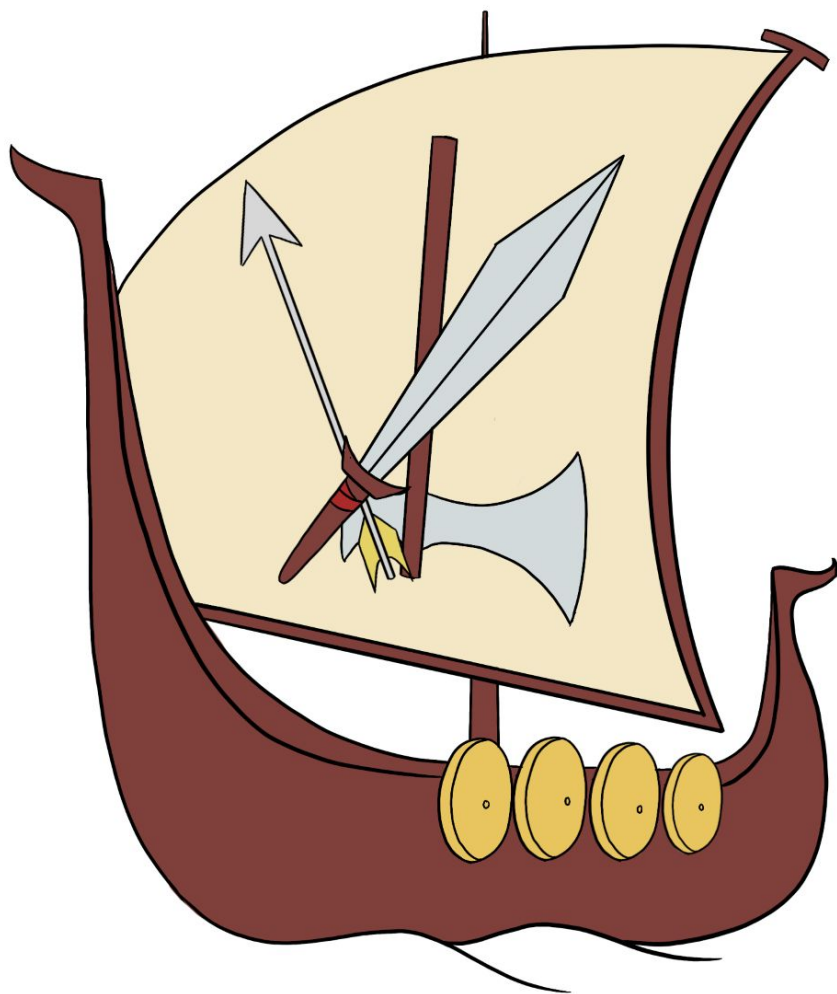




VIKING LEGENDS

VIKING LEGENDS



VIEWMONT HIGH SCHOOL'S LITERARY
JOURNAL

VOLUME 3

Viking Legends is an annual literary and artistic journal that features various writers, artists, and photographers from Viewmont High School. The *Viking Legends* staff is composed of Mr. Bartholomew's Creative Writing II students. Publications are chosen through a blind submission process.

Special thanks to Daniella Arroyo and Mr. Michael O'Connor for helping with the logo and cover. Another special thanks to Lisa and Hannah Bartholomew for help proofreading.

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This work is available online at:
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Viking Legends ship logo design by Daniela Arroyo.

EDITOR'S NOTE

To say that this was an unusual year would be an enormous understatement. Virtually every aspect of our lives has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and this publication is no exception. Normally, I work closely with my Creative Writing II class to select, edit, compile, and format pieces. This year, however, most of this work has been left to me. In addressing the challenges of online learning (for both my students and myself), it became necessary to put *Viking Legends* on the back burner. Still, I have received so many incredible submissions throughout the school year that knew I had to compile and publish them, no matter what. As the school year wound down, I found more time to devote to the project, and the result is what you see before you.

At this time, it is not possible to publish (or distribute) this issue physically, but I hope that it becomes possible in the future, for the Vikings whose work you'll find herein are nothing short of legendary.

Sam Bartholomew, Editor in chief

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LEGENDS



Graham Wright



Graham Wright



Graham Wright

My Dream

Alex Espinosa

In this dream
My world is cozy
With leaves that thrive
Like that of fresh ivy
My heart beats a soft rhythm
When I walk the river of my memories
And when my ears
Hear the warm lost sound
Her distant voice
The day begins
Eyes lift their lids
And as I run
To catch the sun
This dream runs close behind



Andy Wank



Andy Wank



Andy Wank



Andy Wank

Not One String, But Many

Rockwell Adams

I'm just one boy.

I'm just one guy.

Who made some choices. And brought a group together.
With the weight of the world and the consequences of
sin.

I've learned of the deep hole I've dug myself in.

You speak of my ties, the lives I've touched.

But to me, it really doesn't seem like much.

Come what may,

See what might,

Feel the wind,

Calm the seas,

And smell the summer from the west.

Because if you cut my string, not one knot would fall.

But many nets worth, of lives, and of scars.

One for all, all for one.

A connection to the world.

I see my lines and my influences too.

The pain I've caused.

The fear I've dealt.

And the sadness felt.

But that will never change the happiness too.

Because I did this.

And I can do it again.

Don't cut my string.

Unless you cut theirs too.



Billie Eilish
Emily Pace



Elton John
Emily Pace



Park Jimin
Emily Pace

Shame and Hope

Henry Anderson

SHAME

Somehow, each one is a liar, each one of us.
Hateful to say this, but we lie to ourselves.
Although we pretend to have pride, and honor.
Memories of cringe will always remind us.
Everyone has shame in their soul

HOPE

Hollow promises and serpents in the garden deter
our spirits.
Open ended nothings, phrases without soul,
without meaning.
Promises may be broken, but a happy person
cannot.
Everyone has hope in their soul.



Carly Pierce



Cartoon in Life
Carson Tanner

Life

Lara Pitbladdo

To Love, to Dream, to Think, to Feel
These are the things that always caught my eye.
The things that make up Life.
And I Think that I understand why.

For Life is to Love.
Loving family and friends, supporting each other through
hardships and pains.
Memories that are warm, and fuzzy, and full of Love.
Love that comes from the best place.
Loving and caring for others and showing them through
acts of pure kindness.

Life is to Dream.
Dreaming of a better day, a better world. Where respect
and peace reigns. A world where no
wars are fought.
We aspire to be better than we were yesterday.
We Dream of accomplishing the impossible and beating
all the odds.

Life is to Think.
To Think of how things work and what they mean.
To wonder about how things were or how they came to
be.
Life holds many questions that make us Think and it's a
beautiful thing.

Life is to Feel.

We can experience many emotions.
We could Feel things such as joy, gratitude, and hope.
You could Feel compassion for those in need, compassion
that moves you to help.
Feeling Love for those we hold dear.

And so, my good friends, this I leave with you.
That in Life we Love, we Dream, we Think, we Feel.
And without these wonderful things, what would Life
mean?



colosseum

Kelsey Barton

The Hallway

Micah Byington

Ring. That's all Riker could hear as he regained consciousness. He furrowed his eyebrows and slowly opened his eyes as he squinted at the space around himself. The space was extremely dark, except for a light quite a ways away. His head ached as though he were hit over the head with a wooden baseball bat. He sat up and winced, feeling bruises all over his body.

"What on earth happened?..." he asked the empty space, unable to remember how he got there. His eyes were adjusted to the darkness by now. He saw walls, high ceilings and dark carpets. He used the rough feeling wall to stand and steady himself. He looked around him and found no objects anywhere near except for the light. Seeing that there really was only the one way to go, he slowly made his way along the wall.

Once he was beneath the light, it went out. He was left in darkness for a few minutes. He was blinking to try to adjust to the darkness. When he was finally adjusted to the darkness, a light farther away suddenly turned on, momentarily blinding him. 'Cruel trick...' he thought to himself. He had gained enough strength back to walk without the help of the wall. The process of lights turning on and off continued for a long time. The lights were farther and farther away from each other.

He began looking around again to try and find something. He had done this a few times now, always finding nothing. He got to the next light and stopped. This light wasn't turning off. He studied the light carefully, so that he wouldn't blind himself. As he looked

around the light, he thought he saw something move on the ceiling. He blinked a few times. When he opened his eyes again, he only saw the strange burned shapes from looking at the light.

The light suddenly burned out with a pop, making him jump a little. He cursed under his breath and looked around the darkness. He waited at that spot for a while, waiting for the next light to come on.

Ending One

When it did, what he saw disturbed him.

It was a woman, bone thin and on the wall, clinging to the light. She had long, red hair that was dirty, ratty and greasy. Her long, bony fingers were followed by long fingernails. Only, they were more like claws. Her face was hollow. Her eyes were sunken in. Her mouth was black and dripping some kind of dark liquid, almost like blood. Her pale greenish yellow skin was so thin, he could see her veins, spine, and rib cage poking out. Her voice was a deep groaning and clicking.

Riker was both worried for the woman and worried about his own safety. She screeched and the light burned out in sparks. Riker ran back the other way, faster than he'd ever run before. When he first woke up, he was at the end of an empty hallway, a wall behind him. Now it was gone, just a never-ending hall. However, the hall began to curve. The curves soon turned into sharp corners. Riker would run into a wall or the pointed corner of a turn, creating more bruises.

Now that he thought of it, his first bruises were just like the new ones. He could hear something behind

him. It sounded like a dog's claws hitting a wooden floor as it ran. This caused Riker to run faster, he knew that looking back would cause him to slow down, so he continued looking forward. After a while, fatigue caught up with him, and he began to stumble as he ran. The thing behind him grew closer quickly, growing louder with its growling, screeching and clicking. He fumbled over his feet, tripping and falling over. He turned over right as the woman-like creature caught up to him. She jumped down from the wall, but just before she landed her attack, Riker blacked out...

Ring. That's all he could hear as he regained consciousness. He furrowed his eyebrows and slowly opened his eyes as he squinted at the space around himself. The space was extremely dark, except for a light quite a ways away. His head ached as though he were hit over the head with a wooden baseball bat. He sat up and winced, feeling bruises all over his body.

"What on earth happened?..." he asked the empty space, unable to remember how he got here...

Alternate Ending

The light suddenly burned out with a pop, making him jump a little. He cursed under his breath and looked around the darkness. He waited at that spot for a while, waiting for the next light to come on, but it didn't. He looked around in the darkness, unable to see anything. He decided to try to continue walking in the direction he was going, only to run into a wall that was not previously there. He rubbed his forehead a little and looked towards

where the wall was. He reached out his hand, only to receive empty space.

“What's going on...?” he started walking back the way he came and ended up finding some stairs. By find, I mean fell down the stairs. He was able to stop his falling after a few seconds, stood and continued down the stairs, a little bit beaten up. He got to the bottom and stumbled a bit, expecting more stairs than there were. He began walking forward again, his hands stretched out so that he wouldn't run into anything this time. His hands landed on something that felt like wood. He felt the wood-like thing until he found a handle. ‘A door!’ He was so happy to have finally found a door. He opened it and walked into the space. The door naturally closed after he went in. It was dark for a moment, then all at once he was surrounded by bright white lights. Shocked by the sudden blinding flash, his eyes shut quickly and tightly. He groaned at the light, crouching and covering his eyes with his hands.

It took a long while, but once his eyes were able to remain open whilst looking around the room, he found that he was in a simple white room, no doors, no windows, just white. He stood once again, looking around a second time. This time, he saw something in a corner. He carefully walked toward it, finding it to be a very skinny woman. She was extremely thin, with dark black hair. She was crying silently, almost as if she was giving up on something. He tried to put a gentle hand on her, only to find that he couldn't. He physically couldn't touch her, his hand passed right through her shoulder.

He stared at her in shock. ‘Is she a ghost!?’ He thought that was impossible. He backed up slightly, only

to see her suddenly disappear. He whipped his head around and found the woman hunched over in the center of the room, lowly chuckling, almost insanelly, grasping her own hair. He backed up again, only to fall into a pool of clear water. It felt like he was being held beneath the water for a moment. In that moment, he saw the woman at the edge of the water. Hair ratty, bags under her eyes, body thin and long. Her face was dull and empty. Void of emotion. Her pupils were dilated, very small. He suddenly found himself falling onto dry ground, coughing out water as he was facing the ground. As he looked around, he found himself at his house again.



Audrey
Aulbanie Olson



empty
Cassandra Yates

I miss

Anonymous

Is it crazy?

To miss your smile

To miss your laugh

To miss the way you picked me up

When I was falling in an empty void.

To miss my best friend who passed away a few years ago
today.

Is it so wrong?

Hanging onto what you used to say

To miss your eccentric blue hair

And your backward wave

as you walked away

Am I crazy?

That I still dream of you here with me

On this empty world where I feel so cold?

Am I delusional?

Hoping you'll come back,

Even after knowing it's true.

You're dead and gone

Left me alone

Empty promises that filled and broke my heart

Broke me down right from the start

I believed you till you left.

You left of your own accord

Left me for death

But I can't blame you

When the world's filled with nothing but hate

Hate that's aimed at anyone

Who doesn't agree with what someone else said.

I understand why you left.
I tried to see you a year ago
But I failed in my attempt
Now I have to wait.
Wait too long
Wait for years
Till my time comes
To come and see you up above.
Am I crazy?
Hoping one day
That I will get the chance to see you again

Candlelight

Anonymous

Your bright green eyes,
Gleam in light
Lighting my way
Making sense of the night.
The stars that glitter
Like candlelight in your eyes
Make even the nights most bitter
Brightly warm and kind.
You, my love,
Are my warm candlelight.

Your love

Anonymous

Your love is mine

As mine is yours

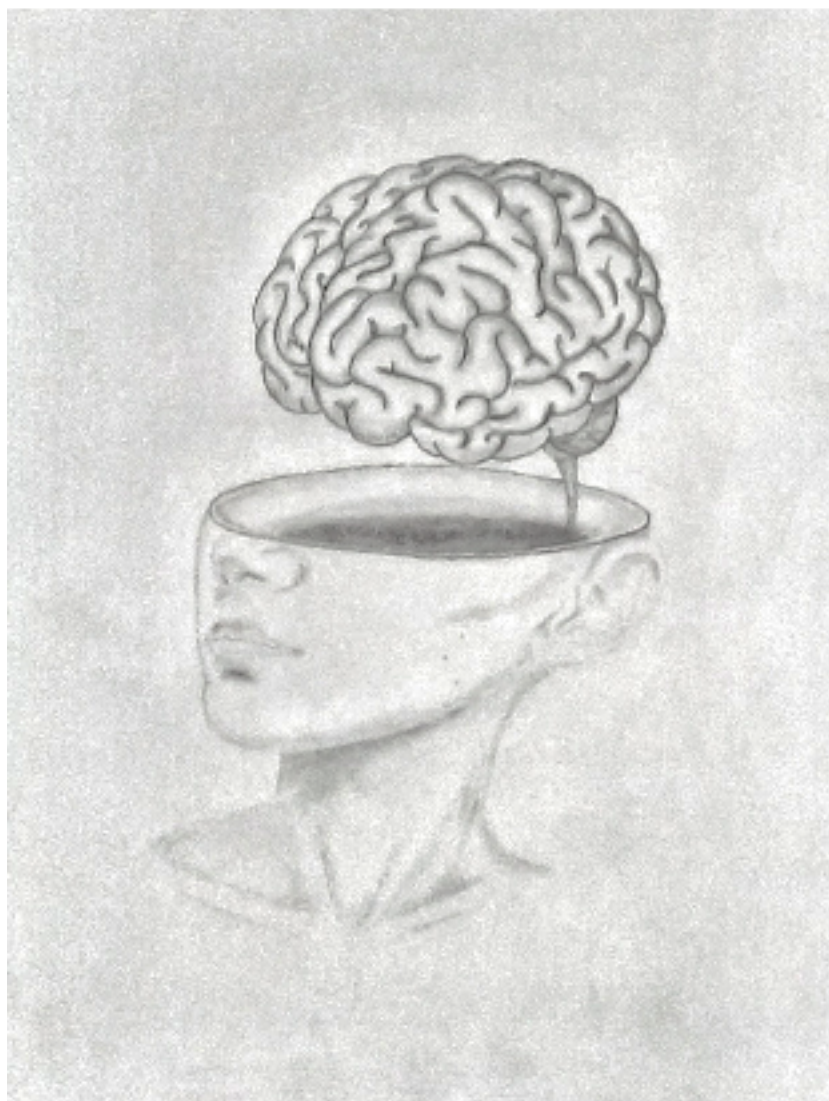
Your heart I'll keep

Safe and sure

Cause your love is priceless

And I can endure anything

As long as I am yours.



Sequoia Malé



Sequoia Malé



Grace Bolinder



Grace Bolinder

Loneliness

Kelsi Argall

Loneliness is a shadow stabbing
right into your heart.

I can choose to be alone,
but Loneliness creeps up on me to swallow me whole.
No one really understands what that means,
even me.

I start to think I'm okay
until I remember just how alone I feel.
My body is physically impacted by
Loneliness.

The only thing I can do is go through my day
and forget about everything that's actually important.

The only thing I can do is turn up my music
and hope that it drowns out reality.

The only thing my mind can do is run a marathon
which causes me to only dream without sleep.

I desperately want someone to come along
and melt it all away.

I don't need someone to be blind to my imperfections.

I need someone to see them all clearly
and still want me,
to love me because of my imperfections



Virtual Hero
Sydney Tolman



Meraki
Tah Htoo



Nostalgia
Keira Lundgren



Sea World
Braxton Busker



Pando
Kelsey Barton



Dylan Carlson



Sun Face
Mele 'Akau'ola

My Poem

Jacquelyn Eggett

I am... loud and talkative

I wonder... if I'm going to pass high school

I hear...dead people

I see... my family being happy

I want... my life to be calm and have friends

I am...ME

I pretend... to be famous

I feel... hyper and anxious

I worry... that i will lose my grandma to cancer

I cry... because of my past

I am... Strong

I understand... my family

I say... don't give up, keep trying, remember I will always
love you for who you are

I dream... to help people

I try... to make everyone smile

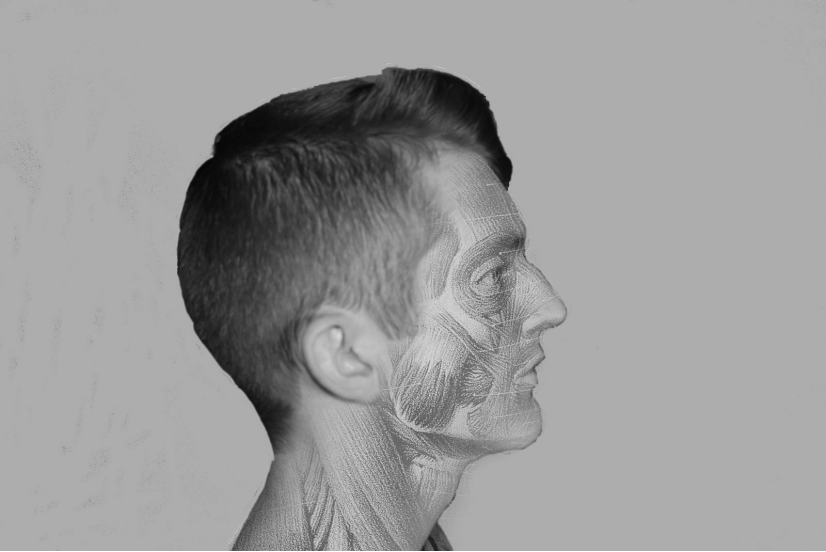
I am...Unique



Alyssa Matheson



Alyssa Matheson



Alyssa Matheson

Unseen Scars

Jeannine Palomares

To all the liars and cheaters that caused tears to fall from
my dark amber eyes.

Sitting inside looking out a bay window, while I watch
the pure white snow falling.

Thoughts are swirling in my mind, like the blizzard from
the other side of the glass.

I feel the penetrating coldness, like the memories are
pushing to the surface.

The scars left behind by careless nights, like the tire
marks in the fresh snow.

Hoping to escape the dull pain from knowing he didn't
want me.

It was just a well hidden lie, a little snow white lie.

All I wanted from him was the truth.

But now I'll never know what really happened.

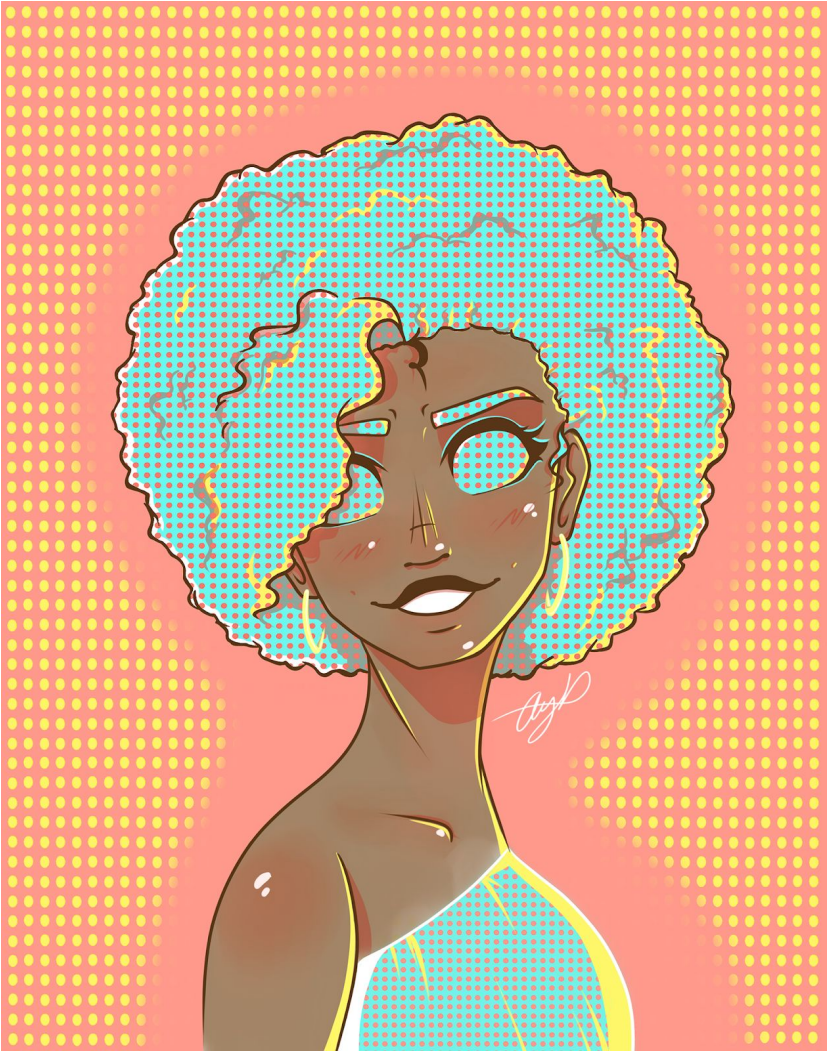


f-stop
Tanner Phelps

Nature is a Masterpiece

Sage Mitchell

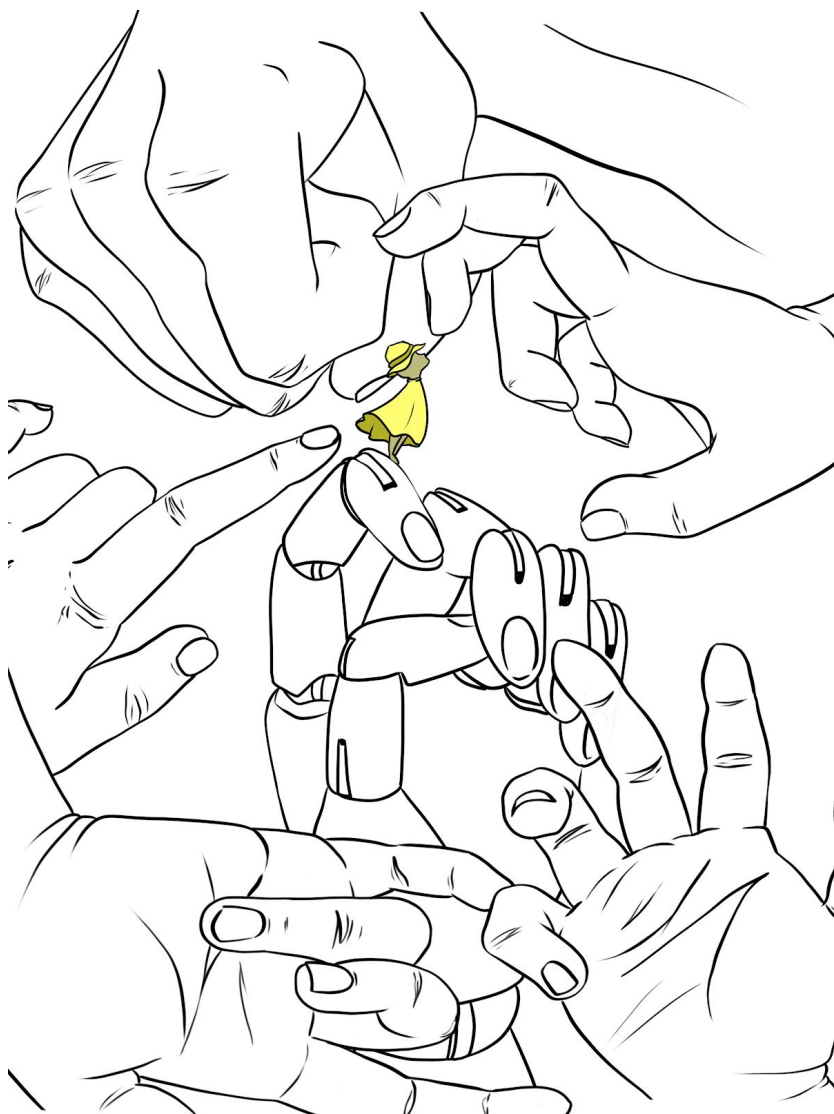
The sweet smell of leaves and fresh air fill my lungs as I
take some deep breaths
Hearing the crunching leaves under my feet as I continue
to hike
The beauty of the world around me captivates my mind as
my eyes explore the area around me
Hearing the creek water rushing down the mountain due
to the extra runoff this year
It's so beautiful how it all changes season to season
Seeing the trees and plants dead yet full of the life that we
can't see yet
Seeing tiny blossoms and buds on the trees preparing to
become something beautiful and full,
Like the caterpillar becomes the colorful butterfly that
floats ever so gracefully
In the hot summer sun, sweat glistening on my forehead,
I see how full and green the world is around me
Slowly the green fades to yellow and the mountain
becomes full of colors
Red, orange, yellow paint the mountain, creating a
masterpiece
It captivates every eye, perhaps it is the best artwork on
display
These colors don't last forever, they fade, and the leaves
are blown away into the wind
All that is left is barren trees and bushes waiting until
they can show off their beauty within



Honey
Ayumi Durrant



Rabbit Spirit
Ayumi Durrant

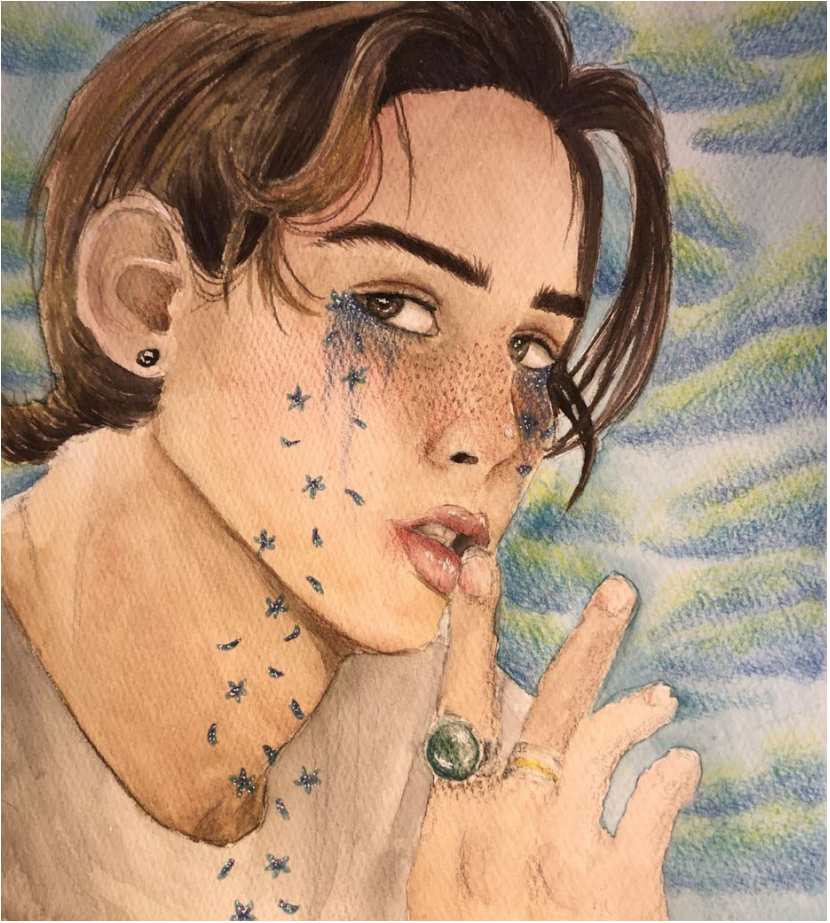


Perspective
Ayumi Durrant

Sunlight

Jane Jeppesen

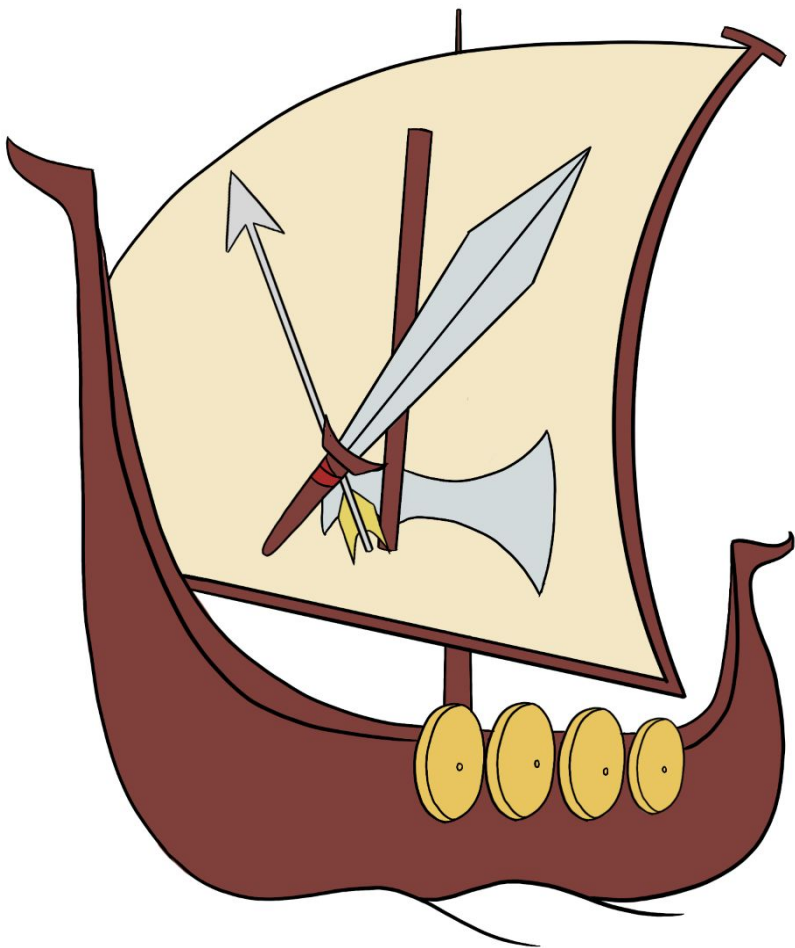
To truly feel the sun
Is to truly live.
To rest
In the shade of a youthful tree.
To listen
To the simple melody of gentle leaves.
At that moment
Please close your eyes.
Some moments will be dark from shadows overhead.
In moments of clarity
The world becomes
Fresh citrus on a hot day.
It becomes
More than we can ever be.
It becomes
A father saying "I love you."
When the moment is right, open your eyes.
Do it slowly.
Rushing ruins peace.
Open slowly
And thank your maker for the majestic gift of
Life.



Petals
Daniela Arroyo



Sunflower
Daniela Arroyo



Alternate Logo Design
Daniela Arroyo

If I Had Known

Daniela Arroyo

If I had known this would happen
That our senior year would be over so soon,
Would I have done things differently?
Would I have gone to the games,
To the events,
Would I have participated more?

If I could turn back the time,
If I could repeat my senior year,
Would I have done things differently?
Would I have gotten the courage,
To ask someone to homecoming?
To harvest?
To sweethearts?

I've missed out on so much
The games
The dances
The events

I didn't realize how much it meant to me
Until it was all suddenly gone,
You only go to high school once,
Maybe if I had known,
I would've done things differently

Maybe I wouldn't have spent it
Crying in the bathroom stall
Wondering what I did wrong,

That no one wanted to be my friend

Maybe I would've been more out there
I wouldn't have spent my lunch times
By myself, in the bathroom,
Or in a classroom

So let me ask again,
If I had the chance
To repeat my high school years
Would I do it?

Perhaps not



Megan Jensen

The Battle

Clara Dahlgren

Dreaming can be confusing for some
that fine line between reality and fantasy
What was real, and what was a lie
I cannot tell the difference anymore.
Like when you held me so closely in that sweet smelling
shop
Was that real?
Because I wake up now and I am alone,
even though I still smell the aroma of our little shop
I reach out and the other side of the bed is cold
Reality and fantasy
What is the difference really?
They attempt to blend together, creating a swirling mess
of two intricate colors
And I live in the center
The colors are contrasting, fighting to consume me
They cannot blend together.
It's interesting really, like watching oil and water fight
for superiority
Never blending, endlessly battling
until they finally come to a stand still and separate
and some sort of forced peace is initiated.
But as of now, it is not the case, and the colors battle
mercilessly
It's quite strange really, how two colors, so uniquely
beautiful, can contrast so terribly.
They are horribly ugly together, as they swirl around me.
I suppose I should be quite scared or confused
But I merely watch them peacefully

Simply wondering when they will separate again so I can
continue my life
Emotions have left me
leaving me with a peaceful feeling of numbness
And as the battle rages on,
I take advantage of the moments
And rest my weary soul.

The pen

Clara Dahlgren

a creative outlet mastered by many
the power it possesses differs between person to person
with a child it is practically harmless,
but with an author it can slay thousands with a single
sentence
people do not see the true value of the pen
because if a picture says a thousand words,
how much power are we giving to those who create those
pictures



Grace Steiner

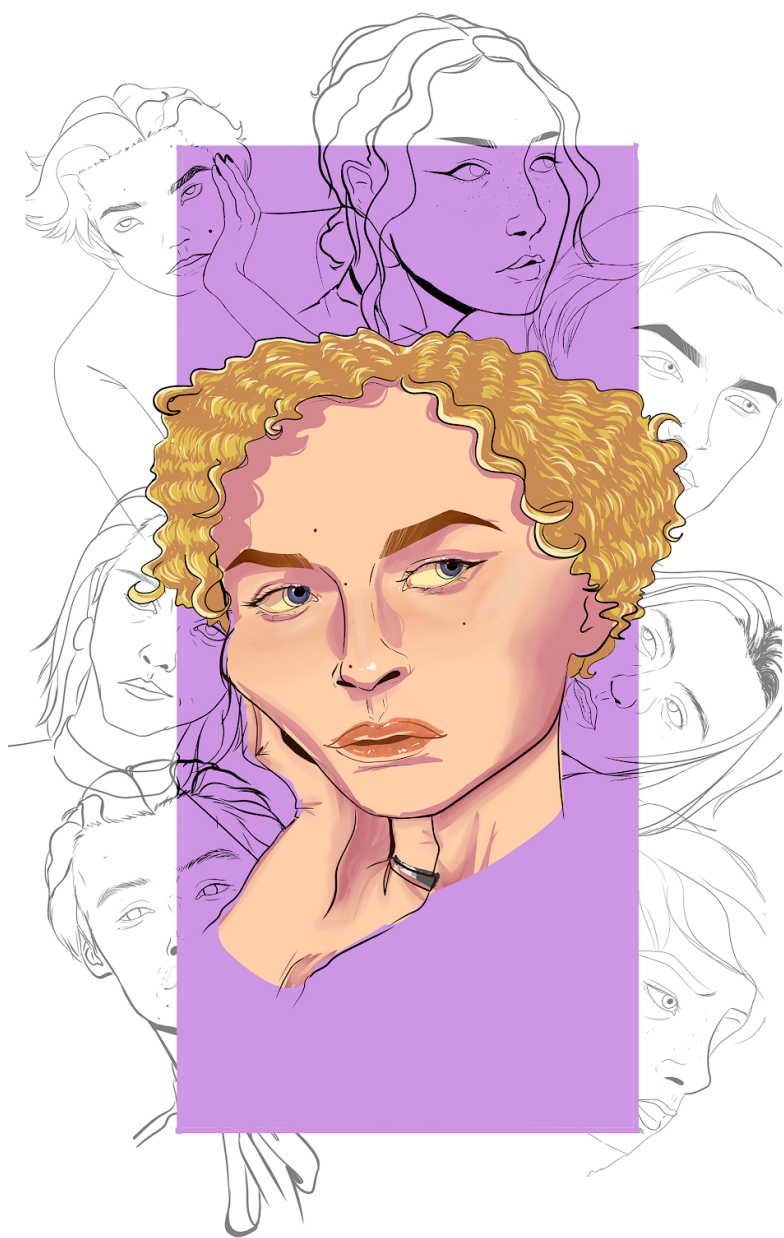
What We Deserve

Lex Dosdall

Deserve—such a strange word
For such a strange concept,
How do you deserve something?
I put forth my effort
I work for months
But when the promotion comes,
I'm left in the dust--
I didn't deserve anything more.

Deserve—how do you know
When you truly earned a prize?
I put forth passive attempts
Maybe giving a little effort,
But then I'm praised
For something I hardly worked on.
It seems that everyone thinks
That I'm the best at the job
When I know I'm not.

Deserve—I've been told
I deserve this privilege,
They see I've worked harder
Farther, and stronger
Than all of my counterparts.
Sometimes, luck favors the workers
And we get what we're told;
We get what we deserve.



Rumors
Bella Davis

An Excerpt from *The Result of Fate*

Ashlei Filmore

The war was raging between Aconna and Larian. Swords clanging, shouts echoing. And Cora was in the middle of it all.

Her armor chinked as she rode forward on her steed, slicing down enemy soldiers left and right.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Ace stood toward the back of the horde, hands shaking and legs trembling. He held his gun unsteadily, his chainmail rubbing against his armor above.

He wasn't meant for war.

He was meant for calculating the odds of the war, which way it would turn, who would have the advantage.

He was meant to call the official retreat when necessary.

He was meant to be the man in between.

He wasn't meant for the field.

After he had told King Aconna that the war was turning in Larian's favor, instead of calling a surrender, His Majesty called for every able-bodied man and woman to fight.

That included Ace.

But he felt that his loyalty to his kingdom, his home, was not enough.

He turned and ran.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Cora spotted a soldier far away, and getting farther. They were running.

Coward, she thought.

Her gaze lingered on the lone soldier, until she made her decision. She started gliding toward the trooper.

Then, a dull thud.

An exclamation of pain.

A crash, as she fell off her horse onto the battlefield.

It all happened in an instant.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Ace thought he heard something.

A crash of armor onto the unforgiving ground.

He turned back, and saw the enemy's best soldier, one whose skill was renowned throughout the whole continent, on the ground, bleeding from a gaping wound in their back. The one blind spot.

I could finish it, he thought. He started with abruptness of the thought, not used to things like that. I could finish the job. I wouldn't be a coward if I did. They're dying anyway. I could do it.

He carefully ran back over to the soldier, jumping in surprise when he saw it was a girl! From what he could see, she wasn't even twenty years old! Being only twenty-two himself was a shock enough.

Do it, the voice said.

No. I can't, he replied.

Do it, or you'll be a coward for the rest of your life.

No, I won't do that. She's dying anyway!

Do it.

Ace felt a tug on his arm. There was nobody else there.

Do it.

His right arm raised up, all on its own, ready to bring the sword down.

No! Stop! he cried.

DO IT.

He let out a yell as the weapon came down.

DO IT!!

The sword made contact.

With the dirt wet with blood. Not the girl.

Ace's face drained of all color.

She's my soulmate, he thought.



Riley Shooting
Alma Velazquez

Quarantine

Ethan Groethe

Overall, I'm feeling pretty happy
I would say life in general isn't too shabby

My friends and I would meet in parking lots
longing the day when all of this will stop

the only thing that makes life dim
is the fact that I'm not able to swim

Well, come to think of it, there is a little more,
I feel restricted to walk out my own door.

I can't play my sport, I can't even date
maybe it's time to just accept this fate

School is fine, I wish there was less work
although this quarantine at home is a pretty nice perk

I mean the sleeping in and stuff, being able to relax
although spending time with family has pushed me to the max.

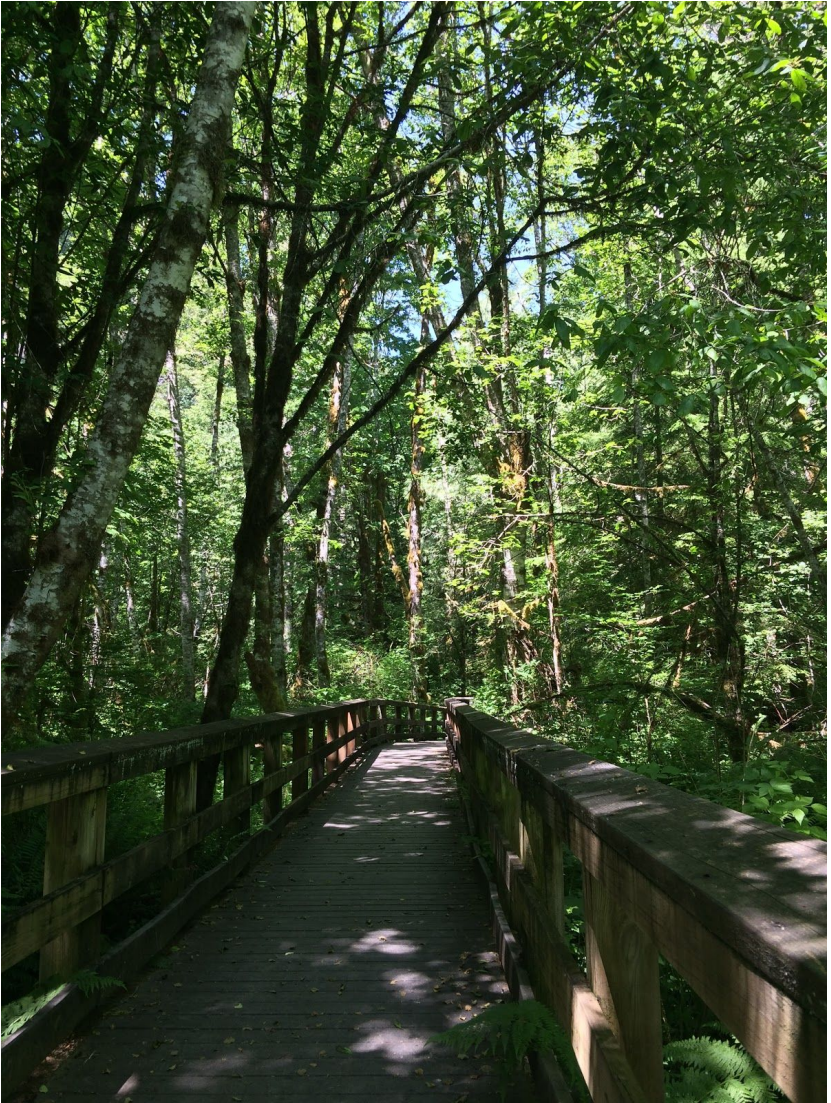
So you ask me how I'm doing and I say I'm doin' alright,
but in all reality it's been a hard fight.



Morgan Wayment



Morgan Wayment



Morgan Wayment

Untitled

Emma Baxter

Thunder pounds on the walls of the shaken-up cabin.

The lightning strikes, lighting up the wall, casting a shadow on the heads of the poor animals hung up, mouths open, eyes forever seeing.

The hunter rocks in his old chair, in front of the crackling fire, and the children sitting in front of him with their blankets wrapped around them, holding cocoa filled to the brim of the cup.

Mother warns them not to spill, but they spill anyway. The newly stained warm rug is cleaned thoroughly to match the rest of the cabin which held a doormat reading, 'Home Sweet Home.'

Granny sleeps upstairs, but comes down to grab a nice mug of cocoa before creaking back up the stairs to her room.

The elder siblings watch out the windows at the rain-blanket that falls upon the earth, and the young racoon that gathered peanuts in front of the glass door where the children had deliberately placed them, so the racoon would always come back.

Mother is the one making the cocoa. Her soft laugh only slightly damages the noise of the wind blowing past the house, trying its best to knock it off the mountain.

The whines of the young children as mother tells them to go to bed. "One more story," they beg the hunter, but the hunter only laughs.

It was his signature hardy laugh.

It's quiet now, and the only sounds left are the raindrops hitting the roof high above.

The snores of grandfather could be heard all through the house if you listened, really listened.

Father was still hard at work, the keys of the typewriter clicking, click, click, click, to match the pitter patter of the rain glossing the roof.

The racoon will go home now, seeking shelter from the ever-growing storm.

The wind grows louder now, threatening to break through the wooden walls of the large home.

Then, silence.

All that was left of the storm was the blanket of dew that adorned the ground like glorious little pieces of jewelry made by pure nature.

The final breath of wind blew through the shafts of the house, a loud sigh, letting the whole world know that the storm was finally over.

Silence.

Wind

Emma Baxter

Wind.

Something that drives us

Whether it be for a good place or a bad place.

Wind

It's an unseen force, like the powers of a glance or the
hands of a cold drunken sailor on a woman's neck.

Wind

Sails along until the storm after comes.

Wind

Comes around when a storm is coming, and it's easy to
realize that it's there.

Wind

Strong as a hurricane which sinks unworthy ships
Yet so small

It can only whisper through a strand of hair.

Wind.

A force that drives

A force that many fear

A force that allows children to play

And criminals to get away with crimes.

Wind

Hatred.

For someone who caused harm in life

Wind

Just blow him away

Sink his ship

Stop his drinking

Stop him from hurting

Wind.



Mia Jaynes



Doggo
Mia Jaynes

cardboard custodian
Bodie Worthen

where were you
last night when we came home
were you giving the dog
water on the porch

and i know
that you think that we're not telling you
something

and that's true
just don't hate us
when we go

and you'll live
by yourself
in this house alone and out of fear
you will call someone to be your own

and you'll live in isolation but you'll
be content because you are with them
but they won't remember your name



Porter Johnson

Times Uncertain

Luke Hansen

I often here ponder
At this time now come
Left quite somber
Uncomfortably numb

I sit on my bed
No place to go yonder
Mind filled with dread
With fear, with wonder

“What will become?”
“What is to be done?”
“Will I myself walk?”
“To whom shall I talk?”

As these thoughts come
In sadistic reminiscence
I cannot succumb
To evil’s indulgence.

Instead I turn unto the light
Give praise, give thanks for another fight.



Chase Redd



Chase Redd

Growing Up

Kristynn Tyler

Growing up can be terrifying
Make you feel anxious at the thought
But be not afraid
And listen close
The memories we made could never be erased
The shirts we wore, made up of pure cotton
Our jeans covered in grass stains
Eating various proteins.... or the lack thereof
Climbing up the smelly garbage bins
To relax on top of the big blue van
Ah, the perfect spot to watch the clouds
Separated from the noise of the world
We begin to sprint through the neighborhood
Our adrenaline kicks in and our energy lasts for hours
The feeling of the summer air in our face and running
through our hair
Our safe place, our innocence
Unaware of any form of war
Only stopping for our secret snack
Savoring the flavor of raspberry pie
Oh, how could we forget these memories
The memories that were perhaps taken for granted
Yet feel like Heaven in comparison to the years that await



Nilla Waifa and Cookie Monsta
Kaylynn Harned



Kaylynn Harned

I'm Grateful For Hailee Chimezie

Black cats

Mechanical pencils

Sudden acts of hubris at three in the morning

Blue skies with fat white clouds

Fields of wheat

The sea

Rain

The wind rushing by as I stick my head out the car window

Pine trees ready to climb

Frosty breath and warm hands

Fire-toasted hot dogs

Snowmen made of sand

Long dirt roads

Hot souvlaki

Afternoon trips to the library

Watching the sunset from the old trampoline

Whispered secrets

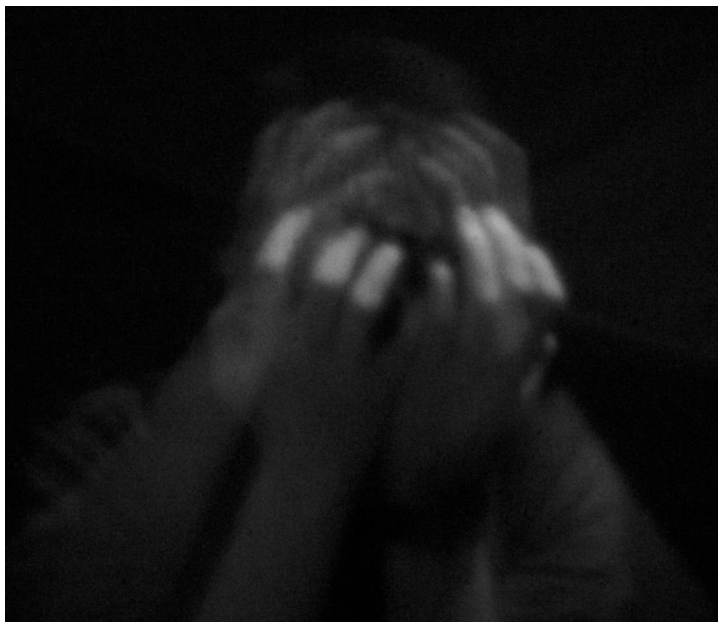
Blasting rock and roll

Brand-new sketchbooks

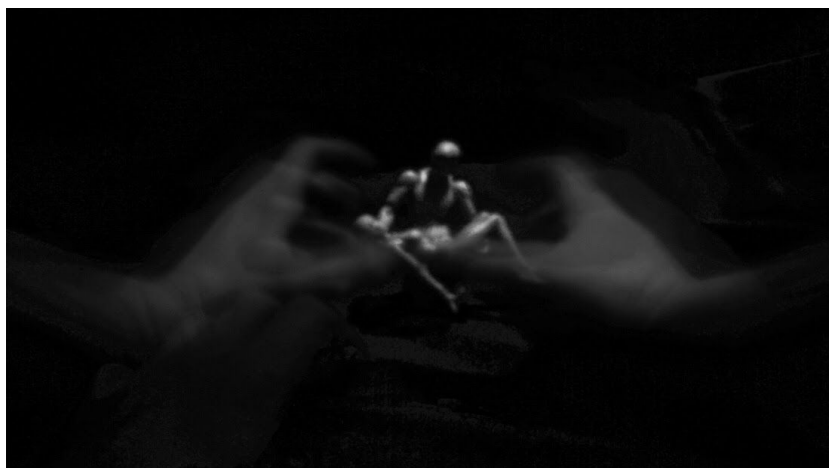
Unfiltered laughter

Aunt Pheph

Mom



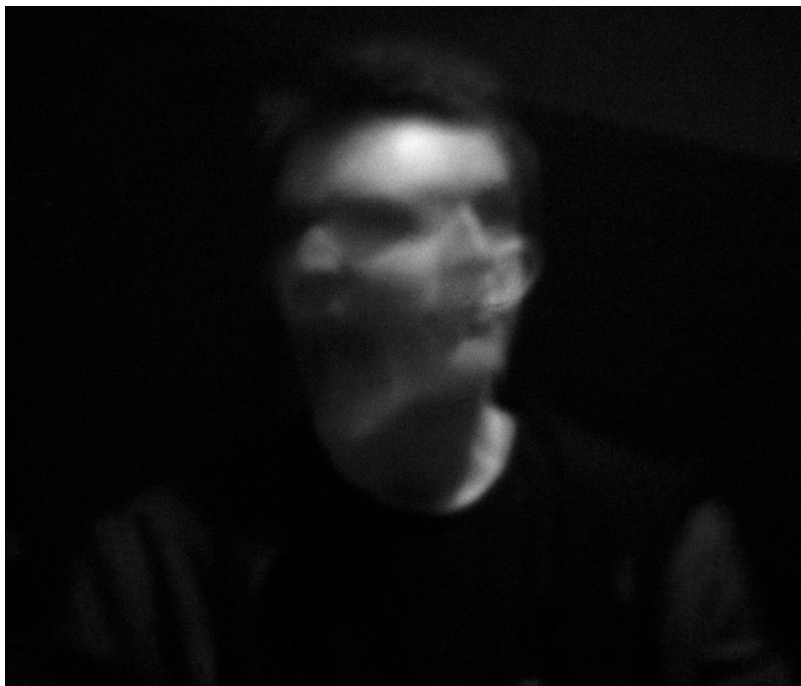
Zeb Rhodehouse



Zeb Rhodehouse



Zeb Rhodehouse



Zeb Rhodehouse



Zeb Rhodehouse



Zeb Rhodehouse

Untitled

Kendall Rosenlof

The reflection stares back at me
I'm not sure if it's the same face from years ago
My appearance, suddenly changed with age fills me with
insecurity
I long for the childhood that time ended by making me
grow

The memories flood into my mind
Good, bad, in-between, they don't seem to discriminate
My eyes blur with the tears of past experiences
Gone forever and nothing will change

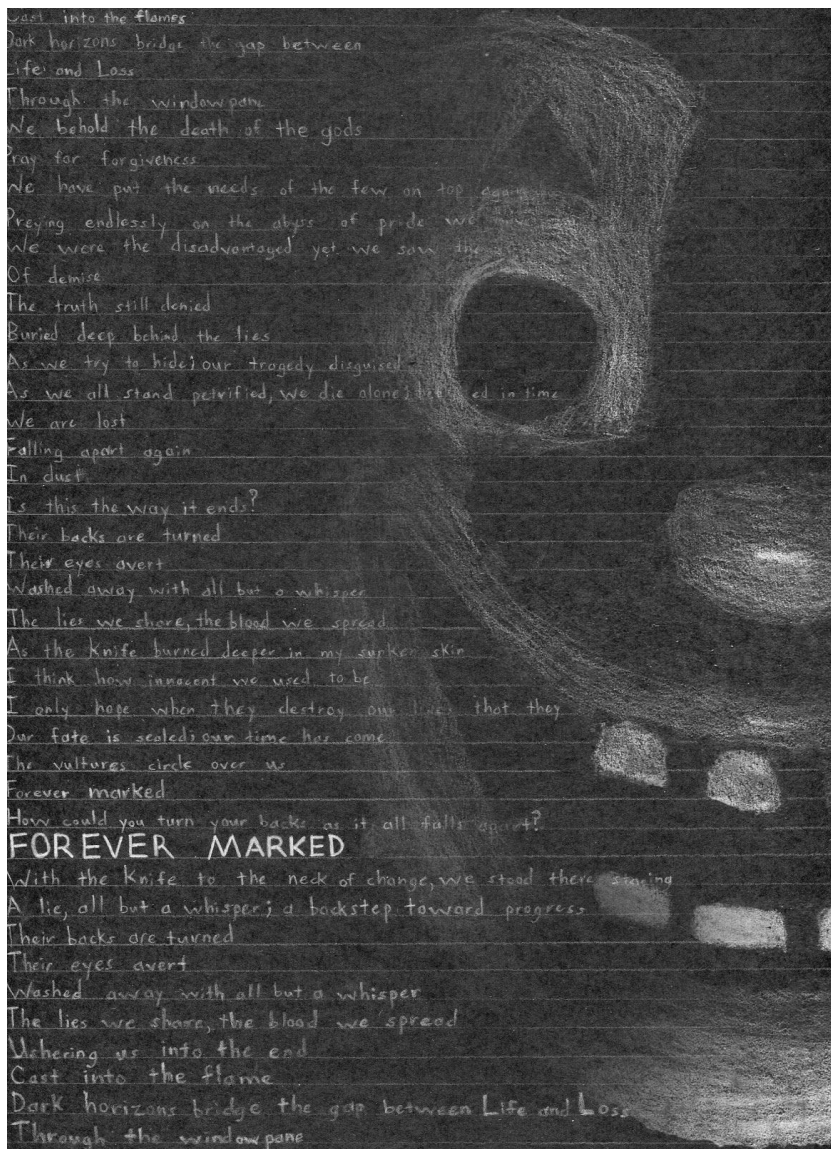
The times I was hurt, they seem to stick
Before I feared the thought of a fall
When I felt joyful, they hurt the most
I hate myself for letting it go

I don't regret it all, though
I made memories I don't want to forget in a lifetime
There are times I want to forget
They are the times I regret

When there were no consequences for what I said
Brushed off as silly childish chatter
Now I'm told to think for myself
To speak my mind and prepare to be opposed

I remember what I've been told
By others already grown old

Don't let the rude comments get to me
The name-calling, the teasing, the fights
My childhood is done and gone
The only thing left is to move on
Create new memories and experiences
I am ready.



Rhys Harwood

(Lyrics: "Forever Marked" by Currents)



Reflection

Rhys Harwood

An Ardent Twilight

Rhys Harwood

Upon an emblazoned bastion of concrete victory
Surrounded by the scorched hillside
We stood there staring at the setting sun
Like so many seem to say
But this experience was unlike the scenes I'd viewed
before
From that same domesticated and wild spot on the
mountain
The bright beams of that gross incandescence
Softened as they soon drooped behind a curtain of clouds
As the shade of a celestial barrier passed upon us
The sounds beneath the scene and in the valley rose
A distant dull thundering of the train along the tracks
The cries of jubilant competition and stadium static from
the football field
A motorcycle revving betwixt the roads of the hillside
suburbs below
While a hound dog bayed brashly from someone's yard
Up above, the far-off roar of an unseen jet engine echoed
And under it all, the almost unheard burr of the cars
along the highway
All the subtle sounds of the valley made themselves seen
As clear as furtive insects which walk along a cement lot
unnoticed
The misty evening blazed on the other end of the lake
which filled the valley's basin
And the air seemed to shimmer above the surface of the
waters
Its light lazily basking in its own brilliance

Soon, the valley was split in two by the twilight's
unveiling
The stream of cars along the highway sparkled and
shattered in reflections of radiance
Opening my eyes to its brilliance, a blinding bolt struck
me
And so, I saw a stolen slice of the sun's light above the
view of the mountain beyond the valley
And smiled, having found my reason to write and be
happy
For today, at least

Days of Sloth

Rhys Harwood

Woken with torpor thick
A digital blue pierces the twilight
With a raw poor man's pastry
To fill up on the way up

Then a couple minutes of keyboard clatter
A few hours staring disguised as study
With several moments of acquaintance
And off to home I go again

A day awaits, still undone
With dwarven dogs to walk around
A work for wage to attend grudgingly
And homework to work on, supposedly

Then, after staring at another screen
A poor man's pocket to eat
A bottom bunk mattress to sleep
And another dragging cycle to repeat

Sunday Stroll

Rhys Harwood

For a moment
The floor falls away,
Sliding against the flat grass
Swept down by the wind of time,
And I see the seasonal cycle spin anew.
The cool sky calms and tempers my mind,
Giving shape to the molten flow of thoughts.
Back up on the mountain,
Looking down on the vale;
This is where I am content
To be so pleasantly still.
Where I'm happy to sit

Hollow Knight

Aiden Stokes

There was a time when I was happy and content
But that time is gone, and dead
I used to be a hero for all the world to see
But now I am the infection that plagues the world
I am the horror I tried to stop
To put an end to everyone's misery

Once I was accepted and loved by everyone
Even the king turned me an eye
But that time is long gone
And Someone else now must carry the burden
I once was the savior of the world
Saving people from the darkness and infection
I wish I could see the kingdom one more time
But that will never be...
For when the door opens
And the infection leaks through
Afraid of what I'd be

Afraid of what I'd become
I'm afraid of what I'd do
Afraid of what would happen to me
Afraid for the sake of the kingdom
If the lock on the door was opened

I will never be loved, or accepted
I cannot run away from this fate
Even if it's just for a moment
Even if it is a clean slate

As I fight for the crumbling world
I see an infection spread
So, I help the king escape
And go and fight the infection
And put it back to sleep
And I am never seen again
I have hidden the infection inside me
To keep it from breaking loose

There was a time when I was friendly
There was a time when I was kind
But the infection kept within me
Is taking control of my head
As I lose control of my body

The chains start to crumble to the floor
And I see a warrior stand before me
Short, like I was, years ago
As I fought for the safety of the world

I could feel the end coming near
As the infection takes control
And as I fight the warrior
I see myself again
I stab myself to stop it
I try to hold it back
Avoiding the look of the hero
That brings up my forgotten past

I look up at the warrior
And see the sorrow in his eyes

And as the infection takes control
I know, I'll surely die

He looks at me, and looks around
At the chains that magically bind
Stabbing me in the heart, the infection starts
To enter the world all around
I see him gather the infection
And the chains rattle in anticipation
As the infection is sealed
The chains no longer yield
To bind the new host of death

And once again the world is safe
As the infection no longer remains
It will come back eventually
That we know and fear
But we know well
That a hero with no soul will enter this world
And Save us from impending doom



Bridger Jensen

the optimist
Reign Kaline

It began on a hot summer day:
I was the biggest pessimist around,
She was the biggest optimist around.

She was my glass half-full,
My optimistic glass,
My optimist.
I was her glass half-empty
Her pessimistic glass,
Her pessimist.

We were a full glass.

We balanced so well together,
Back then.
She wanted to explore my heart,
She wanted to see it all.

But one day,
She strayed too far.
Strayed into the drought.
My drought.

From that moment our relationship changed.
She grew distant.

And then it happened:

She poured the glass.

Our glass,
Into my heart
The glass;
It was empty,
Never again would it be full.

The next day she was gone,
Far into the drought of her heart,
Just to rid the drought of mine.

But still, she is in my thoughts.
I think about how it all changed then,
My glass
Her glass
Our glass.

My heart is a river now,
Because of her,
It is a river,
From her ocean,
My optimistic river
Our optimistic river.

Pains of Life

Rachel Larsen

Always striving to fulfill your potential
Leasing everything you are and hold, but gaining nothing
Tragically dedicated to the poison that is your life
Hitting your head to your pillow the way a bat smashes
glass
Screaming as you break down, but finding no sanctuary
Tears pierce your cheeks like many needles
The sleep deprivation eventually claims your aching body

You wake up and elect yourself to be happy
The foundation of what people see painted on, the
paintbrush hitting the canvas
You turn into a work of beautiful art, despite the dark
cave inside
Throughout the day the people seem to perforate you,
regardless of what you're going through
The tension of life continues to build
Familiarly discouraging



Zesty Sky
Emma Skeen

The Siege of Belgrade

Colten McKay

Belgrade Castle,
The Kingdom of Hungary, 1456.

Byzantium has fallen. Constantinople is in Ottoman hands. The fate of Christendom lies in the balance.

Under the command of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, the Ottoman Empire surges further into Europe. In their path sat Belgrade Castle, one of the best built of its time, and with it an army of peasant crusaders and Hungarian Knights.

The Ottomans besieged the castle but suffered a costly loss. Fresh off their victory, the peasants began to engage the Ottoman force.

The Hungarian Knights, who were not yet ready to attack, were forced to salvage the situation and forged their own assault.

I sat tall upon my mighty steed, my sword attached at my hip, my right arm trapped my lance between it and my steel plated torso. My other arm lifted the swiveling faceplate of my helmet to the sky, granting me vision of the hundreds of other knights. We were all sitting upon our horses, restless and thirsty for the charge to come. The rest of the battlefield was clouded by the fog of war. Peasant armies and mercenaries were already engaged in battle with the Ottoman line. The smell of dust and blood corrupted the air. And there was a thick, bitter smoke from the Ottoman cannons, which thundered and cracked through the sky, as if the clouds of a thunderstorm lingered above us, yet the rain and

lightning remained absent, and all that was left were thundering echoes.

“Noble Knights of Hungary!” shouted Lord Hunyadi over the distant yelling and clashing of steel. “Standing before us is a horde of cowards and heretics. They have come to pillage our farms and homes, sack our cities, and destroy our temples!” he continued while riding his horse up and down the lines of mounted men.

“Our kingdom, nay! All the kingdoms of Europe rely on us to quell these heretics!” Hunyadi said as his horse reared upwards and stepped towards the mass of banners and men locked in the lethal debate of war.

I moved my hand from my helmet and gripped the leather reigns. The faceplate of my helmet slammed shut against my face. My vision of the other knights vanished as if a wizard had snapped them from existence. All but a few before me remained. Those I could see through the finger width slit which crossed my helmet where my eyes lay. The vicious roars of cannons became deafened as they struggled to make their way to my ears through my helmet.

Hunyadi hid between the knights before me, but between them I could see him raise his sword to the heavens. When he brought it parallel with the earth it pointed towards the Ottoman line.

As one, the first few lines of knights stormed forward, then the lines after them followed, including me. After a few short moments the entire horde of cavalry charged across the grassy plains between them and the Ottoman lines. The cannons continued their desperate pleas for my attention, but they became even more dulled. Hundreds of horses hooves ripped through the earth

flinging chunks of dirt and grass from the landscape, beating the earth like a drum.

The collective beat pierced the metal containment cell on my head and became the only thing I could focus on. There were so many stamps of horses feet they began to overlap. Before I could make one out, four more had sounded, and for each of the four, another four echoed through my eardrums.

Before long the mass of mounted equines had covered a large amount of ground and gained the attention of the Ottoman force. Pebbles made of glistening metal began to shoot through the air, tailed by narrow brown shafts and capped by feathered tails.

In an instant I felt an impact on my left shoulder, just above the armpit. Out of instinct, I turned to look, but the lack of openings on my faceplate, and the restrictions imposed on my neck by my armor would not allow me to do so. So instead I let go of my reins for a moment to form a circular motion with my arm, and everything appeared fine. Just as I did so, I glanced up to see one of the objects approach me with extreme haste. Before I had time to react it had already slammed itself upon my faceplate and caused instantaneous aching on my snout. My arm stopped its motioning and shot to my face, I could feel that my face plate was off, rather than the usual pointed nose of my sallet, it was malformed, shifted to my right and flattened down. I could feel the collapsed metal on my nose.

More of the arrows fell upon the charging mass, however our metal armor did its job, and they bounced right off. At most leaving small dents like the ones on my

helmet. Thus, the arrow defense proved pointless, and the cavalry continued their approach on the Ottomans.

The drumbeats of horse hooves ground to a halt and were replaced with the sound of the earth getting peeled back with the weight of horses sliding upon it, kicking grass and rocks forward. While the horses were concerned with halting their momentum, the knights atop them thrust their lances into the chests and shields of the Ottomans.

As my horse made its way through the already engaged knights and towards the Ottomans, my right arm braced as my lance found a target, an Ottoman foot soldier. He was aware of what was going on, but was there anything he could do about it? No, the immense momentum the lance carried crashed into the soldier's shield arm, and sent it into his torso, which cracked bone, and knocked him off his feet. My horse rose up on its back legs, and I aimed my weapon at another victim. When the steed approached the earth again my lance found another target causing the same effect.

A few more Ottomans fell to my attacks. The collective horde of cavalry mopped the floor with the Ottomans, going up and down like a well-oiled machine. The charge had inflicted massive damage to the Muslim line, and they began to capitulate. As they turned to flee, we pursued them, driving our lances into their backs and sending them face down into the dirt.

The Ottoman front line had fallen back so far, they ran into their elite soldiers, the Janissaries, or the Sultan's personal guard, who tried, to some avail, to rally the men.

Eventually they got a meager number of troops to reform, along with themselves, forming a second battle line.

However, we had already regained speed and crashed into them once again, inflicting more damage. Not as much as before, but still significant.

As my horse reared up so I could attack again, it collapsed to the ground and me with it. As I rolled to my feet, I could see the perpetrator, an Ottoman Janissary. Clad in a mixture of armor and black robe, with a golden faceplate that mimicked a real face. He had slashed his sword through the rear leg of my horse, causing it to crumble to the earth. He approached me with his sword at the ready.

I slid my longsword from my hip-bound sheathe and brought it in front of me to a high guard position. His attack began first, swinging for my neck, but I intercepted it with a quick hanging guard. I swept my blade toward the sky, forming a half arc above my head, his blade followed suit, as I reached the top of the arc I shifted to a quick thrust, connecting with his false golden face. He staggered backwards; a gash appeared on his right cheek. Following through with my momentum, I made a swift strike to his neck from a high guard. Still dazed, he was unable to deflect it in time and it connected, the chainmail on his neck absorbing the blow, but the sword slid across it, the mail gripped his neck, ripping flesh and sending him to his knees. Before he could get up, I had switched my grip to a mordhau, both my hands held the blade and I swung the guard of my sword like a club towards the back of his skull. It connected and he became entirely neutralized. Now he lay still on the grassy plateau of the battlefield.

After the short duel I looked up at the rest of the battlefield, assessing my situation. The Ottoman line had

collapsed on itself, though some horsemen still brought down the pain and most of the knights engaged on foot. I continued to fight my way through the Ottomans. I must have taken out at least ten men. But then I saw a target, one I could not resist. It was obvious by his apparel; he was Sultan Mehmed. He bore the golden mask of the Janissary, but unlike the Janissary, his robes were gold and purple and two cloth extensions rose from his helmet like the hat of a jester. It was the Sultan, it had to be, if I could kill him the entire Ottoman empire could collapse. I approached him with great speed, deflecting a blow from a common foot soldier and sweeping his foot with my blade. I ran at the Sultan, the battlefield around me had disassembled itself into a chaotic mess, with no semblance of formations or tactics at all. As I approached the Sultan, he finished a duel with another knight by sending his blade through a small gap in the knight's chest plate, killing him.

When I got closer, he turned to face me, moving first I assumed a high guard, protecting my head and chest, and went forward with two quick strikes. One of them went to my right, but he met my blade with his own, and as soon as the blades met my second strike swung around to my left and, just like the first one, he blocked it. I tried to back off and reassess, but before I could he drove his sword towards my knee. I stepped back with haste and got out of range of his sword, which was now low, leaving his head open. Exploiting the opening I brought by sword downward, aiming for the top of his skull, but he dashed to the side. And instead of hitting his head I caught one of the cloth horns on his helmet, cutting it clean off. Following through, I brought a broad

strike straight at his chest, but he had the same idea. Our blades clashed between us; caught in a bind I began to push his sword out of the way. However, in one quick motion he removed one of his hands from his sword and slapped the side of my helmet.

The sheer shock of the move dazed me, and my sword disengaged. Exploiting the opening, he used the hilt of his sword to bash me on the shoulder, knocking me to the ground. It all happened so fast, I lost grip on my sword and it landed two or three feet away. I began to stumble backwards, using my elbows and feet to drag and kick myself away from him.

It seemed like the whole world had slowed down, if only for a moment. Above me stood one of the most powerful rulers in the world. He wanted my homeland as his conquest, he wanted my people to bow to him. And I had the opportunity to stop him.

His golden face reflected the steel image that was my armor, and in the reflection, I could see an arrow, planted in the soil adjacent to my left shoulder. I had an idea.

Lacking a weapon with which to defend myself, I reached to the arrow and ripped it from the earth. The Sultan raised his sword, ready to bear death upon my soul. As soon as the arrow was free from the mud, I reached to the Sultans thigh and planted it like a flag deep inside. The shock of the attack threw him off and his swing missed. I kicked myself back a few more feet and stood upright. He stumbled backwards in disbelief and pain and disappeared into the fog of war.

I sucked a series of deep breaths into my lungs, then began to feel a deep ache in my right shoulder, like

someone had torn it off and nailed it back in place. I reached over with my other arm and tried to support it, but the pain remained and continued for minutes to come. I continued to fight my way through the battlefield, though my vision became more and more plagued with a black fade. Eventually, my knees buckled and gave way, which sent my body crashing to the ground.

The next thing I remember was waking up in a white cloth tent, my shoulder was bandaged, and my armor was stripped from me, stacked in the corner of the tent. I stood from the rickety cot which held me. My vision was doubled, and my balance was poor, but it soon returned to normal. As I exited the tent, I saw the vast expanse of the battlefield before me. The double barred cross on red and green cloth flew high above the battlefield. The Hungarian flag was flying.

After the Hungarian victory, the Ottomans retreated from Europe. And the Europeans celebrated. Though it wouldn't last long.

Eventually, Sultan Mehmed's grandson, Suleiman the Magnificent, extended Ottoman influence back to Europe. He defeated the Europeans time and time again, claiming territory all the way up to Vienna, Austria.

The Ottomans held their territory in Europe until the first world war dissolved the empire.

For Marching Band

Ilima Briones

I am thankful
for marching band,
for the family I found in it three years ago, when I was
friendless and homesick,
who have marched with me through the blistering heat of
parade seasons
to the toe-numbing cold of competitions
and with it,
I love the excitement in the eyes of the new kids each
year,
not quite sure what to expect, and still willing to jump in
all the way to the knowing smiles of veteran seniors
who walk in time to music they hear
and in step with each other in the halls without meaning
to.
I love the feeling of us all together,
watching and cheering on other bands at competitions
and playing pep tunes in the stands at football games,
singing “Hey, Baby” at the top of our lungs.
I love the serious unity of when we’re all in uniform,
when we perform like it matters,
and the feeling at the end of a show,
after the last horns down,
when we gave it our all and know that it was our best run
yet.
and so,
to all the people who make it amazing,
to the people in the stands,
for watching our show and cheering us on,

to the rest of the band, to all of them,
because it's different and incomplete when even one is
missing,
for taking me the way I am, on my best and worst days,
and for making them better,
for listening to me and laughing with me and making me
better,
and to our staff, parents, and band director,
for all the hard work they put in, seen and unseen,
for all the support they give us in our lives,
for caring about us and believing in us and in our dreams,
more than words could ever express,
thank you.

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