

A surreal landscape with a large glowing orb on a stalk and a smaller orb in the sky. The scene is set against a gradient background of blue, purple, and red, with a dark, silhouetted mountain range in the foreground. A bright, glowing orb with a textured, orange and yellow surface sits atop a thin, orange stalk that extends from the bottom of the frame. In the upper left, a smaller, pale, spherical orb floats in the sky. The overall atmosphere is dreamlike and ethereal.

SPECTRUM  
2018

# *Spectrum Literary-Arts Magazine*



“For most people, we often marvel at the beauty of a sunrise or the magnificence of a full moon, but it is impossible to fathom the magnitude of the universe that surrounds us.”

– Richard H. Baker

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Spectrum is Detroit Country Day School's literary magazine organized by Spectrum club members. As such, our goal is to represent the student body through creative writing. This annual issue is the culmination of both club members' and non-club members' work. As a club, Spectrum offers student writers the opportunity to write, edit, or ponder poetry once a week every Tuesday. We also have an insert in the school newspaper. An important aspect of the club is the encouraging environment for students to produce their writing. Students explore the artistic process of writing with the aid of staffers, the review of their writing, and the pride of published work.

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Submissions are accepted year-round and can be sent to staffers and the faculty advisor Mrs. Hannett-Price by dropping off hard copies in room 130 or by emailing work to [BPrice@dcds.edu](mailto:BPrice@dcds.edu). We accept all types of creative writing.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Universe Theme		1
"Cosmos"	Julia Shen	2
	Anna Sun	

## STARS

Stars Section Introduction		3
"Stars"	Erin Brennan	4
"A Prison Coated with Silk and Cotton"	Ami Sanghvi	16
"Perspective"	Anna Sun	6
"Xiao Peng You"	Erin Brennan	8
"Crystal Blue Eyes"	Amelia Cunningham	9
"Dreamers"	Tim Bilen	10
"Higher than the Stars"	Maria Cheriyan	12
"Ink Galaxies"	Erin Brennan	13
"Crossing the Road"	Brett Arenberg	14
"Paper Lock"	Krishna Kiru	18
"Parchment"	Alicia Wang	20
"A Doomed Day"	Nikhil Mantena	21
"Piano Keys"	Sophia Zhang	22
"True Love"	Amelia Cunningham	23
"The Whirlpools"	Eva Niederhofer	24
"Fault Lines"	Erin Brennan	25

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## MOON

Moon Section Introduction		26
"A Series of Supermarket Produce"	Julia Shen	27
"Blood in the Water"	Anushri Radhakrishnan	31
"Cocytus"	Erin Brennan	33
"We All Bleed Red Wine"	Anushri Radhakrishnan	34
"Daisy"	Natasia Raptis	37
"Ten Little Students"	Anna Sun	38
"Glass Marbles"	Sophia Zhang	39
"A Taste of French"	Timothy Bilen	40
"Midwestern Nightmare"	Leila Hilf	41
"Awake"	Kristina Zheng	42
"No Time"	Brett Arenberg	43
"The Girl in the Corner"	Amelia Cunningham	44
"The Princess and the Flower"	Maheen Haq	45
"Abandoned"	Rebecca Li	50
"Tick Tock"	Anna Sun	51
"PM2.5"	Rosalie Fang	53
"Tears"	Anushri Radhakrishnan	55

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SUN

Sun Section Introduction		56
"Blueshift"	Maria Cheriyan	57
"Stardust"	Erin Brennan	58
"Beauty"	Kristina Zheng	59
"The Peak"	Timothy Bilen	60
"November Afternoon"	Sophia Zhang	61
"Merrily, We Struggle"	Brett Arenberg	62
"Cross-Country Shoes"	Rebecca Li	63
"The Coming of Winter"	Colton Zander	64
"Insecurities"	Lorraine Yuen	65
"My Heart"	Timothy Bilen	66
"History in the Making"	Natasia Raptis	67
"At Dusk"	Sophia Zhang	69
"The Art of Imperfection"	Kristina Zheng	70
"The Keeper of Secrets"	Krishna Kiru	71
"Outside Forces"	Timothy Bilen	72
"Superman"	Maheen Haq	73
"Adonis"	Amanda Bradley	75
"Those Who Write"	Maria Cheriyan	78

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SKY

Sky Section Introduction		80
"Color Theory"	Erin Brennan	81
"Geneology"	Anusha Mamidipaka	84
"Trees"	Michael Upton	87
"Everlasting Harmony"	Julia Shen and Anna Sun	88
"Unison"	Rosalie Fang	90
"Kaleidoscope"	Natasia Raptis	91
"Coping"	Leila Hilf	93
"Season Leaves"	Anusha Mamidipaka	95
"The Things I Know"	Erin Brennan	96
"For The Queen"	Brett Arenberg	97
"Blood Binding"	Julia Shen	98
"Vanishing Act"	Erin Brennan	100
"My Savior"	Amelia Cunningham	101
"My Ancestor's Creations"	Anushri Radhakrishnan	102
Letters from the Staff		105
Credits		108

# ART TABLE OF CONTENTS

"Off to Dreamland" (Acrylic Painting)	Anusha Mamidipaka	4
"Trapped" (Acrylic Painting)	Julia Shen	5
"Tiger Lilly" (Drawing)	Ađiti Sharma	6
"Frosty Morning" (Photograph)	Maria Cassel	7
"Nathan" (Photograph)	Chloe Kiriluk	8
"Teamwork" (Acrylic Painting)	Anusha Mamidipaka	9
"Thunderbird" (Mixed Media)	Sydney Jiang	15
"Light of the World" (Mixed Media)	Anna Mascarenas	18
"Scorched" (Fashion)	Aicha Chehmani	20
"Midnight" (Painting)	Stephanie Kasprzyk	21
"Piano Keys" (Pencil Drawing)	Sophia Zhang	22
"Pagoda" (Drawing)	Mary Sullivan	23
"Turbulence" (Painting)	Molly Beachum	24
"Palms" (Pencil Drawing)	Jocelyn Chu	25
"Interruption" (Photography)	Nadia Elnaggar	30
"Drama" (Painting)	Sydney Jiang	32
"Kai" (Photograph)	Jack Dolan	33
"A Happy Pup" (Drawing)	Jocelyn Chu	37
"Shattered Glass" (Photograph)	Ava Porter	39

# ART TABLE OF CONTENTS

"As the Smoke Fades" (Pencil Drawing)	Sloan Kiriluk	40
"Behind the Shadows" (Charcoal Drawing)	Kristina Roberts	42
"Dripping Away" (Pencil Drawing)	Anusha Mamidipaka	43
"Alone" (Pencil Drawing)	Ava Porter	44
"The Rose" (Acrylic Painting)	Anusha Mamidipaka	49
"Emerald" (Ceramics)	Shrikant Chang	52
"Homeless" (Photograph)	Kate Mullany	54
"Agony" (Pencil Drawing)	Anusha Mamidipaka	55
"Serenity" (Acrylic Painting)	Sophia Zhang	58
"A Beautiful Sunrise" (Acrylic Painting)	Jack Zhu	59
"Standing Alone" (Mixed Media)	Jared Freeman	60
"Bird in the Golden Sky" (Acrylic Painting)	Lianna Lau	61
"Volatile" (Fashion)	Thomas Nardicchio	63
"Cold-Hearted" (Pencil Drawing)	Jack Zhu	64
"Melting Pain" (Photography)	Meera Amin	66
"Victory" (Photography)	Maddie Pachla	68
"Red Silence" (Charcoal Drawing)	Helena Li	69
"Lakeview" (Photography)	Laura Bongers	70

# ART TABLE OF CONTENTS

"No More Words" (Charcoal Drawing)	Jack Zhu	71
"Strength" (Ceramics)	Abby Ashcraft	72
"Swoop" (Photograph)	Mia Kirkman	74
"Faerie" (Sculpture)	Aicha Chehmani	77
"Flying Words" (Mixed Media)	Anna Mascarenas	79
"Prism" (Drawing)	Jessica Patnaik	83
"DNA" (Pencil Drawing)	Julia Shen	86
"A Walk in the Forest" (Photograph)	Celina Zhuang	87
"Melody" (Watercolor Painting)	Liana Lau	89
"Together" (Acrylic Painting)	Erin Shi	90
"In the City" (Acrylic Painting)	Anusha Mamidipaka	92
"Beauty" (Pencil Drawing)	Ava Porter	94
"Early Bird" (Acrylic Painting)	Bianca Desai	95
"Spring Awakening" (Acrylic Painting)	Sophia Zhang	96
"Hollow Death" (Mixed Media)	Ava Porter	97
"Roots" (Watercolor Painting)	Jack Zhu	99
"Falling" (Charcoal Drawing)	Helena Li	101
"Culture" (Watercolor Painting)	Anusha Mamidipaka	103
"Fishing for Dreams" (Acrylic Painting)	Stephanie Kasprzyk	104

## UNIVERSE

The theme of the 2018 SPECTRUM issue is the components of the universe: stars, moon, sun, and sky. Each is a physical feature of the galaxy, but each also represents a distinct stage of growth in an individual's life. The stars are celestial sources of boundless energy, youth, and hope. Within their sparkling radiance, they encapsulate childhood dreams, ranging from whimsical fantasies to aspirations for the future. The moon embodies the cycle of life— along with the waxing and waning of the moon, come oscillating series of hardship and prosperity. Some days, as the moon is enshrouded by darkness, we face times of sorrow and adversity. Other days, as the luminosity of the moon shines clarity through the misty veil of the night, the moon brings us wisdom by calling for our reflection on past misfortunes. The sun and the brilliance of its rays invigorates us and imparts to us the strength to pursue our passions, even in the face of challenges. The sky represents continued growth as one soars higher and higher through new beginnings, experiences, and learning. Nonetheless, one should never lose sight of the foundation on which everything else is built: one's family, innate character, and identity.

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These four contrasting elements come together in harmony to form a complete universe, and in this issue, we explore the spectrum that exists across different cosmic realms. We hope you enjoy reading!

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Watch as the mauve of the night  
bleeds into a million constellations,  
stretching crystalline ribbons of stars through the  
veins of the sky-- watch,  
as the celestial forces send ripples  
through the heavens with each breath.

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Dance in the magic of the slant moon--  
mother of all dreams, enveloped in  
the milky silence of after-hours.  
Sway in her crescented rhythm;  
Stir the radiance of the horizon.

Bask in the spirit of the sun  
as it weaves ichor through the azure sky--  
Its warmth kissing the lush hills,  
Its fierce rays invigorating the earth with energy.

Reach out and touch the marbled clouds  
which mask the raw taste of a hollowed life,  
for the syrup skies overflow with moments of wanderlust.  
Catch dreams of copper roots between your fingers  
that will echo for all eternity.

# STARS

*"I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will  
endure the darkness because it shows me the stars.*

— *Og Mandino*

MAGIC

FANTASY

HOPE

ENCHANTING

JUBILANCE

YOUTH

SPIRIT

## STARS

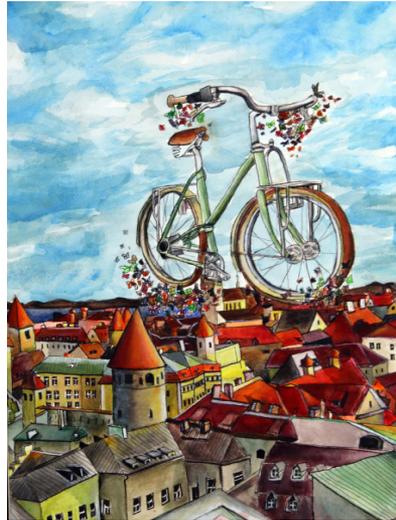
The stars shine brighter than life tonight  
And heaven seeps through their cracks.  
They spell out myths in constellations  
With celestial syntax.

No ground exists below me,  
No boundary left above  
To bar my heart from sprouting wings  
And soaring like a dove.

I'm both vaster than an ocean  
And the smallest speck of dust;  
But from dust comes universes  
And to dust do stars combust.

I remember what the prophet spoke  
Of plans He has in store  
And wonder, soul among the stars,  
If I was meant for more.

"Off to Dreamland" by  
Anusha Mamidipaka  
Painting



## A PRISON COATED WITH SILK AND COTTON

The bars were mounted from top to bottom,  
Harbored by a cotton hug and a silk kiss.

You sat in your cell, warm and soft.  
Stagnant, but not really minding.

It wasn't him that was keeping you locked;  
He said you could leave if you wanted.

But the feeling he gave you was more than enough.  
Limitless,  
but eternally binding.



"Trapped" by Julia Shen  
Painting

Ami Sanghvi

Children serve no purpose.

I refuse to believe that  
“Our children are our future.”

It is true,  
Adults

Are more valuable than  
Children

And I can only believe that  
In a century

Our world will be doomed because our generation will vanish

It is foolish to presume that  
Young people will renovate the world

One day

Think about the teenagers these days

Who have their eyes mesmerized by hypnotizing screens

Children are not just people

In fact,

Children will ruin our earth

Don't let anyone convince you that

Our children will bring light to the future.

(Now read bottom to top)



“Tiger Lily” by Aditi Sharma  
Drawing

## XIAO PENGYOU

Xiao Pengyou, look at the stars. Do you see them shining just for you?

You don't know it yet, Xiao Pengyou, but the stars are watching you too.

Xiao Pengyou, open your eyes. Do you see those balls of flame?

Somewhere far away, Xiao Pengyou, is a constellation in the shape of your name.

Xiao Pengyou, lift up your head. Do you see that river in the sky?

There's a whole galaxy out there, Xiao Pengyou, if you only learn to fly.

Xiao Pengyou, look at the moon. Do you see how it waits in the darkness each night?

Be patient, Xiao Pengyou, and tomorrow you will see the light.

Xiao Pengyou, look in the mirror. Do you see that twinkle in your eyes?

There are stories still unwritten, Xiao Pengyou. Yours will shake the skies.

\* *Xiao Pengyou* means "Little Friend" in Mandarin.



"Frosty Morning" by  
Maria Cassel  
Photograph

## CRYSTAL BLUE EYES

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You look into his crystal blue eyes  
And you lose yourself,  
You get lost in them,  
You forget how to breathe,  
Your heart skips a beat,  
You forget all of your problems,  
They remind you what love feels like.  
You get those butterflies in your stomach,  
You get nervous and begin to shake,  
You go all day and night thinking about them.  
When he holds you in his arms,  
He feels like home.  
Those crystal blues have put a spell on you.



"Nathan" by Chloe Kiriluk  
Photograph

## DREAMERS

Emotions deep, filling the cranium with questions  
 Inventing (im)possible scenarios to ponder, but answers are  
 astray  
 Imagination runs wild without a leash  
 But it shall not be tamed

Depression attempts to seep in  
 Yet resiliency eradicates its presence and takes the wheel  
 Zeal and fervor are stronger than depreciation  
 The gazelle overcomes the lion so a true smile grows

Negative internal and external vibes are shut down  
 Dreams live on and stand unified  
 Hope awaits its prosperous moment  
 The light at the end of the tunnel is blinding

Once that light is reached  
 All is worth it  
 Everything comes together  
 Dreams will become a reality, so continue dreaming



"Windmill" by  
 Anusha Mamidipaka  
 Painting

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At the center of a faraway star, there lay a melody. And on the surface of a faraway planet, there lived a boy whose ambition spanned the distance between him and the song. When the afternoon sun melted into the satin shadows of the night, he leapt from sky-clinging rooftops and soared towards the star, flying as high as he could. Not a soul noticed when he plummeted towards the ground, his wings shattering with no more sound than a whisper from the trees.

&lt;&lt;&gt;&gt;

*He is devastated—both physically and emotionally—but he is strong. He will survive.* The healer holds the blade with care, making the first incision. Blood flows freely from the boy's shoulders, and mangled feathers blush a bright vermillion. The healer gently places her hand where a wing used to be.

With her eyes, she sees his wounds, but with her heart, she sees his broken pride. Gazing into the boy's mind, the healer feels the weightless freedom of flying unchecked through the night, the crushing failure of falling down to the very beginning of the journey. Brittle ambition clots in the boy's core, with no love or kindness to strengthen it.

The boy is a stranger to her, yet she loves him. She loves his half-closed eyes, drenched in the sky he failed to reach. She loves his hands clenched tightly with determination, announcing to Fate that he will not give up. She loves the turn of his mouth, a slight curve filled with unstoppable ambition despite his pain. The healer loves him, but the boy cannot love her back.

And so, she gives him the greatest of the three virtues. She gives him love. Around her hand, the boy's feathers begin to grow, silver blades sealing the wounds on his back. The healer waits, continuing to think, continuing to *love*, and the boy's wings spread, soon ready to kiss the skies once more.

The healer finally leaves, fresh cuts ravaging her back. She stumbles, unbalanced and confined to the ground. *For him, it will be worth this pain.* Now, she understands the love of the First Healer.



He jolts awake, yet he can see nothing; all of a sudden, waves of memory hit his mind's eye, revealing an image wrought of misjudgment and subsequent chaos. Unreachable stars jeer at him for his blind eyes, for his body that will keep him pinned to the ground. His proud shoulders sag, and for a moment, the boy feels something brush against his back.

Silken strands interlocking to form feathers, feathers in turn coming together in an impossible shape: the wings he thought he had lost the night before. But the freedom he had felt when he left the earth, the loss when he returned, the bittersweet bliss of the dancing stars—the unreachable stars—these are all too real. So why does he have these wings, when his own are surely broken and defeated? Why is he still alive, when anyone else who had fallen would be dead in an instant? Finally sitting up, he swings his feet over the bedside and puts weight on his foot. *No pain*. The boy tests the other foot, then rises, stumbling with the weight of the unlocked sky.

The moon illuminates his features: his eyes wide with pain and broken-but-recovering hope, his hands reaching for the window, straining to fall into the sky again, the turn of his mouth straight and expressionless. The boy knows that to fly as high—even higher than the stars—he must strengthen his wings. He does not know how. But in his new wings, he feels a small seed, a small spark of a warm feeling he cannot name.



“You are free. You owe no debt.” The words are as tentative as his own, but they do not come from his mouth. He does not need to turn around to see their source—her reflection stares at him from the window. She is a steady, patient flame, burning with the same strength as the spark in his wings. Recognition unlocks his memory, and his mind recalls the flame, shining in the face he sees reflected in front of him, framed by—

*Wings*. There is only one way that he could have wings, and it is not because of himself. His eyes answer the reflection with a question, a plea for understanding, and he turns around, yearning to see the one who would heal him, assuaging his fears

before he even voiced them, harboring the thief of her wings.

She greets him with a soft smile, one that he does not deserve, and suddenly he knows that this is called *kindness*, this senseless, futile thing that ruined her, that means the world—the sky—to him. His mind is wracked with pain, and he does not know that he is crying until he is pulled into an embrace, the healer's flame enveloping him and filling him with a warm feeling that somehow makes more tears roll from his eyes.

"Do you know what love is?" She offers an invitation, not a question.

"Do you know what will strengthen your wings?"

<<>>

"Why? Why would you—" The boy stops abruptly, unwilling to awaken pain in the healer, unwilling to remind her of the things she has lost. She smiles, realizing why he did not continue, and he sees no regret, no envy—only the flame. This must be love.

"You are learning already." Her voice is kind, and that makes it beautiful.

"It's *different*. For you to give love to *me* . . . I am a stranger. An intruder, a person who has brought you pain and hurt and loss. Yet, you give me love despite all I have done to you. How does love give you that sort of power?"

The healer smiles, and turns to leave. "It will not be long before you find out."

Minutes, hours, days pass, and every second she has something to teach him, something which always journeys back to her flame, his spark. *Love*. Although he is not tied to the healer with a debt or by honor, a bond still forms, growing stronger with each story they tell, each wayward glance towards the sky that they share.

But each night, the boy stays at the window, his dream of flight wanting reality. As his flame grows stronger, brighter, so does his hope, his faith in his wings. And he yearns for the star more than he ever did before.

To him, their parting is not abrupt. "Wait," she calls, when he reaches the front gate. "If you want to reach your song,

you need to learn more than I can teach you. You must go to the city. There, you will teach others and learn from them.” He feels her arms around him, fingers brushing the tip of his wings; his hands find the place where her wings once were, and they stay in a parting embrace until she breaks the silence as she did on the first night. “Go. *Fly.*”

He takes a step out of the gate, and is released by her final words to him. “Don’t forget. I love you.”

<<>>

The city is eating him up, tearing out his heart and quenching his flame. He knows this, and yet, it feels so good—so *refreshing*—to have no love, to fend for no one but himself and do whatever he pleases regardless of whether it is patient, whether it is *kind*.

The boy is becoming irascible, hatred taking the reins and inciting him, stirring up anger at everything wrong with the city. *It is not just that the healer lives alone and loves, yet these people do not know how to although they are among many. It is not just that some are untouched by darkness, living their life already on a star.* He stops, and a monster appears, reflected in the glass of a shop window. Its face is filled with hatred, yet some parts of it are fighting to hold out, to *love*. It has wings, once well-kept and lustrous, now stuck in the half-state of turning brittle, feathers blackened with disease. The boy recognizes this, recognizes the spark-turned-flame barely surviving against the city’s flood, and suddenly the inhuman scream is his own, echoing off of the buildings, but there is not a soul to hear.

New light paints the rooftops, and for a split second, the city is quiet, nostalgically peaceful. He flies back to the stillness of the first morning, broken by his words to the healer and her question. *Do you know what love is?*

His pleas for forgiveness are unheard, drowned by the city as it fully wakes.

“Is this what you could not teach me? I have done wrong, I have gone against everything you taught me, I have *hated*. But still, you would pardon me. You would set me free as you did not long ago. Is this what love is? The ability to

— forgive all, to *give* all, to fly to the stars through not only your own power but the strength of others? It is not just that I was saved and the people of this city were not. And so, I must forgive them and give myself to them. I must love them.”

<<>>

As he walks through the city for a second time, the boy is determined to love. The paths are still dark, lights still too bright, voices still too loud, but something has changed. *I see the city's darkness, but I also see the light—the hope. Small specks, bright like stars, floating in the black universe. And I love them, I love them like I used to love the stars.*

Now, he is in the heart of the city, beside the tallest building that reaches towards the sky, and he is lost in his memory. For this is where he jumped. Soared. Fell.

This is where the healer found him, *saved* him, treated him like her own son, taught him to love.

But at the foot of the building, there lies a girl. Her wings are broken, snapped in two, and she is helpless, earthbound, blind.

And the boy, whose wings have the power to take him higher than the stars, understands. He understands how the healer could love someone who gave her nothing, who would cause her pain yet endless joy. He understands how the healer could care for an intruder, a stranger, who brought her loss and yet filled her heart. He understands how the healer could sacrifice her wings. Because that is what he will do for this child, this shell devoid of love.

The boy loves her half-closed eyes, drenched in the sky she failed to reach. The boy loves her hands clenched tightly with determination, announcing to Fate that she will not give up. The boy loves the turn of her mouth, a slight curve filled with unstoppable ambition despite her pain. He knows that for this girl to know love, he will have to give her the ultimate sacrifice.

His wings.

His life.

There is no resentment in the boy's eyes, for he knows

Maria Cheriyan

that love is the greatest of all virtues, that he must share it with anyone he can. He gently places a hand on the place where this child's wings used to be, and he *loves*.

Feathers grow from the girl's shoulders, spreading into wings that will once again kiss the skies, and new wounds ravage the boy's back.

"Why would you save me? Why would you sacrifice your wings?" the girl cries. It is a plea for understanding, a sign of gratitude.

"I love you."

These are the last words of the boy, the only words that the girl hears from her savior. For the boy is left dead by his wounds, blood streaming from his side and shoulders, staining white feathers a bright vermilion.

<<>>

The boy is flying, but he has no wings. He is lifted up by the healer, the city, the girl he loves unconditionally. The universe is his song, the sun playing to the beat of his heart, the moon dancing around the world. But he needs a melody.

So he sings what is in his heart. He sings for the city, for the people, for the skies. He sings what the healer has taught him, what he gave the girl.

And one by one, the stars in the sky join his voice, until the whole night is alive with one song, one melody:

*Love never fails.*



"Thunderbird" by  
Sydney Jiang  
Mixed Media

S In my sleep, I see their shadows  
 P bleeding from the corners of reality like the crumbling  
 E edges of parchment  
 C awash with golden flame.  
 T I am afraid of burning out—like the ones who came before me,  
 R so bright,  
 U so fleeting—  
 M so I write. I record my joys, my fears, my passions, my frustra-  
 tions.  
 I follow my own mission:  
 I will be remembered.

2 The roaring sun  
 0 and the crashing tides  
 1 and the deep, dark sky  
 8 shout,  
 “Remember me!”  
 And I will write them too.

I will write universes into existence  
 and bleed solar systems from the recesses of my mind  
 until my world is too bright to burn,  
 captured in the scorched margins of my own  
 parchment.  
 My own story,  
 for generations  
 and for none but  
 me.

And I wonder what they will say,  
 the ones who come after me—  
 so bright,  
 so fleeting—  
 will they remember my galaxies of ink?

I take slow steps. Testing the ground for inconsistencies and pitfalls, the likes of which seemingly search for my feet. Such, they silently reaching out with cold unforgiving hands, waiting... hoping for the familiar weight of an innocent step so that they may strike and pull the prey down to oblivion, using the momentum to pull themselves up from the ground that trapped them before. Such is the nature of the road I cross. Never forgiving, never allowing, always waiting. Only the timid step of one too afraid to dare make a sound, too careful to chance a ripple, too gentle to break the ground could ever cross the way. With confident step comes the fall into the ground. Into the void of oblivion, trapped forever in the subsuming earthen hold. It's always waiting. Never ceasing, it seems. Grasping upward for something to pull them up, or for something to pull down.

O'er the distance it's seen, one who walks with great strides. No fear of the fall or the hands searching inside. Merrily strolling, the figure steps forward. Only stopping to look around them, enjoying where they stand. Unanimous are his decisions in life. No hesitation in their step, only the determination to finish. Timidly, I watch from afar, awaiting their inevitable fall into the pits below, dragged down by the calloused hands of the fallen. Finally, I see him stagger and fall. Underground he goes, I assume, but pause when he stands back up, shaking off the failure. Jumping back up, the man continues along his way, unfazed by the hands attempting to pull him down, using his own strength to keep him afloat. It is without fear the man traverses the landscape, taking steps by his own strength instead of fearing that of others.

Maybe this is the true path. Maybe there is another way to cross the path of life without fearing for every faulty step. Do I dare make broad strokes on the painted canvas? Do I dare touch the calm water's surface, sending ripples through the silent lake? Do I dare disturb the universe? Maybe it's a mistake. Maybe I'll fall like the rest. Maybe I fall and can't get back up.

But there's only one way to find out.

Brett Arenberg

## PAPER LOCK

S You made a mistake  
 P And so they locked you up,  
 E In the dungeon of Gabes,  
 C Where the villains lay.  
 T I can hear your cries,  
 R But I can't see your face,  
 U Only a month,  
 M Yet I can't recall your smile.  
 2 If I did the same?  
 O Made the same mistake as you  
 1 Would they lock me up?  
 8 Alongside you?  
 Well if they did-  
 If they put me in the cell  
 At least I'd be by your side-  
 And see your wondrous smile.

"Light of the World" by  
 Anna Mascarenas  
 Mixed Media



Krishna Kiru

## PARCHMENT

She sits  
 still as a statue  
 silent as the night  
 with eyes  
 sparkling like stars.  
 Before her lies  
 a single piece  
 of dry parchment.

She lifts  
 a single finger  
 and lays it upon  
 the barren page.  
 Slowly, slowly  
 the page comes  
 to life with color  
 and begins to dance.

She watches  
 as colors escape  
 her gentle touch.  
 Blue, purple, yellow, red  
 all leap across the page  
 into spirals and streaks  
 and into the air  
 surrounding her.

She smiles  
 as colors swirls  
 around her,  
 warming her, comforting her  
 and laughs  
 as they fly  
 across the empty sky  
 into the lonely night.

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— She fears  
as shadows approach,  
grouped together

S in a blur of gray.  
P A single shadow  
E lifts a single finger  
C and lays it upon  
T the vivid page.

R She cries  
U as the parchment  
M bursts into flames,  
as the shadows laugh,  
as the colors fade.  
2 Red, yellow, purple, blue  
0 slowly revert  
1 to white.

8 She sits  
still as a statue  
silent as the night  
with eyes  
sparkling with tears.  
Before her lies  
the burned remains  
of her precious dry parchment.

"Scorched"  
by Aicha Chemani  
Fashion



Alicia Wang

Descending down to a calm brightened pond,  
 The eyes of one rest on charm,  
 A gaze unbroken waiting to respond,  
 Dawn breaks just as hope has come.

A rainbow lit by light of sun,  
 Speckled with opportunity yet to become,  
 New love not to be overdone,  
 The eyes of two merge for hours to come.

Reaching to each other for a bond,  
 The hearts of two collide as one,  
 A new-born love to beyond,  
 Love rises just as light has come

Shining possibilities lead the way,  
 As the two swans prepare for a long day,  
 They take off and flutter an air ballet,  
 Only to be met by a storm's delay.

Flittering and fluttering to their own surprise,  
 The new couple soon plummet to their own demise,  
 A strong swift wind suddenly carries them high,  
 As their hearts soar to the sky.

A blazing orb commences its descent  
 As the swans flutter from their life of adornment,  
 A resting phase soon to impend,  
 As the swans prepare for a dreadful bookend.

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"Midnight"  
 by Stephanie Kasprzyk  
 Painting



Nikhil Mantena

Bitter rain tapping incessantly

S Against windows, the sound of fingers running

P across ivory floors, moving like puppets

E Upon string, over black and white steps stumbling

C Over crescendos.

T The mechanical input and output of colors

R Never fuse like white light. Two hands:

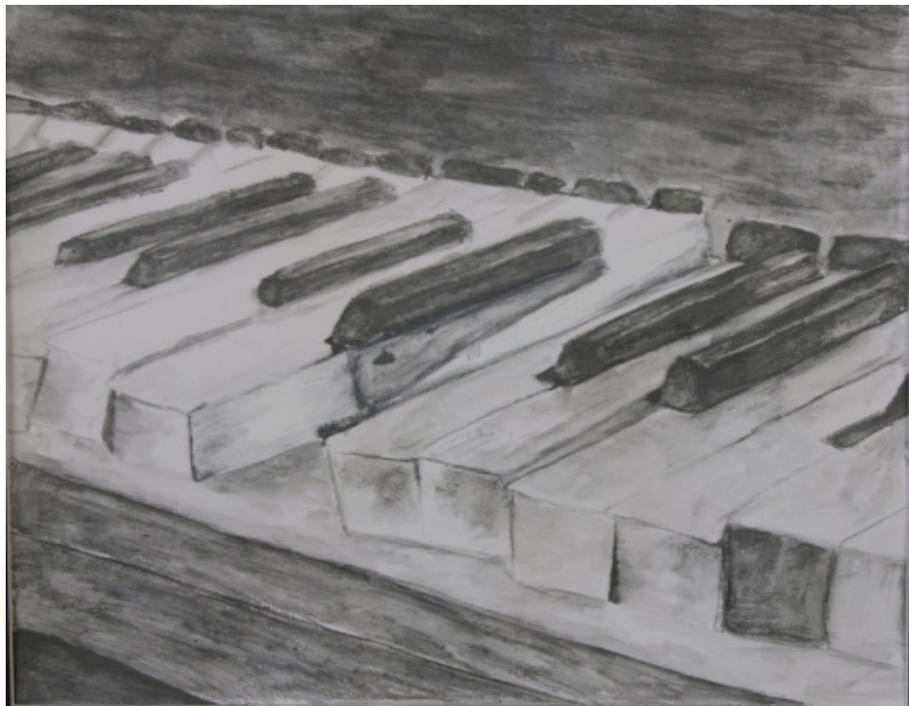
R Incompatible strangers slipping across a glossy rink without  
pausing to listen.

U The hour glass empties and

M The keys with stiff joints rest

In deep slumber.

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"Piano Keys"  
by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Pencil Drawing

Sophia Zhang

## TRUE LOVE

You made me realize  
the true meaning of love,  
It's more than just a word  
It's a story  
Love takes you to places,  
Good, bad, gruesome, exciting places  
But through it all  
I have you  
To look up to  
To hold  
To lay on  
You are my reason

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"Pagoda" by Mary Sullivan  
Drawing

Amelia Cunningham

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The swirling sea thrashed in violent, unwanted, circling patterns; crashing, folding, tumbling, drowning face-down into her black, bottomless psyche, unending and unseen to any regular eye. But the ocean fought the whirlpool and eventually sprang up, her hair's ends spraying drops of the whirlpool's wicked water. In the same maneuver, the ocean fell desperately upon a large, tawny crag, her foamy-white fingers sliming their surfaces in attempt to climb further up the rock. For the second she was safe on the crag, her shimmering eyes blinked dreamily and hopelessly into the sky. It was so quiet, so still, all pale and clear and baby blue, with just a thin, red ribbon outlining the distant, strong, unmoving mountains. A flock of seagulls squawked above her in delight of the peaceful day, the happy day! Oh, what a nice, calm day! And right in that moment, regardless of how big and blue and sparking the sea could be, she realized that when she was spinning in this crazed, explosive whirlpool that she despised so much, how they all squawked above her! The mountains are too tall, the sky too high, the birds too fast. With a yank of hate from below, she slipped back into the whirlpool's viciousness.

"Turbulence"  
by Molly Beachum  
Painting



Eva Niederhofer

## FAULT LINES

she hunts for Heaven between the cracks  
 of a sky torn in fault  
     lines distinguish between the Sun and His crown,  
 but always seem to get  
     lost pieces of each shooting star trapped  
 somewhere on the horizon  
     lines are always right there, but  
 just blurred and just out of her  
     “reach for the stars,” they say,  
 but the stars are falling from outer  
     space seems lonelier than the  
 cathedral that sings through a rusted  
     organ player sits on her own  
 but says “alone will always be better than  
     lonely” heart searching for  
 straight lines but instead stuck on an endless  
     fissure.

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“Palms” by Jocelyn Chu  
 Pencil Drawing

Erin Brennan

## MOON

*“I do not want to sleep  
for fear I might miss the twinkle of the brightest star  
for fear I may never know  
how the moon glimmers, in the darkest hour.”*  
— Sanobar Khan

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REFLECTION

SORROW

HARDSHIP

SOUL

STRENGTH

TURMOIL

TRANSITION

## A SERIES OF SUPERMARKET PRODUCE

## i. carved pit of watermelons

mama tells me how to pick the sweetest watermelon:  
 find one whose bare belly has been yellowed by the stilted heat  
 of southern summers,  
 whose stem has been shriveled dry by the red sun,  
 body ripened until plump, and  
 shell bruised in brown webbing  
 from the pounding of earthen pulses.

cradle the watermelon like your baby  
 and then turn it over and strike it with your bare palms.  
 beat it  
 until you can feel the vibrations quiver on the bottoms of your  
 hands  
 and hear its splintering cries — only then  
 will you know whether the watermelon  
 is worthy of your love.

bring the watermelon home,  
 and watch as the green swells as it splits and  
 bursts into flames, and as the fleshy center blushes  
 with a freckling of blood.  
 observe how the vermilion juice coils at its core,  
     swimming in the pain of having its heart  
     cleaved into two.  
 next, she tells me,  
 gorge its syrupy waters out with metal tongs;  
 sit and savor its sweet suffering.

leave the rind to rot on the pavement, alongside your daughter,  
 who jumps into the wet, dark forest rim  
 and carves out the shell of a tortoise,  
 until she is 6 feet under in her mind.

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## ii. the eyes of a murdered fish

the smell of fish

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overwhelms you the moment you walk  
through the iron-rimmed doors and onto  
the tobacco-stained floors, the color of murky nights.  
the smoke of a man's joint, a white snake,  
slithers through the heavy air.  
i follow you through the dim-lit alleys  
lined with tanks of copper fish,  
germinating in the ebb and flow  
of the rot-black waters.

you turn back towards me, smiling ,  
and tell me that we are eating whitefish for dinner.

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i cling onto your shadow, and  
as we get closer to the butcher man standing in the hole in the wall,  
he heaves and exhales, his sour breath corroding the milk of my  
teeth, his spit bubbling—  
thick, viscous  
black oil dripping from his corpulent tongue.  
mouth damp, i watch as the November man  
ladles a fish onto his bare cutting board, as he  
wields a blackened mallet in his calloused hands  
and pounds and pounds and pounds  
the fish's head inside-out—  
until it bleeds a violent red and  
splinters into a million pieces.  
until it is raw—  
meat, blood, bone,  
marinating in a pool of brine and tears.

the man smothers the cut-carcass in translucent folds of plastic,  
and the fish should be dead,  
but, i swear, it still stares at me with the glassy undercurrents of its  
eyes, pleading

with its swelling scales and anxious pulses against the counter.

i ask mama why the fish is still flopping,  
and she tells me it was the man's  
acc-

ident — oh, *poor fish*, if I were him  
I would have put it through its suffering earlier,  
cleanly.

at home, she smothers the fish in slabs of cut-lemon  
and sends it into the oven,  
but, i swear, i still see it flopping.

at dinner, i stare the fish in the eye and swallow,  
and, on the way down,  
the needles of its spine prick my throat,  
numb with the white-heat of brine and salt.

iii. onion heart

you showed me where the supermarket keeps its onions—  
on the top shelf, between the frozen foods and the cereals—  
and, one night, when you don't come home,  
the only thing i find to eat is a bag of onions bounded by red  
fishnets tucked away in a corner.  
i slash away a thousand and one layers of thunder-stained onion  
skins,  
until my hands are clammy, until they won't stop shaking,  
until the cut flesh, the tawny skins,  
and the reds and the blues and the purples  
all flood over the counters and onto the floors.

mama,  
tell me,

why is there no core, no heart?  
where can i find those 3 words, 3 syllables?  
why are there only tears?

Julia Shen

I walk along the hot grains of white blond sand,  
 Sights of dark shivering waters further out.  
 The waves play-fight  
 with constant takedowns onto the sand.  
 The fight unknowingly pulls in little scared fish  
 and tumbled seaweed  
 and beautiful shells broken  
 now scattered along the arena.  
 The dry, warm sand protects my feet.

In the distance you don't hear  
 the jaws filled with hundreds of sharp teeth  
 slam close  
 as the waters protect the shark in  
 a bubble of food and safety.  
 I hear the seagulls' wings rush with the wind  
 along with the drifting scent of the sea-salt blood.  
 The sand has footprints imbedded in their skin  
 a momentum of when I last came  
 but my prints never reached the shore.  
 The sun sends shimmers atop the surface  
 of the flowing waters  
 But there are no shimmers beneath.  
 I didn't go into the waters.  
 I never learned to swim.



"Interruption" by Nadia Elnaggar  
 Photography

Anushri Radhakrishnan

## MASSACRE; CLEANSING; REPERCUSSION

*The Rohingya Persecution refers to the current brutal military crackdown of the Rohingya Muslim minority by the Buddhist majority in the country of Myanmar. What's happening to Rohingya in Myanmar has been called "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing." Myanmar's military troops are accused of killing, burning, torturing, and raping innocent Rohingya civilians. Although over 600,000 Rohingya Muslims have already fled their country, Ms Suu Kyi, Myanmar's Prime Minister fails to condemn the violence, and according to the New York Times, the U.N. is unlikely to act against Myanmar.*

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## I. Massacre

Mama trembles under  
the weight of a thousands lost dreams,  
head stooped in mourning.  
She weeps for her children,  
whose soot drenched backs  
blacken their beds  
like the cruel onset of nightfall,  
whose teeth grind  
to the jarring staccato of lead,  
whose nails tear away the memories  
of ash tinted wind.

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When she remembers her vacant, scorched home,  
she sees her daughter's legs caught  
in a burning inferno,  
And asks herself *why can't I save her?*

## II. Cleansing

Take me to her  
starved body  
dressed in burned rags,  
where the silent night guards  
her sleeping soul,  
washed with the blood

of a thousand nameless victims.

— Take me to her  
ashes, scattered through the river,  
S sunlight glinting off  
P the kaleidoscopic fragments.  
E Take me to her,  
C where even my muffled cries  
T fail to fill  
the gaping hole she left in my heart.

R III. Repercussion

U I see your ivory teeth,  
M glistening under the dimly lit lamp,  
like of the bullets you shower  
upon our people.  
2 With your hands clasped together,  
O you pray to God,  
1 drowning out the cries of every Imam  
8 who screams for our mercy.  
I stare into your blank eyes only to remember  
the beating of salt water waves  
the lullabies I sing to my sister  
the sweet tang of guava left in the sun.  
I pray for you and our country.



"Drama" by Sydney Jiang  
Painting

## COCYTUS

Her eyes lie at the bottom of a river  
black as shadows.

Warm and cold,  
sweet and toxic,  
a caress and a fatal blow,  
they fade in and out of view  
beneath the murky depths.

A gnarled oak tree  
overhangs the inky torrent, its fingers  
too stiff with arthritis to nurture  
the autumn leaves that seem to  
take on hues  
livelier than life  
as they sink lower,  
lower,  
low  
er  
into the endless  
black.

And when the eyes reach up  
to drag him in by the tips of his toes,  
he cannot decide if he fell  
or jumped.

"Kai" by Jack Dolan  
Photography



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Life has a funny way of crashing a hammer into your amateur- chiseled life, sending pieces of happiness flying out of your grasp. Maybe had I stayed in bed that day, the hammer wouldn't have broken me. But I woke up in a sunny daze and stepped out the tall snow-white door, unaware of the crumpling life behind me.

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Time taunted me, I stared at the ticking school clock waiting for the weekend to start. The bell rang, and voices exploded around me, but my mind felt silence. I ran home, tossed my bookbag carelessly onto the ground, and flopped on the couch to watch the series finale of a romantic soap opera in Korea. I got hooked on the show after my friend introduced it to me. Unfortunately, I don't understand Korean, so I read the subtitles. My parents came home at little while after me. I didn't pay much attention to them, but I could hear my mother reproaching my father on meaningless acts of stupidity he's done. I could hear the wore-out words coming from the kitchen, diffusing into the air. I increased the volume on the TV to block the incoming air. By the time dinner came, they had finished fighting and when I sat at the table, their shoulders seemed to relax as if my presence was a needed barrier protecting them from destroying each other. The talking during dinner was weirdly forced, and I seemed to be the only one interested in talking. So, we ended up just sitting in silence. Awkward uncomfortable silence. I decided to leave the table and the awkwardness and go to my room.

Lying down on my bed, I watched the ceiling fan spin in a continuous motion as I reflect on my family. I felt the tension recently between my parents, but nothing ever rose to the point where I needed a breath away from them. I was not blind; I knew there was problems in the household, but I had no clue what they were. My thoughts drifted away as I began to construct an alternate reality. I started to imagine our family going and traveling the world. And as silly as it was I imagined us having dinner at some fancy restaurant laughing and joking around. Smiling. We'd be like the perfect American

Anushri Radhakrishnan

sit-com family where a problem always had a happy ending. This reverie was cheerful and happy, and at some point, I must have fallen asleep with this dream.

I woke up in the middle of the night after hearing something break. My heart began palpitating inside my chest. I heard a blood-curling scream coming from my mother and immediately I leaped out of bed and ran to the stairs. From where I stood at the top of the stairs, I could see the living room as if were a museum display. My father had a broken bottle of whiskey in his right hand, and his left-hand bled red wine. I saw my mother leaning exhausted against the wall, holding a family picture. Her face was red with vexation as she hurled the frame at my drunk father. The frame shattered as it hit him, his forehead hit the wall, and scarlet- red blood started dripping down his face. I could hear the pain in her voice, as she recited his mistakes like a broken poem. My father collapsed onto the ground, still gripping the broken bottle in his hand.

I screamed, "DAD!"

They both finally saw me, my face aghast in fear and my body paralyzed. My presence let that barrier go up and they slowly subsided their angry. They tried to stand up to walk towards me, but they were both too hurt to move. I saw the utter humiliation wash over their faces, but the truth still hung in the air. The problem they tried to contain in tiny petty arguments had slowly fueled a forest fire tearing down the protective walls around me. I blinked hoping it was only a nightmare, but I couldn't un see it no matter how hard I tried. My heart sank as I saw outcome of the ruinous fight. The room had blood and shattered glass everywhere. The red wine was everywhere.

There was a long moment of silence in which no one dared speak. Too afraid to go near them, I stayed in my position staring with many emotions tangled into each other. Fear. Anger. Sadness. Hurt. My heart started aching as the emotions

— kept weighing me down, while my blood carried the weight to the rest of my body.

S “Honey, I am sorry.” My mother looked towards me saying the  
P only words she could manage. The silence shattered like ice.  
E “Sweetheart, go to bed,” My dad said drunkenly, slurring his  
C words together. I had never seen him without control. His  
T movement and smirks and words were completely different. He  
R was an alien to me.

I nodded and ripped my eyes away from the scene un-  
U able to take any more of the pain. I walked slowly back to my  
M room, my eyes watching each step I took. In a nightmare, the  
2 best advice is to walk away. I climbed into the bed and laid  
O there staring at the ceiling. I listened for more noises to come,  
1 more screams or things crashing, but there was only silence.  
8 Paralyzed, I stayed awake staring at the ceiling unable to catch  
that dream again.

I wish I could say that after that night everything went  
back to normal. That we forgot what happened. That we be-  
came a happy cheerful family like in my dreams. But that didn't  
happen. I woke up the next day to a string of apologies, but  
none with hope. I saw my mother rummaging in her closet all  
day, while my father tore himself apart in the cellar until he  
gave into the addiction. My mother left us next day after saying  
she needed space. But she left me with an alcoholic that didn't  
carry the label of father anymore. She left me torn in half, as if  
my value had no importance to her. She betrayed me, leaving  
me deprived of a childhood. Of happiness. She left me shattered  
like the whiskey bottle in his hand. In the end, my broken fami-  
ly was left hurting. Left bleeding red wine.

## DAISY

Daisy. Her life was like a flower. Starting as a bud, full of life and potential. The first glimpse of a petal white as snow. Pure as an angel. Day by day, week by week, petals begin to stretch out their arms as if waking up from their nap. Then everything comes to life. The coy way the flower bounces raindrops off it's petals and dances in the wind puts a smile on everyone's face. Basking in the sun, living life to the fullest. It's only when the petals start to shrivel that our smiles shrivel along with them. It's only when the flower loses it's vibrancy that we lose our hope. A flower can hold so much power. So much influence in one's life. When the last petal falls, we all fall with it. My baby fell. And now she's up in doggie heaven watching us pick up the pieces of our broken hearts. I love you Daisy, forever and always.



"A Happy Pup" by Jocelyn Chu  
Drawing

## TEN LITTLE STUDENTS

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Ten little students having little time;  
One was too overwhelmed, and then there were nine.

Nine little students up working late;  
One had a date, and then there were eight.

Eight little students fighting depression;  
One gave up, and then there were seven.

Seven little students finding their cliques;  
One was not welcome, and then there were six.

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Six little students trying to thrive;  
One had bad grades, and then there were five.

Five little students paying off debts as a sophomore;  
One had no money, and then there were four.

Four little students earning a degree;  
One lost motivation, and then there were three.

Three little students making a medical breakthrough;  
One made a mistake, and then there were two.

Two little students studying a ton;  
One failed the MCAT, and then there was one.

One little student was finally done;  
She didn't understand that she had just begun;  
She lived three decades of no fun;  
She realized she wasted her time, and then there were none.

## GLASS MARBLES

Inside the heart: marbles sliding  
across wooden floorboards,  
a reckless game of  
shooting and striking  
feelings tugged between laughter  
and heartache  
until the glass beads scatter  
into a mosaic of color  
without order.

The young girl watches from afar,  
clutching a small fistful of  
cold marbles to her chest,  
afraid of the clatter ringing  
like gunshots  
if they hit the floor.



"Shattered Glass" by Ava Porter  
Photography

Sophia Zhang

## A TASTE OF FRENCH

Speaking on borrowed time

S Searching for the one

P But everyone goes away

E Feeling dark and gloomy

C Like a midnight storm

T Seeking acceptance and passion

R But none can be found

U Get a taste

M But the taste deceives

Nothing sweet for me

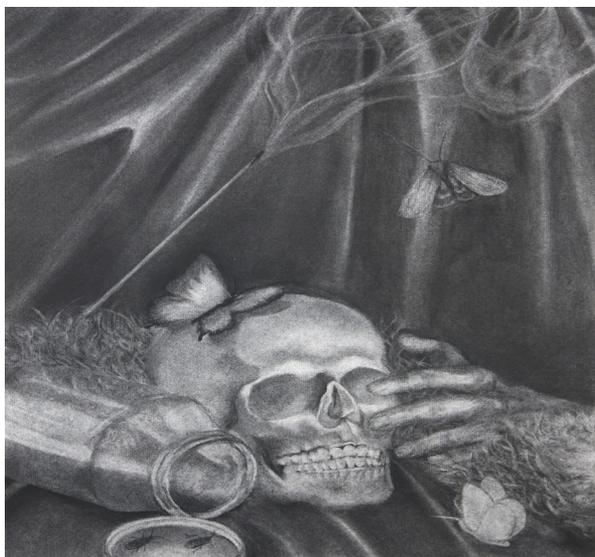
Just a lost soul pierced with trickery

2 Maybe this one is my chance

O Just remember to grasp on

1 Before she flutters away

8



"As the Smoke Fades" by Sloan Kiriluk  
Pencil Drawing

Tim Bilen

## Midwestern Nightmare

Watching the evening news,  
 Feet propped up on the ottoman,  
 Listen to how pleather sounds against old socks,  
 Same anchor, same story, different people, same time

Kids are home from soccer practice, lunchable nightmares.  
 "Crust, no crust, easy on the mayo, only peanut butter and  
 jelly."

Dreams turned into red minivans and goldfish crackers,  
 Elementary school pickups and dropoffs.  
 PTA meeting at three,  
 Time off,  
 Maybe crochet a blanket,  
 Join a book club or work as a secretary.

Husband comes home at six,  
 TV dinners and frozen peas,  
 Complains about the nine to five,  
 Silence over sorbet, anti-acid pills after;  
 Clank of spoons, dishes to be done.  
 Empty dining rooms, emptied soul.

Cheap romance novels on the nightstand,  
 Sleep with backs turned.  
 Suburban silence always screams louder at night.  
 Fall at nine, rise at five,  
 Kids get up at seven, bus comes at eight,  
 "have a nice day at work"

Empty house, emptier person,  
 You sit there waiting  
 Only to turn on the morning news.  
 Feet propped up on the ottoman,  
 Listen to how pleather sounds against old socks,  
 Same anchor, same story, different people;  
 Same time.

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Awake,  
but hazy. Circles  
of light steal my  
vision as I stand  
to face myself. Hair  
jumbled in a bird's nest,  
Eyes still peaceful from  
the night. Pillow marks  
stained on one cheek. A  
glaring 9:12 stares back  
at my face. I take each  
step towards the door  
with precaution. I reach  
the handle, push it  
open. It's night.  
Dark night.  
Goodnight.



"Behind the Shadows" by Kristina Roberts  
Charcoal Drawing

Kristina Zheng

“NO TIME”

Awake. Shower. Get Dressed.

Eat. *I want to savor this!* Quickly, no time.

Past 7. Late. Drive.

Arrive. Sit. Listen. Write.

*I want to understand this!* Later, no time, memorize.

Sit. Listen. Write.

Bell. Walk. *Can I Talk to my friends?* Later, no time. Walk.

Sit. Listen. Write.

Lunch. Eat. *Talk to them now?* Later, no time, leave.

Sit. Listen. Write.

Bell. Walk. Drive.

*Home now!*

Sit. Work.

*Dinner time!* Later, no time, Work.

Sit. Work. Work-

*But my Family?*

Later, no time. Work.

*But Sleep?*

Later. No time. Work.

*But-*

Later. No time.

Work.

...

Work.

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“Dripping Away” by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Pencil Drawing

## THE GIRL IN THE CORNER

Bend and Break

S Shatter and Shake

P Shivering in the corner

Lost

E Drowning in tears of black and blue

C Face developing a pale complexion

T Just looking for an explanation

But in the end

R The girl in the corner was left behind

U To write her own explanation

M In tears of sorrow

2  
0  
1  
8



"Alone" by Ava Porter  
Pencil Drawing

## THE PRINCESS AND THE FLOWER

The Princess and the Flower Once upon a time, in a kingdom far, far, away, there lived a princess in a white castle. From her balcony she could see everything in her beautiful kingdom. Weaving through the villages was a river that glittered like broken glass.

The princess's beauty was legendary. All the people in the kingdom spoke of her rose-red hair and warm doe eyes. They said her smile was bright enough to light the darkest of days.

The kingdom was the happiest place in the world to be. Gradually, sickness and hunger all came to an end. The beautiful princess forgot misery. She only knew how to smile and wave from her balcony, a pale ghost in white.

"I love you," she called to the farmers outside the moat. Their faces were sun-reddened and wind-worn as they smiled back and waved their shovels. The princess giggled. "Your shovels are beautiful. I love you."

The farmers bowed respectfully. "Have a good day, ma'am." The princess watched them walk away, twirling her red hair around her finger. She smiled, teeth as white as her castle, and laughed. "A good day? I think I'll have a good day! I'm going to sit and watch the flowers grow," she said, leaning on her elbows and fixing her stare on an empty brown pot.

Milky light from the sun turned to harder rays as the day aged. A midday breeze began to pick up and gently swirl the skirt around her ankles. The princess sighed. Although the stem had grown a few inches high, the bud remained firmly shut. "Hello princess!" a high voice squeaked. The princess looked down and saw a young girl waving up at her. She smiled even wider.

"Hello, child!" she cried. "I love you! Do you see my flower? Isn't it pretty?" "It's lovely, princess!" the girl shouted back. "Thank you, child. Thank you! I love you!" she called, waving goodbye and promptly turning to face the flower. She watched and watched, and when the sun was at its zenith, the bud peeled away. A white flower gently unfurled itself and stretched its petals to the sun.

The princess squealed and clapped her hands delightedly. “Look, look at my flower!” she sang out to two merchants waving at her from below. Both of them nodded appreciatively as she stroked the gently curling petals. “Isn’t it stunning?”

“Much like you princess,” the merchants chorused, tipping their hats. The princess laughed in delight and clapped her hands.

“I love you!” she called as they chuckled and rode away. The pretty princess turned her attention back to the flower. It had grown steadily as the day faded, and now was so tall it bent over from the weight of its thick white petals. The princess gently held the stem upright, brown eyes filling with sorrow. “My flower is so tired,” she said softly to herself. “But what is tired? I don’t know why I thought of such a silly word..”

The sky began to fade to a dull grey. A shadow fell across the princess’s arm and she flinched, snatching her arm away. She edged closer and closer to the flower, eyes round and fearful. “I really don’t like shadows,” she whispered to herself. “I don’t. I really don’t.”

“Princess!” a new voice chimed from below. A young boy stood at the moat, waving up to her. His knees were covered in dirt. “It’s suppertime. Are you going to eat?”

The princess pulled her cheeks apart in a blinding smile. “Hello, boy! I love you!” “Are you going to eat?” he called up to her. “I’m not hungry,” the princess replied. A tiny frown creased her smooth forehead. “I don’t think so. I don’t know what hungry is, why did I think of such a silly word?” she giggled at her own foolishness and waved farewell to the boy. The princess turned to look back at her flower and cried out. The edges of the petals were light brown as though they’d been burnt. She put her hands over her mouth and gasped. “My flower is dying. My pretty little flower.”

As the hills below filled with the merry laughter of the villagers, the princess’s flower began to wilt. Each petal gently peeled away, layer upon layer of stem melting into the dirt. Two crystal tears rolled from her brown eyes down her soft cheeks to her collarbone. “My flower is dying. My pretty pretty flower,”

she said softly, stroking the last petal tenderly as it fell. The stem keeled over and soon all that remained was dry dirt.

Cold wind blew around the princess, causing her red hair to ripple slightly. The beautiful princess looked up and saw that the sky was streaked with gold and scarlet. Black clouds gathered overhead as the sun sank languidly between the hills. For the first time, the princess stopped smiling. Like curtains closing her face fell together. Her eyes looked wider and larger in fear. Her cheeks had turned as pale as her dress and her mouth was in a tight line. The princess began to shake. "No no no," she whispered, bringing up her hands to her throat. "Please, no—"

"Princess." The princess jumped. Someone had opened the door to the balcony behind her. The room behind was pure darkness, but she could make out a fuzzy human outline. Two bright, yellow eyes blinked out at her from the darkness. "It's time to come inside."

The princess shook her head. She took frantic steps backwards, pressing herself against the balcony. "I like it outside," she said weakly, tugging at her cheeks. An ugly twist of a smile appeared on her face for a brief moment. "I-I love you. Please let me stay outside."

The shadowy space behind the door rippled and a hand pushed through. It was pale and skinny, trembling slightly as it extended long, bony fingers. The nails were rotten and yellow.

"It's time to come inside, princess." "I don't want to." Behind the princess, music and laughter could be heard from the villagers.

"It's time to come inside." "Please, please, no," the princess pleaded. "It hurts when I do- you always say it won't but it hurts—"

A guttural snarl came from the shadows. Like a protruding tongue the arm slowly slid out of the shadows, impossibly long, reaching for the princess. She screamed and curled into a ball but the hand clamped onto her throat and pulled her in, unshaken despite her thrashing and clawing and crying.

Pressure left her neck abruptly and the princess coughed, doubling over on her knees. The darkness oozed around her like a slimy blanket. She stood up and turned frantically but her hands slammed into brick. “No,” she cried, feeling along the wall. “Let me out, please!” like a caged animal she scratched and threw herself at the brick again and again, not stopping even when her perfect face was bloody and her nails were ripped.

“Princess,” the voice drawled. Her breath caught in her throat. “It’s time to take a bath.” Pure terror turned her blood to ice. The princess clutched at her dress, hugging herself tightly. “I love my dress,” she wept. “Please let me keep it.”

“You are too old to play dress up,” the voice said, almost mockingly. “Take it off.” “No,” the princess sobbed. “I am a pretty princess in my white castle and white dress-” “- you are none of those things. Stop crying, child, and take it off!” There was a loud rip. The princess shrieked. The white fabric on her forearms began to unravel, soft white thread spilling to the ground like falling petals. The princess cried out and snatched frantically at the threads, but they vanished as soon they touched her fingers. And her fingers, her delicate, pretty fingers, began to harden. The tips turned black and hard, then her palm, then her arm. The princess wept and wailed and clawed at herself but could not stop her limbs from shriveling into black, burnt bone.

“There you go, girl,” the voice said. “That’s who you are.” The princess screamed. “You are killing me.” “I am teaching you,” the voice crooned. A broken mirror floated out of the darkness and stopped in front of her. The princess peered in and a skeleton peered back- black, burnt skull with brown eyes and flaming red hair. “Much better. But you’re not quite you yet, are you?” The princess moved her jaw. “Stop it,” she moaned. “You’re making me sad, I don’t want to be sad-”

Like a river of fire her hair fell from her skull and cascaded to the ground. It rested gently around her bones and lapped at her ankles, the only thing warm and soft in the dark, dark room. The princess cried again, but now her tears were inky and hard. “My hair,” she said brokenly. “You took my hair. My hair red like rose petals. How could you?”

“Because it’s not yours!” the voice snapped. “And neither are these.” There were two soft pops and the princess felt her vision fade. She wailed as the light blinked out of her existence, leaving her in fathomless black. She could no longer see but she knew the voice was in front of her. Something cold and gentle stroked her face. “If only you could see yourself now,” it purred. “You’re beautiful. I love you.”

The princess- was she a princess? The word seemed clunky and uneven in her thoughts. She was fading away, slipping off the edge of the world. “I thought I was a princess.”



“The Rose” by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Painting

## ABANDONED

The house on the hill fights together.

3 mugs, 3 jackets, 3 pairs of shoes.

Outside,

the chrysanthemums reflect the sun's rays,  
a beaming pigmented yellow.

One day, with a

storm,

the wind chimes rang.

Each blow of wind followed by clashing –  
clashing  
at different pitches.

A silence never

broken

the rest of the day.

The next morning.

One side of the bed delevhsid,  
the other nicely made.

The mugs on the counter,  
2 mugs.

The jackets in the closet,  
2 jackets.

The shoes at the doorway,  
2 pairs of shoes.

The

marks

on the driveway.

The house on the hill fends for  
itself.

Time is dynamic. This is a world in which time moves slowest for a man who speaks the loudest. Naturally, the population splits into 2 groups. One group of people fills the earth with screaming and yelling, as people of all ages try to preserve themselves. Another group allows themselves to grow old, as they believe that is how life is supposed to work.

One man has spent his life shouting constantly, as he admires his smooth skin and young body. He quits his office job, which forced him to stay quiet during the day. He also lost contact with his friends, who became annoyed at him for never being able to have an actual conversation with them. Nevertheless, Jack strongly believes that trading his past life, his job, and his friends was worth living longer.

But as his family grows old, he becomes even lonelier. He has no one to share his deepest secrets, no one to look and smile at, and no one to hug him tightly in a time of sadness. He wonders if it was really worth trying to live longer, when there was nothing left to live for. But he does not have to worry about that too long. Soon, his voice tires, and he can no longer talk. Time instantly speeds up for him, as he slowly loses his senses due to his aging body. His vision blurs and his voice mutes. Jack's body catches up to his actual age, and he passes away, leaving a life where he never truly found happiness or love.

Another man lives his life with a carefree mindset. He welcomes the idea of growing old, if it means that he can have casual conversations with his friends, family, and strangers whenever he likes. Though he grows old quicker than others, he's able to grow old with his wife and kids together. But, as he lies down one day, when his cheeks have sunken and his skin has withered, he regrets his missed opportunity. By staying younger, he could have had more time with his kids. He would have seen them grow up, find happiness, and build a successful life. Now, he is close to leaving, and his

— kids are still just children, whose lives will be greatly affected when their dad passes away.

It's hard to decide whether living a life of sadness or leaving a life of happiness is worse. By leaving a life of happiness, one will cause pain to those they love the most. But, living a life of loneliness may not be a life worth living.



"Emerald" by Shrikant Chand  
Ceramics

## PM2.5

Don't breathe.

He's coming.  
 He wears a gray jacket,  
 and underneath the wrinkled hand reaches up,  
 grabs you by the throat.  
 Hold your breath.  
 For if you breathe he'd hear.

He's coming.  
 He climbs out from the smoldering chimney,  
 his face unseen.  
 When he opens his mouth full of stained teeth,  
 smiles faintly.  
 You have nowhere to hide.

He's coming.  
 You cannot hear his steps.  
 But he leaves behind a scent of gasoline.  
 It runs under your nose,  
 crosses your bones,  
 through your blood.

He's coming.  
 The sun beclouds the earth;  
 The sky rains dust;  
 Darkness falls.  
 Don't look up.  
 For the concrete and cement choke in.

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He's coming.  
Breathe,  
for you do want to survive.  
Just breathe lightly,  
wear a mask if you do need,  
and cover yourself if you so wish.

Don't breathe.



"Homeless" by Kate Mullany  
Photography

One day when I was as young as the time of day when the sun rays stretch to reach the leaves covered in dew left by midnight's mist, I first remembered what it meant to feel a knife stabbing into my heart. It was late at night and midnight's mist was just arising when my mother came into my room. My father was sleeping at the foot of my bed to comfort me if I woke from my frequent tragic nightmares. She whispered quietly to him as if to not wake me, but I was already awake, afraid to sleep and face another nightmare. My mouth filled with dried up vocals, my attempted whispers turning into air. I couldn't warn her I was awake. Their whispers turned to yelling, yelling fixed from accusations, insults, tears. Tears. I had never heard my mother cry, but her voice wobbled, and her stutters matched the silence when the tears rolled quietly off her overworked face onto the carpet. I wanted to scream to make them stop hurting each other. I wanted them to see me clenching my jaw, pressing any of my escaped cries into the pillowcase to muffle the noise. I wanted them to realize that when they cry, I physically feel their pain because, after all, my heart was made from their love. Tired faces left the conversation without any apologies, and silence followed. I heard noises coming from my father, abrupt inhales and stiff gasps, which later I realized was his attempt at concealing his crying. I waited many minutes until my father's almost inaudible cries of helplessness had ceased before opening my mouth to say into the dark room, "Daddy? I just had a nightmare."

"Agony"  
by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Pencil Drawing



Anushri Radhakrishnan

## SUN

*“The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun.”*

— Christopher McCandless

## PASSIONATE

FIERCE

ENERGETIC

COURAGE

RESILIENCE

INTENSITY

## BLUE SHIFT

I don't remember the first time  
 I looked into your eyes.  
 You were in a distant world -  
 Your crystal voice bringing laughter  
 to the silent stars.  
 Until you fought against dark energy,  
 arms like a spiral galaxy,  
 spinning closer to our sun,  
 brave, singing into the unknown.

A blueshifted star, still lightyears away -  
 but close enough for me to dream,  
 traveling ever closer.  
 And when I woke to your dawn,  
 You set the skies on fire with love and ire,  
 Heart on your sleeve and the tip of your tongue.

That night brought shooting stars,  
 Faith in those fated to rise or to fall.  
 I didn't think to catch you until  
 you were caught up by the winds,  
 and you smiled. I remember this, at least.

And in a heartbeat you fell down to Earth,  
 an Icarus but an improviser, catching the thermals  
 with wings fixed on the fly. You had a choice:  
 back to the skies or home to us.

I'll never understand why you love your family so much,  
 And I'll never be more grateful  
 Now that you're ready to fly away again.

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Fling open the windows!

Let within spill into without  
and the flame of a thousand galaxies  
pierce the silence of the heart.

And that light that permeates  
from the most heavenly of muses—  
let it sink into passion  
and passion into paper.

Let the ink spread dark  
as hidden depths of midnight  
and capture light through cracks  
of fractured worlds.

Let each line rip them apart  
and sew them back together  
in a pattern drawn from smooth scars  
and scattered stars—  
the dust of unborn constellations.



"Serenity" by Sophia Zhang  
Painting

Erin Brennan

## BEAUTY

A natural  
glow dotted  
with pollinated freckles.  
Distinct cheekbones  
line the horizon.  
Delicate snowflakes  
dot each glaring eyelash.  
Fierce, bushy blankets protect  
fragile expressions.  
Lips tinted with  
salmon tones,  
every ridge and crevice  
distinctly marked by scales.  
A smile brighter than any light ray  
from the solar eclipse.  
A new day.  
A new beginning.  
A new face.  
And a never  
ending cycle  
of beauty.

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"A Beautiful Sunrise" by Jack Zhu  
Acrylic Painting

Kristina Zheng

## THE PEAK

Trying to circumnavigate to the peak

S Appears nearly impossible  
 P I try every trick I can muster  
 E The path is found by many  
 C But seems lost to me

T I do believe I will get there  
 R To the top  
 U It may take years upon years  
 M Decades upon decades  
 But I will never give up

I will hurdle roadblocks  
 2 Dodge haters  
 O Sneak past authority  
 1 To find the peak

8 But when I get there  
 Will I hang on  
 Or fall off  
 Into the empty abyss that I started from

The risk is worth it so I shall try  
 I will pull myself up  
 Rung by rung

Step by step  
 Until I reach the top  
 No matter what the cost  
 The destination is worth the painful journey  
 Because the peak is the place I want to be



"Standing Alone" by Jared Freeman  
 Mixed Media

## NOVEMBER AFTERNOON

The wind chases children back home,  
licking our knuckles red. In November,  
moths converge under musty yellow light.  
Spine curving, lids shutting,  
We fold ourselves smaller and smaller.

Like restless birds, hearts shuffling  
Backwards. We're still lost in the fields  
with heat-prickled skin, the hours punched gold.

A chill knocks at my bones. The clouds drain  
the sky of color, tucking Yesterday  
in its pocket.

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"Bird in the Golden Sky" by Liana Lau  
Acrylic Painting

Sophia Zhang

## MERRILY, WE STRUGGLE

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When you push  
     I pull  
 When you sprint  
 I laugh and fill the air with molasses  
 Lean in and whisper with icy love  
     'Wait a while'  
     'We aren't going anywhere'  
     'It's all just the same in the end'  
         'Just you'  
         'And me'  
         Forever  
 When you plant your feet  
     And hold on with all you can  
 Whether with the strength of an ant  
     Or the might of a thousand men  
     You slide right along  
     And I, the culprit  
     Smiling as we go  
     'How merrily we go'  
 'How happily we struggle down this path'  
     You may curse my name  
     You may cherish my love  
     But who's the fool?  
     I'm not your enemy  
     How could I be?  
     I'm not your friend  
     Why would I be?

It was around four in the afternoon. My body weighed twice as heavy as it did yesterday.  $9.8 \text{ m/s}^2$  acceleration dragged on me the way gusts of wind blow against a runner. I made my way through the long, drawn-out hallways to the locker room. As I shoved my feet into my thickly mud-stained tennis shoes, blood rushed to my heels, bringing a light hue of red. My finger joints turned pale white. A stinging pain shot up my legs as I watched the veins around my ankles surface on my skin. That's when I spotted a stubborn, mud-covered knot staring back at me. Practice was starting in five minutes – whether or not I get these thickly mud-stained shoes on.

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"Volatile" by Thomas Nardicchio  
Fashion

## THE COMING OF WINTER

Wet and cold  
 That is my day  
 See the sun  
 It sits at bay  
  
 Heavy clouds  
 Moving fast  
 Friendly weather have come to pass  
 Birds they see  
  
 Birds they leave  
 For the sun has passed  
 They move away  
 Out of the Haze  
  
 Trees they see  
 They drop their leafs  
 For the sun has come and left  
 Winter thrives

It moves in quick  
 It tells a trick  
 Steals the light of day  
 No worries! No worries!

The sun will come  
 Back again  
 Back again to retrieve the past  
 Restoring the world to its glory past



"Cold-Hearted" by Jack Zhu  
Pencil Drawing

## INSECURITIES

Dear 15 years old self,  
 Why do you squish the hives on your face?  
 Wishing you will no longer be a victim of growing up.  
 How that criminal is nobody but yourself, scarring your eyes,  
 and vandalizing your confidence  
 Invading the seeds of your soul, isolated under your shadow  
 Why do you scratch at the pits of your skin?  
 Holes so deep, the light recedes,  
 the hives reflect in the eyes of your friends  
 You are alone, so deep and obsessed in your impurities  
 Alone with the unescapable reflection of your insecurities  
 leaning against the bathroom stall,  
 you hide to avoid the stares but deep inside,  
 you know . . . you hide from yourself.

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Dear 17 years old self,  
 You shadow my life with aversion  
 Draining my seeds of happiness with your harrowing whispers  
 Among your scornful branches  
 you scar my eyes void of happiness.  
 You are not me. I am not you.

I desire to be free from your corpse  
 I tear off my glasses,  
 Extirpating your roots and sweeping away you dead leaves  
 Although visually blind, I free my thoughts of your presence  
 My eyes brighten, my skin clears, and finally, I see me.  
 My astigmatism is a gift.  
 My farsightedness is a gift.  
 I am.

## MY HEART

With a mind of its own my heart ponders decisions

S Explores conversations and flirtations

P Yet my heart is silent

E My heart is tied down, imprisoned, trying to break free

C It pumps my blood, but the blood runs cold, with jealousy

T Temper runs hot with anger

R My heart wants to speak, yet my emotions are holding him back

U Fear, and jealousy control the heart, not love

M Love is eternal and everlasting, qualities my heart is yet to comprehend

2 Emotional awareness is strong, too strong,

O Holding back true thoughts and feelings

1 Regret and sorrow are highly present, yet love is yet to emerge

8



"Melting Pain" by Meera Amin  
Photography

Two-Two. 40 seconds left in the game. Echoes of the chant “we bleed blue” bounce around the stadium; while the team bleeding maroon lures around the goal. The ball skips across the field, from Moo Penn to Bellavance to Clarke, resembling a pin-ball machine. The team gets 25 points from each completed pass, but nothing hits the jackpot. Clarke sprints up left field and guns the ball over to the corner of the penalty box, to the feet of Jared Stroud the MVP of not only Colgate, but the entire Patriot League. As the ball glides through the air and lands at the tip of Stroud’s toes, a feeling of pride washes over the team’s faces. Their journey suddenly felt worth it. The copious amounts of anodyne taken for their bodies to survive the season as painfree as possible felt worth it to see Stroud chip the ball with the toe of his neon purple cleat. The endless surgeries prelude by numbing anesthetics just so the torn labrum or the broken toe would not keep a player from the game all felt worth it to see Stroud’s right leg bend to the perfect preshot angle. The relentless doctors treating joints and nerves so the player’s bodies would heal and function properly on the field; every last bit felt worth it to see Stroud’s ball tear through the air and strike the back of the net like a bullet.

All the teams that spoke in grandiloquent “we’re better than you” tones lost. All the colloquies that ended with the words “you guys won’t win” were proven wrong. Colgate had won. For a moment, the stadium fell silent. A maroon shirt exchanged an empathetic look with a blue one. Maroon knew what it felt like to lose, they knew what blue was feeling like right now; yet that shared feeling did not prevent maroon jerseys from being ripped off the boy’s backs. The momentary silence broke in a heartbeat, and the stadium exploded into anarchy. Everyone went absolutely crazy. No one was listening to the sounds of the announcers politely asking fans not to raid the field. Screams flew through the air at 100 miles per hour. To the naked ear, the noises probably sounded more like a deranged psychopath went on a killing spree rather than a win at a soccer game. Nobody could believe what had just happened. The loudness of the cheers seeded thirteenth in the

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tournament, while Colgate was not seeded at all. U of M should have won. The team saw it as a complete anomaly that they did not. Colgate’s win went against the common rule of statistics. The color drained from the blue shirt’s faces; the passion drained from their eyes. The teams apathy spread from player to player. No one had the heart to go talk to the blue jersey laying head down on the ground. Everyone felt pathos for U of M. Everyone felt pity.

After minutes of mixed cheers and cries, and an awkward obligatory postgame handshake, everyone departed from the field. U of M players retreated back to their dorms to grieve, and Colgate players retreated back to the locker room to celebrate. They had made history. Colgate had never won an NCAA tournament game before U of M. As the cheers dwindled, and the fans drove away, the maroon jerseys packed up and left as well. With an aura of pride and a glimmer of joy, the boys left the field, knowing Stroud’s neon purple cleats would haunt U of M forever.



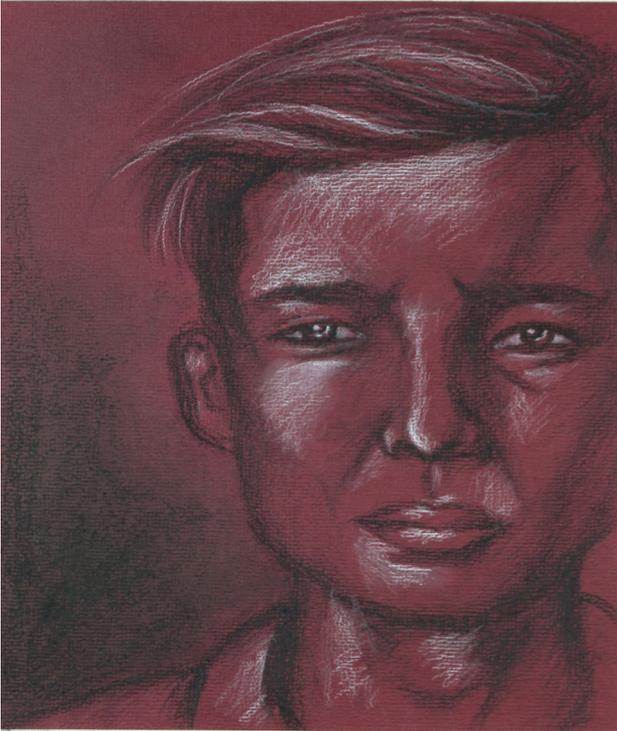
“Victory” by Maddie Pachla  
Photography

Natasia Raptis

## AT DUSK

Another intoxicating song flows from one ear to the next,  
the muscles of our hearts squeezing. Night awakens  
outside the car windows, in sputtering breaths,  
the salty sunlight plunges  
into another world.

A knot untying itself, our energy  
swells in flames licking our throat.  
They'll hear us, spitting ashes in the air,  
before the sky snatches our voices in the morning.



"Red Silence" by Helena Li  
Charcoal and Colored Pencil

My feet are forever molded. Their soles are layered with rubber to cushion my heel like a mattress softening a hard fall. But, after years of jutting gravel and heavy earth, their souls are worn. Purple and blue streak the sides, mixing together to form new shades of magenta. But now, streaks of dried dirt and grass cling to their surface. Laces intertwine within each other as if a cluster of snakes were slithering over one another, just vying for a breath of fresh air. They used to be new. They used to be useful. But never have they been so valuable. Years of use created endless experience. Every race, every practice added to its growing repertoire. But for how long?



"Lakeview" by Laura Bongers  
Photography

Kristina Zheng

## THE KEEPER OF SECRETS

Tell me your secrets,  
 Spill out your heart,  
 For I am the keeper of secrets and thoughts.  
 Don't be afraid,  
 I won't tell anyone,  
 My lips are sealed and your secrets are safe.  
 You collect stamps,  
 I collect secrets,  
 And like any collector, I want the full collection.  
 Secrets are my oxygen,  
 They keep me living,  
 So help me breathe and tell me your secrets, my darling.  
 Give me your secrets,  
 And help me inhale,  
 Don't worry, I won't tell anyone worth knowing.  
 I tell you this,  
 Yet still, you refuse,  
 Because you understand that even I need to exhale.

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"No More Words"  
 by Jack Zhu  
 Charcoal



Krishna Kiru

## OUTSIDE FORCES

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Outside forces seeping into the mind

The outsider activates depression

Once the outsider defeats the inside

A winner emerges

Never let the outsider defeat the insider

Once that scenario occurs, you become a follower

And a follower can never lead

Until the leader follows

So, barricade your heart and brain

Build up an emotional immune system

Once that system is set

You make your own decisions

And you are free to live



"Strength" by Abby Ashcraft  
Ceramics

Tim Bilen

## SUPERMAN

He fell off his rollerskates and the world slid under his feet  
 so he flew (like Superman) and landed as flat as a  
 pancake arms out the boys laughed and spat *Mama's not here to kiss  
 you better* his hands are sticky with blood  
 but that makes him feel cool.

Skinny antelope arms gnarly knees and jutting elbows  
 shorts baggy like skirts shirts puffy like parachutes so when  
 the other boys slam into him and take his soccer ball  
 his shirt catches him and lands him safe  
 on the ground.

He's always at the back of the classroom next to the  
 shadowy niche near the bookshelf where the teacher keeps  
 her purse he looks inside once doesn't take anything  
*(Mama would yell)* sees the shine of loose change when his first  
 grade teacher goes on about the solar system he  
 dreams about money he'll be a millionaire he'll  
 invent the cure for cancer win the Olympics beat  
 Usain Bolt at a jog he'll have so much money he'll  
 shower in gold.

When he's older Mama will be able to go  
 to the beach like she's always wanted he'll fly her  
 there in his private jet so fast it'll break the  
 sound barrier smash it and shake the world make the  
 people look up and whisper *who is driving that  
 plane* and he'll swoop low right over the sea close to  
 the beach but they won't see his full face just a side  
 profile illuminated by the rays of  
 the setting sun.

So what if his tests are full of red pen he  
 gets shoved in the hallway people talk and give  
 him glances out of lowered eyes  
*he's funny, doesn't talk, is he crazy i've heard  
 he's homeless he lives in the school basement no one  
 talks to him he's stupid, flunks every test slow*

Maheen Haq

*worst on the team who is he what's his  
name yes that kid, the weird one who never talks  
who is he?*

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You'll know me he promises and straps himself  
into his rocket ship he takes a deep  
breath and pushes down on the gas pedal  
the world blurs into the screaming of  
the crowd as his race car speeds around the  
bend like the world-famous painting he'll create  
and sell for a million become the richest  
man alive you'll know me he vows, a promise carved  
into his brain as he jumps off his plane his parachute flares  
out but he doesn't need it anyway  
he punches through the clouds and rips a hole  
in the wind dives to the earth with his arms out  
(like Superman).



"Swoop" by Mia Kirkman  
Photography

Maheen Haq

The palace was dimly lit; bright blues, fierce yellows, and dark shadows grabbed at the tips of the bare stone walls. The palace halls were cold and arid, as ever, and the woman walked them in a sleeveless white dress, although she was no stranger to the chill. Her posture was erect, her cold, unearthly blue eyes focused on the walk ahead. She had eyes of marble, somehow detached from the rest of her face, as though there was a barrier between the world and her interpretation of it; a barrier between the woman's eyes and the woman's world.

Her posture was erect, claiming her short, angular body. Her breasts were too big, the fat of her skin portioned out unevenly over her hips, arms, legs, and stomach. Her hands were small, and they grasped the glass doorknob tentatively as the woman pursed her voluptuous lips.

"Adonis?" She whispered, and when there was no answer beyond the door, she swung it open.

She was regal, in her white dress, with the crimson pendant at her throat, but she looked ugly in the firelight. Beauty snagged at her face, breathed through her pores to the tips of her cheeks, but was like a narrowly missed shot. You could look at her for however long you wanted, but that face was no more beautiful for your efforts. Her face was a study in sobriety, a harsh comment on the aging nature of a queen. She was once beautiful, once beloved, but now all that was left was cloudy makeup, lifted eyelashes, and spoiled someday.

"Adonis," The woman whispered, and square teeth rose from beneath her dark red lips, "My love. My darling."

The boy before her returned a smile. His red hair stood up like grass on his head, his green eyes like small, reflective snow-globes. Entire landscapes could be seen in them, great testimonies of hope, of truth, of returning to a world so great and green.

"Mom," The boy said cheerily, and immediately, the woman's smile twisted backward, and she bit her lip, coldly.

"I am Persephone, Daughter of Demeter, Princess of Olympus, Maiden of Spring, Countess of Summer, Duchess of Autumn, Prisoner of Winter, Wife of Hades, the Black Lady, Queen of the Underworld, Goddess of Death." She recited her titles solemnly, and chided him purposefully, "I am none your mother."

"No," The boy agreed, but hesitantly. He sloppily brushed back his red hair, his eyes guarding the floor before him, weighing the

speed of Persephone's black-toed pumps. He wanted her to come in, but was already anticipating how quickly she'd leave. He could still hear the telltale click of her pumps across the stone floor. Those prints seemed to be etched into the hollow expanse of the palace, careening off every wall, every lucky chance that maybe, just once, she'd stay.

"I wrote you a song," The boy tried, lifting the guitar on his lap. His white shirt crinkled, its texture like rippling waves off his skin. "It's a gift for you."

He reminded her so of spring, of her mother, of firelight that warmed away the pale of her cheeks. She would blush like a blooming rose, back when the sky copied the blues of her eyes, daisies drank up the yellow of her dress, and her blond hair melted against the sun. The spring had borrowed her beauty, and her grace had become the ambience of season. She had fluttered through it, joyously, but somehow all of that had been swallowed up in an unrequited kiss.

"Nonsense," Persephone waved a careless hand, "You know how I have never cared for music."

Flashes of Orpheus, of sweaty hands clasped over a lyre, a robe drenched with blood, a scream, a snake, a voice like the gods could not comprehend, Hades' contempt— but her own liquid lechery pouring out in a spring of anguished tears— it was a lie. She had only begun to hate the song once he reached that damned scale: the one about her world above, of oaths sealed standing ankle deep in lilies, and of that godless word, that idyllic religion; oh why, oh why had he sung love?

"But I worked on it," Adonis insisted, "Orpheus taught me the scales; he told me you'd like it better in your key." As he tuned up the guitar, Persephone felt herself begin to disintegrate into the hallway, as if she was fading into fate. Unconscious of her actions, she began to back away. She reached for the doorknob and held it tight, knowing it wasn't really what she needed to keep her upright.

"Why don't you play it for Makaria?" Persephone said, unsure if the boy noticed the hastiness of her movements, "I'm sure she would enjoy it more than me. She does love anything related to the Upper-World."

"But you're going back up there soon," Adonis said, "And Orpheus told me it would be an excellent going-away gift. He reminded me of that time when I was little, when he played for you, and you said his song was beautiful. You got Hades to let him go—"

"Enough!" Persephone thundered. She watched, heart of stone, as Adonis' eyes grew wide and he clutched the guitar tight to his chest. They stood in frozen silence, staring, until Adonis caved into himself,

and averted his eyes.

"I'm sorry," He whispered, after her back was turned. She was already moving toward the door. "I'm sorry, Persephone."

"Don't think on it," Persephone quipped, doorknob in hand, "And don't trouble yourself by apologizing. You didn't know."

How could he tell her he wanted to? How could he say that's exactly what he wanted— couldn't she see how she troubled him? There was so much angst in those eyes- such pensiveness, even in the way she breathed, in her aura, herself...

"You didn't know." She said again, as she faded into the shadows.



"Faerie" by Aicha Chehmani  
Sculpture

Midway through tests and trials in two times,  
 Together we are bound, both now and then  
 Creating vibrant words, forests of rhyme.

And while poems of love I do not pen,  
 Nor allegory meant to shape the mind,  
 I hope to find the Muse I've had again.

A certain poet drenched in sleep was blind  
 To all the horrors of the rings of Hell.  
 We, as students, no such peace can find.

Our slavemaster and savior is the bell.  
 It is both cursed and blessed when time is short,  
 And stretches minutes into hours as well.

The ones whom we love oft are hard to court  
 When courage flees with furtive eyes that meet,  
 And passion, reason always seems to thwart.

So when they smile, we find nothing more sweet  
 And love what is impossible to gain,  
 Envyng those who know no strange heartbeat.

One Muse, one figure, our writing maintains,  
 An inspiration, one we blush to name,  
 A scapegoat for creative escapades.

Since stress and work will strike with deadly aim,  
 Serving to stain our lives with misery,  
 Respite we bless, we treasure when we claim.

And while we value peace and liberty,  
 we'll fight until the wronged no longer weep;  
 Through poems do we claim our victory.

As centuries pass by this pattern keeps;  
School seems much like the city-states of old.  
Scholarships or noble blood both hard to reap.

Written in history, when all is told  
Are two people: the bold and those who write.  
And if one of these names you're proud to hold,



"Flying Words" by Anna Mascarenas  
Mixed Media

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# SKY

*“In the sky there are always answers and explanations for everything: every pain, every suffering, joy and confusion.”*

— *Ishmael Beah*

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OPENNESS

BEGINNINGS

ENERGY

FAMILY

FOUNDATION

GROWTH

IDENTITY

## COLOR THEORY

“How does a baby learn to speak?”

*Gradually.*

“But how?”

*She learns one word from her mother, one from her father, one from her sister, and one from her brother. Again and again and again until she knows them all.*

“And then what does she do?”

*She finds her own ways to put them all together. There are infinite possibilities, you know.*

“Infinite?”

*Infinite.*

...

A little dark-haired girl sits with her equally dark-haired father on a carpeted floor, a how-it-works picture book spread between them. The man points to an image of a circle. Here, the rainbows she likes to draw have organized themselves into neat little pizza slices.

“That’s a color wheel,” the man explains. She listens as if he holds the world in his hands and is entrusting her with a tiny fragment of it. “Do you know what happens when you mix all the colors together?”

Of course she knows. They turn black.

“No,” says the man. “When you spin the wheel fast enough, it turns white. That’s because all the colors together make white.”

The wide-eyed girl wants to argue, but her father has handed her a key to the universe, and who is she to object?

...

“Okay, but if you mix every different color of paint together, you get black.”

The girl huffs. She is taller now, and older, and smarter. She knows better than her friend, the boy who never saw the picture book on the carpeted floor.

“Yeah, but that doesn’t matter,” the girl insists. “It’s about *color theory*. When you spin a color wheel, the colors all mix to make white.”

— She likes those words: *color theory*. They make her sound like she knows things he doesn't.

The boy disagrees, but she knows better.

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“Today, kids, we will learn about color theory.”

The girl listens with rapt attention as the red-haired art teacher points to a circular object she knows far too well: a color wheel.

Primary. Red, yellow, blue.

Secondary. Orange, green, purple.

“And when you mix all three primary colors together, you get a very dark brown, almost black.”

The girl frowns. Suddenly, her father's key has become too small for its lock. She thinks of the little fish puzzle she got when she was five—the one with only two pieces that always together perfectly—and wonders if maybe knowing less is easier.

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The biology teacher is good with words. She knows words the girl has never heard before: *Chromatography*. *Coenzyme*. *Chordae tendinae*.

Now, she explains a word the girl thought she already knew: *colors*.

“When you see colors, you're actually seeing the wavelengths of light that are reflected from a surface,” says the teacher. “Black objects absorb all colors of light, which is why we see them as black. However, when all wavelengths of visible light—all the colors—are combined, we call it *white light*.”

Color wheels twirl around and around in the girl's head, becoming more blindingly white the faster they spin.

“Remember, light does not work like paint, whose colors all mix to make black. These are two separate phenomena.”

And suddenly, as if from nowhere, she finds the piece she has been looking for. It does not merely fit with the others—it makes a whole new puzzle altogether, right on the backside of the first. They are immeasurably different, and yet one and the same.

...

The girl walks through the gallery with the kind of silence that can only arise from reverence. Her fingers itch to reach out and touch the stories written in acrylic on the walls.

Each piece is a tactful explosion of colors, and the best ones capture a sort of orderly chaos within their vivid strokes. Each artist is an inventor, a pioneer who finds new trails through a forest of colors, blending and brushing each one into something beautiful.

Just when she thinks she understands this perplexing world, the girl discovers a thousand new ways to mix the colors. They unfold before her eyes like flowers that grow in every direction and every hue. And for the first time, she sees not a single wheel but an infinity of shades.

...

Years pass, and the girl learns more words. Words that explain the secrets of the universe. Words that express joy and sadness and relief and anger and frustration. Words that fit together like spinning rainbow cogwheels, each leading to the next.

The words don't always make sense. She flounders through phrases that deceive and contradict, only to find that the sentence is merely incomplete. And she begins to understand that she knows nothing.

She learns to save the pieces that don't fit. Perhaps they just belong to a different puzzle.

She learns to write down words she doesn't know. Perhaps they will complete a sentence she hasn't written yet.

And eventually, she learns that with the right brushstrokes, the colors can make whatever she wills them to.



"Prism" by Jessica Patnaik  
Drawing

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 GENEALOGY

## Part I. Great Grandmother

S Your humbled back hunches over  
 P dusty floors  
 E like the bunched straw of the broom you use  
 C to sweep away the otherwise forgotten dirt.  
 T The harsh sizzle of an overcooked dinner  
 R warns of discontent husband and angry sons.  
 U Your mother asks you to marry  
 M a boy older than your eldest brother before you  
 complete your secondary education.  
 2 And like your dutiful mother,  
 you give up your dreams for your parents'.  
 O You wake your husband and open  
 1 the kiosk where he sells coconuts  
 8 on the side of the soon crowded, clamorous streets  
 before the sun even contemplates rising.

You iron your children's uniforms  
 and braid the hair of your youngest daughter  
 while she sips on the water seeped from fresh coconuts  
 (plucked from the garden behind your house)  
 and you make sure your children eat before you  
 in case the food runs out, again.

You send away your daughters  
 to walk across the dusty road to school  
 and while enter their classes, they notice  
 how few other girls are left.

## Part II. Grandmother

You were born to the blasts of fireworks  
 rupturing the night skies,  
 of endless parades submerging the streets with triumphant songs,

Anusha Mamidipaka

Your mother watches you marry your husband  
at twenty one,  
much after all of your sisters give birth to their first sons,  
much after you've earned your own independence.

While your sisters and friends  
cook and clean for their children,  
you bend over Sanskrit manuscripts  
at the university a twenty minute walk away.  
And when your daughters return home from school,  
they enter a silent house,  
gated from the rest of the town.

You earn a masters in literature  
And then another in chemistry.  
You would have continued if not for  
your husband and daughter's begging you  
to be content with your job as a professor.

You taught your daughters how to provide for themselves,  
to be proud and bold,  
to never let their gender define  
the limits of their achievements.

### Part III. Mother

Your mother braids your cascading inky hair  
while you stumble through endless pages of biology.  
You decide to attend a university a short ride away,  
so you could continue eating familiar dinners  
and escape to your comforting family.

You marry a stranger,  
once you finish medical school  
so you could evade the misogyny of your country,  
but different obstacles fill your life

when you decide to move to America with your husband.

No sun kissed mangoes grow in your backyard.

The warm, gentle showers of the monsoon season  
hide in the clouds.

Your mother's sing-song voice breaks  
in the stuttering stream of the phone,  
your only connection to your mother country.

But you earn your certification to practice medicine in America.  
Then you give birth to a girl and a boy,  
finally remembering why you gave up the comforts of your old  
life.

You gave your daughter the opportunity  
to decide what she hopes to achieve,  
and taught her that she stands on the  
sacrifices of the giants who came before her.



"DNA" by Julia Shen  
Pencil Drawing

Each one is different  
 Colors of bark  
 Types of leaves  
 Reaching into the sky  
 Some trees don't get along  
 But they have no reason not to  
 All have bark no matter the color  
 All have leaves no matter the pattern  
 All reach into the sky no matter how high  
 And all have roots that keep them grounded



"A Walk in the Forest" by Celina Zhuang  
 Photography

## EVERLASTING HARMONY

Friend,

S I see you when I am entirely alone, barely afloat  
 P in my sea of worries, after everyone else has left--  
 E You embrace me with the warmth of your arms spread wide.  
 C You, a safe haven for all my bitterness and insecurities,  
 T Catch me, ricocheting over sweet gravity,  
 R And anchor me back down to earth.

Friend,

R I see you, most of all, when I stand anxious, the raw,  
 U biting cold ruminating within my head-- but then,  
 M I hear your honeyed voice,  
 2 like a zephyr through fields of dahlias,  
 O And it rushes back a flood of memories;  
 1 Of summers spent spitting cherry pits under the  
 8 citrus sun,  
 Of heartbeats humming as we ran through the streets,  
 Of stolen nights underneath a blanket of stars, telling  
 tales of kisses  
 Of yelling so hard that joy crystallized in our mouths  
 like sugar.  
 As you envelop me in your joyous warmth and  
 laughter,  
 All my troubles simply melt into a puddle.

Friend,

I see you during times of despair,  
 Whispering lullabies and singing  
 Rhapsodic melodies  
 chained with loyalty that remind me of  
 Guards who protect cells of my secrets and faults,  
 Secured through an oath of our  
 Silence and sacred bonds of trust and lasting devotion.

Friend,  
I see you in the darkest of nights  
And through the shadows of the moon.  
Your iridescent presence  
Adds color to my monochrome silhouette  
Because you've taught me that even within  
Dirt gathered from the loneliest corners of the earth,  
The brightest petals of strength and persistence  
May still blossom.  
Your encouragement sends waves that urge me  
Through skies higher than I could ever reach alone.  
And I thank you,  
For eternalizing the hope of a new day  
And for bringing life to bittersweet farewells.



"Melody" by Liana Lau  
Watercolor

When I first met the two sisters, they sang in dissonance.

The older sister is mild and virtuous. She talks softly, with the sweet scent of fall osmanthus and jasmine tea. She dances a single waltz across the black curtain in a long silver cheongsam, her luminescent silks guiding those who lose their way.

The younger one brims with fire and energy. She talks loudly, with animated gestures. The warmth of her fingertips melts the glistening snow that blankets the city upon a hill. She ambles around in bottom-length skirts, high heels, and rose-wine lipstick. She smells of sunflowers in the heat of a Midwest summer.

Now the sisters come and go, singing in harmony for me.



"Together" by Erin Shi  
Acrylic Painting

Rosalie Fang

All I wanted was a butterfly. A simple, pretty, butterfly. Those ones that have the orange wings with black lines and tiny intricate white dots. What are they called? Monarchs? Yah. I wanted a single monarch butterfly on the small of my back. Instead I got an entire kaleidoscope; but the guy at the parlor said one butterfly wouldn't cover all of the scars. When he finished up my tattoo, he had a sort of scarily nebulous look on his face. I couldn't tell whether my back looked wonderful or horrid. The whole point was to get rid of the ugly, not put more ugly on top of it. I desired to have the butterflies as a sort of specious coverup for the hideous truth; but this nightmare of a tramp stamp is making me wish I could see the remnants of my third degree burns again. The ink doesn't even cover them. "Get a tattoo, you won't be able to see your scars" they said. Well, now I have 12 butterflies flying up my back, bumps of turgid puffy improperly healed skin peeking through, and grotesque red and white streaks most certainly still visible. "You're all stupid" I said. I just need to figure out how to live with the tattoo. If I figured out how to live with the scars, this should feel easy.

The whole tattoo mishap grounds itself quite fitting, if you think about it. I asked for a butterfly, but I got a kaleidoscope. I asked for a simple, pretty little monarch, and I got a whole mess of them flying around on me. I never just get what I want. A huge disaster always has to ride along with it. I wanted a normal family. My heart ached every night thinking about the perfect painless nirvanalike image. The radiation of my aches lacked the strength to hit the universe though. My mom still can not grasp the concept of reality. Her illness still embeds itself in her head. She still decided to light the house on fire. I keep dreaming that one day life will finally make sense, but I can not seem to expurgate all the demons from my soul. I stare at my life and see complication.

Kind of like I am looking into a kaleidoscope. Not the flock of butterflies, but those little children's toys that show a huge jumble of colors. My life rides like a discombobulated dysfunctional crazy messy rollercoaster with multiple obstacles shooting at me from every possible direction and it is so terribly hard to understand. I wish I could escape it all and fly away. I wish my life could turn from complicated-children's-toy to flock of butterflies. I have two contradictory kaleidoscopes circulating my mind at the moment. The one I am living, and the one drawn on my back that I hope to someday live. I remain anxious to see which will win.

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"In the City" by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Acrylic Painting

Natasia Raptis

## COPING

When I search “how to love yourself” on google,  
 I’m not looking for seven tips on how to cure split ends with  
 coconut oil or  
 how to make a bath bomb,  
 I’m looking for a way to walk into the bathroom, stare at my  
 reflection and  
 not be ashamed.  
 That maybe there’s a way for me to not be at war with the mirror  
 or the scale  
 That one of these days I can appreciate how I look clothed, na-  
 ked or anything in between  
 but being a teenage girl never works like that.

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Countertop littered with cosmetics and products  
 Companies profiting from my self hatred.  
 I can drag razor’s across my legs to get rid of hair  
 Mother Nature’s curse upon my body  
 Shave myself clean of shame  
 But when I wear a skirt I still feel dirtied  
 without ever dipping a toe into mud  
 I draw makeup across my face not as battle paint,  
 But as my attempt to put band aids over civil war wounds  
 My body is not a home  
 It is a city where I am visitor  
 And all I can do is comment on how disgusting the streets are.

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I am hard to love and loving me is like trying to love a beast  
 My confidence is buried under Vogue and Cosmo magazines  
 And lost in google searches looking up how to make myself skin-  
 nier or how to make boys like me  
 How am I ever supposed to accept love from others when I can-  
 not accept love from myself and  
 How am I supposed to love myself when my eyes dart towards  
 the ground when I see a mirror

I am in a fight with my reflection and some days it seems like the only time I can win is if I disappear.

Mean to myself, it's hard to have someone to cry to when you are your biggest bully

When I tell you I am ugly it is not vanity or poetry

It is me, angry at an existence that seems to stain memory

I am too scared to care for myself

Take care of my own bruises and wipe away my own tears

I want to let someone tell me I'm beautiful and to actually believe it

I am a wounded animal, waiting to succumb to self inflicted injuries

Blood loss and a ticking time bomb,

Waiting to just implode.

If I am ever brave enough

Look at myself bone by bone

See the haunting and hurt in my flesh

Aid the metaphorical and physical scar tissue

Learn to love a mind that hates itself and

Learn to house a body without trying to tear down its frame

Then I can try and grow flowers from a tarnished ground,

Throw out the products and cosmetics,

And walk into the bathroom, look into the mirror

to see myself smiling back at me.



"Beauty" by Ava Porter  
Pencil Drawing

## SEASON LEAVES

The buds of blossoming rubies  
Decorate the tips of golden branches  
Clasped in a shell of fading emerald

Bundles of twinkling emeralds grasp  
The youth of gleaming limbs  
In the blazing noon sky

Scarlet jewels shatter  
From the necks of amber branches  
Glistening in the crimson dew

The necks of barren trees shimmer  
While diamonds drip  
In the shadows of silent, pale stars



"Early Bird" by Bianca Desai  
Acrylic Painting

## THE THINGS I KNOW

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I do not know why we soar every winter  
 Into the shimmering, snow-dusted sky.  
 All I know is that I know little.  
 As few as my fully formed feathers  
 Are the things I know.

I do not know why the sky's brightest dye  
 Is mournful as waves on the sea.  
 All I know is that I know little.  
 As nascent as newborn nightingales  
 Are the things I know.

I do not know where the world begins  
 Or where the horizon leads.

I do not know why the robin is red  
 Or why the wind rustles the leaves.

All I know is  
 As vast as the sky  
 As broad as the cosmos  
 As wide as the welcoming world  
 Are the things I can know.

"Spring Awakening"  
 by Sophia Zhang  
 Acrylic Painting



Erin Brennan

## FOR THE QUEEN

Beady legs labor down beneath the strength melting heat  
 Each tiny body bearing the weight of the world on their shoulders  
 Or so it seems.

Scraps of food on the backs of the weary  
 Food for the queen. Food for the queen. Food for the queen.  
 Not once does a thought pass through their mind  
 That perhaps their labors are for themselves  
 Perhaps their work is their own  
 Perhaps they should reap what they sow  
 Every piece of food so small, so miniscule  
 Yet each one means the world

Staring over at the parade of futility  
 With watch of condescension  
 As I labor on my own works  
 Of which are of great importance  
 It surfaces to my vastly superior thought  
 Perhaps we are the same, that insignificant creature and I  
 But surely not!  
 I cry in self-chastisement  
 For my works are for the greater good, I assure myself  
 The rewards of my toils are for all.  
 For the society. For the society. For the society.

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"Hollow Death" by Ava Porter  
 Mixed Media

Brett Arenberg

i.

S in the wet dark of the night, just before her fifth birthday,  
 P a girl wakes to find herself drowning,  
 E ankle-deep in a stew of raw herbs and the blood of feral animals  
 C with her limbs bound to the legs of a wooden chair.

T minutes later, her sharp scream pierces the  
 R february air. she meets the serpentine eyes  
 U of a woman, whose name she does not know;  
 M the woman pulses her thumbs into the girl's feet, and  
 jerks and yanks and twists  
 as if her flesh is the balled pulp of a wonton.

do not resist it, dear.

she is the twentieth girl that the woman has sculpted,  
 and the woman no longer hears the cries for mercy.

2 your feet will blossom into  
 O the golden lotuses dotting the Yangtze,  
 1 and rich men will melt and sink to your feet,  
 8 wooing; then, you will forget all about this,  
 this fleeting pain.

the woman braces her toes with her parched hands and  
 rips tendons from bone as she curves in the swollen folds of each toe,  
 birthing four crisp snaps and four desperate prayers  
 into the cool air.

the girl feels the rage and fear in the blood of her marrow  
 simmering, boiling within;  
 but she is powerless to stop the woman,  
 as she stains her with  
 black and fuschia and blue.

as she fractures her arch in two,  
 and as she mutates her crushed toes, pressing them deeper and  
 deeper  
 into the sharp splinters of her heel;  
 swollen carnage against shards of howling glass.

as she snakes her hand through thick bandages  
 saturated with the juices of astragalus and

decades after the nameless woman left her  
 sculpted and blooming  
 salty tears still run down the girl's round cheeks and  
 join the stinging blood from her bitten lips  
 to become one with the violent red,  
 seeping through her bandages.

ii.  
 on sunday night  
 i rest my feet against the red skin of nai nai's palms  
 as she bathes the balmy, peach-bottomed skin of my feet  
 in honeyed water,  
 weaving the warm river through the crevices between my toes—  
 in and out,  
 under and over.

nai nai cradles my feet as she  
 traces constellations onto the folds of my skin  
 and tickles the underbelly of my arch.  
 she kisses my feet four times each,  
 four for each caressed toe.



"Roots" by Jack Zhu  
 Watercolor Painting

Julia Shen

## VANISHING ACT

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i can pack my things  
into neat little boxes  
and suitcases with the tags missing  
—they fell off somewhere  
in Melbourne or Shanghai or some shining city in the distance—  
and make them just  
disappear.

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toothbrushes and deodorant;  
socks, bras, underwear;  
a battered Glen Arbor baseball cap;  
sunglasses with UV protection,  
because my eyes are young and worth protecting,  
and there is always more to see;  
a passport in the front compartment;  
clothing, shoes, jewelry;  
little trinkets that line a sunlit windowsill;  
toenail clippings that slip out of trash bags  
and hair stuck in the bottom of a faucet;  
names etched into a pillar  
that has since been painted over;  
a cream-colored duvet lined in leaves,  
the one i begged for for months  
but stays unwrinkled beneath me, behind me;  
smog through a skylight lined in green  
i rolled on myself;  
the smell of must that comes  
with coming home and  
the smell of home that leaves  
with leaving.

and when i am done  
making them all disappear  
i, too,  
vanish.  
that's the magic of the act.  
it takes a lot of practice.

## MY SAVIOR

My world was crashing down  
Further than the Bloody Bowels of Hell,  
Faster than the speed of light  
Everything was going wrong  
No money  
No hope  
No love  
Until one day I found you  
Youthful  
Intelligent  
Full of light  
Amusing  
All that I needed  
To drag me out from down below  
Back to living a happy life  
With you  
And for that  
Thank you

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"Falling" by Helena Li  
Charcoal

Amelia Cunnington

## MY ANCESTOR'S CREATIONS

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I was born of Indian blood and American soil,  
 Of bindis and saris and lehengas  
 Of three languages, all at home in my ear, not on my tongue  
 Of 'auntie and uncle' even though we are not related  
 Of makeup two shades lighter and failed attempts at bleaching my skin  
 Of the village's pride for my parents—  
 they made it to the land of dreams.  
 I was born of temple bells and fireworks mistaken for gunshots.  
 Of "get out of my country" and not-so-random security checks at the  
 airports  
 Of surrounding the house with candles for Diwali  
 Of millions of Gods and Goddesses  
 of one God.  
 Of 90 and below is failing  
 Of no talking to guys, but be married by 25  
 Of arranged marriages  
 Of a lack of 'I love you' in the house because we can't express our feel-  
 ings.  
 I was born of grandparents picking my name based on astrology  
 Of ears pierced at 10 months  
 Shaved head at 2 years  
 Nose pierced at 14.  
 Of not wearing saris anymore because I'm afraid of the ridicule.  
 Of people never remembering my 'exotic' name.  
 Of "Grandma don't come to America right now"  
 Of "but where are you from from?"  
 I'm from here.  
 Here is where I learned  
 I am a terrorist for having dark skin,  
 I can't express my religion,  
 But I can fail history for not knowing all of Jesus's teachings.  
 I will be known for IT and smelling bad and funny accents,  
 Known for somehow taking jobs that don't belong to me  
 And never being the cool kid on a TV show.  
 Here is where I watched  
 My family pray and worship in an adorned puja room  
 Teaching me to hold my hands tightly together

Anushri Radhakrishnan

And pray for the poor, the sick, and the suffering  
Because they need more hope than us.  
Here is where I was born.  
I grew up changing to fit other's perceptions  
Of who they imagined I would be,  
Until I finally understood  
That I am not a replica of white imagination  
But a creation from the blood, sweat, and tears of my ancestors.  
I am their vision of the Indian dream.



"Culture" by Anusha Mamidipaka  
Watercolor Painting

*“A book, too, can be a star, a living fire to lighten the darkness, leading out into the expanding universe.”*  
— Madeleine L’Engle



“Fishing for Dreams” by Stephanie Kasprzyk  
Acrylic Painting



First and foremost, I would like to thank Mrs. Hannett for making everything possible through her endless guidance, support, and enthusiasm. Throughout these past few years, you have done so much to shape the warm, welcoming environment of Spectrum that has nurtured a deep love for writing within all the members of the club. To everyone on the editorial board, thank you for your dedication and commitment to putting the magazine together— we truly couldn't have done

it without you. I especially want to thank Anna for being such an amazing co-editor-in-chief and for being someone that I can always count on through any obstacles or technical difficulties. Lastly, thank you to everyone that submitted pieces— reading all of them has been a truly eye-opening and moving experience. This year's magazine revolves around the four realms of the universe: stars, moon, sun, and sky; while they each represent varying aspects of the human existence, their forces come together to create balance and form a harmonious whole. I hope you enjoy reading this issue!

~Julia Shen, Editor-in-Chief and Design Editor



I have been so honored to be able to work with the members of Spectrum to create the past three publications. Spectrum truly embraces all styles of writing, and being a part of the club has allowed me to explore and try new things. I would like to thank Mrs. Hannett for her tireless effort to ensure that our magazine continues to improve over the years. She has opened me up to new ideas and inspired me to expand my creative boundaries. Julia, thank you for being so easy to work

with and for being an overall great co-editor-in-chief. This magazine could not have been possible without the help of Erin, Anushri, and Brett, who helped organize and put together the magazine. They proved their dedication through hours of work during the summer and attention to small details. In this issue, we decided on the theme of the components of the universe. The four aspects— stars, moon, sun, and sky— each embody unique qualities, which together create a balanced universe. We have all worked hard to publish this year's issue, I hope you enjoy reading!

~Anna Sun, Editor-in-Chief and Design Editor

# LETTERS FROM THE STAFF

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No club fosters creativity quite like Spectrum, and I am honored to witness the creative outpouring that takes place in Mrs. Hannett’s room each Tuesday. This club has allowed me to grow as a writer while reading heartfelt work from all ends of the creative “spec-trum”—an experience for which I am incredibly grateful. I would like to thank Mrs.

Hannett-Price for her endless devotion to this club, and for allowing me to get involved in editing this year’s magazine. Thanks also to Anna and Julia for your patience and leadership. I applaud my fellow club members for their hard work and dedication to the art of writing, and I hope you enjoy our magazine!

~Erin Brennan, Associate Editor

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It was my love of writing that drove me to join this club, but it was the creativity, passion and drive to create art each member demonstrated that convinced me to stay. Not only does Spec-trum offer the rare, and often overlooked, opportunity to dedicate an hour of your week to creating something bigger than yourself, but it has exposed me to my classmates’ writing in an environment where the imagination is not stifled or shaped by mandatory prompts or requirements. Championed by our fearless leader, Mrs. Hannett, this club has given me chance to enrich myself in both intellectual and profound ways. There is no way to articulate how much this club has done for me. Thank you.

~Brett Arenberg, Intern

# LETTERS FROM THE STAFF

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Being a part of the Spectrum magazine has really helped me develop as a writer, from the exposure to amazing works by my fellow classmates to the encouragement of Mrs. Hannett to pursue new ideas. I would first like to thank Mrs. Hannett for her ongoing passion for writing and excitement towards Spectrum. Furthermore, I would like to thank Anna, Julia, Erin, and Brett for their dedication and hardwork in putting together this publication. The works in this newest edition have some of the most creative, uplifting, and heart wrenching pieces that really showcase the beauty of creative writing. Thank you all for the opportunity to be a part of this and I hope you enjoyed reading Spectrum!

Editors-In-Chief:  
Julia Shen and Anna Sun

Associate Editor:  
Erin Brennan

Interns:  
Brett Arenberg and Anushri Radhakrishnan

Design Editors:  
Julia Shen and Anna Sun

Faculty Advisor:  
Mrs. Beverly Hannett-Price

Special Thanks:  
The Spectrum Staff  
Ms. Mary Ann DeVogel  
The Art Department  
The English Department  
Sean Davis  
Meghan Guo  
Student Visual-Artists and Writers

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