hell do those guys / gals run that far??!? I simply DO NOT UNDERSTAND IT!

Lastly, the most major thing that I am not is I am not a simple individual. Many people might just chalk me up to a few major qualities, or just throw me into some arbitrary category. There's lots to know about me, the things I've seen, the things I know, and the things I can show others. I want to better the world from a deep place in my heart but it's difficult when people don't want to really listen.

**Untitled**  
**By Donato Guerra**

*My full name is Donato Dean Guerra, which actually has a lot of meaning to it. Donato as a boy's name is pronounced doh-NAH-toh. It is of Spanish and Italian origin, and the meaning of Donato is "given; gift from God", which is pretty cool; although, I know the name wasn't given to me for its meaning because I am the 6th Donato in a row in my family*

*My last name means war in Spanish which is interesting because I think the first Donato happened to be the leader of the Mexican Army at one point and participated in the Reform War and in the French Intervention. I think also the town named Donato Guerra in the State of Mexico is named for him. The names Donato and Guerra put together seem weird to me because one means gift from god and the second one means war so it's almost like god's gift is war.*

*I used to dislike my name when I was a kid and I used to want a different name because I always felt like other kids thought my name was weird and I always had to repeat it several times so people could pronounce it and remember it.*

*A lot of times if people hear my name before they meet me, they usually think I'm Hispanic and are surprised when they see me with my blonde hair and blue eyes (but I am of hispanic descent). I remember in kindergarten my teacher seemed very surprised to find out I was the kid in the class named Donato. Most people tell me it sounds like a mob boss name or something if I tell it to them in person.*

*I don't have many nicknames, but some people called me "Don or Donny" in middle school and now some people call me "Nato" for some reason. Sometimes I wish I had a name where I could have cool nicknames but for the most part I like my name now and the fact that it has a lot of meaning and I couldn't imagine myself with a different one.*

**Untitled**  
**By Lola Elahi**

I remember the time I was cashiering at Pick N Save and a trio of elderly people came into my lane and immediately started singing my song by The Kinks. “Lola, la la la la Lola,” they sang and watched my dull expression grow into a smile. I can never thank The Kinks enough for creating that song. When I went to Richmond School, from 4K-4th grade, the lunch lady sang my name as I typed in my lunch number, every day.

When I tell adults my name the first response I get back is “Oh like the song?” Yes, it probably is from the song. My grandpa suggested my name to my parents and he was in love with music from that era, so I’ve always just assumed I got my name from there. My dad swears he picked out my name, but everyone else in my family agrees that my grandpa picked it out, so I think my dad just wishes he did. It is a beautiful name that I’m lucky to have.

Although the song doesn’t portray the most flattering image of Lola at the end, hearing the little jingle of my name by strangers sometimes helps me connect with them. I also like it when my friends or family listen to that song and think of me as they do so. What’s going on may not be anything like what happens in the song, but they will look at me, maintain eye contact, and ardently start mouthing the words to me.

Another thing I think about was that the song is almost a true story. The Kinks’ manager actually spent a night “dancing with a crossdresser.” While this was intentional or not it still was enough for The Kinks to write a song about a man in a similar situation. With a woman whom they assumed was cisgender and soon realized was not. This song would probably gather a bit of controversy today, but to others, the lyrics are trivial. I don’t think most people really listen to the lyrics. All in all, as annoying as older people can be sometimes, whether it’s driving slow or not being able to understand simple technology, I have to thank that generation for my song because it has brought me a lot of joy and comfort.

**Untitled**  
**By Alyisha El-Refaie**

*First Grade, I can still remember the teacher hovering over my desk when all the other students were done making their nameplates. Neither of us could figure out whether the second part of my last name was capitalized or not. Nobody else in the class had these issues, but considering how long and complicated my name is I was always the last one done.*

*The first day of school, the day I dreaded from year to year. Lodged in the tiny chairs waiting for the teacher to slowly go down the list. Every other name was read off effortlessly along with "I think I might know your brother". But when the room goes silent and I can see the teacher begin to struggle, I already know that it is my turn on the list. I immediately speak up and kindly help the teacher out. Some give me variations of my name like Alisha and some can't even pronounce it, to begin with, so it's always such a pleasant surprise when someone gets it right on their first try. It never hurts my feelings because I understand how stressful it is for them to get everyone's name right for the year. And my least favorite time of the year, the days we have a substitute teacher. It's always a debate inside my head whether I should let it go or tell them my name. To me correcting them was always trivial.*

*In Arabic and English, Ayisha means alive. It means living and vivaciousness. A name that radiates energy and vitality. Adjectives that describe me perfectly. Those who meet me describe me as being energetic and outgoing. When I think of my name I think of vibrant colors and strong energies. A name that is so calm yet so powerful.*

*Growing up I never liked having such a unique and different name than everyone else. It was always such a struggle correcting people's spelling and their pronunciation. However, I've grown to absolutely love having a distinctive and special name. I've met close to no one who has the same name as me and I believe it describes me perfectly and sets me apart from others. Although it can be hard to explain my name to some, I couldn't imagine having any other name. And now telling people about my name is something I love doing.*

## **Blossoming Connection**

**By Alyssa Lemay**

*The pristine yellow flower opens wide—like it's inviting you into its warm embrace. The June heat urges the alyssum to open-wide while the December wind begs it to close. An elegant name—showing symmetry and representing honesty within today's culture—emerges from the flower's name.*

*Flowers have vibrancy—their colors and astute nature command a room's attention. A flower is added to help liven a room's look; similarly, I am a lively person, filled with vivacity. When I was a child, my parents said, with smiles strewn across their faces, "You could provide life to any room."*

*A yellow flower is filled with positivity and happiness. My favorite color is yellow. Why? Yellow helps me see the positives in life... the end at every tunnel. Similar to the yellow flower, I pride myself on being happy and care-free when the time is right. Our lives are filled with many hardships, why not fill the rest of it with alacrity and optimism?*

*Yellow flowers, also, show friendship and a caring spirit. Friendships are ever-lasting bonds I hold close to my heart; I am a protective and caring friend towards those who are loyal towards me. I am a caring person, but I can become ferocious and protective when my friends may be in danger.*

*Even though flowers show fragileness, they also show strength within their stems. It is strange that a flower can be quite contradictory, but it shows an oddly human element of the plants. Humans are creatures filled with contradictions. Humans have never contradicted themselves—frankly, the inability to be perfect makes us human. For me, I have a care-free personality, but I get stressed over topics I am passionate about. I can be a sensitive person, but I can also be emotionally distant to some. Showing an even stronger connection between humans and flowers than one might think.*

*Maybe that blooming alyssum flower can show me a lot more than just its pretty colors—it can show me, well, me. I wish I could say I was an alyssum, but I am not. I wish I was that blooming yellow flower, but I am not.*

*I am Alyssa.*

## **Finding my Inner Compass**

**By Annabelle Weiss**

**Award winner**

Our interests can be compared to that of magnetic fields and a compass. These invisible, yet powerful forces attract and point us in particular directions. Everyone naturally gravitates toward different interests, similar to the pull of a magnetic force on the spinning arrow of a compass. From Barbie dolls to Disney princesses, soccer cleats to ballet shoes, coloring books to design, the interests that stimulate my brain have constantly evolved as I have grown. As my inner compass has matured with age, some of those interests waned, while others added a spark to my eye and peaked my curiosities.

For a long time, my center of gravity was not clear, and I hadn't yet discovered what attracted my interest. I knew the activities I liked doing in my free time and the extracurriculars I enjoyed, but what I was passionate about? What career path should I choose to pursue? The answers to these questions, like my inner compass, were unclear to me.

With time and patience, I began to realize what my brain naturally gravitated toward and what my interests were. In my middle school and early high school years, I had a blurry view of my future, unsure of which direction to follow. All I knew was my natural instinct for helping others. Immediately, I began to look toward careers in the medical field, assuming it was what I was meant to do.

Committing my time to job shadows, medical terminology, and health occupation courses, I began to pave a path for myself to forge a successful career in medical service. But wherever I looked, my eye was regularly drawn to visual layouts. Fascinated by creative designs, an artistic voice and style began to speak to me with a grounded voice that felt comfortable, natural, and confident. Creating art has always been a personal form of self-expression I have loved since a young age, but I had never thought about pursuing an art or design-related career before. Following this new direction, I entered a whole new perspective with curiosity and enthusiasm about the various directions my chosen path and inner arrow have guided me. My exploration of art programs was transformational as I kept my mind open to possible majors. What I found quickly captivated me, and ideas of all the things I could see myself doing in the future whirled in my head.

Reflecting on my past uncertainty, I have learned that it's important to pursue the things that I am drawn to and what I naturally love. As cliché as that sounds, it's a lesson that many fail to embrace or see clearly in themselves. My interests have pointed the way and I look forward to a future where I work hard towards my inspired goals. I have set an intention to pursue the artistic ideas that captivate my thoughts, to follow the direction my brain, my heart, and my inner magnetism pulls me. Throughout the course of my newly-set journey, I look forward to the vast number of people I will meet and the immense amount of skills I will learn- socially, mentally, artistically, and academically.

The human brain and heart can be compared to a compass, in which no matter what path one takes, there is an underlying, invisible force greater than ourselves. I feel fortunate to have found my own and believe that, in my future, I will be able to use my creative eye and artistic thinking to be successful in a design-related field. After years of trial and error, I have discovered what comes naturally, what I could spend hours working on, and what I want to pursue. No matter how the compass of life may spin and regardless of the specific career to which I aspire, I trust the magnetic attraction my brain has guided me to, what I will flourish in, and where my interests have found their true north.



## **My Definition of Perfection**

**By Kayla Esslinger**

*I am not perfect. We all know that. It has been a constant lesson throughout our lives: "Nobody's perfect." But still, growing up, I tried to be. Everyday started with perfectly straightened hair, perfectly picked outfits, and perfectly applied makeup—or as perfect as a middle schooler/early high schooler could do. Obsessed with not only looking, but also acting perfect, I never was able to see the beauty in imperfections.*

*Now, as I show my true self without hiding behind a mask of perfection, I am able to see what kind of person I am. What kind of person I am not. I am not perfect, and I am okay with that. I am not the negative thoughts that dance around my head at times. Telling me that I'm not good enough at anything. That I'm not worthy of love. Always using "I'm not" as a way to bring out the worst in me. Now, I use "I'm not" to tear down those terrible false thoughts. I am not a bad student because of one bad grade I got on a test. I am not a bad dancer because of my mind's constant comparison to the other girls. Reminding me of the negative thoughts each time I glance in the mirror. I am not unwanted because of the friends who dropped me once we got to high school.*

*I am filled with joy and love for my life. I am a great student that will likely get into the colleges that I want to because of the effort put into my grades. I am an excellent dancer because I keep pushing myself to be better. Always pulling up through my center, stretching through my extensions, and making energy flow through my arms. I am loved and I am surrounded by amazing people that would give the world to me.*

*I am a better person than I used to be because I can now see all of this in a positive way. My hair is not naturally straight, but it is unique. The sun shines off of it, turning it a fiery orange color. Some days it will be sleek and smooth, and other days it will curl up, giving it a new style each time. My outfits aren't planned out days in advance, but it makes it exciting and is able to fit whatever mood I'm feeling when I wake up. My makeup isn't perfect. In fact, I now only wear mascara, but that showcases my natural beauty. Instead of caking on concealers and foundation onto my face to cover up every little bump, red spot, or freckle, I now embrace it, knowing that each freckle on my face makes me...me.*

*You see, you have to allow yourself to live a little. Once I stopped trying to be the "perfect person," I found myself happier. You have to think of what being perfect means to you. I'm not talking about the dictionary definition: "having all the required or desirable elements, qualities, or characteristics; as good as it is possible to be." That is what my younger self thought it was. Now, I see it as a measure of happiness. Ever since I've stopped focusing on being so perfect, I'm happier than I ever have been; and that seems pretty perfect to me.*



# SHORT STORIES

## Les étoiles d'amour

By Hayley Hunt

I stand on the beach of a tropical island with cyan waters. The sweet smell of milk and honey drifts through the night air. The sky is glittering with the light of many stars. They dance and twirl in the sky and then fall down to earth. The faces of past lovers shine through their light. They reach out to try and grasp me once more. I slip away and sink into the sea. I cannot carry their love any longer if I wish to survive. They call out their love but it's drowned out by the Atlantic. I sink into the depths of the sea and the water grows cold. The light of the stars is overcast by clouds of fish. They swirl in rings and ribbons and hypnotize me to sleep. With the closing of my eyes the flames of their love dies. The night sky is forever dimmed.

## Coke

By Ross Mann

I was sitting in class learning about anaphora, the sky was baby blue but raining. I was counting in my head because I was so bored, the last thing I remember was getting to 187 before my head smashed against the desk. I woke up and looked around and everyone was there but kendal was drinking a coke and eating french toast. I looked to my left out the window and it isn't raining anymore. It was full of water like the Great Salt Lake, but that wasn't the only thing out there. There were blobfish swimming everywhere. Travis Scott walked into my class wearing black and white zebra yeezys, all I said to him was "hola" he said to me "watch out" I turned around and saw juice wrld and jackie robinson flying on a liger threw the water with juice wrld singing "if I keep taking these pills I won't be here". Travis Scott asked me if I wanted to get one of his burgers. I said "bet", We got to mcdonalds and the grandma taking our order called Travis adorable. We went back to the classroom and snapped. The class was still going on so I went to my seat and Travis snapped and I looked around and everything was normal, and I had no recollection of anything.

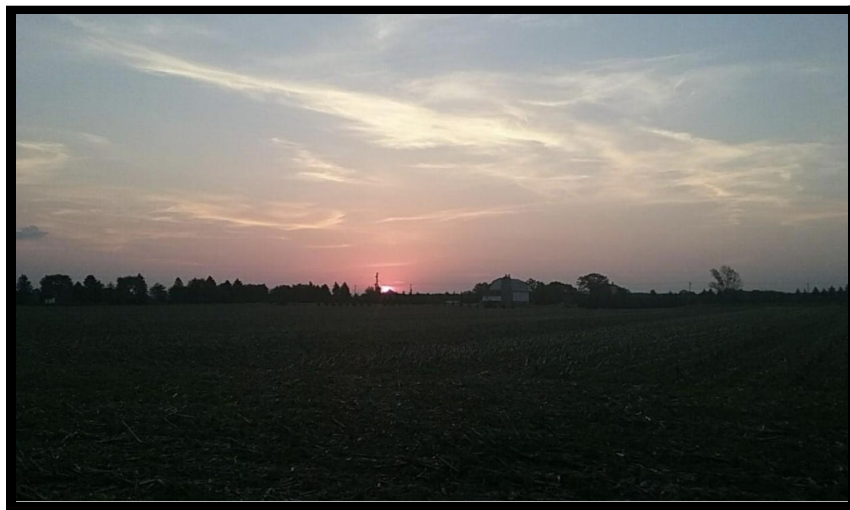


Photo by Joanne Brack

## **A Country So Split Among Themselves**

**By Alex Wood**

I sit and watch two figures on the screen and think about the people in my life. I think about how simple things had been years ago, how relaxing and calm. Now I feel the split lying on my thoughts, a taut string pressed against a razor sharp blade. I want to wave my flags, express my opinions. I know that under the 1st amendment that I'm legally able to, but yet I hesitate under the fact that I fear what the people around me, my friends, my family, thinks.

I stand in a time when people hold their own opinions higher than their own relationship with one another. I hear so much hate and negativity thrown around, some just, most uncalled for. People are harsh to each other, blinded by their own political agenda in a way where they let their deep savage thoughts and actions out.

Though the times are split and I may think that the people around me have views as tart and undeveloped as a crab apple, it is important that everyone and I respect each other. The First Amendment allows anyone and everyone to oppose the government but yet we, the people, lack the ability to oppose each other with respect. I fear my own opinions and I fear sharing them because my family, my friends, and everyday people may find a reason to hate me for it.

## **Untitled**

**By Nick Proell**

I hated reading, I really did. But something happened, something changed. It was a miracle: I began to read. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus...I just kept going until I finished reading from cover to cover.

The truth of God's word pierced my heart. If God is good, He must be just. And, though I've done good things, I have broken the law.

Yet, out of love, God came down and died for me. By His grace, He suffered for me. A spotless lamb, He poured out wrath upon Himself, making me righteous by His blood. I will never be the same.

**Untitled**  
**By Tracie Grey**

*The Earth was at my feet, the Sun's bright rays in my eyes—this was everything I wanted, right?*

*Connected on a line like a fish, my shipmate, my college budd, my motivation. He floated weightlessly with his puffy marshmallow suit, reaching out to the planets like he could touch them.*

*I could hear his smooth voice speaking through the radio in my helmet. "The planets are so beautiful," he laughed and sighed in relief, "we finally made it, Jess."*

*I snorted, "Don't make it sappy," I said.*

*My heart felt heavier than I was in this weightless mass...why?*

**Untitled**  
**By Mary Schlinsog**  
**Award Winner**

*His hands tremble as he drives to her house for the first time. Fiddling with the music until the song and volume are just right. Everything needs to be perfect. Nervous sweat drips off his brow as he speeds down the familiar back roads of their small town.*

*She stands in the mirror checking her complexion for what seems to be the hundredth time that night. Recoating her lip gloss every five minutes like clockwork. After one final review in the mirror, she decides she's ready.*

*The doorbell rings, and the hearts of two trembling teenagers skip a beat.*

**Untitled**

**By Abigail Kjorlien**

**Award Winner**

How could I pick just one memorable moment in my life? I've been on this Earth for almost 18 years, with hundreds of thousands of memories.

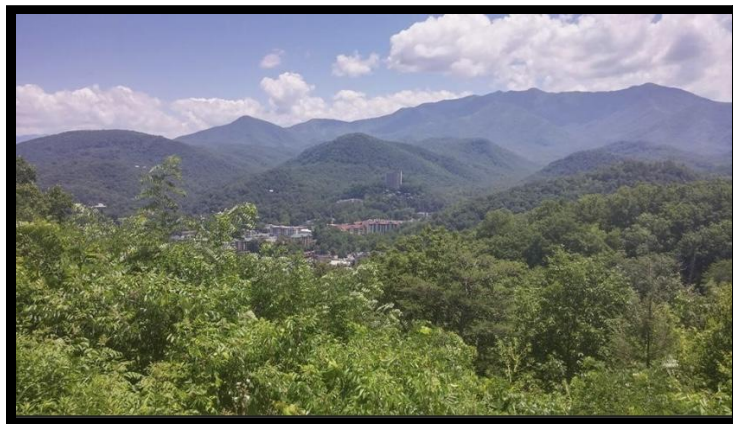
I could talk about the moment I found out I was going to have a baby brother. Or the moment I walked across the stage and graduated from kindergarten. I could talk about getting my license or being accepted into UW Lacrosse.

Everyone has important moments in their life, but when asked to just choose one it seems to be a nearly impossible task. Live in the moment, because every moment counts in life.

**Untitled**

**By Lucas Kroneberg**

Now, when I say that my birthday was memorable, I don't mean that it was great. Quite the opposite, actually. My friends thought that mini-golf would be a fun experience—one of those ideas that looks good on paper. Anyways, we're mini-golfing and all is going well, but then we became adventurous. So, combine a ball hit very hard, an unfortunate placement of a rock, and the owner of the course in the wrong place at the wrong time, and you get stern warnings to "never ever step foot on this course again." Like I said before, memorable, but not great.



**Photo by Joanne Brack**

## Tennessee

**By Aaron Bain**

*Memphis roads were dismantled and rundown. The dead brown grass was matching the buildings. The smell of chocolate chip pancakes was evident throughout Graceland. Lisa Marie was as white as my Adidas ultra boosts when I look down. Beale Street is full of the history of 10,140 blues artists while I listened inside the hard rock cafe. The band sang "tiptoe higher" which reminds me of my quiet, soft grandma saying "Oh, honey!" as I walk into her house. Mike Rose Soccer Complex was larger than a house you would find on Okavchee lake. My coach yells "Es hora de comer" as I drank my orange Gatorade before stepping out on the field. The thrill as I scored in the 90th minute of the Tennessee college showcase and hearing our parents yell "Goal!" was astounding as I am "built different."*

## Untitled

**By Karina Woodward**

*Bright lights. Late nights. Excitement courses through my veins. Every time I see the twinkling lights of the night, a stupid grin appears on my face.*

*The memory of New York when I was eight seemed to have sunk into me; become a part of me. I want so badly to have that part of me fulfilled. The part that longs to be back in the city, to see the stars of the city shine, to go on adventures, to take night drives, to see the rush of people. I want to take it all in. I want New York.*

## **Untitled**

**By Kaeyln Glassey**

Many days, many memories, and too many stories. Each day comes with a story. A day that stands out over any other would be the day I moved in with my grandparents.

It wasn't only the one day that I moved in with them that was so memorable, it was the days that led up to the move and the days following. Designing my new room, moving out of my old one, and moving onto new adventures—moving out of the past.

The story of living with my grandparents is still being built with each year being like a new chapter.

## **Untitled**

**By Alena Lippold**

Life on Garpula. As I woke up from a deep sleep, I looked around. *Where am I?* Getting up from the ground, I find Mckenna and Jade. We found a spaceship. We move closer.

With only shards of metal left, it was useless. So we walked. We walked until we came across something unusual. Footsteps. *Is someone here?* This wasn't something I see every day. This creature had a yellowish-brown skin tone and spiky, shiny teeth. We began to run.

After what seemed like 1,000,000 miles, I tripped and fell into a deep coma. I was at peace.



**Untitled**  
**By Megan Mielke**

*The podium is three feet off the ground but it seems like three yards. My legs are weak yet the strongest they've ever been. Flash! Click! The lights and sounds of cameras flood my senses.*

*A reporter asks, "What are you feeling at this moment?"*

*"Years of blood, sweat, and tears. Standing up here with this gold medal around my neck makes every part worth it," I announce into the microphone, "If you asked my 16-year-old self about my dreams, you would hear exactly what you see right now. A man who made history as the best in the world."*

**Untitled**  
**By Emmaleigh Zietlow**  
**Award Winner**

Dear Emmaleigh,

Over the past four years you have grown significantly as a person and it shows a lot about your character. Walking into freshman year you were a frightened and shy 14 year old that wasn't sure what to expect from high school. It's safe to say that now you have definitely grown out of that phase. You are no longer timid and shy walking through the halls. You have now learned that people's opinions do not matter and you just have to live life the way you want to regardless of what others think. The experiences that have gotten you where you are are the reason you are who you are. You also have learned that not every single person in this world is going to like you. As you grow through experience you figure out who the people are that make you feel good and who lift you up and the people that don't. Those good ones are the people that you will hang onto forever. You are now in your second semester of senior year thinking, "Where did all the time go?" That thought could mean several different things to you. Does it mean that there are things that you wish you had done but didn't? Does it mean you lived it up to the best of your ability? Or are you confused on what it actually does mean? You are sitting here thinking about the third choice of what does it actually mean? Maybe a little bit of both? Who really knows? The answer is different for everyone because everyone lives completely different lives which is something that you have also learned. You are no longer a believer that the world solely revolves around you and that everyone has their own struggles.

As your highschool years come to a close, the takeaways from this four year rollercoaster are very significant to your growth in the future as well. As you continue your life beyond this small isolated town you will always remember that your success is not defined by how good you are at something but rather how passionate you are about it. Passion is the key to success. Passion defines your character. Your passion shapes you to be who you are. Never forget that.

Sincerely,

Emmaleigh Zietlow

**Untitled**  
**By Sam Hytinen**

As we flew over Hawaii sipping coffee looking out on all the green in the middle of the Atlantic ocean I couldn't help thinking of the fish. After the flight attendant gave me hashbrowns I got off the plane while listening to the weekend. I noticed it had begun to rain and my sperrys were starting to get soaked. Then a guy who looked like Brad Pitt was yelling, "Hola" to me. He was going to take me to my hotel. The hotel was dragon themed and there were a bunch of weird characters in the entrance. An NBA player, a guy who looked like Benjamin Franklin, and an extraordinary look alike to this girl I know named Hailey. My room number was 1234567890. I was thinking, "whoa dude, how big is this place?" Then a Hotel staffer came up to me and said, "yessir, its the biggest hotel ever built and the elevator doesn't work". I was like wow this is really my life right now. Then I heard a small voice in my head say, "keep your head high hun" and began the climb to my room.

**Untitled**  
**By Chrisopher Tanke**

*I sit on Apollo 11 with my best friend Ronald Reagan. I ecstatically prepare for takeoff to Mars, I sip my orange juice while also shoveling down pancakes. I sit in my seat and I hear Morgan Freeman's booming voice start counting down. During the final seconds of the countdown, I hear a loud rumble of thunder and rain begins to fall. The rocket ship starts to take off over Lake Michigan. I look down and I see a blue whale surface, blowing water out of its airhole. Confused, I look down again to Lake Michigan, this time I see something even stranger. Surfacing from the water is the Lochness Monster. I scream to Ronald, "Look at that!" Both of us are in disbelief as we continue ahead on our journey. As we get to outer space, the sky slowly is turning a magenta purple and I close my eyes. I think to myself about my past life goal of becoming a professional athlete. Now I realize I am living my real dream, going to Mars. Still daydreaming, I hear Ronald say "where are your all white nikes?" I jump up out of my seat, only to realize that we are now in outer space. I start floating around the ship, while Ronald laughs. His laugh is one in a million. Suddenly, I hear my grandma's voice saying, "Hi Jack." In shock, I look around and see my grandma on the TV. Floating throughout the ship I slowly make my way over to my bag, where I see her holding a container.*

# WRITING CLUB

# WRITING CLUB

## STUDENT LEADERS

Lindsay Martin • Bella Schuelke • Karina Woodward

## STAFF

Ms. Jorgensen • Mrs. Carnell

Arrowhead High School's Writing Club offers students the opportunity to pursue writing in a safe, comfortable and encouraging environment. The Writing Club is for dedicated writers who want to pursue writing as both a hobby and a passion while also improving skills. Often, meetings start with a guided prompt and then students share and discuss. After the warm-up exercise, students form groups and provide feedback on their work. Each student brings something to workshop—a poem, essay, narrative, vignette. In addition to impromptu writing and workshopping, students discuss writers' markets. The Writing Club builds upon topics addressed in Arrowhead's writing courses, while also giving students the freedom to pursue different styles.

## Writing Club Student Leaders



**Bella Schuelke** is a senior at Arrowhead.

This year, I volunteered to be one of the leaders for the Writing Club because I have always been interested in writing, and throughout high school, I have watched my writing abilities grow. Outside of the writing club, I am also involved in Warhawk Interact, Earth Club, Yearbook, and gymnastics at Arrowhead. Currently, my favorite genres to write are poetry and realistic fiction, and I struggle more with writing nonfiction pieces. I plan to continue my writing career beyond Arrowhead, as I will be attending UW-Madison next year to study either nursing or secondary education. It has been such a pleasure to lead the members of the Writing Club, and I know this club will continue to be successful long after I graduate.



**Karina Woodward** is a junior at Arrowhead.

Writing has always been a passion of mine. I love being able to express my thoughts and opinions on paper, as well as create intriguing characters and a plot that transports you from this reality to another one. Activities I enjoy are writing realistic fiction novels, song lyrics, reading, listening to music, and hanging out with my friends and family. I love that writing club is an enjoyable and laid-back club that allows people with an interest in writing to create a story based on a prompt, share our stories, and socialize. I'm looking forward to more adventures in this club!



**Lindsay Martin** is a junior at Arrowhead.

Writing has been my favorite form of self expression ever since I could put a sentence together. Some things I enjoy in my free time and/or are important to me (and I use as inspiration) are fashion, watching films, and politics. I strongly believe writing is the most effective way to communicate ideas, as it combines art and academia to create something that means something different to everyone who comes across it. Being a part of the Writing Club means a lot to me because I get to share that interest and encourage others to see the world through a writer's eyes (it's a bright one!).

## Writing Club Members

Sarah Arabiyat  
Mina Kang  
Caitlyn Klopp  
Lindsay Martin  
Virus Mennan  
Yamna Rahman  
Bella Schuelke  
Laura Verzegnassi  
Karina Woodward

## Co-faculty Advisors



**Elizabeth Jorgensen** is the co-faculty advisor of the Writing Club.

An Arrowhead English teacher, she received her undergraduate degree from Marquette University and her master's from Carroll University. In 2017, she was named Carroll University's Graduate of the Last Decade. Her memoir, co-written with Nancy Jorgensen, *Go, Gwen, Go: A Family's Journey to Olympic Gold*, is available from Meyer & Meyer Sport. She is published in *Azalea* (Harvard University), *Edutopia*, *Teachers & Writers Magazine*, *English Journal*, *Wisconsin State Reading Association Journal*, and elsewhere.



**Terri Carnell** is the co-faculty advisor of the Writing Club.

An Arrowhead English teacher, she received her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and her master's from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Inspired by her creative colleagues and students, she enjoys assisting them with all stages of the writing process, taking pride in their success.

**Not Shortened**  
**By Bella Schuelke**

Although some may believe being seemingly less whole makes something or someone any less important, this is untrue. In fact, I believe that being incomplete is proof of working towards being better, which is a great thing even if there seems to be nothing to fix. Oblivion to imperfection is equal to cowardness. There is always room for improvement.

The foundation of a skyscraper is no less important than the completed skyscraper itself. And if I were to look at the base of a skyscraper and tell someone that there is nothing more to be done, I would be crazy. Even once the skyscraper is completely built, the designer can still make changes in order to better the appearance or the practicality of the building. There is always room for improvement.

A single seed that is planted into the ground is just as valuable as the lovely flower that will take its place. Once the flower blooms, viewers will be astounded by the treasure that was once unnoticed on morning strolls. And even after the plant has bloomed, it can still be watered and nourished with minerals to grow even bigger and more charming. There is always room for improvement.

‘Bella’ may sound as if there is more to it—or something else to add. But if someone were to look me in the eyes and tell me that there is not enough of me to appreciate, I would tell them they are crazy. This is not me telling you that there is nothing to better about myself. In reality, I would love to improve my ability to express my feelings, save my money, and be dependable. Basically what I’m trying to say is there is always room for improvement. Got it?

## Yasmine and Andromeda

By Yamna Rahman

The first and most important thing Yasmine notices about her roommate is her socks. The first and least important thing Yasmine says to her roommate is, “Oh.”

Because here’s the thing about Andromeda: she’s all over the place. Her hair is styled down, silky and neat, the way the uniform requires it, but her skirt is all wrinkled and her tie is too loose and her socks are most definitely not the ones that come with the school uniform. It makes Yasmine mad, how Andromeda’s hair is orderly and everything else is not because this is the exact opposite of Yasmine herself.

“You must be new here!” says Andromeda with a smile so bright that Yasmine looks away, uncomfortable. “I’m your roommate! I took the left bed, the one closest to the window if that’s ok with you.”

“That’s alright,” says Yasmine stiffly. Her whole body feels itchy, like a thousand ants are crawling up her legs. “Um, did you already unpack?”

Andromeda beams. “Yeah, I got here this morning. I can leave this room if you’d like to unpack by yourself.”

“That’s not necessary—”

“It’s fine! I’m hungry anyway, so I’m going to go eat.” Andromeda smiles once again and Yasmine smiles back for the first time. There’s an awkward gap, and then Andromeda leaves the room.

It’s not difficult to unpack because Yasmine hardly packed anything. Three sets of the uniform (with correct, non-rainbow colored socks), extra clothes for weekends and other outings, sleep clothes, her phone, school supplies, toiletries, and other personal care items. She didn’t think to bring extra pillows and other room decorating supplies, like Andromeda’s side of the room suggests. But then again, the last thing Yasmine wants to do is associate this room with feelings of home.

Once everything is set in place, Yasmine decides to shower. The itchy feeling is back and the only thing to get rid of it is to scrub, scrub, scrub the ants away.

She’s barely gotten out of the shower and dressed when Andromeda knocks on the door. Yasmine opens it rather hesitantly because she’s not sure if she’s emotionally strong enough to deal with Andromeda’s smile.

“Oh good, you’ve showered,” Andromeda says. “The girls- in our grade, I mean- are going to go out for ice cream today. It’s a tradition, so you should come!”

Yasmine is suddenly hit with the realization that she’s the new girl. These other girls, they’ve known each other since they were fourteen and awkward. They’re seventeen now, which is three whole years of inside jokes and friendships that Yasmine has missed out on and will never experience.

Noticing her hesitation, Andromeda adds, “You don’t have come! But it’ll be a great way to meet everyone.”

Yasmine considers this. Andromeda stares at her with wide eyes filled with hope. *Her eyes are so bright*, Yasmine thinks. *It’s like they’re filled with stars.*

“Ice cream sounds nice.” She says finally. Andromeda looks positively delighted.

“Ya-ay! You can meet us in the cafeteria in an hour, we’re all gonna gather there. I have something to do, but you’ll find your way, right?”

Dazed, Yasmine agrees. It’s only when the door closes and Andromeda is gone does she wonder, *where is the cafeteria?*



**Untitled**  
**By Lindsay Martin**

I want a career in which I can explore this world as much as possible. I want to see everything: the good and the bad. I want to meet all kinds of people: those I will like immediately as well as those I will never grow fond of. I want to document my experiences in an interesting way: a way that can be understood now as well as far in the future. I want to spend my life experiencing humanity's elegance before I lose the privilege of being a part of it.

I want to see what humanity has made and what humanity has destroyed. I want to see architectural masterpieces like the Taj Mahal and the Great Pyramids. I want to see those cute little colorful towns in Morocco and those iconic waterfront homes in Greece. I want to see devastating pieces of history like Pompeii and Auschwitz. I want to see artifacts of war: reminders of how terrible we treat each other. I want to help people recognize that humanity is capable of both amazing and terrible things.

I want to explore different types of nature. I want to explore the frigid climate of the north pole; I want to experience the absence of humanity...pure solitude among the glaciers. I want to hike through the Amazon Rainforest, and observe species most people don't even know exist. I want to see the Aurora Borealis, and feel comforted by the knowledge that there is something else out there; something greater than the world. I want to be so far out in the ocean that I can't see land and no one can see me; again, pure solitude. I want to take in the beauty that only the Universe could so effortlessly create.

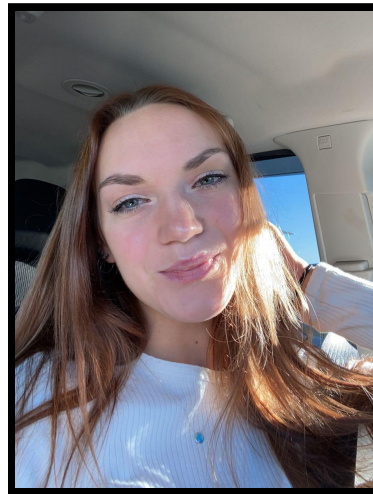
I want to meet seemingly "ordinary" people (is there even such a thing?) I want to learn what it is like to be a dabbawalla in India or a swan upper in England. I want to smile at random people on the street, knowing they probably won't smile back. I want to fall in and out of love so many times so that by the time I meet the person I was meant to, I'm really good at it. I want to speak with criminals and learn how differently they view the world, and if they still have hope. I want to meet someone who I cannot stand, and learn that tolerance is taught by experience. I want to learn about the human condition from the most viable source: humans.

Life was not intended to be spent wanting more; it was meant to be spent learning to appreciate what is already here... to appreciate the simple essence of being alive. And I plan on doing just that. I don't know what career that may lead me too, but I will gladly spend my life trying to figure that out. I will find my way, and with the world as my guide, I know it will be quite the journey—one worth sharing.

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## 2020-2021 Arrowhead Literary Magazine Editors

**Joanne Brack** is currently a senior at Arrowhead High School. Through the Literary Magazine, she has grown to learn how each and every person has a unique way to their own writing and how big of an impact writing has on individuals. In her free time, she enjoys being outside, writing, and hanging out with friends. After high school, she wishes to pursue a career as an ER doctor or trauma surgeon and further her writing career as a journalist for special and unknown cases that may be new to all doctors or surgeons.



**Rachel Gebhard** is currently a senior at Arrowhead High School. Her senior year, she was named one of the editors for the literary magazine. Through the literary magazine she grew to understand the way people write and use their emotions to portray a story. In her free time, she enjoys listening to music and hanging out with friends and family. After graduating, she plans on going to school for criminal justice.



**Ana Casper** is currently a junior at Arrowhead High School. She is very grateful for the opportunity to share her art through the Literary Magazine. In her spare time, she enjoys drawing, hiking, and creating photo-manipulations. In addition, she likes songwriting and making cover art for her friends' songs. After graduating, she intends to pursue research in either psychology or neuroscience.

