



Summit Shasta

Literary Magazine

2018 Creative Writing

Artwork: Chloe Albanati

Forceful Beginnings

Our written prophecy
If this is our fate,
Why wait until the expiration date?
The purity of this milk is now sour;
It's time to restock,
Father time is nothing but dour.

By: Kendall Fry

Heart

Very young and numb
I'm alone with my dark side
But I've been stabbed
I wonder If I'm nice again
But I don't want to see your eyes again

By: Edwin Augustin

Tired, just tired. I suppose that tired does come with some friends like thirst, hunger, boredom, pain, and aching of my body from my toes to my shoulders where I was carrying the young girl I met along my journey. She couldn't be older than 10, yet she felt like a ton of bricks as I carried her through the desert. She was fast asleep, which was a lot better than her complaining about how thirsty, hungry, and bored she was. Of course I felt the exact same way, but I internalized those feelings. I guess that you can't help it considering she's a child. I believe that the older you get the quieter you are; perhaps that's good and perhaps that bad. On the one hand, you have more time to have thoughts of your own and philosophize on things in your life, but on the other hand you have best chances to advocate for yourself as I have seen in young girls like this one. Those who yell their beliefs to protect themselves. But even when I was a kid I didn't speak out that much; I've always been quiet. You would think that a person who is as quiet as me and as smart as I am would think of a better way to get out of the stupid desert or think of something to entertain the young girl still fast asleep on my aching shoulders.

By: Julia Parr

Trains

That's we named you
A fast paced person
Complex but simple
And everyone knew about you

But trains as you know
Are hardly in one place
And with a fast pace
You were gone

But that never stopped them
From running after you at the dock
And waiting for you day and night
Just to see you again

Here was a person
Who never looked back
But was looked at by many
Being chased after

But day by day
People started to forget
The famous train
That was once loved by many

But that's how it is
And that's how it was
Realizing what you missed out on
Coming to a complete halt

By Kristen Geraldizo

PINK

Happiness is an indescribable feeling
It exudes the color pink
A melody of laughs, oh so appealing
It happens when you have a soft drink
Happiness is so revealing

Last time I felt happiness was in '03
It was in a hospital
When I was a little baby
Back when my bones were brittle
Will I be happy again?
Maybe

By: Teayana Orence-Fierro

Wandman

Once there was just an ordinary guy living an ordinary life. He would eat the same thing everyday and live the same day over and over. He would go to work and always hate it, he would always go eat at his favorite place, McDonalds. But one day..., he was walking around a neighborhood he has never been. He started to get creeped out when he heard gunshots and people screaming. He started to run and tripped into someone's yard. He thought it was fine until he heard someone scream at him to get off. He started to run but at that moment the police showed up and asked him some questions. Once he got let go, he started to feel a little weird, he wouldn't walk straight and he felt dizzy. He went back home and fell asleep.

The next day he saw a wand at the end of his bed. He didn't think it was anything until he picked it up and felt some sort of power. He pointed the wand at the door and told it to shrink. One second later the door became 2 inches long. He thought, "that's weird i wonder what else it can do" Later on in the day after he went to work and ate, he picked up the wand again and told it to make his house bigger. A second later, the house was twice as bigger. He started to get excited because he knew he had a lot of power with the little thing. After trying out a couple things, he figured out that the wand could do anything he says to. Then he wondered how he got the power and came to the conclusion that it was from the yard that he tripped on because right next to where he fell were some plants that looked really weird so he thought it was from that. Going through his day he helped everyone. He felt at the top of the world because everything he had done had helped people until one day. He saw a girl crying and when he saw her leg, he had seen that it was obviously broken so his powers came to his mind so he tried to heal her but things just got worse.

He got worried and mad that his powers weren't working but he went and did more but what he was trying to do wasn't working other. He decided to go to

the same yard that he tripped on and when he got there he saw an old lady. He went up to her and asked if her yard if it was magical. She had no idea what he was talking about. He got mad and ran away because all he was doing was harming people at that point which was the opposite of what he wanted to do. He decided to help people without using his powers because he came to the conclusion that the powers don't work anymore and that he should just give it up. He went around helping others by hand and donating to people in need and going with the Red Cross Foundation.

He went through his life without using his powers at all and continued on to help people by hand and flying around the world to help other countries. He lived happy with his wife and ended up having 4 kids who were all healthy and happy.

By: Jonathan Portillo

Positivity

- 1 Do you not feel like you are yourself because you are sad?
- 2 You're not alone so don't feel bad,
- 3 There are people around the world who feel the same way as you
- 4 So be yourself and do what you do.

- 5 There is someone deep down in every one of us
- 6 It's not very noticeable or big like a school bus,
- 7 But it brings out the inner you
- 8 It's just like following a bunch of clues.

- 9 If you feel down well that's ok
- 10 You will feel like a new person the very next day,
- 11 I hope this poem lifted your heart
- 12 For the sake of the future, this is only the start.

By: Ethan Tran

In this car I hear the raindrops that fall from the unforgiving sky hit the roof, each one creating a simple beat that then transforms into collective crashings. These crashings become so loud that I can almost feel each raindrop fall onto me and nearly drown me. I look out the window and see figures in the mist run in front the car trying to get into their safe haven, escaping from the pouring rain. To most people these figures are merely entities going from point A to point B, but to me I see something much more. People that see the pain only see the pain, but I can expand. I can acknowledge these people's life stories. Their first steps, the first time they cried, the first time they laughed, the first time they loved. Sometimes these observations are useful but most of the time these observation add to my own pain. Sometimes I wonder if other people with these observation can tell my own pain and stories. The car slows down and I hear the driver leave the car and open my door. He's holding an umbrella for my protecting my from the rain. I look out and I see figure standing in front of a casket on a hill. I scan through all of them until I see him, the man who has hated me for half of his life. He's wearing an all black suit except for his white shirt that illuminates in the pouring rain. For a second he looks up and sees me standing with a smile on my face. I can tell by the look in his eye that he's drowning out every word that the priest is saying and is focusing on me. Right now the only thing that he is talking about is taking out the 9 mm. he keeps in his holster and putting 5 pieces of lead in me, but he surprises me. With every fiber in his being he looks down and listens to what the priest has to say.

By: Miguel Angel Cassano

The Final Days

By: Kathryn Currier-Herzallah

In a frenzy, Brooke Medina paced back and forth by the river. She only had a few more minutes until she was expected back at the house for dinner. She kept desperately trying to get the water under control, but to do that she had to calm down and focus. But how could she focus when the date was looming over her head? If she didn't get it together before her eighteenth birthday, her fate would no longer belong to her. She would be helpless to the government's cruel hands.

Although to say they were cruel was a faux pas. Brooke had known the queen since her birth. The royal family had always been kind to Brooke and her family, but if it came down to it, they had to keep their integrity. All things considered, Brooke was an outcast. But more on that later.

With one last feeble attempt at the river, Brooke began the short walk home. The whole way, she heard the rushing of the moving water, and felt the mist in the air. It was always like that was in the Kingdom of Mira. It was all about the water. In all honesty, Brooke hated the damn water, but she could never escape it. It was her fate. She would live out her days surrounded by the water, regardless of whether or not she could figure out how to control it.

When she crossed the threshold, her mother was setting the table. Quietly, she took the silver out of her mother's hands, and finished the task. There was no "thank you," no nod of acknowledgement. For the most part, Brooke was invisible. But then again, that was how she wanted it.

When the food was placed on the table, Brooke took her seat at the small mahogany table. She soon found herself faced with her kin. Although family by blood, the other three people seated at the lovely dining table had nothing in common with Brooke. There were so many differences, both inwardly and outwardly. The three people facing Brooke had the cool, light blue colored skin that was typical of noble families like the Medina family. Unlike her family, Brooke skin was darker, nearly violet, almost with warm tones. While her family had brown hair, Brooke's long unruly locks were the color of the sky, like her grandmother's had been. The only commonality they shared were the piercing azure eyes. The eyes as deep and churning as the unsettled ocean. The eyes that saw into your soul.

But on the inside as well, Brooke was lacking from her family. You see, in Mira, nobles were dictated by ability. And Brooke belonged to a bloodline filled with fierce warriors, water benders of the highest caliber. Simply put, Brooke had no aptitude.

Everything in her home reminded Brooke of the talent she did not possess. For the dinner her mother had made, she willed the water to boil. Tendrils of water carried the dish to the table. The dishes would wash themselves at the end. Her father was a general in the Queen's

militia, manning the front lines, fighting with the water as an advantage. Even at fourteen, Brooke's little sister Bree was skilled with water.

She went to the school for the gifted, like most noble children did. Brooke had gone there until she was fifteen, when her mother pulled her out and began to homeschool her. You see, Brooke had an incredible aptitude for math, reading, writing. She loved her country's history and knew it by heart. Science came easily to her. In those aspects, she excelled in school. But, she lacked in water bending. In Mira, everything centered around the water, and as a noble, she was expected to be able to control it. At fourteen, the training in bending transformed from rudimentary basics, to an artform. While the children around her had been able to control the water since youth, Brooke still could not figure it out. So, a year after struggling and watching her classmates rise, her mother pulled her out to teach her at home. Except, it didn't work. And her birthday was days away. If she could not become a productive adult member of her ranking, what would happen to her?

Having lost her appetite, Brooke quickly finished her dinner and excused herself for the night. She found her way to her bedroom. It had not changed since she was a child. She admired the dark purple curtains, the river painted on the floor. The bay window with the pink pillows that she used to prefer to her bed. The lights were out, but the starry sky on her ceiling lit the room. The paint was enchanted by her mother, infused with water that would glow in the dark. She sat down at the bay window, thinking about all the memories. The room that she very likely had only days left in.

Lost in thought, Brooke stared out at the rushing river that she had followed home. Once upon a time, she had loved the water. As a child, she would swim for hours, her fingers never pruned up. She would float effortlessly, swim as fast as a dolphin, rarely coming up for air. Her friends and family had assumed it to be aptitude, that she held great power with the water. But now, she resented it. It was the source of her greatest misdemeanor.

Legend had it, that once upon a time, the kingdom of Mira was not isolated as it is now. There were other kingdoms. Of fire. Of earth. Of air. But no one knew for sure. All that Brooke knew was her kingdom. Her kingdom, an island sealed in a ring of fire. Cruel for sure, to the people who could not survive without the water.

That's where they would probably take her. To the ring of fire, to perish in flames, forever gone. If she was not a productive member of society, she was a burden. And burdens are to be expelled, after all. That was what she was thinking, anyway, when Bree walked into her room.

"Hello!" She exclaimed cheerily, her step as light as air, as if she was walking on water. Brooke looked up at her younger sister questioningly.

"Oh, come on," she said, exasperated at the lack of response. Bree grabbed Brooke's hand and made her follow through the large home they lived in. Bree lead Brooke through parts of the mansion that Brooke had never seen. A lot of it was off limits to the girls. Of course, that would never stop Bree from exploring, and the whole family knew that.

Right, left. Right, right, stop. Down this tunnel, through this door. Bree clearly knew where she was going. Finally, the pair stopped in front of a plain looking door. In fact, it was the same as almost every door in the house. Brooke wondered what was so special about this room.

“Well,” Bree gestured to the door. “Open it!”

So, Brooke did. And what she found, was a wonderland that she wished she had known about as a child. It seemed like a paradise for a younger, happier Brooke. The room was clearly enchanted. Waterfalls ran down the walls, into a lake with an island at the center. The water churned with anger, yet it was strangely tempting. It reminded her of the vicious river rapids. Nobody knew how she could stay afloat in them as a child, yet she did.

“Brianna... how?” Was all that Brooke could manage.

Bree shrugged. “I just found it one day.” She proceeded to throw a swimsuit at Brooke. “Come on!” Bree quickly changed into her suit, but Brooke hesitated.

“Bree, I haven’t swam since I was twelve years old.”

“You’ll be fine. It’ll be great. You trust me, don’t you? Trust yourself.” And Brooke did. More than anyone else in the world, Brooke trusted her younger sister. Bree was the only person who hadn’t ditched her, who still believed in her. So, she put the swimsuit on. And she waded into the swirling pool of water, and trusted herself.

As she waded further, she felt the currents catch her toes and her legs and carry her. She let go and allowed herself to simply float. It was bliss. It was everything that she used to love about the water, brought back in that moment.

Suddenly, Bree was next to her.

“Race you to the island!”

Using her long limbs to her advantage, Brooke swam as fast as she could. Almost instantly, she found herself at the edge. She climbed out of the vast pool.

Seconds later, Bree climbed up next to her.

“Brooke, tell me what you want, but you already have your elemental skills. You just might not know what they are.”

“How do you figure?” Brooke asked incredulously.

Bree looked down at the ground for a long time. “Once, I brought Amal here. She’s not, you know, like us. Her family doesn’t have it. Anyway, if you didn’t have the magic, you wouldn’t have been able to swim through the currents like that. They carried you, Brooke. They dragged Amal down.”

Brooke stared at the convulsing currents around her. She took in the information. Although she didn’t like it, she knew that her fate was likely sealed. She would not discover her magic and in turn, would be escorted into the ring of fire. But this, this information contradicted everything that she had resigned herself to. Perhaps there was hope left for Brooke Medina.

Brooke dipped her hand into the wild rapids. The water that she pulled up continued to churn, ever changing.

“Make it stop, Brooke. Make it still.”

With everything in her, Brooke tried. But at best, all she could get was the currents to move a bit slower.

“It’s useless, Bree.”

“Um, no it’s not.” Bree gestured around them. While the water in Brooke’s hand was still moving, the rest of the body of water was completely still, crystal clear. The two girls stared in amazement. In that moment, Brooke realized that she had been trying too hard. So, she let all the pent up energy out, and she focused. She focused on sending all the water into one spot. The small of her sister’s back. And the water moved, oh boy did it move, but it would not hit Bree.

It was like there was an invisible shield protecting Bree from the convulsing currents. But Bree was completely unaware. She was lost in her train of thought.

“Are you for real, Bree?”

“What?”

“You’re shielding my water!” Brooke laughed.

Bree turned around and looked at the water that surrounded her, close, very close, but never quite touching. The smile faded from her face.

“I’m not doing that.”

The two girls sat in silence, contemplating. They were confused, with good reason. There was no reason that they could think of, between their incomplete educations, for the water not to hit her. Until it did hit her. Not the water, of course, but the idea.

“Brooke... what if you’re a healer?”

“Healers are powerful. I can’t be a healer.”

Bree lost herself in thought, reflecting, thinking hard. Could her sister be a healer?

“Here’s what I know. You are powerful. You settled the entire pool. Healers cannot use their power to hurt people. All that water on my back would have hurt. I didn’t make the shield, Brooke. You did. In school they taught us that healers are gifted not only with water, but with the other elements. That’s why sometimes they come into their power later. You did. It just takes them a little while to unlock it because they’re looking for one specific part of their power. We have to tell to Mom and Dad. They’ll know what to do.”

Bree got up and reentered the lake. Brooke simply could not bring herself to follow.

“What’s wrong? You have powers. Powerful ones. You should be jumping for joy.”

“What if it’s just a fluke. I’m already a disappointment,” Brooke responded quietly. Her words hung heavy in the humid air.

Not knowing how to react, Bree rolled her eyes and pulled Brooke into the water with her. In the lake, everything felt right. Brooke forgot her troubles, momentarily. But when she arrived at the door, her heart was heavy. She knew that she should feel excited. She knew that

to be a healer would be the greatest honor she could ever have in her life. But somehow, that just didn't seem like it would be her fate.

The next morning, Brooke and her mother sat together at the breakfast table. Her father had left for work and Bree for school.

"Are you ready to go train?" Bella Medina asked her daughter, concealing her irritation. Although she would never admit it to her daughter, Brooke already knew. Bella Medina had given up on her first born child. So, with resignation the pair walked to the river.

Brooke had managed to convince Bree to stay silent, but if their parents did not know by dinner, Bree would tell them. That was their deal.

Their walk was silent, as usual. But Brooke walked with more urgency than normal. All she wanted, the only thing, was to pass her evaluation. And her birthday was in three days. Normally, the evaluation was a ceremony of sorts, a coming of age. However, for Brooke, it would be different. It would be in front of her family, if they could stomach her likely failure, and the government officers who would decide her fate.

At the brink of the river, Brooke's mother sat with her feet in the cool water. Brooke did the same, hitching her dress up to sit.

"Alright Brooke, I want you to do as I do," her mother told her and began a demonstration. She held her hands cupped in front of her, and willed water into them. A spout similar to a fountain projected water right into her hands. Bella Medina turned to face her daughter. "Your turn," she said matter of factly.

For the first time ever, Brooke was able to replicate her mother's little trick. In fact, everything she attempted on that day, she succeeded at. Her mother had to mask her surprise. Though she would never admit it, Bella had given up on her first born child.

So their training continued, and so did Brooke's success. For the four days that followed, anyway. But then the fifth day came. This was the big day, Brooke's eighteenth birthday. The day the government would decide her fate. She was nervous, so nervous. She and Bree woke up early to practice. Bree had confidence that Brooke would pass the test. Everyone did. No one had ever seen such control in such a short period of time. So, the girls practice, and everything went right. That was rare for Brooke. It was a bad omen of sorts.

She was nervous out of her mind as her family walked her down the river to the testing facility. She could hear her pulse, feel her nervous sweat. This was the biggest moment of her life. And perhaps her fatal flaw, Brooke simply could not stop thinking. She couldn't let the anxiety go. Like she had all her life, Brooke Medina was trying too hard.

She took a deep breath and stepped up in front of the Council. An enchanted river ran before her. All she had to do was prove she was its master.

She took a deep breath and attempted to focus. She put all her will into pulling the water up out of the river, to make it fly around the room and then return. But try as she might, nothing happened. She stood there for what seemed like ages. She couldn't look at her family.

She had failed them. She was truly the disappointment that everyone had always known she would be.

Wordlessly, a Councilman came to take Brooke away. Brooke heard Bree's sobs, although she refused to look up from the ground. A silent tear rolled down her own cheek.

Soon enough, she found herself on a cliff leading out to the Ring of Fire. She looked at her surroundings. She looked at herself. At her dark unbecoming skin, uncommon of her family. She felt her coarse sky blue hair. She was aware of the wind blowing her chiffon dress, her best dressing. How fitting that she would die in it. There would be no body to bury.

Accepting her fate, Brooke swallowed and dove into the fiery abyss below her. And to everyone's surprise, she began to swim. Away from the people who did not believe in her. Away from the government who would assassinate a teenager. Away from the shell of herself, which she left in the Kingdom of Mira. But most importantly, Brooke swam away from her supposed fate, to create her own.

America is my familiar place because I have been here pretty much my whole life. This place is very familiar and I know a lot of events that have happened here. Most of my friends and family live here.,
it looks nice at most parts of it,
and it smells nice in certain parts.

By: Tyler Ell

Horror Story

By: Ben Judice

There was a girl who had a passage to a magic land. She liked it there a lot. There were: rivers of juice, fields of candy, luscious brightly colored skies, and beautiful vibrant landscapes. She liked it so much that she continually spent more and more time there. She spent so much time there that she even ignored her real life duties. She lost her job and her friends. But she grew to love the magic land so much that she didn't even care. However, it got harder and harder to leave the magic land. The door, once a calm and peaceful walk in the forest, became an exhausting trudge through tangled vines, thorns, and mud. The magic land used to be an escape for when real life was hard, but as time passed it seemed like life was *always* hard, unless she was in the magic land. Her family tried to bring her back to the real world, but she knew they didn't understand. If only they knew what the magic land was like, she thought. However, one day in the magic land, on her way out, the door wouldn't budge. She tried to push it open as hard as she could, but it would not move no matter how hard she tried. She was trapped. Weeks passed, and the delicious juice streams and fields of candy were no longer enough to sustain her. The luscious skies and vibrant landscapes didn't seem nearly as beautiful as they once were. She ended up dying in the magic land, but it was no longer magic at all.

It Was Just A SunnyD

The day is rainy, the water pouring
And there is a box in front of me.
It's full of sweet drink SunnyDs
And I take two or three
Cause no one wants to stop me.
Who said I was boring? Nobody.

Then I see this little bug that's ugly
And who says that "I am sharing a car with thee!"
What old-fashioned language I contemplated.
But my mood and that bug I soon realized,
They were related.

Out I stepped into the April shower,
And walked for what seemed like hours.
And the bug was waiting by my car.
Said the bug "Here I am without a jacket!"
And thought I "what a racket."
I felt like plugging my ears with tar.

The was no tar, not even wax
The drive back I could not relax.
The bug went on and on
And ate ALL OF MY CHIPS.
(You don't get it. Not a thank you!)

Eventually, it's San Francisco
The fog makes the air thick as Crisco.
The bug rats on as we approach Cole Valley
(The bug's home. Don't make me dilly-dally!)

We reached a giant hermit crab
that looked like it was grown in a lab.
The bug gets out of the car.
"Thanks for the ride" the little bug says.

Jumps into the crabs' mouth, and disappears.
Think myself to I "I'm in the clear!"

The study trip's over, now I'm free
To mess around and party.
Out of Cole Valley, back home
Jump out of the car and Rush up the stairs.
Hi everyone! I'm back.
In my pocket there's still a SunnyD.
Eh...I'll have it later.
When later comes... cheers!

By: Liam Morcillas

Tag

By: Olivia Quiambao

“Alright, we’re here. Who’s ready to play?” Finn said with a chilling voice in the night sky. “Hurry up, let’s play it before we get caught!” Natalie said while letting out a cold shiver. “I call not IT!” Ethan yelled while running ahead. The five of us arrived to the center of the quiet abandoned carnival fair. Four long hands stretched into the handmade bowl, made by Rachel. I knew all of them were tacitly deciding that I would become ‘IT’. I counted to 100 seconds while closing my eyes, hearing laughs and thumps digging into the ground. What felt like forever, the seconds were up, and I looked around. “You’re It!” Rachel said looking back at me while she was walking. I remember disagreeing with the whole idea, calling me chicken if I didn’t go. Walking around while looking at the abandoned carnival, sent me chills down my spine. The smell is mixed with piss and sewer, molding together into the definition of toxic. I was walking around the disgusting abandoned carnival fair for 15 minutes, without hearing a voice. I was getting worried, which frightened me. “Guys, come on, how am I supposed to find you when this place is huge! Guys, I give up now can we please leave?” I yelled while zipping up my jacket in the winter weather. I listened intently; but no response. I walked faster, and faster, noticing that something is wrong. My heart beat was pumping quicker than normal, bringing my phone to the front of my face. Checking, I saw that I have enough data for one phone call, I call Natalie, my lifelong crush since the fourth grade. I dialed her phone number while running around the park looking for the people who made me scared for my life. Brrh...Brrh...Brrh... I hear waiting for a response. “Come on Nat pick up!” I said running into the circus tent. “Hello?” I thanked God that he answered my loud prayer. “Nat, where are you guys, I’ve been worried-” A sudden voice cut mine. “Sorry, I’m not here at the moment, make sure to leave a voicemail!” Natalie’s voice fainted out while my thoughts blurred through my mind. I was so worried that my friends left me, and played this sick prank on me. I’ve been thinking for ten minutes straight that I realized I have no idea where I am. I lifted my head up, and looked around. Suddenly my face slowly turned into disgust when I saw three of my friends hanged from the top of the tent. I was so shocked I couldn’t move. Finally what felt for ages I looked around, to see the words written “Are you ready to play?” in dark red. I looked at my three friends and I noticed one other person wasn’t there. I could not believe that it was him who killed my friends...

...

“Thank you for your time, you may leave.” I looked down, not looking at the detective who questioned what happened in that horrible week. My mom looked at me empathetically, speaking into my muzzled hearing as we walked back to the car. She suggested that I take a week off from school, being that I was too devastated by the deaths of those people.

Days felt like weeks, and after forever, it was time to go back to school. It’s been a month since the incident and I still feel the adrenaline that rushed through my body. I heard the television being surfed through multiple channels with my mom repeating my name to get ready for school. I sat on the couch hugging the only soft thing next to me. The news was on, the only thing that was on the television screen.

“After only one month of the murders of the teenagers at Tate’s abandoned Carnival, suspected murderer Finn Sawyer was charged with first-degree murder, and is sent to death penalty.

“I did not do anything! I swear! I was there with my friends and all of a sudden someone came behind me and knocked my head! When I woke up I saw my friends.. all.. hanged! My girlfriend, Natalie and my best friends all dead! Why send me I didn’t do any-”

I knew Finn was going to die. Behind my mom was running her mouth saying how much he cause onto the community and how she did not like him in the beginning. She spoke, but all I could here is my never ending laughter in my thoughts. I knew my plan worked. I was not caught and he deserved hell after all the bullying he made people give me, evening taking the love of my life calling her his girlfriend.

I hid a slight smirk while I walked into school looking for my next victims. Tag I was IT.

About Clay

Your brain on the surface is a plane
And the rain and the turf doesnt amount to much
But when you look down close in the mud
Theres a jungle of creatures running amok
Gardens of beauty and rivers of gold
But thats certainly not what you and me were told
They said there's nothing here,
That its just dirt and sand
But many great things can come from this land

By: Ben Judice

Balloon

Floating freely in the air,
Is a special balloon with all my care,
That I released to the skies above.
It's really important, it carries my love.
So please be watching for it to come by;
This special balloon, I released to the sky.
I know you're in heaven and that gives me peace.
So it's with all my love, this balloon I release.

By: Clay Johnson

thAt's welrd *By: Olivia Quiros*

Dogs are cool
They also drool
So much it's a pool
If you staple yourself, you will bleed
Oxygen is what you need
We have nerve cells
They tell our brains to be angry if we hear school bells
Everyone can be a winner
In "Silence of the Lambs" that one dude skinned her
All of our fingers have different prints
If you don't wash your belly button, you may find lint
Why do people like hot cheetos?
I personally prefer doritos
Nail polish is not forever
I'm sure there's something that looks better
One time I touched coal because I thought it was a rock
The ash that came off and burned me looked like chalk
If you crash your car, you may get hurt
In "Glee," Kurt's dad's name was Burt
Keys can be many things
Sometimes you use them when you're typing
I LOVE SPECULOOS
Some people may think that it's gross
Friends are more important than money
But what if you need money because your nose is runny?
I read that on a lunch box
Are no-shows considered socks?
Can you wear them with crocs?
I don't know
One time I ate snow
It was extremely cold
You probably shouldn't make physical contact with mold.
Dogs smell bad when they are wet
Washing them excessively can put you in debt
Reading may be good for your brain

Some people may find it to be intellectual pain
Characters in books can be insane
Has anything magically appeared in front of you that you feared?
thAt's weird!

I been stabbed
You broke me
I want you back
But I hate you
You did me wrong
I want to forgive
But you're making it hard
We came so far
And you just want to turn back around

By: Austin Moore

Eroded and corroded but yet beautiful
Boiling and frothing seas below
Stone pillars jutting from the waves
Cloudy views of the sunset

By: Kai Smith

REDQUEEN

Working,

White Screen

Working,

Black Letters

Working,

Pencil

Working,

9.75 x 7.5

Working,

Things I barely understand

Pass one keep going

Pass two keep going

Pass three keep going

Pass four keep going

Pass five keep going

Pass six keep going

Pass seven keep going

Stop

No time to Stop

Rep,

Jab Step

Rep,

Pass

Rep,

Shot

Rep,

Cross

Rep,

Layup

Rep,

Pull back,

Rep,

Never good enough

Three, get back

Six, get back

Eight, get back

Ten, get back

Breath in

Breath out

Runnin' Repin' Studyin' Workin' Never stop Never good enough All I do is stop New shoes Can't find them Slippin' and slidin' God help me I'm dying Can't find it can't sign it Seven out of ten try again good luck Whoever says whatever but I'm not getting better Skin ain't made for the m.A.A.d city Feel that I got no place in the city I'm nobody special Back again passed eight outta ten good job go back and do it again Dad don't want me mom got heart Feel so dark Got no light The Lord my Lamp

By: Aaron Susantin

Oh My God They Were Roommates

it's a painted canvas but at the same time it's blank
it sounds like something you cherish the most
but it also sounds like something you fear the most
it happens when there's nothing left
it's everything but nothing all at once

clad in an array of colors
i felt it
mindlessly typing and watching a page fill with words one by one
i felt it
my friends doing the same, albeit maybe better or worse
i felt it
it wasn't a fun feeling
but it was there
just as it always has been, waiting for the perfect moment to strike
like a predator stalking its prey

that's what this emotion was to me
the emotion, the predator, awaiting the perfect moment to strike
me, the prey, blissfully unaware of what was going to happen
it struck quietly, the prey silenced as it hit
just as this emotion does to me
it renders me useless

it feels like it's full
but there's nothing there to fill it
constantly filling to the top but always spilling over, emptying it once more
this feeling is endless, but always there
this feeling is invisible, but spreads throughout
this feeling isn't good, but is what fills me some days
there's nothing but emptiness left in me
it's unfortunate but true

By: Jenna Wong

I Remember

I remember,
The sound the birds chirping on the streets
The feeling of warmth
The taste of the melting popsicles
And the smell of flowers around me
I will remember.

Spring

I remember,
The sound of the buzzing bees
The feeling of the summer breeze
The taste of fresh air
And the smell of BBQ from the backyard
I will remember.

Summer

I remember,
The sound of the leaves falling from the trees
The feeling of the brisk wind against my body
The taste of pumpkin pie
And the smell of cinnamon
I will remember.

Fall

I remember,
The sound of the creaking floor
The feeling of cold freezing weather
The taste of hot cocoa sitting at the table
The smell of the fire burning in the pit
I will remember.

Winter

I will remember all those good times in my earlier life.
And they will not ever to be forgotten.
Now as an adult I should've taken advantage of it.
"Live everyday like it's your last."

By: Dianni Flores

Monachopsis

A grey area, not really black but not really white (not anywhere, really)

Sounds like the constant chatter of people talking about nothing and everything to everyone (except you)

Happens when you watch people move on with their life and finding their place in the world, but you are just...there

Freshmen finding their cliques, finding their place

But i'm just looking around with a desire to belong

One group is formed after another

And i am just there, watching and wondering:

Was it my shoulder length blonde hair? Was it my Harry Potter backpack? Was it just plain awkwardness? Was it just me?

These thoughts plague my mind all throughout the day

And it's still with me today:

The subtle, yet persistent feeling of being out of place

By: Charlotte Christie

Flying through a few thousand feet on the way to Toronto, seatbelt signs turn on. I feel unsure on doing just about anything by now. After the outbreak in Los Angeles of the infected people, all hell went loose, no help, no hop. I managed to drive out the city, which was engulfed in flames because of riots happening for months now. Because of this outbreak, Los Angeles looks like it's been attacked by bombers. I drove to San Francisco, picked up a friend named Jane, we took a flight to Toronto, one of the only places currently with no infected people. Soon the Canadian government will be closing down Toronto and Quebec to keep out any infected. Most likely me and Jane will get kicked out but there's a chance we can fake our citizenship. A guy called Montay has been running a shop for 30 years selling fake ID's.

"Ladies and gentlemen this is your captain speaking, we are only a few minutes away from Toronto we'll be landing shortly, once you disembark the airplane please put on your masks that we will hand out at the gate and keep it on at all times. Please do not leave any of your belongings here on the flight. We hope you enjoyed this flight on behalf of me, my crew, and Air Canada we wish for all to stay safe out there." the pilot announces as we are about to land.

We arrive at the terminal and all put our masks on, inside there were guards standing ready to fire at any moment. We check out at the luggage area and we exit out to catch a bus. The bus takes us to designated areas that are meant for visitors only, we stay over there for the night to then find Montay for the ID. That following night sirens wail across the whole city.

"No, no no the infected couldn't have reached here!" I yell.

"What the hell are we gonna do?!?" shrieks Jane.

"We need to get out of here, get out of Toronto, there's a road I saw down East, I saw it on a tourist map at the hotel's desk. Let's go!"

We run down the stairs as the power in the hotel went out, chaos outside like in Los Angeles I remember as I look out the window near the elevators. Once outside people are running, cars are in flames, shattered glass and other debris fill the street in front of the hotel. As soon as I catch the general direction people are going the infected started to appear. These infected aren't just people, there are deer, racoons, other rodents running savage. All acting abnormally. Faces looking like they've been in a fire for hours. Too many thoughts passing by as we begin to run away as fast as we could. As many people are fleeing simply forward, I know they're gonna be at a dead end, inevitably meeting their fates. I usher Jane to take a right with me that eventually leads to the gate. Before this outbreak most likely the gate was guarded by soldiers. No clue what could be happening there now. Only a few people are running with us, as

the mainstream of people are running on the main avenue, followed by the infected ones. Reaching the gate it wasn't to my surprise that the soldiers were dead. As the infected most likely came from this gate and the main entrance. The only chance we have is going to Montreal by stealing a vehicle here.

"Jane! Search the dead guards' corpses and tell me if you can find any keys. I'll search inside the control room. Quick!" I holler out to her.

I go into the room and browse in there taking out all of the cabinets and searching frantically on the desk. At last I find a couple of keys, both for the same models. Jeep it says on the keys, must be the Jeep Wranglers parked right behind the control room.

"Found one, let's get inside one of these and get going to Montreal!" I yell out.

Me and Jane, who's looking completely at loss, get in the Jeep, I put in the keys praying it's the right car I put them in for and it starts up, a sigh of relief comes out of me. Before pressing the pedal a family runs up and are yelling, pleading that they get in, I open my window and gave the presumed father the second key to the other Jeep. I slam on the pedal and we drive out quickly out of what's left of Toronto. The the road should lead to a highway that takes us to Montreal. Minutes go by as the roars of helicopters and a couple jets pass by, all heading out of Toronto like me and Jane. As soon as they pass a clear view of what's left of downtown is seen, knocked down structures and a couple barely standing as old fires are still eating the metal trying to knock down every one of them. Debris goes under the wheels making stability on the road very hard to maintain. Something human like catches my eye to my left, not a good sign, this means infected are around here. I can feel my gut wrenching again as for a second I felt a moment of pure relief. More pass by and some in the headlights, I steer around them until one them hits the hood of the Jeep smashing into the windshield. Jane starts screaming, and the infected human starts to move again.

"Throw it out!!! I need to see where I'm going!!!" I scream at Jane, not being sure if she heard or not because of the rushing wind passing by.

The infected human takes a bite right out of Jane's the next second. I try my best to throw the zombie out of this car but it's clenched into Jane. Before I realised it the Jeep is driving over what used to be homes for the citizens of Toronto. I pull a sharp right turn to get back onto the road making the zombie fly into me. I looked straight at it, it's mouth full of blood and torn flesh. Ooze coming out all over the face, eyes completely whited out, no pupil can be even seen. They made no noise. How could something like this once be a normal human being? How could any of this even happen? Why does it have to be like this? I don't want to die.

Tears start rolling down my eye, my guts feel like as if hands grabbed them and crumpled them all into paper, along with the feeling of sinking thousands of stories down at a million miles an hour. This is where I will die, there is nothing anymore. I managed to process through my brain. As the infected person starts lunging at my face an impact I've never felt before, flung me out of the car. Flying in the air I hear a faint explosion as all I feel is pain in every single part of my body...and a flash. Then everything goes black, emptiness.

By: Daniel Vygodner

My Room

Not much in it except for my bunkbed and desk

It smells like lotion

Closet

-Hollow like an empty avocado shell

The boredom hits you right in the face as soon as you walk in

Sunken void of nothingness

A prison

Beautiful outside, looking out the window

By: Chasity Pace

JeepsOfficial

This is a blog that Chloe and Bella both wrote in 7th grade. It is about a fake disease called the Jeeps. The blog is written in the point of view of a doctor who is studying the disease, only to become sick with it himself. Unfortunately, he died from the Jeeps and his son Alex devoted himself to post his drafted articles and journal entries.

To check out the blog, go to <https://tinyurl.com/jeepsblog>.

#137 BART

Today I went to downtown Costa Rica which is off the coast of Costa Rica! On the train, I saw a dude who was coughing intensely and his pupils were going up and down. I was sure that he was a Jeeps victim. Coming up to him, I put on my Hazmat suit and helmet, which I always carry with me just in case. "Excuse me, but you might have a rare disease called the Jeeps!"

Suddenly, his body started shaking and his face went pale. "Seizure!" someone yelled. That person knew nothing. I knew what he really had. "Stay back and cover your face!" I shouted to the crowd. "He has tHe JeEpS!j!" The paramedics came to take the victim away. "Stop," I protested. The ER didn't listen to me so I slapped him in the face. "STOP!" The paramedics took me away and called the police. I was arrested and sat in the police station lobby. My loyal son Alex (who got that from me of course) came to pick me up. He explained to the police and took me home. That person was clearly a Jeeps victim. Soon the world will know the truth.

Re: BART

I remember that day like it was yesterday. I had to pick up my father from the police station. The officers were laughing at him as they interrogated Father. I spoke to the officers that I was here to pick him up. That was probably one of the most embarrassing things I've ever done. I guess I am a "loyal son."

#231 Walgreens feat. Alex

Today, I took my son to the land of medicines and photo printing to explore science and paper. A pharmacy! He looked so excited! It was a scientific study trip in downtown Costa Rica, which is on the coast of Costa Rica. He was so excited when we reached the Aspirin section. He claimed he had a headache. I wonder why. I continued to repeatedly ask him why this headache had occurred and if he was sick. I was very worried for my only child. He reassured me and said that it was nothing while buying 2 bottles of pills. I hope he's okay.

While he was at the checkout counter, I searched the aisles for more fortune cookies and pickles for lunch. I buy the cookies for Alex, but they are de-lic-ious! My son met me back in the aisle. We walked along trying to find something to eat for tonight's dinner. Alex asked why we

had to shop for food at Walgreens. I responded by saying that where there is science, there is fortune. He hummed back as we kept walking.

Check out our blog to learn more: <https://tinyurl.com/jeepsblog>

By: Chloe Leung and Bella Kwong

Sleepy

It would be a smoky gray
A buzzing sound
It happens when you don't get sleep

By: Aspen Matteucci

His eyes reflect me
I blink and he disappears
All I see is blue.

By: Nelly Rahimhodjayeva

Sixty-three

I crumpled under the light of the
spiteful silver sky when I heard your fate.
It was the same feeling
with Polly
and almost Charlie.
Simple euphemisms and platitudes stood in my way of understanding.
I remember you undressing;
your withered
lifeless skin
hung like curtains from your strong solid frame.
That body
wanted to tell me everything but couldn't,
I wouldn't let it.
That body
I knew the smell of all too well.
I miss you because I did not know you.
You passed through my life in a way you never passed through your own.

By: Will Maloney

Author's note:

Okay, this is just a scrap of thought that I produced after falling in love with The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. I thought I was going to write something about World War II and people hiding in basements because 1) for some reason I connected with Max Vandenburg (but NOT IN THAT WAY) and 2) The Pianist, but I couldn't really think of a whole intricate plot or elaborate on the setting. As you may see, I'm not really a history nerd. This isn't a very original story, but pfff, nobody really is very original, except for Lady Gaga, who is just plain weird.

I may or may not make a novella thingy out of this. Maybe in like 29 years or something. Or maybe never.

— a. w.

Scrap 1. The Sunday Lock-picker

The first one was a Gypsy.

A jeep pulled over to the curb outside an abandoned building. The motor stopped and a young Nazi officer came out. He covered his nose with the collar of his jacket and looked around the area once. Very few pedestrians. If there were any, they were busy digging out of the rubble that poured out like deathly white slime into the street.

The officer's name was Christoph Nuremberg. A very patriotic name that went well with his light skin, dirty blond hair, blue eyes, and crisp green uniform. But sometimes, in the right weather, those blue eyes were gray.

Apparently a new rumor had spread that a Gypsy woman lived in the two-story building in front of him. It barely stood like a tall but withering tree among the smoking remnants of the building to its right and the partly destroyed shop to its left. Under the layer of dust shrouding the entire house, faded white paint was peeling and lichen grew in microscopic cracks. The officer stalked up the stairs to the door and sharply rapped the faded wooden panel. The door, which turned out to be unlocked, slowly opened by itself with a hesitant squeak. An uneasy welcome.

The officer strode in, his boots making the wooden floor creak. The interior smelled like a dank mixture of smoke, moldy wood, and dust. It probably had been totally dark before a huge chunk of concrete had bust through the roof, dented the floor, and left a gaping hole in the ceiling. Now, a ray of Sunday sunlight penetrated through all two floors. It was a temporary light source for the house that illuminated the fine white powder covering the old furniture and the dust dancing in the air.

He examined every little detail of the place, brushing broken china to the side, opening every dusty cupboard and peering through every cobweb-covered doorway, and found no one. He walked up the stairs and inspected the upper floor. Nobody was there either.

The officer sighed as he returned to the lower floor. He must have been making a whole lot of noise in the house and scaring the occupants. If there were any occupants. After all, maybe it was just a rumor.

He scanned the lower floor one last time before he opened the door to leave. The ray of sunlight seemed to be pointing at... a back door. *Is there a basement?* the officer thought. He unlocked it and took a peek out. To his left, behind a pile of weeds, was a concrete staircase leading to a rusty metal door. He went down and tried to turn the knob, but it was locked.

His heart jumped in excitement. Did that mean a Gypsy was actually living here?

How could he open that door? If only he had a lock pick set... then he realized that he *did*.

Christoph reached into one of his breast pockets. Nope. Not there. He tried the other one, fumbling for something leather, and pulled out his childhood lock pick set.

There were so many memories stored in that single bag. When he was nine, his mother wanted to teach him how to manage simple finances. He used the first bits of allowance she gave him on a lock pick set, and that same night, he sneaked with his friends Julian and Wolfram to cranky old Frau Langenberg's candy store and stole some licorice. He had this crazy feeling of triumph that lasted for two days, until Frau Langenberg snitched to his mom and she confiscated his set. But when Julian lost the key to his house a few weeks later, he smuggled back the set and used it to open Julian's door. For the next seven years, everyday after school, he would walk with Julian back to his house and open the door for him with his lock pick set. He sighed. Oh, those were the good old days.

He pulled out the tension wrench and stuck it into the bottom of the keyhole, then added a bit of pressure. The lock rotated slightly. Christoph stopped. What did he have to do next? He ran through all his memories, what his old lock-picking manual said. Then suddenly, as if his muscles had a sudden burst of memory, they moved all by themselves, applying the right amount of pressure to the lock and gently pushing up the key pins. With a click, the lock turned. He slowly opened the door, flicked open the switch inside, and walked in.

The basement was full with easels. Some of them were empty, while others held canvases covered with a thin cloth. All he needed to do was find the brushes, then the artist.

He made sure the door was closed, then he slowly made his way through the maze of easels. He scanned the walls. No windows, which was good.

He was fully aware that he was going against the Final Solution. And for the umpteenth time, he questioned himself. Was this really the right thing to do? Or was what he was doing a crime against Germany? Were Jews and Gypsies really here to make the lives of Germans worse? He remembered the days when lines of neighbors snaked across the street for the remaining apples and cans of soup in the general store. Even a ten-meter stack of Marks could barely get you a loaf of bread. The Führer described how Jews and Communists were stealing Germany's money all for themselves and they wouldn't give a single Mark to the unemployed people on the street...

However, his mom had repeated to him, stressed over and over again how powerful helping someone was. She'd taught him how to give all the fruit from their small orchard to the homeless people on their street and help ninety-year old Herr Weimann start his fireplace. Eventually, without any coercion, Christoph would offer to shovel the snow off Wolfram's lawn or help his history teacher stack the textbooks. Anything would do to relieve his neighbors' suffering. It had been the best way young Christoph could make his town happy. (Well, besides applying for the German army.) If Mama was right beside him, she would definitely rub her chin and stare at the clouds for a little bit, then say that Jews and Gypsies and Communists counted as people too. And Christoph had a strong, deep belief that all people deserved a long, content, secure life. Not one where death constantly loomed over them and sorrow awaited them in every corner.

Ugh, he didn't know... His heart was torn into two.

Something colorful caught his eye. He turned to see a stunning oil landscape of a small wooden cottage in front of a pine forest. The painting was intricately detailed, down to the little brown roof tiles and the blades of grass around the house. It looked so real. He stepped closer, embracing the beauty of the painting. He could even imagine the sounds of children playing, birds chirping, the grass whispering...

But where was the artist? The Gypsy was nowhere to be found.

When he reached the other end of the room, he finally saw a wide table covered with a large red tablecloth. Next to a row of sticky brushes sat a pile of dirty water and a palette covered with wet, colorful blotches of paint. Someone was recently here.

He picked up the hem of the tablecloth and looked under, revealing a pair of brown eyes staring back at him.

He jumped back, stifling a yelp. He knew that somebody was there, but this was a little unexpected.

The tablecloth rippled, and out came a small, tan-skinned woman. She had weary eyes and dull, ropy black pigtailed that were shot with grey. Her skin looked tough and weathered, like rock eroded by wind and water. On her face was a bitter scowl, as if she'd just eaten two whole lemons.

"*Guten tag*," Christoph said with a smile. "Good afternoon. How are you?"

"I'm good," the woman said. She looked like she was in her late thirties, early forties. Even though her voice was emotionless, her lips were pursed, and her hazel eyes darted around, first focusing on his boots, then his cap, then the little silver buttons on his jacket, then his bright red armband, then his boots again.

"Are you part of the Gestapo?" the Gypsy asked, her voice wavering.

"Mm..." Christoph looked around quickly. "No, I am not."

The woman said something that Christoph couldn't hear.

"What?" He leaned in closer.

"Take me," she whispered hoarsely, her voice accented. "Go ahead and take me. I give up."

Christoph looked around to see if anybody else had entered the room. Then he reached inside his coat, into his pocket, and took out a shiny green apple.

"Here," he said, holding out the apple. "You must be starving."

The Gypsy opened her mouth, speechless. She looked frozen for a moment, then after half a minute of silence, she shook her hands in front of her and sputtered, "No, no, you take it. There's many starving people out there. Don't waste an apple on a useless life like me."

Christoph tried not to show any surprise in his face, but inside, he was knocked off-guard. Yes, he knew that they had feelings, but the astonishment still penetrated his mind. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, they really were kind, and honest, and compassionate...

"You are *definitely* not useless!" Christoph said. "Look at all of those paintings you have made." He swept his arm to gesture at all the covered easels. "I saw the picture of the country house as I was walking around, and it looked *gorgeous*. Just like the real thing. May I have a look at another one?"

The Gypsy froze again.

"Go on," Christoph encouraged.

She slowly ambled over to the nearest brown-clothed, rectangular ghost and yanked off the fabric, revealing the smiling portrait of a young girl about five years old, her outline glowing with light. She wore a paint-covered apron over a paisley yellow dress. Next to her was a sippy piece of paper covered with a painted caravan and a dripping stick figure.

"Is that your daughter?" asked Christoph.

The woman's rocky eyes looked sad. She nodded, staring at the floor.

So, she was not just a Gypsy. Not just an artist. But a mother. Just like Mama.

"What's her name?" he asked.

"Why would you want to know about my daughter?" the woman scoffed with an unexpected bitterness that made Christoph shrink back in surprise. "To you, she's just another Gypsy child in a concentration camp, no?"

Christoph opened his mouth, but he couldn't think of anything to say. What could he do? Console her? Give her a little hug? No, she would probably go berserk at being embraced by a Nazi officer.

"I'm not what you think I am," he finally said, weakly and awkwardly. Guilt sunk into him like a huge lead weight. *You're not making her feel better*, he thought to himself.

The woman's long, wistful sigh sounded like bare, rustling branches in the dead of winter. "Well, her name was Nadya. She got captured by the SS while she was outside playing soccer. She never came back home, and— and—" A tear slowly rolled down her jagged face.

"What was she like?" Christoph asked gently.

She blinked away her tears and brushed her shining eyelashes with a bony finger. "She— she was quite artistic," the woman replied. "She loved listening to stories. She'd listen to me read a storybook to her, then I'd let her borrow a brush and some paint and she'd draw everything from the story. My goodness, she had a lot of artistic potential in her— if only I had more time to teach her the wonders of painting...."

"I could look for her," Christoph suggested.

Her eyes widened, then narrowed. "Should I trust you?"

Christoph nodded and tried to smile as comfortably as he could. "I'm an officer. I can look for her name in the SS's documents and tell her I said hello."

The woman pursed her lips and looked straight into Christoph's eyes, her glare watery but firm. "Swear that you will not tell anyone that I am here." She emphasized every word, as if she wanted Christoph to remember everything she said. "I'm not telling my name to you, but look for a girl named Nadya Majewski and tell her that everyday, I wish that she was here. Everyday, I wish I could finish with her the last three chapters of *The Midnight Hero and the Golden Glass* and teach her how to paint the night sky above the Alps."

That's a lot, Christoph thought. He tried to repeat the words in his head. *Look for a girl named Nadya Majewski and tell her that everyday, I wish that she was here. Everyday...* He mumbled the words to himself over and over again.

"Do you swear to keep this meeting a secret?" The woman's sharp voice distracted Christoph from his thoughts. She shuffled back to the brush-covered table and brought back a thick, dark blue book with the golden letters *The Midnight Hero and the Golden Glass* on the cover.

"I don't have a Bible, but this will be enough," she said. "Put your hand on it and sincerely swear with your eyes on me."

Christoph took the apple with his left hand, raised his right hand and gently placed it over the book. The cover felt soft, as if it had been worn down over time by fingers touching it. He locked his eyes with the woman and said slowly, "I solemnly swear to God that I will keep this meeting a secret, I will not tell anyone that you are here, and I will look for your daughter."

"*Sehr gut*," the woman said. "Very good."

He dropped his hand. Then he glanced at the red fruit. "Would you still like the apple?"

The woman sighed, then shrugged. She took it.

Otto came out of the car holding a book under his arm.

"What happened, Herr Nuremberg?" he asked Christoph in a respectful manner.

"I couldn't find the Gypsy," Christoph lied. A lump of guilt lodged in his throat. He didn't feel good being honest, but Otto wasn't someone he could trust. Yet. "I searched the house several times and went into the basement, but it even seemed abandoned. I did search the store next door and I couldn't find anybody there either." He internally sighed with relief. He hadn't stumbled or faltered, which was good.

And Otto seemed to believe him. "Maybe it's just a rumor, then." He opened the passenger door. They sped off into the Warsaw afternoon.

Scrap 2. The Begonia Lady

March 1941, five days before his first meeting

The driver was pretty quiet. He looked about nineteen, half a decade younger than Christoph himself. He had wavy golden hair sticking out in places like a lion's mane, gray eyes that stared ahead at the road. A short but angular nose sticking out of his red scarf. Black gloves gripping the steering wheel.

He looked tense. Was it his first time driving?

"What's your name?" Christoph tried asking the driver, hoping to relieve him of his nervousness.

"Don't mind the amenities when you're just around me."

"Otto Metz, Herr Nuremberg," the driver mumbled without eye contact.

Christoph leaned closer, his hand cupped to his ear. "What's that?"

"Otto Metz, sir," the driver said in a slightly louder voice.

"Oh." Christoph leaned back in his quite comfortable front seat. "A pleasure to meet you, Herr Metz. Which part of Germany are you from?"

"*München*, sir," the driver answered.

Christoph tried to continue the conversation. "Mmm, Munich, the great Capital of the Movement. Are you just working as a driver, or do you have other occupations too?"

"I'm also a mechanic, sir," Otto replied. Christoph waited for him to say more, but Otto didn't say anything else.

"That's fortunate," Christoph said. "If our jeep breaks, you can fix it. Which officers have you drove so far?"

"Many, sir."

"You don't talk a lot, do you?"

A tiny smile cracked Otto's statuesque features. "No, sir."

Something in the landscape caught his eye. In the midst of the green forest was a row of buildings that seemed to suddenly appear out of nowhere. A concentration camp.

Just then, there was a loud thump, followed by a jolt of the car. Otto frowned and pulled to the shoulder of the road, the car making a loud, slow *flump-flump-flump* noise.

The driver opened the door. A cold blast of winter air rushed in, nipping at Christoph's cheeks. Otto stepped out and examined the tyre.

"It's flat, sir. I'll have it fixed in a twinkling," Otto said, which was the longest sentence he had spoken so far. He gestured to Christoph to get out of the car.

Christoph opened his door and walked around to the side of the road. He wrapped his scarf tighter around his neck and nestled his chin underneath.

The fog made the sky an intense icy white, like the colour of an Arctic glacier. The dark green forest stood out with spiky edges against the clouds, as if the sharp tips of the trees were trying to chisel the sky. It was

March and not the coldest time of the year, but gusts of wind still wrapped their freezing hands around Christoph's face.

Then Christoph turned around and dared to peer into the concentration camp.

Even for the rest of his life, he would never know why. Was it because of curiosity? Compassion for the prisoners? The need to do something to pass the time? Maybe it was a mix of both.

He saw gaunt women shivering as they made straw shoes and dug up cold, stiff dirt. Their feather-thin hair blew in the chilly wind. A few SS officers loomed over them, occasionally barking at them to hurry up. Christoph looked closer and saw that some of the women had thin, wobbly legs, their striped dresses hanging loosely over their frail frames. His mother would have fainted if she saw how thin they were.

Christoph, this is for the good of Germany, he tried to convince himself. We need to start fresh if we have to rebuild our country.

An officer kicked one old woman, who nearly collapsed onto a pile of dirt. Christoph caught a glimpse of her face and recognized... his neighbor?

This wasn't Frau Meinhardt. Was she Sascha Meinhardt? He examined her nose and saw that it was bird-like, like Frau Meinhardt's nose in his memories. No, she was *the* Frau Meinhardt whose soprano voice floated through Christoph's open bedroom window every Sunday afternoon. The Frau Meinhardt whose garden was decorated with beautiful red blanket flowers and pink begonias. The Frau Meinhardt who always asked him about his week at the end of church.

Despite all of Christoph's struggles to suppress his feelings, distress still rose within him like boiling water. His fingers fidgeted. Cold sweat stung his forehead. She didn't deserve to be here! What was wrong with her? Was she a Communist? No, he couldn't bear to label her a Communist. Was she a Jew? No, she always went to church! Was she a Socialist? An abortionist? A million questions like these swarmed Christoph's head.

Christoph, looking at his boots, then realized his current position in front of the camp's fence. Was Frau Meinhardt able to spot him? Had she already seen her neighbor in his uniform and realized that he was working with her captors?

Just then, he heard a click. He turned around to see Otto in a stiff salute. "Kutscher Metz reporting to say that the tire is fixed, sir."

The two of them got in the car and continued driving. Christoph still couldn't get the image of Frau Meinhardt out of his head. It was seared into his mind like a brand on a cow's back, staying there for the whole four-hour drive.

(to be continued...)

(Ms. M, cut off here)

Scrap 3. The Professor's Niece

The second one was a Jew.

Otto was slowly, but surely, warming up to the officer; now, he could talk in sentences that were roughly five words long. He even said a joke once. It was an extremely bad pun. Despite all this, though, Otto still refrained from being too intimate; he still clicked his boots and saluted in public, and he said the words "sir" and "Herr Nuremberg" after every sentence.

He was driving Christoph.

The Penguin

All my brethren fly ahead,
as I remain grounded.
Some wish to stay in my stead,
and yet I remain confounded.
And still I trudge on.
And still I trudge on.

By: Gabriel Dao-Pick

Grief

It's as deep and confusing as a black hole

It's pure white noise

It happens when you're at your lowest

Grief

She wore rolled up distressed blue jeans

She wore her heeled boots

She wore one of her favorite sweaters

She wore a bracelet with charms he got her

She wore his thumb print around her neck

She wore his ashes close to her heart

She went to school like nothing was wrong

She went to the mall and talked to her friends

She went to dinner and hardly ate

She went home and let it all out

She went back to school and the cycle repeated

She was with her friends

She was with her family

She was with her peers

She was with her cat

She was always with him

She felt alone

She felt scared

She felt numb

She felt empty

She felt happy

She felt sad

She was out of control

By: Katie Scribner

Illegal Night Out

By Zander Sutor

It was a beautiful night, and I was out to find something to do. I am a young man who likes to sneak into places I shouldn't be, underage. I have a bright new car, one that can go at such an amphibious speed, in case I need to make a quick getaway. I just snuck out my bedroom window, right after my parents were sure that I was asleep. I see lights in the distance. It looks interesting. I pull off the road and go toward it. I pull up to a large building, one that has music blasting from it, lights shining everywhere, and there's a long line outside. This could look interesting. I get out of the car, and put on my sweat jacket, complete with a hood. I get out of the car, and try to find a back entrance.

I make my way around back, and find a hole in the wall. A small one, but large enough to be seen and for someone like me to just slip right on through. I'm guessing no one knows about this, because if anybody did know, this hole would have definitely been covered up by now. Through the hole is a series of brightly lit white and dull grey painted hallways. Pretty boring. I really hate community center hallways. I follow my ears to the music, and make my way to the room the club was hosted. Inside, loud rock and roll music was blasted at full volume, there was a dance floor where people were just thrashing themselves out, there was a bar area, and on top of that, the whole place had a large assortment of party lights, a disco ball, and decorations everywhere. I knew right then and right there, that this was going to be my kind of place.

I go in and start thrashing. At one point, there was a super big beat in a song, so I hit the hardest dab of 2013. With that, my bag flew off my arm, and hit one of the large amps. Shocked, I watch the amp shake back and forth, trying to get re centered. I thought it was going to be ok, because the amp was slowing down, but on it's very last swing, it started to tip over more, and more, and more, and then I knew it was going to fall. BOOM!!! It hit hard on the floor, and the music started to get all high pitched and glitchy. Some people started to scream because this was freaking them out. The vibration from the ground from the amp knocked over a tower of wine bottles in the bar area, spilling alcohol all over the floor. Some people slipped, and one who was smoking dropped his cigar in the alcohol, causing a huge fire. Now everyone was really panicking, and that was only the START of the chaos that I had caused.

I began to get freaked out at this situation, because I am personally afraid of glitchy music. Now people were running in circles everywhere, screaming, all running out the door in large groups. The music was getting louder and crazier, the fire was growing, the ground was constantly getting more and more splashed with alcohol and other beverages, the decorations were all falling, the sprinkler system was going off causing an electrical storm on the stage, it was a complete madhouse chaos scene. And I was in the middle of all of it. The lights started to

go out, leaving me alone in the darkness, constantly getting soaked by alcohol and sprinkler water. I was scared for life. Suddenly, a police officer entered the building, and yelled at me. Startled and scared, I tried to turn around and run away, but I slipped on the wet, flooded floor, and fell. When they gained one me, I quickly got back up, and sort of jog-ran back towards the door I entered this room in, and closed it behind me.

I darted down the white hallways. Well, if they were creepy before, they are even creepier now, because the lights in the hall have gone out, and now I can hardly see a thing. I feel my way along the halls, trying to stay unseen. I hear them requesting guards at all the entrances to the building behind me. Hopefully they don't know about my hole. To the best of my memory, I make it back along the wall to where I remembered the hole. It's still here! And nobody knows! I slip out the hole, run to my car with my head down, start it, and put the pedal to the metal. I flip the club and the guards off on my way out.

I return home safe and in one piece, sneak in through the window, and into the comfort of my bed. I did it. All my life, I had dreamed about sneaking into a place I wasn't allowed. And best of all, I basically destroyed it. With the chaos I caused there, I will be really surprised if that building is still standing in the morning thanks to me. I really thought I wouldn't make it out of that collapsing building, but I am safe now back in the comforts of my own home. I drift off to sleep feeling brave and awesome. The next morning, I wake up, still proud of myself. Happily, I walk down to the stairs. At the bottom, my parents don't look too happy. The officer from last night that was chasing me was in the doorway. Busted.

Woods

It smells like smoke and fire and trees

I see green and brown

I'm Here

An axe and knife and some wood and trees and hot fire

Woods

By: Chris Edrosolo

October

By: Shayla Branner

I remember wearing a purple/pink northface jacket, distressed blue jeans, and some pink slides. It was a sunny, but windy afternoon and I was getting to meet a boy that I had been talking to on instagram. Kayla and Samantha both rode the bart and bus with me. On my way there, I was feeling butterflies in my stomach because I didn't know if he would like me or not. As we got to the park, he was still at his house so we swung on the swings until he had arrived. When he arrived, he couldn't tell between me or my sister so he texted me, "What are you wearing?" As I text him, I stood up and walked to him, still feeling the butterflies in my stomach.

I had finally got to him and said, "Hi." I used to be so shy so I stood my distance and just smiled. We moved over to the play structures and sat down getting to know each other. We had a good time and laughed the whole time.

After 3 hours of getting to know each other, I was getting ready to go home and we kissed (just a peck). A burst of sunshine came out of me and I was already excited to see im next time even though I haven't left yet. When I got home, we talked on the phone all night.

Geraint the Chained

By: Cesar Meza

I've walked this path before,
It circles in my mind,
I try to stray from this path,
To only grab me back,
These chains hold me down,
I can't escape my fate,
I pull on these chains to only let them dangle,
I pull and I pull,
To only get them mangled,
I Hate what I've done
My sins can never be undone,
I can still hear them,
The people I have slaughter,
I still remember them dying in shallow waters,
The water turned bloody red
Now a days it fills me with dread,
But back then it filled me with pleasure,
I smiled and I smiled everytime I slaughter
I laughed and I laughed like an unforgivable marauder
Poor men didn't even stand a chance
Oh how they tried and they tried
To only scar me in the end,
Not physically
Only mentally
I can still hear them begging
I can still hear them crying
I can still hear them dying
Oh how I regret killing those men,
And all of this for what?
The glory I've obtained, is nothing more than a shame
And with this shame I am forever chained!
Chained...
Chained...
Chained...
How funny it is to be chained,
To be forever engraved with this burdened I've obtained.
The sword I bear,
The armor I wear,

Reminds me that this path will lead me to nowhere.
I look deep into my sword,
To see someone there,
I glare and I glare,
To only see a murder standing there,
This Murder is more than a man,
This Murder is a Marauder
A Goliath
A Demon
A Monster
A Damned Berserker
A Psychopath
A Crestfallen...
This warrior smiles at me,
And saids "You can't escape me",
I am terrified
I am horrified
I am demoralized
This warrior tightens the chains,
Engraves the chains deep into my arms and chest,
The Monster mocks me
The Monster begs to be release
The Monster reminds me
The Monster teaches me
The Monster...
Understands what we've done
And I accept these chains
That are forever engraved,
And I accept these sins
That are forever engraved,
And I accept who I am
I am Geraint the Chained!
The sins I have made,
Are now forever engraved in these chains,
And with these sins I have obtain,
I must repent,
Repent for what I've done!
Repent for what We've done!
Now I ask you dear knight,
Are you chained like thy?

I know a place we could go
Deep in the forest, somewhere we know
Lie in the quiet, safe in the silence
I know a place we could go
Can we go home
Can we go home

By: Gabrielle Enriquez

Life is Big Hole

By: Dexter Hemenway

"Hey I'm drivin' 'ere, watch where you're goin' bucko!" After a heated debate with the The traffic was hell. Taxis were attempting murder and the rain presented an unchallengeable obstacle to every driver. As a homicidal maniac in a yellow car, or weapon, swerved in front of him, David screamed for the third time in the past ten seconds.

"Jesus roosevelt christ, how did he get his license?"

"His plate is GETPWND, I'm skeptical that he has a license." Tommy, david's roommate, had been living with Tommy since halfway through high school. They were one month apart in age, and Tommy never let David forget that. After swerving to correct himself from his aversion path, David saw that he was coming up to roundtree junction. This monstrosity of an intersection served as a wall between david and Tommy and the rest of their lives. "My good god is that a buttload of cars." Tommy stared in awe as cars careened through the intersection, lawlessly ignoring any sort of order intended to be passed upon them.

"Is this Indi- hoo shoot! That car scraped us at 90 miles per hour!" As Tommy was reeling from shock, and possibly minor whiplash, David was trying to out maneuver a Madmax-ian world of cars. As cars continued to kamikazee across the intersection, a car David recognized pulled up next to them.

"Hey howdy Gabe, mighty fine weather we have here."

"Holy heaven I'll say! I'll see you on the other side, my turn's coming up."

"Does the light even matter?" Tommy asked, but it was too late. Gabe sped halfway across the intersection before intersecting a semi-truck delivering food to the homeless. Gabes car instantly exploded. A large ball of flame shot into the sky, killing at least three birds. Gabe tried to open the door of his car angrily, but it fell off. He stomped out of his melting wreck and walked over to the semi truck which now had a sizable dent in it. truck driver, Gabe retreated to his car and transported it, much like the flinstones did, across the intersection. Now it was David's turn. He saw a moment where the car that was supposed to go got cold feet, and he stomped down hard on the gas pedal. David and Timmy sped through the intersection, narrowly avoiding two oil tankers that had gotten the same idea as David, and scraping by a freight truck for a plastic explosives manufacturer. They drove through the street away from the junction. As they find their way through the streets, now seemingly calmer than ever, they find a parking spot directly in front of the bank they were trying to get to. As they were beginning to parallel park into the spot, a streak of yellow and black lighting struck them. The taxi was going at least 90 miles per hour on a 55 mile per hour street. It hit the back right corner of the car, flipping it in the air, and careened under the rotating car. It sped off and the only thing about the taxi that David could make out was the license plate. The license plate was familiar and read: "GETPWND."

The flip had happened extremely quickly. No pedestrians noticed and the car was mostly fine, and only the right side had taken any damage. Timmy nonchalantly exited the car not showing any sign of a reaction. After dropping tommy off, David began to embark on the

odyssey that is the ??? streets once again. He found that maneuvering was suddenly very easy, he felt as if he was winning a staring contest with death. After reaching his building, a mini paper mart selling papers of all colors, shapes, and wood origins. He got out of his car, walked to the front door, and stepped in.

Instantly the scenery around him changed. As soon as his foot landed the gray floor transformed to a dark brown mahogany. The shelves of endless paper disappeared, and around him low fence of the mahogany stood. Above him where the ceiling was hovered a giant balloon. Dark and gray, much like a zeppelin, one could hear the blast of the hot air inside it. Pushing it along were propellers, each glimmering silver, rotating faster than David's head was spinning. David had made a grave mistake already. He had looked off the edge of the flying air boatloon and saw he was miles above the ground. His stomach did not seem to appreciate the view quite like is eyes did, and in an act of protest decided to hurl his breakfast at his brain. After a couple minutes of retching, he looked up to a strange creature looking down at him.

"First time on the boat is it?" Asked the strange creature. It was roughly humanoid, but had blue skin and large eyes. It wore a cotton sweater dashed with, presumably, coffee stains. A long wood pipe was teetering from his lips, genteel smoke rose from whatever substance was burning inside the device.

"Uh, yeah it is my first time." David looked around, taking in his surroundings. The surroundings only lead to further confusion.

"Well welcome aboard, I'm Griffin!" Griffin accompanied the welcome with a stronger than comfortable pat on the back. To do this the creature moved forward, allowing David to inhale the very strong odors that helped to confirm the stains' origin. The stains were not coffee, and David was confused further about how such a substance could become stained on someone's wool sweater.

"Where are we going?" David inquired while backing away from Griffin.

"Well we're goin' to the holey land!"

"We're going to Isreal? I really want to be as far from israel as I can. Can you drop me off in franz?"

"Never heard a' both o' em, you sure them's real places?"

"Yeah I've been to one of them, bet you can't guess which one."

"No I can't cuz a've nevah 'erd a' 'em"

"Well anyways if we aren't going to Isreal, where are we headed?"

"We be headed toward Enterton."

After a half-hour ride of chatting with the creature, David learned that Griffin had been getting usual passengers randomly on the ship, and all got off at enterton.