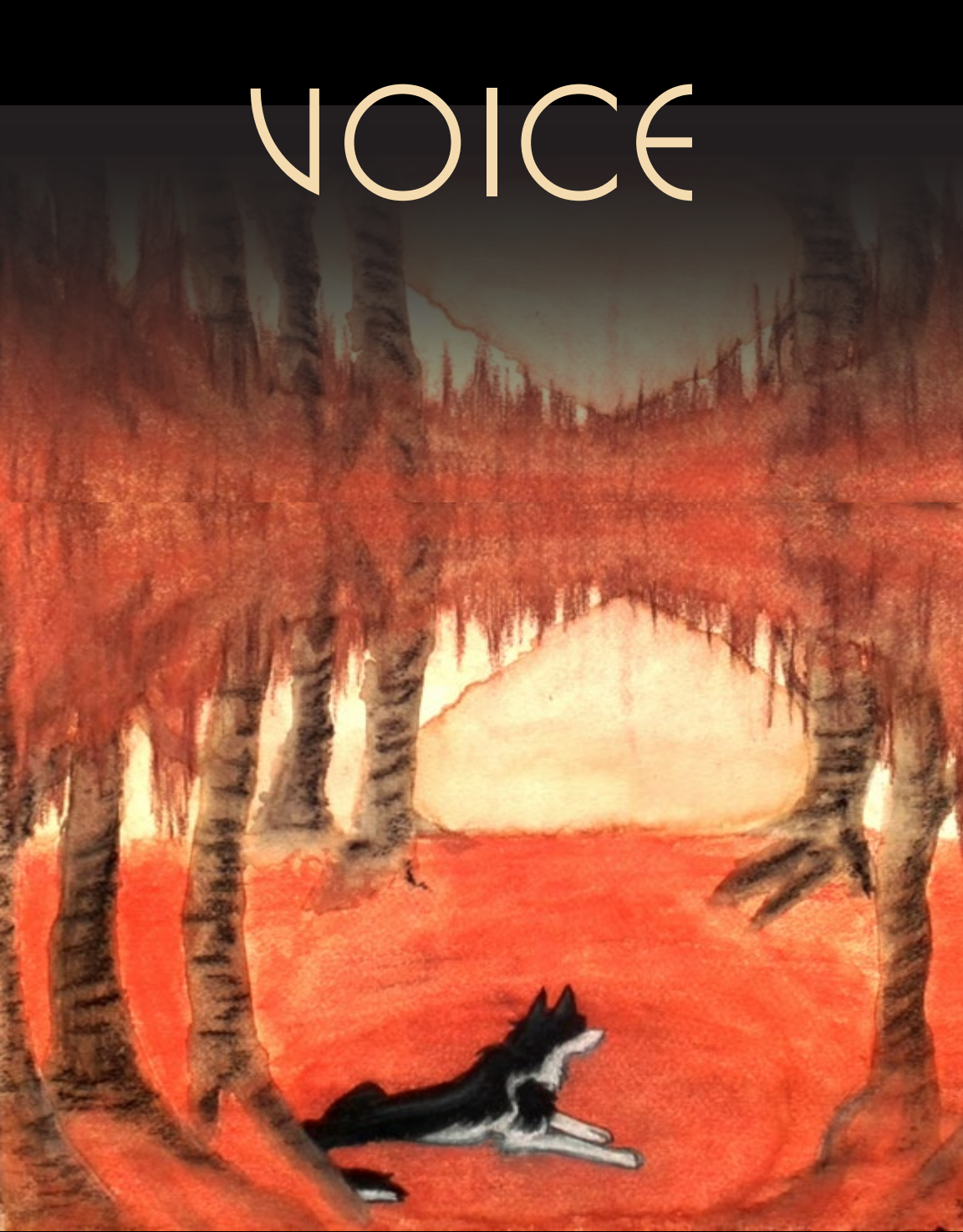




MAKALA DUEZ



# VOICE



## AWAKEN VOLUME TWO

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**AWAKEN  
VOLUME TWO**

MACKENZIE FREEBORN

I'll stitch the  
word into my  
heart, with a  
needle & thread



JULIA FERENAC

*A note from our principal:*

It is with great pleasure that we publish this second edition of our beautiful and engaging Literary Visual Arts Magazine, VOICE. Congratulations to all our students who put their hearts into these submissions. Your creativity is inspiring and your insights are thought provoking.

We are especially grateful to The College Board for granting Howard Middle School with the national award for "Excellence and Innovation in the Arts." This award, in the category of "Equity Through the Arts," is given to a program that uses the arts as a tool for increasing academic engagement among underrepresented students. The award helped fund this publication.

I invite you to relax and browse through the amazing work printed here. I believe you will find that Howard's Visual and Performing Arts Magnet Program is indeed a place where we are planting seeds of creativity. A special thanks to Ms. Buckley for overseeing this project and Mr. McCracken for working with me on this national award.

Sincerely,

Michael Martucci  
Principal  
Howard Middle School



A Literary and Visual Arts Magazine

Howard Middle School  
Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts  
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# LIFE'S PERSPECTIVE

We only have one life...

We try to live that life the best we can...

What happens when we lose track of time and forget who we are...

Life gets set off its balance...

We have to try to live it the best we can...

Because nobody can change the way life goes...

Life can not be altered, it can only be passed on...

Humans are not cats; we only live to have one life, not nine...

Unlike cats, we do not take advantages of what we have...

The Moon, The Sun, The Stars, it is all a part of our lives...

Just like Earth, we rely on one thing...

Except that instead of relying on the solar system, we rely on our hearts...

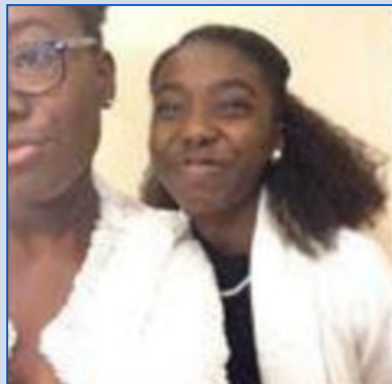
Live life to the fullest...

Live it so good that history will not know what has hit it...

But remember....

"Life can be broken, life can be brought, life is something that means a lot, so you shall never forget that thought."

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## Life's Perspective

"A happy family is a wonderful family."

-Sophia Stewart~

Never, ever forget the people that you truly love, and always remember to enjoy life just the way it is...



# JOURNEY OF NARDONDELIOUS

by Dylan Rogers

**August 29<sup>th</sup>** I am preparing for my big trip in September. It will take a lot of my time and energy to get all of the needed supplies for the trip to Nardondelous Island. I will be traveling near the equator and will need lots of water. I need to make sure to bring a tent and plenty of bandages. The island has never before been explored, so I believe that I will make history. I have absolutely no idea what the island has in store for me.

**September 1<sup>st</sup>** Almost complete preparing for the trip. Three more days and I am to head to my local airport. From there, a small plane will take me to the island and drop me off for three weeks. Then I will be picked up in the same place I was dropped off. The landing site has not been decided because we do not know where it would be best. When we get on the island I am to search for rare and new herbs. If I find anything that I think may be useful, then I will record it in my journal.

**September 4<sup>th</sup>** I am writing on the plane and I have decided to take an inventory of my supplies. I have in my bag a small water purification system, four boxes of bandages of various sizes for any kind of open wound along with a first aid kit, my small tent, a rope, enough food for three weeks, and a ton of glass jars for keeping herbs in. So far, Nardondelous Island is a small speck in the horizon of a sunrise. I am sure that I am prepared for my three weeks of survival.

**September 5<sup>th</sup>** We landed yesterday in a sandy spot next to the water's edge. I set up camp in a small empty cave that I found just inside the small forest on the island. I know that I am safe in here because I had to tie my bag to my waist with the rope that I packed in a small outer pocket and climb up a rocky cave wall to a small platform of rock. This is where I set up camp. I found a small waterfall coming out of the cave wall at the small ledge where my tent is. I pulled one of the jars out of my bag and filled it up with water. I set up my filter and took a sip. It tasted better than any water that I have ever tasted, and looked crystal clear, too.

**September 9<sup>th</sup>** Today I found another herb and put it in one of my jars. I have three herbs in jars so far and recognize all of them. They are not rare, but they will help me if I get hurt. I left my small shelter and walked across the beach where the plane landed. I was sure that by the time the plane came back I would have some useful information. As I walked along the shoreline I found a rare herb along the side of the forest and classified it as a *Sposh Grentend*.

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** Today is the twelfth day I have spent on the island. Only nine days left. I was chased by a wild boar and got a bad injury on my left arm. I want to dress the wound before the daylight runs out, but I didn't want to wait another day without a journal entry. I escaped the boar by climbing up to my camp and waiting until it was gone. When I climbed back down, I thought it had wandered away, but actually it was still lurking around the corner. Sorry, need to tend to the sharp pain in my arm.

**September 16<sup>th</sup>** Yesterday was a hard day. Early in the morning I was able to gather more of the *Sposh Grentend* and put it in the jar next to the other samples, but then when I was coming back to camp with a small sample of *Beneg Yutent*, another rare herb that I was able to discover, I got chased by a wild boar. This is how I got a cut all the way from my wrist to my elbow. I used the *Sposh Grentend* to numb my arm, so it didn't hurt as much by letting the leaves dry out in the sun and crushing them with rocks. Then I put the *Sposh Grentend* dust in a jar and mixed it with some filtered water. I rinsed my arm with the filtered water that contained a bit of the *Sposh Grentend*. I then rubbed a leaf of *Beneg Yutent* over my wet arm to heal it faster. Then I put a few bandages on it. Now I am off to bed.

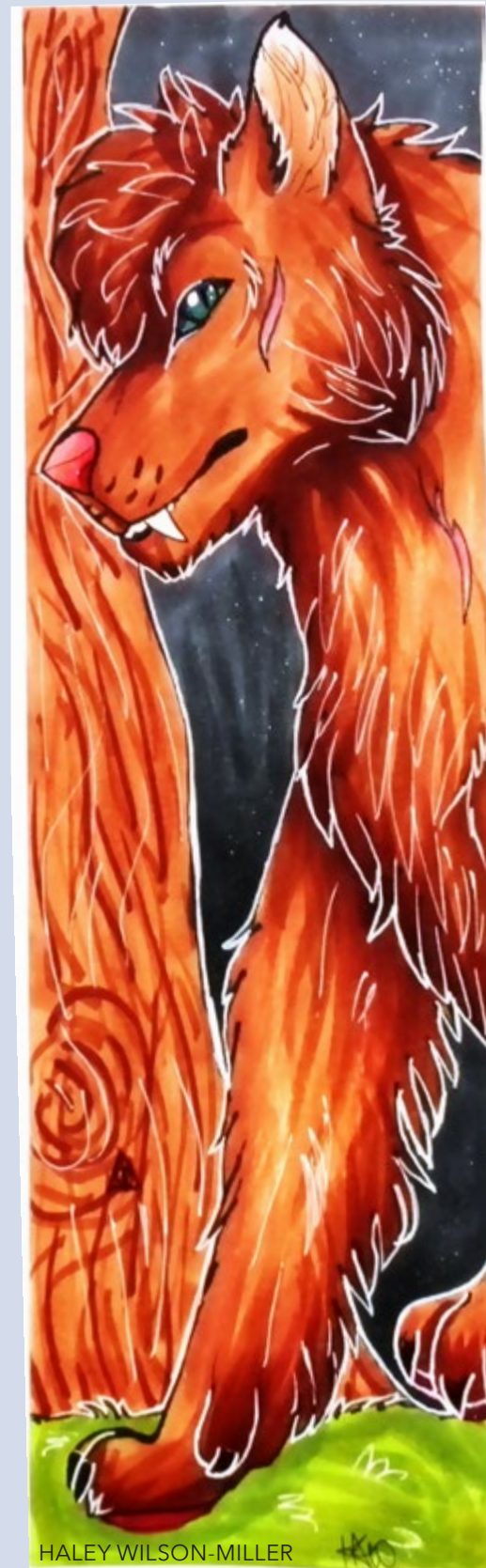
**September 18<sup>th</sup>** I have no word to describe what I saw today. It was an amazing discovery, but also quite scary. I discovered an herb that I could not classify and am going to call it *Lava Root*. I gave it that name because of where I found it. On the other side of the island, opposite to my camp there was a large wall of rock with a small opening dripping lava. I mean, it's not every day that you find yourself on an island by yourself with a lava dripping rock in front of you. And to make it even more interesting, there was a small plant about the size of a soda can with big droopy leaves. On the underside of the leaves were tiny black dots that I think are seeds. The most amazing thing about the whole situation was that there was a steady stream of lava that was slowly flowing around the plant's stem and into the ocean. The plant wasn't even singed! I followed the stream and found two other plants like this. I will need to investigate this more.

**September 20<sup>th</sup>** I have been down to the lava trickle several times now and have been able to gather a few leaves from the *Lava Root* without burning myself. I have burnt the tip of my finger on my first attempt. I now know to get a jar from camp, fill it with water from the ocean, and dump it on the lava to cool the flow right before the plant. Then I come back a few hours later, and safely gather some samples of the *Lava Root*. The burn that I received from the lava has almost completely healed. I am very surprised because I only burned myself yesterday afternoon. I was trying to collect *Lava Root* by making quick grabs at the stem of one plant but my right hand's pointer finger hit the lava for a few nanoseconds and left me with a nasty burn. I numbed my finger with more *Sposh Grentend* so I cannot feel the pain, but I can't believe how fast it has healed. Right before I put the *Lava Root* in the jar with the other samples I rubbed it over my hands to feel how the texture of the seeds felt. Maybe the *Lava Root* is what is healing my burn.

**September 22<sup>nd</sup>** I know it is very risky and dangerous to experiment with unfamiliar plants, but today I did. And it had one of the best outcomes I have ever seen in my life. I rubbed some of the *Lava Root* on my cut just like I did with my burn: the top of the leaf touching my injury. This took place at my camp in the morning yesterday and tonight my cut is halfway healed. This is the first herb that I have ever seen that heals injuries this fast. With two days left on the island, I need to gather as much *Lava Root* as I can get.

**September 24<sup>th</sup>** I am quite satisfied with the amount of herbs I collected, and I am writing on the plane again, on my journey back home. Home is the place where it all started. One day when I was sitting in my living room, my friend Jeff called me. He said, "Hey, Dill. Didn't you tell me a long time ago that you'd like to discover some new herbs someday?" I told him yes and that I did say that. I also said, "Jeff, where are you going with this?" And he said, "Last week when I was sailing on my boat, I saw an island that wasn't on my map, so I bought some new maps to see if the island was on them, and you know what? It wasn't! So, I thought to myself this island should be explored by an expert." I told Jeff, "I would love to take a look at the island, but I am no expert." Then Jeff said, "I figured, but you're probably better with nature than I am." And that is how I came to be on this plane. (Jeff happened to know how to fly a plane, too). He said, "The Island is too far out to boat there quickly so I can just rent a mini plane." And he did. (Well I paid the rent and he drove it for me).

**September 24<sup>th</sup>** I am back at home. I feel safe. And I can only imagine what else the *Lava Root* can do.



HALEY WILSON-MILLER

# WINGS OF HILIR

by Jeremiah Tacey

## Chapter 1: Skye

“Who gave birth to her?”

“I can see why she’s here, nobody wants a blue jay cow-bird.”

“No wonder nobody wants her. She’s a killer. That scarlet chest proves it.”

You know how people say, “I really like the color of your hair” or “Your eyes are beautiful?” Not when you are a bird. I am a Brown-Headed Cowbird. Now, most Brown-Headed Cowbirds are simply black and brown. Not me, I am definitely not brown. When people look at me, the first thing they see is red, and then they think they see blood. I have a furry, fiery, red stained, crimson chest that covers the entire underside of my body, which starts under my right eye and as it goes down my body it gradually takes over more of my torso. But I am much more than red. Right under my royal blue build, flecked with violet, there is one emerald green feather. I have an obsidian black beak, but that is the only thing normal about me. My periwinkle eyes are nestled into my head which is purple with a tiny faint of blue. I have the typical backwards bent legs that all brown-headed cowbirds have, but they are also red but with a small mix of magenta. It looks like I got on the wrong side of a paintbrush. And I have looked like this since birth.

Now I live with the only people that let me stay in a nest, the orphanage. Most birds are there because they are too small, their beak is too big, or the mother didn’t want to have to feed another mouth. There aren’t very many in here, maybe ten or twenty birds actually live with birds are adopted, but I never was and never will be. Even birds that are formed differently are disgusted at the sight of me, but it still wasn’t as bad as the orphanage itself. When someone came to adopt a bird, I would always be at the front because I am one of the best fliers in the orphanage. Now, I always get skipped because nobody wants me. They always have rude comments to say. Whenever there is an adoption, I get thrown in a corner and am not allowed to come out until they are gone. However, I still get treated the same as all the other birds in the orphanage. I get the same amount of food, the same amount of sleeping space, the same amount of free time, and the same amount of education, but it is still horrible because I never have alone time, and I can’t experience growing up with a family, but that doesn’t matter right now. My name is Skye. I am currently twelve years old and this is where my story really begins.



EBONE ROBINSON

# When I Wake

by Molly Dansby

Roden and I race through the lush forest. The thick, green moss covers everything. We climb over fallen branches and large, jagged rocks to get to The Tower, a rickety old treehouse. On the outside of the fort there are pictures all over the walls that Roden had taken. The pictures are of people we know or have just seen around. My personal favorite is one of his mother.

It is one of her better days, her hair drapes over her face, and she is happy in a field of dandelions. His mother doesn't always look that pretty, seeing how she has stage two breast cancer. Though, when she is happy, it is always amazing.

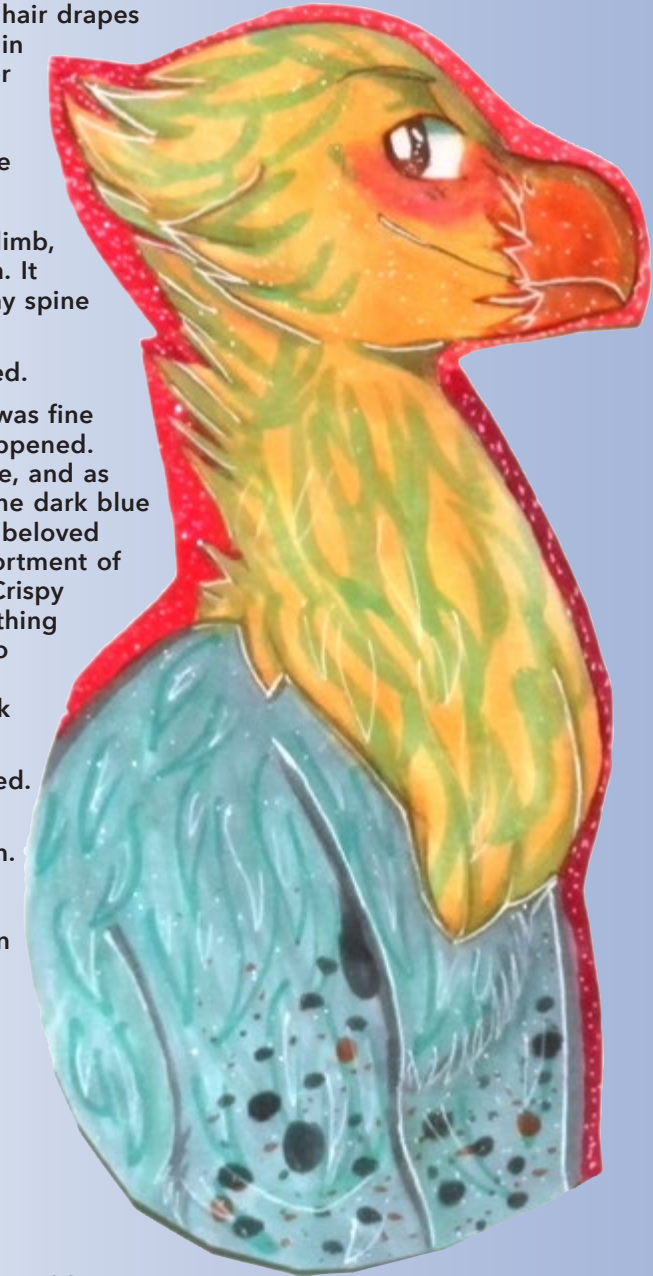
As Roden and I started to climb, there was a sudden rush of pain. It started at my feet and ran up my spine into my torso.

"Are you okay Sal?" He asked.

"I'm fine. It was nothing." I was fine now, but it was weird that it happened. We finally got into the treehouse, and as always, we headed straight to the dark blue laundry hamper which held our beloved snacks. We dug through an assortment of gummies, chocolate bars, Rice Crispy Treats; we had just about everything in there. Then we finally got two Nature Valley granola bars and went to sit in the two huge, pink bean bag chairs in the corner.

"How was the beast?" I asked.

"Not so beast like today." He said, his voice full of sarcasm. At that instant, my body started to go dull, like every bone in it stopped working. Then, I was on the floor. I saw Roden reach for me, but then everything went black. I couldn't hear or see anything. At that point I knew I wasn't okay.



HALEY WILSON-MILLER



NEAH MONTGOMERY

## *This Feeling Forever*

by Neah Montgomery

I am tired and weak. My fur is falling off. I walk slowly - and barely at all. I'm not like I used to be: lively, fluffy, or even feisty. I almost don't care when my humans pick me up in a strange way anymore. Most of the time, I am motionless.

However, I am still ecstatic. My humans make me feel special, despite my old age. They feed me, groom me (because I am too exhausted to groom myself), and they love me like when I was a newborn kitten. Yes, I am happy, but I am suffering.

Today was different. We didn't follow our normal schedule of petting and medicine. My two little humans, Lian and Neah, stayed home from school today, and doubled my grooming time. I was confused. Why would they stay home if they weren't sick or going anywhere? Well, it seems as if they stayed home just to be with me! Although, something was peculiar. All of my humans seemed upset. Even the oldest, who was allergic and thought I was a nuisance. I never cared, though. Anyway, Neah and Lian were crying. I wanted to tell them it would be okay, with whatever they were sad about, but... cats can't talk.

When I was about to take my sixth nap of the day, precisely at 1:23 pm, my big human swooped me up with his sturdy arms and put his lips on my limp head, while tears welled in his eyes. He never cried. No, not this human. Something bad was about to happen. Including me.

One of my little ones took me from my big human and brought me into the big machine on wheels outside. When I was younger, I despised the machines. They

made me feel like no one could help me crying, saying how nauseous I would be. But now, I am in much pain and do not have the strength to fight. All I could do was sleep while my humans held me.

When I awoke, I was in a room. A room that smelled of other cats and dogs. I knew where we were. I knew what was happening. I was going to leave. Leave forever, and never come back. How could the ones I love so dearly do this to me? Then, I mustered up all the strength I had left, and achingly jumped from the table.

It was like slow motion. As soon as I leapt from the table, I regretted it. I knew that if I were to land (or fall) on the floor, it would be the end. I had just used the rest of my strength to fall on the cold, hard ground.

But then, he caught me. My human caught me. He saved me from perishing. Then I remembered two things: I was here in the first place to perish, and the fall caused every muscle in my weak body to burn. I didn't care about leaving now. I wanted to leave. Anything to stop my agony.

As I was whimpering, my big human passed me onto my little ones. Oh, I love them with all my heart. If I was going to go, I wanted to go in these arms. I stopped squirming and started purring. My small head started to throb, and I was scared. Scared of leaving them and never seeing them again.

After a few minutes of silence with my humans, a lady walked into the room holding a needle. It was time to go. Neah and Lian started sobbing. They knew it as well as I did. The lady slowly approached me with the needle and began to stroke my fur. She was comforting. As she stroked me, I could feel the needle sink into my skin. I didn't fight. I knew it would stop the pain.

"Goodbye. We love you more than you can imagine. We will never forget you," Neah said with a shaking voice.

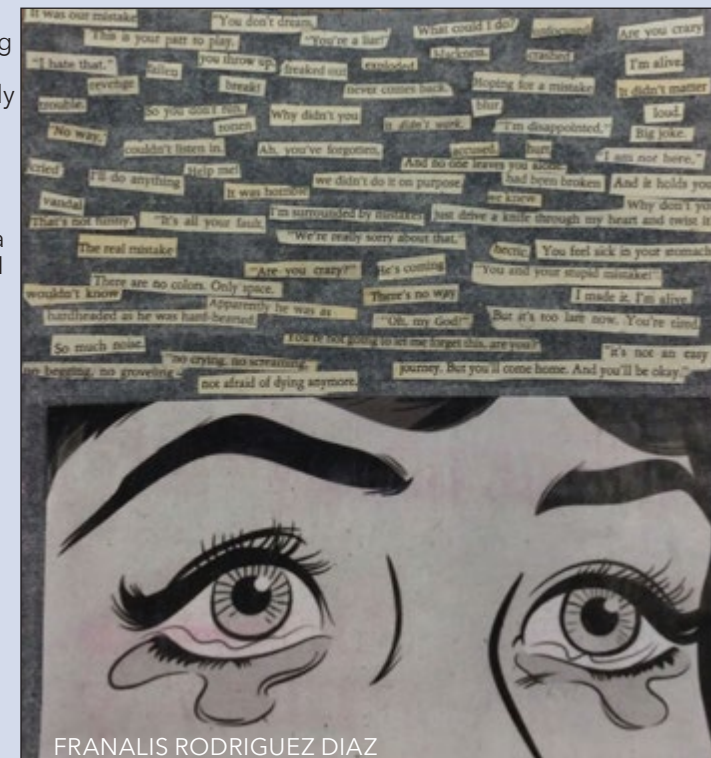
If only I could respond to them. Even if I could speak, I wouldn't have the power to do so. If I could, I would say, "Thank you. Thank you for your love of me, making me feel like the luckiest cat in the world. You made me forget my suffering and showed me that happiness is the best thing anyone could wish for. I love you two more than anything in the world."

Soon, I began to lose feeling in my limbs. My head fell into their shoulders. The pain slowly drifted away. I was free of suffering. My eyes reluctantly closed. Forever.

Even though my body was no longer in agony, I still felt a tug of sadness in my heart. If I had to choose between no pain, and staying with my humans feeling weak, but loved, I would choose being with my family a million times over being painless.

Ignoring the feeling of vacancy, I felt like a kitten again. I could still only see darkness, but I felt as if I was flexible, running around in the dew-covered grass with my humans, content as could be.

I could live with this feeling. I could live with this forever.



FRANALIS RODRIGUEZ DIAZ



by **Samantha Jayne Foerster**

Flare waited for the general to walk into view, her fiery red hair caught in a breeze on the roof. As she waited, she looked over her tattoos that were different from the ones she had as Clair, before she changed forms during near death to preserve her life. They had small skulls, scythes, and a mix of swirls and stars. She looked at her eyes and facial features in the small pocket mirror. She had blue eyes instead of green, more freckles, red hair instead of purple, long fangs instead of short, and a small nose piercing something she wasn't too fond of until now.

"Stop admiring yourself and get set up, and open these doors so we can drive them out to ya!" She overheard her leader yell through the earpiece, and with a sigh, opened up her holographic keypad and entered the lock code unlocking the doors. "Now, then all I need to do is exterminate the general, knock out the soldiers, get the plans and go," she said in her head while loading the rifle and looking down the scope to spot the general's head.

Once the general walked into view, right into her trap, she aimed straight for his head and fired, hitting exactly in the center. She laughed, letting the shadows around her form claws and darts on her glove. She slid down the side of the building and proceeded to fight through soldiers firing darts, wounding them until she reached the general's body. She patted the his body down until she found the plans in the back pocket of his jeans. She smirked and was about to tuck them into her hoodie when all of a sudden, an arrow flew past her head, landing on the wall. Knowing the markings on the arrow, she realized who was here.

Stark.

She slowly turned around to face her brother and the nine other girls on the council.

"Looks like your party's over." A blue-haired girl she knew by the name of Aquarius, said with a chuckle.

Flare spoke, "You're right, it is over, so that's why I'm leaving."

As they charged toward Flare, she used the shadows to teleport behind them and climb the wall, a trick she learned back when being a young fourteen-year-old-immortal can be boring, especially since this helped her eighteen-year-old-immortal form escape, buying herself time to pack up.

She put away her gun peacefully until a voice called from behind, "You can't escape me, demon!" She knew it was the angel she befriended named Virture, even though she never liked her traditional ways of saying demons shouldn't be helping vampyres. When Virture charged at Flare, being her slick self, she teleported away, letting the angel get her spear stuck in the cement roof.

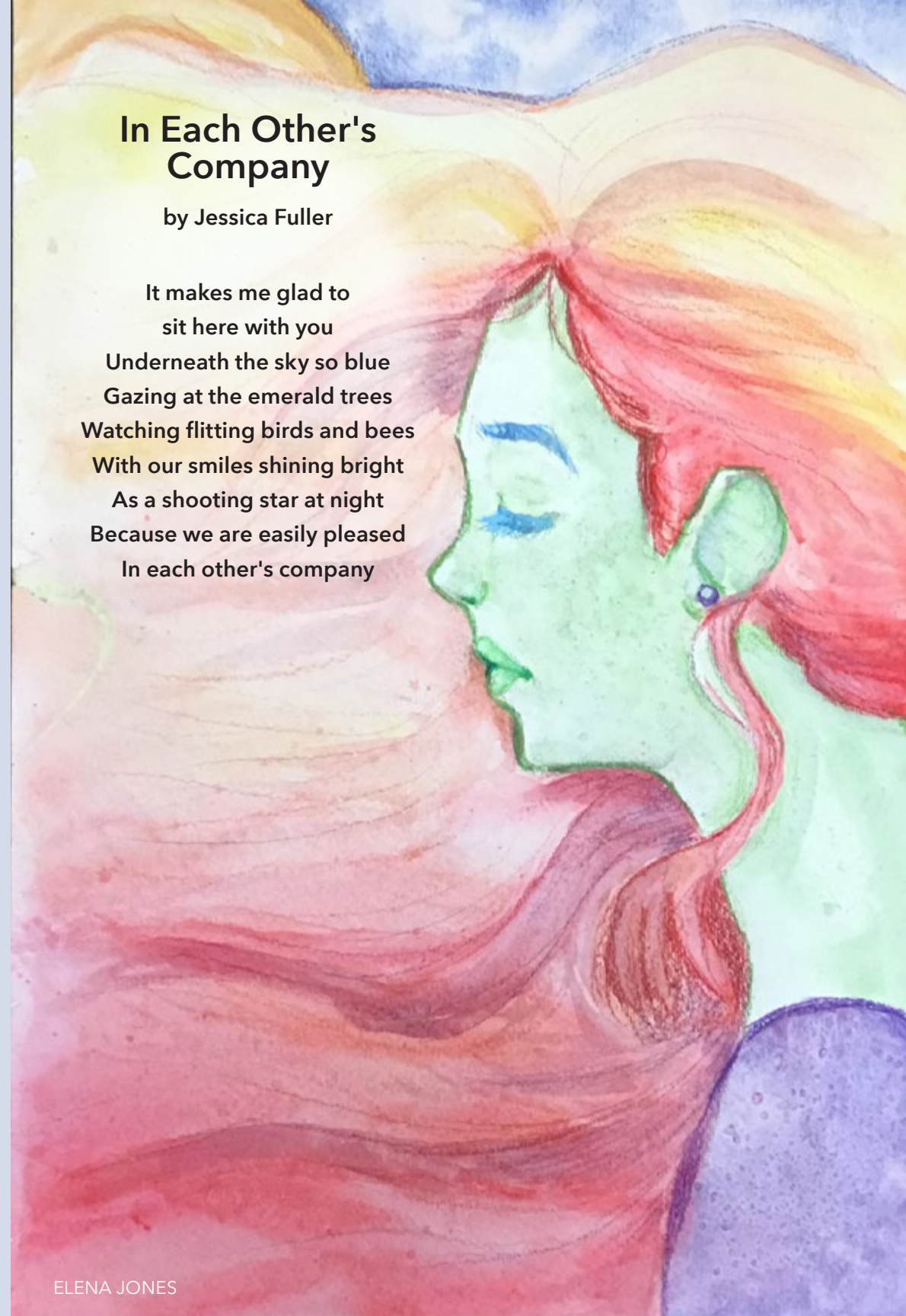
"It's too bad you can't catch me birdy," she snickered as she ran full speed wounding the angel, who cried out in pain that the others could hear.

Stark, who had heard Virture, immediately got up there when Flare was about to teleport back to her home. He tackled her mid teleport, leaving with her, while Karma his consort, cried. And, finally, to Stark and Flare, it all went black.

## In Each Other's Company

by Jessica Fuller

It makes me glad to  
sit here with you  
Underneath the sky so blue  
Gazing at the emerald trees  
Watching flitting birds and bees  
With our smiles shining bright  
As a shooting star at night  
Because we are easily pleased  
In each other's company



# CYBORG

by Tessa Adamopoulos

## Chapter One

I grabbed my backpack before jogging down the stairs to eat breakfast. As I drew near the bottom steps, the smell of cheese, ham, and eggs wafted into my nose. I lick my lips knowing the delicious fragrance was coming from the kitchen, where my mom must be making omelets. I almost drooled just thinking about her homemade omelets, my favorite. I sat down at the table, as soon as my plate was on the table, I wolfed it down in three bites. My mother chuckled, her blues sparkled as she remembered just how much I love her omelets, her long blonde hair draped over her shoulder, hugging her neck. I tuck some of my own blonde hair behind my ear as I grabbed my bag.

I stood, waving bye to my mom, and jogged towards the bus before missing it. My bag hit my lower back with every bouncy step. As soon as I was on the bus, I dashed to the first row right behind the driver, knowing if any one tried to mess with me, she would stop it. Soon everyone was on and we were driving down the road towards my middle school. I hopped out after saying bye to the driver, and walked silently towards the big double-door entry of the middle school. I was always the outcast, and that was the way it was always going to be. I turned to the right, heading up the stairs, then banking a left down the hall, and stopping at the second door to my left which was my first period, language arts with Mr. Panter.

After that, I had second period, then third, and finally lunch, my favorite, because it has food, and my least favorite, because of bullies. When I survived the cavemen, I walked to fourth period, Theater, with Mrs. Snoptz. Surprisingly, I hate theater more than lunch. My mom put me into the theater magnet, so instead of learning how to play guitar, I have to learn how to act, which is completely useless in today's society, with global warming at its worst in years, storms doubling in strength, and the government trying to bring back the Jurassic age, there's really no need for acting anymore. Pushing the thoughts out of my mind, I push open one of the heavy metal doors, and sat down three rows behind everyone else. I'm one of those socially awkward kids no one hangs around with, the weirdo, nerd, geek, dork, unpopular, freak, but how could I blame them when I don't even like myself.

"Good afternoon class. Today we will be working on your Shakespearean plays," Mrs. Snoptz announced, her voice echoing around the large room even as the intercom droned on.

"An EF10 tornado has been spotted near the school, please stay clear of windows, and prepare for impact," the intercom went off. I ran to the window, an EF10 has never touched down, let alone in Florida. I watch the dark swirling mass of wet sand, and water. I squint, looking for something I swear I saw.

"Alright then class, go under the stage, and tie yourself to the pipes underneath with these rags." She held up enough rags for all of us. I sighed before grabbing my bag, and headed out of the auditorium, into the bathroom. I reached into my bag, pulling out my scissors, I cut one of the straps off, and cut the other one, tying it around the sink's drainage pipe. I tied the other strap around my wrist and the other end around the same drainage pipe as my bag. I put the scissors back in my bag, before zipping it up.

Just then, Don, Ton, Erik, Jay Z, Lezzi, Sara, and Seeanne walk in. "If you don't want to die, do what I did." They quickly get to work, not saying a word. Soon all of them were under their own sink, their backpacks tied next to them, in the neat row of sinks, each one about a foot and a half apart.

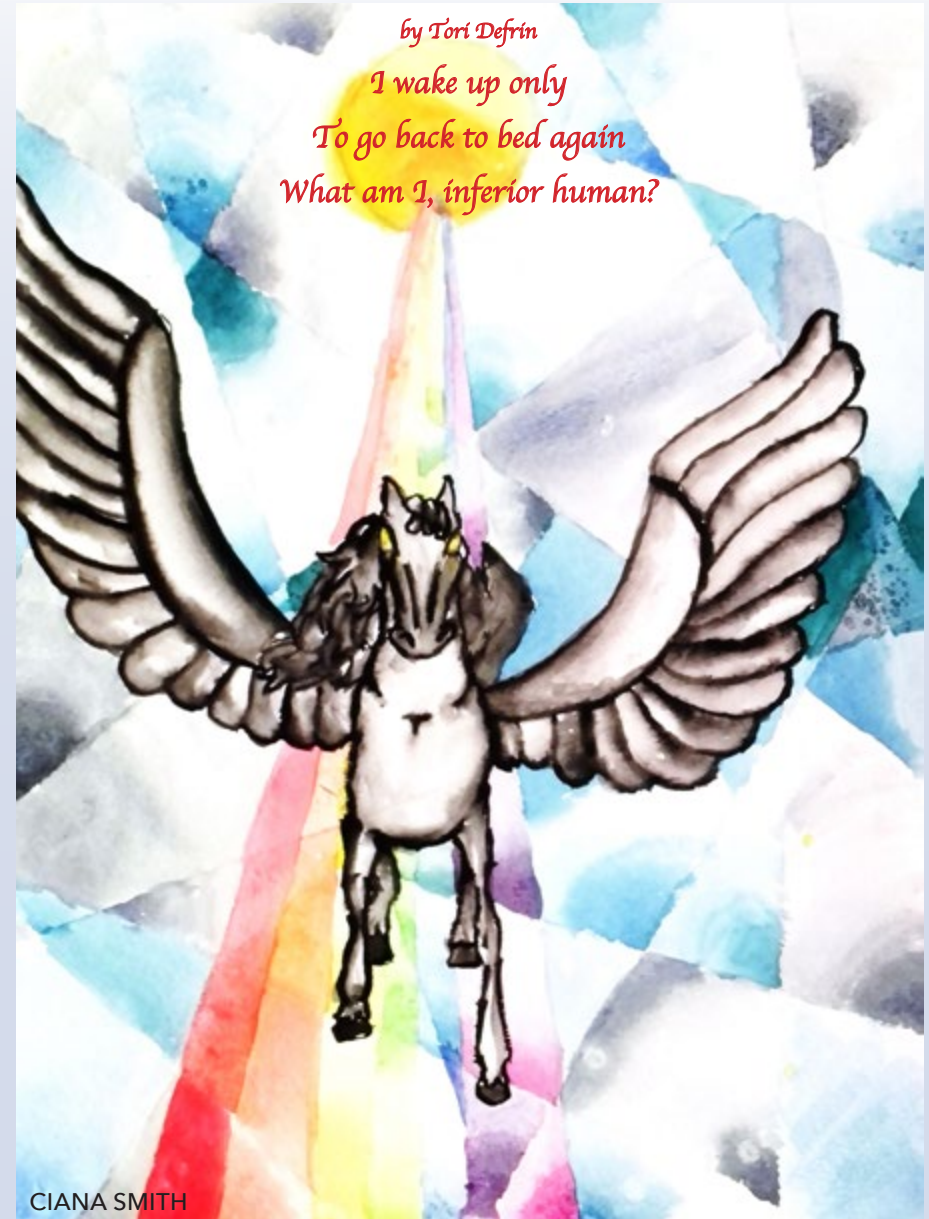
"Tell me exactly why we're doing this," Lezzi demanded. She was tall and skinny, with long black hair that flowed down to her waist, with dark brown eyes, and high cheek bones.



## A Poetic Riddle

by Tori Defrin

I wake up only  
To go back to bed again  
What am I, inferior human?



"If you ever listened in health class you would know," I sigh. She scoffs, whipping her hair over her shoulder, her natural, irritating sass coming out.

"Crystal, how do you know this will work?" I turn around to face Jay Z, he was right next to me. He was short spoken, but popular nonetheless. He had long legs, which was probably the reason he was captain of the track team, he had a nice tan from surfing all the time, his shaggy, reddish-brown hair went down to his shoulders, and his eyes were brilliant hazel.

"I don't," I answer, feeling the tension grow as we wait for the storm to hit, my stomach clenching as I watch Don, and Ton, from behind Jay Z, look at each other. Their faces tight, but deep down I know they're scared; we all are. Soon I could hear, three-hundred freight trains. I wrapped my legs and arms around the pipe, my backpack in between my stomach, and the pipe, from the corner of my eye, I saw everyone doing the same.

I turned to Seeanne, she was texting. "You have got to be kidding me!? She's on death's door, and she's TEXTING????!!!" I think. Just then, the wall and stall doors of the bathroom rip out of the foundation.



# WORDS OF THE DECEASED.

A haiku by Miranda Fuller.

Philosophers say,  
that death is a peaceful thing.  
They have never died.

# Who am I?

by Ruby Lucien

*Do you know me? Truly know me? I don't think so.  
Do you understand how I am feeling on the inside?  
Do you know the pains I go through? You most likely don't.*

*The person you know is the person you see. That person isn't truly me.  
That person you see...*

*is the look-alike of me. She has a veil over her face, hiding the tears.  
That veil wrapped tight around my throat, so that I can not scream.  
The laughs that you hear, are not really there.*

*They are the echoes from the empty halls of dreams underneath my veil.*

*The smiles you see every day are the ones I paint on my face.  
The happiness you know of, that you think is inside of me, is just an illusion.  
I am miserable.*

*The once bright white veil I had is now soaked in a beautiful, and bright red.  
If you try to break inside of me, you might be able to,  
but once you are inside there will be many challenges you have to face and conquer.*

*When you defeat all those challenges you'll figure out that it was a waste of time,  
because now you see the brick wall barriers guarding my vault of emptiness.*

*You'll try to leave, but as soon as you had entered,  
I had trapped you inside of me, locking the doors and guarding  
the keys so that you could not escape me. So that you would  
never leave me behind and forget about me, because that has already  
happened one too many times.*

*You'll never know me. No matter how hard you try.  
You can't pry yourself in. My body has been cracked, scarred, and bruised.  
You can huff and puff, and try to blow my wall down, but it'll never work  
'cause I have a secret you don't know about, and that secret*

*is the  
KEY  
to my...  
EVERYTHING.*

*But the key to my everything is truly a lie, because I,  
have truly nothing.*



# STRESS

by Liz Gambrell

I woke up to a monster of nothing  
but stress,

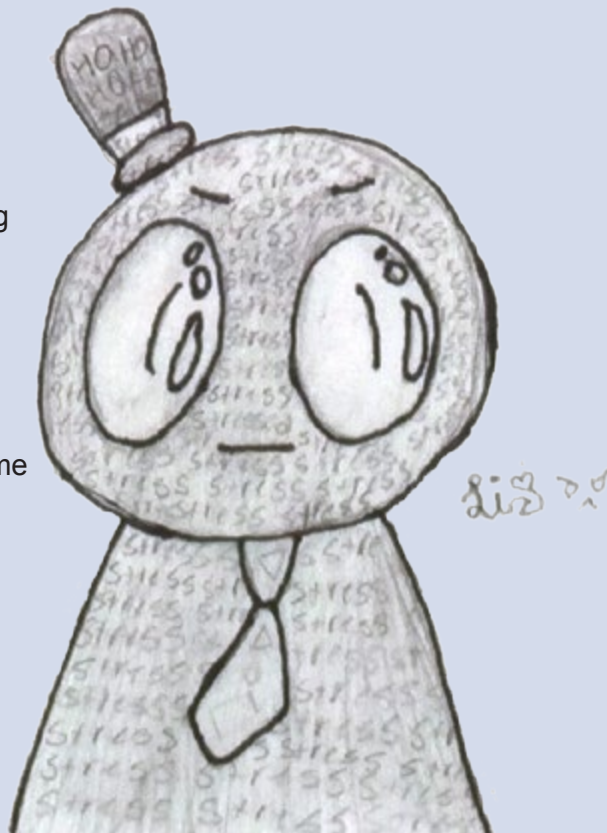
A big ball of something heavy  
on my chest.

It courses through my brain,  
destructive, like a disease.

The pain of its presence brings me  
to my knees.

Stop it!  
Please STOP!

I beg and I plead.  
But to the monster inside,  
I am nothing but feed.



LIZ GAMBRELL



ANA DERENTHAL



SAVANNAH VILLEGAS

## They Were Sisters

by Luet Kahn

Past, where I am blind to sad.  
Where everything is happy,  
bright, and colorful.  
Where a little baby crawls across the  
snow white tiles.  
The smell of cinnamon candles burn  
even when it's not Christmas  
Where the infant goes to play with her  
toys.

The baby is now growing.  
The little brunette kid runs after her  
sister in the silver skirt.

The one she always wore.  
The siblings take the family camera  
and make movies  
with their dolls.  
They would play and have fun.  
They would pester their mother and  
father.  
They would compete and race to see  
who was better  
They were always together.



ANNA DERENTHAL



MADDIE FLINT

## Truth

by Izabella Tursi

Her mouth  
Drips  
With truth.  
This thick, dark liquid  
No one wants to see.  
Everybody looks away.  
She quickly wipes her mouth,  
but it pours out of her.  
This time, violently,  
"You cannot look away from truth"  
She says.



KILEY SMICH

# The Force in Full

by Jeremiah Tacey

A young Nautolan Padawan walks down across the desert like environment of Jakku, his twin lightsabers lightly banging on the sides of his legs. He walks to the Jedi Temple inside the town, the sun starting to rise and making the sky shine a gold-orange color. He walks inside the dark temple and looks around at the destroyed statues, reminding him of the days when Jedi ruled the galaxy to keep peace. He remembered his old Jedi master, Kit Fisto who taught him how to fight underwater, how to use his blade as an extension of his body, and how to control the force, but then he remembered his worst memory - Order 66, when all of the clone troopers turned on their Jedi Masters. Then he heard a military marching sound that he knew right away.

*Stormtroopers!* He thought as he jumped with his force powers, helping get him in the air, back-flipping to land on a ledge above the entrance. The Stormtroopers marched in with a large crate floating behind them. They opened the crate and grabbed the drills inside.

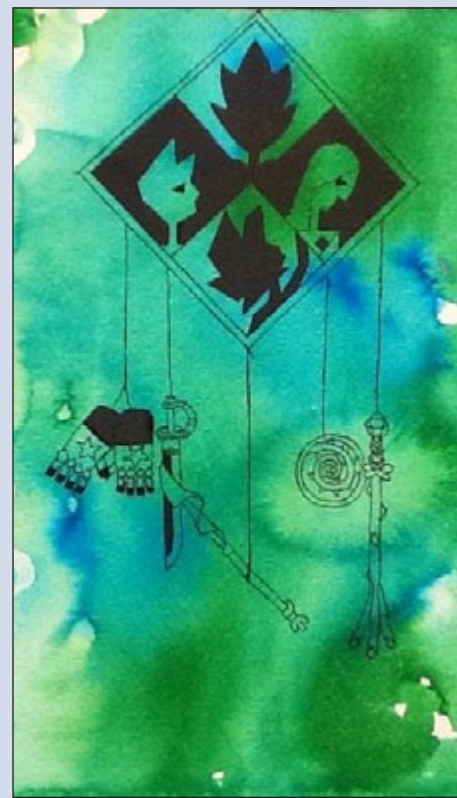
They started mining for only one thing. Kyber crystals. They were drilling with almost a sort of eagerness for more, but since they were Stormtroopers, they didn't have emotions. The young Jedi leapt into the crate and hid under the crystals. Then the crate closed and the Stormtroopers started to push the crate back to the Star Destroyer where they would unload the crystals. All of the sudden, the crate stopped and started to elevate towards the Star Destroyer. Then they got to the dark hanger bay. The padawan leapt out of the crate and while somersaulting in the air, his two lightsabers were ignited, and the brilliant blue and purple shined through the dark hanger. The Stormtroopers sounded the alarm, but the Nautolan took out a trooper using the force, took his blaster, and shot the cameras before the Empire could see a thing. All the Stormtroopers could see was the flurry of light coming to them before they got stabbed or sliced by the duel lightsabers. He eventually got to the officer in the hanger bay, with countless Stormtroopers behind him. His two lightsabers were crossed, with the officer's neck in between them.

"Who-who are you?" he said in a frightened voice.

"Marcielio. Also known as, your doom." He responded before he let his lightsabers connect and kill the Imperial officer.



MICAH YAEGER



ISAIAH MAEZTU



ZANIYA SKEEN



HALEY WILSON-MILLER

# Flora

by Alba Rezak and Ariana Gomez

"Mom, Dad, I-I think there is something wrong with me." Alex said, soon to be known as Flora.

"What do you mean Alex?" his father replied.

"I saw this boy at after school a-and I really liked him and I wanted to hug him and be with... be with him forever..... is that wrong?" Flora's mother backed away slowly as his father seemed to be virtually shaking with anger. Flora was slapped to the floor.

"GET ALL OF YOUR DISGUSTING THINGS AND LEAVE THIS HOUSE, YOU CHILD OF SATAN!!!!!" roared his father as Flora was shoved up the mansion stairs toward his room.

The thing his parents did not know was that Flora had been stashing millions of dollars inside his closet and drawers for the past couple months. While in his bedroom, he grabbed most of the money - he was hurrying, so there was barely any time to grab all of it - and shoved it into all of the sketch books he owned; that's an achievement when you own over 20 of them, and put them in his backpack including a bunch of pet food, millions of extra pencils, many erasers, and God's gift to Earth, Copic markers. He also included extra flower food in case he got hungry.

Wait.... I haven't told you yet? Alex goes by the nickname Flora because he has a special "power". He doesn't just have a green thumb, no, Flora has green arms, legs, and other body parts I don't feel like mentioning. Flora has Florakinesis, which means he has the power to manipulate flowers. Yes, he named himself after his kinesis!

What are you going do about it? On to the story...

As Flora left the house tears rolled down his cheeks as he thought of how easily someone could stop loving you. He ran and didn't stop until the moon-rays danced beautifully across the lake as he passed. He sat down on the grass and noticed a dark figure walking across the street toward him. IT WAS THE KID FROM AFTER SCHOOL! Flora ran to the nearest alley and hid. He didn't really want to it just... happened. His heartrate sped up as he heard the teenager's footsteps get closer.

Out of pure anxiety, a cage of rose vines encased him and he calmed down. He was alone. Kind of.

The taller teenager poked at the cage and investigated the vines. "Hello? Is anyone in there?" He said as he continued to poke at the vines.

"Who's there?" Flora mumbled.

"My name is..."

ALBA REZAK

RYAN BLOSSER



KEYRESIA SEALY



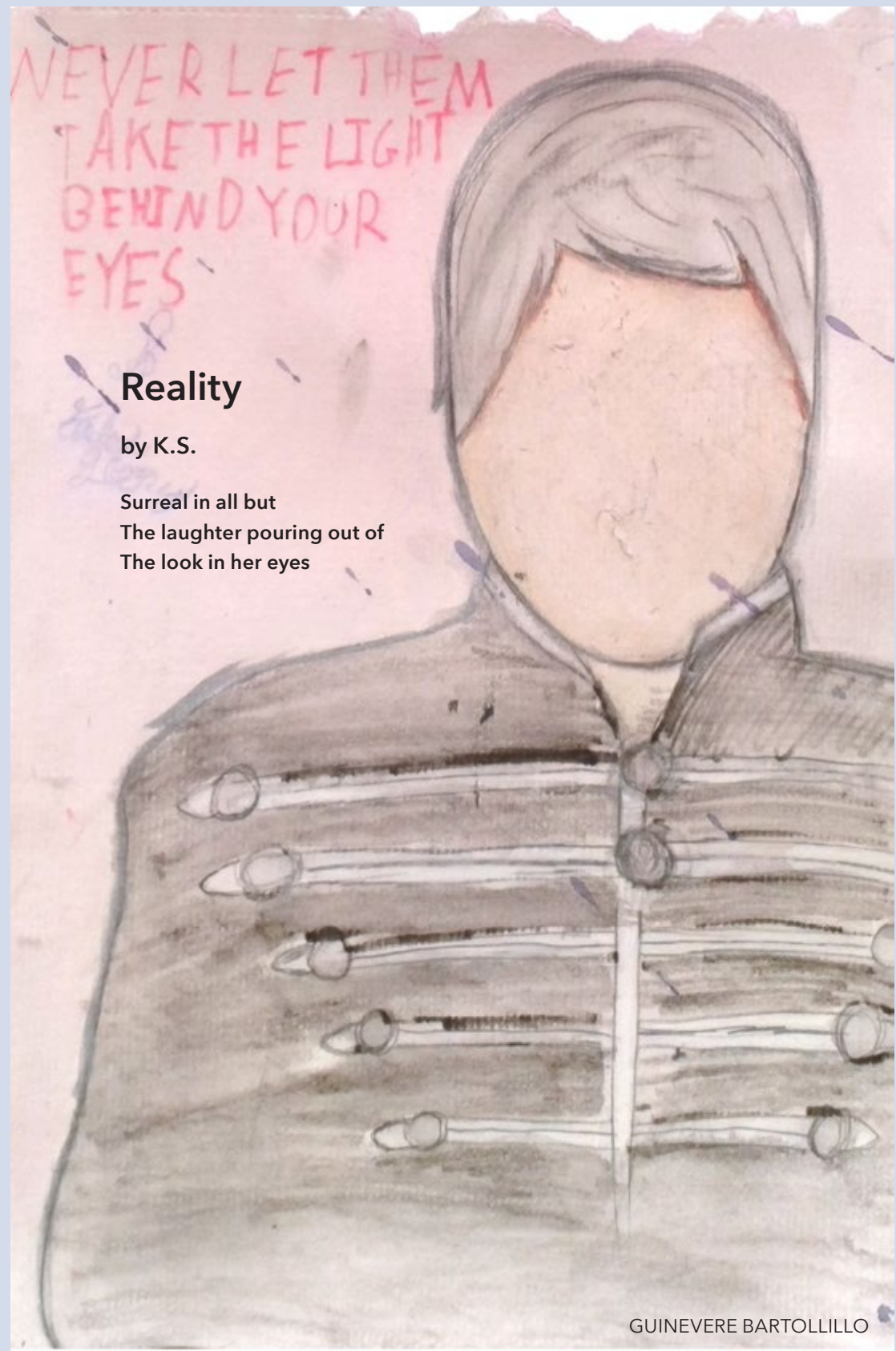
ANGELA WINIEWICZ



TRISTYN BLANKENSHIP



TAIT NAKAGAWA

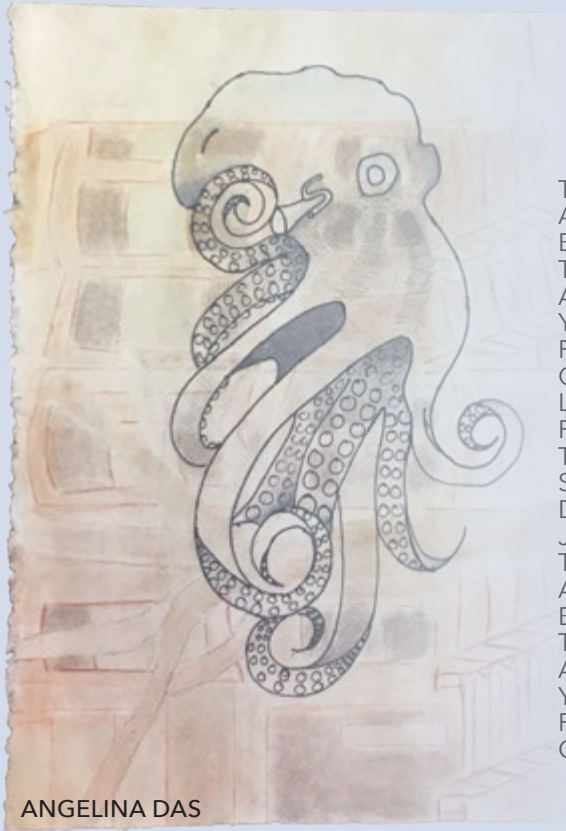


## Reality

by K.S.

Surreal in all but  
The laughter pouring out of  
The look in her eyes

GUINEVERE BARTOLLILLO



ANGELINA DAS

## Worldly Rules

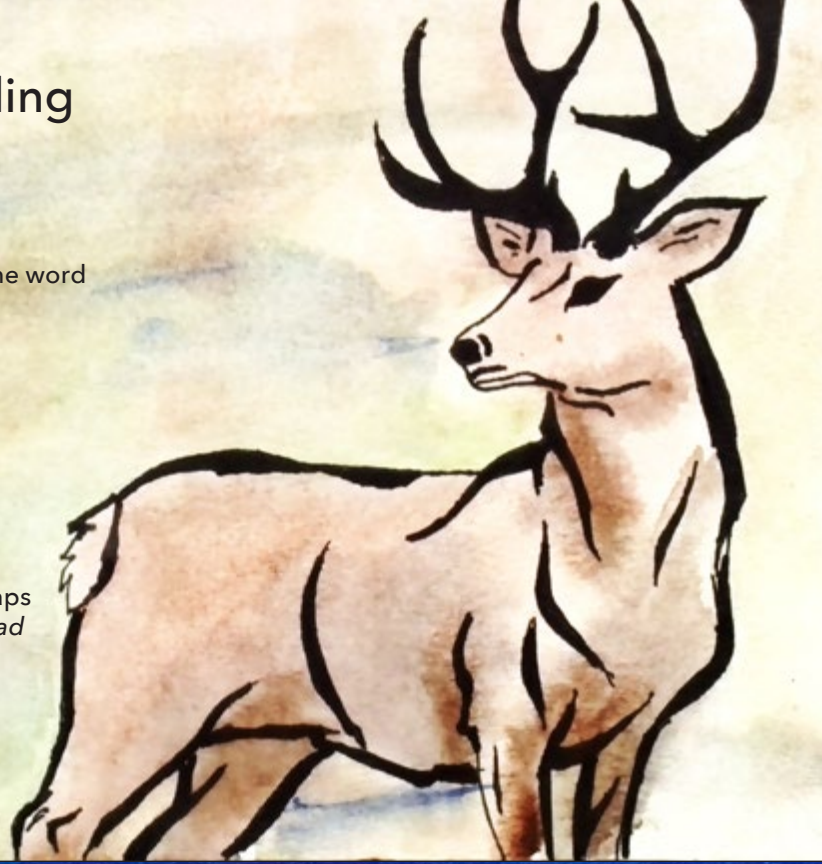
by Jessica Fuller

These are not my rules they're the world's  
And who are we to say they're wrong  
But it's written basically  
That if you work hard you'll get along  
And if you're pure of heart you'll find  
You get the gift of peace of mind  
For in the end my boy you'll see  
Goodness pays off eventually  
Life is the worst ruler of all  
For he has a great iron fist  
That he crushes people with if they do wrong  
So follow suit and stand up tall  
Do not think of things you have missed  
Just break out into this wise and heartfelt song  
These are not my rules they're the world's  
And who are we to say they're wrong  
But it's written basically  
That if you work hard you'll get along  
And if you're pure of heart you'll find  
You get the gift of peace of mind  
For in the end my boy you'll see  
Goodness pays off eventually

# Downloading

by K.S.

I was  
Invisible  
In every sense of the word  
But you  
Not only  
Saw  
Me  
You  
Ventured  
And fought  
And defended  
To meet me  
And I wonder  
If maybe just perhaps  
It's time to *download*  
Some visibility  
To present to you  
in return.



GRACE BARCOTT



SARAH BRISCOE

# Mother

by Luet Kahn

I've loved since forever,  
She fought for me when people fought at me.  
Pretty,  
beautiful,  
funny,  
talented,  
is what she was, what she hides from me.  
She won't listen, she yells,  
I can't talk without a  
lecture,  
lies,  
frowns,  
yells,  
questions.  
And all I do is say, "I don't know" and pout my lip.  
I DO KNOW  
I know strong people listen, not yell.  
You won't listen  
and I know that, and that crowds my head  
like it's black friday.  
We never get along. We are too alike.  
This is me, this is me standing up for myself.



LEO HALL



GENESIS MUNOZ



OLIVIA WILLIAMS

## The World Gone Blank

by Liz Gambrell

Creativity or perfection

Feeling or stillness

Freedom or instinct

All that is familiar  
Lost in a single blink

Learning from our failures  
or winning every time

Knowing the outcome  
or learning the truth

Comfort in knowing every single day  
or excitement of what's to come in life's peculiar game





MANUELA TABORDA



VICTORIA LAGADEAU



GINA BISHOP



KEVIN DUVERNE



JASMINE MARKEY



MICAH YAEGER



JANAYA MORALES



EDWARD HOUSTON

*A collection of poems written during testing.*

## Tests

by **Miranda Fuller**

I finished this early  
And that's nothing new,  
But sometimes I just wish  
I took testing time too.

My boredom is growing,  
I stare at the clock.  
While the random guy next to me  
Is asleep like a rock.

So I jot down some poems,  
Just to pass all the time.  
'Doom' and 'gloom'  
Is now my favorite rhyme.

Doom, gloom  
Despair, don't care  
Clock, like a rock,  
I could pull out my hair.  
Next, best, chairs, test,  
Each stanza is melting  
Into a jumbled mess.

It drags on forever, my boredom and doom,  
When they call the test's finish,  
I'll run out the room.

Pencils scrape.  
Keys clack.  
I rest against by test chair's back.  
I look around,  
Desperate to see,  
If anyone  
Is as bored as me!

Beyond the window, beside next to the door.  
I look at something, and look some more.  
I continue to stare, don't know if it cares...  
It's a baby's face.



## My Friend Brought a Pillow

by **Miranda Fuller**

My friend brought a pillow.  
I think that was smart.  
'Cause I'm doomed to writing  
Tiny pieces of art.  
poem after poem,  
Each worse than the rest.  
I just hope that somehow,  
I survive this test.



LIA DELGADO



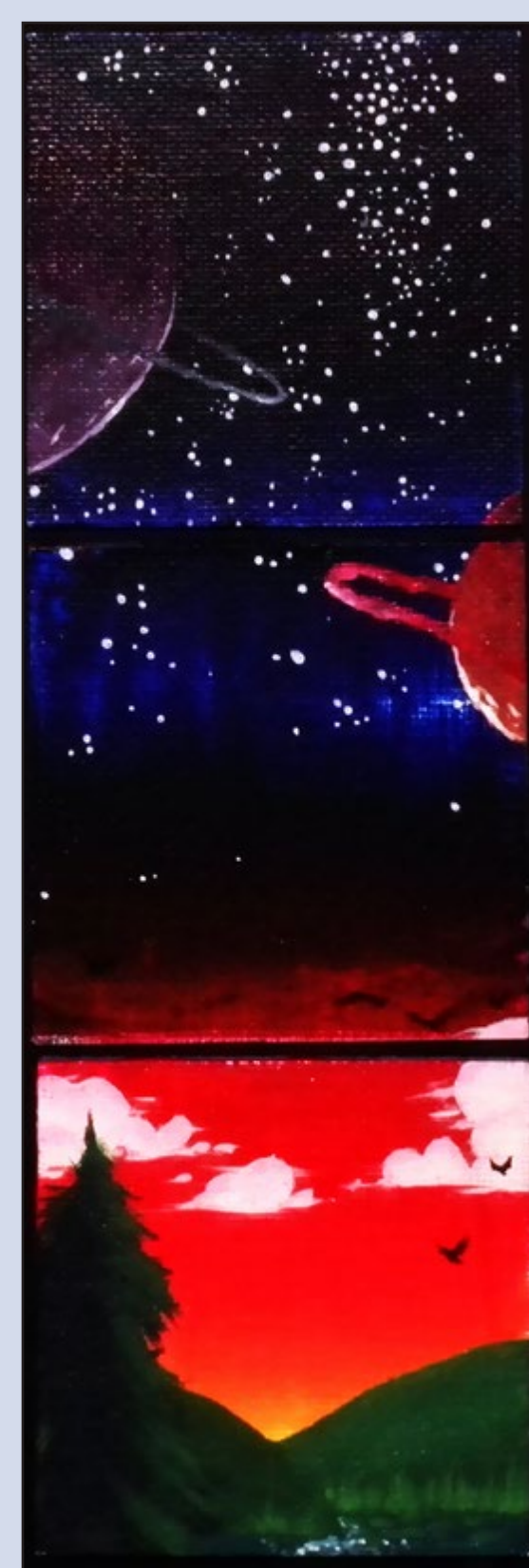
VICTORIA McBENSON



COURTNEY CHISHOLM



MALACHI BRAVE



ALY DRAPCHO

# Awesome... Not.

by Alexis Sheppard

Remember that soccer game I had on Thursday night?  
When I charged towards the ball with all my teenage might?  
Well this part you may not, but he kicked the ball and put spots in my light.  
Yes. I'm telling you now, no one could have predicted the who, the why and the how.  
Time stopped a minute then,  
And all I can tell you was when  
That soccer ball met my face.  
There was no "howdy doo?" or ,  
"I'm glad I bumped into you".  
But the THWACK it made as it went down,  
The sound of my neck snapping back as I hit the ground.  
My nose hurt the worst, I was thinking it had broken,  
Or at least was bleeding.  
Until I realized the wetness on my face was those tears that were falling, and my head  
started pounding, telling me the real worst had come calling.  
My body was spinning, I felt so dizzy, I hyperventilated, coughing and inhaling grass.  
They helped me up and carried me off the field.  
I felt dread when I found myself in a hospital bed.



ALEXIS SHEPPARD

The light was too bright, the  
sounds were too loud, and  
the pounding in my head was  
drowning out the crowd.  
I felt myself moving, the spinning  
never stopped. I wanted to  
throw up, but I was tired all the  
same.  
I don't think a time will come,  
where I feel as helpless as I did  
that day.  
I'm finally home, to maybe get  
some sleep  
After just a tiny bit to eat.  
I lay down on that cold, hard bed,  
as replays of that moment  
plague my head.



MORGAN LUBOLD



ALEXIS SHELTON



ANDY DECARDENAS



AUSTIN SPANGLER



ELENA JONES



HOLDEN CONNER



SAVANNAH VILLEGAS



VICTORIA MCBENSON



TY SHOFNER

## Turning This Duo Into One

by Jessica Fuller

Oh, when we got together I thought  
 that we would never end  
 And you I could depend  
 As more than just a friend  
 Now I see I was mistaken and you  
 are not for me  
 Now I just want to be left be  
 But your lipstick stain is stuck on my  
 heart  
 And you just don't seem to be willing  
 to let us part  
 I already told you that I can't be true  
 And so, I tear myself from you

Oh I'll clean!  
 Clean clean clean,  
 And I'll scrub!  
 Scrub scrub scrub,  
 Dip my heart in water and wash it out  
 in the tub!  
 Yes I'll rip!  
 Rip rip rip,  
 And I'll tear!  
 Oh dear!

This is the way it must be done,  
 Turning this duo into one.

Oh, I keep on hearing that when we broke  
 up you were so sad  
 Well that is just too bad  
 But I will not get mad  
 I understand that it's hard for you to get over me  
 But that is how it has to be

But your perfume smell is lingering around  
 And your voice is such a lovely sound  
 I don't want to say I still sort of love you  
 Good thing I know just what to do

I will clean!  
 Clean clean clean,  
 And I'll scrub!  
 Scrub scrub scrub,  
 Dip my heart in water and wash it out in the tub!  
 Yes I'll rip!  
 Rip rip rip,  
 And I'll tear,  
 Oh dear!  
 This is the way it must be done,  
 Turning this duo into one.

## Caring Company

by Jessica Fuller

It makes me sad to sit here with you  
 For you always seem so blue  
 Knowing that there is no one  
 To cheer you up when you are glum  
 But you don't realize that I  
 Do not like to see you cry  
 Yes much happier you'd be  
 In my caring company



ROBERT WALKER



VICTORIA MCBENSON



MIRANDA FULLER



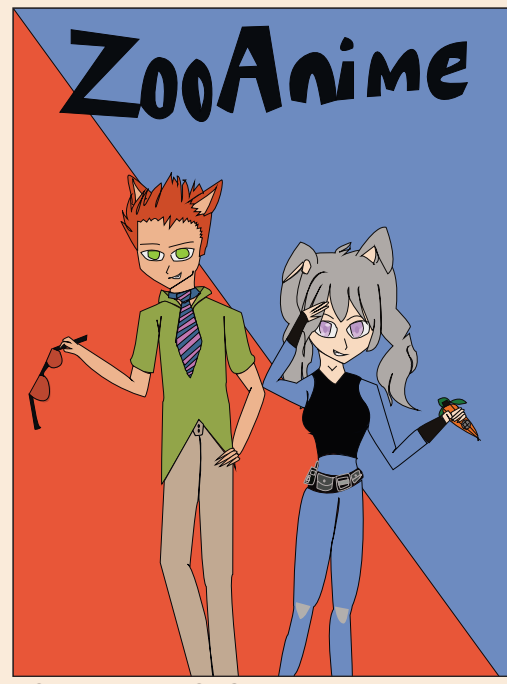
MIRANDA FULLER



ELENA JONES



HALEY MARSHALL



CHARDNET IROEGBU

**May the 4th Be With You**



**HMS Illumination Art & Magic Showcase**

Where: Howard Middle School  
 When: Thursday, May 4th 5:30-7:00 pm

Hors d'oeuvres will be served  
 Special Performance by the HMS Jazz Band

Rachel Buckley: Art  
 Valerie King: Digital Art  
 Clinton McCracken: Art/Magnet Coordinator  
 Lee Ramsey: Magnet Director  
 Kristen Warskow: Art  
 Eric Yuhasz- STEM/Magic

LEO HALL



KATELYN LUMM



DANIELLE GABRIE



ETHAN HORNBECK



BENJAMIN MARKS

# Afraid

by  
Brandon Agranoff

You see him,  
You hear him,  
You free him,  
You're near him.

He advances at you,  
With instant betrayal,  
Trying to scare you,  
Refusing to fail.

You start to run,  
You're sweating like  
heck,  
He thinks this is fun,  
He goes at your neck.

You try to hide,  
But you see him  
follow,  
You go inside,  
And his heart is still  
hollow.

You see blood,  
Coursing through  
your veins,  
You fall into mud,  
As it rains.

You are trying,  
To call some help,  
But you think you're  
dying,  
So you yelp.

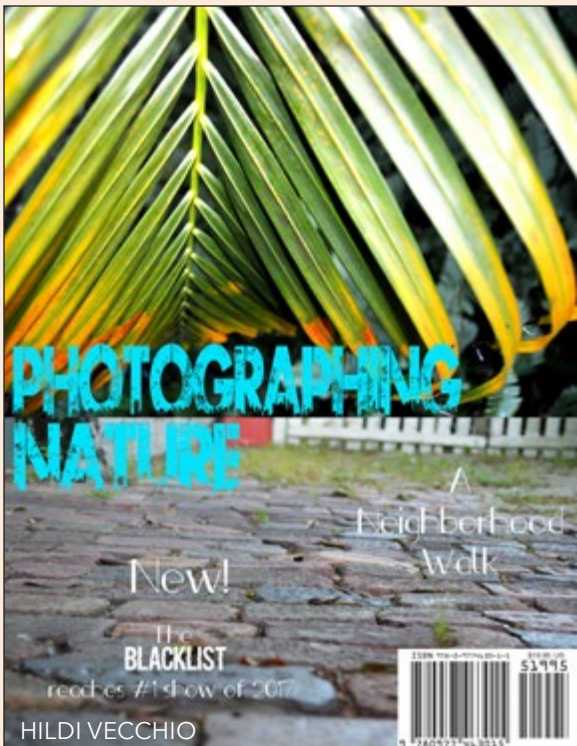
This is a feeling,  
That he has made,  
And there is no  
healing,  
When you're afraid.



CALLIE SPELLMAN



KATELYN LUMM



## Where The Willows Grow

by Jessica Fuller

I'll tell you where the willows grow  
 Down by the bank  
 Down by the bank  
 I'll tell you where the willows grow  
 For all my life this fact I've known  
 The bank where fish jump joyfully  
 And birds sing sweetly in the tree  
 That is the spot where willows grow  
 That is where you can find me

I'll tell you where the stars shine bright  
 Up in the sky  
 Up in the sky  
 I'll tell you where the stars shine bright  
 For I've gazed at them many a night  
 Then dawn chases the dark away  
 And sheds the world in light of day  
 That's the same sky that hold the stars  
 That's where you'll find me gazing

So sit with me in meadows green  
 Among the flow'rs  
 Among the flow'rs  
 So sit with me in meadows green  
 Where it is peaceful and serene  
 With Oxeye, Jasmine, Dahlia  
 Pennywort and Magnolia  
 Sit with me where it smells so sweet  
 And everything is blooming



MACKENZIE WERKING

## I should have been there

by Jessica Fuller

I wandered all lost, until I was found.  
 You were the one who held me, and you held me down.  
 I went and left you, your troubles unknown.  
 So now you are gone, and I am alone.

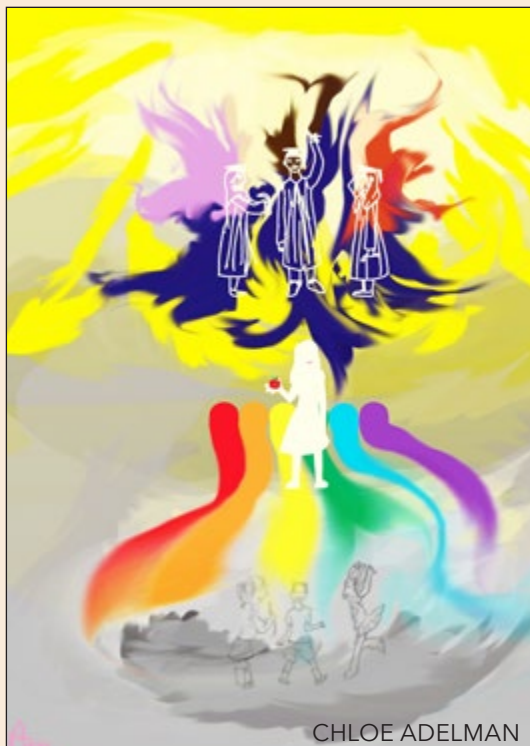
I should have been there, right by your side.  
 To comfort you, in your darkest nights.  
 But I went and left you, I left you alone.  
 And so you were long gone, when I came back home.

You tried to be happy, again and again.  
 You thought of me and smiled, as I was your friend.  
 But troubles over took you, around every bend.  
 They made a hole in your heart, that you couldn't mend.

I should have been there, right by your side.  
 To comfort you, in your darkest nights.  
 But I went and left you, I left you alone.  
 And so you were long gone, when I came back home.

I came back to see you, but you weren't there.  
 I wandered around your home, but couldn't find where.  
 You weren't there waiting, you hadn't read the mail.  
 I searched with all my heart, but to no avail.

I should have been there, right by your side.  
 To comfort you, in your darkest nights.  
 When I found out the truth, I fell down and cried.  
 For while I was away, you had died.



## Welcome to the End

by K.S.

They lay down amidst soft purple heather, encased in amaranthine petals that are more fluid than water, softer than the scarlet clouds above them. The air is frigid and the scenery hazy, and they watch as the sky, in all its vermilion glory, drips down into the gray of the forests leaves, blurring the lines until they become indistinguishable. The trees, what's left of them, sway, and the petals around them rustle, colder and colder still. They think that they should be frozen in the scene, but the flora still sways, swishing with the wind that threatens to freeze them. It's all soft and cold and delicate and they lie there taking in the sensation of color and of light. A tragic serendipity, for even though the cold may chill them to their hollow bones, it can't freeze their time. If only. They know the serenity encasing them now is destined to wilt away in time. Like everything else.