

ACCENTS

The Student Literary Magazine of

S SAN JACINTOSM
E COLLEGE



ACCENTS

2020

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Accents, the literary magazine of San Jacinto College, exists to recognize artistic talent and creative expression from students at the college. It represents the collaborative efforts of faculty across the college and reflects the diverse voices of our students.

For information about the magazine, including a digital version and information about how to submit work for future issues, visit sanjac.edu/Accents/.

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Cover Art

Front Cover: “Ki’imak óol” by Karla Garcia Burgos

Karla studies Fine Arts at Central Campus.

Back Cover: “Caged In” by MaKaylynn Hughes

MaKaylynn studies Life Science at North Campus.

Six-Word Memoir Contest Winners

Taylor Arbuckle: A fire burns. Something secret simmers.

Austin Heckman: Things you want to say, don't.

Angelique Marroquin: I was supposed to do what?

Kirsten Simon: Broken pieces picked back up again.

Wendy DeLeon: I became what I have loved.

Alex Garcia: Lived in dark. Saved by light.

Emely Melendez: Well, you gambled and you lost.

Bryan Salinas: The environment screams without a voice.

Allison Manriquez: Fake smiles engraved in the mask.

In celebration of the National Day on Writing 2019, student writers from all campuses entered their six-word memoirs. Each writer was prompted to express their life experience in exactly six words. CONGRATULATIONS to our winners!

Joselinne Piedras-Sarabia: I write in a torn notebook.

Hao Nguyen: No thank you, I'm lactose intolerant.

Alexandra Lindgren: Her? She was busy creating dragons.

Aryanna Gallegos: My ears don't work, oh well.

Krizzolance Papa: New beginnings: discovered an imperfect bliss.

Daniela Horne: Too broke to fly? Read books!

Ivan Rivera: All my wrongs, made me better.

Sarah Hernandez: Raising goats allows me udder freedom.

Raadiyah Ali: I'm Desi. I'm late to everything.

The Traveling Suitcase:

A Story About My Grandfather

Arsh Ali

The wooden boat encircled with echoes of thunderous silence
Reminisces the rowdy sailors once on board
Its calm trail disrupted by the impatient tranquility of a man
A man without fear of sailing across dark waters
His gaiety and preposterous hopes muted for eternity in another land

What was his dream?

Fortune?

Power?

Money?

Clutched by sweaty and calloused palms
And fringed with scratch marks and small dents, tattered
I held his memories -- a token from his motherland, wife, son, daughter
The old futile dreams my owner once carried untangled a series of new ones
His restive pursuit of the fleeting comforts of home
His endless journey to begin a fresh life elsewhere
A glimpse of his hopes across the dock sits there waiting to be discovered

What was his dream?

Freedom?

A new family?

Simplicity?

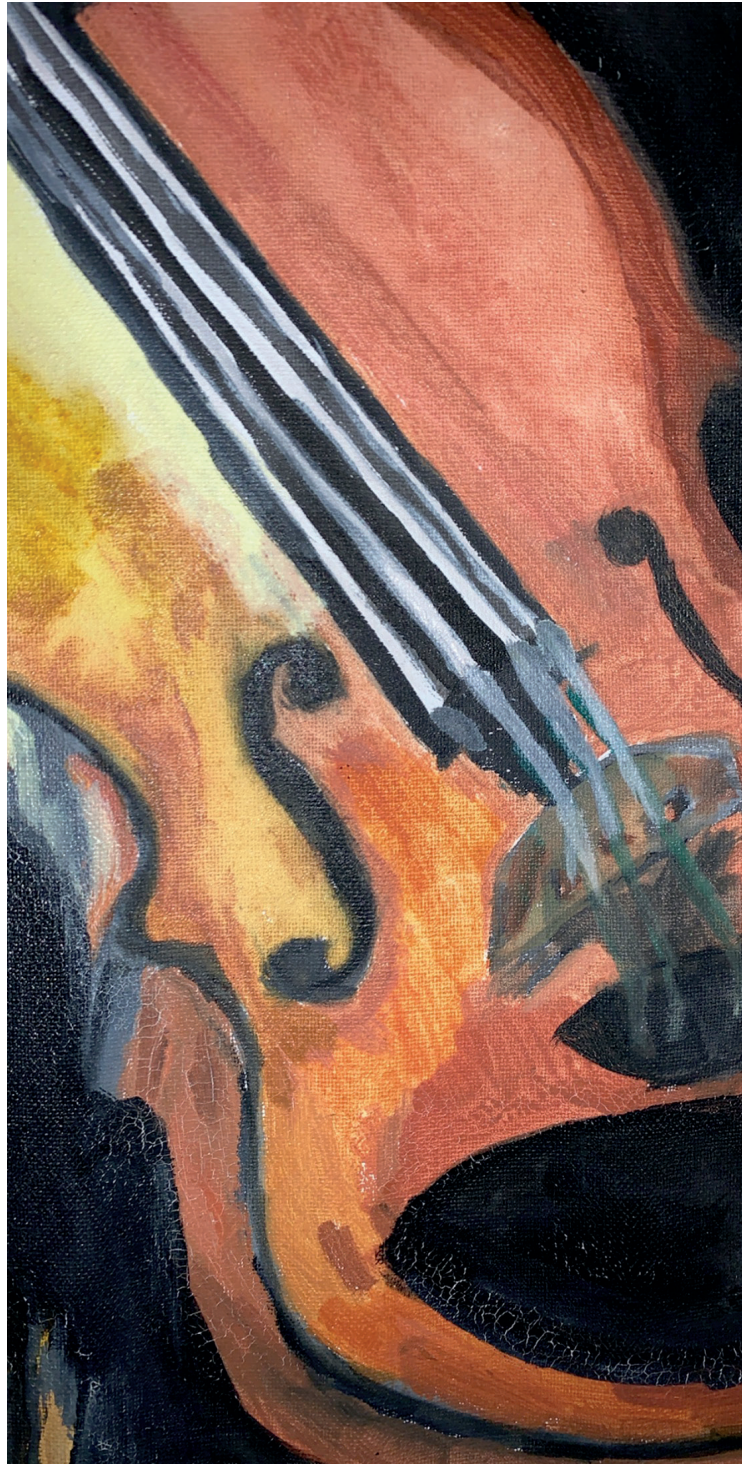
Here we were, the city of dreams
Where he could not have fathomed of what the bounties of life convey
An era of his life erased, abounded with new opportunities

How can we transplant ourselves into different soil?
Nourish in different rain?
Acquaint ourselves to meet strangers?
It is the fear of regression on which he dwelled
We shall, nonetheless, endure the change together

What was his dream?
To become a businessman?
To become a writer?
To have lived a life with minimal effort?

67 years
Deluged in the epiphanies of a growing desire
I felt at home
Nestled underneath his new wealth of junk
The same hands, this time, with a softer touch, pulls me out
His granddaughter removing his past piece by piece
Her inquisitiveness retelling the stories lost deep in her grandfather's mind
Rich in all that he lost
Attaining all he wanted from across the world

What was his dream?
A choice
A value
reverberating throughout the spirits of his loved ones
It was the triumph of robust love for his family



Viola shades

Tetzal Cornejo

Grow As I Go

Megan Romero

I am a one of a kind hodge podge
Inside me are all the faces and places I have seen
I have lived North and South
I like soda and pop
but I drink Bubbly
I have lived with very little and with way too much
I have drunk wine that costs more than some cars and I have drunk 40's that I didn't pay for
I have grown from rags, and flown with riches and landed down somewhere in-between
I have run from God and ran to Him
I have been held captive and I have danced freely
I have fallen and risen
I have forgotten and remembered and then learned to forgive and forget again
I am learning what matters most
What to hold on to and what to let go
When to soften my voice and when to raise it up
I am learning how to stand and how to bow down
To balance and how to focus
I am learning to choose
When to win and when to lose
Most of all I am learning that who I was
is not who I am
and who I am
will not be
who I become
I ebb and I flow
I learn and I grow as I go



La Danza de los Colores

Karla Garcia Burgos

Karla studies Fine Arts at Central Campus.

ACCENTS

by the sea

Paola Lizama

legs sprawled out,
hands clasped together,
we sat by the sea.

a romantic movie scene
without a script to follow,
or actors to pay.
just me and you
by the sea.

it seems like a dream,
you being there
but looking up at the sky,
i realized a dream i had,
had become reality.

nostalgia hit.
voices cracked.
tears spilled for
moments
we longed to relive.
places
we longed to revisit.
feelings
we longed to feel once more.

but in the moment,
under the millions of stars,
i knew it was meant to be.

to the sea,
i returned not too long after.
(this time without you.)
but i saw it.
legs sprawled out,
hands clasped together,
we sat by the sea.

Autumnal Hues

Morrigan Rathey

Fall leaves flutter fairly in a kaleidoscope of warm color.
Yellows, reds, and oranges;
Orange pumpkins and Jack-o-lanterns,
Orange ribbon tied over a black cat's collar.
The soft pad of kitten paws through orange paint,
Staining the grey linoleum of the kitchen.
Laughter blooms through the house in those same warm colors.
Oranges, yellows, and reds.
Autumn days, auburn hair,
Wilting sunflowers, once golden, now brown.
Brown eyes, twinkling as she dances,
Dances across the orange stained kitchen.
Blazing bonfires on cold fall nights,
Red, orange, and yellow.
The colors of hot fire,
The feeling of liquor in my throat.
Love and warmth of family,
Safe, unwavering.
Yellow, red, orange.



Young Geezers

Megan Romero

Lemons

Kelsie Walsingham

If you come to understand anything by reading this, please let it be that I am not writing for pity. This is my life, my story.

They say becoming a mother changes everything. I have found much truth in this expression. Who knew my whole heart could be taken from inside my body and placed on my lap? My best friend; I would have lived and died for him.

I am not too proud to admit my flaws, but Kyler loved me despite them. The day I lost him, I lost myself as well. No one taught me how to cope with losing my heart, though I'm not sure I would have been open to hear it anyhow. There is no manual. In the days following his accident I liked to believe I conquered all five stages of grief at once, and within a week I was accepting of the situation. As it turns out, I was only in denial. Not denial in the sense of him still being alive but refusing to face the reality of what happened.

Alcohol became my new best friend. I suppressed my thoughts by chasing the bottom of the bottle, and somehow, I always found it. Friends and family did not utter a word, they let me deal with it as I saw fit. Every now and then my father's eyes would catch mine and his lips would curl to form my nickname, "Baby girl." Never a man of many words, from his language to mine this translated to, "I'm so sorry. I'm here for you. I wish I could take your pain away," and any other expression he could not find the voice for. And for that I am thankful. Eyes of what typically would have been judgement and disappointment were

only filled with sorrow and sympathy and pure heartbreak. After all, I was nineteen, somehow handling what parents twice my age and beyond could not fathom in their most catastrophic nightmares. My approach to handling it was to not handle it at all. I refused to be without company so my thoughts couldn't get louder. Pills slid down my gullet like they were a Thanksgiving feast. I would not take a breath without permeating my lungs with smoke; I wanted to choke. I craved anything to not make me feel. It was easier that way, for a while.

I reluctantly fell in love with a man who had absolutely no grasp on the reality I was desperately avoiding. He didn't care to talk about it, but neither did I. He had met my son a handful of times in the months before he passed, but not having children of his own he lacked the emotional capacity needed to process what I was going through. Looking back, can recall one specific occasion he disrupted my mid-morning routine, which was a smoke/cry session, to question me. "You're still crying over that? It's been three months." I was grateful that he was able to aid me in the suppression of my negative thoughts, but damn, his insensitivity and lack of compassion was overwhelming. The relationship ended abruptly after he finished a bottle of liquor and got physical. (Karma was instantaneous though. He threw my belongings out into the yard and because it had rained, he slipped while doing so, breaking his foot in the fall.) And coming to analyze it now, I'm sure I would have gladly fallen under a trance by any controlling guy to avoid being alone.

Within twelve hours I was with someone else. This one was only about a six-week spurt, but when I said I couldn't be with my own thoughts I meant it.

Creeping up on the one-year anniversary of Ky's passing I decided to confide in my dad. I told him I thought maybe I needed to go talk to someone. It did not work. The psychiatrist diagnosed me with PTSD (uh, duh) and told me, "I think you're really, really sad." Thanks a lot professor, take my \$300, no there's no need to schedule a follow up. Have a nice day.

I say this sixty-minute session didn't help, but perhaps it did. I took the antidepressants I was prescribed until the bottle was empty, knowing I was not going to refill them. I reasoned with myself. If I freak out, then so be it. How I react will determine the remainder of my life. Am I so weak and broken that I need to take a pill every morning to be okay? Or is this something I could overcome? I chose the latter. I could have very well let this be the end, people surrounding were already planning a funeral so it's not as if it would have been a shock. And believe me, some days I contemplate it. But I will not leave this Earth before my time. My biggest wish is for no one to ever feel the things I do. The emptiness that comes alongside this pain is indescribable. I have a father that loves me with everything he has, and I've broken his heart enough throughout the years. I am here for him.

People will ask me how I handled losing a child. My answer is simple: I just do. Present tense. I do whatever I have to. I woke up one morning and decided I didn't care for twisted insides, so I wasn't going to be sad anymore. Please don't misread that; I am always sad. I am working on it, always. I unfortunately am not equipped with a time machine and no one I know has access to one either. Believe me, I've asked. The past few years have been anything but easy but have taught me a level of understanding I did not believe I was capable of. My bitterness for the world has transformed into gratitude. Before I hesitated to

feel anything and now, I am accepting of any and all emotions on the spectrum.

Life is mind over matter. Sometimes life hands you lemons, and sometimes she hurls them at you. And it is okay to sit there and think, "Wow. That sucks. These are the worst lemons I have ever tasted." Lemonade cannot be made every time. Not everything happens for a reason. Bad things are bad things that coexist with good things. And that's all there is to it. How you handle your lemons is entirely up to you and the little man in your head.



Don Polo

Karla Garcia Burgos

Karla studies Fine Arts at Central Campus.

ACCENTS

Forgive Thyself

Karolyne Galdamez

Pardon those transgressions
Those foolish, selfish theatrics

Acquit your fickle moral compass
As it sways with the tide

Reprieve your guilty conscience
For youthhood is harrowing

Remit thy fecund tongue
Of moral condemnation

You must Forgive Thyself
For Time is a ravenous goon.



Cool Rising

Megan Romero

Megan studies Communications at South Campus.

ACCENTS

Judged

Sarah Faughtenbery

Characters:

Mason

Tripp

Athena

Scarlet

Sage

Wyatt

Mrs. Finnegan

Mr. Hart

ACT 1, SCENE 1

(a single spotlight comes up on Sage)

SAGE: Anorexia—the porcelain doll. My hair and skin so dry, my nails so brittle, I might as well be glass. Did they make the AC blow colder? I'm freezing. No, wait, that's just the anorexia again. Lack of weight, No, I don't want any food. I'm not really hungry.

(spotlight goes out and up on Tripp)

TRIPP: Depression—the loner. I can't sleep, talk to anyone, or interact. I'm just upset with myself. Something's wrong in my brain, and I can't fix it with these stupid pills.

(spotlight goes out and up on Mason)

MASON: Anxiety—the scaredy cat. I just panic. It's not fear. I don't like it either. I can't control it either. It's a pain.

(spotlight goes out and up on Athena)

ATHENA: PTSD—the school shooter soon-to-be, “Hey, where's your rifle?” That's not it at all. It's worse than what you think. I'm forced to relive the darkest moments of my life. A lot of times it's too much. I can't let it go like you think I can. It sucks. I can't just let go the memory of watching my brother shooting himself in the head, knowing I couldn't do anything. Look at me, I'm a mess. Again.

(spotlight goes out and up on Scarlet)

SCARLET: Bipolar—the pill-popper. One minute, I'm happy; the next, I'm upset, where the only way out

is the little pills. Three in total. An anticonvulsant, an antipsychotic, and a serotonin supplement. I've cut, I've wanted to die. Everything, yet I'm still somehow here.

(spotlight goes out and up on Wyatt)

WYATT: What do you want me to say? I'm perfect. They're the ones who need help. Porcelain is just too thin. Loner just needs to cheer up. Scaredy Cat needs to get over whatever the hell it is he's scared about. Shooter just needs to get over it, better him than her. Pill-Popper pops enough—surprised she's not a druggie.

(spotlight goes out and back up on Athena)

ATHENA: (stepping forward into a fresh spotlight) And because of so-called "Mr. Perfect," (she turns her wrists to show her cuts) I'm dead.

(blackout)

ACT I, SCENE II

An empty classroom, the chairs arranged in a usual classroom setting. There is a place for everyone and on each desk is a pencil, and a sheet of paper. ENTER Sage, Tripp, Mason, Scarlet, Wyatt, and Mrs. Finnegan.

MRS. FINNEGAN: Okay class, in lieu of recent events, the school has asked us teachers to provide an activity that they believe will help you cope with the loss of Athena.

WYATT: (groaning) Who would really miss Shooter? I mean, did any of us even go to her funeral?

MASON: (upset, clearly) I did. She was Al—she was... everything to me. After all, it was your words that lead her to this.

MRS. FINNEGAN: Mason! Wyatt! That's enough. Detention.

WYATT: (scoffing) You can't prove that. Give me evidence.

SAGE: (standing) Did you not read the note?

SCARLET: (rudely) It specifically says you're the reason she did this.

TRIPP: (who usually stays quiet, speaks up shyly) You're the one who made my best friend lose faith in herself.

MRS. FINNEGAN: (clearly upset) That's it. All of you, detention. You can discuss why Wyatt was wrong there.

(blackout)

ACT I, SCENE III

A detention-style classroom, with only chairs, no desks. They are arranged in a circle, with one chair, in the middle, empty. All are seated. Mr. Hart is standing in the back of the room, with his arms crossed, making sure they keep the conversation okay. However, he's okay with the cursing in this situation.

MR. HART: (uncrossing his arms) Talk it out, kids.

WYATT: (rolling his eyes) What is there to talk about? I didn't do anything.

MR. HART: Wyatt, take that seat in the middle. Everyone else, open it up a little.

They obey and move their chairs to create a larger circle.

MR. HART: (pointing at Sage) You, tell your story.

Sage is caught off guard, but stands.

SAGE: (looking at Wyatt, circling him as she speaks) Do you know what it's like to not be able to eat? To throw up your lunch? You call me "Porcelain," which is an accurate nickname, yes. But that's because I'm so damn fragile I can't regulate my body heat. I'm not just thin—I can't eat and not feel guilty about it. You understand now?

WYATT: (looking at his feet.) I'm sorry Porce—Sage.

Sage sits down.

MR. HART: (pointing at Tripp) You're next.

Tripp stands, then sits in front of Wyatt.

TRIPP: Do you know what it's like to feel like no one cares? To be hated by your own family because you can't 'cheer up'? My medication doesn't work and in fact, I've been to a psych ward—have you? I'm only a loner because I can't choose to be happy. (grabbing his head) Dammit. I can't do it.

He sits.

WYATT: (glancing at Tripp) I just thought you were lonely.

TRIPP: Then why didn't you say anything?

MR. HART: Mace, let's go.

Mason gets up, holding his arms close to him.

MASON: (stuttering) W-Wyatt, I've got anxiety. You know how you feel rushing to finish your homework because it's due in ten minutes? That 'oh crap' moment? That's how I feel twenty-four/seven.

Wyatt sighs and shifts.

MASON: I can't control when it happens—it just does.

He plops down into his seat. Wyatt gives him sympathetic eyes.

MR. HART: (pointing at Scarlet) Come on, sweetheart. You're up.

Scarlet stands and takes a deep breath.

SCARLET: (using finger dialogue) I don't control this, first of all. It's bipolar disorder. It's like having two people stuck in your head wearing the comedy and tragedy masks, and only one of them is visible at a time. I can't prove that my theory is true, but I think you liked her.

MR. HART: It's not about Athena.

SCARLET: Right, sorry. I don't want what's bound to come. I hate where it seems my life will end up, but I have to deal with it and try to fake a smile.

She sits.

MR. HART: You all go home. Wyatt, I'll send a message. Go home.

Wyatt nods. All except Mr. Hart exit.

(blackout)

ACT I, SCENE IV

Wyatt's bedroom. He's lying on his bed, on his phone. He doesn't realize it, but he is sleeping and dreaming.

WYATT: I'm such an idiot. I should've asked how she felt, if she wanted to talk. Instead, I pushed her away.

Athena enters in a flowy, white dress, with a crown of daisies. Wyatt doesn't notice her.

ATHENA: Why didn't you? I would've told you everything, but instead you condemned me to join my brother in the afterlife.

Wyatt jumps, seeing her.

WYATT: I-I don't know, I messed up. I let you think that no one cared and, because of that, you're dead.

He holds his hands over his face.

ATHENA: Did you?

Wyatt looks at her.

ATHENA: Did you care? Because obviously you didn't care eno—

She is cut off by his grasping her hands, then hugging her, softly.

WYATT: Of course I cared, I thought you were beautiful and I regret every word.

ATHENA: (pulling away) You can't undo what's done. Stop dreaming about a dead girl with PTSD.

She exits.

(blackout)

ACT I SCENE V

Athena steps out from stage left in her white gown with a boy who is slightly older, previously unIntroduced: her brother Jackson in solid white.

JACKSON: (half-smiling) Athena, it would've been okay.

ATHENA: (smiling at her brother) Are you sure?

JACKSON: (holding his sister's shoulders so she faces him.) I know so.

Athena snuffles.

JACKSON: (wiping away his sister's tears) I never meant to hurt you. You're so much stronger than I ever was, and yet, now mom's left childless.

ATHENA: (wiping a tear) Jackson, you were braver than me—you fully committed to dying. I just was kinda hoping someone would find me before my heart stopped beating, and—

JACKSON: That's what makes you stronger—you didn't fully want to die. I did. Athena, mom didn't know what either of us were going through. She was raising us on her own.

ATHENA: (getting angry) Then she should've asked.

JACKSON: Athena, relax. She was drunk eighty percent of our lives. Hell, I'll bet she's drunk right now.

Athena starts to walk away. Jackson takes her wrists lightly.

JACKSON: Athena...

ATHENA: She changed after you...

Jackson looks at his feet.

JACKSON: After I filled my skull with gunpowder and lead.

Athena nods. Jackson sighs and pulls her to him, hugging her tightly.

JACKSON: I'm sorry.

She pulls away and exits.

JACKSON: (turning to the audience) Borderline personality disorder, characterized by difficulties regulating emotion. (pause) To be fair, Wyatt never knew I existed. He thought I wasn't real, like some imaginary friend. I would've been, if I could.

(blackout)

ACT I, SCENE VI

All are on stage, in their original places, with Finnegan and Mr. Hart.

WYATT: I was foolish, arrogant, and stupid. I let my dreams get in the way of what beauty was in front of me. Don't be like me—appreciate everyone.

SAGE: Anorexia, a medically diagnosed lack of appetite for food.

TRIPP: Depression, a mental health disorder characterized by persistently depressed mood.

MASON: Anxiety, characterized by feelings of worry and paranoia that intensify and interfere with daily life.

SCARLET: Bipolar disorder, associated with episodes of mood swings ranging from depressive to manic.

ATHENA: PTSD, a disorder in which a person had difficulty recovering after experiencing or witnessing a terrifying event. Most war veterans you find who fought as early as World War II after D-Day and Vietnam will have this, but it's not just them. Cases that hit closer to home like a brother killing himself can cause it too.

MRS. FINNEGAN: Be careful what you say and do; it can cause someone the most pain enough to kill themselves.

MR. HART: And if you ever feel like you're to that point call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

JACKSON: (walking out from center) Before you end up like me.

(curtain falls)



A Certain Someone My Friend

Poet Cummings

The Last Day

Marisa Moreno

Would the world end with you?
I said as I talked with the moon
No more lights, nor nights, gone today?

I felt comfort above all looking for you
These were the words I said in June
Would the world end with you?

Would the stars be reborn anew?
The world would end and be finally in tune
No more lights, nor nights, gone today?

Our broken hearts would be gone too
Thinking melancholy would be too soon
Would the world end with you?

Would the trees know its value that no one knew?
When the valuable air would be gone by noon
No more lights, nor nights, gone today?

When the value of true love, that you outgrew
Would disappear like the many things that were immune
Would the world end with you?
No more lights, nor nights, gone today?

Broken Wings

Jannatun Zaman

You treat her like she's trash
triggered by your past
You never gave her the chance to fly
Broken her wings and left her to die
The guilt you felt was never lasting
Cuz all you dealt with was forever lambasting

She wakes up to your galling voice
Where all you did was cavil
Ruptured eardrums and never-ending migraines
The truth is starting to unravel

You may think breaking wings, bleeding strings,
loosened flings, patriarchal kings
Are the way of doing things
The thought of going home is frantic
The safe place is actually antic
The home was never fantastic
The unhealed wounds gaped for years
Distrust of self and plaguing fears

Oh how the bird is broken
Unable to fly like the rest in the world that
wrests freedom
The condolences with vile flashbacks are
petrifying
Well she won't be testifying, for she has no voice
in this world
Unlike many, she's locked up in a cage
Unable to engage, clearly this ain't no stone age
You took away all her innocence
Left her in a ditch where the trust is cold



Girl on Fire

Adriana Maldonado



Eve's Apple

Sofia G. Bucio

I Dyed, You Died

Melissa Perez

Monday, I dyed my hair red.
Tuesday, I painted my nails red.
Wednesday, I made my wardrobe red.
Thursday, the walls of my home turned red.
Friday, my furniture changed to red.
By Saturday, I was living in red.
But you were not.
Red was always your color,
But when I saw you again on Sunday
You wore white...
Your hair
Your skin
Your lips...
All...white.
But Red was always your color?

Following My Bliss

Natahali Lara

I learned I should follow my bliss because of this one video I saw during my freshman year in high school. My friend Hannah and I were on YouTube watching random videos.

Then we came across this video called “3 Years of Travel In 3 Minutes” by High On Life. The video is about a group of five guys who traveled the world in three years and videoed it all. During the video there is a guy narrating over giving a motivational speech and what stood out to me that I have yet to let go is something he said; that was “to follow your bliss.” For some people the word bliss may seem unfamiliar, but it means “pure happiness; great joy,” according to Merriam Webster Dictionary. That spoke to me because in life you will never be truly happy unless you find pure happiness within yourself, and that may be hard for someone; it was hard for me. So, for me to “follow my bliss” meant I had found something that made me feel happy inside, and that was vlogging. It made feel comfortable and confident as a person and gave me a reason to meet new people and experience new things for new content.

To become a YouTuber with good content, you must have knowledge on what you’re doing and how you do it. You must know how to film; know your lighting, be creative with content, make sure your audio is good, etc...Another important part of filming is editing; being able to cut, transition, and delete scenes. Since I have no true foundation of knowledge with these topics, I decided to take it upon myself and take a class with Apple company.

The reason being I currently have a MacBook, so why not learn the software? And the classes are free, so why not, you know?

It’s September 17th, 2019, and today is the day to go to my class. As I am getting ready, I began overthinking to myself; I’m going to be alone, I’m not going to know anyone. I kind of wanted to avoid it and not go; I felt nervous, palms shaking and everything. Then thought, the point of this challenge is to be comfortable with myself and to experience something new. So, I finished my makeup and headed over to Baybrook Mall. On my way I had to put myself in a good mood -I had to feel positive vibes inside. So, I put on my favorite type of music and jammed out. Hearing the words and singing along just made me lose every care in the world; I felt so content with life. I pulled up and found the first parking spot I saw; good thing is was close to my entrance. I get to Apple and of course it was hectic, I felt kind of lost until one of the employees approached me and asked, “Can I help you, ma’am?” I answered him quickly. “Yes, I am here for a class and I am not too sure where I am supposed to be.” He directed me straight to my spot. The class began and the teacher started asking questions to get to know us. He asked, “What brings you all here today?” The guy next to me answered, “I want to be a You Tuber,” and inside I got excited because I wasn’t the only one. The teacher began teaching. He showed us the inner phase and basic work flow in iMovie. The inner phase contains five different areas; the tool bar, sidebar, browser, viewer, and the timeline. You

use the tool bar to import, create, and share your media. The browser contains the videos and picture you want to upload into your clip. The shows your video as you're putting it together. The timeline is where you include transitions and music inside your video and also where you move content and place items where you like; it is the "editing" process. Throughout the class as the teacher was going through the program, the guy kept leaning over to help me, but I didn't mind; he smelled good. The class was only thirty minutes, which was a bummer, but it was okay. I obtained plenty of information to begin with my videos. Although it was a small and quick class, the guy next to me made it better, he was very helpful. Right after my class I decided to grab something to eat. Out of all the choices in the food court, I chose Chinese food. The restaurant I go to has these potato wedges that are delicious. They are salty but with the right flavor, almost as if they used Tony Chachere. After I ate, I headed home. When I arrived home, I got my computer and played a little with iMovie, to practice so I could finish the day with a good feeling realizing I learned something new. Since I have some knowledge in the background of video editing and content I could possibly help.

Becoming a YouTuber can be magnificent in many ways. You can turn it into a hobby, profit, to express yourself, and etc. It is remarkable what you would find on YouTube, literally anything you search up will be on there. I am going to explain how you could become the perfect YouTuber in just as little as four steps.

First things first. You will need to get a camera of some sort; a phone camera is fine, or a video camera, it does not matter. You just need to be able to film whatever content you would like. Next, you get a laptop and some sort of editing software. It does not matter what kind, just anything that can help you edit your video. Then, this is where you are able to start your process, filming. Depending on the category you want to establish yourself

under, do so. You want to film as much as possible, so you have a lot of background to create from. Finally, after you have finished filming, you begin the editing. When you edit, make sure to know your software or study before you begin so you know exactly how to use the software you choose.

Becoming a YouTuber is not hard; anyone can do it. It is just a matter of being comfortable and confident in yourself and what you do. Find the way to make yourself unique and different and be open minded to new content and ideas.

Being around new people or new things would make me want to put myself in a cocoon and isolate myself because of my lack of confidence, so my ultimate goal was to become comfortable with myself. Doing the YouTube videos was the perfect opportunity because it was something I always wanted to do, but I just didn't have the courage to do it. The journey itself has been a struggle, but I'm beyond proud of how far I have come. I am so much more confident in myself and happier within than I have ever been, and it feels miraculous. I hope that this overview of me developing into the person I am may inspire you to follow your bliss because nobody in this world can stop you from being happy beside yourself.



Dream Paralysis

Hector Garza

Hector studies Fine Arts at Central Campus.

ACCENTS

The Two Different Sides of Me

Shanee Benison

The two different sides of me
are at war.
Their hate grows by night and,
by day they are torn.
Dreaming in the wildflowers, of her summer.
Then awakening by solitude, within his winter.

The two different sides of me
play coy.
With their tricks and games and,
manipulative exploit.
Her smile so divine, you'd never truly know
All that he had done solely by her word.

The two different sides of me
can't agree.
What is right and what is fallacy?
They bicker, they bite. And bark at me,
When she won't find the right way.
He'll cheat, his way.

The two different sides of me
want what's best for me.
But they were never taught how.
She knows her lines, were taught them well.
He knows they're lies, resentment swells.

The two different sides of me
are at war.
Like night and day, there is no score.



Karen's Crystal Ball

Poet Cummings

Our Slow Fade

Yelo Gré

I was her first friend, she didn't forget me.
I shadowed her.
Almost inseparable.
Time passed,
I ran with her.
She taught me to sing and let me sing with her, until...

Still. So jolly a memory!
We danced together and laughed at our sheer lack of skill.
But then it was time to grow.
Well, she was grown already.
It was time for me to grow.
And so I did.

We were different.
Still are.
But then reality hit.
Chances came; she took hers while I missed mine.
We took our different paths,
No longer her shadow now.
I didn't think she wanted one anymore.
Our relationship became something close to passing rain.
But we got used to that too.
I had my sad, selfish days.
I didn't think they hurt her. I thought she thought I was just immature.
But we were cool once again.
She knew I was a child at heart and humored my tickling sense of humor.

Then, I finally grew up.
I hoped she understood.
I spoke less in an attempt to listen better.
I became distant while trying to be better.
I read to her, portions which she couldn't relate to.
But she listened... most times.
I read even more.
Romance as well, after a heartbreak.
Strange.
She'd help me whine -over the phone- when the book ended with a slump.
Anyway...

She had so many friends.
I made more friends, who also understood me.
Maybe better, I guess.
I hoped she understood that there were secrets I couldn't say to her.
Partly out of shame, partly from fear of pity, partly from fear of judgement.
Lord I missed her.
But I wasn't entitled to her time, so I let her be.

Sunday mornings were my favorite.
We would have breakfast together, and talk for long hours.
But those too became rare.
I knew she was busy. Sunday was her work day.
I told myself it was because of exams, or I was perhaps in denial.
So I consciously walked away to give her the space she needed.
I wanted to stop being clingy, as I tend to be after losing people.
I hoped she understood.
I thought it made sense, it made sense to me.
Nobody likes clingy.
I didn't think there was anything to work out.
I mean, I was still there - I didn't really leave.
Or maybe I did.

I always felt grey and she was a colorful, vibrant artiste.
I couldn't let myself taint her.

So I gave a few, blunt, quick greetings and scuttled away before I became too much.
But she never said anything.
Nobody does like clingy.
I didn't want her to feel the way I did; to burden her with my sadness and pain and tears.

She didn't seem to believe in best friends.
I never uttered the idea again.
I guess she thought I had one already but she didn't realize she fit the role better.
What are best friends anyway?
Anyway...

I miss her.
I'm lonely.
But loneliness is a terrible excuse to miss her. I don't want her to feel used.
Until I feel better, happier, less dreary... this is safer.
She's got so many friends to have lunch with.
She probably won't notice I'm gone until I find my way back.
Then we can pick up where we left off

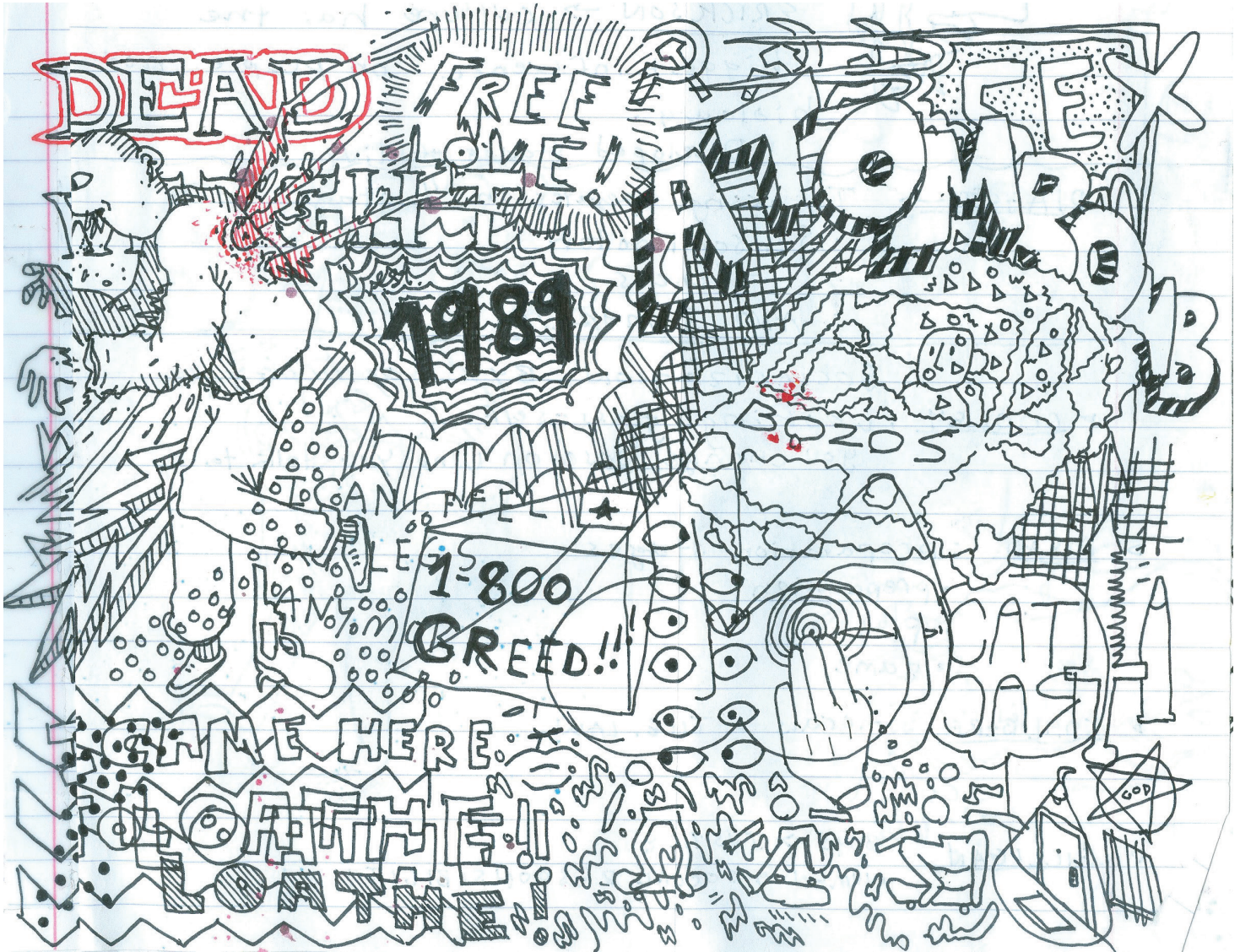
the power we hold

Liliana Garcia

we hold the power to tell our own stories
whether small or large
life changing or insignificant
we write our own futures
with pencil on paper
or on the glowing cinema screens
we will not succumb to their boundaries

they have cut out a box for us
they want us to stay quiet, huddled inside
change does not occur inside the walls they
have built for us
we are more than what they say
we are more than just these four walls
change is what happens when we break down
their boundaries
smash it, tear it, throw it away
yell out our stories from atop the box
make them heard,
make them known
they will listen to us

tell them your story,
tell them your truth
their box cannot contain the magnitude of our
beings
we hold the power,
we will use it



Atom Bomb

Doug Loye

The Art of Self-Exploration

Arsh Ali

The overwhelming and subtle panic filled my body with familiar dread as my fingers weaved in and out of each other, a complete eradication of my joy. Tersely, my eyes flickered to the door of knowledge that just minutes ago had been a hum of exhilaration, but my timidity and quietness snuck secretly within and remained there undisturbed. Open computers filled with exhaustive research, glossy posters with the bolded words Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, messy papers with equipment scattered alongside the pipet-aid—this, I thought, was the quest to explore immeasurable secrets and explanations that wander our mysterious, chaotic universe.

Within my world, away from a culture that worships loudness, I longed for lush peace and quietness, to enrapture life through observations and the infinitesimal.

The solitude of a serene life enabled me to embrace an unflagging attraction to the world of science—a search for meaningful patterns with complexity and randomness, the narrative in communicating a theory. The inner world, I understood, was by default mysterious and therefore a way to explore the roots of a problem and pique one's curiosity. Longing for a way to escape reality, I buried myself into the depths of learning, expanding my awareness about the universe around me.

A pair of slides with a blue speck, discovered more than 350 years ago, was handed to me to place under a microscope. My attention shifted to the tiny building blocks of life that seemed merely like psychedelic visual art. Here, down to the tiniest detail, was the intricate geometry of our neurons and the tiny architecture of microbes, an individual body becoming realms of complex wonder. We opened the door to a brand new, small—yet seemingly infinite—world.

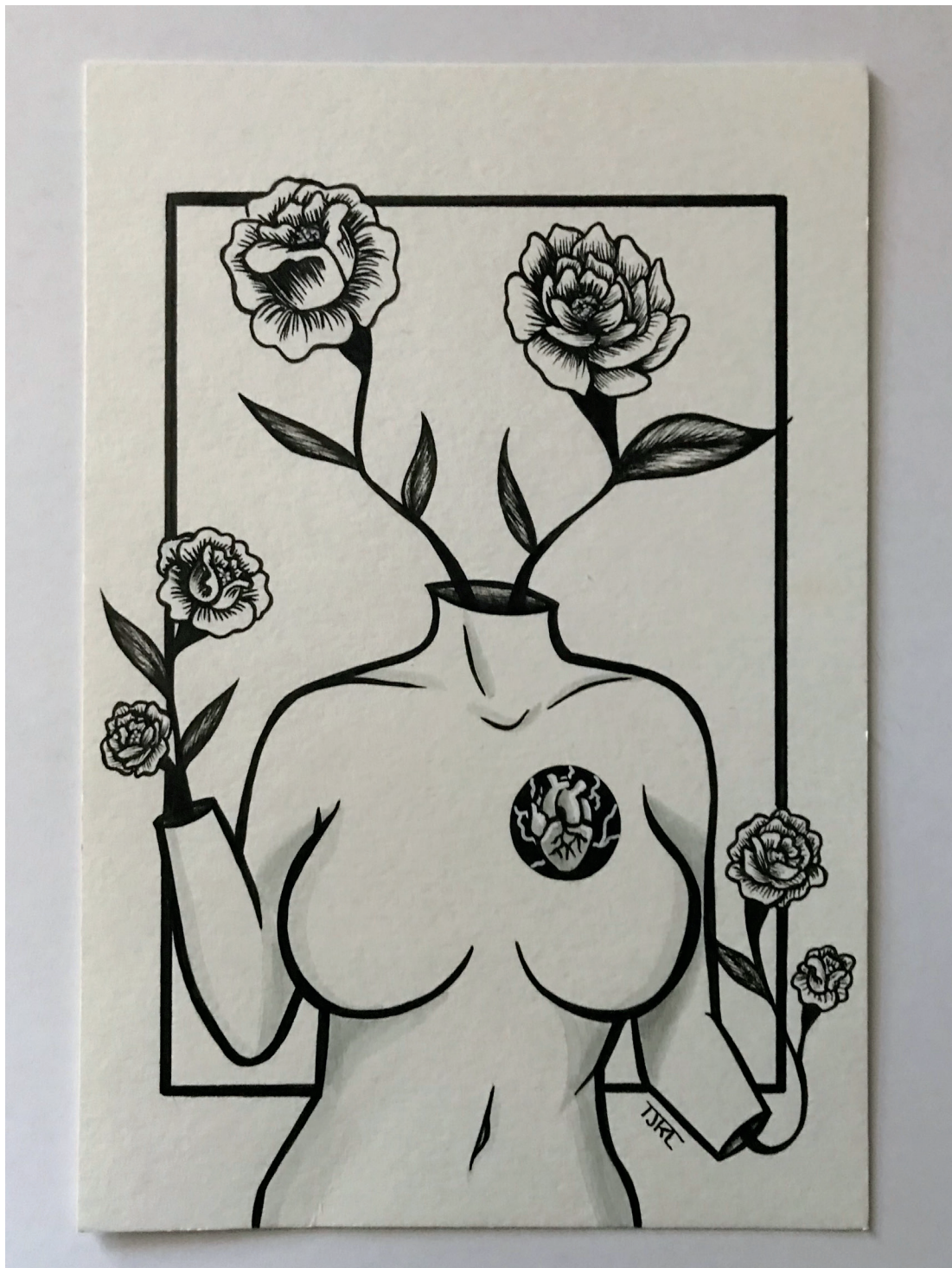
I look deeper into the external and internal level of multicellular life, which takes on innumerable shapes and functions, unique to each type of organism. The nature of science is born from a swarm of questions

formed by difficulties and setbacks, yet it never quells the curiosity of a scientist. That is why I value the little words “I don't know” and “why?” so highly: they are born from the continuously driving force of the inspiration for my wondering mind. It expands our lives to incorporate the spaces within us, as well as our own fixations, in ways similar to the never-ending search of understanding the interior of all tiny cells within me.

These basic units hold the power to the machinery of life, in which inner components function to perform a dance of exquisite fidelity, orchestrated by replicating molecular performers—we are made to grow.

The expression of truth and beauty in science is irreducible and unique, parts that require me to explore deep within the heartland of life. As I kept looking within, there was no shortage of internal inspiration, wonder, and potential that resided within my mind. It was a secret place that unlocked new levels of creativity and confidence I never foresaw; my real self—obscured and minute—was a profound look within the heartland of me. The fear and panic that once congealed the past transfigured into a thirst for inquisitiveness and valuable knowledge, far beyond the distorted wall I built to protect my vulnerability.

Truth be told, it was awe-inspiring. The art and science technologically assisting forms of human inquiry. A path to solutions. But it did not simply provide answers to the structures of life itself; it gave me the tools to rethink what I truly valued—curiosity. My sense of self unraveled into a vast universe consisting of a vision grounded in ambition and an urge to harness a deeper scientific understanding of life and its fractal properties. It guaranteed the satisfaction for the girl inside me, the one who failed to understand how her own web of reserve was going to share a valued status in the world and transform into an unfolding epitome of change.



Flourishing

Jennifer K. Lopez

Jennifer studies Fine Arts at North Campus.

ACCENTS

Types of Lovers

Jannely Gutierrez

There will always be a perfect man, one who loves you and your imperfections
Yet somewhere along the line you will find something sinister and dark
Something you wouldn't expect
Something nearly microscopic if it were a physical object
He controls you slightly, making everything for him, manipulating you and playing victim

Then we have the other lover, so controlling, full of arrogance
Everyone asks how I think that will ever work
Truth is behind the mask that man wears,
He admired your beautiful smile and ambition
He knows you can outgrow him in a better aspect
He knows you will do amazing things with or without him.

Then one who looks at you from afar
He observes your grace and the imperfections you carry
He will never approach you
Because he has marked himself a monster
He has imprisoned himself with the demons in his mind

Lastly there is the lover who doesn't appreciate one's existence
He claims to love you, deeply and truly
Yet he avoids you and follows her
He admires her and everything in between her flaws
He only comes to you when boredom strikes
He touches you the way he wishes to touch her



Serenity

Mary Fields

Mary studies Education at South Campus.

ACCENTS

Yellow Submarine

Raadiyah Ali

Alert the seas, inform the winds, let the sunlit skies see who is coming.
Greeting them is I, a traveler whose aim is to explore the vast sea of life.

Apprise the birds, enlighten the trees, let the sunflowers feel who is passing.
Greeting them is I, a dreamer whose desire is to transform visions into reality.

Notify the world, acquaint the cosmos, let this cheery era espy who is arriving.
Greeting them is I, a spirit whose avidity beams like the brightest star, the sun.

A Present

Aashik Pokhrel

One day, we will laugh
We shall look over the past
Not because we are over it
But....
We admire
What we learned
And for how wonderful today is
Thus, as a Present we have.



Blue Marble

Doug Loye



Lost

Jennifer K. Lopez

Jennifer studies Fine Arts at North Campus.

ACCENTS

Then She Bid Farewell

Joselinne Piedras - Sarabia

There we stood-
In the eve of '19,
Screaming at the top of our lungs,
Clutching to the last of our youth,
Begging the moon to forget to go down,
Pleading for the night to never end.

"I'm sorry," she cries.
And she looks down on us,
Grasping stringed pearls,
The world underneath her
Pupils white and pale lips frowning
A cape of stars floating behind her.
"I'm sorry, but I send my love."

"But, moon!" We cry.
"Oh, moon!
Don't let us age! Please,
Forget to go down!"

We looked west.

The moon looks east.

In the midst of our despair,
In our foolish attempts
to cling to a fickle youth;

Her majesty remembers to fall down.

Sweeter Than Tea

Daniela Horne

Mother always told me that politeness will take someone far and make someone else's day. She arrived in the Deep South in the broiling summer of 1990, from the more forgiving state of Indiana, introverted, but still meticulously courteous with others. Life in my childhood home was casual, with light touches of basic manners because we, being a Christian household, were brought up to treat others with respect and kindness, but I will never forget the day we met my new babysitter, Pam. Mother always told me that politeness will take someone far and make someone else's day, but that was soon subject to Pam's magnifying glass of Southern-style manners.

Pam's house was adorned with 1950s nostalgia. Splashes of bright aqua dressed her small kitchen, with pictures of Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot in rustic frames along her countertops. She herself resembled Old Hollywood right here in the heart of Texas, complete with short, curly, blonde hair and a thick Southern accent that danced with her hospitable words. However, she at times was very strict with instilling those Southern values on an eight-year-old. One weekday night while my mother was attending school, Pam prepared chicken pot pie. I wasn't accustomed to eating a variety of foods.

"Come for supper, hon! I whipped up some chicken pot pie."

My stomach turned as I exclaimed, "I ain't hungry!"

Her face contorted into a stern glare as she replied coldly, "We do *not* say 'ain't' in this house! There is no 'ain't' in the English dictionary!"

Stunned, I remained quiet for the remainder of supper, which was another word I had become

accustomed to using, instead of "dinner." I scarfed the last of my pot pie and slipped away from the table to return to my books. But before I could turn away, Pam rose from her seat, and with that so did her disappointment.

"Here in the South, hon, we ask to be excused from supper before we go. We also say grace in this house."

Unsure of what to say, I returned to my books. It was peculiar to be in a place where customs were so proper—even with your own family. Mother had always told me kindness will get someone far. But now the Southern suns of Texas began to show, in a different light, what it really meant to be polite.

Every place I went with Pam, she was like a comet of Southern flare, trailing with hospitality and courtesy. She addressed everyone by some form of "hon," "honey," or "*hunny*," depending how she was speaking to you. She made friends wherever she went, and I heard other Southerners call her "sweet as tea." When these friends acknowledged me, I would look straight down at my shoes and mumble in response to their "How ya doin'"s.

Pam would smile and then turn her back, facing me with the same stern glare. "When a grown-up talks to you, it's nice to say 'yes ma'am' or 'no ma'am'. 'No sir' or 'yes sir.'"

In time, I met her daughter, Paige. She was a ringer for her mother, complete with the same warm country accent and slightly darker hair. She was a few grades ahead of me, but spoke like her mother. She looked grown-ups in the eyes when she spoke, she addressed all her girlfriends as "hon" and even "sweetheart." Just like Pam, Paige was sweet as tea.

One sunny Saturday morning while my mother was running errands, I was sent over to Pam's for the day. I dug my nose into a mythology book, sinking into the steps of her back porch which was completely canopied by lush green vines and plants, when I heard the clicking of Pam's sandals approach me. She looked down at me and asked, "Would you like to go with me and Muggs to the mailbox?" Muggs was the family's friendly yellow lab, always ready for an adventure.

Uninterested and unable to withdraw my gaze from my book, I shrugged with a simple and short, "Nah. I want to stay here."

I had already sunk back into my world of old castles and kings, when I felt the same age-old stern glare I from before.

"*No ma'am*. 'Nah' is not a word. We say 'no ma'am' in this household."

I had always spoken like that to Mother without the bat of an eyelash. I was as bewildered as I was annoyed with how my language was picked apart and strewn in front of me as if I was being told everything I had been brought up to know was not the way things were done here in the South. But I was soon to learn that this kindness Mother had rehearsed with me for years was about to shine through the darkness.

Meanwhile in my own home, I began to compare my set of rules heavily enforced at Pam's to the lax, but still polite nature of being with my family. I noticed that other members of my family would quietly leave the table, instead of the elegance of asking to be excused from supper.

After my twelfth birthday, I began to see less and less of Pam. Soon after that, I moved from a quaint school of less than two hundred students, to a vast ocean of well over eight hundred students. I was a small beetle in a rainforest of diversity, surrounded by different types of personalities I'd never been around before. When I stumbled into my first class on my very first day, my teacher acknowledged me with a sincere smile, welcoming me, aware of my nervousness at being in an enormous class of over twenty-five other students when I was just used to maybe eight or ten.

"Are you in my class, darlin'?"

I paused out of awkwardness and replied softly and kindheartedly, "Yes ma'am."

An eruption of laughter rose from the class, almost like they were not conditioned to "honor your elders," as Pam would often call it. The students in my new school acted like barbarians in terms of manners, disregarding their elders with "yeah"s and "nah"s. A wave of repulsion came crashing down on me. The very things I was forbidden from saying were like hearing the skeletal twigs of a tree against a window. In my mind, I thanked Pam profusely for steering me away from those "lazy words," as she called it.

Small changes to my language became more apparent as I dove headfirst into young adulthood. Phone calls with potential employers were seasoned with "yes ma'am" and "no ma'am." I can recall one time when I strode into my first ever interview, and they were gobsmacked to pair an eighteen-year-old with the young woman on the phone.

"We could have sworn you were much older by your tone and manners," I remember them exclaiming, shaking my hand.

In remembrance of my childhood, the young girl's naïve and curious language would soon be shaped by the spirit of the South and the Old Hollywood-style babysitter who would scold me for using lazy words. I am still eternally grateful for the art of saying grace before supper, respecting my elders, and plenty of "yes ma'am"s sprinkled on top. Mother always told me that politeness will take someone far. But the journey is not over yet, and I plan to utilize this lesson and spread this language of courtesy.



Western Sunset

Mary Fields

Mary studies Education at South Campus.

ACCENTS

I Am the Color Orange

Kieahn Wilson

I am the color orange
I am the warm sunset that sits on your windowsill
I am the wings of migrating monarch butterflies in the beginning of winter
I am the freshly squeezed juice
that dances on your tongue each morning

I am the color orange
I am the sweet-smelling marigolds
that girls tuck behind their ears
I am the elated crowd at basketball games
when the team scores
I am the round pumpkin children carve each fall

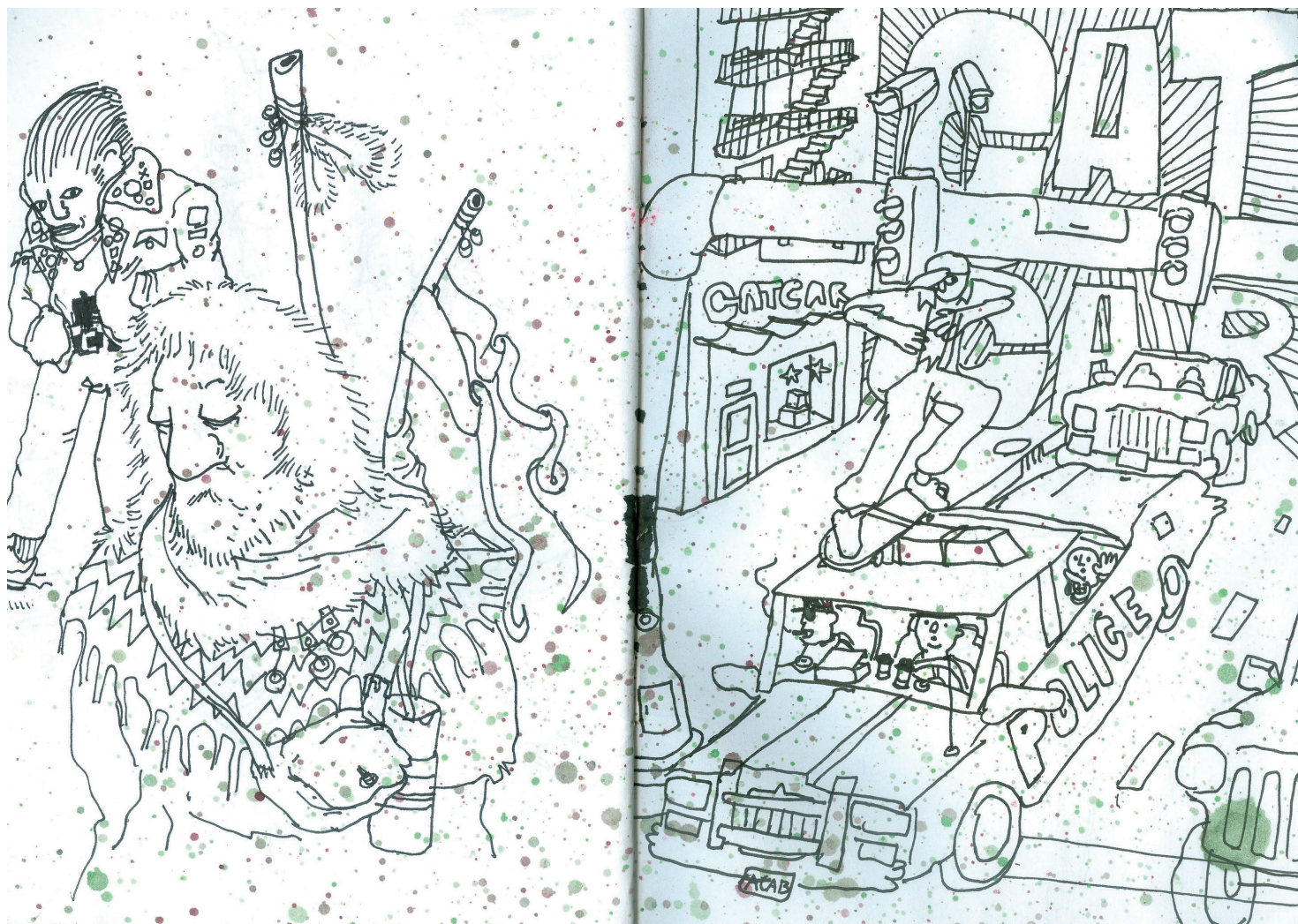
I am the color orange
I am the falling leaves in autumn
and the smooth gleam that adorns lucky pennies
I am the soft coat of ferocious tigers
I am all-encompassing and the embodiment of life

I am the color orange

Dishes & Dams

Melissa Perez

I remember that night you left.
I told you, “Go chase your dreams.”
And you smiled sadly at me and told me “What if my dream is you.”
I laughed, despite the tears that brimmed my eyes, threatening to overflow as the dam that held all
my feelings for you struggled to keep it all in.
“You need better dreams then,” is what I said.
And then we hugged, for hours? minutes? I don’t know. All I knew was that I didn’t want it to end.
But it did.
You walked one way,
I walked another.
When I arrived home the apartment was quiet, my roommate in a deep sleep, just like the rest of
the world it seemed.
I tried to sneak my way into my room, but as I passed the kitchen, I realized I still had to do the
dishes, they were my chore after all.
It seemed like such a mundane action that contrasted starkly with the hurricane that was raging
inside. But I did them anyways.
And as the warm water dripped from my fingers, I willed it to wash away all of you.
But water will only wash away so much.
So I stood there, washing dishes at two in the morning, as the dam finally broke, and drowned me
in you.



CATCAR and SHAMAN

Doug Loye



Louis Wain

Doug Loyer

Bigger than before yet colder
Different circumstances
Different sentences

When will the Ennui be over?
When can the light pierce my eyes?
What will happen past these doors?
No one knows...

The walls were bright
What an annoying color
My freedom is inches away
But haven takes sand

My empty stomach churns for balance
The pendulum stops swinging
Freezes over on both spectrums

The Girl with Many Voices

Sarah Martinez

A noise goes off...
The police sirens wail
Another memory awakened
Another cry at night
Another suicide
The voices of another world
The voices of lost reality
Can't make a sound
Because no one cares to hear it
The screams
The cries
Where were you?
The voices screech
The man never leaves
The shadow never fades
The woman never whispers
I used to accept you
Now I hate you
Every day is a forgotten battle
Every day the voices win
while I lose everything
They never leave
And never relieved
Until the casket closes



Burning

Jennifer K. Lopez



Go Fetch

Salma Delgado

Salma studies Mathematics at North Campus.

ACCENTS

Rust

Mary Fields

I am rust.

I am the sign of withering away and wearing down, caused by the grievances of the environment. I am the western earth, bathed by the sun and washed with rain.

I am the very rust that dons a rustler's boots, caked in crumbled sediment of the Arizona deserts. I am the coarse fur on the hides of cattle, and the shade of pride to the University of Texas Longhorns.

I am a health risk to those who work in the honesty of gardens and carpentry shops. I am weakened metal, a constant reminder of age and the onslaught of inevitable collapse. I am dried, oxidized blood on the edge of a blade that is soaked inside the grains of a cutting board, spoiling the freshly cut vegetables that lie there.

I am rust, the name of a newborn foal with a chestnut coat, spry with youth. I am a deep amber stone set in a pendant, gifted in celebration of an anniversary to a lover. I am the leaves that dance along the ground and around the kissing couple's feet. I am the envisioning of warmth, and of decay.

I am rust.



Hot Chocolate & Pan Dulce

Daniela Rodriguez

Daniela studies Health Science at North Campus.

ACCENTS

Reminiscent Beige

Sophia J. LaRochelle

I am Beige.
Smearred across countless walls in infinite shades,
Plastered over fissures and cracks,
I am many things.
Cookies baked just right,
Beams of light just before they fade into the night.
I am wood putty and plasters,
I am the groundwork of buildings and beaches.
I am warm sun-kissed skin before the bitter winter.
I am Beige,
That feeling that's hard to describe
The content syrupy sentiment of satisfaction that beckons in sleep
I am the color that is everywhere,
In classrooms, doctors' offices, police stations, and hospitals,
But unremarkable, for the most part I go unnoticed.
I don't mind, good friends with bone white, wine burgundy, and auburn tan.
I'm one of many neutral colors,
We go unnoticed, but remain present all the same.
I am Beige.
I'm that good ache the one that let lets you know a hurt is healing.
I am Beige, and though not many remember my name, confused with other labels,
Brown, russet, off-white, coffee.
Those are my friends, and my sisters,
Because I am Beige.

After a Lifetime of Waiting

Monika Kardos

After a lifetime of waiting, I will finally see my family's country, its flag with red, white, and green horizontal stripes rippling through the air at the parliament building, not the one with red, white, and blue stripes I see everywhere you turn. The genuine, smiling face of my grandmother waiting at the airport. Her eyes, a mirror of mine, searching each passenger's face until a recognition comes into her head and a spark goes off. We'll make up for the memories, laughs-we-can't-stop-and-can-barely-breathe, smiles, tears, and arguments for the last fifteen years. Her heart finally restored—not with another lonely, abyssal Christmas by herself, but a Christmas with me, her granddaughter, with whom she hasn't spent one birthday, Christmas, Thanksgiving, summer break, Valentine's, New Year's, Easter, or Independence Day.

No, this year will be the most special one because she will be spending it with her favorite granddaughter. The granddaughter who lives fourteen hours away, the granddaughter separated by the Atlantic Ocean, the granddaughter who speaks English and not her family's mother tongue, the granddaughter who doesn't even know her grandmother's favorite color; but, most importantly, she will be spending the world's favorite holiday, Christmas, with the only granddaughter who loves her beyond any condition.

She'll have two whole weeks of love and laughter with the family members she loves most, not because of money, but because of long-lasting memories just waiting to be had. We'll explore my family's birthplace and see how the world has changed from each generation. We'll shop until we run out of money and eat like kings, and I will finally learn to speak the true words of my family's mother tongue. After a lifetime of waiting, I will finally have true, real, and honest memories with my grandmother in our family's birthplace, where our family started and thrived.



First

Jennifer K. Lopez



A True Hero

Salma Delgado

Salma studies Mathematics at North Campus.

ACCENTS

The Hero Syndicate

Jordan Valier

NARRATOR (V.O.)

With the world now full of superpowered humans, there are people that will take their power for granted. That's why I'm forming The Hero Syndicate to find people like me to rid the world of evil.

Two boys, KYDD and MICHAEL stand outside a gas station.

KYDD (leaning against a wall)

Dude, I really messed up man.

MICHAEL

Kydd, it's going to be all right.
All we have to do is get the money back.

Michael hands Kydd a ski mask.

KYDD

What are we going to do with these, Michael?

MICHAEL

We are going to rob this gas station.
Since I got the gun, I'll get the cash,
and you can get some snacks for the gang.

Michael and Kydd puts their ski masks on.

KYDD

All right, let's do this.

Michael and Kydd run into the gas station without hesitation. Michael points his gun in the OLD MAN cashier's face.

MICHAEL

Give me the money, old man!

Kydd is in the back, filling up the duffel bag.

MICHAEL

Hurry up, old man! You don't want your wife cleaning your brains off the floor, do ya?

The old man gets the money out the cash register.

OLD MAN

Take it and get out of here dammit.

MICHAEL

Let's go, bro!

As Kydd runs over to the front door, they hear two gunshots.

KYDD

Shit, he said he wasn't going to
kill him.

Kydd's bag drops to the floor when he sees Michael's lifeless body.

KYDD

Michael...

Another gunshot goes off, causing him to drop to the floor.

TWO YEARS LATER

LOCATION: St. Joseph Medical Center. Kydd's eyes slowly open in a hospital bed. A NURSE looks on.

KYDD

Where am I?

NURSE

Oh my God, he's awake!

KYDD

Awake? Why am I here?

Kydd sits up.

NURSE

We found you blacked out in the
alley way almost dead. It's a miracle
you're alive. Thanks to your brother,
we were able to stop the bleeding.

KYDD

Brother? Wait, where's Michael?

NURSE

I'm sorry, that's not who I'm
talking about, but Michael Johnson
passed that night.

KYDD

It's all my fault.

MYSTERIOUS VOICE

Don't beat yourself down over
this, Kydd.

KYDD

Who the hell are you? Why do
you look like me?

MYSTERIOUS VOICE
Susan, could you give us a minute?

NURSE
No problem, Jay.

The nurse leaves the room.

KYDD
Wait, don't leave me here with
this person!

JAY
Calm down... I'll tell you who I am.

JAY sits down.

KYDD
Who are you?

JAY
I am you.

Kydd gasps.

JAY
You heard about G-Humans?

KYDD
Yeah that stuff on the news about
super-powered people, kind of like
the X-Men, right?

JAY
You're a G-Human.

KYDD
Are you being straight up with me?
What can I do? Can I fly, or do I
have super speed like the Flash?

JAY
You have the ability to make clones
of yourself.

KYDD
So you're telling me, I'm Naruto?

JAY
Something like that.

KYDD
Holy shit! How do I do it?

JAY
Let's get you checked out. We
are eighteen now, so we are
technically adults.

Jay hands Kydd a black and blue tracksuit.

Later That Day

LOCATION: Under an old bridge

KYDD

All right, let's do this! All
you said is I have to concentrate,
right?

JAY

Yeah, just think of it as taking off
a shirt or like a snake shedding skin.

KYDD

All right, I got it.

Kydd closes his eyes and breathes as a clone comes out from his side, standing beside him. Clone
#1: You did it!

KYDD

Holy shit! I really got superpowers!

Kydd gives his clone a high five.

JAY

All right, now let's see how many
you can make.

KYDD

I'm going for a hundred.

Kydd closes his eyes and breathes in and out.

JAY

Whoah, that's a lot.

Kydd turns around and there are about one thousand clones behind him.

KYDD

This... is... awesome!

He falls on his back, looking at the sky.

JAY

Are you okay?

Jay rushes over to Kydd.

KYDD

Yeah, that just took a lot out
of me. Ugh. Hey, I have a question.
Do I put them back?

All of the clones shrug their shoulders as Jay laughs.

KYDD

Hey, why are you laughing? Tell me
(cont.)
how I put them back! I'm hungry!

KRIS, a man in a khaki trench coat with red hair is standing on a light pole watching Kydd and Jay.

KRIS
I should introduce myself now.

LOCATION: Mona's café

KYDD
Jay, are you going to eat the
rest of your fries?

He is drinking a chocolate milkshake behind a stack of plates.

JAY
Don't you think you ate enough?
How are you going to pay for all
of that?

KYDD
I haven't thought that far ahead.

A tall man in a trench coat begins walking towards the table Kydd and Jay sit at.

KRIS
Hey, how are you guys doing?

KYDD
(with a mouth full of fries)
W-who are you?

KRIS
I'm Kris Park, the leader of The
Hero Syndicate.

KYDD
So, you know about my powers huh?

KRIS
Yes, I have been watching you for
a while now. I would like you to join
my team.

JAY
A team?

KRIS
Yes, I'm recruiting members to help
rid the world of evil.

KYDD
We'll join. I like your spirit.

This piece was cut for length in the print edition. To read the the work, please find the digital version at sanjac.edu/Accents/



Halloween Jack

Poet Cummings

Motion: A Song

Millie Turner

The Clock trades hands with itself again
I'm exactly where I've stood
This flower won't stand forever
Smash my pot

A stop motion picture life
Just remove the motion

A full glass of sand
Above my head
Teasing to tip over

Someone push me now
Can't do it on my own
Get this motor running
Before it has to go

A stop motion picture life
Just remove the motion

I could be doing better
Get me out of my bed
I won't be this young forever
Misery rears its head

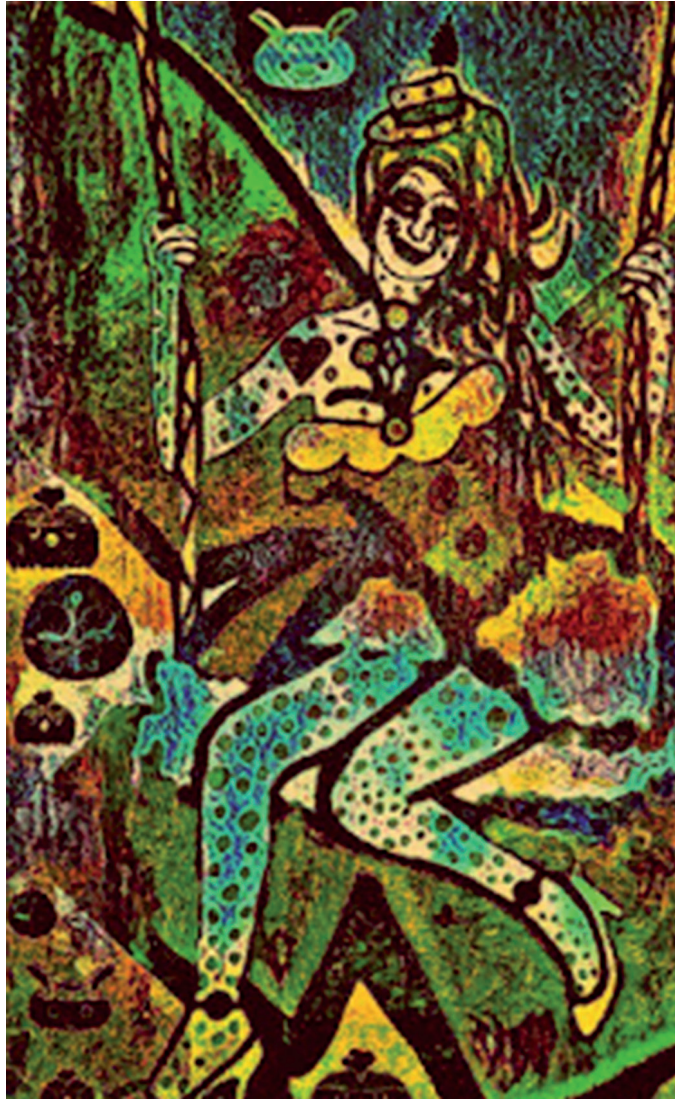
A stop motion picture life
Just push me into the ocean

A full glass of sand
Above my head
Teasing to tip over

The Clock trades hands with itself again
And I'm exactly where I've stood
This flower won't stand forever
Smash my pot

I can't just stand here anymore, anymore, anymore

Smash my pot
Smash my pot
Smash my pot



Swing Set

Poet Cummings

Maniac

Jannely Gutierrez

My heart races as I see you across the room
The way your hair falls just gracefully
A psychopath you may be
Yet I no longer fear it
The eeriness surrounding draws me in closer as a moth to a flame
Your silence screams my name
Once the eye contact connects you look away
As if it were a sin to lay eyes on me
I can't tell you my obsession to keep you at a distance
Keeping things mentally locked up
What is the point?
We will all cease to exist at some point in our life
Why not roam free until we are six feet under?
Is it because we need to keep humanity safe and thriving as we kill the blinded weak?

Season's Greetings

Raadiyah Ali

I clank my glass with my pen, the thunder rumbles over my head.
Time ticks away quickly while I rock my old chair in utter dread.
Music echoes loud and clear, the wind howls outside my window.
Petals on the rose in my vase wither into crisps like a fallen hero.

Come two quarters past three in the morning, my eyes are ablaze.
My mind's roaming through an abyss unknown, calm and unfazed.
My drink remains on the nightstand, still sparkling and untouched.
My mind is absent beyond remiss as the atmosphere is hushed.

My demons drain me numb and blank to sleep.
A heaving storm of resentment hovers over me.
Slowly, my piling thoughts will cease to spawn.
Tomorrow, I will trudge this land again at dawn.

For now, I'll avoid glaring at the mirror with spite,
But this daily battle is meant to incessantly blight.



Festive

Karla Garcia Burgos

My Mind Before You Go

Yelo Gré

I hear. I don't listen to what he says.
I'm not trying to understand. I'm trying to memorize
His voice.
His speech.
His breathing.
His mind.
His laugh.
Him.

I remember us locked in an embrace in the forest.
"I want to memorize this hug" I whisper.
"Is that possible?"
I wanted it to be possible. I want it to be possible as I imagine our final embrace.
I imagine we'll be alone, entangled for a long time.
Long enough for it to be embedded in my memory.
I smile.
I continue to hear him.

I don't speak. It will be one more conversation to miss.
I refuse to miss him. He won't miss me. He won't miss anyone.
Anyone.
Am I anyone? Did anything change? Did I expect anything to change?
No.
...
I'm lying to myself. It won't matter when he's gone.

I continue to hear him.
I fall for his voice all over again.
His speech.
His breathing.
His mind.
His laugh.
Him.
I will my heart not to break. My heart obeys.
I wonder if it was wrong to ever feel what I felt. I wonder if it was wrong to say what I felt.
Would this hurt less now? Would it hurt more? I'll never know.
I continue to hear him.

I wonder if what he claimed to feel was real. Does he even know?
Does he know he gave me hope? Does he know he made me happy?
Does he know I want him to feel as I do?
Does it matter anymore? Did it ever matter?

I look at the setting sun... He'll say goodbye at dusk.
Is the sun setting on us? Did it ever really rise? Was it always there?
The sun is setting.
I will it not to. It does not obey.
I know he will leave when it does.
He will leave.
Everybody leaves.
Everybody forgets.
I forget he is not everybody.
I think of the future.
I stop thinking of the future.
I continue to hear him.
I close my eyes.
I see him.
I smile.

He's gone.

Clothes

Jannely Gutierrez

Funny how my clothes changed so much
Lost a lot of weight because I wasn't eating
Went from wearing baggy clothes to finally feeling secure with my skin
I have to hide my scars from the world
The only way is with these baggy sleeves
Ashamed of the skin carried by me, I hid
Finally breaking free from this trap
From the suffocation
From hiding myself in this shell
From the boys who would stare
From the boys who wanted to touch
Now that I'm free,
Others wish to shame me
"You're showing too much skin"
But they will never know the struggle that is over my bare skin



Strong

Jennifer K. Lopez

Running

Mary Fields

The echoes of the very word that bellowed from the faculty and staff remain as prominent as the melody of a song that could've been played three minutes ago.

"Run!"

Why are we running? From whom, or what? This I did not know.

We all stood huddled in fear and confusion behind the auto-shop across the highway. Sirens and engines roared as the road filled and became blockaded with the company of law enforcement both local and city-wide. Voices and cries floated around my head as I looked around, shock locking and holding my bones stiff.

"What is it? There is no sign of a fire. Why did the alarms go off?"

"It's not a fire."

"There's an active shooter."

"Shots were fired."

"People got hurt."

My mind failed me in that instant, and my limbs and voice went on autopilot. I pulled my phone out to call my mother before the school or the news could reach her. I knew she needed to hear me in person as much as I needed her to. I pressed my phone to one ear, and plugged a finger in the other.

"Mom? Mom, can you hear me?"

My voice was shaky, either from adrenaline or fear. Or, maybe, both.

Her voice carried through the faint speaker. "I can hear you. Is everything okay?"

Then the tears began to pour, and my voice betrayed me.

"There's been a shooting, Mom. I'm okay, but I needed to tell you so you wouldn't fear the worst for me."

Her voice expressed several emotions within seconds: Shock, fear, relief, sorrow.

"I'm coming to get you!"

"No, Mom, don't come. They aren't letting us go yet." My voice was clogged with the ugly sobs that threatened me. "They are making sure no one else is missing. The road is blocked off and they are forcing everyone to turn back."

It took several minutes to convince her that I was okay, and to not come pick me up, as much as I wanted to be home and wake from this nightmare.

They herded us from behind the auto-shop, down the highway, toward the gas stations right of the school. All the while, I was texting and calling friends to make sure they were all okay. All of them were, apart from the one friend who didn't have any form of contact.

Chris Garcia.

The numbers of those physically affected continued to increase by the hour.

I spent until 4 pm of that day at a fellow thespian's house, watching the news and petting his dog in a desperate attempt for wordless comfort. I knew I

was still on edge, as my emotions were locked in a box inside my chest. I kept my mom updated and called her several times while at the safe space.

When she opened the door, I stood up from my seat and broke down, clutching her in the tightest hug I could muster. All I could hear and feel were her cries and tears against my shoulder, and my own against hers.

That night, around 6 pm, a vigil was held in the parking lot and grassy portion of a local market. Candles were on a table for people to carry and hold. I texted a friend of mine who was also close with Chris. He was stopping by Chris' home to see if he was okay.

When my friend came to the vigil, his eyes were sore and puffy, tearstains coating his cheeks.

“Where’s Chris? Did he make it?”

He couldn’t even open his mouth to answer. All he did was shake his head.

Chris was gone.

I couldn’t believe it, and all I could do was hold my friend in grief. He, too, held me and wept.

News reporters flocked to us like mosquitoes on a humid summer day, filming us with an unsolicited thirst for commentary. A thirst for a political statement for gun control. They used a snippet of sorrow and despair instead of using the footage that contained important points that were otherwise censored.

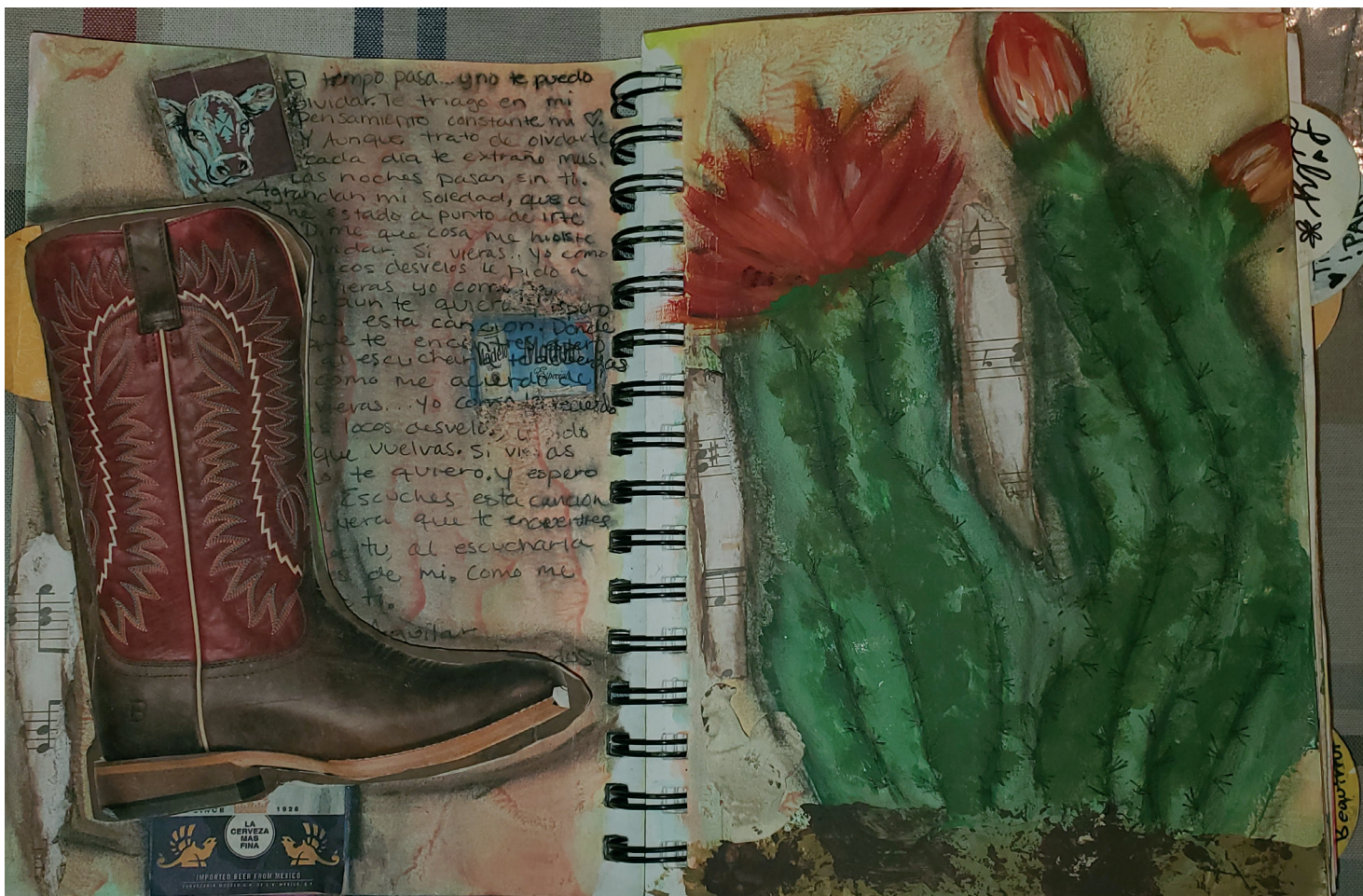
The night drew to a close, the crowd from the vigil dispersing little by little. I left with my mother, who brought me there, and we returned to the comfort of our home. Even though I would be sitting on the couch for the next week—couch buddies with depression and incoherency—I never stopped running. I kept running. I keep running.

I run from the horror and the trauma. I run from the darkness that spawned in 2018. I run from the abandoned relationships and the ties that dare to keep me down. I run from the inquiries and the spotlight that this historical event has thrust on me.

Running, running, running. Just like the day I ran from the school building.

I run to the future for comfort, distraction, and a sought-after peace, with the anonymity that graduation gave me. I run after my dream career. I run for a new life with those I love. I run with my soulmate, and for the future we will forge in fire together.

I’m always running.



Boots

Yesica Cardoso Diaz

Yesica studies Education at North Campus.

ACCENTS

Exulansis

Jannely Gutierrez

I'm back on this dark path
These thoughts are heavier than rain
Here come the waterworks and the storm
Sometimes the river will be red
I dive into it for safety
For the release of this mental pain
It's wrong and stupid
Yet they'd never understand
They've never had to battle with this
Just smile and keep quiet
Or else they'd know
They'd know how to save you
Yet they will never know how to find a lost girl
What's the point when society never wants you
When you're sticking out like a sore thumb

I Am the American Dream

Joselinne Piedras - Sarabia

i am the american dream
in the land of the free
where blue and red and white
sleep peacefully together in the horizon

i am the american dream
of the mother who had her own illusions
that perished to poverty
that crumbled upon the death of the man i never met
who gave up her dreams for a better life
and bid goodbye to the country she loved
praying to the night sky that it would all be alright
giving birth in a strange new world
and never looking back
i am *her* american dream
built with tears and glue and ribbons
held together by words and hopes
and the fleeting dream of a daughter
that even gravity could not defy

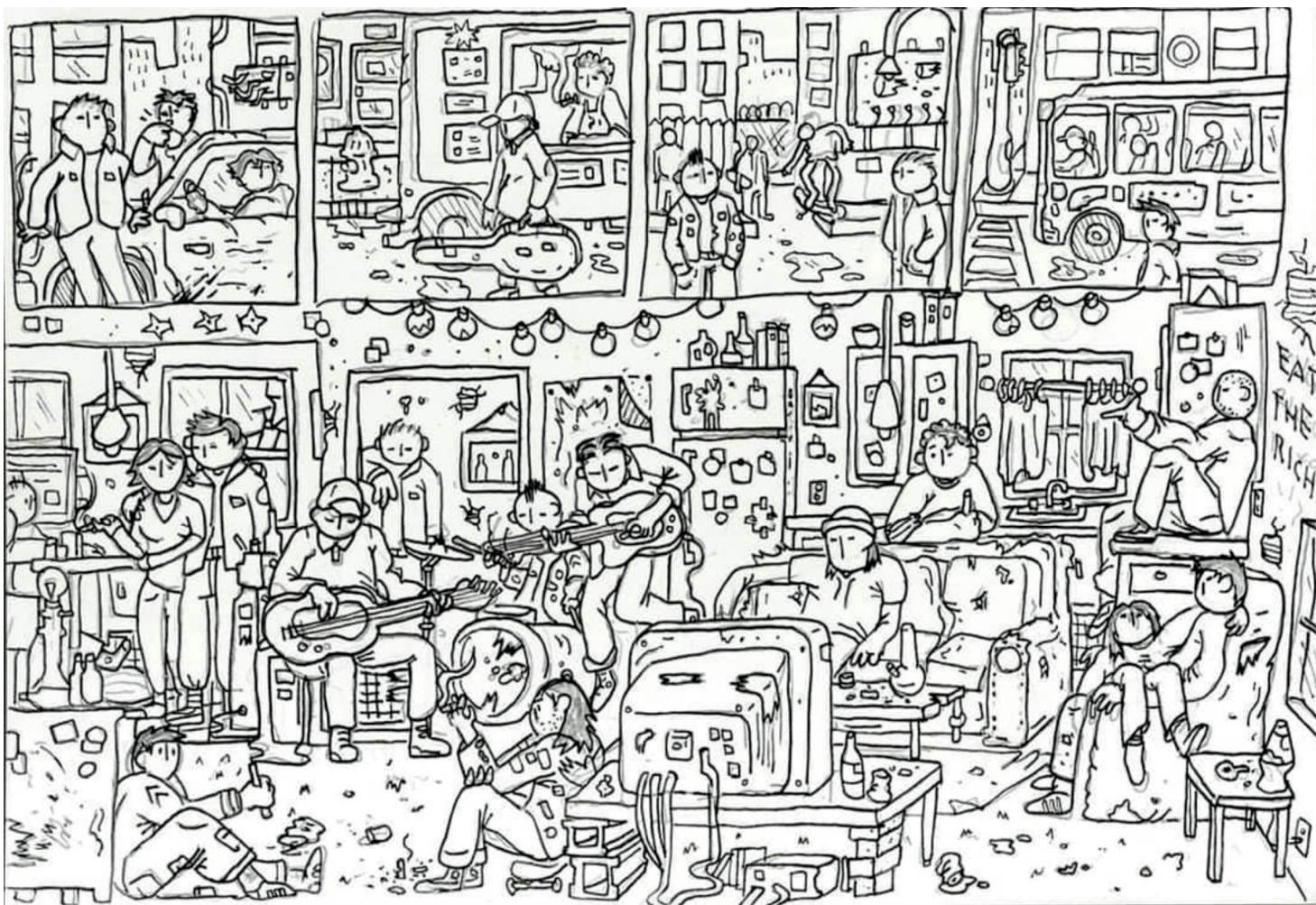
i am the american dream
of the father who shed tears in the brisk of dawn
when news of sickness abruptly knocked
for he was burdened with the knowledge that he could never pay respects to his dying mother
in a country that was no longer his
and in a country that no longer knew him
i am *his* american dream
built with work and night shifts and aching bones

held together by a heart and determination
and the fleeting dream of his children never knowing what it was like
to starve in fields of empty promises

i am the american dream
of my mother
of my father
of those who came before me
and those i never met
for all those who run through my veins
i am *their* american dream

i am the american dream
in a land made not for me
in a land where walls divide
a home i've never slept in
but i am its american dream

i am the american dream
in the land of those who aren't free
where blue and red and white
don't wish to see me in their sleep



Eat the Rich

Doug Loyer

Doug studies Fine Arts at the Central and South Campuses.
ACCENTS

For information about the magazine, including a digital version and information about how to submit work for future issues, visit sanjac.edu/Accents.

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