

NEVER RIDE AN UNTAMED BIKE

Along Magnolia Way →

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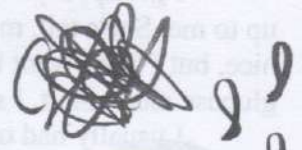


a collaboration by the students of  
YOUNG MUSICIANS & ARTISTS  
creative writing & visual arts dept.

2017



# CONTRIBUTING



# ARTISTS



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Special Thanks to: The Pinewood Table, a prose critique group in PORTLAND → [thepinewoodtable.com](http://thepinewoodtable.com) . . . . .

## New School

I look out the window on a cold October day. The frost glazed the playground. It's frosty white from the field to the window. I stare at one of the frost flakes on the window. Missing my old friends, I start to draw on the window with my finger.

I get up; my thin arms and legs are so pale. I nearly trip on the way to my locker. This girl walks up to me. She's tall, maybe a few inches more than me. She reaches out her tan hands to greet me. She's nice, but I don't want to meet her. She hands me my phone. I had left it at the windowsill. It says "high glucose alert" on it. I still need to go to the office to check my blood sugar.

I usually had one of my friends go with me in case something happened. The girl says she'll go with me. I look at her like she's crazy. I nod my head yes and we walk together. The twists and turns of the halls lead us to a big office. There I prick my finger. The nurse tells me I need to sit in the office until I'm back to normal. I look out the frost-painted window, wondering if that girl will be my friend. Little white flakes are now falling from the sky.

Cecilia Clark



## Object Story

The bell was once beautiful and a shiny silver. It was used to get a woman's attention. She left her door open, allowing anyone to come in at any time. They would walk up to the white simple table and ring the bell that sat alone. The bell's elegant ring would echo through the house and the woman would be waiting with a warm smile.

But these days her door is locked and she is too busy to open it. The white table is now grey and the bell is rusted, the sound now dull. The woman's smile now wrinkles.

Belle Vacheresse



## Science Class Daydreams

the turbine has three stages with separate sets of blades that work at high, intermediate and low steam pressures

now, I don't know but steam pressures sound like whistling laughs  
funny people are famous like cats on fences  
tall fences, short fences, medium fences, three stages in a turbine

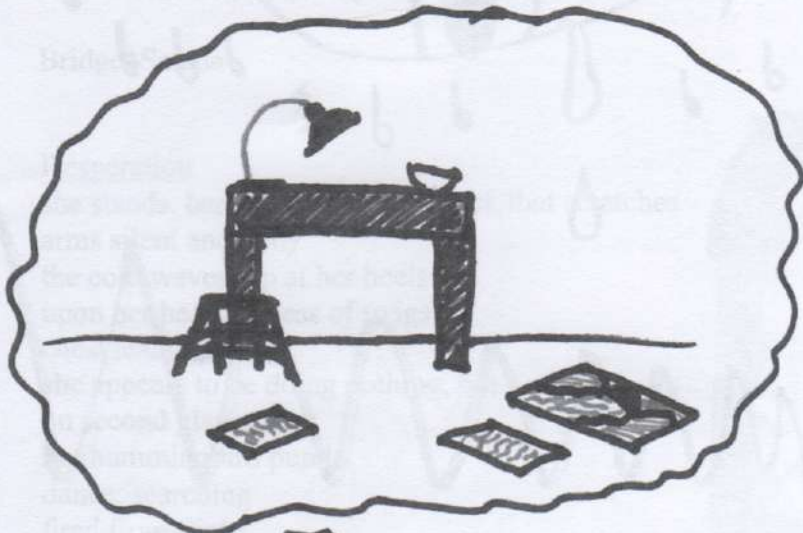
Belle Vacheresse



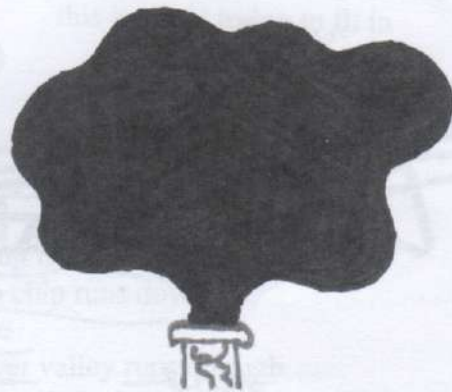
## The Green Desk

He took all of his work sheets and documents, leaving the desk pristine. The only thing that was left was a lamp and a little white bowl he ate apple slices out of last night. He had been working on a poem.

Cecilia Clark



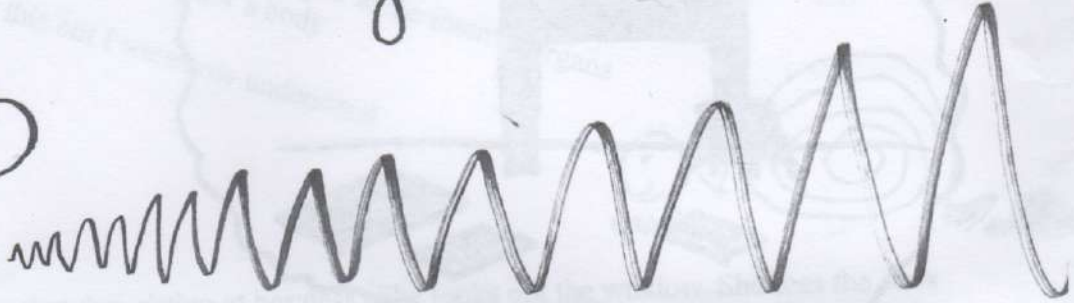
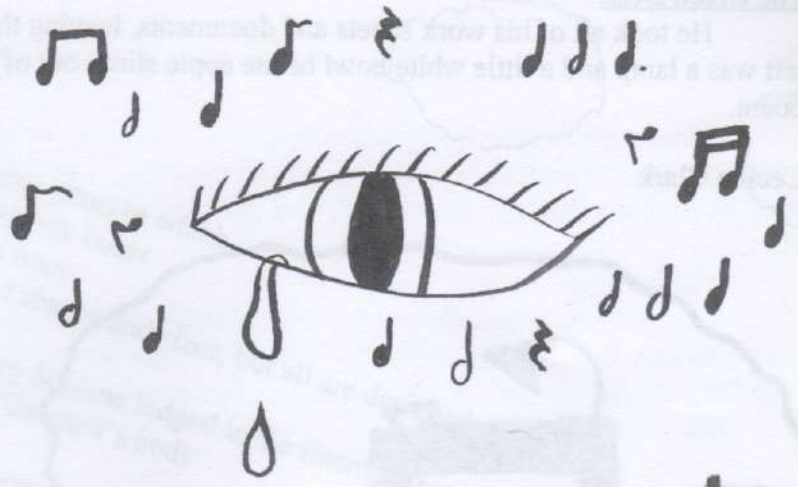
River  
The clocks do not work  
water like glass  
that shatters with  
angel wings of sun  
Claire Avenoso



## Privilege

A black cloud of smoke billowed out of the cracked chimney  
My grandma and I played cards together when I went over to her house; we used big cards because she couldn't see very well  
The sounds of tinkling vibrated into his ears  
Warm chocolate chip cookies dunked in milk  
I used to go over to my friend Lindsey's house; she had a hot pink motorbike we took turns riding  
The brick shattered leaving nothing but dust in its wake  
My family didn't always get along. My sister was always the center of attention  
The emerald sat as bait for the larcenist, protected only by the gleam of lasered alarms  
Bridget, why are we not doing more to help the refugee children?

Bridget Salada

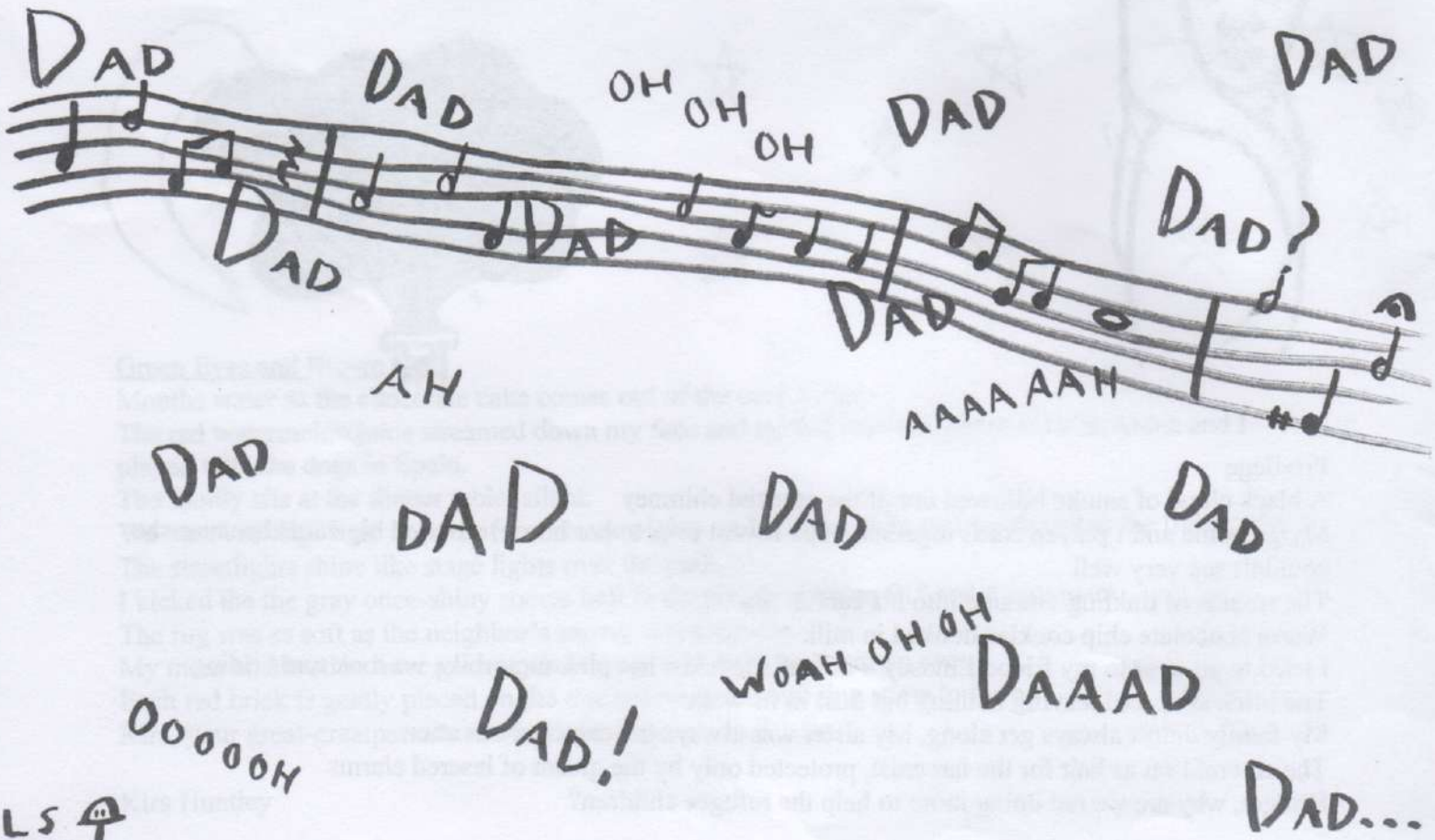


LS ♪

The Song

She is sitting on her bed in her pink night gown. She is sitting with her legs crossed. She's brushing her long red hair and singing the song she and her dad wrote. She starts to cry.

Cecilia Clark



LS ♪

## Fear

Fear is a dark shadowy figure looming over your bed at night waiting to jump down your throat, stifling any sense of comfort. He is an ear-splitting shriek that can bait your consciousness at any given moment. He is a candle dropped onto a carpet that burns, filling your lungs with smoke that turns to lead, corrupting your body, disfiguring every limb until you're lying, shaking at the bottom of the closet. Fear is the tap on your shoulder you feel when you're all alone.

Bridget Salada

## Desperation

she stands, barefoot, on a black rock that scratches  
arms silent and bony  
the cold waves nip at her heels  
upon her head, a mess of twigs  
chest leathery  
she appears to be doing nothing, but  
on second glance  
her hummingbird pupils  
dance, searching  
tired from flight  
emaciated

Engraver Arnold



## Items

a large red fire  
white marbles  
clear vase on a table with purple flowers  
woman in a black skirt  
a ledge with an unlit red candle  
neighborhood with tiny houses  
this is about trying to fit in

Claire Avenoso



## Ode to a Mug

The mug is faded and worn  
A deep chip runs down  
the side  
as a river valley runs through  
a canyon in the hot sun

The mug is relief you gain while skimming toes across  
icy river surface

There is pearly white tea sloshing inside  
a stage for the dancers flying and twirling in the air  
from the metal spoon

The mug is bobbing and floating in a large  
lake of saltwater

as pink fish swim down below next to a large chest  
with crimson rubies spilling out the side

The mug is old and as thin as the spiderweb  
laced with dew outside the kitchen window  
ready to catch an unsuspecting fly in the woven strands

The mug is mine.

Claire Avenoso

Curt Inman

"Are you shaking?" Jessie asked me, quietly so Dr. Diggs couldn't hear.

"No," I said. I had realized the question was rhetorical, but pretended it wasn't. She didn't prod further.

22 years without a doctor's appointment. It wasn't what I expected; I noticed Dr. Diggs' nail polish, a lilac color, was chipped on more than one finger and the dust ball in the corner gently swayed in the blow of the air conditioner. 22 years and I never thought I would be so afraid.

I could tell Jessie saw it now, the way my eyes didn't dare look up from the tiled floor, how my only responses to Dr. Diggs' questions were one word or inaudible. I didn't get scared often.

After a few unsuccessful tries to find my heartbeat with a stethoscope, I was shepherded to an x-ray room. It was all a blur, a gust of wind in which I was a particle of dust.

I stepped into the x-ray machine. Diggs' eyebrows wrinkled. I didn't wait for her to say it.

"I don't have a heart."

Engraver Arnold



The Wild Stallion

I mounted my bike as if it were a wild stallion as we conquered the single block of cement surrounding my block, a war we always won.

My bike is small and dirty, smudged with mud dry as the Savannah in a sandstorm and hotter than a blistering summer's day that could melt a popsicle in your hand. The handlebars are coated in glitter like my mother's lustrous emerald necklace sitting in a box at the bottom of her dresser. Tassels hang from the handles and fly in the wind like water pouring out of a rock. The chain is a mouse, terrified, squeaking with every push of my pedal as if a spin of the wheel is a trap out to steal the mouse's life.

Speeding down the sidewalk, it bucked me off. I fell to the ground, knees smashing into the cement. Blood stained the sidewalk like grape juice on a white tee shirt.

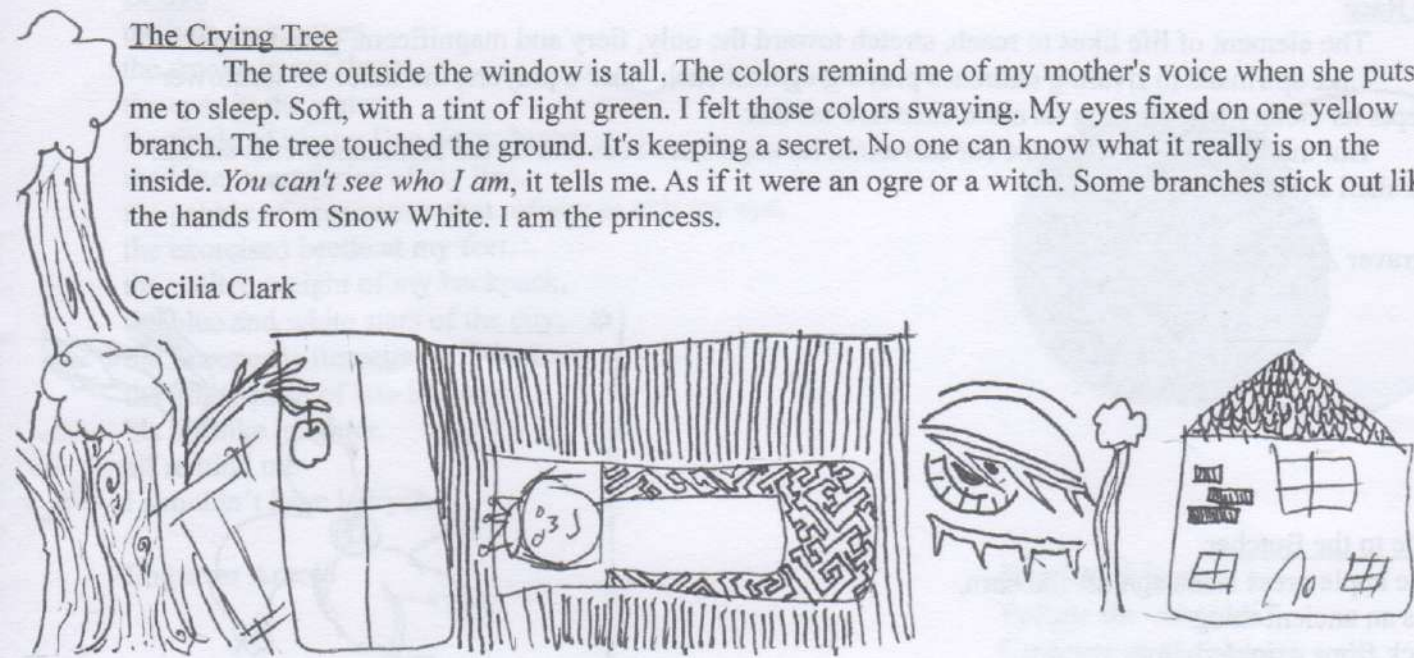
Don't ride an untamed bike.

Bridget Salada

### The Crying Tree

The tree outside the window is tall. The colors remind me of my mother's voice when she puts me to sleep. Soft, with a tint of light green. I felt those colors swaying. My eyes fixed on one yellow branch. The tree touched the ground. It's keeping a secret. No one can know what it really is on the inside. *You can't see who I am*, it tells me. As if it were an ogre or a witch. Some branches stick out like the hands from Snow White. I am the princess.

Cecilia Clark



### Autobiography

Being a secret, sneaking around behind closed doors

Being a wristwatch, in charge of time, I can never take a break, and if I do, those gnarly fingers come at me and press my buttons

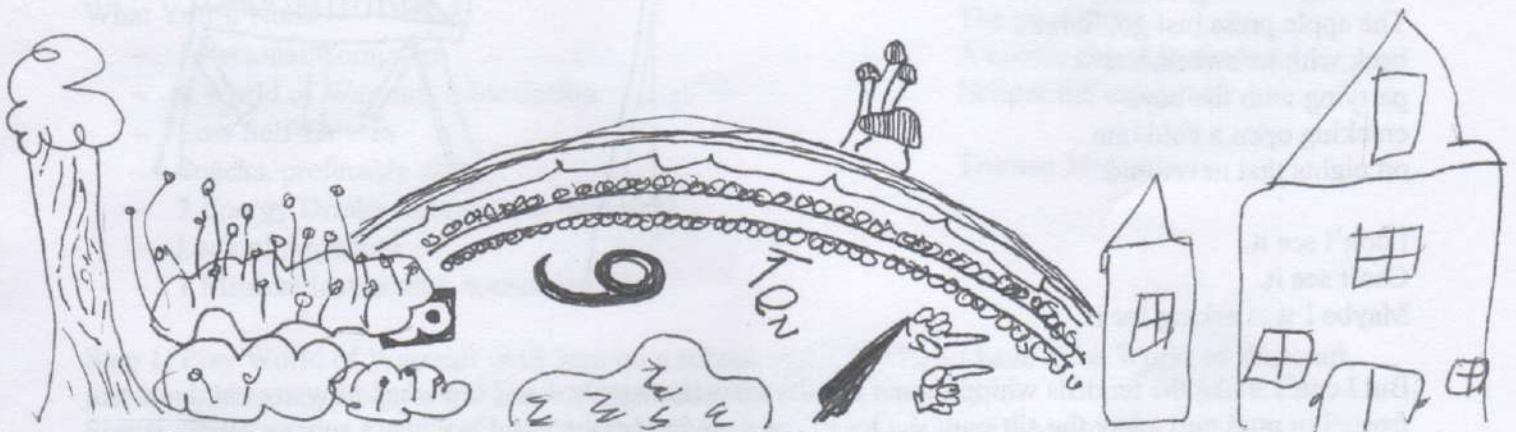
Being an electric fan, stuck in my protective wired cage, unable to get out, to be free

Being a cake, experiencing digestive systems as my brothers and sisters separate, what about the stabbing? Thick metal sticks with four tines come at me, why couldn't I have feet?

Being a kitchen, stationed in the same corner of a house, unable to get a new perspective

Being a stoplight, always having to change colors: green, yellow, red, what about purple, brown, black, orange? I would've run away the first chance I got.

Kira Huntley



### The Kingdom

The mossy forest stood silent. Not even wind blew through the towering redwoods dripping with dew. The ground was scattered with a kingdom of fungi, leaving no more than an inch of bare soil. The mushrooms were in the magic process of dropping their spores. They would grow for months, waiting to burst through their caps.

Bridget Salada



## Sun Race

The element of life likes to reach, stretch toward the only, fiery and magnificent, god it knows.

Like spirituals in rivaling churches praying against each other's prayers, the saboteur sunflower accepts its victory by eclipsing its more eastward brother.

But the flower does not hope for salvation; its angels are bees and its ten commandments are all: thou shall stretch.

Engraver Arnold

## Ode to the Butcher

The apple press leans against the barn.

It's an ancient thing  
back from wrinkled days  
when the machine had a soul.

The apple press is a murder suspect,  
the butcher of my fingertip.

For now these allegations  
are smuggled into obscurity.

For now the apple press is a celebrity  
an annual star

shining bright through cider jars  
through leper leaves

through caramel apples  
through kids conspiring for a drink  
through the waddling pumpkins.

The apple press delivers babies like a stork  
with sugar filling the blanket.

The apple press just got home  
back with its sweetheart  
partying with the boys  
cracking open a cold one  
on nights that never end.

I don't see it.

Can't see it.

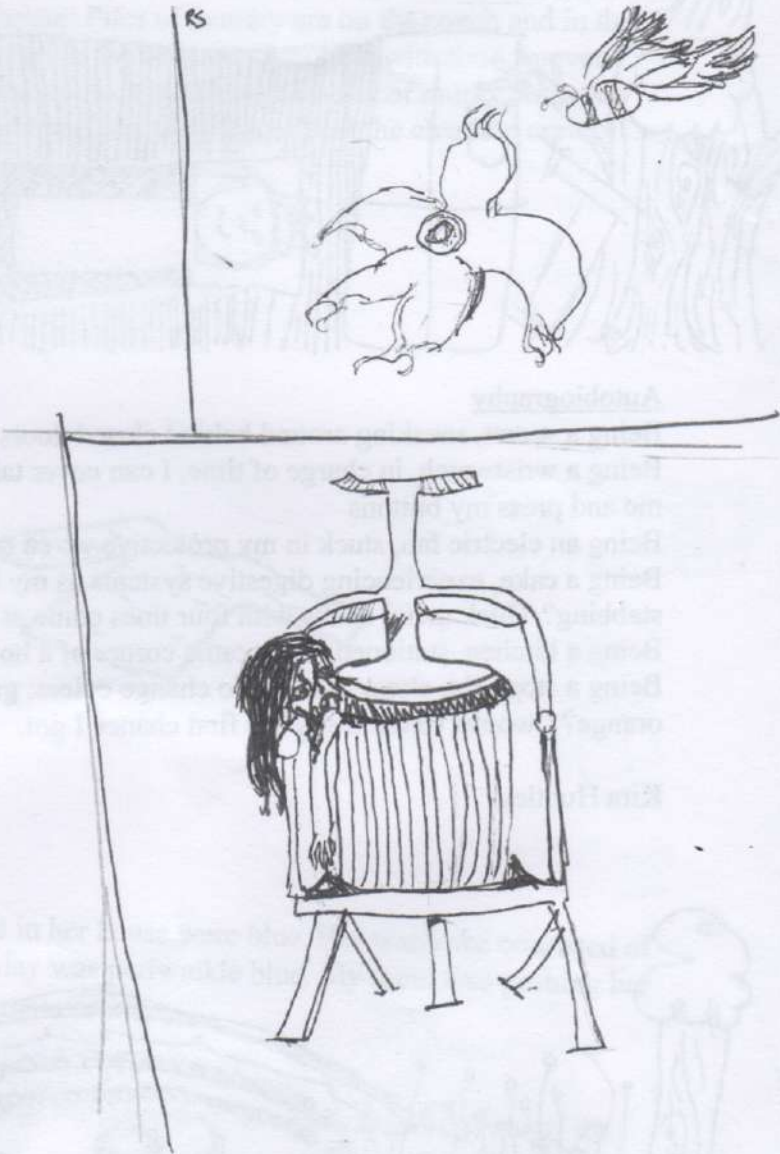
Maybe I was asking for it.

But I can't shake the tendrils whipping me into its maw that creaked and crunched now my hand frosted in mud pull away the silt gum shades of red growing brighter and brighter a sunrise on my arm singing the lion king song but it's really a scream for dad a scream for the things I never saw happen burning my throat raw on the the pain that's waiting for me a slab of ice towel cowboy's words running white walls bed cloth man woman sirens sleep.

There was an apple press that leaned against the barn.

It was an ancient thing  
back from wrinkled days  
when the machine had a soul.

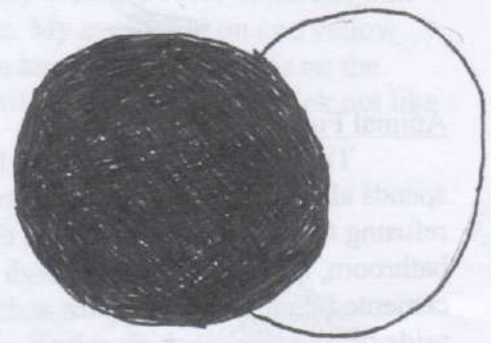
Truman Mooney



## Bridge

the hair on my toes,  
the smoke in my throat,  
the eyes in the water,  
the tingle of a song I've never heard,  
the bitter boundaries of my lips,  
the pebble of oceanwater that refuses to exit my eye,  
the exorcised beetle at my feet,  
the molten weight of my backpack,  
the blue and white stars of the city,  
the Europeans funneling off the train,  
the guilty hush of late late night,  
his birdlike laughter,  
all remind me  
I shouldn't have left you.

Engraver Arnold



## Don't look back

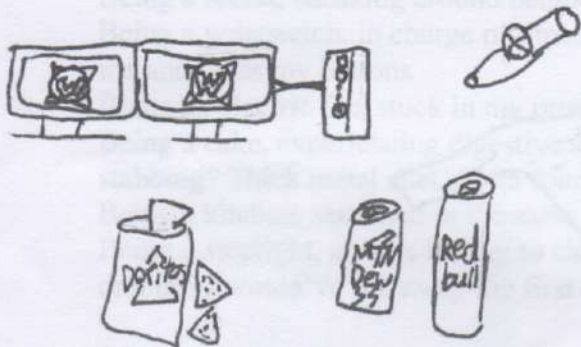
Eclipse the unknown  
Creeping past withering walls  
The pool hums  
The walls giggle

Creeping past withering walls  
Goose space curls up  
The walls giggle  
I can't shake this need to breathe

Goose space curls up  
A basement in my head  
I can't shake this need to breathe  
A corner caked in shadow

A basement in my head  
The pool hums  
A corner caked in shadow  
Eclipse the unknown

Truman Mooney



## How To Waste Your Life

### What You'll Need

- 1 Personal Computer
- 1 World of Warcraft subscription
- Low Self-Esteem
- Snacks, preferably chips
- 3 Energy Drinks (mix at your own risk)
- Lack of Ambition
- 1 Musical Instrument, something edgy

Step 1: Play World of Warcraft until 3am on a school night. It doesn't have to be World of Warcraft, just something, anything, to make you forget about the loneliness.

Step 2: Wake up late. Decide it's not worth it to eat breakfast. You'll eat a big lunch.

Step 3: Forget lunch and work on your generic fantasy novel (Title: The Will of Shadows) that you know you'll never finish. Lament lunch.

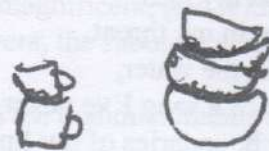
Step 4: Argue with your parents about that job you both know you're not going to apply for. Music, play the bass or listen to some Blink-182, to forget.

Step 5: Look up monologues and pretend like you will get into Juilliard. Savor it.

Step 6: Pretend like you did something today.

Step 7: Repeat.

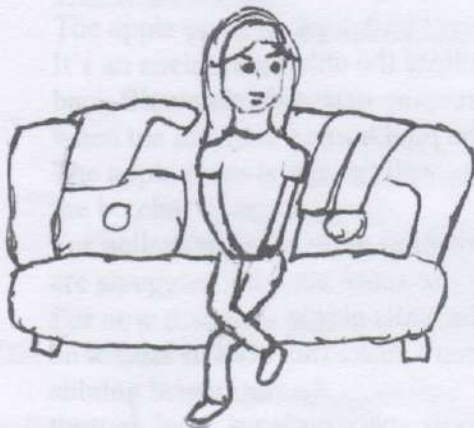
Aidan Tappert



### Animal Fur

The off-white fluffy jacket lies in the corner of my living room, the color of a dirty sheep who spends all of its day outside and never gets washed, like an innocent child playing in the filth and mud refusing to take a bath. I sit in the chaos that is my house: Piles of laundry are on the couch and in the bathroom, loads of dishes pile high in the kitchen, making the counters disappear with food forever cemented on the rims of plates and bowls, and silverware is discarded in a bucket of murky water set aside for years as if a high school of kids had trashed the place and forgot about the cleaning crew.

Belle Vacheresse



### My Grandmother

Blue. That was her favorite color. Her walls in her house were blue. Her wardrobe consisted of mostly blue. And the T-shirt she was wearing that day was periwinkle blue. My mom was pushing her in her wheelchair.

"Can I sit?"

"Sure."

Me. I was sitting in her lap. We were laughing. We were also lost. How do we get out of the maze?

"Look! Up there!"

"Oh yeah! What is that? Let's go check it out."

We rolled over there and squinted to see the sign.

EXIT→

Kira Huntley

EXIT →

## Eclipse

An eclipse is when one thing covers another  
the sun is covered by the moon

I went outside because I couldn't sleep and stood in the street  
the moon disappeared  
everything was still

Claire Avenoso



## Ritual for Going To Bed in the Morning

What you will need

- A bed
- Too many blankets
- A pillow
- Long fuzzy PJ bottoms
- And any comfortable shirt from drawer

Step 1: Wake up to the sun rising, birds chirping, and fall back asleep

Step 2: Wake up again mid-afternoon, groggy and angry

Step 3: Lie in bed and stare out window and think about all the things you have to do today that you know you're not going to do

Step 4: Lie in bed longer until you're hungry or have to go pee

Step 5: Get up, check yourself out in mirror, forget about having to eat or go pee and fall back asleep on couch

Step 6: Repeat next morning

Belle Vacheresse

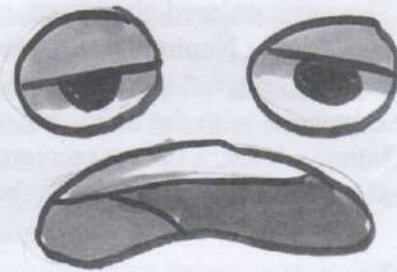


## Breaking My Vegetarianism

There's a stone in my stomach  
did anyone see me?

did anyone see the clandestine crunch  
or the sweet salty taste?

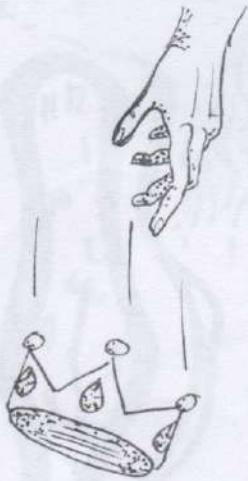
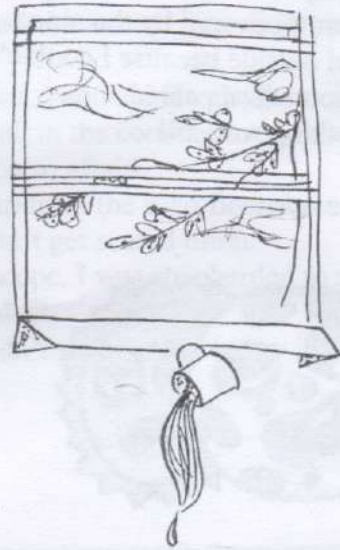
Engraver Arnold



## Milk & Sugar

A baby zebra finch starts his long journey to mature  
song by listening.  
Now, I don't know for sure, but you can't  
leave the nest without  
knowing how to fly.  
Clouds fluff by the open window  
next to the cup of cold coffee that just  
spilled on the carpet.

Claire Avenoso



## Being...

Being a secret is lonely.  
Being someone's queen sounds boring.  
Being a human being, a harpie  
Being, just trying to be, and eat cake  
Being, the name of the ghost town I once wandered  
Being with a spotlight on me at all times makes me want to be by a creek

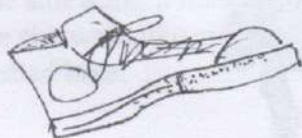
Belle Vacheresse

## The Day My Cat Died

Helping my mom open the door made me feel important. The key slid into the keyhole with that little click. My hands on the black door tinkered with the bumpy dirt under the black paint. The tan walls of my lobby was waiting for me. The cool air conditioning rushed to meet my skin. The two flights of stairs that led to my apartment were green and marble. The railing gave off smells of metal. My feet stepped inside my apartment. My knees bent toward the floor. My voice called out, "Earl?" My head moved left and right. My legs skidded around the house. My eyes checked every room. "Earl?" My parents come to my room where they found me lying on my rug.

The rug is colored cherry red, grassy green, sky blue. The fringes on the side are colored tan like the wet sand at Neptune Beach where a lonely yellow shovel lies buried in the sand. Each bump of the multicolored rug holds millions of secrets. Who owned that shovel? And whatever happened to that dark blue bracelet with the lucky eye on it? Where is it on its journey? Is it underneath my bed among a ton of clutter: a book, a brown converse shoe, a tennis ball, a doll, a crayon? Is it on the floor of the neighborhood deli, Violet's Sandwiches? Once lost, is it gone forever? Is there still hope?

Kira Huntley



## Drip

Bouncy needs time by herself with her salmon eggs. They're a lot better at being still than she is. No thinking, no feeling, just a wait without anything to wait for. Sometimes they wiggle. Those times are hard for Bouncy. She used to feel the wiggle too. Sometimes she sucks on a binky to feel better.

It tastes sour.

Silly bouncy. When those eggs finally hatch, she won't get to keep them. All of her friends are allergic to fish. Besides, it would be a really big hassle for Bouncy. Salmon have to go all the way down the river, all the way to the sea, and all the way back home with just their fins.

It's easier to stay as an egg.

Truman Mooney

## Ginger



The afternoon my dog died I was asleep. I woke up freshly napped, unaware my family had taken her limp, furry body and buried her in the backyard. When I found out, I was sitting in front of a plate of pancakes drenched in syrup. I ran outside and rode my bike down the sunny street. It seemed as if the weather was mocking me. I had never ridden that far before. When I got tired I went back home and collapsed onto the lawn, freshly sprinkled and annoyingly green, and cried.

That night my parents helped me make a gravestone for her. I recognized the concrete kit we used; it was the same one I had seen my neighbor use, trying to force the shaking paw of her greying and cancerous dog into the liquid. I was careful to follow the instructions so I could make sure it was perfect for my dog. I engraved it with her name, Ginger, placing false diamonds and shards of brick on the stone. Right before it dried I wrote 1995-2005.

I haven't eaten pancakes since.

Bridget Salada



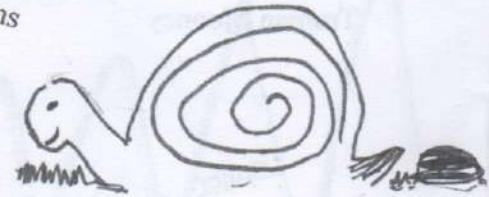
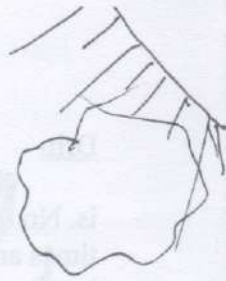
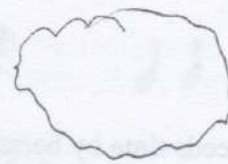
## Ode

My mother bought me the notebook. It is small and marked with static zebra patterns. It is filled with scribbles and scratched from my pen galloping across the page like the chestnut mare I used to ride on Hawaiian beaches. The notebook is beautiful to me, not for its chocolate ganache gloss, which it loses in moments by nervous tapping palms, but for the pages inside. It is the point of shattering, the point of infinite smorgasborg and peach-pink sandals. The notebook swallows the ink from my tongue, lacking curlicue words, and forms them into something competent. It is now filled, drenched in sticky black thoughts. Molasses in my mother's Christmas cookies.

Aidan Tappert

Love Darts  
snails have a complicated mating ritual in which  
after circling each other for up to six hours  
each fires a dart into the other's body  
the weapons come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but all are designed  
to pierce  
they can be shunted so quickly they become lodged in the internal organs  
or pierce through the other side of the snail's body  
then they procreate  
I have no explanation for this but I somehow understand

Engraver Arnold



A Documentary on Space

She is in science class that day, sitting at her desk. She looks out the window. She sees the stars and the moon, but also a big black hole. She walks to the window and leaps into the sky. She passes the stars and the moon. She reaches the hole and gets sucked into a new place filled with colors. She is getting stretched. She is almost flat by the time she finds herself at her desk. Back in science class, watching a documentary on space.

Cecilia Clark



Green Eyes and Brown Eyes

Mouths water as the chocolate cake comes out of the cool fridge.  
The red watermelon juice streamed down my face and spilled onto my green dress as Aidan and I played with the dogs in Spain.  
The family sits at the dinner table, silent.  
We watched Yogi Bear as part of our movie nights on Fridays, while eating takeout in the living room.  
The streetlights shine like stage lights over the park.  
I kicked the the gray once-shiny soccer ball in the muggy gym on 91<sup>st</sup> and Amsterdam.  
The rug was as soft as the neighbor's snowy white poodle.  
My mom and brother have green eyes and my dad and I have brown eyes.  
Each red brick is gently placed on the one below as the building starts to form.  
Kira, your great-greatparents survived the Pogroms in Russia.

Kira Huntley

## The Search

Joy is laughter in the glove compartment  
the smell of cinnamon on Saturday morning  
bouncy, loopy, spazzy, kooky, the kid to keep an eye on at the birthday party.

Joy is a book in the shade  
the first bite of whipped cream  
fingers dribbling down a chest.

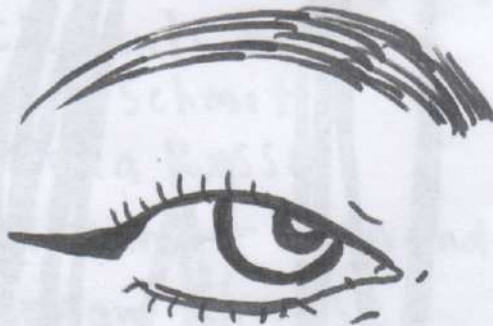
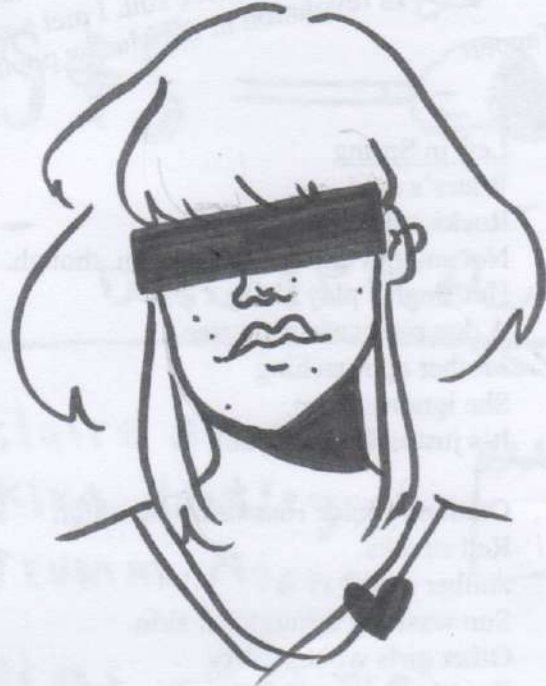
Joy is a 20 on a 20-sided die  
the canyon below a cliffhanger  
beachside naps in summer.

Joy is a kick of espresso  
the corner before the parade  
mom's voice after school

Joy is a crush's gaze  
the crackling between our fingertips  
rose gardens opening to the sky

Joy is waiting.

Truman Mooney



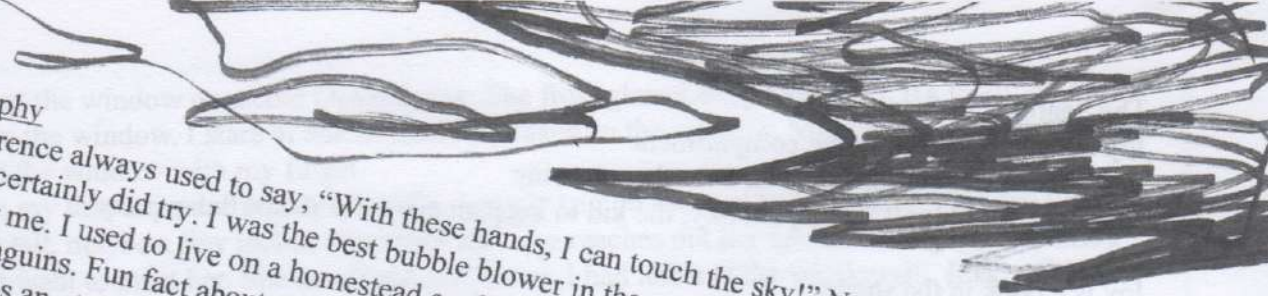
## Music

He wandered through the market, careful not to step on any of the wares spread around him. The sun had long since passed its apex, but the bazaar was lively. There was music in the air. He followed it. It led him to two men sitting in front of a tapestry of red and gold, strung between two poles. The first man, dressed in all red, held an instrument with uncountable strings and pegs. The second man pounded a steady beat, and smiled. His smile was an invitation to dance.

What you need to know is this: Life is full of music. It is the bird-song that opens our eyes and the blood that pounds through our hearts. Music is our fire and the soul's leitmotif. Often we forget our music. What you need to know is this: Listen.

Aidan Tappert






Autobiography

Lawrence always used to say, "With these hands, I can touch the sky!" Now, I don't know for sure, but he certainly did try. I was the best bubble blower in the west. Ah, the West, it was far too cold and dusty for me. I used to live on a homestead on the far end of the glacier. There were fields full of frolicking penguins. Fun fact about penguins: They do indeed have knees. Fun fact about THAT penguin: It was an otter in a 3-piece suit. I met a zookeeper once. He told me, "They fired me!" Apparently, inciting revolution in the Macaw population is frowned upon.

Aidan Tappert

Left in Spring



Water's cold.  
Rocks are smooth.  
Not smooth enough to sleep on, though.  
Her fingers play along a leaf  
A doe peeks around a tree  
Mother approaching  
She ignores them.  
It's just nature, after all.

Cranberry juice runs down her thigh  
Red streaks  
Amber rivers  
Sun washing through her skin  
Other girls would worry  
But it's just nature, after all.  
Such things are washed away  
Easy as time.

Red streaks  
Ink in the river  
Threads unwinding into space dust  
Drifting into tinier and tinier and tinier worlds.  
She wants to tell somebody  
Shout out loud  
Share some piece of herself with a passerby  
But no one's here to listen.  
The doe is a mother now  
The rocks are bare.

Is it bad to like being alone?  
Does a person need people to be happy?  
Doesn't hurt.  
Doesn't make her want to change.  
And yet  
Maybe  
Just this once

Should it?

Truman Mooney

