

Pauline Johnson Collegiate & Vocational School

# Arts Magazine



2025





**By Eli Nanticoke**

Grand Erie District School Board recognizes Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, as the longstanding peoples of this territory. We honour, recognize, and respect these communities as well as all First Nations, Metis and Inuit Peoples who reside within Grand Erie District School Board. We are all stewards of these lands and waters where we now gather, learn and play, and commit to working together in the spirit of Reconciliation.

**Cover art by Seyma Rustom**

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## 2 AM Thoughts

By Evelyn Waldron

Sometimes I don't know what to think,  
I stay up at night, don't sleep a wink.  
My brain grapples with the existential,  
Do you ever feel inconsequential?

TODAY I DECIDED TO VISIT MY SHRINK,  
SOMETIMES I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK.  
I'M STUCK AND CLOUDED WITH CONFUSION,  
I JUST CAN'T COME TO A CONCLUSION.

*My friends are loud, they talk a lot,  
There are days where I just lose the plot.  
Sometimes I don't know what to think,  
Please tell me why I'm out of sync.*

**The outside world is cruel and hard,  
Violent people who leave us scarred.  
What is it that truly keeps us linked?  
Sometimes I don't know what to think.**



By Rama Adesoken



By Stephanie Hazlett



By Emmy Kerr

# A Light Only She Could See

By Avery Russell

**1987, Huntsville, Ontario**

“Ana!” I shouted across the thick treeline, an abundance of greenery surrounding us. Her laughter tangled with the leaves, a sound that wrapped around me like a warm hug. I pulled myself up to the highest branch on the tree, bark flaked off and the smell of rich oak filled my senses. Dirt and mulch crept its way under my nails; my stained skin shone in the sunlight peeking through the tall trees.

“Come on Ben, keep up. I know you can!” Her voice was a melody, perfectly in balance with the sounds of water trickling, leaves brushing, and birds chirping. This is where we played. This is where we belonged. Anastasia loved being out there. She had a special connection with nature. She would drag me out there nearly every day after we finished our homework. Through the tree branches, her pink shirt moved quickly between the branches. I jumped from tree to tree, attempting to keep up with her.

Once I finally caught up with her, I heard a leaf crinkling. Anastasia was wrapping a wound with a large leaf, using a twig to secure it.

“What happened?” Her skin was red with irritation surrounding the wound. A small stream of blood moved down towards her elbow. “We should go back; my mom can patch you up and then we can watch a movie,” I spoke up. Moving closer to her, I felt my stomach tighten. Surely that could not have happened here. Nothing would have made that clean of a cut.

“No Ben, we stay out here. The fairies will take care of it,” she winked and sprang back up. She began running once more, deeper into the forest. Dirt stirred up behind her steps, a trail of footprints followed. More worried than ever, I decided to continue behind her. Someone had to protect her from the dangers of these woods. I always felt I had to protect her. I love her; she is my best friend.

The trees began to appear greener, the leaves flourished a little more, flowers began budding from the stems placed in the ground. The branches were no longer flakey and rotting but rather strong and flexible. It appears the deeper we went into the forest, the more strength and liveliness came from this forest.

Catching up with her once more, she lay in an ethereal spot, a small circle of trees surrounding her with just a spot of sunlight in the middle. Birds chirped softly and my shoes sunk into the soft grass. She lay where flowers surrounded her, the grass long and a bright, vibrant green. She was still, soaking in the sunlight. The leaf bandage was no longer on her arm, and neither was the cut; not even a scar resided on her arm. Her hair was spread out around her head and a soft smile enchanted her face.

“Join me,” she said softly. I moved towards her and lay next to her. The softness of the grass was attractive, the smell of life and fresh air intoxicating. Her presence is what kept me calm. “Isn’t this wonderful?” she sighed in complete calmness and contentment.

“Yes, it is.” I looked at her and my breath quickened. She looked beautiful. I realized in that moment that it was always her. She was always the person I would look to first; she was always the person I cared most about in this world. She was the love of my life.

“Do you remember when your parents first let us into the forest?” She laughed softly. I nodded, smiling at her. She made me feel so special. “We made up that whole story of being superheroes? Jumping from the trees and pretending to fly?”

“I don't remember pretending,” I remarked. Laughter filled the small bubble we were in. She was my first friend who made me feel like more than a boy who liked books. “Your parents got mad that you went in there at all,” I reminded her.

“Man, they suck,” Ana spoke rubbing her face. “I remember the first time they told me to leave, I came right to you,” Ana’s hand moved to mine, and she turned to face me. “I hope you and your family know how much you’ve

helped me,” she spoke with her voice quivering slightly. Her eyes shifted when she said that and it felt the sincerest words she'd spoken.

“Well, you are always welcome. You know that.” I smiled.

“Remember when you tried to catch that frog?” she laughed, her eyes bright. She was quick to change the topic. “You screamed louder than it did.” I flushed.

“I was seven! Besides, you were the one who wanted it as a pet!” I shot up, pointing at her. She smirked and pulled me back down to lay and enjoy the forest around us.

Being this far in the forest, the air felt warmer, cleaner. It felt more like we were in another world rather than a few minutes away from my house. Anastasia felt different here. She truly shined when we were in this place. But honestly, it was Ana's beliefs that made the forest feel so magical. It was her presence and her descriptions that felt so real.

Years later, I still find myself drawn back to that forest, its secrets buried deep within the trees.

## **2013, Huntsville, Ontario**

Today I am going to tell you the story of someone who I loved very dearly. Someone who captivates my memory every day, even years later. Someone who everyone knows and who is used as an example to young kids now. This is the heartbreaking story of who I believe was the love of my life, Anastasia Collins. She was a force to be reckoned with. If you said something that she didn't like, she would tell you. If you were being disrespectful to someone she knew or loved, her body would tense, her fists would close, and her face would become scarlet.

Her personality was uniquely beautiful. She made everything better, she made everything wonderful, she pushed me out of my comfort zone and brought me onto wistful adventures that I could not even imagine. She made things out of this world become a reality. Anastasia was 15 when she went missing; it shook the whole town. Sure, she was adventurous, reckless, blunt, and forward, but she was loved deeply by everyone. Everyone other than her own family of course.

Anastasia's family was awful. They still are. When we were young, she would begin to fidget with her thumbs when the idea of spending more time than she had to at her house was brought up. We usually would go to mine. Her excuses went something like:

“Your house is better.”

“Your backyard is bigger.”

“You have more channels.”

“Your parents make better food.”

I didn't understand why she was so consistently pushing back at the idea of going to her house.

Anastasia would always speak about escaping this world. Moving on to something bigger and better. She would speak about these unbelievable fantasies: worlds with spirits, talking animals, nature growing for your need, elves, ogres, fairies, she really believed this type of stuff. And sometimes, I believed her too. She spoke of it like she was there. She'd tell me about the creatures who'd lived here for centuries: the fairies who whispered secrets to the oldest trees, the ogres hidden deep in shadows, waiting for travelers foolish enough to stray. Part of me had always wondered if she knew something I didn't.

I would always call her Ana; she would call me Ben. It was a joke between us that we both had eight letter names and shortened them to three. She would say we were meant to be; I would brush her off reminding her we were only kids. I wish I could tell her that we are meant to be, that she was right. I regret that every day.

## 1990, Huntsville, Ontario

“Benedict.” It was never a good sign when she called me my full, eight-letter name. Her voice rang through my ear; I was distracted about something, I cannot remember what. “I am telling you right now you must believe me, these things exist and if you were to trust me, you would believe it too,” Anastasia spoke with her hands, gesturing to the forest. Oh yes, the forest. She was trying to convince me to go find the magical world.

“Listen, Ana, it’s not that I don’t believe you, it just doesn’t seem plausible.” I pushed my glasses up my nose. I mean can you blame me? Elves and ogres? Magical nature? Fairies?

“Ben, I am asking you, just this one time, trust me.” She took my hand. I felt sparks this day, something lit up inside of me when she grabbed my hand. I finally understood that day what she meant when she said that we were meant to be. Reluctantly, I followed. We moved through the forest together, hand in hand, grabbing on tighter than ever before. This time, the adventure was different. I felt it. She knew I felt it. The forest was far more enchanting this day, even though we had explored it countless times.

Just like all the years before, the more you moved through the forest, the more magical it became. The trees thickened and the branches strengthened. The flowers flourished and grew taller. When we were there together, everything felt better. All my worries left my mind, and it was just us, in nature's beauty, together. The air thickened as if whispering secrets just beyond our hearing, wrapping us in a gentle, earthy embrace.

Highschool had been hard on Anastasia. People became more rude. They began calling her a freak. I couldn’t defend her because I was never around when it happened. We came to this part of the forest more and more every day because it was her escape. And she was mine. There were so many folktales about this forest. And she believed every word of them.

“We have to go into this cave,” Anastasia warned me. A shocked expression grew on my face. It looked dangerous. A small gleam of green resided in the small space of the cave. The last thing I wanted was for her to get hurt.

“Ana — no way. I am not fitting in that small space. Also, no way I am letting you go in there! Have you done this before?” I questioned her with a worried tone, grabbing her hand tighter in fear.

“No, that's why you’re here, we are doing this together,” she smiled. “Please.” She sounded so hopeful, like this would be a fresh start for us, somewhere we could be our true selves and have no one to bother us. “In that world,” she whispered, her voice became shaky, and she motioned towards the small entrance. “No one would tell me what to be. There would just be...freedom. And magic. Real magic.” I wanted to believe her; to follow her down whatever strange path lay before us. But a voice in my mind held me back, whispering, *this isn't safe. She's not thinking clearly.*

“Ana, this is too dangerous. I do not think you know what you’re getting us into.” It felt like I was pleading with her. Suddenly, her attitude changed. She felt more distant, a strange, pulsing green glow seeped from the cave, casting an eerie light across Ana’s face. Her hand slipped from mine, and I felt the chill of loss before she even stepped inside. “Ana...” I whispered, my voice barely louder than the sound of leaves brushing against the cave’s mouth. But her mind was set, and her eyes shone with the same intensity as the strange light.

“Ben. I am doing this whether you are here or not. I need this, I need you to come with me,” she spoke assertively, hoping, praying that I would join. “If you don't come with me, I will never forgive you.” When she said that I tensed. I don’t know why, but it really struck me hard.

“I...” I wish I went with her. “I can’t do this...” I was so dumb. I shouldn’t have kept talking. “You may not have a family to go home to that loves you, but I do.” I regret my words every day. If I went with her, I could have saved her. I could have never imagined that this would be the last time I saw her.

Tears welled up in her eyes. For a heartbeat, she turned and met my gaze, her eyes wide with both fear and hope. Then, before I could move, she was gone— alone, upset swallowed by the green glow, and with no one

to support her. I called after her. As soon as I lost sight of her, my entire world stopped. Everything I had just done, I regretted. I scrambled hopelessly trying to reach her in that small space. I don't even know how she fit in there. I stood up and ran back to my house. She was gone, out of my grasp for the first time in our lives. I did not know what to do. Worry filled my chest, I couldn't breathe. I was losing her.

"MOM!" The forest was thick and silent as I sprinted through, my heart pounding, my legs trembling. Every shadow seemed to reach for me as I ran, calling her name. I did not even get to say goodbye. What if I had held onto her? What if I hadn't let her wander ahead? My mind swirled with endless questions and 'what-ifs' that would haunt me for years. "Ana went into a cave, and I couldn't get her out!" My mom lost a daughter that day. She followed me through the forest, and when we got there, the cave was closed. Like the hole was never there. I remember breaking down into tears. I was heartbroken, confused, and I felt like an awful person.

"Benedict are you sure it was here?!" my mom questioned loudly.

"Yes Mom. Oh God, how did I let this happen?" I did not know what to do with myself. I just collapsed into my mom's arms. I felt myself lose breath, sobbing, like never before.

When we returned to the house, my mom called the police immediately, and she informed Ana's family. They were convinced she would be back. I was left questioning what would have happened if I went with her. The whole town searched for weeks, not even a trace of her was found. She was gone. Out of thin air. I remembered her laugh echoing as we played hide-and-seek in these woods, the way she always found the best hiding spots. I like to believe that she is living in the world she told me about, with magic, nature, fairies, elves, and ogres. But my mom continues to search in desperation and sorrow, hoping to find even a sign. She wishes for peace of mind. Sometimes, when the wind rustles through the trees just right, I imagine it's her voice, laughing from somewhere far away. And, just for a moment, I believe she's happy in that world she dreamed about.<sup>6</sup>

## 2013, Huntsville, Ontario

Every year, I come here. I keep thinking maybe if I stand here long enough, that cave will open, and she'll walk out, same as ever, grinning as if no time has passed.

I remember the way she looked back at me, just once, her face a mixture of determination and something softer—fear, maybe, or hope. In that single glance, I saw the girl I loved and the woman she was becoming, someone so strong she could walk away, even if it meant leaving me behind. Even now, the forest calls to me with her laughter woven into the breeze, the smell of moss and wildflowers a bittersweet reminder of everything we once shared. That final moment replays every night—her face, lit by that strange green glow, her eyes silently begging me to follow. The sound of her last step echoes louder than my own heartbeat, and it's a sound I can't escape

*Ana, my love, if in some miracle that you are reading this, listening to this... I am sorry for everything. I am sorry I did not go with you; I am sorry for what I said. I am sorry for not believing you. I feel your presence in everything I do. You are always on my mind. You are with me no matter what I do. I learnt so much from you and I have made an effort to carry what you showed me with everything I do. I believe you Ana. I believe that you are in a magical place now that treats you the way you always deserved to be. You were right. There is magic in this world. You showed it to me, and I carry it with me, even now. In every leaf, every breath of the forest, I find traces of you. I love you, Ana. I always have, and always will. I am sorry that it took me so long to realize it. I let you down.*

I set the letter against the cool, solid earth where the cave once was, hoping that somehow, in some other world, you might find it. My love, wherever you are, I believe you. You found magic, and in a way, you brought it to me too. I'll carry it with me forever.



# Door Number Three

By Brianne Potter

The clock echoes through the halls,  
A bright, red glow shines on the worn-out floors.

I stand before a tall, white door,  
The door that has been locked for hundreds of years.  
No key could handle the large lock.

Noises come from behind,  
Like scratches and muffled screams.

There have been rumors,  
All this time,  
Of immortal entities trapped inside.  
They cannot escape,  
But could bring the living in.

I come back to reality.  
The feeling of horror overcomes my body,  
Cold air circles around,  
The word RUN enters my mind.



By Myha Harrington



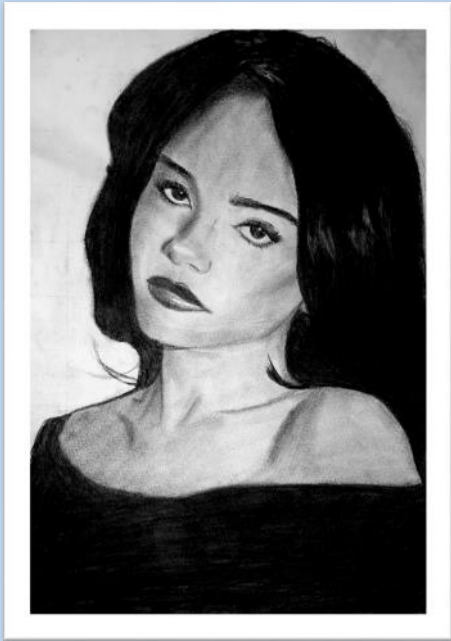
By Lirjon Dabova



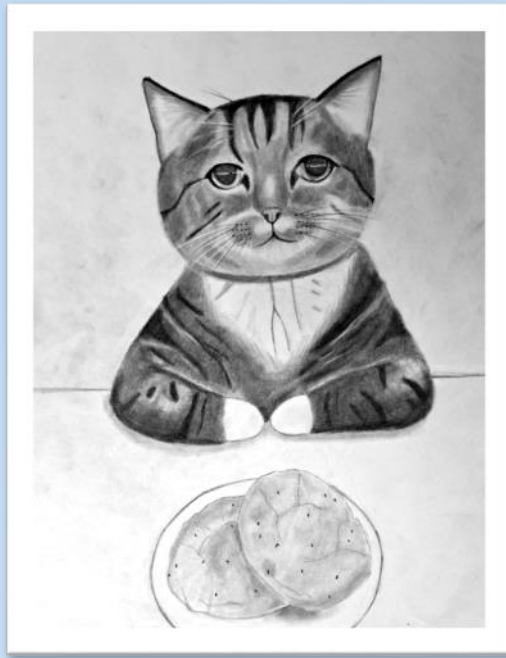
By Kalleigh McEachern



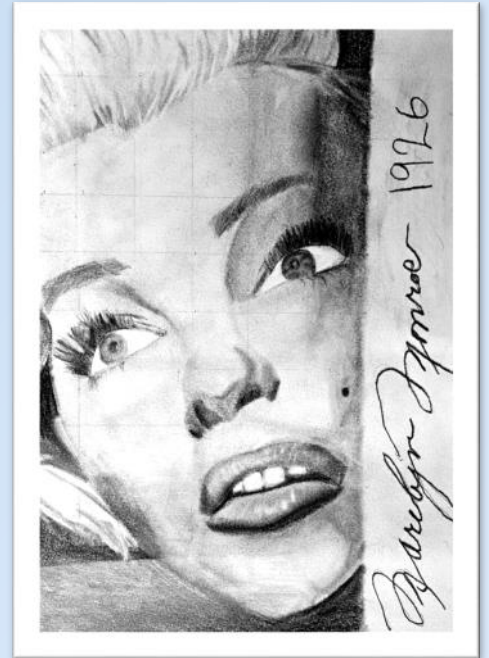
By Destiny General-Wheeler



**By Susannah Rush**



**By Lei Zeira Rebutoc**



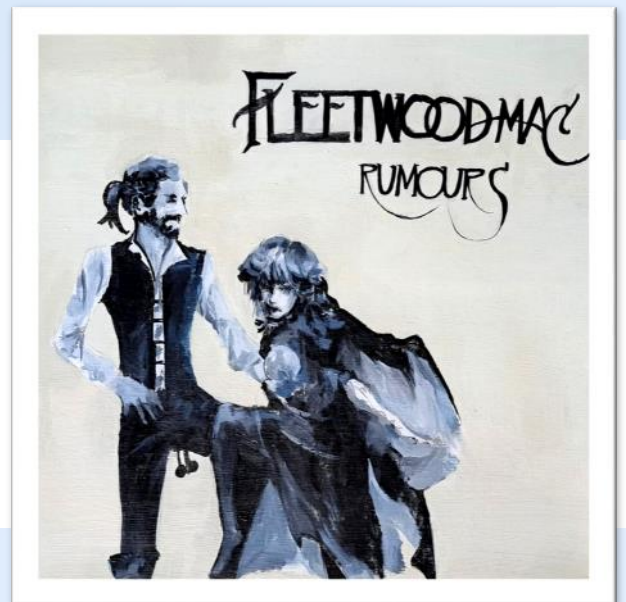
**By Paige Kirby**



**By Danika Rieser**



**By Yatawee  
Aniwattanakun**





# Daybreak

By Aiden Williams

On her muddy eyes came daybreak  
Alpine robes pulled her from her mother  
Her connecting organ severed  
Left alone in chilled air

Sunrise spiraled above horizon  
On her muddy eyes came daybreak  
Large vacant room half-filled  
Her small body fetal curled

Apartment obelisk scraping clouds  
Long night shift driving product  
On her muddy eyes came daybreak  
Insomnia days follow soon

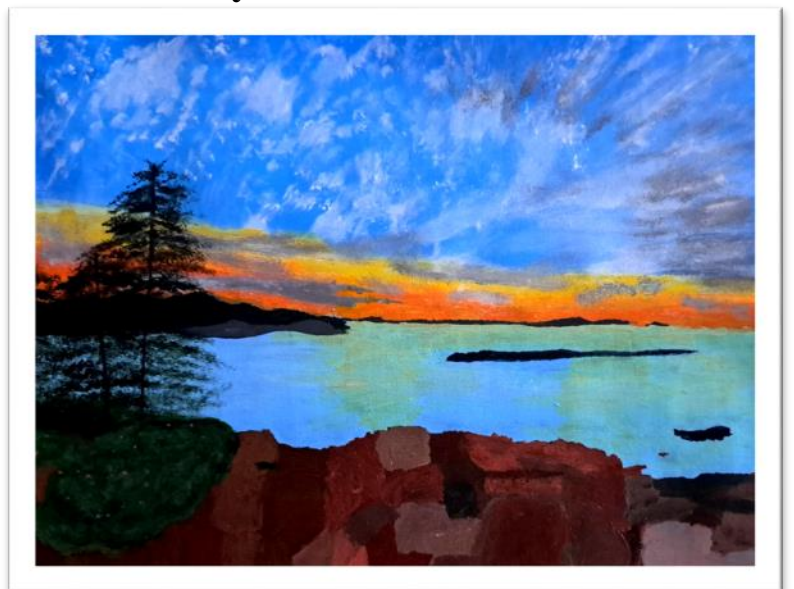
City filled with a web of people  
She was quarantined from all other  
Realized no future embrace awaits her  
On her muddy eyes came daybreak



**By Raneem Alabed**



**By Kaitlin McKenzie**



**By Jairus Estole**



**By Kylie Barry-McLean**

# A Statement and a Question

By Evelyn Waldron

You may silence us on the world stage, and cut the volume of our voice to less than half.  
You may force us into the home and say you speak on our behalf.  
But we know the truth.

You may hurt us. Hit and bruise our skin, strip our autonomy from our bones.  
You may smile and reduce our pain to a b\*tch and moan.  
But you will never know us.

You can work half as hard and earn twice as much,  
But we all know who comes in for the clutch.

You can triumph, laugh, and bask in the glory,  
But it was one of us who began your story.

Take our freedom, take our names, take everything we own.  
Take our pride, take our bodies, make us face the unknown.

**BUT GUESS WHAT?**

Our hearts still beat,  
History is not yet complete.  
While you sit on your throne and doubt your defeat,  
We still fight on, march down the street.

**WE FIGHT ON.**

Our souls burn with starlight  
Our voices soar to new heights  
We do not do this out of spite  
We try, we fly, we die for what is right.

**WILL YOU?**



*"Fading Far Away"  
Haiku By Caleb McCrae*

**Tender as we age  
Disgraced through every flipped page  
Only time shows change.**



**By Caleb McCrae**



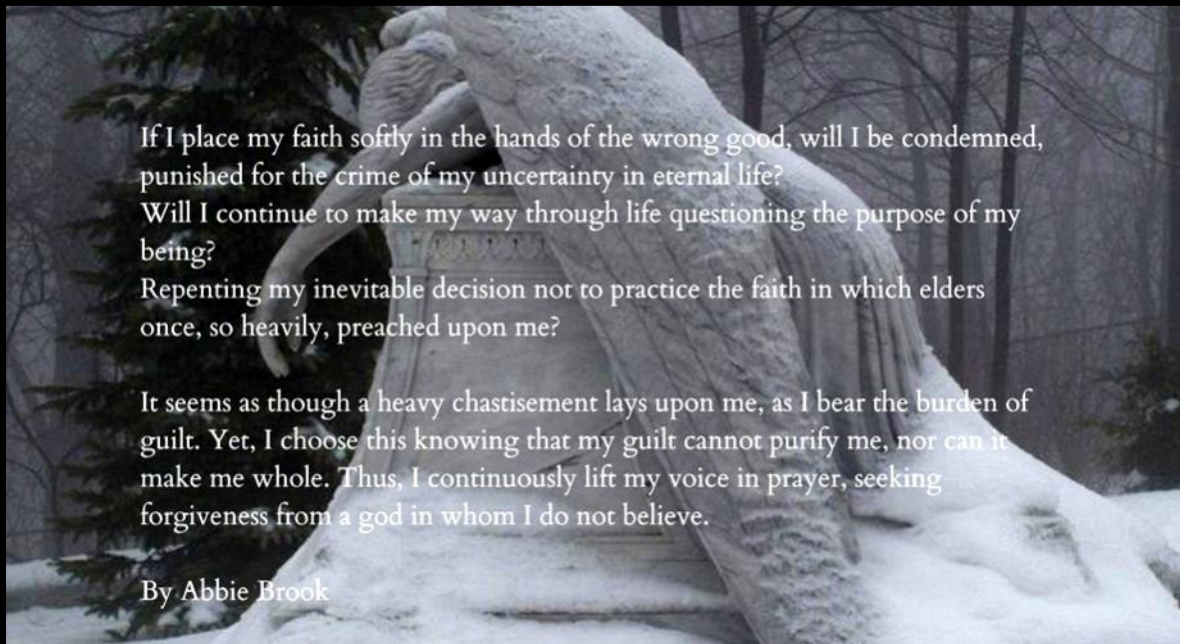
## Banner Spangled Star

By Zorawar Singh

**Our personal hell is murdering  
this loved place  
While we watch it axe the fresh air  
Women  
Aren't guarded  
It is the pure downfall of access  
Fraudsters  
are not limited  
We watch them  
break the law  
And eat their overwhelming lies  
Along with whatever slop  
they feed us**

This place will become horrible  
stripped of love and light  
The liar threatens us  
We must show the offender  
that the day isn't over, yet.

By Zorawar Singh



If I place my faith softly in the hands of the wrong good, will I be condemned, punished for the crime of my uncertainty in eternal life?

Will I continue to make my way through life questioning the purpose of my being?

Repenting my inevitable decision not to practice the faith in which elders once, so heavily, preached upon me?

It seems as though a heavy chastisement lays upon me, as I bear the burden of guilt. Yet, I choose this knowing that my guilt cannot purify me, nor can it make me whole. Thus, I continuously lift my voice in prayer, seeking forgiveness from a god in whom I do not believe.

By Abbie Brook

By Abbie Brook

# Gosenda Lodge: My Camp

By Abby Durdon

Just past Timmins on the Kapuskasing Lake, there is a small camp in the middle of nowhere. You can only get there by train or plane. Tall trees and the large lake surround it. Birds chirp and the lake lightly crashes into the dock. The sun fills the sky and lights up the old cabins. This camp is named Gosenda Lodge.

Gosenda Lodge was built in 1937 by my great-grandpa. In 1979, my grandparents took it over and ran it until a few years ago when my uncle and aunt took it over. Although my camp is very old, it's in great shape. The cabins have got new roofs, been painted and had some renovations inside, but for the most part it is still the same. It has been closed for a few years, the only people going up were my family, but since my aunt and uncle now run it, it's open again for anyone to visit. I have been going up there my whole life in the summer with my family and it's my favourite place in the whole world.

It's hard to put it into the right words to describe how beautiful it is. When you first get there, you're welcomed by a dock. Once you're off the dock, sand surrounds you and fills your shoes. You walk up a little hill to the grass and right in front of you is a red shed. Inside the red shed are floaties for beach days, life jackets for fishing trips, fishing rods for the fish you'll catch and if you're lucky you might find a boat motor or two. Walking out of the red shed when you look to your left, you'll see the open lake and the beach (we like to call this beach the rock beach because it has a ton of rocks on it). To your right you'll see two cabins.

The first cabin is a white cabin with a red door and a big staircase leading up to the porch. In the porch is a table used to play games at night and sit and chat in the daytime. There's a fridge and another table that a water jug is kept on. When you walk through the door to get into the main area of the cabin, you're welcomed by a short hallway. On your left and right, there are two bedrooms. They both have mint green walls and two beds. Once you walk past the rooms, you're in the main area. When you look to your right, there's a huge window overlooking the lake. Right across the lake is a direct view to the bridge that trains cross; we've made a game out of it and guess how long the trains are.

There's a table where we eat and hang out. This table reminds me of a bunch of memories, so I'll tell you just two of them, the first one being Ping Pong. We have a portable ping pong net and paddles that we bring with us. Me and my friend who goes to camp, decided we were going to try to see how long we could keep the ball from hitting the ground. The ball was bouncing off the windows, the ceiling and anything in its path. We were chasing this small ball around our whole cabin and yelling at each other whenever it dropped on the floor. The second memory I can think of is with that same friend. I was sitting on a chair at the table, drawing, and he was sitting on the couch. He was talking about Sonic and suddenly stopped talking and I asked him why he stopped talking. He said, "Well most people don't like it when I talk about stuff I like this much." That made me feel sad, so I let him talk. He talked for probably two hours about Sonic and a few hours later when we went to the beach he talked more about Sonic. Those are just two of the many memories I have at that table.

Then, a couch is beside it that in all honestly most people don't use because you can feel the springs coming out of it. The chairs at the table are better options to sit on. To your left, there's a kitchen that is rarely used. We keep snacks like chips, candies and beef jerky in there and use the bowls that are in it. Then you walk straight and there's two more rooms that are the exact same as the first two that you saw.

Once you walk to your left there's the other cabin that you saw when you first arrived. It's brown and a little smaller than the white cabin. This cabin is what we like to call the kitchen, because it has a giant kitchen, and this is where everyone eats. When you first walk in there's a pantry to your right and a woodstove to your left. In front of you there's a giant counter with drawers with utensils, pots, and pans inside. To the left of the counter is a stove where all the breakfasts and dinners are made. To the right at the end of the counter is a fridge that has way too much stuff in it. In front of the counter is a table where everyone eats. This is where everyone gets to see each other after being apart most of the day doing all kinds of different things. Once you're done



looking at the kitchen there's another room attached to it. In this room there's a door and giant window. There are two large comfy chairs and an old phone that is used to make calls.

You leave the kitchen by the front door and stand on a large porch. The large porch has a bench and another chair sitting there. There's a triangle bell sitting on the railing. This is what we like to call the dinner bell. The dinner bell is rung, and it echoes throughout the camp and then everyone knows dinner is ready. Looking over the railing there is a perfect view of the rock beach and the lake. You decide to walk down the stairs onto the grass.

You see a trail going up a hill and decide to go there. As you walk up the hill you're surrounded by trees and long grass. At the top of the hill is a cabin. You decide to look after it as the hill still goes down and there's another cabin. You walk past the cabin at the bottom of the hill and are welcomed by another trail that goes down to a beach. You walk down the trail and are welcomed by the most beautiful beach. It's a long beach and the sand looks like it goes on for ages.

The sun is setting, and you decide to sit and watch the sunset. This is only the beginning of the beautiful sunsets that you'll see. What a perfect way to end your first day at camp.



**By Seyma Rustom**



**By Hayden Mitchell**

# rorriM

By Cienna Murray

I've seen so many emotions  
Joy, fear, sadness, emptiness  
Joy is the rarest I see  
Not much of it going around

People don't talk about the uncomfortable depression,  
The sadness that tears and rips you apart  
The agony one feels and cannot express  
I see that often  
More often than I should

The ones who look into themselves  
As they break loose  
The comfort they get  
From looking at their reflection  
Breaking them more

Covering their mouths with their hands  
As they struggle to keep quiet  
They fall apart,  
Alone, empty, lifeless

They watch as their body  
Shakes and heaves from lack of air  
As the tears rush out and down  
Soaking their face and hands

The tears drip down to the sink  
As they grip it, trying to balance  
Trying to calm and control themselves  
But they can't and the puddle  
Of tears, gets bigger and bigger  
Dripping down the sink and off the counter  
Landing on the floor  
Causing another puddle to form

All that suffering and heartbreak let out  
Escaping, begging to have been freed  
All over in the room, surrounding them

A knock sounds on the door  
Disturbing them and pulling them out

Splashing water on their face  
Over and over again  
Trying to get rid of the stains  
Then drying and blinking the rest away

Cleaning their mess of pain  
They exit the bathroom  
Making a joke about a video they had seen on the  
toilet  
Laughing and smiling until the fake  
Becomes the truth

As a mirror I watch and observe

I want to scream out  
I AM HERE  
YOU ARE STRONG

But I cannot  
They will never know I am here  
With and for them

I stay watching  
Wishing the world wasn't as tough  
As it is on them  
I long to help  
But I am only a silent reflection.

# Mirror

**By Neveah Martin**

Mirror, Mirror on the wall,  
Who's the fairest of them all?  
I hear it almost everyday  
By the children of today, tomorrow, and yesterday  
The men stop and flex to me  
The women pause and reflect on what they see

There are few who stop and tell a few jokes to me  
No one stays to look at my beauty  
They see me,  
think of themselves and walk away

If only I could shout, Hey!  
Take me with you, don't mind my price  
But few will glance and say  
Ah. That looks nice.

But I guess this isn't so bad,  
Just a little upsetting  
I stand around all day  
And have to do it tomorrow all over again.

**By Evelyn Waldron**

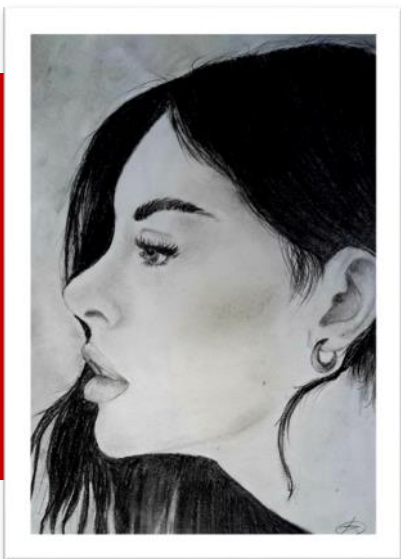
Why do you hate yourself?

That's all I wonder.  
Why do you treat every pimple like an unbearable blunder?  
You frown, poke, and prod,  
Clench to define the length of your jaw.

I see your pain and joy,  
All for some standards thought up by a boy.  
The way you practice smiles and wipe away tears,  
"Always alone," whisper your fears.

I wish you could see  
How free you could be  
If you saw the world like me.  
.sdrawkcaB

You want to know what I see,  
Beyond beauty standards as agreed?  
Just you (strong, brave, powerful you),  
Standing there in the girls' washroom.



**By Keira Dubecky**



**By Tanith Burning**



**By Keira Dubecky**





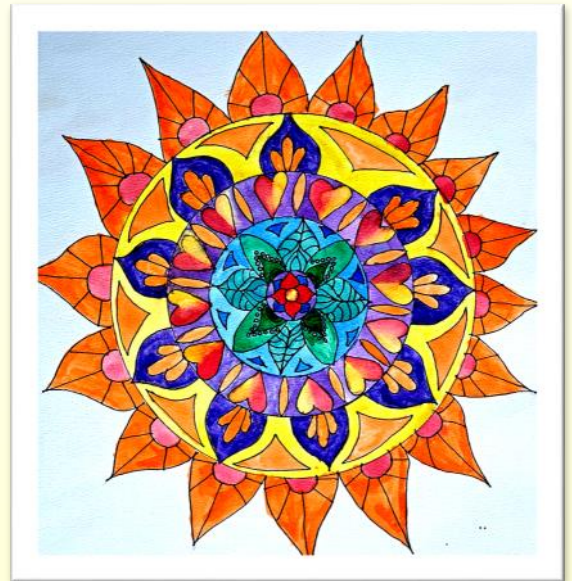
**By Annalise Cartmel**



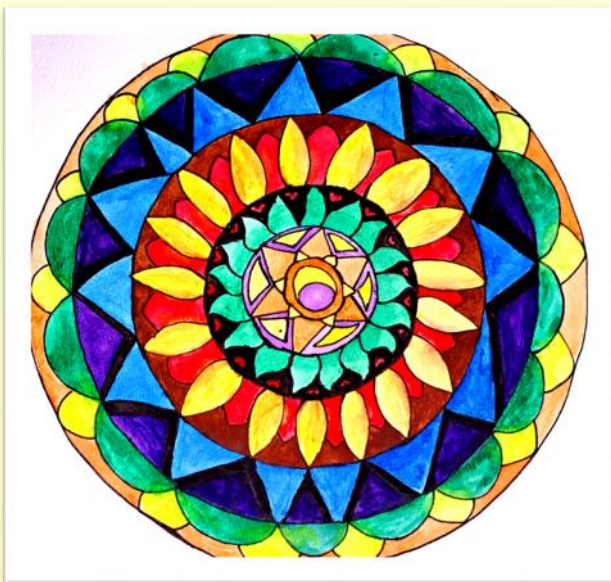
**By Sara Keen**



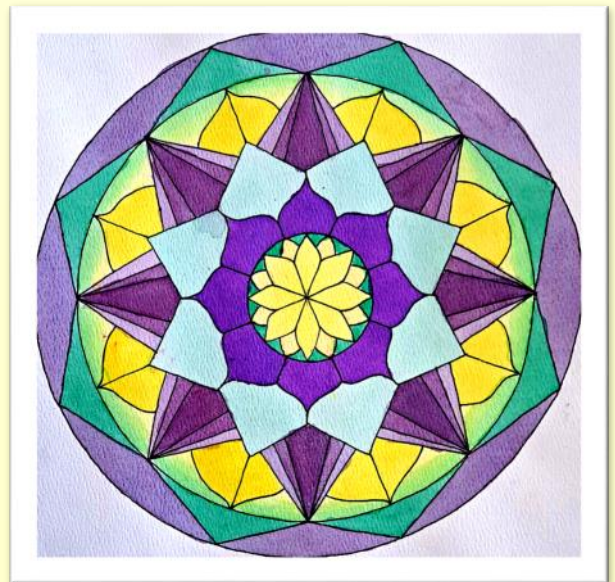
**By Latavia Lembcke**



**By Olivia Lancaster**



**By Sally Barager**



**By Kylie Barry-McLean**



# Resurrection

By Preston Sauciukas

It's grotesque, ugly, disgusting,  
The scent of death,  
The maggots squirm, itching to eat.  
Their hunger for flesh is insatiable,  
Relentless in their quest, creatures born of decay, of death's embrace.  
They await in silence, unseen, creatures cloaked in filth and grime,  
Their hunger gnawing at the very soul, yet in their eyes, a twisted grace.  
No beauty present, just a primal thirst for what has fallen.  
It feasts upon its opposite,  
A being of light, the warmth of the sun, the soft kiss of day,  
A creature of radiance, aura, pure and bright, whose glow fades slowly, fading away.  
For in the shadows, hunger resides, it feeds on the hope that daylight hides,  
Devouring the warmth, the gentle embrace, leaving only emptiness in its place.  
The sun's warmth falters, its light grows thin, as darkened hunger consumes from within.  
The battle is silent, unseen by eyes, as the radiant spirit slowly dies,  
From the depths of darkness it lies, it thrives where the light cannot reach,  
And in its wake, consumed by the very void it sought to escape,  
The warmth of stars burns out.  
The deer is dead, and the maggots thrive in its corpse,  
The death of one, and the birth of another, its hunger endless, its thirst unslaked.  
Until its wake, it lies forever unseen.



By Julia Taylor



By Hayley Willis



# Her Rings

By Olivia Zelazny

I remember the very day I saw her from across the lush, green meadow, standing still, but proud, her arms outstretched towards the ever-bright sun. She was full of life, yet to me she seemed everything but. Almost lifeless.

My gusts seemed to pull me closer to her as I left my trail behind me, grass blowing, my wonderful, uncontrollable power spreading across the sea of wildflowers. I could've sworn the moment I grazed a single, delicate touch upon her still limbs...something within her stirred...shifted. And the closer I got, the more she awoke.

She seemed to not be able to believe it at all either. I could sense the surprise grow within her. The way every time I went to leave, she pleaded for more...

Her beautiful leaves blew as though they were ready to fly into the great big sky... never looking back, and just perhaps... a part of her wanted to go with me. It took me a while to convince her that I truly had every intention of returning. And for the first time in my everlasting life...I kept my word.

Every long, warm, summer day I made my way towards her...never forgetting to visit her, never neglecting my promise. The green that spread to horizons on every side of her grew more vibrant with every visit. Withering wildflowers of every variety littered the sea of color, which I passed so eagerly to reach her

Every time we were together her arms reached further and further up. Every time we were together, she seemed to reach genuine bliss... and despite her roots pulling her further and harder to the ground... she seemed to experience the same undying freedom I did.

The days blew past me, and I realized how very still I had become, and how very little of the world I had seen. I returned to one spot everyday... but what kind of everlasting life is this? Stagnancy? Limitation?

By giving her the freedom she so craved I had enclosed myself... limited myself, and whispers grew in my mind with every passing visit. Until they engulfed me entirely... and drove me away.

"I need you, today, tomorrow...and forever," she had uttered as I made my way further away. "Never leave..."

And never had I lied so quickly. After whispering a final promise to her... I made a promise to myself. To never be stripped of my freedom again...

For months I blew from one corner of the continent to another, in every direction on a compass. I blew the snow from the uttermost peaks of mountain ranges that towered over petite human settlements. I threw the white sand on coasts across beaches and tussled the hair of little children playing beside me.

I met new entities, I played carelessly with the sunflowers, listening to their empty adorations filling the air. I ran my light fingers through ferns and marigolds, brushed against the hydrangeas that a little elderly woman cared for so. I listened to and played along with their words, with their feelings that were as false as mine. Only once did I breeze along with a fellow wind gusting from the east, but she was just as fleeting as I. All of them broke whatever promises and constantly proved that their words were worth nothing more than dirt.

But not a day went by when I didn't reminisce about the green meadow. I had lingered in for so long... and not a day went by when she didn't cross my mind.

I could feel myself getting colder... I could feel the tides changing, I knew it was only a matter of time and I had been gone for far too long. Never in my eternity of life had I blown so rapidly and so intently.

My power threw trees and wood planks, human possessions and powerlines were ripped, but I didn't care. I shrieked and powered through, leaving destruction in my wake... it was all meaningless as long as I got to her.

Days went by, and I had only reached the edge of the place that I considered home for so long when I heard her raspy gasp reach me. "You promised..."

Her once green and full limbs now stood a deathly shade of autumnal brown with little color... she was even stiller than I remembered. And that life I once felt drained by the second.

“I came back.” I barely uttered the words, my breeze had gone still, “I came back...”

This time...the moment I reached out towards what I had once treasured so deeply...her beautiful leaves fell. They were still beautiful to this day to me; her greatness hadn't ceased one bit...but her existence seemed fickle. One by one they toppled towards the ground, flitting as she grimaced in pain at my every touch.

“I'm sorry!” I cried, not knowing how to stop the pain in anyway. “I didn't mean-”

“Be free... like you wanted...”

“I didn't-”

“You did...enough to leave... never did I want to be a limitation for you. So go, have peace of mind... without me forcing you to be something you're not. And holding you down...”

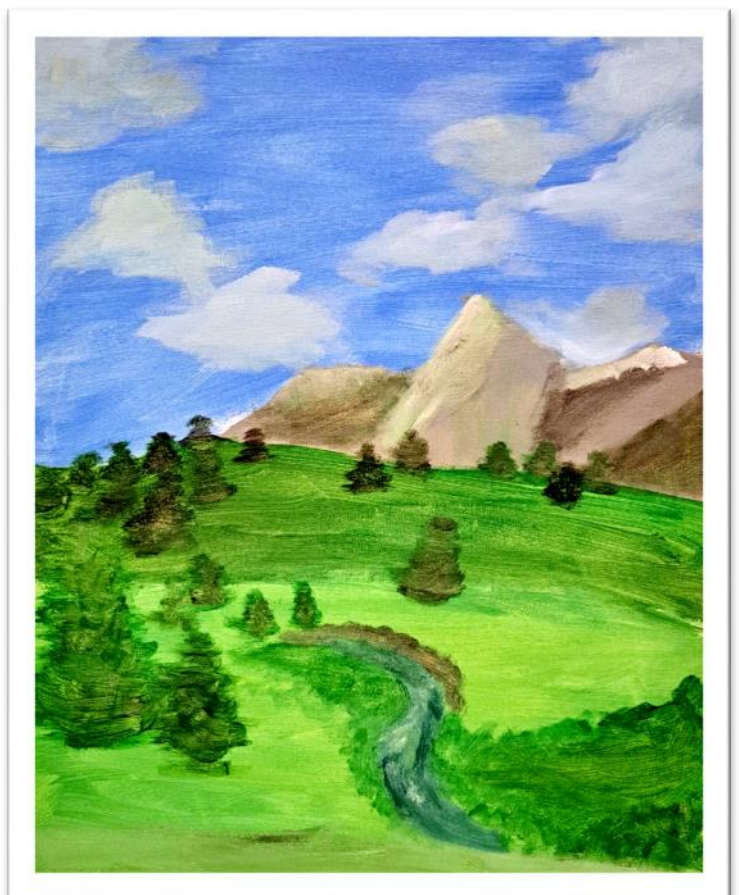
And I stood by as her final leaf hit the ground, not knowing what to say. Not aware that that moment had marked her death. Had I never left... perhaps things would've been different. Perhaps if I had been quicker when returning...

But now I stood by her... every day, every second unmoving as she was... until the day a man came in need of firewood during the frigid winter. And I watched. As my biggest regret fell to the ground, tilting the very way I had left her all those months ago.

Had I truly been free? Now chained to the spot where my love had once stood proudly, I realized that I had lived a lie, I had been everything but free, and now I would never be again. I lingered, chained and imprisoned, forced to accept my life's mistake every day as I returned to her remains which stood a mere twenty centimeters above ground, her infinite rings the sole reminder of her beauty.



**By Annalise Cartmel**



**By Raya Woods**



## That's So Meta

By Tristan Barkley

Words become puzzles  
Letters the pieces  
Simple division turned Complex Calculus  
Heartfelt whispers from friends and kin,  
Comforting lies spun by familiar critics.  
Warm hugs, radiant praise  
The bliss of bias,  
A sanctuary of belief.

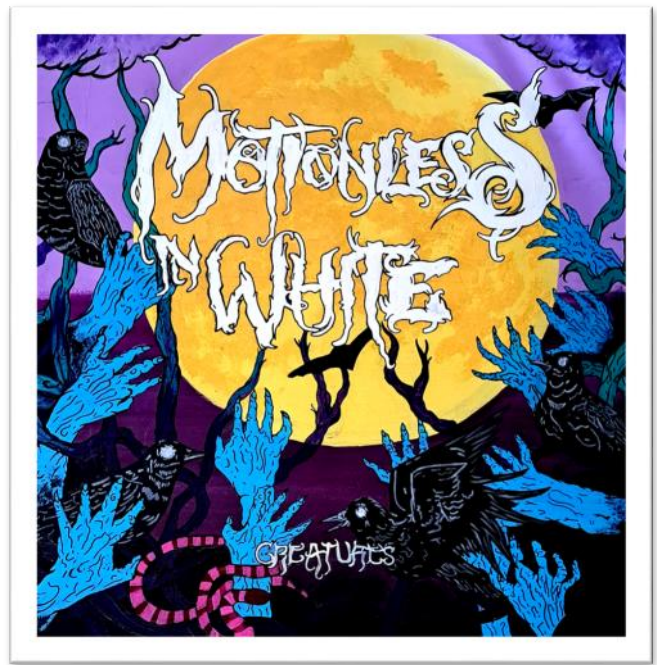
Until the gears within me turn,  
Grinding truths against illusion.  
Bias, no longer believable.  
Who decides my words fall short?  
Me? Myself? I?

I drown in a sea of pages,  
Seeking clarity  
Amidst the chaos of thought.

## Used Shoes

By Elizabeth Barber

From crisp white leather, polished and new,  
now broken in, worn and used.  
Heels scraped from sidewalk,  
emitting an odor that smells like rubbish,  
for being tracked through dirt, puddles and snow.  
Ripped, brownish laces, left in impossible knots  
is all that is left now.  
Tracked miles for hours,  
ripping fabric,  
now piercing holes.  
Rightfully spent, tired, given good purpose,  
Soon to be kicked off,  
behind the rack,  
Forgotten, lonely,  
and now dusty.  
Put in the past, for no longer the best.  
A new pair replaces.  
As shiny as a trophy, polished and cherished.  
So fresh, exciting and destined,  
for adventure.  
Destined for adventures already ventured.



By Shae Gale



By Sally Barager

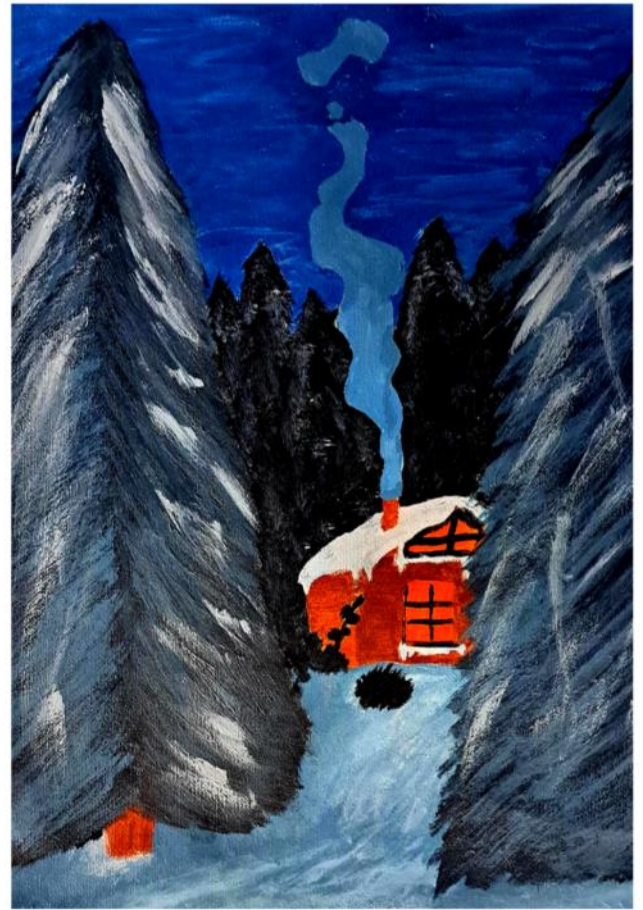


By Latavia Lembcke





**By Sara Keen**



**By Latavia Lembcke**



**By Will Macdonald**



**By Sara Keen**



**By Isobel Harkema**

**By Lillian Longboat**



**By Kylie Barry-McLean**



**By Kaitlin McKenzie**

# You Have No New Messages

By Evelyn Waldron

“Hi, you’ve reached Delia. Obviously I can’t pick up the phone right now, so you know what to do!”

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

“Hi Delia... It's been a while since we've talked last, and it looks like I've missed you again so... So, I guess I'll just leave a message? Luke broke up with me. I know you were always telling me to dump him, but he got there first.

**\*sigh\***

“I’ve already gone through my sobbing into a tub of ice cream phase, but I think I’m still kind of hung up on him. I should probably just be over it by now, right? Anyways, school has been rough. My profs keep switching project deadlines, which has been a real headache, but I think I’ve finally got the hang of my math course. Wish you were here; you were always better at this kind of stuff.

“Hope everything is good over there! Give me a call? You know, if you can... Right, so I should go then. Bye!”

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

“Delia, hey! I can’t believe I missed you again. I went out drinking with some friends who *finally* convinced me to get off my couch and forget about Luke. I danced the whole night, and my feet are *killing* me this morning. Hope you’re proud of me at least.

Soooo, what’s up with you? How's Steph? I know you were going through a rough patch last time we talked but I’ve always liked her. She’s not Luke, you know? So yeah, I’m keeping my fingers crossed that your love life is going better than mine. I did see this super-hot guy when we were out, but I couldn’t bring myself to get his number. Another time I wished you were here; you were always braver than me.

I really miss you, Delia. Sometimes I start talking to you before I realize you aren’t there...

**\*Awkward laugh\***

Stupid right? Okay, so, call me when you get this! Hopefully talk soon?”

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

“Hey, I know we FaceTimed a couple days ago, but I just had to tell you what happened! I ran into Hot Guy again! And guess what? I got his number! I went out to No Frills to get some of that ramen you’re always raving about, and I bumped into him at the checkout! He’s a poli-sci major and he’s a big fan of cooking so you *know* he had something to say about the cases of ramen, but hey! A broke girl’s gotta eat.

Anyways, I could kinda sense him checking me out, and he was *so hot* Delia. Seriously, if you weren’t lesbian, you would totally get it.

So, he was checking me out, and I was obviously interested, so I asked him if he had any cooking tips he could text me and well... he said yes! I’ve been texting him a little, and I’m trying *so* hard to keep it low-key, but I’m just ready to be over Luke, you know? I’m going over to his place on Saturday, so if I get kidnapped just know that he did it! I’ll call soon. Say hi to Steph for me!”

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

“DELIA! Oh my goodness, I can’t thank you enough for all your help! I’d be hopeless without your fashion tips. The date went *so well*. He bought me flowers even though I went over to his place! And get this, they *weren’t* roses. I’ve never even heard of a man with that much creativity before! I have to send you a picture,

they were this gorgeous, soft, pink and- Sorry! I'm getting off track, aren't I?

So, the date. I drove over and we played a few board games I had brought. *Yes*, I did win most of them, don't worry. He was an absolute beast at Trivial Pursuit though. He may even take your crown someday if you ever face off!

After the games he cooked me lemon garlic chicken, which was *divine* for someone who eats fast food from the cafeteria seven days a week. Then after dinner we went to an ice cream parlor. I *may* have purposefully gotten some on my chin, but it worked! He wiped it off! And I walked him back to his place and before I got in my car he asked if he could kiss me! Consent has never *ever* been sexier, Delia. Of course, at least some of the success of the night was down to that outfit you helped me pick out. Thank you so much. You were right that less is more!

\*Gasp\*

I gotta go! He's texting me to set up a time for a second date! Hopefully I'll be calling for your excellent advice again soon. Bye!"

---

\*Beeeeeep\*

"Hey Delia, I just wanted to say I'm really sorry about what happened to your grandma. She was the best, you know? Of course you do, she was *your* grandma. I just... I think about her and all I can picture is her sitting us down and wanting us to tell her all the gossip at school and slipping us a twenty for ice cream on the way home and... well... You know the story.

Can you tell I don't know what to say? I'm just really, *really*, sorry. Please call me when you can, okay?"

---

\*Beeeeeep\*

"Hi! It's been a couple months since we last talked. I know you've been busy with the funeral and school but please talk to me? I miss you a lot and you wouldn't believe what's been happening over here. Call me soon, you can't hide forever, okay? I *will* fly down there if I have to! Or you know what? I'll sic Steph on you so she can talk some sense into you. I love you Delia, and I'm in your corner. Don't forget that, okay

---

\*Beeeeeep\*

"IT'S OVER! FINALLY! I've just walked out of my last exam so obviously I'm calling you! Sophomore year officially finished. My hands keep shaking like I can't quite convince myself I don't have to flip through cue cards anymore. How have your exams been Ms. Pre-med? Nightmarish? I know you don't finish till later this week so don't stress if you can't call till the end of the week.

Abe, that's Hot Guy - I don't know if I've ever actually told you his name before? - is taking me out for celebratory cheesecake! He's not done until tomorrow, and I've got a surprise planned. I bought him that new Zelda video game. I hope he likes it, and I know he will but... is it too nice a gift for four months? God, after Luke, I feel like everything I thought I knew about guys is wrong, but Abe.... Delia, he's been so sweet... ugh, sorry, you have bigger fish to fry than my guy problems.

But know that I'm thinking of you while you brave the last of your exams, and I'll be waiting with virtual hugs when you get out of your last one. You know what? Why wait! I'm hugging my phone right now. *You are now being hugged. Embrace the hug.* Good luck! Or wait, is that bad luck before an exam? Break a leg? No, this isn't theater, what am I saying? Right, anyways, good luck!"

---

\*Beeeeeep\*

"It's officially June and I've begun your birthday countdown! Hopefully the postal system will cooperate, but let's be real, does it ever? So, I've sent the first of your gifts and if everything goes well it should be there



a week before your birthday! Obviously, you don't have to wait to open it - I'm not a monster! I'm sending more anyways, so you should be able to open one every day of the week. I can't say what it meant to me when you did that for *my* birthday this year, so I've decided to carry on the tradition. Besides, final marks come back soon, and we could all use something to relieve the stress, right? I know you're nervous about it, but you've got nothing to stress about! In fact, I've compiled a list of why you don't need to worry. I'm gonna go through it if...

\*rustle\*

I could just...

\*rustle\*

Find- Aha! Here it is. Number one! You are a genius. Two! You were valedictorian. *Valedictorian*. Three! I quizzed you before the exams and I think you know more than your *professors* at this point. Four! The same thing happened last year, and you know what happened? *Exactly*. Everything was above 90%. Five! Steph and I are here for you and if the worst comes to worst – *which it won't* - we'll be there every step of the way to help you. Or at least she will. I will be here sending supportive voice mails and berating you over text. All that to say, you're amazing, and no matter what happens, I've got you girl! If you start to spiral, give me a call. Talk soon!"

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday dear Deeliaaaa. Happy birthday to yooou. Hooray! Are you one, are you two, are you- oh my goodness twenty is too many numbers to count to but woo! We've both reached twenty Delia! Are you starting to feel old yet? 'Cause I sure am! I know you have plans with Steph today but give me a call when you can so I can see you opening your gift! It did make it there, right? I sent it early to be sure, but you know how these things go. Anyways, call back!"

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Hey again! My flight just landed, and my mom is coming to pick me up, but I wanted to make sure we're still on for Tuesday. Don't worry, I'll bring the booze!

I can't wait to see you in person again, there's so much to catch you up on with Abe and the continuing saga of the lunch lady feud. But I can tell you all that stuff in person. *In person*, Delia! How long has it been? Winter break? Gosh, I can't wait to give you a hug and see your face! I'll try you again when I get home, but my mom's pulling up now, so I'll end the message here. See you soon!"

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"WHY DELIA, WHY? It's the first week back and my professors are already assigning *twice* as much work as last year. I miss being a freshman and cruising through orientation week, now they expect us to actually *do* things.

\*sigh\*

It's the *worst*. I bet you have it harder, though. Here I am complaining about my English courses while you're slogging through advanced bio. Still, you've dug your own grave, and I guess I've dug mine too, choosing all these classes this semester. Abe is in his last year, so he's got it even rougher than me. I would be complaining about how little time we get to spend together if we hadn't spent that week at his lake cabin. *Delia* the sex was *mind blowing*. I know, I know, TMI, but if I don't tell someone the deets I'm going to explode, especially now that I have to focus on *grammar* again after so long of writing lazy texts. Grammar is the scourge upon humanity. I do not envy anyone who has to learn English as a *second* language. It's my first and I barely understand it half the time! You speak Spanish, tell me, is it a bajillion times easier?

On a more serious note, it's been hard not seeing you every week, again. I got used to hanging with you everywhere and now I only see you through my phone. Let's set up another time to talk this week. *If my professors let me squeeze it in my schedule.* Hope your first week has been better than mine! Love you."

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"DELIA YOU SCOUNDREL! You wait until I leave to finally get a puppy? You *have* to send me all the pictures now! I'm so jealous, you and your fancy new place where your landlord lets you have pets. At this point I'd settle for an iguana, but I guess pictures of your new cutie will have to do. Have you picked out a name yet? SEND PICTURES. Bye!"

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Hey. Can we talk? I... I just need a friend right now. Call me when you get this?"

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Hi Delia. Everything is going wrong but at least my professors are going easy on me. The stress is eating me alive, but the doctors said I should get the results by this week. Fingers crossed right?"

Anyways how have you been? I could use a distraction right about now so please don't hesitate to call anytime...

I think Abe knows I need it. He's been over practically every day. I think my roommates have forgotten he doesn't actually live here? But it's nice getting to see him so much. Most of the time I just watch him play Zelda or get him to make me dinner. Might as well go for the sympathy points while I can, right?

Anyways, picture me as your wife anxiously awaiting your letters from war and staring wistfully out of nearby windows. Text soon. Love you. Bye."

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"The doctors called back... It's late stage. They think I've got a month, maybe two if I'm lucky. I don't know what to do Delia. Tell me what to do, *please*. You always... you always know what to do.

*\*sniff\**

Sorry. I'll... I'll call soon."

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Hey, just wanted to let you know my mom emailed you your plane ticket and Abe said he'd pick you up so hopefully I'll see you soon. Thanks... Thanks for coming."

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"I don't really know why I'm leaving this message. Maybe I just want you to have something to listen to when I'm... I don't know. This is stupid, I'll try to get you to delete it when you wake up."

---

**\*Beeeeeep\***

"Okay so maybe it's stupid but I want to do it anyway. I love you a lot, Delia, like so much... It's hard for me to, to really say how much your being here has meant to me and...

*\*sniff\**

God I'm already tearing up, what a mess.

Look I just want to say you're amazing, and you're the best friend I've ever had and I just... I want you to be *happy*. I want you to be happy, and Abe to be happy, and my parents to be happy and everyone is just the *opposite* of happy. I just want to be happy Delia- I don't want to go, I'm not ready to g-

No...

\*sniff\*

No. This isn't going to be that kind of message. This is going to be a *happy* message.

You know, I remember when I met you back in fifth grade when I forgot my lunch money and you offered me your peanut butter and tuna sandwich. To this day it's still the most disgusting thing I've ever tasted. But that's not the point. The point is, I remember thinking, 'I'm going to be best friends with that girl,' and then we were. You were there for my first period, my first kiss. You were there when Kitty died and when I got accepted to university. You're here now.

I can't... I can't be there for you and I'm going to... I'm going to miss out on so much of your life- so much of *my* life... So, please remember I'm proud of you, I'm happy for you, and I hope you have the *best* damn life.

So, this is me saying happy birthday, Merry Christmas, congratulations on your marriage, you have a beautiful baby, you don't look a day over thirty, happy anniversary, I'm sorry for your loss.

Have the best life for me, okay? I love you."

### **\*End of messages\***

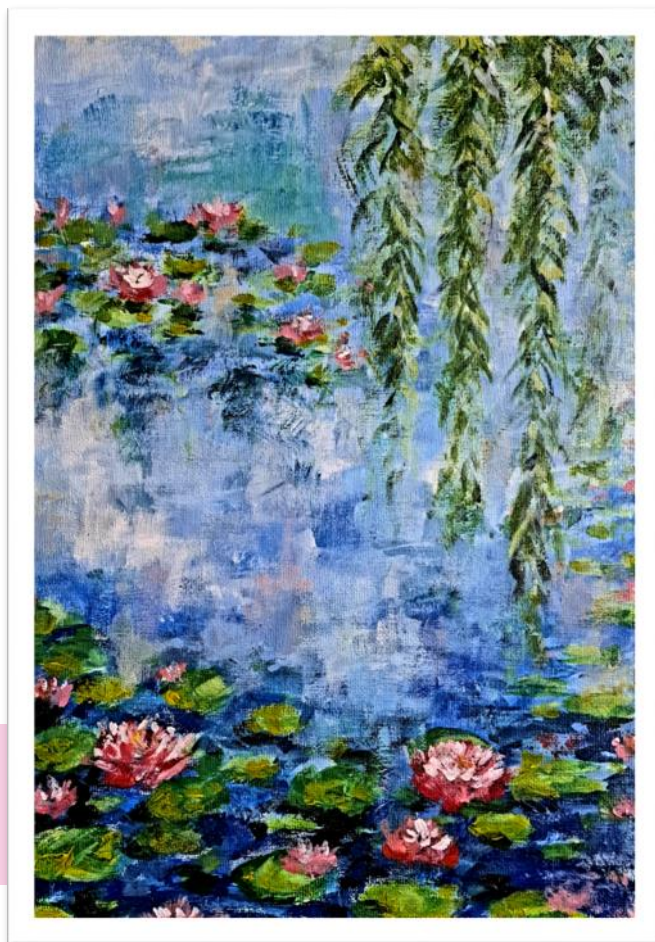
Delia stared at her phone as the screen turned off, gazing blankly into the shiny surface. She could see her reflection, tired and tear-stained, hair messy and tangled with suitcase sized bags under her eyes. She sniffed hard and wiped her eyes roughly with the heel of her palm. Her throat was tight, her eyes were itchy, her skin felt five sizes too small.

Black rage rose up in her gut and she punched the wall and screamed. Drywall flaked off her knuckles and she collapsed to her knees and hugged her hand close to her chest, rocking back and forth as her voice broke and tears streamed down once more. Her thoughts fractured like a broken mirror, sharp and cutting, reflecting the grief in her head until she could hardly think at all. It felt like missing an arm- no worse than that, like missing a part of her brain or her heart and she wasn't sure how to function anymore.

Delia slowly climbed to her feet and picked the phone up from where it had landed. Her shitty apartment wall had a large dent in the drywall, but she couldn't bring herself to care.

She tossed her phone onto her bedspread and flopped down next to it. Her head didn't land anywhere near her pillow, but she couldn't summon up the energy to move. Instead, she grabbed her phone and unlocked it, fighting against a fresh wave of grief. Pulling up her phone app, she went back into messages and pressed play.

"Hi Delia... It's been a while since we've talked last, and it looks like I've missed you again so... So, I guess I'll just leave a message?"



**By Yatawee Aniwattanakun**

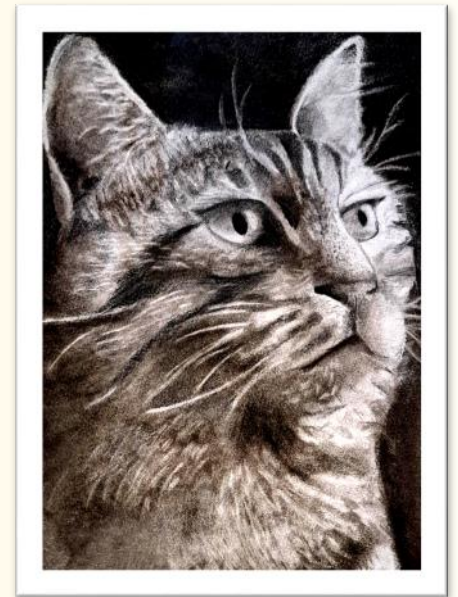




**By Annalise Cartmel**



**By Olivia Lancaster**



**By Zorawar Singh**



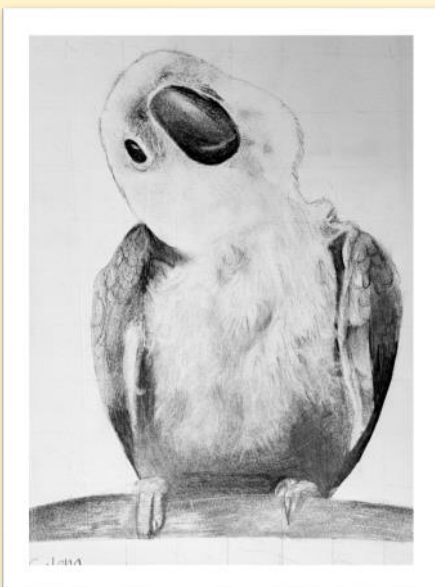
**By Jairus Estole**



**By Kymariah Boatswain**



**Destiny General-Wheeler**



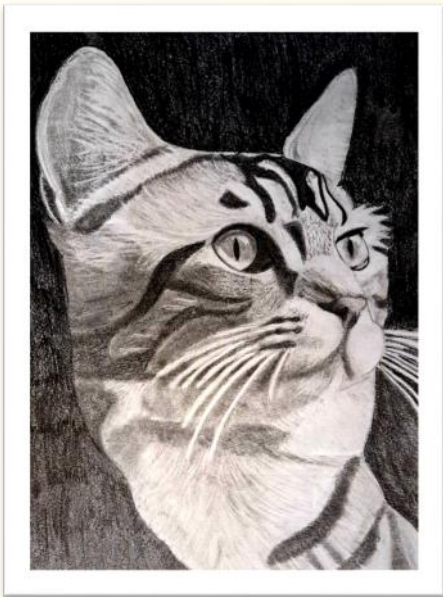
**By Selena Randall**



**By Dylan Vansickle**



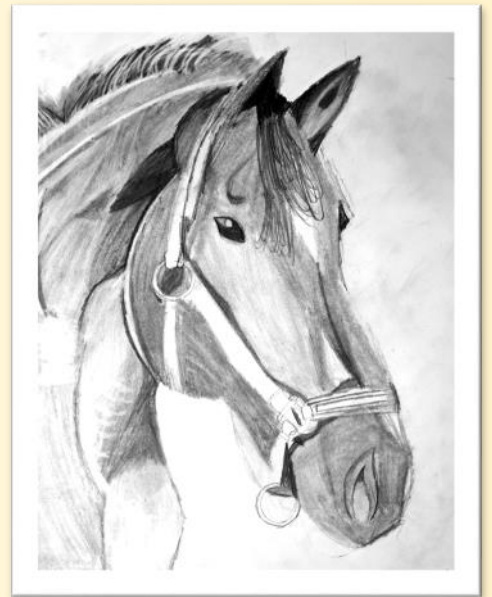
**By Hayley Willis**



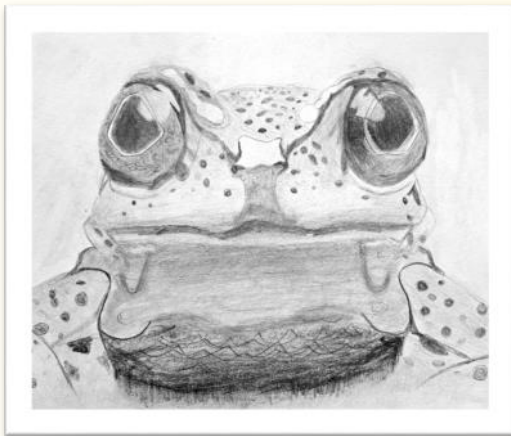
**By Hailey Goodall**



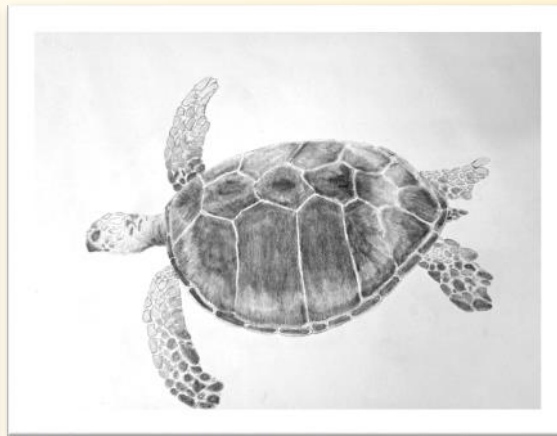
**By Moya McFarlane**



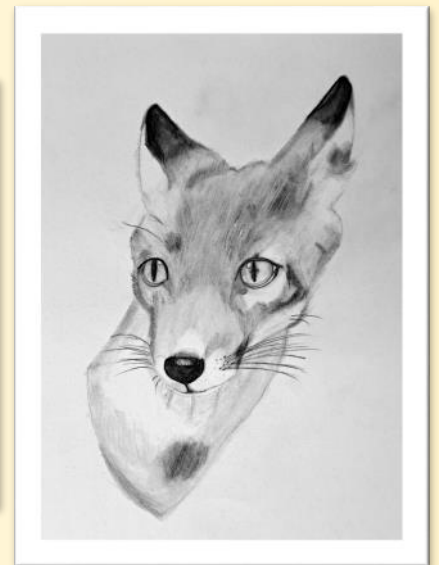
**By Tyson Menard**



**By Gavin Martin**



**By Will Macdonald**



**By Sally Barager**



**By Jakob Cipriano**



**By Danika Rieser**



**By Teyvn Jones**



# It's a Jungle Out There



By Georgia Johnson

# Project Coppermine

By Stephanie Hazlett

*Coppermine, NWT*

*July 15th, 1964*

*6:46A.M.*

My name is Mila A. Carrington. Our team has been studying a meteor site in the river of *Coppermine, NWT*. As research assistant to the **MIR** (*Meteor Impact Recovery*) **UNIT- T1B**, I have been asked to document anything happening during extraction, dissection, and experiment.

## Meteor Description

Covered in crusts; unfractured by impact

*Length-10M*

*Width-7M*

*Height-11M*

*Impact time-1:03 A.M*

*Impact angle-31°south*

*Impact speed-14 km/s*

*Estimated extraction period- 1-4 weeks*

---

*July 20th, 1964*

*10:51A.M.*

Extraction has begun. Members of the **MIR** have been drilling into the meteor to move it in pieces. Three cuts will be made into the stone; through the center (5 meters in length), the other two beside (3 meters in length).

*Update*

*12:08P.M.*

A cut has been made through the center.

## Interior description.

Solid; a hole 1.2m in circumference is hollowed; liquid found.

## Liquid description

*Translucent/green*

*Temperature-6°C*

*Viscosity-53,064cP (similar to honey at 6°C)*

2.34L of liquid and meteorite samples were collected to be analyzed. Liquid potentially escaped into the river- a bacterial warning has been published, along with a **cut off** of river water until analysis.

*Estimated extraction-2-6 days*

---

*July 22nd, 1964*

*4:25A.M.*

Testing for substances contained in the meteor has concluded.

The meteor is a **Carbonaceous Chondrite:**

Oxygen-37%

Silicon-18%

Iron-20%

Magnesium-8%

Arsenic-5%

Carbon-5%

Hydrogen-3%

Liquid is in testing.

July 26th, 1964

9:05P.M.

Liquid analysis has been completed.

Hydrogen-50%

Oxygen-32%

Glucose (C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O<sub>6</sub>)-9%

Carbon-8%

Small traces of phosphate <0

An unidentified substance has been detected. The analysis team made the judgment that the water is safe; further experiments proved non-toxic properties.

- The use of the river water in taps will be **reestablished**.

---

July 30th, 1964

7:10A.M.

The water cutoff will be reinforced. Continual research identified potential 'mutation' between the hydrogen and phosphate. Concern is raised to signs of biomarkers attached to glucose molecules. These could be signs of nucleotides, which hold DNA/RNA, the building blocks of life. It is theorized these are remnants of extraterrestrial life. The analysis team states potential nucleotides could mutate human genes, which poses the issue of a ***HYPO-BIO DISASTER***.

**Water cutoff reinforced**

The biomarkers will be confidential- avoiding widespread panic.

---

August 4th, 1964

3:34A.M.

Coppermine resident *Ann Woods* has been found **dead**, the reasons inexplicable. Her husband claims they had been using the tap water to water crops during the time between the water cutoff dates. Produce arrived in *Ontario* on *August 3rd*.

Autopsy is undergoing

---

August 5th, 1964

7:46A.M.

The autopsy has reported a hypo-biological breakdown of enzyme activity in the stomach due to low pH. The breakdown cannot be directly linked to the liquid anomaly, and could be from a number of causes.

Government officials allow sale of the produce

---

August 9th, 1964

9:36A.M.

Three deaths have been reported in *Ontario* due to mass enzyme-malfunction. Further experiments on the liquid have changed from mutation theory to observable cell change. Studies using the element arsenic found encompassing the liquid have proven to halt its evolution. It's plausible we won't be able to stop its cell evolution unless we start now.

*Arsenic* cure being studied

---

August 13th, 1964

4:44A.M.

Provincial lockdown enforced in *Ontario and NWT*. The DNA in the liquid is undergoing rapid growth. All cures experimented have shown no sign of improvement; the cells seem to adapt to what we've been using. Further discussion with the government has given allowance to **PROJ.COPPERMINE**.



### *Project Coppermine*

Because of the rapid biogenetic mutation, to eliminate the danger is to isolate the danger. To extract the cells, we need to extract their host. Sacrifice is needed to save our bodies.

Towns in Ontario that received the infected produce will undergo *extraction*  
*Coppermine River and water towers in infected Ontarian towns will be poisoned with arsenic.*  
*Oil leakage from pipelines will serve cover.*

Project Coppermine will commence on *August 15th, 1964*

---

*August 17th, 1964*

*10:07P.M.*

Project Coppermine was successful. All individuals in Coppermine and three Ontarian towns had been found dead on the morning of August 15th; no recent deaths have been reported due to enzyme mutation.

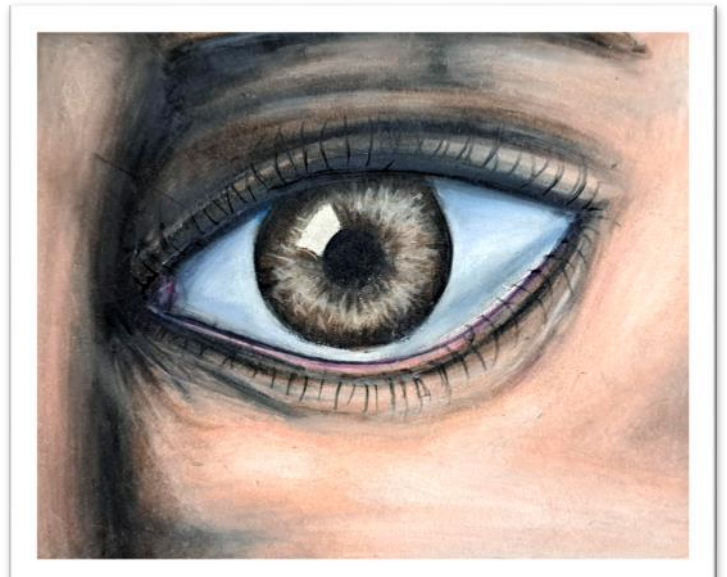
Coppermine is to be cleansed.

Bodies containing the mutated cells will be cremated.

The meteor liquid is to be under heavy surveillance in **MIR** headquarters.

The meteor had proven biological danger, and its properties have proven the potential for extraterrestrial life.

PROJ.COPPERMINE is to be forgotten.



**By Hayden Mitchell**



## Icarus

By Aiden Williams

Fly  
High, aloft,  
Rising, gliding, floating,  
Sky, airborne, gravity, descent,  
Spiraling, tumbling, crashing  
Down, below,  
Fall

## Rundown

By Sam Guiboche

The door is heavy and dusty.  
Old wood cracked and rundown.  
The handle's cold,  
Door closed.  
Door opens,  
Dust and stale air flies out,  
The room is dark,  
You turn a light on,  
There's just a chair.



By Wes Thibodeau

## Haiku

By Aiden Williams

Frigid night air chills the skin  
The dark covers all  
Lightning makes a midnight day



By Annalise Carmel



By Sara Keen



By Rayyan Matin



## Purpose

By Chelsey Rankin

I was good,  
I had fulfilled my purpose,  
I learned how to escape and hide.

Ethan taught me love,  
My most important purpose,  
Which was taking care of me.

Jakob and Maya taught me how to save people,  
All these things,  
Everything I had learned.

I understood it now,  
I had to learn,  
So when the time came,  
I could rescue,  
From the sinking despair of life.



By Jairus Estole



By Kylie Barry-McLean

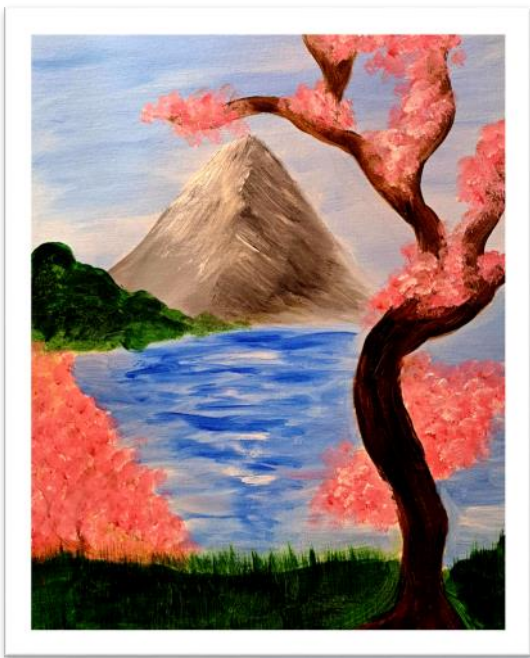


By Annalise Cartmel

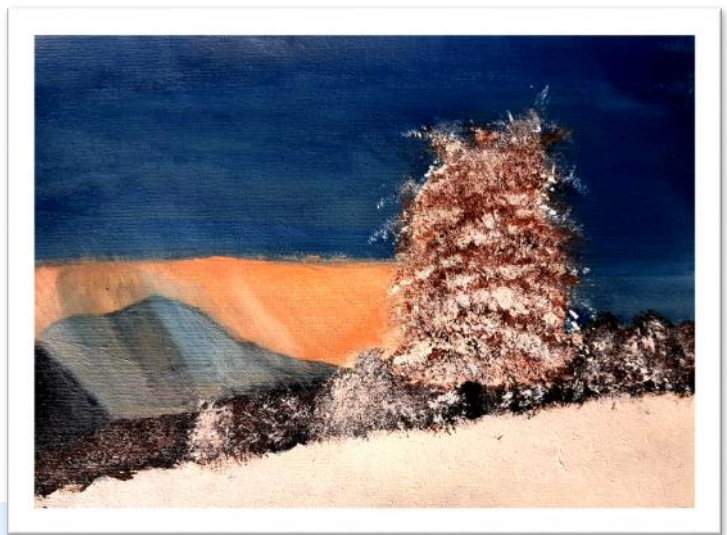


By Moya McFarlane





**By Annalise Cartmel**



**By Brianna Laughlin**



**By Moya McFarlane**



**By Latavia Lembcke**



**By Kaitlin McKenzie**



**By Jakob Cipriano**

# The Fourth Wall

By Nathan Robb

Justin stares at the blank page in front of him. His mind, which is usually bustling with wondrous ideas, can't even think of the first line of dialogue. He has been writing for 15 years, producing many bestselling hits, but today he seems to have run into the one thing he has always feared. Writer's block. He knew that every writer had to encounter it at some point, but part of him thought he was immune. Writing is his way of life; without it, he feels useless. As a final resort, he decides to go for a walk hoping for some inspiration.

He closes the front door behind him, feeling the cold fall breeze brushing across his face. Looking up at the trees, he sees the beautifully coloured leaves slowly twirling in the wind, some of them making their last dance as they gently glide down to the ground. The scenery, which would usually help him generate amazing ideas, leaves him feeling empty. With this overwhelming feeling encapsulating him, he knows he must seek help.

Even though he is beginning to give up hope, he still tries to be mindful of his surroundings, as that has worked for him in the past. He lives in a small town in Northern Ontario called Fairville. He moved here with his girlfriend a few years ago as he thought that small towns were great inspirations for writing, which other than today, always rang true. He still loves this town and all the people in it, even though most of the population seems a little crazy to him. They all believe in unsettling conspiracy theories commonly found in small towns. Surprisingly, these theories help Justin, as most of his books are in the sci-fi genre. Some of the theories have actually inspired his most popular books.

Justin's determined walk becomes slowed as he arrives at his destination. It's the house of his best friend, Ben. No words can explain how extravagant this house is. It is four storeys, made almost purely out of glass, with a blocky futuristic shape. It looks like it was taken from 500 years in the future and does not at all fit with any of the local architecture. The reason this house is so over-the-top is because Ben has an extravagant amount of money. He is an award-winning therapist who moved from Toronto and now has basically every resident of this town as a client. It is impossible to go one day around here without hearing the name "Ben Hartley" and how he is "a savior to this town". Even though calling him a "savior" may be an overstatement, he is a damn good therapist.

Justin knocks on the front door and after hearing frantic footsteps, the door opens. Ben has an exhausted look on his face, but he lights up as he sees Justin.

"Oh, h-hey Justin. S-sorry I'm a bit out of breath. I was on the top floor doing some boring work stuff, but come in," Ben explains, trying not to get more out of breath. Justin follows Ben into the first floor living room which is set up to look exactly like a therapist's office. Despite rarely having clients come to his house, Ben is always prepared for people in need.

"So, is it what I think it is?" Ben asks.

"Yep, the writer's block finally got me," Justin sighs.

"Like I've told you before, every writer at some point has to encounter it. But you need to understand, it doesn't really matter," Ben says bluntly.

"IT DOESN'T MATTER? Of *course* it matters. It's my only way of income. Without writing I'm useless, I'm pointless, I'm worthless, I'm meaningless. Do you want me to give you more synonyms? Because I can keep going," Justin blurts out in frustration.

"No, I understand that, but nothing matters. You do realize none of this is real, right?" Ben asks, softly.

"I don't know what weird psychology tactic this is, but it's not going to work," Justin replies, calmly.

"Justin, I assumed you would know this because of your career. This world is entirely fictional. It's a written work of art," Ben confesses.

“I definitely think the people of this town are getting to you,” Justin remarks, sarcastically.

“I’m being serious here, man. Think about it. What’s the last thing you *actually* remember?” Ben asks, with a face that shows the highest form of sincerity.

“What? Wh-wha-what?” Justin stutters.

“Seriously think here. What is the last thing you remember doing?” Ben asks. Justin begins thinking and he can clearly remember sitting at his desk trying to write, but anything before that seems to be blurry. He can’t remember waking up, eating breakfast, or anything like that. Ben can see Justin thinking and decides to say something.

“You can’t think very far back, can you? It’s because we’re going off script. The story wasn’t supposed to have us do this,” Ben explains.

“Ok, you’re really freaking me out now. I don’t understand. I can only remember trying to write, but there is nothing before that. I know the constructs of my life, but I can’t remember the exact moments,” Justin says with worry.

“EXACTLY!” Ben shouts excitedly.

“Wait a second. How do you know this fact? How did you come to this conclusion?” Justin questions.

“I-I just know. It feels like I’ve always known. I’m pretty sure everyone else here also, just knows,” Ben explains.

“Well, w-with that I’m g-gonna get going. See you soon. I guess,” Justin mumbles, with a crazy look in his eye. Justin gets up and leaves before Ben can even say goodbye.

Justin can’t think properly. He doesn’t really understand what is going on, but something is off. He walks by someone on the street and gets their attention.

“Hey, are we living in a book?” Justin asks.

“Yeah. What type of question is that?” the stranger wonders. Justin ignores the person and continues to walk, at an increasing speed. Justin keeps trying to prove to himself that this world is real, but nothing is helping him come to that conclusion. He tries to think of the person he loves the most, his girlfriend. He begins to picture her in his head. Her beautiful brown... or blonde... or maybe red hair? He can’t even properly think of what his own *girlfriend* looks like. He realizes he only knows about her because he mentioned “his girlfriend” earlier. He doesn’t have any memories of what she looks like or what they have done together.

He arrives back at his house. He decides to look closely at it. He knows it’s there, but he doesn’t really *see* anything. It’s like only certain things are described, just like a book. Then Justin realizes that if this whole world is just a work of fiction, he should know how to get out. He is a fiction writer after all. Justin looks straight up and yells as loud as he can.

“HEY, I KNOW THIS IS FAKE. IT ALL IS, BUT I CAN BEAT THIS,” Justin yells with utmost anger. To his surprise, he hears someone reply.

“You can’t beat this. I made you. I made all of you. Now let’s keep this story going, ok?” a deep voice says from above.

“But I’m beating the system aren’t I. I’ve already gone off script,” Justin states, confidently.

“No, you haven’t. Absolutely everything that has happened is because of me and will always be because of me. I know what you are thinking and what you have thought. I made you and I am currently making you. Your fear isn’t real, it’s all fake, and there’s nothing you can do about it,” the deep voice remarks. Justin begins to freak out as he has absolutely no free will. Everything is predetermined. Or is it? Maybe this author is just thinking the script up on the spot. When Justin writes, he has no idea how the story is going to end, this writer could be doing the exact same thing.



“HEY,” Justin shouts, confidently. “You might know what has happened and what is happening, but you don't know what will happen.”

“I'm aware of that and I also know you know that. Again, I am writing this. I know that you think you can outsmart me, but this is only going to go the way that I want it to,” the deep voice says.

“I'm just saying, as an author, this story is going to be *very* difficult to end. You've set yourself up as a huge antagonist that can literally do anything he wants. There is no way of defeating him, as he could just make the other characters do or think whatever works best for him. How the heck are you going to give this story a comfortable ending?” Justin quips.

“Well, I was thinking that the antagonist would be revealed to have similar issues to the protagonist. As you are right, I don't know how this will end. I came up with this story because I had no idea what to write about, so why not write about someone who doesn't know what to write about?” the deep voice explains.

“Yeah, that's a *real* good idea,” Justin remarks, sarcastically. “Wait, if you are writing all of this, did you essentially just insult yourself?” Justin questions.

“Yep. Self-deprecation is one of the funniest forms of comedy. Though more importantly, what *do* I do now?” the deep voice asks.

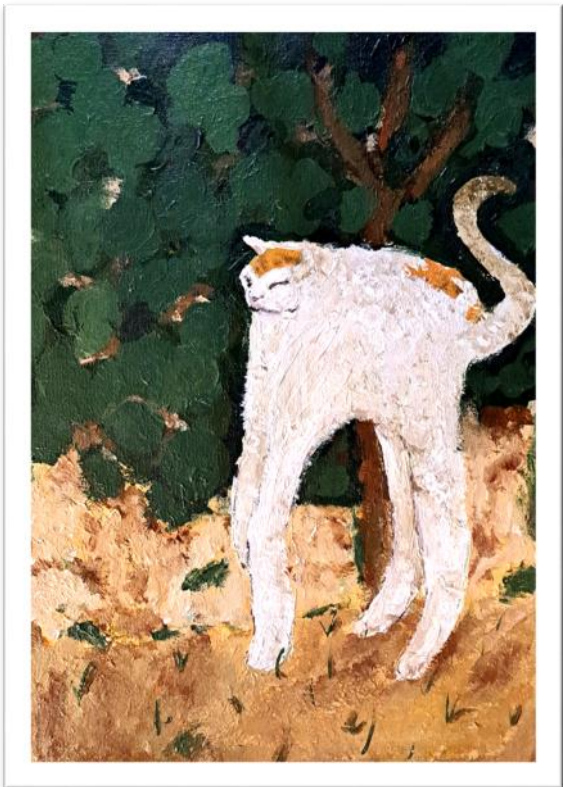
“Why ask me? You know exactly what I'm thinking,” Justin states.

“Well ok then,” the deep voice relates.

Justin appears at his desk with no memory of what just happened. He suddenly comes up with a perfect idea for his next novel. Just as he begins to write, his girlfriend walks in the room. Justin spins around in his chair and looks at her beautiful blonde and curly hair that drapes down past her shoulders. Her piercing green eyes look lovingly into his dark brown ones. Justin immediately stands up and embraces her.

“Everything ok?” she asks.

“Oh, yeah. Everything seems to be looking up.”



**By Stephanie Hazlett**

**By Teyvyn Jones**

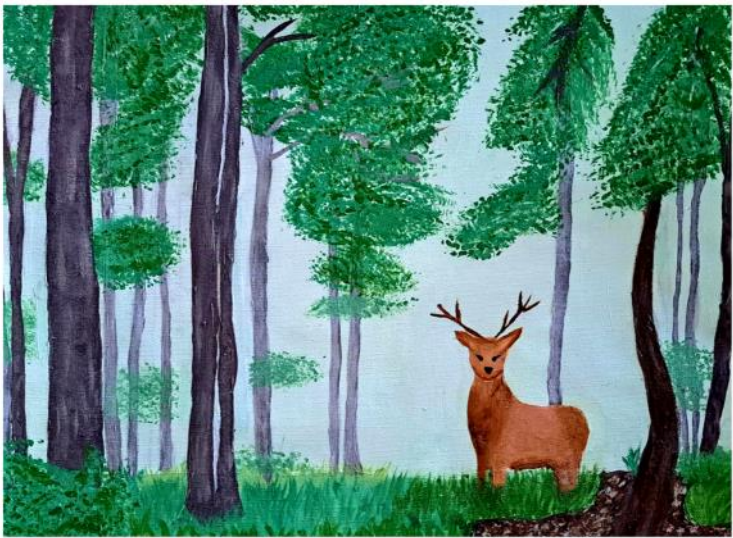




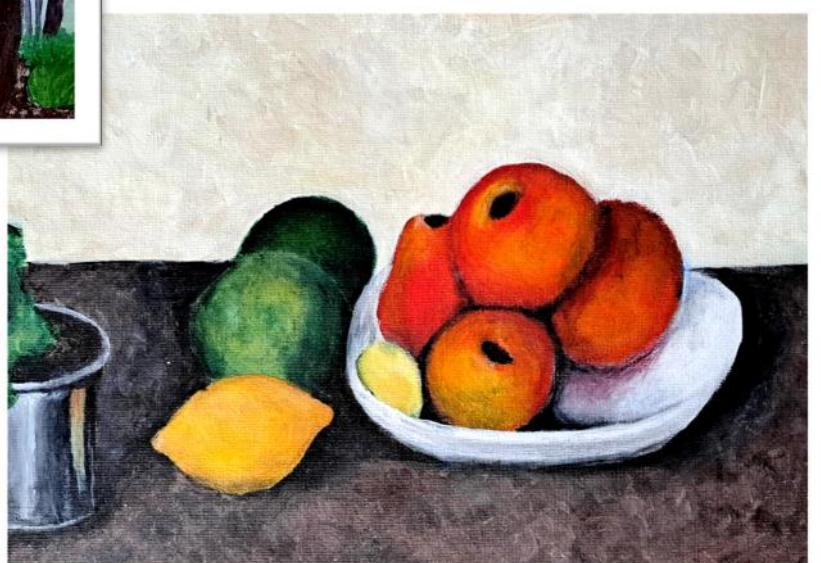
**By Lei Zeira Rebutoc**



**By Sally Barager**

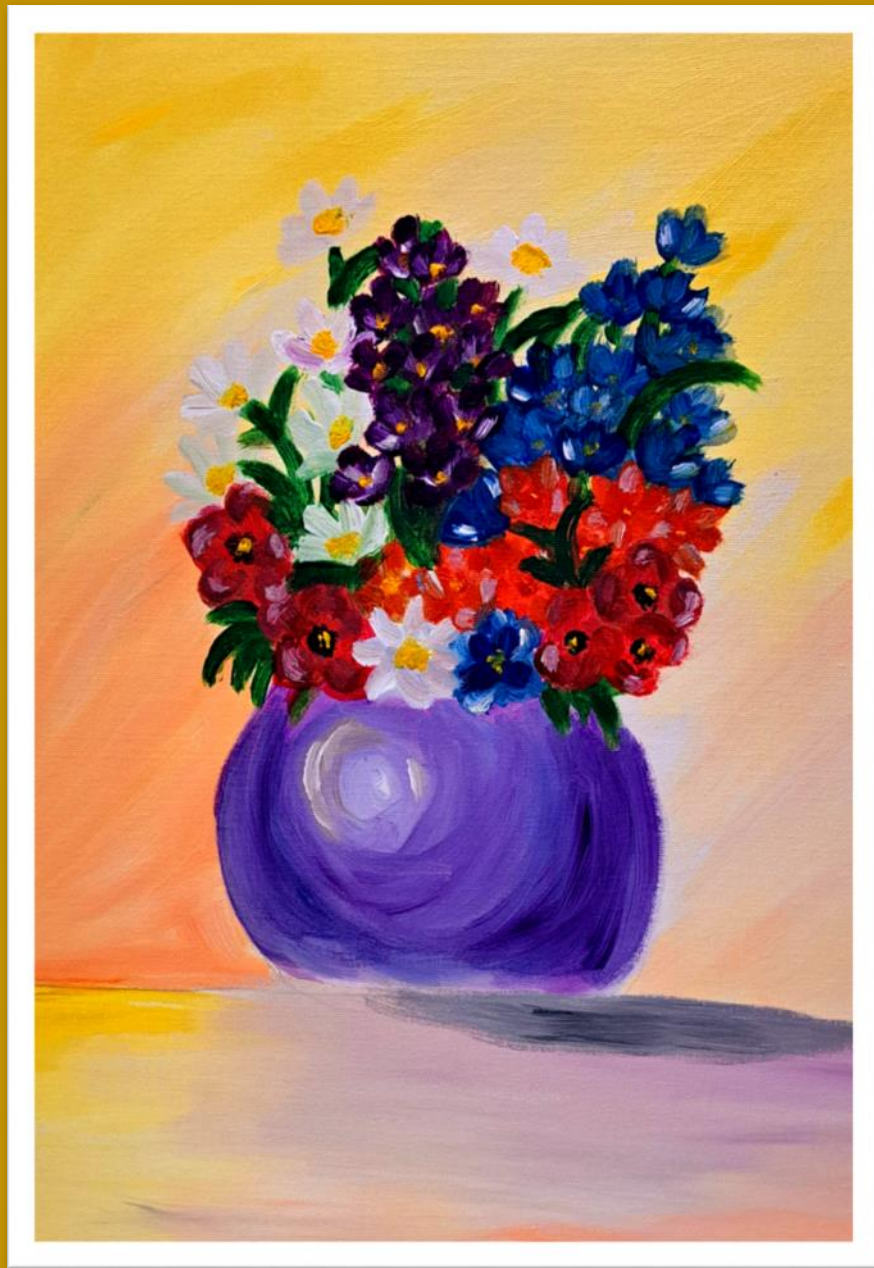


**By Sara Keen**



**By Keira Dubecky**

## Winner - Arts Break 2



By Annalise Cartmel



# The Song My Paddle Sings

By E. Pauline Johnson

West wind, blow from your prairie nest,  
Blow from the mountains, blow from the west  
The sail is idle, the sailor too;  
O! wind of the west, we wait for you.  
Blow, blow!  
I have wooed you so,  
But never a favour you bestow.  
You rock your cradle the hills between,  
But scorn to notice my white lateen.

I stow the sail, unship the mast:  
I wooed you long but my wooing's past;  
My paddle will lull you into rest.  
O! drowsy wind of the drowsy west,  
Sleep, sleep,  
By your mountain steep,  
Or down where the prairie grasses sweep!  
Now fold in slumber your laggard wings,  
For soft is the song my paddle sings.

August is laughing across the sky,  
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I,  
Drift, drift,  
Where the hills uplift  
On either side of the current swift.

The river rolls in its rocky bed;  
My paddle is plying its way ahead;  
Dip, dip,  
While the waters flip  
In foam as over their breast we slip.

And oh, the river runs swifter now;  
The eddies circle about my bow.  
Swirl, swirl!  
How the ripples curl  
In many a dangerous pool awirl!

And forward far the rapids roar,  
Fretting their margin for evermore.  
Dash, dash,  
With a mighty crash,  
They seethe, and boil, and bound, and splash.

Be strong, O paddle! be brave, canoe!  
The reckless waves you must plunge into.  
Reel, reel.  
On your trembling keel,  
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapid, we're far ahead!  
The river slips through its silent bed.  
Sway, sway,  
As the bubbles spray  
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

And up on the hills against the sky,  
A fir tree rocking its lullaby,  
Swings, swings,  
Its emerald wings,  
Swelling the song that my paddle sings.



By Hayden Mitchell

**PAULINE JOHNSON**  
Collegiate & Vocational School