

Shock Therapy

The Writing Asylum Anthology

© 2016 Michael Riedell's UHS Creative Writing Class

All rights remain with the individual authors

Layout & Design by Blake More & UHS Creative Writing Class

Funding for Poet Teaching and this anthology was provided by
Mendocino County Office of Education
California Poets In The Schools
with help from the California Arts Council



For information about California Poets InThe Schools, contact:

CPITS

2131 19th Avenue #203

San Francisco CA 94116

415-221-4201

www.cpits.org

Shock Therapy

The Writing Asylum Anthology

Foreword

Asylum. It's a powerful word. And in truth we had a pretty heated debate about it at the beginning of the year when we were choosing a name for the class. Asylum won, and I was content. Sure the word conjures visions of dark cells and strait jackets but, looking it up in the American Heritage Dictionary, I find it comes from "Middle English *asilum*, refuge, from Latin *asylum*, from Greek *asūlon*, sanctuary." Sanctuary seems like the right word: a place of safety and protection.

In fact, it's not until the third definition that the more common meaning arises: "An institution for the care of people, especially those with physical or mental disabilities, who require organized supervision or assistance." Disabilities? Clearly not. Supervision? Not much. Assistance? Hopefully.

The case for a little craziness, though, goes back at least to Socrates, who said that the poet of "sane compositions" will be "utterly eclipsed by the performances of the inspired madman." Allen Ginsberg, an excellent example of an inspired madman and a favorite of ours this year, stated it more bluntly: "Follow your inner moonlight, don't hide the madness."

So if you find a little madness, a little "inner moonlight" in this book, don't be...well...shocked. We've got the support of even Emily Dickinson--cousin Emily, as I like to call her--who explains in her usual concentrated style, "Much Madness is divinest Sense — / To a discerning Eye."

The therapy we need may just be the sharpening our ability to discern all the sense in madness. Given our work this year, these writers are off to a fine start.

M.R.
5-2-16

Table of Contents

Au, Abigail	6
Ayala, Ana	16
Barrera, Joshua	25
Bjerk, Olivia	36
Borges, Miranda	43
Butow, Seth	53
Caudillo, Bailey	56
Caudle, Kylee	66
Deguzman, Dylan	75
Fernandez, Analidia	85
Fillmore, Gene	95
Fitzpatrick, Bridget	105
Ford, Alycia	114
Goltz, Geneve	120
Hernandez, Jessica	127
Hernandez, Leila	134
Ilar, Vanessa	143
LeBlanc, Dax	152
Long, Autumn	161
Lopez Gonzales, Isabel	167
Munguia, Joseph	177
Pacheco, Jose	186
Ramirez, Jazmin	198
Rich, Imani	202
Richards, Lynesia	212
Rieger, Clarissa	223
Rodriguez, Liliana	231
Silveira, Taylor M	241
Warren, Katana	251
Michael Riedell	264
biographies	269

Abigail Au

sleep walking

there is no more telling whether this is a dream or not
when i can't feel my fingers
and the distance between us is measured in lightyears
and i forget how to speak and think
when I only remember how to love and the way you fascinate me
you pull me into your opalescence and i can only wish that it is not a dream
this is when i sleepwalk
i am so captivated and delirious
in a way that only the moon understands
when i sleepwalk
i do not recognize that i am chasing
after a wilted flower

lovelight

i hate you so much that i love you
i hope that maybe someday i can show you your beauty
the tips of your ears carry more perfection than all the stars and the planets
rosy with the epitome of lust and shadows
your cheeks become metallic
is it because you have shed too many tears
i know you are too exquisite to rust
its funny how i can look and reach so far into your soul
i can pull oceans out through the holes in your throat
there's just something about you
that makes me want to dance the earth's dances
and sip flames out through it's core
till i cough out ashes and hatred
your lovelight dwindles along the sidewalks
and i think that the reason why
you are so beautiful
is because
azaleas grow from your body like hair
and even the seven seas cannot even begin to wear blue the way you do

indian summers

we were fairies in the night
running half naked in the streets
as lace clung onto the most sacred parts of our bodies
buildings and light and impermanence rush past us
memories carried in the wind that made our noses red a
nd watered our bloodshot eyes
seconds dying after seconds
over time we learn to cherish even the dustiest fragments of reality
i want to show you bliss and show you the way
that stars can glow brighter than kryptonite
its is times like these
that mother nature would rise me up onto her shoulders and tell me
that you and i were the reason summer had lasted so long
because your hair reminded her of crushed autumn leaves
because we lived for poetry and we lived for decay
when i found myself in a place where
even tears were no longer clear
and ran down cheeks like burnt sugar
you had always told me to be dangerous like the red of a blood orange

could i ever love a star the way i loved you

i found myself falling in love
with the constellations
one night
i see all of the other girls
helpless desire constructed in their eyes
but then i understood
as i saw the fabrication of stars above me
i found myself falling in love

tree spirits don't pay rent

i have become the mountains
leathery hill sides that drape above the curves of my lips
bronze rust atop mauve sea shells
lips that loved the taste of silver
it only takes one to be a gypsy
i cling onto the spirals of a wounded tree beneath the eaves
and clove-hearted wonders
that skip across lakes like stones
i set sail along the imbalances of the universe
and watch the circumference of the earth tip like the edges of a toddlers cup
i would take you into my creeks
if only you would shelter me from your currents
i would strike lightning bolts into your veins
and listen to the rattle of water kettles that made knees shake and cluttered up
your footsteps
stay awhile and maybe we could bundle ourselves in an old wicker chair
with a newfound hope that shimmered like spiderwebs
we danced with the sunbeams that tumbled through windowpanes
like golden coins
though i am the rotting wood and you are the hungry fire with ecstasy that coiled
around your spine like lanterns
the moon would turn to gold and the wind would build us temples
i could melt your worries like candle wax
if only you would let me because the most fragile souls are the ones that live the least

your aura

your aura
is so potent with sunsets and secrets
i see the way you glisten in the sun
like lapis lazulis at the bottom of a creek

i felt nostalgic for a love we never had

she once told me that it is dangerous to be afraid of a little danger
sitting in the grass of a moonlit garden black hair
that wilted onto bare shoulders
i heard a tale on lost love
i loved him the way i love the ocean boundless
but i feared him the way i fear space where no one can hear my cries
trapped in a distance so haunting and so silent and frigid
words left his desert lips that wove a net to catch my aching corpse
that wept at the thought of withdrawal
my restless limbs leaned against his own that were beginning to forget
he began to sound like someone who flossed between their teeth with apology
and realization in a careless movement thrust me into angry tides
i felt nostalgic for a love we never had
and then on i began to fear the ocean
i began to yearn for darkness so i wouldnt have to face the cruel reality
that slit my jaw with the sharp of its eye
i felt nostalgic for a love we never had
with soft strained tears that seemed to have weighed her cheeks down like tar
she put out her cigarette and looked up into the stars
appearing much older than she had before
ive heard that you age at vulnerability
i hope that she is right when she says that we are reborn by morning

the reasons why we were meant to forget dreams

the day i forget you
is the day i no longer understand the placement of my own fingers
when i can no longer read between every wrinkle and freckle on your body
you would be the sky and i would be the creaky floorboards beneath it
to catch you when you spiral down with the formation of clouds and blue and star
do not worry about denting the wood
as long as the scratches and splinters are from you
As long as when you strum the chords of my spine you still hear music
and pluck the junipers that bloom at the cuticles of my fingers
we stood with our breathes swirling, embracing
electricity strung between our pupils like a clothes line
and we stood so close our memories touched

with you i am a sun dancer

is it the way that your sneakers squeaked in the summertime grass
in the waves of dawn
buried deep down in the mad of mind
below the way you would lower your voice to speak to me
deep and rumbling like fallen pebbles
you used to lean in close
close enough so that i could see the creases in your skin
and i could feel your thunderstorm words and concealed laughter
it sounded the way the trees rustled when
the wind would dance between its branches
when will i see you again
im tumbling drowning in the
blues and greys and browns in your eyes
call my name across the floor and
i promise that your voice would sound like wind chimes
with the veins on your skin a forget me not blue
and your cold lilac lips in the winter
is it the way that your teeth chatter
and your hands shake when you write
that i love you
you brought hurricanes into my heart
with an ethereal touch that froze my fingertips
you had me dazed in the mint of
your permafrost breath
i want to watch you walk in the perspired grass
stepping on magnolias as you drag your feet
you climb onto the rooftops and walk along the chimneys
do you ever lose your balance
because if not
could i hold onto your collar bones as if they were handlebars
and carry you into my oceans
so that you could skim the waves with your fingertips
could i decorate your chest with marigolds and hot coals
because i saw you there with november sprinkled onto your cheeks
you leave these imprints wherever you step as if the earth was made of clay
they say that there are plenty of fish in the sea
but with you in front of my eyes
those oceans are merely puddles

dazed and confused

infatuate yourself into my light
pencil in the universe on the backs of my hands
charcoal and blood and imagination
can we play connect the dotted lines on a highway
and pick up old twist-off soda bottle caps along the roads.
smile back at me with a mouthful of eternities
and let the nectar seep out the sides of your mouth when you speak
look at all the angles of the wind before you walk away
white laces scrambling
so clumsy but so poise and dark and broken
write to me with a pen that has no restraints
a pen that has no bound
to the tempest of emotions in your amber brown eyes
blow me tiger lily kisses
because i do not feel worthy of feeling courageous
or loved
what if
what if I didn't always feel so silent
what if i could hold the planets
as if they were 25 cent bouncy balls
and twirl the telephone wires around my fingers
like curly brown hair
i will lie on the moon
and wait for fountain penny wishes to come true
and listen to old records on rustic garage sale rugs
with the stars above my hair
that smelled like rose hips
and the road beneath the soles of my blackened feet
searching for watercolor sunsets
tell me love
how do you carve that melancholy onto your eyes

if a harp was a person it would be you

fill me with a pot of porcelain tea and enchantment
i do not need honeyed words
i need my sentences raw and true
strip your lines of its milk and sugar
i can drink my coffee black
in a chipped mug
that cut the insides of my cheeks
jagged and sturdy
like quiet mountains
so understanding and so brave
unlike rounded noses and lowered eyebrows
you stretch your arms with so much doubt and defeat
with autumn crescents
blooming at the roots of your hair
and lotuses in your lagoon filled hands
all i have to say
is that my breath tastes like charcoal
and that i wouldn't mind
if you wanted to keep me
in an matchbox under the fence
along with bottles of blue and green
the emeralds and sapphires of an alcoholic
dance me through a telescope
and i will search for your starlight coloured chin
but sadly your crows feet are no longer the outline of beauty
the grooves along your palms
are no longer hieroglyphic words
my ink does not bleed for you anymore

the fairy with windchimes in her hair

there was stardust in her lashes
and syrup on the tongue
the vibrations of her voice ripped through
the barriers of eternity
hydroelectric smoke that escaped her secret ridden mouth
she is so beautiful

clouded eyes and seasons

when we become delirious with infatuation
come to me and i will scrub off that film of ash that has nested into your skin
your voice shook like gossamer
your eyes, distorted like a kaleidoscope
a strange feeling it is
to watch someone slip away
imagine that you are a spool of thread
imagine that someone is constantly pulling and pulling away at the silk
they watch you deteriorate
pulling and pulling away till you are nothing
till there there is no more substance
i want to hold you
in a way that enlightened
and shook the very core of this world
i want to hold you
in a way that invited galaxies to form on your neck
and we would follow the delicate map of constellations
to asylum
it was particularly quiet that night
i heard the distant croak of ancient trees
it kind of reminds me of you
so does the girl that always smells like herbal tea and oil paints

in these moments

in these moments
of dance and movement and song
i came to realize that
there are no coasts
or oceans or hills
only you and me and everyone we know

flowers grown from pores

look through a telescope
and sing me the stories that you find
scattered amongst the unknown that has
Cast themselves on top of this intercosmic space
maybe I'll slip
and all my secrets would
tumble out of an old jam jar
the secrets that had tattooed themselves
onto my skin
the secrets that
burned and seared at the touch of citrus kisses
watch
as i tiptoe into the lake
in my favorite white smock dress
there would be lilies in my hair
pale skin against the blues of midnight
ill wait
wait until it rained so hard the world
looked like smoke through the window
i will wait until succulents emerge from your eyes
eyes that made me wonder how long its been
since you've loved
she leaves with bite marks on her forearms
and carries the profound scent
of wanderlust and rose perfume
it was as if in a moment
the universe had rearranged the molecules of your flesh
and you suddenly became the most beautiful thing
that my eyes had ever seen
i close my eyes
and re open them to see if the world had reversed this curse of loving you
i see you with your widespread smiles
and smoke that lingered at the tips of your ears
the room was hazy and blurred
more so than a broken chorus and a dusk that did not kiss me goodbye
let the words i write for you
lift themselves off of paper
and wrap around your cherry-stained wounds

even the sun cannot love me

i wish you would engrave some summer into your skin winter child
your face crystallized by the night
even the moon had surrendered to your luminous eyes and starlight colored chin
i know that i cannot have you and your meadowed nose
i guess theres no way i can ever be loved by boys like you
because im not the kinds of girls like them
i am not one to have delt with the cold
all i ask is that you remember the feeling of my cheeks beneath your fingertips
and remember the place where we found no fear nor sadness,
where we only found hope
now i have become purple with regret
i can only imagine that in a past life
we were brought together and somehow did the right things and said the right words
because with you
i sleepwalk
looking into your eternity misted flesh
time will pass but it will not be sanctioned
i sleepwalk until dusk tucks me back into my sheets
and the crescents of the midnight blaze reconstruct themselves
into sunbeams that stream over the horizon like honey
the taste of your lips honey
without you sleep does not come easy and i have had enough of restless ruthless nights
i had often questioned the authenticity of your touch so hypnotizing and so deceitful
it was only a instant for you but it altered every moment that came next for me
if i could i would take you the way i took the constellations by their ears
and we would run to the ends of the universe with magnetism in our breaths
and look up at a sky so blue and transparent we could see the other millions of galaxies
and tell ourselves that theres a very good chance that someplace else it was all ok
a place so sublime it made up for ours
i feel i am at war against the sea

Ana Ayala

[Untitled]

slowly getting younger,
we found the fountain of youth
together.
it was a parallel universe
where you smelled like
rice.
and your lilac lips pressed on
mine.
we go back go the fountain, to
throw a copper stone.
we return to a dumpster
called
life, and our love goes away like smoke.
salty tears fill my face as my knees make a line
with
the rough cement, you're sweet aromatic
scent is still scratched on my left
shoulder.

[Untitled]

He whispered kind words in my ear,
his voice full of southern twain.
He sang like Blake Shelton and my heart began meltin'.

How was I supposed to know that the honey
that rolled off of his tongue was vemon,
that this old hoodie was worn by one too many girls?

Now I sit alone watching my once was hopeful
blue eyes dull.
I still cringe at the sight of the old pickup truck.

Boringness

in the streets, the crowds go about their business.
no eye contact. no hellos or have a good day.
the crowds go about their business to reach
their destination. many sit in a cubed desk in
a white office on the 8th floor of a loft building.
they stamp 'approved' or 'denied' on aspiring small
business owners loans. they sit there stamping for
eight hours, just wasting their life away. they
walk down the same streets, just to do it all
over again tomorrow.

Cliff

a salty breeze blew my hair back,
toes curled over the edges.
I let my body go limp and
free fall, feeling the icy
water, like glass shards on my skin.

Misfit

I like your hair when it's wet,
and your breath as you whisper my name.
The sweet smell of oak sap always lingers.

I like your laugh when you're nervous,
and your eyes when they wrinkle,
the sweat upon your right eyebrow
as your hair swiftly slides it off.

I like how you believe in Santa Claus,
And that the moon is made out of cheese.
Your socks when they are mix matched.

The way you say I love you in your sleep is
my favorite song that I keep on repeat.

[Untitled]

your chapped lips
taste like ripe oranges
as stars align to become one
because I like your hair when the natural sunlight hits it
and your smile when it's crooked.
the summer nights never seem to end
as I gaze into your eyes and fall in
love all over again.

Me Trying to Rhyme

I believe in love
Because there are such things as pink doves.
Please don't shove.
There's plenty of rubber gloves.

Me Trying to Rhyme : Part Two

Plaid shirts and levi jeans
You always smell like homemade beans
I hate your rusty old truck
You were always a muck

Summer Love

I told you I'd wait for you
I wrote you letters, waited day after day
for a reply.

at night I dreamed of your twinkly eyes like christmas tree lights
smiling back at me
I saw your porcelain skin glowing,
your mouth turning into a smile, then all at once your were gone,
like a tide you left that summer.

I stand on the shore feeling the water
numb my toes,
waiting for the sea,
to return the love it took away.

[Untitled]

he was beauty
& chaos intertwined
a tornado of black roses
& aged
red wine.

The Gift

The note read, “Kelsie, you’re getting so old you’re close to death. Happy birthday! I hope you can make it for dinner tonight! See you then, Jade.”

The doorbell rang, on the welcome mat laid a pile of flowers and a cardboard box. The mailman, nowhere in sight. As she brought the gifts inside, she looked for a note that was never found. Seconds later, the box began to beep.

Letting Go

I knew she wasn’t in pain anymore.
I could see it in her eyes, she was ready.
But I wasn’t.
The fake smiles stopped being convincing,
And the medications stopped working too.
Doc told us, she has months to live.
She didn’t cry, as she held my hand.
I knew.
And it was time
to let go.

New Friends

A kitten silhouette
prance down
the valley's
legs to
meet a
friendly stranger.

Nature

The green Valleys lay flat as
The Sun roasts them brown.
The mossy rocks create the Vivid
Steam of a trail to travel.
A Song lyric gives a meaning to
A sound that gives you a new Value in Life.

Cherry Blossoms

cherry blossoms sway
to the beat of
a broken heart

Undiscovered

beauty is hidden underneath
the secrets of the sea.
the remains of atlantis
that never got to be seen.

Mi Tierra

Mi lindo Michoacan,
La musica bella,
La comida rica.
Mi lindo Michoacan.

La mañana linda, los gallos cantando.
La noche era negra y fría.
El dia baila con alegria.
Yo soy el sol sonriente sobre mis hermanos.

Agua frescas, la presa con amigos.
Carros sin gas, pero asi vamos.
Se va el sol, y viene la luna.

El maíz caliente del sol,
Las tortillitas hecha a mano.
Las Coronas en la hielera.
La banda cantando hasta la mañana.
Mi lindo Michoacan.

The Weeping Women

black static hair, shredded dark clothes,
looking for her children, soon to realize they are dead.
out of sorrow and loneliness, she drowns herself.
no longer on earth as a human, but lurking as a spirit,
the golden gates of heaven won't open till she finds
her children, searching for them along the lake, crying.

“where are my kids? oh my kids.” she kidnaps children
late at night, who resemble her own, and begs
them forgiveness, so she can leave the earth and enter
the spirit world. she feels taunted & trapped on earth,
filled with families and laughing children.

to this day she kidnaps children,
late at night who resemble her own, along the lake she cries,
“where are my kids? oh my kids.”

Her Kind

I have been her kind,
Young, beautiful, intelligent
So many memories of the
Life I once knew.

I have been her kind,
The party scene with
Nothing to lose,
The night seemed to
Never end.

Now my kind
Sit by the window,
Watch the birds soar
Through the sky,
And try to remember
The rest of our kind.

Cancer

He was nicotine.
I knew he would be the death of me,
Yet I let his seafoam green eyes & wine-stained smile draw me in.
My hands shaking and head buzzing, I craved his lips.
Knowing fully that he would
leave me with haunted memories,
And cancer throughout my body.

Josh (That person you know like)

Jalapenos: The Jail Story

By You Know Who

Bertha McFamchester, a 32 year old British Woman who likes to farm jalapenos. But she didn't know that her jalapeno farm would rise to fame.

It was a cloudy afternoon in the city of Troy, New York. Bertha worked as an accountant for the in the industrial Kitten/Glue Imporium. As she was doing her usual work of making sure that glue gets ordered in the right quantity, and the kittens get fed and watered, she met another British bloke named Gwenavier Saraïen, a tall British person who also worked at the Kitten/Glue Imporium.

“Hey, Gwenavier,” said Bertha with a cheerful fake smile on her face

“Sup Bertha.”

“Nothing much, did you hear we're getting a new kind of glue!”

“Yeah, it's suppose to stick in water and drinks so when a person drinks it, it will glue their esophagus shut and suffocates them to death.”

Bertha just gave a stare with no expression, inside she was horrified, but then her brain told her that would be a good way to commit suicide, but then she remembered what the therapists said and she decided it's stupid anyways. Gwenavier walked away. Bertha walked back to her desk, she sat in her memory foam chair that was good for her back. She looked around in her small, depressing cubicle. The file cabinets, filled with many old papers for tax reasons (or so they say). The empty cupboard, just for broken dreams, and there are a lot of them. Then to the computer, an old Pentium 3, running Windows 98, using Excel in Microsoft Office 1997. Bertha typed away, making spreadsheets, and eating some homemade Jalapeno popper. Gwenavier walked up again, with glue and kitten fur on her arms.

“Bertha, you should give me a Jalapeno popper,” Gwenavier said in a slightly angry way.

Bertha grabbed one out of her tupperware container, and fed it to Gwenavier. Her face lit up with excitement.

“Holy shit, dude, these are the best Jalapeno poppers. Where the fuck you buy these from?” Gwenavier says in excitement and astonishment.

“Oh, I make them myself, I have a lot of time, so I make these as a snack when I come to work.” Bertha says rather shyly.

“You should sell these, you could make a lot of money.”

“Oh they’re not that good.”

“Are you kidding me? These are so good, you could make an ass load of money off of these.”

Gwenavier proceeded to take another one, and give it to her co worker Jim, who didn’t speak at work all that often. He bit into one and gave both thumbs up and has a face of excitement, then he lit himself on fire and ran away. It was 5 o’clock, Bertha did the usual and clocked out and said her goodbyes. She headed into her 2006 Honda Civic, sat in the worn seat. She drove in and out of small roads, dirt trails, and back alley crack houses, Bertha was at her house. She unlocked the paint chipped white door, and walked into her house. Twas a small house, with hardwood floors, and a decent living room. She was greeted to all her pets, her 7 cats named Nancy, Prancy, Trancy, Fancy, Smancy, Lancy, and Bardivick (her favorite), her 3 dogs Zaney, Spikster, and Didelidie Rob Two. She headed to her bedroom to put down her stuff. Her kitchen was a decent space, although slightly dark, but that was no accident. Bertha went to make her Jalapeno poppers, and she started thinking about what had happened at work, with Gwenavier saying how good her Jalapeno poppers are, and that she should sell them.

“You know what, I might just sell them,” Bertha said to herself.

After that, she went out to her jalapeno farm, and started to see if any of them are ready. There we’re quite a few that could be picked. She went back inside to cook them. The next morning, she arrived with a sign in hand. “Homemade Jalapeno Poppers, 5 for \$1,” she hung it on the window and proceeded to work. After only 23 minutes of working, a customer stopped by the cubicle.

“Hey Bertha, I see you’re selling homemade jalapeno poppers,” the person said.

“Why yes I am, would you like to buy some,” Bertha said eagerly.

“Sure, why the hell not.”

Bertha grabbed one of the bags out of her bag and gave it to the customer, and the customer gave her a dollar. He then walked away. She didn’t have another customer. She got in her car, and went home sad, from not having another customers.

“Maybe he didn’t tell anyone,” Bertha thought to herself.

“Maybe he thought they we’re horrible,” the other thought popped.

“I can end it all, I have a bottle of vodka and enough Cyanide to kill a large elephant,” she also thought, but her therapist said that was bad so she dismissed it.

Bertha woke up early that next morning, she was still sad, so she went and checked on her Jalapenos. They were also sad, wilted in the cold of the morning, she went back inside and got ready to work, she had brought her chest with all the jalapeno poppers in it, because she would eat them all.

Bertha arrived at work, she clocked in, and headed to her cubicle. Something was different, there was a long line in front of it, they all wanted to buy the poppers. Bertha became very excited, and got to her desk. She had sold all of them by 8:30. By the time she got home from work, she had

already been making poppers, and made them all night long. Bertha had gotten to work, and there was an even bigger line in front of her cubicle. Once again, Bertha sold out of all of them. In the past two days, she had made \$350.

After about a week of sales, her total income was \$5,000. Bertha needed a bigger place to host her jalapeno farm, so she rented a 45 acre farm and all of it was planted. A month later, she had so many jalapenos that she needed to rent a giant uhaul to get them around. The first month of sales blew by, and she made an astounding \$250,000, so she did what most people decided to do, she opened a shop, and quit her job. She did catering, and just sold them to people, the shop was one of the biggest and most talked about shops in all of Troy. It made over \$2 Million that month.

It was a cold Tuesday morning, Bertha had that day off, since she had made so many poppers, there was no more needed. So she visited her old job, everyone was on their break and most were standing outside.

Bertha had bought a new Lamborghini Aventador, so no one had knew it was her.

“Sup, bitches,” Bertha said.

“So, I see the business has taken off,” said one of the co-workers.

“Hey, Bertha,” said Gwenavie.

“Long time no see,” said Bertha.

“Yeah, I see you’re doing well.”

“Yup, my business is now worth millions-”

“Freeze,” the NYPD said loudly.

Bertha put her hands in the air. She and all of her other co workers had no idea what was going on.

After a short 55 minutes, she arrived in the New York State Courthouse. It was a small room, painted white like a cheap apartment, and had nothing in it but chairs bolted to the ground. The officer came into the room, and escorted her to a courtroom.

“Bertha McFamchester,” the judge said in a deep, gravelly dry voice.

“This court finds you guilty of 7 counts Tax Fraud to the IRS, 12 counts Grand Theft Auto, 43 counts of Assault and Battery, Murder to the First Degree, 77 counts of Manslaughter, 144 counts of Assault on a Minor, Arsen, 771 counts of Rape to the third degree, 9,198 counts of selling drugs, terrorism, 21, 239 counts sex trafficking, abduction, violation of a restraining order, 17 counts of public intoxication, and one count of public dumping, you will be serving 56,213 years, but since that’s impossible, you will be serving life in maximum security prison, with no chance of parole.”

Bertha’s skin flushed at that moment, she didn’t think that she would do life without parole. She thought that it wouldn’t catch up to her, but the life in parole did the trick just fine and dandy.

“Yo dawg, what up?” Jonny said.

“Nothing much, just got here,” Bertha said in a tough, pimpish sort of a way.

“Coolio bro, so what you in for?”

“Too many things, and I am here for life too.”

“Cool, I got here for 345,341,912 counts of selling drugs.”

“I thought you kind of people didn’t get caught.”

“Well....”

“C’mon, how did you get caught.”

“I accidentally tried to sell crack to a cop.”

“Undercover?”

“No.”

Bertha went back to thinking, her thinking face made everyone worried, because of the emotionlessness that it somehow expressed.

“Hey, lady,” a mysterious man said.

Bertha still sat there thinking.

“Hey lady,” the man said louder.

“Huh what?” Said Bertha in a confused manner.

“You got a lighter?” said the man.

“No.”

“Yes you do, now where is it?”

“I told you I don’t have one.”

The man grabbed Bertha by the collar of her dull orange suit.

“I told you you do have a lighter, now give it to me.”

Bertha didn’t want to deal with this crap. So she grabbed his hand, twisted it backwards, kicked him in his testicles, and then threw him up against the wall.

“Listen here you dumb ass motherfucker, I don’t have a fucking lighter, now go back to your corner or I will stab you 73 times like I did my ex, now sit your bitch-ass down.”

The man crawled back to his corner,

“The names Damian” He said timidly

“Wow, that was impressive.” Said the young woman.

“Thanks, first day in jail, here for life.” Said Bertha with that pimpish sort of voice.

“He has been crazy, and likes to harass all of us for a light that none of us have.”

“Wow he seems like a waco.”

Bertha walked back to her corner, and Johnny came up and sat next to her.

“It’s funny sometimes,” Johnny said.

“What do you mean?” Bertha said in a puzzled manner

“I remember just one year ago I was in the back alley coke house, piling stacks of hundreds and bragging about me making \$450k that night, now look at me, I am in jail for selling crack to a cop. I remember when I was a little kid, my mom told me to stay away from that shit, but now I am in this place for not staying away from that shit.”

“Has anyone ever told you that you look like a dirty dog?”

“The fucks that suppose to mean?”

“You look like a dirty dog.”

“You said that, tha fuck does it have to do with anything?”

“I don’t know.”

“But like I said before.” Johnny said in a weirded out manner.

“I remember the good times, when the only thing that I had to worry about was watching my brother Jack and making sure the finger licking mass murderer didn’t come after him, but then our Grandma shot him, when mama would protect us from all the elements, and times were simpler.”

“Yeah, just like my fame.”

“What happened?” Johnny asked.

“I had a decent life, I had a house, a job, some pets, a jalapeno farm-”

“A jalapeno farm?”

“Bitch, I’m not finished, I even had a husband. I ended up taking an idea from one of my co workers, and it worked, but I had gotten in a fight with my ex and went off the deep end.”

“Wow, sounds like an exciting short time.”

“Yeah.”

Damion got out of jail, and is getting work for his PTSD. He now works for a lumber company that exports wood for a small city in California called Ukiah.

Bertha oddly didn’t have to serve life in prison, due to some good behavior and bargaining, she got out in 25 years with parole for extra good. Johnny got out of jail, and he loved music so much that he started up his own record company. Bertha got half stake of the company, running the financial and behind the scenes of the company, while Johnny did all the front end work, getting the music, and even getting some of the guest stars like 2 chainz and snoop dogg. He named his record label Dirty Dog Productions.

and clear plastic
we destroy nature

Sometimes
you just need to forget
about life

The Sound of Sanity

Running creek
in the silence of
nature

Something something something
Time illudes those
who enjoy

Didilede

There once was a man named Didilede
He had a drawer with a gun, cyanide, and vodka for three
His children of various names wanted something to do
So they went over to the neighbor's house after the morning dew
And grabbed the gun, cyanide and vodka on the move
The unnamed children sat in a brown tree
One of them wants to pee
They had a pair of binoculars to see
Judging for race, they went at a fast pace
In the window, the first got shot in the face
The second fot force fed cyanide
And the third had vodka coming out of his eye
They all ended up dead and nothing was said
So they left the house
And ran away to the deep south
But they didn't last, time went by fast
They all died
From the gun, left over cyanide, and vodka for one

Jack was watching TV, eating popcorn. There was a knock on the door, Jack went to answer it. It was the finger licking mass murderer/ Jack was being chased all through the house with the murderer following close behind. Jack tripped on a lego, falling harshly on the ground. Jack was about to get stabbed *boom*. "Ain't no bitch about to stab my grandson but me." The old granny said, and walked away. Jack went back to his popcorn, but his dog ate it all.

Munchin on tacos
takes the stress
away

Little houses with fireplaces
we're always my
favourite

She couldn't believe the sight in front of her. It was a dank meme of golden pepe. She knew she was blessed by the heavenly god of memes. Crying her eyes out she screams in ecstasy "Thank you oh supreme heavenly god of memes!" She then retreated back to her secret cave of memes where she hides her best dank memes.

She began to build a (unreadable word) of the dankest wood from a tree, grown by the holy pepe himself. The pepe candles were lit and the (unreadable word) was about to begin. "Dank pepe, bless this alter and make it a god tier meme." She chanted. She continued this chant until Snoop Dogg himself came down from heaven. Riding a chariot from such doges many rains. "Blessed are you my child." He said, holding up a blunt. "Partake in the dankest weed of heaven. It has been rolled by grumpy cat himself."

She took the blunt, took a long hit, the dank smoke burning her mortal throat. She handed the (unreadable word) back to Snoop Dogg and he nodded his head, obviously impressed. There was a light blindingly bright facing her to shield her eyes and once she could see, she saw something magnificent. All kinds of animals wearing pants in various ways with white vans upon their feet claiming to be Daniel. That is the moment they noticed that did too much LSD.

Billy Goat Bob was walking the dog in the morning, when she saw his neighbor Fenicia Cow Anaya, who loved to smell the flowers in the crisp morning air. They say hi to each other when magical moo cows come flying from space "Hello fellow earthlings, if you don't give us all your flowers, we will poop all over your planet,". Billy gave all the flowers, but the cows pooped all over earth anyways.

It was a dark and stormy night in a small Irish Village. The rain was coming down hard, and it was evident by the sound of the tin roof. The thunder, rumbling like a California earthquake. The man sat inside, with a book, titled "The Ultimate Guide to Sleep." The chair he sat in, old and made of splintered wood. It creaked like the sound of a bending wooden bridge. The only surrounding light being the old lamp, that runs, but is nothing special.

As the man curled up with the book, he started to hear the floor creak, but it was nothing, just the rain under the house. 31 minutes later, the storm got stronger, and the thunder rumbled harder. A sudden electric buzz could heard, then the power went out. He sat in the dark, thinking about dark thoughts, like what if a bear came and attacked the entire village, or if a giant volcano would kill his neighbor because he still has that toaster that he borrowed 13 years ago, and got up to go grab his candle and a lighter or a book of matches. After fumbling in drawers for about 7 minutes, he returned to the chair, to find a knife in the middle, which had a layer of what looked like blood. He slowly raised it to his nose, and then tasted the knife like an idiot. It was strawberry jelly that he put on his toast earlier.

After putting it in the sink, he returned to light the old candle made from a steel bucket. The light is almost as bright as his lamp, and he could see the book with some clarity. After about 19 4/5 minutes of reading the book, sounds of a cabinet can he heard from the distance. He wondered what happened, so he picked up the bucket candle and trudged through the house like a giant cow trying to go to his bail of hay, to find where the noise was coming from.

He eventually landed in the very back room, where his study is. He looked down to see 2 of his drawers open, one of them had all his writing stuff, and the other had his collection of notebooks and papers that he wrote of his ideas to share with all his friends and relatives about the ideas of peace, and sometimes donuts and other crap. Eventually he just closed them and went back to the reading chair. The candle had blew out, probably from the wind. He grabbed the lighter and lit it back up.

After about 39 minutes of reading, a whisper of the word "Pizza" came across, But it wasn't a whisper, it was his mind, because he was hungry. After getting to the kitchen, and taking the candle with him because there wasn't any electricity. The cabinets, empty like the land he lived on, with no people, just crops, and a lot of them, but sadly the crops only lasted 2 days because he binge eats to make him forget about his wife leaving him for her Gynecologist. After being sad about having no food in the cabinet, icebox was the next best place to look. He found some meat that he had purchased in the large market the other day. After contemplating for about 39 1/2 seconds whether to eat it or not, he decided to.

After a tame, but hot fire had been lit, he put the meat on a metal plate to cook it. The smell was starting to fill up the whole house. It was a good smell, like the smell of a grilling steak. While thinking about other things, like Donald Trump and memes, he checked the meat to see if he can engage in the slaughtered animal of his desires.

After the meat was cooked, he extinguished the fire. Returning to the reading spot, he sat down and began to carve into his meat. The taste was superb, with rich flavors from using decadent spices. However, all of his enjoyment was ruined by the sound of loud scratching. After going the where the scratching was coming from, he gazed out a small window right above the blank wall. It was a bear.

He immediately went into panic. Since bears extremely close to your house was a common sight, most people have a bear panic room. As he entered the room with meat in hand, he continued eating. As the man is an idiot, he didn't lock the door to make sure the bears don't get in. He heard the front break in.

The worst has happened. The bear was in. But thinking that the bear wouldn't hear or smell him, he continued eating. Heavy breathing could be heard from the door, it was the bear. Suddenly, the bear knocked down the door, and the man scared out of his mind, got mauled to death. With deep claws that entered the spine, then a loud snap. The meat was never finished.

I told you he didn't make it.

It was a cold winter night, like one of those nights it's great to curl up by the fire and read a good book, or even watch Netflix. James had a cabin, and was sitting in the living room, eating some little caesars. As he looked out the window, he saw a shadowy figure flailing in the distance. He jumped back on the couch, heart racing at 221 bpm, filled with adrenalyne, sweating cats and elephants. He calmed down, and went back to eating his pizza, while he watched the Swedish movies on his integrated home server. After 24 minutes of watching *The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared*, he heard a noise coming from the kitchen. He got up to check it out. There was a note with marker taped on the fridge door that read "김정은은 당신을 죽일오고있다."

"I can't read this," he said out loud in a frightened voice.

He locked the 3 lock door. Heading to the living room to sit down and wait out the night, a flash of lightning, Kim Jong Un can be seen in the window holding a blood drenched knife James felt the need to defend himself, so he grabbed his Desert Eagle. He heard the door burst open.

"I'm not dying today," he said loading his gun.

boom Kim was dead, lying on the floor. He put his gun away, and went back to eating his pizza. He learned his lesson, always lock all of the doors.

Rain, the magical liquid that falls out of the sky and has the ability to make any funeral more depressing.
Rain, staying inside to a warm cup of cocoa with a good book next to the fire
Rain. making puddles that makes kids want to splash in them, then parents getting flustered when they are drenched
Rain, the magic that causes the roof to leak, or your dog to float away on the top of your car
Rain, that sound on the tin roof that makes it o so enjoyable to look at.
Rain, canceled schools
Rain, big puddles
Rain, wet dog smell
Rain, the formation of rust
Rain, the droplets that form on your car's windshield
Rain, that excuse to stay inside and do nothing
Rain, the end to our drought

I'm sorry
for I have eaten your teacup pig

I didn't eat all of him
just his legs

Now he rolls around
wishing he had legs

Olivia Bjerk

How to Become Human

Being human starts with the right body. Pick the right one for you and inhabit it. Now integrate into society. Society not accepting you? Cry. Cry yourself to sleep at night, become friends with a man named Ben and his brother, Jerry. Eat a box of chocolate and question why it is salty, then remember all of the tears you cried and how the stream never seems to stop. But remember by doing this you are feeling emotions of rejections, and you are being human. CONGRATULATIONS! Your heart is in a thousand pieces. Don't worry, we hide it from everyone and one day so will you!

New Years

STOP.

Do you smell it?

The smell of sulfur and champagne on the breath?

Do you hear it?

The sound of people yelling in joy? Children up way past their bedtime?

Party Poppers and Fireworks?

Those things are what we call "reigning in the New Year"

Just stay paused for another moment.

Remember past lovers, old friends, silly arguments and stupid puns.

Remember all of the things that changed you over the course of one year, a short 12 months, that made you the person you are today. Think of all the things you are going to have to let go of and gain to become the person you will be next year. All the mistakes, all of the people who walk out of your story and into someone else's. Now go. Go find those stories, new mistakes, new love, more stupid puns. Stop regretting past lovers, silly arguments and broken hearts.

They say the world is your oyster.

This year, go crack the ugly thing open and find your pearl.

Imperfections

As the breeze blows, you fall.
Your face is red,
Your veins are exposed.
When the breeze blows again,
You are blown away, your stem following behind you,
Making it so you can never forget your roots.
When I walked by, I picked you up.
I studied your imperfections and bright colors.
I took you home
And I kept you,
Simply for your imperfections.
I think of how the imperfections came to be in your short life,
How much you changed when the seasons did.
I think of how you died,
And how I gave you a second chance to be admired.
I think of how much we are alike, in our imperfections,
In how we change with the seasons.
I keep you as a reminder of how I am like a leaf,
Of how imperfect I am.

Irises

The flowers still sit on the table
They're wilting away now
From purple to blue to a sickly grey
The green leaves are losing their beauty
Just like the memories of you
Your purple vans and blue eyes
Your favorite green shirt
That grey car you used to drive away from me
I stare at the vase
Playing with a spoon sitting in a bowl of cereal that went soggy long ago
I stare at the vase while trying to read
I stare at it and I think of you
You were the one
You bought me flowers
You laughed at my bad jokes
I think of the good times which are starting to be shadowed by the bad
I remember our last argument
A silly little fight over nothing
I stare at the vase until it is too much for me to bare
I get up and I throw away your flowers
I pour the water down the drain and let it wash you away
The next day I come home with a bouquet of Irises
I let myself fall into memories of you again
Afraid to let go
Afraid of actually being alone

Apologies

When you asked if
I was the girl in the photo
I said no
When you asked if
I was kind as a child
I said yes
When you asked if
I loved you
I said yes
I apologize for all
The lies stated above

Haiku

The trees sit bare
The harsh winter
Melted away by a gentle spring

How to Cause a Disaster

Make friends with a star
Hold them tight and drag them back to earth
Watch as they burn everything you love
Because you brought a star to earth

The Rose

I remember the day some jogger jogged past me and decided to end my life. He just took me from my family even though I was very thorny about it. I guess my beauty just wasn't meant for this world. He gave me to a lover later that day. She stared at me in awe for a moment before hugging him tightly and saying I love "it". I am not an "it", I am a living thing, not an object. I had been anyways. She put me in a vase on her table and left me to fade away, my color slipping as I longed to see the sun once more. From an elegant, vibrant, scarlet to a less than desirable grey. She eventually threw me away, like I was nothing, like I had been nothing but the withered version of myself she saw now. I, the high-strung rose, had become nothing but garbage, a shadow of my former self.

Tell me it's wrong

Tell me it's wrong
That I still think of you everyday
That I never build up the strength to visit
Tell me it's wrong
That the one time I did visit, I couldn't hold myself together long enough to say the things that needed to be said
Tell me it's wrong
That I held onto our sugar coated memories, blocking out the harsh words and pain we never meant to cause each other
Tell me it's wrong
That I still needed you when you left
Needed you to hold me like when we were kids hiding from your mom and dad
How I needed you to never let me go when we started to fall in love
Tell me it's wrong
That when I visited you today I broke down because your name is still on that piece of stone and the dates are never going to change

Lightning Bugs

The backyard was lit up by lightning bugs and lanterns made of mason jars. The stars shined bright without their companion, the moon. We held each other's hands and spun in circles to a song only we could hear. We were anywhere we wanted to be. A ball sat in the corner from our earlier kick ball game for two, our princess dresses gathering mud at the bottom. We were at the ball, we were climbing mountains. We were stars, but I only wanted to be a star if I could hold my big sister's hand. So we danced amongst lightning bugs and the stars danced without the moon. All I wanted was to be like you but for mom we were growing up all too soon. For now we were princesses, explorers, stars and we were two halves of one soul destined to grow up but never to be alone.

Untitled

When I cry myself to sleep at night, it isn't because of past love or because someone has broken my heart. I hardly know those things. I cry myself to sleep because sometimes the world is too much for me to bear. I don't tell you I'm okay because I truly am. I don't even know what okay is anymore. I tell you I'm okay because I don't want you to worry about me because I don't want to be a burden to you. When you finally notice that I'm not alright, you are going to question what you did wrong or why I hate the world. The truth is that you didn't do anything wrong and I don't hate the world. I hate myself. I don't like the person who looks back at me when I look at myself in the mirror. She is lost and broken and she can't view herself as beautiful in her self doubting eyes. When I look at myself, I can only pick out the flaws. When I am left alone with my thoughts, I claw and tear myself apart, trying to piece back together the heart I broke myself only to destroy myself a little bit more in the process. Hear me cry, HEAR ME SCREAM, begging for help before every part of me is gone. Don't believe me when I tell you I'm okay. Don't leave me with my thoughts or tear my heart apart. When I cry myself to sleep at night, It's because I was left alone and I broke my own heart.

Just Another Character

The midnight rendezvous between the writer and the engineer was not the first, but it was the last. The writer, a beautiful female with silvery blonde hair stared at the engineer who thought she loved him. She was only getting information for her husband and she knew there was nothing the engineer wanted more than to see her nude. The engineer had worn his hair in a pompadour as if trying to use it like a peacock uses its plume to attract a mate. He had become obsessed with her. The writer was unimpressed as she played with the blade in her jacket. It was a beautiful blade that she was slightly obsessed with. The knifepoint never dulled, never needed to be sharpened or shined. It remained the same with every kill, unlike the person who wielded it. He got closer to her, gently stroking the writer's cheek. It disgusted her. She had all the information she needed when she pulled the blade from her coat and drove it into his heart. He had a surprised look on his face as small blood streams slowly fell down his chin. He was nothing to her. After all, she was a writer and he was just another character in a story.

Moving On

I'm happy to know that you have moved on.
You can go out with other people and not think of me.
I'm glad to hear that the chime has returned to your laughter.
Just one more thing.
Could you let me do the same?
Stop making me see your smile in strangers on the street
 Or the color of your eyes in fresh spring leaves.
I need you to stop popping up in my life where you shouldn't be.
I'm finally ready to move on, to continue my life without your hand to hold
 Or the brush of your lips on my cheek, gentler than a summer rain.
Let me forget you.
Let me forget how kind you were.
If you love someone, let them go.
I let you go on the outside but you still have a grip on my heart.
One last thing.
Don't forget me, okay?
Because I promised myself that I would never forget you.

Miranda Borges

My Life

The elegant shine of your
Eyes in the moonlight,
I look at you and think about
How our life will unravel.
Will I fall deeply in love with you,
And forever feel the dust of your
Lips so gracefully on mine?
The ghost of your fingertips
On my neck, the scratch of
Your nails down my back.
Will I have the smell of your shampoo
Coming from the bathroom
When I wake up in the morning?
The euphoric smell of your
Cologne on the inside
Of your hoodie when I pull it close around me?
I could not ask for a better
Outcome to my life.

Serenity

The firmery located in the
Very depths of the museum.

The only light, the lightning,
Carrying my thoughts across the Atlantic.

Charging my soul and making
Me scream with content.

Molten lava calling me to dip
My hands into its magnificent
Stream of orange and red.

The storm so fierce and loud,
And yet, all I want is to yell in the rain.

Burrowing myself in cozy duvets,
Singing to myself as a form of
Serenity.

The darkness, like an escalator to my joyous
Feeling of content.

I see glimpses of the stars through the stormclouds, and rejoice,
For they are everything I ever want to be.

You Are My Solar System

The ring around Saturn is as elegant as the rings around my fingers.
The sun shines, and my love for you gets stronger.
Your eyes are the color of Neptune,
They change my mood like the moon changes the tide.
Your lips, captivating, like the sun on my back in the middle of summer.
There are galaxies cascading from your fingertips.
Painting memories into my brain like I am a canvas,
And you want to color me in,
Fill all my blank spaces with love and beauty.
You are the earth and I am the moon, stuck in your orbit,
Never wanting to leave.

Me, Myself and I

I am the scent of dandelions in the rain.
 The taste of sweet and sour candies on your tongue.
I am the sight of lightning turning sand to glass.
 The cat cautiously sticking his paw in a puddle.
I am the feeling you get the first time you open a new book and the spine
 cracks.
 The twinkle in the stars when they shine their brightest.
I am that mini spasm you have when you almost fall back in your chair.
 The feeling when you ace a test.
I am the tears running down her face.
 The neverending shine of the sun.

Ode to Rain

I want to be the rain, slowly dripping off of your eyelashes
Making your hair waterlogged before it dries into a frizzy mess.
I want to be the one cuddled under your fluffiest duvet with you
While we sit on your couch and watch anything we want.
I want to be the trickle of water on your boots walking home
To cling to your clothing and soak into your socks until you
Change into warm, dry clothes, forgetting about me.
And cuddle up on the couch with a large mug of hot chocolate,
Headphones, and a new book.
You have forgotten about me, alone in the rain,
Just waiting for you to love me too.
I know that rain is there for me when you are not.
Rain is the friend you call when you want company
But don't want to talk.
Rain is the one who always listens to your music with you.
The one who will give you a perfect melody to read to.
Rain is the lover I wish you could be,
But I know you don't even see me anymore.

*

The bare branches
Showing off their skin
To the poet in blue

*

Little red leaf
Water centered in the middle-
Rainy day bliss

You Are Not a True Beauty

You are the captain of the army and
The leader of the rebellion.
You will riot against me when I
Have given you everything I have.
You build me up to the highest I can be,
Just so your icy touch could tear through me.

You are the short lasting daffodils on my windowsill,
The trickle of sunshine through the blinds,
You may think you are the kiss of
Cashmere lips on my neck, but
You are the cold fingertips grasping my hair,
Forcing me to comply with your ways.

You are seen as a nameless grace,
Granting wishes and creating love.
This is not what you are,
You are a tsunami
Tearing away the foundation and
Natural beauty of your victims.

Your name is beauty but you are far from it.

New Year, New Experiences

Remember all the things that changed you over the course of one year,
All the stolen kisses and sad goodbyes,
Everyone telling you that it will get better soon,
But they don't know any of it.
They don't see the way I look at myself in the mirror,
The way I cry myself to sleep because
I just don't know what to do with myself.
Sure, I'm hoping it will get better.
That I won't have this voice in the back of my head,
Telling me I'm doing things wrong,
But hope won't get me very far.
I want to be able to touch your hair because you're the reason I am here
I want to kiss your soft lips and feel the touch of your skin on mine
But I don't know if what I want is realistic.
I see my friends and their relationship troubles,
And it makes me feel like I will never have the things I crave
Because I crave another person,
A person who I can talk to at two AM because I can't sleep,
Who I can kiss unexpectedly and have it not be that big a deal,
A person who doesn't mind me being my affectionate self around them,
And because I love you, even if you don't love me back right now.

*

The clouds
Whisper your name
In their glory

My Dear Vanessa

For Vanessa Ilar

The young girl sits in the grass,
Her shoes are wet and her butt is getting dirty,
But she is only focused on the poetry gliding
From the tip of her pen onto her paper.
Her tea is next to her.
She does not care what others think,
But instead,
She just sits and writes,
Letting all of her thoughts flow onto paper.
Her hair is golden in the sun,
Her nails are chipped but elegant.
The young girl sits in the grass,
And writes.

Autumn

Autumn rain coming down onto my hands,
I am in bliss.
The shine of water droplets on the leaves.
Making me happy to be alive.
I can't tell you why it rains, or if it rains to please us,
Or possibly because the earth is crying for all that has happened to her.
But I can tell you that it is a beautiful sight.
Droplets falling from the sky like falling stars.
Leaves on roses covered in rain,
So pure, they soak up as much as they can, grateful for this gift.
I sit in the rain and I do not care if my hair is wet or if I get cold.
I am only focused on the droplets hitting my face
Telling me the bad days will pass,
And that it's never too late to love the little things.

Words

Words can and cannot illuminate
The encryptions of the heart and soul, the body, and mind.
They are a taste of that beauty on the tip of your tongue
Like hot tea.
Words cannot go far enough to express
The feeling of being in love or of a first kiss.
Words can and cannot illuminate
The beauty of catastrophes and shooting stars.
Only the planets can see the true magnificence of the stars and
themselves.
They are not done justice by the words that are spoken or written
As only the eye knows the truth of these things.
It would be beautiful and wild and rugged
To have the ability to portray every image, every smell, every sound
through words.
But, alas, that feat has yet to be achieved
Because some things just can't be explained.

The Me I Wish I Could Be

I am different because I have a fire burning in my bones
My head is filled with the beautiful sonnets of Shakespeare
And all the poetry I love.
I am full of brilliant thoughts that I cannot fathom into existence.
I am a hurricane waiting to blow away my audience.
I just need to find the right time.

Nature

She couldn't breath.
She felt like she was drowning in a world with so much beauty.
There were flowers all around,
Trees littering the area, but all she felt was sadness and despair.
All the beautiful people around her,
But she could hardly see them.
She could only hear the voices screaming at her.
She knew they were there.
She did not want to hear their words,
She couldn't let go, couldn't let them take her.
She tried to fight them,
To fight all the words they threw at her.
But she still couldn't hear the birds chirping,
The creek flowing,
The beautiful people,
All the trees rustling in the wind
All she could hear was them.
She didn't want to do it,
But she let them win.

*

The darkness covers me and I breath it in
My only thoughts are of myself
And I don't know where I'm headed or if I'll ever get there.

*

We are together
All slowly breaking apart
Seething for beauty

You Know Who You Are

You are the snotty older brother, you bully people into believing you are the best there is.

It seems you don't know right from left, yet we follow you like lost dogs.

We think you will grant our biggest aspirations,

All you really do is show us the possibilities and then push us back onto the ground when we do something you don't like.

You say you will let people come, be open and free, but then you oppress them

You oppress anyone that tries to speak their mind against you because you know you are wrong in so many ways.

You say we are safe, protected from all the horrors around us

But I am terrified to go outside at night, so afraid that something will happen to me and I won't be around to see the sunshine in the morning.

You are contradictory to your own promises and stand up for the people who are tearing you apart.

You know who you are and you need to own up to your mistakes.

There Are No Limits to My Love

I can't get you out of my head

With your sideways glances and freezing cold hands.

You do not know how much I love you,

I don't love you as one loves the moon or all the stars.

I love you as one loves the rain even though it soaks them to their core.

I love you as one loves bees, even when they cause them pain.

I love you because you are capable of pulling me into the clouds

When I feel I will never lift off the ground.

I love you as the fish loves the sea, with no limitations.

I don't know any other way to love except in this form,

Where I give every aspect of my heart, body and soul to you.

Seth Frenier-Butow

Take Away

rip what you love most away
rip it away because with every breath you take
you find a way to think of it more
take it in your grasp and throw it into the depths
watch it disappear
because the more you are with it
the less you are you
you think it is great when all you are doing is giving it power of you
to a mindless object that does not care about you
you waste your time fighting
fighting for love
because love is all you need
take it away because with it you aren't you
take it away because when you aren't you
i fall apart

Nikki

They tell you to stop but you can't
Her long brown strains of hair run through my fingers
I remember when we met
Her green brown eyes dragged me in
Her soft pink lips dragged me closer
She hurts me with every kiss
But I can never quit her
Her pull is too strong and always becomes tighter
Slave for her touch
I'm a slave to you Nikki

Grandfather

The little things get you
They ask me what you so sad for
Because the days we spent together
There is no more
My days for so long were just us
Ice cream for breakfast on summer days
Always pizza for dinner
You always knew the little things to make me happy
The day you leave my heart will be the day it stops beating
And I see you again

Suh Dude

Dude suh

Untitled

The feeling when someone is talking to you
And you get lost with every word they say.
Not because you don't care,
Because their voice brings you to another place.
A place of comfort.

Feelings Blow

Feelings are the worst
They cause pain
But when they are for you,
It is just right I tell myself
Your eyes draw me in with temptation.
Eyes that bring my heart to a stop
But starts to beat again every time I hear you voice.

Bailey Caudillo

Unknown

At the end of the hallway
looking out the window at night
there is a sense of coldness seeping through
my warm blood
going through me and taking over

Under the bed
inside of your head
is there a demon waiting?
lurking through the cover of darkness
stealthily destroying all sense of confidence

Where is the light?
I can't find the switch
I'm just reaching out into the dark
a void filled with the unknown

The present is all you know
and maybe some of your past
and your future is all that's unknown

For a Soldier

When you wake up in the morning
or stay up on nights end
know that your friend is still here till the
very end
when you gather your equipment
and grasp your gun
know that you're loved, brother,
uncle, son.

When you think of the memories we
all shared before
think of the future and know that
there'll be more
when you look at pictures and see
see your wife
I want you to smile because
she is your life

When you're hurting inside cause you
think you've done wrong
lift your head up and remember
you're strong
when you fire your weapon and see
enemies dead
please hold on tight don't let it go to
your head

When you leave from there and
you're packed for home
I want you to think back and know
you weren't alone
when you see us and we hold you tight
I will smile and tell you that you held
up a fight
Be strong I know you can do this
because when this is over
your life will be full of bliss.

Please Smile to Me

I would do anything to see you for a while
I can walk a thousand mile
To make you feel better...to make you smile

I would do anything to make you glad
you don't understand how I go mad
if I hear you sound sad

I would do anything for you
to make you pass this mood through
to cheer you up from feeling so blue
if only you tell me what to do
if only you give me a clue

If only I know the key
to make you smile to me
Smile to me...
Please smile to me

Philip's Bad Day

Philip woke up in his bed on the first day of January. He was making coffee when he heard a scream outside. Philip opened his front door to see what was going on and he saw swarms of zombies devouring the townsfolk. "Oh Hell no!" Philip shouted. Like an idiot, he ran to his car to try to escape the city. It was that moment he realized that he had forgotten his keys in the house just as twelve zombies set their sights on him. Philip ran like Forrest Gump for seven blocks when the Army appeared out of nowhere and mowed down the undead horde with bullets and grenades. Philip breathed a breath of fresh air and put his hands in his pockets only to discover that he had his keys on him the whole time. He chuckled and face palmed, knowing that he could've saved all those calories from running. He began to walk towards home when a surviving zombie emerged from the bushes and bit him on the neck...killing him.

The End.

America

America,
The supposed land of the free and home
of the brave,
filled with the worst generation
of pants sagging idiots who can't
live without their precious wifi.

America,
the refuge for hypocrites
that look down on immigrants
who are just looking for a better life,
when this country was founded by
immigrants and those hypocrites
are descendents of illegal immigrants.

America,
the shelter for war-hungry
morons who claim they
want to make this country
great again by sending troops
into any nation that disagrees
in the slightest.

America,
what have you become?

Marooned

We stand in the blaze of the sun,
our toes buried in the scorching sand,
overlooking the endless ocean
that completely surrounds us.

I turn and see that bastard Colton,
stealing the raft and paddling off to civilization,
leaving us for dead.
Leaving me for dead.

Paul grabs his hunting rifle,
and whispers, “You can’t just leave us here.”
My body quivers as the sound of thunder
fills the island air.
I look off in the distance to see Colton’s body
stumble off the flimsy wooden raft and
into the drink.

The raft continues to venture out
with no intention of returning.
Without a second thought, I reach for my
black, metal, flashlight and I focus what little
power my body had left into a vicious swing
that collides the tip with Paul’s jaw.

He falls to the ground like a mighty redwood,
blood protruding from his mouth and nose.
His eyes glare into the sun.
My heart sinks as the idea of what I’ve done
comes into realization. I drop the beacon
and put my palms on my head.

I turn and see Tyler, standing
No more than ten feet away.
He had seen my mistake. I put my hands
on his shoulders, “Look at me.” I say.
I gaze at him and he gazes back.
His mouth hanging open like he’d suddenly
become brain dead.

After what feels like an hour of taciturnity,
he muffles a faint, “Goodbye.”
I can only watch as he raises his pistol

to his right temple, finger on the trigger.
I close my eyes as the shot
quakes the entire island. I feel his blood
all over my face. Do I dare open my eye?

Sure enough, I do, and Tyler is no longer standing.
I drop to my knees as I comprehend that
I am all alone now. The only one left.
I can't take it. I pull the gun from his
inanimate fingers and inhale one last
breath before ending it all.

I feel it. The testosterone coursing
through my veins. The rage. My heart
begins to beat faster and faster. The sounds
of the island become louder. The waves on
the beach, the wind in the trees, the screaming
of the gulls.

I put the barrel just in front
of my ear and quickly draw
the trigger. Only this time,
nothing happens. I hastily pull
pull out the clip and see that I'm
out of bullets.

Anchors

My eyelids feel like
they have anchors pulling
them down. My body feels
like a broken down rusty
Machine. My stomach
growls like a Lion fighting
off mangey Hyena.
My mind tells me to just fall
asleep, to stop reading this
boring book about this boring
character and his boring life.
Who cares if Gatsby and Daisy
are in love? I would trade my
Goddamn soul just to go home.

Life Chooses For Me

I wonder if the trees can hear me
when I scream aloud.
Or if the dandelion screams
when I pick it out.
There's no telling where life
can take us.
One day I'm a blade of grass,
but today, I am myself.
Nobody else.
Life chooses for me.

Worthless Worries

Sometimes, life is utterly revolting and tiring.
With its boring obligations.
I wish that I could take these moments
and throw them in a dumpster called life.
I weep for worthless worries,
hating that these tears are worthless.

Thoughts

Every night, I stare at the ceiling
and I think about the future.
What could happen in my lifetime?
Could Aliens from another planet
invade or peacefully visit?
Could the Government create some
sort of biological weapon that starts
the Zombie apocalypse?
Could the world's superpowers go to war?
Will everyone and everything be destroyed
in the flames of nuclear fire?
Maybe none of those will happen
until long after I'm dead.
Maybe they won't happen at all.
Only time can tell what the Universe
has in store for us.

The Punisher

It only took one day
and everything I loved was taken away
but now every time I think of it I laugh
for now I'm on my most destructive path!

One day you're going to remember
that I'm just returning to sender
I'm just returning the favor
so these last moments you better savor!

I'll never be the same
for you've started an inextinguishable flame
You've torn my world apart
now your turn is about to start!

Ode to a T.V.

A T.V.
What is its purpose?
Why does it exist?
To entertain human beings.
A T.V. doesn't think.
A T.V. doesn't feel.
A T.V. doesn't care about anything.
Humans treat T.V.s like their own children.
If not, who would entertain us now?

His Kind

I have gone out, a furious monstrosity,
attacking anything I see that breathes,
pleading anger and frustration,
leaving misery and pain in my wake.
A man like that is misunderstood.
I have been his kind.

I have found tranquility,
a place of safety and happiness
that rests within the walls of my home.
A place that I can shut myself out
from the world.
A man like that is thought of as strange.
I have been his kind.

Kylee Caudle

-Untitled-

Call no man happy until he is dead.
All he shall do is whine about how he should have so much more,
 when he is living.
He will drink, and fight, and whine.
It will be your job to make him content, to make him stop.
You have the responsibility to make his life better;
While you waste away with no benefit.

When you want to do something for either yourself or both,
He will still whine.

So let me ask you this:
Is it better to be married, where both are unhappy?
Or a widow where both are happy and you get to try again?

Singing Bones

Snap! There goes my neck.
Crackle! There goes my jaw and fingers.
Pop! There goes my spine.
Now to slouch into myself to become stiff once again.
To hear my skeleton's melody.

AEIOU

A: the metallic silver of an arrow's head as it flies through the air towards its mark.
E: the soft green of dyed faux fur or hair signalling spring time.
I: clearly transparent, but reflective, like the glass we master.
O: a deep royal purple worn only by royalty and children.
U: a bright pale yellow of a child's security blanket which has been with them before they could remember.

Foxy

Dedicated to Dax LeBlanc

What does
The fox say?

“Give me
My hat back”?

“Yosef”?

“Wat!”?

“I veto
Your veto
Of my veto”?

“Never again”?

All these
A fox
Says.

Fallen

How do you know when you're too deep? When you wake up with her in mind? When she texts you you're happier than an elephant with a ball? When you wish you were in the same city, state, country, alongside her? I know I have fallen in love, and I don't really want to get up.

-Untitled-

Remembering the days
Where all seemed fine.

Bratz dolls mingled with Barbies,
Stuffed animals, always female,
Dresses 24/7, no pants allowed.
Those were the days.

When your parents actually seemed impressed
When you say something smart,
Instead of bored, as if you should've already known this.

When you fell asleep on the couch
Watching Spongebob or Dora the Explorer,
And wake up in your bed,
Thinking you've mastered teleportation;
Instead of waking up with a crick in your neck.
When you didn't have to wake up at 4:30 in morning
To prepare for school.

When you actually got excited about Christmas, or Halloween, or Easter.
Instead of feeling the magic of each holiday slip away.
Each and every year.

Those were the days.
And those days are the reason I don't want to give up
Being a child.

Few Screws Loose

Back in 8th grade,
I was a total screwball.
My campus had trees.
And with those trees came animals:
Birds, squirrels, possibly a raccoon or 2,
Me.

Back in 8th grade,
I used to chase squirrels.
To challenge my body;
To prove people wrong;
To see what it would be like to catch a fast little animal
with my bare hands.

Back in 8th grade,
I almost caught a squirrel.
Just a yard or so away.
I could've jumped for it; should've.
But we were too close to the tree,
And I didn't want to get road rash,
splinters, *and* a nasty bite.

Now in Junior year;
Whenever I see a squirrel, I chase it;
As if it were my future itself.
I haven't caught it yet, but one of these days,
I will need a rabies shot.

Ode to Rain

Rain rain
please stay;
play with us every
day.
You've been
gone for awhile,
and you hardly
visit anymore.
You're becoming
a myth.
As unbelievable
as snow.
Maybe
even more so.
At least
it gets cold enough
for snow.
You just seem
to think
that your job
is over;
after you've just had
a four month
vacation--
with sick days.

Ode to Donald Trump

You, Sir,
are the utmost
trash I've seen
to trash.
I know trash.
I, too,
am a lowly
trash citizen.
But you, Sir!
Are the
trash that
everyone hopes
never to sink
so low
to be.
You
make us other
trash citizens
look like
Premium recycling!
You are
the spoiled milk,
in a rotten
cake,
trapped in
a moldy
carcass of
a rat,
at the top
of the heap.
The Trash God!
Congratulations
for choosing something
everyone thinks about,
but a lot of people
rely on.
Good luck
with your
fucking wall.

-Untitled-

The fae folk are being condemned.
And we don't care.
Because we are the cause.
We cut down their skyscrapers,
We stomp on their cottages and taverns,
We kidnap and slaughter their friends and livestock.
Because we require paper to write upon.
Because we have *nowhere else* to station our heaving carriages.
Because we are so entitled to the land we "so rightly live upon."
The fae folk and animals are suffering
For our lust and greed of production and carelessness.

Haikus

Puppy monkey baby
Grab a good old mountain dew
See you in my nightmares

Dirt everywhere
Under my feet, my ass, in the air
Baseball's fun

The poor array of food
Makes me wish
I had not come

Abandoned lunch table
Left only for Earth's elementals
To sit

Lovely

You may not know this,
But I love you.
I wish I've been around you
For many more years, than just two.

Your silly act, your oily face,
Your love for them,
That's a whole new race.

I can't compete.
She is better.
And I am starting to see
What you see in her.

Park Trip

Here at the park...
Water is running from an unknown assailant.
Cicadas are screaming in competition.
Lizards are training for nationals.
Rocks sleep for hundreds of years and will sleep for hundreds more.
The tiny rock wall is doing a dam good job.
Giant tree roots step out in the nude in wondrous shapes & sizes.
Ants prepare for the great 'Ant vs. Aphid War' by gathering arms & food.
Children gather around the creek's edge and write their ballads to be passed
 down to their great-great-great-great-great-great-grandson,
 Hector.
And the grass, oh, the dear grass, does absolutely nothing.
Like a champ.

~_(\ツ)_/~

Mama died today. Or yesterday maybe; I don't know. I was too busy playing with my blocks to notice. Plus, she never visited me, so why should I care? I haven't seen her for three years.

I'm stuck in day care, that's where she left me. Apparently I'm a "troubled child". I talk to my imaginary friends too much; I throw things, and bite people, and climb the tallest thing in my room to jump off. The daycare people took everything out of my room, except for my bed.

When I was told mama died, Lance told me before the daycare people did. He told me, "Emma, I think your mother is dead. I think she was playing in the street like she always told you to do. I think she was drinking one of her 'special' drinks. I think the person driving didn't see her until too late. Emma, I think your mother is dead." I laughed. We normally played this game together. Then the day care person came in.

Mama either died today or yesterday; I don't know. I was too busy playing with my blocks.

Dylan DeGuzman

Wild

clouds so massive
you can feel them in your bones
embracing your veins
they drop you to your knees
you let your heart thank them
because they gave you a gift
you take it every time you inhale
gasping for more
they medicate you
the half lit moon subdues you
under rosy clouds
and purple skies
the ground under your toes
matches your skin
tossing wind chimes
harmonizing crickets
you sit under limbs
and find the rhythm in the mountains
trees and houses dot the skyline
with little bits of lights
poking out the sea of green
the clouds are drained
from their color
and begin to put the stars into the sky
I stare into wild eyes
I take my first steps home

[untitled]

their lungs begin to fill with the breath of life
they awake into the sea of limbs
taunting them out of their skin
they begin to ground their bones to fine powder
stained with their blood
reminding them who they are
they lift their fingers together
measuring their imperfections
his fingers towered over hers
but she raised her hand to match his
the world swelling between their palms
immersed to something beautiful
their hands began to shake
too afraid of letting go

she is the vibrations in my throat
vanity constructed by the laces
tethering her soul to the strumming
of guitars
she beats her toes to the drums
and finds her arms tangled with the chords
she caught a note whispering
a novice mistake
she paints a coffee shop
with the rhythm
meddling on the brim of a mug
dancing with cotton mouth
she dreamt of a nightmare
she tasted the wine on the violin
and lathered it with her tongue
she wrapped her heart around
the amplifier
and gave the music a taste

The Spaces in Between

you washed yourself down through my fingers
you made every bone in my body crack
paralyzed under christmas lights
your mouth is a delicacy
every time it touches mine
I get a little bit high
that's where I want to be
under branches and trees like a
blanket you swallow me in a fantasy
sitting under walls
your words are like alcohol
and I am addicted
let me drink from your tongue
smoke exhausting from your capillaries
I need to sip from your fingers
but that's not enough
suffocate me from your lungs
let me taste your lipstick halfway down my throat

Menus

give me something spectacular
she said in front of the black marble table
double shot espresso
almond chai
maybe a happy hour sandwich and a soft drink
she screamed
give me something spectacular
give me your pocket change to buy this moment
where living and breathing
double lungs a shot of oxygen
is all you need
give me something spectacular
give me your torn sneakers
from back when you were still learning from teachers
back when you got roughed up in lunch line
give me something spectacular
give me change
keep your tips
too much is never too little
too soon is never too late
give me something spectacular
world peace a side of purging pollution
how about the cure for cancer
do you cater in South Africa
give me something spectacular
is that too big of an order
can I start with the hors d'oeuvres
what about the daily special
for you friend outside enduring the weather
in a cardboard box
made of empty dreams and alcohol
two packs of cigarettes
for the chain smoker
chained to nothing better
can I get a dessert please
how about an apple pie
for the kid down the street whose grandma is about to die
give me something spectacular
or is that not on the menu

Giants

the wind is howling in my bones
clinging to the warmth in my blood
I stand beneath these giants
their hair dangling down over their faces
grey and misty locks of fog dancing over
the top of their heads
gentle but cold he nestles his hands around my feet
as I exhale I can see my breath melding into his
he raises me up to his eyes
and I can see the pines in his irises
a forest of them
tree trunks and stumps
melting with the grass and the leaves
swelling into a beautiful green
rocks dot the outline of his pupil
a fire ignites inside his eyes
swallowing me in warmth
I begin to feel my fingers
and then my toes
I stand on the tip of his hand
he moves me to his shoulder
rising above the ghostly clouds
I can see nothing but the moon
illuminating the empty world
then I begin to feel a tremor beneath me
I reach my fingers into the plush soil
and feel his heartbeat

Caught in a Thunderstorm

people thought harmony was unachievable
but the swells in your irises seem to suffice
you defy the disbelief that the ocean is mysterious
you lost your soul to the thunder and found it in the lightning
putting waves on like a sweater
like the night wore the moon
passing up oxygen because you found the sea
you don't need faith to breath
you breath the thunder
inhaling the vapor caught between
you and and the ocean floor
you sold your heart to the phantom
of the morning mist
wanting nothing but a whisper
you painted a ghost on your bones
like a map without an X
you sang sirens that
made the thunder silent
and waves subside
but you needed them more than reality
and gave your voice to the silence
you took the swells in your eyes
and drained them to your lungs and breathed your last storm
giving your life to the waves
and your body to the thunderstorm

[untitled]

maybe people want to be disappointed
maybe less is more but how
can less be more if there
isn't more to love
because less is not enough
sensation is depriving from humanity
but they're wrong
people get clouded
by a vortex of emotions
maybe that's the stairway
binding us to oblivion
because we escape
cowardness overcomes and
we leave
just to find another one exactly the same
because maybe
you have to fall harder to be let free
because everything seems to end
and the gash in the universe
has origination somewhere
maybe that's what happens
when death falls into your lap
maybe human beings can live forever
but we decide not to
because the burden is too great
your shoulders can't hold you up any longer
we decide to expose
our self to a new life
maybe a parallel paradox
is waiting at the bottom of oblivion
where we just get to
re-live life on the other side of the
galaxy stuck where
maybe pluto was mercury
and earth could be a giant dust ball
floating on the ring of saturn
but who could ever know
because their star hasn't even reached
our constellations yet

American Dream

America dives into the monstrosity of its nature
fully embracing
the nuclear waste that swells
around the beauty that we tax for
stuck up with pride and solitude
so masquerading it dampens
any other light from
exposing us with the massive
outbreak of blindness patched
to the sockets of the New American Dream
shooting fighter pilots down aren't the only people getting shot down
sickening people do sickening things
and people try to do
their best but their best
it's not enough
because light is just
too thin to penetrate the gases
consuming every soul who sits in silence
light can't always win the minds of shadows
there are just too many people in over
populated states of mind
America swallows the people's perception
hunting for world peace
but we hunt down the people who care to make a difference

Capsized

we're wading through the blank pages
begging for insecurity
we're lost at sea under the atmosphere
heavy but bold
castaways waving death elsewhere
sailing along the characters
broadside we reach through the portholes
to inhale the thick ink
musty wood leaks into our skin
coffee stained desks we unfold the constellations
as we dance on carefree sails
pirating adventures from the night sky
we drown ourselves in lust

Little Things

genius is idiocy
in the right perspective

let my fingers dance around your body
like a typewriter and a poet
I want to make a poem with you

can you hear the broken distortion
coming out of my mouth
feel the tremors that I scream
from the pit of my lungs
taste the crashing of cymbals ringing from my tongue
furious rampant lashes of lyrics
held my breath at a stand off
can you hear the rasp of the guitar
jamming your fingers onto the chords
can you hear
the amplified distractions in this madness

Rewritten End “*Too Far*”

She put her hand on Robbie’s chest, he could see the fear as her pupils dilated to the fire behind them. He reached up and laced his fingers with hers, “Dream, Fristeen, Dream.”

He could feel the Dream Man’s voice wrapping around his throat as he said it, it left a sweet taste on the back of his mouth, like a raspberry. He held Fristeen as close as he could, his arms melted into the small of her back.

“We have too.”

Shivers whaled profusely under the snows howling tone. She let out a whimper but it was muffled by the roaring of the fire.

“You’re brave, Fristeen.”

“So are you.”

With the syllables still lingering on their tongues they bolted through the front door. Not a scream or a cry of pain came from the cabin.

Robbie began to lose his fingers, then he began to lose his toes. “It doesn’t hurt” he thought. He looked at Fristeen, her dress began to singe, the tips of her hair began to burn. “Still beautiful” he thought, his head began to feel heavy, his eyes darted from place to place. The fire felt warm but not too warm, as he expected. He felt the flames creeping down inside him, he held on to them, clutching what was left of his hand to his chest and his other hand held Fristeens. As her grip tightened he could feel the smoke staining the walls of his lungs, it tasted bitter, nothing like the sweet aroma from Grace’s house. He looked at Fristeen one last time, her eyes were the color of the sunset golden orange, tinted red. “Fristeen you’re the sun” he thought. With that he felt his feet lift off the ground. Fristeen rose with him. Their hands were hot but he felt the comfort growing in between their palms. The flames began to damper. He felt his skin melting off into ash, his fingers tingled where they touched Fristeen’s. Like they were trying to hold their flesh together. He was going to miss his body, the gentle summer rays on his back, the feeling when Dad lifted him in the air. The embrace of Fristeen he was going miss most. He was whirling through the night sky, unable to speak. He still felt her beside him. He was scared, terrified, but Fristeen soothed his mind like she always did. He flew right next to the stars and the moon was in full bloom. He could see all of *Too Far* beneath the heavy layer of clouds. He saw the dim light from his kitchen window.

“Mom.”

But his attention averted to a rich voice inside his head, The Dream Man. He was standing on the brim of the Dream Man’s head.

“Welcome,” the voice boomed.

“Fall, Robbie, fall. *Too Far* will consume you.”

Analidia Fernandez

My Mind Is Thinning

i'll try to avoid the rhymes
but sometimes all i see are crimes
so i write with my pen
to preserve what's going on then
and my palm may be dead
but i still have my head
to keep the dark mark of the arche
with a check mark above the thin mind
of your entity

you may not believe me
but what i say is busy
in the eyes of scholars
who fix their collars
and cry to their teachers
that they could have been preachers
but what we all know plucks the muck
from intelligence of luck
and hands made to pull triggers

we are crutches in imagination
to aid in the creation
of thin minds

4 A.M.

watch your eyes reveal true lies
and sit outside at 4 A.M. to discover the truth

Scarlet

i saw Scarlet's red dress
with the melancholy in the stitching
and her velvet walls
absorb
powdered pills
seeping sadness out the window
touching soft cherry lips
and orphanage eyes
she turns on the light
to find a mass murder
living on her arm

Infinity

i am the sunshine's only one
and the moon's
i belong to the star's journal
and its womb
i am the water's daughter
and the raven's slaughter

my hair is the trees' pine
and my voice, the wind's whine
and my eyes leak rivers
the clouds are my bed
and the hills rest my head
and the sky's tears give me shivers

my lips will rust
and my bare feet will trust
the cold ground
they'll walk on thorns and flowers
and the earth's hum will sound

my name is Infinity
who are you?

falling.

the november kissed your lips in my absence
while your tears fell down to your hipbones
and your ephemeral affair
brought limerence to your eyes and cheeks
you saw sea foam sunsets and gentle eyes
filled with azure hills and black velvet pupils

you were walking on a stair of stars
creating paths to galaxies that were only seen in his eyes
you're looking for someone to *cruci-fix* your broken mind
because your brain is spilled on the table
and your heart lies with him
you're looking for that escape
because thinking of him is like being trapped in your own mind
pounding on the walls of your own brain

distilled tears and broken teapots
you keep them all
laced in your bones
you look up at the trees
and see the leaves on the branches
falling out like curly hair
you set fire to candles and dance to your records
but all they do is remind you of him
because you know they were just as beautiful as he was
you have packs of cigarettes
merged in your lungs and scars he left on your lips
you're withering away
and there's nothing you can do
you're falling out of the bruised gardenias he picked for you
and the pages of his favorite books

you just keep falling
but then again
the falling never really stops when you think of him
does it?

My Mind Is Made of Glass

i traced my thin demise
to your frosted lips
your cigarette kisses
fought wars on my tongue
and my thoughts are broken
like glass they cut my wrists
and my mind cannot be *cruci-fixed*

your lips on mine
you steal my thoughts for awhile
i don't want to be alone
but it's all that i am

Momentary Bliss

pretty lies they told you
petty thoughts that hold you
memories flash by your eyes
and you have remembrances of your cries
you know this is just momentary bliss
that you're aeons far from this
you've asked them all to *cruci-fix* your broken mind
but all they did was leave you blind
LSD visions of working gears
and your heart filling with salty tears
his poison lips kissing the shore
leaving even the sea wanting more
with every crash
their hands will clasp
And yours will pull the trigger

Tintinnabulation

you hurt me, and i didn't need to be hurt
but you did it anyways
i knew the warning signs
those dangerous eyes and those believable lies
you breathed cigarettes
into my lungs
only to say goodbye
you left me stranded in a sea of fucking dirt and you said
"this is where i leave you baby. call me if you need anything."
and i did
i called for hours, begging for your help
my legs were going weak
i saw myself falling into a halcyon of pure thoughts
i saw the tintinnabulation of light as i went 6 feet under

i woke up with the tide
and began my journey through my labyrinthine mind
only to find a dead end
with a pack of Spirits
and some bubblegum
i realized i didn't need to search anymore
and that's when i heard the faintest of whispers
and felt the slightest pinch in my chest
bright lights filled my brain as i opened my eyes
to people with skin glowing violet
and bandages on my wrists
flowers sprouted from the counters
and sunshine floated through the ceiling
no one could hurt me
i wasn't trapped anymore
i found a place with the tallest hills you could imagine
layered with cotton candy grass and bees that never stung you
black roses grew behind your ears and we all slept on velvet clouds
surfing a sea that was never cold
mothers kissed you and waterfalls drifted you
through photobooth memories and diamonds skies

i was free
and nothing could stop me
not even the faintest remembrance of you

d1g1t@l dr3@m g1rl

there was once a digital dream girl
with a psychedelic stare and a violent twirl

dancing high on pink cotton candy clouds
and millions of people watching to make crowds

there was once a digital dream girl
who made the world her oyster and swallowed the pearl

lighting her cigarette on Hell's flames
while memorizing all of her online names

there was once a digital dream girl
with dreams so big and a head full of curls

she fired a gun with her eyes
as she realized she had become her own lies

Kisses

so much depends
upon your carbon monoxide filled lungs
and your nicotine kisses

lips glazed with clear rain
hair messy and dazzled with stars

no
umbrella
needed

Entity

we wanted to strike lightning in the dark waters to see
if only for a second
the entire world that lives down there
till ten million
colors
and
patterns
show us life now
the new Rapture
creeping to the surface
and pieces of automaton revealing the chartreuse and vermilion
from within the sand
the bright stars twinkling in eyes which reflect on the water
a universe of unknown
tied into eglantine packages
to fill the demise of your non-existent entity

drugs.

you're probably seeing the shape of her birthmark in the clouds
day dreaming, day dreaming
eyes flickering, and eyelashes quivering
black tears streak the street
as you taste the alcohol through each kiss
you see a whole nation of Eve that resides on tongues
acrylic droplets
dripping onto eyeshadowed eyelids
and you can see her bruised lips
and you can feel her breath
with butterflies drowning in your lungs
and coffee eyes with vision fading
your whole world is dimming
and you awake
to nothing by your side
but a desk lamp

Rusted Wrists

my rusted wrist has spread
like a fire set ablaze within my lonely head
no one sees me because i cry flowers
but i sit counting down the hours
when
my labyrinthine mind will be at rest
and i can put my arms to a test
and this calamity that resides inside of me
sits in my soul heavily
and melancholy hearts elucidate to my woebegone

but no one really knows
i want to be gone
that i want to be in a halcyon of thin minds
and not in a bathtub of my own crimes
i don't want to be swimming in a sea of pills
popping pretty pink powder pills

no one understands that i want to be gone
that i want to be in a halcyon of thin minds

broken sundown, fatherless showdown.

in a dream i was a werewolf
catching crimes in the velvet night
and dancing with broken suns made of twilight
lavender ribbons of rain sang
and his eyes screamed at me with anger from his drunken soul
twisted minds and broken roses may hang
twenty
pillars and the light of moons crashes
leaving dollar bills and coke thrills etched into his lashes
breaking beds
powerful tumors sleeping searching for the perfect daughter
setting fire to his heart
and every fatherless showdown
breathes down bottles of his quick tricks
lips kissing unknown
fairy tales, dreams dead
crash cart
rushing to the needle in his arm
and batting eyelashes
he's back from the visions of his mother
daughter
laughing at her dreams at night
killing queen stalking her prey without light
the old willow wallows at its schizophrenic father
faster pastor
potions, crystal lips dripping electric blights
swearing she is pretty in a fight
leaving little tears and bullet holes
left stains on my sheets and on my soul
all of my dreams bring me sadness
first kiss
lips are bleeding
trying to shake you off, though
eating no soul and i'm back with no remorse
muted angels killing crying
creatures
kissing rusted wrists and
shouting in my ear
broken hearts and i'm pounding on my chest
no rest, he lets me kill myself in here
devil horns and empty wine bottles
shadows of myself and i'm dying
crying, buying

selling to his sex-crazed
misbehave and you'll get a hit
you better keep it quiet
overdose princess
always makes his night
carries the weight on her shoulders
smoulders from the older men in their cars
closing, posing
whispers in her ears
a young mother's love
slumber kills, leading to cold gray graves
but i am just his daughter
loveless bedrooms filled with tally marks
and moments of bruising happy days
he breaks it down easy on concrete clips of sordid beats
4 A.M. listens to the truth and her dreams

Gene Larry Fillmore

We Are All a Tree

My tree is a weird one.
It starts out normal, same as all others.
But trust me that's where it ends.
The trunk is made of polished re-enforced steel.
The branches are of cast iron.
Where the leaves are of pretty polished bronze.
I provide shade and protection for those who need it.
So please, pray tell, what type of tree are you?

Beast

I am a beast who cares not for reality or any of the fake, would-be people.
Then again we are all beasts in a way, yet many choose to deny it, ridding
them the truth.
As for me, I am one of few who chooses to embrace it and with the beast I
see some truth.
The beast affects us all, it influences us to search for the hidden truth in us.
The hidden truth being what creature we are, I am the Zombie King. Who
and what are you?

Ekphrasis

Are you a multitude of stairs leading to fun wonder?
Or just a light post leading those who wander through the night?
Oh picture on the wall what are you for I can't see.
Oh sweet sweet image; where oh where do you lead?

How to Make a Portal into ANIME

we need metals.
we need power.
we need hope.
first make the foundation.
get the copper petals.
for soon we devour.
all we desire.
install the bronze beams.
put in the iron panels.
as we get closer we gain a big problem.
systems explode.
cause major damage.
begin going mad.
trapped in this world.
stuck in the mental hospital.
now a little brittle.

Untitled haiku

Beautiful night.
Blissful silence born.
Sleep of serenity.

The smell of grass.
Nice with sounds of rain.
Natures beauty divine.

Our lovely home.
Vast yet small.
We know all and all know one.

A pretty sight yet.
To most a shell.
To me the most lovely one.

Gift of time

My gift of time is a poem of years meant to bring emotions and questions that I know nothing of. But who can deny a generous gift from one who knows you not but wishes good will and grand fortune. Now without further adieu here is my Gift of Time.

Time

Time is elegant.
Time is divine.
But who knows how long.
Or how short.

Time may vary in length.
But time is time.
People will not see this.
For they go blind in search.

Now let time fly.
Or let time slow.
For times mind is its own.
Now time has no voice.

But it does have a force.
The force of wear and tear.
Our scientists try to travel through time and deny it.

Time is unbeatable.
Time is powerful.
Time is Time.

Scribe

it is left to us scribes to write our crap filled theories and stories.
then we must read them into excellence before our judge filled audience.
in the hopes we will be heard.
for who are we but men who wish to warn the world instead of provoking it.
we will improve this stained world.
we will rewrite the truth to be rid of the lies.
we are the scribes.

Me?

I am a gentleman one who would fight for friends or family,
Who would write such shit that no one would like but me.
I am here to save the spoiled brats of tomorrow.
I am here to be the philosopher no one wants but needs to survive.
Am I here to gain pride, hope, or joy?
Who will know for I just hope I am not too late.
So listen here you greedy fat cat corporations of T.V, internet, and product
producers from hell.
Fear me for I will reveal the truth and make you pay for your crimes.
For I plan your demise, your wish for war will be destroyed and I will stand there
saying.
“You failed, I have prevented your rein of the market, let the world be free.”
And when I am done I shall return to slumber.
For my work is never done.

Freedom

If you think you are free then take one good look at life.
That is when you learn that in some way we are all trapped.
Tied down by electronics and would be corporations.
With chains of fast food products, food and drink.
There are the lead balls of stereotypes on social networks.
When the chance of escape finally shows we are to LAZY to reach.
WE FAT FOOLS!

Ode to Rain

Thank you rain.
For all the fun.
You wash away the pain.
And you stop me from going on runs.

You've kept me inside.
All through the night.
Were I used to hide.
And play games that fright.

So I can call you friend.
Oh sweet sweet rain.
I will want you even in the end.
Please rain wash away my pain.

Sarge

Is it right to die on a day like my death.
Cold, raining, sounds of battle all around.
Explosions, cracking rock, and gunshots ripping the air.
This is not a battle this is ultimately war.
Our orders kill krauts and take the beach... put simply.
We got our "look left then right because the first few rows will die" speech.
I was in the seventh row.
The only one to see battle.
This IS HELL.
The doors drop (splashing water, reminds me of the beaches back home).
We all charge, sure enough rows 1,2, and 3 all dead.
My row was last , we worked our way up the cliff.
The last thing i heard was "GET DOWN!!!".
(Boom) I was on the ground 2 ½ inches of shrapnel to the gut.
I was dying ; well at least i got some too.
Me = 42 krauts
Them = 1 me.

Dog

If you scratch a dog, he'll want you to rub his belly.
If you rub his belly, he'll want a snack.
If you give him a snack, then he'll want a nap.
When he naps, he'll nap by you because he will always choose you.

Years

Time flows like a river of cubes filled with hope and filled with dread.
And for every 12 cubes there is a year of memories and events.
The water leaves us an unhappy lot or it gives us hope filled dreams of love.
Thor that river leads into an ocean and in that ocean is every year that has passed.
But everyone thinks they can drink from the ocean of eternity to remove the past.
When all we can do is peer into years reflection and see ourselves.

Death

Who is death to take from us our family.
Raking away ones we love with scythe of stone and claws of bone.
My friends pass around your tear filled bucket and show us why you cry.
Is it of your lost family that you cry.
Or is it of lost friends that made you die a little inside.
Death takes it all, for we all must die.
But why is it that death takes early.
Is death not happy with it's reaping.
Show me why you do this.
Show me the reason you reap.
Show me how you know it's time to die.
For shouldn't we all know death to understand life.
Just tell me why.

War

What has become of the world?

We fight one another over land and resources.

All because untamed emotions and primal instincts drive us.

Not to mention we always want more.

We have fought with clubs and bones to swords and bows.

Now the age of guns where you can smell sulfur on fields.

While you can smell champagne on rich breath.

For businessmen profit on war while soldiers die.

How can we stop war when it has already started?

Morning View

Under the disguise of the early morning rise.

Is a surprise set before our weary eyes.

Tis rain which washes away the pain of a groggy rise.

Making us alert to that which we might gain.

So I can say goodbye to all my doubt.

Forever in the wind of uncertainty.

The rise grants to our surprise.

A better morning.

The First Case

It was the start of Jack Willson's career, his very first case. Jack was approached by a man and his wife.

They said their names were mr. and mrs Hitchcock and their case was a missing person (their daughter). They gave a description and boy did she sound pretty, despite the age. Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcock told me the last location they saw her the city park by the creek. Thats where I gotta start I tell them it will be ok and I take the case. I walk them out while I get my gear and keys. When we get outside we split ways I get in my pickup truck and start going to the park. I notice the small things in life while driving it calms as well as prep my eyes.

There was a 1967 Chevy Impala pulled over getting a ticket on 4th street. A hot dog vender arguing with a customer near the courthouse. The old bates motel is still shut down since the murders.

I get to the park nothing special on face value but a lot happens here. I start walking over to the creek when I see it. The glint of metal and some torn cloth. There was a struggle of some sort and pretty recently too. Footprints fresh yet old maybe a day.

I found a fresh bullet casing. Too fresh to be used. I pull the casing from the ground and it was a full 9mm round. This case is starting to look like a setup.

I start the tracking process for tracing. Take the bullet to a gun store. Have them analyze the round and tell me who bought it. Right as Adrianna Thornburn Shikoba walked in. the gun store sells hunting and some camping gear. The only reason she comes in here is to buy camping stuff like rope and outdoor supplies

The gun store owner told me it was mr. Hitchcock who bought the round in a 48 round box of 9mm. I run outside and called mrs. Hitchcock. She says she didn't know and starts to cry. I hate to see or hear women cry so I tell her I'll follow her husband to find what's going on. I hear her calm down a bit and miss Hitchcock says (barely audible)

"Ok."

I hang up and get in my truck. That hotdog vender is getting arrested. I sit outside of their house and wait for mr. Hitchcock to leave.

He comes outside and gets in his car. you gotta love those old classic cars. His engine starts and you can barely hear it purr. He starts taking off I follow headlights off.

Going down the roads we take a strange path. Right, left, straight a block, right, straight for two sections, the one last left.

The millard farm this is where the mobster bis saul had one of his hideouts. I stop at the gate. Hitchcock goes into the farm and stops at the barn. I get out, load my revolver and start moving towards the barn. Mr. hitchcock gets out and opens the barn and what I saw made my stomach churn. All the missing kids are in there plus some dead bodies. Enough's enough I went out to confront him.

He runs into the barn and I hear screaming. Then Mr. Hitchcock does it. He walks out with a Beretta 9mm against a kid's head and shouts.

"You don't know jack shit jack my wife was gonna leave me everything then the damn kid was born and she changed the will. The kids get it all. KIDS ALWAYS GET INHERITANCE!"

Hitchcock fires his gun in the air to mean business.

I have no choice. I aim my revolver at his head and get ready to fire. He presses the gun to the kid's head more. I drop my gun.

Hitchcock ties his kid and sets her to the ground then starts to walk over to me.

I tackle Mr. Hitchcock and we hit the ground after a gunshot. I start pounding his head in until he's unconscious. I call the cops and tell them what happened. They say they'll be here soon. I untie the kid then I feel it. The gunshot was me being hit.

I tell the kid to go untie the others. She's crying but she moves into the barn understanding. I look about and check my body. Found the wound... bullet to the gut, hope the cops get here fast. Blacking out, I don't know what happens next.

I open my eyes only find myself in a hospital. I ring for the nurse and she comes in with a cop, Miss Hitchcock, and her daughter. The cop tells me I unraveled the missing people's case then sits. He doesn't say anymore just sits there. Miss Hitchcock thanks me for saving her daughter and I tell her that it was the case she brought that saved her kid and more. After the talk was done and thanks were given, they left.

I spent two days in the hospital but here I am again in my office waiting for my next case.

Bridget Fitzpatrick

What Should I Stay...

The piercing pain of two small wounds allowed rivers of blood to flow down my arm and drip upon my silk dress. A spectrum of green slimy scales slithered under my bed, as the quivering voice of my nurse, frightened the creature to eternal night.

“Oh, Cleopatra, what have you done?”

Brittle

What becomes of a snake’s brittle skin, when it is no longer desired?
The skin crumbles and patches the earth.

Till

take my hand and expel your soul till the burning wind has trickled
to a match
till your sticky ivy vines have finally barred the tree and you steal from
it what was depleted for you
till the fogged window has melted to ash and lifted away by your
tidal breath
till the flexed muscle of your cracked lips, fails to contract and turns
blue from the exhaustion
till the strained, moldy, gentle string has been cut by the old woman
with the long sharp knife

Time When Eros Weeps For Helios

Come time
when Eos spreads her sapless palm
and slashes the somber sky of scattered paint
with her slick copper nails

Come time
when the eye of Helios cracks
forming a blinding glare
to prick holes in shadows
and crisp the foreign ground
of stained crowded footprints

Come time
will you still be alive

Tangerines

Time To Taste Thyme
And To Taste Thyme We Will
Till Our Taste Of Time
Has Ran Out Of Steam
Then We shall Taste Tangerines

My Dying Hill

The poisoned grass on a dying hill
Bathes in the weary sun
To slowly burn away with her

The sea of wrinkled Earth
Was deprived of its soul
And so it mimics a cold desert
Cracking from the obedient wind

The lost sound of a rattlesnake
Chained to her loning
Lifts its head to see more clearly
Lifts its tail from the clarity

I move back from where I'm perched
Ducking my head and leaving a trail
As I slug down my dying hill
To let the foolish, lonely predator
Feel the lost emotion
Of victory

Burning Tears

The tears that fall are burning hot
and scorch my fragile skin
they streak down to leave a scar
the proof of all my sin

Dripping

The wet footprints

Of a creature's

Melting soul

Leaves golden puddles

And when you look into the liquid

Your reflection is blurred

When

When words fail, war begins

When medicine fails, death begins

When love fails, hate begins

When science fails, religion begins

When reason fails, chaos begins

When angels fail, revenge begins

When hope fails, nonentity begins

When war is over, we reconcile with words

When death occurs, we unearth medicine

When hate was possessed, we seek love

When religion is forged, we quarrel for science

When chaos was assembled, we reason order

When revenge unsatisfied, we plea to angels

When nonentity has commenced, we quest to embrace hope

Milky White

Lilly woke up to the sound of her favorite opera artist, Lady Maria, perfectly singing a C note from her favorite play. Lilly moaned and struggled to lift her eyes. They felt as if a little fairy came at night and glued them shut. She glared at her desk, anger creeping into her eyes. Lady Maria continued, her voice swinging up and down, up and down. Lilly grasped for her phone and lifted it.

~Fast Forward~

The smoke blocked the sun. The screams of people echoed in Lilly's ear and radiated over her mind, consuming her. Lilly moaned and struggled to lift her eyes. The sky was a blurry gray haze, no cloud in sight. The air smelt of cement and wet soil, which made Lily cringe. Pain sketched her face as she tried to move, but her body was broken.

Not broken.

Hurt.

She decided to look around. The dirt cloud made Lily's eye itch and burn. She twisted her head, which caused her sight to blur for three seconds, and then she gasped. Luke was lying next her. His eyes milky white.

~Rewind~

Lily saw Damian before he saw her. His black hair was swaying in the afternoon wind and his brown eyes were study a group of pretty little girls braiding each others hair. He looked so confident in his Army uniform yet he was always so quiet.

"Hello, Mr. Ramos!" Lily yelled. Damian twisted his focus behind him. His eyes light up. He threw himself off of the standard black SUV car that was used to transport all important members of Congress, and stood at attention. Lily glanced at the car with suspicion. It was very uncommon for Lily to ever be given a protection assistance on her way to the White House since her job was not really important.

Being the official speech writer for the President, Lily was constantly in contact with the President. She had become good friends with the leader of her country and his son, Luke. Unlike the President though, Lily never needed protection. A tinge of worry flashed at the back of Lily's mind. She felt as if something very terrible was going to happen today. Damian's monotone voice redirected her focus back to the present.

"Good Morning, Ms. Lily. Are you ready to go to the White House?" Damian was studying her. His brown eyes, both confused and concerned.

"I believe so...is this about the ceremony?" Damian hesitated, thinking.

“I’ve been called in to help protect the staff of the President, like you, today. I cannot think of another reason besides the ceremony that could explain this rarity.” Damian swung open the car door and gestured for Lily to get inside.

“I hope they aren’t moving the date,” Lily remarked as she threw herself into the back seat.

~Fast Forward~

“Sorry for the early start but we are moving the ceremony to today,” spoke President Charles.

Lily tripped and almost crashed to the ground. She had only known about the ceremony for a few days. She barely started writing the speech. She only had a few short notes and ideas written in her notebook.

“Well, Lily” declared the President, after noticing her worried face. “You better start writing.” Before Lily could protest, a voice echoed down the hallway.

“Lily!” it shouted. Lily turned just in time before she was dragged into a hug. Lily grumbled but embraced the teenager. Luke removed himself from the hug and smiled. He looked cute in his black suit, matching his father’s presence perfectly. Luke smiled at her and if he was harboring any anger for waking up so early in the morning, Lily couldn’t detect it.

“It’s good to see you again,” Luke declared. His overwhelming joyful attitude seem to make all of Lily’s worry and anger melt away like leftover ice cream on a kitchen counter. Lily enjoyed hanging out with Luke. He wasn’t like most 13 year olds Lily knew. Almost everyday Luke would ask her about certain pieces of literature that he read. Luke would also force Lily to read every single paper he ever wrote, as if she didn’t have anything better to do. But, no matter how busy Lily was in a day, she would always find time to read Luke’s papers and talk to him about Ray Bradbury.

“He is going to be a great writer when he grows up,” Lily thought. She was sure of it.

~Fast forward~

Lily watched the President smile at the crowd and walk across the stage to the slick wooden podium that had the American seal on it. He gripped the papers in front of him and released a big sigh. Everyone in the crowd laughed. Lily laughed a well.

“For years the rope that has tied both America and China has become worn and moldy, resulting in it slowly tearing apart. But I am here to announce that rope is no longer rope, it is ribbon. Silky, smooth and... strong!”

The crowd bursts out cheering. Lily smiled with pride and gazed upon the crowd. She knew that line would rattle the crowd. However, Lily’s smile faded when she spotted a man in the crowd. It was the middle of summer but this man was wearing a thick wool coat. The man’s face looked angry and determined, which was not an expression Lily was expecting at a

ceremony where people were supposed to be celebrating. The man's eyes slowly became darker and darker as the President spoke every word.

"How strange," thought Lily.

~Rewind~

"This is going to be the worst day ever," mumbled Lily as she flicked the light switch in her bathroom. The sudden blaze of fluorescent beam made her flinch and cower. Her face was a great example of pure morning anger. The type of anger you feel when your sleep has been interrupted and now you have to think and function. Lily began her normal routine of brushing her teeth, putting on her make-up and choosing an outfit for the day. She decided to wear her favorite high black boots that were comfortable yet still stylish. She had no idea what the President wanted from her this early in the morning but she definitely knew that she was going to scold him about it.

Lily snatched her brown leather bag and reached for her computer. She was just able to catch a glimpse of the computer screen before closing it. Written with beautiful font was "3:24 am. August 4th 2023." This realization of time made Lily moan and stomp her feet. She hated mornings. Then, after a big sigh, she searched for her notebook that she found sitting on her kitchen countertop. Her notebook was open to her fast written notes on the upcoming ceremony. Lily felt honored to write about this ceremony. This ceremony was the start of a new beginning and everyone in the world would be listening to the speech made by the President.

After years of a cold war, the President was finally able to agree to peace with the China. This peace alliance was not mutual, though. China wanted America to continue buying and trading their products. However, this action would become a direct violation to the law established in 2019 stating that America was going "Green" and could no longer purchase or manufacture products that harm the environment. China's economy collapsed and they threatened America in retaliation. Peace was only enforced after America decided to ally with Russia and Europe, against China, if a war ever occurred. Lily felt bad for China but she was really relieved when the peace treaty was signed. After ISIS was destroyed, it felt too soon to have anymore more possible terrorist attacks from another enemy. Lily shook her head before her thoughts could swarm. She moved a little quicker, realizing that Damian was probably waiting for her outside.

~Fast Forward~

Daniel Indigo was the last person on the list.

The list.

Ah, how much Lily hated that list.

She sat in front of her small sleek black computer. A cold breeze blew across her back and crawled down her spine. Lily's hands were shaking

as she typed Daniel's name on the Word Document. The Vice President's strained voice echoed in her brain.

"Write a speech memorializing all who were lost and injured."

Lily did what the newly stated President told her to. She did it, even though every word caused a tear to fall and every sentence brought back the image of Luke's eyes.

The news feeds have been busy calling it the "Tragedy of 2023."

Catchy, right?

Lily scowled every time she saw those words. Most of her memories of that night had escaped her mind, running further and further away as every minute passed by. But the other memories controlled her. Keeping her up at night and forcing her to think of nothing else but themselves. The most vivid memory Lily had was of the man at the ceremony. The man with the wool jacket.

~Rewind~

The security team assigned to the President instantly went rigid. The man whom Lily saw earlier was inching his way through the crowd. As he forced himself closer to the stage, Lily was able to see his features. He was older than she expected maybe around late 40's. He was Chinese and had thick black hair that hung over his ears. The man's pierced lips and bouncing eyes made Lily's instincts go rigid, as well. The men in black suits around the stage noticed the chinese man and began heading towards him. Damian was with them.

The new attention, instantly made the man panicked. He sprinted towards the stage, throwing people to the ground who were in his way. The man began to unzip his jacket. Everyone around began to scream and run in different directions. Lily couldn't see the man anymore. She couldn't make out anything. Lily was so caught up in the action that she forgot where she was.

Where she stood.

How close she was to the man with the wool jacket.

And then everything went black.

~Fast Forward~

Only years after the bombing did Lily understand the beauty of the giant black rock. It stood where she once sat with Luke during the ceremony and did nothing. It was pure black and had sharp edges that glittered when the sun hit it just right, but it did nothing.

It had nothing.

It meant nothing.

It was just a rock.

As she stared at it, Lily remembered Luke. His comforting smile and cute freckles. Lily remembered the President. His sarcastic yet charming attitude that always made her want to laugh. She remembered Damian leaning against the car staring at the little girls. She remembered

the photographer and his semi-trustworthy smile. She remembered the young paramedic who helped carry her to the ambulance. She remembered the sweet old lady with browned eyes, Margaret, sitting next to her in the hospital. She remembered the man. That man who will forever be engraved into her mind. The man with the wool jacket. Lily saw her reflection in the rock. A tear was streamed down her face.

“Oh,” she thought. “I understand.”

~*Rewind*~

“Smile” called a man. Lily did. She clenched the Charles’s back and smiled. The quick flash of a light ensured Lily that the photo was taken.

Lily hated the press.

The photographer had curly red hair and a great body. He looked kind and trustworthy but Lily wasn’t sure.

“Mrs. Fortune,” called a voice. Lily switched her thoughts back to the ceremony. She saw the Vice President walking towards her. The Vice President was a former Air Force General and switched his career to politics.

Lily didn’t like him.

In fact, she despised him. He always faced each problem like his was still in the military. Never showing any emotions or weaknesses.

Lily forced a smile and gave him a short wave. He still continued to walk towards her, though. He stood next to her without saying anything. The ceremony was about to begin and Lily was itching to get away from him. Before Lily was about to leave the Vice President leaned down and whispered in her ear.

“I hope you wrote a great speech. This day will be written in history, forever.”

~*Fast Forward*~

Lily vaguely remembered being carried and pulled into an ambulance. What she did remember though, was the pain. Her left shoulder ached and was covered in blood, but that wasn’t the pain she was talking about. Lily was placed inside the rear of an ambulance, parked next to the stage. This meant that Lily had a front row seat to the aftermath. The grass was pitch black and dead. The cloud of smoke that made her eyes burn, had yet to be distinguished.

People were running, grasping for the touch of others.

People were crying over the bodies of the fallen.

People were dead. Dead.

Lily glanced at the bloody bodies that laid before her. Their faces were masked in dirt and ash. Their lifeless bodies, cracked and crooked. She realized, with a start, that they her watching her.

All of them.

Staring at her, with their eyes of milky white.

Alycia Ford

Sometimes the gutter fills up too much
and the water and leaves sit still for a moment in time
Your hair curls at the tips when it is damp
the layers of sweaters stick out from underneath
I liked when your lips felt plush
and chapped at the same time.
Solid skies like dimming white and december dances
no fabric feels like you when I lay
You were a stroke
and I was nearly just a scrape
I misread violent and saw violet
and I'll admit I was diggin' it
They say you can't love someone else unless if you love yourself
I have never compared myself to a summer's day
I don't see glass sculptures in my fingertips
but oh darling when I saw you
I wanted to put your feelings in a glass jar to save in my room
like a museum to have children look and wonder what defines
physics

*

You don't brush your hair anymore
I like the veins on the inside of your lips
And when you kissed the tops of my scalp
Like branches playing with your hair
Or when your shoes slipped off sidewalks
You startled the water in the gutter
The night you let me borrow your socks
I would wear them even when they got old
You sit on the other side of the room
And your smile is a chain reaction

*

Light of my Life, Fire of my Loins
Your depths grow on me
Somehow your hands are holy water and you submerge me
Envy burns at your shoelaces; big love letters for big hearts
You make my blood dance

I remember when I lost my taste buds
When mother nature bit her fingernails
When you forgot the blueprints of the clouds
My afternoons were days long
You made me understand literature
My pages were fractions of stumps
And I didn't know it was a funeral
But somehow I'm writing tombstones
But it's beautiful when you spill coffee
And the tops of your paper are soiled
And dry to a crisp
Recovering like healing skin

*

Why do I wish upon crystals like they are your eyelashes
You are my superstition
I want to intoxicate your lips
I'm falling down the ridges of your spine
While you dip your fingers in ink
I saw graves under your skin
I knew I was a death letter

*

I watched the waves throw themselves at you
Wet sand stuck to your neck
Almost like a sweet kiss or a melody
You birthed the glory to my day
I followed your footprints in the surface
I climbed rocks to sit with you
No sand dollar was ever as perfect as you
And I lived for once in my life
I breathed the air to filter my soul

*

I can breathe!
The sun hits my chest.
Lawn chairs.

3rd Place ukiaHaiku Festival Winner

My fog of emotion rises with the dead
Citrus springs on my lips
Pressing cotton to my face of heavy agony
I thought I was keeping warm but my skin was on fire
Humans face her with pornography eyes
Ripping her teeth out for publicity
People spilling themselves down her chest
She walks on sinking ships
And I was not good enough
My lips were not raw honey
I was scared

*

You're a mental death letter
And I'm your hard liquor
I wanna scrape your skin
I rubbed poison on my legs
Home is a mindset
I want my blood to ripple
I've been crying stones
And my sea sand is nearly dead energy
I'm on another level licking your spirit

*

Sea salt dries onto my legs
Fresh fruit seeping the corners of my lips
Mental love letters; I miss you
Paintings of freedom
Cobblestone pathways and green birds
I wish you could've seen the red that dripped from my cheeks
Eating cheap blue mints
Watching us tear the waves in half
Humans crave fear and risks
And you are one of them
I want to draw on your skin

Groggy leaves on hard plastic
Water color of Earth's blushes
Wooden frames let ashes fall
Are moon rocks not made for human hands
Am I dead or the only one living
We destroyed the one place we live
I swear I will never forget the honey bee

*

Why is it I find peace in small bridges
Why do I seep near freeways
I like walking around guided by street lights
Singing songs because nobody is listening
Every footstep is a journey
And I am in the tap water club

*

I like to swing with you
To see who can get higher
The metal screeches
Those are the moments I feel safe
When I've walked so far I can't see headlights
Laying under oak trees
The air is hot but the sun is hiding
I don't mind coloring with you
You have a way of vibing with my memory
I'm jealous of how calm you are
And the quality of your music

Maybe I could cause a rain storm in your memory
That pounds on the soil to your roots
I never lost my insanity like most my age
Your nose dripping and we were watching it rain somewhere else
I want it to clear your droughts
Let Mother Nature clear your pores
I want to watch your hair stick to your skin
Red noses as fog leaves your mouth
Walking on sidewalks listening to the waterfall in the drains
Water piercing your skin
Your hands are in fists keeping warm in your sleeves
I wish to be the single drop of water that fell on your lips that November night
But with all the other drops I joined your atmosphere
My pages stuck together like a wet bible
What is the meaning of life if I can't find a god to pull the branches from the heavens

*

My heart comes alive when the pink fades
I only like the light from the moon
My walls are smooth to drag yourself against
Wondering if you look at the stars too
We have the same atmosphere
That's the closest I've got to being at your window

*

Oh how I sit here and dream about you
Your hair matches wet sand
Your lips are the underneath of a starfish
Your hands excite me
The way your body was crafted
Makes me want to hold you in my arms
Every way your hair flows is perfect

*

I kinda like when you forgot who you were
I adored the idea of smiling in bed
I wanted you to miss every footstep I took
I only wanted to dance off sidewalks with you

I wanted you to hold the back of my neck
I wanted you to touch my lower back
You understood what I wish I could've said
I tried telling myself not to fall in love
To not think about the beauty in his footsteps
But the ground felt like monkey bars
Every footstep I've taken led me to you
I didn't want to be someone you knew
I wanted to be a dent in the side of your car

*

You are moss that grew on the side of my face
The palms of your hands remind me of candle wax
I wish I was there when you wanted to call me
I wish you knew how badly I wanted it

*

I like the greenish tint in your silk skin
And the natural oils on your eyelids
And the way your veins stick out of your feet and hands
And your pink lobes from your stretched ears
I like the thickness in your fingernails
The hair on your knees and nuckles
I want to hold you while you get your flu shot one more time

*

I want to show you how you influence people in your town
And the touch of your skin is like a flashback from childhood
I love the faces you make when you put on chapstick
I like running in fields with the sprinklers drenching us
Holding your hand

*

I will never find a way to explain summer of 2015.

Geneve Goltz

The Invisible Man

I am the invisible man
Lurking in the shadows of the 7/11
Living by the sky

I am the voice of the corner beggar
Fighting with the world for every bite
Living on the charity of others

I am the dirty coffee cup filled with worthless coins
Tossed in carelessly but by gentle hands
Tokens to a world where humans are kind and life is easier

I am the cracked and callused feet
That have traveled the darkened path to warm safety
Only to be turned away at the gate

I am the hopeful heart
Clutching desperately at my dreams
When all else has failed me

Forget You

Some days you're all I can think about.
Days where every word, glance, smile has some hidden wealth of
 meaning.
Days when imagined implications drive me to insanity.

Those are the worst days.
Sitting, waiting, trusting you not to break my heart.

Again.

Other days I forget you.
Days when, for once, your vivid green eyes can't hurt me anymore.
Days when, I can see you without feeling the ghosts of your scars
 at the tips of my fingers.

Days when, I can promise that
 this is the last time.
 I'm over your games.
 I don't love you, anymore.

But, somehow, I always end up here.
Two AM and I can't get you off my mind.
 Because I loved you.
 Because you were always
 supposed to be there.
 Because without you
 I don't know who I am anymore.

But I don't regret it because at night I dream of you and smile.

Here Where the Grey Is Greyest

Here where the grey is greyest
Where a little girl sits beside
The callous man in a bar room listening to him with rapt attention
Where the wealthy are justified and the poor condemned
Where every move is wrong and every thought traitorous

Here where the sun rises first
Where the eagle screams its victorious cry
Where the poet on a bench traces bits of his soul with blue ink
Where the cries of the people are heard echoing in time

Here where dreams come second
Where a teacher scrawls an uninspired lesson plan on a once-white-board
Where adults pull hair in an old playground squabble
Where a dreamer sits like a broken doll waiting to be fixed

she lives in $\frac{3}{4}$ timing

she lives in $\frac{3}{4}$ timing
waltzing on a wet sidewalk
singing in a crowded subway
her tears are a falling crescendo
her love a minor chord
she waits like the ivory keys full of silent noise
but he never returned

I Have Been Her Kind

Wondering eyes, watch a busy world around her.
They pick out the bright colors and not much else.

Thoughtful eyes, pondering the ins and outs of the middle school social scene.
It is complete with false friendships and strategic power plays.

Exhausted eyes, because life is so much harder than she imagined it would be.
No one ever taught her how to pay bills.

Thankful eyes, look on at the small but close group of friend she has made.
Watch them mingle in the small bright kitchen.

Pleading eyes, after all hasn't she already made all the same mistakes?
But, her daughter won't listen.

Wondering eyes, she knows she is dying.
But, holding her granddaughter,
She recognizes the excitement of being alive and the beauty of memories.

When I Was....

When I was growing up, I used to drink warm milk and chocolate chip cookies. My mother's favorite box recipe since, at that point, she no longer baked from scratch. I can see her blue plastic glasses, five dollars at Rite Aid, perched on the high bridge of her nose. The newspaper spread on the counter as she reads.

When I was growing up, I read late into the night. Sometimes my father would come in and seat himself next to me on my pretty blue duvet and I'd pass him whatever book I was reading that night. He'd change his voice to suit the characters, eventually he'd stand up kiss my forehead and wish me a goodnight.

When I was growing up, I could never stay awake in a car ride. My older brothers would take photos of me and blackmail me with them later. Even now, when we see each other once a year, if we're lucky, I am occasionally reminded of my narcoleptic tendencies.

When I was growing up, I played the piano. Our dog, large, incredibly stupid, would join me. The steady click of his nails on the tile floor as he tried to make himself comfortable. Eventually he settles, with his big head by my feet and his tail thumping to Canon in C.

To Describe

As I lean against the rough bark of the old oak tree, I let myself relax. Sitting on the ground in the patchy shade, I can feel the roots of my back rest as they push themselves up and out of the dry earth. Yellowing grass scratches at my legs and wraps itself around my tennis shoes. I shut my eyes and smile as I feel the slightest breeze on my face. Against the blue sky, a single bird circles a miniscule black dot on a pretty blue canvas. The grape vines, most of their fruit picked off by birds, are in straight lines marching up the hill towards the water tank. Above, an airplane roars on. Its plus sized shadow darkening everything it touches. As it disappears, I stand up and try to get rid of the static feeling in my leg where it fell asleep. I listen to the crunching grass and muffled thud when I stomp my foot. I can't help it when I giggle as I try walking, but stop quickly. There is something strange about laughing on my own in the near perfect silence. When I inhale, I smell the dried out grass. I can see the gravel path down to the barn and where it began its transformation into grass to my right. I turn around, a full 180° turn, I see the college track. I try to visualize the white lines, marking each runner's path; there is nobody on the track now.

What little wind there was died down as the afternoon slipped on. The shadows have nearly all migrated to the other side of the tree. It is now warm enough to be distinctly uncomfortable. The sun beats down on the ground where I'd been sitting. As I begin to wander in the general direction of my home and air conditioning, I stop. Crouching down, I peer at a very persistent weed, I have on multiple occasions tried to uproot. For, around the light purple flowers four miniature butterflies with light grey wings and black markings flutter. They are hardly larger than my thumbnail and don't seem at all bothered by my close proximity. I stay there for a minute or two, watching as they do their job. When I stand and leave I glance back at one of the few plants that made it against the dry and rocky earth, lack of water, and constant weed-whacking and smile.

55 Words

William's closest friends and family gathered for his special day. They stood in the church, re-telling stories from his childhood. As the organ began to play, a hush fell over the group. His young bride, delicate veil hiding her eyes, squeezed her father's hand next to her. He kissed her forehead, as the coffin passed.

For a Second

I thought, for a second that you loved me,
But, you only loved what I represented.
I noticed everything about you,
But, you never saw the break in my smile.
I blinded my eyes to your actions,
But, your eyes seeked only my flaws.
I thought for a second you loved me,
But I guess I was wrong.

The Writer

Words fall like stars from my pen
Drawing hallowed secrets on coffee stained paper
I wave my graphite wand and you listen
Revering the words that I bleed
I give you my every whispered dream and stain it in your mind
Waxing poetic
You follow me like a haggard dog
Constantly looking for your next fix

Jessica M. Hernandez

Yellow

I'm afraid I have grown too fond of grey and not loved yellow enough
Because I haven't thrown a rock in a long time
And I haven't ran barefoot through the meadows lately

You always said I tend to wear yellow when I feel like myself
But I've been drowning in the greys blues blacks and browns lately
And maybe it's because they remind me of your eyes
Or maybe just because I never loved yellow enough

And I haven't felt cold kisses in the morning in a long time
The yellow daisies that used to bloom out front
Don't seem to have ever been there
Now it is nothing but dark dry soil

Black fingernails and salty white kisses
Are getting harder to remember
And I am afraid I have grown to fond of grey
And not loved yellow enough
Because shredded t shirts and tree vines
No longer mean anything

It feels like forever since i've shot a hair tie at the wall
But I swear I can still feel your feel your presence
When i'm sitting on the old chair outside
But how am I supposed to keep my feet warm
When you're not there to carry me on your back
Across the black hallway tiles

And how am I supposed to love yellow more than I love grey
When you're gone and the yellow daisies that used to bloom
Out front are no longer there.

Energy

I will not walk through walls or make you chill in fear
I am the same as you and one day you the same as me

Although my skin is gone and
Your naked eye can not see my shaken presence
I am here

I will sing and dance through the halls
A song of myself
A song of you
My fierce lungs burn with passion

The waves will crash and
I will still watch
And I will walk through the dirty streets
Whistling with my hands in the pockets
Of the pants I do not wear

I will scream and shout
And smile an unsettling smile
Because I am finally at peace
With whatever I am

I will visit you
And you still will not see my thriving self
But I will watch you

I will not be underneath your fingernails
Nor stuck to your shirt
I will swing is the old air
And get my energy from the ocean

And I will still sing
And I will still dance
And walk through the plush forest
And I will live on here
Forever

Cliffside

The flower stands alone on the cliffside
With its wonderful white petals
Flowing like lost air

The flowers grows and changes
It looks up to the rising sun
Thank you
You can almost hear
Over the crashing waves

It sways in the wind alone and fearless
Almost as if
It was swinging from a star
Day by day and night with the moon

The white flower stands tall
Untouched

Wreck

I always seem to end up running back to you
And I will never understand why
You caused tornados inside of my head
And left a hole inside of me from where you once wanted to be
But changed your mind
And decided to say it was easier to give up on something we never were
I guess you can say we were never on the same page
Because now all that I can feel is the harsh breeze of your absence

Once you caused not butterflies but hurricanes inside of my head
When I felt your cold newly aged lips against mine
I do not understand why I have become so infatuated with you or why
I can't breathe when I hear your name
Or why when you look at me I become frail and dizzy
Like I have been struck by lightning
Somewhat conscious and somewhat gone
Perhaps it was the soft yellow brown in your eyes
That caused me to no longer love the sun
Because dark is all that I can see now

I'm trying so hard to forget you
But how can I forget the timeless nights spent together
And the soft tingles of fingertips against frozen skin
Where I once carved my name with invisible ink
When stood on the crackling bench
Because the dew drops were already sitting and we could not disturb them

I remember asking every single star to somehow lead us back
To each other because I still can't forget your creased hands
Or your shifted smile
And I always seem to end up running back to you
How can my whisking heart stand the thought of you anymore
But maybe one day when this is all over
We can ask each other once again
Why it was nothing but a perfect storm.

I Am Here

One day my hazel eyes
Will be one with the grass
And you will inhale their scent
My lonesome fingertips
Will touch your bare feet as
The sand runs through your toes

I will live on for years and years
Longer than time would suppose I should
My ashy skin and bones
Will grow along with the trees
Then once again me chopped to nothing
By the lonesome wanderers
Unaware of my presence
Here and there

And my unknowing brain
Wonders can I cross my legs
Or intertwine my cold fingers
If they're not all in the same place
My soul and my heart and my mind
Are not all together

Spread apart in the water
And on the leaves
Maybe clinging to your sandy locks
I am here and I always have been
Although you're unaware
Me and my hazel eyes
Will live and breathe with you
In the same second
And one by one
We will disintegrate but we will all live on
Unseen but aware.

Random Stuff

the night sky sat next to me
and held my hand in one of his
but in the other was the moon.

*

time has fell asleep in
the afternoon sunshine
and earth has laid to rest

*

striped sun rays
radiate of her skin
like little diamonds

*

she was a song
that was always stuck in my head
playing over and over

October

I held tightly
Shredding the pale skin off of the palms of my hands
And I run towards the old oak tree
Who has seen much more than I ever have
I run away from your blossom kisses and deep eyes
Only to find myself once again drowning
Not because we were on separate pages
But because we never were
And you're never going to lose me must've been a lie
Because not only did I lose you I lost myself
And I find my cold feet scraping against the dirty ground
Running away from the haunting surprises of what is to come
I sit above you my limbs draping over the bark of a willow tree
You're only scratching the surface while I thrive and dance
On top of it
And I suppose the man on the moon must have fell down
Because I can no longer see him sitting there
I am still running from you
With fear plunging out of my dark hair
I run through the cherry trees
Only to get caught on a branch and sway in the wind
My bones turn into a pile of ash
And I get away from you
I scratch the surface and sway in the wind

Leila Hernandez

Low Gap

The serenity of water calms the beating of our hearts with the symphony of love running through our veins we gaze at the waterfall dancing through the sunlight

Our Love

I watched the eternities swirling in your deep brown eyes with curiosity. Wondering if your eyes would ever dance with mine and meet in the center of the milky way.

Believe

To say I love you
Would have to make me believe it.

Listening to The Sound of Nature

The sound of nature climbs its way into my ears
Beating fierce with the symphony of life
The calming notes gently cradling me above the creekside

Insecurities

I am made up of old gum wrappers, bleak, boring, and depressing
I am the pain lingering in between your imperfect views.

Living Without a Forever

these are the small hours when
the sun bursts
and the world goes up in flames
the remembrance of albert einstein,
abraham lincoln and shakespeare
will die along with the earth
and those small hours
will be forgotten like the ashes
of the earth floating in the atmosphere
close to all the stars in the galaxy
and those few hours you will be thinking
about tomorrow when there will be no tomorrow and there will be no
forever.

Haiku

lipstick stains
on the teacup
fumes of lavender lingering

*

on the white rug
embracing forever

*

thoughts in space
staring at the fan
circling around the stars

*

bubbles concealing
my body under the water
cleanliness satisfies

*

flooding my heart with glass
roses tear through
our pages of a love story

*

inside these fingertips
the world inscribes my fate
pushing me through time

*

we cursed at the walls
with the hope of a future
without a word we spoke

Departing

my glistening shape of the heavens came to thee
the sun kissed burns left on your cheeks part to the sea

Counting Stars

you were once written on the lines of my paper
countless scrawls of your name all erased for none to feel, see, or love
you blew my dandelion seeds away to make a wish, i never was, come true.
the countless nights i stayed awake waiting for your response
i would gaze up at the stars and count the ways i fell for you,
i always knew you would not catch my fall, but i can still feel the gentleness
of your words when we would talk.
your laugh was a better drug to me and i was addicted.

Wanting to Be Yours

i want the torrential downpour of your tattered memories to be the suffering
none should feel
i don't want to be trapped inside this coffin i call my body
i want to be the ecstasy coiled around your spine, to be the pen in the universe
with no restrains
and to be left alone with my eternal strife
and watch you make friends with the constellations
i don't want to weep for worthless worries
i want to be yours

Searching For a Purpose

scattering showers
lonely nights with you still gone
winds whispering sweet nothings through the night
memories rushing through the wind, they hit me at full speed
i realized mr. right will never come to sweep me off me feet and now
there is nothing to do but wait for what everyone is searching for....
a purpose.

Before

tears drip down to her lips
she wipes them away
her heart lies shattered on the floor
her plum shaped face now filled with streaks of her two day old make-up
she still lays on her bed with her once clean dress
her eyes have begun to swell
she dwells in her past
forgetting what's happening now

Lovers

Could we dance on saturn's rings and see what life brings?
We would see our future unravel at the tips of our pointing fingers
making love scream long meaningful sentences
only our older selves could hear
We could scream each other's name and listen to the echo bounce
off the vineyards, and laugh as we would run down the hills
feeling love radiating through our body with such adrenaline
we could dance all night to slow love songs and forget
the solar system revolving around us.

Give Me Protection

The calming breeze slightly glides its way past my skin, flowing my dress
higher and higher until
there is no shield to protect me from the eyes that are always lingering.

Crystal Necklace

wrapped around your neck
the stars all lined up side by side stuck to the gold chain
the twinkling when the light hits that perfect jewel is enough to make
 anyone smile
the brightness and gentleness of that tiny jewel brings it all together
the picking that perfect notch to fit you just right and just like that
you're the star of the show

Matched?

Could we be in a parallel universe where I would be good enough for you?
A place where the size or shape of my body didn't matter.
We could make the stars into galaxies and place every constellation
 wherever we pleased
I want to feel the palm of your hand intertwined around mine, to be as
 unique as your fingerprint.
I want to be that person the your mind revolves around.
I want to be the girl who comes before your friends.
The girl who would be happy to be around them and you to be happy
 around mine.
I want to be the person who knows you more then you know yourself.
I want mother nature to deck herself in flowers and promise the terror
 drenched blood stained tears dripping down my face to only be a
 dream.
I want to be able to kiss your plum shaped lips and release the distress
 and pain you feel.
If there is not a world where we are together, I don't want to be in that
 world
A world that a you and I and we does not exist, is a world i'm not
 willing to be apart of.
If you had a choice would you choose to hold my hand and let me take
 you to neverland?

Hand Me a Galaxy

Chunks of the moon flew past me today
I felt the radiation of sadness watching it float seamlessly across the universe
with such grace I wanted to follow it to the end of the earth.
Some stars bickered along side me hoping to get to hear one wish
that was worth granting to end their lives
The milky way guided me towards the sun which was my first time
in thirty years to have my chance to soak in the heat and glance
at the amazing bursts of the nuclear reactions of plasma jumping towards
my rings

Dedicated to You

Look where we are now
Floating through space, riding our stars, forgetting our scars
We're jumping over the moon visiting the big spoon
Admiring everything as if it were spring, flowers blooming but instead
it's our hearts
We sit on Saturn's rings and wonder what our new life brings.

Fire

The red flower burns silently
It's poison, choking me, pleading me, to be its sacrifice.
The smoke wraps its hands around my neck.
I close my eyes, searching for someone to save me.

Matched Beyond Eternity

The lights were a weary dry canvas splattered on the walls, designed with fury. Staring up into space, into your eyes, diving into your soul, we landed in a carousel going round and round around our hearts and, while staring deep into our eons, we glance at our eternity and laugh at what our future might be.

Tell Me The Answer

Pause, courteous spirit, let me in on the secret of tomorrow and let me know what awaits me. Surprises haunt me and I need to know what comes next. What is the spirit you withhold? Do you know the secret of my existence? Tomorrow is another day and life surprises me yet again. With everyday that passes I will continue to ask you the question which you possess the answer.

Vanessa Ilar

For My Dearest Friend and Almost Lover

I watched you do your ocean dance on the dark purple rocks.
You caught the sun by his hair and kissed your bronze light into it,
Laughing patiently at the sand as it crept up your left arm.
The salty breeze carried the sound of your contentment to me.
The waves, they pounded it into my shivering body.
That was the day I made my confession to the pearly seafoam every time
it passed by.
Begging it to understand that yes, this life was ripped out of places
sweeter than my daydreams, and the world we live in beautiful,
But it has nothing I desire except for you.
That the wrinkles in the cuticles of your index finger could tell me more
about the history of beauty than the rings of a tree trunk.
That the faded brown of your eyelashes is a color that honey would die to
acquire.
Between waves
And buckling knees
I watched the foam and the way it looked at you;
As if you were the answer to the question the ocean's been asking the
universe for all these years,
And if it could only get a closer look at your eyes then maybe the seas
could finally rest.

Untitled

I am made up of crumpled gum wrappers and dandelion seeds.
All the things that are easily tossed aside
But subconsciously thought of.
I'm the strand of hair that gets nervously tucked behind a clumsy ear,
The absentminded impulse to chew on the back of a daydreaming
 fountain pen.
I'm a fumbling black hole
Unintentionally consuming my surroundings
Glossy eyes full of wonder
Trying to find a way to shove the cotton candy sunsets into my fingertips
 because when I wipe the tears of another I want a sugar storm
 to flood their bodies and overwhelm them in the wonderful
 revelation that there are people out there that care.
I want to be the smell of pavement after the rain
The place worms run to to be safe.
I want to be everybody's plan b
I want people to know that they can draw strength from me,
That I would be honored to help them dream
To help them break down the insecure atoms of their being
And hand them a mirror.
So that when they look at their glowing faces
They can fall in love again,
Never forgetting the fields of flowers they see staring back at them.

Sumalee

Her eyes are wide like lost monkeys
Ready to absorb all the fear and all the comfort the world has to offer.
She has nothing left but a sweet whisper of a voice now.
Like little men sitting on the moon,
They come by to sit on the edges of her ribs,
Sharpening their swords against her bones.
They ate the sugar from her lips,
And now she speaks in jaw shifting madness,
Curling her toes to keep their secrets.
Her hands are always empty and fumbling,
Clawing at her empty stomach.
Her children are gone.
Her lovers are gone.
Her consciousness is gone.
She spends her days watching everyone pass through the living room,
Begging them to stay.

Song of Myself Inspired by Walt Whitman

I cannot sing a song of myself
Because my atoms are not worthy of mingling with yours.
My voice is cracked
And wisdom broken,
I can offer you the shavings of my brittle bones
And a pool of tears.
I spend my days laughing at jokes that haven't been told yet,
Reaching for the sunlight
And form of help
Only to be burned.
I cannot sing a song of myself
Because it would only sound like lonely howling
And mid-day despair.
I would not wish to curse your beautiful mind with the useless
 philosophies that over populate mine.
I cannot sing a song of myself,
But
I can sing a song of you
Full of mesmerizing eyes
Glimmering up towards the heaven that exists inside everyone.
Beating your wings along to the universal rhythm of the soul
A song that would sound like no other.
Warm chai and lilac kisses,
Every neuron a mini firework
In the magical maze of your holy body.
I've founded my religion on everything in this universe
And
I worship you,
And your chapped lips.
I shall sing a song of you
In hopes that all the world will love you as I do.

Untitled

You don't love me anymore,
And I don't know if it's because of that time I fell asleep to your favorite
movie.

You never want to talk to me,
And I think it's because you don't think I'm pretty anymore.
My full moon face isn't beautiful, just obnoxious and chubby.
There's no more mystery and depth in my brown eyes,
You stopped running your hands through my hair because it's tangled and
messy.

You don't love me anymore,
And I don't know how to stuff the sunsets back into my fingertips.
I'm trying to rub the beauty back into my face,
But all that's sticking is the pain and cheap lipstick.
I don't know how to make you love me again.
I've tried painting your name in the sky,
But my paint brush couldn't reach that far,
I can't warm up your world like I use to.
I've become the dog you leave in the backyard all day,
And when you come home you don't have time for me.
I love you too much to find out if it's true,
The women with their broken faces and wet eyelashes tell me
That if I press my lips to the bottle tight enough I'll find you at the bottom
But I'm afraid I'll just find myself.

Curled up and crying in that oversized track sweater you gave me four
months ago,
Ripping out chunks of my hair because I've given up on trying to be
beautiful.

This wasn't suppose to end.
Forever was suppose to be longer than 6 months.
You don't love me anymore and it's making me hate myself,
Face puffy from crying,
Standing in front of the mirror throwing up your favorite foods because
you've never been a fan of girls with curves.
I've tried to bleed you out like a disease,
Carving into my thighs
Only to have you enter my veins.
You're driving me insane and I'm addicted to the empty feeling in my
stomach.

I've found comfort in wanting to die.
You don't love me anymore.
And I can't say that I blame you.

For Taylor

You fit so well,
As if you were carved of my flesh.
I dream of you and your squinted blue eyes.
I love the way you apply cover-up in the morning,
And I will kiss your eyelids until you forget that you would ever need to
 open them.
I will hold you and let you explode in the safety of my arms.
I will plant flowers under your chin,
And when the tears race down your face you'll bloom.
You'll bloom
And blossom,
Until the whole world forgets hate and war.
I'll tuck your hair behind your ear
And press my lips to your hand.
I'll do everything in my power
To make you feel like the goddess you are.

Liquor and Smoke

I still think of you
Like residue from ripping off a bandaid.
I can't scrub you away without burning my skin.
You were filled with liquor,
And I was made of smoke.
Together we made drunk foggy summers in New Orleans
Where the willow branches danced and the frogs sang.
But you decided that you loved clear sunny skies,
And while I stretched myself across the thoughts of you,
You left.
And the smoke inside me kept growing,
And I just can't breathe anymore.
I walk through life not seeing what's in front of me.
I try to find you in all my fog,
Knowing all too well that you don't want to come back.

Untitled

Humanity is above all.
Giant scraps of metal floating across the sky.
We build our heaven in our overpopulated cities.
Spending, spending, spending,
Forget the american dream.
Give us gold and overpriced champaign.
Forget romance,
Forget compassion.
All that matters is getting to the top.
More power,
More money,
It's all the same thing.
Give us more.
We're not satisfied with natural beauty.
We want the impossible.
We want the type of faces and bodies that only thousands of dollars could
bring.
We want strong drugs
And the freedom to crush each other's souls.
We live in a world where
Man overpowers God.
We write our letters in rubies
And forget about the people who have to sleep in the streets with nothing
but blankets of pavement.
Nothing matters anymore,
Forget the consumer.
Why try to please if we can save brainwash?
We scoff and roll our eyes at the people who need us.
False promises of accepting the tired, the beaten, and the poor.
We clap our hands to the men who condemn their brothers.
Calling everyone in the middle east a terrorist.
Blind to our own treachery and wrongdoings.
Humanity is above all .
Number one because of a frontal cortex,
Humanity is above all
Because we slaughter our environment to make it a play thing of
mankind.
Humanity could never fall.

Untitled

You're a four leaf clover caught in a mermaid's hair in the middle of
spring,
But despite this you insist that you're not significant.
I wish I knew how to make you feel beautiful.
I wish I knew how to love you
Because you deserve it all,
And I'm afraid that my hands aren't big enough to catch all your fears,
And my lips aren't soft enough to feel like home.
I'll never be good enough to be yours,
But the way you look at me makes me shiver.
The way you look at me is intoxicating.
I need your eyes to be everywhere.
I want your hands in the places that are only meant to be touched by
moonlight.
I want to be the salt on your shore,
But all I'll ever be is the seagull droppings on old park benches.
I want you for an eternity,
But all I deserve is a few seconds.
I tell you that I'm not worth it.
I tell you that I'm going to break your heart
But you don't believe me,
Or maybe you just don't care.
I don't want to hurt you.
All I am is destruction.
Don't let my fingers touch you,
I promise it will only burn.
Don't mistake pain for pleasure.
You're the green that clings to the trees.
You're the rainbow with the promise.
You're lovely.
You're so lovely.
Darling,
Never forget that you're so freaking lovely.

Dax LeBlanc

Rainfall

As he stepped outside,
into the torrential downpour,
he stared at his mother's grave.
He remembered her laugh and smile,
he remembered the cookies she used to bake,
and how she always had some wise words to say.
As he turned away from his mother's final home,
not a drop of rain had fallen, except for on his cheeks.

A Piece of Wonder

Sitting in the same spot for hours,
Your eyes not tracking the sun,
But instead the words on a page.
Looking down from atop the sky in a plane,
Seeing the world live and breathe.
Looking up from the ground, beneath a tree,
Seeing quadrillions of everything
Stars, nebulae, black holes, and galaxies
All smiling down at you.
Hearing the voice,
Of someone long past.
And seeing the face
Of someone long forgotten.
This is wonder
Refined and processed
But still
Natural, immaculate.

Right?

A car full of kids,
the two adults in the front,
five kids in the two back rows,
heading back home from a long,
long weekend in Sacramento.
Talking gibberish, listening to whatever's playing,
then our once pure air is contaminated.
“Ewww gross, what is that dad?” I say into the night.
The odor pungent and acid,
stinging our throats,
as we are forced to breath it in.
Little did I know it was the smell of decay,
it was the smell of a skunk,
who was just a little too brave,
a skunk who is now horrifically merged with the asphalt.
But we didn't care about his life,
only the terrible stench we were now forced to endure.
10,000 more skunks could pass our way,
be crunched under our tires and left to decay.
But we wouldn't care.
For what are their lives compared to ours?
Though fragile they may be,
our lives are worth more than those of all the tiny skunks...
Right?

Madam If You So Please

Madam if you please,
Let us sit down and chat.
I'll open a bottle of wine,
And you'll drop the gun.

The Nightmare's Dream

Her dress was a deep red, the color of the sunset and of week old blood. It was a long flowing gown, it left her shoulders bare and her curves accentuated. Her hair was done up into a beehive, the pins haphazardly placed, keeping the towering mass sedated. She offered me her hand, and all too thin hand with and all too pale complexion. I took it, our matching rings glowing in the light given both from the moon and the armada of candles. I pulled her close and we began a waltz, in the empty room full of people.

We danced and we danced the floor a blurred infinite space. But I did not notice it, for my attention was solely on her. My eyes wandered from her beehive down to her long, slender face infested with maggots no longer quite a face. Her eyes nothing but sockets from which an eerie black oozed. Her lower jaw was completely gone, the detached ligaments and tendons dangling from the top jaw.

"It's time to come home honey." She whispered in my ear as my vision faded to black...

I awoke in a cold sweat, despite the chill 62°.

"What is it dear?" she said, her hand on my chest.

All I could see in our dark room was her ring glowing like a beacon leading a boat to a perilous coast. I stared down at it, raised my own hand and felt, more than saw, its match.

"N-nothing...just some past mistakes haunting my dreams," I said drawing the dagger from beneath the bed.

Loving That Which Is Decayed

Carruth loved abandoned places, he loved how surreal it was to be alive amongst the grand marvelous structure. He would walk around, find a secluded spot in the deserted, secluded place, and then he would wait. He would wait and think about how the entire structure was like the corpse of a giant creature.

Every wall was a bone, every pillar a muscle, every bed, chair, or table a single remaining cell. He would admire how the roof would crumble like decaying skin, and how what remained of it desperately tried to stay in place. And then his mind wound back to him. Here he was, a virus in the dead body of this once living creature, he was an intruder and he was feasting. Feasting on the idea of what this creature used to be.

If he closed his eyes he could hear the clanking of feet on the floor, the feet of people who had long since abandoned this place. Here Carruth would sit until the sky turned from blue to orange, orange to black, thinking and living in this world of his creation. A gentle beep would stir him from his wonderful daydream, the face of his watch glowing in the darkness that had fallen.

He would rise, his shoulders slack and his head bowed, as if some unseen force had lifted him like a marionette. He would leave the creature and say goodbye, for this was a place and a dream he could never return too. He would open the door to a place he knew too well, hear the same uninterested “Where have you been all day, Richard?” he heard every day, and he would be brought back to reality.

Yet Another Mistake

“This was a mistake,” you say
passing among the herd of people
all of them going to class.
You struggle past them into yours
and you take your seat
preparing to waste another hour of your life.

“Why did I even get out of bed?”
your thoughts chime in
the teacher’s lecture being heard by your ears
but not your mind.
Your mind is off in a world of its own
counting the ways your life could be better.

You could be skiing in the Himalayas
surfing in the Caribbean
taking a cruise to god know where.
But instead here you are
complaining about your class and wishing you were asleep.

The bell rings signaling the end of the day
and you trudge home
winching as your shoes, little more than threads,
do little to protect your feet.
You open the door to your house
the one room run down shack it is
and you collapse into your bed.
“This was a mistake,” you whisper as if it was a secret
hearing the click which will be followed by a glorious bang.

But the bang does not come
and you sigh, wishing you could afford the bullets.
You put the gun back where it rests everyday on the nightstand
pulling the covers up over your head,
hoping they will hide you and you pain.
There you rest, waiting to slip into another useless day.

Take a Deep Breath

They are the lungs of the Earth,
breathing in death and exuding life.
For millennia they have done their task,
working as a well oiled machine.

But now they grow old and tired,
Their synchronized efforts have fallen awry.
Each day they die a little more,
Consumed by a cancer they birthed.

His Beautiful Wings

There was a dull shattering noise
resounding as his bones broke
scattering like the stars in the night sky
ever in motion as they seek home.

He had jumped 20 stories
straight to the ground
in an attempt to fly he had taken the final plunge
waiting for when his wings would sprout.

They collected his body the next day
in all of its broken, shattered completeness
and they envied him for the sweet release he now had
that same sweet release they sought.

But they knew that they could not jump
and so they were stuck in the pale faced lie
for where their wings were broken and their feathers molted
his were lustrous, and golden.

Jeff

Jeff was a lonely man, for he had no spouse, no kids, not so much as a pet gerbil to keep him company. He was well and truly a lonely man who lived in quite the lonely apartment, for the apartment was the only one on his floor. Jeff had a lonely job, he worked in the mail sorting room of a big company, where there was not a single human insight. His assignments would come down one tube, he'd grab the mail they asked for, and then he'd send them down another pipe. He did this 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, 360 days a year.

If ever there was a picture of loneliness, it was Jeff. But strangely, Jeff never felt like he was alone. Sure he never was with another human being, and so he never had any human interaction, but he always felt like someone was there. From his apartment window he would look down and see the millions of people crowding the streets, they looked no bigger than tiny dots from up here. He knew each dot had its own story, they knew people Jeff certainly didn't know, they had jobs Jeff certainly hadn't, had experiences Jeff certainly never had...

Sometimes Jeff would give them new stories. This dot was a firefighter, who took vacations in space. This one was an accountant out to get coffee for their boss, who was a fat alien from Glorban. This one was a very attractive lady dot who was just absolutely smitten with a man she had never met, whose name was Jeff. He would go on and on about the people made dots, not knowing their age, gender, ethnicity, or even name. All he knew was what color the dots looked like from way up here.

Jeff didn't even feel alone at his work. He never felt alone because he knew someone had to send his assignments down the tube, and that someone received them when he sent them down the other tube. So even though Jeff could not see, touch, hear, or smell, anyone he never quite felt alone.

Many Haiku

The coarse laugh
Of a watchful crow
Waiting for its next meal.

The broken gravel
Of a baseball field
Bearing the feet of those long passed.

A flat nearly empty land
Broken into sections by trees
You can see the sun.

Just What I Could See

You looked at me,
eyes like blue tears,
eyes you swore were green.

You looked at me,
and in your paper thin gaze,
I saw your spirit.

You looked at me,
and I could see your contempt,
the same contempt that fueled me.

You looked at me,
ravaging my being,
just as a feather does a painting.

You looked at me,
and I could tell you knew you had found your next puppet,
I knew this but I still remained loyal to you.

For in the darkest corner,
the deepest trench,
the smallest atom,
of those blue green eyes,
I saw the love you had for me.

A Haiku

Gale force winds meet
The pouring, heavy rain
As I bring in tables.

Beep, Beep, Beep

Jimmy love his mother very much. His entire day centered around making his mother happy, and making her day better. He would wake up early and get dressed in his Sunday best. He would go into the kitchen and make his mother a lunch, only then making himself one if he had time. When he was done with that he would go and get his black leather shoes and shine them, just how his mother had shown him. Then, when his shoes were nicely polished, he would slip them on and grab his backpack and begin the short two block walk to his school.

When he arrived he would sit down in his class, well before the bell rang, and begin studying. All day he would do his best, aceing test after test, his mother always on the forefront of his mind. He could easily imagine his mother's broad grin as she looked down at his report card, full of A+'s of course, she would be so delighted he might even get treated with ice cream for all his hard work. When the school bell rang signalling the end of the day Jimmy would begin his walk back to see his mother. Along the way he would pass a meadow where he would sometimes play with his mom on the weekend.

As was his routine he would grab some flowers, a red one and an orange one just like his mother's favorite colors. He would dust of his knees, flowers in hand, and continue his walk to go see her. When he reached the big white building where she spent most of the day, he would push with all his might to open the big glass doors several feet taller than him. He would say "Hi" to the nice lady at the front desk, who would wave him right in knowing he was going to see his mother.

When he reached his mother's room he would open the door very quietly, not wanting to disturb his mother. He pull up a chair right beside her, putting the flowers in the vase that rested by her bed. He would grab the sandwich he made earlier in the day and gently put it in his lap, grabbing his backpack and pulling out the test he had taken today. "Look, Mommy, I got another A," he would say, only then putting the test down onto the ever growing stack of past tests.

He would gently grab her hand in both of his, her hand dwarfing his, careful not to mess with the tubes that ordained her wrist.

"I love you so much, Mommy," he said, as the gentle beeping of the life support droned out his tiny voice.

Autumn Citrine Long

Silence

We lay skinned in dust, on top of a carpet of rotten ivy. Brain and bone exposed by the same stone we used to carve our names into the walls of our prisons. Our heads bowed prayerfully over our jars of amber liquid, screams caught in our throats but silenced by our sealed lips. Oppressed by the deep animal instinct, commanding to hush. All while a boy in the corner, tearing at his blue lips, cried from the rope digging into his throat. We just sit and stare with slanted spines and a detached numbness with the tongues paralyzed in fear to speak. Our fingertips trail the tile, cold and abused, all that we are capable of doing is to fuel the nightmares with terror. Our eyes chasing hallucinations across the ceiling, each time our teeth part to speak it becomes a chore, every plodding movement is like walking in cement. Anchored to our grief, to our fear, to our death. We sit smothered in quiet, brittle from the wonder of what's lurking behind us in the dark.

Paralyzed.

Mute.

Ruined.

Dead.

Colors

I look at the windows. They have the sunlight gently melting off their brims and it kind of reminds me of your smile. Your smile is a lot like the primary colors looking so ordinary, but being able to create rainbows. Red. Blue. Yellow. I wonder if you could ever tell that you compose so many colors in me, ones that I can never seem to formulate so perfectly on my palette like you do. While I mix to try to make an untainted red, I accidentally get an ultramarine reminding me of the time we had spent the last hour of day holding each other. And I keep mixing these colors wanting to create your eyes on canvas, wanting vermilion like Juliet, a ruby like roses, flashy deep maroon lipstick, scarlet forget-me-not-kisses, yellow sunflower petals, busted-lip-purple bruises, cloudy grey skies in the city, slytherin tree green, isolation of cyanide, and even navy school girl skirt hiding small hands. I would give blood to my brush to create your eyes on canvas. I look at the art on the walls of a museum, it speaks to me the way you do. Crazy ideas and short orderly breaths. Pretty as a painting, because they can't ever be touched. Galleries of blunt meanings, and colors! So many colors! I look at the moon, so brightly silver crisp, in the cold black ashtray night, and it kind of reminds me of your voice because it cuts through my troubled darkness like cold steel. I try making your lips on canvas mixing my colors, trying for a copper like my guitar strings, mahogany child valentines, sunglow marigolds, fresh spring green grass, dandelion kissed droplets, delicate apple seed blush, red violet like Romeo, or even antique brass chandeliers to match our sparkling white wine. I want to mix all of them on my canvas so I can get the same simple color of my eyes, dark tumbleweed brown. And maybe if I hold up close to you, you'll fall in love with it the way I fell in love with you. I know I can create black sometimes where I go, but please let me show you that I have my own colors too, and they will only be meant for you.

Damaged Spines

Stretch my skin like disordered limbs across your naked canvas, my heart is poisoned by stillness due to a frozen breath. Their hands are cold while fingers linger between each heavy bone of my ribcage. From the flask we split, out bursts blue porcelain lips. We've shattered our dreams into weapons against our own humanity, drowning all but the fears we must abide by. We've been awashed with pressured arson, singing softly like mother's hands into our minds. We point guns at each other and see who blinks first, we race our own decay with accomplishments, slowly decreasing with punishment. Details neglected but the scream to be noticed, look at their spines! Do you see their stories embedded in their spines!? We damaged our lungs with each other's brokenness. We destroy the framework with a fire caged in our souls. We kiss split wounds, and let the pain of all our yesterdays howl out. Look at their spines! Lay me down and twirl your finger through my tattered thoughts. Watch my words fall off your skin like slippery ink.

Damaged and damaged and damaged my spine is.
Damaged and damaged we all are.

55-Word Short Story

"I love you," her husband whispered while sheets moved gracefully to their love. She thought about lasting forever and promises he had made. How she was to trust him for a lifetime. She thought about everything that was beautiful between them as she watched him make love to another woman in their bed.

-1st Place 2016 55-Word Short Story Contest Winner

Moonshine

There's a bunch of scruffed up boys, hands always swimming in their pockets, spitting insults off their tongues as if their mouths were meant to curl around the word "bitch". They laugh about dumb things that aren't meant to be remembered but she sits there and listens. They whisper about moonshine but she isn't too familiar with that. They aren't meant to be remembered but the sentences string themselves together and tighten around her self-confidence as if it's the best toy yet, "bitch." Their laughs like sirens ringing in her gut, and she tries to tear their labels off her skin but her flesh can't wash off the dirt personally engraved in her pores. She isn't normal enough. "Bitch." She isn't smart enough. "Bitch." She isn't pretty enough. "Bitch." She isn't anything. "Bitch!" She is only a young woman...and that is it. Her throat is now friendly towards the burn of the moonshine and she knows it only takes a little to forget all the hand-picked labels. Each syllable plastered behind her eyes as if she can't read anything but the ink of their insults on all her tattered artwork. And if she could she'd fill every empty bottle with her tears, and surely enough they could still get drunk off that liquid goodbye. She feels she must powder her cheeks with commercialized confidence, and picks at her face as if she could pull perfection out from under her alcohol-filled skin. Maybe then she can fit in, maybe then she will match the background of everyone's simplicity. They laugh about moonshine, and the way she chugs it, matches the way they abuse her with words. She sips, while they slander, "Bitch."

Untitled

His skin felt like soft sandpaper, a defense mechanism to stop people from tasting the adventure painted into the crevasses across his hands. His lips carried the burden of unfathomable ideas he didn't dare spit up into words, he could create masterpieces on all our canvased faces but he wasn't ever told it was okay to be different. Beautiful was only meant to stay between the lines, the reality of society confines humans to a set up, physical standards and mental limitations. He wasn't born wanting to be strung up to numbers and put into a category like every lie in the magazines. Short straight hair, blonde, big bright eyes, perfect high cheekbone powered in exquisite blush, curves like question marks around the phrase "What're you doing tonight?" Rough hands to cup the rear of a car and his hot girlfriends, too good to be true attitudes and muscles that were meant to run forever. But he didn't romanticize the petals of normality. Simplicity wasn't his taste in lifestyle. The fibers that made up his being were the dust of dead planets and from the atoms of his bones held stories about the value behind honest humanity. Cruelty wasn't stuffed behind his nail beds unlike the villains of modern day routine. He cried velvet crystal chandeliers and laughed like golden peacock feathers. He was reckless in the most stunning of ways. He played hide and go seek with the sun and I'd see him chase after the rain as if it were his own mother! People ponder him like he's a complicated quote, something that is meant to have an ending and beginning when he is simply just existing. He can suffice the thirst and desire for human desolation, he can't be caged into something as simple as a boy. He isn't a phase of earth, he is energy pulsing, vibrating against everything. He makes fire with the twirl of his finger, while he hums about the cold coffee he drank yesterday morning. And the way colors roll of his tongue remind me of the way the wind wonders through daisy fields. He wasn't ever told it was okay to be different.

Hunted

Here in this place, I speak gutter. Walkin' like I got the best dirty tongue tangle and my lips are stained with street litter. I got my own blood smeared on my hands because the kids at school don't like the way I dress. My face says restraining order but they find it more like a taunt. They tickle ignorance and I am the one who laughs for them. I act like it's okay, the things that they say- but I don't even have custody over my own feelings. I have a crowbar for a spine and my language is kill or be killed. Or all and all silence. Everyday, wanting the alzheimer's to kick into me before their shoes do. I must stay desensitized. I must stay above, flicking my phrases off in the fashion of not caring and acting as if my body is just a mouth holding skeletons and stones. Stones that will drown me in my tears, heavy. I have to act tough or else they'll snatch me, swallow me like I'm no victim of kerosene sippin' addiction, I'll burn them. Don't touch me. I know the corners of this building better than the man who made it, I know how to slip under being hunted and become the one who hunts. My body is broken but it knows their insecurities. I just don't poke where fingers aren't meant to linger.

Oh, I know my bruises are tempting,
But they are mine to touch,
And theirs to keep away from.

Isabel Lopez

My Truth

I wasn't fast enough
I'm all that I am
That's enough for me
I always hated hate
You hate the way that I lie
That somehow shows my innerself
The hypocrite that I am
The gullible and liar
Who cries but won't give a shit
If you leave

There's nothing for you to see
There's a lot for you to read
Read my novels to find my fears
Watch the stars to see my dreams
Run on the road
To feel your body dancing
To the beat of your heart
Look in my eyes
You will find my reasons
Maybe you'll see my truth

Sweet Dreams

I found a love
I thought was true
You looked at me
With eyes of amazement
I held your hand
Traced your fingers
The sound of you and I lingered

You called me yours
And I was happy
If only I know
That it wouldn't last

Ignored and forgotten
I don't know why
Did I do something?
I couldn't help but cry
You pulled me an inch closer
To push me back a foot

That was it
You let me go
You didn't turn around
I was silly to think you would

Known

Free at last
I no longer cry
I won't cry
You don't deserve my misery

I didn't deserve the pain
Things happen
You left
I'll grow

You'll look back
I can only look up
You look at my big eyes
I look at my bright future

I'm sorry you won't be the one
You'll regret it
When you see me smiling with him
Know that could've been you
Know that.

The Lioness & Wolf

Skin brown eyes wide
Do not look at me with fear
I'm not here for you
What you can do, is step aside

Standing tall, thin shoulders
Appearing fragile and weak
You have not discovered the lioness within
A lone wolf with one goal

You have not seen the cold raining nights
Within the eyes of a lone wolf
You have not seen the atrocious days
of the lion wanting to feast

Do not question the wolf
Who turns away from the pack
When they have turned from her
When all she needed was validation

Do not question the lioness
Who lets her mate starve
When he almost permitted her to die
When all she needed was love

Skin brown eyes wide
Do not fear who I am
But the power that holds within
Do not question it

I am not the sheep that requires validation
Nor am I dog that will follow you around
Those days are dead
A new leader has risen

Wonder

You sat there
All I could do was stare
I couldn't help but wonder
What is on your mind?
How is your day going
I don't know you
You don't know me
It's perfect

I think of what would happen
If I approached you
If we started talking like old friends
You like my music
I love the books you've read
I can't help but wonder

I notice you're staring blankly out the window
I do the same
I know it's not done blankly
You're thinking so much
I know I do the same

I don't approach you
I let you be
I let the universe go it's course
I'll always wonder

Los Angeles

I miss you so much.
Miss your sunshine,
the way your hot days
of sunlight rays
touch my skin.
I miss your sky high palm trees
how elegant they look
floating in the big blue world

I miss your tanned prissy people
waiting for their iced cold soy-milk coffee
Rude and ignorant, they are apart of you.
I will love all of you Los Angeles.
Take me in, make me yours,
the way I took you in my soul
the way you never make my heart sore.

Stars

The stars floated all around her fragile body
Crystal drops of sunshine enter her divine skin
She didn't know she was flawless

She has enough power
To strike lightning in your veins
She only allowed clouds over your head

She thinks her soul is fragile
When she can carry the entire universe
On the tip of her index finger

She always felt like a grain in the sand
When she didn't know
She was the sky
As the sunsets in vibrant pink hues.

Galaxies in Heaven

The stars have written your name,
In galaxies we can not see.
We call them constellations,
But it's you who've inspired them.
You've inspired the heavens
To create such wonder in the universe
That the human race can not define.
And the heavens stare at you,
With such twinkle in its eye,
You call them stars.
I look at you with such a daze
You call beauty,
That's only because
It's a reflection of you.

New

New face
New thoughts
New lips
New ideas, I never sought

I wasn't looking for you
Didn't mean for you to stay
I looked you in the eye
You looked me in the soul

Time seemed endless
Sadly it had to end
A little piece of infinite perfection
You were perfect
The apple of my eye
Everything I could've dreamed of

You gave me a new feeling
When I didn't have any
You sparked something inside
The flame outshines the sun

Don't You Fear

Darling don't you fear
The world is yours
So clean up those tears

I know your troubles
I know your pain
We've gone through it all
Even if it's not the same

Look at the stars
Ever so bright in the darkness
So get in that car
Drive away
Go to the ocean
Even if it's just for a day

You need the space
You need the air
This life's a race
Look around
This is your place

Ready To Hunt

She has that look in her eye
She's ready to hunt
Don't you be so surprised
This is her territory
She's ready to win
That fame and glory
The feeling comes in
Her claws come out
Natural senses tingle
What's this all about?

The lioness in her kingdom
Coming out at night
She's ready to fight
Do be aware
Don't you even dare
This is her trial
If you give her an inch
She'll run a few miles

Lone Wolf

She has that fire in her eye
The flames that burn right through
You can feel the tension within
A lone wolf
Searching for her prey
Will stop at no cost
The fire may burn her
She tames it
Uses the light to her advantage
In search of what she's looking for
Her next prey
She may get lost
She will always find the track
Crazy and driven
Lost the insanity
She will eat tonight

The Real B

The real me
Do you know
How deep I am
The words I think
What I say
My mind my spirit
Do you notice
The sparkle in my eye
I have my bad side
To the good side

The real me
No old me
Flirtatious and innocent
Sensitive and cold hearted
Paradox
Do you know?

Joseph Munguia

Lavender Life

I dream of a lavender life
With velvet pillows, and cotton candy clouds.
I dream of a lavender life, where love lives long
And life is not short.
I dream of a lovely lavender life
Where velvet clouds roll across
The sky, like a ball of yarn, chased by a kitten of
Joy.
I dream of a lavender life
Where magenta mornings mean
A moonfall of rain.
I dream of a life
Where lost leaves
Follow the breadcrumbs home.
I dream of a lavender life
Where I don't feel alone.

Controlling Emotions

Anger, desperation, and sadness: these are the feelings that lead me astray,
Anger driving me into the ground,
Leaving me hopeless inside this loveless earth.

Desperation leaving me clawing at the heels
Of those that I try and scream too.

Sadness holding my throat keeping
Me from voicing my fears,
Pulling my ankles,
Always bringing me back to the loveless ground
From which I was born.

Neverending

Scars never healing, just reopening, deepening the ache of an old wound,
Never fading in mind, only faded in skin.
The mind never forgets the cause of pain on its body's sensitive skin,
Causing nerves to scream in alarm, even fear.
The mind never forgets what you wish not to remember,
Only stores an eternal ember.
Waiting, patiently, to burn again,
Into scars,
Never healing, just reopening, deepening, the ache of an old wound,
Never fading in mind, faded only in skin.

Masking

The mask I wear by day
Is not worn by night
For the darkness of the night
Hides what my face cannot
Some say my mask
Is an illusion
To hide what is worn on
My sleeve

True that may be
Yet people walk by
Without a glance at my sleeve
For the mask is all they see

Wanderings

Pause courtious spirit
For your wanderings
Have caught my eye

Do you dream old memories
Do you cry in misery
Or do you simply
Breathe

I ask these questions
For one reason alone
I believe I live
Yet I feel
Dead

Which is which
If what you do
In life is
Done

Wandering as a
Spirit of the
Dead

Sadness

To define your sadness
You creep into your mind where shadows lie
Find the surface of your last sadness
Then dive into its sea of darkness.
Search and wander seemingly lost
Until a glint of light finds your eye.
Follow deeper down until it seem you'll drown
Turn yourself around spot the puppeteer and ask him why he dragged you
underground.

Star Walker

Words can not illuminate
What I do not already know
For I am a child of the gods
And time has fallen asleep
Allowing me to carve a path
Amongst the tens of thousands of stars.

Lotus Tree

Time has fallen asleep
now is the perfect time to become a thief

And hide in the majestic oak tree that has itself stolen the lotus flower
and enjoy its beauty to its fullest

So you can burn away its life like a torch
and say you have seen something truly unique

Humanity

The world at a glance seems fair
Its beauty undeniable
Unless you look
With a human perspective
Humans greedy yet free
Pleasure is granted
Without fee
Yet human one
Is not like
Human two or three
Human one has little greed
One is fair
And one's fee for pleasure
Is forfeit to be real
One chases its goals
Yet refuses
To bring down another
One has love
Just like two or three
Yet
It lives not on a whim
So why
Why does the world
Rise one up
To stomp them down
Like some joke
So one will lose
All hope
So one will feel chained
To the world's might
They say one is free
Just like two and three

Tied To Strings

Like a puppet tied to a string
My actions bound by what
Controls me
Do this do that
No, no my emotions
Can't run free
I'm forever in a sickness
Rather dark

That is until the day my strings
Fall to the ground before me
No longer a puppet
No longer bound
Free to be me
To weave my own fate
With simple string
Yet I understand not how to weave
Nor do I know what these
Emotions mean

So my choice
Is to weave myself
To the thing that set me free
To the sickness rather dark

Teardrop

A teardrop is a just a memory
Staining the face with remnant thoughts
A teardrop is noticed by many
Suddenly they seem to care
But once that tear drop leaves your face
They all seem to forget
The precious memory that teardrop contained
A single teardrop
One that could infect the world
So all could shed the same teardrop
Bringing the world together in harmonious pain
Yet that teardrop is easily forgotten

Why Sleep

Why should I sleep if sleep requires being in the thing I fear most? Why should I submit myself to the horrors of darkness? I'm not afraid of the dark. I'm more afraid of what my mind makes up in the dark. I fear the outlandish images, the murky darkness, behind my eyelids creates.

I refuse to close my eyes and allow myself to fall into that world. If I must, I will live with toothpicks keeping open my eyes and lights so bright that I could never sleep. Yet as I sit in my room, my eyes start to feel heavy and my bed gets more comfortable. It takes more effort than I would have thought to sit up and rub my eyes to try and keep myself conscious. Yet, it does nothing to aid me in my quest to remain awake. Before I know it, my eyelids are falling again.

This time succeeding in closing over my eyes. Then it begins, the shadows of my closed eyes seem to move rapidly like a swarm of a thousand insects, yearning for an escape from behind my eyes. At first the images seem to flow and wisp around almost as though the were visible emotions.

I can feel myself falling back onto my bed. I try to stop but I can't, I want to scream, but it only makes noise in my head. I want to be awake but I can't, the seductive feel of sleep is bringing me to its bed. One last time, I try to escape the horrors of darkness in my mind, but to no avail. I find myself asleep.

Jose “Sonny” Remijio Pacheco III, Destroyer of Sanity

Fallen Angels: Suplexing Trains Because You Can’t!



Under a light from the full moon, walks a small lone figure through the cold and desolate streets. Minutes later, several more larger figures follow behind. They finally catch up and drag the small one into an alley. Before anything else happens that could result in tragedy, I decide follow them inside their own demise. Hidden behind a nearby dumpster, I wait and listen to their conversations. Just in case they aren’t just pranksters or anything that is not a real threat to their victim.

But once I hear them ordering the little guy for money, it gives me a reason to take action. First I take a rock and toss it at the light bulb above them. Once it is out I come out of my hiding place and approach them. Though they cannot see, doesn’t mean that I can’t. These guys are just humans, I am something better. I have super powers, my abilities is to manipulate and use the darkness. As I come closer I watch them struggle in the dark. It always gives me joy when I see thugs in fear, especially when their bravery only relied on weapons and numbers. These five guys only had knives and 9 mm pistols. I can take them.

Taking the first one out was easy enough, but once he yelped three of the thugs began firing in our direction. To get another one I toss the first into him, they impact into one another. The second one is down, only three to go. The third one is pretty big, so I just give him a few socks to the head. The fourth tackles me near the lit entrance of the alleyway, both can see me. When I manage to knock him out, number five begins to shoot me. If I was a normal human, I would be dead by now. But sadly I am anything but normal, I mean who beats up a bunch of gun wielding thugs in an alleyway anyway? As the idiot keeps shooting I walk closer toward him. When he finally ran out of bullets, the coward became petrified in fear. Seeing my shot up body was all it took for him to faint in that alleyway. With them out of the way, I can inspect who they were after. By the way probably I forgot to mention that most things can’t kill me.

As I look around for the victim, I finally find it behind a trashcan in the corner of the alley. Upon further inspection I notice that it is only a young boy. So I began to talk to the child so I can get a n understanding of what is going on.

“Hello kid, I happened to noticed that you were getting mugged in this alley. So I just dropped in to help.”

“You didn’t have to help me ya know. I could have done it myself.”

“I would have.... until I saw that they were grown adults with weapons. Don’t you know that it isn’t safe out here at night? Why are you out here anyway?”

“I’m running away from home...”
“Why would you ever think about that? Was your house really that bad?”
“Yeah...”
“How so?”
“It was burned down...”
“By who? Where are your parents?”
“I don’t know where they are! All I know is that the army is after me because I’m a freak!”

When I heard the child say the words “army” and “freak”, I fully knew what he was talking about. I heard about this stuff all over the place. Whenever a someone with superhuman abilities is discovered, the military find it in their best interest to take them and run tests on them. If a superhuman lacks the abilities the government wants, they can leave. The rest end up in facilities and get experimented with. I know what happens in those facilities because I was in on of these places. But luckily, that facility burned to the ground, I made sure of that... Back then, they weren’t as strict as today’s standards. I even have the old dog tags they issued us. Since I was one of the special ones they used as weapons, or “Heroes”. I was even given a number and nickname, it was: “Smiley”, #23. This was because of my mother, she was a-

“Sir?”, interrupted the child.

“Yes?”

“Are you a superhero?”

“Uh... what else would you call a random guy that saves people, has super powers, and wears a costume that consists: a mask; hooded leather jacket; blue jeans, and steel toe boots? You better not say Santa Claus”

“Well, can you help me save my family?”

“I guess I can..”

“Thank you Sir! By the way what’s your name?”

“Smiley”, I replied. Pointing to the mask on my face. Which resembled a skull with canine teeth forming a smile, decorated with two stripes of blue paint on each side of the cheeks.

“Well... makes sense”, replied the kid

“How about your name?”

“My name is Sam, but I want to go by something cooler. Can I go by Sparky?”

“No...”

After this odd conversation, Smiley and “Sam” walked out of the alley and into the cold darkness that awaits them.

Fallen Angels: John Goodman’s Cat Documentary

“Man I hate getting late night shift in this place!” replied Gary the security guard. Though Gary liked working at this secret laboratory, he hated being at the third wing of the building. The third wing holds most of the superhumans that have been “refurbished” for the government’s needs. Gary had only seen a few of the experiments go awol and run through the halls. He was used to this kind of stuff, Gary knew every protocol to use on the creatures. He was even given a controller that is used to detonate the explosives implanted in each superhuman. This was in case there was no other solution to apprehend a rouge experiment.

Suddenly, all of the lights in the third wing go out. Gary just sits there and waits for the back-up lights to activate. While he sits in the darkness, one of the containment doors open. When Gary heard the noise, he grabbed a nearby flashlight to see what is going on. He pointed it at the hall, only to see a giggling silhouette of a figure leaning at the end of the hallway’s wall.

“Who’s there?!” ordered Gary. But instead of getting the response he wanted, the figure only laughed even more louder and maniacal. The figure started walking towards him, laughing louder and louder. Gary could only watch as the figure staggered towards him. The way it walked reminded Gary of an old drunkard staggering out a bar. This made Gary chuckle a little, he knew it maybe the last one he would ever make. While the figure was getting closer, the flashlight began to reveal what was the shadows were concealing. What the guard discovered was horrifying. It appeared to be a teenage girl, but the left side of her body seemed to have been stitched together in a grotesque manner and was covered in fresh scars. Even Frankenstein’s monster would find this thing fugly!

“Is this what these people do to you?! THAT’S IT, I QUIT!” Gary yelled, while throwing his badge at the floor. He then turned and ran out of the exit. When the creature noticed it, she began to move towards him. But instead of walking, the creature dropped to the floor and began to scurry along the floor like a spider. While Gary was running away, a familiar laughter was close behind. Luckily he found help in the form of several other guards.

“HELP ME, THIS THING IS CHASING ME!” Gary pleaded in desperation. Instinctively, the other guards began to fire at the creature. Because he did not have a weapon, Gary just kept running away from the scene. He did not care what happened to those other guards behind him, he only cared for the exit in front of him. Once Gary got to the door, he immediately threw it open, went outside, slammed it, and locked it. Once he escaped the nightmare, Gary took a breath of fresh night air and walked towards his silver 2011 Honda Accord. All Gary wanted to do now was to go home and see his family.

Once the car started Gary drove his Sedan into the night, and onto the well lit highway. But as he was driving he started to feel a cold breeze hit

his left shoulder. This puzzled Gary, he knew for a fact that he never left his windows open. Suddenly a bloodied hand reached toward the radio to turn it on.

“Man, I hate silence, ya know?” asked a voice.

“Please don’t kill me...” Gary pleaded.

“Kill you? Why would I ever do that?” the voice asked, silently patting Gary’s shoulder with her bloody hand.

“I just want what you want sir. I just want to be free. Just drop me off at the nearest town or city and I will be on my way.”

“Fine, just please don’t stain the seats please. I just washed them yesterday.” Gary sighed.

“Do you have a name?”

“I only have the name “50/50”. It was given to me as a codename from the facility, based on my appearance. My real name has since been forgotten. Any other questions?”

“Nope.”

“Then let’s just relax and listen to this song, it’s my favorite.”

On a streetlight a lone owl sat and watched as the silver car passed by, hearing one of the passengers sing the lyrics of “Bohemian Rhapsody”. It made the owl cry, the singer horrible.

Fallen Angels: A Cure for Foot Fungus



“Epsilon, report to room J-1. Epsilon...”, Droned the overhead speaker.

“I wonder what’s happening this time?” Epsilon wondered.

Whenever they want him to report to J-1, means that there is an outbreak somewhere. The most usual cases he deals with are rogue superhumans, like himself. But to Epsilon, he has what it takes to end the danger of other superhumans and keep the public safe, especially his younger sister “Blight”. Ever since the destruction of a facility Epsilon and Blight lived in as kids, made Epsilon promise that incidents like that will never happen to anyone else. No matter any cost.

“Epsilon reporting for duty sir!”

“At ease soldier.”, replied General Winston.

“What is it that you needed me for?”\

“Apparently there were two sightings of superhuman activity: one at San Francisco, California; and one at Ukiah, California.”

“What happened?”

“In San Francisco, a group of teenagers were beaten and thrown in a dumpster at an alleyway. And in Ukiah, one of the captive superhumans somehow broke out of it’s cell, ravaged the guards, and escaped their facility. Almost all of the bodies of the guards were identified and found, except for one.”

“Who might that be?”

“His name is Gary, Gary Miller.”

“Ok general, I need the files on both cases and i will be on my way.”

Once Epsilon was given the files, he had to ready his equipment. The target at San Francisco seem to be a “Shadow demon”. A Shadow demon is a type of superhuman that manipulated the shadows and the darkness as a weapon or defense. They can even mimic not only people, but also the powers of other superhumans. But this ability is also limited. They cannot copy the powers of “angels”. Angels are a type of superhuman that is the complete opposite of Shadow demons, not only could they use light as their weapons and defences; they could also fly! Epsilon is one of these angels, alongside his sister Blight.

Since Shadow demons and Angels are very rare to come by, it could only mean that Epsilon’s old friend is alive after all. He was once one of a close friend to Epsilon, until he decided to take the title “Smiley” and go rogue. There also another girl besides Blight that was with them too, but Epsilon had forgotten her name. Hell, he doesn’t even know what ever happened to her after that facility burned down. Back to the subject at hand, Smiley was one of the only two shadow demons ever recorded by the government. The first one was Smiley’s mother, but she is dead. None of us here really don’t talk about it much. What happened there was too gruesome to comprehend. Even speaking about the incident makes a survivor burst into tears and drop to the floor.


Looking through the other file, Epsilon read about the experiments

they did on the runway superhuman. The goal was to create a superhuman that could not only copy powers, but could use two different powers at the same time. Though it seemed that the final results accomplished the goal, it also made the subject turn batshit insane and develop a second personality. Scientists have even joked that there was a 50/50 chance of leaving the experiment alive, due to the savage and polite personas. Hence the nickname: “50/50”. The experiment’s weakness for Epsilon to use for an advantage is on the left side of her body. This is because that half of the body uses shadow demon genetic material, in order to keep the ability copied different from the one on the right half.

Since Epsilon knew what he was up against, he decided what equipment to use: Power armor, standard issue; a tranquilizer gun, for the experiment; and an ancient sword passed on from generation to generation from his family, perfect for eliminating shadow demons. Once it was all prepared Epsilon left the base and flew to the first destination: Ukiah, California.

Fallen Angels: Top Elevator Hits from the 50’s

トノ --- < --- ちノ

Returning to the adventure of Smiley and Sam, we find that they have traveled from San Francisco to Ukiah, California. This is so the duo will get the aid he needs in the form of his siblings that live in the local reservation. Meanwhile, Epsilon is also in Ukiah in an attempt to hunt for a runaway experiment named "50/50". And without his knowing, 50/50 has a hostage; his name is Gary. We now return to *Fallen Angels: What is The Name of This Again?* .

"Are we there yet Smiley? My feet are getting tired..." Sam asked.

"We are almost two feet away from the reservation, just keep moving."

Once they reached the entrance to the reservation, Sam felt a sudden chill go down his spine. Even though he felt uneasy and afraid, Sam followed Smiley into the center of the reservation. As they were walking closer to their destination, Sam began to have the awkward sensation that someone is watching them. Once Smiley had noticed that Sam was feeling nervous, he told Sam to just walk around the nearby creek outside of the reservation. Smiley even reassured him that "they" would never follow him there. Once Sam had finally agreed, Smiley began to walk further towards the a small turquoise house, surrounded by broken down cars. When Smiley reached the property, two figures emerged from the nearby walnut trees.

Just by looking at the shape of the shadows, Smiley began to recognize who they are. The big one that lumbered towards him was his younger brother that goes by the nickname "Vortex". Vortex uses abilities similar to his brother but they are very limited. This is due to the fact that he is too big to use the abilities that would normally give him stealth. But this does not make him weak in any way, shape or form. Unlike Smiley, Vortex possesses super strength. The costume he wears resembles a red fiery mexican wrestler, Vortex loves that kind of stuff. The smaller shadow was Smiley's older sister Kat. She does not have any known abilities similar to her "little" brothers. Kat instead has the ability to become invisible and run fast. Her costume is just: a black hoodie, blue jeans, tennis shoes, black gloves, a white cat mask, and a pink bow in her hair.

Though they are siblings, Vortex and Kat still feel bitter about their brother returning. Smiley had left them at the res for four years. He never even gave them a reason, he just disappeared one day without a word of sorrow or remorse. Vortex and Kat believed that Smiley just wanted to start a new, better life without them. And they respected that wish. But Smiley explained to them that he was just hiding from the government, because of the destruction for the facility positioned in Clearlake, California. If he went back to the reservation, the government would have followed him and would have taken not only him, but his siblings too. But since they could not find him anywhere, they probably assume that he is dead, or do they? Smiley then began to ask Vortex and Kat about them stopping the other facilities from causing harm to other people. Once they agreed, Smiley then discussed with them what they will do.

Meanwhile, Sam was wandering the woods just across the creek. While he was playing with some pinecones, Sam began to hear someone sing. The voice of the singer felt like silk in the wind, Sam was captivated. In order to find out who it was, Sam followed the voice deeper into the woods. Through all the trees, stones, and leaves, Sam finally found out who was singing. It was a girl older than him, she seemed about as old as Smiley was. Her fair skin and long hair were as white as snow, but her eyes were like red rubies glistening in the sun. The mysterious girl also wore a pale white dress and shoes. If someone randomly looked upon her, they would probably think that they have seen an angel or spirit.

Sam then began to approach the celestial figure, say hello, and compliment her harmonious voice. But once he made that fifth step, Sam tripped over a nearby pine cone and fell into a pile of crunchy leaves, breaking the silence. Sam caught her attention, she looked shocked and startled.

“Smoother move!”, Sam said to himself.

“Uh hello, I didn’t see you there.”, the mystery girl said.

“I’m sorry that I interrupted your beautiful singing.”

“It’s okay, as long as someone at least enjoyed it.”

“My name is Sam, what’s yours.”

“Blight.”

“Are you Smiley’s sister?”

When Blight heard Sam say the name “Smiley”, she was flooded with memories about the fun times she had when she was younger. She grew up in a facility, it would have been very lonely if it wasn’t for her big brother Epsilon. When she was eight, she met a strange boy that was always cheerful. Whenever she was sad, the boy would find some way to make her feel happy. The three kids would then become lifelong friends. Later on, they also met a human girl named Alyssa. Alyssa usually visited the facility often while her parents worked there. Alyssa’s father was the leading scientist, and her mother was a superhuman. Blight never knew the boy’s parents though, the only thing she knew was that his mother was the **First** original Smiley that existed at the time. But ever since the incident happened at that facility, she never saw her friends again...

“Hello? Are you okay?”, asked Sam, feeling nervous about witnessing someone having a sudden flashback.

“Yeah... I’m okay.. And no, I’m not Smiley’s sister. I am only a friend. Can you show me where he is? I need to--”

Suddenly, an explosion erupted outside of the forest. Realizing what is happening, Blight grabbed Sam and flew towards the commotion, she knew what was happening. It was her brother Epsilon, he was what Blight was going to warn him about. When she found out that Smiley was alive, she had a feeling that Epsilon would hunt him down, and possibly destroy him, To prevent this, Blight followed her brother to Ukiah, just in case Smiley was there. She was the only one that knew where he lived. Smiley had told her once, because he believed that she was nice and trusted her. So she waited there in the woods, and instead of finding

Smiley, she found Sam.

When they reached the area, Sam and Blight were horrified to see Smiley and his siblings, versus Epsilon and an Odd girl. She looked familiar to Blight, but she did not know why. For now all the Blight and Sam could do is watch and wait until something bad happens, they don't want to get caught, yet...

"It's you!", Smile shouted, pointing at 50/50.

"Who me?"

"Yes. I know who you are, how could I forget."

"I don't even know you. Or anyone else here."

"But I do, Alyssa!"

"Who?", asked Epsilon.

"Neither of you remember? All of us used to play around at that facility I destroyed."

"So you did destroy it. Why would you do something like that Smiley?", demanded Epsilon.

"Are you serious? I did it for revenge, for my mother and Alyssa. When I found out that they had killed my mother and transformed Alyssa into a monster from their cruel experimentation. I had to act, so I wore my mother's mask and rampaged through the facility. I wanted to make sure that those kind of horrors committed there would never happen again."

"I'm sorry Smiley but this charade will have to end. Though what you say is true, the facilities work their hardest to make the world better. You must be stopped no matter the cost."

"Why do you throw your life away so recklessly Epsilon?"

"That's a question you should ask yourself, Smiley"

"I guess I'm gonna have to crush you with bare hands then!"

Everyone but Smiley and Epsilon got out of the way, all of them knew what was going to happen. When everyone was distracted, 50/50 walked away from the scene. She now knew her name, and she had questions. Who is she? Does she have a family? If so, why did they give her up to experimentation. 50/50 was determined to find the answers, to find her own path in life, and seek redemption.

This is the day when it ends, the sky is dreading with rain and lightning, the wind is howling, and the everyone is silent. This is the finale everyone watching were waiting for. A final battle between the good and the corrupt. A storm is coming....

Fallen Angels: Jinx is My Main

(☞° ㄨ °)☞ ☞(° ㄨ °☞)

Standing there at the one end of the dirt road of the reservation was the misunderstood warrior Smiley. He was known as the one that destroyed the Clearlake facility, killing everyone there. In reality he did it, because of what the facility did to not only innocent people, but also those closest to him. Smiley is the easiest one to blame, his actions made known for being a villain. It didn't help that he wore a thick black coat, and a eerie smiling skull mask decorated in dark blue warpaint; but he also controlled the shadows and was powered by fear. The mask and his abilities were passed on from his mother, the one true Smiley, a cold hearted killer.

The opposer in Smiley's way stood Epsilon, the compelled villain. Epsilon was once one of Smiley's best friend in the whole world. But after the crime Smiley committed, he had to be stopped. The Government did their best to make Epsilon stronger, at the cost of his humanity. They did this because they knew he had the power to destroy Smiley, or any other superhuman in their way. Though Smiley could control the darkness, Epsilon controls the light. Their basic angel for the demon. What Smiley saw in front of him was not his childhood friend anymore, Epsilon is his wretched nemesis.

Smiley did his best to run from the government all these years. But all of his running caused others to be hurt by his cowardice. The cowardly acts he committed hurt the bonds of not only friend Blight, but his brother Vortex, and his sister Kat. Now as he firmly stands in this desolate road, standing like a sentinel. he knows only one of them will walk out this alive. If this world wants him to fade away with a whimper, they better ask for their refunds. This guy is going to go out with a cosmic explosion, guns blazing!

Seeing his target Epsilon spoke, "Are you done running you worthless coward? Just kneel before me and I will make your death swift. Then no one will ever have to die by your sinister face again."

With his razor toothed grin, Smiley replied, "It's a beautiful day outside, why waste the moment. I know a lot of people that deserve this vengeance. I have watched many innocent people die by your government's hands, never mine. They should be the one to face justice!"

After hearing these remarks Epsilon flew swiftly towards Smiley with wings of fire. Before he could impact, Smiley emitted a shadow claw and sliced one of the energy wings. Sending Epsilon into a house with a loud smash. While he emerged from the rubble, Epsilon drew his sword. This sword is a sacred item passed down from his father. A man the facility wanted Epsilon to become the one that would end the darkness. The minute Smiley was close enough, Epsilon swung the sword at Smiley's face. The impact caused the mask to crack, just a little.

Even though the damage was little, it sent Smiley into a fiery demon rage! This anger fueled his fight for survival. The whole fight lasted until the next day. When it was over, the whole property was destroyed. Epsilon and Smiley looked like two broken toy soldiers standing in a kid's messy room. As they limped towards each other in a determined hatred, someone walked towards them. This individual made them stop. It was Blight, Epsilon's sister, and Smiley's friend. She stepped in, because she

had enough of these random acts of violence. Blight had known both of them, she had known them since they were kids. Both Epsilon and Smiley just stared at her in utter amazement.

“Blight get out of here! This is none of your business!”, ordered Epsilon.

“Brother, don’t you see how wrong this is? You two have known each other for years. Now you two are fighting to the death. Look at the ground below you two! You guys are bleeding. I am order you two to stop, or I will have to use force.”

When Smiley and Epsilon ignored this order, instead they started to fight again. To give them a little discipline, Blight shot bolts of light from her hands and knocked them down. Too tired to get up, both rivals just layed there. Basking in the gloomy rain. When Vortex found this as a chance to kill Epsilon, Kat held him back. It would have been dishonorable if Vortex killed him now, he was defenseless. Then suddenly, Epsilon stood up and turned to Smiley, picking up his sword.

“What are you gonna do now Epsilon? Kill me?”, Smiley asked.

“No Smiley, I’m just gonna turn around and go back to base. When I am healed, I will return to finish the job. Blight, let’s go now.”

“No, brother, I will stay here and mend Smiley’s wounds.”

Epsilon just stood there, gave the reply a little thought and spoke, “Very well then. But when we meet again, you will be my enemy.”

“Very well then, now go. You are scaring my new friend Sam.”

“I’m okay, it’s just the rain. I’m getting cold.”, replied Sam timidly.

Annoyed with what is happening around him, Epsilon shot into the air and disappeared into the clouds. While Epsilon was flying, he began to ask himself if Smiley was right, and if the government was really as corrupt as he said it was. Only time will tell what is real or not. The main thing Epsilon had on his mind, was how grown his sister was. Blight doesn’t need his protection anymore, she has become a true hero. Epsilon decided to fly faster, making a loud sonic boom echo in the air.

Back on the reservation, Vortex and Kat helped their fallen brother up from the ground and into the house. It’s condition looked way better than Smiley ever could right now.

“Good thing this is over!”, exclaimed Sam.

“I don’t think it’s over.” replied Vortex.

“How so? Epsilon is gone for now and we can rest.”

“Sam the worst is yet to come, our biggest threat is coming to us now.”

“Who? Who is coming?”

“Our father. He is going to be pissed when he see’s how messed up the house is!”, Replied Kat.

“Crap”

*To be continued in the next issue: Fallen Angels: Give me Money! Coming soon **NEVER!***

Watching You Sleep/Say it Again Please

Shh, hush now
Be quiet now

Time to be in bed
Please rest your head
Turn off the light
It gives me fright
You look perfect and peaceful
This has made me hateful
When your mother sings you a sonnet
I quietly wait here in the closet
When you are alone
I will be shone
when you are filled with fright
It gives me such a delight
When i hear you scream
It always makes me beam
Parents come in
I am hidden
you tell on me
I'm full of glee
They never believe you
What can you do
Just go to bed
rest your tired head
Ill leave you alone
the job is done
No need to fear
I won't be here
In the closet
don't be upset
Until I am slain
We will meet again
A shame is floating in town
laughing at all to see
to blame the fool is shared
for all people to see

Jazmin Ramirez

here's to the girls with golden state minds
the chicanas who live in la misión
surrounded by art and culture
the ones who never forget where they come from and embrace their roots
the ones who wear hoop earrings and their
gold bracelets their abuelita gave them even
if it makes them look like cholas
the ones who come from little cities with
expensive taste where the cars are all old,
chipped and broken like her
the ones with starry eyes and chapped lips
who dream past the stars and the galaxies
hoping to one day make it

here's to the girls with golden state minds
the ones who can smoke a pack a day and who later try to mask it with
cheap perfume
the ones who wear faux fur jackets and keep
a copy of Howl to read during the ride from
Berkeley to San Francisco
the ones who aren't afraid to walk the
tenderloin at night even when shiny eyed
men follow them all the way home
the ones who shop at American Apparel even though they can get the same
exact thing at goodwill because it's expensive to look that cheap

here's to the girls with golden state minds
because without them there wouldn't be
much to write about

i have eaten all
the sunflower seeds
they were in your drawer along
with the note you left behind
only for my eyes to see
i wasn't sorry the minute
that salty seed landed on my tongue
i was transported back to
when you were happy
when you would grab life by the fistfuls
and toss them into the air like wedding rice
i ate another and another until they were all gone
to keep the image of you in the bloody bathtub out
of my mind

tomorrow i will buy some more sunflowers

my hands are the portal to
my mind hold my hand and
look at what's inside don't
shut me out when you see
the dark parts of me
parts I wish I could hide
parts that desolate
my pride as you sit here
and flip through
these pages I see
the fear in your eyes
as you realize
my lies

pretty broken

tattered girl running
with the wind
breaking hearts and
tea pots playing mind
games
pretty broken tattered
girl wearing makeup
like
war paint for the battle
of hearts has begun and
it is she who always
wins
pretty broken tattered
girls running with the
wind
she has broken yet
another with her
boring old mind
games
pretty broken tattered
girl has fallen deep
into her game
it has cost her life but at
least it brought her fame

people are always comparing each other to art
and although art is beautiful
it's supposed to make you feel something
you made me feel nothing at all
i bet you thought this would be a love poem
of me comparing the green and blues in your eyes
to Van Gogh starry skies
and I bet you thought i was a dumb shit
who would fall in love with you
but truth is you're ripped at every edge and useless
and I know I said I would never write a poem about you
but this is more of an ode to a bitch

i once tried to compare your beauty to all nature could ever offer
but nothing could ever explain how you hold more beauty in your left
hand than all the seas stars and galaxies combined i would much rather
find the constellation in your freckles than stare at the black sky not

seeing anything but dots i much rather venture into the deep
blue that is your soul than the boring waters off north i would
rather soak up your intelligence than the sun and i would rather
give you all the oxygen in my lungs if it meant i could finally find
something just as beautiful to compare you to
she sat on saturn rings and
kicked the stars so we
could dream so close your
eyes and make
a wish to the girl in the sky

*

i cling to the side of a wounded tree and
hope my
body can patch up the cuts and bruises left
behind
by young lovers who were just passing by
carving their names on the side hoping
their love would
last as long as the tree stood

*

i stared at my reflection in the puddle but
it wasn't me
it was a girl whose words were like fire
and she was a dragon
i stared and stared until it seemed as
though I was there
and I could feel what she felt the burning
desperation of being alone
i wanted to tell her she wasn't alone
she had a pocket full of thoughts and eyes
full of dreams
i wanted to tell she had herself and that
was enough even if it wasn't

Imani Rich

A Group of Haikus Is Called an Afternoon

Hair untied, dancing
My father cannot
Unbear his scars

A gentle heartbeat
Finally, a mother
For but a single moment

Break from the pole
Tear the skin from your chest
And run, bloody and hot, down the road

Blue birds, red birds
Quails, and Hawks
Noisy little bastards

A hot, hot winter
Punxsutawney Phil
Was right

Responding to My Long Dead Chinese Wife

As Autumn passes into Winter
The wind has never felt so cold
And bitten so hard
At my face, my hands.

Far up the winding river I have gone
And still further shall I go,
The birds and women
Laughing mockingly at my devotion.

At night the river flows down my cheeks.
Oh, to travel it back to you--I wish I could,
But I must keep going
Until the blossoms of a new Spring
Order me to turn back.

When that time comes
Meet me at Cho-fu-sa,
The monkeys will weep happily
At our reunion.

“A Sense of Wonder and Emotion” (Discomfort)

I am the dust in the eye of a drowsy child
Woken up early for his first day of school
I am his aching muscles he gains running track
In his new P.E. class
I am ill-fitted shoes that press against toes
The only ones his family could afford
I am the weight on his shoulders
So many books in the bag
I am the sound of chalk on the board
And the screechy voice of the teacher
I am the hot leather bus-seats
Packed like sardines in a bright yellow can
I am the heat of the sun
Beating down on the sidewalk, on the child
I am the crinkling of paper
Homework balled up by mistake
I am the dust in the eye of a drowsy child
Who just wants to go to sleep

“A Sketch of Walt Whitman” (Another Hungry Soul)

The fisherman reels in his catch. Such a small, insignificant thing, not worth two bites, all bone, would go down hard, caught in the throat. He throws it back into the wide expanse of water, where it will be eaten within the hour anyways. He baits his hook and tosses it in once more and waits patiently for what he hopes to be his next meal. He strokes his beard gently and stares at the clouds that cover the sky, black, dark, gloomy, rolling like hills through the sky, ready for a storm. The fisherman readies himself for rain, zipping up his jacket and turning up his collar. Drips begin to fall, slowly at first, then soon heavily. Wet wet drops falling into eyes, soaking shoes and socks.

He feels a tug. A strong tug. He grins. His patience is beginning to pay off. He begins to reel in slowly, licking his lips in anticipation. The fish resists, the fisherman gives some slack, then pulls in more, like his father taught him as a boy. Reel, slack, reel, slack, reel, slack. Over, and over, pulling the fish inch by inch closer to the shore where a hungry mouth awaits fresh flesh. Thunder booms in the distance. The line strains. The fish feels big, strong, a survivor not ready to give in, not ready to lose this tug-of-life-and-death, as few are.

The fisherman gives on final pull, lifting his prize high out of the water. He catches a glimpse of the creature. A beautiful trout, somehow shining bright in the heavy rain, flying through the air above his head. With his pole and catch high in the air, the fisherman smiles for a moment. But only a moment. The instant his pole reaches the top of its long arc, a bolt of lightning strikes the earth, attracted to the long, metal rod hoisted high into the air. The fisherman and the trout are dead in an instant, flash fried by thousands of volts of electricity, of divine light, of cosmic intervention. They lie there, black and crisp, waiting to become food for the next hungry soul that wanders by.

Hunting

A victim is running tonight. He frantically trips over himself as he tries to get away, trying to find a way out of this place. But there is no escape from the hunting ground. Not tonight. He can hear it now. The sounds that make his blood dance through his heart, a mad tango of fear. The clangs and the creaks and the clicks and the hiss. The hiss of steam.

A bullet enters his ankle, splitting his foot from the rest of him. He cries out in agony, tears free-falling off his chin. He trips face first into the cold, unforgiving concrete.

“Perhaps you need to fall harder to free yourself,” echoes an all too human voice. “Perhaps you have forgotten to pray.” Calm and condescending, but still with a hint of concern, as if his hunter was worried that the prey may not be able to go on much longer. The clicks get closer. Light disappears from the corridor, replaced by a bleak, dark figure. The prey cannot not move. He just lies, but his heart still pounds in his chest as if he is an olympic runner on the last meter of his final sprint.

But the prey’s final sprint is already over.

Riedellian Seven Sentence Short Story (RSSSS [Possibly Cheating])

Robert and his friends were doing their bi-weekly karaoke and pizza night, because those two things go well together, singing and spewing cheese over their vintage karaoke machine, having a grand old time. Suddenly, Daniel, who was never really invited, but showed up anyway, knowing it would be rude to flat out say he had to leave, challenged Robert to a duel on their hardest song; Take On Me. After much consideration and a bucket of peer pressure, Robert accepted, and the two's eyes met, a gleam in each, one of mischief, and one of determination, as the song began. It started off easy enough, both hitting the lower notes of the beginning of the song, but as the chorus began, so did the strain as the notes got higher and higher and higher. Everyone watched in silent excitement as the two reared their heads back in an attempt to hit the last, highest note and Robert, good old Bob, with all of his might, reached a note higher than Aha, higher than the goddamned himalayas, the highest note known to man. Daniel fell to his knees in defeat, panting and sweating as everyone else lifted Robert high into the air with their greasy cheesy hands. In his moment of triumph, Robert turned to Daniel and said but one thing; "Looks like you couldn't take me on."

The Box

I found something today. Something that I do not believe is wholly of this earth. Do not call me mad, but it is a box. Yes, a box. Small, fits in your palm. It is green and purple in color, with some bits of yellow, decorated with strange, almost tribal depictions of eyes. On the front of it is one eye, and strange markings that I am not sure what are trying to convey.

But its appearance hardly matters, any moderately skilled craftsman could have made something like this. What really matters, and what makes me believe that it is unnatural, is that it moves. I have not seen it move, but it has. I leave it one place and when I return it is somewhere wholly different. It seems to favor the windowsill in the eastern room, where the sun shines through most of the day. One may attribute this to absent-mindedness, that I simply put it there and forgot, but I know myself and I know I did not. I swear it moves, and I swear it speaks, as well.

Ever since I found the damned thing I have been having terrible nightmares. They start on a dark road with only the moon's waning light to illuminate my way. At the other end of the road stands a shadowy figure. It just stands there, watching me. I can feel its eyes boring through me. Every night it seems to get closer, and as of yet I cannot make out any detail of the figure. I dread the day that it reaches me. And during the day I hear whispers when I am in the same room with the box. I hear them in the back of my mind, I turn to find the source, but the whispers are always behind me. I have a great sense of dread surrounding this thing. Still, it is rather pretty. Perhaps it is simply my aging mind getting the better of me.

It moved again. I know it for sure this time. The man is getting closer. The whispers are getting louder. I can make out features on the figure now, and what I've seen is horrendous and utterly terrifying. It is a nude, pale man, skin appearing as to have been thrown without a care onto a set of bones and muscle, and pulled tight and held together with clamps. Under the skin... Something crawls under the skin. I can see it moving under the pale flesh, thrashing as if it desires to escape the pale prison. The whispers are slowly becoming more like quiet screams on the edge of my psyche, slowly surrounding me. I can hear some of them say "trapped" and "free me" and "I watch". I awoke this morning with the box on my nightstand, staring at me. I could feel the eyes follow me as I ran into my washroom to vomit. Nightmare induced nausea, migraines, terrible burning behind my eyes. I cannot think straight. I must be rid of this wretched thing as soon as possible.

The figure in my dreams... it *touched* me. It *TOUCHED* me! It grabbed my face... God, it grabbed my face... Its flesh was cold and clammy... so loose yet so rough... and it was covered in eyes! Eyes covered nearly every inch of the pale man's body, and they were all focused on me... I could not move as it took my face in its palms... It just stared at me for the longest time... And then it used its long, slender fingers to begin to gouge out

my eyes... I awoke with a terrible pain in my face, and the box was there, sitting on my chest. The eye was set on me. I instantly jumped up and threw the infernal thing out of the room and locked the door... I am afraid to leave this room... The whispers are now screams... They're coming from under the door now... I feel so sick... I cannot fall asleep again... I fear what that... that monster will do to me if I meet it again....

The following is an excerpt from the Arkham Daily Paper:

Emergency teams responded to a house fire early this morning, which destroyed a home and damaged several others. Only one known fatality, the apparent resident of the house where the fire originated. The body was burned to an unidentifiable crisp. In the ashes of the home was found an undamaged wooden box. Reportedly, the box contained a pair of human eyes.

Harold

“Tell me it’s wrong.”

“What?”

“Because it has to be wrong.”

“I don’t know, it seems true...”

“It can’t be.”

“Seems it is. Look.” Harold held up his phone to show me that the rumour of my favourite performer and singer quitting showbiz was, in fact, confirmed in an interview a few days ago.

“Dammit.”

“He was getting old anyways.

“He has a good few years left in him. He did that huge concert just last year, his biggest ever.”

“And his last.”

“Dammit Harold I get it.”

“Sure, sure.” Harold looked back down at his phone as I focused on the road. My right headlight was going out, and the left was never that bright to begin with, so I usually don’t go out driving this late at night.

But I had to pick up Harold.

“Why the hell do you keep goin’ to that place, Harold? Every time you do you get piss drunk and make me pick you up. I know you hate the place.”

He was quiet for a moment.

“For her, huh?”

“I always see her mackin’ on her new guy every time I go to see her there, and I just can’t help but try to drown it out when I do.”

“How much did you have?”

“Just a few shots...” He slowly counted on his fingers. I sighed.

“At least you’re not drunk enough to think you can drive.” The car went silent then. All we could hear was the sound of the engine and the faint hum of some Elton John or Billy Joel on the radio. Neither of us turned it up.

“Why’s she do this to me, man...”

“She’s moved on, Harold. You should too.”

“I love her, man.”

“I know you do, Harold.” I pulled up in his driveway and put my car in park. “We’re here.”

“Thanks, Alex.”

“Yeah. Sleep well.” Harold walked drunkenly into his home. I waited in the driveway until I was sure he was asleep, then drove off to my own home.

That was the last time I saw Harold.

They say they found him a couple of days later in his house. Cause of death: Alcohol poisoning. Apparently he had a few bottles and cans in his house that he wanted to finish off.

Dammit, Harold.

The funeral was quick and empty. It’s funny, in the movies they always have funerals on gloomy days and there’s always lots of people to come see the dead be buried, but it was so nice out that day, almost perfect,

and I was one of the maybe seven people that showed up. I couldn't look at the casket. I was too distracted by the family having a picnic in the park across the street. Who the hell has picnics these days?

She was there. Alex. That girl that Harold drunk himself to death over. My name is Alexander, her name is Alexis. I think that's why I was probably the worst person to help Harold. I almost told her off. Almost went over there and yelled at the top of my lungs how dare she come to this funeral, how dare she try to honor his memory when she was the reason he was gone. But I knew it wasn't her fault. I knew Harold just couldn't cope. So I bit my tongue and stayed quiet through the eulogy. Harold would have wanted me to deliver my own, but I just couldn't.

Sorry, Harold.

I didn't cry at the funeral, I didn't cry when I got home, but I woke up with my pillow soaked and tears streaming down my face. I wiped my face off with my blanket and tried to go back to sleep, almost forgetting that I had work. I decided to not go in that day. I felt terrible using my dead friend as an excuse to get out of work, but I figured if I didn't use it then I couldn't use it later.

Thanks, Harold.

I slept till noon. Around 1:30, really, but close enough. I slept till I couldn't sleep anymore, so I got up and ate. Stale bread. Wasn't that bad lightly toasted with some butter. Pacing around my apartment didn't quite entertain me as much as I thought it would, so I decided to go and pace around town instead. It was another nice day. 77 degrees Fahrenheit, sunny, a couple of nice, fluffy white clouds that broke the monotony of the blue sky. I coughed. Maybe I was sick. Should have used that instead.

I stepped outside and just walked and walked, with no real destination in mind. I just put one foot in front of the other, focusing only on the few feet of concrete in front of me. I think I started to hum loudly. A Billy Joel, Elton John, maybe. I don't remember. It was nice and sunny, and I was humming to myself. I must've looked crazy.

Eventually I ended up in a park. I found a bench and sat on it. It was really hot, but I bared with it. I eased my back onto it and got used to the heat. I sat there a while, just staring off into empty space, and I suddenly realized where I was. I was across the street from the cemetery, staring right at Harold's grave.

Clever Harold.

I walked over slowly. I jaywalked, but I watched for cops. They're the only ones who care, and not very often. Suddenly, I felt very cold, despite standing in direct sunlight, looking down on the little stone plate on the ground. His family couldn't afford a proper headstone. "Here lies Harold Dudley. A good friend taken too soon." That's all that they could fit. I could feel my heart pounding in my chest. I took as deep a breath as I could. It wasn't quite as deep as I planned, or as deep as I needed. It stung, Ached is a better word. I just stared and stared, kept reading the engraving over and over again.

"Here lies Harold Dudley. A good friend taken too soon."

"Here lies Harold Dudley. A good friend..."

"Here lies Harold Dudley..."

"Here lies Harold..."

I miss you, Harold.

Lynesia Richards

A Summer On The Swings

The chains linked together swaying
A plastic smile attached beneath
Cheeks firmly pressed to the plastic
A wave of dust crashing on to my new shoes
With every sway of my foot
My body gliding back and forth
My hair whiplashing through the winds

Don't Kill Me

Don't kill me
Your flowers are gone
I ran over them
Don't kill me
The mailbox can no longer hold mail
Don't kill me
But while you're out shopping you might want to buy a new dog too

Beauty

Beautiful Girl
Your fragrance sweeter than a flower
Show your ivory white smile
And strip the sun from all its power

Hello, New Me

New year, new me?
I hope to be less depressive
I just want to be happier than I aim to be
New year, new me?
I'll wake up hoping my day will be more progressive
I'll stride showing off my smile that's been blanketed by my insecurities
That old year with old me
I hope to forget her
She was held on a tight leash with society's opinions guiding her
That old year with the old me
She didn't strive for better
She acted as if she didn't want to be free
Now I start off the New Year with a new me

MONET

M pink cotton ball shades in the sunset
O white feathered birds panning over the
N blue nautical ocean, home to many sea creatures including the,
E silver backed dolphins dancing on the waves, crashing on to
T cream sand that's holding all the heat from the afternoon sun.

Seashell

Seashell on the sea shore
Pretty coral on the ocean floor
My hand intertwined with yours

Beats Per Minute

60 bpm

I lie here thinking of what my my life could've become
Twiddling the sharp knife between my thumbs
I slowly blow my breath into the cold
I see it like smoke from the burning hell in my soul

80 bpm

I'm getting anxious I can't wait
I hope when I'm gone they'll realize it was all a mistake
I didn't mean to feel his warm blood running down my hands
I swear on my life this wasn't my intentional plan

100 bpm

I can feel the cold sweat trickling down my forehead
It pools together on the pillow I took from my bed
I think it'll be better if I can get the job done
So I decided to grab the glossy handheld gun

120 bpm

I load the last bullet
I can feel the tears rolling down my face
Tell the world I'm sorry and that I didn't mean to do it
I touch the ground once more leaving my trace
..... Then I pull it.....

0 bpm

Dear My Future Offspring

To the kids that shall continue my bloodline,
Don't screw it up.
Understand you can make mistakes,
Just don't revolve yourself around a big one.
I've been through so much to get you where you are now.
You mess it up and I will haunt you.
Please realize you have some pretty big shoes to fill,
Don't ever think you will never be able to succeed.

Sincerely,
Your favorite ancestor.

Daydream

I don't dream anymore;
I stopped when I was 13.
I believed dreams were just dreams,
They weren't meant to come through.
Then my insecurities killed my dreams of hope.
At 14, I told myself it was a part of growing up.
I no longer had conversations in my sleep.
I no longer howled when I dreamt of dogs.
I no longer dreamt of my future.
The hope that powered my dreams vanished.
The animated voice in head became monotone.
I am now 16 and realized that I was just scared,
Scared of my dreams never coming true.
So now, I only dream with my eyes open.

I Can't Wait

I can't wait to smell the sea salt in the air,
To pick away at each grain of sand imbedded in my hair,
To let the ocean warm my skin from the cold California air.
I can't wait to hear the native tongue of the townspeople
Spew out the fast pace dialect.
To let my tastebuds welcome with joy every crumb of local food.
I can't wait to feel the loving arms of joyful souls I left behind,
To bounce my feet in sequence with the bass of the riddim.
I can't wait to go back home to my people and have fun,
I call the my people because we're all one.

Taste

Teeth crunching on broken fingernails
Tasting the stress of yesterday

Observations

Shine through
Sun shines through the sunroof
Warming the seat of my car

No clouds insight
Just an ocean of blue above
The crow swimming across

Jealous faces glaring at me
Their smiles turned around
They watch as I wear my crown

Screams of the kettle pot
Tears from the soggy mop
Loud snoring from the vacuum

Sun Travelling

I'm travelling with the sun
I watch it as it bounces off the leaves
Then down to the ground as it mingles with swirls of dust
It takes occasional rests on the hairs of humans
It makes them glisten and glow like angels
I'm still there as it dances in a conga line at the river bank,
putting on a show
Then it takes me with it across the sky
And then I see it's about to die
But it tells me not to worry for tomorrow,
It will come back alive

Following in the Bird's Footsteps

I'm walking on the beach
Following in the bird's footsteps
Hearing the waves crash on the sand
Feeling the waves crash on my skin
A water so clear
Yet so blue
I've walked so far that I've lost my shoes
But I don't care
For nothing compares to how I feel when I'm here

In My Eyes

Soaring over blue
Faces looking at me looking at you
Blue foam kissing the white sand
That magical part where sea meets land
I've been dancing from island to island
My feet never worn or tired
The sun waking me up at the crack of dawn
I lay on the soft sand for comfort
Emerald palm trees and sapphire blue seas
Is the first and only thing I see

Home Is Where I Belong

I walk into the beach
I see the bright sun glaring at me
I taste the salty crystal clear shore
And the deep blue ocean
I hear the ripples as I bask alone
It just feels so good to be home
I want to go in, but i can't
My clothes restricting me
So I dip my hands and wiggle my feet
The tourists ask me questions as if I still lived here
Even they can tell I belong

Love Letter for Leafly

I love you, you're beyond beautiful
I love your fluorescent green color
I love the way your age spots doesn't define,
Or take away from your beauty
I love the fact that you were once apart of something bigger,
But you allowed me to be selfish and pluck you away
I love tracing your venation pattern trying to fill it with my love
I love the way you gave shelter to the critters that fed off of you
And still manage to keep your upright curve
I love the way the wind would sweep you up into a delightful dance

Duke the Dog

Duke the dog hates baths. Every time his human Timmy tries to give him a bath he runs away and hides. One day Timmy got a kiddie pool and filled it with soap and water to bathe Duke. Timmy wrestled Duke into the pool, and in the blink of an eye Duke flipped over the pool and left Timmy soaking wet. Timmy was furious, he yelled “ Bad things happen to stinky dogs who don’t bathe !”. Poor Duke felt so bad that he kept on hearing Timmy’s voice even while he was falling asleep. Then he wondered what did happen to stinky dogs who don’t bathe? If I don’t bathe, he dreamt, then my humans will get so disgusted with me and they will make me sleep outside. If I don’t bathe then none of my friends at the dog park will want to be my friend anymore. If I don’t bathe then Timmy won’t give me anymore treats because I’m not a good boy I’m a stinky boy. No more treats!?! Howling Duke awoke from his terrible nightmare. The next morning Timmy looked outside to see Duke sitting in the kiddie pool wagging his tail.

Under The Sea

The rainbow in the water
The life under sea
The things you can’t see
So beautiful yet so fragile
I’m glad I’m staying here for awhile

When...

When no one understands you
When your point is not valid
When everyone watch the image they create,
Except for the one you project
When you feel like you get blessed,
Just for the blessings to get overshadowed by evil

Making A Difference

It was my first day on the job. I was working at Jason & Meyer Law Firm, since it was my first day I didn't expect to be given a case just yet. Each floor of the firm has their own floor secretary that knows and does everything that needs to be done. Our floor secretary Jill, who looks 18 turning 30, and has a young face but a very mature stature came into my cubicle a few minutes after I sat down and handed me a thick folder full of papers.

"Seems like the big guys are really impressed by you, they gave you the biggest case this floor has had so far, I heard from Martha on 6th floor that if you rock this you might be getting an office. And no one has gotten an office this early before" Jill said.

"Me? Biggest case so far - what I don't understand, this can't be true this has to be a mistake" I said in that high pitched voice I get when I'm nervous.

Jill eyes narrowed and said, "The only mistake is the one that has been made by YOUR client that you have to defend."

Then she flipped her silky red hair and left me sitting there with my head way too far up my ass.

I was so scared so I decided to call my mom but all I got was a voicemail talking about how much fun she was having in the islands.

"Come on, you got this," I started preaching to myself. "Who passed the bar with flying colors that's right you did". After I was done giving myself a John Cena inspired pep talk I grabbed all my stuff and went to the library/cafe across the street. The name of my Client is Alex Ceja, he is 24 years old, no kids, Mexican American, lives in the small town outside of our city, worked on a construction site for 9 years until he got in a work related accident and was let go. He started to work on fig farm barely making enough to survive.

The sheriff's statement states that two men came into the house of an ex gang member, shot and killed the ex gang member, his wife, two kids, then went and stole 200k worth of merchandise from the family's safe, and scribbled the name of the rival gang around the lock of the safe with a red permanent marker.

Throughout the week I had several meetings with Alex and when I asked why he thought he was arrested for a crime he didn't commit he said:

"All my life I lived in that town. I watched people harass my family just because we're Mexican, and even though I am second generation born in America I was still teased and called an immigrant. The townspeople believed that all Mexican people are evil because a gang (The Mayans) has been terrorizing the town for 30 plus years. To be honest I still don't get it because the town also has their local gang which is even older than the Mayans are. Sometimes I wish that both gangs would integrate and become one massive notorious gang and leave ethnicity out of the picture." After hearing Alex's confession I knew I had to get him off.

It was the day of the trial and like most small towns the police were too dumb to notice the obvious. The writing on the safe's lock was written by a person who is left handed and due to Alex's work related injury it was not possible he could've written it. Also Alex had a small shipment of figs to deliver

to the town 3 hours away so he had a strong alibi. It was nice to see the angry faces of all the people who tried convict Alex fall when I lay out my evidence and gave my closing argument. The case was big that is made national news. So because of all of the publicity 5 years later Alex owns the biggest fig company in the state, the feds took over the town and there is no more old racist cops. Although they're still rival gangs the town is better and calmer than it's ever been before. By the way I got my office!

Sun Rays

The sun is shining through the clouds
And it dries up the sappy wet ground
The sun is shining all through the valley
And nature hardly even makes a sound

Perfectly Sane

The day of my birth black crows were dropping out
Of the sky like rain drops.
I came feet first and refused to cry.
From then on they labeled me crazy
But would a crazy fold their sheets into a pentagon
And sleep in the middle for safety?
Would a crazy person list Hell for their dream vacation?
Even after I tried to prove my sanity they
still labeled me insane
That's when I clung on to Hope.
Hoping she'll make me sane
I wrapped my fingers around her neck so hard
Until she was blue and lifeless,
But still, they labeled me insane.

Ode To Albert

Hey there, Sir,
With your eyes looking into me, not at me,
With each gray strand of hair flowing with wisdom,
Each wrinkle overlapping and distorting your childlike face.
I see you,
Resting your weary head onto your fragile hand.
Behind your beautiful exterior holds a mind that changed the world.
No one expected such a lonesome face to have such impact.
The world wouldn't be the same without you, if were never born.
In loving memory to one of the greatest minds to walk this earth,
In loving memory of Albert.

Clarissa Rieger

Transparency

she laughed like flowers swinging in the west coast wind
as I traced the constellations embroidered on her shoulders

her hands whispered colors of the ocean against mine
as her soft velvet kisses had me drown in waves of blue

a pale rosy flush tumbled across her freckled cheeks
as we held each other watching a blush rose colored rain

and her giggles felt like sunshine on a rainy April day
as I held her delicate full moon face in my clumsy hands

Possibility

maybe it was yesterday when his heart was like the moon
and the sky was resembling an endless ocean of wandering waves

or it could have been the day before when his head was in the clouds
and we played thumb war enclosed by the stars sitting on Saturn's rings

or it might have been a week ago when he laid his world at my feet
and had covered himself in a bouquet of my favourite wildflowers

that I began to realize our love would be beautiful, wild, and rugged
no matter where the wind would take our fragile feather bodies

Wishes

we watched the poppy sunset over distant hills
and gently sent our wishes amongst the swirling wind

Hopes

we heard the rolling waves crash against the towering cliffs
and sent our hopes amongst the messages laying on the seabed

Dreams

we felt the wildflower meadow beneath our tiptoeing feet
and lightly sent our dreams amongst the dancing dandelion seeds

Desires

we whispered burning prayers on a sunless summer night
and sent our desires amongst the descending shooting stars

Reality

we live on a microcosm surrounded by a system of billions of stars
and still place all our buried fantasies on a microscopic wishing tree

Yours Truly

I am the girl that smothers herself with flowers
I wonder if the sunset kissed your freckled cheeks
I hear the sun pouring from your rosebud lips
I see the wildflowers you grew in the meadow of my lungs
I want to feel your wild edges with my cashmere fingertips
I am the girl that smothers herself with flowers

I pretend to be the liquid sunshine falling from the sky
I feel your gentle words wrap around my daffodil heart
I touch the vulnerable dreams painted on your delicate skin
I worry about drowning in the ocean of your eyes
I cry for your heart for it had been drowning in the sea
I am the girl that smothers herself with flowers

I understand that I'm blinded by our freckled love
I say splash your poetry over my crumbled pages
I dream that I can see the stars during daytime with you
I try to kiss the cloudburst of your lotus flower back
I hope for our hearts to touch beneath billions of stars
I am the girl that smothers herself with flowers

Promises

I would never eat your fragile four leaf clover lips.
I would never wear your dreams on my sunflower skin.
I would never erase your scent of lavender and lemon.
I would never read a book about your melting sunset smile.
I would never go if it meant departing from your arms.
I would always think of you as a sweet and tender home.
And I promise I will never let your heart sink amongst the blooming lilies.

Reasons

I can't possibly write anything today...
because I saw a smashed flower on the sidewalk
because liquid sunshine is pouring from above
because I'm carrying the moon on my shoulders
because consequential thinking only happens in your arms
because I dreamt about a black void full of wilderness
because so much depends upon the running time
because I miss the feeling of earth beneath my feet
because the smell of you is lingering on my pillow
because I felt the trace of your hands along my lotus back
because the clouds surrounding my head won't let me

A Rumor

I'm still waiting for you like the moon waits for the stars
and I still wish for you to come and save my homesick heart

Seasons

In springtime, I see her delicate daffodil heart blossom.
In springtime, I hear red roses tumble off her pale lips.
In springtime, I feel her tender touches on my daisy skin.
In springtime, I taste little lilac petals on my tongue.
In springtime, I smell the soft scent of the morning's dewy grass.

In summertime, I see the coloured clouds wander.
In summertime, I hear wild waves as they dance.
In summertime, I feel the sweet sunshine frame my face.
In summertime, I taste the found freedom on my lips.
In summertime, I smell the soft scent of citrus in the air.

In autumntime, I see the longing leaves falling.
In autumntime, I hear your gentle guitar strumming.
In autumntime, I feel wind carefully caressing my heart.
In autumntime, I taste a sweet swirl of cinnamon in my apple pie.
In autumntime, I smell the soft scent of a chestnut oak.

In wintertime, I see the candle's flickering flame swirl.
In wintertime, I hear an owl's white wings swing.
In wintertime, I feel a single snowflake melting on my skin.
In wintertime, I taste caramelized chocolate soften in my mouth.
In wintertime, I smell the soft scent of vanilla sway around my house.

Evergreen

The two passed in the hallway. Their eyes met, atoms traveled and galaxies collapsed. She concealed her love, covering her daffodile heart. Chapped lips and daisy skin, too fragile for his touch. A flood of people pushed them away from each other, pulling their petals apart. She never got to know his mind was evergreen.

Cosmos

I'd give the sun, the moon and all the stars for one more day with you because I've got a mouthful of questions that you have the answers to

Smoke

I'd let you gently kiss my cashmere lips on a beautiful rainy summer's day because I want to be your lucky charm in times of desperate urban gray

Wasteland

my heart has overgrown with the memories of past lovers
but I simply can't make myself cut down the flowers they grew

Daydream

I wish your brain was a bedroom
and I could write poetry on your walls

I wish the world was a wondrous ocean
and I could be embraced by the rolling waves

I wish it was possible to sleep amongst the stars
and I could dance around the silhouette of the moon

I wish my wanderlust would be satisfied by a photograph
and I could remain in your gentle arms which are my home

Lies I've Told

I told you that I did not miss our midnight conversations
so you would wander beyond the city limits at night

I told her that the light wind could tug at the pale clouds
so she would lift her curly head and look for the stars

I told him that I wasn't drowning in his deep ocean eyes
so he would let me keep swimming in his beautiful sea

I told the world that the moon did not admire her beauty
so she would mingle her atoms with mine instead of his

I told myself that I was not worthy of your blooming love
so I would be able to let your yellow morning sun smile go

Mistakes

I miss the way your hair felt soft against my skin as you left your temporary marks I miss the way your ocean blue eyes stared at me when we told each other stories in the dark. I miss the way your hands felt after strumming the guitar, and I especially miss the way you loved me with everything you are.

Our Love

I could feel your breath all over me the moment it touched my dimpled cheek, as your gentle feather hands investigated the hills and landscapes of my body. I found shelter in your embrace the moment our lips touched beneath the stars, as you taught me how to breath again with your hands tangled in my curly hair.

Wanderer

I realize that the sky is an endless ocean of clouds and I am only a small organism wandering the mighty waves, as a raindrop hits my umbrella and leaves a trace of my favorite symphony.

Snowflake

You held me in your hand and I slowly melted away. Now I'm the one wondering how you could have thought that a snowflake would survive your burning heat of may.

Liliana Rodriguez

Her

She sat there keeping all to herself. Her eyes lingering for golden treasures. She was a pirate and she fell in love with the sea. But, with the sea containing no emotion, it tried to love her back. She ended in a shipwreck, white foam caressing her body. She had gone to the moon and with the stars all around her, she fell in love once again. The planets were her only true friends. But, now my dear, you have fallen in love with fire. He will keep you warm, but only for a while. And I hate to not have gotten the chance to see what you really hide in your pink shoe box and hate that you're painting a whole new image of yourself in everyone's head. And you are truly an artist. But art is art and those headlights will never shine as bright as your eyes. And a baby's smile will never be as beautiful and happy as yours. So let me know you, the real you, once again, and I will love you more than the sea, the stars, and the fire.

Scabs

Do you remember
when you were just a kid
and nothing mattered

When the world was a playground
and you would run around
and be happy, but then
you would trip and hurt yourself

You would have this memory
of what happened
and over time it turned into a scab
then because you were being ignorant again
you would pick at it
and it would start to bleed

It would hurt
not so much as the first time
and it would turn into a scar
and you'd learn to be more carefull

Well it's the same thing with love

Rain

When the poorest river is blessed with crystal drops,
strip down and let every inch of your body
be touched,
and let rain wash away the memories
by what earth has forbidden for so long.

A Starry Night

For them the whole universe lived and breathed
They made friends with the constellations
And hopped from planet to planet
They would skip rocks on the dark purple water
They played with the sun
But when one of them wasn't paying attention
It would fall, explode and make a beautiful accident

Years would pass, time would change their playground
They looked at all their immensely
Gorgeous creations and their fatal mistakes
Promise each other that in another life they will be more careful
Then slowly, each of them would turn into stars
And watch as their kids make the universe live and breath

Take Me Back

Sometimes I wish to go back
Back to when we used to dance barefoot on all the stars
To a song only we can hear
Back to when your sweet sorrow love was all I had
When I would be beautiful enough for you and
All my imperfections would fold into a paper airplane and fly away
When your mouth was full of eternity's like the galaxy's edge
And we had each other's love

Red Velvet Lips

Red velvet lips up against a Heineken
Making you wish you were the bottle

Her brown hair
Flowing over her shoulder like a ballet dancer

Her voice like the one of a beautiful siren
Luring you to your death

And before her lips even form a word
You will know you're gone

Breakfast

The flight was great and the weather was perfect.
Out of nowhere, a black hole appears in front of my plane.
I try to retreat, pull up, barrel-roll away,
But a force was pulling me towards it.
It was inevitable, I was going to die.
My plane, The Fruit Loop, was devoured by the hole.

Haiku

My heart was at peace
And so was my mind
Thanks to the pull of the trigger

*

On the highway
Going too fast
To admire the white flowers

*

Footprints on the sand
The white foam
Gently taking them to sea

*

She slammed the colors
On the wall
Painting me on the canvas

*

In her designer jeans
She has the face of disgust
As the man reaches in the trash for food

[Untitled]

She makes me think of an angel
With stardust in her hair and pieces of moon in her eyes
She is worthy of the sun and much more
The supernova of wonders claims her to this earth
She is art for everyone to admire
Every flower looking up to her beauty
Begging her to never abandon them

Mr. Einstein Portrait

You stare into the infinity of space
Your wise eyes staring at everything and nothing at all
But this is more than just a picture
It is knowledge
Silently being shared out into the world

Just Go

Every night I promise that in the morning you'll be forgotten
But you carved your initials in my heart
And I still dream of you
Your soft pink lips never felt more real
And its stupid how even in my dreams you leave me
Alone and cold
And the fucking vodka isn't warming me up like your hugs did
And without you I have no one to play with on the moon
So free me from this burden
And just go

Give Me a Chance

Tell me I'm stupid for feeling this way
But everything you do makes me love you a little more
Your stupid laugh and corny jokes
Tell me I'm stupid for missing your kisses
When I've never even felt them
And I probably never will
Because I know your heart doesn't belong to me
But when will you realize
That she doesn't appreciate you enough
And I sometimes think she even
Forgets that you exist
Just don't tell me I'm stupid when I tell you
That I could do it so much better
I'll show you what it's really like to be loved

Thoughts of a Weird Person

Don't you dare compare me to spaghetti!
Come and play the Nintendo with me.
You headbutted me! Twice!
Susan killed the moose.
I pulled a broccoli out of his nose.
Once upon a time he had hair.
She's a ball of butter.
I wear grapefruit for protection.
When I close my eyes I can't see anything.
Her nostrils are bigger than your future.
Duck, duck, moose!
Just kidding, it's dead.
I made yarn out of her hair.
Shut up, Beanpole!

Sneaky Snake

Dear George Shrekadalasfro III,

Yesterday was a really nice day. Sike! It was the worst day ever. I can not believe Trolacast threw the elephant down the hill. After she did that she woke up the king and told him his wife was dead. The king was so mad, he broke his bed and made his servant kill Trolacast. But turns out Trolacast was the king's wife and she was never dead! Long story short, Trolacast committed suicide. The king, Polaroidiso, was so sad, he ate all the flowers in his mother's garden and accidentally ate a snake. The medics said that the snake inside the king took over his body and is now controlling him. Now, we have a snake for a king. Since the king's wife was dead, the snake wanted a new wife. He had auditions for a new wife, but didn't like any of them. So, he sent out a witch to bring Trolacast back to life. But, it was a huge surprise, because, turns out, the snake always had a strong affection for Trolacast and this was his whole plan. Also the elephant survived.

Sincerely,
George Shrekadalafro II

Love Me The Way You Did Yesterday

I sit in here with tortured memories bubbling in my head
I knew this house wasn't big enough for the love you had for me
And every morning I pulled out my hair just thinking of ways to pay the
rent

Remember that night when you swirled the stars with such grace
And I looked at you and told you I loved you
And I wish I could've given you everything you deserve
Every night death put a cigarette in my mouth
And lit it with your love

I never noticed the flame starting to fade
It got smaller and smaller every night
And I knew you couldn't do it anymore
But as I sit here I think

Why couldn't you love me today the same way you did yesterday?

Taylor Silveira

For a Substitute Teacher that Mesmerized Me

it was the way his voice oozed
as if from walls
and slid as if of silk
it was the way it boomed
from his throat and reverberated
in your bones like earth quakes
and when he was angered his voice tumbled
over itself like a sequence of waves
roaring and gurgling
and taking residence of every being left and right
and north and south of him
his inconvenience quieted the reckless
silenced the spoken
there was a sound that emitted from his throat
like light from a beacon and it
swallowed the room
and swallowed your friends
and swallowed your world
he owned you as he spoke
and he did with your ears as he wanted
his words were wax over fingers
french roast foam down a cold throat
a warm hand on your quaking chest
and then they were monsters under your bed
whose whispers held the capacity of screams
and an angel with her hand on your mouth
whose touch was nothing short of deafening

Dreaming About Wolves

and then he came out of the water
a wolf with kind eyes and the
heart of a man
drinking the moon from the sky
he nuzzled my cheek
a growl that kissed my nose and
furr that collected my shivers he
was dripping tears
from a river I'd
cried earlier that night
he was painted with stars
I felt homesick
looking into his throat when a galaxy
twirled out of his howl and
kissed me deep and
soft, staining my tongue the color
of nebulae I felt the cosmos
sitting on my chest and knew I was more than human
but less than him

Where Sorrow Sleeps

I carry sadness on my eyelids
wrecked ships and
broken pens
there are broken hearts
beating softly in the
creases of my eyelids
watch rose petals
dye them red and blue
it's not blood it's art
there is wind sliding
off my eyelids
ink dripping off my eyelids
I feel lightning on my
eyelids
please kiss them
kiss my eyelids
watch them close

Little Thingies

time had fallen asleep
on her fingertips and she used it
to stop his world

*

just because you can't move on
doesn't mean
you get to break the universe

*

I woke up with a
poem in my mouth
stars in my eyes
black holes in my mind
eating all the gravity

*

counting curses on my fingertips
nails all stained with ash
please hold my hand

*

his feet are tools
used for leaving
hands that wrap around
a train that slips
away at midnight

*

instead of the words
I love you
out of his mouth fell a thunderstorm

Oh Fuck

tell me the truth
give me the truth
I scream it from
the mountain tops
and into clouds
I tell him
I cannot have him
if he is etched in lies
he said be fearless
balance beams and pinky
promises are all things
far too brave for me
he said kiss me like courage
I said tell me the truth
honesty is the best policy
even if it hurts
I said tell me the truth
empty eyes and
silent train rides
she is flipping quarters into streams
she is the truth leaking through his teeth
she is shining things and
priceless rings she has
feathers in her hair and
diamonds in her skin
her pores are filled
with cheap perfume
lilacs and cayenne
she is dangerous things
and aching things
she leaves mud across the floor
she is a tiny thing
pocket sized and tucked
beneath his tongue
I am quiet
and no longer made for dancing
splintered lips pricked at my fingertips
everything is still

More Little Thingies

he cannot kiss me
without swallowing me
spiraling inside him
so this is where the aftermath
of storms go

*

If roses had names
I'd give you the one
called December

*

she's a curiosity
her lips are where
the wild things go
they are the rests
in music
the haze in dreams

*

I am still
inside myself
too far away
from him

*

I am broke and
he is used
who says I have
to buy things new

Sunday Mornings

there is something religious
about the way he looks at me
I don't know when
my fingers touched the water
I don't know when I learned
his prayer
but I'm believing in the way
he breathes against my hair
speaking in tongues against
the sheets
I never knew that faith
could be this easy
spirits tangled in the
chapel
bells all dancing through
he doesn't curse in the
house of god and
I don't like the pews
stained glass window light
dripping from his mouth
blessings sprinkled through
I've never been a saint
but I'd love to go to church
on you

In Cafe Corners

alcoholic strangers in cafe corners
hair gray and pulled back tight
there are broken smiles in
his coffee cup and
secrets on the rims of his lips
he is quietly exploring
brooding and lyrical
rhythmic glances
hidden and hungry
licking music from
the tips of his fingers
he is halfway shadowed
and chipped at the corners
blazed and alphabetical
speaking from beneath
broken teeth
using only his outside voices

Green Eyes

colors were only reflections
of his eyes
emeralds born of irises
moss that grew from rocks
and vines that curled
around my fingers
when I am tugging on his hair
he is soft and filled with jade
well-lettered and book perfect
fingers dripping hazel liquor
nails all stained with fire
he licked the ash from my lips
now all I see is green

Earth Day Fantasies

he is touching the flowers
drinking the dew from the leaves
he is braiding the wind
stepping on those
spongy plants I've always
loved to lay on
he is holding my hand
climbing my trees
he is handing me petals
and licking my leaves
he is whispering mist
onto my calla lily lips
he is growing limbs
flowers in his fists
his fingers are reeds
his eyes are stealing
the salt from the sea
he is a green I have not touched
embodiment of nature
I fall like red things from
the trees in October
he is living in me

Reflections

she is troubled with the
chipping of nails and
the breath in her lungs
she is cracked on her sides
and tie-dyed black and blue
plum lips and silver coins
rivers running through her veins
she is made up of midnight wishes
and candle wax
melted ice cubes decorating
the corners of her eyes
she is only a fragment of herself
occupied with red ink
and crumbling petals
songs that hold hands between her ears
she is slow and cold to the touch
she is there dreaming mountains
but afraid of standing on top of hills
she is half-cracked
unsleeping and touched by fallen leaves
composed of secrets and birds
with black wings
testing the concept of flight

Katana Warren

To Wonder

Wonder is the lights hanging loosely,
 Off the bark of the leafless tree.
It is holding your warm hand against mine,
 Connecting our wrinkles, our lifelines.
It is the darked pavement stained with stars.

Wonder is the stone clinging to the dust.
 A million lives hidden beneath.
It is the mask super glued to faces,
 Faces of the uneasy.
It is the swirls of pumpkin on my tongue.

Wonder is when the world shades.
 Clouds of white and prius gray cover us.
It is the changes that hit me hard,
 Snowflakes of chills on my freckles.
It is the promise of cold in orange.

Wonder is catching the changes.
 Holding them in my eyelashes,
Watching them with typewriter eyes.

Break Up Blues

In a fit of anger his computer slammed into the floor. The break up had been harder on her than he had expected.

Suddenly, he ducked to avoid a cell phone that would've smacked his tender cheek.

“How could you break up with her, she was perfect!” She thundered.

“Things just didn't work out, Mom.”

A Life Without a Story

I preferred the way words came out to form a story, compared to the complexity of the language spoken. But right about now I have come to miss both. I searched everywhere when it happened. Now I live in the dust of an old library between fantasy and science fiction. The end of my life seems like yesterday but, in all reality it's been twelve years.

I had woken up to the noise of shouts. As I pushed away my plush pink sheets, the cold September air hit my arms. My feet landed on clean carpet and I moved toward my cracked door. The lights were still off but the sunrise shaded the windows. I trembled my way down the wooden steps of the staircase.

The house stayed still and quiet, aside from my footsteps. The living room was scattered, so many memories were smashed and broken on the floor. After seeing this, I rushed around the house to find nothing but the same. Everything was broken.

By now it had to be at least ten in the morning. The sun was brightening up the town of Westford, as if nothing had happened. I realized by noon that I should find food not just for me, but, for the animals. That's how it began.

At twenty-two, I sit in the halls of my forgotten library accompanied by the barking of a dog. Pete had found me wandering around town. Since then we've always been together, his tag kept his name for him to remember, but mine, hasn't been heard in years. About four years in I had decided to only refer to myself as a character in a book.

As I sat against the wooden shelf, deep in another time, a noise came from outside. Pete shifted, his white fur came off of the floor as he stood, revealing his sharp teeth with a growl. Slowly I clenched my fingers steadily around the edges of my book and crept towards the window. Through the dust covered glass, stood a man.

His hair stayed short, as if he was in the army. His pale skin contrasted against a navy blue jumpsuit. He carried a machine on his back as a backpack, which resembled a small vacuum cleaner. That's when I noticed, he was not alone.

He was unique but surrounded by copies. They moved with him to inspect the area. I crawled away from the window as I started to panic. Rushing toward the safety of the pages Pete guided me to the book. We had almost made it when dust puffed into the air and the door burst open.

With a smile Michael walked in. I grazed my hand on the dusty cover. "Sabrina, mother has been looking for you." He said, his expression irritated.

"I just wanted to get away do you remember what it was like to be children? You actually liked me then." I could feel my eyes filling with water but I didn't care.

"Times change. People change with them. We have to go before they decide to attack." He began to walk, Pete following him, but before I had the chance he turned.

"Oh and leave the book." I rose to my feet with a sigh. As I glanced back

into the library, the light trickling through the dust stained glass, my copy of Peter Pan still touched the floor. I left with a promise to return once my happy thoughts let me fly away.

Yellow Daisies and Letters

Daisy petals stain the air and land
On the frail skin of a hand.
A hand holding a pen smudging ink scribbles on a muddy dirt page.

Fingers trail the trace of lines,
backwards words and jumbles of time.
A silk golden petal sudley tip toes
Away.

Leaving the lesson imprinted as
Pollen in our minds.
Dead Girls Don't Write Letters.
And so,
I could never be dead.

Pages

The diary of a damned soul is unkept.
The pages age with time,
 The stale memories caress.

Life becomes more divine.
The trees seem brighter,
 Their leafs carved with mine.

The sun changes shapes.
Wrinkles slip through the lines,
 They trap my memory in this age and time.

The ink creases pages.
The slick cover hides my world,
 And it will be ages until it falls below.

Glass Eyes

Glass eyes watch our lives go on. Some are green. Some are blue. Some are brown. Or at least that is what I've heard. Fin says that it's much harder to lose your sight when you're older. Fin is the closest thing to a best friend I have. He arrived here on a Saturday afternoon in May, 1918. I had been seven and he had been eight, ever since then life there had been better.

Marie's Boarding School for the Blind had been my home for as long as I can remember. Truly it's only a big plot of land surrounded by a vast number of buildings covered in shrubbery. In the summer time flowers would bloom from the ivy. I imagined what it would look like if I could see it, to actually put a face to the name purple or green. None of the people here understand that. I feel stares at me, at all the students here. Teachers feel sorry and try to grasp in their minds what we see but really they don't know anything. That's one of my least favorite about not being normal. Normal children are told to trust that adults know how to take care of them. Here I may have people to help me but relying on them to be my eyes in the world frightens me.

The day that changed everything started in a little vineyard on the outskirts of a city called San Francisco. I was walking the dirt path away from the cluster of houses. I felt the grooves in the road that lead to our tree. My ears picked up Fin muttering to himself once again about an escape plan. None had worked they only resulted in chores. I grew closer and I could tell he shifted.

"You take too long. How are we ever going to escape if you are never in a rush." He laughed kiddingly.

"A lady is never to rush off. I am not late, you are merely early and as a gentleman should rise so I may sit down," I said in an all too proper voice.

We laughed for so long I could feel my cheeks ache. I sat down, my dress ruffling around me. For awhile we just laid there under that olive tree. I ran my hands through my hair as the wind began to blow.

"What does green look like?" I wondered out as the thought entered my head.

"I can not explain it, it's as though one thousand leaves of grass move together to form one bright color. A color so vibrant. I sometimes picture it. But in a way it's not green anymore at all."

I was going to answer but the bell rang. We both hurried to get up and run down the path. Fin had more trouble running back then I did. The path was carved into the feeling of my feet as if I was apart of it. We slowed as we reached the stone steps and piled in through the thick wooden doors. The sound of the locks clicking is one that will haunt my dreams far beyond my death.

Later that night I laid in my bunk surrounded by the sound of others in sleep. I turned in my white sheets. They always clung to my body

too tightly. The sound of the door creaked open and I could feel the light spilled onto the floor. My eyelids shut with a slam. Someone nudged my arm lightly and I heard Fin's sigh. We didn't dare speak from fear of being heard. He helped unwrap me from the sheets and we tiptoed along through the door. I followed him through halls and we occasionally hid in darkened doorways at the change of the air around us. It had seemed like hours then but we finally made it to the front door. He continued past it, I heard the feeling of cloth move with fingers. I knew it was the mural that cloaked a secret exit. Ironically enough the teachers had told us it was a man that was known as The Savior, and if we hoped enough he would bring back our sight. That night he was. It was the night of our escape.

I could hear Fin's breath as he struggled to run with me. I had kept ahold of his hand, being his eyes on the pathways to the gate. I reached my hand out until it found the metal bars of the gate. Together we climbed. Our feet touched free ground and the bell sang with the barks of dogs joining it. Fin's fingers intertwined with mine and we fumbled into uncharted territory. We moved with the dirt and rocks and grass until our feet bleed and we could no longer hear the dogs.

I reached out my hand to feel moss on a tree.

"I feel moss." I whispered. My voice was rough and horras out of fear.

"That's good we can find a river. It is my job to watch out for you know that we are in my known world." I could hear the grin in his voice.

"That was seven years ago. Maybe the world has changed."

We wandered through woods until we walked straight through a river, leaving behind our old lives. Thinking of this now makes me wish I could see him, before I say goodbye. The chair I sit in is cold and as I have lived, I will die. Only holding the memories and adventures in my mind.

The mad Lover,
Driven insane by the eternity,
Of shattered glass.

Sulking around her crumbling castle,
Her heart became stone and ivy.

Rose buds mix with the chill.
She sits and picks them away.
The wrinkles of her fingers reflect her loneliness.

Her sun-licked skin has slipped onto a stranger,
One she has not met,
One she can not know as her hair dulls to snow.

There is a biting feeling.
Is it better to love,
Then to never love at all.

Yellow Things

I have not loved yellow enough,
As the sting of the bee,
That hurts me.

I have not loved yellow enough,
As the tinge from my skin,
In the shadow of light.

I have not loved yellow enough,
As the change in my sight,
When the tree's leaves fly away.

I have not loved yellow enough,
As the word centered against the wall,
Of a first grade classroom.

I have not loved yellow enough,
Not in the way it has loved me.

Metaphors and Fortune Cookies

Beauty is the dusty book on the shelf,
Cast aside.

The body is a lamp shade,
Holding a light underneath.

Karma is a crayon of fate,
Leaving life in touch with color.

My poem is a fortune cookie.

The Past Generation

I remember the days when things were different
More simple

When the children rode around on feet powered wheels
Wheels rusted away by now

When the shattered glass screen was cloth
So big for our curious eyes

When the clash of running hit the pavement
Whispering promises of adventure

When the dresses were hidden behind
Now cut to pieces

These are the times we remember

Now left to ramble how the world has turned
Our grandchildren lost through blank eyes

Perhaps the next generation will see through the lies
Playing in the summer sun

Bringing back the memory of us
So we never disappear

Will be known as The Past Generation

A Fear Too Sweet

The leaves swirled around the creepy old house. The neighborhood children watched the front yard in horror. The creaky gate swung back and forth and there was an echo in the air. Crack.

“Oh no, my back!” cried the sweet old lady. Everyone ran past the gate to catch the falling cookies from her hands.

Freezing

The caress of harsh words freeze
the air and floor
Withered entangled veins meet the unkept nail
as they press the cresses
of the satin pocket
The soft wrinkles resting under old or new irises
are brightened with the red kiss
of mistletoe

Sounds of bells and stories of red noses swish
around the ramps of frostbitten ears
Only to come out the other end leaving memories stowed away
Along with the sight of green and red twinkling lights
imprinted on our eyes

All of this to touch our lips,
Speaking of the cold.

Family Ties

The shutters on the house sat frozen, the ice crept up the windows and everything was quiet. Behind the edges of the wooden door, the room was warm and full of color. The faces of three people shifted differently.

The father, a man who went by the name, Adam Martin, sat stiff against the cushion of his desk chair. Along with the rough paperwork of a heavy job, he also was stone cold thanks to a fight with his wife, Ana.

Ana Martin lounged against a ratty couch that hadn't shifted from the floor of their living room since 1995. She glared at the black plasma of their flat screen T.V., angrily pushing the buttons on the remote. The night before had been their 10 year anniversary, of which Adam had forgotten. Seeing as it was a fit punishment, Ana gave an enlightened smile and decided to lock him out.

The sounds surrounding the house that night were filled with cursing and yelps of slipping on icy steps. Finally when the door did open Adam found his wife with a smirk.

"Why would you lock me out, it's December for crying out loud. I could've froze to death!" Adam ranted in his angry tone.

"What's today?" Ana answered with a raised eyebrow.

With a look of confusion across his eyes her husband answered, "It's Tuesday, my hardest work day, you should know this, we've been together nine years."

Feeling no need to defend the fact that he deserved to shutter in the frosty December air she simply answered, "After today it was going to be 10 years together." With that she walked on the old wooden floor past the couch that held a pile of blankets and a pillow.

It was clear where Adam would be sleeping that night. As morning came by it was obvious that Adam would have to integrate sleeping on the couch into his lifestyle. He had no idea how he would explain why to his son.

Robert Martin was only about six and all his attention was paid to the details on his toys. As he sat on the wooden floor coloring with a green shaded marker, his eyes fluttered up and down. The night before he was awakened from his devious dreams about the apple pie that sat on the marble kitchen counter. He crawled out from beneath his Batman comforter and Spiderman sheets to wake his mother. After poking a single lump under the thick blanket that lived on his parents bed, he finally convinced his mother to let his father in.

By dinner time Robert was sure his parents would quit arguing as he forgot about his crayon and laid his head against the floor with the shut of his eyelids. He had eaten the pie and would be up all night long. But he would let his parents worry about that.

The Man on Market Lane

He hides behind the rotten wood panels and the old, blue peeled paint of the ancient house on Market Lane. It is said that you could hear him dragging his rusted, blood-stained knife against the wooden walls on the night of October 31st. Ready to still his shaking hands with the twitchy grin and wide eyes of satisfaction. The vampires, mummies, werewolves, and ghouls have no idea what monster they are facing when they say trick or treat. All found with horror filled faces and not much else.

Although it is worse for those who live. Their eyes flash open in the dead of night, letting loose a bloodcurdling scream, cutting the parents of Market Lane out of their delusional dreams. And as they are hauled away, still tossing and turning uncontrollably, he watches from between his dark curtains with a smirk. A house has opened up on Market Lane. Move there if you are brave. This is just a story or at least that's what the real estate agents say.

The Fight of Your Life

Mud stuck to his face. He had barely come out of the fight alive. He stepped up brick steps with one sock. The door opened.

“Tommy, what happened to you?” his mother asked.

“Mommy, Jake took my teddy. I told him it was mine but....” he whined.

“Where is your jacket?”

Silence touched his lips.

Stone Eyes

The movement of my words walks through your ears
As bouldering rocks sitting on the grass
Watching the winding road.

They see the dreams of nuns move their feet against
The pavement, ready to drop the
Cheap frame of glasses toward the earth.

They see faces grow entangled in hairs,
Mumbling the words of peace and protest through
The creases of their mouths.

They see the destruction of the splintered trees,
The destruction of a nation,
Until the swipe of an axe is stopped by the voice of a rock.

A simple stone
Can change so much.

Michael Riedell

Poets in the Schools

for Mary Norbert Körte

Light so artificial it's hard
to believe the human
eye can see to write on
the next blank page,
the first ink hitting it
with a big bang and
a new universe is
revealed.

Old souls,
we sometimes say
of this kind of young
mind refusing to be
caught in the same standard
traps so well set for them.

The worlds they right,
word by word, have a gravity
that pulls together
thoughts and hyenas,
headlights and plum-faced
girls who are learning
more than the fixed lessons.

Poem by poem they give
birth to themselves.

Guitar Man

He played guitar like he could string sunset
into a bright gift for an ageless child, each touch
a brush with a heaven of sound, as if the ground
beneath him were holy and holding him
expressly for this: to announce with his soft song
another world here within this one, a bliss
to be found, with his voice and choice
of each sweet note, here on this lit corner
of this street, on this warm night in this city
where to be born means to be graced and
every passing face has a smile and a grateful
bill to toss into his open case, but he
would never play for the money, never
sell his art, his soul, for any part of any
quick dream. When he began each evening
he swore himself to the stars, to the streetlights,
to the bricks, to the bums, to the sun and moon
and all the gods that ever were and from them drew
all the favor any minstrel ever knew.

Teddy Bears

At some point those plastic eyes know
they have nothing to look forward to--

the child who spoke to them of Christmas dreams
has been sacrificed to create

a teenager, though she, as if to fool a mother
into believing that young child still lives, still keeps

all her teddy bears seated among the pillows of her bed,
and when she and her boyfriend

toss them to the floor
in the excitement of an empty house afternoon,

somewhere in their stuffing brains
they are relieved to have landed with their plastic noses

pressed to the old innocence
of a light pink wall.

Notes for Recitation

i

Some will say start easy,
Your breath a whisper, breezy
As a Sunday. Others like Beethoven
Begin with a BangBangBang Bang!
However you do, do be
Invested totally.

ii

From flute to tuba
The voice is an orchestra:
Learn the instruments you possess
The woodwinds, strings, the brass.
Give each its time, its proper do,
But remember:
The conductor is you.

iii

You do not need a metronome—
In fact, to be locked
in tick-tock time is deadly.
When the rush and swell of energy
Crescendos, note the still
Slow pace that should follow
Like a wish that's been fulfilled.

iv

How you end is crucial,
The culmination, the final fall:
Do you
 set them
 gently
 down
or smash them to the ground.

Linoleum

If I could be installed
like a linoleum floor, measured
by square foot and fit together
with like pieces, I'd hope
those pieces joined with me
not neatly, sealed with silicone
until nearly seamless, but loosely,
recklessly, haphazardly,
lazily enough to show
it never much mattered,
that any toe scraped
was better for the slight blood,
the thin red streak
nearly unnoticeable
in the corner where this and that,
me and you, meet roughly,
approximately,
and if upon our backs
boots walk straight from the fields
and trail their mud upon us,
do not expect anger:
Linoleum knows its limitations,
that the earth beneath us
will rise again, that our shine
and polish are a momentary joy,
that the real lemon fresh scent
must come from lemon trees
come from soil, rich soil
to which we all
shall return.

Biographies

Abigail Au:

Abigail is an Asian goddess whose legs turn numb whenever you say her name in a high-pitched tone. She laughs too hard and snorts often. She is dressed in long hippy skirts and good vibes. She often breaks out into sweet moves, including, the Napoleon Dynamite dance and an ancient korean form of martial art. She speaks Chinese and it surprises everyone. She enjoys star gazing and trampoline jumping, and when she visits rivers, she first picks out the prettiest rocks, then asks the river for permission to take them. She is majestic and smiling, kindhearted and tattooed with poetry. When she writes, she lassos the moon, the sea, and the stars, and pulls them all together on her pen. She uses adjectives like alcohol and plays the ukulele like hypnosis. With summer in her pores, she is the embodiment of July. She is the epitome of granny sweaters and morning dew, K thank you.

--Taylor Silveira

Person #1--my grandma says i have a third eye

Person #2--your grandma's a fucking liar

Ana Ayala is 17 years old, her current obsessions include Ryan Reynolds and cats that sing. She likes watermelon and fresh horchata. Her hobbies consists of reading romantic novels, feeding her pet fish, watching romantic comedies, and theater. Her favorites phrases include: "I don't want to be here," "Don't touch me," and "Get out of my face." Lastly, Ana is mentally married to Bruno Mars.

Josh: I am a kitten typing on a keyboard, I am 6 months old, and my fur is orange with spots of white. I wrote the story about the dank memes because my dad, grumpy cat forced me too. I live in a small house, getting fed food by this giant living being, I think it's name is hooman, but I don't know. Since I have been born, grumpy cat has been taking care of me, and making sure that I get lots of food and water, and that I get a bath, because he says that I stink, and I roll in other kittens poo too much. I meow cute meows, and get views on YouTube.

Olivia Bjerk probably hates everyone. We don't actually know. She always has the same face on so it's really hard to tell. She isn't sure what she is going to type next and is pulling this biography out of her ass. But hey, at least she's being honest about it. That's worth it ain't it? She is old. We don't know how old but we know she is old. Olivia also likes writing about herself in the third person and probably wrote her biography.

Miranda Borges is a passionate girl. She cares far too much about others and often doesn't know when to start caring for herself instead. She loves to read, write and has a great love for poetry. She believes that through poetry she can express anything on her mind. She laughs far too much at nothing in particular and loves beyond limitations. She's never been comfortable talking in front of a lot of people, not even a classroom, but she has found that through her poetry and people that share the same interests, it's a little easier.

My name is **Seth**, I am a periwinkle. I have one bit of wisdom for anyone poor being who reads this book. "If you ain't first. You're last!"- The Great Ricky Bobby

Bailey Caudillo: Just a guy who wishes he was a Giant.

Kylee Caudle: Do you ever just wish to fall asleep and never wake up because you dread what consequences that one action will bring you? Because I know I do! Everyday I get closer and closer to death and I can't do anything to stop it because I am just a lowly human child with no outstanding talents. But you know what helps me feel better throughout the crushing undeniability of having to suffer through life with all of its unpredictabilities, horrors, and insufferable demons? This: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynlk9K1psFg>. This makes my day all the more bearable; and I hope it brings joy to yours.

Dylan DeGuzman: An extraterrestrial being seeking refuge from his currently imploding planet where terrorism and war pose threat to every nation known on its surface, where the vegetation is diminishing, where self extermination is ideal. At a new low cost of free you can Help-A-Human, Right now! Only a couple years too late, call now and you can get your very own How Not To Human manual. Only in this special offer you can get a holographic recording of Human Nature guaranteed to blow your mind.

Side effects may occur: joint pain, nausea, headache, shortness of breath, minor blindness, complete loss of eyesight, disorientation and in severe cases death. Please keep away from all ages under and above 60.

Warning: batteries not included.

Analidia Fernandez: Preferably called Ana, since most everyone pronounces her full name wrong. She indulges in many activities such as: writing poetry/stories, drawing and painting, listening to a wide variety of music, potting succulents (though she killed one by only watering it once and never again), reading books - most of which are Stephen King novels or the entire Harry Potter series (again), laying out in the middle of the road at 4 A.M., sitting outside when it's raining, playing video games for 12 hours, and watching extensive episodes of Grey's Anatomy, Friends, Dexter, and Skins (UK). Her talents include messing everything up, procrastinating until the very last second, falling for people she shouldn't, spending all her money in the bookstore, drooling over Tom Hiddleston all day, writing poetry only to think it is completely shitty while reading it later, and stressing herself out. She likes to think she's cool, but everyone knows that she is, in fact, a huge nerd.

Gene Larry Fillmore:

What is he? A man, a monster, poet or storyteller? To himself he remains an elusive being who has yet to be caught and tamed. For if this beast was tamed he would lose all of his being in lands where sanity and insanity don't exist. Because his thought would be not of others and fun but of what is wrong in the World and why people kill. Whereas his natural beauty of the mind is strong, fast and forever moving. So let it be known that he is just ... A Fun Guy.

Bridget Fitzpatrick is a freshman at Ukiah High School. She loves to read short stories and poems but she had never taken the time to write any herself. Therefore, Bridget chose Creative Writing as her elective this year.

She never regretted her decision.

Alycia Ford: She is THE ULTIMATE grunge pixie, as rebellious as a hippie can get. She is a tiger bitch, majestic, protecting, alluring, unafraid. She has hands to hold onto and a perfectly symmetrical face. Dolphins, goats, and Shakira are all things captured in a tiny box in her throat. She will always break out into song and spontaneous lap dances so don't expect it to change. She is a cauldron of smiles and spices, eyeliner, perfection, and every other lovely thing there ever was. She will write you into a daze and pet you whenever you ask nicely. There is magic hanging from her septum piercing and she will use her tiny hands to transfix you, so that no matter how many Alycia's you meet, she will ALWAYS be the best of them all. She is the definition of hardcore. ;)

--Abigail and Taylor

Geneve Goltz doesn't really feel like writing a bio. So, just pretend she wrote something interesting here.....
.....
.....
.....

Leila Hernandez is a fifteen year old girl who loves turtles and writing poetry. Her favorite color is blue and her hobbies consist of writing poetry, hanging out with her friends, drawing, and reading. Her favorite season is summer because she loves to swim and go to the ocean. She has always wanted to learn how to surf. She hopes she will sometime in the near future go to Chico State University and become a nurse.

Vanessa Ilar: Don't bother reading her 10 pages, it will only make her low self esteem even worse. The passage was made by a dear friend of Vanessa's and she cannot exclude all the hard work and kindness Miranda put into it. (She is a lovely girl, though sometimes she has bad days because nobody is perfect. She believes she is nothing extraordinary but she ignites fireworks and forest fires in her peers. She has the ability

to make the most simple things sound like the most beautiful sunsets. She writes poetry in her sleep and sleeps in her poetry; she is lovely. She is sparkling champagne and chili peppers, sweet and refreshing but fiery and can pack a punch, but in a good way. She makes people laugh all the time just because she is in their presence. She is passionate and loving, who wouldn't want to know her? Maybe you won't read her ten pages, but just know that she is a unique human being and she's pretty cute too.)

Dax LeBlanc So I was asked to write a biography about myself. My first thought was “Ohh s**t what do I write?” This is what I came up with to answer that question, I can't guarantee the quality of this piece, but I'll try to make it both entertaining and mostly true. So here goes nothing, this is the mostly true recounting of a me. I'm like a million years old, give or take a couple, and I like pizza. Like a lot. Life's boring normalcy, nothing exciting going on. Greatest life achievement: finishing an entire pizza by myself, with no help just a little soda.

Autumn Citrine Long: I have been asked to write a biography about myself, to describe who I am, who I aspire to be, what I've been through... but I'm not quite sure how I could ever confine my being into a simple paragraph. I could try to cram everything I am into words but I doubt it would ever be good. I am a human, and to be able to suffice the satisfaction of explaining myself is beyond impossible. I am not ready to say who I am, ask me again on my death bed. I have not lived enough yet, I have witnessed death and lost myself a dozen times but I argue I have not lived enough. Who am I? What do I want? I do not know. If it were that simple, everything would be full of clarity, and the reality of life is that everything is blurred between the lines. The sun rises, and the sun sets, as humans we complicate the process. Complicated is who I am; it's beautiful and insane all at once. I am a human: that is who I am and who I hope to always be.

Bella: Born and raised in Ukiah, California. Your average “basic” Californian girl. Vegan, does yoga in the morning, drinks lemon water and green tea all day long, likes long walks on the beach, and dreams of going to Coachella. Starbucks is a necessity for the soul. Instagram @bella24_00 for pictures of flowers, the sunset, basic selfies, and me pretending to look away but it's obvious that I'm not. On my way to slide in yo man's dm's.

Joseph Munguia: I'm a guy named Joe nothing more nothing less. Just remarkably boring. “He goes by Joe instead of Joseph. It fits him better because it's a little less formal. He is an incredibly interesting young man with amazing hair and a great smile. He is sweet and cares for others, and looks great in red. He makes people laugh when all they want to do is cry. He is crazy and goofy but there's no fun in being normal so why not be himself? :)”

--*Miranda Borges*

“Sonny” Jose Remijio Pacheco III:

“Who is “Sonny” or Jose? And do I care?” you are probably asking.

Hey, don’t walk away while I’m speaking! Sit back down, and put away those MLG airhorns. I have a serious story to tell. If you are very sensitive, then be warned: this room is flooded with onions.

Once upon a time when I was 14, I used to live with my mother, little brother (10), and grandparents in Clearlake. I didn’t live with my father, because of the constant clashes between my mother and him when I was younger (1 yr-ish). When they separated, my dad believed that it would be better and safer if I lived with my mom. Boy was he wrong, my mother suffered from depression, and was abused by her parents.

One morning I woke up to discover that she was unconscious in the living room. When she was rushed to the hospital, we discovered that she was in a coma. While she was in the hospital, my grandparents and my dad began arguing over custody of me. When none of them agreed, me and my brother were sent to a temporary foster home in Kelseyville. With nothing but the clothes on our backs, we kept close and became inseparable. We were the basic family that we had at the moment. Once we spent about a week at the home, we were sent to another. This time this foster home was in Lakeport.

The foster parents there were nice. They took us to the bowling alley (now closed), events, and even a Kings Game. But when we came back from that game, we had a visit from our grandparents. They came to tell us that our mother died in the hospital. This initially sent me into depression. Not only did I know that I could never see her again, but I knew that she would never attend my upcoming birthday at the time. All I did from that day on was sit in my room doing nothing. Before we left this foster home, they had set up a surprise party for me. I have to admit, I almost cried a little.

The time at the next foster home was really crappy. I don’t even want to talk about it, NEXT! After that home we moved to another, this time it was with my aunt on my father’s side. That time was fun, at least I got to know my family a little more. Moved again, this time with my grandmother, and finally I got to live with my dad in Ukiah. The best part is that he even got to adopt my brother. This was because he had a different father and wasn’t accepted by him.

At this time I started my freshman-Senior year. It was peaceful, I did not have as much stress as I did long ago, and my depression was better. I even got to know all of my family members, all 9001 of them! Just kidding, there aren’t that many of them. I think....

The best part about this was that I made a long journey to get here, and learned a lot. I am grateful I have a large family, some friends, and good teachers. I would like to thank:

“Ray” Jose Remijio Pacheco II, Natalie Bowmer, Jonathan Pacheco, Arvada Pacheco, Isidro Chavez, Imani Rich, Andrew Anderson, Ms. Warda, Ms. Mastrian, Mr. Riedell, Mr. Krasts, Edwin Kang, Melanie,

and you!

Stay fresh, now get out of here! Go outside, and take a breath of fresh lemon scented air.

Jazmin Ramirez is too cool for school.

Imani Redwing, “The I-Man”, Rich is not a writer at heart. He enjoys creation, but often finds words difficult to work with as effectively as he wishes. The pencil is much more his style, but he tries his best with words. He thinks himself clever at titles, but stories, especially the middles, are difficult. He lives for moments, not for the time in between. Still, he hopes that you enjoy what he has to offer. Statistically, someone has to.

Lynesia Richards:

Lynesia (lin-EE-sha) who prefers to go by Lyn is 16 years old and is a junior at Ukiah High. Lynesia was born in Atlanta, Georgia and moved to St.Croix, U.S.V.I when she was a few months old. Growing up Lynesia moved around a lot, she went back and forth from Atlanta and St.Croix. Lynesia and her family moved to California August 2013 from St.Croix. Growing up Lynesia used to be very quiet and was considered a “teacher’s pet” until she broke out of her shell in 7th grade. When Lynesia grows up she wants to be a criminal defense lawyer and all though many people doubt that she’s going to make Lynesia is very determined.

Clarissa Rieger is a girl who wants to live with her head in the clouds.

Wait, who? **Liliana Rodriguez?** I have no idea who that is. Oh wait, is it that one girl who threatens to lick people? Yeah, I actually do know her. I heard she reads and writes for fun. She can be goofy sometimes, I guess. I also heard she wants to have 10 cats and live by the ocean when she grows up. Yeah, she’s weird. But she’d like to be your friend.

Taylor Silveira:

She’s afraid to raise her hand in class. She has the eyes and tongue of a serpent, venomous and beautiful all at the same time. She shivers like a hyena and when she says your name in a high pitched voice it paralyzes your legs. She has strange thumbs that look like little hills and her laugh sounds like church bells and sad daisies. She is a swan with stage fright and she spellbinds anyone that looks between the strands of her hair, she is a witch. She holds more perfection in her split ends than the stars and the planets combined. When she’s excited she falls to the floor and the weight of her burdens and sadness cracks the earth. She will poke you when she loves you, she digs into your heart and searches for the things you had in yourself you didn’t even think existed, just for you. With the voice of a thousand sirens, she is music.

--Abigail Au

Katana Warren is an adorable blonde.

Michael Riedell is a teacher, poet, songwriter, playwright, husband, son, grandson, brother, uncle, and friend. He has lived in San Diego County, Eugene, Oregon, Humboldt County, Petersburg, Alaska, Costa Rica, and Mendocino County. He's worked as a dishwasher, busboy, pizza deliverer, knife factory worker, silk screener at a skate company, sales display manufacturer, wedding caterer, flower deliverer, UPS truck loader, crab killer, dock worker, language institute instructor, juvenile hall teaching assistant, English teacher and creative writing teacher. He really excelled at the knife factory. He wants to be an ancient Chinese poet-hermit when he grows up.

