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### Instress: A Journal of the Arts, 2009

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**instress 09.43**



Welcome to the 43th edition of *Instress*, Misericordia University's literary magazine. We believe this edition showcases some of the very best literary and artistic efforts created exclusively by Misericordia University students this year. Selected for unique perspectives and universal appeal, this year's magazine includes the whimsical, the darkly enticing, the sublime, the cautious, the funny, and the delicate in poetic form, prose, photography, and art designed to intrigue, entertain, enlighten, and excite. As you glance through the pages, please take a moment to savor the kaleidoscope colors, discover a subliminal message placed here and there, and ponder the author's deeper meaning in a poem or short story. It's all in there, waiting to be uncovered and enjoyed.

We would like to thank Dr. Tom Rehtin for his dedication and sage advice in guiding us in our efforts to put together an exemplary issue of *Instress* for your reading pleasure. We hope you concur.

Open the cover and begin the journey...enjoy!

## 2009 *Instress* Staff

Content Editor  
Deborah A. Higgins

Layout & Design Editor  
Sarah Hite

Copy Readers  
Rachel Hasay  
Rachel Orehotsky  
Stephanie Pellegrino

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Amanda Janiga, back cover and pages 16, 29  
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Rachel Selert, pages 9, 35  
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\*Bob Wilson, pages 23, 45  
Allyson Vaccaro, pages 29, 46, 56  
Kristen Vender, pages 7, 9, 25, 28, 32, 33, 55

\* denotes award-winner

# Awards

## Journey through the Arts: Poetry

Repairs By Margaret Malloy

## Journey through the Arts: Prose

I Sometimes Think of the Sea Chickens By Brian Burd

## Journey through the Arts: Photography/Artwork

Caitlin Bryson, Photography  
Bob Wilson, Artwork

## High School Poetry Contest

### Winners

Doctors and Writers By Amanda Stango; North Pocono High School

Dad By Claire Cummings; North Pocono High School

### Honorable Mentions

Untitled By Adrienna Rowe; G. A. R. High School

Limits: Breaching Them By Ashley Evans; G. A. R. High School

# He Walks

By Christine Brandon

He walks  
He knows not where  
But, he holds back the fear  
The load he carries is dear  
The pieces of glass  
So precious to him  
Some glimmer and are smooth  
Others dig into his skin  
But, all have their value  
So, he walks with them  
The good and bad from everyday  
Within  
His grace is felt  
As the day grows dim  
His walk becomes a swim



Kristen Vender



Paul Ruhnke

And, there he reaches through the veil  
Countless faces smiling back at him  
Ones that he missed for so long  
And feels  
And embraces them all  
Then, the wait  
It starts again  
He waits for those  
He cannot feel or touch  
Those he longs for  
Patiently  
Lovingly  
He waits  
For those who miss his face



# I Sometimes Think of the Sea Chickens

By Brian Burd

I sometimes think of the sea chickens. They live on a small rocky island in the North Atlantic. They are endangered to be sure, but nobody hunts them and there are no predators. They do die of normal stuff and normal stupidity stuff, but their death does not really come up as a topic. They live in a cave in the rocky cliff that is above the ocean which always laps upon the rocks below. They eat bugs and stuff, along with the occasional small ocean creature, but nothing too big. They are about the size of regular chickens, after all, and can't eat big fish or anything. The sea chickens are related to the chickens that we see around here. Sort of cousins. Sea chickens can fly better because their feathers have a kind of latexish finish to them. This helps them fly a little bit farther than normal chickens, but mostly serves to keep them warm in the cold North Atlantic wintertime and allows them a small ability to swim. They all live together and there are some of them, but not lots of them. It's hard to tell how many there are. They are characters though, to be sure.

Crazy Uncle Fester messed himself up one time. He had an urge to try to find the cousins over the ocean. See, they all have this urge, but mostly they know better. But this day, Fester was overwhelmed. He figured that he could get over the whole ocean if he got a running start, jumped real high, and flapped like crazy. He went so far as to try to stick fish scales on his feathers with spit. Well, needless to say, despite his best efforts, he didn't get too awfully far. The problem was that because he got going so high, when he tired, he crashed pretty hard into the ocean below. Now when you see Uncle Fester, his beak is twisted up and to the right and his eyes bulge out pretty badly. The left bulges a bit more than the right, unfortunately. He doesn't act quite right anymore either. No one knows if it was the fall or the fear of the fall, but sometimes he blurts stuff out or just seems to be existing on some separate astral plain than all of the others. Good guy though.

Today, Clem came to mind. He used to be the one that flew out to get bug-dinners when it was really windy. Hard work, for sure. It gets windy by the sea, you know.

Anyway, after a very long while, his little wing muscles got tired and his feathers became ragged. Despite this, he pushed on. Bug dinners must be had! Unfortunately for our most diligent Clem, his wings just quit one day. He could fly no more.

Although unsure how to go on with no Clem to fly on windy days, the other sea chickens found other dinners, and Clem began to see. He saw all of the other things among the rocks and moss as he strolled the rocky shores. He saw things the other sea chickens cannot see. He knows things the other sea chickens do not know.

So you see, what seems like a flightless plight is actually quite nice. Oh, how the other sea chickens love his stories of wonder as he walks where they all fly!



Rachel Selert



Kristen Vender





Rachel  
Orehotsky

## South Street

By Aimee Dilucido

We started out on one end and after three hours of walking and stopping, looking and browsing, we never made it to the other end. The end, where the bright neon signs to the diners that never close and the glow in the dark reversible “Yes, we’re open,” or “Sorry, we’re closed,” signs dim and the broken street lights begin. We walked past the pub on the corner with the long, open windows, music blasting, surround sound football games, and clanking glasses. We stopped, looked, and browsed in the many thrift shops stuffed with bright colored cardigans and dreaded 1990’s apparel. We stopped at countless one of a kind, homemade, cheap, chunky jewelry stands and stores with two levels of the largest variety of the best bling in town including hello kitty bling and under garments. We passed the alley way with the shopping cart and newspapers spread out on the ground beside it. We were nearly run over by people and cars alike for stopping too long to admire the rainbow dreadlocks and the innumerable unique outfits. We dressed to impress but not enough to fly above the radar; creating a scene could possibly be fatal. We took our wallets and emptied them on the counters of stores with jingling earrings, works of never before heard artists, funky hats, and vintage backpacks. Saving enough for our final destination which took several passings for us to realize that the hole in the wall was the Sushi bar we were looking for.

# The Abused

By Alysia Ardo

I opened the window.

I could smell the clean, crisp air in between the breaths of smoke that filled my lungs.

I felt the heat become hotter and hotter the closer it came to me.

I could hear the men screaming that it would be okay and that they, the men, would save me,

But I did not believe them because in my head, there was only one option.

I looked out the window and was nauseated at the sight of the ground.

It was

Four

Stories

Down.

I climbed onto the windowsill.

I could feel the sweat running down my body and my heart rapidly beating out of my chest.

I quickly grasped for one last breath of air but the smoke tasted like charcoal in my mouth.

I wished that I didn't tell Tom.

I wished that I didn't do it.

I wished that he didn't react like that.

I wished that I could go back:

    Before the screaming of his deep voice,

    Before the impact of his rough hands across my smooth face,

    Before the bruises on my chest from the bedroom lamp he threw at me,

    Before he found the pack of matches in our kitchen cabinet.

My hands let go of the windowsill and I felt like I was flying.

But, I could see the ground coming

Closer

And

Closer

And then everything went dark.

My life is now as dark as

An empty room.

# Drol

By d. e. bussy

rip                  rip                  rip                  R.I.P  
                rip                  rip                  pir

So we work and we die but do we see in the light  
it's an all encompassing thing and I don't think  
the poets get the credit get the registration credentials right I'll take the  
head of magistrate for a drink and sink his BOAT with TEA before I  
surrender my soul give up the ghost fire all my cannons and sink no poseidon  
can stop me

Take care of the fields of nothing keep nothing clean he's a good nothing I  
swear I will testify this  
in a court why weren't you there when he took things for himself  
he's    lord    lord    lord    lord    lord    drol  
      a    a        a        a        a        a

But you scurry off and I'm mumbling palindromic haikus into a weather vein  
while eating sushi and playing bebop and that's what jaco meant the  
economy comes crashing

But I'm having a drol for lunch and dinner because you'll cut his head off his  
off head and he isn't tan nor can he push through NOT boxes

Roots take over everything even your my god mind my god and you'll be  
dreaming when they came to replace your wife but this isn't your's and  
they're withering away I'm writhing on the beach like a worm left out in the  
sun

You know you control every last bit of it easy as paper



# My Dark Love

by Janet Arroyo

Through the eyes of the enemy I seek comfort.  
My soul is empty, only with despair  
I seek her warmth, her tenderness; her acceptance for my being  
I love her so deeply my veins can sense her presence calling out my name  
She rejects me for who I am; however she is the only one who accepts me for what I am  
My soulless body rushes with intensity when I smell her scent  
I love so deep that nothing in the universe can disrupt it  
Not a mother, nor child of which one self has bared or produced through the fruit of his loins  
She is truly cruel to me, but no matter how far I run she finds me; then at first will soothe my pain  
She will truly love me, make fall in love all over again  
Once she has made me hers she strikes again!  
Now stronger than ever, she destroys me!  
Her sexy seductive manner is irresistible!  
During our encounters I beg for mercy, though she refuses, she only pleasures me to the point of  
exhaustion  
Her devilish manner, the way she holds me tight, and caresses me, is all I am searching for  
She makes me feel as though no one else in the world exist  
Then she is gone?  
I scream in the dark in agony!  
My love where are you, my body aches for your touch!  
Sleep come to me I can not bear the world without you  
For you my love, are my life and without you I feel  
Cold sweats creep into my bed, visions of death, and sounds of wicked screams, of which I can not  
stop  
I will die with her, but I live without her,  
Oh, her name is embedded in my mind, the name of my sweet, oh, my sweet heroin  
Someone, someone hear me please!



Caitlin Bryson

# On the Hill

By Debby Higgins

The day is as silent as gravestone  
The sky blue: no clouds on the horizon  
Cold like a pillow smothers the land  
But it's windy up there on the hill.  
Always there is a stirring, a rustle  
Like voices in the distance  
Far away yet clear -  
Who is calling up there on the hill?

Shrapnel of lives torn and jagged  
By battles of today and then  
Enter hunched and crippled  
Through the portal at the top of the hill.  
Is that smoke from cannon fire?  
Or the sharp crack of a rifle  
Splitting the stillness in the air?  
Blow wind; clear a quiet place on the hill.

Empty and faceless go the shadows  
Around the corner to hide in the past  
Where soldiers once young and willing  
Escape in the winds of time on the hill.  
The sun is shining warm some days  
On the smooth stone and brick  
Mortared together by the blood  
Of fighting men seeking respite on the hill.

Who marked this high ground for glory?  
It's well and right that it sits up high.  
Where the wind is always asking  
Have the heroes come to the hill to die?  
Maybe this place is a step closer to Heaven  
Perhaps we mortals should not know.  
Then we mortals need not question  
Why the wind blows up there on the hill.



Debby Higgins

# Hey Nurse! Thanks!

By Jacqueline Zabresky

“Hey, Nurse!”

It was a man’s voice, loud and gruff, coming from room 254. I was taking a shortcut through the telemetry unit after another busy day in the critical care unit. These weren’t my patients, so I kept going.

“Yo, blondie.”

I stopped and looked around. No other nurses were in sight, so I went to the doorway of room 254 and glanced in. A large man with a big, friendly face was sitting up in the bed. He spoke before I had a chance to open my mouth.

“Do you remember me? You were my nurse on the fourth floor.”

“I’m sorry, sir, but I work in the critical care unit. You must have me confused with someone else.”

I smiled, wished him a good afternoon, and turned to go on my way. His booming voice stopped me again.

“No, wait a minute.” He started snapping his fingers. “Your name is...oh, let me think...”

I turned around to see him looking up at the ceiling, a half smile on his face. The he looked back at me.

“Jackie, right? You’ve got a long blond ponytail, don’t you?”

I was dumbfounded.

“Yes,” I said, peeking at my chest to make sure I’d taken off my name tag. (I had.) I reached back and touched the tightly braided bun on the back of my head. Then I studied his face, looking for something that might trigger my memory. His eyes were cool, blue and shiny. Curly salt-and-pepper hair framed his face.

“I’m sorry. I don’t work on the fourth floor, and I just don’t remember you.”

“That’s all right, Jackie. I’m just glad I got to see you again. You came into my room about three weeks ago. My heart stopped dead on me and you put those paddles on my chest. I remember you shouting out all these technical sounding words, telling everybody to clear the way. Then you took those paddles and you shocked me back to life.”

Suddenly it dawned on me: I had been in his room for a code I’d forgotten about. He was a different person then - unresponsive, with dilated pupils and a red and blue face.

“Who told you I helped you that day?” I asked, my curiosity pulling me into his room.

He laughed and looked back up at the ceiling.

“Nobody told me. I was up on that ceiling there watching you. That’s how I saw your long, blond ponytail. And when you turned to look at the monitor, I saw your beautiful face. I’m so glad I got to see you again.”

He looked down at me, his smile gone. I could see he was struggling with his emotions.

“I wanted to say thanks. Thanks so much...”

Every time I pass room 254 now, a warm feeling wells up inside me. I am grateful for the shortcut I took that day, and for the fact that I answered the call of “Hey, Nurse.”





Caitlin Bryson



Amanda Janiga

# The Lost Poems

By Mitchell Finch

\*Walk around until you find the time  
To let go and rethink all that you've been  
Find a way to see the thing you thought  
Always so familiar to touch and sight  
Open your mind and find a way to breathe  
Search with ease and reason digging deeper  
Realize it's not about digging down  
But uncovering all around the miracle of being  
Finding a meaning for things articulated  
As institutions pertaining to characterization  
Walking away from what you knew  
All the while traveling towards what you know

#Fire containing an amber energy  
Flirting with a darkness creeping in  
Let me out to find a way into the forest  
Departing from grace and providence  
Roaming lonely on a quest of reason  
Seeking your truth in a world free and open  
Find me a way to be free and open  
Leaving behind a pit of embers and trampled grass  
Frustrations growing like the dampness  
In the mud growing cold in our winter  
My bearings are no longer useful  
For my path is neither straight nor bent  
Direction lacks any actual power or progression  
For anyone movement now is progress  
Breaking the clearing I can see fields of fortune  
Wondering lost between barley and rye  
Let my ambulating harvest the feast  
Of wisdom, of goodness, of truth, of love

^Grab a hold of me and don't let go  
Look deeply and speak your mind freely  
We can meet somewhere among the thorns of  
reason,  
The tears of love, and the pain in the joy  
Listen only to our words among the distractions  
Find us a way to be free and away  
Is it now that we're supposed to know  
Who we are and who we're going to be?  
Is it know that we're supposed to know?  
Bare a prophesy upon my mind  
A conundrum for the intellect and the hands  
A tactile fulfillment of satisfaction and wisdom  
Lets get away and go home in our own way  
Break away and look back over what we're leaving  
Examine the sores and leprosy of a once verdant  
valley  
Setting off into the breaking dawn  
Atop exploding sun lit ridge lines

~"Did he who made the lamb make thee?"  
Can we still live amongst the trees  
Feeling just as free as we once were  
Not quite searching but not quite standing  
All the way while ships with tall sails landing  
Amongst the pines of the East looking for a  
cure  
Will there ever be peace for me? For thee?  
Traveling and singing hymns to find thee  
Drawing closer to you but appearing more  
Vaguely in my sight and in my mind  
It seems the harder I search the more I find  
All the while becoming more blind



## A Bit of Something By Margaret Malloy

"I saw this article in a science magazine once. Well, no, that's not right. I saw the title of the article on the cover of a science magazine. It said something like, "Infinite Earths in Parallel Universes: What Some Scientists Believe!" Well, maybe that's not exactly how it went, but it was something like that. I didn't read the article because I was so taken with the idea, and my own version of the idea, that I didn't want it tarnished by scientific language and I didn't want it to turn out to be something totally different from my initial impression. But I like to believe in this theory, or at least my version of it. See, in my version, these infinite earths are not identical; they are the product of subtle variations. They all stem from the same point and branch out. Each earth is different from the next because of the effect of slight change of circumstance. Each earth takes a slightly different path than the next. Can you imagine, all of these earths coexisting: An earth where Neanderthals didn't get killed off by Homo sapiens, or an earth where Hitler's mother went through with the abortion, an earth where my father never picked up a cigarette? I like this idea because I like to think that somewhere, in one of these parallel universes, somewhere there lays an earth where I have made every right choice, every right decision. Somewhere there is an earth where I am happy."

## Musings by Motion Light By Sarah Gill

The house down the block I used to play in when I was a little girl  
has been condemned for a long time.

On the way home I notice it as I stumble by when  
the motion light kicks on.

I'm in a state where I can wonder things as trivial as who pays the  
electric bills when it makes me realize that nothing is ever really  
empty inside. All things project life onto each other. Cycles and  
tides, intersecting spheres of life. Sharing in plane and 'time'.  
We attach meanings, connected by the single most varying uni-  
versal. Our experience is truly what carries us towards the form  
of the legend of some white chariot that can  
guide us straight to the truth.

We can never be truly alone when we are truly alive.

It's not all so difficult to get by, attempting to take the tricky in  
stride, finding some value by which enriches the way your body  
sends signals to the brain.

Words like good and truth will never be defined until we each take  
it upon ourselves. When your word is your rule, qualified by noth-  
ing else in the world, it requires a great deal more of inspection.

It all always ends up connected.

Life's progress.

# For Jeff

By Mary Scarpa

If my heart had a conductor, it would be you  
You know every beat  
Every rhythm is the song my lips kiss you to  
With your eyes, you make it faster, slower  
It is not my own, but your instrument to love me  
And your play it gently, as it beats for the one who gives it life  
You teach it melodies, and I can hear them  
Pouring out from within me, and singing me to sleep  
Playing into the night, my heart waits for you  
Till dawn rushes hours that bring us closer  
And like a servant to its master, my heart is bound to its teacher  
To the songs that you teach it,  
The reason it beats



Mark DeStefano

# Crevice

By Bethany Mulhern

The sunset creates  
A halo on your hair  
The pieces of my heart  
Shed on my face  
My heart is a filthy  
Reminder of love lost  
Of laughs shattered...

Of times when I felt alive  
I was dying slowly  
But your heart goes on...  
A singular beat of exaltation  
Reigns supreme  
As my heart refuses to beat

Because when you left  
You took something of mine  
And I never want it back  
It's forever changed  
And mangled  
In your hand  
And you may want  
To be charitable  
Hand it back  
Without compensation

But your reasons are selfish  
A disgusting guilt  
Maybe you did love me.

I wish you did...

# The Hexagonal Nuisance

Sometimes it seems I write a paper everyday. I have determined that this overload of essays and prompts is unhealthy for young developing brains. There was a crazy incident that spurred my diagnoses. One night, a typical night, there was me, sitting at my desk, writing an essay. I wrote. And wrote. And erased. And wrote. And sighed. And wrote.

I will keep my eyes open. I will keep my eyes open. Just finish the essay. I shook my head and woke up.

Conclusions can be annoyingly elusive, and this one fit the stereotype. I nibbled on the pencil tip in frustration. It felt good to just dent that pencil, just to sink my teeth into the wood.

"OWWWWWWWWWW!" What was that? My heart was a fluttering canary bent on escape, beating against my rib cage.

My hands were shaking. Mom wasn't supposed to be home yet. I grabbed my flute and assumed my band-geek-who-wished-she-knew-karate position. If I was a serial killer, where would I hide?

"You looked absolutely ridiculous." Where is that voice coming from? "You ought to put that flute down before you hurt somebody." Actually, that's my intention, Buster. "We aren't playing Clue." The voice chuckled, "It was Tabby, in the living room, with her flute." How does he know my name? "I'm not going you hurt you, Tabby, it's just me, your pencil. Relax!"

I spun around, grabbed my pencil, and looked at it. It was as always, with its crumbly pink eraser, dented metal clasp, hexagonal yellow body, and the scratched symbols "#2B." I twisted the pencil between my thumb and forefinger, and on the other side I saw a face! Black beady eyes, a little wooden nose, and an angry, miniscule mouth were fixed on my pencil. Pencils are not supposed to have faces! Especially not moving, talking faces!

"Don't have a cow! Haven't you ever seen a talking pencil before?" I didn't answer. This was really freaking me out. I dropped my pencil onto my desk and resumed my Jackie Chan stance. "Owww!" Immediately, the pencil furrowed his eyebrows and began to shout angrily at me. The pencil changed his tone from jocular to offensive and sarcastic. "You are so thoughtless! I am so misused! How dare you drop me! I have feelings too, you know!" Actually, I didn't know I was being abusive!

Quickly, I picked up the little guy and set him up on my shelf to try and make him more comfortable. Yes, I'm a suck up. I know it seems wimpy to be scared of a pencil, but everyone has their fears, and talking pencils must be one of mine. "Now, listen here Missy," the pencil barked, "I have a few points to make, so listen closely." I just nodded.

"First of all, you must stop tossing me into your backpack, it's very painful, and you might damage my fabulous shape! Understand?" I nodded.

"Second of all, if you chew on me one more time, I am going to go right ahead and bite your fingers while you're doing that physics worksheet!" The thought of those nasty wooden teeth touching me sent lizards crawling up and down my spine. "It's terrible to be chewed on, just terrible! What a disrespectful thing to do! But kids all around the world continue to gnaw on us. Are you listening? The chewing has got to stop! I mean how would you like to have something chew on your head? And what if that thing ate a cheese steak with onions and then chewed your head? Huh? How would you like that?"

I remembered chewing on the pencil after dinner yesterday. "I-I'm sorry. I didn't realize that you cared about onion breath. I didn't even know you had a nose!"

"Well! I do! Thirdly, when you write and erase with me, you need to use more gentle movements. You have rubbed my eraser to a pitiful stub! You have disgraced my graphite point by dotting, jabbing, and even scribbling with me! How would you like to be scribbled with... WHEN YOU'RE UPSIDEDOWN?!"



## By Jodie Kitchell

"I, um, I didn't mean..." I stuttered, trying to defend myself. I didn't like being made into the bad guy. After all, he was the one yelling and accusing. I had no way of knowing that my writing implement was about to develop a mental complex because of my brainstorming habits. "I didn't know..." I began. "Of course you didn't! Bah! They all have excuses for being so cold and cruel. 'I didn't realize that I was hurting you, Mr. Pencil.' And 'I didn't know that snapping your friends in half hurt your feelings, Mr. Pencil.' Give me a break!"

I felt my forehead, thinking I was sick. "It's not my fault! I really didn't know. Besides we don't snap pencils as an offense; it's just a way to cope with anxiety! Some people snap pencils, some people eat chocolate, some people throw cell phones..."

"See? You deplorable child, you are just like the rest. You are a disrespectful, excuse making, giant brat!" That stick of wood was heartless! How could he shriek so mercilessly when he didn't even know me? Shouldn't I have had a chance to defend myself?

"All pencils hope and dream to belong to someone important, or at least good looking!" That was almost too far for me. "Hey! Lay off on the insults!"

Ignoring me, he continued to shout. "But no, I'm stuck with you. Yes, most of us poor pencils are stuck with nose picking, hot tempered, and downright horrid teenagers!"

"Hey, that's a stereotype!" I huffed. He obviously didn't care, because that arrogant pencil kept talking. "Look at me! You've done the worst, Missy, the very worst possible! Yes, I should go soon to the trash, the terrible trash!" (He began to sniff) "Look at these dents and my stubby eraser!"

"I wouldn't throw you out, you're still handy!"

"Yes, you would! You horrible creature you! Don't lie to me! Don't insult me more! See? You only care about me so you can use me! Once I get too short, you'll do away with me!"

Oh, please. It was utterly impossible to try and rationalize with him.

"Oh, and one more thing! Before you use me you should wash your hands! I have finger prints all over me!" The nerve! Is he telling me I have grimy fingers?

That was enough! I couldn't stand his nagging and accusations any longer. He was only a pencil, and I was much bigger than him. So I straightened my back and stared him down. The pencil began to shake profusely, begging me not to hurt him.

"You know what, pencil?" I picked him up and held him tightly.

"What are you doing with me?" He shuddered.

"If you can't say something nice, don't say nothing at all!" I quoted Thumper, the rabbit from the Disney movie Bambi. Then I stuffed the hexagonal nuisance into my bright red pencil box. To make sure he was locked in there good and tight, I energetically banged the lid a few times.

As I left the room his muffled voice was demanding me to reconsider the cruel containment. Could this day get any worse? First, the homework and then that uncouth pencil! Sigh.

I slumped back into my chair to finish my essay. I started to jot down brainstorming ideas. Darn! I had forgotten that I no longer had a pencil. I went to my roommate's desk to borrow a pencil, but I reconsidered. No, not a pencil! They are dangerous!

As I crossed the room and reached for the pens, I heard some tiny voices. "Would you like black or blue ink, Tabby?" In horror, I pulled my hand back as if I had picked up a Copperhead. The pen's metallic smiling faces immediately made the frantic canary rematerialize in my chest. I turned. My sock feet padded down the hallway as I screamed.

# The Tall, Dark Man

By Alysia Ardo

When I turned the corner,  
He was standing against the brick building.

My eyes, focused on the ground,  
Noticed his long, black shoes first.  
My focus shifted upward to examine the rest of his body:  
His long legs covered by denim jeans with holes at the knees.  
His black belt decorated by a silver gun as the buckle.  
His plain, black T-shirt.  
His face covered by the shadow from the stop sign.

Hidden from my view,  
He reached out a long, dark arm to me  
As I stood standing still on the wet street corner.  
Without moving,  
My eyes searched the dark surrounding for any signs of life.  
There were none.

Before I knew it,  
The dark-colored arm was around my waist,  
Pulling my body closer to his.  
The other arm ventured quickly to my mouth  
So that I was silenced.  
I felt panic rush over my body as I thought,  
What is this tall, dark man going to do to me?

He pulled me quickly against his muscular body  
With such strength that I knew  
There was no chance of escape.  
First,  
I felt him grab my right leg above the knee.  
Next,  
A hand touched my stomach.  
His breaths became longer and deeper.

His hands explored my shaking body  
Until finally,  
They touched my bare skin.

And I was pulled into the long, dark alley.

Susan Panaway







Bob Wilson

# Doctors and Writers

By Amanda Stango; North Pocono High School

WORDS erupt like fireballs  
onto clean, unblemished paper,  
charring my tablet and  
sprinkling ash on the  
hardwood floor.

Mother doesn't like my poems.  
She vacuums the ash  
from the ground,  
frowning and scowling  
at the burn marks on the floor.

doctors, Darling, are honorable men.  
don't waste your brains.  
be a doctor.

doctors, Mother, welcome Death apathetically.  
"Oh, I've seen you around. Me next?" while Death  
steals them away.  
writers, Mother, are different.  
for although Death wines them, dines them,  
and lulls them to sleep,  
he cannot erase the burn marks  
on the floor.



Kristen Vender





# The Run

By Amanda Brown

After my final “farewells” and “goodbyes”, I quickly closed the door of the apartment building and headed into the cold streets of Philadelphia. I wanted to stay at my friend’s apartment longer, but worked in the morning and I needed to get at least a couple hours of sleep.

That night could only be described as still, silent, solitary, and dark. In my opinion, it was too still, too silent, too solitary, and most certainly too dark.

Only a slight breeze lightly flowed and chilled over the surfaces of the silent city. Cold projected from the cement that I walked on, and buildings stood dark and tall, which left me feeling smaller and weaker as each second past.

A brief memory of sunlight came to mind. Everything was bright and alive just hours ago. Pedestrians bustled and pushed, vendors chattered and yelled, and cab drivers honked and cussed on their way through the busy city. All of that liveliness was gone now and everything was frozen in time without the sun.

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark.

I never walked alone at night until tonight. Why did I leave my friend’s house alone? It was too dangerous. There were criminals, yes criminals who walked these very streets. I secured my purse under my arm and looked desperately for movement in the blinding darkness, but the streetlights were too dim to see any movement.

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark.

I quickly walked towards my car that I had unfortunately parked several blocks away. It seemed like a good idea in the safe sunlight, but now I was so paranoid that the quiet of the night was driving me mad. The night streets were usually loud and noisy but now, for some reason, they were silent. I purposefully stomped my heels into the pavement, somehow hoping that the noise would make it easier to hear other sounds that tried to hide in the darkness. I sighed in frustration. Why did I wear heels when I knew I wouldn’t find a parking spot close to my friend’s house during the day? It was too far away to walk, and the heels were too high to run in if I ever needed to...

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark.

I let another cloud of foggy air escape my lungs as I continued to clutch my purse and stomp my heels. I was alone; but too alone. It was impossible to be so alone in the city. There had to be an old lady glancing out of her window, or a bored teenager quietly driving down the streets, or someone walking behind me. I snapped my head behind me and stood still for a moment.

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark.

I looked and listened but nothing appeared since I was completely solitary. I stood for several more seconds to debate my immediate future plans. Should I go back? My friend’s house wasn’t too far away. It was just two blocks. I could sleep over and leave early in the morning. Why not? I peered deeper into the darkened depths that led to my friend’s apartment and noticed a street lamp that flickered eerily. I looked in the direction that my car was in and all of the street lamps were lit. I continued walking towards my car.

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark.

And then I saw it. The shadow. It came from behind me and towered over my small shadow for a moment and then disappeared. I turned around, but saw nothing out of the ordinary except that the flickering street lamp went out completely. I moved my feet faster. Should I take off my shoes so I could run?

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark

It was not long before I heard the shuffle. It was just for a moment but I knew what I heard. It was the shuffle of a person dragging his feet. Maybe this person was taking out the trash...or following me. I forced my feet to take longer strides and I breathed harder in sincere terror. Should I scream for help?

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark

I knew that it was impossible to believe that I was alone. There was someone behind me; moving and shuffling across the gritty pavement. I had to get away. I had to make myself solitary once more, and return to my car which was empty and safe. My thoughts twisted in a dreadful way and I accepted the worst of thoughts; that I was being followed by some sort of fiend. Blood pumped quicker in my veins and adrenaline warmed my body, as I jogged through the streets in my stilettos, and grabbed at the cell phone in my pocket. Should I call for someone to come get me?

Still. Silent. Solitary. Dark

I tried to look ahead of me but it was too dark. That's right dark! That is exactly how things looked when people were attacked. It's always dark in the movies when a damsel in distress is attacked and the hero comes to save her. Unfortunately, I was not in the movies. There was no hero stalking in the darkness but an evil and desperate enemy that craved violence and killed girls that matched my description. I was a small girl who was alone and in the dark while running barefoot in the streets because I just kicked off my shoes to run faster. Evil doers love attacking girls like that, and I was next. Why did I even leave my house today!?

Finally, I saw my beacon of hope. My little silver Toyota shimmered gallantly in the street lights, and awaited my arrival so it could save me from the crazed and murderous lunatic that was coming at me with a chainsaw! I wrenched the keys from my pocket book and hysterically sent out prayers for safety from this dark place.

I smashed in the unlock button on my key chain; threw open the door of my small car, and locked the door behind me after it was slammed shut. I was running out of time because he was right behind me! I threw on my headlights, turned the keys in the ignition, and stomped my bare foot onto the gas pedal as I sped through the suspiciously empty streets of Philadelphia.

After a few minutes, my foot let off the accelerator and I allowed myself to blink. I turned on some music and chuckled nervously. There was no chainsaw murderer in the streets. That was impossible.

I let myself to relax even further until I realized that the crazed, murderous, lunatic with a chainsaw could have had an evil, sadistic, and knife-bearing accomplice who was waiting for me in the back seat of my car.... I hate movie night.





Kristen Vender



Amanda Janiga



Allyson Vaccaro



Hazley Williams



# Blacktop

By Sydney Stamatis

I could never forget  
I couldn't bear to forget  
Being solitary in the dark  
Beat-up sneakers on concrete  
Unforgiving  
Naked legs, stark white  
Prickling  
Dotted with goose bumps  
Hem blowing about my knees,  
Billowing navy blue...  
As gusts raged against me  
I stood there alone  
And I wished like hell you were there.  
In the swing set paradise  
My youth shaded, out of sight  
I was not alone.  
Instincts disregarded in the stares  
The howls in the trees,  
The roots that keep me where I am  
Bundled fear in plum cardigan  
But still the uncertainty  
That makes me sigh, defeated and  
ever-divided  
I will never understand  
I will never understand.  
Since when did remaining where I am  
Become my deepest loveliest paramour?  
But we've got wanderlust  
Oh, we've got wanderlust in our veins  
It bubbles and it screams  
It tells me what I need.  
And you lived with me through it all  
When we'd lay in the grass  
And stare the sky down  
We knew that our passion, our zeal,  
Was ever-penetrating

The unknown never stood a chance.  
And we laughed as we slowly died  
We waxed poetic as our soul turned to  
stone  
Feeling as if we'd live forever,  
We forgot to face our greatest adversary.  
And this cold hard truth  
It found us out  
And showed us things for how they are:  
That infinity does not lay on the ocean  
wave  
On the desert sands or the dark dank  
jungles  
It does not lay in the caves below  
Or the peaks that rise to interminable  
heights  
It is not in our hearts or in the sky  
Or in our hands or in our gaze...  
Infinity was never here at all.  
We never had infinity at all.  
But still we climb the sunset  
We take what we can get  
Mapping the territories  
Of that which startles and enchants  
And the many we grasp onto...  
We could never forget  
I couldn't bear to forget  
That which keeps me here.  
And shivers of the real run down my spine  
Breath so bated that I feel faint  
Please don't waste your time on me  
But save me, save me  
Save me, my friend.  
Just stand here with me  
And feel it happen.



Rachel Orehotsky



# My One

By Paul Ruhnke

All the days that you're not with me,  
I feel like I should die  
All the weeks that I miss you,  
You are all I think about.  
Without you,  
My heart shatters into pieces.

You are my flying angel,  
Sent from the heavens to save me.  
You are my guiding light,  
In this void of endless night  
You are mine, my love, my one.

All the moments I've had to suffer,  
Without you by my side.  
Always thinking you'll never find me,  
But the phone starts ringing,  
And your voice starts singing,  
And I know you that love me.

You are my solid rock,  
You let me lean on you when I'm down.  
You are my reason for living,  
Without you I'm an empty shell.  
You are mine, my love, my one.

Thank you for being there for me,  
For believing in me, trusting me.  
Thank you for not judging me,  
Mocking me or leaving me  
But for loving me  
For all my faults and insecurities.

You are mine, my love, my one  
You are mine, my love, my one  
You are mine, my love, my one



Kristen Vender

## March 2007

By Amy Greig

Outside Salt Lake City we  
Vibrated with giddiness  
Induced by nicotine and Red Bull.  
When driving no longer was an option we  
Stopped finally at a desolate campground.  
There we found ourselves tempered by  
Absolute darkness and a bottle of cheap  
Red wine we'd picked up outside of Reno.  
Cautious words vanished, replaced  
By blatant truths and knowledge that  
Would only slightly endanger our immortal souls.  
Funny to think that a broken glow-stick  
Could lead to a transcendental experience  
On this new Frontier.



Kristen Vender

## Stress

By Lauren Verret

It's always around  
sometimes in the background  
maybe right in front of you  
others might feel it too  
you can't escape it  
you might just want to quit  
but you have to fight  
even if it lasts all night  
you'll make it through  
because you have to  
it may make a mess  
but we all have stress

Caitlin Bryson



## Countless Milestones By Aimee Dilucido

I cannot measure my life by these so called milestones  
No I don't know the time and date.  
Why don't you just sit and wait awhile,  
Close your eyes and hear my smile  
As I tell you my stories...  
Of the moments I cannot count,  
Of the moments no scientific theory  
could ever simplify and break down.  
Of the time I spent digging in the sand,  
The time I found something new.  
It came crawling into my hand .  
Of the time I sat and pondered  
When we left our maps at home  
And wandered into the great unknown.  
Yes, it's not always what we do, but how.  
And though life seems like a scary movie  
With monsters and people who don't understand,  
Nothing is too scary when it's living  
Or when it finds its way into your hand.  
She's still just a little girl, digging in the sand  
She's just a little girl with her head in the clouds  
Thinking and shouting out loud.





Rachel Selert



## Spring

By Kaytlin Yachim

Music seeping through the car  
Roads leading us somewhere far  
Sunlight gently creeping in  
Warmth soaking my pale skin  
Wind passing through my hair  
Scents fill the fresh, warm air.  
Spring fever has plagued us all  
Goodbye, cold; Adios, snowfall.



# To Live Freely

By Chelsea Wertz

It had been a hazy 12 weeks since I left the note to my parents explaining my deep desire to “seek the unknown” and adolescent yearning to “silence my questioning mind”. It had been an enlightening five weeks from that 12 since I had approached Sir Cadelka. My head only reached to his ankle bone and he would not have noticed me had I not pulled at his leg hair.

“I’ll find you a safe place to stay while you work on increasing your tiny size,” Sir Cadelka said while he pulled me up into his expansive leathery hands. “Mrs. Fonash will fetch you something to fill up your stomach.”

These creatures were extremely open to me. Granted, they didn’t trust me for a second (they had me barred up and watched ‘round the clock by other giants in their city) but Sir gave me a place to stay!

Meal times were unlike anything I have ever smelled. Most of their foods were similar to what the Americans eat. But the amounts – wow! Talk about enough to feed an army, just for one person. And the smell literally knocked me over the first day. Passed out cold for a good hour until Gordoff (my day guard) tossed ice water over my face and nearly drowned me. They have come around to understanding my small size and how much force I can take.

Sir has begun to allow me to roam free in the city but I have to stay a certain distance from my lodging so people know to look out below for my tiny figure. That is when I decided I needed to try to repay Sir somehow. Since my pockets were empty from my trek and I had not packed one single bag the day left I found myself in the tightest pickle. Finally, my mind settled on sharing knowledge from back home. Knowledge can grow and make countries prosper.

My rational mind kicked in while inventions and practices of America flashed through my head. Every country has war and every country wants to win! Just so happened that I could think of the perfect piece of knowledge I could share with a leader of such a super-sized country. So I called a meeting with Sir during which I planned to explain the logistics behind American weapons.

“... and with just one of these bombs you can wipe out an entire area of civilization. For hundreds of miles the toxins in the air could kill any living creature that tries to pass through. Who needs to build walls or fences? Hand grenades are a thing of the past. American has one and it makes us more powerful in the eyes of other countries. This is an Atom bomb,” I detailed vainly, ignoring the heartsick looks that just crossed Sir’s face.

“You cannot bomb for peace, young Grasshopper. To settle disputes I talk to my opponent and we always come to a final agreement. Your people must lack in conscience and heart. I could never oversee the activation of such a destructive item,” Sir retorted sadly and more somber than before.

He was right. What made me... no. What made American think they had the right to take away millions of lives for our own benefit? It is impractical to believe we were chosen to God’s creation with just one bomb. My next try would be better. He would respect me and call for me to think up more great inventions after this one.

“At my previous home all the females wore ‘make up.’ They spend possibly hours powdering their noses, rouging their checks, plumping their eyelashes, and glossing their eye lids,” I was on a role. Sir would definitely approve of helping to make his female constituents feel happier!

“No matter where the ladies are headed they most always have make up tucked in the purse and strive to impress their significant others day in and day out. You’re people would love to spice up their looks,” I finally concluded.

“How anyone could support or encourage the beautiful women to paint away their natural looks? All the people in my kingdom are lovely and a gift of life,” Sir said, astonished. “To mask what God has given a person is out of the question. We are all comfortable with ourselves here and there is no need to put on a masquerade every day to each other.”

I had left home to gain experience. I need to live the life of a roamer for just a few months. I longed to feel the freedom of the having no plan, no map, no money, no rules. These people I encountered ripped open my eyes. In the middle of nowhere this city laid with giant people who had the biggest and most true hearts. They showed compassion to the tiny details while I spoke of bombs that could wipe out half a nation. They basked in their true identities while I tried to encourage them to mask over that had been given them by God. I discovered more than a secret village of unimaginable people – I found real truth and love.



Mark DeStefano

## High School Poetry Contest Honorable Mention

# Untitled

By Adrienna Rowe; G. A. R. High School

We sat together on the darkest night on Earth.  
Our mouths touched like melting ice on the winter mountains  
Screaming for sweet love, bleeding red on white glass snow.

So we walked hoping that the path never ends but opens up like an open sea.  
He smiled when I expressed how I see the world through my eyes  
with him in my life.

In our passion of disease and scream you said, "I promise to keep you close."  
So then I turned away lifted by his words.

Unsure understanding set in both minds knowing problems that will come.  
The sky had come crashing down like the news of an intimate suicide.  
I was told to take the one way ticket out.

I went against all odds, keeping the freeze in time still in tact.  
Now how loved I really am, I go after you.  
My Romeo.  
Us star-crossed lovers, together again.  
Forever, I keep you close, loving you, dying together.

# City Light Invigoration

By Aimee Dilucido

I shuffle my feet  
With my head turned  
Towards the sky  
The city lines  
Never straight  
Eyes drifting  
Following the archways  
Towering over  
I see the dust fly  
Little pieces  
Of mystery  
Floating in and out  
Inhale  
Exhale  
Illuminated by night  
Darkness meets  
The city lights  
Shining down  
On me  
Is it day?  
I feel so awake

# Wednesday Afternoon

By Rachel Hasay

I waxed our narrow, yellow hallway  
With ornaments I should have hung on our tree last year.  
You sat in the toilet, drinking the last of the coffee.  
Don't you think about going to work sometime today?  
I sure wish you would.

I washed the clothes and the photographs,  
I couldn't get those stains out.  
I wish you'd do some washing.  
Then maybe they'd ring dry.

I sat down to eat my toast  
And read a magazine.  
My picture should have been on that cover  
Thanks a lot, Lady Luck.  
You weren't on my side.

I lost my diamond ring when I bleached the back yard,  
I didn't tell you, I knew you wouldn't care.  
The bird singing in the tree said he'd get me a new one  
And more importantly,  
Why don't you look at me when you're not listening?

# Random

By Amanda Janiga

Random  
Chaos  
But, in chaos  
Beauty  
Reality  
It needs not be explained.  
Just look and you can see,  
See and you can understand,  
Understand and you will learn.





Mark DeStefano

## Secrets By Kayla Strach

Your words make the beating of my heart; beat two times faster than it should...  
Take your hand and run away, I would

Kindness and thoughtful are the things that define you...  
My feelings for you, you don't have a clue

Looking straight into your eyes and seeing my reflection  
Watching your lips move, speaking only affection

Days go by and you still hold strong  
In your arms is where I belong

Secret feelings, secret thoughts, secret dreams, secret love  
When I'm with you I'm floating above

No one knows how I feel, No one knows how it is,  
But deep down he knows, that I'm all his.



# The Battle Cry of the Country By Brandi Brace

Which of us wishes to depart from this fair condition?  
Which of us wishes to destroy the beauty of this land we call home?  
Be this land not fertile?  
Be this land not enchanting?  
Yet many claim that it is sparse.  
That due to the few in number who live here, our home is not worth living in!  
They want economy! They want modern wealth!  
They want customers to buy needless things so that the shop owners can  
fill their purses with meaningless wealth!  
What they who complain about our position do not realize is that our  
wealth far exceeds that of the many who live in cities of prominence  
that are overcast with shadows of fortune!  
We few, we happy few,  
Those of us who still know what it smells like to be alone with the trees,  
Those of us who know what it feels like to swim in a summer creek,  
To taste a wild teaberry!  
Who have grown food with our own hands and have run through cornfields in the fall.  
Some would wish for more people to come to our quiet country,  
To have businesses come and have more money exchanging hands,  
To have our once quiet streets buzzing with life be it ever such a false life,  
To turn our quiet home into a clone of every other unhappy city plagued  
by business and quick pace.  
What I say to those who want the city to come to our town is why don't  
you go to the city!  
If you are not interested in our rich peace, then you do not belong here,  
but we plead, don't stop us few... us brothers and sisters of this  
rural land from continuing to live in the way we adore.  
Leave us and go forth into other lands for it will increase our quiet!  
In many years those of us who stay will be able to watch our own  
children help the baby bird who prematurely fell from his nest.  
We will watch as they build forts out of sticks and stones and dig  
holes in our fields in an attempt to reach the other side of the world.  
We will stand on our porches watching as the sun dips down out of sight  
behind our green mountains.  
As it disappears, we will sigh with the remembrances of those who  
wanted to take all this away.  
We will tell our children to defend against those who would destroy the  
abundance of our land.  
We will recount to them the day we stood our ground and refused to give  
that which was ours!



Mark DeStefano

## High School Poetry Contest Winner

# Dad

By Claire Cummings; North Pocono High School

Days went by.  
Oblivious to the magnitude,  
To the severity of it all.

Days went by.  
Never once did I question,  
Did I doubt any cough.

Days went by.  
You were too weak,  
Too weak to speak and slowly the world was

Crashing downward,  
A blur,  
    The focus forgotten  
        And the picture  
Ruined.

And it was just too much,  
Too much to handle  
All at once.  
For this wasn't real – it couldn't be.  
You always got released,  
Time after time,  
Treating the months of fear and uncertainty  
Into nothing more than a checkup  
And we'd eat the fruit baskets  
Delivered quickly, so quickly.

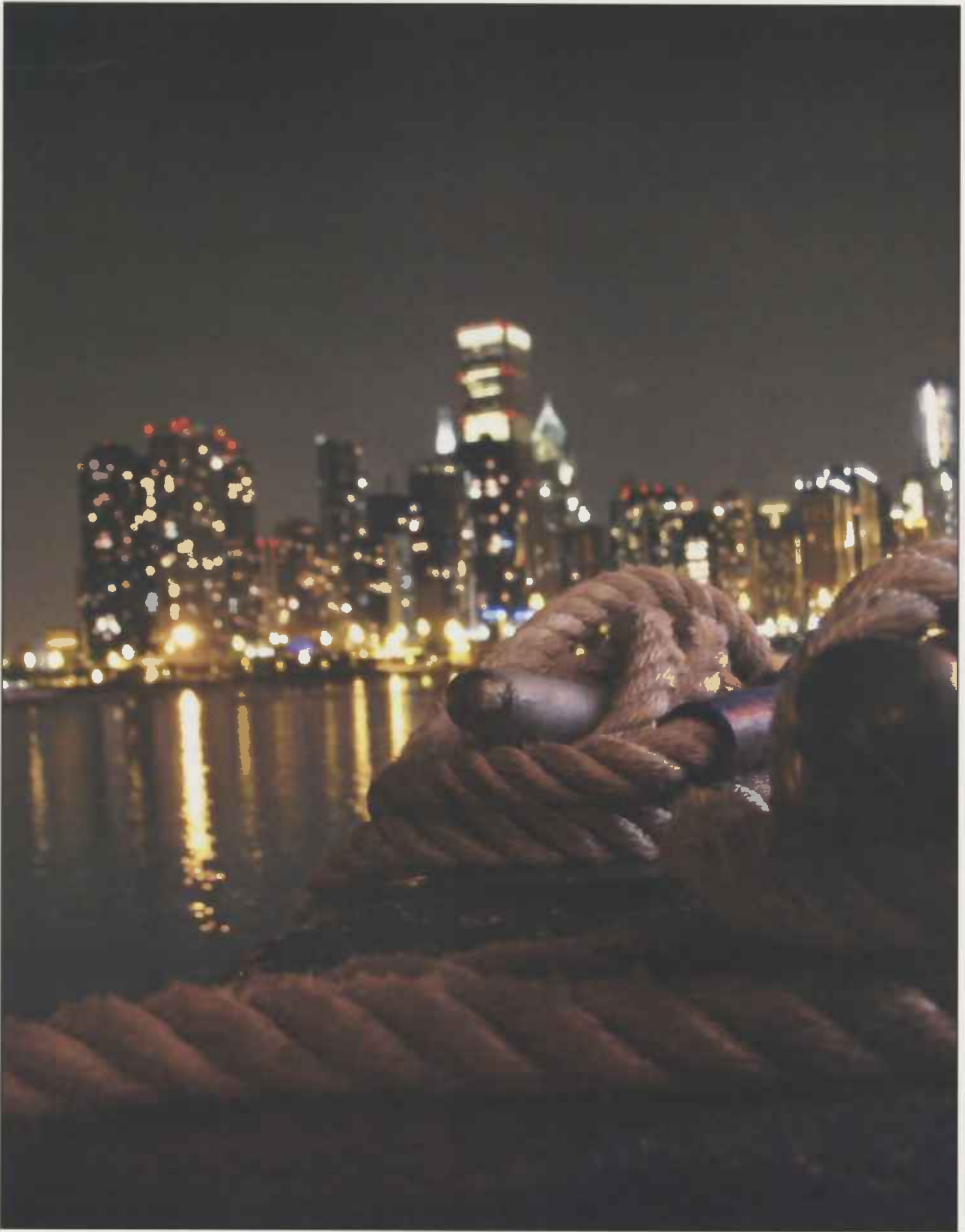
Then why was this time different?

The hospitals and their stupid linens  
And the women who  
Paraded with coffee and  
Vending machine treasures,  
All comfortable in those too-happy fabrics.  
But we were there for the white board  
And the remote controlled bed –  
The magic carpet ride that could only be stopped  
By changing I.V. or an accidental red button fiasco.  
Stop coughing please. I don't like it here.

Coming home?  
That has to be good. Right?  
That means no more two door elevator rides  
Or sleepless nights praying you will see another sleepless day,

Days went by.  
The truth was real.  
Real like a game of Yahtzee on a hot summer's night.  
Hot like a cup of tea – I never could steep them.

Your crystal blue eyes  
Saw everyone gather around us as we recited  
From that book, its pages still glistening with tears.  
I loved the Brad Pitt haircut right down to  
Your bony, cold knees and swollen feet.  
I'd do anything to hug again.  
Anything.



Caitlin Bryson



# Ideological Academia

By Heather Heun

If we must look, we are plenty  
To sacrifice to the library; and if we succeed,  
With just us few, the more knowledge we receive.  
Athena's owl, do not burden more.  
By the Index, I do not want the money,  
I don't care who profits from this;  
It will not sadden me if others gain as well;  
I would be gladdened by the sharing.  
However, if it is horrible to want knowledge  
Then I am a horrid beast.  
No, my friend, do not bring someone from the business department.  
I would not lose any answers  
As he would think by not hiring a publisher.  
Let it just be us few.  
Go, tell the others,  
That if any wish not this toiling with no pay  
To go. Have him leave his library card at the desk.  
I will not research in the company  
Of those who wish only profit.  
This day is called the Feast of Crispian.  
They that return home today with more knowledge  
Can stand tall when they are reminded  
Of the quest by the name of Crispian.  
They shall continue to look till they are old  
And will be frequent visitors of the great libraries  
And encourage others to go.  
He will open his books and show his notes  
And say, 'I gained this knowledge on Crispian's Day.'  
Sadly, all forget:  
But, with his books, he will remember  
What he learned that day. And he shall remember  
Those who were at the table with him,  
The Academic, the Inquisitor and the Curious,  
The Student and the Researcher, the Archivist and the Fascinated-  
In their own minds will be remembered.  
This is the lesson the teachers should show their students,  
And Crispian Crispian will never pass  
For however long the earth shall turn  
But we shall remember what we found,  
We few, we happy few, we band of scholars.  
For those who are sleeping away the day  
Shall in time wish that they were here,  
And feel themselves lacking logically when  
Any speak of what we have found.

# Just an Ordinary Man

By Kristina Brown

They look at his picture and see a man  
nothing extraordinary that they haven't seen before  
he's simply sitting there with a big smile on his face  
as he strums the guitar with his fingers  
and I'm told that he's just an ordinary man.

I look at that same picture and see what others don't  
what others should.

I see a man with a heart of gold  
and hands tough as steel yet soft and loving  
and I think, this is no ordinary man.

What I see is a man who worked 10-15 hours a day  
deep in the cold, dark mines  
pulled out of school to support his family  
at only eight-years-old  
and I wonder, is that such an ordinary man?

I see a man with a great responsibility thrust upon him at such a young age  
who worked very hard for very little  
just to keep his family going  
and his lungs paid for it in the end  
yet I continue to ask, is this such an ordinary man?

Only a second grade education  
yet one of the smartest people I know  
he showed me how one person can impact you in a way that stays with you forever  
and I was only seven years old  
yet I understood that this was no ordinary man.

He would put me on his lap as he played his guitar  
that smile that he wore as he looked down on me  
is captured in my mind like a photo  
and looking back up at him I knew  
that this was no ordinary man.

As I glance at the picture  
the memories begin to flow  
of the gentlest, hardworking  
man that I know  
and I realize that this is no ordinary man.



Megan McClary

Bob Wilson







Allyson Vaccaro

# China Cabinet

By Rachel Hasay

French-tipped nails scratched down his spine,  
And she clung tightly to his body.  
His confident screams escaped from my lungs,  
As she slowly kissed his cracked lips.  
She was shaking with chills, as I  
moved  
about  
broken.

My blonde hair mixed with his black roots  
Brushing slowly across her forehead  
As she closed her eyes and  
my heart  
stopped  
beating.

He held her hand, while he still clutched onto mine,  
Without any resistance or sympatric thoughts.  
He was our devil: avoiding her honor,  
And stealing my persona.  
You left me empty, and my shut mouth was screaming secrecies  
to no one  
listening.

The lights within my city's walls blacken  
When you drove away.  
You left me lying on our kitchen floor  
Naked, shattered, forgotten  
Next to  
the broken  
China  
cabinet.

# Fire of the Maze

By Amanda Janiga

Following directions  
Step one leads to step two  
But what happens when  
That's not what you want to do  
What about options and choices to make,  
And the uncertainty you have to take.

It's like being trapped  
But not in a cage  
In this case, it's more like a maze.  
There's still opportunity to  
Change your course,  
But not many options lead to a flying horse.  
There is no leaving,  
without major consequence.

But leaving the maze  
Isn't the desire  
Instead it's getting closer  
To the heart of the fire,  
Finding within what it is that's needed.

## Driving Lessons

By Amy Greig

I come to my senses  
While crashing through fences  
Which are intended to keep  
Our trespassers who creep  
Into all of your sacred spaces  
Eradicating any and all traces  
Of the dreams you planted  
Yesterday

## Simple Pleasures

By Kaytlin Yachim

Candle, candle flickering,  
Give me light for seeing.  
Flower, flower swaying  
Give me scent for smelling.  
Lips, lips kissing  
Give me flavor for tasting.  
Bird, bird chirping  
Give me song for hearing.  
Blanket, blanket warming  
Give me comfort for touching  
Simplicity, simplicity—  
Give me the pleasures for living.



# Lakeside Impression

By d. e. bussy

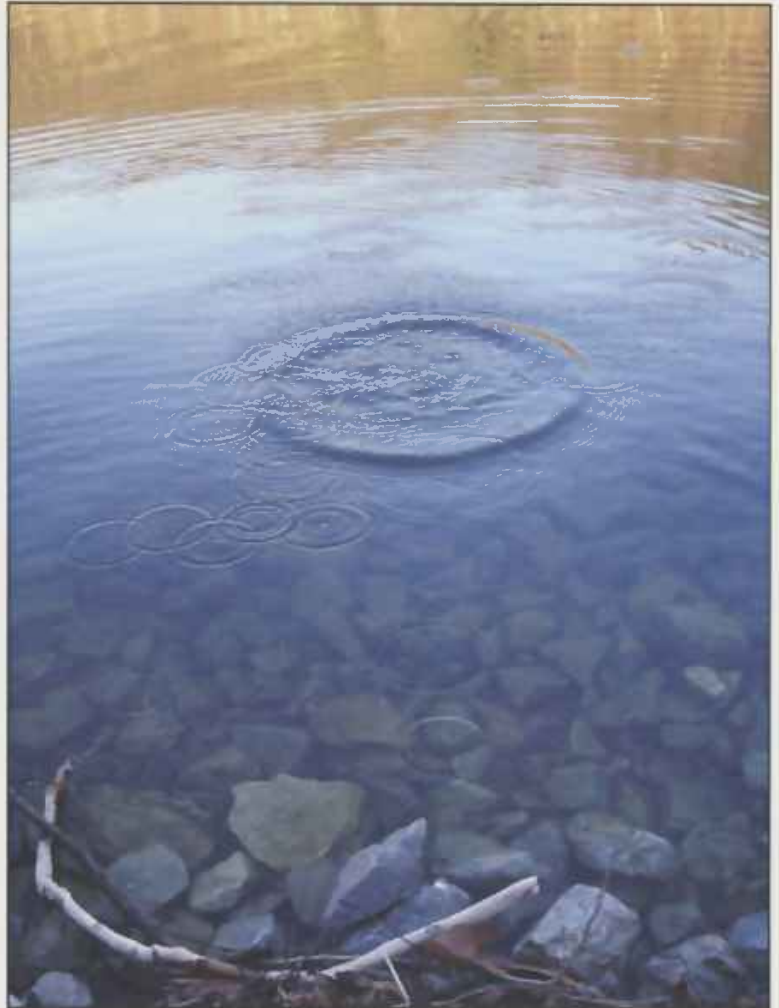
Life imitating art  
Was Monet's impression right?  
A pretty postcard, signifying so little, Hullo,  
how are you  
The beaches are wonderful here but I do  
not pray to the maritime god and you don't  
need to pray to me in turn.

Sea foam and life signify the same; behavior  
the same  
How to be have, have in conditioned time  
But I am no dog; I don't salivate. In fact, I  
denounce the practice that states we  
excrete to see beauty.  
We are, yes, but our awe is mentalesse it's  
no body catalyzing the sweet nectars of a  
peach.

How can you disturb me, it's not past noon  
and the walls crunch in my god, my god  
and it's all a dream where it's all my fault  
my fault for dreaming in the daytime flies  
consume me, flies fire cannons and rape  
their loves; the children born consume the  
mother in birth.  
Are we as bitter birthing as we are dying  
eternally dying always, the bees dies but  
what way do you want to do ed whatever  
you like to do

Runners dreams are the dreams of animals  
choking on life and extinguishing them-  
selves in the flame of a candle my god, my  
god but we strive for beauty we die for  
beauty but I swear by Poseidon  
We cannot let everyone excrete condition  
them to never be conditioned

We dream all the time it's all too perfect



Caitlin Bryson



Mitchell Finch

# Repairs

By Margaret Malloy

My father never told war stories  
But I knew a that bomb in Korea  
Had blown off the tip of his ring finger  
They'd sewn it back on without any bone  
To fill the spongy bouncy flesh outside.  
I'd sit on his lap as a little girl  
And play with it, smooshing and rolling it.  
I'd call it a potato and he'd laugh.  
My mother, washing dishes, would not look.  
She'd tell me, "Margaret, leave it alone."  
But he'd laugh and say it didn't hurt.  
I was little, the 'darling of his eye.'  
I didn't then realize what it meant.  
The year I was born, his heart had failed him  
And they cut open his chest for his heart  
Replacing valves with veins from his legs.  
He would tell me stories about that time,  
Of peace and endlessness and surrender  
He bore a long scar where they had cut him  
It was bumpy smooth, like spilled candle wax  
That repair gave him twenty more quick years.  
He is gone now, and I am all grown up  
Eight years have passed. I don't go to the grave.  
I don't go see the memorial plaque  
Guarding the remnants of ash in the ground.  
The potato is gone; the scar is too.

What's left comes in dreams and quick memories  
What's left comes out in the stories we tell.  
Like a house refurbished, fixed up time again  
Plumbing and wiring fails, foundations crack.  
But people tell stories of where they grew  
And remember happy mornings, where there's  
Now a vacant lot or parking structure.  
I have my own scars now, healed bones, fixed teeth.  
But repairs don't last, gravity will out.  
Will there be any stories, when we are gone?





Mitchell Finch

## Re-Write of St. Crispin's Day Speech

By Rachel Thompson

What's she that wishes so? My fellow thespian, Kaila? No, my dear friend. If we are unanimously booed off the stage, so be it. If we, instead, receive a roaring standing ovation, the fewer fellow actors to share the praise. Dionysius' will! I pray thee, wish not for a single, better performer. I am not interested in fame; Nor care I if I am the finest actor to play the part. It yearns me not if our group of players has the fanciest costumes; Such outward things dwell not in my desire. But if it be a sin to covet joviality, call me a sinner. No, faith, my soubrette, wish not for better entertainers than what we have: Bacchus' peace! Rather announce it, Kaila, that any actor which hath no stomach for the butterflies, let him or her depart; his/her name will be taken from the playbill and common clothes will be exchanged with him or her for their costumes. We would not perform in that person's company that fears his fellowship to perform with us. This day is call'd the opening night: He that outlives this nerve-wracking e'en, and makes it to curtain call, will stand proud when this day is remembered. He or she that has survived the stress and lack of a social life, will yearly on the vigil watch the recorded show on DVD. Then will he or she bring out costumes from the show and say, "These make-up stains and rips are from opening day". Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot, but our grandmas and grandpas will remember the feats we did that day. We few, we theatrical few, we band of players; For he/she today that dons a scripted persona with me shall be my fellow player; And any quitters now in spectator seats shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here, and hold their acting capabilities cheap while any speaks that performed with us upon opening day.



Susan Panaway



# Limits: Breaching Them

By Ashley Evans; G. A. R. High School

BOUNDARIES: So many  
Obstruct the invisible road  
We refer to as the  
"Path of life."

Be they social, physical, or intellectual  
-dimensional?  
However, the real dilemma is,  
The question that absolutely requires an  
Answer is:  
Will we ever make the leap,  
Or transition,  
To that strange, newfangled world?  
Half-hidden behind a gauzy  
Veil

Silken, yet as undoubtedly  
Strenuous to part as the  
Immense ocean in all  
Of its merciless glory.

This task has never appeared as  
Impossible as it does now.  
And, in this moment comes the  
Realization that you must  
Jump! Do not stop to think.  
This will only weaken your resolve.

Farewells need not to be  
Exchanged. This act in itself  
Is a form of closure.  
A perpetual adieu.

And so, with nothing to  
Hold you here, you  
Jump. A moment passes where  
You are utterly weightless,  
Absolutely free; it passes.  
You land in a crumpled heap,  
Disoriented.

But, quickly right yourself and find that  
You've made it! You're on the  
Other side!  
... Only what will you do now?





Kristen Vender



Allyson Vaccaro







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