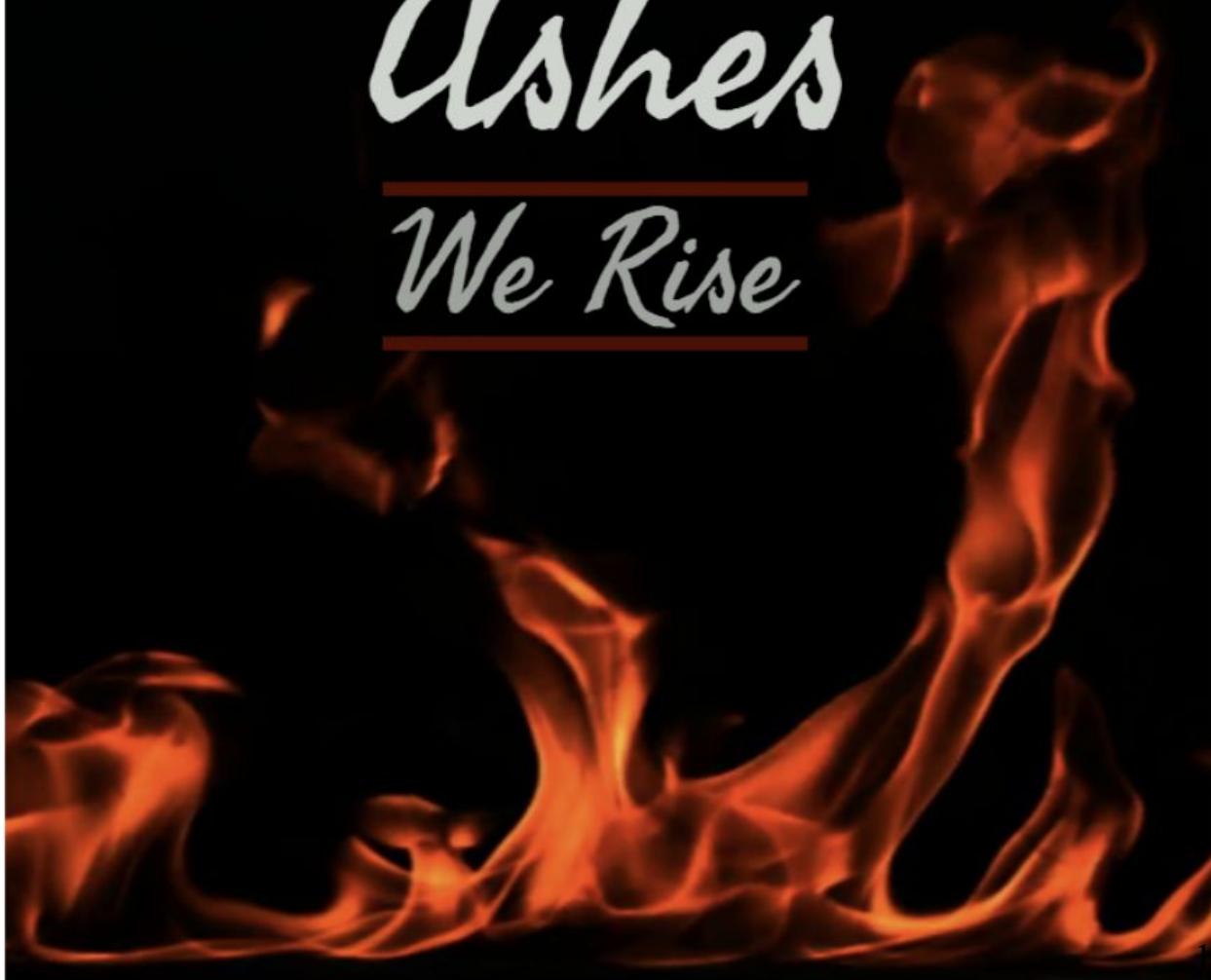


BANNER BOLD
2017-2018

*From the
Ashes*
We Rise



Banner Bold 2017-2018
“From the Ashes We Rise”

To the residents of Ventura County affected by the Thomas Fire,
Our hearts and prayers are with you as we rebuild.
We are a community that is stronger now than ever before.

To Mr. Michael Beeler,
We thank you for your unconditional love and support.
This magazine is because of you.

To the students of Ventura High School,
We exist because of you, to provide an outlet you may not always have.
This is for you.

Dear Reader,

This has been one rough year for everyone and I am extremely grateful that we have reached the end of it. In this school year, Banner Bold has overcome the adversity of being only a club to publish what I believe to be one of our best magazines ever. The incoming messages with submissions always put a smile on my face and joy in my heart.

As this is the close of my last year at Ventura High, I will truly miss the great collaboration and community that working on this magazine creates. I am eternally grateful to Mr. Raney for encouraging me to keep the magazine alive this year, to Dr. Mainz and Yuuki Alfonso (my junior editor in chief and good friend) for standing with me through all the ups and downs, and to Mr. Beeler for having our backs through every moment. To the editors of Banner Bold who stuck by me through the missed months of school and who worked tirelessly to make sure that this magazine was as good as possible, I thank you.

This magazine takes months to complete, and I cannot be more grateful for the two years I have had the pleasure of working on it. This has truly been my greatest high school experience, and I can't wait to watch the following generations succeed in many ways I'll never be able to imagine. I am so excited to see what the future of this magazine holds, and I can't wait to see how it brings the creative community of Ventura High School together.

So, flip through these pages and immerse yourself in the talent that erupts from the souls of our students.

Thank you,
Emily Lewandoski
Editor in Chief
Banner Bold
2017-2018

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Grand Prize

The Dragon and The Phoenix by David Perez

The Dragon

Fire scorches the Earth
Fire burns out its fuel leaving nothing
Fire contributes to ecological destruction
Fire destroys the physical world
Fire destroys irreplaceable memories
Fire is a wild force of nature
Fire causes expensive repairs
Fire takes energy to fight
Fire symbolizes rage
Fire is death
Fire is the Dragon
The Dragon is the end

The Phoenix

Fire allows new life to grow
Fire burns to keep us warm
Fire is a necessary part of ecology
Fire changes what we perceive in the world
Fire creates new bonds with others near
Fire reminds us of nature's greatness
Fire creates valuable objects
Fire gives energy to use
Fire symbolizes passion
Fire is life
Fire is the Phoenix
The Phoenix is the beginning

Editor in Chief's Award

A Story with a Point & Beyond by Sarah Florez



Beyond by Sarah Florez

A Story with a Point by Sarah Florez

This story might seem slightly depressing and endless, but I promise it does have a point.

A lot of my junior year was spent existing in grey. The walls felt grey, my scribbled pencil marks were grey, everything we were learning, mmm more like cramming, felt grey -- unstimulating and unimportant. And even when things became pigmented enough to turn black or white, it never seemed to be in a positive light. Sometimes on the third night of forgoing sleep to do homework or study for an upcoming quiz, my mind became white. Blank mind and blank papers, all white.

But on the contrary, there were moments that felt black. Seeing the two out of six out written at the top of my math quiz or hearing the disappointed tone of a teacher when you fell short or the 89% that “couldn’t be rounded,” all felt solid black: unchanging, unwavering, and unforgiving. The path I was going down felt black and set in stone. It seemed to the teachers and parents I was surrounded by that there was one way to “success and happiness”: their way, the school system’s way. But what does academic and career based success matter if you’re miserable? Not that other’s opinions and expectations should affect you, but spending your day in six different classrooms and every one of them expecting your all, can take a chip off of your mental health. Of course I could give up the time I spent at dance to do my homework, but that brought me color in my fog. I was walking through a haze of grey at school, with occasion clouds of white or lightning bolt strikes of black.

After two long semesters of burying my nose in SAT prep books and memorizing flash card after flash card, I was ecstatic to embark on a little adventure the summer before my last year in high school. I was going backpacking in Canada with a group called Younglife, climbing up and down a mountain of 7,500 feet in six days.

Young Life loves mystery and surprises, so our guides told us nothing about the trip. And I mean absolutely nothing. We left our phones, watches, and possibly better judgement at base camp. And when we asked our guides what time of day it was, where we were going, what we were going to see, or even when the next time we were going to eat would be, they simply shrugged their shoulders with a coy smile.

By day three, we were exhausted. The hiking boots on our blistered, aching feet felt like bricks. And despite starting the day off freezing in multiple layers of fleece, we had been hiking for so long that we were drenched in sweat in just shorts and a tank top. Not to mention the extra 40-70 pound packs on our back with everything we needed -- food, tents, pots and pans, sleeping bags, snow picks, helmets, harnesses, and more.

Yet we continued trekking on. And as we were walking, the trail opened up to a clearing, and I saw a beautiful, crystal clear lake of glacial water surrounded by a glorious mountainside covered in pine trees. Here are a couple of pictures to put this amazing sight into context for you.

Our guides told us we could swim in the lake if we wanted to, so I ripped off my pack and dove head first into freezing, glacial runoff. And then sitting in who knows where Canada, possibly slightly delirious from frostbite and the high altitude, I had a moment. I was looking around and the colors seemed to appear more vibrant than the usual grey I existed in. The green of the trees was a deeper green that I had ever seen and the world seemed a little more alive and

rich. And I didn't know if my goosebumps were from the touching experience or the cold, but I did know that that moment was worth more than any transcript could be.

I'm not in any way saying that nature is a "cure" for depression. But for those of us that can get stuck thinking life is just homework and standardized tests, experiencing forests, mountains, and lakes can spark an understanding that life is so much more vibrant and exhilarating than numbing yourself to an onslaught of 200 question scantrons and forced essays about US history.

But unfortunately, we can all get stuck in our ways, and nature remains out of sight and out of mind. We don't always think about how our lifestyles can affect our world, and because of it, we are losing some of the most naturally beautiful and inspiring spots on Earth.

This is a quote from the Forestry Department Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "About half the world's tropical forests have been cleared or degraded. If the current rate of deforestation continues, it will take less than 100 years to destroy all the rainforests on the earth." (Rinkesh Kukreja)

But what does that have to do with us? Most of us try to recycle, take shorter showers, or carpool. And I'm not saying you should stop those practices; they do help. But I think we're directing our focus away from a bigger issue. According to Amanda Machado, "Eating one hamburger wastes more water on the planet than 2 months of showering. And due to livestock waste, meat does more damage to the atmosphere than all transportation combined."

In addition to the smog and lack of usable water we're experiencing, we're losing space for our awe-inspiring and untouched lakes and trees. According to Peta, "Livestock or livestock feed covers one third of the Earth's ice-free land. And one of these dairy farms with 2,500 cows produces the same amount of waste as a city of 411,000 people." And the thought of my kids or your kids losing existing solely in a world of grey beaks my heart.

I understand that many are hesitant or flat out against becoming completely vegan or vegetarian. But even if you don't want to fully give up meat and animal products, there are many, many substitutes to reduce your consumption of meat, still get enough protein, and probably feel a lot healthier. Because the bottom line is that the way that our society mass consumes meat and dairy is unsustainable. You can have your hamburgers, turkey, and cheese, or you can have hikes and adventures in breathtaking forests, helping bring you back to the vibrancy, beauty, and excitement of our world.

And to be more aware of our planet's need for us to be environmentally conscious, we need to spend more time diving head first into crystal clear lakes, sleeping among pine trees, and seeing more stars in a night sky than on your graded paper.

Fiction



Cephalopod by Madison Secor

Fiction First Place

Labyrinth Heart by Charles Varien

I have an epic for you, dear reader, a story of hubris; names: omitted, but the feelings: real and bittersweet as ever. This story is not the whole story, not by far, but in it lies shards, like a broken mirror, showing but a partial truth and a whole lie.

I was this strong and confident person, grown arrogant at the jest of mortality. After having moved time and time again, losing friend and again, I was used to leaving people behind. A cold life, my heart was set in a frame of ice. So I built up a massive labyrinth around my heart. In part to ensure I was never hurt.

I erected walls of stone thousands of feet high and neigh on impenetrable. Grey walls looming under a tormentous sky. I built every inch and knew it's every trap and pitfall. Dark and designed for failure, it was hazardous and completely confusing. Dangers lie in wait or elsewise ran about ravenously hungry looking for prey. Often I fed them.

In the center, was a garden, my love. Soft grass and tender flowers. What little beauty I had. My heart was safe here. True, it would never beat; but it would never break. Every now and then, I would bring something inside. Like my cat, Galilea. But elsewise, it was all but sealed. If I grew bored, I would lure an unsuspecting victim inside and watch with a smug malevolence as they failed to pass the trials of my labyrinth. Impossible standards of love I had implemented. But everything changed when I discovered Lisa and, more importantly, Lena. German celebrities, over whom I fell head and heels. They broke the outermost and strongest wall, leaving a gaping hole. Now, angels they are, they flew right over the dangers and into the garden. Though they are there still there, it is an ethereal being, nothing real or finite. Through this hole in my defense, in crept the most unsuspected of travelers.

A girl. A light and weightless spirit in contrast to mine. Rather bothersomely, she waltzed in and about. Unafraid of all the dangers I had put there. As though without trying, she made a startling progress. Slowly, she made her way past all the tests and pitfalls until she stumbled unwittingly into the garden. The first person to ever do so, I soon realized that for the all the work and grandeur I had put into the labyrinth, making it this protective shell, I had neglected the garden. I was ashamed of its vagrant state, but happy to have someone to really share it with.

That joy turned to ash in my mouth when she left just as easily as she came. I set fire to the garden, to clear the grossly unkempt plot. Starting anew. There has not yet been cause or time for new growth, the ashes and tears too fresh in the ground for the sprouts to grow, but one day it will come; and this time I will not be so unprepared.

My thanks, dear reader. Maybe by now you have seen what I meant. Or perhaps my meaning goes entirely unnoticed. Either way, from ashes I shall rise, stronger than before and a little more understood.

Fiction Second Place

The Man in the Gray Suit by Karen Stewart

That night was just like the night before. And he knew it would be just like the next night. He stuffed the same papers into his briefcase, took the same hat off the same hat rack, and left the building with expected un-originality. The moon was unimpressive through its layer of haze-barely brighter than the streetlights above the man in the grey suit. He listened to his footsteps as he walked. He'd polished his shoes yesterday. That was different. That was new.

An old woman in a heavy coat walked past the man, head stooped low, breath visible in the air.

There was a smokey old bar not far from here. He'd get a drink, call a cab, take off the grey suit, put it back on in the morning. Liquor didn't taste like much anymore. The man kept walking. It wasn't too late. Ten, ten thirty. His watch was at home. That was different. Another change; nice. He usually had his watch on. But the streets were quiet and deserted, apart from a grey-suited nobody. He wasn't a man at night; just another shadow produced by the streetlights. Just a drink and a quick ride home; he was numb to all else. Was that alright? Probably not. The shadow didn't really care. Everything was so incredibly pointless. That was the point. He did it all ironically. Everything.

Every day was a grey suit and a chance be even more numb than the day before.

There was a hat shop on the corner, closed. The man gazed into the window for a moment before taking off again. He already had a hat. No use for another one. Maybe tomorrow he'd buy a second hat just to show himself how much he didn't care. He could afford a car- a good one- but a car wouldn't make much difference. The street smelled of sulfur and dust and rain. Not much farther to the bar. Whisky, taxi, home, office. Again, again, again. The light from the bar could be seen through the mist. There were puddles on the pavement, grease on the asphalt. The man looked out into the distance with bleak eyes. The street went on and on in loop around the world. Never stopping, never-ending.

Oh, wait; something new.

There was a shape coming towards him. It was blurry and blue, like a Monet painting of flowers. Closer, closer, closer. A person. Another old somebody without a home. A blank spot where a name had once stood.

No; something different.

A young woman was walking towards him. He took off his hat. She was the sort of girl you'd see in movies; blonde curls festooning her face like exotic vines in a far-off paradise. They were pinned back softly to show her eyes- big and blue and thoughtful. And she had a little red lipped smile, doll-like and elegant. She said his name. He said nothing. She said it again. And the man then remembered that he had a name; this was it, on her pretty lips. She made it sound like something.

"Have we met?" Asked the man

She laughed. "It's been a very long time, I know."

He didn't believe he'd ever seen her before. But there was a sort of feeling he couldn't place. A memory of standing on an island with the sun going down, laughing about something.

Something. He didn't know what. But there were flowers and colors and music and light. Maybe he had known her once.

"Come," she said. "I've missed you."

"And I've missed you too." So he had known her.

She asked him where he was going, and he told her.

"To that old place?" The woman shook her head and her curls shook too. "I have a better idea. It'll be just like old times. You remember now, don't you?"

"Yes." Though he really couldn't tell.

And out of the darkness, there was a taxi cab- a single star in a black sky. The man never saw taxis here when he didn't call them himself.

She waved a pretty hand in the air and the taxi slowed to a stop.

The woman brushed off her dress and sat a little handbag on her lap. The man had smelled her perfume somewhere before; a bright, sugary scent. "Take us to Morgan's. You know where. Real fast; don't hold back!"

The driver nodded.

The woman smiled at the man in the grey suit. Just barely, he smiled back. And they were off.

All the dim lights in the town shifted and whirled- drops of paint blended out into a vibrant wash of color. And the driver didn't hold back; up and over, swiftly, fleeting. They were in a golden chariot pulling the sun across the sky.

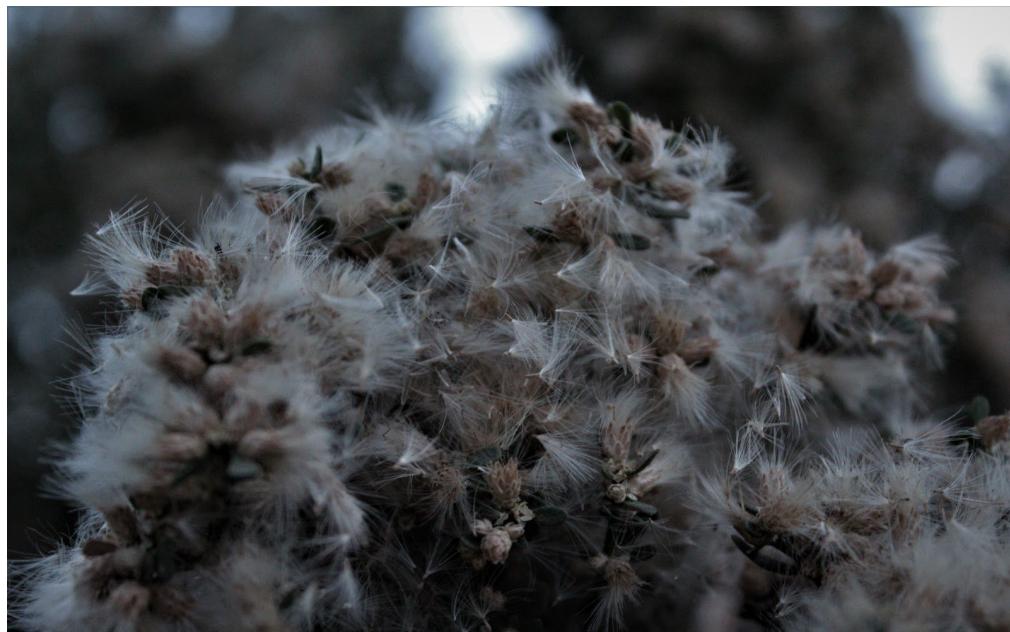
The man gazed out the window into the shifting colors. They'd passed the city- in all its paper mache grandeur- and were flying down a tree-paved path under a vivid white moon. They didn't say much; they didn't need to. The ride was light and airy and scented of sugar and distant memories.

The driver veered off to their right where misty lights were glimmering. Down a path, further, brighter. The man in the grey suit could hear music from outside; brassy and fast-paced.

"Makes you feel like dancing." The woman said.

And somehow it did. The man felt strange. Drunk? No, happy.

You can find the rest of this piece online at <https://bannerbold.wixsite.com/bannerbold>.



Clean by Kira Spargur

Fiction Third Place
Breacher by Madison Secor

Today was my little brother's birthday, and as always for the past seven years, I was trapped inside Chuck E. Cheese.

My mom thought it would be a great idea to host a party for my brother in the least expensive way possible, only this involved me being a punching bag for three hours. I rubbed my arm as I weaved my way through the arcade games. I could be at home doing something far more entertaining than babysitting a bunch of ten year olds. Sure, I love my brother, but not enough to be cramped in a little kids' arcade that smells like rotten feet and cheese.

I heard a little kid scream and turned my head, expecting a man dressed as an oversized mouse to emerge from the back room. I was shocked to see instead a girl my age run past him, knocking him to the ground. The kids screamed when the mouse's mask came off, revealing a pasty white guy with purple hair in the suit.

The girl pushed past the spectators aggressively. Behind her trailed what looked like highly trained members of the S.W.A.T., and I knew they had to look uniformly similar, but these guys looked completely identical. Towering over six feet, these men were identical clones of each other. They had the exact same build, as well as the exact same facial features that peaked under their dark masks.

I couldn't help but stare at the girl. She wore a black leather jacket with $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeves, exposing her dark skin at the bottom of her forearms. Fingerless gloves, dark pants and burgundy Doc Martens completed her outfit. Her hair was pulled into cornrows on the left side of her head. The rest of her short hair was left in springed curls, dark chocolate hair with bleached tips.

The world slowed. The girl caught sight of me, her hazel eyes matching my dark green ones as she past a crowd of kids and parents. She brushed shoulders with me in her attempt to escape. I thought that would be the last time I would see her before she escaped the building, but that was before I felt someone pull me to their chest from behind. Time had resumed its regular speed, and it was then that I realized the mysterious girl was using me as a human shield. The men in dark suits now aimed their guns not only at the fugitive, but at me. My eyes grew wide as a bright light from their guns glared into my eyes.

"Hey! Let me go--"

"Quiet," the girl hissed.

"*Prisoner B-06*," the man in front announced. His voice was deeper than I anticipated, but it sounded scratchy, hoarse even. "*You are hereby ordered to stand down and remove the boy. Do so now or you and your prisoner will be obliterated.*"

You can find the rest of this piece online at <https://bannerbold.wixsite.com/bannerbold>.

Chimera 237 by Yuuki Alfonso

“Where is *it*?! Where did *it* go?! How can your team let that *thing* escape? FIND IT!” I heard General Kaiser’s anger fading into my ears. My eyes slowly opened but everything was a blur. My lab was washed over in a red hue, the emergency system was up and running. What was going on? Why did everything seem like it was in slow motion? I couldn’t feel my body...maybe I should just drift back to sleep. While my eyelids fluttered closed, I saw a large silhouette come towards me.

“Takahashi! Wake up! Stay with me please!” Was someone shouting for me? I opened my eyes and my vision was back to normal. I couldn’t feel my left leg and my head was spinning. My head fell to my right when whatever I was on hit a bump. I saw my intimate co-lead Luca Agreste, the Head Biochemist in my department at GCA-Sciences, a genius, and my fiancé. Someone rushed to abstain him before I was taken somewhere behind closed doors. Then, my vision once again faded to a fuzzy black.



“What is this? This isn’t my body. Why do I keep hearing a dog moaning in the back of my head? I have to get out of here.” The beast was in an alleyway far from the military structure. The night was placid, no one in the streets. It tried to stay in the shadows, away from the pittance of light from the street lamps.

It looked at its arms covered in fur, paws at the end of them, realizing its larger stature and walking on all four limbs like a savage. There was a tag on its wrist: Chimera 237, reading it made it tense up. It felt the knife-like teeth, tasted the blood in its mouth, the taste of human flesh still remained, reminding the beast what had happened before. This mortification of being turned into a lowly mutt, the vengeance in his heart started growing and boil.

“I am no beast, I am Allen Cooper the Game Master. They didn’t realize that I am immutable. I’m the genius psychopath who never loses. I will strike again and keep striking until they realize what I’m playing. I will make them mere pawns in my game and have them chase me around the board until I’m through with them. I am in control.”

The fusion between a bloodhound and a psychopath had made the Game Master even stronger and more twisted but being manipulated angered him. Chimera 237 would be the weapon he uses to destroy his adversaries who had created this monster. Once he has annihilates them he shall feel no remorse, that is his deposition. He tasted the blood in his mouth again before bringing a menacing grin to the Chimera’s face as if he had just consumed a sweet elixir that has heightened his malice.

You can find the rest of this piece online at <https://bannerbold.wixsite.com/bannerbold>.

He Looked so Sad by Terra Bransfield

She was quiet for a time. Just listening to the silence filling her ears. There wasn't much to do here. There never was. But where exactly was she? Her mind buzzed with the question, but only for a second before she started wondering how often she wondered where she was. It seemed she never knew where she was. She always just seemed to be lost in her own mind, wandering the blank streets of her brain until they got flooded with random burst of thought.

She inhaled. The silence pressed inward. She exhaled. The silence relaxed. She inhaled. It pressed in again. She exhaled. Relax. There wasn't much else to do here. There never was. But where was she? The question flooded her mind, but only for a second before she started wondering how often she wondered where she was. Why did she wonder where she was so often? Did it really matter?

Anytime she knew where she was, it seemed she'd always forget it a minute later anyways. One moment she'd be yelling at her son about some dumb shit, like grades, or something. And another moment she'd be lost in her own room.

"Mom, what are you looking for?" A young boy asked, standing in the doorway.

"What? Oh, nothing." She responded.

"You say that every time mom. You've been searching your room for the past ten minutes."

"Well I just can't find my keys. I know I left them in here somewhere." She responded.

"Keys for what? You don't have any keys." The boy said, looking concerned.

"My car. I need to go to the store. We're out of milk." She said, still searching.

"Dad can get us some milk when he comes home after work." The boy responded, walking towards her. "Want me to read you something?"

"No, I can read on my own. Will you help me find it?" She asked.

"You don't have any keys mom." The boy said, taking her arm.

"I'm not looking for my keys." Why did the boy think she was looking for keys. "Where did I put my glasses?"

"Mom, you don't wear glasses." The boy tried leading her to the door. "Want to watch some TV mom? Let's go watch New Girl. You like that show."

"No, no. I need to find it!" She resisted his efforts to move her.

"Your glass?" The boy asked, his hand still on her arm.

"Yes."

"They're in the living room. Let's go watch some TV and I'll get them for you."

"Oh! Ok." She said and allowed herself to be lead out of the room.

"Hungry mom?" The boy asked, leading her to the living room.

"No, I don't think so," She responded.

"Ok."

They entered the living room and the boy helped her onto a red couch in front of the TV.

"I'm going to make a sandwich mom. Stay here ok?" He said. She nodded and the boy left.

The show was quite weird and going too fast for her to keep up. The girl and the guy didn't seem to get along. But why? It was too confusing, so she got up and walked around.

She grabbed a pile of papers from on top of a bookshelf and rifled through them. They slipped through her hands and fell to the ground.

“Shit.” She bent down to pick them up.

“Mom, what are you doing?” A boy's voice called from somewhere.

Her heart began to beat fast. She dropped the papers and grabbed a fire poker. Quietly, she tried to crouch behind a red couch.

“Mom?” The voice said again.

She stayed silent.

“Do you need help mom?” The voice asked.

She peeked her head up. No one was there. Where did the voice come from?

You can find the rest of this piece online at <https://bannerbold.wixsite.com/bannerbold>.



Wildflowers by Aspen Leavitt

Nonfiction



Untitled 1 by Malik Hibbler

Nonfiction First Place
Le Monde en Cendres by Bailey Malcolm

Dans un monde rempli de violence et de chaos, l'espoir parvient toujours à rester. Tous les jours, il y a une goutte d'espoir. Avec les gens qui meurent, nous entendons parler de la tragédie et non de la façon dont le congrès du peuple est en train de le changer. Ça me fait mal au cœur, ça me rend malade. Le monde, le pays a vu un grand déchet, un déchet que nous avons créé.

Les adultes nous traitent comme des enfants, tout en enseignant à être des adultes. C'est notre temps, nous sommes maintenant confrontés au monde que vous avez gaspillé, la plupart d'entre nous connaissant la dette que nous sommes confrontés, ce rythme foiré. Les adultes disent que nous n'avons aucun espoir, mais il est simplement enterré sous l'inquiétude, le doute, la douleur et la peur. Nous voyons le monde autour de nous brûler, mais comme un espoir phoenix s'élève de ses cendres pour l'emporter

Translation:

In a world full of violence and chaos, hope always manages to stay. Every day, there is a drop of hope. With people who are dying, we hear about the tragedy and not about how the People's Congress is changing it. It hurts my heart, it makes me sick. The world, the country saw a great waste, a waste that we created.

Adults treat us like children, while teaching to be adults. This is our time, we are now facing the world you have wasted, most of us know the debt we face, this messed up pace. Adults say we have no hope, but it is simply buried under worry, doubt, pain and fear. We see the world around us burning, but as a phoenix hope rises from the ashes to prevail.

Nonfiction Second Place

Simply More Than a Word by Isabel Mercado

Anxious. The word itself when muttered trembles out of your mouth with the worrisome fear it is being a nuisance in your vocabulary. The “x” in Anxious is much like the feeling, unexpected and quite frankly, uncalled for. Break this word into syllables, Anx-i-ous, Each flustered on the tip of my tongue represent the uneasy state that Anxious creates. Anxious is

strained, tense and disturbed. Anxious becomes airborne. You breathe it in, it fill your lungs, leaving a traumatic bitter taste upon your tongue

Due to Anxious, I am half the person I once was, and one fourth of the person I should be.

I always felt apprehensive about saying I was in distress and dismay over my own thoughts. I used every metaphor in my library to explain my pain only to end up repeating myself because there are only so many ways to describe my broken chemistry. At one point I stopped trying. I never spoke about it because I was scared and ashamed. Scared and ashamed over what I have hidden in my own mind.

I believe the word “Anxious” remembers it vividly. I got this worrisome feeling, deep inside from the moment I woke up. Just getting out of bed and making my body go outside and face the world was too much. Let alone to deal with the monsters Anxious and Foreboding was making up. The nervous and neurotic thoughts flew around my head and down my spine. From the pits of my stomach to the tips of my fingernails, I shook with no reason. I just kept looking down, pressing my hands to my neck, constantly on edge to protect myself from a danger I had no knowledge of. My breathing to the pattern of “Nearer, My God, to Thee” the song played while the Titanic and now my heavy heart sank to.



Untitled 2 by Ben Pace

Nonfiction Third Place

Pelé by Raul Ibarra

Ganar una Copa Mundial no es fácil, al contrario, es un torneo de 32 equipos nacionales. Dico Nascimento “Pelé” fue seleccionado al equipo de Brasil a los 16-17 años, y tiene el récord del más joven en participar y anotar en el mundial. Para que un equipo gane un torneo todos necesitan participar como equipo y todos llevarse bien como familia. Para Dico no solamente

ganó para el mismo, pero también para el país de Brasil, su familia, sus amigos de juventud, y su gente del pueblo.

Para los padres de Dico, João Ramos do Nascimento y Celeste Arantes, fue una alegría cuando el equipo de Brasil ganó. Su madre miró a su esposo luchar para poder ganar dinero en el juego de fútbol pero tuvo una lesión, que lo dejó fuera del fútbol. Fue un escape de alivio, en el año 1958 cuando Brasil ganó la copa. Los padres no tenían muchos recursos y esto fue una solución de problemas económicos. Ellos apoyaron mucho a Pelé y le demostraron cómo aprender de sus errores. Pelé llevó con él las lecciones de la vida para poder ganar el mundial.

Su equipo, al principio, no se llevaban muy bien con Pelé y eso le afectó al equipo al inicio. Pero apesar de los problemas, el equipo Brasileño pudo pasar muchos obstáculos y aprendieron de sus errores. Pelé por ejemplo, puso al equipo de Brasil en grande por jugar como un equipo por primera vez. Jugando unidos como un verdadero equipo, y jugando al estilo ginga, él famoso estilo Brasileño, fue lo que los Brasileños llevaron al mundial para poder triunfar.

Amigos no solamente son amistades, también son como familia. En el caso de Pelé, él mismo tuvo que pasar por momentos escalofriantes, como mirar un amigo morir. Muchos de sus amigos trabajaban en minas por muchas horas, y era un trabajo pesado. Pelé no quería ir a ese destino, él quería ser un jugador profesional para poder poner comida en la mesa para su familia. Él llevó sus sentimientos y su pasado al partido, y eso le dio fuerza para jugar mejor “como un dios”.

Para Brasil el campeonato fue una alegría, no solamente porque fue su primera copa pero porque todos ganaron juntos y se reunieron por la primera vez. Todos brincaron con alegría cuando el pitido del partido sonó. En ese momento, el país de Brasil tuvo un escape de sus problemas personales y todos se miraban felices. Pelé a pesar de ser un futbolista fue un héroe y inspiró a muchos brasileños en esa época.

En conclusión, la vida de Pelé fue llena de alegría y momentos tristes pero a pesar de todo, tuvo un destino muy feliz. Pelé pudo poner muchas personas en alegría y pudo ayudar a muchos. Creo que lo que hizo Pelé fuerte fue, su inicio de su vida, empezando con la pobreza y los padres que fueron guías para él. Para Brasil simbolizó valorar como una cultura propia.

Translation of Pelé:

Winning a World Cup is not easy, on the contrary, it is a tournament of 32 national teams. Dico Nascimento "Pelé" was selected to the Brazilian team at 16-17 years, and has the record of the youngest to participate and score in the World Cup. For a team to win a tournament everyone needs to participate as a team and all get along as a family. For Dico, he not only won for himself, but also for the country of Brazil, his family, his friends of youth, and his townspeople.

For Dico's parents, João Ramos de Nascimento and Celeste Arantes, it was a joy when the Brazilian team won. His mother watched her son fight to earn money at the soccer game but he had an injury, which left him out of football. It was a sigh of relief, in the year 1958 when Brazil won the cup. The parents did not have many resources and this was a solution to economic problems. They supported Pelé a lot and showed him how to learn from his mistakes. Pelé took with him the lessons of life to win the World Cup.

His team, at first, did not get along very well with Pelé and that affected the team at the beginning. But despite the problems, the Brazilian team was able to overcome many obstacles and learn from their mistakes. Pelé, for example, put the Brazil team at large by playing in unity for the first time. Playing together like a real team, and playing "ginga" style, his famous Brazilian style, was what the Brazilians took to the world to be successful.

Friends are not only friends, they are also like family. In the case of Pelé, he himself had to go through chilling moments, like watching his friend die. Many of his friends worked in mines for many hours, and it was hard work. Pelé did not want to go to that destination, he wanted to be a professional player to be able to put food on the table for his family. He brought his feelings and his past to the game, and that gave him strength to play better "like a god".

For Brazil the championship was a joy, not only because it was their first cup but because they had only played together that year and still won. Everyone jumped with joy when the end-of-the-game whistle sounded. At that time, the country of Brazil had an escape from their personal problems and everyone was happy. Pelé, despite being a footballer, was a hero and inspired many Brazilians at that time.

In conclusion, Pelé's life was full of joy and sad moments but in spite of everything, he had a very happy ending. Pelé was able to put joy in many people and was able to help many people. I think what made Pelé so strong was the beginning of his life, starting with poverty and the parents who were guides for him. For Brazil it symbolized the value as a culture of its own.

Enchant by Hannah VanDomelen

Enchant is sometimes spoken with a softly beautiful voice. It might be heard floating out of a fairies lips as she casts a spell on a princess. Enchant can burst free from the shackles of its dark prison along with a villainous laugh. It can be heard seeping from the toothless mouth of a dastardly witch as she puts a wicked spell on her freshly caught prey. Enchant cannot be imprisoned for long, eventually it escapes and casts a spell of its own on anyone in its path.

Some days it decides to be the hero, but other days, it is determined to inflict evil on others. Enchant is the doppelganger of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. It glides along as a golden shimmering light, or a dark ominous gas. It comes upon a human in peril and asks in a kind and silky voice, what they might need. Then with a wave of its hand it rids them of their troubles and goes on its merry way. Some see a dark cloud of smoke emerge out of nowhere and envelop a passerby. Enchant leaves its victim clueless as to what happened. The only evidence left behind is ever present bad luck, or possibly a pig nose that can never be removed from the victim.

Enchant is used by stories and their wondrous plots and surprising twists, to cast a spell of delight on people. The audience leaving the first ever full length animated movie, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, were given a charming little farewell on their way out, by enchant. People as well as movies enchant their audiences. People like Marilyn Monroe. Her elegance and dazzling good looks are what enchanted her fans. Miss. Monroe and enchant teamed up to leave her audiences pleased with her many performances. Enchant did not only conspire with Marilyn Monroe, she has also collaborated with many stars, through many decades. Enchant can never die, she is immortal. It is not possible to inquire how old she is, for she never ages. She beholds delicate features and a dazzling voice of velvet. Enchant smells of roses and sweet apples. She glows like the bright sun on a warm summer day.

Enchant can seduce as well. Her beauty attracts the attention of many men. Usually the lost and sorrowful souls, roaming this earth with no one. She locks eyes with a man for what seems like forever. They feel as if no one else exists, like they are the only two left on earth. Her beauty starts a raging fire in him, one like he has never felt before. His courage leaves him for a second but he suddenly knows he must meet this enchantress. He puffs up his chest and starts to stroll over, but before he moves he notices that the enchantress has started gliding over. It's as if she is floating, not even moving her delicate feet. They finally meet. Amazed by her allure and beauty, the man tries to speak but before he can, she puts one slender finger to his mouth. The man notices the enchantresses striking blue eyes, they look deep into his soul, searching for any sign of love in him. She finds it, hidden deep inside. No words are spoken yet they know they are in love.

Enchant still lives and breaths today, never to die. She will forever captivate anyone who sees her, with her angelic beauty. She will evermore shift from an alluring enchantress to a devilish fiend ready to strike. Despite her shapeshifting, enchant has promised to eternally help those in distress with wondrous spells. With her beauty and sweet fragrance, she resembles a flower that will never wither. Enchant will eternally roam this earth, ready to aid or inflict harm.

What Astounds You? by Terra Bransfield

What astounds me? The butterfly effect; how one simple thing can alter someone's entire future. I was adopted at 3.5 years old from China, and that was no simple thing. My parents had planned on adopting a child even before I was born. They'd even had an adoption planned in Vietnam, but things fell through on that one.

Not too long after, co-workers of my parents had adopted a girl from China. When they got back, they told my parents of a little girl they'd seen at the orphanage that might be a good addition to the family. Less than a year later, I was brought to my new home in America.

I have very little memory of that time, but I'm sure I was doing nothing spectacular or noteworthy. Yet, all it took was someone to notice me, exchange a few words to a family who wanted a new member, and so many lives were changed. I think of all of the other paths my life could have been, and they're endless!

A short 8 years later and my best friend is coming out to me as gay. Little do I understand what it means to be gay, or the risk of which coming out may bring, yet later that week I find myself telling my parents I'm gay too. Humoring me or not, they accept it without a blink and nothing seemed to have changed. But looking back on it, I realize that so much changed.

First, my brother, father and I now had something major in common. We all liked women. Second, the things of which my father could tease me about broadened; not only was I short and Asian, but I was also gay. There must be a scholarship out there for left handed, adopted, midget, Asian, lesbians right? Thirdly, I found myself pushing people's boundaries and opinions on LGBTQ+ rights. I found people questioning my sexuality more than I had, but I also realized there were more kids out there like me than people seemed to willing to admit.

8 months ago, my mother happened across a video from the colleges that Change Lives website. She showed it to me, and I fell in love. We visited the campus and I fell in love again. Now, here I sit typing my finals words, legs, arms, fingers crossed, hoping for a simple 'yes'. Because a simple yes, will alter my entire future.

Art and Photography



Walkout by Dash Debley

Art and Photography First Place
Panoramic by Dash Debley



Art and Photography Second Place
The Fire by Juliana Jacobson



Art and Photography Third Place
Ventura Strong by Janessa Seaberg



Red Rock Canyon by Madison Secor



To Start Anew by Emily Matarazzo



Still Standing by Gabriela Molina



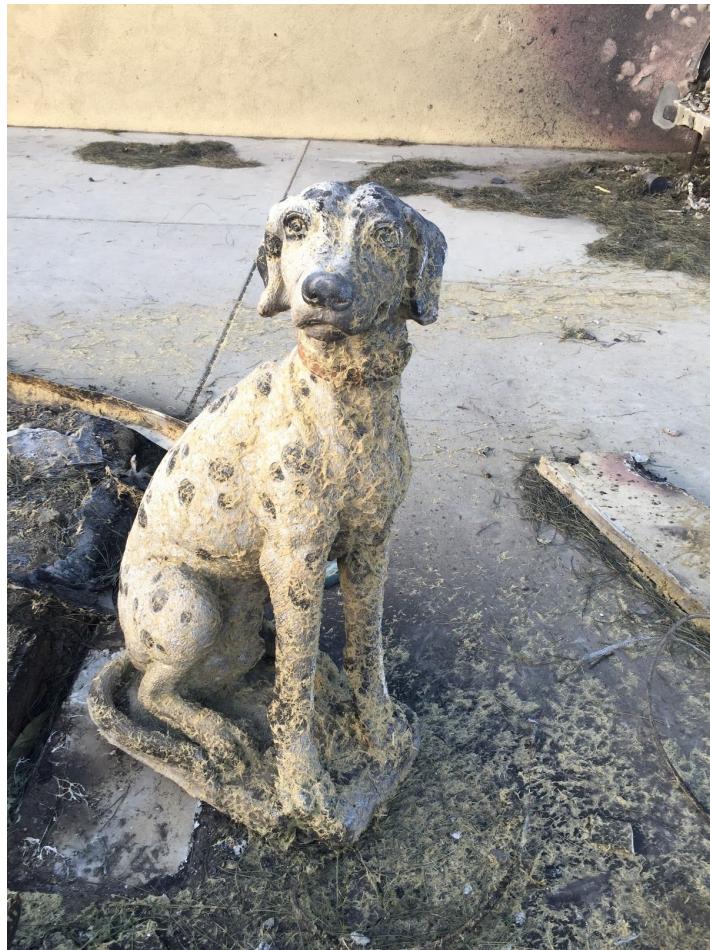
Soul by Kira Spargur



Home with the Vineyard by Malik Hibbler



Untitled Pieces 3 & 4 by Owen Davis



Our Monumental Cross by Terra Bransfield



CAUTION: Do Not Approach by Madison Secor



Terracotta Skies by Kira Spargur



Girl With Rose and Fire Hair by Emmanuel Gonzalez



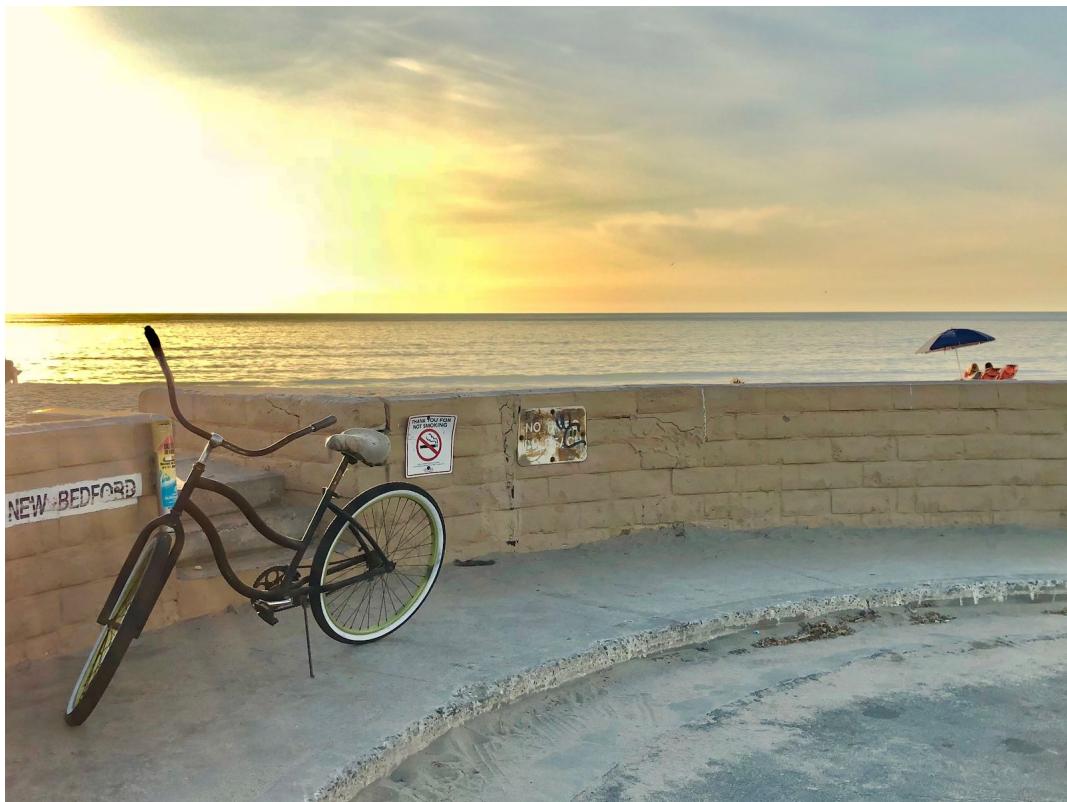
Singed Palm Forest by Emily Matarazzo



Glass Sky by Madison Secor



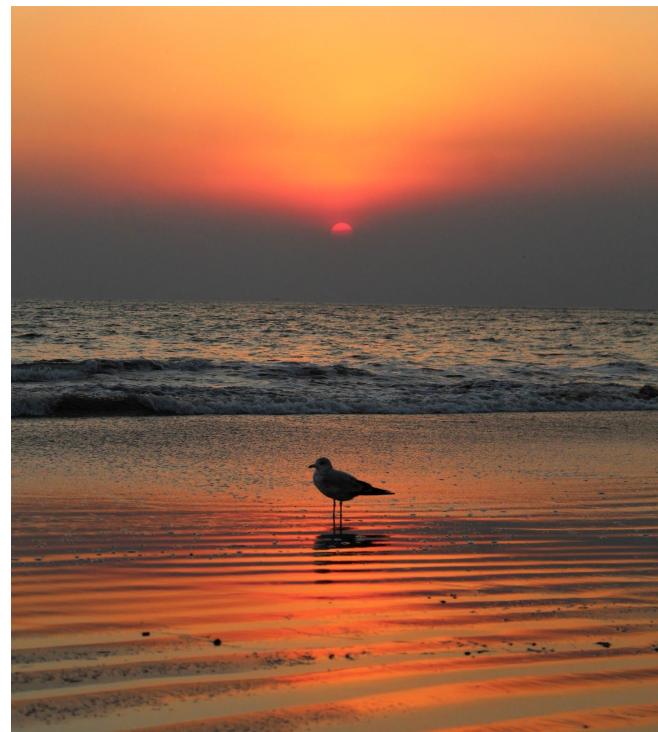
Pierpont Yellow by Ben Maidman



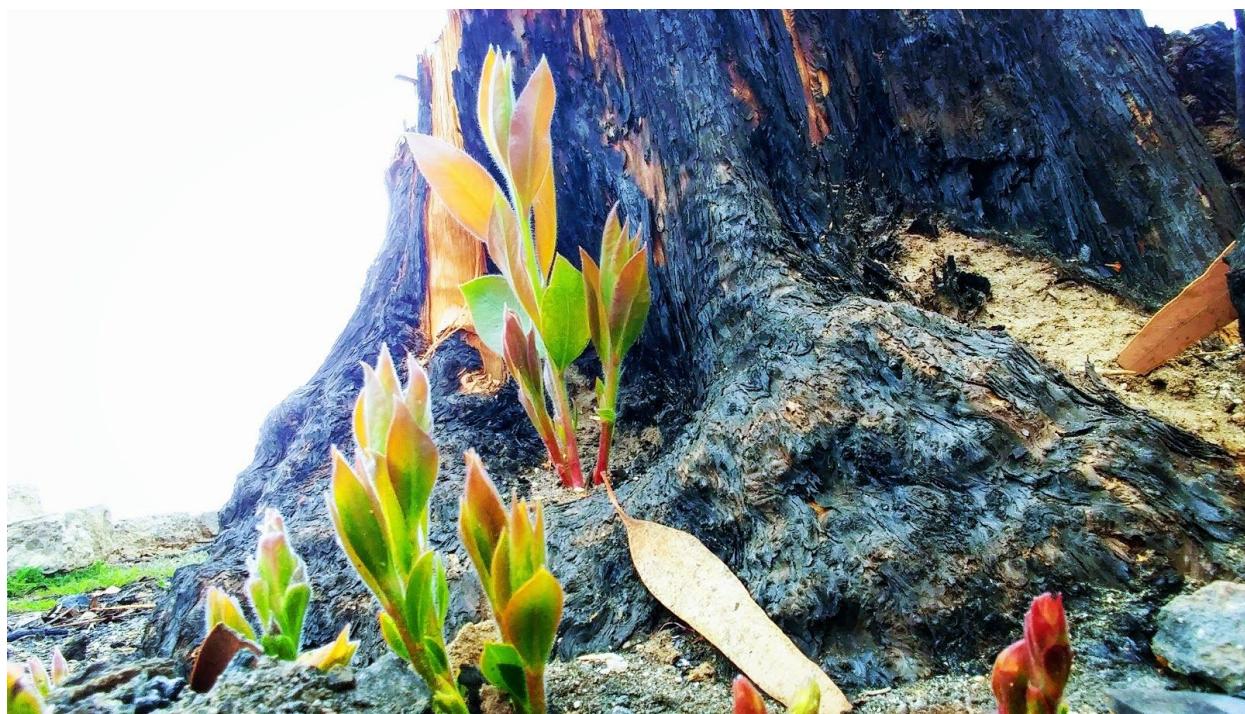
Friends by Joseph Martinez



Untitled 4 by Christina Hornbaker



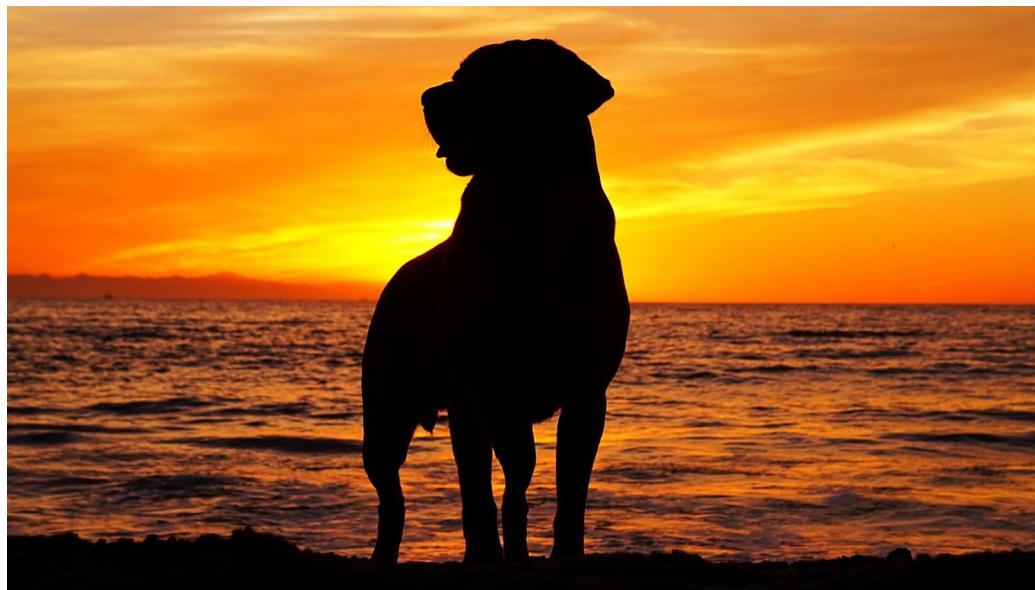
Lil Sprouts by Emily Matarazzo



Sequoia National Park by Jocelyn Lee



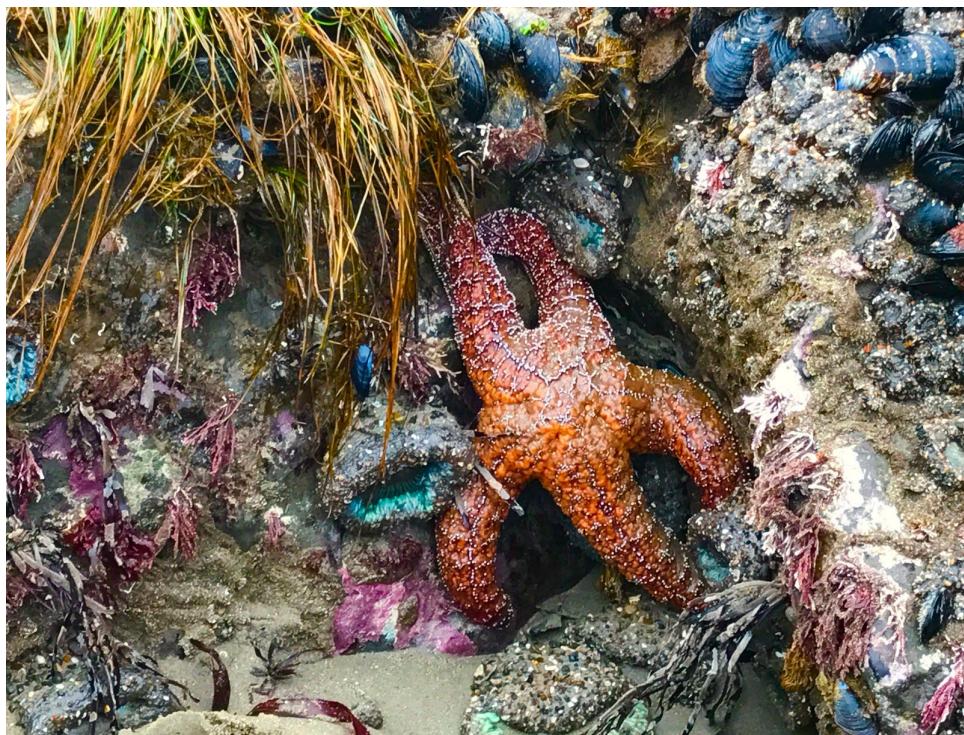
Pierpont Livin' by Kaine Miranda



Cool Goat by Jocelyn Lee



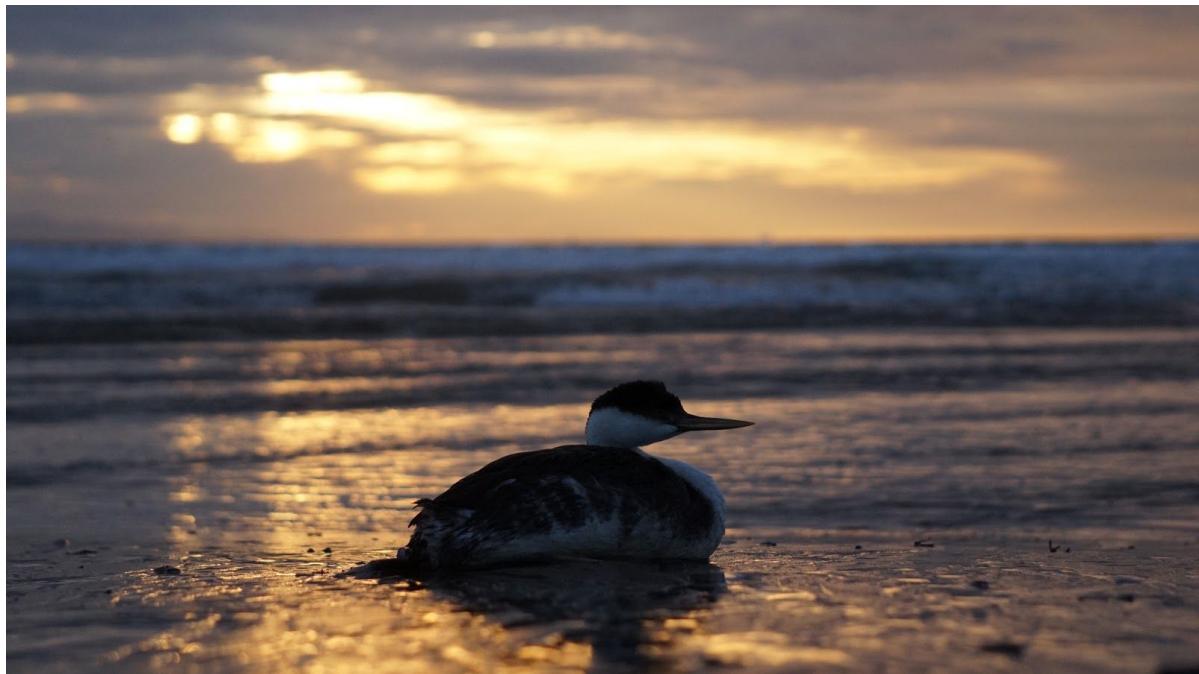
Disco Star by Madison Secor



Beautiful resilience by Gabriela Molina



Chillin Birdy by Kaine Miranda



Poetry



We Will Be Back by Joseph Martinez

Poetry First Place
Where are the Other Colors? by Sydney Votruba

Orange,
Bright and bold,
Yet destructive and cruel,
Rises,
On the scene of a dark landscape,
Slowly,
But ferociously,
Over the crisp hillsides,
Over the newly paved streets,
Over the beautiful neighborhoods,
Over our former memories,
Tears,
Screams,
Fear,
Surround many souls,
Everything is orange,
Where are the other colors?
Black,
Dark and mysterious,
Yet destructive and cruel,
Rises,
On the scene of a bright landscape,
Quickly,
Becoming what's left of orange,
Over the the crisp hillsides,
Over the newly paved streets,
Over the beautiful neighborhoods,
Over everything we once knew,
Everything is black,
Where are the other colors?

Poetry Second Place
Ventura is Burning by Ren Tallent

Ventura is Burning
We see the news from other states
In similar states of panic
We watched with idle eyes and thoughts of
"That could never happen to us"
Caught by surprise by
A doorstep business man selling
Packages of flames and fear
Labeled
Fragile: this side up
While our world turned upside down
And our homes burned, and
Ash littered the ground.

It started with a blackout
Flicker, flicker, pop!
Left in the dark in all aspects
Information and illumination scarce
And scared of what's to come
Ash rained down in darkness on Main Street
Downtown dystopia
Where headlights roamed the streets in
search of shelter
With bright eyes no longer idle
The traffic lights were blinking red
Resembled the firelight blinking as flames
bled
Into one mass of sickening switched sunrise
The waves crashed on the harbor rocks
While the fire crashed in waves over the
hilltops
Flicker, flicker, pop.

Whispers of "be safe" littered our lips on
loop
As loved ones broke down in tears
While their houses broke down and leering
Chimneys lay arrayed in rows where homes
once stood
The smoke was thick, filled our lungs and
eyes with black cries
Of disguised hope

The fire would jump
Leaving some homes alone
Relieving those who had gone
in search of safety
And many men stayed on the front lines
To fight the marching orange-clad soldiers
They left most of it in smolders
And saved most of our hometown
We stand on their shoulders
And thank them

The night was long
Left us all exhausted
And extinguishing the flames was costly in
our losses
And may take more than a day to eradicate
But perseverance will medicate our fears
And the earth will turn over and green will
appear
The nights will be long
But as they say
We will rise from the ashes
Ventura strong

Poetry Third Place
The Patriot's Tune by Max Quintal

Asleep
The night's fire thrilled terror
The first glimpse you notice
A vast beaming cloud in a hot coveted atmosphere
Families fly from the confrontation of mother nature herself

You hear the distant temptation of fear, caressing your senses
Brothers and sisters snug in the cozy warm blankets of the mattress
The time has come to act and preserve your righteous resume
While your cohort of loved ones have chosen to stay safe and shelled
You plunge into the heroics and selflessness of love and sacrifice

Your destiny is found
Your destiny is written

The flames surrounding your sight
Churning your emotions in every direction possible
You ignore your past fusions with your foes
Then resume to hold them in your grasp
As you sprint from the hellish palace of orange

Your love stands
Staring in awe at your shape and appearance
You embrace, and fornicate with passion and relief
Stating no matter the status
You shall reach the boundaries of this earth for them

Your destiny is miraculous
Your destiny is positive

I'm Not Like Most Girls by Madison Secor

I'm not like most girls.
Not all, but most.

I didn't like watching princesses and fairy tale shows growing up.
I was the girl that would binge watch shows like Avatar the Last Airbender, Teen Titans, Spider-man: The Animated Series, All summer long.

I didn't like dressing up as princesses either.
I wanted to be a superhero
The yellow Power Ranger
A female version of Indiana Jones
People that I thought were so cool
Having their own adventures,
Their own freedoms,
And completing their own quests.

I'd watch sports with my dad,
Harry Potter movies with my mom,
And wrestling with my brother
(Although we weren't allowed to at the time,
But that didn't stop us).

I wanted to excel in everything I tried:
Swimming
Academics
Choir
Theater
Drum club
You name it,
I was there.

Nothing really changed since I was a kid.

I don't like wearing dresses,
Although I look damn good in them.

I not only read about teens and their Miraculous journeys,

But I write about them too:

Rebels
Pirates
Villains
Campers
And vigilantes.

These stories are physical proof that I can not only create stories, but learn from them and my characters' faults As I change arrangements of words Into timeless art.

I have posters of movies
And listen to film scores at full blast.
While some girls' closets are filled with cute outfits for school,
My drawers are shoved with old movie t-shirts, T-shirts from my favorite bands I got at concerts,
And flannels.
Lots of flannels.

I perform not only on stage as an actress
But on paper
To convey my emotions.
From the tingling at my temples,
To the flutter of keystrokes,
My thoughts travel,
Racing to meet my fingertips,
Bleeding words through ink that
I cannot express through verbal nor physical interpretation.

I had a different mindset then.

As time progressed,
As more friendships were made,
I began to feel this new feeling
Of desire.
Desire to be wanted.
Desire to be pretty.
To *feel* pretty.
Desire to fit in.
Contemplating throwing away what made me unique
To fit into the cookie cutter mold,
Fit into the popular crowd,
Fitting into those pair of skinny jeans that cut curves so tightly
You can't tell if you're flattering your body
Or your ego.

It's the pressure from inside

That sharp throbbing pain in your chest cavity
Like a balloon
Growing in size
Over expanding
Overwhelming you to where
There is no room for air.
There is no room for your heart to beat.
There is no room for anything else
But that stupid
Painful desire
Of acceptance.

And everything else,
Everyone else
Can be damned
If you can't get what you want.

From my experiences I have learned this:

In a world of Glinda's, be an Elphaba.
Be wicked.
Be daring.
Why be candy sweet
When you can have spice?
Why fit in when you can stand out?
Stand tall and high
Above those smaller in character than you
Defying gravity.

In a world of Marilyn Monroe's, be a Lucille Ball.
Be a role model for personality, not for looks.
Why be a heartbreaker when you can be a
Law maker
Wall breaker
Game changer
Eyebrow raiser
A player at your own game where everyone else
watches you as
You keep your own score.

In a world of Cinderella's, be a Mulan.
Be a Lass Kicker
Ass Kicker
Bad ass individual
Who don't need no man
A woman who can run in heels

Without losing them
On the steps to a man's kingdom.
No one should tell what to do
What to feel
Or what to say.
That is your choice.
No one should tell you what to wear
What to like
Or who to like
That is your choice.
Instead of relying on someone else's opinions to
be the deciding factor,
Be your own person to make your own
decisions.
Surround yourself with individuals who are as
tough
And unique as you are to rely on,
Not those that were built to bring you down.

So from here I say this:

Bank on the
Over achievers
Believers
The dream makers
And the body shakers.
Blare your music hella loud
And be hella proud
As you dance the night away
Like nobody's watching you,
Because this is your house.

And when everyone is ordinary, be
extraordinary.
This is your time to be fearless,
To be a woman with all
Brains
Beauty
And Brawn.
And above all,
Whatever you choose,
Whatever path you decide to take,
If you're gonna do it,
Do it with flair.

The Playpen by 117639

You were born as free as I was born
enslaved.
You as white as winter, I as dark as a road
freshly paved.
We get punished for the same mistake, I
usually more.
Our hands created the same, but mine
always more sore.
Tell me why can you speak, while I am
stripped from my say?
Why must I work, while you relax and play?

Patiently by Isabel Mercado

Rested up high

Patiently waiting until someone wants to hear my story

Gentle fingers hug me into snug corners resting me into warm hands.

They crack my spine as I take a breath-

ready to share my tale

Adventure, Romance, Mystery

we share laughs and cry together

Until the day I cry alone, stuck in my corner again

But I know I only have to wait so long and sit here...

Patiently

Our Life By Vanessa Hernandez Vazquez

At the beginning of this long
and silent street.

I walk in the dark,
I stumble and fall
and with more strength I get up
and I'm trampling
with my blind feet
the silent stones and the dry leaves.

And someone in front of me also steps on
them:

if I stop, it also stops;
if I run, it also runs.

I look forward: nobody. it's nobody
Everything is dark, cold and without exit,
and I turn in the corners
where I always end up on the same street.
the same street where I started
where nobody expects me or follows me,
nor seeks me, nor cries for me

where I follow a man who stumbles, when I
also stumble,
he cries when I also cry, and he falls when I
also fall,
but with the same strength we get up.
He says when he sees me: nobody. I'm
nobody

I keep walking down the same dark and cold
street
following the footsteps of a man who left me
waiting for me
and suddenly stumbled but he no longer
triumphs,
I fell, but he did not fall,
I get up and he is not there anymore.
and now I'm just walking along the same cold
street that bears the name of life

Remembering

I remember how you asked me to dance
I said no

Now I'll never get the chance

I remember the games we use to play
We'd spin around
Until one of us fell down

And now here I am
Dressed in all black
The church where we'd skate in our socks
And the ladies would laugh

And now here I stand
On a mountain of grass
The trains coming fast
So I ran by the track

I remember how you threw my doll
Across the room
You were scared of the big bed
So I slept with you

I remember you didn't want this
Moment to end
9 'o'clock in the hottub
Snow fell over head

And now here I am
Where the truck passed
The street bears your name
And the flowers grew back

And now here I stand
The room in the back
Everyone's talking and crying
You're really not coming back

But here I am
Years after you passed
Your pictures is fading
And they planted more grass

But here I stand
A poem in my hand
I've missed you so much
Wish you could come back

Dödlighet/Mortality by Devon Lenwell

Från dag till natt,
Natt till dag,
Dagarna dör -

En duva;
Han satt på en gren,
Och tänkte på dödlighet.

Döende, han tänkte -
Ingen döende.
Inte nu -

Det är inte rätt.
Det är fel,
Så fel.

Hjälp mig från döende, snälla.

En duva tänkte på dödlighet,
Han satt på en gren
Och tänkte på det.

Translation:

From day to night,
Night to day,
The day dies -

A dove;
He sat on a branch,
And thought of mortality.

Dying, he thought -
No dying.
Not now -

It's not right.
It's wrong,
So wrong.

Help me from dying, please.

A dove thought of mortality,
He sat on a branch
And thought about it.

Dear Wind by Terra Bransfield

Dear Wind,
Dance with me
Let me hold you in my arms
Sing to me
And I'll sing along
Sweep me off my feet
Sweep back my hair
You twirl around my heart
Catch my breath
And I stare

The lust that I feel
So strong I feel drunk
As you kiss me
Love me
Stroking my trunk
I miss you so much
Every time that you leave
But I know you'll always come back
For as long as I breathe
Love, Tree

Joy That Kills by Kaylee Price

Broken sentences and veiled hints
With a paralyzed inability to accept its significance
She wept at once, with sudden wild abandonment
The storm of grief had spent itself

Physical exhaustion that haunted her body and soul
There was something coming to her
She saw the kind, tender hands folded in death
A monstrous joy that held her
She spread her arms out to them in welcome

A kind intention or a cruel intention
Yet she had loved him-sometimes
Free! Body and Soul Free!
Yesterday she had thought shuddering that life might be too long

She carried herself like a goddess of Victory
He stood amazed at her piercing cry
The doctor said it was a heart disease
A joy that kills.

The Song We Sing to Ourselves by Yuuki Alfonso

We call upon our brothers and sisters
Our peers we recognize as a part of us
We sing to each other, words so sweetly
Acceptance and love to those we consider normal
No difference there is to be seen
Even with black, white, or brown
But yet

My gender is wrong
My love for others is queer
Decided as an outcast for how and what I feel
Not the color of my skin but the color of my heart

Society's song of right or wrong
Different melodies not to be seen or heard
The song of myself is off tune

How Lovely She Sings by Charles Varien

I was the king, in my castle of glass
Then I lie broken, weak in the grass.

I was confident, brave, and strong
Through all of my woes, I could do no wrong.
Lucky, is he who rules from above
But luckier still, is he who finds love.

I was thrown there, lost from all grace
Beaten by beauty, found out of place.
She was my sun, perfect as could be
She was the stars, all I could see.

I fell from my castle, burning at the wings
Oh, my beauty, how lovely she sings.
Falling, I grew dizzy, in a black cloud of ash
Scared, I grew, of the inevitable crash.

*I*n my fall, I turned to a friend
And through her, I sutured to mend.
When I hit the ground, my world was to end
All save for her, my sweet lovely friend.

*S*o with her, I hit the ground
Neither lost, nor found.
She lent me a hand, and said not to rush
I took the offer, our friendship was lush.

*H*er heart was so gentle, I fell in love
Nearly forgetting, my beauty above.
New heart, how lovely she sings
Fresh start, with burned, blackened wings.

I leaned on her, but she slipped away
My heart again broke, colors turned gray.
I stumbled down, I had lost my queen
Broke, on the ground, perhaps I was mean.

*F*rom her, I fell into dejection
Crippled, somewhat, by her sudden rejection.
Deeper I sank, into a world devoid of color
Hurting inside, less than exemplary a scholar.

*O*n I went, beaten down
When once, I had ruled with a crown.
Slowly it grew, my dragon's ire
How quickly that changed, with the coming of fire.

*T*ragedy struck, in Ventura, this city
So I went to my farm, home to my kitty.
The time we got off, went by in a flash
But a price was paid, in homes and in ash.

I came back, a person renewed
Indeed, something in life greatly improved.
The fire was greedy, took all in its path
Never once thinking of its aftermath.

I came back to a cry: 'Ventura strong!'
This was it, our phoenix birdsong.
We soared up high, on blessed wings
Phoenix, my beauty, how lovely she sings.

*S*o for a school project: Banner Bold
I wrote of a malice: Cupid's chokehold.
Something changed, drenched in the rain
Though I miss her, it lessened the pain.

*B*ack I am king, with strong silver wings
In search of my beauty,
How lovely she sings.

Disconnected by Mishel Tachet

I'd like to release you from my heart now
suffocating
old wounds & heartache
little wishes
& toxic memories of your lips
hanging onto these figments of lucid dreaming
they do me no good
they draw me back
an induced poison paradise
of the haunting song of your love

what is reality?
floating amongst clouds
of "I love you"s
&
goodbyes that soon turn to hellos all over again
a cycle of giving & taking & leaving & loving
of tears & forgiveness
of wondering
endlessly
when you will come love me again
& yet when you do
oh
how can I trust the winds that fuel your heart
and the mountains that dwell in your soul
when my oceans have never been enough to keep
you close

I want to let you fly
open the cage of my heart
that I've kept you prisoner to
release yourself from my confines
Detox myself from your voice
& your touch
for I am addicted to the very essence of your being
drunk on the thought of your eyes
high on the memory of your embrace

let me stand before you
let me drink in your intensity
you only visit me
in my self induced hallucinations
in dreams you hold me
& tell me that I am everything you've ever needed
yet when I wake

we are worlds apart
I stand
a top a mountain swimming in fog
a jagged peak I tiptoe upon
just to catch a glimpse of you
I've cut the bridge that used to suspend between us
a path to your heart
I destroyed it
disconnected
& now I'm frantically trying to find my way back
shouting into the abyss
I can only hear bits & pieces of your replies
come save me
before I jump to my own despair

I've forgotten how to fly
we used to soar
you & I

I am sinking
into the unfathomable darkness
a heaviness dwelling in my heart
the tears of my mistakes
weighing me down
I am an endless body of water
of movement
& you are the force that pulls me in & pushes me
away
the tides of my love
they rush in & out

just hold me close & never set me free
(but oh how naive of you)

the time has come to let you go
my love
I want to release you from my heart
go
be free
for if I grant you freedom
perhaps I will lift this burden from my soul &
perhaps
I can learn to fly without you

Now I Rise Alone by Sydney Votruba

She was my inspiration,
She was half of me,
She was courageous,
She fought until that day,
The day her body gave up,
Now I rise alone,
The circle of life never felt so real,
Her life went too quickly,
She was my inspiration,
She will not experience my graduation,
She will not be at my wedding,
She will never kiss her great grandchildren
goodnight,
She will never wrap her warm arms around
me again,

The pain surrounds me,
I will not give up,
For her,
Now I rise alone,
I will walk my graduation,
I will walk down the aisle,
I will kiss my beautiful children goodnight,
I will wrap my loving arms around my
children,
Though I don't walk alone,
She will always be in my heart through it all,
Because she was my inspiration,
My grandma,
She never gave up,
Until she had no choice.

To My King by Kira Spargur

In my dream
You were my king
I wore a dress of blue and pink
Your suit was black
Jacket thrown off
We danced as it
Was only us

The heart of a lion
We walked hand in hand
Life's a ride
We buckled in
To the dismay of other kids
We fought the cynics
In only the way lovers can

They tried to scare us
We held on tighter
Your arm in my hands
Your hands 'round my waist
My waist swaying
To the sounds of our feet
Me and my King

Then I awoke
It was only a dream
My king he wore rags
No finer things
But my king let me tell you
I don't need money
When I have you

The Boy in the Box by Ben Maidman

There is a boy in a box
He has been in the box for as long as he can remember
The inside of the box is painted with flowers and trees
this helps him simulate the freedom he doesn't have
The paintings are good and sometimes he forgets
But if he stops to think he knows
He is only a boy in a box

The walls of the box spell out forbidden things
“Freedom and Individuality”
Voices say “Boy, you have these”
The boy thinks “how may I have theses things?”
“my box is the same as the rest”
“Individuality Freedom” the voices demand
They boy nods slowly, but secretly disagreeingly
He is only a boy in a box

In the box there are works talking about these thing
More Freedom and more Individuality
The voices ask him to describe these things
“How may I describe these thing?”
“When I have never experienced wind blowing through trees”
“nor the feeling of sun on my shoulders”
Still the voices demand “you must tell me”
He is only a boy in a box

Still the boy doesn't know what to think
“Do they not know that I am not free?”
“Do they demand without seeing the hypocrisy?”
“Maybe that's the point” the boy thinks angrily
“Do they know that this is how they can break me?”
He is only a boy in a box

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