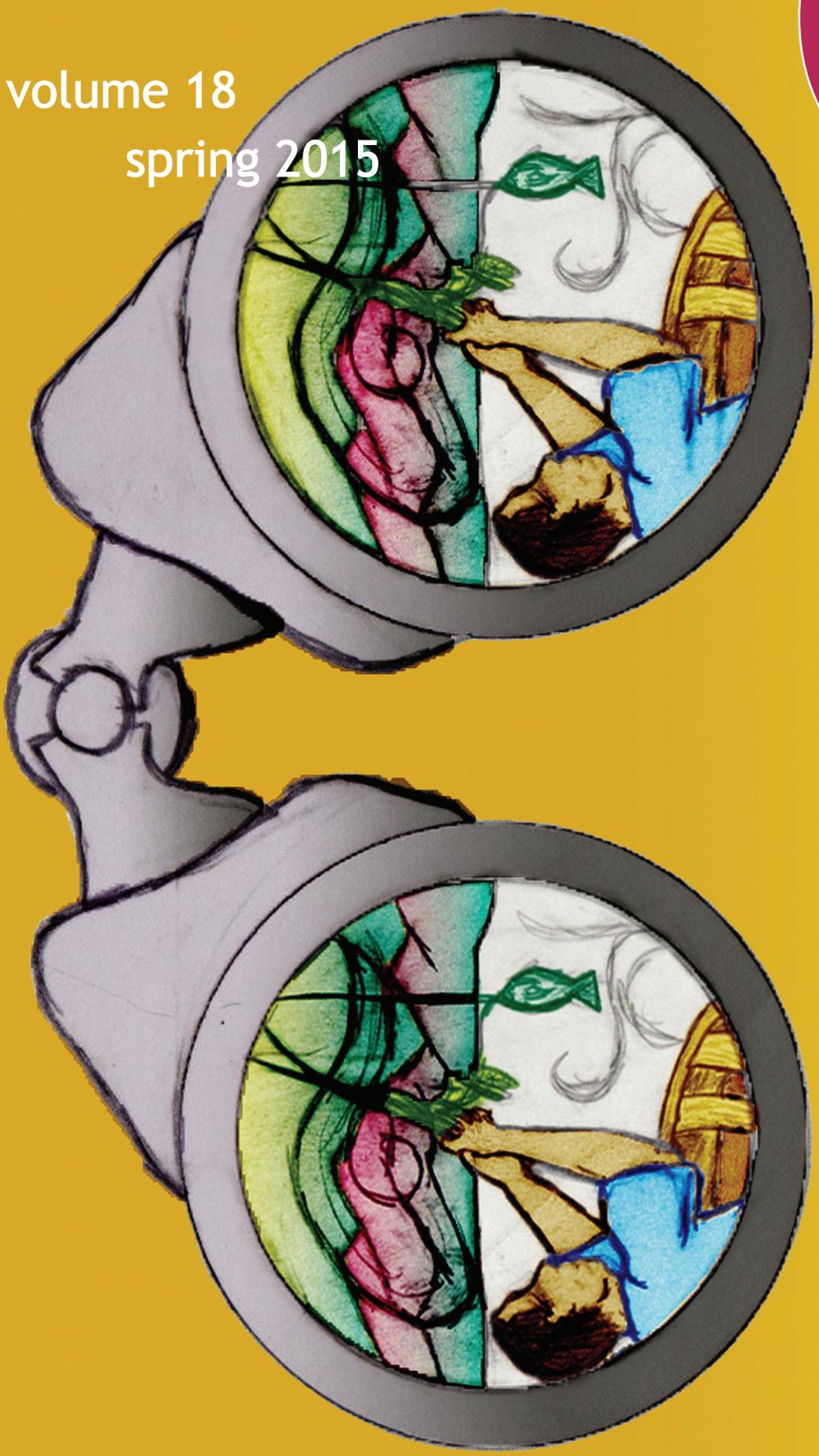




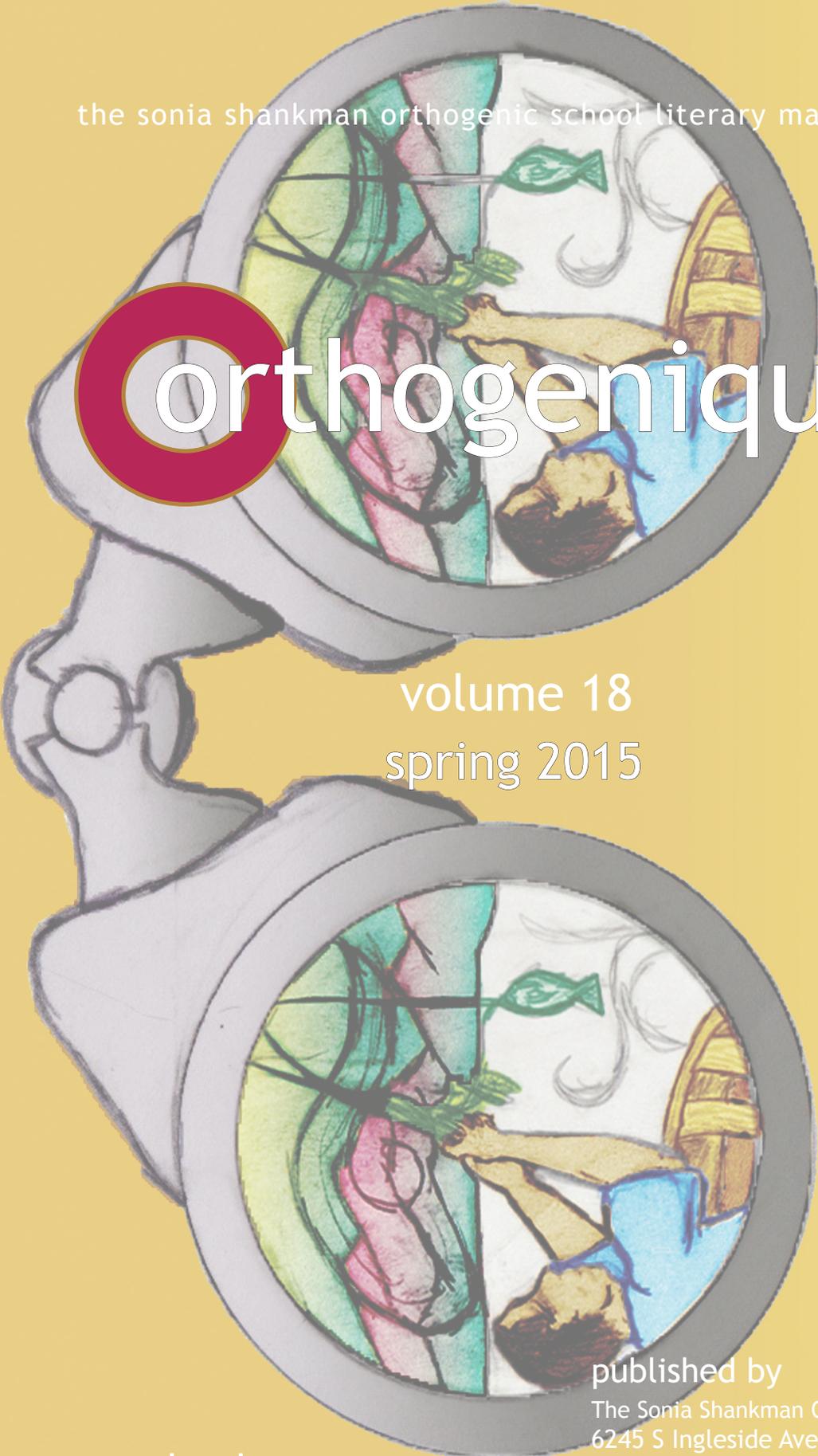
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spring 2015



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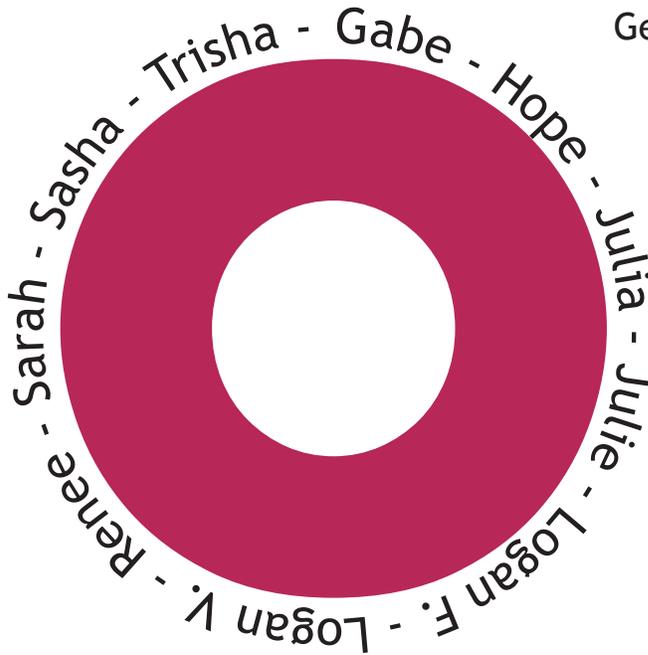
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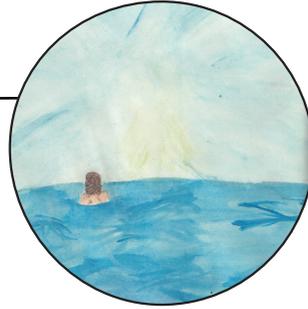
SPECIAL NOTICE TO READERS

The next issue is scheduled for a January release.
Anyone who wishes to contribute artwork or
writing to Orthogenique can do so by giving the piece
to Hague W. or Michelle P.

Pieces submitted will be used at the discretion of
Orthogenique staff and will be incorporated into
existing spreads and sections.

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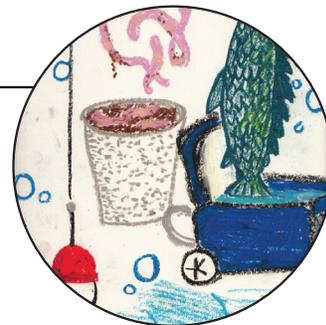
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Orthogénique

Bait



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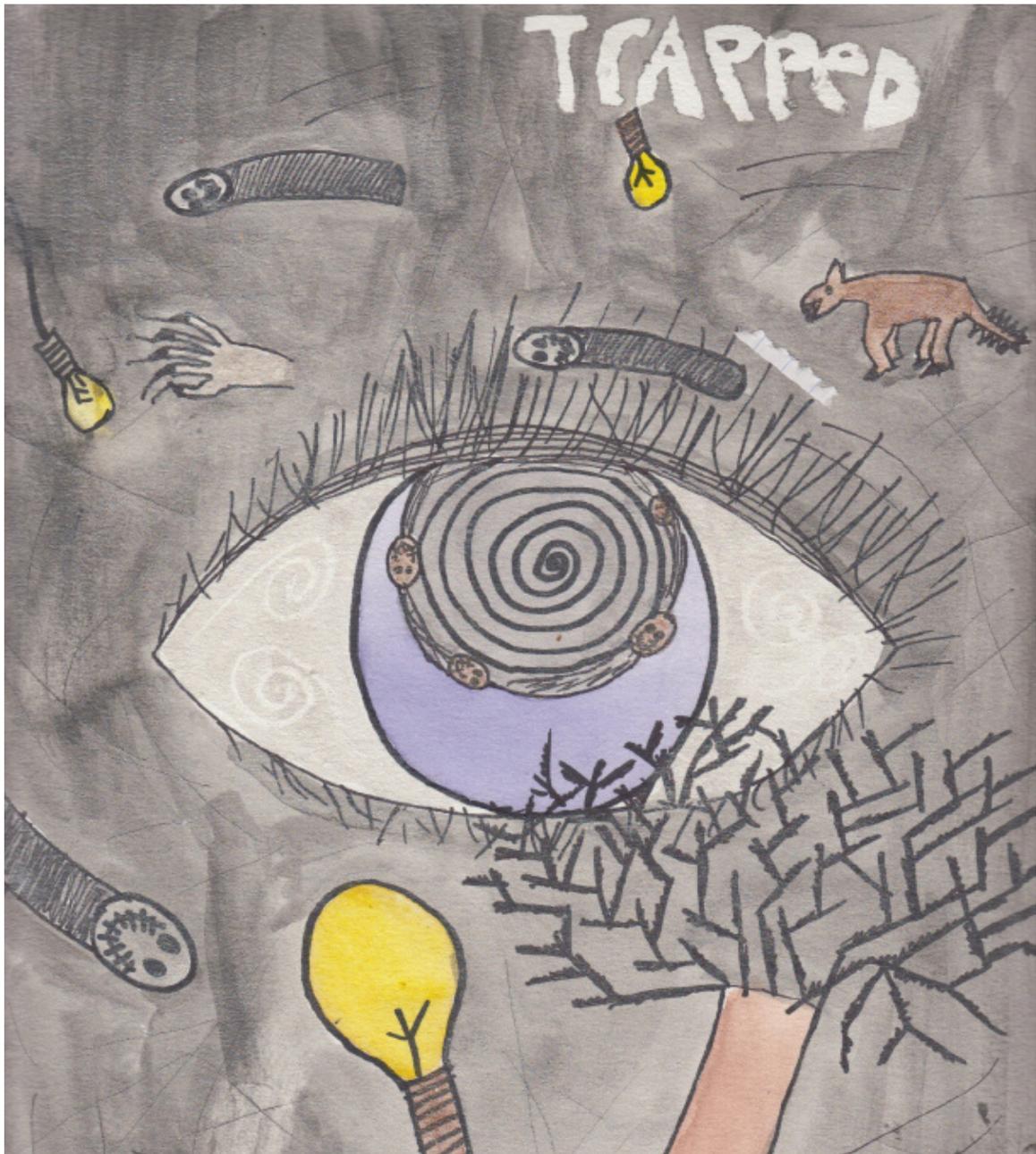


Reel



THE SANDMAN

Story by Sarah



Painting by Julia

Stephanie was just 16 when her world began falling apart. Parents fighting, friends lying, school demanding more than she could give. Since everything had a tendency of falling apart in her waking hours, she found comfort and reassurance in sleep.

One night, she met a strange figure in her dreams who promised her a world of perfection if she'd do nothing more than vow to never wake up. No feet holding him to his place, he levitated, leaving a shadow about as dark as his body. His smile went past his ears, long sharp teeth dripping with crimson, the sight sending chills down her body. She was taught to look into the eyes of a person when speaking to them, but with him, she couldn't, for he had nothing but two gaping dark holes where his eyes should be. She agreed warily, letting her impulse to escape take over, and with a huge toothy smile, the figure disappeared, taking her sunshine and safe feeling with him.

“The monsters seemed to grow as her fear did...”

Creatures began letting out horrible shrieks, convulsing as they appeared from behind once peaceful trees that were now twisted branches. Her worst nightmares were coming to life right before her eyes and she tried everything from pinching herself to screaming at the top of her lungs until they were raw and hoarse, but she was trapped, like a mouse in a maze. Every turn she took, she was faced with more horrifying creatures with charred flesh peeling off their thin frames, with bones as white as the dark moon looming over her.

Some raced after her on all fours, with magnificent speed and blood dripping from their pointed fangs. They looked as if they leaped right out of a horror movie her older brother would make her watch. A laugh pierced through the thick air, before a dark figure appearing before her with a pleased look on his demented face. She ran to him, but she went right through, looking back quickly. His head reeled around to look right at her, but his body remained forward. With another evil laugh, he disappeared, leaving more disgusting things in his place. Some flew, their crooked wings making horrible cracking sounds as they soared through the air.

The monsters seemed to grow as her fear did, getting bigger and stronger with each shaky breath. She wanted nothing more than to wake up and have the images and loud noises contradicting each other stop, but when she covered her ears the noise seemed to get louder and louder, as if she was trapped in her head. The shrieks, screams, howls and cries of monsters that only existed in her worst nightmares continued behind her as she ran.



She ran until her legs ached, falling on the hard ground only to look up and be surrounded by dark twisted trees, while their branches seemed to spiral into awful looking faces. She cried out to the man who had tricked her, taken her life from her. Not long after hearing a maniacal laughter, he appeared before her, her frightened face making him proud of his work.

“Please, please let me out of here.” she begged

He only shrugged and kept listening to her pleas, enjoying his show. This was all a game to him, a simple jest to bring excitement into his boring life. Tears were running down her face, before she wiped violently at them leaving dark smudges around her eyes causing her to look even more wrecked than before. After she'd let the fury of cries and sobs win her over, she clutched her stomach, the tears falling rapidly. He gave her one simple answer as she lay there. It would rattle her forever.

“You don’t take bait from the Sandman.”

With that, he left her once again, in a room that looked like a black box, and one flimsy light bulb illuminating the room only to show there was no way out. She began clawing at the walls, hearing nothing but her own beating heart and screams.

There he left her, and whenever he needed a little entertainment, he’d simply bring back the beasts. He would bring back the creations of his own twisted and dark mind. She’d begun to imagine freedom, and saw white fluffy clouds floating freely right above the floor, through her dark room. A sliver of light shown through the clouds which she created with her mind and when she closed her eyes she expected it to be gone like her other daydreams, but this light stayed.



Chaos

Poem by Hope



Digital Image by Gabe

Who am I, what do I deserve?

Fairy tales do not happen in real life.

Love does not come in one shade but many that are ever changing

We cannot expect perfection but we cannot let go of all standards and expectations.

Do not ruin,

what we have created!

I honor the person you are not your behaviors but I will not allow your behaviors to crush me

EVER

I'm not an idiot!

I'm done pretending to not see the elephant that continues to, leave this empty hollow feeling.

Cringing does not fix this.

I cannot shake the pain in to non existence.

Though I would kill for it to not exist.

I know now that your heart is full but of things that are not pleasing and I expect this and I'm ok letting go



PEACHY

By Logan F



Artwork by Hope

It was a cold Saturday morning when Claire came over again. The previous weekend, Claire and I had gone out with a few other friends to celebrate her 18th birthday on the city. I remember talking excitedly with her about all the new things she could do now that she was an 'official' adult. In a big city like Chicago, turning 18 was like being reborn into a new world with all new possibilities. Most likely, I was so excited about these things with her because I knew I would also be 18 soon. In fact, that chilly Saturday morning, before Claire rang my doorbell, I was thinking about everything I could do with her when my birthday came the very next week. I chuckled as I ran to the door, recalling an ironic joke she had made last weekend about all the sex she now couldn't have. Certainly, college students weren't very prone to be having relations with a high schooler, even if she was a senior. But opening my front door to see her face, which was quite rosy from the cold, I questioned that judgement. My eyes traced her breath as it seeped from her lips, clearly visible.

"Hi there," Claire huffs, obviously cold, "You gonna let me inside, or what?"

I blink, snapping out of it and smiling to her while stepping aside to let her in.

"Ah, sorry. I'm a little out of it. It's still pretty early, and I slept in a bit too much." Claire raises an eyebrow, giving me an amused little grin; "Dreaming about what, clutterbrain?"

I laugh a little, closing the door and walking to the living room with her. I throw up my hands and roll my eyes when she looks to me for a response,

"Oh, not that much that I can really remember. It's all so nonsensical and confusing."

Claire chuckles, shaking her head at me in amusement. "You really are a clutterbrain, aren't you?"

I really can't deny it, and I find myself becoming a bit embarrassed, so I change the subject.

"So, how was that concert last night? I'm pretty jealous of you, considering I was just a week away from being able to go."

"Oh, it was very good. Unlike the all ages events, you don't have to worry about stepping on kids, or worse, a sea of kids stepping on you."

I smile at that, already excited at the prospect of going myself. I thought that maybe I could even go with Claire. Just as I was thinking this, she suddenly pulls something out of one of her large coat pockets. It was a little metal box with a sort of glass tank affixed to the top, from what I could tell. Some kind of orange liquid occupied that tank, and I recognized it as some sort of electronic cigarette. Still not quite sure, I asked; "What is that? Is that an e-cigarette?"

I was intrigued; these things were starting to get really popular, and it was something that I could possibly get after just a week more of waiting.

"Yeah, I forgot to tell you. Actually, this dedicated e-cigarette is called a vape. It's pretty cool, and way better for you than smoking actual cigarettes. It's also cheaper in the long run."

She sounded like she'd been programmed to recite it, but I believed it all. I mean, that's what I had heard about them, too. I still had questions, though.

"But, it does cost you money to buy everything for it, right?"

"Yeah, but not nearly as much as buying cigarettes."

"And it still isn't particularly good for your health, right?"

"Not really, no. But again, better than cigarettes."

"It's worth it for you?"

**"I was intrigued;
these things were
starting to get really
popular..."**

“Totally.”

Claire smiles, and brings the vape to her mouth, inhaling. After a few seconds, she draws it away and exhales, a large plume of vapor billowing out in front of her. I could smell its sickly sweetness as it spread out in the air around me. I didn't mind it, necessarily, and changed the subject again, now just chatting with her.

The day progressed normally from there, just as how it always did when we hung out: we chat for awhile, go out for a late lunch, and then come back to my place to watch a movie or share music. Based on how much she seemed to enjoy this routine with me, others might assume that she liked me as more than a friend. Of course, I wouldn't mind it at all if that was the case, but really we were just very comfortable with each other, as we had been close friends since Kindergarten. I didn't want to assume anything at that point, and I believed myself to be content with friendship. This Saturday, however, I enjoyed spending time with her more than ever. As we chatted at lunch, I realized that she was a lot easier to talk



to than she had been in the past few months, and I seemed to connect with her more than I had in a long time. She seemed more fluid in her thoughts, more genuine, more in-tune with her surroundings. It was almost as if the vape that she toted around with her that day was honing her personality. I knew that wasn't true, but it still intrigued me. After listening to music that afternoon, when she was getting ready to go, I finally asked her if I could try it.

“I was wondering if I could, uh... try that vape,” I asked hesitantly.

“Oh, definitely,” Claire said, putting on her coat. She then slides her hand into her pocket, emerging with the box and handing it to me.

“See that button on the side? Just hold that when you want to hit it.”

“Ah, yeah. I picked up on that just by watching you today.” I smile, trying to hide that I was nervous. I had smoked a cigarette once, but it tasted disgusting and made me feel light-headed. From what I had witnessed throughout the day, I assumed that this wasn't going to be the same. I was excited. I finally bring the vape to my mouth, hold down the button, and inhale. Just two seconds go by before I take it away, doing my best not to cough. I exhale, a minimal amount of vapor leaving my lungs, tasting like peaches. The cloud that appeared before me was nothing like that of Claire's, but I was satisfied that I didn't cough for my first time, at least.

“It's good, right?” Claire asks, an eyebrow raised to me.

I blink, a light wave of numbness washing over me. “Y-yeah. It's pretty good.”

I actually really like how it tasted and I take another one.

Claire steps forward after I had exhaled the second time, and holds out her hand. I really wanted to take a third one, but after a few seconds, I hand her the vape. She turns on her heel, smirking to me, going to the door. “hey, if you like it that much, I can go with you next week to a shop where they sell 'em. You'll be old enough then!”

I smile and nod, it sounded like a good offer. Plus, with her, I would know exactly what I was getting. “that sounds great! I'd love to!”

Claire grins, putting on her jacket, “cool. It'll be fun.”

She finishes zipping up her jacket, and walks to the door, opening it and exiting.

I should to her as she walks to the gate. “See you at school!”

She waves to me as she closes the gate behind her, vape in hand. “See ya!”

I could swear she winked at me as she walked off, and when I finally closed the front door, I was beaming. I was more excited to turn 18 than ever. Only one week away.





Hooked up on Junkies

Writing by Trisha

Art by Logan E.

If you eat a french fry, would you go for another one? Well I'm hooked on french fries and they are delicious. If someone put a french fry on a hook, I bet you \$2.00 that i would run after it. Did you know junk food is healthy for you 2% of the time. Well I discovered this the other day at home. Did you know that Doritos are made from corn, and that's a vegetable, right? Potato chips are made from potatoes, and that's a vegetable, also. Fruit snacks are made out of 100% fruit juice and well that's your fruit. Cheeze Itz are made from cheese that is just not ready yet. However, I decided to give all of that up for a whole three weeks for religious purposes.



Man! Ha!
Did you know that they have an even healthier chips...Guess what; they have "Baked" chips now. Snickers make you feel better according to the commercial. Skittles give you a chance to feel and taste the rainbow. Twinkies are these awesome on the go cakes. Gum drops give you drops of joy. Candy corn is just sweet corn. Popcorn is kind of good for you because its high in fiber as well as polyphenols which help protect against heart disease.

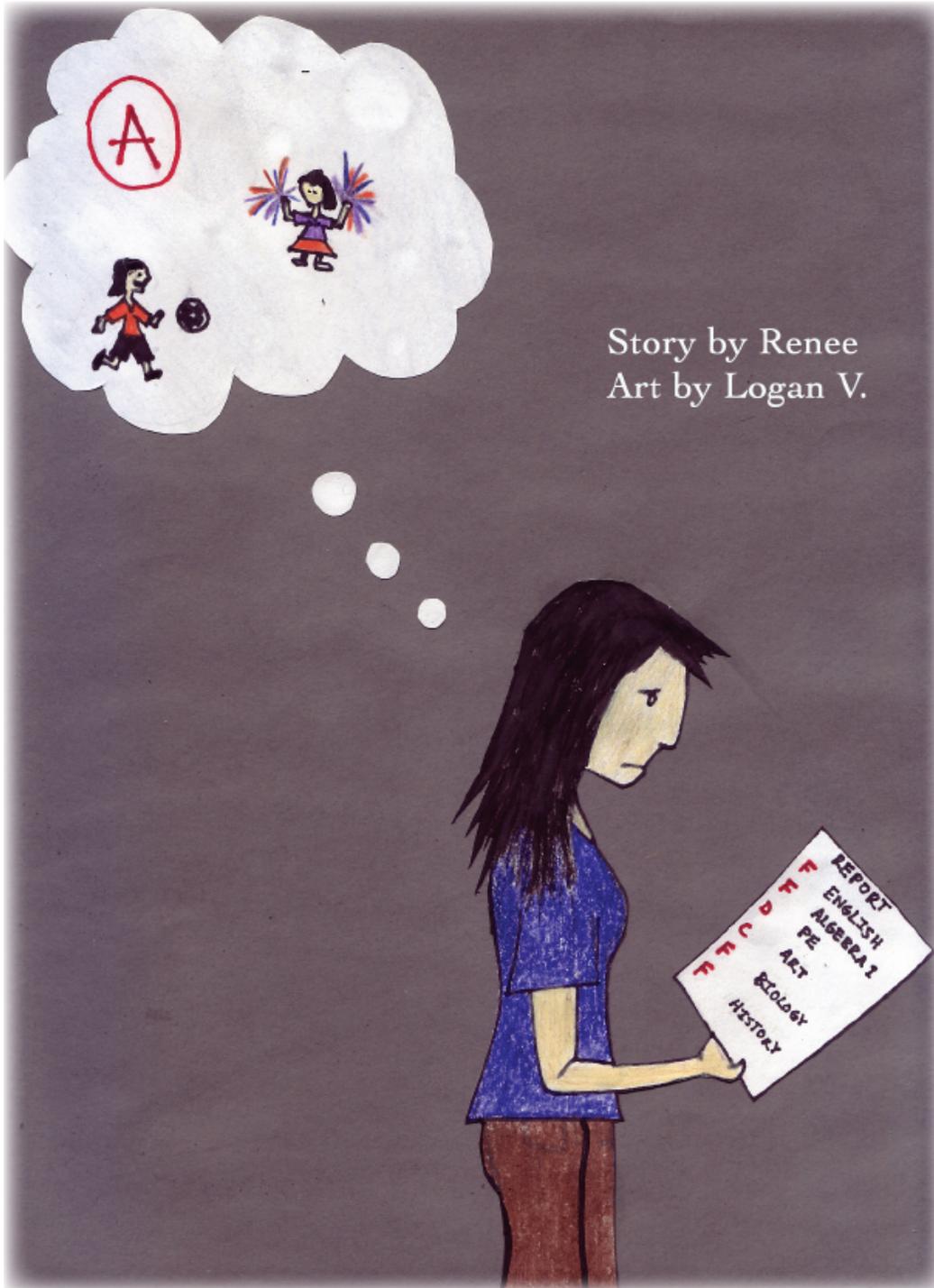
After all these years, I finally went on a diet, with only eating rice, beans, and veggies, with no sugar, no meat nor dairy. My blood pressure went down and well those beans really worked through me. It was neither fun nor cute.

It was amazing to me how drastically my health improved and how energized I felt once I kept on proceeding on with my diet. Fruits and vegetables are very good for you, they make you feel better. Vegetables clear your face from acne and it clears your bowels, mostly beans clear your bowels.



Vegetables lower your blood pressure and they are life savers real Life Savers. Just eating meat made me feel yucky and at every meal i would feel like i wanted to pass out. Junk food really is not good for you no matter what anyone says or persuades you to think otherwise, or how good that food may taste. Junk food is designed to reel us into eating and buying more of it.

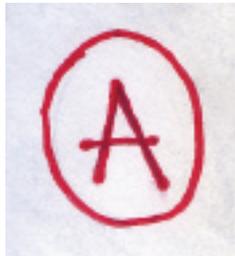
CHANGES WITH CONSEQUENCES



I was a young girl who hated all the rules. "Do your homework." I'd say "No thank you." When I got home it was, "Make your bed, and do your work around the house, then you may play outside." I'd say "No, but thanks for the suggestion." Then to everyone else i just said no, and not listen. When I got into 5th grade I was a wreck, always getting into trouble. I had a group of friends and we all loved to get into trouble. We would bully kids on the playgroup, have our own "turf" and just be mean. Then one day a girl from our group was moving away. She was one of the first in the group and she said she wasn't coming back, ever. I thought this might be the end of those days.

6th grade came around and our group started to be more serious about a lot of stuff. That is when we split up in to different categories. Some were with the cheerleaders, some in sports, others not in contact with us. I was in the cheerleader, sporty category. When I was starting to get better grades people made fun of me. My reputation was already set on a pretty cheer girl and soccer star. No one believed that I was smart.

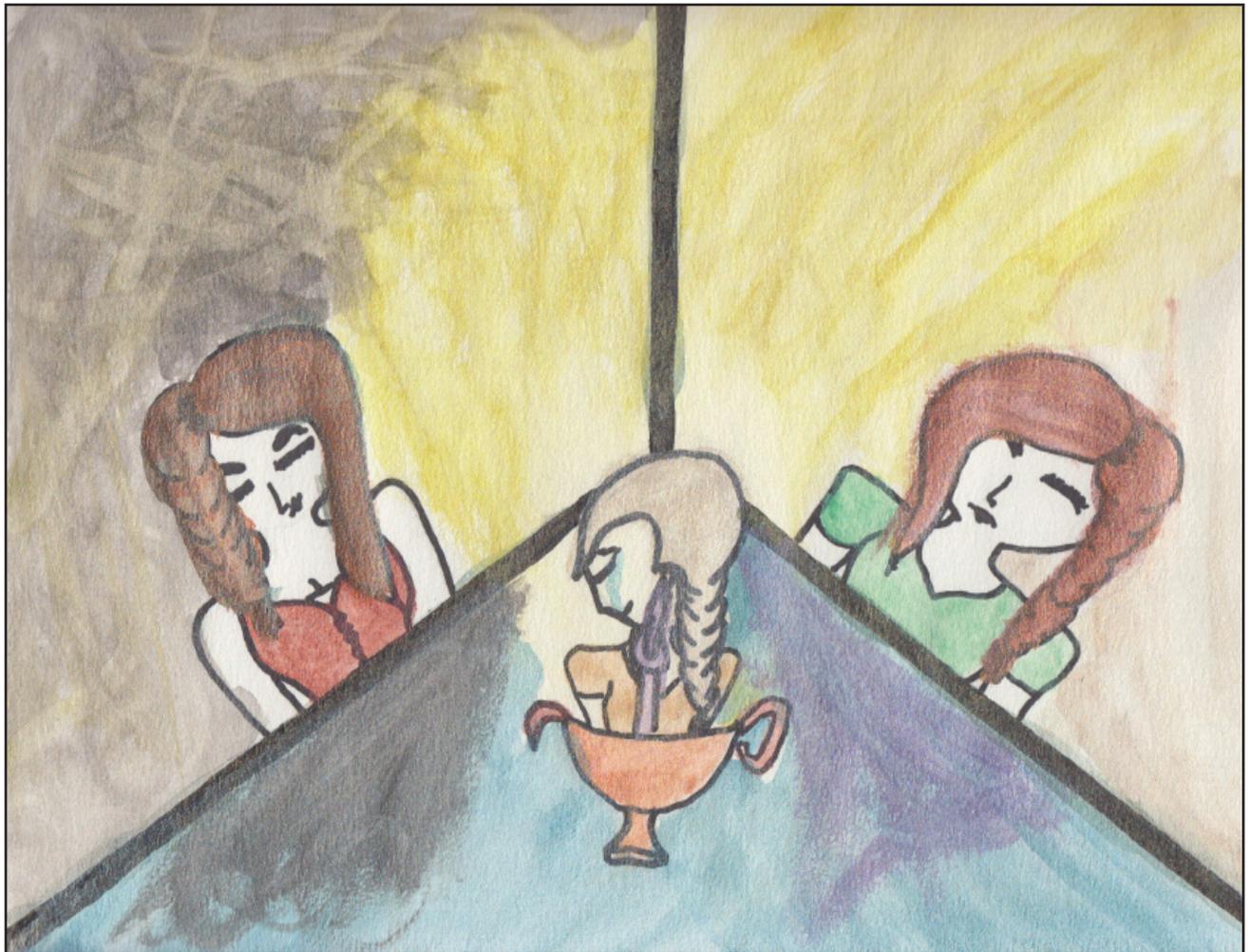
In 8th grade i finally stopped being a goody good. I didn't want to be good, have a sweet reputation, or have good grades. So I started to skip classes, get into fights at school, argued with the teachers and just wanted my old life back. I didn't want to be made fun of anymore. People would be rude to me, call me names, and neglect my existence. When I was finally strong enough to stand up for myself, I got recognized. I would hurt people feeling who originally hurt mine. After about 2 months of that my grades dropped to C's, D's and F's. I was kicked off the school soccer team because I couldn't focus or take anything seriously. I was banned from joining the cheer squad till next year because I was off balance. I lost everything because I was scared of rejection and scared I would be made fun of for a long time. Instead I made it worse for myself. I wanted to build myself back up but it was going to be a struggle. I would go up to people and say sorry for what I have done.





the second me

Story By Julie G



Drawing by Renee

Everyday I used to go by my daily routine. Wake up, eat, tv, school, eat, internet, texting, texting and texting. I considered myself as a very bubbly person. I liked creating and establishing new friendships and connections with different types of people and groups that differed from my own comfort zone. I talked to the geeks, goths, preps, nerds and other people labeled "losers".. I smiled at people and asked them about their day. The ways i got people to like me and became pretty well known in a positive way is just the simple things. That was basically my strategy. I said good morning and goodnight or just gave simple compliments that brightened up peoples day. It can be looked in a positive and negative way. For some it can be considered as being fake but the postive would be friendly and social. This was how i survived high school by using the guide to admiration.

During freshman year I was a very liked person I went to parties, dated the jocks and did well in school. Around the beginning of the year there was this girl Ashley, who hated me so much where she would've gone over the limits just to put me down. Knowing that she hated me really frustrated me knowing that theres one person who actually truly hates me. I knew that she hated me but I didn't know she hated me that much until something happened. I was in 7th period biology class and I was talking with my lab partner Parker. She was really good friends with Ashley and she also knew that she hated my guts. Parker was explaining to me the reasons why Ashley didn't like me. It seemed to me like the reasons why she was mad at me were unreasonable. According to Parker, shes was jealous. at that time I would usually say " who wouldn't be?" but as her hatred increased my frustration got worse. She started to spread rumors that I liked certain people and that I've done certain things. I didn't understand why she did that. she also tried getting a few people against me but that didn't work. My frustration level was so high where if she did one more thing I would flip.

In third week of the 9th grade I realized something was happening. Ashley was trying to create a fake instagram account of myself to bully other kids in school. She made a plan to breakup with my boyfriend on social media at that time and to become a total jerk to everyone else. A day after I figured that out I was furious. I wanted to scream swear words at her face or have revenge. I knew I couldn't scream I don't like screaming at people in general. I just wanted to let out my anger and frustration on her or something. She made me so mad at myself to a point where it distracted me from school and social events. I didn't tell my friends about her cause I knew that they would attack and bully her. I may have been very self centered by I still did care somewhat about other people. After I took all that anger and frustration out, on the same day I decided to calm myself down and to relax. I thought to myself if I did something due to my anger bad things will hap-

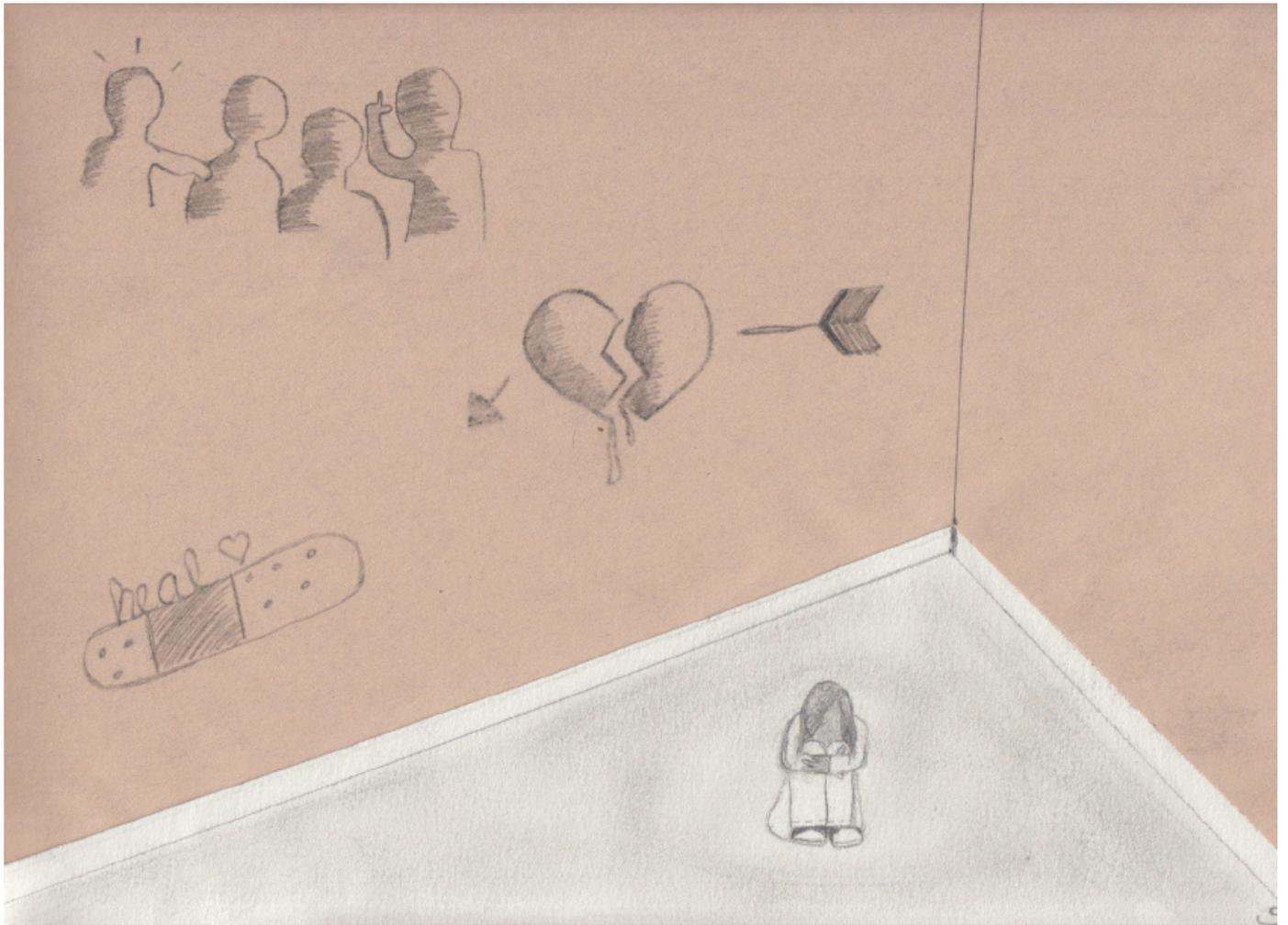
pen at the end. But if I let it continue I would be extremely frustrated and explode. So I walked to my favorite teachers classroom and told him about it. After a few hours everyone get informed and she did get the consequences she deserved without me being angry or frustrated on what she did and what her motive was.

In the beginning I was a bubbly person in order to have a lot of friends and to become admired by everyone. I was conceded and full of myself even though certain people were negative towards me. I was really frustrated with the idea of not being accepted by everyone in a positive way. It got me angry with myself and secretly angry to others. I needed to learn how to control myself during situations when certain people didn't like me. Although, now that I embraced my characteristics and physical traits and loved who I was and if necessary if I had strong beliefs to change myself I could and would. But I've noticed throughout my life I made sure that everyone liked me and no one can dislike me but it doesn't mean that I ended up liking myself. And that was my guide to admiration it was by going through challenges, overcoming my difficulties and having self acceptance even if some people didn't like me.

MY FRUSTRATION LEVEL WAS
SO HIGH WHERE IF SHE DID ONE
MORE THING I WOULD FLIP







Who I Am

Story by Julia
Artwork by Sarah

“False hopes are more dangerous than fears.” –J.R.R. Tolkien

I remember how stubborn I was when I was a little kid. Whether it was an adult or a peer telling me what to do, I rarely ever followed directions. I had a moral compass that was not easily swayed, and I knew exactly what I wanted. My parents used to say I had a “fiery independence” that made me unique. As a kid, I was confident in who I was and liked the person I saw in the mirror. As I started school, things began to change. It seemed that my independence slowly became a curse. I found myself with little to no friends and nobody to share my thoughts. I remember watching my classmates on the playground laughing and joking around, and wishing that I could have that. It wasn't that I had never had a friend; it was that nobody ever stayed. I was temporary.

Once I entered middle school, my lack of friendships continued. I eventually withdrew and turned to myself to be my own friend. I no longer felt sad, but self-conscious about my lack of friendships. As I got older, my self-esteem continued to diminish and I became frustrated with the way I felt. I decided at this point to push myself to form friendships that would stick in high school.

When I was a freshman, I got sucked into an unhealthy group of friends. I was so desperate to be a part of anything that I ended up giving up parts of myself to ensure that everyone around me was happy. In the social hierarchy of high school, I became a part of the popular crowd; also known as the partiers. I had no similarities with any of these people and was forced to be someone I wasn't. Hiding who I was eventually took its toll and my mental health started to decline.

When I turned 15, I had officially been diagnosed with clinical depression. It affected every single part of my life. I could be surrounded by all of my “friends,” yet still feel the unrelenting pain of feeling lonely. I realized at this point that being alone and being lonely are nowhere near the same thing. I had been alone most of my childhood due to my independence and had never thought anything of it. The moment I began to struggle with my self-esteem and friendships is when being alone turned into feeling lonely. I no longer felt confident enough with who I was to be okay with being alone. Instead, I chose to let my fears of loneliness lead me to accepting the false hope of friendship these people gave me.

My parents forced me to end my friendships with these people because they believed they were doing more harm than good. My friends moved on without me without

any difficulty, and it was then that I quickly began to dislike myself. About a month after losing my friends, a boy came into my life and gave me attention. I was surprised by this, but it made me feel good that someone wanted to spend time with me. We later began dating and things got serious pretty quickly. I found that I would consistently put him before myself because I didn't want him to leave me. He saw this neediness and began to use it to his advantage. As I became more comfortable with him, I let him into my world. He started to blame me for any problems he was having and made me apologize for things out of my control. I just wanted someone to want me. I wanted someone to need me. He knew that I was vulnerable and used it to lure me back...every single time.. My family continued to tell me that my relationship with him was unhealthy and that I deserved better. I hated myself for letting my fear of being lonely override the reality of what our relationship really was.

"...there is always some love for the loveless." - Santosh Kalwar

"Eye contact. Look up." I told myself this a million times in my head but it felt impossible. I felt everything. I was sad, scared, relieved, worried and hopeful all at the same time, because I knew that this was my last chance — my last chance to save myself.

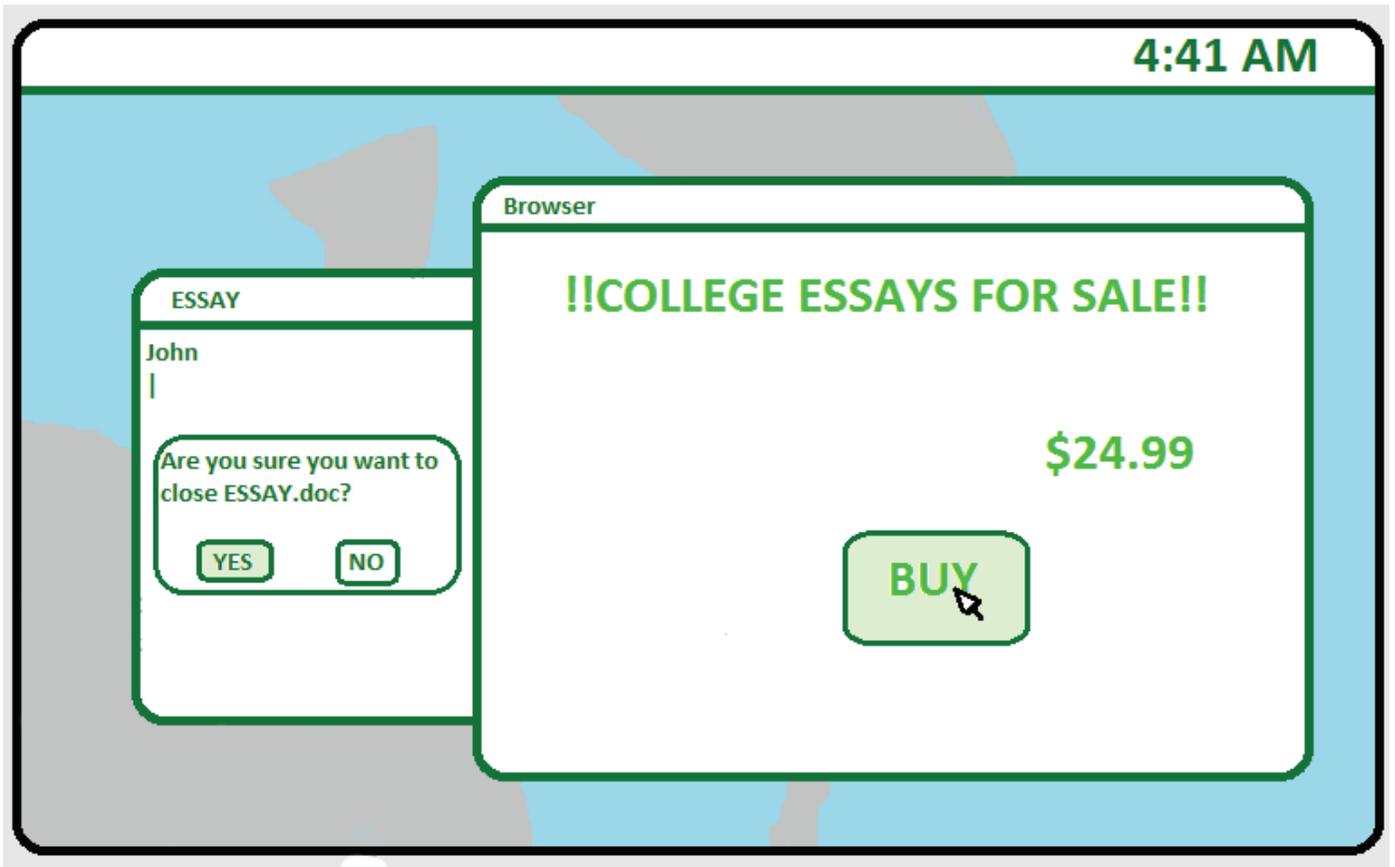
"I gave you everything. I loved you, I really did, but I loved you far more than I loved myself. The sad part is that I would choose you a million times before I ever chose myself, and that's why I have to step away. I don't regret anything, because one day I'll wake up and realize that I am worth so much more than this. One day I will learn how to love myself, and I can't wait for that."

That was it—the last words I ever said to him. I chose to leave and I never looked back. It was one of the hardest decisions I have ever had to make, but I know deep down that it was the right thing to do. We often allow ourselves to get walked all over because we think any attention is better than no attention. We do anything to counter being alone, because the idea of what we want is far better than the fear of not having it. The truth is, love is not sex and hearing I love you. It's not about self-sacrifice and it doesn't happen instantly. Love is far greater than that. It's about self love and growth. Love has the ability to change a person and it has the power to heal. Love, in its entirety, is what keeps us alive. Santosh Kalwar once said, "...there is always some love for the loveless." Don't ever make compromises in order to feel whole, because no matter how lonely we feel, love will always find us at the time we need it most.



An Unwise Decision

Writing By Logan V



Artwork by Sasha

I had no choice. It was just the last thing I needed to complete my final essay in my senior year at Reelton University. Of all the essays I'd written in my life, this was by far the most difficult, and held the most pressure. I stared at the glowing red numbers on my alarm clock; 3 a.m. It was crunch time, and I was stressing out. The paper was due tomorrow, and I had gotten nothing done. Even worse, it was supposed to be at least 12 pages long. I had genuinely tried to get it done in the previous weeks that it had been assigned, but I just couldn't think of a good thesis. I was passing all my classes except this one, and I needed this essay to make the grade a passing one.

I stared at the open Word document before me. The blank page with just my name, and the blinking cursor displayed in front of me. I stared for a long time, hands hovering over the keyboard. I started and deleted my thesis at least 20 times, but always ended up with a blank screen. After almost an hour and a half of thoughts about giving up, I finally gave in to my inner impulses. It was around 4:30 am. I had four hours before I had to go to class and hand in the paper. My hands began shakily typing the words into the search bar: College Essays for Sale. I found what I was looking for. In large, bold, and bright green letters, the screen read: "Complete College Essays! Any Topic You Want! Only 4\$ a page!" Forty eight dollars. I could handle that. But what was I doing? I had never plagiarized in my life! It was against everything I stood for! But I had given in. Given up. I succumbed to my fate as my hands, shaking like crazy, hit "buy" with my cursor. I had done it. For the first time in my whole life, I had plagiarized an essay. I knew it was wrong, but I couldn't just turn in a blank piece of paper. It had to be done.

I now had my plagiarized essay to hand in. I slept for a couple hours while it printed, and when I awoke, I headed for class. When I got there, I took a seat in the back of the class, but I was so nervous I was shaking in my chair. My professor told us to hand in our papers, and I slowly and shakily made my way up to the front of the class. I handed my plagiarized essay to my professor, shaking and not making eye contact.

She looked me in the eye, and said, "John, are you all right? Are you ill?" I replied with a quick "oh, no, I think it's just too much coffee," and headed back to my seat. My insides were churning, what if she was suspicious? Did she suspect anything? But I had turned it in, and it was finished, over, never to be brought up again. I hoped I would never hear about that essay for the rest of my life. How wrong was I.

Two weeks later, I was celebrating the end of all major assignments with my fellow classmates, when I saw my professor striding toward me. I felt a rush of fear, anxiety, and guilt. My professor pulled me aside, and said, "John, please come with me to my office."

My stomach dropped. I was shaking as I followed her into her office. There she sat me down in a chair, and told me, "John, in the 25 years that I've worked here, I have seen the essay you turned in more than eight times." My mouth fell open as she went on, "I'm sorry, I know you're a good student, but I can't have you pass my class..."

"Also," she said, "I have talked to the administration, and the heads of the school, and they informed me that you are being expelled. I'm sorry John, but you should start packing tonight." I couldn't believe it. After I had picked my jaw up off the ground she said her final word. "I'm very disappointed; I never expected this from a student like you, but I hope you've learned your lesson."

I sulked back to my dorm, and got out my bags. My roommate asked me, "hey John, why the long face? You should be out there celebrating! The hard work is over!" He looked me up and down, glanced at my bags, and said, "Hey, man, is something wrong?"

I looked at him blankly for a long time before replying, “hey man, look, I’ve been kicked out.”

“What? You? But you’re such a teacher’s pet!” He said slapping me on the back.

“No.” I said. “I plagiarized my essay”

“Oh.” was his only reply. After that, he left me alone. A few minutes later, he said, “Yo, I’m gonna go help Pete with something. I’ll give you some space,” and he left. All my hard work through the years of college, all to come down to a single, meaningless paper. Nevertheless, I packed my bags that evening. I went to the quad and said my goodbyes. Word had gotten around about what I had done, and I couldn’t stand the shame. When it was time for me to go, i got my bags, got in the taxi, and left. I got a job at the local thrift store, but had to bear the shame of being an expellee from college. My parents were the worst. When they found out that I had been expelled, they didn’t talk to me for two years straight. For the rest of my life, I will never regret anything more than taking the bait of that College Essay website.



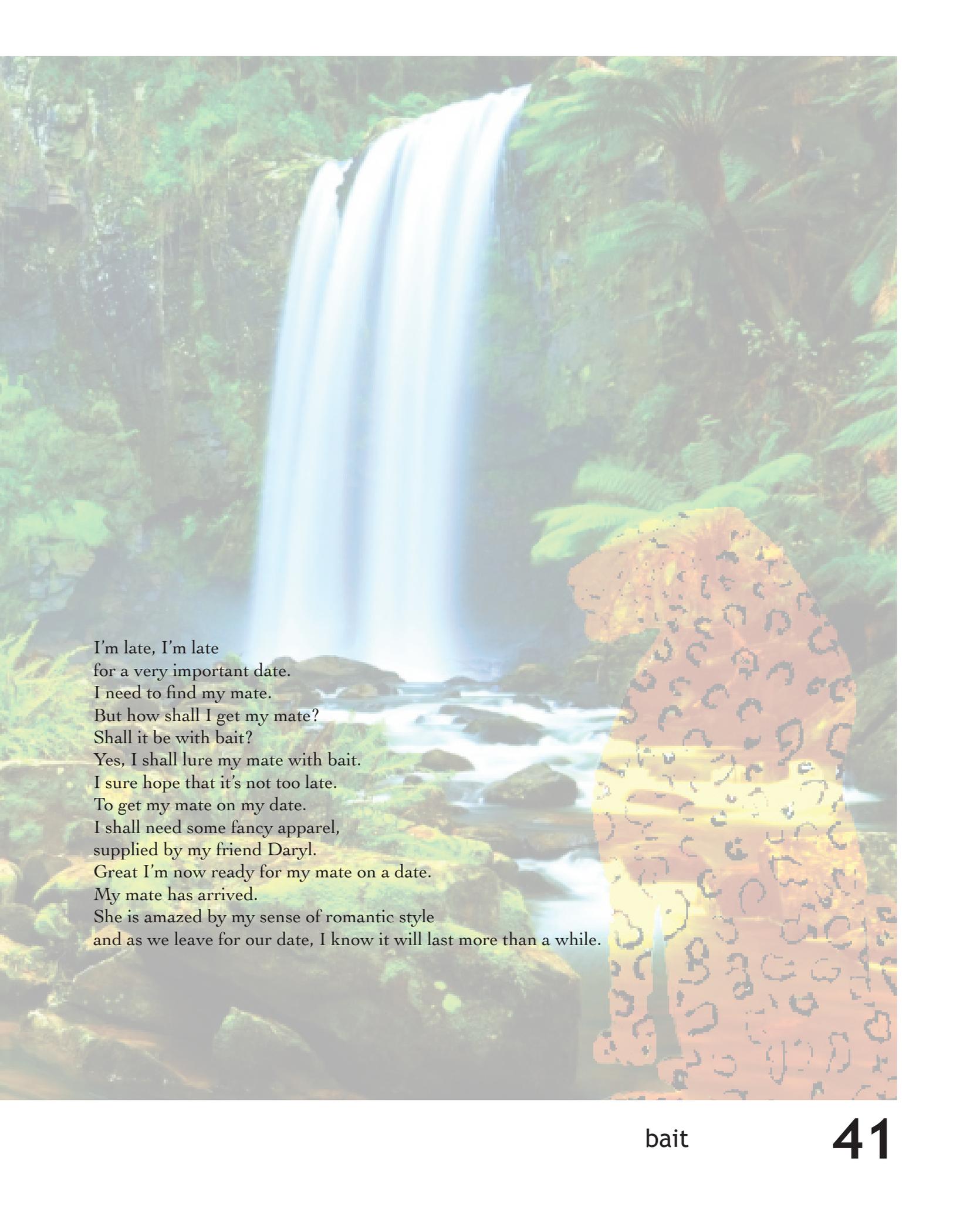
A Date of Bait

Poem by Gabe

Art by Trisha T







I'm late, I'm late
for a very important date.
I need to find my mate.
But how shall I get my mate?
Shall it be with bait?
Yes, I shall lure my mate with bait.
I sure hope that it's not too late.
To get my mate on my date.
I shall need some fancy apparel,
supplied by my friend Daryl.
Great I'm now ready for my mate on a date.
My mate has arrived.
She is amazed by my sense of romantic style
and as we leave for our date, I know it will last more than a while.

Orthogénique

Cast



Reel

Bait







A Surprise Encounter

Story By Logan F

Digital Image By Gabe D

It was a wonderful day at the lake; the waters were a deep blue and the dark sand was warm and firm. Today, Dave had brought his brand new fishing pole. He smiles excitedly as he feels the smooth, worn wood of the dock against his bare feet, and he prepares his line. He ties on the bobber, the weight, and finally the hook. Out of the smaller of the two coolers that he brought, he removes a container of nightcrawlers. He cringes a bit as he removes a worm from the dirt-filled container, and baits his hook with it. He was now ready to cast out his line and catch some fish!

Dave pulls the rod back, then flicks it forward while releasing his thumb from the line to cast a moderate distance away from the dock. The line lands in the water softly, the bright red bobber popping out against the vibrant blue. He cranks the reel back a few turns to taught the line. Then comes waiting. Fortunately, it's not a long wait, as the bobber dips beneath the surface after only a few seconds. Fish on hook! Dave reels in smoothly, his fishing pole bending slightly as the fish struggled weakly to swim against the pull. Finally, smiling at how lucky he had just gotten by catching something on his first cast, Dave reels the flopping fish out of the water and over the wooden railing of the dock. Dave's smile fades a little as he recognizes the fish as just an ordinary bluegill, maybe half a pound in weight, but he's still somewhat glad he caught something that he could eat.

"Maybe my luck will continue..." Dave thinks, admiring his catch. "Maybe, my luck can increase!"

Grabbing the bluegill carefully but firmly, he removes the hook from its mouth, and proceeds to throw it in the larger cooler, over ice. Then it was back to the worms to bait his hook again.

"Please let me catch something big this time," Dave hopes as he casts out his line once again, much further out than before. He's satisfied with this cast, and squints over the water to look for any shadows of fish interested in his bait. After three minutes of waiting, nothing happens. Dave taps his foot lightly on the wooden dock as he stares out at his line. The bobber bobs idly in the soft waves. He sighs. Dave has heard that patience is the most important part of fishing, but he didn't know it would be this hard!

However, just as he's about to reel in to try for another cast, he spies a large shadow in the water near his line. "What in the world could that be?" Dave thinks, excited at what seemed to be a moving fish, and quite a large one at that. He had been told stories as a kid about monsters living in the lake, but up until now, he had thought for sure that they weren't real. His eyes widen with anticipation as the shadow moves slowly towards his hook. The waves stop. The bobber teeters. Quickly, Dave's expression turns from excited to mortified as the shadow increases dramatically in size under the hook, larger than any fish he could ever imagine living in the lake. Suddenly, the bobber disappears under the water completely, and moments later the line is pulled, hard, bending Dave's pole to its limits. He's nearly thrown off the dock, but he flexes his feet to latch onto the wooden railing at the last second. "Aaaaahhh!!" Dave screams, extremely scared.

He looks in horror in front of him to spot what had him stretched out over the railing. It was huge, and approaching the surface quickly. Dave trembles as he spies the culprit's grey fin rise above the water. Dumbstruck, Dave can only mumble.

"Oh no... that's not a fish... that's... that's a shark!!!"

In panic, Dave simply lets go of the rod, and subsequently falls face-first into the water.

The shock from the impact and the realization that he was now in the territory of a dangerous shark was quite enough to make Dave lose his cool, flailing in the water to get back to the surface. Disoriented, he opens his eyes to find his way, but the very first thing he sees is the huge shark swimming quickly towards him, wearing a toothy grin. Dave had never been more scared in his life, and he opens his mouth to scream, accidentally inhaling water. He chokes, and his vision fades away as he continues

to struggle towards the light of the surface. But the surface didn't come.

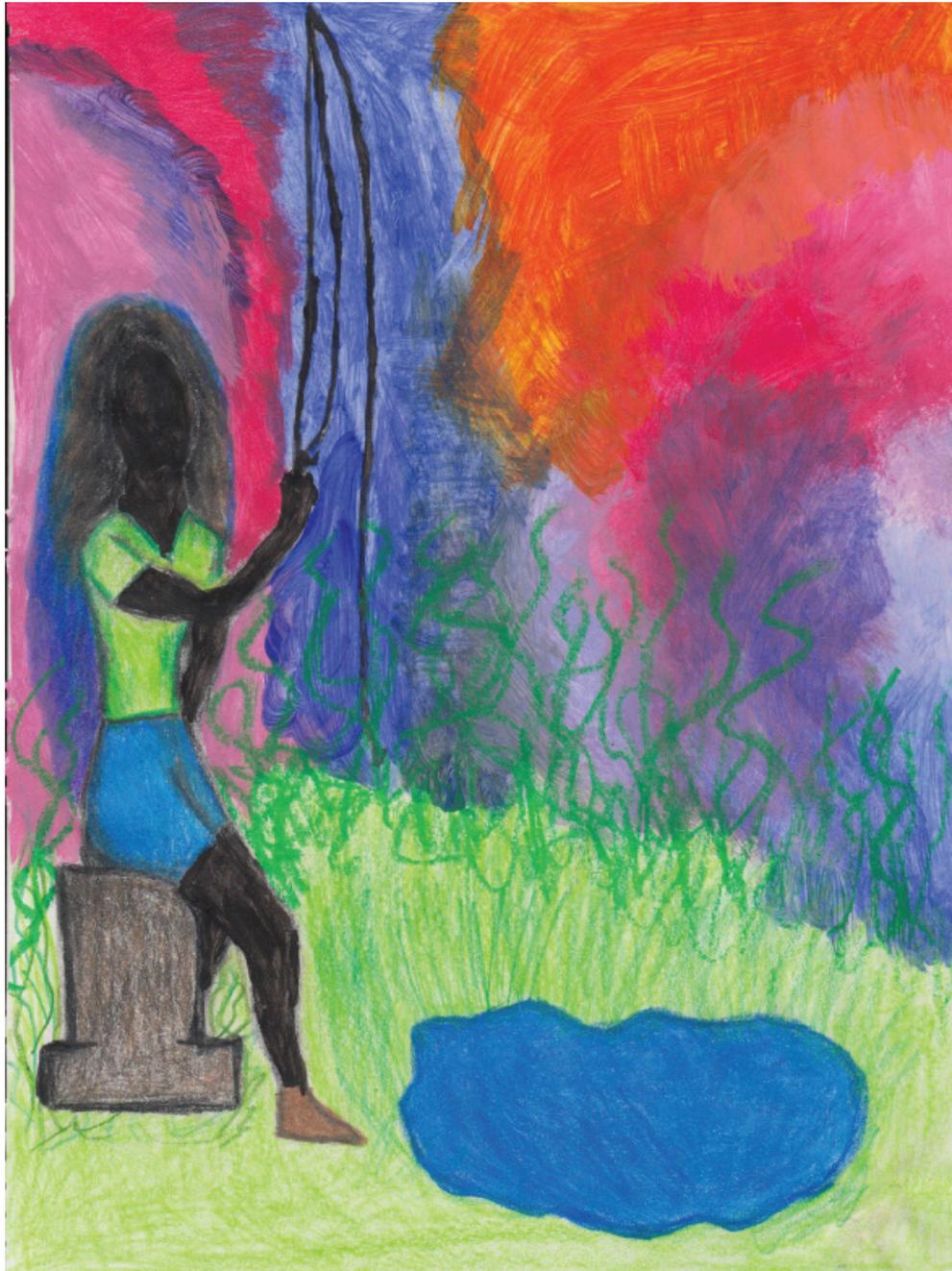
An undetermined amount of time later, Dave opens his eyes to the sunset, lying on the shore. He seems to be unharmed, except for some minor bite marks on his left leg. He sits up in the sand quickly, trying to piece together what had happened to him. His eyes widen and his jaw falls agape as he spies a fin dipping down into the waves. The last thing that Dave could remember hearing was: "Sharks are fish too, you know." He scratches his head in awe, and then simply laughs as he gets up; the shark had saved him, but at the cost of his new fishing pole! He goes to retrieve his coolers before heading home, still chuckling in disbelief. At least he still had a bluegill to eat!





WHO AM I?

Story by Renee
Art by Hope



There once was a girl named Athena. She was part of a species called The Rainbow People. This clan had a ruler, his name was Shadow. He was a dark man who didn't like the sun. When the sun would come out he would use his powers to push away the sunshine. Athena was in a lower part of the clan. Athena was 16, the middle child of the family. She liked to go to this pond, sit and think. The pond was beautiful and reflected the sky. This pond helped Athena think about right and wrong, what to do in a bad situation or if she should turn away. Her mom would tell her stories of when Shadow would go there when he was her age. The story ended of a strong hatred towards the pond with Shadow.

Athena lived in a small cloud with 4 other members: her sister, her older brother, and parents. The mother of the family didn't like living in the clouds, or being ruled by Shadow. On the other hand, the father liked living there. He liked the dark calmness of the clouds. The siblings did not talk much; they were very silent and stayed out of mischief. Athena was the outcast of the family; she was different from all of her family, even the whole cloud population.

Different colors from orange to blue, magenta to olive green rained across the cloud population. Athena's family was a wild mixture of color. Her sister was pink and violet. Mother always told her that those colors were the colors of peace and sensitivity. Her brother was army blue and dark green. They stood for strength and protection. Athena's mother and father were red and yellow, to symbolize love, care, and trust.

Athena's colors were a bit different from others of her kind. She is black with grayish hair. Her mother told her that those were not bad colors, they're justdifferent. Mother told her, "You are 16, your color will be amazing and shine for all to see." Athena was always confused about what she was, who she was going to be. She tries so hard to find out but the only way she would think about it straight was when she went to the pond.

One gloomy day she went to Shadow to ask if the pond is still there.

"Shadow, I must go to the pond!"

Shadow replied, "Is that so?"

Athena tried to explain to him that she must go to find who she really was because she has heard it will help.

"Little girl," Shadow said strongly, "I used the pond water to make an amazing storm, there would be no water left there anyways." He finished with a chuckle. He told her " Never again talk of that pond!" and pointed to the door.

Athena walked out crying. Then she turned and said, "Just because you couldn't find your colors doesn't mean I won't find mine!" She ran down the steps crying. "I have to find my colors, I must!"

The storm that Shadow was making started to brew. Only this time the storm was not on the world below it was in the clouds. This had not happened before, the town was in a lot of fear. Mother and father, sister and brother all went looking for Athena. When they found her they tried to convince her to come with them. They asked what was the matter. She told them she talked to Shadow about going to the pond.

"Oh my, honey you can never talk to Shadow about the pond or his colors."

"Why mother, did something happen to him?"

"Yes," the mom said with a sad voice.

"What, what happened to Shadow?"

The mom sat down in the rain to tell the story.

"When Shadow was about your age he loved going to the pond, like I told you. He was as curious as you are to find what his colors meant, black and gray."

"Was he mad?" Athena asked with a glum face.

“No, he was as high spirited as you,” she said with a smile. “Only one day he went back because the pond had no answers. When he was there he found a fishing pole, black as night. He picked it up, closed his eyes and asked with a teardrop, “ Who am I?” The fishing pole started to go crazy and the sky turned gray. He got scared and dropped it in the water. He looked at the water, and cried, “This is who I am.” That is why Shadow doesn’t like the pond.”

Athena became ferocious, “Just because Shadow has bad color and personality does not mean I won’t.”

She started to run to the pond, leaving her family behind her. When she got to the pond she froze. The big beautiful pond that once was there was now a small circle. She ran over in tears and yelled, “NO!”

“Shadow has been sucking the water from the pond since you were young,” her mom said with a hug.

“But why, why would he do such a thing?” Athena fell to her knees. “The pond shows you who you are, why would he do that?”

Taking a deep breath the mom replied, “Remember the gray skies and fishing pole?”

“Yeah...”

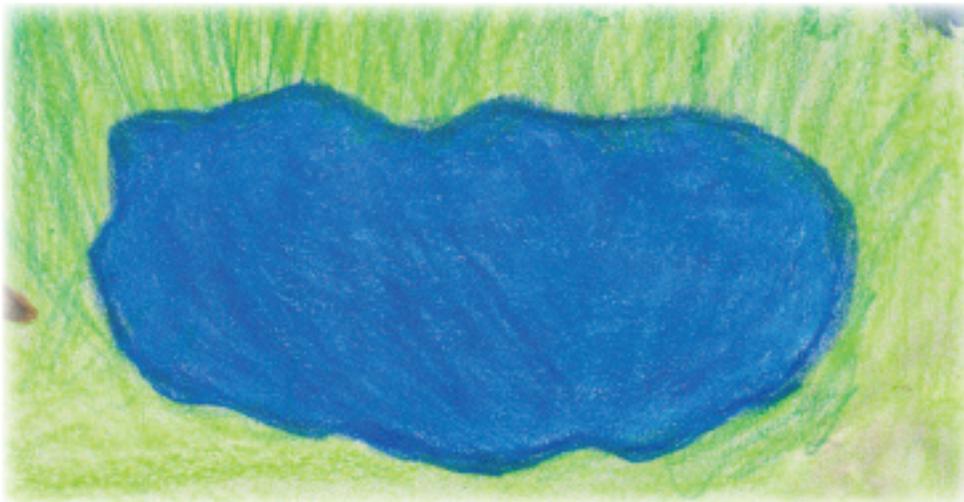
“That fishing pole is also a test to see if you are evil or good. He is like the fish, he couldn’t swim away fast enough.” Athena came close and nuzzled close to her mother and they both were silent. A little while later Athena had an epiphany. She knew what must happen.

“Athena, NO!”

Her mom woke up to her daughter holding the same pole. Athena turned around and began to cry.

“Athena don’t you DARE!”

With no words Athena closed her eyes, took a breath and said, “Who....am....I?”



Unrequited Love

Story by Hope



Drawing by Julia



There are things I have yet to understand. Things that my mind has yet to conceive and that my heart has yet to except. I did not choose my genetics; and my personality has been shaped by my life however creepy, disgusting and unfavorable I may be. We do not choose our poison and we don't always see it till we're laying there in anguish gripping at the hollow space that once contained a heart. Her hair is dark as night and her skin pale and polished and perfect. Her marble lips are a maroon red. Those lips that were mine.

Taunt me, yelling!, she now addresses me in disgust. As though I am scum or an unwanted zit. So here I stand watching in awe and utter despair cause I know that in this house lies a man, a man that has what I don't. Her, of course, along with many other things. In the moonlight I am a gray color, translucent and airy, as if of the mist. There are things that make a person whole and full things that I have never had.

The woman I look at will one day be a mother but she has always been a lover. I remember all the summers and winters spent in her company. The seasons changed and our love stayed steady unyielding though I wait for it to fall apart and sooner or later like everything else it did. That day unwrapped itself in front of me like an onion becoming more and more unbearable. While creating a picture his monster stands in front of me, and I question the one thing I feel I shouldn't have to myself. I question if it's me who's created this if maybe I am just completely unlovable. And it makes me mad. What!!!! Why is it that so when the only thing I wanted was love.

“But there are things that are just not meant to be..”

It seems that people are completely unable to look past what is so visible on the outside. To see that inside I am screaming, clawing at the walls I want love and I'm sorry so sorry I wish it was different but I cannot change. I want you but at this point I just want a friend. Someone to listen to see that past the eerie translucent gray is a human. I still need hugs I still want an ear when it's all too much and I need someone to carry this pain with me.

But there are things that are just not meant to be and I suppose that this is one of them. That though I desperately want, I will never obtain. I am thankful for this one last night to will myself to give up the fight. That my brain knows I lost and my heart **MUST** except. Tonight is the beginning of my emotional haunting.



The Shadows We Cast

Written by Sasha

Art by Logan F.



At the age of 17, I met a girl with a shock of pink hair. At the age of 18, she became my first girlfriend. In between, she helped me realize I was transgender. But amidst all these momentous occasions, I learned the key to balance, simply by learning how terrible it was to not have it.

When I realized I was transgender, Katy had been sleeping over at my house, and was the first one I told of how I felt. She herself was gay, so she helped me come out to my parents. She and I worked on writing how we felt. It was that evening that I finally realized that I had fallen head over heels for her.

Forty days later, she asked me to be her Valentine. We'd hung out once more, but had yet to go on an actual date. It would be a couple weeks before we genuinely went for our first date, when we both did things that society would consider "shameful". I'm not ashamed of what happened. I merely regret wasting that time with someone who would later hate me.

Through the whole of the time we spent dating, we became obsessed with each other. We both went to the hospital, right after another, because we were too anxious from a lack of contact. That should've warned me far in advance that it wasn't healthy... but it didn't. We continued to text long into the night and neglect our friends to focus on our love.

After seventy-one days of dating, we split. I knew it had been coming. She'd texted me first and my heart had filled with dread. I was scared. I didn't know what to do with my life. I asked out one of her best friends in an act of desperation. I know now that such a mistake would drive such a wedge in what little friendship we had, that nothing could be repaired.

Looking back, there was one enormous problem with our relationship: we were everything to each other. She and I cast shadows upon each other, so that we could not see the glory found in our other friends and loved ones. This shadow obscured what was necessary for healthy living, and I regret letting it go as far as it did.

In other words, in any relationship, one must have balance. Balance between the people in the relationship, balance between the innumerable relationships you keep, balance between yourself and everyone around you. I learned that the hard way.



Bullies and Silence

Story by Sarah
Art by Logan V.



From the moment I was able to understand what bullying was, I realized that that's what was being done to me every day from kindergarten until the end of 8th grade. I didn't enjoy what the other kids around me did, like playing and storytelling, I was fond of sitting on the cement stairs as other kids ran about and just watching, listening. I had questions that even my parents couldn't answer which was foreign to me because at the time, I believed that they knew everything. The other kids didn't like me because I didn't talk. They'd whisper to each other, giving me side looks as I continued through my day with all these 'grown-up' thoughts plaguing my childhood mind.

I remember one group of girls that made up a rumor that I was mute, so they kicked me in the shin to see if I would scream. They, of course, didn't get in trouble for doing so, but I was red in the face with embarrassment because "no one normal screams in the middle of a math lesson" said my teacher. Spilling tomato soup on my white uniform shirt was another favorite game of theirs as well as milk on my pants so I'd have to call home and get a change of clothes which of course made rumors run wild. "Her mom always has to bring her clothes because she wets herself."

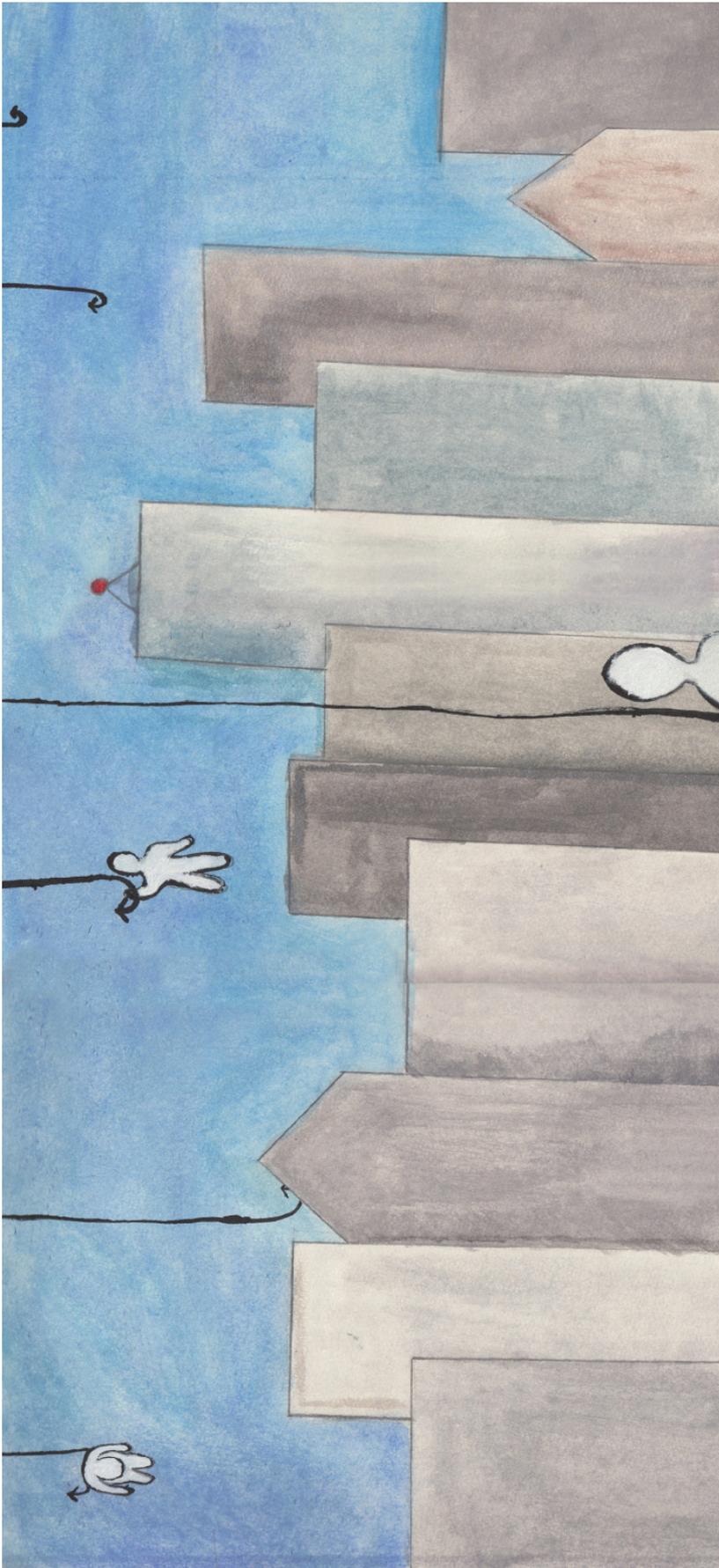
When I moved from that school, they bid me a goodbye and simply moved on to their next target. My new school was scary, not because of the kids or the new environment but because of what I was afraid they would do to me. After my old school, I knew what young kids were truly capable of, like the instances that I mentioned as well as many more I'd like to leave buried. It wasn't fair that others so easily could cast me out and give me labels at such a young age, and burden me with these memories while they have no regrets, but it happened and I will live with that for the rest of my life.





HOOKED ON SURREALISM

Story by: Trisha
Watercolor by: Sarah



“SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE HOOKED ON SO MANY DIFFERENT THINGS.”

So many different people hooked on so many different things. A young teenager named Loriece worked at a store called POPZ. The whole store had everything wrapped in bubble wrap. It was a one stop shop for only things that were resourceful and edible. Once you purchase something, it was wrapped in bubble wrap.

Loriece was popular in school. One way she was popular around school was she would come to school but be a part of the not so cool but would be talked about and volunteered by the cool crowd when passed by, mostly only because she was smart and had had a good head on her shoulders. She was popular for being apart of the ancient coin club of extinct people, yes she loved that club. She was always used and taken advantage of, all because of how strong her vulnerability is. Every Wednesday she would go to work after school for 5 hours. Loriece is a nice person who is kind, sweet, smart, and even funny at times.

However, there was an employee that who she really liked. Her features were so fierce. so sweet so pleasant and mature, she had the most beautiful almond shaped olive green eyes, curly jet black hair and the sweetest, most warm smile that Loriece had ever witnessed. But Loriece wasn't sure if she would be confident enough, she wasn't sure if she would be accepted for who she was born to be. All though she has good grades and she had a wonderful personality underneath those deep eye sockets and fine muscular arms, her Alto voice as well.

One day while Loriece was at work she saw the beautiful female look working in the kids department. Loriece was going to conquer her fears and swallow them whole as she was going to approach her beautiful Co-worker, but as soon as she got closer to her the young lady turned around and both of them stood about 4-5 feet away from each other. Loriece was so nervous to speak that she just couldn't hardly get the words out to speak. Her body heat was rising she had chills up her spine; she shook with nervousness.

The other female spoke up and said, “Hi, I'm sorry, I didn't know you worked here, my name is Violet, and you must be,” she squinted her eyes and pointed her index finger directly at Loriece, curiously. Loriece said, “Oh um, hi I'm Loriece, and yes I do work here..umm,” Loriece stopped and took a moment to cherish this and think of her check list.

Loriece Imaginary checklist:

- Beautiful
- Outspoken
- Pretty Eyes
- Beautiful Voice

CHECK!!!!

Violet then said, “Hey, do you mind helping me with some of these clothes. I have to put away and I would love to have some company to talk to and keep me occupied, if you don't mind?”

“Don't mind if I do,” Loriece said.

The two co-workers continued with their conversation as they both kept working in the kids department. After they were both finished with the task. Loriece spoke up, but this time with more confidence.

“Hey, Violet, um... do you mind, or would you like to...umm go out sometime after work or on the weekend?”

“Sure, I would like that, here, tell you what. I will give you my number after I get off. I'm off the clock at about 8' o'clockish.

Loriece smiled and replied, “Okay.”

* * * * *

Saturday:

It was Saturday and the two girls decided to meet up at the movies during the movie Violet decided to hold Loriece's hand throughout the movie. Loriece was so happy at that moment that she had butterflies in her stomach. All the sudden Loriece decided it was time to that she told Violet something personal and that she has been hiding but want people to understand about her. Loriece let go of Violet's hand and decided to send her a text message.

Loriece: HEY

Violet: HEY, WATS UP?

Loriece: I NEED TO TELL U SOMETHING...

Violet: SURE WATS UP... IS EVERYTHING OKAY

Loriece: I'M A TRANSEXUAL.... I WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT I CHANGED MY GENDER BCUZ I JUST AINT FEEL RITE IN A MALE BODY U KNO... I'm SORRY I JUST HAD TO TELL U...

Violet: WOW, THATS AMAZING...I FINALLY MET SOMEONE WHO HAD THE SAME PROBLEM AS MEHH!!

Loriece: -_- WAIT.... HOLD UP..R U SAYIN???

Violet: YES, I USE TO BE A GIRLBUT I JUST DIDN'T FEEL MYSELF....U KNO... I ALWAYS FELT THAT I WASN'T MYSELF AND THAT I JUST WASNT SATISFIED WITH BEING A GIRL. SO I'm IN THE PROCESS OF TAKING TESTOSTERONE AND ALL OF THAT MALE THINGS THAT FUNCTION IN A MALE BUT I WANT TO KEEP MY ORIGINAL FEMALE ORGANS BUT U KNOW HAVE THE BRAIN OF A MALE THO...U GET WHAT I'M SAY IN?

Loriece: HELL YEAHHH!!! BUT I'M JUST DOING THE SAME BUT JUST TAKING ESTROGEN BUT I'M KEEPING MY ORIGINAL MALE ORGANS... WOW THATS AMAZING LIKE YOU SAID...

Violet: :-*

Loriece: I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER WAIT ...THIS MOVIE IS KIND OF BORING LOL... YOU WANT TO GO TO THE MALL?

Violet: LOL...YEAH.. LETS GET OUT OF HERE.

Once the two girls got to the mall, they got straight into shopping mode. They shopped the rest of the day together. After they did a little shopping the two went shopping they decided to go to the food court to get some food that might make them constipated. Once the day was over the two walked to one of the exits of the mall, but there was no one around. All of a sudden, Loriece's phone started ringing, it was her mom saying that she's on her way to pick her up. Then followed Violet's phone.

Loriece, "Well today was amazing wow, you really are a really cool down to earth person and I would love to..."

Violet cut off the conversation and surprised Loriece with a kiss on the lips. A soft, sincere, sweet and friendly maybe a little more friendly... kiss.

Violet, "Shh...there will be many more times for us to hangout. Okay, thank you I will see you on Monday right?"

Loriece "shhh shhh shhhyyeah.. (with a smile on her face)."

And that was just the being of the life that Loriece and Violet had been waiting for.

The End

Technology Costs Us

Technology is a great thing for us. Over the past 10 or so years, the graphics and apps on television, on computers, our phones, and etcetera have made life a lot easier, and a lot more entertaining. But it isn't just limited to these things.

When you're online, you can go on social media websites and befriend online people that you may have never met in person. When you've got a smart phone, it's called smart for a reason. Today's phones aren't just used for calling people. If you're too lazy to have a long conversation by talking, you can text people. Smart phones, just like laptops, iPads, and etcetera have tons of data so you can go on the internet.

On the contrary, though these gadgets are awesome to use, they can become addicting. And when they become addicting, they can take your time away from more important things: being with family/friends, helping things get done, being productive, etcetera.

They can also--well, namely just a smart phone--can lead to accidents while you're driving. This is why there's the saying "Don't Text and Drive" like there's the saying "Don't Drink and Drive."

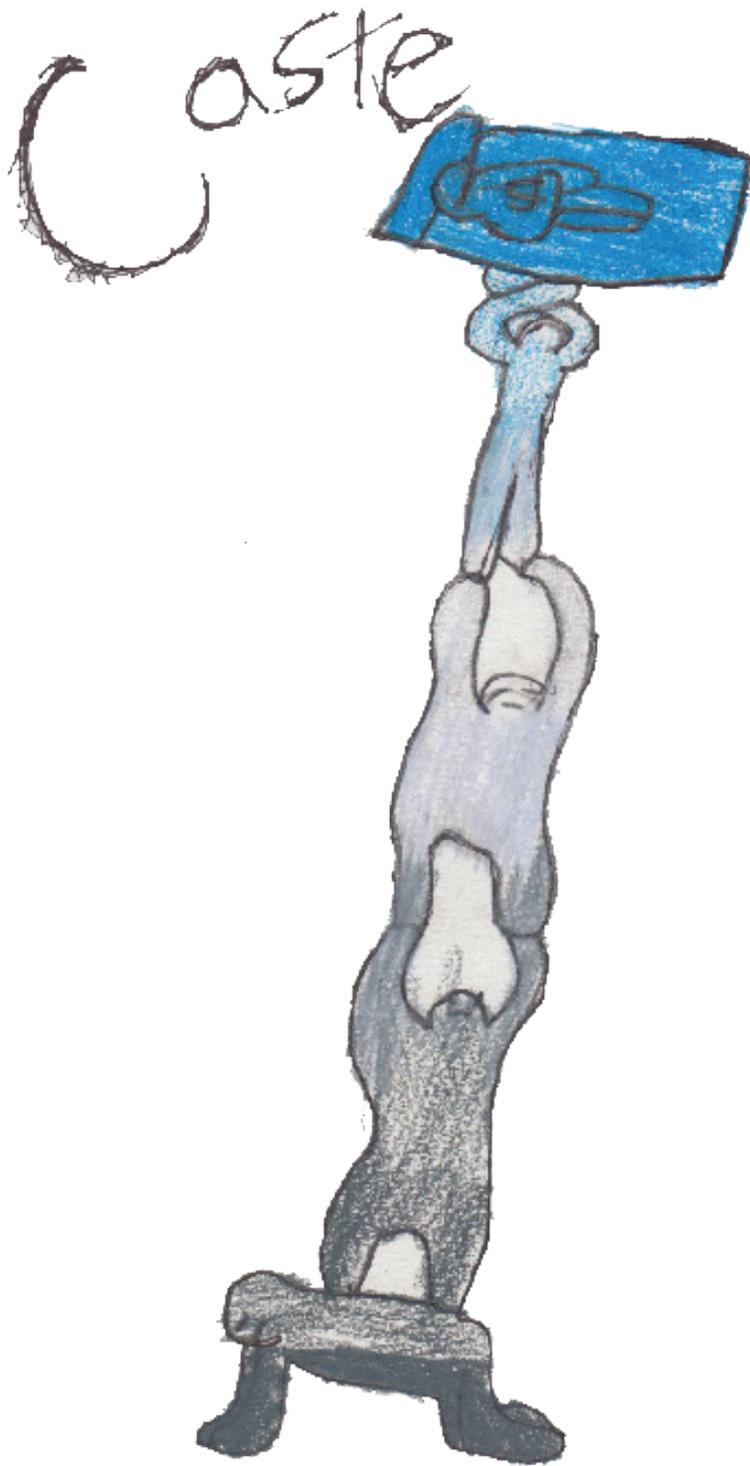
But overall, technology is an awesome thing that tons of people couldn't bear to live without. So, if you want some electronic and technological goodies, then all you have to do is go buy some. In conclusion, although society was better 20-30 years ago, technology is what stands out today. So stay updated people.

Essay By Gabe

Digital Art By Trisha







Poem by Julia

Art by Sasha

Hero



I don't want to be saved
I just want to be seen
to be alone or in love,
I'm trapped in between
I lay in the dark
and stare at the sky
counting the stars
and wondering why

there is something destructive
about being alone
lured into the dark,
I fear the unknown
a bottomless pit
filled with secrets and lies
all those who enter
must give up their lives

I chose to love you,
to let you come close
you hovered above me
and stole away my voice
your love, like the waves
swallowed me whole
my lungs filled with water
drowning my soul
because you were the tide
not able to stay
and I was the rain
always washed away

I was twenty feet under
gasping for air
because all I wanted
was for you to care

I don't want to be saved
I just wanted you to see me
abandoned at the bottom
I will never be free.

All That Once Was

Poem by Julia

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I awoke deep in the night
shaking uncontrollably
my eyes filled with tears
and my heart full of hate

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I began walking slowly
on a dirty, broken road
of painful memories
and never ending thoughts

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
the sharp ground beneath me
began to puncture my skin
the wounds seeped with my blood
numbing all that I once was

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
you stood just a few feet away
smothered in the darkness
a twisted smile on your face
laughing at the sight of me

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I walked towards you with hope
but I never got closer
the distance between us
stretching for miles and miles

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I fell hard on my knees,
with my head looking down
weeping an ocean of tears
for the man you once were

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
looking up, I reached out my hand
begging for you to help
the piercing look in your eyes
a twisted monster in disguise

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I tried to stand up to you,
on legs that were broken
you pushed me back on my knees
trapped at point blank

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I cannot be certain which one of the two
I was below, shutting my eyes
you were above, lifting your hand
letting out a sinister laugh
you screamed and said goodbye

I once had a dream
or maybe it was a nightmare
I am certain now which one of the two
I opened my eyes
my heart pounding fast
your secrets and lies
buried with me underground.

Orthogénique

Reel



Bait



Cast





Digital Art by Gabe

The Issues of Trivial Things

Essay by Logan V.

As a child, one is often reeled into things and places like getting ice cream or toy stores. Furthermore, a child is often caught up with advertizing and what they immediately feel from seeing the advertisement. Whether that advertisement be on television, or a display in a store, the child reacts to it and responds. When I was a small child, I never was that into receiving or eating sweets. However, whenever I was with my grandparents, I always seemed to end up with an ice cream cone in my hand. My grandparents and I were a terrific gang of window shoppers and ice cream critics.

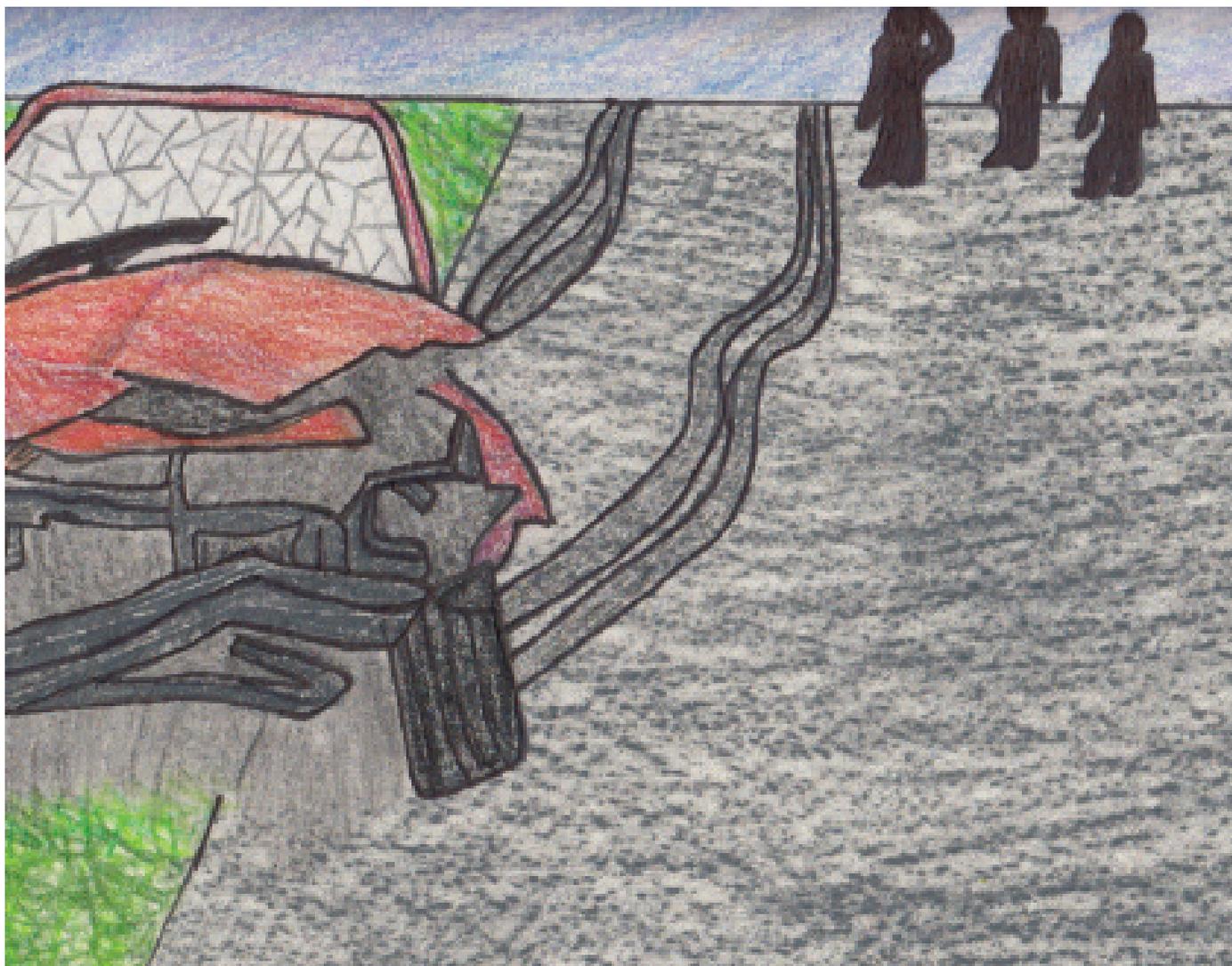
As I got older, I noticed how my classmates would get reeled into controversial styles and behaviors. One day a girl would wear all black, trying to look a certain way and the next week she would be all rainbow with brightly colored shirts and skirts. Of course this is not the case with every teenager on the planet, but teenagers of any age get reeled into how to look or act by media all the time. If you want to be “cool” you must act and dress and live in a certain way. The trouble is, that way is changing all the time, and therefore teens are satisfied with themselves for long periods of time. They get reeled into the conundrum of “who am I?” And “how do I present to the world?” This often leads to bigger issues such as peer pressure. Peers will bully or strongly persuade one another to act or live a certain way, and this is when it becomes a problem. This can lead to the person who is being pushed to not be comfortable with themselves even more. They get “reeled” into the peer pressure. If I pass an ice cream shop, even now as an older teen, I will think of my grandparents. Occasionally I might even pop in and get a cone. I and many others are still caught up in the “reel,” and still get dragged into whatever we feel we need in that moment. That need can be as simple as buying a new shirt, or as drastic as changing your whole lifestyle. I have gone through many “phases” in my life, particularly in my middle school years and what I have experienced in high school.

As I think about it, I once knew a person who was so focused on how she looked that she never was happy. Even though she was a regular of makeup and jewelry stores, she never could get exactly what she wanted. What she wanted was to be accepted by her peers, and although we accepted her through whatever phase of concealer or eye liner she was going through, she was still reeled into the ever changing concept of the media’s idea of “beautiful.”

This changes as we get older, because we need, or think we need different things. However, we still get reeled into advertisements, which leads to changing ourselves, or shopping, or acting a certain way because we want to fit in. I feel that I have overcome the “reel of life” because I do not carry much value in trends or material things. I have a few items that I would be devastated to lose, but I have come to realize the cheesy reality that “it’s the memories and thought that counts.” I do not buy an ice cream every time I see a Baskin Robbins, but I cherish the memories that I had as a child with my grandparents. We are all humans, and will always get reeled in by something. It’s what we do with those urges that makes a difference in our lives.

Reel People Online

Poem by Trisha



Drawing by Julia

Look at the screen
What did I see?
That number that tells me
How many messages to read

Look at the screen
What did I hear?
The “ding” for a notification
that shows that there are new messages to seek

Look at the screen
who messaged me
Oh my one n only bff
Who always said she loves me

Look at the screen
What did they say
“ I love you, can’t wait to see you?”
I say, “ Ikr.. i’m omw..shud i pix sumthi...”

Looked at the screen
I was just talking to my friend
hoping just hoping
Our evening would go as planned

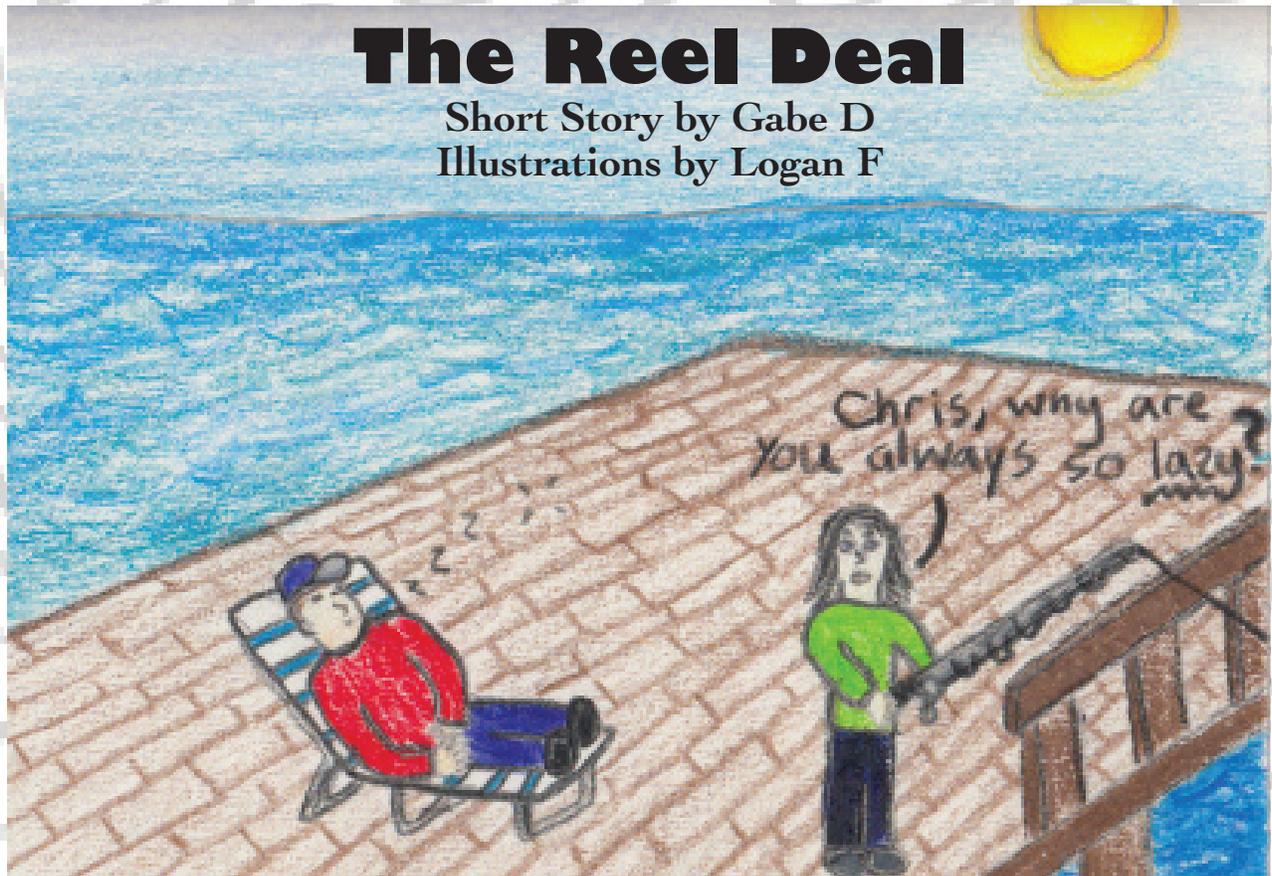
Looked at the screen
Just shooting a text
I’ll never know
What could have come next





The Reel Deal

Short Story by Gabe D
Illustrations by Logan F



Doing well in school is the reel deal because it reels you in and you have no choice to resist; but if you do resist, you'll suffer the consequences of being a poor, lazy bum with no job(s) or friends. Meet Chris. Chris dropped out of high school in his senior year. This did not go well for him because Chris hates his life because nobody can support him, which is what he wanted. Chris was once a very bright student who had a whole life ahead of him, but he threw it away by becoming a slacker and refusing to be responsible. As a result of his foolish behavior, he now has no education, no job, and is homeless. Please make the right decision by staying in school and getting a good life so you don't end up like Chris.

If you do well in school, you won't have as much to worry about and catch up on. If you do the work they ask of you, it won't be as much of a hassle, in which you'll have to do it at a time that you may not like, but that is totally necessary. Meet Saul. Saul was always a good student. She always had her work done on time, and by doing so, she had and still has a good life ahead of her. By putting forth the effort to receive a good education, while cooperating with those who were helping her, she graduated from high school, went to college, and received her college degree. Now, 12 years later, she is a clinically licensed psychologist. I can assure you that if you follow in Saul's footsteps, you'll have a great and successful life ahead of you.

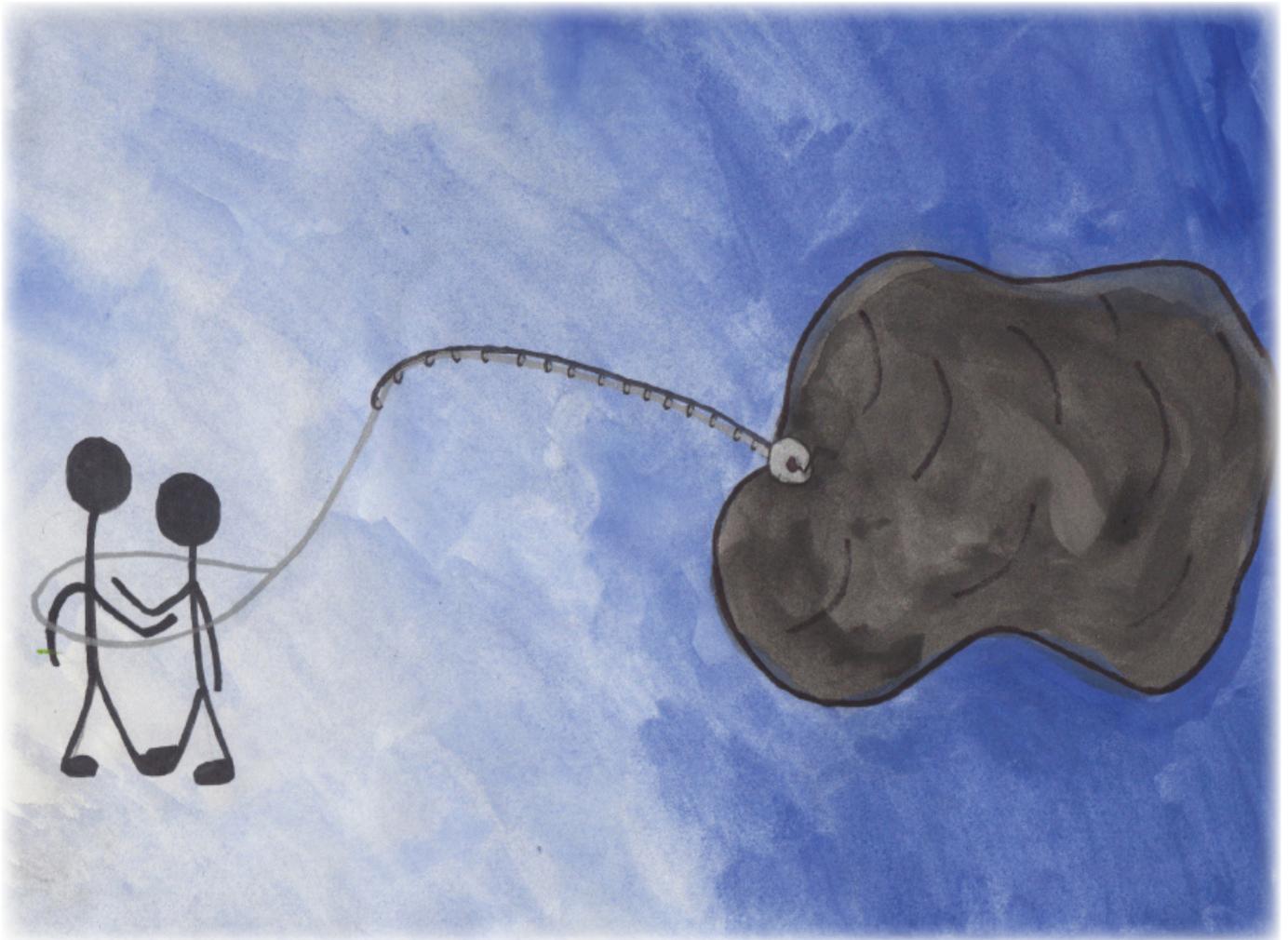
In order for people to live good and successful lives, they-- almost every time--must have an exceptionally good education that includes having a high school diploma and a collegiate bachelor's and/or master's degree. So if you want to do well in life, you'll just have to succumb to the requirements of the work that will hopefully benefit you in the future. So just let the work reel you in to get it over with, so you can have an awesome future.





Breaking Free

Story by Sarah
Art by Logan V.



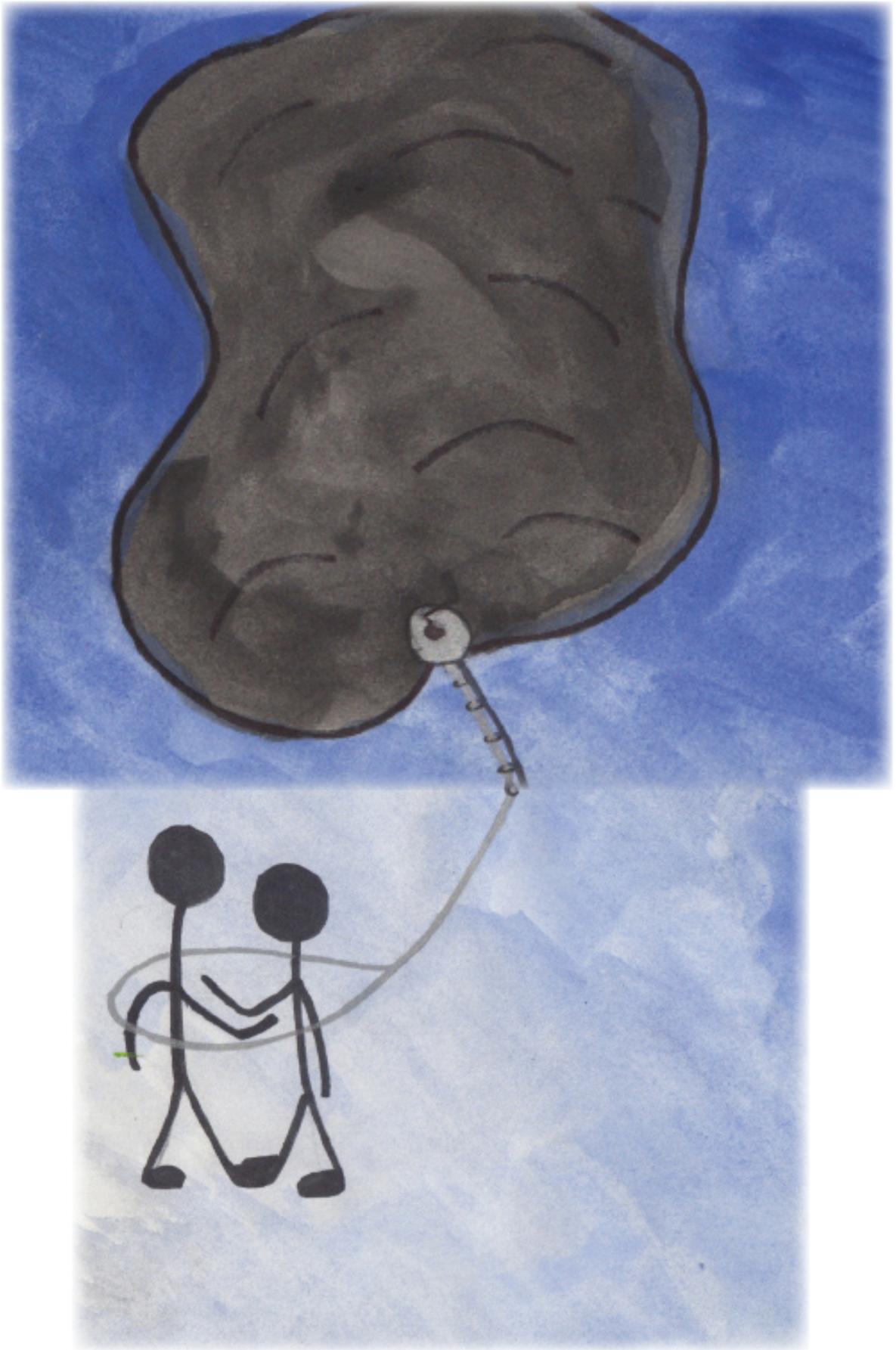
We all have stories, reasons why we are the way we are, this is one of mine...

His name was Derek. We met through mutual friends and clicked instantly. He made me laugh when I'd completely forgotten how to and when we were together, we forgot the world and everything unfortunate it had to offer. We were, by definition, the kids your parents warned you about. There were so many days where I walked the thin line between giving up and going on, empty-heartedly, but when I met him, I realized that I didn't walk that line alone.

With time, we got closer and closer, and against my better judgment, I let him in. I told him everything, with fear that he wouldn't accept me, but I was lucky, not only because I got to know him, but also because he was one of the best kinds of people who truly understands. To my surprise, he did the same for me. We weren't so different in our feelings towards the world and ourselves, we were both sad, lonely kids who wanted someone, anyone, to give every breath we took some kind of reason. He became my reason.

At one point, I'd had a horrible day and once again, decided to shut the world out. I lay in bed for what seemed like hours when the silence was interrupted by the sound of my phone ringing. For whatever reason, I picked up. If I hadn't, I'm not sure that I'd be here now to tell this story, but because of him, I am. He began by saying that he was worried about me, and went on to say how much he cared about me and needed me to stay strong. He always had a way of knowing when I wasn't okay. He had so much going on in his own life but still made the time to be my lifesaver.

Not long after I came here, Derek lost his battle with depression. I was scared of getting close, but he broke the walls that I had so carefully assembled with fear in my heart. The mark he left on my life was one I couldn't wipe away, not that I ever wanted to. We both realized that our depression was like a fisherman, ready to reel us in, but because of him, I fight even harder to break free. His love gave me hope, hope that no matter how alone I felt, I never truly was, and never really would be. I just had to reach for help, and accept it.



reel



Story by Logan F.

Art by Trisha T



BAD BUSINESS

reel

85

Have you ever been walking along the street and suddenly you're distracted by someone twirling around a colorful arrow advertising a business? This is an example of one of the simple ways that businesses try to reel you in. Today, you can find both honest, fair ways that businesses reel you in, as well as dishonest, unfair ways that they do it. How do you know when you can take legal action, and how can you tell the difference between honest and dishonest methods before it's too late?

First of all, there are many laws in place to prevent unfair or deceptive acts in the marketplace. It is illegal to pass off goods or services as those of another, claim that goods come from a particular place when they do not, represent goods as new when they are actually not, advertise goods or services with the intent not to sell them as advertised, or make false or misleading statements about sale prices. There are a multitude of other laws surrounding unfair business practices, but these are among the most important, as they most commonly provide someone who has been reeled in unfairly with the means to shut down the business who has wronged them.

Still, even with these laws in place, always be on your guard, as these illegal tactics *are* a surefire way to win money fast, and some businesses are willing to take the risk. An extremely common tactic to watch out for is the advertising of goods or services with the intent not to sell them as advertised, known as the 'bait and switch' tactic. An example of a bait and switch sales tactic is when used car dealerships advertise extremely low prices on vehicles for which they actually have a very limited amount. You might see an advertisement for a car you would like at a price you can afford, but when you get to the dealership the car is already sold. In this case, the dealer will offer to show you other vehicles you might be interested in. This is technically illegal because the dealership did not tell you that they had a limited amount of the original car, and so you are being drawn in falsely. By the time interested consumers arrive, the advertised vehicle is gone and the bait and switch is on.

Another common, illegal tactic to watch out for are tie-ins. A tie-in is when a business sets up a conditional relationship between two or more products; in other words, the purchasing of one product requires the purchase of other products. Often times, the business will force you to buy inferior or overpriced products or services that you could purchase for less elsewhere. An example of this is when a cosmetics store bundles their expensive blow dryer with commonly found, regularly inexpensive hair products, and sells the bundle at a high price. The tactic works because the new blow dryer is in high-demand, and usually the customer will decide to buy the bundle even if it means spending more money, as the cosmetics store does not offer the blow dryer individually. Because the blow dryer is not available in other stores, but the hair products are, and at a lower price than they are bundled with the blow dryer, this is illegal because it takes advantage of their product and restricts competition.

Unfortunately, even with laws in place, there are still ways around them that enable businesses to reel you in unfairly *and* legally. You have to be very careful. Let's bring back the example of bait and switch at the car dealership. If you see an advertisement that promises a free television to everyone that purchases a new vehicle from that dealership, you may be tempted to check out the dealership's cars because of the 52-inch high definition television you saw in the picture. When you get to the dealership, however, you find out that they are not giving away the television that you saw. At this point, you might want to call shenanigans and expose the company for lying to you! However, if you were to go back and read the fine print of the original ad, it will tell you that the actual television they are giving away is not pictured, so while what they did might have been unfair, it was still legal. Let's bring back the cosmetics store, too. Let's say that the blow dryer and hair product bundle is now being sold at a lower price, a price higher than the blow dryer itself but lower than what you would normally have to pay for both together. You may be frustrated that you can't just buy the dryer individually, but in this case, the bundle isn't illegal because the cosmetics

store isn't forcing you to buy overpriced products. Here, the bundle can be advertised legally as a deal because of the price drop on the hair products, and customers *will* buy the bundle because they are getting more out of it.

In conclusion, most of the time when you see an ad on a billboard on the highway, or someone twirling a colorful sign advertising a business on the street, you don't have to worry; there are many laws in place that prevent most businesses from even thinking about trying to lure you in illegally. However, there are still ways around these laws that some businesses use to take advantage of you, and it is important to be an aware consumer so that you can avoid being hooked by a falsely beneficial deal.



LOOKING WITHIN OURSELF

Story by Julia



Drawing by Renee

“You have a gift, honey. You are special and unique.” My grandma told me this a thousand times since I told her what she thought was a “gift.” I saw it as more of a curse. I didn’t want to be different and I didn’t want to be unique. I just wanted to be a regular 17 year old teenage girl. My family consisted of my dad and I. My dad said that my mom was a little crazy and left when I was only 2 years old. According to my grandma, on my mom’s side, it was my dad who was a little wacky and drove my mom away. Despite all that drama, my dad would take me to my mom’s house a few times a year to see her. I looked forward to those visits and felt so close to my mom. After five years, my dad stopped letting me go see her and never told me why. I didn’t stay in touch with my mom after that and grew apart from her. I didn’t see my dad much, because he worked at a restaurant in the city and worked long hours. Even though I was home alone often, my dad and I had a good relationship. I never asked why I couldn’t see my mom, but I trusted my dad, so I trusted he had good reason to make that decision. I had, what I called, an overly-complicated-simple-boring-life.

I guess I never really explained what my “gift” was. I used to think I was crazy, but as time went on I knew that it was real and that it would never change. When I closed my eyes, my life would play out like a movie where most people just saw darkness. The longer I closed my eyes, the more of my life I saw. I could only see my life, not someone else’s. My grandma always thought it was a good thing, but I never thought so. Life was supposed to be full of surprises, but I would never have the chance to enjoy the unexpected things in life. I knew what was coming for me. I couldn’t see the small details, like what clothes I would buy or what I would eat for dinner, but I saw the big stuff. I had the pleasure of knowing how my life would end. I already knew how I was going to die. I knew who I would see in my last dying moments and where and when I was going to die.

My power was not special. A 17 year old girl shouldn’t know how she is going to die. There was nothing special about that. It wasn’t beautiful and it definitely was not a gift. Let’s back up to when I was 13. That was the age when I started noticing that I was different. When I was younger, I thought my gift was normal. I had never had anything to compare it to. In my eyes, I was just a regular kid. Everything about my life felt normal. The routine my dad and I followed day after day always stayed the same. I would wake up early in the morning and run downstairs to my dad’s room so I could jump on his bed and wake him up. He would then groan and say “Sammy come on, your dad is tired.” Being the stubborn girl I was, I would ignore him and continue to jump on his bed. After I was tired of doing that, I would always run to the kitchen and start making breakfast. My dad would come out of his room after about 10 minutes, smile genuinely, and say “Morning Sammy Bear!” My dad loved giving me nicknames. He thought it made him “cool.” I went along with it because I loved my dad, and despite his unsuccessful efforts to relate to my feminine side, he was the best dad in the world.

When I turned 14, I decided to tell my dad. The comfort I had with my power when I was younger was no longer there. I was uncomfortable in my own skin and I was scared of what my power was. I wasn’t nervous to talk to my dad, I just felt awkward. When I closed my eyes, I saw that my dad wouldn’t believe me when I told him. I saw a fight, and I saw sadness. I was determined not to let this happen, so I chose my words very carefully in hopes that he would believe me. “Hi daddy, can I tell you something?” I remember he laughed at my question. “Anything.” I knew what I planned on saying, but for some reason when it came time to speak, I didn’t follow the script.

Here's what I said: "Okay, I promise I'm telling the truth so I want you to believe me. It's going to sound crazy, I know that, but please do your best to understand." His expression changed and he started to look worried. "Grandma calls it a gift, but I don't know what to call it. When I close my eyes, I can see my whole future play out like a movie. I know it sounds weird, but just listen. It's not that I have thoughts about what will happen, I'm not a psychic. I actually see my life as a movie or video. I know exactly what is going to happen to me in 5 minutes. I know what will happen in 3 months, and I know what will happen when I'm 50."

He laughed. "Sammy Bear, I think you've made up this little power in your head. I'm sure you can guess about what will happen in the future, but nobody can know for sure." He walked away and I got upset. "Dad stop." My eyes filled with tears and I felt stupid. I knew I sounded crazy.. "You don't understand. I feel like you don't understand me at all. You treat me like I'm a baby and act like I'm making this up!" My dad and I had never been in a real fight. We argued once in awhile but for the most part, we got along.



"Honey, stop. I do understand you, I'm your father." Something inside me broke and before I could stop myself the words flew out of my mouth. "You think you understand me, but you don't! In fact, I don't know if you really even know me. Maybe mom left because you were so sure you understood her. Maybe she got tired of it and left you!" My dad looked shocked. I had never yelled at him in my whole life. I immediately regretted what I said. I waited for him to say something but he didn't. "Dad, I-I." Before I finished, he interrupted me and said something I won't forget. "Samantha, you know nothing about what happened between your mother and I. You will never understand how life works. Never." With that, he turned around and walked into his room.

Ever since that day, my dad and I didn't really talk much. I asked what was for dinner on nights he was home and he asked me to clean the house. Everything we once had was gone—broken. Instead of blaming my father for not believing me, I blamed myself. I could have changed the outcome. I knew what I needed to say differently and I choked.

Even after a year, things didn't change. I gave up on the idea of not only my father believing me, but everyone around me too. All I wanted was to be normal. I wanted to go out with my friends and come home late. I wanted to sneak out and sleep over at my friends house. I wanted all of that, but I wouldn't allow myself to have it. I couldn't enjoy anything without being tortured by the knowledge of how my life played out. I knew how I was going to die. Every time I closed my eyes, I saw myself worn down by a vicious cancer that caused me pain. There was nobody by my side, and the only company I had were the doctors and nurses. I was alone, and nobody mourned my death. I could not think of a worse way to die, because it's one thing to be in horrible physical pain, but the loneliness I felt was a far greater pain. I spent so much time trying to make the inevitable go away.

Turn my power into something that I thought would hurt me, when instead it was something that could help me. All my feelings of anger disappeared that day--with myself and with my father. I couldn't be mad at him; he didn't understand. I never forgot what my mom told me before I left, "There will always be people in this world who will doubt you and try to tell you differently, but if you know yourself, then you know the truth." I know the truth--my truth. power and I hated myself.

I woke up early on a Saturday. My hands were trembling and my body was shaking from the dream I had that night. I was on a dark, broken road walking towards someone. That someone turned out to be my mom. Behind her were blue skies and sunshine; it was beautiful where she was. I walked and I walked but I never got closer to her. I was trapped with the darkness looming over me. I started to cry, which woke me up. I was so confused as to why my mom was in my dream. I hadn't seen her in so long, so why was I thinking about her? I took it as a sign. It had to mean that I needed to see her. That day, I left my dad a note saying I was going to a friend's and drove to my mom's house.

As I sat in her driveway, I felt uncomfortable. I hadn't seen her in years. I wasn't even sure she would recognize me. I rang the doorbell and stood on her porch awkwardly. It felt like I waited an hour for my mom to answer the door. I started getting anxious. Finally, the door swung open and I saw her standing there. She looked shocked, like I had 3 heads or something.

“Hi.” That was all I could get out of my mouth. I didn’t know what to say. “Sam h-hi. What are you doing here?” I guess she didn’t know what to say either. I asked if I could come inside so we could talk. She muttered yes and motioned for me to come in. We both sat down on her couch and didn’t say anything for a long time. “It’s been so long mom.” I looked at her face and saw that there were tears in her eyes. “This is going to sound weird, but you were in my dream. I was trying to walk towards you but I was trapped. I didn’t get any closer.” I started to feel a lump in my throat. “A dream.” She was thinking about something. “Yeah...I miss you mom.” I don’t know why I said that, but when I did, I sobbed. For so long, there was a piece of my life that was missing and at that moment, I felt like I found it. We both cried for awhile.

“Sam, if you don’t know why you’re here, I do.” I was confused. How would she know? She continued, “Me and you, w-we share the same gift. I knew it from the second you were born. Your father never understood. I had to leave after a while; I felt like I was suffocating. I’m so sorry Sammy. I’m so sorry.” She cried so hard--I had never seen someone cry that intensely. I didn’t speak. My mom had my power too. I wasn’t the only one. Relief came over me and I breathed deeply.

“It’s okay mom. It’s okay. I’m here now.” She hugged me tight and I remember I felt her heart beating fast. “I need your help mom. I need to understand.” She was my only chance. She didn’t even hesitate. I sat there on the couch listening to the words flow out of her mouth about how she discovered she had that power and how she dealt with it growing up. I sat there and watched her face light up as she talked about how grateful she was for having her gift. She said it changed her life for the better. She said it was a miracle.

I went home that day a different person. My mom was able to change how I saw my power. She told me stories about how she used to be so depressed because she saw her life ending similarly to mine--alone. She talked about the lowest moments in her life and the greatest moments too. She used her power to learn to do things differently. She saw how those she felt close to would later turn into toxic influences. The process of cutting out the bad people in her life wasn’t as hard as she thought, because she knew it would brighten the outcome of her life.

I no longer viewed my power as a curse, because it wasn’t at all. I let my lack of understanding turn my power into something that I thought would hurt me, when instead it was something that could help me. All my feelings of anger disappeared that day--with myself and with my father. I couldn’t be mad at him; he didn’t understand. I never forgot what my mom told me before I left, “There will always be people in this world who will doubt you and try to tell you differently, but if you know yourself, then you know the truth.” I know the truth--my truth.

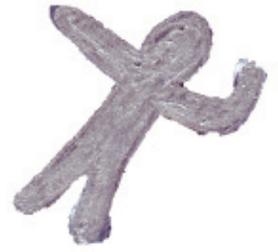
Real

Poem by Sasha



Artwork by Sarah

What is in that endless expanse
Is there truly anything between the stars
What is down in the treacherous depths
Is there an ocean deep below?



When we gaze out to the world
There's nothing we see
Nothing but nothing
And that scares us all.

"Must we dream another night?"

Do the seas shine like stars
Or is the sky just an ocean of nothing
Do we feel for what we cannot express
Or is the pain only real when we don't understand?

When we gaze into another's heart
There's something special in there
Something we could never find
When staring inside ourselves.



Is anything real at all in this world
Would we be better off in a dead-time dream
Is this life just a lucid fantasy
Would we be together in reality?



When we gaze from a high-tide tower
To see if anything is there at all
We find the something known as nothing
And that must be terrifying.

Can we break through to something new
Carve a world with tooth and nail
Can we forget something remembered
Carve something real in the brick and bone?

Or must we dream another night?



MY PUPPET MASTER

Poem by Renee

I'm a ragdoll helping her put on the strings
I'd listened to what she said
Like I was an ear touching the phone
I would do what she wanted
Like a dog to her owner

I'm a ragdoll admiring the strings
Getting lost in her eyes
As if she were the artist and I the art
She the composer to the music
I'm the symphony she directs

I'm a ragdoll looking at the strings
I'm am trapped her never ending trance
Like a little girl to her music box
As if a strange disease took over my body
Yet there is no cure, to the un-one

I'm a ragdoll fighting against the strings
Her looks, the way she acted, her eyes, addictive
The strings turned into rope to lasso me back
I fight and struggle like a man in war
Only worrying if he'll make it back, alive

I'm a ragdoll that never cut off the strings
My puppet master led me here
Like acid my tears burn my face
I looked up for comfort or a word
My master said, "You've chosen"

Painting by Sasha



Colophon

The Fall 2014 edition of Orthogenique was produced at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School in Chicago, Illinois. The magazine was thermal bound by the Orthogenic School. The covers are 1/2 inch linen tab covers from General Binding Corporation in Northbrook, IL. The content pages were printed by an HP color laserjet 6015dn on 32lb. Hammermill Color Laser Gloss with 90 brilliance. Sixteen fonts were used in the magazine. Cochin was used for all body text. While magazine staff chose fonts in keeping with style and content for titles and pull quotes. The following fonts were used for titles and pull quotes: Lucida Blackletter, Times, Rosewood STD, Brush Script MT, Lucida Handwriting, Zaphino, Blackwood STD and Stencil STD. Orthogenique is a full color magazine. Layout was created in Adobe InDesign CS3 on Apple MacBooks. Adobe Photoshop CS3 was used for image processing. All submissions were judged using standards agreed upon by the staff. All text submissions were typed using Microsoft Word on Dell PCs running on Windows XP, and MacBooks running on Mac OSX.

Policy

All of the students at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School are invited to submit their literary and art work to Orthogenique.

The Orthogenic School is a small private school consisting of students who represent school districts throughout Illinois and California. The school has limited extracurricular activities or after school meeting times. As a result, Literary Magazine is offered as a for credit course in which the enrolled students alternate writing units in which they write in reference to a specific theme and art units in which they illustrate for a classmate's writing. All students then create spreads that incorporate their writing piece and the illustration completed for the piece.

Students not enrolled in the course are welcome to submit their work to the advisors at which time the staff of enrolled students will decide which pieces can and will be used based on the themes employed and the fundamental belief of the school that all student work is of value. The literary staff reserves the right to edit the body of the works for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Orthogenique has been published three times yearly since the summer of 2007. The publication is financed by departmental budgeting as well as subscriptions and donations. The ideas and beliefs expressed in the magazine do not represent those of the magazine staff, advisors, or the Orthogenic School. All rights are reserved to the individual artists, authors, and photographers.



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