

northern
lights 2012



Northern Lights Art & Literary Magazine

North Hunterdon High School
1445 Route 31 South
Annandale, NJ 08801

Artwork Credit:

Front Cover: Olivia Brand
This Page: Stephanie Doss

Layout Editor:

Theresa Vitovitch

Editors

Theresa Vitovitch
Emily Chen
Attayah Douglas
Jesse Moore
Mae Buehler

Advisor

Suanne Fetherolf

Thank you to all the students who shared their words and images so fearlessly, to the teachers who generously urged students to submit writing and artwork, and to the NHHS administration and the Board of Education for their continuing support of students for whom art is "a certain breathing room for the spirit."

Table of contents... Writing

Eden in the Sky, Claire Zakszewski	5
Reaching, Danielle Koubek	5
The Runner, Sarah Speck	6
For My Mother, Claire Tersigni	7
Little Girl March, Sean Lin	8
The Wanderer, Stephanie Specht	9
The Wall You Never See, Kimberly Greco	11
Autumn Journey, Stephen Mustillo	12
Farewell Nightlights, Caroline Jaeger	13
You-Nique, Danielle Hess	15
The Sky Boat, Kate Held	15
Lifeless, Stefani Kilyk	16
The Orchid and the Lilly,	17
Deceit to Destruction, Breanna Malecki	17
Falling Down, Sophia Latriano	18
The Catcher in the Rye Epilogue, Melissa Mitaren	19-21
Visiting Hours, Emily Chen	22
Brother or Rival, Lauren Dianora	23
Right Here, Right Now, Megan Vantslot	24
Endless Blue Paper, Alyson Yu	25
Second Rate Sibling, Megan Williams	26
Coat of Many Colors, Courtney Morrissette	26
Fireworks, Sarah Holland	28
A Milky Way Night, Lauren Crawford	28
A Lullaby, Terry Li	29
A Cycle of Which, Kirsten Wu	31
The Price of Friendship, Jared Gosselin	32
Healthy Competition, Danielle Iwaskow	32
School Love, Angela Hammell	33
Tattooed Memory, Andy Dopp	34
The Car Ride, Theresa Vitovitch	34
Everyone's Favorite, Maddie Miller	35
Floating Away, Brandon Gallagher	36
Regrets, Ariana Rivera	36
A Forgotten Highway, James Balance	37
Stress, Kacey Highland	38
Façade, Lauren Straley	38
Home Away From Home, Alexandra Falcucci	39
The Feather, Cayla Mabie	40
Choices, Desta Pulley	41
Angel & I, Claire Tersigni	42
Hello to Farewell, Chelsea LoCascio	43
The Lost Boys, Raphaelle Gamanho	44
The Final Song, Marisa Grillo	45-46
Ode to Food, Mary Warren	47

No Name Calling Week Contest..

The Lonely Willow Tree(First Place), Ariana Rivera	48
Bullying to Friendship, Meredith Conn	49
Open Your Eyes and Rise, Christie Young	49
Follow the Tear, Emily Mulhall	50
Sticks and Stones, Amanda Ruth Witwer	51
I Am Different, Daniella Fodera	51
Nobody, Kira Scala	52

Artwork...

Dirty Toes, Andrea Mittenmaier	6
Little Girl, Jess Horn	8
Church Window, Briana Viera	10
Wall, Nina Tomayko	11
Boy in the Leaves, Alisandra Pardo	12
Light Bulb, Olivia Brand	13
Winter Tree, Jenn Lambert	14
Dead Wood, Olivia Brand	16
Risen Arms by a Lake, Erin Dolan	18
Broken Ride, Dylan Colon	25
Armchair, Kara Maul	27
Girl, Emily Chen	30
Love Glasses, Olivia Brand	33
NYC Snowflake, Olivia Brand	35
Spider Web, Dallas Taylor	40
Tree Rings, Olivia Brand	41
Flowers, Olivia Brand	43
Water Dipped Toes, Samantha Roberts	46

EDEN IN THE SKY

The sun streaks across the mid-morning sky,
Bronze-gold hues left cowering
In its wake

Tree tops shudder with gleaming hope
As Dawn unfurls her righteous beauty,
Melodies of the winged
Melt the valley in harmony.

Careless as the drops of morning dew
Hanging from frail blades,
Free as the honeysuckle that canters as a stallion
Across the crisp ground,
Immeasurable days of listless dreaming
Awakens the senses

I,
Alone,
Atop my Eden in the Sky

-Claire Zakszewski

REACHING

I am broken,
a dead leaf floating
through a world of hurt.
Everything dies,
killed by a shivering wind.
Icicles of tears
form on the limbs of a tree.
The boughs extend
up to the sky
to reach for something,
something it knows
it can never reach.

Danielle Koubek

FOR MY MOTHER

She awakes with a start to a dark and empty room. Sleep is peaceful, sleep is oblivious, sleep is the only time she feels happy. Because when she wakes up, it all comes crashing back down on her. The pain is so intense that she can feel it biting into her, tearing at her skin, her heart, her mind.

She lies there silently, in the darkness. That's the other reason she sleeps, to escape the darkness. When she's sleeping, she can't feel the black walls closing in on her or hear the voices crying out from the shadows. When she's sleeping, they don't exist, but when she wakes up, they come back to her, ever tormenting.

She sits up in bed, her twisted sheets twining all around her frail body, trapping her there. She widens her eyes, hoping for some light, anything. But all she sees is more blackness. The little neon numbers tell her four o'clock and twenty-one minutes. Soon it will be twenty-two, but not soon enough.

The darkness brings back painful memories that only the light can keep away, memories of someone who loved. Someone who cared about her and yet did not care enough to stay, to beat the odds, to beat death. But then again no one ever seems to care that much. Images flash through her head: a bowl of strawberries, a faded old nightgown, a woman's soft hand. The hand that pulled her to her feet many a time and never let her go. Only it *did*, it did let her go. And go she did.

Falling.

Falling.

Falling.

Down into this suffocating darkness.

She untangles herself and stands up, clenching her fist around her collar to keep her thoughts in. For they mustn't escape. Across the carpeted floor with small, delicate steps, she wanders like a sleep walker. Only she is not asleep, she is terribly gut wrenchingly awake. So awake that it hurts.

She sits with broken grace by that window and looks out into the night sky. Suddenly the world is not so dark, as the stars and moon smile down upon her. She doesn't believe in heaven, never has. But as the pain begins to ebb, she feels in the pit of her stomach that she is up there, maybe watching her, maybe not.

All she sees in this is a hope. A tiny hope that this is not all there is. A hope that this is not all we are. A hope that someday we'll see all those we love again. A hope that somewhere out there, somehow, things do get better. A hope that no one is really gone forever. In this, she sees the light, and the light sees her.

Claire Tersigni

THE RUNNER

He is a runner
Left everything when he pulled the trigger,
One second a release,
One lifetime a runner

And the law stepped in
Because someone had to pay,
Pay with their time,
And he has the marks to prove it

Teardrop under one eye
Handless clock, both symbols,
For one life lost and 15 years lost time,
15 years and he was free to go

But that kind of freedom is limited,
Because his marks tell a story
And nobody wants to be part of it
Like oil to water, he stands separate and cursed

And his punishment is too much to bear
Trying over and over to plant a new seed, And
it never takes root,
So he tries again to move on

Forever a vagabond,
Forever a runner

Sarah Speck

DIRTY TOES

Andrea Mittenmaier



LITTLE GIRL MARCH

She is little girl March
with Botticelli curls, Monroe lips
and dresses of ivory and silk.

She follows the month of broken hearts,
Never the one with the broken heart, but with the
bow, the arrow, and the knife.

She is all smiles,
Like the Sun who decides his vacation is too long.
She is laughs, laughs so beautiful that Heaven cries,
cries, and cries thunderstorms of warm rain.

Little girl March lives for the high, and dreams of the Fall,
But when April comes, April death,
She is nothing but a memory of tap dances on dew,
sneezes in the woods, and pink raincoats.

She is remembered as always placing third.

Sean Lin

LITTLE GIRL
Jess Horn



THE WANDERER

She glides through the house,
up the stairs and into a room she once remembered.
She floats into her sewing room and reminisces
about the quilts she would create
as if each were a masterpiece that only she could make.
She makes her way over to the pictures of past vacations.
She remembers the carefree laughter of our family
and how helplessly happy we all used to be.
She can also see the uncertainty in her own eyes
wondering if we will ever feel the blissful happiness
that used to fill our everyday lives.
She enters into the hospital
that replays the nightmare of her last day on Earth.
She can feel the cancer begin to crawl back underneath her skin.
She watches her family cry over what is left of her.
She tears herself away because the memory
is too painful for her to relive again.
My mother walks into a world that is unlike yours or mine,
but a world that is her own.
Slam! As the gates of her future close
she says goodbye to the past she once remembered,
and opens her heart to the only life she can ever live again.

Stephanie Specht



THE WALL YOU NEVER SEE

I've built this wall.
Your shards of rejection
Piled high around my skeleton
That once clutched the flesh of life;
An enclosure of darkness
As shrill and black as the tip of your tongue
Surrounding me, with splintering hope and passion;
Day by day
This opaque canopy
Shielding me from the hate
That always seeps through the seams;
This lethal injection of abuse
As callous as the front you wear
Masking right and wrong;
But let me remind you,
You've built a wall of your own,
One so thick
That you are blind to this one.

Kimberly Greco

WALL
Nina Tomayko



AUTUMN JOURNEY

I decide to take a journey
Through this dense sea of fiery colors
My boots softly compress the fallen,
A crunch in every step.
I lift up my head,
And it looks as if the whole forest
were in a blaze.
Red, Orange, Yellow.
And yet I am not the only one—
As the wind whispers through the trees,
The leaves hang on for their lives,
Knowing it is time for the end.
But life longs to replay,
A new bunch in the trees next spring.
Perhaps all things share this journey, together.

Stephen Mustillo

BOY IN THE LEAVES
Alisandra Pardo

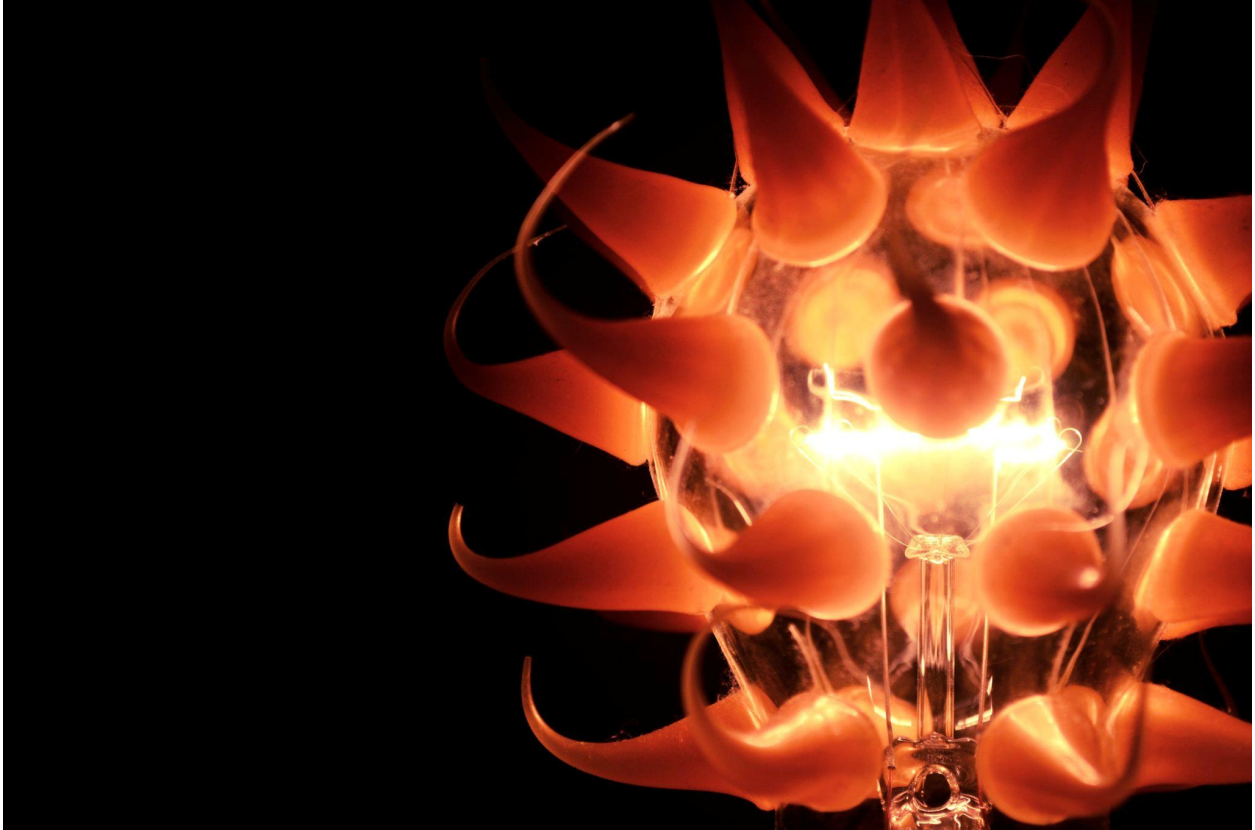


FAREWELL NIGHTLIGHTS

The bittersweet goodbye of the simple years
Of the nightlight that lit my room.
The swimmies will no longer support me
While I swim away,
Away from my childhood.
When the world was my town
And I was the size of a yard stick
It was a sinecure.
Effortless, I needed to make no decisions.
When my only fault was insecurity
Without the presence of my parents,
It was like losing my brain.
During the times of princesses and dinosaurs
As the minutes progressed,
So did the mind.
Losing innocence, but gaining knowledge
Growing up is learning to ride a bike,
We slowly lose our training wheels.

Caroline Jaeger

LIGHTBULB
Olivia Brand





YOU-NIQUE

Who are you?
I thought I knew you so well.
But this person standing in front of me
Is not who you're supposed to be.
You say you're growing up
But you are shrinking down.
You hide behind a shell,
you're so lost can you be found?
You're a fake, a mistake
All things good you take.
You mix them up but we can see
What you really are is me.
So just take them out.
Return everyone's individuality.
So just let me be me
and you be who you were born to be.
Born to be you
You-nique

Danielle Hess

THE SKY BOAT

Sitting upon, a giant boat,
flying in the sky.
Leaving home, but going home.
The picturesque mountains
emerge from the ocean of clouds.
Like a shimmering jewel,
surrounded by glimmering stones,
inside a cave of possibilities.
Strangers surround me,
but I feel as if
I have known them all my life.
I know that this is not the end,
But a new beginning.
As we begin our descent,
into the future.

Kate Held

LIFELESS

The blazing sun warms the desert floor,
The land is desiccated and harsh.
A tumbleweed rolls by,
And stops to catch its breath.
The noisy silence of the vast landscape,
Obtrudes the ears of all its inhabitants.
Mounds of sand are reshaped,
As gusts of wind pass them by.
Hares hopping through lines of cacti,
Like they are competing in a race,
A race that never ends.
The fiery furnace sets,
And the moon's glow lights up the desert
like a flashlight.
The howl of a coyote is heard,
Followed by a woman's cry off in the distance.

Stefani Kilyk

DEAD WOOD
Olivia Brand



THE ORCHID AND THE LILY

In a desire for beauty in his barren field
The solemn gardener planted one seed.
Out of one seed grew two beautiful flowers
One, an Orchid.
Known by her breathtaking beauty
Of petals as light and as white as milk,
Her scent sweeter than honey.
The other, a Lily, blossomed forth
Pleasing, yes, yet simplistically so.

Strange but true, they grew
Together.
Always in sync with every root, leaf and stem.
The Gardener rejoiced in his job well done,
But he secretly just wanted one.
The Orchid whom he loved to his dismay stay closed.
By day and by night her beauty expected but withheld.
Lo, the Lily blossomed her beautiful fruit
Six petals of violet, amber, cherry, white, rose, and
gold.

Each day the gardener saw those petals, but each day he
cast them aside
For the one day his beautiful Orchid bloomed,
She shed two
petals then
died.

DECEIT TO DESTRUCTION

I was once perfect.
Loved, wanted,
Even beautiful.
The deceit that overflowed my home was
Like the flood that devoured all the earth.
Powerful. Sudden.
That fellow part of creation, ha!
His sleek slithering body deserves fire.
Hell.
My head, skillfully mended by my creator.
My pink petals are a glistening star of
Hope for this sinful world.
My body, the fatal signature of the evil one.
Left to give off a beautiful pain when touched.
Sharp, spiked.
As if to show the world what that snake has done.
Deceiving man, destroying beauty.
Destroying the very purpose of this world.
I am an example of Evil.
I am an example of Good.
I am creation.
I am a rose.

Breanna Malecki



RISEN ARMS BY A LAKE
Erin Dolan

FALLING DOWN

I walk to my brothers
Their soul rejects me
I do nothing to my brothers
They torture me with their hand
I scream and yell
They watch me fall like a penny from the sky
I beg for help
They relax and stall
I only want to follow my father's smart word
We only want to follow our father's wise word
Falling down I know my father has lost control
Falling down I ask our father for one last chance
My brothers willingly watch me go down
But it is they that will fall
It is I who will rise
Whoever may think I am gone
I will surprise them all
Falling down is an option
But rising is the choice

Sophia Latriano

THE CATCHER IN THE RYE—EPILOGUE

At first, I doubted the shrink and if he could actually help me, since he asked such stupid questions. He always asked about school and friends and damn things like that. But I grew to like the guy after a while, even though he made me talk about things I'd rather forget. Like what happened when I finally went back home. And since you're wondering now, I guess I'll tell you too.

Well my father was obviously pissy about it. Same with my mother. My father yelled angrily about how I should have *applied* myself better, and my mother was kinda quiet, yet I could tell she was disappointed in me. The strange part though, was that I *didn't* fight back. It's weird, but I see their point of view. I have heard people say it like "looking through their eyes." I always found that saying sorta strange but nonetheless, it tends to be a good idea. The more I think about it, the more I realize how much simpler things become when you do just that. I don't know how it makes things simpler, but it just kinda makes things more even, but it only works when the other person does the same you are. And I'm not admitting that I'm wrong, just that they might have a couple good points. But anyway, when I think about it, I guess I should have tried harder, you know, just a little bit. Maybe passed one more class, but it's too late at the moment. So I listened to them for what felt like forever, then they finally let me go. Maybe they realized yelling wasn't doing much good since it didn't fix the fact that I flunked out, since there's no way that can be fixed now.

After listening to my parents rant, it was DB's turn. He wasn't that bad though. I could deal with him, well sorta. He was mostly disappointed like my mother. They were always kinda alike. He was kinda happy that I passed English, since he was a writer and all. At least he *sorta* made it seem better than it was. Phoebe was the least mad. I remember how she got mad once she first found out, but she seemed to have accepted it by now. I guess she also realizes that it can't be changed, too. But she seemed the most concerned about me, mental wise. I was still depressed as hell, even though I was home but I think that being home just added to it. I like being around my family, but sometimes they are a pain. Phoebe, being the sweet little kid she is, kept asking me if anything was wrong. She showed that she was concerned about me, which always kills me. Any kind of affection from her kills me.

So having Phoebe ask me and ask me started to catch the

attention of my parents and soon, they were all thinking something was wrong with me. DB too, even though he wasn't even home. I didn't really see it like they did. But the best thing they could think of to help me was this place in California. It was sorta like a mental hospital. I didn't think I was crazy, just kinda stressed out. Maybe a little depressed still but I was starting to realize being home was better than surviving on my own anymore. So they sent me out. I didn't know how long I would be there, but I hoped it wouldn't be for long. I didn't like being in that place at first. It made me feel crazy being there, and I definitely didn't like all the attention I was getting. I don't really like attention. I'm usually happy just sorta *blending* into the shadow and coming out only when I needed to be. It's easier that way.

So back to the shrink. His stupid questions started to get less and less stupid as I was there. It's hard to explain the change I was going through. I hear people talk about how I was supposedly going through this "change", and to tell you the truth, I didn't feel it all too much in the beginning. I felt like my same old self, the same old Holden. I decided that I would feel it the longer I was at this place.

Well anyway, while I was there I finally gave old Jane a buzz. But this time she answered. To tell you the truth, I was happy as hell to finally talk to her. I missed talking to her. I haven't had much of a friendship, or any contact, with her for a hell of a long time. So I called her up and we chewed the fat for a while. I ended up telling her most of what happened to me. Lately I have been telling a lot of people. I don't know *why* everyone is so interested in my life. I'm not a very interesting person. Jane seemed interested though and I promised after I left the hospital, I would come visit her. Making that promise sorta reminded me of another one I made not too long ago. So I did what I thought I should do, and flew down to see Sally at Christmas to trim that damn tree of hers. I don't know what made me fly down, and to tell you the truth I don't really care. She was so damn happy to see me. Even after that whole stupid fight. I don't get why she was though. I don't get how someone can go from being so mad to acting like *nothing* ever happened. I guess I just don't really forget stuff easily.

My next promise to go through with was Jane and days after I got out of that damned hospital I flew over to see her. She was just as happy to see me as Sally. We talked for a damn long time, mostly about what has happened to me lately. People are always being nosey, even Jane. I never got why everyone

had to be so involved in everyone else's business. I really don't care about what other people are doing. I guess, in a way, I like privacy. Anyway, I was sorta getting tired of repeating myself, but I told her. If Jane wants to know something I'll always tell her. I didn't spend too long with her though, maybe a week. But it was still one of the greatest weeks of my life, especially after my week in New York. When I had to leave, I kinda didn't want to, but I know I had to go back to my parents. I was starting a new school. Another damn school. I still don't know if I'm going to apply myself yet, and that's still a stupid question to ask someone.

I didn't know how long I would be at my house for, but to tell you the truth, I didn't mind being back. I guess I sorta missed my family in some crazy way, even though they drive me insane at times. The fight between me and my parents seemed like it never happened. They were kinda *supportive* now, even after all that. They did keep telling me to do my best though. Most people don't understand that your "best" can be different than theirs, but all I could do then was listen to them and tell them that I'll try. Me and Phoebe talk a lot now that I'm home, at least for a bit. She tells me about school and friends and all the child-fun things she does nowadays. To tell you the truth, I love to hear her talk about it. But I guess it was bittersweet to hear her. She doesn't really ask me for advice or anything anymore, and I guess I kinda miss that. I notice that she is sorta getting more independent. And talking about less girly things, and doing less girly things. But she's just growing up and I guess it's just bound to happen at one point anyway.

Melissa Mitariten

VISITING HOURS

An elderly widow
fragile, and stooped with age.
She crouches at the foot of his bed
sharp stones and sea moss
decorate his blanket.

The crumbling gray headboard
announces, remorsefully,
the name of her companion,
lover, best friend.

Her tears, like salty creeks, flow
through dozens of winters, springs, summers, falls.
Across the plains of her memories,
down and around her wrinkled face.

A ghost of a sigh,
a ghost of a sob.
She almost hears his voice,
sees his face.
She relives those sweet memories.

She lays down flowers.
Bright, beautiful, fresh
bursting with life
with color.
A solace in a world of
black and white.

The crisp wind
nips at her face.
The bare trees bow and creak
the swallows cry out
to honor her lost half.
She pulls her jacket in close,
stands up, and walks away.

She treasures those precious visiting hours.

Emily Chen

BROTHER OR RIVAL

Brother.
Sometimes a jerk,
Sometimes a friend.
Always going to be there
through the good and bad
Always blood.
Supposed to be a comrade, companion
A friend.
But one puts themselves before their brother
And thinks
Me.
Help your brother, he is starving
A fine mess
no
What's in it for me?
The kingdom
He is hungry like a nomad
who had been lost in the dry
dusty desert for
Days
Months
Years,
but he hasn't.
Yet he throws it away
I now have the power
Brother,
My father loves him
Yet he cannot see, so I shall succeed
And receive the blessing from my father
Brother,
You deceive me, for yourself
Brother,
We cannot help but fight
Brother,
Our relationship is a constant competition,
opposition and contention
Brother?
No, rival.

Lauren Dianora

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

Slowly I breathe in the warm July air.

I gaze up at the starry sky of a summer night.
Like speckled eggs on the horizon
The stars dangle in the deep and dark cloudless night sky

Soft grass prickles softly on my bare back,
I hear a blithe laugh from my young cousins
And the ceaseless chirping of the crickets in the distance

I lie in pure contentment.
I can't help but to become embraced by life.
So many feelings swirl around me,
Like gauzy curtains
twirling about an open window on a breezy day.

Once again,
I gaze up at the stars
And I plunge into the atmosphere.
Dimly glowing in the distance the lights of the cottage,
suddenly fall into a sound slumber.
Only the light from the moon
and stars glisten on the calm bay.

In a split second,
A shooting star rockets across the sky.
I close my eyes to make a wish.
I take a trip into my imagination.
And I think about my wishes.

Suddenly, I stop.

Happiness doesn't come from luxurious wishes,
but of living purely in the moment.
I open my eyes and I wish.
I wished simply to cherish this time in my life.

Right Here.
Right Now.

Megan Vantslot

ENDLESS BLUE PAPER

Like an endless blue paper creased by the winds.
Broad trees sprouting from the moist soil
Like a sheep to a lamb,
nurturing the slender green grass
sprouting amongst the branches

Fresh dew from the sky's last cry
linger on the flowers;
singing to the sky.

Open my eyes.

Dirty, damp, dusty air
The buildings are giants, fighting against the sky.
The straining sun smiles through the holes of the gray blanket.
Off-key beeps and honks fill my ears.

Birds, like a blossoming cherry orchard;
nowhere to be found.
My drowning voice, begging,
please sew another innocent, untouched world.

Alyson Yu

BROKEN RIDE
Dylan Colon



SECOND RATE SIBLINB

Always second best, forever outdone
The glowing light of Rachel
Casts a permanent shadow over my beauty
Which now resides deep within

For me, Love acts as a dead end path
Constant labors of love never returned
Yet tradition outweighs passion in the eyes of my father
I am where I am due to his acts of deceit

The pity felt by my Lord
Brought me much fertility
Still, the first of my own seed
Never cherished as much as Rachel's last

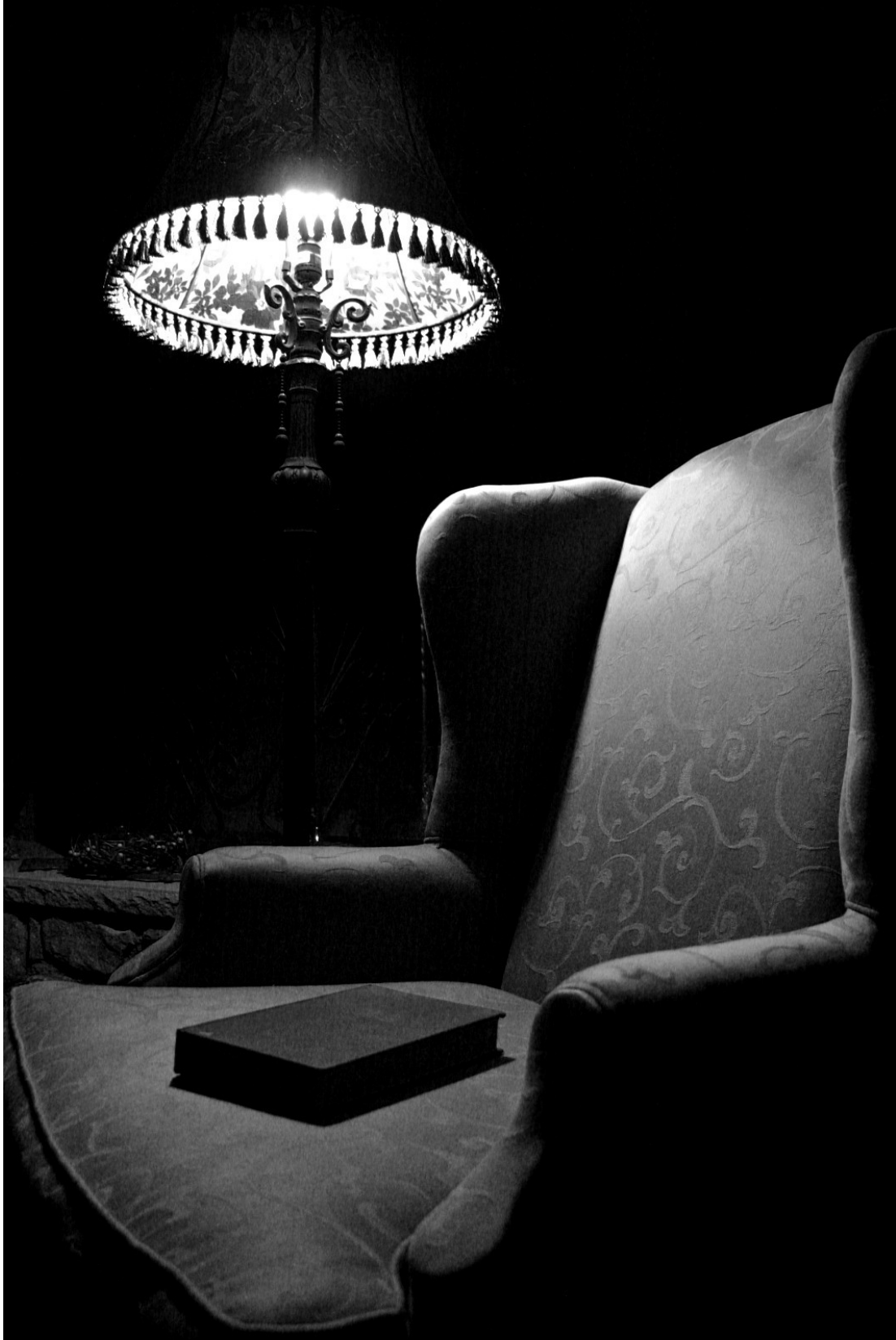
My lesser, yet my greater
My sibling superior to everything about me
And though barren as the desert
Stole the heart of my husband
Without lifting one of her beautiful fingers

Megan Wil-

COAT OF MANY COLORS

On Joseph's coat
The threads weave the story of his days
Like a book with turning pages
The green string ravels through
And explains the brother's envy
While the blue thread eases on
Saddened by enslavement
The red yarn pushes in and out
Insisting on unfaithfulness
But the gold cotton twists though
Proud of its prosperity
Then later, the orange wool
Ties in, famished for years to come
But in the end the purple
Thread weaves in the clothing
All is suitable in the land

-Courtney Morrissette



ARMCHAIR
Kara Maul

FIREWORKS

Surrounded by family,
I lay back on the cool grass.
The inky sky flows
above the anticipating crowd,
and I refresh my lungs
with the mild summer air.
An array of multicolored blankets
is faintly visible
through the dark of the large hill,
and hushed parental voices pacify
anxious children.
Suddenly, all eyes snap up
as a loud whir intensifies.
Children cover their ears,
captivated by the suspense.
All at once, with one enormous boom,
the night bursts into life,
sparkling spectacularly.
The explosions are terrifying, wonderful.

Sarah Holland

A MILKY WAY NIGHT

Shooting stars streak through the sky.
They are dancing, flying past the constellations,
like little lightning bugs of outer space.
The trees reach far enough to catch the stars
as they dance past the rooftops.
The moon smiles.

The bugs soar into the atmosphere
and heat up in the oven of the ozone.
The stars break into hundreds of tiny pieces.
They burn out as the sun awakens.

Lauren Crawford

A LULLABY

Flashback.

It is 8 AM,
Saturday morning.
Silence.

A stranger that has made himself comfortable in my house,
Like an ungracious guest,
Enveloping the furniture and the people,
Creating an aura of rigidity.

I lay in my small, soft bed,
Waiting waiting waiting,
For the inevitable to awaken and break
the cellophane of silence,
But as long as I waited,
It never came.

Uneasiness and anticipation crawled
around the feet of the bed,
And then the silence and the warmth called to me,
Beckoning to me,

Encircling me in the comfort of its arms,
Lulling me slowly back to sleep,
A dreamland where I was not waiting,
Where I was eternally carefree.

But reality snatched me back with its cold, strong grip,
And the inevitable came.

Silence whimpered and ran away into the
shadows where I longed to follow,
The screaming from below began once again.
Flash forward.

It is 4 AM.

Silence tiptoes back and smiles slyly,
He is a frightening figure,
With jagged teeth and thin lips,
Dark eyes and a sinister glare,
He sings a song,

A tune that is the life I live,
With words that are my only friends,
A lullaby,
With a soporific effect.

Fear engulfs my heart.
Silence is too loud for me,
But only for me because now,
The world is sleeping soundly,
The house is snoring softly.

Papa's gone,
Mama cries,
And I have never felt so alone.



GIRL
Emily Chen

A CYCLE OF WHICH

Three

Two

Two

One

One

tick tock

TIME

What is it?

as the moon sets in the West

The sun rises in the East

or is it the other way around?

tick tock

TIME

Leaves quietly and swiftly
much like how it arrives

the cries of a child

the cries of an aged man

the chicken

the egg

the mother

the babe

A cycle

or is it?

We live in a world known as "reality"

Yet it seems that we live in dreams

Life.

Death.

Beginning.

End.

What

Wonders.

But who are we to say

Which. Came. First.

THE PRICE OF FRIENDSHIP

Two friends bound by blood,
Yet always in an eternal struggle.
To lead like a wolf leads his pack,
But corrupted by jealousy,
The young conquer the old.
In his rise to victory
He took his greatest fall.
The one meant to lead made to serve
But even in servitude he found greatness
And he rose again
Because unto greatness he was destined.
But even great men have their faults
And when you think you have succeeded,
Revenge...
Revenge with its serpent tongue
Turns innocent into evil with clever words.
Now he's hooked, with no way out
Now one man bound by shame.

Jared Gosselin

HEALTHY COMPETITION

And there will always be competition,
Bitter brothers battling.
Caught in a fight for a father's blessing,
Lost in the vicious struggle for power.
Sibling rivalry at its finest,
Ripping families down the seam,
Tearing loved ones apart.
Not being the favorite,
The most treasured,
The eldest.
Fueled by jealousy,
Overcome by rage,
Stuck in your place,
Like a mouse in a trap.

Danielle Iwaskow



LOVE GLASSES
Olivia Brand

SCHOOL LOVE

He is stylish and so suave,
Complexion clear and bright.
I see him always in the day,
But never in the night.

School days bring him closer to me.
My heart like a kick drum.
The way he walks is alluring,
And my stare stuck like gum.

Her golden hair flows like the sea,
Strands crashing on the shores.
When she's not there his smile fades,
Will he smile once more?

He looks to her and she can see
Her pulse is throbbing fast,
The crimson's rising in his face,
She wants to make this last.

Chin in her palms she looks away
As he moves close to her.
He turns to her and smiles bright
And to class they walk together.

TATTOOED MEMORY

Alone he pitters and patters, making his way down the empty hall
Until he comes upon a group of adults, watching in awe

He does not understand, nor can he
The soft, simple eyes steal only a small look

Much time passes, and now he is grown
He owns a greater understanding

He knows what happened on that day, so many years ago
The memory comes clear as a spring lake

But why is it so translucent?
Why this of all memories stored in the bank of his mind?

These 3 minutes are the best kept, unclouded
Images tattooed, always there

But it is not just he
The memory remains untarnished in everyone

Andy Dopp

THE CAR RIDE

The never ending boredom which stalks my waking hours.
I've felt it more today while driving for three hours.

The repeating landscape kills my brain,
It wanders in a cloud.

I want to sleep, but over a seat,
My siblings are just too loud.

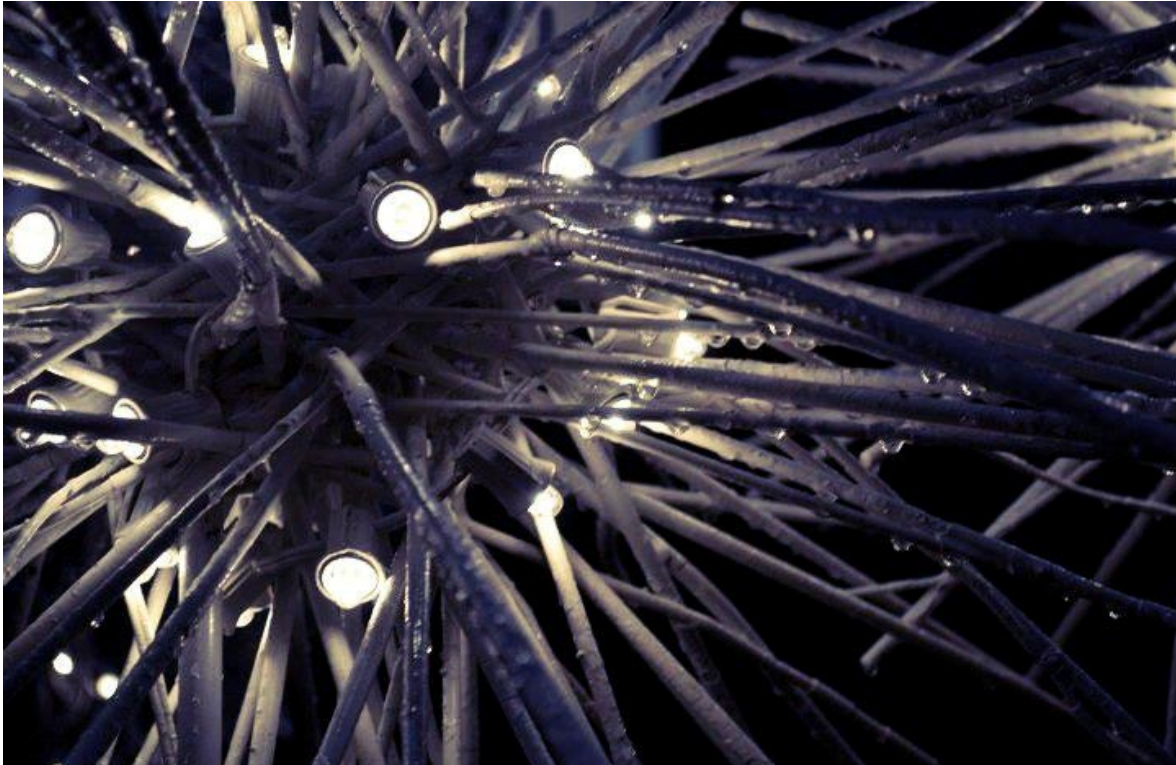
Theresa Vitovitch

EVERYONE'S FAVORITE

A cool wind blows
that sends a chill, freezing
Like those of the long winter nights
we once knew so well.
But they don't mind;
the children love the air,
Fresh and crisp as the leaves
that cover the ground.
Yes, they enjoy the reds
and yellows deep and serene
And the brighter blues and greens
of the sky and land.
The sweet aroma of apples
and cinnamon fills the air,
Scrumptious as though I was constantly baking.
Little white flakes dance
and drizzle their way down from the sky.
The hazardous specks gently fall
Coating the ground with a blanket
that sparkles as if covered in diamonds.
This is the children's favorite time of year,
This is everyone's favorite time of year.

Maddie Miller

NYC SNOWFLAKE
Olivia Brand



FLOATING AWAY

I wait in the wings,
all packed and ready to leave.
To walk my down my beaten path
past the streets filled with people.
They continue on,
while I begin a new journey.
I was forced from my home,
memories of childhood just left behind,
the sweet bitterness of home,
Gone.

The rain then came down, and I turned around.
Smoke still in the air,
fires burning out,
the people stopping just to stare.
The splintered wood of a broken home,
mock me as I look for a new house.
A fire ravaged my home,
while the debris and memories were just left
to follow me.
Just floating away.

Brandon Gallagher

REGRETS

When a story begins
The page is empty
But then words appear
They just keep coming
Flowing naturally, like a river
And if you erase part of the story
You try to keep that part a secret
But you can still see the leftover marks
Smudges, big black stains
Those can never be forgotten

Ariana Rivera

A FORGOTTEN HIGHWAY

We flew down
An illuminated highway
The hum of the tires grazing
Over the blacktop
Softly sang me into a nostalgic sleep.
My eyes straining to stay open
Desperately trying
To observe the alien landscape,
The valleys I never saw
Carved deep
Into Earth's wrinkled face.
While puffy white clouds
Wandered like sheep
Towards the distant horizon.
Air rushed through
My open window
Urging me to come with it.
The sun burned bright
On the distant mountains
Suddenly,
The smell of freshly cut grass
Permeated my nose
And the rattle of a lawnmower
Smacked my ears
Over there
An innocent, white, ranch house
Stood below a little green hill.
A man,
A large figure,
Heaved his mechanical beast of burden
Up and down a field what seemed to be
Never ending.
Then a woman entered
Through a sliding door from the house
Her blond hair was rustled
By a gust of wind,
While a child
Tightly gripped onto his mother's
Hand for protection.
For a second
The little boy gazed curiously
In my direction
His eyes fixated on me
But his figure faded
With the innocent looking house
And I would never see it again.

James Ballance

STRESS

The Heaviness endured,
From all the worrisome weight on the shoulders
Of a person, a small person
Who cannot withstand it all.

Like pins and needles
In the back, erode
The bones like the top of mountains.
Crippling, crumbling, crunching.

Ruining the body, breaking down piece by piece
Until nothing is left.

Kacey Highland

FAÇADE

She scurries up the stairwell
flies down the corridor
slam, bang, click of the
lock of the door.
Her Bedroom is her only safe haven
the bed like an eagle's nest
the window as her vision of freedom
and the radio
tuned to a static station
to drown out her wretched screams.
Elsewhere, she puts on
a convincing act.
Like a child on
Christmas morning.
And yet, behind that smile, remains
a dark lie.
Her bedroom being the
only place of serenity.
She attempts to find this peace.
mellowing... mellowing...
only to return to
this familiar façade
she entertains the rest of the world.

Lauren Straley

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The sweet, salty smell of the sea.
The whoosh and whirl of the waves.
The crisp white crests call
to me from its turquoise body.
The sun lies among the lingering clouds
As if it's about to drift off to sleep.
As I dip my head under the warm water
I hear the joyous melody of shells
Swirling among the sand and coral.
The fish swarm
around a remote mound of coral
And rush away
into the unknown as I swim over.
Except for one who sticks by my side
Like a friend in need of comfort.
The sun creates beautiful images
On the soft, twinkling sand.
It sits high up in the clear sky.
I wave to my parents as they snap a picture.
At night when the moon pulls
a blanket of stars across the vast sky
I make a wish on a glimmering luminary
Knowing that someone across the world
is making a wish on the same one.
The stars whisper their secrets in my ears
As I drift off to dream sweet dreams.
Each day I wake up
and I'm in the warmth of your waters
Even when I'm not there.
My heart will forever
belong in your shining seas
With the sun smiling down on me.
I have no limits.

Alexandra Falcucci

THE FEATHER

The feather fell,
soft as a lullaby
floating freely into the empty
corners of the spirit,
letting the wind take
it wherever it may.
It does not resist,
nor question,
only reaches.
The path is not clear,
the wind will change

On a still day
it falls,
a dead weight
unexploring the air.

But the wind
can be harsh,
forcing it to travel
into the knotted claws
of the soldiers
that stand proudly
in the woods,
entangling itself,
a web
it shall triumph over.

SPIDER WEB
Dallas Taylor



CHOICES

Which path should I take?
There is no turning back,
For the dark door closes and locks
Behind me.

All I can do is walk down the dim corridor
The choice, the scourge as dark as a winter's night.
What is at the end?
A meadow?
Or a monster?

But what if I couldn't choose?
What if my fate was written in stone?
And it wouldn't matter
Which path I chose
Because the outcome would be the same.

But even if fate isn't real
There is still only one outcome.
The same for everyone.

We will all die
Eventually.

Unless...

Desta Pulley

TREE RINGS
Olivia Brand



ANGEL & I

Two sleep
Droplets of oyster's flesh lacing the black velvet sky
dangled loose from granite
shoulders and spine.
The angel of death waits on her sun-bleached steed,
sickled and wreathing
her downy form under draped dress.
Inferno in, that ivory skin, gleaming
dreaming, tranquil
beneath bundled amethyst.
Resting her head in my lap,
finger tips tracing on the small of her back.
Beneath wings,
black and featherless.
Beside an ocean
of flowers, grayscale and breathless
between two,
entwined
in the fading darkness.
Sound asleep with a sea of sunflowers,
with magic, with machines,
with the lamplight of a rising sun in that heavy,
shadowed room.
Rouge-auburn hair strewn,
about her shoulders in peaceful dream and disarray.

Claire Tersigni

HELLO TO FAREWELL

Bright dull flowers. Out of place
Amongst the lifeless leaves saying
Their last goodbyes as they plummet
to their end,
No thanks to the chilling breeze
that heaves away at them day-in and day-out.
They float away, lighter than feathers,
to the distant island that is no more,
But will return one day.
The branches shake like a young man off to war,
Waving goodbye to his family,
Uncertain if he will return
despite everyone telling him so.
Now, when will winter make its grand exit?
When spring's lion rears its ferocious head
and becomes the lamb.

Chelsea LoCascio

FLOWERS
Olivia Brand



THE LOST BOYS

Twenty-seven thousand little drops of water
That fell from the firmament
Born of nowhere, of chaos and nothing
To destroy itself
Twenty-seven thousand little flowers
Bending and breaking in the gusts
Their veins reaching into the dry soil
Twenty-seven thousand little fish
Drowning in the ocean salted
By the motherly pillar
Twenty-seven thousand little birds
Chirping pleas of peace
Flying to escape the war
Twenty-seven thousand little boys
Trudging across a windy desert
Their hearts covered in sand
Twenty-seven thousand lost boys of Sudan
Born of blood and turmoil
To destroy itself
And God saw what he had made and saw that it was good

Raphaëlle Gamanho

THE FINAL SONG

I breathe and raise my arms.
They are tense, poised, and ready.
My wrist upright, like a soldier,
The hard wood firmly beneath my chin
Perfectly fitted,
The final piece to the puzzle.
My eyes gently close
My elbow bends gracefully,
And my heart starts to sing.

I hold my breath
As the beautiful melody begins.
My fingers press against the hard strings
And dance across the neck of aged ebony.
The old Celtic tune soothing my nerves.
The music dances off the page and into the night
Beautiful, quivering voice
Singing my hearts desires and fears.
It is a simple song,
Yet it speaks to me in a way
No other piece of music ever has.
My fingers tremble, adding a vibrato sound.

The sheet flutters before me,
But the notes are forever engraved in my memory,
And on my heart.
The bow flows smoothly, richly,
Like a lithe ballerina gliding across the floor.
It takes my breath away.

The beauty smoothly lifts me off my feet
And spins me around,
Cleansing my soul.
It brings tears to my eyes,
Which flow into the music.
My arms stream with the rhythm,
As it rings out to the world.
Soothing, relaxing, elegant;
A stream lazily flowing down a hillside

Continued →

under an afternoon sun.
The notes are comfortable,
Like a hug.
My fingers mechanically move
Across the dusted strings.
Gracefully, like a swan across a moonlit lake,
My hand slides up to hit the highest note
Breaking the rhythm sharply,
as a tear softly runs down my cheek.

The solemn bow grazes the strings,
The song winds down,
And the final note,
Trailing into silence;
Beautiful, fulfilling silence.

Marisa Grillo

WATER DIPPED TOES
Samantha Roberts



ODE TO FOOD

Food, oh food how thou cherish food
So sweet, so delightful, so delicious
Which keeps us full and stuffed like pigs
Owns a smell that cheers up a stomach
Looks as appeasing as a wonderful day
When a soul is sad, or when one is happy
Food is the fit, like peas in a pod
Food, oh food, how thou cherish food

When on a diet thou devours with ease
Strife to whom that eats to get fat
More and more keeps packing it on
Like a pack mule walking along a king
Bites and bites are no benefit
Continuously eating just for the heck of it
Food, oh food, how thou cherish food
Watch the result, will be no rejoice
As your stomach is growing there is no choice
So to whomever is reading, watch what you eat
Or on with stomach like fungus on feet

Mary Warren

No Name Calling Week Contest

First Place

THE LONELY WILLOW TREE

The lonely willow
stands all on its own.
While the creatures
pass by, they think
what ugly
bark and what shaggy
branches.
How revolting.
But the warthog
knows how it feels.
And he makes a friend
of the willow.
He stops the name calling
and all the creatures
realize
what they've been missing.
They are in awe
of the slender,
beautiful
willow.

Ariane Rivera

BULLYING TO FRIENDSHIP

She walks through the school.
She edges alongside the lockers
She thinks to herself,
What if they see me?
What if they make fun of my clothes?
My voice?
Or even my size and shape?
And as she shuffles towards her locker,
She sees them.
They stand there, laughing - joking.
She ducks her head and runs!
She makes it past them.

But nobody should have to live like this;
Nervous, Frightened, and Worried.

I approach her - and smile.
She attempts one back, but it's really more of a wince.
I introduce myself, and ask about her and her interests.
Her wince then broadens to a smile
Which then turns to a joyful laugh.
We now talk to each other often
And we both have made a new friend.
So really, what's there to lose?

Meredith Conn

OPEN YOUR EYES AND RISE

She's hurting,
She's burning,
Deep down inside she thinks no one can see.
Her mind doesn't stop turning.

The pain,
The cuts,
The scars,
People think, is she nuts?

Just a smile,
A chat,
A hug,
Can be the difference from a splat,
Of blood, dripping from her body.

Stand up for what you believe,
Don't get caught in the lies,
The bullying, and shame,
Just open your eyes and rise
For what's right.

Christie Young

FOLLOW THE TEAR

Swirling inside
the buzzing brain
are words,
harsh and merciless.
They fill the mind
until it releases
a single tear.

Down it drops.
It slides over swollen skin,
painted shades
of blacks and blues,

Past lips shivering
with fears,
doubts,
pains,
hurt.

It deteriorates
confidence like stinging acid
as it swoops
down the fragile skin
of the neck.

A neck that would so easily,
snap
if suffocated by strings
of hostility,
prejudice,
hate.

So,
Stop the tears
before they drop.

Emily Mulhall

STICKS AND STONES

Eyes like daggers
Voice like knives
Rumors fly like wildfire
Your words contagious
Your thoughts diseased
I'm growing sick
My heart is squeezed
I've closed the door against your lies
I've swallowed all the keys
But will I find inside my mind
The very same disease?
Although I first denied it
Said it could not be so
The weapons caught my flesh
The blood began to flow
Sticks and stones will break my bones
But words will break my spirit
My screams ring out
My body shakes
You see but do not hear it

Amanda Ruth Witwer

I AM DIFFERENT

Fat
Ugly
Four eyes
Words that pierce like daggers to the heart
Echo throughout my mind each day of my life
I am different
One circle in sea of squares
I sit in the dark corner
Crumpled up in a ball
Crying the tears of pain
The door swings open and a figure emerges
Walks towards me like an angel from above
And embraces me with the reminding hug
That I am no longer alone in this world
Fighting the fruitless battle against myself
Someone cares

Daniella Fodera

NOBODY

I am Nobody.
 Nobody saw,
 Nobody heard,
 Nobody answered my pleas.
The only ones who saw
 Were my tormentors.
 They came,
 Angry and evil.
And they destroyed me,
 erased me.

I am Nobody.
 Nobody cared,
 Nobody helped,
 Nobody cried for me,
Even when I was no longer human,
 When I was gone,
 Invisible,
 An empty shell,
 A shadow,
 A faded memory.
Reduced to insignificance.

 I screamed for deliverance,
 But none came,
For my pleas fell on deaf ears.

 I struggled,
 But none saw,
For the world was blind.

 I am Nobody.
 Nobody cares about a Nobody.
They can only see when it is too late,

 They only see
 When Nobody
 Has become
 A body.

Kira Scala