

4-2014

## TYGR 2014: Student Art and Literary Magazine

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### Recommended Citation

Forrestal, Jill; Johnson, Dave; Kirk, Patrick; and Stephens, Erin M., "TYGR 2014: Student Art and Literary Magazine" (2014). *TYGR: Student Art and Literary Magazine Archives (1985-2017)*. 29.  
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T Y G R

ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE

2013 - 2014





TYGR  
ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE  
2013 - 2014

Department of English & Modern Languages  
and the Department of Art & Digital Media

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Bourbonnais, IL 60914  
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## EDITORS & STAFF

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## "THE TYGER"

*By: William Blake*

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp,  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears  
And water'd heaven with their tears:  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,  
In the forests of the night:  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?



*Art: Hope Olson*

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Reader:

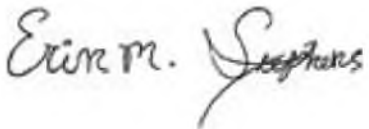
Tygr Student Art and Literary Magazine is one hundred percent distilled Olivet creativity.

It empowers students of all fields of study by providing a framework in which to share their artistic vision. As such, Tygr enriches Olivet's community and the wider public with a perspective found nowhere else. It is a celebration of imagination and a reminder that seeing the world through another's eyes is always a rewarding and beautiful endeavor. Crafting it has been a complete privilege and joy.

This remarkable publication is the result of countless hours of dedicated collaboration. Much heartfelt gratitude goes to Art & Layout Editor Cymone Wilder, Assistant Editors Katelyn Oprondek and Lydia Nelson, Art Photographer Kaci Dunnum, intern Brandy Buckholt, and all of the Staff Readers. Our team is especially indebted to faculty advisors Professor Patrick Kirk, Dr. Dave Johnson, and Professor Jill Forrestal. To the student who together submitted for consideration 50 works of art and nearly 200 works of literature: we applaud your courage and immense talent. You embody the spirit of Tygr.

And to you, reader: thank you for opening your heart and mind to what these young voices have to impart. We hope that you will discover in these pages a vibrant portrait of life as only the students of Olivet can envision it. To God be the glory.

Sincerely,



Erin M. Stephens, Editor in Chief





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## "PRESCRIPTION OF POETRY"

*By: Emily Arnold*

I need poetry tonight  
words to bathe my open wounds  
hot cloths steaming with relief to  
assuage the quaking chill within

Only words satisfy  
it isn't a pleasure  
to be voraciously sated,  
it is an aching pang of a spirit  
destitute in the desert of human wilderness

It requires the gentle soothing company  
of a perfectly understanding muse who warms  
my fingertips  
with seeping oils of tranquility,  
medicated on sublime collections of letters

I'm self-prescribed and in danger of an  
overdose







Art: Samantha Kryger

## "WAITING"

By: Laneah Ravn

(A young man, Reyes, sits alone in a small room, biting the nails of one hand, holding a pencil with the other. His hair is slicked back. He wears dress pants and a button up, both slightly too tight for his muscular frame. He is alone on a dim stage, the spotlight shining only on him. He sits at an old rickety desk, staring at a packet of paper. He begins to tap his pencil against his leg. There is a large black clock in the backdrop behind him without hands or numbers, only dots where the numbers should go.)

**SFX:** (The clock behind Reyes begins to tick, softly and slowly. He is obviously aware that the ticking has begun. He looks behind him, then quickly sets his eyes on his paper.)

**Reyes:** (Softly, in a slight Spanish accent) Stay cool, Reyes. Stay cool. (His leg starts shaking, bouncing up and down.) Calm down, Reyes. It's no big deal, yeah? Whatever happens, happens. No pressure. There's plenty of time to decide the answers. Everyone likes answers, no? (Reyes begins tapping his pencil faster.) Aaahhh...that's not true. The only thing worse than an unanswered question is an answered one. Focus, Reyes. Just focus. (Reyes sits quiet for a few seconds, then begins to scribble on his paper. His mouth moves as he reads the paper, but no sound comes out.) Oh this one is easy... ¡Muy fácil! Okay, if I find a wallet on the ground, do I pick it up? If you choose "yes" what will you do with the wallet? State your answer in a well-developed paragraph. (Reyes, concentrating hard on his paper, silently scribbles for about 30 seconds then flips the page.)

**SFX:** (The clock begins to tick faster, just a bit louder. The clock that was once black begins to appear red, lit up by neon.)

**Reyes:** Take your time, Reyes. This one, not so easy...I liked it better when it was just black and white, yes and no. Now it's all grey. Grayscale is so confusing. Just call it what it is, for Pete's sake! (Reyes begins to look very uncomfortable, his leg bouncing faster now, his pencil tapping quicker.) It's okay, still time. Lots of time, Reyes. Relax. (Reyes begins to read aloud from the paper, more confused this time.) If you could be a world traveler, a business tycoon, a rich linguist, or a poor family man, what would you choose?

**SFX:** (A quiet giggle comes from the direction of the clock.)

**Reyes:** If you chose world traveler proceed to page five of the packet. If you chose a poor family man proceed to page seven of the packet. (Reyes scribbles an answer on the paper, then turns to a new page of the packet and reads aloud again.) You have chosen poor family man, but to your dismay, your wife of 20 years commits adultery, your kids blame you for the divorce, and you end up broke and alone.

**SFX:** (A giggle, just louder than before, comes again from the direction of the clock.)

**Reyes:** Create a well-developed, rational response and express your reaction in no more than 75 words. What? This can't be right. (Reyes wipes the sweat off his forehead and readjusts his position in the chair.) Who is writing this test, anyway? (The sound of the clock becomes louder, and Reyes looks behind him quickly, then back again to his packet and frantically scribbles his response). It's okay Reyes, still time to fix this. Just think...**THINK** Reyes! (Reyes furiously continues his scribbling.)

**SFX:** (The clock begins to tick even faster and louder, and another giggle comes from the direction of the clock.)

**Reyes:** Hey, who is messing with the clock, I just started! Hey! Is anyone back there? Who is messing with the time? ¿Qué haces? Hello? (Reyes turns back to his desk, sits down, and continues reading the next section, his leg is bouncing faster than it was before. He is back to biting his nails.) Are you upset with the way you have spent your time? Yes or no? ... ¡Es más complicado! I need more space to write on here. There's only a yes or no? This doesn't make any sense!

**SFX:** (A deafening buzzer goes off. The clock turns bright red as all the neon lights up and a loud laugh comes from the direction of the clock. Reyes stands up in a rage, directly facing the clock.)

**Reyes:** I just started! I don't think I found the answers yet, I need more time!...Well? Did I pass? (The laughing intensifies, and Reyes throws the old desk towards the clock.) Did I? Excuse me! Can you hear me? Did I pass!...I did my best. Surely, I passed. (Looking out into the audience.) ¿Lo apruebo, no? (The curtain falls)

Art: Bethany Meyer







*Art: Joy Katenkamp*



*Art: Jon Lehman*

## **"FRUIT"**

*By: Andrew Leavitt*

I took the heart of a slain animal wrought with maggots and larva and dead and crawling things and I held it in my bare hands.

The blood ran down and in between my fingertips and crusted there like maroon rust and it smelled like it.

I found solace in the holding of the heart and I talked to myself. Imagined it beating in sync with the beats and pulsations of my thumbs.



## "NOSEGRIND"

By: Lacey Austin

Pinocchio enters stage right, holding a broken piece of wood that looks like a broomstick in one hand and a skateboard in the other. The end of his nose has been snapped, and the wood has splintered. He is wearing skater clothes—Etnies, baggie cargo shorts, a punk rock t-shirt, and a black bookbag. He stops center stage and loudly drops the skateboard.

Pinocchio: Jiminy! Where the are you! [rummaging in his backpack and pulling out a cricket in a box; loud chirping begins] A great lot of help you've been, you stupid insect! You've never helped me make one good decision in my life, and now you've let me go and do the worst thing... it's beyond... I can't believe this. I can't believe that fairy made me keep you. Well, we're through, you useless arthropod. [drops Jiminy on the ground and crushes him under his foot; the chirping stops suddenly] Finally! I should've done that years ago. But now... what am I supposed to do now? My whole life I've been trying to become a "real boy"—going to school, joining the bad crowd, being reformed, saving my family—stuff to improve myself. But nothing has worked. For 17 years I've been trying to fit in. I've joined every clique you can imagine, from army brats to socialites to rednecks to jocks, but they all think I'm a freak. I finally found this group of pot heads—they didn't care what I looked like. They could hardly tell that they were real, let alone that I wasn't. I stole a skateboard and started practicing so they'd think I was cool. But these wooden knees don't give me the greatest balance. [starts pacing across the stage, gesticulating with the stick] Then my vanità, my stupid, stupid pride. That's the root of the problem! That's why

I lie so much! Why couldn't you have worked on that, huh Jiminy! [suddenly stops] But I mean, c'mon, I'm a living puppet! I think I have a right to be proud of that! [pacing again, a little more calmly] Anyway, I went to the park with these guys and they started doing all these 360s and heelflips and ollies and stuff and they just kept asking me to show them what I could do. Well, I spouted off a bunch of cool sounding names but they looked at me like I was stupid so I just said that's how we do it in the Mediterranean, fratu. That's when my nose started growing. It's not fair that my nose grows for every little lie. Conversation would be nonexistent if people didn't lie. Trust me, I've listened to plenty of conversations, trying to figure out if I'm the only one who lies. Nope, I'm just the only one with any outward evidence of it. But I guess I've actually gotten used to the naso. It is a part of me after all, even if it is useless as far as noses go. Usually even my biggest lies only give me an extra four inches or so, but I must have been a little over the top today. They kept asking me about my boarding moves and I kept making up all this crazy stuff, and before I knew it my nose grew to seven inches! Even though they were high, trust me, the guys noticed that. So before they could decide if they were really seeing my sprouting schnoz, I jumped on my board and pushed off up the ramp. I had no idea what to do, but before I could decide I lost my balance halfway up the pipe and... well, this. Usually, it shrinks back to size within 15 minutes, but so far... what if it's like this forever? Should I sand down the end? Maybe I'll leave it splintered as a statement to... [freezes mid-gesture] wait, this is it! It's the end of my curse! Haha! I knew I should have gotten rid of that dumb cricket ages ago! Without my nose growing constantly I can disguise myself better. It's amazing what they can do with plastic these days. I'll get an upgrade! I'll be... [looking at the stick sadly, bewildered] a real boy.

After a pause, Pinocchio kicks the skateboard away from him and walks offstage.



## "LIBERATION"

*By: Brandy Buckholt*

Sweet mix of fresh rain  
worms and dirt.  
Wet grass clinging to shoeless feet.

A curved prism  
Stretching over the field.

Light cold wind brushing  
against half-naked shoulders  
and exposed calf muscles.

Gusts of wind  
causing water droplets  
to fall from trees onto an adust face.

The crying has ended.  
Bring on the sun.







*Art: Samantha Kryger*

## “MONOTONY”

*By: Andrew Leavitt*

I wonder sometimes if God watches me  
 And with a pleasure voyeuristic in nature, takes heed of my monotonous motions  
 Like an animal in an open cage killing grass with everyday movements along  
 common paths.  
 And then I remember I don't believe in God.  
 And curse myself for my inconsistent babbling wonderings.  
 And pray frantically for forgiveness.

## “BIRTH”

*By: Brandy Buckholt*

Gathering in the holding pen  
 Uncomfortable chairs, gaudy end tables, outdated magazines, and expired  
 snacks  
 Sitting, eating and reading is as easy as breathing underwater

An angel in white scrubs appears  
 Calling him into the room  
 Walking in and seeing a dead face and a foreigner

Alien-like legion in a bin  
 His chin, her nose, their hair color  
 Waiting nine months for this?

The bloody creature  
 The life-stealing leech  
 Sucked away at his wife  
 Took what wasn't its

Hijacked her body like a virus  
 Leaving him nothing except a demon and  
 a corpse



*Art: Samantha Kryger*

## "BUBBLEGUM"

By: Erin M. Stephens

Tiny pink treat.  
Perky little pink treat.  
All wrapped up in the  
dazzling, dizzying,  
drool-over-me  
pink.

Pick me up! Pop me in!  
Silly-sweet  
perfection  
begging please,  
please.  
Won't you pick me?

Chewed up. Spat  
Out.  
Well, what did you expect?  
Didn't think your bright pink  
pink, pink  
wrapper  
would get what it sold?

Slap  
On the concrete.  
Grimy, grinding  
tennis shoes—  
unconcerned with  
your used up, used-to-be pink;  
your sticky, flushed excess;  
your crusty, black residue.

And the pre-teen peers—  
innocent, sparkling—  
right at her reflection.  
Tries on a smile.  
Dusts on some more of that  
bubblegum pink.

And the world grins back.



Art: Hope Olson

## "ONWARD DRIFT"

By: Kallie Siscoe

on a bleak night a week after she died  
a whisper beckoned us together across town.  
frosty air plagued our lips with a clouded veil,  
but we gathered at the lakeside  
with sky lanterns creased in our grasp

we lit them one by one, each special, each  
unique with scribbles of friendship and loss  
on flimsy rice parchment, set to rest  
out over the dock and splinters beneath

in hushed whispers, we took our turn,  
but my pen stuck through when I signed with a  
scrawl  
and a tear at the base of the lantern shone  
while the spark faltered, warmed my palm

they said, it will still float, let it go  
and it lifted from my fingertips  
over silver water, trailing far below the others,  
bobbing, broken, one side split.  
into the water it fell,  
but the lights drifted aimlessly onward

## "JUST CHRISTMAS"

By: Sarah Ward

When the earth is covered in white fluff  
Before the ploughs rumblebump the purity  
Into a dark glob growing on the side of the road.

When the Eve is twinklelights  
Blinking boisterously through the frosted windows.

When the house smells of lasagna and garlic  
And trays of cookies are squeezed  
Unto every surface.

Ginger and Cinnamon  
M&M's and powdered sugar  
Crammed on a pudgy fudge square

Tummyrumble  
Grrsh

Evergreen envelops the air  
A tiny church on the piano lights up  
Whispering to me, "Merry Christmas"

The nativity is chipped  
Broken  
From all the years I thought  
The delicate figurines were Holy Barbie  
dolls

The red ball that hangs on a branch  
Reflects a giant eyeball as I lean  
Closer  
Closer  
Closer

Blink

A world of carols and cards  
With a family of Faith.

In just Christmas-  
When peace, joy and hope are  
wrapped up  
In swaddling clothes  
And twinklelights.

Art: Karah Lain



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## "SOLITUDE"

By: *Haley Hatalla*

Like an unknown, winding path  
On a deserted, secluded island  
My thoughts turn and twist like the  
Melody scratched onto the musician's page

Only in moments like these  
Can I contemplate the meaning of this life  
And of all other things unseen  
As the solitude allows my mind to wander

An eagle soaring far above the mountain pass  
A lone plant casting shadows on the desert floor  
The salty, damp air invades my nostrils as  
My toes dig into the impressionable sand

The crashing waves are deafening  
But my thoughts push through to the foreground  
I am alone, in solitude  
My thoughts drifting in and out with the tide

A tap on my shoulder snaps me back  
The waitress refills the half-empty glass  
As I journey away from my isolation  
To the frenzied pace of reality

Cars flowing through the intersections  
Like the steady beat of crashing waves



---

## "ESCAPE FROM THE ZOO"

By: *Katehyn Oprondek*

There is an elephant in the room.

The air is thick with tension.

No one knows what to do.

'How do we handle this?'

they ask themselves.

Eyes dart quickly around the room.

Feet start to shuffle back and forth.

Hands are wrung.

Lips are nibbled.

Nails are bitten.

Everyone is staring at the elephant in the room,  
its large gray head tossing to and fro.

Its tail swinging round and round.

Its ears flapping like a bird's wings  
and blowing papers onto the floor.

The noise bursting from its trunk

sounding like a trumpet

and shaking the whole room.

---

## "LONDON BRIDGE"

*By: TJ Martinson*

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I looked onward, past the limestone steps that split his chin when he was six. Short of forgiving them, I parked my car at the foot of them and stared at them. Into them. Long enough to blur the edges into a gray mess where edges and corners met flat-paved horizons. Others may have forgotten his split-chin if anyone had ever remembered to begin with, if anyone had even known, but I had not forgotten the way it hung on his jaw like a peach. I wanted to make this known, if at least to the steps. A group of pigeons paraded the steps and crooned into the haze of idling cars.

There was no school bell at the top of the parabolic front doors anymore which had been mounted like a shouting gargoyle. It had been there the day he tumbled from the stairs like an eroded stone. He had told me that now there were digital clocks in each classroom, all synced to the others, and when a class or the school day was over, it would chime a gentle tune. I had asked him what tune it was and he said, "I think London Bridge." "London Bridge what?" "London Bridge is falling down." I imagined this machine, a pencil in my hand, forty years from off my back, my shoes untied, and the gratitude that I knew everything I had always wished I could tell myself in retrospect. A bridge falling in my imagination, collapsing in the center, the rubble falling inward like two wicks lit by a single match.

I went to the same school he goes to. I remember little of its hallways. I remember little of the faces I'd go to high school with, where their faces changed indefinitely. The sharpening of the pencil is one of the few consistent, near-cinematic memories of that school that I have. I remember where the pencil sharpener was in each classroom I was in and I remember which ones were the best, and which ones would catch your pencil in its dendrites—mercilessly threshing its yellow coat. I remember the satisfaction of a fine, microscopic point of a pencil, the glistening stain of scintillating lead on the palm after lifting a hand from the page. The smell of it. She went to the school, also. I have told him that she was in my class when I was in his grade. "Were you friends?" "We knew each other." "So you were friends?" I know a lot of people, and I'd like to think there are some people who still know me. There is no point in friends if your time is spent best with one person who knows you well, well enough to turn on the television and sit quietly. Someone who understands the quiet to be something loud. Entirely too loud at times.

Other cars began to appear like scarabs from the skeletal streets and alleys, parking as near to the steps as they could. I rested my head against the window and mindlessly fanned myself with a scrap of paper, folded in two. It was a brochure that had been placed under my windshield like a burden, a dying flower. The brochure was for a pawn shop, taking gold and giving cash—few questions asked. "Quick, easy, and profitable," was how the brochure described

this process. A strange, reversed alchemy was how I thought of it. Gold into paper. And I had kept it—this brochure. I had asked him what he thought of me getting rid of the ring and that it would become necessary, and he said, "I don't care." "You don't care? I would think you would care." "It isn't for me to care about." And that ended the conversation. An admission of no involvement with someone who may as well have been the tooth fairy, come to kiss his forehead in the night—to question me in the morning if it had ever happened at all.

But of course he cares, I thought, turning the ring on my finger like screw—either to loosen or tighten, I didn't bother to think. He cares, but it doesn't bother me. It's a memento of something that I am unsure ever existed. But he should care. I had gone this far thinking that he would be born with some innate knowledge of his mother that someone outside of such a primordial connection could never know. And that the connection may wane throughout his life, but by then he would be old enough to know—to read her letters, to see her pictures and see the slanted smile on her face. The smile that rests like indecisive punctuation. He would be able to know what I know and to feel what I feel. When he was a boy, I would tuck the cartoon bed sheets under the small of his back. A CD player on repeat, nursery rhymes he'd memorized and already parodied. He lay and I brushed his hair because I was still amazed that his hair had been hers in the same way he knew of her. "Dad, tell me a story where Mom is the person." "What sort of story do you want it to be?" "A real one." I should have known then that she was just a name he heard spoken by me when I didn't know he stood behind me. Just a blank name spoken into a telephone receiver when I hold a newspaper over my face—not for shame but for protection of being seen the same way I see the steps that lead to his school. I looked in the rearview to check my eyes for any hint of moisture beyond the thin layer that had become more or less permanent. A recent phenomenon. A woman in an SUV was parked behind me, doing her makeup in her own rearview. I watched her with a boyish excitement rising that I was not seen, looking into a private act. Hardly voyeurism, more of an appreciation for things that I had lost and since missed without knowing it. Like the way a woman applies her makeup, lowering her jaw for her cheeks to tighten like stretching canvases. The makeup applied roughly and then gently. The bridge of the nose pointed downwards, the pupils rolling back when the thin line of mascara outlines the eyes. How she stares into the mirror upon completion, turning her face for the shadows to catch, to bring a light to the imperfections that wait. I've told him she was beautiful, but he doesn't know what beauty is without her as a point of reference. The photographs, the two-dimensional representations, standing next to a picnic table with half her face shrouded



by the gaunt shadow of overhead foliage. “Why were you at the park?” “We went on a picnic?” “You went on a picnic?” To which he can only think, yes, some time ago in a moment that isn’t now. And it seems that much of his replies, as of late, have been confined to his thoughts. They ricochet madly, reforming and twisting from sorrow to anger. Yes, some time ago in a moment that isn’t now.

The doors opened, and a seemingly disembodied leather shoe flirted with the afternoon light before fully stepping from the school. I whistled the tune that the school children had just heard to mark the end of another day of constraint, the celebratory song. They came out from the door and held their hands over their brows. Their cheeks swelled as their eyes squinted into straight lines, widening their panoramic sight of the parade of cars. The throng punched shoulders, passed hugs, tied shoes, and shouted wildly into the air with the breath of a creature fresh from captivity. All but the one who carried his book-bag by one strap over his left shoulder, his face low and his head sunken into his shoulders. I always need to remind myself, that one is mine. That is of me. That is of me and of someone else. And I thought it with wonderment, and I’m told that one day I will think it with anger or disapproval. I can’t imagine those words ever being laced with spite or frustration. That is of me. He nodded to a friend as he walked down the limestone stairs, triumphantly and with ease—he is a conqueror. He opened the car door. “Hey.” “Hey.” “Can you turn the air on?” I looked in the rearview mirror as I pulled from the sidewalk. The woman ran a thin finger under her lip, straightening the line of lipstick, covering her bottom row of teeth, her chin stuck outward. Her sunglasses shone on her head like a halo with the sun it reflected. I explained to him that the air condition did not work.

He laid his book-bag on his lap and ruffled through its contents. Papers—folded, ruffled, twisted beyond recognition—peered out from the mouth of the bag for a breath of air. He muttered to himself in quick, low patterns of speech that I could not discern. It had become a recent habit. Nothing to pay much mind to as of yet. I also used to mutter to myself at his age. We drove without a word, at least not an audible one. I pulled into a spot along the apartment building, the first tier of the fire escape directly above our heads as we stepped out. The street was calm, but would soon be filled with the syncopated rhythms of the bouncing of basketballs, the aridity and aromatic omniscience of smoke from thin cigars and cigarettes, wafting from porch stoops. He walked a step ahead, possibly still muttering quick and low to himself. Speaking to himself. What does he have to say to himself that he must say it quick and low? He pointed to a trashcan outside of the apartment building’s entrance.

“Someone threw away a piece of cake.” “Looks like it.” “I wonder why?” He had a key on a bracelet around his wrist, one that he used to open the door. That is of me. That is of me which just held the door open for me. I used to hold the door for his mother. I used to mutter to myself. I chastise needless waste. I walk with my head sunk into my shoulders.

He turned the television on and put his feet, clad in gray socks, on the coffee table. I sat next to him after opening a window. Someone was shouting several windows down, muted behind a pane of glass. A percussive sound, one that neither of us acknowledged, though I saw his toes stiffen and curl when each voice would vie for the highest volume, back-and-forth. He muttered, quick and low, to himself, turning his hands around each other like he was kneading dough. I sighed and pulled the ring from my finger, hooking it on a fingertip like a crown. I told him I had to do it. “That’s fine. It doesn’t bother me.” “It really doesn’t?” “It doesn’t matter to me.” And I knew that it didn’t. Because it didn’t to me either.

*Art: Samantha Kryger*



## "SKULL IN THE SOIL"

*By: Tyler DeWees*

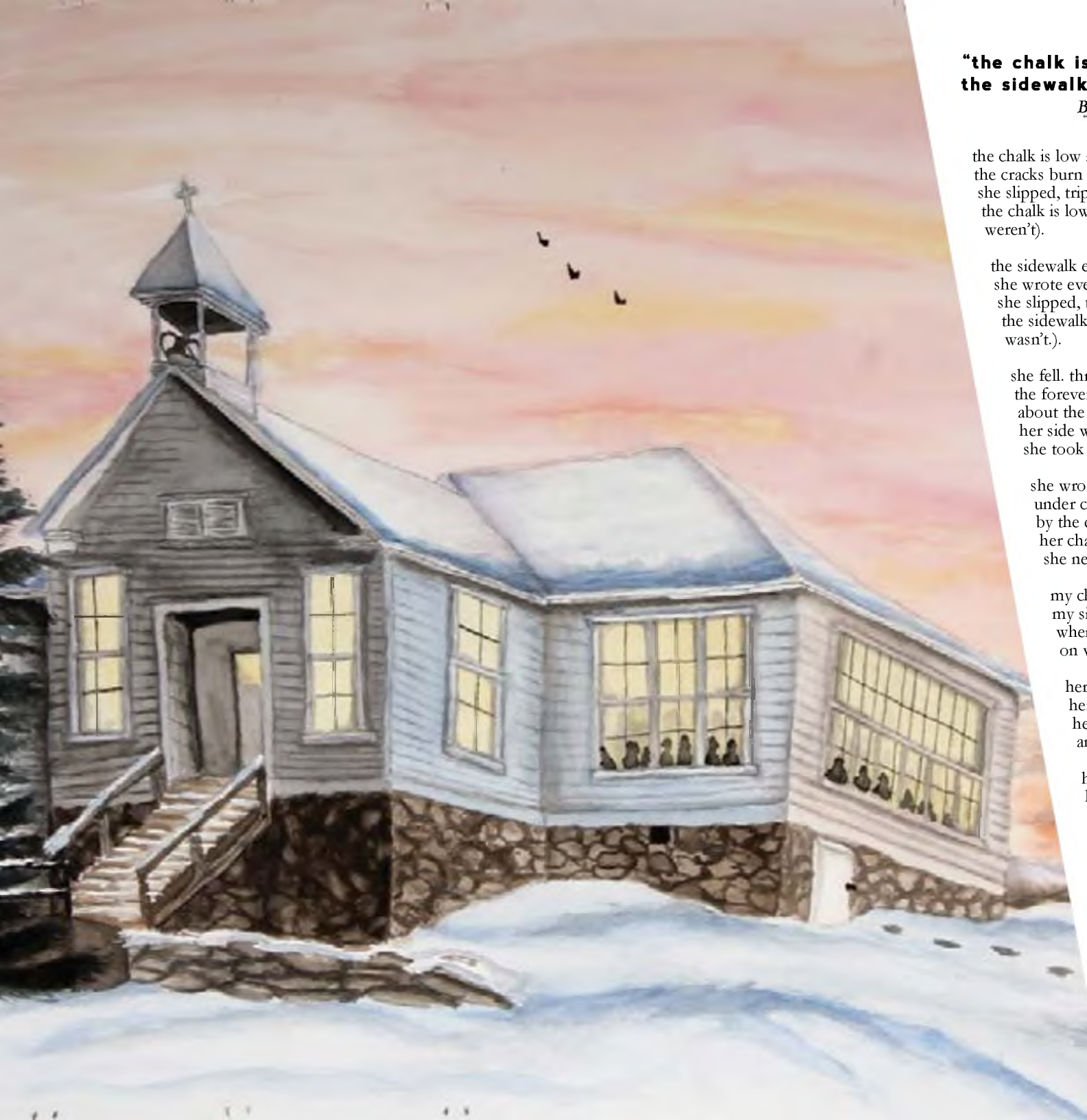
On the last day of every man's life, he becomes nothing more than a skull in the soil.  
The past is erased and time takes away any good deed that once made him loyal.  
I can't help but wonder where I'll be when I die.  
Can I exchange my cold concrete tomb for a pink flower in bloom,  
Or will I be another soul in the sky?

On the first day of every man's life, he cries as his eyes adjust to a world of new light.  
God brought him here and God alone knows the obstacles he'll fight.  
I can't help but wonder how I looked when I was born.  
Was I crying in fear or was I expressing joy with my tears?  
Did I know the plans ahead?

In a world shut out from the light, I am determined to take a higher flight.  
I will smile through the pain and brush away the shame.  
I know my life has meaning, I know my life has purpose.  
Can I exchange my cold concrete tomb for a pink flower in bloom,  
Or will I be another soul in the sky?







**"the chalk is low and  
the sidewalk ends"**

*By: Megan Mattila*

the chalk is low and the sidewalk ends (I wish it did).  
the cracks burn and my mother cries (I wish she wouldn't).  
she slipped, tripped, never told (I wish she would have).  
the chalk is low but my words are endless (I wish they  
weren't).

the sidewalk ends and the chalk is low (I wish it wasn't).  
she wrote everything but (I wish she hadn't).  
she slipped, tripped, spoke once (I wish she had.)  
the sidewalk ends but my journey is forever (I wish it  
wasn't).

she fell. through the cracks, tripping, neon shoes flying,  
the forever teenage girl somehow silent  
about the most important things...  
her side walk was unending,  
she took a short cut.

she wrote. on paper in notebooks, illicit tweets  
under cover of night, her beautiful face illuminated  
by the demons that stalked her.  
her chalk was overflowing,  
she never used it in front of us.

my chalk is low now, my head weary.  
my sidewalk seems to end at dawn,  
when I argue with myself  
on when to get up.

her chalk was overflowing, the boards blank.  
her sidewalk was never ending,  
her shoes brand-new  
and blindingly neon.

her sidewalk ended. the tree swung sweetly.  
her chalk was low. she kept it all to herself.

my sidewalk bends. I can't see the end.  
my chalk is broken. I use it in bits and  
pieces.

(there was no writing on the wall,  
merely a note in her pocket.)  
(there was no sidewalk,  
only a fake tile floor.)

(my writing is in pen and ink,  
and my teachers use computers.)  
(the sidewalks are wet,  
and I walk on the grass.)

*Art: Bethany Meyer*



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## "VISIT TO A SIDE STREET"

By: *Colin Mahnke*

What is this? Old syringes,  
Dirty Playboys,  
Cigarette butts,  
Urine in the street-

Is this the way it's always been?  
I somehow remember  
More sun;  
Less gloomy shade.

I don't recall any garbage then-  
Just clear, bright sky.  
Clean air.  
And joy. My joy.

No more am I the center of  
The Universe, or me.  
Behind brick walls  
I changed.







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## **"CONFORMING"**

*By: Gabi Metzger*

Practicing to fit the part.  
I've altered lines  
and suppressed myself  
to become the perfect character.  
Do you approve of me now?

Performing my best. I bow,  
anticipating a roar of applause.  
The curtain closes  
leaving the crowd unimpressed.  
Do you approve of me now?

Now that I have constricted myself  
into your tiny box of grand expectations.  
Do you approve of me now?

Now that I've lost so much of myself.  
Do you approve of me?



## "HOME"

*By: Kallie Siscoe*

morning sky above and sea salt below  
a crisp breath brings mingled perfume  
of cedar planks and the brisk bite of  
budding algae water tinged amber  
to welcome a cloud-scattered sun

the choppy catch sways a slim boat  
weathered against odds worn by an age  
which carves a soft trace through brisk wake  
and the lonely chilled silence  
is broken by gull cry for more, more

shaded with red remnants of fish scales  
and brine, stiff with overuse, a net  
stretched between both hands, drawn  
to one side where it rests in calloused fists  
until compelled once again to swallow the sea

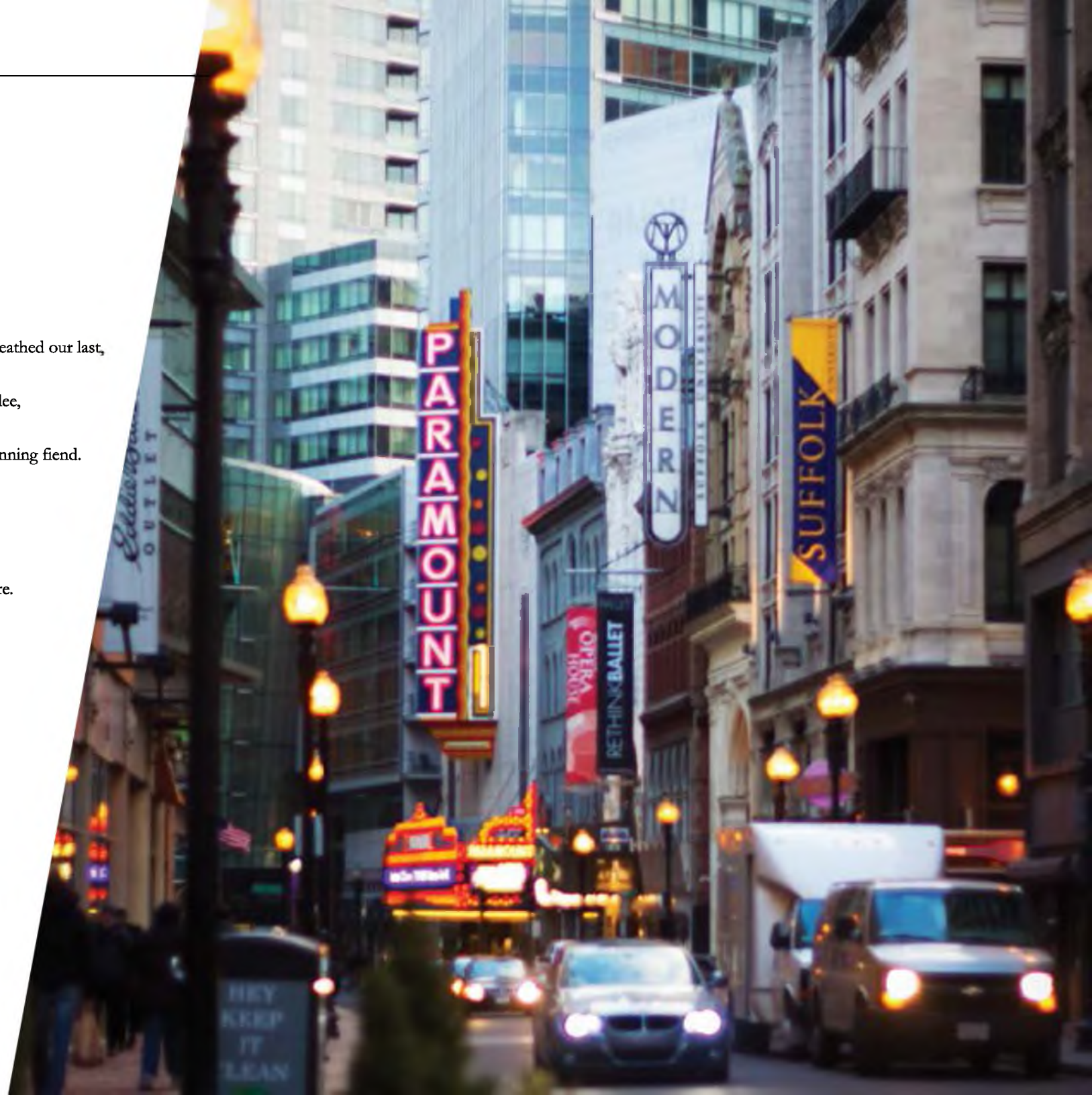
*Art: Karah Lain*



## "FATE'S TRAP"

By: Kasey Main

O Fate,  
The entangling web that holds us all,  
Forever bound to circumstance,  
Whether deserved or unjustified,  
We weep.  
In the blackness of our woven caskets,  
We wait.  
Until our blood is drained and we've breathed our last,  
Shall we be free.  
However, some brave souls will try to flee,  
Slipping through the spider's grasp,  
Unaware they've been loosened by a cunning fiend.  
Overjoyed to be free at last,  
They begin to run very fast,  
How bitter Fate can be.  
When Freedom lies behind the door,  
Awaits the Elderly Spider ready for more.





**"WATCHING MY GRANDMOTHER  
BECOME A CHILD"**

*By: Mary Hall*

At times, a flash—a glimpse  
Amidst gnarled hands  
Gnarled toes  
Gnarled  
Thoughts

The woman who once ran a corporation  
Kept her nails done  
Recognized two clashing plaids

The glimpse, it comes  
In between  
Weeks in which I study  
Her unfeigned enjoyment of visitors  
The tactless retelling of what she can't  
understand  
Excitement to share what I already know  
The hysteria when left alone.

Wit has been abducted  
The ransom note: stuttering  
Erasing generosity  
But leaving behind criticism  
At times, I find myself  
Wishing her to age into childhood  
So that she can exchange anxiety  
For joy.

*Art: Samantha Kryger*









