



Eclectic Soup
2008-2009

...a collection of creativity

Eclectic Soup



A Collection of Creativity 08-09

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A Troublesome Thorne and a Stuck Elevator

By Melanie Breunig

“Oh! My day has been downright dreadful! I fell into a briar patch and got a head full, I’m in dire need of a revving Red Bull...I need the help of a medical professional!” Dr. Seuss adjusted his black-frame glasses and picked thorns from his sweaty brow, flicking them about the shaggy-carpeted elevator where he presently stood, careful not to fling them into a neglected plate of Green Eggs and Ham.

“Hey! Careful! You’re going to hurt the monkey with those things!” said a strange, prematurely bald man.

Dr. Seuss spun around to find that he was not alone. He ceased his present activity of thorn-flinging but could no longer ignore the odor coming from the mysterious ape. “If I may be frank, he is causing an order which is really quite rank.” He paused and turned to the strange, prematurely bald man. “And who you might you be?”

“Howie Mandel, at your service,” he said, while offering his fists for a “pound” rather than a traditional handshake. “And this is George.” He motioned to the animal with an eccentric steel suitcase. “He’s really quite a social mo--George! Don’t eat the thorns!”

But George was curious. He opened his mouth defiantly and placed a barb on his pink tongue. After a few chews, his eyes widened and he realized that once again, his curiosity had led his downfall.

“Oh my dear! Oh my duck! I do believe that thorn is stuck!”

The elevator turned into mayhem: George was climbing on the walls as if they were the trees in the jungle where he was born. Dr. Seuss was running along the outskirts of the elevator shouting, “With a lodged thorn, he’ll be dead by morn! With a lodged thorn, he’ll be dead by morn.” Howie observed that the elevator had stopped moving and was therefore frantically pushing buttons and trying to alert the others.

“QUIET!” George and Dr. Seuss turned to look. “Now, if we are ever going to get George to a Doctor, we need to get out of here! And to get out of here, you two need to calm down! Deal or No Deal? Now, I need you to get out from in front of the

doors,” the two moved, “and remain absolutely silent.” The two obeyed. “Elevator...open the doors.”

Howie, having immense power over all things with doors—both sliding and hinging—was able to successfully open the steel panels.

“Oh, my soul doth leap with glee! The wedged thorn shall soon be free!” Dr. Seuss was ecstatic at the notion that George would not, in fact, be “dead by morn.”

The three rushed off to the hospital, emptying the elevator. Now all that remained was a steel suitcase, thorns, and a neglected plate of Green Eggs and Ham—because apparently, not even Dr. Seuss will “eat them here, there, or anywhere.”



Lyndsey Cross

What a Lovely Day to Go to the Beach

By Colin Schrader

Cannibal Island. That's what we called it. It's this little island about a mile out from the coast where I live. They say there's a crazy old man who lives on that speck of land. Supposedly he has traps planted all over the beach, buried in the sand. Once he's got you in his traps, he snatches you up and eats you. That's the story. There was a story in the paper about a missing girl a few years ago. We all figured he ate her. But she was found washed up on the shore about a week later. Unfortunately she was dead. But her body blew our whole idea out of the water.

"I wish we could talk to him," said Angie, a couple of days ago, "y'know? Just to get to know him."

"Yeah if you want to get eaten," joked Harry.

"Well I think it would be kinda cool to meet him. If he doesn't trap you. Maybe he really isn't a cannibal. Maybe he's just trapping small animals for food," I said.

"Well let's ask him," said Harry.

And that's how it began. We would leave for the island in two days time. We got all of our gear ready. We brought flashlights, walkie talkies, and other survival stuff.

Everything was planned for our encounter with the cannibal. We set out a little after ten o'clock at night. We didn't want to wake any of our neighbors up, so we were quiet. We got a boat from Harry that we could all fit into. It was snug, but it worked.

We were almost at the island when I realized how big the island was. It seemed so small from the coast. It would take at least fifteen minutes to find the cabin where the old man was supposed to live. I was in front. So I led our team onto the beach where we tied down the boat. The sand seemed so warm here, which was weird because it was such a chilly night.

As we headed toward the center of the island, I reveled in the warmth of the sand between my toes as I walked (our water shoes would slow us down,

so we took them off). I was surprised how far ahead I was from the other two; I always felt like I was the strongest, the best of our little group, but I never expressed that to the others.

"Slow down, Jake, you're moving too fast," called Angie.

"Yeah you're truckin' way too fast for us," Harry said.

I turned to look at them as they trudged up the beach. It seemed the sand was pulling them back, but sand has a way of doing that.

"Hey! I can't move!" shouted Harry from behind.

"Yeah, me neither," said Angie.

I sighed and doubled back to help them. They

probably got stuck in a sinkhole. A part of me was hoping it was one of the man's traps, and then it would prove our theories. When I got to them, I noticed they were sinking, slowly, but definitely sinking.

"Jake, help us!" they cried.

They were panicking, which wasn't making the situation better. This was a heck of a sinkhole (or trap). I tried

pulling them out, but it seemed to make them sink faster. It felt like I was having a tug-of-war with the sand. As I tried pulling them out, I saw Harry zip into the sand. I became terrified. I instinctively let go of Angie. Big mistake. She was pulled under just as fast.

"Angie! Harry! No!" I screamed.

I was frantically clawing at the sand in the hopes I would find them and save them. Suddenly I felt something tugging at my foot, and I realized it was buried completely under the sand. I began clawing at my own trap as I tried to free myself. Just then I looked up and saw the old man sprinting toward me with a shovel in his hands. He was screaming something I couldn't hear. He was probably here to decapitate me with his shovel to carry off my carcass



Jen Wesenberg

for his dinner.

At that moment, I realized he was running to help me. It took me long enough. I guess he was saving the best for last. That little bit of humorous pride died quickly when I discovered what had me. It was never the crazy old man who was eating people, it was the –

The old man sighed as the boy went under. He hoped he could save him. Just save one soul from the sand. This was growing increasingly more depressing. He shuddered for a moment at the thought of where they were digested and released from. Probably somewhere along the coast. He tried to save that

one girl many years ago, but once again he was too late. Oh, how the old man wished he could leave the island, but he knew it wouldn't let him. It liked his company even though he hated it. He turned back toward his shed where he would brood over this terrible loss. As he walked back he thought he heard a sound like a burp, but he decided he didn't want to truly know what it was.

It was getting really late now; he needed to get back to his shed quickly. It was the only safe haven, for night was almost at its peak. The trees were getting restless....and hungry.



Jen Wesenberg

Untitled

By Lindy Nelson

Once upon a time in a big, bustling city, a box of kittens was put outside. One by one, people would come by and peer in at the tiny, mewling balls of fluff, and one by one, the squirming kittens would be taken out of the box to live with a family of his or her own.

By the time night fell, there was one amber colored kitten left by herself. She mewed in hopes of getting someone to look down into the box, reach in, and pick her up, but the sounds of the evening busses and mothers calling their children in for dinner rendered her cries unheard.

As the night began to get darker and colder, the kitten felt a drop of rain on her forehead. She huddled in the corner of her box, but it offered little protection from the storm. The wind whipped and she thought she'd be thrown out into the street. She didn't want to leave what little protection she had, but she thought she'd try in an attempt to get out of the downpour. Wriggling up over the soaked edge of the box, she pushed and clawed against the wind as she tried to move forward. She was so focused on going up the street she didn't notice the gutter she was about to walk into. The torrent of water flushed her down main street and didn't stop until she was pushed into a street light.

Shaking her head in an attempt to clear it of the ringing, she didn't notice the large black pair of boots in front of her. A hand that looked like it belonged to a giant scooped her up.

"Did someone leave you out on this miserable night?"

Kitten mewed as she squirmed under the weight of her own drenched fur.

"I'll take you home with me. Would you like to be my kitty?"

A "mew" mixed with a "purr" was her answer as the man put her inside his coat.

"If you don't scratch me, I'll put you in my shirt. That'll keep you warm."

Kitten nuzzled her face up against her owner's chest. If she held still, she could hear his heartbeat. It was like being with her mother again; her mom's tummy was always warm and fuzzy, and she knew no harm would come to her. She closed her eyes until she felt herself being lifted out. She was in a house like the one where she was born, but it smelled

differently and there was more stuff.

"I'm sorry, kitten. The boys crashed here last night, and I didn't get to clean up yet."

He took a t-shirt that was draped over a chair, put it in an empty pizza box, and moved the box next to the air vent. "It'll be warm here. If you get hungry I'll put some milk over here. Goodnight, kitten. I'll see you when I get up for class tomorrow."

Kitten shut her eyes again and let the feeling of the warm air overtake. When she opened her eyes again, the man was hunched over an enormous text book at the kitchen table.

"Meow?" kitten asked as she went to rub against his legs.

"Good Morning, kitten," he replied as he reached down to scratch her ears. "I've got an exam this afternoon. You can help me study."

He lifted her up into his lap and petted her as she kneaded a spot to lay down on his legs. Suddenly, he picked her up. He ran his fingers along her tummy until he reached a spot that tickled her.

"This is the spot where you're supposed to administer medication. I'm studying to be a vet, kitty. You're going to help me study and learn about cats."

Kitten mewed in agreement as he ran his long fingers up and down her lithe body. After much muttering to himself and page turning, he got up to put his coat on.

"I'm off to my exam, kitten."

She rubbed his leg in an attempt to wish him good luck and proceeded to explore her new home. She found lots of clothes in piles that smelled like her owner and lots of thick books. There were also pictures of other cats she hadn't met yet.

"Meow!" She called to see if there was anyone else here. Nobody returned her call. She decided they must have been cats from school or animal shelters but had never come here. While she was exploring, her owner came home.

"I'm home, kitten!"

She ran up to greet him.

"I think I did a good job on the exam. Thank you for helping me, kitty."

She purred and licked his nose.

"Thank you. We earned some T.V. Come on."

He sunk into a bean bag chair, and she found a seat on his slightly padded stomach. She fell asleep

listening to the gurgles and sounds the noisy box made.

For the next few months, the pattern continued: wake up, help owner study, wait for him to get home, watch TV and fall asleep, repeat. Kitten was ecstatic to have a home where she was petted and cuddled daily and told she was a good kitty, but on some nights, he didn't come home. When she'd wake up, there would be food in her dish, but she missed her owner.

He must be really overworked at school, she thought as she rubbed her face in the mountain of clothes that smelled so good.

One night when her owner didn't come home, she woke up to find no food in her dish. Her stomach growled in protest as she went all over the house to find nothing edible. The day dragged on and on as she waited for him to get home.

When she heard the click of the key in the door, she rushed up to tell him she was hungry.

"Sorry I didn't feed you today. They needed me at the clinic because of him."

He reached in his coat and pulled out a chocolate colored kitten that was her size.

"Please be nice to him."

He went into the bathroom and left the two of them alone. The chocolate kitten seemed nice, but kitten was so hungry she didn't spend much time talking, and she went to her bowl. When she was about halfway through, she notice the chocolate kitten was crunching at the opposite end of the dish.

"That's my food and I haven't had anything to eat all day!" She swatted him across the face and tried to go back to eating, but the man had seen her strike.

"Naughty kitty! I told you to be nice."

That night, kitten slept out on the linoleum floor while chocolate kitten slept in the pizza box. In a few days, chocolate kitten was gone, but he was replaced by two white cats that would rub against kitten's owner's legs and make it so he wouldn't pet her or even notice she was there. More often than not, he forgot to feed her. Kitten tried to get her owner's attention by mewing and nuzzling like she always did, but it didn't work. She knew humans got upset when cats sharpened their claws on the furniture, but she didn't want to get attention that way. She wanted him to pet her and tell her she was

a good girl like he used to. The other cats weren't always nice. Some spat at her, others would swat her. The friendly ones just ignored her. Kitten longed to be picked up and kissed on the head. When she was able to catch her owner by himself and try to cuddle, he would either yell at her to leave him alone, or he would toss her into another room.

Kitten felt herself growing weaker and more miserable by the day. A week went by where she wasn't fed. Using whatever strength she had left, she dragged herself into his study room.

"Mew." She needed to eat at the very least and be petted if that was done. She rubbed his leg and mewed again.

"Shut up, you stupid cat! You always make a mess, and I don't even get paid to take care of you. Go away."

"Mew." She wished she could tell him how hungry she was and how sad it made her to not be his pet anymore.

"I said go away, you little creep!"

She tried one last time. "Mew."

"I SAID, SHUT UP!"

He grabbed her by the scruff of her neck and threw her against the wall. The impact broke her spine but it was the fall to the floor that killed her.

Her body was removed after about a week when the other cats started to eat it and get sick. He put on a rubber glove and picked her up by her mangled tail and threw her out behind the bushes.

A month after kitten was killed, a black cat appeared at the clinic where the man had been hired. This cat would hiss at clients and bite their heels as they entered. No exterminator could find this cat, and they all denied there was a problem, but people slowly stopped coming to the clinic. On the day it shut down, amber kitten's owner felt a stinging rake across his ankle as he walked out. The black cat's green eyes glared at him from inside the shrubbery.

Graduation

By Jennifer Winsten

“Mom,” the woman sighs impatiently, indignant but empathetic.

She’s beautiful. I cry.

Freckles adorn. Eyes thirst. No pigtails, no mud-spattered jumper, but I see. My Lucy.

Someone calls her name. I hold tight, brush the hair from her face. My fingertips graze the tassel resting upon her right cheek.

And then I let go.

My Heart

By Danielle McConnohie

All I can think about is how he’s coming home. A thousand thoughts cross my mind and my heart begins to beat.

I enter the football game. Almost instantly, I hear someone shout my name. As I look back hoping to see those big blue eyes looking back at me, I come to see an unfamiliar face staring at a beautiful blonde behind me. I continue to walk through the roaring crowds of people with hope of seeing him. After walking for what felt like miles, my hope begins to fade, tears begin to fall, and my heart begins to break.

My parents picked my name because, at the time, it was rare and they loved saying it. Now when my parents say it, they have that tone that says, “Go clean your room,” or “Did you finish your homework?” When my friends say it, they just want to talk about silly boy-liking-girl drama.... But when he says it, it’s with that smile, which says those three words that makes my heart beat uncontrollably: I love you.

As I walk out to my car in the crowded parking lot, I feel a hand touch my shoulder. I turn with a smile...and my heart begins to beat. Once more.

32

By Sarah Trentadue

Katie, Alexandra, and Francisca the 3rd—names. Every individual has one. Trentadue—that’s her name. Some people think it’s nice, others don’t really know—but she knows. It’s Italian—one of the many things she is proud of. 32.

Spending leisure time sitting watching “One Tree Hill” eating unhealthy amounts of candy is a must—guilty. Soccer games are all the time, usually five hours away. No big deal. Her name shares a smile. Her dreams are as powerful as money, but when spent on wishful thinking could destroy a pocket. At heart she will always be forever young. Summers are spent on the lake (that she wishes could be her own). Friends and family mean the most to her. Growing up and making a difference in the world was never a question. She always tried to find a way to help out, possibly the peace corps. and traveling the world. Her name lives everyday to the fullest. 32.

Yes. In a boot shaped country her name—Trentadue—means 32.



Jennifer Winsten



Mark Pochowski

Our Natural Life

By Jennifer Winsten

It's 5:30 now. The new day casting shadows across the length of my bed. I go to the window; snow falls from the desolate sky. It's thick, erasing the marks of yesterday left behind. The ground has warmed, though, in days past, and fights what has newly fallen. I step outside; the cool air brushes back my hair and nips at my cheeks. Snow melts. The sun continues to rise, bright, as if encouraging the coming of spring. I hear the hum of a new beginning. I can smell the damp, feel the energy against my skin. The transition has begun.

As the day reaches its end, the sun lowers, the earth darkens, and I prepare for rest. I, along with all of this earth, live within nature, not aside. We fall with the sun, we rise with the sun. Our lives are built around it, our reasons, and our answers. But nature does not live as we do. It does not sleep; it does not dream. It does not grow or age, nor has it death. Rebirth. Nature, of perpetual existence, is without end. Its path is a circle, a cycle held above both time and circumstance. Therefore, we may walk with nature, but we do not follow it. Our path is one of unique design and destination. We live and we die. We explore, choose, make our own path and our own ending. But we're not alone; Nature is our teacher, our guide, and our solace. It is our one promise, our singular gift. It is what connects us, what binds us one to another in even the most divided of our days. It is the light, the air, the water that feed our body, the power and beauty that enrich our soul.

And Beyond

By Carly Jackson

Beyond our earth, beyond our solar system, beyond our galaxy. Deep into the vast outer space, past all of the stars and meteors and extravagant, massive sources of unfathomable light... there is a wall.

The wall surrounds the entire outer space which is trillions of times more colossal than our galaxy: the Milky Way. It contains all we know to exist beyond our sight, everything we know is there and have not explored. It is the end of outer-space. And what lies on the other side of the wall is wonderful.

It is another land with a different form of intelligence. The creatures who live there...they know. They know how to obtain every resource required for a joyful life. Each form of intelligence that lives beyond posses the keys to be whoever he or she desires. They have the option for their world to be perfect. Nobody just lives; everybody just thrives.

You'd think everyone is rich. You'd think everyone is healthy all the time, or no one ever chooses physical or emotional pain.

Nothing is out of their hands. Since they are born with the tools, they know how to control every aspect of their lives, yet their world is not perfect. But it is.

If there was no cold and only warmth, we could not appreciate warmth. There would be no contrast. But who is to say warmth is better than cold? And who's to say wealth is better than poverty, health is better than sickness, or happiness is better than any other not positive feeling? In their world, it was always all good. And there were no limitations.

A Silent Dance

By Jen Wesenberg

I was finally married to the man of my dreams. Almost everyone I invited showed up that day to celebrate. My husband and I had our first dance. Afterwards it was the father and daughter dance.

I heard a voice behind me. "May I have this dance?" I turn around and it's my dad. He took me in his arms. My dad died three years earlier.

Kaleidoscope

By Sarah Trentadue

Broken roads, run down houses, little boys without shirts, and irritant bugs. It was June, and I was standing in Minneapolis on my second church mission trip. I did not know what that city had to offer, but I was eager to find out. My expectations had grown from the previous summer, seeing as the alumni of the trip included...well...just me.

I was assigned to help out at the kid's club Kaleidoscope for the week. I had the pleasure of teaching faith, playing games, and bringing hope to inner city kids. I taught through experience, as well as learned through understanding. Both the students and I grew in knowledge, as well as strength. When I arrived, a boy named Case no older than six followed me around asking questions. It wasn't long before we became fond of each other.

Case perpetually asked me, "Why are you white?" or said, "You go first in line; you're better than me." We were coloring one day, and he showed me his picture and said, "Look, look! This is a picture of you and me. I am colored black, and you are white."

I looked at him, and he didn't have a clue as to what he had said. His keen ignorance stunned me.

"Case." I paused. "The color of your skin doesn't matter. Everyone is different. We all take part in this kaleidoscope called the world. Each color has its own function, and without it, the picture would not be complete. See life in your own way." As I coached him back to confidence, I realized what

I had said. Maybe six-year-old Case didn't understand just yet, but I did. The best advice ever given to me was my own.

Just as Kaleidoscope provides the kids with freedom, happiness, and knowledge, I too have looked through my own kaleidoscope. Each challenge created a new pattern with different faces of colors reflecting in front of me.

As I listened to my own advice that afternoon, I remembered the words of Henry David Thoreau: "I march to the beat of my own drummer." I found truth in knowing Case was changed. I made a difference, and at the end of the day, that's all that matters.

As Case changed in his kaleidoscope, I know my little kaleidoscope will change, too. The new experiences will not only enrich my life and add to the colorful design in my kaleidoscope, but also help others to engage in building their own.



Lyndsey Cross

Beach

By Shawn Bechtel and Stephanie Catano

Sitting on the grainy and rough sand, I could see the thick, white foamy waves crashing down on the shore. Far into the distance, I could see the orange of the setting sun reflecting on the steady waves of the ocean. On my left, I jealously observed a couple sharing a coconut with two straws. Past them was an old lady with grey hair glaring at a kiosk. A seagull swooshed past me, distracting me from the old lady and switching my attention to the seagull's loud cawing. I followed its flight and watched it land on a rock shaped like an upside-down bowl. Next to the rock was a man unloading his net of fish from his fishing boat. I looked down to my feet where I had just felt a crab and relocated it to a new warm patch of sand.



Sylvia Hansen

Not Your Children

By Carly Jackson

With flailing limbs, tightly shut eyes, a wide open mouth, and a red face, the screaming four-year-old boy is carried out of the grocery store. Lately, his mother is loath to take him out in public. The nefarious tantrums occurred regularly. The mother asks their neighbor and friend to scrutinize the child's behavior, for her attempts to settle his anger are ineffectual. She doesn't recall her two sons acting this way when they were four. Society says the parents are not doing their job. A 10-year-old cheats on his science test.

Society says the parents are not doing their job. A teenage girl steals a diamond ring from her friend's mother. Society says the parents are not doing their job.

An astute poet, Kahlil Gabrin, shared wisdom about the parent/child relationship: "They come through you, but they are not from you. And though they are with you, they belong not to you."

It is a village's duty to love and support a child. Nurturing the child to have strength and individuality is important. Expecting them to share

their parents' thoughts and views can cause a child to lose who they are.

When a child solicits guidance, parents and neighbors step in, telling him what is right and what is wrong from the adult's perspective.

We are on the earth to learn and experience. The right decision for the parent may not be the child's path. "Your political views are vexatious," mumbled the teenager. "I don't agree with you and Dad." A child who has the strength to break away and be who he is means successful parenting. Allow the child to fall and make mistakes. Allow the child to create success and triumph. Allow the child to experience his own life for himself. When the child can do that, it means the village is doing its job.

We blame the parents for their children's mistakes. We credit the parents for their children's successes. A parent brings their child into the world. The child's life belongs to him. An amicable settlement is not for the parents to be responsible. The child is responsible. Power to the children of the world.

The

All Purpose Machine

By Colin Schrader

"...Yeah, but what is it?" Adam asked.

Adam stared at the curious device the old man was holding. It was large – maybe eight inches tall. It was a four-sided pyramid with a sphere resting where the top should be. The old man turned it in his hand, and the shining silver glistened in the sun. Adam could almost feel the sun's heat emanating off it.

"Why it's the APM m'boy!" the old man said.

He had a large grin over his face. Well, it looked like a grin. Adam couldn't tell. The man's face was buried behind a white beard. His eyes were a piercing blue. Knowledgeable. His nose was small and rested on top of a large moustache which fused into the beard. He was tall, thin, but not weak. And there was an air of youth about him that Adam couldn't quite identify.

Although the APM looked heavy, he seemed to have no trouble holding it in his bony hand.

"It's the only thing you'll ever need. I can't tell you how many times I've relied on this thing. I tell you, this thing is built to last. And it's yours."

Adam stood on the sidewalk with a curious look on his face. He wasn't grasping what this man was saying. If it was such an important, valuable commodity, why give it to Adam? Sure, he helped the man with his groceries. Big deal. Adam didn't see that as any reason to receive the APM.

"What does APM stand for? And more importantly, why are you giving it to me?" Adam asked.

"APM: All Purpose Machine. It can do anything you need. Much better than any of those new-fangled contraptions you have. Cubes and Gameboxes."

"Now to answer why I am giving it to you is simple. You helped me with groceries – yes, a simple task, but you had no reason to do it. You didn't ask for a reward; you were polite, patient, proper; you were honest."

Ignoring the man's butchering of game console names, Adam listened as the man elaborated on his reasoning to give his prized possession. He didn't know why he helped the man. He felt it was what he had to do. Yeah, it was honest, wasn't it? Adam was a pretty awesome guy.

"Here, take it m'boy. Don't use it until you get

home. And be very careful with it. Use it wisely."

Adam held the APM in his hand and admired its smoothness. He suddenly realized the man was gone. He didn't explain how to use the machine. With a shrug Adam hauled the APM back to his car. It was heavy, but at the same time, Adam felt no exhaustion as he carried it.

He arrived home to see his parents sitting on the couch watching TV. His mom glanced up to him and saw the device.

"What do you have there?" she asked.

"I have no idea. I'm going up to my room to tinker with it. I'll be down for dinner," Adam said as he walked upstairs to his room.

His mom shrugged and resumed watching TV. Adam carried the APM to his desk. There were books, tools, and candy wrappers strewn over the desk. He swept them aside to place the APM in the middle. He stared at it. It didn't do a thing. He passed his hand over the slightly concave side of the pyramid. His hand felt a small indentation.

When his fingertip met the notch, he felt a bit of electricity pulse from it. Just then, the sphere split into four sections. The silvery casing seemed to disappear into the pyramid structure underneath, leaving behind a glass ball.

Almost as soon as the silver sides vanished, the ball began to fill with a peculiar orange liquid. It looked like orange soda without the fizz, and it was glowing. Not brightly, but enough. Adam stared with bewilderment as the liquid filled the ball. No air bubbles. The liquid filled the entire ball. Then it began to churn.

Adam felt an urge to touch the ball. Although it was a stupid thought, he proceeded to place his hand on it. It was warm. He could feel the liquid swirl slowly within. It also tingled. With a slight sensation of electricity it hummed against his palm. But it was with more than electricity, something stronger.

He suddenly had a craving for a hot dog. His dad was grilling hot dogs and he could smell the grill from outside. The rich scent of grilled beef danced in his nose. His stomach began to growl. Then a hot dog appeared in his free hand. Perfectly done.

Adam stared at the food that materialized into

his hand. He didn't know what to think. Was it the APM? Looking back and forth between the hot dog and the APM, he couldn't comprehend the thought of such an event, so he tested it.

His hand was still on the glowing ball. He imagined a new videogame. It was all he could think of. Selfish maybe, but he'd been saving up for the game, and he wanted it. The minute he thought of the game, it appeared in his hand. No pop. No fizzle. Just there. He couldn't believe his luck. He wanted to imagine other things, but the liquid drained in the ball, and the casing returned.

Time's up for today, Adam thought.

During school, all he could think about was the All Purpose Machine and what he would create. He imagined fame, fortune, the girl of his dreams, superpowers – things a 17-year-old should dream up.

One thought popped into his head. It was small and more of a whisper than a thought. World peace. He chuckled at the thought, but then again, why not? He could do it. No questions asked.

Nah, he'll save that for a rainy day.

For the next week, he used the APM to create trivial things. Money, games, a slushie machine. Nothing major, because he was afraid at what would happen.

Then one day, he had a stupid thought. He couldn't help it. It just popped into his head before he could even stop himself from imagining. Dinosaurs. No – better than dinosaurs, dragons. As a kid, he loved dragons. He had wished them to be real. He saw his hand was still on the ball. Uh oh.

He heard a roar from outside his window. He rushed to it, only to stand terrified. There were dragons on a rampage throughout the city destroying anything and everything in sight.

"Y'know m'boy I was afraid of this," the old man sighed, "but I thought, no. He wouldn't do such a silly thing. I was wrong. I figured I could finally have someone take over. Give the reins to somebody else for a change. But we can't always get what we wished for, eh?"

Adam turned to see the old man standing in his bedroom munching on an apple with a look of disappointment on his bearded face.

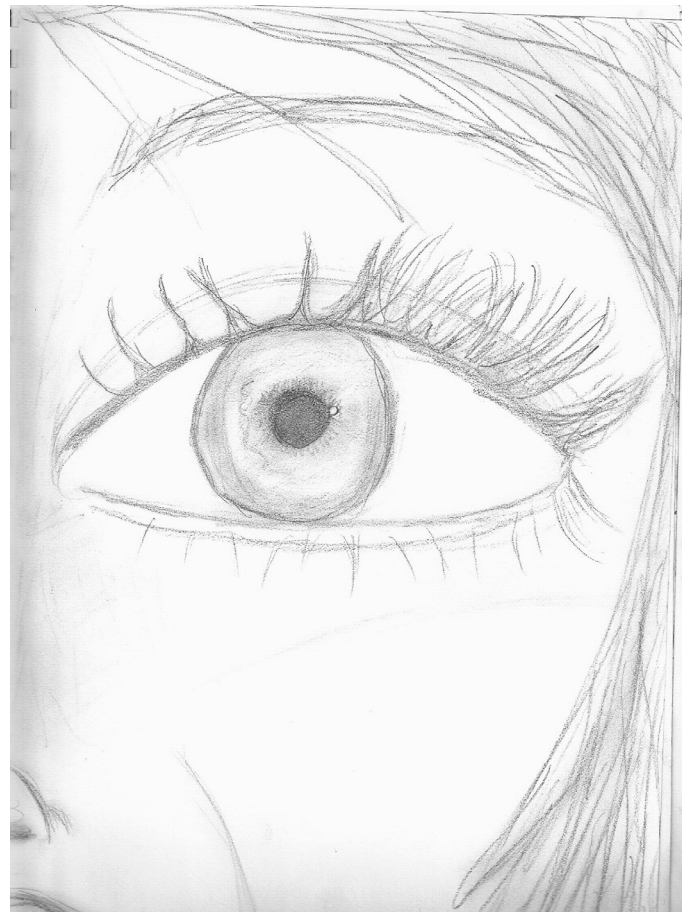
The man continued, "I've created worlds. Creatures. Everything. I thought maybe, just maybe I could find someone like me. Someone who could do as I did. Guess not. It's not your fault. You're a kid. I don't blame you."

Adam felt the ball begin to stir violently. He saw the orange liquid turn black. If he was terrified before, he crossed into a new threshold of fear. The old man walked over to the All Purpose Machine, pressed his hand into the notch, and the world stopped. Nothing moved. The beasts outside froze in mid-flight.

Adam, however, could move. He moved away from the APM. His hand tingled. He couldn't speak.

"You screwed up again," the old man said. "Now I've reset the world before your dragons. Maybe in another couple of millenniums I'll redesign you and you can finally take the reins. Until then, I'll be upstairs tinkering."

And it was so.



Carly Goll

America:

A Nation Under God?

by Emma Reynolds

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 by Francis Bellamy, a Baptist minister. At first, the pledge contained everything except the words, 'under God'. They deemed something was missing, and after decades of deliberation, added the words 'under God' to the pledge. The basis for this was because people felt the pledge should reflect the American spirit and the way of life as defined by Lincoln. However, this caused a stir among the diverse population of the United States from the year it was added to present day.

America was founded by people who immigrated to America to escape injustices, looking for a better life, or simply looking for a new adventure. They are the people who created the United States, and defined the American way of life. America has always been known as the "country of freedom", the "land of dreams". These people came to America from all over the world, with different languages, religions and customs—yet they were united and connected as "Americans."

Who complains about the Pledge of Allegiance? It's important to keep God in our pledge regardless if you're a Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, or any of the hundreds of religions in the world. More than 77% of our nation identifies themselves as Christians, which translates approximately to 159 million people. America must work hard to keep God as the foundation of our country. Those teachers who make their students stand outside of the classroom to avoid the pledge should find another country. The pledge is to "us" a nation united under one God. This needs to be incorporated into our classrooms so that we continue the basis and fundamental beliefs and values of this country. This does not constitute any enforcement of religion in public schools. The pledge isn't centered on those two words, "under God." It's a reminder that each day, our country provides us the rights and freedom to speak, dress and worship in any way we choose.

If the government takes God out of the pledge, they will have to remove much of what America was founded upon. Our nation was founded



Jen Wesenberg

upon Christian values and principles. Our currency contains the words, "In God We Trust." "God Bless America" and "America the Beautiful" are patriotic songs in which God is mentioned. Our own Congress begins each day with a prayer. God plays a major role in America's history, and He should continue to be a part of America's future.

As Psalms 33:12 reads, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." Especially considering our problems, is it really a time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?

Since Thomas Jefferson's day, there have been conflicts with the issue of separation between church and state. The term "separation of church and state" was introduced by Thomas Jefferson in 1802 and continues to present day. In 1948, the issue was brought up yet again, and the Bible was eliminated from classrooms in 1963. The separation of church and state is the political and legal doctrine that government and religious institutions are to be kept separate from each other. Since that time, we have seen a decline in our nation's values and an increase in crime, teen pregnancies, and teen suicides. God is being expelled from our lives. When we hear people using God's name in vain, rather than for worship, it appears that we're losing our connection to God day-by-day.

God: a three-letter word that represents comfort for the majority of Americans. It defines the American way of life.

You Have One Shot

By Kirsten Prost

He was incredible. At fifteen, this boy had achieved what most can only dream of. He had gone to the Olympics and thus was a swimming phenomenon. It was not possible for Michael Phelps to screw up; he was perfect.

The dream was born when he started swimming at the age of five. The 14-year journey had never been easy. Practice filled days, turned into practice filled weeks, which turned into practice filled years. Years of commitments to the pool instead of people had always been difficult, and had not always been worth it. But to Michael it was not just about setting records. It was about changing a sport. Because of those goals, he broke new records and thus set for himself higher and higher standards. He had what many thought a solid, unbreakable reputation as a symbol of the American way even before he went to the Olympics.

The first Olympics in Sydney did not go as well as planned, but that only earned him more respect in the sport. Swimmers everywhere admired that you could beat him, but you could not make him quit.

Four years later Michael, got his chance once again to prove to the world what he was made of at the 2004 Athens Olympics. He did not disappoint. He matched the record of eight medals and set a total of five world records.

However, no one is perfect. Actually no one is even close. Only three months after he amazed many fans world wide, he disappointed many more. On a Thursday night, he was arrested on drunken driving charges after rolling a red light. He was underage, only 19 years old. When people heard this, they didn't care it was Michael Phelps, their hero, or that he had been an American sport icon only months before. All that mattered was he shattered many people's dreams that day by shattering his own reputation, in only a short number of minutes.

Michael's dream was to change a sport and change a sport he did, until that night. He failed to realize with great power comes great responsibility. And now he has to pay for that. He was able to get his status back again through many more years of hard work. However, he will never be able to forget how many lives he could have cost and how many people he could have hurt that night, all for a little fun.

The Monster Did It

By Chris Meissner

The room was a mess. Again. I knew the monster had done it. Again. I had to face the beast and stop this madness. Forever.

I climbed the stairs to its lair. I knocked on the door. No answer. Deciding to enter at my own risk, I opened the door. My sister wasn't there.

Encounter in the Yard

By Chris Meissner

Walking through the yard, I found a young man named Jake. I asked if he'd like to see the flower garden. He said yes. As I led the way, I looked back. He wasn't there.

I came upon the gardener and asked him, "Have you seen Jake?"

He said, "He was buried here last week."



Jennifer Winsten

Untitled

By Danielle McConnohie

Imagine being a single mother with a ten-month-old daughter. What if you had to work full time in order to provide a normal lifestyle for your child, but you couldn't even afford daycare? When I realized my 26-year-old cousin, Theresa, was in this situation my heart started to ache; I wanted to change the world for her, or at least make hers seem less suffocating. I offered to babysit my smiley little cousin all summer while Theresa worked.

The first week I got Lauryn, she was a mess. Her nose was so stuffed up, she needed her mouth open to

breath. Her eyes watered non-stop from her ongoing coughing. Throughout that week, she cried every second. I didn't have a minute to rest. Not once did I see that cute smile come across her chubby face. I tended to her every hour on the hour, until her mom came and picked

her up. I was so unbelievably tired, I could barely function. And that was only the first week.

The worse part of it all was that my friends were actually enjoying their summer and all I could think was, "What have I gotten myself into?"

The next night when Theresa came to pick up Lauryn, she saw the exhaustion in my eyes. The smile on her face fell to a concerned look.

"You know, if this is too much for you, I can always put her in daycare," she said.

At that moment, I realized day in and day out, Theresa goes from a full day of work, to tending to her baby at night. My tiredness doesn't compare to what she goes through. I knew my weakness needed to change into strength. The only way to do that was

to face the challenge ahead of me.

"No Theresa, I can handle it...I promise."

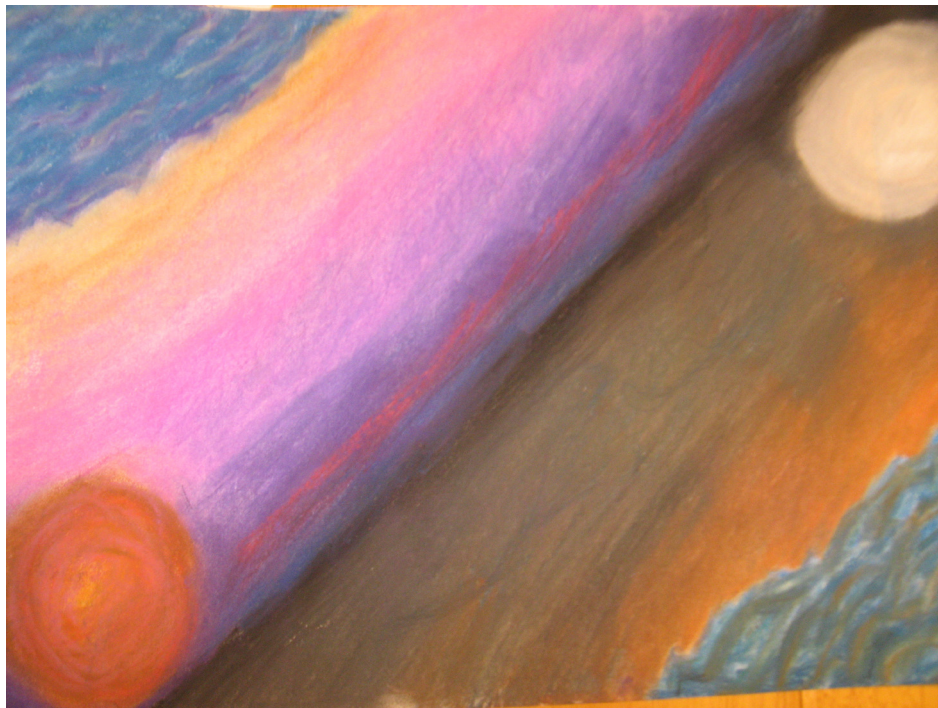
The next couple weeks went by, and things seemed to be getting easier. I started to pick up on Lauryn's everyday schedule. It soon became second nature to me; I knew every moment she needed to be fed and changed. The smiley Lauryn I once knew was back.

Having to change weeks in my life around Lauryn's every need took more than just time. It took patience. When it comes to babies, you never know

how they're going react from one moment to the next.

Lauryn reminded me that you can't just walk away from tough situations in your life; you have to learn to face and deal with the obstacles ahead of you, for there will be many to come.

On my last week of summer, I was out with a group



Kayla Herrera

of my girlfriends. We were all sharing the exciting things we did these last three months.

"The lake by far was the best part."

"Well, personally, I thought the parties were all pretty great!"

"No way, camping was definitely the most fun!"

Hearing all of these events made my summer seem dull. But honestly, it was the farthest thing from dull. I watched Lauryn all summer long without getting paid a dime.

Many would say I'm crazy for wasting my summer, but in the end, I was given something greater than money. I was given the chance to make life a little less complicated.

I Understand

the Hearts of Heroes

By Max Jentsch

I understand the hearts of heroes, the courage of present and all times, the firefighter who risked his life on that adrenaline filled day.

He frantically fought the bright orange flames to find the lost soul within the heart of the burning two-story building.

He jumped over burning piles of wood, brushed away the ash collecting on his visor, and searched for the yell for help he had heard moments ago.

He found the body of the five-year-old boy who was trapped and alive, but breathing in the poisonous, gray smoke.

He was hope and survival in that boy's brown eyes.

He was the person who pulled the boy from the belly of the 300 degree beast.

I am the boy who cried for help, suffered in the smoke, and survived that day.

I am the firefighter who was like a red angel to that trapped boy.

The teacher who is always there for her students, how she gave parties, sweet treats, and extra recesses for good deeds her students did, and how she knuckled down when it was time to learn.

She stressed over correcting the ten-page paper she assigned two weeks ago while thinking, "Why did I assign this?"

She became joyous when her students understood the formula for finding the area of a circle.

She found time in her eight-hour work day to help the struggling student with the correct use of a semi colon.

I was that student who struggled with semi colons, persevered through the extra homework, and finally learned.

I was the teacher who stressed over correcting the ten-page paper to the point of throwing the two-foot stack that still needed to be corrected and giving everyone an A+!

I understand the hearts of heroes.

Never the End

By Jennifer Winsten

I'm dancing. Wild, free. My arms lift to the sky. I spin. Beauty is everywhere.

I'm ready now. My body escapes. Still, the tiny arms of my grandchildren wrap tightly around me. The bond is eternal. Divine in strength.

I walk now. My steps guided by their hold. Our touch. The journey begins.

His Seventeenth

Birthday

by Chris Meissner

I was heading out the door for a party celebrating Grandpa's 17th birthday. I thought it was bizarre that he was only seventeen. I decided to write him a hundred-dollar check for a gift. I had to write the current date on the check, so I checked my watch. It was February 29th.



Lyndsey Cross

The Other Miller

By Kaiti Kumlien

“Wesley,” Dove said. “Thank God you’re home.”

Wesley. His name sounded foreign on Phil’s tongue. Phil Dove had his arms raised, walking slowly, unsurely, toward his stepson standing silent in the doorway. Wesley stood still as his stepfather gave him a disgustingly drowning hug. He could smell the mint from chewing gum mixed with Dove’s hourly cigarette. Dove had started smoking when his wife started getting sick.

“You were killing her, you know, even before she was sick,” Dove said as he pulled away.

Wesley was surprised at the sudden remark by his scrawny stepfather.

“What do you mean I was killing her? I had every right to not talk to her! She married you. I didn’t want that! Things were fine before you came into my life.”

“What about your mom’s life? Huh? Did you want her to be happy, ever? You can’t go prancing around thinking that nothing is wro-”

Wesley couldn’t handle it. He was building up with fury. The voices of the men and women in the room seemed to get louder, buzzing like traffic on a busy day in New York. He clenched his fist, and within seconds, his scrawny, stuttering, biology teacher stepfather was lying on the floor. Wesley had punched him in a matter of seconds. He did not know what to do. He hit his stepfather in the temple and he was lying unconscious on the floor. Blood was leaking out of Dove’s ear, nose and mouth onto the vintage floor rug.

Wesley scanned the room. All the men and women were stuck in their places like stone. They took their glances off his mother’s casket and stared at him. He tried to speak, but nothing came out. When he tried to move, his feet stuck to the floor. His heart sank so low, it felt like it was filled with concrete. Wesley moved his heavy feet and slogged his way to the door. He turned around one last time to see that Dove was still on the floor, but now he was not breathing. One of the women screamed and started crying. She got down on her knees and started giving CPR. When she came up for a breath, there was blood on her forehead. Wesley turned and walked out the door. He couldn’t help it. He just took the life of his stepfather. He thought to himself, it was all for the



Jennifer Winsten

better anyhow.

He walked down his driveway. He tried to breathe, but something in his head was not letting him. He fell to his knees. I just killed my stepfather, he thought to himself. First my mother, now this. Wesley heard a piercing blare. It sounded close. When he glanced up, a semi truck was just seconds away from hitting him. He stood up. He wanted to. The thought of getting hit by an oncoming semi pleased Wesley. The seconds grew longer. The semi seemed to be slowing down with time. If I’m about to get hit by a semi, he thought to himself, I better make it look good. He stood up, but not quick enough. By the time Wesley was just barely off his knees, the semi hit Wesley head-on, lurching him 50 feet backward. He was dead on impact.

The driver of the semi came out screaming, “Not this! Not now! I just got released! Damn, man! What the hell were you thinking?”

Wesley’s head was a bloody mess. The bones in his arms were shattered and his legs were broken, each going in a different direction. His body was mangled, as if he were a pile of sticks. The only thing recognizable was the jagged smile on his face.

Show Some Love

By Kirsten Prost

I'm a Lutheran who has come to see Jews as my brothers. Laugh if you will, but I'm serious. Anti-Semitism is pathetic, especially after all the Jews have suffered throughout history.

Iran's President, Ahmadinejad says, "Israel must be wiped off the map."

That is clearly insane.

I don't see anything wrong with the Jewish people. Frankly, I don't see anything wrong with the citizens of Iran, either. That's what makes the situation so difficult. You've got a despotic leader influencing good people who don't want war.

No one ever wants war. I think this is especially true for the Jewish state. Wasn't losing six million of their people a high enough price to pay for their land? Do they really owe anyone anymore? I believe the answer is no.

People get passion about this I've never been to been to a temple.

I tell you what For the past two at OSRUI which is a Labelle, near my home. I came to the job. But working people would that I worked there. At funny too. If I could I heard, "You're not

"Nope."

"Okay, good,"

As I started with the counselors, waterfront staff and my comments of my friends As I made friends with at camp, this bothered I made connections teaching swim lessons lifeguarding, this blatant home.

What if my What would it be like to

you believe, persecuted for you believed, killed for what you believed? It broke my heart to hear Israelis saying that they don't believe in God. To quote one of the guys I worked with, "There is no God...He died."

I know people say, never say never, impossible is nothing...you can do anything you set your mind to. But I'm a realist. If you want to see big change you need to start by doing little things. I don't make Jewish jokes, won't laugh when other people tell them and continue to empathize with the fact that Jewish people are some of the nicest people I've met. I figure the best way to get something done is to lead by example. If I can change one narrow-minded person's view I've succeeded. If I can change more than one person, I know we have hope to be able to win if a war ever breaks out. The world can't survive another holocaust. It's time to recognize that.



Lyndsey Cross

confused by my issue. I'm not Jewish. Israel. I've never even

I have done, though. summers I've worked Jewish camp on Lac It's a long story how when I first started rib me about the fact first I thought it was only count the times Jewish, are you?"

was always the reply. making friends rabbis, the rest of the boss, the anti-Semitic grew to bother me. the Israelis working me more. And as with the kids I was to, taking tubing and anti-Semitism hit

family was Jewish? be laughed at for what

A Kind of a Love Story

By Alex Dabertin

It was a warm evening in the springtime of Paris, a time when even the most reserved open their eyes and lift their chins to the new sun of the spring during the day and embrace in rapturous advance in the evening. The waxing moon tangled with the setting sun upon the bank of the Seine, mingling the already pungent air with a hint of an imagined odor of twilight that brought the world a quality of a Shakespearean romance in its climax. The Eiffel Tower rose above, magisterially announcing its dominance as the symbol of the city of lights in love's greatest season. Even the angels who stood forever still upon the buildings around the city began to dance at this special hour of the year, making the night's magic build into a self-perpetuating ecstasy.

The monsieur hung his head at this. It made him gag, wishing to rend the hearts of those indomitable loving couples that flocked to the streets and made him so acutely aware of his failure and the scar it left upon his mind. Thinking was what he had to do, though it pained him. They had been happy; moving from the central fields of France to the streets of Paris had been her idea. He had amassed a fortune and garnered fame in her name and to please her honor. Their children he had cared for since the days of their births: exemplary children, top marks, honors classes, top in their sports, and cheerful and thoughtful. Now, after twenty years, she told him she did not love him anymore, that she would assume custody of their one remaining underage child, Maria, for the second

half of her last year of schooling. Then, as she had announced, she would move to Nice with her alimony and twenty-year-old man she picked up from the Sorbonne two years ago.

Why, thought the monsieur, have I been left to bereave in my old age with no love of my own to cling to and only my thoughts to accompany me through to death. What future do I have now? Man and woman are to love, and now I am to be left?

Stop it, he chided himself. The rate of "failed marriage" is far greater than my own sad case. I have no cause to be so angry, for our marriage was happy as it was passionate, and the children are well raised and good people. Cannot that be counted as a success, regardless of the length of the union which bore them?

The fertility for love the evening bore finally, like rain on a barren land, softened the monsieur's mind and

heart, and from the now imbued earth of these places sprang the shoots of memory. Slowly they stretched to the moon, and by its magic bore their quiet and semisweet fruit from which the monsieur drew new life enough to reach the home he once called his own, and displayed to him, slowly, what his reaction should be to the woman. Reconciling his heart's anguish to his mind's understanding, these noble apples of the mind laid bare his feelings and brought his soul to healing.

The day of their wedding, the monsieur was in a tuxedo that cost him more than he had in clothes for his entire life. The church was too ostentatious for his taste, but beautiful nonetheless.



Jen Wesenberg

The garlands of white flowers hung from the ceiling like snow kept cold all winter just to be a marvel in the spring. The altar was bedecked in white as well, with the traditional French white canopy, in this case enmeshed with gold embroidery, a gift from her father for the monsieur's noble treatment of his daughter. The smells that filled the church breathed happiness and calm, though in truth they were the smells of the lilywhites and lavender perfumes, with roses scattered over the church. They may as well have been those of cupid and Venus themselves luxuriously wrapping the participants in joy. These final drugs pushed the day from beautiful to an irrationally glossed romanticism, and in this golden film, he saw Sarah. She walked upon the music, the carpet disappearing under the strains that flowed both from the organ and his own mind. Love of the truly falsest kind: Dickensonian, biblical love that constitutes the entanglement of souls, broke into his mind, taking control and wresting his mind from himself into its viciously soft grip. The good book was read, the pledges were spoken, but the monsieur knew none of it. His mind blurred by the heady drugs in the air, observing, not taking part, in the action. Yet, after the veil was lifted, another emotion overcame the monsieur, as that glitteringly false love matured and gained depth as the very true emotion of lust, animal and knowing. After the ceremony, the monsieur knew the party had been loud and boisterous, but he knew only that anticipation of the flesh.

In the most truthfully natural extension of that emotion-misted day, and the two week excursion of lust-fueled ecstasy that was their honeymoon, nine months after came the late February morning where, in place of the lust and passion that had served as the fuel for their partnership so far, was a more solid drive.

The molten lust congealed up and hardened into another hollow prescribed emotion of the mind: hope. That glittering beacon burning on air and dreams that has, rightfully, lit the passage of so many through the darkest of days shone its light upon his marital animal den. The morning flew by under its spell, and even as his wife's screams filled the gleaming white hospital room and sweat drenched her forehead, it seemed to the monsieur the calling

of the angels and the dew of the very fruits of their fiery labor, though it may truly have been the screams of a siren and her mesmerizing liqueurs. When at last in the evening his daughter slid from her home of the past into the stark cold presence, that strange transformation of his wedding day stirred again in the monsieur, turning his crystalline mind-manufactured emotion into another solid, deep, true animal emotion: protection.

From the moment of first sight of his daughter to the day his wife broke him, that led his body. He was the feeder, clothier, and provider for his wife and child, awakening the roots of father as found by the first warm-blooded beast to today. Blind with a protective haze, the monsieur worked harder and made more money, providing his daughter with every amenity he could give, but he forgot to engage her. The monsieur, seeking to be the perfect protector, directed by his jungle tethered drive to feed and clothe his family, forgot to learn who, in truth his daughter was. His earthly folly was repeated with the quick succession, for family pride easily heats to passionate temperatures, of his son and the less rapid delivery of his second daughter. The monsieur did not understand this fully yet, but his recollections were beginning to show their own light and ripened the fruit further towards its final rewards.

The monsieur walked up the Avenue Marceau onto the Rue de Georges Bizet slowly to his building halfway up to Rue de Chailiot against the traffic, his passions worked against the moon's cooling rays, and once the clouds covered the moon for only a moment, they inflamed his memories to his newest, most terrible rend upon his mind.

Nineteen years of protectoral smog had stunted the monsieur's other passions and thoughts. Choking all other thoughts with its blatant message, "PROVIDE!" it commanded without cease.

Burning through that noxious necessity, as he thought it in his fully reared rage, took those nineteen long years, and save that day at the Louvre, new lights and new hazes would have mingled into a lazy befuddlement of old age wherein the monsieur could lie back and not care. But, life takes its victims at the knees and he was no exception.

It was midmorning and serenely quiet at the museum and warm even for May, making the

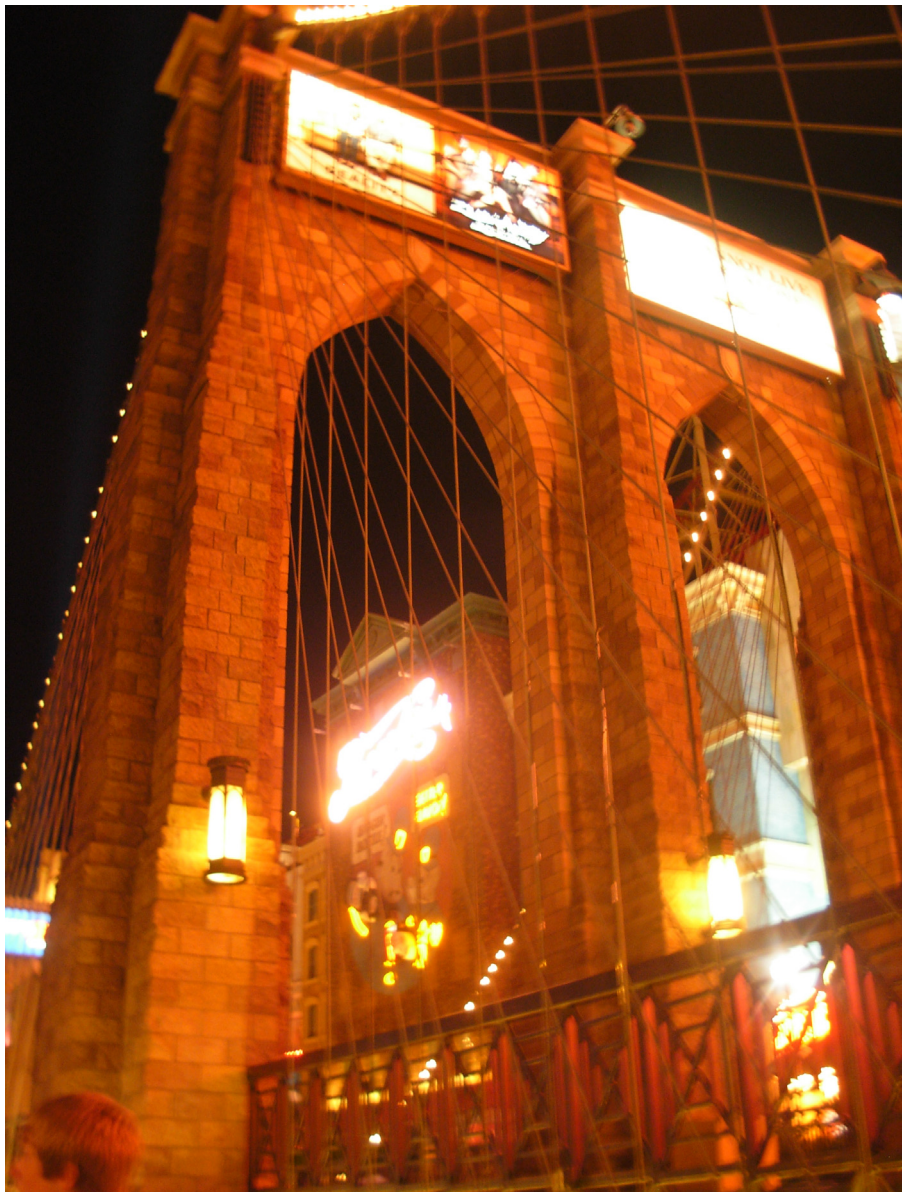
paintings alive with their various passions, infecting the monsieur and facilitating the thoughts of a final burning lustiness after his final daughter left the house and the dotagery that would blindly follow when he turned the corner and the fire heightened from protection, to lust, to that emotion that the mind and body share, albeit in different name: rage.

It consumed the monsieur to every fiber of his awareness, and only a slight unconscious eddy kept the paintings on the wall and him out of jail. The man turned at the incoherent yell that escaped the monsieur, of a middling volume, but of terrible force, his twenty-some year visage contorted, for he knew the monsieur and his devotion to his family. His handsome face fell away to reveal the cowardice that lay beneath, the thin blond hair to show its non-existence in another twenty revolutions, and the blue eyes went from puppy-like to blubbering, pathetic jelly. Then Sarah turned and led the man away from her husband, scared, shocked, ashamed and defiant, though he did not see it at the time.

The monsieur saw only a red haze over the Mona Lisa and the rest of the museum as he rushed out, reviewing all he had done for her and viewing them as debts to be repaid instead of services rendered. She was in that instant the coldest ice of hell, succubating upon his life and soul, tainting his children, but now she would burn in the fires of his passions, melting from the sheer force of his will. His thoughts blurred and seemed all to be parts of a Shakespearean melodrama of Macbeth being done wrongs whose weapons were the court systems to be used as the stake for the burning to take place.

The monsieur had lived this way for two weeks and thought of little until this night recounted, and though the descriptions of his earlier thoughts may have seemed cooled, they were not. These beautiful flowers of memory created in a burned-out patch of barren mind, already taken by his passions, fed by the love and the moon, did what was recounted until the moon was covered as the monsieur

reached the black awning of his apartment building. There he made his redemption. The covering of the moon was momentary, but enough, mixed with his previously suppressed mission and his painful surroundings, to allow this hearts fire to burn at its apex. His anger was like the hottest wildfire, a fat corpulent slug who feasted upon memories, love, happiness, and hate. But it was greedy and devoured its food too fast. This fire of the monsieur crawled at that moment back to where it had come from, and found it had devoured all behind it, and screamed in pain at the knowledge of its demise, roaring the flames to that point where all is consumed, and the greatest trees can bear their fruit. The moon-fed memories required this heat of passion to ripen their fruit to full harvest. Pink and green, they hung in their hollow, raised by the fire above its reach. They swayed at the beast's piteous roar and fell, gracefully, taking



Jen Wesenberg

the time of all the night in a moment to descend, finding the slug. With their fall, it felt its demise, and the monsieur's mind embraced it. The skin of the fruit touched the first flicks of flametongue and doused them immediately, and when at long last and in a sudden moment they crashed upon the slug and rent open, there surged forth a torrent of their labor that flooded the monsieur's mind and engulfed the flames of anger so quickly it might have been magic should it happen in the physical realm.

The monsieur was in the lobby as this wonder happened in his mind these images and those of his life flashing incoherently as he walked, pressed the elevator button, went in, and collapsed as the door closed and love's truest labor splashed upon anger's folly. Thence from the ashes doused grew instantaneously the only real fruit the mind can bear to fruition independent and in control of the heart: understanding. It rushed up and out of the soil of his psyche to fill his skull as a bounty worthy of the best of men, received by a commoner.

The monsieur wondered as he rose from the floor. There was no anger to be had at his wife or his children because he did not know them. His recollections had borne him the understanding that his relationships, like so many human lives, were based not upon what he had thought, a basis of the meeting of the minds, but on always a cycle of falsely synthesized emotions of the mind, working where it did not belong, to the fall into the animal drives that worked the heart, leaving no one to blame, as a man with reason cannot blame an animal for what it does that seems foolish. His wife had sought the young man because the Monsieur had failed to fulfill the animal needs that mingled in her large heart for both companionship and lust, while he blamed her for a perceived nonreciprocation of his protective services, though her discreetness was her thanking him for this, a return, the monsieur decided, that was equal to the services rendered and just as remote. This grew in the monsieur as his ex-wife opened the door with fear in her eyes and he smiled back with complete calm. He did not hate her nor anyone else he imparted, and they discussed long into the night their lives together, deciding still against a legal entanglement, but a true understanding of the minds that never did stray from its foundation on reason to the base fires of passions. But that would come in the future, and all the monsieur thought of as he walked back to his new home in the city, over the bridge

looking up to the enlightened Eiffel Tower above him, was that those men and women who embraced under it would come to his understanding before passion took over, or sooner after. Though he would not, he knew, begrudge those who could find the balance he could not achieve, and he smiled like a man who has overthrown an addictive weight from his shoulders up through the center of that spire of clear beautiful, rational light of what he would do with a clear head.

Just a Dream?

By Claire Westlie

Her eyes fluttered and opened. She lifted her head to look at the glaring red numbers of her alarm clock. 2:18. But why did she wake? She had been peacefully dreaming. Suddenly, her body tensed, she saw something in the corner of her eye. Something in the window.

A man.

He was staring right at her. She felt panic rise in her chest. She had seen this before. She had felt this terror and seen this man watch her in the dead of night. Was it a terrible dream?

Slowly, the man backed into the shadows and she quietly rose from her bed. Her knees were weak and she barely had the strength she needed. She made it to her phone and dialed 911.

"What's your emergency?" said a dull voice. Before she could answer, she heard a crash come from the front of the house. She knew it was the man.

"Hello? Is anyone there?" the dispatcher asked.

"I...help," was all she could muster before she heard a loud crash come from downstairs. She heard him break the door and begin his ascent down the hallway. It was almost like he wanted her to know he was coming....

"Ma'am? Are you there?"

"Send help." She dropped her phone on the floor. She looked around wildly looking for something to protect herself. Something. Anything. The Lamp. A book. Her shoe. Her doorknob started to shake and turn. She began to back herself into the corner. Terrified and shaking, she stood awaiting her fate.

Beacon – Part 1

By Mallory Zimmermann

01.

It was red and it was blue, and then it was black. There was no sense, no “self.” She floated in the nebulous dark, a tiny mote in the wide universe. She didn’t remember herself; was there a “herself?” Was there ever anything? She felt heavy like lead weights and was inexplicably afraid of falling through the floor of the universe.

You’re a cyborg; you can do anything.

A bright stab of light. She shut her eyes, pained. Beeping. Quick but stable. Hers. Somewhere...where? In her head. She was...what? Nothing, possibly. No, something. She began to feel. To be.

Alive.

02.

Many system scans revealed a complete absence of memories. The doctors seemed to think she should have these, but they were confused. She’d been raised by wires, then most certainly deposited here. There must be some reason for her to be here, out of anywhere in the universe. She’d tried to explain it but the doctors didn’t believe her.

It must be a secret mission, then.

“I remember wires and darkness, but I wasn’t finished, so I couldn’t feel. Then I woke up here. All my memory banks are blank except for that.”

The fluorescent lights buzzed, but listened patiently.

03.

A few tiny adjustments needed to be made, but it was basically a recharger already. So convenient.

She’d discovered quickly that the doctors had drained her battery. They wanted to test her because she was a cyborg.

“Actually, I told them when they asked about my name. Big mistake,” she told the lights. Being a cyborg naturally meant she had no name. It didn’t matter, now that she could recharge herself.

When the nurse’s shift changed, she activated the recharger. It whined in her hands with pure voltage. The lights buzzed encouragingly. Grinning, she clapped the paddles to her chest.

04.

“Cyborg?” Dr. Bennett asked over the phone. “No, I doubt it’s the amnesia. More likely, she was delusional before the accident. Although,” Bennett paused, fingers running lightly over the keyboard, “head trauma and the coma, though minor, could be causing these delusions. I agree; treating her behavior is the best course.”

“And there’s no family? Well, the car accident suggests her suicidal tendencies aren’t new. Her admittance is mandatory, but please call if someone comes asking. Patients do better in treatment when they have support.”

Bennett sighed. Suicide when you couldn’t remember yourself was like murder. Her patient deserved better.

05.

Yet, even with a charged battery, she couldn’t leave. None of her cyborg abilities would work.

She sat on the scratchy green bed, knees drawn up to her chest. What kind of cyborg didn’t know how

to rocket away?

"It is frustrating to be a machine," she said to nobody. The lights were sleeping because sunshine poured in through the window. Inside, she was gears and bulbs and springs, but she couldn't make them work. She didn't know her secret purpose.

She crossed her arms on her knees and buried her head in them. "Presently, I am very meaningless."

06.

Being invisible was difficult.

Holding her breath helped her concentration. If she lost focus, she would materialize.

The cafeteria was sterile white with plastic tables and chairs. What tales would the vending machine tell?

She froze as a young woman sat down across the table.

"Anyone there?"

"No."

"But I see you."

She winced, then ducked her head. "I lost focus."

"Oh. I'm Adele."

Without looking up, she asked, "Why are you here?"

"I'm a werewolf, even without the full moon. Because of my eyes."

She looked. Adele had one blue and one brown eye.

"I'm a cyborg."

"That's okay."



Lyndsey Cross

Frightening

Grammy Fiasco

By Claire Bush

The glistening glass elevator doors glide open as the Jonas Brothers, Jack Johnson, and Third Eye Blind swiftly step in. The Grammy Awards are tonight, and these musical acts are heading backstage for warm-ups.

"I don't know about you guys, but I'm just sitting, waiting, wishing to win a Grammy tonight," says Jack Johnson, as he breaks the awkward silence.

Suddenly, an ominous red light blinks as the elevator jerks to a stop between two floors; the artists, flung against the walls and onto the floor, exchange glances of terror and panic.

Joe Jonas remains calm and says, "Hold on a second! This is an S.O.S!"

Nick Jonas jumps to his feet. "We don't have time left! I think it will take more than common sense to get out of the mess."

Stephan Jenkins of Third Eye Blind cannot take it anymore. Losing his self-control, he says, "I want to get out of this mess, but how's it going to be?"

"Wait...I can almost hear the girls mourning our absence," says Joe Jonas.

"Well, at this rate, we're going to be ten days late for the show," Stephan says, hanging his head.

Jack Johnson regains consciousness, and loquaciously adds his advice. "It's always better when we work together."

A Twist in Love

By Jen Wesenberg

I love lying in his arms. It was the only place I felt safe.

"I will never leave you," he always said to me while in bed.

"I will never leave you either," I always said back. And I believed him every time. You know what's funny? Sometimes I can still feel his arms around me.

"That's a good idea." Stephan shoots up with enthusiasm. "I know something's wrong."

The Jonas Brothers feel neglected, but they rally together because the fire is in their hearts; however, they are afraid they will not work this out tonight.

"It's a crying shame that gravity's got a hold on us, but who are we going to blame?" says Jack Johnson as he feels as if his world is upside down.

"Hold on tight." Nick Jonas, scheming in the corner, formulates a dazzling escape plan. "This has got me going crazy, but if we can sing loud enough, maybe someone will rescue us."

Stephan agrees and says, "That's a good idea too. Hopefully someone will notice we're gone."

Coincidentally, the artists have their instruments with them. They begin uneasily at first, but soon erupt in a flurry of music. They are positive someone will hear them, and in no more than five minutes, the elevator plunges down to the backstage floor; the artists gratefully step out of the hazardous elevator to begin their show.

"Well, this has been a walk in the park. In case we don't see you later, goodnight and goodbye," the Jonas Brothers call out with a wave of their hands as they depart from Jack Johnson and Third Eye Blind.

Car Chase

By Chris Meissner

I was racing down the streets, being chased by the cops. I had just robbed the museum of its rare diamond collection. The cop cars couldn't get me! I turned too sharp; I was soon plummeting off a cliff!

"Andy!" said Mother, "Dinner's ready."

I turned off the PS3 and headed for the dining room.

Uganda:

The Forgotten War

By Jenny Restock

It is referred to as the Forgotten War of Uganda, the Genocide, or the Children's Holocaust. A United Nations officer states the war in Uganda is "the world's worst neglected humanitarian crisis." Either way, it is a mass murder operation that has been in effect for over twenty years.

The war in Northern Uganda began in 1986 when a group of Ugandans called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) grew tired of the government's control and unreasonable rules. To express their anger, they chose the way of war.

To supply this horrific army with soldiers, the LRA goes to villages and kidnaps the children. In fact, almost half of this rebel army is constructed of children.

The captured boys are required to become soldiers, and if they cause a problem of any sort, they are shot and killed. With this in mind, many of the boys are forced to loot, burn villages, and torture or kill family and friends. The girls become sex slaves or wives to the officers in the LRA. Tragic and horrifying, many of the children do not survive.

This process has been come to known as the "Invisible Children" for the LRA steal the children at night when no one can see them. This immoral

capturing has affected more than 30,000 children of Northern Uganda. It is not just the children dying, but communities as well. Over 1,000 people die every week.

Despite that this war has been going on for over twenty years not many people know or seem to care about it. But those few who do are doing their best to help out and spread the word. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has been raising money to help those in danger of this war.

Jason Russell, Bobby Bailey and Laren Poole of South Carolina went to Uganda and made a film about the situation. The film is an eye-opener and has caused a response from those who are willing to give.

But that sadly is not enough. As hard as those men and the IRC try, they can not spot the war. It might take the world to defeat this brutal killing, but the world is blind to this genocide. Sure there are other things to worry about, but the mass murdering of children is wrong and needs to be stopped. As a staff member of the IRC says, "Those who live here are witness to a slow genocide, a holocaust of children, and we wonder when the world will start paying attention." So pay attention! That little help that can be done, like donating, just might save a little girl or boy from this forgotten war.

You Always Had Me

By Jen Wesenberg

We were walking back from dinner, and he kept looking at me funny. He wiggled his hand in his pocket the whole time. I had a feeling he was going to ask me to marry him. He stopped me, and I was overwhelmed with excitement. I collapsed.

When I woke up, he was over me with a knife, and he was cutting out my heart. My last words were "you always had my heart."



Kayla Herrera

Jesus' Tasks

(An Elevating Story)

By Chris Meissner

"Wow! Look at all the numbers!" said Big Bird, staring at the numbered button panel as he entered the elevator. "It goes all the way up to six hundred and sixty-six."

"Do not follow that button if you wish to spend eternity in the kingdom of heaven," said Jesus. "Follow the holy path and receive eternal life."

"Well, life's what you make it," said Hannah Montana, "so let's make it rock!"

Big Bird, being bored with the situation, began to count the floor numbers. "One, two, three..."

"I think we're both heading back to the first floor," said Hannah.

Jesus pressed the button marked 'one.' It lit up a soft yellow glow as the doors slid shut.

"Wow," said Big Bird, "now we can learn all our colors!"

"Big-yellow-bird-say-what?" Hannah did not like the sound of that. "I think we need to start pumpin' up the party! Let's make some noise!"

"I think we need to introduce ourselves first to have the full experience of a truly meaningful conversation. Hello my dearest people. I am Jesus Christ, your lord."

"I'm Hannah Montana," she said as she flipped back her hair. "I do have another identity, but I'm just not prepared to show the other side of me quite yet."

"I'm Big Bird!" said the yellow pile of yellow feathers in the back corner.

Hannah stared at him in a blank face for a moment. "Wow, like I couldn't figure that one out."

At that moment, Jesus pressed the emergency stop button. Hannah and Big Bird began to panic.

"Please, good people. Settle down," said Jesus. "I have been sent to warn you that you must change your ways if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven."

"Please tell us Jesus," said Big Bird. "I like to learn new things."

"First of all, Hannah," said Jesus, "you must change your evil ways."

"Well, nobody's perfect."

"You have been living two lives, hiding behind truth."

"Yep, I got nerve," she said, feeling proud of herself.

"You must no longer live two lives, but expose yourself to the world and show who you really are."

"Jesus-my-Lord-say-what?"

"This must be so to have eternal life with my father in the kingdom of Heaven."

Hannah was shocked. She couldn't believe she had to complete such a hard task just to enter the kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus held a moment of silence and then continued. "As for you Big Bird, you must stop lying about your age."

Big Bird was stunned to hear this as well. "I don't lie about my age," he said.

"Then why do you say you're of the age of six when in fact you have been broadcasting on public television for over thirty-five years?"

Big Bird began to cry. "I don't understand how the numbers work! I don't know math yet."

"Then let me make it simple for you. You were of the age of six when first on TV thirty-five years ago, meaning that today you would be at the rightful age of forty-one."

"But Jesus," asked Big Bird, "I may not be as smart as you, but wouldn't my friends be suspicious if I were forty-one and stilled played with a three-year-old friend, Elmo?"

"Gordon plays with Elmo, too. Does he not?"

Big Bird thought for a minute. "I suppose so," he said.

"Then that is the task you must do if you wish to have eternal life in the kingdom of Heaven."

Jesus restarted the elevator, which soon announced their arrival at the first floor with the sound of a single 'beep.' The doors slid open allowing in the bright sunlight.

"Remember my words," said Jesus. "Go fourth into the world, and do what you must."

Big Bird and Hannah quickly ran from the elevator in sheer terror of the difficult tasks Jesus had laid before them.

As the doors slid closed, Jesus quickly changed out of his white robe revealing his uniform underneath. He also placed the bellhop hat back on his head as he thought to himself, that trick works every time.

Selective Hearing

By Allison Jankowski

My name means inspiration. For others, it is a way to push me. I'm at the starting line, one minute until the gun goes off. My nerves build up, my heart starts pounding. All I can hear is the simple yelling of my name from one person and one person only. My mom.

The race begins. The crowds start cheering. I start breathing heavily. In the distance, I hear the thrills of my name being yelled. Every stride I take, I feel pushed to go faster. It's the only thing that keeps me going. Out of the hundreds of spectators yelling several different names, all I can hear is the eagerness in one's voice, cheering, "Go now, Allie!" My mom.

I approach the mile mark. There's my coach yelling out my splits. Six forty. I do not hear coach while the race is happening, even though I should. All I hear is the same voice over and over from the same one person. It is selective hearing. Every time my foot hits the pavement, I hear a different way to motivate

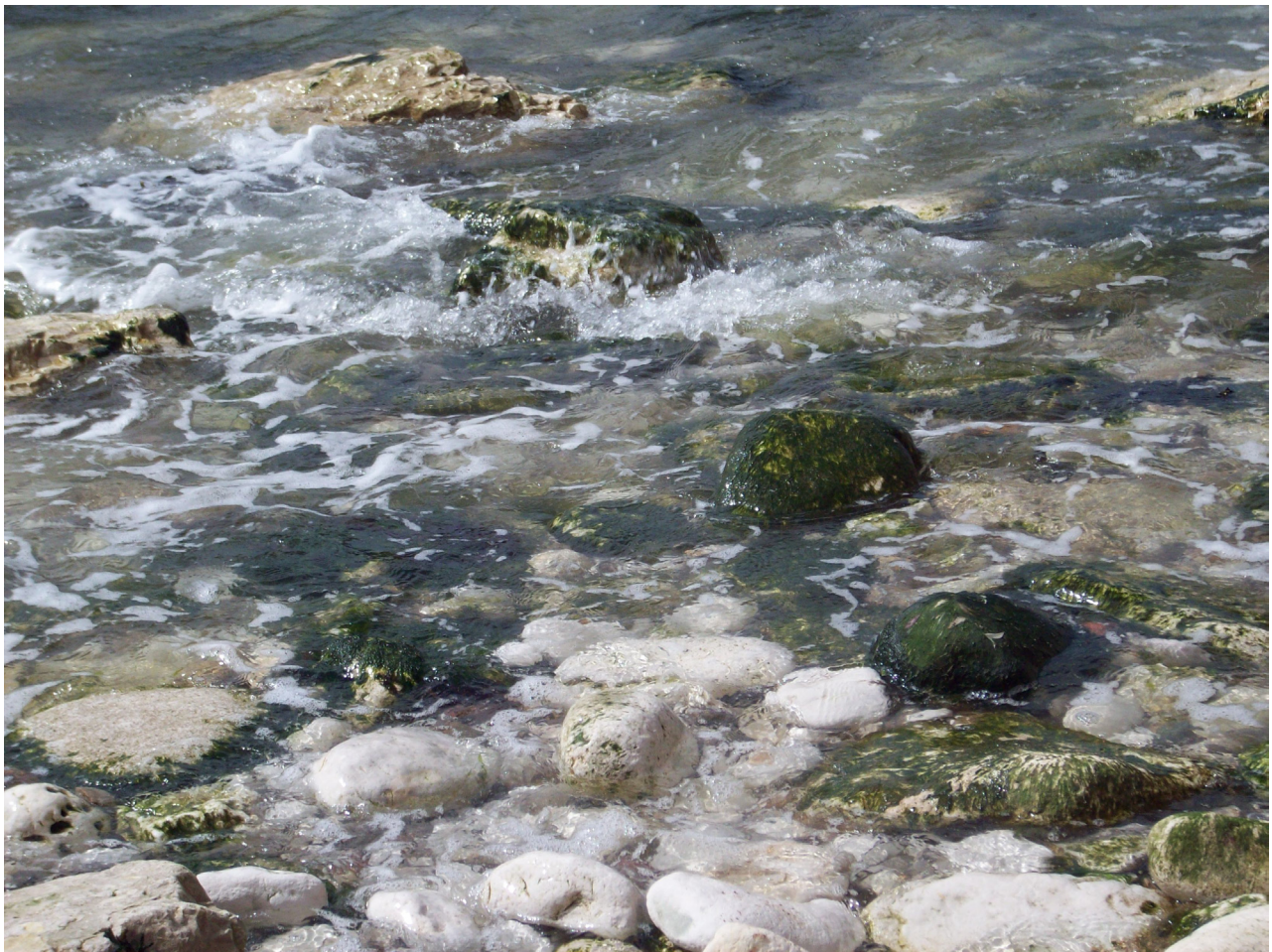
me to get up and go. It works. My mom screaming my name brings motivation to me and helps me mentally finish the race. She is the only one who can bring me the inspiration, and challenge me. My mom.

The finish line nears. There are only three hundred meters to go. My legs are bricks. My heart beats faster than I am running. I have nothing left in me. Should I drop out of the race now? It is unbelievably tempting.

"Make your move now, Allie. Pick up the pace, you're almost there," yells my mom.

When I hear my name and that, I feel exhilaration. I make my move. I finish the race.

Standing at the finish line is everyone that was cheering me on. My coaches. My dad. My relatives. My teammates. Out of all the fans there encouraging me, I can still only hear the spur and excitement from one person when she yells my name. My mom.



Lyndsey Cross

The Great Sakkarans

by Sarah Trentadue

Once upon a time, there lived a fortuitous realm filled with prevalent Egyptians. The ruler was the most prestigious man of all. He knew about the history of the ancient Egyptians and he knew the true culture of their underground, secret society of which he dictated. The only people welcome in their community was their own ilk. They nominally called themselves The Great Sakkarans. They lived in colossal, connected pyramids filled with gold, fabrics, scents, and all the riches you could only dream of.

Each member had their own duty to fulfill. Rarely was anything incoherent. The women's jobs were to care for the children and maintain the duties within the pyramids. The men rotated jobs every twenty years. These jobs consisted of security as well as "farmers" and runners. The runners would go up to the real world (above ground) and obtain the stone of life. The stone of life was their power source; it was what made the Egyptian civilization survive. Because

this stone of life was so powerful, it took hard work and years to find. Only the strongest and fittest men would go. When this stone was found, there would be much thanks and celebration because that secured the Egyptians another 100 years of life.

The old stone was dwindling - they were in need of a new one, and soon! The king had sent for all of the men in the town to go on a massive hunt to find another stone suitable for the job! He posted placards all over their society in hopes all the men would flee to find power for their kingdom, in which it was so desperately in need of! He ensured each member who sought to find another stone, some type of remuneration in return for his loyalty and great aspiration to his society. Any member who was not willing to go on their hunt for a stone of life because he is an inhibition to the kingdom-shall be mocked.

Indeed, all the men went out as the women and children stayed back in hope and prayers.

Fall in My Life

By Casimir Panawash-Bielinski

The mornings have no fuel to feed the fire, while the end of the day rears a short supply. The sun could supply, but it's heading back home. Its array of color waves me goodbye. I can see it falling faster; it's telling me, "If you never leave, you never love." Even a hero needs a change of scenery.

The air leaves its cooling mark upon my defenseless cheeks and grasps my breath. The chill wants me to see for myself I'm alive and okay by showing me physical proof. This proof I can see with a pump of my lungs. A pump of my heart warms my ears. With my ears I can hear a symphony at the very least that the wind conducts with its favorite woodwinds to break the silence when all else is bare.

I've bordered myself with my favorite linens to stop the new day, this new feeling. It is unusual, for

it pleases my mind and not my body. I can't help but think of Thanksgivings past. It used to play in dead fields where I was cold as the drink, not the ice in the glass.

When I look out the window, the lustrous sun makes visible nature's experience and wisdom. The trees are the sages I look to for help. They've seen the world with mere children in their laps. They reveal lessons of red and gold delivered in trees, dying and old. When I look out the window it's safe to say that this time of year has made me this way. The chill before the cold and the diminishing daylight manifest my pride to be where I am. I am amongst nature; I am amongst friends. I am amongst my thoughts as this story ends.

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SOUP

2008-2009

Whatever It Took

By Katie Hackbart, Katie Kolster and Jamie Krause

It started before high school
Trying to be cool
Doing anything to be a queen
Even if it meant making a scene
...whatever it took

Freshman year, where it all began...
Fitting in was the most important plan.
School never mattered
Girls' confidence was shattered
...whatever it took

Sophomore year hit hard
We always had to be on guard
It was necessary to be thin,
And have perfect skin
...whatever it took

Junior year we started to grow
We stayed away from the flow
We became mature
And secure
...nothing ever mattered

Senior year the best time of our lives
When the acceptance letters finally arrive
We stop caring
And get over all the people staring
...nothing ever mattered

College is coming up quick
We're free from cliques
And done with drama-filled girls
We're ready to give it a whirl
...nothing ever mattered

Why did it have to matter?

It's a Jungle in There

By Andrew Sisulak

Stare into the eyes,
The eyes of the forest,
And you will become lost forever
Souls forever weaving
Like the spiders in mid-air,
Pulse of the intoxicating Green
Echo in your head,
Faint then fierce,
The roar shatters it all,
And you see for once
Of the beast's love
How peaceful and warm,
That of a saint
And you rest,
Hidden in the wood.



Lyndsey Cross

Midnight

By Nate Keczmer

The hoot of an owl
The croak of a frog
The chirp of a cricket.
All the sounds of midnight.

The rustle of leaves in the wind
The splashing of water over the rocks
The soft howl of the wind.
All is peaceful at midnight.

But midnight is also the time
For the most dangerous of hunters.
Because midnight is the hour
For the vampires to hunt.

They hunt for the blood of the human,
Us mortals who are completely powerless.
To endure the kiss of the vampire
Is to feel nothing but blackness.

Even the strongest will not win.
The struggle is futile.
It will just increase the misery
Of the soul of the dying.

Spider, Spider

By Maggie Dubnicka

Spider, Spider, in the night
Cringes back from all the light

Spider, Spider, jumps a height.
Creeping, crawling with delight.

Spider, Spider, venomous bite
Sinks its fangs and holds on tight.

Spider, Spider, silky sight
All eight eyes are gleaming bright.

Spider, Spider, silent might
Four legs on the left and four on the right

Spider, Spider, in the night
Creeping, crawling, 'till first light.

Darkness

By Kevin Ciesielczyk

I'm drowning in my darkness
The water's seeping through
I'm choking on the memories
That make me think of you

My mind is sinking deeper
Still the pain remains
My heart starts to tingle
As it's burning in the flames

All my negativity and sorrow
Bring me to my knees
Just as I was the day
You had me begging, "Baby, please."

The One Battle

By Anonymous

I no longer have you to rely
I know you're not by my side
I'll still fight my battles
With what's left of my pride
And hope that it's enough
To make me survive
I took you for granted
Thought you'd always be here
That someday we'd be like strangers
Was never a fear
Now the one battle I'll never win
Is to make you mine
You're no longer here
And I'm all out of time

Untitled

By Samantha Glass

The moon whispers the story of nights past
Like a scornful song
The stars dance across the sky
Basking in the bitter-sweet symphony
The night looks to day to take over
For it wishes to retire
The dawn brings hope
Hope for love, hope for life
The morning reveals its everlasting tale
Something of joy and dreams
The sun reminds us of happiness and pain
Of days lost and days forgotten

Beauty

By Jenna Wolfsohn

Long, long, ago
A thousand miles away
Hidden in a rosebush
Under a thousand pounds of clay
Lived a stiff and frozen statue
An ever-present still
A snake's decrepit victim,
Lying cold; its kill
It froze within confinement
Many feet below the ground.
It stuck to earthly dwellings
And did not make a sound.
Inside its hard encasement
It knew but one known fact.
It had no life to live for
Except to not react
Its eyes were covered marbles,
Covered from all things.
Its heart held nothing soft,
Its soul, not rich as kings.
It was quite plain and ugly.
It was quite plain and still.
It sat beneath a rosebush
Until winter held it still.
Then frozen in the clay
It sat again still more.
It had no purpose, so it seemed,
Just as it did before.
It had no one to live for,
It had no one to hear.
It had no thing to give for,
And so it shed a tear.
Tears seeped inside a crack
Of the crushing clay below.
The clay, so long encasing,
That would not let it go.
It seeped into the dirt.
It touched each tiny grain
Until it reached the rose bush
Where misery is made.

The roses wept with sadness
For a thousand pounds was said
To have crushed a broken heart
Until it fell to dead.
For the first time in a lifetime,
The victim's life was known.
It was known to have been left
In the hard clay all alone,
And no one thought to weep
Until it was announced,
Until the final verdict came,
Its death was now pronounced.
The roses danced in sympathy.
A rose can never know
How to grow the plant of heartache
A thousand pounds below.
Cry not for victim's passing,
It went to where all die.
Weep for ignorance above it
Who never heard it cry
Until the earth was wet,
Until the deed was done,
Until passing now was present,
Until upon it came the son.
He heard it plea for love.
He heard it plea for ears.
He heard it plea for one soft rose
To descend to dry its tears.
He sent down from the heavens
A chorus of rebirth.
He sent all this to it
A million miles from earth.
The rosebush now has wept.
It wept out all its breath.
It lived in beauty in rosy bloom,
But beauty does not know its death.
Ashes turned to ashes.
Dust turned down to dust.
God will send his beauty
To the most overlooked of us.

Decisions

By Marcus Menzel

“Hey man, you’re coming to the party, right?”
That is what you asked me last Friday night.
I asked “what’s going down,” just to be polite,
Although no reason will make it right.

So for you I just have a few things to say,
And you made me look back at the day
And all the other ones like it.
You were my friend, I’ll admit it.
You were essentially my sibling.
You never got fully involved, only nibbling.
Yet that one night, it was just enough.
You took a hit, a shot, of that stuff
Even after I told you to watch yourself.
You gave me this feeling of guilt about myself,
Yet here are a few things you should know.

Just know that when you were making lame decisions,
I was taking in some coach’s revisions.
Just know that when you were getting high,
I was reaching for the sky.
Just know that when you were getting drunk,
I was making sure every shot was sunk.
Just know that when you were being “cool,”
I was preparing for beyond high school.
Just know that when you weren’t there the next day,
I was thinking nothing of it, and not a word did I say.

But when I got the phone call and it told me where
you were laying,
I simply dropped to my knees and began praying.
I began questioning my judgment.
We could have surpassed this moment.
If only I had gone with you to the party
And kept you away from that bottle of Bacardi.
If only I had driven you back home,
You would still be free to roam
The halls of this temporary stage of your years,
But I didn’t do those things, yet for you I have no
tears.

It was your stupidity that did this.
I warned you, yet I was just a dismiss.
I even told you to call me if things got rough,
So why didn’t you? I gave you chances enough.
My hand was always there for you,
And what do you go and do?
You turned it down and ignored my helping hand.
Why didn’t you just understand?
Yes, you’re gone and the funeral sucked,
But you will see no moisture coming from my tear
duct.
This is what you chose when you went behind the
wheel,
Yet who was I to see how this would reveal?
Like headlights staring down a white-tail,
How could I have seen this unveil?
I am sorry, yet my feelings of joy are unconcealed
Because when you get there, you will be healed.
You will be in a better place
Because you were saved by grace.



Kayla Herrera

What Matters Most

By Andrew Sisulak

I'm not the guy you saw from the shell,
I'm not the guy to save you from Hell,
I'm not the man to commend your beauty,
But to embrace it,
As I shall with you,
Because the love is everlasting.
This beautiful wish I see in your eyes,
The kiss can be never-ending.
In your true desire
I can penetrate your soul through your eyes.
It is there within
That you know I'm right,

But it matters not what I am,
Rather, my acts
Of sin, of virtue,
But both for love.

The clouds do block the path so we shall not see,
But to listen with our hearts
And to see with our souls,
We will feel the path
To the ends of our days,

But they shall not end, and it matters not,
For we have spent eternity
Gazing in each others' eyes,
And it matters most
To Him above
Our joy,
Our pleasure,
Our Love.

The Absolute Spell

By Anonymous

There is something about your eyes
That makes me melt
And something about your smile
That turns my world upside down
It's the way everything is okay
When you are near me
People don't understand
'Cause they can't see
The absolute spell you have on me

We are Invisible Children

By Justin Lance

This is our nation...
Our lives played out on the streets
We fight for the chance to survive

We have the right to get nothing
For what rights would they give us
We are all an indecent nuisance

We fly by day as our friends die
By gun fire, knife blade, illogical fighting
By night we sleep with hopes of security

Captured and you must kill
Refuse and you will be killed
Obey and you're given a gun

Brothers killing brothers, and why?
Sons killing mothers, and why?
Friends killing friends, and why?

Because that is all that they know
And for us we can only do so much
Hide and run, hide and run, hide and run...

This is our nation...
Our blood runs through these streets
Help is what we want, help is what we need

Just Friends

By Tom Krause

I can't be completely fixed,
but I'm mendable.
I'm not the funniest kid,
but at least I'm dependable.
I'll give you a serious word of advice
to let you know that I'm real.
I'll be here forever to show that I know how you feel.
I guess we have no choice but to wait things out,
and trust me, you're not the only one in doubt.
So let's try to live life without too many complications,
and let's start to be friends without our selfish
expectations.

Stormy Weather

By Jenna Villanova

Green hue cast over the fields
Silence seethes from the hills
Life forms disappear into woodlands
Shadows sporadically there

Cascades of falling floods engulf
Swarming winds weather the trees
Darkness, flickering flashes of light
Cacophony of thunderous clouds at night

Power twitches teases spirits
Candles lit, flashlights click
Panic, screams, frightened young
Running to take shelter from

Windows shut, lock, doors slam
Basements overflow with families
Closely embracing loved ones
Turning on the AM radio

Listening to snapping, pounding
Debris clouds the air outside
Wishing for saving, sparring
A chance to get out alive

Roof breaks, collapses inwards
Worried cries as the beams brace
Holding onto those precious near us
Looking up for the answer to our fate

Suddenly quiet, rain pouring ceases
Light creeps into small cellar windows
Whirlwind settles, thunder dissipates
Golden hue climbs over the hills

Children, parents, young, and old
Emerge from their small lairs that hold
The story of the secret that kept
All from harms way that autumn day

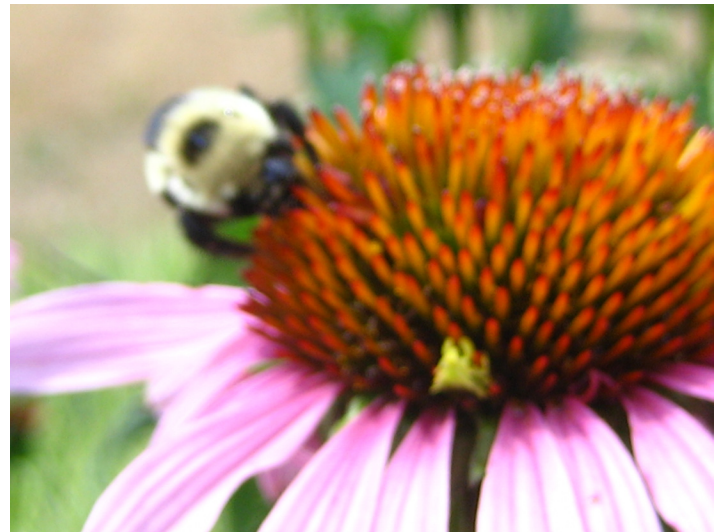
Attack of the Grapes

By Jarett Kallas

Living free without a care
Green orbs flying through the air
Should I find another table?
The grapes will conquer everywhere.

I love the grapes; they're sour and sweet
Smashing right beneath my feet
Hitting anyone I am able
I will not accept defeat

Those who stand before me fall
Lunch is a grape flavored brawl
People think we are unstable
Grapes will get the best of us all.



Mark Pochowski

Would that make you love me?

by Anonymous

I'll be wrong instead of right.
I'll be dark instead of bright.
I'll sing low instead of high.
I'll live forever instead of die.
I'll never search for that happy ending.
I'll always break instead of bending.
I'll go to hell and back again.
Would that make you love me then?

Nearer

By Melanie Breunig

"As the ship sank we could hear the band playing 'Nearer, My God [sic], To Thee.' We looked back and could see the men standing on deck absolutely quiet and waiting for the end."

—Titanic survivor Vera Dick

Upon the deck we gaily played whilst trusting Valiant Queen
To hold us sure till glorious sights of Lady Liberty.
Come storm and gale she'd stayed alive with loveliness supreme.
For come what may, no beast could jar this lady of the sea.

Nearer...

Alas, one day The Beast did come— a greedy thing was he.
He scraped against our Splendor so that he alone could be.
The children screamed and mothers cried—I witnessed many pleas.
Men closed their eyes and prayed and waited for eternity.

Nearer...

Goodbye, Friend...

By Anonymous

No matter what you'll be in my heart and dreams
And you'll always be the one who sewed up the seams
That hold me together now
But I've fallen apart
And you're off to a fresh start
You get a new life
And I gain nothing
I'll try to sleep at night
But it's always a fight and no matter how hard I try
with all my might
I can't get over the fact that you're gone
But sometimes I'm like you
And I take the optimistic way through
And I thank God that I had such a great friend
And I thank you for being more than anyone else has ever been

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Then, slowly, oh so slowly did I raise my bow and strings.
Nodded to my men and whispered, "one-a-two-and-three..."
With trembling hand and with brave face and firm camaraderie,
Now played we once again, to set the others' minds at ease.

Nearer...

The battle fought, the damage done, the victor all too clear.
A terror-breeding nightmare that refused to disappear.
"Here ma'am and child! Please climb aboard. But sir, you stand aside!"
I knew I had but moments to perform a final time
Nearer...

A funeral dirge for friend and foe, a dying elegy.
And as I played, I sang along, "Nearer, My God, to Thee!"

...Nearer

My God to Thee.



Jennifer Winsten

The Notes You Play

By Desirae Owens

The notes you play dance in my ear,
music I hear on a blue moon day.
Goodbye felt so far away.

Your smile and quick, low-tone laugh
must cross my mind to touch my heart.

Jokes passed between us without words;
eyes met in the best type of contact

until moments like this somehow slipped into years.

I chose to forget farewell's silhouette
hidden in the light of everyday's hellos.

From

By Melanie Breunig

I'm from the smell of fresh mint on Grandpa's farm.
From a "climber" laden with mirages of the past.
I'm from Blue Box, Bibles, and Barney.
From annually rained-out camping trips.

I'm from the art of a student, wife, and mother.
From the eyes of a diligent father that saw little rest.
I'm from the bruises and hugs of sisterly squabbles
and amends.
From brownie-batter bellyaches.

I'm from, "If you get it out, put it away."
From applesauce cinnamon salad.
I'm from frozen moments at Lighthouse.
From reunions at The Pig after Sunday service.

I'm from strawberry-picking and jelly-making.
From forlorn tennis balls hiding in the neighbors'
bushes.
I'm from the strength of my family, the battling of
disease.
From shoulders to cry on and hands to hold.

From family and friends, moments and memories.
From the loving hand of my Maker.

Back Where I Came From...

By Brandee Anthony

The ocean was not far away
I would sit in the sun and waste away the day
Back where I came from all your neighbors are friends
Your food was theirs and your happiness they shared
My best friend and I had not a trouble in the world

Where we came from flowers grew big
Gardens full and lush
No pesticides on the vegetables
No wax on the fruit

Back where I came from...
I was Daddy's little girl
And Mom's wild flower
Grandma's spice
Grandpa's sweets

Back where I came from the ocean is all you need
Crisp and glistening in the sun
Sunburn and strong tan lines

Back where I came from tea always came sweet
All those little things didn't matter
And to see your parents in the same room was true
happiness

Back where I came from...
Seems far away now
But I hope to go back there again
A short visit to where I came from
And what I love

Back where I came from...
Defines who I am.

Game of Love

by Maggie Dubnicka

Love is a game
Of guilt and of blame,
Of trust and suspicion,
Of intense intuition,
And of purest heart's maim.

Muse of Autumn

By Steven Schwartz

A spiced, sweet smell
Wafts upon the air
Whispering through the elder trees
Reduced to silent sentinels against the wind

There is another thing on Zephyr's breath
Not made by mortal means
A song, not of mourning for the dead things around
It is one of joy, gaily sung that echoes through body
and soul

She walks nearly silent upon the dry leaf floor
Not a crunch, not a crack, not a single tiny sound
Not a thing is stirred as she glides across
The deadened, frozen glade

Her robe is woven from neither silk nor wool
For she is clothed only in the finest fruits of Gaia's
loom
Leaves as red as morning clouds, yellow as the midday
sun
And orange as the evening sky

Gourds grace her slender arms, colored corn her feet
And nuts cross her waist, all of them dancing as she
moves
Twirling and jumping, like the toy of a babe
Composing rhythms unheard by the ears of man

Her eyes gleam with hazel shine
With ages of things not thought
Her golden hair flows upon the autumn gales
With every grain of her infinite grace

For a moment she pauses and looks about
at all the cold and tattered life
Once a lush place
Now left to the hands of death himself
A single tear is shed
For all who lie upon the cold earth
For those who once were life incarnate
Who now live no more

The muse looks up from her moments of mourn
And begins her sacred craft
To free the land from the silent frozen
And the cursed dead

One by one, she speaks to the trees
And with her very voice they answer
The old giants shake and tremble as if to say
I live again

The branches of the trees suddenly stretch
And from their wretched forms burst colors beyond
imagining
Shining in the evening sun
With every bit of life as their ethereal host

Soon all the land is caught up in their final throes of
life
All ablaze in their last blazes of glory
No fire could burn brighter
No sun could shine with more splendors

Nature's servant beholds the wonders of her work
A thin smile brightens her pale face
For she knows the forest lives again
No more does the shadow of death reign

A leaf studded wind blows, and she is gone
Leaving nothing behind
But the colors upon the trees
And the life returned



Rachel Stich

Cocoa

By Sylvia Hansen

One June day a girl came along.
She hummed; the sun shone warm and strong.
Other children widely smiling ran after.
The dry street was filled with laughter.
Soon a pitter-patter plop starts,
But not a single smile departs.
Bits of light shatter on the ground.
Still no one looks guilty or down.
They catch them on their tongues as though
They are made of tasty cocoa.
The small girl looks up cautiously,
Only to be poked in the eye.
Still, the girl merely turns and splashes
Forth to the next mirror she chooses;
That shall too in good time shatter
By her or the pitter-patter.
Under a canopy she goes
Where all is still and a lamp glows.

Past the door her face is mirrored,
But with a serene mien captured,
She warmly smiles out the back,
Watching the exploding colors on the black.
Like fireworks, they appear above
The large pool surrounded by foxglove.
As one comes down, many more fly up.
Lanterns light them as they break up.
She smiles quietly to herself.
The clouds begin to break themselves,

But calm it will be no longer.
Splash! Up flies a cloud of sugar.
Slowly, the pitter-patter halts.
Few drops fall, an unsteady waltz.

Winter

By Claire McKinnon

Outside, the world seems cold and dead,
'cept for a child all dressed in red.
The snow falls down like waves of white,
but the boy isn't fazed by this dreary sight.
He drags his sled up a steep hill
then perches like a lion waiting to kill.
Waiting till the snow slightly clears.
Down he goes without any fears.



Carly Goll

Brett Favre

By Nick Corlett

Day in and day out,
I throw that ball about.

Trying to reach the first down,
And eventually the touchdown.

Dodging would-be tacklers like the rain,
You can't touch me; I'm at the top of my game.

I play for the Packers, the green and gold,
We like to play up here in the cold.

But now I'm getting old,
Or so I've been told.

It's time for me to step down,
As the king of this town.

Teenage Girls

by Aureanna Gendreau

The liars.
The cheaters.
The rumors.
The deceivers.
The life ruiners.
The back stabbers.
The tear makers.
The heart breakers.

Sound familiar?

Yes, it does.

There are lots of "THOSE" around us.

The ones who can't keep a secret,

And the ones who don't say enough.

The ones who hurt your feelings,

The ones who make up stuff.

When you think they're your friends,

They're really not.

They degrade you behind your back,

Because they think they're so hot.

Just when you think you're happy,
And everything's going right,
They come and screw things up,
They're putting themselves up for a fight.

You hate them so much,
Yet there's nothing to do.
Because you say this about them,
But they say the same thing about you.
There's no way to stop this,
It's just the way things go.
These hurtful games could be prevented,
But I guess we'll never know.

Who are these people I talk so bad about?
They're the ones who make you scream,
They're the ones who make you shout.
They're the ones who are known to love diamonds
and pearls.
They're the "witches," or in other words,
They're teenage girls.



Jennifer Winsten

Waltzing

with the Ice Queen

By Karly McMillan

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three

Telegraph fingers tip-toe in time with the

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three

Ice water spreads over the dancers' toes.

On deck, a spotlight follows the

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three

A distant audience hears The Odd Waltz—sees the dancers

First row turns up its nose

Second and third rows inch closer, intrigued by the

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three

Fingers are freezing on bow strings

On keys

Dancers, desperate, the tempo picks up,

But the rhythm remains

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three

Morning headlines read like telegrams:

Titanic Hit Iceberg STOP

Thousands Dead STOP

We're sinking

STOP!

Epilogue:

A fish,

The heir,

In a tiny room

On the ocean floor

Swishes its tail with a

One-two-three

One...

Two...

Three...

One-two-three



Lyndsey Cross

Nighttime

By Annie Geschke

The sun slowly sinks below the hills.
With twilight gone, the earth is still.
Night slowly draws its shadow near.
It comes softly; it brings no fear.
The moon soon hangs within the air.
Beams of light streak everywhere,
Through thick branches that reach to the sky
To owls' wings that stretch as they fly,
To shallow waters of forgotten streams
That silently drift towards secret ravines.
It fills the land with a quiet peace.
Its thick lull makes all actions cease.
Now a rain falls, but nothing is wrong.
It showers the soil, singing its song.
It drips from the branches into the earth.
The grass takes it in, drinking its worth.
The clouds that deliver it hang in the air,
Just wisps of charcoal sitting here and there.
The droplets dance on, swirling around,
Soaking nature before soaking the ground.
The shadow of the night is slowly withdrawn,
The song of the rain finally through.
The moonlight slowly retraces its path,
Retracting its beams, releasing its wrath.
The cover of night now fully gone
Brings new life with its new dawn.
The rising sun breaks the peace,
Causing night to finally cease.



Rachel Stich

The Million-Dollar Question and a Bittersweet Goodbye

By Garrett Kim

Who understands why the sky looks so blue
When the sun shines so yellow in the day?
And who comprehends why the eagles flew
And how from the black and the white came gray?
When I arrived at those forks in the road,
Was there someone who knew how to proceed?
Better yet, could someone who bore that load
Have told me to where all the roads would lead?
Why isn't deep love always in supply,
And why must every life have to end?
I'll say no answers, for I don't know why,
But weave your life so there's nothing to mend.
So goodbye, wonderful world! Now, I die;
I'll see you soon, beneath a diff'rent sky.

The Moon

By Maggie Dubnicka

The moon is a face that glares down at you
In the dark and cold of the wretched night.
Though it is silent, beneath the pale
And polished face is a seething menace,
Awaiting the day that you lose yourself
To the bitterness of the cruel, dim night.
And when that day comes, it will strike you down
Like a lost fish in the nest of a hawk.
You will perish, for you do not know where
The exit of this horror night is, and
The moon will turn its mighty head around
To show you its true color: merciless
Black. Its grinning skull will sneer at your life,
And all around you a terrific storm
Will swirl, till all you can see is the sin-
Full face of the moon as it conquers you.

Untitled

By Desirae Owens

It is too soon for words like these,
So I will whisper with my lips
And not permit my mouth to speak,
Or it will say too much.

Excuse my silence
As heavy words float through my blood.
My mind, so drenched with words so small,
Cannot find any others.

Distance

By Kevin Ciesielczyk

The most beautiful flower
The most beautiful rose
A feeling so perfect
A feeling just so...
A moment in silence
A moment like this
Nothing replaces
A feeling so bliss
A soft night's chirping
A cool breeze's touch
The air is so perfect
But the distance too much
Time is so short
But an illusion we feel
Is an illusion this perfect?
Or an illusion this real?



Jennifer Winsten

How it Came to Pass

By Garrett Kim

I always knew I'd die in wintertime.
It must have been the way the snow would fall
And how the icicles would hang sublime
Just like how angels used to come to call.
Like autumn frost descended aches
Most physical but some spiritual too.
I wondered if I made any mistakes;
Deep self-reflection was long overdue.
These eyes have seen more than the cunningest fox;
This mouth has spoken both bad things and good;
This heart has shattered both shackles and locks.
Although my story is lengthy, my friend,
I must relive it before it can end.

Where I'm From

By Morgan Janssen

I am found where the ancient trees tower
over like a mother protecting her child, where the sun
peaks through the leaves to awaken us and bid us a
farewell at dusk.

I am found where the water reflects nature in
its own perspective, where the animals go to quench
their thirst, and where the soft breeze creates artwork
along the ripples of water.

I am found along the sweet smelling lilac walls
that separate the boundaries of neighbors and large
oak that is a landmark.

I am found along the stone path
that leads into a home, inside activity
stirring from soapy dishes, folded
towels, to man's best friend guarding
the entrance.

I am found on the lower level
and around the corner, into a room
that is inspired by nature.

I am found in a room that holds
my memories and stories to tell; at
night it's where I lay.
To find me, all you have to do is open
my door.



Jen Wesenberg

It Would Have Been Too Perfect Anyway

By Desirae Owens

Pack your bags, kiss your parents goodbye.
Tell them to write, and try not to cry.
Eighteen years, then you start a different life.

See your small town one last time
before you turn the corner from the simple times.
Do you think of me beneath the August sky?

It would have been too perfect anyway
To spend these years a different kind of way.

I know the first words you spoke to me,
a smart remark said repetitively,
and I didn't know what to do; this was something new.

I missed a chance then to make you mine,
and I thought with good luck there'd be a different time,
but then you found someone, so I found someone, too.
But it turned out that someone just wasn't you.

It would have been too perfect anyway
To spend these years a different kind of way.

Our last year together ended much too soon
With a hug and no kiss; I thought I'd always knew
a happy ending must be fake in order to be true.

We said goodbye and then I cried;
I'll never make it through this.
We split our ways.
I stopped my chase.
I never thought I'd lose you here.
So soon.

You know, it would have been too perfect anyway
To spend these years a different kind of way.

My Struggle and Bravery

By Jonathan Simmons

You can say I knew for quite sometime,
but just wasn't sure when to come out.
Summer came and I knew I wanted safety,
so it happened,
just like that,
ended up to be the best thing.
Better sleep,
Better friends.
But only one thing:
how were others going to perceive me?
I am stuck again in this corner,
but escaped and said, "So what if they don't like it?"
We as Americans need to help,
not scare and confuse the innocent.
If people have told you,
"You're going to hell,"
then they're wrong.
He loves who you are.
Be who you are and don't try to change that.
If you aren't out,
Now's the time to do so.
Ask for help if you're worried or need a helping hand.

Springtime

By Sofie Garcia

In the long reaches of the winter night
Lies hope that continually grows strong,
That cruel winter will end its stormy plight
And happy spring will bring about its song.
When spring comes, the snow is all but gone,
And flowers bring colorful life to all,
And chirping birds sing joyous songs alone,
For lovely nature all the world enthalls.
Alas, the evil snow returns with force,
Not wanting to end its sorrowful reign,
Tricking all who thought it left for good,
Drawing out its long, cold, and brutal course,
Not letting May flowers follow the rain.
If I could make cruel winter stop, I would!

To Name is to Be

By Maggie Dubnicka

To name is to be;
It's clear, don't you see?
For to call one a thief
Is to cause him great grief
By robbing him of his dignity.

I am from Left America

By Jenna Villanova

I am from the left veered path of thought
Where equality meets necessity and rightful law
I hang from the leaves that spread their cooling shade
Over American yards on warm summer days

I am from the change of tomorrow
Where heated debate meets satisfying compromise
I nourish opposition with tangy retorts of reason
Upon which is tasteful during any voting season

I am from the evolution of society
Where healthcare meets group prosperity
I speak words of counsel and benevolence
To my fellow citizens of countenance

I am from The Fourth of July parades
Where red, white, and blue children grow patriotic
I embrace strength from the banners waved high
As the fireworks blaze into the free evening sky

I am from the culmination of history
Where independence equaled deliberate action
I listen and learn before I take position
Through which I understand a prosperous vision



Rachel Stich

I am not from the right
veered path of thought
Where abstaining leads
to no progress
I do not haunt any
mansion or corporation's
hall
And will never stoop to
scandalous methods of
call

The Perfect Soldier

By Carl Moderson

We ride towards the battlefield,
with our banners raised up high.
The enemy trembles before us
as they hear our battle cry.

Charge through their formation,
the line before us breaks.
Our number strikes fear in their hearts
as the ground beneath us shakes.

Feel no pain, fear, or guilt,
unmoved by those we slay.
This makes us the perfect soldiers
for we know no other way.

Kill to live, live to kill,
raised by blood and steel.
Defeat is never an option,
for no one shall we yield.

When the battle has been won,
no celebration shall ensue,
no burial for our fallen brothers,
we know not what else to do.

Marching to the next fight,
paying no homage to the dead,
they are things of the past,
and we only look ahead.

We harbor no feelings amongst ourselves,
meaningless to us is the word friend,
though one may save another
only so that he may live to fight again.

No thoughts of right or wrong,
we do what must be done.
We will keep on fighting
till we are dead and gone.

When You are Here

By Desirae Owens

When you are here
and your strong, musician's hands
stroke mine mindlessly,
your satin words flow in easy conversation;
when we lie intertwined in so many ways,
my heart's gentle rhythm slowly sounds
in tune to my clandestine thoughts.

But when you leave with one more,
one more, one more last embrace,
my heart begins to run a desperate race.
The words I said are tangled in my head
among the thoughts I should have voiced instead.
Uncomfortable and awkward with the label I gave us,
I nervously anticipate the time I'll see you next.

Ode to Facebook

By Jake Jorgensen

Oh, shoot! That paper's due in an hour
I think I need a break, possibly a shower?
Wait a second, is that a new notification?
Awesome, I could use a short vacation

Facebook, Facebook, my ode to thee
On this paper, I better get at least a B
Gosh, I really need a new main pic
I can do it fast, just three mouse clicks

Oh, look, my lady friend wrote on my wall
So much more intimate than, say, a telephone call
Twenty minutes left, then my time is up
But wait! A new inbox that simply says 'sup'

All my friends have gone to sleep,
So there's no one left to Facebook creep
Now my paper's completely done
Back to Facebook, time for fun

Hope Erased

By Desirae Owens

I search behind your eyes
For a hint of something more
A speckle more than pity,
Then I look down at the floor.

When I hear your voice, my heart jumps
And collides into my soul.
Even though you don't talk to me
Like you did before.

My heart is torn and broken;
Only you can take away
This empty feeling haunting me,
This hope that was erased.



Jennifer Winsten

Thank You

By Desirae Owens

I do not think I can sing this out loud
without crying for you, without losing my soul
in the music that so much reminds me of you.
The words you helped me find
are now lost in my mind,
but this silence does not mean goodbye—
only thank you.

I promise if you think of me
I'll think about you, too,
so leave me a flower touched by autumn's dew.
I'll find your path and make it mine, too.
My cry in this music is a broken thank you.

May Flowers Continue to Bloom

By Maggie Dubnicka

How interesting it is
To hold a flower in your hand
And to see all the petals
So beautifully fanned

The pencil supports the words
As they begin to bloom
The core keeps them together
While they fill the room

The ground is wondrously
Firm and rich to hold
The pencil that works so hard
To keep the words in their mold

The roots so far below
Bear the flower so very strong
And keep it from straying
To soil that's grammar's wrong

The rain from up above
Gives the flower inspiration
And stretches the petals to
Make room for alliteration

The beauty, beauty, beauty
Must be from up above,
For no one makes a flower, flower
With which you fall in love

Oh, how interesting it is
To hold a flower in your hand
And to see all the petals
So beautifully fanned

Untitled

By Claire Bush

I'm from flowers, vegetables, and "knee-high by July,"
From dirt beneath my fingers and hard earned
satisfaction,
From seedlings, buds, and everlasting blooms.
I'm from scintillating scents in the balmy summer
breeze.

I'm from dramas, mysteries, comedies, and romances,
From sad endings and "Happily ever afters."
I'm from salted popcorn and soda cups with free
refills,
From Sweet Tarts and baggies hidden in purses.

I'm from wet whiskers and noses and velvety fur,
From expectant eyes and unconditional love following
my every move,
From dirty paws and sloppy kisses wherever I turn,
From long naps in the grass as hours pass by.

I'm from "Hoot and Holler Hour,"
From tortilla chips and cheese dip,
From names, numbers, and no excuses!
I'm from tie-breakers, blow-outs, and "not even
closes."

I'm from billboard games and "slug-bugs,"
From "Is that the right exit?"
I'm from maps and new places for exploring,
From tires, blinkers, and "crazy freeway drivers."

I'm from memories and new beginnings,
Not knowing what comes next,
Forever looking forward,
Never forgetting where I'm from.

Continuum

By Eric Sutton

Our lives a novel none are shown,
A journey none but ourselves know.
An endless trail we walk through life
Down some paths love and others strife.
As we all go on with our lives,
Not grasping yet the girth of time,
How it continues, never fails,
While we pass on, our bodies frail.
As time continues we move on forward,
The world around us changing fast,
But time continues, ever unchanging.
The final hour, a grim chord,
But never bleak; continuum.
Time will always stay – continuum.



Kayla Herrera



Jennifer Winsten

I Am From

by Kirsten Prost

I am from long winters,
Sledding down hills,
Hot summers,
Running through the sprinkler.

I am from living in the fast lane,
Frozen dinners and pizza,
"Gotta go, but it was nice to meet ya."
No rest is where I'm from.

I am from Hecker and Prost.
Always together,
From the sunny beaches of Mexico,
To the traditional Christmases in
Wisconsin.

I am from frozen feet and numb hands,
Flying down the mountains,
Wind whistling in my ears,

Out of control fun,
Falling down and getting up,
Aspen, Breckenridge and Steamboat.

I am from dreams of success.
Doing something meaningful,
Helping the world,
One person at a time.

I am from drowning in ecstasy,
Struggling to beat the pain of defeat.
Sore muscles and red eyes,
Long weekends battling it out with the clock.

I can do anything I want.
The world is my playground.
I will win; I will be the best.
No one can stop me.
Believing in myself is where I'm from.

A Girl

By Jenny Restock

There's a girl, she's all alone
She needs someone that she can phone
Someone who she can say anything to
Not feel so bad, look so blue

She needs someone to hold her when she cries
To be there when she's sad, to help her to get by
She needs someone who can look her in the eye
To make her feel so loved that she could fly

She sits and waits for that special one
To make her laugh, to go out and have some fun
She hopes that he doesn't wait too long
'Cause the loneliness grows, the pain is strong

She walks alone, she needs a friend
To hold her hand till the end
To kiss her tears, to dry her eyes
To make her smile, to burn those lies

She dreams that he will be everything
He'll hold her heart, he'll have a ring
They'll grow old, with their kids and lives
When it's time to go, they'll leap into the sky

She needs someone to hold her when she cries
To be there when she's sad, to help her to get by
She needs someone who can look her in the eye
To make her feel so loved that she could fly

There's a girl, now filled with joy
'Cause next to her is that boy.

I, the Shepherd

By Anonymous

I, the shepherd, am dirty and cold.
In each of my hands, a lamb I hold.
A cold gust of wind whips at my face;
My tangled brown hair blows out of place.
My tattered robe is dusty and old.
I, the shepherd, am dirty and cold.

I, the shepherd, am full of fear.
The heavenly voices I strain not to hear.
"Good news to you, and tidings of joy!
In the city of David is born a boy!
Go to him, and fear not, my dear!"
I, the shepherd, am relieved of my fear.

I, the shepherd, am tired and worn.
Under the Star, the Savior's been born.
To Bethlehem I traveled
Where the Son of God is held,
Who would someday be pierced by hate and by scorn.
I, the shepherd, am tired and worn.

I, the shepherd, am lonely and cold.
The angels above cry out, "Behold!"
Mary's hands are folded in prayer.
Animals gather everywhere.
The Babe sleeps on in the blanket's fold.
I, the shepherd, am no longer cold.

I, the shepherd, stand guard this night,
Filled with the Spirit, with peace and delight.
All is finally, wonderfully right,
While I, the shepherd, stand guard this night.



**A Collection of Creativity
2008-2009**

ELECTRIC SOUP



ECLIPSE

2008-2009

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