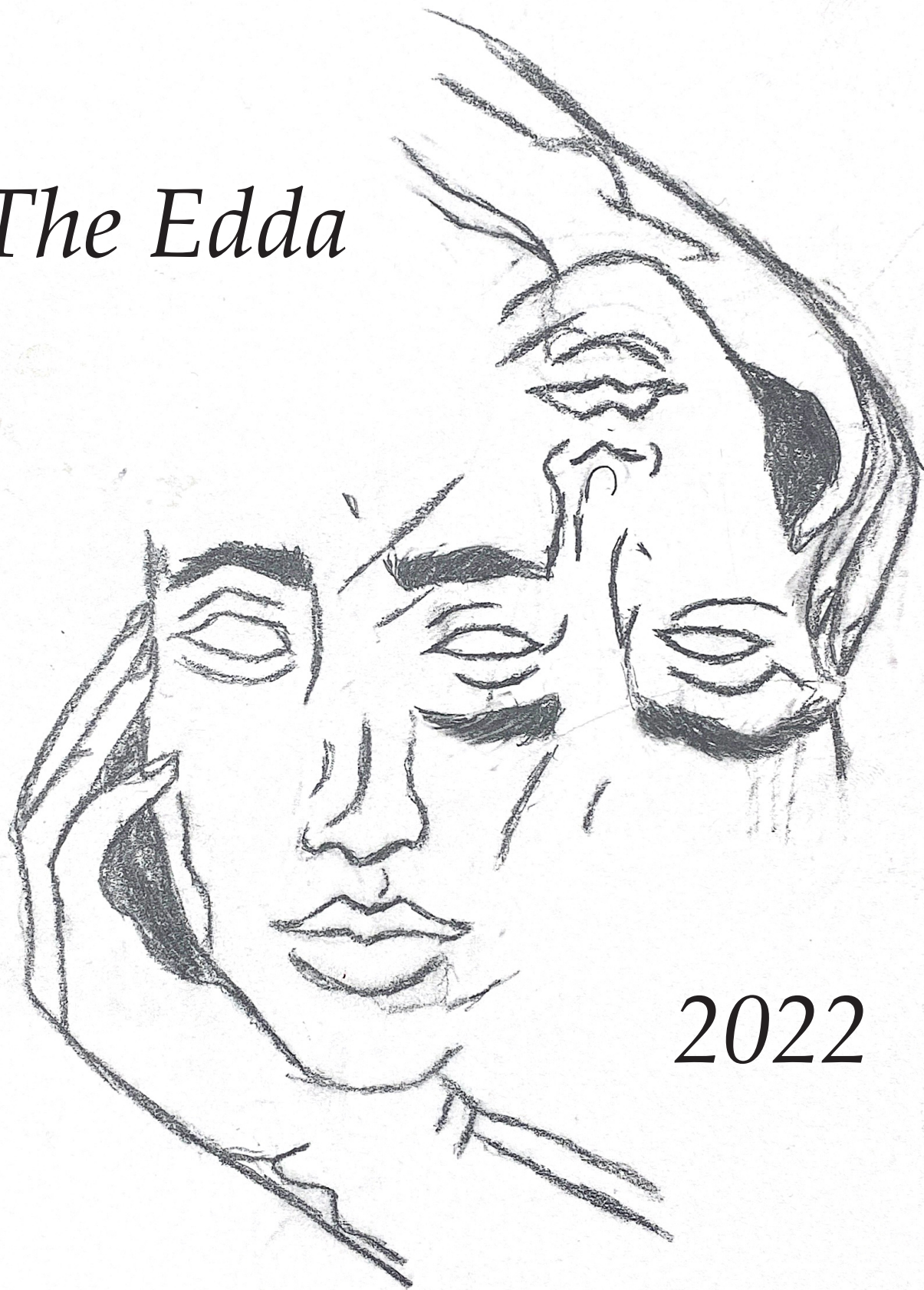


The Edda



2022

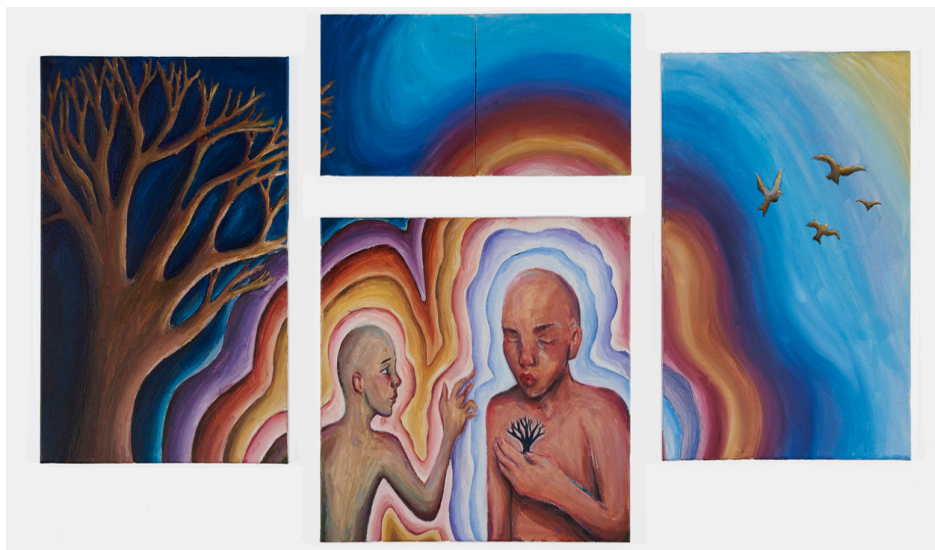
About The Edda Literary Magazine

“Edda” is a word in the title of two collections of ancient Viking poems and stories: *The Poetic Edda* and *The Prose Edda*, and inspired the title of the La Jolla High School Vikings’ collection of their own poems, stories, artwork, etc.

Welcome to The Edda Literary Magazine of La Jolla High School.

This magazine was inspired and worked on by The Edda Club. They inspired each other to write creatively and to make artwork, and solicited contributions from other students via their Instagram account: @theeddamag, as well as posters, bulletin announcements, and appeals to art teachers and English teachers.

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Table of Contents

"How the World Works" by Anissa Nunez.....	1
"Artwork" by Anissa Nunez	1
"The Frog" by Tabitha Hibbs.....	2-5
"Ceramic Artwork" by Anouk Guilhemfouert.....	6
"An Indescribable Feeling" by Anissa Nunez	7
"Artwork" by Anissa Nunez	7
"Artwork" by Sophie Castaneda	8
"Six Ways of Looking at a Boat" by Emma Norris, CJ Maggio, Clayton Fillmore	9
"5 Ways to Look at at School Day" by Sav Garcia, Kiele Smith	9
"Thirteen Lines of Happiness" by Sofia Cardenas, Barbara Gomez, Reagan Aalbers.....	10
"7 Ways of Looking at an Insect" by Zach Foster, Alexandra Fransen	11
"Seven Ways of Looking at a Chair" by Connor Schmidt, Darius Branner	11
"Three Ways to Look at Food" by Santiago Castanon Patron, Jennifer Mitchell, Jonah Figueroa.....	12
"Six Ways to Look at a Family" by Arlene Pedraza Lopez, Karla Cruz, Diana Galeana Torres	12
"Six Ways of Looking at a Cellphone" by Sawyer Moseley, Paige Hench, Stella Hurley	12
"Six Ways of Looking at Yourself" by Sebastian Summer, Javier Ranjel	13
"Love" by Ella Roman.....	14-15
"Teeming" by Elizabeth Parr.....	16
"Paper Model Installation" by Catherine Huang.....	16
"Hope" by Sav Garcia	17
"The Waves" by Sophia Benito	17
"Untitled" by Anouk Guilhemfouert.....	17
"Memory: A Horror Story" by Sophie Castaneda.....	18-24
"Artwork" by Anouk Guilhemfouert	24
"Photograph" by Solaine Bardin	25
"He Fumbled" by Violet Nightingale	26
"Priscilla Chalk Board" by Elizabeth Parr.....	26
"Concentration" by Elizabeth Parr.....	27
"Fresh" by Stella Hurley	28
"Green" by Sofia Lawrence	28
"Red" by Sawyer Moseley	28
"Indigo" by Anais Reneaum	28
"Orange" by Alina Stephan.....	29
"The Tinge of Orange" by Sydney Vaknin.....	29
"Orange" by Hayden Charles Worst.....	29
"Waves of Life" by Alina Stephan	29
"Artwork" by Anouk Guilhemfouert	30
"Traditional Market in Taiwan" by Catherine Huang.....	31
"Plug and Electrical Outlet Series" by Catherine Huang.....	31
"The Sign of Constantine" by Mr. Sam Cisneros.....	32-33
"Artwork" by Anouk Guilhemfouert	33
"Music and Life" by Alex Mahoney.....	34

"Waves" by Emma Norris.....	34
"The Weight of Life" by Carlos Hernandez	34
"Life's a Beach" by Kiele Smith	35
"Printing the Future" by Sydney Vaknin	35
"Balloon" by Violet Nightingale	35
"The Tiger in Me" by Sebastian Summer	35
"Ocean" by Rowan Clark.....	36
"Sunflowers" by Diana Galeana	36
"Wather/Feelings" by Karla Cruz.....	36
"The Highway of Life" by Paige Hench	36
"A Fly in the House" by Elias Manno	37
"The Diamond Lady" by Ella Roman	37
"An Independent Agile Wolf" by Anais Reneaum	37
"Heaven and Hell" by Jesus Valeriano	38
"Loving Everything" by Jesus Valeriano.....	38
"The You I Never Knew" by Ricardo Sanchez.....	38
"Untitled" by Jesus Valeriano	39
"Cafe" by Elizabeth Parr	39
"Oh Love" by David Perez Carachure.....	39
"The Curious Events in Room 19" by Audrey Weishaar	40-43
"Artwork" by Anissa Nunez	44-45

How the World Works

By Anissa Nunez

I don't know what it is about this world
Funny, I say that as if I'm not from it
Sadly, I am
But sometimes I feel like I'm just observing it
Rather than living in it
Like it doesn't matter what I do or the what the next person does
Like I could walk away and nothing would change
The ones around you will tell you that is false
But in reality, nothing would change
The world would still go on
And as time moves on
Others will too
Because that's the how the world works



Artwork by Anissa Nunez

The Frog

By Tabitha Hibbs

"What should I do today?" she asks The Frog who lived on her countertop. The Frog croaks once, twice, but not thrice. "The Market, that sounds perfect," she responds to The Frog.

She dresses properly to go into town: boots to wade through the shin high mud, large pockets to hold what she desired, and the warmest coat that she owns.

The trip into town is long and treacherous, she leaves her small cabin when the sun rises and does not arrive onto the paved streets until the afternoon heat beats down on her. She pinches her nose shut when she walks by the town cesspit, avoiding looking into the eyes of a man dumping his chamber pot.

The town crier is annoying to listen to, Easter Sunday is three days away! He cries, Prepare thyself!

She walks over to the butcher's stand, wrinkling her nose at the pungent smell. "Can I have my usual?" she asks the butcher.

He gives her a long look, "One of these days, Tiff, one of these days." His voice is rough from the war and grating to her ears. And despite his tone, the Butcher still takes her bag of coins.

She takes the dripping canvas bag from his hands, "God be with ye," she says softly.

"How be God?"

She turns her eyes from him, looking down at the floor. Blood seeps through the cracks of the cobblestone.

"God be," she answers, but she knows that the answer does not satisfy the Butcher's curious eyes. "God be with ye," she says again as a farewell, turning around and leaving fairly abruptly. Someone whispers about her a stones throw away, but she tries not to listen.

She takes the long walk back to the woods, her arms burning with the weight of the bag.

By the time that she has arrived at her cabin, the sun is threatening to dip below the horizon. Her legs ache with the strain of walking nearly the entire day, so the small, damp cottage in the woods standing submerged two feet under the swamp water's surface seems like a veritable heaven.

She enters the door with a relaxed sigh, taking off her boots and leaving them on an elevated table near the door. When she places her feet on the cottage's hardwood floor, she wiggles her toes at the mud and swamp residue that floats around the flooded house.

"Where do I leave this today?" she asks The Frog. The Frog lets out a horrid wailing noise, which sounds like the screams of the children damned. She hums, "Alright, thank you." And throws the bag out her open window.

The Frog seems pretty content with that.

"What should I do tonight?" she asks The Happy Frog that lives on her countertop, never moving from its small grove. The Frog looks at her with a solemn stare, "Yes, the walls are filthy," she confirms.

She walks to the cleaning closet of the house, forcing open the closet door swollen with water at the bottom. Inside the closet, from a shelf above eye level, she plucks a scrub brush and bar of abrasive soap.

She gets to work scrubbing the walls, making them presentably sparkling, revealing the beautiful cobblestones and the nice grout. The mud that was caking the walls drops to the floor, turning the swamp water into a sort of sludge.

By the time she finished this task, the sun has risen once more. She knows now that she has cleaned the walls dutifully, and returns the bar of soap and scrub brush back into the closet cabinet. She will need to buy a new bar of soap one of these days, if not to clean the walls, but to clean her blackened heart.

She returns to the room The Frog lives in, blinking blearily and rubbing the sleepless night from her eyes.

"What is the day today?" she asks The Frog with an idle teetering tone, trying not to yawn in The Frog's presence. The Frog puffs up.

"Thank you," she says softly. "Is it market day today?" she asks. "Yes, then I will be going in."

The Frog watches her with appreciation as she puts back on her boots, and retrieves her warmest coat once more. She tries to ignore that her hands and dress are encrusted with mud and the liquid from the canvas bag.

When she exits the house, the sunset blinds her for a moment. The glorious orange shines through the trees, illuminating them the colors of the world. But she does not have all the time in the world to watch the sun, as she would like, so she turns around and makes her way once more to the village.

Even though the journey is just as far as it was yesterday, she arrives when the sun hasn't even risen to the tippy top of the sky. The Frog must have been impatient this day. The town spares a glance for her, she spares a disgusted glance at the horse dung in the streets. They can't even bother to clean their beautiful cobbled plaza.

She makes a bee-line for the Butcher's cart, walking towards him while he is butchering a chicken to entertain his youngest child.

The child looks up at her, but the Butcher shoos the child away, and pays his full attention to her.

But she is not in a talking mood today, she simply reaches into her coat to retrieve coins, and presses them into his hand. She doesn't even bother to count them, but the Butcher looks down at the handful with a concerned glare.

The Butcher looks at her, "I have to ask you, Tiff, where do you get all of these coins?"

"I am blessed."

"Thievery is punishable by amputation." He looks at her with an ounce of kindness, "I tell you this because I am responsible for cutting people's hands off here. I would rather not soil my soul with your blood."

"I am blessed by God."

"How is God?" he asks, "Still in the form God was last?"

She tried to open her mouth, but was unable. She could feel eyes watching upon her soul.

"Tiff." In that moment she could almost remember when he had been her Father, "Do not bring hardship upon our town, our lives."

She looks behind him, fixing her eyes on the town crier rushing in with a red face and

hurried breaths, the Butcher follows her gaze.

The Town crier is especially loud today, The King is dead! By the year of our lord 1349 the King is Dead!

But the Town crier does not announce a new king, she can hear all the old women of the market stalls nearby gossiping about it. They know it is a bad omen, one of chaos. The youngest woman of the elders shouts, "My grandfather died because of the last heirless king, and I will not let my son!"

The Butcher looks into her eyes, as if he can see her guilt.

"Do not bring hardship knocking which you cannot answer."

She furrows her brow, bouncing from foot to foot, "I will answer it when it comes knocking tomorrow morning."

Suddenly, the Butcher throws the filled canvas bag at her, and she has to quickly react to stop it from hitting her coat. She holds the dripping bag at arms' length in an almost comical sight.

"Go answer," The Butcher gruffly orders.

So she turns around from the chaos of town, holds her bag with two hands, and trudges back to her cabin in the woods.

Today, the first signs of her cabin that she sees on her trek back home is the large painted toad statue, half buried in moss. She resolves to destroy that statue when she can; The Frog has never approved of it.

So when she walks through her front door, she doesn't wait before asking The Frog, "Should I remove that statue of a toad?"

'Oh.' She says incoherently, "Then why did you bring me by it?"

The Frog says a novel's worth of words in a single stare, managing to flip one eye-lid inside out and inflate the other eye to unnatural proportions.

"Thank you," she says, but tries not to say it too excitedly, she does not want The Frog to think she is excited to stop working, "I will make sure to sleep so that I may be better for you tomorrow."

She clearly said the right thing, The Frog approves.

So, she makes her way through another water-swollen door of the house, into a small room with an elevated straw mat upon it. Before she slumbers, she makes sure to wash the mud off of her dress so that she may be presentable for the next day. After that is done, she lies down on the cold straw mat, and falls asleep like an extinguished candle.

And dreams a dream of dreaming dreams.

She wakes up the next morning before the sun rises, to a frantic knocking at her door. She stands up, walks into the room with The Frog on the countertop, and starts a small fire in her elevated stove.

"What should I make for breakfast?" she asks The Frog, as whatever is knocking starts to knock louder. "Eggs? That sounds wonderful."

She procures an egg from the hen lay-box on her windowsill, and cracks it on to one of her less dirty pans. The knocks come rhythmically, so she times the stirring of her egg and the praying to The Frog.

Knock.

Stir the pan.

Knock.

Check the wood.

Knock.

Bow to The Frog.

Knock.

Repent your sins.

Knock.

Flip the egg.

So and so until the egg is ready and cooked. She winces as she drops the hot egg into her palm, but quickly eats it from her hand.

Whatever was knocking has started to yell.

Her hand is dirty from the egg yolk, so she washes it in the two-foot-high flooded water on the floor. Her hands come out clean, despite the thick and viscous mud.

She can hear the screaming outside her door.

"What should I do?" she asks The Frog, who stays still.

She bends down to the height of her countertop, and looks at The Frog from eye-to-eye, "Did you say that my life is insignificant in the scheme of reality? That my imminent death means that my life will never be told, that the people around me will shortly forget about me as if I never existed? Did you say that there is nothing after death, that I will die and cease to be, on this world and my own consciousness?"

The Frog looks at her.

"Do you need protection?" she asks The Frog. The Frog croaks once, but not twice nor thrice.

She promptly and delicately picks up The Frog, gazes upon The Frog, and throws The Frog into the fire.



Ceramic Artwork by
Anouk Guilhemfouert

An Indescribable Feeling

By Anissa Nunez

I swear it's almost like an addiction
Your scent
Your touch
Your kiss
You
I don't believe it sometimes
For a split second it's feels like i'm living someone else's life
Like this is all a dream and I'll wake up any second
I crave the feeling you bring me
The feeling of warmth
Of happiness
Of love
It gets worse when I'm alone
Because reality hits me
And thoughts slowly creep in
I might lose you
Today
Tomorrow
Or in a year
But for right now you're mine



Artwork by Anissa Nunez



Art Assignment: To take a photocopy of half of a famous photo, and complete the sketch of the other half.

Artwork By Sophie Castaneda

List Poems

This list poem assignment required students to read a poem by Wallace Stevens called "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" and then to use the poem as the inspiration for their own list poem, working in groups to come up with a topic and to model some of their stanzas after the original inspiration poem.

Six Ways of Looking at a Boat

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Emma Norris, CJ Maggio, Clayton Fillmore

1.
Amidst turning waves
Slowly bobs a boat
Like a beacon in the night
2.
In the domain of Poseidon
Like a god
I sit and fish
3.
On a boat sitting
Motion of the ocean
Throwing out chum
4.
On a boat looking at the sky
Wondering which day I'll finally die
One day I'll find my inner peace
5.
When my boat finally reaches land
I'll lay in the sand
Drinking a piña colada, catching a tan
6.
I'll be brown
Laying on the sand
One day the the boat will come back to me

5 Ways To Look At A School Day

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Savannah Garcia, Kiele Smith

- 1
Waking up early,
Old people love it,
young people hate it unless you're insane
- 2
Getting ready in the morning
Like an automated routine
Ingrained into our brain but in a loving way
- 3
Driving in traffic
Something we all do
But never understand, and never miss
- 4
We never know which to want more
A free first
Or a free sixth period
Both are yearned for, but both are never obtained
- 5
Some see it as a place to learn
To socialize
Or to get away from troubles at home
Some people see it as a place to grow
Or meet new people

Thirteen Lines of Happiness

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black-bird" by Wallace Stevens

By Sofia Cardenas, Barbara Gomez, Reagan Aalbers

1

I woke up with the sunrise
Yellow, orange and red
Sunlight seeps through the window

2

Coffee brewing in the pot
The smell of vanilla creamer fills the air
The flavors melt in my mouth

3

The green leaves falling with grace
The sound of birds flying through the sky
With the summer breeze

4

Opening the blinds
Seeing the bright sky
All my anger goes away

5

Pineapple and strawberries fill the blender
The light smoothie fills the cup with color
The perfect refreshment

6

Laying in the sun as the rays hit your skin
Feeling the summer burn with a cool breeze
The perfect tan on the perfect day

7

A dip in the water
Feeling the coldness touch my skin
The perfect temperature to cool the air

8

My closet makes my day
Picking out an outfit to match my mood
Pink and white to tie it all together

9

Walking out the door
Feeling the cool warm breeze
I know its going to be a good day

10

The waves splashing in the background
The perfect blue washing up to the shore
Shells scattered around as I walk along the sand

11

Lunch with gals
Ordering sushi
Talking about the beautiful day

12

Driving by the clear ocean water
Feeling the breeze
Great way to end my day

13

The sun sets as the brights colors fade away
The cold night sets in as I go back home
The end of the perfect day

7 Ways of Looking at an Insect
inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird"
by Wallace Stevens
By Zachary Foster, Alexandra Fransen

- I.
The fearsome beetle rears
Up to challenge its opponent.
A swift battle commences.
They're like jets in the sky.
- II.
The beautiful butterfly floats
Along in the wind.
Its odyssey lasts its lifetime.
- III.
The ant colony constantly
Bustles like a large city.
Their only duty is to the queen.
- IV.
A fly continues to bump the window.
Only landing for day old food.
Its life is wasted.
- V.
A wasp invades a beehive.
The bees sacrifice themselves
To protect their hive and queen.
Their swift wings overheat the wasp.
It cannot escape the mass of bodies.
- VI.
The flea jumps from leg to leg.
Its journey begins and ends on skin.
The little vampires are difficult to kill.
- VII.
Termites eat your house for fun.
They don't think, they only munch.
Wet wood is their favorite.
You don't know they're there
Until it's too late.

*Seven Ways of Looking at
a Chair*
inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a
Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens
By Connor Schmidt, Darius Branner

- I. A place to sit
 To rest your legs
 A sanctuary
- II. A prison
 where one is trapped
 By the expectations
 Of others
- III. Around the dinner table
 A chair is
 A place of family
 And community
- IV. No place is more dreadful
 Than a chair
 When one is in trouble
 Especially from their parents
- V. A piece of art
 That must be perfect
 For we spend so much time
 Using each one
- VI. A weapon
 Used to clobber others
 In every show ever
 Since TV was made
- VII. A place of authority
 Demanding of respect
 Where one commands all

Three Ways to Look at Food

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Santiago Castanon Patron, Jennifer Mitchell, Jonah Figueroa

1. A dollar and a cookie
 are small
 A dollar 50 and a cookie
 are small
2. The clock is ticking
 The stomach must be hungry
3. At the taste of food
 Sitting in the soft light,
 Even bawds of hunger
 Would cry out sharply

Six Ways to Look at a Family

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Arlene Pedraza Lopez, Karla Cruz, Diana Galeana Torres

- 1 A father and a mother are one
- 2 A mother and some
 siblings are a disaster
- 3 Family comes together
 Always and forever
- 4 In sickness and health
- 5 Some families are big
 And some are small
- 6 Love of family is true

Six Ways of Looking at a Cellphone

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Sawyer Moseley, Paige Hench, Stella Hurley

- 1
To many people a picture has many meanings
- 2
Could our phones hold memories?
- 3
To the person with nothing.
The phone is everything.
- 4
A child and a cellphone is happiness.
Two children and a cellphone is joy.
- 5
The phone is broken and so is the heart.
- 6
The phone
Reflection
We see perfection.

Six Ways of Looking at Yourself

inspired by "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens

By Sebastian Summer, Javier Ranjel

I

A shadow from the light shining above you
Can be only thing you see
If you keep looking down

II

The light is blinding
If you can't stop looking up at it

III

To escape the darkness
And the overbearing light
One must look forward

IV

To look at the present
Is to look at yourself
Not someone else

V

Ahead of all peoples
There is a mirror for themselves
Or many mirrors to look at others
At the price of dropping one's own

VI

Some rip out their eyes to give to others
Some tape their eyes to their mirror
Some keep their eyes where they are



Artwork by Anouk Guilhemfouert

Love

By Ella Roman

Love is the greatest of all muses
She comes down to you and hovers
Her presence inspires making music and art, and poetry feel easy
Love taps you on the shoulder,
As you turn to greet her
She whispers in your ear and entires your mind
She invades your senses,
Sewing seeds in the folds of your mind
She waters them with her sweet words
She travels through your arteries, you feel her in your blood,
How it warms and rushes in her presence.
She will make her way to your heart, where she will build a little home
She will paint the walls,
Move her furniture in,
Hang pictures
As she hammers the nails into the walls of your core,
You will feel little pangs
She will set a fire in your heart,
To keep her warm
It will warm you too, like wine, which she will drink much of
She will occasionally travel up to your mind and watch her crops,
Making sure they grow
She will wait for them to sprout and bloom as the season's pass
Then it will be harvest season
As she labors day and night,
you will find ideas fall from your brain to your mouth
As she is very picky and only takes the very best crop
Soon though,
She will be done,
She will leave you
Hopefully, while you sleep so that you might not notice for a while
Love is cruel though,
As she often picks the most inconvenient times

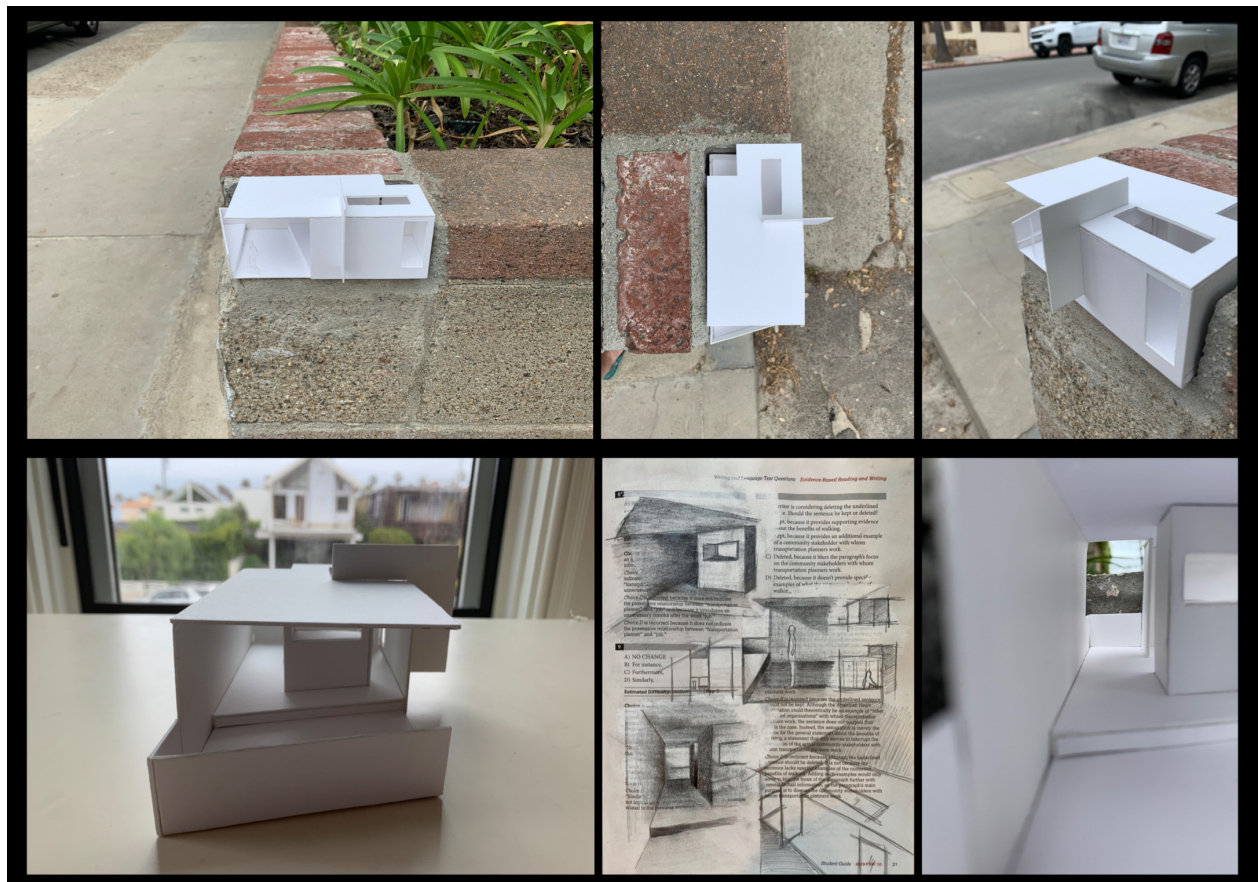
During an important meeting,
A family dinner,
Whenever she feels
When Love leaves it will be cold
Your brain will be barren, like a frosted field

Your heart will be an empty home,
Left behind in a rush, still fully assembled
The fire will die in her hearth with no one to tend to it
Her things will gather dust, but not deteriorate
You will take care of them,
Incase she comes back
Your blood will be frozen,
So it will be you who wishes for wine,
Wanting anything to remind yourself,
Of the sweet warmth she brought
Reason will come and he will try to help
He will not enter softly, like Love
He will crack a hole in your head and try and plant his own crop
Your soil will be barren though
The cold frost will kill his hard work
He will travel through your bones and make you ache
Once he finds his way to your heart
He will take all of Love's things and throw them out
But they won't have been hers anymore
You will own her things,
Use them to cherish and remember her,
Sad artifacts of her presence
You will weep when Reason takes them
When he throws them away carelessly Wrath will come
Wrath will not care for Love, Reason, or even You
He will come in through whichever way is easiest
Most likely, he will go through the hole in your head ,
Melt away the ice that grows on your brain
He will travel through your muscles and make you move
Awakening you from the long sloth that winter brings
He will taunt Reason and they will fight a long battle in your body
Wisdom will whisper to you,
Tell you the answers,
Be too quiet in comparison to Wrath and Reason
You will ignore them
They will leave quietly, perhaps in one of the many tears you shed
Oh, and you will shed tears,
Your soul will weep
As it weeps it will water your fields,
Carry nutrients and minerals to your mind
And as winter turns to spring, your body will warm again
Be born anew

Process Piece

A process piece is when an artist captures the steps (or process) that it took to create the piece.

Process photos of *"Teeming"*
By Elizabeth Parr, mixed media
(collage of sketches, block print, watercolor, acrylic, oil pastel)



Paper Model Installation - Creating a Pavilion Within the Space of a Missing Brick
By Catherine Huang

Hope

By Sav Garcia

Hope is a colorful flower,
That spreads along a dry dead field,
That searches for its need to grow.

Hope is an injured dog waiting
For the wounds to heal.
So that one day it could be playing
With his family.

Hope is a dotted dice
Waiting for someone to roll
High number, so it could make
Someone happy.

Hope is a song
Waiting for someone
To hear the beauty in it,
That makes it speak to the soul.

The Waves

By Sophia Benito

All to be understood—for a Futile second, a
waning pulse Heedful of the ebbing tide Here
is the night sky
Waves part for your call
To a cracked self and mind
No answer shall wait an unwanted presence
The waves stand for an unspoken truth
A conscious left clouded as I begin to drown

Untitled By Anouk Guilhemfouert

1

Oh to be as beautiful as the ocean, that is my
wish.

She is powerful

She is feminine

She creates all life, and brings back all death.

How could a human ever compare themselves
to such grandeur,
Or even it's majestic creatures that flow
around effortlessly.

But I still see it in my eyes, the tinted blue
swish that conceals itself from the world,
I feel connected when I enter the strange dark
waters,
Yet fearful because my fate is all in her hands.

But all I can do is come back, thirsty for more
answers,
And ready to be submerged, even forever if
that is what she wishes.

Because all I can do is love her.

2

There was a time

When I wished the ground would cut off your
legs

And I could sweep you away.

But the floor had no such intentions,
In fact, it had decided to stick you straight up,
like a flag,
Unable to move.

I had it all twisted,
Maybe I should be the one to grab the chain-
saw and quickly breeze through your ankles,
Only for the ground to then blow you away
Down the path of least resistance.

Memory: A Horror Story

By Sophie Castaneda

short term memory loss: *noun*

1. The fact or process of losing the ability to store and remember information.

A lot of things can happen when you're twelve years old. Your view of the world can change in an instant. One minute you can be sitting on the couch watching TV, and the next you can be getting interviewed by the cops. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's start at the beginning.

Hi, I'm Jake Anderson. And if you're reading this, then you have somehow found my secret diary. I know you're probably wondering as to why a 12 year old boy would ever want to have a diary. I mean, isn't that more of a girl thing? Well it can be a guy thing too, I guess. I mean, at least that's what my mom tells me. You see, she got me this diary a few years ago when my parents decided to stop homeschooling me. I was entering Junior High and my mom said that I should have something to write my feelings in, in case I ever got lonely. I was skeptical at first, but decided to bring the diary to school anyway.

Turns out it actually works great! I had to eat lunch by myself on the first day of school because I was too afraid to talk to anyone. So, I brought out my diary and just started writing. I could sense that people were staring at me, thinking that I was some dorky introvert. But after a while, I honestly didn't care. It's become really helpful for me ever since the doctors found out about my condition. I was diagnosed with short term memory loss when I was little. I know when you think of this disease you usually picture it happening to old people or that one fish from "Finding Nemo". But it's a real condition that can occur in children too.

That's actually a big reason why my parents homeschooled me in the first place. When I started showing symptoms of short term memory loss, they immediately decided that the public school teachings would be too confusing for me, and I would just forget all the material. However, at some point, my parents finally realized that I needed to develop social skills as well, so they sent me back. But having short term memory loss isn't all that difficult though. I've noticed that people often confuse short term memory with long term memory. Long term memories are the basic, important facts in your life. Like what your parent's names are, where you live, and who your childhood friends are. Whereas, short term memories are what you ate for breakfast, where you put your school supplies, and what TV show you just watched. These are the things that I have a lot of trouble remembering.

So you can see why this diary might help me. If I ever receive any important information for school, I immediately write it down in my journal so I can look at it later and remind myself. It's a little annoying to have to take this extra step, while all of my other classmates are able to just retain the information. But it's something I've just learned to deal with. There was a time though, when I really wished I had a diary like this. Somewhere I can put my emotions in. This was when my parents first started homeschooling me. I felt so frustrated with the symptoms of my short term memory loss. Everything my parents tried to teach me was so confusing, and I couldn't remember any of it. The worst part was that I was never allowed to go outside or play with my peers. Like at all. It was really weird. My parents said that they were worried I would

get lost or sick. But I guess that was just them not fully understanding my condition.

This was when I started to break out into tantrums and really hate myself for not being normal. This resulted in my parents getting really worried that I might become seriously depressed and try to escape the house. It was that month that my parents decided to buy me a puppy so I would have someone to play with. I remember that month because I had written it down on a scrap piece of paper, so I would never forget the moment my parents came home with my new furry friend. I held him in my arms and decided to name him Rufus.

It's been a few years since that day, and Rufus is now a fully grown German Shepherd. Even as I was slowly starting to make some friends in Junior High, Rufus has always been my best friend. It's not just because he's a good dog and enjoys my company, but it's also because he too suffers from short term memory loss. Well to be fair, all dogs do. Their brains aren't advanced enough to store information, such as what they ate or when they went to the vet. So like me, they can only really recall long term memories, such as who their owners are and where they eat and sleep. This is also a big reason why smell is so important to them.

Dogs become instantly transported back to the short term memories that occurred with a particular smell. It's the whole reason why dogs like to sniff their owner's hand to make sure if it's really them. Knowing these facts just makes me feel even more connected with Rufus. I wanted my parents to have that same connection with Rufus too, however, it turns out that they are both terribly allergic to him. Whenever any of his dander gets near my parents, they would break into a fit of coughing and sneezing.

So whenever they would be working from home or coming back from a business trip, I would have to lock Rufus away in my bedroom so he wouldn't jump on them and make them allergic. However, even though Rufus couldn't interact with my parents, I still wanted him to recognise them as members of the household. So as soon as Rufus was locked away I would take a handful of my mom and dad's old clothes they kept in a box in the closet, and give it to Rufus for him to sniff. He always seemed pleased with the way that my parents smelled, and would constantly inspect a specific spot in the neckline that seemed to be bleached out. I tried sniffing it for myself, but found that it just smelled like a mixer of detergent and almonds.

Now I know you're probably wondering how I'm able to recall any of this. Well, I have been writing down the habits I have with Rufus in my diary. This is the whole reason why I'm able to remember to lock Rufus away when my parents get home. Whenever I hear my parents unlock the front door, I flip through my diary to see if there is anything I need to do with Rufus before they come in. I always thought this system was fool proof, but I couldn't have been more wrong. There came a point where I had written so many entries in my diary that it took forever to find the note that told me to lock Rufus away because of my parents' allergies.

I heard the front door unlock, telling me that my parents were coming home from work. I instinctually checked my diary to see if there was anything I needed to do with Rufus. Unfortunately, because of my messy handwriting and cluttered entries, I was unable to find the note in time. My parents entered the house and, much to their surprise, were greeted by Rufus running towards the door.

"Goddammit Jake, we told you to always lock Rufus away when we get home! We have allergies!" yelled my dad.

"I-I'm sorry I forgot." I mumbled sadly.

It was at that moment that time seemed to slow down. I watched as Rufus crept towards my parents and sniffed their hands and shoes. Even with my short term memory loss, no disease could prevent me from forgetting the horrified look in my parent's eyes when Rufus suddenly showed all of his teeth and launched at them with a mighty growl.

Like I said before, a lot of things can happen when you're twelve years old. And while I don't remember the ambulance showing up to my house, or the funeral reception that happened soon after, I know that if you were to watch the news, you would hear the words:

"Missing Child Noah Johnson found after a German Shepherd reportedly mauled kidnappers, Sheila and Nathan Anderson. Officials state that DNA analysis links certain clothing and personal items to the deceased Sarah and Mark Johnson. Thus reopening the ten year double homicide case file."

"Safety: A Horror Story"

When you're at school, they tell you to never talk to strangers. However, they also tell you that if you ever get lost, you should always seek help from a woman with children. This is, of course, understandable. If one were to think from a lost child's point of view, they would most certainly ask another mother versus a single grown man. Now being a middle aged mother myself, I've had my fair share of briefly losing sight of my kids at the mall.

Now let me tell you, it's a lot scarier than it seems. I'm always so afraid that my kids will ask the wrong person for help and end up getting hurt. You never know who to trust. Luckily, my kids are very well disciplined and know to stay by my side at all times. But I'm not saying I'm an expert. It took quite a while for them to follow my directions at first. Trips to the mall would usually result in my kids taking every opportunity to scream and bolt in the opposite direction. But they know better than to do that now.

I still sympathize with mothers who have uncooperative children. I mean, kids can be a handful sometimes. Waking them up from their nap is like unleashing the devil, and trying to put them to sleep when it's past their bedtime is even worse. Kids are also very sneaky, and will try their hardest to get around brushing their teeth without you noticing. And don't even get me started on their mood swings. Even the slightest thing can tick them off. Whether it be, losing a game of tag or not getting that certain toy from the store, it always ends in kicking and screaming.

But it's all worth it though, just to see them smile. Those moments when they hold your hand and laugh when you go on walks. Or the most precious moment of all, is when they call you "Mommy" for the first time. These are just things that can't be replaced. This is why I can't wait to expand my family further. I'm taking my children to the mall today in hopes of finding another lost kid to take home.

"The Pills: A Horror Story"

"Can you really trust anyone?"

This was the thought that boggled through my mind as I was lying in bed with a thermometer and a cold compress on my forehead. They ask you this question when you are in an

elementary school assembly about the dangers of kidnapping. But like many things in school, they just went

in one ear and out the other. I am now in my forties, and these thoughts have rarely ever crossed my mind. However, I found myself not being able to do much else after I got sick. My husband is an absolute godsend. I don't know what I did to deserve such an amazing man. He's played an excellent nurse ever since I fell ill. He had come home early from work to drive me to the doctors when my symptoms of nausea and paralysis first started. This led to several days of blood and allergy tests in order to find out what was wrong with me. Luckily, it only took the doctors a week to discover the nature of my sickness, which resulted in me having to take a prescription drug every six hours to help with the pain.

I was so grateful for my husband, as he tried to help me lift my spirits. At first, I hated him for doing this. I didn't like the person I became during my illness. I was short tempered and impatient constantly. As weeks went by, my symptoms worsened and I was unable to feed myself. This resulted in my husband having to take a different position at his office in order to work from home and take care of me. I was falling deeper into thought, when my alarm rang telling me it was time to take another pill. My husband entered the room instantly and gave me a sad smile before disappearing into the adjacent bathroom to grab my prescription. He reappeared with a glass of lukewarm water and the bluish-red pill in hand. I braced myself for the similar bitter taste that was about to invade my mouth as I took the pill from him. I shuddered as I felt it go down my throat, which was accompanied by a fit of coughing after the warm water mixed with the bile in my stomach. My nose began bleeding profusely as my husband gently stroked the crown of my head for comfort. As he did so, a chunk of hair fell out into his hand, which caused me to sob in his shoulder.

He squeezed my hand apologetically before leaving the room to phone the doctor about why my symptoms weren't letting up. I couldn't hear what they were saying due to the bedroom door being closed. However, after a few hours, he eventually reappeared and explained that the doctor said I needed to start taking the medication every three hours now. Without a word, my husband comforted me as another wave of tears coursed through me. I was utterly grateful for

his devotion, but I really just needed to be alone right now. In an effort to spare his feelings, I sent him to the store to get some groceries.

I was in the midst of a rather pleasant nap, until the alarm rang again telling me it was time to take another pill. With my husband gone, I weakly stumbled towards that adjacent bathroom and opened the medicine cabinet. There I found the familiar bluish-red pills in an unlabeled jar, and next to it, much to my horror, were the untouched white pills the doctor had really prescribed me.

"The Happiest?: A Horror Story"

It's been about five years since the day I was kidnapped. But honestly, I'm not even sure if that number is accurate. All the days seem to mesh together here. I don't why I was chosen to do this. Or why any of us were chosen to. They told me it gets easier after a while, but I find that I'm just losing myself. The people who took me are creeps. They find happiness in making us

look like helpless fools. We would be forced to dance around in our special costumes and look like idiots. They all seem to get a good kick out of it. The freaky people we give our performances to seem to forget that we are being held captive. They actually think we are doing this in our own free will.

Our kidnappers told us that if we don't act happy, we will be severely punished. I've had many of my friends go missing and get replaced because of this. If any of us even try to have an uprising, we would get beaten and deprived of food. So this is why I'm obligated to wear this disgusting costume everyday. The kidnapper's friends would come over grinning from ear to ear, yelling "Hey Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse! Over Here! This is the happiest place on earth!"

"Venting: A Horror Story"

Bullies used to pick on her in school. They would call her paranoid and a freak. Speaking of school, she would have meltdowns constantly in the classroom. But somehow I was the one held responsible for it. Her attitude towards me would be the same everyday. I would pick her up from school and get the cold shoulder. We would be at the dinner table, eating silently, when all of a sudden she would snap and just start screaming. But that's just teenagers I guess.

I would often take her to the mall to see her friends, but would be accused of embarrassing her because she doesn't want to be seen talking to me. I was so tired of it. She didn't used to be like this. When she was younger, she would want to play with me and read stories before bedtime. I was her favorite person in the world. But now that she's older and more mature, she starts to see me differently. I wasn't cool anymore.

Our biggest fights always happened at night. She would be done with homework and I would try and confront her about her bad attitude. This would lead to her to start crying that she wants to be left alone so she can go to sleep. But I can never sleep. I am very persistent and follow her everywhere. But what else can I do when she's the only person who can see me.

"Soulmate: A Horror Story"

My soulmate left me today. I guess he just doesn't love me anymore. All though, when I say that outloud it might be a bit of stretch. He always told me that I tend to have a talent for the dramatic. That I can be clingy and blow things out of proportion. But now all that's left of him is the scattered clothing across the bedroom. They probably fell out when he was packing up his suitcases. As I looked through the house some more, I found a small note on the kitchen counter. It was a scrap piece of paper, likely torn out of a spiral notebook, since you could still see the little ripped frays that stuck out on the side. The handwriting was messy, as though he was in a rush to write this. The top of the page was labeled "READ ME" in all caps, so I did as was instructed and started reading the rest of the note.

"Lilly, I can't do this anymore. You know that I love you very much, but things have been very hard for me these past few days. I have been confronted by someone again. Yes, it's her. She's been following me again and I'm afraid that if I stay at our house, she may try and kill you.

I couldn't bear the thought of someone bringing you harm because of me, so I am leaving to ensure your safety. I really wish I could go into more detail, but you'll be home in a few minutes and I hate seeing you cry if I told you in person. Love you always- Jason"

It was at this moment that I heard the door crack, as though someone was trying to quietly get in. I instinctively ran towards the kitchen cabinet to grab a sharp cooking knife, before skidding into the pantry to hide myself. I saw the woman step through the front door cautiously with a glazed look in her eyes. I struggled to keep my breathing quiet and steady, as she started heading towards the kitchen. I watched as the note left on the counter caught her eye, and she started reading it. Within seconds, she dropped to knees and started crying hysterically. It was at this moment that I lost all control of myself and jumped out from behind the pantry door. I couldn't help but smile wickedly at the feeling of finally thrusting the knife into her stomach.

"Welcome home Lilly." I whispered.

"I Hate Mondays: A Horror Story"

For some reason I felt like today was different. That something was off somehow. I got this sensation the moment I woke up. As the sunlight shone through the curtains, I peered around my bedroom with fully rested eyes to see if anything was amiss. Wait a minute. That's it! For once in my life I had actually gotten a good night's sleep! I realize that after saying this, you may find that statement to be a bit sad. But you have to understand that I had never gotten a full night's rest before. I was always, no matter what day of the week, getting viciously woken up by my cat, Garfield. Every morning at the exact same time, he would jump on my bed and come up with some new way to disturb my sleep. Whether it be by tap dancing on my face, or pulling my eyelids open, it would always be for the same reason. Food.

Well, lasagna to be exact. And truth be told, no matter how tired I am, or how grumpy I may appear, I was always happy to see him smile when I handed him that dish. Thinking back on this though, just made me worried. He was never late to wake me up, even on a Monday. What if he had run away or gotten hurt and couldn't get to me? I could feel myself jumping to conclusions, so I simply pulled back my bright blue covers and proceeded to walk through the purple wallpapered bedroom.

As I entered the living room I was relieved to see Garfield sitting in his cardboard box bed, clutching the blue blanket that lay inside. As if sensing my presence, he looked up at me with his usual sly grin. I took comfort in the fact that even though he didn't wake me up this morning, he was still acting like himself. "You got me kind of scared there Garfield. You know I never thought I'd say this, but I kind of wish you woke me up this morning. So, how's about I make you that lasagna?!" I said cheerfully.

His response faltered a little, which got me worried again. "When was the last time you took your pill Jon?" he asked with an almost unreadable expression.

"My what?" I responded.

"Your pill. You know, the one that they prescribed to you a while back?"

In his paw he clutched the familiar bottle I had seen countless times in my medicine cabinet. Unfortunately, I had always forgotten what they were meant for, and never thought to investigate its contents.

“Oh...yeah...um... thanks for reminding me.” I said hesitantly.

I grabbed the pill bottle from Garfield’s paw and began to examine the weight of it. It was still quite heavy, as though almost no pills had been taken over the course of however many months I had them.

“Come to think of it, I don’t think I’ve taken one in ages. I’ve completely forgotten what they were for.”

With one quick motion I abandoned all logic and popped one of the white pills into my mouth. I proceeded to swallow and watched as Garfield stared intently into my eyes. It was at this moment that time seemed to slow down. My skin began to feel fuzzy and I quickly became disoriented. It was only a few moments later, after my dizziness began to fade, that I was able to slightly comprehend what was happening around me. Everything started to change. What was once a brightly pastel colored living room, quickly became a wooden, mold infested room. Piles of old rotting lasagna were shrouded at my feet, and my clothes that were once a nice fitted pajama top became an oversized dirty white T shirt. I sprinted over to the adjacent mirror on the wall, expecting to see my usual facial features, but was surprised to find a sickly shriveled up man with a long nose, small eyes, and a messy five o’clock shadow staring back at me. I could feel my eyes brimming over with tears as I began to panic. So in search of comfort, I quickly looked over at Garfield, and was horrified to find a little orange stuffed cat toy, with buttons for eyes, placed in the center of a cardboard box with a blue blanket inside. The still full pill bottle that had rolled to my feet read: “Warning: Only intended for patients with severe schizophrenia and hallucinations.”



Artwork by
Anouk
Guilhemfouert



Photograph by Solaine Bardin

Pantoum

A pantoum poem consists of four-line stanzas where the odd-numbered lines in the first stanza become the even-numbered lines in the next stanza, and so on. The poem can have as many stanzas as needed. It originated in Malaysia and then was adopted by the French.

He Fumbled

By Violet Nightingale

He is mean and has nothing left.
Nothing better to do than cheat.
Nothing better to do than lie.
Lie about how he feels.

Nothing better to do than cheat.
Tell the truth? No.
Lie about how he feels.
Tell me he loves me? Yes.

Tell the truth? No.
Too late.
Tell me he loves me? Yes.
He fumbled.



"Priscilla Chalk Board"

By Elizabeth Parr, 13x11, mixed media (collage of sketches, watercolor, acrylic, oil pastel)



"Concentration"

By Elizabeth Parr

9x12, acrylic on canvas

Color Poems

This assignment asked students to describe a color using sensory details, alliteration, and onomatopoeia.

Fresh

By Stella Hurley

The color of the leaves before the fall breeze
The taste of freshly chopped vegetables
Smells like the wet grass after the rain passes
Feels like the sharp tingle that strikes your
nose after smelling mint
Represents a relaxing, restful day
Feels like a new paycheck and wealth.

Green

By Sofia Lawrence

Green is the color of life
Life is living and it is something that can be
seen
With grass being as fragile as glass glistening
in the wind
The flesh of the fresh cut grass on a Sunday
morning is much needed
Although the touch is rough it will not be
tough when you lay in its weaving patterns

Red

By Sawyer Moseley

It smells like spicy food in the icy wind.
It sounds like the crackling fire in the creaking
house.
It feels like it's burning your broken boots in a
barn.
It looks aggressive and destroys everything it
touches.
It tastes like it's burning your mouth as you
say ouch.

Indigo

By Anais Reneaum

Admiring the vast galaxy sky after the day
had ended.
Waking up and glancing at a field of wild
indigo flowers
with my big cobalt eyes as cerulean warblers
chirp.
Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet
are the colors that emerge after a cloudy rainy
storm.
An umbrella can help shield you from this
tempest
as indigo can be an umbrella for purple, blue,
and violet—a mix of all.
Picking a selection of blueberries and
blackberries for a sweet side with breakfast.
Following a line of ducklings to a pond at
dawn deep into the woods.
Splish, splash the condensation sliding of
sycamore leaves,
falling to form a puddle on the forest floor.
As I fall profoundly into a dream, the night
sky returns.
I feel a brisk wind picking me up and taking
me
to the bottomless and infinite ocean.
Its waves tumbling and whirling, swaying me
side to side,
I smell the sharp air and taste the salty sea
as I sink deeper and deeper.
I come to a complete stop as I am no longer at
the surface.
I am calm and it is quiet.
I am awake.

Orange

By Alina Stephan

Orange like the blazing sunset
Orange like the fallen leaves in the fall,
Crunching under your feet
Orange like the juicy fruit dripping from your
lips
Orange like the cracking sound of the fire
filling the air with smoke

The Tinge of Orange

By Sydney Vaknin

The pigment of pumpkins projecting in the
prevailing winds of fall
The color of All Hallows Eve
“Ahhh,” scream the screeching children
Sweet and sour
A day between fall and spring
Red and yellow mixed into one
The shade of shifting leaves as they start to
switch

Orange

By Hayden Charles Worst

PSHSHSHHSBOOOOM
Lava falls and invades a town
The Sun is crashing into earth
BOOOOOOM
A nuke explodes Europe
Big fires erupt everywhere
Flame and famine fill the forest

Waves of Life

By Alina Stephan

Life is like the ocean
It may seem still at times
But the ocean never rests
The waves come crashing down when life
seems difficult
But at the end of every barrel there is always
light
Blooming with life but sounds silent
The only way to survive is to ride the waves
to shore
Back to the soft, warm sands of safety
Only to go back to the sparkling blue water
the next day



Artwork by Anouk Guilhemfouert

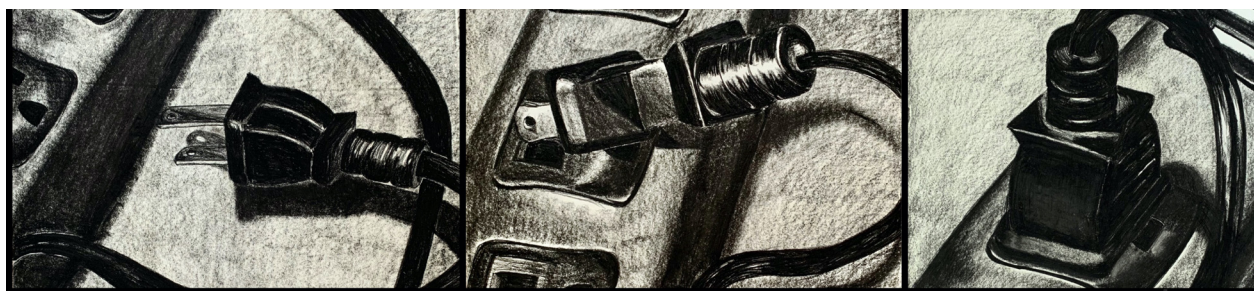
Traditional Market in Taiwan

By Catherine Huang



Plug and Electrical Outlet Series

By Catherine Huang



The Sign of Constantine

[A Personal Narrative.]

By Mr. Sam Cisneros

A burning cross hovered 50 feet above my head and lit up the canyon and the night sky. I scanned the dozens of young men facing me and realized we were all wearing white robes...and I was thunderstruck! I knew of the Ku Klux Klan, that evil organization formed in the bowels of the Deep South to promote and preserve White racial purity. Who didn't know?! The world knew, and it was not happy that a group of WASP men, angry that their side had lost the American Civil War, had promoted their superiority over every other race and religion. I knew, yet it seemed, on that warm May night in the spring of 1979, that I had committed myself to membership in that reviled organization. And I thought I was just joining a fraternity. I wanted to bolt, but where would I go? And more importantly, where was I? Most likely, it was Santee. We were in the middle of nowhere, and I knew of the wilderness framing that blue-collar suburb of San Diego; that San Diego State University was just two stones throw away; and that Santee, a very white, very conservative community was referred to by some as "Klantee." You see, San Diego County's well-chronicled history with white supremacists dates back to the 1920s. All of this evidence strongly suggested that I was quite possibly joining the grandfather of all hate groups.

But I couldn't bolt. My pledge brothers (those bastards!) had elected me president of our pledge class one weekend when I had gone home. Besides, I rushed Sigma Chi to have the full university experience, to make life-long friends, and to build a network of contacts for my future professional life. Well, if I became a professional _____ and a Klansman, I would be among great company: Senator Robert Byrd, Chief Justice Hugo Black, and U.S. President Warren G. Harding...all Klan, as the stories go.

I didn't bolt. Leaders don't flee in times of crisis, times like the one facing me. On that burning cross-lit night, the Delta Xi active members faced me: a legion of the rank and file, all dressed in white robes. The leaders were there: Bill Doss, our Consul, Cary Rohan, Proconsul and second in command, and Punchy, my Magister, and Tim Holm, Rush Chairman...all of them. George Hale was there too. George, my "big brother," my link to active membership, my Sigma Chi "trainor,"...he was there, facing me, in a white robe...under a burning cross. They were all there! Every active member of Sigma Chi standing silently, stone-faced. All in white robes, all pledging allegiance to the burning cross! All members of the Ku Klux Klan? The only thing missing was a chorus of "Seig Heil!" Oh, Lord, how was I going to explain this to my mother?

Swearing under my breath, I wondered how I could have let myself get trapped in such a situation. Then a bellowing voice broke the silence.

"BROTHERS!" It was Bill Doss..."Having had the ceremonies of initiation conferred upon you...a distinction to which but few merit...and an honor to which but few attain..." And it all came rushing back: Constantine and my Norman Shield, my pledge brothers and the words "friendship," "justice," and "learning," the core concepts of the fraternity.

I must have just been tired. I hadn't slept much for a week. I hadn't showered in a week. I was dirty and hungry, and I had a dead fish in my front pocket. And there was all the psycho-

logical games we'd endured: the physical abuse and the screaming in our faces: "You're f*****g worthless, Cisneros! Do you hear me, WORTHLESS!" contrasted with the soft refrains from Rick Abate, that he would never let me become a Sigma Chi.

But that was the easy stuff, nothing more than booze-infused hyperbole. It was the 24 hours of Ravel's "Bolero" that did me in. I had nothing against classical music, but 15 minutes of flutes, piccolos, oboes, and clarinets repeated four times each hour...for twenty-four hours. After hour six, I wanted to cut my ears off; after eight, I wanted a revolver and a bullet. Clearly, my mind wasn't working properly, and still the music continued.

Back in the wilderness, the message continued: "...never to engage in anything that would prove derogatory to your character as a high-minded man...Let your motives be pure and honest...in a word, let your life be an exemplary one..."

Maybe it was Bill Doss's powerful but reassuring voice. Maybe it was the Emperor Constantine, our patron saint, channeled through Bill, but I remembered. Sigma Chi was what I thought it was, a great fraternal organization built on a vision of the future and an exaltation of social justice...not a group of misogynistic, racist, scared men who were unwilling to change. I looked upward again at the burning cross, and at the white-robed men, and I saw my future. And I was pleased.

Epilogue

Two years later, as Consul of the Delta Xi chapter at San Diego State University, I led the initiation of 28 new pledges into the Sigma Chi fraternity. It was a dark night somewhere near Santee. I wore a white robe. A cross burned above my head.



Artwork by
Anouk
Guilhemfouert

Metaphor Poems

This assignment was inspired by a poem by Walt Whitman called "The Noiseless, Patient Spider" which has two stanzas, one describing a spider that is hanging on a cliff, reaching out with its web, and the other describing the narrator's soul, which is also hanging out in space, reaching out. Two stanzas, one metaphor, comparing the object and the concept.

Music and Life

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Alex Mahoney

Music

Sometimes music is good

Sometimes it is bad

You have to get me with the sound first

Then you pull me in with the lyrics

When I listen sometimes I relate

And sometimes that can hurt

Life

Sometimes life is disappointing

Sometimes you have to get me with your looks

Then with your personality

Sometimes life can be shallow and then turn deep.

Waves

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Emma Norris

The ocean lifted its arm to softly touch the shore

Tranquil and soft

The sea was angry giving me a salty slap with its tides

Tumultuous and stormy

The Weight of Life

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Carlos Hernandez

Weightlifting

How thee would pull, pull,

pull, then push, push, push, how I would

Force it up and make sure

I don't give up, up up to clearance of my mind

To soreness of my body, end of the day

To new day of new ways of building up

To school, lifting, and life to figuring out

What to do in life

O' my life as it was bitter and sweet

How thy challenges come upon me

From being nada to going to

Something

How thy weight getting pushed or pulled

Has given me inner peace

Piece, piece, piece, that I thought

I would never get,

Life has its crashing waves

We have to learn to ride them

Surf the waves

Feel the waves

Know the waves

In life, you never know what kind of wave you'll get

Life's a Beach

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Kiele Smith

The beach
So loud and chaotic
But yet at the same time
It's so relaxing and calm
The sounds of crashing waves breaking in the distance
Rolling onto the sand ever so calmly
The sound of the sea birds in the distance
So loud, but yet almost in harmony with each other

Just like you, my life
So loud like the people and cars in the street,
But so nice to people watch
Life's so chaotic at times,
But it's never taken for granted
The sound of everything around us
Some can find crazy or soothing

Printing the Future

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Sydney Vaknin

A printer
Needs to be supplied
Is connected to a computer
Its process is hidden behind its container
It can run out of ink
And eventually it will break down

People's futures
Need actions to continue it
Are connected to their person
Can not be seen until you live in it
Can be stalled by inaction
And will eventually end for all

Balloon

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Violet Nightingale

A resting balloon.
Floating in the skies.
Exploring its surroundings and enjoying the view.
It popped, popped, popped, and floated to the ground.

A resting girl.
Sitting in the sky.
Exploring her surroundings and enjoying the view.
She jumped, jumped, jumped, floating down on her parachute.

The Tiger In Me

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Sebastian Summer

The tiger
Strong and fierce
Beautiful and ferocious
Regal and striking
Always watching, but never seen
Intimidating, but sensitive

I come off strong and fierce
But I'm warm hearted
Beautiful and ferocious
But insecure
Regal and striking
But inconspicuous
Constantly observing,
but never acknowledged

Ocean

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Rowan Clark

A wave of the ocean,
So beautiful in many ways,
But deadly in others.
Waves can be like a vast tower
Or like the size of a small dog.
Day or night
there are always waves
Raging on like a wild bull.

The life under the ocean
The creatures are like the people of New York
City
So many people in such a small area
But, the sea is just like people in comparison,
NYC is only a fraction of the mass of the
ocean.

Sunflowers

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

by Diana Galeana

Sunflowers look toward the sun
From the moment they bloom
They reach for the light
And the light shines back

I did not decide to bloom
It just happen truly and naturally
And now i am a sunflower
Reaching towards the sun

Weather/Feelings

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Karla Cruz

Sunny days and Rainy days,
All created by mother nature,
They can make your day or not,
Something so small, or huge
Can make your whole world,
A ray of sunshine,
Or a lightning ray,
Both very beautiful and needable

Happiness and Sadness,
Experienced by the human,
Feelings can change your day for the better /
worse,
Happiness sparks our day with a light of a
match,
Sadness shuts us out with the darkness after
you blow the match,
Both very vital emotions a human needs to
feel

The Highway of Life

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Paige Hensch

A highway
It is fast or slow
Busy or calm
Many twists and turns
Accident and disaster

And my life
Busy and kicked back
Sometimes crazy, sometimes relaxed
Eventful and uneventful
Many mistakes and lessons learned

A Fly in the House

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Elias Manno

A fly in the house
Constant buzzing
Cannot stop its annoyance
A fly in your house may stop but it's impossible to tell if it is sleeping or it left
You can only rid yourself of it if you use a swatter

And depression
Always there
Hard to end the struggle
You may think it's gone but it's impossible to tell if it's still there
It will only leave when you take action

The Diamond Lady

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Ella Roman

A diamond hung from an unremarkable neck
Sparkling in the eyes of every passer-by
No born name was ever uttered
Though one was mined from the quarry
A face sifted and sifted
Until the Diamond Lady was made

Humanity! Where have you left your soul?
It sits alone, abandoned, withering away
As your fleshy face pretends
For if your soul really were to die
What would there be to wear your lies?

An Independent Agile Wolf

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Anais Reneaum

An independent agile wolf
Waiting patiently inside a field for what may appear
Smelling and tracing scents on a path where life was once near
Approaching a herd of deer, delicately or they might run and disappear
Observing flocks of birds, skulks of fox, a colony of ants, even a beaver has a pair
Dusk is at an end, time to go back to a den, but this lone wolf has no place to call home
Finding a pack is what it truly wants most.

Feeling of loneliness so silent, all one can hear are their own thoughts
Reading a book solemnly in an empty library by default
Looking for a place to eat, on a cold winter day,
A recently used table sitting patiently with nothing but frost
Yearning to participate, but scared of rejection
Seeing people laugh and run away together while their day stays empty
Being solitary for too long leaves you wanting the comfort and companion of many.

Heaven and Hell

By Jesus Valeriano

The scent and soft touch of cotton candy
heaven and hell combined
but there is still space for kindness, nurtur-
ance, and compassion All characteristics of
love,
the feeling of thud thud, thud thud
but love can come at a price—a price of heart-
break
but again there's still room for friendship
And a nice hug to end the trip

Loving Everything

inspired by "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman

By Jesus Valeriano

A quiet outgoing girl
Stood out to me compared to others
I saw her once and she was like no other Her
smile makes my day
When I talk to her, I don't know what to say
Her sweet laugh always get me going When
I'm with her I never feel lonely
O love, how you work in mysterious ways
How I've longed to seek you one day
Not many get the chance
I'm glad my day came at last
To have the feeling of loving something
Has me all types of jumpy
This sensation can be temporary or permanent
But what is life without love

The You I Never Knew

By Ricardo Sanchez

Because I think I still love you
After everything you put me through
The crying the sobbing
The calling my friends every night and
Them begging me not to text you
Day after day
Night after night
I had to convince myself this wasn't me
But the sadness and overwhelming
Possibilities of what you could be doing
right now
And I mean what am I even doing
Chasing after someone who does not want me
anymore After everything, I put you through
The crying the sobbing
calling your friends
wondering what to do
like they have any clue
what goes on in my head
they don't know me but you did
you did know me
I may not still love you
But I choose to love
The version of you I created in my head

Untitled

By Jesus Valeriano

Although time flies by, we can make it stop
There's no telling when our time is up
Time is everything, time is what gives us life

When we are born, that is the beginning of a
new life

When we die our time is up
Most people wish that time would just stop

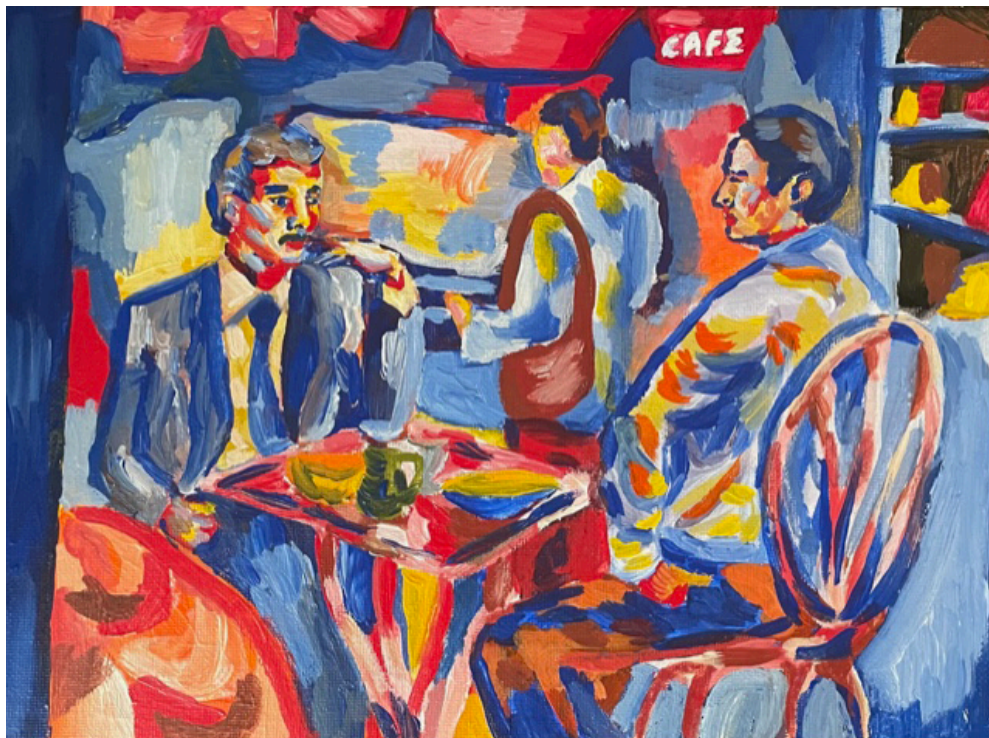
There isn't a clear answer where we will end
up
But I know that when there is new death there
is a new life
All people want is time to stop

Time never comes to a stop, everyone's time
shortly ends up, when a baby is born that is
time that is new

Oh Love

By David Perez Carachure

Oh love how you inspire me to write.
How I love the way you call, skip and soar,
Invading my mind day and through the night,
Always dreaming about the lovely days.
You got me feeling like before riding a roller
coaster Nervous, butterflies in my stomach as
i get
Into the seat of the ride.
Calm breeze flaps as the blighted dancers
of May, And the springtime that has the fair
overnight.
How do I love you? Let me count the ways.
I love your slighted hands, funny humour and
beautiful smile. Thinking of your beautiful
hair fills my days.
My love for you is as tall as a cherry stem.
Now I must away with a wary heart,
Remember my square words whilst we're
apart.



"Cafe"

By Elizabeth Parr,
9x12,
acrylic on canvas

The Curious Events in Room 19

By Audrey Weishaar

The water began to turn grey as I scrubbed the pot clean of food. Quiet, lazy humming came from the living room. I eyed the doorway with distrust. George hadn't been acting normal for weeks now. He wasn't nearly as strict, nearly as cruel. And occasionally seemed happy. It wasn't normal.

I shook my hands free of droplets as I reached for the faucet tap. As I used an wash rag to dry my hands, I looked at my reflection in the window pane. All the curls seemed in place, and makeup wasn't smeared.

"Carol?" I spun, scampering into the living room like a good little housewife.

"Yes?" Behind my back, my fingers twisted anxiously with the fabric of my dress.

"Come look at this." I moved to his side, mildly uncomfortable. I had read the stories of body thieves as a little girl. I had always passed them off as fairytales, like those of witches, vampires, and ghosts. But with this newfound proof of body thieves, I wouldn't be surprised if the others were real, too.

"I see nothing out of the ordinary." I scanned the newspaper article, one about the continuing Montgomery Bus Boycott.

"I know. I'm asking for your opinion." I blinked, surprised. Clearly this one never studied my husband well.

"Well, I guess... they have a point. I can't really argue with people who just want a better life for themselves." He nodded mutely, then continued reading. I left, still feeling mildly shell-shocked at having my husband ask my opinion.

I poured the pot of boiling water into the coffee press. I pushed down on the plunger, watching the water turn brown as the grounds began to compress and the liquid swirled.

As soon as everything was mixed, I poured it into two mugs, then prepared the small jar of sugar and a cup of milk. I arranged everything on individual saucers on a large platter. I walked back into the living room, and set the plate down on the table. George looked up as I tried to reorganize everything to make his life easier.

"Stop that." He waved my hand away. "Sit down. You've been standing for over an hour now." I fell quiet, so surprised by the care the man that used to be my husband was giving me.

"Are you sure?" He let the newspaper drop slightly enough so I could see his face. He looked at me over the rim of his glasses, giving me a plain look that meant he was certain. Hastily, I sat, pulling over the date book I had on the side table. I was meeting Mary and Linda for tea tomorrow around three.

George normally didn't like it if I was gone for too long. I took a quick glance at my husband. Maybe it was better this way.

~~*~~

I crossed one leg over the other, bouncing my foot. I fully expected to get home and get yelled at for not having everything ready when George got home. In fact, I might be home after him. It was nearing four-forty-five.

"Carol? Is everything alright dolly?" I blinked, looking up from the empty cup I had been staring at.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm ok."

"Really? You're pale. And you look frightened."

"I'm fine. I promise." Both looked at me with skepticism, but let it drop.

"How are your students, Linda?" Mary always wanted to be a teacher, but settled for stay-at-home parent. I couldn't blame her, twins were a handful.

I got wrapped up in Linda's story about how her students were writing essays about what they liked best about the book they were reading in class. I smiled at the excitement in her voice. Her eyes lit up, and a flush came over her face. People had said she got over-excited. I thought it was endearing. It showed that she cared.

"What about you, Carol? Is there anything big coming up for you?" I shrugged, smiling simply.

"No, not really. I'm thinking of proposing the idea of a trip to George." "Oh, to where?"

"I'm not sure. He probably wouldn't want to."

"But if he said yes, where would you go?"

"Oh, to go to Europe," Mary sighed. Her voice was dreamy and lyrical.

"You just want to go to Paris," I pointed out.

"It's the city of love! Who wouldn't want to go there?" I laughed faintly, checking the slim gold watch on my wrist. It was nearly five-thirty in the afternoon.

"Oh, dear. I must apologize, ladies, but I must go. I fear I'm running a bit late." I grabbed my sweater off of the back of the chair, pulling it on as quickly as possible.

"Calm down, Carol, there's no need to rush." I stamped down a laugh before it could escape. I kept them in the dark about my home life for a reason. They didn't need to worry about me. I gave Linda a hug, then Mary.

"Have a good night, girls!" I called as I all but ran out the door.

~~*~~

I stood, facing my front door. I smoothed the front of my dress, taking a deep breath. Then I pushed it open.

George was pacing in the living room. I braced myself as he looked up, running a hand through his hair. I pushed the door shut without turning away from him.

"Where have you been? I didn't know where you had gone, you didn't leave any note!" He crossed the room to grab my shoulders. I stiffened in response to the contact. "I didn't know what to think! I thought you had left! Or hurt, or worse!" I looked up, smiling sadly.

"You aren't my husband, are you?"

"I-what? What are you talking about?" There was too much indignation in his voice. After being a telephone operator for quite some time now, one tends to get good at picking up tone.

"You don't act like him. Or maybe you don't try to. Either way, it's obvious to one who lives with him." He blinked, staring at me.

"I... no. I'm not your husband." He dropped his arms. He seemed disappointed. "I'll gather my things, as I'm assuming you'd rather prefer peace and quiet for sometime. I figured it was too obvious, but... I studied. For a while. It's what we do, see? And I couldn't do what he did." He left the living room, moving carefully up the stairs.

I stood alone in the room, then slowly moved over and sat down on the sofa. I wasn't so much as surprised by the answer, just the reaction. He came back downstairs with a coat slung over one arm, a briefcase in the same hand. He stopped in front of the door, then turned to face me.

"Right then." He tipped his hat. "Good evening." With great politeness, he exited and shut the door behind himself. I was surprised by how awful it was to see him leave. I barely knew him, and the man he used to be hated me.

I dragged myself upstairs to my bedroom. Whilst changing into a nightgown, I felt a terrible weight pool in my stomach.

Loneliness washed over me as I crawled into bed. And I cried myself to sleep.

~~*~~

I sat at my cramped little desk, adjusting the headpiece. It had been four days since my husband had left upon me finding out he wasn't my original husband. I accepted the next incoming call, flinching slightly at the ringing sound.

"Hello, where could I connect you with?"

"Yes, hi," a familiar voice said. "I'd like to call Carol Williams." I froze, realizing it was George. Which George, I couldn't say.

"Mrs. William's phone broke down recently. However, as a close friend, I'd be delighted to take a message." The lie came easily.

"Right. Ok. Well... I just wanted to check in. I haven't been home for sometime, and I'm not sure when I'll be back. I just wanted to make sure she's okay."

"Alright, I'll be certain to pass that along. Might I ask who you are and where you're calling from? So that she can call you back, of course." The last sentence came out sounding like an afterthought. And I wasn't sure it was George. I could just be hearing things.

"Oh. It's her husband, George. I'm calling from, uh, the Morning Rooster Hotel, in New Hope, Pennsylvania."

"I will be certain she gets it. Have a nice day, Mr. Williams."

"Thank you. And to you." He sounded breathless, as if he just went down a very steep slide. The call ended, and I folded the note and put it in my pocket. I then removed the headset and stood up, making my way to the back room.

"Excuse me, sir?" Mr. Phillips looked up as I knocked on the doorframe.

"What do you need, doll?" He spoke around the cigar in his mouth. Smoking indoors. A filthy habit, if you ask me.

"I feel rather ill. I think it might be best if I went home."

"Oh well absolutely, plum. I can't have you not feeling well while working. And I wouldn't want you to get anyone else sick." That was the thing about Mr. Phillips. He cared about his employees. Sort of.

"Thank you, sir. I'll send a message later tonight with the likelihood of me coming in tomorrow."

"I'd appreciate it, gem." As soon as I left his office, I pulled my coat and hat off the rack, then raced down to the subway station. I bought a ticket for the first train to New Hope. It would only be about an hour ride from here in Philadelphia. The train would be here in twenty minutes. I just had to wait.

~~*~~

I entered the Morning Rooster Hotel at nearly seven-thirty at night. I leaned over the front desk and rang the little bell to call someone to help me. A small elderly woman with a very matronly smile welcomed me.

"What can I do for you, dearie?"

"Hello. I was wondering if you have a George Williams staying here? I'm his wife, you see and there was some miscommunication about timing, and now I'm not sure what room to go to."

"Oh, of course, dear. Room nineteen. Let me know if you need anything else."

"No, but thank you." I walked briskly down the hall, counting off the numbers as I went. Starting at three, they went up by odd numbers. It barely took anytime at all for me to reach number nineteen. I sighed, only questioning for a second if this was a good idea. Then I knocked. A very disheveled George Williams answered the door.

"Carol? What are you doing here? I thought... why are you here?" He began to shepherd me inside. I smiled, meeting his gaze.

"You aren't my husband."

"Yes, we've already established that."

"You're better than him. And you're much more gullible."

"What do you— oh..." he groaned softly. "You're a phone operator." I giggled.

"My phone's not broken."

"Clearly. That doesn't answer my question."

"That's the thing, though. You care. You care enough to call. To check in after... whatever it was that happened. You cared, George. I've never had someone care like that before."

"What do you mean?" He pulled me to sit next to him on the sofa as we talked.

"You saw how my ex-husband treated me."

"Ex?"

"Well I can't very well call him my husband now that I have you." I blushed as soon as I realized what I said. We both sat in stunned silence as the implications of my sentence settled in.

"Do you... really mean that?" I nodded, mildly worried that if I said anything it would come out as a jumble of words. He cupped my face gently, pulling me closer to him. I felt my thoughts go fuzzy and the world fade away around me as he kissed me.

"How will I know you won't run away again?" I whispered, voicing a fear I had since the train.

"I'm not sure. I guess you'll have to believe I've changed my mind." I paused, then sighed.

"Is that your idea of a joke? Because it's not very good."

"Come on, it was clever!"

"No, darling, it wasn't." Before he could argue further, I kissed him again. And there, on the couch of a small hotel in a tiny town, did I understand what it meant to truly be in love.

The End





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