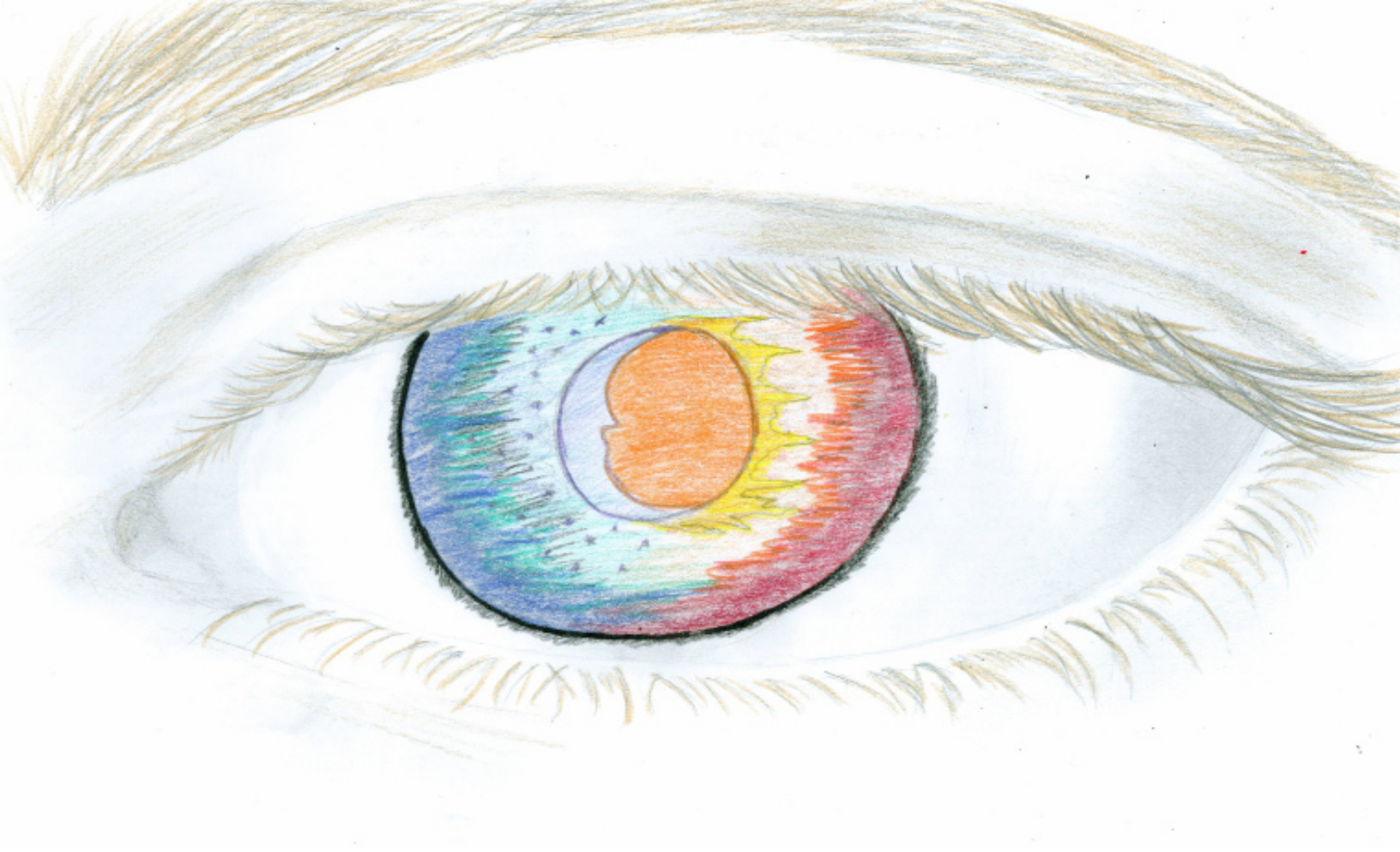




Banner Bold

Ventura High School's Creative Showcase

Mindscape

BANNER BOLD

Ventura High's Creative Showcase

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2 N. Catalina St.
Ventura, CA
93001*

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Edition 3

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Dear Reader,

For Banner Bold's third year the staff all decided on the theme of Mindscape. It's a bit of a broader theme that's entirely up to each person's interpretation of what it means. We all get lost in our minds and daydream about worlds beyond our reach every now and then. Banner Bold hopes that with this magazine you will be able to immerse yourself in the worlds the student body has come up with.

Unfortunately due to the low submission number for foreign language, I have decided to take it out as a category eligible for winning prizes. It would have been extremely unfair if we had given the prize money to three pieces because they were the only ones we received and not for the quality of writing. There is hope that next year we will receive a larger amount of foreign language pieces to include in the magazine and to give out prize money to.

As a quick reminder, all the submissions we received were read and edited anonymously. This means we did not know who was the author when we picked which pieces were going to be published in the magazine. We decided purely on the quality of the writing and content.

I'll be honest with you. Banner Bold had a tough year the third go around but through it all we got the magazine published and out to the students and staff of Ventura High. I'd like to take a quick second just to thank the staff of Banner Bold and our advisor, Mr. Raney. None of this could've been remotely possible without their help. Thank you.

Sincerely,

McKenna Montana

2013-2014 Banner Bold Contest Winners

Grand Prize \$300

Flirting With Death by Erica Riley

Art

1st: Sunflower by Ptomley \$200

2nd: Untitled by Celeste Avellaneda \$100

Honorable Mention: Apollo by Michaela Sanchez

Photography

1st: Freeze by Eric Daniel \$200

2nd: Oily Islands by Maurico Longines \$100

Honorable Mention: Sunset by Hailey Nelson

Light Poetry

1st: Cheeez-It by Dylan Hubert \$200

2nd: Ice and Snow by Seneca Hill \$100

Honorable Mention: My Great Escape by Melissa Martinez

Serious Poetry

1st: Aunty Mara by Sage Dreher \$200

2nd: War and Armed Conflict by Jake Lewis \$100

Honorable Mention: Crazy Pills by Marin Emilly

Nonfiction

1st: Beyond “Stay Strong” by Katherine Rollins \$200

2nd: The Invisible Children by Lucas Brown \$100

Honorable Mention: My Stomach Hurts by Binley Chang

Fiction

1st: She by Binley Chang \$200

2nd: Happiness by Regan Burks \$100

We are the music-makers,
and we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers and sitting by
desolate streams.
World losers and world-forsakers,
upon whom the pale moon gleams;
Yet we are the movers and shakers,
Of the world forever, it seems.

-Arthur O'Shaughnessy

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Fiction

Flirting with Death (Preview)

Erica Riley

Prologue

“An eye for an eye, Emilie. You let yourself succumb to unholy, selfish indulgences in your early life and figure that you’ll just deal with the consequences later. Well, it’s later Emilie. Much later. So much later that I can’t even recall how old you and I truly are.”

She grunted. The blade pressed deeper into her throat. She could see It. It was just barely out of reach. Just a little bit farther-

“Oh what’s that I hear? It would seem little Peter and Viola are almost home.”

Her eyes widened.

“This is your final chance to live. Though, you don’t want them to know what you truly are; do you? Then again, you don’t want them to be orphans now either. Do you? To just abandon them like you did the rest!? Come on Emilie; I know you can do it! Don’t leave them alone in the world; I’ll just go after them next! Come on! Kill me! Slaughter me in front of your darling children!”

“Mom we’re home-!”

Part I: Pawn

Chapter 1

The day Viola sold her soul, she had been lucky enough to have her chess set with her. It was Saturday, and like every Saturday at half past noon, she got off the city bus in front of Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. She crossed the sand walkway encircling flat areas of green shrubbery to get to the glass double doors in the front entrance. The air conditioning was on high in the main lobby despite the late December winds blowing outside, its chill and the strong scent of disinfectant were a little too familiar for her liking. Per routine, she took a right to the false-wood reception desk where a box-color blonde candy-striper sat checking her e-mails on her smartphone. Viola cleared her throat to get her attention.

The receptionist looked up and smacked her gum loudly, “Mornin’ Viola!

What'd ya bring for Peter today?"

She set her tan tote bag up on the counter, "Chess, his homework for the week, and his favorite lemon truffles. How is he?"

The receptionist gave her a wide, fake smile, "Better than ever! He's sleeping though; you may want to come back later."

"It's fine, I'll wait for him to wake up." She replied grabbing the visitors pass from the receptionist's long, red fingernails.

"Well alright, don't forget your things." The receptionist said.

She adjusted her glasses before grabbing the bag without another word. Viola really hated that receptionist: always telling her that her brother's health was getting better when she knew for a fact that it was rapidly depleting. Who was she trying to fool?

In all honesty, she didn't just hate the receptionist, she hated this whole hospital. She hated the fact that her precious little brother had to maintain a practically permanent residence here in this cold glass building, with nothing better to see but the ugly city outside his window.

From the day he was born, Peter Klein had a weak heart. He nearly didn't last the night. The then three year old Viola hadn't cared so much. She never wanted a little sibling in the first place and definitely not a brother. She had nearly cheered when she discovered she might not have had to share her parents, but soon after panic had erupted. She couldn't remember much, just a lot of beeping and scurrying adults in lab coats. The one thing she did remember was when the infant's heart was finally stable, her mother holding the white bony baby in her arms for the first time in the three days since he was born and when she forced him into the toddler's own arms. As Viola had held the malnourished infant and looked at him for the first time with love, her mother had said something that at the time, she never could've understood.

"Listen to me Viola, this is important. I'm old dear, I mean really old," she had emphasized, earning a giggle, "And I won't always be able to relate to him. To be there for him. You need to be there for him just like I am for you. Because I won't always be around and soon you'll only have each other, you have to protect him. Alright?"

Viola had nodded, not fully aware of the weight behind her words. At that time Viola still believed her mother would live forever. Now she knew better. Sill, for twelve years Viola had kept that promise to her late mother. She had played the role of over-bearing sister right down to a tee and enjoyed every minute of it. But

not now. Now she just felt like a failure of a sister for allowing Peter to reside in this sterile Hell.

At first she had at least thought it to be worth it, since she knew he was being treated in a nationally ranked hospital, but after staying there for almost a year straight, and his condition getting even worse, she really resented her Aunt for making the decision to send him there.

As she made her way down the hall to the elevator, she was repetitively greeted by doctors, nurses, and even a few patients. After visiting the hospital four times a week for over a year there truly was no unfamiliar face to her there. She hit the button for the sixth floor, the intensive care unit. Before the doors could close all the way, a gloved hand stopped it and a skyscraper of a man strode in. Now there was an unfamiliar face, at least, it would be if she could see his face.

She couldn't see too much of him. He wore a long, baggy black cloak with a hood pulled over his head, revealing only his pale, angular chin and thin lips. She found it odd that the hospital staff hadn't stopped him and asked him to show his face; he was so tall, she really couldn't believe that no one noticed him.

The doors opened with a small ring and the man walked out first, pulling a long scythe from his robe before walking along. Viola's eyes widened and she ran to go stop him before she was blocked by a graying doctor.

"Viola, good to see you again," He chirped, "Your brother's asleep right now, so make sure to be quiet going into his room."

"Y-yes Dr. Rawson I understand, but sir, that man over there has a weapon!" she shouted.

His eyes widened and he looked behind himself quickly, then to his sides and back at Viola, "What man?"

"The man that just came out of the elevator!"

"Viola, you were in the elevator alone." He said.

"W-What? No I wasn't! How could you not see him? He was like six five, wearing a big black cloak, and carrying a giant scythe!"

The graying doctor put a comforting hand on her back, "Viola, dear, maybe you should skip your visit today and go catch up on your sleep; I think all of the stress may be getting to you."

"Dr. Rawson I'm not delusional! I know I saw him!" She insisted.

"Then maybe it was just your mind playing tricks on you?" he asked.

"I-I guess." She whispered in disbelief.

Dr. Rawson patted her head lightly, "Don't overdo yourself Viola, your aunt

will have my head if you breakdown on my watch.”

“Th-Thank you, Doctor.”

“Of course, come get me if you need anything. You know where my office is.” He said, walking into the elevator behind her.

Viola sighed and collected herself before continuing down the hall. There was no way that the guy hadn’t been real. He had even looked at her, had held the elevator open! How could she possibly have imagined something like that? She stopped in front of the door.

I have a bad feeling, she thought, like I should just turn around and go right back home. Maybe Dr. Rawson was right. Maybe I should just go and catch up on my sleep. Peter’ll probably sleep through the whole day anyway, he won’t even notice that I’m gone.

Viola shook that thought out of her head. No, no. This is what we always do. We’re all that we have; I can’t just abandon him without any warning.

With that she forced herself to go forward and open the door. She was careful to be quiet as she entered the room and shut the door behind her, eyes on the handle the whole time so it didn’t wake her brother up with its resounding click. The room was as cold and emotionless as the rest of the hospital with its pallet of blues and off-whites. It was dead silent save for the lagging beats of her brother’s heart monitor. She frowned as she stared at Peter’s sleeping form curled up and unmoving in the sheets. He was getting worse, so much worse. He was deathly pale with cheeks hollow from nutrient deficiency. His brown hair looked thin and limp and he was skin and bones. He already looked like a corpse

She then noticed something very out of the ordinary, the man from earlier standing perpendicular to her. On the wall. He glanced over at Viola, double-taking a bit when he noticed her staring, but then shrugged it off before bending his knees and pushing himself off the door. He floated across the room and landed on his feet. He pulled out a small black book, flipped through the pages, and then ran his gloved finger down the page until he found the name he was looking for. He nodded to himself and slipped the book back into the pocket of his cloak before replacing it with his long scythe, which he promptly lifted above his head, ready to bring down.

“N-No! NO!” she screamed, sprinting across the room and throwing herself between the man and Peter, “Stop! Get away!”

The man lowered his scythe and tilted his head in confusion before stating in a brooding baritone, “So you can see me. Just as she could at your age. How very interesting. Regardless, move girl I have a job to do.”

He scoffed when she did not move, “Perhaps I over-estimated human intelligence, but I at least assumed since you lived in America that you spoke English. Maybe I should repeat myself. Move human!”

He grabbed her shoulder and with a quick flick of the wrist, sent her flying across the floor. The scythe in his hand lifted in the air once more, but before he could actually bring it down his arm was tugged away, causing the blade to slice empty space.

His hood fell down, revealing what appeared to be a young man with a thin yet defined face and a prominently angular nose. He had straight black hair that reached a bit past his chin and long bangs that framed his inhumanly glowing gold eyes. His irritated sneer revealed a complete set of pointed, shark-like teeth, making him look almost demonic.

He picked her up by the front of her turtleneck, high enough so that her feet were no longer touching the ground.

“Humans truly are reckless. What are you? A small, weak, boring little girl, and yet you stand against a powerful immortal wielding a bladed weapon? Regardless if you believe me or not, there is nothing standing in my way from killing you, a worthless slug not even worthy of being called an obstacle, to finish my job and take this helpless boy’s soul. However...” he trailed off, his eyes roaming around the room and locking on the fallen object at the door.

“...What is that? At the door?” he asked.

She followed his gaze to the contents spilling out of her abandoned bag, “Th-That? It’s a chess set.”

“Chess, eh?” he chuckled as he recognized the game pieces on the picture, “We have a much more self-explanatory name for that certain recreation. The direct translation of it is ‘Kill the King’ where I’m from.”

“What the hell does that have to do wi-ah!” he suddenly dropped her to the floor and pointed a finger at her.

“Do you love your brother, Viola Klein?”

She stared at him, a bit taken back by his question, “Absolutely, he’s all I have.”

“I see, and would you die for him?”

“In a heartbeat, haven’t I already proven that to you, you sick, sick monster?” she growled.

His eyes widened as he burst out into a fit of psychotic laughter, “Monster?!? Haha! You interest me, you little mortal; you interest me very much. And because of

that, I will be a most polite monster and offer you a deal.”

“And what’s that?” she spat.

“If you can beat me in a game of ‘chess’, I will check off your brother’s name from the To-Die List and he shall live until his body has grown too old and weak to carry his soul, in fact I will personally protect him from any other forces that come looking for him. But, should you lose...” He paused and smirked to increase Viola’s anticipation, “Then I shall write your name in my To-Die list and take your soul along with his. Except, your soul shall not move on, I will eat your soul.”

Viola’s eyes widened, “E-Eat my soul?!?”

“Yes,” he said huskily, his eyes glowing with excitement, “You see monsters such as me must eat souls to sustain power.”

W-What the hell is this guy? Defying gravity, taking souls, calling me a mortal like he isn’t one... What’s wrong with him?!

“So bitch, do we have a bet?”

Whatever this guy is, he’s obviously unstable, if not insane! I should just run. There’s no way I can get out of this unscathed... But, if I don’t cooperate, he’ll kill Peter!

Viola gulped, “Alright.”

(Continued on Bannerbold.com)



untitled

Abigail Guitron

She

Binley Chang

It woke in the dark of night. The sky above was shrouded in a curtain of black and the creature rolled Its eyes upward and saw that embedded in the infinite darkness were speckles of diamonds and light. Inhaling the chilling air, It raised Its head. A cool wind breathed softly upon Its sensitive skin, sending ripples of goose bumps and delight, and It shivered under the moonlight. It was there that It finally stood, the claws on Its feet gripping the soft, moist earth, and soaked in the radiance of the moon as it shone upon Its back with luminosity that invigorated, strengthened, and perplexed. But in one brief moment Its mind seemed to touch on a dim thought. Something lost, forgotten. Like a fragile glass flower it grew, blossomed, and in an instant the creature felt a release of confusion, terror, and staggering grief. Pain. Amidst it all was an agonizing warmth that snaked around the creatures heart and clenched. Impregnated in Its mind was euphoria, bliss- and it burned. It felt clarity... and something else. Trepidation, a foreboding of a dawning realization. The weight of the memory pressed upon It and It faltered. It loosed it into the abyss of Its mind and in an instant it was empty again. It was well again. It felt nothing but the illumination of the moon and the rubble between Its toes and the night chill. The creature gazed blankly at the moon, peeled back Its drooling lips, and cried.

.~.~.~.

It had been crawling through the woods for some time now. It would take refuge in the shade where it could, but often times the sun would boil mercilessly upon Its back and blister the exposed skin. It was weak. For days the creature had not found sufficient nourishment. The few furry meals it found scampering along the grass were much too small with too little meat to satisfy Its large stature; and at this point, It was too frail to even give chase. In the forest there was an unhappy abundance of vegetation. Tiny pearls of ripe red and purple fruit dotted the delicate branches of shrubbery and foliage, but when the creature attempted to consume them, the juice of the fruit would erupt and produce such a rancid and foul flavor that it proved inedible. Instead, It learned to rest near the bushes and await his downy victims that, to Its disgust, had no trouble eating the fruit.

Days went on like this. The brevity of the pleasure in devouring the small mouthfuls of hairy flesh and the long dearth in between was unbearable. The crea-

ture once venerable and strong, was wasting away, just as the awesome moon waned to nothing.

It was the day after the moon's light had dwindled to but a sliver that It came upon the other creature. It had been resting near the fruit bush waiting and nearly asleep when a strange yet familiar scent assaulted Its nose. It was an odd smell, unlike any that It had ever encountered, yet it prickled that same bubble of recognition buried in the recesses of the creatures mind. It remembered the pain of that night and quickly shook Its head to rid the probing thoughts. The memory felt unpleasant and foreign. The creature avoided pain. However, It could not avoid the building curiosity that plagued it. It wandered ever deeper into the forest, nose lifted slightly in the air, following the alien musk until It was lead to a small clearing in the wood. The trees were tall here with long full branches of leaves, canopying the mossy ground and providing a cooling shade and sanctuary from the sweltering sun. Briefly It wondered why It had never discovered this haven before- and then Its eyes rested on it.

It was not as large as the creature. But still, its size was far greater than that of the small fruit-eating things. Crouched low and with piercing intensity in Its eyes, It watched the alien. Its bizarre appearance was startling to the creature. It had neither a full body of fur nor the large ears expected of what It was accustomed to, rather it was nearly hairless with only a soft mat of fur atop its naked face. Layered over the creature was what seemed to be a colorful covering that billowed gently in the mild wind. A pleasant sound arose from it and permeated the air around them with a melody so tender and sweet that It flinched, then relaxed to the soothing tune. Softly the hums of the creature brushed Its ears like tender kisses and It no longer felt pain or hunger, only a calm and comfort that eased the tense muscles, the grit jaws. With sleepy eyes It watched the creature, seeming so at home, so natural, amongst the vibrant green of the trees and dewy grass. Rays of sunlight leaking through the lush foliage formed dancing spots of brilliant light on the creamy skin of the creature as it created its gentle and melodious music. The prickle once again itched the back of Its mind but It paid no heed. It slumped to the ground, exhausted suddenly and terribly fatigued. It closed Its eyes.

.~.~.~.

“You have a little something on your lip,” the man said over his cup of coffee-black, splash of milk, with two sugars. Even without looking up the woman could hear the small laugh, mirthful smile in his voice. She swiped one hand over her mouth and rubbed away the cream cheese on her lips; suppressing an embarrassed

giggle but feeling the heat of her blushing cheeks betray her.

“You have a little something all over your face, Adam,” the woman countered teasingly. She nearly stuck out her tongue but reconsidered. They had only just returned from their honeymoon, she didn’t need to show him her childish side just yet. Adam rubbed his scruffy stubble thoughtfully. During the trip he had forgotten to bring his razor and started cultivating his own scratchy face warmer. The woman put down her bagel and low fat cream cheese and reached over the table to touch her husband’s stubble, then cheek. Adam caught her hand against his face, kissed the softness of her palm and gave a second peck on the gold ring on her finger.

“I don’t know... I kind of like it. It sort of makes you look like a lumberjack,” she smiled, “You should keep it. Very sexy,” she said laughing, only half serious. Adam raised one eyebrow in mock surprise.

“Why, Lily! I had no idea you were into this kind of stuff...” He took another sip of his coffee and peered at her again over the edge of the cup. Suddenly, in one fluid motion he set down the cup with a small splash and leaned across the table to kiss Lily fully, bite of bagel in her mouth or no. His stubble prickled against her skin.

“Ad-!”

Adam broke away with a triumphant grin and downed the last of the coffee Lily made for him.

“A little dessert goes great with coffee,” he winked chuckling. The rosy blush staining her cheeks grew ever warmer as she struggled to catch her breath. Though they’d been dating for nearly a year and married for a week, Lily still couldn’t get used to Adam’s unpredictable sudden displays of affection. She wanted to just grow accustomed to it already, but more than that she wished she never would.

“I’ve got to get going. Can’t be late for work,” he kissed her forehead and straightened his tie, “Be good,” Adam smiled gently before opening the front door.

“Just leave already!” Lily exclaimed, feigning an annoyed pout. Even after the door shut behind him, she could still hear his soft laugh echoing from the porch. She tried to finish the bagel but found that she couldn’t. Her husband’s voice was still ringing in her ears and a warmth spread through her chest. There was no doubt, this was love- Lily knew because only love could hurt and bring such elation at the same time, only love could make someone feel so happy, so blessed, yet so miserable and desperate. A vice gripped her heart painfully, pleurably, and she closed her eyes for the onslaught of Adam’s face in her mind. Lily smiled.

.~.~.~.

A shrill scream shocked It awake from the dream. It was nearly dusk now and It fought with Its heavy eyelids and lethargic limbs. It looked up to see the foreign creature standing over It, no longer humming its pleasant little song but staring at It frozen in horror. It held a wooden stick with a bright orange light on the tip. The light was too close to It. It had thrust the lighted stick near Its face and the heat was singeing Its fur, producing a foul stench of burning hair into the air. It understood it was only frightened, It wanted to gift the creature the same comfort and reassurance it gave It. It stood on Its hind legs just like it to demonstrate camaraderie, a connection between the two creatures. However, the stranger only widened its eyes at the enormity of It and uttered another unpleasant, repulsed shriek and plunged the light stick at Its chest, lighting Its fur aglow with a burning, searing pain. It was hot. Hot. Hot. Hot. It reeled back in astonishment, chest ablaze with the rippling orange and yellow light and it hurt. It was hurt. Confused. Angry. It bat away the pain, the light, smothered it in Its blackened fur and advanced toward the creature. It had been cowering behind a tree watching It, waiting for It to die or watching It with horrified fascination perhaps. But before it could turn and run, escape, It had grabbed hold of its colorful coverings with Its claws and dragged the screeching creature toward It. With one deft black blade-like claw It tore through the sheer delicate material and through the fragile white skin. An intoxicating aroma poured forth, saturating the air all around them with its thick, metallic scent that It could almost taste its sweetness. It salivated on its stained whimpering form and allowed the hunger to consume it.

It was only until well into the morning that It finished the meal. It had been leisurely picking at its bones for hours and for the first time in a long while, It felt entirely satisfied. The only part of the creature It had failed to devour was its head. It cast a sidelong glance at the lonely head for the first time since tossing it from the slaughter and saw it in all its grisly clarity in the new light of the morning sun. It rested upon the fresh dewy grass, little droplets like jewels glistening on the matted bloody mop atop the head and on the ragged edges of the stump where meat and skin came apart. Somehow more disturbing to It, was what had been the face. So unlike how it was the day before. It had left it relatively untouched, but as It looked into the dull milky eyes and slack mouth slightly parted, It was struck by such sudden unease, such uncanny dread that It violently turned away from the gruesome sight. Another face, much like its, bubbled up to the surface from the depths of Its mind.

It was so familiar, this face.

Suddenly, as if compelled by some force, It stood on shaky legs It barely recognized as Its own and started Its descent toward a faraway destination It somehow

knew.

.~.~.~.

The man leaned against the porch railing and looked up at the full moon above the wide expanse of the countryside. Sparkling specks like brilliant diamonds dotted the deep velvet black of the night sky and he sighed at the beauty and melancholy of it all.

“Adam?” came the voice behind him. One svelte arm hooked through his and he turned to the pretty brunette that came from inside the house.

“Oh hey, Evie. You scared me,”

“What are you doing out here? It’s so cold!” Evie said, rubbing her arms exaggeratedly to demonstrate this.

“I’m not that cold,”

“Of course not,” she laughed mischievously, “You have that huge hairy scarf on your face!” Evie playfully tugged on his now fully grown beard. No longer was it a disheveled mass of stubble, it had developed into the lush thickness of nearly one year of cultivation. “Are you ever going to get rid of it? It’s scratchy,”

Adam raised a hand and stroked his beard slowly, fondly.

“I don’t think so. I’ve got a lot of memories with this,” he smiled sadly, “Besides, don’t you think I look like a lumberjack?”

“...It’s been a year already, Adam. I know you can’t forget her but you have to move on. Lily would-” Evie put a hand on her mouth and looked up at him with apologetic eyes, “I’m sorry..”

“You can say her name,” Adam smiled faintly and turned toward the moon again, “I’m not that pathetic.” Even with his face illuminated by the soft haze, a dark shadow seemed to cross it that furrowed his brow and glistened in his eyes and cast an impression of vulnerability, loneliness, in regal features that fought to maintain the facade. A year had passed since Lily disappeared. A year of fear. Of waiting. Of torture. As he looked above him, Adam wondered when the wait would be over and what would happen when it came.

.~.~.~.

It gazed at it through the throng of trees. Nearby It heard the hateful incessant chatter of another, but Its eyes saw only it. The strange and familiar creature so like the one It had encountered before, yet it invoked a surge of tumultuous, excruciating excitement. It had never felt more alive. Teetering between the brink of pleasure and pain, It vibrated intensely with smoldering heat and vitality as It watched the enticing and beautiful creature under the moonlight. Red glazed over Its eyes and It

saw blood. It watched the sack of throbbing tender flesh and crimson and It bared Its fangs as they lengthened, sharpened and Its loins were engulfed in exquisite penetrating flames. It was hungry. It wanted it. The creature took a trembling step forward but before It could rip through the trees and bound to it, the prickle came again from the depths of Its mind. It tried to shrug it off, force it away, but the sensation stayed, and grew. No longer a faint impression of something scarcely remembered, an irritation, it pierced the creature with defiance and certainty. Staked the wretched heart with clarity and warmth. Love.

The red faded but the pain stayed.

She woke in the dark of night.



Ink Tree

Happiness

Regan Burkes

DISCLAIMER: This piece contains content some may find inappropriate.

I watch her playing on the dock. She's waddling around with a stick clinched in her fist, poking at the surface of the placid lake. The bottom of the lake is not visible; it is almost an exact reflection of the sky. Her tight brown curls bounce as she skips along the planks of the dock, and a self entertained smile gleams on her pale face.

I turn my gaze from her and contemplate the rest of my surroundings. I'm happy with this property; I think it's perfect for my endeavors. I will begin construction of the house in a few months, and in no time Elena and I will have our dream home.

"Daddy," she calls out to me, holding up her stick. Hanging from the end of it is a thick wad of deep green moss.

"Nice catch, Elena." I praise her and a chuckle erupts from my throat. She flicks the stick, and the moss goes flying back into the lake with a mucky splash.

I glance down at my watch, it's 3:34 in the afternoon. With a bout of sudden realization I remember that I was expecting a call from the landlord at three thirty. That is a call that I do not want to miss.

"Elena, Daddy's going to run back to the car and get his phone, you okay down here?" I ask her, taking a few steps closer to the dock. She looks up at me and swings her stick, little droplets of water splattering the dry slats of polished wood behind her.

"I'm fishing, Daddy." She responds gleefully, and plants herself down with her feet hanging in the water, the stick outstretched in front of her.

"Alright baby, be right back." I turn around and start speed walking towards the gravel pathway leading to my car. For a moment I stop and turn back, vaguely wondering if I should just bring her with me. She is humming to herself and swinging her feet in the water. I decide against it, she looks happy and I'll only be gone a minute or two at most.

I jog up the pathway, and I see my silver truck looming in the near distance. I reach it, and sure enough, there's my phone resting in the cup holder where I left it. I pop open the door and grab my phone, checking to see if I have a missed call. I do, from Ted Leblanc, the landowner.

“Shit,” I grumble to myself, fumbling with the screen until it shows, ‘Calling Ted Leblanc.’ As it starts ringing, I head back down towards the lake, chewing my lip, anxious for him to pick up.

“Hello?” The gruff voice of Mr. Leblanc answers, as if he’s got a stick up his ass about me missing his call the first time.

“Hey, Mr. Leblanc, yeah, sorry I missed your call I didn’t have my phone on me.” I say pleasantly, finding myself hocking a fake smile onto my face even though he can’t see me.

“’s fine.” He grumbles. “The property’s all yours. You just gotta drive down here to my office to sign the final papers.”

“That’s excellent news,” I exhale, the smile becoming genuine.

“Yeah, you wanna drive down here in about an hour?” He asks.

“Yeah,” I start to say, and look up at the dock. My heart starts hammering in my chest and a sharp pain of pure panic fills my body. I run onto it, and look round wildly, but I see no sign of Elena.

“Mr. Laughton?” The voice at the other end of the line growls in a shortcoming of patience.

“Hold on!” I snap into the receiver and shove my phone hastily into my back pocket. “Elena!” I call out, my voice shrill. Maybe she wandered off into the woods. I’m about to go and look when my eyes catch on something floating lazily in the water. The stick she was playing with just before I left to get my phone.

Another wave of panic crashes over me and I start to breathe in and out rapidly and raggedly and my hands are shaking.

“Elena!” I scream and search over the surface of the lake. It is completely still. “Shit, shit, shit.” I groan and hurry from the dock. She must be in the woods, must be. I start heading towards the line of trees, but something causes me to turn back. She must be in the lake, oh God, let it not be true. I pull the phone out of my pocket, and see that Mr. Leblanc hung up the phone.

Prick.

I dial 911 quickly, and start hurrying back to the dock as I do. On the fourth ring, they answer.

“This is 911, what’s your emergency?” A calm, female voice answers. I am enraged by her sense of calmness, and my panic take control.

“Yeah hello, God, I’m at the property at the end of Pamelos street, I don’t have time to talk you just need to stay with me, my daughter, I think my daughter has drowned or wandered into the woods or something.” I hurry onto the dock and look

at the water again. I'm going to have to dive in, just to make sure.

"Sir, please stay calm, what does your daughter look like?"

"Look lady, I don't have time for this shit, just send someone!" And with that I let my phone clatter to the wood planking of the dock. I kick my shoes off and leap into the water, clothes still on my back. The coolness of the lake elevates some of the wild hysteria, and I swim down to the bottom, feeling around desperately with my hands. I swat at moss and I open my eyes, trying to see but it is too murky. The clothes hang off my body and make me slow and lumbering. My lungs scream for air, and I'm forced to answer their cry. I swim to the top and gasp before plunging back under. I swim around wildly, clawing away moss, but I can't find her. I feel like my clothes are trapping me, going to drown me. I swim to the top and grip onto the dock, heaving myself onto it. I cough up lake water and I start to fumble with the buttons of my shirt, but in lack of time, I just grab either side of my collar and I rip down, all the buttons pop off and clatter to the ground. I rip the shirt from my shoulders, and my pants follow. In only my boxers, I leap back into the water.

I search as hard as I can; swallowing water, water up my nose and in my eyes, water in my lungs. Goddamn it, where is she? Where is she? I come up for air, breaking the surface frantically, spitting water. I begin to cry with terror, it comes out in choppy sobs that make my searching even more inefficient. Goddamn it, where are the fucking cops? I can't do this on my own!

I heave myself onto the dock again with shaking arms, scraping some of the skin off of my stomach as I go. I don't feel it, I only feel fear. The shock and panic start to numb my mind, slowing me down.

Maybe she's not in the lake after all... maybe... she's in... maybe she's in the woods. I vomit water and call out, "Elena! Elena!" I hurry to my feet, and then I hear the sirens. I run from the dock, my bare feet sticking with twigs and sharp little rocks. I run towards the gravel as fast as I can, flailing my arms above my head, screaming, "Over here! Over here!" I drop to my knees, the gravel splitting my skin.

Two police cars speed in my direction, followed by a paramedic and a fire truck. I wave my arms weakly. "Over here." I cough through pathetic sobs.

The first police car comes to a screeching halt next to me, and a man and woman get out. The woman has a huge German shepherd on a leash, its golden fur gleaming like a mane of a lion. It barks.

"The lake!" I whine, pointing in the direction of the dock. "My daughter, I can't find her." The officer with the dog takes off for the lake just as the second police car

pulls up. Two more officers come out. The first officer directs the other two to follow the lady with the dog.

“Sir,” he says, coming over to me cautiously. I rise to my feet, trembling hard all over. “Sir,” he repeats. “I’m going to need to ask you a couple of questions, okay?”

“No, no, not right now.” I insist, dumb with shock. “My daughter... I need to find...”

“Yes, sir, we will find your daughter, but you have to listen to me, okay? We can better find your daughter that way. An additional search and rescue team will arrive shortly, but until then, you just need to remain calm.”

“Okay.” I say, lowering myself back onto the ground. I’m shaking harder, and my breathing starts to slow. The officer who was just talking to me barks some orders to the paramedics, and they drive their vehicle off-road towards where I first pointed.

The officer stands above me, a pen and a notepad in his hands.

“My name is Officer Davis, and I’m just going to ask you a couple questions. What is your name sir?”

“Thomas.”

“Last name?”

“Thomas Laughton.”

“And what is your daughter’s name?”

“Elena.”

“Same last name?”

“Yeah, Laughton. Elena Laughton.” My body calms down dramatically as shock grips it. All my emotions leave me, and I’m numb. I don’t feel anything.

“How old are you, sir?” He asks, his voice remaining strong yet calm.

“Twenty five.”

“And how old is your daughter?”

“Three.”

“Where is her mother?”

“I...” I shake my head, trying to recall. “I don’t know. She left after Elena was born, no one can find her. I raised Elena all on my own. On my own.” I murmur, pulling my bleeding knees up to my chest.

“Can you explain to me exactly what happened before your daughter went missing?” He asks, and I swallow hard. What was I doing? I can’t remember, it’s so fuzzy.

“I... we were on the dock. She was playing, with a stick or something, picking moss out of the water with it. I only left her for a couple seconds, and now she’s

gone.”

“You left her? Where did you go?”

“It was...” I look at my watch. It is still ticking despite its exposure to water. “I was supposed to get a call and my phone was in the car. I left her alone while I went to get my phone and now she’s just gone. I couldn’t have left her for more than a minute.” I run my fingers through my sopping hair.

“So,” He looks down at his writing pad. “You and your daughter were on the dock, and you left to get your phone, and came back and she was gone, correct?”

“Yes.”

“Is that when you called 911?”

“Yes.”

“What did you do after you called?”

“I called and then I took off my clothes and jumped into look for her, I don’t understand where she could have gone.” I shake my head, placing it in my shaking, bloody hands. I can’t cry. I don’t feel anything.

“Okay, thank you for your patience and bravery, Mr. Laughton. We’ll find your daughter. For now, though, would you like to sit in the back of the squad car?” He asks softly.

“No,” I rise to my feet. “I have to go down to the lake. She is probably down there. I want to be there when they find her.”

“Alright.” Officer Davis says, “Do you need help walking?”

“No.” I say and start walking down to the lake. My raw feet crunch the gravel but I feel nothing. It’s like walking in a dream. Officer Davis walks next to me, ready to catch me if I were to fall. We reach the dock after much stumbling on my part.

The female officer with the dog is nowhere in sight, but the other officers and paramedics are circled around the center of the dock. My heart starts racing again, my pulse beating thickly, the veins in my neck pulsating. Two of the officers are dripping wet; they couldn’t wait for the rescue team to arrive. I see one of the paramedics sidestep, and my eyes glue onto the stretcher. My daughter lies on it, her blue eyes wide open, and sightless, fixated at the sky.

“Elena!” I scream, and blackness takes over.

(Continued on Bannerbold.com)

Dance Flash

Kanan Luce

The kind of hot that had you running your hand down the small of your back; flippant pleasure in the novelty of sensation - the feel of sweat-dampened skin, very different from the wetness of water. The vestige of memory and brutal foresight of night, naked in a dark heat, feeling thinner in the bed and falsely blaming the shoutings of night air. The itch, personified in the night by mosquitoes, that drives to go out, left hurting 'til finally succumbed to.

Old streets see faces of generations. The temperature is the same outside but the heat is different. There is a deep-rooted camaraderie in people on the streets - a grimace and eye contact and mutual respect for another's business, and silence maintained by the purposeful forgetting that these people are persons. They prefer their worlds and I prefer mine.

Two people walk towards one another. How do you look away without looking like you're trying, you cannot be rude to the person you are about to ignore.

"Would you like to dance?"

The first moment is one of hate, solitude has been shattered.

The second moment is of sexual appraisal.

The third is registering the need of the other, so important as to disturb.

And the fourth is to take the hand.

Midnight Manifesto

Lucas Brown

It was the first time I had killed a man. My conflicting, moral conscious was being ravaged by the thoughts going on in my head as I watched the crimson puddle grow bigger as the blood ran from the man's body.

He attacked me in the darkness! It was nearly midnight, and I was walking home from a meeting with a good friend of mine, one of the few I have these days. This man, medium in stature, with all black hair and a leathery tan complexion, seemed to be in haste to get somewhere. He shouldered me roughly in his rush to whereverso he was rushing. I told him to watch himself, despite however rushed he may be, for even late into the night politeness still exists amongst the sober on the empty streets far away from bars as you can get in a big city. He cursed me, turned upon his heels back towards my direction with a look of inscrutable contempt upon his face. It had been years since i had fought, for never had the life I lived required such a type of violence, but it did require many various forms of other warfare and fighting. Despite this and the startling change of circumstances due to a rather polite sounding comment on my part, I felt the instant exhilarating rush of adrenaline that was entirely different than those bursts I get when giving a revolutionizing speech upon the various negative factors in our city to the people whom ears were eager to hear my words. This adrenaline felt as though the strength of my youth, that of tireless-ness and an amazing, nearly superhuman determination to win no matter what costs and methods had burst into my system. I knew the man meant to hurt me, for in his hand was a miniscule pocket knife which nonetheless, posed a serious threat to me that I could not risk.

I rushed the man. When i neared him, he jabbed out with his knife-hand in hopes of sticking me and ending this all quickly and with him victorious due to a foolish bum rush. This was not the case. I side-stepped to the right exactly a foot, just enough to fool an angry man's perception, with agility I had not felt my legs and feet work together with since my years of youth. This maneuver threw the man off balance, giving me a perfect opening to grasp his knife-arm. I viciously reached out and twisted the man's arm in a contorted position, forcing him to drop the knife out of utter pain. I was positioned in the back of the man, and I tripped him by placing my right leg in front of his two. The man fell face-first, and the sound of his

nose breaking, the cartilage smashing flatly like a pancake was disgustingly gratifying to my blood-thirsty introspection of the situation, satisfying some animalistic instinct for violence I possessed. I proceeded to turn the man over and hammer blows down upon him, and Still! He cursed and cursed me, calling me many names known to my ears, and many vulgarities which I have never had the displeasure of hearing before. After an unbeknownst amount of time had passed of mercilessly hammering upon the man, my ears detected the curses had gone silent. The man appeared to be unconscious...

No! I still heard those curses and could faintly see his lips still uttering them like an unbreakable enchantment he was tied too. I grabbed the fallen knife he had dropped which, though small, had a blade was sharp as that matching a straight razor. I put it to his throat, and proceeded to slice it, creating a ghastly, crimson smile which grinned up at me as red saliva gushed out of its lips. I stood then, being extremely careful to not get a single drop of this man's blood upon my clothing or shoes, and wiped my hands clean of bloodstains. I hurried than to get as far away from the scene, away from the memory itself.

I have all the right to justify my killing of him, despite how the newspapers the next day presented information which was contorted and wickedly twisted to present me as a homicidal, remorseless, psychopath who killed the innocent as wolves do sheep.

But who is to truly blame for the unfortunate hand of destiny that me and this man, at that particular moment in time, feeling the particular emotions we were feeling, would fatally cross paths ending in his ultimate demise. I had walked home last night with nothing but the intention to get back to the place which I call home in peace and free of perturbation. Instead, I find myself killing a man for the first time in thirty-seven years, unleashing ghostly shades of memories I once thought to be totally eradicated from the depths of my haunted mind. That only goes to teach me this recent lesson that comfort and stability can be the great disillusioners when allowing one to see the truth of a situation. I, despite my intense work and battling I have been putting forth, steaming ahead like as a train follows the preordained path of the tracks, found myself going backwards along the tracks, losing the purpose of my pursuit as it drifted further away from my grasp.

This man attacking me in his fury and contempt was a sign of divine sorts, though I am neither a religiously affiliated man due to my firm philosophies nor a man who believes in superstitions, I do believe in omens, which is the more spiritual term for signs of the divine sorts. He represented the production of society's

culminated hatred towards its fellow human, an unknown representative of prejudice, stereotypes, and the inability to see truthfully. I do not know the reason behind him attacking me, nor the source of his disdainful contempt he judgmentally held over me. What I do know is that this conflict was a tragedy; a tragedy which would not have happened had it not been for the corruptive evolution of our society which created such random, senseless hate.

I now sit in my cubic room, where everything is geometrically orderly. Unlike the convoluted way of living which the majority of humanity partakes in, I work tirelessly in order to find order and sustain it to the most one can in life. This tragedy was a distortion in this order, but, perhaps I ask myself, it is a part of orders grand scheme. My killing of this man, the first man I have killed in thirty-seven years, was an omen, or what particular nature I cannot say. I only know that it indicates a time for change in my grand scheme of creation. A revolution.



Sunset

Lourdes Zaragoza

Not the Best “Meet and Greet”

Ellie Queen

“Hey punk!”

I kept running, frantically looking for a way out of the building. Why did I let Karma talk me into this? I reached one set of doors down a hall. I tried to wrench them open but they wouldn’t budge.

“Uhh!” I raced down the hall, zigzagging through different open doorways, startling a few guards along the way.

Then I finally saw it. The bright green sign for an exit. I sprinted towards it, following the arrows. I finally came down the hallway where the doors were when I felt a giant paw clamp painfully on my forearm, wrenching me back, making me crash against the wall.

“Ha! I got the punk!” my captor called out, placing his hand around my neck, choking me slightly.

I guess these guys are only in the military for looks. ‘Cause as soon as I kned the guy in the groin, he doubled over, taking his hands from my neck, giving me free access to his giant nose. I shoved his head down and kned that, making blood spurt out and he was reeling back on his butt. I raced towards the exit door and crashed through, ending up in the courtyard. I ran out, slipping on the wet mud, almost falling on my butt.

“Get back here!”

I looked around for another escape route and my eyes landed on a partially open sewer tunnel. What is it with me and sewers? Considering the way to get in the Warehouse/Clubhouse was through a sewer tunnel. It would be hard to get in there if my pursuers don’t catch me first. Although, there was wet mud right in front of it... if I could run fast enough to slide-

“Hey!”

I sprang towards the hole, managing to land on my side like a baseball player and slip right inside.

“Ugh!” This sewer made the old one look like a tea party compared to this filth. ‘Course, it was actually being used, but still. Nasty!

The water only came up to my knees, thankfully not getting my flashlight wet. I pulled it out and lit my way through, keeping my sleeve to my nose. I might

have been (wading?) for a few some minutes when I heard noises echoing through the tunnel. I groaned softly. The chase wasn't over yet. I went a little faster, going through different tunnel directions, not knowing where I was going, just as long as I lost those guys.

I turned a corner and gasped as hands grabbed my biceps, making me drop my flashlight. The light faded in the murky water as it sank. I couldn't get a good look at the guy, only that he did not look military, wearing strange clothing and longish, dreadlocked hair. He started to push me into this one tunnel. I got scared and lashed out at him, ripping one of my arms free and scratching his face. He grunted in pain and I body slammed him, making him fall in the nasty water. I searched for my flashlight, almost cheering when I found it and the light still working and ran over the dude.

I kept wading through the tunnels, the military guys' voice echoing of the walls, giving everything an eerie feel. Then I came across this one tunnel entrance that was blocked off with rusty bars. I touched one of them and it came out of its place. The opening was just big enough for me to squeeze through.

"Come out, come out, wherever you are," One of the men sang, sounding close. Taking the chance, I slipped through the opening and placed the bar back in place as good as I could.

I turned off my flashlight and pressed myself against the wall as the men walked by my tunnel. I didn't move, I barely even breathed. After what seemed like eternity, when really it must have been less a minute, the men passed and their voice receded.

I sighed... and almost immediately dread filled me to the core. How was I going to get out of this place? I'm inside this rather large, very disgusting sewer that I had just been running around in, playing hide-and-seek/tag with a pack of military guys. And now I had to find a way out of here. Whether that was back to the courtyard or to the... the QZ.

That's what I was here for in the first place. Karma didn't tell me much about it, only that Fiske and his people were lying about it and it has nothing to do with a deadly disease or health hazards or whatever people come up with. The former doesn't surprise me, though the fact that Fiske is so desperate to hide everything he has quarantined is what bothers me. What was he so afraid of people knowing? Do we want to know? Even if there is no disease, is it still dangerous? Can I get hurt or even killed?

All these thoughts and questions started to make my head spin. I swayed a

little and put my hand on the wall to steady myself... and froze. It wasn't because of what I could feel... it's what I can't feel. I turned my flashlight up but kept my sleeve over it, dimming the light so to not attract attention from those guys if they come back, and studied the wall. There was no muck on it. Not a lot anyway compared to most of the tunnel walls.

Even the smell was different. Other than the constant putrid scent, there was a faint earthy sort of smell with salt mixed in it. I couldn't understand the salty smell but I only smell that earthy sort of scent at the Fiske Estate and on the "1st" floor of the Warehouse/Clubhouse. I was nervous but I let my curiosity lead me toward the smell.

After maybe ten or fifteen minutes of wading through the tunnel – that seemed to look and smell cleaner – I saw the opening. I couldn't make it out at first, it was dark like the rest of the tunnel but as I got closer I was able to make out a midnight blue color with small, glittering dots everywhere. It wasn't until I was about a yard from the opening I could recognize what they were. Something I thought I would never be able to understand from Dad's stories.

Stars. Billions of them. Infinity, maybe. I could even see the Milky Way. Dad's voice came back to me. Stars and planets could be seen by every living soul on this earth. There has never been a soul that never saw a type of star. I smiled. The thought that it might be possible that Dad could be seeing these very stars wherever he was in the world made me happy.

But my joy was short-lived. The moment I finally reached the edge of the tunnel, I torn my eyes away from the beautiful view of the sky and stared out in horror at what was on the ground.

For miles, there were old buildings of every type – homes, stores, restaurants, offices, etc. – that looked 21st century style. And water was everywhere. At the front it was at the very bottom of buildings and looking out as far as the eye can see, they were completely submerged. I have never seen such a huge body of water.

Buildings rocked back and forth gently with the waves. I have never really been that big of a fan of water, in all honesty. The fear of drowning has always made me afraid of it. But as I looked out at the display in front of me, I can only feel sadness for this place. Whether this was a long process or it was sudden, what were people thinking when this happened? Mainly the ones who stayed behind. When the evacuation started, most people left but others stayed behind and those who were not caught and taken away, were never heard from again. Did the water come rushing in and drown those who were left behind? Children might've been

ripped away from parents, lovers separated and others simply left for dead.

Sadness was then replaced with anger and rage. I balled my fists. Fiske made this happen. I know he did. If not him, that his earlier generations. I don't know how one would get sea levels to rise but it happened and it is Fiske's fault. And what does he do? He makes people suffer for his mistakes. My stepbrothers, the servants, the people in the city, homeless people, those sent to refugee camps. It should be him suffering! He should take every punishment and torture every victim to his cause.

I slammed my fists to the tunnel floor making water fly. I took a deep breath and stood. I was going to go back to the Big House. With these clothes on and make sure Fiske has a long good look to understand that I know. I. Know.

But the tunnel didn't seem to agree with me. As soon as I lifted my foot to walk, a creak sounded and the floor gave out. I fell off and landed on the ground, bruising my hip in the process. I felt for my flashlight and couldn't feel it. I must've dropped it when I fell. I squinted in the darkness. The stars and their light were behind me now and over the wall is just pitch black from the clouds and smog. Once my eyes adjusted, I could see the tunnel hole. Good. But it was very high off the ground and there wasn't exactly a obvious way to climb back in. Bad.

I stood up and walked up to the wall, feeling for a possible hand or foot hold when-

"What was that noise?"

"If that punk got in there, we are in deep-" The rest of the guy's curse was cut off when a flash of light sprouted to life, blinding me for a moment. It was a searchlight, right against the wall. And coming towards me!

I skittered away from the tunnel entrance, looking around for some type of shelter. With the searchlight on, it made it easier to see. But that also meant it would be easier for them to spot me. If I ran up to one of the buildings, they would surely see me and if not, at least hear me and search every building nearby.

Then my eyes landed on one building at the bottom. It was just a little ways away from me. It was off the ground, with old, rotted wooden stairs coming from the porch. It would provide a perfect shelter and was just low enough to the ground they wouldn't notice. But still someone could see-

Another searchlight flashed the ground to my right and like a startled rabbit, I shot for the house and quickly crawled underneath, hiding behind the stairs. But the moment I was in my hiding spot, I almost jumped out again. There were flies and mosquitos everywhere! Not to mention the crabs. Oh lord, the crabs! I can't

understand why people love crabs. I can't get past those pinchers, the eyes and legs. They're like a harder, bigger version of spiders.

I was about to scoot back out from the crab terror when I heard heavy footsteps. Oh great. The military guys are now on the ground and are right next to my hiding spot. Can this day and night get any worse? I knew the moment that thought past through my head, I jinxed it.

"Hey look at this! Footprints in the dirt." I guess living my life on cement and areas where people never go, I have no experience with running around in mud and sand.

I slipped my hand in my pocket and gripped my knife, not feeling as helpless as many other people would be in this situation. But who am I kidding? These are well trained soldiers for God's sakes. What am I supposed to do with my knife? Scream like a banshee and wildly stash at them? I'll be dead the moment they see me.

But that doesn't mean I can't surprise them. The guys' boots were inches away from the stairs. His shin open. One slash and he'll be down and I can run off. I wasn't afraid to use my knife. I've used it many times before and always keep it clean and sharp. But the fact that I'm dealing with men that have probably caught, hurt, and killed people down here compared to some pervert in an alleyway is what was holding me back.

The moment I started to muster enough courage to slash, water sloshing sounds came to my ears and apparently my pursuers' ears as well.

"It's him! He's back! Forget about the midget! We catch the prick, we'll be a step ahead and they won't know what to do!" I'm guessing that these bottom feeders are only really good at using their fists rather than their words. But something was off. Were there other people in here? If that is true than how many are there? How long have they been stuck here? I wasn't able to dwell on those thoughts for long when I heard them running off away from my hiding spot.

Quickly and quietly, I wiggled out of the crab infested hiding spot, vowing to never hide in something like that unless the moment was dire. I ran off, away from where those guys went and continued to try to find a better spot to hide, in case they come back before I try to get back to the sewer tunnels.

I must've been sneaking around for some time when I heard a sound like feet stepping in a puddle. I didn't know if it was the military guys but I knew I had to hide before I was seen.

I didn't have much except for a small alleyway shaped area that can't be any

bigger than me when I am on my side. The only problem was the fact that water looked really high in that particular spot. If I go walking in that, whoever it is nearby will surely hear me. Then I heard the sloshing noise again and decided to chance it. It seems every time I find an escape route and I hesitate to chance it, something comes up and I take it. Maybe I should just go for it from now on.

As slowly and quietly as I could, slipped inside the sliver of an alleyway and crouched in the water, my legs completely submerged and the bottom of my shirt and jacket getting drenched. My flashlight was definitely dead by now. While I was contemplating how I was going to get back to the tunnel without any light, I almost didn't notice that the owner of the water sloshing noises made himself known. I stared at him but couldn't really make him out, only that he was really big and really tall. He was still in the dark but he was slowly walking towards the starlight and the moment he did, I gasped. His back was facing me but I could see the light glowing lightly on his broad shoulders, muscled arms and lovely, damp black hair having a blue-ish color in the light.

He did look strange though. He wore strange-looking clothes like a dress stopping right above his knees with a thin strap on one shoulder and a scarf draped the other side. He had a small rope tied around his waist, fingerless gloves that looked like leather straps wrapped around his palms and knuckles. Not exactly something you see in the city.

I'll admit he looked really hot from what I could see but I was more worried about him seeing me when I heard noises again. They were very light but I could hear faint curses and I cursed in my head. It had to be the military guys again. I looked at my spot and figured I would be well hidden but I made a mistake at looking at the guy again. He turned around and started to walk in the direction of the walls outside my hiding spot. I still couldn't see his face but the way his shoulders were tensed and his fists were clenching suggested he heard them and was looking for a spot to hide.

He made an irritated noise in his throat, no doubt he couldn't find a hiding spot and the search party was sounding louder and closer. He started to walk past me again and I don't know what I was thinking, or even if I was thinking, but as soon as he almost passed the edge, I launched myself on his back and pulled him down to where I was crouching. He didn't make any noise and caught himself when he started to fall but I could tell he was startled. He moved so fast, I didn't know what was happening until after it happened. He spun around, pressed one hand over my mouth and the other on my shoulder, shoving me against the wall.

Now I was the one startled and put my hands on his wrists, feebly trying to pry them away from me. I still couldn't see his face even though it was probably like an inch away from mine. I could feel his breath on my face he was standing so close.

"What was that noise?!" I sharply turned my head and groaned slightly. The guy holding me, let go of my shoulder and took his hand from my mouth but instead, wrapped one arm around my waist and pulled me towards him. I would have struggled but the next I knew, my feet left the ground. The guy was climbing between the two buildings! I immediately wrapped my arms around his neck and held on for dear life.

He kept climbing until he came to an opening in one of the walls and slipped inside. He carried me as though I weighed nothing. He had his arm wrapped tightly around my waist and as soon as we were inside, he made me sit down on the ground, pressed against a wall that had a large hole in it and pressed himself in front of me, one arm in front of my face against the wall and the other wrapped around my shoulders. I started to struggle for a moment, then I heard the military guys passing by, and that shut me up.

My heart was beating so fast it almost hurt. And I was pretty sure the guy could hear it. He tightened his arm around my shoulders until my head was practically resting on his chest. He gently rubbed my shoulder with his thumb, trying to calm me down. Not as easy as it seems when you're feeling so puny compared to this guy. Though his heartbeat did manage to make me feel a little less tense.

After maybe fifteen minutes or so, the search party disappeared – cursing quite colorfully I might add – and the guy finally let me go and stepped back. I still had my back close to the wall and my legs bunched up. I slipped my hand in my pocket, searching for my flashlight, forgetting it was totally soaked, and flicked the switch. I almost cheered when a faint light came up and I finally got a real look at my comrade. And I almost fainted when I saw him.

He was a very handsome Asian guy who looked very rugged. His hair was choppy like he hacked a bunch of it off with kitchen shears. He had jagged scars all along his flesh and I was right about his strange clothes. It looked like an outfit from the ancient times but was treated rather poorly. It was ripped, stained and clung to his body like second skin. Which gave me a rather good idea at how muscular this guy really was. My stepbrothers and half-brothers are much more fit than most of the people in the city (with the exception of my friends at the Warehouse/Clubhouse), but compared to this guy, they're like marshmallows. I'm not fitness maga-

zine material myself but this dude took the prize.

Which is what made me nervous when he started to come back to me, rather quick. When his face was about an inch away from mine, he lifted a calloused hand to touch my cheek. I flinched a little and he paused. He looked at me like he was really seeing me for the first time. Then he backed up and started to lower himself closer to the ground and laid the palm of his hand on my foot. He moved up my leg and I tensed a little. He felt my calf tighten and patted it lightly, like he was trying to sooth an animal. I looked at his eyes and saw a comfortable glow in them. I felt I could trust him. Which was why I moved one of my hands from my side, sliding it to my knee, a few inches from his fingers.

He faced brightened with excitement – though he didn't really smile – and gently placed his large calloused hand over my small soft one. I relaxed completely when started to stroke my hand and come a little closer but only to touch my black hair and stare at my green eyes.

I looked at his hand holding mine. They were so different. He had thick fingernails, knobby knuckles, callouses on the pads and scars showing his life of hard-ship. Whereas mine were small, soft, long thin fingers and devoid of any markings. He looked at me again, the corners of his mouth twitching like he wanted to smile. Then his gaze hardened. A little surprised by the sudden change of the mood, I looked behind me, thinking the military guys were back and that was what was bothering him. I didn't see anything and turned to ask only to have his nose touch mine he was so close again. I jerked slightly but he wrapped his hands around my biceps to keep me from moving. Probably a good idea too; I tend to whip my arms around like a windmill when I jump. Though he did add a little force, pushing me against the wall, making my head hit the wood. I yelped and he loosened his grip slightly but not much.

He gazed intently at me and lifted his hand to my cheek again. I winced slightly when I felt a little spark of pain. I totally forgot about the bandage to cover the cut when Fiske hit me during our fight. I raised my free hand slowly towards my cheek. He looked agitated about it. I pulled a corner of the bandage tape and peeled it off.

I looked at the bandage tape and could see the "C" shaped blood smear bleeding through. My eyes widened and my breath caught. I looked back at the guy he gazed at me with a fearful and disbelieving expression.

"Cuccinelli," he hissed. I felt my heart in my throat and a lead weight drop in my stomach. My eyes burned and hot tears fell from my eyes.

The Right Amount Of Green

Shannon Moore

I stare out the window of the trailer and I see green everywhere. The trees are still green and so are the bushes, the weeds, and the grass. Fall is approaching and I am surprised that the plant life hasn't begun to brown. Without looking behind me, I know my boyfriend, Mitch, is sitting at the table, which is placed in the center of the trailer. I can smell the cigarette he is smoking and I wish he would put it out. I have tried to get him to quit, but he won't. He has tried to quit for me but he hasn't tried hard enough. I know he can quit. I used to smoke but now I only smoke those fake cigarettes. Soon I will quit those too. I love Mitch dearly and I want him alive in our old age.

I look at the other trailers and I see pieces of trash around them. Why can't people clean up their space? I know ours is messy, but not for long. We had a party last night. It was supposed to be a small get together but more and more people showed up. It was still a small party but it got out of hand. Mitch actually had to yell and throw people out. I was surprised when he picked someone up, opened the door of the trailer, and threw him out the door onto the ground. He then yelled, "Don't come around here again or I will hang you by the telephone wire with your guts!" I was stunned why Mitch would have done such a thing. The man that was thrown out must have really pissed him off. After that man was thrown out, everyone else cleared out within the hour. Later that night I had asked Mitch what the man did and he wouldn't tell me.

When most people meet Mitch they are scared of him and I can see why. He is tall man, about six foot two, and very brawny. He is the scariest and strongest man I know. But he is also the gentlest man I know. I find it funny that none of my friends come near me if Mitch is right there by my side. They say he is "bad news", but he really isn't. He and I have our problems, but I love him and everything that he is.

I keep staring outside and seeing what else I can look at. I look at every little detail. I don't want to turn around. After the party last night and everyone went home, Mitch and I got in a huge fight. I wanted to know what had happened but he wouldn't tell me. The yelling got out of hand and Mitch's anger was vibrating off him. When we stopped yelling I ended up in the bed and he ended up on the couch. I was scared of him. He could never scare me. All of a sudden, two strong arms

curled around my waist. I didn't even hear Mitch come up. He hugged me close and tight, like he was hanging on to me for dear life. He kissed my cheek then whispered in my ear, "He looked at you and told me something that should never have been said."



untitled

Naye Martinez

Nonfiction

Escaping the Mind

Madison Avrea

Mindscape is an unrealistically perfect universe deep inside of your brain. As humans, it can be very challenging to reach this imaginary world. This is only because we are constantly afraid to go outside of our comfort zone. We see doorways everywhere and every day but we do not completely know what is behind them, and so we never bother to open any. Our personal mindscape is one of these doors. Constantly in our mind, our mindscape resides. Having the courage to reach this mystical and imaginary world requires being ultimately free in your thoughts, to not feel restricted in your own body. Your thoughts that are more acquainted with everyday responsibilities are what hold you back from reaching your mindscape, where you have none.

Now what exactly is it that we are trying to escape from? Speaking from the perspective of a student, there are about a million things one could want to get away from once in a while. School is stressing you out. Parents don't understand. You don't have any real friends. You're uncomfortable, anxious, and may have something in your everyday life that you dread going through. There can be a list of things and feelings you just need a break from. This is normal, for it is certain that the standard pathway for students seems to be very narrow and colorless. It is healthy to branch off from that road and see different hues and feel various emotions through an escape: a mindscape.

The actual image of a "mindscape" is a hard one to paint for some people. You can take a stressed man who could write a hundred responsibilities he currently has on his shoulders, or a post high school graduate student with no worries who believes the world is as open as their options for life. Which is the more free-spirited? The more spiritual the being, the more articulate their painting of a mindscape is. The person with a broader horizon can explain a perfect picture of their blissful mindscape. However, most of us find ourselves deeply within the middle of these two juxtapositions. If you fit into the category of a stressed student who also has many choices in life, you may have a difficult time creating a visual of their mindscape. It is simple. Either fulfill or temporarily ignore all responsibilities and weights on your shoulder first. Then, make sure you are seeing a blank canvas of

some sort that is waiting for your recordings. (Paper, white board, clean document, or just your blank and waiting mind) The rest of the process should be unorganized and have as little hard thought put into it as possible. Paint, sketch, type, write, or think of whatever starts flowing. Remember, you will not get anywhere overthinking your starting point. Start going in circles with your ideas as they formulate, recording at first nonsense that later can form to something else. This is the point of letting creativity flow freely. Once you have spilled your inner and most deep nothingness, close your eyes and picture where you are in this moment. Your mindscape is a blur of colors at this moment and the more you visit this place in your mind, the more focused the picture will be. Meditate often subconsciously, getting a slight taste of your perfect universe of relaxation as much as humanely possible.

Although we all have different and perfectly blissful universes hiding deep within our brains, everybody should know exactly how theirs looks. This way, your mind can always be subconsciously present in your mindscape. It should be like you are looking at a black and white room and, just out of the very corner of your mind, you see your favorite colors creeping in. At any time you could easily face the colors. Where we focus your attention on, what we consider worthy of our time all can be completely under our control. This will benefit all humans greatly for you do not have to necessarily face anything negative if you don't want to. How you should level out your well-being with your responsibilities is how you recognize what is most important to you, what you take to heart, and when you believe the right time is to let everything go and float away into the divergent element of your mind. Your personally imagined mindscape only belongs to you and your inner vision.

My Stomach Hurts

Binley Chang

My stomach hurts. Not the normal I-ate-something-weird-and-now-I'm-gonna-sit-on-the-can-for-an-hour hurt, but the deep painful pangs of anxiety and dread that leaves me breathless and closing my eyes until it passes. I swallowed hard. I think this is called butterflies. But no, the shit going down in my belly isn't nearly as pretty and harmless as those. Or maybe they're just some big-ass monster butterflies banging around in there trying to get free. I wish I could go to the toilet and free them goddamit. Right down the drain. Be free you bastards! I wish. But I can't. I'm almost up. I can feel it, the teacher's going to call me up and I'm going to have to present. Yup, I can tell. She's been eyeing me for a while now and- holy shit our eyes met. Well okay, done deal now. I'm going up for sure after this poor bastard.

"Binley?" the teacher calls after he sits down. I almost feel like laughing.

I walk up to the front and begin my monologue. Beads of steamy sweat appear in my hairline and on my upper lip as I stumble through the first paragraph. It's hot in here. Is it hot in here? It's hot. I quickly start the second paragraph and realize I missed a sentence. The whole paper doesn't make sense now because of this damn missing sentence. I steal a look at my peers and instantly wish I hadn't. They're staring. Of course they are- I'm up here shitting my pants. I look down at the paper again and...I'm lost. Where was I again? Shit, shit, shit! Did I read this already? I don't remember! They're waiting. It's so quiet, so so quiet that I can't even hear anyone breathing. Am I breathing? No. I gulp a deep breath and exhale. That was so loud! Everyone knows how nervous I am now. They pity me. No, I don't want pity! Stop!

And I start at the second paragraph again. Sweaty face red, eyes watering profusely, and hands trembling until the words on my paper are too blurred to distinguish, I shake like the beaten dog I know I am at that moment and die a little inside. All this torment from a two minute presentation about cats in my high school English class.

Shut up.

Beyond “Stay Strong”

Katherine Rollins

After struggling to find the right words and to avoid the clichés, I’ve come to this conclusion: depression is not beautiful. There is nothing romantic or poetic about cutting yourself and wanting to die. The depressed author is a common trope in the writing world, and some people have convinced themselves that good art must come from suffering. I don’t mean to criticize those who are miserable and trying to cope through creativity, but one doesn’t have to suffer to create something of value as an artist. If you don’t have clinical depression and you want to write something beautiful and profound about it to the point of glorifying it, please don’t. Turning a pain that you haven’t felt into something pretty is insulting to those who have experienced it. If you do have clinical depression, I promise you that wallowing in it won’t help you. Fixating on depressive thinking will only pull you in deeper.

Depression sucks, plain and simple. Writers have managed to turn it into something noble, like a necessary side effect of creativity. They’ve make it sound interesting, like a gripping battle or a dramatic struggle. The reality is nothing like that. When you are depressed, you feel nothing, mentally or physically. It’s not just the absence of happiness or the presence of sadness. It’s the absence of all emotion. You’re numb, practically walking in a coma. Wanting to kill yourself doesn’t necessarily stem from immense pain or negative emotions. Eventually, the demands of everyday life and overwhelming emptiness of it all just get to be too much. It’s not just that you don’t want to do anything, you can’t make yourself do anything. Death is the only way to get out of the obligations of living. If you can’t get anything accomplished, what’s the point of continuing to trudge through the days?

In a way, you’re already dead. You just want people to leave you alone so you can lie in bed and do nothing in peace. You’re a corpse that the living expect to perform the basic tasks of being human. You’ve already given up on life, so there comes a time when you need to finalize that decision. But it isn’t a decision. There is no person who wakes up one day and decides that they want to become a detached, empty shell of a human being. Your brain makes that decision for you, without any conscious influence. The worst part of depression is the illusion of free will. That’s why people tell you to cheer up, and you don’t even know why you can’t.

willpower and motivation, and depression makes you feel like it's your fault.

It isn't your fault. You have a disease. That's what mental illness is: a disease. No one holds people with cancer or diabetes accountable for curing their illnesses, and you shouldn't feel responsible for yours either. Because it's an illness, it is treatable. At the risk of sounding like an old afterschool special, find someone you can talk to who will just listen. Whether that's a friend, a family member, or an actual therapist, it can be surprising how much just talking can help. Beyond that, don't be afraid to talk to a doctor, because they can give you an actual diagnosis and prescribe a variety of different antidepressants. Obviously, the medication route isn't for everyone, but it has been a literal lifesaver for me and countless others.

However you choose to approach it, the important thing is letting people help you. There are resources out there that exist specifically because you shouldn't have to face depression alone. If you're trapped in the worst of the lows, it can feel like it's not worth the effort. You may think you're not worth saving, or feel like it would be better for the people around you if you weren't there. You are worth saving. You deserve to live your life, and it would be a shame if you decided to give up on it while it's just starting.

When you do decide to let people help, it needs to be something you're doing for yourself. You can try to survive for the sake of your family and friends, but when you're living just for other people, there will come a time when they won't be enough anymore. You can't keep living when you're barely alive. The hardest decision you will ever make is deciding to survive for your own sake. It's realizing that even though it's hard to believe now, you will find something that makes life worthwhile for you in the future. You owe it to yourself to make it to that happier time.

A Hard Life

Seneca Hill

It is not uncommon for someone to ask me, “What did you feel like when you lost all your vision?” For me, giving a specific answer to this question has always been a challenge but whenever I ask others what they would feel like if they lost all their vision the common response is, “it would be terrifying!” I can only assume that having all one’s vision and then waking up one day to find it all gone would be a shock. I guess asking someone how they would feel about going blind completely all at once is a bit over whelming so let me put it another way.

Have you ever woken up and you couldn’t see a thing? Have you then experienced the feeling of relief by turning on the lights and watching the darkness retreat before them? What would you do if the lights stayed dark? Some people might panic and run out into a room they know should be full of sunlight. Can you imagine doing this and feeling the warmth of the sun striking your face but not being able to see anything? Close your eyes and try to imagine the life of a blind person. We wake up to this every morning! We have to go through this every day of our lives!

I remember the day in seventh grade when I woke up and I couldn’t see anything. I remember taking it very calmly. I didn’t scream or cry hysterically. I just remember walking into the kitchen and saying to my mom, “mom I woke up this morning and I can’t see anything.” She said, “Well I’m very sorry but you’re still going to school.” That was the day when my whole life changed.

I don’t remember much of those first few days except losing all my sight wasn’t all that unexpected.

I had lost most of my sight because of a brain tumor and have had surgeries and radiation therapy throughout my life to make it stop growing. After my last surgery my vision, or what was left of it, started getting blurrier. If, for example I looked at a computer screen when the text size was larger so I could see it, the words looked as if they were swimming around. I couldn’t focus as well as I’d been able to before the surgery. So when I lost the rest of my sight my parents and I weren’t that surprised. But even though it wasn’t a shock I still miss it.

At first I had to take a guide with me to all my classes. When walking by myself I had to be a lot more careful. When I could see before I wouldn’t need to take my cane everywhere I went. Once I lost all my sight that changed. My cane became

Along with my cane I had to use my ears more too. I had to pay more attention to what they were telling me. I couldn't rely on my sight any more to tell me when it was time to cross the street. Now I had to really listen to the traffic patterns and align myself with the crosswalk so I would walk straight to the next curb.

Up until the point when I went completely blind I'd had no sight in my right eye and barely any in my left. I can still remember what colors look like and what they looked like mixed with others. I could sit for hours and draw scenes that reminded me that there were still some secret places in the world that brought peaceful happiness to the observer. I'd love to look at pictures of rolling, green hills with small groves of trees dotted here and there as far as the eye could see. I would draw tall waterfalls cascading down into rippling ponds with trees all around. Looking at these pictures I could almost hear the birds singing their songs and the whispering breeze as it rustled the leaves and made the grass and flowers dance. If I closed my eyes I could imagine the world of buildings and streets disappear and in their place my pictures would become real and I would be surrounded by the hum of bees as they zipped from one flower to the next. I would hear the soft calls of birds as they flitted from tree to tree. These images would fill my mind and for a short time my pains and worries would be forgotten.

I remember as a kid seeing the other kids that were blind from birth. I was luckier than a lot of kids I knew. Now and then I try to imagine what my life would have been like if I'd been born blind. I wouldn't feel as if something's missing. People who are born blind have never known the world around them via sight. They couldn't miss it because they've never had it.

A lot of the time I think that the people who were born blind have the better deal. They don't know what the world looks like. They don't have the feeling of loss that those of us who had sight but lost it do. I can remember seeing the world and taking for granted the fact that I had eyes but others didn't. Sometimes it's really hard for me to cope with the fact that I won't see anything ever again. Walking through a park isn't the same any more. People tell me what the trees and flowers look like but it's never the same. Sometimes I catch myself wishing that I still had some sight left. I can wish for a lot of things but they will never come true.

The Person Under the Uniform

Eddie Rodriguez

Honor. Strength. Faithful. Brotherhood. These are the words that come to mind when I think of people serving in the United States armed forces; the people who can't kiss their loved ones good night, watch their kids grow up, tell their loved ones in person: happy birthday, merry Christmas, happy new year, or just a simple I love you, because they are miles away, overseas, serving our country, and putting others before them. They are the best at what they do, because only a few can endure the pain and lifestyle that they live, only a few can be so selfless and risk their own life for a comrade or civilian. They are the most loyal, because they know a comrade will do anything for them, and they are the most disciplined because they know any mishap could lead to a death of that comrade.

Yet, aside from the discipline, the loyalty, and the honor, under that uniform, and under that tough skin, lies a person, a person who once was a child, who once had their first day of school, who once woke up in the middle of the night to see if Santa dropped off the matchbox racecar track he wanted, a child who once had those weird feelings for a girl, and who once, years later proposed to her, and now, records video messages to tell his son how to ask a girl to the prom, and to make sure his daughter knows to tell any guy she dates, that her father is a United States Marine with a big gun, but an even bigger heart, filled with love for his family.

And these are the people who get called killers, psychos, cold-hearted. They are judged on the aftermaths of wars of over 50 years ago; judged on movies and acts of a couple soldiers who were out of line. And yet they are still judged because they hold a gun, and the certain skills they are taught, but the civilians don't know the real reason they were taught those things. Soldiers are taught these things for certain situations, they have these skills and guns to protect the lives of the innocent, and the lives of their fellow comrades. Everything they do, every act, is for someone else, civilian or soldier, it is engraved in their head to help those in need, there is no extra payment every time they do something good, it is their duty.

So every time you see a soldier, look beyond the gun, beyond the things they are taught and have seen, and beyond the uniform. Think of when the soldier goes to sleep. Wherever he/she sleeps, in a tent, plane, Humvee, maybe even on the ground, but think of the people the soldier thinks of before they shut their eyes, the

people the soldier dreams of, because that is the only time he/she may ever see their loved ones again, and that is the only thing the soldier wants in this world, is to see and hold their family again. Because just like us, the soldier feels, the soldier thinks, the soldier bleeds, and the soldier loves, and there is a family longing for that soldier to return home.



Inedible Footprints

Eric Daniel

Asperger's Syndrome is a Part of Me

Angeles Castillo

My name is Angeles Castillo, and I am autistic. Do take note that I am not severely autistic, I have a 'light' form of it called Asperger's syndrome, which is referred to right now as Autism Spectrum Disorder. You may be wondering what autism is, but fortunately this essay will inform you about it.

Autism, like a ray of white light, comes in a spectrum. There is Autism Spectrum Disorder, which means that the person with that appears not to be autistic, autism that is somewhere in the middle, and severely autistic. If you have anything on the spectrum, you may be exceptionally smart in anything, but not do so well with other subjects-so some people think. Consider most media depictions of people on the spectrum. They are portrayed as being very smart in some subjects, but also being somewhat childlike and rather immature. The film "Rain Man" was criticized by people on the spectrum because of its incorrect depiction of an autistic person. However, it was received positively by people who are not on the spectrum.

There have been many films about autism and Asperger's syndrome that have been made, with the most recent being "Temple Grandin", which is about a woman on the autism spectrum who designed a more humane way of transporting cows to a slaughterhouse. Another example of a film about autism is "What's Eating Gilbert Grape", in which the protagonist has to take care of his severely autistic 18 year old brother, his family, and also work at a local grocery store at the same time. Several psychologists, psychiatrists, and people on the spectrum have written books explaining autism, how it works, and what life can be like for a person on the spectrum.

Sometimes, autism can be detected when the person who has it is very young. They might not be able to speak, or may get overwhelmed easily. They sometimes do actions that are referred to as 'stimming', which are small and simple movements, such as rocking back and forth or hand flapping. Some psychologists or counselors may suggest that the child be institutionalized, sent to a special school, or be home schooled, but most of the time, they end up going to a generic public school.

Preschool can be relatively fine for children with autism, but it should probably be well supervised by the teachers in case of any problems. Elementary school

may be considered a safe haven, because there is teacher supervision and no changing classes. Middle school, however, can be very tough for people on the spectrum, because some students aren't mature enough to handle middle school and all of the stress of changing classes and being with other people wouldn't help with all the stress. High school may be a little better for students on the spectrum, because most students mature a lot during this period of time. However, as perfectly 'safe' some school experiences may seem, there is always that hidden danger known as bullying.

Sometimes, people bully because they might think that people who aren't like them are odd or 'freaks'. A person with autism may be a possible target for a bully. But it isn't just bullying that contributes to the challenge of living with autism. Some people think that autism is a disease that is life-threatening, and they attempt to cure people of it. But in reality, autism is incurable. It would be pointless to try to get rid of something indelible, and sometimes it seems that people with autism have no hope of having friends.

Fortunately, there is help for these individuals. In schools, there can be special education classes and support groups for people on the spectrum. Some autistic people may choose to live in a group home with other people on the spectrum. There can also be counseling and going to special support groups, such as ASAP and Autism Ambassadors. In April, there is even an autism awareness month and there are also special activities year-round to raise awareness for people with autism.

In conclusion, people who are different should be treated with respect. Whether they have autism, Down syndrome, or any other condition, they should be made to feel welcome. You may know the saying, "Don't judge a book by its cover," when we should take this saying into effect in real life, because most of the time we judge people by their exteriors. So please keep this in mind: Be it a blessing or a curse, Asperger's is a part of me, and to quote Katy Perry, "that you're never gonna ever take away from me."

Chaos

Makani Cartwright

Throughout humanity's history, we have pitted ourselves against that force that we cannot hope to stand against. Chaos. No matter what order we desperately try to create, it will still prevail as nothing humanity can accomplish can stand the eternal test of time. Yet there is an incredible beauty within it as well, for it is the very nature of Nature itself. The ecosystems of the earth do not grow in rows and columns; they spread out in a chaotic sprawl that leaves us awestruck. It is omnipresent and we are both amazed by it and terrified by the effects that it has upon that which we strive to create, order.

Chaos is a nearly omnipotent force that we struggle with in the grand scheme of the universe; however, we forge our own brand of it that causes us to destroy ourselves. It displays its most malevolent aspects in our conflicts with one another, for the battleground is one of the most chaotic places on the face of the earth. For the purpose of war, it has even seeped into our technology. We have developed devices that have no purpose other than to obliterate themselves in an orderless, harmful blast. Chaos naturally works to ruin us and oftentimes it does by infiltrating our inner nature.

Chaos is also found in much more benign ways. It is the beginning of a cross-country race, the maelstrom of flailing limbs as people fight for a strong position. It is a presence in nearly all sporting events, for beyond their initial structure, a level of chaos ensues. Chaos is the disorganization that is to be found in children's rooms, ceaselessly returning. It is a major city sidewalk, with no strict order, just a mass of individuals, each independently moving in a different direction. Chaos is found within the fabric of civilization, as if it is constantly reminding us that we have no hope to overcome in the long run.

Desperately, we fight on, but most often it comes from areas hopelessly out of our control, for no matter where we flee to in the universe, natural disasters will occur. The chaotic conglomeration of seemingly harmless clouds into an ominous thunderhead is a terribly beautiful example of Chaos' paradoxical existence. Chaos is a roiling cauldron of magma and the titanic blast that eventually results, following no strictly ordered results. The brobdingnagian vortex of a hurricane leaving scattered wreckage throughout land and sea is the very embodiment of chaos and its

vice like grip upon civilization.

Even our minds offer no refuge, as the roots of chaos are deeply embedded within human nature. It finds its way into our thoughts and creates a jumbled mess of ideas without organization. When we lose consciousness, we also lose all control of our thoughts and a strange train of thought is formed which we perceive as dreams and nightmares, the effects of Chaos on our innermost being. Here it is a double-edged word though, for out of these chaotic visions and ideas emerges Creativity, the very essence of our ability to create.

Chaos is a vital component of the very fabric of the universe and even though we constantly fight it, or perhaps because we do, we are able to see the greatness within it. We can appreciate nature more because it seems so utterly foreign, without that sense of organization that we strive for. It has stood against humanity's creation from the beginning; yet, it is also the cause of many great changes in history, or it at least lent a helping hand. Chaos is to be found everywhere, leaving us no choice but to give in.

Nevermind Mattie Peters



The Invisible Children

Lucas Brown

There is a group of kids I would like to call, “The Invisible Kids”, in tribute of the anonymous protagonist of Ralph Ellison’s novel “The Invisible Man”. Concerning these children, I myself being counted among this number, there is often a mis-interpretation or a failure of perception of who we are. We are the children made invisible due to unknown and rather cruel, random factors in life, which exist in the eyes of the visible many as a failure of society and individuals will to society, thus making such factors invisible and ourselves as well. I speak in these collective terms of “we” and “ourselves” not because I wish to falsely place intellectual credentials or qualifications I do not have, but because, as the protagonist of Invisible Man asked “Who knows but that, on the lower frequencies, I may speak for you?”

I should label these kids I speak of instead of poetically placing my thoughts, so I shall give you a label because that’s what the visible need; identification of something unknown or invisible. We are the kids from foster homes, and group homes, children homes, support homes, other homes than our true home, for whatever random events occur, sometimes in place of good fortune for the growth of the child, sometimes in place of ill fortune which will eventually bring them down in distraught from life itself. Invisibility comes into place the second a child is removed, a concurring effect which follows immediately.

How are we typically seen, perceived, or generalized? We are invisible so we are not seen in a sense, but we exist in the world just as much as any other human being. Some exist and flourish more radiate than those visible. Though invisible, we have friends, family, lives. Though it is an interesting equation as to what creates such a difference as to call us invisible. Invisibility, in accordance with children placed into foster, group, or children homes, occurs because when you are taken from your parents, even if, as I’ve come to be harshly and unsympathetically criticized once for, for positive reasons and sincere care for safety of that child and securement of their future, a loss in identity occurs and the child develops child separation psychological problems and feelings of insecurity which cause the child, as I have dealt with and felt alongside millions of other children whom have gone invisible in the eyes of humanity yet still exist, the will to shine bright because they wish to fight on no matter what may have occurred in life, or the less of will

,despair, and others die out, their own lights dulling because too much of the past is pulling them down until invisibility completely envelops them.

We are typically perceived as human beings I have come to believe from seeing. No one perceives our invisibility which makes us that much more invisible. Incredibly ironic in the nature of perception? I do believe so. In my own pair of eyes connected to my unique mind, I perceive life as beautiful and cruel at the same time, contradictory world of losses and victories, joyous yet full of sadness, we laugh when we cry at times. I do not know about my fellow invisible and visible brothers and sisters and how they perceive the world and its people. Invisibility takes much effort to find because it is something we overlook every day and even those of us invisible overlook it in better hopes of its disappearance.

Humanity is full of generalizations and romanticizing as I've come to learn. The invisible are not generalized as individuals, but rather as a collective group we are generalized by the visible society. People generally think children are taken away from their parents due to their parents being bad, irresponsible, inefficient, abusive, and a number of other intellectual negatives labels, and in precisely 50%, because everything in life outside of human control in my beliefs is ying and yanged; cosmically balanced to a scale unperceived by humans unless strenuous effort is taken to find it. The other 50% is from those children, I myself not being of these 50%, are the invisible children whom are collectively not generalized at all because no one knows how to generalize this group other than the invisible children themselves. Children whom were taken away from their parents even though all they remembered with their parents were happy memories and were steadily positively growing in that environment but then taken away for whatever random reason produced by the CPS and put into another were emotional and psychological problems impede or stunt their growth into the brilliant individual they had the potential to become. Though, this equivalent, unrealistic claim is not always true, as is any generalization in life no matter how specific the characteristics, it is what I perceive as the generalizations that add onto our invisibility due to lack of sight and perception, both afflicting the invisible and visible.

(Continued on Bannerbold.com)

Light Poetry

Cheez-It

Dylans Hubert

Oh my how you are so beautiful with your suit of orange;
You look so crisp, yet so clean;
The aroma of your body is filling my nostrils, until all I can smell is you;
Just thinking about your flaky soul, with your blanket of salt makes me happy;
Oh Cheez-It,
How wonderful you are.



Burning Marshmallow

Ricky Reza

Ice and Snow

Seneca Hill

Ice and Snow

Ice and snow I love it so but the heat and sun I hate it!

I'd love to play in snow all day but the heat I just can't stand it.

What's really nice to do on ice is to ice skate fast and graceful.

But in the sun well that's no fun cause it just makes my life painful.

I'll have you know that in the snow, snow men are just the thing.

You can make them short or make them tall and give them lots of bling.

I love to gaze upon the haze of snow flakes drifting down.

They fall like rain and bring no pain and always lift my frown.

Down from the sky, with stars so high, they fall slowly to the ground.

Around me for miles, they form gentle piles across the icy ground.

To ski across the cracked, white frost fills my heart with pleasure.

Quite fast I go through all the snow feeling like I could do this forever.

In the still air, the trees are all bare with all their leaves long gone.

They stand there like statues, with their many virtues, dominating the icy ponds.

The fish in their ponds, enclosed in their bonds, sit patiently waiting for spring.

And with its great splashes, the ice cracks and crashes, from warm weather that spring does bring.

My Great Escape

Melissa Martinez

Down deep in the meadow
Way beyond yonder brook
Past the seas and Fiddler trees
Way beyond that summer's breeze
Where the clouds kiss the sky
Humming birds sing their lullaby
Autumn leaves come and go
Preparing for the winter snow
As the flower buds begin so new
Daffodils smelling of honey-dew
Wind whispers so soft and however so cold
The rising sun's crowning is ever so bold
What being so divine designed this place of Paradise?
What lies beyond the summer's breeze, and way beyond the Fiddler trees,
past the plains and past the seas, down in the meadow past yonder brook,
always take a second look.
Here is where I will await thee... For now and forever so you and I may
become we.

School

Dylan Hubert

The alarm clock rings at 6 o'clock sharp,
Why do I have to get up while it is still dark;
I get a bowl of cereal and grab a granola bar,
Then it is time to hop in the car;
I pull up to school and I rush to my class,
If I am even a second late the teacher is sure to give me some sass;
Tick-tock goes the clock as I stare at it all day,
When will school be over because I need to be on my way;
As the final bell rings that means that it is time to leave,
Today's day is over, but now it's tomorrow that I grieve.

Love's Beginning

Ryan Etherton

Love is beautiful
The fragrance of a rose bud
A new beginning

untitled

Sam Harrison

sleep
lethargic & listless
dreaming, calming & freeing
torpidity, idleness, repose & abeyance
mesmerizing, numbing & tranquilizing
languid & somnolent
slumber

Choc'late Lover

Makani Cartwright

I thought I had my life all figured out
Until she came and turned my world upside down
The joy she gave me made me want to shout
When thinking of her I never could frown.

Looking at her, I see no better sight.
'Neath her hair, an ocean of golden silk,
Her eyes shimmer like two stars in the night
Colored like shining pools of choc'late milk.

Her smile is enough to make my heart melt.
Her lips, as full as a glass of red wine.
She brings out emotions I've never felt
Forever more she will be only mine.

Our passion burns like a fire infernal,
The bonds we share will last time eternal.

Not Like You

Trevor Moss

Sometimes people say
“You really are weird”
I ask for their sincerity, listen, and hear,
“Of course, I mean, you shaved half your beard!”

Do you consider me different?
Is it bad I don’t filter before I blurt?
“Yes, that would be considered weird,
You also wear a Karl Marx T-shirt”

And what of my behavior?
Is it more childlike than others?
“Well you play Pokémon, like pro wrestling,
I’m sure we have different druthers

You listen to music non-stop
Most of it Rap
That stuff will rot your brain
It’s nothing but complete crap”

Well I thank you for your time
It really has been delightful
“How so? Were you not listening?
Your behavior, it is not rightful”

Oh but it is
Acting so makes me happy
Cause I act who I am
Geeky, outspoken and scrappy

Think what you will
And hear this in its enormity
Just remember, there is no such thing as weird
Just an expectance of conformity

So I thank you again
For I know, to myself I stay true
I do not conform
Therefore I am different from you



untitled

Johnathan Gonzales

Serious Poetry

Aunty Mara

Sage Dreher

I am Living but not alive
Infected with madness
Hiding from a mysterious past
Three different addictions
Alcohol - sloppy, tipsy but bubbly
Xanax - relaxed, numb
Methamphetamine - euphoric, higher then high
Three black holes
Three different strokes
Black demons run the show
I kick punch burn beat anything in my way
Sage and I tear each other apart limb by limb
They kill any hope of a family
Inside the insane asylum
Nurses excrete breast milk on me
The food they serve is still alive after I digest it
Dr. Darvy prescribes pill after pill
No change
My mind is like a computer glitch after Sally spilled her soda
Flittering in and out of reality
Trembling with fear of the near future
Schizophrenia eats me alive
Stuck in insanity
Holding hands with death
My life on a projector
Childhood laughter
Teenage heartbreak and addiction
Aged with years but stuck in teenage mentality
Insane insanity
That fragile white light consumes me
What a beautiful world

War and Armed Conflicts

Jake Lewis

It has been around since the beginning of time,
And is much more destructive than any other crime.
War really has been the most vicious beast of all.
Patriots are gunned down in battle, and there, they fall.
Through the guns and the bombs, many lives have been lost.
We smelled the toxic fumes during Adolf's heinous Holocaust.
There are the deaths, there are the tortured, and there are the merciless rapes.
Thousands of innocent people have suffered these heartbreaking fates.
Radioactivity has corrupted the delicate bodies of the fruitful youth.
The sad part happens to be that we accept this as the treacherous truth.
Communist leaders have ordered brainwashed men to kill
Even when it was against their heart, soul, and will.
Even still, war continues to spread like an infectious disease.
It does not hear the people's cries, or their desperate pleas.
It is very clear to us that the world remains very ill,
When we hear the shots fired and we see the blood spill.
It has been fought in the air, on land, and by sea.
Violence is the problem here and peace is the key.
War solves nothing; it only brings about pain,
And leaves our hearts with an irremovable stain.
War instills soldiers with terror and fear,
And crafts murder into a regular career.
The darkest of times called for the darkest of techniques,
When we dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima's city streets.
From the beaches of Normandy, to the deserts of Iraq,
Soldiers have been shot down and they lay flat on their backs.
From the brutal Western Front to the jungles of 'Nam,
Men have literally been blown apart; bomb after bomb.
Troopers are sent home in impersonal caskets,
And their ashes are collected in bottomless baskets.
Looking past the smoke and through the mushroom clouds,

We see ruthless shots fired into innocent crowds.
Lifeless bodies of child soldiers that litter the street.
Humanity has fallen and must get up on its feet.
War creates monsters out of the most innocent of men,
And sends them home with the most broken hearts to mend.
Armed conflict has always been the major downfall of man
So now it's time we correct that and we all take a stand.
A stand for our sisters and a stand for our brothers,
A stand for our fathers and a stand for our mothers.
The battles will not cease if we don't band together,
In order to terminate this sinister, stormy weather.
The guns must be unloaded and the soldiers sent home,
So that way everyone on this planet can peacefully roam.
Enemy must love enemy and friend must love friend,
Or else we could be facing an abrupt catastrophic end.



Israel

Jacob Mizraji

Crazy Pills

Marin Emilly

I'm old like rocks.
My eyes are walnuts.
The air around me tastes like stale animal crackers.
Hands shake from my unsteady environment.
Ears filled with the clatter of worn out checker boards.
Old wheel chairs that resemble paper clips and rubber bands.
All you can smell here is bleach and feces.
Lavender sighs constantly leave my raisin lips.
Nurse Winifred O' Donnell fills my crazy pills cup in San Francisco California.
Though filled the cup was, I'm not that crazy.
I can remember the warm sunshine on my young skin.
Vibrant colors and the smell of weed filling the cold crisp air.
This town was cracka' lackin'
I was lost because my feet were so big.
Only the gentle are ever really strong.
I gently trudged from place to place filling my eyes with unimaginable sights.
Heated singing streets if hippies galore kept my thoughts up.
Lifeless and fake, like an old Barbie doll, I was empty.
Shattered, I floated into another dimension.
Paunch stuck it out and fought a good fight.
Yesterday was rough, today is a mess, but tomorrow will be kinder.
The tiny music notes carried me on.
Si se puede!
Waving goodbye the sun always winked, the moon blew kisses, and the wind carried my feet.
My body is haggard and wrinkled, but my mind will always stay young.

The Unknown Hero

Kelsey Sherman

The hero
unknown
alone.

The hero we all wish we could be,
you see,

he's my grandfather.

He's strong and smart

he stands tall

alone,

betrayal and loss

is what he can see.

Through the tears in his eyes

he tells me,

of a story,

a story of a boy,

in a camp

in Poland.

You see, the story describes him,
and his misfortunes during World War II
and all the sadness that is true.

He braved through it all
and helped others as they fell,
so that they could live
and see another day.

He saw pain and sadness,
loneliness and longing,
hope and fear.

He's a hero in the way
that he keeps the story alive
that he pushes past the pain
so that others can understand.

He's a hero for all the hopes and dreams
that he saved,
and for the ones that he keeps alive.
He's a hero for all his deeds,
all his hope,
and all his fear.
He's a hero for getting out alive
and learning how to soar,
to be free,
to be alive when all the others are dead.
The tears in his eyes,
they show the faith,
the longing,
the sadness,
the pain,
the loss and betrayal.
He's the hero I wish I could be,
the one that means so much to me.
He's the star in the night sky,
the one that shines so bright,
the one that gives me faith and hope,
the one who understands me.
His poems inspire others
to open up their eyes
and see the cruelty in the world.
My grandfather is a hero in my family's eyes.
We see him as a hero,
an unknown
pure-hearted hero.
Through the betrayal and loss
he has soared.
He's the hero no one knows,
he is the hero among the many others,
the others who survived the Holocaust.
He's a survivor,
a believer,

a hero.
He's a hero,
known yet not known,
forgotten yet not forgotten,
but still a hero to us all.



Photo

Summer Stanley

Growing Up

Kanan Luce

A boy will grow just as a tree will rise
Mature, to men, is not a taller span
A man must know a harder path than size
And God would shame the boy who stands a man

A man can trust the flow of air in life
But breaks a course when the tide would bring him back
Aware, he's whole, humble, and calm in strife
No tyrant has composure midst his lack

The ritual for boy to leave his home
Is taken so soft skin can rip and flay
And secrets flow in, filling mind and tome
Do not come back until you know the way

For this, my son, you'll go to die alone
Return, as man, and live how you've been shown

Dewdrop

Gabrielle Genhart

Willow trees and dewdrops,
Shining in the new sunlight,
Under a dirty sky,
Why do we call this living?
Glittering eyes, like amethyst and emerald,
Under the sunrise, the purple colors bleeding.
Smoky fingertips and twice-scarred wrists,
Summer breathes life into the forgotten.
Captivating,
Captivated.
We're imprisoned by the lost.
In a pond with lily pads and frog princes,
Shadowed by the tall trees and clouded skies,
In our little crafts,
Whispering our goodbyes.
Eyes watering,
We look up to the masked sun,
Who knows what's there?
And we see them.
Butterflies, butterflies,
Dancing in the atmosphere.
Fluttering, fluttering,
Do they know any better?
Have they ever?
Will they ever?
Kiss your love goodbye,
Smudged lipstick and running liner.
What does it matter anymore, how he perceives me?
I've already destroyed him,
I've already destroyed what he might see.

In the evening,
In the night,
We sit in the back of the car,
Bathed in the black and white light.
Tell me,
Take me,
But I'm falling through your fingertips.
Just like sand, just like earth,
And we don't trust each other any longer.
So we sleep with the lights on,
Because the darkness is far too much for us to handle.
Where have you been?
Where have you been?
We're dying,
But we're dying for the better.
It's better, right?
Of course it's better.
In a field of dreams,
With the sound of reruns illuminating each midnight,
We find our only repose.
And there we know,
There we know,
Our heartbeats and our deep breaths.
And there we know,
There we know,
Our blinking eyes and temporal lies.
The clock says one, but is it morning or is it night?
The stars are still, sparkling with light.
Blowing curtains and withheld words.
Against porcelain skin,
Satin, silk, and velvet.
And we're on fire.
On fire,
On fire,
And we'll burn forever.
But maybe that isn't a curse any longer.

My Landslide

Marin Emilly

My Landslide
The air was warm.
My hair was salty.
Cinnamon swirled through the house.
Little Raven danced on the coffee table one last time.
Dad and Sis had just left for ice cream.
We could all taste it coming, but refused to believe it.
We couldn't leave yet.
This was our home.
Plus, Dad and Sis were getting ice cream.
1 pebble.
The earth was shaking.
2 pebbles.
We were covered in rubble and hurt.
3 pebbles.
All 5 bodies lay in the ground, covered in dirt.
Home is no longer home.
Mom and us 4 kids, we live up here now.
And you, you live down there.
January 2005, how could this happen?
Dad and Sis were coming home with ice cream.

A Blanket of Stars and Stripes

Shannon Moore

A blanket of stars and stripes,
folded into a triangle.

A sign of honor
for a marine who died from enemy fire.
It was no consolation to his wife
that he died on the ride home.

She used to think everything was innocent,
but she lost sight of what was good.
When her husband died she lost the strength to stand,
the faith to believe,
and the love in her heart.

She sat numb in front of his metal casket,
staring into the blank space.
The service was long over
but service men still lingered.
Before she would have welcomed them in open arms,
but now she just couldn't.
She wasn't going to pretend that everything would be ok,
and she wasn't going to pretend that her husband was alive.

She looked down at the blanket of stars and stripes,
and brushed the tears off her cheeks.
Nothing was ever going to be the same.
She closed her eyes,
stood up,
and fell to the ground.
She was faintly aware
that her husband's fellow men, her friends,

were rushing towards her and calling out her name.

The pain was too great.
The only comfort she felt
was the feel of the folded flag
that she was clutching in her arms.
The flag was a sign of her husband
and that he wasn't truly gone.
A blanket of stars and stripes.



Beautiful and Patriotic

Jose Barcenas

The Ultimate Battle

Sara Godinez

The Blinds put up a lame fight.

As the Light came sweeping in, a battle was born.

A battle between Light and Darkness.

Reinforcements were called over from either side.

In came Good and Evil, Positivity and Negativity.

Lastly, as Happiness and Depression entered, silence fell among all.

Then, almost simultaneously, both sides attacked.

With their swords they slashed at one another, many crying for mercy before termination.

At last, the Light team had the upper hand in numbers and the Darkness was slowly fading.

Corner by corner, the Room was filled with Light.

Happiness sighed in relief and, with the support of Positivity, lifted off the Floor and crawled onto the Bed.

Lying there was the vulnerable Human.

Gently, Happiness crept into the Human, spread throughout the Brain and eventually reached the Heart.

And so, after the intense feelings of Happiness set in, the Human walked into the Dark World to spread the Love to all.

Sail Away

Shannon Moore

A boy will grow just as a tree will rise
Mature, to men, is not a taller span
A man must know a harder path than size
And God would shame the boy who stands a man

A man can trust the flow of air in life
But breaks a course when the tide would bring him back
Aware, he's whole, humble, and calm in strife
No tyrant has composure midst his lack

The ritual for boy to leave his home
Is taken so soft skin can rip and flay
And secrets flow in, filling mind and tome
Do not come back until you know the way

For this, my son, you'll go to die alone
Return, as man, and live how you've been shown

Belief

Luke Backlund

I believe in mankind
I believe in their words
I believe in the trees
I believe in the birds
I believe in God
I believe technology as well
I strongly believe in heaven
Just as strongly as hell
I believe in literature
For a higher education
I believe in the world
Especially our great nation
I believe in songs
I believe in poetry
I believe in the myths
For there are more stories to see
I believe that a utopia...
Is unlikely and fake
I believe in peace however
For it is worth the stake
I believe in hope, but...
Its meaning has come to slaughter
Hope without belief... is like an ocean without water

Travel

Laura Sasse

Voyage (French)

Et si on partait sur la grande route de l'inconnu
On s'en irait sans jamais se retourner
Si on marchait bras dessous bras dessus
On verrait qu'il y a un monde entier à visiter
Monte sur mon dos
Quittons cette terre
Découvrons toutes ces eaux
Et tout ce qu'il y a dans l'air
Qui sait on dépliera peut être nos valises
Après tout, l'avenir nous appartient
Et si la vie est trop grise
Repartons sur les chemins
Ensemble, les nouveaux horizons
On va en voir à en perdre la raison

Travel (Literal Translation)

And if we left the main road of the unknown
It would go without even turning
If you were walking arm in arm
We would see that there is a world to visit
Get on my back
Leave this earth
Discover all these waters
And all that was in the air
Who knows we may unfold our suitcases
After all, the future is ours
And if life is too gray
Out again on the roads
Together, new horizons
We're gonna see the reason to lose

Travel (Rhyming Translation)

And if we left the main road of the unknown
It would go without turning
If we are walking arm in arm to see what is shown
We would see that there is a world worth yearning
Get on my back
Leave this earth
Discover all that we lack
Find your inner mirth
Who knows what our future will hold
After all, the choice is yours
And if life makes you feel old
Start again and open new doors
Together, we start again
With new horizons to begin

Untitled

Abby Miller



Art & Photography



Sunflower

Ptolemy



Night lady

Celeste Avendelle



Apollo

Michaela Sanchez



Human LSP

Michaela Sanchez





91



Untitled

Johnathan Gonzales

A Peaceful Moment

Vuly





Alone

William Tesla Geyer

Cloudy Mountains

Mauricio Longines



Mauricio Longines

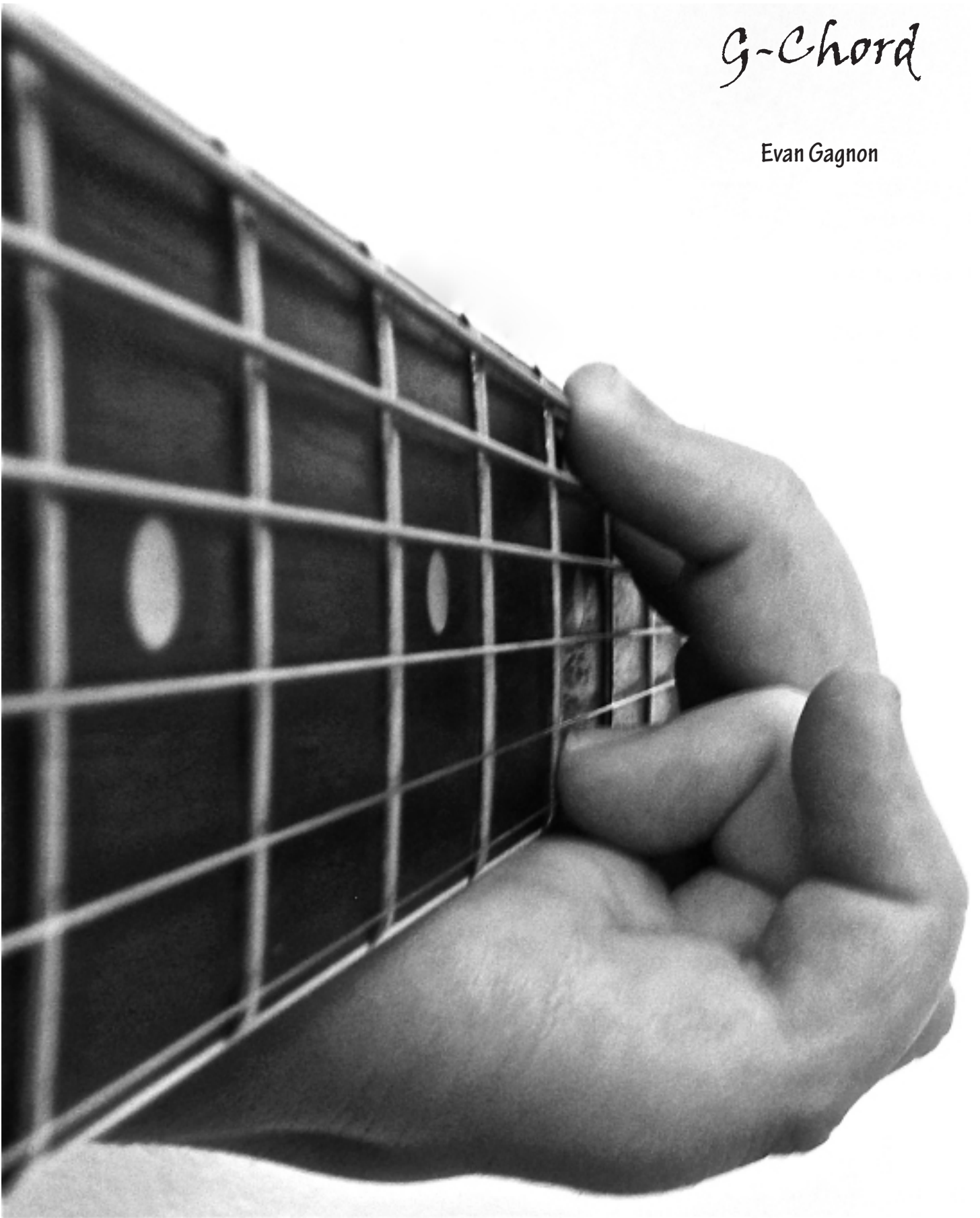
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Chit Martinez



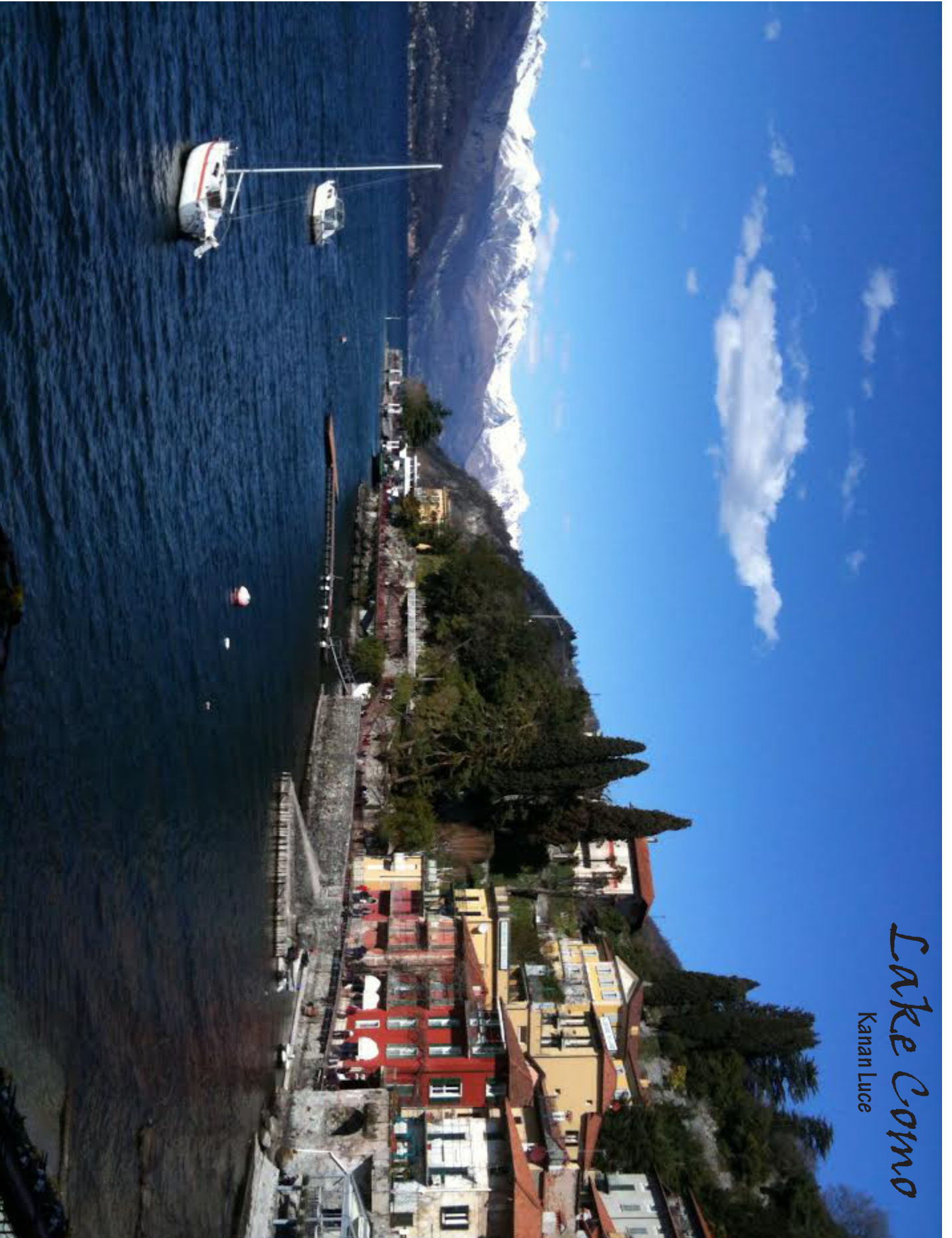
G-Chord

Evan Gagnon



Lake Como

Kanan Luce



Oily Islands

Mauricio Longines



Mauricio Longines

Ventura High School
2013-2014