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INSCAPE

The Art & Literary Magazine of Indian Hills High School
Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District
97 Yawpo Avenue, Oakland NJ 07436

COLOPHON

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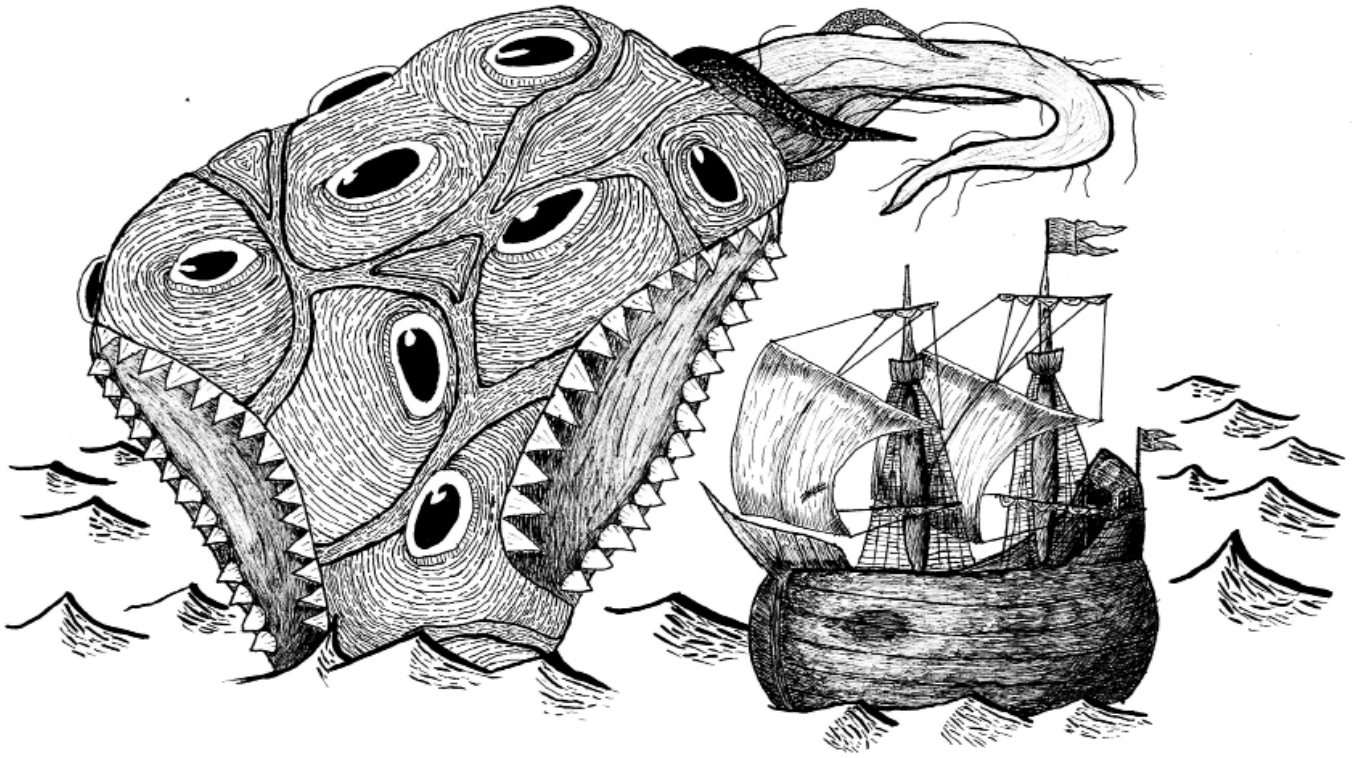
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The *Inscape* staff accepts submissions for the magazine from September through March. The staff encourages student submissions that showcase a variety of literary and visual styles.

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REMI CORMIER, EGGS IN A BASKET

INSCAPE (in'skāp'):

The unique essence or inner nature of a person, place, thing, or event, especially depicted in poetry or a work of art.

INSCAPE is not just a magazine; Inscape serves as a meaningful outlet for not only the voices, but the minds, hearts, and souls of the student body. Inscape represents both the right to express oneself freely as an individual and even more so, one's right to be heard.

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ALISON LOUNSBURY, *BUBBLE SERIES*

SHE IS ME

KATE OSTROWSKI



she is the girl that only has one or two true friends. she is the girl that will laugh hardest at her own jokes. she is the girl that expects too much. she is the girl that doesn't care what people think, but deep down she actually does. she is the girl that is nice to everyone no matter what. she is the girl that will hang up on you but apologize and call back right after. she is the girl that would be let down by your unintentional rude comment. she is the girl that is always self-conscious. she is the girl that will cheer you up even when she is having her worst day. she is the girl that will get insulted or made fun of but will still show a smile. she is the girl that will believe in you and won't give up on you. she is the girl that is broken but believed. she is me.

HURT

CARMEN NOYA

i don't think you see
my hurt

i don't think you realize
how much you're hurting me

i think you've stopped trusting me
and i don't know why
please tell me what i did
i want to know
but i will never ask

i won't tell you
i'm hurting
because i think
you'll think
that i'm being stupid
overdramatic
asking for your attention
by making you feel bad

so i won't say anything
even when it gets worse
even when it gets so bad that
i spend hours thinking
crying
beating myself up for being so horrible

i'll see you the next day
and i'll smile at you
because i don't want you think
that something is wrong
or different

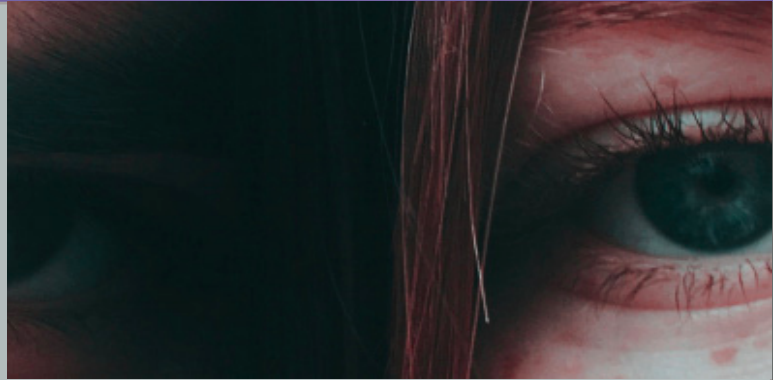
how can i be a good person
if you
my closest friend
don't think i deserve your trust

it breaks me down inside
i wish you understood
i thought i knew you
and i thought you knew me

i never expected this change
i never expected you to change

i never thought
that things would be different
from how they were before
but they are

and i was wrong




GAIA

FRANCESCA ROTELLA

Our world is a place
Where flowers
Grow out of the
Cracks in the sidewalks
Like nature is slowly reclaiming
What we have stolen from her.
Bullet holes in concrete walls
Are slowly filled in with ivy
The grass over our graves grows
Verdant and strong
Until we can no longer see the headstones.
Whatever size wall we build
Will be no match for the fury she
Holds for us.
Her creations.
Her flock.
Turning against each other
Instead of searching for peace.
Even in the wild,
Lions still respect other prides.
When we have destroyed her
Body beyond repair,
And we fall from her grace
Like Icarus when he flew too close,
Our cities will crumble.
Our boats will sink to the bottom of
Our murky oceans
Buried underneath plastic
And shark skeletons.
As the centuries pass,
Her storms will wash away the radiation.
Her plants will grow over the shells of bombs
Water filling the explosion sites.
Scars may heal,
But the harmed never forget.

And as her flora mends the cuts in her body,
And as her fauna make her smile once more,
She will not forget.
She will not forget how we endured winter
After winter
After winter
With the fire she gave us.
The fire we would later use
To burn her forests to ash.
She will not forget how we cultivated her
Vegetation.
Stubby, white, wild carrots to hearty orange ones.
Wild mustard to broccoli.
She watched us with warm eyes as we experimented,
Creating new tools,
Exploring her bounty.
Until we razed the fields for new houses.
Logged the woods for timber.
Coal.
Fire.
Silver
Gold.
When did it become about greed?
About land?
When we would spill the blood of natives.
When we would spill the blood of our own people.
For money.
For territory.
She will remember us
For what we were.
Before we continued on a path
That lead to our own destruction.
Our world was once a place of
Green forests
Crystalline oceans
Radiant deserts where the sand shimmers with
A mirage of a better world.



There was once a little girl
With stars in her eyes
Who read fairy tales
And gardened with her grandfather.
She remembered hate in her father's voice when he spoke
Of the first new president she knew in her lifetime.
The freedom of difference in ideas makes our country.
But hatred of a person because of different ideals
Should not be what we present to our youth.
Ever since, the little girl has hated the news channels,
Who use their influence to spread hate,
To take seeds of doubt and turn them
Into a blazing fire.
It does not matter if it is true.
The girl remembered her grandfather always spoke words
Of kindness and lessons to be learned
From any bad situation.
Now a young woman, she struggles to remember them.
Time has washed away days on the beach and
Evenings in the garden.
And now he is no longer here to remind her of them.
But she remembers the wrinkles in his skin,
Warped with age like sun tanned leather,
Around kind pools of chocolate brown eyes and
Laughter that he brought to any house he visited.
She wants to change things,
Clinging onto his memory.
She wants to fill vacant lots with flowers and fruits
And vegetables,
She wants to feed the hungry,
And listen to all the opinions in the world,
Because she knows that there is so much to be
Learned
From a hearty
Polite
Argument.

MEGAN FINAN, *FADING* (LEFT), JORDAN POLANSKY, *FLOWER GIRL* (RIGHT)

EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

MARIANNE DOSS

Likes. Comments. Reposts. These are worthless things that we all fixate our worries and thoughts on. *Do I post this picture first or will it not get enough likes?* Is this caption artsy enough? The sad matter of this is that we spend so much of our lives comparing ourselves to *perfect* celebrities on social media and wondering if our looks can even compare. In our age of social media, nothing is enough. You must look *perfect* at all times with *perfect* pictures and *perfect* friend groups. Everything is expected highly of you, but eventually, we realize: we are ENOUGH.



KATHERINE KAYE, EYELINER (ABOVE)

MARY KENNELLY, WHAT WE'RE MADE OF (RIGHT)



ALGEBRA

DAN FERAT (ENGLISH TEACHER)



We walk a double-lined life:
a search for the elusive x
that will create balance.

Too many deadlines and paychecks
will tip the equation to the right.
Too many lovers and chocolates

lean it the other way.

Parents, pets, progeny all factor
as the variables pile up.

Soon the complexity of life
seems unsolvable
until we realize that,

in this problem,
no matter what is added together,
it all equals x .

JASMINE AZAR, *LUCKY* (ABOVE),
LEAH GIBSON, *SUGAR* (BELOW)



WARMTH

ELIZABETH WEINER

Warmth isn't as simple as it seems,
Not just the average six-lettered word, but a piece of a whole.
Warmth is the crackling fire that fills the room with an orange glow,
It's the humid and sticky summer nights where fireflies dance through the air, flickering their lights now and again taunting the determined child with a cusped hand.
It is the tossing and turning at hours where even the stars are sound asleep, the desperate search for the cool side of the pillow.
Warmth is the spark of love, the butterflies fluttering and fireworks bursting, it is the flushed cheeks and tight embraces, the awkward smiles and sweaty palms shared on first dates.
Warmth is a feeling, but so much more; it fills rooms and swirls in the air, leaving eyes glistening in awe. It is the moment of hope, of love and of the anger coursing through veins and the shouted words that were never meant to be said.
It is the sudden drop in an expression, the buildup of tears that choke down words, the waves of fear that crash without warning, dragging the most dazzling shells to the depths of the sea.
Warmth is the essence of life, a treasure that the world is still searching for, a glimmering flash picked up in the corner of an eye, that deftly disappears under the cloak of the sky.

DREW COCHRAN, JORDAN IN RED



ALEX BONZULAK, MARY'S ROOM



THE COFFEE SHOP

REBECCA PELLER

Working in a coffee shop isn't all it's cracked up to be. Upon being hired, I was told that it would be stimulating and involving my organizational skills, but honestly, it's stressful and overwhelmingly time-consuming. The only thing about it that's the slightest bit rewarding is the people. I watch crowds of individuals come in and out, seconds or hours apart. Some stay for what seems like forever and some leave immediately after receiving their orders.

At about a quarter to eight, right after the 'closed' sign has been flipped to 'open', a woman comes in, her hair up in a messy bun, wearing sweatpants and a hoodie. Her cheeks are stained with tears and it's obvious that her mascara has been running. She orders a vanilla coffee with five shots of espresso. After her order is ready, I expect her to sulk out of the place, but instead, she sits at the first table in the front, sipping her drink silently and staring into space for three hours before standing up, recycling her cup, and then leaving.

A group of three young boys comes in, probably middle schoolers. One's hair is dyed a bright, neon blue, and he's dressed in sweats. The second's hair is gelled to one side, not a strand out of place, and he's wearing a full tuxedo. The third is wearing a full face of makeup and khakis and a button-down shirt. I hear the blue-haired boy refer to the others as his bros before ordering three pumpkin spice lattes with a wrinkled twenty-dollar bill.

At around noon, a woman comes in, pushing a stroller. People attempt to peek over her shoulder to get a glimpse at the baby inside, but what they see is not a child. Instead, a puppy, small enough to fit in one of the mugs that we sell at the counter, which she purchases with all dimes.

As it grows later, the crowd changes, but only in the slightest. The late afternoon contains a rush of older patrons. A man comes in, his hair grey and his walk slow, and he orders a small tea. After ordering, he doesn't move, instead, he tells us a story about how he's bringing the tea to his wife who works next door as a surprise. We didn't need to hear the story, but something about it put a skip in my step for the remainder of the hour.

Four o'clock. Two girls come in, backpacks on. They take a seat by the window and then come up to order. The first girl is dressed in denim shorts and a t-shirt. She orders two coffees, which causes the second girl to whisper her objection. She's wearing a floral sundress and is blushing profusely as the girl in the t-shirt tells her that she can pay the next time. Her blushing only grows as the other girl kisses her on the cheek. My heart grows ten sizes.

It's dinner time, and we don't serve dinner. Instead, the late crowd orders drinks with extra espresso shots and breakfast sandwiches as their final meal of the day. One girl feels the need to tell me that she has three essays to write before the end of the night. I wish her luck as I slide her the large triple espresso that she ordered.

Two boys walk in together around seven, holding hands and laughing. They both order green teas and then sit at the corner table for two hours, exchanging stories and reminiscing about

all their firsts. As they walk out, I spot promise rings on their fingers. They kiss each other goodbye, and I almost call out a thank you to them for absolutely no reason.

Eight o'clock is when the night starts to wind down. A group of girls comes in, all wearing identical denim jackets. They all order variations of hot chocolate and then move three tables next to each other to sit together. They sit there for twenty minutes, gossiping in whispered voices before eventually standing up and exiting all at once.

At a quarter to ten, as we're wiping down tables and counters and storing away leftover containers of miscellaneous things, a man comes in, takes a deep breath, and then leaves, without buying a single thing. I hear him mutter a quick "Sorry" before he goes.

As I change the sign on the door from open to closed, a girl comes running towards me.

"Are you closed?" she asks, her voice as small as her body.

"Not just yet, what can I get for you?"

"A cup of water, for the cat outside."

And sure enough, I peek out the window to see a little brown kitten. It blends right into the sidewalk, and most people probably would have seen it and just kept walking. The little girl's face morphs into a smile as I run inside to get a cup of water. I return to give it to her, and she thanks me quickly before turning right around and placing the cup in front of the cat.

The kitten's tongue snaps out of its mouth to lap up the water, and the girl sits beside it and watches it do so. After a torturously long day, this is how it ends. I'm sure tomorrow will be no better, no worse, just the same, and just as different.

ALLISON GILPATRICK, *PRIDE*



BONITA

ALICIA MASERCOLA

She sits in the garden.
She sits on the porch.

She writes.
She reads.
She talks.

She cares.
She laughs.
She cries.
She assists.

She is a woman of color.
She is a woman of culture.
She is a woman of love, of affection.
She is her own beautiful reflection.

She can dance reggaetón.
She can dance salsa.
She has blood originating from Colombia.

She is intellectual.
She is eclectic.

She is bonita in his eyes.



ALLISON LOUNSBURY, *QUARANTINE FLOWERS*



ZOË PAXOS, *FENCE KING*



MADDOX BURNETTE, *FLOWER THROUGH A SEWER*

PERFECTNESS

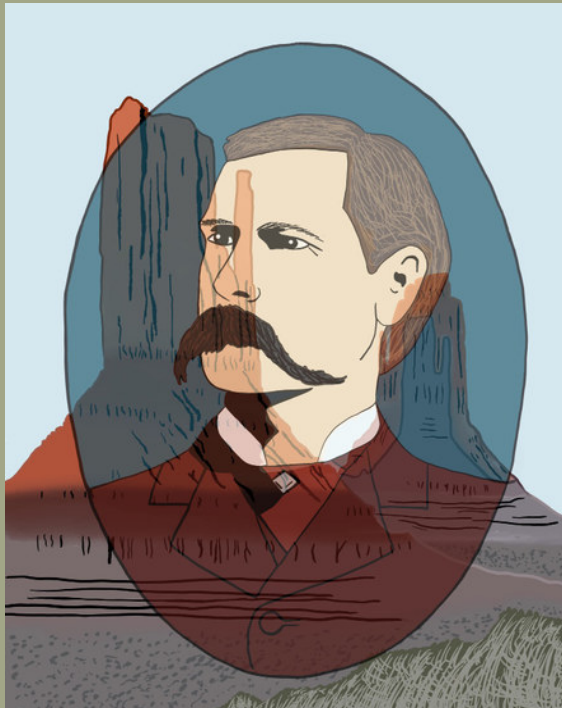
KYRA GOSSETT

*A star alight in the sky
A single light to break the darkness
An old stone castle stands, towering above all
12 roman statues stand, unmoving in their Perfectness*

*A boy laid in his bed, the stone walls drenched in shadow
A sound stirs the boy in his sleep
An empty house doesn't make sounds
An empty garden doesn't peep.
Yet the sound of voices fill the sky*

*The boy looked out into the dark night
He saw a face
Not his face, no, one of stone
Staring right back at him
A blood-curdling scream filled the courtyard*

*A star alight in the sky
A single light to break the darkness
An old stone castle stands, towering above all
13 roman statues stand, unmoving in their Perfectness*



EVAN PIMLEY, WYATT EARP



JOSE ESTUARDO PICHYA, PUMPKIN STILL LIFE

UNCERTAINTY

CATHERINE HOM

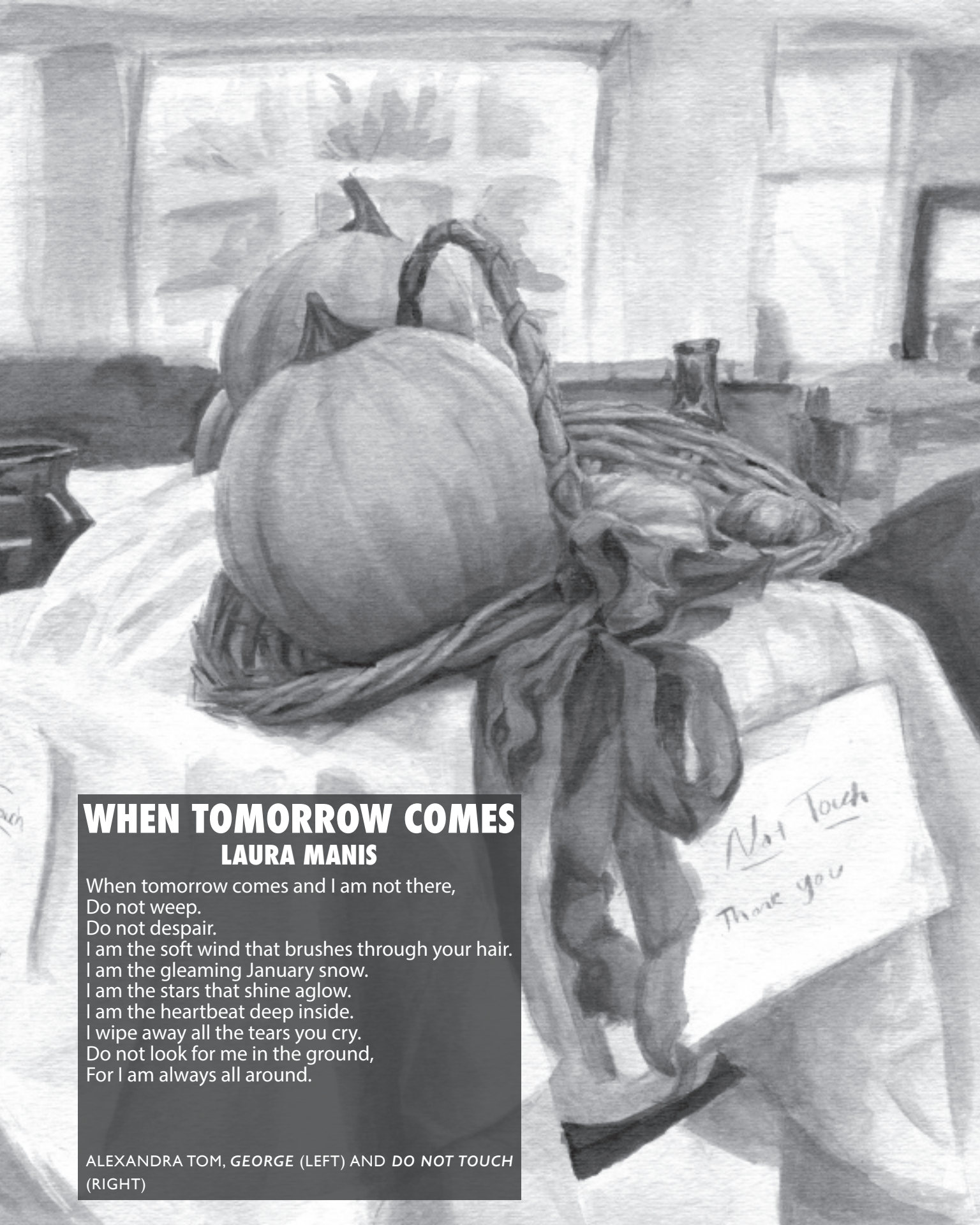
We are restless atoms,
waiting to break free from the walls that bind us
and roam in uncharted territory.

But some of us are attracted to the past.
It pulls us in like a magnet,
Bringing us to a time when we would cower behind parents' legs and hide out of fear,
Not wanting to know what happens past those walls.

The second we take our last steps through those all-too-familiar doors,
we become scattered points on a map,
some of us closer than others,
but we are separated nonetheless.

Just like Schrödinger's cat, we won't ever see what lies beyond
Unless we look and take a leap of faith into the unknown.





WHEN TOMORROW COMES LAURA MANIS

When tomorrow comes and I am not there,
Do not weep.
Do not despair.
I am the soft wind that brushes through your hair.
I am the gleaming January snow.
I am the stars that shine aglow.
I am the heartbeat deep inside.
I wipe away all the tears you cry.
Do not look for me in the ground,
For I am always all around.

ALEXANDRA TOM, *GEORGE* (LEFT) AND *DO NOT TOUCH* (RIGHT)

WINTER FLAME

AIDEEN GANNON

She held the match with her thumb and pointer finger and watched the flame slowly move down. The heat lightly touched her skin, but she did not mind. She enjoyed having fire that close to her. She thought about how others would think she is insane for playing with fire like that and holding a lit match for so long. But she knew something many others would not realize: the flame would go out before reaching her finger. Just as she predicted, the flame burned out with more than enough space between it and her skin. She dropped the burnt stick onto the pile of them on the ground. The box in her hand only had two matches left. She put the box into her pocket and looked ahead at the snowy landscape. Suddenly, a chill went through her body and her tears felt frozen to her face. She smothered the dead matches with snow before shoving them in her other pocket. She wiped her face and started walking. The branches of the trees around her were just high enough to not hit her head. Snow fell from the trees. She could just see the moon through the branches. A smile crept onto her face as a familiar, cold, melancholy feeling filled her. She closed her eyes and breathed in the winter air. The brisk air was refreshing and she loved being outside in this weather, but part of her longed for the fire she just held. The bitter-sweet smile only grew as she thought of the way the fire danced on the match and how bright it looked in the darkness that surrounded her. She wanted to light the remaining matches, but she knew she had a long night ahead of her in the woods. The echoing sound of a twig snapping quickly wiped the smile off her face. She looked around but saw nothing. She took off running, not risking looking behind her again. Her feet pounded on the ground beneath her, almost as loudly as her heartbeat inside her chest. She could feel her whole body shaking and her hands going numb. After running for a while, she found herself in a clearing. Anxiously, she turned in a circle, expecting someone to attack her. No one did. She sank to her knees and screamed. She couldn't take it anymore. She felt like she was always running, that there was always someone right behind her telling her what to do and the right way to do it. Whispers started filling the air around her. She fumbled for the box of matches in her pocket and struck one against the side of the worn-out box. All at once, the noises stopped and she found herself quietly sobbing while intensely staring at the flame protecting her.



WINTER WONDERLAND

KYRA GOSSETT

Through the snow, he wanders.
The blinding white-out surrounding him.
The cold piercing through his cloak.
His footprints stay behind him, but slowly start to disappear.


He placed his gloved hand upon his sword, unsure of what's ahead.
He kept telling himself he could find it in the end.
The only thing that kept him going was the dim hope that he would find it.
Otherwise, why was he here?
Wandering through the dark woods, alone and cold.

Voices started to surround him, and he chased
Every one,
Looking for a company in this frozen waste.
Or at least comfort,
But none would be found.
The snow knee-deep,
He keeps going,
Trying not to be caught by the wandering beasts.

He clings to promise,
Propelled by hope,
He wants to be done,
His life of wandering, over.
His name never written in history,
He wants to go,
Arrive in the city.
The beautiful city of crystal,
Also called Wonderland.

There, people become great.
Hopefully, the wanderer finds his place,
One worthy of history,
One worthy of remembrance.

The white snow slows and starts to sprinkle while he rests on a ledge.
To see the grey stones,
The collapsed roofs,
The tall, cold wall standing in the middle of the town.
Looking from the top of a ledge, he sees the golden light. The beautiful crystals,



Glittering in the light.

He rushes, hoping to go through the gate.
When the wanderer arrived, he was turned away.
"No ticket, no entry," said the guard.
The wanderer goes into desolation.
Looking and looking for a ticket.

He listens to everyone and they're all looking for a ticket.
He waits and waits and waits.
No ticket. He sees the gates every day.
As the days number and the wanderer ages,
Only one enters through the gate.
More people come from the gates in their grandeur.
The wanderer thought day after day: how was this happening?
Then he realized that people were born in the walls.
People don't enter the walls.

He sat and sat, his roof sagging,
The wall cracking,
His hair turned grey,
His muscles weakened.
And he died just as unknown as he was before he arrived in "Wonderland."



ENTITY

CHARLOTTE ROY

cause everyone seems so separated from me,
like i'm a different entity,
god spent a little more time on me,
or less, but i digress, i never claimed to be the best
tuesday i feel unique, wednesday is a blur
thursday is regretful, as i wish tuesday didnt occur
why do my thoughts wander? i wish i could keep them in shelves
organized alphabetically, with no outside help
like therapy, like surrounding pity, where no one can hear me yell

the world is aching
my hands are shaking
i was told not to feel, but the feelings reached the ceiling
if it stings don't worry, that means it's healing
my past set my present on fire, and now my future has nothing to admire
the tank's already on empty, too late to refill

don't worry about me, i'll see you in my journal
i guess now you have that stamp of approval
once i see red flags all my instincts are maternal,
i would stare at the ceiling, convinced i'm nocturnal
i could never like anything, i always let it consume me
i should've never ever showed up at that party
because mistakes are just honesty wrapped up in casualty,
will i feel free or will i feel heavy
if i don't know the answer, i'll wait for the stairs to
lead me to my death bed and god said he'd answer my
prayers but he never got back to me, maybe that's why i
don't believe in the ministry

life in the sheets isn't quite what it seems
it gets dark at nearly three
and the train ride home is always lonely
the stuff that you went through,
the texts when i ignored you,
the blushing in the classroom
what i never wanted done to me, i did to you

EMILY CERCHIO, *CLOSE ENCOUNTER*



i know i'll be ok but i'm not now,
and the battle between past and future tells the present
conflicts to quiet down

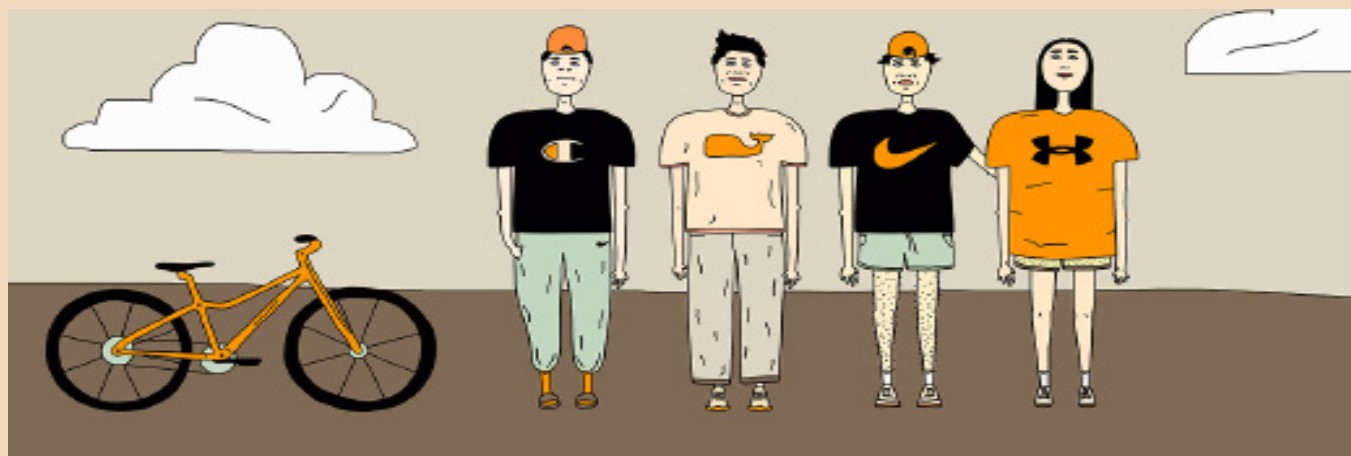
the world is all in white and grey
but since i know i'll be okay
i'll dream of colors decades away

what's there to hide? i know how you feel
where's your pride? mine's on my sleeve
i can see the insecurity when you stumble
i see your heart through your shirt when you fumble

i make hell out of heaven and wonder why i'm burning
i claim god as my witness and the devil my jury



RAYMOND SHEEHAN, *D-DAY* (LEFT), KEVIN ALLEN, *SPIDER-MAN* (RIGHT), ALEX BONZULAK, *SUBURBAN* (BELOW)



TALK!

CATHERINE HOM

Dancing bodies and the smell of sweat surrounded Ella. After wandering around the party for a couple of hours, she was finally able to squeeze her way into a group. Anyone could have seen that Ella's version of 'talking' was very different from their own. She just stood there, smiled, and nodded occasionally when it was appropriate, never adding anything of substance to the conversation. Ella knew this. She knew that she was socially awkward and incapable of saying a word. She knew this, and yet every time there was an opportunity for her to comment, she couldn't. Ella couldn't just magically form coherent sentences the way her twin sister, Lucy, could. Lucy was the reason Ella was here in the first place since their parents wouldn't let her go to the party alone. If it weren't for her, Ella would be at home in bed and not here, trying and failing to be social.

Looking at her sister, Ella wondered how they could be related, let alone twins. Ella's hair was frizzy, her skin was pale, and her eyes looked like murky water compared to Lucy's bright blue skies. It wasn't just their looks that were different; it was everything. In school, Lucy took all of the advanced classes and passed with flying colors. Meanwhile, Ella was struggling to keep her head above the water in regular classes. Wherever she went, Lucy wore makeup and rocked cute outfits, yet Ella looked like a potato in her baggy sweats. No matter what, Lucy always bested her.

How is she so goddamn perfect? Ella spun the question around in her head. For a moment, she thought about asking Lucy what her big secret was, yet the blasting music interrupted her. However, it didn't take long before Ella found herself drowning out the noises with the overwhelming volume of her thoughts. *How does she manage to have a normal conversation with someone without stumbling over her words? How does she manage to always get the attention of everyone else in the room? How does she manage to be successful both in and outside of school? And how does she manage to be happy? How?*

As all these thoughts flooded Ella's mind, she faded even more into the background (if that was even possible). The people around her naturally started to shut her out of the circle. Watching Lucy speak so vibrantly and laugh so angelically, Ella almost began to hate her. It didn't help that Lucy was standing directly below a ceiling light, making her look heavenly to everyone around her. *Why couldn't she share some of the spotlight?* Ella felt as if her own spotlight had given up on her and directed itself towards someone more worthy.

Just speak! Maybe if you were actually normal and talked for once, then you wouldn't be like this! You could be happy too!

Maybe Lucy wasn't all that happy. Maybe she was tired. Tired of spending endless nights studying for her next big exam. Tired of waiting to hear NYU's admissions decision. Tired of acting like she doesn't know Ella cries herself to sleep.

Since the twins shared a bedroom, it was easy for Lucy to pick up on what was happening. When it first occurred, Lucy immediately ran over to her sister's bed and tried to console her. "Are you okay? What's wrong?"

No matter how many times Lucy asked, Ella never told her the truth and said things like:

"It's okay. I just had a bad dream" or "I was watching a sad movie. Go back to bed."
As sleepless nights kept piling up, each attempt to help pushed Ella further into herself
Eventually, Lucy gave up.

They weren't always so distant, but with high school and different interests, they drifted apart. Lucy regretted not trying enough to keep their relationship afloat, and by the time she realized how little she knew her twin, there was no way to fix it. There was a hole in their boat, and the water wouldn't stop flowing in until they finally sank.

For a moment at that party, Lucy looked just like Ella, standing there at the edge of the group, lost in her own thoughts, when suddenly, her friend threw out a life raft to keep her from swimming too far from the shore.

"Lucy, what do you think?"

"What? Sorry, I got distracted," Lucy said. And just like that, Lucy was back to her normal, perfect self.

Maybe if they had just *talked* to each other they wouldn't have ended up the way they did.

BRITTANY AUFFRET, *BLACK AND WHITE*



THE MONSTER

SARAH HOULDSWORTH

We are all so young
'Til the day we are not.
Sand slips through
Our helpless fingers.
The one hourglass
We can't turn back over.

What would you do
If you saw yourself sleeping,
A lifeless corpse
Resting in bed.
Vulnerable to all,
Yet in peaceful bliss.

The specimen jar is open,
Don't let the monster escape.
Grab at the lid
You have to confine it.
It eats through your hands
You can never win.

Time is not real,
Yet the clock ticks on
It doesn't care
If we like it or not.
When the bell chimes
The hour is up.

We are all so young
'Til the day we are not.
Youth slowly drifting
From one to another.
One door closes
Another one opens.

Keep it contained
Don't let it out.
You can beat the odds
With Botox and makeup.
The monster is in you.
Your wall is breaking down.



LEAH GIBSON, *BLACK HOLE SUN* (ABOVE)

JAMIE RITTGERS, *IN THE MIRROR* (BELOW)



DON'T THINK

MEGAN FINAN

There's a monster
hovering over my head.

Don't think about it,
I tell myself.
Thinking about it gives it strength,
will make me panic,
won't do me any good.

If I don't think about it,
it doesn't exist.

I stare at the ground,
determined to ignore the monster
breathing ice down my neck.

I don't think about it.
I swear,
I swear to God,
I don't think about it.

But I'm enveloped in its shadow,
and my teeth won't stop chattering,
and I feel so goddamn cold.

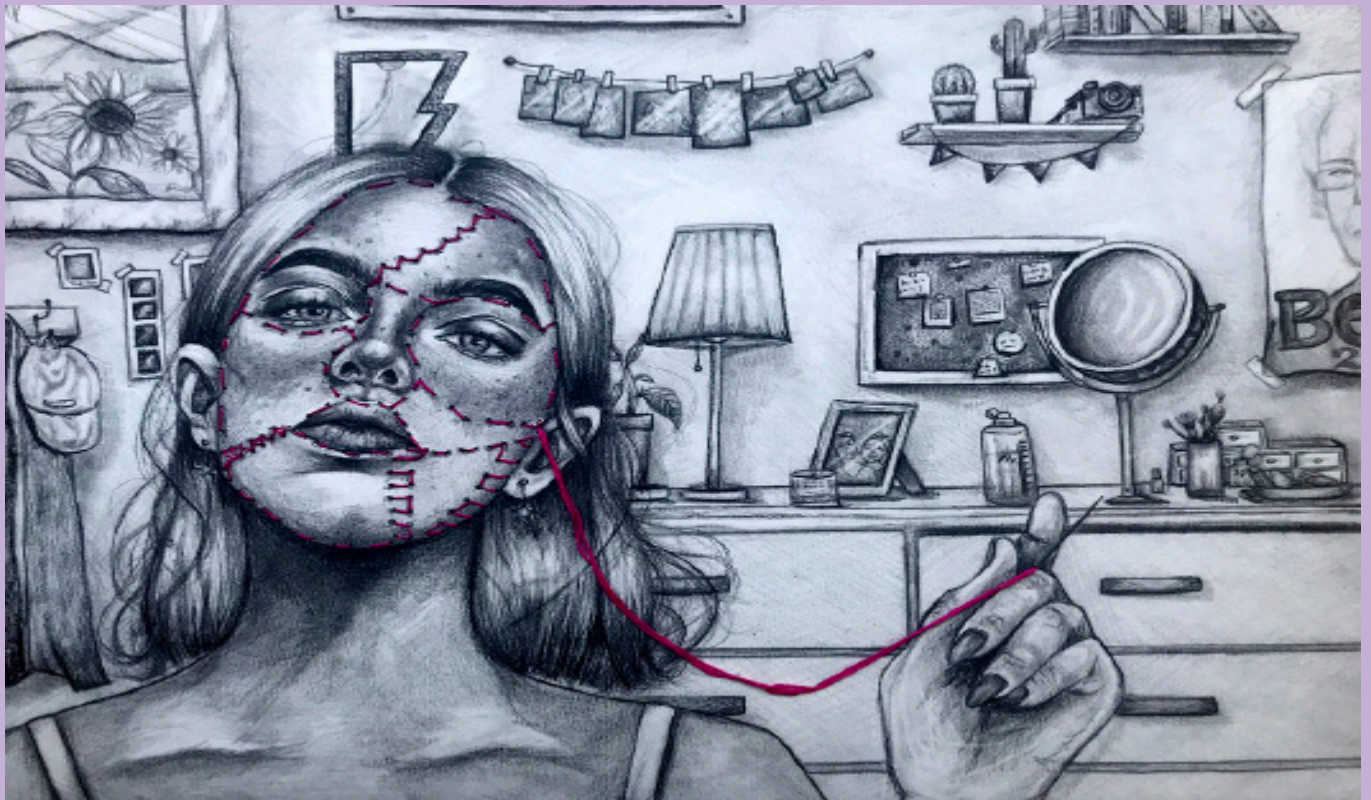
And it's sucking up all the air like a vacuum.
Each breath catches on the back of my throat,
reminding me
oxygen is limited.

Time will destroy the monster.
It always does.

How do I survive, though,
during these minutes of looming doom?

Because I can't not think
about the monster hovering over my head
for very much longer

EMILY STELLAKIS, *UNSTITCHED*





HOOKED HEART

ALICIA MASERCOLA

Far from toxic, far from rebellious
He stole her heart and she let him
Hiding behind a mask of identities
She never knew which one was the enemy
Pirates will hate, pirates will steal
Pirates will hate, pirates will steal
Yet...she fell... head over heels
Pirates can love, pirates can feel
She'll now never know because his heart
Is nothing but melted steel

MARY KENNELLY, OPEN HEART

GREY

SARAH HOULDSWORTH

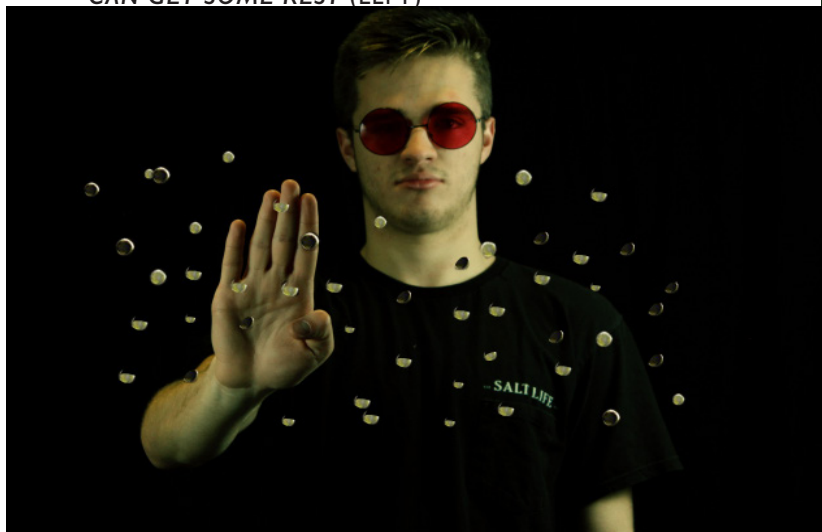
Darkness is nothing but the absence of light,
Cold, the vacancy of hot.
The balance found in every atom of this Earth
Decides what shade of gray
It shall be.

There is no good without the bad,
No happy without the sad.
There's solemnity found in every smile.
Innocence appears in everything
And comfort relies on fear.

No "yes" or "no" is all encompassing,
For the whole world is made
Of nothing more
Than endless shades
Of gray.



GAVIN MCKEON, *THE BAT* (ABOVE), VANESSA HASELKORN, *STOP THE BULLET* (BELOW), GABRIEL FRANCO, *AT LEAST I CAN GET SOME REST* (LEFT)



THE LION'S DEN

MEGAN FINAN

Her mom always told her to stay away from the lions roaming in the savanna.

Cautionary tales of children torn in two and elders torn in half were bedtime stories.

But she spent her childhood, gazing at these creatures in between the steel bars of yellowing blades of grass.

Her mom told her she was stupid, she was going to get killed, blades of grass are not protection.

But there was something... *fascinating* about the lions.

Untamable and wild.

She loved that. They were just like her.

Eighteen, she left home. Her mom told her to avoid the lions.

She did not obey.

She walked right into the lion's den, senselessly, stupidly.

There were no steel bars to protect her now.

But she never wanted to be imprisoned in the first place.



MADISON CHEN, *LIONESS* (ABOVE)
EMILY CERCHIO, *LION* (RIGHT)



WADE IN THE WATER

JOHN MUNGIELLO (ART TEACHER)

*I was never any good at beginnings,
Always preferring wide open endings...*

She unwrapped the plastic bag
Tied tight—to her head
Her head—cheeks, cherry red
Swollen sacks of lead
Swollen sacks of cherry red lead

She laid down her crutch
Splayed the bag out, with ceremony,
Splayed out the bag out
Sliding her hands—end to end

THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU
It read

HAVE A NICE DAY!
It shouted

She sat staring at the ground
—Just staring
—Just sitting
Was she ashamed of something?

Did she see her choices
Stuck there, in the linoleum?
All too clear

I looked closer over my shoulder,
Over my shoulder
I knew her
I've never stopped thinking about her
And the way she slept in the bio aisle

After fiction, crammed
Between philosophy and religion
Cup of coffee in hand
It was only 25 cents then
Only 25 cents back then
Because of the kindness
Of one man—Aaron

"Can I help you?" The cashier said

"Hey, thanks, yeah. Can I have a latte
and a coffee for that woman,
over there?" I said

"Why?"

"I knew her from a while back"

"Go ask her what she wants and it's on us"

"Thanks, man"

—I walked over
Patted her on the back,
Shoulder blade left
Patted her on the back
Shoulder blade left

She turned
Just dazed
Eyes gone
Away for days

"Hey do you remember me?" I said

"Oh yes!" She said "yesss"

Time held back as she
Hung on her S...
Time held fast as she
Hung on her S...

*Keep recalling, keep recalling the story
Tell HER story, give it peace, give it glory*

"I got you a cup of coffee. How do you take it?" I said

"Black," she said

"That's right I remember, black"

"Thank you! She said,
Smiling through the dead
Growing in the oxygen
Nuzzling against our shared skin
Our shared skin

I remember, back when
Her teeth had that gap in them
That one down the middle
Kids tend to have
When their teeth are babies
Still, split down the middle
Apart a finger length

Outside birds rested on electric

"How are you doing?" I said
Stupid question

"Eh, I don't have long left," she said

A fist lodged in my throat
A fist, so...

"Wait here," I said
"Wait here"

The cashier handed me her coffee
I stuck ten dollars to the bottom
It's a meal at least
It's a meal at least

She went back to staring
Dreaming maybe
Still as a brick building
Foundation cracking
Foundation supporting
Still supporting
Barbell memories

I handed her the coffee
She felt the money, smiled
There's that gap again

"That girl you used to tell me about—remember?
Whatever happened with you two?
You were obsessed"

"Still am," I said
"I married her"

She cupped my shoulder
Proud like the love of a mother
The closest other

The closest other

I hugged her
When I did something turned in me—free
Relief maybe?
Like a sheet thrown off the body
First thing in the morning

We pulled away

"I gotta' go," I said
"Nice seeing you and thanks," she said
"You'll be ok"
We pulled away

I passed the sign
Caution...Wet Floor
The air scented with rain outside

I felt her on me, she never left
Oily, thick, the scent of a soaked almond
Greased across my cheek

From behind the window of my car
I held my hand up and waved
While listening to Springsteen

She waved back
Waved back
But, behind her expression
I saw, there, in the thick ink deep

She will always be wading
In the water—wading, wading
Steadfast against
The raging current of sleep.

*I was never good at endings
Always preferring wide open beginnings...*

in their dad, it had to be correct. There are some misfo
economical Atlanta — mation that always seems to happen
what Sher really had New with people when movies come into
down."
toward New Jersey and Sher is privy to other secrets, ones
eck, or course, and the fans of the Batman franchise
things that were famili would like to know. "The Joker" is a bit
y to put in that movi wild card. There are ways than one
of pictures for it. To a s unusually low-end
Atlanta suddenly has a \$55 million high-end film. For
sey, well, then these are an himself doesn't appear
ses, these are the type to be in the Batman vilan
that I'm looking for. role. The Batman vilan
those out. So even if Jared Leto in 2016's "Su
s a New Jersey man, i dad" is here played by Joaquin Phos
at all Jersey to be here nker, leading fans to speculate that his
the movie was made at Joker might not be the same one as the
as the Gov's Jersey regularized Gotham in other iterations.
city government build- "The Joker" is definitely a stand-
y, and on Market Street alone film, a one-off in the "Batman"
matter. It was set on a universe, Sher says. More details will
ner to return to his old have to wait until the film's release date.
ds. Oct. 4.
s still a place that when "It's certainly drawn from The Joker,
I feel exactly that. At the character as we know it," Sher says.
n't believe it, try the pa "But it doesn't tie directly into any other
in Newark, Sher discov movie in that way. Yes, it takes place in
of Hobby's Delicatessen Gotham. And Thomas Wayne [Batman's
e and Hal father] is a character. In that regard, it
has ties to that universe. But the
characters

through communications d
The second time, all those t
have to work through have hap
you can imagine when it's the
the fourth time, the fifth time
great. It's good, the sixth time
a huge difference."
thing Sher has le
the "Hangover" movies
is how to sho
what's funn
old. The Joker in 2009. "S
and shot comedies, but La
what he's doing."
there is a knock to it, Sher
can, it is not keeping thing
low-key. Not trying to be cute
or overw. Judge the au
laughter.
"There are different philos
how a cinematographer can
comedy," he says. "There wa
standing philosophy that it ne
brighter, or flatly lit, or wide
this or that. I never sub
things. One of the
with the

CANCELED

POOR KREAMS

STAY





JACLYN KOTORA, *FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS*
(LEFT), SARA CHESNEY, *DEAF* (RIGHT)

HOPE HEALS

LAURA MANIS

I often let my mind run amok
I contemplate feeling stuck
Reeling in the situation around me
There is nothing treacherous I see
For I am not scared for myself
I fear for someone else
I fear for the homeless in the cold
I fear for the businesses that haven't sold
I worry for the families in pain
I resent the illness that came

I worry for the world in despair
Given up hope.
Given up care.
Loss is what permeates the soul
Permeates the body
Devours one's whole
It is imperative at this hour
To give mother earth some time
For she will replenish herself
Whole
And resort back to her prime.

ALIANA TRIANINE, *DIVI DIVI*
TREE (LEFT), AMIR SHAGHAGHI,
CLASS OF 2020 (RIGHT)



2020

CORONAVIRUS
OUTBREAK

Lysol

Purell

CRASH

TOILET PAPER

IRE

LYDIA PARK

When I first learned to speak,
I spoke too fast.
Words tumbled out of my mouth,
In seconds when I was asked.
But I was too busy,
Too busy talking to be downcast
Without any regard
To how many seconds that would last.
When my two-tongued mom and dad
Put me in kindergarten
My mouth was a mix, a clash
Of English and Korean.
So I played with the kids
In our little playpen.
I wasn't really able
To talk to them
But who was I kidding?
I was a little naive,
I didn't understand
What it meant to leave.
I've perceived everyone as a friend.
In my misbelief,
I paid no mind to the support
I didn't receive.
But I didn't care.
I was in my head.
I dreamed about
Rainbows, ponies instead.
And I loved to read,
So I read and read.
And I didn't think about
Every word I said.
I loved to go to school.
I loved to learn.
I loved every bit of
Information I would learn.
And I loved to talk.
I wasn't taciturn.
I looked forward
To every day I would return.
First grade, second grade, third grade,
Four.

I think I began to learn
More and more.
But not from the books,
But from the world.
I saw things
That I didn't see there before.
I began to see
Eyes when I talked,
Eyes when I walked.
Eyes when I spoke,
Eyes when I choked-
On the very words
That were dear to me.
And soon enough they were
Killing me.
I began to see that my "friends"
Weren't there for me.
Maybe that's when I learned
That I was lonely.
Fifth grade, sixth grade, seventh grade,
Eight.
Middle school came
And it wasn't great.
I didn't grow.
I chose to stagnate.
I wasn't really a kid
Cuz I learned to hate.
To hate myself,
To hate my mouth.
To hate my fate.
To hate how I went south.
To hate my life.
To hate how I was now.
My accent was a chain
On my tongue.
It clung to me, like an iron lung.
And every time I spoke,
It stung and stung.
And stung.

Freshman year, didn't change.
Except there were new people, now isn't that strange?
If you didn't know before, now you know now
How these people don't want you around

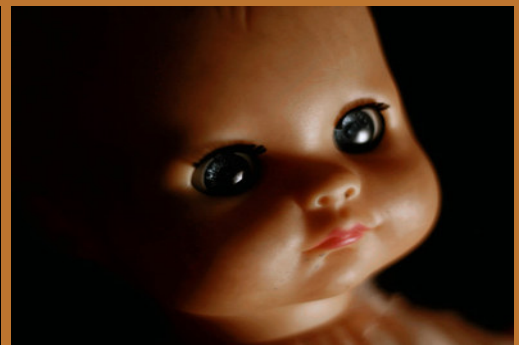
How they cut you off when you speak,
How they think that you're oh-so weak,
How they say that they don't want you here,
By pretending to smile when you're near.
How they ignored you, implored you,
And the way they assured you,
"Sorry, man, there isn't enough space here."
As if there was a place for me anywhere.
I'm screaming, can't you hear over there?
Is there actually anyone who cares?
Anyone who doesn't see through me like air?
Is it the way I speak?
The way I eat?
The clothes I wear?
The way I stare?
The way I look Asian, not Caucasian?
Or it's my accent, 100%.
Maybe if they hate me for who I am,
Maybe I shouldn't speak at all.

But that can't be it.
I can't quit.
At least not now.
I gotta piece myself together, bit by bit.
I can't be quiet.
Language is my outlet,
A rope that led me out of my pit
No, I will not submit,
But will reach the summit,
Commit,
Until I reach the top of it.
Not for your own benefit,
But for my own free spirit.
I'm here for me
To make my stories,
To make my poetry.
My words,
They set me free.
Finally.
My mouth was a shield,



ISABELLA MARQUES, *RING AROUND THE ROSEY*

My words a sword
And with them,
I can win the war.
For too long I was
On the floor,
But soon enough
You will hear my roar.
I didn't know that they, them,
Weren't my struggle
But instead
It was me at the end of the tunnel
Trapped in the kennel
Trapped in my cell
I don't belong here
I don't belong to you or anywhere
The world's not fair,
But it's better that I beware
So I don't impair
Myself from watching their glare
I'm still repairing myself,
And I sometimes forget
Sometimes I'm left
To play this game of Russian roulette
But even when I'm hurt
Or when I'm upset,
Or when I regret
Or get scared of things that
haven't happened yet
I remember
I'm here for me.



RYAN SCHAFFER, *CHILDHOOD*

UP IN FLAMES

REBECCA PELLER

I'm not supposed to be here. There's a bustling in the crowd that causes no one to notice my presence, but the subtle details of the beings here are incredible. Incredible in the way that those movies about princesses make me feel -- like I wish I could be one, yet I'm aware I would not belong anyway.

I don't belong here. This is evidently the inside of a castle, the walls tall and the ceilings high. Everything has this tint of amber, whether it's from the chandeliers hanging up above or just the magic in the air. The people around me, if you can even call them that, have pointed ears like elves or eyes that seem to glow like a beast's. Some are wandering around with horns bursting from between strands of hair or faint clouds of what look like angel wings extending from their shoulder blades.

I feel out of place with my scuffed up boots and muddy t-shirt. Everyone is moving around me, and I want to flee but I don't know where I would even run to. I see no escape from the chaos of the room, but I do see a person hovering near the balcony above.

The railings appear to be made of gold, but the girl standing beside them is glowing twice as bright. Upon first glance, there's no one thing that makes her unique, at least not in the way that so many of those on the ground have their markings, but after watching her for a moment, I see them. Flames, burning above her head, almost like she has gone completely ablaze. They disappear as quickly as they first appeared, but my eyes go wide nonetheless.

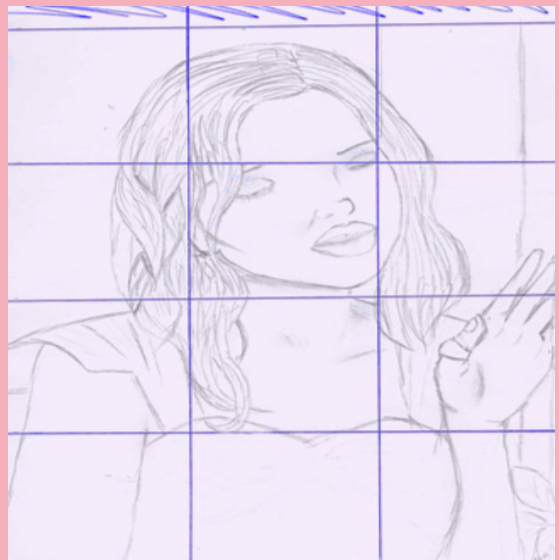
And then she looks to me, looks at me, and the whole world stops as she yells a wordless command to all those on the ground around me. Everyone in the room turns at once to face her, and I stop in my tracks, just wishing with all I have in me that she hasn't recognized that I'm not meant to be here.

"Who is this?" the girl calls out, pointing with her index finger directly at me.

Simultaneously, the room turns their attention to me, and in this tragically final moment, everything comes crashing together in a mix of realizations come too late. This isn't home; I don't know where I am.



KATRINA MELISSAS, *CREATION OF ADAM REDUX* (LEFT), AIDEEN GANNON, *DOVE* (RIGHT)





TWO-FACED

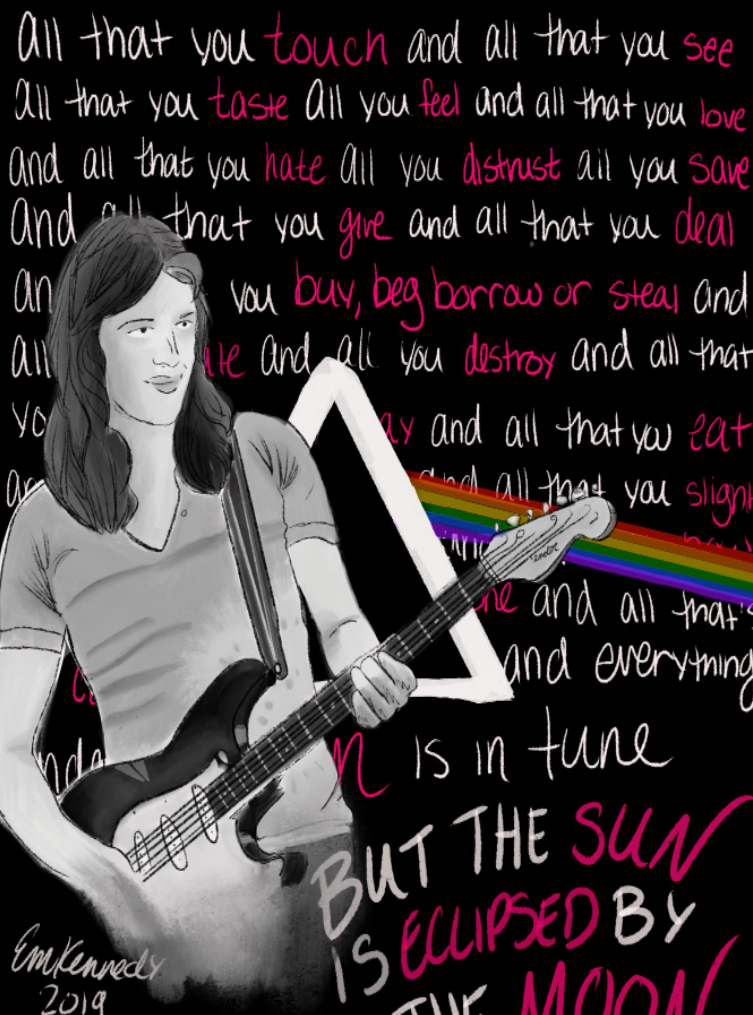
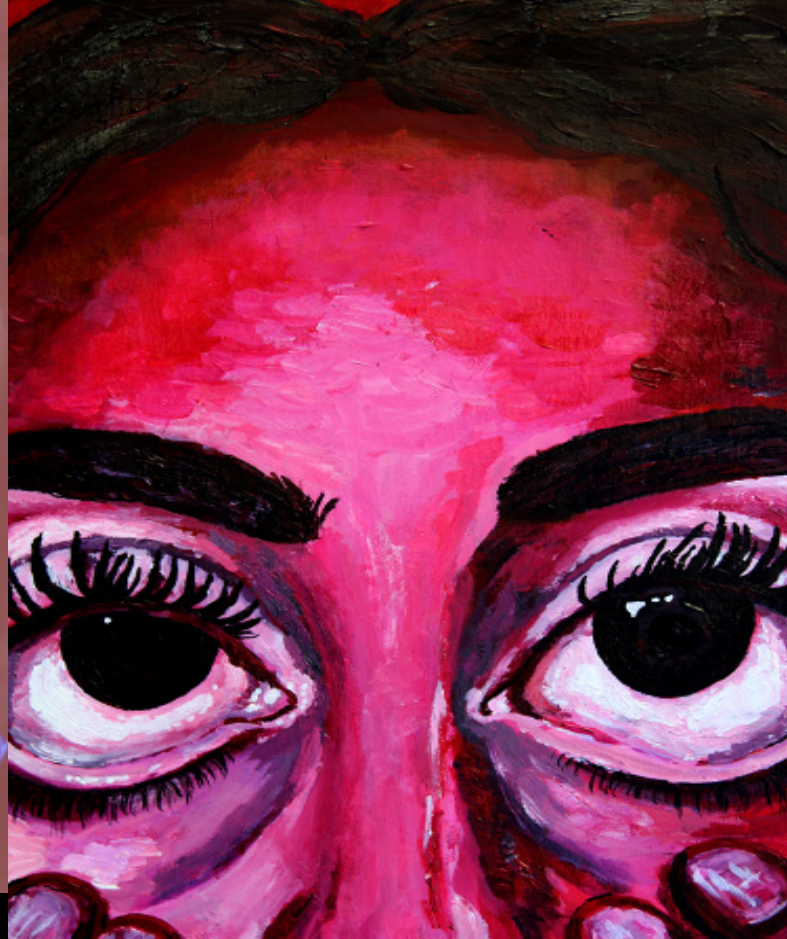
MEGHAN MAINELLI

Your two-faced characters lead me to second guess how you make my world turn.
The shame you stowed upon me made the summer shift to a merciless winter,
Freezing the joy that you once shared and abandoning the few happy memories to burn.
Two-faced promises stabbed their way into my trust for love like a stubborn splinter.
You tell me you raised a monster in the form of a daughter:
Always hiding under the bed, whispering to you your flaws and strains.
When will you learn that my intentions isn't to bring your love to the slaughter,
Making you realize that I don't deserve to be the one in chains.
But I have come to learn that your ride won't stop unless I stop it myself.
Your two-faced threats will finally come true, leaving yourself in the dust rather than me.
I know I can live my life with your never-earned love on the shelf.
So I say this when it comes time for me to be free:
Someday, I wish you discover that love isn't something that needs to be chased.
Someday, I wish you know that karma comes back when you are two-faced.

PAGE 46: EMILY STELLAKIS, AT *THE HALLWAY'S END* (RIGHT), NOLAN CLARK, *TWO SIDES* (LEFT)

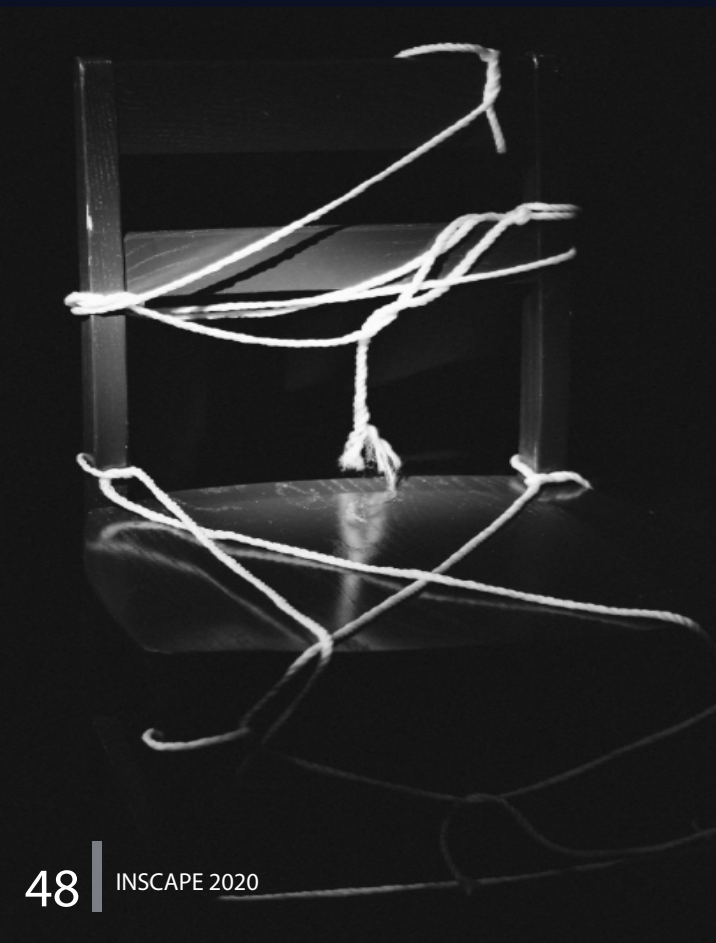


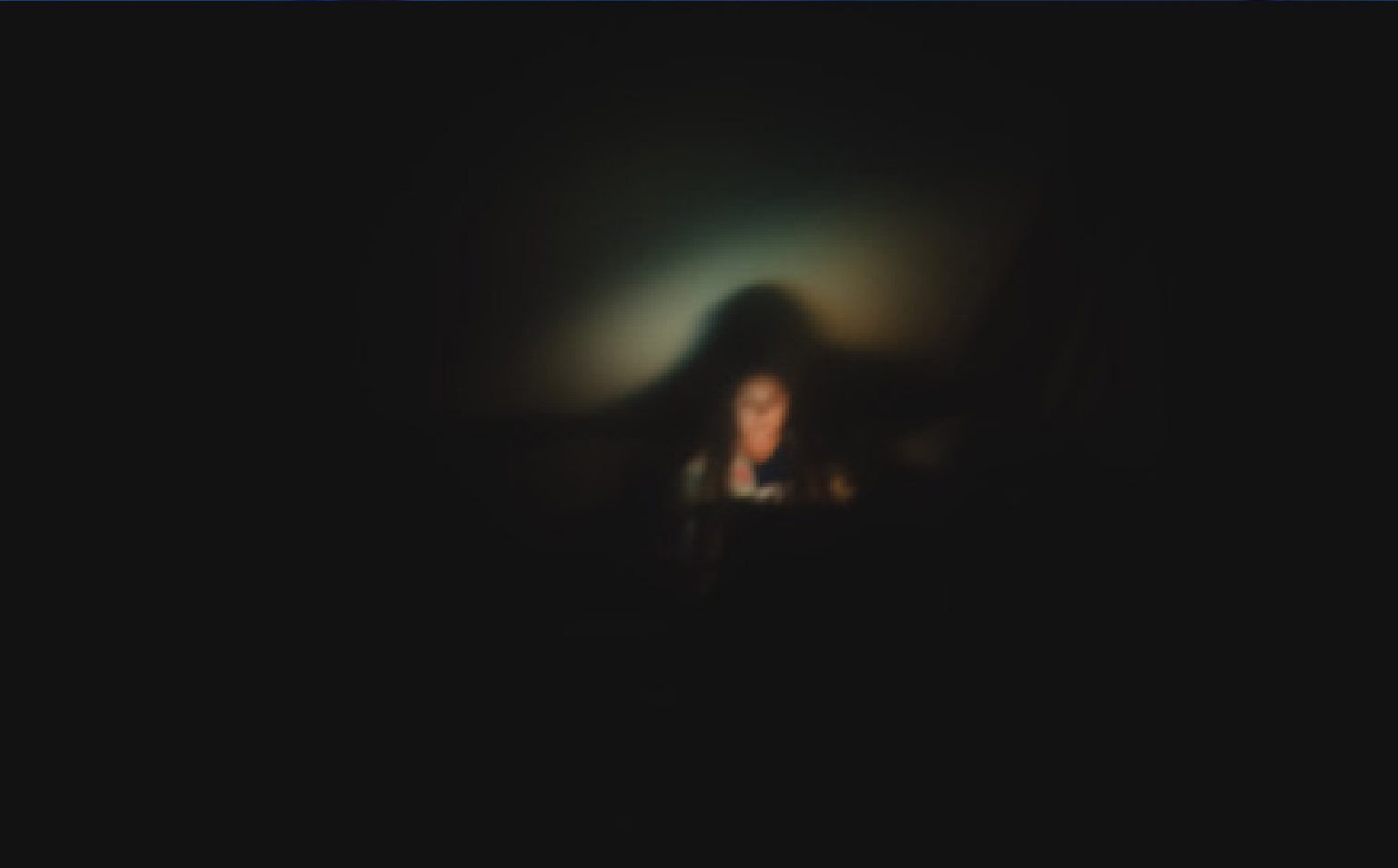
PAGE 47: EMMA KENNEDY, *1956-1982* (TOP LEFT) AND DAVID GILMOUR (BOTTOM LEFT), SHEA GILMOUR, *ANXIOUS* (TOP RIGHT), JAMIE RITTGERS, *BEAUTY* (BOTTOM RIGHT)





PAGE 48: BRANDON BANKS, *BLUE BALL* (LEFT TOP), KAYLA BRAGE, *SCHOOL* (BOTTOM LEFT), SHEA GILMOUR, *JOE* (BOTTOM RIGHT) / PAGE 49: ZOË PAXOS, *KATRINA* (RIGHT TOP), KAYLA BRAGE, *SISTER* (RIGHT BOTTOM)





THE NOTE

JAKE FREDERICK

It seems like whenever you want somebody to care the most, they care least of all. Life hadn't been the same since Mom died in the crash. With only one income, Dad had to work even harder and longer to support us, and when he was home, he was drunk, so he wasn't ever really "with me" at all.

Living life without my mom was lonely enough, but it got even harder when I "lost" my dad at the same time.

I had friends at school, good grades, and I was on the hockey team, but none of that mattered the minute I stepped through the door of the empty void that used to be a real home. You'd think that as a hockey player I'd be used to the cold, but I still get the shivers every time I so much as think of the cold shoulder I get from my dad.

At first, Dad's excuses varied, and some of them even seemed to be true, until they happened more and more frequently. At first, the stench of alcohol on him was just "rubbing alcohol" that he used to clean a nonexistent scrape. Then, he came home every night late because his car had a "flat tire," but, coincidentally, his car conveniently seemed to always break down in the bar's parking lot. Eventually, his excuses went from well-thought-out to just drunk mumbling or yelling, and that's when I knew he didn't care at all anymore.

Most kids hated practicing for sports, but I loved it because it was one of my only escapes from the pit of despair that I lived in. I liked to pretend that my friend Michael's family was my own. The minute my mom had died, they had basically become my family anyway. They drove me back and forth to every practice and cheered me on as much as they did their own son.

My life would be perfect with them, and very rarely I'd imagine what life would really be like if they had adopted me. These dreams shattered one way or another, just like my dad's beer bottles.

Even though it was an obvious lie, I still convinced myself he cared enough about me to break through his severe grief-induced alcoholism.

One day, I approached him when he returned home late one night and asked if he would come to my championship hockey game the next day. All I received was a grumble as he took a sip of beer and threw the now-empty can against the wall.

Even though I knew better, I expected to see his face in the crowd, but I never saw it, and I knew he wasn't there.

Coming home from our victory, I found my dad in an alcohol-induced trance on the couch. Cautiously, I asked, "Why didn't you come to the game?"

Not even turning his head, he replied, "I was there, you must not have seen me, kiddo." Knowing he was lying as usual, I questioned him more.

"What was the score?" I asked, raising my voice to ensure I would get an answer.

"Uh, 4 to 0, I'm sorry you guys lost," he replied.

Tears began to fill my eyes, until my "barely there" dad became a blur. "The score was 6-3 and we won the championships. I'm literally holding a trophy," I said, my voice breaking after almost every word.

I didn't want the trophy anymore. It meant nothing to me, and it clearly meant nothing to my dad. That's when I decided something needed to be done.

I needed to know he cared. I needed to know if he still loved me and if he'd care if I wasn't around.

I brainstormed all day, and I knew what I had to do. I had to run away, and if he really cared, he'd

come to find me.

I poured my heart into every single note, but they all ended up crumpled on the floor, as meaningless to me as I was to my dad. Millions of thoughts ran through my head, but I didn't believe anything would be enough to break through the layers of alcohol and make him feel my pain.

I wrote all my thoughts and feelings onto one piece of paper for the final time, and I knew that it was the perfect note to get my point across. I walked into the woods and settled on a moss-covered stump, far enough away that I could not be seen but close enough that I could still see my house and driveway somewhat clearly. I waited for hours, but he never came. I knew he wouldn't, and so I went to him, like always. As I approached the front steps, I took a deep breath in and swung open the door, bracing myself.

A heart attack.

I did this to him. I wanted too much from him. Everyone said it was the alcohol, but I know it was me. It was that stupid note. I killed him.

That's what I told the police and my friends when they had asked what had happened at least.

Most of the story I told the police was true until the end. He really did have a heart attack, so it really wasn't all a lie. I had planned to run away temporarily to see if my dad cared. What I left out was that I had seen my dad alive between the time I had run away and the time I had "found" his body.

I watched his car pull in the driveway, but I had waited at least thirty minutes before I realized he wasn't coming. I walked towards the glass sliding door of my living room and stared at my father watching TV on the couch.

Maybe he hadn't seen my note, I thought as I continued to examine him through the glass. It was at this moment I noticed my dad raised his arms up to clutch his chest where his heart was. I put my hand on the handle of the screen door, but before I began to slide open the door, I noticed a crumpled piece of paper at the bottom of the couch near his feet. It was my note. I took my hand off of the door handle, turned around, and walked back towards my stump in the middle of the forest.

He didn't care, so why should I?

EZRA SHAFRON, *THE CHOICE IS YOURS*

MADDOX BURNETTE, *STOP-GO*





ALIANA TRIANINE, CHERRY BLOSSOMS (LEFT),
MARRA FINKELSTEIN, DALAI LAMA (RIGHT)



Dala

GONE

ZOË PAXOS

so many spoke of her ugliness,
but ugliness i have yet to find.
yet to find, yet never had i seen anyone as fierce as she;
never had i seen
such beauty in one's heart.
never had i seen another with that same fire burning in her eyes,
as much passion,
hope,
strength,
pain -
no one's eyes could captivate like hers,
and never would i see as much residing inside another.
never had i seen skin as bright,
a face so worn yet full of warmth,
a heart so loving,
a hug so comforting,
a smile so welcoming.

yet here she lies, embalmed in this coffin;
the life drained from her skin;
the warmth pulled from her face;
the arms that once held me close, that can no longer, laid at her sides;
her smile without its shine;
her heart without its beat.
and the light that danced behind those fierce, stormy eyes flickered out with her.



JAMIE RITGERS, MARCH 2020

MATTHEW TOMPETRINI, TAKE OVER



JOSEPH ISKANDER, *FOCUS* (ABOVE), AIDEEN GANNON, *WONDERING* (BOTTOM RIGHT), GRACIE LUINENBURG, *LISTEN* (BOTTOM LEFT)



WANDERING ISLES

FRANCESCA ROTELLA

The elders say that villages know we're coming by a shift of the winds or a red paradise bird landing at their well. Not soon after, we come tumbling in like grains of sand down a dune, camping outside their town for days before packing up in the dead of night, only leaving the ashes of our campfires as proof we were ever there.

Though I say it's because they can hear Hakim's drunken singing from miles away.

Even with the creaking timbers of our wagons, the grunting of the camels, and the chatter and din of the hundred wanderers in our Caravan, his voice pierces it all.

Sober, Hakim has the voice of a mild-mannered sparrow, but drunk? He screeches like a gull who has seen a worm.

I sit at the worn wooden bench of my own wagon, gripping the reins of my camels though by now, they know where they're going and need no coaxing from me.

I'd spent the finer hours of yesterday filling in the cracks in my wagon's roof with tar in preparation for the rainy season. Black crescents of the substance are stuck under my fingernails, and I pick at them as we make our way across the desert.

My stomach growls and I sigh, standing up from the bench and unlatching the door to my wagon. The inside is far larger than one would think, with a hidden compartment for my goods underneath the plush embroidered rug and a soft bed in a little alcove at the end. I made my wagon myself, spending months just on the base, consulting elders on measurements and charming the wheels myself to roll quickly across the sand without getting stuck.

Shelves on the walls hold bottles, salves, and drinks. Drying herbs and hanging lanterns dangle from the roof, little gifts from every clan member.

It's a wanderer tradition to add a piece of themselves to a new member's wagon. Hakim gave me a small flute, Helaqui Mareen gifted me the star-shaped lanterns, and Taaram painted the inside a deep midnight blue with swirls of plum purple and golden inked stars. From the others came jars of gemlike fruits floating in sugary syrup, silks, dresses, and jewelry.

Nadiya, Helaqui Mareen had said, tasting my name on her tongue, scooping me off the desert floor, cradling my frail body. *Nightbringer*. She took me into her wagon, had me fed and clothed. With a wave of her bangled hand, she anointed my forehead with crushed inkberries, and I was then a member of the Wandering Isles.

I pull a bottle of syrup from my shelf, blending it with cubes of green mango and a sweet wine Taaram had gifted me last month. *It's not a meal without fruit drenched in syrup*, Helaqui Mareen would say, laughing, at nighttime campfires.

The idea of the Isles had always been some distanced thing, a notion I could reach for but never grasp, for even as a child, I knew better than to dream. Living in the Empire will teach you that. Mothers whisper to their children in the comfort of their homes, tales of the Wandering Isles. *"They're places of magic and whimsy, where you can find the rarest oddities, the finest silks, the sweet-*

est fruits. But," they would say, looking deep into their child's curious eyes, *"don't be too entranced by their magic, young one. The problems life gives you cannot be solved by trinkets and whimsy. It is easy to believe their smiling faces and sell your family home just for a potion of love."* When I was a child my mother, too, told me stories of the Isles, but her golden eyes gleamed as she tucked me and my brother into bed.

She gave no warnings, no silent reverence. Only awe and wonder at the people who gave their lives to the small magics of the world, their adventurous souls mischievous and playful. She would ten ritualistically stir honey into goats milk and warm it in the ashes of the fire, placing three drips in the south and east corners of our room each night.

"That is how you make the Wanderers come." She would explain, "When the seers cast their bones, they will know they are welcome here and sweep us away forever." But now mama is gone, and Jalal and Baba. Our little village burnt and destroyed. Not even a memory for those who would wish to hold onto it. In this world, it is better to forget.

The sun glitters like a ruby on the horizon, its glow staining the clouds with a neon opalescence. Dusk will fall upon us at any moment now, and I can smell the rich spices as everyone begins to cook their suppers. I push forward, finishing my drink and placing the cup back on the ledge.

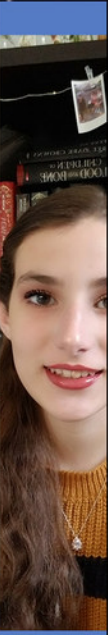
I feel a small pull and a twinge of magic. After I joined the caravan, I felt the currents that ran through the world as clearly as water over my skin, shining golden threads that connected everyone and everything, an intangible fate. The grip loosens, and I feel the energies settle again. Someone is thinking of us, wishing for us to come. Perhaps they're using goats milk and honey or praying to their saints. Perhaps it's only a mother telling a story to their children. Whoever, or whatever, their will is strong, and I'm sure everyone felt it.

A new beginning, a new adventure tugging us forwards.



ZOË PAXOS, *BOAT VIEW* (LEFT), KAYLA BRAGE, *ISOLATION 2020* (RIGHT)

TEAM INSCAPE 2020 TEAM INSCAPE 2020 TEAM INSCAPE 2020



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