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Energy

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Energy

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Energy would like to thank Dr. James Shemwell, June Walters, Deborah Parker, Deanita Hicks, Danny Graham, Courtney Fisher, and the Arts and Sciences Department. We would also like to extend gratitude to everyone who encouraged students to submit work. We are grateful for all the words of encouragement and support

I started this publication right around the time President Obama was elected in 2008. There was so much “energy” buzzing around the campus. People were so hopeful and energized, and this magazine helped to provide at least one way to channel some of the creativity that was waiting to become alive on the page. All of our publications capture such fantastic creativity from students who are only at our college for a little while. I hope that you enjoy and support our featured writers and artists. I am incredibly proud of our fifth publication.

Julie Dorris, Editor

Energy Submission Guidelines:

Any part or full time ANC student can submit to our student magazine. Each student can submit a total of five different pieces, consisting of writing and/or art.

Submission Categories:

Fiction: Short stories should not exceed 3,500 words (about 15 pages).

Poetry: There isn't a restriction on length, but poems must be submitted in the exact form that you desire them to be published.

Non-fictional Works: These should not exceed 3,500 words (about 15 pages).

Art/Photography: We accept all forms of visual arts; please send a jpeg file of the photo of the artwork.

How to Submit: Please send your work as attachments to ancenergysubmissions@gmail.com. In the body of your email, please make sure you type your name as you would want it published, the titles of the works, and a phone number. If you have any questions, contact jdorris@smail.anc.edu (or come by the C-Wing). **We are accepting submissions from June 1, 2016-April 1, 2017** for the next edition of the magazine.

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Stabbing Myself with Pride

Cody Hogan

I was nearing a turning point, a troubling fork in the long, dark, and unforeseeable road. My own conscience shook his fist tenaciously at me for the damage I'd been inherently allowing to unfold. "You idiot, you ignoramus, you buffoon," my conscience would relevantly shriek towards me in regards to arising issues, to which I responded, "I didn't know such events would eventually transpire! I just absolutely refused to accept defeat when I am so much more." Little did I know, I'd be answering for my response every night upon the time of usual slumber, for as I'd close my eyes, I'd find myself on trial in a darkened and chilling courtroom. I always had determination and pride in the very things I involved myself with for the very benefit of myself. In a sense, pride was my very essence, and yet I was being accused of stabbing myself, a young man named Cody Hogan, over a course of employment with a very particular infectious and poison laced double-edged sword which bore the title of pride. It was over a reflection of certain past events related to my job that made myself realize I was actually hurting myself in multiple ways by being prideful.

When I was at the forefront of turning seventeen years old, I was employed at the City of Leachville in Arkansas in the summer of 2012. I was a fresh and young stallion amongst a stable of old and tired workhorses. I was naïve and hardly knew anything at the time but willing to learn everything that they could throw my way. Eventually, I gained a sense of pride in my ability to adapt and take on new challenges and found myself taking any and every challenge that could come my way in my job, regardless of difficulty. Pride grabbed me firmly by the hand and pushed me to do more and more things, whispering "If they can do it, you can definitely do it" subtly to me. Contrary to the benefits at face value that such sheer cockiness and determination

might bring, it was this initial pride that paved the road to the highway of troubles and disappointment. This was a beginning to new levels of hurt feelings as the amount of challenges were realistically becoming too difficult. As I'd contemplate just simply saying "no," pride smacked me upside the head and told me "you better refuse to refuse."

During my first winter after employment, I'd found myself tasked with a team which was repairing a busted water main in freezing below zero temperatures. Communication in this situation was all but verbal for all that could be heard was the immense vacuum trailer's vuuuuumm. The wind was cold and bitter, each chilling breath felt as if I were lacing my airways with liquid nitrogen. Pride grabbed me by the collar of my jacket and threw me into the leak first. I got on my knees and stuck my hand through the body of water formed by the leaking pipe. I felt a sort of numbness to which I could not feel nor gain a proper grip on the objects I touched, but yet I felt a sharp and penetrating pain in my hands as if they were sifting through a sea of needles. Eventually through collective efforts, the team and I fixed the leak. However, that would not be a happy ending to the situation. Upon rising myself back to the street level from the cold and damp hole which once was a body of water, the pain of sifting needles did not reside, in fact, it intensified as the piercing cold wind shot through me like freshly fired bullets. I rushed home, my entire body now suffering from a numbing yet pulverizing pain. I properly warmed myself and washed the gritty and grimy mud from my skin, and it seemed to also remedy my numbness, but the pains and aches stayed for an entire week.

By August of 2015, a lot had changed over the course of a few years, all to my detriment. I was an unloved step-child who couldn't be accepted into the real family. Promises of a higher education were broken more than once, and no raise of pay was awarded despite being scattered, scathed, and scorn between five departments in total. Pride was in control, happily presenting

me, a plump and juicy orange, to the juicer every morning. I was happy and optimistic on the outside, but pride couldn't save me from the self-loathing that had ripened like and aged wine on the inside. I was then given the shared responsibility of a sixth department, the newly obtained Sanitation department. One day alone was too much for me to handle, no breaks, no lunch, a full day of hanging to the side of a truck, slinging trash in the back and operating levers. The stench of the day were hardly bearable, even compared to my acceptance of putrid wastewater smells. It was like I could smell a smidgen of every ounce of filth from a single town all in one collective location. The stench was so strong I could taste them. The sight of a pile of maggots caught in the truck's hopper became so common I could almost feel them moving like a pile of lively rice. By the long summer day's end, I could barely walk nor even stand. I had wished multiple times throughout the day that a vehicle would just hit me and end it all since my life had befallen to these atrocities. After some rest, pride woke me up for work the following morning.

It was because of this everlasting pride that I kept coming back for more, even when I should have backed away. Pride had hurt me emotionally, physically, and mentally. 'At the hilt of the double edged sword, I found myself. I admit it, I was forger and the handler' I announced to the courtroom. The judge looked downwards upon me began to slam his gavel. I was convicted for the rightful accusation of stabbing a young man who meant no harm. The accessory to the crime, pride, was confiscated and only slated to return to my possession years later when I could show I'd no longer cause such harm with such a powerful tool.

Pull
Rosa Lloyd



Just Like Me

Olevia Hughes

The cursor on the page blinked out a slow steady rhythm.

The blank page screaming for more.

Hungry for more than just that one single cursor.

Just like me.

The story did not come,

Yet the blank white page still lit up the whole room,

As if to say it still wanted more.

All I could do was watch the cursor blink.

The page yearned for the story not yet told,

To be more than just a blank page,

In the middle of a blank, unforgiving screen.

Just like me.

The page wants more than what it's given.

It wants to be a novel,

A short story, or

Even a comedy.

Yet the page stills remains empty,

That cursor taunting my hands to move.

The words still do not come.

The page remains empty.

Just like me.

As I begin to try and type out the story that the page so eagerly craves,

I lose the words and have to start over,

Again,

Again,

And again,

The cursor is my nemesis
Slowly taunting then only taking the letters away when I have messed up.
That page sits empty, bitter, and still
Just waiting for its next fill.
For the next story to be told,
Or the next story to steal.
The page sits there.
The same cursor blinks a slow steady rhythm.
Waiting for the whole to be filled.
Just like me.

Where Troubles Melt Like Lemon Drops
Brooke Childs



A Long Time Coming

Emily Tilley

Racism. It's not a word that has the best meaning. Immediately when hearing the word, people cringe, and put up their guards. I cannot disagree. Racism is a filthy smudge on our world, and it seems that no matter how much we scrub, it just won't wash off. That is all about to change. I have a solution to this infestation! This solution will furthermore and forever rid our blessed world of this hideous splotch and cleanse the people inhabiting our world today. Racism is based on the color of one's skin, so why not create a whole new race? Won't that just add to the problem of racism? No, not if everyone became the same race, and that is exactly what I intend to do! Creating a whole new race that everyone would become would eliminate the horrific problem of racism altogether.

Before presenting the solution to racism, it is important to know and understand where it came from, how it has progressed, and the side effects of racism. Racism has been around since the dawning of time. It's not a new issue. As seen throughout history, the "superior" race tends to discriminate against the "meeker" race. Looking through the history books, one will find an interesting story about a man with a funny mustache. He thought that his race was supreme, and that everyone else that was not of a certain color was, well, trash. To solve his problem, he chose to relocate many of those people. In their new homes, he decided that, since they were worthless trash, he would experiment on them, give them little to no food or water, and basically torment them until they either keeled over or were sentenced to death. That man's name was Adolf Hitler. He slaughtered Jews like they were no better than common swine. This case is, obviously, an extreme case, but racism still exists today and is still just as much a problem.

It is important to know that racism is not just a thing of the past. In fact it is very much alive today all over the world. For example, an article written by the All Together Now

organization, centered in Australia, outlines in detail how racism is affecting the inhabitants of Australia today. Some of the inhabitants of Australia are of Aboriginal descent. These people are the equivalent of North America's Native Americans. A lot of people in Australia don't like the native Aborigines. They state that "During the past year, 1 in 5 people living in Australia was a target of racial discrimination (around 4.6 million people)" ("Racism in Australia" 1). Racism is not just a judgement based solely on the color of one's skin, though. In Asia, "dark skinned people are looked down upon. Everyone strives to be white..." (Kepnes 1) The color of a person's skin in Asia also determines that person's class as well, and which is why everyone strives to be white. To be white means that that person can afford to stay indoors in the shade, while people with dark skin are associated with people who work in the fields, who are poor. Racism is an issue that is so much more than just the color of one's skin. There are detrimental health conditions that people can suffer from as a result of being tormented by racial discrimination as well.

As children, a human's sense of control over life and his or her overall health stems from his or her social experiences and environment. Racial discrimination is an evil in the world that renders children powerless, unequal, and outmatched in its clutches. This, in turn, can affect the outcome of those children. A study conducted by Doctor Kathy Sanders-Phillips, Doctor Beverlyn Settle-Reaves, Doctor Doren Walker, and Janeese Brownlow, entitled "Social Inequality and Racial Discrimination: Risk Factors for Health Disparities in Children of Color" outlines the effects of racism on children. Sanders-Phillips suggests that "One of the most profound psychological effects of racial discrimination is on general self-efficacy, which is a child's cognitive orientation and belief in his or her ability to affect future outcomes. Lower levels of self-efficacy are associated with risk behaviors such as drug use, aggression, and sexual

risk-taking.” (5) It is unacceptable that not only just children, but people, in general, have to go through horrific experiences that have to do with racial discrimination.

All of that being said, some regions do have racism under, what seems to be, a little more control than others. Take, for example, Latin America. According to opinion columnist Enrique Krauze, Latin America has a talent for being tolerant. Krauze states that “before every World Cup match in Brazil, the players lined up in front of a banner that read, ‘Say No to Racism’” (Krauze 1) Of course, Latin America hasn’t always been the most tolerant to other races, but according to Krauze, they are making great strides in eradicating racism. When asked why he thought racism wasn’t such a big ordeal in Latin America anymore, Krauze said that the reason racial slurs and prejudices haven’t been used in ordinary speech anymore is because almost the entire population is of mixed origins. There is not really one defined race, rather a melting pot of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The Latin Americans have essentially eradicated themselves of any differences that might cause prejudice.

When I read Enrique Krauze’s article “Latin America’s Talent for Tolerance” a strange, yet brilliant thought crossed my mind. Essentially, the Latin Americans have created a new race which almost everyone can be categorized into. If it worked for them, it could work not just for the United States, but for the rest of the world. The only problem with that, is that if everyone became the mixed Latin American race, then the Latin Americans might think themselves better. Plus that would take years upon years of selective breeding. So why not just create a whole new race that is unlike anything we have ever had or ever will have again?

In 2008, a man named Paul Karason appeared on NBC’s “Today” show. Karason was a simple man from simple beginnings. He labeled himself somewhat of a recluse, but that all changed when he went on the “Today” show. Karason suffered from dermatitis, and to try to

counteract his condition, he started to consume a silver compound. Silver has antibacterial properties, that was once used in the 1930's, before penicillin, to fight infection. Little did Karason, know that as a result of consuming silver for over 10 years, his skin turned blue. He tried to counteract the color change by taking self-medicated doses of colloidal silver, but it did not work. Sadly he died in September 2013, but not from his condition: "Paul Karason, 52, suffered a heart attack before contracting pneumonia and having a severe stroke..." (Moran 1)

I think Paul Karason was on to something. He may not have meant to turn himself blue, but I think he, inadvertently, solved one of the biggest problems this world faces today. The solution that I pose to racism is this: turn everyone blue. That may sound crazy, but I know it will work. It may take a little bit for the cure to reach everyone, but through supporters it can be done in no time. It will be a step-by-step process though, and there are several methods as to which immunity can be achieved.

There are over seven billion people in the world. There is a baby born approximately every eight seconds, and someone dies every twelve seconds. This is a net gain of one person every fifteen seconds ("U.S. Census Bureau," par. 1). Method 1's first stage starts with the most prestigious individuals each town, county, state, and country has to offer. People like the President of the United States, congressmen, mayors, secretarial staff, and famous celebrities all over the world will be cured first. It is important for the rest of the world to know that their leaders, and the stars that they love, are also behind the movement to end racism, because without leadership and initiative, there can be no change. Once the people see the change of their leaders and their beloved TV stars, like the Kardashians and Justin Bieber, "Bieber-fever" will erupt and sooner or later, everyone will follow suit and yearn to be blue. The next stage occurs in hospitals across the globe. In the nursery of each hospital, trained volunteers, staff, and

supporters will feed each baby a small amount of silver with a formula bottle. For newborns, many times it is uncertain just how much to give them, so it may take a couple of doses of silver to turn the child the correct shade of blue. It will only be given in small amounts at first, as to not darken their complexion too quickly. A color meter will be created insuring that everyone is the exact same shade of blue. There can be no variation if this solution is to work properly.

After every baby is the correct, magnificent shade of blue, the staff will continue on to the rest of the hospitals and give every person in the hospital the correct dosage according to the Blue Scale Chart. This chart is a guide that tells the staff how much silver is to be given according to height, weight, and current skin tone. If a person is of a darker skin tone, it may take a little more silver compound to achieve the correct results. Once everyone in the hospital is cured, the real fun begins. There will be clinics set up in every major city across the globe where people can come to be cured. I must mention that there is no cost for this cure. There will be plenty of silver to go around. Seeing that everyone will be required to be cured of this horrific disease, volunteers will be dispatched to go from door to door curing anyone and everyone that they can. Volunteers will also be instructed to go to every retirement home, or assisted living facility, to also cure the elderly and the staff in those facilities as well. This task, as massive as it is, can be achieved in the duration of approximately one year if all countries are compliant. If certain countries, towns, or regions are not compliant with the cure to racism, then that shall be considered a declaration of war.

In curing racism, there are a few other house keeping things that must be put in order. In order for this cure to work, it may be a good idea to change a few things about our class system as well, after all, in some cases racism is more like “classism.” With that in mind, I suggest that everyone be housed in a home that has the same square-footage as everyone else’s. Everyone

would be required to do their own part as far as providing food for their families, as not to suggest one person is better than another. As for the homes of the leaders, like presidents, congressman, and others of higher prestige, I suggest that each paint their house the correct shade of blue to show sameness among all.

Although Method 1 is expected to cure most all of the world, there are still other methods that can be used under certain, special circumstances. If, for some reason, the silver doesn't work, or a person is allergic, Method 2 will be put into motion. In this process, booths will be set up where a person can get, what can be called, a 'tan'. These booths will be similar to modern day spray-tan booths, except instead of becoming tan, that person will become the correct shade of blue. Each street corner will be equipped with a Blue Booth. In essence, a person would go into the booth Clark Kent and come out Papa Smurf. The dye used is water proof so it won't wash off, and it doesn't have to be re-applied. Still with both of these methods, I am well aware that some will still not be able to come and be cured due to various reasons. This is when Method 3 comes in handy. I know that some people live out in the middle of nowhere, and won't have any volunteers that come to their homes to cure them, and they won't drive to civilization to be cured. That being said, Method 3 is how these beloved citizens of Earth will be cured. Using a method similar to that of the Peace Corps., airplanes will drop supply packages to those in remote locations. In those supply packages, we will provide the normal rations that the people require. The rations that they receive will contain one of two substances that will turn their skin the appropriate shade of blue. The substances used will either be a silver compound, or indigo dye.

While all of the world is being cured, I will have a team of scientists experimenting behind the scenes. These scientists will be looking for a way to make people blue using only

their genetic make-up, so that in the future, people won't have to take silver supplements, they will just be blue naturally. The scientists used, will be the leaders in the field of genetics. The team will include Dr. Jekyll, Dr. Seuss, Dr. Ruth, and Dr. Phil. They will first experiment on cadavers, using their knowledge to alter the genetic make-up of the cadaver's skin cells therefore altering skin color. Once a viable result is achieved, those genes will be isolated and then converted into an air-born pathogen that is non-toxic to the recipient, but will alter their skin color to become the appropriate shade of blue. This pathogen will not harm animals, or plants. It's only function is to cause human skin to turn blue.

This whole solution may seem a little farfetched, but, I have to say, it is anything but. This solution is quite plausible indeed. Some might argue that blue is not the appropriate color for everyone to be. Some may argue that a different color is appropriate. To this I must disagree. Blue is a year round color. Blue is the color of the sky and the color of the ocean. It is perfect camouflage! Others may say that turning everyone blue would cause everyone to lose their sense of uniqueness. Well, here's the thing, uniqueness is the cause of racism, is it not? Everyone has their very own unique skin color, yet it is the cause of tremendous amounts of ridicule. The way I see it, if being unique caused racism, then being the same should rid our world of racism. Plus there are still other ways to be unique. The way one dresses, acts, and numerous other things allow people to still feel unique.

Racism. It's not a word that has the best meaning. Immediately when hearing the word, people cringe, and put up their guard. I cannot disagree, but with the creation of a new race, the horrible problem of racism will be furthermore and forever gone. That stain that once threatened to blot out a thriving society will be washed away. We will be cleansed of that horrid spot forever. Even the word will be deleted from the dictionary itself. We will cut the word out of our

lives, and we will sew the pieces back together to make a new and glorious masterpiece. We will love each other. We will love ourselves. We will finally be one people. With all of that, we still cannot forget our past, because without our past, there can be no future. I can only hope that racism has taught everyone a valuable lesson; the lesson that everyone is special in their own way. It shouldn't be the color of your skin that defines you or any other aspect of your physical appearance. The only thing that matters is what is on the inside; who you truly are. I know, and I am confident, that by making everyone the same color, people will look past just the skin of another. They will look at what is on the inside and see what they had missed before. It's been a long time coming, but it's finally near. I see a new beginning just over the horizons; a new dawn, a new day, a new life for all of those that live on this patch of ground we call home.

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This Is Me

Kyra Hill

My roses aren't red,

My violets aren't blue.

I'm a different breed of girl,

I'm telling the truth.

I'm a diamond in the rough,

and very hard to find.

I'm not really into girly stuff,

It isn't worth my time.

I'm in love with football,

the Denver Broncos to be exact.

I prefer them over a Barbie doll,

and that's for a fact.

Brotherly Love
Karen Holmes



The Fight

Venecia Middlebrooks

I have never been so scared until I was shaking in my shoes at the skating rink. I was young and very boastful and never got scared too quickly. As a young person, my mother used to tell me that hanging with a lot of people will keep me in trouble. My mother used to tell me to always watch who I called my friends.

When I was sixteen years old, I used to hang out with a lot of girls. I was quiet but would fight at a drop of a dime when I had to. My mother used to tell me that those girls were not my friends, and that I was being stupid as an ox to think that they were my friends. But me being me, my head was hard as a rock and did not want to listen. They were my friends, and I did not want to let them go.

One great afternoon, I asked my mom if I could go to the skating rink. My mom looked at me with a frown of despair, scared like she seen a ghost because she did not want me in any trouble that night. She said yes but told me to please be safe. I walked back in my room to get dressed. I thought I looked as sharp as a tack; people could not tell me anything at all. As I was on my way to the skating rank, I had a bad feeling come over me. I could hear a voice saying, “Don’t go: stay home.” But me being me, I still went.

As I walked inside the skating rank I passed a group of girls who were whispering among themselves. But I just kept on walking by. As I was standing on the side of the skating ring floor, I saw the girls walking my way talking. I got kind of nervous because I was by myself at the time. As they made it to where I was standing, I looked up at them and asked, “May I help you?” Even though I was shaking in my shoes, I was not going to let them know I was scared. Before I could move, one of them grabbed my shirt, and then all the fighting sounded like popcorn

popping. I was swinging at people left and right like I was Mike Tyson in a brawl fight. I was able to reach down to pick up a skate to hit one of the girls. It sounded like I had cracked a pecan. The fight was finally broken up, and I left and went home. It was like I had gotten stabbed in my back in my back because I did not even know what was going on. The shame of having to go home and tell my mother she was right all along was hard for me to do.

From that day on, I let a lot of so called friends go. I listened to the warnings that my mother would tell me. To hear my mother say I told you so was like a punch to the gut. Today as my own children are growing up, I catch myself telling them the same thing that my mother told me: be careful who you call your friends. This was a true lesson learn for me.

Geometrical Shapes
Samantha Gipson



Rose in Hand
Brooke Childs



Alternate Ending

Jessica Weiss

The novel *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin actually ended with the main character, Edna Pontellier, escaping society and her responsibilities as a wife and mother by committing suicide....

Alternate Ending

The waves continued to control Edna. Even in her last moments, she was over-taken by the thing she feared the most, being controlled. She decided that this was not how she wanted to go. There must be better ways, but it was too late. She eventually gave in and awaited her death.

As she opened her eyes, she expected Hell, but was surprised to see the face of a sailor over her body.

“I could see your body out there just a floatin’ so I hopped out of my boat and got ya. I’m sorry if I messed up your plan,” he said with eyes watching Edna’s every move. She couldn’t speak, although thousands of thoughts were racing through her mind.

“Where are you taking me?” Edna asked.

“Well where are you from, m’a...”

“That doesn’t matter,” Edna cut him off, “I asked where are we going?”

“Well ma’am there is a little city just a few hours away. There is a train station there and you can go where ever you need to go. I’ll even give you the money.” Edna responded with a nod and closed her eyes and dreamed. This was exactly the opportunity she needed. She could get away! She didn’t have to be “Edna Pontellier, wife of Le’once Pontellier and mother of two” anymore.

“What’s your name, miss?” Edna hesitated. She thought for a moment before she answered.

“Mary” she said, “My name is Mary Taylor.”

“Well Miss Mary, I’m sorry we had to meet like this, but it was a pleasure.” Edna answered with a slight nod and smile.

The hours passed in silence as she rested in the sailor’s small boat. As she sat there, she whispered her new name over and over. She dreamed of all of the accomplishments Mary Taylor would achieve. When they arrived, she stepped off the boat in the men’s clothing that the sailor had given to her and smiled. This was her new beginning. She took a train to New York City with only the little money from the sailor in her pocket. She didn’t have much but she didn’t care because she had her freedom and independence. It was a new and wonderful feeling.

When she arrived, she worked as a ‘bed and breakfast’ clerk for a year. With every cent she received from that job, she bought her own art gallery with a little room in the back for her own work. This was everything that she had ever dreamed of. Everything was perfect, until one cold, January morning.

The day began as every other day. She woke up and fixed her long hair into a tight bun. When she looked into the mirror, she didn’t recognize herself. It had been nearly twelve years since she was rescued by the sailor. The day began with the usual crowd. The couple from across the street and the rude old lady with the strange accent arrived at their normal times. It all seemed like an ordinary day as she began her daily ritual in her gallery. Suddenly the door opened again and Edna saw an unfamiliar-familiar face. She lowered her head as to avoid eye contact.

“I assume you are the owner?” the newcomer asked.

“Yes,” she answered, “My name is Mary Taylor and I own this gallery, “ she said holding out her hand.

“Hello, Miss Taylor, my name is Raoul Pontellier.”

“Good morning, Raoul, now I apologize but I must get back to work. “

“Wait... Uh miss sorry to bother you but..... I was wondering if you offered lessons?” Raoul asked.

“No, I don’t, “ Edna answered instinctively.

“I know it’s a lot to ask but everyone says you are the best around and that I should ask you... Please miss... I really want to learn.”

“Alright, but all we will do is paint. No speaking of anything else.”

“Oh yes ma’am! Thank you! Thank you!” he said while running out of the shop before she could change her mind.

That night Edna lay awake. It was a lot to take in. How had he found her. She wondered if Raoul would recognize her or if he would pry into her life making her reveal more than she wanted to. These thoughts left her restless as she tossed and turned as the hours ticked slowly by.

“Sit up straight boy, didn’t anyone ever teach you that?” Edna said while walking into the gallery the next morning.

“Ha! No my father was never much of a ‘good manners’ type and my mother died when I was very young.”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” Edna said uneasily.

“Oh no, you don’t have to be sorry. Ya see, she killed herself so she didn’t want us anyways. I mean, yeah, it was hard growing up without a mother, but my brother and I, we figured it out. We were probably better off without her.”

“Yes you’re probably right,” Edna said slowly. “But I thought I said not to speak of things other than painting.”

“Oh you’re right ma’am. I’m sorry.” The rest of the morning passed quickly as Edna taught him the fundamentals of painting. She couldn’t help but notice how quickly he seemed to catch on to it and what a natural he seemed to be. She watched in silence as he suddenly said, “My father says that I got my love for art from my mother.” Edna could not bring herself to respond.

Three uneventful months passed. Edna wondered how her son really didn’t recognize her. She thought Le’once must have destroyed every picture of her as if to erase her memory from the household. She didn’t blame him. She understood why they would all have reasons to hate her.

One evening, as she was closing the gallery, she noticed a stack of things Raoul had left behind. Among them was a folded photo. As she slowly unfolded it, she was shocked by what she saw. It was a family portrait with herself smiling in the middle.

The Inside
Rosa Lloyd



Did God Climb into Space?

Rhoda Yost

Genesis 1:14-18

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven . . . Genesis 1:17a KJV

As my three year old looked at the sky one night he asked, “Did God climb up there?”

“Why would He do that?” I responded.

With an expression that screamed This is so obvious, Mom!, he clarified for me, “To hang the moon.”

I smiled at his expression of faith. “No, He is big enough to hang the moon without climbing.”

As I related the conversation to my mother, she added more perspective. “He is also small enough to live in the hearts of believers.”

Although God sometimes seems preoccupied or impersonal, I need to remember that He cares about what happens to me as His child. Every detail that enters, exits or changes my life has been planned by Him. Just as clouds may hide the moon, even when I do not see God I can know that He is present.

God, help me to remember that the power You used to hang the moon is the same power You use to work in my life. Amen.

Sunrise
Katlyen Castanon



The Night

Kyle Misner

Something awful has me wrapped in white. Drain my soul of the will to fight. Glowing yellow in the bedroom light. The night waits patiently for me to relax and think I'm safe. The night pounces on me like a cat after an injured mouse waiting for death. I lay awake wide-eyed and jumping at every sound. I can hear a faint "swooo swooo" like something is crawling slowly across my bedroom floor.

Just like a child I cover my head with the covers hoping to deter what horrible amalgamation the night has sent for me. My guard slowly falls as I slip into a deep sleep. The Night reaches his frigid mangled hand "klik klik" out from the darkness for my throat. He is holding me down with little effort as I struggle to move and breath. I'm gasping for air like a fish out of water. Why can't I scream?! The night is a blanket of black swallowing me up into nothingness.

I see it in the door way, floating toward me. The figure is like a black cloud of noxious fumes taking my breath and leaving me paralyzed. I can't think straight. My mind is racing just as fast my heart. This is the end I think. I've meet my end I'll be swallowed up into the darkness never to be seen or heard from again. Then I see the door, my only hope for survival in the hellish nightmare. I try to stand, but my legs are like noodles, flimsy and weak. I fall to the floor, scraping my face against the abrasive carpet. The carpet burn feels like coals on my face in my disoriented state. I summon the strength of ten men to stand up, and as quick as it came it was gone into the night. I stood alone in the glowing yellow light pouring in from my bedroom window.

Being afraid of what's in the dark is not only reserved for children and stories for around the camp fire. I have suffered from night terrors and sleep paralysis most of my life. People who

have never experienced this mostly write it off as crazy, and I need to grow up for being afraid of the dark. It can effect anyone on any given night. Sleep paralysis is a real issue that many people deal with. There is no getting used to the Night's cold touch.

Miles to Go
Rosa Lloyd



Behind The Trunk

Jordan Bowman

Filling the room with cold dark air, the Chinook's back door dropped. While shaking my rifle, sweat rolled off the barrel onto my boots. Twenty pounds of parachute seemed so heavy on my back. What was I about to get myself into? The only thing that was clear in my mind was to protect my brothers. That's all the training I could remember. Being a soldier meant having your buddies back, yet looking out of the plane, I felt so alone. There were six of us, on the go, ready to jump out into the vast darkness of enemy fire. I was first in line. Rookies were always first to drop from the sky.

Sargent Miller yelled, "Its go time boys. Camp, get the hell off this plane and don't forget your rifle. You look like this is your first time jumping, rookie."

"Yes Sir Sargent, right at it," I said.

Gun in one hand and parachute clip in the other, I was ready to make the biggest jump of my life. I was doing it all for myself. I had nothing back home but a few friends. My parents had died a few years back, and I hadn't even thought about starting a family yet. I was still a kid at heart, letting my life lead wherever it wanted, and somehow it lead me here.

I mumbled to myself, "Here goes my life."

I jumped from the plane expecting the cold air to smack my face. It didn't. Instead, I felt my head instantly burn. My hair almost felt as if it were melting off. The sky lit up, and I was falling to the ground. The Chinook I was just standing in, realizing where my life has lead me, was blown apart by a single 3 foot RPG. I was alone, sinking slowly to the ground, with only heli parts falling around me.

Making it to the ground, I refused to believe what had just happened. I refused to think about all my fellow soldiers. Hopping to hell I didn't see them or even a body part laying on the ground, I picked up my rifle and ran. Staying low and out of sight, I headed to a tree line that was at my horizon. I heard a loud crack in the distance just as a rock exploded in front of me. It was a sniper, my worst fear in a fire fight.

"It's just like track in high school." I told myself. "Only 400 meters. Only 50 seconds to get there."

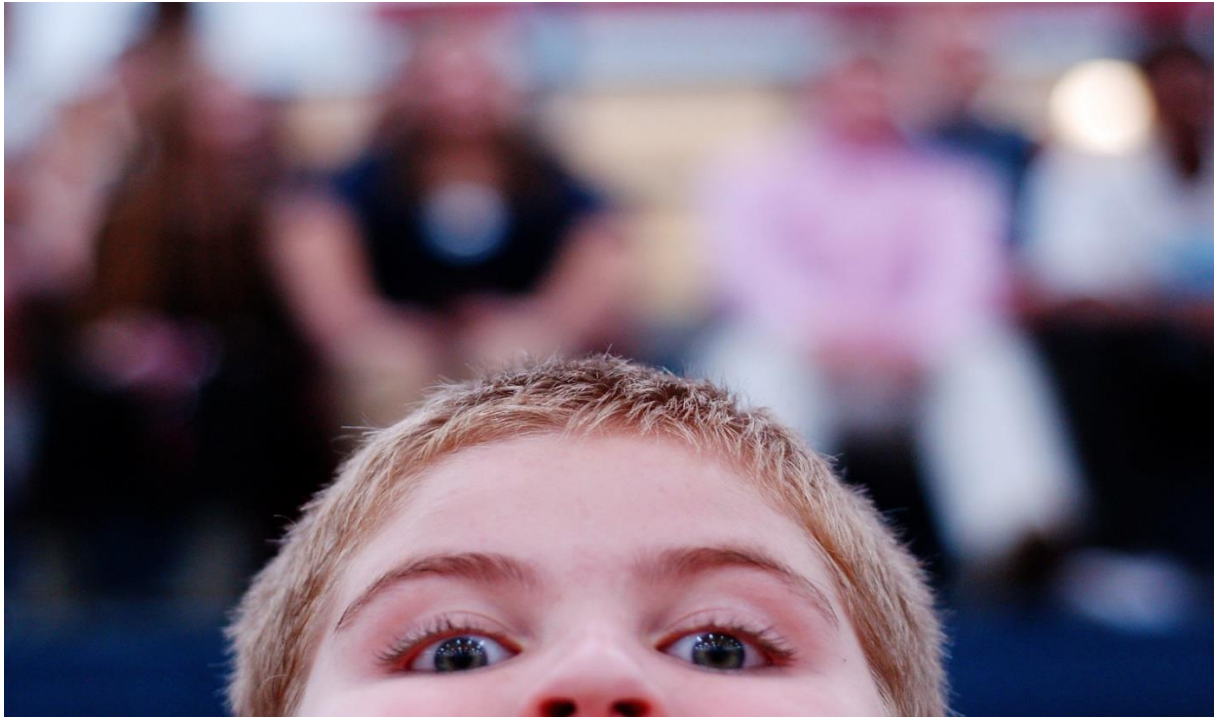
I bolted to the tree line as fast as I could. Running through water and over rocks, I heard a crack coming from far behind the tree line every five seconds. I was coming to the finish line 20 meters, 10 meters, 5 and then it hit me. A 50cal ripped straight through my left knee cap. I fell to the ground as a red mist of blood covered my face.

"Five meters from this tree. Come on Camp get there!" I told myself.

The sniper was still shooting. I could almost feel the bullets zipping past me. Bullets were splitting through the tree bark, blasting bits and pieces of the tree in my face, sticking right to the blood on my face. That was the least of my worries at the time though. My leg was spitting most of the blood I had right out of my body. I crawled to the tree trunk and laid there. I was lightheaded. I was dying. He was still shooting, filling the empty night sky with the sound of a crack every few seconds. As if he had unlimited ammo, he never stopped firing.

Approximately 15 minutes past, yet it felt like hours. I started to feel relaxed and at ease, yet frozen at the same time. I made up my mind that I would stay behind that trunk before I let that sniper hit me again. I stayed there forever. The cold dark sky fell deeper and darker ever second. I laid there under that trunk and gave up on life. I had lost all the blood I could lose. I couldn't wait see my fellow soldiers again.

Untitled
Joanna Perez



Coach Taylor
Mary Ivy



Dear person with a broken heart,

Although you may not see it now, there is light at the end of the tunnel. You may feel like there is no way to move on from the past, but let me tell you that there is. The hurt right now feels like it is unbearable. It feels like there is a hole in your body- half of you is missing. If you look in the mirror, you will realize that you're still whole. The person whom you once loved did not take any of you. Do not dwell in the past, but look forward to the future. If you have hurt or struggled in the past with your ex, they were not the right person for you. God has a plan for you and your life. He will guide you and protect you if you allow him to. Do not let the sorrow and pain take over your life. You need to allow time for healing because it is necessary. Don't put yourself back out there immediately. Protect yourself. Learn to move on and continue with life. Keep yourself busy. Go out with friends, exercise, and pray. Someone out there is dying to meet you. Don't let that one person hold you back from living a great life.

Ashley Field

Dear anyone who has fallen in love with a drug addict,

I know it's hard. It's the hardest thing in the world, and it seems hopeless. I feel like being addicted yourself would be an easier struggle than this one. Nothing will screw you up more than loving someone addicted to substance. You want to save them, but you know you can't. They can destroy you, and they will. I want you to know that I've been in your shoes, and it's a tight fit. Some days, you just want to kick them off and walk away, but there's something inside of you pleading for you to stay. It's even harder when you watch the one you love lose himself to it. It's like a slap in the face because you never saw it coming. I know you're hurting. I know some nights you cry yourself to sleep, praying to God to save them. Because you want them back. You need them back. I've never been the person to sugar-coat things to make them sound better. I feel like the truth is what people need to hear. The truth is that you need to walk away, no matter how hard it is. The truth is that the person you are so madly in love with isn't thinking about you anymore. They are thinking about their next high. They are thinking about the next thing they can get their hands on. Keep in mind that this person isn't their addiction. He will never be his addiction. But his addiction runs his life now. You were his whole world, I know. But not anymore. And I know that none of this is fair. I know the thought of walking away scares you. Trust me, it scared me too. The biggest mistake you can make right now is staying. Take it from me, the girl who stayed. I kept holding on, hoping that he was still in there somewhere. I refused to give up on him. But he wasn't, he was gone. Everything he once was is gone. Leaving him is going to break you, it is going to shatter you into a million pieces. But once everything is over, you will be a new person. A stronger, better person. You're going to have to learn to live your life without this person who you love so dearly. I know it's going to be tough, but you will learn. I want you to know that there are going to be nightmares, and there are going to be breakdowns. It's okay. It's okay to think about them. You don't have to completely forget about them. And let's face it, you're never going to. I'll never forget about him either. It's

something that's going to stick with you, but you will grow from it. Don't stay and lose yourself like I did. This isn't going to be easy, and it's going to take some time. His addiction runs his life now; don't let it run yours, too.

Lauren Bolt

Rain
Christopher O' Caveney

On the rooftop I hear the sound of the raindrops falling down
It falls so softly I can barely hear
But I know it is rain and that is quite clear
The rain is so peaceful and so full of joy
It reminds me of when I was a little boy
I felt so free I could do as I please
I could fly like the wind with the greatest of ease
Just like the rain I could cover the land
And I held these thoughts in the palm of my hand
But just like the rain I wasn't alone as a few things followed as I started to grow
As I got older I started to wonder if the bad things in my life were just like thunder
Crashing together dark clouds of grey
Like the anger inside that eats me away
Lighting is the wickedness that you can actually see
Unlike the fear that is trapped within me
But there is one thing I know for sure
That I can't control the rain whether it sprinkles or pours
So I'll just sit here and relax and forget about the pain
And listen to the sound of the beautiful rain

Rain
Jenna Barnard



Even If
Nathaniel Armstrong

I can't sleep, unless you're right here next to me
When I look into your blue eyes I see an older us.
Happier than we are now and you're so beautiful
God has brought us safe this far; He'll see us through.
Whenever I hold your hand, know, I'll be there for you.

Even if the sky is falling down
It will be like we're underground
Nothing could ever hurt you, now
Cause I've got you safe in my arms

You're the angel that I know that God has sent to me
So these next words, they will always be in my heart
I thank God for blessing me with such a miracle
I need you to know that I do and always will
Love you with all of my heart; I swear it's true

Even if the sky is falling down
It will be like we're underground
Nothing could ever hurt you, now
Cause I've got you safe in my arms.

Even if the sky falls down
I'll have you safe in my arms

Flower Bomb

Rosa Lloyd



Untitled
Terrance Redmon

As I lie in my bed,
And stare at the ceiling.
I ponder these conclusions,
My heart has been feeling.

Why did it turn to this?
Was this the way to go?
It's not going to fix anything,
Nor will it help me to grow.

What could've been done,
To fix what is broke?
I was told to pray about it
And to show a little hope.

There are other feelings that have,
That still linger in my heart.
They have their own problems,
That also plays a part.

I'm gonna state my opinion,
It will be hard to believe
But if you don't wanna be in my life,
please do me a favor and leave.

I'm turning over a new leaf,
And making a new beginning.
Never again will I fall victim,
To another tragic ending.

The Angel of Chemo

Rachel Johnson



This Is Where I Am From

Kaylynn White

I was born in the Windy City
but raised near the fields
where my Nanay questioned my bruises
and practically raised me herself
because my mom was too young
and we were scared of our father

I am from purple and gold
where music is my escape
from the stress and anxiety
of growing up
but I have my brother to help
...or I use to

I am from height and glasses
from Mariah and Shania
from reading books
and being forced to make perfect grades
from being saved at camp
to being too scared to mission on my campus

I am from “freedom”
and daily routines
From being told to follow my dreams
when it’s just my mom’s dream
I am from the fields,
but I belong in the Windy City

The Mighty Mississippi
Peyton McMahan



Sonnet to the One Lost
Katherine Cotton

his arms wrapped around my waist aren't like puzzle pieces;
his eyes aren't like chocolate but more like mud;
his soft lips pressed against my neck resemble leeches,
and whenever the mud gazes at the spring leaves, my heart thuds.
if jawlines could pierce diamonds, his might make the cut;
the veins in his hands are staggered rivers;
he could never walk the runway due to his lack of a strut,

but when his rivers cross with my rivers, the fear of rejection shivers.
if people were defined by lengths of rope, his compared to mine wouldn't be much longer;
if torsos were stones, his would almost be a boulder;
if mud were able to suffocate, i would be a goner
if love were emitted through parts of the body, ours would be a shoulder.
 and, yet, when his laugh rings through my ears,
 he has the power to diminish my fears.

A Woman Like You

Marlene Soto

As I look around me I see many women,
But none compare to you.
The way you care for your children
Only proves how good of a mother you are.
When I think of the future
I think of a smart, friendly, understanding woman
A woman like you.

When I grow up and have kids of my own
I will remember everything you taught me.
How to be patient, understanding, and calm
Under every circumstance.
And when I have a daughter of my own
I will teach her everything I know
On how to be a mother and
A woman like you.

Elsa
Kirsten Wattigney



The Path

Madison Groves

Two Paths

Both crooked and worn

One has roses

the other thorns

I reached these roads

in the dead of night

to find there was

no light in sight

First I looked left

then to my right

and felt my stomach

drop

Now roses aren't always good

they can have minds

of their own

and harm the ones who choose

to follow

As I looked to my left

I saw the thorns

surrounded by the

nice

(continued)

green

inviting

grass

And stars to light the broken path

But to my right I found

the rose

broken

withered

yellow

The path was fried

dried by the sun

scarred by the battles

temptation had won

I took one last look

down each path

and saw something

shine on the left

I said to my self

what's

one

little

scratch

And began to take the path on the left

Only later

did I find

(continued)

That I had cheated

death

Frohes Neues Jahr
Greydon Williams



I'll Hold On
Billy Davis

Storms are gone within a midst,
Your love is like tenderness.
Say goodbye to the cloudy days.
Your loneliness is gone away.

The stars up in the sky;
Stand for the sparkle in your eyes.
We will stand by each other side.
Our love is stronger than our mind.

I'll hold on.
It's one thing that I want you to Know,
The Love I will never let it go.

Your touch has such a warm embrace.
Your smile is just a hint of grace,
Humbled with intense Fire.
You're my deepest desire.

I'll hold on.
There's one thing I want you to know
The love I will never let it go.

I'll hold on.

Reality
Jessica Krob

There once was a very young child,
Who lived in Adventure World,
And there was never a dull moment,
A game always being played,
Everyone happy and full of wonderful joy.

Adventures taken,
Discoveries made,
New friendships created,
And at the end of each and every day all was still,
And all was quiet.

Adventure World began to die,
Children less exuberant,
More serious,
And focused on themselves.

Then the end of the wonderful world came,
Everyone moved away,
Creating their own world.

Joy followed some,
And hate followed others.

Deer Season

Hunter Drury

Colored leaves are falling down.
People bustling around the town.
But I am nowhere to be found
Far away from human sound.

I have reached my happy place
Far away from the human race.
Deep in the woods in my tree stand
Where I can watch the distant land.

Patiently I wait and look
Maybe I should have brought a book.
Wait. What's that? Can it be?
A big buck for me to see.

As he draws near, my heart starts to race.
That big buck has set his pace.
I take aim as he tries to leave
But it's too late, he hits the ground.

Green Hideaway

Rachel Johnson



For the Greater Good

Willie D Williams

As I stared into his eyes of deceit, I couldn't stop the rage I felt enlarging in my belly. My blood began boiling hotter than an inferno volcano. My madness grew grossly out of control. If he only knew the thoughts that were running rapidly through my mind, he would cringe with fear. Whoever said that you were man's best friend was sadly mistaken and should be here to partake in the backlash that I was about to commence. Yes! It is good versus evil, the oldest battle of mankind. Nothing could have prepared me for what was about to be revealed unto me, "that evil evokes an even greater good."

This day started no differently than any other. I woke to the rays of sunlight that penetrated through my bedroom window. I eased out of bed so gently trying my best not to provoke any movement that would have awakened my wife, out the room, down the hall, and finally out the back door to embrace Mother Nature in all of her glory. It was a brisk and cool morning, but not as cold as the look that was on his face. It wasn't a look of "I've been a good boy. May I have a bone and a hug?" No, this was the look "I am glad that nothing can be use against me in the court of law," he barked. He did it. I am sure of it. I had to find out what it was so I can punish him for whatever I know he did.

So I began surveying the entire yard, not to overlook anything that was broken or out of its place. I found myself tapping into my own animal intuitions. Even hoping that Mother Nature would be so kind and help me sniff out what my dear friend had done. As I rustled through the fallen brown leaves and in every corner of my back yard expecting the unexpected would jump out of nowhere and give me a reason to explode. As I moved ever so gently I felt his eyes piercing through my heart as if he was trying to control my body to stop me from discovering what he had done. Right at the moment when I thought my investigation would turn up fruitless, much to my chagrin there out the corner of my angry eyes appeared green, red, and black wires hanging off my central air unit. No! I screamed. You couldn't have after I've provided you with bones, balls, and other chewable toys to play with. Why did you have to chew the wires off my central air unit? Oh this means WAR!

As I approached my four legged enemy, I had nothing but bad intensions on my mind. The look on his face expressed he knew that he was in big trouble. Well I hope those wires provided you with all the protein and nutrients your body needed today. No food, no water, no pat on the head from your faithful master today. I should just open the gate and let you free! Freedom, is that what you want? Well, today is your lucky day. Just as I proceeded to bend down to pick up a stick, I saw a strange looking stick lying right in front of my useless dog paws. After taking a closer look my rage transformed into fear. No, it wasn't a stick. It was a hideous brown and green snake. It was lying there with no sound or movement. So I encouraged myself to take an even a closer look. The deadly snake was dead. His head had been chewed into pieces and its intestines where hanging out of his belly like the wires on my central air unit. Ha! You can't do any harm to me looking like that. I started to wonder, who or what could have been so brave and protective to destroy this evil and ruthless serpent? Then, I said, "Hey boy, are you okay? Do you

want me to bring your favorite bone? Come give me one of your famous hugs, Old Buddy, Old Pal! You know I love you.” What are a few chewed wires between good friends?

Suddenly I had a revelation that would change my view on life forever. It was revealed unto me that when we are forced to face life’s disappointments or our biggest fears, we as people can have the assurance that it could be a whole lot worse. Even though evil could sometimes seem like an unmatched enemy, good is ever present and sure. So as I continued to watch my friend out of my kitchen window that day, I realized for every evil there is a greater good.

You camped out underneath my skin
Katherine Cotton

you camped out underneath my skin
flowers were stuck in your throat
you couldn’t bring yourself to fire the gun to
shoot bullets through the fighting bear’s pelt
flames bubbling in your chest didn’t diminish the
replica of my smile hiding in the cracks of your lips
and the roaring in my eyes couldn’t stow away
the shakiness of our legs

Flight in Prague
Greydon Williams



