



**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:

Emma Fisher

Ms. Abbott

Sue Graham

Thanks also to Norm Tuttle  
for printing our beautiful books.

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“YOU CAN FIND LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS”

Emily Stephens (Grade 10)

ALONE

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

“Do you know what it's like to be totally alone?” I ask

“Yes, yes I do.” I reply

I chuckle, hoping someone heard me.



## LEGACY

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

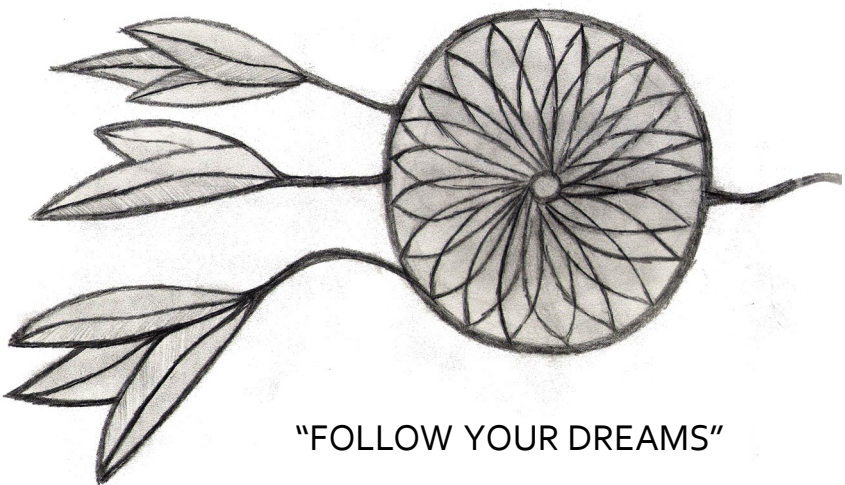
A blessing, and a curse it will be  
To carry my own legacy

A name lost in tumbling winds  
Ink stained paper and endless sins

A mind, heavy with liquid thoughts  
Strings of words that I have fought

In mere seconds these thoughts degrade  
I've wasted years for them to be made

Legacy to progeny, through coarse cotton  
Not much time 'til I'm forgotten



"FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS"

Emily Stephens (Grade 10)

## PROCESS OF WRITING

Emma Fisher (Grade 12)

**Somewhere in the world, a girl was writing.**

*Today I died. Again. This would be the sixth time this week. Most of it was my own fault, like falling down the stairs and breaking my neck, but one or two were completely out of my control, like that stray javelin. I'm not even sure how that last one happened. My mom is going to be so mad at me. She told me to stop dying. At least this month's death tally is lower than last month's. That should count for something, right?*

*Back to how I died today. I think it was a murder, but I'm not entirely sure. The details are a bit fuzzy. That usually happens when the cause of death is a head trauma. Maybe someone came up behind me and whacked me with a baseball bat. Or, maybe I'm just hearing hoof beats and thinking zebras. Just because it was a head trauma, doesn't mean someone malicious was behind it.*

*No matter how many times I try to say this to myself, my gut says differently. It's like...*

**'No, that won't work,' the young author thought as she erased those last two paragraphs. She really had no idea where she was going with this free-write. The concept was awesome, but she just couldn't figure out where it would lead.**

**It would make a magnificent story, and the author made a mental note to finish it some other time. For right now though, it just wasn't the story she needed, so she'd have to come up with something else. She paused to think for a moment, and then tried something new.**

*Hector Moore didn't like killing people; it was just something he had to do. He wanted nothing more than to keep those girls alive. He always made it clear to them that they didn't have to die so long as they cooperated, but they never did. They normally tried to escape or call for help. Hector hoped this new girl would be different, easier to break for his son's sake. He really needed a friend.*

*This particular girl had seemed like a promising candidate. Hector had been watching her for over a week before he decided to take her. She was around eighteen years old, give or take a year, and wasn't particularly athletic, which made her easier to abduct. Her core was soft, but not flabby, and she had shoulder length, mahogany colored hair with bangs falling straight across her eyebrows. Her eyes were the bright green color of emeralds and she had a heart shaped face. Altogether, she was beautiful. Hector sincerely hoped she would work out. She seemed like such a nice girl. It would be a pity to kill her. Besides, he didn't think Trevor could handle much more rejection.*

*Hector kept a close eye on her as the sedative he'd given her wore off. He made a point of being in the room when the girls woke up so that he could explain the rules right off the bat. When she started to wake up, he sat up a little straighter, and smoothed out his white, button down shirt. She looked at him, and he smiled warmly at her to put her at ease. It didn't seem to work. She looked at him like he was some sort of viscous, rabid dog. This wasn't off to a good start.*

**‘Okay, this is creepy,’ the author stopped as she paused in her work. ‘Where did this come from?’ She looked up at the TV screen at the other side of the room. It was on some sort of true crime show, which answered her question. She reached over for the remote, and turned the TV off. She hesitated before putting the remote back down. This was a very interesting story, albeit very creepy. It had a good flow and she had an idea of how it would end.**

**Smiling to herself, she turned the TV back on for inspiration and went back to work.**

*“Hello,” Hector started politely. “My name is Hector. Hector Moore, if you’d like to be formal. What’s yours?”*

*This was the point where the other girls would have asked questions like: “What do you want with me?” or “Why are you doing this?” but this girl seemed smarter.*

*She hesitated, but then answered the question. “Kaylee Hobbs.”*

*“Nice to meet you, Kaylee Hobbs,” Hector said politely. He would have extended his hand for her to shake, but he was too far across the room to do so, and past experience taught him that coming closer didn’t help put the girls at ease. “I’m not going to hurt you as long as you behave. That means you don’t cause any trouble. Do you understand?”*

*Kaylee nodded her head, but didn’t say anything.*

*Hector continued, “You’re my guest here, and I intend to treat you as such.”*

*Kaylee seemed to be on the verge of saying something, but then seemed to think better of it.*

*“I’d like you to meet my son, Trevor, but first, you have to get ready.” He gestured to the bureau on the far side of the room. “You’ll find everything you’ll need over there. I’ll be right outside if you need anything.”*

*Kaylee watched Hector closely as he walked out of the room and shut the door behind him. She didn’t hear a click, so she assumed that meant he hadn’t locked the door. She looked around the room carefully then. It was relatively small with four plain walls and no windows. The only pieces of furniture inside were the bed she was propped up on, the bureau off the right, and the folding chair in front of the door which Hector had vacated.*

*Hector had seemed genuine when he said that he wouldn’t hurt her so long as she behaved. Kaylee decided that her best chance for survival was to play his game. She didn’t really have any other option now. She thought this*

*through as she went through the bureau's three cabinets. The top one contained hairbrushes, clips, and various perfumes. The middle one had many brightly colored sundresses. The last one had strappy sandals in various styles and sizes.*

**The author looked at the TV screen for help. Right now, it was on a commercial for toilet paper, and that didn't help her at all. She turned it off angrily and dropped the remote onto the floor. She liked the story she was writing, but she wasn't sure if she could cram it all into three papers like her English teacher wanted. Creative writing was so much easier when you didn't have limits. She may have been able to persevere, but then self-doubt crept in. Did the character's actions seem genuine? Would a kidnap victim really seem that calm and quiet? These questions were like a guillotine to her creativity, cutting it off short in one fell swoop.**

**She put her head in her hands and groaned loudly, frustrated with herself. After taking a few deep breaths to calm herself down, she had an idea. She'd go back to the idea of the first story where the main character died, only this time, she'd try something different.**

*I don't remember how I died. I can't remember much of anything, actually. That's strange. I should probably be more concerned about that, but right now I'm just too hungry. It's hard to even think straight. I've never been so hungry in my entire life, and the feeling is all-consuming.*

*I notice I'm lying down, so I push myself up to my feet. It seems just a little more difficult than usual, like I can't quite find my balance. Everything looks a little blurry too. It's not so bad that I'm stumbling over my own feet, but it's still not crystal clear. I can see a deep, red/brown colored stain traveling down from my shoulder to my chest. Now how did that get there? Death is very confusing.*

*I try not to focus on that as I shamble forward awkwardly. It's not too hard when I have my hunger to distract me. I don't know where I'm going, but I don't really care. The street I'm on is devoid of all life.*

*That's not right, is it? I can't remember. It doesn't matter anyway. I've already come to the conclusion that if there's no food here, then I'll have to find it somewhere else.*

**'Yes, this one is good,' the author said to herself with a proud smile on her face. This one will work. It had to. She continued writing, determined to finish this one story.**

*As I walk, the day turns to night and then back again. This happens several times, but I never stop. I don't feel the need to rest or anything. Eventually, the stone beneath my feet turns into grass and the surrounding buildings turn into trees. I still haven't found any food, and my belly feels like it's about to collapse in on itself if I don't eat something soon.*

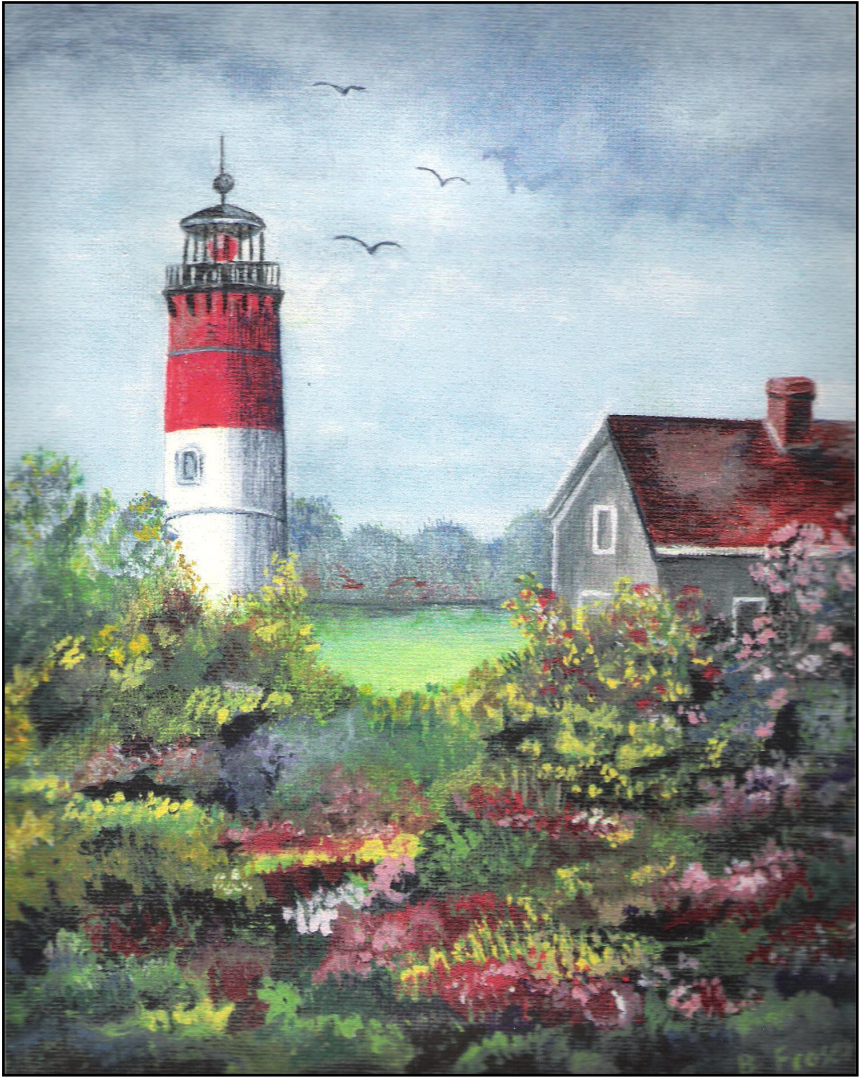
*When I finally find something, I'm too eager to feel any other emotion. I'm not sure exactly what I've found, but I don't care. Its food and its meat. What more can I ask for? As I drop down onto the ground, I start to tear into the carcass before me with my bare hands. I'm nearly blind with hunger as I shove flesh, organs, and intestines into my mouth. I feel like I could pick this carcass bare, and it wouldn't be enough to eat. Hell, I could probably have twenty deer and it still wouldn't be enough.*

*"Hey!" someone shouts by the time I'm halfway through with my meal.*

*I look up, and open my mouth to tell whoever it is that I'm not sharing, but all that comes out is a breathy grumble. He's pointing something at me, and a word pops into my head: gun. Before I can figure out what that means, there's a loud 'BANG!' and then darkness at last.*

**It wasn't exactly the best story ever written, but at least it was something. The ending was a bit of a cop-out, but then again, how else would a zombie story end? The author just hoped that her English teacher would see it the same way. Even if she didn't, at least the author could say that it was just a rough draft. That was the thing about writing, it can always be fixed.**

**As she saved her work and put it away, she felt a combination of relief and pride at having finally finished the assignment. She made a mental note not to wait until the last minute next time an assignment like this came up, but she knew that note would be long forgotten in an hour or two.**



“Lighthouse”

Brenda Fraser

# ME AND MY FOUR FEET

© Merrill Vaughan

February 25, 2014

Clickety click Clickety clack

You can hear my wheels glide over a sidewalk crack

As I sit proudly, pushing the wheels, I can hear my heart beat

My wheels skim the surface of the concrete

To my destination a few short blocks away

Drivers honk as they give me a friendly wave

I now maintain four feet

A little girl stops, inquires why do I need wheels to move

I explain to her I was hurt a long time ago

She jumps and smiles as she tells me "I can jump"

Even though I smile at her, she leaves me in a slump

My four feet, they are how I now move

Then, I realize, my legs may not work right

But my mind keeps me happy and bright

I propel down the sidewalk

Only to wait at the corner while some gawk

They do not realize I possess four feet while they have only two

At the curb, there is a ramp of concrete called a cutaway

But across the street, not one can be found to my dismay

So into the street I roll looking for a driveway that I can use

Along the way I speculate, if someone hits me, what can I do?

My four feet are like car tires, only smaller wheels

I find a driveway I can use then back along the sidewalk I roll

I soon see my destination of the house on the slight knoll

I stop and watch children playing ball in the street

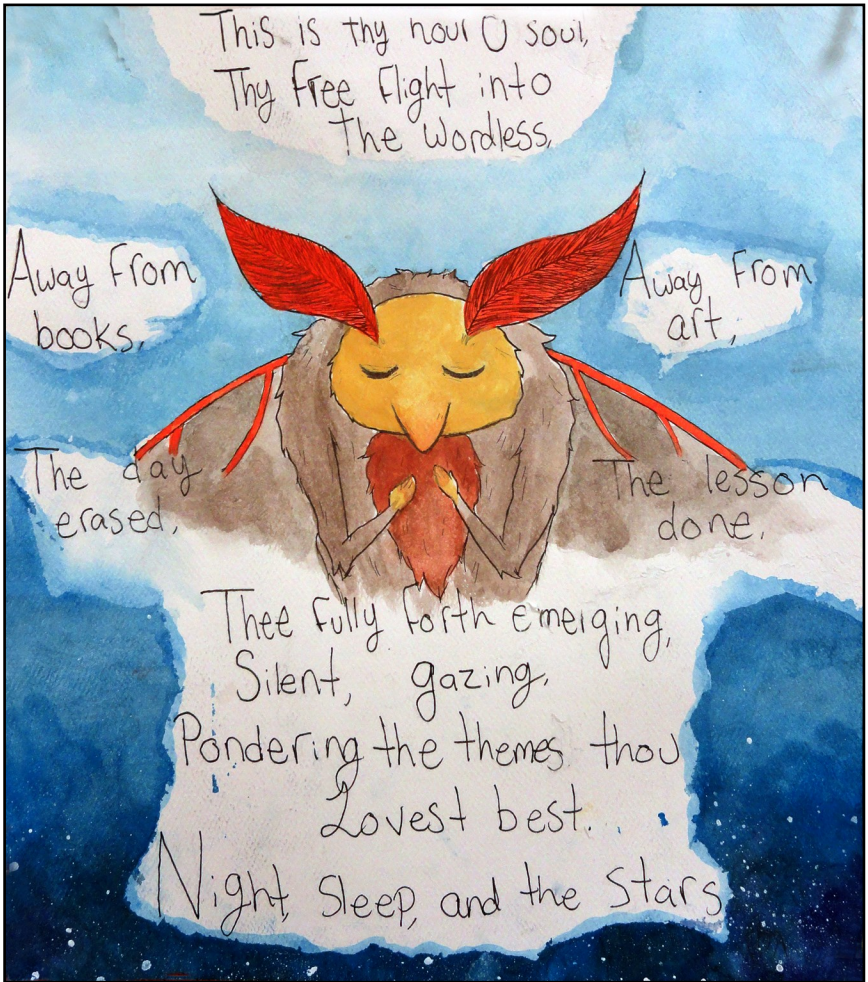
Oh how I desire so that I could play on my own two feet

Yes, I may have four feet know, but blisters, I have on one

Clickety click Clickety clack

You can hear my wheels glide over a sidewalk crack





## "A CLEAR MIDNIGHT"

Quote by Walt Whitman

Brynne Gaudett (Grade 11)



## BOB'S EFFIGY

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

Bob grabbed a book one day  
A little knife, a bag of clay  
He read the book through and through  
And decided on what he must do

He flipped to page one-eighty-five  
"How To Make Art Come Alive"  
He attacked the white, unmoving blob  
And worked to make a better Bob

When he finished, he was delighted  
"All of life's wrongs shall now be righted!"  
With some complex chemistry  
Bob gave life to his effigy

The clay then sprung up into life  
And peered down questionably at Bob's knife  
"Are you the man that carved my heart?"  
"I am indeed, you are my art."

"Do I live because of you alone?"  
"Before me there was no life in stone."  
"Why did you make me, why am I here?"  
"Some day that will become clear."

The clay then began to cry  
Each tear leaving him more dry  
The clay then cracked and Bob sat idle  
As the clay robbed itself of what it found vital

The clay in pieces, and on the floor  
Bob was back where he was before

"It never works, but I won't stop trying,  
Afraid of sentience, they won't stop crying,  
I will soon make something better than I  
I will not give up, again I'll try."



**"WHEEL THROWN BOWL"**

Gavin Hadley ( Grade 12)



**"WATERMELON BOWL"**

Bobbie Jean Small (Grade 10)



“MARILYN”

Taylor Edwards (Grade12)

## LITTLE SKELETON

Emily Williams (Grade 12)

I used to have a little skeleton  
Of an angel, who fell from heaven

He did not make it to Earth  
But landed in hell, next to me

I saw the light leave his body,  
As the Darkness took over

No last breath was taken,  
His body just shriveled  
All was left was his bones

Scary he was, for he could still talk  
But what did he say, I could not tell

Please he wrote in the wall,  
But nobody could see but me

How could I help This small soul,  
We are in hell

For nobody could, not even I  
He passes for good, so soon

I used to have a little Skelton  
Who only wanted me to try

## *The Dance*

Worn, gnarled fingers search deeply into stuffed full sock  
drawer, where old treasures reside.  
Grabbing piled socks and purple ribbons, my hand  
searches for the long-forgotten, wrinkled,  
pink leather slippers.

Sitting quietly, my bunioned toe reaches for the old, soft  
shoe, remembering  
its intimate fit.  
Rising from the tapestry stool, knees flex, arms rise over-  
head, as muscles remembering the dance.

Triple step, 1-2-3, pas de *bourrée*; the well-known melody  
fills my head, "Dance of the Flowers," I think...and  
my heart smiles.  
Memories sift and solidify like a  
stop-action animated cartoon.  
Shimmering silver lamé flows in folds, billowing about,  
Graceful arms fly overhead, extend, contract, then bend  
and relax in slow motion.

The mirror reflects the old vision...  
Swirling gossamer gowns glide about, while gracefully  
coiffured curls gently sway in rhythm.  
Strings, drums, brass, and winds set the harmony of time  
and space, as I swirl and twirl on the well-worn wooden  
floor.

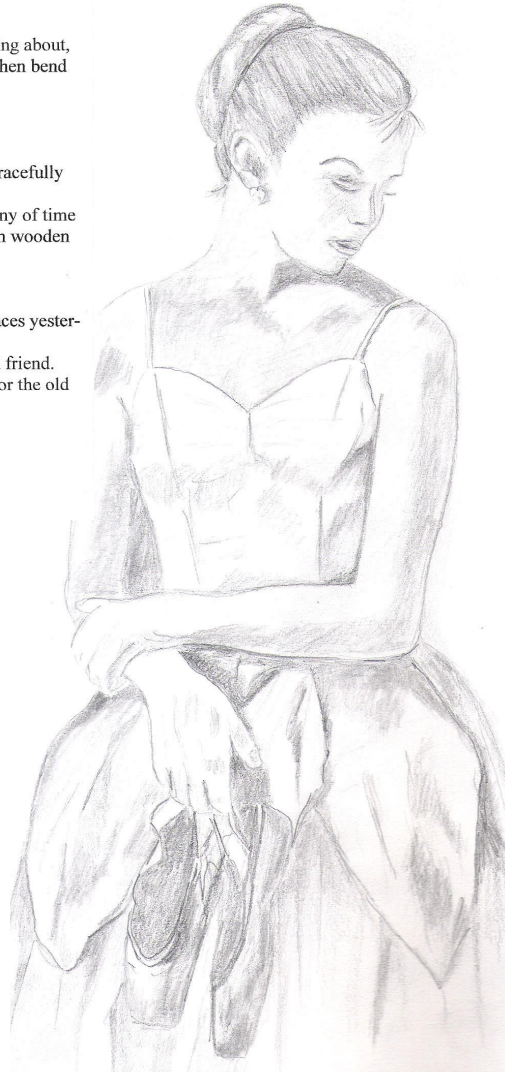
The vision fades into the corner, as today replaces yester-  
day.....  
The worn, pink slippers fit like a welcome, old friend.  
The new, black stretchy pants allow freedom for the old  
limbs to flex and bend...

And with each demi-plié, my eyes smile,  
and my heart sings.

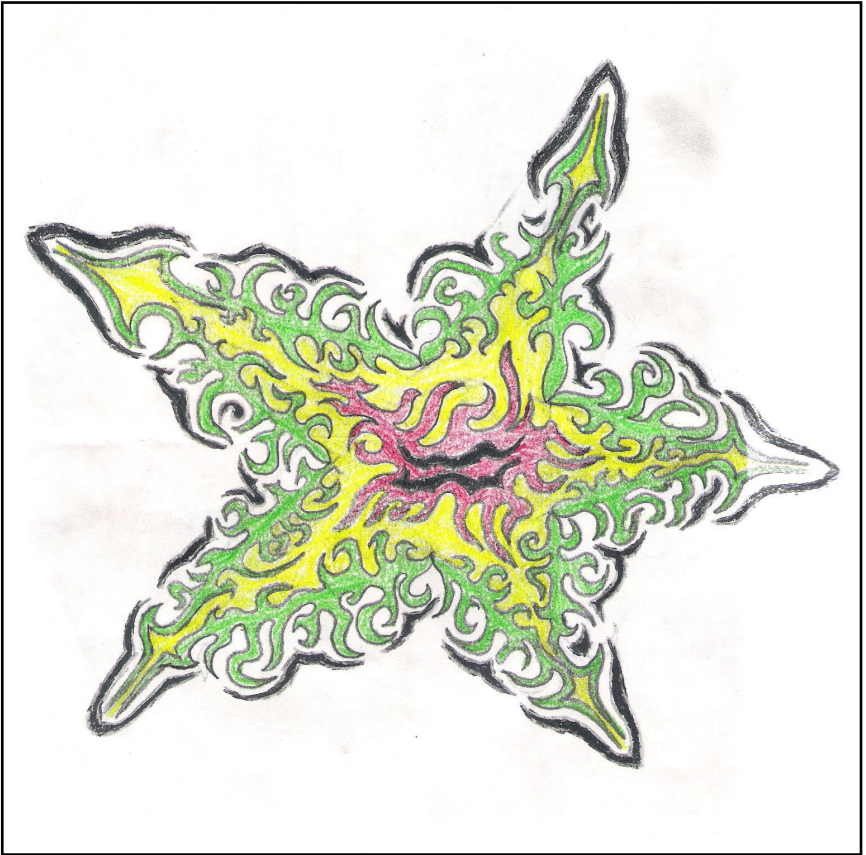
Poetry and Art

by

Brenda Fraser

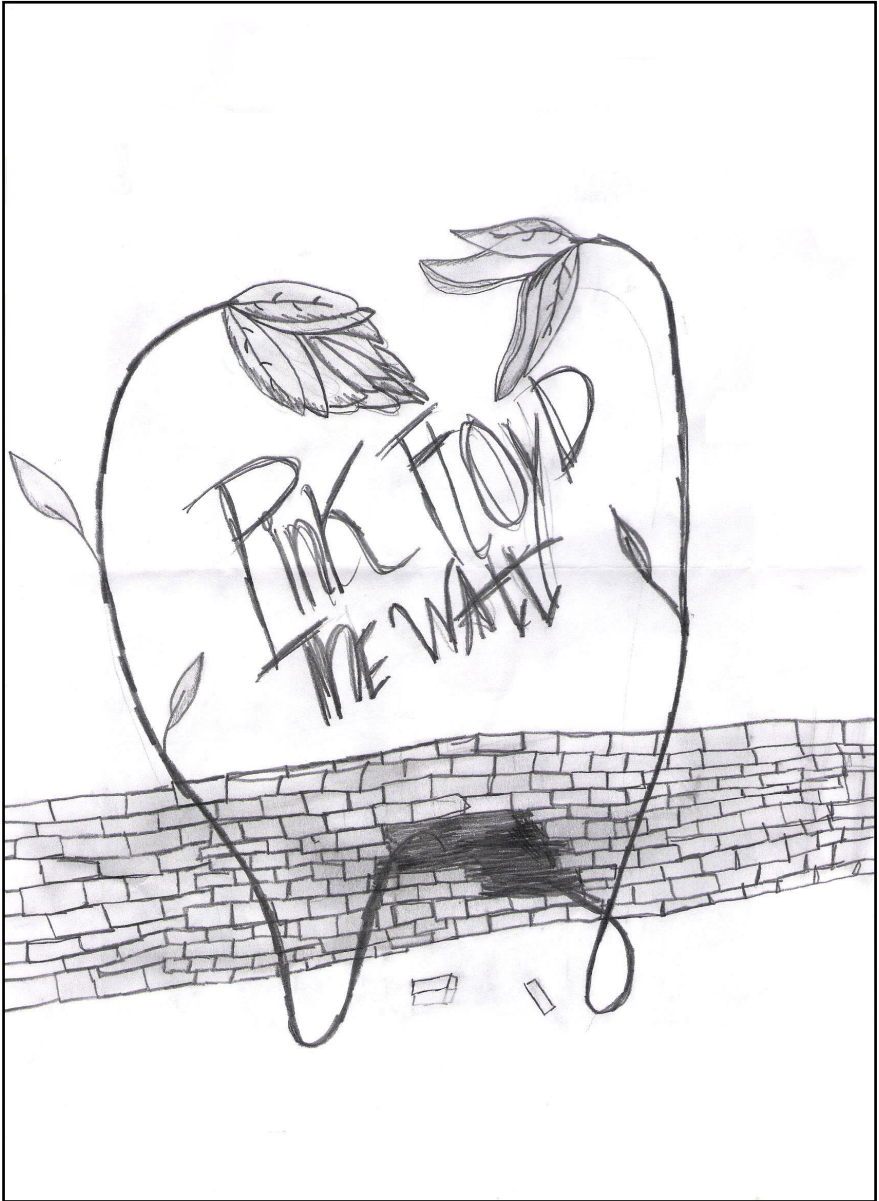






"RASTA STAR"

Isaak Soto (Grade 9)



"PINK FLOYD"

Emily Muse (Grade 8)



"DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION"

Fred Pantis (Grade 9)



"FOOTBALL BANK

Gavin Hadley (Grade 12)





"CELTIC LADY"

Taylor Edwards (Grade12)

# YOU ARE LIKE

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

You're a lot like the static between radio stations

Grating

Bleak

Lacking in order and empty in promises

Of any sort of harmonies

You're a lot like the tops of high mountains

Cold

Distant

Attainable in the way that I could get to you

But the attempt would be pointless aside from self projected  
glory

You're a lot like an embalmed corpse

Stilted

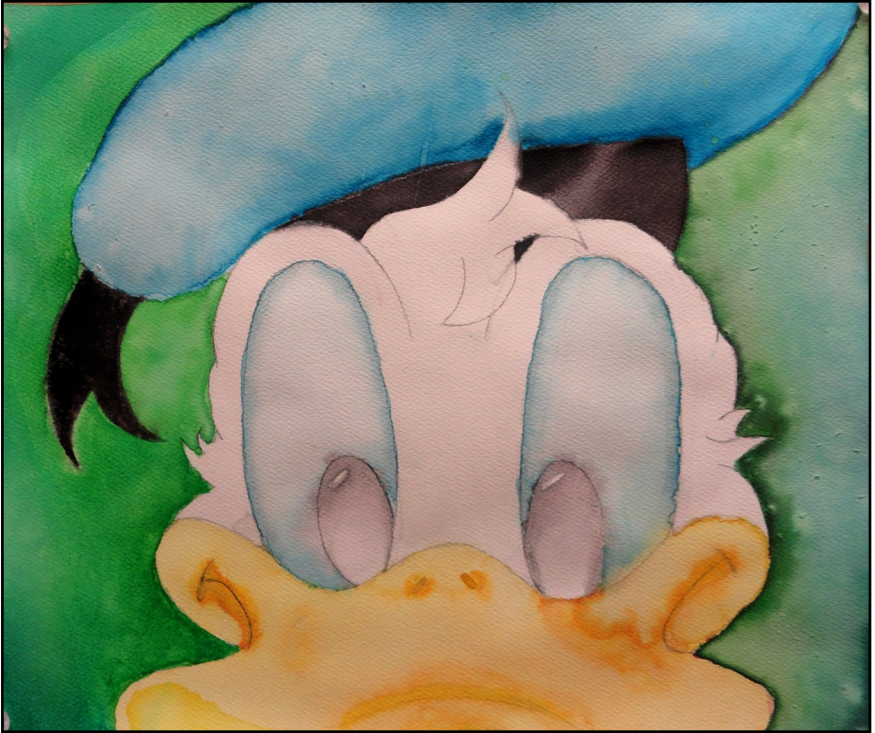
Inhuman

Covered in make-up so others think you still have feeling

And again, cold

And I must be a lot like my letters to you

Because I must still be missing you somehow.



"DUCK"

Mike Osborn





“WILDCAT BROOK”

William Mitchell

## IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

By Jenny Lynn Wellington

I stopped in my car,  
there was a buck and the night  
and I was afraid  
a car coming down this dark road  
too fast  
would shove me head-on  
into the deer

in the middle of the road.  
We can't always stop—  
not even for a deer  
with glassy onyx eyes  
caught with the night  
in its teeth.

Not even my high beams  
could spook the deer to run  
back into the woods,

so I looked  
in my rearview  
and turned off  
all my lights.



"WE ARE US"

Katie Steeves ( Grade 11)

## FROM A FRIEND

Emma Fisher ( Grade 12)

They're not going to be happy that I'm telling you this, but I don't care. They're going to kill me anyway, so this is basically my last act of defiance. It's worth it anyway. Maybe if someone had warned me, I'd be able to talk to you in person instead of through an anonymous paper.

Coming from such a safe environment, I know that you'll find it hard to believe me. Please hear me out though. I can't get too specific about what's going to happen. Being vague is the only way to ensure that this letter gets to you. What I can say is that there's a chance for you to survive, but only if you act fast.

For over a thousand years, there's been *something* drifting through the world, looking for... I don't know. I wish I could tell you what it was, but I honestly don't know. What I do know is that everyone who falls in their path ends up dead, just like I will be soon. I only have enough time left to warn you.

You should go back and read the first word of every paragraph now.

## SIX WORD POEMS

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

"Weight"

Love us because we need you.

"Cannibal"

Communion wafers and sour wine.

Gluttony.

"The Great Leap"

Father, Mother

Sister, and Brother

Goodbye.

"Not Understanding 451"

Fight fire With

fire. Stupid

fireman.

"Darkness"

Evil in

youth Salvation in

death.

"Cataract"

We cannot see

What cannot be.

"How to Dance"

First pop.

Then lock.

Drop it.

"Need"

Kill for food.

Kill for water.

"A Good Fight"

Blood, sweat, and tears.

And vomit.



"Puzzle"  
Put it all together.  
Answers appear.

"Busy Busy"  
How was your day?  
Busy busy.

"Stubborn"  
Rock in the stream.  
Go around.

"Infinity"  
I got it all for you.

"Persistence"  
Break the wall.  
Brick by brick.

"I Thought It Was A Fall From Grace"  
Damned.  
God never cared about me.

"Success"  
All measurements of success,  
Eventually fail.

"Inevitable"  
Future telling is like reading history.

"Oxford"  
English, grammar, spelling, and useless commas.

"Fire Resistant" Some  
may say it is  
Unmatched.

"Six"  
A lot more can be said



"OWL"

Gavin Hadley ( Grade 12)

# FRIENDSHIP

Merrill Vaughan

© 2002

Friendship is a word that has many meanings  
Friendship is the best feeling that one can have  
Friendship means knowing another person, knowing a brother,  
sister  
Friendships are made at a gathering of people that are of a like  
mind

Friendship is just saying hello to another person  
Friendship might be created by stress and the unknown  
Friendship is fragile and needs tending often  
Promises made that will make friendship a life long adventure

Yet in a heart beat it can all be lost for eternity  
Forgotten when stress is no longer a factor  
Lost because of a word that is said in a thoughtless act  
One's jealous mind utters thoughts in haste

Can the friendship be brought back?  
Only time will tell and the hurt repaired  
Forgiveness in the heart uttered with true feeling  
Friendship rekindled grown stronger  
Friendship repaired after the storm means a little more

# CANCER

Emily Williams (Grade 12)

He was a hardworking man,  
Who did whatever job he could to take care of his family,  
But he gave up at the age of fifty

Cancer took over, but no one knew how bad,  
He starting forgetting things  
But not caring was easier then trying to remember

He was the one I took care of in the summer,  
The one whose death I was there for, in the other room  
The one I thought shouldn't die  
So fast

After a phone call from his family down south, and his best  
friend,  
It was easier to let go,  
And that he did

My aunt was in the room when he took his last breath,  
And when he saw blue eyes when looking up towards the ceiling  
My nana didn't get there in time, to say goodbye

Death took over,  
He was gone,  
With the family he lost years ago  
The brother he played with as a child,  
His mother who held out her hand,  
and brought him to the light

Death took over,  
He was gone

# I DREAM OF MARIA

Quinn Boyce (Grade 11)

I've made a horrible mistake  
I pay in slow miles driven on cold streets  
I need to find her  
The woman who was better than it all

Cold streets and cold towns  
Fast women for fast cash  
An hour of warmth  
Will cost you more than you know

Maria stood among many  
Bent on corners for attention  
Exposed to the cold  
And exposed to cold men

Something about her made me go mad  
Eyes that burned a man down  
That shade of lipstick  
Cherry red

In the car we made deals  
Quiet conversation over a throbbing heart  
We went into my house  
She claimed her room

I wanted this woman  
To know everything about her  
Her loves  
Her story

Born in Wisconsin  
Destined for New York  
Had big plans that never went through  
Asked me my life

Born in New Hampshire  
Illusions of grandeur  
Making big plans that will never go through

A kiss

With arms around my shoulders  
A shock of surprise  
Warm lips share secrets  
Kept from an empty home

The music in my head swells  
A sharing of longing and passion  
On the bed I move slowly  
She is ready, but waiting

We remain in an embrace  
With me above her  
Quantum entanglement  
Right where we're supposed to be

A tension broken with a  
door opening Heavy  
footsteps while Maria  
panics Another door  
opens  
And a man stands before us

This man makes a quiet request for money  
Maria is distraught  
I offer up any of my own  
He pushes me to the ground

I see him grab Maria  
Exposes her body  
Maria is crying  
This house can't keep secrets

I cannot look  
I get up and run  
I get to my car  
And drive

A day later I return  
A refund on my bed  
Above changed sheets  
And below a note

"I think I love you"  
I've ruined all of this  
I need to find her  
Maria, destined for something better

And so I drive on cold streets  
On cold nights  
Looking for Maria's warmth  
And making big plans



"BMO TEAPOT"

Emily Williams (Grade 12)





**"THE APPRENTICE"**

Brynne Gaudette (Grade 11)

## THE BEAT OF THE IMAGE

By Colton Gaudette (Grade 7)

The stories I write are the stories I dream  
And when I dream, they will sing I know  
Surely. Both stories seem to dance along  
To the beat of the image, a beat that  
Everyone uses to the limit of imagination.  
So share your stories and sing your dreams.  
Many will fly and many will run. So  
Run and fly.



"TANGLED"

Katie Steeves (Grade 11)



**Interested in joining Loose Leaf?**

The PMHS Art & Literary Magazine is looking for individuals to help put together next year's magazine!

See Mrs. Wellington or Mr. Mitchell for more information.

