



LOOSE LEAF

PITTSFIELD MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL
ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE



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Mr. Mitchell and Mrs. Wellington would like to thank those who put energy and time into the magazine this year:

Special thanks to Norm Tuttle for printing these beautiful books.



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"Untitled"

Samantha Squires (Grade 7)



"Untitled"

Bree Roy (Grade 8

The River That Lives Below

Ben Marcotte

Grade 7

The small river zigzagging below
Who's home to many but yields to none
Surrounded by the gentle slopes
Who are like giants
To the calm, peaceful river below
The river below may be small in size
But big in heart as it flows through
The monstrous mountains above



.So It Can Enjoy Living

Emily Donagin

Grade 10

"See those flowers?" I turn my face away from Isaiah, "When the water runs out, they'll die right along with me."

Lying in the hospital bed, I push away the tears tugging at the corners of my eyes. It was only yesterday that I had been playing in the waves at the beach. Today, here I was, waiting to die. At two in the morning I had awoken, unable to move. At 5 AM, the doctor announced to my parents that I would die of a terminal illness attacking my nervous and muscular system. I had at most a week to live, slowly becoming paralyzed a little more each day. I had at most a week to live.

I had known Isaiah since we both were five years old. He had moved into the house next to us, constantly teased by everyone for his incurable speech impediment. It was a month later when I first spoke to him after a particularly bad day of teasing. When I asked him what was wrong however, he told me he was sad because his flower was dying. I had told him, "Everything dies, but always let it have water so that it can enjoy living."

Now, I lay in the bed with him by my side, staring at the pale orange tulips sitting by my bed. Now, I could see that my first grade philosophy contained no truth. No living thing could enjoy life if it dreaded dying every moment. Slowly, with a great struggle, I crane my neck to peer over at Isaiah. The tears glistening in his eyes could only be seen through the thick lens' of the wire glasses he wore. Shaking his head, I watched as his blond curls were jostled about on his forehead, "Tina, you're NOT going to die!"

"Yes I am, the doctor said so."

Isaiah shakes his head again. I try to smile. Isaiah, if anyone could come up with a cure for whatever I had, it would be him. Receiving high honors every year during freshmen, sophomore, and junior years and acing every test, Isaiah was by far the smartest kid in the school. He was a sharp contrast to me, the girl who has skipped school, was forced to stay after every single day, and was suspended the maximum number of times the school would allow. Still, he had stayed by me. Almost every night

he would come over for lengthy tutoring sessions, bringing my favorite gummy bears to motivate me; and whenever I was suspended he would rebuke me harshly. Now, he would leave like the rest. Georgia, my best friend since 2nd grade had already left, she had told me that she couldn't bear to see me like this. Sure enough, with an exasperated sigh, Isaiah spun on his heel and stormed out of the room, slamming the door behind him. I was left to die, alone, without even one of my friends surrounding me.

I was wrong, at 11 AM the next morning, Isaiah burst into my room, startling my dad out of his chair. Throughout the next week, he visited before and after school every day, equipped with numerous gadgets and different pastimes. He would read to me, play(or try to play) his guitar, watch movies with me, and even bring in schoolwork that I had missed. He was my only friend during that week of waiting for death to come. My other friends called, but none of them dared to set foot in that stark white hospital room. That Saturday, my final breath never came. The funny thing was, those flowers didn't die, they didn't even begin to wilt. The water continued to stay at the same level as well.

Week two was even worse as I permanently lost all feeling and movement in my arms. Isaiah's visits grew even more lengthy and entertaining. Since I was unable to move, he took responsibility of painting my nails and doing my hair. Through tutorials on YouTube, he learned to French braid better than I ever could have. Isaiah was gracious enough to provide me with audio books to pass the time while he was at school. Still, throughout that week, the flowers still didn't wilt. The water never went down, not one inch.

During week three, I lost complete feeling and movement from my shoulders down. I began to find it difficult to move my neck and control how I moved my mouth. It hurt to breath, my diaphragm muscles were failing, as were the muscles in my heart. Again, the doctor told me that this was my last week to live and that he was amazed that I had lived this long. Isaiah kept coming every day, both morning and night. The flowers didn't die or wilt. Neither did the water subside.

The fourth week was my last, I could feel it. However, I continued to try and prove them wrong. Those flowers hadn't died yet, so neither could I. Isaiah continued to come, even when I couldn't move my mouth anymore to talk to him. None of my muscles to move my limbs or facial features worked

anymore, except for my ability to move my eyebrows up and down. Isaiah read my favorite books to me, skipping more school than I ever dared in a month. He brushed my hair, watched movies with me, and read my mother's Bible to me.

However, the bliss of our friendship couldn't last forever, I was dying. It was on Friday night that I noticed that the flowers had begun to wilt, the edges of their pale orange petals beginning to turn brown. They were dying along with me. My head was positioned to stare at them when I heard the door slide open as familiar footsteps neared, Isaiah's gentle, soft hands slowly turned my head to face him. Inside, I smile as his face comes into view.

“Tina, you're getting tired of living, huh?”

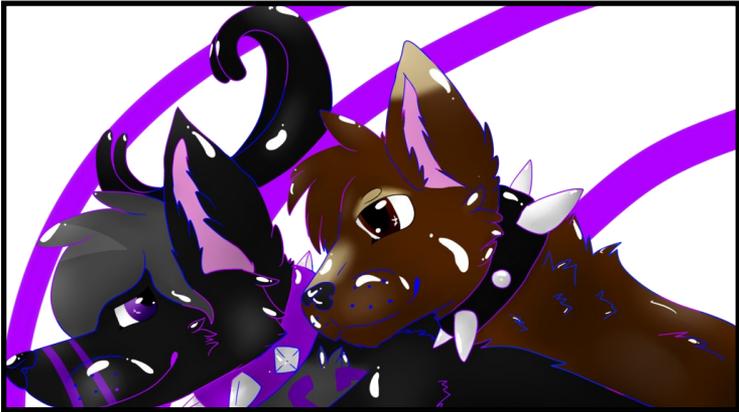
I can't speak or nod. However, my tears tell the tale. Wiping away my tears with his finger, Isaiah smiles softly.

“I couldn't let you die before I had made up for that one month that I didn't speak to you when I first moved here.”

More tears filled my eyes and rolled down my cheeks. Isaiah wipes them away again, leaving his own tears unattended, glistening on his cheeks like twinkling diamonds.

“Everyday-” He sucks in a deep breath and releases a long sigh in an attempt to stifle the sobs that threaten to overtake his body, “everyday I filled up the water for the flowers and every other day I replaced them so that you wouldn't give up.”

I notice that Isaiah tightly clutched my right hand in his own. I hadn't felt it. Throughout my freshman, sophomore, and junior years in high school Isaiah had stuck by me as my heart had been broken by countless boyfriends. The entire time I had simply been searching for security and worth. Little had I known that, through all of my 'boyfriends', the best friend I would ever have was standing right beside me. I watched as Isaiah withdrew the flowers from the vase and approached the side of the bed. With painstaking care, he folded the flowers in my hands. The tears fell from his eyes faster than he could brush them away as he stared deep into my eyes. In a silent voice, made almost incoherent by the sobs racking his body, he whispered, “Long ago, a little girl told me that everything dies, but you should always give it water so that it can enjoy living.”



"3 Sketches"

Justine Melanaphy Grade 7

The Memory

By: Stephanie Sullivan

I walk up to the bathroom sink to clean out the cuts on my face. I look into the mirror and see my brown, long, thick hair, as I look at my perfect eye-liner I notice my deep blue eyes. I have narrow face and I am short and skinny.

My guardian, James, is dead. He wasn't a parent or family member, he was a person that my family/mom and dad sent to look after me. He taught me how to fight, so I could protect myself. But that didn't end so well because now my family and James are dead. They died because of a tragic fire and also because of bad people.

As I put on a bandaid I remember, it feels like it happened a couple hours ago, but it was yesterday, when my family was destroyed. I was trying to save my parents and James, but I failed in the process.

It was a dark, windy, cold, and terrifying night. I wasn't thinking clearly because of what had happened before I started walking. I went on a walk. My mind was distracted because I couldn't think about anything else than how angry I was. He told me now! Why didn't James tell me before, when it all started.

One day I was walking home from school with my friends. We were all laughing, talking, and making jokes, all of us were being ourselves. My friends were happy, and I was happy as well. Well, I was happy until I got home and found out the worst news.

As soon as I walked through my white, thick, long, front door that leads me into my house, and I could feel the tension as I was walking. As I shut the door behind me, I looked forward and I saw him.

He was sitting at the table that is in the middle of the kitchen. He had his hands on his head and he was staring at some electronic devices on the table with frustration and anger, and he couldn't take his eyes off of them.

I took one step forward and he raised his head and looked at me. There was so much rage and hate in his eyes, and I didn't even know what was wrong. I was happy, but then I came home and now my mind is full of fear. I

didn't know my feelings could change so fast from happiness to fear and worry. Of course I didn't know what I was scared and worried about yet, but his rage and frustration makes a tingle go down my back and I find that I am scared and worried.

I need to know what's wrong, I can't just stand here and not ask him what's wrong, I mean clearly he is angry, frustrated, and upset. But inside my mind I also think, what if I don't want to know what's wrong, what if the problem kills me inside and out? After I had a fight with my mind on what to do, I decided to ask him what was wrong.

"What's wrong James?" I asked.

"They took them." James replied immediately.

"Who is they and who is them?" I asked, with so much question in my voice because I didn't know what he was talking about.

And he looked so full of rage, I have never seen him this mad, he never gets this angry. He usually solves problems calmly, but right now he's not calm.

"They are the bad guys, and them are your parents, and they took them! And I can't track them, there is no signal!" He shouted.

"Ok, you don't have to yell at me, I'm not the bad guys, and what do you mean they took them?" I said and asked as nice as I could, I got a little upset because he yelled at me, but also because he just told my parents were taken from bad guys.

"Sorry. I'm just panicking, I didn't mean to yell at you. I mean the bad guys kidnapped your parents, and I knew that they were after them, but your dad told me not to worry, and make sure you are safe, but then it ended up happening anyway." He said as he was trying to keep himself together as much as possible. But I can hear the panic in his voice, so I start to feel panic too. James never is panicky, that means this is really bad.

I can't believe this is happening, the last time I saw my parents I was six years old. I couldn't think at that moment, in fact in that moment I was ready to do anything to save my parents. I wanted to see them again. And right now they are captured by bad people! I turned around and walked out the door, without even thinking about it.

"Sawterria, wait!" James shouted.

"No. I'm going for a walk!" I shouted back as I slammed the door.

I went to my backyard and started walking through the woods that was at the very end of my backyard, after a few hours I came across a road.

I wasn't sure which way to go at first, but my mind finally set on going left. Usually if I ran across a road like this I would choose right because it's my dominate side, but today I feel like doing things differently, because of everything going on.

My parents were trapped, and James couldn't find them, what am I going to do. I can't lose my parents, I don't know them very well, but they are still my parents.

My thoughts break from a loud bang sound that came from a building. I am very far from home, and there is no other building out here, besides the one that is making that loud noise.

It's night time now, who would be up making that loud of noise. Someone probably got hurt, and that isn't even a house, it's an old closed down restaurant, why would someone be there?

I start to walk to the restaurant, every step I take makes my suspicion worse. As I finally reach the door to the restaurant, I just stand there for a minute. I look at the old door. It's very old, there isn't one spot on the door without a crack, the wood is starting to rot, and the bolts on the door are covered in rust.

This is a very creepy place to be in, but it's better than home. I start to turn the cold, rusty door knob, and it sends chills up my spine. All the lights are on, who's here?

I start to open the door, and it makes a big crack sound. I start to fully open the door, and suddenly someone grabs me by my wrist, and all I see is black.

Once I wake, I open my eyes and get an instant headache. I look down to see that my wrists and legs tied to a chair.

I'm in a different room than I was in when I first walked into this creepy building. I think I'm in the basement of the restaurant because of the grey cement walls that surround me. There are shelves all around the room, except for in the middle of the room.

Suddenly, I hear someone scream in agony. It is a sound of a guy voice, and I look to see where the sound came from, and I see a door. The wood is dark and old, just like the one that leads you into the restaurant. There are cracks running up and down the entire door, and it has rusty bolts as well.

Out of nowhere I remember that I have a pocket knife in my boot, now I just have to get it. I look down again and realize my stomach isn't covered in rope too, I might be able to get the knife if I try hard enough.

I start to lean down and try to use my teeth to get the knife out of my boot. I start to grab it by the edge, and I almost get it, but it falls on the floor. Really! How am I supposed to get it now?!

An idea pops into my head and I start to move the chair with my feet. I get as close to the knife as I can, and I use my foot to bring it closer to me.

I stand up to grab the knife and I fall sideways onto the ground. When I fell in made a really loud noise. I grab the knife in my hand and try to get the ropes off as fast as I can, worried that whoever tied me to this chair heard the pound noise.

I get untied and the door starts to open, but stops and shuts again. I guessed that someone was going to come out, so I picked up the chair, and made it look like the ropes were still around my wrists and feet, and closed my eyes.

A few minutes later I hear a door open and then close, and then another door opened and closed. I decided to open one eye, and I saw no one there, so I got out of the chair and started to walk towards the door.

What is behind it? There must be a person that is being tortured or something. I put my hand on the door knob, and turn it a little.

And suddenly I hear two voices scream, "Leave us alone, haven't you done enough!" It's the sound of a guy and girl voice being put together.

I open the door, and there are two people standing there tied up like I

was, except, worse. They have ropes around their stomachs, wrists, and legs. When I entered the room their mouths fell into the shape of an o.

Just then, reality hits me, it's my parents. I ran over and whispered, "It's ok. I will help you," and despite my father's protests to save myself, I started to untie the ropes around his stomach.

Then, something more like someone grabs me by my hair and pulls me out of the room. I cry out in pain when someone throws me on the ground. There is man in front of me and he looks infuriated.

"Who are you?!" He asks well screaming at me. But I don't answer, I just get up and stand there. This guy took my parents and he is screaming at me?!

He starts to yell again, "I asked you a question!" But I still don't answer, I just grab him by the wrist and swing him around, he cries out when he makes contact with the wall, and he falls with his eyes closed.

Using that as my escape route, I run back to the room and start to untie my parents.

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Once my parents are fully untied they start to stand up, but they both fall back into the chairs they were sitting in.

"Can you guys walk?" I ask. "Not without support," my dad replies.

Without thinking I grab one of my dad's arms and put it around me, and then I start heading towards the door in a slow pace, being careful to not hurt my parents.

As soon as I open the door, I see the person that I knocked out standing in front of us, except there is four more people standing with him, they are all guys, and now there is five of them.

"Where do you think you're going?" Asks the guy I knocked out. And suddenly, pipe breaks, and he turns his attention to somewhere else.

I stand on my toes to look for over all the people standing in front of me, and I see James, holding a bluish-grey pipe. How did he find us? That doesn't matter right now, I'm just glad that he's here.

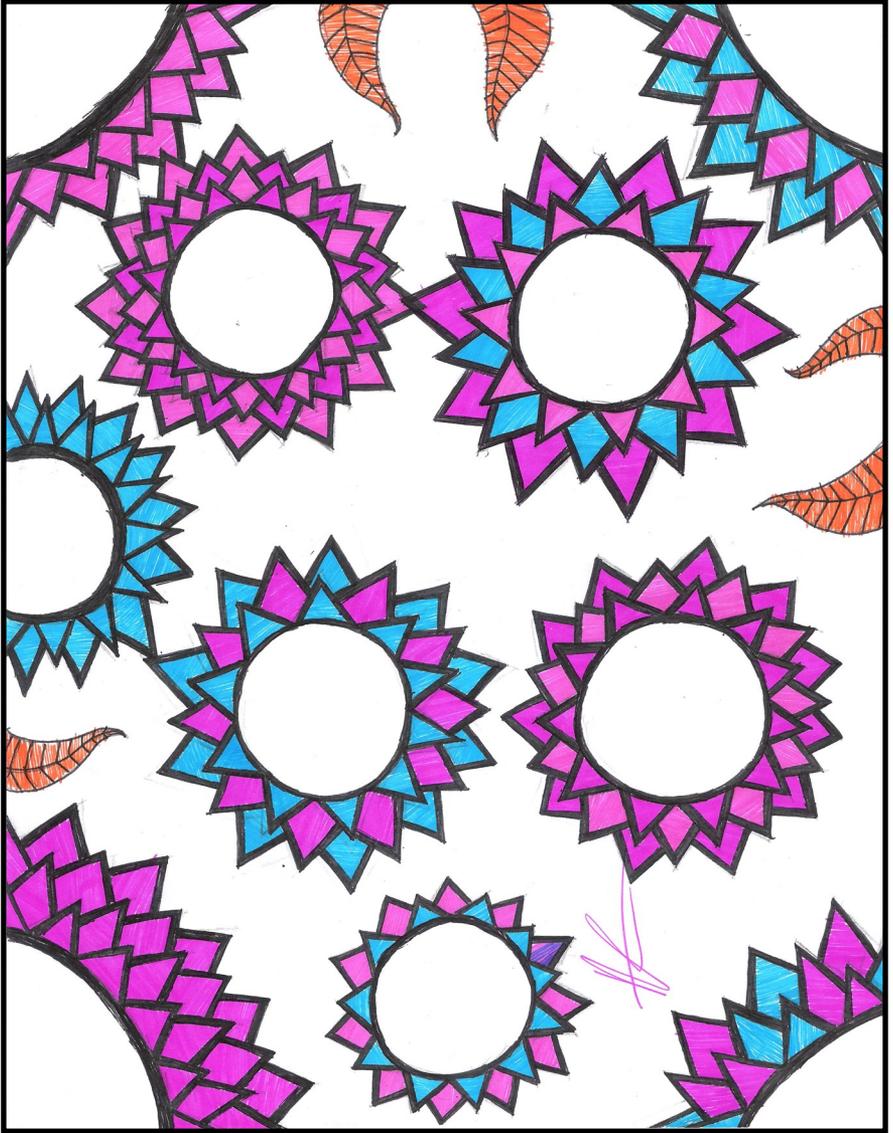
To of the people that were standing in front of me run over to James and

started fighting him. Then, once James defeats one of them another person ran over to him.

I take the time I was given and I hit the guy I hurt before in the side. He falls on top of another person, and now my way is cleared. I grab both of my parent's arms and I start to walk up the stairs.

As soon as I got to the top of the stairs, my parents are ripped from my arms, and I am dragged across the room. Someone throws me out of the restaurant, and locks the door. I try to find a way in, but I can't find any other places to get in.

It been 30 minutes and I still haven't found a way in. Suddenly, the whole building explodes, and I fly across the road. I hit the ground and I can feel all the cuts on my face I look and see a car driving, down the road. More like speeding.



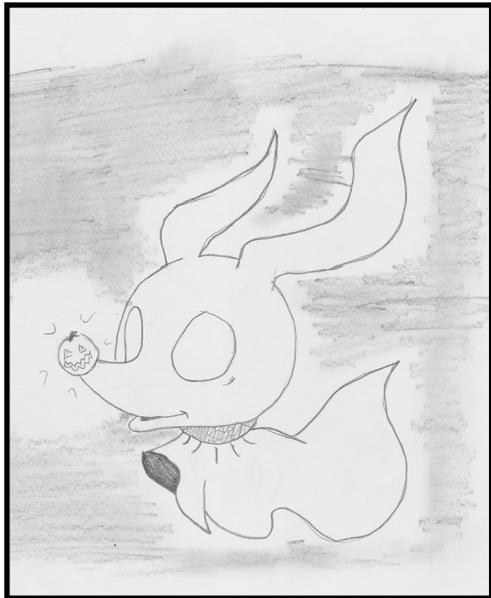
"Untitled

Amber Ricci (Grade 10)



"ZERO"

Romeo Owen (Grade 10)



"ZERO"

Corrine Lansdown (Grade 7)

Stop hating yourself
for everything you aren't and;
start loving yourself
for everything you already are.

“Beauty isn't about having a pretty face;
It's about having a pretty mind, a pretty heart,
and a pretty soul”

Start by doing what's necessary;
Then do what's possible; and
Suddenly you're doing the impossible.

There is no elevator to success
I guess you will just have to
Take the stairs

If you are always trying to be normal
You will never know
How amazing you can really be
I am strong (because I know my weaknesses)
I am beautiful (because I am aware of my flaws)
I am fearless(because I learned to
recognize illusions, from reality)
I am wise(because I learn from my mistakes)
I am a friend (because I know how it feels to be alone)

BE INSPIRED

Corrine Lansdown (Grade 7)

Still Alive

By: Emma Smith

Edited by: Emily Dunagin

Once, I ran at the sight of blood. I was only twelve when they invaded. Now, sixteen, I look upon the world differently. Something purely good cannot contain any particle of evil in its entire being. I find myself hating the world, and hating them- how can I not? All the memories of what I was taught of God's provision, His mercy and protection; they all seemed well and good when I was safe at home, but what now? With every passing moment, more life is sucked from my corpse-like body. I wish they would leave, I wish that they would cease torturing us. Every day they take two of us away. I wonder how long it will be until they take me, I wonder what they will do to me.

"Ahali, are you not well? It's past waking!" A familiar voice yells. It was Imah; Ahali had obviously overslept and was late for the morning routine of chores-again. Ahali groaned to herself, being careful not to let her mother hear.

"I hate waking to do chores so early in the *boker*." Nestled under her warm covers, she wanted nothing but to stay in bed, but Imah was getting more impatient by the second and there was positively no time to waste. "*Echad, shtaim, shalosh!*" Ahali counted before she whipped the quilts off of her body and sprang from the soft mattress. Feeling rushed and very flustered, Ahali quickly undid the curlers in her shoulder length dark hair and tied back her sides with a blue ribbon; she then threw on her grey skirt and white blouse, along with her stockings. Finishing her primping, she then raced to the table where breakfast had recently been placed and was encircled by the remainder of her family. "*Boker Tov,*" Ahali quietly remarked as she slipped into her place at the table.

"*Boker Or,*"

Abba returned the salutation as he regarded her sternly. "You missed your chores this morning, as well as prayers," He remarked, "And as I recall, this was not the first time."

Ahali's older brother, Rafael looked at her with amusement; how glad he was that he wasn't in trouble this time. Ahali returned his look with a brief, cold stare before glancing back at her father.

"Hurry children," Imah said, seating herself at the already-full table, "Ahali, you are already behind in your chores. Boys, you still need to dress!" The boys looked down at themselves and sighed; they despised hurrying to dress. Why couldn't individuals go about life dressed like this? It certainly was more comfortable, and to them, a practical choice of attire!

Finishing quickly, Ahali rose before the others and rushed out of their cramped apartment into the store room where she retrieved a stiff broom and a rag. Dragging the broom across the rough wooden boards, she began to quietly sing her favorite tune:

"Durme, durme querido hijico.

Durme, durme sin ansia ni dolor.

Cierra tus luzyos ojitos,

Durme, durme con sabor.

Cierra tus luzyos ojitos,

Durme, durme con sabor."

The song had been sung over her brothers and she when they were infants. Ever since then, Ahali had insisted that Abba sing it for her. Her father had relented; there seemed to be nothing he wouldn't do for his daughter.

The sweeping of the entire storeroom took her only a brief amount of time; she then hurried to sweep the storefront and dust all the supplies on display in the window. This, unlike the store room, took her a fair amount of time. Her efforts resulted in a dirty rag, a sparkling store, and a very exhausted young girl. Ahali collapsed in a nearby chair and shifted her dark eyes to the window. The sun was just rising over the horizon.

"It's all so beautiful," she said to herself, "the purple, pinkish, yellow glow that seems to overtake the world at the sun's waking-the sky doesn't do that when

I get up.”

Shifting her eyes from the sky, she turned her gaze downward and across the street to the shop windows, looking very similar to her family's very own music shop. But instead of windows filled with displayed harmonicas, guitars, and the traditional Jewish instruments, there were colorful fruits and vegetables, dresses, skirts and shoes, clocks and watches. There was anything that you could have ever needed or wanted, lined up and down the main street. Among all of this, she also saw the abandoned shops, the scattered broken and boarded windows, and the silent terror which still hung about those dead buildings that served as a reminder of the now severed families. She wondered often when their last day was.

Would today be the last day that I will ever be able to show my face?

As she sat looking out upon the street, to her horror, a truck slowly rolled up against the curb. Just as death creeps, slowly and mercilessly, determined to destroy life. It came to a jolting stop in front of their small music shop- then came the sound, the sound that Ahali had shrank from since the Nazis began taking them away; this time, it made her freeze. A commanding knock sounded on the storefront. When no answer came, a sharp crack sounded as the butt of a gun forced it open. She sat frozen in the chair, legs and arms paralyzed, her tongue glued to the roof of her mouth, prohibiting even the slightest scream. All the plans she had thought of, all the ways she had thought she could best handle this moment escaped her; her mind went blank and her body rigid at the look from the commanding officer.

I felt my torso shoot upwards into the sitting position, my body covered in a cold sweat. Upon my waking, I was suddenly aware of the stench of the cramped room; the smell of humans without soap or water, without the hope of any proper amenities or medications-the stench of death was overwhelming.

“Ahali did you have another nightmare?” A familiar voice spoke to me out of the blackness; it was my friend Hannah.

“My whole life is a nightmare!” I said angrily, then winced at the realization

of my words- Hannah was my best friend and she definitely was not a nightmare, rather a sign of God's provision in my life. There is no physical pain in this world that could compare to the sheer heart wrenching suffering and loss that Hannah has experienced, yet, she is the kindest and the strongest person I have ever known. If I was ever to write a fairytale, Hannah would be the heroine.

Laying back down beside her in the crude bunk, I began to speak out loud to her and to the darkness. "Is there no end to the end to the joy that they receive from the monotony?"

"Joy," answered Hannah, "if that's what you want to call it; the endlessness, the torture, the murder...the blood. We wake, we're sent to work as slaves; the weak ones are shot or burned- but for what? What have we ever done to any of them?"

This was not like my friend, to burst out with her thoughts, to make them known. However, this seemed to last but a moment- she then turned to me and asked, "What did you dream of?"

"My Imah and how she used to wake me in the morning and how Abba would reprimand me for always being late. The silly squabbles, the past life that I used to live. How naive I was, how small and innocent the world did seem." Hannah was silent and I knew that she agreed with me, for she too had experienced such dreams.

"You know, after all the things I have seen, after all the horrible things I have experienced, the worst nightmares I have are of home, of that first day when they invaded. How they showed up, as death looking to snatch me up. Oh Hannah! How do you not hate them? They slaughtered your family right before your very eyes. They instilled terror into your life and engraved fear into your very soul!"

Hannah first looked sick, as if she were searching for the right words to say to the desperate young woman beside her.

"The hate, it comes from within yourself, your flesh man." The sudden silent reaction from me caused her to rephrase her sentence. "It comes from your own desires, as opposed to God's desires. When you focus on what you want or what you feel, you will always fall short of all of anything pure or

holy,” she paused briefly “when you focus on God and let Him direct your heart, you will be able to see people through His eyes and with His heart...Understand?”

I nodded, though she could not see me in the blackness. I realized then what I hadn't been able to yet grasp- God had been providing for me even in the trouble and the horrors I had experienced. Memories began to flood in... memories of when I first came to Auschwitz...

I was driven out of the dingy and grossly-confining cattle car and forced to stand, shivering from fear, in the blinding sunlight. The first thing I experienced of that place, even before the shock of the sun, was the smell. It came back to me, the time when my friends and I had been playing in the alley and had encountered a cat, one who had been somehow hit by a car and probably tossed away. The blood-curdling smell of death. But now, in this moment, this smell was much worse. Similar, yet different. They were burning - the ugly, large towers of everlasting flame towered in front of where we stood. Menacing, the smell that they dispelled made it difficult to draw breath.

“Your age?” A rough voice came from somewhere in front of me. I had a hard time seeing where the voice's origin was. I clutched the small woolen blanket that was wrapped around my thin shoulders. It had been given to me by an old woman in the cattle car. She knew that she was doomed to die-her eyes, void of sight, proclaimed that she belonged to death. I found myself next to her, of all people; she gave me her little shawl, telling me that I needed it much more than she. It was but a miracle that someone was able to be so selfless in such a desperate moment. A sharp slap across my face awoke me to reality again.

“Your age!” yelled the officer in my face.

“Twelve years old.” I whispered

“To the left!” he shouted and pointed in the general direction to where a large group of huddled young people stood.

I nervously moved towards the frightened assembly, wondering if I had just condemned myself to death; refusing to glance around me at the

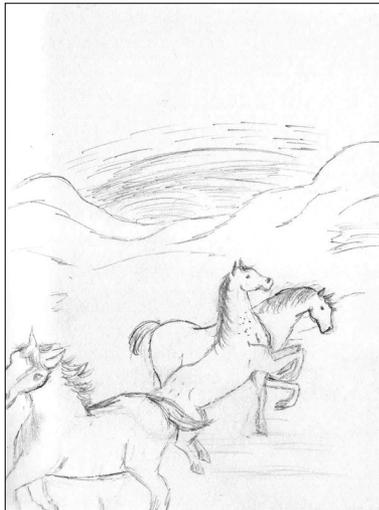
multiple officers clutching machine guns

and the hundreds of fear-stricken eyes. Next came my two brothers and my mother; I saw my father walk to the opposite grouping. The rest of the people then became a blur; my family was safe, we hadn't been killed—that's all I cared about.

But how could I really tell if we were safe? What is safe? Does it even exist here?

Before I could even finish my thoughts, I saw, to my horror, the group on the right, being led towards the crematory.

The Gestapo hadn't chosen to murder me, even though I had been small when I had first come to be enslaved in Auschwitz. Even though I was brought up in a good home, I was but skin and bones when I first arrived, not to mention small for my age. And what about that old woman? She was murdered like the rest of them; she had nothing to give, but she gave anyway. When I came, everything was against me, well, almost everything. Except for God's will. He's kept me alive. With that last ray of hope still shining bright in the depths of my soul, I close my eyes against the horrors. There must be something more for me, something I had yet to achieve.



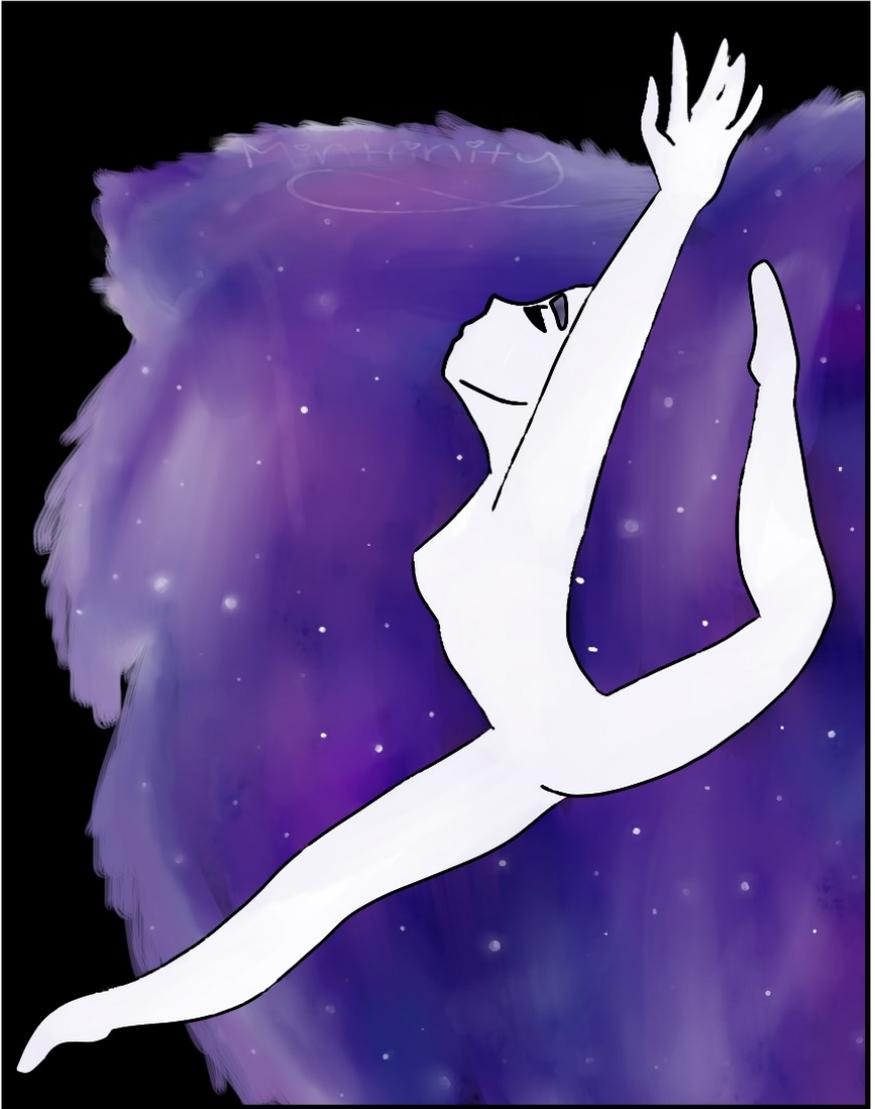
“Untitled

Emma Smith (Grade 10)



"TURNED BOWL AND
NESTED BANDSAW BOX'

Paul Sherwood



"STARS"

Fallon Perry Grade 7



"TARA"

Trinity Morse (Grade 7)



"Untitled"

Sam Nevins(Grade11)



"Untitled" Sketches
Joanna Jackson (Grade7)

So It Can Enjoy Living

Emily Dunagin

“See those flowers?” I turn my face away from Isaiah, “When the water runs out, they'll die right along with me.”

Lying in the hospital bed, I push away the tears tugging at the corners of my eyes. It was only yesterday that I had been playing in the waves at the beach. Today, here I was, waiting to die. At two in the morning I had awoken, unable to move. At 5 AM, the doctor announced to my parents that I would die of a terminal illness attacking my nervous and muscular system. I had at most a week to live, slowly becoming paralyzed a little more each day. I had at most a week to live.

I had known Isaiah since we both were five years old. He had moved into the house next to us, constantly teased by everyone for his incurable speech impediment. It was a month later when I first spoke to him after a particularly bad day of teasing. When I asked him what was wrong however, he told me he was sad because his flower was dying. I had told him, “Everything dies, but always let it have water so that it can enjoy living.”

Now, I lay in the bed with him by my side, staring at the pale orange tulips sitting by my bed. Now, I could see that my first grade philosophy contained no truth. No living thing could enjoy life if it dreaded dying every moment. Slowly, with a great struggle, I crane my neck to peer over at Isaiah. The tears glistening in his eyes could only be seen through the thick lens' of the wire glasses he wore. Shaking his head, I watched as his blond curls were jostled about on his forehead, “Tina, you're NOT going to die!”

“Yes I am, the doctor said so.”

Isaiah shakes his head again. I try to smile. Isaiah, if anyone could come up with a cure for whatever I had, it would be him. Receiving high honors every year during freshmen, sophomore, and junior years and acing every test, Isaiah was by far the smartest kid in the school. He was a sharp contrast to me, the girl who has skipped school, was forced to stay after every single day, and was suspended the maximum number of times the school would allow. Still, he had stayed by me. Almost every night he would come over for lengthy tutoring sessions, bringing my favorite gummy bears to motivate me;

and whenever I was suspended he would rebuke me harshly. Now, he would leave like the rest. Georgia, my best friend since 2nd grade had already left, she had told me that she couldn't bear to see me like this. Sure enough, with an exasperated sigh, Isaiah spun on his heel and stormed out of the room, slamming the door behind him. I was left to die, alone, without even one of my friends surrounding me.

I was wrong, at 11 AM the next morning, Isaiah burst into my room, startling my dad out of his chair. Throughout the next week, he visited before and after school every day, equipped with numerous gadgets and different pastimes. He would read to me, play(or try to play) his guitar, watch movies with me, and even bring in schoolwork that I had missed. He was my only friend during that week of waiting for death to come. My other friends called, but none of them dared to set foot in that stark white hospital room. That Saturday, my final breath never came. The funny thing was, those flowers didn't die, they didn't even begin to wilt. The water continued to stay at the same level as well.

Week two was even worse as I permanently lost all feeling and movement in my arms. Isaiah's visits grew even more lengthy and entertaining. Since I was unable to move, he took responsibility of painting my nails and doing my hair. Through tutorials on YouTube, he learned to French braid better than I ever could have. Isaiah was gracious enough to provide me with audio books to pass the time while he was at school. Still, throughout that week, the flowers still didn't wilt. The water never went down, not one inch.

During week three, I lost complete feeling and movement from my shoulders down. I began to find it difficult to move my neck and control how I moved my mouth. It hurt to breath, my diaphragm muscles were failing, as were the muscles in my heart. Again, the doctor told me that this was my last week to live and that he was amazed that I had lived this long. Isaiah kept coming every day, both morning and night. The flowers didn't die or wilt. Neither did the water subside.

The fourth week was my last, I could feel it. However, I continued to try and prove them wrong. Those flowers hadn't died yet, so neither could I. Isaiah continued to come, even when I couldn't move my mouth anymore to talk to him. None of my muscles to move my limbs or facial features worked anymore, except for my ability to move my eyebrows up and down. Isaiah

read my favorite books to me, skipping more school than I ever dared in a month. He brushed my hair, watched movies with me, and read my mother's Bible to me.

However, the bliss of our friendship couldn't last forever, I was dying. It was on Friday night that I noticed that the flowers had begun to wilt, the edges of their pale orange petals beginning to turn brown. They were dying along with me. My head was positioned to stare at them when I heard the door slide open as familiar footsteps neared, Isaiah's gentle, soft hands slowly turned my head to face him. Inside, I smile as his face comes into view.

“Tina, you're getting tired of living, huh?”

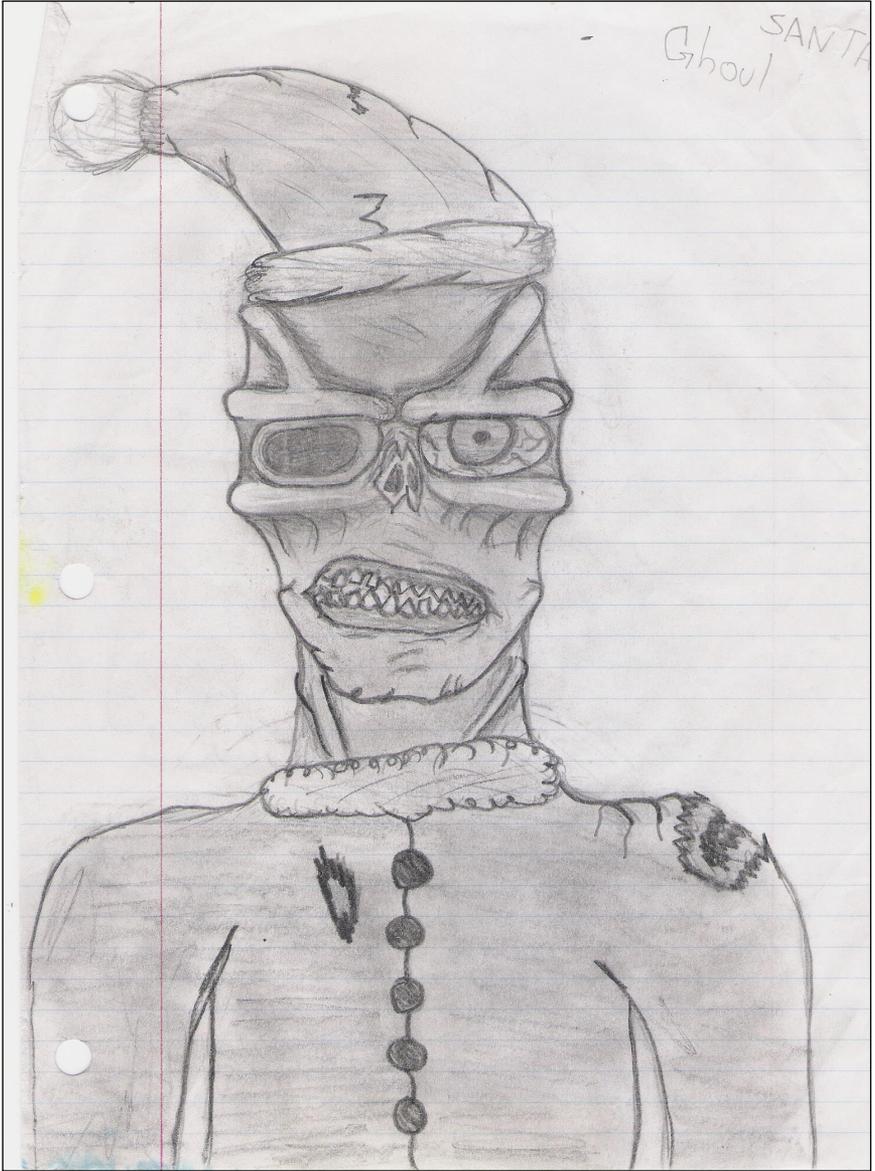
I can't speak or nod. However, my tears tell the tale. Wiping away my tears with his finger, Isaiah smiles softly.

“I couldn't let you die before I had made up for that one month that I didn't speak to you when I first moved here.”

More tears filled my eyes and rolled down my cheeks. Isaiah wipes them away again, leaving his own tears unattended, glistening on his cheeks like twinkling diamonds.

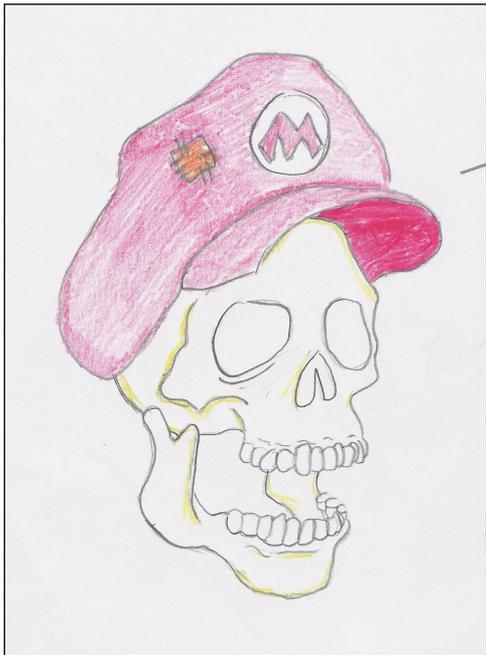
“Everyday-” He sucks in a deep breath and releases a long sigh in an attempt to stifle the sobs that threaten to overtake his body, “everyday I filled up the water for the flowers and every other day I replaced them so that you wouldn't give up.”

I notice that Isaiah tightly clutched my right hand in his own. I hadn't felt it. Throughout my freshman, sophomore, and junior years in high school Isaiah had stuck by me as my heart had been broken by countless boyfriends. The entire time I had simply been searching for security and worth. Little had I known that, through all of my 'boyfriends', the best friend I would ever have was standing right beside me. I watched as Isaiah withdrew the flowers from the vase and approached the side of the bed. With painstaking care, he folded the flowers in my hands. The tears fell from his eyes faster than he could brush them away as he stared deep into my eyes. In a silent voice, made almost incoherent by the sobs racking his body, he whispered, “Long ago, a little girl told me that everything dies, but you should always give it water so that it can enjoy living.”



“Ghoul Santa”

Romeo Owen (Grade 10)



“Untitled Sketches”

Corrine Landsdown (Grade 7)

Personification

Emma Smith Grade 10

The sharp staccato purr,

My fingers stroke her 43 glossy strands of fur.

A calico color, strands of fur yellowed from years of use.

Her metallic glossy exterior, shining as she walks,

Her silver head as it turns to the right, surveying her territory.

Playfully, I batt her head to the left, as I twist the silky end of her tail.

In response, she grasps the paper between her metal teeth and holds fast.

I continue to stroke her glossy plastic fur, twisting her tail to the time of her staccato tune.



Personification of Time:

Emma Smith(Grade 10)

Her train extends toward the distant horizon,

A seemingly endless seam.

The roaring of the wind does her no harm,

The crashing of waves cannot move her planted feet.

If you look towards the cliffs, she is there,

She dwells even in the very depths of the sea.

There is no place on earth, no dimension in which she does not exist,

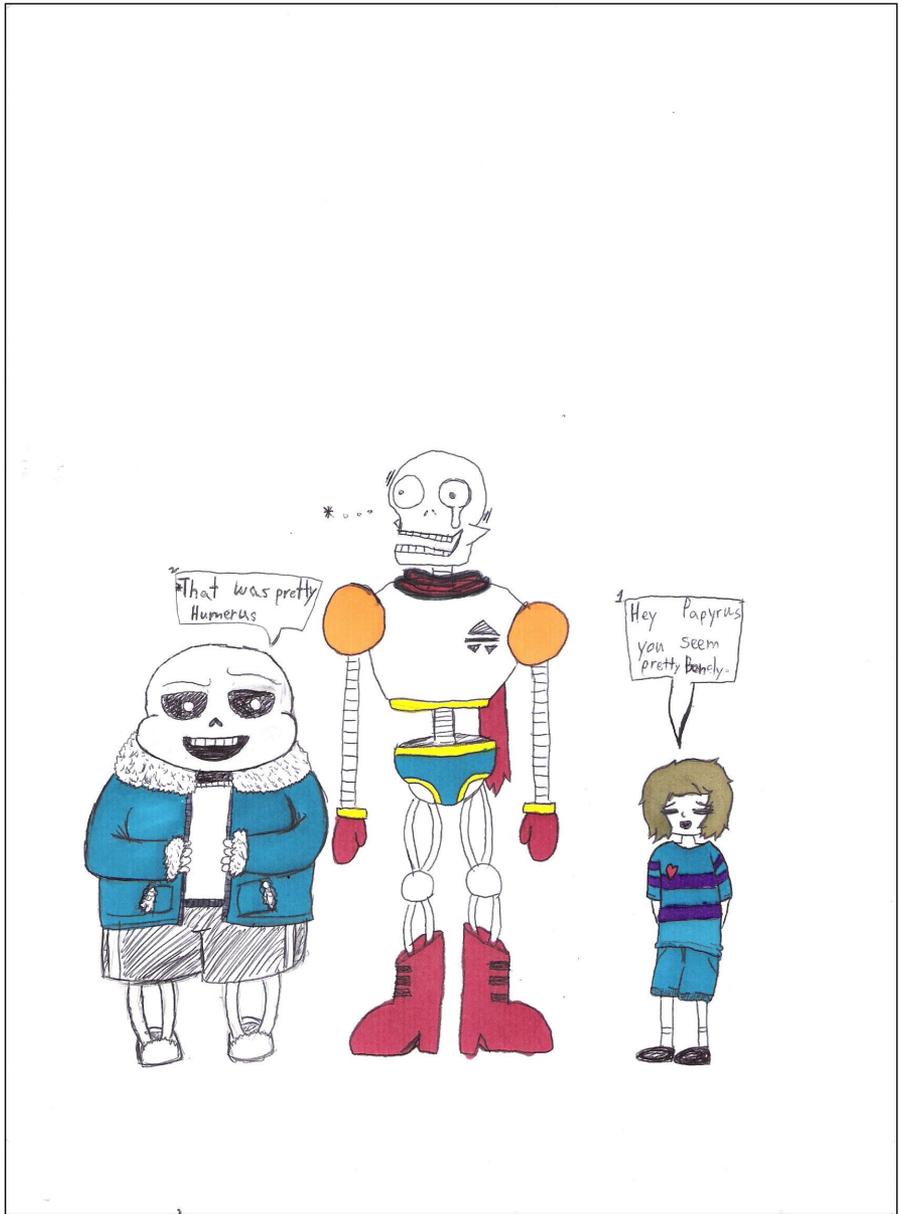
She was, is, and will forever be.

No words can be used to define her,

Or can describe her invisible face.

Where she began and will end is forgotten,

Till the bitter end, from her no-one and nothing can ever take.



"Untitled Sketch"

Nick Conner Grade 11)

PERSONIFICATION OF WISDOM

Emma Smith (Grade 10)

More precious than dozens of rubies,
More costly than the greatest price to pay.

Abundant to the end of ages,
Yet no mere man could take.

The poor were those who found her, for they could pay the price,
They had not gold or silver, nor wealth of any kind.

Their humble hearts prevailed them, causing them to rise above,
While the wealthy sought and struggled but lacked the heart to find.

For in her right hand is found length of days,
In her left are riches and honor.

She is a tree of life and joy is her abundance,
No end comes to her peaceful song.

To have her comes great blessing,
She comes not with a perverse tongue.

With a soft answer and a steady mind,
It is then when she shows herself long.

King Solomon himself had found her,
By no scheme of man or magic spell.

But by God's grace his blessings flowed,
Which in the end he did sell.

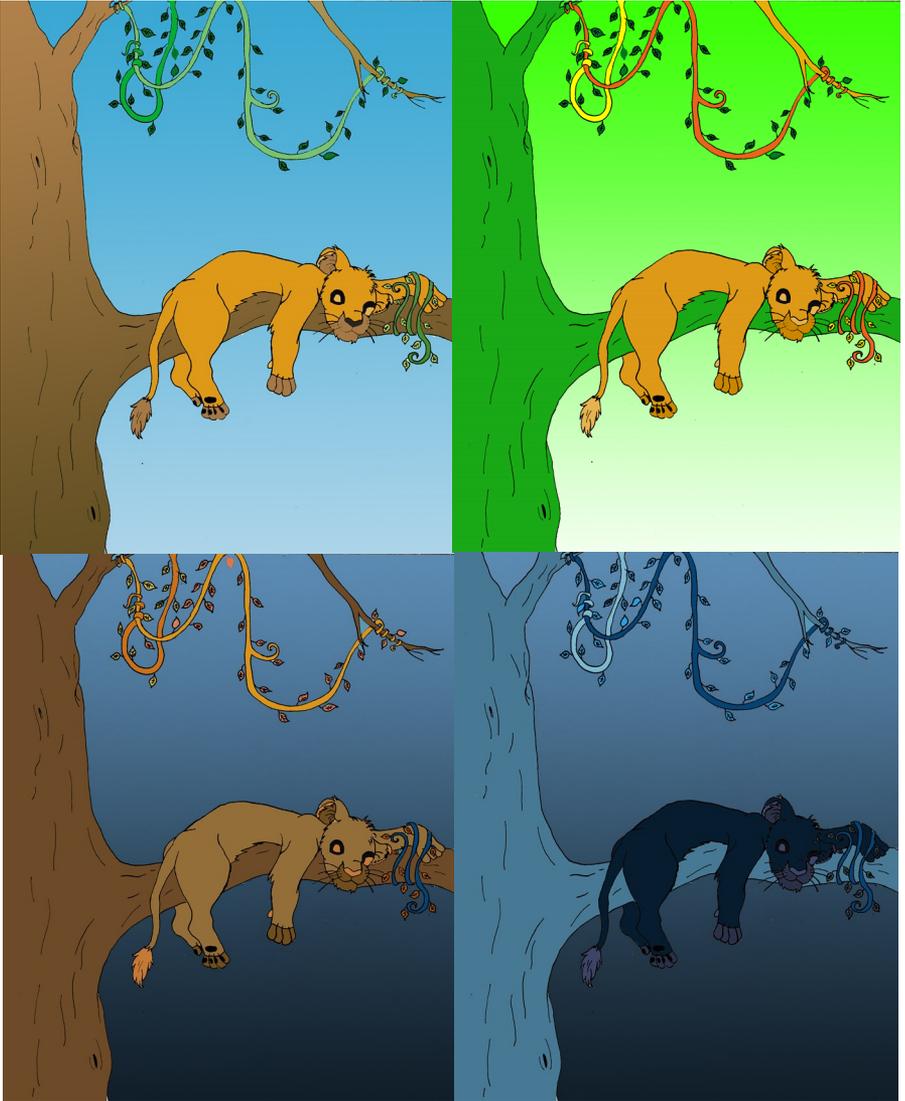
Is there none who have chose to attain her,
To treasure her abundance and cost?

Yes many have sought, yet can't find her,
While others have found and yet lost.



UNTITLED

Sam Nevins (Grade 11)



Lion King Color Schemes

Emily Dunagin (Grade 10)

The Books

As Anna was going through the old dusty library, she stumbled across a strange big book. Curious as she is, she pulled the book off the shelf very carefully. For its size it was oddly lightweight. She found a few more books like that. Now her mind was filled with thoughts and wonders of why the books huge books were so light. Anna decided to take the books back to her room, she put the books down on her desk. She noticed that there were numbers on all of the books. Anna opened book one and to her surprise it wasn't at all words, instead of words there were objects, it was the same with book two and book three. In book one there was a letter, a rock, a plant pot, and a single seed in a green silk bag. In book two was a letter, a canteen, and a glass tear drop in a blue silk bag. Book three had a letter, a candle, a match, and a piece of coal in a red silk bag. Anna wondered why these objects were in the books. Anna then realized that there was a theme to each book, book one: earth, book two: water, and book three: fire. Anna then looked around the room and wondered, then something caught her eye, something that was there but was never there before. Something new, curious as she is, she decided to get off her bed and see what it was. It was an envelope with her name on it, she opened the envelope and took out the piece of paper

Dear Anna Carroll,

*You don't know me but I know you. There's a war coming, a deadly war, one which we will might not survive in. By they, I mean humans, Anna you are not human at all your family never was. Those books you found are important. Do not leave them lying around keep them in a safe place. Also keep an eye out for any clues like for letters and certain objects you'll know those objects are when you see them remember **BE CAREFUL (you'll know who to trust)***

-white rabbit

She sat there and wondered why did it seem like she knew him, like she has seen him in person before and why does this place feel like she's been here before but this is her first time here in her grandmother's house, staying here for most of the summer. But why does this seem so familiar she's never been here before at least she doesn't think so. Anna decided to go for a walk, she walked into the garden her grandmother loved flowers the whole garden was filled with them. The flowers were mostly roses, as she was thinking she noticed something by the old family tree that had been around for since her family had been around same with the house. When walked up to the tree she saw what it was an old pocket watch by a rabbit hole, she picked up the watch and studied it then put it in her pocket and started to walk back until she came across an old deck of cards, she grabbed them and walked back inside. When she got inside she found the rest of the clues now it's time for part two...



"UNTITLED SKETCH"

Sam Nevins Grade 11)



"UNTITLED SKETCH"

Ellena Mulcahy Grade 7)



PANTHER

Romeo Owen (Grade 10)



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