

A photograph of a blue door set in a brick wall. The door has a metal handle and a white mailbox. The number 64 is displayed above a row of ten small, identical, stylized faces. The word 'Nolos' is written in large letters, and 'Volume 10 2017-2018' is written in smaller letters below it.

64



Nolos

**Volume 10
2017-2018**

This issue is dedicated to those who wonder.

Nolos

Volume 10

2017-2018

Notes from the Editors

Miriam Guzmán

Editor-in-Chief

I think anyone who has been Editor-in-Chief of *Nolos* can attest to the fact that it's a wild ride -- one way or another, it always ends up being a wild ride. This semester was my third working with the magazine, and I'd have to say it has been my favorite. Not because it was any less stressful (or wild), but because I was witnessing the magazine grow into something incredibly dynamic and beautiful.

This term we had an amazing staff that I am infinitely grateful for; we each had something special to bring to the table that essentially became crucial to this experience. Thank you to the wonderful readers, to our advisor, Dr. Elliott, and to those who helped with fundraising. I will forever be grateful for Joey, the Assistant Editor, who worked incredibly hard and definitely did not know what he was getting himself into when he signed up for the position. Hey Joey, you were GREAT! Thank you to our Poetry Editor, Angela; I still have so much to learn from you and the beautiful way in which you assemble words. Thank you to Wyatt; the design editor, we've both cried our fair share over *Nolos*, but we always pull through and it is always a pleasure working with you. And lastly, thank you to the contributors and readers of this magazine who make everything worthwhile.

Joey Lucchesi

Assistant Editor

It has taken weeks, but as the spring semester reaches full swing I have come to realize that the untied shoes, unkempt frizzled hair, and coffee stained hoodie have become a part of my daily uniform in my first year as assistant editor for *Nolos*. I found myself on this year's staff abruptly after our publication's hiatus in the fall and I have not looked back since. Mainly because I did not have enough time to do so with the tremendous pile of incredibly talented submissions to sift through. However, I could not be more excited for the release of this 2017-2018 super-issue because it has given second-wind to the deserving pieces originally submitted for the fall issue.

That being said, I would like to give an enormous round of applause to our Editor-in-Chief, Miriam Guzman for administering CPR to the magazine and giving me the opportunity to be a part of it. Additionally, I would like to thank the rest of our editorial staff, Angela Trevino, our poetry editor, and Wyatt Murphy, our design editor, for their hard work making this whole shebang happen. Lastly, but certainly not least, thank you to all of our contributors for allowing us to share the AU voice in its purest form: art.

P.S. I would also like to thank the Washington State Board of Education for failing me on the 4th grade state writing test for "not following the prompt." My story about our school flying around in a tornado was clever and you know it.

Wyatt Murphy

Design Editor

Created while in a Mountain Dew-induced coma, the first “jumbo” issue of *Nolos* is finally here. Having been my third issue I’ve designed, I can proudly say this is our most polished issue yet (hooray for no page numbers in the middle of the magazine).

The backbone to *Nolos* is the content. Truly unique material can only come from those who realize they are unique themselves. It is an amazing feeling to inspire people to submit their work, and seeing their reactions when they first read the magazine. Being the design editor for *Nolos* gives me the chance to enrich the lives of those who submit, and those who indulge in the content.

Unfortunately, a change in the staff structure made it too difficult to release our normally-scheduled Fall issue of *Nolos* for this school year. However, I could not be any more proud of the staff’s ability to bounce back even harder for the Spring to bring together a much larger, more dynamic issue of AU’s literary magazine. I definitely want to give a huge thank you to Miriam Guzmán, for stepping back into the Editor in Chief role so quickly, and essentially saving the *Nolos* magazine from fading away.

This issue is for the those who wonder - for those who are ingenious enough to imagine; who envision the dreams we have yet to see. This is for those who withstand the criticism and overcome rejection, yet still manage to influence the world. So for those who decide to take creative risks, this issue is for you.

Angela Treviño

Poetry Editor

In life there are ups and downs that come our way. Sometimes they take hold of us and never let go, like a long-lost lover that refuses to leave your side. And other times we find the will to triumph and find the will to stand for one more fight. Life can be hard and difficult at times, and sometimes we need a way to express that. This issue does exactly that. We have read so many pieces over the last few months, each powerful in their own and unique way. We felt their pain, joy, suffering, pride, power, anguish, anxiety, and every emotion in between. We want you to feel what we felt with each and every poem, short story, and photo. Anyways, hope you enjoy these amazing pieces just as much as we have!

Acknowledgements

The editors and staff of *Nolos* would like to thank the following groups and individuals for their support during the making of this publication:

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Goodway Group

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Submission Guidelines

Nolos welcomes quality online submissions of short stories, one-act plays, poetry, and art from all students, graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Please state in the body of your email whether you are submitting short stories, one-acts, poetry, or artwork and include your name and email address. Free speech is welcomed and encouraged, but we will not publish hate speech or thinly veiled political statements or gratuitous violence and pornography. No hard copy submissions, please. Specific guidelines are detailed below, and we are excited to hear from you!

Poetry: We will accept poetry submissions up to four pages with a total of five poetry submissions per person. Please avoid limericks and nursery rhymes. Please include contact information and a list of the poems you are submitting in the body of your email and attach your poems as a Word document.

One-Act Plays: One-act plays are limited to one submission per person with a maximum of 3,000 words. Excerpts from longer plays will not be accepted. Please include contact information and the title of the work you are submitting in the body of your email and attach your play as a Word document.

Short Fiction and Non-Fiction: Fiction submissions are limited to one submission per person with a maximum of 3,000 words. Accepted genres include literary fiction and the issue's featured genre. Please include contact information and the title of the work you are submitting in the body of your email and attach your story as a Word document.

Art: Art submissions can be sent as either a drawing or photograph in JPEG form. Drawings should be done in black ink with a black felt tip pen and contain no shading. Five art submissions are allowed per person. Please include contact information and the titles of the artwork you are submitting in the body of your email and attach your JPEG files.

Please send submissions to
nolos@aurora.edu with the title "Submissions for *Nolos*"

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Table of Contents

Poetry

I Was Tricked

Shawn Kalam 11

Orion

Mark Zelman 12

Writer's Block

Mariah Boehl 14

Why I Don't Speak Spanish

Angela Treviño 29

Ocean of Deceit

Morgan Franczyk 30

La Memoria

Denise Hatcher 39

The Exchange

Connie Padera 40

Scars

Mariah Boehl 42

Running from Life

Mariah Boehl 45

BLACK POWER!

Tiffany Brown 47

The American Fear of Colors

Shawn Kalam 49

A Summer Recently Burned

Dana Drier 56

And Yet

Miriam Guzmán 57

Skunks and Weed

Angela Treviño 60

Outside the Box

Shawn Kalam 62

Window Pane

Denise Hatcher 79

I am Greater Than This Darkness

Mark Zelman 92

Pillow of Dreams

Kelsey Kenneally 94

Could You Stay?

Julie Cortez 95

The Ugly Truth

Tiffany Brown 106

List of Things (The Little Things)

Mariah Boehl 109

Can't Have

Angela Treviño 112

Not Haunted by Ghosts

Julia Kranenburg 115

Her Journey

Tiffany Brown 117

As it Eats

Morgan Franczyk 119

Silence

Denise Hatcher 121

*Non-fiction***Life in the Universe**

Zach Ferris 32

Sounds of Silence

Marlene D. Vail 52

Things about Depression

Jordan Devera 75

*Fiction***the fleeting mortal's lonely excerpts**

Mark Zelman 16

Iterations

Alexis Ames 63

Charm of Jew

Hannah Peterson 81

The Goldfinch Says Po-ta-to-chip

Joey Lucchesi 98

Artwork and Photography

Theresa Daunheimer	..... 13
Bayley Murphy	..... 15, 74
Roberto Orozco	..... 28, 51, 120
Emily Zavacki	..... 31, 44, 59
Duo Tang	..... 38
Alexandra Moscinski	..... 41, 78
Megan Coleman	..... 44, 97
Wyatt Murphy	..... 46, 80, 118
Myranda Gould	..... 55, 73
Sam Chase	..... 61
Perry Cooper	..... 91
Jake Lichty	..... 93
Blaine Petrella	..... 105, 111
Jordan Devera	..... 108
Connor Ross	..... 114
Stephanie Sabon	..... 116

I Was Tricked



Shawn Kalam

They definitely lied to me.
Claiming the glass is either half full,
Or the glass is half empty.
They are absolutely wrong.
Whether it be with fluid.
Whether it be with air.
The glass is never bare.
For, even a void.
Filled with nothing.
Converts it into something.
They surely took me for a fool.
Trying to hide the fact the glass is always full.

Orion



Mark Zelman

You whisper *courage*.
Hunter and winter's herald,
how many have gazed
upon your grand galactic
hunting ground?
Do you roam alone,
the lone commoner
among bright
kings and queens,
goddesses and gods,
and mythical creatures
of our night?
It is fitting we should
elevate the hunter,
emblem of Earthly pursuit,
we eternal seekers of
sustenance and light.
Your stance speaks resolve,
spear and sword, readiness.
As you climb high
where all might see you
stride in our darkest,
coldest, longest nights,
we hear you whisper
courage.



The White City

Artwork by Theresa Daunheimer

Writer's Block



Mariah Boehl

My mind blanked as my hand moved,
Trying unceasingly to describe how I felt;
But the paper lay bare,
Like a newborn baby:
No thoughts yet imagined,
No feelings yet felt;

Oh, how I wish the words would come -
Words that could describe
The images running through my head:
Of colors and emotions,
Of flashes and memories;

Touch, smells, and sounds:
These are the things I remember,
The ones stuck like glue in my head;
No amount of tugging
And pulling can release them;

Only time can make them come,
Only time can pull them free



Closed for Business

Photo by Bayley Murphy

the fleeting mortal's lonely excerpts



Mark Zelman

I.

“you’ll live many lives,” he said, “all it’ll cost you is your time.”

that might have been centuries ago, that trysters’ exchange of words. it might not even have been of this same life...

lately I’ve been suffering from something like an acute lenition of the senses. however, I am still very much absorbent.

still, I forgot the lock to my key. I forgot about the sun. I walked around until my ankles ached like heartburn, and my heart ached like a sprained ankle. every night that passed, seraphim crows wreathed around the moonstone, phantasmagorias like oil slicks swirled down drains with candy wrappers and left the parkway feeling silent and unnaturally sterile: all the air was sucked into the sewers and the wind was muzzled by some kind of more powerful, unseen anti-wind—unseen indeed, but not wholly allusive of the senses, either—and all this with a runny, stuffy nose.

(allergies. coming and going like feet do, like the guts and dreams they carry. a leaky brain makes for a runny nose, sometimes clammy skin. now let’s think about thoughts... I tend to ghettoize my perceptions inside me, my thoughts and fears. but my hyperboles always come out a bit like understatements, and I fear quite often that I may have a brain tumor. I fear the fact that I’m wholly incapable of not remaining calm, constantly calm, as well as achy-shouldered and hard to please. there is no directory of this ghetto; there is no way to navigate its teeming streets, and not even I dare to attempt it, usually).

but that same person he asked me “where?” I says “*where?*” and he says “yes, where?” I says, on a whim, “in Elsewhere.” and he says “good, meet me there.” there’s a sharp ringing in my ears as the fog rises and he sidles into it. I couldn’t have known then, I don’t think, that one day I’d be just like him.

so now, one day,—vagrantly awake, guided by noctambulist actions—pooling in my candlewax like a sick man’s oil, ablaze and glorying: parabolic moths, mealworms, cocoons, wings w/o bodies, bodies w/o wings. I see little petals, little pearls, angels and coronations, over-fed eels, little girls on swings, glossy eyeballs and whirling acrylics, the scent of pine, soft sponges, stolen watches, roached copper, and moldavite. there is also the reflection of the moon there, pooling, and which, not being like a woman this night, is hard to mimic.

again, I won’t even try.

II.

the piece of paper I’m writing this on has my father’s name printed on it, professionally—some sort of office stationery. you can’t see it now unless you’re reading the original copy or a copy of it.

III.

allergies came and went, like normal. my socks are colored red, white and blue. I’m being serious. they go all the way up to my knees; it’s 80 degrees outside and the bees are all still alive and things are not yet real, not yet.

IV.

the garden bed I slept in last night left me feeling like a head of lettuce. in the midst of my vegetation, a hangover, a tutelary saint said to me: “a person’s purpose in life is to play with stardust like putty. a person’s purpose is to play with dirt.” and so I shook myself like a wet dog does, always without shame.

V.

after all, only doves feel shame. that is a statement. it’s all some sort of evolutionary quirk, but there are educations to be learned, and learn them we shall. for the Humanities will not admit anything as anything without first admitting its greatness or its vile lack of it,—all the while jungle gyms go untouched by the lizard-like hands of children, and splendid, ancient oracles go unperceived or are touted

as “bums.” I suppose even the deaf can likely hear the snores of those who are purposefully asleep, and by that I mean nature, or genes, or the innateness of moral codes, impeccable senses, easily pinpointable illness and/ or the nostalgia of a tear, which, of course, is saltier than the sea.—I want to fall down a well and wake up in childhood, to wake up in nonage; I don’t want to care; I’ll even hit my head and tatter my clothes!

that’d be real cute, wouldn’t it.

but free from the well’s depths as I’ve always been, I see shadows in this lexicon of darkness; jaundice-eyed they sit with big hips on power boxes, under streetlamps, leaning on hydrants, as if calm in a chair with a full belly.

after a while, you learn to take notes, and they learn to ignore you, and instead turn their attention to the paper or the radio, whatever.

bike rides in penumbra when I was young made me ready for dinner, ready for bed. marsupial-nightmares hunkered away in the brush-weed were Edwardian spooks; unknissed toads leapt into the rainy, damp shadows as I rode past. (and I remember dusky hours spent picking dirt off the bottoms of my blue shoes).

then came the lingering notion of a Future. pearl-eyed bosom serpents came, out from the pages of a dog-eared script, coiled like grudges in my chest and eyed stalkily the roof of my mouth from deep down, all the while another hundreds-of-days became one, like a big knot of hairballs in my belly.

in the parks and plazas, town squares, woeful obelisks wait, dewy gray cenotaphs stand risen through the mad neglect of night, giving off an unfelt heat, fogging up glass. those whose names they bear probably want you to visit them, and you should.

over the causeway, there’s someone who’s not looking back.

in the stairwell of the apartment building I lived in one year in college (the year with the week I had red hair), I sure hope my name’s still written in black at the very top step beneath the roof’s hatch, where I left it.

and sometimes in my dreams I dream that I'm jealous of myself, and so sometimes I think I should be, and then I feel bad.

VI.

over the weekend's weak ends, finally, trying again to re-equilibrate the chemicals in my brain, which I hope is pink. outside on the street, which is hot, duplicable people walk and drop coins without awareness; children pick them up crawling between feet;

they don't even care about money.

VII.

but that was earlier. of late: cacti grew, things didn't sleep at night. on a stump in the desert,—a kind of laboratory—beneath flying causers and heat lightning and migrating birds only there to fly past it all, I saw the Man w/ Guitar; he droned: D chord, G chord, something like a minor A. “come by here, my Lord...” the projections of a bonfire abominate his face; he trails off, begins to hum. he has a hat full of money, all to himself. he has a tough crowd, and's all alone.

VIII.

so that's about when I knew, I knew it well: I must build my own vigils, for book shelves are lined with fear. I am a master of my own statements. I overpopulate the transfrontier. remnants of my attentions and thoughts pinken like our evening star across some made-up horizon.

anyway, sunlight is better than flashlight. that is simply a statement, but glow-sticks are best.

I once got chilly reading Dante's *Inferno*, so I got up and opened the window and stood up on the sill in dusk-summer, with no shirt on, and thought about finishing my drink and jumping, thinking *Bukowski never did this!*—in the morning I woke up on the couch with a body full of aches, while somewhere in another tenant's room, Nico was singing in that sweet voice about what happens if you close the door.

IX.

then came the heatwave. it came like an eclipse: tomorrow felt like yesterday, felt like tomorrow, felt like today: rippled, buried beneath fallen fruit.

that's when I saw you, neighbor, gruff like Man. saw your gold tooth when you smiled back at some stranger who was no stranger to you. saw you leave the fake-foods store. saw you walk nameless to me into the park, through the park, kick the woodchips ragelessly, scuff the path with careless heels, arrogant toes, past the cenotaphs and mulberry trees.

saw you swat away the flies, the smokers' smoke, the spider's long web that glinted like a single strand of Rapunzel-hair dangled across the path, let down, waiting heroless and unrescued in the twilight of the day's old age.

such tragedy! and such fate!

the way you walked beneath that streetlight was more interesting to me than death. only a sudden fatal strike of lightning could have ever broken me of my state of insatiable concentration... and that's when I saw you, so sad, so sad... then again you were grinning at nothing, maybe thinking, ambling back to your big red apartment building. your hard hand shoved open the door; your palm-print stained the glass; your fake-food bagged in your other hand, swaying casually; your bald head oddly without glint or shine, but polished to glare, and with the smell of hamburgers grilling because that's what was in the air—it always was.

I saw you walk into that dark doorway, still anonymous, unaware of eyes and unconcerned, as you have a duty to be. I saw you like the opposite of in-dreams. and when I went home by myself that night I sat on the carpet, counted my mosquito bites, and didn't even want to turn on the t.v.

X.

I've let time pass...but believe this: I am an altruist, especially when I want to be.

I write this now on very ordinary paper.

XI.

I noticed helicopters sounding like beanstalk giants gargling ale. the strobing city left me this evening on a train ride into the country. I put all my money in an envelope and folded it in my back pocket; it wasn't enough.

I arrived before dawn, bleary-eyed at a little town overrun by pumpkin vines and wild cats. a novice to tranquility, I lingered in digestion of the scene: no more helicopters but plenty of stalks. every lot was bricks and boards and silos and rickety porch-swings. then, hungry, burdened by uncertainties and itchy skin, I sidled off into the bean-crop and the varying harvest.

XII.

by noon, eating a dark & juicy purple pluot in a swamp-orchard nearly riverside, in the squalid heat and vaudeville of Delta music hummed from somewhere through the ground-fog and jabber of Mississippi coxswain children—slapping your knees to a beat for the phantom past, I found you, Death, slapping your knees to a beat for the phantom past.

your bones were sharp then, dark, shrouded. you sat small and gaunt at my feet like a fawn black-eyed in the grass, and sang to me of how you feast upon the street, the very hungry ground, and how you give God goosebumps whenever you're around.

but, I should add, enigmas of the fleeting mortals were, to the best of my abilities, ignored. I spent the day out in the sunny fields looking for lucky clovers through clouds of fruit flies, on the trails of nervous little deer. I had treasures in mind, too. I had dreams—but it didn't matter. when this I realized, I cried out to coyotes: "usurp me of my powerlessness, O howling night!" I prowled long hours for pearls of Truth and Beauty, elbow-deep in blue water that wished it were ice. I hunted thoughts and kindred energies like a cazador tracks the dinner boar with the craftsman's arrow... but all I got instead were gamma rays. in the morning, instead of local

flowers pressed in scrapbooks, all I found was stung skin.

at night I slept inside a hay stack like a tick. at the first glance of day, I left my nomad's cabin in a slow, grim haze. I took to following the bend of the stream, to following its course as it moved through the yellowing forest. the stream: where myriad broken women must've fallen into voluntary sleeps, from sick mossy banks of lost hope (like old achy-headed Woolf), and whose sylphs now haunt the poplars alongside hoot-owls in the night, which is how I know this.

it seems I need to find a new place to sleep...

XIII.

but there's no fooling you: it will not happen, it would be vain. I am King Novice among all the feral orphans of "normal" neurology, which is not a thing. my efflorescence is like a garden in reverse-blossom, and I feel great. hypnogogic thoughts wind through the delicate webbing of my brain whose only request is mercy, as all around me the zoetrope spins, and I feel great. I feel bilocated and limber and foolishly afire...

a dusty yellow, the lantern spits its muted light as I scurry through the branches. then I see it—at last! at last!—atop a layer of dirt and dry leaves, crouching, at the center of the ring of little glass cups holding candles, few lit, I open the forbidden chest to play the game alone.

XIV.

a Ouija board wrote this poem. over the course of an hour, the possessed lens slid my hands across the surface from letter to letter to make a word. then paused. then repeated. I was antagonistic but patient. (with grammatical punctuation added after-the-fact), it read:

“exiled by the absence of my body,
gravity can no longer hold me.

I go away,
trailing gauze and blue night-light
in my wake...
“you wish.”

*at this point, there ensued a forty minute silence and stoppage of
communication between me and the spirit. I sat and waited for it to
continue:*

“beneath me,”
*it resumed, possessing my hand and controlling it with a menacing
grip,*
“the stench of a blooming land
congest the people—
all summoning, all theurgists!
they wheeze and wheeze;
they worry.
they are eyes in heads,
and I am Elsewhere.

“a déjà vu of scents and smells,
when you summoned me
to this your shrine, tonight.

now I am here.
I'll answer 'Yes,' 'Yes,'
'No,' 'Yes,' 'No,'
and you'll shudder like a branch,
and your cyanosed hands
will shake
as they spell out against your will
the muted voices of the Unknown;
and I'll deign to laugh with vile pleasure,
as the pyramid lens jerks
your hands across the board
from letter to letter.

"then when my energy is weak,
I'll seep through the bellflowers
and ooze into the backwoods creek,
into the muddy skulls of caimans,
or up into the hippodrome
of that churning sky now purple,
leaving you with these fleeting efforts,
your mind like a cloud forest,
the assurance of an unquiet sleep and/ or
the acute insomnia of the dead.

“this was no fun for me, kid.

you’ll not want to try it again.”

XV.

it didn’t take much thought for me to agree, and so you better believe I wont. hypnosis and helplessness are victimizing, and vice versa. but like allergies, so came and went the night-stories of the orchard’s lingering ghosts, and so went their control; the chest I buried. morning came and I was there to see it, though cold and dew-damp, at the center of some theurgical shrine beneath the cicada-clung trees. presently, all I’ve here to do is lay, itch my nose, listen to bugs, and think about the wide-spread Now, its myriad abstruse myriads and wet-eyed woeful things.

the youthful masses, for example, stopped listening as soon as they learned how. anyway, that’s always how it seems to those many-years-aged. they think this and are unpleasant to be around because, through their years, they’ve watched powerless as a once beautiful generation of ovipositors ceased their critical functions and so set awful Nothingness into motion—from the windowsills to the swamp-orchards and cornfields and retirement homes on lakefronts and white condominiums in high-rise towers far away from the progress of world-motion and the flaunted leisure of a healthy body. everywhere.

it need be recognized that it is this tragedy precisely that we all must face and laugh at lest we become tragic ourselves—that is, Degeneration, the touch of wrinkly old Entropy;—for there she is now, everywhere! a thick, black tangle of hair on a slim figure, posing as ground fog and eating away at skeletons not yet free from skin.

it is wise to know, however, that there is more futility in despair than in any other mire of the human social-psyche. whether one likes it or not, coffering distilled versions of the Soul and quite indifferent to history, the colossal Epigoni march onward armies of

their own.

overhead: one such morphon marching, proclaimed: “poetry is pidgin! water is better than art and so is dirt,” and he ran around town drunk, purloined the ambitions of schoolboys, pissed in gutters until he was a genius and famous and burdened by numinous riddles, loved his flask and died in a dim room hallucinating Ubu Roi through a bleeding candle’s never-touched flame.

the whole mania reminds me of my mother, in a juxtaposed way, how she would proclaim: “lightning always strikes the willow tree at its heart,” because it does. she made me notice it and now I do. nevertheless—everything, the planets, the clouds, the microbes, the wild—none of them listen to each other at all. we like to pretend they do. We like to pretend that we are connected to the sea and the air and animals, but we’re not. the only thing we are truly connected to is each other. we are more akin to our most hated enemies, our most contrary acquaintances, those of a different race or gender, than we will ever be to the morning sunshine or the shapely clouds or the foxgloves or a hungry pack of chiens.

together we’re in it for the long haul, the Big Dream. there is one single vein somewhere where all plasmas flow as ichor and humanity is but one single consciousness playing Brahma with the limbs of a few billion fleshy gods supping on a pebble. such a conclusion leaves me wary, like some soul-seller at a crossroads, not knowing whether or not there’s reason to fear, or even where to go...but it is a conclusion nonetheless.

well, then, I think I think. I often imagine; I often veer off roads. I like to feel sympathetic, make things abstruse, and mix sympathy with sincerity and restlessness and beauty and so end up digging a grave. but don’t bother bothering. I’ve plenty of memory-foam and a shovel and two almost-strong arms and an angel in my sock.

furthermore, I still have a dream, albeit a lousy one. I like to call it the Intercontinental Embrace. in it, everyone on earth holds hands with another person, and humanity makes a big imperfect, interlocking chain around the earth like a circuit. the united pulse would be felt by everyone, as one single protracted beat.

the electricity created by the connected ring of bodies would be enough to power a microwave oven, and what could possibly happen as a result of such an embrace is potentially amazing and quite frankly unimaginable; the first step, I suppose, would be to cut your finger nails and wash your hands, find a partner, find another, etc....

but don't go to sleep.



Birthday

Artwork by Roberto Orozco

Why I Don't Speak Spanish



Angela Treviño

I can't glide my tongue
in and out of phrases
like my counterparts can;
that glide and dance
off the palates of their mouths.
Instead, it trips and falls
on the dance floor;
struggling with simple words
and pronunciations.
The natives of this spicy
tanged tongue, glare at me
while I speak my broken
Spanish; judging every word
that escapes from my lips
while theirs' salsa off their
palates in a rhythm gifted
to them before their birth.
They snicker and laugh,
before walking away
as I tuck my tongue back
into the darkness
of my unseasoned
mouth.

Ocean of Deceit



Morgan Franczyk

Looking into your eyes is like diving into the ocean,
I am submerged and breathless in the blue abyss.
As I stare I am tossed about in the waves,
their shimmering a gift highlighted by the sun.
And yet, as light as they are,
there are specks of darkness within.
As I watch, slowly sinking further, the dark spots shift,
each taking a turn blocking out the sun.
It isn't until I hit the seafloor and look up that I realize:
the specks are actually the shadows cast from sharks
as they circle the sea, prowling for easy prey.
The predators begin closing in around me,
forcing my ascent.
I swim upwards, narrowly missing razor teeth.
Breaking the surface,
finally pulling my eyes from your face,
I figure it out:
I am your prey.



Flower

Photo by Emily Zavacki

Life in the Universe



Zach Ferris

Abstract

This paper will be addressing the most important question we have as a species: “are we alone in the cosmos?” Without basic knowledge of the nature of the universe, this may be quite a difficult question for you to form an educated response. My goal in this paper is to tackle this question by revealing some important characteristics of the universe. These include, but are not limited to, the vastness and chemistry of the universe. The size of the universe is beyond human comprehension, with a volume of 3.58×10^{80} cubic meters (the average human occupies 0.0664 cubic meters). These two figures mean that the observable universe is 5.39×10^{81} times bigger than you. The most abundant elements that are scattered throughout the universe are a one-for-one match with the essential elements for life that we are composed of. Although these two concepts point towards the conclusion that we are most definitely not alone in this universe, there are some barriers that keep us from finding life. These three barriers are: time, intelligence, and technology. Unfortunately, due to the variables these present, our species will not discover the intelligent life that lives amongst us in the universe.

Imagine you are at the beach and you are all alone. It is just you and your thoughts. The sun has set and you're lying in the sand looking up at the stars, who twinkle back at you. You might be thinking just how many stars are up there. Now, to help you gain some perspective on this, I need you to turn over and try to pick out one grain of sand and fit it between your fingers. It is so small you most likely cannot see it, but you can feel it - knowing it is there.

This grain of sand between your fingers is just one of seven quintillion, five hundred quadrillion grains of sand on our earth. This is the number seventy-five with seventeen zeros after it. Now look back up at the sky, there are roughly 1×10^{24} stars in the universe. After performing some simple math, you discover something very astounding about the universe. There are one hundred and thirty thousand stars in the universe for every grain of sand on earth, just like the one that currently lies between your fingers.

The stars you are currently observing are obviously visible, and this is due to the light that is entering your eyes. Light has a speed, and it takes time to reach you. Considering this logic, the universe is "expanding," meaning that the light from distant galaxies is just now reaching you from when they first formed. If you get lucky, you may notice a new spec of light enter the sky. This is a distant star or galaxy that has always existed, but its light is just now reaching you. You are currently looking in to the past while this star was forming. Similarly, in theory, if you travel far enough away from earth and turn around with a high-powered telescope, you could watch the extinction of the dinosaurs. This concept of light reaching us allowing us to see new stars and galaxies is often referred to as the observable universe. There is an unknown quantity of stars out there that simply haven't gotten the chance to twinkle for us. The thought might even cross you that this place we have decided to call earth, is just an invisible grain of sand tumbling throughout the infinite universe amongst the stars.

Before we dive into theorizing on what lies beyond us, there are a few terms that must be defined. The Particle Horizon is the limit to what we can see, meaning that since the beginning of the universe, the light still has not had enough time to reach us. According to this concept, the Particle Horizon encases the observable universe, which is 93 billion light years in diameter. Next, the Cosmic Event Horizon, is the theoretical point in which the universe ends. This essentially would become the same as the particle horizon if we waited forever and all of the light in the universe had reached us. Finally, Proper Distance is the distance it would take to travel between two points if expansion froze. Proper distance is essentially used to conceptualize the vastness of the universe, because nothing ever travels the Proper Distance. Now that you are familiar with these terms, let us delve.

The only way we can begin to theorize on what lies beyond is to lift the speed limit of the universe. Because, if you cannot travel at the speed of light, you will never be able to reach the cosmic event horizon. The first theory is that if you were to arrive at the edge of the universe, there would simply be more universe. This idea solidifies the idea that the universe is infinite.

The second theory is the Multiverse Theory. This theory takes perspective into consideration. Similarly, to the earth looking flat by simply standing on its surface, you can only see its curvature if you look down onto the planet from space. The Multiverse Theory states that the observable universe is simply a small section of the entire universe, and we have not seen enough space to perceive its curvature. This would make the universe a Hypersphere, which is a four-dimensional sphere where its surface is three dimensional. Considering this logic, if you were to travel in a straight line from earth for infinity, you would eventually arrive back at earth.

Now that we have captured the vastness of the universe, let us transition to the most important question that we have formulated as a species. Humans can never agree on a majority of subjects due to varying religions and political ideologies. But, we all agree that finding life in the universe is interesting. Although everyone is interested in this subject, we all don't agree on the probability of there being life elsewhere in the universe. Currently, there are three groups that disagree on this topic. The first group consists of religious people who believe that god created our earth and there is nothing like it anywhere else. Two other groups to consider are the "logicals" and the "skeptics." The skeptics are a group of people who are open minded, but have a hard time conceptualizing the idea that something complex as life could have formed elsewhere. The logicals are a group of people who understand the vastness of the universe and the abundance of the essential elements for life throughout the universe. Consider this: the most abundant elements that are scattered throughout the universe are Hydrogen, Helium, Oxygen, Carbon, and Nitrogen. The essential elements for life are the exact same as this list with the exception of Helium, which is chemically inert anyway. One of my favorite quotes regarding this subject of cosmic perspective is by Neil deGrasse Tyson who says, "It would be inexcusably egocentric to suggest that we are alone in this universe... the chemistry is too rich... the universe too vast... life is an inevitable consequence of complex chemistry." Although all forms of life are out there in the universe, we will be focusing on complex, intelligent, multicellular life because that is what we humans are most curious about. It is one hundred percent certain that there is life elsewhere in the universe, but the probability of finding it is most likely zero percent because of the barriers of time, technology, and intelligence.

4 - Life in the Universe: Time

The universe has been around for 13.8 billion years. And the modern human evolved roughly two hundred thousand years ago. This means that humans have only been around for 1.45% of the life of the universe. This is a huge problem when searching for life elsewhere in the universe, because the life may have already become extinct, or is in the process of developing. In other words, there is a very narrow window of time while the species is alive in which finding intelligent life would even be possible. Time is the most dangerous barrier when searching for life.

5 - Life in the Universe: Technology

The second roadblock in discovering life in the universe is technology, which can be approached two different ways. The first approach is developing technology that can transmit signals throughout the universe. The problem with this method is that the probability of finding life decreases significantly, because the signals being sent have to be received. This means that both life forms need to be alive in the same timeframe, have similar technology, and similar intelligence (which will go into more depth in the next section). The second approach is developing technology to travel to distant planets to observe the life for ourselves. This method does not require other life forms to have developed technology, which greatly increases the chances of finding life. However, radio signals can travel much further than transportation. Modern transportation limits space exploration to a small area of the universe, making it nearly impossible to find life. (We have not even created man-made spacecraft with the potential to leave our solar system, which makes up an insignificant fraction of the universe).

The final roadblock is intelligence. We humans like to tell ourselves that we are intelligent, but what if we are not as smart as we think we are? Consider Tyson's take on relative intelligence: we are ninety-eight percent genetically identical to chimpanzees. The two percent difference is what allows humans to invent calculus, study chemistry, and build complex telescopes. Whereas the smartest monkey can do a little bit of sign language. Here is where it gets interesting. Consider a life form out in the universe that is an additional two percent different from the chimpanzee in the same direction that we are. These life forms would look at us like we were worms. Perhaps, these living beings have already visited earth, observed us, and left, concluding that there is no sign of intelligent life on Earth. This is why similar intelligence is important when looking for life, so you know you've found life when you see it.

7 - Conclusion

Let us return to our original question: "are we alone in the cosmos?" If you are a creationist and believe that we are special and unique in this universe, just know that the essential elements for life that we are composed of are scattered throughout the universe. I believe that we are special, but not for the same reasons. Neil deGrasse Tyson captures this concept spectacularly when he says: "we are not special because we are different, we are special because we are the same." The abundance of essential elements for life across the universe leads to the idea that intelligent life most certainly exists elsewhere. If you are a secular non-believer, consider the sheer vastness of the universe, it is beyond human comprehension. I hope that this paper has convinced you to be curious about space exploration and spurred a desire to pursue science related fields to lead us on the journey of discovering life.



Space

Artwork by Duo Tang

La Memoria



Denise Hatcher

remembering and forgetting
are not
opposite thought processes
but rather
two strengths of our mind
that allow us
to save
the most precious events
we want to preserve
and
to discard
those which will keep us
from being
who
we most want to become

The Exchange



Connie Padera

When I was in high school
I snuck out my window
and climbed into the car
of a boy I barely knew,
and we drove into the darkness
and parked in a field.

Lost to the world
and lost to myself
I opened a little,
but never enough.
He pushed and he begged
and I genuinely meant no
but only because saying, "Yes."
meant he wouldn't respect me.

So he drove me home
and I climbed in my window,
and a few hours later
someone else climbed in too.

A different boy,
much more familiar.
I opened a little,
always too much.
I should have said no or nothing at all,
but he didn't beg
and I guess I was tired
of trying to understand
why respect was so important
if in exchange
I got to feel loved.



Don't Hurt Me

Artwork by Alexandra Moscinski

Scars



Mariah Boehl

Your scars —
The nicks and scratches and dents
Inflicted on your once smooth surface
don't disgust or embarrass me.
Instead, respect washes over me
For you were strong enough
To endure the abuse forced upon you —

The slamming of a hand out of anger,
The frustrated glares received from strangers,
The clenching of fists and teeth,
The breaking of your very essence.

Your net of protection torn down
and replaced,
You've survived longer than expected,
Your owners poaching from you as much
life as they could
Until — finally — your body crumbles inward,
Nothing left to be thieved.

At the end,
When everyone else detests you,
It will be I who will always love you,
For you were my escape — my friend,
Always there, never abandoning me,
And how could I not appreciate all you've done for me?
My *beautiful*, **strong** ping pong table.



Archie, the Gnome

Photo by Emily Zavacki



Snoop

Photo by Megan Coleman

Running from Life



Mariah Boehl

An inferno forges:

Flesh frigid as ice, but searing with adrenaline

Shivers kindled, then snubbed,

Push. Push. Just keep pushing on,

Whip through the wind – high on ecstasy

‘Til exhaustion thaws

Your frostbitten legs into liquid,

Like dry ice: burning but bitter cold;

Nothing can be comprehended,

Nothing but the irrefutable demand

To keep running:

From the obstacles hurtled at you

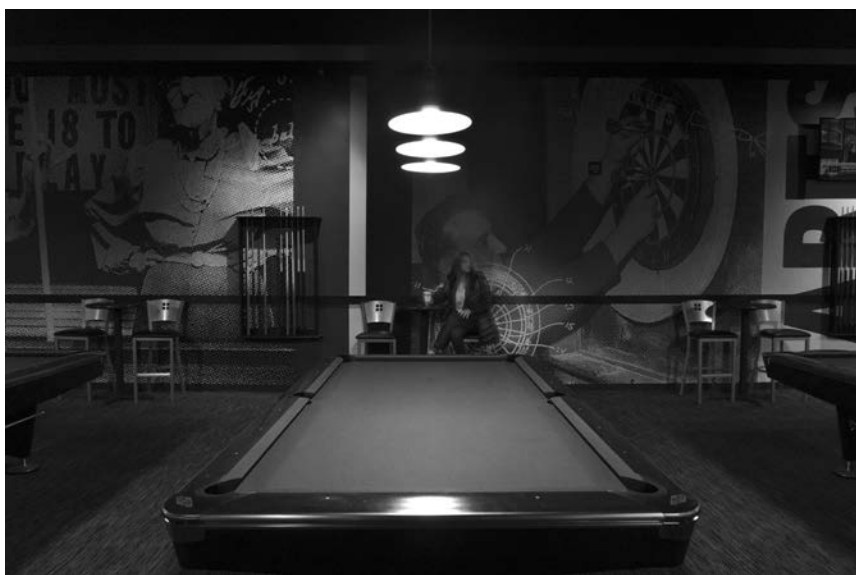
Making you stumble your way through life,

From the thoughts sprinting through your mind

Like a movie on fast forward – relentless;

Running physically is acceptable,

But mentally is not.



Hustler

Photo by Wyatt Murphy

BLACK POWER!



Tiffany Brown

A sudden dream explodes into thin air
The struggle is clear, the tears were proof.
To be African American is to bask in the glory.
Who are we?
Like Maya Angelou, Martin Luther King Jr, and Rosa Parks
we are the voice for the Voiceless
We will rise time and time again.
Along the road, clouds darken
Tears pour like a fountain
Dreams vanish like a ghost in the darkness
Faith never fails
like a staircase
Faith keeps on climbing.
Fist held high
Drums beat in rhythm of heartbeats
The chants grow with every step
Through this fight for our rights
Like a path, we control our destination
The crowd stumbles
and like a river
just keeps going on.
Through every struggle,
every trial,
and every movement
We will be the voice,
We will march on
we will refuse to give up Our Rights.
OH SOUL!
OH HEART!

We are down on our knees
We march on
like a herd of lions
Clawing their way to protect their own
Battered, Bruised, and Broken
We will shine bright as the North Star.
Voices echo all around us.
Like a melody telling us to continue
to fight through the flames to Freedom.
To be African American is to unlock the chains of misery
and release the Doves within ourselves.
we will turn "I have a Dream" into "We have a Dream"
to stand tall against it all
To pave the way as our leaders did.

The American Fear of Colors



Shawn Kalam

A Buddhist monk born in the Alaskan snow
Whose parents settled in the states lifetimes ago
Asked, *why must we label a person's unique glow?*
After realizing anyone with slanted eyes is considered yellow
He pondered the association to colors Americans bestow.

The Black American is afraid of the white man's oppression.
He believes they are determined to stop their progression.
My skin color is a cause of rejection
This is his position, when justifying his hindering succession.
The fundamental opposition, the root of his oppression.

Why did 9/11 have to happen?
Says the Muslim girl from Manhattan.
She is reminded every day of a horror that took place
An act she considers an abhorrent disgrace.
She keeps her faith swept under the rug
So no one relates her with the color of blood.

The Mexican family who immigrated to live the American dream
Works hard to avoid the agents of the regime.
The blue uniform strikes fear to every part of their being.
Please put an end to our constant fleeing
Is what they pray to god every day
Knowing any second it can all be taken away.

The white boy fears all colors
It is him against the others
He is scared to be victimized for his ancestor's horrors
The tension between him and color has created all sorts of borders
Causing division and social disorder

The blue fight the red
The red fight the blue
They litter the streets with the dead
Causing a cycle of dread to brew

Opposites attract
Yin is the black
Yang is the white
When brought to life why must they fight?
The monk smoothly exhaled as he left his trance
His thoughts took a moment of silence, then began to enhance

*We act like cardinals who are wary of the colorful insect
Knowing, their beauty is a source of danger
But we are meant to be eagles that soar the sky
Absorbing nature's beauty with our intuitive eye
Color is meant to inspire, not to cause anger
It is part of our universal perspective that allows us to connect.*

He affirmed himself he would never forget.
The true nature of color's effect
With a smile the monk whispered in his head,
color is the source of beauty for light to reflect.



Big Gus

Artwork by Roberto Orozco

Sounds of Silence



Marlene D. Vail

We walk alone down the lake path. Heather's ears are pointed forward. Somehow, she knows today is different. The lake is blinding, sparkly and calm. I now know why the Native Americans called it the Lake of Sparkling Waters (Kishwauketoe); so apparent this time of year. As we meander down the lake path, I am anticipating what lies ahead. I know it will be the beginning of the gifts from the lake. Up the steep hill we walk. Heather is huddled close to my side; my sweet and gentle collie will often lean into me as we walk. I believe she thinks I am a sheep that needs to be herded (perhaps, more than I realize). Reaching the summit, I see my first gift; the sandhills cranes are wading in a shallow, algae-covered pond by George Williams College campus. They are like statues – not moving – still. Heather sensing the moment does not bark. I revel in their beauty and markings; they never fail to inspire, and their profile is one of elegance and grace.

Each time I come down to the lake this time of year, I set aside a block of time to ensure I can capture all the gifts. It is better now with my dog – my love, and companion. After I lost my husband, getting a new puppy was a gift to myself – a kindred spirit of a different kind. As my feet and her paws traverse the path, I feel the crunch of leaves and that intoxicating earthy smell which comes from them, so pungent. I breathe deeply; I cannot get enough of it. The lake path is uneven in spots, craggy, roots, rocks, and fallen branches, but these obstacles do not deter us. Heather, her nose to the ground, is enjoying all the scents of the day. Her step is animated, and she is alert. We look ahead to Conference Point and our next gift. The tree by the Point is stacked with cormorants. Native Americans believed these aquatic birds were sacred (or so the oral legend goes). Flying close to the water at times, they resemble primordial birds, for me, a glimpse into the past. Cormorants fish, fly, and then will land ashore, or in a tree similar to this one, drying their wings before darting off to fish again. They also nest in trees when breeding, but that is another season of the year, another lake gift for another time.

Their presence gives me a peaceful feeling. I sense Heather feels the same; the sounds of silence are so loud.

How far will we traverse today? I want my lake gifts; I wait all summer for them. The historic home Bonnie Brae, built in 1881, is one of my favorite older homes on the lake. Fortunately, “the Brae” has not been bought to be torn down as many of lake homes are only to build a modern shell of a house that is not home. When I see the McMansions, a song fills my head that spoke of neon Gods. These homes appear soulless; they are so enormous and empty most of the year. We continue; it will be a longer walk today. Sitting on a bluff so high above the lake, the Victorian splendor of Bonnie Brae cannot be missed. But, this home provides a lake gift that intoxicates one if you stop and look – so many do not. The turkey vultures are back. They sit in vast numbers on top of Bonnie Brae’s roof on its various precipices staring down at us mere mortals (girl and dog). The birds take flight and glide through light winds. Circling above us, there seems to be an ode to joy to their flight, freedom, and yet play as well. They love to fly; it is evident. Heather and I find our favorite rock and take in their spirited aerial dance. It is mystical, church-like, and sacred to watch them; one feels at peace. The birds above soaring, soaring, soaring. We are in no rush to return home.

The late afternoon light gives us a fair warning. We better start our journey back; there are many miles to go. I alter our return trip so we encounter the duck inlet – the migration has begun. Hundreds of ducks and geese gather here throughout the fall. This small channel provides adequate shelter and a food source for the waterfowl to rest and fatten up before their southern escape. I am spellbound by the cacophony of their voices; it is deafening and yet silent – a dichotomy. The colored rainbow of the different species of birds is brilliant and blinding in the sun – black, tan, brown, mottled, and white seem so vivid to me. The gathering of waterfowl is just the beginning of fall migration; the numbers will grow a thousand fold and more by autumn’s end and early winter before the lake freezes over.

If I were to read my journal from prior years, the gifts of the lake might be similar, but my experience and views are ever changing as is my life's journey. I could not fathom when I was a young teen, and my grandmother gave me this exceptional book to read, there would be a direct correlation to my current life.

Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh was an epiphany for me at age 12. I believe my grandmother sensed the timing was right. I harken back to that book time and again – reading over the passages – not realizing at the time I would be given my own gifts from a lake far away from my Long Island home. “The sea does not reward those who are too anxious, too greedy, or too impatient... Patience, patience, patience is what the sea teaches... One should lie empty, open, choiceless as a beach – waiting for a gift from the sea.” (Morrow Lindbergh). The lake is ours again – mine and Heather's. As we awaken anew from the sounds of motorboats and jet skis of pre-Labor Day, the lake unfolds its gifts to those who look and those who seek it “...and my old friend I have come to talk with you again because a vision slowly creeping left its seeds while I was sleeping and the vision that was planted in my brain still remains within the sound of silence” (Simon & Garfunkel).



Shoes

Photo by Myranda Gould

A Summer Recently Burned



Dana Drier

Tonight I'm looking at the stars she can no longer see.
She traded them for a skyline
When she braved the path I was too afraid to face.
The night we sat around the flames
Of a summer recently burned,
She pointed straight ahead of her and said:
"Look at all that light pollution. I think that's all coming from the city."

Her plan was to follow that light
Straight to Chicago,
And when she didn't look back
To see the darkness she once lived under,
I realized she had run away.

But tonight
I'm sitting in that very darkness
And I'm looking at the stars I once tried to surrender
And I swear to god they're flickering,
Threatening to snuff out at any moment.
Even they can't bear to watch over the world anymore.

And Yet



Miriam Guzmán

Sometimes I get weirdly vivid flashbacks
as if I were back in Malta waiting for the 2€ ferry
taking me to a city built 452 years ago.
or in the 12€ hostel in Portugal
with a view from the fifth floor
of glittering Lisbon. Opening the window
was opening a music box—
a quiet accordion whispering
secrets of the old city.

Too many times I've found my way back to
San José — in my tiny room listening to the
ever-present raindrops on the tin roof,
waiting for my tender host mom to finish dinner.
I didn't know if the one facing east of my window was a volcano
or mountain.
I left without the answer.

I was taught to smoke cigarettes
outside the Gran Vía metro stop at 4am.
I learned to love the shoulder
of a Belgium boy with a deaf left ear
as if my head,
and everything in it,
had finally found a safe place to rest.
The way languages poured from his tongue
so effortlessly and restlessly only
triggered
my inability to ever calm
the fuck
down.

I was raised to love the salt
of the Caribbean waves
To take directions only from green signs
on neverending roads.
Each exit a new beginning.

I don't know a life without a backpack
on my shoulders

and yet
you ask me to
stay.



Growth

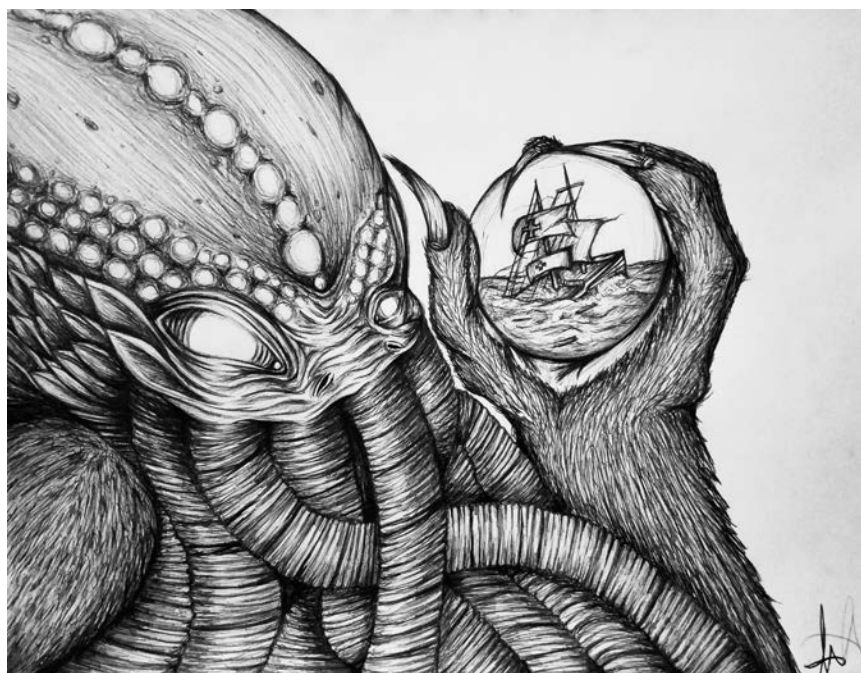
Photo by Emily Zavacki

Skunks and Weed



Angela Treviño

I never realized the difference
between the suburbs and home.
The suburbs are filled with scents
of freshly mowed lawn; all cut uniformly
with blends of neon green and alpine. Homes
in linear formation; some break the tradition
by bending to the curb of the corner. Children skip
and scamper up and down streets, without worry
of being killed by a speeding car. Skunks fill the air
with pheromonal scents that spread for miles, before it
finally dissipates. This is nothing like home; where lawns
are overgrown. Infested with dientes de león y grub worms.
Casas y tiendas abandoned on every street. Graffiti plastered
on iglesias, garajes, y escuelas. Hijos y hijas cling to their madres,
who protect them from peer pressure and stray bullets.
Weed trails behind old 98' camrys that leave behind
mimicked zorrillo pheromones. The suburbs
have skunks and we have weed.



Cthulhu & Chaos

Artwork by Sam Chase

Outside the Box



Shawn Kalam

Think outside the box.
But who put it here?
Who caged the creativity,
Which was formerly free?

Walls were built in the mind,
Hindering connection.
Expression went blind.
Conformity became complexion.

As time drifts on.
The walls grow strong.
It won't be long.
Until all imagination is gone.

A fable like Pandora.
A myth like Gaia.
In order to break these mental blocks.
We must simply understand, **there is no box.**

Iterations



Alexis Ames

Varros's voice was a low, steady thrum in his ear.

"Take a right at the next junction. At the third door on your left, enter the code A-234-Omega-Delta-Zeta."

"... Delta-Zeta," Cal muttered under his breath as he punched in the code. The door opened into darkness, but he had spent a sleepless night memorizing this ship's schematics. His feet, and then his hands, found the rungs of the ladder, and he started to descend. He kept a tally in his head, and when he reached thirty rungs, he knew he was on the correct level. He stepped off, feeling in the darkness for the hatch, and emerged into a dimly-lit corridor.

"The engine room is fifty meters ahead," Varros said, which of course Cal knew. It was still a comfort, though, having Varros there – or as near as he ever was going to be. "The code for the door is Delta-Gamma-87234-MZN. Proceed with caution: Agent Sokol is likely armed."

An understatement if there ever was one. Sokol had emptied the contents of a weapons locker prior to making the jump. She was armed to the teeth. Cal pulled his gun from his belt, and hoped he could take her by surprise.

"How long?" he asked as he started to plug in the code.

"Fifteen minutes, twelve seconds. You must be at the extraction point by then."

The door opened with a loud hiss, and he went cold. So much for having surprise on his side. Cal raised his gun, but was a beat too late. A bullet slammed into the wall, centimeters from his shoulder. He dove for cover.

"What the *hell*, Karena?" Cal shouted, ducking behind a fuel tank.

"I missed, didn't I?" Sokol retorted. "Get out of here, Cal. I can't promise you'll be so lucky next time."

“What happened?” Varros’s voice was outwardly calm, but Cal detected a frisson of anxiety in his words.

“Nothing, I’m fine,” he said in an undertone. To Karena, he called, “I’m not leaving without you. Damn it, Karena, you can’t do this!”

“There’s very little you can do to stop me at this point.”

“You could cost *billions* of people their lives —”

“Conjecture,” Sokol broke in. “I could just as easily save billions.”

“But you don’t *know* that.”

“No,” she said calmly. “I don’t. What I do know is that we have the means to prevent the greatest loss of human life in the history of our species. To not do so would be a disgrace.”

Cal ventured slowly out from behind the fuel tank. He held up his hands, but trained his gun pointedly at the ceiling.

“Karena,” he said, “I just want to talk.”

“You’re welcome to, if it’ll make you feel better.” She stood at a computer station, one hand flying across the console while she kept the gun in her other hand pointed at Cal. “But don’t expect me to respond, not while you’ve got your *handler* listening in.”

“Cal, don’t —” Varros started, but Cal tapped the device behind his ear, killing the connection. “There,” he said. “Just us, now.” The gun didn’t waver.

“*Damn it*,” he fumed, “what do you *want* from me?”

“Leave,” she said. “I want you to turn around and walk away. Go home. I’d rather not have your blood on my hands today.”

Cal kept his gun pointed at the pipe that ran along the ceiling, connecting the fuel tanks. He had memorized the schematics. He knew this ship’s strengths — and her weaknesses. A simple bullet wasn’t enough to puncture those pipes, but then, he didn’t have regular bullets in this gun. He remained silent, waiting until her gaze followed the line of his arm and she realized what he was about to do.

“This ends one of two ways,” he said quietly.

“You come with me and we allow history to run its course, or I set off a chain reaction right now that destroys this ship with us on it. Either way, every person on Luna dies tonight. I’m sorry, but that’s how it needs to be.”

Sokol’s nostrils flared. “Agent Hunter –”

“Respect the course of history!” Cal interrupted hotly. “Observe, but never interfere. Whatever happens *must* happen, no matter how dreadful. The timeline – *history* – is sacred, and we cannot change it. I learned all that from you.”

Sokol turned back to the console, fingers dancing across the keys.

“Shoot that pipe, if you must. I’m a better engineer than I am an agent, and I’m a *damn* good agent. You know I’ll be able to fix it.”

Cal’s throat was dry. The comm behind his ear beeped. Ten minutes.

“Damn it, Karena, come to your senses! The destruction of the lunar colony is vital to history, you *know* that. It’s a terrible tragedy, yes, but it’s hundreds of years in the past now. If all those people live – you don’t know what that will do to the timeline.”

“You’re a lot of things, Cal, but I never thought that you’d be someone who would advocate for mass murder.”

“It’s not murder,” Cal said. “It was an accident –”

“It was a flaw!” Sokol rounded on him. “It was a glaring flaw that should have been caught by someone, *anyone*, but they were more concerned with ramming this project through its final stages to meet their impossible deadline than with actually running the proper tests. *One* flaw that someone should have caught, and this ship wouldn’t have exploded in the middle of the night. There are almost a billion people down there, Cal. A tenth of humanity’s population. This was *murder*.”

The comm beeped.

Five minutes.

Without looking up, he fired his gun.

Steam screamed out of the pipes as they burst. Smoke poured from the holes where the bullets sliced through the metal. Karena could patch the damage - but only if she got to them in time.

"We have five minutes to get out of here," he called to Sokol over the blare of alarms. Emergency lights bathed the room in a hazy, eerie red glow. "The extraction point is on deck twelve. Come on —"

A resounding *crack* cut off his words, and he jerked backward as something slammed into him. Pain was quick on its heels, white-hot and blinding. The gun fell from his fingers, and he slapped his other hand against his shoulder, pressing hard. Sticky-warm blood poured from the wound.

"Kare —" He broke off, choking on the thick smoke. "Karena, we *have* to go!"

"I'm not finished yet!" she bellowed back at him. "Get out of here!"

It was only fair play, he reasoned when he grabbed his gun off the floor and aimed it at Sokol. Pain fogged his mind, and his eyes watered against the smoky haze. It was his off-hand, and the peals of the alarm filled his ears. He wouldn't risk hitting her in the head. He aimed at her leg instead and barely heard the shot. Sokol crumpled to the floor. He rushed to her side.

"We need to get out of here," he said, swallowing a pained groan as he wrapped one of her arms around his shoulder. "Stand up, I can't carry you the whole way —"

Sokol shoved him away, and he stumbled. Pain flared along his arm, and he bit the inside of his cheek hard enough to draw blood.

"Don't be stupid," she hissed. "Don't you understand? I'm not leaving this ship."

"There's nothing you can do to save it now, it's too late," Cal insisted. "We have to get out of here."

"I'm not leaving," Sokol gritted out through clenched teeth. "My family is here. I won't leave them to die alone. I *can't*."

Cal stared stupidly at her. “What?”

“My children,” Sokol said, “die here on Luna. They were one of the first to settle the lunar colony in the twenty-first century. I was already on ice by then. I died, and they couldn’t deal with it, so they put me on ice. All of them were living here when this ship exploded and wiped out the colony.”

His bullet had ripped through her thigh. He knelt at her side and pressed his hand against the wound, little good it would do.

“You don’t remember anything from your first life. Cryogenics is a blessing in that regard.” Sokol’s mouth twisted. “I remember the faces of my children, my grandchildren. Their voices. I researched my family after I was defrosted, and I found out what happened to them. If I can’t save them, I won’t let them die alone.”

“Karena, this is *madness*—”

“You have less than five minutes to get out of here,” she said, pushing his hand away. “Go, before Varros does something supremely idiotic.”

“I can’t just *leave* you here,” Cal said desperately. “What about Annie?”

“Annie will understand.”

“No, she won’t!” Cal roared. “How can she understand that you would rather die than come home to her?”

Sokol stared at him for a moment.

“They’re my children,” she whispered. “I won’t leave them.”

“We’re the oldest agents,” Cal said helplessly. “No one else is from our century. I don’t have anyone else I can —”

“You don’t even remember our century,” she interrupted, but her words were gentle. Her hand found his, and he squeezed her cold fingers. She added softly, “And you have Varros.”

“Don’t do this,” he whispered.

“I can’t go with you, even if I wanted. They’ll put me back on ice,” Sokol said. “Let me go out on my own terms. It’s a far better fate, believe me.”

His shoulder was on fire.

Deck twelve seemed impossibly far away. Even if he left now, he might not make it. Sokol squeezed his hand, harder this time.

“Cal, listen to me,” she said, her voice low and urgent. “The time agency told you that they don’t have any information on your first life. It’s a lie. They know more than you think, and one day, they’re going to use it against you.”

“What are you talking about?”

“You had two siblings. You joined the army at eighteen.” Her other hand touched his cheek, a smile gracing her lips.

“Your favorite book was *Don Quixote*.”

His stomach twisted. “You can’t possibly know any of that is true.”

“It’s in your file,” Sokol said. “I’ve read it.”

He reeled. “*What?*”

“You have a past, Cal. You don’t remember it, but it exists. Even though you don’t know it, someone does. You need to be careful.” She pulled her hand from his. “Now *go*.”

The fuel tanks punctuated her final word with a tremendous groan. There was no way he was going to make it, not at this point.

He had to try. Varros was waiting.

Cal pushed himself to his feet and ran.

#

With every blow, the maize bag creaked on its hinge. Cal delivered a series of rapid punches. Each one reverberated up his arm, and his shoulder throbbed. He ignored it.

The only warning he had to Varros’s silent approach was the prickling at the back of his neck, the tingling down his spine that told him he was no longer alone.

“What?” he grunted.

“You aren’t supposed to push yourself too hard at this point in your healing process,” Varros said.

“You’re on medical leave for the next eight days still.”

“Just means I’m not cleared for a time jump yet,” Cal said. “Doesn’t mean I’m supposed to be bedridden.”

Varros went silent. For an android, he was remarkably adept at making his disapproval palpable. The air was thick with it. Cal paused his routine and flicked a sweat-damp bit of hair out of his eyes.

“Did you need something?” he asked.

“I spoke to Annie this morning.”

Cal closed his eyes for a beat. Finally, he turned to face Varros. He was dressed in civvies today, his outfit the typical muted browns and forest-greens that Martians from Valles Marineris tended to favor. A brown ribbon held his hair back, and he was wearing the beaten leather boots he reserved for days when he was doing maintenance on the tanks. So that was where he had been hiding these past three days. Cal had wondered.

“Is she all right?”

Varros shrugged, an exaggerated movement he had copied from his human colleagues. “Her wife chose to die five hundred years in the past rather than return home. I believe it would be unusual if she were doing fine at this point.”

“This wasn’t her home.” Cal was surprised at how easily the words spilled from his lips. He hadn’t even consciously thought them. He walked over to the nearby bench and fell gracelessly onto it. “Jesus, Varros. I don’t know if I can keep doing this.” Varros sat next to him. “You don’t exactly have a choice.”

“I killed them.” Cal dropped his head in his hands, fingers digging into his scalp. “The ship exploded because of me, because I destroyed the main fuel lines. I wiped out an entire colony. One *billion* people. God —”

Bile rose in the back of his throat. The room swam around him. For a moment, he feared he was going to be sick on Varros’s boots, and then a bucket appeared in front of his face.

“It would have happened regardless,” Varros said when the retching had eased.

“In the original timeline, a design flaw caused the engines to overload and explode while the ship was still in dry-dock. In this one, it was the severed fuel lines that destroyed the ship. The colony was wiped out either way, and Luna was left uninhabitable for decades. That is how it needed to be, Cal. If Sokol had succeeded in changing history, there’s no telling what might have happened to the present.”

He reached out and put a tentative hand on Cal’s shoulder. The warmth of his metal fingers bled through Cal’s shirt.

“I believe Annie would like to speak to you at some point.”

“She’s already talked to you.”

“I wasn’t there,” Varros pointed out. “It isn’t the same. I don’t know how it feels to know that someone you loved chose to die on a mission.”

He added after a moment, “I suppose I can imagine, however.”

A sudden stab of guilt pricked Cal behind the sternum. It was impossible for androids to make a time jump. Varros couldn’t have gone after him, no matter how much he may have wanted to, and when Cal had cut their connection, it must have been maddening.

“I didn’t mean to worry you,” he said lamely.

“I believe we are far beyond that point,” Varros told him gently. “I know that every time you go into the tank, there is an eight-point-two percent chance you won’t be coming back. I have always known that, of course, for every agent I have ever worked with, but – it’s different once there is an emotional investment.”

Cal snorted. Varros certainly had a flair for understatements.

“You said that this wasn’t Sokol’s home,” Varros said after a moment. “Do you feel the same?”

Cal pinched the bridge of his nose between thumb and forefinger.

“I was born in the twentieth century. I’m living in the twenty-sixth,” he said after a moment.

“I don’t exactly belong here, do I?”

But unlike Sokol, he didn’t know anything else. A sideeffect of the cryogenic freezing process. He had died in one century and been resurrected in another, with no memory of his first life. Mars, Varros, the time agency – this was all he had ever known.

“She told me something, before she died,” he said. “She said that the time agency has my life on file. My first one.

They know about my past, who I was before I woke up here.”

“I was informed that there was very little data about your first life. The records had been lost in the centuries after your death.” Varros shrugged again. “Of course, I am only a transport operator, and an android. There would have been no need for me to know.”

“Sokol was defrosted years before me, and years before you were recruited. She was responsible for training me, so she *did* know.”

“Does that bother you?”

“Yes. No. I don’t know.” Cal gave a frustrated huff.

“Nothing’s changed, has it? I’m prohibited from accessing the file. Even if I could, it would be like reading about someone else’s life. That’s not me, not anymore.”

He massaged his shoulder carefully, feeling the knot of scar tissue beneath his shirt.

“You’re overdue for your painkillers.”

Cal nodded, and allowed himself to be pulled to his feet. Varros put an arm around his waist, which under normal circumstances he would have protested, but this time he was grateful for the support. He ached down to his bones, and his legs seemed to be made of rubber.

“She told me to be careful,” he said softly.

“You do have a tendency to take unnecessary risks during time jumps.”

Cal shook his head. “That’s not what she meant. She said that the time agency knows about my past, and that they’re going to use against me.”

Varros went very still. After a moment, he curled his fingers around Cal's hip, squeezing gently.

"I have no idea what she might have meant," he admitted. "Be assured, though, that if they try anything, they will have to go through me first."

"It'll cost you your career if you interfere." The agency didn't take too kindly to androids who stepped out of line.

"And possibly your life if I don't." Varros looked at him. "I would rather lose my career than you."

Cal leaned into Varros's warmth and let out a slow sigh through his nose. Varros was the only home he had ever known, and the only one he wanted.

Whatever it was the time agency intended for him, it could wait another day.



Typewriter

Photo by Myranda Gould



The Mission Inn

Photo by Bayley Murphy

Things about Depression



Jordan Devera

People will tell you things about depression.

They'll tell you about the sadness, but you already know about that,
don't you?

They'll tell you that some days, it'll be hard to smile.

That some days will be better than others.

People will tell you that "It's alright though," and "I'm here for you"
and "it'll get better."

Your mom will tell you she loves you, and your friends will tell
you they are there if you want to talk, and your therapist
will tell you about all things you're supposed to hear at
therapy, like what you should do and why.

But oh my god, there are so many things they don't tell you.

They don't tell you about the pain.

It's a burning and it's so there, and it makes you aware of every
single breath that enters and leaves your body, like someone
is manually inflating and deflating you, squeezing your body
like a plastic bag with too much air in it.

They don't tell you about the numbness either.

The emptiness, the hollow hole in your chest, that only comes in
place of the pain, an emptiness that creeps into your smile,
and then your eyes, a fog so thick you can't see your hand in
front of your face.

They'll tell you to take your time.

"It's okay! No rush," they'll say. But you feel rushed, maybe not by
them, but by the way they ask you if you're okay, and their
worried faces just before they rearrange their expression for
you.

They will tell you to take a day off. Make the next one into a good
day, and take today for yourself.

But people don't tell you that the good days are only mediocre, and that if you have a day where you feel okay, it's probably going to be your best day of the week.

People don't tell you that the bad days are the dark days, the days where light doesn't make it past your corneas, where it takes all of your energy to get out of your bed and function.

People don't tell you that the worst days are the storm days, the days when there is no sunlight, no sky, no warmth, no life, and all you can do is sit, alone, under a pile of blankets, staring blankly at nothing because nothing is all you can see.

People will tell you about all the things they've heard and read.

All the coping mechanisms that they saw on Facebook, or the ones that helped their sister's friend.

But you're not their sister's friend, and yeah coloring is relaxing, but how does that help when your lungs won't work right?

People don't tell you that you won't want to get better.

They don't mention that, even though up to one in six people in this country are medicated, you will reject the idea of taking a pill, that you will say you're strong, and you don't need a medication to make yourself better.

They don't tell you that for a while, you'll hate your therapist. The only person that knows how to help you will be refused by you, because you hate the idea of not being in control of your own life.

They don't tell you about all the days that you'll call in sick because laying in bed sounds so much better than getting dressed, even though you know that getting dressed will make you feel better.

They don't tell you that you'll go days, even weeks without washing your hair, covering the strands with headbands and hats to hide the fact that you can't keep yourself together enough to keep yourself clean.

People will tell you that it's all in your head.

They'll tell you that you're fine and it's all fine and it's all in your head. And you know that it's all in your head, depression is just a chemical imbalance in your brain, right? You know it's all in your head but that doesn't stop the ache in center of your chest, your chest and not your head.

People don't tell you that you'll lose your friends.

They don't tell you that this being inside of you is not you, and that the not you is the you your friends will see instead of the real you, and they will hate it, because they don't recognize your face anymore. Your friends will drift away, all of them on a boat and you on a dinghy, until all you can see is the outline of their ship on the horizon as you float the other way.

They don't tell you that you won't recognize yourself, either.

You will look in the mirror, and you will see your face, but when you look into your own eyes, the person staring back at you is a stranger, a stranger that took your body when depression took your mind, a stranger with no emotions and a broken soul.

They don't ever tell you about the broken soul.



Scattered

Artwork by Alexandra Moscinski

Window Pane



Denise Hatcher

Sometimes

people

are like

glass:

push

too hard,

they

can

b r e a k .



Overflow

Photo by Wyatt Murphy

Charm of Jew



Hannah Peterson

Early 1935

My family lived in the southern part of Poland, a town called Krakow. We owned a very small business in the city; the bottom of the building was the store, while the top was our home. The bottom part was a wide open space, as the top was separated into three rooms. We also had a space behind the store, and in a small makeshift pen were a few chickens, and a goat. I lived with my older brother, Abel, and my mother, Raakel. Pa had died years before my birth. I had a friend who lived across the street; one whom pretty much lived with us, Nina. Nina and I differed in all appearances, except the texture of our hair. She had brown eyes and blonde ringlets, while I had brown curls and blue eyes, almost identical to my brother. My mother, however, had brown eyes. The shop was where one could find fresh pastries and warm bread; the best in Poland.

Every morning, it was my duty to retrieve milk and eggs from the chickens and goats. Abel, on the other hand, had other jobs. Once a week, Abel went into the middle of Krakow, to buy sugar and flour. Ma had the job of baking, as well as cook meals for Abel and I. Nina would sometimes help out in the bakery when she got home from school. Abel and I were homeschooled by Ma, because we didn't make enough money for us to be sent to school. She had attended school, and everywhere she took with her was a book full of teachings and stories. It was small, but contained a lot of information that she took time to show us. Every Sunday, the shop stayed closed and Ma would teach Abel and me about who we were. We were Jewish, and being Jewish came with the rules of the religion.

Late 1935

Life in Krakow in 1935 was not the best. A depression had started, and although Poland was not in one of the roughest conditions, my family had trouble getting the supplies we needed. Abel started to make longer trips to get sugar, flour and feed for the animals. Without much food, the hens wouldn't lay eggs, and it was hard to get milk from the goat. Somehow, my family managed to make do. Some of our regular customers stopped coming in, and with it, less money came in, making us have to close the shop more than just Sundays. I noticed Nina no longer went to school. When I asked her about it, she said it had been canceled. I knew it meant we were not the only ones in poverty. So was the government. Nonetheless, life went on. Ma continued her teachings every Sunday morning, despite what was going on around us. Some days people would try to come into the bakery to steal food or beg for some bread. Usually Abel shooed them out, but other times Ma would give in. One day, she told me how it would end soon. Life was life and you had to make of it what you can.

One night her and Abel were arguing. I was supposed to be asleep. Ma was getting loud, and so was Abel. I snuck down the stairs and overheard Ma.

"Fate is an overpowering thing Abel. It will take its turn. But for now, focus on the present. Do not worry about the future. It is about right now. And right now, we are okay. We at least have a roof over our head and food to eat..." She paused, "Abel, you are only 15. You need not to worry about things like this. We are strong. Okay? Now hush and go to sleep."

When I heard her coming up the stairs, I darted to my room. What was going on around us? I knew nothing of the outside world. I had been hidden from the world around me, and to me that was okay. I knew Ma was right. All that mattered was us. Right now. And right now, things were rough, but we were going to make it through it. At least, that's what I believed.

December 1938

The struggling became weaker as time went on. Nina started to go back to school. Ma finally was able to keep the bakery running for six days of the week. Poland was beginning to be better, but I was unaware of the rest of the world. I was still censored from most of the world around me, but Abel was not. He made it a necessity of his to listen to the radio each night, to get a sense of what was going on around us. Once Ma and I had gone upstairs, he would take out his radio, listen, then shut it off and go to sleep.

One night, I knew something was troubling Abel. When Ma had finally gone to sleep, I went to talk to him. He was seated in the back of our shop, at his small makeshift table.

“Abel?”

“Yeah?” He answered. Deep bags bruised his eyes.

“What’s going on?”

“Aiylah...”

“What? Please. I want to know.”

“It’s the Germans. They...they do not like Jews. And... they are trying to destroy us. For now, we are safe. It is only in Germany.”

“We are supposed to focus on the now Abel,” I reminded him. He looked at me.

“I know. But...I fear they will come.” He paused, “We need to be prepared.”

“We need to not worry about it Abel,” I told him. He stood up from his chair and shouted, “Dammit Aiylah! Don’t you understand? We are in danger!” I cowered back, protecting my face. Abel sat back down, frustrated, and put his head in his hands. I quietly looked back up at him.

“Promise me something, Aiylah,” he muttered.

“Sure,” I whispered.

“Whatever happens, be strong. We will be okay. Me and you, we will survive. Just be strong.” He did not even leave time for me

to promise. He took his radio and stormed up the stairs. I sat there, on the floor, in the darkness. "I promise," I whispered. Not that it mattered anyway. I did not know much of the Germans, but I kept thinking about what Abel had said. He was angry, and frustrated. Never had he snapped on me the way he did. I know he did not mean too, but what caused his anger? Why did the Germans not like us? Did we do something wrong? Were we in danger? What will happen? I thought about these things as I left to my own bedroom. I waited for sleep to come, but it didn't. I lay there awake, fearful of the Germans. But I had made promise. To stay strong. There was no way I was going to break that promise.

Later that week, I found out what Abel had been talking about. Why he had been so upset. Nina told me bits and pieces of what she heard at school. Although I did not know exact details, the Germans had put the Jews into their own territory in Germany. They called it a ghetto. It wasn't too bad, as the Jews still had their shops, and a home, simply it was just in the destined territory. The Germans attacked the ghetto, breaking everything in sight, smashing windows, and killing Jews. I knew I was lucky to be living in Poland. For now, being Jewish was none of my concern. I did not think the Germans would really invade our small country. That was, until my 16th birthday.

September 6, 1939

Never did I think I would wake up on my 16th birthday to the sound of shouts and screams. Abel entered my room, shouting how we had to leave. I was confused, but the worried expression on my brother's face made me hustle. "We need to escape," said Abel. He told me to pack a small bag that could be hidden, with essentials. We rushed down our stairs, and Abel's face dropped. Standing in the front of the doors to the bakery were two SS Guards. Next to them, my mother. "All of you are to report to the center of Krakow," demanded the officer. We had no other choice but to obey, for fear of death. Abel and I both knew what the officers were capable of. Once outside, still next to Ma and Abel,

we began to march towards the middle of the city. We saw many others doing the same. I scanned the area for Nina, but there was no sign of her. I watched as one of my older neighbors refused to march. The guard pulled out a gun and shot him in the head immediately. "Does anyone else not want to go?!" He shouted. The people around him hustled, but he shot one of the few women in the group. It disgusted me how cruel the guards could be. The lady had not done one thing...but to him, it didn't matter.

We shortly arrived at the center of Krakow, where a barricade was in the process of being set up. Long, tall fences surrounded the middle of Krakow, where few apartments had been evacuated. I knew the same thing that happened in Germany, was happening here. The Germans had set up a small ghetto for the Jews. They wanted us all in the same place. As we entered the ghetto, all of us were put into different apartments and homes. They were labeled with different numbers.

"These will be your new homes," announced an officer. Ma, Abel and I were put into apartment seven, along with another family of five. I recognized that they lived near us, but we had never spoken. A mother, father, a daughter Abel's age, a son who looked a couple years younger than I, and a newborn. I remembered now Ma had sent them a few pastries when the baby was born.

A few other families were put into our apartment, which was starting to get cramped. I hated it. There were too many people in one apartment. I was very grateful Abel made me take a small satchel. In it, I packed few pastries that I had had in my bedroom, along with few spare things of clothing. Most of my personal belongings were at home. I did save one thing though. It was a necklace, and on it was a charm the shape of a key. The key opened, and in it was a picture of Abel, and one of Ma and Pa. I put it around my neck and tucked it under my shirt. It was my prized possession at the time, and there was no way I would let go of it.

Food was scarce in the ghetto. Luckily, Abel brought with him the money he had. With it, we bought bread and potatoes. It was in small amounts, but some was better than none. I grew hungry, but I knew I had to deal with it.

I could bear the hunger, especially if it meant survival. If Abel was hungry, he spoke none of it, and neither did Ma. Ma had brought her book with her. In secret, she still gave us teachings every Sunday. Or at least tried. It was hard to keep track of what day it was living in the ghetto. She made sure she wasn't caught, since she knew the guards would not only rip it to shreds, but also kill her for preaching her teachings. Abel once told her not too, but she did not care. Ma cared only about her teachings, her beliefs. It was fine to me, as long as we weren't caught. It kept me distracted from the foul odors around the apartment, and the lack of space.

I made an effort to stay out of the apartment as much as possible. I roamed the streets of the ghetto, witnessed tons of beatings, and killings. The guards for some reason left me alone. If anything, they gave me attention I did not like. I tried to stay away from them as much as possible. I was not interested in them the same way they were interested in me.

I was still on the search for Nina. One night, I heard a whisper calling my name. I feared it was one of the guards, trying to get me alone in the night. I ignored it, until it came closer. I slowly sat up, making sure not to touch any of my surrounding roommates. All were fast asleep. It seemed to be the only thing to do around here anyways. I tiptoed to the closest window, and opened it. I saw a guard in the far distance with a flashlight. One of the rules here was you had to stay inside your apartment all night. If they caught you, they'd kill you. As I looked out the window, something grabbed me and pulled me down. I was going to scream, but a hand covered my mouth. "Shhhh, it's me. Nina." I stopped struggling, and Nina let go. I turned to face her. She was in the same condition as I was. The dress she wore was ripped, dirty, and her blonde ringlets were very out of place.

"What are you doing?!" I hissed.

"C'mon, we gotta go," Nina said, taking my hand. She started pulling me away from my apartment, to the other side of the ghetto.

"Here, there's a hole here, we just need to go under..."

“Nina, where have you been?”

“I’ll explain later.”

“I...I can’t go Nina.” Nina looked up at me, and stood up from where she was crouched.

“Why not?”

“What about Abel? And Ma?” I told her.

“They don’t matter Aiylah, it’s just me and you”

“Nina, no. I have to stay with my family..”

“I thought I was family.” Nina whispered, tears loading her eyes.

“Of course you are,” I whimpered, embracing her. Then, out of nowhere, we heard shouts of the guards.

“Who’s out here!”

“Run!” Nina yelled. I took off towards our apartment, and Nina darted the opposite way. I didn’t stop running when I heard the gunshot...and the scream. I couldn’t look back. I couldn’t be caught. Tears ran down my cheeks as I jumped into the window, shut it, and laid back besides Abel. I tried to slow my breathing. I knew they had gotten Nina. I had no idea where she had been, what had happened. She had escaped from the guards. She had come back to me. And I... I betrayed her.

October 28, 1942

One morning, I awoke to Abel calling my name.

“Aiylah?” Abel asked, shaking me.

“Yeah?”

“Time to get up.” I noticed that the sun was rising through the slit in my eyes. Everyone in the apartment was waking up, as SS guards asked for us to line up. I walked outside with Abel. Everyone was lined up in front of their apartment.

“Last night we had someone try to escape,” announced the lead officer. This happened very often. After the night Nina was caught, escapes seemed to occur more and more often.

He stood in front of us, his hand dangling by his gun. The other officers were lined up behind him.

“Sadly, we didn’t catch the escapee fast enough. They are hidden somewhere within us right now,” he eyed everyone suspiciously. He got into one of the girls from my apartment’s face.

“Was it you!?”

“No,” she replied quietly. BOOM! The shot fired into her head. Her mother fell to the ground and cradled her daughter’s bleeding head.

“Well! Who was it then?!” the officer screamed.

“Why, why...” the mother still wailed. BOOM! A shot was fired to the mother’s head. Everyone stayed silent.

“Anybody else?” The officer shouted. Just then, one of the officers from behind stepped forward and whispered something in his ear. The officer turned back to us.

“Well then, turns out to be your lucky day! Children under 10 follow Srg. Gats, and anyone over 45 over with Gats as well. Others follow me,” he directed. I knew Ma was well over 45. Panic crept through me.

“Ma?” I turned to face her. She was already headed towards Srg. Gats.

“Ma!” I screamed. I started to run toward her but I felt Abel’s arm grab my waist.

“No Ailyah,” he whispered under his breath.

“But Abel!” I argued. Abel was much stronger than me and before I knew it Ma was out of site.

“Abel, where are we going?” I questioned, looking up at him. My hand was held in the crook of his arm. I knew he paid more attention than me.

“They are liberating some of the camps. Labor camps. We will have to work. They are making more use of us *Jews*,” he spat.

“But, Ma?” He stopped walking and stared at me. His face softening.

“Young and old have no use to them Ailyah.

They...they have these other camps. Called extermination camps...
"Abel looked at me sadly. I stopped in my tracks. I felt myself getting weak. My knees betrayed me as I collapsed on the ground. All I remembered was Abel calling my name, tell me it was going to be okay.

I awoke in Abel's arms. We were walking, and by the sound of his breath, it must've been for a while. When he saw I was awake he asked, "Ready to walk?" I nodded. He put me down and we walked.

"Where are we going?"

"No idea. I think a train."

"How long have you been walking?"

"An hour or so."

"With me?"

"Yes." I looked up at him, his jaw bone hardened.

"They wanted to kill you," he whispered, "I just said you fainted. Wouldn't let em touch you. Luckily the guards allowed me to hold you until you woke up."

"Thank you."

We continued to walk in silence. The train soon came into view. The train would take us to a concentration camp in Plascow, Poland. I didn't want to think about it. All I wanted to do was sleep this all away.

October 30, 1942

I figured out later Ma had been sent to the extermination camp in Belztuc. Once we had arrived in Plascow, we unboarded the train. We were put into female and male lines. I knew I was going to be separated from Abel. He made sure to tell me before we walked in our separate ways: "Remember the promise. It will be okay."

They ordered us to undress. Any unwillingly were beat with whips.

Fearful of the whips, I undressed quickly. A few of the guys stared and whistled, but Abel shot them a glare. The SS officers also yelled for them to shut it.

I took one last look at my necklace. Somehow I managed to keep it on. I studied the picture of Abel, of Ma and Pa. Oh how I wished she was okay. No matter what happened to me here, all I could remember was fate will take its turn. I gave the charm one last kiss, and let it fall to the ground.



Work Hard

Photo by Perry Cooper

I am Greater Than This Darkness



Mark Zelman

I am greater than this darkness,
this sleepless dream, aimless walk,
this black veil and blinding fog.

I am comet, one of multitudes.
I reclaim my sun, restore light to my heart.
I am greater than this darkness.

I am bell, I am meadowlark.
Hear my notes and know what prayer is.
Do not fear this black veil and looming fog.

Scouring tide, purging flood,
I advance, I destroy, and I renew.
I am greater than this darkness.

I decant my fine spirit, I am volatile,
explosive, I am supernova, I rise above
this black veil and blinding fog.

I am only something beautiful.
I am not the only one.
We are greater than this darkness,
this black veil and blinding fog.



Skyline

Photo by Jake Lichty

Pillow of Dreams



Kelsey Kenneally

*Rest little sister, no need to fret.
I am close by and there is nothing to fear.
Sleep little sister no need to cry.
Lay your head on the pillow of dreams.*

*Stay little sister; please, stay right here.
I am close by and there is nothing to fear.
Be calm little sister don't be afraid.
Lay your head on the pillow of dreams.*

*Please, help me sister; stay by my side.
Stay with me always; I'll find a way.
Sleep little sister, lay down right here.
Lay your head on the pillow of dreams.*

*I love you to the end of my days.
Lay your head on the pillow of dreams.*

“Pillow of Dreams” follows the fictional story of siblings Sontono and Melodine. Sontono is Melodine’s guardian since they were forced to run away from home when Melodine was only four years old. Melodine was born with a debilitating psychological disorder for which there is no effective treatment; because of this disorder, Melodine is slowly going insane. This poem is Sontono’s lullaby, soothing his young sister to sleep while trying to assure her (and himself) that he will find a way to save her from her madness.

Could You Stay?



Julie Cortez

My dear,
if you could
would you choose to stay?
If you could
would you choose to live?
Don't be in such a hurry to leave,
this world needs you
more than the angels do.
Existence in this life
is already fleeting,
but Heaven is eternal.

My dear,
where do you think you're going?
What do you think you'll find?
Honestly,
I don't think you even know.
If you could,
would you please just stay?
I'm not ready to say goodbye,
not yet.
Heaven's gates can wait.
I pray to God
not to take you yet,
to keep you here with me
just a little longer.

My dear,
if I gave you my hand

would you take hold
and never let go?
Because I can't walk this life
alone,
this world would be too lonely.
If I begged you to stay,
would you?
I could give a million reasons why,
but darling
would you believe them?

I need one more
Christmas morning with you,
one more Sunday afternoon.
I need one more birthday with you,
one more New Years countdown.
I need one more laugh together,
one more cry,
one more conversation.
My dear,
I need one more kiss
and one more smile.
I need more time darling,
I just need more time.

If you could, my dear,
would you stay?
Honestly I know you would.
But your time has been cut short
and you've entered Heaven's gates.
Now the time has come
to see what angel you become.



Oxymoron

Photo by Megan Coleman

The Goldfinch Says Po-ta-to-chip



Joey Lucchesi

Spittle misted from his lips, and his shirt was stained dark with perspiration. Carl continued to stare blankly back down the trail. They had only hiked for a few hours, but the trailhead was far, far behind them. If the tops of evergreens weren't there, he might have been able to catch a yearning glimpse of the tan ranger station and the ranger's black pickup truck. By now it would have looked like the meat of a sunflower seed and a grain of pepper. Carl turned on his heel and resumed his reluctant trudge up the mountain to catch up with the other two boys.

Steven Pry, two years Carl's senior, kicked a muddy hiking boot at the post of a trail sign reading "Devil's Gap: 1/2 mi."

"We're almost there. I've been before with my Ma. Well, not all the way there. Just far enough that I could see it," said Beau, wiping off his thin wire glasses as his scrawny legs propelled his gentle physique up the incline. Carl wondered if he was telling the truth. He had been hiking before in his old town, but the meager hills in southern Georgia did not compare to the immense switchbacks the mountains offered in the Pacific Northwest. They pushed on; Beau's faded gray sweatshirt draped over him like an old furniture covering.

"I just hope that the last clue was right and we aren't on a wild goose chase," muse Carl, scanning the underbrush for a new walking stick. The trio had found a geocache on their previous hike, and the Field Notes memo pad contained a set of clues that supposedly led to a final surprise. According to the notebook, the trail to Devil's Gap was their final destination. They could only assume they were on the right path because the clue had read as such:

"The Great Adversary with a negligent dentist."

A bird twittered to his right, and Carl turned to see where it was. The trail had opened up from the patch of evergreens and spruces to a lush green meadow. Bees danced around yellow, white,

and red bushels of wild flowers. Arching foothills stood in the backdrop. Previous hikers had lined the sides of the path with rocks of different colors, and there were boulder formations on either side in the shamrock green grass. The group of boys stopped. Beau stumbled into Steven, his eyes lost in the meadow and not on the trail. Steven gave him a shove and muttered at Beau to pay attention.

“I was, I was, I was,” whispered Beau.

The hike remained relatively silent among the trio. A yelp or grunt broke the silence when occasionally one of the boys stumbled on a root, or lost traction on debris underfoot. Carl did not mind the quietness, and he caught himself looking at the surrounding trees more than he did the trail, causing him to continually be further behind than the rest of the group. The scribbled words in the Field Notes memo pad danced in his head. He wondered if the devil would actually go to the dentist. Would it be such a treat for him to have his incisors racked with floss and jabbed with a pick? He probably got orange juice and toothpaste flavored toothpaste in his goody bag. Old Lucifer probably flosses too much and gets scolded for it. Carl chuckled to himself. The wilderness hummed back.

The trail widened again, this time not as much as the meadow, but to a small circular clearing about one hundred feet wide, with patches of grass and ferns. The boys froze in the middle of the circle. Before them at the edge of the clearing, was a single white-tailed deer. Its head was down grazing and did not seem to take notice of the boys at all. It nibbled at bits of grass and continued its casual saunter by the trees. The boys whispered to each other and Steven began sifting through the dirt and grass slowly. Steven stood up and flashed a grin, his fingers cradled a small pebble that he shook around in the palm of his hand. He looked at Carl, and Carl shook his head frantically to stop him. The deer still did not bother.

“It smells like must,” said Beau.

Steven turned and stepped out further into the opening; now between the deer and the group of boys. Carl tugged feebly at

Steven's arm which he shrugged off with a huff. As Steven wound up, the deer turned a sharp peripheral eye and bits of grass clung to the edge of its mouth. In one step, Steven's arm, a sunburned fleshy trebuchet, hurled the rock in the direction of the deer, missing it by inches and instead bouncing off the tree behind it with a *thock*. The deer jolted its head up, frozen in place only for a second with its eyes two piercing raisons riveted on the group of boys. Startled, Steven was now in the headlights, standing stock-still with his own wide green eyes. He relaxed when one of the other boys laughed and teased him for being afraid. The deer, unfroze and went back to eating as if the boys were not there again.

The posse stared at the trail before them. It was noticeably steeper now, and as they exited the meadow away from the deer, the trees ominously towered over the swindling path. Another trail marker at the base of the new incline read "Devil's Gap: 1/8th mile". Carl trembled excitedly in the gap's growing proximity. Of course, they could only hope to find the final geocache there. Beau opened a small bag of Lay's next to him and began to nibble. Filling the air and Carl's nostrils with the smell of salt and potatoes instead of the musty deer.

"I heard if you look down the gap, there is just an endless pit that goes straight to hell. At least that's what my big brother Todd told me," said Beau, taking out a handful of crispy chips before offering Carl the bag. He dipped his hand inside, his thoughts still on the geocache.

"Forget the gap. I bet there's a state coin in the cache. The Hawaii one just came out and it's an easy pick for a geocache. It's so small, it'd fit perfectly."

"I hope there's a Playboy," guffed Steven. "Someone has just been leading us to their stash they would have to keep from their mom. Maybe they got caught with it and instead of throwing it out they wanted to spread the love."

Beau retorted, "No one would do that. I'll bet if they wanted to spread the love they put a big ol' bag of M&Ms." His gray hoodie draped over each of his hands and he had to peel back the sleeves to reach into the bag of chips. Beau crunched away.

The pines' outstretched arms of different shades of green and brown and silver formed a winding tunnel over the trail. The ground beneath Carl's feet had changed from a dark beaten path, wide and broken in from numerous pounding feet, to a slender untrodden rut with rocks, ferns, and other debris strewn throughout. He had stopped hearing the sounds of the birds, and the wind warbled through the trees like a flute.

At each turn, dip, and switchback it seemed as though the Devil's Gap would appear before them. The labyrinth continued to send the eager group bouncing in an endless circle until the path broke out of the canopy. They were now pressed against the mountain with a rock wall as their guide. Looking out the boys mumbled in stark appreciation as a wide dusk sky stretched for unstoppable miles on end. The sunset erupted pink, with magenta and purple and bright orange spilling across the sky. The blazing colors seeped through the clouds like a spilled slushy in the cracks of a white sidewalk, and the sun now glowed a low red, pinning their silhouettes against the rock. The wispy shadow puppets marched on.

In the low dusk light, the boys began to feel some relief. The path had begun to level out and the boys could each sense that they had finally reached the top of the mountain which was wide and circular. From there, the path lead to a spout-like opening of outcropping at the end of the trail. The mountain, at its crest, had ceased to be made up of mere grass, stumps, and dirt. The boy's boots clumped against the hard stone under them and were now surrounded by dozens of granite peaks jutting up all around the trail. They wandered around the peak as if unsure of what to do next, until they made their way to the beginning of the outcropping, they could see their terminus come into view. "There it is!" cried Beau. The Devil's Gap was narrow, shaving down to about a yard or so wide with shards of dusty granite underfoot. The outcropping gradually narrowed more, forming what looked like the cross between a train bridge and a catwalk. A gap about five feet across split the catwalk, as if the rocky train bridge had a chunk of it blown away from a stick of TNT, taking a page straight out of old

westerns and Looney Toons. Across the chasm, the bridge continued forming a scanty rock ledge that ran flush up against a perpendicular granite wall on the other side. At first glance, the distance across the gap was underwhelming, but then looking over the edge immediately made Carl's stomach flip inside out. The drop was a mind-boggling two hundred feet, as read on the warning sign posted at the end of the trail before the outcropping. There was no deep dark pit of infinity at the bottom as Beau advertised, but instead there were more and more jutting granite spikes coming from either side of the overpass and the bottom of the small canyon. It was cold on the top of the mountain, but perspiration trickled down Carl's cheek.

"So where is the geocache?" murmured Steven. He twisted his hands in his shirt and scuffed his boot on the granite, his voice fading just a hair. The vastness of mountain's crest and the gap had momentarily inundated Carl that he almost forgot why they had trudged up there in the first place. While Beau gaped at the granite, Carl pulled out the Field Notes memo pad once more.

"The clue only says that it's at the ga-"

"Gap," finished Beau excitedly. All at once, the boys turned to the chasm. Sure enough, they could spot a small forest green bock nestled in the granite chips not three feet from the edge of the drop off.

The boys huddled around the box on the wider part of the catwalk, not touching it and looked at each other with nervous elation. "Steven you open it, you're the oldest," said Carl. Steven smirked, swelling with pride of primogeniture and swiftly unhooked the clasp and flung it open.

"Oh hell!"

Inside the box was simply another piece of off-white paper which looked to be torn out of the same Field Notes memo pad in Carl's hand. Another clue. Before Steven could go into another temper tantrum, Beau opened it and laid it out for the others to see. In similar handwriting as before, the clue was short and sweet, signed with a stick figure with two horns, a fork, and a pointy tail.

It read:

“Did you really think it was on this side of the gap?”

The boys immediately knew what had to happen next, wide-eyed, they looked at each other in silence. And again, they slowly turned to look across the chasm and again, sure as all hell, there was another green box resting in the shade of the granite wall on the small rock ledge. Around them, the sunset was quickly turning into dusk, and the shades of deep red and magenta loomed a tad darker. “Well, so much for the long trip. No reason to jump across that,” insisted Steven, “Besides, this was just a dumb game anyways,” he added. Carl looked indignant and glanced back down at the note again and then over to Beau who blinked back at him. There were still dashes of chips and salt on the edges of his lips. His feathery hair bobbed with the breeze.

After a moment, Carl sighed and folded the note up, “I hate to say it, but I think that Steven’s right. I mean look at that drop.”

“You’re deader than shit if you fall. Goodbye. Sayonara. Adios amigo,” reiterated Steven. They looked at the gap again. It bared its granite teeth and grin back at them. Steven had already started to walk back down the trail shaking his head and muttering about what a waste of time the hike had been. Carl looked back down at the box and undid the clasp to put the last clue back in the box for another, perhaps braver, group of hikers.

“I’ll do it,” peeped Beau. Steven whipped around, incredulous, and Carl looked up from the box. He raised a finger and opened his mouth to object, but then slowly retracted and stepped to the side of the trail. Beau’s eyes gleamed and he strode past with a tight-lipped grin that seeped over his face and he gathered himself a few feet from the gap.

“I’ll be with you every step of the way,” Carl reassured him. Beau reminded Carl of his younger brother. The wiry boy was swimming in his oversized sweatshirt which had seemed to grow in size over the past few hours, the sleeves drooped like willow branches. His shoelaces, even triple knotted, flopped around in the dirt. Beau inched his way towards the gap on his own. Without a

glance back or even a stop at the gap, Beau lurched forward, taking Carl's breath away at the suddenness of the bound. His light, bird-like frame floated over the gap and smoothly as if landing on a small branch, came down on the far ledge. He shot his head around at Carl, beaming back at him in toothless rapture. Still out on the outcropping, Carl looked back at Steven who hooted and hollered from a safe distance. "Well let's see this treasure then! Open it up!" he called to Beau. Beau looked down at his feet at the green box and scooped it up, keeping a hand on the granite wall behind him.

"Not until I get back over there! It's all of ours, isn't it?" Beau replied still sheepishly smiling. Carl anxiously rubbed his hands together and beckoned Beau to come on back. He looked at Beau who was readying himself for the jump back from the ledge. His shadow on the granite wall was twice his size, looking like a skinny wingless pterodactyl. Beau crouched, surging with confidence now; ready to spring into flight. Steven and Carl watched on as he pushed off. Beau's tiny calves hardly flexed and his red, poorly tied sneakers struggled to gain traction, sending a cloud of brown dirt and shards of granite skirting in the air, launching him into a stumbling vault. The faces of the older crew blanched, a safe distance from the ledge. Time slowed. Carl's eyes locked with Beau's. They were wide and on full alert just as the deer's in the clearing was when the rock wizzed by its head. His arms outstretched. His legs flailed in each direction. He hung there, motionless over the crevasse. Suspended in air, Carl noticed a crack in the left lens of Beau's brown framed glasses.



Paint the Ceiling

Photo by Blaine Petrella

The Ugly Truth



Tiffany Brown

Alone in the dark room there she sat, back against the wall, ready to
risk it all

A hopeless soul searching for comfort, greeted with demons.

Dreams of soaring, yet faced with failure.

Step closer and see the pain in her eyes, hear her agonizing cries
the redness tells all the lies underneath her smile.

Every day she struggles to keep her façade,
a hidden mask to the world

by night she's just an unknown mystery.

The tears begin to pour, that wall begins to

C

R

U

M

B

L

E

Eyes bloodshot, scars deep as the oceans.

Surrounded by painful memories of the past, a flood washes over
her,

There's no remorse, only hope for an End.

The end of Suffering!

The end of pain!

The end of feeling alone!

The end of restless nights of hoping that tomorrow ceases and for

the world to
STOP judging.

The Ugly Truth she is just a girl who gave it her all

The Ugly Truth is she is me

She is You

She is every Girl struggling to identify herself in a world full of
fakeness.

She is staring back at herself in the reflection

Seeking approval yet all she receives is

THE UGLY TRUTH!

Fighting to remain in this cruel world of endless rejection

She is You

She is Me

She is your sister, your niece, your cousin

She is Every Girl seeking to become a

Woman, yet society will always make her feel

WORTHLESS.

The UGLY TRUTH is even when she is down on the ground
Blood pouring out, every inch of her soul cries out to be heard; she
never gives up,

She continues to be the **Voice**, A **VOICE** for all those who struggle
against society's expectations of what **BEAUTIFUL IS**.

The UGLY TRUTH is

She's

Afraid Of

REJECTION

Yet

SHE

Knows

She must continue fighting for those who have no way, no willpower
to continue through the depths of this pain that we call **LIFE**.



The Faces of Life

Photo by Jordan Devera

List of Things (The Little Things)



Mariah Boehl

It's the little things in life that make you want to live:

ONE.

A lone, shining daisy – spotlighted by sunlight –
Sprouting in a field of brown, dehydrated grass;
Fighting for life and, roguely,
Surviving in the most unlikely of circumstances

TWO.

A stranger holding a door
Wearing a grey beanie – halfway falling off;
Unkempt hair teasing out,
Trying to escape into the sunrise behind us;
8 a.m. and purple surrounds his weary eyes,
Movements slow and exhausted;
Still, the door is held,
Pleasantries are exchanged
And a heart-stopping smile given;
Guess chivalry isn't actually dead.

THREE.

A sly hand sneaking food to a bone-thread cat
The screeching, unused door freezing your limbs,
Concealed in the ink of night –
The moon closeted away, the stars muted,
Shadow blending into the black hole of a wall,
Hidden from prying, nosy eyes;
Still, he sees what you've done,
Several times you've tried – no success,

Always caught;

Fear. But never regret;
Punishment handed out,
The blur of the worn, leather belt not seen,
But the crack of skin splitting heard;
Pain. Always pain. But never regret.

FOUR.

The fluttering of the last Autumn leaf
On a naked, cadaverous tree,
Bitter December wind biting your skin,
Numbing you to everything but that one color -

The color of tulips blooming in grassy fields,
Of egg-hunting and spring showers,
Of sunlight warming your skin as a breeze hugs you;
The simplest of times –
The color of your childhood.

Then, with that final leaf falling, falling down,
White blinds you - snow reflecting your future,
Tearing you from that one simple color;

Panic consumes you as darkness descends,
All knowledge of living in reality forgotten,
For lost you are now.



Spartan

Photo by Blaine Petrella

Can't Have



Angela Treviño

I can't be controlled
nor owned.

The soul rages
like the wild mustangs
that roam the plains;
the wolves that howl
at the full blue moon.

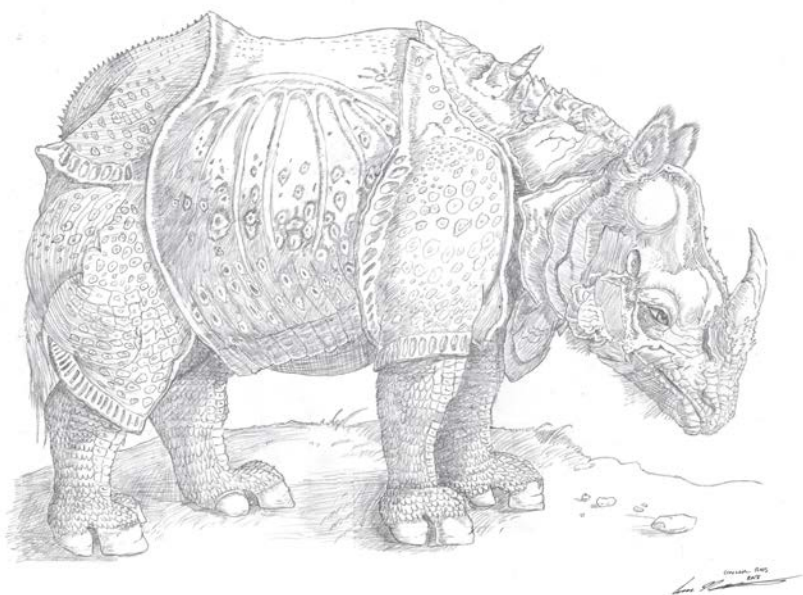
The spirit burns
with an eternal flame
that nothing can extinguish;
not even the darkest
of pits could dim
the light of hope.

The mind
does not bend,
twist, nor turn
like the raging river
rather
it carves its own path
of destiny and truth.

The body
endures life's trials
and tribulations
like a boxer;
blow after blow,
but still having the will
to stand for another
round.

You cannot control
what you cannot own;
nor own
what you can not
control.

Try, as you will,
but you can't have.



Durer's Rhinoceros, 513 Years Later

Artwork by Connor Ross

Not Haunted by Ghosts



Julia Kranenburg

I am not haunted by ghosts.
I am haunted by a living, walking memory.
Haunted by the blue of your eyes
and the echo of the laugh I used to see in them.

I am not haunted by ghosts.
I am haunted by the way you used to talk to me.
Haunted by the memory of giving up
and letting you win.

I am not haunted by ghosts.
I am haunted by what you said to me.
Haunted by the steel in the voice
that used to be so kind to me.

I am not haunted by ghosts.
I am haunted by a past I cannot shake.
Haunted by the version of you I left behind
when I decided to survive.

But I am not haunted by ghosts.



Reflection

Photo by Stephanie Sabon

Her Journey



Tiffany Brown

An empty chair at the intersection of the bedroom
Her path, her journey along the trail never wavering

In the dark of twilight

There she sat, departed from here and now

Her mind is like a tornado, swirling out of control

She is a thousand miles away

I pause, wandering if her soul has traveled the unknown course.

From her room, I heard the ocean beating in the silence against the
shore

When the tide falls, it rises again

Old age is a number, her strength is a mountain

And just like a mountain she stood tall ready to face her destination

In the tranquility of her room, she sought to be free as a

Bird.

Spreading her wings, silently she soared to her safe

Haven.



You've Got Mail

Photo by Wyatt Murphy

As it Eats



Morgan Franczyk

As It eats,
I ball my fists and grit my teeth.
As It eats,
I set my jaw and raise my head.
As It eats,
I take a shaky breath and clench my eyes shut.
As It eats,
I begin to feel the war.
The wear and tear,
here and there,
as I slowly crumble away.
As It eats...
licking the plate clean.



Welcome to Cloud City

Artwork by Roberto Orozco

Silence



Denise Hatcher

Sometimes
one's
silence
is
the
loudest
sound
a
heart
can
hear.

Contributors' Notes

Denise Hatcher is a Spanish professor, mother, wife, runner, and part-time poet. Many years of teaching have nourished her love of the written word.

Julia Kranenburg is a sophomore year nursing student at the AU campus in Wisconsin. She has had an interest in poetry and writing since she was a child and is excited to be a part of this edition of *Nolos*.

Mark Zelman is an associate professor at Aurora University, where he teaches biology and interdisciplinary studies. Mark lives in Aurora.

Mariah Boehl has only recently gotten into writing poetry; she is more into the editing side of English, rather than the writing side. She also has an unhealthy addiction to reading and Pepsi and shows some signs of insomniac tendencies. Lastly, her current obsessions include Korean tv shows and ping pong.

Zach Ferris is a Freshman Health-Science and Chemistry major, Board of Trustees Scholar, tutor for first-year chemistry and biology courses, and member of the Men's Lacrosse team here at Aurora University. When not living on campus, he resides in Delafield, WI with his mother, Celia, Steve, and his three siblings, Alex (twin), Cosette, and Christian. He has a ten-year-old shihpoo and recently adopted a maltipoo rescue. When Zach is not on the field or in the classroom, he enjoys going out with friends and traveling.

Hannah Peterson is a freshman at AU, majoring in Human Animal Studies, and minoring in Criminal Justice. Hannah loves animals and hopes to work with them in the future. She also loves naps, reading, and of course, writing in her free time. (Which she claims tends to be rare these days!)

Alexis Ames first picked up a pen when she was eleven years old and hasn't put it down since. She lives in Colorado, where she works with robots by day and writes about them by night.

Connor Ross is a 19 year old Art and History major at Aurora University. While he considers himself a paleoartist, one who looks to accurately restore prehistoric life forms based off of current evidence, he is open to other forms of art as well.

Emily Zavacki loves to combine her passions (and majors) in biology and art whenever possible. Her work typically documents the small, but impactful things that may be overlooked at a particular moment in time. She hopes to open people's eyes to the world and inspire them to deeply observe their surroundings, especially with present day environmental issues.

Lexy Moscinski is an Aurora University senior and has been an artist and a writer for over 10 years. She focuses her creative work on the dark and raw side of humanity and herself; with her work, she hopes to inspire and enlighten those who come across it.

Bayley Murphy ('16) is an Aurora University Alum and former Graphic Designer of *Nolos* (2015-16). She returned to Aurora University in 2017 as Spartan Fellow for the Office of Financial Aid, later transitioning into the role of Access Services Coordinator in Phillips Library. Bayley is excited to be back on campus and a part of *Nolos* once again!

Myranda Gould is a sophomore Media Studies major at AU. She likes to draw and create art through painting, sketching, photoshop, and photograph.

Theresa Daunheimer is a Senior majoring in Religion and minoring in Spanish. She enjoys spending time with her three children, working at a library, and creating art every once in a while. Drawing or painting is her favorite way to relax, recharge, and put things in perspective.

Roberto Orozco uses a comic book style mixed with his own style to help convey both action and story in his works. He finds beauty in complexity and that is why he enjoys a heavy amount of line work to have the piece look incredibly detailed. Though not entirely egotistical when it comes to art, Roberto jokingly boasts that he is a god king among gods and kings.

Connie Padera is a social work graduate student with a strong passion for helping others. She has been writing for over ten years, and draws inspiration from her own life experiences for her poetry and short stories.

Miriam Guzmán is a junior majoring in English and Spanish and minoring in International Studies. When Miriam isn't working at her boring suit store job, her publishing internship, with Nolos, or doing homework, she likes to sleep, travel, read, write, listen to mariachi, and watch Bob's Burgers.

Joey Lucchesi is a senior English major and captain of the lacrosse team at AU. His favorite literary style is science fiction and his favorite author is Kurt Vonnegut. He loves spending his mornings with a cup of coffee and a good book. This is his first time being published.

Marlene Vail is currently a social work student at George Williams College studying towards her BSW to MSW. In her prior career, she was an events manager for a Milwaukee publisher. Originally from New York, Marlene resides in Fontana, WI with her collie. Ballet and dance are her passions.

Wyatt Murphy is a junior at Aurora University majoring in Communications & Media and Psychology, while minoring in Marketing. He is the current design editor of *Nolos*, having now created three issues (2016-2018). He enjoys photography and cinematography, as well as writing scripts. Wyatt hopes to build upon his existing YouTube partnership and advance to creating his own content as a career.

Alexis Ames	Julia Kranenburg
Mariah Boehl	Jake Lichty
Tiffany Brown	Joey Lucchesi
Sam Chase	Alexandra Moscinski
Megan Coleman	Bayley Murphy
Perry Cooper	Wyatt Murphy
Julie Cortez	Roberto Orozco
Theresa Daunheimer	Connie Padera
Jordan Devera	Hannah Peterson
Dana Drier	Blaine Petrella
Zach Ferris	Connor Ross
Morgan Franczyk	Stephanie Sabon
Myranda Gould	Duo Tang
Miriam Guzmán	Angela Treviño
Denise Hatcher	Marlene D. Vail
Shawn Kalam	Emily Zavacki
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