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The Lesson of the Palm

By: Jake Jarvis

A coconut falls from the palm,
but not until it's ripe,
not until its shell is hard,
and death hath gripped its vine.

A coconut falls from the palm,
to travel across a sea so vast,
an ocean so salty and bitter,
to land far from its past.

A coconut falls from the palm,
because remaining idle will cause it rot,
because remaining idle will cause it death,
and then all its life's for naught.

A coconut falls from the palm,
to seek prosperity and growth,
to spread its leaves and roots,
and in the sunlight soak.

A coconut falls from the palm,
to spawn more of its kind,
in hopes that they will also fall,
from the palm it leaves behind.

I ask no more of thee,
than of this humble tree,
that you will heed its lessons,
and from your vine be freed.
Where the Dead Birds Fly

By: Jay and Jerry Hu

One evening, as I ventured through a fog
I met a lonely old bird perched on a log
I’ve always wondered
where elder birds wander
when their springs become too many
and they feel fulfilled and ready?

From the trees come the songs of birds
and in the skies I see them soar
Yet, a dead bird I have seen
not in song nor in flight
Surely birds die –
where must they fly?

So I inquired:
Where will you go
when you’ve grown weak and weary?
Will you glide high, high and higher
until you're a tiny spot in the big blue sky
and higher still, until poof
you're gone forever and ever
into those clouds, fluffy and white?
What will you find
when you go, oh so high?

All the old bird did was smile:
You’re quite the curious kitty
Though truth be told
I may fly everywhere, nowhere,
and anywhere in between

Oh why did he speak no sense?
I’ll cry if it’s me who’s dense
No, it’s his years – he’s senior you see
Maybe he’s simply too keen for me

I longed to know, so I asked my friend:
Where will you go,
when you’ve grown weak and weary,
and your days pass bleak and bleary?

Beyond the clouds, fluffy and white,
above our dreams, where nights stay bright,
is there a heaven, a splendid Nest
where the elder bird seeks to rest?

But all the wise old bird did was smile:
You're a pensive little kitty
It may or may not be what you think
When you’ve grown old, then–

–Suddenly, Mama leapt out from behind
the darkness
and gobbled up that poor old bird in one
great gulp.

I wish Mama hadn't swallowed him
‘cause now I won’t know for certain
where the dead birds fly.
**Magic Wand**

By: Saba Aziz

If only I had a magic wand, I’d say bibbity-bobbity-boo.
And the world would be a better place.
And with a flick and a swish, your dreams would come true.

I’d have to fight Cinderella and get all up in the Godmothers grill too
Then I’d use the wand to have their memories erased.
And If only I had a magic wand, I’d say bibbity-bobbity-boo.

Rest assured, I’d use the wand for only good things too.
The world would be decorated with pearls and lace.
And with a flick and a swish, your dreams would come true.

No animal or person would ever feel blue
Everyone would smile and lovingly embrace.
And if only I had a magic wand, I’d say bibbity-bobbity-boo.

Everyone would trade in guns for hippie tattoos
And go out of their way to puts smiles on their faces.
And with a flick and a swish, your dreams would come true.

I can only imagine how the new world would make its debut
Its bright, youthful colors, and light shining from every space.
If only I had a magic wand, I’d say bibbity-bobbity-boo.
And with a flick and a swish, your dreams would come true.

**Little Bo Peep**

By: Saba Aziz

Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Is not as innocent as you think she is.
Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Has murdered quite a few men.
Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Has a temper like one you’ve never seen.

Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Has been referred to psychiatric help.
Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Coincidentally has DNA that matches the grudge.
Little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Is certainly not who you think she is.
And little bo peep, who lost her sheep,
Won’t ever, ever find them.
**Young Love**

By: Stephanie Chen

She was young and in the sixth grade
When she fell for her brother’s friend at school
It wasn’t even a fair trade.
How she became a love-sick fool.

Could he but look to like her more
More than that of a little sister
Isn’t that what a heart was for?
Won’t you share your heart, mister?

All throughout high school she was under his spell.
Tender feelings she harbored hidden inside
Would make the sky cry, seeing how hard she fell.
Her young heart leaped and dived like the ocean tide.

To think that her lovesickness would never resolve
Troubled her mind, so she rarely slept.
Her feelings for him would never dissolve
Was what she learned to finally accept.

Five more years passed without any contact.
They both grew up and became mature.
The feelings she had remained intact,
Even while she became an entrepreneur.

He called to meet with her one day.
She agreed in an instant
And almost forgot what to say.
Since he was usually so distant.

When they went for a swim
Her soul was shocked to see
For she had outgrown him
He was a foot shorter than she.

**Wonder**

By: Stephanie Chen

Kids wonder why their parents don’t listen.
Why their small opinions don’t matter.
  Why they can’t be right,
  Because they have to be wrong.

Parents wonder why their kids rebel.
Why their kids drink, smoke, and yell.
Why they skip school, break the rules
And end up breaking their hearts.

Philosophers wonder about the human condition.
Why we are here and what do we fear?
  Why we suffer.
  Scuffle, spit, and stumble.
  Why even bother?
  Why should we try?
  If we are all condemned to die.

I wonder too.
I wonder why?
Why happiness is only sporadic.
Why I have to hurt so much.
Why do I hurt you so much?
Why do you hurt me so much?
If Only
By: Mahima Chojar

Oh, why did you have to leave this world?
You were the shining light of my days
You were as sweet as apple pie
Your love hugged me every second of the day
If only you could have given me the ring before you parted
Oh, sweet love come back to me
My heart aches like a sore shoulder
Now I sit alone while the wind slaps me in the face

Goo
By: Bre Dunsworth

There once was a strange little boy
Who had found the most perfect toy
His nose he loved to pick
And give it a little lick
This always filled him with so much joy

The little boy could not stop the picking
He just could not stop himself from licking
He picked every day and night
He picked with all of his might
But then one day he discovered flicking

He would flick the goo to the left and right
Aiming for the perfect target with all his might
Towards babies, girls and guys
Even towards innocent flies
Once he even managed to hit a flying kite

But one day he had gone way too far
He tried to flick the goo at a moving car
But the window was down
And the guy wore a frown
He ran towards the boy with a swinging crowbar

He chased him up and down and all around
Till he managed to get the boy on the ground
He wanted to care

So he swung in the air
He determined to turn his world upside down

Suddenly, he took his crowbar and gave it a spin
Across his face grew a gigantic, silly grin
He looked like a goof
As he said “Poof!”
When his crowbar changed to a wand in a whim

He swung his wand with a cackle and a swish
The boy ducked and asked for one last wish
The man said “No, you must go.”
And he turned the boy into a wet flopping fish

This may seem mean and very much unfair
As he twisted and turned and jumped for air
His gills were dry
And he started to cry
His clothes lay next to him that he used to wear

The magic man said, “Now don’t you see?
You should have never flicked boogers at me.”
The boy knew this
Since he was a fish
“It won’t happen again, please let me be free”

The man laughed an evil sort of noise
He cackled “I hate nose picking little boys”
In his mind he knew
Just what he would do
The little boy would be another one of his toys

So now you know what will happen to you
If you pick and flick some of that sticky goo
If you don’t believe
Just wait and see
You will be turned into a flopping fish, too
Where Have You Gone?
By: Kheelan Gopal

Where have you gone?
Has someone taken you away?
Come back please!

Usually you are always here
I was looking for you all day
Where have you gone?

I looked all around for you here and there
Please come back today
Come back please!

Is that you I hear?
I yelled out a yay!
Where have you gone?

Just as I let out a cheer
It was only to my dismay
Come back please!

Even if you found a way to disappear
I will wait for you every day
Where have you gone?

Come back please!

Too Late
By: Kheelan Gopal

Had this not been a shock
It would have been better news
Now it put all of us in a deadlock
Between the slow chews

Of the food that we were eating
When we found out
That he was just leading
Us on, while we were full of doubt

That we would never accept this
Not in a million years
But he would be missed
By everyone near

But he made the choice
To go his own way
And thought that we would rejoice
With him but not today

Delectable Dessert
By: Libby Herman

Sweet to eat,
Treat that’s neat.
The cool soft texture
Refreshes the taste buds,
On a hot summer's day
While kids play.
Chocolate, vanilla, strawberry,
Flavors galore ensure that
This special treat
Will never be
A bore.
Gone Away
By: Kayla Gray

They all have gone away
I do not know what to do
There is no reason to stay

Without making this cliché
But I must tell myself it is true
They all have gone away

Now my whole world is gray,
but somehow I see blue.
There is no reason to stay

So I’ll just sit and pray.
For this is all brand new.
They all have gone away

and I am not longer gay
I wish I could just undo
There is no reason to stay

I suppose I shall obey.
I bid you all adieu
They all have gone away
There is no reason to stay

Why Is Life Such a Mess?
By: Peter Ho

Is it okay to run?
To run from your fears
To run from your dreams
To run from the stress
To run from the mess

Is it alright to fear?
To fear your future
To fear the past
To fear the present
To fear life

Is it alright to dream?
To dream for your happiness
To dream for your nights
To dream about a nightmare
To dream within a dream

Is it alright to stress
To stress about your work
To stress about your relationships
To stress about your family
To stress about your school

But why is life such a mess?
Is it because you have to run
Is it because you have to fear
Is it because you have to dream
Is it because you have to stress
Or is it because you like the mess.

Mom
By: Joe Hobbs

Mom
Beautiful, Nice
Loving, Laughing, Joking
Trustful, Funny
Friend
The Willow Knows

By: Jake Jarvis

The storm is approaching,
the wind wildly whipping
the willow stands alone,
its branches slowly dipping.

Its leaves shake timidly,
though its countenance stays true,
its roots grounded firmly,
as the skies grow gray from blue.

Butterflies and bumblebees flee the scene of
the pouring rain,
but the willow proudly stands its ground,
humbly shaking,
and bears the strain.

This day the willow still stiffly stands,
taller now than years before,
many storms have since then passed,
but the willow stands strong,
true to the core.

For the willow knows,
it understands,
the storms are difficult and trying.

The willow grows,
it comprehends,
that when the sky begins crying,

The winds, the chaos, must be burdened,
and it must stand the whole storm through,
and when the sun does shine again,
and the skies once more are blue,

That life's sweet nectar is left behind,
in the aftermath of the storm,
that it can gather the spoils of war,
and grow, and grow some more.

For the willow knows,
it understands,
that the storm will soon be over.
And once that time has come and passed,
it can grow and face another.

Poetry Is...

By: Jake Jarvis

The light coming on in a dark room.
The flame that burns soft and forever, or
flashes suddenly.
The map to tears, smiles, and laughs.
Life in so many words.
Death in twice as many.
The road that so many people glance down,
yet never travel.
An escape from a tiny chamber, and an
opening into a wide open field.
An explosion, or a gradual release.
Art experienced in more ways than one.
A sixth sense.
A mirror to the writer's soul.
Black and white.
Colorful.
A link from one person to another, or one
person to their own heart.
Lifting a veil.
The power button.
A story that isn't read, but understood.
An early ray of sunshine lighting up fresh
drops of dew on an unmowed lawn.
A revelation.
The last of what is beautiful.
3rd Grade

By: Lisa Kim

You and I first met
When we were only ten
You made my hands sweat
Over and over again

You came near by
And asked me for my name
But I was too shy
And looked away in shame

Another day came around
And you said hey
But I just looked down
And wanted to run away

Finally I mustered up
Every ounce of courage I had
To see your face close up
But I became sad

I thought I was brave
Brave enough to say hi to you
But all I could do was a little wave
And tap the ground with my shoe

Then one day I was for sure
That I would go that extra mile
Go out of my way to where you were
I knew it would be worth the while

I accidentally dropped my books
And you appeared out of nowhere
You surely got me hooked
Our eyes were locked into a stare

Little Asian Girl

By: Lisa Kim

The same Asian girl at the library
Pulled out a colorful set of pens
They were arranged in the rainbow pattern
And looked very fancy, classy, and sleek
She quietly removed the cap off one
And began to write with such ease
I just wanted them to be mine

Time Machine

By: Lisa Kim

Help me to go back in time please
I regret not having too much fun
I wish my heart could for once be at ease

I miss walking freely through the breeze
I forget what it’s like to go on a run
Help me to go back in time please

I remember when I used to climb trees
And enjoyed playing in the sun
I wish my heart could for once be at ease

I remember rollerblading and scraping my knees
Looking around, hoping there was no one
I wish my heart could for once be at ease

I miss sitting and nibbling on string cheese
Doing nothing but sitting on my bun
Help me to go back in time please
I wish my heart could for once be at ease
I Hate You

By: Brett Lancaster

My day is going awfully great
Until I see the things I hate
They swoop
They screech
They have large talons
They eat enough worms to fill a gallon
As I walked peacefully down the lane
A bird flies down
I go insane
With sharp yellow beaks
And vibrant feathers
There always out
No matter the weather
I jump
I scream
I sweat a lot
If it was up to me
They’d all get shot
A rat with wings
That’s what they are
I think it’s funny
When they hit my car
Birds! Birds! I hate you so much!
You make me want to cry and such

Light

By: Maryanne (Jiyoon) Lee

Your love gives me delight
If my heart locks, you are the key
You ignite my darkness with a light

The day always stays bright
If you are the sun, I am a thriving tree.
Your love gives me delight

When I am wrong, you steer me right
I am able to see things clearly.
You ignite my darkness with a light

You give me strength and might.
With you here, I feel so lucky
Your love gives me delight

You are a beautiful and exotic sight.
I don’t know if I could live without thee
You ignite the darkness with a light

No matter how long, I will always be
In love for miles with your beauty.
Your love gives me delight
You ignite the darkness with a light

Fear

By: Maryanne (Jiyoon) Lee

Chills crawl up and down my spine
My stomach twists and churns into knots.
My heart races, my breaths so rapid.
My body cringes upon the thought.
My eyes widen as tears stream down.
Terror is written all over my face.
Fear. To run away or to confront.

First Semester

By: Kunhee Lee

It is getting cold
It is only November
School is almost over
Time flies like an airplane
First year of college,
I’ll miss those good times
“Like”

Susan (Soo Yeon) Lee

You and I were best friends
Talking everyday online
Hanging out till the night ends
Joking around all the time

But something was wrong
Cause you thought of me
as a girl, not a friend, all along
and I didn’t know you liked me

I don’t think like that of you
I just want a friendship
But I don’t want to be awkward with you
If I tell you that we can’t be in a relationship

I am in front of two different ways
And I am confused like I am in a maze

The Turkey

By: Susan Ma

How fast did that turkey run!
Our Pa was behind with his gun.
We heard the shot from the house.
It even awoke the mouse.
I can’t wait to eat that with a bun!

Haiku

Sara Matthews

Thanksgiving is here
It’s the best time of the year
Turkey and desserts

Thnksxgving Txt??

By: Nick Potter, Corrie Opolka, Jocelyn Marnati, and Davin Minor

Thanksgiving is almost here.
Turkey time is rly near.
Sum ppl like to shoot at deer.
Others want to drink a beer.
Eating is alotta fun.
Pass that buttered bun!
It’ll be 😊 when it’s all dun
Bak 2 STLCOP we all come.
Cuz fnls are round the bend
Stdyng will becum a trend.
Surviving skwl and learning 2 fend.
Uhh, y won’t this txt send?

Forced Relationship

By: Robyn Lowe

Though I did not plan on it,
I should have seen it coming.
I think about you all day and night,
When I eat and when I sleep.
For I cannot abstain myself
From worrying about you.
I resent your grasp on me.
I’m disgusted by your complexity.
I hate your every being,
But I cannot get away from you.
For you are my life.
You are my everything.
Organic Chemistry.
The Cool Kid

By: Marquitta Martin

I hate when my friends do this
Make fun of the quiet kid in the class
His face is drowned in embarrassment
And he watches the clock as seconds pass

Sure he’s skinny and kind of weird
And yeah, he has that funny walk
But they’re being mean for no reason
It annoys me to even hear them talk

Just shut up already
And stop throwing paper balls
The kid looks like he wants to run and hide
Just disappear and blend in with the walls

Talking, laughing, pointing
I feel sorry for the little guy
If they were making fun of me like that
I would probably ball up and cry

I stand up and walk over to the kid
“Kacey gonna hurt his feelings” I hear them say
But instead I smile and touch the kid’s shoulder
Give him a fat kiss on the cheek and walk away

The room is quiet, everyone is in awe
I had to teach them that they aren’t so cool
Oh, I forgot to mention that I’m Ms. Popular
So the nerd just got a kiss from the hottest girl
in the school

ON MY MIND

By: Marquitta Martin

WHAT’S ON MY MIND?
THE SAME AS YESTERDAY AND THE DAY BEFORE
HIS EYES, HIS VOICE, HIS TOUCH
WE’RE NOT EVEN TOGHETHER ANYMORE

I wonder if he knows how I feel
I didn’t mean the things I said that day
How I wish for his make-up kiss
How could his feelings for me just go away?

Does he think about me half as much?
Ok, new subject, lets see what’s on tv
There’s never anything good to watch
Why doesn’t he call or come to see me?

He was so good, so bad, so perfect
Messing with other dudes just prove me right
Why can’t he like me the way they do?
Why can’t he dream about me tonight?

I wish I had the courage to ask
Do you still like me, do you still care?
But as I lay here falling asleep
I think about him, and it isn’t fair!
Winter

By: Patrick Metel

The snow is almost here
With cold days and long nights
Time to make snowballs and snowmen
And to whiz down the mountains
On either snowboards or skis
But remember to have fun
Because you can’t do this all year

Glamorous

By: Josie Millard

Glamorous and chic
The Celebrity smiles
Goodness, what beauty!

Crystal, Crystal had a Little Lamb

By: Crystal Naes

Crystal, Crystal has too much homework, too much homework, too much homework
Crystal has too much homework and it is time consuming.
Every minute that Crystal has, Crystal has
Every minute that Crystal has is sure to be consumed by her homework.
She was given more homework at school, homework at school, homework at school
She was given more homework at school but didn’t finish studying for her practicum.
It made Crystal’s parents very mad, very mad, very mad
It made Crystal’s parents very mad that she did not study for her practicum.

Fall Txt Poems

By: Jamie Hundsdorfer

It’s time 4 break
And thanksgiving ham
I’ll hang w/ friends
And w/ the fam

Wait I frgot
Whn I come back
I have exams & bio tests

No time for fun
Cnt fix my looks
I’ll hav 2 hang out w/ my books

Rich & creamy a decadent delight
A pumpkin spice Latte I must have every night
When leaves start to turn & chill is in the air
I need some warmth to bare

By: Michelle Albert

By: Olivia Johnson

The wnd blws
As if a tornado
Lifting leaves frm the grnd
Swaying trees sde 2 sde
A Song

By: Suong Nguyen

My words were never heard
As more than absurd
And so I battle my strife
Here alone in the rain
Since in the melody of life
Love’s my lost refrain
And so I sing this song
Please follow along
When I lose it all
Catch me when I fall
Whisper in my ear
Be my only sunshine here
In the labyrinth of my heart
Where it is so very dark
In this silent world
Where a fog unfurled
Hear this song I sing
A silver bell of hope will ring
Under a cloth of black
Its muffled cries are heard
I give you my word
You will gain what you lack
You said such things to me
But I knew it could never be
If only reality was like dreams
Where nightmares happen
But you can forever wake
Released from a grasp
A land that is fake
And so I sing the chorus
It echoes through the forest
The night-creatures stir
It all becomes a blur
So it was a dream all along
I guess it will always remain
Just an unheard song

Reach

By: Suong Nguyen

Unfurl your wings.
Waft all doubt and dread away.

Drop all weight.
Reach towards the sky, the stars.

Grasp a fragment of hope
that resides in the infinite sky.

Stretch your arms.
Take hold of what awaits.

No worries.
No obstacles.
Just reach.

A Day full of Surprises

By: Kinjal Patel

I worked hard all summer to buy a car,
But then my parents gave me a brand new
Car as a birthday gift.  I couldn’t believe
What I saw and I felt on top of the world
And I didn’t even need wings to help me fly.
I took it on a drive and got into a big accident
with 3 other cars,
But it’s okay because I only got a little scratch
on the bumper.
I got my car fixed and when I got it back
It looked like a brand new BMW.

A Dream

By: Kinjal Patel

I want to go to Rome
And see the famous dome.
My bags are all packed,
My parents think I am on crack
And want me to come back home.
You Mean the Whole World to Me

By: Khushbu Patel

you mean the whole world to me
without you I don’t know where I would be
you are like a beautiful dream
very hard to believe
but I know your love is true
you are the one true thing
I know I can believe in
it all started as a joke
but as time went by
didn’t realize what happened
your sweet and caring words
touched my heart
you play a big role in my life
who knows what’s going to happen tomorrow
you might be mine
or you might not be
we should just leave it to destiny
one thing is for sure,
I’m not giving up on you
I’ll hold you as long as I can
now I’m keeping my hopes
unlike before
I learned to be a strong girl
and to fight for what is mine
even if we don’t end up together
remember I will always love you no matter what

I Am a Person

By: Khushbu Patel

I am a person who loved you the most
I am a person who cared for you when no one else did
I am a person who can do anything for you
I am a person who can take you on a long ride
I am a person who took you out for dinner
All I want to say is that I am a person who loves you like no other

Sports

By: Sujal Patel

Sports motivate us,
to compete.
We do it because,
We love the sport.

We are a team,
of courage and heart.
Every member,
holds a critical part.

Winning rather than losing,
is much more sweet.
Life without sports,
would not be as great.

You Know?

By: Smit Patel

Whachu know about that?
Plays after plays after plays
Herrrrr dat
Winning, that’s that shit I do like
There’s nothing you can do about that
Respect
There’s nothing you know about that
Whachu know about...
Bare Chest
By: Vruti Patel

As I lay upon his bare chest,
I realize its mine.
Mine to lay on,
sleep on,
dream on.
Mine to kiss,
touch,
and wrap my arms around.
Oh how much I love his bare chest.
I know when I am down,
I have his chest waiting for me,
for me to lay on or against,
while he holds me,
with the comfort of every rise from his
breath.
Oh how much I love his bare chest.

The Only Guy
By: Vruti Patel

You are the only guy
my heart beats for.
You are the only guy
my eyes want to see.
You are the only guy
my ears desire to hear.
You are the only guy
my lips want to kiss.
You are the only guy
my hands want to hold.

The Fall
By: Samantha Pinkley

She was FALLING
FALLING
FALLING
FALLing so fast the world was a blur
The trees were a green smear against the
blue sky
FALling
FAlling
Falling
falling
Thud..

A Cat’s Howl
By: Nancy Quan

Meow Meow
The Cat kept on howling
Every single problem
It goes meow meow
The Cat kept on howling
Little problem, big problem,
It kept on howling.
Facebook
By: Sabeena Rahman
Can you live one
day without it?
Many people can’t.
It has become part of
our everyday routine.
It keeps us connected,
We won’t be able to let it go.

Annoy ing Dogs Of Xenon
By: Amanda Recchione
Never even saw it coming
Mindsets on a different page
Speak to me
Slow and calm
Tell me you will never leave

The days go by and nights grow long
Restless and dreamless
Empty internal hearts
In sync with the ticking clock

Silence is the only word you speak
Nothing is all you hear
Anxiety is the emotion you give
Content is what you feel

Carry this with you
As you slowly fade away
Abandon what you started
And finish what has ended

What is it that you want?
The satisfaction of a Paradox

Snowflakes
By: Thomas Riedl
Small and tiny
From the sky they fall
Individual bits of joy
Collecting on the ground
Bringing happiness
And fun all around

When waking up and looking around
Children do not see them as tiny
But as mounds of happiness
They build up the mounds only to fall
Where they land on the ground
Covered in joy

During these days of joy
Children spend their days hanging around
Making angels on the ground
Many of them end up being tiny
And without their wings they would fall
The saviors are just little signs of happiness

Eventually there will be an end to happiness
And an end to the joy
As they cease to fall
Then there is no more goofing around
As children who were big again become tiny
And are brought back to the ground

The children are stuck on the ground
Gone is there happiness
Which again has become tiny
But there is still joy
If they just look around
Their happiness will no longer fall

But sadness returns again in the fall
As they drop to the ground
But everything will soon come around
When they look to the sky for happiness
There will suddenly be joy
With the return of something tiny

When there is no more ground there will be joy
The happiness will stay around
As something tiny begins to fall
Therapeutics

By: Kayla Schmeltzer

Your job is to answer the riddles of Apollo’s messenger -

“This exam is worth the world.
Even if you study, you could be doomed.
The bad news is, even if you fail, you will live.”

Hunting Season

By: Kayla Schmeltzer

A buff bearded boy
Stand hunting into the dawn
Spots a royal bull

Silence the sunrise
A bang through the wood forest
Darn apple knocker

Missed and scared it, eh
Head to deer camp for da beer
Maybe pasties too

Hunger Games

By: RJ Shaw

It is time for the Hunger Games
One through twelve offer boys and girls
Boys and girls fight to the death
Murder runs through the veins of tribute
For victory is the goal of all
Only one tribute will be crowned victor
May the odds be ever in your…

Disney Princess

By: RJ Shaw

Where does happily ever after exist?
Adults say nowhere, but the children disagree.
Look all the Disney movies produced today.
They show happily ever after, but

Do they truly love one another?
Is selling your voice to be with a man love
or following
Sleeping Beauty’s idea, get woken up by a kiss.
Not to mention Belle is into bestiality.
Each princess strives hard to be with the man they love
Yet what happens when the curtain closes?
Dog’s Friend, the Butterfly

By: Amanda Syers

Getting a quick drink of water
Looking for something fun
While the water is very cold
I decide to take a quick run

Running through the quiet forest
I look down and see
A little butterfly is flying around
And wants to play with me

Spinning around feeling so free
Wagging my tail in joy
Everything moving so perfectly
Who needs a new toy

My new friend consumes the air
Like he is in control
No one will ever cease his beauty
Since he is on a roll

Then suddenly out of the blue
I didn’t see it coming
Why did the world have to say
Just continue running

The butterfly drops on the floor so peacefully
I don’t see him, where did he go
Running around no one cares to help me
I bark out a loud “no”

No one seems to notice or hear me
I just want to run and die
Sadness fills my little broken heart
Until I see my butterfly

No, I already have one of those
But it’s fast and makes plenty of noise
But I want more toys!

A new superhero action figure?
No, I already have one of those
He can fly and glow in the dark
I want something to read at the park!

A book about big beluga whales?
No, I already have one of those
The baby belugas are very white
I want something to put me to bed at night!

A new stuffed teddy bear?
No, I already have one of those
My teddy sleeps next to me in bed
I want something for my head!

A new hat to wear in the sun?
No, I already have one of those
But it is blue and very fun
I want something that helps me run!

A new pair of running shoes?
No, I already have those
But, they light up and are white
I want something I can bite!

A sandwich for lunch?
No, I already had one of those
But, it tasted very great!
I want something to use when I’m eight

A new backpack to take to school?
No, I already have one of those
But, it is black and very big
I want something to use when I dig

A new shovel to play in the sand?
No, I already have one of those
But, I really love playing outside
I want something that can hide

Then I turn around and see
A dog is waiting to play with me
This dog will be my best friend
I hope this moment doesn’t end

The New Dog

By: Amanda Syers

Hip Hip Hooray its Sunday
Today is going to be a big day
Mom is giving me a surprise
What could it be?

A new red fire truck?
**Housewife**

By: Susan To

There is no one who likes to *mop, cook, clean, or bake*  
For someone whom they really hate  
They want to throw *pots and pans*, maybe even *shoes*  
But if you do that then you will certainly lose  
For in this game you must have patience and wait  
Get enough *sleep, go shopping, buy some dresses*  
Forget putting on the *hat* and throwing the *knife* at him  
Keep doing your duties with your *apron* on and use some soap  
*Wash* and sweep with your broom  
He will definitely die before you do  
So just wait.

**I Want You**

By: Susan To

I want you when I’m sad  
I want you when I’m mad  
I want you when I’m stressed  
I want you when I’m depressed  

You were always there for me  
Helping me through my ups and downs  
Never have you failed me  
My one and only, Chocolate.

**Movie Night**

By: Susan To

In order to have a successful movie night  
You will need a funny DVD  
To laugh at with your friends  
A bowl of popcorn with extra butter  
For everyone to grab  
A few two liter bottles of soda  
So they won’t get thirsty  
Some chocolate covered raisins  
For the sweet tooth  
A few bags of chips  
In case the popcorn runs out  
A big fluffy bean bag  
Big enough for two  
And finally a big basement  
That can fit everyone comfortably  
For a night full of fun.

**My One and Only**

By: Malory Toebben

It is all in your mighty hands  
My life, my dreams, and my future  
I have trust and faith in you  
Lead the way, show me the path  
Give me the courage to do right  
I promise to follow day and night  
You are the one I live for.
STLCOP Weekend

By: Malory Toebben

The weekend is here
Time for everyone to cheer
Time to hang out
Time to scream and shout
Time to lay back and relax
Time to forget about paper stacks
Time to sleep till noon
Time to stay up and just stare at the moon
Now all this would be true
If I didn’t go to pharmacy school in the Lou

Let Me…

By Thuy Tran

Your hands are so cold.
Let me warm them up for you.
Your face is so stiff.
Let me soften them up for you.
Your lips are so frosty.
Let me melt them up for you.
Your eyes are so dark.
Let me brighten them up for you.

And your heart…
No longer does it beat.

I’m sorry I left you in the snow.
I’m sorry I left you in the cold.
I’m sorry for not being next to you.
I’m sorry for ever leaving you.

I hug you one more time…
And now I’m just like you.
Together…in the snow.

Christmas Txt Poems:

By: Sarah Samuel

Jingle bells ring
Late at night
Kids are waiting
For Santa’s flight
They hear a sleigh
Coming near
Down he comes
With presents and cheer
Anxious they are
For Christmas

By: Nick Selby

The x-mas tree shined
Undr the tree prsnts sit
Hard not 2 open

By: Justin Patterson

Winter
The best time of year
It’s time to be happy and love
It’s the time to share and be happy
Everyone is happy to be caring and outgoing
If only these feelings lasted more than a year
The world would be a better place for everyone
Holiday season is the only time
For others to be happy and caring
Enjoy the time while it’s here
Once it’s over it’s back to normal
Big Changes

By: Jessie Um

Leaving Cali was a big decision
Especially going back as a freshman
Thinking if I can get through this new life
Is like playing with a brand new kite
Don’t know what to expect
Looking from a different aspect

Coming to Saint Louis was alright
Actually, it wasn’t a pretty sight
I thought this adjustment was gonna be easy
But it took me awhile to become steady

This was the first time my family and I were apart
There was a strange feeling deep inside my heart
This was what people call homesick
But not to a point to go to a clinic
I told myself I’m going to try by best
And try to pass all my tests

Worrying if I was going to fit in
Possibly to find someone like a twin
Slowly adapting to the environment
I started to form relationships with other students
Seeing them every day out and in of class
I starting to see them as families as days pass

I knew right away I started a new journey
With a lot of my brand new buddies
It’s going to be a long 6 years
But definitely worth it for our careers

Troubled But Don’t Freight

By: Jessie Um

When I thought everything was going well
Things started to rock and didn’t look swell
I honestly thought we were going to be all tight
But now, I want to runaway and go on a flight
Getting to know each other more
And it wasn’t the same like it was before
All I could do is just wait each and every day
Sitting my room trying to figure out a way

Along this tough and unexpected journey
They were there to hear me out like a true buddy
Thick and thin
I knew I had my kin
Always trying to make me smile
Even though it took quite awhile
Everything happened so fast
But I’m going to put that in the past
I just have to keep on going
Covering all of my hurting
Because this is all part of life
And I have to keep on with my strife

Jessie Um

Without light,
W/out me, u can’t illuminate
W/out me, u can’t c in the dark
W/out me, u r lonely & cold
W/out me, u r in shadow
W/out me, u r
Hopeless
Light
Bulb
Ballad of Momo

By: Haseeb Wajid

I walked into West County
Trying to spend some gift cards
I bought a couple of pants
I even thought about going to Dillards

Then a crowd of people
Were crowded around something
I kept on walking
It was probably just another fling

When I saw the label Pocket Pets
It began to catch my attention
“Come see our sugar gliders”
“What’s that you mention”

A little ball of fur
That was extremely cute
It had big enormous eyes
And liked to eat fruit

The man put him on my fist
And told me to raise it
I held my hand up
And he jumped into the man’s pocket

I knew right then
That I had to get one
It would cost a lot of money
But it would be a lot of fun

I went home and did my research
There was so much to learn
The study part was done
Now there was money to earn

I got my old job back
Anything that pays
Saving up the money

And working many days
Finally I got an email
That pocket pets were back in town
I had enough money
My frown turned upside down

I went with a friend
We chose one together
A small male sugar glider
Who was as soft as a feather

The first month was the hardest
I had to get him to trust me
Intimidating was his plan
That part I could see

I held him everyday
With affection and love
He saw me as his parent
He saw what he was a part of

Once we finally bonded
I taught him a couple of tricks
He does them all perfectly
It’s also a great way to meet chicks

Now we’ll live together
For the next fifteen years
I’m glad I bought Momo
My heart is where he is near
At the end of Chapter 9 in Emily Bronte’s Wuthering Heights, the protagonist Heathcliff flees Wuthering Heights, poor, alone and hopeless. He believes that the one person on earth that he loves has rejected him. He has no friends, no money, no prospects. Three years later, he returns to Wuthering Heights with polished manners and exterior, lots of money and lots of confidence in himself. How could this be accomplished in three short years (two in one movie version)? Following are four possible answers: Four versions of chapter 9 ½ of Wuthering Heights.

“The Story of Brishen
By: Jace C. Biggs

“It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now.” That single quote will plague my thoughts forever. Those words, like daggers in Julius Caesar’s back, had almost killed my soul. I, Heathcliff, the man who gave her all the love she would ever need, was now nothing more to her than degradation. I cannot believe I have given my affections to that insolent slut for so long.

How long had I been riding? One half of an hour? An hour? More? There was no way of telling. I could only measure time by the beats of my horse’s hooves on the muddy ground and the number of times I had to wipe my eyes free of rainwater and tears. Every time my eyelids drew to a close, they would stay shut longer; every time they would open, they were greeted by a stinging sensation. The galloping nearly put me to sleep; I knew I needed to find somewhere to rest my eyes, and quickly. In the distance, I spotted a tree. It was no bed at the Heights, but I assumed it would surely block some of the rain, so that I would be capable of drifting into what I expected to be a dreamless sleep. I slid off my jacket as I tied Gitana to the tree, for I knew I would need a pillow. As my eyes drew to a close, the last thing I saw was the least welcome image my heart could bear; Cathy’s mischievous smile.

I dreamed. I dreamed of many things, real and imaginary. I dreamed of what Cathy and I used to be, but could never be again. I dreamed of Cathy and Edgar’s wedding, and how glorious that wretched woman would look in her wedding gown. I dreamed of Edgar turning into the hideous monster he really is, the satisfaction I felt while slaying him, and then making love to Cathy, who was eternally grateful to me for saving her from a life of misery. I saw us getting married, and the most beautiful horse drawn carriage would take us away. I could even hear the horse’s feet hitting on the cobblestone outside of the church. But it didn’t sound like hooves on cobblestone, it sounded like feet sinking into mud. This wasn’t my dream, this was...
I awoke with a start. My eyelids opened too quickly. The sun shone in through the leaves of the tree and a beam of light struck me in both my eyes. I quickly held my palm up to block the light. As I opened my eyes again, I saw the outline of a tall man. “Good mornin’, weary traveler. My name’s Gadjo, who’re you?” What an informal way to introduce one’s self. He hardly seemed to be a man of high class, I assumed without a single glance. “My name is Heathcliff…of the Earnshaw family.”

The man’s excitement was apparent, although he tried to hide it “I knew an Earnshaw, once—briefly—he was a good man...” I could hear something in Gadjo’s voice I couldn’t quite place it, but it made me think that maybe I wasn’t the only man who had experienced no small amount of heartbreak in his life.

My eyes were now adjusted to the light, and I could see the man who stopped my dreaming. He was a tall man, who looked to be twenty years my senior at most. He was ever so slightly pudgy, but very athletic looking. His dark grey hair was slicked back and almost seemed to glimmer. He had deeply set eyes, which glittered like black diamonds. His beard looked like it had once been kept, but now was a mess of untrimmed foliage, except his moustache, which was curled at each end. His beard led almost a quarter of the way down his chest, which was barely covered by a loose once-white shirt that looked much too big for him. He wore a dark brown vest, covered in stains, and dark purple pants that also appeared to have been tailored for a much larger man. This man looked very much like what my adoptive father had described my people to look like.

“Where are ya headin’, my boy?” he asked. My functionality was still very low, for I had just awoken. I then realized that I had been staring at the man for my whole consciousness. I quickly drew my gaze to the ground, embarrassed by my lack of etiquette. “Don’t worry yourself about it, my boy; I was only curious, you look much like a gypsy yourself, and I figured, ‘what’s a few questions among fellow gypsies?’”

I then realized that my clothes, damp with the previous night’s rainwater fit loosely, it had been day since I had last shaven and the hair atop my head was in an even worse state. “I meant no disrespect, sir, I only—,”

“I said don’t worry yourself about it” He interrupted, as he offered his hand. I dared to look him in the eyes again, and they sparkled with delight. I could almost even make out a grin under the hedge of hair on his face.

He waved his arm to his right, in the direction of the road, and that’s when I noticed what had made the loud hoof noises that startled me out of my sleep. With a quick mental tally, I noted that there were nine carts in all. The back eight all had a basic earth color with yellow trim. The one in front, which Gadjo proudly introduced as his, was almost twice the size of the others. The wood was stained a deep purple hue, and gold trim surrounded everything besides the canvas roof. The side told the caravan’s story. It read “The Traveling Gypsy Circus.” It wasn’t the most imaginative of titles, but it seemed to fit. At this point, most of the gypsies in
the caravan had probably wondered why they had stopped, and were coming out to see what had caused the sudden delay. An oddity that I noted was that, although these people did not seem to be at a the most prime of ages for child-bearing, there were no children, nor did any of the women appear to be with child. Gadjo introduced me to the other eleven gypsies in a very warmhearted manner. He said to them, “this is Heathcliff, and he is one of us.” His assumption that I was a simple gypsy would have upset me, but there was something about this man, something that told me that he had a lot of power, although he didn’t show it. Again he waved his arm at the caravan, this time to his cart specifically, “when you’re ready…” he teased. He said his name was Gadjo Essex; he proudly told me that Gadjo meant “lover” in Gypsy. He had traveled with the circus caravan that he had been born into is entire life. We didn’t talk for long; his wagon had padded seats, and my weary eyes could hardly stay open long enough to comprehend anything else.

For the greater part of the ride, I slept soundly; I assumed my newfound need for sleep was because every second of conscious thought was plagued with thoughts of Cathy. Unconsciousness, when not plagued with dreams, was much easier on my nerves. Every now and then we would hit a bump, which would startle me awake, but the steady beat of hooves on moist dirt lulled me—quickly—back to sleep.

I awoke—yet again—with a start as the wagon came to a slow halt. Gadjo sat in the exact same spot as he had when I had gotten into the cart. I started to ask, “How long-,” “Only a few hours,” Gadjo replied. “Are ya ready for a show, Mr. Heathcliff?”

The eleven gypsies set up the big top tent in what couldn’t have been longer than a half-hour. They all worked as a machine, turning a few large logs and an enormous tarp into seating for what could fit hundreds. The eleven gypsies—not counting myself and Gadjo—shared only three of the carriages, the others were full of props for the circus. All the carts were uploaded, save one. As I grabbed the handles to open the back, I noticed two things. Firstly, the cart was locked; secondly, the lock appeared to have the word “Leo” engraved on it. Gadjo placed his hand on my arm, smiled, and said “show-time”

How so many people had heard of this event was beyond me. Why they would travel to the middle of the countryside to see a circus of twelve gypsies also confounded me. The tent was full of people. I stood among what I could only approximate to be around one hundred people. They all formed a circle around the blocked off area for what I could only assume was for the performers. There was only one way in and out of the ring, a single path the performers used which led to the outside of the tent. Everyone’s attention turned to the center of the circle, where Gadjo gave his signature smile. With a booming voice, he said, “Ladies and gentlemen, boys, girls, and children of all ages, may I have your attention, please.” And, with that, the circus started.

First up, to get the crowd interested, there was a psychic, she went around the ring guessing people’s names and ages. Then, she went into crazier things, like names of their horses, and
their grandparents. The next event was two dancers of some sort. Three gypsies played music while the two danced. Then, they climbed the middle pole holding up the whole tent and performed feats that had to have taken years of practice. Next, there were three jugglers, who juggled balls at first, then sticks, then sticks on fire. It was no simple feat. Next there was Boris, the only one whose name I remembered due to how different he looked. He was a mountain of a man. He proceeded to lift barbells labeled with unnaturally high weights. Then, he picked up and threw the next act onto stage! She was a contortionist, who bent her body into every shape imaginable. Gadjo walked back into the center of the pit as the contortionist finished. He smiled at the crowd, and said, “Now, for our final act…”

I looked to the entrance of the tent and saw Boris pushing the cart with the lock labeled “Leo” up to where the door was facing the entrance. I looked back at Gadjo, who was now holding up a large key. He made his way over to the cage, rattled the lock, and opened the doors wide. Then, with a savage roar, it was upon him.

The creature, bearing large claws and even larger fangs was upon Gadjo faster than I had seen any other creature move. It seemed to have the gypsy pinned to the ground, but with a quick shift of momentum, Gadjo was back on top. He quickly grabbed all four of the creature’s legs, rolled it onto its back, and turned to the crowd. The stunned crowd then erupted into applause. Gadjo went on to amaze the crowd, making Leo jump through hoops with the crack of a whip. To end the show, Leo jumped through a ring of fire!

The show drew to a close, and the audience all found their way out. Afterwards, we all gathered around a fire. We cooked what I later found out to be people’s payments to get into the circus. People would give whole chickens, and even the odd sheep for a large family’s admittance. We were all sitting around the fire laughing when I saw it. A pair of glowing yellow eyes hovered directly above Gadjo’s shoulder. I jumped into action, leaping over the fire, and between Gadjo and the eyes. I don’t know why I felt that I needed to protect the man, but something deep down inside of me told me that he was important. I then saw the creature much more closely than previously. It stood around four feet tall with a deep brown mane. Its structures were feline, but greatly exaggerated. Its skin lay on its muscles like silk. I looked deep into his eyes and knew that this beast was ancient.

It leaped at me just as it had at Gadjo. It pinned me to the ground, and I panicked. My arms were immobile and my legs wouldn’t obey me. I shut my eyes and shortly reflected on my life. Most of the memories were with Cathy. Then, I felt a thick sticky fluid—which had to be my blood—spread across my face.

“Leo, knock it off!” I heard Gadjo casually say. “He doesn’t have any more food, givin’ him the sweet treatment won’t fill your belly.” The beast leaped off of me and ran over to Gadjo. My newly freed hands started to grab my body, looking for where the fluid was coming from. Then, I looked at my hands. The fluid was clear. It was saliva. The creature had licked me.
Gadjo tossed Leo a whole rack of lamb meat. “Heathcliff, meet Leo. He’s a West African Lion, a large breed of feline. He’s our little baby.” Gadjo explained, as the lion rolled onto its back, apparently asking for a tummy rub. “Go ahead!” Gadjo encouraged. I hesitantly reached down and scratched the skin on his ribs, and he began to make a loud sound that vibrated his ribs as he exhaled. “Lookie there! He likes ya!” said Gadjo.

Gadjo went on to explain that everything about his act with Leo was staged. Leo knew to pounce right after he heard the “lock” rattled. There wasn’t really an effective lock, it was all for show, Leo could roam as he liked, but he knew that the attendees at the circus were supposed to think he was fierce. Any crack of the whip was only in the air near Leo. Gadjo treated Leo as any other performer, if not better. According to Gadjo, Leo had been with the circus for generations, and that only God knew how old Leo really was. Leo and Gadjo had a bond that I had rarely seen among two men, and never between man and beast.

I traveled with the circus for two and a half years. Sometimes, I would ride ahead to towns and tell people of our circus. Attendance skyrocketed, and we became one of the most well-known circus troupes in the area we traveled. During this time, Gadjo and I became very close. I talked a lot about Kathy and the Heights. He often spoke of his wife who died at a very young age during childbirth. He rarely spoke of his son, Brishen. He only mentioned that “Brishen left us at a very young age.” Gadjo would happily listen to my stories about the Heights, but was always more interested in my early life than my current life. He did assist me in buying Hindley’s debts, so, that, if I ever did go home, I could have some power over him. The truth was, I never dreamed of going back to the Heights. Only sour memories were there for me. I had all I needed with Gadjo, who typically did an efficient job of keeping Cathy off of my mind.

After two and a half years with the circus, we came across the opportunity of a lifetime. The opportunity was to perform for King George the Third and his friends and family. We had to maintain our pride by performing outside of the kingdom. We set up the tent in the middle of nowhere, as we always had. I snuck into Leo’s pen, as I did before most shows. Tonight I was dressed in Gadjo’s only suit, since we were almost the same size and I needed to make a good impression if I was going to be in the presence of a king. There was something calming about petting the big cat’s mane and hearing him “purr,” as Gadjo described it.

But, today, something seemed different. Leo, who normally waited by the door of his carriage for visitors, was laying on the floor in the back. I went over to pet him, and he made a sound I had never before heard. Leo growled, which sparked a memory of the dogs outside of the Linton’s house. I inched over to him and pet his ribs the way he loved. His skin was unnaturally hot. He refused to purr. There was something wrong with Leo. I had to tell Gadjo.

Gadjo was stressed out enough with his preparations before performing for the king that night. He only replied with a short “He’ll have to perform tonight, he knows what he needs to do.” “He’s sick, Gadjo, you can’t just-,”
“Leave it.” Gadjo ordered. He was my boss first, then my friend, so I let it go. Now, I wish I hadn’t.

I don’t quite know how I expected a king to enter a room, but I assumed it would be in such a manner that everyone would notice him. It was quite the contrary. I can honestly say, short of the deeply dyed purple robes and the golden crown adorning his head, that I would not have assumed he was royalty. His attention, just like everyone else’s, shifted to the center of the ring as Gadjo started to speak.

Gadjo gave a different introduction than the usual one, but my nerves wouldn’t allow me to hear him correctly. How could he force someone to perform if they weren’t willing. He had always said that Leo did what he pleased. All the acts went as usual, some even better than others. Boris added some extra weights, the dancers extended their routine, and the jugglers even added a few objects to their usual roster. Now, the moment I had been fearing was upon us; it was time for Leo’s act.

Gadjo pulled the large gold key out of his pocket, as usual. He made his way over to Leo’s cart, which was in position, as usual. He rattled the lock. The doors didn’t open. Gadjo hesitated, then, slowly opened the doors. Leo was laying in the back, as he was when I went to pet him. He seemed to be in a worse state than usual. He normally constantly groomed himself, but, now, his mane looked limp. I heard Gadjo say under his breath, “come along, Leo.” Leo only responded by swishing his tail as if he was annoyed. Gadjo started to reach into the cage and Leo batted his hand lazily with a paw. Gadjo suddenly started to climb into the cage. Leo must have taken this as a threat, because he did something he had never done before. He did something that would change my life forever. Leo attacked.

I started to think what my life would be like if this single event hadn’t happened. I would continue to travel with Gadjo, probably for the rest of his life. We would tour the country, just us and the troupe. He would die of old age someday, and I would shortly follow him. But, that’s not what happened.

One swift bite was all it was. Leo clamped his jaws around Gadjo’s forearm. Gadjo fell back out of the cart and Leo immediately jumped after him. Except, now, Leo’s ferocity was gone. Leo started to lick Gadjo’s wound, he clearly felt guilty. I don’t remember running to Gadjo’s side, but I remember getting there. There were two deep punctures between Gadjo’s wrist and elbow along with a semicircle connecting the two. A man from the king’s company ran up to us, and pushed me aside. “I’m a doctor, I may be able to help,” he said.

The doctor had us take Gadjo to his cart, and clean his wound with wine—he said the alcohol would help clean the wound. He left us for a little while to inspect Leo. We had locked Leo in his cart since we had no idea what was wrong with him.

“This is one of the most invasive infections I’ve ever seen,” the doctor said. “I’ve never seen anything quite like it, but it appears that, whatever sickness your beast has, has now
transferred to you, and, due to your body’s lack of an immunity to it, you can’t fight it off. I’m so sorry, sir.”

“I’ll be fine,” Gadjo insisted. “Can you bring me my cat?”

Once Leo was in the cart with us, Gadjo ordered everyone except me out. “I’ve been holding this in for so long, and I have not a clue how to tell you.” he said. “I should have told you sooner, Bris—Heathcliff. When I was a mere sixteen years old, I met a wonderful young lady. Her name was Dooriya. She was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. We quickly fell in love, it was effortless. A few months after we had met, she informed me that she was with child. We didn’t have the means to support a child, but we didn’t care. We were young and in love. As you know, Dooriya died during childbirth, but she gave me an amazing gift. A gift I saw as a curse, and I was wrong, Heathcliff. I lived with the child, I neglected it. I can’t even remember how much later it was, but, we were doing a show in Liverpool, this was a particularly dark night. I had been drinking wildly, and the child would not stop… I can’t even remember what he was doing. But, I screamed at him. I cursed him. I thought it was his fault that I had lost the love of my life.”

“Then, a man entered my tent. He had heard me screaming and came to see what the fuss was about. His name…” Gadjo tried to hold back tears, “his name was Mr. Earnshaw.” I can’t even remember what he said, or how I responded, I just remember cursing both of you, and waking up alone. Heathcliff, you are Brishen. Heathcliff…you are my son. Please forgive me.”

I stayed with him a few more days; he only got worse. Three mornings after the bite, I awoke to find him on the floor, with his arm wrapped around Leo, not in a violent manner, but in an embrace. My father was dead. Leo had passed away the same night, whether it was due to guilt or the sickness, I’ll never know.

Gadjo, my father left all of his money and possessions to me. It didn’t seem like much at first, but I didn’t have a strong grip of the idea of money, since I had never really had much. It would be more than enough. For what I planned to do.

We decided to bury my father on the cliffs near the sea. He would always remark on its beauty when we would ride by it, so it seemed fitting. We buried Leo first. As we closed my father’s casket, I saw my reflection staring back at me. I was the spitting image of my father. The only differences were that my beard was shorter, my hair was darker, and eyes didn’t sparkle. My eyes only reflected the fires of determination. I was finally ready.

I was ready to show Edgar what I was capable of. I was ready to knock Hindley down to the level he deserved to be on. And, finally, after all this time, I was ready to confront the woman who once had my deepest love, but now was the object of my deepest loathing; Cathy Earnshaw.
Heathcliff ran and ran. He could not handle the humiliation and despair. He has always known that he and Catherine had mutual affection towards each other, but the presumption that she might not have been in love with him at all was building up. It was killing him inside. All the past memories with his dearest Catherine passed his mind as he kept moving in the rain. The night air was so cold and the sky was so dark that it was freezing up his heart. Heathcliff ran until his thoughts went blank and nothing could reach his mind anymore. He was starting to get mentally and physically exhausted.

The long, mindless running had gotten the man to a place he did not know. It was a town rather sketchy, but Heathcliff did not care. The town had a heavy atmosphere that Heathcliff couldn’t handle at the state he was in. His tired body began slowing down, and suddenly fell to the ground. Dragging his body into an alley, Heathcliff gradually became unconscious.

Heathcliff dreamt of his first encounter with Mr. Earnshaw. Oh, what a strange and kind man he was. Then the scenery morphed itself to show the Wuthering Heights. Catherine was there. She turned around to face him, and started walking towards him. “Heathcliff,” she mumbled, and as she came closer and closer to him, her face distorted and she became an intimidating, terrifying monster.

Heathcliff opened his eyes. The sun was shining right into his face. Even though Heathcliff had thought he wouldn’t care if he died before, his body immediately reacted to dehydration. It was almost like an instinct as he desperately started looking for water. Despite the rain from yesterday, the heat had dried all the puddles up. His frantic search for water helped him recall his younger days. He hadn’t experienced this kind of torture since being out in the streets as no one, or being bullied by Hindley. Heathcliff noticed a small building with an open door. It seemed as if only men were walking into the place.

Heathcliff entered the building. It was rather dark inside, and men were crowded over at a table. There were glasses of water placed on one of the empty tables. Heathcliff hastily grabbed the closest cup and gulped the water as fast as he could. A bar appeared as he walked deeper into the foreign surrounding. Sitting on one of the chairs up close at the bar, Heathcliff asked the worker for food. The worker stared at Heathcliff’s face for a moment, looked down to see what he was wearing, and then pulled out some loaves of bread for the filthy man. As Heathcliff munched the bread down, the worker asked if Heathcliff had any money. Just as Heathcliff was about to reply, loud yelling and applause shot out from the crowded table. The worker ran off to witness the business, and Heathcliff followed.

All of the strange men standing were throwing money into the table calling out numbers. One of the two men sitting on the table had a giant smile on his face, and the other
man looked as if he was about to cry. The crying man got dragged out of his seat, and a group of men kicked him out of the bar.

“Who’s next?” shouted the man with the smile, “Who is willing to bet everything to take this fortune home tonight?” the crowd started screaming and applauding even louder. Heathcliff observed the table. There were several dice lying around, a lot of money, and some shaped objects he did not recognize. There was already a lot of money on the table but the strange men were talking about how all the markers were worth as much as a single house. Just as Heathcliff was trying to figure out what the fuss was about, he felt a strong stab on his waist. “Psst!” It was the waiter. “I will let you go free of charge if you challenge that man to a game. You look like you are some runaway servant or something... So if your luck lets you win, I will give you food and shelter. If you lose, you lose whatever you bet. How’s that sound?”
The waiter dragged Heathcliff to the chair even before he could say his response. He was sitting on the chair before he knew, and the crowd started applauding again. Then they started whispering within themselves.

“Oh? A new face, eh?” said the man in his seat. “What are you willing to bet?”
“I have nothing of my possession for a bet,” muttered Heathcliff, confused, “unless... I can bet my own body.” The crowd started laughing hysterically.

“Interesting...” the man stroked his chin, “very well! You shall be my slave if you lose.” Although Heathcliff did not know anything about this so-called “game,” including the basic rules, he utilized his observations and the crowd response to give it his best shot. He thought twice before making any move, and threw the dice with all his hope and faith. Surprisingly, Heathcliff gained his first victory in just one round. Everyone around him went loud, but the man who was against Heathcliff said that it was beginner’s luck. However, Heathcliff’s luck did not seem to end.

The sun was setting, and Heathcliff had not lost a single game. The waiter, impressed by Heathcliff’s intelligent tricks, told Heathcliff to stay and make it his home at the bar as long as he kept winning. It took Heathcliff a while to figure out what all the markers were worth, but he became able to make good use of them as he eventually found out about them.
Tears rolled down Heathcliff’s face as he ran. His clothes were soaking wet, but nothing mattered at the moment. Catherine’s words repeated over and over in his head. The words struck him like knives piercing through his body. Did she ever love him? He did not understand how status and money can overpower their love. He thought they had something special, something no one can understand. He grinds his teeth together and closed his eyes tightly when he reached the stable. His arms flung towards the walls back and forth. Pounding his madness away, he thought to himself that he needs to leave. Heathcliff pulled a horse towards him and saddled it. He rode his horse towards the gates. Heathcliff looked back as he drifts father and farther away from Wuthering Heights. He started to hesitate, but he continued forward.

Heathcliff arrived in a small town and as in arrived; he saw a group of men attacking an old beggar on the streets. He quickly got off the horse and ran towards the men.

“Stop! Stop!” Heathcliff demanded. One man plunged towards him and he quickly punched the man in the face. The man lay unconscious on the floor and the other men stopped. Suddenly, they picked up the man from the ground and hurried away. The beggar looked at Heathcliff and slowly got up.

“Stop, you poor beggar, I do not need your thank you or anything. All I want to know is what town this is and the closest inn I can stay at,” Heathcliff said.

The old beggar started to chuckle. “I am not a beggar. My name is Thomas Loveguard. Earlier, I saw this old man struggling to with bags of coal and I decided to aid him. In the process of carrying the coal, my clothes got dirty and many people assumed I am a beggar. Those men have no idea who they are messing with. I am actually a lord. Lord Thomas Loveguard. I am going to send those men to jail the next morning. I have my own business! Many, in fact! I have wealth and power. Those men could have killed me and taken everything away from me. So how should I thank you for saving my life from those twats?”

“I do not need anything from you.” Heathcliff responded.

“Ah do not be shy. How about you stay in my mansion for the time being? That is the least I can do for you. Welcome to Englewood!” Lord Thomas smiled as he said those words. Heathcliff noticed how Lord Thomas’ grin was so white and clean. Heathcliff realized that this man could possibly help him become the man Catherine wants.

“Alright, we shall go to your place. Actually there is something I do want from you. I want you to teach me to become a man. I want to become wealthy and educated. You see, the woman I loved left me. I was not good enough for her. She wanted someone who had money and power.” Heathcliff throat tightened as the image of Catherine appeared in his head.
“I promise you I will help you forget that girl and help you become the man you want to become.” Lord Thomas said. They rode together on Heathcliff’s horse towards Lord Thomas’ mansion. Once they arrived, servants and others ran towards them. “Oh we were so worried about you, Lord Thomas!” They cried. “Ah fear not, my life was in danger until Heathcliff saved me. Ladies and gentlemen, make sure you treat this man with great care!” Lord Thomas said.

Heathcliff and Lord Thomas became great friends. Lord Thomas did not have many friends because he feared they will try to take his business and money. Lord Thomas did not have any children either. He longed for a son like Heathcliff. Heathcliff was someone he can trust and enjoy spending time with aside from his wife. Lord Thomas bought Heathcliff many new clothes and taught him how to become a gentleman.

In the early morning, Heathcliff had reading and math lessons from a teacher. This helped him improve his grammar and vocabulary tremendously. Towards the evening, he practices violin or helps Lord Thomas with his business reports. At night, he instructs the cooks and servants on ways to improve the image of the mansion. Sometimes, Heathcliff attends business meetings with Lord Thomas. Lord Thomas wanted Heathcliff to learn how to interact with other educated and wealthy people. As Heathcliff earn respect from other people, he started to learn how to respect others as well. He did not think about Catherine as much anymore. He wanted her to see how much he has changed and regret marrying another man.

“Heathcliff, isn’t it funny how it has almost been 3 years since we have met? I am glad you are my friend. The mansion looks lovely every day. I do not know how you keep up with changing it all the time. Business has been booming and funny thing to say, but I do not know what to do with all this money I have!” Lord Thomas said.

“I cannot thank you enough for helping me pick up everything. You already know how hurt I was by Catherine. I just wanted to improve myself and live my life. Wuthering Heights was just not a place for me.” Heathcliff responded.

“I want you to have my business Heathcliff. I know I am going to die soon and I have no heir to give everything to. I want you to have everything. For the past three years, you have grown so much. You have grown into such a great man. I wish I was your father. Take my business and do whatever.” Lord Thomas smiled. The wrinkles in his tired eyes made Heathcliff feel a bit emotional.

Heathcliff looked away and said, “If that is what you wish, I shall take over your business.”

“No, Heathcliff. I want you to go back to Wuthering Heights and take everything back. There is nothing left anymore here. I will see my wife in heaven and I want to look down and see that you are happy in Wuthering Heights. I know you want to go back. I support you.
completely. Sell the business if you have to, I just want you to be happy now,” Lord Thomas said.

“Why do you speak of death so suddenly my lord?” Heathcliff questioned.

“I do not know Heathcliff.” Lord Thomas replied. He shook his head and picked up his cane. He started to walk back into the mansion. Heathcliff watched Lord Thomas walk back and prayed for Lord Thomas’ health.

The next morning, Lord Thomas died in his sleep. It was a dark gloomy day for Englewood. Heathcliff planned funeral arrangements for his dear friend. Lord Thomas was a father figure to him. Heathcliff will not forget Lord Thomas. He is going to do want Lord Thomas suggested.

“Lord Thomas’ will states that you have ownership to everything he had. What are you going to do now Lord Heathcliff?” One of the servants asked.

Heathcliff walked away without responding. He knew what he was going to do. It was time to return to Wuthering Heights.

**Love is Poison**

By: Nancy Quan

It starts from the eye,
Crawls to your head,
And then injects itself into the heart.
Love is Poison.
It darkens the pupil,
It confuses the brain,
And then constricts the heart.
Love is Poison.
It brings cheers to the ears,
It pleasures the mind,
But only to break the heart.
Love is Poison.
It is distracting.
Overwhelming.
Poisonous.
What Can Replace My Soul?

By: Kelsey Toler

As the rain beat down on the moors, it colored the once-bright green pastures and rolling meadows a somber shade of gray, as if all of the happiness had been sucked out of the vibrant landscape that Heathcliff had once called “home.” The rich perfume of the wildflowers and wild onions had been replaced by the sickly-sweet smell of decay, as if the rain had been acid poured down onto the foliage by the hand of God Himself. If Heathcliff could put into words the anguish in his heart, the tumultuous landscape of the moors would be a fitting description. His soul, so entwined with his beloved Cathy’s, had shrunk into oblivion the moment he heard her utter the words “I cannot marry Heathcliff; it would be beneath me…” His one shining star in this dreary, forsaken world; his one beacon of devotion that illuminated all that was wonderful and good in his twisted soul, had been snuffed out like a candle in the wind. As his hope and faith dwindled, he ran blindly into the sheets of rain, running in the direction of the one sole memory he had retained from his mysterious childhood: his named etched in gold on the weather-worn timbers of a massive brigantine.

As moths are drawn to the flickering flame of a lantern, Heathcliff felt a pulling in his soul toward the roaring tides of the ocean and the chattering, clamoring bustle of the docks and shipyards his memory had retained from the gray abyss of his early childhood. Heathcliff had dwelled on this subject for many years, but gradually the smell of the salty sea air had been replaced with the earthy, heavenly scent of the hair of his beloved Cathy. Now, however, the one person who had kept him grounded had vanished, and his memories came flooding back, as if a wave had washed him from floating in the turbulent sea of romance to come crashing back onto the shores of reality. His feet seemed to wander aimlessly over the rolling hills and rocky crags of the English high country, as his mind drifted back to that stormy night in which Cathy had denied him. He felt like a ghost, doomed forever to wander through the moors, despair and a growing hatred filling the gaping hole where his heart had once beat so fervently. He had been travelling for weeks now, scraping for food out of pig troughs and sleeping amongst the briars and brambles in the woods, for no one wanted to help a “dirty gypsy beggar.” One day, thought Heathcliff, I’ll show these fools what a dirty gypsy beggar could become, but the one who will be most ashamed of her actions is the one I will get the most satisfaction of gloating to. Finally, on a foggy, blustery morning, Heathcliff trudged over the crest of a hill, just as a wagon labored past piled high with manure. The wagon hit a rut in the road, causing the foul-smelling compost to rain down upon him. As Heathcliff’s anger boiled over, he wiped the manure from his eyes and screamed out at the top of his lungs, “IS THIS WHAT YOU TRULY WISH FOR ME TO BE? A DIRTY GYPSY BEGGAR?! You have already taken my soul from me, now you must take my dignity? If there is a God in the heavenly cosmos, why did
he wish for me to ever be in existence?! If there is a purpose for my life, let it be known, or so help me I will…” At that moment, the sun broke through the clouds, and the fog lifted, pulled back like a curtain to reveal the vast, sparkling waters of the ocean, no more than a mile from where Heathcliff sat. And, nestled in the jutting of a peninsula of land, Heathcliff saw clapboard shanties and endless rows of ships in the harbor, and he knew that he had finally reached the destination that could soothe the burn of his ragged soul: Liverpool.

It had been ages since Heathcliff had wandered down the dirty, muddy streets of Liverpool. His memory only allowed him faint glimpses into the past: running his hands down the weather-worn boards of the closely-nestled houses, the smell of salt and sweat mingling with the pungent smell of fresh seafood in the bustling marketplace, and of the creaking and moaning of the hulls of the ships as the tide rose and fell in the harbor. Beyond that, Heathcliff’s recollection of his past ceased to exist. As he ambled down toward the docks, lost in his own thoughts, he was jolted back into the present by the collision of his body to what felt like a solid, unyielding stone boulder. However, as he glared up into the sunlight, he became startled as the face of a monstrous man scowled back at him. Yet, it wasn’t the sheer size of this behemoth that shocked his senses, but the fact that it felt as though Heathcliff were gazing into a reflection of himself: much older, unkempt, and marked, but nonetheless, his dark, brooding features protruded through the grime and sweat and harshness of the figure. A sudden change overtook the stranger as well, as it seemed to realize the striking resemblance he shared with Heathcliff. As the giant of a man opened his mouth, it seemed as though thunder sprang from his vocal chords instead of human speech, gravelly and tinted with the colorful surliness of rum: “Well, if I didn’t know me own son as he stands right before me, I would mistake ye for mine own self likeness.” Instantly, Heathcliff could no longer deny or wonder about his parentage, for floods of memories came cascading down upon him: the coarse, thick beard dribbled with fish and bread crumbs, the way in which the planks beneath his feet seemed to shake and roll whenever the thunderous voice unleashed a torrent of curses, and the way in which two dark eyes gleamed beneath a thick scar running the length of his brow bone. At once, Heathcliff knew he was in the presence of his father.

“Well boy, speak up, or are you still as daft and mute as when me last saw ye?” the figure inquired, raising one eyebrow and gazing steely into Heathcliff’s eyes. The figure seemed to radiate power and commanded authority, two traits that Heathcliff could not stand to be on the receiving end of, which pushed his temper to boil over unbridled in his sharp response: “If you take me as both daft and mute, what use is it to waste your breath on a question that will never receive an answer?” At this, the man seemed shocked at first, but quickly unleashed a boisterous volley of laughter. As the man wiped tears away from his eyes, he sniffed and exclaimed, “Even though there be fancy English polishing to those words of yers, there is no denying the fiery temperament of yer mind and the sharpness of yer tongue. My son, don’t ye remember me ‘tall?’”
Heathcliff shrugged his shoulders, and answered, “I have very little recollection of my youthful days, for I have lived too far away from my birthplace to be reminded constantly of my heritage. I was taken from here when I was but six or seven, and have been raised by a family out in the English moors for the remainder of my existence. I have ventured here to escape the harshness my step-brother has bestowed upon me, and to find a balm to salve the burning wound that has been placed upon my heart.”

As the man took in Heathcliff’s words, his demeanor seemed to soften just slightly, as Heathcliff recounted his story from Mr. Earnshaw rescuing him from squalor, to his betrayal by Cathy and Nellie. The man seemed to pity Heathcliff for an instant, but then regained his surly composure as he replied, “My boy, my name be Captain Horatio Madeline, commander of the Heathcliff and leader of the most feared band of buccaneers the ‘Lantic ever laid eyes on.’

So, thought Heathcliff, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Oh, how I loathe this man, but at the same time, he may be my refuge to ride out the storm of my despair. As Heathcliff gazed steadily into his father’s eyes, he braced himself for the repercussions his next words were sure to acquire: “Sir, my namesake comes from your beloved brigantine, and not from your mouth, but from the mouth of another man, who raised me to be a gentleman. But, considering my lineage that has just come to light, it seems as though no polishing or primping could ever turn me into a sensible English aristocrat. My wish is to acquire a vast fortune, and since other, more proper ways to acquire this wish would bore me, I must offer you a simple request. As my father, allow me as your son to come aboard your ship and sail with you, for I have no family connections here any longer, and wish to start anew again out on the vast, open sea. I thirst for adventure and seek thrills, something to make me feel like a man once more.”

Captain Madeline squared his shoulders at young Heathcliff, and pinned him down with a look that combined both parental scolding and befuddled amusement. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity to Heathcliff, the Captain spat and said, “If any of me crew would have dared to speak with such a tongue as ye have, I would have sent them directly to Davy Jones meself. But, I admire yer spunk and passion, for it reminds me of meself back when I was a lad. There be a spot ready for you, but be warned, the sea be full of mighty dangers and the work is treacherous at best. But, the treasure ye reap could make ye rich beyond measure.”

As Captain Madeline spoke these words, it seemed as though the path that Heathcliff had searched so long to find stretched out before him, lined with gold and jewels just ready to be plucked by his greedy hands. But, the greatest reward he could see lay at the end of this path, whenever Heathcliff returned a rich man, much wealthier and more affluent than her precious Edgar could ever be. Then, she would realize how wrong she had been to doubt his connections, and cast herself down upon his feet, weeping and begging for his forgiveness. That, Heathcliff reasoned, would be sweeter than any trinket he acquired on the sea. As the Heathcliff left the weather-worn planks of Liverpool dock behind it, Heathcliff gazed out into the open sea, not daring to look back upon the land; for fear that he would see Cathy, reaching
out her arms to him, begging him to stay on the solid, rocky shores of the English moors with her.

On that fateful day, Heathcliff had left Liverpool a dirty, headstrong young man whose only motivation in life was to forget the past and bury it forever with his love for Cathy. But now, three years later, Heathcliff disembarked from the giant brigantine that bore his name back onto the weather-worn docks of Liverpool. So much has changed these past three years, Heathcliff mused as he wandered through the mud-caked streets once more. Yes, he had acquired a much larger fortune than he had anticipated, between his pillaging of enemy ships, illegal rum trafficking, and ransom collections from many different hostages. His father, the heroic, crooked Captain Horatio Madeline, had perished in an epic battle just two months prior to Heathcliff returning back to Liverpool. Being rapidly moved up among the ranks of the buccaneers to first mate, Heathcliff had inherited his father’s beloved Heathcliff, as well as three smaller sloops, and all of the crew that each ship possessed. Yes, Heathcliff had done well for himself these past few years, and it seemed as though he achieved every goal he set out to accomplish. He was wealthy beyond compare and had a most loyal and “hard-working” crew, but there was still an emptiness inside of him that no amount of money, rum, or women seemed to fill. At night, Cathy’s dark, solemn eyes seemed to haunt him; her voice seemed to be carried on the wind as it raced over the swells and waves, begging him to return back to Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff had pushed these feelings away, but now, they seemed stronger than ever, compelling him to return back to the English moors, and back to the life he always withered under. As always, Heathcliff’s mind started to wander again, alert and sharp from his seedy life on the open ocean. He started to think of her, and as he reached the outskirts of Liverpool, his thoughts were racing like the Heathcliff did with full wind in her sails: The sea was supposed to purify me, but its salt just intensified the burning her words gashed into my heart. Maybe, time has changed her heart, and maybe it has softened the hardest stone that has encased her feelings toward me these last years. Maybe, if I return to Wuthering Heights, I will discover that she has yearned for me just as much as I have for her. Maybe, Wuthering Heights won’t be so tempestuous anymore, and my Cathy’s golden light can shine on me once more...

Sun
By: Samantha Pinkley

Burning bright golden
Bringing life and light to us
We thank you oh sun.
Every time we see visit our grandparents, we’re always bombarded with stories of their past. Sometimes we hear the same stories over and over again because we’re never lucky enough to be there when they remember something new. One of my grandfather’s favorite stories was how he apparently he almost killed, then, saved Paul McCartney.

At the time, my grandfather’s dad worked in a factory in Liverpool, England, so my grandfather had spent most of his childhood and early adult years there. My grandfather’s school was a ten minute walk away, so one day, he was on his way home from school like usual. He always stopped at a local candy shop to buy saltwater taffy. This particular day, the store was a bit more crowded than it normally was, so instead of taking the usual five minutes to get in and out of the store, it took him twenty. He knew his mother would scold him being late for dinner because she always preached that punctuality was the greatest virtue.

My grandfather quickly weaved in and around the crowds of people on the sidewalks. There was an intersection up ahead, and he knew that if he ran fast enough, he would be able to make it and not have to wait the three minutes to be able to cross again. He held his bag of salt water taffy close to his chest and sprinted in the direction of the stop light. He was only a few feet away from the crosswalk when the “stop walking” signal started flashing. He had been running so fast that he couldn’t stop fast enough and ran straight into a young boy. The boy was flung into the street, landing face down on the asphalt. Then, of course, out of nowhere, a milk truck appeared flying down the street headed straight for the boy. My grandfather reached out and snatched the back of the little boy’s shirt and flung him towards his mother.

The mother caught her child just as my grandfather was back up on the sidewalk. The woman shook my grandfather’s hand and thanked him for saving her son’s life. Just as she was leaving, she said to my grandfather, “if you ever need a favor, my name is Mary McCartney, and Paul, here, and I would be glad to help.” And that was how my grandfather saved Paul McCartney, which he has slowly built up to mean that he indirectly saved the Beatles and therefore the music industry and therefore the whole world. My grandmother says not to believe my grandfather because he’s just crazy, and that’s probably true, but I’d like to think that my ancestors made a difference in the world.
A Haunting Vacation
By Samiha Badwan

The summer of 2010 finally approached, and Allie was thrilled to begin what she hoped would be the best summer ever. Allie would be staying with her dad in South Carolina for the entire summer. She was so excited because he had just moved to a house right on Myrtle Beach. She had only been to the beach once, when she was only a child, back before her parents divorced. With that said, she was eager to see what this summer with her dad would bring.

After twelve long hours of driving from Kansas, she finally arrived to Myrtle Beach. Her father was ecstatic to see her, as he had not seen her since she graduated high school. After giving her dad a big hug and shedding tears of happiness, Allie took her things inside the house and got washed up for dinner. They caught up with one another over dinner, and afterwards Allie told her dad that she wanted to go for a walk on the beach. “Are you sure honey? Maybe you should rest after such a long drive.”

“Dad, it’s just a walk on the beach. I haven’t felt the sand between my toes since I was four. I’ll be fine!” She grabbed her favorite pink polka dotted flip flops and walked out the door. Without realizing it, she forgot her phone on the dining table.

Allie walked alongside the glistening shore for nearly two hours, picking up seashells and pausing every few minutes to take in the beautiful scenery. Midnight snuck up on her, and her lack of sleep was beginning to catch up to her. Allie realized that she ought to head home and let her dad have that “I told you so” moment. She turned around to return when she noticed a tall, skinny figure standing still in the distance. Allie tried to pay no attention to this person, but the closer she got, the faster her heart beat. “What was this guy doing just standing there staring at me?” she thought. Allie was now panting; she walked faster and faster when all of a sudden, he grabbed her.

Back at the beach house, Allie’s father took her bags into the guest bedroom, when a bad feeling ran through his veins. “Something’s not right,” he said to himself. He anxiously walked over to the phone and dialed Allie’s cell phone number. The dining table buzzed, and he looked down and saw that she had forgotten her phone right there. He slipped on his shoes and left the house to look for her.

It was past one in the morning by that time, and there was no reason that Allie would still be out so late. He walked through the darkness that fell over the beach. The only sound that echoed was the ocean sweeping on and off of the sand. “Allie?! He was beginning to panic. He approached a bench along the way, where he saw a familiar sight-Allie’s favorite polka dotted flip flops. He was now horrified at the emptiness on that beach. He looked around, and again shouted, “ALLISON ROSE?!?” He picked up the pink flip flops and continued down the beach in a state of terror.

Hours went by as he walked up and down the beach in search of his daughter, who he had only seen for an hour since she arrived. He called the police around 2:00 AM and reported his daughter as a missing person. “She is about 5’ 6”; she has wavy blonde hair, and she was wearing a yellow sundress
when she left.” He was trembling with fear. “How could this be happening?” he wondered. This was all his fault; he should have never let her explore the beach alone at night.

“Sir, we will do our best to bring your daughter home safely,” the police assured him.

Hours of searching turned into days; days turned into weeks, and weeks turned into months. Allie’s father went into a state of depression, while police handled the case as best as they could. He felt helpless and guilty all at the same time. Nine months after Allie went missing, a clue turned up. Vacationers found a set of keys next to a building near the same beach that Allie disappeared on. Attached to the set of keys was a picture inside of a keychain that had Allie and her father in it. Police immediately notified her father of the findings, and they assured him that they were not finished looking.

The keys had turned up near an old library that had been closed for years. No one had thought to check inside of that building, as it was a run-down site that no one in town ever visited. Because the keys turned up so close to this building, however, police felt it was best to search the inside of the building.

They broke down the door, but no one was in sight. “Myrtle Beach Police, is anyone inside?” There was no answer. As they were about to head out, one officer realized that one of the antique, built-in bookshelves was actually a door to something else. They opened the door and realized there was a basement. They raced down the stairs and into the basement where sure enough, Allie was sitting on a small cot.

Her physical appearance was startling, as she had lost weight and was covered in bruises. She burst into tears when she realized it was police officers coming down the stairs. “Please tell me I’m safe now!?” she asked hysterically. She ran to the officers for protection, as she feared her kidnapper might return to the building soon to check on her.

“Don’t you worry, Allie; you’re safe now. Now let’s get you some medical attention, and then we’ll have to ask you some questions about the man who brought you here, so we can find him,” the officers explained.

“What about my mom and dad?” she asked.

The officers calmed her down and said, “We will be in touch with both of your parents shortly, and as soon as we have you checked on, you can see your father.”

Police notified Allie’s father that she was found in the run-down library and that she had in fact been kidnapped by a man on the beach that night. He felt terrible, and he continued to blame himself, but as soon as he reunited with his daughter, he found it in himself to just be happy that she was still alive. “I’m so sorry, sweetheart,” he cried as he hugged her tight.

She, too, cried, but said, “Don’t worry, dad. It’s not your fault.”
He looked her straight in the eyes and said, “This isn’t over. I’m going to make the man who did this to you pay.” She began to cry as she hugged her dad even tighter. While Allie was beginning a road to recovery, her father was on his way to revenge.

An Empty Beach

By: Samiha Badwan

Where is everyone?
The beach is empty, not a person in sight.
Everyone is hiding, even the bright sun.

I don’t see anyone out for a run
There are no children having water fights
Where is everyone?

I can’t believe there is no beach fun
No one to climb the lifeguard’s chair of great height
Everyone is hiding, even the bright sun.

Are they bored with the beach? Are they done?
Surely someone appreciates this sight.
Where is everyone?

Normally there are umbrellas, a ton.
All I see now is the clear sky, almost white.
Everyone is hiding, even the bright sun.

I hope that changes restore the fun
And that the sky brightens up with birds and flight.
Where is everyone?
Everyone is hiding, even the bright sun.
'Twas the Night Before Christmas

By Nathan Dodd

‘Twas the night before Christmas, and I was making my final deliveries to all of the boys and girls. I flew over my last house to see that not a creature was awake and moving about, not even a mouse. I could see through the window that the children’s stockings were hanging on the chimney very delicately and with great care. They hung there hoping that I would fill them soon. The children slept snugly in their beds and looked to be dreaming of sugarplums and Christmas morning. Down the hall, in the next bedroom, laid a father in his cap and his wife in her kerchief who had just settled into bed.

I landed my sleigh too hard on the roof and arose a large clatter. I thought I heard someone spring from a bed to see if something was the matter. A light shimmered on the snow from the downstairs window as if someone had just torn open the shutters and thrown up the sash. It was nearly mid-day judging by the look of the moon shining on the fresh snow. “Ah sleigh bells! I’ve been spotted,” I muttered as I saw from the window a man staring at my sleigh and my eight reindeer. Just to show off I called off my reindeer by name. I knew the man could hear all of the reindeer hooves on his roof and I knew I had been spotted. I decided to not skip the house yet anyway even though I was in a hurry to get back so Mrs. Claus could massage my feet.

I was very warm, at least, because I was covered in my fur from my head to my foot. This guy really needs to start cleaning his chimney though, I thought, because I was now covered in soot. I carried my bag filled with all of the toys down the chimney with me. It was so cold outside, my face was red. My cheeks were probably red as roses and my nose like a cherry. I saw in the mirror how old I was getting and saw my beard was as white as snow. I started to chuckle, I don’t know why. But I realized I needed to go on a diet because my stomach seemed to shake like a bowl full of jelly.

I knew the man saw me and was spying on me at the moment. I even heard him snicker in spite of himself. I turned and gave him a smile and a wink to ensure him I was there. I turned back to fill the stockings and set out the presents. I turned to man and put a finger over my lips and nose and went back to the chimney to go up to my sleigh. With a slap of the reigns I was off to finish my night. I left with a “Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night.”
Opening Day

By: Mike Feller

What was a seemingly boring Sunday night at STLCOP turned into the best, well maybe not the best, but definitely the most unique Subway experience of my life. It was a cold night in December and the short walk to Subway seemed longer than usual, but it was definitely worth it. As I walked into Subway with Adam and Jesse, we all noticed a rough looking homeless person sitting down at one of the tables. Acting like he was a long lost friend, he asked me for money and I politely refused. Not deterred at all, this man proceeded to ask Adam who also refused. Two refusals were not enough to make this man quit. He then walked up to Jesse and asked for money and he said that he didn’t have any money and that he wasn’t eating, even though he had just eaten at Hons Wok.

Even though he was denied by all of us, the homeless man was not about to pass up the chance to start up a conversation about sports. Noticing the St. Louis Cardinals hoodie Jesse was wearing, the man began asking questions about the Cardinals.

“Hey did you go to opening day?” asked the man.

“No,” said Jesse, just trying to end the conversation before it began, but this did not end the conversation.

“Do you know when opening day was?” replied the man.

“Some time in April,” still not discouraged from a few word answer, the homeless man posed another question.

“Well, what day in April was it?” asked the man clearly not satisfied with Jesse’s answer.

“I’m not sure, sorry,” said Jesse, not really sure why this man seemed to have an obsession with opening day. Thinking that this was going to be the end of the conversation, Jesse got up and walked towards the counter to get a drink while he was waiting, but the homeless man followed him and continued to question him about the Cardinals, explaining that he has been a St. Louis fan his entire life.

“Think the Cardinals can make the playoffs with their star?” asked the man.

“Nope, they actually didn’t make it this year,” replied Jesse wondering whether this so-called lifelong baseball fan knew anything about the sport seeing as he was asking if the Cards were going to make the playoffs even though the playoffs were already over.
With a puzzled look on his face, the man decided to continue the conversation asking, “Is Sammy Sosa still with the Cubs?”

“He hasn’t played for the Cubs in years. I think he might be with the Orioles, or he’s retired,” replied Jesse still trying to end the conversation and wondering why there had to be such a long line in Subway that night. Jesse’s answer seemed to spark some interest in the man and he continued to question Jesse about sports; however, his attention turned to another sport.

He asked, “Have you heard of a sport called basketball?”

Wondering if this man was on some sort of drugs for asking this ridiculous question, Jesse just gave him a nod.

“Hey, lemme ask you another question. Have you heard of a man named Magic Johnson?” questioned the man.

Trying not to laugh at the absurdity of these questions, Jesse replied, “Yea I’ve heard of him.”

“Well, lemme ask you this. Have you heard of a man named Michael Jordan?”

With a slight chuckle, Jesse replied “Of course.”

“What about a man named Scottie Pippen?” continued the man.

“Yea I’ve heard of him too”

“Well then let me tell you something not many people know about these men. They got old and what do you think they did. They retired.”

Having a hard time suppressing laughter now, Jesse replied “That’s right.”

The homeless man had a stern look on his face and then leaned close to Jesse and said something quietly to him so that nobody else in the place could hear him.

“Now lemme tell you something, son, that all people have in common. They get old and retire. Look at Sammy Sosa, Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan, and Scottie Pippen; they all got old and what do you think they did?”

Not giving Jesse time to answer, the man shouted, “They retired.”

At about this time our subs were done and Jesse quickly said bye to this man. However, this would not get rid of the man. After we walked out the door, we saw the man jump to his feet, open the door, and yell, “Don’t forget to watch opening day!”
New York

By Kayla Gray

In 1929 I turned five years old and remember growing up during the Great Depression years. My father was a farmer, but also did carpentry jobs to earn more money. I remember my Dad making a deal with a man who owned a cow in our small town outside of Boston. In return for feeding, milking and cleaning out her stall, my father received two quarts of milk each day. I think that was the best thing my father ever did for us. Oh how I loved farm fresh milk.

My mother had a pretty good sized garden and was very good at canning. The farmer’s wife gave us beans, so we ate beans more often than I would have liked but at least we weren’t hungry. We only had a small wood-burning stove in the kitchen of our home and my mother would spend hours cooking on it. In the summer months she would use a kerosene stove, and it would be my job to walk to the gas station to buy ten cents worth of the strong-smelling kerosene. I would play outside all day to stay away from that strong smell. Playing outside was my favorite childhood pastime. My imagination was as great as they come. Every day I would have a new adventure with fictional characters. Emma, my sister, and I would play outside from dusk until dawn and only come inside for dinner time.

That was the best memories I had of Emma, back when the depression had not taken its toll on us. Emma was a year and a half younger than I was, but she was also always ill. Her immunity to the various viruses and infections received was very poor. Summer time was my favorite because she hardly ever got sick in the summer, compared to the winter time. The winter time was always a constant battle in those days. Between Emma’s health and keeping the family from starving or freezing to death was the nonstop battle that my parents played.

I remember one particular Christmas it was so cold that we thought we were all going to freeze to death in our sleep. That is one of the Christmases I remember best, even though there were not many gifts. My parents had told me that Santa Claus could not make it to our house because it was too cold for the reindeer. I remember worrying about the reindeer, for I was a huge animal lover. I was not worried about him visiting or gifts, I just hoped that those reindeer would be okay. That next Christmas morning Emma and I received a doll and a doll bed. The joy I
felt that Christmas was incomparable. I was so happy that Santa Claus had made it to our house, which meant the reindeer were okay. The Christmas tree lights were always a problem because if one bulb burned out, the whole string would not work. Because we couldn’t afford to buy new bulbs for the Christmas tree, if one burned out, we used a good bulb to find the broken bulb. Then we would break the burned out bulb, twist the wires and then screw the bulb back in its socket so that the whole string could light up again. That only lasted one year; the following years we just had the lights on the tree unlit, but that was fine with me just so long as we had a tree.

The following years were hard as our bank had closed, and we lost everything we had. Even a young girl like me had lost her entire life’s savings. I remember losing that little pocket money I had in the bank. A few years later the bank did pay back some of our money and I got a check for a whopping 12 cents!

**Ballad of the Stone**

By: Kayla Gray

She makes that right turn  
coming out of her long country lane.  
She turns on the radio  
and tears come down like rain.

It was their song,  
she knew every line.  
Somehow she couldn’t believe  
that everything would be fine.

She had made this trip  
what seemed like a thousand times before  
But this time it was different  
what she feared most had become a heart sore.

She made it to the  
little dockside town.  
Where her one and only  
had been laid to rest in the ground.

It had not been real  
until she had seen it here in stone.  
That perfect person had left her  
in that moment she had never felt more alone.
Once upon a time in a galaxy far far away, there lived the kingdom of elephants. The elephants there weren’t like the elephants on planet Earth. These elephants were much skinnier and they would walk on two feet rather than all fours. Their trunks were much longer and so they would use them as weapons. For a decade they lived peacefully, until the giraffes invaded. These giants came with their gunships and technological advancements and took over the elephant empire.

Eventually the elephants became slaves to the giraffes and were tortured and persecuted. One day as the elephants were working in the field of peanuts they saw a meteor land. They slowly approached the meteor to see what was going on. They were surprised to find a sugar glider come out. His name was Momo and he was here to take over the kingdom. Yet when he saw how poorly tortured the elephants were, he decided he would help them reclaim their kingdom. Because he was so small, it wasn’t too hard for him to hide from the giraffes.

Momo devised a plan to overthrow the Giraffes. While doing reconnaissance near the giraffe home city of Tall Branch, he happened to find a golden leaf. It was a small leaf, but he sensed that it had great power. After showing it to Grandoaf it was discovered that this was the mythical Golden leaf of power. It was said that the giraffes had created it in the depths of candy castle to enslave all the elephants on the planet. If this was destroyed, then the elephants would be able to defeat their giraffe slavers. In order to carry out his plan he needed a team of elephants willing to fight to reclaim their planet. Nine brave elephants came forward and each had a specific skill. There was Araha, a rather tall pachyderm. He was once the ruler of the elephant kingdom. He felt it was his duty to reunite the pachyderm kingdom. Boretusk was another tall elephant. He was a master fighter and had mastered the art of trunk blowing. If he ever was in trouble he could blow his trunk and the other elephants would come to help him. Grandoaf volunteered to go as well. He understood the threat of the golden leaf of power and knew that it must be destroyed.

The nine elephants gathered together to hold a meeting. Determined to reclaim their kingdom, they created a battle strategy, and decided to attack the Giraffe’s home city at dawn. At the appointed time, while all the giraffes were sound asleep, the comrades formed a line and marched ahead. The ground shook as they advanced, trembling under their footsteps. It wasn’t long before an alarm sounded in the giraffe city, and families fled. The giraffe leaders and soldiers scrambled to organize a defensive line. It was mass chaos in the city. They confronted
the elephant attack and were obviously confused by what was going on. Both lines stood facing each other, the giraffes sleepily staring, and the pachyderms ready to fight for their freedom. Araha stepped forward and held up the Golden Leaf. It glimmered like a star in the light of dawn. He waved it around, and a collective gasp came from the side of the giraffes.

The giraffes charged towards the elephants. The elephants charged towards the giraffes. The battle had begun. The nine elephants fought and violently threw giraffe after giraffe to the ground. The pachyderms were determined to win their kingdom back. The giraffes could sense the premature feeling of defeat come over them. The giraffes knew they needed help. They all looked backward to their last resort, Longlo, the king of the giraffe kingdom. Longlo came charging at the elephants. He was determined to reach Araha because he knew that was his biggest threat and that if he could get the golden leaf, the kingdom would remain the giraffes. Charging through the elephants, Longlo was gaining on Araha. He could see the golden leaf with his own two eyes. The other eight elephants tried to stop Longlo, but he could not be stopped. Longlo was so tall that he walked right over the top of the valiant pachyderms. In his pursuit of the golden leaf, Longlo stepped on and killed two of the elephants, including Boretusk. The death of Boretusk was a significant loss for the entire elephant family and a significant loss on the battlefield as they now had lost the ability to summon extra help if needed. It was down to eight elephants.

Longlo reached Araha. Longlo looked down upon Araha. Araha wrapped the golden leaf tightly in his trunk. After fighting with Longlo, Araha knew what he must do. He led Longlo into the water. Dragging him deeper and deeper into the stream, Longlo got stuck in the mud on the bottom. Araha knew this was his chance. He rushed out of the water and placed the golden leaf on the ground. Longlo watched in astonishment as he knew what was coming. Araha picked up a large boulder and dropped it on the golden leaf, shattering it into many pieces. Beams of light shot through all of the giraffes and they quickly turned into dust just as the leaf had done. The pachyderms had won and regained their land. Araha remained a legend and was once again ruler of his kingdom.

**Untitled**  By: Christina Ranick

Heaven haunts a weary heart of gold  
Pulled down for the sake of love  
Letting loose the fiery hounds of hell  
Hoping to catch a glimpse of that  
Which was lost all those years ago  
This tired heart of gold still searches  
Endless nights for a place called home
Golf Decision

By: Mike Feller, Mitul Gandhi, Bre Dunsworth, Joseph Kang, Kristin Hagen

As the top student in his high school class, Steve was expected to continue his education at a top university, maybe Harvard or Yale, and become a doctor like his father. Steve had different plans for himself. He never really liked the life sciences too much and he wasn’t the biggest fan of English and literature either, but Steve excelled in these subjects anyway. Throughout his life, Steve yearned to be a professional golfer, but he knew that he would never be good enough to achieve this goal. This did not stop Steve from choosing a career path where he would always be around his favorite game. His friends and teachers were amazed and his parents strongly disapproved when he decided to attend Rutgers University to major in golf course management. His parents feared that this would be a dead career path that would simply lead to working at a golf course. Being the stubborn and driven person Steve was, he knew that he would not settle for a career other than designing and developing golf courses. Steve ended up graduating from Rutgers with a degree in golf course management, but unlike most students in this field, Steve stayed at Rutgers to get a Bachelor’s degree in business.

Once Steve began looking for a job, he realized just how hard it would be find his dream job. About two months after he graduated, Steve finally was hired by a small Midwest golf course management company. This was in no way the job Steve envisioned; he always wanted to build professional type golf courses and all this company did was build easy 9 hole courses in small towns around the Midwest, but seeing as this was Steve’s only job offer, he knew that he must take it. Little did he know that this company was owned by one of the top golf course designers in the work, Greg Norman.

Greg Norman was the C.E.O of the major corporation Golf enterprises. He was looking for people with new ideas. He had a vision that would one day change the game of golf as everyone knew it. For this reason he was looking for a catalyst to get things going.

One day Steve was working his regular 9-5 when he saw Mr. Norman walk into his office. He thought to himself…no that couldn’t be him. Why would multibillionaire Greg Norman be in these parts of Madison. He got excited by the thought of him Mr. Norman being there but quickly realized that he was probably just seeing things. He continued working for another half hour then looked outside of his office window. He saw Mr. Norman again. This time he knew that he wasn’t just hallucinating; it really was him. Instant anxiety engulfed his whole body. Steve started to sweat profusely and his hand started to jitter. Under his desk he could not control his legs. As they shook, they kept bumping against the table. He could feel his water level slowly dropping as a puddle of his own sweat collected on the release papers he was in the process of signing.

At that very moment he saw Norman talking to someone. Mr. Norman pointed right at Steve’s office and proceeded to walk towards it. Steve had dreamed of this day all of his life but
he didn’t ever imagine he would be this nervous. Mr. Norman was closing in on Steve’s office
door. Steve quickly tried to think of an opening line. Nothing particular seemed to be good
enough. He was running out of time. Steve closed his eyes and the next voice he heard chilled
him to his core.

Greg Norman introduced himself, “Hi, I am Greg Norman and I think you and me will
make a great team.”

Steve’s voice box stopped working. He could not say anything; he could not think of
anything. Just silence…

He mustered a quiet hello, but it sounded more like a question than a greeting. How did
Greg know who he was? And what the heck did he mean by “great team”? Greg stuck out his
hand and Steve politely shook it, a confused look still on his face. “We have so much to talk
about,” Greg began. He turned and started to walk away, still chattering. Steve quickly jumped
up and followed. Heading towards a private meeting room, Greg closed the door behind Steve as
he slowly walked into the room.

“Have a seat. Are you thirsty?” Pressing the intercom button, Greg told his assistant to
get them some coffee and a dozen doughnuts. Seconds later, his order was rushed into the room
almost before he had even sat down. “You look surprised,” Greg said to Steve.

“Well, it’s not every day your boss that you have never met introduces himself to you and
tells you ‘we will make a great team’,” Steve explained.

Chuckling, Greg nodded. “This is true,” he agreed. “Well, I have heard so much about
you and all of your talent that has yet to be unleashed in this company. I have the perfect
opportunity for you, and I hope you are ready to jump at it.” Greg paused, letting the suspense
build.

“You and I are both going to build the most modern, biggest golf course in history, and
you will now personally be working for me.” Greg said. Steve was ecstatic. Before Greg could
even start talking about the requirements, Steve jumped and exclaimed, “Yes, of course! Yes!”
Greg chuckled at his enthusiasm to get started, but wanted to lay out the blueprints and location
before Steve said anymore. Greg began talking about how the course would be monitored 24/7
and how he had hired the best lawn care and architects to utilize all 100 acres of land. Steve had
only dreamed about an opportunity such as this and had plenty of ideas for Greg. All Steve
would do in his spare time was work on building his dream golf course; hopefully Greg would
share the same thoughts and like his work too. As Steve was about to discuss his ideas, Greg
announced the location of where he planned to build his golf course; it was his hometown! Steve
was thrilled to know that his hometown would become a big attraction and that he could return
there to work on his new project. Greg hesitated and said, “I hear you are familiar with the area
so I want to assign you to managing any situations that arise domestically.” The feeling of
euphoria hit him as Steve just agreed knowing nothing could go wrong in this situation. He had finally made it to where he wanted to be.

The next day as Steve was packing to leave for his hometown, he got a phone call from his parents. His dad called with some very upsetting news. The healthcare site that he had been working for would be closing down being forced to move to a different location. His dad also mentioned they would be moving a couple miles down from where their home was, but other people in the town were moving out. Steve was bewildered at the news. He finally realized what had happened. The golf land property he was in charge of, had been his entire hometown.

Steve was distraught. He knew that the offer was too good to be true. He would have to sacrifice his hometown and childhood for his dream job. This was definitely not worth the trade. Steve had a long talk with his father. Whenever Steve had to make a decision, he always had his dad listen to his pros and cons list. After talking to his father, Steve decided not to take the job offer from Mr. Norman. Although, it would be the perfect job and a great salary, the commitment and toll it would take on the community would not be worth it in the long run.

Later that night, Steve was feeling rather down about his decision to decline the job offer. He turned on the 9 o’clock news as he began to close his eyes.

The television sounded, “Breaking news, investor Greg Norman and associates arrested without bail for fraud!”

Steve jumped out of the chair.

“What?!,” he exclaimed. Apparently, Mr. Norman made his millions doing some “questionable investing.”

Steve went to bed with a sigh of relief that night.

“I have to get up early to go back to the old job at the golf course.”

**Soldiers’ End**

By Thomas Riedl

To war the brave young soldiers marched
Following orders to the bitter end
Onward to the beach
Onward up the hill
Onward into the breach
Onward toward the mill
Onward they ran until the wall
When the fire through the window gave them their end
Lori was irritated. She loved her new computer, but for some reason she was having trouble getting it to work correctly. Obviously when they set it up for her, they left some major command out—or something. Lori had to write two papers. One was for a simple class with a friendly teacher. If some of the functions didn’t operate correctly, she could explain it to the professor, and at the worst redo it. The other paper, however, was for Dr. Hidely, surely the meanest crank at the school. Half baked formatting was not going to work with her. What could Lori do? Normally she would tackle the hardest first, but that probably wouldn’t work here. Yes, she could write and revise, but on the other hand she could just get one paper out of the way while she waited for help.

But first, she had to get help. Who should she call? Mark was very knowledgeable about computers; she knew he could solve her problems. But he seemed too interested in her. Yes, the interest would insure he would come and help, but then he wouldn’t want to leave her alone to write the dreaded paper. And he would continue to be a pest.

Another alternative was Janie. She knew as much about computers as Mark, but Janie wasn’t exactly friendly. Would she be willing to drop anything to come to her aid. She too probably had a lot to do. It is bad enough to impose on a friend, but on someone who is indifferent, as best, to you?

A final possibility was Jason. He had a girl, and so would realize that she only wanted computer help. But his girlfriend, Cassey, was so jealous. She might think Lori was trying to steal Jason away from her. No, that was stupid. Wasn’t it? Well, Cassey had gotten into a few fights with other girls. Why was this so difficult? All she really wanted was computer help on a Sunday evening.

Lori sat there helpless. For minutes, she pondered who she could possibly call. She wiggled her toes, shook her leg, stretched her arms, twirled her hair, but she was still left bewildered. She knew that she would be unable to withstand Dr. Hidely’s wrath, so it was to her benefit to reach out for help, despite the possible impending dilemmas.

Lori wrote each name on five slips of paper, to enhance her probability stakes, and placed it in a baseball cap. As she held one hand with the cap, she reached her other hand and pulled out a slip of paper. On the slip of paper, were the scribbled letters, “Mark.” Lori quickly placed the paper back onto the nearby wastebasket, and thought to herself, “best two out of three.” She shook the cap, feeling around for a piece of paper, and drew one out. Again, the letters spelled out the name, “Mark.” For two additional times, Lori repeated the procedure of picking a name out of the hat, and each time, Mark came up as the solution. Lori thought to herself in disbelief, “Whoever created the statistics for probability is completely wrong! How is it possible to get Mark’s name four times when the probability of picking his name decreases with each subsequent time?!

With a big sigh, Lori sat in despair. “I guess Mark it is.” Reaching for her cell phone, she managed to get to the screen that held the number of the boy who would help her avoid school troubles, but might devour the love department of her life.

She dialed the number and let out a big sigh. She let the phone ring a few times and then finally she heard a “Hello.”

Lori said, “Hi uhh Mark? This is Lori.”

Mark: “LORI! Hey! Hi! How are you? What are you doing? Want to hang out?

Lori then explained the situation to Mark about her computer. Mark was very excited to even be talking to Lori in the first place. Lori just wanted to get her computer fixed. Mark said he could be over and come and help her fix her computer. The minute that Lori hung up the phone she heard the doorbell ring. Wow that was quick, Lori thought. Mark was already outside the door, brought flowers, and chocolates for Lori.
“I thought you might like these since you seem so frustrated with your computer!” Mark said. Lori said thanks and they went on to where her computer was. Mark immediately jumped at the computer, sat down and immediately started working on the computer. He kept talking about different commands, drives, programs. It was all jibberish to Lori. She just wanted the dumb thing to work. Next thing she knew, Mark exclaimed, “DONE!”

“Wow, you are already done?” Lori asked. Mark nodded his head and then went on to talk about what he did what was wrong with the computer and everything else that Lori was not interested in.

Now that the computer was fixed, the next challenge was to find a way to get Mark out of her house so she could finish this paper! So, she told Mark that she needed to work on Dr. Hidely’s paper. But as she expected, Mark pestered her with questions about the paper. Lori was so mad and just started typing. Remarkably, she found that it was really helpful to have Mark there while she typed. He would ask her questions that gave her new ideas. And before she knew it, her paper was done. No worries at all, and it looked perfect!

As she got started on the next paper, she glanced at the time and it was already five in the evening and simultaneously her stomach growled. How long had her stomach been growling? She really needed some dinner. Mark just continued to talk to her.

Mark babbled on, “There is this one place where there is a garden and it’s really pretty one. But it’s super cool because the waiters serve the customers in the greenhouse during the winter. We should go.”

What to do? Now Mark wanted to take her to an expensive and time-consuming restaurant! Lori realized this was her opportunity to get him home. She told him that she didn’t have enough time right now, but the offer was kind. But he wasn’t ready to give up, and offered to run home and get some quick microwave dinners. Lori was exhausted, her fridge was empty, and she really was tired of fast-food. Maybe she would be able to finish the next paper while he was gone? Lori agreed.

She finished the next paper, and sent her documents to her printer. She really finished that paper fast, or so she thought. Mark was gone for a whole hour. What a relief!

But then her documents didn’t print. Her printer was malfunctioning. Lori was very upset now. How could everything she needed break? Well, now she had no choice but to call Mark, see where he was, and get him to fix her printer.

She called his phone, but he wasn’t answering. As she paced around the house, she noticed some action happening down the street. There was an ambulance and...Mark’s car!!! Oh my goodness, what happened?! She ran outside immediately to see what just happened. There were two cop cars as well. She asked the cops what happened to Mark, and they told her that a drunk driver had hit Mark’s car head-on! “How could this have happened? It’s all my fault, it’s all my fault. If I hadn’t agreed when Mark said that he was going to get some frozen dinners, none of this would have happened!” Lori thought to herself.

She desperately searched for Mark to see how his condition was. He had blood streaming from the top of his head, his eyes were rolled back, and his body was completely limp. Her heart started to race because she was not sure if he would be able to make it out alive. There was a man taking Mark’s pulse. After what seemed like hours, he told her that he couldn’t find Mark’s pulse—that his heart stopped beating.

She could not believe it. There was no way that Mark just died because of her—because of her selfishness. It just didn’t seem real. She thought, “he was a friend that would have done anything for me, but would I have been able to reciprocate? It then hit me that I had lost a friend who basically sacrificed his life for me. He was a friend that went out of his way to make me happy. I wish I could have given him a chance and go on a date with him or something, but it’s too late now, too late....and for some time, my heart will feel heavy and I will regret not doing one good thing for Mark.”
New Start

By: Ashley Sutherland, R.J. Shaw, Justin Patterson and Samiha Badwan

It was Monday August 17 and today was Katie’s first day of high school at Rockwood Summit. She recently just moved and this school was new to her. Her only positive thought about going to this school was that she was starting at the beginning of the year and not transferring in in the middle of the semester. She was a junior in school and she had a little brother named Brendon who was a freshman. Since the move Katie and her brother had been very close because they spent the whole summer together because they did not know anyone else in town. They both loved to go to the park and use the vacant fields to play soccer and football and to run the track around the fields.

Three days before school started Brendon and Katie were playing football; her brother threw her a long pass and she was running to catch it when she tripped and fell flat on her face. She put her hand up to her head and felt the blood rushing out. When she looked up, a guy who appeared to be her age asked if she was okay. When he saw the blood rushing, he quickly took off his shirt and pressed it against her head to help stop the bleeding. By this time Brendon was kneeling on the ground next to her firing off questions to see if she was okay. She tried to stand up but she got dizzy and quickly sat back down. The guy who was helping her, who introduced himself as Ryan, offered to give them a ride home since she was too dizzy and Brendon wasn’t old enough to drive. Brendon said that was fine, and they both helped Katie up and helped her walk over to Ryan’s car.

It was a short five minute ride home from the park and the Ryan and Brendon helped her inside to the couch. Once they got Katie settle on the couch, Ryan asked Brendon where his parents were. Brendon told him that they were both at work but his mom would be home in a few minutes. Brendon told Ryan that he could wait with him until his mom got home and see what she decided to do. Ryan agreed to stay there. A few minutes later Katie and Brendon’s mom walked through the door. She saw Katie lying on the couch with a bloody T-shirt on her forehead and a strange guy sitting next to her. She looked at her son and asked what was going on. Brendon explained what had happened and how Ryan had helped Katie and got them home. Katie and Brendon’s mom said that they needed to go to the hospital and get a CT scan to make sure she didn’t have a concussion.

Ryan looked down at Katie and told her that he had better go, but Katie told him that she wanted him to come to the hospital with them. Katie was picked up by Ryan and carried to her mother’s car where she laid on his lap. Katie’s mom told Ryan to make sure that she didn’t fall asleep since it is extremely bad for people who might have concussions to fall asleep. Katie started to doze off on the ride there. Ryan shook her awake. He told her she had to stay awake because nobody wanted to see anything bad happen to her. Katie thanked him. In order to keep Katie awake, Ryan started asking questions about her. She would give short and to the point answers and give incoherent responses. They eventually arrived at the hospital and Katie
couldn’t stay up any longer. She passed out cold in Ryan’s arms and Ryan had to run into the emergency room with Katie. Ryan gave a short and to the point explanation, and before the nurse even heard CT scan, she called over a crash cart and a gurney. The nurses and doctor took Katie back into an operating room to stop the bleeding and bring her back awake. Brendon and his mom were absolutely losing it; they were crying and thinking of the worst case scenario. Ryan asked Katie’s mom for her husband’s phone number so he could call him and let him know where they were. Katie’s mom, Jackie, handed over her phone. Ryan called up Katie’s dad, Alex, and informed him of the situation that was happening.

Katie’s dad finally arrived at the hospital, and Ryan told him everything that had happened. All anyone could do was wait. As the time passed, Ryan told them that he was going to have to leave. However, his car was back at Katie’s home. Reluctantly Katie’s dad agreed to drive him to his house to pick up his car but not before Ryan had their phone number so he could find out how Katie was. By the time Katie’s father returned to the hospital, the physicians had come back with good news. Katie’s concussion was mild, and although they wanted to keep her in the hospital overnight, they thought there would be no long term repercussions.

The next day Katie was able to come home, and she was told that if she was very careful, she would be able to attend her first day of school on time two days hence. When Ryan called the next day, she was able to talk to him and thank him for saving her. Ryan was delighted that all turned out well. He offered to drive her to school on her first day and show her around. Katie was delighted. Her first day at Rockwood Summit really was the first day of a new chapter of her life in so many ways—maybe not all of them would be bad.

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By: Ashley Sutherland

Juicy and tasty
Makes good smoothies
A fruit sold at stores
Good to eat at anytime
Even better dipped in CHOCOLATE!
Deadly Fart

By: Peter Ho

It was a sunny freezing cold day in the arctic tundra of the Himalayan Mountains. There were over a hundred eager students gathered at the bottom of the mountain waiting for the internationally accredited mountain-climbing expert’s speech on surviving in the Himalayan Mountains. Guess who the mountain-climbing expert was. Me! I was given this huge honor by the Mountain Climbing Association to give this lecture and was so excited to do so. I got up on the podium and begin talking, talking about my past mountain climbing experiences, and about the trials and tribulations I’ve had to go through. I graduated first in my class from Harvard University with a PHD in Mountain-Climbtology, and was well experienced in the field of mountain climbing. Wining hundreds of prestigious awards for my work, I was by far the best candidate to give this speech to these eager young students.

I was doing my speech completely fine, everyone was staring at me with interest as I talked about my experience. All of sudden I felt pain in my stomach. I tried to ignore it and resume my speech, but it gradually got worse and worse. This pain worked down into my pelvical region. Before I knew it I had this huge urge to fart. I thought to myself, “Come on Pete, you can hold it until you’re done with your speech, just hold it. You can do it!!” I tried but the urge became stronger and stronger, and to make matters worse, I was nowhere near done finishing my speech. I couldn’t hold it and decided to just let it rip. The sound that was produced from my fart had to be a world record for the loudest fart in the history of loud farts because the sound echoed all throughout mountains. It was like the sound of an airhorn going off, echoing all throughout the Himalayan Mountains. Everyone started cracking up at my passing of gas, and I laughed with them because I’m not going lie, it was pretty funny.

We’re all having a good laugh when all of a sudden I heard a rumble from the distance. This rumbling got louder and louder and I looked up and saw a huge plow of snow making its way down the mountain at enormous speed. One of the students yelled, “Avalanche!!!” and everyone started sprinting away from the mountain. The plow of snow was too fast however and buried me and everyone in snow. Only a select few survived. Who knew a simple fart could produce such chaos!
Charlotte’s Future (post *Pride and Prejudice*)

By: Helen Jang

“It’ll be back by dinnertime,” said Charlotte, as she stepped out the door.

“Tell my cousin to bring her family over to our house someday!” Mr. Collins replied, waving back and blowing affectionate kisses at his wife.

Charlotte did not reply, but instead, instantly turned around and shut the door. Her feet were moving at a fast pace, as if she was trying to get away from a haunted house. Slowing down, she walked past the carriage and carriage driver who was waiting for her ever-so-naturally.

“Walking again, madam?” asked the carriage driver, worriedly.

Charlotte gave the carriage driver a swift nod, and a soft smile. The woman hurried out of her yard, and headed down to the town. News that Elizabeth has become pregnant with her third child had reached the Collins’ household, and it was yet another excuse for Charlotte to leave the house. Although Mr. Collins prepared a carriage for Charlotte every time she wanted to go somewhere, Charlotte preferred walking, as it gave her more freedom. It was also a way that she could avoid getting back home so early. Taking long walks was not only a great way of interacting with the nature, but also Charlotte’s favorite way of keeping herself out longer.

As Charlotte enjoyed the smell of grass, she began skipping. Even if she was now in her early thirties, she felt fresh as a daisy. Unlike five years ago, she was married, and was no longer an old, unmarried lady, no longer trapped in the social web. Her marriage was a hasty one, but it didn’t mean that she did not put any thoughts into it. Elizabeth told her that she would never be happy, but Charlotte thought it may have been one of the best choices she made in her life. Happiness was not what she lived for. Charlotte had to become realistic when it came to marriage. If she had lost the opportunity to marry Mr. Collins, she might have not been able to marry at all. No one else could have been a better option, not that she would even get proposed by someone.

“Hello, Mrs. Collins!” shouted the baker’s wife from far away, holding a bucket of bread to be displayed. Charlotte waved back.

“I will be back to purchase another batch of your delicious biscuits, Mrs. Edwards,” said Charlotte, politely.

The bakery loved Charlotte, as she was a regular customer. Charlotte would sometimes leave the house, saying that she was craving some biscuits as an excuse. Mr. Collins fell for it every time. By now he thought that his wife was very into biscuits and taking walks. He would never think that Charlotte was leaving the house so often on purpose.

After a quite long walk, Charlotte was able to sight the Darcy’s mansion. As she stepped into the pathway leading to the gates, she saw Elizabeth, walking towards her friend with her two children following her.
“Lizzy!” Charlotte shouted happily. “Hello, Sophie, and oh! Look at you, Ben. You’ve grown so much since the last time I saw you!”

“Good afternoon, Mrs. Collins!” chanted the two children.

“Charlotte, it’s so good to see you!” spoke Elizabeth, beaming the gentle smile of hers.

“It’s so good to see you too,” replied Charlotte, “You’re the only one who calls me Charlotte now, after all.”

The four went into the mansion. Elizabeth and Charlotte chatted for hours, drinking tea. Charlotte updated Elizabeth with weekly gossips as always, and Elizabeth asked Charlotte if she had any plans for children. Charlotte changed the subject, and Elizabeth just stared at her friend sympathetically. She wanted to tell Charlotte how surprisingly such a great dad Mr. Darcy was, and how he started smiling and laughing more often, even out in the public. But Elizabeth held back. She knew Charlotte was content with her married life, but still did not approve of Mr. Collins. The two talked until sunset. By the time Charlotte stepped out of the house, it was dark. Elizabeth asked Charlotte once again, if she would like to get on a carriage. Charlotte denied, saying that she was used to the night air. Elizabeth sighed, kissing her friend goodbye.

Charlotte looked back as she was stepping out of the Darcy’s property. “What a beautiful family,” she thought. She turned her head around, and started heading home.

Letter  By: Kayla Gray

Curly Jo,
I am strong but I miss you more every day,
I wonder if Heaven is really that far away.
I hear your obnoxious giggles
I see you running down the lane
I am strong but I miss you more every day.
I pretend you’re listening, in hopes that you really are.
I feel you riding with me when I am all alone in my car.
I touch the yellow roses.
I wonder what you could have been.
I am strong but I miss you more every day.
I understand that he takes the best
I say it even with the heaviness in my chest
I dream to have you with us
I cry when I think what if...
I am strong but I miss you more every day
-Kayla
They Did It in Harry Potter
By: Tia Joseph

Sarah and the rest of her family were waiting at the train station in London. There had been talk for quite a while about taking a huge family trip out of the country. Finally it was happening. Both her Dad’s sisters had come, as well as her Mom’s brother. Sarah’s uncle and aunts each had one or two children of their own between the ages of six and twelve; so loud chaos ensued at the train station as was expected. Sarah was the oldest of her cousins, so she typically remained to herself as she could only handle so much of her cousins’ energy for certain periods of time.

Madison and Charlotte were playing a hand clapping game, while Billy and Michael seemed to be dueling with each other using imaginary swords. Sarah looked over at Charlie, and of course he seemed to be off in his own little world. He was the youngest of the cousins. Initially Sarah felt slightly sympathetic for him, as the older cousins failed to play with him. She then realized he always seemed to be having the time of his life, due to his large imagination. He was constantly playing in his imaginary world. The adults were all talking amongst themselves. They seemed to be having some sort of heated political debate. Sarah was quiet in general, and an introvert by nature, so she sat on a bench and drowned out the noise of her loud cousins by reading a mystery novel she found to be quite captivating.

All of a sudden, Sarah’s 6 year old cousin Charlie was heard yelling at the top of his lungs running at the speed of light away from the family. Charlie’s mother yelled, “Charlie, what on Earth?!” Before anyone could have predicted what was about to happen, Charlie had run himself straight into a brick pillar. Horrified, Charlie’s parents ran to him, finding him to be knocked out.

Charlie’s father immediately called 911 and pleaded for someone to arrive to the scene as quickly as possible. The ambulance had finally arrived, and took Charlie to the hospital. The police questioned how the accident had happened, and Charlie’s parents tried to explain how their son had simply run himself into the brick wall. The police looked skeptical of this odd explanation, while Charlie’s parents stood helpless, as they did not quite understand themselves why in the world their son would do such a thing. Charlie’s mom thought to herself sarcastically, “Was that one of the rules that I should’ve taught my son, to not run into brick walls?” She continued to think like this, baffled by the complexities of parenting that had been brought to her. Charlie was their first and only child.

After some time spent in the hospital, Charlie had finally woken up. Sarah was in there reading. The rest of her family was in the waiting room, aside from Charlie’s mother who was also in the room with Sarah and Charlie. When Charlie had finally awaken, Sarah, very curious of his actions asked him, “Charlie, why the heck did you run into that pillar?” He simply answered while shrugging, “They did it in Harry Potter.”
The Question Game

By: Maryanne Lee

Julie and Dan were on a fourteen hour airplane flight to Korea. They ate, they napped, they watched movies, they read magazines, and did every little possible thing one can do on an airplane. Yet, only seven hours passed by, and they still had seven hours left to kill.

Dan grabbed his cell phone and went on the internet, attempting to find a game to play with Julie. As a stewardess passed by, Dan hid his cell phone and pretended to act normal, only to be met by a snicker from his side.

“Your normal is absolutely unnatural. Your lips begin to quiver, your eyes start wandering around, you tap your fingers, you whistle, and you cross your legs. You are so easy. No wonder your history teacher knows when you lie.” Julie laughed.

Dan gave her a glare and continued to look on his phone. After minutes of searching, he came across a question game that involved money. From reading the short set of instructions, Dan became intrigued as he was guaranteed to win.

“Julie, let’s play a question game. When you can’t answer a question, you give me one dollar. When I can’t answer a question, I’ll give you one dollar.”

Julie, tired from doing nothing on the airplane, simply wanted to just take a nap. Dan continued to insist on playing the game, as he knew history was her weakness. Julie continued to refuse, until Dan changed the rules.

“Ok, Julie. If you can’t answer a question, you give me one dollar. But, when I can’t answer a question, I’ll give you twenty dollars. You can stop the game at any time.” Dan was over-confident that there was not a question he could not answer. From sports to makeup, he knew it all, the latter because of his sister and his mom.

Julie finally agreed. Dan said, “I will start with an easy one. Who was the sixteenth president of the United States?”

Julie exclaimed, “That’s not easy! You know I don’t know much about history!”

Dan replied with a smirk on his face, “Okay, you owe me a dollar. And it was Abraham Lincoln by the way, you doofus! Your turn!” In his head, he thought, this is going to be easy!

Julie thought for a second and asked, “What brand shoes am I wearing?”

Dan looked down and saw a small L and V letter attached together and proclaimed, “Louis Vuitton. And I’m not gay for knowing that, like that guy from Legally Blonde.”

“Alright Julie, here’s your question. What year did World War I end?” Dan questioned.

“19…” Julie hesitated and finally replied, “I’ll just give you your damn dollar.”
“1918. Man, where were you during history? In lala land?” Dan snickered.

Julie, with a smile on her face, asked, “Alright Dan. You think you know everything. Well here’s a question for you! What goes up a mountain with three legs and comes down with eight legs?”

Dan, confused by the question, began to think. The only thing that had eight legs was an octopus, but what had three legs? He asked meekly, “an octopus that magically grew five of his eight legs back?” Julie shook her head at his answer. Dan whipped out his cell phone and began to google the possibilities, only to come back with no plausible solution. “What is the answer?” he asked Julie.

Julie said, “Okay Dan. I owe you a dollar for your question, making a total of three dollars. But, you owe me twenty for not answering my question correctly, so that makes me have a net profit of seventeen dollars. I want to stop playing now and am going to take my nap, goodnight.”

Dan with an angry face said, “that’s not fair!”

Julie replied, “hey, I played by the rules. And if you didn’t know, I read about this under a blonde joke where the guy thinks he could dupe the blonde. Only, the blonde outsmarts him in the end just like how I did to you. I was only playing dumb in the beginning to not raise any suspicion.”

With that, Julie closed her eyes with a smile on her face and Dan sat there with bitter marked all over his face.

The Best Season of All       Acrostic

By Samiha Badwan

Swimming at the beach and laying
Under the stars at night
Making fresh lemonade and the smell of
Mowing the lawn
Everything about summer is perfect
Rest assured that summer is nearing
A Painter’s Plate

By: Puja P. Patel

Sophia woke, startled by the sound of her alarm clock. It was six in the morning. She groaned and hit her head back on to the fluffy white pillow, almost knocking into the headboard of the bed. It was yet another day at the incredibly boring camp her parents had sent her to for the summer. Sophia slowly climbed out from under the warmth of her blanket, still groggy from the lack of sleep. As she got ready for the day she thought about how she had ended up there.

It was late one evening and Sophia’s parents had just gotten back from work. They saw her sitting on the couch watching old reruns of Gilmore Girls. They started lecturing her about the importance of studying, and how she shouldn’t be wasting precious time watching TV. Sophia was an artist, and she didn’t care much for studying and going to school. Her parents’ assumed that art was nothing but a hobby. They didn’t expect her to pursue it as a career because the life of an artist contained an unstable future. As they argued over how Sophia was throwing her life away by chasing after unrealistic dreams, an idea occurred to her mother. She decided to make Sophia attend an art camp. Her parents decided that if she performed well then they would support her dream. However, if she did not, she would have to follow an unwavering path.

Although most kids would be thrilled to get an opportunity to do something they love, Sophia was not. She wasn’t quite ready for others to see her artwork and was nervous about hearing others’ opinions. However, knowing that this was the only chance she would get to prove her strengths, she silently left.

As Sophia finished getting dressed, she hoped that today was going to be different from all the rest. Considering the fact that the final day of the camp was nearing, she wanted to do something more than they had already done. They had only learned about art, rather than practicing and perfecting it. She wanted to have something to prove to her parents that she was good enough. Sophia walked out of her room prepared for whatever the day may bring her.

When Sophia arrived at her class, she looked around and saw how everyone had distinct differences with the rest. This was something she did not see at home very often. The class also sat in silence, something that she was definitely not used to. Everyone preferred to keep to themselves. When the teacher walked in, he had a look of excitement on his face and yelled, “Good morning class!” Sophia rolled her eyes, knowing that this was never a good sign and that he probably had some crazy idea to make today more “fun” than the last. To kick off the day, the teacher assigned everyone a single project. It was to find something that was meaningful to them or gave some sort of hidden meaning to their lives and then create it. It didn’t matter how; they could sketch, draw, paint, or sculpt it. All they had to do was reinvent it. She finally heard some murmurs going through the class as people discussed what they were going to do for the project.

Sophia never liked to paint with a topic. She preferred to paint something that she suddenly saw and wanted to recreate. Sophia’s mind grew still as she drew blank on what to paint.

Sophia walked around; art supplies in hand, the sound of pebbles crunching beneath her feet. She thought hard about what she could draw but never coming up with something good.
enough. Her teacher had given the class the rest of the day off to find that one thing that was significant to them. As she looked around, she saw the beautiful scenery and thought about how easy it would be to illustrate it. Sophia thought to herself about how any artist there could recreate it, capture the moment in its stillness. But this time, she wanted to find something different, something unique.

Sophia decided to hike further up the mountain. A trail winded upward through the aspen trees whose leaves were a deep emerald green of summer. While deep in thought, a bird whipped past her and chirped with delight. The sun touched the tips of the trees as it descended into the lava-lamp sky. The mountain felt as though it was growing every minute with every step she took. Holding her art supplies in her arms, Sophia finally reached a good spot where she could begin her artwork. However, she was still unable to figure out what she was going to draw. The reason she had gone through so much trouble to leave the camp area was because she needed to be inspired. She needed to come to a quiet place that would encourage and motivate her. Thus, Sophia began to lay out all of her art supplies. She placed newspaper on the ground so if she spilled, she wouldn’t ruin the perfection of nature. She mounted her easel and white canvas on top. Just as she was doing this, Sophia tripped over something and landed on her hands and knees. She turned around to see what it was and noticed that it was a broken art pallet. It was not completely broken, just oddly chipped on the edge, making it look like an ordinary plate. Sophia wondered why it had caught her eye. And unexpectedly, Sophia knew exactly what she was going to paint.

There was a strong fragrance of pine and the light whispers of the wind passed her. The warmth of the breeze embraced Sophia as she finally set to work on her masterpiece. She picked up her paintbrush and began careful strokes to recreate the broken painter’s pallet. As she did this she thought about how it looked more like a plate then anything else. And this is what gave it meaning. It signified how even if something is broken, all is not lost. There still must be some use for it: it can still survive. Although it was broken, the pallet can just be seen as different now. In a sense, the art pallet was similar to her because even if it was seen as useless, it still had something valuable about it. Through the harsh gusts of winds and buckets of rain that have poured, the pallet survived, with nothing but a crack. And along the way, it changed. It was altered, and yet it is still an object that is necessary and useful. Sophia knew that if she pursued art, she could get through the storms. She might get bumped and bruised along the way, she may even get a small crack, but she knew that it was well worth the journey if in the end she got what she yearned for.
Death Race

By: Justin Patterson

I can hear the crowd cheering from the locker room. They are screaming at the top of their lungs and rooting for their favorite drivers. The season has been long and rough, but it has finally come down to the last race of the year. It is between me and four other drivers in a death race to become the world-wide champion. The race is fifty miles long and takes place in a desert setting, a torrential downpour setting, a blizzard setting, and a sandstorm setting. The settings of races are determined by the elite eight; the eight previous champions of the World-Wide Death Race. The champions are in a control room with a state of the art weather simulation system. That’s all anyone really knows about the control room. No one knows how it works, where it came from, or how to cheat the control room. In fact, not knowing is what makes part of racing in the simulated environments entertaining. On top of all that, each car is outfitted differently and to find out which car each driver gets there is a drawing. The drawing does not occur until all drivers are out in the pit. The guard comes over to signal it is time to head towards the pit and draw my card to determine which car I will race with.

We walk down a long narrow hallway and as we reach the end the doors open to reveal the bright day light. I can see the other drivers walking out from the locker rooms on each of the other four openings in the stadium. We all converge towards the back of the stadium where the pit is located. Not a single one of us says a word to each other. I don’t even say anything to Brian, my old team mate and best friend. We both know that one of us will not make it out alive. The first driver picks a card from the bowl and gets a GT-R with a temporary electromagnetic pulse attachment. The next driver picks an SLR with micro-rocket weapon attachment. Next, an S7 with an oil slick attachment is picked. It is now Brian’s turn to pick and he gets an R8 with a rear deployable mine. It is finally my turn to pick and I receive an LF-A with four small gun attachments hidden in the headlights and bottom of the front bumper. I feel like that would be useful for destroying Brian’s mine or blowing up the GT-R’s micro-rocket attachment. Once we finish drawing the cars, each one is rolled out to the starting line. All five cars are shiny and brand new.

We all casually walk up to our cars and hop in. On the inside I am screaming with excitement being able to drive an LF-A. Unfortunately, the excitement is short-lived under the deadly circumstances. Shot by shot is fired into the air until there is a total of five shots fired. On the fifth shot I put the pedal to the floor and fly from the starting line. The S7 is out in front for the first ten miles followed by the GT-R, SLR, Brian and then me. I am trying to stay away from Brian’s tail for fear of being blown to bits by his rear mine. Once we hit about mile seventeen, the GT-R decides to use its EMP to knock the S7 out of first. The S7 starts to spin out and shoots out its oil slick. The GT-R passes by without a scratch while the S7 smashes into the SLR, and the oil slick causes Brian and I to slide off of the road almost into the small river created from the downpour.
I regain control of the LF-A and pass up Brian who is struggling to get back on the road. The SLR shoots one of its micro-rockets at the S7 completely demolishing it. It’s definitely down to four drivers now and maybe three since the SLR’s engine is badly damaged. The GT-R is about a mile and a half ahead of all of us and stays that way until about mile twenty-nine. That’s when the GT-R starts to slip up from the blizzard. I cannot see anything including the cars behind me or in front of me. I would most likely be better off driving blind at this point. All of a sudden I see red tail lights off to the side of the road; the GT-R looked like it had been upside down and for a lengthy period of time since it was covered in snow. I am now in first place and with less than twenty miles left until the finish line I feel like I got this.

All of a sudden, Brian and the SLR quickly pass me while I cherish the downfall of the GT-R. I shouldn’t have celebrated victory so early. Once we get to mile forty-two, things start to get interesting. We are all at least within one car length of each other so all of our power-ups are basically useless since the weapons point straight ahead. Well the elite eight decide to make the race a bit more interesting with a remote controlled target car. It has guns on every side, rockets, and an EMP. To take it on alone would be insane and deadly. We know we have to work together in order to take it down. The SLR sneaks up on its rear and shoots a rocket at the car; the car shoots a rocket back and blocks the attack. The car then shoots out the front tire of the SLR causing it to fly in the air and land on the side of the road.

It’s now up to Brian and me to demolish this controlled car. Brian passes the car just enough so his back end is next to the side of the car. Brian deploys his mine and no more than a second later I use my guns to blow it up. The blast from the mine sends Brian hurling forward and at the same time it sends the rouge car up in flames. I cannot believe that the improvised explosion actually worked. There was only a quarter mile left in the race by the time we destroyed the car, and Brian and I were neck and neck. Neither of us had any weapons left, just our skills. Unfortunately for Brian, the explosion nearly destroyed his engine so little by little he fell behind. By the time we reached the finish line, Brian’s front bumper was at my front wheels. It was a close and amazing race, but I pulled it off. I became the Worldwide Death Race Champion.

Feel the G

By: Justin Patterson

The engine roars loud
As the monster quickly speeds
Through the city streets
As I walked home after school that day, I was just around the corner from my house when I heard the soft pitter-patter of paws trailing behind me. I paused for a moment and the sound stopped. As I continued on my way, the noise continued, and I stopped yet again. This time I turned around and glanced. Nothing was following me. I had expected a dog or puppy, or just a random cat making its way across the street. Then I decided to look down, and at my feet sat a small kitten, with little sooty paws and big blue eyes. I blinked at it for a moment. The little thing was so tiny, I could hardly believe it. If I hadn’t been aware of its presence, I probably would have stepped on it and felt really guilty. I turned and went on my way. The pitter-pattering continued and I glanced back at it. “Why the heck are you following me?” I asked it, and got a tiny little mew in response. I wasn’t particularly fond of cats. In fact, I hated them. Even so, this kitten kept on following me; its tiny little legs stretching as far as they could to keep up. I stopped abruptly, spun on my heel, and picked it up by the scruff. “Quit following me, hairball!”

Look at me! I’m yelling at a cat! I crouched down and released the kitten, who just sat there and continued to stare up at me with those giant ocean blue eyes. Why today of all days? And why a cat? I glared at it, then put my backpack on the ground and unzipped it a little. The kitten climbed right in and I groaned. “Fine, have it your way, fur ball.” I stood up and walked away, backpack and kitten in tow. I wasn’t too thrilled about the cat hitching a ride, but I had to admit, it was kind of cute.

As I made my way home with the cat riding in my backpack, I heard a meow. Meow after meow spouted from that cat’s mouth. For someone who wasn’t fond of cats to begin with, the noise started to get rather annoying. I figured that it was probably hungry, so I stopped and sat my bag gently on the ground. I searched through my backpack and found some leftover chips from lunch. The chips may have been too hard for it to chew quickly but after working on it for a while, the cat finally got it chewed up and swallowed. The cat went back in my bag and we made our way back home.

Once we got home, I got up to my room, sat the cat on my bed and looked at it. I felt like I was studying it as if I were going to have a final exam over the external anatomy of a cat the next day. “What am I going to do with you?” I didn’t dare tell my mom that there was a cat in the house. She was allergic and hated the idea of any type of animal living in our house – furry or otherwise. I knew I had to keep the cat hidden, preferably in my room where I could keep an eye on it. I thought to myself about all of the supplies I would need if I was going to keep this little thing. I thought of other people who may
want to keep it, considering for a second if any of my friends would take it. I thought of putting up “lost animal” posters around town on poles and windows. Honestly, I had no idea what I was doing.

Before I knew it, I was beginning to get attached to the cat and I knew I couldn’t just throw the poor thing back outside by itself. What if it got ran over? What if someone took it and abused it? What if it got put in a shelter? After picturing all of these scenarios in my mind and looking down at the ball of fur curled up on my bed, I knew that I would keep it. But I swore to myself that I would not tell a soul. I made my way down to the local Petco to get a litter box, kitty litter, a collar, and some play toys. I never checked if the cat was a male or female, but I got a pink collar anyway. I looked at the time. It was 5:30! Mom would be home by now.

What would she say when she saw me walk in with a cat and a bag of supplies from Petco?

Once I got home, I fed the cat. I was surprised that it even knew how to use the litter box properly. As soon as my mom got home, she strolled into my room without knocking and freaked out upon seeing the cat. “How could you!” she screeched, “You know I’m allergic to cats!”

“But, mom,” I replied back, “I couldn’t just leave the poor thing outside all alone. It’s so cute and cuddly and it didn’t trigger my allergies either so maybe it won’t trigger yours!” After a few hours, even my mom couldn’t resist how adorable it was. Yet, it had a knack of going near my boots a lot. We decided to name it Puss.

The next day I got up early to take care of Puss, only to find that she had disappeared. I looked everywhere for that cat, but I had no luck finding her. I laid out some food for her and got ready for school. Surely the cat could not have gone far. School was as boring as ever that day, because all I wanted to do was go home and look for my cat. Finally after a long day of school, I ran home, eager to find Puss. I threw open the door, dashed inside, and dropped my backpack. “Puss” I called out, “where are you?” The house was silent. Not a single peep. Obviously not getting a reply, I went up to my room and searched through everything, looking underneath and behind all my furniture, and leaving no pillow unturned. I didn’t have any luck there, so I tried looking in the rest of the house. Finally when I thought I had lost my precious new pet, I walked past the door, and there was Puss, fast asleep in one of my boots.
A Bad Day
By: Thomas Riedl

Damn it’s cold tonight Bob thought to himself, as he opened the door of the IHOP, a rush of cold air and snowflakes met his face. He had stopped the IHOP in on his way to his parent’s house. It had been a rough day for Bob, his wife left him, he lost his job and his house had a tree fall on it. He stopped in the IHOP because whenever he had a rough day he knew they would always be open, and their pancakes were so good. But that night the pancakes weren’t so great. The chef at IHOP was new and managed to start a fire in the kitchen before he arrived and they had to close the kitchen, so all Bob could get was fruit. After his lousy meal he was walking to his car and he noticed a kitten in the parking lot. It was freezing cold out and Bob decided that he would at least try and do something nice and help the kitten out even though the day had been one of the worst in his life. At least this way I can feel like I’m not entirely worthless. He spent a good twenty minutes looking for this kitten in the cold.

“Here kitty, kitty, kitty,” Bob said, trying to find the kitten that ran off. Stupid cat, why do I always end up feeling sorry for cute things. Bob kept walking around the parking lot looking for the kitten. “Where did you go,” he muttered to himself. Getting frustrated, Bob checked one last time under the nearest car. While leaning down he tried calling out to it again, “here kitty, kitty, kitty,” but nothing was under the car. “can I help you,” said a voice from behind Bob, startling him. “Oh I’m sorry,” Bob said as he stood up from the ground, “I wasn’t trying to scare you or anything, I was just looking for this -.” Bob turned around and was staring right into the chest of a massive brute of a man. Oh God, I’m gonna die, I’m gonna die, I’m gonna die, Bob thought to himself. Oh no, I don’t wanna piss this guy off, he seems upset already. I’ll just apologize and get out of his way Bob thought to himself. “Look sir, I’m sorry, this was just a huge misunderstanding. You see there was this cat, and I thought I saw it run under your car.” “I don’t care about a damn cat under my car buddy,” the brute said, “In fact, I don’t care for you sneekin around my car all secret like. Now, just to make sure you didn’t see anything under my car here why don’t ya look again.” The brute reached forward and grabbed Bob by his jacket, lifting him off of the ground, please don’t kill me Bob thought. Then the brute threw Bob on the ground and stepped on his back. “do you see anything under my car?” “nnnnhhhh” was all Bob could reply since the man was crushing his body with his foot. “what was that friend? I couldn’t hear what you said.” The said again, grinding his foot into Bob’s back. “Nnnnuuuhh, nnooo, NOO!” Bob screamed finally getting the words out of his mouth. “Good,” laughing a bit, “now don’t let me catch you snooping around my car again,” and with that he gave Bob a nice kick in the ribs, stepped over him and drove his car out of the IHOP parking lot. Bob was left there covered in grey snow from the ground. His back was killing him because of the weight from the brute. Bob slowly sat up and looked around the parking lot. Nobody was around to see what had happened to Bob, then as if on cue Bob felt something brush up against the arm he was using to support himself. He looked down and there was the kitten, happy as could be. It didn’t know what had happened to Bob and it didn’t really care because Bob was warm. “Oh look, it’s you” Bob said to the kitten. “The crap that I went through to find you,” Bob chuckled to himself not even believing what had just happened to him. “Come on kitty,” he said as he picked up the cat, “let’s go home.”
Mystery at Hogwarts

By: RJ Shaw

Daniel, Emma, and Rupert’s history class decided they wanted to study abroad. Their teacher, Mr. Lipton, told the class that they were studying in Scotland. He said that he found a castle to stay in that also was the school itself. Everyone’s parents agreed, and the beginning of summer the class flew off to Scotland to study abroad.

One summer’s evening, Daniel, Emma, and Rupert were exploring Hogwarts castle. They knew they shouldn’t be venturing outside their common room because of all the disappearances that had been happening around the castle, but these three never listened. Not even to Professor Dumbledore. This particular evening happened to mark the one month anniversary that Tom had gone missing, but Rupert’s sister, Bonnie, was the first to disappear. The next person to go was Tom. The list just kept going on and on.

Daniel, Emma, and Rupert set out in search of their missing friends. But little did they know they were being watched. They didn’t notice the eyes in the paintings move as they walked through the corridors. They were in such a heated argument about where to go search for their friends.

“I say we look for them in the girl’s bathroom. Everything that goes missing turns up in there.” stated Emma.

“If everything that goes missing turns up in the girl’s bathroom, wouldn’t they have all shown up by now? I mean come on, Emma. Use your brain.” argued Daniel.

“Dude, lay off my girlfriend. She can’t help it if she isn’t smart. She has the looks.” said Rupert, trying to smooth over the argument and flirt with Emma at the same time.

“I am not your girlfriend! And I am too smart! I am smarter than both of you combined!” screamed Emma. She stormed off into the girl’s bathroom. When she stopped in the bathroom, she didn’t expect to see Professor McGonagall in there.

“Professor McGonagall, what are you doing in here?” asked Emma. Professor McGonagall didn’t respond. She seemed transfixed on something on one of the faucets. Emma walked up to where Professor McGonagall was standing to see what was such a big deal. Then she saw what she was staring at. It was a snake carving. Only the snake carving was moving.

Daniel and Rupert ran into the girl’s bathroom yelling at Emma, “Seriously? Did we really make you that mad?” Then they saw Professor McGonagall. “Oh, sorry Professor McGonagall. We didn’t mean to barge into the girl’s bathroom. We were just looking for Emma.” said the boys in unison.

“Shut up you nitwits! The sink is moving!” yelled Emma.

“What? Sinks don’t move.” argued Rupert.
“You wanna bet?” countered Emma.

Daniel and Rupert stepped forward and saw the sink slowly moving outward. “What the? What is going on?” replied the boys.

Emma ignored them. She stared into the dark hole forming in the middle of the girl’s bathroom. “Please tell me again, why did we choose to come here for to study abroad?” questioned Emma.

The hole in the girl’s bathroom had fully opened up. All the sinks had moved away from their original position in the center of the bathroom. Now the sinks lined the giant hole in the center. Daniel, Emma, and Rupert all peered into what seemed to them a dark abyss. “What do you think is down there?” asked Daniel.

“Daniel, you do not want to know what is in this horrible chamber. No good can come of this opening. I want all three of you to leave immediately.” warned Professor McGonagall.

The trio looked at each other, then at the hole in the middle of the girl’s bathroom. They were about to turn away when the heard a clank. “What was that?” asked Emma, frightened.

“Cover your eyes!” screamed Professor McGonagall. She pulled out what seemed to the trio to be a carved stick of some sort. “Get away, you foul beast! Stupify!” screamed Professor McGonagall.

The trio looked bewildered. They had no idea what was going on. They covered their eyes and tried to run only to fall into the gaping hole. The fall seemed endless. Once they landed, they looked around. “This is disgusting!” shrieked Emma. The place was covered in gigantic piles of bones and long pieces of snake’s skin.

“What is this place? It looks like some sort of giant snake lives here.” stated Rupert. He looked around and noticed a pile of bones that had blue bows by it. His sister Bonnie always wore blue bows in her hair. “Is that? It can’t be.” gasped Rupert.

“I doubt it is Rupert. She isn’t dead. We will find her.” said Daniel reassuringly.

As the trio continued to walk through what they concluded to be a chamber of some kind, they found more and more clues that they hoped were leading them towards finding their missing friends. Finally they stopped in what appeared to be the center of the chamber. There were snake statues all around. There was one path that led straight to a creepy face that all the professors called Salazar Slytherin. At last, they found what they were searching for! They had found their friends.

“Look! There they are! Bonnie, Tom, Evanna, Matthew, Katie, Devon, and Alfred are all there!” said Daniel with excitement. They all three ran towards their friends, but once they got to them, they realized that they were unconscious.

“What’s going on?” asked Emma. They looked around. No one was there to help them. So they set back into the tunnels. As they did so, they heard an evil cackle. “Did you hear that?” asked Emma, very quietly as if she were whispering.
“Yeah. I think it came from this direction.” commented Rupert. The trio followed the noise for what seemed like forever until they reached the center of the chamber again.

“We just went in a giant circle!” complained Emma. They looked for their friends, but they were gone. “Wait, what happened to everyone? This is getting really suspicious.” said Emma.

_Hahahahahahahahahahahahahahaha_

“There’s that cackling again. This is freaking me out!” said Daniel.

“Well, hello there.” said a shadowy figure that was stepping out of the dark.

“Who are you?” screamed the trio.

“Who am I? I am Tom Riddle, also known as, Lord Voldemort.” cackled the dark figure.

The trio looked at each other. They looked over to where “Lord Voldemort” walked out. Then everything hit them. They had been tricked! This whole thing was a trick! Their class had gone over seas to study at this really cool castle that looked so familiar. The professors’ names were the same as they were in Harry Potter. Even Lord Voldemort was in a chamber. Wait! They’re in the Chamber of Secrets!

Emma slowly walked forward. She reached her arm out and grabbed ahold of Voldemort’s face. She pulled. Voldemort’s face came right off to reveal their teacher’s face. “Mr. Lipton! What on earth are you doing? Why are you recreating Harry Potter? I thought we were supposed to be studying abroad!” yelled the three students.

“Well, we were. But then I figured why not make a game out of this. Plus I hear all you students talk about Harry Potter so I figured we could visit the actual castle where the movies were filmed. Once the other students caught one, I e-mailed them instructions on what to do at night. The first person to catch on was your sister, Rupert. She is very bright. My instructions were to leave the common room at a time when everyone was asleep. Sneak into the girl’s bathroom and go into the Chamber of Secrets. Once there, await further instructions. You three were the last to figure out this was all just a spin-off of Harry Potter.” explained Mr. Lipton.

“But who was Professor Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall?” asked Daniel.

“Oh. They are the actual actors that played them in the movies. We got to work with real actors from Harry Potter! Well, I guess we better go get the others now.” said Mr. Lipton, giddily.

After gathering the rest of the class, they travelled home. Daniel, Emma, and Rupert agreed to never talk about what happened on their trip to Scotland ever again on account of how humiliated they were.
Taylor Swift
By: Ashley Sutherland

Taylor Swift has been an influential role model in my life. I love listening to her music, and I can always find a way to relate to her songs. For the past three years she has come out with a new CD every year, Fearless, Sparks Fly, and Red. And every tour she has stops in St. Louis, and I have attended her concert for three years in a row. For every concert my best friend, Allison, and I have attended the concert together. Her concerts are amazing. She doesn’t just sing; she puts on a show that’s beyond amazing. I couldn’t pick which concert was the best because they were all spectacular. The most recent one I went to was her Red tour. Getting tickets is never easy and isn’t cheap.

On a Friday a pre-sale started. I was sitting on my bed with my dog waiting for fifteen minutes on Ticketmaster until 10:00 when the tickets went on sale. I quickly placed my order and stared at the screen while it gave me a “please hold while we find available tickets” note. I waited for what felt like forever until two tickets for section 105 appeared. I was so excited; those were such good seats! So I proceeded to check out and type in all my information. As I was typing in all my information, my dog stretched on my bed and, without me knowing, flipped off my internet switch on the side of my computer. So when I hit submit, I got an “internet explorer cannot display this webpage.” I was freaking out and so upset I just lost those tickets and they were so close to the stage. I kept trying to get back to Ticketmaster’s website and get more tickets but it wasn’t working. About 10 minutes later I looked at my internet on/off switch and saw that it was off. So I quickly turned the switch back on and tried to get more tickets, but all the tickets it would offer to me were in the three hundred sections and that just wasn’t acceptable to me.

A week later the regular sale went on so I decided to wait till then to get good tickets. The next Friday my mom and I were both home. We each sat at the kitchen table with our own lap tops until it was 10:00 and then processed our order. At first we both got tickets in the three hundreds, so we each took turns backing out of the order and trying to get closer tickets. After backing out of our order 4 times, I decided I might as well take the next set of tickets because I didn’t want them to sell out before I bought some. As I was about to hit submit, another set of tickets popped up on my mom’s computer for section 107. I started screaming, and I was so excited I jumped up and switched seats with her and placed my order. I was so happy that after all that work I finally got good tickets!

After what seemed like forever, March 19th finally arrived and my best friend and I went to the Taylor Swift concert. All the stress and time it took to get those tickets were worth it; that night was a night I will never forget!

Cinquain
By: Ashley Sutherland

Swim suit
Tiny, cute
Tanning, swimming, canoeing
Worn in the summer
Bikini
Disney World Summer Project

By: Amanda Syers

World has definitely been an experience that I will never forget. Driving to work was always a lot of fun. Never knowing what we would end up talking about on the thirty minute drive to the happiest place on earth. The people in the car with me, just a month ago were complete strangers, from all different parts of the country. Now we were starting to become close friends. Once we arrived, the process of getting ready for work was one that took at least 45 minutes.

The first thing we had to do was find a parking spot, and that wasn’t always easy unless we didn’t mind walking a distance, which we normally ended up doing. Then we were off to costuming. This was definitely one of the highlights of the job. Walking into costuming we went over to “the hub” as it was called, to check our work locations for the day. There we had seven different costume possibilities. These ranged from a space ranger to costumes that represented 18th century America. It seemed that most often I worked on Main Street, which had costumes resembling what would have been worn in 1908. Once given my work location, I then had to find the costume. This might sound simple, but this one building was host to all the costumes for the park and very organized but very big as well. When I found the section for my costume, I then had to find the right size. The sizing was totally different than anything you would have expected. Each costume fit differently for the same size. This made it difficult to find the right costume. This left me with no choice but to pick three or four different sizes and hope one of them fit. Next I headed to the checkout line; this is where we would then scan all of our costumes so they could be checked out. This was also the location where we would get long socks, hats, belts, bowties, and the like.

Then it was off to the bus. It was a five minute bus ride from the costume location to get to the cast member entrance. The buses were pretty frequent, and they have pretty tight security making sure you were not trying to sneak into the park. The bus ride was an experience all in itself. This was when we were up close and personal with people who worked in all different locations. The jobs included, custodial, retail, attractions, and food service.

Once the bus stopped, we arrived at the Utilidor or the tunnel. This was where all the magic started. The first thing we passed on our way in was the Mousecateria, which was one of the many cafeterias. Then was a three block walk to arrive at the locker room. We each had a locker and here we changed into our costumes. Once we were fitted in our costumes, we walked for what always seemed like forever to arrive at our job location. This was no ordinary job; we were all cast members for outdoor foods. This job entailed making and serving popcorn and roasted almonds. This also included dispensing bottled soda, 8 different types of ice cream, and frozen lemonade at a few locations. There were all together 8 popcorn stands, 11 ice cream carts, and a few miscellaneous stands.

When we arrived at the outdoor food headquarters, we first had to clock in; this is when we found out the exact location within the specific land of the park we were assigned. Depending on the weather and time of day there were locations that definitely were favored. One of my personal favorites was working on Main Street where we were able to watch the parades and fireworks and truly be a part of the magic. Working at Disney forget.
The Power of Love

By: Susan To

Shannon was born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas. She was a beautiful girl, always complimented by people. But Shannon was not just some dumb pretty girl from a small town. Shannon was very intelligent, and was accepted to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Business School, which is ranked top 5 in the entire country. Shannon’s parents were very proud of how bright their daughter was. However, they were also very worried about her future. They worry that she would never get married because she always turned down every man that ever wanted to go out with her.

The reason that Shannon turned down every man that tried to date her was because she knew that they were all fake and wanted her for her looks, not for her personality. One day, Shannon went with her friends to their campus formal. At the formal, Shannon ate a piece of crab cake, unaware that there was a little bit of cilantro added into it for flavoring. Shannon is terribly allergic to cilantro. She immediately broke out in hives that covered her face and neck. She was so embarrassed that she immediately ran to the darkest corner and sat there, hoping to be unnoticed until her friends were ready to take her home. To her surprise, there was already another man sitting on the far end of the same bench that she was sitting on. This man saw that Shannon was covered in hives, but asked her for a dance anyway.

“Are you sure you want to dance with me?” Shannon asked.

“Ha, you’re just having an allergic reaction; you don’t have to be so embarrassed. It’ll go away soon, don’t worry,” the man replied.

“What’s your name?” Shannon asked.

“I’m Aiden. What’s yours?”

“Shannon,” she replied.

From that day on, Shannon and Aiden were inseparable. Aiden was a medical student and Shannon was a business student. Though their schedules were completely different, they always made time to see each other. In May, 2014, Shannon graduated from Business school with an MBA while Aiden graduated from Medical School with an MD and specializing in organ transplants. That summer, Aiden and Shannon decided to take a long deserved vacation to Honolulu, Hawaii to enjoy the beach. On their second night in Hawaii, Shannon waited for Aiden to return to the hotel so that they could go grab some dinner. Aiden said he would be back by 6:00 PM, but it was already 8:00 PM. Shannon was very worried and decided to call Aiden to see if something had happened. Right as she reached for her cell phone, it started to ring.

“Hello?” Shannon answered.

“Hey honey, it’s me,” Aiden said.

“Oh my god Aiden where are you? Are you okay? What is taking so long?” she asked.

“Something happened at the beach; you have to come help me!” he said as the phone cut off.

“Aiden? Aiden?” Shannon replied to the phone. At this point, Shannon was so worried that she walked out of the hotel barefooted and ran down to the beach.

“Aiden!” she screamed as she ran towards the beach.
The moment Shannon stepped onto the sand, a circle of lights lit up around her and all around the beach. Rose petals began to fall down, as if it were snowing down on Shannon. The distant sound of violins reached Shannon’s ears. She turned around to see Aiden walking towards her with his hands behind his back. He kneeled down in front her and brought his hands out from behind him to reveal a hand knitted grass ring.

“Shannon, will you marry me?” he asked.

Shannon was so happy and surprised that she was without words. She paused, and then said, “Of course!”

At that moment, Shannon felt like the happiest girl in the world. When they flew back to Illinois, Shannon called up her parents and told them of the engagement. Aiden did the same. They were the happiest couple in the world. Shannon was hired as a manager at Boeing and Aiden had found a job at the Chicago Hospital’s organ transplant team. Six months into their engagement, Shannon began to experience some abdominal pain. Aiden took her to the hospital to get checked up. After getting scans and a complete blood work, Aiden found out that Shannon had severe acute onset of liver failure. She needed a new liver within 24 hours or else she was going to die. Shannon was immediately put at the top of the transplant list. However, her blood type is AB-, which is extremely rare. The chances of finding a compatible liver in time to save Shannon were slim to nothing. Shannon felt defeated. She had accepted the fact that she was going to die. All that she wanted right now was for Aiden to be with her during the last moments of her life.

Aiden, however, had other plans in mind. He went to Shannon’s room and broke off the engagement.

“What are you doing this?” Shannon asked, in tears.

“I don’t want to waste anymore time. I have too much to live for than to waste time on someone who is going to die anyway.” Aiden replied.

“No, I know you’re not that kind of person,” Shannon said in disbelief.

“Well, I guess you’re just wrong. I’m sorry, but I can’t be with you anymore.”

With that, Aiden left the room. Shannon was all alone. She could not believe that the love of her life had just left her there to die alone. No words could describe how Shannon was feeling at that exact moment. Shannon’s parents flew in from Arkansas to be with their daughter.

“Don’t worry Shannon! They’re going to find you a new liver and you are going to be fine!” Shannon’s dad said.

Shannon did not listen to anything her parents said. She didn’t even care to live anymore. She was so hurt from the fact that Aiden had left that she lost all will to continue living. Just as she was beginning to lose all faith, Mark, who was also on the transplant team and was Shannon and Aiden’s good friend, came in saying that they found a matching liver! At that moment, Shannon gained back her faith in life. She believed that miracles do happen, and that she shouldn’t waste her life just because the love of her life abandoned her in her time of need. Mark explained that there is a risk to the liver transplant, and that the chance of dying on the table was 40%. Shannon had to accept the offer because her chance of dying without a new liver was 100%. The transplant surgery was successful, and Shannon’s body did not reject the new liver. After three weeks, Shannon was discharged from the hospital.
Shannon felt like she was given a new chance at life. She was so close to dying, but a miracle happened that let her survive. She went back to her job and tried to live normally like she used to. She tried to forget Aiden, but it was too hard. She kept thinking of him and the things he said that night when he left her. She cried every time she thought of Aiden. Shannon even tried calling Aiden to ask him why he left her, but his phone was disconnected. She had lost all contact with Aiden. One day, as Shannon was driving home from work, she took a detour because of construction. Traffic was heavy on the road and she was stopped nearby a cemetery. Shannon turned her head towards the cemetery and was frightened by what she saw. Staring back at Shannon was Aiden’s picture on a tombstone. Shannon stared and stared at that picture, refusing to believe that that grave belonged to Aiden. The cars behind Shannon beeped and beeped, but Shannon did not hear anything. She just kept staring at Aiden’s picture. Suddenly, everything went black. She fainted. Shannon woke up at the hospital. The driver behind Shannon called the last dialed number on her cell phone, which was her best friend Abby. Abby took Shannon to the hospital, afraid that the fainting was due to problems with the liver. The doctor told Abby that Shannon’s liver was fine, and that she just fainted because of stress. Shannon woke up screaming, with tears down her face.

“Is Aiden dead, Abby?” Shannon demanded. “I saw his picture on the grave! Where is Aiden? Where is he?”

“Shannon calm down!” Abby said. “Calm down, please! I’ll get Mark in here for you.”

Shannon would not stop crying and screaming. When Mark came in, Shannon asked, “Why are you here? Where’s Aiden? I want to see Aiden!”

“Shannon, you have to calm down. I’ll tell you where Aiden is,” Mark replied. Shannon tried her best to calm down, but the tears kept falling from her eyes.

“Aiden was the best organ transplant specialist on our team. I’ll bet you didn’t know that his blood type was AB-.”

As soon as Shannon heard that, her heart dropped to the floor.

Mark continued, “As soon as Aiden found out that you two were a match, he begged me to do the surgery to give you a part of his liver, since the liver is the only organ that can re-grow. I urged him to reconsider, since the chances of dying on the table were 40%. But Aiden was very persistent, and insisted on giving you a part of his liver. During the surgery, he began to hemorrhage. Believe me, we tried everything in our power to stop the bleeding, but it was too severe. He died on the table. During the autopsy we found out that he had taken aspirin earlier that day, which caused the hemorrhage. Aiden knew that you only had 24 hours for a new liver and he couldn’t wait any longer for the aspirin to clear out of his system, so he kept that information from us. I think since he knew he wasn’t going to make it, he decided to break all ties with you so you wouldn’t be hurt. Aiden told us to never tell you what he did. It was in his will. I am so sorry.”

Shannon didn’t move. She looked as if she froze on her bed. After hearing what Mark said, Shannon felt like her heart was shredded into tiny pieces. All this time she thought Aiden had left her and was mad at him. But Shannon was only alive because Aiden sacrificed his life for her. Shannon mourned for Aiden. The only thing that gave Shannon comfort is the fact that Aiden will never leave her again, because he is now a part of Shannon.
Horror Story

By: Haseeb Wajid

Sam, RJ, Tom, and Haseeb were finally done with creative writing class. Sam just told Haseeb to write a horror story. “Damn, that’s not really my genre!” he thought. Haseeb thought it’d be funny to give Tom a romantic genre to write about. But boy was he wrong. He was so dead wrong. At that point Tom was boiling with rage. He already had an extremely tough schedule and now he had to add a romantic story to that list! He hated romantic stories! When Jack sunk in the ocean at the end of Titanic, he was so pleased by it. But enough was enough. He’d had it with these monkey loving colleagues in this Monday through Friday class!

Haseeb ended up getting an email later on that day from Tom. “Hey we should all meet up and work on our creative writing stories together tonight in the green study room,” wrote Tom. That was weird; they never met up before to work on their stories. But then Tom also wrote that he was bringing pizza too, and Haseeb remembered that he had no more food at home. So he decided to come.

Anyway, Haseeb showed up later that night. It turned out that Sam and RJ got the email too. They were getting sick of home cooked meals and wanted some pizza. Haseeb thought they were crazy to leave a home cooked meal but it wasn’t his business. They all waited for 30 minutes and then began to start getting annoyed. Tom still hadn’t shown up with the pizza. RJ was like, “screw this, I’m leaving.” He tried letting himself out, but the door wouldn’t budge. He even pressed the red button a couple of times but it still wasn’t working. “What the hell?” he said, “we’re locked in.”

All of a sudden they heard someone on the intercom begin to speak. They didn’t even know Whelpley had an intercom. It was Tom! “You know what’s the worst part of my day?” he began, “waking up in the morning, having to sit through all these terrible lectures and trying and remember every single thing about them! And now you want me to write a romantic story? Oh no, because I hope you’re ready for a horror story. You’re in one!”

All of a sudden, a flash of green light shot from the ceiling and RJ fell to the floor. “NOOOOOOO!” Sam yelled as she began to cry, but Haseeb was pulling her to safety. “This is all your fault!” screamed Sam, “if you hadn’t given him such a stupid genre to write about, none of this would’ve happened!”

“Just change it, if you want the rest of us to live!”
“I can’t!” said Haseeb as he began to cry, “I just can’t!”
“Why not!” screamed Sam.
“Because some sick part of me still finds it hilarious to see Tom write a romantic story”
“Well I hope his story is worth more than our lives. Because you just threw them away.”
“Wait!” said Haseeb, “What if you talked to him?”
“What?” said Sam.
“No wait! If anyone understands what he’s going through, it would be you! Remember when I made you write that story about the Indian guy who had to go to the bathroom! You could talk to him, teach him how to get over it!”
“I guess I could try” said Sam.
Haseeb went downstairs to the green room as Sam prepared to get ready to go and talk to Tom. “Tom” said Sam to the open hallway. “Please let me talk to you. I know how you feel. Haseeb’s an idiot and we both went through a similar situation. Just do what I did and don’t write the story. Then just pretend like he gave you something stupid to write about when in reality it was actually pretty awesome. Wait where was I again? Oh ya, so just don’t write it if you don’t want to!”

“Easy for you to say!” said Tom on the intercom. “You think you know how I feel! You know nothing about me! I had a girlfriend who made me watch chick flicks all day! Do you know how crazy one becomes after having to watch legally blonde ten times in a row! You know nothing about suffering! But you will soon!”

Then all the lights went off. Sam found herself all alone on the stage. The last thing she saw was a flash of green light as she fell to the ground.

“You’re the only one left Haseeb! How does it feel to be all alone!” said Tom over the intercom. “I’m not afraid of you! Show yourself!” said Haseeb. At that point, Tom came out from one of the study rooms. In a long black robe.

“Have you still not figured out who I really am? Think about my name.” He began to spell out his name on a piece of paper. It read Tom Riedl. Then the words began to magically change as they now read, “I am Lord Voldemort. You are pretty stupid for not getting the obvious right away. I don’t care about the stupid romantic story because I wasn’t going to write it in the first place. I killed all of your friends with the killing curse, and you should’ve picked up on it, but you didn’t, so you’re just a stupid dodo brain.”

Haseeb began to laugh hysterically. “You know what the funny thing is Tom; if you had just written the romantic story you would’ve understood the power of love. Love is more powerful than anything in the world and now it’ll be your downfall.”

“What nonsense is this?” said Tom. “Avada Kedavra!” he yelled at me. All of a sudden a white lighted figure approached and deflected the curse.

“Jesus! Is that you?” asked Haseeb

“No, you moron, it’s me, Dr. Fontane,” said Dr. Fontane. She then turned to Tom. “I heard the whole thing Tom, so you were planning on never writing the paper all along huh?”

“Yes ma’am,” said Tom.

“Well in that case,” said Dr. Fontane as she raised her staff, “You shall not pass!” And with that, Tom was gone. As if he ceased to exist. Then Dr. Fontane went and brought RJ and Sam back to life.

“Jesus?” they both cried out.

“No, it’s me, Dr. Fontane, you morons.”

The next day their group was short one member. They all began to read their stories. Finally it was Haseeb’s turn to read his story.

By the end of it, they were all pretty much shocked. Even Tom’s ghost showed up and he was pretty petrified.

Sam looked up at Haseeb and said, “That wasn’t even a horror story, you idiot”
Salvation

By: Amanda Syers

I complain, lie, lust,
Steal, envy, judge,
Hurt, Fight, argue,
And killed my king

I’m dead, I’m unworthy,
I’m sinful, I’m weak,
I’m prideful, I’m mean,
And I’m broken

I have lost friends,
made mistakes,
let people down, and
lived for my own glory

But, God is breathtaking,
Unparalleled, marvelous,
Indescribable, loving,
And All-knowing

My savior, my hero, my love,
My hope, my joy, my strength,
My heart, my soul, my beauty,
My friend, my redeemer

He has, moved mountains,
Calmed storms, separated
Waters, raised the dead,
Fed the 5000, and called out demons

Compared to Him I’m nothing,
I don’t deserve to be alive,
I am a sinner who deserves death
But he sent his son to die for the world

He truly loves me
How beautiful
My savior and King
Jesus Christ

Lost,

By: Amanda Syers

Where are we going
Up or down, confused
Turn around but stuck
Time is running out

What then do we do
Running, hearing voices
They trail the walls
Stuck inside a nightmare

Faster, faster, could it be
Right, no left,
Sprinting, yelling
Can no one hear

We feel so close but so far
a ways away from the exit
but then I see light
free at last

Three Haiku:

By: Amanda Syers

Whisper in the air
The ocean takes its stance
Rolling waves with foam

His abounding love
Brings heartfelt tears to my eyes
Knowing his son died

The rapid heartbeat
Of my passion and desire
Waiting to display
Lips

By: Bre Dunsworth

Love Me
Be Mine Forever.
Be My Other Half, Always.
Can You Be My Number One?
Let’s Hold Hands And Be Best Friends.
Tell Me Your Secrets.
Please Baby, Be My Baby.
All I Want Is Your Luscious Lips.
Forever and Always.

Love

By: RJ Shaw

What
Is the idea that we call Love?
Is it part of life or is it a Developed emotion for humans
To share. Love is tossed around
Like it’s a plastic bag. I love
You but do you really love me
?

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