

## Faculty Sponsor's Note (Richard Rodriguez)

The ability to communicate has always been the challenge of the human race. Cavemen utilized sounds and drawing to express themselves. As we evolved, eventually we created unique languages. Still the challenge has always been there. Today, creative arts give individuals an avenue to create and express themselves. Our Freedom Arts magazine, founded by Robert Hook, a Winston graduate, is exactly the forum to allow our gifted Winston students to showcase their prose in a published form. The offerings of this years' contributors will take readers on journeys of family and acceptance, a creature who breaks down barriers for change, stories of teamwork, a story highlighting the need to believe in oneself and overcoming our own self-doubt to find success. These gifts from our students showcase the need for the arts to allow creative thinking and find that place giving them a voice for expressing themselves and answering our most basic call to communicate.

#### Student Editor's Note (Diego Morales)

After nine bountiful years of excellence and tomfoolery from both students and teachers respectively, the Freedom Arts Magazine has continued to blossom from the heart of expression here at Winston with the return of past veteran contributors such as Megan Jordan with her unrivaled 2D caricature illustrations, and Evan McGinnis with his reflectively illuminating narratives, along with all of the outstanding compositions from other emerging artists and writers alike. Ever since its formation in 2010, Robert Hook's spirited innovation has now become that of legend here at Winston, and I consider it both a privilege and a pleasure to discover and promote the work of my fellow schoolmates. Please take the time to truly acknowledge the quality of work you hold before you, I'm sure you will find yourself in both places you know all too well and somewhere you've never been before

## Island "Vacation"

Maddie Briggs

As the plane landed, the sun blinded my eyes, and I could hear the ocean in the distance. Immediately, I knew this would be a nightmare. I hate islands. I feel claustrophobic on them, and if a hurricane or tsunami hit we'd all be dead! Also, Sarah was with me. She'd be all over the place, stopping every five seconds to buy some trinket from every other store on the island. Of course, the island we had to choose was awful too! Devenport! Of all the islands we could choose from it had to be Devenport. We had a universe of options! Hawaii, Guwati, Zemonfran, or New York. Yes, even New York. Sure, New York was just as cramped and industrialized as Devenport but at least it was on some other planet. It is also longer than Devenport and could actually fit cars on its roads. Yeah, Devenport's so small and cramped there's no point in it even having roads! The point is, I did not want to be there, on that small little island, whatsoever. I was stuck on stupid Devenport with my stupid- ok not stupid, just impractical and annoying- sister on a stupid family vacation, that she insisted we go on every year for her birthday- no, wait- birthmonth. I wasn't sure how this could be called a family vacation anymore. Mom was gone, and it's not like we even had a dad to begin with. He left when I was four and Sarah was two. I could barely remember him, and Sarah sure didn't. But, we're both adults now, and I shouldn't have been so upset over Mom's death. I knew she was getting old and she had heart problems. I should have been ready, but I wasn't. Sarah was. She had her husband and her kids. She had to be ready, but I live alone. I worked from home. I had all the time in the world to miss Mom, to think about all the things I didn't do with her, and all the things I didn't apologize for. I knew this "family" (more like sibling) vacation was going to be a nightmare the moment I heard the ocean and saw the sun.

We walked through the busy streets; Sarah dragging me into every store, filling my arms with shopping bags. I knew by the end of this trip I'd be paying for it all too. That's what happens when you're a pushover and you make a lot of money. Sarah was having a blast without her kids and Mark. Sometimes moms just need a break. I smiled at the thought of Mark trying to braid Josie's hair, while Janie climbed all over him babbling about ponies, as Mika stood in the corner texting a boy.

We finally made it to the hotel, the place I would hide away the whole vacation. Maybe it was a good thing we didn't go to Manhattan or Hawaii. On earth, they still had maids which meant you actually had to leave your room if you wanted it clean, unlike here where the rooms cleaned themselves around you as you went about your day. I sat on the couch in the lobby while Sarah got our room. It was a fairly nice hotel. There were chandeliers all along the ceiling, and they were serving dinner. It was something simple, hot dogs and hamburgers, both a common Earthling and Zanoton food. Of course Cazies and Xevians would probably freak out. Xevians can be picky and I just assumed Cazies would freak out too. Cazies are a weird race. Our room was at the very top of the hotel, the 40th floor. I hate heights. I also hate elevators. "David! Get in the elevator," my sister whisper-yelled at me. "You're not walking up 40 flights of stairs! It will take you forever and your legs will fall off before you get to floor 20." "You underestimate me. They'd fall off by 30 and I can drag myself up the last ten."

"David, NO! Get in the elevator!" She shoved me into the elevator. My heart began to race as the doors shut. I was trapped! I clamped my eyes shut and held my breath. I was going to hold it for all 40 flights if I had too. I knew I was going to hate this trip, I just knew it!

"Is he ok?" someone asked Sarah. I couldn't see the person, but judging by the voice he was an elderly man. He was thankfully the only other person in the elevator. "Oh, he's just a bit claustrophobic." Sarah explained. "A-a bit!?" I squeaked stammering. "You're-you're either clclaustroph...phobic o-or y-you're n-n-not. There-there's no in between!"

"Oh, I'm sorry Davy. I forgot." She said patronizing me. "No, you-!" I sighed, frustrated. She didn't forget. She did that every time someone asked and I couldn't help but correct her. The downfalls of Zanintoinian genes. We couldn't help but correct people. My hands curled into fists and I threw them to my sides. "I'm-I'm also scared of-of heights." I took a deep breath and let it out. "It's almost as bad as my claustrophobia." I was about to cry. No don't cry! I could not let myself cry. It would be so embarrassing and, it would make my situation worse. "I hate you so much, Sarah." I whispered. The old man chuckled and I knew Sarah smiled. The elevator stopped and I scrambled off.

"David!" she called after me. "This isn't our floor. If you would open your eyes you would know that!"

"I'm walking the rest of the way!" I cried. Sarah sighed in frustration.

"You're not walking up ten flights of stairs!" she argued. The old man continued to laugh.

"David, you remind me of my sons, Evan and Liam." He chuckled guiding me back into the elevator. "Good luck, son." He called back, as he walked off down the hall, and the doors closed trapping me again. I then began holding my breath again.

After what seemed like forever, the elevator came to a stop. I bolted off the elevator and into the hall. I was free. I opened my eyes and took a deep breath to calm myself down. We were on the 40th floor. Just thinking about it made me want to throw up. Sarah guided me to our room. To my horror, I found that half the walls in our room were covered in windows. I promptly threw up where I stood. "I'm sorry David," Sarah told me patting my shoulder. She might be mean, but in the end she's still my sister. "I... I can change our room. Get us on the first or second floor with less of a view."

"No, were already here, Sarah. I'll live." No more sanctuary. Instead of hiding in our room I'd be avoiding it. So much for a somewhat decent vacation. No Mom and no sanctuary, just Sarah and a terrifying room of windows. No, I wasn't going to hate this vacation, I already hated this vacation.

"Alright then." Sarah began. "How about we-" I gave her a scared bunny look. "-I go and get us some food from down stairs. Davy if they don't have lemonade, what do you want?" "A refund."

"David."

"Water."

"Ok, water and a hot dog with ketchup only, right?"

"Yeah... Thanks sis"

"I'll be back in a bit. Love you."

"...Love you too."



Vertigo

Quinn Kandra

## Minecraft 2.0: Game-Changer

Fiona Chandler

MorganDQuartz was excited. She had been waiting for this moment for a long time. The video game, Minecraft, has now been updated to its final version, 2.0. Because of this, Morgan got online as soon as possible. 2.0 was a version that many Minecrafters had pretended to make as a joke. However, the real one was here and taking a while to load!

Morgan finally popped into her bedroom and immediately knew something was different. She looked down; her hands moved. "Woah," she whispered in awe. Before, there were almost no joints on a player's avatar, but she could now walk like a normal person! Then Morgan realized more had changed about her. Her skin for her avatar had dragon wings, a tail, two horns, and dragon talons for feet. The new update had added the real parts to her! Morgan grinned. "Best. Day. EVER!" she shouted with joy.

Walking out of her room, Morgan was bowled over by her pet wolf, Eks. He barked and licked her face. "Woah! Hey, buddy! Oh, wow, I can actually feel your fur!" she laughed. Eks jumped off Morgan when she stood, his tail wagging. Morgan's other two pets, the cats Petra and Grayson, rubbed themselves against her legs and tail. Morgan knelt. Grayson purred loudly. "Oh my god, Mojang, thank you so much!" Morgan was beyond happy; she was overjoyed. Minecraft had become the smartest game ever.

It was turning to night. Morgan was nervous; she almost never fought the night monsters before. But she knew, that to play properly, she would have to deal with dying. "Eks, sit," she commanded. The wolf sat obediently. "Now stay. I don't want you getting hurt," said Morgan. She took a deep breath and walked out the front door. Morgan pulled a trident out of her inventory. The mobs, which consisted of zombies, skeletons, giant spiders, and creepers were spawning at random intervals. The monsters closest to Morgan sensed her presence and came after her. "This is gonna hurt," she groaned as she prepared to fight.

An enderman, a tall, black, long-limbed, purple-eyed monster, teleported in front of Morgan, causing her to yelp in fright and dive under it. She grabbed her trident and swept the weapon up, scoring a hit on the enderman. It screamed in pain. Just as it rounded on her, Morgan tried breathing fire. Flames hit the enderman hard. Morgan thrusted her legs out. They launched the enderman back into a creeper, which exploded. Morgan smiled grimly. "Like two birds with one stone," she exclaimed. Morgan stood. Mobs surrounded her. She felt like she had full control of her body. She lifted her wings and brought them down hard. She flew up into the air. She gasped, then grinned with joy. She was flying! She whooped and dove. She swooped up before hitting the ground, gliding swiftly over the mobs. Morgan flamed, hurting many. She laughed with excitement as she wheeled around for another run. That's when she saw him.

The enderman was at the edge of the forest beyond her house. He was watching her, large yellow eyes glowing. Morgan hovered. The enderman had clothes on; an old leather shirt that was poorly made, and tattered leather shorts. She soon realized that she was staring straight into his eyes and looked away hurriedly. But no attack followed. Nervously, she looked back and stared in surprise when she saw the enderman backing away from a group of mobs who were advancing on him. A skeleton archer pulled back on its bow, and the enderman turned and ran. Creepers and skeletons chased after him, leaving the sluggish zombies behind.

Morgan flapped to the roof of her house and landed. She was puzzled. Looking above an endermans knees provoked them to attack, yet she looked that yellow-eyed enderman directly at his face. Also, the mobs were chasing him. Morgan tapped a claw. She wasn't sure why, but she had a feeling that the enderman could be worth helping. There was obviously something different about him. Then she heard a shout in the distance.

"Somebody help!!"

Morgan finally made up her mind. She took off and flew quickly to the source.

The enderman was scared out of his mind. He was too frightened to teleport away! A spider leapt on him. He punched it hard. He was already hurt in numerous places, and he was weakening. Suddenly, a roaring pillar of orange and yellow flame appeared. The enderman cowered against a tree and squeezed his eyes shut. There were sounds of fighting. He was sure he was going to die.

But nothing happened. Nervously, the enderman opened his eyes and looked around. The girl with wings was standing in a circle of drops. She tossed away some string from a spider and turned to him. They stared into each others eyes. "You okay?" Morgan asked. The enderman nodded slowly. "You're an enderman, yet you're not attacking me," she said curiously.

"I'm... uh... a civil enderman... " the enderman said quietly. Morgan cocked her head.

"What's a civil enderman? And what's your name?" she asked. This was really unexpected.

"A civil mob is a smarter version of a rogue mob. But, I don't have a name... I've lived all my life out here," he explained.

"Well, I'm Morgan," she added. "Do you want to stay at my house?" she offered. The enderman stood and nodded. Morgan led him back, walking slowly as he limped alongside.

"What if... Can I call you Endor?" she asked. He needed a name if he was going to stay.

"I don't care what name I get, It's just a name." he moaned. Morgan glanced at him and shrugged. "Alright, Endor it is," she confirmed. The massive white house came into view. The sun was beginning to rise behind them, the sky slowly turning into pink. Endor ducked under the low doorway. Morgan led him upstairs.

He flopped on a coach, exhausted. He was asleep immediately. Morgan headed to her own room and logged off.

From that night on, Morgan and Endor became the best of friends.



Travel Trouble

Fiona Chandler



Close To Home

Destany Caldera

# The Darkness

McKenley S.

Hello, my name is Raven. I am the protector of the plants and animals that inhabit this beautiful forest. Some of the animals here have a council. They call me "Little Protector," because I'm the smallest of the panther protectors. My best friend, Velveteen, is the child of the bunny chief, and the smallest of his kind. Even though he is the future chieftain, he is still not allowed to be in the council tree because of his size. He is constantly saying that he wants to be just like his dad when he grows to be a big bunny. I think that he is the naive one in our friendship, but I think that's why we have been friends for so long. Sometimes, I find his little bunny tail poking outside the branches of the council tree listening and learning how to read.

One particularly beautiful day, when the sky was smiling and the birds were practicing their songs, the animal council called for an emergency meeting. I didn't think anything of it, for they call emergency meetings all the time. As always, I knew where to find Velveteen when this happened. When I got to the tree, Velveteen popped his head out and said "Raven, they are talking about how my kind is showing up dead."

Holding back a laugh I said "It's nothing, you're just overreacting"

"I'm not this time!" he said trembling. I rolled my eyes and started to walk away, I paused for a moment and called out reassuringly "Calm down, I bet you misunderstood them" I wish I had listened to him that day; maybe I could have saved more lives.

In the next few weeks following our conversation, the council called six more meetings. Each time, Velveteen assured me that there was something wrong.

On the night of the sixth meeting, I was supposed to be on watch, but I decided to go on a walk. Everything looked normal to me. The trees were snoring, the ground was full of colors, and the sky had too many stars to count. As I was marveling over the beautiful forest I lived in, I realized something suspicious on one of the leaves. It was an ugly looking slime. When I reached out to touch it, it made my paw turn all black and a surging pain to followed shortly afterwards. Then, once I instinctively pulled my paw away, the slime began to scurry away. This made me curious, so I decided to follow its trail.

After a long while, I got to the source of the slime. When I looked around at the once beautiful forest that I grew up in, I was shocked to see everything charred and lifeless. However, in the presence of this ruin lay two flowers placed right next to each other. The flower on the right was healthy and vibrant, whereas the flower on the left was ugly and thorny. I stood there in surprise and confusion, realizing Velveteen had been right all along. Now I knew something was wrong.Then, all of a sudden I knew what I had to do, so I ran as fast as my little legs could carry me right into the council tree.

When I got there, I tried to explain what I saw, but all

i could say was "Velveteen was right... so much death... so much slime... "

That's when the chieftain came in, calmed me down and asked "Why are you causing all this commotion?"

I answered in a trembling voice "I found this ugly looking slime on a leaf, followed the trail, and found that the area around this ugly thorny flower was charred and decayed"

After a long moment of silence, I followed with "I think the flower is causing all this death!" They looked at me like I was crazy, so at that moment I realized there would only be one animal that would help me.

I ran out of the tree to find Velveteen at the hole of the tree listening intently. He looked up at me with fearless eyes and said "I know what's going on; let's save the forest!"

Running as fast as we could, we made it there in only a matter of a few short minutes. Looking around in awe, we started formulating a plan. Velveteen suggested that we could just clean up the slime, but I knew exactly what we had to do. With my claws as sharp as ever, I started striking at the ugly flower as hard as I could. After about fourteen consecutive hits later, I finally killed it but nothing changed. As I sat there in defeat and confusion, Velveteen calmly said with assurance "I think we judged too fast; I think the pretty flower is the real one causing the slime"

I thought back and realized that he was right. The ugly flower was probably helping us by eating the slime. Maybe that's why it had such a nasty appearance. So with one swipe of my paw, Velveteen and I saved the forest! For the next few months, the sky started to brighten again, and the birds continued to sing as the leaves were restored to their shades of green and orange. As for Velveteen and I, we ended up becoming the new leaders of the council.



**Running Late** 

Franklin Union

# **First Day Frights**

Kathryn Young

It's Alea's first day of junior year and she can't decide what to wear.

"Ugh, why don't I have any clothes... " Alea said anxiously. She had a dress with polka dots scattered all over it, but to her it was too much like what she wore freshman year, not to mention unnecessarily dressy. She also had a cute and ruffled top combo with her favorite pair of jeans. But after realizing that she only had fifteen minutes until the morning bell rings at school, she finally decided on the second outfit. She flew down the stairs and into the kitchen where her mom was making her third cup of coffee.

In the kitchen, she kissed her mom on the check and said "Bye Mom!" "Goodbye honey!" her mother responded with a perturbed smile on her face. "Have a good day at sch-" the slam of the front door cut her off as Alea rushed out the door. By the time Alea arrived to school with a few minutes to spare, she started walking through the courtyard and began to realize that everyone was staring at her. Even her best friend Michael was staring at her. After trying to pinpoint what everyone was staring at, she quickly discovered what the source of attention was. She had a giant stain on the back of her pants. Soon after realizing this, she ran into the school and straight into the bathroom to hide.

From within her stall, Alea had overhears a pair of students walk in the bathroom "Hey, did you see? It was so hilarious; that stain on Alea's pants was so embarrassing." Alea had to try really hard to bite back the tears that were forming in her eyes as the two girls in the bathroom walked out of the bathroom almost as fast as they came in.

"Ugh, why did this have to happen to me?" Alea whispered to herself. She was so embarrassed that everything didn't seem to exist. Eventually, Alea mustered up the resolve exit the bathroom with a look of gloom on her face. She arrives at her first period class just as the bell rings, which causes everyone to look up at her as she walks through the door. Alea then heads for the very back of the classroom before her teacher walks in.

"Good morning everyone, are you ready to get to work?" says Mrs. Lincoln, Alea's English teacher. That's about all that Alea hears as the class period goes on. The next thing she knows, the bell rings and wakes Alea up from her trance.

She's basically already out the door when she hears someone behind her say, "Hey, dirty denim, why the long face? Did you do something dirty?"

Before getting a chance to see who spoke, Michael comes up and says "Hey, shut up." She didn't wait to see what the person behind her responded with because she was already walking away out the door.

"Hey!" Michael shouted as he followed her from behind. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah, sorry I'm fine, I've just had a really bad day." Alea responded with a long face. By the time school ended, Alea just wanted to go home, but found herself being forced to stay at school for the yearbook committee she was apart of. "Okay people," said Alea's yearbook committee sponsor, Mrs. Lincoln, "are y'all ready for this new year?" Only about three people responded with a weak "Yeah" while the other ten people in the room either responded with a shrug or a groan. The committee lasted until 5:45 PM by the time the sun had sunk and the sky began to darken. Alea had to walk to school that morning so she had to walk home that evening. Once Alea was nearly half way home with her path guided only by the spaced out street lights of the neighborhood, the back of her arm was suddenly grabbed by the ice cold hands of someone.

Alea screamed in terror as she instinctively flipped her body around and threw her fist towards the face of the figure behind her. The mysterious figure let out a cry of pain, but Alea didn't recognize the voice from anyone she knew from school. Not knowing what to do, Alea just stood there speechless with a look of shock on her face.

"It's okay, I probably shouldn't have snuck up on you like that." The voice said as if it was his fault that he got punched in the face.

As he regains his composure, the boy steps into view and says "I'm David White, I just moved in across the street."

"Oh, I'm Alea Price. I live just down the street." she says with a look of surprise as she finally sees the handsome face that the darkness had been hiding.

"So, what are you doing by yourself this late at night?" He asked as he looked up and down at Alea in enchantment.

"Um, I'm just walking home from school after yearbook committee"

"Oh, okay" he said as if he was expecting something more exciting.

By the time they were both about to go their own separate ways, David suddenly asks "Hey, since I'm new around here, could you come with me on Saturday and show me around town?" Alea just looks at him with a surprised expression as if she didn't hear him right. "Um, sure, I guess" replies Alea with some uncertainty in her voice.

"Cool, so I guess I'll meet you here at around two on Saturday."

"Sure, I'll see you on Saturday." Alea says, still surprised.

The next day, Alea wakes up to see that the handsome stranger she met the day before wasn't real. In fact, she wakes up on Monday morning to her mom greeting her with a "Good morning honey, are you ready yet for your first day of school?"

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Kathryn Young



# **Fire Cup Painting Gallery**



Hanna Withmore



Fiona Chandler



Lawson Nelson



Megan Jordan



Rachel Perry



Sean Wallace



On The Prowl

Jace King



Undiscovered Terrain

**Rachel Perry** 



Convolutions

Megan Jordan



Conqueror

Fiona Chandler





Will Endersby











Ava Phipps



Abby Robinson



Kathryn Young



Megan Jordan

# Photography Gallery



Sunset Sails

Will Endersby



Laramie Chapa

# **Photography Gallery**



Italian Dawn

Paige Promecene



Ashore

Quinn Kandra



Venice

Matthew Alsip

## Money and What Comes With it

Justus Åhrens

The luxury that comes with money sounds pretty nice to everybody, and we all want to have it. Personally, I think that money can be awesome. Money means power in this world, you can buy anything you want if you work hard enough. To the untrained eye, it appears to be easily manageable and you don't have to think about the responsibilities that come with it. But, I think that wealthy people still have the responsibility to help people who aren't wealthy. This is especially because we live in a country that should provide equal rights and opportunities to everyone. Unfortunately, there are still too many people who aren't as blessed as we are. If we have the chance to help others, we should do it. Being wealthy doesn't only mean to be rich in terms of money, but to be mature enough and profusely aware of what exactly is going on in this world. Wealth brings all kinds of possibilities when you still have time, and there are always some chances to make when considering what the right thing to do is.

## Make Me Understand

Gabriela Auber

What is emotion?

No no, don't give me an answer like that. I am aware of the words definition, which is why I didn't ask what it meant. Instead, I asked you what it was.

•••

I see you are still confused. I suppose I should elaborate so that your simple minds shall finally be able to comprehend my inquiry.

I do believe it is a reasonable expectation that most humans are able to understand and feel things that are commonly defined as "emotions." I, too, experience the effects of these feelings under the appropriate circumstances. I laugh when someone tells a joke that others perceive as funny. I shout back when yelled at. My eyes water when I'm put on the spot. My legs shake when I stand directly in front of a large crowd, their attention all on me. And so much more. However, this is where the similarities in the field end.

I go along with the general mood in the air or of those around me, so that those very same people don't suspect anything beyond the visible. But, from my intensive research on the subject, many describe a "feeling" in their bodies when reacting appropriately or inappropriately like; a crippling weight when depressed; a tightening sensation in their chest when anxious; you get the point. I hear others talk of it as well, which makes me look around and question, "Have I really felt these things before?" Looking back on the few memories that I manage to call upon in these moments, I realize that the true occurrences are exceedingly rare, and when they do occur, my understanding of the feeling is scarce.



Lamentation on the Shore

Maverick Gutierrez

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# **Killing Killers**

Matthew Alsip

"Empty the tank, Empty the tank," The ferocious outcry roamed around the area where my hefty tank is located. I have no real name, but the humans call me Halyn. I have been swimming around in my tank ever since I got released into the tank and I noticed a sign that stated the numbers 1988. "Think about the whales, they need room to move around in the ocean!" said an individual. I froze for a second and thought back as far as I could remember. I could only remember all the shows I had to perform, how much time I've spent in the tank and all the people I've seen, yet I wanted to think of something bigger. After a short time, I contemplated to a time that I had no idea what was going on, the day I got enslaved.

The sun was shining in my eyes when I woke up on, what I alleged, was one of the best mornings in my life. My mother and father were floating next to me on both sides, both still asleep soundly. I was really ravenous, but my parents always taught me to hunt with them until I was old enough. I considered all the options and risks about hunting alone as well as looked all around my surroundings. Then, I noticed a large blob drifting through the water a few hundred yards above me. Knowing how hungry I was, I swam as fast as I could up to the surface and saw the large blob was a stack of fish that didn't move as I got closer. Usually, because of my immense size, fish would scram at the first sight of me, however the fish were as still as a statue. I took the opportunity and swam up to the fish and ate them all in one gulp. With most of my hunger satisfied, I started to swim towards my still sleeping mother and father, although I began to see strange square-shaped holes all around me. I whirled to my left and right and still was encased in the square-shaped holes. Subsequently, the square-squared holes got closer to me and forced me to swim up until I reached the surface where I noticed a boat with the decal the stated SeaWorld, in addition to lots of fish and humans. Then, it dawned on me that I was trapped in a net. The boat started to move, and I was dragged along with it. After a few minutes, the boat stopped and I felt a painful pinch near my dorsal fin. I began to feel sleepy and before I knew it, I was asleep.

When I woke, I noticed the sign with the numbers 1973. Also, I realized that I was out of water, but I was released into a tank after a few moments. The space wasn't big, but I managed. I've spent the last 35 years swimming in a tank. It wasn't always at SeaWorld though. For about 15 years I swam around in an aquarium tank and was well treated. One day I was taken out of my aquarium and moved to a smaller tank at SeaWorld where I've lived for 20 years and have been decently treated. Suddenly I felt a searing pain in my body. It was hard for me to swim, I began to gasp for air and feel lightheaded. Soon after, I sensed my heart racing and continued to pant for air. Then, I began to close my eyes, hoping the people would think I was sleeping, but before I closed them, I noticed the sign that stated the numbers 2008 and understood why I was in pain or at least why I thought I was in pain. I breathed one last time before it went dark.

# $\left( \frac{\mathsf{F}}{\forall} \right)$



10 Years

Will Endersby



The Bright Blur

**Rachel Perry** 



## The Man Who Lost it All

Maverick Gutierrez

The smell of fresh blood danced throughout the living room of my recently purchased New Braunfels home. Minutes passed by quickly, but it felt like the world had stopped right in front of my eyes.

"I killed her..." Sadly, those were the only words that I could muster to pull out of my mouth even though hundreds upon hundreds of thoughts were coursing through my head.

"Molly, please forgive me, please forgive what I've done to you." I was sobbing hysterically, I already knew that something so grotesque couldn't ever be forgiven, and such a disgusting human being, such as myself, couldn't ever be forgiven. It couldn't have been past midnight when I heard it. "You're done for... they'll find out." this voice repeated again and again without fail as if mockingly so.

"They WILL find you." It was nothing short of a whisper, yet it felt like it was screaming at me. I was paralyzed, the amount of shear terror this voice had evoked within me was horrifying, but I found I also felt strangely enraged by it. The mixture of my horrified and angry state caused me to lash out into a fit of rage. I bolted to the wall closest to me and slammed my fist into it with all my strength. The center of the wall where I struck easily caved in which shook the rest of the walls. Not too long after, I was awoken from the trance I had slipped into by the sound of shattering glass. I turned my head to the area from which the noise had come, and I found billions of glass shards scattered across the wooden tile floor. I immediately recognized the glass as the vase that Molly and I had purchased from our trip to Spain.

Instead, the vase was stunning, it had a dark teal tint all the way down to its oval base, and multiple strips of black and white sprung across its body. This vase brought me back to reality, and once again, I realized my situation. I swung my head so quickly back to my wife's body that I felt I gave myself whiplash.

"Molly... " It felt as if my tear ducts were a dam, a dam that had broken open and flooded the city that were my eyeballs. Once again, the hundreds of thoughts started to course through my head which led me to letting out an ear piercing scream. I couldn't take it anymore, all these bottled up thoughts spilled out of me like I was a balloon with a hole on its side. In a rush, I quickly rushed towards the stairs, but not too far from the stairs was a window. Through the glass panes, I saw a sight that instilled the kind of anxiety that no other thing or being could have evoked. The hairs on my arms shot up like something ice cold had been pressed against me as my breathing labored very quickly. Who knew the colors red and blue could be so terrifying. Without even realizing it, I was already upstairs, I didn't care that I had knocked over plenty of the paintings hung up along the staircase; I just wanted to escape.

"Maybe I can tell them it was an accident... yeah it was only an accident, I didn't mean to kill her it was only because I lashed out." Now I was beginning to bargain. I was in denial. I was wishing I wasn't in this situation. But, no matter how hard I thought of ways to get out of this despair ridden situation, My thoughts only went back to one solution.

"That's the only way huh?" It felt like my mind had slipped into a void of darkness, and I quickly grabbed some rope from the upstairs closet. I headed into my bedroom and made a noose out of the rough brown rope I held in my right hand. Without any thoughts, I scooted the small lightly tinted brown dresser from beside my bed to the center of the room where the ceiling fan hung. I stood up on the dresser and connected the rope to the ceiling fan.

"I'm sorry Molly... this is exactly what I deserve..." In one quick motion I pushed the dresser from beneath me with my feet, and it felt as if the world itself had slipped away from me. Instantly, I knew that I was regretting my decision, but it was too late for me now. I remember the sound of the door busting down, and footsteps quickly following. Sadly for them, they just walked into a scene that would be etched in their brain for an eternity. They quickly found Molly and later.. found me.

#### Steepled Dreams Carol Gulley

Seeker returns to native ground The wilderness of her lost youth Deep into the caverns of time Unpeopled by future seasons Ancient rivers run free and wild Dappled light glistens through the trees Iridescent saffron shafts, Shards of ochre, tawny brown, green.

My footfalls still know the pathway Fifty years on, a homecoming With fierce heart full of gratitude To the scorching sun untouched By the living or the dead.

Birdcalls trill through whispering wind Talking drum trails echo the past. I search the tablature of earth Fretted lines leading me to find My balance at the sacred stone Holy, placed precariously Without a sound, heart to heaven, Draped on the prayer mound so long ago.

Dropping to my old knees, I kneel.



The Falls

Quinn Kandra

## **The Inner Workings**

Evan McGinnis

#### The Light

I used to believe that I deserved nothing. No friends, no family, no happiness. I believed all I deserved was the void. A land of cold isolation and dark emptiness. Then, some small lights pierced the void. As I looked closer, they appeared angelic to me. They reached out their hands and I was scared, for I had not felt the touch of others in so long. They reassured me, and I slowly reached out. They pulled me out, and for the first time in a long time... I saw light.

#### Let Me Tell You a Story

Let me tell you a story about a young boy. He was born under the western stars of cancer and the eyes of the eastern dragon. Not too long into his life, the boy was plaqued with a powerful disease. His friends and family prayed for God to spare the young child. One night, the boy was visited by a relative who took his place in the death's embrace. As the boy grew up, he was filled with joy. He gained many friends and had an easy life. However, the boy grew older and these friends drifted away from him into memory. As he entered a new school, he sought new friends. Yet, these strangers used his kindness to find his weaknesses. With this knowledge, they turned on the boy. These strangers asked for forgiveness for their actions but all they wanted was more ways to hurt him. This forced the boy into a life of seclusion. For, he had nobody who treasured his trust. In order to have an emotional outlet, the boy found an empty book. With this, the boy started writing. To this day, that boy is still alone with nothing to trust but what he scribes in that book. Waiting for someone to show him the world can have beauty. If he gives it a chance...

#### A New Outlook

When I started my teenage life, my personality drastically changed. I went from a child who would go out to see the world, to a teenager, who would never leave his room unless forced. Now, with help from family, I'm seeing the world through new eyes. However, I still regret having to swallow my pride and ask for help rather than solving the problem myself. Not only that, I regret using artificial medications to see the world around me. Yet, I am still glad I am able to see the light at the end of the tunnel of sadness. Yes, I will always regret the way I discovered this new outlook. However, in time I believe the sacrifices will not compare to the rewards I shall receive.

#### The Bridge

I opened my eyes to see a large bridge across a chasm that eclipsed any I had ever seen. I looked at myself to see sandals and robes that clung to my skin. I turned behind to see a large portal of sorts stretching out of sight into the heavens. I turned back to the bridge. I was made of the finest stones and was supported by large pillars of Earth that refused to collapse into the chasm below. I reached my hand out to the portal but stopped. Something about it made me feel like I wasn't supposed to use immaculate. I continued to walk slowly along the bridge. As my sandals touched the elegant stones for the tenth time. I saw someone walking towards me. I stopped as the person kept walking to me. The figure was an elderly woman that felt familiar but I couldn't place it. "What are you doing on this bridge dear boy," the woman gently spoke. "Something calls me there," I spoke pointing to the immaculate thing in the distance. The woman smiled and put her hand on my mind. "It is not your time dear boy. I am here to go in your stead," she said as we wrapped hands. "Why would you walk in my place?" I asked. She simply smiled at me.

"Because you have too much of your life ahead of you dear boy, and that place is one you can never return from. When you come back, I will be expecting you to have tried to make a great man out of yourself," she said. I embraced her and began my walk back but stopped. "Who are you miss?" I asked. "Your grandmother my dear. When you see your father tell him I sent you back to him," she said as she walked towards the distant side of the bridge. I reached the portal and heard the beeping of machines as my father came and sat near me. "That's where grandma sat," I said as I shut my eyes into slumber.





Don't Worry

Quinn Kandra

## You Decide Diego Morales

In the small, unkept locker room of an ordinary high school gymnasium, a small team of downhearted basketball players are scattered around the room occupying different stages of discouragement after another brutally lost game. Following a segment of individual players grieving to themselves while grudgingly changing out of their uniforms, they all eventually make their way out of the room at different intervals, either one by one or in pairs, except for one young player still in his uniform as he splashes large amounts of water all over his face and head over the sink in the very back of the room. Soon after, he then reaches for the towel placed beside him and lightly pats his face dry while making his way to a nearby bench where he throws the towels over his head like a hood and sits crouched-over as he stares downwards lost in thought with a cold glare. ventually, the basketball coach enters the locker room in search of the missing player. After spotting him sitting alone, the coach walks further down the hall and calls out to him. "What are you still doing in your uniform? They're gonna lock up the gym soon, hurry up and get it together." The player fails to respond in the slightest with his head still weighed down and his eyes fixed on the floor. Knowing how inevitable it would be to try and convince or even deceive the player to leave, the coach eventually takes a seat beside the player and talks to him about one of his past experiences.

"When I was your age I was a basketball star in high school, I was offered a couple of scholarships to some good universities and I took the chance to go into one. The first time I walked on the court there, I realized that there was a lot more talent in there than I originally thought. At first, I was confident that I was going to be able to compete, but then I realised that it was going to be a lot harder than that.

I did make the team and played for about 3 months, but one day I got injured. The cartilage in my knee was damaged and the Doctor said that my bones were rubbing against each other. It was pretty hard to jump after that. But, I still decided to take advantage of my scholarship and put all my effort in my education, so I graduated and became a high school basketball coach. I'm very happy with my life as a coach and I never looked back. But, after playing college ball I knew that I was never going to be able to play in the NBA, I just wasn't good enough. You have to understand that in your case, you don't have the height, the speed, or the talent to get into a university team. You have to be realistic and decide what you really want to do with your life. The fact that you won't be an NBA Star shouldn't stop you from having a happy life. You just need to find out what you're truly good at and work really hard to be great in your field." "I'm already trying hard to be great in my field! How do you of all people know I don't have what it takes to make it happen?!" the young player shouted defiantly. "You're already a senior in high school. Have you received any calls from university coaches yet? Have you ever even seen a scout at one of our games? We're not division 5A basketball, we're a small school competing against small schools, no one in your class is going to be offered any sports scholarships. This is just the reality. You should face the facts, like I did when my knee went out. Truth is, we're not always cut out for the things that we want to do, even when we think we are..."

The coach stands up and starts making his way towards the exit of the locker room, but before walking out entirely, he pauses and turns back around to face the young player for one last word of advice.

"Whatever you decide to do, just make sure that you're passionate about it and that you love doing it, in that way you'll find happiness in everything you do."



On Top of Chores

Diego Morales



And We Begin Our Odyssey

Diego Morales

## **Words of Farewell**

Well, I hope you've enjoyed yourself, and I am deeply grateful for you taking the time to appreciate the brilliant work from this year's gathering of student artists, I truly am grateful. It is my profound wish that even after my departure from this project, another worthy artist will be able to take up the mantle of editor and carry on this awesome tradition for as long as possible. However, know that this isn't merely an obligatory school activity comprised of every student's deadline class material. Even if this school saves up enough money to afford 50 art buildings, and regardless of wether or not the censors approve of the students craftsmanship, this is still Winston's finest outlet for working artists to gain true recognition for their accomplishments. It's a voice. And now speaking to all the rising artists who have, and will hopefully continue to contribute to the heart of this magazine, it is up to each and every last one of you to keep these pages alive with your heartfelt words and thoughtful images. This is your time, make it yours. After all, this magazine started off intending to be a student-run project, and I find it only fitting that it should stay that way forever.

#### **Diego Morales**

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