



**FLIGHT 2020**

# FLIGHT

## 2020

An Anthology of the Written and Visual Arts  
by Students of Mount San Jacinto College

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## *Michael Guevarra Quiboloy*

### **A Rather Millennial Work**

I write to you an av'rage student's day  
Clichés may come but know I'm tired too  
The pen hits pad on death and on decay  
So spoilers friend: there will be nothing new  
I worry mental stigma is a crutch  
Then watch a YouTube vid on how to rhyme  
Let's keep it simple so it's not too much  
And you might think these words are worth your time  
Hey Wordsworth—wasn't that one of those guys  
Who had a thing or two I should have learned  
And if I didn't maybe that implies  
Degrees and grades and A's and praise unearned  
For deeper meaning I might pare your fun  
Perhaps the point is that there isn't one.

*Jeremy Zaragoza*

**We Are All Mad Here**

I once crossed paths  
With an old man,  
Aged and weather-worn,  
Who told me  
Son  
It's better to go mad  
Than to fall  
In love.  
Both  
Are uncontrollable,  
But madness  
Leaves us numb,  
While being in love  
Makes us feel  
Every  
Single  
Thing  
At once.

# *Zaina Azim*

## **my identity**

my identity is bound by my expectations:

a letter grade

a song in the shower

an essay with proper grammar

head held high, waiting for praise-

at what cost?

my satisfaction

dignity

he waits for me to come back to him

how will i explain my shortcomings

my mistakes

flaws

my identity can be bound by:

my own happiness

love shared with others

a sense of belonging

pride

a quote

rings in my ears

“all i need is me”

dil ki baat boldi

(you've spoken my heart)

# *Jasmine Amador*

## **5 on the beach**

mid July, come on by  
sun is soaking our pretty skin  
one to four, waves and more  
pretty thoughts to fill our summer sins

Venice beach, martini peach  
be by my side when the sun's setting  
golden hour, like ivory tower,  
she said it's a summer of no regretting

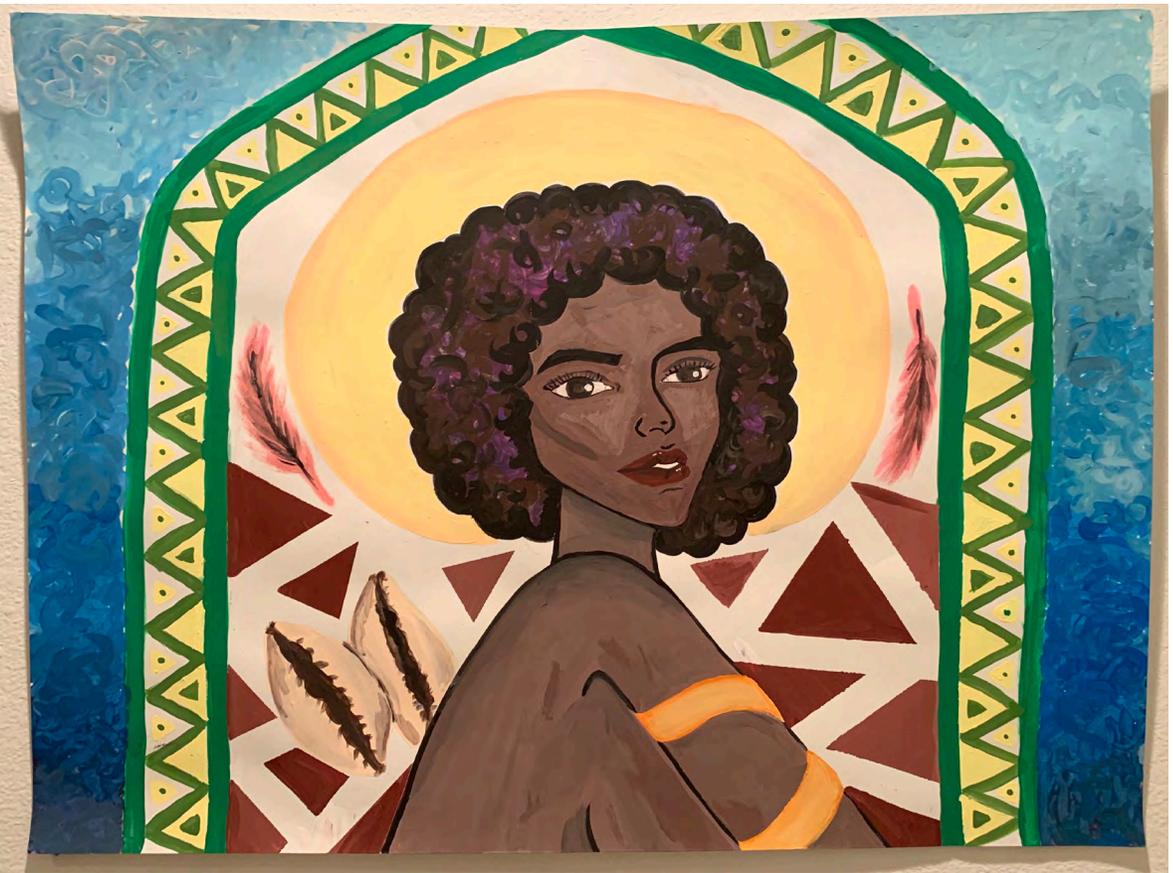
living life in rose colored glasses,  
the radio is playing summer classics  
sipping on a good time and a bad decision,  
wake up tomorrow and all is forgiven

## *Kenny Valdez*

### **It's Pretty Sometimes**

There has been this shade of night in the back of my mind.  
It seems to have been there since the beginning of everything.  
All out of instinct or irrationality others fear:  
death, poverty, judgment or fire.  
Out of all the helpless inevitabilities one may find them self into,  
I fear mediocrity.  
What that entails are  
green painted lawns,  
pastel covered living rooms,  
crystal bowls of worthless fruits,  
estranged children,  
a woman that hates you,  
short conversations.  
Old friends or no friends,  
trust issues,  
six day work weeks,  
t.v. sitcoms,  
one sided communication,  
And infidelity.  
All of these were foreseeable  
before when I was sitting in libraries between lectures  
listening to classical guitar music.  
Sitting with composers who've accepted their illness.  
And hoping some girl would pass by leaving behind  
pink trails of perfume just like the cartoons of my childhood.  
The same recurring thought that drove me to booze and seclusion.  
That kept me from caring at all and looking for excuses.

Until it all happened at once really.  
By chance or some intervention,  
holy or perhaps sinister.  
Being stagnant for so long has paid off.  
I'm now with the right one and  
when the hot air settles I think of her  
and our future together.  
I no longer need to drink in excess or watch others make it.  
Nor worry if she will take it away from me.  
At any moment I'm safe.  
I won't relapse or turn to evil this time,  
all what I had before fades.  
Leaving me with her and she with I.  
I'd love to say I fought to find this  
or I went through some transformation of the soul  
and atoned for many sins.  
All I can really say is  
Don't try, it'll come.



*Cheyenne Görg*



*Alyssa Rietsch*

## *Marley Rodriguez*

### **Untitled**

I lost my shoes old, beaten, and worn  
But comfortable  
But mine  
The rain came and threw them away  
And I haven't seen them or the sun since  
No one can buy me new ones  
They've tried but I didn't want them  
I searched for mine for so long but I'm tired now  
I dream of them  
Their soft soles and discolored laces  
I lost my shoes  
And I've known no joy since then

## *Immanuel Ibon*

### **Tupperware**

My fridge is full  
of mix-matched containers  
with lids not the same,  
  
sealed together with  
plastic wrap, and rubber bands  
and a prayer,  
  
that the fruit inside  
tastes just as sweet  
the next day.

## *Michael Thomas*

### **A Hero's Unexpected Journey**

This time was so unexpected, our young hero never even had the chance to say goodbye. Most heroes know when their time is up. Each meaningful story seems to have the typical protagonist that achieves the goal, gets the attention and always has this spooky, innate sense that always rises to the occasion, never disappointing the cult that follows each comic book-like masked crusader and always allows a happy morning because of the unhappy evening. This time though, the fog of war surrounded him while he was at his most peaceful time in his life.

Speaking of his accomplishments doesn't begin to give breadth to the magnitude his presence and approval gave birth to. He walked with a confidence that provided a meaning to his murkiness, a process to his presence and something of an understanding that he was not one to be confronted lightly.

I envied him deep into my core; he embodied everything that had meaning in life and never hesitated to explain his educated opinion eloquently and with grace. His ideals were those of dedication, responsibility and accountability, each of which I personally neglected, as well as the surrounding society. It pains me to think of a world where we seek the simplicities without such guidance, the easily achievable goals and our false hopes for humanity. One day we will thrive instead of simply survive, as is the reason why his ideals were rare, then and more so now.

Pain is nothing to your narrator or our hero; both were adept at transferring such information in a productive manner more advanced than most humans believe is possible (even with the most advanced research). Most didn't believe our hero was scientifically possible without extensive research, but he arrived into my life with a persistence that rivaled any teenage boy with a crush and a dream.

I didn't ask for it, I was young, the world was new to me and I knew nothing of real heroes that were a channel away, but he challenged me. His drive and determination resonated inside of my

young heart. I realized my only option was to push myself to an uncomfortable place, a place that only I could find and only I could navigate. Here, I could do amazing things, things that only the mentality could provide. I never left disappointed. When I entered the psychological ThunderDome I always learned something tangible, something to take home, but it was never achieved without a cost,

The grind was brutal. It left me crying and laughing and pondering this life, as if I were a philosopher, shackled to the burden of an idea that the masses may not understand until generations have gone past, a metaphysical puzzle that gets to be engraved on a tombstone but is not understood by the masses. He knew; our protagonist knew.

To be honest, we were never prepared; we always thought our savior would arrive in shining, white linens with a booming voice and a disposition which could be spotted from a fortnight away. This wasn't supposed to happen, he wasn't supposed to be who he was, yet he became who he believed himself to be.

You know the story, arriving in your life with a presence that was palpable and unpredictable and thrilling all at the same time. He seemed to leap over buildings, conjured strength amongst despair and rose to the occasion, as a true hero does. He had his distinction set as 8 but as he mutated, the evolution allowed the multiplication three-fold to 24.

If 8 was his youth, 24 was his adulthood. He chose this life and travelled the dark alleys to restore his tarnished character that followed him with both numbers. Resolve and faith to the craft proved to be a haven for our hero as his solitude was regularly found on the court. The court, where the struggle and strength could not be faked or told or scripted. Solitude reigned supreme.

We saw the growth, he displayed his flaws with such fervor it was undeniable the product he would become. A renaissance man amongst sheep, destined to mold minds in ways that were yet unfathomable. One would and could say a cult following ensued, yet how easily is a cult defined; no one (to my knowledge) sacrificed anything of note, the occasional defender was left defenseless as a result of our hero's immense powers, yet each engagement allowed a restoration of the foe's abilities, always wanting the next shot at our hero. Never once was our hero able to snatch a soul, yet the fear

was always present.

With each moment and movement, the legend grew. It was foretold he would surpass the goat at the top of the mountain. Though the goat had long since relinquished its earthly powers, this keeper of the stone was not challenged until now.

Our hero climbed the mountain, passing skeletons of times gone past, a collection of unique individuals who will forever be sketched in history, yet will never reach the top of the mountain to surpass the goat. We saw the ascension, the grind and the work; however the deed is categorized, the struggle never wavered. Glory for glory's sake. An inscription on a stone did not intrigue our hero. He dreamt of an ethereal presence, one in which he would be remembered as a unique being, one of which fortitude lied deep within and could be found with an honest heart and persistent presence, a mentality of which only the venomous black mamba could achieve.

Kobe was one who pushed for perfection and pursued the purse. Bryant loved to live and longed for his legend. Life was short for our hero but the shield was strong enough to carry a legacy that is solidified in history. He bled for his apostles to learn of his mamba mentality, a creed to be followed by those who are prepared for the daunting task.

Obsess over your obsessions, seek a result, rise over mediocrity and construct a goal larger than self. Achieve and believe, accomplish at all costs and change the world. Walk with caution though, large sticks tend to disrupt the natural landscape. Be mindful of your surroundings, nature can be naturally cruel at times.

## *Vienna Hernandez*

### **If I Died Today**

If I died today,  
What will the world say?

Who will stay?

Who will put me to my final resting place?

Who will have the heart to turn the unwelcomed away?

Who will spread my ashes at Santa Monica Bay?

Who will comfort my dad and say everything will be okay?

Who will bring the flowers to my grave  
on my birthday?

Who will remember after a decade?

When people find out, will anyone's heart burst like a grenade?

Will anyone try to make my funeral like a parade?

Will someone make sure I'm buried under the sun's rays?

Will anyone help my parents along the way?

Will anyone care as my body decays?

If I died today,  
What will the world say?

# *Alyse Kiara Deatherage*

## **Breathless**

And one day,  
You're standing in your kitchen,  
Dancing with a cup of coffee in your hand,  
And your neighbors are outside.  
They are watching you.

Watching you dance,  
Watching you live,  
Watching you love,  
Love the way you are still alive,  
And your demons are not.  
Watching you fall in love  
With being alive.

They are watching you,  
And they see your beauty.  
And it makes them simply...

B r e a t h l e s s .

# *Jose Neria*

## **Earth to Self**

### **Intimacy**

Warm soft salty skin

Sweat dripping droplets of rain

Warm red cherry cheeks

### **Sky Reflection**

Blank blue big and vast

Crying peaceful clear wet tears.

Or light ray smiles.

### **Tired**

Soft cotton wraps me,

Engulfed in big lovely warmth.

Eyes restlessly closed.

## *Michael Gerardi*

### **From “OCEANIC #2”**

O the times! O the memes! O the morals!  
O the crises that cause one to shout.  
O the blackguards that brag of their laurels  
While sowing division and doubt.  
O the crimes of the circles that rule us!  
Never challenged, their ill-gotten gain.  
With their words they endeavor to fool us,  
Their pow’r to maintain.

They speak with the accents of adders;  
Their tongues are the tongue of the snake.  
With hammers and sickles and ladders,  
They assault what they seek to unmake.  
What once was revered is reviled,  
What once was abhorred is acclaimed.  
And that which was clear to a child  
Is banished and blamed.

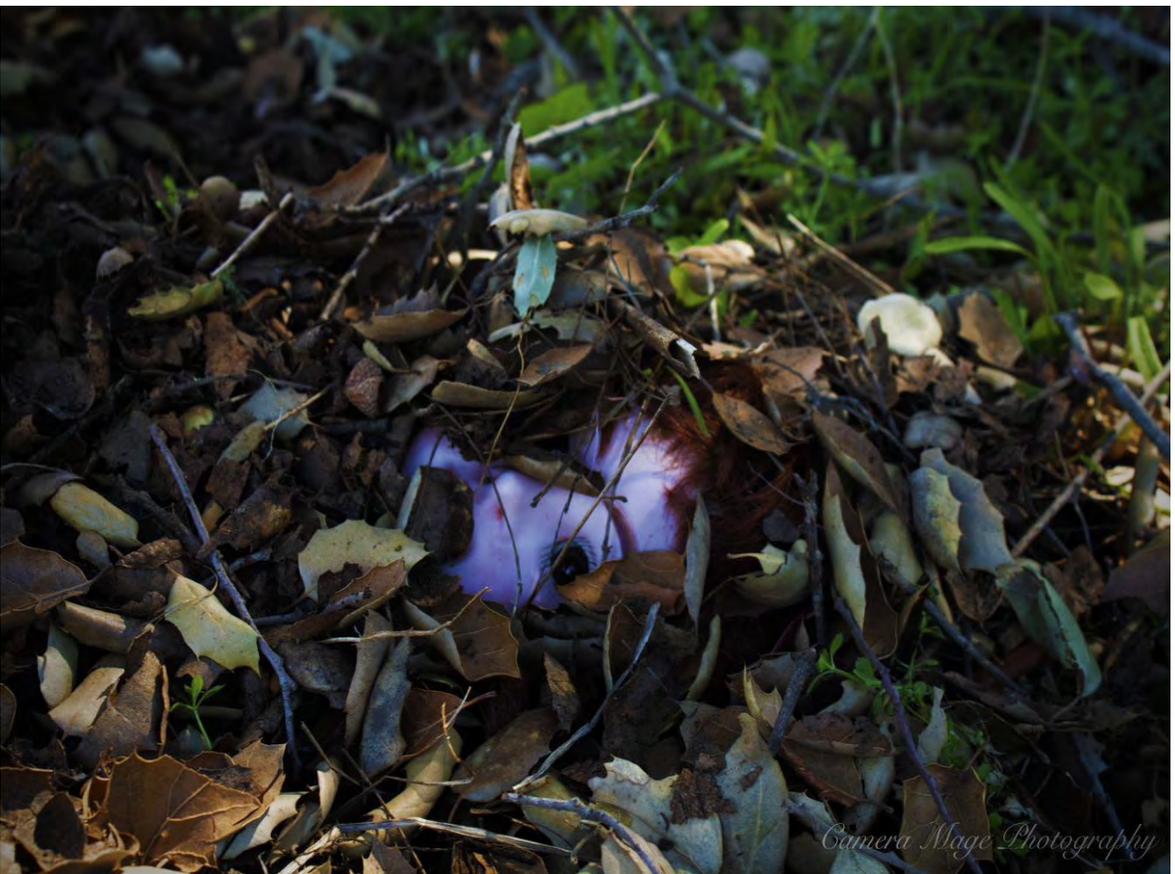
Their power turns men into liars  
Who profess that which nature denies.  
The will of the factions requires  
Submission to what most despise.  
The smaller the faction, the louder;  
The louder, the more they demand.  
And the factions grow fiercer and prouder  
And poison the land.

The haughty, as shameless as strumpets,  
Wax lurid and brazen and brash.  
But their betters respond to the trumpets,  
The alarm, and the call, and the clash.  
As the media define the forbidden  
And demand what to say not and say,  
All the more we perceive what is hidden  
And rise in its way.

As they seek to remove the foundation  
Upon which society stands,  
They are doomed to discover the nation  
Shall slip from the grip of their hands.  
Though they now stand as strong as an ox is  
While they foment distress and discord,  
They shall be as a portion for foxes  
And fall by the sword.



*Callista Zacarias* / Flowers Blooming through Adversity



*Camera Mage Photography*

*Ariane Crevoisier / Buried Doll*

*Victor Pierz*

## **They Made a New Ocean as a Joke**

They made a new ocean as a joke  
Just to see if they could  
God I don't know why they do it  
God am I happy that they do  
Unfortunately, this ocean is for snow geese  
For frogs  
For wading  
I filled a bucket  
With water that I found in this ocean  
With my water-finding tusked Maltese dachshund  
And I present to you this nutrient-infused, ice cold,  
    densely salted water  
And my friends as well  
Have water of similar value  
(Cheap)  
None of them taste like the water I found  
I offer you the whole bucket

# *Aspen Kae O'Keefe*

## **With You**

Every day with you is worth celebrating.  
Every smile, every breath, every touch  
contains its own string of memories,  
a lifetime supply of recollections  
trickling down, one after the other,  
like cascading dominoes.

Let's keep making memories.  
Touch me until we've lived infinitely,  
lifetimes unbounded.

I will live forever,  
so long as I live this *one life*  
with you.

## *Emerie Valentin*

### **Endless Fields**

I whisper your name to the field. It spreads out around me, loud in the silence. The sky is heavy overhead, the color a deep bruise, and I wonder of the Dark the town spoke of. It will rush towards me, alert to my presence. The Dark that has taken many wandered too far away from town.

You were one of many that have dared to wander out. I look at the endless blades of grass, the way the wind twists them towards me, reaching out in a desperation to grab me. It'd been a joke, one the boys always joke about. We'd been gathered near the gate, the girls looking at us a distance away, bodies taut and eyes wide. Everyone had been saying how they'd be the one to go out the farthest. You'd claimed you could survive for a week. That the Dark couldn't touch you. I had looked you in the eyes and dared you to prove it.

I stand in the endlessness. My chest is squeezing, pain rests inside my ribs. There is no way you could have lasted out here. There is no way you could have survived the quiet, even if you had managed to survive the Dark. My eyes squeeze shut. I wonder if my promise is broken if I can't find you.

Before you left, you'd come to me and said that this was no place for us. The town would never accept me as a Bastard Child. That our hope was beyond this town. The Dark was nothing to be afraid of, when the town had treated me worse.

But I was afraid, so I turned you away. I said you were a fool for going, only for regret to stab my heart after. I wanted to take it back, but you smiled and asked me to promise that if you didn't return in a week's time, that I'd come to find you. I promised.

There is nothing, and there has been nothing for the days I've walked. My legs are lead from exhaustion. My head is fuzzy and twists my vision. Now everything is static. There is nothing here but me and the endless field.

After you'd gone, your sister came to me and said that this was my fault. She cried and screamed; a saint turned devil. There

was no recollection of the girl that tended gardens and made flower crowns for the little ones. I was the one that dared you to go, so I should be the one to go out and find you. I would, I knew. Despite everything, I kept every promise I made. Your sister wasn't satisfied, and it wasn't until her aunt came that she became docile. That anger was the last part of her soul, and when the fire went out, so did the life in her eyes.

Night comes fast and swift, a blanket that's been thrown over the world. It isn't possible to breathe right in the Dark, not when there are stories of what's out here. The men of past that wander, looking for their lovers' bodies. The women and their young children, so hungry and desperate that they will eat anything alive they come into contact with, even humans. The children that were hidden in the grass, who'd grab at you thinking you were their mother, and devour your soul when they realized you weren't.

I was one of those children, the town whispered. It was the only explanation they had for when I appeared at the gate of town, skinny, dirty and starving. I was a ghost that didn't realize I was a ghost, clawing my way into the world of the living. You were enthralled the moment you laid eyes on me.

It's too painful to walk. Blisters line my feet, fat and seeping, and I wish I had a salve to put on them. I sink into the grass, moving to my pack for something to eat. There is little left, a single piece of cured meat and dried fruit. I devour them and lay on the ground.

In those years we grew up together, I asked you about the field many times. When I asked you why everyone was afraid of the Dark, you said it was because no one really knew anything about it. It was why every person told a different story, because it reflected their worst fears. I asked what you were afraid of and you laughed and said spiders. Later on, curled outside your house with nothing but bruises, you said it was this town.

The stars glimmer down at me, emulating winks and laughter. They are impossible to see in the town, where there is always light in the windows, flooding the streets to keep out the Dark. They are the only hopeful thing in this entire journey. I try to remember the names of constellations, but their names elude me. It's hard to remember the names of something you never see.

I try to pretend that I'm not the reason you left. I watch the

stars as they watch me and try to count them. Try to stop my mind as it knits together a web of guilt to trap me in. It doesn't work, and the quiet comes at full force. It sinks into me, pulling me apart at the seams. It draws out everything in tears, and I say your name again. A scream this time, that shatters the world around me.

The Dark is not quiet after it fades. There is a noise, a rustling of grass. I bolt upright, choking on a sob. I bury my face in my hands, earthquake tremors raking my body. The rustles come closer and closer, and my eyes squeeze shut.

“There you are.”

My head jerks up and I see you. I see you, hand holding a lantern that seeps light into the air.

“You're...”

I can't speak and you smile and say, “I've been waiting for you.”

“I promised.”

“You did.” You reach out your hand and I take it. I cling to it, afraid that the moment I let go, you vanish. “Now let's go.”

“Where?”

“To where the Dark won't find us.”

The light of the lantern fills me, and I feel the filth of being a Bastard Child wash away, replaced with the touch of your hand. Our fingers interlace, and you lead me out of the Dark.

*Nylen A. Nelson*

## **Coffee Break**

We all need a coffee break sometimes  
A time where the rest of the world pauses just for you  
Short, but sweet  
Forget about the stack of papers staring you down,  
judging your every move  
Forget about the home where a simple hello sends you  
straight to hell  
Forget whether you washed the dishes last night,  
or ate Chinese takeout  
Forget that you came in five minutes late today,  
nobody noticed (maybe)  
Yep, forget about all of that  
It's all about you now  
Brrrrring! Your alarm went off.  
Damn...

# *Alexy Flores*

## **Distance**

I hate this  
I feel so far from you  
I feel so distant  
I don't even know you anymore  
When you left, you left me in pieces  
You shattered me  
And now as I try to pick myself up  
I know I have to build a wall  
I have to cover myself in armor  
I have to protect myself  
From you  
I hate this  
I want to tell you I love you  
I want to hug you  
And tell you it's okay  
I want to look at you  
And be proud of who you are  
But I can't  
I see you and I feel disappointed  
I hate that you let your life go down the drain  
You gave in to the enemy  
You played me for a fool  
I can't let you get away with this  
You took too much from me  
It can't happen again

## *Victorious Comehn*

### **Far Away in the Meadow**

Far away in the meadow  
Lost from the world around  
I find peace in the thorn ridden stems  
Sprouting from the barren ground

Beautiful flowers whistle  
Dancing as the wind silently blows  
Tucked deep and firmly hidden  
Far away in the meadow

Far away in the meadow  
The darkness kisses goodnight  
The stars have come to befriend  
The sky to shower moonlight

A harness of jovial light  
The moon has come to bestow  
The cursed shadow of life now gone  
Far away in the meadow



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*Laura Garrett*



*Alyssa Rietsch*



*Luke Archibegue*



*Alondra Ramirez*



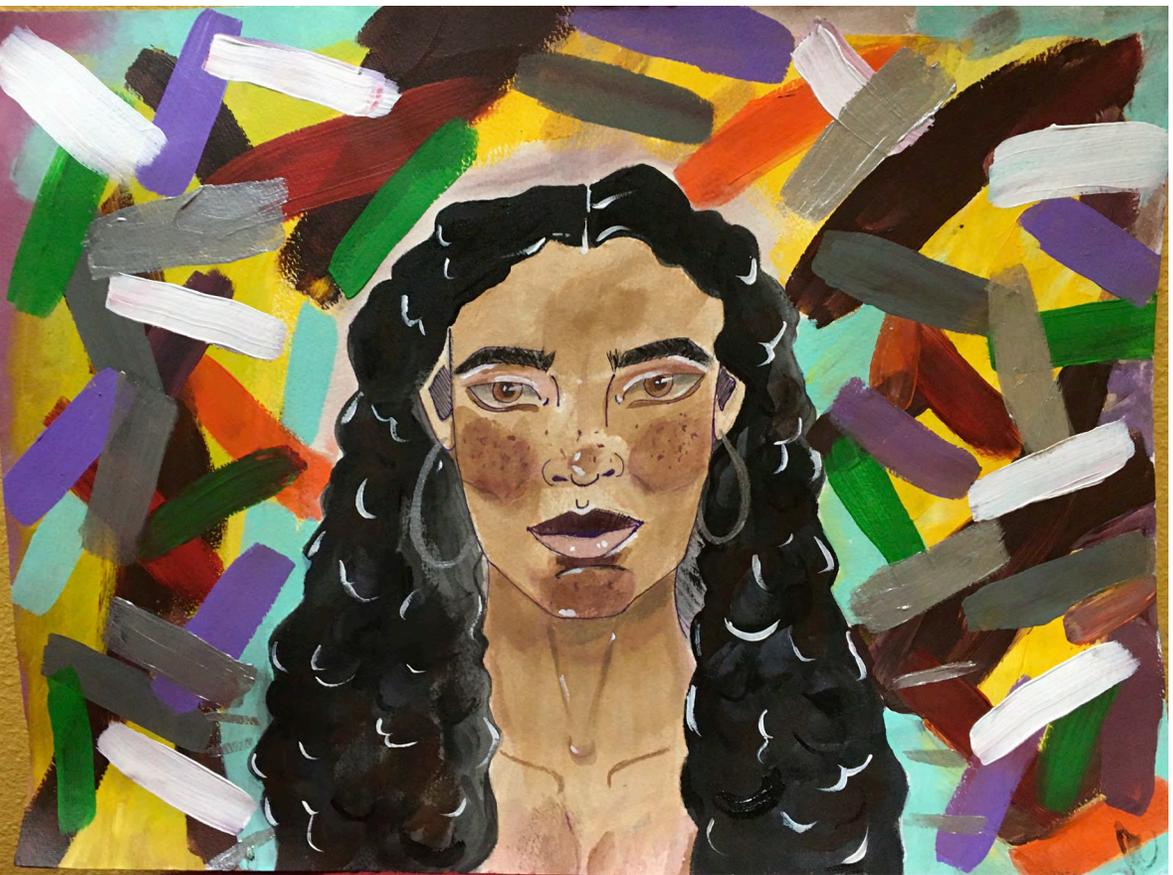
*Callista Zacarias* / Thanksgiving Rainbow



*Jose Salgado*



*Nicholas Navarro*



*Cheyenne Görz*



*Luke Archibegue*



*Alyssa Rietsch*

# *Joshua Lake*

## **Attention**

Who am I

What do I want

What do I need

No one can answer that question

I wish to learn more about me

Why do I have ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

The struggles to concentrate

Having the energy like I'm eight

Constantly pacing back and forth

Education is not the only target where ADHD can attack

No, I don't mean like being struck in the back

It hurts me socially

I feel like everyone thinks I'm "weird or retarded"

Someone that should be discarded

Maybe

But that does not mean that my life is worth nothing

Mental Disorders should never prevent goals to be achieved

## *Brian Hoxey*

### **Never Alone**

Human, without eyes, no sight I am alone.

You stand by me, unseen I am alone.

No ears, silence and with blindness it seems I am alone.

You call from near, though I cannot hear so with fear I am alone.

Tremble and shake, but wait I reach out and hesitate am I alone?

My hand you take, it's no mistake I am not alone for I have Faith!

# *Marisela De La Mora*

## **A Sky of Fireflies**

It was 6 o'clock at night by the time Zipporah had finished helping Don Geraldo teach his daughters the proper way to run a mercado. The old man died half a month ago, and his spirit wouldn't pass on knowing his three lovely girls were running the business with the grace of injured donkeys. Yes, the duty of a medium proved itself a challenging and rewarding line of work; with one such reward being the warm roll of bolillo Zipporah was sinking their teeth into. The winding steam from the bread warmed their beak-like nose as they glanced towards the sky on their rural walk home. The heavens were a watercolor of royal blue and violet as the sun said its final goodbyes to the town of Tagetes. Among the hues, the stars came out of their hiding places to shine and Zipporah remembered the existence of constellations. They weren't familiar with many of them, but they liked to come up with their own as substitute.

Their eyes darted from star to star, linking them together in their mind to find a shape to name. As they looked, the wind picked up with a whistle. Thankfully, the warmth of the bolillo roll and the layers of tan clothes Zipporah loved to wear kept them safe from the wisps of wind. They stared at the stars with exhaustion; their imagination was low after a long day of work, and they saw nothing but snakes in the sky. Suddenly, among the celestial serpents, appeared the body of a boy. The boy quickly began to drop, and Zipporah's bolillo dropped along with him as they sprinted forward to catch him. He landed in Zipporah's arms, relief washing over them. "You're very lucky, chico. I'm tired, and I'm not always great at catching things. You could have become my next client," Zipporah said as they lowered the child onto his feet.

The little boy opened his eyes and joyfully recognized Zipporah. "Oh! Gracias, Ojos de Buho!" he said as he sputtered, he had swallowed a bug during his fall. Instantly, the child began to climb the tree behind him once more and Zipporah lunged forward to stop him. "Have you a death wish, after all?!" they asked nervously. "Oh,

no!” he responded, “I’m climbing this tree because I’m trying to catch stars for mama!” Zipporah closed their eyes and sighed quietly. “Listen escuincle, you can’t catch stars like this. They’re much too far, and you would need to fly to reach.” They pulled him off the tree as they explained.

“I would need to fly?! But I don’t have time to make wings! Mama is going to the doctor’s *tomorrow!*” The child panicked as he looked around him. Taking note of his distress, Zipporah directed their attention to the sky again. They noticed the lights of shooting stars streaming across the blue and an idea miraculously sprouted in their garden of thoughts. “Actually...I think I know a way to collect stars for her after all,” They smiled and knelt to speak to the child. “Did you know stars look down at our world and wish to explore it, just as we wish to explore theirs? Some even come down to visit us.” As they lied to the child, the streams of starlight reflected against his eyes. “Really? Can we find them?” the boy asked in excitement. Zipporah smiled at the effectiveness of their white lie and straightened themselves up to offer their hand. “Well, lucky for you, I know just where to look.”

The little boy took their hand gingerly as Zipporah lead him through the darker areas of the woods. He looked frightened, but Zipporah assured him it was safe. “Shooting stars love to be around dim and damp areas. Look! There’s one now!” The child jolted in excitement as a small light flew towards them. It was merely a firefly, but he didn’t know that. Zipporah smiled at the lightning bug and greeted it. “Hello little star, did your journey to Earth treat you well?” they asked. The firefly’s light flickered in confusion, they hadn’t a clue what Zipporah was talking about. “Pretend you are a shooting star visiting Tagetes, please?” they whispered to the bug. It obliged by shining much brighter, eliciting a gasp from the child. “What did it say?” he asked in a whisper. “It said its journey was fine, and it came with others. It’s going to take us to them!” Zipporah replied as they both followed it.

The firefly lead them through the branches of a weeping willow and the leaves of its draped limbs tickled their faces. Inside, the boy and Zipporah were instantly surrounded by what seemed like millions of fireflies. The child’s pupils darted back and forth as he

gasped in amazement. “There’s so many of them! So many beautiful estrellas for mama!” he leapt as he spoke, trying to catch the stars in his hands. Zipporah quickly stopped him and shook their head. “No, no! You don’t catch them like that! Here,” They reached into the bag slung across their body and pulled out a pair of empty jam jars. “Follow my lead.”

Zipporah moved as swiftly as wind as they caught groups of fireflies in their jar. The boy had some trouble at first, but he quickly got the hang of it and the two had “stars” to spare after they were finished. Zipporah quietly followed the sound of the child singing as he ran home with his jar of fireflies. Immediately, he burst through the front door shouting, “Mama! Mira! Ojos de Buho helped me catch stars for you so we can watch them together again!” The boy’s mother was resting in bed. Her body was covered with a blanket woven of deep blue materials and decorated with patterns of stars. She smiled and kissed her son’s head as Zipporah walked in with their jar. Her voice was low and hoarse as she spoke, “Really, mijo? How kind of you both.”

Zipporah released their fireflies and the room was instantly filled with light as they flew out and danced together. The boy’s fireflies joined the others and the three watched as the bugs positioned themselves into various constellations for them. After a couple of hours, the boy fell asleep beside his mother and Zipporah opened the window to let the fireflies out. His mother feebly gave Zipporah her thanks and they bowed, assuring her that they were happy to help. Zipporah then wished her well and quietly left her home. As they traveled, they stopped to pick up the bolillo they had dropped earlier; it was now caked in some moss it had fallen onto. They decided they would save it for the King of Death, Hellebore, who loved the taste of moss and fungi. Once more, the stars above accompanied Zipporah as they resumed their walk home.

*Audrey Wong*

## **In Loving Memory**

We cast our eyes toward the earth  
with tears of sadness and separation  
along our loved one's final journey.

We lift our hearts toward the heavens  
with hopes of peace and eternal rest  
to ease the pain of their departing.

We reach our hands toward the living  
with words of kindness and past deeds  
in honor of the light that was with us.

We turn our thoughts toward the future  
with memories of joy, of love and of times shared  
as we step forward onto life's path once more.

## *Shara Iglesias*

### **Random Thoughts and Useless Distraught: Fueled by Adderall and My Chronic Self-Sabotaging Withdrawals**

When all else fails in life,  
Just remember to love her  
And never hover a shotgun at her headcover,  
Close your eyes because you'll never get the chance  
To tell her the love you had was never of her  
You'll be forced to hide your mind's muttered  
And never ushered thoughts with your brain's  
Dripping red watercolor stains

Forget all your numb and broken pain,  
Those scars will never fade while exposed in the rain  
Red, white, and black eyes,  
This was never meant to mend lies,  
It was made to aid and display the disobeyed  
Men and women left unpaid from the decade  
Delayed crusade

Don't forget to manifest and make a fuss  
Of red, orange, black rust left behind by the hardworking  
Dead, red, white, and nonexistent better versions of us  
Take your guns and loose trays,  
You'll wish you left on Tuesday  
We celebrate "Truce-Day,"  
Especially when you say,  
We're all bruised, and noose trained

# *Antonio Yanez*

## **The Word It**

It can have many meanings.

Just what is it?

Is it just a word you can't explain?

Or

Could it be something that it is a filler?

Could something that be maintained in a proper essay?

I am meant to believe that the word it is too insignificant to be in  
a proper essay.

The word it only works when talking.

Can be explain in a matter of slang.

Jst like we b kool the way we speak.

Well many people would not understand this.

But since I am reading it out loud it is simple enough to know  
what it means.

Why make this division line between smart and dumb?

The dumb are also smart! Just caught up in their own uniqueness.

Just because they are different

Are we so afraid to trust them in impossible acts that  
we cannot achieve.

We are not so different but we are.

So caught up in the world we live

Just what the word it means?

# Shinx

## #403



15/03/20

*Alistair Fernandez*



*Matthew Mai*

## *Shirley Vazquez*

### **New Heights**

Here we go again, on this journey we call life. Today we awake to a new day full of possibilities. What will we do with our new day? Will we continue on the same old path with the same old behavior? Or will we come to terms that it's not working, therefore we will have to make a choice to make changes. A difficult choice for sure. Where do we start? is a question we often ask. I say pick one thing that's no longer working for you and change it, start there. This change can be as simple as changing the color of your shirt or as difficult as getting a new job, and changing the people you surround yourself with. The only way to reach new heights is to make the necessary changes whenever you start to feel stagnated, trapped or uncomfortable.

Life is a journey. Live it with integrity, an open mind and a never-ending desire to learn.

*Laura Garrett*

## **The Elephant on the Wall**

There is an elephant on my wall. It is magical and speaks to me  
from a mystical place.

Color

Light

Patterns and lines

Abstract and muted.

Life

Lines that are blurred

Colors that bleed. Wisdom woven into it all.

Presence

Some bold

Some weak, faded.

Gone to light

All the way from the idea of it, I was. I am all that it is, all of it.

In the pigment I expand

I mutate and become more than I could ever see of mine own eye

In the bleeding of me I create

In the light I am multiplied

Strip me of color

I am light

A tapestry in which beauty is revealed.

Life is the color of love

I am bleeding

I am Life

Expanding

In

Colorful Light

## *Stephanie Mora*

### **All the Men I've Called My Father . . .**

Ramona is our way home. California had suffered from an infamous drought. It seemed as if the rain had been scarce since I was a child. Yet now the mountainsides burst with hues of yellow, white, and violet. It seemed to rain for forty days and forty nights, and the thirsty earth had submitted to the downpour, transforming itself into a splendor. It went on for miles. Cars rolled to a near stop on the highway. People pulled into the shoulder and left cars running to take pictures. An Insta-worthy moment if there ever was one. My view was unobstructed and marvelous. We didn't slow or stop. Instead we used the overtake lane and sped ahead, the wild flowers zipping by in a flurry of color. In these moments I feel that feeling. Often times when I am confronted with such great beauty it inspires in me a sense of considerable wonder, and even more considerable loneliness. I don't know why beauty has such an effect on me. Perhaps it's because I've never been beautiful, and probably never will be. I turned to my mother and said,

"If I get sick, if I'm like dying on my death bed, ask Milo Ventimiglia to visit me, and pretend to be my dad, so I can say good-bye to someone." I have many surrogate fathers.

"Oh my god," she exclaimed

"What? He's my T.V. dad," I replied.

"You're crazy."

She shook her head, and turned her eyes back to the road. These displays catch her off guard, and make us both sad. No matter how many years pass. No matter the sacrifice. No matter what she did to pick up the pieces of our shattered lives, I will always mourn the loss of a father. Not mine, just the idea of one.

Milo Ventimiglia portrays a one Jack Pearson on *This Is Us*, an epic family drama on the NBC network. Jack Pearson is the dotting husband and father, with a heart of gold and a bit of a drinking problem. Past traumas can be glanced peeking through Jack Pearson's piercing brown eyes. I was in love the moment Ventimiglia

shed that first tear. Not love in a way a woman loves a man. Though Ventimiglia with his thick brown hair and furrowed brow could easily rival a young Brando. I wanted his concern, his protection. I wished he was my dad. More disturbing and pathetic than any fan girl. I called this man my father. I've done this throughout my life. I've encountered men I want to be my father, and then without their consent or knowledge, they are.

My literature teacher Mr. Cornett was white haired, warm, and jolly. He played Santa every year for fundraisers. On May Day he advised students to stage sit-ins in his classroom instead of ditching school or walking out. When I waltzed into class fifteen minutes late, disheveled and reeking of Camel No. 9's he held me accountable. He expressed a disappointment in me I had longed for from a man. When it came time to read the play *The Glass Menagerie*, he asked me to play Amanda Wingfield, because that was the toughest part. I called this man my father.

Professor Keith Johnson taught me everything I ever knew about math. I stepped foot on a college campus at the age of twenty-nine, desperate and frightened. I used my fingers to add, subtract, and multiply. He was the first person who told me that was okay. He rode his bike across the city every day. When I faltered in class, he patiently and concisely walked me through each step of an equation. He once told me he gave his wife Sue coins for a soda every morning. When she was out of town, he sent a picture of her coins from his phone. They would be waiting for her when she returned. I called this man my father.

My uncle Art left us devastated and breathless. His hands were thick and cracked with calluses. An electrician at the time of his death. He left three daughters behind. My aunt Lucinda had fallen ill one winter. Her sisters raced to Oregon to meet her on her deathbed. I stayed behind with my uncle and cousins. We stayed up late those nights. There was a bonfire, music, and endless cigarettes. He checked my oil, tire pressure and was constantly telling me to cover up. When my daughter was born he drove us home from the hospital. His speed was unhurried and he took each turn with such precision it broke my heart. My mother had not taken my pregnancy well. That ride home from the hospital was the first time in nine months I felt like someone's daughter. I called this man my father.

Ole` has been my daughter's grandpa since the day she was born. When she was three, he presented her with a shaggy puppy from a backpack strapped to his shoulder. She named the dog Bear. On Easter it was a giant cardboard box, containing three small chicks. Two gold, and one black. She once drew three black cats on a plank of wood from the floor in our garage. The next day the wood was carefully cut and stained. She played with the figures for days. One Sunday I met him with an embrace at the front door. Happy Father's Day. He shrugged away and firmly patted my shoulder. I called this man my father.

A year has passed since the heavy rains. The mountainsides beside the highway have returned to their former glory. Rocky and golden, with touches of green. An imperfect beauty I can stand. I can see snowcapped mountains in the distance, riddled with evergreen trees and trails left undiscovered. I feel small, in awe like a child. I try to remember what it was like being precious to someone, the way my beloved mountains are to me. My husband is beside me. He points out shapes in the clouds to our little girl, and for a moment my loneliness wanes. I lean toward the window and glance an elephant with his trunk lifting in the air. The road home isn't long. Just long enough to remember all the men I've called my father.

# *Zaina Azim*

## **yes, orange**

a tablespoon of honey makes the sugar go down  
aromatic, fragrant, foul! slime  
rid of the good in with the bad  
taste of orange- i'm not mad

cotton sheets covering our bodies  
glittering sun glows through blinds  
i'm not mistaken, you're being nice

recipe for two  
down with the old, in with the blue  
ponder- where are you going?  
i don't want a clue

just take me where the rays burn new  
i promise you  
true grows old and lying grows new

palm fronds wither in our sleep  
seedling of bloodless orange

i found it on the porch

your name in glittering gold  
a sign called "new"  
and a seedling i grew  
telling me  
it's time you flew-  
no blue!  
no blue.  
no blue-

*Victor Pierz*

## **List of Fake Wikipedia Articles**

Super Mega Ultra Fun, See Spreadsheet;  
The Schwuggie brigade; Scientific fun;  
200 Words All Just Say Parakeet;  
Bob Dole Honor Memorial Ocean;  
1933 Video Games Sales;  
Sheep Latin; Guy Who Never Existed;  
274 Funniest Emails;  
People who are alive or dead, listed;  
Shakey Baby, see William Shakespeare;  
Quacky McQuackface; Sudimentary Rocks;  
A Super Brandon Jesus Adventure;  
What distinguishes wizards from warlocks?;  
Nooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo;  
22.86 Centimeter Nails;  
474 Things For When You Feel Low;  
Give Me Your Bank Account Details;  
List of People Who Died Via Cello;

# *Jeremy Zaragoza*

## **Hollywood**

In a world that spins  
Around and around  
I only seem to focus on  
This wide-eyed girl  
From a small town  
Who came  
To Hollywood  
To chase her dreams--  
Not naive,  
But hopeful in her power  
To make make-believe her reality  
And find adventure  
In a false forever.

## *Vienna Hernandez*

### **Birds of Innocence**

They stole my heart. They reached in and clenched my heart with all their might; breaking the rib cage that protected it. The birds it held all escaped. For months, I had grieved for the loss of my birds. I still miss them at times. Sometimes, I wish I could somehow put them all back - That they never left. But now, I hope they are doing well. I remembered that I still have butterflies in my stomach. I remembered that I still hold gallons of water throughout my body - a ton of little oceans inside me. The teeth inside my skull are like pearls in an oyster, but I get 32 instead of just one. When water pours from under my eyes, they are the waterfalls for all to see and know how I feel. I remembered that the cells in my bloodstream and brain produce electricity as though I have raging storms within me. I remembered that I still have miles and miles within me thanks to the veins that intertwine me. 100,000 miles to be exact. Enough to go around this Earth four and a half times. I hold the length of planets within me. I even have stardust left in me from the star that exploded 4.5 billion years ago that held the elements that made their way into our bodies. The curves that hold all of this together are smooth rolling hills and concaving valleys. I have galaxies, planets, and ecosystems all growing and thriving in me. All of this is still left in me. Maybe there is more to me than just those birds. Maybe there is more to me than just what they stole. Maybe they didn't steal all of me.

## *Michael Gerardi*

### **Eleanor's Nephew**

He lived by himself  
He worked for himself  
He gave of himself  
He talked to himself.

He tried to reach out  
He tried to break out  
He never got out  
He wanted to shout.

He doesn't know how  
He doesn't know why  
He's facing it now  
He's waiting to die.

He longs for relief  
He hopes for repose  
He's weary of grief  
He fears, but he knows.



*Louie Tomas Ventura*



*Callista Zacarias / Roadtrip*

## *Patricia Ellis*

### **The Fledgling**

Sitting in my backyard in early July, singing prompted me to lift my head. There, on the electric pole, was a baby mockingbird singing his heart out. The song lasted a while. Then, suddenly, a furious flapping of wings lifted him about a foot above the pole for an instant before he returned to it. He was fledgling. I know that a pair of mockingbirds build their nest in a nearby tree, because I had seen egg shells on the ground beneath it. So, I imagine he made the ten-foot journey from the tree to the electric pole for this most important moment of his life. The short furious flutter flights lifting him about a foot off the pole and back again continued. I didn't think to count the number of attempts. My neck was starting to ache from looking up. It was already evening with just a little more than an hour of sunlight left. I thought he needed to get a move on while there was still daylight. It seemed as though his short flutter flights would never end. Finally, I stretched out my hands to him and said aloud, "You can do it! Come on – Up, Up, Up! You can do it! I know you can!" A mighty flapping of his wings produced a short frantic flutter flight up and back to the pole. Then he lifted up and flew away. He headed south. A short time later he flew in from the west and landed on the pole. After a momentary pause he took off to the east. His return to the pole was followed by another brief rest, then an excursion flight in a different direction. When the test flights ended, he returned to the pole and burst into song. It was a triumphantly beautiful song of joy, pride, and accomplishment. He made sure to sing loud and long to tell everyone about the great feat he had just achieved!

I took a moment to thank him and Creation for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to share in and enjoy the glorious beauty and marvels of Nature, especially since it was in my own backyard!

*Nylen A. Nelson*

## **Two**

Twins, a mysterious occasion, a splitting image of one  
A pair, mirrored only in appearance  
A team, devised of doppelgangers  
A duet, harmonizing to the same song  
It can be difficult to tell them apart, but  
Their duality illustrates their vast differences  
One might be courteous, but a stickler  
The other, a total sweetheart, a cheery quokka  
No matter how twins are viewed,  
They're still two peas in a pod  
Study their characteristics, just in case  
Confusing them could be a death wish

## *Immanuel Ibon*

### **The Perils of Stepping into a Bathroom at a Party You Didn't Want to Go to**

They say that it only takes four minutes  
of staring into someone's eyes  
in complete silence to fall  
in love with them, so

I stand in front of this bathroom mirror,  
staring back at my reflection,  
Like he owes me money,  
Like he owes me an explanation,

Like he owes me an apology.  
Smiling back with teeth like a warning,  
marked red with bloody ink.  
A condemnation saying,

No one is allowed inside this broken home.

It is hard for the eyes  
to be windows to the soul  
when they have been boarded up  
after so many storms.

How long will this take?  
Because I will stay right here,  
until my feet take root  
through this marble veneer.

I am tired,  
of washing my hands  
with so much soap and so much acid  
that I can see my bones

Later, you will ask me if I am fine,  
And I will tell you that I am.  
A two-word prayer, hoping  
that one day,

I will be.

## *Michael Thomas*

### **Like, Comment, Subscribe, but Don't Share**

A familiar, cold tone wakes me up sternly  
I've felt no time elapse.  
Silent stares surround my treasure  
Yet only I can spring the trap.

This sound repeats yet no one's talking  
I've touched the empty glass.  
To question reality, as a meaningful act  
Becomes a breeze gone past.

I've created art, in such a haste  
Yet with fervor and such truth.  
It will surely survive the test of time  
To freeze my illustrious youth.

I bow as a servant, knowing who I am  
Of faithful, seeking sleuths.  
Filling empty barrels strewn around  
Fighting claws and hungry tooth.

This excitement I seek has only one path  
Predictability always ensues.  
Though the assurance it tends to regularly provide  
Wears with overuse.

My pride never fades away  
I can't part through thin and thick.  
I've typed my name, signed my life  
So I am the sole convict.

My judged life, the sudden sounds  
I dread I'm the one they pick.  
Yet one thing burns and lingers in my mind  
The thrill of that one click.

## *Victorious Comehn*

### **Whispers in the Wind**

The water swallows me whole  
The higher it rises, the more I am lost  
My pleas have turned to muffled gasps of air  
Silenced in a growing array of bubbles  
Hidden in blue space  
I scream and shout and wail and cry out  
But the sounds fall on deaf ears  
Like dimming vibrations  
Like whispers in the wind

## *Alexy Flores*

### **The Secrets of My Mind**

I sit chained to the farthest corner of my mind. My surroundings are dark and eerie. A shadowless place filled with dark thoughts lurking in the abyss. It is cold and I struggle to move, to scream, to make any sound but my voice is swallowed by the thundering of numerous voices. I am lost to the crowd of thoughts and mindless chatter. I am paralyzed and left weak from the evil that feeds off of me. I have no food or drink but the smallest portions that would not fill even a mouse. I save them hoping to somehow fill myself up enough to free myself.

Suddenly I am free. How? I do not know nor do I care. All that matters is that I am free. I look around and see that I am in a room which looks much like an art studio. A soft piano fills the room. Pictures and fragmented memories of happiness and joy fill the walls while piles and piles of music and stories fill tables. There is a sketchbook covered in elaborate yet childlike scribbles that portray something that not even I can decipher. I notice a slightly shaded corner where a large box lies, filled and overflowing with abandoned dreams and aspirations, blurry thoughts, and an unlimited amount of unexpressed yet not forgotten emotions and fears. I turn away from these, not wishing to further explore them, much less become one of them. Instead, I return to the brightness of the room and relish in my newfound freedom.

Suddenly, the room darkens and the air grows cold. I sense anger and rage as voices and unwanted thoughts fill my head. The room disappears and I see the light as it shrinks and disappears. I am thrown backward, back into my former chains. I fight to get back to the light but to no avail. The darkness and voices threaten to suffocate and strangle me and I go limp. It is not worth it to keep trying only to fail yet again, no matter how good the freedom feels. After a time, the thoughts and words no longer bother me. They are my friends and although they are cruel and dark, they shield me from the world and the pain it brings. Even through my chains, I welcome them with open hands and they comfort me.

# *Marley Rodriguez*

## **Untitled**

I miss seeing you in my room

I haven't done laundry since you left

I keep everything that comes out of the dryer on the right side  
of the bed

The side that used to be yours

Maybe I'm lazy

Maybe it's filling the dent you left in my mattress

Maybe I don't want to fold my clothes and see the side of my bed  
empty for the first time in months

You left but you were gone long before that

I miss every part of you every day

The parts that loved me and were kind to me

And the parts that hated me and wanted nothing to do with me

I miss everything and I miss you

# *Aspen Kae O'Keefe*

## **Spellbound**

All my life,  
people would tug on these heartstrings  
just to hear their sound.

But now,  
a man without a single musical inclination  
is writing a symphony,  
and I am . . .

Spellbound.

# man in the sun

by Charles Bukowski

she reads to me from the New Yorker  
which I don't buy, don't know  
how they get in here, but it's  
something about the Mafia  
one of the heads of the Mafia  
who ate too much and had it too easy  
too many fine women patting his  
walnuts, and he got fat sucking at good  
cigars and young breasts and he  
has these heart attacks - and so  
one day somebody is driving him  
in his big car along the road  
and he doesn't feel so good  
and he asks the boy to stop and let  
him out and the boy lays him out  
along the road in the fine sunshine  
and before he dies he says:  
how beautiful life can be, and  
then he's gone.

sometimes you've got to kill 4 or 5  
thousand men before you somehow  
get to believe that the sparrow  
is immortal, money is piss and  
that you have been wasting  
your time.

"To Richard, on Daylight Savings because You Bring the Sunlight"

by A little Bird Called the Department

I stand at the precipice of letters, observe as they  
become words,

Sometimes silent,

the inchoate seek solid ground amongst the loudest  
warble,

a melody of stressed

and unstressed. They leap.

But they do not fall.

Rising on sound waves,

expanding their power,

They grow into a family of phrases, a community of  
clauses,

creating worlds built on mutual understanding,

architecture and rime.

I follow them onto delicate boughs

And through seafoam capped waves  
But then others join me  
Tumbling through symphony  
We are surrounded by song  
It swells in our hearts  
and cascades onto page  
The words tousele yet settle  
Into the syrxinx of my poem,  
Hearkening all nearby into frenzied  
Listening  
Learning  
Longing.

And then I leave  
Only my words left behind, bashful  
italic and bold proclamation,  
waiting to make sense and sadness  
Every time someone opens the page.

