



STARTING A NEW CHAPTER ...

Pacific Grove High School 2022 Literary Magazine
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Starting a New Chapter

Familiarity

Alexandra Blackwell

A warm light hanging over, ever burn-
ing
Familiarity lays as a soft blanket, hugging
tight.
Different pulls out your feet and you fall.
Thrill and fear as your stomach turns.
With familiarity comes safety, a hug pro-
tecting you
Routine, family, home.
With a light ever burning eventually
your eyes sting.
Thrill, excitement,
Difference is a roller coaster you've never
tried before
Despite a rather happy liking of them.
Difference makes your fall
But if you don't land, it can feel like flying
Flying is joy
You always dread landing.
New is fear, eagerness, anticipation.
longing, nostalgic, unfamiliar.
Familiarity is home,
The room you slept in, your old bed.
Familiarity is a soft blanket, laid once
again over a sleeping form.
Hugging tight and warm.



"The love of a Human's Best Friend" by
Angelica Stewerf

Pedazos Quebrados

Lupita Alvarado

Malupe
All those time I stayed with you
I wanted to help glue together all your
pieces
Hours on end in your quiet house
You made it it feel as if you loved me
I felt as if I could trust you
Yo te Amaba

A year and a half ago I was shattered
Estabas allí para recogerme
To put me back together
But then you got bored and juggled with
my privacy
Dropping it
Shattering my trust
Releasing my anger
Making me fear todo otra vez
I could not trust anyone
No Pude volver a a amrar todo
Pero todavia Yo te amaba

Now with the help of other
I slowly have been using my tears as glue
Reconstruyéndome
So I can forgive you
For all that pain you caused me
I forgive you
And I love you.



"Sunkist" by Charlotte Deegan

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Bitter Medicine

Ella Williamson

It's a religion of hiding:

take two tablets daily; side effects
include loneliness,
secrets stitched into your back
and you can remake yourself
a thousand times, but still
those secrets.

You were
proud and annoyed, and strong
and no one saw anything wrong with
any of this.
Not even you, you
fight
the revelation.
I can't see where this is going. That
scares me more than anything I
know.
And your face shines like a divine
light in my mind—
I think our friends are our gods
as much as anything else.



"Blossoms" by Evie Schulze

Me and the Sea

Alexandra Blackwell

When the sea was born it was with
laughter and joy,
and soon life came to fill every inch of it.
And everyday it glimmers and pulls.
Its chilly fingers brush at my feet urge me
to stay all day.
And everynight, as the tides come in, it
crashes and pushes
The harsh sound of crashing against
stone urges me to go.
The beauty of the sea shimmers ever
bright
Becoming me to swim and smile and fish
for its thoughts
And deep down the blue turns to black,
But even in there, there lives life, isn't
that right?
The sea is a beacon for beauty, and
dance, and light
Even the stars, sun, and moon only help
its beauty, reflecting upon it.
The sea's soft grasp is as comforting as it
is warm on a tropical beach.
The sea isn't perfect, but I miss it every
time I step away.
So I've decided, the sea and I, we'll be
together forever.
I'll buy a boat and venture out,
And never return to land.



"Contemplation" by Eden Morillo

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Cradles

Ella Williamson

First, we learned the earth
was alive. We called her mother,
on various corners of her skin,
which were countries, bedclothes
to swaddle us. We ask ourselves now
if our hatred hid in those blankets.
Ares,
God of war, I read in fifth grade. Might
strife, so utterly human be
divine? How easily I dismissed
the idea, laughed at ancient
ancestors in the dark.
First, mothers hope
that time might impart
the wisdom they won't, in so many
collections of words and parables.
I am no longer in fifth grade, thank
the stars (not that the stars
had anything to do with it).
I heard talk of warring, present tense
progressive, for all intents and purpos-
es. First,
I kneel before no statue as I cite its
necessity, nor monument as I plead
morality.
But I wonder, if we are so very different
from before
when still we talk of war as without
Not within.
First, we learned the earth
gave us life when first
we learned how to take it.

Withering Roses

Hailie Atkinson

Where roses bloom
So too— does mankind

They give life
They give sweet smells and smiles
With haunting coruscations of white

Then— with time

Thorns transform
To pointed picket-fences
Petals wither to dust
As Smiles evanescent to illusions

The sweet flower bids adieu
To the smiles, it once knew.



"Seal Beach" by Abbey Fitzpatrick



"Falling" by Eden Morillo

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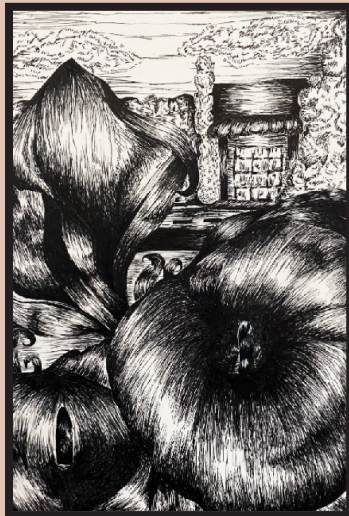
Forgiving Your Ghost Lupita Alvarado

I wish I could say I knew you
It would be easier that way
For me to despise you
But you left me alone
So thank you for that

Thank you for saving me
From knowing such an awful human
From knowing an addict
From knowing and abuser
From knowing a felon
From knowing my father

Not that you care
But I am doing great,
Without you
So today is the day
That I forgive you

I forgive you for never calling
Never showing up
Never reaching out
Never being good enough
Never making me feel as if I was enough
Never taking
me to a father
daughter dance
Never loving me
I forgive you for
it all.



"Hydrangeas" by Grace Martin

And My Worries Lay on Top Alexandra Blackwell

The first is never bad itself, only a warn-
ing
Little speckles adding up,
No two ever alike, different patterns,
stories, and mistakes from which we're
learning.

An inch or two is all at first, not enough
to even fill a cup
But soon a flurry sparks up, covering,
coating, freezing
Nothing left untouched, nothing left
separate

And I'm trying to be appeasing
But soon im snowed in as well, stuck fro-
zen with my thoughts
And the chill reaches down deep enough
to never fully leave
The cold reaches others too, leaving a
new storm to be fought.

Quietly, I put on my boots and try to
make it through.
But as I step onto the top I find myself
sinking down,
And there goes the day I wanted to pur-
sue.

Its freezing in the depths, quieter too, and
I think with a frown,
I shouldn't call for help, they'll just be cold
too.

And so with myself alone, standing up
from the ground,
Because I can make my own shelter from
the storm, with bravery and a little bit of
glue.

The storm will pass one day, as worries
start to melt
And bit by bit, the snow is replaced with
a warmth so welcome to be felt.

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Excerpt from Sons of Detritus:

“The Hermit”

Josephine Jenner

I look past Genna, at the woman seated in the corner of the room beside the wide bay window. She gazes out the glass into the empty street, nursing a cup of tea and a blueberry muffin. If she had been listening to Genna scolding us, she doesn't seem bothered by what she'd said. Eryn and I call her Old Nem, or just plain Nem, not for her age. She's only thirty-some years old, almost young enough to be our sister. But for her hair, which has already gone silver. When Eryn and I were young, we would theorize from the corners of the dining room what could be the cause of the scars that patterned every visible inch of Nem's skin, until Ianthe overheard us and put us right in our rooms for being impolite. Neither Eryn or I know much at all about Nem, even though she's been here in town almost all our lives.

I have a suspicion that our moms have known her longer, though. She never talks, Eryn and I are lucky if we can get one sentence out of her in the morning. But Genna still insists on letting her in every day before the bakery even opens to the rest of town. In fact, everyone else in Freiton seems to know who Nem is, too. Often someone will stop in during the morning and ask Genna at the pastry counter in a low voice how Nem is doing. They could just as easily walk a dozen steps and ask Nem herself, but they never do. Perhaps they think she'll clam up on them, too. The only reason I can think to explain Nem's popularity around the village is her skill

with the blade. Nem is a swordsmith, Eryn and I figured out from the rare glance we got inside her house when the curtains were parted. On a day they were open just enough, we could see inside the dozens of swords hung on the walls within. The clocks, too. Lots of clocks on her walls from many vendors around town. We would admire the swords from afar and imagine ourselves wielding one of those beautiful weapons, but it wasn't easy to browse the wares when Nem never lit any candles and kept most of her curtains tightly closed.

We don't intrude on her house anymore, we haven't for years since I no longer had to daydream of holding one of her swords. Since the night Nem saved my life as a child, every time my birthday came around I would approach Nem's table in the corner of the shop and beg her for one of those masterfully crafted blades. She would only laugh and tell me my parents wouldn't be pleased with her if she gave me a deadly weapon for a present. She finally gave in when I came of age at thirteen and bestowed upon me my own shortsword.

After this gesture of kindness, and giving me a gift more valued than I had ever received before, she just as soon slipped back into silence. So Eryn and I press on, coaxing her into speaking every morning until she allows us to hear her voice again. I hold onto the hope that if we keep trying, maybe someday she will tell us the stories of her scars and of what binds her to our family after all this time. ❖

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The Fundamental Laws of Sisterhood By Emily Keller

Every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

- Isaac Newton's Third Law of Motion

That action would be my birth: August 9th, 2005; the Year of the Rooster; astrological sign, Leo; International Cat Day; whatever else you'd like to call it.

In any case, I was born Mary Jane Smith to Ryan and Elina Smith (née McDowells). The picture of "Plain Jane," I had medium-length, straight brown hair—no texture, shape, volume, or highlights. Growing up, I was average in height, weight, and looks; I was on the middle-to-lower end of the athletic spectrum; I wore plain, uninteresting clothes. My skin was pale and unblemished—and not in a good way, as in I had nice, clear skin; as in I had no freckles or anything of interest to spruce up my plain features. So you see, Plain Mary Jane.

What did I excel in, then, you might ask? Well, what else? Academics. I was in Advanced Science beginning in fourth grade, entered Advanced Math in fifth, and went through my middle and high school years taking as many Honors and Advanced classes as my school offered... after my parents transferred me to a preparatory school that offered the most advanced classes in our area, heralded for its academic renown.

So, I was the action. When I was three, the reaction occurred with the birth of my half-sister.

A few months after I was born, my dad was killed in combat on deployment

for the U.S. Army. Shortly after my first birthday, my mom began dating again, and by the time a year had passed, she had married that man...Terrence Sandoval. On the exact day of my third birthday, my stepdad rushed my mom to the hospital, where she gave birth to my half-sister, Marleanna Josephine Sandoval. It was the beginning of the end.

Compensating for the fact that we shared the same birthday, mother, and initials, we split paths in almost every other way. She was preppy, beautiful, and fashionable, with her always-in-season, top-of-the-line outfits; lush, coppery-red hair; tan, freckled skin; and natural athleticism in softball, volleyball, soccer, and basically anything else. Where I was simple MJS—Mary Jane Smith—she was fancy MJS—Marleanna Josephine Sandoval. We were always at each other's throats, bouncing back and forth in life's endless ping-pong game of shifting power—doomed to repeat the cycle.

I think the endless downhill climb really began when she took my name—literally. Where my plain name had been made into something more exciting with the few nicknames that could be fabricated from it (Mare, Mare-Mare, or MJ), Marleanna Josephine destroyed that. Now, in addition to Marley, Anna, or Annie, which my mom and stepdad had created, she adopted MJ, Mare, and Mare-Mare, courtesy of the parents of her little preschool friends. It didn't even make sense to me. My sister's name had the long 'a' sound, mine was the short 'a.' 'Mare' was not a sound that could be fashioned out of either name but mine. But, my mom called her that around the other moms, which, over time,

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carried into our own household. Thus, I was relegated back to Mary Jane. Mary, Mary, quite contrary. Mary with a little lamb. Plain Mary Jane. That's who I am...

Force equals mass times acceleration.
- Isaac Newton's Second Law
of Motion

The force with which my sister and I attacked each other that day was equal to the mass of our respective grudges against each other, times the acceleration of our pent-up fury. The problem was, we each held the same grudges against the other, and our fury escalated from 0-100 in the same amount of time and at the same rate. Therefore, we struck with equal force and ricocheted. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. She flew back, making contact with our plush, low-back couch and rolling right over the top of it. I stumbled backwards and slammed into the wall, directly beneath one of our floating shelves, which promptly began to rumble. In slow motion, I watched the small blown-glass sculpture my mom and stepdad had crafted together on their belated honeymoon trip to the Bahamas as it shimmied forward in rhythm with the rumbling of the shelf. When it got to the edge, it tipped over and fell. Down, down, down...until it shattered on the hardwood floor.

My sister and I locked eyes with each other across time and space. We both looked back down at the wreck of periwinkle-stained glass that used to show two larger hands holding two smaller hands in theirs. The light glinted, catching my eye on one perfectly-shattered shard of glass—the part of the sculpture that our parents had

had engraved into the base in honor of their daughters and the unification of their new family: MJS.

A body in motion tends to remain in motion, and a body at rest tends to remain at rest, unless acted upon by an outside force.
- Isaac Newton's First Law of Motion

No matter how many times over the years my sister and I insulted each other, neither outside force was strong enough to change the motion of the other body. Despite the thousands of times she called me uptight, nerdy, and unliked, I continued along my plain dirt path, working towards the simple-yet-complex future I had always seen ahead of me. And regardless of all of the instances where I called her petty, vain, and needy, she carried on down the red-velvet, carpeted road laid down for her, sitting atop her high horse. With the same acceleration of progress and mass of determination, we maintained our motion down our given paths, equal in length yet opposite in direction and intention. If nothing else, we truly were the perfect embodiment of The Fundamental Laws of Sisterhood. ❖



"Sisters" by Morgan Gibson

The Meteor's End Angelica Sterwerf

It was raining fire as I looked up into the sky. I watched with several other people, knowing full well that we would be no more. A tear came down my face as I wiped it away as fast as possible. Around me, people were running, screaming, crying. Children wanted reassurance from their crying parents, who didn't know how to tell them it's the end, the end of an era. Then there were people like me, who were silently standing, knowing full well that there was no more hope. It was inevitable. I began to walk to a park that I loved, that I longed for at this time. Silence came about me when I entered the park, as most people had left. It was still as beautiful as ever, but it was going to be destroyed in a matter of minutes. A rock hit a building far into the distance, setting the park on fire. I walked back out, looking once again, to the fire lit sky. A massive rock, a meteor coming straight for Earth. There was no way to avoid it, no matter how much prep, how much prediction, no matter what was done, the course to earth would not change.

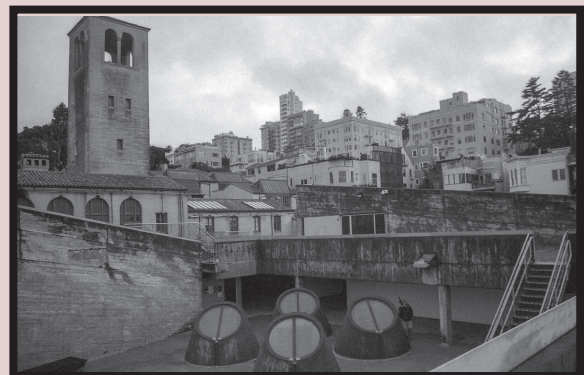
I cried silently in the empty street; the only sounds were falling rocks and the sound of fire. Even those who accepted their fates left to spend their final moments with those who matter the most to them. I had no one—no friends, no family with me. I began to walk the lonely streets, fiery rocks raining down all around me, destroying pavements, burning any green, metal sticking up from destroyed buildings. Fire was everywhere, burning anything and everything. I walked on the cracked

pavement, some of it crumbling under my feet, showing the effects of the oncoming danger. The heat warmed me to the point that I'm sweating, as I put my headphones on, blasting my favorite music. I kept my eye focused on the empty street as ashes littered the air, ground and my body.

"Goodbye dear world of mine," I whispered to nobody but myself, as I walked into the bright lights of fire. Then everything went black. The last thing I heard was "anew." ❖



"Screaming Sirens" by Janica Soro



"San Francisco Art Institute" by Lexy Sapiro

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Charles McGee: A Flying Hero William Coen

On January 16, 2022, a former US Air Force pilot named Charles McGee passed away at the age of 102. McGee was a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of African-American pilots who fought in World War II. McGee served in the military from 1942 to 1973, flying hundreds of missions and earning numerous honors.

McGee was born in Cleveland, Ohio. His father served in World War I and World War II. During his childhood, McGee was a Boy Scout, and he became an Eagle Scout in 1940. McGee attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign before joining the US Army in 1942. He trained in Tuskegee, Alabama with the rest of the Tuskegee Airmen. As a member of the 302nd Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group, McGee flew missions over Italy, Germany, and other nearby countries in 1944, earning the title of captain. In late 1944, McGee returned to the US, and he instructed other Tuskegee Airmen until 1946. The accomplishments of McGee and the other Tuskegee Airmen contributed to the abolishment of segregation in the US military in 1948. In the Korean War, McGee served as a pilot in the 67th Fighter Bomber Squadron and earned the title of major.

McGee remained a member of the Air Force through the 1960s and into the 1970s. In the Vietnam War, he flew as a lieutenant colonel and the Squadron Commander of the 16th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. On January 31, 1973, McGee finally decided to retire from the US Air Force. He completed a total of 409 combat missions during his military career. Few other Air Force pilots have matched or exceeded this number of missions. McGee was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Presidential Unit Citation, among many other honors, during his career.

After retiring from the Air Force, McGee worked for the Tuskegee Airmen Association, which helps people of color find jobs in aviation. In 2007, McGee was given the Congressional Gold Medal along with other Tuskegee Airmen. In 2011, the National Aviation Hall of Fame welcomed McGee into its halls. McGee was also honored and promoted to brigadier general at the State of the Union Address in 2020. Through perseverance and dedication, McGee broke barriers and paved the way for future generations, while also becoming one of the greatest US Air Force pilots of all time. ❖



“The Valley of the Shadow of Death”
by Janica Soro

Excerpt from *The Children of Phobos: "Homecoming"*

Josephine Jenner

On the day I returned home, I was no longer the daughter of a criminal. I became a hero. My country gave me the medals, and my people the appraisal, to prove it. But I disagree with the title they warrant. Calling me a hero implies I'm someone to be looked up to, or that I'm someone who's done something valiant. Heroes help people. I'm not a hero.

The pendants—one of silver, one of bronze—hang from ribbons pinned to the left lapel of my white blazer. They tap against my chest with each lopsided step I take down the empty sidewalk. Dragging with me the heavy prosthetic leg I haven't grown used to, I limp down the hill.

Something about the familiarity of this place calms the fire that has blazed within me for the better part of the past year. The plazas and the towering living quarters that loom over. The white walls yellowed by the weather. The balconies with their rusted railings, colorful front doors face the brick roads. The olive trees that grow up through any break in the pavement, stretching their limbs up towards the sky swirling with blue clouds, and the clotheslines blowing in the blistering cold between candlelit windowsills overhead. My neighborhood, undeniably mine no matter how long I spent away. I can marvel endlessly at the subtle beauty of it, but I wish I had prettier memories of the people who live within these plazas. I grip my cane of olive wood with a pair of thin white gloves as I take another step.

Beyond the neighborhood districts, soon I come upon the quiet market street. The storefronts with their terracotta roofs have not opened, and I am alone with the streetlights just starting to turn off, and the thoughts in my head.

Distantly, vehicles hum somewhere in the center of the city. Birds warble in the trees lining the road, and the banners patterned with stripes of red, black, and blue catch my attention as they sway from the lampposts. For a moment they caught me by surprise as I forgot Manessa's flag could exist printed on anything besides a uniform. I lower my eyes and sweep my dark curls away from my tanned face, tanned further and marked with several shallow wrinkles by the time spent out in the harsh weather. I can hardly stand to look at the national colors, but facing the ground brings me little solace when there they were again, a metallic brooch pinned to my breast pocket.

Steadying myself as I continue to walk, I wonder what my old neighbors will say to me when I arrive at the church. As much as I loathe wearing this outfit, I would rather get the formalities over with. I already know how today will go. They come to see me in my medals. They'll tell me they're sorry for the way they treated me as a child, and I'll lie through my teeth that it's in the past. The transaction will be complete. For the rest of my days as I pass in the neighborhood they'll gawk at me in the streets, but we will never speak again.

After that then I can finally be left alone. ❖

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Fear of Failure Marshall Pearman

The time read 3 P.M. in bold black letters on the kitchen clock. I was sitting at the end of my grand dining room table in front of my bright Dell computer with a glass of iced tea. It was a beautiful day outside in Pacific Grove yet I was stuck inside my home conversing with business aspirants on a Zoom meeting. My business entitled DSA, (Design Survey Agencies), was finalizing a proposal started over seven weeks ago with another company worth nearly \$500,000. I observed condensation from the iced tea trickling down the side of the glass and suddenly, I was overwhelmed with stress. Sweat began to slide down the side of my face as the thought of failure crossed my mind. I knew the possibility of winning the proposal was as likely as the sun, moon, and stars aligning perfectly.

"We will need to finish any final touches to the draft. I am expecting this proposal to be completed within the next few days," I exclaimed.

"I concur with Jerry," stated Mike, the COO of a small business, "but do not stress over this project proposal. There are a plethora of future opportunities to generate more revenue."

"Stressed?" I asked shockingly. "Do I look stressed? I am as calm as a lion stalking his prey in the tall grass."

I knew my speech may have been perceived otherwise. For months, the company failed to acquire additional contracts and I was starting to lose sleep under the pressure to succeed. Even though Mike's advice was genuine, I knew that a win was vital to the security of my position.

I concluded the virtual business meeting by declaring, "Anyways, I now call the meeting adjourned. The coming days may be arduous but nevertheless, we will finish the job. Thank you everyone and until next time!"

As the Zoom meeting closed, my son Marshall entered through the front door of our house after a burdensome day at school. I could sense a feeling of sadness and anxiety from my son as he approached the dining room table.

"Hey bub!" I called him as usual. "How was your day at school?"

"Awful!" yelled Marshall. "I failed my Physics exam today and my World History presentation bombed. The exam was exceptionally challenging and I forgot to rehearse my history slideshow last night."

Disappointed, I retorted, "Marshall! How could you possibly do so poorly in school? You were studying all night for your test and presentation. You know failing grades will show on your high school transcript, which could inevitably affect your college admissions. I expect better from you!"

"Dad!" Marshall cried, "I am putting forth my best effort in school and I feel an immense amount of pressure from you to succeed. I cannot live my life under this pressure or else I will die of a heart attack!"

I was stunned. My son was suffering from the same stress and pressure that I endured everyday in the workforce. I wanted him to pursue a joyous stress-free life with reasonable expectations to succeed, yet I was unable to communicate my message. Suddenly, I recalled a loathed memory from my high school days. The memory was vivid and disturbing, similar to Marshall's current situation. My parents applied the same stress and academic pressure that I placed on Marshall. I was now reliving my high school years from the 1980s in Griffith, Indiana.

I was the youngest sibling in a family of six with three older brothers. Two brothers, Jim and Joe, did not pursue college after high school. However, my second oldest brother, Dennis, was accepted into the United States Air Force Academy after high school and was drawn to the medical field. Dennis became my mentor throughout high school and inspired me to follow in his military footsteps.

My parents loved their children and worked tirelessly to provide for their family. My father worked at U.S. Steel for 45 years in the coldest and hottest weather. I still treasure the U.S. Steel wrist watch I inherited from my father. Even though the clock hands are locked at the twelve o'clock position, I still wear the watch every day. His work ethic served as a prime example of perseverance, even through the most brutal conditions.

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My mother was the chef of the house. She prepared scrumptious midwestern style meals and cleaned the house day after day.

Despite my parents' devotion to family, they instilled unrealistic expectations upon me to achieve highest honors in school and pursue academic opportunities in college. Little did they know that their expectations created an emotional roller coaster throughout my senior year of high school.

Undoubtedly, my most challenging class was Calculus. Every school night, I dedicated countless hours to Calculus homework in preparation for frequent tests. Although I was a diligent student, my grade in Calculus was an unimpressive C at the end of the first semester. I was devastated and stressed, wondering what my parents' reactions would be to my alarming Calculus grade.

As a first step, I implored my Calculus teacher, Mr. Hutchinson, to review my final grade and provide recommendations for improvement. His brash response became forever etched in my memory. "Well, it looks like you will need to get better at Calculus," he caustically declared.

That day, I returned home to my parents and informed them of the hapless news. I remember walking through the door as they sensed my despair. My mother stopped preparing our meal as she inquired, "Hi son. How was your day at school?"

I did not reply as I felt a pool of sweat dripping down my face.

"Jerry? What's the matter?" asked my father nervously.

I responded as if I had committed an egregious act. "I ended the semester with a C average in my Calculus class."

The whole living room fell reticent. I observed my parents' faces turn as red as my mother's summer roses.

"Honey! How did this happen?" asked my mom. "You have always been an eminent student all throughout high school. How could you be so irresponsible?"

"We expected more from you son," my dad proclaimed. "You may have jeopardized your entire academic career and your college acceptances with this one grade."

I immediately wanted to crumble to the floor and steep myself in hot tears. No words of solace offered, only further expectations that surpassed my own capabilities. I ran upstairs to my room and skipped supper, reflecting on my Calculus grade. I reached inside my dark pocket for my dad's old wrist watch. Just as the hour and minute hands pointed to twelve o'clock on the watch, I realized that I must be unwavering in my quest to follow in my brother's successful footsteps. With a dramatically raised grade Calculus the following semester, my college opportunities expanded and I was ultimately accepted into the United States Military Academy, West Point. My path following West Point proved immensely rewarding while serving twenty years in the Army. Thirty five years later, I started a veteran-owned small business called DSA, designing paper surveys for the Navy and Air Force. Unfortunately, the pressures and stress levels experienced in school carried not only into my profession, but to my own family and children.

Marshall and I stood next to each other in strong silence. I realized that I had turned into my parents and passed on the same fear of failure mentality to my son. Marshall was waiting for me to retort, but I did not. Instead, I had another idea.

"I will be right back. I would like to give you a prized possession of mine."

I walked up the stairs into my bedroom and opened a small dusty box on my dresser. Inside the box, I lifted my father's watch from his days working in the mill. The piece of gold jewelry shined in the natural light. I hurried down the stairs and presented the watch to my son.

"This is your grandfather's watch from his days working at U.S. Steel back in Indiana," I explained. "Both hands have always been stuck facing twelve o'clock. Let the watch hands guide you forward into the world without outside expectations and fear of pressure. You can bounce back from these two bad grades bub, and always remember to look ahead. You know I will always love you and support you in any way possible."

Marshall replied, "Thanks dad! I love you too!" as he walked upstairs to his room to do his homework.

I returned to my seat and took a deep breath. I promised myself to never bestow unhealthy expectations upon my children and not stress about my own work.

"Life is awesome!" I exclaimed to myself. I filled a new glass of iced tea, one without condensation dripping from the side, to alleviate my stress about my company's proposal. ❖

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Moving Forward Wyloe Hill

From this point in time, I'll move forward.
That's all I can do.
Be my best self, in whatever point of view.
I can cry
I can weep
I can eat
I can sleep
I can move forward.
It's okay if I move a few steps back or I get off track. It'll be okay.
No matter what path I take, what trail I follow, there will always be a some kind of tomorrow
Good or bad. It will happen.
So that's what I'll do
I will move forward, not for you.
I owe it to myself. Just me, myself, and I, no one else.
I will keep moving forward.



"Capitol Hill" by Abbey Fitzpatrick

Just like a Ball Keira Galvez

Just like a ball
I bounce to the sky
Just like a ball
I fall sometimes
Just like a ball
I run out of air
Drooping in despair
Does anyone care?
But through the sadness
A little one comes
Sharing my pain
They really do care
Just like a ball
I fill back with air
Just like a ball
I'll bounce high and fair



"Lady in the Park" by Abbey Fitzpatrick



"Reflections" by Evie Schulze

PGHS Literary Magazine 2022

Found Poems

To create a found poem, readers select words and phrases from a text and combine them into a new form: a poem. These poems show an understanding of the selection based on the images and figurative language that stand out. The ones published here are based on an excerpt from the book *Hiroshima: The Autobiography of Barefoot Gen* by Keiji Nakazawa, a first-person account of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945. Nakazawa survived and later went on to share his experience in the form of comics, graphic novels, and this autobiography.

Apparitions

Isabelle Kraft

All memory stopped.
Suddenly it's night.
Flames danced crazily, wildly.
Black smoke eddied violently,
when people materialized out of it.
People couldn't help
looking like apparitions-
A procession of ghosts,
dancing in space, flickering,
undulating off into the distance.
A procession of ghosts,
danced helter-skelter into the sky.
I ran among these horrific humans,
Inhuman forms utterly transformed-
threading my way.

I would have died
should have been-
Life or death truly is a matter of sheerest
chance.
If I close my eyes,
I could still see what had happened.
That violent flash burned itself onto my
retinas,
raising the curtain on hell.

Procession of Ghosts

Lily Lundquist

Singing at the top of our lungs
Thank you soldiers!
I would have died
A person's fate - life or death - truly is a
matter of sheerest chance

So we'd let our guard down
"All clear!"
If only the alert had sounded earlier!

"Ouch!" "Horrible!" "Help!"
Flames danced crazily, wildly
Searching for family, terror sank into my
heart
A procession of ghosts
Loneliness seized my mind

The sky turned dark
I sank to the ground beside Mom
Overcome with joy that I had found fam-
ily
We were lucky.
Night had fallen

Starting a New Chapter

Sophia Rudoni

Behind the Curtain

Life or death,
militaristic anthem.
Let our guard down,
raising the curtain on hell.

Penetrated quietly to the heart of Hiroshima,
burned pitch black.

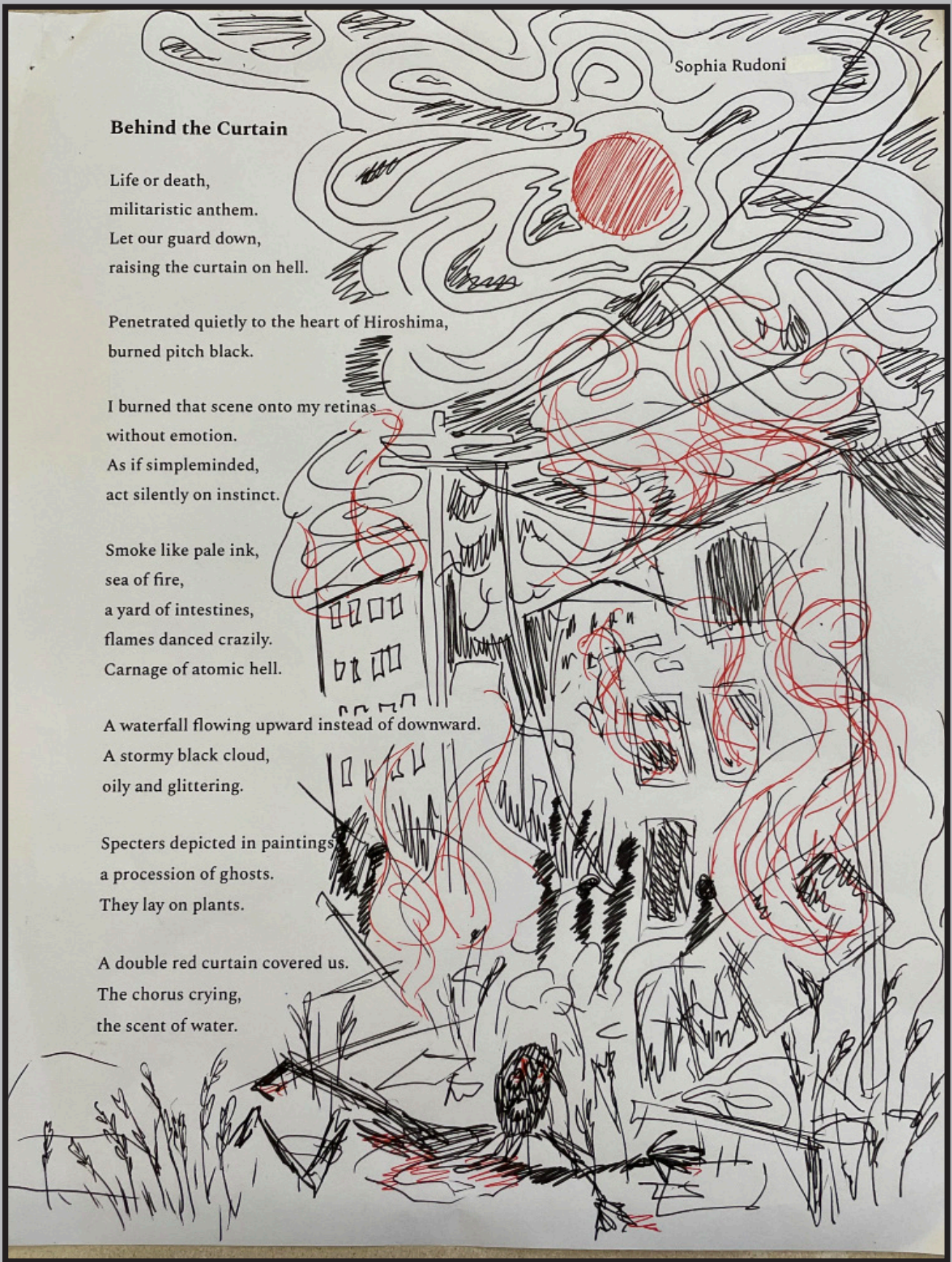
I burned that scene onto my retinas
without emotion.
As if simpleminded,
act silently on instinct.

Smoke like pale ink,
sea of fire,
a yard of intestines,
flames danced crazily.
Carnage of atomic hell.

A waterfall flowing upward instead of downward.
A stormy black cloud,
oily and glittering.

Specters depicted in paintings,
a procession of ghosts.
They lay on plants.

A double red curtain covered us.
The chorus crying,
the scent of water.



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Water

Matthew Pechan

Seeing water flowing from the pumps
They crawled sluggishly
Around the pump
People burned black
Drinking water blindly
Simply on instinct
Scenes of carnage calamity
The two fires stretched
Forward joining hands
As if in a daze
Struck by 9,000 degree rays
Countless blisters
Calling for water people burned
Skin peeled dangling from hands
People called for water
Offered the cup of water
Others groaned and died
Water! Water!

What happened?

Dayci Dishny

"What happened?"
Looking up into the clear blue sky
He was singing in a loud voice
Never dreamed that this would be the last
time
Singing at the top of our lungs
I tried to stand up
"What happened?"
Scrambled my way out
Hair was in tatters
I Gaped
Life or death
Raising the curtain on hell
Glass sticking in their flesh
"What happened?"
They walked silently
Searching desperately
Crying out

Dark Rain

Megan Ayers

Large raindrops splattered against my face,
And I didn't like how they felt.
Black rain.
Black rain.
Black rain.
The drops were slippery.
Black drops clung here,
And there,
glittering in the sky.
When I looked up,
The sky suddenly turned dark.
Black smoke violently covered the area.
Wiping the drops from my face with my
hand.
The terror I felt then sank into my heart.
Black rain.
Black rain.
Black rain.
I will have it with me as long as I live.



"Tidepool" by Maya Bagwell



"Unplugged" by Robert Englehorn

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