

I took up the chain which the three I have particularly described were struggling, carried it into my house, and placed it under a tumbler on my window-sill, in order to see the issue. Holding a microscope to the first-mentioned reel, I saw that, though he was continuously gnawing at the ear-tore-leg of his enemy, having severed his remaining feeler, his own breast was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had access to the jaw of the black warrior, whose breast-plate was apparently too thick for him to pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferer's eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could excite. They struggled half an hour longer under the tumbler, and when I looked again the black soldier had severed the heads of his foes from their bodies, and the still living heads were hanging on either side of him like ghastly trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as firmly fastened as ever; and he was endeavoring with feeble struggles, being without feelers and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know not how many other wounds, to divest himself of them; which at length, after half an hour more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and he went off over the window-sill in that crippled state. Whether he finally survived that combat, and spent the remainder of his days in some *Hotel des Invalides*;* I do not know; but I thought that his industry would not be worth much thereafter. I never learned which party was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I felt for the rest of that day as if I had had my feelings excited and narrowed by witnessing the struggle, the victory, and carnage, of a human battle before my door.

Kirby and Spence tell us that the battles of ants have long been celebrated and the date of them is given as about the day that Huber is the only modern author who has ever had witnessed them. "Aeneas Sylvius,"[†] say they, "after giving a very circumstantial account of one contested with great obstinacy between a large and small species on the trunk of a pear tree," adds that "the pope Eugenius the fourth,"[‡] in a pontifical bull, after having fought in the pontificate of Eugenius the fourth, in a battle with the emperor Frederick, an eminent lawyer, who related that he had witnessed the battle with the greatest

elementia

* Built in Paris in the 17th century as a "retreat" for soldiers, with the site of Napoleon's tomb.
 † Francois Huber (1750-1831), Swiss entomologist.
 ‡ Pius II (1405-1464), pope from 1458 to 1464 and a renowned humanist scholar and author.
 § Pope from 1431 to 1447.

SAILIN
 you went do
 can went do
 e went down

THREE



Cover Image: Mixed Media by Brittany Boffman



elementia...

by. angel jewel dew

came to me
in a dream;

tis' I believe

dreams do
indeed...

come
true.



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a

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literary

teen

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to

represent

& *elementia*

uplift

creative

atypical

sublime

young

adults

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.
...Mahatma Gandhi

Issue VII



Cannon

most pristine nuisance

gorgeous agony

straddling the retired cannon

thumping your

lace tied

ankles

against it, silent pinching of my waist

your limbs of every bit

are a pressure on the body.

~ayah abdul rauf, 16



Artist Kate Mays pg. 20

elementia

creative sublime atypical young adults

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elementia

creative sublime atypical young adults



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editor's note

breath eyes memory

These three words sauntered around in my mind again and again as I considered what I would say about this issue—the 7th issue of elementia.

breath eyes memory

Maybe it is because it is the title of one of my favorite books.

breath eyes memory

Maybe it is because I noticed that my sister-in-law pulled out the book from my bookshelf a few days ago as she watched sweet genevieve...

breath eyes memory

Maybe it is because the book is set in Haiti and Haiti has been on my heart and mind for weeks.

breath eyes memory

Or maybe it's because this issue of elementia is softer than any other issue—soft like the breath and breeze of tree limbs.

breath eyes memory

And maybe it's because this issue is all about what it is we, you, I believe in—belief being rooted in what we see with our eyes, our hearts, and our memories.

Mostly my friends, I believe in signs.

breath eyes memory

enjoy elementia,
angel

We write because we believe that the human spirit cannot be tamed and should not be trained.

...Nikki Giovanni

Patrick is 18 years old and attends high school at Shawnee Mission East

featured young adult writer patrick barry

pgs. 22-25

what inspires you?

I like the phrasing of "musings" as opposed to "inspirations" because I feel that it gives me a bit more room for artistic license as to what has helped shape my art or what has guided me as I take a stab at creativity. I can honestly say a lot of things, but I can dishonestly say even more but I'll let you be the judge as this goes. Music has been and always shall be a major part of my life and I make no secret of the fact that I am an audiophile. My father is a record collector and so I was literally raised on music and it has always been my life. The Who were one of the biggest influences on my early childhood and I have lived on this eclectic range of styles that span from punk to the Italian opera. Storytelling was a cornerstone of my childhood; it was sort of this thing I got from my father's side of the family. Visual arts came from my mother's side; my grandmother was an artist. A lot of the musings have been almost inherited but there are some that were really absorbed, the primary of which would be theatre. I don't really know how that all started. I know it was really early on but I've always enjoyed performing. When all of this comes together you get the primordial ooze that I crawled out of and I've been evolving as I go.

what are your favorite books?

My favorite books include: On the Road by Jack Kerouac, A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess, Huck Finn by Mark Twain, and there are many others but I'll only give you three to keep this short.

what are your favorite films?

My favorite films: There are almost too many to begin. I'll give you the names of directors that I like. Martin Scorsese, Sergio Leone, Stanley Kubric, Michael Cimino, Francis Ford Coppola, Elia Kazan . . .

tell us something about the current teenager...

The current teenage generation tends not to shake hands amongst one another as often as the generation before it; it is not that one is less friendly or ruder, but that the practice of this behavior as being the expected greeting is being lost over time. Slight changes in the morals of social conduct are to be expected as times change. Speech has become less formal due to the prevalence of the instant message; this is not a change that should be feared, however when things can change without anyone understanding why...

how to submit to elementia...

elementia submissions are accepted

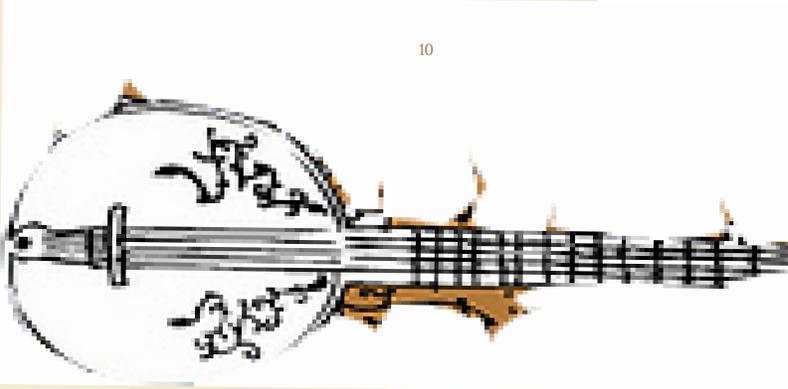
May 1 through October 15 of each year.

All submissions should be typed, and in 12pt Times New Roman font.

No more than three writing submissions per person.

submission form & complete submission guidelines can be found at www.jocoteenscene.org/elementia

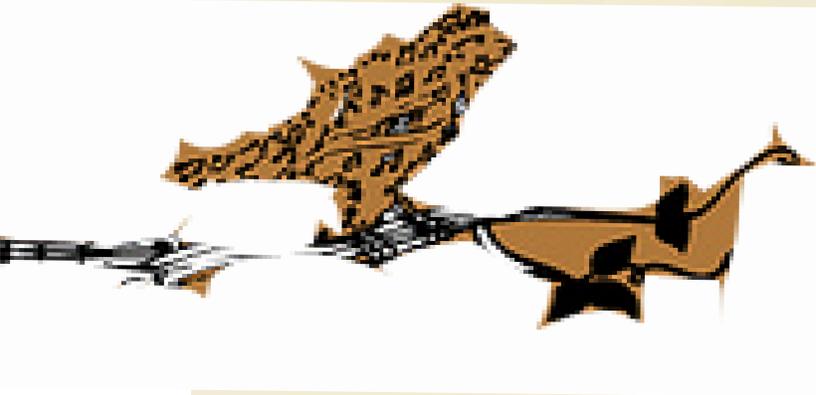






writing
by. bailey fi

The pencil soars across the black page
painting imagination, uniqueness
illuminating places concealed in the corner of your mind
bringing eccentric beasts into the fabric of reality
blustering winds rush over once serene, quiet glades
rainbows tango in the sky
translucent beads of water descend from cerulean skies
wars will rage for countless years
a hero will die to save a friend from a sinister fate
millions of ideas in your head
all tinkle out on ghost white paper
and will lead and sing the language of the soul



universe

by. weston franklin

The Universe

A place made of solar systems, stars, and planets.
To me,
Is just a fading reality.
A dream someone dreamed last night.
A dying star of happiness that is my heart.
A town of my dreams,
By the sea,
That a tidal wave hit,
Throwing it into nothingness.
I made that tidal wave,
Me, my dreams.

I believe.

by. bailey tulluch

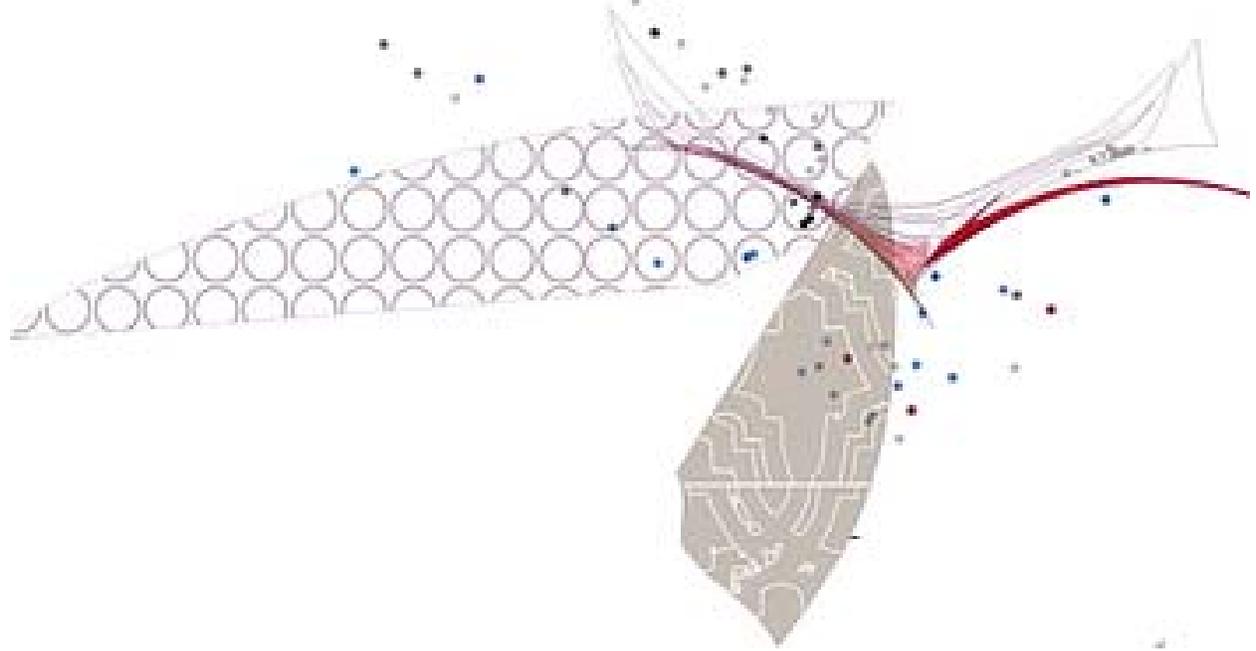
I believe.
That everything means something,
and one thing can mean everything.
I believe.
That every little mockingbird
deserves a chance to sing.

I truly believe.
It doesn't matter how many times you fall,
it matters how many times you get back up again.
I truly believe.
You shouldn't give up, ever,
only if you stop believing
is the time you should call out,
"When!"

I honestly believe.
A person is a person, no matter how small.
I honestly believe.
When you really need someone badly,
they're always just down the hall.
I will always believe.
That I am never alone.
I will always believe.
That every star has a way to be shone.
I believe in you. You believe in me.
Belief. It's why we're here today.



“In real life things don't have outlines”
~julia marquez, 14





Charcoal sketch by Hannah Jenkins

“I’ll dry your tears, and erase
your fears, in the coming years,
just to always hear your voice in my ear.”

~hannah E. jenkins, 15

neverdawn

by. rachel franklin

Tonight I let my shadow wind around my ankles
Soft fingers pulling me down as I succumb to myself.
I look inside to find a growing grasping black.
You should have risen by now, your cadence the only light
In my inner endless tribute to things worse than death,
In my hallways filled with ruins of living luminescence.
If I soak up the Cimmerian blacklight shimmering here,
Will you lay me across these dark pyres,
Burn me in the ashes of dusk stabbed by daybreak,
And offer me up as a sacrifice to the ways I could never ever
shine?

what is a home...

by. connor mills

Is it the one place you can go?
the one place you can trust
those who are there
no matter where you are
or where you are going?

Is a home where you are always found
and lost to lose yourself in old memories?

New to be made
to replace
to overtell
tales of childhood.

To be free again...
find freedom?

My friend, come in...
We may be unknown
just passing strangers
but we'll share this home

the willow tree

by. mathew morefield

I sit under the willow tree
waiting for the approaching storm.
And it comes with a
gust of wind.

I sit under the willow tree
Watching the storm
Destroy everything it can.
It blows over the trees
And breaks the base of
Our house.

I sit under the willow tree
After the storm has passed
Feeling the calm,
Only destruction can leave.



yes, that is why...
by elizabeth b. kelly

The wind and rain, two things I love most. They go hand in hand, the wind and rain. First, the wind blows through and tells the world to be quiet and listen; then the rain comes and washes away horrible things. The gentle rain cleanses the souls of the listeners and those who don't listen do not know the blessing.

I also love the earth because of her many signs of life and love. Trees, who laugh when the wind tickles them and grass that defies anything against it, birds, with their songs of love and flowers that reach to touch the sun. Yes, I love the earth. She tries so hard to protect us but hardly anyone remembers to thank her. It's sad, but my love for her is true, for it does not pity.

The snow, so pure and white, it is probably the purest thing I've ever seen. When it falls it is quiet, like it does not want to disturb anyone. The way it lays on the ground, it's as if it is hugging the earth. Yes, the snow is an innocent child who tries to hug and love everything. Sometimes when I am lonely, I wish it could hug me.



Photograph by Lauren Komer

Oh spring and fall, the colorful days you give us should be treasured for eternity. Flowers of life and sleeping leaves. Life and sleep, separate, but same, both beautiful in their own way. I love how things sing at the sign of fresh charm and elegance. I love how all things become silent and peaceful for sleep. And then all sings again, it is an endless cycle of lovely things. Yes, I love these too.

But all these things I love so much, they can be cruel, for they never stay and I can not hold them. But this is why I love you. I know you will stay with me and that you will hold my hand. You can hold me and you will never say good-bye. That is why I love you more than the wind and rain, the earth and snow, the spring and fall. I can't hug the memories of those precious things, but I can hug you, even from far away. Yes, that is why I love you.

jollity
by haley claxton

A warm soft breeze blows.
The sun descends from the sky.
The scene is peaceful.

You gaze upon it,
And know the sun will return,
Soon in the morning.

That thought makes you glad,
As you walk back to your home
From the grassy hill.

There is so much joy
In our harsh and hateful world;
We must search for it.

Find some small beauty
In every short, passing day
And you will find life.

And you will find love.
And you will find happiness.
And you will find peace.

You look to a bush,
Where a small flower opens
Amongst the sharp thorns.

Look now to the sky,
To find the silver lining,
In the dark storm clouds,

That are sure to bring
Thunder, lightning, and new life.
See; all can be good.

"shooting stars squander"

"find the silver lining"

light in darkness

by becky reilly

A star, bright, sky's diamond
Yellow, blue, white, green
A shinier object
Mine eyes have not seen

I have not been told
Of a more unique thing
Not light itself, music,
A crystal, a ring

To learn to fly
Reflected in sea
In rippling green
Staring back is only thee

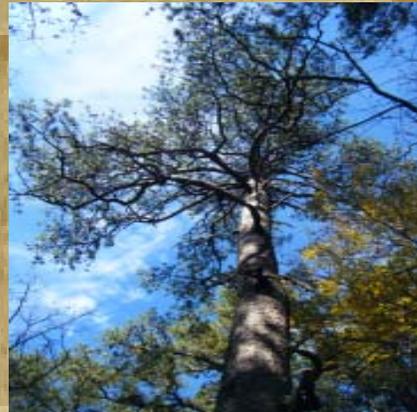
To sing with your sisters
And learning to fly
And shooting stars squander
Their light through the sky

A million small suns
Cannot banish dark blue
But as light enough
We don't need them to

To swing, to sigh
To live in the sky
To hope, to pray
To rest in the day

Then when the sky flushes
Its bright orange-pink
And twilight blue steals
The sky, bright light winks





Photos taken by Lauren Chance

time like falling snow
by skylar pappenfort

Memories, oh memories those fine grains of sand
Escape between your fingers to the beating of the band
Murmuring in harmony upon a demure heart
Oh what a lovely pas de deux in which we find our part
Rows of fleeting smiles and a million bluebird skies
Intent on brightly shining as they pass before your eyes
Endless is the time we spend lost in waking dreams
Sometimes it seems these fantasies are life's biggest schemes



the elemental war

by kristen zuchowski

It began with the fire's havoc, then rained the wild water. Next came the dancing wind, then the fumbling forming earth. At first everything was peaceful but the elements did not get along well.

The fire was angry at the water, for stealing its dark lustrous game. The water denied that it took anything, that the heavens like water more.

But the water was angry at the wind, for nefarious stirrings of its ocean. The wind denied that it was evil but free and feral, saying the heavens liked wind more. At the same time the winds dislike the earth, for growing mountains that stood in wind's way. The earth denied that its creations got in any one's way, that the heavens liked the lands most.

In fact that fire liked the earth for things to smolder, and the lands offered alliance to the fire in exchange for certain lands to burn in if the fires joined to help get rid of wind. When the wind heard this, it made a deal with the water, that if the water became an ally, the wind would stop stirring up the seas. The water liked this idea very much and accepted. When earth heard about their secret, earth knew there was no chance of winning the war. The earth was sneaky and spoke to the water, and lied to the water.

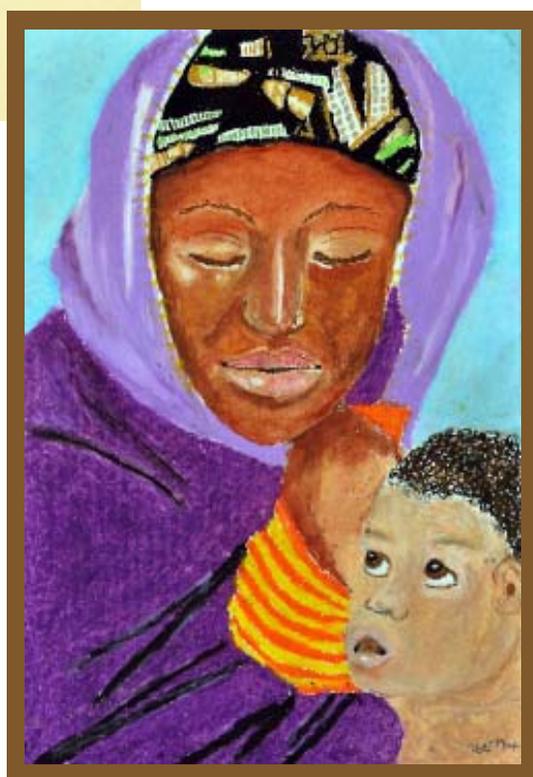
The earth 'assumed' the wind was plotting to pretend friends so the wind could take the water over, and dry it up with fire and earth. The water became enraged and called to earth to side against wind and fire—to put them both out forever. However, when the fire heard this secret plot it hid away to the lands the earth had promised to dwell in shadows, until the right moment to fight alone.



When the battle time came the wind was angry that the earth had turned, and that fire hid away, and that water was against the wind. The wind was angry and fought the water first, for its betrayal, and the earth tried to stay out of the quarrel until the wind and water attacked the earth. The wind and water became allies once more, and when they did, earth called to fire, who was in hiding to stay out of the brawl. When the earth discovered this he cowardly blamed all the fighting on fire convincing wind and water to attack the hiding fire.

When they found fire—sleeping, they put it out. After wiping out the fire, the elements decided to share the world, and let the wind roam freely, while the earth and water shared the other space. All was happy until time developed, and things grew and life formed.

Soon the world was increasingly messy, with humans and their ways of life. When the earth complained that it was too much—heavy, it called on fire to wipe out the humans, but what was left of the fire on earth (that wasn't destroyed) declined the earth's plea, since the earth had betrayed the fire. The fire let the earth suffer with unbearable weight, so it would have to uphold everything that grew, while water held the lands up at its best, and the wind tried to sweep the lands clean. But there was too much to blow through and the wind failed, and the water could not stop the extra earth growing forth from its floors, and they all regretted taking the fire's world away, but they were too late to leave the world, for they were stuck where they were until the end of time...



Painting by Kate Mays

here is the son
by haley claxton

Here Is The Son
that shines through
the
cold
dark
clouds
that herald
a coming storm,
a storm in
the heart
the mind
the soul.
When you feel
alone
forgotten,
the Son rises
to show you
the
right
path
to
follow when
it forks
unexpectedly.

surfacing

by jaden gragg



There is so much beneath the surface,
of what we are being told,
like cream rising to the top of milk,
like layers in the ocean,
like light filtering in only through the top.
The rest is inky darkness,
so much life and truth swirling beneath the surface.

Under everyone's face,
there is blood and nerves, and vessels.
Under everyone's breath,
are whispered things that carry lightly in the wind.
Under clothes,
there are body parts, soft and fleshy and covered,
like vegetables in an underground cellar.

There is so much beneath the surface.

This is the covering, the concealment.
The layer of ice on a frozen pond,
the hard covering of crème brûlée,
the grass growing over Alice's fantastical rabbit hole,
and the tough skin growing over the fruit of knowledge.

life in a swamp of lies

by brandon rainwater

Never wanted to be proven wrong
Even when trapped in a corner
Heart thumping;
Knee's quivering;
Lip's trembling;
As my mind races to cover up yet another

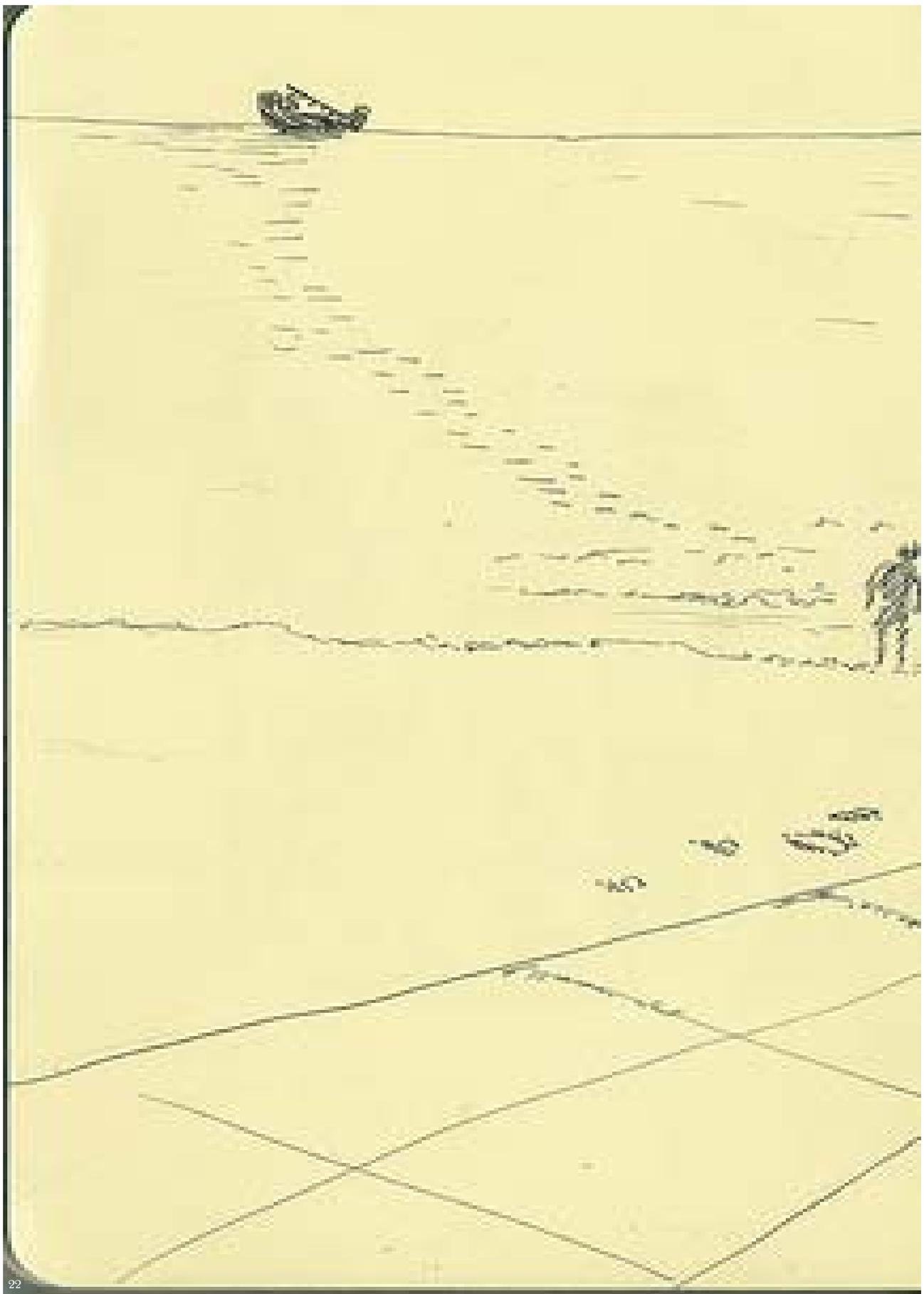
What started out as one little innocent white lie
Has splintered out into uncountable amounts

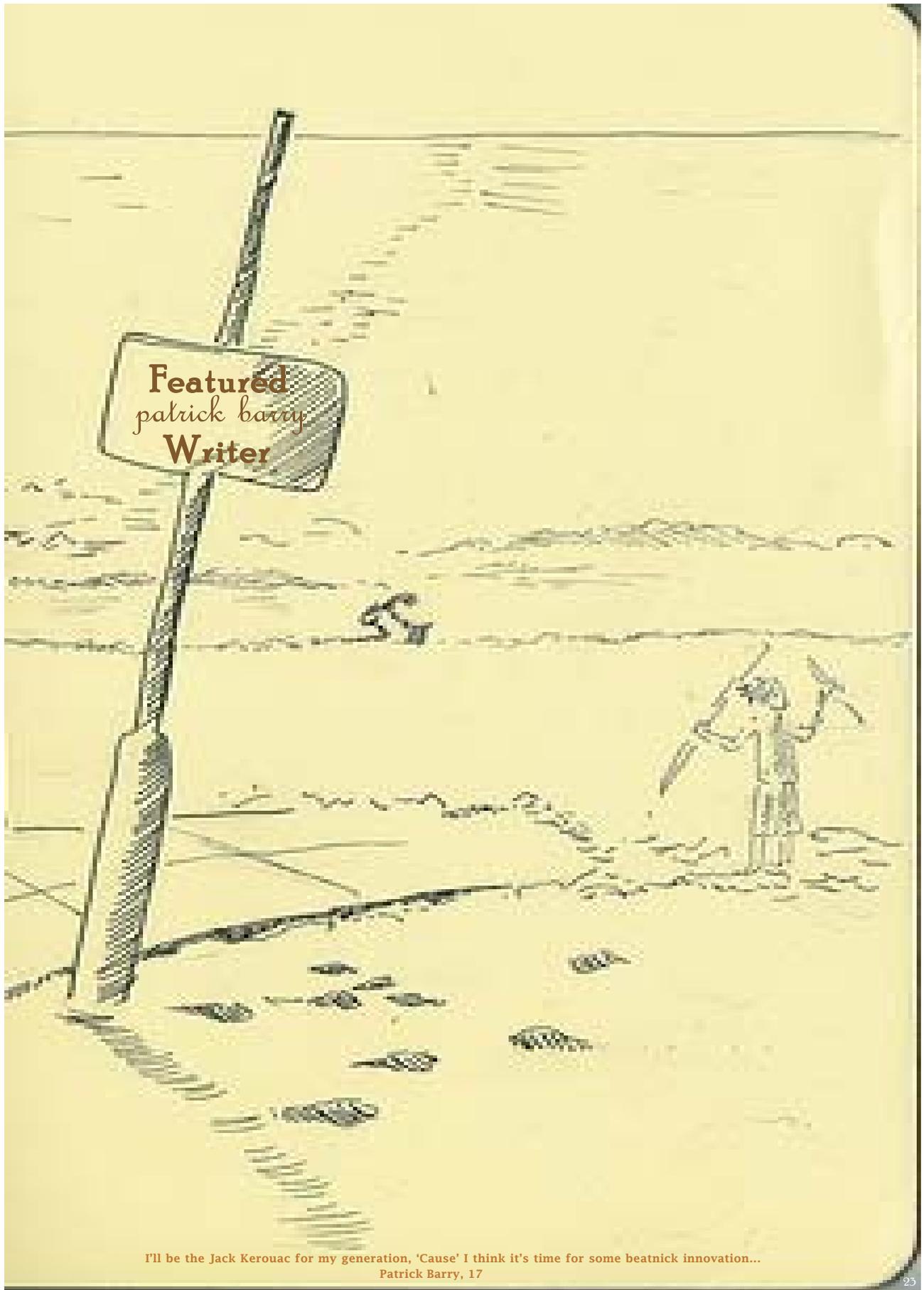
One white lie never hurt any one
At least that's what I've been told
But one white lie never lasts
Another lie is waiting to come into play

Never wanted to become a liar
So I lied to keep my lies the truth

Before long my lies began to run into each other
Becoming completely unmanageable
The puzzle pieces began to splinter and mold apart
My tall tales became my truth
My life;
What I believed;
Life as I know it is nothing but one vast lie
A fake is what I've become







I'll be the Jack Kerouac for my generation, 'Cause' I think it's time for some beatnick innovation...
Patrick Barry, 17



'writings' by patrick barry

a trench in hell

Rain floods the trenches on a cold darkened night,
And the battle drags on. How long must they fight?
Rats grow fat as they feast on the dead.
The constant shell impacts get to the head.
You keep your bayonet close, and your eye on no-man's-land,
Helmet on your head and rifle in your hand.
As you wait for the Hun,
Better man than machine gun.
It's a blood bath in Belgium; it's a god-awful war,
In an industrial era with weapons never seen before.
It's the war to end all wars, or so they say,
But sadly we won't learn our lessons that way.

the chief

They say he could see a full mile on the horizon.
They say that he could smell the seas from the plain.
I've heard he could dance to the rhythm of a heartbeat,
And visualize true beauty in the rain.

Some say that he could listen to the breathing of the earth,
And that he'd been taught to read the sky.
I've heard that he truly understood the land,
And that he knew where nature's secrets lie.

They tell of all his wisdom,
Of his face that showed no fear,
And when all the treaties were left broken,
He only shed one tear.

It's sad the white man's ways had finally taken their toll.
It isn't right that The Chief is the low man on the totem pole.

heroes

As a grade school student I would read comic books. I was no expert in the field nor any sort of serious collector but never the less I enjoyed reading them. I liked all sorts of heroes, Marvel or D.C., but my favorite was The Shadow. I liked almost every comic book hero. The only one I was not all that fond of was Superman. A lot of people thought that I was overly critical or just plain crazy, but I felt that Superman was cheap.

He simply had too many powers: x-ray vision, super strength, flight, good looks, and he was invincible. Well, Superman was almost invincible. He had one weakness: Kryptonite.

Kryptonite made Superman just like the rest of us, but it was rare, just about as rare as a super hero, and it wasn't a constant obstacle for him on a daily basis. For those reasons I didn't feel that he was a fair hero, and therefore I never liked him much.

One day my comic reading world changed when a neighbor brought me a very special Superman issue. This issue was of course the one where Superman dies. I finally could admire Superman's accomplishments because he was not immortal anymore; he was a man who tried the world. This issue was comforting to me, even though the hero died in the end.

I come from a family of relatively recent immigrants. They were forced into an exodus from Ireland at the turn of the century against their will for fighting the British over the issues of religious and political liberty. They were fiercely loyal to their roots as hard working Irish Catholics and didn't feel welcome in America. It took three generations for them to plant both feet in American soil.

For years they would, when asked, say that they were Irish. In 1961 something changed, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected the 35th President of The United States of America, and he was Irish Catholic. From about that point on my great-great grandparents would say, when asked, that they were Irish-American. For them to go from being children brought into the country in the early 1900s who still claimed to be Irishmen in exile to being Irish-American was a phenomenon.

Finally their kind were not railroad workmen at best. They could be politicians. When J.F.K. was assassinated it was a personal blow to many of my family members, but they had hope in his brother Robert Francis Kennedy. Again their hero was taken from them. What they needed was a hero who was not as vulnerable and they found it in Edward Kennedy.

Long after the death of my great-great grandparents in the '70s and my great grandparents in the mid to late '90s, Teddy was still a hero for our family. The Lion of the Senate seemed like he would always be there to protect the rights of the little man and be a bi-partisan leader, but we knew that Teddy would not be in the Senate forever.



It's now 2009 and the Lion has passed. The last of the Irish Catholics who rose quickly to inspire the rest of us was dead. I never imagined that he would live forever, but didn't really want to think that even a hero could just pass away when he was still needed. Every man dies, that's a simple fact, but the worst of it was that something was about to resurface. I knew about the issue and I had just hoped that it would never come up before I'd had enough time to prepare for it.

Just like Superman, Teddy had his own Kryptonite. There was one thing that could bring him crashing back down and that was the Chappaquiddick incident. Superman had the blessing of dealing with a rare substance that could only cripple him in the occasional episode, but Teddy had to carry the weight of his kryptonite on his shoulders for eternity.

One could only imagine what it would be like to carry the death of Mary Jo Kopychne on your conscience every day and every night. The incident was terrible, but I know as well as everyone else that every person has something that they feel ashamed of that will always be there in their mind.

What looms over your head may not be the loss of a young woman's life, but is it something you want to surround you even after you're gone? I have made terrible mistakes in life and beg for forgiveness. I never meant for it to happen but it is far too late to simply take it back.

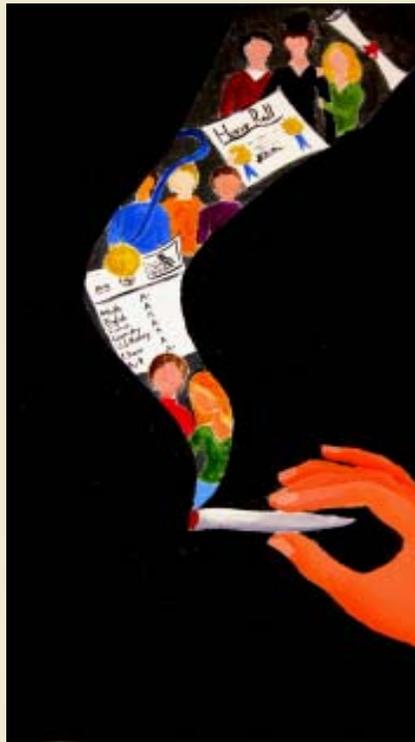
No human is perfect, and if you cannot admit that then perhaps that should be what your shame is, failure to understand that nobody is invincible. When I think about the loss of one of my heroes and the faults that come to light post-mortem, I think about how big of a lie every Superman comic was until the issue he died and we could see that even heroes fail sometimes.

“Teddy had to carry the weight of his kryptonite on his shoulders for eternity...”

first step into high school

by. abbey mock

Walking down,
The hall of my high school,
The stares,
Judging,
The whispers,
Telling lies of the truth,
Tears cause by,
Always and forever,
Gone,
Hurt by you,
Love turning to hate,
The drama,
Coming alive,
Not just in the movie,
Perfection,
At its best,
Finally turning ugly,
Friends turning against,
What they,
Promised to be,
All of the above,
And even more
Colliding into more,
Teen love,
Teen drama,
Teen life.



Painting by Maddie Miguel

“I feel like a serial number..”

High school--those are your prime suffering years. You don't get better suffering than that.

...Frank, “Little Miss Sunshine”

thoughts
on high school:

by. julia marquez

What is the point of pep rallies? Is anyone actually, genuinely enthusiastic? I find it much easier to believe that, seeing as we're teenagers, we're all just faking it, in an ironic sort of way.

High School Haiku

I feel like a se-
rial number, my friend says.
Just part of the crowd.

A boy I went to school with for nine years barely acknowledges me when I see him on the first day of school. He sits across the aisle from me on the bus, black headphones plugged into his ears, resolutely not looking at me. What is the world coming to?

Happily Ever After: A One-Act Play

Scene:

Cafeteria.

A girl with masses of long brown hair (**JULIA**) sits at a table, picking at her lunch. She gazes pensively into the middle distance in an oddly attractive way, which causes the heads of several males to flicker towards her and back as they make their way past her to their various tables.

just
part of the crowd..”

Suddenly the cafeteria doors open and in walks a boy (name up for debate—**BENJAMIN**, perhaps?). He has a mop of dark hair (maybe curly, maybe not), either dark brown or hazel eyes, and beautifully sculpted hands that are obviously good at drawing.

He is wearing, to **JULIA**'s delight, a Beatles T-shirt (Abbey Road). His eyes—unhidden eyes, eyes not hardened like those of most boys in the room—scan the cafeteria. They come to rest on the girl with the long, long brown hair.

She turns around. She sees him seeing her, her pretty (she hopes) brown eyes locking onto his hazel/dark brown ones. She smiles, and he sees past her less-than-clear-skinned faced and non-brand-name clothing to her sweet, loving, true self. He smiles back at her, his eyes taking on the dazed, dreamlike quality of a prince who has just fallen in love with a princess.

BENJAMIN approaches her.

BENJAMIN

Hello. I love you. Let's go out.

JULIA

Gladly.

He scoops her up into his arms and carries her out of the cafeteria. They spend the lunch hour in the courtyard, where they bond over their mutual love for Star Wars, red Jell-O, and books by Jerry Spinelli.

How It Really Works

The movies say that high school is full of well defined cliques. Cheerleaders, nerds stoners, jocks. Really it's just you, your friends, and other people.



Necromancer: Confession

by. connor rice

Why she was here was beyond him. She walked up to him, and held the umbrella over his head protecting him from the rain.

“You shouldn’t be out in the rain talking to yourself. People might think you’re crazy.” Grace said with a smile. She was barely wet, while Simon was, on the other hand, soaked to his skin. It was just then that he noticed how cold he was. A shiver went down his back as water dripped off his chin. Grace pointed to the apartment building that was across the street, and Simon nodded. They walked in silence until the awning sheltered their bodies.

“Who are you talking to anyways?”

“John and Mary.”

“But they’re dead...” Grace looked at him concerned about his well-being. If he was talking to the dead, what did that say about his mental state? Sure he lost two of his best friends, but so had she and she wasn’t talking to the dead in her spare time. Maybe he was crazy. Maybe he...

“I know, but it’s my way of showing respect to them; treat them as if they were alive. Keeping them in my memories isn’t enough. I have to keep them alive some other way...” He interrupted her thoughts. A drop of what seemed to be water rolled down his cheek, but she knew better. It was a tear drop.

“I’m just worried about you.” It was the truth. Lately she’d watched him become more detached from the world. On more than one occasion, she had caught him having a full conversation with himself, but she only heard half of it. It was like someone in his head talked to him and he answered out loud. Grace was told, by Simon, that it wasn’t anything to worry about, yet, she couldn’t help but get the feeling his sanity was slowly slipping away.



Rain danced gleefully across the tombstones as if mocking the dead. The now wet moss on older parts of the graveyard made the ground slick. It grew where other forms of life refused for reasons of their own, yet sparingly did the moss do so as if even it respected burial grounds. The only defilement of the graves were occasional children daring their peers to see how far in they could run without turning back.

Simon stood near the edge of the graveyard where the newer graves sat. In his hand was a single white carnation which he rolled the stem between his thumb and index finger. Fidgeting was a nervous habit for him. Inhaling deeply, he bent down and placed it on the ground between two graves.

“Hey. It’s me again.” He said in a remorseful tone as he straightened up and took a few steps back.

Simon’s face wore a half smile. A ray of sunshine broke through the clouds and just missed the graveyard. It landed on the pavement behind him, but he saw it nonetheless as he looked up.

“I’m sorry I couldn’t come earlier. Mom’s been keeping me busy with looking for jobs. I know she means well, but...” A chuckle escaped his throat. He had promised his two friends that he’d visit them before summer was over. Summer had come and gone without a single visit from Simon, though not a day passed when they weren’t on his mind.

The sound of rustling leaves from behind caught his attention. There wasn’t any wind, which meant someone was close. Turning around revealed a fellow classmate and neighbor, Grace, walking towards him with an umbrella.

“Don’t be.”

“Don’t be? How can I not? You’re not answering my calls anymore. It’s like you’re shutting the real world out, and replacing it with your own.” Simon went silent and his smile faded. Another tear rolled down his cheek. She had verbally slapped him, and there was no going back. Holding her tongue, she waited for him to respond. It seemed like eternity before he did so.

“If I told you what was going on, you’d think I had gone crazy, but, at the same time, I don’t want to lie to you.” His eyes closed and he exhaled deeply before opening them. Grace looked at him with concern. What he was talking about eluded her, but she wanted to know what ailed him; she wanted to help, and most of all she wanted to tell him how she felt towards him.

“We’ve been friends for basically our entire lives, Simon. I’d believe anything you’d say, and you know that.” She placed her hand on his shoulders trying to reassure him. Simon rested one of his on hers. They stood there, waiting for the other to talk. Waiting for someone to break the silence. Waiting...waiting...

“All right. I guess I’ll tell you, but not here.” Simon broke the silence between them. It was almost refreshing to hear those words come from him. For the first time since John and Mary died, Simon was actually going to have a meaningful conversation with her. Folding up her umbrella, Grace grabbed the hand on top of hers, and led him up two flights of stairs. She knew this place well enough to walk it in pitch black. Taking a left when they reached the third floor, they walked past the first two doors and stopped in front of the one labeled in brass “324”.

“Mom and dad left to go on a business trip. I have the apartment to myself for two more days.” Grace told Simon as she unlocked the door. Right as she opened the door, the familiar smell of cinnamon rolls hit his nose. Apparently she hadn’t stopped baking. After she threw the keys on the table next to the door, they both walked in. Out of sheer habit, Simon walked through the front hallway into the main room and sat on the leather sofa. A smile appeared on Grace’s face.

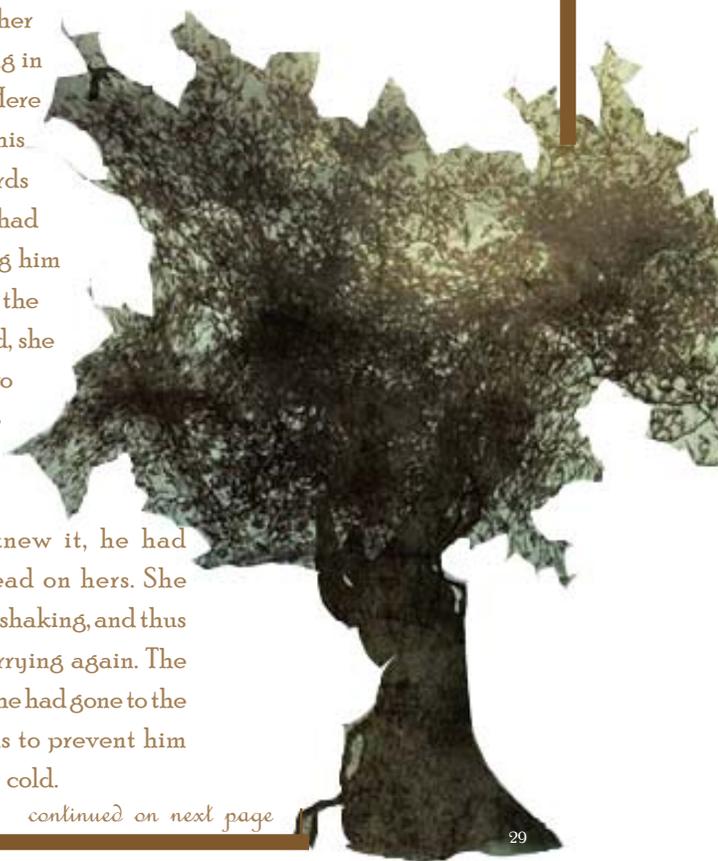
“We kept the couch only because I convinced mom and dad that you loved the thing so much.” Simon let out a sigh. He longed for the days when the four of them, John and Mary included, just sat on this couch and just talked. It was dubbed “The Honest Couch” because they promised each other that they’d never lie to each other when on it. He knew why she chose her house over his. It was because on this couch she wouldn’t have to worry about him beating around the bush about anything. It was second nature to be upfront about anything and everything when on it.

After a few moments of silence, she too walked over to it, and sat next to him. She was closer than usual, but he didn’t mind. She didn’t seem to mind that he was wet either, and even leaned her head on his shoulder.

Grace closed her eyes just taking in the moment. Here she’d find out his feelings towards her, and what had been bothering him recently. Like the old saying said, she was killing two birds with one stone.

Before she knew it, he had placed his head on hers. She could feel him shaking, and thus began her worrying again. The whole reason she had gone to the graveyard was to prevent him from getting a cold.

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She reached behind her for the blanket that sat between the edge of the couch and the wall. Grabbing it, she wrapped it around both herself and Simon. This was the first time that either of them had shown physical intimacy towards the other, but neither of them objected to it. Minutes ticked by as they just sat there with heads laying on each other. Finally, Grace took her head off his shoulder, sat up, and spoke.

“Before we get to what’s been bothering you, there’s something I need to know.”

“Name it.”

“Do you love me?”

This made Simon sit up straight. He knew that she was going to be forward, but not in that sort of way. She had caught him off guard with that question. It was coming from left field, as some would put it. Closing his eyes, he calmed his nerves, and collected his thoughts. It took mere seconds to do so and he opened his eyes again.

“I can’t lie to you.

Yes.

Yes I do.”

the End



“...the probability of failure is so slim, it’s basically non-existent...”

impurity

by amanda schoep

My head hits the pillow
It sinks in
I turn to the left
Then the right
Then back to facing the
ceiling
I close my eyes
Bad things creep around in
my mind
They pop open
I stare at that chair
I glance at my desk
It's no use
I get up
I look in the mirror
I see myself
What have I become
Who have I become
My brunette hair is covering
my face
My earrings are dangling
But, I look past that
My soul is impure
I have done bad
I crawl back into bed
Lay my head back onto the
pillow
I pray
God says he forgives me
Now I can sleep

untitled

by camille O'leary

Purple gone
only grey
green of tree gone
only black
all things dim
as sun goes down
twilight hour

all things grey
only bits of yellow, red are left
and they fade
and blur
as the sun goes down
and the sky goes grey

new sport

by angela clem

Lead between my eyes,
it moves faster than you think.

I know it's hard to tell from your point of view,
but it's almost impossible for me to realize it even
happened in the first place

Don't worry.

The probability of failure is so slim, it's basically
nonexistent. And even if I took the initiative to whisper
in your ear, you wouldn't believe me,
because you never did.

I see it coming, and at that very moment I know
I have an infinite time to move out of its way,
Plenty of opportunity
to change my mind
and dodge it
Or catch it

I've never been much of a hand-eye
coordination girl, anyway.



masquerade
by rachel franklin

I. Blue chamber

Take my hand, feel for flesh
beneath the glove, the mask
Catch the notes slipping through
the air (your fingers)
Dance until we die and await the
resurrection
Listen closely.
We will come alive again
To Beauty and light off stained
glass and liquor off stained hands
When the laughter filling the
room suddenly

II. Purple chamber

Pick up the tempo, lying in pieces
on the floor.
Let's hold happiness close to our
 chests and never talk of why
 Kiss unfamiliar lips and pry off
 masks with curious fingers
 Guess, guess:
 Who am I?
 Who are you?
 Why are we here aflame with
 gaiety and glitter
 When the world outside is aflame
 with the Decay and screams of
 children?
 Is that why when the clock
 commands it, we

*"...you danced a little too
much like a heartbeat"*

III. Green chamber

We didn't used to be this happy, don't you
never want to remember?
But drowning in velvet you can't come up for
air (your touches)
Can't cry through the smiles. We are prisoners
to fancy.
Give me a gilded cage and I will throw away
the key.
The musicians are steeling themselves, watch,
Awaiting the second of bliss, when their world
can finally



IV. Orange chamber

I have sealed this masquerade
Running through each separate room is
a murmur
A brush along your fingertips.
You could not feel me grasp your hand
and ask,
"Shall we?" Shall we rise above the
revelers
Leave the floor and feel the energy
pulse through the room
Then...finally...everyone
just...everything just

V. White chamber

I am the phantasm, the Avatar of hunger
But you danced a little too much like a
heartbeat (your life)
And I was too little like a pendulum with no
pit beneath it.
Dance. You will die. I will eat you alive
And blood will stain the shining floors
And blood will stain the dancers
And blood will stain the musicians
And the revelers
And the ebony clock will

VI. Violet chamber

Please

VII. Red chamber

And each dies in the despairing posture of his
fall
And the life of the ebony clock goes out with
the last of the gay (the final)
And the flames of the tripods expire
And Darkness and Decay
And I hold illimitable dominion over all.
Take a moment, look around, and
STOP.

*"I am the phantasm,
the avatar of hunger..."*



untitled

by jessica prater

I hear that knock on the door, it is the thunder calling.
Outside there are thousands of pasts,
and would have been future memories.

Glass spheres float adrift in the sky,
tempting me to fall into the looming thoughts of
regret and what if. Too much time has been spent on counting.
Counting and pondering over the past events
that each raindrop holds,

each memory it makes me feel

The black sky parts for a brief moment,
as if it needed to sneeze, and a tiny sliver of
orange purple sky dares to unleash itself.
The brief spark of life fills the individual drop,
it brightens each one up a bit.

instead of looking at a once cloudy sky, the color is now a comforting purple.

Purple with a dash of yellow and a pinch of blue,
A certain blue that is whispering at me to dance,
Dance in the rain,
let each drop sprinkle on me,
let those memories and joy cover me.

covering me so that I am not soaking with the thought of regret,

Celebrating where my life has taken me so far.
Behind me is sound of thunder,
I am now dancing in the rain.





"Ever since I was little I've been close to my family, yet as I grew older I started to lose sight of how important they are. I started disrespecting my parents and never spending any time at home. I thought my friends were more important and more fun. I went through some rough times and had a wakeup call. All those so-called "friends" weren't there, but my family was. Even after all I had put them through they stood by me. It really put things into perspective for me and made me realize I need to remember where I came from and what's important. Your family is the most important people in your life. Friends come and go but family lasts forever. So I believe people need to realize how important their family is and stop taking them for granted. Don't forget where you came from and next time you're going through hard times take a look around as see who's still by your side."
~danielle greer, 17

Do you know the Muffin Man?
His lifelong dream was to play in a band
Instead his feet are buried in sand.
If he skipped work he would be canned
His boss bringing down the iron hand
Another job he would demand
Ripping hair out strand by strand

In a library, books he scans
Swatting flies hovering by the fan
He'd rather be a fat caveman

You think this poem is super crazy
It's not, I'm just lazy
Nothing better to do when it's hazy
I'm so good at this I'm like Jay-Z

While judges listen to my rhyme,
It's so long they think it's a crime
If you read slow you're out of time
Right now in my prime
Rhythm moving so fast it feels sublime

Move your hands and feet
To the non-stop beat
Some would say it's a treat
To listen to something so sweet
If you can't dance, go to the street
Where there will be a giant fleet
Of people waiting in burning heat
Until you can dance like the elite

~benjamin abbas, 16

"Probation is very difficult for me. I feel like it's weighing me down,

So much more every day. I believe some kids learn. I think I am one of those kids.

But some don't learn. Some families can't afford probation, It's not their fault their kids make mistakes; They need a break. Probation officers aren't always supportive.

Mine never supported me in my recovery. I believe support is needed in any situation, Especially when you're on probation."



~brook pippin, 16

"I always live
To see how much
I can achieve.
I keep the will
And learn the skills.
I always learn to strive
And I will not give up
Till I die.
I work so hard
I've made it this far.
I try to blend in
So I stand by my friends.
I was born,
Here to be
Everything I believe."

~gack patrick, 17

"Everything happens for a reason.
I wish I didn't make the bad choices that I did.
But we all learn from our mistakes..
I believe.
I have been in and out of jail a couple of times.
I spent four months in there and
I have learned a lot from my mistakes.
we all learn from old mistakes to not make new ones.
I believe."

~brandi fischer, 16

"Money is everything in this life we live
It's about what I can get not what to give
Money can make life positive or negative
You have to spend money to make money
Money is to us as a bear is to honey
Why are a rich man's jokes always funny
Why can't people see who we are
Instead of the house, the clothes and the car
What would the world be without rich or poor
Why can't money just grow on trees
Life would be easier I believe
If the world was as free as the breeze."

~joe howell, 17



It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are thoroughly alive. There are certain things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger after them.

-George Eliot



Balance Verses Chaos

Left only is the echo of the water's laugh
The birds' little whispers still can be heard.
The moon isn't full, it's only half
Sun's clear rays have been made fuzzy and blurred.

Melody misses Harmony-her friend
Nighttime longs to hear the old barn owl's hoo.
The sowing thread has split and needs a mend.
White dove has long forgotten how to coo.

A book has lost its spine, and thus, its voice,
Paper has vowed to reject all writing.
Free will has deserted, leaving no choice.
Peace is buried, there is only fighting.

The universe needs balance on its grand scale;
If try is needed, there must be a fail.

~catherine strayhall, 14

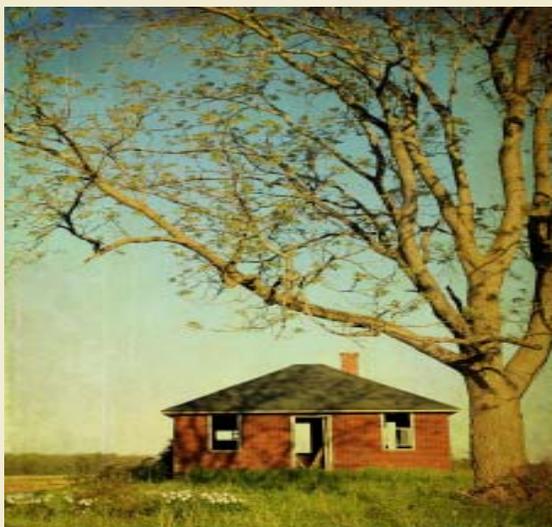


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