



Adrya
literary magazine 2020



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This school year has been unlike any that Rustin (and even the country) has ever seen. I came into this year very excited for all of the opportunities that come my way. As always, I kept myself busy with school work, friends, and extracurricular commitments. I couldn't be more grateful for the time that I did spend at Rustin. However, as disappointing as this situation is, I try to look on the bright side. Due to the stay-at-home order, I found myself with more time—time for which I could dedicate and focus on tasks that I otherwise would not have been able to accomplish. One such task was working on *Idryo*. I have been an editor for *Idryo* all four years of high school, yet I found it difficult this past year to delegate time to putting together the literary magazine. With the newly freed up time, I was able to put together this year's edition. I found that now more than ever it is important to adapt to the world around us and make the most out of a negative situation. I am delighted that *Idryo* drew my attention and that I could keep the literary magazine going.

I would like to thank all of the writers (and photographers) who submitted their work this year. I would like to thank everyone with whom I have worked on *Idryo* since my freshman year. Most of all, I would like to thank Mrs. Turley for running this activity.

Keep inspiring one another to write and create. Let this time be an opportunity for creativity! So, without further ado, I am very pleased to present the 2020 edition of *Idryo*.

Emma Southern
Editor

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HOW TO DREAM

By: Gracy Shivers

Dream so BIG
it **TOWERS** over measly
skyscrapers,
scares away the storm,
and incites fear into those with minds
too small.

Dream so LOUD
that thunder swallows its words
that the steady scorn of naysayers
f a d e s
finally, to the background.

Dream so BRIGHT
the sun seeks shade
and the night sky cries,
unable to block its beam.

Dream so
passionatelyunapologeticallyfiercelyindignantly
that others dismiss it
“impossible.”

And then, you must work.

LAUGHTER

By: Kathryn Douglas

Laughter is a camera,
It imprints moments upon our memories,
Influencing us from afar,
Bringing light upon the darkness.

It shelters us from the horrors of the world,
The terrible things that will implode upon our existence,
Cascading a fog of sadness and tears while demolishing our shield,
If only we let it in.

It holds dear the friends that we call home,
The ones who have been with us through thick and thin
Even when we are separated
By the many miles that quarantine has put between us.

Laughter is a camera,
Capturing only the finest seconds
That seem insignificant until we realize
They are what keep us sane.

TRUTH

By: Christopher Palmer

True Beauty's not a form or sight
Which over time departs.
True Beauty is a way of life
Residing in the heart.

True Love is not a mask to wear
When circumstance permits.
True Love's a feeling freely shared
When caring hearts commit.

True Honor's not a box to check
When others are around.
True Honor is innate respect,
And righteousness abound.

And what is Truthfulness if not
A way to see the world?
Fulfill your virtues as you're taught
To see the future furlled.

TEARS ARE THE HUGS OF LONELINESS

By: Emma Southern

Tears are the hugs of loneliness
A reprieve from all of the sadness
A comforting warmth, felt through your skin
A glimpse return to gladness

To have something there as company
Is to feel, for once, safe and sure
It squeezes you tight, with a catch of breath,
Until it's over and you're alone once more

ANGER

By: Christopher Palmer

A storm in the heart
Of indignation
Marks a malicious start
To rage and vexation

And as ire increases
With enmity and choler
Thoughtful love and passion ceases
While we all begin to holler.

A SIMPLE ERRAND

By: Emma Southern

The mall was rather busy. It had been a little while since I last went to a mall, but Mother had asked me to run an errand for her. And she had asked me to bring my five-year old sister, Molly, with me, much to my chagrin.

I found a parking spot towards the back of the lot. Of course, Molly complained about the extra dozen yards of walking. *Why did I have to take her along for this, anyway?* I rolled my eyes.

We entered through the food court. Big mistake. With just a step into the mall, the barrage of smells instantly hit, and Molly started nagging me for food.

“Maggie, I’m hungry,” she whined. “Can we get pizza? Ooh, or how about a burger? Wait! I want a milkshake. And a pretzel. Maggie, can we? Can we?” Her attention flitted from one restaurant to another. Not a single thing was good enough for her. She had to have it all.

“Calm down,” I told her. “We can get some after the errand.” I paused. “But only if you behave.”

She seemed about to protest but then thought better of it. She grabbed onto my hand as we walked through the crowds of people buying food.

We passed a family of six—one father and five kids, all vying for attention; we passed an elderly couple, hunched and wrinkled; we passed another couple—two teenage boys holding hands; we passed a young woman talking on the phone in another language (Italian? Portuguese? I had absolutely no clue). Molly stared at all of them. And I couldn’t help but take a peek, myself, even though I knew it was rude to stare. There were so many people, all going about their day, the only thing on their minds being food. My mind roamed elsewhere, thinking of the task ahead. I couldn’t help it.

Just before emerging from the chaos, an Asian man approached us. He wore an apron and uniform for the Chinese restaurant in the food court.

“Would you like to try?” he asked enthusiastically. He held out a piece of chicken on a toothpick. Before I could politely protest, Molly grabbed the toothpick and bit off the piece of chicken.

“Mmm. Vat’s goob,” she said with her mouth full.

“Molly,” I said out of the corner of my mouth. “Don’t speak while you’re eating.”

“Oh. Sowwy,” she responded sheepishly, still chewing.

I gave the man an apologetic smile before dragging Molly along.

I checked the map for the store we were looking for, and we began walking. Though the store was small, I could see that it was busy inside. The chain was popular and well-known.

Molly and I entered and joined those already waiting in line. She grew antsy by the minute, her grip on my hand strong—stronger than any child’s grip had the right to be. She kept tugging on my arm, trying to pull me away.

“Quit it, Molly!” I scolded. “Just be patient for once.”

“But this is *boring*,” Molly whined. “I don’t *want* to stand here and wait.”

“Then go sit over there by yourself,” I said, gesturing to the bench against the wall.

“But I don’t want to be alone,” she pouted.

“Well, that’s your only other option.”

Molly released her grip on my hand (what a relief!) to cross her arms and sulk in silence.

I paid her no attention. I had to be the adult here, even when I was also growing tired of waiting. I couldn’t admit defeat.

Yet a minute passed and we still hadn’t moved at all. I peeked my head around the people in front of me to see how much further we had to go. There were about six people in line. All of them were older than me—a middle-aged man who was nervously twitching every few seconds; an elderly woman in a wheelchair, clutching a photograph of a young man; a woman dressed in a suit with a briefcase in hand

(perhaps a CEO?); two men with leather jackets, sunglasses, and motorcycle helmets; a seemingly normal woman in her early 30s—all of whom had plenty of time to live, to make friends and enemies. They all probably had more reason than me to be here.

I squirmed, feeling out of place. Waiting in line was making me anxious.

Am I doing the right thing? Should I even be here?

Just then, the middle-aged man at the counter slammed his hands on the counter. Everyone in line (including myself) jumped in alarm.

“Well how about I just give you your own name instead?” he yelled at the woman behind the counter. She looked unimpressed.

“Sir,” she replied, “if you continue to threaten me, I will call the mall security.”

“Don’t bother! I’ll show myself out!”

With that, the middle-aged man stormed out of line, pushing people as he passed and barreling into the door. As the door swung shut on his way out, the store remained silent.

A few moments passed before the clerk called the next customer to the counter.

We moved up in line, but I was beginning to feel more anxious. As Molly and I waited (Molly still gave me the silent treatment, though she seemed more timid since the middle-aged man stormed out), I thought of what I was doing. I thought of my parents. My mother, who stuck around even when she was in one of her moods. I would do anything for her. My father, who only contacts me a few times a year and who started a new family that was worth caring for. I thought about what this would mean for them, how it will affect them, why this had to be done.

When we were next in line, I pulled out the money Mother had given me when she sent us on this errand for her.

“I know how much it costs,” Mother had said. “So don’t spend the change. I’ll know if you did.”

And I never disobey Mother. It never ends well when you get on her bad side. And I suppose Father had.

The woman in front of us finished her transaction. I stepped up to the counter. Molly didn’t move. I grabbed her by the arm, dragging her forward with me. She resisted but did not verbally protest.

“Don’t make me pick you up,” I hissed at Molly.

She scrunched up her face and stuck out her tongue but ultimately walked forward.

“I’m sorry about that,” I apologized to the woman behind the counter. “My sister can be such a pain.”

The woman stared blankly at me.

“Ummm...well, I’ve never done this before. How exactly does it work?” I asked warily.

“Give your name, their name, and choose a means from this catalog,” she gestured toward a catalog on the counter. Her voice was monotonous. Bored. “I record the details in our database.”

“Oh...okay. Well, I’m here on my mother’s behalf—“

“No,” the clerk said flatly. “You cannot complete a transaction for someone else. It must be you.”

“Oh...” I hesitated. I wasn’t sure if I could go through with this. It would be attached to *my* name. It would directly be tied to *me*. And Mother knew this when she sent me here. She has used this service enough times before; she must have known I would have to do it on my own. She must have known I would still do as she asked.

“Will you still be doing business with us?” The woman asked, not in the least actually curious of my response.

“Yes. Yes, I will.”

“Name?”

“Margaret Meadows.”

“Do you have a form of identification with you?”

“Yes, I have my driver’s license. Do you need to check it?”

The woman nodded. She reached out her hand before I had even gotten out my license. I fumbled with my wallet, fully aware of her impatience. Finally, I handed it over. She glanced at it briefly, scanned the bar on the reverse side, and handed it back.

“Recipient?” she continued with her checklist of questions.

“Joshua Meadows.”

Molly looked up. Apparently she had been listening. “What about Daddy?” I shushed her.

“Method?” the clerk continued.

I skimmed through the catalog. There were so many options!

“Hmm...I think I’ll go with option F09.”

“Would you like to include a signature or final message?”

“Yes, please. A signature.” Mother had said to make sure to get a signature. She wanted him to know who this was from. She said that he’d understand.

“That will be \$2,499. Cash, check, or card?”

“Oh. Cash. Yeah. Just let me get it out.” I reached into my pocket, pulling out the envelope my mother had given me this morning. Inside the envelope were stacks of cash, all of the bills still crisp from the bank.

The clerk snatched it from my grip and counted it. She ran them through an anti-counterfeit device. She seemed disappointed that they were all real.

“And would you like a memento?” asked the woman.

“Yes,” I answered, following mother’s instructions. “His ring.”

She typed, adding notes to the file.

“Expect this to be completed within two to three business days. You will be notified when the target has been neutralized. Thank you for doing business with us. Come again, soon.”

“Uhh...well, thank you.”

I walked away from the counter and out of the store, Molly following me.

“What was that all about?” she asked.

“Don’t worry about it,” I answered. *She wouldn’t understand, anyway. She’s too young.*

Molly seemed about to protest but then her stomach grumbled. She shrugged. “Can we go to the food court now? I’m *starving*.”

I was relieved that she didn’t ask more. “Sure. I’m starving, too. Let’s go back to that Chinese place.”

THE OCEAN

By: Christopher Palmer

Soft billows deep with currents wide
Meet offing, brine, and flux.
Determined waves create the tide
Eternally in crux.

A wave is strong beyond belief
Its push or pull could kill!
And yet the ocean gives relief
When her waters are still.

THE CHANGING CLIMATE

By: Rebecca Klagholz

The moon was nothing but a bystander
The creators lay as peaceful as summer evening
It sees the Earth change day by day
Year by year

The ocean roaring in pain
The tide rising as fast as night falls
Was once home for all sea life
But now the home of wasteful trash, too

The rainforest standing tall but not for long
The trees vanish as fast as shadows
Was once filled with life and growth
But now is replaced with homes

The arctic, silent until hurt
Icebergs fall like the leaves in autumn
Was once ice covered and below 0 degrees
But is now melted

A TREE

By: Christopher Palmer

A sapling, so precious, we plant.
And a tree, in freshness, God grants.
We look to the sky and see leaves
With cent'ries of tales in the breeze.

Greenery, in these woods, resides
Where creatures, understood, abide.
We trip over roots and branches,
And still, the forest advances.

A TREE'S JOURNEY

By: Molly King

From a sapling
A tree grows
Years go by and seasons change
Through sun, darkness, calm, and storms
The tree stays standing
It grows and grows
Takes in the world around it
Oxygen allowing it to breathe
 To thrive
The sun causing its leaves to turn green
Only for it to betray them
The tree loses its leaves
Through the dark days of winter
 Barren
The tree never losing hope

Spring comes around
Like it always does
Lush green leaves filling out the bare branches
Once again
 Alive
All is well
Calm
Dark days left behind
The tree stays standing
 Thriving
Only for it to lose its leaves again

FOREST

By: Maeve Bonass

Fear is a slow-moving Fog,
the Fog that creeps up behind you
during your walk through the woods.

it catches you.

The Fog billows around the mossy path,
under branches,
between the bushes,

until all you see is Fog.
you are blinded.
you panic.

Fear,
it's everywhere,
getting thicker and thicker until,
you feel like you're choking.

then,

you Fall.

HANGING OUT IN THE NIGHT

By: Amy Yang

The stars shine bright.
It's a gorgeous night.
The leaves whistling in the breeze.
Earthy smells all over.
Sweet, cold ice cream.
Slowly melting down the cone.
The spiky grass against your palms.
Leaning back to see the stars.
The illuminated moon,
Bringing light to the darkness of peace.
Silence...
Soft breathing...
You look over.
Black hair.
Brown eyes.
Peering up to the night sky with you.
That's what I want.

FIRST SNOW

By: Taylor Krafchick

They drift through life,
White Specters across the screen,
A vicious bite, a cold embrace,
Heralding more of the same,
Floating softly dancing together,
The world slowed as they came,
The water stopped moving,
The ground turned to rock,
And they floated down, more of the same
Down upon the ground
And the children at their windows,
Need only glance out once to know,
It was winter's first snow.

SPRING

By: Christopher Palmer

Budding and flowering greenery
Establish a vernal scenery.
Beginnings of seedtime,
Seasonal and sublime,
Leads to the use of machinery.

MUSICAL BUTTERFLIES

By: Sarah Porter

Sweet melodies of
Music
Dance in the air
Like blissful butterflies

The music flies through the air,
Each note like the
Gentle
Flutter of fragile wings

Soft
And
Soulful,
Yet loud
And
Lusty.
Each rhythm and rhyme
Speaking
LOUDER THAN WORDS EVER COULD

KING ARTHUR – 5 MOVEMENTS

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

By: *Emma Southern*



SOFTBALL

By: Grace McCabe

I swagger up to the plate.
I acknowledge the umpire and
I tap the plate twice, my lucky charm.

The pitcher starts her windup.
I see the ball coming out of her hands.
I get ready to hit it.

I see the ball coming in towards me.
I have a second to decide what to do.
I try not to close my eyes as the ball screams at me to hit it.

I quickly twist my back foot,
Throwing my hands towards the ball.
I make a connection with it, hearing the crack of the bat.

I drop the bat promptly
I let my feet take me to the base,
Like two magnets being pulled together.

The ball is over the fence.
I jog around the bases in no rush.
I swagger off the field to a dugout full of happy players.

PRE-RACE THOUGHTS

By: Sofia Piccone

You find yourself
shoulder to shoulder,
standing at the start line,
unready for what's to come,
but knowing you will all be fine,

You touch
the rough red surface,
with your bright neon shoe,
edging closer to the white line,
where the starter will call you to,

You hear
chatter of competitors,
fence lined with your team,
stands are full of cheering fans,
right next to you they may seem,

You taste
chocolate, coffee, candy,
your last few sips of water,
the victory that lies before you,
the mountain of ice cream for after,

You smell
the 100 plus yards of turf,
and food from the snack bar,
or surrounding scents of sweat,
traces of Gatorade are never far,

You feel
a warm spring breeze,
whisking through your hair,
butterflies within your stomach,
and the sun's bright beating glare,

You see
six lanes before you,
the inside the smallest one,
you must make four times around,
the faster you go the sooner your done,

You think
tripping falling scraping,
an elbow deep in your ribs,
burning in the last 200 meters,
or losing the numbers on your bib,

You imagine
enduring sprinting passing,
adrenaline circulating inside,
crossing the finish line in first,
your pride is way too hard to hide,

You find yourself
still standing at start,
ready for what is to come,
so when the starting gun fires,
all you have to do is ready, set...

Run

A BOOKSHELF

By: Kathryn Douglas

Glossy, dark wood meets my eyes,
Spines of bright color provide a surprise,
Each one holds untold secrets inside.
The scent of crisp paper, my nostrils confide,
My hands explore the carvings along the edge,
Together forever, I solemnly pledge,

I delve deep into novels and stories galore,
The new lives that I'm loving could never be a bore,
My tears are salty as characters perish,
Our moments together will forever be cherished,
A crinkle of pages is how time is measured,
My beloved books will always be treasured,

For as soon as I'm done,
There are more battles to be won,
I can start at the beginning,
My 'to read' stack is never thinning,
There will always be more books to devour,
From the bookshelf that is covered in carved flowers.

I'M MISERABLE

By: Kathryn Douglas

Poetry makes me mad.
I know it's supposed to be rad.
Rhyme schemes don't feel right.
They trigger my fight or flight.
What the hell even is consonance?
I couldn't tell you that.
I wish I could be anonymous.
Then I wouldn't have to deal with chitchat.
Repetition kills me.
Why must you be beastly?
I don't understand and I don't want to.
It really makes me blue.

Poetry is unnecessary.
I'd rather be eating a blackberry.
It's hard to read.
There's no sense of speed.
God, just let it go.
Songs are nice on the radio,
But that is actual music.
You really need good acoustics.
I'm getting off topic.
I'm going to stuff this poem in my pocket.
My point is I'm bad at poetry.
I'll call the publishers on my rotary.
I will tell them to not publish it
Because who would want to read this?

Dear all other poets,
You guys are oh, so heroic
I'm sorry for hating on your work.

COFFEE! COFFEE! COFFEE!

By: Macey Hoffmann

Bottoms up! Mugs in the air!

Drain

The

Bitter,

Sweet, or

Creamy

Elixir.

Down,

To the

Very

Last

Drop.

The elixir of life, activity, movement.

The fuel in your tank,

The adrenaline in your veins,

The pep in your step.

From a

Single,

Miniscule bean

Obliterated into dust,

mixed with water.

To a thin, dark potion.

A potion that powers,

The mind,

The body,

The soul.

Certainly, no elixir to make you slow!

GOVERNMENT

By: Chris Watson

Government is an ecosystem
a fragile dependence among life forms
a competitive circle that seems to form a balance.

Something new inevitably tips the scale
it seems to be insignificant
no one sees the necessity of fighting it off.

Soon, the seemingly weak have full control
they make everything their prey,
and act as the ultimate predator.

They will soon destroy the existing ecosystem
alienating everyone around them
until this powerful leader loses footing,
destroying the ecosystem.

THE WAITING ROOM

By: Emma Southern

The mood changed as soon as I walked through the doors. The tension was tangible. Children, teens, adults. All here for a reason. Hoping for a better future, a future of insurance and safety in the country they already call home.

Immigrants who have reached citizenship. Immigrants who aren't so lucky. Immigrants who need paperwork and formalities and government approval. Or immigrants like me, who are already citizens but await physical affirmation in order to confirm their validity.

The room was swarming. Not with insects but with humans. The whirring air conditioning and electricity was an easy-to-neglect buzz in the background, loud enough to propel forth louder voices but quiet enough so as to not be distracting. The rows upon rows—front-to-back and some along the wall—were made of hard plastic. The plastic that makes your legs stick when you wear shorts on a hot day. It seemed that two-thirds if each row was full—a few empty seats left between strangers. Chasms between cultures. The aridness of the outdoors had begun to seep through the walls, the air conditioning not quite up to par, making the waiting room uncomfortable—that is, more uncomfortable than having to wait in anticipation for the government to finally do something. Every minute it seemed a beep would sound, signaling a new member of the waiting committee about to join after being led through the metal detector. Languages other than English were being spoken casually. Spanish, maybe Arabic, Chinese. Where have they all come from? Why are they here today? Dozens upon dozens of restless spirits, being suffocated by the waiting room. It reminded me of The Beatles song “Eleanor Rigby.” “All the lonely people / where do they all come from? / All the lonely people / where do they all belong?”

The air seemed heavy, another weight upon these people's shoulders. The world represented in this room, through toddlers and through elderly, through parents and through teens.

A wail escaped from a child, the cause of the outburst unclear, upsetting another child. A chain reaction. Crying and screaming echoed off the blank cream walls. The small boy, dark-skinned and curly-haired, the instigator, was appeased with a toy. A dinosaur, speckled green and brown with ridges up and down its back. A triceratops? Possibly. I couldn't say for certain. Though I can't imagine it mattered at all to the little boy. His cries forgotten; his focus shifted. All that existed was the dinosaur. The hard, plastic toy groped in his hand, dancing across the plastic seats, an adventure being formed in the boy's head for the creature. Does he even understand why he is here? That soon, when the people in the waiting room are no longer waiting, he will have no reason to be questioned for being here, except every reason created by the bigots who have made his presence here necessary.

FIRST LOVE

By: Christopher Palmer

My Love has never meant so much to me;
Its meaning was confined to all I knew.
I'd known True Friends; I'd known Sweet Family,
But definition came through knowing You.

The Time we've shared has been beyond my hopes;
Your Beauty is above what I could dream,
And so Our Love has gone beyond the scope
Of all I could expect True Love to mean.

But time is slowly mocking our Sweet Love,
And circumstance is teasing You and I.
Such Love could not be meant to live above
The Dreams that You must follow off awry.

Whatever fate may plan, or future bring,
Your Love means more to me than anything.

NEW

By: Emma Southern

Posing for the camera
Unexpected, off guard
Yet still full of love
Newly settled in
To the suburban house
A two-story building,
Three bedrooms, two baths
Enough to start a family
And make a life for herself
 and the man taking the picture of his newly wed bride

She was beginning the next chapter of her life
Hundreds of miles from the place she had called home for twenty years
From familiarity and expectations
Free to learn and grow and to forge new connections
Frightening but exhilarating
Unknown but fresh
Different
New
Everything new but her heart and to whom her heart belongs

Posing for the camera
Blouse tucked, hair trimmed, skirt pleated
Dressed ready to face the unfamiliar world with her love
Her love
Her love

AFTERMATH

By: Jade Burriss

He thought He was a saint
i went along with it
for my own curiosity
into His human psyche
it was indeed interesting
to have a “significant other”
but i didn’t feel down
when He gave me the news
i was indifferent
impartial
bet He thought i would cry
or become flushed with feelings
i’m not one to get emotional
over unimportant events
He was surprised by that
shocked even
He became annoyed
that i wasn’t trying
to crawl back to Him
like a baby to its mother
i laughed
in my mind
for we were no longer “a thing”
turned and walked away

glad i left Him

She thought She was superior
i wonder why we dated
then i remember
i did it for my enjoyment
She was a loner nerd
thought it would be fun
interesting even
She displayed little emotion
throughout our time together
friends said She was lucky
to even have a chance with me
i agreed
She used logic and science
in our conversations
boring
the day i said goodbye
She almost looked relieved
i thought She would
at least pout
frown
instead i got a
cold dead stare
She walked away from me
too good for Her anyways

glad i left Her

PENELOPE

By: Emma Southern

Ev'ry day, the burden
Carried alone and in secret
Pulling at my heart
My one and only true weakness

Her face still clear in thoughts
The way she tells stories of past
Fingers on piano
But such beauty can never last

I held her as she passed
Years of hardships all led to this
A tear rolls down my cheek
As I say goodbye with a kiss

Ev'ry day, the burden
Of knowing how she lived and died
I told her I'd be strong
The last words she heard, and I lied

By: Katy Ricketts

They say. . .
that difficult things challenge us to be better
that we grow from death
that what doesn't kill us makes us stronger
but,
what if I don't need to be challenged
I don't need to grow
I am okay with being weak
If that means I can have my mom back.

But eventually life goes on.
And as time passes by,
Pain turns to promise
Helplessness turns to hope
Death leads to growth
So maybe, They were right. . .

COCO

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

By: Emma Southern



SALVATION

By: *Hope Geissler*

The fog had enveloped the city. It was so dense and white that the little boy would have gotten lost in the white nothingness if it weren't for the hand gripping his arm. The hand's nails dug into the boy's arm and dragged the boy through the streets. The boy rammed his shoulder into the corner of a building. Before he could cry out, the hand pulled the boy forward into the nothingness. The boy couldn't keep up with the long strides of the hand's owner. The hand weaved in and out of the crowds of people as if they didn't exist. The boy was not so graceful. The hand slowed allowing the boy to catch his breath.

Discombobulated, the boy wasn't sure where the hand had taken him or what it was planning. A light suddenly cut through the fog like a knife to hot butter. The boy, squinting at the burst of light, was able to make out the hand's owner. A tall man and in his other hand was the source of the light. A lantern. The lantern swung back and forth, squeaking. The boy looked around hoping the new light would disclose his location, but the nothingness was too dense. Suddenly the sound of waves crashing and the stern of a boat sliced through the fog causing the boy jumped. The hand's grip on his arm tightened slightly.

The fog slightly cleared, allowing the boy to discover his location. He stood at a pier guarded with dark iron rods. He could see the lights of the buildings across the water, glowing in the night. Without the cover of the fog, the boy was able to make out the boat. A schooner. The ship elegantly maneuvered so it lay up against the iron rods.

"Get on," the tall man ordered.

The boy was shaking. He felt the man's strong grip loosen, but the boy didn't move. The tall man gave him a nudge towards the edge of the pier. He slowly climbed over rods. He put one foot on the schooner to steady himself and then pulled the rest of himself aboard. The deck of the boat creaked under the boy's feet as he turned to face the man that had taken him. He glanced down at the water trying to find a way to escape.

"I wouldn't do that," the tall man warned as if reading the boy's thoughts.

The boy, who could feel the tears welling in his eyes, sank to the floor of the boat. His head swirled with confusion and fear to the point where he began to weep.

A sob caught in the boy's throat when he heard the deck creak rhythmically. Footsteps. The boy cowered towards the side of the boat as if seeking its protection against the noise. A pair of black boots stopped in front of the boy.

"What's your name?" the boots asked.

"Jack," the boy responded, his voice weak and cracking.

A hand reached down and brushed a tear from the boy's face. The boy flinched as the hand had touched a fresh bruise on his cheek.

"Don't worry, Jack," the boots said, "no one will hurt you like that here."

SHAKEN

By: Dan Yashin

I wake up everyday
From nights that seemed
To last forever
Deprived and shaken
Working constantly

I wake up everyday
With more and more
Work to be done
With more and more
Challenges to be completed
With more and more
Deadlines to be met

I wake up everyday
With the urge to change
And with the knowledge
Of knowing how much time
I have to change

I wake up everyday
Knowing that one day
My struggles will pay off
And that my whole
Situation will one day
Seem like a funny memory

WAS IT EVER REALLY LOST?

By: Jillian Washco

One snap, and the crisp, starry night instantly
becomes blanketed in fresh morning sunrays.
Each ocean wave gently wafts sea salt into the air.
Perfect cascading waterfalls of fantasy clear water
create an overbearing rhythm waltzing into her ears.
Trillions of sand grains guide her path across the beach
as her focus becomes pinned to the melting sky,
to the pastel colors and weightless clouds
suspended above the near-invisible water.
Waning are the blues into hues of rose and amber,
gradually mixing themselves upon the sky's palette.
Happiness trails behind her every footstep,
delicately wrapping her mind with tranquil thoughts.

The ring

tiptoed around her finger,
spewing glamour from each edge.
Mosaic diamonds pieced together
to create the tiny work of art
dancing round and round.
Until it misstepped.
One too many turns and
the ring silently bounced off
into the infinite lands of sand.
Alone now in the abyss of grains,
the ring lay waiting,
waiting even as the woman walks off
blind to the heartbreak
that just changed her life.

One snap, and the warm, lively day instantly
becomes blanketed in cool, starry darkness.
Each passing minute spreads a new layer of nightfall.
Perfect cascading waterfalls of restless water
create an overpowering rhythm filling the girl's ears.
Trillions of frozen sand grains glide the girl along the beach
as the girl's focus becomes pinned to the reducing sky,
to the aurora of shadows and heavy clouds
suspended around the glistening moon.
Waning pinks become deep charcoal and indigo,
increasingly mixing themselves upon the sky's palette.
Feelings of distraught pace behind the girl's footsteps,
racking the girl's brain for energy and adventure.

The ring

peacefully slept in the sand,
sparkling only in the moonlight.
Lavish diamonds pieced together

to create the tiny work of art
concealed by the night's presence.
Until it caught the girl's glance.
The sheer beauty drawing the girl closer,
entrapping the girl into retrieving the ring
from the infinite lands of sand.
Giddy now with the weight luck,
the ring pulsated around the girl's finger,
twinkling even as the girl zips home.

Glowing veins now lead to the girl's heart,
forever changing the girl's life.
Was it ever really lost?

THE HARDEST GOODBYE

By: *Carlee Hontz*

There we were,
Learning the alphabet,
Which color is which,
Moving up grade by grade.

Onto grades 6 through 8,
Judgement, lies, gossip
Who is friends with who?
Drama taking over our lives

Freshman year comes along,
Timid, nervous,
Yet excited for the journey ahead
Finding our place in this new place

Amazing friends and even better memories,
Football games screaming at the top of our lungs.
Spirit weeks, pep rallies, and dances,
Moments to cherish for the rest of our lives.

We may have not gotten everything we wished for,
And it may have been cut a bit shorter than we hoped,
But how lucky are we to have something
That makes saying goodbye so hard?

SPIRALING STAIRCASE

By: Shreya Sehgal

Spiraling Staircase
When does it end?
A ceaseless climb
Feet pounding on the stairs
to get to the top
Sweat trickling down my back
it never stops
CLANK, CLANK, CLANK
I'll never slow
The rusting metal of the stairs,
a familiar smell
I keep on climbing
I feel like I'm in hell
I start to feel dizzy,
my head is spinning
I need to keep going,
but my patience is thinning
Another bead of sweat,
or is it tears this time?
I taste it on the side of my mouth
salty, but I pay it no mind
I grip the rail to steady myself,
I fight against the temptation to stop,
but I keep going,
even as my legs start to throb
I peer up, over the banister,
Where a ray of sunlight shines
It's golden, almost blinding,
but I take it as a sign
Spiraling Staircase
When does it end?
A ceaseless climb,
but I will continue to ascend

By: Tarana Patel

Imagine waking up one day
In the middle of nowhere
You look out the window
And see a lost girl
She stares at you
Wondering how she got here
And she looks deeply into your eyes
Her body shaking
Her lips quivering
A few drops of water start to form in her eyes
She looks down at her toes
Trying to hide her face
She looks up
Her eyes meet yours
And then she is gone
And you realize that she was never there
And it was you all along.

FROM TOY TO GROWN UP BOY

By: Merek Cometa

It is crazy to think
That once upon a time
Jerry's bedtime
Was only at nine
It is crazy to think
He flew his spider man kite
Now he and his friends
Listen to music all night
It is crazy to think
Of Jerry as a baby
When he actually drove
His poor parents crazy
But they loved his playful energy
And their beautiful baby
Except for the clouds of baby powder
Making them hazy
It is crazy to think
About how times have changed
How those Disney movies
Will never be the same
At least Jerry still loves
iCarly and SpongeBob
And family dinners
With corn-on-the-cob
And it is crazy to think
About how big Jerry got
How his taunting appetite
Won't be tamed by tater tots
Jerry is now fourteen years old
And very well taught
But he still gives hugs
To his beloved mom and pops
It is weird to think
Of him as somewhat mature
When he is still getting in fights
With his teenage sister
It is crazy to think
About how he became so cool
And as a freshman
He is now the talk of the school
And to think his friends
Once called him a fool
Well, his filter is
Very, very miniscule
But it is crazy to think
That he is looking at college
When only a few years back
He didn't have much knowledge

Now he is saying goodbye
And heading towards Yale
While his mom is crying
Remembering when he was small and frail
I guess one last hug
From his parents won't kill
As Jerry heads
To his own adult fairytale

LOOKING BACK

By: Emma Southern

By looking back at time we spent,
I end up missing time we lost
Associating happiness
With loneliness, but at what cost?
It all is just so bittersweet
To have to end it all like this.
So will my memories be spoil'd
By ev'rything that I will miss?
It's hard to understand this clash
That comes between what was and will.
What was already hard to grasp
Becomes much harder, even still.

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