

Scribe

2017

*Rutherford High School's
Literary Magazine*

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A special thanks to Mrs. Castellano and Mrs. Grillo
for their art expertise.

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Loose Ends
—Cayla D'Elia

I always thought I had a way with words
But when he speaks
His words have their way with me.
He proclaims his love
I choke on my response
Coughing up silence instead of reassurance.
I result to squeezing his hand instead.
He tells me things that make me cry
My eyes water with the heartfelt words.
My tears fall into bottles
Instead of on his shoulder
I cap them with a cork
And throw them into the sea
Hoping he'll find them along the shore.

I didn't know what lines I could cross
So I didn't walk at all.
I should have told him how I felt
While his heart was in my hands
Beating along with the pulse in my wrist.
Now it's back in his chest
Covered in faded fingerprints
He'll always try to erase.
My naive self, believed time had stopped for us
While it had always been fleeting.
The clock's hands spun so rapidly
That I couldn't see them.
Like a frail string tied to my index,
I had him wrapped around my finger

Turns out I'm not too good at tying knots.

Summer's Over
—Kevin Kosakowski

Summer has terminated.
The beach, hot sand, the cold sensation of taking that first step in the ocean, the sun beaming down on your skin, it's ending.
And they weren't kidding when they said this is the most wonderful time of the year.
Fall is approaching and this means change.
Change for the better.
It's changing as we speak and day in and day out you can feel the weather drop.
As those Friday night football games arrive, and you can hear the crowd and firetrucks blaring from Park Ave. It's a special time and we all know it.
The sky starts to turn grey and the sidewalks are covered by a blanket of leaves.
It's cold, dark, and eerie.
Early sunsets are getting to us and now winter is here.



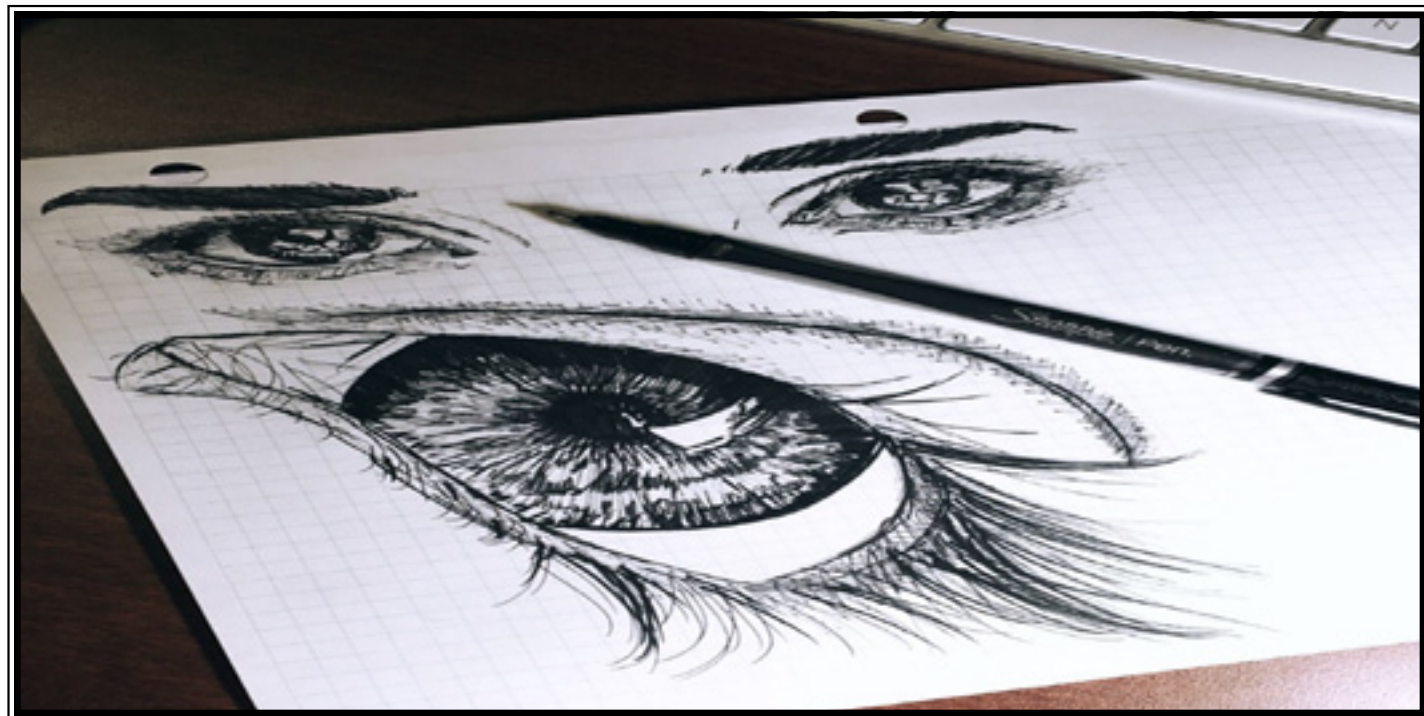
Why?
—Stacy Shang

They say forgive and forget
To bring you peace
To let go of the past
And move on to better things

But does this include lessons
Of experiences relived
Through a painful memory
Haunted by our sins

I can't forgive
Nor can I forget
For everyone who's wronged me
Has always left some debt

You look at me
Say you loved me
Then you turn around
And I fade into the background



Second Hand Smoke
—Caroline McCarthy

You hurt yourself
Then you hurt me
By keeping her so close

By breathing in
The scent of her skin
Going in for one last smoke

You're keeping her between your fingers
So you have to let go of mine
The ashes on your hands still linger
But I pretend it's fine.

When you're with me
You shut her door and lock it.
When she calls
You keep her in your pocket.

But her fumes still lay vibrant on your clothes
Breathe you in and confirm what I know
Inhaled involuntarily
"She's no good" but you still go back
I'm "so good" so you put me in the past.

Described in minutia,
It's like I was there
Everytime she danced upon your lips
And got tangled in your hair.

You knew my heart was fragile.
You knew it was still pure.
But you set it's room on fire,
Walked out and locked the door.

What I need now is distance,
To breathe in some fresh air
I see your hands are clean now-
Now that I'm aware.

Your second hand smoke may hurt me
But it could never kill

Keep going back to old habits
And I promise you it will.

A Blue Moon Cocoon

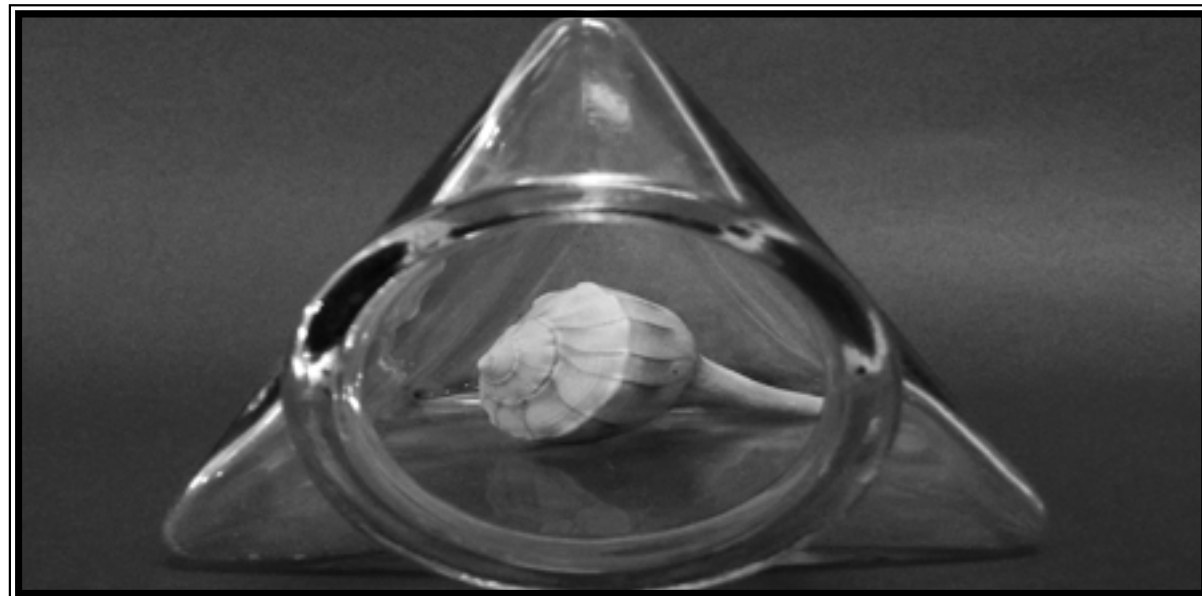
—Ciara Kelly

A cocoon is forming
A prolonged journey it is
Perturbed and unnerved
Simple tasks, so simple that others ask
“Why can’t she do that?”

The wind rattles the crest
There is fear
Fear so strong she can barely hear
Hear the world around her
Fight it, take the pain, ignite it
“Who am I?”
I’ve asked a million times

Growing stronger than the rest
Heck I may be the best
I’m sorry if I’m being mean
But I’m just getting where I need to be
Farther than most people would ever see

Out into the world
Scared and hurt
Soon I don’t care what they say
In a world lathered in self-hate
So I say what I proclaim
Because I have places to go and things to see
That these others will never even dare dream



Someday

—Emma Savitsky

“I’m in love,” she repeats,
To the face in the mirror,
To the eyes filled with liquid,
To the mouth that deceives her

“I’m in love,” she explains
To the friends that question,
To the smile she forces,
No form of expression

“I’m in love,” she cries,
Clawing at eyes, skin, and hair,
This life is a warzone,
No place for the fair

“I’m in love,” she squeaks,
Curled up in the cold,
Asking God for forgiveness,
For the strength to be bold

“I’m in love,” she breathes,
Clutching tight at her heart,
While she constructs a message,
Spinning words into art

“I’m in love,” she repeats,
Staring straight at the mirror,
Her smile now real
And her eyes finally clearer

Leaves of Change
—Jill Griggs

leaves of change
begin to fall
the familiarity of green
chilled away by frosty autumn

bitter winds
cause shaky branches
but stubborn roots
grasp on for dear life

vibrant green transitions
into fresh, fiery red
grass turns brown and dry
and tired flowers wilt

leaves of change
evolve with every season
but trust in Mother Nature
and everything falls in place



Faltering Footing
— Hannah Martin

Three story houses built on backs of the broke
Strains go down from their spine to their feet
Holding up the economy, what if they croak?
Living lavish, meanwhile placing bricks in defeat
Posh women laugh at the waiter who trips
Dinner party for them hard work for us
Don't bother to help, laughs sent off their lips
Advocate for justice, "You're making a fuss."
Break down the social wall, we're all equal
Realize the hard work put in every day
Erase negativity and quarrel
Division and prejudice cannot stay
We must change our outlook and take the leap
With this much weight soon they'll be six feet deep



Academic Decathlon Speech

—Hallie Schiller

This is my third year participating in Academic Decathlon, and this year, for the third time, I got the reminder at the start of the season to avoid broaching any potentially controversial speech topics. At first, this made sense, of course I shouldn't present a possibly offensive topic to a group of people I don't know; after all, these would be the people deciding how high or low of a score I would receive. Why would I want to jeopardize my score and, by extension, my team's score just by making the simple mistake of offending the wrong person? Yet, I soon found myself struggling with the definition of "controversial." I was able to categorize many of my ideas into the boxes of controversial or not, but when it came to the small details, the nuances, I found that I was utterly confused. What should classify as having the power to offend? Where was it alright to draw the line on precaution and just risk treading into territory that could possibly be controversial? After all, the people sitting in front of me are simply people, and presenting my speech should be like having a conversation.

But what resonated most with me during this thought process was that many things I considered potentially dangerous to talk about really should not have held any doubt. They were not controversial opinions, but facts, and suddenly, I was faced with the reality that I could not discuss ideas that were rooted in, supported by, and made up of truth.

Our society has evolved into one that classifies every other word as a trigger word, meaning that it has the potential to make someone feel uncomfortable. People have become so conscious of not offending anyone that they end up suppressing their own rights. There are laws and societal expectations meant to protect people against prejudice and hatred, but when offense is claimed at practically every comment, it is difficult to decipher which person's rights are being taken away. When we deem things controversial, we consequently decide that they should be censored from our conversations. But censorship is not the answer to this situation; too much censorship will lead us to the loss of free speech. We should be having constant, educated discussions addressing issues directly; these are the things we should be talking about.

There's a problem when my Muslim friend does not feel comfortable discussing her religion. There's a problem when she feels that it is too controversial to recognize, address, and celebrate her heritage. There is a problem when my black friend is forced to censor her culture. There is a problem in the fact that I still get corrected for saying black instead of African American, even though the people to whom I am referring have never lived in Africa. There's a problem when my gay friend is afraid to come out because it might change the way his friends see him. There is a problem in that, as a society, we are so concerned with not offending anyone that we effectively force others to hide away important parts of themselves. We could begin to solve this problem by engaging in intelligent conversation.

This issue is further extended when you consider that these are not things that are absent from our lives. We know that other religions exist, we know that not every person has the same skin color, we know that people have different sexual orientations. These things should not be considered controversial, they should be considered facts. By labeling something controversial, we are giving others the right to opinionize it, adding their own ideas and views. By labeling something as controversial, we are ending our conversations and descending into the territory of arguments and intolerance.

Maybe what I've said has offended you, maybe it hasn't. But if you did find it controversial, let's talk about why, because then we can build a future where people don't immediately resort to anger and accusations. Maybe in that future, I wouldn't have to be told to avoid controversial topics.

I'm Ok

—Stacy Shang

I'm ok

I swear

I'll put on my mask

I'll go brush my hair

I'll get through the day

Somehow, some way

I'll try not to cry

Please, just don't pry

If I don't want to speak

Your words will just beat

The low esteem that I have

After all that's been bad

I know you mean well

Giving advice

Not letting me dwell

But I all makes it worse

When I'm alone

The gates open

To show who I am

A pile of nothing

But rubble and sadness

And everything but gladness

Asking a question

Won't pull out a confession

So please stop asking

The answer is never true

Whether you want to believe it

Because I know you do

Don't believe me when I say

"I'm ok"

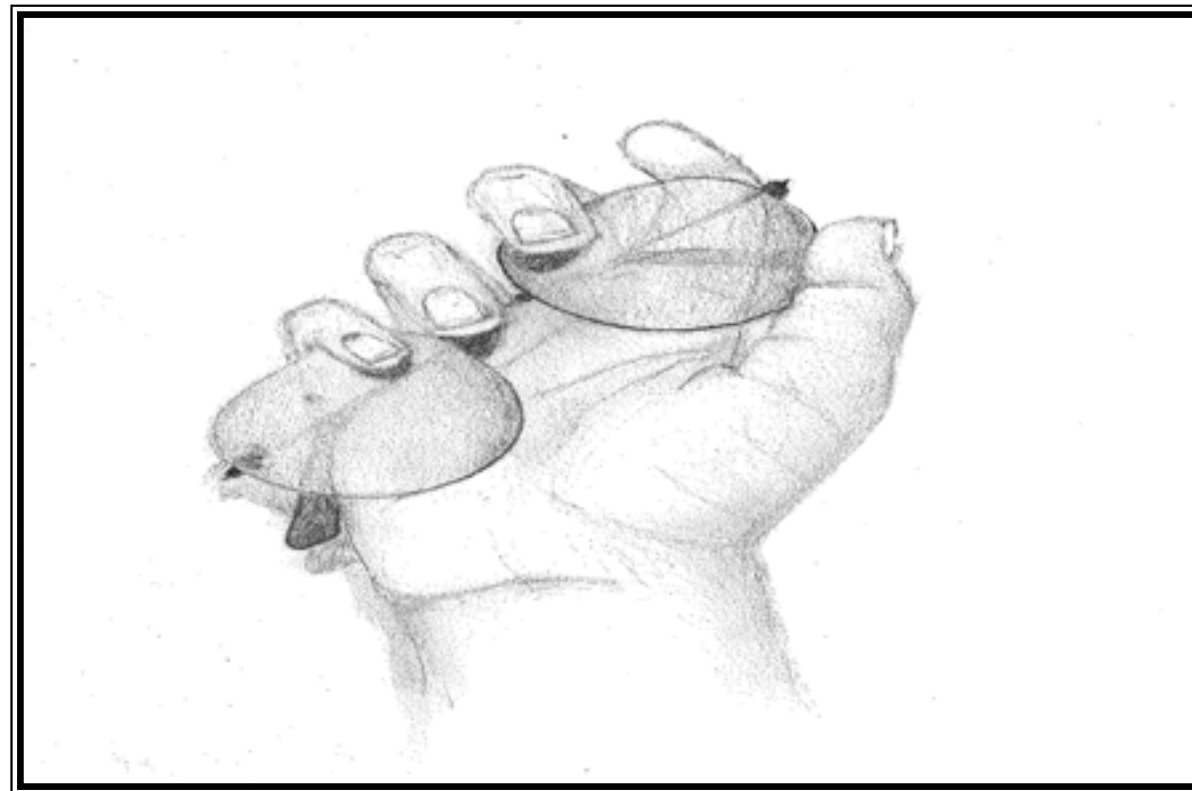
Hollow Heart
—Finn Manning

Emptiness overwhelms your hollow heart
The familiar feeling of heartbreak
Too often, does it swallow you whole
No healing, instead revealing, your scars

Indescribable pain fills your body
Unable to breath, unable to see
Tears, pour like rain from the clouds that are your eyes
The constant desire to be free from yourself

Your head is foggy, filled with frightful thoughts
Scaring yourself further into darkness
You shed one last tear and pick yourself up
But this time you can't rebuild what was broken

You write down what you weren't able to say
Take your last breath, happy you didn't stay



Where Have all the Little Girls Gone?
—Alexandra Tasev

Every day, thousands of little girls,
pretty and fragile,
ask their mommies and daddies,
“Can I please get a mirror in my room?”

They get a big mirror,
and make it a point to look at themselves every day
pretending they're on a runway
posing for pictures,
aligning every piece of their silky smooth hair.

The mirror watches them,
studying their physiques and styles-
noticing they grew 0.001 inch
or gained two pounds since yesterday.

The girls, not so little anymore,
notice these changes one, two, maybe three months later-
seeing the red dot on their faces
and thinking it can be seen from outer space.
It tears them down.

It amazes me what time can do.
as one hourglass runs out,
another takes over,
finding something else to suppress
in the dark, cold corners of their rooms.

And all that's left is the image I see,
As I too, look into my mirror late at night
And am reminded of the girl I used to see-

I think of the bright yellow walls I once hated
slowly transforming into bubble gum
stripe by stripe.

I think of all the toys that kept me occupied,
as I sat on the white carpeted floor,
soft as a bunny's tail,
which was ripped apart to pieces,
and changed to boring, hard, wood.

The teddy bears, baby dolls, and ponies-
taken away,
thrown into opaque bags
shut away, and left to live in their own
world.
Who would serve them tea and make
them feel loved?
Little did we know,
those little girls were trapped inside those
bags too,
left to suffocate,
and squeeze onto their old toys,
until they die and the memories fade,
never searching for, or opening those bags
ever again.

Lastly, I see a tiny girl
hugging her orange teddy bear in one arm,
and holding her barbie in the other.
she had no care in the world,
taking on any challenge,
because she knew she could do anything.
No restrictions.
No boundaries.
Only possibilities.

And the entire time I just sit and realize
it's her I want to be,
and not the girl that the mirror sees
during the few minutes in the morning,
as I rush by,
not even striking a pose,
or walking down the catwalk-
I'm sure the mirror misses her too.
-Alexandra Tasev

Earth is Our Home
—Chloe Webster-Kim

Sometimes I wish,
There were things I could change.
Sometimes I wish,
I could rearrange.
The way things worked out,
And how and why.
I wish there were things that never had to die.
People and places and things and love,
How I wish and wish to the stars up above.
I guess people always die,
And that's nothing I can reverse,
That's just the sad way of the universe.
Places like forests, mountains, and river bends,
At some point they all must come to an end.
But what if they didn't,
What if there was no need?
What if there wasn't so much greed.
We're killing our planet,
We're letting it die.
So you can't tell me that global warming is a lie.
This is all so real,
And it needs to change.
This is our planet that we can't exchange.
We can't find another,
There is no restart.
But you can help by taking part.
This is our world,
We need it to live,
So instead of taking resources,
Why not give?
Donate to the funds,
Or clean up today.
Your efforts could really make a change someday.
You may be one person,
But this planet's all we got.
So why not try and give it a shot?
This is our place,
Our place to roam.
This is our planet,
Earth is our home.

Withdrawal/Drawing Conclusions
—Tierra Sherlock

We were two shattered hearts, each with a jagged edge.
But to say our pieces fit perfectly together would be too much of a stretch.

You fooled me into thinking that I was once again whole.
But when you left, I learned I was only ever half of a soul.

We were drawn together because we both felt alone and no one understood.
But we were so different, what made me think that for some reason, you would?

I thought that two damaged people could help mend one another.
But I found out that we had to work on ourselves instead of completing each other.

You were so broken and I was nowhere near fine.
But that doesn't mean our stars were destined to align.



A Problem that Needs to be Solved

—Noelle Lemaire

In today's culture, some citizens have difficulties accepting so I would like to solve the problem of world rejection. Whether it be accepting homosexuals, different religious groups, or even people of different races. We live in a time period that is much more advanced than the eras before where gay marriage is legal and segregation is gone, yet there is still much more progress need to made. If everyone became open and accepting to every idea in the world, the world would be able to achieve a peaceful co-existence. Now do not confuse this suggestion with liking the ideals; the world does not have to like different ideas, but world citizens must learn to deal with situations in a respectful manner, such as not committing hate crimes and not oppressing other minorities. Acceptance today is much more achievable because of the different changes the generations today have seen.

Growing up, young children are taught that everyone is unique in their own ways and that humans all have something special about them. Rather than discriminating against differences, we should be like children and find that special characteristic in each and every person. It is quite ironic that society tells us to pride ourselves on what makes each and every person unique yet there is still oppression. If people continue to oppress others because of their ideas, the world is going to be a very hateful place but if people are loving and accepting of one another, the world can be a place of peace. The quote I have dreamed up has come from seeing how little acceptance is left in the world. The people of this great planet are all different and we should learn to love everyone no matter what differences are present in society.

Acceptance is the only answer to solving discriminations. If everyone was accepting of flaws both significant and minor, the world would have more productive citizens and less self-harm. Pop culture sets so many unrealistic body and personality standards for both men and women across the globe. Some people have one set idea of how a man and a woman should look and act and are unable to accept the differences in similarities. No man woman or child should ever be discriminated by body types. Along with individual personalities, body types range within society and all types should be accepted. There should not be standards set by the media and other famous individuals that influence how young people view themselves. The standards set today by society are unreasonable and cause a lot of self hatred and not enough acceptance.

The media plays an important role in regulating stories and updates. For example, social media networks have live updating features on what is happening around the world and young people are exposed to "perfection". If young adults focus on the negative things around the world and trying to achieve "perfection", the world will be a terrible place with no love for others or for themselves. The answer to this problem is acceptance. Accepting others is the best option for world peace.

Acceptance is significant to me because I have to sit here in America watching hate crimes take place on the news, and I am unable to stop them from happening. If everyone is surrounded by a world of love and laughter, there would be less wars and less discrimination. The world filled with peace is achievable, we just need the right leaders of the twenty-first century to guide the way to our goal. The goal for today's generation should be to become a generation of love and acceptance not a generation of discrimination.

Shades of Serenity

—Madison Fahmy

A single streak of light sits patiently on the horizon,

Illuminating the earth ever so slightly

Silence and Slumber take a quiet stroll along the bay, hands intertwined

And traces of clouds taint the watercolor sky

Their steps are long and measured,

Disrupting not even a single grain of sand

Serenity greets Silence and Slumber at the pier

Inviting them to dip their feet in the water and slip away

And so they just sit, perched on the pier

Losing themselves in the breathtaking blend of color

As dawn grows tall, they stand

Solemnly awaiting the impending daybreak

Because they know what daybreak brings: Chaos

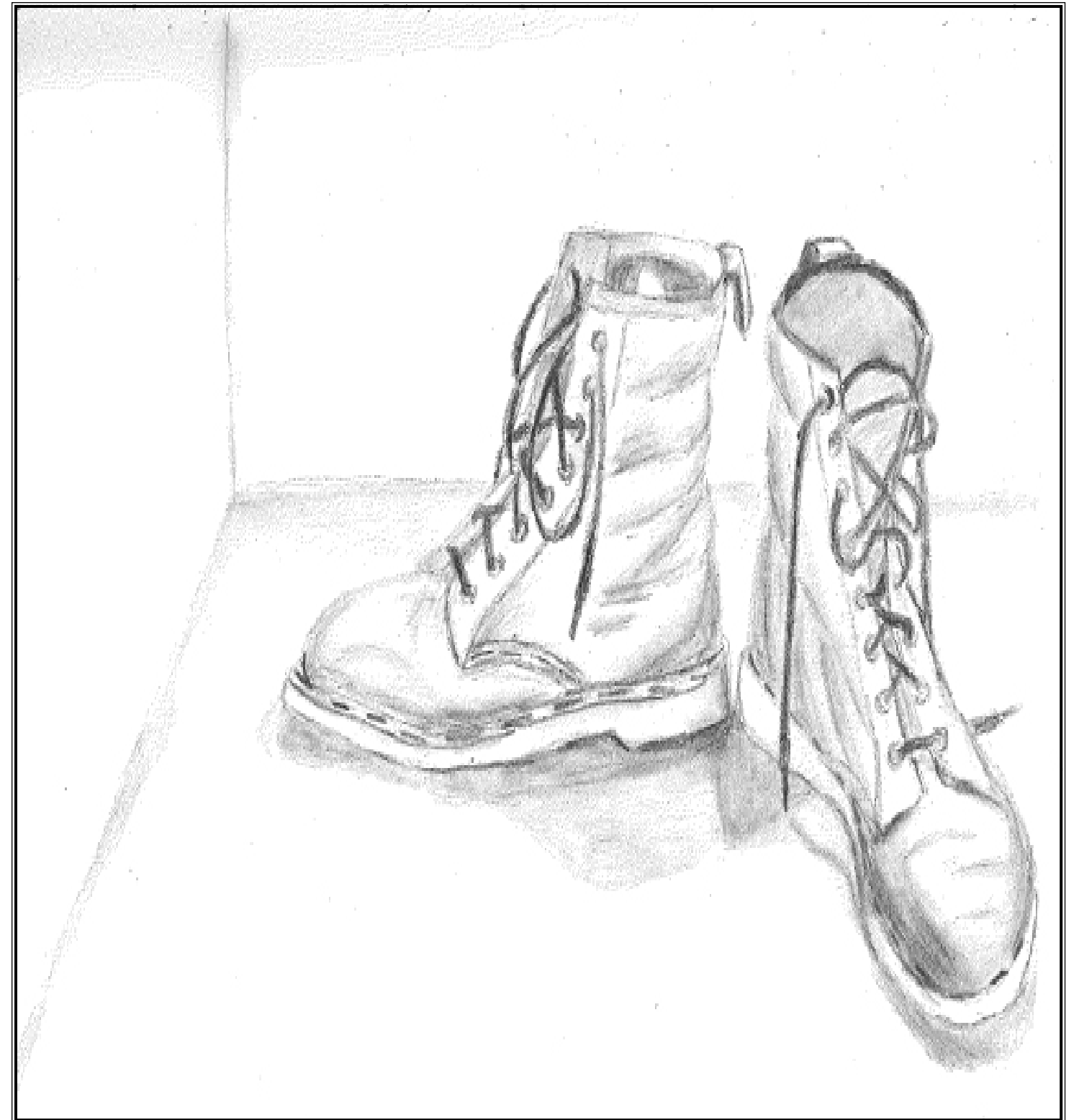
They know that their reunion will be prematurely interrupted

So they stand still and wait patiently

And are beautifully silent.

• • • • •
• Miles with growing distance
• —Tierra Sherlock
•

• I plucked out my heartstrings the way his hands uprooted the lifelines of flowers,
• forcing through the safe soil barrier because their beauty was too great to be kept in hiding.
• I weaved them into a bracelet perfectly molded to fit the width of his wrist, with a little
• extra slack, allowing room for growth.
• Not wanting to lose it or let it slip between my outstretched fingers, I tucked it away in a
• secret spot.
• Only when I reached for it, I learned it wasn't mine to give away, misplaced and
• misguided.
• He was Robin Hood, stealing for the greater good,
• Except when I put my control up for auction, I made sure he was never the highest
• bidder.
• And bitterness came when his sweet smile ceased to be directed at me, yet I always made
• him return stolen glances.
• What could have been and missed chances were the only common ground we shared that I
• relied on to be stable enough to place my weight.
• Because I never wanted to weigh him down with burdens he could easily maneuver around.
• Whereas I was headstrong, barreling into each obstacle, picking up speed, except I was
• never the one doing the tackling.
• Why open his eyes just enough for him to see me hurt, when those clear green diamonds
• only knew how to reflect light?
• Fight or flight, I had always been told that if I just stretched out my wings I would soar to
• new heights.
• Despite the screaming polarity, push and pull seem to work in tandem.
• But when he pushed me out of my comfort zone, I only pulled away.



Door to Childhood
—Katrin Spiridonova

Petite hands
small and unworldly
Inch up
The tall
Rugged
Metal door
Nude-pink fingertips
Curl around
The ornate
Rusted bars
With every reach
I gain power
Confidence
Leverage
A sudden jerk backwards
And I am flying—
Dress freely flowing
The dainty frame
Screeching
Creaking
Shaking
Hinges still pristine
Every swoosh calls in
The strong aroma
Of cucumbers
Freshly chopped
Filling the air
Weaving through every rod
Fusing with scents of red roses
Peaches
And cherries
7 years later,
I am back
Hands now larger
Nail polish slightly chipped
Dress a bit longer
The door—
Although as intricate as before,
Now propped,
Cold, and firm—
Squeaking less strong
Grasps my attention
It's clenching on
To memories I thought were gone



The wonderful thing about Tiggers is Tiggers are wonderful things...

—Noelle Lemaire

As a child, I loved watching Winnie the Pooh. I immediately identified with Tigger, who was always happy! When I fell off the swings in the park, I recall being sad for seconds before I got right back on the swings, happy again. Fast-forward: I am turning 18, and I'm still bubbly no matter what life throws my way. Just like Tigger, I never skip a beat.

Their tops are made out of rubber...

One of my favorite things to do is learn. I always look to expand my mind and horizons, whether through Girl Scouts, Academic Decathlon, or school! I have successfully argued a case in a mock trial, yet also learned about the world of business. I yearn to know as much as possible about the world around me because I want to improve it. I alone cannot change the world overnight, but I can take simple steps, like reaching out to seniors in my community and getting them involved with the younger generation, as I am doing in my Gold Award project.

Their bottoms are made out of springs...

Throughout high school, I have channeled my energies into adventures ranging from Space Camp Regular and Advanced, to backpacking through Europe, to speaking at local schools. My ever-present Converse sneakers have allowed me to bounce across the country and back, down south to Alabama, and to great cities like Paris, London, and Athens. They always put pep in my step. I never leave home without my phone either. From attending high school football games to exploring new cities, I love documenting my life in pictures.

They're bouncy, trouncy, flouncy, pouncy.... Fun Fun Fun Fun Fun

Whether hanging out with friends or exploring new cities, one of my goals in life is to make every endeavor joyful. Ever since my brother was born, I have likewise found joy and fun in helping others. As a two-year-old, I would beg my mom to let me feed and hold him. My helping hand was put to even greater use when I joined Girl Scouts at age six. I found I could help my community and people in need. Through my Silver Award, I donated supplies to a marine center after Hurricane Sandy. Girl Scouts is such an important part of my life because each vest has taught me something new, while enhancing my ability to have fun!

But the most wonderful thing about Tiggers is I'm the only one

I am such a diverse person with so many interests, whether it is learning, volunteering, traveling, or just relaxing! I love exploring new environments and meeting new people who inspire me to be the best version of myself. I set high goals for myself and I adore it when I reach them; it reminds me that all the hard work has truly paid off. Like Tigger, I am always bouncing off to try new things and to do the things I love.

Burning House

—Christina Scanlon

Everybody is like a burning house
Any given day the house is alright
Natural light in the day, candles at night
What happens when the candle tips over?

That candle will start a burning fire
It will destroy everything in its path
Every part of the house feeling its wrath
But even after the fire it stands

Everybody is like a burning house
Things go in and things come out every day
You have no control of what goes away
This could be a friend a love or a life

This burning house can make you feel alone
With the black burned walls standing in despair
Please keep in mind that the house is still there
Build up like the house and conquer the world



To Love's Desire
—Emma Savistky

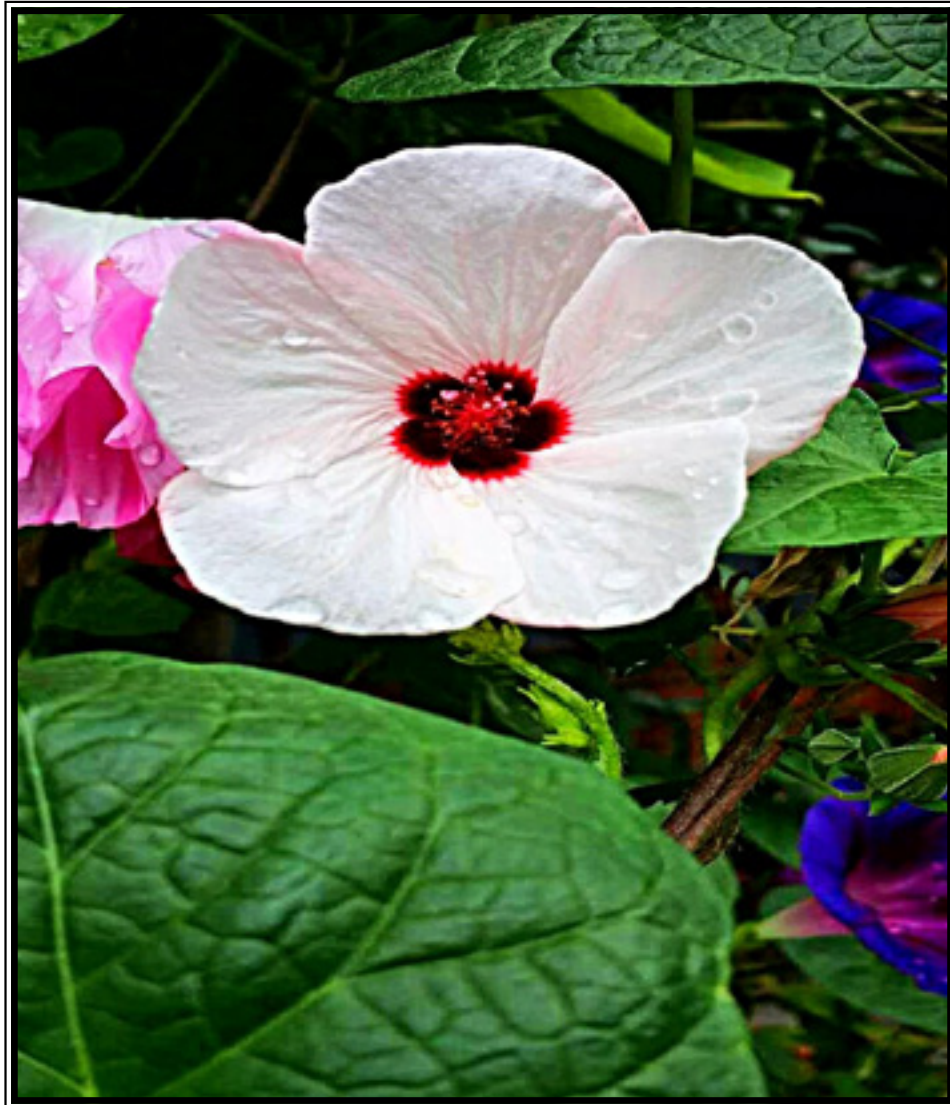
If a love like you,
Inclined to flee,
Were to find your wits
And leave me be
I would wonder not
But try to see
How a love like you
Could have loved me.

If a love like you,
With drawn-out eyes,
Were to craft a tale
Of tender lies
I'd kiss you softly
With fair goodbyes
And travel gently
Towards the skies.

If a love like you,
Made rich with care,
Were to find another
Soul now bare
I would wish for you
To meet her there
Whilst I hold no hand
And grasp at air.

If a love like you,
The best of men,
Were to find this note,
I dare say send
It to my desire
Or to a friend
So that my sweet love
Shall never end.

If a love like you,
Ornate and bold,
Were to send my heart
Into the cold
I'd comprehend it,
My soul I sold,
That a love like you
I cannot hold.



Ocean
—Emily Feza

A dangerous and beautiful thing,
Full of waves that eternally sing,
You've played with my life more than once,
Scooping the sand in an instance,
Beyond what you see,
Where does it all lead?
To adventures unexplored,
Or ripples among a million cords,
The sea is not evil,
Nor rather dull,
Life and excitement thrive,
For anyone, willing to dive
A tropical place-
A reminder of true peace,
The time spent here, forever ceased
But remember what a place the ocean can be,
Don't fall into its blissful misery



Summer
—Brigid Boylan

Riding to the beach for the 5 am sunrise
Watching as the sky goes from black to blue
The sun pokes out between ocean and the
skies
Laying in the sand, that's what we stick to

Days on the beach without a care
Running from the hot sand to the cool sea
Under the umbrella in a beach chair
And burning is a guarantee

Gray blue waves come in three's
Each surf bigger than the last
A time that will never displease
In oceans which are surely vast

Boat rides down the bay
Salty water spraying in my face
Feeling like you've castaway
Without leaving a trace

Taking mile long bike rides
With hair blowing in the breeze
Off the sidewalks on the roadsides
But sweating in the 90 degrees

Family gatherings every other night
To eat barbecue and ice cream
finishing before the mosquitoes bite
And we all run off to the stream

Nights filled with pastel skies
Painted with purples and pinks
The bright moon is on the rise
And stars in the black blink

Last day of school to Labor Day
Time is spent with each other
At the beach wasting the days away
One summer leading to another