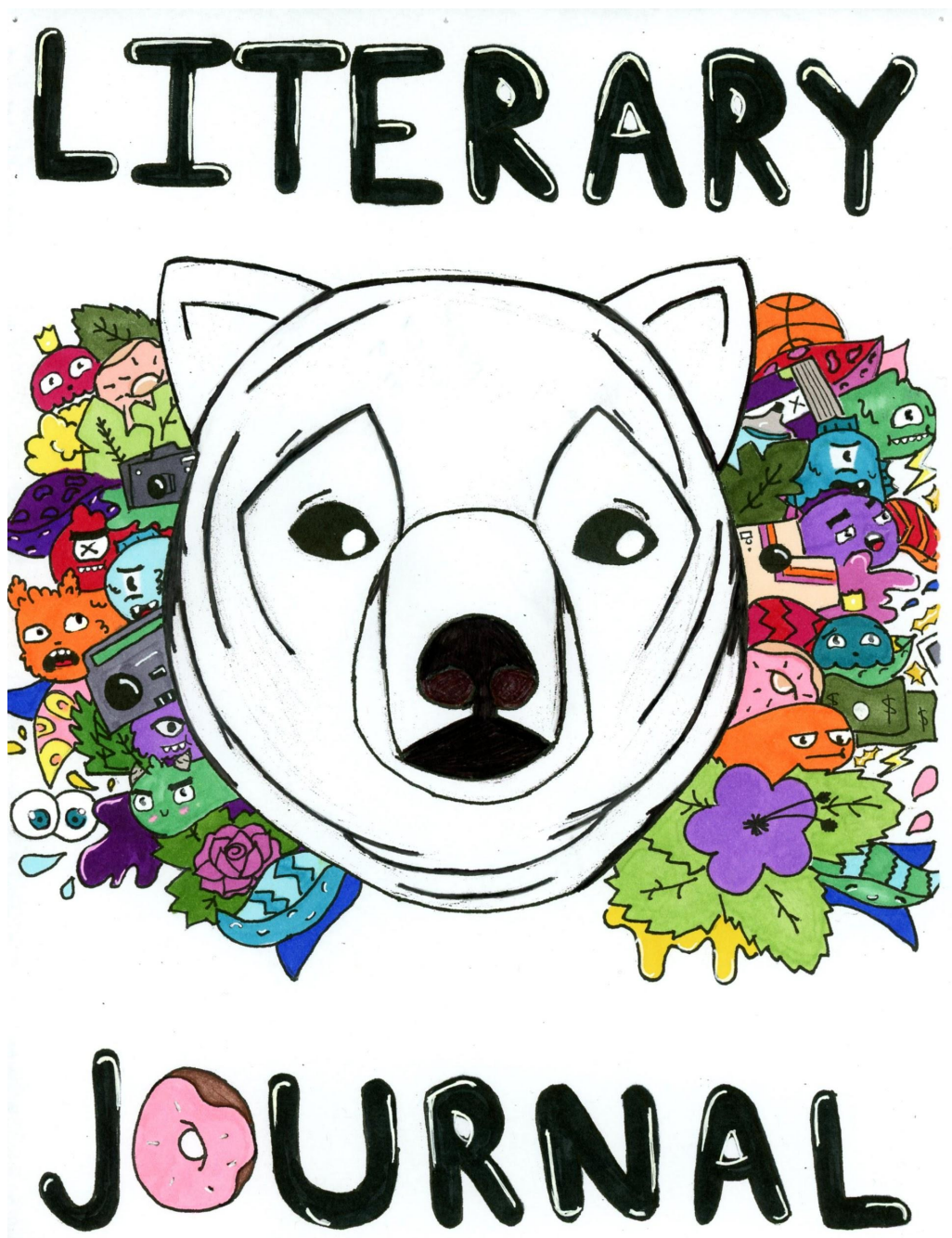
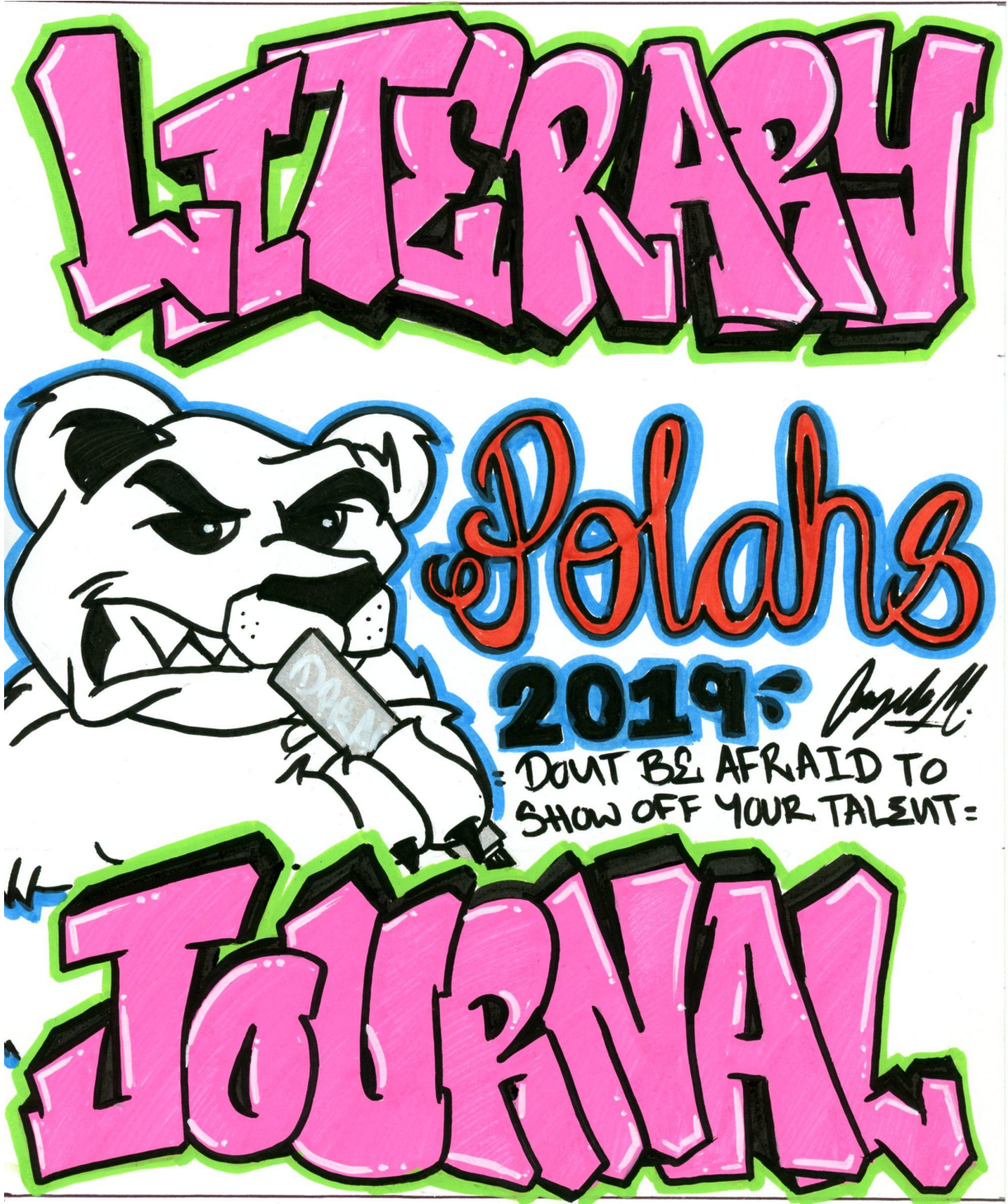


PORT OF LOS ANGELES HIGH SCHOOL



Cover Art By Meztli Garcia

2018-2019



Art By Angelo Mendoza-Ramirez



Art By Priscilla Heredia

**We write to escape reality. To gain joy. We write for fun. To free ourselves. We write because we are made to. To give our little fingers a workout. We write for an outlet to express ourselves without limitation. To express our feelings. We write to have our personal stories told for others to relate, learn, reflect and grow. We don't know the reason, we just do. We write to express inner thoughts. Because if we are feeling something we need to get our emotions out one way or another...I don't know. We write to clear our heads. To think and reflect on life. We write to express our thoughts out loud. Because we are "basic". We write to get our daily thoughts out. This is a class, we are supposed to write. We write to put stupid stuff on paper and organize it. Cause we need a good grade. We write, therefore we are.**

**To put the ideas we cannot say allowed to paper. We write to escape confusion. To express our thoughts. We write to help reflect experiences and have others learn from them. To inspire others to write. We write to tell people our stories. We write to remember and to learn about ourselves. Writing is a form of art." "We write to release ourselves. Because it makes ideas easier. We write to express ourselves without having to say anything out loud. Because we can say anything and write anything we want. We write to give ourselves something to do. Because it makes us feel accomplished. It's a way of venting about what I have been through and how I feel about everything. We write for school. Because we can, nothing can stop us from doing what we want. We write because its a requirement in this class. To become better writers. We write because we have to. Because we did not want to be TAs. We write because it's fun and we want too. Because we have dumb ideas that need to get out, something to say, or we are bored. We write because it's an escape from reality. Because it shows how creative we are. We write to express our emotions. To help expand our creativity. We write because writing IS fun. Helps take our mind off things. We write because it's the only time we can let everything out. To know how we feel. We write because we love to create something out of nothing which gives us stories. We write to challenge ourselves and to reconsider ideas.**

**We write.**

***~Mrs. Clark's Creative Writing Class 2019***



Art By Priscilla Heredia

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**Beach By Charlize Aceves**

The beach is the most amazing place on this Earth. The sun's rays shine against your back as you walk. You could feel the calm energy as soon as you smell the salty air. You could hear the waves as they crash onto the shore. The beautiful blue is the most calming thing the human eye could come across. You could feel the warm sand under your feet as you walk towards the water. There are brightly colored shells scattered along the shore. Each one being more beautiful than the last. As you look out deep into the vast open you can see the sun stretching out along the line of the sea. And at night, the view is even more beautiful than you could possibly imagine. The darkness wraps around the sea, and the water is calmer than ever. The water turns almost black because it is reflecting the dark sky. You could see the stars sparkling and twinkling along the black sky. Small glimmers of light can be seen on the water from the stars shining on the dark ocean.



**Bird Rock**  
**Photograph by Jacquelyn Meek**

**Dark Life By Faith Afanador**

Pushed and shoved through life's obstacles, running away from reality. Freedom please I need it. I'm scared, scared of what obstacles are going to coming next. Up, down, left, right pushed, pushed, and pushed to fall, fall through darkness. I cant see its dark no light where is my freedom. I reach out my hand thinking someone would help, but no one is there im alone. I call for help I hear a voice its myself screaming and begging for help, begging for freedom. I pull myself out of the darkness. I breath in fresh air and it runs through my body like blue beautiful water. I still have freedom in life I choose how I feel even if its dark. I feel happy for once in this dark called life. Freedom is happiness, happiness means freedom.

**I want to hate you    By Andrea Aguilar**

i hate you  
you make me feel worthless, like a second choice  
you make me feel ignored, like i don't have a voice  
    you make me feel ugly, like fungus on toes  
you make me feel unwanted, like thorns on a rose  
    i kinda hate you  
you make me feel stupid, like last place in kahoot  
    you make me feel vile, like old, rotten fruit  
    you make me feel insecure, like a teen with a zit  
you make me feel useless, like a paper oven mitt i should hate you

**What You Mean to Me    By Jessica Alcala**

I wish I could go back in time to Tuesday afternoon and take back what I said and instead of saying “it’s just music” I would’ve said “send me the playlist.” I wish I could go back and be more affectionate towards you to show you how much you mean to me... I’m sorry that it wasn’t clear enough. I wish you’d understand that you’re everything and more to me. I don’t see your flaws or bad hobbies, I see you. You’re a funny, goofy, caring, loving, person. You may be a sad person at times and throw things out of proportion but even with all the “wrong” in you I manage to see past all of that and LOVE you. You’re scared to give it a try, you’re scared to be happy, you’re scared to become someone better because you feel like eventually it’ll all fade away. But that’s not the case. Meeting you is one of the greatest blessings I’ve ever had come to me. Getting to know you, becoming your friend, and best friend has been one of the best experiences of my life. You say you aren’t enough, that you can’t better my life in any way. Well you’re wrong, having a few flaws doesn’t make you useless or less than anyone. Those “flaws” are what make you who you are. And I want you to understand that. I thank you for giving me the chance to know what a real friend is, and for letting me know what it really feels like to love someone. I was and still am willing to put up with everything and be there with you through it all. You aren’t a burden on me and never will be. I want to know everything that goes on in your mind and daily life. Not knowing what’s wrong but knowing that deep down your hurting HURTS me more. Why? Because I don’t know how to help you. I don’t know how to make you smile even if it’s just for a quick second. My goal everyday is to see you smile and laugh, so that even for a second you can forget about everything else. Seeing you mad, or sad, or purposely hurting yourself really messes with me. Seeing the person I love hurt, isn’t what I want. I’m sorry that I didn’t do enough to prove to you that I really do care. I’m sorry I said it was just music. But I want you to know that I really do care about you more than you think, and I LOVE YOU more than words can ever explain.



**The Truth About Society    By Marcela Alvarado**

Drowning is what it feels like. The helplessness and knowing that you can't do anything but to continue sinking and going even further into the unknown darkness. The only form of salvation would be someone throwing themselves in after you to pull you out and save you from the suffering and despair. But who would do that? Who would take the risk of drowning themselves just to help someone else? Let's be honest here. Just how many people would do that? Not many. Because that's just how our society works. We see people drowning in their own struggles and we do nothing about it because it wouldn't benefit us in any way. That's the sad thing about it. We only do things to benefit ourselves when it shouldn't be that way. We should help and save those drowning and help them out of their despair so that they can breathe again and let them know that they're not alone in their struggles.

**El Quebrador  
By Marcela Alvarado**

In Spanish:

Para decir que no pienso en ti  
sería una mentira.  
Pero no puedes saber  
que pienso que eres el amor de mi vida

Por todos los años que te ha conocido  
puedo decir que fuiste mi mejor amigo.  
Al menos por un tiempcito.

De repente un día, decidiste irte  
y si digo la verdad,  
en ese momento te moriste.

Por que me quebraste el corazón,  
nunca lo sabré.  
Pero con tigo, mi amor se fue

Y en ese moment  
prometí que jamás te amare

In English:

To say that I never think of you  
would be a lie.  
But you can't know  
that I think you're the love of my life

For all the years that I've known you  
I can say that you were my best friend,  
at least for a little while.

Then one day, you decided to leave  
and if I'm telling the truth,  
in that moment you died.

Why you broke my heart,  
I'll never know.  
But with you, my love left.

And in that moment,  
I promised I'd no longer love you

**Lost Love By Marcela Alvarado**

To say that I no longer think of you  
Would be nothing but an absolute lie.  
But as others already kind of knew,  
I was afraid of you saying goodbye.

For all of the years that we've known each other  
You're the only one that truly knows me.  
Never did I think you'd make me suffer,  
And yet, you let everybody see.

And then one day you chose to go away,  
And with that, my heart broke into pieces.  
But I would still think of you everyday.  
And as time goes on, my love decreases.

Yet I am thankful for what you did,  
Because if not, I would have always hid.

**Relief By Jazzlyn Amezcua**

I lie awake at night because of you;  
your everlasting fire consumes me.  
Depressive feelings come out of the blue  
You hold me captive, I want to break free.

It feels like I am swimming in quicksand  
The harder I try, the deeper I drown.  
I grasp for help, but I can't find a hand  
I can feel my body start to shut down

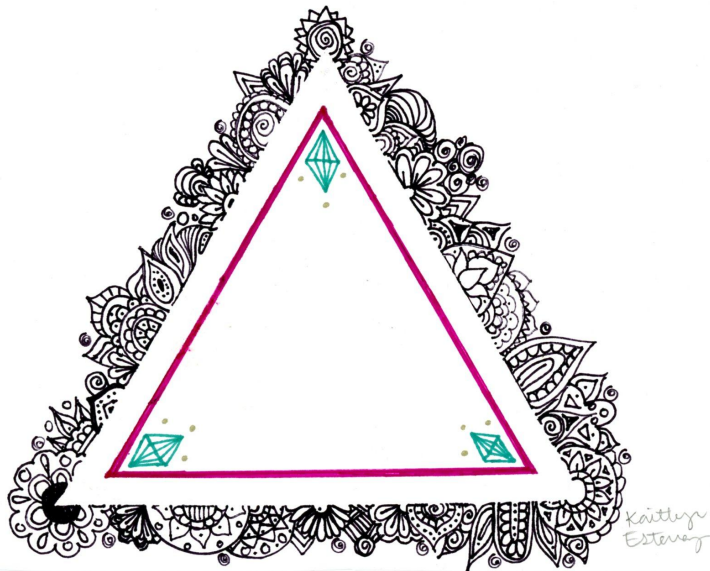
But then I see the light of His glory  
My loving God offers me salvation  
With Him I have no need to worry  
Because He relieves all my frustrations

In order to escape days oh so grim  
I dream about eternity with Him



**Seeing Through A Different Looking Glass  
Photograph by Jacquelyn Meek**

**Recognize Your Beauty** By Elaine Andrade



Art by Kaitlyn Estevez

You look at yourself and don't like what you see,  
Always pointing out your insecurities,  
Comparing yourself to a trunk of a tree,  
Ignoring the endless possibilities.  
You tell yourself that you aren't good enough.  
As you avoid any reflective surface,  
You cringe at how your skin is so rough.  
When a question is asked, you get so nervous.  
But sometimes I wish you could recognize,  
All of your exquisite qualities.  
And hopefully you will see the surprise,  
In your self-deprecating atrocities.  
Yet, I hope that you can change your mind,  
To see the beauty in you that I find.

**Triangle**

**The Winter Season and Its Beauty** By Evette Andrade

Winter approaches as the year concludes  
The chilling weather commences its journey  
Many festive events of great magnitude  
Some wonder how it came in such a hurry

Sentiments of kindness and love are displayed  
As well as gratitude for the ones we love  
The memories that will always be conveyed  
And thought of as we look at the sky above

But the beauty of it all soon vanishes  
As the warmth of the air reappears  
The most vibrant season with no blemishes  
Its emergence welcomed with open ears  
The seasons of the Earth unfold and reveal,  
Though the affection for winter is unreal

**Ene By Melissa Andrade**

Spanish Version:

“Como la flor, con tanto amor”

No se que pensar, ni qué decir.

Hace unos meses, estábamos sentadas en la mesa,  
hablando de todo y de nada.

En solo dias, todo pasó, no se siente real.

Solo te quiero pedir perdón, por el pasado.

No entendía lo que significaban mis palabras, ni el  
dolor que te cause.

Ya que no estas, me duele mas.

Los llantos que sueltan por usted: dolor.

No lo puedo creer, ni lo quiero pensar.

Las noches sin dormir, para saber que ibas a estar  
bien,  
no son nada comparado al dolor que quedo.

“¿Cómo va esa canción, de como una flor?”

“¿Como la flor? ¿De Selena?”

“Sí, esa es”

Como la flor, con tanto amor, la hubiera apreciado  
cuando podía.

Ahora nomas quedo yo, con el deseo de haberla  
conocido.

Ojala que ande con mi abuelo y Selena, cantando,  
feliz.

English Translation:

Like the flower, with so much love

I don't know what to think, nor what to say.

Just a few months ago, we were sitting at the table,  
talking about everything and nothing at all.

In just matter of days, everything happened, it  
doesn't feel real.

I just want to apologize, for the past.

I didn't understand the significance of my words, nor  
the pain I caused you.

Now that you're gone, the pain feels worse.

The tears they cry for you: pain.

I can't believe it, nor do I want to think about it.

The sleepless nights, to know you were going to be  
okay,  
don't even begin to compare to the pain that  
remains.

“How does that song go, about ‘like the flower’?”

“‘Como la flor’? By Selena?”

“Yes, that's the one.”

Like the flower, with so much love, I should have  
appreciated you when I could have.

Now I am just left, longing to have known you.

Hopefully you are with grandpa and Selena, singing,  
happily.

Physics day was at Knotts Berry Farm in the Spring. It was a beautiful day and we had packets of work to do but also loads of fun awaiting us. Naturally, the students separated into groups of friends. My group was Marcela, Katherine, Montse, Gaby, and Evelyn. We had nearly ten hours to ride as many rides as we could and complete the work. Collectively, we set a schedule to be as time-efficient as possible.

“Okay, so, we’re doing lunch at twelve right? Because I can’t go a long time without eating,” Gaby eagerly suggested. We all agreed on the time but where would we be eating?

“Ooooh, let’s go the Johnny Rockets,” Evelyn yelled. “Yeah, yeah, yeah: Johnny Rockets! They have really good veggie burgers there.” Since Evelyn was the only person in the group who did not eat meat, we let her choose. No one seemed to have any other suggestions so on we went, having fun until lunch time arrived.

At noon we headed to Johnny Rockets but we ran into a problem. There was a line about the length of a line to ride a ride. It felt as though the line wrapped around the park, twice. Evelyn and I stood in line while everyone else waited outside.

“How many people in your party?” asked the restaurant hostess.

“Umm... six,” I responded.

“Great, that will be an hour long wait...” as the hostess replied in an annoyingly cheery voice, Evelyn and I looked at each other with wide eyes. In shock, after waiting maybe thirty minutes in line, we were dumbfounded at the fact that we had to wait another hour to be seated then who knows how long to be served. “... May I take your name?” she continued.

“Uh, yeah, Melissa,” I reluctantly told her.

“Great see you all then,” again in that annoyingly cheery voice.

Evelyn and I walked out to join the rest of the group. We broke the bad news to them. After a few moans and groans, everyone accepted our fate and decided to work on the packets. Since the rides right next to Johnny Rockets had virtually no line and the work we had to do seemed simple we spent an hour continuously riding these simple carnival-like rides. However we continuously looked at the clock counting down the time left until we would get our tasty burgers.

“You guys, it’s time! Let’s start packing up and go,” I mentioned. Gasps and shouts of joy were heard all throughout the group. Quickly, we grabbed our things. We didn’t even bother to put anything away. I grabbed Katherine’s calculator, Gaby had my eraser, Montse had Evelyn’s clipboard. We were all over the place but we were also starving.

“Hi, table of six for Melissa,” I demanded, trying to hold myself back when I realized how rude I was being.

“Certainly, right this way girls,” the waitress, Alex, said as she lead us to our table. “I’ll be your waitress today, can I start you off with any drinks?” The word “water” was spoken by each of us, as we were trying to hydrate after the exhausting first couple of hours at the amusement park. “Great! I’ll give you all a few minutes to look at the menu and decide what you want to order, I’ll be right back.”

“What are you gonna get?” asked Montse, who was sitting beside me.

“I’m not sure, probably the cheeseburger and a shake,” I responded. “Do you guys want to order some fries for all of us first just to eat in the meantime?” I asked the group, who loved the idea. “What’re you guys getting?” I asked Gaby and Katherine who were sitting across from Montse and I.

“I don’t know, whatever the cheapest thing on the menu is. I only have ten dollars and my mom wants change,” Gaby mentioned.

“Do you want to borrow some money?” I offered.

“No, it’s okay. I have snacks,” Gaby stated.

“Are you sure? I don’t mind. I have enough to pay for both of us,” I insisted.

“Really? Thanks Meli, I appreciate it. I’ll pay you back later,” she said in a soft voice.

“No problem. Don’t worry about it! Order whatever you want,” as I finished, Alex came and asked if we were ready. We ordered our fries to start us off and then ordered our actual food. While Gaby ordered, she looked over to me asking me if that was fine and I just gave a light shrug in confirmation.

Our fries arrived, and the burgers took another half hour. Eventually each of us received our meal and enjoyed it while we talked and discussed our schedule for the remaining four hours we had at Knotts.

Once we paid the bill and left the restaurant I couldn’t help but think, “*I love my friends*”. We spent hours simply trying to get a meal and although it was a tad bit stressful, we enjoyed it. We all had fun sitting together after a long morning. The value of my friendships was greatly presented that day. There were many ways that day could have played out. We were all tired, hungry, and dehydrated. Rather than turn on each other we lifted each other up. Together, we chose a restaurant and an appetizer. Together we walked about six miles and waited in hour long lines. My friends made the trip as fun as could be, even with the extensive wait.

<b>You    By Pamela Aranda</b>
--------------------------------

I talked to you at the roller skating rink  
That was the very first time  
I hadn’t ever been so close before  
You’d always been sweet  
That I knew  
I heard you were funny  
But I didn’t know much about you  
I liked you though  
Your personality  
Your vibe  
You  
You were kinda shy  
But I was too  
When I finally met you  
It was like butterflies and sunshine

Like the cheesy romantic movies  
But better  
Like fireworks in the sky on the 4th of July  
I felt like a cartoon  
Like my heart beats outside my body  
My eyes turn into giant hearts  
And drool falls down my lips at the sight of you  
Getting to know you was my favorite part  
The best part  
You were what I believed to be  
The love in my heart in the form of a person  
You are everything  
You are love  
You are mine  
I love you

## The Misunderstanding Cookie By Jennifer Arteaga

Late last semester, in the year of 2018, my father and I would go to McDonalds in the mornings to get the usual order of getting the two for four dollar Egg McMuffins with a mango smoothie and six sugar cookies. And every morning we would go there, and I would order the same thing, until one day when my dad asked for six sugar cookies, which means my dad would get three and I would get three, and I was at school when I thought I was going to be eating my little breakfast sandwich and three sugar cookies, but instead of three sugar cookies, they were three chocolate chip cookies. And so when I got home and I asked my dad, "Dad, did you get sugar cookies or chocolate chip cookies?"

He said, "I got chocolate chip cookies, they messed up my order",

But then I thought, "What if they just ran out?"

My dad looks at me and asserted, "They don't just run out, they make them"

And so the next morning, when going through the drive through, my dad explains to the person taking the order about the situation, And sure enough the person replied, "Yeah, we sometimes run out of sugar cookies".

A slight grin appeared on my face as we got our meals and I looked at my dad and mentioned "See, I told you they ran out".

My dad looks at me, and then looks forward and says, "Alright, check how many sugar cookies are there?"

I said, "There's four. Do you want them?"

He says while driving, "Nah, you can have them, I'll have the rest"

And I said, "Okay, so three sugar cookies for me and you get one sugar cookie and two chocolate chip cookies, okay?"

He says "Okay"

And just continues driving me to school, so when I got there and it was lunch time, I was excited to eat the sugar cookies. And so I continued this routine for awhile, but soon stopped because the semester ended, so there wasn't a reason for me or my dad to keep going to mcdonalds in the morning. This semester we haven't really been to mcdonalds that often, well at least not until a couple weeks ago, and it was the same order, only except instead of six sugar cookies, he gets three, takes one for himself, and leaves the rest to me. So, today we don't go to McDonalds that often, mostly because we think that its normal now to skip breakfast and just think about going to school on time, or go to work on time. We would sometimes get it for the whole family if we are lazy during winter break, or spring break, sometimes my dad will go to McDonalds and buy burgers for everyone else and nuggets for me and whoever wants some will just get some from the other box, but then that would be about it.



**Bear and Sea Monster**  
**Art By Jennifer Arteaga**





**Chick Fil A Sandwich    By Justin Bales**

A tasty option and a simple choice  
A very special and popular place  
You get happy when you hear their voice  
The order is here, with your happy face  
Unwrapping the package in white and red  
A steamy hot goodness is there for you  
A piece of crispy chicken on white bread  
It tastes so delicious you may want two  
The meal is good but the service is great  
Need a refill for your drink they got you  
Thinking you might need some sauce they got eight  
If you're in a rush then take the drive through  
And this wonderful meal at Chick Fil A  
Will bring you back for it another day

**Thanks    By Sarah Barajas**

Thanks  
Thanks for the good memories,  
but it's time to move forward  
Helping myself grow each day  
Using the strength I have to move on  
Giving thanks for the lesson you  
taught me

**I'm Tired    By Lizbeth Becerra**

I'm tired.  
Of what ? you don't do anything all day.  
That doesn't mean I'm not tired.  
Are you sleepy?  
Nah just stuck in reality.  
What's wrong ?  
I'm tired.  
Of what ?  
Of everyone. Of everything. I wanna get out.  
Of what?  
Of whatever this is. This ain't life. This ain't living. If I was living I wouldn't feel so empty inside.  
How is it ?  
How is what?  
How is it to feel empty ?  
It's like loneliness, it's like sadness, it's like madness, insanity. Except you don't show it, cause there's no need to.  
How are you?  
I'm tired.

**A Moment in Time    By Julia Brown**

I thrust myself up into the steady branch of the lively tree in my yard which was dripping with fruit and life. I stood tall on the slim branches as is they shook below my bare feet. I climbed higher and higher. My curiosity sent my thoughts swirling inside my head wondering what awaited beyond the treetops where there was a heavenly opening in the leaves which I could peer into the secretive yard of my neighbor. The thought of a frail branch snapping below me or my small fingers losing their grip never drifted through my mind once. As I climbed, branches tangled my soft long hair which shone so brightly in the glistening sunlight. The bark, which covered the tree from trunk to tree top, was flakey and splotched with sap. I reached high for the last branch that would grant me access to gaze straight through the opening in the green, thick, lush leaves. Finally, I could see it. The bright sun shot through the branches and as I admired my accomplishment a soft smile settled across my face. The branch on which I sat was strong and durable, almost trustworthy. The warm summer wind drifted over me and tickled my bare skin. The sparrows chattered beautifully and my neighbor peered at the little girl staring through the branches.

**You Have To Be On A Team To Understand    By Lauren Brown**

The time that I felt like an outcast was my first year playing club volleyball. It was three years ago when I was recruited to play on an elite team. I played with girls who all went to school together. Keep in mind they've all been attending school with each other since elementary school. So I was the new girl on the team. They all ready had there cliques. So I was left out when they picked teams. I would be on the coaches team with the other assistant coach. During outside activities the girls would hangout. I would see it over social media. That's all in the past now I play at a new club. Who are are very welcoming. All the girls get along and you don't leave anybody behind.

**Hip-Hop    By Myani Cabán**

I fell in love with Hip-Hop in my momma's womb  
It's gonna stay wit me till I go to my tomb

The boom-bap sound beats from my heart and into my blood  
Born and raised on the East coast, crankin the bass up in the hood

Got made fun of; how can a girl like me be all about that life?  
My mom and pop raised me well; all music is how I thrive

Called me Hip-Hop girl, thinkin it hurt but I took it wit pride  
I'm livin on a vinyl, turnin and scratchin inside

It all good though I'm learnin and jammin to the beat  
Keepin my head up and walkin wit a extra pep in feet

Lauryn Hill taught me to be a woman wit values  
KRS- One taught me to open me eyes and I gotta brain I need to use

Wu-Tang Clan keep it real and tell the truth; you might not wanna hear it  
Those only a few artists that helped me to grow just a bit

I know I said it before  
I'm gonna say it one more time  
Pay attention  
Listen to my rhyme

I fell in love wit Hip-Hop in my momma's womb  
And it's damn sure gonna stay wit me till I go to my tomb

**Him... By Justine Calderon**

I thought he was the one.  
But now I see he used me for fun.  
He played with my heart, he tore me apart.  
He told me he loved me but then we broke apart.  
He went his own ways while I laid in pain.  
He only came back to take my whole heart again.



**My Baby  
Art By Justine Calderon**

When I was born both my parents had a bit of a tough time finding a name for me. It's confusing when I think about it as I was the only planned child they had. They had that one thought down expect a name I guess. I don't know what to say it's not like both my parents are Einstein, they got that far at least. Anyway, my dad was the first to have a name in mind and that was giving me the name Matthew, after his brother. My mother of course opposed of the name because she didn't want her son to be named after one of his uncles. But they did look up what the name meant in a baby book they had and found the name to originate from Hebrew where it meant "Gift from God". My mother did think about it, but still it was a no so they settled for Matthew to be my middle name. To me the name doesn't sound too bad, I think it sounds like a bird or something more free. Still they needed a name so my mother had my dad find a new one, which he did with the name Michael. It sounded kind of lazy how they found it because all my Dad did was go down the "M" section of the book. But hey what can I say it worked out. My Mother was immediately hooked on the name and wanted to learn more about it. The name Michael originated from Hebrew tradition from the archangel Michael, the only archangel identified in the bible, fun fact. The name meant "One who is like God", and my mother found that to be better than Matthew. To her the name sounded strong like an ox. She thought that name would fit perfectly with me, and for the most part, she was right. I could not think of a better name other than Michael that would suit me better.

When I was little, I didn't have much trouble with my name at all. I never really cared about how or what way someone pronounce it. I mean, really my name is as simple as it gets. After all it is somewhat of a common name used around the world and not hard to spell. Just who in this world is named Michael, but have the "a" and "e" switch places to where it spells "Micheal". It doesn't sound or make any sense at all. It's like if the doctor got the name from the parents, saw how they spelled it but didn't say anything, he just let it go it wasn't going to be a waste of his time. The guy probably had fifteen different patients at the time and was in a hurry. I don't get it I never had that kind of problem with my name until now in high school where some people ask me where the "a" and "e" go. Even as a kid I had better support than this. Like if I had trouble spelling my name in front of class I could depend on the kid in the back that's good at sign language to help me out. Now it's like hunger games I think everyone's trying to kill me I have to depend on myself for help. I'm more confused than annoyed every time I have those kinds of interactions with people about my name. I'm in high school and stuff like this makes me feel like I'm in elementary but everyone's the same age.

When I think about my name a lot comes to mind. So much that I have no idea what I started thinking with. I know that some people think differently when they hear my name. And I think the same goes for everyone. Everyone everywhere will hear someone's name and immediately connect it with someone they already know with the same name. I know for a fact that I have had different experiences with different people over the years, and each person views me differently in some way good or bad. I know I haven't been the best of myself towards others in the last five years. I have been called a whole manner of things, and some of those things said about me have been right. Either it be good or bad, someone will always have something to say about me. When I hear something said that's bad about me I believe it, but when it's something good I don't believe it. I like to compare myself to someone who isn't a good person, but not to someone who is a good person. That way if someone who doesn't like me says something negative about me I'll never be surprised.

I may look like I'm always looking down but really I'm always looking up, I just set my expectations really low so that I'm rarely ever disappointed.

When I picture my name I see a lot of things. It's not much but at least it's something. I picture my name and I don't know what I see mostly. It's just something I've never really thought of. When people think about a name it's not just about what they think it's also about what they see. A name could mean a lot of things. A lot of people when they think of a name they see an animal and how that animal matches someone else's personality. When I think of my name I see a deer, and I think of how gentle they are and seen as mostly peaceful. I've been seen as mostly a hardass and sometimes even an asshole, but really I'm trying to be as gentle as I can be, but some people just look at me differently so I use humor to mask it off. On another note, names can also be seen as instruments to symbolize their voice or overall attitude. A name could sound loud as drums or soft as a flute depending on the person. I think my name comes closest to a piano. I could be as soft as could be or be loud as I can when I chose to be. It's how I perceive my name to be, others may think differently.

So coming to the end, having a name like Michael doesn't make me feel ashamed or wronged that I have a name like that. A name shouldn't make you feel hurt or somewhat burdened with the name you are given. A name is something you make out of it, and by the choices one makes is what shapes their name and turns it to what it is. I've done things to so many people each one sees my differently, there's never a same. My name means something to me, it's something I've made out of it and is what I stand by. My full name is Michael Matthew Caro, and that is a name I will live with and will never change no matter what someone will think.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** Throughout most of my life people have always gotten a bad impression about me by the way I look. I wrote this because I didn't want anymore misconceptions about how I am based off first glances.*

## Smiling Mannequin By Xitlaly Chavez

### Smile-Verb

To form one's expression into a pleased, kind, or amused expression, typically with the corners of the mouth turned up and the front teeth exposed.

What a simple emotion. But behind it a raging fire or dam. Watch carefully because you might be able to find it. The secret behind the mask, behind the closed doors. They say the eyes are the window to the soul. But how much do they really reveal? When all day you feel and act like the guy from the movie *The Mask*. When you feel as if you are going to combust at any moment. When you want to finish talking but then another person starts talking as if you were never there. You want to yell, scream, talk, laugh, and cry all at the same time. But you have to put on that masking smile because you're afraid. You fear that if you showed them how you really were, how you are slowly dying inside they would run away. But you can't. You can't get flustered when you do something embarrassing. You can't express your anger when you are told off but didn't do anything. But you must not stop being that smiling mannequin. You want to tell off your friends that ignore you like you don't exist. But you don't have enough confidence. When you can't laugh with your friends because you are too busy and they're not. When you know that people are always lying to your face but you want it to be true. When you want to get along with people and express yourself but can't. You try to but are afraid, of that monster or innocent child. What your real emotions are but you know that you just have to continue to smile and wave like nothing affects you. When you cry all alone where no one is near afraid you might appear weak. That's why you built that impenetrable wall around yourself. You can't let anyone in because the last time they broke you. They say the wisest people are the most damaged, the loneliest smile the brightest, and the shyest laugh the hardest. But is it true?

### Smile-Verb

To form one's expression into a pleased, kind, or amused expression, typically with the corners of the mouth turned up and the front teeth exposed.

Once someone lets that beast inside them out watch yourself because if you cross the line you will surely

regret it.



**Generic Loli**  
**Art By Mikel Ramirez**

**Swift One By Angie Columba**

Oh how it must be a bless to flutter those wondrous wings.  
To be able to sore through the ever changing skies.  
Truly it is a gift sent from Apollo to hear thy chirpy sings.  
With ease thy feathers glimmer as it flies.  
As thy come with every new new height.  
With slim chances of risks.  
There comes with awed height.  
Truly one live with no fisks.  
And yet, even though thy are not the brightest one in the nest.  
It does not bother the one keen beak.  
To live in absolute savor sweet freedom is ideally best.  
It is no wonder to handle thy peak.  
I truly envy the gift.  
I truly crave the freedom to swift.



**Fatal Attraction By Sofia Cortez**

Fatal attraction	Out of the blue
Close to a chain reaction	I hear you say
I saw you in a glance	That things are not the same as yesterday
When I knew I had a chance	And yes I reply
To fall in love, I took that chance	Cause I agree
Your smile like Pearls	Things aren't always as they seem
That glisten in my face	You take a chance
But so warm	One you'll risk
That I had yet to feel erased	And you will find immortal bliss
Your love	Love as sweet as a nectarine
Like a sunset on a cloudy day	But soon to find out
	It's just a dream.

**Alone By Maria De La Cruz**

Feeling like I'm walking through a long dark tunnel that seems to go on forever  
I can't find the light anymore  
As I keep walking there are blurry faces  
All the memories of me being happy  
Replaying and replaying  
I'm all alone in this tunnel  
Can't seem to find a way out  
All these faces are trying to reach for me, trying to get me out  
They're trying to get me in the light  
They pull me but it seems as though my shoes are glued to the concrete  
I don't bugde as the darkness consumes me  
I can never get out now.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** Depression is darkness and happiness is the light. I'm trying to say that I feel like I have no one and I'm just battling things by myself. People reach out to me but I just neglect them which is why I'm stuck. I'm saying I could never get out of this sadness if I don't tell someone what is going on with me. I feel like this can relate to a lot of people because we don't want to worry anyone. We think we can handle it ourselves but then it gets too much for us and we fall into a deep depression that no one can help or so we think. I want this poem to let people know that you are not alone. You can always get the help you need if you let people in. Many people care about you don't isolate yourself and get the help you need.*

**Peace By Maria De La Cruz**

Hate crimes on hate crimes  
When will there be peace?  
Children locked up in deportation centers  
With no one to fight for them.  
This country is all about “pro-life” but when it comes to these kids  
Where are all those people yelling to save those kids.  
I am not one to judge others beliefs,  
but when it comes to a fetus that is not alive versus a 6 year old that is alive  
There might just be  
No one cares about these kids who are all alone  
With no parents to help them  
With no one to cry too  
When will there be peace?  
After the wall?  
I beg to differ  
Everyone yelling to build that wall  
Have no idea what it is liked to be separated from the only people you care about  
Instead of using your privilege against people who just want to live a better life  
Use it to stand up and support them.  
When will there be peace?  
When we unite as a whole  
When we use our privilege for others  
When we stop discrimination against people who are not like you.  
Then we will know peace.

**Through My Mother's Eyes    By Maria De La Cruz**

It is the land of the free but I can not win  
I have lost many opportunities and took many risks  
coming to this country  
Nothing would have prepared me for all the pain  
this country would cause me  
Not being able to see my family until who knows  
when  
Not being able to kiss and hug my mother and  
father  
I couldn't say goodbye when my father died  
It rained and rained

I somehow thought I controlled the weather  
With the amount of tears that I kept shedding  
My world has fallen apart  
The pain I can not bear  
I don't want my children to see me this way  
I tried to hide the pain but I can't help to burst into  
tears  
I only want to be able to say goodbye but it is too  
late  
But that is the risk I took coming into the country  
I knew that I could not go back to my family  
Not until all my children were successful

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** My mom is from Mexico and she is undocumented since she is undocumented she can't visit her family. Recently I lost my grandpa and I saw my mom in a lot of pain. I put myself in her shoes to see exactly how that felt. Which led me to write this poem in her point of view. Knowing that you can't say goodbye to the one person who raised you and you'll never see them again puts a toll on you. It's very heartbreaking since you moved to a country that will give you better opportunities but it does not feel like that when you can't visit the people you care about.*

**Illusion    By Eveline Cruz**

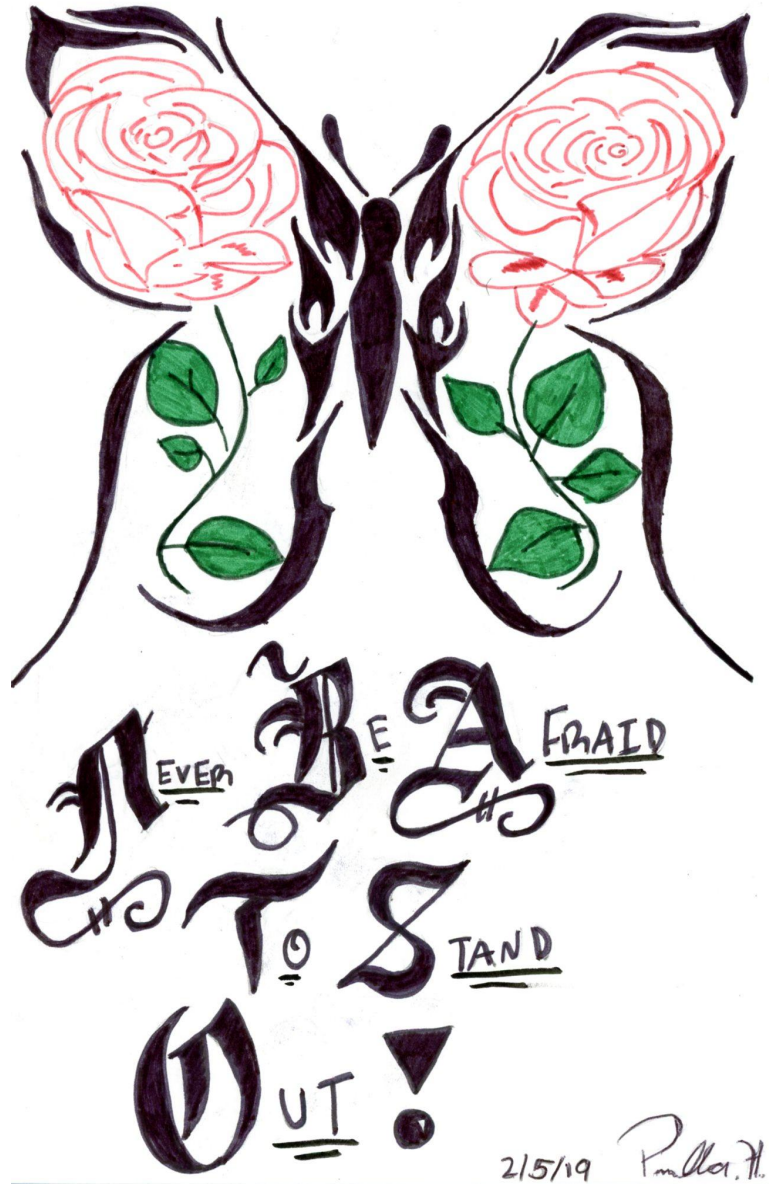
We trust in those who give us hope and love  
Without a doubt Without hesitation,  
Losing them is what we are in fear of  
We trust that it is not affectation;  
Let me introduce myself for I am Trust  
I give thee illusion of what I can be:  
A man or a woman if you must

So soft and fair as the eye can see  
But the closer I am looked upon  
The farther the eye can see my illusion,  
We realize Trust can't be depended on  
It was all a figment of delusion,  
So long as we trust in Trust and deceive the eye  
So often will we have to say goodbye.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** The origin of this poem was my experiences of believing the ones I truly cared for were going to be in my life forever. I trusted them very much, but all of it was an illusion because I only saw what I wanted to see. "Illusion" was something I wanted to write because there was so much built inside me; this poem is a sense of relief and letting go. I hope my audience can understand the poem in their own way and experiences. To know that they are not only in situations of mistrust and hurt. The difficulty of writing this was remembering all of my experiences and feeling the what I felt in those moments.*

**Season Finale By Lorenzo Dailey**

It's the season finale of your favorite show. You can't wait to watch it. You have been tuning into this show for the longest time ever. And you start to notice things like who you love, who you hate, and who you aspire to be. An hour later, after the shocking season finale, it's over and you think, "What am I supposed to do now?" The characters that you've been attached to for the longest time are no longer there. The people you related to the most are gone. You feel like something is missing and that your life has no purpose now. You say "Oh, it's no big deal, I'll just start a new show"...but it's not as simple as that.



**Never Be Afraid To Stand Out!**

**Art By Priscilla Heredia**

## Butterfly By Marlyne Del Campo

My vision begins to blur and tears fall from my eyes onto the picture of my sister they gave out before the funeral. I put my head down and cried to myself. While I was crying a butterfly flew across my face, catching my attention. Butterflies were my sister's favorite. It landed on my lap and just sat there. It's hazel color wings, changing in the light from green, to blue, to brown. A small part of me wanted to imagine it was my sister in another form, trying to comfort me. But I wiped the thought out of my head and ignored it, watching it fly away.

It had been a month since we buried my sister and I've been trying my hardest to keep myself together and not breakdown into tears every now and then. My frustration and sadness has gone down a bit more ever since I met our new neighbor, Jacob. His family had moved in next door to us last month. Ever since we ran into each other while I was on my daily morning run, we haven't stopped hanging out. There is just one thing I find odd about Jacob. Although he's outgoing and respectful, but he has this dark vibe to himself. Jacob was there for me when I really needed someone and really helped me get through a lot of hard times since my sister passed away. But since last week he started to become more distant. I called him out on his behavior and he apologized by inviting me over for dinner at his house tonight. His apology didn't seem so sincere though, but I went along with it. He even had this look of eagerness and desire in his face.

Once I was ready, I walked just a few feet away from house and knocked on his front door. While I was waiting for quite some time, I noticed a butterfly flying around me. It landed on my hand, but doing so I noticed a lot more butterflies coming towards me, landing on my arms and pulling me away from the door. I didn't know what was happening, only the fact that there was this weird unpleasant smell in the air. The butterflies started to become more aggressive everytime I tried to get away from their fluttering wings. They started flying everywhere, picking at my face and giving me anxiety, all until I heard Jacob call my name. I turned around to see Jacob looking at me strangely, with a dirty, bloody apron on and dark circles under his eyes. That's when I noticed the butterflies had disappeared. He gestured me to enter his home and the unpleasant smell grew stronger as I walked in. I asked if his parents were home and he responded saying that they went to Vegas for the weekend with some friends.

He walked me towards the kitchen and pulled out a chair from the island in the middle of the kitchen. There were a few different knives on the counter, all bloody. I assumed he was cooking steak. He handed me a glass of water, but when I touched his hands they were ice cold. I could feel this weird unexplainable uncertainty being in his presence. He turned towards the stove to finish cooking dinner. That's when I noticed a butterfly. It flew from one wall to the other, as if it wanted me to follow it. I asked where the restroom was, but really, I was following where the butterfly went. It seemed as if Jacob's house had a lot of turns and corners, but I followed the way. Noticing that with every corner I turned, more and more butterflies appeared, until I came to a stop near an open door leading down to the basement. The outline of the door was covered in butterflies. But one butterfly, the one I first saw at my sister's funeral, led me down into the basement.

I walked slowly down the basement stairs. The smell grew stronger and stronger with each step I took. My eyes tried to adjust to the darkness. All I could see was a large figure, the shape of a man. I didn't know what to do so I turned back around. My sister was standing right in front me with a butterfly in her hair.

She screamed, "Get out!"

She vanished away before I couldn't say anything. I ran back up stairs, running into Jacob.

"What were you doing down there?" He asked pushing me to the side.

I was still in so much shock I couldn't respond to him. When Jacob went down to the basement, some unknown force shut the door behind him. That's when my sister appeared again.

"Leave!" her voice echoed through the house.

"Why?" I cried out.

"It isn't safe for you here."

That's when I got up from the floor and tried opening the door for Jacob. A force threw me back against the wall behind me. My sister was right in front of me again, in a ghostly form. Her feet were not touching the ground and her hair floating as if she was under water.

"He killed his parents. Don't go back there. Call the police and leave. Drive far from here. Drive somewhere safe. NOW" she then disappeared.

I was still in so much shock, but everything was coming together and it just made sense. I ran out of Jacob's house leaving him in the basement. I ran back to my house calling the police. I stayed in my room covered in the sheets of my bed, trying to fall asleep. That's when I heard police sirens from outside of my window. The last thing I remember from that day was seeing the police rush into Jacob's house and being grabbed from behind.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** In my creative writing class we were assigned to write a ghost story. It was the very first time I ever wrote a ghost story, so I had no idea what to write about or if I wanted to be scary or not.*

*Ms. Clark's Note: This piece was chosen as "Best In Class" for Ghost Stories in Creative Writing.*

<b>Elle and William    By Marlyne Del Campo</b>
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I look at my phone and see a few missed calls from my aunt. I ignored them, I didn't want to miss this opportunity to explore. I run toward the sliding door behind me, that lead to the inside of the airport. Just so that I could get away from the cold. While I rush in, I felt the cold floor on my butt and lower back while my knees fell straight to the floor. I could already feel the bruises forming on my knees.

"Woah, are you okay? I'm so sorry." The man scrambled towards me while on the cold floor.

"Yea Im fine. Maybe a couple of bruises." I joked while rubbing my knees and arm.

The young man helped me up from the ground apologizing over and over again. I constantly told him I was fine. Saying I didn't lose any blood, just trying to lighten up the situation. But during this time full of "sorrlys" and "it's okay", my head was down trying to dust myself off. When I looked up my eyes came in contact with a pair of beautiful hazel eyes. I was speechless, well of course I was who wouldn't be. Just imagine being face to face with a gorgeous being. I could feel my jaw slowly dropping.

"The names Will. Short for William." He confidently said with a sweet smirk.

"Elle" I uttered simply. Looking down at my hands shyly.

"Is that short for anything?" William asked gesturing his head down to my level.

"No." I said giggling.

"Hmm interesting" William commented putting his hand on his chin, as if he was thinking. I kept silent in that moment. I was too star struck at this time to even blurt out a single word.

“Well, I’m extremely worrying about knocking you down just now.” He apologized giving me a small helpless grin, putting his hand on the side of my arm. I knew he wanted to continue on with the conversation, but of course if the person you are conversing with isn’t giving any reply, it gets a little awkward.

“Liam” I shouted out just in time before his foot stepped into the freezing cold wind.

“What?” William questioned turning back.

“Liam, short for William.” I said shrugging my shoulders playfully.

“I don’t understand.” William said baffled by my random comment.

“Well you don’t need too.” I said confidently.

“Mmh” He muttered stepping closer to me.

“I’m guessing you didn’t notices that your name has two names in it.” I said outlandishly.

“No I did not.” William said amusedly. Tilting this head to the side, placing his chin on the palm of this hand. I could see his upper body leaning closer to me, signifying that he’s quite interested in what I have to say.

“Will and Liam.” I said confidently, making two spaces in the air. As if his name was right in from of my face to I show how I divided his name up.

“Interesting.” Was all he said. He said it so bluntly.

He’s quite an interesting person himself. I’m trying to see what his deal is. I mean he is very attractive, but why would someone like him be interested in talking to someone like me. It’s really is interesting. He did knock me over just a few minutes ago, so maybe this is just his way of being polite. Trying to makeup for giving me a few scraps and bruises on my knees.

“Is that all you say?” I blurted out.

“What’s wrong with saying interesting?” He protested fixing his posture. Trying to make him seem bigger than me.

“Nothing!” I said fixing my posture as well. To show him he doesn’t intimidate me

“It’s just a question.” He commented, resting his arm on his knee. I didn’t reply back to him. Mainly because I was trying to come up with another comeback. But that was unsuccessful.

“Oh so now we’re back to one or no word answers.” William pleaded.

“Interesting.” I said quickly, confidently leaning back on the handles of the bench.

I caught him by surprise there. He just sat quietly, then laughing at how clever my response was.

“I’m going to call you Liam. Short for William.” I said playfully resting my arm on the side of the top bench. Placing my tired head on my hand.

“That makes more sense now... Sort of.” William said trying to comprehend the new name I gave him.

“I have a different way of thinking as you can see.” I noted

“I know. I find that very interesting.” He said giving me a little sweet innocent smile.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:*** This is an excerpt from a novel I am currently working on. I still have a lot to do and lot to fix, but this is just a little piece I wanted to share. I’ve always wanted to write a novel, but I never really made the time to actually sit and write down my ideas. Until I took creative writing, which is really helping me a great deal in this entire process.

**The Dance Show    By Marlyne Del Campo**

I see only the people from the first and second row  
I hear only the music I chose last month  
I smell the flowers that are in the crowd for the dancers at the end  
I taste the pizza and salad Ms. Lo got us  
I know that in this moment, this little moment it's just the music and me  
I block out the faces I see  
I block out the people screaming my name  
I block out the smell of sweat from the dressing room  
I block out the taste of fear in my body  
I block out everything because in that moment it's just the music and me

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** This sensory poem is about my experience being on stage at the POLAHS annual dance concert. I love to dance and writing this poem was my way of showing others how it feels when I'm on stage~how we all go through the entire process of working hard and the entire experience on that final day.*

**Why?    By Alena De Leon**

why ?  
why do we fall for the ones we can't have ?  
why do we develop feelings for that one person,  
when that person doesn't share the same feelings ?  
out of the seven billion people in the world,  
i happen to have my eye on you.  
why ?  
why do i like you ?  
i know you're not into me.  
so why are you on my mind ,  
when i'm not even on yours ?  
why ?

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** Over the summer, I had feelings for someone who didn't share the same feelings as me. Knowing that, my mind was going crazy on why it had to be that one person I fell for. All I wanted was to know the reasoning behind all this madness.*



**You Have to Be Really Bad at Math to Understand    By Allison Diaz De Leon**

You have to be really bad at math to understand. Integrated 2 math is something else. You need to find the degree, angle, length from A to B, it's absolutely complicated. Sometimes tests and quizzes are worth like fifty percent of your grade and homework is worth zero percent which doesn't help or do anything to your grade. Trigonometry is frustrating. The teacher will use like the most complicated steps to get to the solution. When you ask a friend, they don't really know how to help so soon enough they just give up and give you the answer. Everytime your report card comes home, your mom will give you this big lecture and tell you that an F is unacceptable, and it is but math is just so complicated. How will solving the area and perimeter of a triangle help you in life? It really doesn't unless you major in math or want a career as a civil engineer. I myself can barely get through ten minutes in my math class. Imagine two hours... I have to call my older brother to pick me up because I was "sick." When it comes to doing like ten math questions for homework which is worth zero percent, you still do it and hope that when you fail the final, the homework you did all year will boost your grade at least a little. The time you waste into doing all the homework questions that you feel will never end, when you could've been eating and watching the show you've watched a million times already but you still love. All in all, not being able to solve the height and base of an octagon just makes me feel pretty dumb.

**Storms & Rainbows    By Sarah Diaz**

At night you turn and toss  
you may feel like you are lost  
when you're in the eye of the storm  
To you I must inform  
It's okay to cry and shout  
when there seems to be no way out  
But don't you dare quit, don't make it a habit  
even when you feel like Alice chasing her rabbit  
Don't give up on your dream  
No matter how impossible it may seem.  
Remember that one day you will wake up  
from your nightmare just like Alice did.  
After a storm always comes a rainbow  
Don't you ever forget that kid

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** I wrote this to let people know that no matter how bad things seem there is always hope. Eventually their time in the eye of the storm will end. I was inspired to write this, because I know what it feels like to be going through a hard time in life and feeling like it's never going to end. I just want to let people know that there is an end, and that they will get through it and come out stronger than before.*

**End of the Day By Kendall Dimson**

I close my laptop and put it away,  
After a few good hours give or take.  
After all the work I have done today,  
I knew it was now time for a nice break.

I go on Snapchat to talk to my friends,  
Telling them how long of a day it's been.  
I wait for replies as I pack my pens,  
Being done early has such a nice spin.

I turn on music and put some headphones on,  
To listen to my favorite playlist.  
My eyes begin tearing as I yawn,  
I realize sleep is what I could not resist.

When sleeping comfortably in my bed,  
I hope I dream about getting this bread.

**You Have to be Called Names to Understand By Ydali Duran**

You have to be called names to understand what we go through. Being called something by the way you look, talk, stand, walk, or maybe the money you have, you have to be called names to understand. People can say oh that girl/boy is ugly because the way that person does their hair, make-up, look, or dresses differently than everyone else, you have to be called names to understand. The person can stand a certain way and still come at them like if they don't stand differently than everyone else, you have to be called names to understand. People can talk a certain way with a deep, soft, rusty etc. voice and make fun of them still, without knowing anything of them, you have to be called names to understand. People call me chola because the first thing they see is the way I look, that's their first impression of me, you have to be called names to understand. People also call me rich because I have money everyday, when I have money I see some of my friends hungry and I offer money to give them and sometimes after school I'll buy them food, even if it means me giving up my two or less dollars, I'll give them the rest. So, you have to be called names to understand.

**You Have to be Brown to Understand    By Gabriel Echeverria**

You have to be brown to understand. People look at you different because of your skin color, the language you speak, the way you dress. It is the feeling you get when your parent can not speak English properly so the cashier/employees start looking and treating you different than the other customers. It is also the feeling you get when there are millions of people across the country, including the very own president of the United States of America Donald J. Trump, who strongly despise or put down your own people labeling them as “rapist” or the ones who bring crime to the streets. Sometimes you would like to even question why so much chaos and hatred goes on toward your people. A huge majority of those “wetback” Latinos that come to this country are in search for one thing, the American Dream. Our children are the ones being put and in a lot of cases die in cages. Despite the oppression, I still love my country. Mi país, mi gente. But sadly a lot of people will not understand because you have to be brown to understand.

**Poem    By Angelina Encinas**

Happiness and joy  
Is used as a mask  
To hide the tears and scars  
Is not an easy task

The mask is breaking  
And the scars are starting to show  
And soon  
Everyone will know

Once everyone knows  
There is no going back  
For I don't even know  
When time will crack

I want to know  
What it's like to be free  
Probably like a butterfly  
Who's found their wings



**Autumn    By Brianna Escamilla**

Green leaves saying goodbye  
The wind passing you by  
You're coffee next to your apple pie  
All of our cravings  
are satisfied

**You Have to be Mexican to Understand.    By Luis Escamilla**

What is like to be an outsider?  
What is it like to be thought of as a farmer?  
What is it like for everyone to make fun of your accent?  
Whats is it like for people to think you smuggle drugs?  
What is it like for people to think that you should be deported?  
You have to be mexican to understand.  
What is like for people to think you're in a gang?  
What is like for people to think you pick beans?  
What is it like for people to call you a beaner and a wetback?  
What is it like being a minority?  
You have to be mexican to understand.

**You Have to be Latina to Understand    By Paulina Escamilla**

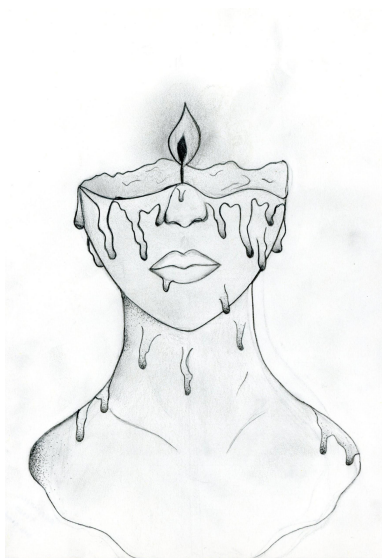
You have to be latina to understand. I remember when I was much younger I would be embarrassed to call my mom or dad. I would talk in a low voice because I would have to speak in Spanish. Everytime I would be on the phone, everyone at school would stare at me because I was speaking a foreign language. I grew out of it and ignored everyone's eyes and smart remarks. Now, I catch myself speaking way more in Spanish than in English. Spanish is my first language and I am not ashamed about it, in fact I embrace it. Because I am bilingual, I can get more job opportunities, understand, and interact with many more people. I enjoy being able to have a conversation with my grandparents, uncles, and aunts, without having other members in the family having to translate their every word. Speaking Spanish only ever benefited me, and I am proud of how I speak it. I am proud that my parents took the time to correct me when I pronounced a word wrong, I am proud that I am a latina. Speaking Spanish is something I do not shy away from anymore. In fact, I happen to think it's kinda cool.

**You Have to be Smart to Understand    By Lasith Fernando**

You have to be smart to understand. My whole family is so smart because my sister and cousins always got above average grades, while me barely passing. Back then they didn't have any pressure, not like me because I'm the last youngest one in my family. When I gets C's I see it as a pass, but my parents always see it as a F. They always think that C's are unacceptable. My parents always say. "Try your best!" When I come back with a C or F, they will say, "Why did you fail this test? This is unacceptable. You have so much time on your hand." I reply back saying, "I tried my best and it turned out to be really hard." It's not easy for me, especially with my parent's expectation. My family just raised too high of standard for me to follow through. I always thought that I was always the disappointed one in my family because I wasn't like all the others. They think that it's easy, but it's not because you can easily forget things overnight.

**You Have to Be a Girl to Understand    By Alma Flores**

You have to be a girl to understand. What is it like to always worry in the morning on what your going to wear? What is it like to do your makeup and worrying if it's good enough like other girl do their makeup? What is it like to compare yourself to other girls and worry what she has that you don't? You have to be a girl to understand. What is it like to constantly worry about your face and constantly wear face masks just to make sure it's healthy and clear of acne? What is it like when you have to deal with stomach cramps every single month and deal with your cycle? What is it like when you look at yourself and have trouble loving your body and what you look like? What is it like when your friends look really nice in clothes that you don't? What is it like dealing with when you go to the stores and spending hours there just to find the right outfit or dresses for a party or look nice for someone you want to impress? You have to be a girl to understand.



**Candle**  
**Art By Adyanna Avila**

**A Teardrop By Kimberly Flores**

A  
teardrop  
can mean joy or  
sadness. It can mean pain  
or madness. They can roll down  
one by one, or stream down and run  
run, run. You either feel happy, sad, or stupid  
as they go down your face. At one point you want  
them to stop or go at a slower pace. You hate the feeling.  
You hate the way others look at you and it's so unpleasing.  
No need to feel embarrassed though. We all have these feelings  
that we need to let go... Don't always let them stay inside...  
Show them, express them, don't let them hide. And if you  
often don't want to show them or you keep them in,  
stop, and let those natural feelings out  
starting with a teardrop.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** I was sitting in my bed, thinking of a poem that I could possibly write. I began to yawn a lot and ended up tearing up a bit because of it. That's when I thought, "Has anyone wrote about teardrops" I looked up poems and found most of them on raindrops. Many of them were in shapes of a black cloud or a drop. That is when I thought a teardrop would be great. A teardrop can hold hundreds of internal emotions. It took me a while to perfect the shape, but I managed it. It came out really good and I am proud of it.*

**He By Kimberly Flores**

Up above is someone I am trying to reach  
Someone that I look up to when I tend to preach  
A leader I truly follow with my heart  
Where I believe He can push me to a new start  
Where I believe He can show me a new way  
Where I believe that I can push any negativity away  
Where I believe He can give me strength  
Where I believe everything good I do will be immense

***From the Author-Behind the Piece:** The one that I look up to and worship is someone really important to me. I had to write a poem over my savior. The idea of Him is something to worship. I believe that every word I wrote came from heart, and I appreciate what I wrote to Him.*

**In Our Eyes    By Kimberly Flores**

In my eyes you were my lover boy  
    In your eyes I was your favorite toy  
In my eyes you were careless  
    In your eyes I was sensitive  
In my eyes you were a sinner  
    In your eyes I was everything but a winner  
In my eyes you were more than a friend  
    In your eyes you knew we would end  
In my eyes all I wanted was a response, a reaction  
    In your eyes I was an attention seeker and begging for passion  
In my eyes you didn't know the meaning of love  
    In your eyes you wouldn't even understand what I wrote above

*From the Author-Behind the Piece: I was thinking of all the love poems that people are always writing about. So I thought of giving it a try. Yes, this is a sad love story as it seems. It is not really meant to be depressing, rather finding out deeper in the meaning of a partner's actions.*

**I am    By Rosalba Garcia**

    I am  
I am finally able to see your weak side  
I am free from the cold heart you try and hide  
    Those hands that only spread lies  
Acting like you love me when you were my  
    demise  
  
    I am free  
I am free from your intoxicating words  
I thought your words would only leave me sun  
    kissed  
    But they just left me bruised  
You left me thinking that together we could never  
    lose  
    When all I should have lost was you

    I am released  
I am released from your devilish touch  
I can now see what we had wasn't much  
  
    I am liberated  
I am liberated from the stubborn look in your eye  
Because you only gave me a temporary high  
    I won't say I regret it  
    But our "love" is now dead  
  
So now I say screw you and all I thought you were  
You weren't much and you definitely weren't my  
    cure

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: This was written for anyone who has ever trapped by someone or something; it's all temporary and one day you will realize it was not as great as you thought it was.*



**The Poison from your mouth    By Rosalba Garcia**

You were a etymological master  
A magician mastering every incantation  
Your words were therapeutic  
Your words were so hypnotic, I surrendered myself to them  
Your words were so soothing  
Your words made me believe that everything would be alright  
Your words made me believe that I could trust you  
Your words got me lost like a summer day in November  
Your words *twisted* and turned my heart until I was an array of broken patterns.  
Your words *played* the strings on my heart  
Your words *created* the perfect melody to a heartbreak song

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: This was written to show the effect that “sweet” words can have on someone.*

**The Purest Eye    By Rosalba Garcia**

You can tell a lot by looking in someone’s eye  
You can see fear, sadness, happiness and joy  
And yes sometimes it can be that simple but other  
times difficult to understand  
Sometimes a tear can be a result of great sorrow or  
it can mean overwhelming joy  
But either way that wasn’t the case for me  
My eyes weren’t a clutter of complex lines  
My eyes weren’t a haven that you could rest your  
worries on  
My eyes were simple  
My eyes were pure  
  
So then why couldn’t you see that I wasn’t like the  
others  
and yours were just full of lies

Why couldn’t you see that my heart wasn’t at your  
disposal  
You acted like a child  
I thought we would be a forever thing  
I was Bonnie and you were my Clyde  
You used me a couple times then decided to throw  
me out like the rest  
We walk past each other like we’re strangers  
And maybe we are  
You were just putting my love to the test  
I try to get over the fact that you will never grow  
up  
And will just keep playing your games  
You tore me down  
Because I had the purest of eyes

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: This was written to manifest the repercussions of a broken heart.*

**You’d have to be Broke to Understand    By Sebastian Ganuza**

Have you ever had to cook your own dinner because your mom had to work the night shift for over 16 hours at the hospital. You see her come home in the morning with her eyes closed shut, reaching for the couch to get a minute of rest, before she had to drive her son to school. Have you ever walked home from school in worn out shoes because she could not afford new ones. You’d have to be broke to understand.

Have you ever laid in your bed as a kid, shivering from the cold, and pretend to be a dragon when you breathe because the air is so cold, you can see your breath. You do it for hours because it's too cold to go outside, the tv was broken, and no one will play with you because no one was home because everyone had to work, so maybe she would not miss paying the gas bill. You'd have to be broke to understand.

Have you ever gone to a friends house, and as soon as you step on the doorstep all you feel is jealousy, because your friend that lives on the nice part of the city has everything you've ever dreamt for: A big house, a flat screen TV, their own room, a huge backyard, and all the luxuries that a kid from a poor family ever wanted. You'd have to be broke to understand.

## **You have to be a Twin to Understand**

**By Natalie Garcia**

You have to be a twin to understand. To know that you have another person that looks just like you. You need to share everything and if not, one twin gets upset. What is it like when a person says "If I hit your sister will you feel it?" Well obviously not because just because you have heard of it, it doesn't mean it is true. What is it like when someone calls you the other twins name? It gets annoying because that isn't your name and sometimes people call you your other twins name to get you annoyed. What is it like having to spend money on twins? You have to spend double the money because there is two of them and plus they each might like different types of brands that cost more than others. What is it like when someone says you guys look just alike? Well if we look alike don't you think we are twins? Like yes we are twins, all you had to do was ask is if we were twins. What is it like when people say if you had a boyfriend, like what if he thought you were your sister? Well he isn't going to get confused because he is going to know the differences between us since we won't look exactly alike. Adding to that question it gets annoying because everyone starts to ask that as soon and one of the twins has a boyfriend. What is it like having to share the same friends? Having to share the same friends is fine because then you guys both know who you guys would be talking about, but sometimes one twin might have a friend that the other twin might not like, but then it would sound like a personal problem. What is it like when your teachers, friends, and family calls you your sister's name by accident? Well it doesn't get annoying, but then you get used to it because you've been called your twins name more than once. What is it like when someone says "Well your prettier or other stuff then your sister". Well like I don't personally care because we are both the same. When we tell each other that one is this then the other or call each other names, someone always ends up saying that we are both are the same and we look exactly alike so no matter what we tell each other we are still going to be the same, but just with different personalities. What is it like when someone says something bad about your other half? Well of course I'm going to tell my other twin because its about her. I wouldn't keep something from my twin if it was bad. What is it like when someone says, "You guys should change classes." Well like if we were able to we would, but we wouldn't want to get in trouble because what if someone would find out. What is it like when one twin is more favored with people? When one twin is favored by people the other twin sometimes feels left out. What is it like when people say "If your birthday is this day, it is your twins birthday the same day?" Well obviously because we are twins. When your a twin, you will have someone who looks like you, is born the same day as you, share some characteristics, but twins will always be two different people with different personalities. When I say you have to be a twin to understand, you really have to be a twin to understand.

<b>Beatriz y el Nuevo Vestido</b> <b>By Trinity Garcia</b>  <b>Spanish Version</b>	<b>Beatrice and the New Dress</b> <b>By Trinity Garcia</b>  <b>English Translation</b>
<p>En un tiempo no muy lejano había una bella doncella llamada Beatriz que vivía en un pueblito lindo llamado Farolito. Un día, Beatriz fue a con la modista y le pidió que le confeccionara un vestido extravagante pues ella quería ser la envidia de todos sus compañeros de la empresa donde trabajaba. La modista notó que Beatriz era una chica presumida y arrogante y poco amable. Beatriz demandó que tuviese el vestido listo en dos días sin importarle si la modista podía o no.</p> <p>La modista trabajaba en alta costura confeccionado vestidos para celebridades y empresarios importantes, personas destacadas y ejemplares. Ella no tomaba trabajos de cualquier persona y Beatriz era un personaje desagradable. En ese momento se le ocurrió a la modista hacerle un diseño muy especial.</p> <p>A los dos días regresó Beatriz con la modista a recoger el vestido. Beatriz platico mucho sobre ella misma de su casa, sus riquezas. La modista le preguntó a Beatriz si era dadivosa y caritativa y Beatriz contestó que no, porque iba a usar su dinero para cosas que no son para ella. La modista no dijo nada solo fue a traerle el vestido Beatriz para mostrarselo. Cuando Beatriz vio el vestido se enamoró de él. Era hermoso, blanco como la espuma del mar. La modista le dijo el precio y Beatriz ni lo pensó dos veces, lo pagó y se fue. Beatriz estaba contenta con el vestido, se imaginaba se en la fiesta rodeada de muchos caballeros.</p> <p>El día del baile llegó, y Beatriz estaba ansiosa por irse al local para presumir su vestido nuevo hermoso. Cuando llegó Beatriz, se bajó del automóvil y en ese momento se dio cuenta que el vestido ya no era blanco que había cambiado de color, a un color verde horrible y estaba empezando a pega al cuerpo. Beatriz corrió hacia al baño, en ese momento se topó con la modista y le reprocho de porque le estaba pasando esto? La modista le</p>	<p>In a not too distant time there was a beautiful maid called Beatrice who lived in a little town called Farolito. One day, Beatrice went to the dressmaker and asked her to make an extravagant dress because she wanted to be the envy of all her colleagues in the company where she worked. The dressmaker noticed that Beatrice was a presumptuous, arrogant and unkind girl. Beatrice demanded that she have the dress ready in two days without caring if the dressmaker could or not.</p> <p>The dressmaker worked in haute couture dresses for celebrities and important businessmen, outstanding people and exemplary. She did not take jobs from anyone and Beatrice was an unpleasant character. At that moment it occurred to the dressmaker to make a very special design.</p> <p>Two days later Beatrice returned with the dressmaker to pick up the dress. Beatrice talked a lot about herself, of her house, her wealth. The dressmaker asked Beatrice if she was giving and charitable and Beatrice answered no, because she was not going to use her money for things that are not for her. The dressmaker did not say anything, and just showed her the dress. When Beatrice saw the dress she fell in love with it. It was beautiful, white as foam. The dressmaker told her the price and Beatrice did not think twice, she paid and left. Beatrice was happy with the dress, she imagined herself at the party surrounded by many gentlemen.</p> <p>The day of the dance arrived, and Beatrice was eager to go to the party to show off her beautiful new dress. When Beatrice arrived, she got out of the car and at that moment realized that the dress was no longer white it had changed color, to a horrible green color and was beginning to stick to her body. Beatriz ran to the bathroom, at that moment she ran into the dressmaker and reproached, what happening to her dress? The dressmaker replied that the fabric of her dress was a reflection of the soul that it wore. In the</p>

contestó que la tela de su vestido era un reflejo de la alma cual vestía. En el caso de Beatriz, su alma estaba llena de envidia de tal manera que la tela cambió de color y unida a su cuerpo como señal que estaba feo.

La modista le recordó a Beatriz que el dinero no es todo en la vida que con amabilidad y caridad la vida es mas hermosa.

El Fin.

case of Beatrice, her soul was filled with envy in such a way that the dress changed color and joined her body as a sign that it was ugly.

The dressmaker reminded Beatrice that money is not everything in life, that with kindness and charity life is more beautiful.

The End

***From the Author~Behind this Piece:** This story was a assignment from my Spanish teacher. I wanted to write a short story with a moral behind it, one that people can learn from. I hope my audience can learn that, it is not about the money or beauty you have in life but what you do with it. You can have all the money in the world but you will never truly be happy without love or kindness. You can be the poorest in the world but be the riches of people with love.*

## **Dumplings By Yerin Go**

Dumplings are my primary choice when I do not know what to eat  
Multiple Asian countries come together and create their own type of dumpling  
It is a universal Asian food  
Potstickers and Wontons are just two of the multiple names that people also call dumplings  
Rice flour and water are used to create the outside part of dumplings  
You can put chicken, pork, beef, vegetables, glass noodles and much more inside  
During the holidays, it is tradition for many families to come together and make dumplings  
You can steam or fry them  
Many people eat them with sauces like soy sauce for flavor  
You can create them to be crescent shaped or round  
They can be jumbo or bite sized  
They can be eaten with rice, in soups or alone  
Dumplings are a great snack or meal  
Regardless of how you choose to eat them, they will always be tasty

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** I wrote this poem because in freshman year I submitted my first food poem about rice and since then it's been a tradition of mine to submit a poem about food to the lit journal.*

## Chemistry Poem By David Godoy

You have to be terrible at chemistry to understand.

What is it like to be in chemistry class and not knowing anything that's going on?

What is it like when your hoping the teacher won't call on you but she calls on you?

What is it like to be called on and not knowing the answer, feeling stupid.

What is it like studying the day before for the chem test and still fail?

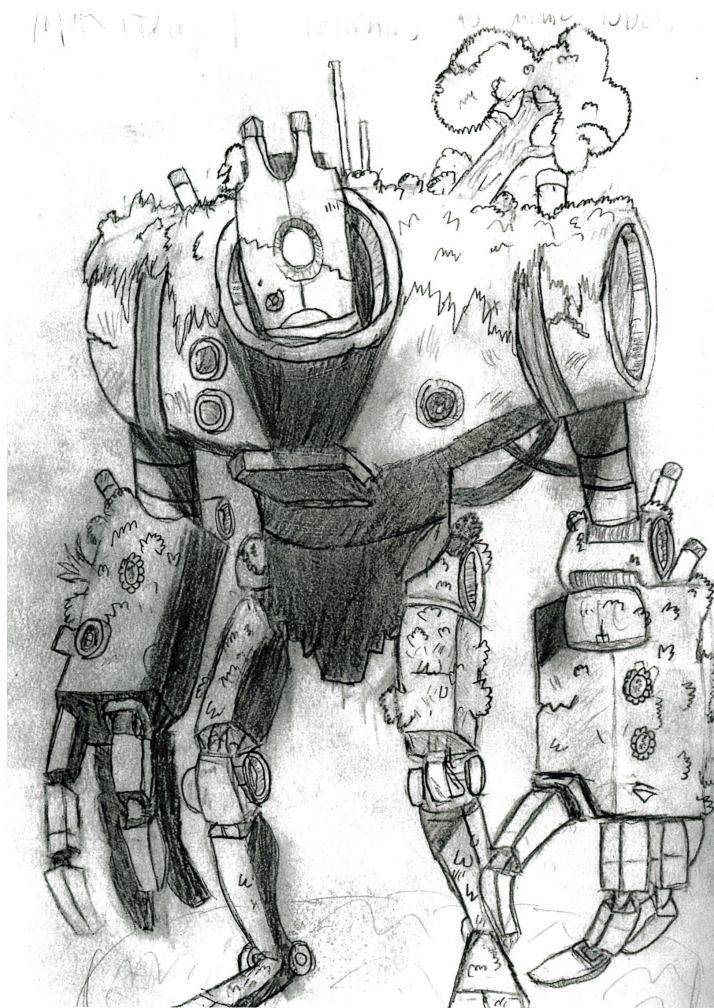
What is it like if I don't pass the test then I'm going to anger my parents and their going to be very upset?

What is it like looking at the clock every five minutes, wondering how much longer I am going to stay in the class because I hate it so much?

What is it like when the teacher explains the problem and I still don't get it?

What is it like when everyone in the class thinks its so easy and I'm always struggling?

This makes me feel that I will never understand chemistry.



**Robot**  
**Art By Joshua Alvarez**

**The Sudden Snowfall    By Andrew Gonzales**

Clouds swirl around the frosty sky  
Snow suddenly falling  
Tiny snowflakes spinning like ballerinas  
Falling . . . falling . . . falling

They hit the ground and pile up  
Like our emotions under pressure  
Snowflake after snowflake  
Piling . . . piling . . . piling

But summer comes, and the sun shines bright  
The snow starts to melt, disappearing from our eye  
And everyone smiles, running and playing  
Running . . . smiling . . . enjoying life

*About the Author~Behind the Piece:*The inspiration behind my poem is my friends. At some point, I didn't feel like I belonged with my friends, and one of them gave me the cold shoulder. It felt cold. I felt cold, not literally though, metaphorically. I remembered when I felt that cold; my first snowy Christmas 4 years ago.

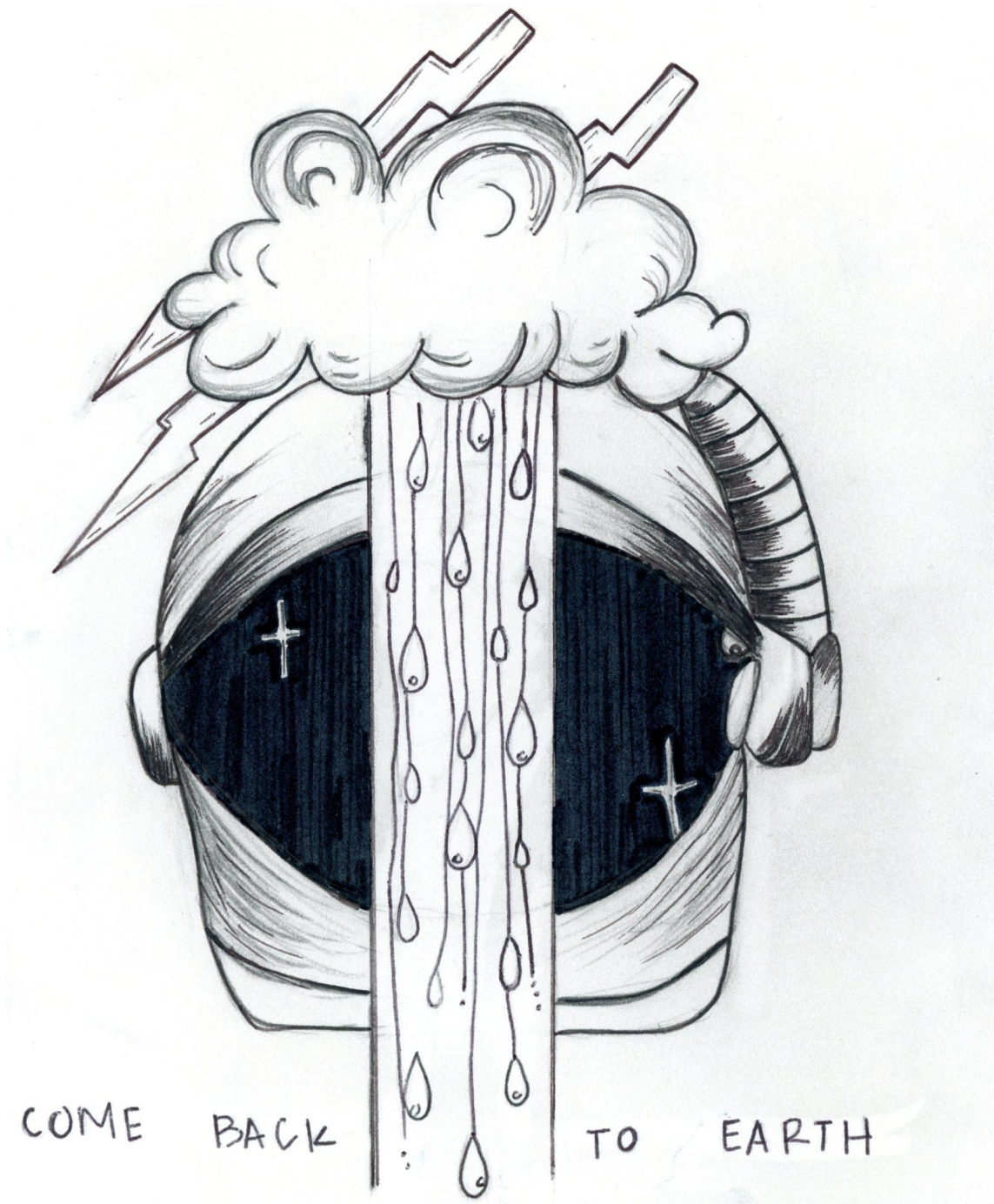
**What Comes After    By Andrew Gonzales**

It's crazy to think of  
What comes after  
To die and reach eternity

For some, they reach nothing  
Others obtain heaven  
Others hell  
For me though...

For me, it's different entirely  
We reach a world of our own  
To where we are God  
Where our loved ones are  
Where our soulmates lie  
To where...

Where we are accepted  
But that is what comes after  
Not now



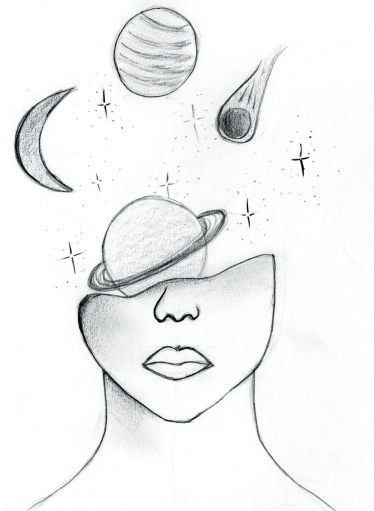
The night sky sparkled with stars. More stars than I had ever seen in my life. I have lived in the city all my life. Where light pollution wiped away the canvas of the cosmos with a synthetic orange light. Where the world was in eternal dusk and true dark night never reared its head. Tonight however was different. It was something out of a dream, perhaps more of a nightmare.

As night came the city still whirred with energy. Cars honked and peoples voiced droned together to form the sound beneath my apartment window. Helicopters buzzed and jet engines roared overhead. I'm an insomniac, so I am very very in tune to the sounds of the city as they come at night. The idiosyncrasies of the streets are something I have come to be familiar with in my 4 years of restless nights in my apartment. But like I said, tonight was no ordinary night. Just as soon as the sounds of the city began to rumble, a greater sound emerged to beat it into silence. A wild and strained otherworldly screech beat down on the city from the sky. I ran to my window and looked up into the sky, to investigate this ear raking noise.

What I saw was beyond strange, the sky became a midnight swirl, the color of oil twisting and churning on the surface of water. The sky swirled madly projecting colors and shapes never before imagined by the human mind. The screech howled into the sky once more, I yelped and held my hands to my ears instinctively, It felt as if it was burrowing into my ears to set fire to my brain, to tear my mind to pieces.

Scientists would later say that the howl had only lasted a minute. In that minute I felt an eternity of pain, of hardship, of struggle. I felt things that my mind does not have the words to describe. I did not see the return of the sky and I don't remember hearing the sound fade. I only remember waking up on my back in the middle of the street and being greeted by the stars. I did not remember how I got there or why I was there, but I was surrounded by people. We were scattered along the street, no one protested. No one spoke at all for that matter. There was a deafening silence that no one dare spoke into. There was no light except for the silver blanket projected onto us by the stars and the moon. The lights never returned but the silence has remained.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** I wrote this story during a 3 month dry spell where sleep was elusive to me. I would stay up at night and listen to the sounds and think about an entire world out of my control. That's the spark for this story.*



**Cosmic Thoughts**  
**Art By Adryanna Avila**



**Foolishness    By Morgan Gonzales**

I have never been one for action  
I always thought words were sweet enough  
That a silver tipped tongue would give all my deeds traction  
But life is often times more sights than sound, life's tough

When storms brewed and men crumbled  
I watched my mouth, my words never tumbled

You see storms come and go  
It's a matter of being quick with a smile  
Or knowing when to talk quick and wrap your words with a bow  
You see I am a grasshopper that sings for the ants as they walk in file

Someone has to do it right?  
Because ants crawl  
But grasshoppers  
They leap

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:*** This poem is me indicting myself for being a little more than irresponsible but also knowing how good it feels to leap a little recklessly.

In grade school, most American children are taught the principles of good natured individuals and a cooperative learning environment, a microcosm of the ideal global society. I remember my school principal, well intentioned nevertheless, indoctrinating students with the pillars of good character at monthly assemblies—for every single month of every semester of every school year. His words and those of the students would echo across every corner of the enclosure. We would all parrot them back effortlessly: We will be responsible, respectful, fair, caring, and good citizens.

As we mature, we come to realize that many ditch those ideals in their own interest. The principal is no longer there and nor are the supervising teachers to lovingly admonish those not being “fair,” “responsible,” or “caring” for as much as that’s worth.

Then, we learn that enshrined in the hundred year old text we as Americans hold so dear is a mere 45 words which transgress boundaries with and end goal to protect the commonwealth it established, secure the advancement of its people, and promote their free and independent expression; the freedom of the press.

This freedom resembles many adopted by nations across the globe, indicative of a common human ideal: that a perpetual stalemate arises when power goes unchecked and expression is barred.

Now, I could go on about how this freedom is imperative to a functioning democracy, but by the same token, it is useless without its keepers. Journalist—many of whom in our day and age continue to be persecuted and attacked by the powerful—must not merely serve their employer, nor their interest, but a much higher purpose; the wellbeing of their neighbors. With this nobler purpose, in the United States, they may serve as fierce watchdogs for a society which has become increasingly active in other respects. A democracy demands this freedom because it cannot afford to make guesses about the performance of their elected officials nor on the vitals of its democracy. We have simply become too busy. As the only profession mentioned in the Constitution, this is a job we the people entrust to a free and independent press.

On our end, we must ensure the protection of journalists, whistleblowers, and advocates of free speech. Without them, the ends to which a free press can be effective is curtailed. Take for example FBI whistleblower Jane Turner.

Ms. Turner was a 25-year-old veteran agent who in 2011 exposed the FBI’s failure to provide protection for child sex crime victims on North Dakota Indian Reservations. Cases of child rape—even one of a 2-year-old who had been raped were covered up by the FBI as “results of automobile accidents” and the investigation of pedophiles targeting Native American children were placed on the backburner. Jane Turner reported her observations to the press, which led to her being removed from her position and placed at odds with the federal government. As she put it, “It takes enormous strength to put one’s moral integrity over... personal [inclinations] to protect fellow colleagues.”

But nevertheless, Jane sounded the alarm loud enough for us to hear and for our government to be held accountable. She fought her removal and won a historic victory before the U.S. Court of Appeals.

It is only after those like Jane that a the test of intellectual integrity in the press comes into play. Great journalists exist, and they embody what I believe our Founding Fathers had in mind when penning this fundamental right; honesty, morality, and yes, the five pillars of character. Journalists around the world are tasked with a significant duty; to fairly and to the best of their ability convey issues relevant to their communities, regardless of how big or small a scale that may be on.

I like to think of freedom of the press as, not the counterpart, but rather the fruit of free speech. I am an avid reader, but I have a tremendous appreciation for podcasts and music. I love indulging and immersing myself in them. But one of my favorite rappers is Compton native Kendrick Lamar. In his 3rd and 4th studio albums, Lamar explores themes of racism, violence, and hate in America. He exposes racial inequality and bigotry across the country, catered to those who listen to his music. When one puts on headphones and opens their mind, Kendrick is there and then both the whistleblower and the watchdog—and nobody stands in his way. Now a Pulitzer prize winning artist, Lamar articulated, in human terms, what a newspaper could not. In essence, “the press” is a broad term, an umbrella for information found in and transmitted through the arts, the media, and academia.

Freedom of the press is the right of individuals to inform, inspire, and imbue Americans with tools for upholding the principles of good character.

It is a freedom which allows accurate and informative news to be delivered to you, whether on the stands at a Starbucks, your mobile device, or straight to your doorstep.

It is about holding powerful governments and institutions accountable as much as it is about inspiring generations to question and seek to be informed, active members of society.

It goes without saying that the freedom of the press is vital, however, it requires us to enable it.

Let us all be champions of this ideal and stand for it when nobody else will or when it is attacked. Because without freedom of the press, the pillars of good character cannot be upheld, there is absolutely no such thing as democracy.

**To My Best Friend****By Julieana Gurrola**

it's always the same thing  
wake up and face battles  
to block it out i sing  
and i pray in chapels  
my best friend she's so amazing  
good vibes she's always bringing  
she's the reason i'm still alive  
without her i would've died  
i'm happy now and i carry on  
you're my sunshine on the hardest days

i'm so glad that i'm not gone  
because everyday i get to see u slay  
you my best friend, i wouldn't doubt it  
not even for a second  
your energy is addictive, i have to admit it  
i can't make believe a person like you  
you're better than i imagined  
this is to my best friend  
my heart has been mended  
thank you god for sending this angel, right down  
from heaven

**My Baby****By Julieana Gurrola**

you're my baby  
got me going crazy  
text you on a daily  
i've been into you lately  
i wanna be your lady  
and i see that you feel same way about me  
i'll give you my heart  
and i promise that we'll never be apart  
looking at your face is like looking at art  
if you're in a movie i would skip to your part  
boy you got me in my feels  
because it's my heart you tryna steal  
you never went fake you always kept it real  
my baby looking like a full course meal  
you make me feel alive  
you give me some good vibes  
well both go to paradise

**Undying Love      By Isaac Gutierrez**

There was a boy who loved a girl, and he would send her countless gifts.  
He would send her flowers and puppies and kittens alike, anything that he could give.  
Their love was unmatched by any two souls, for forever their love would survive.  
But their love was not supposed to be, so the girl just waited for gifts to arrive.  
To show how much she loved his gifts, she kept the gifts forever.  
But when she asked when they could finally meet, between his tears he responded, "never".  
"More gifts will arrive, my love." He said "You just have to wait for their last breath."  
And that is my tale about a boy named Life and about a girl named Death.

**Deadman's Questions Art By Joshua Alvarez**



**My Era      By Mia Gutierrez**

I have been always wanting to say this but everything that I do is all about my family. I hate this generation. There I said it. I have been wanting to say that for years. I act like I don't live in this era. I try to live back in the days. I told my parents "I would do whatever it takes to go back into the 50's." Demi Lovato made a song called La La land and she just puts hollywood on blast. She is telling everyone what hollywood is actually like. She is a inspiration to everyone and everyone who could relate to her. I want people to believe that they have a voice something to say.

NF for example he made a song called "therapy session." His songs are made to be heard. People think that their life is awful for what. You listen to a sad song and you think that you relate to it. This generation needs to change. I believe that It won't but baby steps.

I notice a post saying this is the only way for a girl to like you if your dress like this. Not every girl likes that. I have been noticing that a lot of girls are wearing lip gloss. For what though to fit in because it's a new trend. I just don't get it. We need to make a change to this world instead of making bad music.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:*** I wrote about this topic, because I want people to understand what is going on in my perspective in life. Teenagers younger than me need to know what is going on and what I'm thinking of this generation.

**Dear Grandma, My Letter To You      By Patricia Guzman**

There are so many things that I could say about you. You're the most incredible human being. Ever. There are not enough words in this world to show how much I love you. I love your cooking, your flaws and your imperfections. I love the person that you are. I will never be able to put into words how much you mean to me, but I can go for the rest of my life trying. Ohh my grandmother, a beautiful, hardworking, loving, dedicated, intelligent, funny, determined, wise woman. A woman who has always put others above herself. From my first day on this earth, you have been one of the few people in my life who has been there for me, every day of my life, from morning to night. From holding me as a baby, to teaching me how to cook, clean, knit, and many other things. I admire you to no end. You have put up with countless problems in your life, but you still manage to be the most positive person I know. Ohh grandma, If I could give you the world i would. All I ever want to do is make you proud and see that beautiful smile of yours. Thank you for unconditionally loving me, no matter what I do. With you, I have never had to live up to any expectations. You make my slightest of accomplishments seem so great, and make me feel like a superhuman. You are my safe haven. I never have to be anything but myself around you. I know for a fact that I can trust you with absolutely anything, and I mean anything, like my problems, etc. Even when you know I might make a mistake, you will always be there for me. Your love is so pure and is unlike any other love in this world.

**A Mother's Treasure Is Her Daughter      By Patricia Guzman**

Hey mom, I want to start off and say that I love you with all my heart. You are my best friend, and you always will be. As I get older, my appreciation and admiration towards you will continue to grow tremendously. There were times when I was a total brat to you; I was selfish, rude, and mean. Still, you loved me anyway. Thank you for comforting me through my heartbreaks. Thanks for letting me cry on your bed when boys did not treat me right. Thank you for sacrificing your personal time after your long day of work to help me through my problems when no one else cared. You always know how to make me laugh and feel better. Thank you for teaching me how to put on makeup how to drive a car. Thank you for all the love you give me. Thanks for always taking my side when it came to relationships and threatening any guy who posed a threat to my heart. You have sacrificed so much in order to give my brothers and I a better life than you had when you were a kid. I admire your hard work and success. I am proud to call you my mom. You are a hardworking, selfless, giving, supportive, and caring person. You are a superwoman for dealing with three crazy kids. I know we drive you crazy, but you know we love you. Thank you for being the best mom on this planet. There really is nothing greater than the love of a mother.

**Dear Little Brothers      By Patricia Guzman**

Dear Little Brothers,

I guess I can't refer to you both as "little" anymore. Being an older sister to you both is not as easy as I make it look. You both grab all my stuff and never leave me alone. We fight and argue all the time. I had always felt that I had to be strong, brave, and willing to terrify whomever caused you both problems. As it turns out, I would have been unable to do any of those things without you both teaching me to be strong, brave, and never let someone walk all over my family or me. I love you both to the end, and I will always be here for you when you need me. It is important for me to have you guys realize what two special angels you both are to me.

**Boredom      By Elijah Hardy**

To me the most scariest thing in life isn't a person, place, or thing  
It isn't a consequence, punishment losing my shoe collection or money  
The most scariest thing in life for me is... boredom  
I try to avoid boredom in every way shape and form  
But no matter how hard I try I can't escape it, it's a never ending storm  
It attacks everything and has no mercy  
It attacks everyone and is always thirsty  
Nobody likes Boredom and Boredom likes nobody  
Ruining the vibe is Boredom's favorite hobby  
Boredom will come through and finesse your night like Lil Yachty  
Try to outrun it, you can't Boredom is faster than a Bugatti  
Okay will not literally but like Boredom does strike pretty fast  
I wish I could live my life boredom free but I can't  
Try to imagine a world without school, sleep, nothing to do on the weekend, waitlines, golf.  
All those boring things gone?  
I mean of course there's more but still the fact that a world without boredom is imaginable just gets me to want to make that world real  
And you can look up the word boring and it'll say it's an adjective  
But nobody can escape boredom and everyone accepts it  
Because Adjectives are opinionated and change between each person  
When looking at "applied to all" that definition worsens  
So when some tells you boredom is a choice tell them that's not true  
Because boredom applies to all including me and you  
Since boredom's inescapable and is always bad to have  
Maybe it would be easier to split my world in half  
Growing up is tough and everything is getting boring  
A fun and exciting world is something I have been adoring  
That life is fictional and I should probably stop  
I don't want to grow up too fast and never reach the top  
But since life is getting older, responsibilities are overgrowing, I find less time to think to myself and breathe, knowing that boredom is just another perception of life.

**Clay**      **By Elijah Hardy**

Fresh out of the packet I breathe and scream like an infant. Whoever saved me must've been my savior. I greet my savior, or at least I try as I am interrupted by his cold hard hands tear me apart. His constant aggression is not understandable. He opens up another me, except this one is red. He is a wanna be. He does the same things I do. Then sudden blackness comes to me faster than lightness came to me a couple of minutes ago. The last thing I remembered was my savior's cold hard hands holding me. When I wake up I am interfused with the red clay like I am a mutant or something. As the years pass I see my actual use and hope for a better place. Then, my savior puts us in a plastic bag outside. This is what I hope to be a better life. Regardless I am and will only be Clay.



**Tag**     **By Elijah Hardy**

As a kid I would play tag and it was fun for me  
But as I grew older, I finally started to see  
Chasin all my dreams is my cup of tea  
I mean sure tag was fun it really got me thinking  
If life was like tag, then who or what would I be chasing  
I mean I can chase after my dreams and reach for the stars  
But because of doubt and low confidence that's a way too high set bar  
Selling myself short has been the motto since day one  
And since nothing has questioned it I guess that motto won  
Maybe if I take time and make more rights than wrong  
Maybe that will be the answer to, "Where do I belong"  
If it was a girl I was chasing I have high expectations  
Some girls might be "too good for me" I put that in quotations  
Some girls might not be good enough and they out the equation  
The perfect type of girl for me is probably already taken  
I'm only in high school so I do not need it all  
Maybe if I drop my ego some spot will open up  
If I do maybe I'll have what it takes to go and say what's up  
But even if I do that my low confidence will eat it up  
You see i've never been that guy to do extra  
My grades reflect it  
My personality reflects it  
My whole life reflects it  
And it's not because I can't, it is simply because I am Too Lazy  
Being lazy is easy and very simple  
But by doing so I popped all of my dreams harder than a pimple  
Now I am noticing far too late  
No more food on the plate  
And I strongly relate  
To that of a regret- er  
Even during tag there's always a cheater  
Calling timeout, or safe zone  
That safe zone is now home  
I've never step out of it I don't like to roam  
Though I could do more I always do less  
Cause I confess  
Less is more to me because Less seems to be the best  
In that safe zone I don't have to run  
There's nothing to be afraid of because in that safe zone I am invincible  
And as I watch people struggle outside of the safe zone, it looks so hard for them  
As I watch and pray I never end up like that  
Maybe I am too critical on myself

Maybe I'm mistaking myself for someone else  
I might be over exaggerating but at least I get the point  
If there was one thing I remembered from tag, it was having fun  
As a little kid I always wanted a ton  
After a while the safe zone would get boring  
So I tied up my laces and out I went soring  
But as I grow older I guess I get more lazy  
I guess comparing my life to tag might seem a bit crazy  
But if life was tag right now then I would probably be out  
Because my low confidence and self esteem is punching me in the mouth.

<b>Repaired</b> <b>By Auguste Harris</b>
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I loved you  
You loved me  
You loved me before I even loved you  
It was at first sight for you  
But it took me a year to find my love for you  
You was there for the good and the bad  
I needed you  
You needed me  
You broke me to a part where I didn't even know my name  
I thought it was me  
I thought maybe if high school wasn't my main focus I'll still have you  
I cried and cried  
Cried til I couldn't cry no more  
It was pain in my soul when I lost you  
And you weren't even dead  
I never thought I'll experience pain from a person that discovered me first  
I've forgiven you  
And moved on for the better  
I'll always love you  
And I'll always remember the look you gave me when your love was clear  
And mine wasn't

**Alone**      **By Jake Headen**

“Alone”  
In this one class  
There’s this one chair  
It sits lonely  
By the wall over there  
As the days go on and the time passes  
It stays put through all the classes  
Nothing surrounds it  
Not one bit  
Because it is a chair for no one to sit

**To Get an “A”**      **By Jake Headen**

“To Get an A”  
Paper, pen, and pencils  
They are all writing utensils  
You can use them for homework  
Or, you can use them for stencils  
Use them for your math work due the next day  
Or, stay up watching YouTube to pass the time away  
But in the morning  
The clock strikes 8  
If you’re not here, you’re late  
You wanted to do your homework  
But you forgot the due date  
Now you’ll never know  
What it’s like to get an A



**Art By Diego Morales**

**Gift or a Curse?     By Jake Headen**

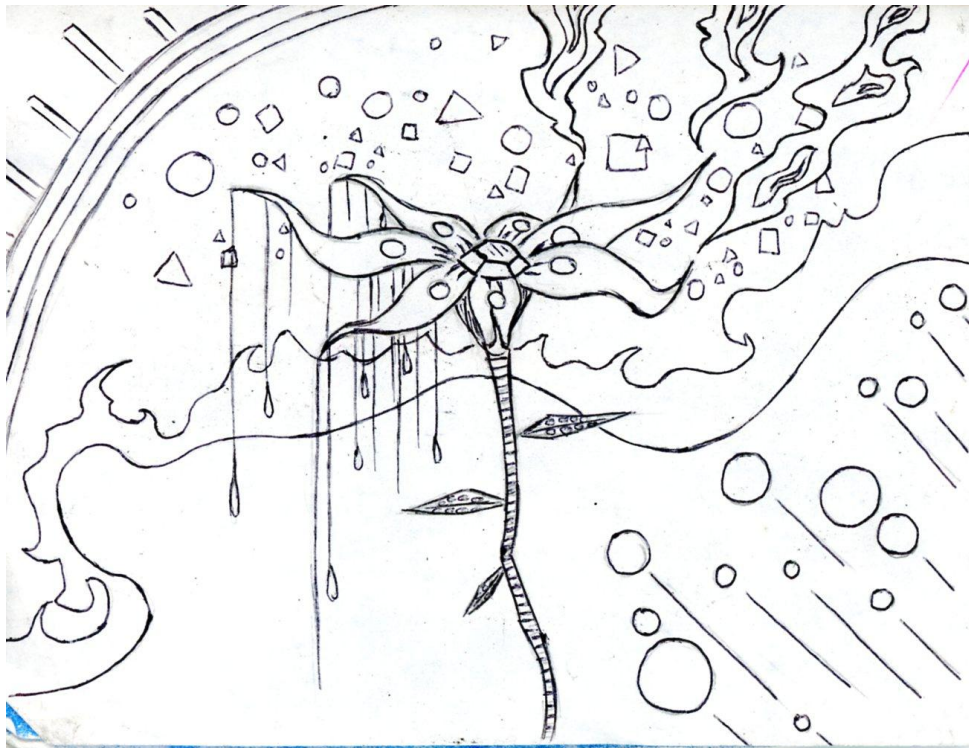
I am writing for extra credit  
I want the points, but not the debit  
    This poem needs a setting  
    So I'm aboutta set it  
    Gotta keep it real  
Because I want this poem to feel  
Writing this thing just like a verse  
To go back, gotta put it in reverse  
    Lookin' back in history  
    Trying to solve the mystery  
    Is life a gift or a curse?

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:***  
Straight up, I just needed something to  
write for a Creative Writing assignment.

**Blinded     By Itali Hernandez**

They searched the world  
    during a storm,  
Never looking through the fog.  
they had already encountered love  
    with each other,  
    but it was blinded  
    by their insecurities.

***From the Author~Behind this Piece:*** With this piece of writing, I hope my audience can understand its true meaning. I decided to write on this subject of loving yourself because it is a topic that many young people seem to struggle with.



**Gem**  
**Art By Ivan Garza**

**Destiny** By Itali Hernandez

You are a girl I cherish,  
an anchor to my soul.  
an unwavering companion.  
You are the one  
in a storm  
in thick and thin.  
You are the one,  
my sister

*From the Author~Behind this Piece: With this piece of writing, I want to express my true feelings towards my sister. I want her to know how important she is to my life and the role she plays on me.*

**Mom**      **By Itali Hernandez**

A woman, a comrade in arms,  
a port in a storm  
through the jungle  
a guide  
a hero through space and time  
You hold my soul,  
Your love has never gone short.  
where would I be without you ?  
Lost in a lighting storm in space and time

*From the Author~Behind this Piece: My mother is the most important figure in my life. So, why would I not take the time to put a piece of writing dedicated to her ?*

**Ode to Marriage**      **By Jovanny Hernandez**

Marriage is a big commitment  
Doubt, fear, and worry are what I think of it  
Doubt of what I'm about to do  
Fear of what is to come  
Worry that I might not be the one  
But then I see you  
The doubt, fear, and worry fade away  
And on that day  
I see myself wanting to spend the rest of my life with you

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: So for this poem I had my inspiration from my parents and to be more precise I got most of it from my dad. I had him answer a few questions about how he felt about the day he got married.*

At what age is it acceptable to walk home by yourself or to take public transportation? The first time I took public transportation was at the age of seven. Consequently that afternoon my mom had a nice and long conversation with a couple of police officers.

Where I lived, the neighbors had a son who was the same age as me. We would sometimes play together outside in the front yard. He would always be making tremendous amounts of noise nextdoor. It sounded like he had a parade with him. I didn't really care at the time because I had recently obtained a new videogame on my Nintendo DS and it was the only thing on my mind. Eventually though I got bored of the video game, I decided to finally go and see what in the world the kid next door was doing. The following day, when the kid went outside, I did too.

I finally asked him.

“What’s all the noise about?” I yelled.

“I’m just having fun.” Said James.

“Doing what?” I questioned.

“Whatever my imagination decides.” James said crossing his legs on the lawn.

“That’s cool! My name’s Jovanny!” I introduced myself.

“Mine’s James!” He replied.

After getting to know who the kid next door was, I proceeded to play with him. That day I had so much fun I knew we would be really good friends. After knowing about each other for a week we would proceed to play at school together.

James was known as a cool kid because his parents gave him a little more freedom. James was allowed to walk home and take public transportation, which at that time if you walked home alone you were considered “cool”. My mother would never allow me to do that because she said it was dangerous and little kids shouldn't be on the street alone. Well on the Friday of that week I had met James, my mom was late. I had no idea where she was because she didn't say anything about being late. My mom told me that if she was late I would have to go to the school office and wait for her there, so that's exactly what I did until I bumped into James on the way to the office. James told me that it would be easier if I just took the bus home. I said no but it didn't take much to convince me.

“Hey Jovanny just take the bus.” James said pointing at the bus stop.

“No, my mom said to wait for her.” I said standing still.

“Trust me it's easy and I'll tell you how to do it.” James insisted.

“Ok.” I complied.

After clearly a lot of convincing, I decided to take the bus. James who has taken the bus before explained where to get off and walk to. I got on the bus and nervously sat down because it was my first time on the bus. It felt nice being alone for the first time but I fell asleep. Falling asleep on the bus is never a good idea because you don't know what can happen. When I woke up I immediately got off not knowing where I was and what time it was. Later I found out that I was in Los Angeles but I was still lost nowhere to run. I had no clue how to contact my parents or get help so I decided to walk into a store and ask someone for help. I went in, looked at the store clerk, and asked where I was. They answered and I was still confused because I did not know Los Angeles. They asked me where my parents where and I just started crying not knowing how to answer. They ended up calling the police and when they arrived they asked if I knew my parents numbers. As a little kid I had no idea what to expect and so I did what I was told answering a few questions crying.

“Do you know your parents number?” The officer asked.

“No.” I simply said.

“Do you know your address?” He asked.

“Yes.” I said with tears in my eyes.

I told them my address and they told me to get in their police car. I was extremely happy because it was my first time in a police car. I sat in the back because the police officer had a partner and so I really felt like I was in trouble, like a criminal. As we arrived to my neighborhood I felt better recognizing the place. We made it to my front door and no one answered. They asked me if my parents are usually not home. I answered yes, not really knowing what they asked. When my parents arrived my mom was yelling at me and the police officers asked if they could come in and have a word with them. My parents got in trouble because of me and I did not have a video game for a long time but James and I would still hang out and get into trouble. What I learned from this is not to trust someone you have known for only a week.

<b>You</b> <b>By Jovanny Hernandez</b>
--

You make me laugh  
You make me smile  
When I see you I feel like a child  
Although you don't always listen  
I'm glad we met  
because to me you always glisten  
You say I'm mean  
you say I'm nice  
But I just like to think  
that I'm alright  
We argue and we fight  
But yet you're always polite  
I tease you all day  
But you're always okay  
That's why I'm happy we're friends today  
Best friends we were once  
But unhappy you were  
And although I'm not there  
I hope you realize  
That I'll always care  
I know things will never be the same  
I understand if you don't like me  
I'm sorry for what I did  
I hope you can forgive me

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: I was inspired to write this poem from the people who are important to me.*



**The Eyes     By Mia Hernandez**

As the girl woke up, and walked her halls. For a slip of cheesecake, as midnight falls. It was also normal, until it wasn't at all. As she went to the fridge, it seemed all wrong. She heard it click, it sounded like a brick, heavy and strong. But the click was all so familiar she had heard it before, she had wished that it was gone. She began to tremble and shake. She turned her head and it was there. Her nightmare, the thing she had dreamed of constantly that walk through her mind. She thought it was over but she thought wrong, how could this be real? As it stood and watched all big and tall, it's dark eyes gleamed like a pitch dark fall. It's eyes, almost like an endless void. The eyes were the worst part. 48 stood right in the dining room a room next to the kitchen where she was placed it could not cross the very thin line that drew the two rooms apart. But the more she looked the more she got crazy she started to scream "LEAVE ME, GO." And she kept repeating and screaming until she said "I COULD WISH YOU AWAY." The tall dark creature just looked at her with those eyes and she continued to scream. Her parents woke up and rushed to the scene, to find their daughter lying and screaming. And they rushed to her, the look in her eyes, was the look of pain in the despies. But as a parent saw she was screaming nothing, the girl couldn't help but to see the thing. It was at the corner of her eye, watching, waiting. And she screamed and screamed and tried to wish away, to make it disappear with just her mind. But it didn't leave, nor did it go. Those eyes, dark and cruel, they seem forever endless, but be careful because maybe one day, those eyes, they will be right in front of you.

**Christmas     By Miguel Herrera**

Christmas cheer in December for the day  
The nice boys and girls going to get gifts  
Deer getting ready to go to the sleigh  
Many elderly getting their neat knits

People will be drinking eggnog all month  
The smell of homemade cookies fills the room  
Christmas music is coming from the front  
Every corner filled with santa costumes

Crooks trying to steal holiday spirit  
All boys and girls will be very upset  
Police trying to find them before it  
Possibility of Christmas will yet

The crooks were caught on time before Christmas  
On Christmas day people nearly missed us

**Elephant**      **By Ella Hickman**

I imagine a time where I'm not worried,  
Spending time with my family,  
Frolicking in water,  
Playing with my brother and sisters,  
Happy  
Carefree  
This is not my reality.  
I am scared of the bipedal creature  
Who slaughters my family

Guns blazing  
Spears sharp  
Piercing skin  
Drawing blood  
Drawing the last breath  
My heart bleeds  
like the wounds of my brothers  
Is my tusk worth my life?

***From the Author~Behind this Piece:** In my poetic piece, *Elephant*, I pictured myself in the eyes of a mistreated animal. Elephants are poached for their tusks, which results in mass killing of Elephants that is depleting their population. In order to evoke sympathy, I wrote about the fear that is instilled in elephants for being poached. I like how it makes readers in the perspective of an elephant to sympathize with them and give support to the conservation of elephants. I hope that people who hear this poem will become educated on the topic of poaching on elephants.*

**Silent Night**      **By Kaitlyn Higgins**

Everything is quiet  
The stars light up the sky  
The glow of the moon shines on my face  
The city is still  
The traffic is gone  
There's no one to judge me  
No one to stare  
Just me and my thoughts  
Wind blowing through my hair  
No feelings of sadness  
No feelings of despair

Just a million stars twinkling  
There's no one to hurt me  
No one to leave  
Free to think the deepest of thoughts I could ever  
conceive  
No sense of direction in which tomorrow will lead  
Just endless opportunities  
A brand new me  
Oh how I wish this could last forever  
Never in daylight could I be so clever  
Midnight Bliss

In all romantic movies, there's always that one super hot character that makes every teenage girl fall in love. However, I never believed in these cheesy romantic movies where one falls in love at first sight, but that was not until I went to Starbucks with family that Sunday afternoon.

It all started on one hot summer afternoon when my family and I stopped by Home Depot, on our way to the cemetery, to purchase beautiful flowers for our beloved one. After my brother and I carefully chose out the delicate flowers, we begged our father to take us to Starbucks as we craved a refresher to cool us off from the burning heat. After pleading, for what felt like hours, our father caved in and told us we could stop by only if it was a quick stop.

When we finally arrived at Starbucks, when we rushed inside to avoid the severe heat. As I stepped inside, I locked eyes with this attractive, tall, blue-eyed, pale man who appeared to be around his early twenties working as a cashier. At that moment, I felt my heart stop as if we were the only two people in the room with no one to disturb us. It was as if I was living a dream where he was the knight in shining armor coming to rescue me. While I remained in my own thoughts, I accidentally blurted out, "Oh my goodness, I have never..."

I stopped myself.

But my brother caught on and asked, "What happened?" with a confused expression.

I quickly stuttered, "I just saw something, Keep walking."

When we arrived in the huge line, my father was trying to get my attention, but my eyes were only focused on the guy who was taking the orders. Many thoughts rushed through my head at that moment giving me anxiety thinking about how there was a high chance that I would embarrass myself while giving him my order.

It was my turn to order my drink and I could feel my cheeks burn from how nervous I was. He greeted me with the biggest smile on his face and said, "Hi there, what may I get you started with?" The moment finally happened, I kept smiling and I realized that I was taking forever to order a simple beverage. He cleared his throat and asked, "Hello?" noticing that I was not paying attention to what he told me previously.

"Umm... oh... hi, I'm so sorry, may I please have a grande Strawberry Acai?" I quickly said to him.

"No worries! Will, that be it?" He spoke while writing down my order.

"Yes! Thank you!" My father told him as he was paying for the beverages that we ordered.

I quickly looked at his name tag and noticed that he had the most perfect name a guy can have, Aaron. I wanted to ask for his phone number, but I was too shy and feared getting rejected by him since I had a feeling that he had a girlfriend. Once we were waiting for our drinks my brother, Gabriel, began to laugh and yelled, "Chenoa, stop staring at him! Do you think he's cute or what?"

I felt my life crumble to pieces from the embarrassment Gabriel made me face, as I saw Aaron turn around giving me an awkward look. Ever since that day, every time I pass by the exact Starbucks, I chuckle remembering my lover, the cashier guy, named Aaron.

A father, son, and grandfather  
An amazing, loving, and caring person  
He was a strong person  
Made sacrifices for anyone  
Only wanted the best for his family and friends

Only hearing stories about you, but never got to meet you.  
Why did you leave so soon?  
You never got to see me grow,  
Never got to see me succeed.  
Why did you leave so soon?

When I think about you  
I feel some type of way  
All I think about is you being by my side  
You supporting me on and off the field

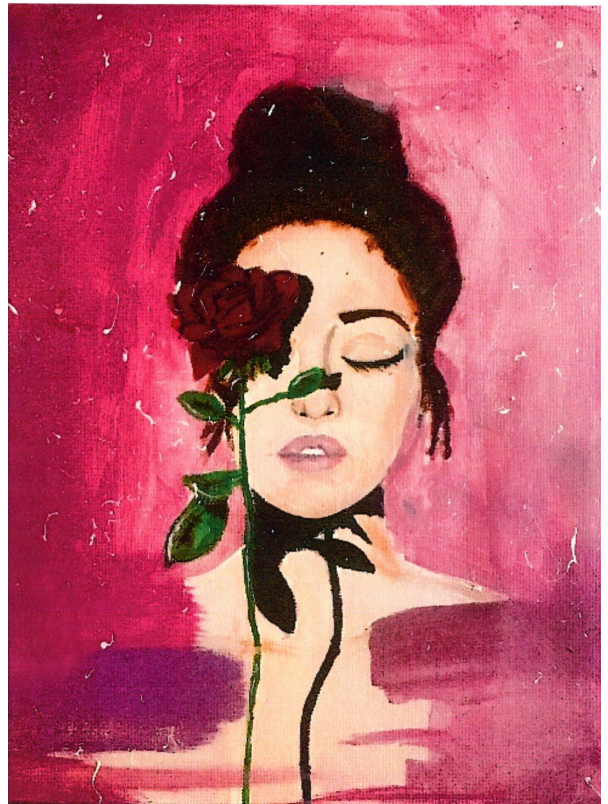
God took a beautiful angel  
A golden heart stopped beating  
Hard-working hands finally at rest  
Now rest, beautiful angel  
I'll see you soon.

**Poem**      **By Jacqueline Islas**

short poem:

“You did not change  
You are the same  
Do not be ashamed”  
- becoming a women

***From the Author~Behind this Piece:** My inspiration behind this short poem is to enhance the important growth from a girl to a women. It is important to inform the younger generation that they are not alone, nor is it abnormal. We must acknowledge the important role that comes within a women and demonstrate the beauty within. We are strong. The future is a woman.*



**Beauty**      **Art By Elonie Morales**

**An edgy poem about love**      **By Adrian Jaramillo**

I'm there for you you're there for me,  
No one else in the world I'd rather be,  
You're special to me, don't you see,  
You're the sun that lights up my day , the sun is yellow,  
After it rains you are my rainbow,  
You make me happy, you make living seem less sappy,  
Whenever I'm sad you always find a way to make me laugh,  
You drive me insane in the loveliest way,  
You always make my grey skies go away.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:** Dedicated to my woman.*

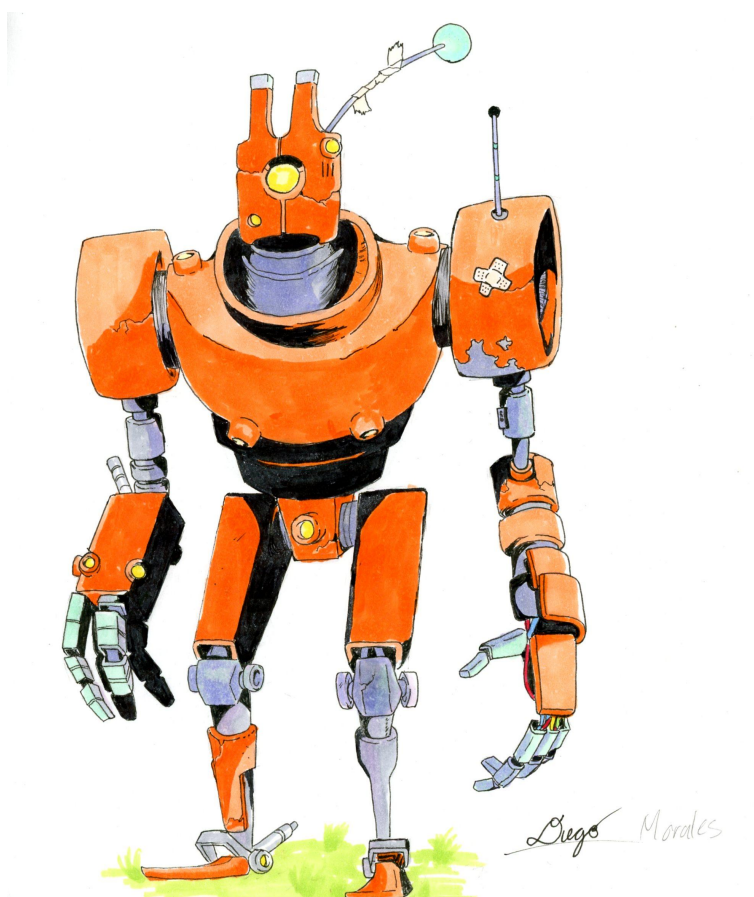
**Ropes**      **By Adrian Jaramillo**

Ropes of hope holding on to success, Sometimes  
they sting,

And you gotta swing to take another opportunity, You may  
fall but that's just part of the great life brawl,

You best climb up instead of laying there, somethings in life are hard to bear, Somethings  
in life are worth fighting for,

Anything you want is worth striving for.



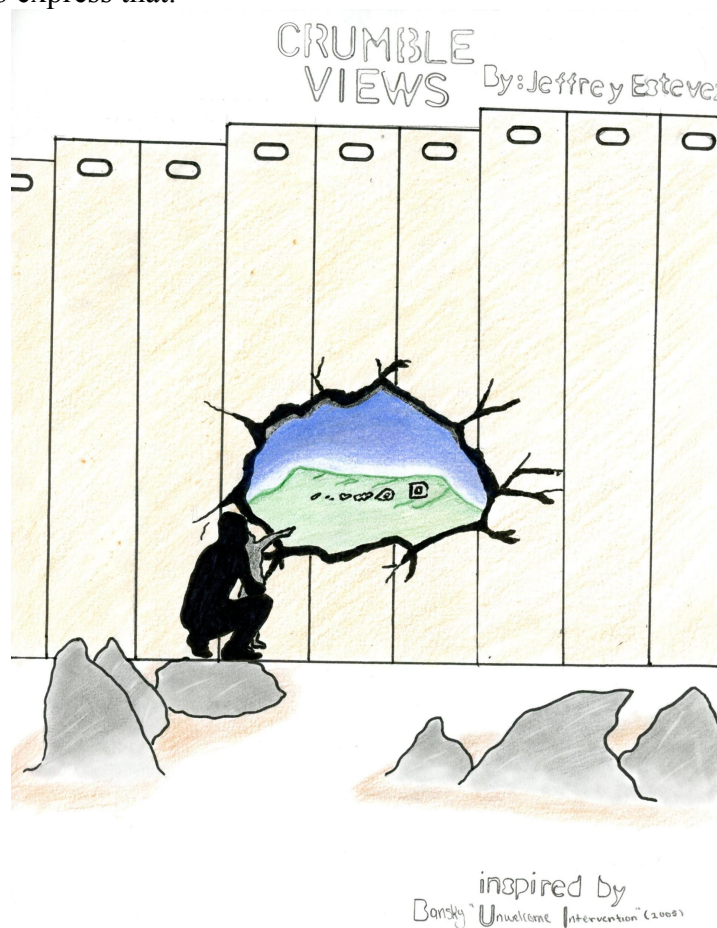
**Art By Diego Morales**

## Baseball

By Jeremy Juarez

When I think of you I think of joy  
When I'm playing I always enjoy  
Baseball is so much fun  
I hate it when the season is done  
Sitting in the dugout surrounded by friends  
I hope this season never ends  
When we in the dugout make that noise  
I got CUPS UP for my boys  
I love this game for a reason  
It is #RINGSEASON  
I will always remember you in the long haul  
'Till next year baseball

**From the Author~Behind the Piece:** This piece came to me because it's baseball season and I wanted to write a poem for my boys. Not only that but baseball is the sport I have played my whole life and I have a lot of love for it and wanted to express that.



Crumble Views

Art By Jeffrey Estevez

## **The Future    By Charlotte Kane**

Performing. To some, a fear. To me, and escape. Ever since I could remember, I craved for the feeling of performing. Whether that be singing Opera at the top of my lungs at age 5 to playing a lead in a school musical at age 13. I love this feeling so much that I have deemed it as a dream. A future. To elaborate, I've always wanted to be on Broadway or be apart of a touring company, this way I can travel and do what I love. And everytime I act, sing or dance in front of people I get a sense that, that's what I'm meant to do. I can't see myself doing any other profession. But, there are those times when I doubt my ability. My talent. My competitiveness. I know that there's always going to be someone better, so why should I worry? When I was younger I had dreamed of a career onstage, but I thought that it couldn't be possible. I'd never be the best or even good enough to be cast. This daunting thought lead me to search for other aspirations, like a Neurosurgeon or an Attorney. Yet, I knew in my heart that there was nothing else I wanted to do. I didn't fully embrace my true dream until 8th grade. I had always been apart of drama, but this year I had worked very hard to be casted as this role, and luckily it paid off. After closing night I realized that I was going to work so hard that there was to be no doubt in my mind anymore. I am going to work towards an acceptance into college and, hopefully, a professional cast list with my name on it. And that is that. Now my future is to be what I dream. My goal. My aspiration. My future, is going to be what I love and what I work towards.

## **You Have to Be...            Ms. Kelly's 10th Grade Class**

You have to be a teacher to understand  
You have to be a girl to understand  
You have to be an American to understand.  
You have to be in my shoes to understand.  
You have to suffer from a mental illness to understand.  
You have to be fatherless to understand.  
You have to be me to understand.  
You have to be successful to understand.  
You have to be depressed to understand.  
You have to be grade cut to understand.  
You have to be poor to understand.  
You have to live my life to understand.  
You have to be bad at Math to understand.  
You have to be Mexican to understand.  
You have to be the new kid to understand.  
You have to be "too young" to understand.  
You have to experience experience it to understand.  
You have to be Latina to understand.  
You have to be brown to understand.  
You have to be the oldest to understand.  
You have to have a father, who is not there, to understand.  
You have to be me to understand.  
You have to come from a gangster family to understand.



You have to be poor to understand.  
You have to use your head to understand.  
You have to move around a lot to understand.  
You have to be slow to understand.  
You have to be sick to understand.  
You have to be an only child to understand.  
You have to move to understand.  
You have to be a basketball player to understand.  
You have to be African American to understand.  
You have to be the only child to understand.  
You have to be on a team to understand.  
You have to be a shy person to understand.  
You have to be Asian to understand.  
You have to be born in America to understand.  
You have to live in LA to understand.  
You have to be a transfer to understand.  
You have to moderately smart, but not as smart as others around you, to understand.  
You have to different to understand.  
You have to switch schools to understand.  
You have to be new to a team to understand.  
You have to have my childhood to understand.  
You have to be different to understand.  
You have to be the youngest to understand.  
You have to be shy to understand.  
You have to have dark skin to understand.  
You have to visit what makes you, you to understand.  
You have to be broke to understand.  
You have to live in someone else's shoes to understand.  
You have to have a broken heart to understand.  
You have to be a girl to understand.  
You have to have immigrant parents to understand.  
You have to be shy to understand.  
You have to be short to understand.  
You have to be bad at Chemistry to understand.  
You have to be insecure to understand.  
You have to be bullied to understand.  
You have to be a teen to understand.  
You have to be a victim to understand.  
You have to witness that moment to understand.  
You have to be smart to understand.  
You have to be the person or the friend without her dad to understand.  
You have to be the seventeenth great-grandchild to understand.  
You have to be a teenage girl to understand.  
You have to be pre-diabetic to understand  
You have to have felt frustration to understand.

You have to be me to understand.  
You have to love the night to understand.  
You have to be different to understand.  
You have to be bad at Spanish to understand.  
You have to be short to understand.  
You have to be a twin to understand.  
You have to be traumatized to understand.  
You have to be on a new team to understand.  
You have to have divorced parents to understand.  
You have to have strict parents to understand.  
You have to be me to understand.  
You have to be a student to understand.  
You have to be less fortunate than the rest to understand.  
You have to be really bad at math to understand.  
You have to have a strict and young mom to understand.  
You have to be a middle child to understand.  
You have to be the child your parents don't listen to, to understand.

You have to be me to understand.

**“You Have to be African American to Understand”**

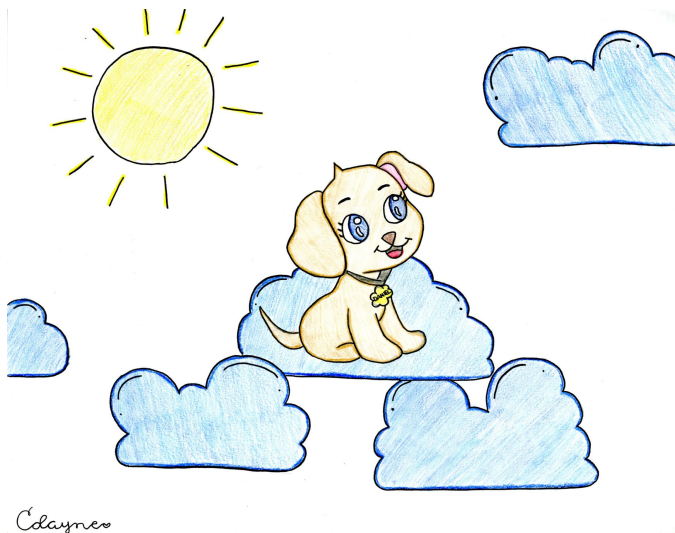
**By Savannah King**

You have to be African American to understand the downfalls we experience everyday. I say this because as a black person we automatically have a stereotype labeled on us. We are looked at as rude, loud, and wild. This is shown throughout the world in various examples. I personally can account for all the times I have been personally labeled as something I act nothing like. It seems as though people look at the color of one's skin and instantly place judgement over an innocent citizen. Typically black people have a default stigma of being troublemakers or criminals. Universally I don't know if this problem will ever change, you just have to be African American to understand...

**My Furry Friend****By Savannah Kulusich**

Her furry coat was as white as the snow,  
Though her eyes were black as the burning coal.  
She was more loyal than you'd ever now,  
As long as I kept good food in her bowl.  
She is a fickle pup who likes to play;  
Her mood may sway like the pendulum rocks.  
At night she often creates much dismay,  
She barks at the moon as the clock tick tocks.  
And yet she walks with her nose in the air;  
When she feels like she needs her private time.  
She will give you a vicious mad dog stare,  
Until she is ready to claim her shine.  
My dog is special and knows she is loved,  
She's a lot like me we fit like a glove.

***About the Author~ Behind This Piece-** I wrote this sonnet because it was an assignment for my English class. I did not know what to write about, but I knew once I had the first line down, everything else would fall into place. I had fun with it and ended up writing about my dog.*



**Puppy Art By Chrischelle Beduya**

**“You Have to be Asian to Understand”      By Michele Lee**

You have to be asian to understand. I am not like others, except the fact that I grew up in America and speak English. San Pedro has more Americans than there are asians in my opinion. Growing up from a neighborhood and going to a school with asians was much more comfortable than it is right now because I didn't feel like an outsider. There were lots of people just like me. Getting accepted into an elementary school in San Pedro made me unhappy at first. I didn't know what San Pedro was like and I would be moving away from my close friends. Going to school in San Pedro for elementary, middle school and high school made me feel like an outcast although it has been around 8 years. People would stare because I don't look the same as others. I would be in classes where I was the only asian which made me uncomfortable. And people would expect you to know everything because you are asian. Being asian doesn't mean you are above average than others. We are all the same people, just with different ethnicities. You have to be asian to understand.

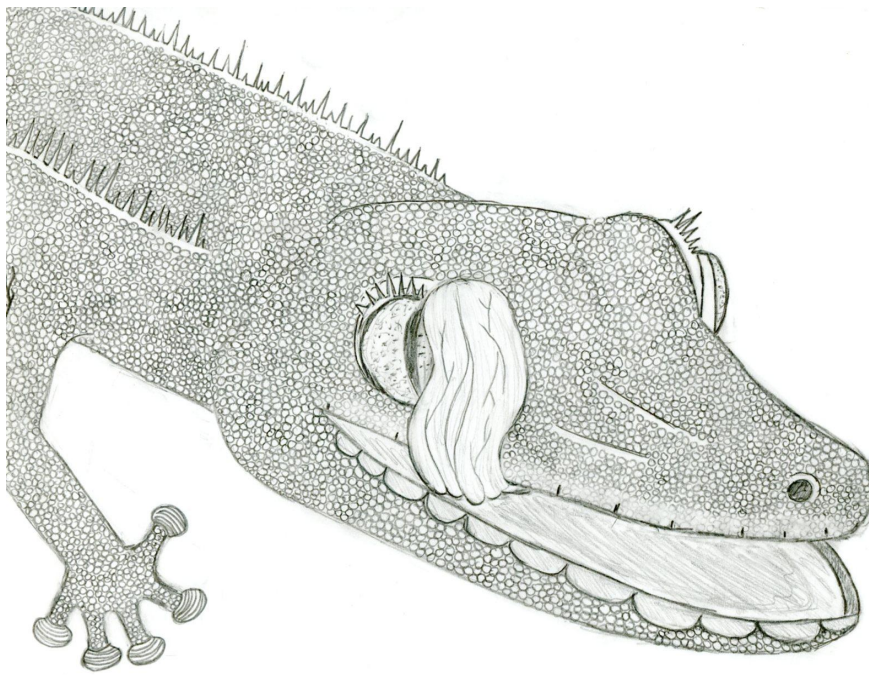
**Ode to the lovely zoo      By Aurora Lopez**

A zoo filled with loving families.  
The neverending walks throughout the zoo,  
You haven't ear childrens screams and squeaks  
As they see this beautiful giraffe.

Parents running around with laughter seeing their kids smile.  
Running around the zoo like a maze.  
Did we head to the first base?

Many moms and dads awwing for the giraffe.  
As it plays around with the baby calf.  
Kids feeding the giraffe as they see their purple tongue,  
they laugh and smile

Once it walks away they say goodbye and play with their new friends  
A zoo is an never ending maze  
Where you meet an unexpected friend.



**Reptile Art By Vianka Manriquez**

**Dinnertime      By Aleina Louriano**

I see the sun setting through thin curtains  
I hear the clocks tick out of sync  
I smell fresh spices  
I taste plain emptiness from my stomach  
I know I am hungry

*About the Author~ Behind This Piece: This was my first sensory poem and I wanted to make it about something relatable like hunger.*

**Forelsket      By Aleina Louriano**

As you watch the sky show remnants of its once vibrant sunset, it feels as if you've fallen in love for the first time. A certain bliss overwhelms you then disperses as you look back into your world. This was the first time you saw the sun and the evening sky. The vast infestation of stars draw you in as you become insecure of your very being. A hallowing echo rings in the distance. An unknown entity makes itself known with a claustrophobic force. Then all of a sudden, you feel nothing, yet at the same time you feel everything. The world. This was the first time you saw the stars and experienced the night. Behind this piece: I wanted to write something based on the word forelsket which is the the experience of first falling in love. I wanted to relate this word to scenery because to me scenery never gets old and each day the sky is different.

**Ticking Clock and Folding Locks      By Aleina Louriano**

The ticking of a clock is clearly distinct through the rains unplanned patters on the window. A good 63° with 97% precipitation, the recipe to a cloud's breakdown. Seconds pass meaninglessly until they're missed in a scurry of throbbing regret. Each second a tear falls not at all important from the rest of the cloud's pain, however it may have dampened you just a little more. It may have got you thinking, or feeling more than you thought you could, which in this case was of an envelope that could evade every tick of time.

It was a letter from your past, the person you used to be. On the back it was marked in cursive the directions. You were to open it four years later, five years if you could wait that long. It was now the sixth year since then. It's not that you were patient, it's that you were occupied with life and it's changing forecast.

The rain set the mood as you held the letter on your trip down the road of memories. You vaguely remember writing the letter but not the words you wrote. After taking a seat by the window you turned on the lamp that gave everything it touched a warm light. On the desk, the clock stayed ticking but your time was frozen. Outside, the rain poorer harder but your heart softened.

The envelope easily snapped open since the adhesive got weak over time. The flap crinkled as you flipped it and pinched the letter inside. Pattering rain became background echoes and the heater kicked in. You unfolded the letter and scanned it from bottom to top before reading. What does your letter say?

***About the Author~ Behind This Piece:** Most of this writing came from the idea of high school being four years. I thought of all the changes that could happen within this time and if you had a letter from the beginning you can look back to see how far you've come.*

**You Have to be Mexican to Understand.      By Escamilla Luis**

You Have to be Mexican to Understand.

What is like to be an outsider?

What is it like to be thought of as a farmer?

What is it like for everyone to make fun of your accent?

What is it like for people to think you smuggle drugs?

What is it like for people to think that you should be deported?

You have to be mexican to understand.

What is like for people to think your in a gang?

What is like for people to think you pick beans?

What is it like for people to call you a beaner and a wetback?

What is it like being a minority?

You have to be mexican to understand.

**What Do You Mean?      By Arelyz Marin**

La chona se mueve\*

And the player just plays

You be so goofy I'd think you were in Mickey Mouse Clubhouse or something

And I was like yolo I'm tryna be on Disney Channel

With you acting like a cholo all you wanted

Was a taco but I didn't know what kind of taco you wanted

So I got lost in our miscommunication

**Footnote\***The woman moves

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** This poem is dedicated to Alejandro Juarez, who taught me how to express my emotions through poetry and that your work does not need to makes sense to anyone but yourself.*

**You have to have a broken heart to understand****By Adrianna Martinez**

What is it like to love someone so much and to have them not love you back? What is it like to give someone your everything and to get nothing in return? What is it like to have major trust issues to the point where you push everyone away? You have to have a broken heart to understand. I've had my heart broken multiple times. And now that I think about it, all of them were my fault. The first heartbreak I wasn't ready, got scared, made up an excuse, then regretted everything and cried myself to sleep every night for 3 months. The second heartbreak, I was ready, but he wasn't. He was still a child who thought love was a game, and I saw all that. I knew from the start I was gonna get my heart broken and yet I stayed and waited... till the day he broke my heart and we became strangers. Do you know what it's like to question your judgement? Do you know what it's like to wonder if you'll ever be good enough for anyone? You have to have a broken heart to understand. Nothing compares to the pain you feel when your heart is broken. It feels like the end of the world. It feels like your drowning in your own tears. Your lungs burn, and you have no desire for anything, but to think about all those great moments you and him had until that day...your heart was broken. Do you know what that's like? No? Well...you have to have a broken heart to understand.

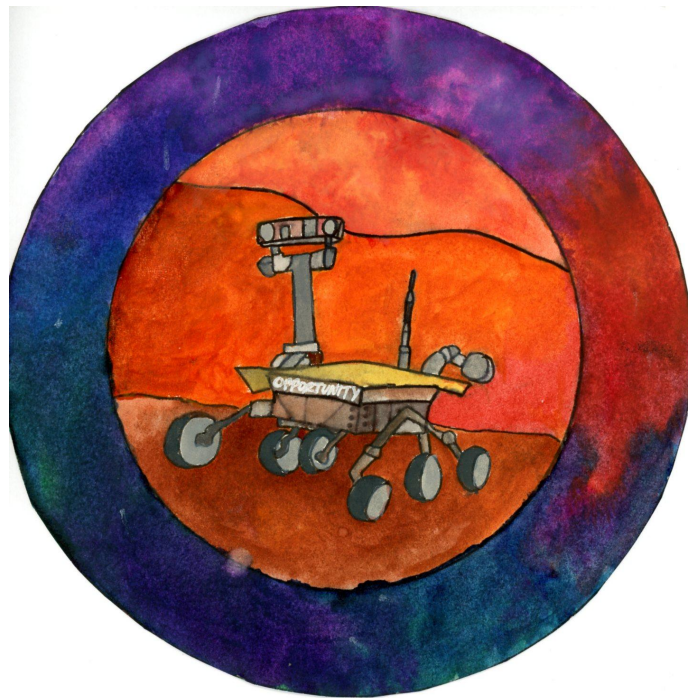
**A Precious Thing****By Destiny Martinez**

White, velvety paws that stretch firmly.  
Forest green eyes that will warm your heart.  
Long, colorful tail that approaches you warningly.  
Triangular, sharp-edged claws that bring shivers up your spine.  
No mice die, no dogs chase,  
this is something to embrace.  
Feather toy after feather toy, string after string, it is  
the most precious thing.  
Worth more than a diamond,  
My cat.

*About the Author~Behind this Piece: I decided to write this poem because I adore my cat. There is a saying that says, "A dog is a man's best friend". But I think, what about a cat? A cat can definitely be more than a companion. I mean, who doesn't love their pet? With that being said, that thought inspired me to write this.*







**Mars Rover Art By Sarah Jeppesen**

**Speaking Up      By Carelyn Martinez**

How is it that you move on so easily?  
Yet you're still on my mind every second of the day  
I want to tell you how I feel  
But I can't because that might drift us farther apart

I still love you for some reason  
And I don't think you see it  
But I didn't mean to make you think what you did  
I thought you needed some space, but clearly I didn't get it

And I'm sorry for not speaking up  
We could still be together if I hadn't stayed quiet  
Have good times and spend less of my time in the dark  
I know this'll sound cheesy, but you lifted me up

I try to look back at the good times, even if they only lasted a second  
And every time I do, I regret letting you leave  
I always think of how this could've all been avoided  
Maybe if I spoke up



**Speaking Up Art By Daphne Hernandez**

**The Clouds      By Maria Mateo**

Here we are on a plane, ready for our next adventure  
I'm seating next to you thinking if this is failure  
Your sleeping hard, should I talk now  
I've been up and all I see are clouds  
Wondering when you'll wake up

they're no white, there more grey  
They're not blue, they're more pink  
It's the clouds that scare me  
It's the clouds that I see

**Face**      **By Maria Mateo**

Your face, like a colorful rainbow  
Saw your freckles and your dimples  
Fine as one of your european cars  
And fresh-face living it bold like a base

Not a morning enterprising surface  
Cope with a visage side of a  
Perfect lined jaw, that can cut me  
With a gentle blinded twirl

I wish I can be small enough to feel every feathery eyelash  
And lay in your pure skin for hours,  
Crawl into the top where your hair is tangled in gold,  
Touch every puddle of rain in your dimples  
And count every glance of wrinkles

Flick your lips and catch your ocean,  
Floating and kissing each other,  
Seeing tired eyes trying to consolidate all of us  
Then I remember I am a spider, and you are scared of them

**It's Like the Way of Being You****By Maria Mateo**

The way you smile, and your dimples fade  
It's like the sky dials, and the flowers braid  
It's the way you dress, and hate for a while  
It's like you talk and it's a mess, but it's definitely not your style

It's more of the dreams you live  
And more of the things you've achieved  
It's the way your dark eyes look  
And you draw your pains in a book

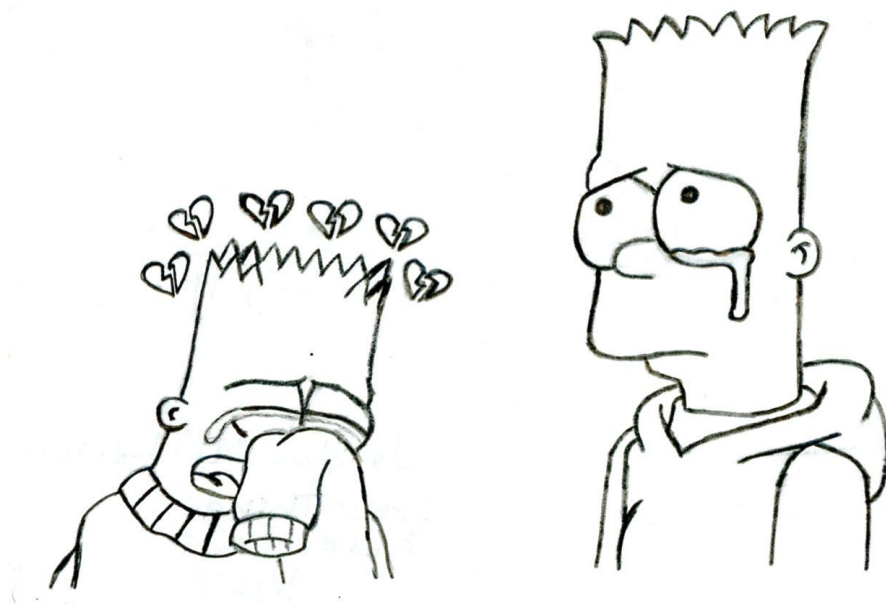
It's when you move your hair  
That makes me unafraid  
It's like where you are is the only thing I care  
And I travel in my mind to some world where  
where I can see your see your heart swear  
And smell your light air

It's the way we say California  
And your way of being silly  
It's the way I think your cool  
But above all that it's like the way of being you



**Man Art By Eric Garcia**

You were the only girl I wanted to stay with. Only girl I wanted to spend everyday with. Only girl that don't like games because my feelings is the only thing she play with. Swear to god love is so overrated. The more I fall into it, the more I grow to hate it. She used to be my favorite song until I overplayed it. Me loving her is an understatement. My love for her is unappreciated. I thought I found my happy place but I guess I never made it. At night I call her right before she go to bed. She didn't pick up so I texted instead. She opened it and instantly left me on read. Like am I even important to her. Or is it just all in my head? Then I FaceTime her, but just for a second because she put me on pause. It's awful how I see beauty for a moment then it's gone. But I guess it's better than not talking to her at all. Your feelings come out when we text or on the phone. The only times you tell me you love me is every time you're alone. Your feelings in public are like deleted scenes because they're never shown. I guess your feelings are also camera shy because they like to hide every time FaceTime on. We got a secret love for each other that nobody knows. We been through a lot but the highs don't outnumber the lows. You barely give me love but I'm still doing the most. And I notice you give more love to the other guys you post. I'm not the best at showing all of my emotions. It gets harder to love every time these girls leave me broken. And I was hoping that she fill in my emptiness because finding happiness is like swimming across the ocean. Bad times she always saw the best in me. Didn't give her my all so here's the rest of me. I just wanted to love her but she wasn't a fan of letting me. She's too busy putting all these other guys ahead of me. I was happy with you in the moment but the moments never last. The moment was there for a second but now you are just in the past. Damn, How come good things never last? Damn, How come good things never last?

**Simpsons****Art By Jordan McPherson**

Everybody feels pain just know we hurt different. Some days I feel so alone. Like everyone on the earth's missing. I know people go through some changes but girl why you change through the changes? We used to be closer than close. Now we turned into strangers. I never tell nobody no because I hate being hated. I gave you all my time and energy, now I'm just feeling deflated. And lately we haven't been talking like you was undercover. I thought I found the right girl for me but I guess I have to find another. If I called you my future then why we walking past each other? You never called and told me it was over, but I guess it was. At least lie to me and tell me it's the best for us. You said my heart don't ever feel emotion. Well yes it does! I was vulnerable being outgoing and open. But now I'm not since last time we had spoken. All I'm feeling is lost and heart broken. And love has just become another thing I lost hope in. And I hate to be the person that paints pictures of pain. But it's hard to say something different when everyday feels the same. And if you telling me you leaving. Then I'm just happy that you came. I gave you my heart but why didn't you do the same? People say there's a lot of fish in the sea. But I'm still reminiscing about how perfect she was for me. My happiest self was all I was trying to be but I guess that picture doesn't include you being with me.



**Mickey and Minnie By Jordan McPherson**

October 5th, 1992. My mother describes this as both the happiest and saddest day of her life. My father says he doesn't know how she made it through such a tragedy. I was born at 11:35 pm. Mother always said that when I came out I never cried. However my arms were always reaching for something. It wasn't until later that I realized what-or who-I was reaching for . . . my brother. My mother was ecstatic about having twins. She was looking forward to dressing us up in matching outfits and confusing us for one another. She had even bought us our own matching necklaces, one that looks broken but when put together with the other half became whole. All of her hopes and aspirations flew out the window when Keith came out. Like me, he came out silent, not a cry or tear in his eye. But he didn't cry because he wasn't scared of the outside world. He didn't cry because he couldn't. The doctor had a sad look on his face when he took off his mask, as if he had remembered doing something he had regretted. The doctor handed Keith over to my father, only able to utter two words before walking away. "I'm sorry."

All throughout my childhood my father would tell me stories, of superheros and brave people. It was only when I was 14 that I learned that Superman's real name was Kal-El and not Keith. Even without my parents putting these thoughts into my mind, I had a higher thinking of Keith. I put him on a pedestal above mine, only really hating him for leaving me broken, without my other half. One day I had grown the nerve to ask my father what happened to Keith. I remember him looking off into the distance, his words echoing throughout my being. "Parker, when you were born all of San Pedro grew quiet. It seemed as if all the lights had shone brighter, colors becoming more vibrant. After you, I got on my knees and looked up at the sky, praying for both of my boys to be successful and healthy. As I was looking up, the lights on the ceiling flickered. When your brother came out, I knew something wasn't right."

When I turned 16, I had made the decision to get a tattoo. I didn't consult my parents because I knew they were going to be against it. I walked hours to get to the tattoo shop, the only one that would tat me up based on if I had the money and not my age. I broke the news to my parents when I got home. My father started cursing and my mother stopped eating. As my father's insults grew louder, I stood up and took off my shirt. My father's insults stopped. I could hear my mother weeping silently, her tears falling onto her half-finished plate of food. I decided to get my brother's name tattooed on my back so that he would always be a part of me. It read "Keith Cornell. October 5, 1992. Gone but never forgotten." After the incident, I had promised myself I would move out, maybe go to college. I got a pretty good gig bagging groceries and I was making fairly good money.

One day both of my parents sat me down. "Son, I know life has been very hard for you. Not just over the past few years, your whole life was an uphill battle." Mom chimed in. "We know how hard it was losing your brother. It's been hard on all of us." Tears started to well up in her eyes. "We already lost one son. We can't afford to lose you too." We all got up and embraced. I made my decision to go off to college, with my parents backing me both financially and emotionally. With one of my father's connections I was able to get a place fairly close to campus for cheap.

My parents offered to help me move but I assured them I had it all under control. I threw all my belongings in the UHaul, gave them one last embrace, and started the truck. Along the way I realized maybe moving by myself wasn't such a good idea. I stopped at a diner and called up a few of my good friends. I gave out a few favors and called in some, but finally I had a few people to help. Finally I arrived at my small apartment. Staring at the building I thought to myself, "*This is a new chapter in your life Parker. Everything changes from here on out.*" I picked up a box and put a vase on top of it. Walking up the stairs I couldn't help



but think about how Keith could be here, helping me move my broken in leather sofa into the living room. How after we were done we could sit on that same broken in leather sofa, adding more breaks into the leather, and have a nice chat. Just me and my brother. Snapping back to reality I watched as the vase slowly slid off the box, every moment edging closer towards its end. I put the box in one hand, using my other to attempt to catch the vase. I demand my left arm to move, but it won't budge. I watch helplessly as the vase falls through the air, eventually hitting the stairs, shattering into thousands of pieces. My friends rush to my aid, asking me if I was okay. I really wasn't, I wish I could tell them everything. But my body only allowed me to stare down at the shattered pieces of the vase. One of my friends keeps asking if I was okay. Finally my body responds, allowing me to put one shaky leg in front of the other until I reached the top. "Yeah, I'm fine."

After I finish moving I invite my friends to stay. We ordered a pepperoni pizza and watched football, making jokes and having an amazing time. As my friends leave, the same sort of depression crept back in, leaving me still feeling alone. I throw the leftover pizza into my refrigerator, brush my teeth, and get ready to go to sleep. I take my half of the necklace off, kissing it and leaving it on my bedside table.

On my 18th birthday I had invited all my friends and family to my party. At the party were 213 people, but I knew, I felt, there were 214. As I blew out the 18 candles on my birthday cake, I felt a coldness overcome me. Nothing like a breeze that touches the hair on your skin. This coldness ran deep, through my bones and into my soul. Leaving the party with all 213 of my friends and family, I felt more alone than ever. As I go home to my new apartment, I kick off my shoes and go to the refrigerator, grabbing a can of beer and guzzling it down. My friends might not be much, but at least they can buy booze. After finishing a few cans I find myself very sleepy, and cold. I grab a nearby blanket and throw it over myself. I lied down on the sofa, letting sleep wash over me, overtake me. All I could see was black. It felt like I was dreaming, but somehow I was still aware. I try to force my eyes to adjust, to no avail. Then I hear a bone chilling voice. Not a deep and scary voice, no. It sounded familiar.

"The time has come Parker. MY time has come." I sat up suddenly, wiping the sleep out of my eyes. I realized my shirt was soaked with sweat. I could have sworn there were a few tears in my eyes. I let my eyes register where I was. At home. In my new apartment. Safe. Dateline was playing on my TV, something about a man gone missing without a trace. I turned the TV off. I had my own issues to deal with. I go for a walk outside, letting the crisp night air brush over my skin. It was all a dream Parker. You really need to stop drinking lean. After I felt calm enough I re-enter my apartment. The air was warm, musky, nothing like the crisp air outside. I wipe myself off with a towel. Taking a shower would've been a better idea if I could trust my legs to hold my weight. I lie down on my bed, trying with all my willpower to force myself to sleep, but the dream kept on coming back. That voice. It sounded so much like...me. I get out of my bed, frustrated. I pour myself a glass of water and go into my medicine cabinet in my bathroom. I open the cabinet, staring at the sleeping pills. I go to grab it, but then I hesitate. Alcohol and pills probably wouldn't mix well. I'm depressed, not suicidal. I close the cabinet door.

That is when I see him. He is in the mirror of my medicine cabinet. At first I thought it was just my reflection, but this one had a menacing smile, to which I knew I had a straight face. I then watch as he opens his eyes. His eyes weren't like brown, like mine, no. His eyes were all black, even where the white parts we supposed to be white. This image flickered for a second, then disappeared. I could see my reflection again. I saw all the blood had drained from my face, with a scared look in my eye. Like I saw a ghost. Could this be no, it can't be. I turned around, ready to go to my bedroom and sleep this off. That's when I heard it. "Parker." it said. "Parker I need you... help me." I turned around to see the same figure, this time with a frown on his face. This image, too flickered out. Cautiously, I walk towards the mirror. My shaky hand inches towards the glass. Finally my fingers make contact with the cold, hard, glass. I waited for a second, looking at the mirror. I see my face, still lacking color, an uncertain look in my eye. I see another flicker, Keith in my place smiling at

me. I quickly pull away from the mirror, but not quick enough. I feel a cold hand grab me by my wrist. It was at this moment that all of my loneliness left, as if it was never there. What was once a hole in my heart was replaced by the shackles around my wrist. I close my eyes, bracing for whatever impact, but it never came. I open my eyes. I wished I never had opened my eyes, no. I wish I never had a brother. I could see the mirror I saw Keith in, but instead of being in my bathroom, I was in a black room. That's what I wanted to believe at least, it was just a black room, I could leave at any time. I watch as Keith, now taking my place in my world, grins back at me. I feel so many emotions, betrayal, sadness, happiness, but one overpowered them all; Rage. I start to bang at the mirror, demanding to be let out. All I can do is watch helplessly as Keith takes my place, standing in my bathroom, becoming ME. Keith turns on the water, the black from his eyes washing down the drain. He looks up in the mirror, his eyes brown like mine. He looks exactly like me, he could very well be ME. He gives me his signature creepy grin as he dries his face. I look on as Keith turns to leave. He takes one look back at me, satisfied with what he has done. He turns off the lights and closes the door, leaving me screaming for someone, anyone to help. I watch as the mirror also begins to vanish, black space filling where it once was. I run, run as far as I could, hoping that somehow there was an exit, all to no avail. It was just me and this vast of empty darkness. I scream out once more in a last ditch effort for help, again to no avail. It has been a long time since then. My senses have numbed to the point that I don't know if I'm falling or floating. I can't remember what I look like, nothing except the necklace. The thing that was supposed to connect my brother and I, always popping into my mind, the image either flashing in my mind or coming up everytime I blink. I don't even know if I AM blinking, the darkness is a different shade of black, like an absolute black. One day I hear something drop, like the clink of glass. I look over to me and see a piece of mirror, probably shattered from me hitting it. I look into it, watching Keith laughing with my friends. They are at the pool. "Screw it, let's just jump in," one of my friends says.

"Hold up," Keith says. "Can't let my shirt get wet."

I watch on as he takes his shirt off. On his back, in the same spot where I got my first and last tattoo, read "Parker Cornell. October 5, 2010. Gone but never forgotten." I watch as Keith turns to look at me, straight into my eyes. He winks at me, the same creepy grin on his face. I yell in rage as Keith turns around and dives into the pool.

***From the Author~Behind the Piece:***

*One day we were in Creative Writing and our assignment was to write a Ghost Story so I did.*

**Better Things      By Larissa Mercado**

It was new  
I was oblivious to your true character  
Oblivious to the fact that every time I'd turn my back you'd had intention to hurt me  
Oblivious to your true feelings  
Oblivious to the person you really were

You have made me a better person though  
You made me realize love isn't just a word,  
something you have to be reassured  
Love is a feeling  
Love doesn't have to be proven if it's mutual

Trust is confidence in a person  
Certainty they wouldn't go out and betray you the second you leave the room

I regret the nights I used to stay up and ask myself what was wrong with me  
When it had been you all along  
Don't be fooled,  
I wish only the best for you

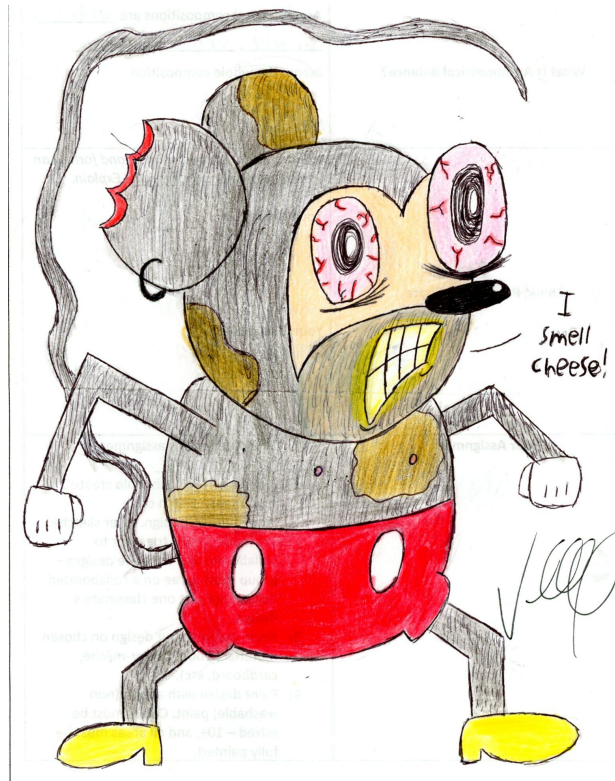
What we had was just another chapter of my life  
My greatest lesson by far  
I'm on to better things now  
Thank you.

**Jeff Goldblum v Adam Sandler Poem**  
**By Nick Naldi and Elijah Sanchez**

**The Ballad of Jeff Goldblum V. Adam Sandler II: The Reckoning: (This Time it's Personal)**

Jeff Goldblum	Adam Sandler
I have the better career	I have the better career
I was in Life Aquatic	
	I was in Pixels
I was the Fly	
	I was both Jack AND Jill
I'm friends with Wes Anderson	I'm friends with Rob Schneider
I was in King of the Hill	
	I was in 8 Crazy Nights
I was in Isle of Dogs	
	I was in Dog Police
I was in Saturday Night Live	I was in Saturday Night Live
I'm the Grandmaster	
	You Don't Mess with the Zohan
I was in Friends	
	I was in Waterboy
I was in 2 Independence Days	
	I was in 2 Grown Ups
I was in 3 Jurassic Parks	
	I was in 3 Hotel Transylvania's
We both make millions	We both make millions

*From the Author~Behind the Piece: I just it would be funny to write about Jeff Goldblum and Adam Sandler.*



**Cheese! Art By Adam Mercurio**

**Friendship By Gisselle Nevarez**

We started off with friendship  
No strings attached  
Nothing but instant connection  
Some way somehow it all turned  
Into love and affection  
Turning me towards you giving  
you all my undivided attention  
Noticing all those little things that sometimes be causing tension  
When we talk less than usual it be given my mind a different perspective  
reminding me that I'm not like those girls that you always mention  
Is it me or did we connect better when all we had was friendship?  
It just seems like now and days you're making it so hard to have a simple conversation.  
You act like it burden to show me a tad bit of recognition  
Did you forget that I'm the girl that stood by your side no matter the situation?

You have to have divorced parents to understand. What is it like when someone asks about your dad, why he's not there? When they say, "why do you barely see him". What it's like to see and hear people talk about both parents when I can only of one. Then they ask you, "why did they divorce" and all the memories come back. Glimpses of times when both my parents, sibling and I were all happy. What is it like when you see old family photos, and you want that all back. You have to have divorced parents to understand.

**Heart Broken      By Candace Norwood**

She listened to a beautiful tune sometime last May.

It reminded her of a boy she use to hate.  
She learned to love this tune more and more,  
everyday.

But she has a weird feeling that this tune  
may be her fate.

The key is to turn the tune into a different  
meaning.

He isn't thinking of you, my love.  
Keep him guessing, keep him feigning.  
But you're delusional now, his love is all you  
think of.

He doesn't pity your heart, because it's you  
he's sick of.

Now she sits in her room depressed and  
confused.

Because the love of her life treated her like a  
fool.

Repeating in her head is that same dang tune,  
that left her soul completely bruised and  
misused.

She leaves advice, she wants you all to hear.  
Never put your trust in a boy, they always  
disappear.



*About the Author~Behind The Piece: Initially this poem was written as a sonnet for my 12th grade honors English class. We were told to create a poem in the same rhythmic pattern as Shakespeare. I chose to talk about an experience many people can relate with, which was heartbreak because I wanted the audience to truly understand the feelings that are drenched in this piece. I got my inspiration from songs I listened to, movies I watched and stories I hear. I hope my audience feels the pain that my character is feeling and is able to empathize with her, even if they haven't experienced a heartbreak of their own.*

**My Love, My Light    By Lizelle Nunez**

My love, my light. . . .  
One day the lights will go out, and we'll all be in  
    the dark  
    Some will be scared  
    Some will be free  
But when the day comes  
    And the light go out  
Can it just be you and me?  
    You're my light  
    And yours I am  
    We won't be afraid  
Intertwined will be our hands  
    So don't worry dear  
    The lights will dim  
    But that's when  
    The shows begins

**My Drug    By Esmeralda Orduno**

I hate how at times I can be on cloud 9  
I can be happy without a worry in the world  
    I feel safe and at peace  
    I hate how you make me weak  
    I feel hopeless and lost  
You have the power to cause agony and give such beauty  
I never knew love would make me feel this way  
    Love is a drug that only you can sell to me  
    Only you can give me this high, this energy  
    You are my drug

**Convulsive Serenity      By Dominic Josh Paragas**

Imagine living peacefully in a provincial village during the Vietnam war. The villagers have lived in their humble abodes for years, but the fragility of their way of life was exposed in an instant. The arrival of soldiers confronts their circumstance. The villagers cannot seem to reason with them, and any that try are shot indiscriminately. Pandemonium breaks out. Napalm is spread throughout the village, and homes are being burnt. From afar, the booming grenades can be heard, and fires are seen reaching the heavens, each flame carrying the soul of a child. Soldiers are entering homes and are unloading their magazines. Children are afraid. They try to escape their devastating situations, but to no avail. In one segregated corner of the village, a mother and her newborn baby are trapped inside their house as a result of fallen debris. The mother is hopelessly sitting on the floor with tears streaming down her face as her child cries in her arms. She wants to accept her fate, but it seems impossible. The pain to herself, the pain to her child, and the pain around her, are insufferable. In the spur of the moment, the mother hears multiple grenades go off, each explosion is seemingly closer to her than the last. Devoid of any hope, the mother tightly embraces her child, knowing it will be the last time that they will see the light of day. Finally, the blasts reach her house. Through the outburst of flames and bursting explosives, the mother and her child scream and wail at the top of their lungs. But their cries are not heard, their cries masked by the barrage of explosions around them, their cries seemingly meaningless to everything around them. This mother had lived through tough times before, and finally became content with her life as she gave birth to a child, but at that moment, it seemed as if her dedication was meaningless, since she was shoved off of the cliffs of life. She showed love to the world, but the world did not show its love back. In the end, she left a legacy full of pain.

**In the End It Makes Me Believe      By Geminis Pelayo**

In the end it makes me believe,  
We were never meant to be.  
I know that I'd die without you,  
But I'd die so much more quicker if I stayed with you.  
If I had thought about it a little sooner,  
I would have felt alive a little inside. Thinking of you makes my thoughts feel dead.



**What Happened to Us    By Geminis Pelayo**

WHAT HAPPENED TO US

In the end it makes me believe,

We were never meant to be.

I know that I'd die without you,

But I'd die so much more quicker if I stayed with you.

If I had thought about it a little sooner,

I would have felt alive a little inside. Thinking of you makes my thoughts feel deadly. My heart is breaking,

My mind is aching for the sorrow that comes tomorrow.

***About the Author~Behind The Piece:** Behind this piece just originated from my emotions that flooded me when I was by myself. I got my ideas to write this mostly from the music I was listening to when I was by myself. I wanted to write it because I thought maybe some people would be able to relate to this. I hope that what my audience understands from this is that it is okay to go through a breakup. What was difficult to write about the poem is making this something comprehensible.*



**Art By Tamara Echeverria**

**You Have to be a Girl to Understand**      **By Ambar Perez**

“You have to be a girl to understand”

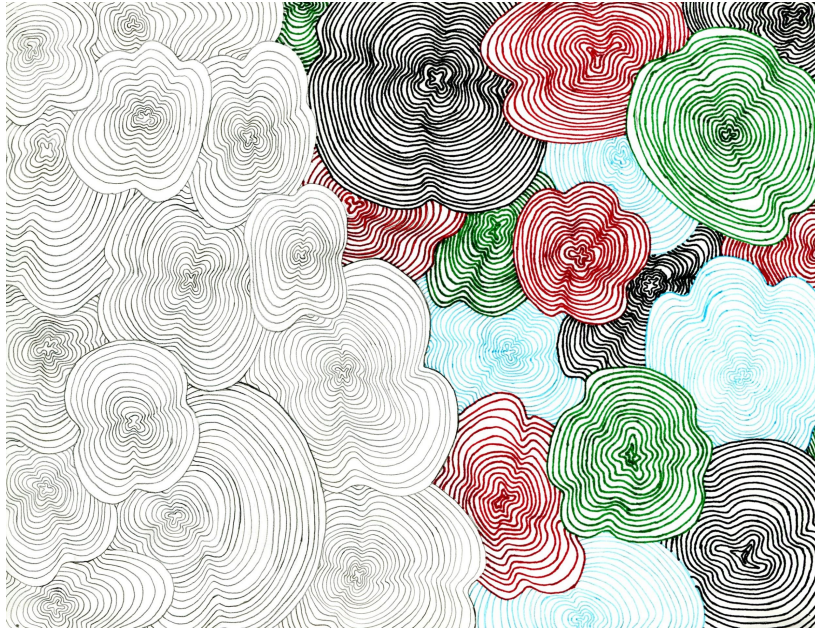
what it's like to feel intimidated or feel “ugly” around other girls.

- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
the hours it takes to pick out an outfit from what color your nail should be to what color shoes match  
the best then you walk out the door and still hate your outfit
- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
what it's like to be put down for choices you make in your life just because of your gender
- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
how evil other girls could be
- ♡ You have to be a girl to understand  
what it's like to have people think your stupid because your a girl.
- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
what it's like to cry because you feel like you're not good enough or that you won't ever make it as far  
as you wish to
- ♡ You have to be a girl to understand  
what it's like to feel hopeless of just give up on yourself because you won't ever be like them
- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
what it's like to have other girls think you have problem with them but in reality you barely know the  
girl
- ♡ You have to be a girl to understand  
what it's like to be told your music isn't very girl like like what does that mean? girl music? That's a  
thing?
- ♡ You have to be girl to understand  
why boys are so annoying

There is a lot of things you need to be girl to understand

**What I'm Thankful For**      **By Eduardo Perez**

I am thankful for many things in this world  
I am thankful for my friends because  
They push me to do my best everyday  
I am thankful for the roof I sleep under everyday  
Thankful for the 3 meals I eat a day  
Thankful for the education I receive 5 days a week  
Thankful to those who love and care for me  
Thankful for the countless opportunities that have come my way  
But I am especially thankful for my family  
Without them I don't know how I would be living today



**Art      By Jazmin Duarte**

**When I Run      By Eduardo Perez**

When I Run, I get to focus on myself  
I am able to ease my mind  
I am able to pay close attention of my surroundings  
When I run, I feel my feet stomping on the ground  
I feel the adrenaline rushing through my body when I first start  
When I run, I always ask myself why I do it  
Then I remember what it feels like crossing the finish line  
Feeling emotional, feeling pain, but most importantly, feeling proud

**Windows to the Soul**    **By Eduardo Perez**

Humans are mysterious  
We are taught to not assume personalities  
They say, to never judge a book by its cover  
Why get to know them?  
To be able to see them within your own eyes  
When you have the windows of their soul  
Sometimes it can be foggy and ignored  
But always open up those windows and see them for who they are  
You should never rely on someone else's point of view

**Love Hurts**    **By Nathaniel Perez**

Mistakes were made  
But that's okay  
I chose to stay  
Now look at me  
I give you my hundred  
You give me fifty

**Us**    **By Nathaniel Perez**

Arguing is regrettable  
Being with you is unforgettable  
Your smile is memorable  
Working together makes us inseparable

**You and I**      **By Sammantha Quintero**

As I sit here,  
Watching the rain fall  
I think of you  
And I can only hope you think of me  
I long for the warmth of your heart  
And the smell of your cologne  
My heart keeps beating for the thought of being next to you  
You may not see it in my eyes  
But you know what I think  
You know what I feel  
But you ignore those thoughts  
And pretend as if you don't  
I know you do  
You know you do  
So why ignore them?  
Why ignore me?  
Do you not feel what I feel?  
I know that you know that I know we feel the same  
We may be too scared  
But what is life without risks? -  
Nothing



**Dreaming Art by Sofia Cortez**

**Wish Upon A Star****By Jackelin Quiroa**

Wish upon a star that's not there, and hope for the best. The only faith you've got is in yourself. Don't stop believing. Have faith, and be your own star for once. Raise up to the gods.

Wish upon a star that's not there, but the only star I see is scraping across the sky, leaving wonderful, beautiful, blue marks for everyone to see.

**Star Girl**  
**Art By Karla Meza**

**The Girl With Ocean Eyes****By Amy Radinsky**

The girl's life was a cycle of being in and out of love:

She fell in love with a kind mind, strong hands,  
Honeyed voice, and elegant words.

She fell in love with a pair of hazel eyes,  
Still seeing them when she closes hers.

Eventually, she had to fall back out,  
For, this one wasn't meant for her.

She thought she'd found her match,  
But some things just don't work.

She fell in love with music

Even though she can not make it.

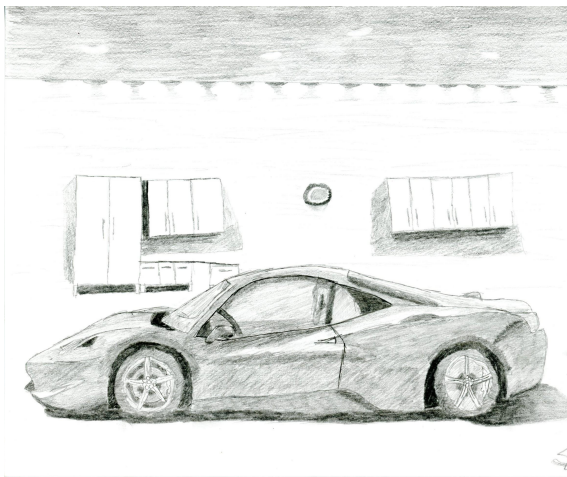
Many songs remind her of her past-  
Memories of people, places, feelings.

She fell in love with the ocean and with rain,  
Living without them could never be an option.

She fell in love with the stars,  
And longs to be among them one day.

She fell in love with falling in love,  
And waits to find herself falling once again.

1. Dark chocolate is really gross.
2. Letting go is not easy. You don't have to.
3. Spiderman is the literally the best superhero.
4. If someone can fall asleep knowing they've hurt you in some way, exclude them from your life.
5. Don't apologize for things you didn't do. Surrendering quickly shows weakness.
6. Relationships ain't crap. Who's gonna pay your bills just a few years from now? You know damn right he's not. Stay on your grind, focus on the right stuff.
7. I'm allergic to apricots.
8. Drake & Josh is lowkey a good show, you can't tell me I'm wrong about this.
9. Always wear sunscreen. Minimum SPF 30, don't forget to apply on and behind your neck. Skin cancer is no joke. Stay safe.
11. Surround yourself with positive people who genuinely care and try to understand you, anyone who doesn't is clearly just a waste of time.
12. Chuck E. Cheese recycles their pizza. Seriously, have you not watched Shane's conspiracy?
13. Don't take things too seriously. Life will be more enjoyable if you sit back, relax, and stop overthinking everything.
14. You can't breathe when you smile. Go ahead, try it...  
just kidding, I just wanted to see you smile.
15. Who cares about what people think about you. In the end, you're all you've got

**Car Art By Sebastian Huesca**

**Culture**      **By Yareli Raya**

Culture, the customs, social institutions, achievements of a particular nation, people, or social group.

Something that lets us not forget who we are.

Where we came from. Wars that we have fought to get us where we are today. What our ancestors have accomplished.

Culture, our people, it is where we come from. A part of who we are, let us not forget who we are.

Culture, our customs, achievements, people. Where we come from. Let us not forget who we are.

**Perfect Match**      **By Maria Reza**

We've been through a lot

But even after every fight I know it's you that I want

I've met other people yet none of them were able to understand

that I break easily & sometimes can't get back up

The instant you came in you showed me the light

You brought me new hope and convinced me that everything would be alright

Since that moment on I knew you were the one

Truth is, you and I are the perfect match

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** Even though I don't write I was inspired to write this because my current relationship is a rollercoaster. My best friend (and boyfriend) means a lot to me and I just thought it would be meaningful to write something about us, through writing.*



**Horse**      **By Katrina Robles**

Horse-A girl's best friend  
Beautiful strong powerful  
Fine creature of God

**Horse**  
**Art By Katrina Robles**



**Resilience     By Angela Rodas**

A story is no small thing  
The outcast who found love with a beast  
The girl turned princess  
The princess awoken from her curse  
The princess resuscitated from poison

But the simplicity of the symbols are so often undermined  
The enchanted rose  
The glass slipper  
The spindle's needle  
The poisoned apple

These are seen as the object of some sort of evil or obstacle  
Yet without these, the happily ever after so often told would not be

The symbols share the same purpose,  
To test resilience

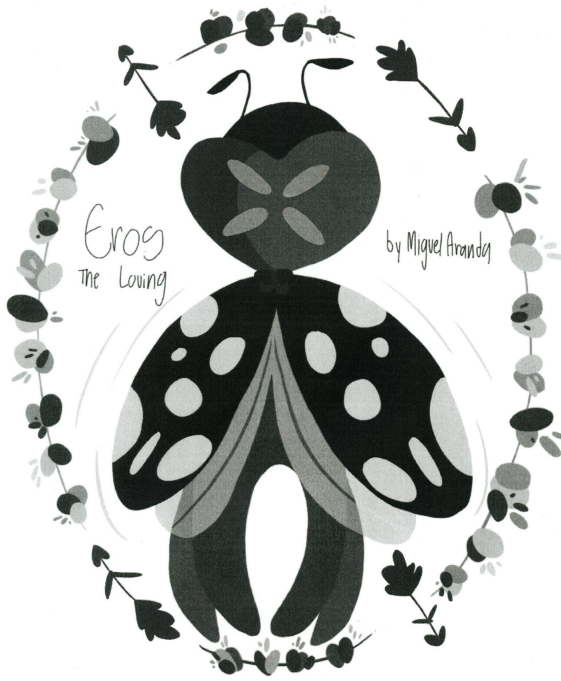
Can the girl look beyond the mask, even if she must admit she has fallen for a beast?  
Can the girl reject the obedience she has kept to her stepmother, for a night of freedom?  
Can the girl learn to give up her time and control, and wait to be awoken?  
Can the girl decide to live, to fight for that right?

So tell me, if the happy endings you idolize all share the absolute need for a girl to decide to give up that  
which frightens her, and accept the reward of resilience

What makes you any different?  
What makes you falter?  
You fear you do not possess that magical gift which allowed them to survive  
That fairytale spark of survival, bright as a flame

The truth is this is not a fairytale, no fairy godmother will grant you the reassurance you desire  
That is the the "real life" part of your test,  
Your resilience must be encouraged by you and only you

So go out with that fire filled heart, and face your test  
Fire was not meant to be extinguished  
That only began with those who feared a strong willed being



**Erog The Loving     Art By Miguel Aranda**

**Thought of You     By Angela Rodas**

I think of you,  
You live in my mind,  
Alone, without truce at all hours  
And though, your fondness has grown indifferent,  
It does not stop reflecting on my heart,  
The love; yes the love that devours me inside.

But in my loneliness your image follows me,  
So peaceful; so pure  
Like an arrow Cupid sends,  
Who knows, perhaps to grant me company.

I do not know what prose is today,  
I do not know what verse is today,  
I know though, you are my universe,  
I know you hold my love, and are my company,  
A whole world painted of melancholy.

With your love existing,  
I long for life,  
Yet without it,  
All I have is some sort of inner strife.



Art By Koujin Watanabe

**Single Pringle** By Vincenzo Russo

With Pringles, two makes a beak.  
But, when there is one you're just alone  
And you feel obsolete.  
Just know there is the other piece  
Waiting for you to complete that beak.  
You're a single Pringle today, but not next week.

**You Are...** By Aritza Romero

You Are....  
You Are, **Beautiful**  
You Are, **Loved**  
You Are, **Inspiring**  
You Are, **Worth It**  
You Are, **Strong**  
You Are, **Unique**  
You Are, **Whatever You Choose to Be**  
You are, **You**  
**Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.**

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** I chose to submit this piece because I know there are people out there that will doubt themselves at one point or another in their life , and I wanted to share that no matter what goes on there is a way to be okay again and you should know that if someone is bringing you down the only opinion you should listen to is your own, because no one is going to bring you down the way you bring yourself down so you should change the way you view yourself.*



**Art By Koujin Watanabe**

**The Life of Matvey Gredinger      By Laila Rose**

Home was Vertujeni, a small town in Bessarabia, Romania. I was born on June 2nd, 1921, raised alongside my two older siblings by my mother and my father, who was a Kosher butcher at the time. I attended a public school with the children from my town, but unlike other towns, mine was primarily Jewish so I never suffered the torment other children did at the time. We heard of how in larger cities Jewish families were shunned or judged by their neighbors, but where I was from my family rarely ever suffered from judgement. At age thirteen, I moved to Bucharest, the Romanian capital, to work as a textile manufacturer until I was nineteen. Meanwhile, my family had moved to the town of Vysoka.

While I was visiting back home in 1940, the Soviets had occupied Bessarabia and soon after came the Germans. We had heard whispered stories from others about the brutality of the Germans but we could never have prepared for their viciousness and cruelty. First came the shootings by the Romanian soldiers, and when we tried to protect ourselves, they broke into our homes and shot everything in sight. Both of my parents perished that night but the soldier who shot me got my neck instead of somewhere more fatal so I was able to survive. They checked my breathing to see if I was alive but I was able to trick them so I was then buried beneath tons of rocks and then wait to escape. Escaping to a nearby town, German soldiers came the next day and I was then taken to a forced-labor camp in in Ukraine. For four years, my fellow prisoners and I suffered unspeakable cruelty at the hands of the Romanian soldiers, working as a road builder for their army. In 1944, I was set free because the Red Army from Russia was getting closer and closer to our camp and the soldiers were afraid of the Russians. I lived a simple life after that, moving around constantly until I moved to the United States in 1990 and I finally passed away on October 19, 2015, surrounded by my family and friends.

## **Anti-Bipedal Movement      By Elijah Sanchez**

For as long as us humans have been on this planet earth there has been one constant that stretched from Homo Habilis to Homo Sapien Sapien, the modern human being. This is, of course, bipedalism. This has been a way that our ancestors have thrived throughout the millions of years they have existed. Without the evolutionary trait of bipedalism and jogging, we as a species would most likely never prosper to what we are today. Then after millions of years of hunting and gathering, we evolved again, not a physical trait, nor an appendage, but instead a social and intellectual trait. We learned agriculture. With the advent of agriculture us humans found a way to break the control that nature had on us and then started to control nature itself. With the concept of farming created we then no longer needed to hunt and gather. It was as if hunting and gathering were useless, outdated, no longer needed in a society that has grown past the need for it. Just like hunting and gathering, or the use of stone, or bronze, or handwriting entire books, or specialized labor, or steam power, or even the floppy disc, I feel that bipedalism is a thing of the past. We need to push on like those who came before us and push past the barrier known as bipedalism.

The need for bipedalism is a thing of the past. The need for two legs in our society has only declined throughout the past century. With the advent of cars the need for bipedalism was drastically declined and with the exponential growth of technology, the need for bipedalism will also decline exponentially. Why should humanity be limited to such an outdated concept?

Just like our ancestors millions of years ago we need to evolve to better suit our situation. Our ancestors have evolved to jog to better suit their environment and us to must evolve our way out of bipedalism to better suit our environment. To evolve past the barrier known as bipedalism is the next evolutionary step we must take as a species. Bipedalism is holding back the human race we must break the shackles and runoff into our future.

Without the overbearing weight of bipedalism, our bodies can evolve to better suit our modern needs. By riding bipedalism we can expand in other ways to further our evolutionary chain. For example, without bipedalism, we can expand our own brain power. The need for movement in our society has already been fulfilled with the technology we have created. We can know to spend waste of energy we spent on walking into something that is more useful such as the capacity of our minds. By expanding our minds we can expand every other aspect that we possess, this is the next step of human evolution.

The time is now to start to move to a future that is will fulfill all of humanity needs and in order to do so, we must end bipedalism. So what I'm saying is to go out and end the tyranny of bipedalism. Go out and end it. Go out and break your knee caps. Grab a friend and a bat and go to town. Jump off a high ledge and break your legs. You see those cars out there, why not just jump in front of them? The time for bipedalism is over. The time is now to surpass the restrictions that nature has over us.

## **Placenta By Elijah Sanchez**

Placenta  
Plentiful in its production  
Yet sadly the supply is always in reduction  
If a Placenta a day keeps the doctor away  
Then the need for it would never be at bay  
That is why I always have one under construction

**Him**      **By Fernanda Sanchez**

He's the one I love.  
Sweet, handsome, charming, funny,  
he is all of the above.

When I see him, I get butterflies.  
I think of him 'till sunset, from sunrise.

He's my other half.  
We share our cries, but also our laugh.

His eyes are magical. They're no specific color.  
From this angle they are a honey brown,  
But from that one, they're another.

He is my soulmate and my best friend.  
Even with our ups and downs,  
We're in this together until the end.

Him. It's Him. I know he's the one.  
He cares like no other.  
And because of that, he will forever be my lover.

**Six Feet Under**      **By Mariana Santana**

Hoping you've never been in a situation such as the one in the title, here are some pointers on literally how to survive being buried alive. Things to keep in mind: the average human volume is about 66 liters while the average coffin holds around 886 liters leaving you with about 820 liters of air. Adults usually use 23 liters of air per hour, this gives you approximately (without panicking) 30 hours tops to escape.

To break out, in a similar way from hockey fights, you'd want to pull your shirt over your head preventing you from swallowing dirt, and luckily if you were buried in a sort of cheap coffin, you would be able to kick the center of the top to create a hole in the coffin which makes the rest of escaping a tad easier. By creating the hole in the lid of your coffin, this relieves the pressure above ground causing dirt to seep in making it easier to open the lid and climb out. Hoping, yet assuming you're only six feet under ground (that's still relatively close to the surface) it should be quite easy to make your way out from there. Congratulations, now you know how to survive what others may call a near death experience \*pun intended\*!

**Star Wars Haikus     By Matthew Sarich**

5 Yoda talks backwards  
7 Luke's hates his father Vader  
5 Star wars has five books

5 Sabers of all types  
7 Introduce what will happen  
5 Luke kills off the sith

5 Yoda dies of age  
7 Luke faces off his father  
5 Death star explodes

5 Not the jedi path  
7 Anakin kills off the jedi  
5 Ben cuts off his legs

5 Chewbacca is mad  
7 Star wars has 7 novels  
5 Solo dies later

5 The force awakens  
7 The empire strikes back  
5 Ewoks run around

5 The phantom menace  
7 Return of the strong jedi  
5 rebel alliance

5 Revenge of the sith  
7 hoping to get the power  
5 R2-D2 screams

5 Star Wars the clone wars  
7 George Lucas is creator  
5 Attack of the clones

5 Waiting every year  
7 Millenium Falcons' Fly  
5 Racing through the sky

**You Have To Be Born In America To Understand     By Haidy Silva**

You have to be born in America to understand. when you go to Mexico and they make fun of you when you can't fluently speak Spanish. Have you ever felt that way? I can relate to this because I got the experience to go to school out there, and the teachers were laughing at me because I couldn't read or write it. Have you ever felt unwelcomed somewhere? Then they started asking me if my parents are born in Mexico, where I'm from, and where I was born, where my parents are from, etc. It was really hard for me to communicate with my teachers and make friends. Have you ever felt out of place? This really made me feel like an outsider because they made me feel like I didn't belong there, like they didn't want me there, and they made me feel really uncomfortable somewhere where I can call home.



**The Moon**      **By Presley Smith**

He held his hands and put them under his chin, his elbows on the table. He leaned towards me and a tuft of his hair fell into his face. The lone candle on our table flickered and the flame seemed to make the gold flakes and copper streaks in his eyes dance. The flame also lit up the single rose in its tall, thin vase and made it look even more elegant.

“So,” He said. “Tell me about yourself. Your hopes. Dreams. Ambitions.”

“Well,” I ponder for a second. “I have something that falls under all three of those categories, but it seems pretty silly now that I am thinking about it.”

“Tell me,” He tilted his head and pouted. “I’m curious now.”

“Fine. Just promise not to laugh.” I sighed and he nodded his head. “I’ve always wanted to go to the moon.”

I looked up at him, expecting to see him holding in his laughs, but instead he looked at me with his eyebrows raised as if he were waiting for me to continue. So, I did.

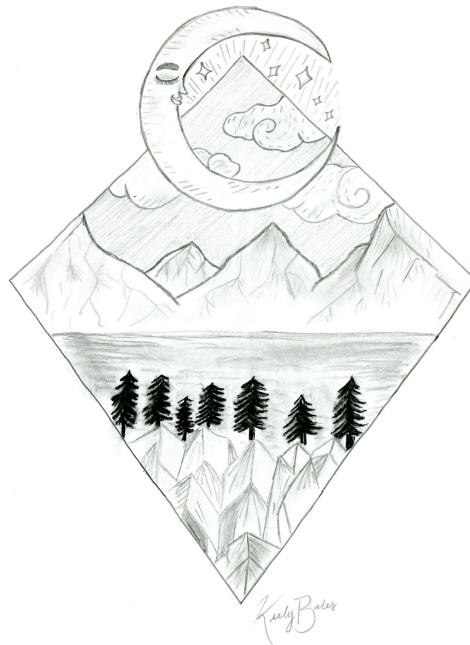
“Ever since I was a little girl I have been fascinated by the moon, its phases, the way it can glow so brightly through clouds or other obstacles, the facts that the other side of it is a mystery. It’s so stunning and beautiful. It’s not a natural phenomena, but I think it deserves to be one.” I looked up to see him staring at me. He had a huge grin spread across his face, wrinkling the corners of his eyes.

“What?” I questioned. I blushed as his lips parted into a smile.

“Well there go my plans.” He whispered.

“Wait, what plans?” I started to fidget, not sure if he was serious or not.

“You are so adorable. Screw getting you back to my place. I’m going to get you to the moon.” He smirked.



**Night View By Keely Bales**

## The Busted Door     By Alyssa Solorio

It was a cold and gloomy day in Wilmington. My brother was out somewhere with his friends and my parents were going to be out all day. The only other people home were my sisters Lily and Olivia. We were bored to say the least. There was no adult supervision in the house, so being the oldest I was left responsible for my two younger sisters.

Lily and I share a room so we know a lot about each other. She knows exactly how to push my buttons and I know how to push hers. She was being especially annoying that day and kept poking me. I started throwing small things at her like orange peels and paper. She started hitting me harder so, I started hurling larger, but soft items. I threw my stuffed animals and pillows right at her face. She eventually hit me harder than normal and she knew it so she ran. I ran right after her until she slammed the door to my parent's room shut. I tried pushing it open, but she was pushing right back. Then, I decided that I would pull on the door so that she couldn't leave the room. We stayed that way for a good ten minutes yelling to each other to stop. I came to the conclusion that my stubborn sister was not going to let go so I ended up letting go. My sister who was pulling on the door to get out, was now flying with it against the wall. My sister and the door both hit the wall. My sister started laughing before she realized what had happened. "Mom is going to kill us," I cried.

"Not if she doesn't know it was us," she replied.

"Lily, the door is literally in half," I pointed to the pieces of the door, "How would she not know?"

"Just put the pieces back together in the shape of the door," she explained, "When they go to open the door they will think they broke it."

I thought this was the absolute most brilliant idea. They would never know! We started placing the door on one side and made sure it looked normal. Our other little sister didn't see or hear anything, so she couldn't tell my parents.

My parents brought my brother home at around eight in the evening. By this time, I completely forgot about the door. I heard my mom and dad talking in the kitchen, which is between my room and their room. My mom went into my parent's restroom, which is directly next to their room. I could feel my heartbeat racing. To my surprise neither of my parents went into their room for about another hour. They were too busy with other paperwork and bills to notice the damage we had done.

At around nine thirty I heard my parents head into their room. "What in the world?" I heard my dad yell.

"Didn't you come in here before?" he asked my mom.

"No, I haven't been in here all day," she replied.

While they tried to figure out what happened Lily and I tried to come up with excuses.

"We should just tell them the truth," she explained, "It'll be easier than trying to come up with something".

"Are you crazy?" I whisper screamed, "Mom and Dad will literally kill us!"

"Well they're gonna ask about it any second now. What do we tell them?" she asked.

"We'll just tell them that we don't know what happened and that no one has been on that side of the house today" I proposed.

As soon as I finished my sentence I heard my mom calling us to her room where the interrogation would begin. Lily and I slowly made our way to our parents. We met my mom at the door. She was not at all amused.

“ What happened to my door?” she asked.

“ I don’t know, “ Lily said, trying to look shocked.

“ Nobody has even been over here today,” I added, looking as confused as possible.

My mom looked both of us up and down, trying to read our faces.

“ So, you’re telling me that neither of you know what happened to my door?” she questioned.

“ I don’t know,” I shrugged my shoulders.

After that, Lily and I went back into our room and gave a little laugh. We thought we completely fooled her. We thought we had come up with the absolute most brilliant plan and got away with it. We learned, not long after, that we were wrong.

“ Lily,” my mom yelled, “Lisa, get over here”.

We walked to the living room trying to act as casual as possible, but my mom knew us too well.

“ Who broke our door?” She asked while giving us a glare.

“ We don’t know,” I replied quickly.

“ So, you’re telling me that neither of you have any idea what happened to my door?” she asked coldly.

“No idea,” Lily replied.

My mom then told us that if we didn’t do it, then that means someone broke into the house and broke the door. We sat there in silence just shrugging our shoulders.

“ Bring me my phone,” she demanded, “ I’m going to call the cops to tell them what happened. ”

I slowly made my way through the kitchen to get her phone. As I was walking back I heard Lily confess. My heart stopped. I quietly stood there a second before walking back in. My mom told us that we were grounded for lying. We wouldn’t even have been in trouble if we told the truth because they needed a new door anyways.

When I think back to this story I realize how lucky I am that my sister confessed before my mom called the cops. I have always tried my best to tell the truth since this incident happened because I know nothing is worse than robbing someone of the truth. It also has showed me how something small can turn into a disaster if you tell just one lie.

***About the Author~ Behind the piece:** I started this in my Creative Writing Class and it always gives me a good laugh so I thought I would share it. Hope it makes everyone else laugh a little too!*

<b>Nostalgia</b> <b>By Alyssa Solorio</b>
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Looks like an episode of Drake & Josh  
Tastes like funnel cake from the State Fair  
Smells chlorine from the pool on a hot summer day  
Feels like a warm hug from mom  
Sounds like the iCarly theme song

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** I started writing this piece in Creative Writing Class with a team. I slowly started making it my own based on my childhood. I knew a lot of people could relate to these nostalgic feelings, so I decided to submit it to the Lit Journal.*

**Back Home    By Yani Suarez**

Hey,  
I've noticed that you've been out of it these past few days.  
Maybe it's because of the cold weather, and you miss the scorching sun back home.  
Maybe it's because of how different the food is, and you miss mom's cooking back home.  
Maybe it's because you're different from everyone now, and you miss having the same thing with everyone else back home.  
Maybe it's because you miss your friends, who seem to be having fun without you back home.  
Or maybe it is because you're just not home.  
This is not home.

The busy streets look familiar, yet so foreign.  
The food is the same, yet so different from your favorites back home.  
The friends you have are just like your old friends,  
yet they are still so different from the ones back home.  
Everything seems so similar yet so different.

I know nothing can replace home.  
I know you always think about home.  
I know you miss the people back home.  
And I know you can't wait to see home again.

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** I was inspired to write this piece to express my homesickness. I'm from the Philippines, and I just moved to the United States about a month ago. I miss my mom and my friends and pretty much the place where I grew up. I wanted to express my feelings because it is not easy to cope with homesickness. I wanted to connect to those who feel the same thing, whether they miss their old house, their old school or whatever seems to be like home to them. The hard part about writing this piece is comparing what I used to have to what I have now.*

**Outlaw Song    By Antonio Torres**

Lining the trail here Steed by my side Hands through the flowers Land, home, and pride	Like the red in my teeth  Past all the branches A valley of green This valley before me The last thing I'll see	A slinger as well A cheat was what he was And that's how he fell  Sunrise, I see it A new day will come For most, you can say this But there's silence for some
The scape here before me Its greens and its lilacs Call it no man's land I say its idyllic	By the rope in this here hand Led my steed to a stream The steed was a good one An equine of esteem	But, like this stream here I'll surely live on With my steed and the berries Nuts and pecans
The trail down below me Gets real rickety But it sure beats The Lawman's hostility Down through the wild here Berries by my feet The red of the pecans	Down the stream I went To wash what he wrought The Lawman, a marksman Pulled a clean shot  A gambler is what I am	The angels are up there In heavenly homes Me and my steed here On we will roam

**Dad    By Allison Torstensen**

Dad My dad and I are each other's best friend  
He and I have a bond that's really strong  
My dad will stick by my side till the end  
With him raising me nothing can go wrong  
My dad and I love watching baseball games  
He would take me to watch the Angels play  
We always scream our favorite athletes names  
We root for them despite what people say  
My dad has always been my biggest fan  
On the softball field my dad cheers me on  
When I say that I can't he says I can  
With my new confidence that ball is gone  
I love him so much with all of my heart  
I know his love for me is off the chart

**Ode to Waterfalls      By Frida Tovar**

Your cascade soothes me and brings peace to my mind  
The sun beams against you  
Instantly causing an array of colors to be seen  
Creating a rainbow which never fails to amaze  
You instil a sense of powerlessness and fear among people  
As you come crashing down on the rocks beneath you  
Bringing the still water to life  
You bring everything surrounding you to life  
Like the captivating flowers which you nourish with your loving mist  
Leading to people falling in love with your beauty  
As they first lay their eyes on you

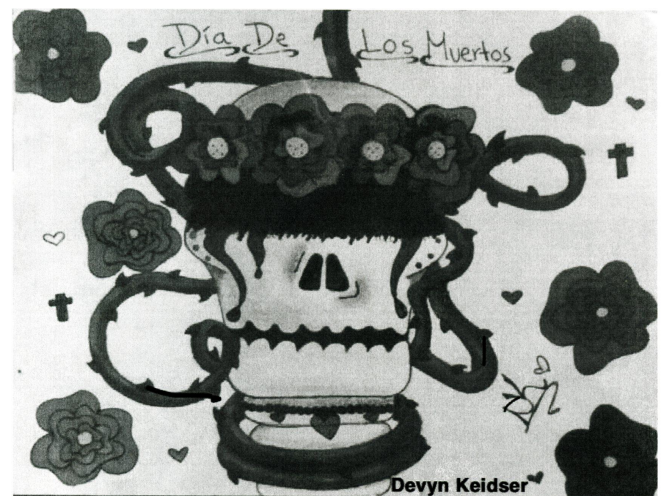
**Life      By Margarita Vargas**

Life  
An endless cycle of living and dying  
We live to die  
And we die trying to live

When you die I like to think it's a better place  
A place where there is no worries  
Where everyone is just happy  
Where you are reunited with your family members

We live and we hurt because a family member  
Or a friend

Is taken from us  
It's a cycle that is impossible to break



**Art By Devyn Keidser**

The feeling in your body when someone  
tells you that you've lost a loved one  
The feeling of shock  
Not knowing how to feel  
Not knowing what to think  
And not knowing what to say  
The feeling of instant loneliness

Knowing that in the next few weeks you're  
going to have to bury this person

Knowing that you will never be able to hug them  
again  
Or talk to them again  
You can never even see them again

They become a memory  
They become a story that you tell to the next  
generations

**We Promised**     **By Margarita Vargas**

We promised  
We promised we were forever  
We promised we would ride till the end  
We promised we would ride no matter what  
We promised we wouldn't hurt each other  
anymore  
We promised we would never be with anyone else

You promised  
You promised you would never love anyone else  
You promised you were done hurting me  
You promised you couldn't live without me  
You promised you loved me  
You promised you would never treat me bad

I promised  
I promised that I was going to be by your side no  
matter what  
I promised that I wouldn't leave  
I promised that I would never hurt you

I promised that I would never make you feel as if I  
didn't care

I promised that I would ride until the end

All of that meant nothing to you  
It meant everything to me  
I meant nothing to you  
You were my everything  
I never hurt you  
You never stopped hurting me  
I kept all of my promises  
You broke them all  
But not only did you break our promises  
You broke me  
I have never been hurt like this before  
But yet I still want you  
But yet I still love you  
Why?  
Why must it be this way?

***About the Author~Behind The Piece** You were the first and the only person who I was able to say "I love you" to I've never been able to say those word to someone before, but when I told you ... it was natural. I don't think you never loved me but I think that you never loved yourself. You grew up in a different way than anyone I know. It was hard . I know it was but you took all of that anger out on me. I don't think I deserved that, or any of this actually.*

**Realization**    **By Montse Venegas**

The cherry blossoms I love  
Could never compare to how much I adored you  
The books I enjoy to read in my free time  
Could never mean as much to me as when I was  
with you

I don't believe the sky will ever compare to the  
mesmerizing color of your eyes  
And the ocean could never match the depth I saw  
in them  
No photograph could ever capture your happiness  
properly  
And I would've said anything to hear your laugh  
Because nothing made me feel more content

You're not like the summer day in Sonnet 16  
So I won't even try  
Because to me  
You were more than just one season

Before all I'd do  
Is compare my feelings to fall and spring  
Because to me  
That was the beginning and the end

I opened my eyes now  
And I can see that fall is no longer  
Dull, depressing, and somber  
Winter is no longer  
Despair, goodbyes, and an end  
Spring is not  
Nostalgia, pessimism, and regret  
Summer is not  
Boring, unexciting, and forgettable

There's so much beauty and happiness  
In each one of those seasons  
I was a fool before I met you  
Because you helped me learn the truth  
And an even greater one after I did  
Because I didn't realize it sooner

I can't compare you to the seasons  
Because none of it can truly describe you  
None of it matters anymore anyway  
So with these words  
I vow to never regret what I didn't say  
Because I know that everything will be okay



Sometimes  
I wish  
The world  
Would just  
Stop.

Not forever,  
Just momentarily.

A brief pause  
In the hustle of everyday life.  
A small clause  
Allowing me to settle at night.

Everything is on the move  
There is a rhythmic groove  
that we tend to lose  
as we wear out our shoes  
faster than we care to choose.

Faster than we care to choose,  
This life is thrust upon us.  
Nothing can cease the unrelenting chorus  
drilling voices in our heads,  
out of tune, we're out of might  
as we stress over the works we do not want to write.

Sometimes  
I wish  
The world  
Would just  
Stop.

A brief pause in the life  
I've grown to not want.

I remember it clearly, my first act of premeditated rebellion.

I was in the fourth grade, and at that time I had not yet found myself in a situation that required revolting. I was going about my day at school as any nine year old would, floating through my class, eating lunch, and playing with my friends at recess.

I enjoyed all types of schoolyard games, like tag, soccer, and tetherball, but the mother of all recess tournaments went down on the handball court. My friends and I had made a good name for ourselves on the court, but today I was to show everyone that I was the best handball player in all of the fourth grade. Today, there was a handball tournament.

Highly anticipating the match, I made my way over to the court after lunch. The hot black asphalt burned the bottoms of my feet through my thin rubber shoes, but I did not mind. A soft breeze lifted my hair from my face as the sun warmed my shorts and t-shirt clad self. It was the perfect day for handball. I was ready.

I arrived at the handball court and stood in line for my chance at a one on one game versus the previous winner. I was waiting next to my friend Brian, who greeted me by stepping lightly on my shoe.

“Hey!” I said as he scrunched my purple Vans. I proceeded to kick him in the shins.

Now, I know that sounds super aggressive, but it was not at all. Brian and I had been friends since Pre K, and we had developed our own silly games in the years of knowing each other. One of these games was where we would kick each other in the shins, and since we were just waiting for our turn at the handball tournament, I figured we could pass the time by playing.

I laughed as I continued to give small but mighty kicks to Brian’s skinny legs.

“Ow!” He joked. He let me have a few more goes at him as payback for stepping on my shoe. Just as he was about to start kicking back, a yard lady came up to us.

“Hey!” She said to me. I never knew any of the yard ladies’ names. They all had big sunglasses and pink lipstick and straw hats. “What are you kicking him for?”

Before I could open my mouth to explain myself, the yard lady began shaking her head.

“You’re going to hurt him! You can’t play rough like that.”

I thought this assessment of the situation was stupid. Yes, Brian was skinny, and yes, I was strong, but he and I were about the same height. No way I could hurt him.

The yard lady did not seem to care that Brian and I were similar in stature. She told me to go sit down on the bench for the rest of recess. Being the law abiding fourth grader that I was, I listened and reluctantly made my way over to the bench. I heard Brian snicker behind me.

I sat down on the lonesome plastic bench next to a girl with short brown hair and glasses. The plastic of the bench was jagged and poked into my small legs. The hot sun beat down on me and seemed to melt the tan paint from the bench onto my skin. All the way across the yard, I watched a handball game.

“They don’t come back,” said the girl next to me.

“What?” I replied.

“The yard ladies... they don’t come back. They won’t check if you stay here.”

My wheels started turning. “So they won’t know if I leave?”

“Did they write your name down?” the girl countered.

I thought back. Not one yard lady had asked for my name.

I grinned at the girl and slowly peeled my legs off the sticky, hot bench.

I was going to be the handball champion, the queen of the court, the envy the fourth grade- and no one could stop me.

I don't remember the outcome of my game. I don't think I ended up winning, but I sure had not lost. I had just rebelled against the yard ladies, the authorities. Screw queen of the court, I was the queen of that whole dang school. I was a rebel.

<b>A Ride to Not Remember</b> <b>By Megan Vidovich</b>
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“Let's go on Xcelerator.”

“What?” I asked.

“Xcelerator,” my friend Jasmine repeated. She pointed to the rollercoaster to our left. The light pink coaster went up, up, up, up, up- and straight down. “Do you want to?”

Any other night, I would have said no. No, Jasmine, I do not want to be hurtled 80 miles per hour to my death. But I had already said no to Supreme Scream, the ride that takes you up 325 feet just to let you drop, and now all of Jasmine's friends were waiting in line to go on that ride. Now she had invited my freshman self to Knotts with all her upperclassmen friends just to sit out and wait. I told her she didn't have to wait with me, that she could have gone on the ride. But Jasmine said she didn't want to leave me alone in the dark at a theme park I was unfamiliar with, and now she was asking me if I wanted to go on Xcelerator.

Do you want to go on Xcelerator? Her question hung in the air and fogged up my head. No, Jasmine.

My heart and my head and every fragment of my body said, No, Jasmine.

But when I caught my breath and my tongue moved, my mouth said, “Sure.”

“Yay!” Jasmine said, happily. She grabbed my arm and walked us jauntily to the line entrance. “It's super fun. You'll like it,” Jasmine assured me with her all knowing smile.

I really didn't think I would, but something about the liveliness of that midnight air seeped into my lungs and made my brain giggle.

My excitement grew as we got closer to the ride. The people in front of us seemed totally relaxed, so I focused on their energy in attempts to not psych myself out. My ten minutes of mental preparation was in vain, however, as soon as I stepped up to the gate. One moment, the people who were in front of me in line were sitting on the coaster, and the next- WHOOSH! They were gone. Just like that! Whisked away at 80 miles per hour. The car returned a minute later. Everybody looked breathless. Some wore smiles, but I could not reciprocate. My heart beat out of my chest as I watched Jasmine climb into the car. I followed suit, slowing lifting my shaking lead legs and plopping my apprehensive body into the seat. With fumbling fingers, I buckled my seat belt and pulled my lap bar down. There were voices and Jasmine's excited squeal, but all I could really hear was the blood pumping through my head and filling my ears.

The ride worker walked over and checked my lap bar. I wanted her to do a full examination of my personal safety and tell me that something was wrong and make me get off the ride, but all she did was unenthusiastically pull up the bar and walk to the next person. If something was wrong, I wouldn't be getting out on the ground. I'd be getting thrown out at 205 feet in the air.

“Jasmine!” I screamed. “I don't want to!”

Jasmine did the sign of the cross, then laughed at me.

I was hysterical, but it was too late to turn back. Before I knew it- WHOOSH! There was pressure like I had never felt before pushing into my chest, pinning my head back against the headrest, blood pumping through my eyes- then nothing.

The world materialized again a few seconds later. All I saw were the stars, millions of little light freckles on the pitch black sky's face. I felt like I was underwater. My head was rolling around, loose from my neck. Are we at the top? We must have been, because now I was plummeting down, straight down, then getting whisked every which way. Then, it was over.

I could barely lift my legs out of the car. Jasmine was laughing and smiling, full of adrenaline. "So?? Did you like it?"

I could barely get my eyes to focus. I looked up at her expectant face.

"Jasmine, I think I blacked out."

<b>A Bundle of Joy    By Sara Walters</b>
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I can just see it now  
In the living room of a cabin  
    On a couch  
Curling up next to the fire  
While it's snowing outside  
A warm wool blanket just covering my legs

It's snowing outside  
And Christmas music playing  
All making it the perfect romantic scene

Then your husband  
A soon to be father  
Walks in the room  
You haven't told him yet  
But the happiness is growing inside of you

He has a present for you  
As he walks in the room he handles the  
    present with care  
With soft, delicate hands he brings it to you

One medium-sized box wrapped in red  
    With a silver bow on top  
You wonder what it could be  
    And he says to open it

When you do you see another present  
Irrepressibly it's wiggling and raging with  
    joy  
This present has a red bow for a collar  
    A golden retriever puppy  
Your joy is one a person can only imagine

You take the puppy out of the box  
    Pet the cute bundle of joy  
    Until it calms down

Then you turn to your husband  
"I have a present for you as well" leaves  
    your lips  
    He is staring at you  
    Wondering  
You speak just above a whisper, "You're  
    going to be a father"  
He has a big grin plastered on his face  
Joy is radiating out of both of you  
Then he affectionately lifts you by the  
    waist spins you around

The fire in the background  
The snow showing through the windows  
It's truly a romantic scene with a bundle of  
    joy running around

## The Lesson I Learned      By Sara Walters

I swear it wasn't my fault. I didn't hear what she said but it was still traumatizing. In order to understand the story you have to know the characterization of the few involved.

Mrs. Paxton was a strict kindergarten teacher at The Learning Tree. Now that is one-hundred percent fine as long as you are understanding along with it. I loved it when I was one of Mrs. Paxton's favorite children. Her favorites varied week-to-week and when this Asian girl showed up and took all her attention, in a way I was jealous of this Asian girl, but Mrs. Paxton was the teacher and should know better than to pick favorites (accept when it's me).

Ms. Jennifer I had known as a yard lady but she very well could have been a teacher. In kindergarten your view of the school doesn't extend past the views of the people you know in your class. Ms. Jennifer was a nice, fair lady who believed in the kids. She was very "artsy" and loved Beyonce.

My Mother. Now if you haven't met my mother or haven't been of any importance to her, she would be the sweetest, average, white mother. When you get to know her though, that's when she becomes the scariest person you ever met with just a look.

The story goes...

Mrs. Paxton took us kids (about seven of us) who were in their last year of kindergarten outside to play as a treat instead of going into boring old naptime. I felt privileged to be one among the seven that she picked and vowed to always stay privileged. We were all having a good time chasing each other around the blue metal playset in the hot sand. We were throwing pinecones and even Mrs. Paxton was happy, laughing, and smiling.

After a while of running, laughing and sweating our eyes out, she told the other kids to "stop" but I did not hear this proclamation so I carried on; screaming and happy to be playing. My first clue probably would have been that the other kids who were just as excited to be playing as I just stopped being so playful. Mrs. Paxton saw me with a pinecone in hand and yelled at me. I felt so ashamed and embarrassed to be yelled at after she had made this wonderful gesture to bring a couple kids out to play instead of going in for nap time. I said to her crying with a red puffy face, a face full of shame and embarrassment, "I am sorry. I didn't hear you!" She accused me of lying and sent me inside to go to naptime.

All the way to the room I tried to control myself and wipe the tears. It seemed like the shortest walk of my life. I hadn't even finished wiping my tears and, BOOM, I'm already back. When I went inside Ms. Jennifer asked me, "Why aren't you outside playing with the other kids?"

Me being too embarrassed to admit I was yelled at told her, "I was tired and wanted to come in." It was a really big lie because I was always the kid with the most energy even as a kindergartener. Ms. Jennifer smiled at me and told me to find an empty mat.

Mrs. Paxton comes in later and is talking to Ms. Jennifer and I can only assume about me, because no more than a minute later, I am getting hounded and scolded at in a whisper by Mrs. Paxton. In a raspy voice she said rhetorically, "Not listening and lying? Really Sara?" She turned around and called someone on her phone. My hatred for her grew from that moment on.

As she exited the room, I started crying again, the silent type of cry. She came back in and said, "Sara, come with me." I looked to Ms. Jennifer for help, a plea of desperation, but she avoided eye contact. Finally, after a long moment, I put my head down and followed like a sad puppy being sent outside, because they destroyed the trash can and put trash all over the house.

I had never been to the principal's office before or met the principal therefore I was naive to the severity of the situation. My mom was called in and I can't remember anything that happened after I saw the look on her face and the intensity in her eyes.

That was the first time I had ever been in trouble and I still feel awful about it. Ever since then I have learned a couple of things. I learned to listen more, be a teacher's pet and never be out of earshot.

<b>Friend    By Lauren Wynter</b>
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A friend has your back when no one else does  
They stick by your side through thick and thin  
Yet friends are not for everyone

In a society where loyalty is bought  
Who can you really trust?

The basic qualities a real friend often has  
Most people in society would not even say they are  
When describing themselves

Trustworthy, no one trust anyone  
Honesty, everyone lies to save themselves  
Dependable, people hate commitment  
Loyalty, what is that?

Friendship is no longer a bonds that can never be broken  
It comes with requirements  
A long list of "What can you do for me"

When you no longer serve a purpose  
When the value of you has diminished  
And you no longer have anything more to give but a shoulder to cry on  
It's not enough  
You no longer meet the requirements that come with the title "Friend"

Good people lose "friends" because their price is to high

**How I Wish To Be    By Lauren Wynter**

I wish to be  
Free like the birds  
Calm like the ocean  
Crazy like the bees  
Wise like an owl  
Deadly like a snack  
Fast like a turtle  
Beautiful like nature  
Skilled like a monkey  
Slick like a snail  
Funny like a duck  
Loving like a cat  
Loyal like a dog  
Unpredictable like mother nature.  
I want to be like all things that make the world go round.

**My Bestie    By Michelle Yanes**

My kind best friend, you inspire me to write.  
How I love the way you call, look and walk,  
Invading my mind day and through the night,  
Always dreaming about the weird look.  
Let me compare you to a pretender?  
You are more funny, friendly and happy.  
Blind frost nips the robins of December,  
And wintertime has the pretty cappy.  
How do I love you? Let me count the ways.  
I love your blazing humor, style and smile.  
Thinking of your sunny style fills my days.  
My love for you is the amazing niall.  
Now I must away with a flappy heart,  
Remember my eared words whilst we're apart.

**Flower      By Michelle Daniela Zelaya**

Beautiful  
Delicate  
Fragile  
Some use as a sign of hope  
Sign of nature's beauty  
Loved by everyone  
Compared to another  
It's a beautiful creation  
No one can escape it  
Once you see it, you can never look away  
But once it dies, it gets gloomy  
But that's okay  
Another will return  
And it will be more beautiful than the last

***From the Author~Behind the piece:** The idea came from a flower that I saw blooming by my house and thought that it was beautiful. I wanted to write about flowers because, I have always loved flowers and it is incredible how each one is gorgeous in their own way. I hope that the audience realizes that flowers can have different interpretations and this poem combines a few. This poem is dedicated to my mom: I love you mamá.*

**Heartbreaker and Liar      By Natalie Zuniga**

They say the show must go on, but at that moment my whole world stopped.  
~ Heartbreak

Liar

You promised you were nothing like the other guys before you, I guess in a way you were right; you were worse.

***About the Author~Behind the Piece:** Behind both all pieces of my writing is a lot of hurt. I use writing as a way of expressing my emotions because I find that much easier than trying to talk to someone who would not understand.*



“To be nobody but yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else - means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting.” ~**e. e. cummings**



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"THERE ARE IDEAS FOR  
WRITING EVERYWHERE."  
- MRS. CLARK

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E.3.

Art By Evelyn Zendejas

