

The Purple Patch

A Literature and Arts Journal

Volume XXI



SIGMA TAU DELTA

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH HONOR SOCIETY

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SIGMA TAU DELTA
INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH HONOR SOCIETY

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I am honored to present the XXI or the 21st issue of the *Purple Patch*. This volume continues to present written literature and art from students attending Missouri Valley College. This volume represents the academic year of 2021-2022.

Due to the ongoing pandemic I had to work on the *Purple Patch* remotely with assistance from the assistant editor and the *Purple Patch* board. Even with the pandemic happening, the chapter members were able to travel to attend the annual Sigma Tau Delta convention that was being held in Atlanta, Georgia, in the Spring. We listened, interacted with other Sigma Tau Deltans, and I presented my accepted work. This paper can be read in this volume of the *Purple Patch*.

I applaud everyone who was accepted into this volume of the *Purple Patch*. I also adored reading and looking over every piece of writing or artwork submitted to the *Purple Patch* for review. I hope that readers will love this volume as much as I did and consider submitting to next year's volume of the *Purple Patch*.

Lauryn Craine
Editor in-Chief
Nu Epsilon Chapter Vice President

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1. Academic Prose

- 1.1. Essential Keys to Life - Gabriela Aldana Rodríguez
pg.6
- 1.2. Rhetorical Analysis of Changes by Tupac Shakur -
Olwethu Dlamini pg.9
- 1.3. To Make the World Peaceful with Education - Yurika
Fujiwara pg.12
- 1.4. Speech for Glory - Stevan Milosevic pg.15
- 1.5. Put Sexual Assault to a Stop - Camie Humphrey &
Mystique Anderson pg.17
- 1.6. Virtual Classes: Pros and Cons - Diogo Mata pg.23
- 1.7. A Whole Story Behind a Simple Eye Contact - Marcelo
Goichi Okuda Filho pg.27
- 1.8. The Power of Our Imagination - Marcelo Goichi Okuda
Filho pg.29
- 1.9. "It's Britney, Bitch" - Alex Sierra Rioz pg.31
- 1.10. Pollution, Law and Protests in Serbia - Nemanja Matic
pg.35
- 1.11. Why you Should Work Smarter, Not Harder - Nemanja
Matic pg.41

2. Artwork

- 2.1. Manifest Destiniti - Carson Rauschenberg pg.46
- 2.2. Clap of Thunder - Carson Rauschenberg pg.47
- 2.3. The Tank - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.48
- 2.4. Old Times - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.49
- 2.5. Young Hall - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.50
- 2.6. The Path to MVC - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.51
- 2.7. USA Nation - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.52
- 2.8. Different Views of Colors - Felipe Souza pg.52
- 2.9. Pictograms - Vitoria Kazanovski pg.53

- 2.10. The Monster Behind the Door - Felipe Souza pg.53
- 2.11. Defiance - Temo Olvera pg.54
- 2.12. Bio Joy - Temo Olvera pg.55
- 2.13. Powerhouse Power - Temo Olvera pg.56
- 2.14. Reality is Perspective - Temo Olvera pg.57
- 2.15. Woman with Red Braids - Carson Rauschenberg pg.58
- 2.16. The Walk to the Hill - Nicole Rubio Beltran pg.59
- 2.17. Head - Lucinda Lombaard pg.60
- 2.18. Plant - Lucinda Lombaard pg.61

3. Creative Prose

- 3.1. The Obsession - Isabella Regalado pg.62
- 3.2. The Lighthouse - Mariona Bolao Manén pg.65
- 3.3. Punisher - Mariona Bolao Manén pg.69
- 3.4. Being “Lazy”- Lauryn Craine pg.71

4. Poetry

- 4.1. What If? Would I? - Jenasyn Baker pg.74
- 4.2. I Am From - Jenasyn Baker pg.76
- 4.3. I Am From - Anonymous pg.77
- 4.4. Safe - Angel Cleare pg.79
- 4.5. The Boy Who Made Loving Easy - Kara DuPont pg.80
- 4.6. The Shadow - Kara Dupont pg.81
- 4.7. Who’s Life? - Jada Fepuleai pg.82
- 4.8. Surprise Attacks... and Love - Jada Fepuleai pg.82
- 4.9. Inattentive Mother - John Hoffman pg.83
- 4.10. seasonal depression - Joana Marucci Compte pg.84
- 4.11. Midnight Dessert - Xhon Pelushi pg.84
- 4.12. Why Am I Like This? - Tyesha Rhodes pg.85
- 4.13. Perception - Jamie Scott pg.86
- 4.14. A Cowboy’s Tale - Jerrod Battson pg.86
- 4.15. Cigarette Smoke - Helena Talbot pg.87
- 4.16. Died an Autumn Death - Kiara Williams pg.88
- 4.17. The struggle - Victor Gabriel pg.89

4.18.	Children's Giggle - Lindsay Jordahl	pg.89
4.19.	When My Heart Opens - Alex Sierra Rioz	pg.90
4.20.	The Depth of the Ocean - Amberrose Castaldo	pg.93
4.21.	Visit You - Amberrose Castaldo	pg.95
4.22.	You Can't Save Everyone - Amberrose Castaldo	pg.97
4.23.	If I Wasn't a Writer - Mariona Bolao Manén	pg.99
4.24.	What I Was Wearing - Anonymous	pg.100
4.25.	Landmines - Lani Bushe	pg.101
4.26.	Nine - Anonymous	pg.101
4.27.	Average Reader - Drake Tipton	pg.102
4.28.	Daydreams - Drake Tipton	pg.103
4.29.	Worn Stories - Drake Tipton	pg.104
4.30.	Young Boys Death - Drake Tipton	pg.104
4.31.	Tidal - Drake Tipton	pg.105
4.32.	Colorful Mundane - Drake Tipton	pg.106
4.33.	Money Man - Keshawn Reynolds	pg.107

ACADEMIC PROSE

Essential Keys to Life Gabriela Aldana Rodríguez

Will Smith gave an emotional speech in the summer of 2010, which succeeded in convincing his audience by establishing credibility through the rhetorical elements; pathos, ethos, and logos. These elements help to increase the use of reason, emotions or credibility in his personal examples, like the fact that he has created his own path to stardom because when he was young he was nobody known, and now he is one of the best known actors in the world. The Running and Reading speech by Will Smith, strives to motivate and encourage all kind of people to do what they love, even if the path is challenging with his speech he tries to incite you to do it, he said that the path is not easy but with effort you will get it, you only need to believe in yourself, while he is speaking he tries to convince his audience by using pathos, logos, and ethos.

The speech summarizes the idea of self-love and self-motivation, Will Smith did his speech eleven years ago, after winning a prize at the children's TV award. He tried after his winning, to motivate other people to do what they loved, so the speech was unexpected and everyone could feel identified. His purpose was to explain to the rest of the world his keys of life, which he reveals as running and reading. He describes running as a way to improve yourself, because when you are tired a little voice in your head tells you to stop and to give up. Smith says that in that moment, you must continue to win against the voice in your head. The other key of life is reading because with that you have enough wisdom in any field so as not to be fooled by anyone.

Throughout the discourse, he makes reference to a few forms of ethos, particularly he uses many references as personal experience is concerned, but not much because he uses very weak arguments. As an example of personal experience I found, "The key to life is running

and reading,” “There’s a little person who talks to you,” “And real young, I realized that the person who works the hardest wins,” “While the other guy is sleeping, I’m working. The other guy is eating, I’m working. You know, the other guy is making love, I mean, I’m making love but I’m working, you know, like hard at it!” With these examples he gives more credibility to his speech, even though he does not appeal to bigger authorities, he is reflected as an example of personal improvement and that everything is possible following the guidelines of his own speech.

He also uses a different type of ethos, as an appeal to experts or expression of goodwill in some quotes from the text such as, “The key to life, the key to life, is running and reading,” as an expression of goodwill, and “There have been millions and billions and billions of people that have lived before all of us,” as an appeal to experts. With these examples he is more successful in what he is saying because he is motivating others and giving real examples.

Secondly, he uses logos to refer to his logic, the first example he uses is cause and effects, “I’m gonna say something that I want you to remember for the rest of your lives,” with this statement he is making a difference in your mind before he said his keys of life and between your mind after you know those keys, with this affirmation he is saying something that will change your mind for the rest of your life. As an example of cost and benefits he utilizes, “Agh, I’m tired. Ohhh, I’m so tired, there’s no way I can possibly continue. And you want to quit. Right?”

That person—if you learn how to defeat that person when you’re running—you will learn how to not quit when things get hard in your life. Running—alright—that’s the first key to life,” “While the other guy is sleeping, I’m working. The other guy is eating, I’m working. You know, the other guy is making love, I mean, I’m making love but I’m working you know, like hard at it!” With this statement he tries to make you see that everything has its costs and that the path is not always easy, and heightens the moment when you feel that you cannot take it anymore. Just at that moment, with his speech, he wants you to

continue and win that voice in your head because at that moment you will have taken another step towards what you really want.

Other examples of logos are facts and anecdotes, “And real young, I realized that the person who works the hardest wins,” “While the other guy is sleeping, I’m working. The other guy is eating, I’m working. You know, the other guy is making love, I mean, I’m making love but I’m working you know, like hard at it!,” with these samples he is reinforcing his theory of running and reading, as he returns to talk about his own anecdotes and his own example. He is very successful with those statements because he is giving veracity on what he is saying because is a real and personal example that everyone knows.

Finally, Smith uses different examples of pathos to give more emotion in his words and whose aim is to influence readers, with examples of promise of gain, “The key to life is running and reading,” with this affirmation he gives you his key to winning life, but it is clear that the way will not be easy and you will have to work hard, as example of promise of enjoyment, “Love what you do, and do what you love,” with this statement he motivates his listeners to do what they really love, and he also is encouraging everyone to do their best. Another example of pathos is fear of loss, “I got this real psychotic thing about, like, perfection and working hard,” with those phrases he makes you see that the way is not perfect, there are always bad moments and you have to learn to get out of them.

“The person that works the hardest, wins,” this phrase is an example of ethos, logos, and pathos, this quote refers to, identification with readers, facts, cost and benefits, anecdote, promise of enjoyment and promise of gain, this phrase is the central idea of the discourse and with which the entire speech can be summarized

Will Smith was able to show his confidence in his speech. By speaking from personal experience, he knew how to connect with the audience and explain the method he uses to see life, also adds many motivating messages, makes you believe that you can achieve what you want, so for these reasons he is very successful in his speech. Smith defends his motivational speech with facts, personal anecdotes or experiences, using different voice tones and some rhetorical methods

with the intention that people change their minds and start to trust in themselves. With his discourse, he pushes and encourages all kinds of people to do what they love even if the path is challenging.

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Rhetorical Analysis of Changes by Tupac Shakur

Olwethu Dlamini

This paper is going to conduct a rhetorical analysis of Tupac Amaru Shakur’s song known as “Changes.” In the song, Tupac delivers a message calling for justice for the African American community in America. He addresses poverty, racism, police brutality and lack of equality that African Americans go through daily. “Changes” by Tupac Shakur succeeds in its purpose of highlighting the social issues of poverty, racial profiling, racism and police brutality of African Americans while encouraging African Americans to unite together. He uses expression of anger and disgust, personal experience and identification with readers, and facts and data in his song to establish pathos, ethos and logos.

Tupac Amur Shakur was born on June 16, 1971 and was shot on September 13, 1996. He was an American rapper and actor. Shakur’s music addressed contemporary social issues that African Americans’ experience while living in America. He was a gangster rapper who incorporated his gangster persona into his music and art thus exposing it to mainstream audiences. Tupac was born into a world of poverty and African American activists as his parents were part of the Black Panthers Group. This makes the song “Changes” significant as the issues he highlights in the song are issues he himself experienced.

Tupac uses a pun on the word “changes”. He begins the song with “I see no changes.” This is a play on the word change by linking it to the “changes” that were meant to be brought to the lives of African Americans after the Civil Rights Movement. However, years later after the Civil Rights Movement no changes have happened as African Americans still live in poverty, encounter racism and are subject to police brutality. Secondly, by using the word ‘changes’ he is calling to the new generation of African Americans to bring forth change for the livelihood of African Americans in America.

Tupac starts the song with a strong use of pathos, specifically expression of anger and disgust to persuade his audience that poverty and skin color are linked. Shakur raps “I’m tired of being poor and even worse I’m Black. My stomach hurts so I’m lookin for a purse to snatch.” In this line Shakur exclaims that he is tired, poor, Black and that he is starving and looking for a crime to commit. Shakur links the color of one’s skin with poverty and how living in poverty results in one committing crimes. This is effective as it illustrates how many African Americans live in poverty and are not given as many opportunities compared to non-people of color to do right in life, so they often divert to committing crimes to get by. This is successful as it explains the struggle of being an African American because when people are not given equal opportunities to succeed in life, they will turn the other way and do whatever it takes to survive even if it includes committing crimes.

The song uses credibility, particularly personal experience and identification with readers to persuade the audience that African Americans are subject to police brutality. Shakur writes “Cops give a damn about a negro, pull the trigger kill a nigger he’s a hero.” In these lines, he goes into how African Americans, specifically males, are targeted by the police and that it’s not a big deal when a police officer kills a Black man. Shakur explains that when a police officer kills an African American their actions are justified, because they have a badge. In this line he demonstrates the relationship between police brutality and race. This is effective as it highlights how unfair the justice system in America is and highlights the stereotype that African American

males are criminals. This is a major problem as this leads to people taking justice into their own hands. Shakur explains that in order for the justice system to work it needs to be color blind.

The song uses reasoning particularly facts and data to appeal to the audience's common sense to persuade them that Black people face racial profiling. Shakur sings "It isn't a secret don't conceal the fact the penitentiary's packed and it's filled with Blacks." In this line, he exclaims that the prisons are filled with majority African Americans and that Black people are being targeted by the justice system. This is the underlined racism that Tupac is singing about that is racial profiling. Many African Americans have had encounters with someone who has discriminated against them because they are Black. These people automatically assume that because they are Black, they are criminals.

"Changes" is successful in highlighting the harsh reality that comes with being Black in America specifically being a Black man. Tupac gives the audience an inside look into how it's like to be Black in America and all the social issues that affect the Black community. He uses expression of anger and disgust, personal experience and identification with readers, and facts and data in his song to establish pathos, ethos and logos. Shakur is successful in communicating his message by explaining how Black people should not have to revert to crime because of poverty, Black people should not have to be shot and blamed for crimes they did not commit. Shakur identifies with the audience by using personal pronouns such as "we" to connect himself to his audience. This is effective as it makes the song more personal.

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To Make the World Peaceful with Education

Yurika Fujiwara

In “*Malala Yousafzai’s speech at the United Nations*,” Malala Yousafzai focuses on education and the role it plays in a peaceful world. She spoke on Friday, 12 July at the United Nation in New York. Yousafzai argues that all girls and boys should receive education to combat illiteracy, poverty, and ensure women can protect themselves with knowledge. Since the ousting of the former Taliban regime, Afghanistan's schooling and literacy rates, particularly for girls and women, have improved greatly, but now only female students are waiting to be reunited with their schools again. While I agree that education can change the world for the better and that we must take action to reject prejudice, I disagree with the way she wants to change the Taliban.

Firstly, I agree with her opinion that one child, one teacher, one pen, and one book can change the world. Education is the only resolution. Malala uses the proverb “The pen is mightier than the sword.” She explains that extremists think that killing people who have a lot of knowledge is the best solution and they do not need education because they do not know the contents of the book, and the book controls the people and society. Moreover, they imagine school was like hell. However, I believe that they should learn from one pen and one book that it is worse to kill innocent people in other countries. They may change their situation just by learning about society from one book or understanding general knowledge. In addition, the reason I consider education to be the best solution is that no one does not get hurt and owe knowledge. There is no learning from killing people. That is why you should be educated with pens and books instead of holding guns and swords. The Taliban now have to persuade the entire country to function, so they should be controlled in a way that education with pens and books is more influential and persuasive to everyone than guns and swords.

Secondly, She is saying that her audience needs to ask other people to change to be liberal to refuse prejudice based on caste,

religion, or gender. I recognize what she said because we should all be equal without prejudice. Moreover, I notice we should understand that sometimes we cannot change such as race. One recent example is that everyone will know that there are recent examples of problems with hating Asians and about black people. Not only this type of situation, there will also be a lot of discrimination around the world due to prejudices that are not known to everyone. I strongly feel that such things have never happened and should not happen in the future. Fortunately, there is an instance of opposition. Saudi Arabia has allowed women to drive in response to the public's suggestion that women's inability to obtain a driver's license is negatively affecting their labor productivity. This decision is intended to encourage women to enter the workforce and increase their consumption, including the purchase of automobiles. That's one gender issue solved. If we all work together, speak up, and make our opinions known, we can succeed and make it happen.

Finally, I appreciate most of what she says, but I question the way she wants to change the Taliban. I think it is not her role to give general education to children of the Taliban. She tells, "I want education for the sons and the daughters of all the extremists, especially the Taliban." Wars, conflicts, violence, terrorism, etc should never be allowed to happen, but the Taliban have their ways, their traditions, and their religion. For instance, Islam is not opposed to education and knows that education has an especially positive force, so they are afraid the women and children have knowledge. This situation is also described by Malala. She says in her speech, "The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them." and "That is why they are blasting schools every day. Because they were and they are afraid of change, afraid of the equality that we will bring into our society." If the Taliban know what education is, they will understand because there are people who believe peace and education is significant in the Taliban such as Pashtuns and Pakistan. In fact, Since 2001 both girls and boys have been able to go to school and learn about education. However, now, only the girls have not resumed going

to school and are waiting at home. Therefore, they can change little by themselves instead of Malala. It is important for the Taliban to learn a lot of things from their mistakes.

In conclusion, I believe that this world can be changed by education, and education is the only solution for peace because education affects people more than guns and swords. I also feel that we have to speak up to reject the prejudice of caste, religion, or gender as it is significant to understand each other and to be evaluated equally. I think these are the first steps towards peace. I judged that it is not a good idea for the Taliban's children to be educated by Malala due to not her role. Taliban should change by themselves with believing in education in the Taliban. Since 2001, the Taliban has been the worst in 2013. People's violence did not stop in an unstable situation. Even now, violence and bombs have not subsided, and recently, schoolgirls exploded near the school when they left school, causing deaths. From this event, the Taliban still felt that women were opposed to being educated. Her speech was very much appreciated by those who want to be educated in the Taliban and I thought some people would like to appeal to her. I admit she is a strong and encouraging woman. Malala's essay makes me empathize with not only Worksite Education but also her thinking. We need her speech to remind us that we should think more about peace like her.

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Speech for Glory

Stevan Milosevic

The speech of Mayor Gavrilovic, during the Austrian siege on Belgrade, in World War I, where he strategically motivated his army to fight, is a representation of the will, stubbornness, and patriotism of almost every Serbian out there. This essay is going to break down the logos, ethos and pathos and try to unbiasedly analyze the elements of it. Gavrilovic's speech, "Defending Belgrade until the dying breath," succeeded in convincing the army that his credibility, soldier's will for life and country and nation's ability to survive, are much stronger than the hostile Austrian army that was in front of them.

In the evening of 7th of October 1915, the Austrian army was getting ready to take over the bridge, which would give them an undefeatable position to assume control of Belgrade. Most of the Serbian people started migrating to the south, with only one regiment left to be sacrificed to hold back the attacks. Mayor Gavrilovic, who was in charge of this very regiment, held a speech, which is now known by many Serbians by heart, to motivate his soldiers, friends, and "brothers." His battalion which had a number less than 500, has been putting on constant attacks and pressure on the enemy. The stories were told about the Serbs, and even though almost everyone died, they were honored by Austrian leaders. Mayor Gavrilovic was injured, but survived, became a Colonel, and was awarded with the highest honor in Serbia, the star of Karadjordje.

Gavrilovic's reasoning or logos played a huge part in his mission. Logos is a system of demonstrating logic through examples or common sense. And the mayor's job to reason with a dying army was the most difficult of them all. He used the facts and data method to explain to soldiers that their lives were already gone. "Our lives do not exist!" He made peace with the fact he was going to die, and knowing that, he had nothing to worry about, which was his main argument to transfer. He carried on with stressing out their cause. "So, forward to glory! For King and country!" He knew that his people were raised to value the ancestors that gave everything so they could be alive. That's

why pointing out their purpose in this war, and the benefits of their actions, turned out to be crucial, as “the honor of Belgrade, must not be stained.” The last piece of puzzle regarding logos, was to use the cost and benefits technique. He explained to them that the cost of their sacrifice is not a sacrifice at all, as their “regiment is erased from existence.” But the benefits of their bravery could put them in the history books for good.

This line can also represent pathos, as a promise of gain. Even though they are going to die, they will remain alive in the hearts of their people, and people to come. Using pathos was the most important job, and that job requires recognizing and using emotions to influence others. Gavrilovic needed to awaken the giants within the Serbian soldiers marching into death, and he had to do it strategically. Serbia as a country persisted through centuries, and in spite of not being independent, still managed to survive. That’s why people would do anything to keep their nation from being destroyed for good. Gavrilovic started with promising an enjoyable future. Not for them, but for Serbia. “Long Live the King! Long Live the Belgrade!” That was the first successful trigger. He carried on with a promise of enjoyment. “Enemy is to be crushed by your fierce charge, destroyed by your grenades and bayonets.” Although for many this wouldn’t seem fun, for the army that is going to die, this was the most amusement they could get. After eliminating a sense of fear, as he pointed out they are no longer alive, he went on to expressing anger. “The Chain of command counted us out already,” and they were not going to let themselves be sacrificed for nothing.

Gavrilovic also made a good use of ethos with that line. Ethos is a way of using credibility to support an argument. And this way, he used the well-established position of Serbian government to show that credibility. First off, Gavrilovic used identification to establish ethos by saying “we.” He also started appealing to authority when he said: “Long live the King! Long live the Belgrade!” Moral character and their duty for the homeland was called into question. And every single one of them responded. By referencing the king, nation and glory, Gavrilovic gave them a reason. A reason to die with honor, for

something much, much bigger. At last, Gavrilovic set their limits. He defined their reason, and power. He acknowledged they were already dead, and that there was only so much that they could do, “therefore, you don’t need to worry about your lives.” And that perspective is most likely what gave them the motivation and will to fight.

I believe that the mayor did a phenomenal job with this speech. He knew when and how to talk to his people, and could put himself in their position, which gave him the empathy he needed. He carefully used all the elements of rhetoric analysis and motivated his people. Ethos, pathos and logos were strategically applied throughout his speech, thus the job was done successfully.

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Put Sexual Assault to a Stop

Camie Humphrey & Mystique Anderson

Sexual assault is one of those topics that is known but rarely spoken about. Although there will never be a complete end to this type of crime there are things one can do to limit the number of cases. So how can male and female students who attend MVC protect themselves and those around them from dating violence on campus? According to research, dating violence that occurs on campus can be limited by female and male students who attend MVC by being aware of warning signs and speaking up, continuing to promote campus safety through advertising signs of abuse, and creating a safe place for victims to go.

Dating violence in particular is a hard concept to grasp and solve. We define dating violence as when an individual in the relationship possesses and exerts controlling types of behavior. Abusers use this behavior to obtain dominance in the relationship. This

can involve not only sexual abuse but verbal abuse as well. In a Washington University article, they defined dating violence as, “Dating and relationship violence is a pattern of coercive and abusive tactics employed by one person in a relationship to gain power and control over another person.” According to the article, “Sexual Assault is just the Tip of the Iceberg: Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevalence in College Students,” women and men are near equal as to who is the abuser in heterosexual relationships (Oswalt 97). The gender of the person who abuses is not the question at hand. How to put a limit to the abuse is the question all types of people would love to solve.

Effects of Abuse

Before help can be done the abuse must be identified. To identify the abuse one needs to understand what abuse is, what rights one has, and what is legal and what isn't. In the journal article, “Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault for Women and Men: Perspectives of College Student,” research shows that both female and male students are less likely to report abuse. There are many different reasons as to why victims second guess reporting it. The journal claims that victims of the abuse want to protect their abuser, the victim has been brainwashed to believe that their feelings are invalid, or simply the victim is fearful (Sable 160).

Although legal action is taken when a report of abuse has been admitted, the victim is left to question a lot. The victim not only has to wonder about their relationship but their self-worth. For example, a 16 year old female named Emily-Ann Buck said, “It was such a violation of my body. It was power, control, and cohesion into something I would never have done.” After reading her story, it was clear that Emily was in a toxic relationship months in but progressively got worse. Even though she was aware of toxicity Emily always forgave him. Until her abuse, unfortunately, turned sexual. Which was the final straw for Emily, yet too late.

Many people who succumbed to the abuse of others have eventually dropped out of school, lost complete motivation to do activities, and seen a decrease in grades. Obviously, with these facts,

the abuse takes a serious mental toll on the victim. An article written by Cornell Chronicle states that female teens are 1.5 percent more likely to suffer from addiction to either alcohol or drugs, severe depression, and thoughts of suicide.

Timeline

The article, *Changing Attitudes About Domestic Violence* states that “Family violence became an issue with the influence of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Johnson).” Dating violence did not just randomly start in the 1960s but, as stated, a major increase was visible. Dating violence does not have a clear date as to when it started and sadly will continue to occur until the end of forever.

Causes of Abuse

Even though dating violence and sexual assault have been around longer than one can imagine, there is not simply just a single trigger that results in an assault. There is not one main cause of dating violence, but the article, “Sexual Assault and Alcohol Use among College Students: A Critical Review of the Literature,” claims the consumption of alcohol is a major factor. Not only does this article go in-depth about how alcohol may affect one’s judgment, but many other questions arise. Such as what type of abuse will take place, how harmful and severe the abuse will be. Alcohol will be a factor in college due to everyone being away from home, meaning no guardians to keep track of them as well as some students are at the age to drink legally. With that being said alcohol will never be a justifiable reason for one to assault another.

Location is also a factor that is taken into account. Again in the article, “Sexual Assault and Alcohol Use among College Students: A Critical Review of the Literature”, a research study was done to see where the most assaults take place. It was found that it is less likely for a student to be sexually harassed if they attend a commuter college rather than a college where you stay on campus. So thinking back on the MVC campus specifically, the majority of students live on campus.

So with that in mind, MVC students are at a higher risk of sexual assault compared to those who commute to their college.

Solutions In Progress

Unfortunately, there is not a clear-cut answer to stop dating violence but there are a couple of steps one can take to prevent the abuse. One method is to be aware of warning signs. Warning signs may include the abuser randomly picking fights, calling their victim names, stalking, etc. Most abusers give warning signs before the full abuse takes place. These warning signs are simple to say but harder to pinpoint in a real-life relationship. With that being said, how can one learn to identify these in real-life situations? Specifically, MVC created a mandatory Title IX training course. This course dove deep into the importance of reporting sexual assault and how to recognize assault. The training gave different numbers one could call if they or someone else is in danger. The Title IX course also stated many warning signs to look out for. Forcing students to get the correct training is a start but many more actions need to be taken to limit the amount of abuse that happens.

Another way students and administrators can limit the amount of abuse that takes place on campus are by promoting phone numbers to call such as, 1.800.799.SAFE, if one needs help or sees signs of abuse. Numbers to call can be placed throughout dorm rooms, classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria, hallways, etc. From personal experience at MVC, I have seen one flyer in particular about dating violence located in the girl's bathroom in the Ferguson Center. I have also seen flyers hung up in MacDonald Hall with first responder numbers on them. Although there are some flyers for display, there are endless amounts of other places where posters or flyers can be hung throughout the MVC campus.

The campus can also create a required course for all students to take that meets only once or twice a week, for 4 weeks, that introduces and educates students on signs of abuse, as well as teaches them on what to do if they encounter any abuse. Those who have an education in counseling and a well-rounded background in abuse should be able

to teach this course. This will ensure that every student has learned the information needed to protect themselves or others. Students are not the only ones who should have education on signs of abuse. Teachers do as well. A teacher's training should include a course that educates them on what to look for if they suspect someone is being abused and what to do if they have suspicions. Multiple domestic violence courses can be taken online, which ultimately certify a person in this area. So every professor should be required to have a certificate on domestic violence before their hiring.

Another aspect that all campuses should have is a safe place. A specific and private place all victims can go to report their abuse. Specifically for the MVC campus, this room can be located in Malcolm or the Ferguson center. Although it may be difficult to have employees all night and day, if it is important to the campus they will make it work. Sometimes people need more than just a phone number to call, rather they need a person in real life. This room will need to be employed with specific people who are licensed as victims of sexual abuse. This way it is promised that they will know exactly how to handle each situation.

Not only is identifying abuse extremely necessary but having solutions for the aftermath, specifically for victims. Many victims of assault live with constant mental health issues. The MVC campus can help tame and minimize those issues by having certain programs open to victims. Such as a support group. This group can be completely confidential. It can simply be a place people go to share what parts of their story they want to share or just to listen to others. If victims don't feel comfortable opening up about their stories to other students, counseling should be provided. MVC does offer to counsel but I do not think it's as effective as it should be. Understandably, appointments have to be made due to Covid-19, but if a student is in a serious crisis that rule should be voided. Even if they don't feel comfortable opening up about every detail, the counselor should be able to guide them in the right direction and provide them with strategies to cope with what happened to them.

Even though there is not a complete answer on how to stop dating violence and sexual assault there are multiple steps one can take

to limit how much it occurs. Students and teachers can take specific courses revolving around warning signs of abuse and what to do if you suspect someone has been abused. The campus can also hang up posters and send out emails with information on what to do if you suspect someone is being harmed, or if someone is harming another person. Also, MVC can create a room, classified as a safe place, where victims can go to report abuse. If the excessive amount of sexual abuse and dating violence does not have a significant change, our society will be tarnished. If no action is taken to limit the abuse, many men and females are at high risk to encounter assault.

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Virtual Classes: Pros and Cons

Diogo Mata

Which type of classes is the best one? Traditional old school or these virtual classes? Due to this pandemic of COVID-19, that we are currently experiencing, we had to adapt everything and do the normal day to day that we are used to, in a different and safest way. Does not mean that is better or worse, it means that we are facing new situations that we were not expecting. In the CNN article written by Lisa Selin Davis, *This is what distance learning should look like in the fall*, it is explained that ,this new type of classes ,called remote classes or distance education, "Online teaching requires a different set of skills, not just from teachers and school administrators, but from students and their families, too." Which requires technology and a quiet place to take the classes too.

Online school or remote learning consists in the education being instructed through technology tools like Brightspace, a software or platform for online learning and teaching, video meetings and discussion boards. As reported by Dharendra Kumar on *Pros and Cons*

of *Online Education* there are four main groups of pros on having online education. “Convenience: This convenience is in relation to study location, time, course duration, etc.” It gets easier to be on time, you don’t commute to the campus , no learning pace constraint etc. It is less expensive, you save money because you don’t travel and usually these courses are cheaper than normal classroom academic .Technology , you can work about anywhere that you want since you have the conditions to do it and prepares you for the future by making you using all these platforms and applications to take the online classes. Last but not least you can numerous additional benefits such as working with international students, equal participation, no discrimination between students etc. Although this type of learning has some positive aspects it has a negative side too. As stated in *Teaching beyond the classroom walls: The pros and cons of cyber*

Learning written by La Vonne Fedynich “Although computer literacy is a requirement of online learning, but so is online access. The lack of access either due to logistics or economic reasons, will exclude participants from the cyber class” and adding to this situation referred by Katherine Wal at *Stress Related Issues Due to Too Much Technology: Effects on Working Professionals* ‘Academic literature and popular press suggest information communication technologies are responsible for increased stress levels in individuals, known as “technostress” (Ayyagari, Grover, and Purvis, 2011). Information communication technologies involve cell phones, pagers, BlackBerry’s®, laptops, Internet, voicemails, instant messaging, videoconferencing, teleconferencing and other work specific technologies.’ This is a seriously important perspective that should be consider because nowadays we are surrounded by technology and exposing such young people to these types of stress level is not good for out future as a society and humans.

In person classes is the type of education that everyone know off or at least the big majority knows of. It consist at having classes in a classroom full of students and usually one or two teachers. In person has a lot of advantages like the relation between people and facing real life relationships situations everyday. School is where you make

friends for life, is where you grow up as a person. In an academic/learning perspective it builds a connection between student-teacher where you can ask for help, you can work as a group and face in face situation that will help you for the future , things that you never going to be able to do it online. A statement that I really agree too because I am a student too according to Benedict Carey in *What We're Learning About Online Learning*, 'The two most authoritative reviews of the research to date, examining the results of nearly 300 studies, come to a similar conclusion. Students tend to learn less efficiently than usual in online courses, as a rule, and depending on the course' In person classes make you feel the necessity of paying attention and work on class, while online its really easy to get distracted or not to do the class assignments because you don't have anyone watching if you are actually doing it. On the other hand in face classes tend to be more expensive while you pay for transports if you live out of campus or you have a bug tuition since you pay for campus if you live there. It tends to be hard scheduling your time between everything

Measuring all studies, articles and information that I have gathered ,the perfect type of classes it would be hybrid, it consists on a balance between in person and online classes. By doing hybrid classes you can manage better your time although not being perfect, you don't spend so much time at your laptop inside some small room and it gives you the chance of saving some money on transportations and electricity costs. You can have all the experiences of a true college life, with your colleagues that you will know how do they actually look like and not just same small box at you laptop screen in a zoom meeting. It will build some trustful friendships and connections for our future and what type of human are we without having all of these experiences of face-to-face relationships? We can use this pandemic and what it has brought to us as a opportunity to implement this type of education in our society because I believe that is the most beneficial one.

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A Whole Story Behind A Simple Eye Contact

Marcelo Goichi Okuda Filho

“He looked me over so he could describe me to the police later. I knew the look” (Alexie 402).

“The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven” is a short story written by Sherman Alexie, a Native American poet, novelist, and stand-up comedian. He was born in Washington, in 1966. In this passage, Sherman Alexie shows us that discrimination and racism are strongly present in society, even though changes are happening to the Native Americans' lives, they are still subjected to discriminatory government policies and situations in which they are discriminated against other people even without doing anything.

The first thing to interpret about this sentence is who are the people in this scene. Both have no name, and there is a reason why the author makes this choice. What this essentially means is that they do not have that much importance as individuals, but more as a representation of an idea. We know them as the worker from 7-11, a white man who by the descriptions before, and the native, the protagonist of the story who comes from a simple reservation. Even though both of them have no name, the worker is important in this context because he represents and tells us the message that the author wants to pass to us about how white people feel when they are in contact with someone different from them, like Native Americans, and how the system was built to protect and enlarge white people while Natives are submitted to a discriminatory system. Now besides being the main character of the story, the protagonist, who has no name to represent an idea that comes from racism, is representing all the Native Americans who were removed from their ancestral lands and subjected to United States discriminatory government Policies.

The main idea of this sentence is that without doing anything, the worker was assuming that something bad was going to happen, he assumed violence from the Native and was ready to describe him to the police. So, after the main character entered the 7-11 to buy a

Creamsicle, the worker was politely saying “Hi” and asking him how he was doing, but when the protagonist looked at him and saw the look that the worker gave to him, a look that he knew, a look from someone who was judging, so he saw that he was being discriminated for being Native. If the worker unjustly assumes that Native American means criminal, then the term “police,” which represents a government institution that is supposed to protect the whole society, is suggesting that they are not doing that correctly and are instead being subjugated by a system in which people that are not white are criminals.

The last sentence, “I knew the look,” tells us a lot about the experience of discrimination. When the author says that he knew the look means that he knows how to be judged by other people, it means that only by the visual contact he could feel what was going on. So, the fact that he knew it is because he already experienced it, probably more than two times so he was able to recognize the way he was being looked at. Moreover, it shows us that discrimination is present in the society and the Native Americans have the feeling of being judged in simple situations like that of going to a 7-11 to buy a Creamsicle. This reminds the case of Casey Goodson Junior, a 23 year old Black man who was shot in front of his home holding a Subway sandwich. Even worse, it happened in the same year in which people were protesting a systematic and racist U.S system after the famous George Floyd case. So that means that the United States system is always against people who are not like the worker from 7-11, always against people who are not white, different from them.

In conclusion, this single sentence shows that any Native American is under visual markers of ethnicity, and even though the system policies are always changing, all the Natives are passing through an ethnic cleansing that is directed by a United States discriminatory policies and a society that judge and treat them differently because of their origin. Also, most of the time people do not pay attention to this matter. However, the fact of the author being Native American makes him try to ascend to people like him, in other words, he is fighting for this to not happen, so he gave the main

character to a man like him and treated him probably how he feels or was treated during his life.

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The Power of Our Imagination

Marcelo Goichi Okuda Filho

Editor's Choice – Academic Prose

"While they fought for the privilege of carrying him on their shoulders along the steep escarpment by the cliffs, men and women became aware for the first time of the desolation of their streets, the dryness of their courtyards, the narrowness of their dreams as they faced the splendor and beauty of their drowned man" (Marquez 293).

"The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World" is a short story written by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a journalist, novelist, film writer, socialist, and anti-imperialist born in Colombia. This scene above happens at the end of the story, when people from the small village were fighting to decide who was going to carry the drowned man on their shoulders along the steep escarpment by the cliffs. Garcia Marquez shows us in this passage that even though our imagination has no limits, humans decide to create physical limits and live a life without the beauty of it. He does this by showing that only after a drowned man enters their lives, they are able to see and care for the first time about the desolation of their streets, the dryness of their courtyards, and the narrowness of their dreams.

The first idea to discuss in this passage is about the imagination of the villagers, were we can see that it was hidden, not being used or developed by the villagers, until the drowned man showed up and touched their interior. After all, there is a reason why the author says that their dreams were narrow, their courtyards were dry, and their streets desolate, until they faced the beauty of their drowned man.

The desolation of their streets and the dryness of their courtyards show us this. When you think about a street, you imagine a path, the way that a car or someone goes on. So the desolation of their streets means that their paths were desolate, empty, and deserted. Now the idea of their courtyards means that that unroofed area enclosed by walls of a building was dry, so their interior was dry, without color and life, and being limited by walls that humans created.

All these ideas combined show us that the villagers had no direction to follow, they were not moving forward, desolate over there living a life without any beauty until death appeared and changed their interior and set their imagination free.

When Gabriel Garcia Marquez says that for the first time, they became aware of the desolation of their streets, dryness of their courtyards and narrowness of their dreams as they faced the drowned man, it shows that the villagers were creating limits, even their imagination was stopped. However, a piece of motivation touched them inside, and it moved and made them change. It comes from a splendor and beauty drowned man, named Esteban.

After seeing the death so close their minds might have changed, making them wake up and enjoy life more more because at any time could be one of them in Esteban's place. However, Esteban had other impacts on them, he was the beauty that they did not have in person, the biggest and handsomest man the villagers had ever seen. So, after seeing someone completely different from them, they started to exercise their imagination; besides their village was really simple, and they could not grow at all, their minds had no limits, and they became aware of their Surroundings.

Esteban set the villagers' free, both physically and mentally. He had such a good and strong impact that by the end they were so

alive that they were fighting for the privilege of carrying the drowned man on their shoulders along the escarpment by the cliffs, such hard and difficult physical work. This privilege of carrying Esteban has two meanings, the honor of carrying the handsomest man, they ever saw, and also the privilege of carrying the one who gave them color, and wished to dream and live again (mentally free).

In conclusion, the villagers were limiting themselves, and after “owning” the drowned man, and transforming the village into the “Esteban’s village,” the people from the village gained something bigger, that is the ability to imagine anything that they never thought before because of the narrowness of their dreams, and also recover one of the most important things in the world that is the life’s purpose: to live.

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"It's Britney, Bitch"

Alex Sierra Rioz

In this article by Lisa Kennedy published in The New York Times, “‘Britney vs Spears’ Review: When the Intervention is the Problem,” the writer states her ultimate opinion about the new polemic Netflix documentary about the famous and iconic singer Britney Spears, created by director Erin Lee Carr. This broadcast about Spears narrates and explores her story from the moment her father became her conservator (13 years ago, James Spears earned absolute custody over his daughter because Britney was thought to be incapable of making her own decisions), the development of the movement “#freebritney”,

and his suspension of the conservatorship. Moreover, it shows how it really is and feels to be a celebrity. Nowadays, gaining back her own custody slowly, the time for Britney to speak has arrived.

As for the author, Lisa Kennedy Montgomery (born on September 8th, 1972), better known as just “Kennedy”, is an American commentator, with a characteristic libertarian personality, also an author, and she was the MTV VJ. She went to Lakeridge High School in Lake Oswego, Oregon, and later, she graduated from the University of Los Angeles, California, with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy. However, at the moment, she works as a journalist in different aspects and she lives in Denver, in the state of Colorado. Specifically, she has written her own pieces and reviews as this particular one, published in the popular American newspaper The New York Times. In it, she uses her creative freedom to note common-interest topics such as popular culture, gender, and race.

This article is not entirely easy to read, in fact, there are some words and sentences that you have to analyze a couple of times or even more to finally get to understand them. I feel like when you are writing or talking about a modern topic as a celebrity, the iconic Britney Spears, you should expand the audience, because her fans or people interested in watching it could be any age, and it is obvious that this article cannot be read by all of them. In conclusion, it would practically appeal to a lot of people but not as many as it potentially could. However, taking into account that the newspaper where this article is written is The New York Times, it’s understandable that the content of it is not easy for everyone to read, even though it should be. On the other hand, in this paper, the rhetorical appeals of Ethos, Logos, and Pathos will be analyzed one by one.

First, about Ethos, there are some comparisons that help to understand some keywords about the documentary and, therefore, expand their credibility. The author has worked as an MTV VJ, which is obviously related to the music industry but does not give her the entire knowledge about it. However, this documentary doesn’t focus completely on Spears’ music but on her personal story, to which, as a journalist, she can have a great access too and get information. As it

has been brought up before, Britney Spears has been under the conservatorship of his father, James Spears, for almost thirteen years, and even though the meaning of that may seem simple to figure out, not everyone has to necessarily know what it is. So, as a notable smart move, the writer points to another film, "I Care a Lot", as an example to explain when talking about a conservator and related terms. This reference is situated in the third page of the article: "The recent comedy "I care a lot" made a dark spot of the potential for abuse, with Rosamund Pike playing a court-appointed conservator who preyed on older people" (Kennedy, 3)

Secondly, about Logos, this documentary explains the process of how Britney was completely attached to her father and considered as someone not capable of living by herself to how she is finally getting her life back and getting rid of her father's custody. The writer jumps into different topics within the review of the documentary but it doesn't feel like they are positioned in the correct order, because she writes about what's going on in the film but jumps back and forth with no sense. It would be so much better if the author would have ordered those paragraphs focusing on the interrelationships between them. For instance, moving forward to the end of the piece, another structure mistake can be found, in concrete in the order in which the last two paragraphs have been redacted. Both of them carry interesting information about the documentary and it is quite obvious that its content has been written to be in the conclusion of the article, but they should be absolutely reversed. In the title of the article, the first two lines, ("When the Intervention is the Problem ") those specific words are repeated in the second paragraph (starting from the end) when they should be situated in the final and last one. A great way to finish an article is to recapitulate what has been questioned in the title, mostly when the article starts with a question, either direct or indirect.

In third place, about Pathos, even though the content of the last two paragraphs are not entirely in precise organization, the emphasis that is created by the writer introducing the sentence of the title once again is a quality form of connecting the readers or audience with the

text they are reading about and also it helps to keep the reader completely focused.

Finally, “‘Britney vs Spears’ Review: When the Intervention is the Problem”, as to how it has been written and composed, I believe that the tone which the author is using feels like a superiority tone, and also some parts of the review use the language in a way that can be very confusing and interpreted in the wrong ways. For example, the first paragraph of the article (“If the makers of “Britney vs Spears” could add one more update to the end of the documentary’s already lengthy text crawl of developments following the film’s completion, they’d have fresh material”- Kennedy, 1) is definitely not easy to read, becoming dizzy and difficult to understand for determined groups of people. As I have mentioned before, being a celebrity like Britney the topic of the article, it should be composed with intentions to make every single person comfortable with what they are reading, not to make them feel excluded. This piece should be understandable to every type of audience, but due to the source where this comes from, only a determined group of people will be able to understand and read it properly, the same as the rest of the articles from that source.

In conclusion, I have always conceived documentaries as a great way to get to know about something or about someone’s life, because it focuses on the details that perhaps simple paparazzi or other less “powerful” sources don’t come up with. It’s true that there is potentially good writing and ideas within this article, both in the creative side and the way of telling and informing about the topic. I consider that it is actually brave to write and post a review of this type of film because talking about a famous person, a woman that has had (and actually still has) a revolutionary impact in the music industry and, in general, in the world; can be challenging... Fans, fanatics, or people very close to Britney Spears sometimes are not able to be objective to constructive criticism. However, there are also some aspects that could be definitely improved, mostly in the language and the structure.

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Lisa Kennedy Montgomery Bio-Wiki, Age, Salary, Net Worth, Children, Height. Facts Bio.

Pollution, Law and Protests in Serbia

Nemanja Matic

In October 2021, Belgrade reached the top of the air pollution list worldwide. Belgrade is often in the red zone, which means that the air is dangerous to the health of citizens. Some possible causes of pollution are thermal power plants, the use of solid fuels for heating, traffic and inactivity, and the lack of interest of the authorities in reacting and dealing with environmental protection. "One of our era's greatest scourges is air pollution, on account not only of its impact on climate change but also its impact on public and individual health due to increasing morbidity and mortality" (Manisalidis et al., 2020). Every year, an average of 6,600 people die from the consequences of air pollution in Serbia (World Health Organization). The decades-long problem of pollution in Serbia has escalated with two new laws that, citizens fear, could significantly worsen pollution. These laws are referendum law and the law on expropriation, which allows the state to acquire private land. The question is, what can be done to prevent the potential environmental and social disaster that await Serbia if the government sells out its own country.

The referendum and expropriation laws will enable Rio Tinto, a mining company, to implement a lithium mining project near the town of Loznica in western Serbia. Green activists warn that the project could lead to pollution of water, air, land and affect the quality of life. "Mining activities cause terrain degradation, including erosion,

biodiversity loss, soil contamination, groundwater and surface water pollution, and air and dust and gas pollution from mining machinery and explosives use. Environmental pollution occurs in the process of geological research, preparation for mine opening and mine operation.” (Trpeski et al., 2021) Sixteen years after a new mineral, jadarite, was found near Loznica, jadarite has dawned - this time in the media. More has been heard in the last two months about the lithium and pine deposit, which is located about 120 kilometers from Belgrade in western Serbia, than ever before.

What is jadarite? The ore was named after the river Jadar, near which are the mountains Cer and the river Drina. Jadarite is lithium sodium borosilicate - $\text{LiNaSiB}_3\text{O}_7(\text{OH})$, which contains lithium and boron as useful components. It was discovered in 2004, and the International Mineralogical Association officially recognized it as a new mineral in November 2006. It was discovered only in Serbia and only in the ‘Jadar’ deposit near Loznica. Jadarite could primarily be used for the production of lithium compounds - lithium carbonate, lithium chloride or lithium hydroxide, which are used in the ceramic, glass, batteries, lubricants and many other industries. A similar deposit does not exist anywhere in the world, but lithium is



Fig 1. N1 Belgrade. (2021, November 29). *Arrested protester released from custody in Serbia; some protesters fined*. N1.

obtained from continental saline solutions (Bolivia, Chile, Argentina) or from solid rocks - pegmatite (Australia, Russia, Canada, Austria), or from both sources (America and China). Considering that it is estimated that close to 10 percent of the explored lithium resources in the 'Jadar' deposit are in the world, that will certainly have a significant value.

The multinational company Rio Tinto and the intention to build a lithium/jadarite mine is one of the main drivers of environmental protests in Serbia. Environmental activists believe that the opening of mines and tailings will completely disrupt not only the ecosystem in the Loznica area, but also in the entire region. The company Rio Tinto, which is the 100% owner of the "Jadar" project, announced that they are working to ensure that the impact on the environment is within the limits allowed by legal solutions in Serbia. Earlier, they announced that they had made an investment decision. They set aside 2.4 billion US dollars for the Jadar project. However, the start of construction is not possible under any law - neither under the Law on Mining nor under the Law on Construction, without the defense of the Environmental Impact Study. While the study is awaited, and government representatives are announcing the referendum, locals and farmers are expressing dissatisfaction. The whole process is blocked by unresolved property-legal relations, as well as locals who do not want to sell their property. Regarding the increasingly loud and frequent remarks of environmental activists that the mine will destroy the environment, the company Rio Tinto responds that everything will function according to standards and regulations.

Given the history of Rio Tinto and the decades-long pollution problem that prevails in Serbia, citizens fear that Rio Tinto's planned lithium mine would destroy agricultural land and pollute water in Serbia. Dragana Djordjevic, scientific advisor at the Institute of Chemistry, Technology and Metallurgy, explains her concern: "3,000 cubic meters of water a day would be taken from the Drina River, and

then 50 percent more would return to Jadar." Those 50 percent mean that all that waste will be dumped in Jadar (Stevanovic 2021).

In 2020, Rio Tinto blew up a 46,000-year-old Aboriginal cave system. A public reaction led to the resignation of President Rio Tinto and two deputies. Green activists believe that the mines owned by Rio Tinto pollute rivers and water. For example, some locations in Madagascar near the Rio Tinto mine recorded uranium levels 52 and 40 times above the WHO (World Health Organization) drinking water standard.

In recent days, protests have been held throughout Serbia, initiated by the activist groups 'Go-Change', 'Environmental Uprising', 'Assembly of Free Serbia' and many others. On November 27. 2021, thousands of demonstrators blocked roads and bridges in Belgrade. Unfortunately, the protesters encounter hostility and violence from the police. There were also attacks by masked men who tried to harm protesters and hammers. In Sabac, unknown persons tried to bulldoze through a group of citizens who blocked the road (see Fig 1.)

The previous days in Serbia were marked by gatherings of those dissatisfied with air pollution, changes in the law and endangering the environment, so several important roads were blocked for an hour on Saturday, and new blockades were announced for the upcoming weekend. Most incidents and the worst were in Sabac, but there were fights between protesters and police, as well as protesters and supporters of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) in Belgrade and Novi Sad. In Novi Sad and some other cities, some protesters were detained for information. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said on December 1. 2021, that the street will not lead politics, but also that the police will not prevent demonstrations unless someone's life, property or institutions are endangered. In Novi Sad and some other cities, some protesters were brought in for an informative conversation, which provoked new protest walks on Sunday and Monday, and new rallies were announced. Activists of the Move-Change movement, which organized the protests on November 27.

2021, then demanded the release of all those arrested, the withdrawal of the Law on Expropriation and amendments to the Law on Referendum and People's Initiative and announced new roadblocks on December 4. 2021.

For years, and even decades ago, Belgrade and many other cities in Serbia, but also in the region, are highly ranked on the lists of the most polluted in the world. The new environmental protest, organized by the Eco Guardian movement, is one in a series of demonstrations due to the country's poor air quality. Representatives of the authorities in Serbia have repeatedly pointed out that air pollution has not been a problem since yesterday, but for decades, and they claim that they have already done a lot to make the residents breathe healthier. The City Institute for Public Health has compiled a plan of measures for Belgrade from 2021 to 2031, which include improving the public transport fleet, building the subway, encouraging pedestrian and bicycle traffic, shutting down boiler rooms wherever possible, as well as introducing subsidies, reliefs to replace inefficient boilers. Environmental protesters have been mentioning Rio Tinto since the end of 2020, appealing for the suspension of all projects harmful to the environment, as well as for Serbia's regulations to be adjusted to the highest environmental standards.

The protests on December 4th have reached a numerical magnitude that certainly didn't go unnoticed by the government. (see Fig 2.)



Fig 2. Risović, M. (2021, December 6). *Protesti, Novak Djoković, ekologija: Kako je nastala fotografija koja je podeljena 45.000 puta*. Dnevni list Danas.

The massive protests proved to be working, as the president of Serbia announced on December 8, 2021 that they have withdrawn the expropriation law, and are considering making changes to four acts in the referendum law. As for the decision on Rio Tinto's Jadar project, it still remains to be settled, but the resilience of the Serbian people has been our most distinguishable and most prized trait as a nation throughout history, and it has proven to be so once again in December 2021. In a world and country that had been divided by vaccines and covid for years, the sight of hundreds of thousands of people coming together to stop the selling of their own country will certainly give everyone a new hope for a better future.

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Why You Should Work Smarter, Not Harder

Nemanja Matic

“Become Elite” is a YouTube channel run by a professional soccer player from the U.S, Matt Sheldon. Matt’s channel focuses on following his life as a pro, and giving advice to young players who want to become pros and improve their game. In a video titled “Why You Should STOP Doing the John Terry Cardio Routine”, Matt goes over the latest trend online in soccer conditioning, and tries to convince his audience to train smarter, not harder. Matt knows his audience looks up to him, so he uses his reputation and personal experience and examples from his own career to help his argument, which makes this video successful in its purpose.

The video is very short and straight to the point. Matt opens up by acknowledging the contradiction in the title of the video, as he has previously uploaded videos of himself doing the John Terry Cardio Routine, but asks his audience to give him a chance to explain his point. He then goes on to say that he spoke to many young players who have been beating the pros in this workout but still aren’t playing at the professional level, and he argues that the reason for this is because these players focus solely on their fitness aspects of the game, and completely neglect their tactical and technical shortcomings. He advises them to tone down on the John Terry Cardio Routine, which he

still believes is an excellent way to improve fitness, and to incorporate more work on their weaker aspects of the game. He also advises players who are already good tactically and technically to focus more on their fitness level. Throughout the video Matt shows some old examples of himself working on what he says were his weaknesses in his own game. He concludes the video by telling his viewers that they should acknowledge their own weaknesses in the game and work smarter, not harder.

Matt's reasoning for this video comes from him talking to players who are absolutely crushing the John Terry Cardio Routine and are on a professional fitness level, but are not yet playing soccer on a professional level. His logic is that these players are wasting time and energy on training something that they are already good at and neglecting other points of their game. He thinks that they should "continue to work just as hard, but shift their focus towards their weaknesses where they are going to see the biggest benefit from their work." (Sheldon) He then goes to explain what he means by these weaknesses and gives a few examples (see Fig. 2)

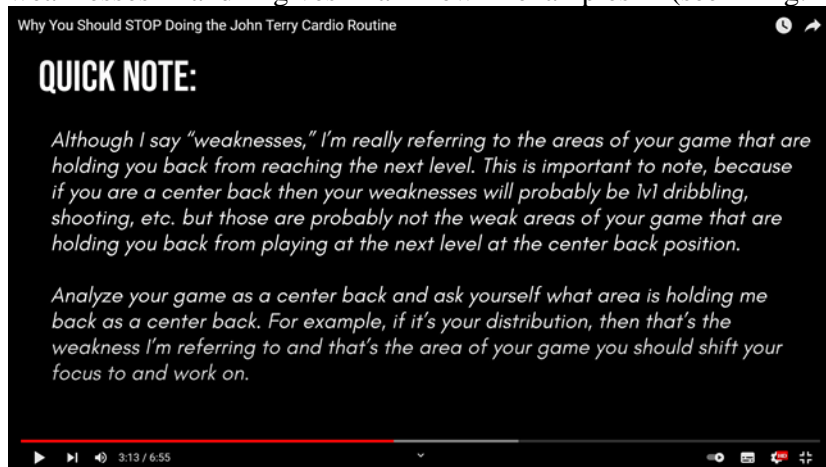


Fig. 2 Sheldon, Matt "Why You Should STOP Doing the John Terry Cardio Routine" 3:13 YouTube, uploaded by Become Elite, 11 Mar 2020.

In this note he explains that as a defender, your weaknesses will of course be scoring goals and attacking, but that there wouldn't be much benefit to training these if you are lacking in crucial defensive qualities. This is a valid argument and anyone who is familiar with the game of soccer or any other sport will agree with the point that Matt tries to make here. He then correlates this statement to the "80/20 rule" which states that 80% of your results come from 20% of your efforts, meaning that you should focus on prioritizing your work, for the best possible outcome, which is the main point of his video, working smarter.

In the video, Sheldon uses his reputation as a professional soccer player with years of experience on a high level of the game to establish his credibility. He already has a big and loyal following with half a million followers on YouTube, as well as a successful career, and his opinions on any soccer training related topic online are always well received and respected. He started his channel before he even became a pro, and has posted numerous videos of himself working out and training, and everyone who has been following him for some time is a witness to the progress that he has been making, which in itself gives proof that his workout programs are effective. His training programs always receive good feedback and comments from everyone who tries to do them. Matt knows that most of his audience is aware of all of this, so he gives himself the right to talk about topics such as the John Terry Cardio Routine, especially when he has previously uploaded videos of himself excelling in the workout, which he shows in this video. (see Fig. 1)



Fig. 1 Sheldon, Matt “Why You Should STOP Doing the John Terry Cardio Routine” 0:37 *YouTube*, uploaded by Become Elite, 11 Mar 2020.

This inclusion to the video is important because it shows that Sheldon isn’t giving advice on something that he isn’t experienced in or hasn’t tried himself, and this is the general rule that is found all across his channel, which is another proof to his trustworthiness.

Matt’s personal connection to his subscribers is evident throughout the video, and the video itself is made as a response to questions from his viewers. This gives further depth to his arguments, as he shows us that he isn’t making the video just for the views, but to help younger players and show that he has also made similar mistakes in the past. He says he believes that if he had worked on his weaker abilities more from a young age, he would’ve been even more successful of a player and had a bigger career. He then talks about his own shortcomings as a player, even though he is a pro, he still has points that need improving. He says that he wishes that he had focused less on his fitness and physicality from a young age, and instead work more on game realistic situations and technical skills with the ball. “I was obsessed with getting bigger, stronger, faster.” (Sheldon) This point really resonates with his viewers, as most of them came to his channel with a similar goal of becoming professional soccer players in

the first place, and Sheldon makes it clear that he had similar fears and doubts as all of them, and thus establishes an emotional connection through the same will to improve and the same fear of failure. He successfully establishes not only a connection with himself and the viewers, but makes it easier for his subscribers to connect with each other and share their own personal experiences as a means to help themselves and others with similar problems. The comment section of his video is proof of this emotional connection as it is a rare place on the internet where the comments are overwhelmingly positive and supportive.

All in all, even though the title of the video is controversial as it is contradictory to his previous uploads, Sheldon manages to stay true to his reputation of an honest and trustworthy content maker. Matt manages to appeal to his audience through stories from his own personal experience in his career, his own doubts and beliefs, and his vast knowledge of soccer, thus successfully convincing them to rethink how they work to achieve their goals.

Works cited

Sheldon, Matt “Why You Should STOP Doing the John Terry Cardio Routine” YouTube, uploaded by Become Elite, 11 Mar 2020.

ARTWORK



Manifest Destiniti - Carson Rauschenberg



Clap of Thunder - Carson Rauschenberg



The Tank - Nicole Rubio Beltran



Old Times - Nicole Rubio Beltran



Young Hall - Nicole Rubio Beltran



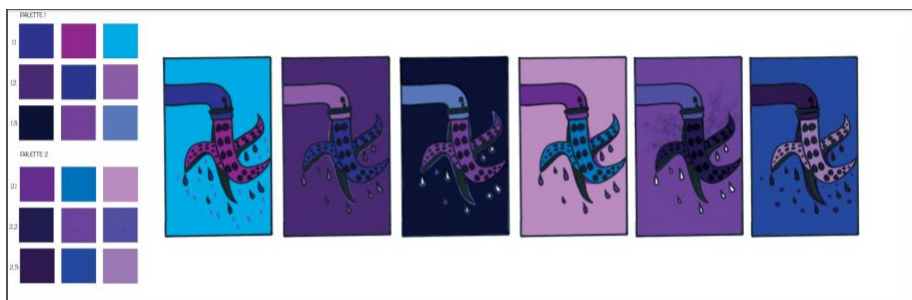
The Path to MVC - Nicole Rubio Beltran



USA Nation - Nicole Rubio Beltran



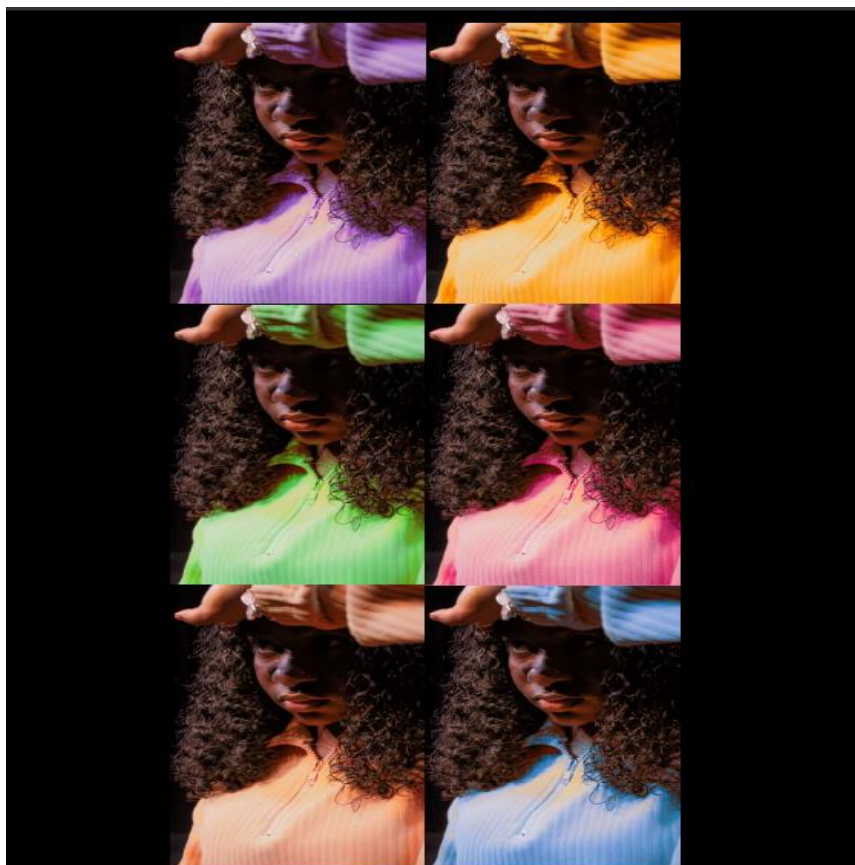
Different Views of Colors - Felipe Souza



Pictograms - Vitoria Kazanovski



The Monster Behind the Door - Felipe Souza



Defiance - Temo Olvera

Inspired by my dearest friend Alex Monroy and Andy Warhol, an act of defiance. The image here goes against all of the photojournalism rules I have been taught. The subject matter has been changed, reality has been altered, and the image is **heavily** edited. When I went to photograph the powerhouse ministries concert in Eckilson-Mabee I was worried that the lighting would ruin my images. Using the techniques that Troy Hunt, my digital photography professor, taught not only did I recover the image, but I made it into something even more beautiful than my naked eye could see.



Bio Joy - Temo Olvera

When Mariona talks about her plants her voice quickens, her back straightens, and she gets little creases in the corner of her eyes. She spends so much time working towards her goals and I can see that she enjoys it. I'm not sure I'll ever understand why, but petting her plants makes them grow bigger. It also widens the smile on her face.



Powerhouse Power - Temo Olvera

Powerhouse Power is a collection of light room processed images depicting one of the most powerful performers I have seen on the stage at Valley. The singer led the tech rehearsal, loves what they do, and is bursting with passion. I wish I could have gotten closer during their performance to feel the radiance.



Reality is Perspective - Temo Olvera

An extreme close up of Murrell Libraries pillars creates a feeling of minuteness. The exterior lines extend from and drag the viewer into the darkness as the center curve smiles with psychotic pleasure. An inanimate structure suddenly becomes a threat and the longer the viewer observes the more inclined they are to look behind them.



Woman with Red Braids - Carson Rauschenberg

Editor's Choice – Artwork



The Walk to the Hill - Nicole Rubio Beltran



Head - Lucinda Lombaard



Plant - Lucinda Lombaard

Creative Prose

The Obsession Isabella Regalado

“Aleena, I have an extra ticket, you have to go with me!” Gia says to me. She’s been begging me to go to this concert all day and I have used every excuse in the book, I think it’s time I just give up and go. “Fine, I will go, but only if you’re buying my drinks tonight.” Gia smiles from ear to ear. I am always working at the hospital, and hardly ever go out anymore, so it warms my heart that my best friend is so excited. Now, for the important part, I must find something to wear. I’m not even sure I own anything but scrubs... I have got to get out more. Gia said I could borrow a dress of hers, it is a little risqué, but like always she begged, I surrendered.

After a couple hours of getting ready and a couple of drinks we finally make it to the concert. “This place is crazy; We are going to be in line forever.” I say to Gia. Gia being the risk taker she is suggests we should cut the long line. Normal me would say no, but tipsy me says yes. As we are reluctantly passing people in line, I feel someone from behind me grab my hand. I don’t know if it is the alcohol or the fact that this hand wraps around mine so welcoming and warm, but I’m not freaked out that some random just grabbed me. I turn and it is a man standing in line, but not just a man, this guy is HOT! Play it cool, be cool. I think to myself. “You two can join us in line if you would like.” he says. I didn’t even notice his friend standing there as I was in awe of this Greek God that just talked to me. I call Gia back and we happily join them in line. “I’m Calvin and this is Elliot, but you can call him Eli.” Gia and I both introduce ourselves and we converse until we eventually make it inside the venue. We all decide to grab a drink before we go find our seats, Eli buys Gia a drink, which leads me to believe he is interested in her, but I’m not surprised. Do I buy my drink? Why am I so nervous around Calvin? Calvin orders his drink and turns to me and asks what I would like to drink. “Just a beer please.” I say

trying to sound like I am not freaking out inside. We find our seats and I secretly text Gia “I think I am in love with Calvin LOL.” She replies, “You def have to go back to his place after.” This kind of thing is normal for Gia as she is an avid dater you could say. Finally, the concert starts and so does the best night of my life. Calvin and I spend the whole-time dancing and singing together. I wish this night would never end.

After the concert we all meet up outside Eli invites Gia to leave with him and in no time, they leave and now it is just Calvin and me. I’m not sure if it was the liquid courage or if I am just head over heels, but I blurt “Want to go back to my place?” he says “Yes, I will call an uber, just type in your address.” We get back to my place and we have a couple more drinks, and we just talk. He tells me about his childhood, his hobbies, and his dog Tucker. Without even realizing we talked till sunrise. “I can’t believe we just stayed up all night.” I say. He sweetly replies “I know, but I should get going. I would love to see you again Aleena.” My name just rolls off his tongue so nicely. He kisses me on the cheek and leaves. I feel like I am on cloud 9, but I feel like this might be too good to be true. How can someone be so perfect? Ugh, here I go again, quit overthinking I tell myself for what feels like the thousandth. As I head to bed to finally get some sleep, I find a small yellow sticky note that reads “I had fun, let’s do it again sometime. - Calvin” Umm how cute is that? I want to text him, but I should get some sleep first. As I lay in bed, I replay our night over and over. Why am I trying to find something bad about him? I continue to think of the worst possible scenarios, like what if he was secretly married? Here we go again my trust issues acting up.

The next day comes and of course I must go to work. Before I leave, I receive a text from Calvin, it reads “Would love to see you tonight. Pick you up at 8?” I quickly text back “Sounds good see you then.” I am a couple hours into my long shift and all I can think about is Calvin. I am excited to see him tonight, but I know I don’t want to move too fast; I mean it’s only been one night. As I finish up with a patient one of the other nurses tells me I have a phone call. Who could be calling my work instead of my cell phone? I mean Gia doesn’t even

do that. I go to answer, and I immediately recognize the voice, it's Calvin. With a curious, but in a nosy way he says "Hi Aleena. How is work? Did you get my note? You weren't answering your cell phone, so I called your work." I reply, "How do you know where I work?" "I know everything about you Aleena. I just want to be the perfect guy for you. Can I see you tonight?" Calvin asks. Freaked out I reply "I am sorry, but I don't think this is going to work out. I am busy, please don't call this number again." Without hesitation he states, "You are making a big mistake." I get home from work, and I notice something outside my window. It's Calvin. He is watching the house... he is watching me. I dial 911 as fast as I can, but he is gone before they get to my house. I also call Gia, she rushes over and is thankfully going to stay with me tonight. The police suggest I get a restraining order, so the next morning that is exactly what I did. It seemed to work a couple days pass and no word from Calvin. I blocked him on everything, and I changed my locks. Finally, everything is back to normal, more importantly work is back to normal. During my shift we are informed a new patient is coming in. It is a male, mid 30's, attempted suicide. As the ambulance brings him in, I notice it is Calvin. He looks me straight in the eye and says, "Look at what you did to me." I start to have a panic attack. Why won't he leave me alone? I explain everything to my boss, and thankfully she sends me home. She informs me Calvin will be admitted to the psyche ward and will be getting the help he needs and that I have nothing to worry about. Finally, this will all be over with. I gather my things and on my way home I pick up some food. I eat and take a long shower, as I am getting ready for bed, I notice something on the counter. A small yellow sticky note that says "You will never get rid of me. -Calvin."

Trigger Warning - Depictions of Violence

The Lighthouse

Mariona Bolao Manén

Pain in my lungs from tantrums are my earliest memories, always hand in hand with oceans of tears and waves of fists for whoever dared come close. I flipped chess boards and shot pawns as my rules of game, and pursued unsuccessful and chaotic victories with every game.

A stranger showed up in my grandparents' holiday house by the coast of The Lake. Looking back I remember his mischievous and poised smile, so when he held his slender hand out to my younger self with a sweet eye to go swim with him, I grabbed a hold of it. Attention. That's what I crave. I changed and ran outside with him, raced him to the water, where he taught me to hold my breath and dive to the most arcane corners of The Lake. When my lungs pleaded for some air, I used my little toes to help me up, and as my eyes became dry enough to look around, there was no sign of him. I lost at the game he had set out for me, but I wanted a rematch, and next time, I wanted to play the white pieces.

The devil came back for good later in my teenage years. I was lost between fiction pages, my back against the wood walls of the summer house, too focused on the life between my hands I wasn't living, to notice how a shadow showed up out of nowhere. Even when my earliest memory of him lingered like a scar, I had already forgotten what he looked like. Years of searching brought me nothing. Still, when I saw the lanky figure from the corner of my eye, I instantly knew he was back. Grudges. That's what I hold. I didn't even bother taking my eyes away from my book, and when time comically passed, he finally took the hint that he was successfully being ignored. An angry groan that should have definitely terrified me escaped his throat as he walked my way, making the pages vanish right in front of my sight. I dared look up, like I had never been scared a day in my life, and raised an

eyebrow while I secretly bit my cheek. His eyes were poison green and the sweet smile he once carried was long replaced by a mean stare.

“I’m only going to ask this once.” His voice thundered in my head, keeping any other foreign sound from getting in. “I don’t like your games. Stop hunting me.” Trying to identify his intentions, I slightly crooked my neck, as still as a tower. To this day I’m still not sure if he ever opened his mouth, or if all the words he spoke to me came as whispers in my own head. I had been too busy holding my eyes defiantly to even notice. But you don’t abandon a child in a lake. “I said only once.” I blinked, my tongue seemed to be too comfortable between my teeth to give him the answer he was looking for.

His fists clenched so firmly I could see the contrast between his pale skin and his white knuckles, and his teeth were pressed so tightly together that his temples moved accordingly. His breathing was heavy and overflowing with anger, until it just wasn’t.

The Lighthouse by the sea learnt to bring me peace from a young age. From the beach in my grandparent’s yard it looked like an old used chess piece floating in the middle of the deepest waters, but many years of adventures and unsuccessful demon hunting by the fortress proved me wrong. The lone ashy building stood strong even at its age, on top of formidable rocks that had been eroded through the years under the power of countless unearthly storms. The light didn’t always spin, but some nights I would get a glimpse of its incandescent glow through the window in my room, and I remember the instinctive goosebumps all over my body.

There was pain in my lungs from screaming to the ends of all worlds and being heard by none, as I stood that day by the shoreline. No, not standing. My legs weren’t legs, they had become part of the sea rather than land. All I had ever known was tears, and screaming, and nightmares, the same things that gave birth to the siren.

My fists dried my cheeks when I accepted my fate, and every drop of blood in my vessels traveled through me like a new hell I made my own to reign. The devil took my King away but left the board and the rest of the pieces to make my own rules – my own victories. He took the King thinking he won, but I just made up a whole new game.

Those mysterious corners underwater I learnt to swim that day so many years back, looked different with new eyes. Even when the water was troubled and dull, a new light hit the current to expose the algae and the many living creatures hiding from the new unnerving neighbor in town.

But my favorite moment of my new life ended up becoming the roughly uniform shadow falling on the bottom of The Lake created by casual sailing ships on the surface. I'd slowly rise up, singing an old melody whispered to me by the waves, and attracted whoever navigated through faster than a landslide. Licking my lips to dampen my lies, I'd hold onto the side deck and bat my eyelids as my hands carefully looked for those mesmerized by my acts, and once I had them under my imaginary spell, their bodies would fall flat in the water. It didn't matter how much air they caught, once my hands wrapped around their necks and started diving down with my newfound prey, they would never see the sun again. But who could say what happens at the Lighthouse by the sea?

I was dozing on the rocks under a midday sky when a small vessel docked by my spot under the building. A solitary man approached the bow of the boat to shoot a curious look up and down to me, and I raised my eyebrow in return. At one point in time, there hadn't been anything more terrifying than a man eyeing my semi-naked body, but one can't be afraid to lose their pawns in their own game. Playing my bishop, I quickly leaned back with a sudden gasp when the man stepped out of the boat. With his palm facing my way and slowing down his movements, he kneeled by me, his hair shining gold under the rays of the sun one last time.

"It's okay, I'm not going to hurt you." His words were careful but true, and I still slightly moved away from him, impostor fear in my eyes. "It's okay, let me help you." His hand moved towards me, and I stared at his strong muscles for a second, doubtful. When my eyes looked up to him, they met a kind smile topped with bright blue eyes, clearer than the lake will ever be. "Let me help you," he repeated. I slowly brought my hand closer to his, and softly ran my fingers across his palm. His knights were now mine.

“Will you?” Desperation left my throat hoarsely, make-believe tears were piling up to race down my cheeks and land in my pouting lips. With assurance, the sailor’s hand held mine, while the other moved to the side of my hips, right on the horizon of where I became sea.

“Let me save you.” Two rooks down.

Even with doubt in my features, I slowly started nodding my head, fixing my eyes on his to consume all his intentions. Every second he became more enchanted by my charms, and his lips started coming closer to mine. With both of his bishops in my power, I let him kiss me as eagerly as he pleased – one last luxury before I took his queen. With my hands holding both sides of his head, I sneaked out of the kiss, finding the side of his neck where I let my teeth sink in and savor the taste of his blood in plain daylight.

With a vile howl muting his human screams, I dug my nails into every corner of his body, making dents for his soul to abandon the corpse whichever way it decided to, harming nerves and tearing muscles and clothing as my fingers pleased. His body was still, but his tears were steady and his breath was heavy. Not taking my eyes away from his, I savored the blood from my fingers smirking at the sweet taste. I collected the remnants from my lips with my tongue and admired the resilience of the dying spirit as I went back to the position I was in before him.

“You’re not a savior,” I spoke. “You’re a liar.”

As quickly as the night came in, the sun started coming out, and with the moon parting ways, the waves became bigger and sinister. Between crash and crash, the man sent out prayers to a God that hadn’t answered his dying wishes, and with the first rays of sunlight in my face, I let him look at me clearly. Showing him my bloody fangs, I laughed out loud as my emotions took over his pawns painfully slowly, one by one. Checkmate.

The Lighthouse by the sea is nothing but an empty observatory with a defective light and countless rusty doors. The walls are thick of dust, cement, and concrete, with a white that resembles bone on the outside, and dim rooms on the inside. Checkered black and white floors

host parties for insect cadavers and curled spiders – no one has been there in years. In fact, fifteen-year-old demon–hunter me might have been the last person to stand in there. No sign of any man powering the tower the past few decades to attract lost tourists or local merchant embarcations. No sign of any man, or other devils, but now I control the tower – I say when we play.

Seeing his chest rising for the last time, a crooked smile covered my face. Someday men will learn to start minding their business and stop underestimating pretty girls laying helpless by the shore. In the meantime I will keep collecting bones from my toys in the depths of my home and leaving stranger’s boats by the coast for clueless crowds to wander the truth of their owners, and even when they’re not seen again I’ll still be inhabiting the waters, prying among the rocks.

Pain in my lungs from tantrums are my earliest memories, what I once thought to be strength and resilience, but has played back to be utter weakness. Every day I thank the stranger that showed up in my grandparents' holiday house by the coast of The Lake for my gift, because kindness is weakness. The devil that came back later in my teenage years punished me to a greater existence, and for that, a little piece of him will always be in a little piece of me. You can’t lose at chess when you have no King and the rules keep your Queen from being taken. After an eternity by the haunted water, the last thing I want is saving, but I like being found.

Trigger Warning - Negative Self Talk, Suicidal Thoughts

Punisher

Mariona Bolao Manén

I am playing at a funeral tomorrow morning; the girl was a year younger than me. Talking to her mother, life doesn’t seem fair, and it’s impossible to breathe when I chew on it for too long. My guitar

is old but the strings will be new, and sometimes I wonder if this is how the universe thinks of us.

I have this dream at night from time to time, this dream where I'm choking underwater in the middle of a green sea. An old lighthouse shines on my few friends by the shore, who look like they don't know what's going on with me several yards from them. Or maybe they do, but they just don't care. I don't really need you to tell me what you think that means. I was obsessed with meanings and symbolism a few years back, but I don't believe in that shit anymore.

I don't believe in that shit anymore because I'm just depressed. All the time, since the beginning of it. But what am I supposed to do when clouds cloud my judgment and all I see is pouring rain, even on the nicest days? After a while you get used to the puddles and the mud, and you never forget your umbrella when you step outside. Sometimes you stop giving a shit and you go lay on the grass and let the water cover every inch of your body, and hope that sadness is a cause of death.

Then you hear rumors about you, about your mental health, about your love life, and your sex life, and that girl you met in the stalls of a restroom a couple of hours before sunrise, and reminders of potential relationships that only last for several minutes in dirty bathrooms of dirty clubs. But how is that me? Those aren't my stories, those aren't part of my life. Too late, they're part of my life in other's eyes. Who do you call when that happens? Dallas is on the other end of the line when I've bored myself to tears at night when I don't feel like leaving my room to become a headline. We just talk. We just talk until we might just commit suicide, then we bring back the laughs to make that thought go away. The feeling always remains.

But last night it was impossible to breathe, so I got drunk alone in my car. In my car that was parked in the front yard I still share with my parents, in front of my mother's flower bed, with the roses, the tulips, the geraniums, the chrysanthemums, all starring like they don't know what's going on with me several feet from them. Or maybe they do, but they just don't care. Still, I woke up with a pounding headache

in my childhood bed. I feel so sorry for myself, and I just wish I could be somebody else. And then I shake my head and I remember somebody's kid died, and I don't deserve to think this way because I've been strong enough to make it to twenty one.

I am playing at a funeral tomorrow morning; the girl has her own blood on her hands. Talking to her mother, life doesn't seem fair, she didn't deserve it, and maybe neither do I. That's why I'm putting new strings in my old guitar, in hopes that this is how the universe thinks of us.

Being "Lazy" Lauryn Craine

I was a dozer in class. Heads down, seven up kinds of knocked out. Middle school was constant dozing during all types of lectures. Teachers wondered why I was so tired at school, but they didn't look into it. While my classmates turned my constant sleepiness into a joke and started calling me "Grandma". In middle school, I didn't mind the nickname. It felt more like a one-off kind of thing rather than something that was me. Although funnily enough it later did become a part of me.

Later my constant sleeping then became a norm for class. Even though I had tested into a private high school, leaving mostly everyone from my middle school behind, my nickname still followed me into my new life. I was still a "Grandma" in high school by being slow at making it to class, but fast at knocking out on the desk with drool coming out of my mouth. It was either my friends waking me up or teachers waking me up. Which led to the snickering. I became a joke to my peers and a nuisance to my teachers. My teachers saw my sleepiness as me being bored and got angry instead of trying to help me. Dropping books on the podium, shaking me roughly, I even remember my chemistry teacher forcing me to stand during class so I wouldn't fall asleep while she was lecturing. Teachers would even ask

me to go to the nurse or go to bed earlier so I would be awake in class, but I would soon learn that there wasn't an easy solution.

Everyone told me to get more rest at home or go to bed earlier. But I was already sleeping 10+ hours every day. Missing assignments to sleep in or rushing to finish homework in the morning before class started. It seemed like a normal teen thing to do at the time. At that time most people talked about being tired so me being tired too wasn't unusual. When I told people I was tired they would nod in agreement and say, "I feel you! I'm super tired too" but we weren't the same type of tired. Tired after a nap. Tired after sleeping for 6 hours. Tired after doing 2 chores or finishing an assignment. Day in and day out I was exhausted even though I slept a lot. It got to me after a while. I was like a broken phone cable and plugging me in for the night was a gamble. My life became a roundabout joke that I couldn't really laugh with everyone about.

In college I was still as tired as ever. Late to any class that was before 10AM or missing it all together. The only difference was in college nobody really joked about me sleeping anymore. Teachers started to question it and I started to question myself a bit more too. It was an odd feeling to examine my entire life and try to think about what stood out. At that point sleeping was baked into my schedule and I almost didn't think too hard about it. But then two memories stood out to me. The first was falling asleep during my AP Human Geography final. I was fighting so hard to stay awake because I wasn't tired and I didn't want to fail. My friend was nudging me to wake me up, but she gave up since she had to focus on her own test. At some point I finally won the fight to stay awake but lost the fight to whatever dream I was having and woke up screaming during the final. Everyone was staring at me like I was a monster when I couldn't even control what was happening. I apologized to the class but afterwards felt extremely out of place.

The second memory was when a friend ran up to me before our next class. She was practically bouncing with excitement about what she had to show me. In front of me she placed her AP Psychology book, opened to the last chapter that was talked about in class. I was confused

at first at what she was trying to show me until she pointed out what she had just learned in class a period prior. Her finger was on a small section of the book labeled sleep disorders. She started describing how people with narcolepsy fall asleep a lot and doze off during conversations. The example did sound like me and I agreed with her saying I probably did have narcolepsy. But being the procrastinator that I was, I didn't explore the thought any further than that.

After having those thoughts, I decided that maybe sleeping my life away wasn't as normal as I thought for a college student. Sophomore year of college I decided I should get tested to see what sleep disorder I had. At this point, I was sure I had Narcolepsy or Sleep Apnea. I went in for a sleep test and they stuck a bunch of wires to my face and recorded me sleep for 2 days. It was hard to fall asleep in a bed that wasn't mine with a bunch of wires coming from my face and my chest. I didn't understand how they expected anyone to sleep normally under such weird conditions, but luckily, I got to wear my own pajamas. Also, since my hair is curly the electrodes kept popping off and the nurse had to keep reapplying the glue throughout the day. I was mostly suck doing homework the second day of the study, but the hospital gave me breakfast and dinner which was nice.

I had to wait 3 weeks to get my results and I was soooo anxious to see what was wrong with me. Soon I got my results back and the doctor diagnosed me with Idiopathic Hypersomnolence. I was confused because I had never even heard of the condition before my results. I immediately looked up the results and I had every symptom that was described. Reading about the condition made me feel validated about what was happening to me for most of my life. At that point everyone had chalked up my sleeping habits to me being "lazy" but I had found out that I wasn't "lazy", I actually had a sleeping disorder the entire time. Everyone chalked up my sleeping habits to me being "lazy" instead of recognizing that, me sleeping in every class period was my body crying out for help.

POETRY

Trigger Warning - Sexual Assault, Childhood Trauma

What If? Would I?

Jenasyn Baker

What if I was able to sit everyone down and tell them exactly how I feel about them, with no repercussions? What if I could be the most honest and vulnerable version of myself for a moment?

Would I thank him? Thank him for modeling such an awful role model, that I know what *not* to look for in people. Thank him for disappointing me at a young age, so I never got my hopes too high. Thank him for creating an uneasy peace between us, where I know he will not force his way back into my life.

Would I admit that he made me want to stop existing? Admit regret. Admit shame. Admit my first, but not last, confusion between lust and love. Admit that my brain can not help but to make bad decisions in his presence.

Would I tell her that it is hard for me to see her flaws and imperfections because I was forced to glorify her as a child? Tell her that ever since that day she left me at home that I'm not sure she ever actually returned. Tell her that she makes me feel like an obligation rather than a passion. Tell her that I believe she raised me because she had to, not because she wanted to. Because I came from her; because I lived under her roof; because we are related. Tell her that she looks at me but she never sees me. Tell her "your hugs feel like home but I can't stand the thought of them." Tell her that I have loved and resented someone as much as I do her.

Would I laugh while telling her she is the worst person I know? Laugh because I know she tears others down due to her own insecurities, but that somehow knowing she is not perfect brings me joy. Laugh because I know she doesn't have it all together, and I don't feel sorry for her. Laugh because I hope someone, someday, treats her as shitty as she deserves.

Would I say that the night with him has never left me? Say that it lingers with me in every interaction I have. Say that I can still feel his body. Say that I haven't felt anything since before him. Say that I don't know if I'll ever feel again. Say that if he would have just listened. If he had just listened and respected that "No's" that I said. Say that I'm not sure if I could ever forgive him, but that I am also not sure if he even knows what he did wrong.

Would I confess that I love him with every ounce of my being, but it would have been better if we'd never met? Confess that I can't help but think of that week as the best time of my life. Confess that I have never missed anything more. Confess that any feeling I have towards him feels invalid given the circumstance.

Would I tell her that she drives me insane but I don't know if I could live without her? That every day I contemplate whether or not she is actually my friend. That she's the day to my night and the sun to my moon. That she balances out every bad part of me. Sometimes I think we collide too hard.

Would my secret be revealed?

Would I tell her that I think the only good quality that she has going for her is that she's nice? That she is the biggest mess of a human I have ever met. That I can see right through her every lie and every cover-up and that I can not wait until she leaves.

Would I tell them that I hope their girlfriends find out?

Would I cry out apologies? Or hug her and never let her go?

What if... Would I?

I Am From
Jenasyn Baker

I am from Jennifer and Ryan, Janice and David, Jessica, and Omar.
I am from what seems to be the smallest of towns in Northwest Missouri;
From Norborne, with miles of bean fields and one gas station for all of your needs.
I am from pancakes on grandma's griddle, from beanless chili, and from ongoing battles of which spaghetti sauce is better.
I am from a product of lust and not love, from anxiousness and sadness, but still overwhelmingly from compassion and tight-knit relatives.
From poets and musicians but also bankers and healthcare workers. I am from women whose career dreams now fall onto my lap vicariously. I am from a feeling of pressure on my shoulders and a constant dwell of disappointment although they say they're proud.
I am from loud family and friend chaos on Friday and Saturday and I am from chilling silence on a Sunday evening wishing for noise again.
I am from believing in whatever God or lack-there-of I want to believe, as long as we don't tell Janice. I am from sitting with her in a church pew as a child to growing and learning her beliefs are not the same as mine.
I am from a divided political family and I am from aching as they blow off hearing my side of any topic.
I am from music and movies and books and art. I am from knowing every Queen song because

my mother would disown me if I didn't. I am from my grandparent's living room where we have experienced every emotion thanks to a DVD. I am from midnight showings and DVR and "You better get ready or I'm watching it without you." I am from Saturday night gigs of my grandpa's old rock band and I am from boasting with pride when I tell everyone I am his granddaughter.

I am from dance and movement and not knowing how to live without it even though some days it feels as if it might kill me. And although I am from all of these things, above all I am from myself. I have built a world that doesn't seem to coincide with my family or friends. Sometimes I am from pure and sheer loneliness, but I am from knowing that even on those loneliest days I still have myself.

I Am From Anonymous

I am from a woman and a man,
From generations who precede me who do not know me,
I am from endless moves
From military base to military base to home base
I am from the pacific, with eternal waves controlled by the moon and
From where the sand grains are so plentiful they could compete with the stars
I am from the finer things, and from a perfect image that can't falter
From brand new cars and brand name clothes
I am from a private school with uniforms and ivy league dreams

I am from Mass on Sundays, Chapel on Tuesdays, Confession on
Thursdays, and Choir on Fridays

I am from rice for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and
From “Misery doesn’t love you, Misery won’t feed you”

I am from broken vows and from a broken home
From West Coast to Midwest

I am from relentless mosquitos and air so thick you could chew it
From barefoot in the street, but only after April and before October
From play clothes, creek clothes, and “rinse off with the hose before
you get inside”

I am from a 1989 red honda civic with no AC and crank window
handles

From long car rides with 3 kids all shoved in the back

I am from a public school with crazy hair days and understanding
teachers

I am from church on Sunday and Wednesday

From donuts for Sunday school, cookies for ‘big church’, and dinner
at youth group

I am from love, abundance, and “we will never give up on you”

I am from 2 people who support my every adventure,
From people who taught me to make life an adventure

I am from people who chose to raise me

I am from blood but not from who gave me life

I am from failed sports and musical adventures,

From “you made a commitment, you have to follow through with it”

I am from “don’t quit when the going gets tough, laugh in the face of
danger”

I am from a knowledge first, 3 home libraries, and a get extra degrees
for fun type household

From watching a thesis being written and playing in piles of paper
research

I am from two cultures and

From the conflict between them
I am from a mixture of lives and the struggle to merge them into one
From juggling different lifestyles and the guilt of preferring one over
the other
And from this, I am on a journey of finding my authentic self

Safe
Angel Cleare

I heard 'be safe' over and over again
which caused such an unsettling aura to set in
Unexpected tragedies happen, and you never know when
Who knew I'd feel the rugged road against my bare skin

Our car rolled over as if looking for the perfect spot
After another car hit us with so much demanding force
Did that driver even feel any remorse?
Pain and no recollection of this moment is all I've got

From being stuck in the flipped vehicle, then pulled out
I remained unconscious through it all
I couldn't even cry for help or shout
But the noise, people, paramedics, I recall

The bruises, tears, pain and hospital stay, I think back to
I'm still trying to recover
For' a car accident is a heart wrenching moment to go through
Will I ever move past this and truly recover?

My life was not fully my own that night
Why didn't I just listen and be safe?
I can still feel the pain, I can still feel the fright
Am I really ever safe?

The Boy Who Made Loving Easy

Kara DuPont

I never knew that I could love like this
But you made it easy for me.
With all your little “you” things.
Like the way you smile at me
With your plump lips and glowing eyes.
The way you hold me in your arms
On the bad days and the good ones too.
How you push back your hair from your eyes
And how your laugh could warm my heart forever.
Your caring and considerate heart for others.
You could move mountains with the determination you have
And make it look effortless, because that's just what you do.
Besides all the little things, there are big things too.
I felt lost before I met you.
Spiraling in sadness and settling for less.
My identity unknown. My heart is a dull and constant ache.
But you made all those things disappear.
You helped me grow and heal.
I was lost but you helped me find myself.
With you there is no spiraling in sadness.
You helped me realize my worth
And showed me the love I deserve.
My heart no longer aches like before,
And on the days it does, you are there.
Comforting me and reminding me
That it will all be okay.
You make me a better person.
All of these things make you, you.
I never knew that I could love like this.
But you made it easy for me.
And I am forever grateful.

The Shadow

Kara DuPont

There is a shadow that follows me around.
Only I know it's there.
It creeps in slowly then all at once.
The shadow makes me feel lots of things.
The shadow tells me to worry,
About what could happen, big or small.
The shadow tells me all the things that could go wrong.
And that I need a plan for every possible outcome.
The shadow tells me I'm not good enough.
That one wrong move could make people walk away.
The shadow feels like a weight on my chest,
Making it hard to breathe.
The shadow is always there lingering.
Dictating my day, emotions, actions.
Somedays the shadow is more present than others.
On those days, the shadow is ruthless.
Making me feel trapped
Even in a wide open space.
Making me lose rationality in my mind.
A nervous feeling that never leaves.
The shadow is always there,
So I learned to cope with its presence.
I remind myself to breathe.
That everything will be okay.
I remind myself that the only thing I can control is me.
And that the shadow only affects me as much as I let it.
I tell myself that I am good enough, with all my flaws and
imperfections.
I remind myself that that shadow is always going to be there
And that I must accept that and not try to fight it.
There is a shadow that follows me around.
And it has made me who I am.

Who's Life?
Jada Fepuleai

Whose life is that? I think I know.
Its owner is quite happy though.
I watch life laugh. I cry.

She gives life a shake,
And she giggles until her tummy aches.
The only other sound's the break,
Of nearby waves and birds awake.

With thoughts of books in her head,
She eats her jam with lots of bread.
Ready for the day ahead.
Could not be me, I'm simply dead.

Surprise Attacks...and Love
Jada Fepuleai

He was quiet as a mouse
I never saw him coming
I was distracted by the party life
And with guys broke and bumming

He was smooth like honey
Flirting was cliché, but it was cute
I heard his friends hype him up
"Shoot your shot man. Shoot!"

It was a surprise like no other
13 months later and we're still going

Shot me with his personality and I fell
Hit so hard with his humor

The old, foolish me died that day
I don't miss it, I love it here
Sure he shot me, but did I care?

Trigger Warning - Childhood Abuse/Trauma

Inattentive Mother

John Hoffman

What a disgusting smell
A smell so unpleasant you think you're in hell
It's an everyday thing
Does she even care about me?
My lungs are black by now can't you see?
I hate when you smoke, I can't stand it!
You should try AA programs and try to commit
Before you make one of your sons commit...
Maybe it's not that serious but do it for me!
Or do it for my two other brothers so they can see
One day i won't be able to take it anymore and you'll see me hung
from a tree
We all care about you, and want to see you live passed seventy
Not dead at fifty, down below six feet in a cemetery
You break my heart and make me think about bad things
Maybe if you stop smoking, you'll get rid of those raggedy old rings

seasonal depression
Joana Marucci Compte

you came to me
as fast as summer leaves
when the weather is still warm
and before you know it
the first leaf falls

but just as you came
you left

as fast as winter arrives
when the weather's been cold
and before you you know it
the first snowflake falls

and just as you came,
you are gone.

Midnight Dessert
Xhon Pelushi

It's so dark and I can't see,
But I can hear that you
are calling me!

Thinking that it was
A dream, but no,
I am sense it.

I stood up to reach you,
Who knows, what kind

of troubles you are into?

This why we are friends.
To take care
When you can't!

In gloom I open the
Fridge, but what to see,
That my wife was there before me!

Why Am I Like This?

Tyesha Rhodes

Editor's Choice – Poetry

Silence.
Her silence spoke volumes
She was always as quiet as a church mouse
But what was going on in her mind?
If they knew they'd be more concerned than inquiring
To live with your mind working against you
Sorrow and Joy playing tug-o-war in her brain
And more days than not Sorrow was the reigning champ
Why am I like this?
She wished her life could be surrounded by rainbows
But it was more of a camouflaged life for her now days
Always at war and not knowing why
Her brain laughing and mocking her cluelessness
Pulling away from the people she loved the most for no reason at all
Why am I like this?
Self-conscious about every part of her life
Constantly blaming herself for her condition
Why do I have to rely on medicine?

Why can't I just be jovial on my own?
You took the easy way out getting medical help
Why am I like this?

Perception

Jamie Scott

Life is equivocal,
Those uncertain of their fallen path
Imagine this,

We are all born with
Our own personal paint brushes,
A palette with an infinite array
Of colors,
Our lives are the neutral canvas
In which,
Each of us paints
Our own individual pictures

The soul becomes dyed with the colors of its thoughts and actions
The route to success lies in variegating the offerings presented.

A Cowboy's Tale

Jerrold Battson

I'm a good hand on a horse,
Some say I was the best.
My life revolves around my herd,
I don't worry about the rest.

Tough hide has replaced,
What once was saddle sores,
So, I guess I'll keep on riding,
Until my body can take no more.

You may think that I'm alone out here,
Which isn't entirely true,
But even if I was, I prefer the solitude.

My friends don't really say much,
But they're always here to ease my pain,
And though they're all four-legged,
I have no reason to complain.

Some day my life will end out here,
In these mountains in the west,
But at least I'll always know,
I was among the very best.

Cigarette Smoke
Helena Talbot

Editor's Choice – Poetry

A whiff of cigarette smoke,
My nose crinkles at the smell.
For the first time in years,
The wind blows in the memory of you.
I feel as though I should apologize
For only finding your memory
Within my least favorite part of you.
I should remember you
With heartfelt birthday cards

And late-night ice cream cones,
Or your beautiful smile
That was always so hesitant to show
If only the distance had been less,
Then maybe I could miss you more.
But the time for that is gone.
It's like our hourglass is out of sand.
So I'm sorry,
But all we will ever be left with
Is cigarette smoke.

Died an Autumn Death

Kiara Williams

The little old man at the end of the street quietly taps his trees.
I simply nod my head
And he smiles back at me.
The leaves had all fallen
Fall had officially begun.
The man just would not stop until his work there had been done.
I sit and watch him work and work
With a hammer in his hand.
For just the little bit of syrup that ends up in his can.
For from the earth the tree had come
And to the earth the man will go.
I turn around to walk back in
And there stood a cackle of crow...

Trigger Warning - Childhood Abuse

The Struggle

Victor Gabriel

Do you know how it feels to sleep on the floor?
Not knowing if you're gonna have running water to wash your body
Or enough food to feed everyone in your household.
Barely having the money to keep a roof over your head
Just wanting a survive
Wanting the bare minimum
Being able to go from eating a syrup sandwich to eating a four course meal.
I just want to tell my mama I made it.
That her little boy is finally the man she wanted me to be
Be able to give back to the ones that helped me the most.
I'll show them who doubted me the most
That I made it
Mama I made it.
I'm Gonna survive even if that means dying

Childrens Giggle

Lindsay Jordahl

Children giggle, smile and play,
While parents love and try to say
The truth of the world they're in
To demonstrate the love within.

Time is ticking for the young
Soon they will be on their own lungs.
And life will scatter all around,
Only for the silence to sound.

The light of day may fade,
And the path once paved is strayed.
A sweet word will be spoken,
The world will no longer be broken.

The winds and the rain will dissipate
And sunshine is to anticipate
The happiness that is within the day
Will show the love that was once to say

The giggles that once so loud
Now fade to the love allowed
Delights of life conquer the mind
The goodness that is always well timed.

When My Heart Opens

Alex Sierra Rioz

I.

Peculiar are the foreigner lives,
we see and observe so close
but feel out of line
and so far from us they grow.

Peculiar is the change,
"Happy Birthday" wishes through the phone
and a waitress still seen as a subrange.

Two tables away,

a typical conversation flourishing
-says the customer- *Excuse me, this is a mistake!*
there, the waitress, his face again coloring,
responds- *No sir, here's your cake.*

II.

Grabbing his knuckles
Spiraling around
Forgetting about time.

Stirring our bodies
Savoring moments
That we knew from the beginning they'd have an end.

Grabbing his knuckles,
His neck,
His hair.

Moving between my fingers,
My breasts,
My insides.

Killing us slowly
With one mortal last kiss.

III.

Intoxications to my mind
Disturbing concerns
random nights
also dangerous.

Black liquid
Smelly
Shameless
Unfortunate
Insolent.

Scared I get restless
I am Breathless.

When your existence is risky
mine gets smaller.
And if you turn black
I become invisible.

IV.
Oh, my life,
Tell me, explain to me
What is this I'm feeling?
Why For You?

Why for You, friend
If it is pure danger?
Blast zone
Mines, bombs, dynamite, fire!

What is this I am feeling
And why doesn't it give in?

Why does the world only stop
when I can see you?

So many whys

questions that remain unanswered.

Will you help me fix it
Or will you leave without thinking twice?

Will you help me fix it
Hand to hand
Face to face
Or will you leave me alone
With my love in vain?

The depth of the ocean.

Amberrose Castaldo

She stands on the coast
With her feet in the sand
Watching the water pull her closer

Only for it to retract

Everytime it pulls away
Her feet sink a little deeper.

She wanders into the horizon
And fades slowly.

The waves fall into each other peacefully,
As oppositional pulls create a beautiful picture.

Everyone admires the beauty,
Very few understand its depth.

What chaos underneath

Creates these beautiful waves?

It takes a brave soul
To explore the depths,
And the chaos,
Underneath such a beautiful ocean.

Most people are too afraid
To swim deeper.
To get pulled under.

Sometimes, the tide is high.
Sometimes, she gets stuck.
Sometimes, there is no tide at all.

That's when it is safest to dive in.

Very few ever notice
When the tide is pulling her under,
But they'll always see her swimming.

She loves to swim alone
Experiencing high tides by herself
Only swimming with others
When she knows the tide has passed

Eventually,
someone as brave as her comes along
Choosing to explore
The depths of this ocean
And they swim through the riptides together

Because they both know
No matter how treacherous it gets,
They'll eventually make it to the coast again.

They'll look back at the journey,
And how strong they needed to be,
to swim to the bottom,
And make it back to shore safely.

Together,
Without any bruises,
Without any scars.

But it isn't until they explore
That people recognize

The oceans beauty
Is not only the beautiful.

Visit you.

Amberrose Castaldo

I wish that I could visit you
All the way in heaven
I know you're looking down on me
I always feel your presence

I hear it when I laugh
I feel it when I cry
Part of me feels like
we never said goodbye.

I see you during the sunsets
Covered by the clouds

My heart is at its safest

When I have you around.

I still can't understand
That part of you is gone

I know you're always here for me
But life just feels so wrong.

I miss your perfect smile
And the laughs that gave me life
I miss how you made sense of me
In a world that steals my light.

I don't know who I am
And have no one's hand to hold
The day that you left me
Is the day I lost my soul

But I see you in the sunset
I see you in the clouds

I know you're looking down on me
And I know I'll make you proud

The memories will be with me
And I'll feel you in my tears
I'll hear you in my laugh
And finally face my fears

I'll see you in my dreams
Until I finally lay to rest

Hopefully beside you
In that pretty flower bed

Please be there
Waiting for me
Extending your gentle hands

They've guided me through everything
And often wiped my tears.

They often changed my diapers
And always calmed my fears.

I'll never understand
I just can't let you go

Because I always feel your presence
And I just need you to know;

I'll love you forever
And I wish that you were here,
But no matter what is going on
I know that you'll be near.

You Can't Save Everyone.
Amberrose Castaldo

There's nothing I could do now
There's nothing I could say
To explain how much I love you
And will miss you every day.

You showed me who I am
And who I'm meant to be
You gave me a purpose
And a love that ran so deep.

My soul will tie to you
Until we meet again
Because I know you will be waiting
With Jesus,
Your new friend.

From baking christmas cookies
To the Pane Di Pasqua
Our memories will be shared
With generations
I will aire.

I know I make you proud
When I do that thing I love
Following in your footsteps
Wearing my gear and my gloves.

I'll run out to every call
While keeping you in mind,
You'll be my motivation
To save another life.

I couldn't be more proud
Of the things that you've done;
For the life that you gave me
And passed down through your son.

I'm so sorry that all you had
Was everything they wanted to take
Before you got the chance
To savor it for a day.

Again,
I'm left with nothing

From the one that means the most
But ill let it slide
Because I know you'll still be close.

I'll love you forever
And words can not express
How my soul will tie to you,
Until we meet again,

Next time I see you,
You can introduce me,
To Jesus, your new friend.

If I Wasn't a Writer
Mariona Bolao Manén

If I wasn't a writer –
I would be a dragon. I would be stories and legends,
and fire and hell. I would burn down cities, guard
unimaginable treasures. I would be cursed. They
would tell stories about me, and they would all be
wrong, but I would be fine with it.

I would be a hurricane. I would go hand in hand
with nature and heaven. I would not belong to one
place, or to one body, or to one time. I would be
condemned. They would name me and tie me to
disasters, and I would be.

I would be a black hole. I would be an explosion
from bright to dark. I would swallow matter for
breakfast, light for lunch, and time for dinner. I
would be nothing. They would try to understand

me, but they never will.

I would be a flower. I would be chosen and I would
be tossed. I would lie with colors, isolate with
thorns, and kill with toxins. I would be uncertainty.
They would put me into words, and they would all
be wrong, but I would be fine with it

– If I wasn't a writer

Trigger Warning - Sexual Assault

What I Was Wearing

Anonymous

It was a queen-sized bed
And I thought it was all in my head
When his hands traveled below the waistband
Of my leopard print pants

It was a cold, dark room
And I had tried to make my body move
Out from his reach, away from his hands
As he pushed underneath the elastic in my underwear band

It was a zebra print down comforter
And I thought she had seen
His advances on me when she opened the door
But she walked away; her observations poor

It was my dad's old t-shirt
That his hands roamed beneath
To touch the skin on my chest
The ice traveling down to my feet

It was a man I had been told to trust
Trying to lull me to sleep
Taking advantage of my body
Before I was really even a preteen

It was the way I was frozen
Even once his assault was done
When I cried myself to sleep
And I had barely turned thirteen

Landmines

Lani Bushe

“They say sticks and bones may break your bones but words may never hurt me” but lately I’ve been feeling that the words in my head are like landmines and one wrong step and it’ll destroy everything in its path causing more to ignite completely destroying the land that once held them. So yea sticks and stones may break my bones but these words in my head created more wounds that Time himself can’t ever heal.

Trigger Warning - Sexual Assault

Nine

Anonymous

Today I am nine,
I lost count of the times that he touched me, I told them but they didn't listen

But did you know that
Nine minutes pass inbetween cases of sexual abuse reported to the
authorities from children like
me.
And one in nine girls under the age of 18 report sexual abuse.
But anyway today I am nine,
I lost count of the times that he touched me, I told him to stop but he
didn't listen
But did you know that
Ninety-3 percent of sexual assault cases are familiar to the victim. 34
percent are family and the
other FIFTY NINE are acquaintances
The other 7 percent are strangers.
But anyway today I am nine,
I lost count of the times that he touched me, I'm trying to tell you, are
you going to listen.

Average Reader
Drake Tipton

I never loved reading books
I always enjoyed the regular short story and comic
Something quick
Easy
Short, never a long commitment
The last long book I read hurt
The endings are always the worst
Especially when you see the ending before the ending is there
But something about this book was different
Maybe it was the familiar cover
The sense of warmth
Maybe it was the way I never really put it down
I've always started this book and never finished it

Leaving it behind for short stories
But I think I'm ready
I'm ready for this story
I just hope this is the ending I've been looking for.

Daydreams...

Drake Tipton

I day dream about you almost daily
You crawl into my bed and we intertwine our fingers and lock our
lips
I pull you closer
And
hold the small of your back
I touch your skin, warm to the touch. I run circles around your back
I wrote I love you with my finger even if you don't get it
I squeeze your hand three times so you know I'm there.

one

two

three

I shut my eyes and breathe in this moment.
the rain hits the roof and I open my eyes
Arms empty.
Hands holding nothing but wants and needs.
I shut my eyes to make it all come back.
But that's the fault in daydreams
At the end of the day
It's only a dream.

Worn Stories

Drake Tipton

I talked about us in a way that reminded me of an old book.
Every page old and worn, like I had flipped through them a million times.

The spine creased and broke.

The pages yellow from age.

Dirt specks on the cover because I take it with me wherever I go.

Sometimes I wish I was a slower reader,

I wish I hadn't rushed to get to the ending so soon.

Maybe I'll go back one day,

And reread it for the last time,

Or maybe it's time I start a new book.

Trigger Warning - Suicide/Death

Young Boys Death

Drake Tipton

I almost killed a man last week

No, I never did pull that trigger

Or sink that knife into his skin

I walked away

With a feeling of remorse

But also a feeling of hope

For if I had killed that man last week

If I had pulled that trigger

Or sank that knife into his skin

I would not be here

To tell you about the man I almost killed last week

Tidal

Drake Tipton

If I had to describe her I'd talk about how she looks like the sun
setting over the ocean.

I've never been to the beach...

But I know that she is more beautiful than the sun setting over a calm
yet raging sea.

Her beauty washes over in waves and with each new wave I let it pull
me in,

Inch

By

Inch

Her smile is like the sun rays kissing my skin,

Her touch is like the sand because no matter how far I go I can still
feel it

All

Over my body

Her laugh...

God her fucking laugh, like a seashell pressed against my ear the
roars of the ocean ever alive.

I've never been to the beach...

But

I'm okay with that

Because

She brings the beach to me.

Colorful Mundane

Drake Tipton

I went to bed at the same time every night
I woke up at the same time every day
I ate the same meal every morning
3 eggs,
cinnamon apple oatmeal,
and 2 slices of toast
I drank the same cup of black coffee
I live the same
colorless
mundane life
For 4 years I did this!
4 years I watched you grow,
4 years I sat and wished,
4 years I made the worst mistakes...
For 4 years I never said anything.
I lived my colorless mundane life
Waking up at the same time
Going to bed at the same time
And...
eating my same breakfast
I lived this life for 4 years
For 4 years too long
I no longer go to bed at 10pm
Instead I stay up until 5 in the morning laughing and loving you
I no longer wake up at 7am every morning
Instead I sleep in as long as possible just to hold you a moment longer
I no longer eat the same 3 eggs, cinnamon apple oatmeal and 2 slices
of toast with black coffee
Instead I eat whatever we feel like eating
because
life is no longer mundane
You once asked me what you do to make life worth it

I thought it was an odd question
What don't you do?
But I realized you don't see you how I see you
so
I gave a short response,
"And I don't know. Life. Life was so bland. So so mundane. I did the
same thing every day. I ate
the same thing for breakfast every day. I sat and watched the girl I
was in love with live her life
and did nothing about it. I very rarely take emotional risks. I very
rarely deal with my emotions.
But you make every little risk worth it. You make life worth enjoying,
you add the color to my life
every day, even on days you didn't know you were adding color to it"
Life is no longer colorless
Life is colorful
You are my muse and the greatest gift I've received
You bring the color to my life and I stare in awe
You make a life I held no care for worth living
You are my savior from my mundane life
You are my color

Money Man
Keshaun Reynolds

Uh uh yo yo
I'm ice cold, cold as a glacier
I'm saying bye bye to all these haters
I'm doing big things and they cant stand it
I got them crying falling off titanic
All this money on me got me singing proud
I got the streets calling, they calling really
loud