



2018

Lewisville High School's
Literary Magazine

The Pomegranate

LHS Literary Magazine

Brought to you by the Poetry Club and the Literary Guild

Sponsors

Mrs. Amber Counts

Mrs. Mary Davenport

Student Editors

Serenity Jaruboon

Alyssa Fox

Israel Zubieta

Deisy Regalado

Cover Art

“Forgive Thy Fruit” by Tya Brown

Back Cover Art

Serenity Jaruboon



2017 Cover Art by Saiydece Elias

Winding
by Jacob Herod

WINDING
through this world, we may encounter
many a scintillating joy, their capacity for inspiring elation endless.
We may discover that this world hides innumerable outrages,
their atrocious occurrences angering us to the very core
of our trembling souls.

WINDING
through ourselves,
we will peruse our minds
endlessly, in constant search for that one invisible, unreplicable trait –
dignity.
We will encounter humiliation in our search for inner glory,
although we mustn't worry –
humiliation is as fleeting as glory.
We will discover that peace, while ideal, can never drive
men with the same vigor or reliability as fetal promises of glory.
Peace is the answer, but power is the way.

WINDING
through the lives of others,
we will discover that our fellow men fight battles much like our own.
We will discover that, while we are all unique,
being entirely special usually breeds naught but incompatibility.
We will discover, through triumph and sorrow alike,
the undeniable influence that human expression has on our perception,
our memory.

WINDING
through love, we may
discover our true purpose.
What gives us purpose?
Is it not true that how we chose to love,
And how we chose to hate,
determines our immortality?
Who did we let in,
And who did we keep out?
Through love, we discover what it means to hate.
Through love, we tear apart.
Through love, we become whole.
The human condition is cured only by love,
the purest extradimensional force we can perceive.
In the end, is it not true that how we loved
and how we did not defines our legacy?

Through WINDING,
we shall lead a perilous existence.
What is a life without peril?
Where is the fun in a straight path?
If you abide unerringly by the straight and narrow,
is it possible to state that you have truly lived?
How will you create purpose in a world in which none is prescribed at birth?
Your legacy is written when you finish WINDING.

Untitled
Cecilia Hwang

Millions of new civilians step
on the shore of freedom everyday
With their shoes clutched in their arms
Unworn and shiny with hope.

Potatoes, War, Gold and Dollars
have drawn us into one kind.
And now here we are; standing
in front of a starry flag with hands on our
bosom,
Pledging for one unity.

Yet, some of us live in fear and
Face differences everyday and fall
Apart under pressure. However, we
Are still the "United States"
Under God and for the individual.

But now with our shoes worn out
From a cold-hard ground of factories
And muddied with trash,
We cannot either advance or fall back any
longer.



How To Make Your Eyes Turn Blue
By Evan Roman

Welcome, my friend, please come inside,
I'll show you the faces of children that cry.
Look at our world, see what you'll find,
Meet the cruel people, who kill their own kind,
Sickness and hunger is far left behind,
Love is a fantasy, the heart is a lie.
Success is found by hatred and fear,
Why don't we see that destruction is near.
We can't find the way, for we are too blind,
The paved road is rocky, faded by one's mind,
To the point of our end, we can only begin,
Learn from today, and start once again.
Happiness is difficult, but still can be true,
To wipe the tears from eyes that turned blue.



Artwork by Michelle Pineda

The Indecisiveness That Breaks Me Apart
Johana Rodriguez

One day you are warm
The next day you are cold
And I am left with no where to turn
I wake up thinking you will be the bright light of my day
To waking up and seeing that you are not there
to shine my way
I'm hoping the next day you come by and speak to me
But at the same time,
I am afraid that you will not even care to seek me
I sometimes wonder why I am so afraid to loose the one I love
But then I remember that I haven't fallen in love
Because falling in love could mean that I could fall out of love
But, I love
You are so indecisive
But little did you know
that your indecisiveness is breaking me apart
I miss you and I want to tell you

I reach out to you
But I am not so sure you want me to
And I am afraid that I will make a wrong move
and this time you will really leave
like an airplane flying to its destination and flying back
but never knowing if it will land
I have unspoken words once again
Words that consume every part of my mind, body, and soul
But it just so seems that when I have time to let it all out
I am speechless
Leaving just you and I
starring at the depths of our souls through our glaring eyes
But you have to decide whether you do care or not
I care about us
but if you don't
well I can't decide for you
But just remember
That your wise decision will bring me back alive

No help needed
Samantha Sampson

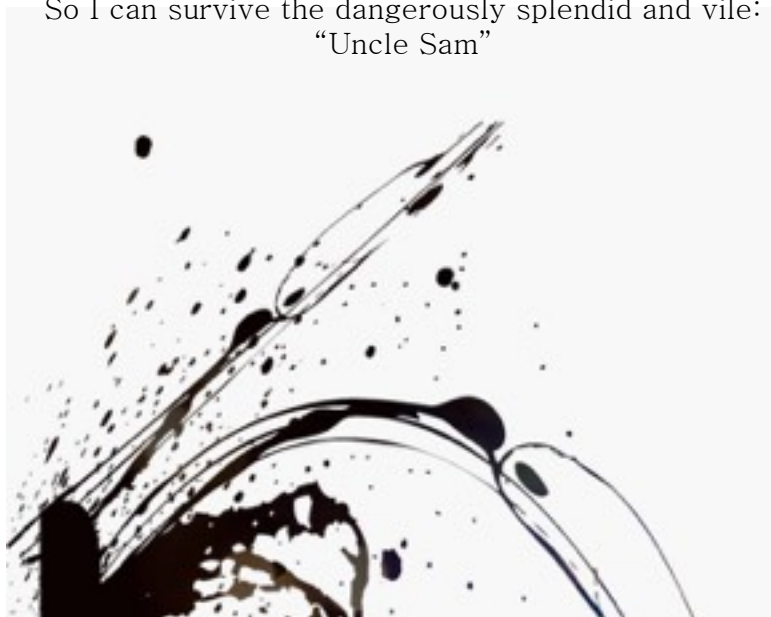
Do not say words you cannot take back
Because once they are free and out in the air they will coil around us and drain us of any humanity we had remaining
Perhaps my story was only meant to be a tragedy of a girl who pushed everyone who
cared away and went to her demons to cry
Or maybe I am too scared to use a damn word because I fear that the sharp edges will only harm me and that it's power
will only bombard my mind with tormenting thoughts
Could it be that I am just too prideful to come forward with these thoughts
I'd rather sit and suffer than disappoint my mother
I've isolated myself and can't fathom anyone understanding these underlying thoughts that harass me while I try to sleep
I am messy and I don't know what I want
My heart and mind are universes apart and I don't know when or even if they will ever cross paths
But I was raised better than this
Always taught to keep my head high and never let anyone see you defeated
I am in desperate need of help but that's a sign of weakness
I have tried calling and reaching out only to be silenced by my own hand
I am so sick of feeling sad I wish to rid my body of these aches and my mind of this pain
I wish that I could wish it all away

Uncle Sam
Ani Uk

It was the "Second Heaven" they said
"Breathtaking"
Its beauty was irresistible, I've heard
"Captivating"
The land of "milk and honey" it was known
So is it?

Then why?
Its cities are swathe with wraths
"Resentful"
Its species are infused with vanity
"Nauseating"
So what?

So I strive for the gleam at the end of the tunnel.
So I bite my tongue and swallow the insults.
So I take a deep breath and bear the cracks on my
hands.
So I release the impersonal syllables from my
tongue.
Why? You ask.
So I can survive the dangerously splendid and vile:
"Uncle Sam"



Forget and Forgive
Alyssa Fox

You said you'd never leave
Then you left me to wonder where things all went wrong,
where I went wrong.
You told me I'd always come first,
And then you befriended the bottle,
and slowly it took my place.
Years later now you wonder why I don't want you in my life.
The day the closet could no longer contain the skeletons,
and they all came crashing down
Is one I'll never forget.
The only sounds were my sobs.
I felt betrayed.
I felt lied to.
You want me to forgive and forget.
The naive little girl from the cul-de-sac wants to.
But I am not her and I'd rather forget forgiving.
My spilled tears have turn to spilled ink and,
I will never forgive you for forgetting me

The Birds
By Macy Kunke

People are scared
It's only the truth
Some are still scared
Of things from their youth

Some people fear fire
That burns in the night
Some people fear sharks
And their terrible bite

Others fear darkness
That echo in dreams
Others fear heights
Of great extremes

Some girls fear snakes
That slither and hiss
Some boys fear girls
And their horrible kiss

Children fear monsters
From under their bed
Adults fear monsters
That hide in their head

But I don't fear monsters
Or snakes or great heights
What I fear are demons
That fly in the night

See how they soar
With their great feathered wings
Their big beady eyes
And the fear that it brings

Their beaks and their talons
The song that they cry
They fly in the clouds
While my end is nigh

They come of all size
But come from the nether
For I fear the most
Are birds of a feather

So you take your fire
Your sharks and your bees
While I will be hiding
From the birds in the trees

People say "Stop!"
"Just let them be!"
But I don't like birds
And they don't like me.

Undone
Elizabeth Shoven

Experiences in the back of my mind
Overwhelming time spent reflecting
on questions
and different circumstances

Why?
What if?
No, that wasn't just right.
I might change
if I had a second chance.

Why did I let that happen?
What if I said no, or maybe yes?
What if I had stayed, what if I left?
It's in the past,
but what if it wasn't.

I've been met with a series of events
that I do not fully comprehend,
but somehow regret.
Constantly on my mind
like a boulder on the head of a pin needle.

Infesting my mind
like the Egyptian Plagues,
but as Pharaoh wouldn't give in
the thoughts won't leave.
They return again, and again.

Replaying, rethinking
Wishing it could all be different
Anxiety rules over me
in the evil way that Hitler ruled
over the "undesirables"

but I just sit,
twiddling my thumbs
wondering how things could be undone.

Untitled
Phoebe "Tuck" Richardson

Often enough on a limb, there's leaves...
And these leaves swirl and twirl on their branches, so
strong in their hold, so glad to be IN the sunlight and
breathe...
But the Wind. The wind is what separates leaf from tree
and leaf from sun, to where that glowing green starter is
thrown off into the gutter.
The leaf wilts simply

Until the wind decides to rear its head again.

In your mind's eye, swirling, twirling,

Now it's a tornado— a cyclone, a sucking cone of doom
that curls and whirls in your dome

I feel— and when I don't feel I fret, and when I do feel,
I'm making up for that emotional debt
The debt— of lost time thanks to those wind-chimes
whispering of fails, of pale nails, taking down, down,
DOWN your mind,
It's TIME

to see your local weatherman. Predict your swings, these
things, that worry one to where it rip-starts that leaf-
blower and makes the wind—
the wind

howl
so
loud

That the screen door over your heart is tap
Tap
Tapping
Against the door frame
Blocking the harshness of the outside just enough.

This PAIN—
you have no reason for it, and you are guilty of sin,

This sin, within, for taking resources from sources used
to help those worse than you, those who are thrown out
and grown up in the street through crack in the sidewalk
like dandelions—

These weeds dig deep roots in the cracks of your brain,
the seeds of doubt and fear make you hear
What just MIGHT be in your near

Future.

You're alone in your head, and when you lie alone in bed,
it's torture,
To feel what you do and have no reason

And when it finally breaks free like the cracks in the
dams from your most recent flood in from the sea—

The sea of your unnecessary torment and your so-called
'hardy'—

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry—!!

If they know,
They might hate you.
If they know,
They will break you.
If you say,
They won't believe you.
To see through this as if you were transparent,
Like the parents of these messes, these thoughts—

No more words.
No more thoughts,
Just your three daily pills and
Locks...

On the cabinet door,
As your mother heard you clawing and pawing for more
of your panic-pills to ease such dreaded chills—

Your guilt began to swell out of that ever-drying well of
your symphony of sympathy,
Feeding off of prior apathy...

I'm so sorry...



Artwork by Phoebe "Tuck" Richardson

This is Me
Uk Mang

I never knew who I was until I met you
Spent 9 months in a damp pit
Day after day I asked myself who I was
Kicked the walls hoping someone will answer
Didn't have the audacity to face reality
My conscious was tied down by my doubts
Surrounded by darkness
I was intimidated because until that day
There was no justification of who I was
Time passed by and I built up the audacity and forced
my way into reality
When I opened my eyes, there was brightness
After brightness, came you
Through an old man's mouth who held me in his arms
"Uk Lian Mang"
To always conquer with a big heart
What an admirable name
You were right beside me and reality was next to you
It was cold and judgmental
If not careful, anyone could go mental

Staring at us, hoping to break us
I smiled because at that time
There was a justification of who I was
There was color in my world
There was you beside me
You are the pride of that old man
You are the pride of the two lovers
You are Me, Myself, and I
Just like our star, you are one among many
Just like the snowflake, you are one among many
I knew living up to you would be a challenge
"Uk Lian Mang"? What a weird name
"Does Uk stand for United Kingdom?"
"Hey Mango!!"
"Ook Ook Ook!!"
I get these a lot
I despise you when I hear these comments
Why do I have to be named that?



Some Eraser Shavings
Chloe Sanders

Sitting in this prison, excuse me, cafeteria,
I inhale the stale air so that I may exhale a sigh.
A, B, C, D, E
Michael Jackson plays on a loop inside my fatigued mind;
I hunch over and continue writing this poem to waste time.
A, B, C, D, E
It's my holy mantra, the letters that determine my fate.
The competition is fierce, yet I am not.
My eyelids droop and my vision fades.
It's blurred and obscured but there's still lead for my pencil,
And neurons in my nerves,
so my hand keeps moving
Is it A? Or C?
It's E for excruciating.
Yes, that's the answer.



Best of the Five Senses
By Bryan Nguyen

When I say drugs,
I don't want to be misunderstood.
The most powerful drug,
goes by the name of food.

From crunchy to chewy,
to salty and sweet,
Everyone has a dish that they can savor.
I even have a ribeye as my screensaver.
The heavenly juices make your mouth flow like
Lake Victoria.
The aftermath leaves your body in euphoria.

From survival to pleasure,
there is no strife.
The consumption of food is the key to life.

I don't describe eating as putting food in my mouth,
but a beautiful melody of colors that no feeling
can surmount.

With my exaggerated words that leave
my love for food on display,
I confidently declare that the best sense,
is the sense of taste.

Boi got no Chill
Israel Zubieta

I am not calm,
it was one of the many things, lost in childhood.
In my house there were always, so, many stories.
Those that I'd learn in school, and many, many, more.
But what made them unique was their epilogue,
What everyone else didn't tell you.
The unspoken tragedies,
unuttered downfalls,
the true unvoiced evils in their tales

Age Six,
I'm old enough to know the family business.
Your eyes, they said
Your eyes, they're...
Impeccable.
Perhaps there is still hope, Here,
Let me show you a few things.
I am Happy

Age Eight,
Remember what they said, Think ahead.
Imagine what your opponent would do,
And counter it. Or more perfectly, deceive them into a
trap.
I am Content

Age Ten,
Become a pillar
The foundation for community.
Show no weakness
stand tall
and people, people will follow.
I am Useful

Age Twelve,
Use what you've learned
Don't let them know, Don't let them know what you
know
What you are.
Don't give them the slightest
inkling to your purpose.
I am Panicked

Age Fourteen,
The pot has boiled over
Searing to the touch.
Foundation crumbling
World no longer afloat.
I am Disheartened

Age Sixteen,
In a desert of my mind, there is nothing
to either side the sun has died,
the storm subsided, and life lay drowned in sand.
I am Lost

Age Seventeen,
The wreckage has settled,
and with it new bounty emerged.
The foundation now set
and life will go on.
But I am not Calm

Age Eighteen.
I have found a home,
wounds, now cauterized,
have begun to heal, and I remain
Hopeful.



Artwork by Langston Mardis

Untitled
Alexandrea Taylor

It's dark and cold on this beach,
unlike the one we had once gone to together.
Instead of a bright blue sky,
it has turned dark gray and dull.
as I walk down the shoreline,
the cold wet sand slips between my toes.
the waves tease me as I stand at the shoreline.
coming so close to my feet,
only to quickly draw back into the ocean before they can brush me.
just like how you teased me,
coming so close to my heart,
only to quickly leave.
the salty taste on my lips reminds me of the salty taste of my own blood
after we argued and you took it a little too far.
but I was stupid and didn't care,
I couldn't accept that the person I fell in love with would ever harm me.
as my eyes water up I tell myself it's the salty air or
that sand blew into it,
but it's really from all those flashbacks of all those night I stayed
awake,
terrified.

Hold On

Teresa Navarro

Hold on to what makes you happy
Hold on to what fills your soul
Even if nobody else likes it
Hold on to what you think is right
Even if you're the last one standing
Hold on to your dreams

Even if nightmares get in your way
Hold on to your loved ones

Even if they can't be with you
Hold on to yourself
Even when you think is not worth the pain

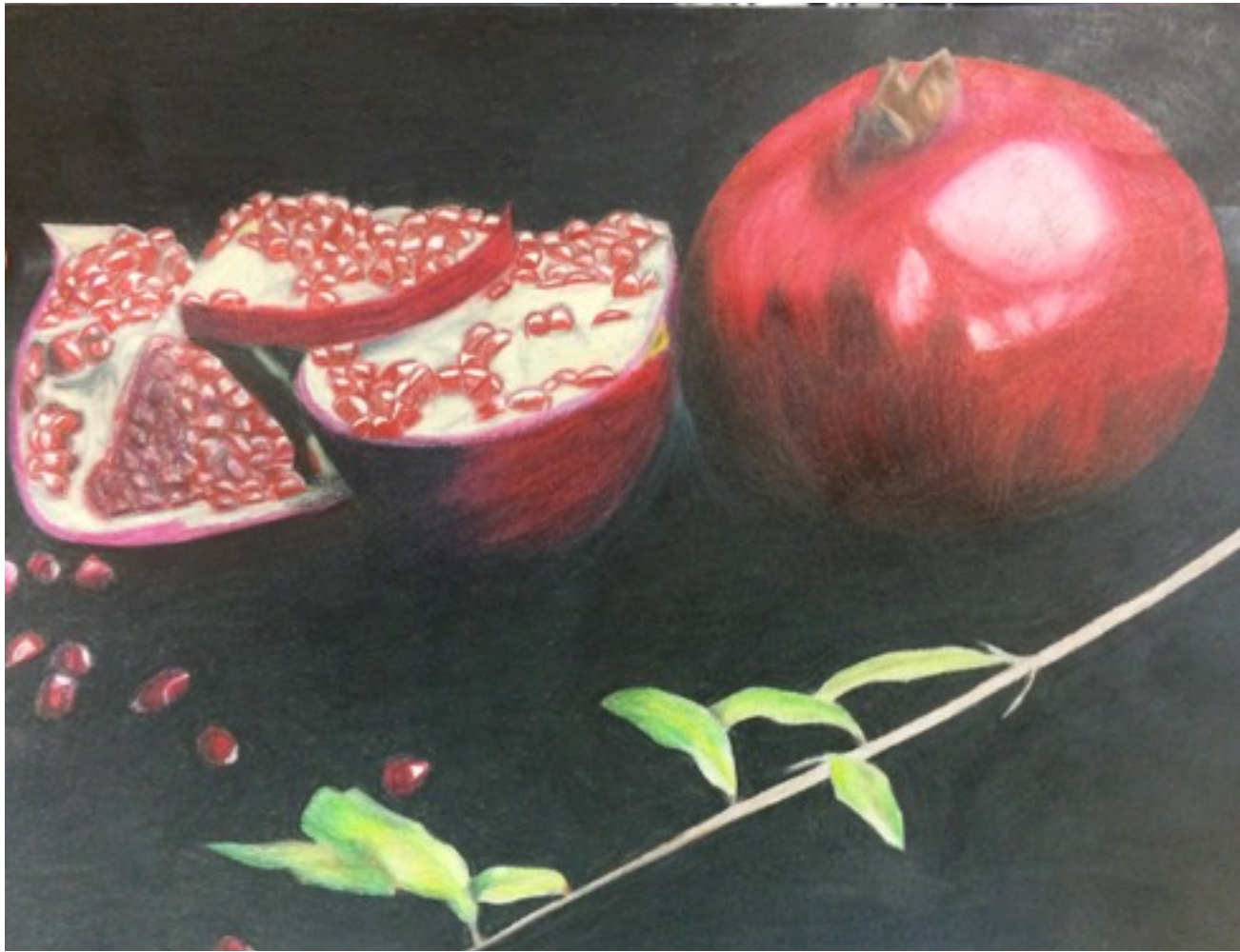
I Am Poem
Viviana Lucio

I am a person of color and desperately hopeless
I wonder if I will ever live to see peace
I see hatred all around me
I want to see racism disappear
I am a person of color and desperately hopeless

I pretend that the things said do not hurt me
I feel as if I have a gun held towards my head for simply being me
I touch my mother's hand in fear that I will never be able to hold it again
I worry that one day they'll take away my loved ones from me
I cry at the fact that people brush it off like racism is not a problem
I am a person of color and desperately hopeless

When I
Viviana Lucio

When I see loathing towards one another disappear,
When I feel the boiling blood in my body relax,
When I hear speeches about equality for all,
When I feel safe in my own hometown,
When I see guns in control,
When I see less protests in the nation,
When I hear less stories about innocent murdered victims who died in their own home,
When I feel like I can finally express myself without fear of dying,
When I see people respect people of color,
I will stand up.



Artwork by Katrina Larson

My Words
Langston Mardis

A new day
just like all the rest
I sit alone with a metal that speaks in song lyrics
I reside in a cage made by my own ears
Bars of Kendrick, Cole, and Lupe forged like steel in the fires of adolescent isolation
Tempered in long sleepless nights
I observe but obtain from conversation.

I went looking for love
In all the wrong places
Came back with a broken heart and ink filled pages
She tore up my words
And left me broken and baseless.

Now my spoken words are rare
Cause I have so little to spare
And my heart can no longer tale these quakes of despair.

So my words will continue to be put under lock and key because my words are the biggest part of...

Me.

Better
Michael Mendonca

Some things I learned the hard way
One, shots and needles hurt a lot less than a bat
Two, just because I believe in Santa clause a lot, doesn't make him real.
Three, the more I want something to happen the more I feel like it won't
Four, it's always better to be telling the joke than being the butt of one.

Coming to terms with the fact that I *could possibly might be*, a bully is kinda *wild*.

A Lot goes through your head after you realize you could have just ruined someone's day, mood, and/or *entire high school career*.

At first you think, dang, that was kind really rude of me
And then you think, dang, I should probably apologize.
But then you think, I mean, anyone would have said the same thing, right?

You move the blame to the victim
You say things like "Well it's just a joke"
I learned the hard way that just because i say it's a joke doesn't mean they laugh.

School taught me, us, that it's just one big ol game of who can fit it the best.

And being under 5'4 and having literally the hairiest legs you've probably ever seen like I don't even know how someone's legs could be so hairy
You kinda start to feel like you're losing the game.

So you learn the hard way

You learned the hard way that the sting of a punch can't compare to the sting of a punchline
You learned the hard way that people don't make fun of people who are funny
You learned the hard way that it's better to hurt their feelings and not your own

Good humor is kinda like a wrestling match where everyone can tell it's fake but it's still pretty entertaining.
You say something wild and witty
They run around doing cartwheels
You do a backflip and end up in the splits
It should be fun for everyone
Never about anything serious

Bad humor is like a boxing match.
You don't care if blood is shed.
You're gonna get bruises
You might lose teeth, break a bone but you don't care
You're just tryna win.

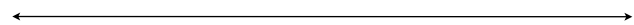
So you learned the hard way
You learn the hard way that words lose their meaning if they are repeated.
So you repeat those words.
But not to yourself, to others
Those things that kicked you down
lace up your shoe

You start to notice kids with the same flaws
Same faces
Same stories that you were once picked on about

You get addicted to this superiority that the high clouds your memory of when you were on the other side.
When you were someone's joke.
When you were clinging on to the days.
9 out of ten "Bullies" are bullied themselves.
Instead of looking inward they look outward.
They look at people with the same flaws
Same faces
Same story

I realized that the moral mirror I kept checking myself in was just a self portrait of everything I thought I was. painting over flaws that I neglected to fix
Taking down the picture left holes in the wall of my self confident that I had to fill with the flaws of others
How they walk How they talk How they carry themselves How much they try How good their grades are How bad their grades are.
Anything that gives you an edge
Makes you feel better about yourself

I've learned the hard way that it doesn't make me feel better about myself.



America is a Gun
Zachary Haythorn

England is a cup of tea.
France a wheel of ripened Brie.
Greece, a short, squat olive tree.
America is a Gun.

Brazil is football on sand.
Argentina, Maradon's hand.
Germany an oompah band
America is a Gun.

Holland is a wooden shoe.
Hungary, a goulash stew.
Australia, a Kangaroo.
America is a Gun.

Japan is a thermal spring.
Scotland is a highland fling.
Oh, better to be anything than
America is a Gun.

Bilingual Poetry
Wilfredo Fuentes Guatemala

Has destruido mi nación,
Cada día que vivo a tu poder es una maldición.
No has hecho nada por mejorar mi condición.
Lo mismo de todos los días,
Veo en nuestros ojos y ala almas están muy frías.

Te Di la mano para que mi vida mejoraras,
No para que cosas absurdas te inventeras.
Le robas a mi gente,
Se mueren de hambre y aún así los llamas delincuentes.

Mis decepciones no son sin razones,
Desde pequeño tuve que tomar muchas decisiones.
Mi cabeza llena de pensamientos explota,
Dice saber de mi vida pero muchacho toma notas.
Aunque actúe como si no me importa nada,
Todo los injusto me enfada.
Pasan a París por el 23,
Y sin pensar que en México los estudiantes fueran 43.

Donde estará quedando tu humildad y el respeto,
A cargo de tu poder me pregunto cuando el mundo
estará completó.
Aveces los ojos son transparentes,
Sabemos lo que ocurre pero no es evidente,
Causan temor para cayar ala gente.
Sacamos la sonrisa aunque no tengamos los dientes.
Que mi gente sea pobre para mi no es suficiente.

Fuimos creados para vivir,
claro que ay dolor pero déjanos decidir como morir.
Cuantos de ustedes se an hecho millonarios robandole
ala gente lo poco que tiene,
Mande a los federales a que me maten porque a mi en
esta letra nadie me detiene.
Sin tanto te intereso sube mi salario,
Y no dejes que me convierta en un sicario.

Reabilitacion a nuestra alma es es mi meta,
Que los niños no tenga miedo salir de su casa.
Que la caya no sea una amenaza.

You have destroyed my nation,
each day I live by your power is a curse.
You haven't done anything to improve my life,
the same things everyday.
I see in our eyes and within our eyes dark souls lie.

I shook your hand so you could get me a better life,
not for you to go and make up absurd excuses.
You rob my people,
they are dying of hunger and you still go on and call them
thieves and criminals.

My disappointments aren't without a reason,
since I was a little a kid I had to make many decisions.
My head full of thoughts is ready to explode,
You think you know about my life but take some notes.
Even though I act like I don't care about anything,
every injustice makes me angry.
They transmitted Paris on channel 23,
With out even knowing that in Mexico the students were 43.

I wonder where is your humility and respect,
In your power I wonder when would our world be completed.
Eyes are transparent,
we know what's happening but is not evident.
They make our people fear so they won't speak up.
We smile even if we don't have any teeth.
For my people to be poor is not enough.

We were created to live,
Of course there is pain but let us decide how we die.
How many of y'all have gotten rich stealing the little people have,
send all the federals to kill me because this letter no one would
stop me from writing.
If you are interested in my living raise my salary,
and don't let me turn into a hit-man.



“Venice” by Arti Mamidi

The Creative Virus
Charisma Gollaher

We strive to be precise
Everything in its place.
We fight against normality
Defining average: a waste.

The task, a rigorous cycle
Our performance must be absolute.
For when the bow completes
The performer becomes mute.

Your feet no longer dance
Your throat sings no more
You're given no second chance
You are ushered out the door.

The score imputed
The judge has the final say
Should you not do as projected
All opinions sway.

For the judge knows perfection
He embodies the truth
Nothing beside him matters
His opinion absolute

The grade has been placed
You know not what you've done
For the grade under your name
Leaves you as the last one.

Confusion takes hold
Your intellect strained
You had done as instructed
You played the part in the game

Her answer leaves you panicked
Scrambling to find your place
For your imperfection muddies
Your work a perfect a waste

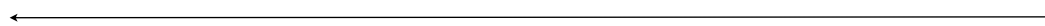
Perfection is a virus
Eating away at your mind
Yet even in the beauty of an Iris
Imperfections you will find

We strive for perfection
Pushing limits out of our way
Striding farther then before
Not to have the final say

The intellects' mind becomes damaged
Good work, thrown out
For it met not the perfect standard
Needed when traveling down perfection's route

Reality breaks the chains
The shades that covers one's eyes
For when trying to stay excellent
We begin to lose our minds

From normality chance is born
From failure we find success
Adventure burst from the unknown
Imperfections make us blessed



To the Flag
Jordan Jackman

I pledge allegiance
To the flag
Of the United States
Of a corrupt nation,
Wrapped in hatred and discrimination
A society of supposed "cultural unity"
Is a nation where color of skin determines opportunity
America wants us to back the blue
But how can I when police are beating my people black and blue
Home of the brave
Home of the free
Home of a constant and never ending struggle
For people like me
When will a day of peace and equality dawn?
When will being hateful towards one another be universally wrong?
Social divides being exacerbated, instead of obliterated
It's time for serenity to be engineered
It's time for the U in USA to be remembered
We live in a country where racial harmony has never truly resided
But it's safe to say that we're stronger together than we are divided.



Hold on to me
Diego Pineda

Hold on to me,
Hold on to me,
Even if I'm gone.
Hold on to the thought of me,
Even if I'll never come.
Hold on to our memories,
Even if I'll never be a part of them again,
Hold on to our past,
Even if we'll never meet in our future.
Hold on to our place,
Even if I don't return.
Hold on to me,
Even when I cease to be.

Untitled
Ludvina Salas

I've always been the observing kind
So when I was a kid,
I'd pull out this green Winnie the Pooh chair and sit down in the middle of my family's discussions.
Obviously I had no clue what they were talking about most of the time.
No one told me to go play or "this is an adult conversation Ludita"
Because I'd just sit there and observe, trying to understand what was going on.

I've always been the observing kind,
I notice when people stare off even when the people around them are laughing

I notice when people stop wearing their favorite jewelry

I notice when people want to talk about something they love but are scared of being annoying

I notice when someone looks at me and would rather pick on the boy sitting behind me

I also notice when the boy holds back tears because he's been taught to match emotions with girls

I notice when the color of my skin labels me as someone who must be ignorant

I notice when someone wants to push me away because they heard that the people who stand in my background are criminals, that people who have two X's like me are weaker, or that people my age have no idea what they're talking about.

We're told a lot of cliches when we're kids.
One, to not judge a book by its cover.

But tattered clothes and searching through garbage for things with closed lids means that they deserve to be on the streets, it's their fault their life is over.

But they wear a tie and carry a briefcase means that they are intelligent and have their life in control

But keeping their mouths closed means they have no ideas let alone a story to be told.

Two, treat others the way you wish to be treated
But people treat opposition with violence
But people scold instead of listening
But people would rather judge instead of get to know



Photography by Johana Rodriguez

My Friend
Kenneth Manning

You'll never meet my friend Hunter.
With hope enough to ever hold
Behind that shining smile of gold
And all that illustrious laughter;
With red locks he'd no need to sweep aside
And eyes the color of the twilight
A mini beard he embarrassedly tried to hide
And I swear - no lies - he'd to himself an aura of light

In ninth grade; we met with a game of poker
I swear that boy would never fold
As for the line between strength and weakness, I've yet to know
But in the end he did 'bout as well as the others
It got him good grades
And in the top choir
But too often he'd be up too late
And miss out on some of life's smaller desires

Nonetheless he'd always be there
When I needed him the most
He'd say "don't just fly that white flag and cost,
It may always believe in you, that's fair,
But you'll never turn around
Or ever leave that frown
If all, in life, you've ever found is stagnation's puny crown"

He really was the best.
But his life behind the scenes turned out to be rife with stress

He showed up with bruises some days
And was stuck in a terrible job
A girl would later steal his heart, leave him in a daze
And rob it of its throb
Yet, he remained the dispenser of light so brave
Despite the ephemeral child inside looking up at the grave
And therein did his hope begin to fade
North, south, east, west
Life's beatings never came to rest
And Like a great lake
Shrinking year by year, and noticed too late
His speeches of inspiration
Succumbed to evaporation

And as Atlas began to take on his weights
I watched him enter that stone face place
That ruin of decrepit brick and mortar
It started out he was offered a pebble
Then a brick
Then a boulder
And thank God i knew him before he left
Now he sported that zombie hair and zombie glare
But behind those zombie eyes
He believed he was keeping up the fight
But to mine...
Icarus couldn't see he flew straight to hell
Not exactly the sun he was after
And i watched fall down to the ocean all of his illustrious laughter

Not two months later
had to lift him to the shower
Kept leaning over to check for pulse
In the morning said he was alright

And later still when they busted in that day
And swept his great collection away
He was so evicted from that stone face place
Having now to start life's great race

Only now he was broken

And nothing was better

Got an apartment away from home
Away from us
Got a puppy that would never cease to fuss
But his inspiration's last breaths still ran low
Inexplicably he continued to try to blow
Cementing down exactly which path he'd go

A car drove past

And now he is somebody you will never know

And I walk this road alone.



Artwork by Esther Htang

Deeper Than Writer's Block
Ashley Perez

Should my body gather the strength to write
I would spill the ink of my virtues.
Should God allow me to pour my heart
expose my soul
wild, naked, and free
I would sing to the world,
but alas, I cannot.

And truth be told
no reason comes to mind.
Melodies of my personal gospel
resonating violently, unforgivingly
throughout a grieving nation,
the sickening sorrow of anguish
sings its fateful song.

Untitled
Hannah Manzanares

The sun has gone down,
It's been awhile now since I last saw its light.
I look at the clock,
See a nine glowing in the dark,
Time to try to sleep.
Tic-tok, Tic-tok, Blink.

Laying down I try to put my mind to rest,
Staring at my ceiling fan,
Swish, Swish, Swish
What time is it now?
Did I even go to sleep?
I look at the clock,
See an eleven glowing in the dark.
Tic-tok, Tic-tok, Blink.

Everything inside the house has gone quiet,
No noise outside but the wind through the branches.
Why can't I stop thinking?
Let go of today and leave tomorrow for then.
I look at the clock,
See a one glowing in the dark.
Tic-tok, Tic-tok, Blink.

I finally feel my body relax into my bed,
The nonsense noise and voices quiet in my head.
Laying back down,
Who knows how long,
Maybe this time it'll last.
I look at the clock,
See a three glowing in the dark.
Tic-tok, Tic-tok, Sleep.

←—————→
Untitled
Keely Patelski

Sunset showers of stars
softly coat the velvet moon, idyl.
the crescent releases its kiss from the horizon
and its embrace of molten grasses
letting darkness engulf my rainbow skies
and summer nights.

It Sucks
Khloe Hall

I suck
you suck too
now the person I was once closest to is the one person I don't wanna be around
how does that work?
you'll soon forget everything about me
but as hard as I'll try I will never forget about you
even the small irrelevant stuff
for Christ'S sake, I wrote a poem about you
I feel like I have a vault in my brain with your name on it
I try to lock it up and forget that it exists but every time I look to see if it's fading away it's
cracked wide open, filling up more space in my head
you are the definition of a waste of space
you are not happy but you're satisfied and have found more love
I am not happy, I'm unsatisfiable and I am afraid to love, anyone else at least
why do I still wonder and reminisce
maybe I miss my once best friend
but I have to remind myself that you're not somebody I know, that was the past, now
you're a stranger

I would text you, I really would
but I've realized I'm afraid
I'm afraid of the past repeating because it has before
and everytime it hurts more
I'm afraid of my efforts being rejected and cast aside
afraid of being put below someone else, so used to being number one in your eyes
and all my apologizes becoming just pointless, meaningless words to you
at one time you cared but you just don't anymore
and it shows

facing harsh realities a little too late
questioning my own worth
overthinking is going to be the death of me
I am my own biggest obstacle
that sucks

it's not my fault though
not all of it
because in a relationship nothing is a single person's fault
me?

I'm passive aggressive
easily frustrated
stubborn

I get mad and I hold grudges, especially when I feel I was wronged
I feel like you did me wrong by short handing me but giving her the world

I haven't fully forgiven or tried to forget reasons lost
maybe it's somewhere hidden in the back of my mind or in the dark depths of my heart
so to avoid searching for the root or my reason, this grudge on you sits on my chest and
weighs me down

keeps me from growing and moving on
I feel obsessed
I know I need to let this go
but I'm stuck

plus why would I text you already knowing how the conversation would go
I'd text first
you respond
eventually something you say or do makes me mad
then you get mad bc I'm being petty now it's an endless cycle
it's toxic
and I know this because I know us
and I know you
well
I knew you...
you suck
I suck too

