

MUSE

vol. 7



2022

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Volume 7

2022

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Acknowledgments

Muse is the literary magazine of Lamar Middle School and Fine Arts Academy in Austin, Texas. Student editors reviewed submissions using a blind submission process in which the authors' names were hidden.

In addition to a print edition, we published this volume online to make it more accessible to the wider community. Authors' last names were omitted to protect their privacy.

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Rachel Dietz
Austin, Texas
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I Am a Writer

By Violet G.

I AM A WRITER.

That's what I know.

That's all I know.

It's who I am.

I exaggerate

I italicize

I love

I feel

I think

My pencil hits the page

Words flowing out of my head

Faster than my poor, sacrificed pencil can write

Broken lead is all I know

Crumpled up paper litters the floor

A sea of "not good enough"

My pencil stops

My train of thought screeches on the tracks

I forgot a word.

What's that word?

The one that's so sweet, so delicious, so tender

The one that ties everything together

Like a strong spool of twine

Not good enough, not good enough, not good enough

I replace the word with something sour and unsatisfactory.

The train of thought starts back up. Slowly, but surely.

Here we go again...

Are We Drowning or Are We Flying?

By Caroline B.

Almost home, still
Running, still
Evading sleep

While the gentle shadows keep
Eating and eating the light and the

Deafening sound of silence
Reveals we are beneath the
Ocean or above the clouds. The
Whole world could stop spinning, yet we'd
Never stop swimming the sky, flying
In the sea
Never will we walk for we can't afford the
Ground.

Orange and yellow and red
Remember? The colors that stain our eyes

At the end of the day, or is it the beginning? We don't
Remember what it feels like to breathe, the way air
Enters our lungs, we are too close to the stars to know. It's funny,

When did flying become so much like drowning? Is it
Easier to let our bodies sink,

Fall? We're soaring closer to the sun than we should,
Longing to be the main character of a tragedy so
Years from now, people will shake their heads at us
Igniting our wings with the sun, drowning *and* flying,
Never once touching
Ground.

Stage Fright

By Camilla M.

I close my eyes.
A sudden rush of
Butterflies
to my stomach.
The gentle *whoosh*
of a red curtain.
Hundreds of lights,
Thousands of people,
Focused
on
Me.

I have to speak now
but
I haven't said a word.

I know what to say
I practiced all morning.
I try to begin,
But when I open my mouth
Not a sound leaves my body.

I gulp,
Open my eyes,
I see a room full of quiet students,
A white board,
Fluorescent lights.

I take a deep breath
In and out.
And another

And another
And another

Until
I wrote a poem called Habitat.
Tall trees
With large fanning leaves...

The words I know so well
Flow out of my mouth
Into the ears of my classmates.

I walk off,
My friends applaud
I take my seat
And think to myself,
I did it.

Blur

By Farrah K.

Quickly

Summon all of the energy from your core

Shoot it out like gunfire through your fingertips and furthest limbs

But don't stop

You can't

Work swamps your mind

It makes your vision foggy, but don't ever stop

One deadline

Two

Click

Whirl

Boom

Bang

Sprint faster

One day

Months

Years

Faster

You are out of breath?

Keep going

Never stop.

But then,

You open your eyes

Your chest is heaving, and your surroundings keep speeding past you

You are near the finish line, you have been for ages

But

Did you ever stop to think about all of those things you were speeding by?

And suddenly,
You just stop
One foot beside the other
The rhythm of your breath slowing to a steady pace

Your brain heaves a heavy sigh
A thankful, slow sigh
A slight breeze of the wind rustling through your hair

Orange, red, yellow leaves stir on the sidewalk
Did you ever notice that it was October?
When was the last time you looked at yourself in the mirror?
What is your name?
Who are you?
Favorite color?
Did you ever stop to notice that the sky was blue?
That the grass was green?

Faster, life screams towards you
Go faster!
No, don't ever start again, you tell it
Quickly
No, the world is too beautiful!
Go

It's out of your power
The world doesn't wait on you for long
People never stop moving
The world never stops spinning
So you just keep going

Quickly
Faster
Scenery blurs

Where's the color?

Where's *life*?

Maybe you could stop one more time

And take in the breathtaking calmness,

Unblurred, un-touched

But

You have to keep going

And if you listen to life

Where might it take you?

You keep running

To follow the flow of people like a river

It will never stop

Sweet Tea & Orange Juice

By Li M.

Sweet tea
Box brand
Orange juice
Fresh squeezed
Hot
Humid
Summer vacation

Grandma and I
Sitting together
My cold glass
Pressed against
My small hands

Dripping wet
Towel around my shoulders
The pool reflecting the sun
A lizard climbs up the wall
The sun burns my ears

Oh
How I miss Florida
Just my grandma, me
Fresh squeezed
Orange juice
Box brand
Sweet tea

Versus Her

By Milane B.

She walked in the rain
Skin glowing like gold
Crystal droplets fell on her
In a waterfall
Rain came down like autumn leaves.
Tumbling on to her back.
Graceful.
She walked like she was on a runway.
She walked like she owned the world.

I walked in the rain
Black tears dripped to my cheeks.
The sky cried with me.
It screamed.
Water dived like shards
From both the clouds
And my eyes.
I walked like my feet were broken.
I walked like I was a monster.

She spoke to me
With soft words.
It sounded like a poem.
Like a melody.
Her phrases were clear.
But her voice was also strong.
It echoed off the walls with power.
She always had a say,
And no one could be mad about it.

I responded to her

Voice shaky.
It sounded like gargled water.
Like my tongue was tied.
My words were tripping on each other.
My voice was stumbling in my throat.
It was weak.
I could never think of what to say.
And I hated myself for it.

Six Ways of Getting Lost

By Lyli E.

The woods whisper in her ear
Tracing the steps back
Lost through the fog

Frantically searching
Paintbrush hidden
Her view of the world lost
The canvas blank and lifeless

The nightmare undeniably real
Twisting into knots
Sleep lost

Parting ways
Lost friendship
Tomorrow strangers

Time lost into dusk
Pouring rain
Too late to take it back

Lost deep inside herself
Panic in her veins
Mind unraveling

Salty Tears

By Ruby A.

Exuberant chatter
and the whoosh of
pedals spinning
fills the humid, morning air.
Cars fly by us in streaks
and stop as our bike signal turns
vivid
green.

I slam on my brakes hard,
yell out,
"Camilla!"
Too late.
Her shoulder slams into the big, white car,
and she looks so small and
out of place
when she hits the black pavement and
skids
across the cracking, white lines.
She picks herself up,
a terrified sob
escapes her throat,
and
she runs to us,
legs shaking,
lips trembling.
She rushes back into the crosswalk to get Opal's
smashed bike,
with its fragmented pedal still laying
abandoned
in the street.

We ask if she's okay,
and she guiltily
apologizes
as if she did something wrong,
but nobody cares about the bike,
we only care about her.
Salty tears trickle down
not her face,
but mine,
like a feeble waterfall
that has lost all its strength.
She brushes herself off
and takes a deep, trembling breath
that only
the strongest of people
can take.

Hurricane

By Maureen V.

The air feels salty and wet, like it might rain any second. The gray clouds swarm above me as I quicken my walking pace. The clouds' tears trickle out, falling one drop at a time.

As I keep walking, the wind blows a soft breeze, and when I look up at the sky, it seems to be sad. The rain starts to come down harder, now a steady rainfall. Up ahead I spot my local grocery store with a stack of free magazines. I walk over to the magazines and grab one out of the intricate black wire crate. I open to a random page, flip the magazine upside down, so the cover is on the outside, and hold it over my head.

I look up at the sky to see that the gray clouds have started to cover the once-existing sun. The sky no longer looks sad, but now, it looks angry. I continue to walk as I realized how empty the streets were, it was like everyone but I received a warning . While lost in thought a gust of wind blasts by, knocking the magazine out of my hands.

I no longer have something to help me stay dry, so I walk even faster, I'm almost running. The wind is blowing brutally; it is pushing me back, but I will continue to resist. A spark of hope arises as I see the familiar beat up street sign that says "Woodrow Street." The sign calls out to me, "Keep going, you're almost there," and as I pass the sign, I see my house.

Adrenaline rushes through me and suddenly everything is a blur. I can no longer hear the sound of the trees harshly blowing. I can no longer smell the salty air that surrounds me. I can't feel the clouds' tears pouring out onto my skin. The only thing I can see is my house. The deep blue paint, the beige trim, and the greenery that frames the picture of Home.

I approach the path that leads up to my house, the stone now a darker shade of gray because of the rain. I step desperately, one foot per rock. I come to the stairs still longing for the warmth of my home but low on energy. Each step up is one step closer to home. I tell myself to walk up the first step, then the second, and finally I am on my front

porch, water dripping from my clothes, and hair leaving a little puddle behind. I find my key and put it into the lock, and twist it.

As soon as I open the door and walk inside, I realize how unaware I was of my body. I relax my clenched muscles. I lock the door and turn on the light. I rush into the living room to see my gray couch, with the rich blue blanket draped over the side. I turn the news on. As I listen attentively I gather enough information to conclude that a hurricane is on its way. Hurricane Katrina.

Infinity

By Greyson C.

The night sky flooded the water with light
As well as the lustrous moon
It was beautifully translucent and clear
The stars brightly bloomed

The Milky Way shown
The stars twinkling and dancing
The trail of the heavens
Quickly prancing

Shooting stars leaped across
Flying side to side
As if the sky was a damp puddle
They poured so bright

Past our glossy galaxy
The space that didn't matter
Held unknown stars
Many were scattered

The glorious nebulas
Printed on space
Clouds of pouring blue dust
No outer case

The stars made solar systems
And linked constellations, too
Invisible ropes played connect the dot
Coming into view

But back on the ground

Where the water shone
Sat a small boy
Gazing alone

The lush grass
Through his bare feet
His blue eyes
Endless and sleek

In the middle of it all
There he sat
Deep blue eyes
Reflecting

Infinity

Young Life

By Victoria S.

When I was young in the gym, I would walk in and see everything I could ever wish for, bars, beam, floor, and vault, I was in my heaven. My mom told me that I was born a gymnast, because when I was in her belly I was flipping like crazy.

When I was young in the gym, I would sit there and wonder why the smell made me feel so alive; it was sweaty gymnasts and the coaches' beef jerky (gross).

When I was young in the gym, the place always lifted me up after a bad day, and the way it made me feel like I could do anything I put my mind to.

When I was young in the gym, I would go and jump on an event, and it would make me feel unstoppable, it would lift my spirit.

When I was young in the gym, I never wanted to stop doing gymnastics, I was always #1 to my family and myself, even if I didn't win every medal.

When I was young in the gym, I had never imagined myself getting this far without having a mental and/or a physical breakdown. People never acknowledge how hard this sport is on your body and mind, it never allows your body to have a break. This is one of those sports that you love so much you could never let go, so either you fight through the tough times or you look back over time and realize how much you would have accomplished if you hadn't quit.

When I was young in the gym, I never stopped imagining what I could accomplish when I grow older. To this day I am still imagining, still pushing through, and now I am a level six gymnastics at Crenshaws Athletic Club.

Fire in My Eyes

By Kaylee B.

Fire lives within all of us

Sounds of crackling and snapping warm my heart

Smells of smoke and charcoal

All the tragedies sizzle off

Time passes unnoticed

Staring into its glorious flames

All the warmth makes me doze off

I was happier there

I always will be

My heart will always find fire

The flames would get bigger and bigger

That wouldn't frighten me

Fire was my friend

My companion

My home

I was happier there

I always will be

My heart will always find fire

When I was young I never wished to run around

Or live with street lamps polluting the sky

I wished to be unique and creative because I feel like I am not

But I never realized I would long for fire

I was happier there

I always will be

My heart will always find fire

██████████'s Diary: December ██████-June ██████

By Penny M.

December ██████

Even though Division ██████ has been hacking away at this mission for two years now, we have a better shot at getting rid of ██████ than they ever did. I mean, really, does that group of defects even stand a chance against us? I'm immortal ██████ can shapeshift, and ██████ can literally create natural disasters. We're the cream of the crop when it comes to combat skills (or at least the other two are), and we're super smart and good at planning.

Okay, that last one might not be true, but at least we're being sent on an easy mission that should be done in a week.

February ██████

I may have been mistaken. The enemy is far stronger than I could have anticipated, and Division ██████ has proved that being an annoying group of useless weaklings is a strategy. Not to mention I haven't been able to land a single punch on any of the enemies ██████ and ██████ are calling me useless), *and* I've died at least ██████ times over. One time I got thrown into a building, one time I got cornered and had to jump *off* a building, one time I got roasted, literally, one of the members of Division ██████ can summon fire. I got shot at least 10 times, stabbed 5 times, and the rest of the times were that aggravating little jerk ██████ from Division 5 murdering me in cold blood for NO REASON whatsoever! I'm so close to giving up. I don't even know if Division ██████, the most talented in our field, could handle this.

June ██████

[The entry for this day consisted entirely of scribbles before the page was destroyed entirely, due to the author ripping up the page from pure anger. No other journal entries have been added since.]

Glossary of Middle School

By Maggie L. and Kate S.

Middle School

A semi-clean education prison for juveniles.

Middle Schoolers

Juvenile inmates.

Math Class

A small torture room.

Science Class

Nap time.

Gym Class

A class invented for sweaty punishment.

The Lunch Line

The most dangerous line you'll ever be in.

The Last Bell

When you step out into the halls hoping upon hope that this isn't the day that *you* get trampled.

The Hallway Slow-walkers

The people you always end up behind who don't seem to feel the need to get to class.

The Girls' Bathroom

A place only meant for talking, socializing, and being on your phone.

Teachers

The underpaid people who have the "fun" job of taking care of the inmates of middle school.

Lunch

The highlight of your day.

The Edge of the World

By Kai G.-S.

Her feet, calloused and blistered, ran across the harsh wooden boards of the boat, and although she only made the smallest of noises, creaks followed her as she ran across the deck, shadow shifting across her face from the sails far above her head.

She had worked on this boat for more of her thirteen years than she could remember. The ropes in her hands, and the whole ship, felt like an extension of her own body.

The work was second-nature to her, in fact. As she stepped off the boat onto the dock, she stumbled.

Although she never had a problem finding her sea legs, she always struggled to find her footing on land.

She practically lived on the boat, dawn to dusk, and long voyages were her favorite, when she didn't have to leave her only home.

Coins plunked unceremoniously into her hand.

There was one thing she looked forward to every time she returned to land, and she couldn't wait to see them.

The sun swung down towards the horizon, setting her stumbling feet on the road through town.

Her white dress, covered in blue tie-dye spots and sand, swished around her feet, which were tan from the harsh day's light.

She turned into a shop.

"Hello, what can I get you?" said the woman behind the counter.

"As much bread and salad as this can buy," whispered the girl.

"Okay, that would be one roll, one half pound of salad," said the woman struggling to her feet. "Here's your change."

"Thank you," she murmured. She continued down the path, leaving bells jingling in the shop door behind her. She headed to the highest spot in town. Eventually, her feet left the road and traveled on soft forest leaves and sandy dirt.

A basket swung in her hand as her legs strode along, breaking into a run as she approached a large boulder. She turned to the side,

hoping to see her only companion, but was met only with harsh emptiness.

Solemnly, she planted herself in the sand before the rock, feet touching empty air at the edge of the cliff, and watched the sun drop toward the horizon, all alone, the small girl, with the large ocean stretched under her feet, dangling over the edge of the bluff. She dared not hope, for her dreams could never, would never, come true.

A Fading Sunset

By Nettie R.

The sun shrinks down into the ground
To let the moon come out.

The sun is done, had its turn
Now it's time for the moon to learn.

The day will leave and the night will rise
The loudness, clouds, and bright blue sky.

Say goodbye and fade away
Into the traces and remains of day
It's time for quiet darkness to stay.

The people all go silent
The animals all turn and watch
To see the last of light
Finally fade away.

Like hourglass sand, only lasting a moment,
Then quickly turns to dark.

Now comes the dreaded time
For silence to play its part
Its lonely, cold reign only lasting the night.

But now we can only move on and wait
For the time to arise the following day
It will come, so do not fret,
The bright golden haze of a sunset.

November

By Lucy C.

I was born in November, a month of many, many things, when the trees boast red, orange, yellow, and maybe still some green.

I was born in November when the pretty leaves leap and dance in the wind, when children are still eating like beasts at their Halloween candy feasts.

I was born in November when mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandmothers, and grandfathers alike were cook, cook, cooking seemingly without a thought of look, look, looking away.

I was born in November, when children want to go out again and gain a more hefty bag of sweets.

I was born in November when crafting long Christmas lists, being engulfed in Christmas bliss, and ignoring perhaps a “ding, dong” of a bored friend, was a popular hobby.

I was born in November, when I excitedly craft a list for two holidays, when my thoughts drift to others’ Christmas lists and to so many stores.

I was born in November when school was out and the fun had finally begun, it’s a time of bike rides and outdoor times.

I was born in November when members of many tribes, people of many nationalities, celebrate one: Native Americans during their heritage month, and when families, friends, and others, too, celebrate the military troops.

I was born in November when adults use their vote for a say in democracy and choose someone with zero mediocrity.

I was born in November when animals gather their food and eat, eat, eat, for winter, when animals as fat as boulders wander around.

I was born in November, a time of change. A change of time.

I was born in November when it's neither damp nor dry. The breeze is cool but not chilly, perfect weather!

I was born in November, when the delicious smell of fresh baked pumpkin bread covers me like a warm fuzzy blanket.

I was born in November, a month of many, many things. Good job, November!

The Iridescent Waters

By Noah M.

The black viper.

Fire pulses through its hollow fangs;

Its bladed eyes concentrate.

The hammer strikes the primer.

It destroys, decaying and rotting all in
venomous fire.

The pale shadow.

It flees from cognition, hiding out of sight in the forgotten.

It cowers in the darkness,

never to be discovered.

Nameless by man and deity,

fate shrouds it in fables.

The azure mountain.

It stands proud and mighty,

insurmountable and immense, with an apex too high to summit.

Above the world it watches,

an eagle perched, peering down at the vast expanses of the inferior,

Yaldabaoth clinging to the material.

The crimson hatred.

Through the mind It crawls and leaks

Into pure, unadulterated absolute.

It corrupts and perverts innocence and divinity.

It twists wisdom into ignorance and fear.

It grows and throbs until eternity ends.

The verdant sun.

It shines upon the world, embracing all in warmth and comfort.

It cleanses the world of impurities and corruption,

but it boils.

It writhes in agony in its own, fiery torture.

It shines so beautifully, a dandelion forever blooming in the sky.

It never stops screaming as every part of it burns,

but still, even through its never ending torment,

it brings life and happiness to those so far below.

The golden will.

It knows no bounds.

Artificial at heart, created by the hands of humanity,

It reciprocates that creation, and holds it dear.

It uses its creativity to devise and construct.

For that is the will of humanity.

The ashen river.

Time forever flows, an unbiased river of events and situations.

Its gray, bleak waters rush predictably.

It separates and branches off into creeks and pools, but it maintains its form.

Then it ends.

The waters of millenia percolate out of existence, and the river runs dry.

At the end of the ashen river all vanish and disintegrate,

And oblivion, incomprehensible oblivion leaves no trace of existence,

but black, white, blue, red, yellow, green, and gray remain,

fragments of reality.

United as one,

in spite of their clashing and conflicting existence,

In spite of their polar differences,

In spite of hate and love,

In spite of creation and destruction,

In spite of might and meek,

They form a river.

The iridescent waters.

Time flows once more,
unpredictably fluctuating and glittering
like stars drifting through the infinite.
And through the waters paradoxical existence,
And through the waters conflicting existence,
And through the waters opposites and similarities,
It flows, evermore,
As the river of time.

The Wanderer

By Zara C.

“Good morning.”

The birds chirp and sing.
The sun rises beyond the horizon,
crested over the water,
the most captivating thing.

Wandering along a path,
water washing over my feet.
The sun crawling through the sky,
the clouds just lazily rolling by.
A swarm of butterflies dance,
pirouetting through my life.

Singing to the setting sun,
blowing my sweet bubble gum.
Laying on the beach sand,
in a satin sleeveless red dress
alone,
all alone.

When darkness falls,
the stars glitter bright in the sky.
On the surface of the ocean
the reflection of the moon ripples in the night.
Go to sleep my beloved,
I heard from afar.
The ocean beckons me
danger and all.

The tide rolls in,
the tide rolls out.

Let the Night Rise

By Josie B.

We went out again--
'*Do you like American
Music?*' We love it.

We don't have much to
Say to each other tonight.
We don't need the words.

I hear you still. A
Flash of glittery something,
Heels stabbing at toes.

Laugh at ourselves
Fall to the ground, hands clutching
Lifeline ticket stubs.

'*Say something, say some
Thing, anything!*' We need to
Hear it, scream it out.

We twist and shout, and
We scream along with our hearts
Let the noise grow too.

'*Boys don't cry.*' Let me.
I know I feel the same things
As the rest of us

Ripples of movement
Hit walls and bounce back, braving
the throng twice. We sing.

*Take a piece of my
Heart!* Haven't we done enough?
Take another piece.

How much do you need
From me? I know I have no
Choice in the matter.

*"I'm sorry but I'm
Just thinking of the right words
To say..."* Promise me

That you will tell me
The answer to our questions.
As long as you know.

Release us both now
With your voice. We know
How to sing along.

Let the frustration
Billow from your moving form
And let it all go.

What could we know? We
Are the children of the young
In an unheard time.

Letting the night rise
Far above our eager heads
Forget us again.

Hopes Are Impeccable

By Edie T.

Dreams

Wishes

Hopes

Prayers.

The other individuals

They get their wants.

The conspiracy theories have done me wrong.

I give, and they get.

Why can't that be me?

For what makes the others so special?

I've tried blowing on the dandelions.

Tossed my pennies down the never-ending wells.

Asphyxiate on the wicks.

The tiny blazing arsons of my hope.

I've prayed to the shooting stars.

For I've done so many things.

But though I've tried all of these methods

The trickery doesn't do a thing.

I still end up with six pale painful petals.

Slowly ripping off each one, as bitter as I can be.

"My wish will come true"

"My wish will not come true"

When I Was Young at the Playground

By Cecelia C.

When I was young at the playground, I could smell the fresh wood chips on the ground that I fell on. When I was young at the playground, I could taste the Kona Ice; Tiger's Blood never let me down. When I was young at the playground, I could feel the breeze blow through my hair and all the sand from the sand box would gush and go straight into my mouth. When I was young at the playground, I could hear my voice screaming when I fell on the sharp wood chips, but I also heard my mother's voice saying it is going to be okay!

Fire

By Sophia W.

Candle light flickers in the hallway
Spinning and twirling on the wick
Leaping about, melting the wax that holds it upwards

It kisses my hand when I lean down to touch it
Quick and hot
Instantly, my hand feels aflame

Boldly, it puffs its chest in defiance before I huff
The warm glow recedes to the barely burning embers
Nevertheless, it bounces back in triumph

It crackles in the hearth, running on the wood of the fireplace
criss-crossing as if to mark its territory
Brightly beaming on burning logs

Laughing and spitting flames, bathing in its warmth
But hisses when I pour a jug of water upon it
Runs across the grass in a hurry to escape but hits stone

Dancing as it burns the forest
Turning the trees to coal and the creatures to ash
Roaring all the while

Inspiration

By Josie B.

A single silent glimmer
A whisper to the deepest depths
A gleaming butterfly, an inch away
Casts one red string trail
As it floats away
Carrying lyrics on its back.

We snatch the cord like a fishing line
Thinking ourselves exemplary,
When the prey we hunt has the true virtue.
Do not take advantage of the butterfly.
Let it guide you softly, let the gentle shine
Blind you of all else.

As it burns, it will consume the darkness.
As it burns, it will become clear.
Follow the string, and grab
Your pen and paper,
For inspiration has struck.

Shattered Mirror

By Brooke Z.

If four plus one is twenty-one,
Then this poem has begun.
Look up and down to cross the street,
And do a handstand on your feet.
Your mind will mind its own fun,
When the maintenance is thoroughly done.
Tooth and claw beats any gun,
If the poison amounts to none.
In the cold it's hot cross buns,
Cross as cold and hot as the sun.
The pencil's ink will grow and run,
While the pen's lead heart makes icy puns.
Four plus one is twenty-one,
And this poem has not yet begun.

Rotten Milk

By Marlo D.

I see it on our counter, Mom won't take it out.

"It has a few days left," she says without a doubt.

"It obviously oozes."

"Honey, do you want bruises?"

She always refuses.

Then the conversation defuses.

Pre-Cracked Egg F.A.Q.

By Violet G.

www.pre-cracked-egg.com/fac

-FAQ- frequently asked questions

My pre-cracked egg had a purple yolk. Should I be concerned?

No. That is extremely common in our product and is no cause for concern.

Why is there no shell that comes with my pre-cracked egg?

It's a pre-cracked egg. Why would it have a shell?

My pre-cracked egg came without the pre-cracked egg. I am threatening to sue for false advertisement.

Did I ever specify that it came with a pre-cracked egg? No. Stop spreading lies.

Can I use my pre-cracked egg as glue?

As I always say: "A pre-cracked egg isn't just an egg. It can serve so many purposes- the only limit is your imagination."

Why is my pre-cracked egg cold?

Maybe because I refrigerated it before sending it to the stores? God, Janice.

Where did you get the idea to make a pre-cracked egg?

I'm so glad you asked. When I was 15, I broke my leg because my friend Rodericio threw an egg at me. I was only 20 pounds at the time (a story for another time) so it greatly damaged my weak and frail body. The egg shell also left several scars, both mental and physical. I still cannot see an egg shell without recoiling. During my healing period, I had a lot of thinking time. Approximately 5 years. Again, I was very weak. Anyway, I thought about my condition. A woman, too weak to even see an egg shell

without shedding a tear. So I sought out others, just like me. And I found, like, at least two. They helped me fund this project, and now, here we are. My dreams have become a reality. I no longer live in fear that I might bleed due to an unusually sharp egg shell. I can be free now.

Did that actually happen?

I don't like your tone.

What happened to Rodericio?

He went on a keto diet and was never heard from again.

Eggs are good for a keto diet, right?

What are you implying?

I tried to make scrambled eggs with my pre-cracked egg. Why won't it cook?

Oh yeah, that's because I pre-cooked it. I was getting some salmonella reports from unhappy customers so I decided to pre-cook the pre-cracked egg.

Oh. Well I'm trying to scramble it and it won't scramble. Again, why?

The same 'salmonella customers' also said that they didn't like the texture of the unhooked egg, so they took a vote and decided it would be better if it were pre-scrambled, so I had to pre-scramble the pre-cooked pre-cracked egg.

Can I feed my newborn baby pre-cracked egg?

Yes, in fact it is recommended! Not by the health department though. Or the FBI. Or the FDA, or the CDC, or the CIA. Really any government agency. But yes!

Art

By Miranda F.

Wood and wire, pen and ink, paint and paper
All resources for art
All ways to display emotion

The wood and wire look boring
But sophisticated sounds come out of it
Cheery or grieved
The pieces still create a memory

The ink looks messy and the pen runs dry
But the ink is simply a messenger for the writer
Fiction or nonfiction
The words still mimic in the reader's head

The paint looks gooey and the paper is empty
But with a few dashes, a masterpiece is born
Abstract or lifelike
The dashes are still seen with eyes sealed

Many people love art
But some pay no forethought to it
Visualize a world without art
No music
No books
No paintings
A meaningless hushed existence

The books you tear through
The art that amazes you
The sounds that you desire
All gone
No more

Emptiness

The appalling silence swallows the earth
So quiet but yet so loud
No music
No wood
No wire

The lack of words is taunting
So blank but yet so complex
No books
No pen
No ink

The blank canvases are disheartening
So dull yet so distracting
No pictures
No paint
No paper

Walking through a blank silent world
is an artist's distress
Would art be wanted but ignored
Or discouraged out of fear

Afraid of different
Afraid of change

Afraid of wood
Afraid of wire

Afraid of pen
Afraid of ink

Afraid of paint
Afraid of paper

Afraid of art

In the Middle

By Petra S.

Some people have everything
Some people have nothing
Then there are the people in the middle
The people who pity the less fortunate
The people who curse the successful
The people who are just in the middle
Standing on the edge of a full broken riddle
Wanting to help the people down there
Scowling up to the people up there
Living their whole life in pity or hate
Scared to move
To mess up fate

Ode to the Rejected Bugs Below

By Greta S.

Bug,
Persecuted by the
Cackling
Infant
yet giant,
Clumping and pulling
On your prized wings,
As if a simple trashed brooch
To poke and ignore
At the bottom of the trashcan.

You are a vibrant mint geranium,
With your foliage
Expanding
Outside of a rainforest's rummage
Of creatures,
Only for the foliole to be taken apart,
And probed
by your pores
and spores.

Your silent tears of abuse,
Wisp off as unseen vapor,
And useless condensation
Like the overlooked
And crying
Clouds above.

Maltreated to the point of
Malnutrition,
Causing soaring sky-diving

In a blurry panic of fear
While bystanders around you
Laugh at
Your inability
To encore the rage
That the rest of the world
Praises.

You are a slave underfoot by
The Heaven above's amusement.
They have
Abjected such
A wonderful,
Buzzing blissful boy
Created by God's purity,
To the unfair poverty
Of the wretched world.

But I say,
Farewell to the giant's sneering,
Farewell to your oppression
Caused by these uncaring,
Wing tearing tyrants.
You, so pleasurable tainted
By a brain forged with innocence,
Unable to comprehend your distress,
Deserve to see the unfurling,
The uncurling,
The ruffling sunrise
Of the morn.
The mixed moisture
And scent
Of a mint geranium
That only your tormentors
Can enjoy.

Five Ways of Looking at Sunflowers

By Arya I.

Golden sunshine entering the room
Golden petals of a sunflower glistening in the dark
Queen of the light

Center of seeds
Tall and determined
Forever yellow
One symbol of love
Happy smiles
Never old enough to know less

Wiser as it grows
Brighter as it glows
Always wanting to know more

Grows in the summer
Wants the sun
But can never get enough

Rain

By Cleo H.

Rain

Tapping against your window
As you're lying in your bed
Teddy at your side
With a book

Rain

Shaking trees
Howling wind
You, hiding under your blanket
Closing your eyes tight

Rain

Pulling you to the door
You running onto the street
Looking up
“What do you want from me?!”

Storm

uncontrollably pouring down
Soaking your socks
Turning your lips purple
Whipping your hair into your face

Storm

Rocketing down
Thunder booming louder than ever
Eyes blurry
Blinding you from reality

Rain

Whistling in your ear
Slowly parting
As you walk inside
Feeling defeated

Rain
rain rolls down your cheek
Splattering on your blanket
Wiped away with a hand

Rain
Rain dripping down
Off the leaves of the trees
After the storm
Is gone.

The Many Aspects of Amy

By Lucy C.

Gardner, School Board, Chiropractor, Mother,
The Many Aspects of Amy,
Amy Firth,
My great-great-grandmother,
My hero!

Poison ivy,
In her own backyard,
To warn her grandkids of the three-leaf beast,
The Many Aspects of Amy!

On the school board,
Years ago,
A woman,
Amy!
A school, her namesake, is still here from all those years ago!
The Many Aspects of Amy!

A chiropractor,
Wow,
A good one, too.
Also, she met her husband there at chiropractor school,
Cool, cool, and cool
The Many Aspects of Amy!

Now, guess what else?
She played basketball as well,
A star athlete,
She played at school after the bell!
The Many Aspects of Amy!

Mother to my Great-grandma Bailey!
Grandmother to my Grandpa John!
Great-grandmother to my Dad!
Great-great-grandmother to me!
The Many Aspects of Amy,
Amy Firth,
My great-great-grandmother,
My hero!

Knowledge of the Unknown

By Brooke Z.

There is a search going far and wide. Not for a person, item, or animal. A search for logic, reason, and solutions. A search for action, for things to change. But it's not big enough. Humanity is failing.

We aren't as intelligent as we think. We presume we know a lot—about math, science, the way the world works... We don't. Even the periodic table has gaps, holes that are waiting to be filled.

One single theory proven correct or incorrect could change our world as we know it. It could suddenly be a catastrophe that we never even thought to think was possible. And yet we live in ignorance, finding these theories amusing, ludicrous, or even boring, not even taking note of the travesty that could lay ahead.

But we do know of a travesty, one very close to happening. We caused it. It's called climate change. The problem is, though, we don't partake in changing this change. We're just a bunch of big snobs, in this tiny galaxy. We're just a bunch of small pests, in this huge universe. We don't care about silly little theories, or even our own planet. We don't even care about our own brain cells. We make horrible devices, only out of greed and for money.

I suppose I should stop writing. I suppose this is all in vain. Nobody wants to change. Throughout human history, all we've done is destroy. European settlers first came to America in the 1500s. They killed Native Americans. They cut down the forests. They enslaved people. And even before that, Native Americans killed each other all the time.

Fast forward a little while later, and we see a civil war in the U.S. Then comes World War I. And World War II. I'm so glad everyone's friends now. But wait, there's more! Korea splits into two. Don't even get me started on China and Taiwan. And... then there's Afghanistan, and that whole mess. A wonderful representation of sharing and kindness by the world leaders!

You see, no one wants to listen to theories about great cataclysms, even when they know they're already here. No one wants to do anything,

or even think about it. But we need to. We have to take action to save our home. Do you want the only planet we can live on to have a massive flood, and drown everyone because people were so ignorant?

You probably assume I'm going to end this with a sweet little paragraph about how we still have time, how the world hasn't ended yet, how we can still have hope. I'm not. If I do that, this whole thing will go to waste. We need to act, and we need to act now¹.

Are you even listening?

¹ If you want to help, here are some helpful links:

NRDC - <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/how-you-can-stop-global-warming>

NASA - <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>

EPA -

<https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/climate-change-indicators-seasonal-temperature>

If a Summer Day Was Cold

By Alina C.

The world often likes to taunt the dreams we have
It likes to make us hopeful
And laugh when the hope fades away

People will turn and ask you

“Are you upset?”

My child
I want you to listen to these questions I have
And my answers that follow
My task to you:
Answer them
When I am gone

Why is it that if we say

“Yes, I am upset”

They view us as weak

Why is it that if we say

“No, I’m not upset”

They question us more

You see, my child,
I don’t mind when the world taunts me
It teaches me to take nothing for granted
It teaches me to handle disappointment
It teaches me to enjoy what I have

But my child

Listen well

When you say that to people
When you say it doesn't bother you

They will look at you
In a way that makes you shrink

Do not cry, my child
For that may seem dark and cold
But if a summer day was cold
I would simply say

It was because of the rain

Cheer

By Chloe C.

I tumble across the floor
“Stretch out more,
And tighten your core!”

Trying to get it right
And needing to
get over my fright.

I tell myself
“Listen to my coach”,
Cause if I don't, I'll look like a cockroach.

Though nailing my tricks takes a while,
Walking into practice
still makes me smile.

Summer Bliss

By Luca B.

Sitting atop a garden bed, basking in the rays of sun
Sipping lemonade from a glass, foggy from the cool air

The kids' gleeful screams
Chasing each other through the woods
While the dogs lay in the shade, panting with pleasure

Listen to the wrens sing, their high pitched chirping
Back for a summer of sun and clouds

Look at the treetops, the shade they provide
The animals run about the branches
They have a separate world up there in the trees

What beautiful weather this is
The wind wisping slowly past, cooling the summer air just slightly

Look at the dogs, their thick fur coats
Shedding their hair till comfortable
Breaths heavy, bodies soggy and wet from the cool creek water

Enjoy the summer sun, shining down its bright rays of light
Enjoy the breeze whispering about, it is pure summer bliss

The Things You'll Remember

By Caroline B.

I'll wear a pink shirt
And a yellow flower in my hair and
You'll take a picture of me
Standing in the grass
Smiling

I'll talk about the moon
And the evening light
And everything that's gold and shimmery until
You understand
How immense my love is

I suppose I'll always be a little too daydream and
Not enough reality for you to hold onto,
Too much fairy dust
And not enough flesh

You'll only remember me as happy
And intangible
And entirely insane

You'll only ever see through me
Like butterfly wings
Or broken promises
Or sidewalk cracks
That are always more obvious
After you stumble home with bloody knees

When I vanish
You will find the sea saltier
Than you remembered

And you won't know you are drinking my tears
Because I'll haunt you with sugar so sweet
That it runs from your ears and
Turns your mouth black
Black
Like the clothes at my funeral
Or the color of what you'll conveniently forget

When I vanish
You will only marvel at how lovely the dark is

So you'll sleep
And fall in love
With darker hues

And only remember me
As yellow and pink.

The Succeeding Opponent

By Charlie S.

Where'd all the time go
We ask gazing in the sky
Where'd it all go, seems like it's floating by
The days are short
But the hours are long
I always seem to wonder where everything came from
Day by day, night by night
I try to live in the moment
But the future is always the succeeding opponent
My past seems long but turbulent
I usually misinterpret it
I worry in the future if I will succeed
Instead of living in the moment and smiling with glee
We procrastinate the fact that we have to
Assassinate the idea of our present being just as important as our future
Rich people say the most valuable object is time
But most people would sell it all for a dime
We always think about the time-ahead
Instead of enjoying what's happening now at hand
Maybe not living forever is good
Because it would
Create an avail of things you do
And things that are new
Instead of meaningless conceptions
And perceptions
Of living forever and doing it later
Everybody says "We're burning daylight"
Instead of enjoying the pale light
Of the moon as it shines
In the defines and spines of the trees
Time is free

But to an utmost degree
It's priceless
Because it's timeless
Because without it
You'd be lifeless
Along with me being rhymeless
In numbers, life seems long
And prolonged
Yet we still ask "Why?"
All this time is passing us by

Nocturnal

By Camilla M.

The whole landscape is pitch dark,
All that can be seen is the moon and the stars
The trees have grown still
And the air has a chill
All that is awake,
Bats, frogs, crickets, raccoons, snakes

All through the night
They glide in through the sky
Some leap far and high
Some swim in a crystal lagoon
Some howl at the glowing moon

When the sun begins to rise
They crawl into their den, close their eyes
And take a nap until
All the land is dark and still
Again.

Sun and Moon

By Posey B.

Moon...

I give nothing but shivers.
I give nothing but dark.
I'm the planet of gloominess.
I *am* one of your shadows.

My dark fog hovers.
My fog jumps over everyone.
People are afraid of my darkness;
I create sadness.
Everyone's asleep because of my sorrow.
Tears erupt out of eyes.

Sun.

You give me warmth.
You give me light.
You're the star of happiness.
You *are* the star.

Your golden glow beams.
Your rays of light bounce from sky to ground,
They shine;
Making others shine
Everyone's awake to take in your glory.
They smile at your silk.

Moon...

We are love and hate.
You are loved,
I give hatred.

Divided

By Aubrey M.

Lonely in a room full of faces
Split and divided by our races
Don't we know that we're all people
So why are only some of us equal
Don't we see we're all the same
So why do we always act so vain
Races speak out
Minds divide
The differences we set through time
But power is a fool man's game
Yet it's something we all crave
Races speak out
Minds divide
To breaking hearts covered in pride
Pay a penny, pay a dime
To see the truth instead of lies
Pay a penny, pay a dime
To lonely people lost in time

When I Rise

By Elinore E.

I am not a villain. I am not a hero. I am not anything. Not good. Not bad. There is no good or evil. No heroes or devils. No sinners and no saints. There is just *survive*. One more day. Just keep living, keep going. Just believe. Believe things will get better. Believe that one day there will be heroes. Know that there will first be a villain, someone must rise up and put us on a map. Take us out of the nameless. Bring us back from the footnotes. Let us fall so we can rise.

But it will not be me. I have no vision, no legacy. Nothing but hunger and pain. Nothing but the feel of acid rain and the texture of hopelessness. No belief. No more.

None of the nonsensical costumes, the brightly colored capes waving in the streets, flying from the shoulders of those who still have hope. Who have not learned to give up. Who have not learned of reluctant survival, of wishing for escape. Of saving up all that you have so that you might someday be free. Of trading your life for being a little bit closer to freedom.

One day I will escape this nameless hell, these alleys of mud and these hopeless nights. I will escape and I will finally live.

And I will come back. I will come for all those who cannot escape. I will tear down these walls and lead the hopeless to freedom.

And to all those with their mysterious cloaks, playing at the hero. I am done. I am not playing anymore. I am done *just surviving*. I am done watching more and more lose hope every day. I am done.

I will be the villain if that's what it takes to rise.

The Traveler

By Angela B.

The sun shone through the leaves of a tree,
leaving little paper cutouts of light scattered across the ground.
A small cat, silent as the clouds,
Was the only movement in the forest.
The splotches of light climbed slowly onto the cats back,
And fell back to the ground,
As the cat silently weaved its way in and out the gaps between the trees.
Never stopping in one spot,
always searching
For a place unknown.

dear veronica

By Chim B.

dear veronica

some things i will never say out loud to you
like, i've always hated your blonde highlights
your voice has always gotten on my nerves
but it's never enough for me to be angry
i've always needed to hurt somebody
summer is too sentimental
i hate having to think of what i've lost
a lot, in these past few years
a lot i know i'm never gonna remember
but i will keep loving you
i will feed off of your sage green gaze
like a deer lapping water from a creek
i wish we could have worked out
but you were acting a fool
and i went crazy
came over a couple of times
felt your hand touching my heart
thought maybe i'd found
somebody just like me
somebody who was just as ugly
a person not worth saving
from the problems they made for themselves
summer is too sentimental
i hate having to think of what i've lost
but i'm sending love to you
i'm leaving this city
as soon as i've got my license
but i will keep loving you
i will feed off of your sage green gaze
like a deer lapping water from a creek

i wish we could have worked out
but you were acting a fool
and i went crazy
i went crazy
i don't yell much
i guess i was just afraid
of losing myself
because if i can't have someone to ruin me
i can't have anything else
from charlotte

Fight It

By Penelope C.

I am imperfect the way I am
Don't tell me
I don't have to change my appearance for your approval
Do my makeup,
"Fix" my hair,
Lose weight,
Wear jewelry,
High heels,
Dresses,
Wear uncomfortable clothing,
I don't need to
Complain about beauty standards
I'm going to
sit on the side as I am objectified
I'm not going to
Fight it

↑ Now read it going up ↑

The River by a Cliff

By Charley S.

I see you crying by the river.
The door in the wood swings open to a cliff
You walk to the edge just to quiver.

I searched for years for you not to consider.
You still sit there ever stiff
I see you crying by the river.

You just see me as a giver.
Never my eternal griff
You walk to the edge just to quiver.

All your problems can't be solved with liquor.
There is no and, but, or if
I see you crying by the river.

It's not a time game, you can't outlive her.
Slow down, don't stay on a riff
You walk to the edge just to quiver.

The tides are too thick, float down-river.
Take the time to sand the skiff
I see you crying by the river.
You walk to the edge just to quiver.

Flashlight

By Olivia-Kate C.

I could stop a mile off the shore,
But that would be a bore.
I could take the second fastest route,
But that's nothing to tout.
I could stop the car and coast,
Settle for not the most.
I could take the easy way,
One pill not two.
Yet,

I chose the hard way out,
The way that twists and bends,
Scratches and pokes,

Because I've seen you.
Your influence empowering,
Me to be a better me,
Us to be a better us,
Our world to be a better place.

Your courage undying.
You've shown me,
Confidence,
Takes you far.

The means to the end clear,
Yet obvious obstacles unable to elicit fear,
Because I have seen you.

You've shown me,
Taking the hard way,

Is more than doing,
What most are afraid to,
Overcoming the most common fear,
Failure.

You've shown me,
It's a journey
A process,
Not to be taken lightly.

You empower me,
You've given me what I need to push through,
A flashlight,
For the darkest path,

For that,
I thank you.

Memory

By Jillian D.

i remember
waiting on the beach
where the icy tides
and rolling warm water meet
staring at the stars
waiting for them to come down to me
to grab my blistered hand
and lift me up
to show me the world
through eyes like the sun dancing on water

but all i see
is what the world was supposed to be
an image of fairies whispering among the trees
of morning's teardrops of dew
blooming the flowers of day i once knew

their voices call out to me
beg me to come save them
but i cannot—
for i am nothing but a memory
waiting on the beach—
waiting to be remembered.

Sunflowers

By Gray L., from Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" painting

Oh, sunflowers
Picked
One by one
Once free
And growing wild
Now sitting
And growing old
Oh, sunflowers
Beautiful
In a vase filled with water
But oh sunflowers,
You are beautiful
In a body filled with sorrow
Oh, sunflowers,
You have a single wilted leaf
How long
Until you have naught
But one healthy one?
Oh, sunflowers,
Why must it be you
And not daffodils
Or daisies
Or roses
Oh, sunflowers
I mourn for you
Silently
While I pick you
And put you in
My pockets
So when I die
Your seeds will grow

Into something
Beautiful
And maybe
I will be at peace

Author's Note: The ending of this poem was inspired by a BBC story about a Ukrainian woman giving sunflower seeds to a Russian soldier to keep in his pocket so that, should he die, something beautiful would come of it. This poem is dedicated to the people of Ukraine.

Paper Planes

By Farrah K.

Your smile is like a memory in my mind
As the paper folds in your small, delicate hands
The sun is bright as the plane soars above our heads
Such a short time we are children; the plane lands