

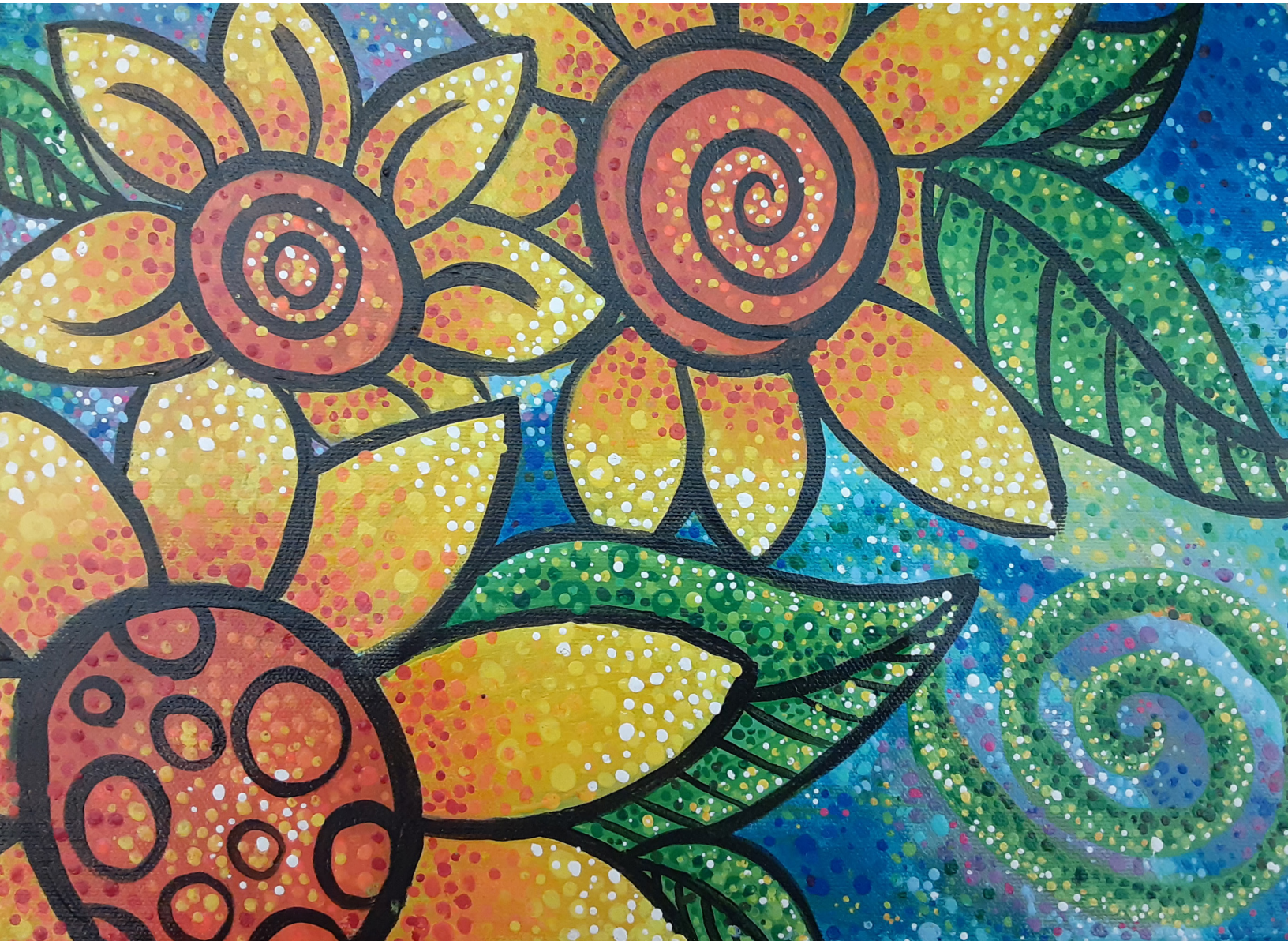
in·del·i·ble

/in' deləb(ə)l/

adjective

1. (of ink or a pen) making marks that cannot be removed
2. not able to be forgotten or removed

POETRY & ART BY TEENS & ADULTS
NEW LENOX PUBLIC LIBRARY
VOLUME THREE, 2021



Thank You

Thank you to the FRIENDS OF THE NEW LENOX LIBRARY for sponsoring the printing of this year's annual Poetry & Art Contest journal. Your support of the Library and the New Lenox community is always deeply appreciated.

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About our Guest Judges

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MARCI RAE JOHNSON works for Legible.com and is also a freelance editor. Her poems appear or are forthcoming in *Image*, *The Christian Century*, *Main Street Rag*, *The Collagist*, *Rhino*, *Quiddity*, *Hobart*, *Redivider*, *Redactions*, *The Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *The Louisville Review*, and *32 Poems*, among others. Her most recent book, *Basic Disaster Supplies Kit*, was published by Steel Toe Books. Her first collection of poetry won the Powder Horn Prize and was published by Sage Hill Press in 2013, and her chapbook won the Friends of Poetry chapbook contest for Michigan authors in 2014 and was published by Celery City Chapbooks.

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Destination

Josephine H. | 7th–9th Grade

On the summer days when entertainment refuses to show itself
When the hot, sky-bound afternoon sun is trumped by the refreshing breeze
An adventure lurks in the back of the mind, waiting patiently just to be considered
A family bored to no end responds to the request that will never go unanswered
“Let’s go to the city. Get in the car, we’re going to downtown Chicago!”

The stuffy feeling of the hot car rests stubbornly in our heads
As we zoom by our picturesque surroundings of houses, apartments, and parks
We hear the boundless sound of the highway rushing under the car
As we impatiently ask how much time we have left until we arrive

The farther we head downtown the more I see the life around us restyle
From the quiet, boring suburbs I’ve forever known and always lived in
To the busy, vibrant city life I’ve never really gotten to live
As the wonder and inspiration awaits, just a few minutes away
I study the graffiti art painted on every solid surface
The backyards where kids play, kicking soccer balls on tiny squares of green grass
The flower gardens planted in the front of the apartment complexes
And the people hurrying by as just a piece of the buzzing city

Then we park our car and walk three blocks
Only one in a sea of hundreds
But just as I step out of that car
The world’s picture becomes clearer
Like Maya Angelou discovering why the caged bird sings
And like Albert Einstein understanding relativity
I now understand inspiration even more than before
Because everywhere I look, there is a community
Because even though we are drowning in the population
We will forever remain connected

This is downtown Chicago at its best
This is the city, flooding with its life
This is the vibrant place where I was born
This is very place where I may find peace
Despite the persistent, eternal noises

It builds my most indelible memories
From seeing the awe-inspiring Bean
To visiting a huge art museum
This is the wandering poet's dream
A place overflowing with people
All of discrete personalities
And even though the crowded streets are never-ending
My controlling anxiety tucks itself away
As if a form of temporary surrender
Because of the beautiful place I just brought it to

Here is where I find individuality
Here is where I find wonder
Inspiration
This place doesn't need beautification
But rather appreciation
I don't care where the adventure will take us
A Jamaican restaurant
A history museum
Millennium Park
Or some random antique shop
As long as we are here
Living this dream
Witnessing this miracle
As long as I am free to imagine
What life could look like
And what it already is.

That's Where I'm From

Siena A. | 7th-9th Grade

I am from Lincoln Logs and LEGOs
And playing with Barbies and Bratz
From a subdivision with lots of houses and ponds
And a playground to swing and chat
I am from the American Airlines aircrafts
To travel to beautiful places all around the world
To family reunions in Minnesota and baking cookies on Christmas
Or even making popcorn on a family movie night
I am from the Padilla Cheeks and the Italian heritage of talking with my hands
From the Blissful Baumanns and the Adventurous Adduccis
I'm from warm bonfires and making sticky s'mores on a cold summer night
To sledding in winter or having a snowball fight
From a cap and goggles and jumping into cold water
To setting and bumping a ball to my teammates to score points
From hitting a ball with a club to make a hole in one
Oh cheering and clapping is so much fun
I'm from laughing and making memories with all the people I love
To being creative and going on courageous adventures
I am from, "You grew!" and "You're my amazing genius"
From "You have beautiful hair" and "Good job I'm proud of you"
I'm from the Catholic Church and show love and forgiveness
From the land of pasta and pizza and Libertad Trabajo Cultura
To the high Swiss Alp mountains and the Prussian blue Cyani flower of Germany
That's where I'm from, my beautiful family tree

[Untitled]

Griffin F. | 7th–9th Grade

Have you ever felt like a bottom feeder
Desperately looking for a scrap

Of the glory someone else got
With you stuck in a trap

Of jealousy and anger
Toward someone who doesn't even deserve it

So gather yourself and make a plan
To get out of the terrible pit

Take a breath
And start anew

And be the thing you want to be
The one and only you

The Hope Our World Brings

Swathi S. | 7th–9th Grade

There comes a time,
Where each of us, young and old,
Speak up against the injustices of the Cruel world,
To play against the gamble of lives,
Of freedom,
Of personal rights,
Or of inhuman practices.

These problems all started with wretched thoughts,
As chains enslaving the great Thinkers in each
of us,
Feasting on insecurities, falsities,
And perhaps most of all,
The consumption of Greed,
The Abuse of Power.

Even the smallest of words have the greatest impact,
For the devil that started Horrible wars whispers
to the same ears,
Of those who choose to Harm,
To hurt,
To inflict pain on the weakest of us all.

Needless to say, the ‘weakest’ are our strongest
Warriors.

Wrestling against Society’s standards,
Attacking the dictator, the authoritarian, with
nothing but lessons from a ruthless past,
Unjust,
Horribly Painful,

But they now stand unharmed.

For those who choose to abuse their own
privilege, I ask,

What good does it do to hurt others?
To cause pain?
To make one feel helpless, useless,
Inferior?
What good does bullying do?
When your act is no better than those of Heinous
Villains?
What good is violence truly?
When you become the attacker to merely enjoy a
game of predator-and-prey?
What good does it do?
To pit yourself against others,
Knowing that you’ve started a war you’re doomed
to lose.

There is no poison except for dark thoughts
themselves,
Plaguing the good souls in this world,
For thoughts of misuse and hurt,
But there is always light at the end of a dark tunnel,
Just as there is Hope in Pandora’s box.

Do not release Hope yet, dear Warrior,
For the time will come,
When the world will watch your Final Stand.

You must remember:
You have been gifted with a voice,

And for even the quietest of voices,
One is Gifted with Great Power.

Voices

Vincent S. | 7th–9th Grade

CHORUS

Voices in my head again. I'm off my meds again (x2)

Voices... (x3)

VERSE 1

All these demons inside, I've got nowhere to hide,
because deep inside I know I can't run away from
these problems. They haunt me to this very day.

CHORUS

Voices in my head again. I'm off my meds again (x2)

Voices... (x3)

VERSE 2

These voices are what help me. These Voices
are my family. Protecting me from my problems
that I can't hide away from. They help me fight my
enemies. But my problems keep coming back to
haunt me.

CHORUS

Voices in my head again. I'm off my meds again (x2)

Voices... (x3)

My Golden Retriever

Poppy M. | 7th–9th Grade

My dog is is a golden retriever
But he can be an overachiever
He grabs all our shoes
And never leaves clues
But he's still such a people pleaser

Flicker

Keira S. | 7th–9th Grade

Light bulbs flicker in the dark basement
Cobwebs scattered across ceiling
Gloomy, dark, eerie
Flickering like lightning bugs
Flashing like a moonlit spring
Floorboards creek with each step
It is lonely forest
Spiders crawling around corners
A rat peeks its head out of a crack in the wall
Lighting by the old flickering bulbs

[Untitled]

Samantha G. | 7th–9th Grade

It starts with a capital letter,
And ends with a period
That's what everyone told me
They never looked at a page and saw that things can end in a comma,
A break,
A small pause in a sentence,
Not everything needs to end
Only the good sentences have a comma
But after a few words,
The comma will turn into a period
What will we do then?
Do we wait for another capital letter?
But why worry about the question marks,
When we can fill in the words before the period
When we can make those final words meaningful
Every line,
Every comma,
Every singular space between each line,
We get closer and closer to the end,
When our words finally form a sentence,
And our sentence becomes part of a paragraph
Hopefully, our sentence becomes history
And, you remember our sentence when you go onto the next
Knowing that the period is coming soon and you will soon find another capital letter,
I want the last lines to be meaningful
Everyone was right,
It starts with a capital letter,
And ends with a period

Abuelita

Isis O. | 10th–12th Grade

While we all rest, my grandmother's sweat and tears are buried deep within the flour mixture
Years of gathering pieces of wood and log for the fire have left her hands
Scars, bruises, and experience.
Her eyes have been slowly turning red due to the long restless night of waiting for her teenage kids
to come back home.

Many years ago, she had to leave the comfort of her home
My great grandparents saw a happy wife but underneath the veil was a
Young, scared woman
Who would have known that from that day on, she would have to live her life in constant anxiety
Although this was a long time ago, my heart still feels her desperation that lived vividly a few days after
the wedding.
The pain of being only able to eat once a day or nothing at all just to see her four
children with full tummies.

Oh how loving of a mother she is.
My grandfather's family never really treated her well but always held her face up high throughout
the fights and misunderstandings.
Her knees also carry stories of long nights of prayer and kneeling down by the river to wash clothes.
Beautiful tan skin, eyes that have received betrayal.

Strong woman who I aspire to be
I want my abuelita's strength
Her love
Her beauty

"Te quiero Abuelita."

I grab her warm hand.
She smiles back at me while she moves her baby hairs in her face with the back of her hand.
Oh how I love the tortillas she makes.

[Untitled]

Teja D. | 10th–12th Grade

It is 8th period of my 8th-grade year, U.S. history.
My teacher takes us through the presentation slides
and pictures as we discussed the Triangular Trade and slavery.

We're halfway through when behind me there's a hand raised to say
"I don't understand why they just let the sailors take them from their homes."
And as if that isn't enough, her friend had you follow up
"they should have jumped off the boat and swim back home."
Of all the times to look away from your phone you decided this is the one thing you had to say
instead of continuing through Instagram.

My stomach churns and my eyes burn,
I realize the only thing they learn today
is to stay away from the past and Google images of slavery with SafeSearch on.
Like they couldn't take the tsunami and handle it bit of saltwater from it.
It troubles me the sharks have met more of my ancestors and I have.

When I was younger my mom said they rushed to put me in swimming lessons
I was always jumping into the water,
never caring if I could swim or if it was too deep, I just wanted to be in it.
I love the ocean, but these great whites have been eating my kind since before my time.
I should be scared because I've been warned too many times
people that act like me aren't safe.
People that look like me are natural-born sharkbait.

"Keep your distance from the sea, cut your tongue out your mouth,
your words are better left unsaid. Spend your day Treading Water."

Force him to swallow his 158 years of sea salt.
Like making up 79% of the police force isn't enough.
Like Chicago isn't enough.
Apparently, Charleston, Cleveland, New York, jersey, Miami, and Kansas City aren't enough
room for them to swim.
My life takes place in an aquarium,
and Michael Phelps has nothing on me and my swimming record.
I went to the pool with my best friend, and she said my hair looks like a jellyfish.
It's because I learned how to sting early.

So when you apologize and then mumbled so quietly you thought I couldn't hear to ask what my problem was, I would have gladly told you that my problem, *White Tip!*, is that you've been using your fins and gills from the beginning, but can't spend 40 minutes to learn where your triangular feeding grounds came from in the first place.

A Year of Uncertainty

Maura M. | 10th–12th Grade

It's been a year since the monster struck,
A year of fear and the sensation of being stuck.
At first we rejoiced at the prospect of two weeks off,
But fifty more later I can only look back and scoff.

How naïve I must've been to have seen this as only an inconvenience,
Yet how could we have known that a single gap year would be such a difference.
In 2020 we learned how to completely adjust our lives,
Living each day uncertainly, struggling to make strives.

New hobbies, new crafts, new recipes to make,
At least now that we're home we've got some free time to bake.
Trends like TikTok and tie-dye, Tiger King and Zoom calls,
Are what made 2020 bearable trapped inside these walls.

School started back up, at least there's one thing that's a constant,
Too bad it's all virtual and loading my laptop is anything but instant.
My grade is now solely determined by my Wi-Fi connection,
And my teachers are struggling to have us answer one question.

So yes it's true, that we are all in this together,
Just keep your chin up because this won't last forever.
We will come out of this mess stronger than before,
Fight this virus and then win the war.

I guess I've learned lots about life during my time on earth,
The pandemic made me realize what life is really worth.
I've learned that death encompasses us and passes by us daily,
But we need to focus on all the positives or else we'll go crazy.

By now it's been a year, we've hit 2021,
It was quite tough but we were able to still make it fun.
So even though 2020 did not go how anyone expected,
We can virtually join together to all feel connected.

Of the Beholder

Sofia A. | 10th–12th Grade

I kiss you with my eyes open,
I'm scared that if I close them,
You'll disappear in the moment,
And leave me heartbroken,

I'll kiss you with my eyes open,
Searching your face and hopin',
You feel some satisfaction in,
Your touch against my skin,

No idea what I'm doing here,
But I'll stay 'cause I'm with you,
Sure, let's get nothing clear,
Did it have to be so soon?

"I forgot you were such,"
I guess you're out of luck,
I'm afraid this is what you get:
A flat chest and my fidgets,
Shaking cold and ugly thin,
The type of body that isn't "in"
Straight hair that I can't fix,
Oversized clothes I can't fit,
Don't know how to work my lips,
Never filled out these boney hips.

You know I'm no Aphrodite,
Make me feel like I could be.
Would it kill you to tell me,
I'm worth more than I believe?

Let me pretend that you only see,
All my beautiful possibilities:
A dancer's form, a work of art,
A developing idea, a character arc,

The only creature in existence,
Your present past future tense.

Could you ever kiss me with your eyes open,
Or would that ruin the perfect moment?
Won't I ever be your final component?
Sofia, close your eyes; just enjoy it.

[Untitled]

Alex M. | 10th–12th Grade

I thought I meant something to you
You made me feel so special
We used to tell each other everything
Now all I can do is hope to hear your voice
 in the wind
I used to see you all the time
Now i'm trying so hard to remember your smile
Oh that beautiful smile
Your teeth so white and beautiful
I swear you could light up a room
I used to sit at my phone waiting for you to respond
I would get butterflies in my stomach
Every notification I recieved
Now my phone is a paper weight
That I don't care to hold
You knew all about my life
I told you things I have never told anyone
Now I don't know if you even remember
You were the first person
I would look for when I walked in a room
You were the first thing
I would think about when I woke up
And the last thing before I went to bed
But now you're gone
You left without warning
You left without saying goodbye
I never got a reason
I thought you would come back
But I was wrong
I held onto the lies you told me
I believed you cared
I guess it was all in my head
The problem is that
No one understands
I tell people i'm over you

But i'm not
I still think about you everyday
Hoping maybe you'll come back
That we can be what you said we would
People say a break up is hard
But how do you recover from something that
 never happened
I don't have a real reason to be upset
At least that's what my friends tell me
They say get over him
I wish it was that easy.
I wish I could forget the memories
But I can't.
Without you I am lost.

Don't Give Up

Kendall S. | 10th–12th Grade

Life can get messy and you might want to quit,
But don't listen to that voice in your head.
Try again, instead.
Just don't give up.

There may be bumps in the road,
But what's life without a little ride?
Take it slow and don't hide.
Just don't give up.

Things can get scary and may seem impossible,
But life isn't supposed to be easy.
It's okay to feel queasy.
Just don't give up.

You may want to give away your pen,
But this is your story to write.
Spread your wings and take flight.
Just don't give up.

I know it seems hard,
But you are so strong.
I promise to be here to tag along.
Just don't give up.

Do it for your mom,
She is so proud of how far you have come.
Don't become numb.
So please, Just don't give up.

The Neighborhood Cul De Sac

Caitlin C. | 10th–12th Grade

The grass doesn't shine as green as it once did
Our innocence is gone
Everyone has moved away or moved on
It's not the same anymore
Suddenly, the smell of those sugary popsicles disappeared
It's now the awful smell of gasoline
The world we built and imagined bright
Is now just a dull neighborhood cul de sac in sight
Our games of tag turned into short conversations
There's no good flow, they are forced
It's not the same anymore

That bright blue picnic table is not as vibrant
We notice the chipping paint
We noticed our disconnect
We are noticing our world change
It's not the same anymore

Those bikes and scooters we rode with no worries
Turned into school work with no guarantees
Going through the motions of life with no break
It's like we work a 9-5 office job to stay awake
It's not the same anymore

Our summers feel short and winters long
They're not as innocent
So many responsibilities
You have to take a step back and realize
Our childhood is gone
It will never be the same again

[Untitled]*Kylie S. | 10th–12th Grade*

I prefer checkers over chess.
Perhaps you're right.
Perhaps it's because I'm too simple-minded to understand the complexities of the far superior game.
Oh you're right. Forgive me. Chess is not a game.
It's a... what did you call it?
A strategic op-what?
I'm sorry. It appears my simple-mind didn't understand what you said.
But either way, I suppose you're right.
Especially by describing it as superior.
Because isn't that what chess is?
Sacrificing inferior pieces so that the superior ones may continue on their conquest?
I wonder, does my simple-mind make me inferior?
Are you going to sacrifice me?
How about all the other simple-minded folk who prefer checkers over chess?
Are us simple-minds just here to emphasize how much better, how much more superior the intellects are?
No?
Do you say that because that's the "right thing to say?"
Can that not be the actual right thing?
Oh, forgive my simple-mind.
I tend to drift off when my opponent takes too long to make a move.
Yes, yes. I know.
A good move takes time.
It's important to think several moves ahead to ensure your victory.
But if you keep thinking about what you will do, you'll miss what you are doing.
Oh, my move?
Very well.
Oh, I can't make that move?
I thought that piece could move diagonally?
No, only straight?
Okay, is that better?
Your move now.
See, this is why I prefer checkers.
No need to remember all the intricate details of what each piece can and cannot do.
In checkers, all pieces do the same.
Not one piece starts off with an advantage over another.
They begin the same. Equals.

Of course, different pieces will go on different paths.
They will use their power as they see fit.
But their origins do not define the amount of power they have.
There's no cowardly king for innocent pawns to be sacrificed for.
No bishop to ambush a prancing horse.
I'm sorry?
That's a knight?
But it looks like a horse?
Well, you surely know better than me, the simple-minded fool who prefers checkers over chess.
Oh, just one more thing..
Checkmate.

The States of America

Ainsley R. | 10th–12th Grade

“The Land of the Free”

Where people really aren’t free,
Where people are scared to leave their homes
Because they might be attacked for what they look like,
Where women are scared to walk alone at night
Because they might be attacked for existing.

Where people can make something of themselves.
Where dads like mine can escape
The poverty generations before them lived
through,
Where moms like mine can come
To get a better education than they could across
the oceans.

Where people have to worry
About if they can afford an ambulance
Or if they should drive themselves to the hospital
Where they’ll be charged thirty-seven dollars for
a band-aid.
Where people can drive and drive
For hours and hours,
For miles and miles,
And still be in the same state.

Where people are more concerned
With what race or religion
A mass shooter is or practices,
Rather than the guns they have access to.
Where the people are so divided
Amongst themselves, that they can’t possibly be
“The United States of America.”

Where people have opportunities
And can be whatever they believe
They are capable of.
Where people have the freedom to choose.
Where fate is up to the people.

Because in the end,
It’s supposed to be about the people.
Sometimes it’s not
But it should be, always.
Like the snaking veins of a river run rampant,
Branches stretching across the country.
Some currents are gentler than others,
But they all have the same destination in mind—

Progress,
Being better than we were before.
“The Land of the Free”
Where progress and perseverance are what matter.

Vagabond

Emila N. | 10th–12th Grade

Aromas of black coffee and blackening lungs
Dance past endless heads.
Native earth, caked with melancholy longing,
Has sodden beneath stormy clouds of thought.

Hatred solidifies the country's borders
Into thick tangible columns
Towering over suggestions
of peace and equity.

A different kind of impenetrable hatred
Poisons a father's sentiment in regards to his wife.
His offspring, foreign to the touch,
still remain under his care
For the only thing more potent,
More conniving,
Is the father's pride.

Rampaging regret refine his formidability
Intentionally intended to intimidate
the ones he blames
For the departure from his
Real
Home.

Home is where the heart is and
Father's heart is
Buried
underneath blatant narcissism
Far below the bustling of Bitola.

The sun softly caresses my face whilst
Clouds hide the busy nothingness, growing sleepy.
Staring at distant mountains,
A pair of eyes glare back.

They taunt me, mock my misery,
Daring me to leave these shackles of confinement.

A father's blood is distributed into
The systems of his birthed babes.
A mother muddies their blood,
Spoiling them to the core.
His image remains far more precious to uphold for
The family possessing
untainted blood.

The same as what crawls under his own skin—
a most vital substance.
Numbness debilitates soft hearts and oblivious minds.
Standing still on uneven ground
My legs managed to stop themselves.
Home is where the heart is,
Now mine refuses to pump besmirched blood.
Aromas of mellow musing and significant people
Dropped dead.

We Label The Ununderstandable As Weeds: An Ode To Dandelions

Rebecca A. | 10th–12th Grade

Beauty grows
 In cracks in the concrete
In arid lawns of yellow brown
 In rocky railroad beds
In lapses of ironclad fences
Beauty grows
 Where no one wants
To be pulled or die
 To be born again
Because beauty is persistent
Consistent vivid yellow petals
Thrown into the mix of green
Giving respite to the blankness
Putting color into grayscale
 To tuck behind tiny ears
 To knot together on porch steps
 To pluck and pluck until the noise
Goes away
Beauty is free, im-
-perfect, glorious glowing in a glitch
Reaching up to the sun
Giving its petals as a gift
 Clenched in a small fist
 Reaching out to her mother
No dripping dye or cost
Beauty spreads and grows
 No limits or contingencies
It knows no ideals or normalities
It shines of sun until fading to snow
Pixie-sized puffy white pillows
 Not to sleep but to dream upon
 In nature's birthday candle flames
 Because beauty is a pillar to believe
In until your killing breath

Pen

Deanna K. | 10th–12th Grade

There's something distinct
About holding a pen that isn't like
Anything else

See now,
A pen is like a brain
It functions like a brain
Hours and hours
Of crossing out,
Scribbling,
Drawing,
Noting down,
Eloquently

Just like our thoughts
That circulate our mind
Like the blood traveling throughout our body
Flowing through our brain giving us the ability
To speak (without our mouths having to open!)
To move our hands!
To write our thoughts!

There are
Sentences about the past,
Present,
And the future!

I get to write my truth
Sometimes,
I just write things that I have yet to tell the world
Other times,
I write things that subconsciously come to mind.

And it is then that I have to reread
What I had just written.
I put my pen down to ponder

Therein lies the distinction between a pen
and speaking
My voice can be heard for only so long
until it gets tired
And a pen,
Whatever was written down beforehand,
will always be there.

Without a pen,
I wouldn't be able to write, of course.
But I could speak.
And without a brain,
Well I'd be dead.

But the things that do remain
Are these consequential words that
Quite possibly could, can, and will
hold meaning to somebody else.
And that somebody,
Could catch a glimpse of my mind

Sparking them to write their own truth
And pick up a pen.

Ode to Pineapple Pizza

Alexander P. | 10th–12th Grade

You're so misunderstood.
I'm so sorry.
Pepperoni kings and cheesy queens
think they can walk all over you.
They share fake smiles but don't give you
a seat at the lunch table.
They flaunt their popularity
while you walk with your head down.
They use their burnt edges and jealousy
to distract from your beauty,
to hide your bright yellow shine
and your sweet, juicy flavor.
But they will never compare.
You are the perfect addition
to any slice of a piece of life.
You are more than any other
classmate of yours. You work well
in groups of either two or three.
But you never get any credit for
your contributions. You don't work for praise.
And you are definitely not a crowd favorite.
You are my little secret, my partner in crime,
the one I defend to all of the bullies.
And I always will.
So come sit with me, Pineapple,
we will face this world together.

A Field of Wonders

Alexa S. | *10th–12th Grade*

A field constantly evolving.
Like a gear that never stops spinning.
New medicine, new technology
Popping up from every crevice of the world,
With only the benefit of the people in mind.
A force focused on the wellness of others,
Something that is often lost these days.
Life saving devices created annually
And the ideas for how they work,
Hardly understandable to anyone besides the creator.
MRIs, cat scans, x-rays, and more.
Like looking glasses into the body
But the body is a chest that has been bolted shut
Leaving me to believe it's nothing other than pure magic.
Like the sparkly purple and blue
That shoots from the end of a wand in fairy tales.
Except here, it's real.
It was made by the hands and minds of humans.
And maybe that's why it calls my name.
Maybe that's why my child self and myself now
Still want to be involved somehow.
Because it appeals to the magic that children love
And also to the hands-on experience that I crave now.
Machines and people working hand in hand
To give the ill and wounded a chance of survival.
A field so pure, it's only intention is to heal.
Procedures always changing,
Efficiency and safety working side by side.
Technology comes and goes with new creations, revolving.
A field constantly evolving.

Isaac Edmonson

Mahryssa H. | 10th–12th Grade

I was holding love
a plant you could cradle
watch grow and blossom.
But plants die without proper care.
Doesn't matter how much water you give
without the sun, they can't thrive.
You were my light
my warmth to count on
to hold me when I shiver.
As summer rays on your skin
but you know you're gonna burn
and you're too shocked by the beauty
and too into each moment to care.
The truth of our relationship was covered
by the butterflies he left
scrambled in my throat.
Each throb soothed
by his aloe covered hands
rubbing my back
and gently cooling the sizzle.
Short relief to the tender
long term damage.
Each red flag blinded
by the way we snuggled.
Using staples to fix the tear in my heart.
Each staple coming out
opening my wound once again
and being replaced with another.
Slowly mending itself back together.
All that work I put into us
gone so slowly.
All that water given to our plant
for it to wilt from lack of nutrients.

I Almost Missed You

Alissa M. | 10th–12th Grade

I miss you.

You didn't go anywhere, but yet you are so far away.

With an outstretched hand, my fingertips can only splay out
and brush the silken memories you have gifted me for but a brief moment.

But the wavering string that ties our existences together, now frayed,
is fading within the fog that you approach.

I have known you since nine years old,

You shone so brightly.

Your hands would clutch a pencil like you would a lifeline.

You doodled on the pages of the canvas paper twirled along spirals of the sketchbooks
that resided on your desk at all times.

I missed you eagerly showing me your art.

But everything you would say had an edge to it.

The words you would speak with such lovely context would slowly begin to dip down into an abyss.

You would tell me about your recurring nightmares,

And how gruesome they were,

You always had darkness whispering into the depths of your mind,

I always sensed it.

I missed when you confided in me.

As time passed, we drifted.

But when we did interact, you came to me crying, needing someone to listen.

Every day you would feel your stomach twist into knots like a beast trying to claw its way out.

You would retch out the anxiety that polluted your insides,

To the point where the hinge of your jaw would come loose.

Your mind grabbed hold of your wrist and you couldn't shake free as it dragged you into the
gloom where any light you possessed was doused.

I missed the way you relied on me.

Your light was fading more and more by the day

As you told me you hate your body,

You hate your art,

You hate yourself,

You hate the voices that would shriek inside your skull,

And you hated that you listened to them.

I missed your light.

After years of never once seeing one another, we did.

It was like no time passed.

We laid upon your pullout mattress and rambled about what we hated about the world.

We laughed and cried like we used to back then.

You told me how in the time we spent apart you tried to end your life and spent months in a mental institution,

How those who you thought were your friends, told everyone why you were gone for so long for attention,

How kids added you to a group chat, and sent pictures of you and made fun of them just so you could watch
in humiliation.

I should have been there.

That small moment in my life was one of the most comforting,

Because you probably don't realize how much you have always meant to me,

And you were almost taken from this world without me having known.

I almost missed you.

I know you are still at war with your mind as you choke down prescription pills to tame your brain
as you sit alone in your room,

Wearing your cottagecore cardigans,

Surrounded by walls strung with withering roses,

Your tears acrylics that would color the canvas in pale pastels upon the easel in the corner of your room,

Producing masterpiece after masterpiece with each droplet.

I miss you.

You believe people will only spend time with you out of pity.

That's not true.

With every fiber of my being I miss you.

I miss your laugh and our dumb inside jokes,

I miss watching anime with you, and drawing together while listening to Mitski,

I miss you for everything you hate about yourself.

I miss you.

Taste of Reality

Varun S. | 10th–12th Grade

We remain in place,
Such wonderful creatures,
Shining with exuberance,
But rash with our judgements.

Austere items turn to diamonds in our eyes,
Never content.
Chasing the faint glint in a sea of dust,
We wander aimlessly,
Unable to experience the fruits of reality.

Sat atop the altar,
A taste of reality,
Clouded with judgement,
Its skin a shock to nature,
Its core appetizing,
Fresh to the soul,
And ripe for the mind.

A single bite.

Glory possesses the heart,
As we stray from convention,
The flesh sour in our mouths,
Like bruises on our tongues.
But over time,
It heals complications,
And promotes contemplation.

The core stands high,
Looking down as we wonder,
How long we were chained,
To the ones showered in glory.
As no one is truly free,
In this imaginary reality.
Our vision shielded,
Like Icarus,
On his flight to servitude.

A single green fruit,
Its appearance rooted in reality,
Its imperfections reflecting
The cost of our impunity.
We remain grounded,
As it viciously decontaminates
Our overwhelming gluttony,
Its aroma gifting us
A deceitful bliss.

Mother's eyes

Logan W. | 10th–12th Grade

The sky was purple and orange, it danced carelessly
bouncing across my mother's eyes
She was floating with a childlike happiness

Horses galloped behind her on a grassy plain
They were swallowed into the beauty of the sky
The wind blew the colors around changing again and again

As I look into her eyes today they are grey and lifeless
I can't decide what her eyes looked like
Do I remember them as a perfect memory or the reality I see in front of me

[Untitled]

Jorge S. | 10th–12th Grade

Time in America is beginning to feel like a soggy
cigarette butt confined to years of carcinogenic days.
Yet, men gladly walk around with the hands of America
constraining their necks. With American flags plastered on every
object they own as if America herself pulled out the branding iron
and called its citizens one by one to burn her ideals into.
The division is still there even with the branding.
Both sides manipulated into each sides creating zombies
that roam the streets. Some see America like a plump
peach that oozes with opportunity and equality.
Just across the pothole ridden street, their neighbor
sees the America that uses its calloused palm to
smack around the people who barely clings
onto the world around them that America brings.
This is the story of America.

The Bus Stop

Ryan H. | 10th–12th Grade

I look upwards,
glancing at the thick white sheet as it cascades down to the earth.

The frigid winds whip repetitively at my already blistered nose.

My lips dry like a barren desert,
my breath of toothpaste freezing as soon as it escapes me.

I wrap my fist tighter into my pocket and waddle slowly,
my feet crunching softly with each step.

Will this bone biting pain ever end?

The three minutes have so suddenly made like an eternity.

Alas, the roar of life; my savior.

My nose fills with the bittersweet exhaust.

The clunk of my boots are greeted by the warming nostalgia of the heater's cry.

The grim faces of rosy cheeks and chattering teeth watch suspiciously as I pass down the aisle.

The faux leather seat makes for the typical companion.

It too dreads the destination.

Witch in the Woods

Cole G. | 10th–12th Grade

O Witch in the Woods,
Who turns trespassers into frogs,
And protects my kind in your forest,
The one you spent years cultivating,
Growing into a mass of thick trunked trees
And meadows blooming colourful flowers,
Cut by the streams going right through them,
Dimmed by the upper foliage
that blocked parts of the sun.

O Witch with such control of the Earth,
Could you turn me into a frog?

Shrink me until my eyes turn wide
While my problems float away
Like leaves fluttering in the wind.
Have the lily pads that sway atop the streams
Become my bedding and place for sunbathing
While I sleep under filtered rays of the sun
Underneath the shelter of the canopy
Created by your trees above me,
Warming my cold-blooded body,
Holding me in an embrace of loving heat.
I would awake croaking and screeching
into the woods
To match the tone of the orchestra
Of rustling leaves and howling winds
That act as my alarm.
Let me hop from branch to branch
And crash to the ground,
Saved by the wandering Gays you protect,
And be held in their soft and subtle hands,
Or gently placed in the pockets of their clothing,
Peeking my head out to watch
A world where my stress has disappeared.

O Witch in the Woods,
Could you turn me into an owl?
One with grey feathers peppered with black spots
To contrast the colours you painted your forest,
And eyes made of the same abyss that birthed space,
My means of watching the mortal realm from my perch,
In a plane of no consequence.
Grant me permission to sleep throughout the day,
Awakening in the cool night of possibilities,
Chirping and singing to the moon that brought it,
Ignoring the minuscilities of work and stress.
Dawn would bring about my resting on branches
near the open flower field,
Spending too much time turning my head around,
Grasping each sweet scent the forest garden produces,
Prompting the petting and admiration
Of the soft subtle-handed Gays that awake
by the time I sleep,
And just as devoid of stress as I.

O Witch in the Woods,
Can I become a flower?
Conjure me as one in your floral garden,
With pedals splattered in hues of pink and purple.
I would rest easy feeding on the foliage filtered sunlight,
Rather than the stress that once governed my life,
Let me prompt the interest of the bees
That sleep and hold their feet within my embrace,
And use me to create a concoction of sweetness divine,
That the Gays in this forest you protect collect.
Let them collect me,
Peeling me from the dirt in hands now caked in soot,
Yet never disturbing my roots,
Have them place me in a pot from their abode,

And water and sing away any fears and stresses
That may have lingered in my roots,
Hope that they would give me a bizarre name
Never dare used on a child,
Hope that I would become a symbol of their love,
With all problems of mine obsolete in this form
 in your woods.

Heading Home

Mason F. | 10th–12th Grade

Let me know when you're ready to come home.
When we're there, we can be alone.
I know it's been a tough year,
But please,
Withhold your fear.

I'll be by your side
During the trials you go through,
And the future to look forward to.
So keep your head up
Because I'll always love you.

Dry hands

Malika O. | 10th–12th Grade

The smell of rubbing alcohol no longer stings my nose
Gets her scrubs to iron out any and all wrinkles of hope
Had 2 kids before the age of 25
No longer in control of her life
It belongs to a 12 hour shift and prepping for the next one
She never complained about being tired or alone
But we knew
That every clock-in reminded her of the sand running out
That every time she washed her hands she was wiping her dreams away with the blood and grime
That every time I saw the cracks I can see her aspirations escaping
The rougher her hands got the harder it was for her to be happy
Being in the land of opportunity without any
Having to resort to manual work making just enough money
Always made it clear she didn't want that for me
Which didn't take much convincing
Getting no love from my job or a significant other doesn't sound too enticing
Hearing her frustrations make me want to be less and less like her
Avoiding romantic relationships so they can't hurt
Not for the streets but I'm ok on the curb
Putting myself in her shoes nah I'd rather go barefoot
For her to get here I know what it took
Cuts from the supermarket register, security guard shaking from that east coast weather
The thought of our resemblance going past physical attributes fills me with so much hate
Not for her, but I feel like I can't make mistakes
I'll be damned if her dry hands become mine
And for that I'll never be present in time
Like her my life will never fully be my own
Forever molding my life to contradicts hers
I hope her dry hands don't get mirrored

Inspired by "Mami works" by Elizabeth Acevedo

Eve

Abigail J. | 10th–12th Grade

Where am I?
A calling to the void that gently whispers back.
A parking lot
Bathed in green
Laid towards the stars
Air hot and thick as oatmeal
The distant hum of cars
Speeding by in the road
So fast that it hurts to think
Of what might happen if I were to run
Out into the street
Arms open wide
To dance and sing under traffic lights
To scream my lungs raw
Forget my mind is crushing
Under the rushing
Of thoughts and promises
And hands to be held.
The store is closed
Hours since the managers left
But the lights are still there
A shining sign in bold words
If you squint
There's the hint
Of a birds nest, tucked behind the letters
Its half past eleven
I told my mother I would be home by ten
But she is long since in bed
And in the morning
She'll have my head
For I turned off my phone
And breathed in the air
Wafting with dust and gravel
The parking lot is old
And i'm feeling bold enough
To face my parents' wrath

Why am I here?
In the parking lot
Past eleven.
I'm living.
In the last place we stayed together
Where I told you of hallways at school
Where my words were twisted and taken out of hand
Where my trust was lost
And replaced with a snapping rubber band
Over my mouth to cover the burning hatred
That I cover with a smile in the classroom
Where I felt baited
And betrayed
Where I shook at my core
And sobbed too close to the musty school floor
In this parking lot,
I told you that he was bad
That he used me for years
and made me feel like hands were on my thighs
And in my hair
And whispering things I pretended were high
And mighty lies
That maybe if you were there
You could have stopped me from
Holding my breath till my face turned blue
No, not in the past but here
You and only you
You held me and told me I wasn't single use
That I had worth beyond the boy that lied
When he said he loved me
And preached it sublime.
I told you how my teacher
With words of discouragement
With a sneer that I was blind to
Ruined my body.
How he never touched me

But instead twisted my self image
Tore down my self love
Left remnants of fear and trembling hands
Post traumatic stress that I managed
As if it wasn't that big a deal
Because I looked up to his heal
Foot above my passions
Grinding it into the color of ashen red
To make me hate myself and all that I knew
To make me regret even being
You sighed and offered we scream
That we let it out
And stop letting the past rein over our heads
As if that man didn't tell me I was better off dead
 than in his choir
Taking up space in his classroom
Then openly hating me for freeing myself
For taking the L
And flying from hell
We screamed
And my voice was gone the next day
But we laughed it off
And I felt light
For the first time in years
I didn't feel a need to fight
I was a kid
Smiling and free
As if no one had ever hurt me.
Because I have you
And you have me
The world was mean
But I refused to see
A timeline without you in my life.
So im in this parking lot
You, long gone from my narrative
And it feels imperative

That I chase that feeling
In this yellow lined box
With a huff
I sit up
Brush off my jeans
Forgetting what this parking lot means
The one I drive passed on my way to work
The one in that picture of us that lurks
Deep under my bed
I was a ghost then
Haunting nothing but myself.
Now I am alive
Breathing thick air
Listening to the cars fly past.
Revived from my fears
Dry of old tears
It's time to head home.
And close the book on another person.
Perfect calm lacing my bones
Forgetting what was once mine
I say goodbye to Fresh Thyme

Ode to Melancholy

Nicole L. | 10th–12th Grade

Melancholy

That bitter in between,
A longing,
A feeling someone can only describe.

The word tastes like citrus juice,
Sour like a lemon.
Yet when you think of a melon,
It is sweet, and tastes like summer.
It wouldn't make sense,
To take a sweet word,
Only to combine it with a few other letters,
And create such a sour definition.

But I remember the first time I heard it.
In that small class, reading a big kid book for the first time.
Because of Winn-Dixie and those Littmus Lozenges,
I fell in love with words.
The way the word looked,
A funny sounding arrangement of letters, with a deep meaning,
Became my favorite.

Melancholy showed me my love for words,
It painted me pictures and made me feel heard.
Melancholy spoke to my curiosity and fed my vocabulary,
It helped me grow and soon I had more than just
Sad, angry, or happy.
While I found words like jubilant, gossamer, and eloquent,
Melancholy will always be my favorite.

Rose-Tinted Glasses

Chloe S. | 10th–12th Grade

Another pair chosen from a vast field,
A couplet of rubies, plucked from green grasp
Held to the sun, fragility revealed.
Plastered over the eyes, with each blink they clasp.
Filtered sight envision life's melody,
Sonorously, memories and hopes full.
Lovely, fragrant: Euphoric remedy.
Tinted vision sees rose, yet still stained soul.
Petals in the light dispel world's fever,
In the haze, Heaven's light creation is made.
Though scrape roses off, seen is the griever.
With sight relinquished, do not be dismayed.
For without false glow, colors radiate.
Vibrant, hues and truth, clear sight celebrates.

Held Breath

Clara Leo | Adult

We're caught here, swimmers,
slivers of color in the middle of a marble,
actors photographed in youth,
moths caught in amber,

beautiful like the sun before it sets,
and the rain before it falls,
and the fall before the landing,
and the land before it wakens,

caught at the cusp of something,
stuck in sticky time that's thick and sweet,
eating ice cream moments from melting
on a swing that's stilled before the drop.

Underwater Dreams

Clarissa Cervantes | *Adult*

Glimpses of you
in underwater dreams
where everything moves
a bit slower,
It seems

The silence breaks
as we reach the surface
one second
just to go deep again
into our love

Not shallow love
we like the depths of strong currents
tossing us into our future

We found each other
among so many other creatures,
creatures whispering
currents twisting

She swam close
the rest was history
just like her
he had fins.

Listen (Haiku)

Lisa Gaier | Adult

Leaves falling silent
Or do they instead thunder
Not for me to hear

Glass

Savanna DiCostanzo | Adult

I woke up in a room made of glass and you were there too,
With my pain you suppressed
The windows were clear and your presence was near
But all I really wanted to hear was the sound of your familiar whispers in my ear
The floor was shattering and my heartbeat was faint,
But your glow on the windows could ever so gently taint
The walls would crumble, I knew, I knew
But I couldn't withstand this collapse,
Not if it wasn't with you
I woke up in a room made of glass,
But what I didn't realize was that it had already imploded,
Deep within you

I Am Anyone

Cindy Schliffka | Adult

If you see me today,
Be sure to look me in the eye and nod
To recognize my existence acknowledges I have value

If you see me today,
Be sure to make your whole face smile
Even with your mask, I can see your eyes grin and it makes me feel hopeful

If you see me today,
Please speak up with a cheery “hello”
Yours might be the only path I cross today and it feels soothing to hear another human voice

If you see me today,
I won't be offended if you hold the door as I pass
Your strength, just like any frailty I might have, is who we are—neither offensive or shameful

If you see me today,
Know that I see you too
And it makes me glad

Who am I?
I am anyone.

Here Comes the Ivy Again

Daniel Salazar III | Adult

I am an abandoned home consumed by ivy and weeds.
Hidden in plain sight, yet I rarely feel seen.
All the windows where light used to shine in their beams,
are now boarded up.
No light can come in, and I can't let light out.
This home is mine, but I feel trapped with myself.
I can't figure this out.
Some people come near, every now and then.
But if I can't be a home for myself, what chance do I stand?
When someone new comes close I feel the ivy retreat,
maybe this time they'll notice my white flag in defeat,
But they just take pictures. Look around at what once was.
Seems like this is what everyone does.
I'm never what they're looking for.
At least for no longer than a moment.
I want to finally end this cycle of torment.
If I can't be a home for even myself, what chance do I stand of housing anyone else?
And here comes the ivy again.
All the cracks of old floor boards. All the shifting brick.
Begging for ears to hear that I still exist.
Sometimes our eyes meet, as I peek through the cracks.
But they just come and go. They never look back.
And here comes the ivy again.

Words and their Power

Susan McClellan | Adult

I can't describe the power what words mean,
They are more than letters on a piece of paper just waiting to be read or seen.

The power of words no one can deny.
Words can make one smile or cry.

Words can spark charge and inspire
Or can light your heart on fire.

Once said, words cannot be taken back.
Use your words to help and not attack.

Words are yours and they are mine.
Remember you shine and your words can make the world divine.

The Vacant Stare

Marcia Horan | Adult

I sit across a vacant stare
Eyes wide open, but not aware.
A vessel once I loved so dearly
A hint of the person left, just barely.

Will this vision be me with time
I try to brush this from my mind.
I take hold of a warm, soft hand
And hope for a moment to understand.

A marriage fitting like a glove
Now learns a different dance of love.
A parent who was there to lead
Needs you more now to intercede.
You watch your loved one's mind grow dim
And resists your guide, the future's grim.

Once they walked with such great honor
Now what they do is stare and wonder.
Thoughts go dancing, steps unknown
In their minds they're so alone.

Oh kind souls hold them tight
Treasure the moments that delight.
Love them, laugh and all the while
Think of things that make them smile.

Carve their smile, love them tender
Do what you can to be their mender
Crush the thoughts that seem to frighten
Share old memories that enlighten
Lovelier times of days gone by
Share fond memories before they die.

Time is confused in their mind's eye
Bewildered paths, all gone awry.
So love, laugh and all the while
Think of things that make them smile.

Now she can hardly walk

Edarly Edouard | Adult

“Now she can hardly walk. How long do you think it will be till the slumber comes?”*
Not a single being can tell, for many have attempted to contest the clock,
but passed off, leaving the clock to lead an endless journey.

As for Princess Meryl,
the effects of her achievements could not be suppressed.
Her hair is powdery like the snowy-white mountains in Australia,
and tis the prize of triumph.
Her eyes are as gray as the Newfoundland slates,
but all she pays attention to is the magnificence of life.
Her face is not as youthful as it used to be,
but her skin glows as stunning as the stars in the midnight blue atmosphere.
On the outside, she is delicate like a crumbled cookie on a couch cushion,
but on the inside, she is spontaneous and satisfied.
Mankind pictures her as an overdue mortal,
but to the ones she’s intimate with, she is an example of
a life well-lived.

Never has she questioned “Why,” or “How,”
for her faith overshadowed her doubts,
much like how the waterways of love extinguish the infernos of hate.
Never has she ever permitted the conflagrations of vengeance to overshadow her soul,
for she’s made peace with the reality that she conquered what her adversaries couldn’t.
Every now and then, the salty sentiments stain her skin like a wallpaper,
because her bravery throughout the frenetic years brought her gratitude and joy.

Don’t worry about the accommodations of life; learn to make memories out of them.”
“Learning from the best,” she says, “is the greatest lesson of life.”
From that moment, I knew she fulfilled her greatest destiny.
Though she could hardly walk, it is her fearlessness that walked for her.

*FOOTNOTE: “*The Two Princesses of Bamarre*” by Gail Carson Levine, pg. 75

More or Less

David Brost | Adult

Life is nothing like it appears to be
Stop trying to figure it out, this is what I see
Life can be summed up in two words...more or less
And both of these words can lead to your success
Dream more and see what you can achieve
Complain less and watch all your doubts leave
Listen more and give your thoughts time to respond
Talk less and watch how you and the one talking will bond
Love more and spread it all around
Argue less and you will discover a new sound
Hope more and always wish for the best
Fear less and you will be able to rest
Relax more and be in a good mood
Worry less and start eating healthy food
Believe more and stop thinking life's a test
Doubt less and never compare yourself to the rest
Play more and realize life can be fun
Work less and try to get other things done
Life can be summed up in two words...more or less
And both of these words can lead to your success

To Evelyn (A Deaf Musician)

Gregg Strand | Adult

It seemed an ordinary, unsuspecting day
when you overwhelmed my unsuspecting heart.
Though Silence be your sentence,
you tour the world in quiet, joyful triumph.

When you climb inside my dreams,
as you are wont to do,
confusing scenes commence,
like acts in novice plays.

Sometimes I find you sleeping so a waking nudge I try,
but ne'er you feel my futile touch and so I vainly cry:
"Evelyn, awake! Make me your instrument!"
Useless sounds, silent on deaf ears.

In the deepest dungeons of sleep's kingdom,
delusion and fantasy
seem the means to love's salvation:
Twisted thoughts!!!

There, in semi-conscious innocence,
my sleeping sanity
lies a casualty
of your perfect beauty.

Loss

Jessica Guardado | Adult

What can I do?
The deed had been done.
There was no turning back. No hiding, no running, I could only face.
Where could I go?
The brutal truth brought to light and both of us facing reality.
There were no more secrets on my pillow now.
Yes, I felt it in my own chest. The ripping of his heart.
The tearing of the trusting bond we had created from the start.
There was nothing I could do. I had made my bed and now I must lay in it.
But so did he. And he never asked for any of this.
His smiles had been ripped away. His happiness, taken by me.
We were supposed to be making a building. Supposed to be building strong walls. An unbreakable foundation.
We were supposed to bend, never fold.
But here we were now, completely broken.
Those building walls were torn down. Exposing us to a cold, icy winter and a cracked foundation.
So now he built new walls.
This time they were around himself. Blocking me out.
I realized it. I understood. It was my fault. I stabbed him in the back with the sharpest of blades.
He was Adam and I was Eve.
How could I have done this?
It was cloudy, stormy, and dark.
I wanted back what I had destroyed.
But craving for what's lost is the same as hoping for what will never be again.
Yet still, there is a single sparkle of light.
A seed.
Thank you God.
Created from nothing but heartache and pain.
There would always be light if we chose.
That warmth may have gone.
But it all could be reborn.
The bone may have been broken. But when a bone breaks, it can be grown back stronger.
So I choose that. Without a second thought.
I choose regrowth. I choose the spindling of a new bond. I choose to start our building over, from the base up.
This time a real unbreakable foundation.
Regrowth was possible. I'd make it happen.
Spring is here now.
And I'd water my plant daily. Until this tiny seed we are left with, buried underneath the snow could sprout.
And when that tiny little sprout would come, I'd make us a huge luscious tree with fruits sweeter than the Garden of Eden.



“Basketball Hoop”

Elaina Troiani | Camera and editing app



“Sunflowers”

Karen Schuld | Acrylic on canvas



“Flowers in the Morning”

Sarah Troiani | Paint, Sharpies



“NHL Mascots Abbey Road”

Brady Roach | Copic markers, pencil, ink markers



“Hopeless Romance”

Cynthia/Strawberry | Alcohol and watercolor markers

“Melittology”

Faith Hogan | Acrylic on canvas

“Mystic Artichoke”

Scott Martin | Acrylic paint with silicone oil

“Yellow Spider Strikes”

Remington Davis | Camera

“Rebel Reload”

Noel Roberts | Oil on canvas

“Zentangle Caricature”

Sharon Schondorf | Gel pens, colored pencils



“Sunflowers”

Karen Schuld | Acrylic on canvas

“Stop & Smell the Flowers”

Joana Persiani | Camera



“Eren Jaeger”

Eva Grady | Shading pencils, pen, marker

“Himiko Toga”

Eva Grady | Shading pencils, pen, marker



“Two Halves”

Sophia Coventry | Pencil, alcohol markers

“Flowers in the Morning”

Sarah Troiani | Paint, Sharpies

“NHL Mascots Abbey Road”

Brady Roach | Copic markers, pencil, ink markers

“Basketball Hoop”

Elaina Troiani | Camera and editing app



“Big Panda”

John Troiani | Pencil, Sharpie

“Little Panda”

Tammy Troiani | Pencil, Sharpie



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