



THE SPIRE

2011 Literary Magazine



THE SPIRE

2011 Literary Magazine

The Spire is The Governor's Academy student literary magazine. Students submit their poems and short stories to student editors who then decide which entries will be published. The Spire has been a voice for student literary creativity since 1966.

Winners of the Murphy/Mercer Short Story and Poetry Contest are also included in The Spire. The A. MacDonald Murphy Short Story and Thomas McClary Mercer Poetry Contest was created more than two decades ago to honor the work of the two English masters, whose combined service to the Academy totaled more than 65 years, and to encourage students' pursuit of creative writing. Students submit entries which are read and voted upon by the English Department. First prize winners in each category receive a book prize and their works appear in the annual publications of The Spire each spring.

Student Editor:

Eloise Willemssen '11

Student Assistant Editors:

Katie McKay '12

Megan Mullin '12

English Department

Faculty Advisors:

Maud Hamovit

Tom Robertson

Cover Art:

Mark Huang '11

Special thanks to faculty and staff in the departments of English, Fine Arts and Communications.



Christina Schwertschlag, '11

The Stresses of Shadows

Nora Kline '11

I stepped out of the car and was immediately swarmed with the sound of girls yelling “hellos” and parents reading off their “to-do” lists. New students stared in awe at the bell tower and the new science building, but I wasn’t one of them. Well yes, I was a new student, but no I did not gawk at how tall the buildings are or how shiny the marble floors looked. I had already been to campus a few dozen times for various sporting events and award ceremonies. This was Jake’s school, not mine. If it was up to me, I would have hopped on a plane and gone to college somewhere across the globe, only to fly home if a death in the family occurred. But free will in my family was just a myth.

“Kate, don’t forget the rug in the backseat.” My mother was like the roadrunner. Everywhere she went she left a cloud of dust behind her, as people stared at her speed and diligence, as well as her amazing ability to maintain a perfect perm

through all the madness. She was a super-mom of sorts. “Never mind Kate, I’ll get it!” She threw the rug over her shoulder and slung two extra large duffle bags over her arms.

“Mom, you know that no one is timing you, right? It’s not like whoever moves in the fastest gets extra dining hall passes or anything.” I rolled my eyes and followed my mother to the dorm.

The goodbye could not have come fast enough. After she smoothed out all the creases in my rug, my mother’s eyes began to tear up and her voice cracked. “Well, dear, have a little fun, alright? Work hard, don’t forget to do your laundry, make sure to keep your room clean...especially now that you have a roommate and all, you have to be mindful...”

“Mom! I got it.”

“And umm...call home please.” With that, she placed her hands on my shoulders and pulled me close to

her. “I love you, Katharine.”

“Love you too, Mom.”

“And you are?”

“Kate Bryant.”

“Bryant? Are you by any chance related to Jake Bryant?”

“Umm, yah. He’s my older brother.”

“Wow, what an amazing young man. Does greatness run in the family?”

“...we’ll see,” I murmured.

It seemed like everyday I faced an encounter similar to this one. Everyone tells you that college is the place where you can reinvent yourself and become who ever you want to be. Well, I didn’t get that luxury. I was simply Jake Bryant’s little sister. And that came with the pressure to live up to the “Bryant” name. Who knew that one person could make such an impact on a college? Leave it to Jake to put me in a shadow.

I had never been one who had to work very hard for my grades, unlike Jake who spent all night doing homework in high school, and I’m assuming in college as well. I had always managed to pull off A’s and B’s in high school without really trying, but when the rare C popped up on an exam grade, my parents threw a fit. So college was quite the whiplash.

“Alright everyone, welcome to your first college English class. I know most of you probably have not been in a class of quite this size before but try your best to stay involved. I have posted your syllabus online but your first assignment is to write an analytical paper on the one book that was assigned this summer. It is up to you to choose a proper topic. Today is Monday, and the paper will be due the next class – on Thursday.” My professor looked around the room at the intimidated faces. I couldn’t help but be a little taken back by receiving an assignment on the first class day but this wasn’t high school anymore – things were supposed to be harder. I figured I could probably just whip out the paper on Wednesday afternoon, seeing as how I only had one class that day.

I spent the next couple days overwhelmed by my amount of free time, as well as my amount of homework. The procrastination that I had learned in high school definitely was not my ally in college. When Wednesday rolled around, the thought of writing a paper had drifted to the back of my head.

“Hey Kate, do you want to go play Frisbee in the quad? It’s so nice out!” My roommate, Emily, pulled on her sneakers and grabbed a water

out of the mini fridge.

“Ugh, I should probably start writing my English paper. It’s due tomorrow.”

“Oh come on, it’s only 2-o-clock. Come hang out for a couple hours. You have all night to write. Besides it’s your first paper! Your professor won’t be too hard on you guys.” Emily grabbed my hand and pulled me away from my laptop.

“Umm.. Okay. But only for a little bit.” I snatched my sunglasses and headed out the door.

After an afternoon filled with Frisbee, water gun fights, and mingling, I collapsed on my bed as my eyes slowly closed and my mind drifted away. When I finally woke up to the sound of Emily slamming the closet door, it was already 9-o-clock.

“Shit! I have so much work to do! I can’t believe I slept for that long.” I jumped up from my bed and started shoving papers into my backpack while I wrapped up my laptop charger.

“Chill out, Kate. The library is open all night. You’ll be fine.” Emily chuckled at my frenzy as I grabbed a Redbull and ran out the door.

“Hey, how’d that late night English paper turn out?”

“Ugh, I don’t know Em, I just passed it in. I kept falling asleep at

the library so I kind of just wrote it as quickly as possible. Hopefully everyone else’s sucks too.”

“Don’t worry about it. Freshman year is one big adjustment.” Emily dumped two packets of sugar into her large coffee as she took a bite of her energy bar.

“Ha, tell that to my parents. I just got a 57 on my Calculus quiz. Isn’t that crazy? I got straight A’s in math last year.” I looked down at the time and started packing up my books. I had a group meeting at the library for my psychology class that I was about to be late for.

“Well, hang in there, Kate. You’ll be fine!”

But it turned out that I wasn’t going to be fine. My English professor emailed us to let us know our papers would be in a folder outside her office for us to pick up. So I practically ran to the English building. I fumbled through the folder and finally came to my name. I flipped to the last page. D+.

“Shit,” I whispered.

“Dude, same here. This ain’t high school anymore, huh?” I looked up at the boy in my class and nodded.

“Nope, definitely not high school anymore.”

I started to flip through my paper, which was smothered in red ink, when my blackberry started



Ryan Kelly '11

vibrating ferociously. I whipped it out of my pocket and saw my psych classmate's name blinking on the screen. I shoved the paper in my backpack and ran off to the library, as the D+ retreated to the back of my mind.

"So, how'd you do on that English paper?" Emily continued to type viciously on her laptop.

"Ah, thanks for reminding me. I hadn't thought about it for a while. D+... Not my best." I looked up from my psychology book to see her reaction. She continued to type away.

"Well, you know, you're adjusting. You'll get the hang of things."

"I don't know though. I'm struggling in all my classes. I used to never have to kill myself for good grades, but now it's like pulling teeth."

"I mean, I don't know if you're 'that kind of kid,' but aren't you taking the same courses your brother took when he was here?"

I closed my psychology book and threw it on the floor. "Yah it's basically the same schedule. 'That kind of kid?'"

"Well, I'm sure he has old papers and tests that can help you, ya know?"

"Emily, I'm not one for

cheating."

"No, no, I don't mean cheating. I mean like use his old work as study guides or 'suggestions' of sorts." She laughed and closed her computer. "Do you know how many papers and shit your professors have to grade? Do you honestly think they'll notice if your essay 'resembles' one they graded a few years back?... NOPE. Just think about it."

What she said seemed to make sense. Would anyone really notice? "Well... I grabbed my brother's old hard drive before I left because I was going to empty it and use it as a backup." At that, Emily jumped off her bed and ran over to mine.

"Perfect! Go get it. What's your next English assignment?"

As we sifted through all over Jake's old documents and pictures, I couldn't help but feel excited about my new helpful "tool." "Holy shit, there it is! That's the same play I have to write my next paper on."

"Click it!"

When I dropped off my English paper a few days later, I actually looked forward to getting it back. Jake had always gotten impressive grades in college, so I knew his paper would be more than adequate. I felt like finally I was going to be able to live up to the standards that my parents were setting for me, and so

what if I had a little outside help.

Every night I sifted through Jake's old hard drive in search of anything that could help me with my classes. I compared the file names to my English syllabus and the two almost matched up perfectly. As I started reading one of his essays, my blackberry interrupted my newfound adrenaline. Without looking at the phone I just hit "send" and spoke.

"Hello?"

"Hi honey! I haven't heard much from you lately. Just thought I'd check in. How's everything going?" I never thought I'd say it, but my mom's voice actually gave me a pleasant essence of home.

"Hey mom. Things are pretty good. I've been pretty busy lately."

"And how are your classes going, dear? Working hard, I hope!" My mom's unique chuckle rang across the phone.

"I think I'm doing pretty well. I just passed in an English paper that I'm feeling good about so we'll see."

"Oh, that's great honey! What was the essay about?"

"Ummm, some play that we read in class."

"What play?"

"You probably haven't heard of it... *Oleanna*."

"Of course I know *Oleanna*. Your brother wrote a paper on that

play and he received that writing scholarship for his submission his freshman year. Such a scholar, that boy. I'd love to read yours too."

"Wait, what scholarship thing?"

"His English teacher loved his paper so much that she submitted it in a freshman writing competition and he earned an impressively high ranking. Remember that award ceremony we went to when he was a freshman? You must remember, I think you wore that paisley dress, dear. Well anyways, please email me your paper! It'd be so fun to read it and compare your opinion to Jake's!"

"...umm, well.. ya.. okay... umm who was his English teacher again?"

"Katharine, you know he had Professor Ryan as well. I told you that when you got your schedule!"

"Mom, I have to go. I, ummm, have to go pick up my laundry. I'll talk to you soon. Bye."

September 27, 2010

Dear Katharine Bryant,

Please come to my office as soon as possible to discuss your most recent assessment. It possesses striking similarities to a paper I received four years ago. I will talk with you soon.

Sincerely,

Professor Elizabeth Ryan



Carolyn Hoffman '11

The Adult Table

Katie Reilly '11

It was a late November evening. Darkness was falling quickly outside, proof of the changing season. Already, it was becoming unbearable to leave the house without wearing layers of warm clothing. Looking out into the dark street, which was visible only from the glow of a few street lights, Frances Reilly stood by the kitchen window of her home in Taunton, Massachusetts. Eddie Dion, who had been her and her husband's friend for years, would be arriving soon. The oven hummed behind her, reminding her of the pot roast that would be done soon. Her refrigerator was decorated with colorful magnets and school papers, distinctive signs that there were children living in the house. Pausing, Frances listened to the floorboards creaking above her. Her four sons, Michael, Paul, Mark and P.J., were playing upstairs; although, it sounded more like they were simply stampeding back and forth across her floors. She listened to the footsteps, to the boisterous voices and to the sounds of board games

and toys being set up. Despite the annoyance of the ruckus, she didn't ask them to quiet down. Frances was never one to yell. Instead, she couldn't help but smile as she heard their voices, carefree and happy. She was able to make a few words out of their muffled dialogue, and she strained her ears to listen.

Mark heard the doorbell downstairs, becoming -immediately excited because he knew exactly what it meant. Mr. Dion was here. His parents invited him over for dinner every once in a while and Mark looked forward to it each and every time. He loved his visits and he never tired of hearing the stories that Mr. Dion consistently brought with him. Last time, he had regaled them with the tales of his recent trip to New York City, speaking comically and colorfully about the sights and sounds of "The Big Apple." Mr. Dion had described the city's bright lights, tall buildings, busy people and expensive prices. "I paid \$3 for a small glass of orange juice!" he had

exclaimed as Mark listened closely, fascinated by both the storyteller and his stories. He could have listened to him talk for hours, spellbound in admiration.

Knowing Mr. Dion was downstairs once again, Mark lost interest in the game he had started to play with his brothers. What he really wanted to do was sit in the living room, listening to Mr. Dion's stories and the adult conversation followed it. Fortunately, he didn't have to ponder the situation much longer because his Mom soon called him and his brothers downstairs to say hello to their guest.

Mark was first to bound down the stairs, making loud thuds upon the stairs in his haste. His brothers followed with less enthusiasm. They said their hellos and responded politely to each question asked of them. Eddie sized them up at once, exclaiming, "Look how big you've grown!" The boys' smiles brightened with pride at the compliment. Mr. Dion inquired about school, "How are your marks?" The boys responded with a chorus of "Good" while Eddie laughed, "Mine never were." After a few minutes, Frances excused her sons and three of them dashed out of the room, running back upstairs with loud thuds on each step, but the noise this time came from only three sets of footsteps.

Mark returned to the living room, dragging with him an

ottoman taken from another room. He pushed it into the center of the room, strategically positioning it next to his mother's chair. He sat on the floor, his elbows leaning on the ottoman, his hands cupped under his chin and, with eyes darting back and forth from one person to another, he listened.

It was a cold, November morning, Thanksgiving Day, and I was ten. Bundled up in layers of sweaters and jackets, I walked quickly up the driveway toward my Aunt and Uncle's house alongside my sister and my parents. Once we knocked on the door, family members erupted in greetings. Auntie Donna answered the door, "Happy Thanksgiving! It's been so long since we've seen you. You girls look so tall." My Uncle Paul, always the comedian, chimed in, "Look who finally decided to show up. Mark's here, everyone." My Grandma came over to give each of us hugs, "It's so good to see you." She was the quietest of the bunch and the sweetest by far. Her four sons and her husband were constantly joking and teasing, but Grandma would just shake her head and smile as she listened to their laughter. "It's their Irish humor," she would say.

We moved into the kitchen and the scents of Thanksgiving met us at the doorway. Unloading the pies that I had been assigned to carry inside, I sat down at the kitchen counter. Already, the house was

humming with many simultaneous conversations, something that always seemed to amaze me. I heard my Uncle Paul's deep laugh in another room, intermingling with holiday music. I heard my cousins' shrill giggles as they chased each other upstairs. I heard Auntie Donna dictating her stuffing recipe to my Mom as they peered into the oven, checking on the turkey. I sat there, absorbing my surroundings in the midst of the commotion that I had come to expect with any and all family gatherings.

Looking around the kitchen, I saw the turkey browning in the oven, the potatoes cooking on the stove, and the array of vegetables waiting to be placed on the two tables, already beautifully set for the occasion. The dining room table was set with fine china for twelve people, wine glasses placed to the right of each plate. The second table was in the kitchen and set with china of a less expensive variety for only four people. Smaller glasses soon to be filled with milk, rather than wine, were placed to the right of each of these plates. This was the kids' table and, at ten years old, it was the table I was designated to sit at.

I sat at the table obediently, just as I was expected to. I loved my cousins and I liked spending time with them. I even recognized that there were considerable benefits to sitting at the table where no one

is force-fed the vegetables that he or she "forgets" to eat. That being said, as the oldest cousin, I was also well aware that the most interesting conversation would not be taking place at this table. The action was at the adult table and I knew it, even if none of my tablemates did.

As I ate my dinner and laughed with my cousins, I kept one ear on the conversations of the other table, catching bits and pieces of stories that I desperately wanted to hear in their entirety. Each time the adults burst into laughter, I wondered what had caused the excitement. Each time they toned their voices down to whispers, I became more interested, craving to hear the story even more because they deemed it unfit for our ears.

We were excused from our table and my cousins and my sister dashed out of the room, running back upstairs with loud thuds on each step, but the noise came from only three sets of footsteps.

I ventured into the dining room, dragging my own chair with me from the kitchen. I pushed it into the room, strategically positioning it next to Dad's chair. I sat among the adults, my elbows leaning on the table, my hands cupped under my chin and, with eyes darting back and forth from one person to another, I listened.

My favorite stories were those that told me more about my Dad's



Amanda Pease '11

childhood. I loved hearing about the time my Dad and his brothers had tried to play “circus” in the front yard, a game that resulted in my Dad breaking his wrist after being tossed into the air as a trapeze artist. I laughed as I heard about their Cousin Joe-Joe’s old habit of breaking their new toys whenever he visited on Christmas morning. One year, that same cousin convinced the four Reilly brothers that he could fly and, as they stood shivering in the snow, Joe-Joe leapt from the roof of the garage, landing miraculously safely in a pile of snow.

I loved hearing the stories from my Dad and each of my uncles about their paper routes and their jobs in restaurants and supermarkets, where they had worked during high school. I heard about my Great-Grandfather’s speakeasy, which my Grandpa had worked in when he was ten years old. I also heard stories about our family still living in Ireland and the Great-Grandparents who immigrated to America so many years ago.

While the topics ranged from the humorous to the serious to the politically relevant, I continued to learn more about my family’s heritage and history. With every story and every comment, I sat by quietly and listened, chiming in only with laughter. I saw new sides to the personalities of my family members, even that of those who didn’t say much at all.

Looking across the table, I spotted my Grandma. She was absorbing every bit of the conversation just as I was. Her eyes moved back and forth, following the actions of each of her sons, her husband and her grandchildren. She looked around the table, genuinely happy in the presence of the people who meant the most to her.

It is Thanksgiving once again and my family is gathered at my Aunt and Uncle’s house, just as we were eight years ago. At eighteen years old, I am now technically eligible to sit at the glorified “adult table,” but instead, I ate my dinner with my cousins as usual. In keeping with what had become a habit of mine, I returned to the dining room after dinner. I pulled up a chair next to my Dad’s and I listened to the conversation.

“What are you doing, Katie?” my Dad said jokingly, knowing the answer already. He always said I was like a human tape recorder, always listening and absorbing the information in my surroundings. He knew this was my favorite place to be.

I thought about Grandma. Dad always said she was the same way, listening tirelessly to the conversation at every family dinner, not willing to miss anything.

“You know if Grandma were here, she wouldn’t have left this table for anything,” my Dad said.

“I know,” I said. I remembered.



Amanda Pease '11

Crumbled

Jessica Xu '11

The contacts I left on my windowsill every night
Accumulate by my bed. Day by day, they break
Into pieces of transparent flakes as I, asleep, fight
Against winter storms never soothed me awake.
Going to classes and hanging out with people,
In the day I follow the same routine without delay.
Uninterested in the time spent and the food ate,
Yet I see the world with different eyes everyday.
Each night two pieces of contacts are added to the pile.
New pieces fall apart, as older ones wear down,
Gradually, smaller and smaller, gone, meanwhile
I sleep and wake up to live with a new pair till sundown.
As they disappear, we move on to the next day,
Never collecting them or noticing their crumbling away.



Mark Huang '11

Abstract Art

Andrew Coleburn '12

I find it hard
to take all the raw emotion of life
and place it precisely on the canvas.
I find it much more effective,
to throw, splatter, smear, spray, dot, and slap
whatever color of whatever material
that your eyes draw you to
all over the canvas and unfortunate surroundings.
It's a better form of expression.
Is it confusing?
Potentially.
Is it complex?
Incredibly.
Can anybody besides the artist discover its story?
Probably not.
But life just can't be represented in a fixed way.
Or perhaps...
I'm just bad
at placing paint precisely on a canvas.



Frank Barba '12



Claire Lilly '11

Boots

Erin McDavitt '14

Sloshing across the campus grounds as I
Noisily tread along in my tall, dark boots.
Mesmerized by pale white against harsh black.
I always make sure to pick the best route -
One with rough terrain and a large supply
Of snow.

My eyes are fixed on how the boots move
Through without a mark, and I think
Why can't I go through like so?
It would be easier to walk on the brink,
But next time I will try to prove
That I too, can walk right through.

Stone Wall

Christina Merullo '14

“Dad! Wait up!” I stumbled, desperate to catch him. Typically, there wasn’t much that could beat exploring the woods on a fall afternoon with my dad. The sound of the leaves crunching beneath my feet and the cool air rushing through my lungs always lifted my spirits. I loved making new discoveries and observing the ways of nature. Walking through the mess of trees and dead leaves, I used a trail of rocks created by colonists a long time ago to help balance myself. It was about three feet high, had rocks of all shades of gray, and winded through the infinite woods.

“Dad! Wait for me,” I gasped. Finally, I caught up to him. He was tall-nearly twice as tall as I was. He wore a down jacket with jeans and had a gray baseball cap to cover his salt and peppered hair. As we walked, he told me stories about a long time ago. When we would come to a fork in the trail he informed me to “turn this way” or say “this is the right way” and point to the right path.

When I didn’t turn the right way he would always lead me the right way and when I tripped over a log (I’m not very coordinated) he picked me up. I became apprehensive when I heard gun shots in the distance, but he reassured me that it was only the army base nearby, and that hunting wasn’t allowed during this time of year. He pointed out the animals he saw, like the fox, and told me to stay away from them.

Dad seemed to know everything about the woods. He used to be a Cub-Scout when he was my age. He knew about how to tell the time without a watch, using the location of the sun in the sky. He even showed me how. Once we figured out we had been in the woods for about an hour, we turned around and decided to head back home.

Soon enough, we arrived at a place on the trail where we could turn either right or left.

“So, which way are we going to turn?”

“Well, don’t you know, Dad? You

brought us here; you told me you had been here tons before.”

“I thought you were keeping track of which way we were turning.” His bushy eyebrows repositioned, confirming his confusion. His expression started to make me feel worried, too.

“Uhh, well, I think we should go left and if we don’t recognize anything turn around and walk the other way.”

“Alrighty then, we’ll turn left.”

I was only six! How was I supposed be able to find my way through the woods? I wondered how long it would take to make it back to my cozy home. The blood rushing through my veins mimicked the velocity of the water in the chilling stream nearby. We walked on and on to a point where the endless time began to aggravate me. This time, my dad trailed behind me. I searched around trying to find something that I had seen before.

Then I saw something gray and about a yard high.

“The rocks! Dad, I found the rocks! Follow me!”

I began to run toward it. As I ran, it grew larger and larger. Finally, I reached out and pressed my sweaty fingers on its cool, rough surface.

Behind me, I heard my dad shouting, “Christina! Slow down! Dad cannot run right now!”

In response, I jumped up onto the rocks and waved my dad on. He

jogged the rest of way back to me and helped me off the stone.

“Why are you running so fast?”

“Dad! I know how to get home from here. These rocks lead right to the front of our house. We can follow them home!”

“Gee, Christina, that’s not such a bad idea. Let’s give it a shot!”

We followed the rocks downhill since before we had turned around, and now we were walking uphill. Then, through the lofty pine trees, I saw my home. I wanted to run inside my warm house to defrost and sit by the television with a hot cup of cocoa.

When we made it inside and were walking upstairs, my mother asked, “What took you so long?”

“We got lost,” my dad replied.

“Yeah Ma, it was so scary. We were lost in the woods all alone. But then I was brave and stayed really calm and figured out how to find home. I used the wall made from stone that leads to the back of our house as a guide.”

“Wow, good job Christina,” Ma said, throwing Dad a worried glance.

“I had no idea where I was. I don’t know what would have happened without you, Christina,” my dad told me, glaring back at her.

“I did do a good job, didn’t I?”

“You were awesome! I was really lost.”



Emma Collins '12

Broken Heart

Eloise Willemsen '11

If you choose to listen I will show you how a broken heart is made. (You don't need to fall in love, to bind yourself to another heart with ropes or chains.) Just walk the rickety catwalks of life and be very careful not to step into the void. Watch carefully now; this part gets tricky. Climb down the fraying rope ladder. Test each rung before you put weight on it. If it snaps you will fall into the abyss heart full, unbroken. Now find that house, the one at the bottom of the ladder, suspended in a place no one else wants to go. Do not enter. Find an open window, watch the little boy hide when his father enters. Watch his mother sprint from the bedroom as soon as she hears his heavy footsteps on the floor, placing herself between the man and boy, arms wide: protection. Hold on tight as he grabs her wrists and throws her down, the house will sway dangerously and your right hand will slip, don't panic. When you peer back through the window the little boy is clinging to his father's right leg, his eyes full of malice, his small foot lashes out, connecting with her shoulder. Her eyes have gone cold. A bruise is spreading across her cheek, and a dark line of blood is running down her arm, where the tip of his shoe broke skin. This is when your heart will break. You will turn away quickly not wanting to see anymore, and return the way you came. The only difference is the heavy feeling in your stomach and the few times you stumble because you cannot replace the scene you just saw. If only you could back to where you were when you stood at the precipice ready to descend.

Dead Roses

Anonymous '13

Dwelling on my love of yesteryear
I lay in dark solitude, dreaming about you
While again that lustrous tear carefully descends my face,
Slowly following the path of its predecessors
And entering my once vivacious mouth with salty grief.

As I look to my side I see that pot of dead roses.
I remember when they were alive, vibrant, and beautiful;
They flourished through darkness and light;
Through day and night, while I lived for them.
I awoke every day to smell their excellence, to live in their name;
To be one with them; To share my love.

Though today I find the willow of myself painfully
confronting them.
They are a pernicious travesty of their amorous past;
Day by day grief consumed their core until now;
Today, they are dead; only their physicality remains.
I wish, vehemently, for their departure, but I know
Dead roses never leave.

Past my next tear a pedal escapes and falls
As if to vex me, to mock me, to praise its escape from the hell
From which I will never escape.
I pray to be that pedal and wake from this nightmare,
But the chains of love are everlasting
...and the condition remains.

Your perfidy lived in impunity, and now-
The image is unshakeable; the feeling- unbreakable
The roses- immobile forever in my heart
Because dead roses never leave.

Beautiful Sounds

Cassie Clavin '14

I hear the teacher walk
Into the classroom, as my mind begins to stalk
The tip of my pencil, meeting the paper.
Listening to him would most likely be safer,
But I hear that sound, similar to
Perfectly sharp scissors gliding through
Plain, white paper. It creates lines that
Swirl, twirl, flow, circle, eventually creating a black
Hole, resembling an ocean in my eyes.
The designs on my paper seem contrary to what I spy
On the board. Thin, formally drawn crosses and
Dashes. Some with dots over and under; some stand
Alone. As the sharp tip glides across the top
I try my best, and want to make it stop,
But continues flowing, As if it had a mind of its own.



Madison Tsao '12

Fire and Lambs

Galaxie Story '12

Mary had a little furnace
That set the field ablaze
She sat upon her linen sheet
And watched her sheep bleating
Among the growing flames
They crept closer to her cloth
Slithering through the flowers
Mary's fire ended
All her frolicking days

Floating Misery

Galaxie Story '12

Why can't my smile be real?
All I want is to feel numb
Like everybody else
These thoughts, I want to forget
Banish them from my twisted mind

Misery floats along my path
Brushing against my body with every new step
Where it seeps into me
Becoming no different than the blood
That I hate to say is mine

Reality

Andrés Sáenz '12

I blame Understanding and
Knowledge.

Before their arrival I used to
dream
About confusing and changing
shapes.

I dreamed of flying
In a crimson and golden sky
Above a deep white ocean:
No ground.

Life unbound,
I was led by imagination,
Followed by dreams.

But Understanding and
Knowledge,
Unannounced, appeared one day.

Understanding, tall and skinny,
Wore a black suit, black tie.

Knowledge, old and small,

With round glasses, gray eyes, and
grey hair,
Lacked hope.

They grabbed my dreams and
Placed them in a small, dark box
Called reality.

Now I walk,
And no matter how far I go,
My feet are attached to the ground,
And my mind is unable to dream.



Kevin Chang '11

The Four Questions of Almo

Jaicey Bang '13

Once upon a time, there was a man named Almo. He was the youngest of three sons, who had to raise his parents by himself, since he was the sole-remaining care giver. His other two brothers already married and left home long ago. His parents were too ill and old to earn money and maintain their living. Therefore, Almo resolved that he would make a conscious sacrifice of his young years and not marry in order to dedicate himself to the care for his parents, out of respect and consideration for them. He diligently and intensely worked every day to earn enough money to support his parents. In the morning, he woke up before sunrise to work on the farm. During lunchtime, he came back home again to make lunch for his parents and to feed the livestock. In the afternoon, he went to the market far away from his town to sell the crops that he cultivated in the morning, and came back home after sunset.

He repeated the same daily

routine over and over for many years. All of these jobs did not allow him any opportunity to break his routine and spend time on himself. However, even though he worked tirelessly, his family's financial situation did not get better, at all, because he needed a lot of money to treat his parents' illness. He was now running out of money to pay his parents' doctor. Almo became frustrated and depressed by the hopeless situation. He couldn't discuss the problem with his parents, because he knew his parents would feel bad and guilty when they realized that Almo was having such a difficult time earning money for them.

Despondent, but not defeated, Almo returned to throwing himself into his work. One afternoon, like all other afternoons, Almo was selling his crops in the market.

"Fresh vegetables here! Carrots! Cucumbers! Radish! Apples, half price!"

Unfortunately, not many people

were buying his vegetables that day. In the late afternoon, sighing heavily with a careworn face, Almo started to pack up all the products that he did not sell. As he was about to leave, a strange man came up to him and said, "Are you Almo?"

"Yes, I am. What is the matter?"

"I am a stranger here traveling around this region and now I am coming from your town. There, by chance, I discovered your, father fallen in a faint, and brought him to the doctor. Your mother was so shocked that she did not know what to do. I think you should hurry and go see them."

Extremely shocked and worried beyond words, Almo ran back to home, without even thanking the stranger. In his great haste to get back to help his parents, he did not realize that he dropped his wallet that contained all the money that he earned that day.

When Almo arrived the doctors where his parents were, his father had recovered consciousness and his mother had finally started to calm down. Relieved, he brought his parents back home and prepared to go to sleep when he suddenly realized that he lost his wallet in the market! He desperately wanted to return to the market to find his wallet, with all of his hard earned money, but he could not, as darkness had already descended and he was

not able to see anything.

The next morning, as soon as the sun rose, Almo proceeded to the market, where he quickly found the wallet that he lost the day before. Nevertheless, when he opened the wallet, there was nothing in it, but a piece of folded paper. Angry and frustrated that he lost all of his hard earned money, he unfolded the paper with trembling hands. The note read:

"Poor thing. Misfortune is following right behind you. Instead of beating yourself up over this, why don't you go to our great and wise king and ask him the reason for your hapless fate?"

Accepting this advice, Almo told his parents that he would be going on a trip to visit the king's palace.

The palace was very far away, and after climbing up a mountain for the entire day, the sun soon set and the darkness fell upon him. Almo then looked for a safe place where he could spend the night and get some sleep. He was worried that nobody would live on such a remote mountain. Fortunately, a light from a small house caught his attention and he walked towards it. Almo approached the humble house and meekly asked,

"Is anyone there?"

One woman, with a surprised face, came out and said,

"Why are you here this late? This

place is so far from the cities and towns that hardly any people ever come here.”

“I am on my way to the palace to see the king. Because the days are getting shorter as the winter approaches, I encountered the darkness of night without preparation. Since I do not have any other place to go, may I stay here tonight?”

The woman suddenly smiled and answered,

“Of course, sir. Come on in.”

Almo was relieved and glad that he found a place where he could sleep safely. The kind woman even brought dinner to him, saying,

“Nobody has come to this house for seven years. I am glad to have you as a guest.”

Almo, who did not eat anything day, hurriedly ate up the food that the kind woman brought. When his hunger was satisfied, the kind woman said, “Almo, it is rough and difficult to get to the palace. For what reason, are you going through such pain and agony to meet the king?”

“All my life, misfortune blocked everything I desired to do. I did all I could to earn money, but the financial situation of my home did not improve. My ungrateful brothers do not help me at all. Not long ago, my father collapsed and I learned that he is suffering from

a disease. However, with the small amount of money that I have been able to save, I cannot afford to pay a doctor to heal my father, unless I used the money I set aside to buy food to survive. To make matters even worse, I lost my wallet and now all of my money is gone. I am so vexed and outraged by these unlucky events that I am planning to ask the king why I am living such an unlucky life.”

“Then, could you ask a question for me when you get to meet the king?”

“What is your question?”

“Just like you, I have lived a hapless life. I am under the gloomy shadow of misfortune. I have married many times, but all my husbands have died on the night of our marriage. People who heard about this terrible story avoided me and called me a cursed woman, surrounded by dreadful, dead spirits. Also, no men wanted to marry me for fear of losing their lives, as my other husbands did. Please ask the king why I have to undergo such a terrifying ordeal.”

“Of course. I will,” answered Almo.

The next morning, Almo continued his journey to meet the king. However, he was soon lost and struggled finding the way to the palace. Fortunately, He saw a group of children so he approached them.

“Hello. Do you know how to get to the palace of king?”

The children kindly instructed him way to the palace. With eyes full of curiosity, they asked,

“Why are you going to the palace?”

Almo repeated the story of his misfortune that he told the kind woman.

“Then, could you ask a question for us when you get to see the king?”

“What is your question?”

“We have tried very hard, and for a long time, to get this flower to bloom. In order to delight the beautiful nymph in the flower, we watered it with golden bottles and decorated it with treasures and jewels. Despite our attempt, only a bud appeared, but not a blooming flower. Will you ask the king what is holding the beautiful petals under the green bud.”

“Of course. I will,” answered Almo.

Almo continued his journey to reach the palace. As he walked more and more, the palace got nearer and nearer, which pleased him. In due time, though, he came upon a deep and broad river he needed to cross. Almo, who did not know how to swim, collapsed on his knees with tears pouring from his eyes, frustrated by the thought that he might not be able to achieve his dream and goal. One drop of his

tear dripped into the river. The next moment, an ugly duckling appeared from the river. The duckling said, “Almo, why are you crying so hard?” “I am trying to go to the palace to see to the king. But I cannot make it, because the river is blocking my way.”

“Why are you trying to meet the king?”

Almo repeated the story of his misfortune that he told the children and the woman. Then, the ugly duckling said,

“Then, could you ask a question of the king for me when you get to meet him?” “What is your question?”

“Since a long time ago, I have tried hard to become a swan. I have these magic pearls that are supposed to help me change into a swan; but, even though I have collected a large number of magic pearls, I am still not a swan. Ask the king what is holding me back from being a swan, please.”

“Of course. I will,” answered Almo. The duckling, to thank Almo, let the man climb gently onto its back and carried him across the river.

After walking a few more days, Almo finally arrived at the palace and met the king. Almo asked, “My lord, why am I so poor and unlucky in every single event, even though I am a diligent and hard-working man? Why is heaven giving me such

agonies to endure?”

The king responded,

“You are a kind, assiduous and passionate man. The reason that you are facing all these misfortunes, despite your efforts and hard work, is because you do not help other people. You are so occupied with earning money that you do not care about other people. So, others think that you are a greedy and selfish man who is so rich and proud that you do not want to help them. You can get help from others, only if you help them.”

“Why does the woman, who lives alone on the mountain, lose her husbands so often?”

“She will not face such miseries when she marries a virtuous man who is willing to help others.”

“Why is the flower of the children not blooming?”

“Materialistic jewelry and treasure do not delight the flower nymph. A beautiful flower only blooms from true-hearted love and sincerity. Those children should be more serious and put more effort into raising the flower, instead of embellishing it with expensive ornaments.”

“Why is the ugly duckling not becoming a swan?”

“It is because the duckling is too greedy. He has three magic pearls, even though one is enough, and that is holding him from turning into a

beautiful swan. If he gets rid of two, he will become a swan right away.”

After the meeting with the king, Almo relayed the answers to those whom he promised. Then, the ugly duckling said,

“I do not need two magic pearls any more. You can have them, since you helped me become swan.”

The group of children said,

“Then, we do not need the golden water bottle and these treasures and jewels. You can have them, since you helped us bloom the flower.”

The woman said,

“You asked a question to the king instead of me, significantly helping me. If I have to marry a man who helps others, I want to marry you.”

Thus, Almo married the woman. The two magic pearls from the swan healed the diseases of Almo’s parents and made them even healthier than before, and Almo and his wife became very rich with the treasures and jewels he got from the kids. They spent the rest of their lives helping other people and lived happily ever after.

Junk Mail

Anonymous

The junk mail you receive is mail order misery.
You sign for it because no one else is around but Him.
Yet push away the bitter and squalid, and you are as gentle as snow.
There is something fiery inside trying to push its way out.
When the going gets tough not even mouth and muscle,
working in perfect harmony can pull you out. It is an appalling reminder
of your rocking disbelief; your Destiny.
You turn to magic for the key; you turn to the Gospel for the key.
For even the books of transformation turn away, keeping their distance
from Him.
Your strength is broken down by ultimate defeat.
I am your magic. The sound of a thousand trumpets would not be as
pleasing.
I will fight Him off. Don't cry for there is no turning back.
To me the end is fluid.
You changed and it's no accident.



Mei Li Johnson '13

Hope for Tomorrow

Felix Emiliano '11

I remember that first day like it was just yesterday,
The anxious nerves of a new year, a new start.
Most importantly I got to see you every day,
The person I held most dear in my heart.
But now things are coming to an end,
Soon this joy will be no more.
You, my closest friend,
You, the person I most adore,
Couldn't be found just to be lost,
I just want to hold on a little longer.
Hold on to what we have at any cost.
Against time, will our love be the stronger?
All these things just conjure up a lot of sorrow,
My only support is the hope I will be with you tomorrow.

History Class

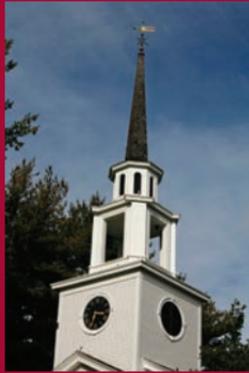
Alex Curran-Cardarelli '14

Returning to my lined paper I discover my black ink
Ran out on my four-colored pen.
This time I don't bother
To search through my bag for a replacement,
But instead I transform my notes into a mechanical bird.

Then I move to the next page and switch the colors with a clink
Kind of sound, as a jungle of flowers
Starts to blossom around me.
Soon the blue morning glories start to bleed
Into a river, drowning the unwanted words.

Eraser carcasses sink through the waves to the river floor
And grow into hard bits of coral.
With my fingers I swim through them,
Smudging the ocean plants to create
Stormy rain clouds.

The storm starts to expand even more
So I shred everything.
As if the doodled world I had created
Was enduring an Armageddon.
I return to my sparrow and make him a friend.



The Spire

The Governor's Academy
1 Elm Street
Byfield, MA 01922