HAIKU

Snow
Snow falls to the ground
Presents are what we wait for
Christmas time is here
Arda Ozdemir

Hamilton
Went to the city
Hamilton on Broadway, with
Lyrics so witty
Jessica Lee

A Bad Day
First I failed my test
And as if that’s not enough
The whole day I’m stressed
Jessica Lee
**Favorite Food**
I like spaghetti
It is very delicious
It goes well with cheese
Eric Zukowski

**Adulthood**
I wish to create
New inventions to help us
With daily problems
Seth Kim

**Picture Perfect**
She smiled at me
Laughing I took the picture
It was beautiful
Jahaira Roca
Season
I slow down then stop
The branches, covered in green
In the shade, I read.
Simon Rodriguez

A Pen to Paper
Words into pictures
Soon they all become alive
No clear, right answer
Nyla Carter

Disney World
Mickey Mouse and more
Bright sunny days in the park
We love Disney World
Ava Winkler & Sydney Morreale
Favorite Pastime
Soccer is the best
Score as many goals to win
An amazing sport
Joshua Han

Favorite Food
Delicious flavor
Amazing scents fill the room
Peruvian food
Omara Morales

Sports
On the day I scored
It made me feel confident
So I loved the sport
Joshua Han
The Rough Sea
The sea really rough
The ocean waves smack the shore
Leaving shells for me
Mario Lan

Christmas Day
The snow comes down light
Making white blankets on grass
Leaving me to play
Mario Lan

Mashed Potatoes
They’re mushy and mashed
Buttered, salted pleasantly
They are Potatoes
Katie Wilds
Writer’s Block
A frustrated sigh
Crumpled paper and ink stains
Another thought is lost.

Lily Dutta

Favorite Pastime/Hobby
Basketball is life
The ball swishes through the net
This is just light work

Kevin Cho

Haiku
Huge shooting light in sky
Mixed with blue and green lights
It was like a dream

Taku Murkam
WARMTH
Warmth in the winter
Epitome of delight
The world has been graced.
Avery DiMaria

FOOD
Food on the table
Family is all around me
Surrounded by love
Eden Terrell

NATURE
Nature bears beauty
Displayed on my plate is life
Taste buds are set free
Avery DiMaria
Metaphor Poem

This school is a jungle
Roamed by reckless animals
I can’t see any doors from my angle
I see a wave of people coming through
It’s a lot of people
It grew
The wave was coming my way
The group was getting louder and louder
Maybe I should stay
Maybe I should drown in it
I’ll be lured into this wild tsunami
I’ll become a part of it, and I admit
Being in this is not what I had imagined
After a while, everything is blackened

Paulina Barroso
Metaphor Poem

I am a book,
So full of potential,
Yet, sometimes overlooked

Some may take the time
To find the secrets inside
Others may not care
For what I provide

But I will not change my cover
Because I do not need the approval of others

Those who read my story
Will be brought happiness,
But those who do not
Will never know what they missed.

Gabriel Castro
Metaphor Poem

My family is like a circus:
My dad is the announcer making sure everyone knows what they are doing.
My mom is the lion tamer, calming the most dangerous animal and the largest crowds.
My little brother is the clown, making sure everyone has a good laugh.
And I, I am the dare-devil, taking any challenges that no one will ever do.
Nothing in my home is calm,
Just like a circus.

Liangy Gomez
MAKE A CAKE

Get in the kitchen it’s time to bake,
Follow these simple steps to make a cake.
Get your ingredients, pots and pans,
Prepare to get messy so wash your hands.
You will mix until your arms are tired,
But your final product shall be admired.
Get your eggs, cream, milk, flour and sugar,
And hope that your batter doesn’t taste like booger.
Lick the batter off the spoon
Your product will make friends and family swoon
Let it cool,
Don’t be a fool
Now you can let your friends try it
And it is so good they will have to admit
You followed my easy steps to make a cake,
Hopefully you shall continue to bake.

Simon Dalton

Rules to Be a Popstar

If you want to be a popstar, here’s what you have to do:
Dress to impress
Turn all of the heads of the guests
And lip sync your way to success
Win over the masses of teenage broken hearts
And when you do, you will be topping the charts
Rock all of the latest trends
And gain an abundance of “fake” friends
Be awarded with a Grammy, VMA, or two
If you want to be a popstar, this is what you must do.

Saniyah Hicks

Bitter Sweet Rules

If blissful ignorance is what you seek, here is what you must do:
Forget your crude notions of human concord.
Teach yourself to dissuade from emotional consumption.
Remember senseless tears are abhorred.
End compliance to stereotypes without resumption.
Let go of menial heartache.
You have to look, but never see.
All your goodwill you will forsake.
Your cold heart will be the employer...and your flesh the employee.

Avery DiMaria

Point of View

Love is cold and merciless,
My heart is dull-witted and heedless.
Because when you pause and try to see it
From my mind’s point of view, it’s needless.

Other people don’t make you happy,
Nothing ever will.
To see it from the viewpoint,
When love no longer makes you ill.

How once I was governed by stupidity,
And suffer was all I could do.
Until I stopped and looked at love,
MY RULES TO PARKOUR
If you want to be a good free-runner, here’s what you have to do.
You must learn how to vault, and try something new.
The main purpose of parkour is to keep on trying,
But one thing you should remember is to never start crying.
You can kong, climb, roll, and flip.
The results of these actions may cut your lip.
If you think parkour is just a little game,
Well it takes more than luck to receive some fame.
There’s a game in parkour called “Parkourse.”
Where one person does parkour and crates the course
Some people consider vaulting as “hardcore;”
But I do this activity because I love to parkour.
Leo Shim & Andrew Takematsu
unless it’s to destroy them and send them reeling
   don’t do that, it’s not passive enough
   just always leave the scene in a huff
   and always embody the absence of chill
careful, people will soon get their fill
so if you want to be lonely and full of regretty
dedicate your life to being petty.

Holiday Wright

FLOWER
Carefully I grow for a season
And finally blossom in joy
But humans see it as a reason
   To use me like a toy.

Do you think my petals could express
   if he really loves you or not?
Why don’t you just go up and confess
Instead of picking on every part I got.

When humans look at the beauty that every petal
   brings
Stopping to admire our varying hues
   Why can’t they just see things
From the flower’s point of view

Carolina Navarro

Go
I wave bye to my friends
as I see them fade,
I look out the car window
To see the town one last time
I start shedding tears
As I realize I’m moving
But I think it’s time to finally go
There will be new memories to come soon.

Augustus Figarola

Free Verse

Can you hear it?
Can you hear the beating of my heart as it slowly breaks?
Can you hear the rumors as they spread?
Can you hear my sobs as I cry?
And do you know that you are the reason why
The reason for my pain
The reason that I cannot stop my crying
And do you know you could have stopped it all
Erin Choi

MIXED RACE HOP SCOTCH
It all starts by using one foot to hop. Kids all lined up in a row
Good for the ones that have had close friends since very long ago
One more jump, this time to one side.
It's time to deal with what being you will provide.

Now up real high, both feet drop. Frist friends with one race, and then you swap.
No one completely accepts who you are
Until they stop thinking of your background as bizarre
Wait three and twist at a good pace
They say they are confused and so is your race
Struggling to find which group you fit into
Crossing the line can easily frighten you
Finish the game with your feet on the floor.
Still don’t understand me, but I know who I am in my core.
You never know who is right
Crossing the line can bring you fright.

Janah Szabo

A RESPONSE TO JAMES WELDON JOHNSON
Sometimes the darkness covers my path,
And the feeling of lost is scaring.
But, oh, I have a magic way
To turn the frighten into a manful day-
I softly sing.

And if the way is unseen still,
Shadowed by your fear to keep going,
With glad defiance in my throat,
I create light with a note,
And sing, and sing.

I do not turn back to the past,
Nor am I worried for what the future will bring;
No mistake can be changed, no matter how much I long,
While I cry my mind thinks of a song,
And I can sing.

Jiu Han

A RESPONSE TO AMBROSE BIERCE
The horrifying sounds she makes
Could be heard everywhere
As people hit the breaks
Instead of going somewhere

She still screams
Because even though they are aware
Of the world’s horrors down to their seams
They still choose their cage without a care

She begged for it to cease
In utter despair
For them to still be free
But actually aware
She pulled at her chains
For Freedom could no longer bare
The ignorance that reigns
Among the people that are so unaware
Kenny Daici

FREEDOM FOR ALL

Not a day goes by
When hard labor is not pursued
And commenced by the poor
It is not hard for them to look in our eyes
And see the broken hearts
There is no such thing as freedom
For those who live rich and proud

Freedom is taken for granted because
Nobility is granted
And freedom for all is rewarded
But the rich still take advantage
They have the right

The rich don’t work
But they earn
The poor are humble
But they don’t receive
The people who are cruel and afraid,
   Who lynch and run
They do not deserve it
They do not deserve freedom the way we do
   But that’s just the price we pay

There’s no cotton, silk,
   Nor linen curtain in your life;
There’s no need to choose freedom:
   You are free
Rea Radu

GATHER THE WOMEN

Trouble, trouble, the trouble we cause
   The riots that happen
The laws that are flawed
Gather your children, your mothers, and your
   grandmothers
For a revolution is to occur
   With women of all color
Gather the women
   who wish for equality
Gather the women
   Who wish for a good day
Gather them by boat
   By ship, or by bicycle
   By flight or car
   By run, by walk, by crawl
For If you wish you can, you will
The revolution is about to begin
Samantha Co

NOBODY IS EVER FORGOTTEN

His tears drip onto the gravel with his sorrow
His cries echo like the shrieks of misery among the graves
And I watch him, hear him, and feel him.
Feeling his pain and his fear
Fear
That he’ll forget him. Forget who he is, where he was, and
How important his father was to him. A man with an empty shell

With a gentle touch, I rest a comforting hand
Upon his shoulder and give him a meaningful smile
He lifted his head and knew what I was trying to
tell him
He was devastated, but he knew.
He knew that people are never forgotten,
Even if their souls move on to another place
Nobody is ever forgotten
Ryan Ko

WHAT SHALL I TELL MY CHILDREN WHO ARE WHITE?

What shall I tell my children who are white?
And have had white supremacists ancestors
What shall I tell my dear one, fruit of my womb?
Of how kind hearted they are when everyone
Views them as racists
The clouds are white and so is spoiled milk.
Picket fences are white with white individuals behind them
A white puma is not as intimidating nor is a white mamba
What can I say, therefore, when my child
Comes home in tears because a playmate
Has called him racist, sexist, and not ethnically diverse
What will he think when I dry his ears and whisper-
“Some people are just very closed minded, my dear”
How shall I lift up his spirits, get him to laugh, and feel joy
When all diverse persons are afraid to speak with him?
I must find the truth of heritage for myself and pass it on to them
In years to come, I believe because I have armed them with the truth, my children and their children’s children will venerate me
For it is the truth that will make us free!

Izzy Diaz

I Will Forgive but I Will Never Forget

Inspired by Prisoner B-3087

We voice the belief of rights for all humans no matter who you are
We say we inspire the next generation to keep equality in our communities
We repeat this idea that everyone is treated the same way
Treated with the same amount of respect
We utter these things but it means nothing when it comes to our history of treating People
I will forgive but I will never forget
We have had dark times in history
One of these times is when we as people tried to wipe out an entire generation of people
This time of history it was not considered as wrong but normal
I will forgive but I will never forget

Back then we voiced the belief you get a certain amount of freedoms depending who you are
What you looked like
The perfect human being was someone with blond hair and blue eyes
Anything else was unacceptable and thrown into a trash pit
The people had been so lucky laughed at the so many unlucky souls
I will forgive but I will never forget

They throw the unlucky ones into these small trains full of fear and sorrow
They stuck hundreds into these trains
No one can breathe because of the stuffiness and sweat in the air
We stayed in these trains for days in darkness
Until they finally let us out
I will forgive but I will never forget

They dumped us out of these horrid trains into an even worse nightmare
They led us to a concentration camp
They pushed us and pressured us out of the train with their big guns
There were two lines
One was for the able bodied
The other was for the elderly, women, and children
I will forgive but I will never forget

The people on the abled body line ended up in this horrid place
There were these huge sheds
When you walked in them you can smell the scent of sewage
In them were also lumps of fabric put on top of each other and they called them our beds
I will forgive but I will never forget

They made us do so much physical labor that at the end of the day no one could move
Then after a day of hard work they would give us a tiny bowl of broth
And a small piece of bread
We were starving and they gave us a meal that would not even be suitable as a snack.
I will forgive but I will never forget

They would beat us
They would choke us
They would shoot us
They would smoke us
They would sicken us
I will forgive but I will never forget

Now you see our histories and it is not as free as we would like to believe
As long as people can have others under their control
no one will ever be free
So let's stop believing in an ideal that may never come true
I will forgive but I will never forget
Because I am Prisoner B-3087

Jacqueline Hoffman

Black

Black is not a color
It is one of a kind
So they hanged them by the collar
But did racism decline?

Racism everywhere
Handed out like mail
Put into small squares
Like the rooms in county jail
Stereotypes do exist
Negroes as terrible people
But they still raise their fists
And ascend that steep hill

Protests are occurring
Beaming hope through tough times
Hope is a dove who’s learning how to use its wings
A rock climber starting his climb
Black is not alone; it is part of a rainbow

Erik Jung

**A World Enveloped in Darkness**

Certain situations can be avoided
There are some things you have to fight for
Some of us have to be aided
Feels like a raging war

All peace was faded
But compassion seemed to roar
In the end I will shout, “I made It”
And relaxation will be behind that door

Once enough has been said
I sit in bed
Thinking of what has happened
Now the world is less blackened

Andreu Rios and Brithany Macias

From Afar

The morning was bright, the sun awoke,
Clouds appeared, as winds blew.
I arose from my bed, when my servant spoke,
Romance would live anew.

“Sir, a fine damsel appears in your sight.”
To the window I went and stared out,
My innermost passion began to ignite.
This lady was most beautiful without a doubt.

On her knees she knelt,
Picking bouquets of sun-kissed flowers.
Every bloom she caressed; each petal she felt
And there she remained serenely for hours.

Her hair compared to charming gold
  Her eyes were bluer than the sea.
Her image was soft, so far from bold
  She was perfection to me

She reminded me of a beauty I desired long ago.
  Whose fate is the tearful story of lost love,
A lady who died at the hands of a cruel foe.
  And now resides in the heavens above

Too fearful of more heartbreak, I remained aloof,
  With my heart I refused to spar
I never again will forsake another,
  Alas, she is a gem only to be viewed from afar.

Min Seong Kim

Halfway House

From the non-shoveled walkway
  across the empty street
He stared through the windows in disgust
  At the ones who’d admitted defeat

For almost a year he had managed
  With nothing but his wits
But he had begun to believe
  that it was time for him to call it quits

He had hoped that his release
  Would sever the chains
That it wouldn’t be he that was bound tight
But his filthy remains

But he was still tied down
Unable to move
Detained by the stigma
Not being approved

That day, he sat
Outside in the plight
And found himself staring
at the glass structure, glowing in the night

He only longed for a taste of its heat and
To escape from the snow
And where would they find his bones
If he did not go

But, he told himself,
Only when Hell froze over
Would he walk through those doors
And get his mental makeover

Only then would he concede
And accept the relief
Do as they had done
And admit defeat

But it seemed as though Hell had already iced over,
Consumed by the cold
The frost reached him, too
But he would not be controlled

He found himself moving
It seems he’d been convinced
He hurried to the blank canvas
And what would be his first home since
He stood in the doorway
   Not in, nor out
And crossed the threshold
   No regret, no doubt

Kenny Daici

WINTER OF HER MIND

Oh, Ms. Believer, my pretty sleeper
Your twisted mind is like snow on the road
Your shaking shoulders prove that it’s colder
   Inside your head than the winter of dead

Oh Ms. Believer, my pretty screamer
Your icy touch can be sometimes too much
Your feet are running all of a sudden
Because inside your thoughts you hear loud shouts
   I’ll keep you sane and safe from the rain
You don’t have to worry your vision is blurry
   Stay home with me and I’ll set you free
From your rattled soul I’ll help you through your battle

Oh Ms. Believer, my pretty weeper
Your trembling hands have been through badlands
Your rigid fingers are always frigid
Because at last you’ve remembered your past
I’ll make your dreams safe and serene
Your misty eyes don’t hide that you’ve cried
Lift up your spirit and together we’ll clear it
Just try one more day it doesn’t have to be grey

Oh Ms. Believer, my pretty dreamer
Your stone cold bones were like icicles of gold
Your glistening heart was made of pure art
Though you thought that you brought misery for naught
You lit up my day I’ll now admit
Your heavenly gaze brought me to a haze
You became colder which made you run slower
Through darkest days your smile will always stay

Omara Morales and Izzy Diaz
When Man Met The Tree

Sunlight as warm as honey
Poured through the branches
Those branches connected by a tree
Its thoughts full of second chances
A man trekked through the woods
His whistle carrying a sorrowful tone
For regret ran through his body
Down to his flesh and bone
Once the man met the tree,
He let out a sigh
Unpacked his axe,
And prepared to say goodbye
The tree cried out in fear
As the man raised his weapon
Rain began to fall
And time stopped for a second

The man first took off
The tree’s largest branches
And soon cut off its leaves
  Burning them to ashes
The tree yelled in anguish
As its body was destroyed
By the axe that harmed it
The one it wished to avoid

The tree trembled
As the ax hit harder into its trunk
And the man’s eyes began to water
  As his heart sunk
But the tree, the tree instead
Thought of life that was fresh
  Closed its eyes
And let out its final breath

Anonymous

Diaspora of the Mind

The heavens shining down upon his face,
With bronze skin a-gleaming
The shepherd stood tall upon the knoll
Searching inside himself for meaning.

He took his crook to lead his flock
Back down to the sovereign’s city.
The sheep were bleating in the wind,
they went not from fear, but out of pity.

Cyrus the Shepherd approached the city’s gate
A place that once he called home.
As he wept before the murals of the King,
Cyrus’s mind began to roam.

Scores before, it must have been
When the verdict had been made
And Cyrus had been sentenced,
His exile leaving him betrayed.

Wise Cyrus the Scholar claimed not
to be neither a prophet nor a god.
His only crime was thinking free,
Yet he’d been labeled as a fraud.

They called him heretic and blasphemer
Disciple of the devil
His banishment was set upon
As the city engaged in revel

He wandered through the savage lands
As the months melted into years
Cyrus became a lonely soul,
His face marked by drying tears

And now he stood before the gate
Gazing at the life that he’d once known
The city minds had banished him
For thinking differently from their own.

Reclusive Cyrus the Agonized
Cursed himself out of spite.  
He’d lost it all for arguing,  
And now he’d make it right.

They say he was never seen again,  
That the poor shepherd died of age  
That Cyrus became just a footnote  
On society’s rotting page.

‘Tis the cruel nature of humanity,  
To fear what was never known.  
Just as Cyrus’s profound ideals  
Were reduced to ash and bone

Emery Jacobowitz

Love and Loss

My love, my love, will you be mine?  
You are the one I seek  
My love for you is so divine  
Your beauty makes me weak

The day I laid eyes upon you  
I knew it wasn’t fake  
Surely I knew that it was true  
love boiling in heartache
Do you remember long ago
when we possessed our youth?
I dreamed we’d kiss ‘neath mistletoe,
to tell you in full truth

Do you remember long ago
when you shattered my heart
I begged you, “Be my Calypso!”
So we’d ne’er be apart

Do you remember your response
to my brave inquiry?
I sensed an air of nonchalance
Then it came down on me

Your head tipped back and laughter rolled
right off your graceful tongue
Then the surrounding air grew cold
And your harsh words, they stung

“I’d rather die from a disease
than have you as my beau
Your every action disgusts me
So maybe you should go.”
And ever since that day, my love
Self-consciousness I bore
Attempting to rid myself of
the things you judged me for

Here I am, dwelling in the past
My age turns twenty-two
I can’t believe this love did last
For all you’ve put me through

My love, my love, we meet once more
You have not changed a bit
But I’m no longer as before
The past, we must omit

I gaze into your once fair eyes
My love for you expires
You were my angel in disguise
Now your hair resembles wires

Maybe once I saw beauty in
your looks and inner self
But underneath your precious skin
You are worse than myself

My love, it's such a tragedy
I thought that you were mine
But it's just the way things came to be
Now it's my turn to shine

Lauren Kwak & Jessica Lee

The Ballad of the Lost Boy
The ship yard was full on a busy morning
And it was here where a boy wandered
Soon the boy was placed into a ship without warning
So the boy did not let this chance be squandered
Soon he would set sail and leave his worried family behind
But he did not know the challenges he would face
On beginning this journey he might as well have been blind
As in the distance was a storm for which no man could brace

The light was blinding; the sky was roaring
The ship could barely hold
But the men on board kept rowing and rowing
Forever remaining bold
But their efforts would definitely be for naught
And soon the mast would break
And when it did some of the men were caught
In the sea below, and how the ship would shake
Mighty sailors would soon fall to their doom
And the sea would gobble them all
Bashing the ship, leaving despair and gloom
As the ship and sea engaged in a brawl.

Soon the boy fell overboard
And his breath seemed to be disappearing
This cold hard sea felt like a thrashing whip
Thunderous sounds that mimicked cheering
The sea continued its pounding
And soon all vision went dark
And the boy was convinced that he was drowning
On this journey he should have never embarked

The boy was cold, completely alone
On an island which glittered like gold
He soon awoke and with a groan
Set out to find a home
He treaded through woods
And continued to roam
In hopes of discovering goods

But what he found was something more
Hidden in the trees was something covered in gore
The sight made him freeze
He was completely lost in fright
It was not until a gentle breeze
Did his face stop turning white
He turned and ran
In hopes of escaping danger
He would scan as he ran
So as to not end up like that stranger

He ran to elude this pending danger
Only stopping when he started to wheeze
As he looked around he found his surroundings only looked stranger
But its beauty did not displease
He seemed to be in a field of golden grass
Except that it was much taller
The river nearby shone like glass
He was near a town, and this made him want to holler
He was soon running down stream
In hopes of finding salvation
He asked himself: is this a dream
Or a reality of my exhaustion

Now the boy had found a town
Where he would finally find assistance
Once he thought he would drown
But his salvation was now in the distance
He now had hope
The people took him to their rescue station
No longer was there a need to mope
Soon he will reach his destination
But he would not be deterred; another voyage he will seek
He vowed to remain confident, never again to be meek.

Seth Kim

“Wait!” I shouted as my parents sped away from me.

This was the second time this week my parents forgot me and today was Wednesday. I slowly started walking home from Rose High School. Only to make matters worse, I know my younger sister, Theresa Dubois, who goes to the same school as me, got a ride home with my parents, yet they left me.

You know how people say you have a face that only a mother can love. Well, I have a face not even a mother can love. My sister said that she thinks I was adopted because my parents do not really care about me. Sometimes, I think Theresa is right. Sometimes, I think that maybe the air around me just makes people despise me. My sister on the other hand is loved by everyone. We are complete opposites.
“Hey, kid,” Mrs. Heart said. “Do you want to get a ride to your house. It is almost dark.”

I looked at the sky seeing an array of colors. My feet ached.

“Thank you,” I gratefully replied, “I would like that very much.”

I got into the small, black car that smelled oddly like mothballs and despair.

“So, why are you still outside?” Mrs. Heart asked hoping to start a conversation.

“Oh,” I replied, “I, um, missed my ride and, I did not have money for the bus so, I used the only other option I had; walking.”

After that, we sat in awkward silence for the rest of the ride.

I stepped out of the black, odd smelling car only to see the sight of my own despair. On the outside it looked like any normal house. It was white and fairly clean, like any other house in Livingston, New Jersey. I would have actually liked living in this house if I was not the only one that cleans it. I do the dishes, wash the clothes, and worst of all clean the bathroom. When you do all the cleaning, you learn a lot about the people in the house. At that very moment the rain started pouring and the wind started howling.

Just my luck, I thought as I quickly ran toward the house holding my backpack over my head.

Once I got under the patio, I started looking through every pocket I had and every section in my backpack. Luckily, I had a gift card and with some awesome MacGyver style thinking. I slipped the credit card in between the door and the door frame. I slid the card down. The card luckily, unlocked the door, and I step through the door.

The house was messier than yesterday before I cleaned it. I sighed. Sometimes it seems like they make this mess just to give me work. My family was so messy. My mother, as usual, was ready for me with my daily list of chores.

“Here is your list of chores and try to be ready by ten o’clock,” my mother said.
I looked at the clock. It read 5 o’clock. It seemed possible to be done by 10 o’clock.

“Yes, ma’am,” I replied.

I grabbed the trash bag to start picking up the trash in the kitchen since that is what I always do. For the next three hours, I washed the dishes, washed the clothes, dried the clothes, mopped the floor, and did a lot of boring housework. I worked in the basement and in all the rooms except Theresa’s room and that of my parents.

I sometimes think that I am the lucky one. I get to have life experience that I will need in the real world. I was about to turn the handle to Theresa’s room, but then, I stopped.

*What if you allow her to clean her own room,* I thought. *I better tell her just to be sure she actually cleans it.*

I turned the handle and walked in front of the television. Theresa’s room was gigantic. The room was a mess. Papers were everywhere. Food wrappers were on the floor. It is no wonder that this room is not a safety hazard.

“Hey Fatty, move away,” Theresa ordered as she craned her long neck to see the television better.

“I will once you clean your own room,” I replied.

“Like that will ever happen,” Theresa said as she rolled her eyes.

“I told you to clean your room!” I exclaimed angry enough to pull her hair.

Theresa screamed in reply to this. I said my apologies as I exited the room. I was about to go into my parent’s room to clean when I heard their voices talking. Being my nosey self I could not help but listen to their conversation.

“What are we going to do with Adrien?” my mom asked, “He only earned a A- in physical education.”

“He needs to do better,” my father said, “Maybe we should just leave him in the woods to fend for himself.”
“Why couldn’t he be more like Theresa,” my mom said, “She is getting an A+ in gym.”

After I heard that, I left with tears streaming down my face. I ran into my room -- the only place where I feel safe.

*How could they do this to me?* I thought, *I never raised my voice. I always did what they told me to do. That A- was the lowest grade I have ever gotten. So why would they want to disown me? Maybe, I should just get out of their life.*

I packed my cash, clothes, food, and some survival tools in two suitcases. I was at the door and I said my final goodbyes- internally of course.

Nothing happened on the first day. On the second day, they called the police.

“Sir, my son, Adrien Dubois, was not home for two days. And I am getting worried,” my mother said.

“I wish Adrien was here,” Theresa said. “He would clean the house. We need him.”

To my surprise, my father started crying.

*Those ungrateful people actually did miss me. Well, it was too late for that, I thought, They should have loved me sooner and better. I never ever went back there ever again.*

Annabel Adeyeri
A Day in the Life of Alex Rider

I am a 14 year old spy. I don’t like being a spy, but sometimes I have to be one. Sometimes, I just want a normal day. I woke up. It was still dark outside. I looked at my clock. It was 4:27 in the morning. Well, I was up. I stood up, rubbing my eyes. I walked over to my dresser and pulled out my middle school uniform. I struggled to put it on, but I finally managed. There were many wrinkles in the uniform, but I didn’t care. I sat on my bed, and read a book. I particularly like books about spies, so I’m reading the Xela Redir series. Two and a half hours later, I got up and walked
downstairs. My house helper and best friend, Jack Starbright was already in the kitchen, making breakfast. “Morning!” I said. She turned around and smiled her crooked smile. Her red hair was especially messy this morning. Jack lives with me, since my parents and uncle are dead. I sat down at the huge kitchen table. I picked up the paper and read the news. There was nothing special. I was interrupted when the food was done. It was eggs, bacon, and toast. “Thank you.” I said. I looked at the time. It was 7:30 and school started in 25 minutes. Oh, how I hated school. I wolfed the food down and ran out the door. I sprinted to my bike, unlocked it, and raced to school. My uncle who died gave me the bike, so it is special to me.

The wind rushed in my face. I reached school, throwing my bike in the bike shed, and sprinted to class. I reached class panting and sweating just as the bell rang. I made it! I took my seat in the middle row of my English class. It was a normal day. Nothing extraordinary was happening. It just droned on. I walked from class to class, almost falling asleep during each. Getting the homework, barely paying attention, only when a teacher called on me did I talk. At lunch, I sat alone, like usual. I had acquaintances but no real friends here. A good friend of mine is Sabrina, but she doesn’t go to my school. We met at Wimbledon. How I miss her
right now! When I’m alone, my mind starts to wander. I tried not to think about it, but when I am alone, I always think about my parents, and what it would be like if they were alive. It’s hard without them, and I miss them.

Lunch ended and I slowly walked to my next class. Finally, the day was over. It was 3:00 exactly, when the bell rang. I walked outside, to the bike shed, grabbed my bike, and pedaled home. I sat at the kitchen table and did my homework. I ate my dinner, and went to bed early, just to wake up again tomorrow and start all over again. I hope I am not called upon to be a spy again soon.

Liam Waterson

**Once Upon a Time**

Once upon a time, there was a man named Geppetto. He was very poor, and lived making money from creating and selling puppets. Geppetto was a middle aged man. He never found a woman he was comfortable with, so he never had any kids.

One day, he fashioned a new puppet with the little money had. This new puppet was named Pinocchio, and Geppetto wished for this little puppet to be a boy. A fairy godmother hearing his wish, made Pinocchio an actual boy. However, she decided to cast a curse where if he stole something, his nose would grow. When Geppetto woke up and saw that Pinocchio
became a boy, Geppetto made Pinocchio train to excel in the art of robbery.

“Haha. You’re going to be my money-maker,” Geppetto said menacingly.


In a nearby town, there lived a woman named Geppetta. She was very poor, and also made money from making and selling puppets. Geppetta was a middle aged woman who never liked men, thus she never had any children.

One day, she made a new puppet with the little money she had. This new puppet was named Pinocchia, and Geppetta wished for this little puppet to be a girl. The same fairy godmother who had just turned Pinocchio into a boy heard her wish. She made Pinocchia into an actual girl, casting the same curse on her as well. When Geppetta woke up, she made Pinocchia train endlessly for the art of robbery.

“Haha. You’re going to be my money-maker,” Geppetta said menacingly.

“Mommy, no,” Pinocchia pleaded. “I’m just a child.”

That night, after some tiresome training, Geppetto and Geppetta both sent their children to rob some local homes. They were each sent with a very worn out duffel bag to hold their stolen items. However, when they both took one object, their noses started to grow and grow and grow. When they returned to their homes with their stolen goods, Geppetto and Geppetta were both stumped.
“WHY IS YOUR NOSE GROWING? WE DIDN’T TRAIN YOU TO BE CAUGHT! FIX IT BEFORE WE DO GET CAUGHT!”

Geppetto raged. Pinocchio held his head in shame, not knowing the reason either.

Meanwhile, it could be heard...“WHY IS YOUR NOSE GROWING? WE DIDN’T TRAIN YOU TO BE CAUGHT! FIX IT BEFORE WE DO GET CAUGHT!” Geppetta screamed with rage. You could hear them from a mile away.

A couple of nights later, coincidentally they were robbing the same house. Pinocchio was stealing some silverware, when he heard a loud thump from upstairs. As his heart raced loudly, Pinocchio slowly crept up the stairs, but his gigantic nose smashed against the wall, shaking the entire house.

“OW!” Pinocchio yelled rolling down the stairs.

“Who’s there?” a female voice quietly said from above.

Pinocchio looked up the stairs to see... a girl with the same features as his. “Who are you?” he uttered.

“I’m Pinocchio,” he replied. “I’m guessing you have the same problem as I do.”

They talked for a while until they realized that stealing was not good. They both agreed to return the stolen items and run away from home. Pinocchio and Pinocchia waved goodbye as they went to their homes in different directions.

As soon as Pinocchio got home, he started putting all the stolen goods back into the duffel bag. Pinocchia, in the other town was doing the same thing. After they filled their bags with the stolen items, they raced to the robbed houses and returned
the items. Magically, their noses started to return to normal. They both arrived at the same house they met. It was very late at night and they could barely see each other. The only light was the moon shining very brightly.

“So,” Pinocchio groaned through heavy breathing. “Ready to run away?”

“Right,” Pinocchia replied.

“STOP RIGHT THERE!” two voices roared from the other side of the street. It was Geppetto and Geppetta, both holding a whip. The whip gleamed in the darkness, stabbing fear through the children’s hearts. “You’ll be comin’ with us!”

“Run!” Pinocchio yelled to Pinocchia. They ran away as fast as they could, Geppetto and Geppetta after their tail. Their footsteps thundered through the quiet city. However, the duo were soon outpaced by their children. The fairy godmother saw this chase, and decided to remove the curse she had placed on them. Then Pinocchio and Pinocchia lived happily ever after, always on the run.

Zain Hasan
Johnny's Lottery Experience

Johnny was strolling through the street wondering what he'd do with his life in the long-term. For now, he would live in his parent's house and have them pay his expenses. He wasn't eligible for bankruptcy again, as he had already filed about a year earlier. His eight thousand dollar debt was pressing on him, and the interest had already become unbearable. He wasn't quite sure what would happened if you couldn't pay your interest... What do you do?

For now though, he didn't really care. While strolling through the street, using time that his parents told him to use for job hunting, something shiny caught his eye. A small wad of papers had drifted from god knows where. What is that? he thought, eyeing the shiny wad of golden objects. There were bold letters saying things like “Jackpot!” and “Win big!” Aha! he thought, satisfied with his find: lottery tickets!
Shrieking with joy, Johnny took out his pocketknife and started scratching off the pieces of foil. A stranger eyed Johnny as he vigorously scratched the foil off the tickets. “What a weirdo,” the stranger whispered to the person next to him. “Darn it,” shouted Johnny, frustrated with his lack of success with the tickets. People were stopping on the streets to watch the ridiculous situation. “JACKPOT! I WIN!” Johnny shrieked with joy, jumping up and down. “Ten grand, here I come!” Calling the numbers marked on the ticket, he screamed into the phone. “Give me my money!” “Calm down,” the operator replied. “Could you please say the number on your ticket?” “661872!” Johnny blurted out. “Do you have a bank account?” the operator asked. “Yes. The account number is #1A97F and it is with Chase Bank.” “Good, we’ll be transferring the money shortly.” she replied.

Johnny danced happily all the way home, extremely pleased with the result. He grabbed his debit card and rushed to the mall, spending well over three thousand dollars. When he returned home, he figured that he would pay off most of his debt with his winnings. Thinking about the transfer of ten thousand dollars, he smiled. Then he saw the tax. In total, they had taken off six thousand dollars, leaving him with only a thousand dollars after his spending spree.

Once Johnny arrived home, he opted not to tell his parents about his lottery experience, but rather to just head to the basement where he reconsidered his life plan. He would simply continue to have his parents pay for his living expenses. He would use the remaining money to pay off his interest until it caught up to him again. He would worry about that when it came.

There was one thing to be learned from this experience, something very important. He told himself that from now on whenever his
parents came downstairs, he would have to quickly hide his three-thousand-dollar, gold embroidered flamingo statue, the one wearing a diamond necklace as it stood on its suction cup feet.

Ruben Soh

My Idols

Xander peered out the window, pressing his fingertips against the shiny clear glass to see a brand new, model eight fire truck, polished to the height of appearance and appeal. Xander glanced at the professional fire fighters, hoping that they would notice him. One of the fire fighters jerked his head and winked at Xander. Xander rubbed his eyes in disbelief. For most people, fire fighters don't seem like a big deal. However, this was not the case for Xander. For him, this was like meeting your idol for the very first time, and that was not something Xander was going to forget.

When Xander was only 7 years of age, he would go to his room and pretend to be a fireman. He even had his little red, plastic and rubber coat that was very special to him. For most children, blankets and stuffed animals would be the sentimental toys that they would carry around with them. But for Xander, it would be his dream to grow up to be a firefighter.
“Mommy! Mommy!” Xander would always call.

“Look, I am a fireman putting out the fire,” Xander would constantly shout.

When Xander was 12 years of age, he thought even more seriously pursuing his childhood dreams. Every morning, Xander would look out the window and hope to see his idols in action. However, for the past two years not one firefighter had paid attention to Xander, not even sparing a glimpse to look at him. Xander wondered if they were ignoring him for some reason.

Then one day, Xander saw one of the firemen looking at something. But it wasn’t something; it was more like someone…

The fireman was staring at the new kid who just moved in next door in the apartment next to Xander. The kid smiled, almost as if he knew that Xander was becoming jealous of the attention he was receiving from the fireman.

“What are you smiling at? You know, once you get older, those firemen won’t even notice you; better yet, they won’t even bother to look at you. You’ll just be a drop in the ocean...just like me.” Xander exclaimed.

After Xander graduated Antelope Valley College for Firefighters, he began his journey as a fireman. Xander was so good at his new profession that all the top fire departments all around California sent him a job application through the mail. He roughly stomped back and forth through his hallway. He was actually ecstatic that all the fire departments and recruitment officers wanted him. Xander’s dreams were finally coming true.

Xander’s work was becoming well known all over the news. Billboards appeared showing his face and his professional department number. All was well until the government dialed his number.

“This is Xander, Executive of ‘Evaporation After Fire’ Corporation and Fire Department,” he responded.

“Xander, this is the Executive and Judicial Branches of Government. There is a massive fire in New York, and none of the firemen there have the vital equipment that is required to put it out. We need you to come here as
soon as possible and bring all your men and equipment. This is an order. We have a private jet ready for you outside.”

Xander realized that the fire was in his old home town.

“I’m on my way.” exclaimed Xander.

Xander grabbed all his most trained men and his best tools and hopped on the jet and flew to New York.

And there he was, putting out the most outrageous fire he had ever seen. When he was finished with his work, he caught a glimpse of his old apartment, one block away. Xander saw a baby boy peeking out the window, looking at him and watching his professionalism.

Xander remembered that day so long ago and realized that his dreams had really come true.

Nicholas Lien

**THE LOST HERO**

In a blink of an eye everything is gone
You try to escape but are pulled back in
It is time to stop trying
Escape to utter darkness; replace the sunlight
Never to be seen again
Can you see behind these eyes
Do you notice what isn’t there
The truth dressed up in lies
It’s not about escaping but more about survival
Working with the cards you were dealt
Letting those who care help you
Allowing the sun to shine again
Starting fresh
A new chapter
Leave behind the voices that tell you to give up
Let the stars shine
Use your own voice
Living life to its fullest

Bailee Rivera and Jahaira Roca

HOPE

I feel as though no matter how hard I try
And no matter how hard I push forward
I can’t explain this to anyone
I need more words

Life is so much of a struggle
It’s so hard to keep pushing on
Life is an epic expanse
Bigger than the Yukon
But you keep moving on
Looking for that finish line
Trying to keep moving
To that rhythm and that rhyme

But when times are tough
And you want to give up
The expectations are too high
For you to live up

There’s something that
Can shine a light for you
It allows you to know
What to do

It gives you strength to push
Through the hardest of struggles
Allows you to give life
A strong rebuttal

Its name is small
But still powerful
It lights up anyone who says it
It is truly powerful

It cleanses you like
A bar of soap
And the name of this magic word is
Hope
Albert Poni

A stranger once asked me, “What is love?”
I heaved a sigh
And replied with a reply
Love is the sweet cry of a baby in a mother’s arms;
Tis precious hope of those to war had gone.
Love is the sunshine of trees in winter’s reign,
And the rain longed by land when the drought comes in
But to a shattered man, such as I,
Love is the brightest light my eyes had ever seen.
The blissful song I sang in a long forgotten dream
Love...love is a paradise.
My tired lonely feet are tired of wandering through it
Alas, when it left
I lived in the shadows again
My chest in twisted pain,
As agony filled the air
I breathed into my lungs
And so I took a knife and pierced my heart,
For I know not of life when we’re apart.
Indeed, what is love?
Tis this question always asked
And the question, each times asked will never
Be answered with the same response.
For love is misunderstood.

Karla Alcequiez

Hidden Treasures

Seashells of different sizes and colors
Treasures hidden
Only to be found by man
Creating serenity and peace of mind
Constantly washed ashore
To be held in the palm of your hand
While your eyes inspect every fissure

You only wonder
What journey has this small seashell taken
Through high and low tides
What story does this little shell tell?
Oh
That is for you to discover

Noelia Gonzalez & Isabella Kenney

**Time**

Time is what we want most
Yet it is a limited gift
You can keep it and spend it
But it is wise to be thrifty
For once it goes by
it never comes back
For time will fly
As stay power it lacks
Passing time brings joy
Wasting time is a shame
Effort must be employed
Or you are to blame
It is too valuable to dismiss
It should never be tamed
Moving forward and back
Staying in a straight line
So much to do
Yet so little
Time

Sydney Sun

Fate
The knocking will not stop
Knuckles hitting the mahogany door...going on for weeks
Finally, the impatient sound consumes me
I can no longer avoid it
If I do not answer- will it go away?
There is no avoiding it...no hiding from it
Fate is knocking at my door

Aphrodite Stamboulos
The Disappearing Act
Have you ever wanted to disappear?
Just get away from everything?
Well, I can teach you how
It’s quite simple and takes no time at all
It will take you to a different place
Away from your worries and troubles
You will experience wonderful adventures
Or romantic tales
Whatever you enjoy
And the only thing you have to do is pick up a book

Aphrodite Stamboulous

hope
hope is a wave of wind
swaying back and forth,
ever expected
sometimes deciding to stop
then suddenly returning
hope is a burst of smoke
that clouds the eye
of the reality that is not seen
hope is a star in the sky
that does not shine but instead, grows dimmer dimmer dmmmer

Stephanie Hong

THE HEART

It is fascinating How fast it is broken And how long it takes to put it back together Somehow no matter how hard I try It always falls and it always breaks Then the cycle continues And my heart breaks every time

Katie Wilds & Michelle Saez

Tell Me

Tell me What do you see When you look at me?

Tell me What do you think When I walk in?

Tell me What do you hear When I speak to you?

I don’t know
What It is?
Why are you still here?
Most have just
Given up
On catching me

When I look in the mirror
I see nothing.
So how can you see
Anything when you look at me?

I love you
But does it go both ways?
I love you
But do you know that?
When I say I love you
Do you think I mean it?

What do you see?
Who am I?
There is nothing here
But confusion.
Who’s to tell me about me?
Who’s right?
Who’s wrong?

All I see is you.

Pilar Carranza
The Late Goodbye

Oh cruel world, is it true you have done this?
Without her soft hum now, my life is amiss
   It was right here where she died
   It was right here where she cried
The last drop of milk, from her milky eyes

I watched her soul break into a million pieces
Years ago it was, yet my despair still increases
How I pitied her loss, when the brethren stopped fighting
Would it have been too much to ask for sooner uniting?
But it was they who forsook us, for something more exciting

We all thought it would go on forever
How could anyone know it was our last endeavor?
The blood, my blood, she spilled through broken bone.
To end up like all the other soldiers, unknown
She stands like a pine tree atop Mt Namsan, alone.
Did she do it so that our lives would be better?
Because she knew we weren’t meant to be together
Constant crossfire would have been the death of all of us
But all it really would have taken was a little trust
What started with an explosion was suddenly hushed

Now I swear what she did was for the greater good
That great leap of faith that killed her childhood
It was the antics of the universe with which she was assaulted
All in the name of a little girl being exalted
Alas, it was the rapture I gave her, that caused me my torment

Avery DiMaria, Eun-Soe Lee

**A Man Called Ove**

**His name is Ove**

**It rhymes with dove**

**He is the grumpiest man you will ever meet**

**He has strict rules and expects you to be neat**

**Becoming neighbors with Ove is a fright**

**Especially if you crushed his mailbox the first night**

**When it comes to technology Ove is clueless**
So some might think he lives in sadness

Although he might be scary,

Please do not get teary

All he needs is Love

His name is Ove

Gloria Park

Scythe (Poem based on the book Scythe by Neal Shusterman)

For millions of years men have been mortal,
But now the advancements of life have no demise,
Citra and Rowan are shamelessly recruited,
By legend Scythe Faraday who’s extremely nice,
Immortality may be great and all,
As the human race is finally cleaned,
But that doesn’t mean everyone is free,
Due to the Scythes who glean.

Daniel Kalfayan
FRIENDSHIP
The first day I trembled-Wanting to fit in
Good friends are
hard to find
Impossible to forget
Special memories with you
Bring a smile to my face
Having to leave it all behind
Brings tears streaming down my cheeks
I felt confident and safe
But I had to say goodbye
Leaving was hard for me
The strength of friendship is so powerful
I promise to never forget

Brianna Bustamante & Begum Taktak

Faster Without Her

It wasn’t like this in reality.
I never led her by the hand.
We we’re together.
I was satisfied with what we had.
Even if she forgot she was with me,
Still better than complications.
She did light up my life.
I wonder if she felt the same.
We were okay with doing our own thing.
She and I were okay with the distance.
She was going to be leaving, following her own life and ambitions.
I was fine with it.
I wanted her to be happy.
We simply enjoyed being together for the time being.
I played it out in my head.
I wasn't going to chase her.
She knew that.
If she wanted to keep going...
She would have convinced me.
I didn’t want to stop her from finding someone else.
I was mature about it.
No big deal, nothing dramatic.
For now we had each other.
We have been at it.
But we aren’t that close.
She doesn't need me.
I’m an obstacle in her way.
To me, it doesn't make any sense.

Julius Weimer

Home
Comfort., warmth, Joy.
Home is a place
Where emotions
Grow into harvests
Where feelings can be held
Home is a place
Without fear
Of who you are
Your thoughts are always your own
Kept dear in your heart
It is a place of only you
All of you
Even what you wish to change
Because it is accepted

The parts you hold dear
Never denied or rejected
That which you love
Is ready to be set free
Nobody judges you here
You rule supreme
You are home

You decide what happens
In your castle
In your world
In your home

A place of love
Daham Jayasena & Mishelle Goykhberg
Mrs. Richter and Mrs. Pawlick thank all the aspiring poets and writers who contributed their talent to the 2017 LMS Literary Magazine. Putting pen to paper inspires creativity and stirs the imagination. Thank you for a job well done!