Ramblings 2014
Glenbard East High School
Lombard, Illinois

Co-Editors:
Emily Hagan
Marisa Judd
Eeman Nadeem
Brianne Okayama
Namra Panawala
Kelly Womack

Advisor:
Mr. Bill Littell

Acknowledgements:
A huge thanks goes to Ms. Wink and Mr. Cho who provided all of the art for Ramblings. Another massive thank you to Mr. Gancarz, technical wizard and layout guru.

Jenna Winiarczyk - Hide and Seek

CONTENTS
Allison Achenbaugh - Cruelty
Allison Achenbaugh - Who Will I Be?
Mary Anderson - Red Dirt
Tyler Behrendt - So We can Just...
Crystal Calderon - Recess
Lina Camacho - Help Me Understand
Lina Camacho - How You Made Me Feel
Cynthia Campos - Failure
Anitra Davis - Love At First Sight
Kayla Diggs - Stranger
Casey Erickson - Stars
Casey Erickson - Thick as Mud
Alley Garrity - Capture a Scene
Jackie Gomez - Hate for the Splits
Ashley Gonzalez - Prison
Ashley Gonzalez - Silence is Golden
Charles Grunert - Please, Tell Me Visions
Melanie Hernandez - My Mind
Melanie Hernandez - Ways You Say
Jordan Hubbard - Eyes
Ryan Hughes - Jesus Christ Controls Time
Antoine Jack - Growing Up

Christian Johnson - Haiku
Marisa Judd - Haiku
Amber Llorens - Confrontation
Sammy Macrito - Shyness
Patrick Morris - Remembering Yourself
Ray Nance - This Is How Lonesome Feels
Krystal Ng - There Was Something...
Duyan Nguyen - Family Meal
Jonathan Nitsh - Memories Hurt
Jonathan Nitsh - We Are Not All White
Angelika Nowasadko - Flawless Angel
Brianne Okayama - Haiku
Alex Ostrowski - Tattoos
Namra Panawala - The Start of a New Night
Kristen Panzarella - Drowning
Jake Rench - Haiku 1
Jake Rench - Haiku 2
Jake Rench - Perception
Monique Robinson - Inspired by "Heaven"
Anaiveh Smith - The Mirror
Alex Trezzo - From Me To You
Kelly Womack - Some Days
She walks into the school
Feeling everyone’s eyes locked on her
The sense of urgency races inside of her, but she doesn’t let anyone see
The comments meant to be quiet hit her like bullets
With every remark her body weakens
As she gets farther down the hall, she hits something hard and flies to the ground
With every book making an imprint in everyone’s ears
No one making a move
A hand reaches out to help her up
Everyone is shocked
Now every eye is locked on them.

Who Will I Be?

By Allison Achenbaugh

I am the pictures hanging on my wall
The volleyballs sitting in my closet, to the box of photos full of memories trying not
To be forgotten
I am the piano in the living room that dreams to be played to remember what once
Was
I am the ring on my finger that keeps her with me
To the necklace hung so nicely that symbolizes my love and sadness for what
I have lost
I am my failures and the missed opportunities, the heart broken and memory holder
I am also my success, the great times and memories once had but always with me.
I am from the man who had faith and hope for my future
I am the memories
From the talented
And I will be amazing just like them.
Alex Naguit - Reve

Red Dirt
By Mary Anderson
It took maybe a couple full days of driving to get there. The scenery changed quickly and soon everything looked bare, red, and deserted. The last city we came to was now three hours away. This was Monument Valley, Utah.

My dad had always wanted to take a trip to Monument Valley. It was where all the John Wayne movies were shot and those were his favorites, so here we were in the hot desert air. The air was so thick it could wrap around your throat with its dry hand and choke you with one squeeze if you didn’t drink enough. So that was why my sister and I drank three water bottles the morning we planned on hiking out through the Monuments. There were these huge boulders surrounding our campground and so, of course, I’d wanted to go out as soon as possible to see how high you could get.

Starting out was simple enough. Tank top and shorts were an obvious choice of wardrobe. Water bottles and a camera in our bags, we headed out just after 5 so it wasn’t the hottest part of the day. Starting low and zigzagging up to avoid the crumbling rocks, we eventually reached the main part of the “mountain,” looking back once in a while to see the camper still there, reassuring us we weren’t too far away. I pointed out some hand and foot holds to Emily, my sister, and told her to start climbing, that I’d make sure she didn’t fall.

“I don’t want to though!” she said, looking like I’d just suggested that she should go jump in a pool of sharks. “You go first”.

“Fine,” was all I replied as I began pulling myself up. It wasn’t too far. Maybe 7 or 8 feet up. I turned around and secured my footing.

“Grab my hand,” I sighed. I helped her up and we turned around to see where we ended up.

The top was flat and extended over the cliff forming a small ledge. There were names of other hikers carved into the rock. I reached into my pocket and grabbed a rock I had brought up just for this purpose. It was a bright red color but when you drew with it, it came off as a white chalky substance. We walked closer to the edge and discovered a small indentation in the rock perfect for sitting.

“Oof!” Emily sat down with a sigh of relief. I handed her the chalk.

“I’m not sitting down because then I won’t be able to get back up again,” I told her, “so you write our names.”

“Ok!” she said with a smile.
The next day we went up again, later this time. The climb was way easier this time because we knew where we were going. We got there in about twenty minutes. Emily actually went up first this time; we walked out to our spot and sat down. We got out our cameras and set them up. I took several pictures of the view of Monument Valley from so high up. The view was breathtaking. The sun was beginning to set, the already red sand turned to a burning orange with pink and crimson accents. It was amazing like a kaleidoscope of shadows fading, blending together and spreading apart. My sister and I were completely silent as we looked around, memorizing the land and ignoring the fact that we would have to leave it all in less than a week. Finally, as the sun dipped below the horizon, Emily and I slowly began to descend to the campground. We stayed silent until we got to less vertical climbing.

“Again tomorrow?” I questioned.

“Well duh!” was all she said.

I rolled my eyes as we began the walk back to camp, the dark descending like a curtain as we walked into the shadow of the mountain.

So We Can Just Kick Back and Relax

By Tyler Behrendt

So the thing I’m trying to say to
Convince
Hundreds
Of students and
Teachers is that the day is not
Long enough for us to
Scrape
Up our books, homework, friends and throw them in our Car.
Recess

By Crystal Calderon

Cuts and Bruises
Sweat dripping down my face, my face covered in dirt and sweat
The woodchips scrape on my knee
My legs clinging high above the ground, sitting on the monkey bars.

You tugged at my light blue plaid dress
I jumped down to a ladybug
You put this ladybug on my hand to crawl around
But it would not only crawl around my hand
It would crawl around my heart forever.

Help Me Understand
By Lina Camacho

He puts forth all of his time and effort for you,
You don’t acknowledge it.
He tries his hardest to please you,
You don’t appreciate it.
He loves you more than himself,
You don’t care.

Your words and actions pierce his fragile heart.
After all that he’s seen and been through, can’t you show even an ounce of compassion?
Help me to understand your ridiculous way of thinking because I truly can’t make sense of this logic you’re harboring inside your mind.
I’ve seen him at his worst and through it all, he’s still one of the most genuine, warm-hearted people I’ve ever come across in my entire life.
How You Made Me Feel
By Lina Camacho

Like a kid on his way to the toy store
Feeling that energy and excitement, that feeling of pure joy.
That’s how you made me feel.
Like a puppy getting scratched behind the ears
Feeling that pleasure and contentment.
That’s how you made me feel.
Like a young cub being protected by its mother in the wild
Feeling that safeness, that feeling of protection.
That’s how you made me feel.

Top

**Failure**

*By Cynthia Campos*

If I couldn’t fail
I would do
Everything
Because I’m not good enough
For I see it in their eyes
So deep inside I want to cry.
If I can’t fail
I would be less of a
Disappointment
In their eyes
So when

Somebody somewhere
Will clean out your wounds
With their dirty fingers
We’ll bury the lie

Like in my dreams
Yet,
Dreams were never meant to last
So when reality slaps across the face
There is no escape.
Love At First Sight  
By Anitra Davis

Your eyes respond to my body language  
My face takes over your thoughts  
You say my love is your drug  
So the addiction pays the cost  
Money isn’t an issue when loving me is the main idea  
Prices become priceless because my love is rich and near  
Our eyes meet constantly and I tend to look at other things  
When wanting to shop for clothes you tend to look for wedding rings  
I ask you repeatedly, why do you all of a sudden love me?  
You say you didn’t know, guess it was love at first sight that made me so lovely  
Love is Life Others Value with Each other  
Love is not the people’s pupils aligning with another  
Love is not the sight of one’s appearance  
Love is not for sale as if hanging on a clearance  
Love is the dearest most precious emotion to feel  
Love at first sight to me is unreal.

Top

stranger  
by kayla diggs

there's only so much i can say  
i don't wanna say too much  
if i do...  
something inside me begins to break  
every breath, every kiss, every hug, every song
i can only imagine what life would be like for you if i was gone
the more our relationship grows
the more you tear it down
i see you get a real kick in bossing me around
i am so overwhelmed with depression
people ask me, "what's wrong?"
i wanna tell them it's you ...
but...
i just take a step back
look down and say
i ain't in the mood!
they say, "are you sure?"
i say, "yes"
they say, "are you positive?"
i say, "i guess"
i mean it's sad for me to say i think i love you
like really...? you can't even love yourself...
so who the hell are you?
oh yeah, now i remember...
NOBODY

Top
Stars

By Casey Erickson

Balls of gas, burning light years away
Holding onto our dreams and our wishes
Millions of stars, just one being.
Close your eyes and make a wish
I wish to never leave
The night is dark, the lake is still, the loons are crying
The boards of the dock creak,
But here we feel so safe
Under a blanket of stars, we lay protected.
Billions of stars, you and I
And just one shimmer of light to wish that this would never end.

Top

Thick as Mud
By Casey Erickson

Ten years with you could never satisfy me
These eight years without you will never heal me
Memory as thick as mud could never bring you back
But this photograph screams something else:
A 4x6 photo, wrinkled and tossed
Found in the bottom of an old, beaten box
The corners are torn and the edges are wrinkled
But the focus is on the center:
Two faces bright with joy. Two arms coiled ever so tightly
I can feel it all:
The vanilla ice cream cone, sticky as it drips onto my fingers
Even the smell of your skin that I miss so much
The breeze against my face, the sun on my skin
Eight years gone, one brief moment back.

Memory as thick as mud could never bring you back
I’m slipping under, but I’ll never forget.
Emma Cairns - Stolen Innocence

Capture a Scene
By Alley Garrity
Cages stacked on top of each other,
Creating rows upon rows for as far as the eye can see
You hear the cries and moans of various animals
As you stand in the middle, your eyes slowly make their way around
Scanning the premises
The cage to your left holds 3 full grown dogs
The cage to your right carries 8 cats
They stare at you wide-eyed
Panting, as the sun drowns them in heat
While they are never given food or water
Some stolen from a fenced in yard
Still wearing the collar they were once given by the family they will never see again
Quickly, a man passes you as he walks over to a cage crammed with 5 raccoons and grabs one by the neck
All the animals become silent as fear overwhelms them
They must watch as the man hangs their friend by his back paws
Two slices by the ankle and one down the back,
One animal’s screams fill the air and all you do is watch
Your fur coat is almost ready.

Hate for the Splits
By Jackie Gomez

Split ends everywhere
They split like two side streets
These split ends are longer than Main Street
Split ends are longer than a medical career
I hate you, split ends
You’re more stupid than Snooki
More useless than the U.S. government
As irritating as Sponge Bob’s laugh
You create more damage to my hair
Than a cat to a car in a car crash
Why do you exist?
I hate you split ends.

Gina Farfan - Old Cat Woman
Prison
By Ashley Gonzalez

I remember the first time I saw you
In my mind the memory reeks, like a rotting corpse hidden in the folds
of my brain
I can still taste it, the bitter salt of my tears as you told me you didn’t
need me anymore
I still savor it – the stale aftertaste of being alone after a long day of
holding myself together
Or the savor of chocolate as I try to comfort my torn soul
But it doesn’t work, not really
Blood still stains my lips from the last time I thought I was strong
enough to fend for myself, until you proved me wrong
Water’s sweet but blood is thicker, they say
I guess they never considered if it was my blood spilled before your
retreating back
When the bad blood between us turned sour I never imagined the
anarchy created would last infinitely
Its jagged peaks digging into my flesh and soul
Don’t let me go, I plead
Our love’s death is a prison, prison is scary, and scary things are
unforgettable
It consumes pieces of your heart until you feel numb, then goes in for
the kill
People learn to love their chains, but death is a prison
And its chains are thorns
Don’t let me go
Silence is Golden
By Ashley Gonzalez

Silence is golden
Or maybe silver
Considering those who win are filled with chatter.
Their words slip off their tongues by twos and threes
Drowning the room in careless sounds
Suffocating all who breathe and replacing the oxygen with choking words.
But people love words
It’s their nicotine.
Consider yourself broken if you don’t smoke the verbal weed.
They look down on you, throttle you, and prod at you
All because your lips are sealed.
You’re nothing more than a helpless fly in this web of words
Flying desperately until you’re caught.
You’re nothing more than a rat in a maze
Forever navigating the corridors of sentences to seek a way out.
Words can be projectiles against innocent victims
Bombs against the brain
Or prying hands grabbing at your secrets, seeking to expose you.
But people will never know
The silent music that chimes in the confines of quietness
Or the purrs of imagination inching through your mind.
The soundless beauty will forever drum against empty ears
After all, eyes and smiles will tell more stories than words ever will.
Talking always finishes with bronze in life’s racetrack
Or maybe silver
But silence is golden

Top
Jeremy Wagner - Untangle Your Mind

Please, Tell Me Visions
By Charles Grunert

Please, tell me visions.
Entrapped by the mortal chains of this fiery hell
I cannot breathe.
The mounds of the dead surround me, and though I can’t see them
I hear their whispers, sending me chills from my ears, to my spine, to my heart,
Then to my soul.
They say the day the earth died, the sinners who killed
The thieves who stole, and the rich who hoarded,
Had brought their reckoning upon everyone.
Tell me how the thick, metallic scent of blood in the air still remains
How the decaying hordes of the poor have not only continued to grow, but thrive.
How the grayish tint of desperation, sorrow and envy still appear
In the iris of our eyes.
After witnessing all of this
Accepting all of this
I now realize it is not about us, whose worlds have been stolen
And whose desires have plagued the world,
But it is the sound of the earth weeping, the ground shaking,
The winds dying and the water turning
The sound that only so few of us can hear, that has revealed who
And what we truly are.

Still, if You’re up there, devising Your next plan in the skies
And in the clouds
I hope You know I can see the return of the birds. And the leaves.
That I’ve noticed the sparks of life beneath the piles of ash and debris.
So with all of this said, though I’m still unsure of Your wrath
Don’t tell me the world is at its end because after all,
I know it can only get better.
Apocalypse, please.

Top

My Mind

By Melanie Hernandez

My mind wanders late at night
With no sense of control
Thoughts drawn
Out of the darkness
Of my room
And all I have left
Is to lie in bed
And wander back
Back to what I wish I’d said
And back to what I could
Take back.
Ways You Say

By Melanie Hernandez

You whisper into my hair in the middle of the night
After you’ve counted the spaces between my breaths
You shut your eyes quickly when I shift toward you in wonder
Maybe you were just sleep-whispering.
I heard it.

You sigh it into my mouth, wedged between teeth and messy lips
Not parting your lips, falling out so lightly into the air
Maybe it was just an exhalation of ecstasy.
I felt it.

You say it deliberately, your tongue tripping on every syllable
Over dinner, over coffee, when we watch a movie. Your don’t adorn it
with extra words like “I think” or “I might”
you don’t sigh heavily as if saying it were a mere chore or burden.
You look into my eyes
And you pray, heart beating, palms sweating,
that I will turn to you and say “I love you too.”

I do.

Top

Eyes
By Jordan Hubbard

The sky has stars
But your eyes have more
I make a wish upon them
Each time you look away

The twinkle I see
Inside your eyes
Is like a flash of light
Into our future
The stars are bright
But yours are brighter
Nearly blinding
Of blue, green and gray

I look deep into
Your eyes
And see one thing
And that one thing
Is…love…;) 0

Joy Belitz - Dakota's Angel
Jesus Christ Controls Time
By Ryan Hughes

When the sun gives up the ghost
Will you look at your name?
See the audience in ramparts and abodes
…This is hard to explain.

You got your people and you got your believers and you got everything you got
Did you turn water into wine using all the love of God?

When your eyes cross your mind
Will you look far away?
Back to where you can’t remember what you’ve done
Aren’t you glad it’s not the same?

You got your magic carpets, you got your pearly parlors, you got your alpine energy
You got a Sistine chapel made out of cobweb apples passed down through your family tree

It’s not fair for the boys without a father
They ain’t got no one to praise
Trapped in a cold dark landscape for most of the rest of their days
My body’s a cold sore
My head is in the sand
How can you be a symbol if you cannot draw on demand?
Growing Up
By Antoine Jack

Growing up
I can’t believe I’m 18 years old

I’ve grown so much since I was born
I’m not the same guy I was years ago
I’m doing things for me on my own
Making decisions for myself

Making friends, speaking up, and then some
Each day, each week is going by quick
Like the blink of an eye when you see a cute chick

This is happening, it’s all real

Not a book full of fairy tales

I’m in the flesh I can’t believe
This year I will be graduating
Class of 2014
To G-O-D
For blessing me with a family
Who’s nice, caring, strong, and healthy.
Without you I would not be alive
You gave me something money can never buy
It’s called life to live on this earth
You bought me here to live and do work
So that’s what I have to do

Do the right thing and tell the truth
As long as I stand by you
I will never lose and be blue.
Bilal Rehman - Storms Coming

Haiku

By Christian Johnson

Splash drip drip drip splash
Another suitcase falls down
Man stands in the rain
By Marisa Judd

Snow falls
People shiver
Fire struggles to light
Maile Edulan - Face of Nature

Confrontation
By Amber Llorens
Running. Running. I need to go faster. The cold darkness surrounds me like a blanket over my head. I can’t breathe. It’s like the air around me isn’t really oxygen. My breaths come out ragged and labored. I know I will have to stop sooner or later. My lungs are burning, threatening to explode into a ball of flames. But I can’t stop; my life depends on it. In the distance I can’t hear the quiet swish and whoosh of traveling water.

I can hardly see my hand in front of my face but I follow the sound. The only light I have is coming from the half moon. Things like whips start to hit my face. As I run, I can see that they are branches. I put my arms up to shield my face. Faster, I need to run faster. My legs ache. I can’t even feel them anymore. I will take that over the pain.

My toe hits something hard like a tree root and I fly forward and hit the ground. “Oof!”

I put hands in front of me at the last second. The leaves are wet and I can feel them sticking to my skin. All I want to do is lie here. I know I can’t if I want to live. Despite my body’s protest I push myself up with a grunt, take a deep breath, and continue to run. With adrenaline coursing through my veins, I push myself to run faster.

I clear the trees and see the lean stream shining in the moonlight. There is a bridge going over it and a few feet away from that there are woods. Instead of going over the bridge, I take one last deep breath and jump into the water. I am submerged in ice cold water. I clench my teeth to keep from screaming. I sink six feet to the bottom. My lungs burn even more because now I am actually holding my breath. Through the water I hear muffled footsteps pattering. They come and leave quickly. As soon as I am about to swim up, I feel someone grab my face and pull me up.

I wake up clutching at my sheets. Someone’s hand was over my mouth and there was a shadow above me. When I started to freak out and thrash, the shadow talked. “Liza, calm down it’s just me. I didn’t want to scare you.” He let go and I shot up.

“That’s not how you wake someone up without trying to scare them, you idiot!” I said angrily, punching my brother in his arm.

“Ow,” he whined.
I huffed and reached over to my nightstand to turn my lamp on. When it came on I squinted my eyes because I’d been in the dark for a while.

“Pack necessities in a backpack. We’re leaving,” he said seriously.

“Why? What’s going on?” I asked.

“Liza, just do what I tell you for once in your life.”

I stubbornly crossed my arms. My brother had brown hair like mine, though his was shorter. It only came down past half his forehead. But usually he combed it up. He’s 19 and a sophomore in college. He’s on some type of break and came home last night.

People say we look alike. I’m 17 with long wavy hair and nice eyebrows. Our only difference was our eye colors. He had dark brown eyes and I had grass green eyes. He was a real heartbreaker when he was in high school, but he went to college and I haven’t heard about a girl since.

“Alex, tell me what’s going on. I’m not a kid anymore, and where are mom and dad?”

He sighed. “I know you’re not a kid… I just… Mom and dad left last night, shortly after I got here. A while after you went to sleep. There was an emergency meeting in Indiana. They told me to tell you that they love you.”

I opened my mouth to say something but he cut me off, “No more talking. Please just get up and pack your stuff. Trust me,” he said getting up and walking to the door. Before he was all the way out he turned. “A bag you can put on your back and won’t slow you down too much. You have five minutes,” and with that he walked out.

I huffed and angrily got out of my bed to find a backpack. I started to fill it with clothes for late spring. After that I went to the bathroom and put some stuff in there into my bag. Exactly five minutes later Alex came in asking if I was ready. I nodded and grabbed my phone and charger. We walked down the stairs without saying a word. As we walk by the coat rack Alex tells me to grab a jacket and put it on. So I did. The morning air is crisp and nippy. But the sun isn’t up yet.

“Where are we going?” I asked as we walk.

“Just keep walking.”

I stopped and turned towards him. “I’m seventeen Alex! You can’t
keep hiding things from me like I can’t handle it! I’m tired of it, Alex!”
His eyes wandered around until they rested on me.
“We’re evacuating because…” he started.
I can see the conflict in his eyes as he struggled to find the right words.
“Just tell me!”
He sighed and looked me straight in the eyes.
“There really isn’t an easy way to say this, but… overnight the whole Eastern coast was…” I could tell this was hard for him. “Millions of people just disappeared into thin air. Planes have been crashing from the sky. Trains have been derailing. It’s chaos all over. Perks of living in a small town, right?” he gave a humorless laugh and turned his head. “People are dying. It’s just crazy. The whole East coast is under water. And the West coast is next.”

**Shyness**

By Sammy Macrito

Shyness is like an ocean, or a fence you simply cannot Pass.
It blocks you, intimidates you, and taunts you.
This barrier is not simply passed by beating it down, or Running around, but by simply time, persistence, and Realization.
The time freezes the ocean, or decays the fence.
The persistence keeps you going, and the realization is When you pass and find out it wasn’t so bad.
Remembering Yourself
By Patrick Morris

I shall never grow up!
I’m a kid forever whether you like it or not.
From the toys to the imagination of a lifetime,
Everyone grows up, and loses the special time.
Years later, you hear that voice inside your head,
And hear a little kid that sounds like you.
It makes you wonder if you chose the right lifestyle.
So, let’s face the music,
We won’t be kids forever.
We don’t want to grow old,
It just happens in a way that sucks.
We may grow up on the outside,
But certainly not the inside.

This is How Lonesome Feels
By Ray Nance

In the dark cell you call your room
All you hear is the wind beating across your window.
The sun shines but you never feel the glow.
It’s just your emptiness that keeps you locked up in a tower you call home.
Where friends are truly foe, and you wonder if it’s best to be alone.
You try to hide yourself in things you write
But you just want to be free.
There Was Something…

By Krystal Ng

There was something about the way she laughed. I remember the first time I heard it. The sound rang through the shop like wind chimes on an autumn afternoon. Like the porch of the bed and breakfast we went to. The mahogany wood board under our feet. We swung on the bench and we heard the wind chimes. She laughed when I told her that the chimes reminded me of her. Her mouth curled up into a smile and I would get to see her pearly white teeth when she laughed. She never laughed half way. She would always genuinely show how much something would amuse her. I could always tell if she found something
funny or was just laughing to be polite.

There was something about the way she moved. She moved with such grace that I thought she was a swan in a life before. I remember telling her that and she laughed her full laugh, teeth, curled lips and all and thanked me. I could watch her dance for hours, with such determination on her face that I wish I had. She danced like a swan, much more beautiful than any swan. I watched her in ballet, and she was the most beautiful. Beating all her others. She spun perfectly, her legs always straight, in the correct position. Her brows would knit into a "V" and her eyes were always concentrated at the task in front of her. She would walk with ease, taking light steps in any sort of shoe that she wore. Whether it'd be boots, high heels, flats, or gym shoes, she would walk like nothing bothered her. I could always tell if she was having a bad day or not, just by how she walked. I told her this, and she only cocked her head.

There was something about her eyes. They shined brightly beyond her brown eyelashes. They were long and naturally curled. There was no need for mascara at all. She was a natural beauty in all she was. Her eyes were the prettiest of bright green and they would always shine. They would remind me of the sea, almost like sea foam. The ocean on a perfectly sunny day. Like a fresh pond on that first day of summer. When she laughed, her eyes would squint with the smile. Eyes are the windows to the soul, and it was the same for her. Her eyes would smile with her. They would be sad when she was. I could always tell if she was genuine by her eyes. When I told her this, she smiled, only with her lips.

I still remember the feel of her skin. The little bumps when I rubbed my fingers lightly across her arms. The way she molded into me when we hugged. We warped into each other's arms. She was soft. Like silk. The feel of her skin after swimming in the ocean. Slick and soft, even when the sand clung to her calves. Her skin was creamy, and felt just like it. I loved running my hands up and down her legs. I loved the feeling of her neck under my lips. Smooth, sweet like strawberries. She always smelled like it, since the first day I met her. I bought her silk
pajamas once, it was our year. I said, that when I felt it, it reminded me of her. She gave me a half smile and laughed without teeth.

I could read her, and she didn't like that. She never liked the way I watched her, whenever I would comment on her movement; her hair. Her skin. Her lips. On the way she walked, talked, sat, laughed, danced, anything. She didn't want me to watch. She didn't want me to see flaws. Her lips were in a straight line, and I never saw those teeth.

But I wanted the flaws. I wanted her all, from the day I met her, I wanted her. She shined for me, like the northern star. She was there to lead my way. I never wanted to leave her, and I didn't want her to leave. To me, she was perfect. She was perfect. Like the beach on the first day of summer, when the ocean shines along with the sand, and the sun beams down. Like a forest right in autumn, when the leaves are perfectly red and brown and yellow. I told her this, and her eyes drooped, the green shine lost.

I kept her safe. And she kept me. The scars on her back were the only memory of her ex. The raised skin, slightly lighter that her own skin. I rubbed my fingers across them, mimicking the delicacy of her steps. I felt her flinch under them. Her back becoming tight and she pulled away. Her eyes shined, but not the way I memorized them. The wetness filled them as she got up and ran away. The bathroom door slammed. I didn’t chase.

At night, I kissed them. Each scar, when I couldn’t sleep. The long ones on her back. The words scarred in the skin. The worlds it carried. I kissed the ones on her wrists. The only evidence for her days alone. I’d run my fingers down her thighs, never telling her I noticed the new scars. I promised myself never to tell her. She was awake one night, when I felt them. She sat up and stared. Her light steps punched the floor, slipping on the clothes I had taken off and the pillow from the bed, before leaving the room. I didn’t follow.

We baked. We said we would do it day in and day out if we could. We baked at night. Today was red velvet. The red reminded me of her
blush. The way her face would get when she became flustered or embarrassed. I told her this and she stared at me. The indent on her face made it evident that she was biting her lip. She asked me to stop. To stop comparing her to perfect things. Things that she wasn’t. I told her she was beautiful. That I was lucky to have her. She shook her head, making her brown waves bounce. She muttered, loud enough for me to hear. “I’m not perfect, I’m not beautiful, stop thinking that. I’m will never be close. Never with these scars.” I opened my mouth to speak, but she only grabbed her coat and walked out the front door. I didn’t run after her.

There was something about the way she walked out. She gave me a glance back, holding a white box, crammed with odds and ends, anything that was hers. From the poster of a professional staged Swan Lake to the wind chimes we bought for the house. Her step were still light as fresh snow. Her eyes were even and still shined their bright green. I never heard the ring again. Never heard the wind chimes.

There was something about how she left. Only one look back, as a final good bye, and nothing left. The door shut silently, as silent as her steps. The house was left without its shine. Her eyes gone and the sound. I could never hear a ring. She had taken the wind chimes. The ones that sounded like her laughter. She had taken the wind chimes. Leaving me with nothing to remind me of her.

Top

Family Meal
By Duyan Nguyen

A family meal consists of one cup of commitment
2 cups of responsibility
4 gallons of love
and a pinch of hate.

Mix it all and pour it on a dinner table
Heat up at 250 degrees and let it sit
for 15 minutes

After 15 minutes has gone by
crank it up to 350 degrees
because the mother didn’t like her son’s attitude
When one person gets angry, the rest explodes into spiciness
See every recipe isn’t perfect
but it takes time to perfect the right meal for a family.
Memories Hurt
By Jonathan Nitsh

Once upon a time like fairy tales
Without happy endings
Like seas crashing on a shore
Like pain playing as a film
A film plays in a drive-thru theater.
And as everyone sits in their seats and eats popcorn
Revealing the star
Revealing you
For it’s your pain
Your film
Your life
So thick that the speakers blow out
So heavy that the screens starts to fall off their hinges
Yet so graceful that they could all cry
Pain in the strength that carries you on
Pain in the scars
Pain in the memories
That just don’t stop as the negatives start to come to an end
And everyone starts to cry, not knowing why
But you know
You know
It’s because they feel
They feel sorry
And as they cry, the star of the film
Slowly starts to smile
Not knowing why
Not knowing how the movie will end
Not knowing where to go
Looking confused as the projector clicks and ends
But the movie’s not over
That was just the previews
and life is my movie.

Top

We Are Not All White
By Jonathan Nitsh
To the white men who pretend to rule in a land they themselves are not native
To the men who blame us for taking jobs thy never wanted
But when these “wonderful” jobs run dry
And we whom you forced to plow the land and pick the fruit
When we take your place
And you ours
When we come up with college degrees
And start to out-number you
When the land starts to look as foreign as the day you came
And we start to grow in ratios of three to one
You being that one..

But for now we pick the fruit
We are the basis
The concrete foundation
That you need
For without us you have not your necessities
Yet we take pride in our work

Still you blame us for the problems
You try to exile us in a land we were native to
For if you ever paid attention in History 101
Which mostly seems to be about you
You paid us for the land
And we stayed on the land
We were native to like the Indians you plucked off tribe by tribe.

But now
Now you force us from the land
You push us down the border of your nation
A white line that you drew
Forcing us down the line for the land you have been running since we could count has been running into the ground and you pick us a scapegoat
That never really asked for anything in return
Yet we are treated as lesser
We still coward in fear
And after all those teachings
Look who hasn't learned

Flawless Angel
By Angelika Nowasadko

“Parents rarely let go of their children, so children let go of them.”
I was only 5.
Feeling my mother’s warm, soft hand clutch mine.
The lights were too bright, the walls too white.  
This looked nothing like the warm, yellow walls of our place of serenity.  
Filled with memories from our past, I looked around.  
This place,  
It was full of people,  
Yet seemed like the loneliest place all at once.  
We walked down the white-tiled hallway,  
My red sparkly sandals clicking on linoleum floor.  
The hallway was never-ending.  
I looked out of place, but my mother’s tired, desperate face fit perfectly with the melancholy faces of the patients and nurses.  
Finally, we stopped in front of a white door,  
Room 121.  
My mother crouched down and told me I’m not supposed to be here but it was near the end, it was time to say goodbye.  
The white chamber door swung open as the sad nurse walked out of the room.  
I peered from behind my mother and I knew now what she meant by the end.  
The room was tiny.  
Pale white walls looking grey from the lack of sunlight streaming in from the small window, a chair with a blanket thrown hastily over it as if someone was in a rush to leave.  
The bed was full of crispy sheets.  
As if an angel lying on a cloud, she lay there.  
The girl was still, unmoving. Regardless of the tubes and monitors surrounding her body she didn’t stir.  
Monika had a look of pure peace on her face convincing you everything would be all right.  
Where were the blue walls?  
Where were the green pillows and yellow rug?  
She didn’t belong here.  
My heartbeat quickened, face red hot. I felt the tears prickle at my eyes. It was the end; my mother’s child has chosen to leave without being let go.
Haiku
By Brianne Okayama

Slandered my poem
Without knowing it was me
I’m right here, jerk weed

Edelyn Ponce - Untitled

Tattoos
By Alex Ostrowski

I wish my existence was like the ink on your skin
But I’ll never be as important
And I’ll never be as permanent
And I’ll never be as beautiful
And, unlike me, it’ll still be there
When I’m long gone.

But at the same time
I’m glad I’m not the ink on your skin
Because I don’t represent those drunken mistakes
And I don’t represent the death of a loved one
And I don’t represent an attempt at being cool
And I don’t represent the desire to rebel against my parents.

I may not be able to kiss your skin every second of every day like they can
But hopefully you’ll never regret me like you regret them.

Top

The Start of a New Night
By Namra Panawala

“I’ll be outside in five, wait for me, Josh.” Jessica whispers on the phone, in her pink room, while jumping off her pink bed. Her room hadn’t changed since she was nine years old, her Hello kitty poster still hung on the wall next to the window.
“What else am I supposed to do? You’re late, again. I’m two houses down like always,” Josh screams on the phone. Jessica ends the call and walks towards the white door. She leaves her room and heads towards the front door.
“Hey dad, I’m going out. Don’t wait up for Shannon and me. We are
going to a midnight movie after dinner. Love you bye,” Jessica runs out of her house without even waiting for her father’s response knowing he would ask more questions. She looks back at the yellow and white house to make sure her father is not following her like he did last time. Jessica starts to look for a blue Ford pick-up truck but can only spot a brand new red BMW. She looks inside to see a handsome boy with blonde hair and green eyes. She jumps into the car and slams the door shut and says, “Let’s get the hell out of here.”

Josh asks, “Shannon’s?  Or do you wana go somewhere else, Jess?” Jessica, now officially Jess, shakes her head telling him that she doesn’t care it’s up to him. The car’s engine starts up, Josh looks both ways, and makes a quick U-turn. Josh and Jess don’t talk in the car, it is dead silent.

The car stops at the red light and Josh looks at Jess. Jess looks back to see if there is anyone behind them and nods. Josh blasts the music on the radio and slams the gas paddle, running the red light. Jess rolls down her window and sticks her hands out letting the wind go through her fingers. They end up pulling up to a grey house with black and white windows, Shannon’s house. Josh turns the car off and smiles at Jess.

Jess grabs Josh’s face and kisses him on the cheek, “Thanks for picking me up, babe; it’s too cold to walk with all this snow. “

“Have I ever let you walk anywhere since we started dating a year ago” is all that comes out of Josh’s mouth before he gets out of the car. Jess follows him and opens the car door to see Josh waiting for her with a hand out. Jess grabs his hand and pulls herself out of the car. As soon as Jess is out of the car, they entwine their hands as they walk up to the white door. The closer they get to the door, the tighter Jess’s grip is on Josh’s hand and the louder the music gets.

Jess starts to think of the first day she came to Shannon’s house and what it led to. It was a stormy night and her dad had her tagging along in the squad car with him. That night reminded her of how she was told about her mother so coldly. Her dad always gave the bad news in this town regardless if it was a mere car accident or a death of a loved one or a rape or whatever happened to be.

Shannon and Jess connected with the loss of their parents. This
shocked everyone because Jess never fights anyone yet everyone was afraid of her and how close she was to her father who happened to be the towns’ sheriff. Jess’s mother died when she was nine years old. Shannon was 14 when her father passed away, so it helped both girls forge a bond. Shannon was Jess’s first friend, in fact, she’s the one who turned Jessica into “Jess”. With one friend, everything changed: she made new friends, got new clothes, even found herself dating the co-captain of the football team.

Jess heard the doorbell ring and it brought her back to reality. The door opens and a redhead screams, “Finally… Please tell me you got it…”

“It’s in my trunk, go fetch babe,” Josh clicks the truck opener on his keys. “It’s brand new, so be careful.”

Jess and Josh walked into the house full of teenagers partying. Shannon’s dad was out of town for work, so the first idea Shannon had was an end-of-the-season party. Football meant everything in Eastwood, and since the season ended it meant that the players could do whatever they wanted.

Josh wrapped his hand around Jess’s waist, and started walking toward his friends.
Tayrn Chovan - Drowning

Drowning
By Kristen Panzarella

Looking around
Pitch black
Dead silent
Loneliness

It eats you up
Chews you down
Swallows you

Your fingertips
Barely reaching air
The rest of your body
Trapped  
Almost as if there is an anchor  
Chaining you to the ocean floor  

Gasping for air  
You look up  
And see him  

He is standing there  
Just watching you  
You are begging for help  
Slowly sinking  
He doesn’t move  
He stands there  
Two feet away  
Saying  
Learn how to swim.

Haiku 1  
By Jake Rench  

I’m looking for peace  
People whipping out pieces  
My hope slowly decreases

Haiku 2  
By Jake Rench
Define what makes a prophet
A venturing open mind
Or a big-spending wallet?

Veronika Severini - I Don't Even Do My Hair, Usually

Perception
By Jake Rench

The eyes are useless if the mind is closed
Society is turning into sheep, going into deep sleep
More government spending and rule-bending
Violence is public, but love must be hidden
Open your eyes and focus a second; do something don’t regret it
Your mind is your number one enemy and your savior
If you don’t control it someone else gladly will
You underestimate your true skill, living under borders
Roll with life’s uncertainties and you will never hit the corners
Your perception controls your life
Have a positive mind and live it right.

Top

Inspired by "Heaven" - Beyoncé
By Monique Robinson

I fought for you the hardest. I thought my persistence could save you. But I couldn’t wait for you. With all your life in consistent times you promised we were forever, and told me I was your motivation. I was the adrenaline that kept you racing, and I guess I meant so much. That’s what went through my mind when I found out you lied. I never hated you, probably never will. But listen, I think there is something you should hear. It’s imperative that you understand. Fate never brought us together. Even though we endured so much in this weather. I intrigued you so much with my innocence, you had a million secrets racing through your veins, and you’ve seen my heart through my eyes and knew I was capable of holding an umbrella through some rain. Accept you for what you were, and be fond of all your remarks. The gentle kisses that made me think I was your heart. You made me the strongest. You laughed at the darkness had my mind tangled around the thought of me being your brightness. My infatuation with passion and my weakness for protection had me yanking the roots out of the heads of girls you’d claimed were just friends. And then one had your kid. I was broken by your infidelity. Imagined my heart going through a shredder. That’s what it felt like when I screamed and threw everything
in reach at your head. First love is the sweetest, but that first cut is the deepest. Even though my mind was against it, my heart was still in it. I try to forget every time I forgive you. My heart beats your last name, and when I’m quiet, it’s wedding bells I hear outside my pain. I endured the long nights, the big fights. But deep down inside I wondered if you loved me the way you said. You proclaimed there was no greater joy than the sweet sound of my voice, but you never talked about me to your friends. This unrequited love…brought me to my knees; I was drowning in my own tears. Suffocating in my dreams with fears. I thought it would be the moon without the sun, it's how I imagined my life if I left you. Holding on to cobwebs like they could bring us through. Remember that August afternoon, I’m sure you can’t forget it. The roles were switched; the actuality of a breakup without someone walking away. You reached for my hand, I shook my head, and I didn’t want to be you. But something had to give. I just wanted you from the beginning, not the lies you told, the secrets you kept, my heart that you’ve broke, despite all of my sorrows, I still want you to be okay. Maybe one day you can introduce me to your son. And we can be, just friends…
The Mirror
By Anaiyeh Smith

When I was a child, looking into a mirror was like looking into another world. I would spend minutes and minutes a day staring into my bathroom mirror looking around at things, thinking how much better life would be inside this alternate universe where everything looked the same, but truly wasn’t. It would be opposite. I would sometimes get sad when I had to leave this alternate world and go back to my own. In my mind this was never just a mirror, it was the other side, but now I
realize that it’s all the same. It’s all one world in one place. Even though the other side is flipped and looks better or you imagine it as better, it won’t be.

Top

From Me To You
By Alex Trezzo

They don’t care and at that point you realize that nobody does except yourself and don’t sit here telling me you do because I’ve heard enough lies from people like you.

And so I sit in this dark room with endless lines of thoughts running through my head and knives deep in my back for all the times you pretended like you cared. I can’t spend another day alone. I close my eyes and take a breath real slow releasing all the pain that’s in my body.

But I’m tired of begging for the things that I want, on my knees with my hands clamped together, just for you to stay here with me, and now I’m sewn into this bed with the taste of you stuck on my lips and thinking of how we use to hold hands so tight it felt like I broke my wrist.

Now there’s nothing to do but scream at the drunken moon. I know you want to see me crash and burn and criticize my every word. I’m trying to keep from going insane but isn’t that the way of this whole damn thing? When all is said and done, I guess it’s time for me to walk away.

Top

Some Days
By Kelly Womack

Some days I wear empty like a coat,
Like a jacket abandoned in the summer.
Alone in the closet.

Emptiness is how I walk some days,
A blank gaze staring at the floor.
Walking with just enough strength to move on.

Emptiness is the feeling of tight jeans,
Chaffing and causing a rash.
Pain with every step.
It’s the sight of everyone with friends,
While you are alone.
It is the thing that hardens you,
Until you are empty.

Empty is the blank gaze of the sun,
Alone in the sky.
Empty is the unreturned cry of a wolf,
On a warm summer’s night.

Some days empty creeps inside,
And doesn’t leave.
Some days it decides to make a home inside.

Empty is listening to music and reading,
While the rest of the world is happy and out and about.
Empty is the twin brother of loneliness.
Empty is the lone wolf,
Running through the forest in search of nothing.

Top