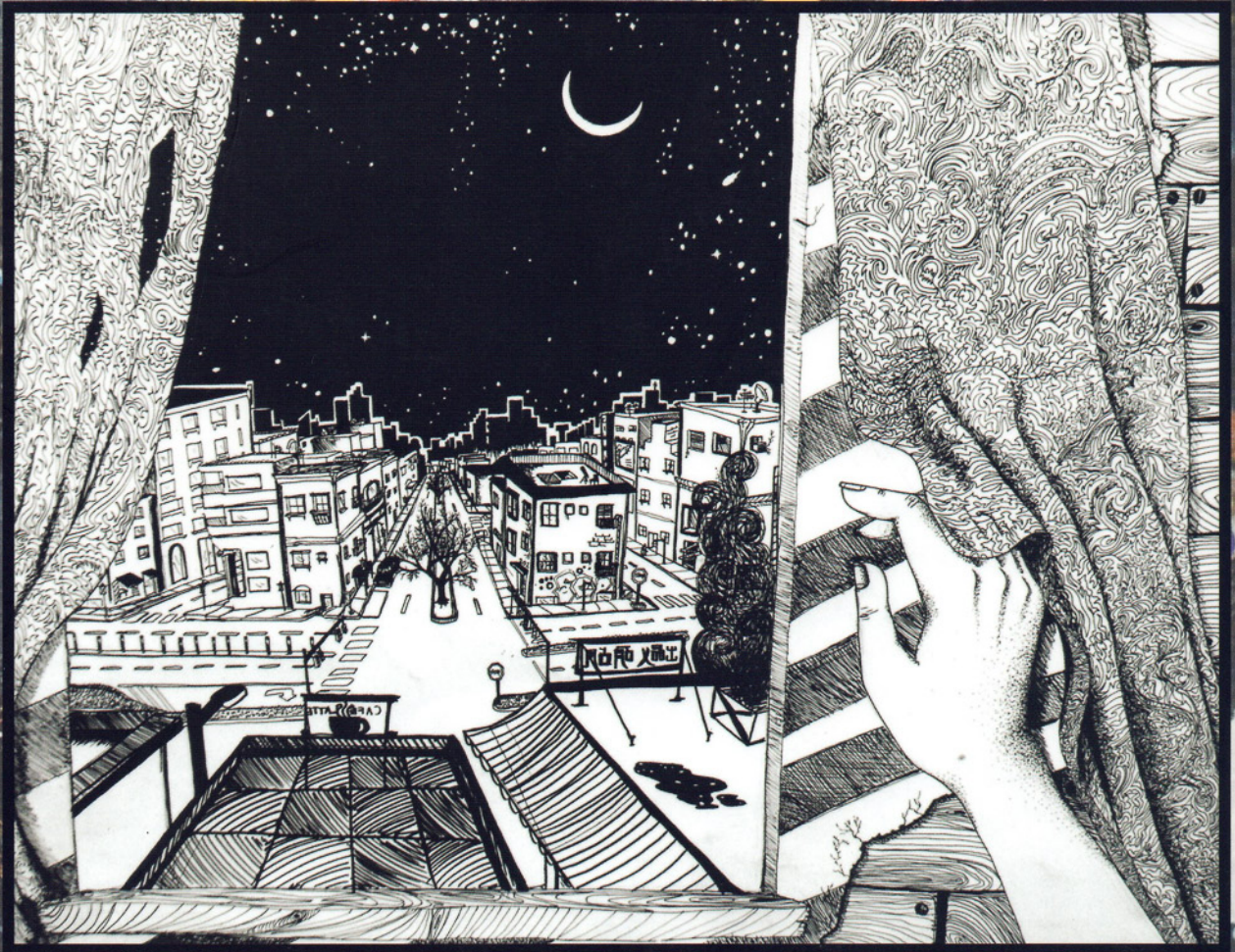


Labyrinth Magazine



**T.C. Williams High School
2012-2013**

Labyrinth Staff



Timothy Laboy-Coporropa, Gabriella Salcedo, Kiri Spiotta, Emma Bartley, Lia Neibuar, Alexis Judd, and Sara Conception.

Cover Art by Michaela Japac

Editors' Note:

Labyrinth magazine has reached incredible new heights this school year. The small but passionate staff has made it their mission to build up the magazine and, as a result, has received well over a hundred student submissions since this past November. Labyrinth was able to continue to move from an online-only presence to having more issues printed and available to students in the hallways, free of charge. We believe that this accomplishment has aided in establishing Labyrinth's presence in the school.

In congruence with building up the magazine itself, the hard work of the Labyrinth staff has facilitated awareness of art within T.C. Williams, helping students get their artwork publicly displayed for all to admire. Labyrinth's video announcements constantly exhibit current projects in art, photography, and graphic design classes. Staff members repeatedly reached out to the creative writing class, who happily submitted their work to be published in the magazine.

Labyrinth will continue to strive for greater heights in upcoming years, as well as remain a predominant medium for student creativity and expression at T.C. Williams.

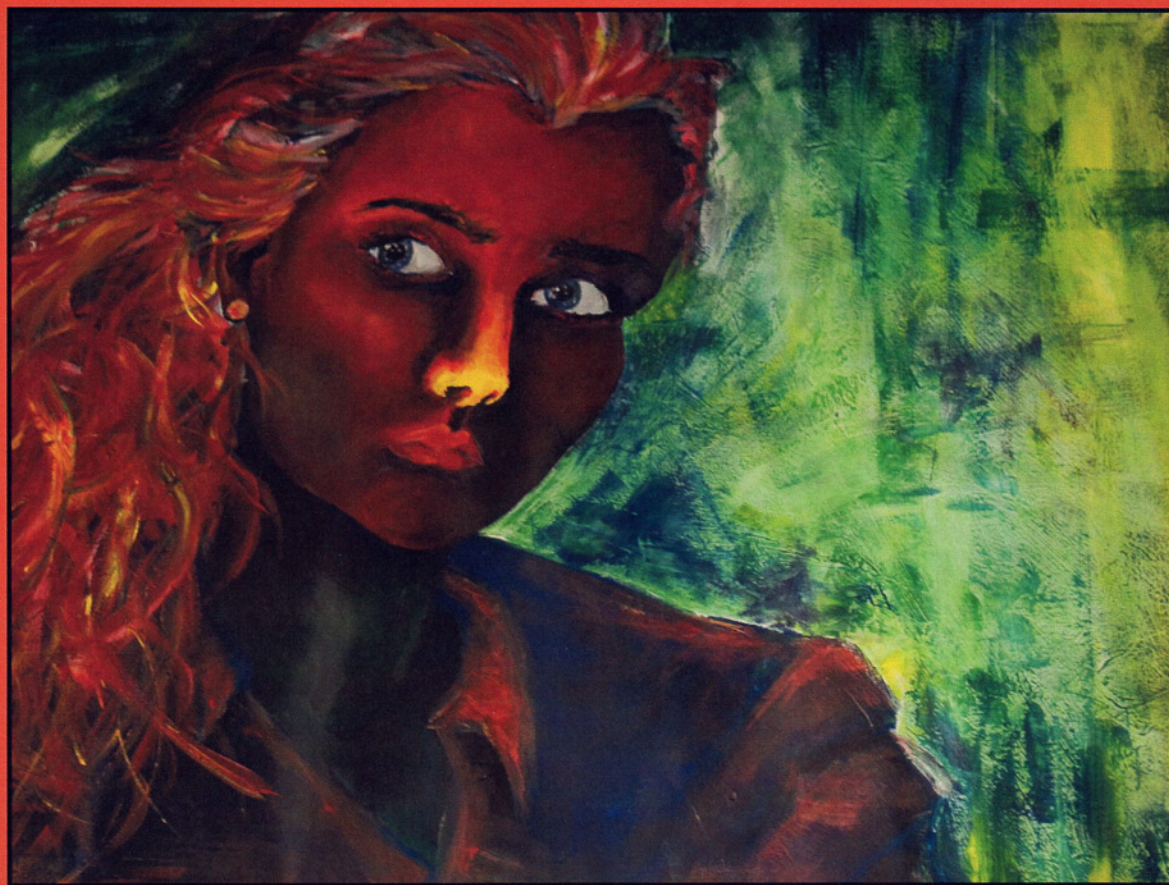
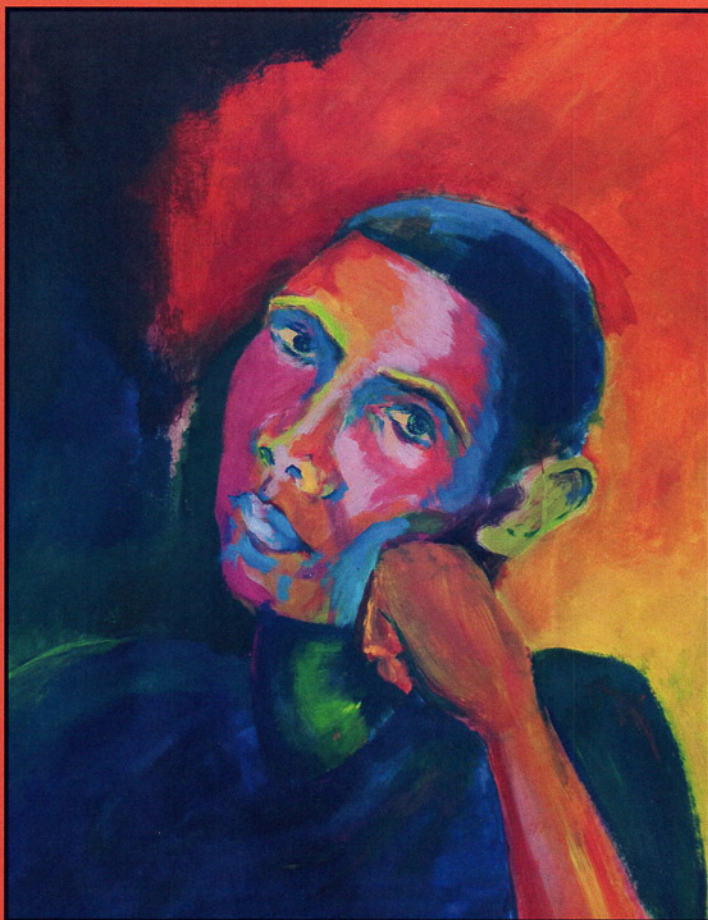
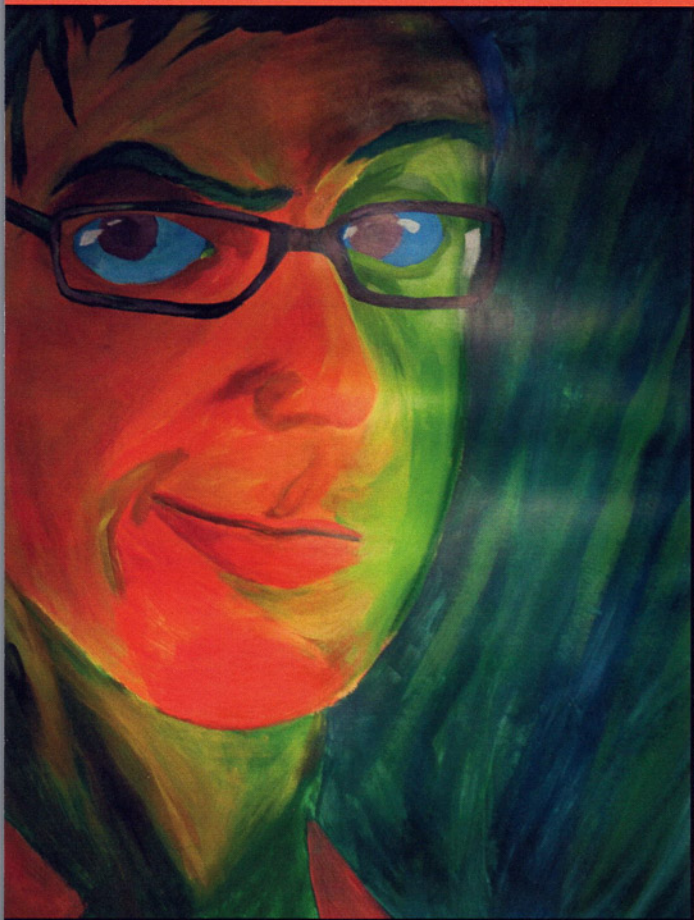
Thank you, and enjoy!
Emma Bartley and Kiri Spiotta
Editors-in-Chief

Top: Biky Morales Aquiler
Bottom: Emma Bracken



Top: Raphael Thomas
Bottom: Kiri Spiotta

Opposite Page
Top Left: Halden Fraley
Top Right: Raphael Thomas
Bottom: Alexandra Lemke



Raphael Thomas



Catherine Beall





Kiri Spiotta

Catherine Beall



Edom Tilahun

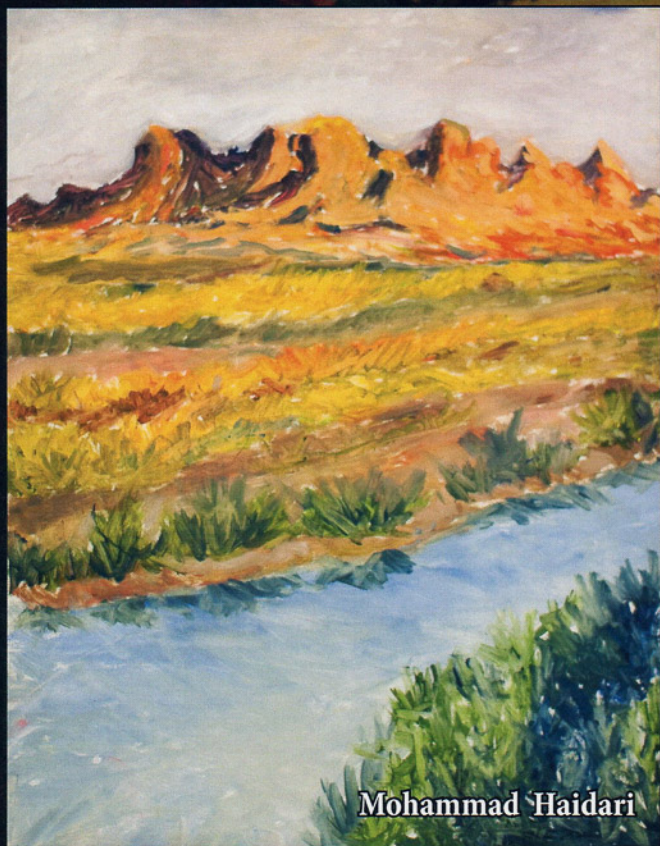


Edom Tilahun



Opposite Page - Top left: Brendan Kerwin, Top Right: Cindy Ramirez
Bottom: Oscar Martinez





Mohammad Haidari



Mohammad Haidari



The Bird

By Rachael Vannatta

*Is that bridge getting built?
Are you making your way?
Your wings are broken,
You can't return home
The light appears in front of you
You try to resist the pull
Your body drags along the ground
Your talons breaking off
Flightless Bird, jealous, weeping
Lost everything you had
Never had a choice to go
Never to take the sky again
The bridge is getting built
Pressing back the blackened trees
The fog is churning round
Making it hard to see
The cat's silhouette is as big as a monster
Pushing you away
Crushing you beneath its weight
Forcing you to leave
Flightless bird, grounded, bleeding*

Adolescence

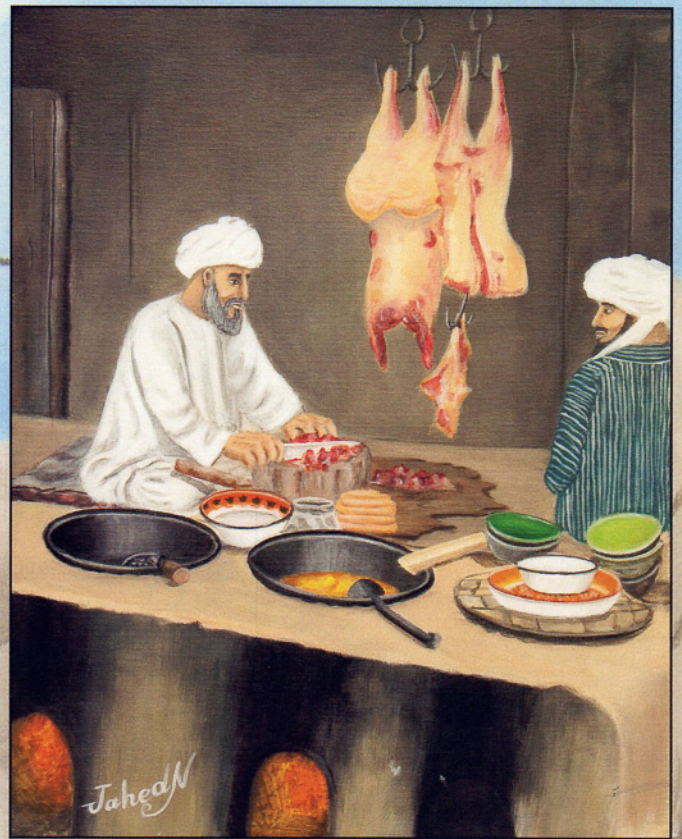
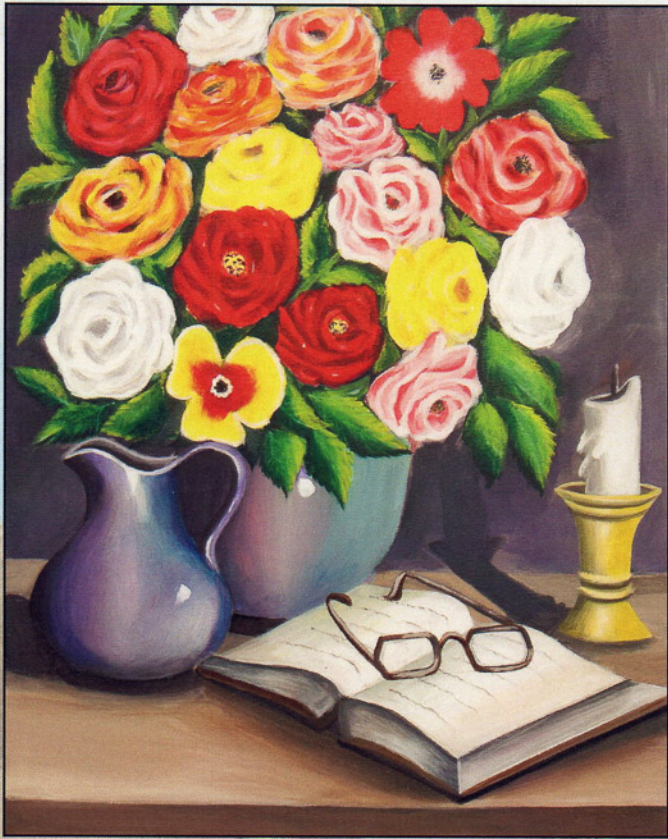
By Kiri Spiotta

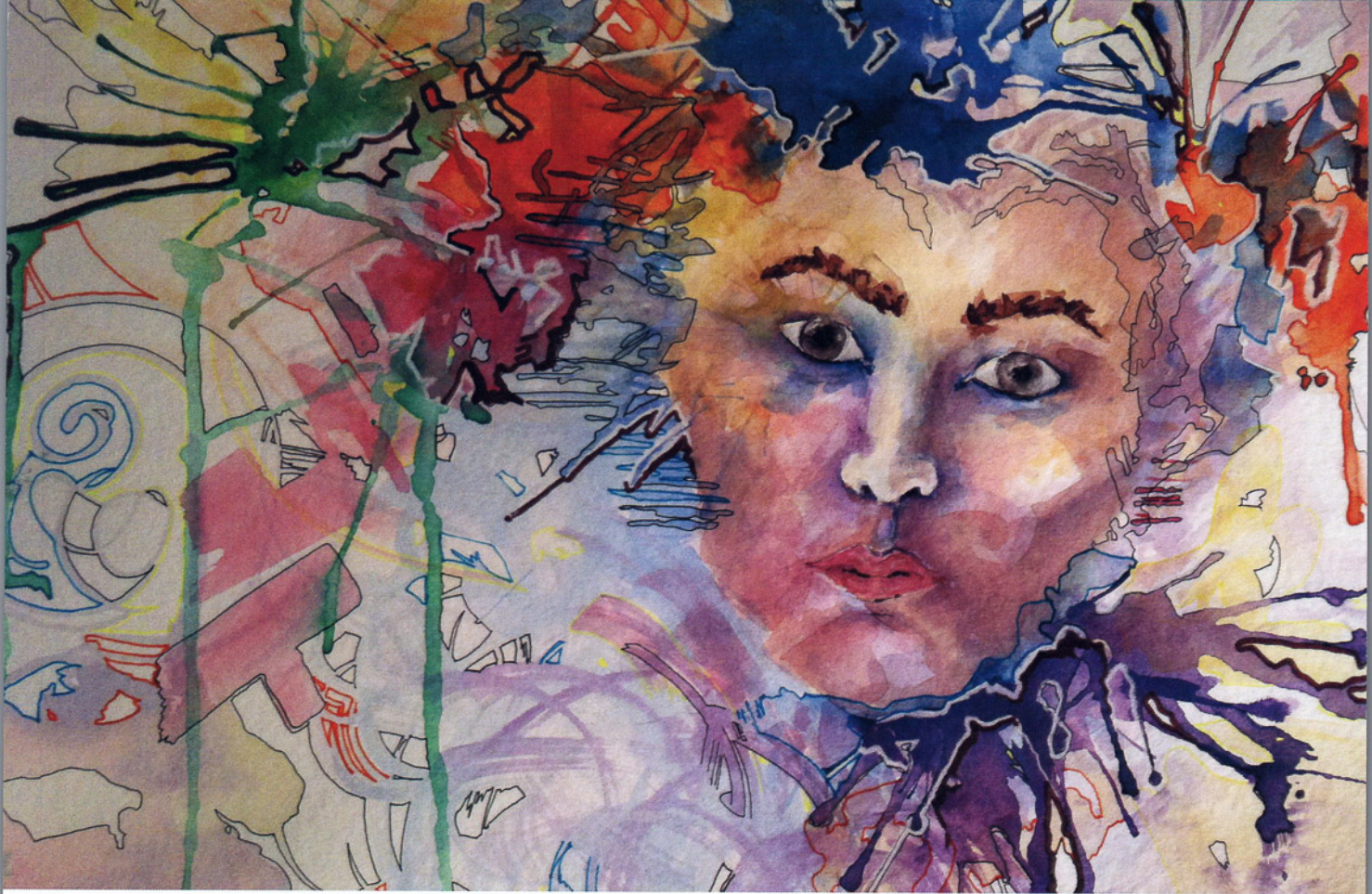
The unrefined scent
Of fresh tipped grass
The breath humidity and sparkling lights
Intertwined among the ripening sky
Giggles and dirt upon knees
Heads tilted towards heaven
We captured the lights in penny jars
And shook them till the glitter in our eyes
Corresponded with the flashes

Mohammed Haidari

Originally from Kabul City, Afghanistan, Mohammed has always had a passion for art. In Afghanistan, he often worked with calligraphy and illustration and had a great deal of support from his friends and family. During his first year at T.C., he continued to work on his art outside of school but had not signed up for any art classes. One day during Titan Time, a teacher saw one of his drawings and, extremely impressed by his talent, asked him to enroll in her art class for the upcoming school year. Jاهد now takes art with Ms. Rousseau and enjoys it very much. With continued support from friends and family, his affinity for art is only expanding.







Art by Alexandra Lemke





Interview with the Artist:

Alexandra Lemke

Labyrinth: What grade are you in?

Alexandra: I'm a senior at T C Williams.

Labyrinth: Have you taken courses relative to art?

Alexandra: Yes, Torpedo Factory classes in fine arts/charcoal, and Glen Echo pottery/sculpture classes. I started art in elementary school at Jefferson Houston, but my passion for art progressed significantly in middle school. Throughout the course of elementary and middle school, I was known for hoarding the good art supplies in art class and staying after class to work a lot.

Labyrinth: What inspires you?

Alexandra: Shadows, lights and observational things. I'm not very abstract; in fact I get very frustrated if I can't create exactly what I'm seeing or imagining.

Labyrinth: What's your favorite piece that you've done?

Alexandra: Oh, that's a hard one... probably my water color chicken (exhibited behind Alexandra in portrait.) I like a lot of my simple sketchbook pieces as well.

Labyrinth: Do you plan on pursuing art after high school?

Alexandra: Not in college, much to the aggravation of my mother and art teachers. However, I hope to continue amateur classes and perhaps even work/sell my pieces on the side of another job.

Dive

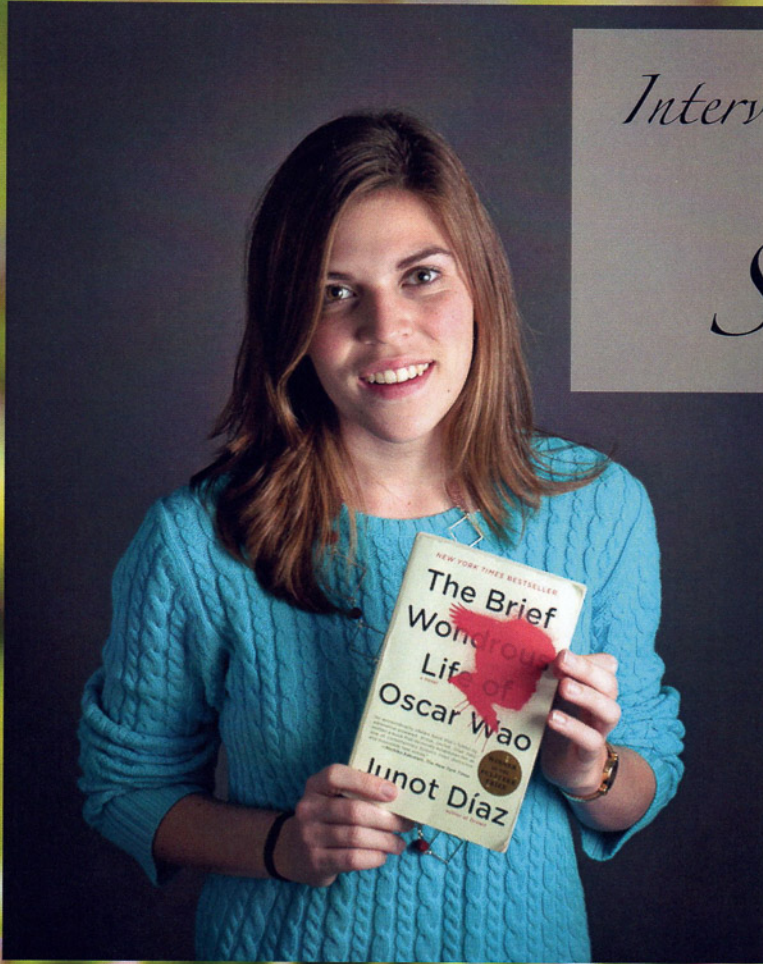
by Sarah Paez

The walls bleed
Seeping visceral slime of
knowledge
Outside, flowers bloom
Deep red poppies
Staining my retinas
Like the cataclysmic
patterns
latticing
Across the floor
As if you were
Climbing on a garden trellis
But instead
You sliced a chasm
In the water
Watched it glide
Through your conscience
We became an entity
Shrouded in cotton
Walled in

So we clawed our way out
The sun just
Dawning upon our backs
Noses turned up to the
World's gravity
That anchored our minds
But we tore off our clothes
And soaked in ultraviolet
Radiation
Crescent moon smiles
Upon our fiery lips
Igniting the dusk
and the murky labyrinth
Echoes of our once-lost thoughts
Now brighter than crystal-studded
Caves
Brilliantly
We escape from our graves.

Interview with the Writer:

Sarah Paez



Labyrinth: Have you always enjoyed writing? When did you start becoming interested in it?

Sarah: I remember when I was in 3rd grade we actually had a subject called Writing as part of Language Arts, and I used to sit there and think, “Sarah opened her green writing notebook and knew that when she looked back on her childhood this would be the moment where she realized she wanted to be a writer.” So dramatic, hah! But I’ve always loved reading, and that’s always inspired me to want to write.

Labyrinth: What subjects do you like to write about most?

Sarah: I love writing about people, and their insignificant daily lives. Love triangles are fun too, and crazy situations like plays and dances...just events where tons of different people all end up together and I can write about how the characters react to being out of their comfort zones.

Labyrinth: What authors, if any, inspire you or your writing style?

Sarah: God, I think...Laurie Halse Anderson would be my prime author. Her prose is gorgeous. She can alternate between sarcastic one-liners and devastatingly haunting poetry. She captures the big issues and puts them into little keyholes of peoples’ lives. I love that. *Speak* was my favorite book of hers. I also love Lois Lowry, I owe my childhood love of reading to her.

Labyrinth: Do you plan on pursuing a career that involves writing?

Sarah: Oh I definitely plan on pursuing writing! It’d be nice to live in a bubble where making a career as a writer actually results in monetary compensation, but to start out I’ll probably do something practical. I hope to ultimately end up an author.

Labyrinth: Do you have a favourite piece of literature?

Sarah: Ooh favorite piece, that’s tough...Well I wrote this reflective essay about a birthday party I went to where I was the only guest, and I just tried to capture the loneliness of me and the girl. It leaves you feeling kind of empty, and I guess that was the goal. But I promise not all my work is depressing! I’m working on a love triangle short story now, so we’ll see how that turns out...

Kayla Lewis

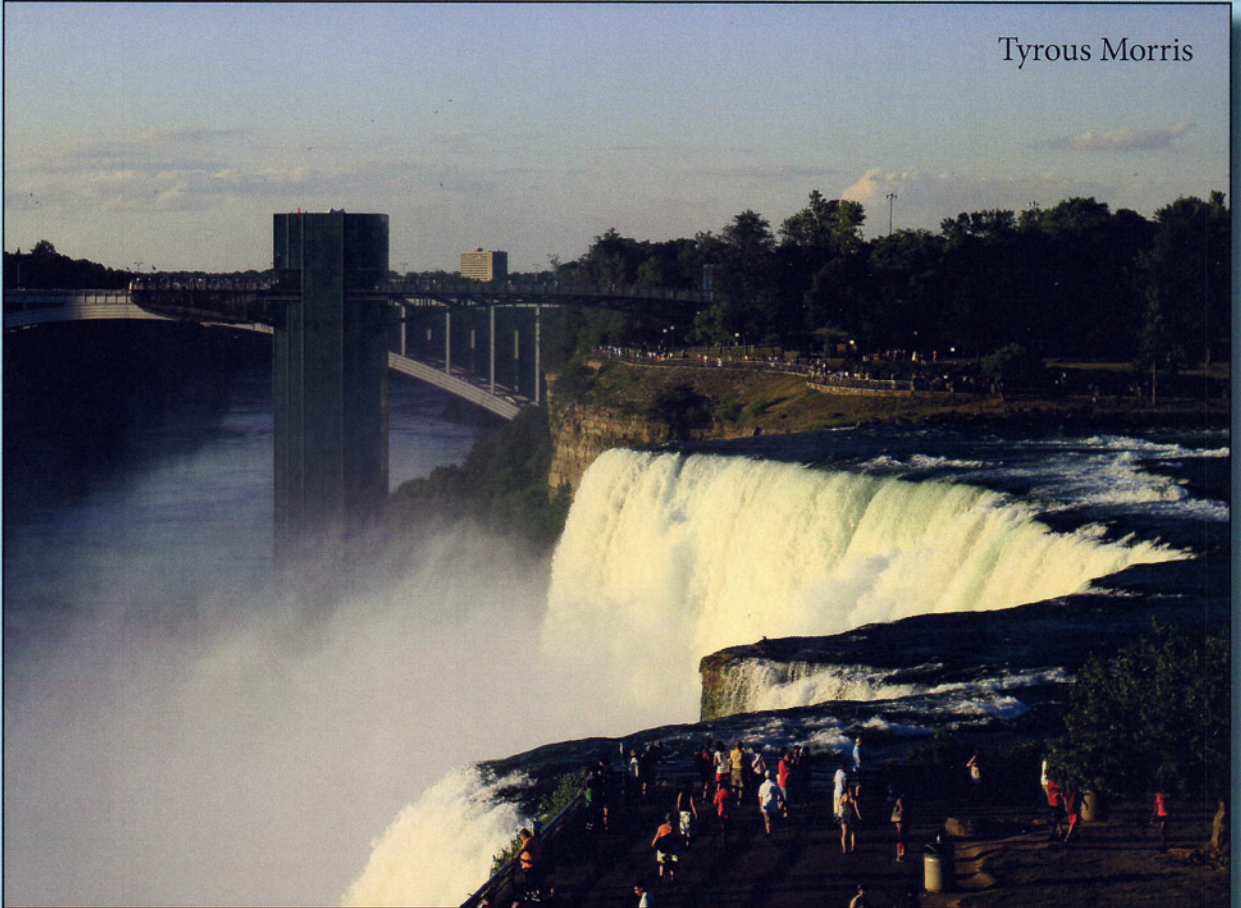


Kate Arnold





Tyrous Morris

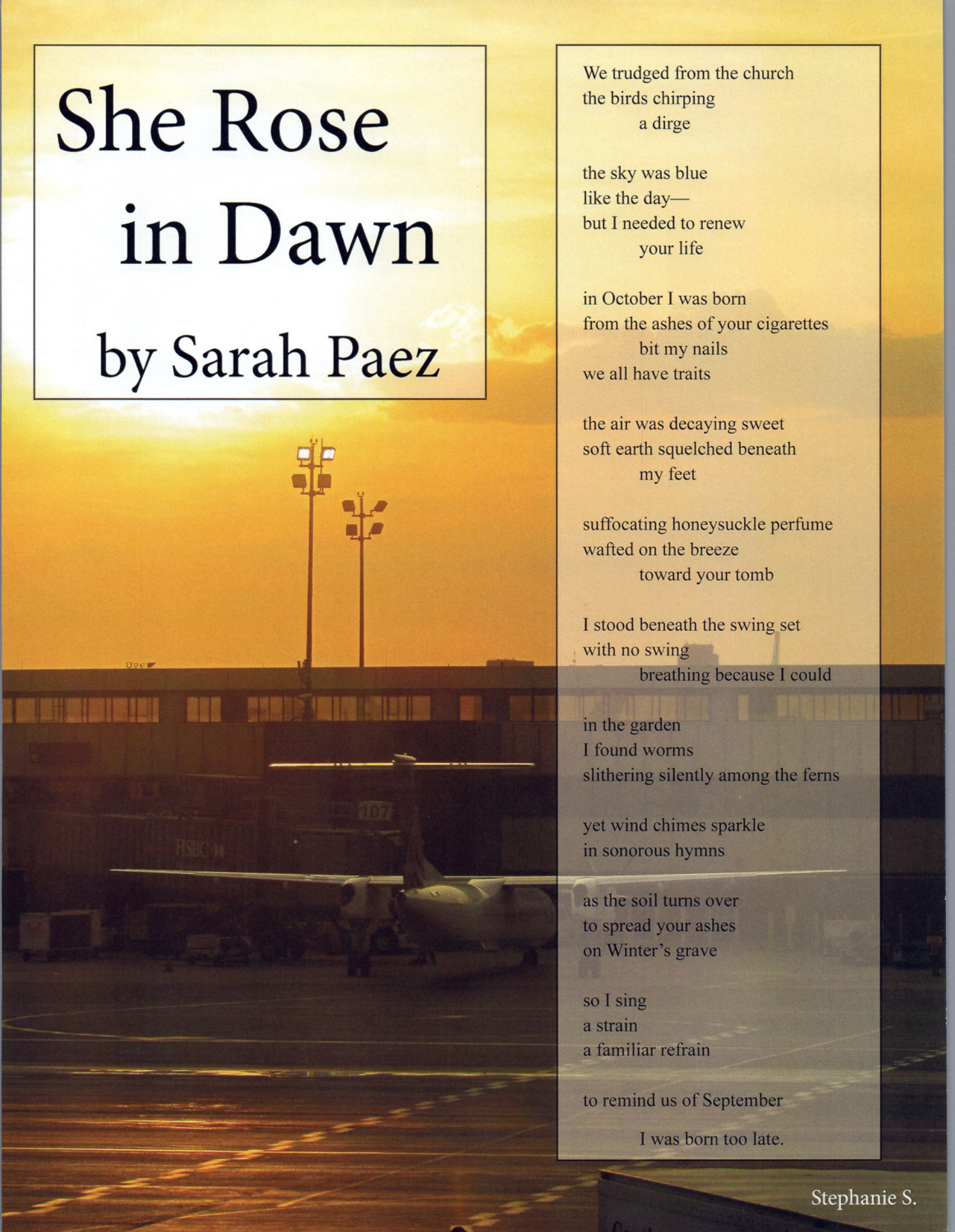


Charly Liss



Ibrahim Lamin





She Rose in Dawn

by Sarah Paez

We trudged from the church
the birds chirping
a dirge

the sky was blue
like the day—
but I needed to renew
your life

in October I was born
from the ashes of your cigarettes
bit my nails
we all have traits

the air was decaying sweet
soft earth squelched beneath
my feet

suffocating honeysuckle perfume
wafted on the breeze
toward your tomb

I stood beneath the swing set
with no swing
breathing because I could

in the garden
I found worms
slithering silently among the ferns

yet wind chimes sparkle
in sonorous hymns

as the soil turns over
to spread your ashes
on Winter's grave

so I sing
a strain
a familiar refrain

to remind us of September

I was born too late.



Maria Jones



Kiri Spiotta



Tyrous Morris

Bayou Baby *by Chloe Tomsue*

The waters ain't clean, down here.

I can drag net after net through those damn waters and somethin' still gets stuck.

See, I drag net after net because this place is my home and maybe the water wasn't always this dark, and maybe I could see my feet in the water one day, when I wade in. It's a little scary, knowing things are up to me.

My name is Juno. I'm a full-figured pit bull of a child with tangled yellow hair, tanned olive skin, a curved nose and big bright eyes. I think I'm pretty, somewhere underneath all of the car oil and bayou scum. But I'm good enough for what I've gotta do.

And even though it's scary, I've got everything under control down here.

But it's strange for me to think about it realistically. If I lived a little up north some, it probably would make more sense and in fact maybe no one would think it was stupid. No Jerry Falkner, a boy with wildly curly black hair and freckles covering every inch of him, who sees me with a wet t-shirt working and he just calls his friends over and they think I'm damn funny. I never told anyone that he sent me flowers once, asking me to go to his school dance with him, and I said no.

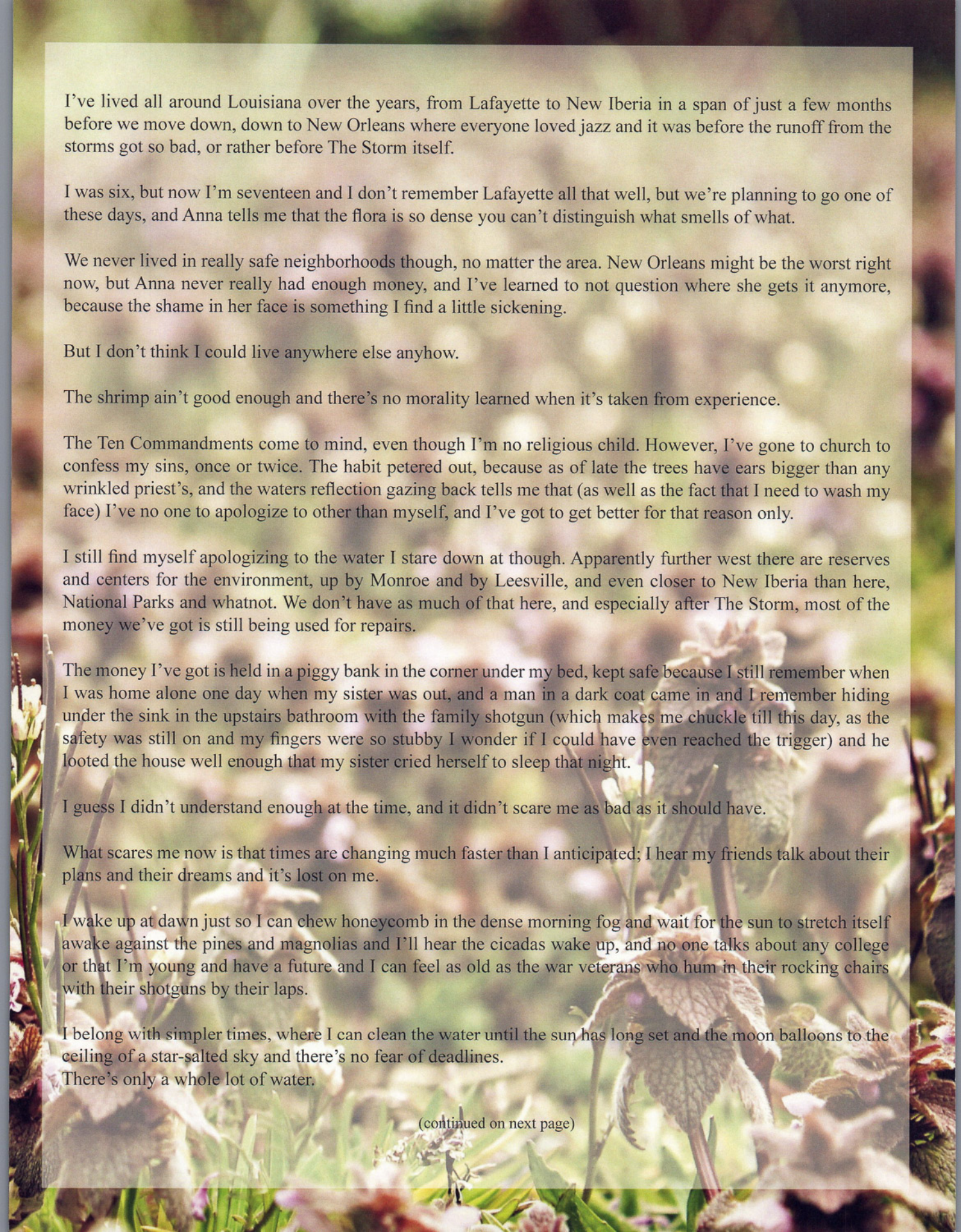
My sister told me it was no mistake that I did that, that his kind takes advantage of girls like me.

I wonder if she was just talking about men in general, or if she knows some secret I don't know about him.

She calls me a bayou baby and I contemplate every time she says it whether or not I like it. Thing is I been called naïve before because I haven't taken things into consideration enough that I take some things meant as insults as compliments, and when I should feel sick with shame I just don't.

It's lucky I don't, because someone has to hold my household together. She's been feeling pretty sick lately, Anna, my sister. She looks so drained but every time I ask how she is, she doesn't tell me anything other than "I'm tired, honeybee." And she'll drink one of her home-made remedies, honey and whiskey or something that almost always has alcohol in it. She's the prettiest girl most anyone has seen around here, big, twinkling brown eyes and rose colored cheeks and hair that is always shiny and fragrant, like Rapunzel herself. I reckon I could look like her if I actually fixed myself, but it ain't gonna happen because it's the only way that people leave me alone. Plus to be honest I've never gotten a haircut, and with my hair reaching record lengths sweeping my knees it ain't happening anytime soon.

Jerry Falkner still bugs me though, no matter if I swat him off, curse him out, he laughs. He compliments me too much when we're alone together, and cowers behind his little flowery phrases when I call his friends ugly names.



I've lived all around Louisiana over the years, from Lafayette to New Iberia in a span of just a few months before we move down, down to New Orleans where everyone loved jazz and it was before the runoff from the storms got so bad, or rather before The Storm itself.

I was six, but now I'm seventeen and I don't remember Lafayette all that well, but we're planning to go one of these days, and Anna tells me that the flora is so dense you can't distinguish what smells of what.

We never lived in really safe neighborhoods though, no matter the area. New Orleans might be the worst right now, but Anna never really had enough money, and I've learned to not question where she gets it anymore, because the shame in her face is something I find a little sickening.

But I don't think I could live anywhere else anyhow.

The shrimp ain't good enough and there's no morality learned when it's taken from experience.

The Ten Commandments come to mind, even though I'm no religious child. However, I've gone to church to confess my sins, once or twice. The habit petered out, because as of late the trees have ears bigger than any wrinkled priest's, and the waters reflection gazing back tells me that (as well as the fact that I need to wash my face) I've no one to apologize to other than myself, and I've got to get better for that reason only.

I still find myself apologizing to the water I stare down at though. Apparently further west there are reserves and centers for the environment, up by Monroe and by Leesville, and even closer to New Iberia than here, National Parks and whatnot. We don't have as much of that here, and especially after The Storm, most of the money we've got is still being used for repairs.

The money I've got is held in a piggy bank in the corner under my bed, kept safe because I still remember when I was home alone one day when my sister was out, and a man in a dark coat came in and I remember hiding under the sink in the upstairs bathroom with the family shotgun (which makes me chuckle till this day, as the safety was still on and my fingers were so stubby I wonder if I could have even reached the trigger) and he looted the house well enough that my sister cried herself to sleep that night.

I guess I didn't understand enough at the time, and it didn't scare me as bad as it should have.

What scares me now is that times are changing much faster than I anticipated; I hear my friends talk about their plans and their dreams and it's lost on me.

I wake up at dawn just so I can chew honeycomb in the dense morning fog and wait for the sun to stretch itself awake against the pines and magnolias and I'll hear the cicadas wake up, and no one talks about any college or that I'm young and have a future and I can feel as old as the war veterans who hum in their rocking chairs with their shotguns by their laps.

I belong with simpler times, where I can clean the water until the sun has long set and the moon balloons to the ceiling of a star-salted sky and there's no fear of deadlines.

There's only a whole lot of water.

(continued on next page)

"You look like you're thinking mighty hard girl."

"Jerry."

I don't know whether I hate Jerry or not. I hate him when he's with his friends, but not as much when he's by himself.

"You thinking of jumping into this sludge?"

"S'not sludge, it is water. An' it's not gonna look like this forever either."

I didn't face him but I could hear his feet shuffle over to me and plop himself down beside me. He lets out a long grumble.

"Do you see something that other people can't out here?"

I looked at him after a few seconds pause.

"If I did, I don't think I'd be talking to you, I think I'd be talking to the voices."

He let out a bark-like laugh.

"I don't get you, Juno--"

"You're damn right you don't."

"What I mean is that you don't do nothing other than work down here and then go home and hole up, the only times I see you are down here."

"Yeah, well, why would I want to see you and your gang; you and Frank Miller and that boy who you call Tank, you look me up and down and then you jeer at me like I'm real funny--"

"Hey look we don't mean any harm, they think you're pretty, you know."

"Yeah? I think they look like sewer rats. Just because I'm the only female in this neighborhood who won't mace you doesn't mean you can take the piss out of my hard work."

"That wasn't what I was trying to say!" His ears glowed red. "I was trying to ask why you think you can make a difference when one little girl isn't gonna do jack to fix anything. You're not dumb Juno, even though I say so with the guys, you know how guys are! That's just what we do. Don't mean no harm by it though, honest!"

"Yeah like meaning harm means anything. You think a bear means to hurt their lunch when they're starving?"

"I didn't come here to argue with you." Jerry mumbled. I shot him a stinging glance. "Your sister isn't well is she? She looked real pale last time I saw her."

"None of your beeswax." And I scooped out another lump of gooey comb from the jar in my lap and bit off a chunk. He laughs a little at my joke. "You think you know things, just like your friends and my friends too-" I forced down the mouthful. "Just cause you do well in school, or have some healthy pattern. I know who I am and what I gotta do, my sister knows. Do you know, Jerry? Do you and your friends know when you beat people up and tell them they'll see you again?"

"Juno I-"

"If she ain't well, then she ain't damn well! You can keep your nose out of it, and you can stop making me think about things that aren't necessary! I got enough to worry about as it is, and all you and your kind ever do is make it worse!"

"Why're you crying?"

What scares me about the future is that no matter how much smarter I am than everyone else, is the future is always smarter than me. The future knows that until there are hundreds of Juno Velikigi with nets and purifiers, the water will still look like sludge.

The future knows that my sister won't be around to hold my hand for very long.

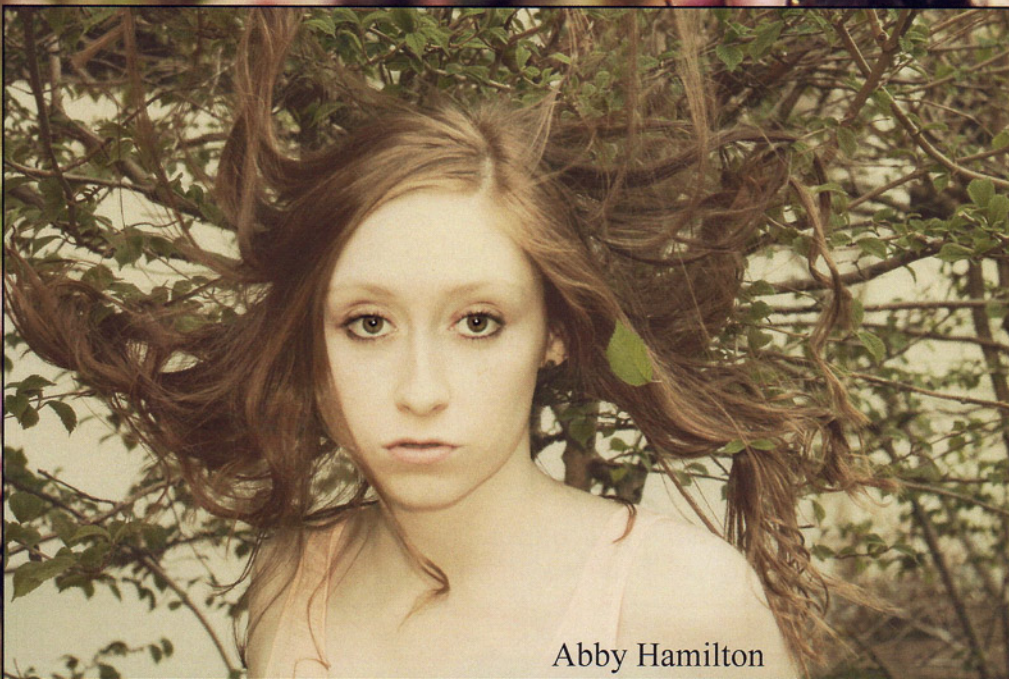
Jerry left when the tears started to fall, and I looked at the dirty waters, I looked at my net.

I felt the water slide over me with a rush of anticipation and sorrow and I tasted the rich scum on my mouth when I shouted as loud as I could.

What scares me about the future is that it knows everything and I know so little, but when I'm here, when I'm with my own God and my own heart?

I know everything that I will ever need to know.

I know everything that I will ever need to know, and so much more.



Abby Hamilton

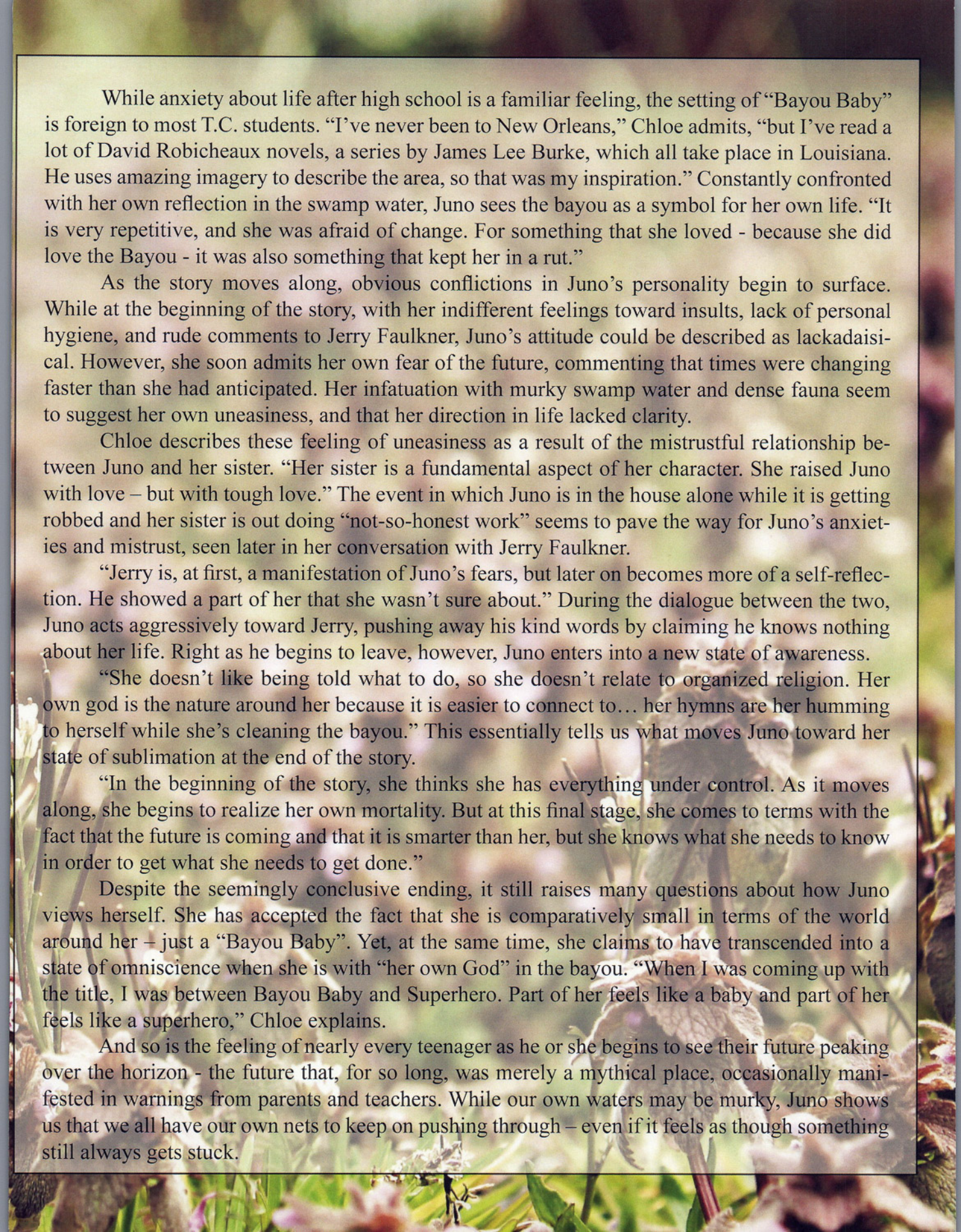
Interview with the Writer:

Chloe Tomsue



Chloe Tomsu's exploration of the mind of Juno, a 17-year-old girl living in New Orleans, as she grapples with her own life and the inevitability of the future is a fascinatingly complex story – filled with hauntingly familiar juxtaposition, as well as imagery in the form of magic realism. A junior at T.C., Chloe took time out of her Creative Writing class with Mr. Cunningham to explain “Bayou Baby” in greater detail to Labyrinth staff members Emma Bartley and Tim Laboy-Coparropa.

“Juno was a character I pulled from personal experience. I wanted to create someone that I knew was human.” Chloe notes that many authors can create characters that are good, but not necessarily relatable. “Juno is scared of the future. Being a high school student, that’s something I could relate to.”



While anxiety about life after high school is a familiar feeling, the setting of “Bayou Baby” is foreign to most T.C. students. “I’ve never been to New Orleans,” Chloe admits, “but I’ve read a lot of David Robicheaux novels, a series by James Lee Burke, which all take place in Louisiana. He uses amazing imagery to describe the area, so that was my inspiration.” Constantly confronted with her own reflection in the swamp water, Juno sees the bayou as a symbol for her own life. “It is very repetitive, and she was afraid of change. For something that she loved - because she did love the Bayou - it was also something that kept her in a rut.”

As the story moves along, obvious confusions in Juno’s personality begin to surface. While at the beginning of the story, with her indifferent feelings toward insults, lack of personal hygiene, and rude comments to Jerry Faulkner, Juno’s attitude could be described as lackadaisical. However, she soon admits her own fear of the future, commenting that times were changing faster than she had anticipated. Her infatuation with murky swamp water and dense fauna seem to suggest her own uneasiness, and that her direction in life lacked clarity.

Chloe describes these feelings of uneasiness as a result of the mistrustful relationship between Juno and her sister. “Her sister is a fundamental aspect of her character. She raised Juno with love – but with tough love.” The event in which Juno is in the house alone while it is getting robbed and her sister is out doing “not-so-honest work” seems to pave the way for Juno’s anxieties and mistrust, seen later in her conversation with Jerry Faulkner.

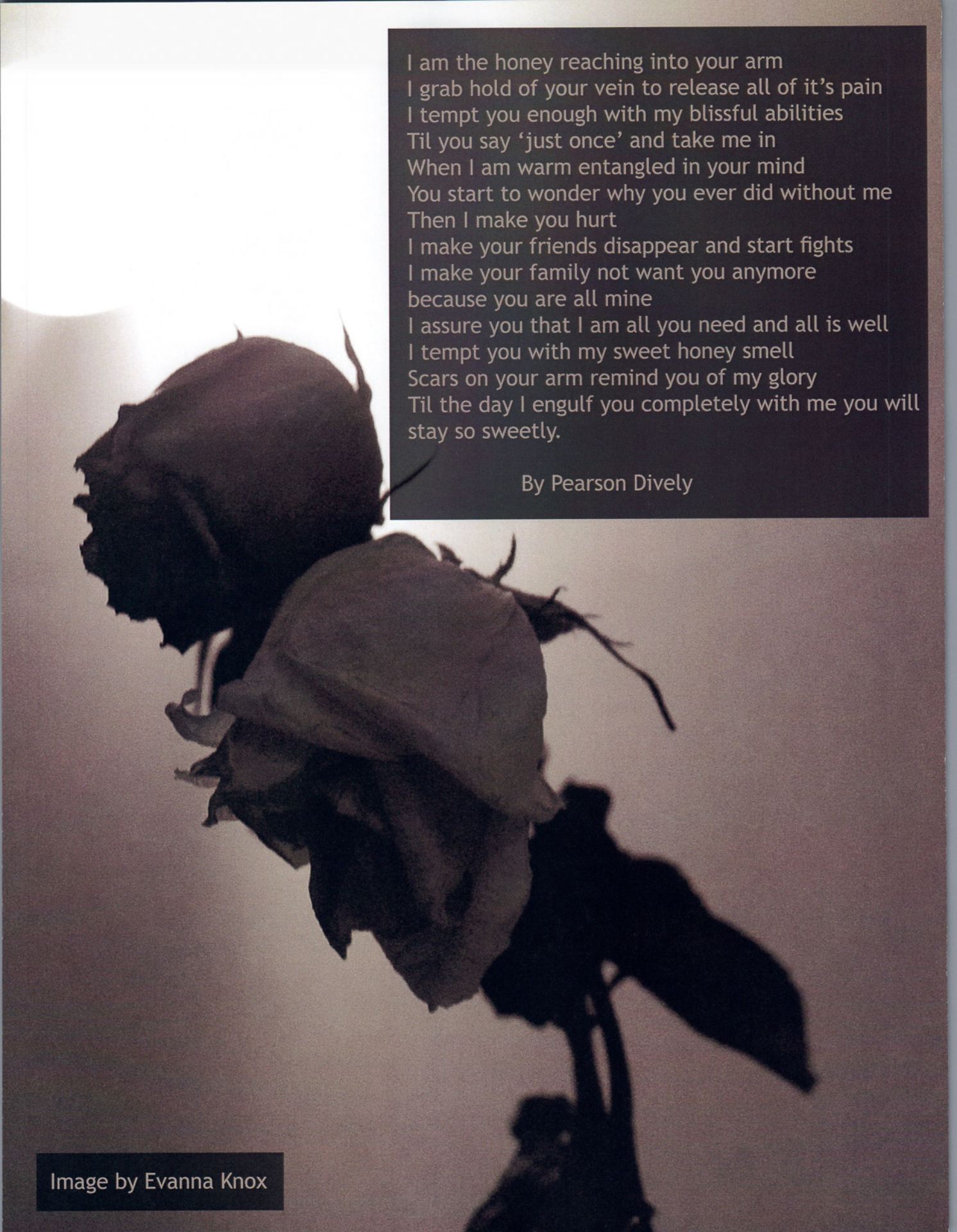
“Jerry is, at first, a manifestation of Juno’s fears, but later on becomes more of a self-reflection. He showed a part of her that she wasn’t sure about.” During the dialogue between the two, Juno acts aggressively toward Jerry, pushing away his kind words by claiming he knows nothing about her life. Right as he begins to leave, however, Juno enters into a new state of awareness.

“She doesn’t like being told what to do, so she doesn’t relate to organized religion. Her own god is the nature around her because it is easier to connect to... her hymns are her humming to herself while she’s cleaning the bayou.” This essentially tells us what moves Juno toward her state of sublimation at the end of the story.

“In the beginning of the story, she thinks she has everything under control. As it moves along, she begins to realize her own mortality. But at this final stage, she comes to terms with the fact that the future is coming and that it is smarter than her, but she knows what she needs to know in order to get what she needs to get done.”

Despite the seemingly conclusive ending, it still raises many questions about how Juno views herself. She has accepted the fact that she is comparatively small in terms of the world around her – just a “Bayou Baby”. Yet, at the same time, she claims to have transcended into a state of omniscience when she is with “her own God” in the bayou. “When I was coming up with the title, I was between Bayou Baby and Superhero. Part of her feels like a baby and part of her feels like a superhero,” Chloe explains.

And so is the feeling of nearly every teenager as he or she begins to see their future peaking over the horizon - the future that, for so long, was merely a mythical place, occasionally manifested in warnings from parents and teachers. While our own waters may be murky, Juno shows us that we all have our own nets to keep on pushing through – even if it feels as though something still always gets stuck.



I am the honey reaching into your arm
I grab hold of your vein to release all of it's pain
I tempt you enough with my blissful abilities
Til you say 'just once' and take me in
When I am warm entangled in your mind
You start to wonder why you ever did without me
Then I make you hurt
I make your friends disappear and start fights
I make your family not want you anymore
because you are all mine
I assure you that I am all you need and all is well
I tempt you with my sweet honey smell
Scars on your arm remind you of my glory
Til the day I engulf you completely with me you will
stay so sweetly.

By Pearson Dively



Image by Abby Hamilton

24 Hour Drawings

The art 4 class undertook a project this year in which they dedicated 24 total hours to work on a single drawing using only Sharpie.

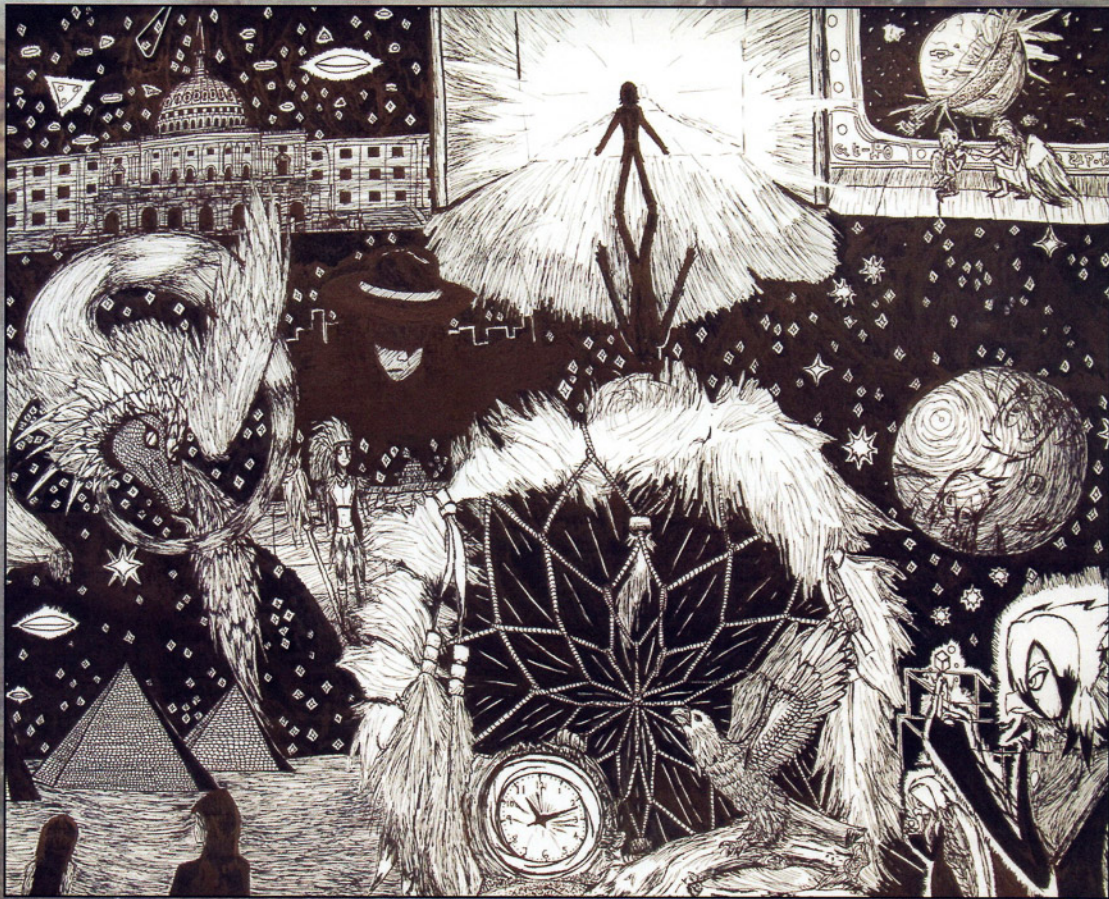


Above: Raphael Thomas

Opposite Page

Top: Rodolfo Navorio

Bottom: Halden Fraley



Alexandra Lemke



Catherine Beall



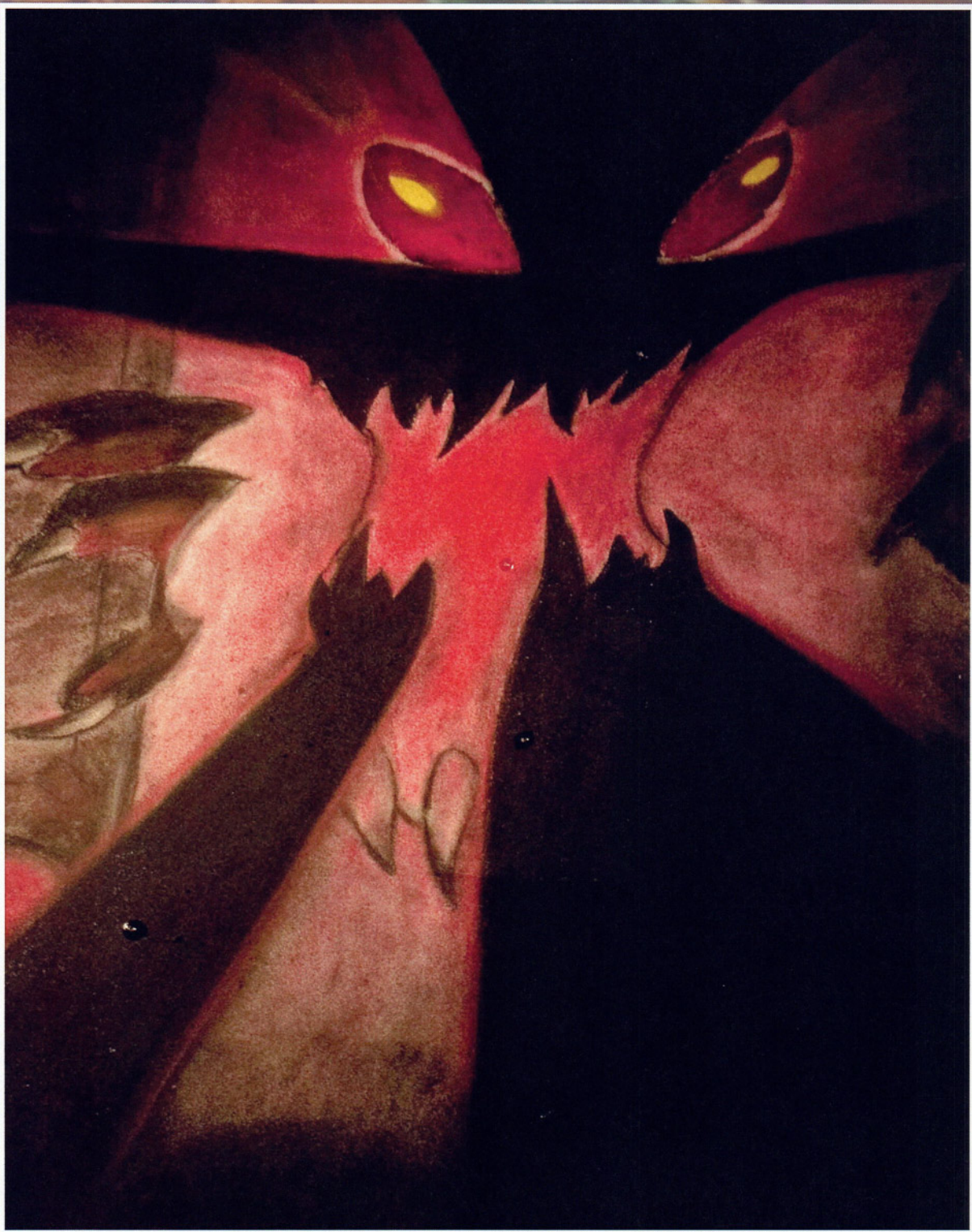
Kiri Spiotta

Ayanna Burnside

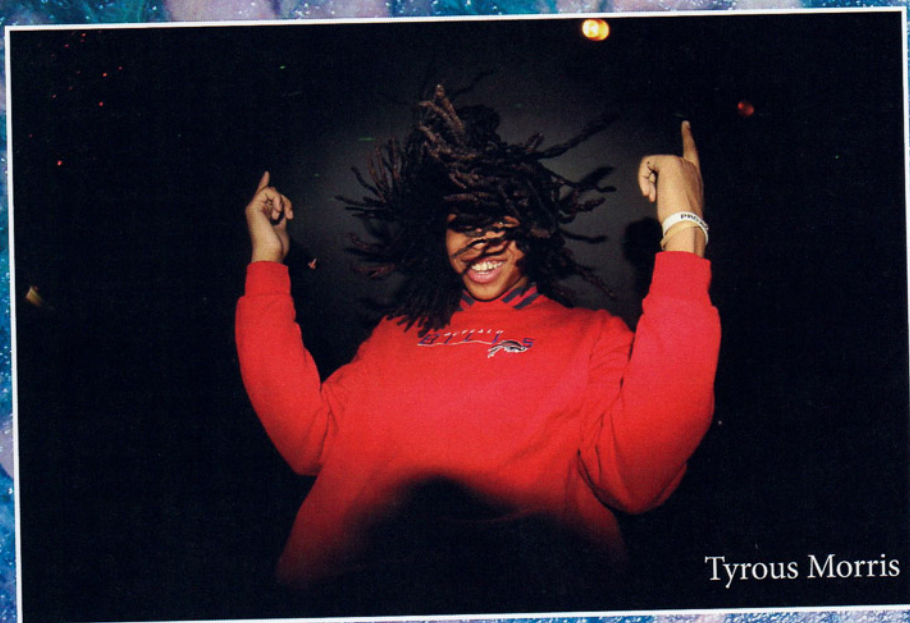


Avery Weaver





Art by Halden Fraley



Tyrous Morris



Ricky Neal

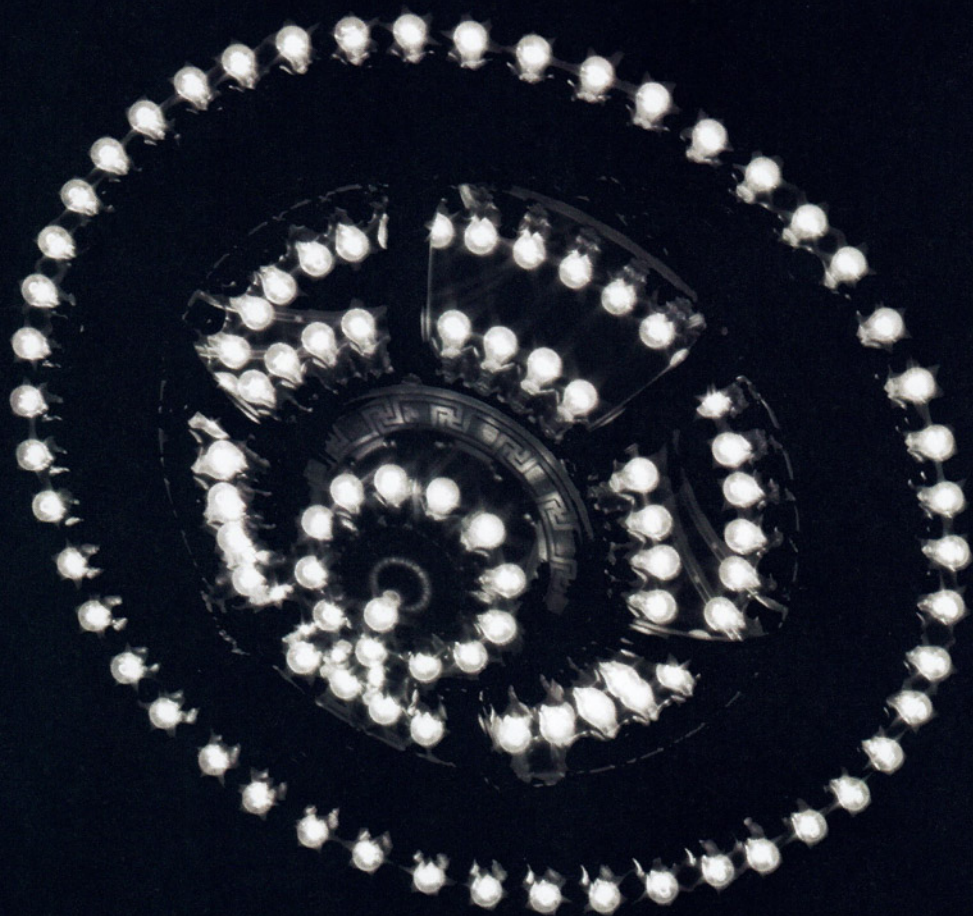


Ari Harbin



Ari Harbin

Alexis Judd

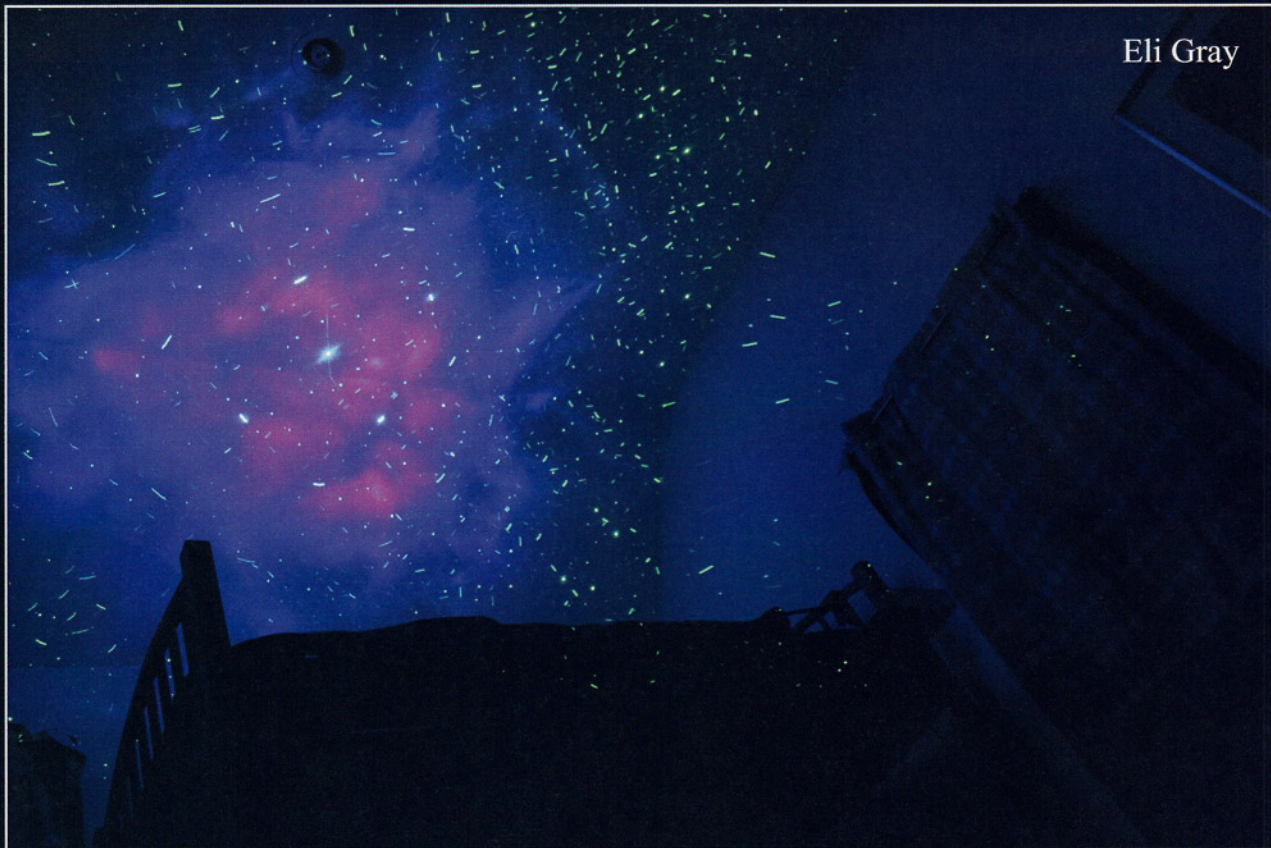


Tyrous Morris



Background Image by Tyrous Morris

Eli Gray

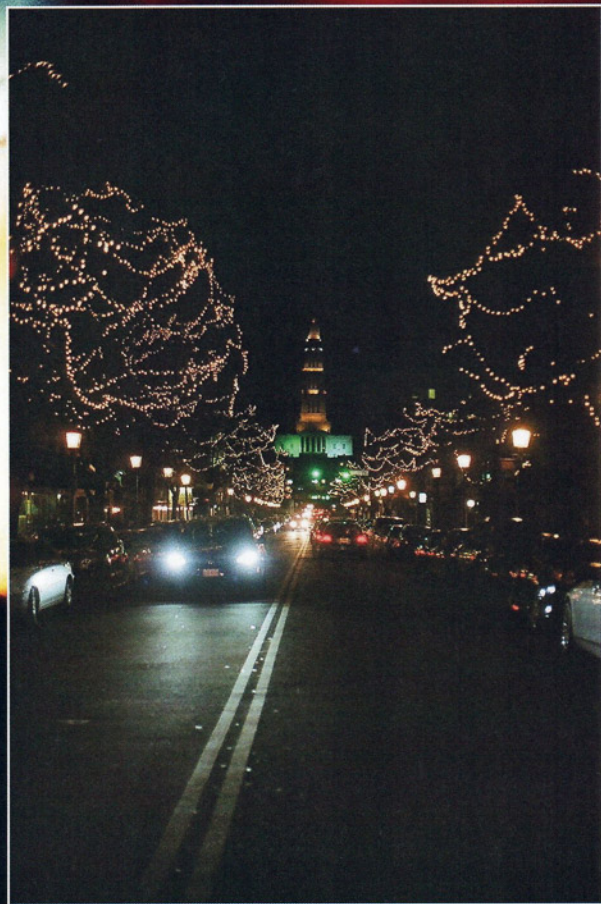
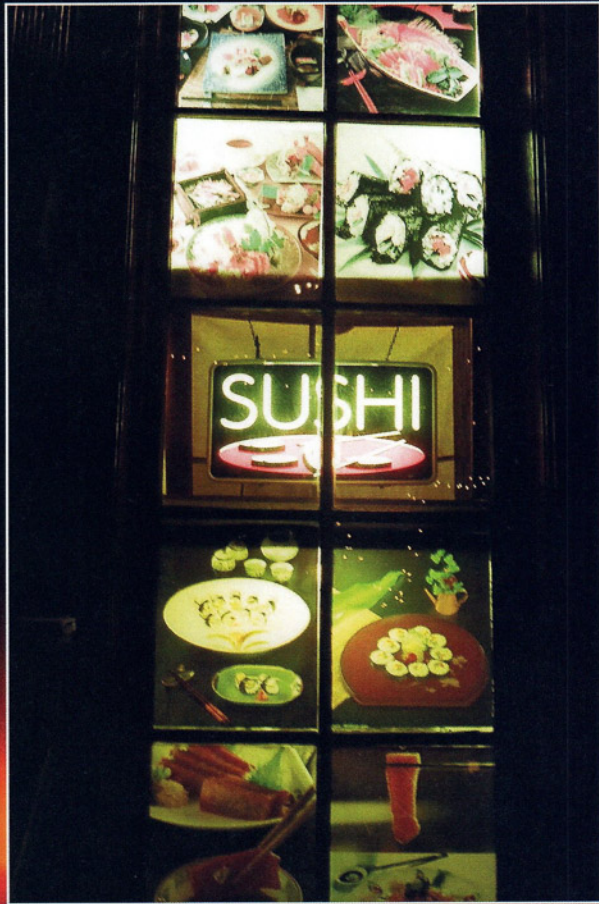
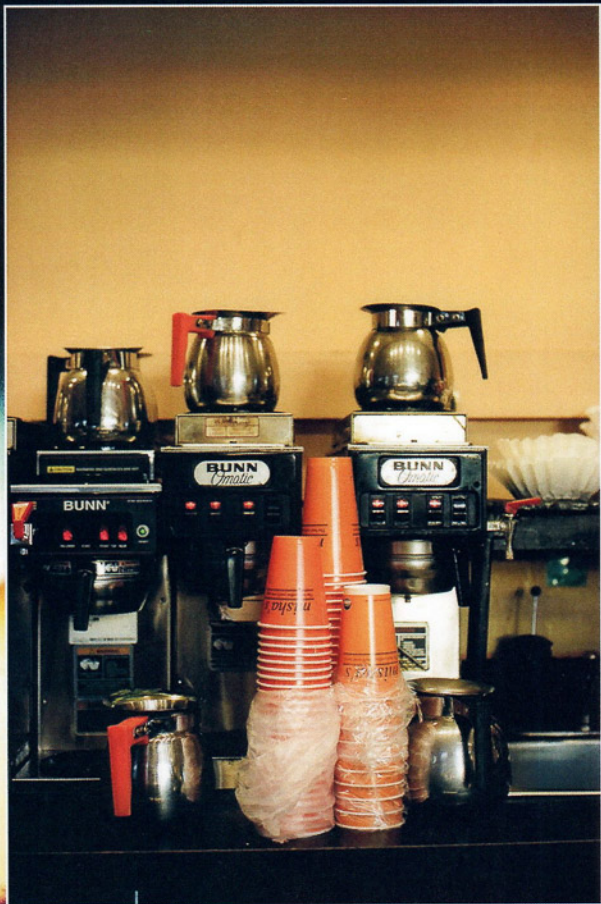


Alexis Judd



Evelyn Amaya







Aurora

By Rachael Vannatta

Echoes of color are projected in the stark white room, shades of ruby and blush dance across the walls. A lone shape resides in the center of the space, hovering slightly above the white tile floor, a single multi-faceted heart. The color bleaches from the soul of the heart, weakening its foundations, but making it unique. Save for the color, the object is symmetrical, repetition, over and over and over, rotating on an invisible axis round and round and round. Merely existing, simply living, beating. A thump, thump reverberates throughout the contours of the room, seemingly from an external source, but felt in the core, continually hammering, even tempo, striking nothing by air, forever a song heard by no one, a beauty never experienced. The room shimmers, a fairy's wings on a bright day. Lines blurring with each beat, the room seen through water. Everything quivers, tremors unseen, unfelt. The heart, an arrow poised to be shot, shuddering with vigor. Tremors traveling to its center, miniscule fissures begin adorning the interior, a spider web of cracks, capillaries in a bloodstream, rivers winding throughout a land, a nest of snakes keeping warm for the winter. Infectious splits, traveling through colors, blush to scarlet, cracking the exterior, breaking the façade, shards of light reaching out, its tendrils caressing the expanse of the space, exploring, projecting faint glimmers of color. The heart sinks, a microscopic drop. The pulse is swift. Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump. An erratic rhythm, a conductor unable to control his choir, faster, faster, bothersome and uncontrollable. The uproar silences, a thousand lions tamed with a single whip. The heart clashes to the ground and shatters into a billion hard crystal pieces. Scattered across the floor, they reflect brilliant shades of pink and crimson, patterns dancing on the clean white wall, blood in a crime scene. Nothing stirs. The emptiness, the lack of noise is prominent throughout the room. Beauty destroyed, beauty created, the aurora borealis contained in a definite space.

RUBBER ROOM

BY CRACK DUNN

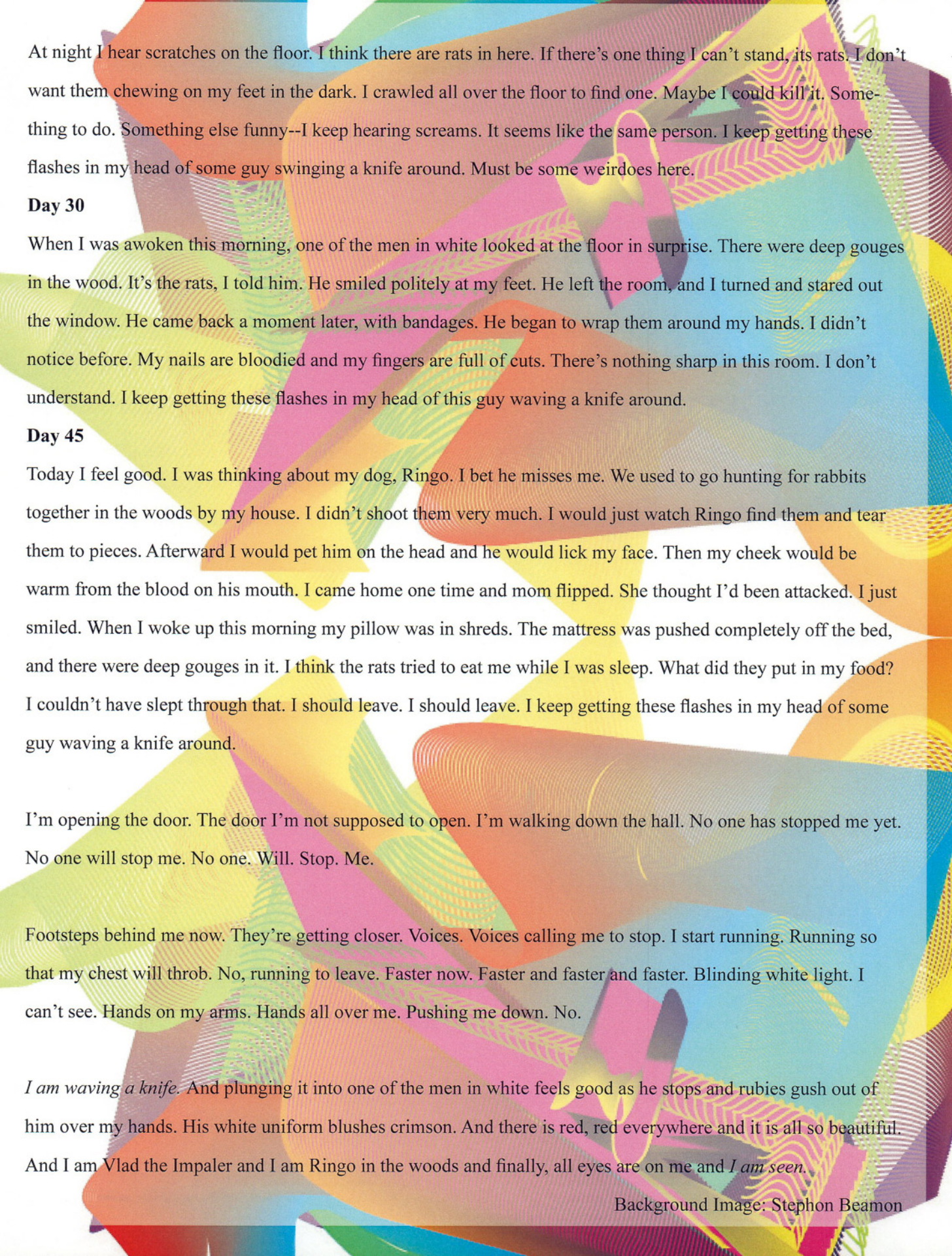
Day 1

It's nice here. The food is okay, but I could go for some pizza. Nice. Nice. I'm sure you're nice too. I'm Christopher Copen. They told me to write to someone, so I don't think too much. I don't really know what they mean. Thinking is good. That's all I ever did at college. Think. It was the end of sophomore year when I left. I think what I miss most are the books. Like ones about Vlad the Impaler. Man, he was a cool guy. All those different ways he could kill people, you know? All the fear of him. I think people are afraid of me too. They don't really look at me. They look to the side of me or through me. I always sit alone at lunch. People part like the red sea when I walk by. I looked at my reflection in the window a little while ago (no mirrors in this room). It was a little hard to see myself. Like I was going to blink out in a second. Or maybe it was the bars on the window. I have shaggy, mousy brown hair. Blue eyes. My mother never liked them much because they remind her too much of dad. He left when I was too little to know him. I'm lean, but not too muscly. I don't like those muscly types. So what is it people are scared of? I'm not exactly physically imposing. I keep getting these flashes in my head of some guy swinging a knife around. The other guy in the room looks frightened. He's kinda on the floor cowering back against a dresser. I think it's from a nightmare I keep having. I think slasher guys are cool though. They don't use guns. Guns are too fast. The guy on the floor should get it together. Why can't he defend himself? He's much bigger than the guy with the knife. Then the nightmare ends and all I see is this white light. Not in my head. I actually can't see for a second. Okay. I'm going to bed. Not much to do around here with no books and all.

Day 14

I can't leave my room. I want to. It feels almost dangerous to leave. But boring staying here. All the more reason. I want to go for a run. The kind of run that leaves me feeling so exhausted I just want to sit on the ground and put my head between my knees, clutching my throbbing chest. I wish I at least had some music or something. Nirvana. The kind of music you break things to.

Mom hasn't visited once since I've been here. I don't get why. She hasn't even written me or anything. I feel lonely. The people who bring my food don't look at me either. They smile at the floor so politely. It's insulting. Why can't someone just see me? I keep getting these flashes in my head of some guy swinging a knife around.



At night I hear scratches on the floor. I think there are rats in here. If there's one thing I can't stand, it's rats. I don't want them chewing on my feet in the dark. I crawled all over the floor to find one. Maybe I could kill it. Something to do. Something else funny--I keep hearing screams. It seems like the same person. I keep getting these flashes in my head of some guy swinging a knife around. Must be some weirdoes here.

Day 30

When I was awoken this morning, one of the men in white looked at the floor in surprise. There were deep gouges in the wood. It's the rats, I told him. He smiled politely at my feet. He left the room, and I turned and stared out the window. He came back a moment later, with bandages. He began to wrap them around my hands. I didn't notice before. My nails are bloodied and my fingers are full of cuts. There's nothing sharp in this room. I don't understand. I keep getting these flashes in my head of this guy waving a knife around.

Day 45

Today I feel good. I was thinking about my dog, Ringo. I bet he misses me. We used to go hunting for rabbits together in the woods by my house. I didn't shoot them very much. I would just watch Ringo find them and tear them to pieces. Afterward I would pet him on the head and he would lick my face. Then my cheek would be warm from the blood on his mouth. I came home one time and mom flipped. She thought I'd been attacked. I just smiled. When I woke up this morning my pillow was in shreds. The mattress was pushed completely off the bed, and there were deep gouges in it. I think the rats tried to eat me while I was sleep. What did they put in my food? I couldn't have slept through that. I should leave. I should leave. I keep getting these flashes in my head of some guy waving a knife around.

I'm opening the door. The door I'm not supposed to open. I'm walking down the hall. No one has stopped me yet. No one will stop me. No one. Will. Stop. Me.

Footsteps behind me now. They're getting closer. Voices. Voices calling me to stop. I start running. Running so that my chest will throb. No, running to leave. Faster now. Faster and faster and faster. Blinding white light. I can't see. Hands on my arms. Hands all over me. Pushing me down. No.

I am waving a knife. And plunging it into one of the men in white feels good as he stops and rubies gush out of him over my hands. His white uniform blushes crimson. And there is red, red everywhere and it is all so beautiful. And I am Vlad the Impaler and I am Ringo in the woods and finally, all eyes are on me and *I am seen.*

INTERVIEW WITH THE WRITER GRACE DUNN



1) How long have you been interested in writing?

I have enjoyed writing for a very long time. My love for writing probably spawns from my adoration of books. I think I first became aware I was somewhat good at writing last year in English, when I genuinely enjoyed writing essays for that class. I like thinking critically about things. And I think a person's writing says a lot about them and deeply reflects who they are.

2) What was the inspiration for your short story, "Rubber Room"?

"Rubber Room" probably originated from my curiosity about mental disease I had some time ago. During that time, I read *The Bell Jar*, *Shutter Island*, and some of Sylvia Plath's memoirs from her journals that were published posthumously. I also read *The Yellow Wallpaper* during this period. I wanted to try my hand at a story involving an unreliable narrator.

3) Of the works that you've submitted to Labyrinth, do you have a particular favorite? If so, why?

My favorite is most likely "A Disturbing Retreat". I wrote it about an abandoned house that I found when I visited Hollins University one summer. I went to a two week camp there, and I was taking a photography class. Everything about the house was very aesthetic and visually dynamic.

4) Who are some of your favorite writers and why?

Chuck Palahniuk, the author of *Fight Club*, is one of my favorites because he always has offbeat characters who lead miserable lives of quiet desperation, and his novels generally have fantastic twist endings. I enjoy Truman Capote for *In Cold Blood*, because he challenged my morals and made me realize I could never support capital punishment—he made me sympathize with a murderer. I like John Green is a great author because he creates relatable characters with senses of humor that weather them through their realistic, sometimes life changing problems. I have nostalgia for The Bartimaeus Trilogy, written by Jonathan Stroud—it's about magicians in London whose servants are demons. And I could never fail to mention J.K. Rowling, because she fostered my love of reading and filled my head with dreams.

5) In general, what themes do you most enjoy to explore in your writing?

I think I like realistic fictional situations. The closer I am to a character, the more convincingly I can write about their circumstances.

6) What are your 3 favorite words?

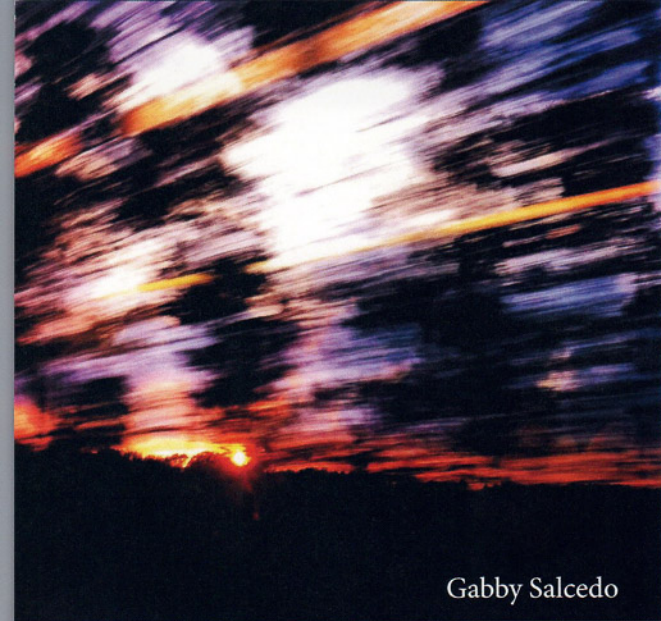
Porcelain, Intrinsic, Labyrinthine

7) Do you plan on pursuing writing after high school, whether it be in college, as a career, or just on the side?

I am going to become an English major with a minor in communications. I hope to become a journalist after college.







Gabby Salcedo

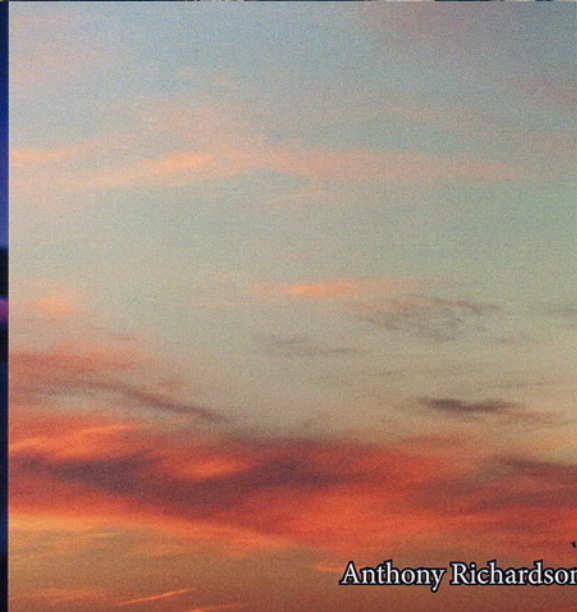


Alexandra Gulya

Conrado Castro



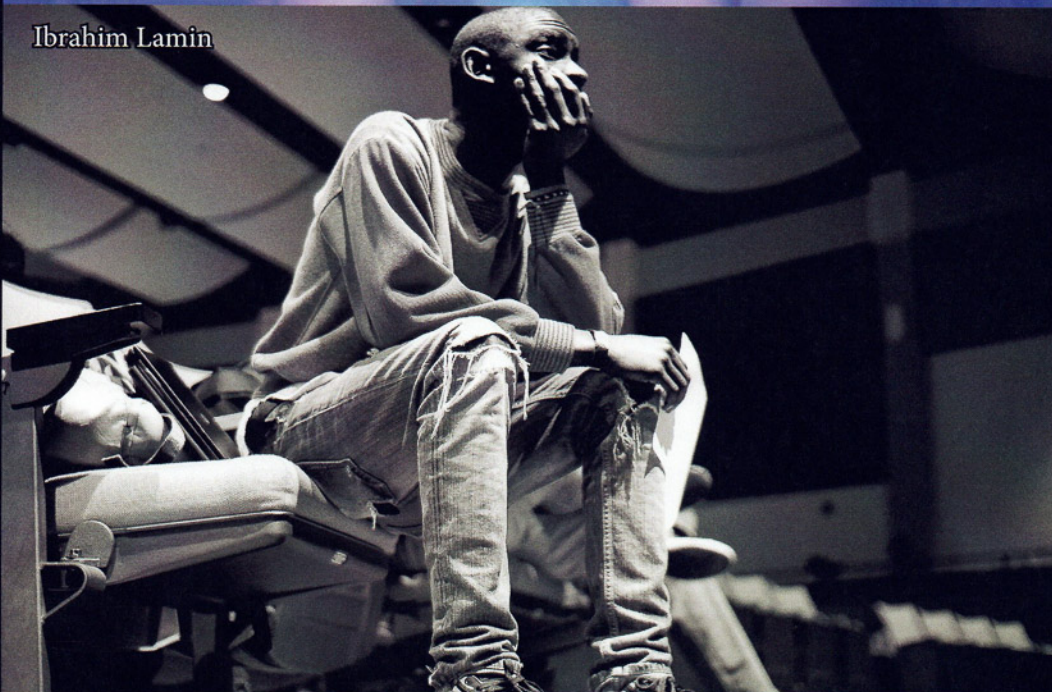
Emma Bartley



Anthony Richardson



Emma Bartley



Ibrahim Lamin



Lia Niabauer

A Few Moments

by Emily Schulman

Your name is R-Cubed and you're staring a pile of unpeeled potatoes in the face. If you want to get technical (and who are you kidding, you always do), your legally recognized name is Rick Rex Reynolds and you are merely gazing upon the potatoes which are resting on the counter of your small apartment kitchen.

You have been waiting for them to be peeled for the better part of an hour and given the sudden disappearance of your partner in crime (though, he's more your partner in talking about doing things that are kind of not legal and then going off and doing them by himself), it looks like you're going to have to do this job alone. You've been trying to teach him how to cook anything other than curry. It's fantastic, but if you don't want curry every night for a week then you have to make dinner sometimes.

You set your laptop down on the wooden chair in front of the couch. It is there for that very purpose because the last thing you need is the heat from your laptop setting something on fire. You walk the short distance to the kitchen with as much annoyance as you can manage. Sometimes you wonder why you even bother with Less-Three. The story behind his nickname is considerably more complex than yours, though it's about as stupid. However, he enjoys telling people why your nicknames are what they are and you like indulging him if only to see his face light up when he explains it.

You'll do a lot to see his entire expression change like that

If you really want to start thinking about why you bother with him, then you're going to have to go down a long list of things you like about him and that's just going to kill your slightly bad mood. You want to keep it going for a few more minutes just to remind yourself that you can get into them over things that aren't coding. You rummage through the drawer, find the potato peeler, and begin peeling.

Thirty minutes later, you have a pot of potatoes on to boil and are settling back down with your laptop. Less-Three has complained that you spend more time with your machine than you do with your boyfriend, but you're pretty sure he doesn't mind too much. Besides, your relationship with your laptop is completely platonic. You open up your IM window and send Less-Three a message.

<R3>: Hey, <3. Where are you? Dinner's going to be ready soon.

You minimize the window and go back to searching the internet for a set of lock picks that you can give to Less-Three for his birthday. Just because you can pick locks doesn't mean that he shouldn't learn so he can stop waking you up at three-thirty in the morning to help him break into some abandoned building. You're always afraid that you're going to be caught for breaking and entering and he always says that you aren't doing any breaking and you never enter anyway. You're always the one standing outside the steam tunnels telling Less-Three that whatever he's doing is a terrible idea while he runs on ahead because it's an adventure.

<LessThan3>: heeey im out w/ some people

<LessThan3>: when you need me back?

<R3>: /sigh

<R3>: Why don't you ever tell me when you're leaving?

<R3>: Dinner's in like half an hour.

<LessThan3>: sorry :(

<LessThan3>: ::hug?::

<R3>: /hug

<R3>: Are you going to be at dinner?

<LessThan3>: yeah! just give me a bit to get back to your place, ok?

<R3>: Okay.

<R3>: I love you.

<LessThan3>: ich liebe dich! :)

<R3>: Potatoes are done boiling, got to go.

<LessThan3>: ok

<LessThan3>: love you

<R3>: Love you.

Twenty minutes later, you have a bowl of mashed potatoes and are still waiting for Less-Three to show up. Sometimes you think that you need to put an RFID tag on him or something, like they do with wolves they release into the wild. Of course, you do have to give him a bit of slack because you told him half an hour and it hasn't quite been that long yet, but the mashed potatoes are going to get cold.

<R3>: Dinner is ready.

<LessThan3>: im almost there!

<LessThan3>: just give me a few more minutes

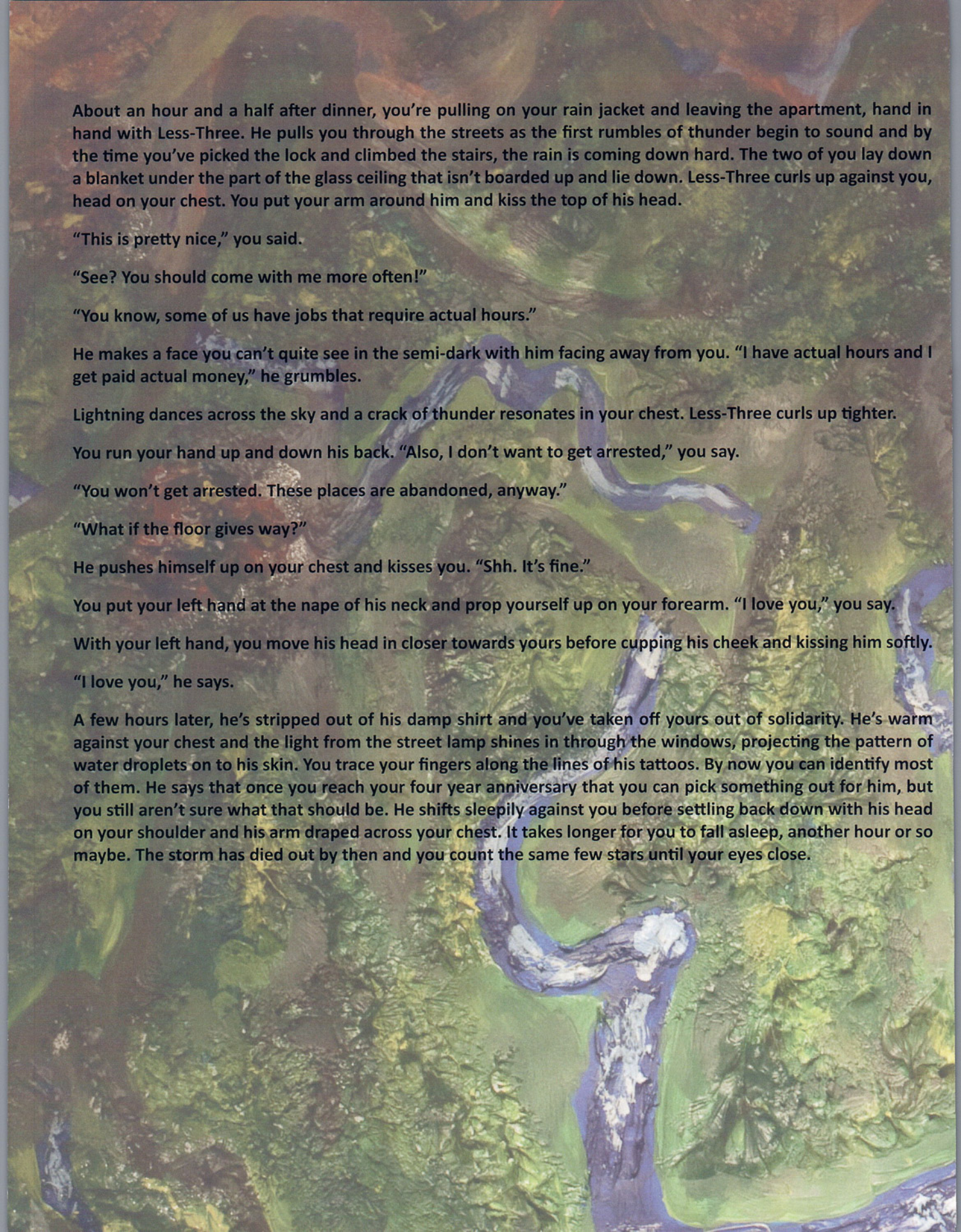
You hear the click of the door opening and Less-Three comes in. His shirt is smudged with dirt and his hair is damp, but he's smiling.

"It's raining pretty hard out there," he says, dumping his bag near the door and kicking off his shoes. He closes the door with his shoulder and goes to fix himself a plate of potatoes. "There's supposed to be a huge thunderstorm later. Hey, there's this really cool abandoned building and there's a glassed in top floor! It's mostly not broken. Do you want to come?"

You hesitate for a bit before answering. You don't like his breaking and entering tendencies but he's always asking if you want to come along and hey, you could do with a bit of adventure.

"Yeah, I'll come along," you say.

Less-Three is in charge of packing your bags. You spend your time making sure the storm is actually going to hit and trying not to think about all the dangers that could lie in an abandoned building.



About an hour and a half after dinner, you're pulling on your rain jacket and leaving the apartment, hand in hand with Less-Three. He pulls you through the streets as the first rumbles of thunder begin to sound and by the time you've picked the lock and climbed the stairs, the rain is coming down hard. The two of you lay down a blanket under the part of the glass ceiling that isn't boarded up and lie down. Less-Three curls up against you, head on your chest. You put your arm around him and kiss the top of his head.

"This is pretty nice," you said.

"See? You should come with me more often!"

"You know, some of us have jobs that require actual hours."

He makes a face you can't quite see in the semi-dark with him facing away from you. "I have actual hours and I get paid actual money," he grumbles.

Lightning dances across the sky and a crack of thunder resonates in your chest. Less-Three curls up tighter.

You run your hand up and down his back. "Also, I don't want to get arrested," you say.

"You won't get arrested. These places are abandoned, anyway."

"What if the floor gives way?"

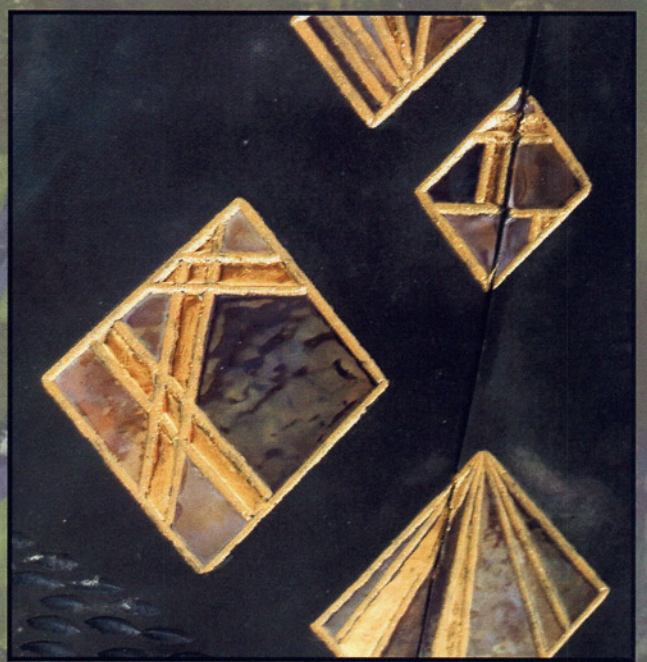
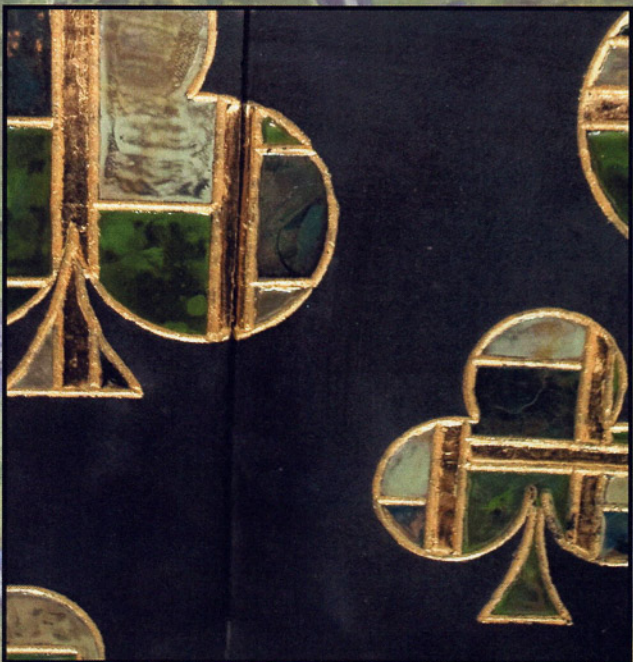
He pushes himself up on your chest and kisses you. "Shh. It's fine."

You put your left hand at the nape of his neck and prop yourself up on your forearm. "I love you," you say.

With your left hand, you move his head in closer towards yours before cupping his cheek and kissing him softly.

"I love you," he says.

A few hours later, he's stripped out of his damp shirt and you've taken off yours out of solidarity. He's warm against your chest and the light from the street lamp shines in through the windows, projecting the pattern of water droplets on to his skin. You trace your fingers along the lines of his tattoos. By now you can identify most of them. He says that once you reach your four year anniversary that you can pick something out for him, but you still aren't sure what that should be. He shifts sleepily against you before settling back down with his head on your shoulder and his arm draped across your chest. It takes longer for you to fall asleep, another hour or so maybe. The storm has died out by then and you count the same few stars until your eyes close.



Catherine Beall

The background of the page features several large, dark, smudged fingerprints. One prominent fingerprint is on the left side, with its ridge lines clearly visible. Another is at the top center, and a third is on the right side. The fingerprints are dark brown or black, contrasting with the light beige background.

A Disturbing Retreat

by Grace Dunn

It was an aged, white clapboard house
A place that time had ravaged
The roof was barely intact;
Jagged pieces laced together

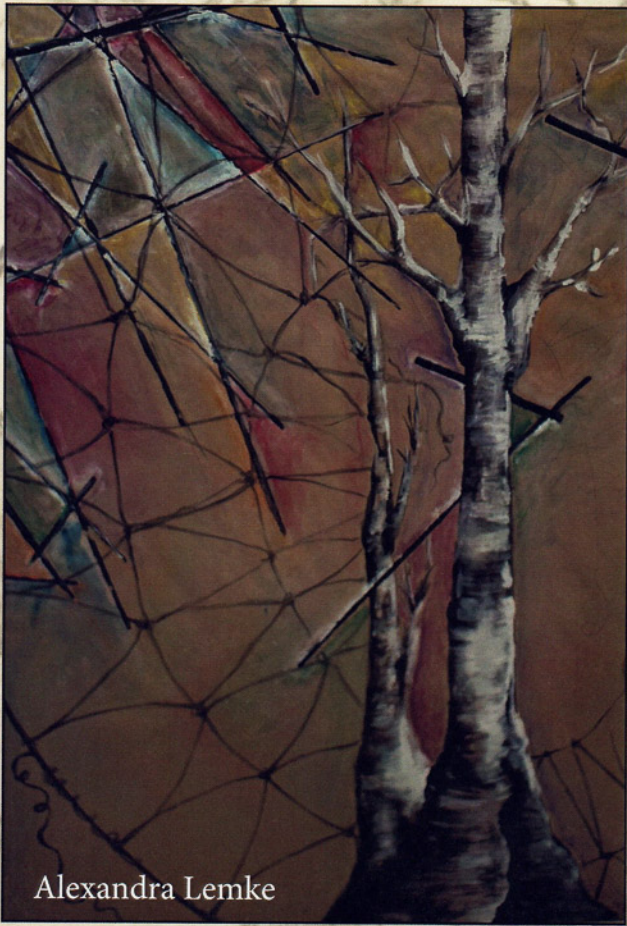
Wretchedly supporting each other
Like some twisted ribcage
The old wooden piano on the porch
Still played a melancholy tune

Overgrown with weeds and vines
The dwelling was a testament
To nature overcoming man
And time overcoming all

The bedroom was poetry itself
An empty frame
And a stained mattress
As if suddenly left by two disconsolate lovers

I climbed the tilting stairs and
I stole a book from this place
I ran my thumb over the worn pages
And wondered:

How will time change me?
How will time change me?
How will time change me?

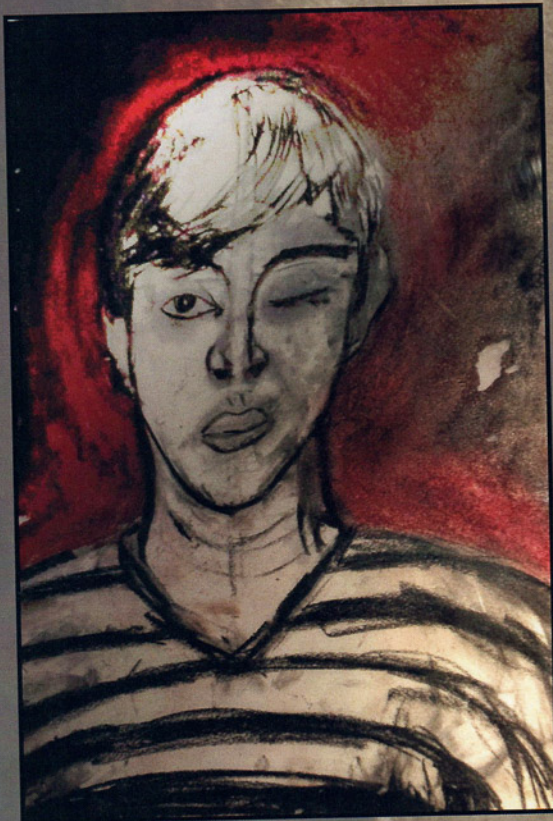


Alexandra Lemke



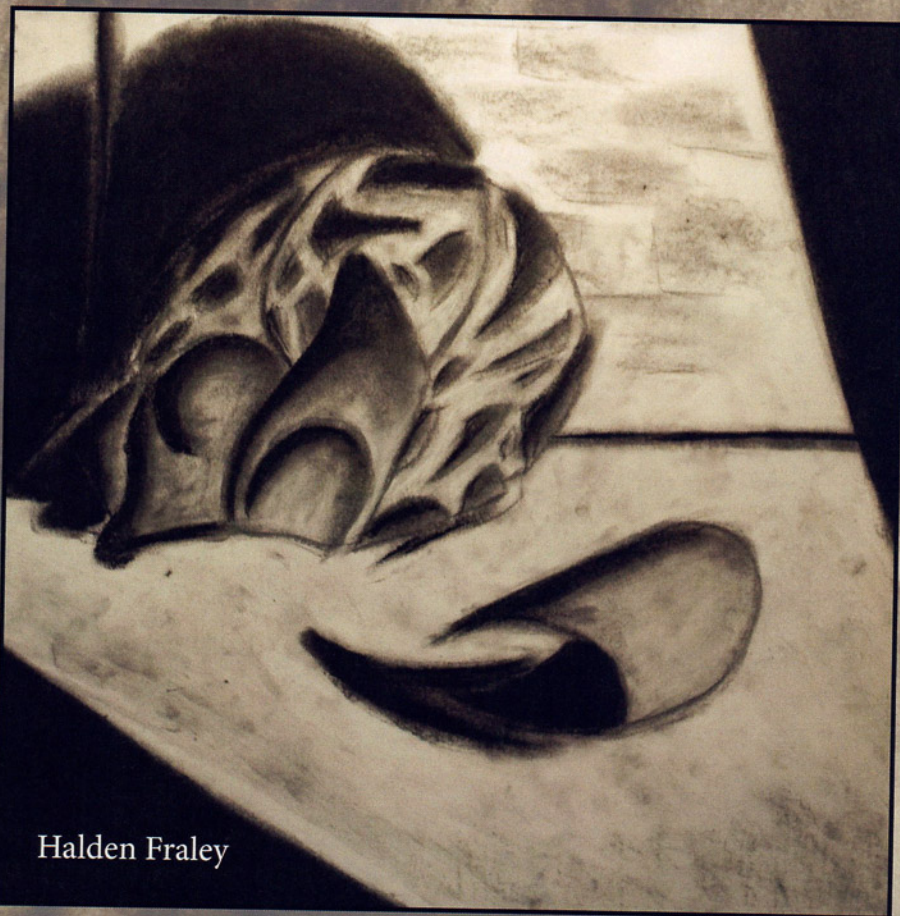
Cindy Ramirez

Michaela Japiec



Oscar Martinez

Alexandra Lemke



Halden Fraley



Oscar Martinez



Alexandra Lemke

GPS (GUIDE TO PERSONAL SALVATION) BY CONRADO MULUC

A wise man once stood
In front of a crowd of a hundred and more
With a fearless impression
Coming from the blood in his eye
And spoke, with a voice
Capable of leading any Nation stating that
"Education is our passport to the future,
for tomorrow
Belongs to the people, who prepare for it today."
I've always believed this to be true
Because to me
True Liberation of any people
Begins with the turning of a forgotten page
Where every complete sentence or equation written with permanent ink
Guides your existence
Closer
To the type of Equality
Scarcely seen in the darkest crevices
Of a dysfunctional family
When I hear
"No child left behind"
I reflect upon the hard-headed & younger me
The trials and tribulations
That fabricated me, to be Free
Yet I've never viewed a good education
To merely be hours of informative lectures
My mother taught me better than that
Instead, I've always envisioned it as far-reaching GPS
Guiding me, to my Personal Salvation

IMAGE BY CONRADO MULUC





FAMILY

BY ALEJANDRO CRUZ-L

Does anyone here know about dream interpretation?

I would check online but I'm kind of weary of their vague "accuracy." That and I guess I would prefer some human insight...

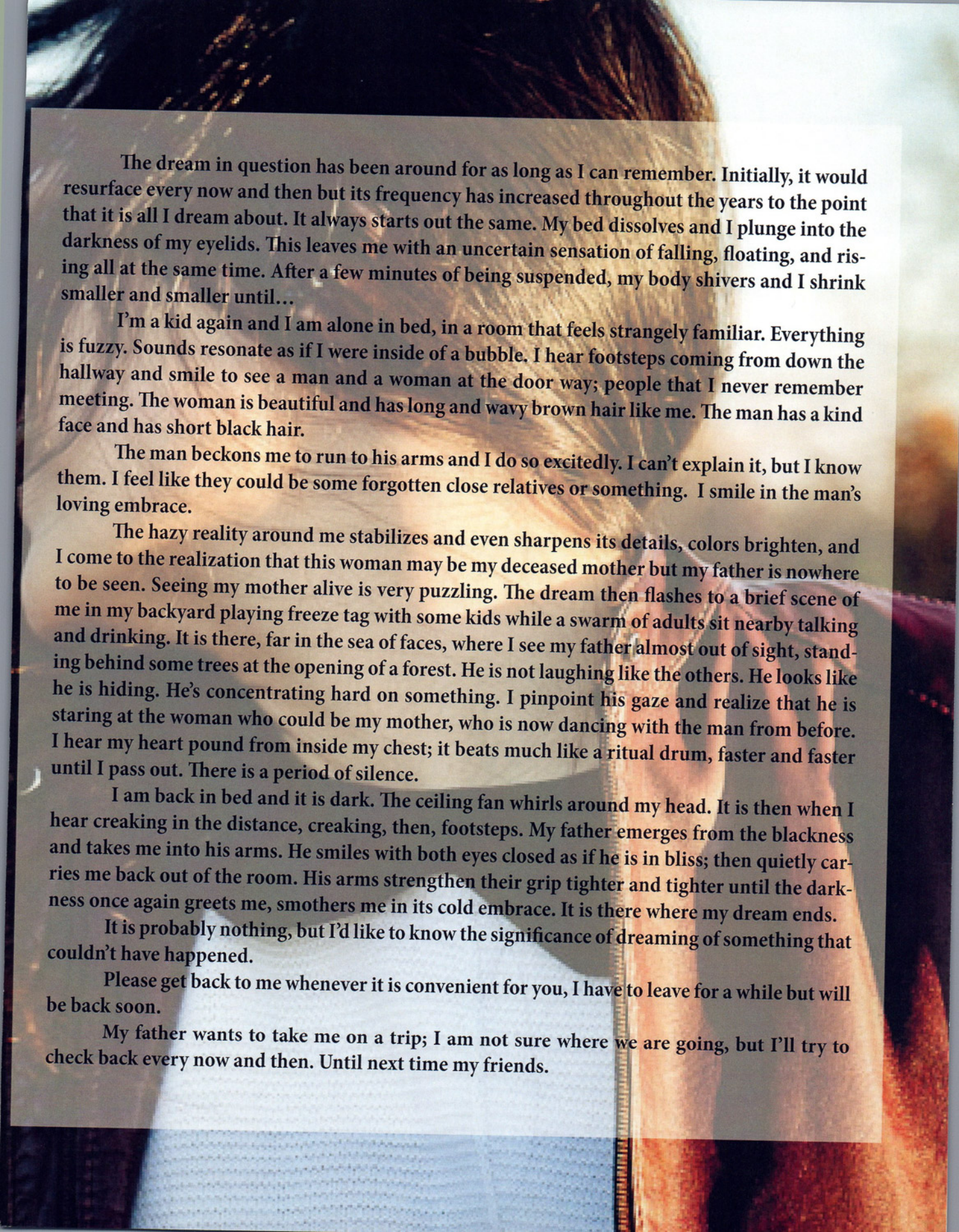
There has been one reoccurring dream that has followed me throughout my childhood. As a New Year's Resolution, of sorts, I'd like to make some sense of it, rather than just putting it out of my mind like my father tells me to. He says dreams are just bursts of random sensations and that they hold no weight in the world around us. I want to believe he is right, but my dream seems too structured to be ignored. It frightens me and leaves me with unshakable feelings of apprehension and premonition. I would greatly appreciate anyone's help to make sense of it all.

Before I begin, I think it would be appropriate for a little background as it might help you understand why my dream is so strange.

I am an only child. My mother died in childbirth; this left my father the sole responsibility of providing for me. God, I wish I had known more about her. According to what my father says, she was undoubtedly the most beautiful woman he had ever known. He says I have inherited most of her features which probably explains why I look almost nothing like him. My father is a very big man and the strongest person I've ever known. I have a faint memory of him pushing a tree down with his bare hands, though looking back now it was probably the product of a young and overactive imagination. Sometimes I have a hard time telling the two apart, dreams and memories...

My father is actually a very affectionate man. He often holds me like he did back when I was young. This may seem a bit weird to some, being that I am now 18 years old, but I never really saw anything strange about a father still wanting to cradle his child. I guess, in his eyes, I will always be his little boy.

He is also very overprotective of me. He limits where I go and how long I stay there. The fact that I am seldom allowed to spend time with friends causes any possible relationship outside of home to fade quickly. When I ask about my cousins, aunts and uncles, my father's responses often vary from "Oh, we lost contact." to "Who cares?" depending on whether or not he's sober at the time. Needless to say I was often very lonely growing up. Maybe this is what has led to the crazy thoughts I've been having lately.



The dream in question has been around for as long as I can remember. Initially, it would resurface every now and then but its frequency has increased throughout the years to the point that it is all I dream about. It always starts out the same. My bed dissolves and I plunge into the darkness of my eyelids. This leaves me with an uncertain sensation of falling, floating, and rising all at the same time. After a few minutes of being suspended, my body shivers and I shrink smaller and smaller until...

I'm a kid again and I am alone in bed, in a room that feels strangely familiar. Everything is fuzzy. Sounds resonate as if I were inside of a bubble. I hear footsteps coming from down the hallway and smile to see a man and a woman at the door way; people that I never remember meeting. The woman is beautiful and has long and wavy brown hair like me. The man has a kind face and has short black hair.

The man beckons me to run to his arms and I do so excitedly. I can't explain it, but I know them. I feel like they could be some forgotten close relatives or something. I smile in the man's loving embrace.

The hazy reality around me stabilizes and even sharpens its details, colors brighten, and I come to the realization that this woman may be my deceased mother but my father is nowhere to be seen. Seeing my mother alive is very puzzling. The dream then flashes to a brief scene of me in my backyard playing freeze tag with some kids while a swarm of adults sit nearby talking and drinking. It is there, far in the sea of faces, where I see my father almost out of sight, standing behind some trees at the opening of a forest. He is not laughing like the others. He looks like he is hiding. He's concentrating hard on something. I pinpoint his gaze and realize that he is staring at the woman who could be my mother, who is now dancing with the man from before. I hear my heart pound from inside my chest; it beats much like a ritual drum, faster and faster until I pass out. There is a period of silence.

I am back in bed and it is dark. The ceiling fan whirls around my head. It is then when I hear creaking in the distance, creaking, then, footsteps. My father emerges from the blackness and takes me into his arms. He smiles with both eyes closed as if he is in bliss; then quietly carries me back out of the room. His arms strengthen their grip tighter and tighter until the darkness once again greets me, smothers me in its cold embrace. It is there where my dream ends.

It is probably nothing, but I'd like to know the significance of dreaming of something that couldn't have happened.

Please get back to me whenever it is convenient for you, I have to leave for a while but will be back soon.

My father wants to take me on a trip; I am not sure where we are going, but I'll try to check back every now and then. Until next time my friends.



Spread by Ibrahim Lamin



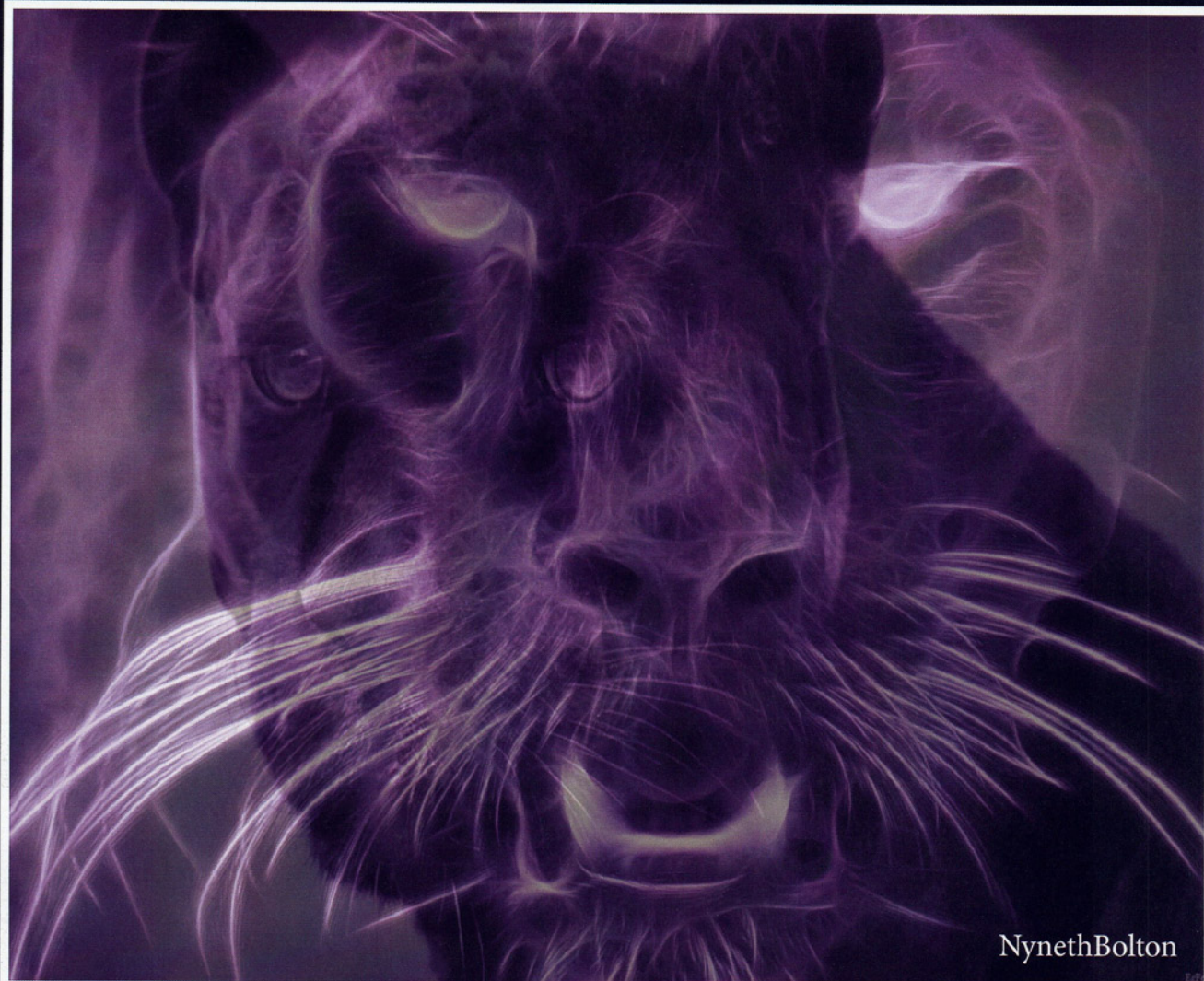




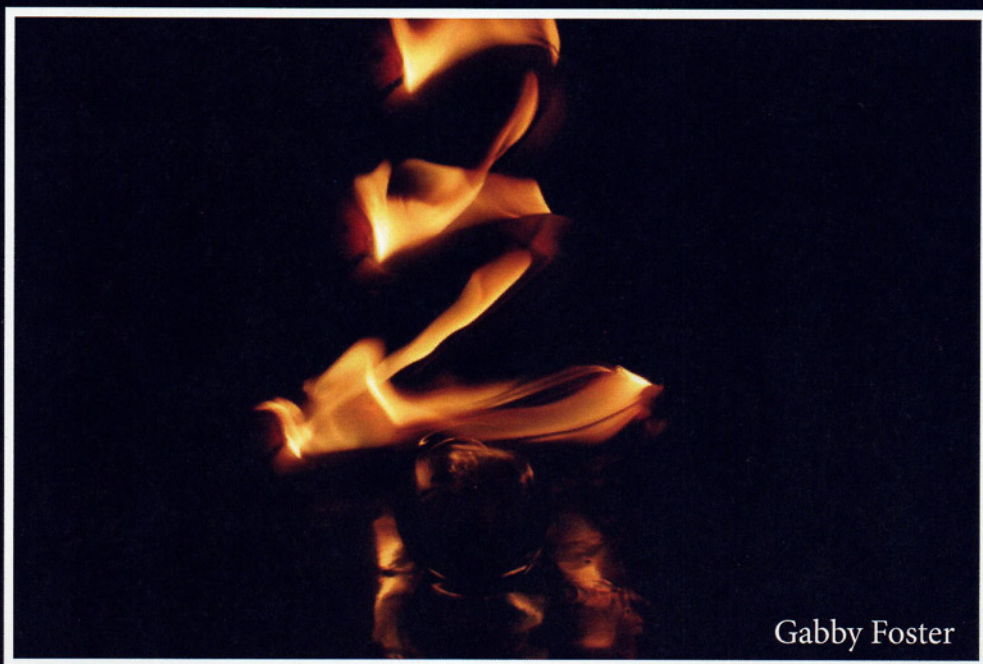
Photos by Henry Anderson



Jacob Tolle



NynethBolton

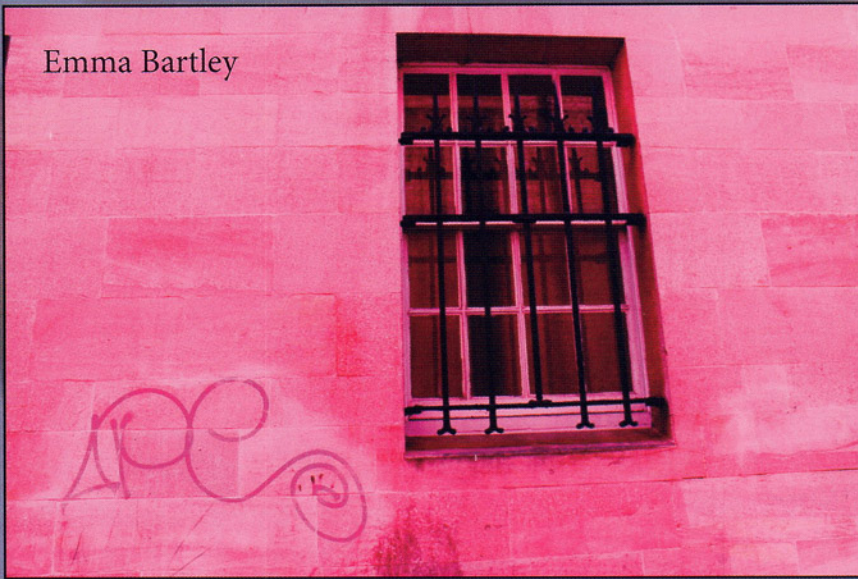


Gabby Foster

Mac Dickson



Emma Bartley



Stephanie S.



Emma Bartley

