



Pen
and
SWORD

2017 - 2018
A Brother Martin Publication



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Flip

Nicholas Russo '18

"Get Johnny, Jack, and Jim so we can all
decide this now, we've argued far too long.
A man or his memorial. Your call.
This will tell who gets to ping the pong."
A whir, a whiz. Decisions in the air.
Which team will punt? The world will watch each down.
The coin may tell who gets to take the share,
or who will own the horse and Triple Crown.
How so does one decide his fate upon
the shiny shill, so worthless in itself.
The thrower even acts just as a pawn.
He's picked without a care, like books on a shelf.
A clash, a teeter, clink, a rattle. Stop.
But fate was chosen long before the drop.

The Door

Nicholas Russo '18

As I lay in bed tinkering my new Lego set, his voice swarmed like a ringing in my ears, a trivial, controlling nuisance. I had been setting up the mismatched figures from sets of *Indiana Jones*, *Harry Potter*, and *Star Wars* on the wooden railing of my bunk bed, taking pictures after each slight adjustment of the pieces. I meant to create a stop-motion film of two adventurers travelling around my room. After half an hour of the pieces falling out of place and ruining the filming process, my agitation was already brewing when he called across the hallway.

"It's about time to get ready for bed," my dad said to me and my brother. After a few minutes of hearing no response, he stood in my doorway and placed his hands on the scarcely used chin-up bar we had installed in the room. Short and skinny, my father resembled myself in both physical characteristics and personality. "Whatcha up to? Getting ready for sleep?" he asked softly.

"I'm not doing anything," I responded as I hid the Legos under my sheets. I was not sure why it concerned him. I rarely told my parents about my side hobbies. "I'll go to bed later," I added.

"Well, if you're not doing anything, then what's stopping you from going now?" he pleaded.

"I don't know. I still have to get some homework done," I argued. Since I had entered the fourth grade, teachers had begun giving lengthier and more demanding assignments that hardly attracted my interest.

"Son, you need to start this stuff earlier.

It's almost eleven o'clock and that's way past your bedtime. You've got a big week ahead of you," he urged. He always argued that we needed rest for a big week ahead of us, whether the week was busy or not.

Frustration engrossed my thoughts, and I lashed out. "I just said I'll do it! You're being ridiculous. I don't even need sleep!" I yelled confidently.

"Alright, son. If you're gonna talk to me that way, then no T.V. at all tomorrow," he decided.

"Dad!" I lashed as I hurled a Lego car at the floor. It crashed against the wood in a satisfying explosion of tiny black and green pieces. I was furious. *I was only talking to him. What was so rude about what I said?* I thought to myself.

His eyes widened as he saw my Legos cover the floor. I watched as anger and disappointment flushed together on red on his face. "Nicholas! Make that the rest of the week, then!" he exclaimed. I had clambered out of my bed by then and erupted into a fit of outrage, swatting a stack of books from my desk, which hit the wall with a clumsy thump. My face burned like a lingering fever.

Hearing the commotion, my brother entered the room and pleaded with me in confusion and fear, "Nick, stop! You're just making it worse!"

"You shut up!" I retorted, chasing him into the hallway. Our routine started and ended the way it would that day at least once every month as kids. I would chase him through the house in rage until he ended up on the worn leather sofa chair in the living room. In defense he would position his legs to kick my

chest as I extended my arms, swinging each one in constant force against each side of him. He began to cry, though not out of pain. His bulky form could handle the reckless swings of my scrawny arms. Rather, his tears came from fear and disappointment for the constant fights we had as a family. I never cried during our fights. I was stronger, or at least I thought I was.

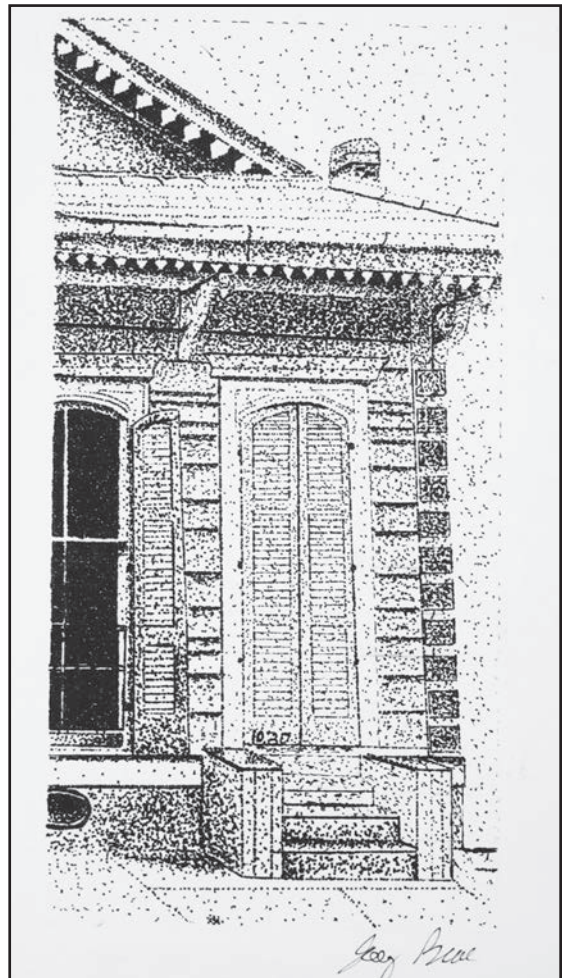
Suddenly I was pulled away and shoved against the living room wall by my father. "You're out of control! Why can't you behave instead of beating up your brother and breaking our stuff?" As he spoke he prodded me on the shoulder with each syllable, each prod driving me closer to breaking down. I clenched my jaw to stop my chin from quivering. I couldn't bear it any longer. I ran into my room and slammed the door with enough force to rattle my dresser as it violently clicked into the doorframe. I climbed into bed, stuffing my forehead into my pillow, leaving my eyes to stare at the baby blue sheets as they caught the tears that filled my eyelids and flowed down my cheek, darkening at each drop.

I hated how they treated me, as if I was some disappointment, or monster. They didn't understand me. I was justified in how I acted. Why couldn't they see that? Why couldn't they just leave me alone? I realized, after ten minutes, that my wish had been granted.

I was left alone. Before that night, every fight ended the same way. I would sit in bed, angry at the world, and wait. I would wait until my mom entered the room, and when she did, I would continue the fight: throw a shoe at the door or yell at her to leave, my voice still hoarse after yelling and crying. The second time she attempted to converse, I

would allow it reluctantly. I would lie in my bed and let her talk to me, and the conflict would resolve itself as she did. I knew that in reality, there was nothing reluctant about it by then or even the first time she attempted to enter the room. I needed the talk and the comfort she brought. I could never show it after how I had acted, but when the door opened I would rejoice to myself. But that night, I didn't rejoice.

That night, as the tears dried on my face, no one came to the door. I turned my head



to stare at the silver door knob, watching and listening for it to turn. When it didn't, I started to think. It didn't take me long to figure out that no one came because no one wanted to. Countless times, my mom would call me "destructive" or "a bully" for how I was acting. I would brush it off each time as some misunderstanding, but this was different. *Was she right?* I thought to myself. I realized the answer didn't matter. It didn't even matter whether I was justly angry at

them or not. No matter the answer, they didn't want to be near me. They were scared of me or too tired of my endless negativity and constant rebukes to want to be in the same room as me. I pondered the situation and realized I was the only one who could change it. I wiped my eyes, climbed down the ladder of my bunk bed, and for the first time, opened the door myself, stepping out into the hallway.



Rails

Jude McCaskell '20

It whizzed past me like a bullet,
sharp and fierce, fast and sleek,
a power of fire, smoke, and steam,
dressed in gleaming gray.
It was beauty, it was strength.
I never want to leave the trains.



Bear and Mare

Jeremy Baier '18

Deep in the forest lived a reclusive bear,
who meandered about on his weary feet
down to the river to catch a fish to eat.
And then one day he met a maiden mare
with a mane of fresh and flowery, fragrant hair.
Though suave, he tried but failed to be discrete
in expressing to her sayings sweet:
nothing to this maiden mare could compare.

Trotting through the meadow the mare pondered:
How could a love of such exist between
a mare and bear? What kind of love is this?
So to his cave with haste the mare wandered:
"O I cannot love you, a bear, it seems,"
and so she left him with a good-bye kiss.



The Walk Home

Ethan Ohler '18

*This story earned the Silver Key in the
2018 Scholastic Writing Awards in the category of Flash Fiction.*

The dust flew down the street as the wind picked up. The sun shined down across the landscape, making the sand gleam. Faheem walked down the war-torn road, a journey to return home after successfully escaping the conflict that had erupted two weeks before. His face was covered with sand, and his clothes were tattered from the long journey.

The once proud buildings of Naqadeh lay in ruin. The soldiers marched down the street with the tanks close behind, rolling along the road and making the ground tremble beneath the people walking. After the soldiers passed, some people began riding bicycles here and there among the occasional pedestrians.

Faheem stopped by a group of soldiers next to a tank that made a suffice checkpoint. A low-ranking soldier leaned on a brick wall. His uniform was a desert tan with a scattered camo of a dark brown color. The tank driver sitting on the barrel of the tank wore old boots and an tattered uniform. Another tank crew sat on the barrel of the tank reading a book. The low-ranking soldier talked with the tank driver about the war's progress as Faheem sat down for a break.

"I hear the Turks are going to attack near the Gadar River soon."

"That's ridiculous. Our defenses near there are impenetrable. The tanks over there are the best we have."

"I'm just saying what I heard."

"It seems crazy why the war started."

"It started over land."

"No, we found a rich oil supply near the Turkish border. The Turks say it's their oil."

"Those damn Turks they think they can have everything."

Faheem wanted to draw closer to hear more about what the soldiers were talking about. He moved to a shady spot near the remains of an old hospital. The piece of the familiar red cross still stood in front of the decimated building. Faheem found a comfortable spot closer to the soldiers than before.

"The heat is brutal today," said the low-ranking soldier.

"Imagine sitting in a metal tank all day with little air condition."

"Have you heard about the Westerners coming into the war?"

"Yeah. They want to help the Turks take back the land they say is theirs."

"I wish they had never found that oil. My brother would still be alive today if this war never started."

"It's a shame what greed can turn people into."

"They turn into monsters," chimed in the tank crew member, who had been reading the book.

"What are you three babbling on about?" an officer barked as he approached the three soldiers.

"Nothing, sir," the low-ranking soldier said back as he came to attention and saluted the officer.

"Get your gear ready. We will be moving to the Gadar River soon, and for you two, get your tank moved out of the middle of the street."

"Yes, sir," the three soldiers shouted back toward the officer.

Faheem felt he had rested enough and should get moving. He was almost home to his family. As his feet shifted in the sand to start walking, Faheem heard arguing come down the street.

Boom!

The entire ground shook. Pieces of land

flew into the air. Pebbles started falling on the ground around Faheem, who lay flat on the ground. Dust filled the air as smoke rose from the checkpoint right next to him. The cloud of dust and smoke made it hard for Faheem to see three feet in front of him. Faheem slowly rose from the ground, his vision blurry and everything spinning. As he slowly came to his senses, Faheem decided to get away as far as possible not even checking to see what happened. Soldiers running down the street towards the checkpoint stopped Faheem as he stumbled up the street.

"What happened?"

"I don't know. One second it was quiet, and





the next an explosion.”

The soldiers didn't ask any more questions and kept moving up the street into the cloud of dust. Their guns were still slung around their backs as they started moving again. Their rifles bounced against their backs as they jogged, vanishing in the dust cloud. Faheem raced down the street as fast as his weary body could move.

When he arrived at his home, it was still standing. The sandy bricks had a few holes, but nothing was critically wrong with the house. Faheem knocked on the old, green wooden door that felt like a strong wind could take it off its hinges. Faheem started thinking about what had transpired. He could have died. The thought of being so

close to death sent chills down his entire body.

The door opened slowly. Light crept out into the darkness that consumed the land. The weather was growing colder, but Faheem could feel the warmth of the fire as he waited outside for the door to open. The slow creaking sound left an eerie feeling as the door inched open, but a sudden wind ripped the door out of the hands of the child who was slowly opening the door, letting the light from inside flood into the darkness. Faheem shifted in the sand as he stepped inside the house. Before Faheem closed the door behind him, he took one last look at the vast landscape. He knew that the sun would rise again tomorrow.

Brier Lake

Griffin Ervin '19

A sanctuary,
a scene of true serenity,
filled with towering pine trees,
which house all the squirrels, blue jays,
robins, and cardinals.

In the morning,
Canadian geese blare their battle horns
en route to take over the neighborhood.
The *peck peck peck* of a woodpecker
serves as a natural
alarm clock, and one
can hear the conversation
of all the dogs in the subdivision.

At night,
one can marvel
at the bright stars
that decorate the still black sky.
And the *hoot* of an owl echoes
as their hunt begins
when the neighborhood falls asleep.



Alone

Roger Baudry '18

I am surrounded, yet alone,
mocked and mimicked like
a stray dog searching for scraps.
Sneering imbecile in a black leather
jacket snickers as you
stumble through the streets.
Successful, egotistical businessman
deems your character as insignificant
as your disheveled suit.
Clumpy brown sludge cakes

your sticky, black hair, and
chocolate streaks of mud stretch across
your shaggy face.

Me:
broken and misunderstood,
longing for someone to believe
in the man I am, away from the
mess that I have become,
wishing anyone could find a way
to love a person like me.





June's constant motion:
shaking sand, sizzling sun soaks
bright plastic colors.

-- Nicholas Russo '18

Driving down spillway,
distant power plants' smokes mix
with gray thunderclouds.

-- Jeremy Baier '18

The whispering wind
rustles the orange brown leaves
as the sunlight dies.

-- Trey Waguespack '18

He suffered for us:
the scourging at the pillar,
crucified and died.

-- Ryan O'Connor '19

The ocean's maelstrom:
relentless vortex of death,
poor frigate's fate.

-- Patrick Raley '19

Warm, orange-red glow--
crackling, mid-winter fire
burning through the cold.

-- Roger Baudry '18



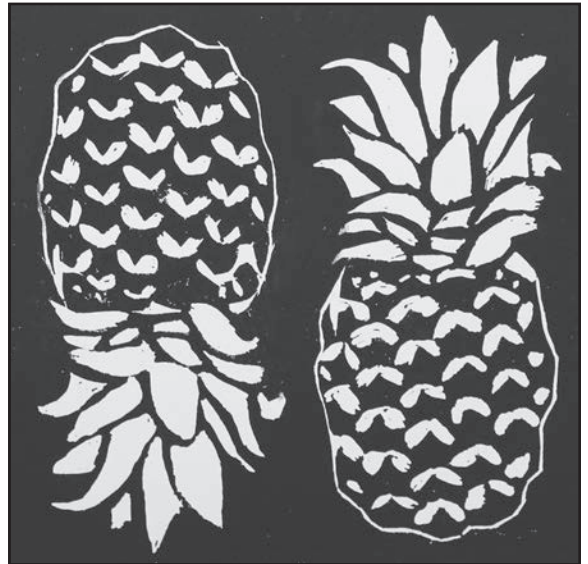
An unexplored world
looks innocent at a glance,
deceptively pure.
-- Patrick Raley '19

Looking up at the
azure sky, admiring the
simple emptiness.
-- Ryan O'Connor

The warm rays fall like
the waves crashing on the shore.
What do they fall for?
-- Ethan Meydrich '18

Surrounded by air,
We breathe but do not feel it:
conscientiousness.
-- Jeremy Baier '18

Haikus are odd.
They don't make much sense,
but I had to write one.
-- Evan Valenti '22



Flowers for Ruby

Ethan Meydrich '18

*This story earned Honorable Mention in the
2018 Scholastic Writing Awards in the category of Flash Fiction.*

A chilling wind blew rampant through the park, danced past each tree individually and left a shower of autumn leaves in its wake, the cold steering anyone from coming to the park. Only one person remained, a lone man sitting on an old, onyx bench. Neither the cruel wind nor the raining leaves seemed to bother him. He sat there with a black jacket and dark blue jeans, staring straight ahead. His unshaven face looked tired. He hadn't moved for a while, and maybe he wouldn't have moved at all, but suddenly a young girl came running to him.

"Dad," she said gleefully. "I found the flowers!"

A look of life glowed upon the unmoving man, and with the smallest smile he rose from the bench.

"Well, let's go see them then, Ruby."

The girl ran forward, unable to contain her joy as the man followed her through the park. They walked alongside a chain fence that stretched down to the end of the park. The wind picked up as he followed Ruby, making it hard for him to follow. Ruby turned and looked at him.

"Why aren't you at work right now?"

"Well, I'm out here taking care of you."

"And what about Mom?"

Ruby turned back and began moving forward again.

The man paused and tried to decide how to respond. He watched leaves blow in circles, forming little tornados.

"She left a while ago."

Ruby turned back at him again and seemingly stared straight through him, emerald green eyes peering into his soul. "Are you sure she left, or were you the one who left?"

The man wasn't sure how to answer her question.

Ruby had started to pull ahead from him, so he hastened his stride to catch up. He trailed her dark black hair that whipped behind her from the wind.

"It isn't that simple, Ruby. It's complicated." The wind picked up again, and the man started to question the point of this. "Ruby! Let's go back," he yelled into the wind.

If she heard him, she didn't seem to care, for she kept walking straight against the wind. The man grew frustrated and yelled out again.

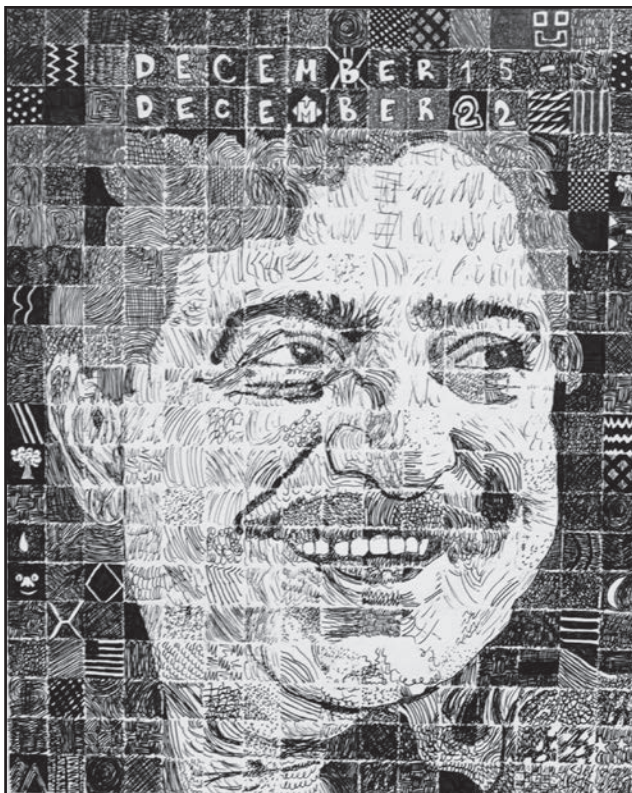
"Ruby, the wind is too strong, and it's cold! Let's go home."

This time she looked back, the joy on her face gone.

"We're almost there. Are you going to give up again?"

She continued walking forward, and the man realized he had no choice but to follow. They arrived at a large tree, one with no leaves remaining on its branches. The chain link fence ran beside the tree to the left, and a grove of dead flowers lay scattered at its base.

"Ruby, these flowers are all dead," the man said quietly. "Why did you bring me here?"



"But aren't they still beautiful?"

"How can they be beautiful if they're dead? They barely have any color."

"They're Mom's favorite."

The man examined the flowers closer. Pink roses crumpled and discolored. They lay on the ground in a small pile as if someone had collected them. The bud of the roses were starting to come apart.

"Okay, so they're not totally dead, so what?" the man asked.

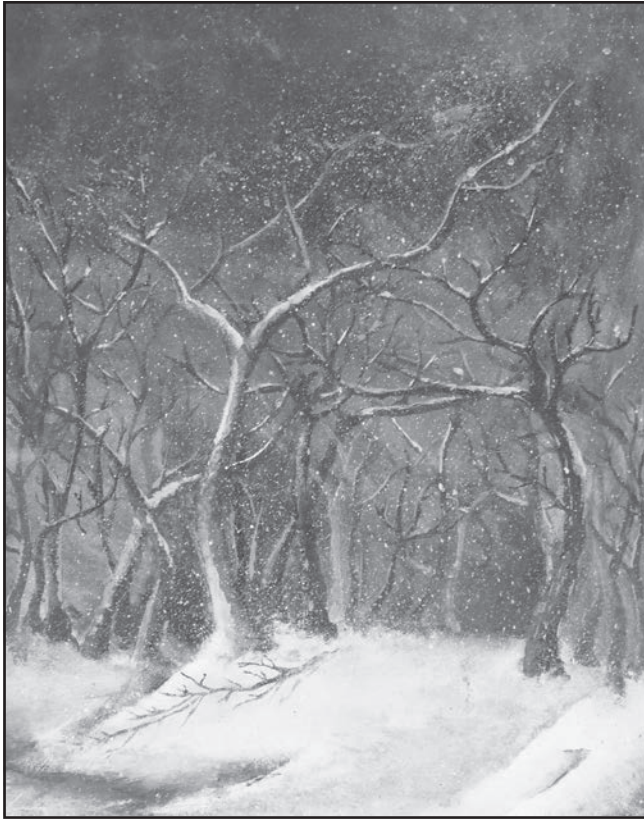
"You aren't very different from the flowers either, you know. You're barely alive." Ruby turned and looked into the man's eyes, her dark hair held up by the wind. Her emerald eyes once again pierced him. The sun seemed to turn with her and cast the shadow of the

chain link fence across half her face. Her face was blank as the man searched her face with his eyes.

A gust of wind blew again, causing the man to shield his face with his arm. He looked back to where Ruby was and found that she was gone. He glanced around him for a few seconds, until he remembered she was never really there in the first place.

The man stood there for awhile and stared at the flowers. Although the flowers were dying, the words of Ruby stayed with him. They still had some life in them. The flowers had not given up yet. The man collected the dying flowers at the tree and left the park.

The setting sun lit up the sky in a fire of changing colors. The man noted that



it reminded him of a bundle of different flowers. The chilling wind earlier was replaced by a warm gentle breeze. He walked through the cemetery and had trouble finding the grave he was looking for.

After a few minutes, he finally tracked down his destination. The man knelt down in front of the grave in the ground. A layer of dirt and dust lay over the gravestone, so the man cleaned it off with his sleeve. He stayed for a few minutes and then lay a collection of flowers at the gravestone. He whispered something to the gravestone and left.

The night sky hosted an audience of stars as the man walked slowly down the sidewalk. He still remembered the apartment number he was looking for. In his hands he carried a

small vase filled with water and a few dying roses. Arriving at the apartment, he knocked on the door. Light footsteps could be heard leading towards the front door. The man took a deep breath and steeled himself.

A beautiful woman, about the same age as the man, answered the door, her long dark hair flowed behind her. Familiar emerald green eyes still filled with fire. She hadn't changed since the last time he saw her. She seemed surprised the man was there. After a few seconds, she invited the man inside.

Meanwhile, on the front porch of the man's home, a single dying rose hung from a small bush in garden pot. The flower appeared to regain some of its color. Life was returning to the dying flower.

Left Behind

Ryan O'Connor '19

Mayhem on a misty, murky Monday morning:
two people see that love is quickly fading.
A bright and welcoming blonde-haired girl
watches the love of her life walk away.
Auburn-haired and tall, the man
pleased her but left.

Sitting on cobblestone steps with her bags
as a child waits for one's parent,
clenching a tissue in her right hand,
she remains optimistic he will return.
A complex decision separates the two;
they move in opposite directions.

After a painful argument, one leaves,
one waits, rumors start, but only two know the truth.
One is gone; one stays.
Both lose someone significant,
but only one person waits.



The Spear on the Road

Bryan Lagarde '20, Nathan Levandoske '20, Bryce Pellegrin '20, Collin Rupp '20

Progressive story with translation.

North of Rome, a young hero named Cato was leading a military campaign against a group of barbaric tribes. Cato was a centurion who trained since he was a child to obtain his position in the military. If he succeeded in the conquest of these tribes, he would be given a position in the Roman government. Cato was now traveling on a road juxtaposed by two mountains with a legion of soldiers following behind him. Everything was peaceful and going according to plan - until soldiers began dropping one by one without notice.

As more soldiers died Cato realized that the gods might be punishing them. He started to pray to various gods, but the soldiers kept dying. Then Cato saw a spear sitting on the side of the road. He walked over and picked it up. All at once, soldiers stopped dying. He realized that the spear must have been magical. So, spear in hand, they continued with their plan.

Whatever unknown entity that had caused the mysterious deaths was still lurking about, and Cato knew that he must seek out the fiends who would dare attack the a Roman legion. He sent search parties out to locate the treacherous enemy; as the hours went by, Cato noticed that not one search party had returned. Days passed as he planned with his subordinates what to do about the unseen enemy who had now even started raiding the vital supply trains. Cato knew he was surrounded, almost cut off from Rome, and it was only a matter of time before an all out

Supra Romam, Heroicus nomine Catoexpeditionem contra manum tribuum barbaricorum ducebat. Cato erat centurio qui puero se exercitat ut ignitatem in militia. Si possit vincere hos nationes, honor in imperio ei Romano datum sit. Cato iam in via duos montes post se apponente legione militum ibat. Omnia erant pacifica et consilio movebant- dum sine notitiam coeperunt milites alii ex aliis decidere.

Ut plus militum mortui sunt, Cato cognosceret ut ab deis punirentur. Et coepit orare deis diversis, sed adhuc millites moriebantur. Cato autem hastma sedentem secus viam vidit. Ambulavit et id tollit. Momento milites cessaverunt mori. Et sentivit hastam magicam fuisse necesse esse. Sic, hasta in manu, cum concilio eorum continuerunt.

Quicumque ignotus ens qui mortes arcanos fecerit delatitabat, et Cato scivit se debere quaerere diabolos qui oppugnare legionem Romanum auderent. Emisit investigantes partes ut hostem inveniret; dum horae abiit, Cato nullos partes redisse animadvertit. Dies transierunt ut ipse cogitaverit cum facientibus imitetur quod agit comitatum de invisibile hoste, qui praedari coeperat etiam nunc vitales commeates. Cato scivit se cingere, decidere fere ab Roma, et id erat solum materia temporis ante oppugnatio deduceretur. Prima luce proximo die, cornu horrendum ob omnes partrs enflavit.

Cato cohortes suos in ordines revocavit,

attack was launched. At the crack of dawn the next day, dreadful horns blew from every direction.

Cato rallied his men around him, forming a circle, since these mysterious and hidden attackers appeared all around. He encouraged them to hold their ground. After all, they were Romans. However, as more and more of his soldiers were cut down, he knew that they wouldn't hold out for much longer. He then boldly ordered his troops to charge into the surrounding area, leading the charge with his spear in hand.

Cato did not know that this spear would make his legacy. Being forged in the forges of Olympus, this was an old weapon of the god Mars himself. It laid here after an old hero, who was blessed by Mars with great power, was defeated in battle. For generations, this road was its home. It watched as many tried to wield it but could not because it had not seen the power of a true warrior in their hearts-- until Cato came along.

As Cato led his troops into battle, he noticed that his new spear was glowing with a strange red light. All of a sudden, his vision turned red, and he noticed a red aura surrounding him. He recognized this as the aura of Mars, the god of war. He also noticed that everytime he slew a foe, that he felt stronger and faster. After a few hours, the enemy started to retreat and Cato declared victory, but he knew that the enemy would be back with reinforcements, and so prepared his troops for another battle.



formantes orbe, undique hi arcani occulti aggressores apparuit. Hortabatur eos ut pedes suas habuerit. Denique Romani essent. Ut magis magisque milites sui caederentur, tamen scivit eos multum diutius non duravisse. Dum audaciter imperavit copias ut in aream cingentem incurrant, ducens impetus cum hasta in manu.

Cato non scievit hanc hastam legato facturam esse. Fabricata in caminis Olympi, hoc erat antiquum telum dei Martis ipsius. Posuit hic postquam senex Marte beatus, in proelio acie vincebat. Generationes haec via erat aedes eius. Vidit dum multi conati sunt tractare id, sed non potuit, quia id non vidit potentem veri viri - donec Cato venit.

Dum Cato copias eius in proelio ducit, animadvertit novam hastam suam ardere cum miro luce rubro. De improvise visus suus rubrum vertit, et animadvertit auram rubrum



The second wave came with even more men than the first, outnumbering the Romans four to one. Nearly half of the troops were fresh reinforcements who had not witnessed Cato in battle. Barbarians love a good bloodbath, and the new reinforcements could not contain themselves when they saw a much smaller group of Romans just building rudimentary fortifications, so they charged. The remnants of the first wave, however, did not charge with them, but instead watched to see when, or if, the leader of the Romans would die so that they could join in as well. The charging barbarians did not know this, or maybe did not care, as they kept charging. Cato defeated the enemy, but it was a costly battle. All their preparations and this enchanted spear had won them this battle, but they were still in danger.

Cato marched his remaining forces to a clearing in the forest, and had them set

cingentem eum. Hanc novit ut auram Marti, dei belli. Animadvertit quoque quandoque hostem occiderit, sensit fortiores celeriorque. Post paucis horis, hostes fugere inciperet et Cato victoriam indixit sed scivit hostes reversuros esse, nam bello alterio copias parat.

Venerunt quoque secundi fluctus cum pluribus quam prioribus, multitudine superaverant plus quadruplis. Fere dimidiata ex copiis virida qua non viderant Catonem in pugna. Barbari bonam trucidationem amant, et novae copiae non posuerant continere se, cum viderent a multam minorem manum Romanorum modum rudem minitionem dispositionem, ita incurserunt. Reliquiae primae undae, tamen, non interpellaverit, cum eis sed magis observant ut viderint quando aut si dux Romanorum ut etiam particeps sunt. irruentes barbari nescivit, hoc fortassenihil moratis ut irruebant. Cato hostes

up an encampment there. While Cato had slain many of the enemy, his own troops had sustained very heavy casualties. He debated on whether to return to Rome and get reinforcements, but remembered that if he could win this campaign against the barbarians he would earn himself power in the government. From this memory, he decided to stay and fight. Cato sent out two scouts to go and find water. A while later, one of the scouts came sprinting back to the camp. He explained that the enemy had killed the other scout, and that on the other side of a river nearby, there was a very large enemy encampment.

So, with this information, and his sights on victory, Cato started to plan. He sent another scout to a village nearby to ask for a little assistance with supplies as their rations were running a bit low. Then, he started to think about how to attack. He realized that the enemy were next to the river and managed to catch the scout before he left. He told the scout to also ask if the village had any boats. The scout came back with more rations, some more men, and several boats. Then he used the boats to move half of his force across the river, then he told the other half to help man the ships. What he planned to do was flank the camp, one half of his force coming from the river, the other from the opposite side of the enemy encampment.

Cato was on the other side of the encampment, and had entrusted one of his most worthy legionnaires with command of the river forces. The plan was to strike at daybreak. Both forces made sure to light no fires and make no sound. That night, they all silently made their offerings to the gods and prayed for a victory. When the first rays of light broke through the night sky, Cato

vicit sed erat pretiosum proelium. Omnes suaru praeparatarum et hoc cantata hasta quae vicit eis proelium, sed erant tamen in periculo.

Reliquas copias ad nemore in silvam Cato incessit et iubet eos ut castra defensione ibi posuerint. Cato multos hostes interfecit copiae suae gravissimos caduces bello acceperant. Disceptavit unde Roma redeunte et auxilia nanciscente, sed meminit, si posset vincere expeditione contra barbaros, potestatem in re publica pro se mereret. Ex hac memoria, constituit ut manerent et pugnaret. Cato emisit duos exploratores ad inveniedam aquam. Post paulo, unum ex exploratoribus currentem celeriter ad castra reduxit. 44. Exposuit ab hostibus alterum exploratorem ocessum esse atque in alia parte fluminis erat maxima hostium castra.

Sic, his rebus cognitis, et affectata victoria, Cato coepit meditari. Misit alium exploratorem ad vicum proximum ut oret parvum auxilium cum commeatis quod cibaria sua paulatim deflexit. Deinde, incepit putare quomodo impetum faciat. Agnovit hostem esse prope flumen et ministrare prendere explorationem antequam reliqueret. Explorator cum maiore cibaria, viris, et multis navibus. Dixit explorationi ut quoque rogaret etiam utrum vicus ullas naves haberet. Tum usus est navibus trans flumen ad dimitiatas copias movendas; tum dixit aliis copiis naves navigando adjuvare. Aliis copiis ab flumene et aliis copiis ab lato castris hostium venientibus mediatur.

Cato latus castrorum tetigisse se contractus commiserat unum ex dignissimos milites suos cum imperio virium cis flumen. Consilium erat ferire prima luce. Ambae castrae curaverunt ne ullum sonum facient aut ignes accedent. Nocte silenter omnes ad

and his troops advanced on the camp from both sides, taking the enemy by complete surprise. Cato had left the fires burning at his troop's old encampment, to make the enemy think they were safe. A few hours later, his men packed up and headed back to Rome, victorious. Cato thanked the spear on the road for this victory.

Upon their return home, Cato and his troops were welcomed with celebrations. There were several parties that they attended, but most of the soldier attended these to be polite. They just wanted to be at home with their families. Cato was one of those soldiers. Sure the parties were fun, but his family was more important, and so, when the last party ended he rushed home. His wife and two children were overcome with joy and had a little party of their own. And when they asked how Cato won, he said that he won because of his new spear. He told them how it gave him strength when he fought, and how he had formulated his strategy to flank the enemy camp. He said that the spear helped him in these ways because it was a gift from Mars himself. So from then on, whenever Cato or his descendants went to war, they would bring the spear, which helped them win many battles and wars.

deis suis sacrificantes pro victoria oraverunt. Primo luce illuc frangente caelum noctis, Cato et copiae undique in castra deprehendentes hostes procedent. Cato ignibus ardere permisisset ad vetere castro ut hostes cogitent se esse tutos. Postea paucis horis, viri sui Romae retenderunt et collegerunt, victoriosi. Cato enim pro victoria gratias hastae in via egit .

Redito domo sua, Cato et copiae militum celebrationibus accepta sunt. Aliquot convivia autem fuerunt ministri, sed plurimi ex militum adfuerunt eis ut urbani essent. Tantum voluerunt esse domi cum familias eorum. Cato erat unum ex illis. Certe convivia erant iucunda, sed familia sua erat gravior, sic, cum ultimum convivium desivit, festinavit domo. Uxor sua et duo liberi laetitia superati sunt et celebrationem parvum suam habuit. Et cum rogaverunt quomodo cato vincat, dixit eum vicisse propter novam hastam suam. Dixit eos quomodo ei vires dederit cum pugnaverit et quomodo fecisset rationem militaris ut latus castrorum hostium tegetet. Dixit hastam iuvare eum his modis quod ea esset a Marte ipso donum. Sic, deinde, utcumque Cato aut posterius sui ierunt ad bello, allaturi sunt hastam quam eos vincendos multa proelia et bella iuvat.

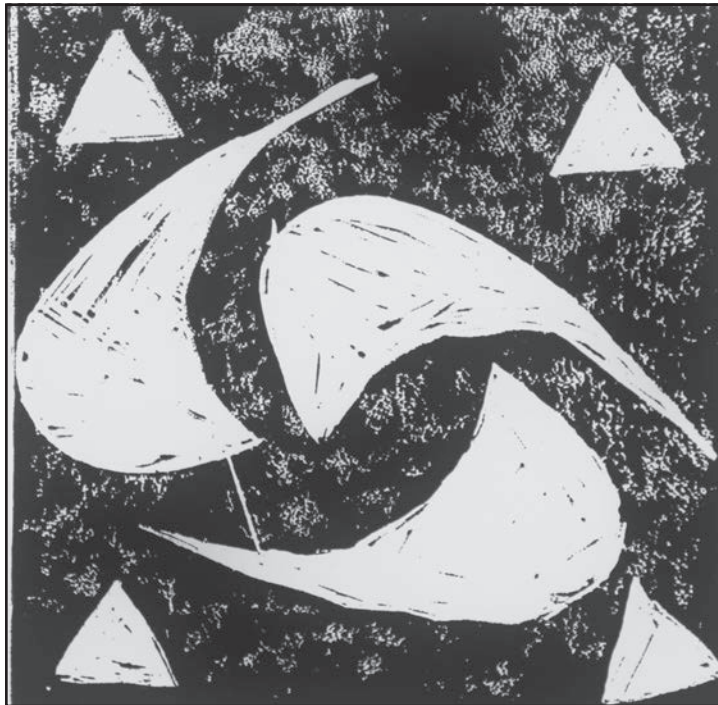
Memories

Trey Waguespack '18

We met as sable ink consumed the sky.
Like porcelain, her skin was pale.
The moon's blue light danced off her hazel eyes.
Her appearance had never grown stale.

My heart began to swell as our lips met.
The crowd around us seemed to cease motion.
A moment that beautiful: how could I forget
a piece of time filled with so much emotion?

She left, and the moment followed her.
It left too soon, an instant fleeting,
but the memory will last forever.
I could never forget our sacred meeting.
While moments last for only a brief time,
the memories will never leave my mind.



Asleep

Trey Waguespack '18

Sheee-shooo

Sheee-shooo

Sheee-shooo

As I made my way through its chilling, sterile corridors I could hear the moans of machines keeping the hospital's citizens alive. I looked up to see my aunt, sobbing and broken. We embraced and she said, "Hey baby, I missed you. You got so handsome."

"What's going on?" I asked in confusion.

"She's in there." She pointed me to a room on my left. As I entered the room I noticed my uncle sitting down, drowned in sorrow. When he saw me approaching he rose, wiped his tears, and left. I turned to my right to reveal the lifeless body of my grandmother, invaded by tubes, with my mother attached to her right hand. The final image of my grandmother will forever be burned into my memory. She was wearing nothing except a hospital gown. There were tubes running through every opening of her body. She was shaking rhythmically from the sheer force of the fluids being pumped into her system. Her eyes were half open, and looking in different directions. I did my best to look into them and saw nothing resembling my grandmother. I so desperately wanted to see her.

My mother motioned me over and said, "Look, Mom, Trey's here. You want to talk to her? She can hear you."

"What happened?" I asked, wondering how she could have been fully functional just the night before.

I thought back to last time that I had seen her. As she sat on the couch experiencing a

possible heart attack, my sister was on the phone with my mother trying to figure out what to do. My mother didn't believe there was anything wrong with my grandmother. This was a regular event in our house. My grandmother always experienced some sort of medical issue, but this time it was different. Something was really wrong this time. I heard my mother screaming, "She's faking it!" into my sister's ear, so I grabbed the phone, and regaled my mother with a series of expletives before dialing 911. The paramedics soon arrived to bring my grandmother out. As my grandmother was leaving our house I stopped her and said, "Mimi, wait!" She stopped, and we stared at each other. I wanted so badly to tell her that I loved her, but for some reason I couldn't. I could only give her a look that meant goodbye. The paramedics then brought her to the hospital. Why couldn't I tell her that I loved her? That's what I thought as I stood over her comatose body.

"Well, when we took her in last night she ended up having another heart attack, and that sent her into a coma. But she's here, she can hear you," said my mother. I stared deeply at the thing posing as my grandmother. Everything about her was foreign. As much as I would've liked to believe that she was, my grandmother wasn't in there. She was breathing, but she wasn't alive.

"Do you want to talk to her?" asked my mother while handing me her own mother's lifeless hand. Even though I didn't believe she could hear me, I still agreed to talk to her. I saw the hysterical look in my mother's eye,

so I didn't question it.

"Can I be alone with her?" I asked in reply.

"Sure. Mom, Trey's just gonna talk to you for a second. I'll be right back." My mother left the room and went to my aunt. It was nice to see them together again. They didn't talk very much in the years prior due to a fight that they'd been going through.

"Hey Mimi, it's Trey. I just want you to know that I'm really gonna miss you, and I love you." Sure, I didn't say it while she was conscious, but at least I said it, right? Then I walked out of the room to see my family. I went to my father and asked if he could find me something to eat. He complied, and we fled to his truck. As I climbed into his cluttered truck, I was forced to move papers and tools, remnants of his work, in order to make a place for me to sit.

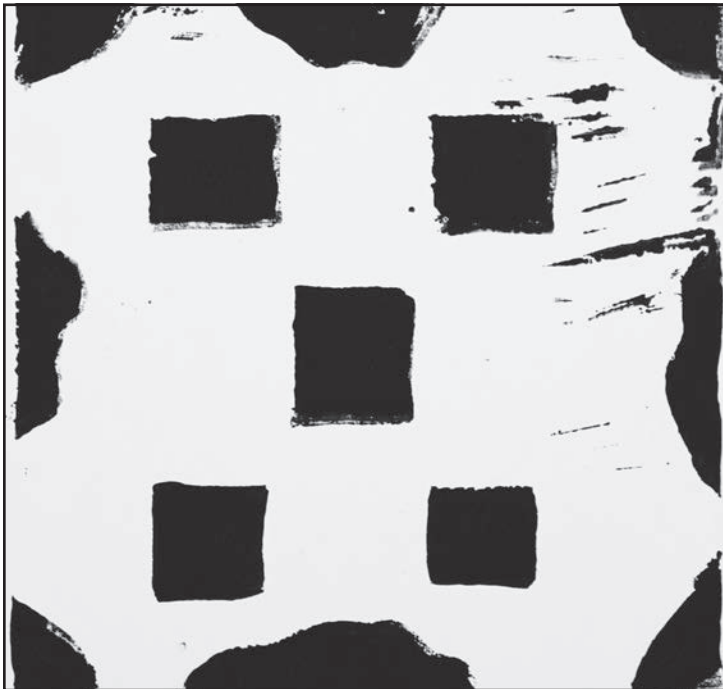
"Is Wendy's okay?" my father asked.

"That's fine," I said in reply.

"You know, for as long as Mimi lived, she never really did much with it," he said. She worked at a mall. When I die, you'll be able to see the houses I've built."

"What are you talking about?!" I all but screamed, in disbelief that he could say something so callous. "Mimi raised two daughters almost completely on her own. One of which is the mother of your children. She also kind of raised us in a way. Her life was very successful."

We were silent for the rest of the car ride. We arrived back at the hospital to find that my grandmother was gone. She hadn't passed away, or withered in her sleep. She had died. At sixteen it was a lot to handle. It didn't feel real. I used to arrive home from school with dinner cooked, or the house cleaned, but that would never



happen again. I used to be able to walk to my grandmother's room and talk to her about anything, but that was never going to happen again.

When we returned home that night my parents asked my sisters and me if we were okay. Even though I felt like dying inside, I told them that I was fine, and returned to my room to contemplate my grief in solitude. Until later that night. I could hear my mother in the living room. I heard her moaning in pain, crying in a way I hadn't seen her do before. I decided to attempt to comfort her, so I left my room and joined her. As I approached the living room I saw my mother sprawled out across the floor surrounded by childhood photos including my grandmother. She looked pathetic. One light source illuminated the room. A single lamp that suffocated the room with a depressing orange glow. My mother was wearing an old *Cowboy Mouth* T-shirt, a shirt I hadn't seen her wear in years.

"Are you okay?" I asked as I stood over her.

"You know she loved you, right?" my mother said as she attempted to hold back her tears.

"I know she did."

"She was so so happy the day you were born. She was so excited." Tears began pushing their way through before I collapsed and my mother embraced me. I began to sob. I lay there, for the first time since I was a small child, crying in my mother's arms, and it felt satisfying.

About a week after my grandmother's death, it was time for her funeral. I was dressed in a suit that hadn't truly fit in years. There were pictures of my grandmother hung up all over the four walls with flowers to accompany them. I walked around

mingling with our guests before making my way over to my grandmother's open casket to have my "Stand By Me" moment. I was sixteen going on seventeen the first time I saw a dead body. It was strange; she looked nothing like my grandmother. She appeared to be inflated and blown out. She looked as though someone had taken her skin off and then tried to put it back on as quickly as possible. My family had put her in a beautiful purple dress, however, and on her chest was a note from my cousin that no one was supposed to read.

There was a great turnout at the funeral. Maybe a hundred people showed up. It's funny, my grandmother hadn't talked to any of these people in years, but now that she was dead they were all her best friend. They all stood around the TV, which broadcasted pictures of my grandmother as a child, and told stories of what she was like as a child. She seemed so different.

After everyone said their goodbyes, the priest came and cleared the room of everyone except direct family members. We then had a few minutes to say good-bye. I savored those few minutes, because that was the last time I'd ever see her. In our final moments together my uncle came up from behind me and jokingly said, "I'll take care of him, Mimi! Don't worry!" I laughed and broke out into a flash flood of tears. I didn't do very much crying at the funeral, but I couldn't, no I didn't want to, hold back in that moment. My father then nudged me on the shoulder with a box of tissues as if to say, "Compose yourself. Be strong." Why did I have to be strong? I certainly didn't want to be strong. I was sixteen and hurt.

The priest closed the casket and we walked it into the chapel. As I looked around I saw

Gracie

Allan Merida '18

A giggly, bubbly mess of smiles and joy,
you tug the corners of my lips to smile—
the way you hide behind your hands, all coy,
when I say words that make you blush and smile.
And when your little blushy fit is over,
you pout and hug me, seeking my attention;
you look at me—your eyes and lips incur
a sudden, subtle change in my expression.
I want to say what words cannot express
in such a way that you know it's sincere;
I move my mouth and hands in soft caress
and whisper something softly in your ear:
There's nothing—from your person to your face—
there's nothing I would change about you, Grace.

History

Nicholas Russo '18

This story earned the Silver Key in the 2018 Scholastic Writing Awards in the category of Science Fiction/Fantasy.

The sun rose among Campsite One, called that because, frankly, it was the only camp known to the survivors. About a hundred makeshift tents of dull brown and grey colored tarps covered in burns and tears formed a lonesome oval in the middle of a vast field of dirt and rubble. Among all of the rubble, about a quarter of a mile from the campground, a giant White Oak tree stood thriving. Not a single leaf had been taken from its thick branches. Only a miracle could describe its survival after what

had happened. The second miracle was a single school building, equally distant from the campground on the other side. It had somehow survived along with everything inside of it. Other trees and buildings were wiped away, completely obliterated. Those two stood.

A larger, sturdier tent was propped in the middle of the camp, and a large fire had been built twenty feet in front of it. Hayworth lived in this tent with his wife of two years. He walked outside shortly after sunrise to



tend the fire, his wife staying in bed, now eight months pregnant. No one elected him as leader, but it became obvious after a few weeks that he led the camp. His bulky, tall figure was authoritative. At 35 years old, he was young enough to get things done and old enough to know what he was talking about. No one argued in part because no one else wanted the job.

Reuben stood in his tent over two sleeping children, a girl and a boy, by the names of Joel and Lance. He woke them, as he did every morning, with a story. Today's came from a large textbook titled *Western Alien Civilization*. In fact, all of Reuben's stories came from history books. Out of the untouched rooms in the school building, one was a storage room filled with thousands of textbooks. Behind his tent, one could see the pile of books the size of a school bus. Reuben kept them hoping to keep the world that came before him alive.

"HUGERT54 could not have invaded the Pangea without the supplies provided by--"

"Reuben, can I have a word with you," interrupted Hayworth, standing outside of the tent.

"Sorry, kids, Daddy's gotta help take care of some business, I guess," Reuben explained to the hardly awake Joel and already sleeping Lance. "What's going on, Hayworth?" he asked, stepping out into the morning fog.

"Well, first I'd like to apologize. You're not gonna like what I have to say."

"Oh, uh, okay."

"Actually, just come with me," Hayworth said, beginning to lead towards the burning fire over which a pig was being roasted. When he came upon the burning wood he gestured towards it. "It's dying."

"So add some wood."

"There is none. We've used all the wood we could find. Even all the flammable supplies from the school building. All gone."

"There is a tree out there. Just cut it down. I don't understand the problem here, Hayworth."

"That will work for a while, but what happens when we run out? We need to start thinking about the future. I think we need to keep that tree in the ground. Eventually more will grow and maybe even get this planet back in shape."

"Even if that did work, it would take a hundred years. We'd all be dead. Especially if we don't start using that wood now."

"Well, Reuben, that's where you come in."

"Alright. What are you thinking?"

"Textbooks."

"No."

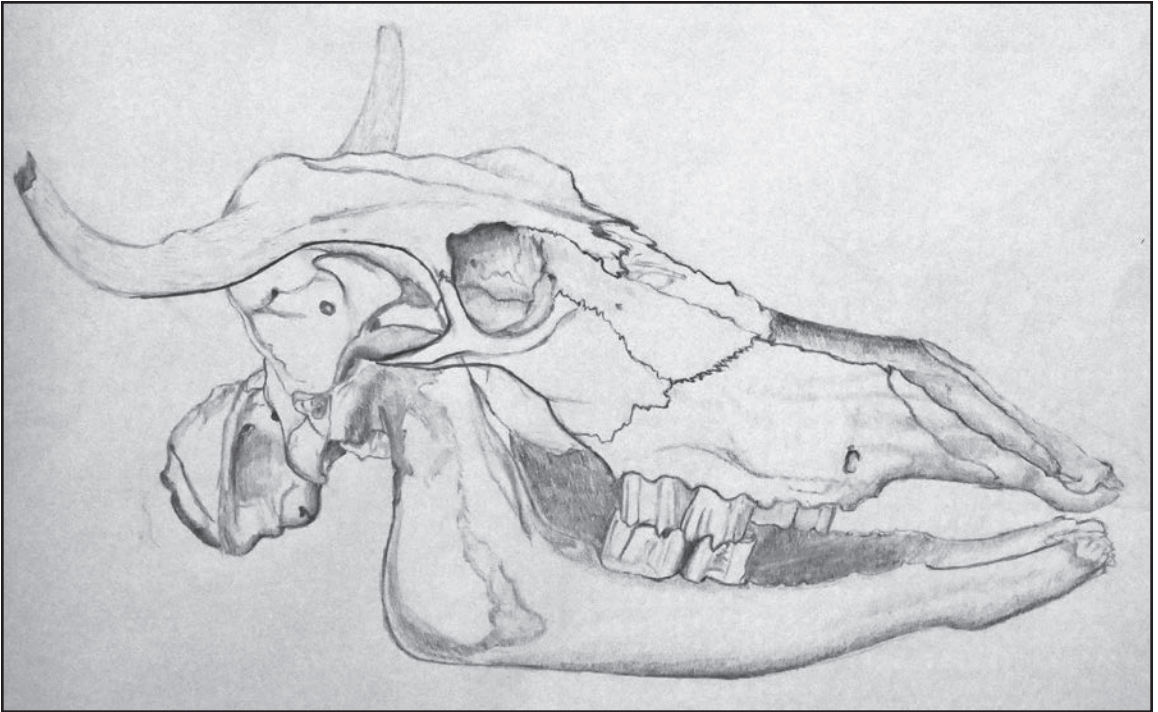
"Reuben. We use your textbooks now and maybe someone comes and rescues us or something. The Mars ships are still out there. They could bring us electricity or supplies or even take us somewhere habitable."

"So use the tree until then and keep our history alive!"

"You're not thinking about survival, Reuben. That's the last tree we know of. If we cut down that tree, then we ruin the chances of a forest growing here ever again. What will provide oxygen in the future? These books have no use anymore. It's just not reasonable to keep them."

"So, everything that happened before us and everything that our ancestors did just doesn't matter?"

"Look around, man," remarked Hayworth as he opened his arms towards the rubble and destruction. "Nothing they did is still here. The only things that still stand from history are these campers. Sure, what they



did matter. They gave birth to us! The only way we keep that alive is by surviving and carrying on the tradition. My wife is in there right now trying to do just that. Even if we die, my son could still be alive to see the survival of this planet. Your kids, too. Think about them."

"What's the point of survival if we forget who we are?"

"Reuben, you know what needs to be done. I'll be back tonight."

Reuben kicked the fire as he marched back to his tent, sending embers into the sky like fireworks. His cargo pants barely escaped the flames as they hunted for a lasting host. He knew Hayworth was right about the books.

As he returned to the tent, Joel and Lance ran to greet their father.

"Tell us a story, Daddy! We're awake now!"

"Guess what, guys! Today, that's all we're gonna do is read stories. All day long!"

The kids roared in approval, giving Reuben two big hugs.

The three of them spent the whole day in bed reading bits of every textbook from *Ancient Civilization* to *The Great Alien Wars*. As night fell upon the camp, Reuben broke the news.

"Joel. Lance. There's something I gotta tell you."

"What?" asked Lance.

"Today is the last day we can read any stories. That's why I had us read so many."

"How come?"

"Well Mr. Hayworth needs 'em for something. It's out of my control. But, hey. We still had today, didn't we?"

"Can't we just keep a few?" begged Joel.

“You know, Joel, that’s a great idea. How about you both pick out some of your favorite pages!”

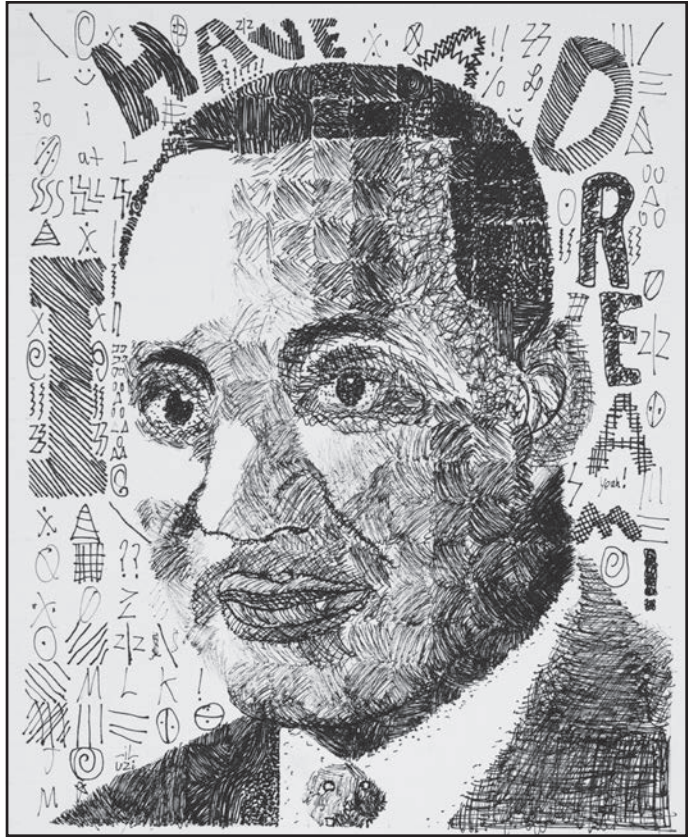
They spent the next hour scattering pictures of wars, council meetings, kings, and artifacts as the two picked between their favorites. When Hayworth came by to pick up the textbooks, the children hid their pages under the bedside. Hayworth wasn’t oblivious. He knew Reuben would want to keep some of the pages. He could see the guilt in the faces of Joel and Lance, but he let it go. It couldn’t hurt to let them keep a few pictures. He made his sincere apologies for the situation and left the family for the night.

“Well, what do we got?” Reuben asked excitedly.

“I got one of two people kissing!” said Joel as she held up a black and white photo. It depicted a man and woman in what looked like a city intersection flooded with people instead of cars. The man had his arms around the woman as he embraced her. His sailor hat sat neatly atop his head. The woman’s body tilted so far back that it seemed she could fall without the man’s support.

“Look, mine’s from some old battle,” exclaimed Lance, holding up his prized image. It depicted a cluster of men dressed in large coats, vests, and hats, guns held high in the air over a sea of casualties. A woman stood in the middle wearing a tattered yellow dress. She held a red white and blue flag.

“This one is our favorite,” said the two of them pulling another snapshot out from



the covers. It showed four men with long hair and wearing suits walking in perfect, harmonious step along a crosswalk. The street behind them was lined with parked cars.

“Wow! These are pretty cool, you guys. Let’s hang em up!”

After they finished pinning the pages to the inside of the tarp, they stepped back to take a look at the finished project.

“Daddy?” inquired Joel, “Who are all these people? What’s their story?”

Reuben’s joyous expression diminished from his face as the realization dawned on him.

“I don’t know,” he admitted.

Caribbean Sketch

Thomas Leggett, *faculty*

The long horizon line, dividing
white-washed cerulean sky from
widest imaginable sea,
awakens from deep within
a voice that clarifies a singular
insignificance—mine and ours—
reminder of the way of
things, invisible pulse that
ties cloud to air and brackish
water to ruddy skin,
uniting all that matters.



Concept of Time

Jackson Schneider '18

*This story earned Honorable Mention in the
2018 Scholastic Writing Awards in the category of Flash Fiction.*

"Ms. Wills, your son is one of the most rebellious students I have ever met!" Principal McCloskey yells. The vein bulging out of his forehead shows his displeasure with me.

"What's he doing?" my mom asks.

"Well, just to start, we caught him smoking this morning."

"Smoking?!" my mom screams.

"Yes, ma'am, also he has been labeled as a bully and continues to fight Mr. Page."

"That jerk deserves what he has coming to him!" I yell.

"He's the starting quarterback," Principal McCloskey scolds.

I begin to stand up and clench my fist as my mom grabs me.

"Mr. McCloskey, I am so sorry for this," Mom says. "I will handle this."

My mom and I walk outside into the busy Brooklyn sidewalks. The air is not quite bitter, but cool. The sky fades into a bright salmon color as the sun falls. We start walking home.

"Tyson, honey, you're smoking now? You're not even old enough to do that!"

"Yeah, I am, not like you can do anything about it."

"Your father would be so disappointed."

"Dad is dead!" I yell.

"Tyson Wills--"

"Just shut up!"

Everyone on the sidewalk starts staring at me. My mom sits there with tears falling down her cheeks. Guilt floods my mind, but instead of apologizing, I run. My legs take

me through the dark, ominous alleyways of Brooklyn. Then I stop at the river. The sky shimmers with an obsidian color, but on the other side of the river Staten Island looks like the stars fell down to earth. I start to think about what I said to my mom. I feel the guilt envelop my mind, but I blow off the feelings.

"I could use a smoke," I say to myself.

The cigarette gives me a comforting warmth. Then I heard a siren from a cop car.

"Hey, kid, you old enough to smoke?" says the policeman, stepping out of the car.

"Yeah."

"Let me see your license."

I look down at my feet.

"Son, let me see your license."

I run for it. The cop grows farther and farther away as I dash along the bank of the river. All of a sudden I trip, fall, and feel my head slam onto the ground. Everything goes black.

"Hello . . . Hello . . . is anyone there? Hey, is anyone there?" I ask.

"Real disappointed in you, son."

Then four clocks light up at once. Two big ones, a small one, and a medium-sized one that a man cleans with a rag. He is a shadowy figure, so I can not make him out. The small clocks reads "12 A.M." The two big one says "1:50." I can not make out the medium one since the man stands in front of it. They all seem to be plugged into the wall. The glow of the clocks reveals a curtain behind them.

"Who are you?"

The man steps into the light of one of the clocks and says, "It's me."

"Dad?"

He is wearing a navy blue janitor suit with the sleeves rolled up. His hair is liquorice black, and he has a bulge in his gut.

"Wait, Dad! You're dead! Which means I'm dead!"

"No, son, you're in the hospital. You're just unconscious. But that's not the problem."

"How is that not the problem?"

"You're wasting your time, kid."

"What you mean?"

"You're throwing your life away," he says.

"You were such a good kid."

"You died."

"And? Time does not stop for you."

"What's with all this time stuff?"

"You only have so much of it. Some day you are going to die, and when you that happens, do you want to look back and regret your life?"

"Life without you hasn't been the same."

"I can't come back, Tyson. You can't bring

me back, but you can turn your life back around for me." He becomes more serious. "You have one life. Use it to spend time with the people who care about you most."

"Mom?"

"Yes, Mom," he says. "She loves you, and worries."

"I feel bad for what I said to her."

"Tell her that. I gotta go now. I'm gonna miss you, kid."

"Wait, Dad. Don't go. I have so many questions."

He disappears.

"Dad? Dad? Daaaaaaaaaaaad!"

I fall through the ground like it is melting butter. I open my eyes and see a white ceiling above me. I look over and see my mom. Her face has mascara dripping down from crying, and she looks very tired with dark circles under her eyes. The medicinal smell of hospital reaches my nose. She is sleeping in the chair. A smile starts to appear on her face, and a single tear runs down her cheek.



Sonnet 5/25

Ethan Meydrich '18

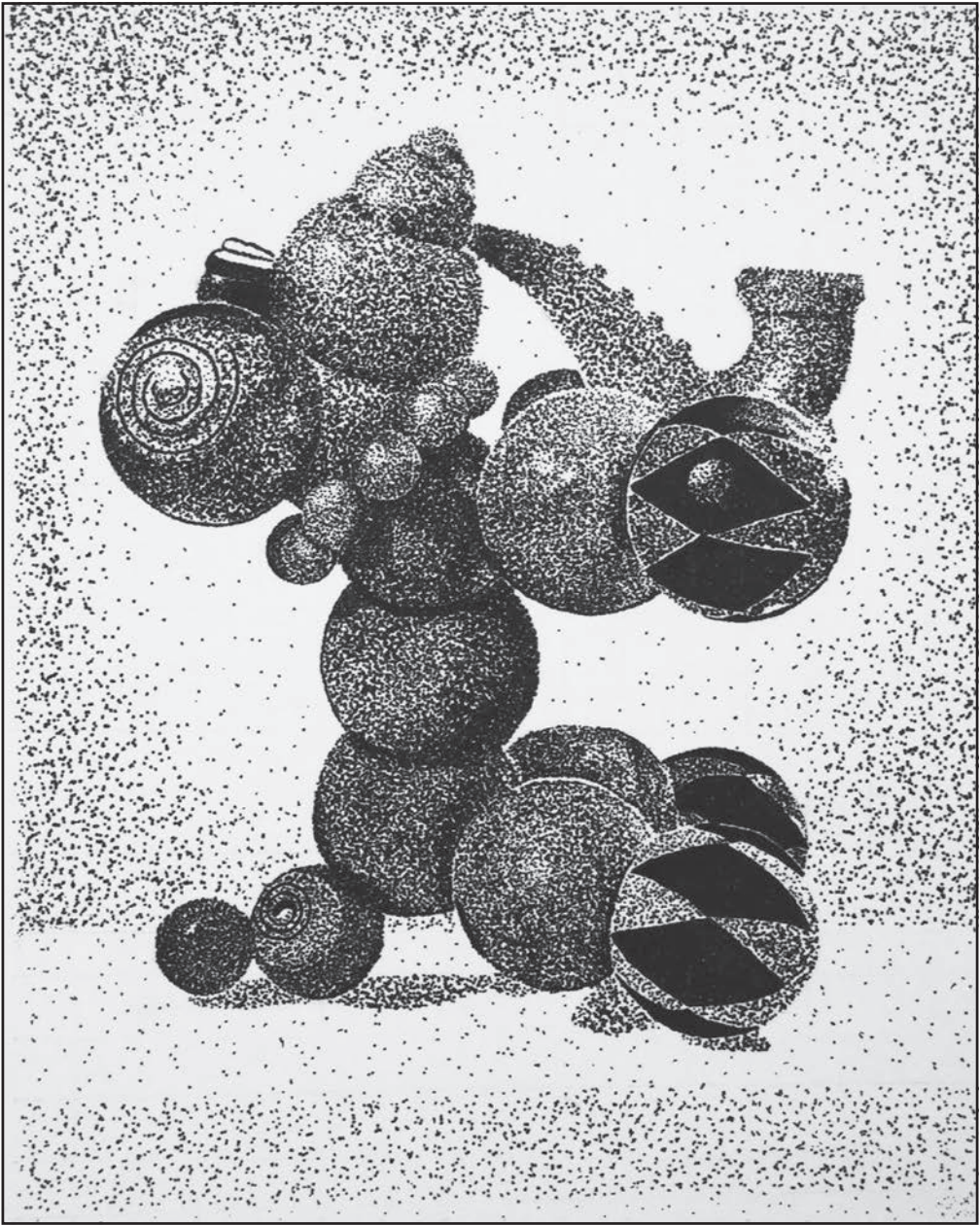
With each passing day, I see myself age.
Each time I blink, I lose myself and think
that soon I'll grow older and receive a wage.
The more, it seems, I grow, I wish to shrink.

What started with months, reduced now to days,
thirty-three school days left, gone in a Snap,
and after graduation no one stays.
Friends and peers disappear off the map.

The things that linger in the mind are barely
thriving, hazy memories of us together.
Sports teams, school clubs, and dubs leave mind rarely.
Remember when school closed due to weather?

People disappear, but do not be afraid;
memories made together will not fade.







BROTHER  MARTIN