

THE ANCHOR MAGAZINE

Upcycle 2016

*A Student Collection of Literary and Visual Arts
James M. Bennett High School
Salisbury, Maryland
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Dear Somewhat Child,

When's the last time you ran barefoot through the grass? Or danced around in the rain? When's the last time you blew a wish on a dandelion? Or pretended to be an astronaut? All of your old shovels and buckets are buried in the sand-box. Pinkie and Snowbelle are in storage in the basement. You almost visited me the other day, with a tea party for old time's sake. But I guess you thought I was silly, and you decided not to. All I have to remember you by are the crayon drawings on the wall that mom could never scrub clean. I miss you.

Emma Schmitt, Grade 12

Imitation

Imitation based on Pablo Neruda

I want you whole, as if you were raining,
and you see me close, my body aligns to you.
It seems that your heart has become a hurricane:
it seems that a sea has flooded your eyes.
Since these things exemplify beauty created in nature,
you are born from beauty, created in nature.
You reflect my fear, as connections disintegrate,
and you reflect Lucifer's past.
I want you whole, as if you were raining,
you are a burning, a river's calming.
You see me close, my body aligns to you.
Let me be shaped, then, shaped by yourself.
Let me collapse, then, collapse with yourself,
raw as our flesh and white as the sky.
You are like space, wide, gravitational.
Yourself, a galaxy, as ethereal, as pure.
I want you whole, as if you were raining:
ethereal and heated, as if you were crying.
One look at that moment, a glance, is enough.
And I smile, then, I smile: since it cannot be so.

Mia Johnson, Grade 12

The Pact

On reading Austen's Pride and Prejudice

On one stormy night in late August, the sons of Harold Fitzwater found themselves forming a pact. The sons, Edward and Bennet, were wary about what the future had in store for them. The year was 1809, and their futures were about to change forever. Unbeknownst to them at the time, their father's health was slowly deteriorating. Bennet being the first born son, would inherit their father's estate named Blickly located in Norfolk, England when he died. Edward's plan for the future was to join His Majesty's Royal Navy. The rain had ruined the brother's plans of wandering around the estate for the evening. Being the end of summer, the gentlemen did not want to waste any moment. At the ages of 21 and 23 respectively, the gentlemen were used to the ways of the Ton, and neither of them wished to return to London where the onslaught of fortune-hunters found them. That problem actually brought around the making of the pact. With Edward leaving for the navy that next week, he wanted his brother to promise to him that he would only marry for love. He did not wish for his brother to become foolish while he was away, so to avoid future havoc, the pact was made. Both Edward and Bennett Fitzwater would only marry for love, and nothing else.

Morgan Hall, Grade 11



Stevi Burkett

Colorado

Colorado: land
of the rusty red rocks that
line the horizon

Elizabeth Simpson, Grade 10



Amber Williams

3 A.M.

I love you like the sound of rain at 3am
Pouring down with such uncontrollable power
But still so sweet and innocent
I love you and all of the veins bulging
Out of the skin on your arms
And your heart that continues to beat
Even when times get tough
I love you like the sun that shines even
When it's covered by large masses of clouds
For it can't always be seen though somehow
You know it's there
I love you and all of your flaws
For they make you flawless
I love the feeling of burnt lips on my skin
Hours after I've seen you
But more than anything
More than all the tiny things you do
I just love you.

Brooke Ward, Grade 12

Dream

As I drift off to sleep not wanting to be here, I see a corny vision of a baseball lying in a field. All of a sudden I thought I was drunk like I thought I was dead. I saw my brother with his green mitt and everything. Man, I was dead. I knew I would die. I told you I would.

He comes up to me and says, "Why aren't you reading my signs? You need to be stronger. I sent you alcohol and cigarettes to resist." He can be a moron sometimes. "I've got everything under control," I say. "I am running away and living by myself. I have everything under control."

All of a sudden, he shakes his head then looks at me straight on. Like he was looking into my soul. He then starts to turn white, paper white. I started feeling piercing pain all over my body and I felt sore. I was close to crying. Then I woke up and found myself on the floor. What a stupid dream.

Alexis Prandy, Grade 11



Kristi Noble

Seven/Sept

En français, le numeral seven est sept.
Malheureusement sept n'est pas écrit avec sept lettres, seulement cinq.
In French, the number *seven* is *sept*.
Sadly, *seven* is not spelled with seven letters, only five.

Toni Parks, Grade 11

Growing Pains

The moment your eyes linger too long on smooth skin and long fingers is when you realize that you have fallen too deep into the bubbling vat called feelings.

Again.

At this realization, you miserably try to cover the flush that rises to your skin with an awkward smile. You grasp at the hope that the period ends quickly enough, so you can rush down the hallway while banishing the thoughts of how stupid you are to actually fancy yet another person you could never attain.

The world seems to mock you as the minutes trudge by slowly; the clock changing time at the speed of a tortoise.

Tick tock

Tick tock

Look at you admiring so foolishly. Are you an idiot?

You stew nervously as you catch glimpses of that really nice smile from that really nice person with the smooth skin and long fingers who you really only just wanted to be friends with. You can easily bet your life that your other platonic, romantically incompatible friends will look at you strangely with your latest admiration. Yet hopes of you keeping your mouth shut are abysmal at best.

The bell rings.

You bolt out as casually as one can make it seem. Brief, odd looks are given towards you as your feet stumble out of the room too quickly.

As you amble down the sweat-saturated hallways, you wonder where you went wrong in your quest to make as many friends as possible in order to sustain your position as the unobtrusive yet friendly student. The minor character. Villager A in the play called Life.

It could be basic physical attraction, common at this age of awkward words and fast growth, and you can probably hypnotize yourself into thinking that your attraction is simple and easily diffused.

But as you enter your classroom to sit in your seat, you remember how their words could make heat tingle to the very ends of your fingers, and you realize that this may be more of a problem than you expected.

Juyoung Park, Grade 10

El Dolor Permanente

La niña sienta por la ventana
Y mira, con tristeza, la lluvia
Y ahora no está luz
En su pelo largo y rubia

Pero ella puede recuerda
Una vez más feliz
Y recuerda la voz de su madre
Y recuerda su cariz

Su madre esta aquí
Sentado por el fuego
Pero su alma no está aquí
Y no estará luego

Porque padre no está aquí
En su cuerpo o en su mente
Y madre no puede soportar
Este dolor permanente

Emma Schmitt, Grade 12



Mackenzie Johnson

The Permanent Pain

The young girl sits by the window
And watches, with sadness, the rain
And there is no longer light
In her long blonde hair

But she can remember
A happier time
And she remembers her mother's voice
And she remembers her mother's face

Her mother is here
Sitting by the fire
But her soul isn't here
And it won't be here later

Because father isn't here
In body or in mind
And mother cannot bear
The permanent pain

Emma Schmitt, Grade 12

Mackenzie Johnson



Comfort

I find comfort in destruction.
Storms are beautiful.
In my eyes, a dark cloud is a huge reminder of a smile.
A thunderstorm is a cry for help.
A bolt of lightning is a happy memory.
Rain is the tears of the earth's past.
The blank, dark, night sky is a dream, waiting to come true.
Destruction is misunderstood.

Alana Leto-Carr, Grade 10



Stevi Burkett

Iris

A Short Story by Selena Layton

I awoke with my body damp from a cold sweat and my face was tear-streaked. Realization hit me. *I had a vision.* Glancing at the clock, I saw it was nearly five in the morning. *No time to waste.* Grabbing my phone, I called the only person I trusted. “Elise” I said in the phone, “I need your help.”

“Amber?” My sister’s voice was drowsy.

“Iris is in danger. I had a vision, a dream, and soon she... she’s going to...” I couldn’t finish my sentence.

My hands trembled, my eyes watered, and my voice was barely a whisper.

“It’s alright, Amber. Come on over, we’ll figure this out.”

“Thanks, Elise.” I hung up and ran to Iris’s room. “Iris, wake up sweetie.”

“Why mommy?” The little girl asked, dazed.

“There’s no time to explain. We need to leave, now.”

Eleven years later.

Dear Iris,

By the time you read this you’ll understand everything. You know of my capabilities, I was able to see a person’s death before it happened. They’re similar to your capabilities. The night I left I had a dream, a vision. You were very ill and you died in my arms. I couldn’t stand to see you like that, so I took you somewhere I knew you’d be safe. However, by changing your fate I also changed mine. I’m now the one who’s fallen ill, but by the time you receive this letter I’ll be gone. Remember, don’t look people in the eyes. Eyes are a window to the soul. Please be careful out there in the world, I can’t protect you anymore. I love you very much.

Mom

On my sixteenth birthday, today, my Aunt Elise gave me an envelope with my name on it and said it was from my mother. My mother has been gone for eleven years. I don’t remember much of the night she left. She spoke in hushed tones, telling my aunt to take care of me. I never saw my mother after that night.

After reading the letter I looked up at my aunt. She sighed, making her way to the kitchen table to sit with me.

“Iris,” she said, “Your mother came to me and told me to watch over you. I didn’t know she wouldn’t come back. I’m sorry sweetie.”

“It isn’t your fault.” I didn’t realize I was crying until I wiped my eyes. “I’m going for a walk.” Before she could protest, I grabbed my jacket and ran out of the apartment. I walked for about fifteen minutes before I started shivering. The snow started descending slowly as I looked around for someplace warm

to go. My eyes landed on a coffee shop at the end of the block. I made my way there and ordered a hot coffee. While ordering, I stared at the menu so I wouldn't be tempted to look into the barista's eyes. Sometimes temptation gets the best of me. I heard my name and went to receive my beverage when I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned around, forgetting to avert my eyes. To my luck however, the man was wearing sunglasses, making it impossible to see his eyes.

"Excuse me?" I turned to face him. "Your name is Iris Burnett?" *How did he know that?* As if reading my mind, he answered. "I heard the barista call your name."

"What do you want?" I didn't mean to sound rude, oh well.

"Sorry for bothering you, but it's not every day you meet someone with the same last name as you." I was going to nod my head and walk away, but my curiosity betrayed my thoughts.

"Really? What's your name?"

"I'm Lucas Burnett, nice to meet you." He brought his hand up for me to shake.

"Likewise." I eyed him carefully before accepting his handshake.

"So, do you think it's just a coincidence that we have the same last name or do you think we could be related?" His question caught me off guard.

"I don't know," I answered honestly, "I believe anything is possible though."

Understanding, he nodded his head. "Who were your parents?"

"My father left before I was born and my mother left when I was young. I live with my aunt now, so I never really knew my parents. What about you?"

"My mom left when I was young, so my father and I moved away. About two years ago my father died. I moved back down here a few months ago hoping to find my mom. I thought that if I found her I could ask her why she left us years ago."

"Oh, I'm sorry for your loss."

He gave me a sad smile. "That's alright. I've learned to accept what happens in life. Besides, I believe that everything happens for a reason."

"And what is the reason for us meeting?"

He smiled, scratching the back of his neck awkwardly. "I don't know yet."

I took a sip of my coffee and when I looked up I instantly regretted it. Lucas had taken his sunglasses off and my eyes met his. Everything around me faded and the vision clouded my mind.

Blood was seeping through his thin jacket. His breaths became jagged.

"How could you do something so reckless?" A girl spoke through sobs. Holding him close, she stroked his cheek.

"I-I had to s-save you, I-Iris." His stammered words were soft.

"Why would you do that?"

"Th-That's what b-brothers do."

He began choking, his lungs in need of air. His eyes rolled in the back of his head and

his breathing ceased. The sobbing became louder with every passing second. He was gone.

There he was, staring at me wide-eyed from across the table. I diverted my eyes and clumsily stood from my seat.

“I-I should go. My aunt will be wondering what’s taking so long.”

I fled the shop, running back to Aunt Elise’s apartment without stopping to catch my breath. My mind was spinning with thoughts. Why was I in my vision? What did he mean “*That’s what brothers do*”?

I burst through the door and my aunt’s expression became worried.

“Iris-”

I didn’t let her finish her sentence. I enveloped her into a bone-crushing hug. I immediately began crying into her shoulder. She stroked my hair while shushing me.

“What did you see, Iris?” That’s why I love her. She knew me so well.

“Aunt Elise, this vision was different from the others. I met this guy at the coffee shop and when he took his sunglasses off I accidentally looked in his eyes and I had a vision of him dying. But it was different because I was in it. I was in my own vision! It looked like he had been shot and I think the bullet was meant for me because I asked him why he did that and he said ‘that’s what brothers do’ and then he died in my arms. I don’t even know the guy but I felt every emotion. I was devastated over a stranger!” My sobs subsided slightly. “Aunt Elise, what’s going on?”

“Iris, take some deep breaths.” I did as she said and I felt myself start to relax. “Sit down. We need to talk.” She passed me a tissue from the coffee table and I wiped my tears away. I sat beside her on the sofa.

“Iris,” she began, “I never told you this because I promised your mother I wouldn’t. She thought keeping this from you would protect you, but I guess fate had different plans. You have a brother, Iris.”

I felt a sudden ache in my chest.

“A few years before you were born your mother had a vision of your brother. So to protect him, she sent him away with your father. I’m sorry I didn’t tell you, but I promised-“

“I forgive you.” I stopped her from finishing her sentence. “I need to tell him. He deserves to know.”

She shook her head in agreement. I got up from my seat and headed for the door. I was relieved to see him still in the coffee shop when I arrived. I made my way slowly to his table. He looked up when he saw me and I quickly looked down.

“I know who you are.” He spoke before I could. “I don’t understand completely, but I know you’re my sister.”

“How do you know that?”

He sighed. “You probably won’t believe me when I tell you, but I get these

visions--”

“You get them too?” I looked up from the floor. I looked above his head.

“Wait, *you* get visions?”

“Yeah.” I tucked a strand of hair behind my ear. “My mother-our mother-got them, so I guess we get them too. Wait, what did you see?”

“I saw you die, of course. But this vision was different. I was holding you and it looked like you had taken a bullet for me. I asked you why you did that and you said ‘that’s what siblings do’. What did you see?”

“Same as you, except reversed. You were dying and you said ‘that’s what brothers do’.”

“You said you live with your Aunt?”

“Yes. Why?”

“I have some questions and I need answers.”

“I can take you to her now if you want.”

Lucas stood from his chair. “Lead the way.”

It was getting dark outside and the streets are dangerous at night, but we took shortcuts through the alleys anyway. *We’ll be fine; it’s not that dark yet.* We walked in silence until we were about a block away from the apartment.

“What was mom like?” Lucas broke the silence.

“I’m not entirely sure. I was very young when she left. She left to save me, you know.” He looked me in the eyes, but I saw nothing. *How weird.* “Aunt Elise told me that mom had a vision of you when you were young. She sent you and dad away hoping it would keep you safe, but she had a vision of me years later. So, she took me here and vanished.” I looked at my aunt’s apartment. “She wrote me a letter before she died, basically explaining why she ran off. I understand why she did it though.”

He was about to respond when we heard a clicking sound. We turned our heads toward the noise and I thought my heart would beat out of my chest.

“Give me your money!” The man’s voice was rough and urgent. I couldn’t see his face in the dark, thank goodness.

Lucas and I looked at each other. The man brought his gun up in front of my face.

“You! Give me your purse.”

“Hey, listen-” He moved the gun in front of Lucas’s face.

In one swift motion Lucas grabbed the gun and it went off towards the ground, startling me and I screamed. He managed to get the gun and now pointed it towards the robber.

“How’d you do that?” I asked him flabbergasted.

“Dad was a cop and he taught me some stuff.”

Before I could reply, my aunt caught mine and Lucas’s attention when she screamed my name. The man took this as an advantage to try and take the gun back. The gun went off once again and the man ran away victoriously with the

gun.

“Iris!” I turned to my aunt.

“Aunt Elise!” Blood was seeping from her left shoulder.

Lucas caught her as she collapsed. *This can't be happening.* I saw Lucas die, not her! Yet, here she was bleeding out in his arms. I began sobbing and I saw Lucas's watery eyes.

“Lucas?” She grabbed his arm.

“Yes, Aunt Elise?”

She smiled, “Take care of her, will you?”

“I will, I promise.”

“Aunt Elise, why did it have to be you?” I sobbed.

“I rather it be m-me than one of y-you.”

“No!” I cried.

“I'm sorry, Iris,” Lucas wrapped his arm around me.

Her hand fell. Her body went limp. She was gone.

Selena Layton, Grade 11

Encaged

The bubbling brook does not care
Which way its current flows
The bird cares not who hears its song
The sky cares not if it snows

Yet here we stand so envious
Of water's carefree ways
We fear all those judgmental eyes
And we dare not make waves

But freedom lingers close and near
It hangs above your head
To forget the harshest judgement
Take charge of life instead

For when the years have passed
Our faces marked with age
We will yearn for years long gone,
The years we spent encaged

Emma Schmitt, Grade 12

Happiness all around

My perception of my happiness has changed significantly.
Anyone's happiness can change at any given time.
Even so, happiness should be inside everyone you meet.
Happiness can be felt by everyone.
Some people may think differently.
Yet it doesn't matter what the person's perception of life is.
Perceptions can change, and with that happiness.
Change can be good in some places.
Without progress, the world would lose faith.
Is happiness related to faith?
What inspires happiness?
The world may never know.
It doesn't matter.
Because all around the world something is forming.
The phenomenon is surprising.
Happiness is all around.

Morgan Hall, Grade 11



Sarah Messick

Night Storms

Night storms keep me up all night.
It's hard to sleep when you are in a fright.
I wonder if I'm the only one
Who hates it when they're alone?
Are you afraid of Night Storms too?
I know I am--they give me such a fright.

Christina Taylor, Grade 12

Episodes from *Schrodinger's Human*

"I talk to God but the sky is empty"-- Sylvia Plath

The room in which I wake is white. I have woken up in grey areas, red halls, and in every motley hue between. Never white. White is Heaven's Gate like black is the Abyss, but this place unnerves me. My body is light, but my head is heavy as though I am inebriated by something foreign, yet all I did last night was sleep, or at least, attempt to. The air is numbing but without chill. This is heaven.

"Daughters"

I travel a lot. Each morning is a new airport, another breakfast of a packaged croissant and slightly cold coffee. I'm usually on commuting flights between my the global branches of my office. I'm CEO of StormCorp, an up-and-coming pharmaceutical company centered in Miami. Forbes thinks I'm "shrouded in mystery" and calls me "Mrs. Bruce Wayne," but I take my elusiveness as a compliment. Business is skyrocketing, and so am I.

I remember falling asleep at an LAX terminal, only to be woken by the monotonous announcement of boarding. Sleepily, I rummaged through my carry-on for my boarding pass and ran up to the counter.

I am greeted by a tall blonde flight attendant with a wide flight attendant smile; she takes my pass and notions me to the first class seats. She takes my suitcase and props it into an overhead compartment. It feels awkward to have her do it for me, though I know it's her job. My thoughts don't last long though; a little girl excitedly runs into me, giggling. She then looks up at me curiously, her eyes seem to mirror mine. Huh. Her mother runs after her, out of breath. She is young but tired-looking; dark circles frame her big eyes and one of her earrings is crooked. That's travelling for you.

"Neela!" she gasps. "What do you say?!"

Little Neela looks up at me sheepishly. "Sorry," she says.

Her tired looking mother apologizes to me again and grabs Neela by the hand, and they walk away to the crammed Economy section. I see Neela's mother singlehandedly put all of their luggage into an overflowing compartment while Neela stands on seat, grinning and clutching a teddy and a book. I feel a twinge of guilt, watching from my comfy reclining seat. I used to go with my mom on her business trips all the time, and it was no easy task for her to keep up with a bubbly five year old. I go up to the flight attendant who seated me and whisper to her. She nods with a smile and tells me I'm a good person.

If only she knew.

* * *

“Hail caffeine”

My mother makes jokes about how one day my life will turn around---I'll marry, have kids, the works.

“Nah mom,” I tell her over the phone, mindlessly pouring my third coffee of the day. She laughs and tells me about my high-school brother's latest shenanigans. I sip away at the coffee, peering through my emails and listening to mom over speakerphone. She sighs.

“You're happy, right?” She asks me. “You seem distracted.”

“Mom, I'm fine. My stack of paperwork though . . . well, not so fine.”

“Have you gotten any new décor for the Hub yet?”

The Hub is what she calls my condo, a sleek penthouse overlooking the water. I have a habit of redecorating parts of the place every few weeks. The Chinese call it Feng Shui, I call it art. Speaking of art, the walls are plastered in it. My crowning jewel of a piece hangs over the fireplace (don't ask me why I have a fireplace in Miami), a towering Dali-like clock with the hands as God and Satan. Each number has an image of a myth in which said number is significant.

“Not lately. Lots of work lately; we're thinking about buying a smaller company, and I've got the legal department working overtime.”

Mom lectured me for another ten minutes. When I hung up, I was the loneliest I've ever been. I looked up at the clock painting, stirring at the dregs of my now cold coffee. At least they're with me, or something like that.

* * * *

Ten minutes after I woke up, I realized that I hadn't fallen asleep in the linen closet again.

I heard a voice whisper to me, almost ethereal. I couldn't understand what it was saying, but words started to appear on the walls.

“Good morning dear,” the walls read.

What the... when I get out of here. I've gotta stop drinking so much damn coffee.

“You're not here because of your caffeine issues”

It took me a second to realize that I hadn't spoken aloud yet. And that I hadn't tried to run screaming, especially since it feels like the plot of a Saw movie.

Before I could react properly, a man walked in. He was about ten years older than me, but his eyes still had a youthful gaze, twinkling with the hope that left mine long ago. Our eyes met once before I started crying.

“What is wrong with me?” I thought. I hadn't cried in years, why cry now at the face of a stranger?

He knelt next to me and took my hand with one of his and dried my eyes with another.

I looked up at him, cheeks still dewy with tears.

“W-who are you?” I stammered.

“Forget that, do you know who *you* are?”

“Uh, I’m pretty sure most people know who I am. Do you even keep up with the news?”

He laughed and pulled out a copy of *Fortune*.

“Maybe.”

I sighed and shook my head, looking up at him properly for the first time. He looked like one of my colleagues, dressed head to toe in a crisp suit, but his hair was like Axl Rose’s.

“I knew that the devil wears Prada, but I didn’t know God wore Armani.”

“Can God take you out to dinner sometime then?”

“We’ll see.”

I woke up at nine that morning, alone and panicking before realizing that God was a dream. I had the day off, but what to do? Anyone in Miami would’ve slapped me for thinking that, because let’s be real: what can’t you do in Miami? So I got up to make my first coffee of the day, pulling out a filter. I went to put it in the coffee maker, but stopped at the sight of a dark splotch. The splotch, as it turned out, was a note written in untidy scrawl.

The car will pick you up at seven for the Azul - “God”

...what? This is still a dream, right?

“God’s name is Dexter”

Apparently Dex is Father Time, and in his spare time he’s a world traveler. And not just our world, but all the worlds in the universe. I nearly choke on my champagne when he tells me; this guy is crazier than all the other ones I’ve been out to dinner with, but he sure is entertaining.

“No, seriously,” he says. I roll my eyes, but keep listening. “Imagine you’re a bubble in your glass, and that liquid amber is all you know. All you are is a tiny capsule of air and chemicals and your only purpose is to be consumed. In essence, humans are the same way; they live and they die. They think they’re doing something meaningful when they fight, when they complain, when they kill. But every man dies the same death. Not you though.”

Great, I hired a lunatic to head the new secret research project at StormCorp.

“And that’s why I hesitated to start Project Infinity--if the wrong people got their hands on it, we’d be done for.”

He put his hand over mine and looked at me carefully.

“Trust me.”

“Let me take you into another reality”

I was in the hospital, writhing in pain. A dark-haired figure head to toe in scrubs was holding my hands in his. *Not bad, Alternate Me.* I thought. Dex

smirked.

A few moments later, the main doctor placed a wrinkly new being into Alternate Me's arms. She started crying, totally unlike her. The man next to her lowered his surgical mask and kissed the top of her head.

Through her happy tears, Alternate Me said, "Neela. We'll call her Neela." I looked over at Dex, tearing up.

". . . and that's what you've been missing."

* * *

I woke up to the smell of coffee and and sunshine. Rolling over, I decided it was okay to skip one seven o' clock meeting. *To be continued . . .*

Tisha Chakaborty, Grade 11

Freedom

Each line

On the old woman's face
Another sign of wisdom

Each line

Of smoke wafting in the air
She burns sage for protection

Each line

Of native people
Being led from their homes

Each line

On the document
That signs their land away

Each line

Of blood
Dripping down the battlefield

Each line

Red and white
On the flag that stole it's freedom

Emma Schmitt, Grade 12

Making a Choice

A couple days later, after we saw the gun running, and we assumed it was the resistance men. “We almost got caught,” yelled Henry with clenched teeth.

“No we didn’t” said Sam. “You’re worrying too much, but isn’t it amazing that of all that stuff was going on and no one knows?” They were opening the door and walking inside.

“How about if someone did recognize us?” said Henry, down right sweating because of the stress.

“Someone did,” said a voice standing in the corner of their apartment.

It was the girl we saw last night the same long red hair, the same haunting white skin that looked like carved marble, and now that I’m closer, the sharpest blue eyes. She got up and walked slowly to the door and locked it. She was tall which is saying something; I am a solid six foot five.

I realized that she was locking the door. Then I looked over at Henry who seemed to have had a heart attack but still, by some miracle, still standing.

“So Tuesday night you saw something. Do you know what?” The girl asked and wandered over to the dirty window facing the street. She closed the blinds.

“Ummm ...” said Sam.

“We don’t know what you’re talking about,” Henry said shakily.

“Now, now,” said the girl. “Don’t lie to me. I know what you saw. Now we are faced with an impasse; either I feel threatened and violated, or you tell me you want to join.” She was so calm and cold. She knew exactly what she was doing. “You’ve put yourself in a position where you have to choose which side you are on.”

I looked at Henry, and he looked back at me. “You’re wrong it’s not a choice, this place needs to change. We’re on your side no matter what.”

“Good,” said the girl. “I made the made the right choice.”

“And what’s that?” said Henry.

“I could’ve killed you.”

Lydia Marsh, Grade 12

Of Fantasy to Fight

Testimony of the Athens Government
13th Understanding . . . The cold night bears mystery,
A fear of the unknown,
A god's voice to guide us to safety

The gods always guide, you...
You, Sparta have been misguided.

By the 13th Understanding..
The gods commence, if war is upon us
The gods will guide us.
Terms of internment . . .

Mason Carmean, Grade 11



Ada Estrada

Five Haiku

There is a clock
Can you read the time?
Seconds pass by

The flag still hangs
Stripes unmoving now
But the stars twinkle

Tap tap on the buttons
Fingers flying on the keys
Trolling on tumblr

Electricity
Zooming all around here
Through the cord and plug

I bite my nails
Why I keep doing it?
I do not know
Haley Nash, Grade 11

Who is she?

She was depressed,
I am radiant
She had no reason to be,
I have countless reasons
She held in all her emotions,
I am eager to let them out
She never felt wanted by many,
I know I don't need to be
She forgot what good news was,
I create it for others
She formed enemies that did not exist,
I have everlasting friendships to cherish
She only felt content alone in the shadows,
I dance in the light like it is the only place I was meant to be
She saw the future as a goal that could never be attained,
I see a future full of dreams waiting for me to grab one and never let go
She refused to love herself,
There is not a number big enough to show all the people I love
She was beautiful all along and did not see it,
I easily see the beauty in me and everything around
She was eventually saved,
I am saved
I was her,
She is me

*Mikayla Riba, Grade 11
Young Author Prize Winner 2016*

Rico's Story

A Speaker Knockerz-inspired selection from Mehki Woolridge

Rico

Looking through his eyes I remember the pain, the sight of fear, the smell of gunpowder, and the blood on the floor, my mother and brother's bodies lying motionless. I remember the flash, the world going dark, and the last slither of light dissipating. Then it goes dark.

Pedro

"Aye boy, get the hell back here!" 17 soon to be 18, Pedro the trouble maker of the city, already has one of the biggest records a senior in high school can possibly earn. Being locked up and in prison doesn't faze him, it makes feel high above the world giving that extra adrenaline rush each and every day.

Rico

The light returns slowly, but the pain is tremendous. All I can hear is the doctors barking orders at the petrified nurses. Then the darkness overwhelms me once again, putting my body in a fit of movement, then stillness accompanies the darkness.

Pedro

"I hereby sentence you to four months in Florida State Penitentiary with no bail or early release for the charges of grand theft auto, breaking and entering, stealing, and assault." Judge didn't go easy on me this time, ha-ha. Whatever. Time will fly. Back to the hell hole I go again.

Rico Chapter 1 fragment

I overhear the doctors talking, describing the facial reconstruction and surgery I would have to go through in order to remove the scar running from mouth to ear, like a forced smile with a bullet. It's been 2 and a half months since the murder of my mother and brother. I, however, got lucky and survived. I've had no visitors that I remember except for a strange man who left a card inside a card. "Wishing the best for your recovery. Call me when you're ready to move out." Strange, considering I don't have any family in California, but I ask the nurse for my phone anyway as I finish gathering my belongings to finally leave this place. I dial the number, it rings for 10 seconds then a woman answers. "Hell, who is this? Mark, is this one of your little side girls that keeps calling?!"

“Give me that damn phone, Celina. What sup? This Mark. Who’s this?”

I soon fill him in, telling him that he left a card in my room. “Oh yea, you. How you feeling, champ? You look ugly still or have they fixed that scar yet? But I need you to listen good: there’s a credit card under the flower’s dirt. Take that and go get yourself some new clothes and shoes-- freshen up a little, then take the ticket to Florida and I’ll be waiting. Don’t call anymore.”

Beep. the phone hangs up. I’m lost for words and confused. So many questions arise, but I soon find myself digging up the roses and finding the card and ticket. I check out and call the taxi . . .

Mehki Woolridge, Grade 11

Outlooking

The buzz of the monitor echoes the blankness I don’t know that I
am only
jagged lines. I thought I was
suspended over the earth

inside a crater my dreams held
They do not see
Out--
stretched arms over their home, my tubes dangling in their

glassy eyes---mine or yours? Am I dunked under the ocean of
ignorance...my vision, nonexistent?
my reverie is hands holding

question marks feigning answers
all they see of me is the lump of grey keeping me
alive

or at least living---a series of blinks and visits
a camera obscura of upside down nothings
is where I lie, rest in peace.

Tisha Chakraborty, Grade 11

Narcolepsy

“The creak of bed springs suffering under the weight of a restless man is as lonely a sound as I know.” Patrick deWitt

Right now I am awake but nobody knows
the sleep in my eyes or lack thereof and dark circles
biting nails, flickers of red lacquer

There is an angel in the corner
watching me sleep but she doesn't know me
She doesn't know how

Awake I can be when she closes her eyes and
lulls into a daze
she does not care to share with me

Why is her white sheet so beautiful but
my nightgown isn't and why can't I be
Her...if she can close her eyes

Why I can't I?
If the lamp turns on, who is holding
the switch

of fate that I could be the angel
and she could be me
rolling under the covers

Imagining door handles breaking
hearing a creak in the corridor
the drip of the faucet

little ticks that make hours go by until
Night fades into day and my
angel,

She does not stay
She comes when I am not
supposed to see Anything

But blackness hanging
from my ceiling
dripping like water droplets from the faucet

Tisha Chakraborty, Grade 11

Seven Poems

Bully

Bully, why do you say those things?
Bully, what did I do to you?
Was it something I said?
Was it something I did?
Why do I feel so alone?
Is there something wrong at home?
Is someone bullying you?
Do you feel torn inside?

Names

You call me ugly; I know I'm beautiful.
You call me dumb; I know I'm smart.
You call me freak; well at least I'm being me.
You call me fat; at least I don't starve myself.
I'm beautiful, smart, kind, funny, and I am who I am.

Words

Words hurt don't you know
They cut like a knife and won't let go
Words hurt deep inside
To the point where you want to hide
Words make you feel alone
To the point where you feel like you're done.
But I'm here to tell you
That you're not alone
I have been where you are
But I made it through
And truthfully I can say it only makes you stronger

How would you feel?

How would you feel if someone called you fat?
How would you feel if you had no one to talk to?
How would you feel if you were bullied?
How would you feel if you were being abused at home?
How would you feel if everyone ignored your tears?
How would you feel if you didn't have any place to call home?
How would you feel if you got some bad news?
How would you feel if you don't have any clue when your next meal will be?

Today

Today, I will make a difference.

Today, I will stand up.

Today, I will make someone's day.

Today, I will support those in need.

Today, I will give it my all.

Today, I will learn to understand everyone's differences.

Today, not tomorrow, I will help to stop bullying, will you?

Yesterday's gone

Yesterday is in the past.

Yesterday I didn't know what was in store.

Yesterday was a bad day.

Yesterday was a different time.

But today is here--no more saying I can't

No more being a bystander

Yesterday's gone, today's a new day,

make a difference

What is normal?

What is normal? Is it being who you are?

What is normal? Is it being who they are?

What is normal? Is it the "in" crowd?

I am normal in my own way.

I am smart, a little weird, a little out there, and a little sassy.

I am normal because I believe I am normal.

Christina Taylor, Grade 12



Susan Hemanuer

The Decision Process

“Ma’am, you have two minutes to make your final decision,” said the man in the uniform.

Two minutes!! That’s not enough time. A bead of sweat fell from my face and dropped to the green and yellow tiled floors. My eyes moved left to right, back and forth. Discouraging thoughts ran through my mind. Telling me I can’t possibly make up my mind for I am too indecisive. I feel the encouraging thoughts trying to give me a fighting chance, but I know for a fact that the optimistic side won’t win.

My eyes look up to the clock mounted on the right side of the colorful walls. The number of inhaling breaths increased as the second hand ticked and ticked. My eyes raced back to the two decisions laid in front of me. The amount of discouraging thoughts increased in my head again. The battle between the encouraging and discouraging thoughts continued again. This is a constant never-ending cycle.

I look to my left and my right. I see on the right all the happy people who had already made up their minds. They probably never went through all this constant battle that I’m going through.. I see them laughing and smiling. They are all so content with their decisions. What about me? The encouraging voice inside of my head tells me I could be just like them. Happy. On my left, I see all the people waiting to decide and I am the one holding them up. I can see a look of determination on their face. They all have decided. Every single person in this room has decided but me. Am I the only one that goes through this? I can’t be. There has to be people like me.

“Ma’am. Please decide. You only have one minute left,” again said by the man in the uniform. Who is he? The timekeeper? I want to ask him to give me a few more minutes but then I always remember the people on my left, the ones waiting to decide. I’m holding them up.

I shut my eyes and decided that at the last minute my final decision will prevail. I forced my eyes to look away from the cause of my stress and focused on the man in the uniform. He was wearing the uniform that allowed everyone to know that he was an employee. He wore a hat with a name tag clipped on. A black shirt and black pants. One of his hands tapped in a rhythmic beat on the metal counter while the other was at a stance, ready to begin when I made my decision. I wondered how many times has he made someone this nervous and stressed. He was probably a nice kid, but right now he was my worst enemy. I imagined red pointy horns sticking out of his hat and a red tail swishing back and forth with the red pitchfork behind his back. I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. My imagination disappeared and all that was left was a boy in a uniform.

I looked back to the clock. I had thirty seconds, twenty-nine seconds, twen-

ty-eight seconds, and so on. One final time I looked back at my decisions. I raised my eyebrows and told myself that this should be the easiest decision of my life. This decision should, in fact, make my life better. This decision will and should bring happiness to my life. I looked back at the man in the uniform. He raised his eyebrows, a nonverbal way of asking if I am ready to decide. I nodded my head yes.

He asked again this one final time, "Are you ready to decide?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Great. What will it be?"

"Mint chocolate chip ice-cream."

"Good choice. Will this be in a cone or in a cup?"

I looked back at him in horror and he could tell that this whole decision process would begin again. I don't know about you but this is the worst fear for an indecisive person.

Virginia Cheng, Grade 10

Concrete Us

A broken heart is concrete,
soft when poured

sensitive to the touch,
grows hard when it gets bored

You leave the heart alone,
and not let it love

it dries and goes cold,
it can be walked on

but the footsteps, won't
sink in.

Kachaira Briddell, Grade 11

I Remember

I remember my mom sitting on the bottom step with me helping me tie my shoes for my first day of 1st grade like it was last year, but unfortunately it wasn't last year.

I remember her unscrewing the training wheels off my bike and putting a Band-Aid on my scraped knee. It felt like it was last month, but unfortunately it wasn't last month

I remember her wiping my tears away from my face in 8th grade when my first boyfriend broke up with me like it was two weeks ago, but that didn't happen two weeks ago

I remember when she finally gave me the keys to the car to go to that party I begged to go to like it happened last week, but that didn't happen last week

I also remember me wiping her tears away when I came out of the dressing room in my wedding dress like it was yesterday, but to my disbelief that was not yesterday

I, most of all, recall holding my crying sister in my arms when the doctor said those five terrible words no one wants to hear, "I'm sorry for your loss," like it happened a couple of seconds ago, but that didn't happen a couple seconds ago

That happened 12 years ago, but it's all going to be okay because the cycle always goes back to the beginning

Today I am helping her tie her shoes for her first day of 1st grade.

Mikayla Riba, Grade 11

Hao Tran

The Beauty of Language

English: Live your life

Italian: Vivi la tua vita

French: Vivez votre vie

Spanish: Vive tu vida

German: Lebe dein Leben

Toni Parks, Grade 11





Susan Hemauer

Lament of an Angel's Soul

Was I forced here through the gates?
Or did I flutter here on my own accord
 I remember the exit
 But lost the journey
I bleed, I feel, I blink, I read, I learn, I am deceived
 My heart has been rendered penetrable
Yet I do not see why.... That is the trouble

Being in a human skin I long to escape
 Free me, unearthly being
 The pleasure is not worth the pain
 And memories evade my brain
For this mind, constructed of flesh
 Cannot handle such memories
 Such glory, such sights...
If they remained they would destroy every fiber
 That is the trouble

 I know, but do not understand
 No longer fly but now I breathe
 What a disadvantage
My enemy has become invisible to these eyes
Wet orbs good for nothing but viewing the simplest of colors
 So release me, fine meat
 Serve your purpose and be gone
Yet my sentence has not been called
 That is the trouble.

Susan Hemaner, Grade 12

Beauty

Beauty is nature around you
May it be grass, trees, or sand
Nature brings out the beauty

Toni Parks, Grade 11

Tisha Chakraborty



This is Untitled on Purpose

an anchor?

an ocean?

is it meant to be concealed like the bags that form under your eyes after crying? after the healing merely acknowledged as self-pity? as weakness? are you meant to be seen as weak by the same people who think poetry is only supposed to rhyme and entertain their hazed minds? into verses written as if they were inscribed by your own desires—

all short

and stopped

and implicit?

— is it like those people who are perceived as necessary for amusement so their spots are decorated with metaphors of judgement and an appearance of forced stanzas?

it is,

to you,

isn't it?

Mia Johnson, Grade 12

Tick-Tock of the Clock

After reading Edgar Allan Poe

Hidden in a tiny apartment, tucked away in the heart of downtown, lives a middle-aged woman. She sits in her home listening to the clocks go tick-tock. As the hours pass by, she grows more anxious with each chime. No one understands her anxiety, only she does. Widowed with no kids, all she has left is her husband's grandfather clock.

As I walk into her home to care for her dying body, I wonder why she rocks back and forth to the swinging of the grandfather clock. But a day before she died she told me all . . .

She grabbed my arm, yanking it, so I took that as a sign of her wanting to talk. "Miss, if you don't mind, I want you to know a story, and you can't tell a soul till my soul leaves, you understand?" She said weakly.

"Yes ma'am," I replied.

It was a stormy night, and the lady and her husband were trapped in the apartment. Like a normal couple, they made dinner together. The husband went into the kitchen unaware that his wife had a devious plan. She had become annoyed with his foolish ways. As the husband walked back into the living room, by the glow of the fire, the missus stabs her husband four times in the chest. As the grandfather clock chimes to the hour, the husband's soul left him.

While the fire blazed, so did her guilt. She decided to cremate her husband in the roaring fire. As his body burned away, the lady sat back and enjoyed her dinner as the clock chimed to the next hour. She put out the fire and cooled the ashes; she carved a pocket inside the clock and poured in the ashes.

As I learned this, and the old lady passed, I screamed and the clock chimed. I went running. To this day, all I can hear is the sound of her body thumping to the ground, and the old grandfather clock chiming. After three days in shock, I called the police and told them the story. But the tick-tock of that grandfather clock will never leave me.

Morgan Brinkley, Grade 11

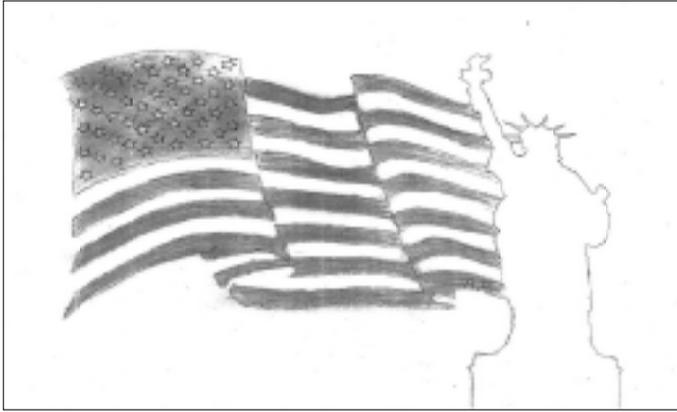
Silence

I never thought I'd see the day when the bees no longer buzz. The birds no longer sing their songs, and nothing is like it was.

The leaves no longer wave when the wind blows through their branches; and the clouds no longer do their usual day-time dances.

On a day like this I understand, it all makes perfect sense. Loss is in the air, and there is only silence.

Selena Layton, Grade 12



Anakin Ferguson

Chapter Nine: The Idea and Mr. Watson

A Selection from Molly Forsythe

You know when you write or say a word that particular number of times where it suddenly begins to breed the uncertainty of its actuality inside of you? Almost like you've uttered it into extinction, every letter broadly extrinsic and every syllable murmuring the definition of *counterfeit*. Well, for about a week after New Years, possibly longer, I had been delicately articulating the letters and sounds that made up Mason's name. *Mason Alexander*, tracing the empty letters onto my knee cap or onto my pillow. Eventually, that name that had once been so esoteric on my belittled tongue, reciprocated from a bright and intoxicatingly new sense of vocabulary to the trite lyrics of an old love song. I became so incredibly lost with the demise of the new-found awe that accompanied his

name only days before, that there wasn't much else I could do besides curl up in a fractured heap under my comforter for days at a time, only retreating from the comfortable warmth to use the bathroom or eat some saltines. I couldn't determine whether the ill-tempered uneasiness in the pit of my stomach was due to alcohol poisoning, because of Mason's death, or possibly even both, but I knew I had to do something about it.

It all started one day in February, after a week of my sorrows and sobs into my pillow case for a good half of a month, I had lost a daunting total of 10 pounds from not eating and all of the vomiting into the toilet I had done...I do not suggest any of this, by the way. It was the worst month of my life, talk about rough beginnings; I could only hope for better things to come with the bitter cold month of February. I had gone to school for the first time in three or four weeks, and on that first Friday back, the idea came to me. The idea that would put set so many hearts on fire, so many minds at ease, so many people into amenity, the idea to finally give Mason a just and fair ending. Not that any ending for that teenage boy would ever truly be fair in any manner, but as fair as it could get. After school let out, I skipped my hour-long bus ride home and went to talk to my guidance counselor....for the very first time in the entirety of my year-worth high school experience. I hardly knew where the room was, I just knew it was somewhere around the nurse's office, and I went there a lot, so I knew very well by now where that was in vicinity to where I was at all times. Hopefully, there would be a sign so I could at least look like someone who knew what they were doing. Sure enough, on a plaque outside the last door to the right, in bulky black letters read the words *Clarence Watson: Guidance Counselor*.

I opened the door very carefully, the inexperience of my situation frightened me for some inexplicable reason. He was just another person, why was I suddenly so terrified to utter a sound? When I looked into the contentedly mellow room with its faded yellow walls and dark curtains drawn shut concealing the warmth and friendliness a midst the room. In the far corner, stood an old hat rack, a tea table with a pitcher and lemons on a tray resting on the tired wood, adjacent to them was a filing cabinet with five drawers, three of which keys jutted out from their key holes. To the left diagonally strewn against the wall was a modest desk made from the same tired wood as the tea table and sitting behind the desk was a very hefty man sitting in a swivel chair the color of the walls. He had wide-rimmed glasses, a bushy greying mustache but not a hair on his sleek bald head, his ears reminded me of Dumbo with how they jutted out of his head at the angle and length they did, but nothing was larger or grander than the smile he wore with beaming confidence.

"Well, hello there miss, how can I help you?" His voice was undemanding and very soothing compared to the abruptness and brininess of the day-to-day school life.

"I have a proposition." I've always loved that word, so official, so mature.

"I see, and would this be a business proposition?" Mr. Watson gestured for me to sit down, putting on a false sense of gravity towards the situation, which actually did wonders to relieving my stress build-up. I began to relax into the

environment, sitting in one of the folding chairs in front of his desk, watching as his smile clung under his mustache.

“In a way.” I smiled back.

“Well, I’m for it. Let’s hear it!”

“Do you remember Mason Alexander?” With the name, his smile faltered—his eyes so suddenly full of despair.

“Yes ma’am, I do. That boy was a very good student, always to school on time, fantastic grades, so many colleges wanting his name in their books, a million friends who depended on him and admired him and his company. Such a shame about that accident. The boy was like the son I never had.” I could tell he was more than just a guidance counselor to a lot of the students here, I had only been sitting in front of him for three minutes, and I already looked up to him more than most of the teachers here.

“I met him once, that night actually.” I didn’t say the words but he understood. “I felt something with him, he was one of the only guys at that party who wanted more than a kiss or a dance or more. He wanted conversation. He wasn’t drunk, I hope you know that. I hope you trust him enough to know he wasn’t drunk. Not that night. I didn’t know him but I wanted to. He was so young and there was such a beginning for the two of us, and now I’ll never get to know what kind of story there could have been. I still feel him to this day, I still smell his cologne and taste his lips and hear his voice. It’s really hard to get him out of my head. I stayed home for a good few weeks, sobbing and grieving over him and what’s so uncanny about that is I only knew him from December 31st to January 1st and then he was gone. It was almost like I grabbed ahold of some star, no matter how impossible that may be, that’s what Mason was. He was a star. And don’t you agree, Mr. Watson, that falling stars should have a proper and organized goodbye? A beautiful send off, a beautiful way of remembering them? Shouldn’t someone be able to recount who he was and what he did, not just why and when he died. Shouldn’t he be more than just a name, a grave, and a number? He had so much star left in him that went to the grave with him, shouldn’t some be used to carry on his legacy?” I hadn’t realized how many tears were streaming down my cheeks, I hadn’t realized how badly I was shaking and how my words were remained to flow from my lips together and potent.

Tears glittered from the brim of Mr. Watson’s eyes as I finished breathlessly drawing the last, painful words out from where they had been smothered in the silence or the sonance of my sobs for those last few weeks. That silence soon returned as Mr. Watson and I battled the rush of hatred towards the world, or at least I did. I hated the world. I hated what it could reduce a human being to; blood and guts on the highway, drowning in alcohol or not. What infuriated me the most was the fact that no one would know he wasn’t drunk unless they really knew him, like Mr. Watson, like his friends, maybe not even them, maybe not even his parents. I only knew because I tasted his sober lips and submerged myself in his charmingly sedate breath. Otherwise, the next day I know I would have assumed the car had been drowning in alcoholic teenagers. I would have believed the got what karma set aside for them, what the devil intended.

“What did you have in mind?” His voice though as even and collected as it had been, disrupted the cool silence, it made me flinch.

“A memoir, of the sort.” I said and pulled an envelope which had been folded into quarters out of my back pocket, handing it to him. He delicately unfolded it and pulled out the check.

It was a good sum of money, I won’t tell you how much, but I will tell you that when Mr. Watson looked at me, his eyes were wide...both with shock and with reverence.

“Are you sure you want to do this?”

“Mr. Watson, in all of my life, I have never had anything more that I’ve wanted. When I was little I was moved from house to house, family member to family member like I wasn’t worth a dime. Ever since I knew what alcohol was, I’ve been drowning myself in it because nothing else motivates me to do anything, even to live. So I do, I want to give that money in honor of Mason to do something great in remembrance of him. He has, after all, shown me how much one person can impact another in just a single moment and what that impact can do to a person over all. I don’t know if you believe me when I tell you I only knew him for an hour or two at a party, because that’s really all I knew of him. We talked for a few hours and I met him but I didn’t know him. But I still felt something with him, something I’ve never felt before...and even after he died he left his lasting impression on me. I’m still trying to rehydrate myself from all of the crying I did over and about him. I know the song we were listening to at the party, after days of pondering on it, when I met him. I’m now fully devoted to preventing his name from falling between the cracks.”

“What about the other students in the accident?”

“Mr. Watson, the designated driver wrecked the car because he was drunk off his...” I stopped myself from continuing, after all I was sitting in front of an adult who I highly regarded and did not need to tarnish whatever image he had of me in his head to any further degree. “I don’t advocate drunk driving, I never will, I feel very deeply with sympathy for their families and their friends, I really do. If that money goes toward anything in their name I do hope it goes towards a program to get depressed and alcoholic teenagers the help they so deeply need. Or even to a program for the hospital bills and funeral costs of the students who do get hurt or die in accidents of these sorts.”

“I understand, I wouldn’t blame you. But, what about you?”

“What about me?”

“Your depression, your drinking?”

“I’m working on that, Mason’s accident was a wake-up call, I’m much more aware of the consequences, and after a lot of mourning and probably a lot more, I’ll feel better about my situation.”

“Meaning?”

“I’m alive, aren’t I?” I say with a delicate smile.

“If you ever need help, I’m here. I think we will end up being great friends, miss.....oh my, I forgot to ask your name.”

“Oh, I forgot to introduce myself.” I chuckle, “my name is Selma Noonan.”

“It’s nice to meet you Selma, thank you so much for your donation, I be-

lieve I have the best idea for where this money can feed into.” He smiled that bright smile.

“I’ll stop by and make sure to ask you what your plan fulfilled.” I smile back, a real smile, the first from me in a long time.

“That’s more like it little one, smiling is great for the heart.” We both chuckled, something screamed at me to ask him a question that had come to me the minute I opened that door.

“Mr. Watson?”

“Yes, Selma?”

“Why this shade of yellow?” I was referring to the walls.

“Well, Selma, back in the day there was a brand of matches, they were called Gilbert Watson’s Safety Matches. My great grandfather’s name was Gilbert Watson and he started the company, soon after he died to lung cancer, my grandfather, Chance Watson, took charge of the company. When my grandfather married my grandmother and had my dad they lived on the floor above the manufacturing quarters because it was easier and cheaper. I grew up in that match factory, it was fun and dangerous, the perfect place for me. The boxes which held the matches and the heads of the matches were both this shade of yellow. It’s homey, I suppose, to have this color surround me every day in my own work place, especially since the year I began working here, the match factory burned down, taking my little sister down with it. Thelma, my sister, and I were somewhere around 10 years apart, so she was 13 when I was 23 and began working here. Now, I’m 54 and it’s been nearly 31 years since she died, will be in mid-August. My parents and the investigators think the burning was arson. Luckily enough, my parents had gone away to Sacramento for the week when the building burned, but my sister still had to go to school. Looking back on it, I should have let her sleep at my house and then she wouldn’t have died. But this color always reminds me of her and the good old days before life really hit me hard. Days in school and coming home to the smell of mama’s chicken in the oven upstairs and the smell of a fresh batch of matches. The matches never were my favorite smell but it was home, and home was my favorite place. So I guess, that means there was something to that smell that means a lot to me.” I couldn’t fathom the right words to say to Mr. Watson in that moment, his story was so...incredible. Bitter sweet.

“Wow, Mr. Watson. I’m so sorry for your loss.” I say quietly, my heart feeling hollow and cold.

Mr. Watson catches my eyes and beams at me, my heart fills back up with hope, love, and something brighter than even both of those things as he says, “I’m alive, aren’t I?”

Molly Forsythe, Grade 10



Stevi Burkett

Skipping Stones

A Short Story from Selena Layton

Our Place. That's what my mom and I called it. Somewhere in the forest behind our house, there is a lake. The lake spreads far and wide. Surrounding the lake are trees, frogs, plants, and stones. This place gives me freedom. Whenever I feel troubled I come here.

My mom and I used to race to our place. I liked feeling the thrill of the wind blowing across my face. We would skip stones across the lake; this was my favorite thing to do with my mom. We would see who could get the most skips across the shimmering water.

Our place seems empty without her, it just isn't the same. I seem to have lost my freedom in Our Place. My hopes are gone with my mom. The birds and the frogs seem to have lost their interest in making noise. The forest is quiet, all except for the sound of my breathing. I wish she could be sitting with me again; gazing upon the shimmering lake. I would give anything to hear her breath again.

Here I am, alone at Our Place. I listen to the quietness of the forest while I pick at the grass by my feet. My hand stops when I feel a smooth, cold, hard surface of something small. I pick up the flat skipping stone and stand up. I look between the rock and the lake, and as hard as I can, I toss the rock. It skips three times. That's the most skips I've ever gotten. My mom could get five skips. I wish she were here. But here I am, by myself at Our Place, missing her presence, skipping stones.

Flames From the Past

My uncle warned me about today. He told me that I should stay home and clear my head and keep my feelings under control. He doesn't want me to go to the firehouse today because he doesn't want my emotions to fog my brain and block my senses. I understand his reasons, but I'm still going to work. I can't stay here and wallow in my tears while people out in the real world are suffering and need help. My help.

My Uncle Kyle left the house hours before I got up, so by the time I wake up and get out of bed, he's already at the firehouse. I go to the bathroom and wash my face clean from sleep. As I dry my face, my phone vibrates in my pocket. I pull the phone out and read the text from my uncle.

Uncle Kyle: I know you're up and I know your reading this. I don't care how old you are, I'm telling you to stay home or you're fired!

I laugh at his statement and message him back.

Me: First of all, you're not the boss and you can't fire me. Second of all, I'm going and that's final!

Uncle Kyle: Please James, you know what today is and you shouldn't come today. I'm only worried about you.

Me: I'm fine.

Uncle Kyle: I'll ground you!

Me: I don't care, I'll still come!

He didn't text me back after that, so either he gave up on texting me or he's cursing me for not listening to him. Despite what my uncle thinks, I'm fine to go to work. He can't rule my life; it's not his life to live. Besides, what I decide to do today is my business, not his.

Refusing to think of the topic any further, I get dressed and grab an apple from the fruit basket on the kitchen table. I finish my morning routine and swipe my keys off of the key ring, so I can drive to work. My life had other plans, however. My keys were not in their usual spot. I pulled my phone out and called the person responsible for my missing keys.

"Hello?" My uncle answered on the second ring.

"Where are they at, Uncle Kyle?" "I heard him sigh through the phone, and then I heard a strange jingling sound.

"You mean these things?"

I gritted my teeth. I was already upset with him for trying to tell me to stay home. I hang up on him and grab my hoodie from the coat rack. I shrugged my hoodie on and started walking to the firehouse. The cool November air nipped at my bare skin, causing me to shiver. I shoved my hands in my pockets and continued my walk down the sidewalk. The firehouse was only about six blocks from our neighborhood, luckily. As I walked into the front doors of the firehouse, all talking ceased. I ignored the awkward silence and went to my locker. Just as I opened my locker my Uncle came up beside me.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?"

I glanced behind me and everyone went back to their own business. "I'm working," I finally answer.

"I told you to stay home."

"I told you I was coming here anyway."

The alarm went off, and everyone scurried to their cubbies to get their gear on. I looked at my Uncle. "Well, duty calls." I ran off to my cubby and put my gear on, my Uncle does the same.

"This conversation is not over, James."

I roll my eyes at him and hop into the fire truck. We sped out of the station, sirens blaring, and soon enough I saw the smoking house. Police had arrived

already and cleared the area. We pulled up in front of the house, and everyone jumped out of the truck to do their routine. As I was adjusting my mask a woman ran up to me. Her face and hands were grey from the smoke, and she was coughing.

“Please! My daughter, she’s still in there! Please, she’s only five years old!” Her voice was raspy and she strained to speak.

I took a glance at the smoldering house. Flames were coming out of every opening possible. Wasting no time, I ran towards the two story house.

“James!” I turned and saw my Uncle running towards me. “James, you can’t go in there; it’s not safe yet!”

“I have to! There is a little girl trapped in there, and I’m not going to just stand here until the flames ease off while she’s in there, probably scared out of her mind, at risk of burning alive! I won’t let her die!” Without another word I ran towards the house. I kicked down the front door, ready to face the flames that followed.

Flashback:

I struggled out of the fireman’s arms and ran towards the house. “Suzie!” I called out for my sister. The fireman, who was holding me before, ran up to me. Before he could grab me and hold me back again, I ran into the house. I carefully ran upstairs to Suzie’s room and called out for her. I was about to start looking around when a fireman grabbed me from behind and threw me over his shoulder. It really hurt my stomach, but I didn’t care at the moment, I just wanted to find Suzie.

“Come on kid, you can’t be in here! It’s dangerous! The house is being searched, don’t worry!”

The fireman tried to assure me that Suzie would be fine, but I didn’t believe him, and I was right not to.

I looked around until I found a staircase. I carefully made my way up the stairs and I was met with three doors, and only one was open. The room with the open door was a bathroom that was ablaze. The second room was only a supply closet. I hesitated at the last door. This has to be it. I opened the door, and it revealed pink walls, a pink bed, and pink window curtains. Everything was pink. It probably would have looked like any other little girl’s room if it weren’t on fire. “Hello?” I called out even though it might have sounded muffled through the mask. “Is anyone in here?”

Flashback:

I waited impatiently outside while a paramedic took care of a few scratches I had and hooked me up to an oxygen mask. After what seemed like forever, a fireman came running out of the house with a small frame in his arms. As I ran towards him he cast me a warning look, stopping me dead in my tracks. Once again, a fireman came and held me back. Suzie was placed on a stretcher, and then I saw how sickly she looked. Aside from her smoke-stained skin, her

usually tan appearance was pale, almost a ghostly white. A paramedic came over with an AED and the shocking pads were placed on her chest; an oxygen mask was placed on her face to help her breath. There was a countdown from five and everyone stood back as the shocks swept over her body, causing her to jump slightly. “Clear!” Someone kept shouting the word and her body rose and fell again, and again, and again until the paramedic shook his head with a tight frown. She was gone. Suzie is gone and it is all my fault. I knew where she was hiding. She always hides in her closet when she gets scared. The smoke must have gotten to her through the door. I was right in her room, I was right by the door, and I couldn’t save her.

Looking for this little girl reminded me of Suzie. I was in her room. I was going to look for her, and I couldn’t. I could look for the girl though. I remembered where Suzie would hide when she got scared. I ran to a door that was hopefully her closet, but it was hard to see anything through the thick clouds of smoke. I opened the door, and more smoke came out, but not as much as I expected. I looked down and saw clothes had lined the bottom of the door. Smart girl, I thought to myself. I saw the small, unmoving child laying on the floor and I carefully scooped her up into my arms.

“Come on,” I said to her. “Wake up!”

The girl’s hand moved to her face and she coughed weakly. She was struggling to hold on to her life, but she was alive. “Yes,” I sigh in relief, “Thank you!” I held her gingerly, and carried her safely out of the house.

Selena Layton, Grade 12

Zombie

“It happened back when the sightings were rare.... And though it was very long ago, the recollection of that terrifying moment is as vivid as the very minute the man first reached out his hand. The fingers were disfigured, swollen, chewed phalanges that hadn’t healed correctly. In fact, now that I think of it, I might have been one of the first to encounter the Infected.

The man was staggering just slightly. As he came near, I noticed he appeared very sickly. I lived in a friendly suburban neighborhood, so I called out to him, asking if he needed help. He stopped and turned to me in an abrupt fashion. I noticed him raise up to his mouth a bloody, injured hand and begin to gnaw on the flesh. My eyes grew wide and I stepped back, too frightened to turn and reach for my door. The man approached me alarmingly fast.

I panicked and raised the hose, squirting him in the eye. I blanched, as the eyeball imploded in on itself and slipped out of the socket as if nothing was

supporting it from behind. I staggered back, but the man reached out his hand and grabbed hold of my blouse. I looked up into the empty eye socket and saw something wet and white move in the most gruesome way. Then I realized what was happening: a parasite was controlling this man, consuming his brain.

I sat with my back against the door, blocking out the guttural sounds that leeches from the hall into the dark classroom. Mr. Edison, who had taken shelter with me, breathed roughly. He scratched at the linoleum, and with every passing second, his breathing became a bit more hysterical until the same sounds that were resonating in the hall outside emitted from his own throat.

I stood up, picked up a chair, and walked over to the man. Indeed, he was no longer a teacher in my mind. Just a man. Much longer and he'd be reduced to a mindless beast. I looked down at the shredded wound on his arm and then raised the chair above his head. Earlier, I hadn't wanted to risk it; there was still a man inside him ... but my survival was most important. Not his. From the moment this all started, something had snapped in my brain and reformed into something cold and emotionless.

Cold and emotionless, like them.

But I was the only sane human here... wasn't I?

I didn't hesitate. I slammed the chair down on his temple.

I scrounged around the desk and found three rubber bands, a plastic fork, and a measuring stick to create a spear. It wasn't much, but I decided if I was approached by anyone, I'd immediately go for the eye. I scratched absentmindedly at a wound on my arm and unlocked the door.

Susan Hemaner, Grade 12

Stevi Burkett



Revelation

Short story by Susan Hemauer

As I walked through the clinic's corridor, its sanitary walls unnerved me to the point that it was disgusting. The smell of bleach and multiple other cleaners wafted up my nose, and I scrunched up my face. I would have covered my mouth and nose, but the handcuffs prevented me. The cold of the tiles sent a chill through my bare body. Indeed, they hadn't bothered to even put a simple covering on me. After all, the only use of dressing up an animal is to waste time. And that's all I was to them. The quills from feathers dug awkwardly into my back from where they had tightly tethered my wings to my sides. It was clear nothing was or ever would be done in regards to my personal comfort. No one would bother with it. I had no human rights anymore.... Heck, I didn't even have so much as animal rights. I was a thing to them. And a thing doesn't have any rights. It's simply there to take up space and to mess around with. Like a rock. A rock had no rights. No one cares if you scratch a stone, split open a geode to see the inside, or toss a pebble around. No one cares what you do with a rock. No one cared what these people did with me. In fact, most of the people on this earth want them to do their worst. And to think, I am here to fight for them. To fight for the ones who abuse me, who hate me, who despise me.

I could get out of here; it would be easy. But I did not have the orders to do that. And I was not disobedient. I will not try to escape them. I will not harm them. I will only follow orders.

I looked up at the ceiling. The artificial lighting stung my eyes and made me squint. *I believe I remember when Edison was born...he was interesting. And it's strange to see how his "light bulb" evolved into all of this... all of the artificial lighting we see today. Oh, how light pollution crowds out the stars at night. So many times I would have liked to look up at the night sky and catch a glimpse of a star as it fell but alas the flashes and bright signs overwhelmed the darkness with a type of darkness itself. A brown darkness.... an impure, dirty darkness. Yes... anything that crowds out the magnificence of creation is born of a disgusting darkness, not of natural beauty, but of a muddy culture. An impure muddiness. Oh, how I long to go home...*

The man in front of me stopped in front of two automatic doors and swiped a card in a slot next to the door. I clenched my jaw as the other men shoved me forward. It wasn't long before we reached their destination. A small table with a white towel laid over it claimed the center of the room while machines and medical supplies crowded out the rest. The hairs on the back of my neck rose and my mouth immediately went dry. I started shaking in fear, as I was led towards the table but didn't resist. I would not disobey... I would not disobey...

Even though I had put up no fight so far, the humans still strapped me

down as tightly as they could. They undid the tethers on my wings and stretched them out to their full length. Determined to provide me with as much discomfort as possible, one woman grabbed firm hold of one wing in her hand and, asking for some assistance, proceeded to snap the bone in half.

Black and red spots immediately flooded my eyes, and it seemed as if my lungs stopped working for a moment. The pain was immense... incredible... torturous.... I wanted to scream and cry but my body wouldn't comply. It was just... frozen. The pain put my body in a state of incredible shock, and I felt my fingers trembling with the agony. I finally found myself able to wheeze out a breath and gasp one back in. I tried to retain my consciousness, but it was slipping from me. A few seconds, maybe minutes later, I lost.

When I woke, I realized only a few moments had passed. I turned my head best I could to look at the wing and, to my horror, saw a feather being forcefully ripped out. A few seconds later the feeling, the pain, in that wing rushed back with a terrible force. I grit my teeth as they continued pulling and twisting out my feathers one by one. They fell like snow, each one accompanied by several drops of crimson. Each one feeling like a finger nail being ripped out. Each one catching my stare as they drifted sadly to the ground, to be scooped up and stuffed into a black trash bag. My other wing, however, remained untouched. If I remembered my chemistry class correctly, they were most likely using my other wing as the Control. If, indeed, there was any purpose to this at all. I closed my eyes, unable to continue watching and I prayed. I prayed and prayed and prayed for strength, my lips trembling as I whispered out the words. Suddenly I felt a hand smack across my cheek and my eyes snapped open, my face flushing. I looked up at the woman who had done this. Red hair, unnaturally tanned skin, and then I looked up at her eyes. They were green. Green with specks of gold in them, And behind those specks of gold is a wilted flower. A lily. It had tried again and again to rise up to the sun yet every time fell back to the earth, growing weaker and weaker until it detested the sun altogether

I frowned. The woman clenched my chin in her fist with anger and squeezed my cheeks together. I did not break her gaze. And in that moment I briefly thought up an image of myself, the way I looked through her eyes.

I looked like a teenager. Just a broken, bruised teenage girl with wings. But in her mind I was a monster. A deceiver. Practically a devil. For she blamed me. For having something she could never keep her grasp on.

Light. She wants light.... Oh darling, how I wish I could give it to you... but you never hold on. You throw it away the moment you are tempted.

The woman moved another hand down to my neck and squeezed, her cheeks quivering with her inner rage. I looked up at her, my eyes wide as I tried to gasp for air. My arms strained against the restraints. Both the pain of my feathers being ripped out and the burning in my throat and struggle for air

overwhelmed my nerves and flooded my brain and every cell in my mortal body started aflame as I choked and struggled for breath. A white hot band constricted around my lungs. I heard the roar and felt the heat of blood rushing in my ears. I dimly heard someone protest at the woman's actions. And then I very clearly heard her as she bent down and hissed in my ear.

"That should teach you to pray to your petty god! You're nothing... nothing. You think you're so grand? You're nothing more than a pest. A wasp buzzing around in the name of the Colony, irritating the human race. I'll rid the earth of you. And all the others like you. You can be sure of that." And then her grip loosened and she drew back, sneering at me. I coughed and drew in a breath of air, though it felt like I was swallowing a thousand needles. My eyes watered and I looked around. The others had stopped, looking on with their mouths slightly agape.

I shifted my gaze back to the woman. Her eyes were cold and hard.
Like a rock.

A bright lamp shone down on my face, waking me from what little rest I had just settled into. They had left me maybe two hours ago still strapped to the table. I think I had finally gained confidence they were leaving me alone for a while after an hour. After an hour and a half the pain dulled enough to let me relax. After about an hour and fifty minutes I began to drift off. As to whether I actually fell asleep or not I do not fully know.

I squinted and grunted lightly, groggy and disoriented. My tongue rasped against my palette like sand paper, and my throat still burned. I blinked several times against the lighting and eventually my eyes began to adjust. I looked up and saw the red-headed woman, but no one else. I simply stared at her eyes, her eyes that were so full of anger. Not a fiery anger but a cold one. A determined one. Which more often than not was the more dangerous of the two. I readied my body.

"So... they say you are an angel, yes? Well you should know . . ."

She sliced beneath my armpit with a surgical knife and I grimaced. "I've been called a demon." She grinned at me in a foolish way, as if priding herself on this fact.

She not only masks to hide her thoughts from others, but to hide them from herself as well. She wishes to be deceived . . .

You are not a demon. You are a Fallen One. You've lost your wings . . . and you regret that decision. That is why you hate me. But I do not hate you, Sister, I grieve for what you've become...

The woman continued to draw the knife down the length of my torso and she laughed. A cold chuckle I never wish to hear again. That laugh made my heart wrench with pain. For it was that laugh that kept her from buckling at the knees and crying, sobbing, and crying out for repentance.

Andiel clenched his fists, as he walked forward, his sword bouncing slightly against his thigh. He raised his gaze, past the horizon, and to the clouded sky.

Lord... I don't understand.... Yet please, forgive my ignorance, for you are Almighty and All Knowing.

He spread out his wings and with one powerful thrust, the ash around his feet stirred up in billowing clouds, and he rose up into the air. His clothes, glued to his skin by dried blood, resisted as his body began to exert itself. He flew toward the west horizon, where the sun should be setting. A small town rose in the distance, and Andiel eyed it cautiously. Once humans had gotten over their initial shock when the veil was lifted, they started hunting the angels, and pretty much every other supernatural creature down. And though a simple bullet wound wouldn't be enough to kill an angel, it still hurt like a bitch. Many of the angels whom the humans had succeeded in shooting down either had their hearts ripped out, their heads lopped off, or they were taken away by the government. It was a complete supernatural round up. Some for the slaughter, others to be used as lab rats. Either way death would occur.

Few humans dared to venture outside in open areas now. Many formed their own communities behind barbed wire fences assisted by fire arms. Andiel frowned. He knew humans would be freaked out... to realize that many of the familiar faces they saw each day were really just masks. But he did not expect them to go this far for that exact same reason. *We still are who we always were. Our existence was not a lie. The jokes shared, smiles exchanged.... It's all fine if you're human. But tweak that one tiny bit, add wings to that human body, and suddenly even your own family will turn against you.*

Family... He hadn't really realized how much he would truly miss them. And though he knew his true family now, it still left a small gap where his human parents and sibling had once been. Hardly anyone he knew before all of this happened would even think of approaching him now without being armed. He could remember the look in their eyes. Horror. Sheer horror. It broke his heart.

He had witnessed a former friend being attacked by a demon shortly after the war broke out between the Supernatural and the humans. Andiel had swooped in to save them, Holy Fire blazing, and his sword glinting, as he smote the demon back to Hell. In his mind as he turned, he envisioned them shocked but amazed, recognizing him. And yet, when he fully turned, immediately some form of debris was flung at his face. His friend backed away, raising her arm as if to shield herself from danger. He tried to step forwards and gently calm her down, but she screamed out a string of curses at him and fled.

Hurt, he had immediately started questioning everything around him. Most of all the fact he had looked forwards to this moment, the end, the veil being lifted. He had imagined this war as a gory, yet glorious battle. But no... the harsh reality was that it had torn apart his emotions every which way and left

him with only GOD to look to. In a way, that was a good thing, and he was thankful.

But also another part of him wished things could go back to the way they were. Heck, he'd take school over this. A hundred years of school, just joking with others about it being "hell on earth." What was happening now truly was Hell on earth.

A tear leaked out of Andiel's eye as he continued his flight. Wherever that led him. He had no direction, he was just flying. Alone. More now than ever he wanted someone with him. Someone near him. Just a comforting presence. But only the hard, cold wind stung his bare shoulders.

Susan Hemauer, Grade 12



Maria Solis Hernandez

What Makes Art “Art”?

An Editorial

Art is a very subjective activity because it is created to be viewed and judged by an audience. No matter who the person viewing the artwork is, whether it be an expert or a random passerby, they will form some sort of opinion about the piece of artwork. Even if it is an unconscious thought. However, many people believe that some forms of “art” that are created aren’t actually art and shouldn’t even be considered “art.”

One opinion many people seem to agree on is that art is supposed to evoke some kind of emotion. Art is a form of expression and is made to allow feelings to flow freely from the artist. But there are a lot of controversies surrounding whether some mediums of art should actually be considered pieces of artwork. One of the most famous examples of this is “Fountain” by Marcel Duchamp. Duchamp’s piece is a urinal presented on its back, signed and dated as “R. Mutt 1917.” This type of sculpture is called a “readymade” sculpture, which is when ordinary household objects are joined together or stand alone as a single sculpture. When Duchamp submitted his piece to an art show, the board of directors wouldn’t accept the piece because they believed that a piece of sanitary ware used for bodily waste was indecent and could not be considered a work of art. At first glance, these directors seem to make a lot of sense. How could a urinal be considered a work of art? But why ISN’T it art? Duchamp believed it was up to the artist to determine what “good art” is, no matter what the opinions of outside viewers are.

When many people look at modern art, they tend to use the phrase, “That’s not art, I could do that.” People who aren’t very familiar with art usually think that the more realistic the piece is, the “better” the artist is at their craft. This isn’t true. What makes a piece of art good is if the piece itself is able to make the viewer feel or connect in some way with the art piece. That’s how you know an artist was successful. Most artists create art in order to release pent up emotions, whether they be good or bad. Another artist that creates controversy about what is considered “art” is Jackson Pollock.

The phrase “I could do that” is often heard when a viewer is looking at Jackson Pollock’s work. Without understanding the background of Pollock’s paintings, it is very easy for a person to assume that because the painting is just a series of splatters and strokes, it shouldn’t be considered art because it didn’t take precision and care seen in pieces such as Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel. However, Pollock did something that is maybe even better than Michelangelo—he took art in a new direction. The type of art he had created had never been seen before. It was an entirely original concept.

Pollock completely took all the rules about how paint should be put onto

a canvas and tossed them away--breaking all the traditional rules and showing new generations that there are absolutely no limits when it comes to art. Yes, anybody can splatter paint onto a canvas and call it art, but what makes Jackson Pollock so incredible is the fact that he did it first. His paintings are art because they started something absolutely revolutionary in the art world.

Art is a practice that requires a very special individual. You do not need to be able to draw with careful precision and accurate detail in order to be considered “good.” If you are pouring your heart and soul into a piece, even if it’s just a series of lines, it is considered art because now it is personal to you and reflects your emotions. Anybody can create art as long as they have the drive and the passion.

Stevi Burkett, Grade 12



Stevi Burkett



Stevi Burkett



Tisha Chakraborty



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Note from Joan D. Cooper, advisor

Thank you for reading **Upcycle 2016**. Upcycling takes used materials and makes something artful. Many of the pieces in this issue are imitations of master writers, a play on theme, or a homework assignment gone creative. Word upcycling.

Many students and staff have contributed to *The Anchor* this and previous years. Editors such as Tisha Chakraborty, Haley Nash, Morgan Hall, Morgan Brinkley, and Alexis Prandy have read, edited, placed, nudged, and puzzled over these selections. Creative Writing Class 2016--all 26 students--read drafts and made suggestions. Art teacher, Erin Davis offered many of her students' artwork, artists Stevi Burkett, Kristi Noble, Maria Hernandez Solis, Anakin Ferguson, and Susan Hemauer generously volunteered pieces. Creative Writing 2016, the Writer's Club and Ms. Chelsea Murray's Grade 10 Class offered a wide selection of pieces and new voices.

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JMB Clippers--keep writing! Send submissions to jcooper@wcboe.org. Consider joining the Writer's Club or the JMB Writer's Critique Group next year.



