

4-4-2023

## Philomathean MMXXIII: Reflections of Our Times (Full Issue)

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### Recommended Citation

(2023) "Philomathean MMXXIII: Reflections of Our Times (Full Issue)," *Philomathean*: Vol. 2, Article 47.  
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*The Philomathean*



*Est. 1896*

**MMXXIII**

Reflections of our Times




BC Digital Commons Edition, 2023

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Philomathean Logo & Cover Design by Larissa Niles

# Philomathean

MMXXIII

Reflections of Our Times

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# Second Generation: Reflections of Our Times

*By The Philomathean Editorial Board*

The Philomathean, founded in 1896, celebrates the literary and artistic creations of the students, faculty, and other members of the Bridgewater community. In the face of adversity, our community remains committed to goodness, truth, beauty, and harmony. Our resolve to lead principled lives of purpose and consequence is bolstered by the love and unconditional support we offer to friends and strangers alike. In recognition of this strength and charity, this year's edition of the Philomathean is dedicated to the diverse and global community that is Bridgewater College.

The theme for this year's edition is "Reflections of Our Times." The contributors to this edition focused on a number of topics within our theme. Their contributions explore their growth as individuals in a climate of change around them. They looked backward at past accomplishments and failures, inward at personal joys and insecurities, outward at exterior beauty and conflicts, and forward in pursuit of visions of unity and grace.

We invite you to read The Philomathean from cover to cover as we have carefully selected an order of pieces to take you on a journey through personal growth. You will read about the inner struggles and the realization of fate that mark our times. Our creators took a deeper look at their own fate and external challenges as they lead you on a path to their own acceptance. We hope that by sharing these powerful experiences, you find inspiration to reflect on your own narrative and consider your evolving identity and your journey in the past, present, and future.

This year, the Philomathean adopted a new logo. Created by Bridgewater College student, Larissa Niles, our new logo is featured on the front cover of this year's edition. The symbology of the wreath or torse is rich and variegated. At different times in different cultures,

a wreath has marked noble leadership or celebrated the circle of eternal life. Wreaths have been displayed in times of celebration, as well as those of mourning. Wreaths commemorate the past, sanctify the present, and celebrate the future. Our new logo represents these multitudes of meaning and symbolizes the diversity of creative excellence seen within the Bridgewater community the Philomathean celebrates.

Our writers and artists have submitted phenomenal representations of the creative merit in the Bridgewater community. We encourage you to take some time to peruse their submissions as they consider and pursue a “Reflections of Our Times.”



# The Ballade of False Light

The others see light  
But I see nothing but the dark  
I've never known the world to be bright

A world of cheerful streamers so pure and white  
Looks nothing like God's promised ark  
The others see light

I don't know why I only see the night  
I can never make their mark  
I've never known the world to be bright

I will never see the shining armor from my knight  
As his sword meets darkness in a blinding spark  
The others see light

While others look in the mirror with delight  
My reflection is nothing but a songless lark  
I've never known the world to be bright

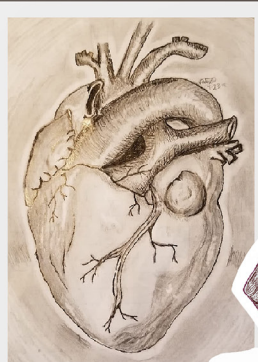
I looked for the diamond in spite  
A colorless diadem in the face of its monarch  
The others see light  
I've never known the world to be bright

Written By:

Samantha Katlyn Herbst

# A Heartfelt Reflection

*Valerie Lutz*



4/23/18



*Val*  
11-1-22

11/1/22

# Teeter-Totter

Pushing up and falling down.

At age five, falling is the best part.  
Butterflies tickle your tummy,  
and pilot the shared streams of laughter.

So desperate to reach the top.

Just to fall again, but always  
bouncing back.

Repeat with glee.

Pushing up and falling down.

At age twelve, four feet  
turn into a ravine.  
And I need to stay at the top.  
I cannot risk slipping over the edge.

It takes strength to push up,  
and only release to fall.

Pushing up and falling down.

At age fifteen, the image of death  
stains my brain in dark red ink.  
Closing my eyes, I know I am falling,

Plummeting,  
and I don't have the strength to push back up.

I only lay at the bottom, immovable,  
broken from impact.

Pushing up and falling down.

At age seventeen,  
I teach myself to get back up.  
But it's dangerous.

You don't think about how you got there,  
or when you will crash again.

You only think about the views you see,  
and forget the ground at the bottom.

Pushing up and falling down.

At age nineteen,  
I still don't know how to stop

spilling out to the bottom,  
and springing up every three months.

At the top,  
the air is lighter,  
and so is the weight on the other side.

Yet, 100 pounds of feathers are just as heavy  
as 100 pounds of brick.

Until the wind blows,  
and the feathers leave.

Down with brick and chains I go  
as the balance ends in release.  
Too big to push the other side down.  
Too heavy to move from my place on the floor.

Wishing and pleading to go back to the day  
of laughter and butterflies  
and the joy of

pushing up and falling down.

Written By:  
Emily Wylie

# Spring Creek Morning Sky #2

*Scott Suter*



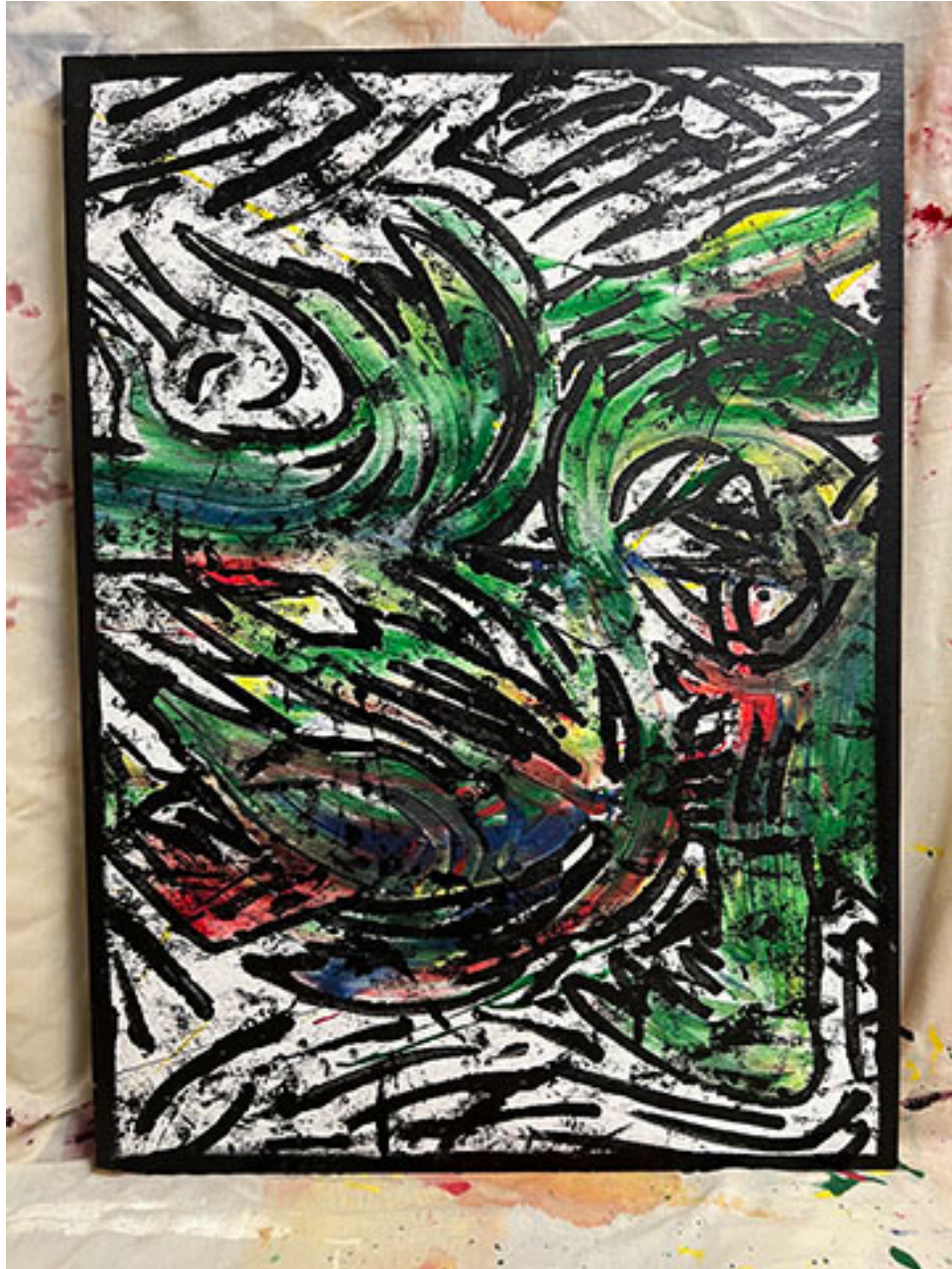
# Silken Lavender

*Larissa Niles*



# Viento Tropical

*CJ Romano*







# Thistledown and Feathers

“Twenty-four days until Christmas,” Áine said. We warmed beside a beach fire. The lake was still, no wind, and no one would notice the fire in daylight. I treasured Saturdays with Áine. They had become “our time.”

“What’re you gonna get me?” I asked, precocious, as if a child again. But to look at her was too bold. Instead, I managed the fire.

“It’s more blessed to give than to receive,” she replied.

I tried to pretend there was no tug of magnetic hormones between us.

Áine then asked, “What would you like me to give you?”

I sobered. There it was. The question was real. I’d dreamed of her asking a hundred times, a hundred different ways. And my dreams all went awry. In one, Áine became a red mare and rode off into the sky. In another, she became a cartoon mother scolding me for lascivious thoughts. Another variation led to us shamed naked in the stocks of a faraway Puritan settlement. And ninety-seven other failures. I dared not answer. If my desire for Áine were ever uttered, the possibility of it would explode like thistledown on air currents, never to be reassembled.

Áine looked at me, her lips edged in pink, her hair red and yellow in the sun and fire-light. I felt a prickle in my jeans, and the heat rushing through me had nothing to do with the fire. Finally, Áine looked away across the lake, and the colors drained.

\*

“Seventeen days until Christmas,” Áine said, at the lake again, and I felt my whole psyche tighten. The weather was still holding above freezing and we had skipped rocks and generally behaved like adolescents all afternoon. The sun would go behind the mountains in

less than an hour, and today a wind off the slopes troubled the fire.

This time she added, "I'd like to get you a ring."

"A friendship ring," I clarified.

After a moment, she said, "Yes, a friendship ring, because we are the very definition of friends."

We fed sticks into the fire until dark, consuming all the deadfall within reach.

\*

"Ten days until Christmas," Áine said as we walked the busy mall. It had snowed earlier and the road to the lake was uncertain, even if the snow had all melted in town.

We looked at clothes and shoes and bric-a-brac, and when we came to the jewelry store, I said, "Let me buy you lunch," and we turned back toward the food court. I had dreamed again of disaster, of the angel of pestilence visiting the fields and leaving every horse, cow, sheep, goat, desiccated in the sweep of a single night. Instinctively, I knew to admit what I felt beneath my shirt and pants was to release that angel.

\*

"Three days until Christmas," Áine said.

We'd spent the day skiing and were finishing off the day with coffee at Bateman's. I'd dreamed the day before that Áine had come to me in the night, had entered my bed, her nipples on mine, pointedly, and our bodies celebrating each other, joined at our sexes, reveling in the orgasm that is life. But when the moment of climax came, the room exploded – roof and walls atomized in an instant, bed beneath us shot into a million feathers, and I, raw and bloody in a limbo that was all that remained of the universe. It was nearly closing time.

Áine leaned toward me and said in a contained voice, "Imagine how many hundreds of couples are making love across the city right now, freely, happily, unconcerned about what someone else might think."

I looked at her, and I could see she saw my fear. In return, I could see her patience, worn

thin. We were both tired from trying to master the mountain.

“Mallory Thomas, I swear you are so timid you will never have what you want in life for fear it will bite you.”

I saw her rightness, the terrible truth. “For both our sakes, I hope that isn’t true.”

“Will you go to the mall with me tomorrow and pick out rings?”

I nodded.

\*

But Áine didn’t come the next day, her car flattened under a poultry truck at an unmarked country intersection – my Christmas legacy, no longer dream, but thistledown and feathers.

Written By:  
S.A. Galloway

# Swallows Being Swallows

*Scott Suter*



# Just, Please

Just, please

Look at me

Can you see all my hard work

Do you see it? MY blood, MY sweat, MY tears

Just look at me

Please, just look at me

I can't look at myself

My reflection breaks my heart more than my own promises

I cannot validate myself

I already promised myself I would try that more.

So validate me

Please, validate me

I hate to beg, but please validate me

All my hard work

My biggest accomplishments, even my smallest

Cheer me on

Isn't it amazing that I am talking to you now

All my hard work will mean nothing if you don't validate me

Look at me

I wake up every morning

I am making it through life

It's amazing how well I am doing

It's suspicious how well I am doing

At least you can look at me

Let me interpret your stare as being impressed of me

My accomplishments, all I've been through

Haven't I lived through enough?

No, I am not talking about the recession or Covid.

I'm talking about the life that entered and left my body

I'm talking about that part of me that left every time they touched me

The knife my friends put in my back and stirred around

I'm talking about all the pain I've lived through and how statistics say I should no longer be here

Maybe, it's because I haven't lived through enough

Is that why you don't validate me

Please, give me your pain

I beg you to give me your fears and anxieties

Then will you validate me?

I'm begging you, look at me

Just please Validate me

I can't look at myself, so become my Narcissus

Just please don't touch me,

I have had enough validation done through people's hands

Only with your eyes, look at me

Validate me with your words and actions

Be proud of me

Validate my inhales and exhales

I cannot seem to validate myself

I can't see why I have lived through so much

So can you do it for me?

Can't you see me?

No, that's not what I asked for

That's not enough

Do more than see me

Do more than validate me

Be proud of me  
Be happy for me  
Be grateful for me

Be aware of everything I do  
Every action I take  
Each step I take

Please?  
I know I am selfish.  
I just want to see myself  
For all I have lived through  
For all I have done.  
I'm not asking for much.  
I just want you to see me  
To validate me

It's not that hard  
To be me  
I can still inhale and exhale  
Is that not enough for you?  
To validate me

Written By:  
Mae Lotts



# In the Past

In the past  
Anxiety always controlled my thoughts  
My actions  
My life

Stuck in a time warp of never-ending worry  
Who will care for them?  
What will become of me?  
When will this end?  
Where will I go?  
Why does this keep happening?

Just when I thought I hit a dead end  
I made a left and you took my hand  
Calming the voice inside my head  
Granting me the power to move forward

My mind still races  
But I'm heading in the right direction  
I'm learning to care  
Without being swallowed by the burdens  
Be empathic  
Without taking full responsibility for others' situations

My life is mine  
I am taking back control  
The past can't stop me now

Written By:  
Ashley Martin

# The Weight is Heavy Today

*A poem describing the effects of stress*

The weight is heavy today and my shoulders droop low  
Under pressure amplified by continuous blows  
Of jilts, texts, and notifications. They push down,  
But I will not let it show or make a sound.

Perfection is the all-encompassing goal  
That no one may achieve. The branch looms too high above the sole.  
For my soul is tired and is begging to dream  
Of rest, of joy, of how it might feel to beam.

I may not rest or tire because I have too much to do.  
The lists. The plans. The aspirations. Don't they matter too?  
For rest takes the time I need to achieve my many goals,  
But we forget that there is nothing if there are too many holes.

The gaps. The faults. The weight presses on as I think of what I must complete.  
I must fulfill my purpose of bringing others joy and collect the benefits I have yet to reap.  
Nothing is gained if all is lost and the lost struggles to be found  
Hidden beneath the endless lists. We drown beneath the sound.

For this sound is loud, louder than others, for it is inside my head,  
And is inhabited by none other than me. It is the place I most dread.  
The pressure is too much and the time too little. I must find time

By pausing the ticking from their winding circles. I must pause before the ongoing climb.

I must pause, listen for silence, and bask in the glorious quiet.

Drop the pen that haunts me and cease the autopilot.

A moment to listen. Leaves rustle. The breeze whistles through the streets.

A moment. A time for quiet. That is my entreat.

Written By:  
Annabelle Terry

# Volcan

*CJ Romano*



# Only One of Us is Dying

*A Series of Poems Describing the Cruelty of Time*

only one of us is dying

only one of us is dying.  
it's the plot twist that Fate revealed in the second act.  
i imagine a spotlight on center stage  
where you're standing five feet away from me  
arms wide open  
and soul bared to the audience  
*i'm dying.*  
it's like a whisper so deafening  
and i can't help but flinch.  
the world stops  
and starts crumbling,  
the walls of our future shattering around us.  
i never told you what my ring size is  
or how many kids i wanted.  
i never told you how much you mean to me.  
i never told you that i loved you  
before you told me your expiration date  
and i probably never will.  
i am not going to write a story that will never come true.  
you'll never know how i felt about you.  
you told me to write our story  
and i asked you what the title should be.  
*only one of us is dying.*

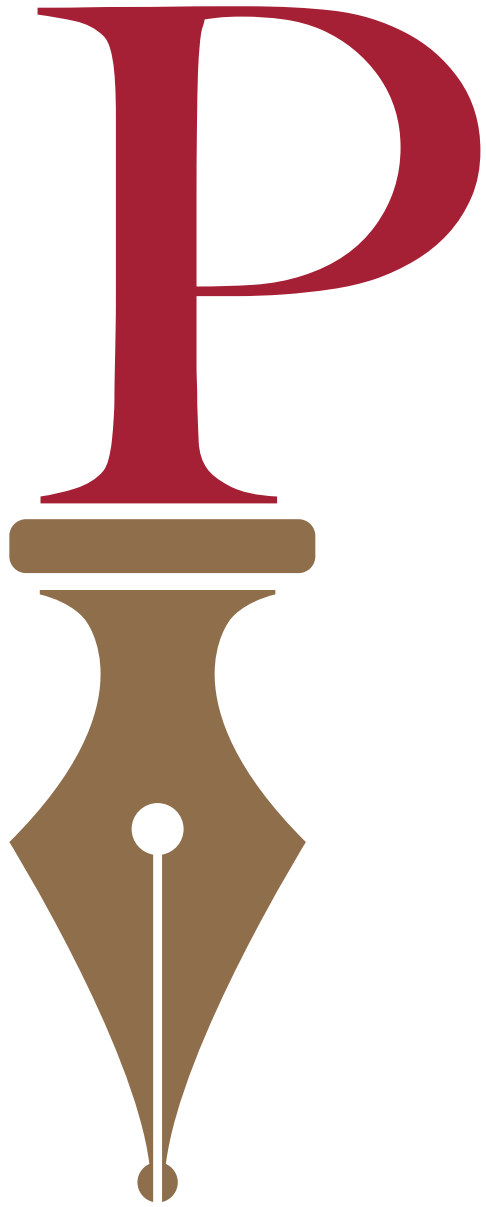
3:47 a.m.

if i could rearrange  
the stars and change  
the Fate of destiny  
to give you  
more time,  
i would  
do anything to ensure  
a life worth living  
because a life lived  
in fear of death is  
no life at all.

borrowed time

ten years.  
all i get with you is ten years  
and that is the best-case scenario,  
Fate dropped you into my life;  
made a hurricane out of the butterflies  
and in just as much time  
the Fates are taking you away.  
you were a dream  
when all of my life had been realities.  
you were the calm in my storm,  
you brought the candle that lit through my darkness,  
you gave me a future that I never intended on having,  
you added forty years onto my life expectancy,  
and i only get to spend ten with you.  
“it isn’t fair,”  
i said,  
“i wish we had more time.”  
*Do you think I want this either?*

Written By:  
Shifa Tewari



# Hallowed Dream

*Larissa Niles*





# There's a Time for Everything Under the Sun

i am learning that there's a time for everything whether I want it or not.

a time to thirst & a time to be submerged  
a time to sweat & a time to shiver  
a time to face it alone & a time to face it together  
a time for dingy airport light & a time for the cleanest air, the bluest  
skies

there's a time for white water rapids & the lazy river

a time for monotony &  
a time for adventure

lean into the time,  
this is the only time you truly have  
& it's not here for long

time is fleeting  
the river keeps running  
the days keep coming

let it go  
let it be  
be here now, along with everything

if there's sadness, let it be  
if there's irritation, let it be  
if there's joy, let it be

if there's longing, if there's ache, if there's anger or heartbreak, if there's

pain, if there's pleasure, if there's waiting, if there's pressure, if there's  
release, if there's struggle, if there's peace or rebuttal, if there's love so  
strong it hurts, if there's lashing out or coming together, falling apart, or  
change like the weather  
let it be  
let it be  
let it be  
you are alive  
you need the sunshine, the rain, the wind, the birdsong, the decay  
somehow, you need it all, someday.  
everything that's meant for you, everything you need will be yours.  
even if that's death.  
this self, this body, they are mine, but they are not me.  
what matters cannot be created nor destroyed.  
hold it all with loose hands,

but hold it all.

Written By:  
Karis David

# The Titanic

To Arrive

Entranced

With the possibilities.

Energized

By its potential

A dream, A vision.

Buttressed by strength of conviction,

Driven by unsinkable willpower,

The spirit returns to form.

The mind is an immovable object, the body an unstoppable force.

To depart.

In shame, in grief

In complete and total disbelief

The Ship has sunk.

Its hulls exposed, parts sold as junk.

If the voyage was destined for ruins in the end,

What reason was there to ever begin?

Time and energy are best conserved, rather than wasted on doomed endeavors.

But to learn,

Is to truly embody the gift.

To sacrifice the past on the altar of regret,

Is to mortgage the future on the perception of the present

Without the discovery of failure, truth remains unseen.

Winning makes one lucky.

Success makes one fortunate.

But playing the game for its own sake is what makes one blessed.

**Written By:**

**Alexander Hulleman**

# Corona Glow

*Scott Suter*



# Indecisive and Doubtful Words

This piece of writing is not really an essay. This piece of writing could just be seen as a person voicing her feelings on her writing or writing in general. While I was writing the second sentence of this thing, I went back to the first sentence and added “really” in between “not” and “an”. The “could” in the second sentence was something I put in there the first time I wrote it without even thinking. I have written a lot of essays in my educational career, and all of the ones I consider good are essays that got good grades and that my teachers and/or peers told me I did a good job on. When self-describing my own work before I submit it, the highest praise I give it is “good enough” or “okay”. Whenever I even try to talk about the quality of my writing, or answer questions in class, I tend to throw in “probably”, “maybe”, or stuff like “I suppose” instead of “I think”. Sometimes, even when I use “I think” it is a less definitive version of “I know” because I am afraid of backlash if I am wrong about something. And I throw in a “sometimes” because my memory of the past gets foggy and I don’t remember how much I have actually done something. If I am wrong about something, I am more than willing to admit my wrongdoing. I might have only added that sentence since I might be afraid of people thinking I know all the right answers. And by might I mean it is 100% how I feel but I have to have an element of uncertainty or else I might look dumb or worse, self-centered. I also hate misunderstandings and being misinterpreted, and I tend to over-explain the words I write sometimes as a result.

Anyway, essays. Essays are something that I generally enjoy writing despite their highly formulaic nature. This is a nature that has been discussed extensively in some of the readings I have had to read for this semester. I think I might have used to not enjoy writing essays, which is a statement I am making because I earnestly do not remember if I enjoyed writing essays

when I was younger but have a feeling I might not have hated writing them. That previous sentence might have been a bit of a run-on, but I am unsure hence the “might”. Anyways again, there have been several things I have read this semester that have made me continue to doubt the quality of my writing. I hesitated to type that previous sentence because I do not want anyone to interpret me as disliking much of the readings I have done for this class. Has my years of being taught to write essays in a certain way completely and utterly squashed out my ability to write well? Is my writing in my own voice or is it just generic? I would like to think that my writing is in my own voice since I always imagine myself speaking my words aloud when I am writing, but I feel that whenever I am confident about anything relating to my academic skills the rug immediately gets pulled out from under me. Like I am not allowed to have confidence because it is pointless and I am actually just getting a big head. This probably explains why William Coles’ *The Plural I* affected me as much as it did, because if a teacher ever put my writing on blast in front of the class like that I would probably begin to actively hate writing and never feel like I could do anything right ever again.

I included the probably in that previous sentence because while I am confident that that is why that piece of writing affected me so much, I’m always worried about any potential margin of error in anything I say that I can never speak certainly. I have likely always felt this way to an extent, in high school I was deathly afraid of getting any problems or questions incorrect because I was worried it meant I was an idiot. In elementary school, I was praised by my teachers for not acting out in class, and I guess overtime my brain took this praise and mutated it into meaning that I was smarter than the rest of my classmates because I didn’t act out. This notion was almost completely destroyed in middle and high school, where I struggled in a fair bit of my classes and started to feel like I was a complete failure if I got any questions wrong. It was on its way to fading away, and it certainly doesn’t feel as exaggerated as it did when I was in high school. Although I’ve noticed a similar feeling popping up since I started being active on Twitter, where people always think less of you as a person whenever

you get any kind of factoid wrong. I feel like these thought patterns have bled into my writing, where I worry that getting one super tiny thing wrong makes me a complete and utter idiot. If a second essay that I write gets a lower score than the first one, I sometimes spiral and worry that it means all my progress is gone and that I'm actually just getting worse.

Tend to.

Sometimes.

Feel like.

Might.

Probably.

...

I can't keep getting away with this. I don't know what I'm supposed to do or if this is a habit I can even break. Why can't I just commit to a statement I'm writing instead of being so darn wishy-washy? Is this even something I should fix? I am not sure if being indecisive all the darn time in writing is considered a negative thing like it is with making decisions, but dammit if I don't want to fix the latter and fixing the former might help with that. Does it even have a real impact? I'm sure it will. Er, pretty sure it will.

**Written By:**  
**Mackenzie Smith**



# The Love

This one-act is an exploration of the idea of the “Three Loves” which is an idea that a person will fall in love three times in their lifetime. The three loves are (1) The Love That Seems Right, (2) The Difficult Love, and (3) The Love That Lasts. I had added a fourth kind of love that is reflective of my own experiences which I am calling “The Good On Paper” Love. The main character in the one-act is confronted with all of the important loves from her past as she reflects on the relationships which brought her to the person that she has chosen to spend the rest of her life with.

## CHARACTERS

Annie Stanton

Michael Harris

Henry Manning

Max Garner

Tanner Bellview

Brenda Bellview

## SCRIPT

*(The play opens with a table set with a beautiful candlelight dinner with a chair on either side of the table. ANNIE sits in the chair on stage right. MICHAEL sits in the chair on stage left. The couple is dressed nicely and looks very happy and in love. There is an elevated platform upstage with a white sheet hanging flat.)*

MICHAEL

So, Annie... Annette...

ANNIE

Yes, Michael? *(laughs, mocking his serious tone)*

MICHAEL

We've been together now for almost four years.

ANNIE

We have... *(sits up straighter in anticipation of the proposal)*

MICHAEL

You really are the love of my life

ANNIE

Wait!

MICHAEL

What's wrong?

ANNIE

Nothing is wrong! I just have to pee and I don't wanna be holding in my pee when you, I mean when we get... just wait one minute! *(exits stage left)*

MICHAEL

*(Pulls a ring box out of his pocket and looks at it. HENRY enters stage right and walks towards stage left. ANNIE enters stage left and they bump into each other.)*

ANNIE

Oh! I'm so sorry!

HENRY

My bad, really

ANNIE

Wait, do I know y— Henry?

*(Stage lights go black, spot on ANNIE, shadow scene is performed behind the white curtain.)*

ANNIE

Henry Manning was my first boyfriend. I was fifteen, he was sixteen. He sat behind me in sophomore algebra, Mrs. Sipe's class, Harrington High School. We dated for three months and I was convinced that he was my soulmate. My mother said to slow down. S, she said, "Ddon't lose your head," but I had already lost my heart. He was tall and smart, and he never had food in his braces, and he always remembered to text me goodnight before he went to sleep. Until one day he didn't. I said, "It's fine, as long as he holds my hand in the hallway tomorrow," but then he didn't. I cried that night as tears blotted the ink where I had written "Mrs. Annie Manning." He broke up with me two days after we hit three months. He said, "Iit's not you, it's me," but what he meant was, "It's not you, it's Amanda Harvey Stewart." When I saw him holding her hand I wanted to die. I said I'd never love anyone again because how could I ever love anyone more than I'd loved Henry?

*(Stage lights come up)*

HENRY

I'm sorry, do I know you?

ANNIE

Annie Stanton, we went to high school together

HENRY

Oh my god! Annie! Of course!

ANNIE

This is so random! How are you? How have you been?

HENRY

I've been great! I'm a CPA now

ANNIE

Wow, that's so... interesting. Hey, do you still keep in touch with Amanda Harvey Stewert?

HENRY

Amanda Harvey Stewert? Wow, I haven't thought about her since...

*(notices ANNIE looking at him knowingly)*

*(ANNIE and HENRY part and ANNIE returns center stage to the table)*

MICHAEL

Hey, who was that?

ANNIE

That was Henry Manning

MICHAEL

Like, your first boyfriend? Wow... funny running into him here... now... tonight... on this date

ANNIE

Why is that so funny?

MICHAEL

I just think it's interesting that tonight of all nights— never mind

ANNIE

*(Looks at audience, winks)*

So, where were we?

MICHAEL

Right, so, we've been together for almost four years and you're the love of my life—

*(MAX enters stage right and approaches table)*

MAX

*(Interrupting MICHAEL)*

Hey folks, I'm Max, I'll be your waiter tonight. Do we wanna start off with some drinks?

MICHAEL

Actually, if you could just give us a sec—

ANNIE

Max?

*(Stage lights go black, spot on ANNIE, shadow scene is performed behind the white curtain.)*

A week after we graduated High School, my girlfriends and I went down to the local pool for a swim. I was all grown up and had just bought my first bikini. My mother nearly fainted when she saw it, but I felt like such a woman. I went to get a soda from the snack bar and there he was. Bare-chested and bronze, 18, and looking for some summer fun. Max Garner, every girl at Harrington High knew about Max Garner. And that day, Max Garner knew about me. He had me sneaking out of my window that same night, and every night of that all summer. He was the first boy to ever tell me he loved me. He gave me my first sip of beer, my first cigarette, my first... time. We started fighting all the time. Huge blowouts that ended in screaming and tears. After a few months, my dad caught me sneaking back in and chased Max down the driveway with a baseball bat. He said he was a bum and forbade me to see him again, but I was a grown-up woman in love. I told myself we were perfect together, never mind the fighting and the pressuring and the fact that I never even saw him during daylight hours. That's just how Max was. Eventually, the days got shorter and I packed up for college. Max never even said goodbye, I doubt he'll even remember me now.

*(Stage lights come up)*

MAX

Annie Stanton! Wow! Look at you!

ANNIE

*(To audience)* I stand corrected

MICHAEL

Um, who's this?

MAX

Annie and I go way back

ANNIE

We dated a little before I left for college., Max, this is my boyfriend Michael

MAX

You're a lucky man. Annie Bananie is one wild little thing

ANNIE

*(Horried)* Wow

MICHAEL

*(Sarcastically)* This is great

ANNIE

Max, we're gonna need a few more minutes

MAX

You got it baby girl

MICHAEL

*(Exaggeratedly)* Bye Max!

*(MAX exits stage left)*

MICHAEL

He seems like a catch

ANNIE

Okay, when you're 17 and he's got a leather jacket and a job not a whole lot else matters! We  
were just kids

MICHAEL

So that is now two of your ex boyfriends. This restaurant is shaping up to be a great choice!

ANNIE

I'm sorry babe. Just keep saying what you were saying before

*(TANNER and BRENDA enter stage right)*

MICHAEL

*(Sighs)* Okay, it's been four years, you're the love of my life and my best friend—

TANNER

Annie?

MICHAEL

For the love of god! *(drops head on table)*

ANNIE

This isn't happening

*(Stage lights go black, spot on ANNIE, shadow scene is performed behind the white curtain.)*

So, still reeling from my unfathomable Max heartbreak, I decided that I would never date another bad boy. Enter Tanner Bellview, a painfully sweet and totally harmless history major who wanted to teach high school, have two kids, a dog, and a ranch-style house in a small quiet town in New England. He was my best friend on campus but it was soon obvious he wanted

more. I guess I did too. I just wanted someone safe, the anti-Max. I took him home for my first fall break and I've never seen my parents so happy. He was incredible. Kind and thoughtful and mature and oh my god I've never been so unattracted to anyone before. He was everything I thought I wanted, on paper it was perfect. We made so much sense and it was infuriating because our families were so happy, our friends were so happy, he was so happy, but I was so bored. I broke the poor guy's heart in a Starbucks before our eleven o'clock psychology class. We said we could go back to being friends, but that didn't really work out.

*(Stage lights come up)*

TANNER

Annie, I haven't seen you since graduation! How are you!

ANNIE

I'm great! This is Michael, Michael this is Tanner Bellview from college

MICHAEL

How's it going, man?

TANNER

Oh, this is my wife Brenda

BRENDA

Hi Annie, Tanner's mentioned you before. It's great to meet you

TANNER

Oh, honey! Um, it's not like it sounds. I don't talk about you I just—

ANNIE

Tanner, it's okay. Brenda it's so great to meet you

BRENDA

You know, we've got a little boy at home too



ANNIE

Good for you guys

BRENDA

Yeah, Tanner is an amazing teacher and his life turned out great, you know

ANNIE

*(Quietly)* Oh my god

TANNER

Thanks hon, um, yeah. I turned out great!

ANNIE

You really did Tanner, I'm glad

TANNER

Thanks Annie. *(awkwardly)* Okay well, it was nice running into you!

MICHAEL

*(Strained)* Have a great dinner you two!

*(TANNER and BRENDA exit stage left)*

MICHAEL

I hate this restaurant

ANNIE

I'm sorry my love, I don't know why this is happening

MICHAEL

Clearly the universe is trying to sabotage this date so maybe—

ANNIE

No! Not sabotage! This date is going perfectly!

*(MAX enters stage left)*

MICHAEL

Annie just stop—

MAX

Alright guys, are we readywe ready yet?

ANNIE

Max, ha. Not quite

MICHAEL

I can't do this *(gets up and exits stage right)*

ANNIE

*(Stands to chase after him) Michael! (stops and sinks back into her seat)*

*(Stage lights go black, spot on ANNIE.)*

Michael Vincent Harris, I never saw coming. Four years ago I went for lunch with some friends and he walked in. We had nothing in common. Different tastes in music and movies, he played video games and I read books. He liked going out at night and I was an early to bed/early to rise kinda girl. We had different backgrounds, different values, different expectations for our lives... but in less than three days we had both decided that no matter how much we disagreed on, we could both agree that we wanted to make it work. I fell in love with him faster than I would have liked, but there was no stopping it. I am safe, comfortable, and happy. We weren't made for each other and written in the stars, but we chose each other and continue to choose each other every day. Henry, Max, Tanner... they may be my past, but Michael is my future.

*(Lights come up)*

Michael! Wait! *(gets up again to run after him)*

MICHAEL

*(Enters from stage left)* Annie! I'm sorry honey. That wasn't fair of me

*(ANNIE and MICHAEL meet)*

ANNIE

No! I'm sorry! This is not how I wanted tonight to go at all

*(HENRY, MAX, TANNER enter stage left and stand in a clump)*

MICHAEL

No Annie, I was mad because seeing all of your ex's just reminded me that I didn't get to be the first man to love you, kiss you, hold you. But I will be the last. And that matters much more.

*(gets down on one knee)* Annette Maria Stanton, my love, my best friend, marry me?

ANNIE

Yes... yes I will!

*(MICHAEL and ANNIE embrace and the curtain falls)*

Written By:

Elizabeth Burzumato

# Marka Color Nacional

*CJ Romano*





# Change

change.

this bittersweet feeling  
melts in my mouth  
every precious thing is passing  
waving through a window  
take the moment and taste it  
the river keeps on rolling

this feeling's not forever  
and neither are friends  
this doesn't make the love  
any less lasting  
this doesn't make the loss  
any less-

there is a season for everything, i'm finding  
and like the seasons change  
people change  
perhaps one of the most complex  
and simplest words  
the paradoxical constancy of  
change

Written By:  
Karis David

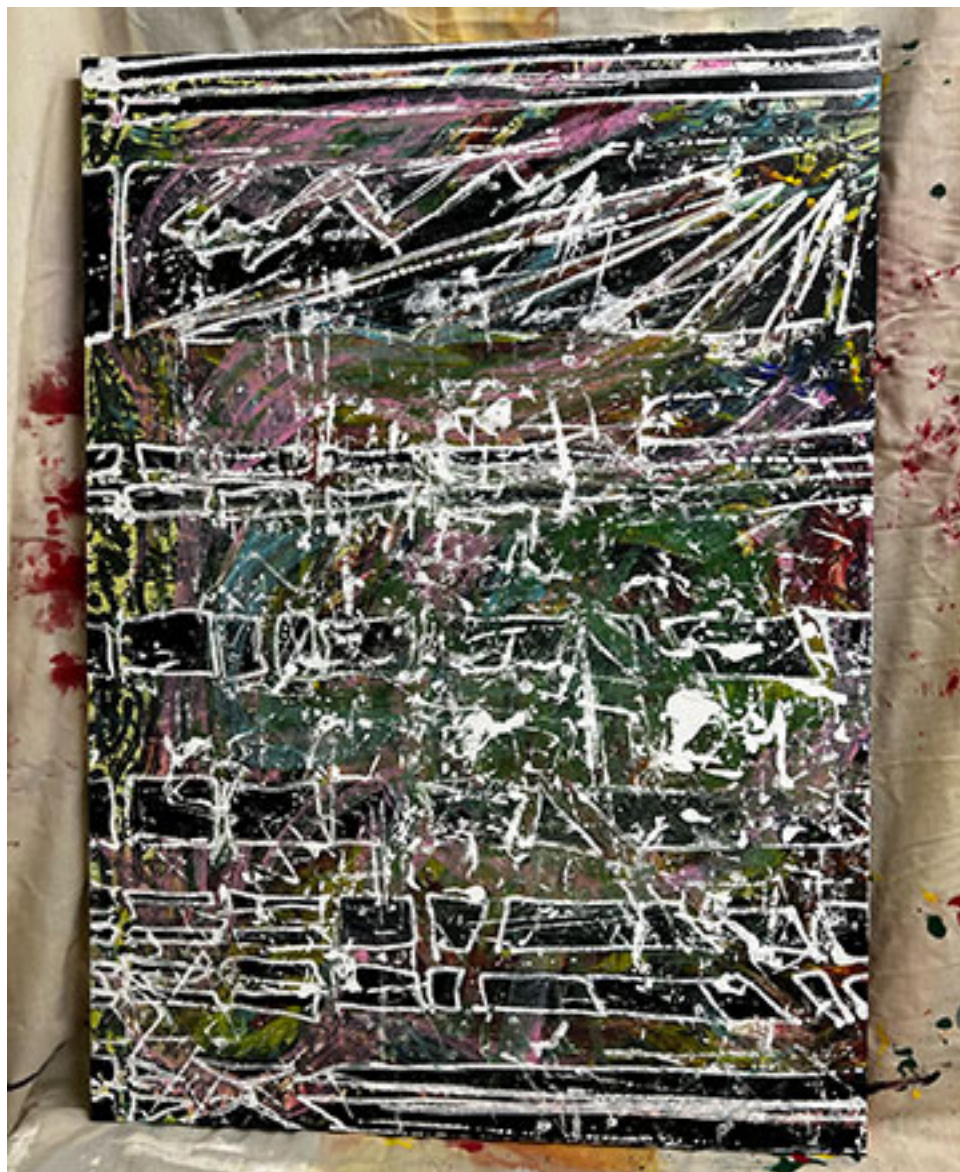
# Dandelions in August

*Larissa Niles*



# Corriente del Bloque

*CJ Romano*





# Ode to My Glasses

I look at myself through the glass  
Two pieces of glass  
So old,  
So old  
A frame that is even older  
Smashed after so many years,  
But the glass still intact,  
Still intact

A piece of me is gone  
Broken with the frame  
Long gone,  
Long gone  
They were my first  
And for years,  
They were the only one  
Only one

Written By:

Samantha Katlyn Herbst

38°2' 51.654" N, 79°7' 11.376" W

Virginia, from the project Passing Still

*Scott Jost*



# Revisiting My Old School

*“All the bells say: too late.” John Berryman, “Dream Song 29”*

Distances are smaller, sound thinner, time faster.  
Trees and fences stretched much higher, in childhood,  
creeks impassable at six feet wide.  
The distance from six to sixty is immaterial now  
because it measures only backward.  
The wet pavement where buses whisked away  
school friends to their exotic homes  
stands bare, as twilight flares and fades.  
Sister, cousin, shadows walk with me,  
phantom whispers of what was  
and never came to be.

Written By:  
S.A. Galloway

37°48' 44.13 N", 79°23' 6.426" W

Virginia, from the project Passing Still

*Scott Jost*



# As I Think Back Through Time

As I think back through time,  
I realize where I have been  
is not where I'm meant to be going.  
I can no longer be the fix-it-all glue you created me to be.

For so long  
I've had to walk on eggshells,  
for fear if I did the "wrong" thing,  
more trouble or headache would emerge,  
and it would be the end of it all.

My opinions and goals  
were placed on the backburner,  
to ensure I could always be your plan B.  
A reliable source to ensure things were saved before the crash.  
My future on hold  
in order to protect YOUR present day.

The past can no longer hold me back.  
MY present needs to focus on striving forward  
to build my own life and purpose  
in a way that will allow me to discover who I actually am.  
And be given the chance to thrive.

With eyes straight ahead,  
nothing can hold me back.  
This is my story now.

Written By:  
Ashley Martin

# Bugatti Chiron

*Ron Alabanza*



# Sports

All sports are different,  
there's the fun ones  
but there's always have some boring ones.

Those baseball,  
softball,  
and soccer games  
are the ones that I often work.

The baseball ones are often the longest,  
but hearing the walk-up music  
liven up the game.

The softball ones are extremely fast paced  
working play-by-play  
makes the two hours go by just like one.

The soccer games are soccer games depending on the team  
they can go fast,  
they can go slow,  
but watching the teams play  
makes it all worth the while.

At the beginning they are often fun  
but you never know what will happen next  
and knowing people on the teams often helps the game go quick.

Baseball, softball, and soccer the 3 sports I enjoy working most.

Written By:  
Jen Chan

# Chesapeake Bay #3

*Scott Suter*





# It's Bigger Than an Oval

## Chapter 11: “Late Nights”

Ms. Waters was 34 years old and worked as a waitress at the local Waffle House. She worked 10 hours a day to put food on the table and keep the lights on in the 2 bedroom 1 bathroom apartment in Detroit, Michigan. Although it wasn't much, it was home for the 2 person Waters family, but it was also very dangerous. They lived in a rough neighborhood of Detroit known as “Hell.” The real neighborhood was called Hallsbury, but nobody ever called it that.

Virginia gave birth to Malik Ace Waters while she was 17 years old, and as a result, she was kicked out of her parent's home and forced to be an adult and a mother all on her own. Virginia found a job at the Waffle House, passed her GED certification, and found her apartment that she still lives in today.

When she had first moved to the neighborhood 17 years earlier, the violence wasn't nearly as bad as it is today. This was something new for her to navigate as well as the growing financial tensions she endured. Ace knew his mom was struggling, so he always tried to help out as much as possible. Whether it was donating his check from working at Walgreens after school and practice or even racing people for money after class. He always tried to repay the one woman who ever loved him unconditionally.

It was around 11 at night, and Ace was still making his way home. The moonlight helped guide his path through the dark Detroit streets representing the beauty in the struggle. The high crime rates and poverty made it difficult to see any good in the place Ace called home. Many didn't make it out of the city, or even survive for that matter, as violence and drug

dealing was the main job opportunity after high school. Ace wanted to go to college, but day by day it became harder to visualize.

How was he going to go to college selling drugs just like everybody else? He began to think of the resentment he held towards his father. His absence led to financial hardships for his mother and him. Although he loved his city and his life, he was stuck at the bottom and he blamed his dad for it.

“Dear Lord,” he softly spoke to himself. “I ask that you provide me with guidance in times of uncertainty, in this time of uncertainty. I know-”

Ace immediately stopped when he saw a man on the track of his high school. A man he hadn't seen before, but knew all too well. Without thinking twice, he hopped the fence separating the track from the sidewalk and yelled.

“WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING HERE?”

The man stayed seated on the metal bench on the football field adjacent to Lane 1 of the track.

“ANSWER ME!”

Ace continued to cover ground towards the man as his anger rose with every step.

“HOW DARE YOU COME TO MY SAFE PLACE? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, YO? YOU WANNA BE A FUCKING FATHER NOW?”

The man jerked his head towards Ace at his last statement and stood as Ace neared the bench he was sitting on. As the two locked eyes, there was a moment of realization for the both of them.

“How'd you know?” the man asked.

Ace was stunned. “Know wha-”

“How'd you know I'm your damn father?”

“The care you showed when you caught me selling dope, the protection you illustrated when they tried to rob me, plus you knew I only lived with my mom and I tell very few people that my dad abandoned us like a coward.”

The last word made the man flinch. He had dreaded this day, but he knew it was coming and there was no running from it.

“Your mother and I were both young,” Ace’s eyes widened as the man began but he didn’t interrupt him. “She was always stronger than I was and it showed. My father was never there for me when I was young and as much as I wanted to be the opposite of him, I wasn’t. I failed you and your mother. I had no job, no money, and I definitely wasn’t going to college so what the hell could I offer my son? What could I offer you?” the man paused as tears began to fill his eyes.

“I didn’t expect her folks to kick her out,” he continue, “and when I found out I searched for her, I swear I did, but she had already moved. I’m sorry Malik-”

“You don’t get to call me that,” Ace said in between deep breaths full of tears. “Only my mother and the people who love me can call me that. YOU LEFT! You don’t love me...”

“I do love you boy! I love you with my whole damn heart. Once you started making a buzz on the track when you ran your first race freshman year, I came running. I saw your mom doing a great job, so why did I need to intervene and get in the way?”

“TO TEACH ME! I had to learn to shave on my own, talk to girls on my own, fight on my own, and now I’m out here selling drugs and you’re telling me you’re proud? Look at what you fucking caused.”

“Son, I know things haven’t been easy for you but hard times break the boy and hard times make the man. I’m sorry for the things you had to do on your own, but I’m proud of who you’ve become. You’re a true man, a good man, more than I ever was or will be.”

Ace was speechless. The two stood there as their tears ran down their faces in river-like fashion. The air was full of tension as emotions ran wild. Ace had been right all along. No need for DNA tests or top secret investigations... he just knew.

“What’s your name?” Ace asked.

“Your mom never told you?” The man emitted a nervous chuckle, “Leroy Hunter, but

most people call me-”

“Malik,” Ace interrupted. “That’s why y’all named me Malik.”

“Exactly. How is your mom doing?”

“We’re broke. I’m not out here selling drugs for my health,” Ace responded sharply. “So you talk to the coach of your dream school and instead of being patient you decide to risk it all?”

*How the hell did he know tha-*

“I know what you’re thinking. Yes, I was at the meet. Matter of fact, I’ve been at every meet you’ve had. I’m surprised you didn’t notice sooner, but I guess when you’re a superstar all the faces look the same.”

“Nah, I just remember the people that’ve been there since the beginning.” The man said nothing. He knew there would be hatred geared towards him and was well aware that he deserved it. He didn’t have an excuse for why he left his only son, he only had his story. Which, in reality, wasn’t ever going to be good enough.

“Hey man, I’m sorry. I’m sorry for abandoning you and your mother. It was wrong and I never considered how much you would have to go through on your own, but one thing I can say confidently is I’m proud of the man you’ve become. If you ever take one piece of advice from me, please let it be this…” the man paused as he turned to walk away. “Stay out the streets, they’re unforgiving.”

Ace watched his dad walk away and, surprisingly, held onto his final words tightly. Although he had no reason to trust this man or his advice, he felt as though his father wasn’t lying to him. Ace had a decision to make, but for right now he had to get home and pray his mother wasn’t awake.

His luck ran out. Ms. Waters waited patiently for her son to return in the recliner near the box television.

“Must’ve been a great dinner baby.” She said softly as Ace locked the door. “Yes ma’am,

we had tacos but they were nowhere near as good as yours mama,” Ace responded.

As much as she wanted to be upset at her son for coming home so late, it was hard to stay mad at him. He had the same charm as his father.

“Malik, you know you could’ve asked to use the vehicle baby. Why’d you go walking to that girl’s house? It’s dangerous,” she said to her only son.

“I didn’t want to waste your gas, mama. It was okay, I was safe.”

“Safe? Baby, the only thing protecting you is God.”

Ace had contemplated for a while telling his mother what he did to earn the money he gave her for the rent, but telling her also meant revealing the firearm he kept handy to make sure his mother didn’t lose her only son. However, before Ace could decide, his mother decided for him.

“Since we’re up and talking, this money you’ve been bringing to me has me worried Malik. I know you work hard, but all of this is not from cashiering. Baby, please tell me you’re not o-”

KLINK!

Ms. Water’s eyes laid onto the jet black pistol Ace placed on the dining table in front of her. She was expressionless as her worst fears had been confirmed.

“Mama the lights have to stay on. We have to eat and we definitely will not get evicted. Not while I’m the man of the house.” Ace paused as tears began to fill his eyes. “You’ve worked so hard and the world has been so unfair to you mom. I refuse to keep letting us get pushed down.”

“Baby, God will always provide.”

“God? God was about to let us get evicted and live on the streets. God has your son standing on the corner moving weight. God has your son 2 seconds away from taking someone’s life.” The weight of all Ace has done came down upon him like a tidal wave. He broke down to both knees on the living room floor as he wept.

“WHERE IS GOD NOW MOM?” Ace said through tears.

Ms. Waters had never experienced her son so vulnerable before. She was aware his strong persona and habit of withholding his emotions would catch up to him. It didn't make it any easier for her to witness. She began to weep uncontrollably as her greatest gift was slowly breaking.

“Malik... God has blessed us. Look at what you're doing on that track. We may not be rich, but God gives his toughest battles to his toughest soldiers. I'm so sorry...” she began to get choked up and was no longer able to emit words.

She ran and dropped to the floor to hug her son tight. Her mind ran wildly, contemplating the things she wished she'd done differently. She was sorry for not picking a better father for her son. She was sorry for not providing a better life. She was sorry for not protecting him from what was to come. She had seen Leroy at every meet since Ace's freshman year, and she knew it was only a matter of time before Ace met him. However, that was a problem for another day. The two fell asleep on the floor, embracing each other.

Written By:  
Da' Shawn Wilson

# Martha's Vineyard Ship Mast

*Scott Suter*



# Standing in Raindrops

I don't find myself amongst rain often  
Many times I avoid it  
But something changes on a soft night  
With only a slight drizzle  
Anything can be changed but everything will still  
Be forever the same

Written By:  
Jordan Phelps





# Con Face With Cara

*CJ Romano*



# Let Today Be Today

Let today be today

Just like you can't change the seasons  
from growing cold  
the wind will go where the wind will blow  
and how the sun leaves and returns as she pleases  
the moon always misses

The two so intimately connected  
yet they keep their distance  
equilibrium is protected

Let it be  
feelings, they come & go  
but today is today  
mountains will move, in their time  
the night is long, but morning's on her way  
all will be well  
today is today

Everything falls down in a landslide  
matter & time  
wildfires burn summer's baggage  
ashes to dirt to rebirth  
babies are born  
drought & downpour  
parents pass  
nothing lasts  
children have children  
the circle of life

feels more like a whirlpool  
all will be well  
today is today

So encapsulated by the physical  
how strange to have a body in search of the spiritual  
somewhere in the atmosphere  
something in the ocean  
somehow in the purple mountains  
an eclipse between body & spirit  
    head & heart  
    senses & intuit  
    together when apart  
    mourning & dancing  
    celebration & grieving  
    the Sun & moon  
    me & you

I can be certain of uncertainty

All will be well  
Let life be life  
Let death be death  
Let today be today

Written By:  
Karis David

# Hear My Prayer

## Intro:

Hear my prayer  
Don't they know  
What they've made of me?  
Hear my prayer

## Verse A1:

It's 8 am  
The day's just begun  
The same thing as yesterday  
The same to be done  
A drill that goes on and on

I cannot see  
I cannot feel  
Everything feels so inane  
When I see myself as lifeless  
And it goes on and on

## Chorus:

Hear my prayer  
You who've shown care  
You who've shown awareness  
Hear my prayer

## Verse A2:

Why must I watch  
Those happy people  
Why must I see

## Chorus:

Hear my prayer  
You who've shown care  
You who've shown awareness  
Hear my prayer

## Verse B:

How can a girl  
Who'll always have it all  
Be so blind and bliss  
And always get the boy  
While I am left in tears

## Chorus:

Hear my prayer  
You who've shown care  
You who've shown awareness  
Hear my prayer

## Outro:

Can you?

Hear my prayer  
You who grieves for me  
You who loves me  
Hear my prayer

Why won't they  
Oh please

This dark and twisted world  
But never say a word

Give me meaning  
Give me life  
Since I cannot feel  
The way others can  
And I'll be silent so they won't:

Why can't they:

Hear my prayer!  
Can't you hear my prayer?  
Please, can you, please  
Hear my prayer!

Written By:

Samantha Katlyn Herbst

# Tranquil Lake

*Larissa Niles*



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# 2023 Student Editorial Board

## Senior Editors

Katelin Carter

*Katelin is a junior Political Science and Professional Writing double major.*

Jen Chan

*Jen is a senior Business Administration major.*

Katelyn Harrison

*Katelyn is a senior History and Political Science major.*

## Social Media Coordinator

Meredyth Rankin

*Meredyth is a senior English major.*

## Publication & Promotion

Malcolm Anderson

*Malcolm is a senior Digital Media Arts major.*

Delaney Broderick

*Delaney is a junior Professional Writing major.*

Jalen Cunningham

*Jalen is a junior Digital Media Arts major.*

Khari Dublin

*Khari is a junior Digital Media Arts major.*

Luis Palacios

*Luis is a sophomore Business Administration and Professional Writing major.*

Samantha Katlyn Herbst

*Samantha is a junior Professional Writing major.*

E. Wyatt Jones

*Wyatt is a Political Science and Professional Writing major.*

Elizabeth Leal

*Liz graduated with a degree in Digital Media Art.*

Valerie Lutz

*Valerie is a sophomore Business Administration major.*

Jordan Marshall

*Jordan is a senior Digital Media Arts major.*

Larissa Niles

*Larissa is a senior Digital Media Arts major.*

Brandon Ramirez-Moctezuma

*Brandon is a junior Digital Media Arts major.*

Kevin Turner

*Kevin is a senior Computer Science major.*

Emily Wylie

*Emily is a junior English major.*



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Department of English

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