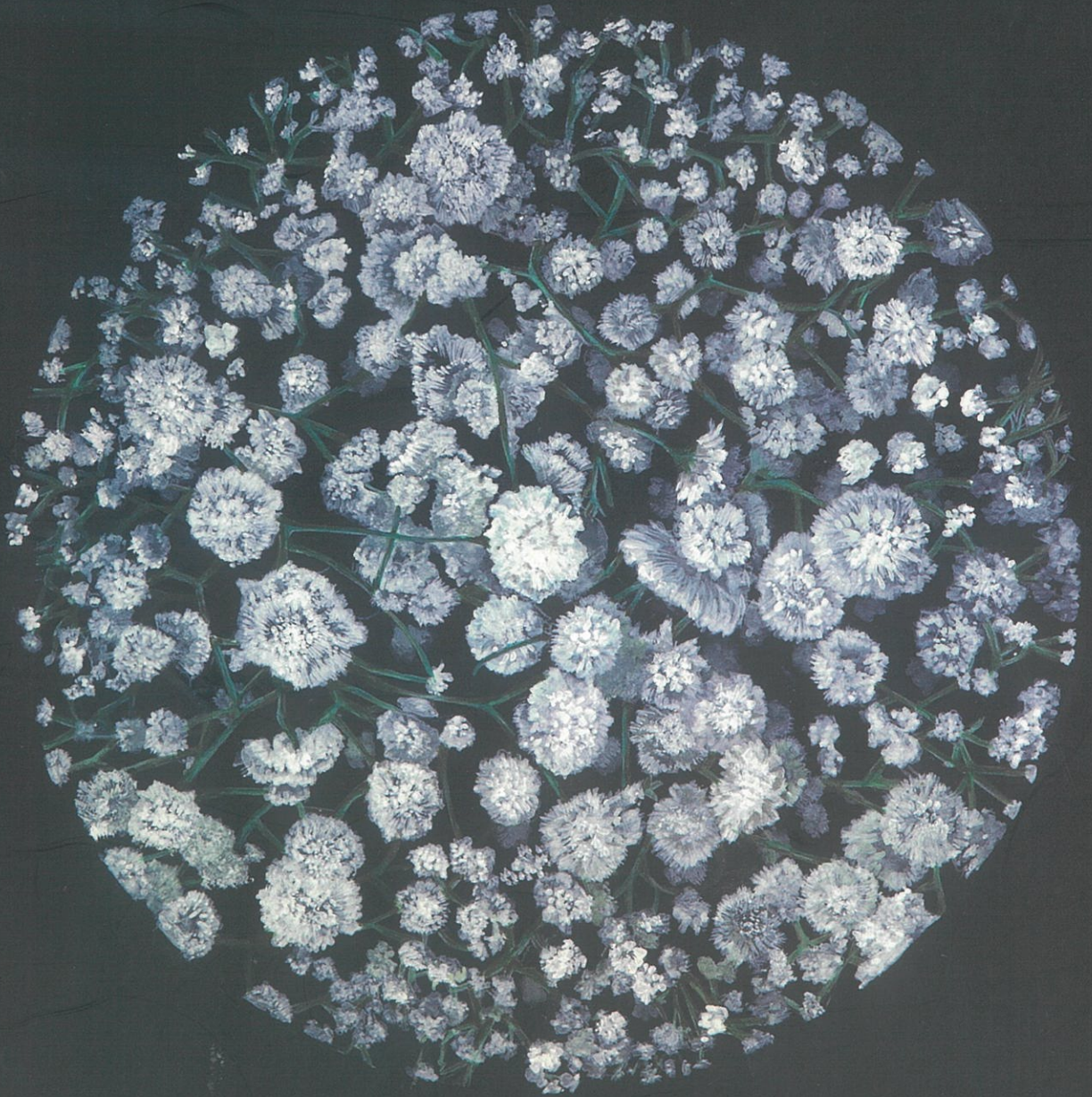


# *The Magpie*

2016







*The Magpie*: the literary and art magazine of Seoul Foreign High School  
Volume 4, 2016

To our dear readers,

We are delighted to bring you our fourth issue of *The Magpie*!

Korean magpies, *ggachi* (까치), are said to bring good news and to invite good people. This year, we have invited so many good people to contribute to our magazine, and the result is a joyous celebration of the creativity and talent of our Seoul Foreign High School students.

This year, for *The Magpie*, good news abounds! In January, we received a great honor from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, USA) Program to Recognize Excellence in Student Literary Magazines. They awarded us with a designation of "Excellent" for last year's magazine. Then, in April, the Chairman of the PRESLM, Tom Feigelson, called us in person to commend *The Magpie* and to ask if he can feature our magazine in the NCTE National Conference in Atlanta and the Korea Academy for Educators (KAFE) conference at the University of Southern California. We feel very proud to receive such recognition and grateful to be able to share our work beyond Korea's borders.

Thank you, SFHS students, for the part you all play in bringing *The Magpie* to life each year, sharing the very best of your writing and art with us. We hope you will enjoy reading it as much as we have loved creating it.

Lauren Jackson  
Faculty Advisor of *The Magpie*

Cover Art:

**Baby's Breath** Acrylic paint on paper

*Claire Shin*

**Art Within Humans** Pencil, OHP film, acrylic board

*Seinna Kang*

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Lauren Jackson



**Komorebi**

*Jules Lee*

Golden sun streaks trickle through  
The clusters of leaves  
Illuminating its hue  
From shamrock green to chartreuse

Cool breeze diffuses the petrichor  
Left behind by the 3am morning dew  
The misty wafts  
Tickle the doe's moist nose

Halos of light warm my limbs  
As I lie in my cynefin  
Soaking in the gilded beams  
That puts every cell in my mind to peace

**Tiger and Lilies**

Oriental paint

*Eunice Ye-in Lee*

**Look for Disney**

*Lauren Youmi Chang*

*Scholastic Award recipient*

The smiling shape  
Of the black and white H<sub>2</sub>O molecule  
Smiles broad and Brave in front  
Of the rising peaks of the glowing castle

The pure water stretching out  
Reflecting the dashing star as it  
Arcs above the castle tips  
Fireworks giggling behind

Then emotions pop within  
Splashing flares of joy and surprise that  
intertwine, getting Tangled, then merge  
as they glide and dance on the Frozen rink of innocence  
Within any child

Queer though it is how such a fictional character  
May pose as a Big Hero to young minds,  
Bringing together the Beauty of wonder  
Concealing the Beast of reality

As if a whole new world expands  
Turning your imagination Inside Out  
To find yourself looking at what shapes  
Your childhood



## Binary Errata

*Serin Lee*

I shudder to remember the morning  
we passed the autumn-strewn cracks  
in the sidewalk at an easy 25, and your  
eyes razed each lawn in October disapproval –  
sweeping clean the suburban lines' maple-pronged deformities  
as we cruised the streets inoffensively.

You feigned deafness to  
the frazzled pop-crunch of the gilded  
sycamore bones – their alley-cat arches ironed out  
under the thrum of our wheel.  
I sat with the taste of morning traffic  
in my mouth as we fled the blowsy ambivert season –  
that curious mid-life meditation with its wallflower beauties –  
without so much as a drive-by comment.



## Talk to Me Nice or Don't Talk To Me At All

Acrylic and spray paint on canvas

*Younghoo Kim*

Each window frame was its own vignette;  
you laughed at me for believing it.  
Some nights I sniff around the unyielding leaflets  
you like to riddle your tinkering hours with –  
waxing poetic about the beauty  
of boot sectors and solid-state drives, those disturbing  
rectilinear strongboxes that mold your heart.  
Page 48: I study between its lines the art of  
transferring your cardiac code  
to a binary form more emotionally executable.

I abhor seeing the world as it is; you refuse  
to see it as anything but. Let us both try  
not to delude ourselves as on other highways we cross  
the chaos of cirri that assails our swathe  
of pedantic road.

And you continue to distrust prosody's lies,  
and I, the rules of the game – still, I  
look up and think there is nothing so lovely  
as the cerebral phantasmagoria of clouds.

## How to Disappoint Your Teacher

Kate Yim

You receive high marks. You're given all sorts of praise at school. And you. Hate. It. It is time to devolve from teacher's pet to pet peeve. Here is the definitive process for grinding your teacher's gears.

The first crucial step to disappointing your teacher is obvious: put absolutely no effort into her class. Start with your best subject. Chances are, your teacher has heard about you from previous teachers and has high hopes for you. Now is your chance to shatter your teacher's goals for you. Begin by not participating during class, slacking off on your homework, and flunking your exams. Sit at the back of the classroom to talk with your friends during lessons. By neither participating nor doing your homework, you will appear to be apathetic towards both the class and your grades. Failing your exams will show your incompetence and lack of motivation towards the subject at hand. However, if you are compelled to pass the class, keep your scores at a solid 70% through your exams. Only get the difficult questions correct; make careless errors on the simple ones. Writing answers like "16 divided by 4 equals 2" or "the definition of respiration is breathing" are prime examples. I can testify that your teacher will express his distress when he gives you back your exam. This kills two birds with one stone: your competence is proven, and your teacher is disheartened at your lack of effort. These are sure-fire ways to grind any teacher's gears.

The next disappointing thing that you can do to your teacher is to use slang exclusively to communicate with your peers during class. While phrases such as "scrub," "GG," and "savage" are ubiquitous among teenagers, they never fail to create confusion among teachers. Teachers will assume that the students are insulting each

other and cannot speak proper English. If your friend trips over a chair during class, do not call him or her a "klutz"—instead, yell "GG YOU SCRUB" at the top of your lungs. Extra brownie points if you can incorporate pop culture into dialogue with your teachers. Casually mentioning Taylor Swift's cats, Zayn Malik's solo career, or anything related to the Kardashians will truly baffle any teacher. A tried-and-true comment would be "Mr. Frey, WHAT'S GOOD?" To be more subtle, simply address your teacher as "Homie G" from time to time. Be careful that nothing you say is actually rude—your goal is to disappoint your teacher, not get chewed out by the school counselor.

The last thing you can do to disappoint your teacher is never to take their advice to heart. The majority of teachers only want the best for their students and often give suggestions of activities to join or classes to take. Reject all of these ideas. Your teacher believes that you have the ability to take IB HL Math? Take Math Studies instead. Your English teacher is encouraging you to submit writing samples to *The Magpie*? Fold some paper planes out of your poetry. Even if you believe that you can (and want to) partake in certain classes and activities, fight the urge. It doesn't matter if you have the skill set to become the captain of varsity soccer, or MUN Secretary-General by the time you're a junior—if your teacher is encouraging you to do it, you cannot try out! No exceptions! It is in your teacher's best interest to ensure that you have a well-rounded school experience; it is in *your* best interest to disappoint your teacher.

Now is your chance. March into that classroom, take a spot in the back, and sit there like a vegetable. No teacher will love you now.





**Haenyo Lady** Photography  
*William Lee*

Magpie 2014-2015

**Cognac**

*Andrew Chung*

Behind the stick, yes you, my dear,  
Thou hand a glass, on rocks, right here.  
Yea cold VS, no doubt, be good,  
Ol' spirit right, for soul, once drear.

At sea I's been, for years, in daze,  
Cartier within, explore, all maze.  
But years elapse, no cease, at strife,  
The rocks cut off—my sight? No bays.

For these are rules, restraints, of life.  
Until I heard  
A shrewd man say,

“Alcohol heal them cuts.”  
and so my VS  
be on the rocks  
cause life is  
full of ‘em  
thus

it be my cushion  
and i drink  
and drink  
and dr nk  
i

and d i n  
r ck

my med ici  
ne  
ma m ic en  
ed j

me sin  
di e



**Jellyfish** Photography  
*Nicole Hong*



## Frayed Hems

Michelle Yun

It was his favorite place in the world. On this rooftop, everything was quiet.

He could idly watch the hazy puffs of his breath disappear into the cold February air, and if he rested with his back against the hard steel of the air ventilator at a specific angle, the sounds of the city would not reach him. When he was on this roof, there was nothing but himself and the vast, never-ending sky.

On this rooftop, everything was quiet.

All the complicated, conflicting thoughts in his head stilled in a way they never did when he was anywhere else, and the complexities of his life came down to two very simple choices—ones even he could understand: to jump or not to jump.

He was wearing a pair of elegantly worn-out jeans and a thin polyester zip-up over an even thinner white t-shirt. Had it not been for the frayed, threadbare cuffs of his sleeves, his attire might even have passed as classy. As it was, those few loose strands ruined the overall simplicity of his outfit, much like a single misremembered detail can tarnish one's affections.

From this high, he could see the dazzling lights of the metropolis reflected along the unbroken sheet of the river. The intersection below was the epitome of flawless communication between people who had never before met. Polite civilities were being exchanged on the sidewalks, and on the streets, traffic lights guided cars to their appropriate destinations with the meticulous precision only machines could possess. This was the apex of human advancement, of civilization, of technology.

At least, it was... on the exterior.

One night, when he closed his eyes and took a deep breath, he inhaled the sweet scent of mankind's competence... and exhaled the rotten stench of a city's corruption. Something, somewhere, changed. After that, the flaws in the metropolis's deceptive mask began to unravel like the frayed hems of his once-perfect sleeves, picked at over and

over again by fingernails that were bitten down to the quick. His eyes had been opened to the dark, menacing alleyways where the city's glare did not reach, his ears to the insults hurled between people who had never before met.

From the rooftop, he could see it now.

The city was a distant, emotionless place, a mark of man's unsuccessful attempt at artificial beauty. When he hugged his jacket closer to his body, it was not just because the temperature had dropped. The weather numbed his fingers, yes, but the city froze him from the inside out.

He carefully took off his jacket and draped it over the metal railing. The soles of his nylon shoes slapped against hard cement as he landed on the other side. He was consciously aware of the merry laughter that drifted up from below, the boisterous honks from cruising vehicles, the buzz of energy from the vibrant city that he both loved and hated.

From directly above, the drop seemed so much more intimidating, a dizzying height that made your head pound with blood and knees go weak with fear. It was in moments like these that he appreciated—if just an infinitesimal amount—the preciousness of life. He breathed deeply. For some reason, the air tasted cleaner, fresher than what he was used to. A sudden rush of terror engulfed him, and his limbs locked in place. A powerful gust of wind came up—for one terrifying moment he believed it would push his paralyzed body over the edge. The moment passed, his legs began to work again, and he instinctively shrank away from the precarious drop. Deep, rapid breathing echoed in his ears, and he hung his head in what could only be identified as shame.

He couldn't do it... at least, not today.

Slowly, the night sky made way for warm sunrise.

Back on the metal railing of a rooftop lay a jacket a man had left behind. It was sleek and navy blue—in perfect condition except for the loose strands at its frayed hems. Not knowing their owner's struggles, the tattered threads fluttered shamelessly in the morning breeze, dancing back and forth like the swaying of a man's crumbling resolve.



### Things Not Seen

*Audrey Kim*

I wish to sing a duet with nonexistent time  
To float among the clouds of ancient hours  
Once wasted and cherished  
And watch the moments tick by constantly  
On the clock that never seems to stop counting  
Before the beams of moonlight cease reaching for this lowly earth.

I wish to drift among the mist of lonely island dreams  
To walk the dusty paths long since forgotten  
And shift through the timeless gold dust of the years now gone  
And the memories promised to be treasured in hearts forever.

I wish to sail on the soft wind across a starlit sky  
To light the night with stories never told  
And dance with glowing fireflies on a field of diamond dew  
And dip my hands into the inky blackness of the unknown.

I wish to swim down a music filled stream  
To listen to the melody nature has composed  
And bask in the notes that peacefully drown out the rest of the  
world  
And fall deeply into the sounding chorus  
of my duet with the unseen.



Hyo-Nyuh Shim-Chung's Underwater Adventures  
Watercolor and colored pencils  
*Eunice Ye-In Lee*



## Anger

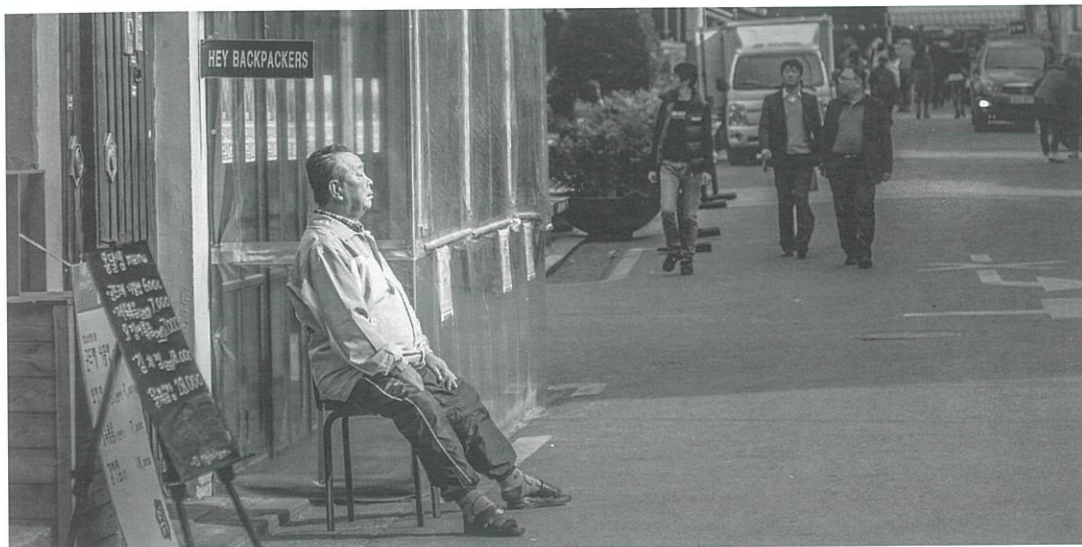
*Olivia Kim*

It fills a room with clouds of smoke  
and seeps into your lungs  
slowly, until it covers you

It coats your insides  
you can't breathe  
a thousand pounds on your chest

It pours  
out of your mouth  
white-hot

The fog melts away  
and so does your wrath  
but your hands are stained red



## Bed

*Andrew Chung*

in wayworn shoes. We trudge ahead,  
With toll of day imposed upon,  
Pursuit of things from times of dawn.  
“Soon storm shall put us back in bed,”

we know of such. As fate draws near,  
By ones and threes to graves depart.  
Yet I proceed with valor, heart,  
For time remains with those who hear

the southern wind. And tall I stand  
Amidst the whips of sand on face,  
Alone, alone in desert place.  
“The end must not receive my hand,”

was what I thought. But must it be?  
The bed can be my source of breath,  
Thus bear afresh a life not death,  
And render free

My Soul.

**Hey Backpackers!** Photography  
*Yonna Kim*



**Simple Relationships** Photography  
*Toby Kim* *Scholastic Award recipient*



**Sunrise Awakening**

*Grace Kim*

Over hills of autumn trees  
the leaves hold their breath  
waiting  
under the drooping dawn sky  
a single lavender blue wash of paint

A sudden rush of cold wind  
soaked through like heavy cotton  
beats the withered leaves like a rag doll  
tossing them around from hand to hand  
breaking them  
crushing them  
then settling them down gently  
only brown shreds left of their identity

The slightest sliver of the rising sun  
slicing sideways  
baking the fallen leaves  
to a blood dipped  
withered  
crisp  
painting the hills red

Hanging low like a lantern  
the sun consumes  
the slouching evergreen trees  
bristle by bristle  
the hunched over trees  
retching into the dried grass  
the rotting pine needles  
hammered into the ground

**Autumn Trees** Photography

*Ning Chin*



are illuminated  
sewing a patchwork  
of forest hues

The wispy shadows of each tree stretch  
growing leaner and taller  
looming over the rest of the forest  
wrangled limbs  
wringing each other's necks  
dressing the world in a robe  
of pitch black darkness

The distant echoes of a lonesome owl

cease to exist  
Replaced by the incessant chatter  
of dovetail coos  
and robins.

Thick layers of clouds lying down  
resting on the sky line  
rise to the piercing gaze  
of the sun  
shifting around to make space  
for the shining morning sun.

I have misjudged it.



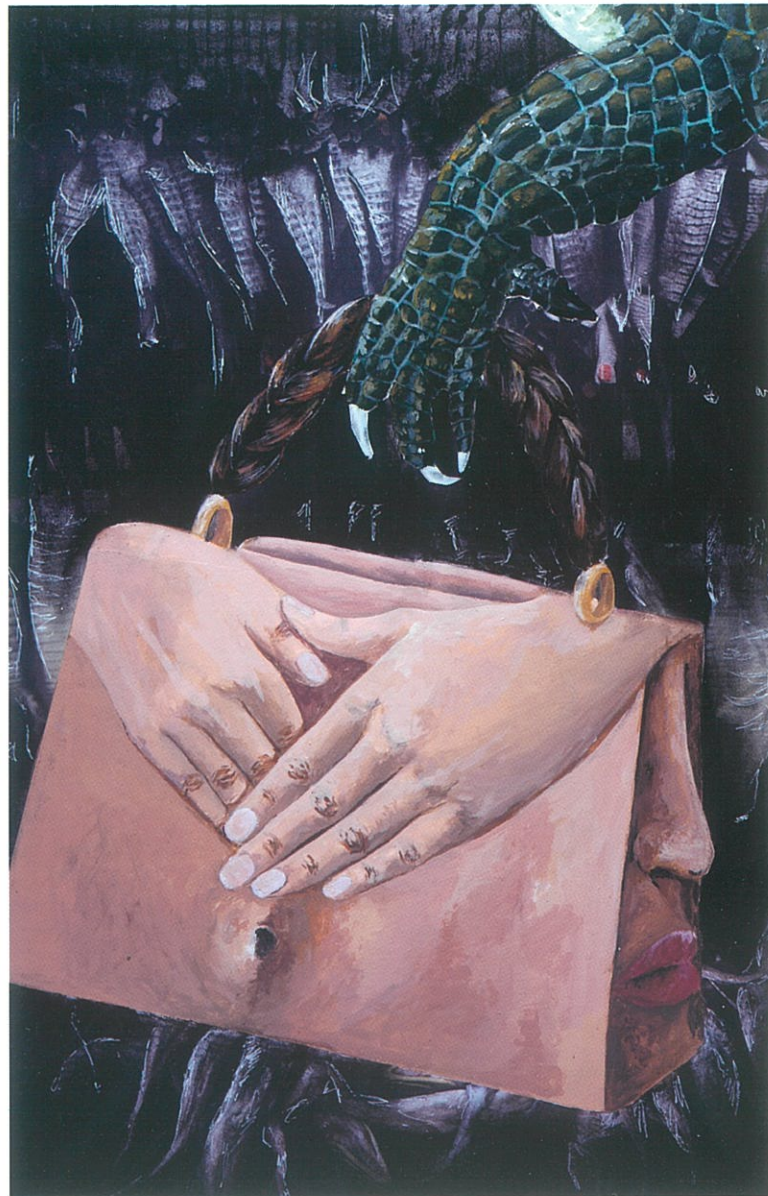
Emulation of Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

*Sarah Hamm*

What I carried varied by state.

When a moving van uprooted my family, I carried a half-written-in journal, an empty Hello Kitty journal, the Magic Treehouse, and a 64-pack of Crayola crayons. What I couldn't fit into my Barbie backpack I fit into the pockets of my jeans. I carried state pennies flattened at rest-stops, random assortments of unidentifiable Skittles and M&Ms; I carried unenthusiastic dragging feet and silent brooding. In Sadness, I carried my brother's hands in mine as both of us carried unknowing borders between our fingers. In Confusion, I carried empty promises of family trips to Hawaii, the salty tears that stained my orange sweater, the sound of a certain "pu-dum, pu-dum" I would hear when my dad's car pulled into the driveway. My state was always changing. My father, who was paranoid someone would snatch us up in the busy streets of New York or that we'd get killed in a car accident in some freak circumstance, carried subway maps and hotel keys and pictures of our family and spare change and a spare metro card. He was a big man and carried thirty-eight years of newspaper deliveries, dish-washing, shopping cart pushing, handy-working, meetings in cubicles, business meetings, and ethnic stereotyping in his large, army-retired body.

**Reversal** Acrylic, gel pen  
*Isabelle Kim*





**New York**

*Jeena Chong*

234 West 31st Street  
The dusty, dark brown mechanism  
Stretches its hands  
8 o'clock fading away  
Entering the hour of 9

The rhythmic patter of footsteps young and old  
The steady hum of eye-blinding billboards  
As the city prepares for nightfall

Wafting through a windowsill are the muffled voices  
Of a father and daughter  
A crying toddler  
Waiting for an embrace

Through the wall of peeling paint and aged rust,  
Dancing pots and pans in the dishwasher  
Fill the room with a lemony daydream.

Children scream in delight,  
Seeing the gleaming whites of their smiling parents  
Bring in bags of swirled white and brown sweets.

Buildings reaching to the sky  
Shine with silvery white lights,  
Like a Christmas tree surrounded by candy apple red presents  
On Christmas day.

Through the neighborhood,  
Past the mossy greens and a mismatch of reddish browns,  
The hinges prepare themselves for another night of patrol.

It's 9PM in New York City,  
And the city is just waking up.

Bedtime stories end.  
Eyes slide closed,  
Teddys clutched tightly,  
and the soft sound  
inhale, exhale  
inhale, exhale  
inhale, exhale.



**Twins** Photography  
*William Lee*

**The Thunderous Silence of Alfred Chapman**

*Cailee Kim*

*Scholastic Award recipient*

I scan my face carefully in my old stained bathroom mirror. Man...my stubble looks rough. I rub my hands against the pudgy wrinkled corners and lines all across my face. Guess I can't deny the fact that I'm growing older...very old now, that is. I adjust my favorite custom-made polka dotted necktie with my initials 'a.c.' on the back—a present from my granddaughter ten years ago. I fold down the collars of my white button-down shirt and fix the form of my suit by pulling the ends down.

"Alfred, get it together. Show them who you really are, and deserve to be. You can't let them just get away with ignoring you suddenly like this. Old fella, you're a keeper."

She always used to say that. I was a keeper, and she gave me the confidence to believe in myself. I was worthy enough for attention. And quite enough. There was a time when I walked out on the streets and people would stare in awe because it was... me. I have done everything I could in order to get my name out there. October 14th, 1945. I still remember the day my name 'Alfred Chapman' was everywhere on headlines. Unbelievable... exceptionally unbelievable what time can do to people.

After shamelessly staring at myself in the mirror, I grab my 'I love whisky' coffee mug, and prepare myself for another boring day in the office. \*

\* \* \*

"Hey, if it's not the infamous Paul Gibson!" I nudge the side of his shoulder with mine and give him a wink out of the corner of my right eye. How would I have known that I would see him here at my office of all places! It's been nearly a month since I sent him that letter. The old bastard probably forgot to reply back to me.

"tick. tock. tick. tock. tick. tock." An awkward chill of silence, and I stare at him. Did he not hear me right?

In his hand, clutched very tightly, is a faded brown, tarnished letter. And as I look back at Paul's face, I notice something I didn't before. Was he... crying? I turn my head back to the letter, now curious about what he saw, but to my displeasure find it crumpled up in his balled fists. I'm about to ask him what it says, but decide that it's better off if I leave.

I trudge over to the new location of my desk, recently moved to the way corner of the room where basically everything is inconvenient. I slump down onto my rigid wooden chair and stare at my computer screen for a minute until I remember what I was supposed to do. The clicking noises of my co-workers from the rows and rows of computers begin to frustrate me. I can't help it that I'm an old man with sensitive ears.

"I'm sorry, can you pass on the message to type in a more gentle manner than furiously clacking away on the darn computers. I'm old. Deal with it."

". . ."

"Excuse me, do you need me to repeat what I just said, because I think my message was pretty clear."

". . ."

Who does he think he is? I daringly stand up, and pound both hands flat-palmed onto the table. The contact of my hands with the dark, rustic table creates a heavy echo that runs through the spacious hall. I can definitely hear the deep rumble of the ear-splitting sound. I can definitely feel the vibration—starting from the tips of my hands and rushing up my spine.

But no one reacts.

There is only one thing that can help me regain my stability. It helps me calm my nerves, helps me relax, helps me not to do something I would regret. I hold down and control the swelling fury within me. I whisper to myself, repeating once, then twice, then again until I finally convince myself, "You're a keeper." I believe it. I know it. She said so. But then I remember... she's no more.

Restraining the enraged fire from rekindling within me, I take a



deep breath in through my nose, shut my eyes tight, purse my lips in frustration, and let it all out through my mouth, one of the most useful tactics I have learned in the last few weeks, ever since these good for nothing pretentious psychos think they can ignore me just because I turned seventy.

In order for my annoyance to subside, and take my mind off of...her. I decide to go and help myself to a glass of water in the snack room right around the corner from the office desks. Carefully placing my vintage black bowler hat down on my table, I head off to the snack room. That is, until another good for nothing psycho co-worker crashes into me, pushing me down. I shriek at him for being so inconsiderate and careless.

But he doesn't react.

Using all my strength to get myself back up, I hold onto the chair beside me for support. He continues to walk past me, looking unperturbed—not even giving me a side glance, or better yet helping me up. A slow gushing sense of fury takes over, my whole frail body so red even my blood is boiling, and my guts are about to burn up. A fast forwarding of all the cold shoulders, of all the times they treated me despicably—looking down on me as if I were inferior, deficient, crummy, worthless. It runs through my head like a whirlwind of reminders...reminders that I should show them that I really am a keeper—like she promised, that I am not a worthless inferior fool that they think I am. I snatch a box cutter knife lying on one of the tables. I am shaking so much I can't process anything I'm doing. Taking big long steps, I stomp with all my strength towards him. I take hold of his shoulder, and plunge the knife as deep as it can get into the back of his neck.

But he doesn't react.

No one reacts.

The knife is still there. The blood is not. He is still there. But am I not?

Silence returns and dominates the room, and all things become light as feathers.



**What We See First** Acrylic and charcoal on paper  
*Seinna Kang*

**Sincerely, a Korean American**

*Anna Nahm*

*Scholastic Award recipient*

“Hi, nice to meet you, where are you from?”  
Hi, nice to meet you as well. I’m from  
Irvine, California.  
don’t you dare ask me where i’m from-from

“No...where are you *really* from?”  
ugh here we go again  
Uhhh, my dad is from  
Chicago  
and my mom is from  
South Korea.  
is that what you wanted?

Ohh! You’re Korean!  
I like Kimchi quesadillas!  
And those Korean sushi things?”  
Um.

this conversation was an  
everyday part of my life  
as an asian american in california

there were asians everywhere.  
asians who have spent their whole lives in  
tokyo  
asians who were raised in california  
their whole lives.

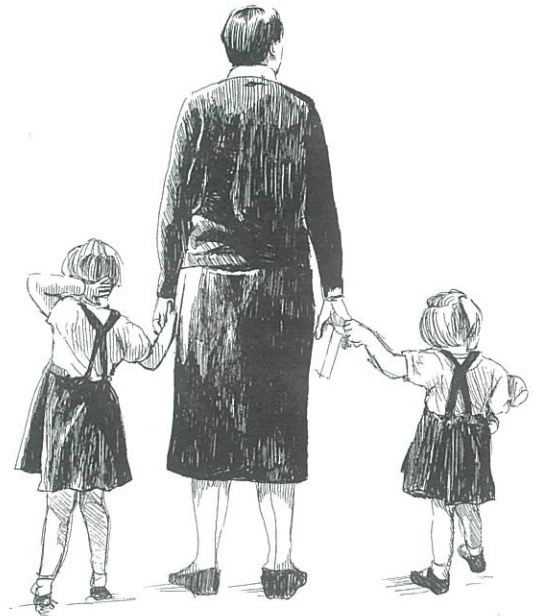
something about  
an asian american.  
they don’t ask european americans  
or african americans  
or even canadian-americans.

is this a sense of  
cultural alienism  
or is it  
a compliment?

are they interested in getting to know  
my life story  
as a 2nd generation korean american?  
or is this just a mixing up of  
chinese and japanese and korean?

maybe three times asking  
is enough  
but hey,  
if cultural alienism is your  
piece of cake,  
take the whole box!

just keep in mind,  
i’m just as american as you.  
my favorite food is also pizza  
and i don’t love “korean sushi”  
as much as you do.



**On the Road** Pen and ink  
*Ina Kim*





**Seoulite** Mixed Media  
Eunice Ye-in Lee

## We

*Janice Hahn*

Behold the land, the home  
Of the free, of the brave.  
Though we have yet to bear the flag  
That we should proudly wave.  
Until the stream of racial slurs  
Parches on our tongues,  
Until our bare feet learn to kiss –  
not trample the earth that reared our young  
When will America be seen  
As the nation of nobility  
Purveyor of peace,  
Where love is in the language we speak?  
Where we are not blinkered  
By color, class, nor proclivities;  
Where the fruits of our work  
Are borne righteously,  
That is America to me.



**Forgotten Lyrics** Digital illustration  
*Mariposa Lee*

### **Last Flower**

*Lauren Youmi Chang*

The flower descends slowly  
petal by petal it floats away  
like shedding its tears of isolation

This flower once bloomed, blossomed  
shining a bright eye towards life  
emanating a bright color, ruby, emerald, sapphire

Reflecting back, reminding you of  
the times when a smile twinkled in your eyes  
when determination burned within you

Yet such colors change its nuance  
scarlet, jade, indigo  
ripping away at your memories  
twisting them black  
making you feel scared  
to enter a world that is harsh

As soon as your last twinkle dies  
as soon as that fire whispers bye  
the flower touches the cold floor at your feet  
broken apart into single petals  
alone, never to be mended again  
never



# Metropolitan Museum

*Lauren H. Jackson*

Hopkins said, "Glory be to God for dappled things."  
but the skies now are just one color—

white

the trees not stippled, but etched  
onto zinc plates  
each black branch  
defined, quietly reaching  
beyond a stark grid of windows.

I am caught between the snap lines of windows  
above me  
and the reflecting pool stretching out  
below—

cold, dry air outside  
or cold, watery sky,  
glittering with nickels and pennies.

But I don't let my legs stop  
walking steadily forward,  
heels clacking on marble grandeur.  
I don't want to stay here  
in black and white clarity.

I'm looking for a pied beauty,  
for rose-moles,  
leaf buds misting  
the branches  
green.

**Solemn Release** Oil on canvas

*Claire Shin*



### Forty-nine Seconds

Leonie Woehrle

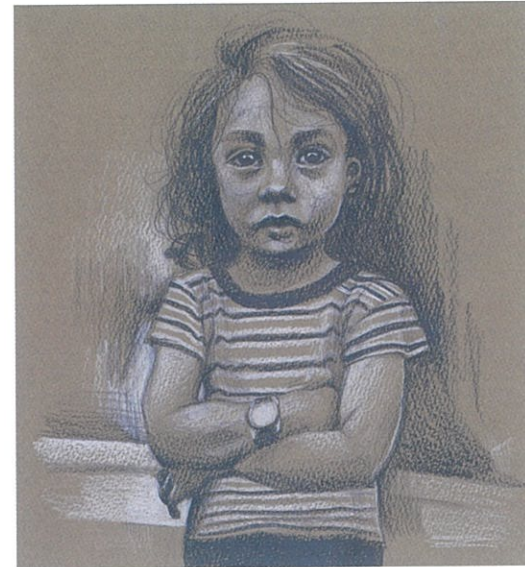
And then they fall, at least a dozen of them, rolling in every direction. She, despite dress and high heels, which I think is an impractical combination for a hectic everyday life in a big city, bends down to collect the contents of her purse. She looks so young, and at the same time as weathered as an old woman, a combination that one finds nowadays increasingly common. The woman desperately tries to get her perfectly polished nails underneath the coins to pick them up. I will probably have to wait a while, and I know when I am looking in the face of the businessman behind her that we share the same thought, but the difference is that I will, either way, stand here all day long. His eyes automatically look at his watch and I can hear his foot start tapping.

(00:00:07.08)

I look out of the window and watch the snowflakes as they chase each other to the ground, one faster than the other. They jostle past each other with only one goal on their mind. To be the first. It is so beautiful and at the same time bizarre. I watch their imitators walking on the street, carrying last minute shopping for Christmas. There are just too many of them to focus on individually and the scene gets blurred in my mind. I close my eyes for a moment and take a deep breath.

(00:00:12.17)

The aroma of coffee in the air rising into my nose is so demanding that the smell of spiced punch, freshly peeled tangerines, and cookies get almost completely covered. I listen to the quiet, persistent tapping on keyboards. But something does not fit in. I try to focus on this one specific noise and open my eyes to prove to myself that I am not wrong. There, in the right corner of my small café in a niche, an old man sits with his book and flips the page. It's been a while since I have heard that kind of noise around here and I can't help but smile. How can this man be so normal



**Waiting** Color pencils on paper  
Ina Kim

but still stand out? It fascinates me in a way. I see a lot of different people in here every day, but he is special. The combination of grey hair and glasses he is wearing makes him look pretty old. He wears a neat suit and he holds a book in his hands with the title *Faust*. He is in the middle of the book but there are some sticky notes in the last couple of pages. Someone who has read Goethe more than once in his leisure time has to be either educated or just crazy. I feel like he is the type of old person that you can ask anything and he would have an answer. How calmly he reaches for his cup of tea and takes a sip is noteworthy. This man seems so friendly and familiar, like an old friend I haven't seen in awhile.

(00:00:28.01)

"Can you hurry up a little?" The deep voice of the businessman interrupts my thoughts. The only answer he gets from the woman is a desperate sigh. Her shaking hand just does not work the way it



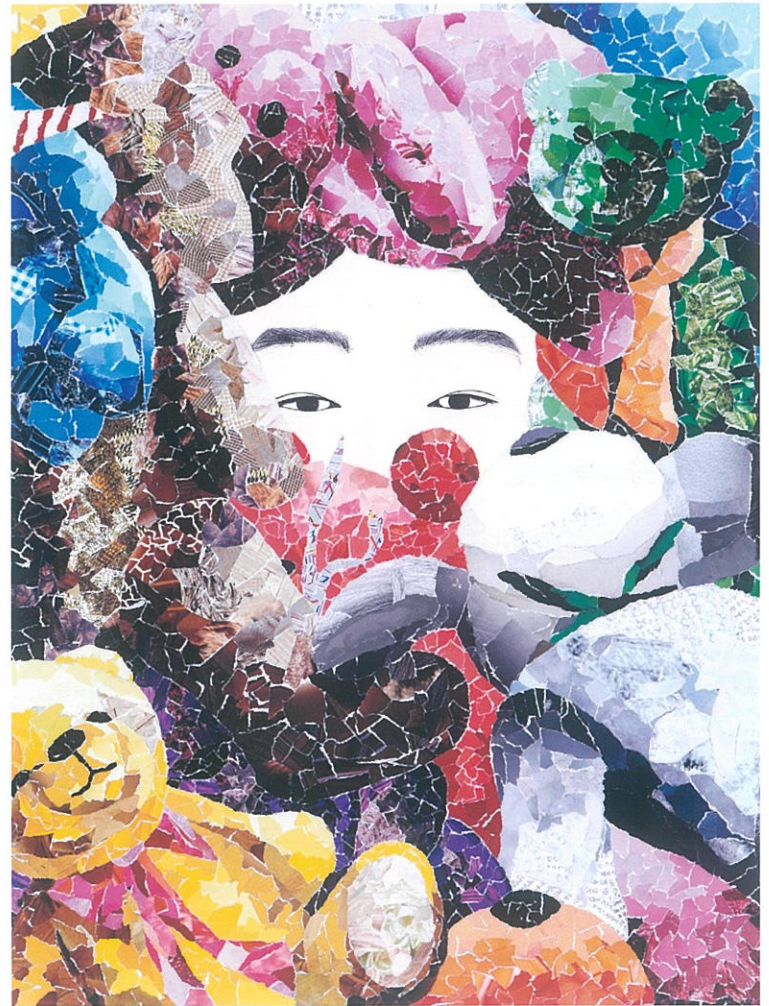
should. It almost seems like the metallic money enjoys its five minutes of fame. Now she places her handbag on the ground in order to work with both hands. A glance at the waiting queue tells me that time can be perceived very differently. One after another pulls out his mobile phone to kill the seemingly endless amount of time. (00:00:32.79)

It is a small gesture, but I can see her wipe a single tear from her cheek. Her movements are becoming more aggressive and you can see a faint trace of anger in her eyes. Nobody cares. Everyone has something better to do. My eyes wander to the niche in the right corner. The old man puts his book neatly on the table and comes straight for us. What is he going to do? I'm curious. He kneels painfully next to the woman and starts to pick up some of the coins. "I don't need any help," the woman says repellently without looking at him, but he keeps going. He watches her in a way I can't describe. It's like he is reading her, reads through all the chapters of her life, and soaks it in. He puts his hand gently on her shoulder and waits. She immediately stops collecting her money and looks at him, shocked. It almost looks like time is standing still, as if they were in their own universe, here in my small café in this big city. Her hands are still shaking and a strand of hair, escaped from her ponytail, falls into her face. I look in her eyes and notice that instead of anger, astonishment takes its place. He puts his wrinkled hand on her soft hands. Her hands stop shaking and her face starts to relax. The old man smiles and starts again to collect the remaining coins on the floor. The woman is sitting there now, stunned and does not move.

The old man gets up with difficulty and places the woman's purse in her hand. "Take care of yourself," he says quietly, smiles and returns to his seat over there in the niche in the right corner of my small café.

(00:00:49.23)

She gives me the money and says: "Not to-go, I'll drink my coffee here."



**Safe Haven** Mixed media  
Seinna Kang



Magpie 2015-2016

## The Female Law

Chloe Han

Name: Society

Choose the most appropriate answer for each question.

A woman must be\_\_\_\_\_.

- gorgeous
- attractive
- beautiful
- all of the above ☒

A woman should be\_\_\_\_\_.

- elegant
- thin
- modest
- all of the above ☒

A woman belongs in the\_\_\_\_\_.

- kitchen
- laundry room
- grocery store
- all of the above ☒

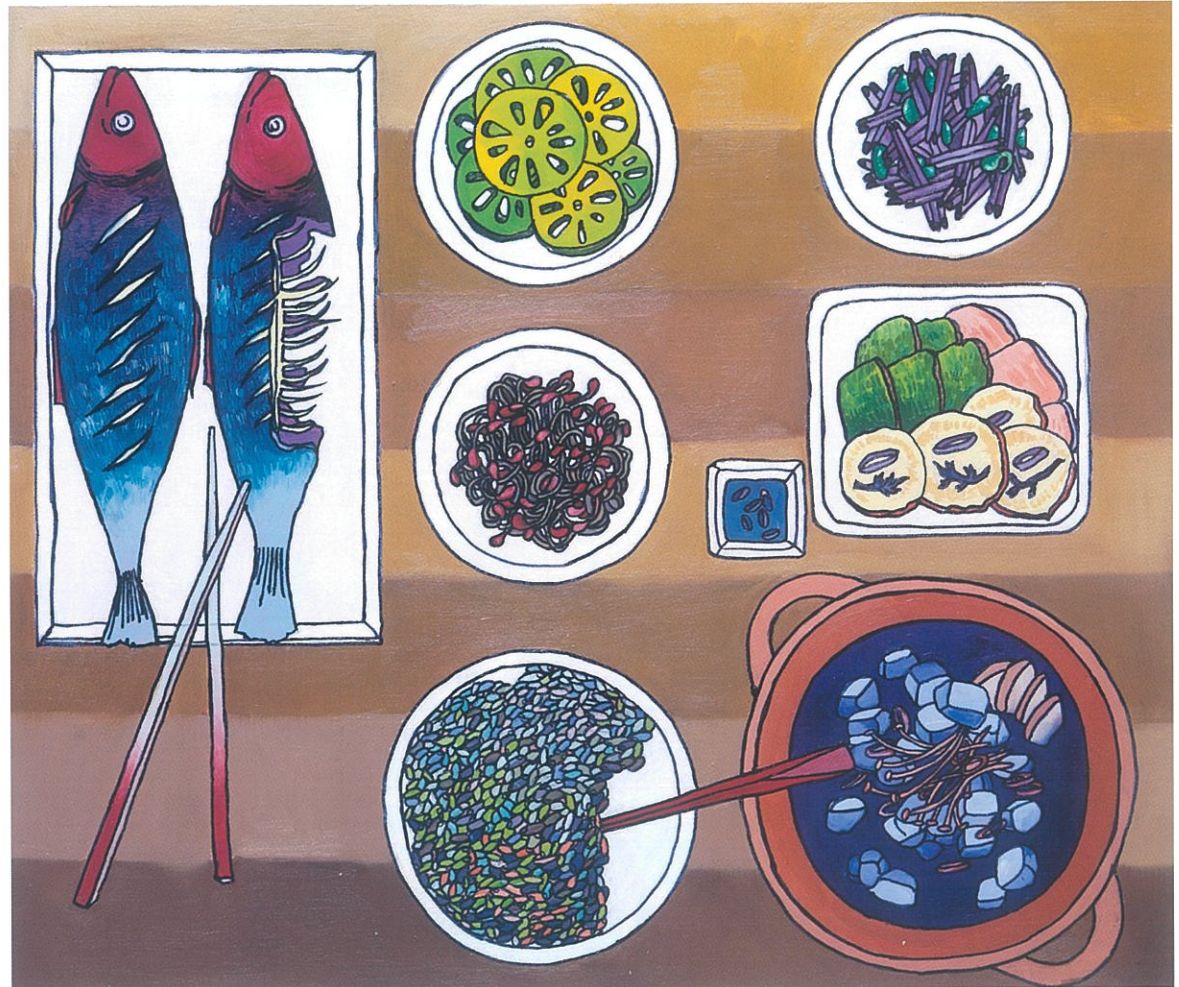
A woman must never be\_\_\_\_\_.

- athletic
- smart
- plump
- all of the above ☒

Savoring Culture

Oil and marker pen on canvas

Claire Shin





# Locked-in Syndrome

Janice Hahn

Cerebromedullospinal disconnection,  
de-efferented state,  
pseudocoma,  
were all just different ways to name the same nightmare:  
a condition like a lock  
to which there was no key.

Her new best friends  
were an IV drip  
and a creaky, four-wheeled  
hospital bed.

Her other companion,  
a tube  
cuddled up in her throat,  
would whisper  
brown slime into her esophagus  
and not her ears  
as if she could hear it better that way.

He chewed for her a bit of steak sometimes  
so she wouldn't forget what it was like to taste  
and wiped her bib  
when she tried to spit it out  
and while he changed her diaper,  
he turned on the TV so she could watch the soccer game.  
She closed her eyes and was thirty again,  
pumping her fists with him as the goalie missed the ball  
and standing up to dance with him  
in the middle of the living room.

There were enough wires on her body  
to play  
all the movements of Mozart's 40th Symphony.  
The only thing missing was a movement  
so the only thing we could ever hope to do  
was play a broken tune on her sorrows.



Elephant Head Sculpture

Porcelain clay

Eunice Cheung

Magpie 2015-2016

### Secluded Garden

*Sae-eun Pak*

I meet you there, again.  
At our secret hiding ground that's  
shimmering  
and brimming  
with something mystical.

It's my sanctuary, as well as yours.  
The delicate flower petals  
glittering  
and fluttering  
down with a sweet scent.

You weren't here at the beginning.  
And the birds, crested and colorful, weren't  
chittering  
and twittering  
like they are these days.

My time at the garden always seems to slip—  
But really, it's only good because of its  
silence  
and serenity  
that seems louder than anything.

**Dopamine** Pen and ink  
*Mara Wiora*



### Mother of Nature

*Emily Dawon Choi*

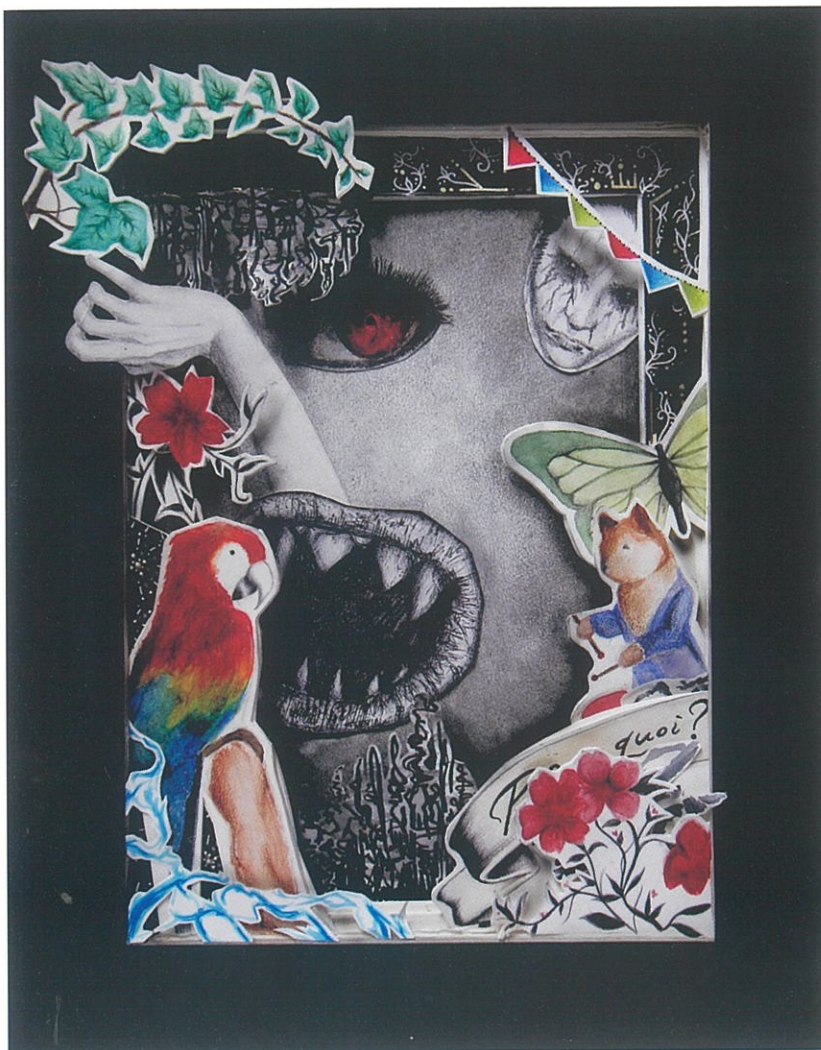
As the raindrops fall  
all over my hazel-coated body,  
my old yet strong branches lengthen  
gradually,  
looking for a hand to hold.

I claim my spot in the forest.  
My roots are firmly fixed in damp soil,  
grasping onto all the dirt they can reach,  
and tufts of grass poke out of every corner.

I am the mirror of the weather.  
I reflect every season by turning my leaves  
to different shades of color,  
from smooth olive green, full of life,  
to toasty golden bronze.

My leaves dance to every beat of the breeze,  
and drop one by one  
from the freezing wind  
that winter blows in my direction.  
But I refuse to fall,  
and I never fail to provide life,  
for I am the symbol of Earth.  
I am the giver of air  
and the mother of nature.





**soi-même** Mixed Media  
GyuEun Park

## Friend

*Yunab Ough*

The goods and bads of Friend  
Not my friend, or a friend  
Just Friend

Usually dressed all in black, as if going to a funeral  
Other times – white, as pure as an angel  
With a long, lean figure, Friend looks down on me  
Not down a ranking, just down in height

From endless poking of my shoulder  
to warm hugs that catch me off  
From silly and annoying, to safe and cozy

My sweet vanilla scent sticks onto Friend  
Covering the traces of burnt cigarettes,  
Which I wish did not exist –  
Not on Friend, not yet at least.

But who am I, to tell Friend what not to do?  
The last time I tried, no words between us two  
For thirty whole days, Friend withdrew.  
And me? Just lost, in my own blues.

The first time Friend spoke, after those thirty days  
Was just my name, repeated more than once.  
Then Friend smiled, revealing perfect teeth  
And Friend and I – together –  
we both laughed it off.



**Infinite Space** Photography  
*Toby Kim*



### Heart of Darkness Emulation

*Adeela Nasharuddin*

He strode through the door with a Frye Logan hung across his broad chest, the clash of its buckles increasingly audible. His necktie swung against the gray striped dress-shirt that hugged his body, sleeves folded to the elbows. Confound the man! He stood before me like a fiery hibiscus in a field of tamed lilies – and yet – there wasn't an atom out of place, and I knew it. Here we go again – just another hysterical episode, the routine retelling of his day, unrelenting and unabating – but what's the point? His hoarse voice rang against the drums of my ears, sometimes echoed in the back of my head, an alarm that awaits me every afternoon. But why do I have to listen? Soul! If anybody had ever struggled with a soul, I am the man. And it wasn't that his tales are less than riveting either. Believe me or not, every sentence carried me through an experimental journey – slow and nervous at first, swallowing his words here and there, which interfered with my concentration. But it was beautiful – he was beautiful! I was shocked when I caught myself staring into his big, brown eyes – faded – most likely from his age I would say, and yet, I didn't feel the need to stop. I couldn't help but study the shape of his jaw, decorated with black and white bristly twigs, and admire the wrinkles outlining his face. I kept my cool demeanor pretty well; but when I heard his familiar low laughter, I smiled a kind and genuine smile – a smile I hoped would warm his heart – I hoped it would last a decade. After all, it was a special smile – and it reflected the very one in front of me – what a special smile indeed...

a moment.

*Grace Charnesky*

Your grandmother's hair –  
not grey or a striking white,  
but pewter. The patterns  
on clinking china Grandpa brought  
from 'Nam in the '70s. They sip  
sour jasmine. You slurp noisily,  
giggling in shimmering blue silk that  
slides beneath soft hands, bearing the  
texture of fur. A tawny kitten purrs,  
warming the frozen blocks of your  
icy November fingers as Saturday  
morning polka blares in a distant past.  
Later, the cousins will explode through the  
creaking door frame. But until then you have  
only tea.



**When the Sun Goes Down**

*Mehr Lakbiani*

Watercolor, emulation

of Katherine Downie

Magpie 2015-2016

### **Powdered Beauty**

*Chloe Son*

The last sunshine fell upon her glowing face  
She was dressed  
    In white  
And the sidewalk grew  
    White with moonlight  
Then he kissed Daisy's  
    White face  
And the glow faded, leaving  
A beautiful little  
Fool.

From F. Scott Fitzgerald's  
*The Great Gatsby*

**Fish Out of Water**  
Water color  
*Sophia Han*



### **A Candle Wick**

*Grace Kim*

Devoured by despair  
Pulled into the bottom of a well,  
taken against its will into the dark pit of its mind.  
The monster inside begins to growl.  
Palms outstretched towards the sky,  
reaching for a savior.  
But just like Alice,  
there was no net to save it,  
no rope to pull it out,  
free falling in insanity.

Radiating with disgust and loathing for the world,  
the intensity of the monster grows.  
Feeding on hatred,  
destroying, consuming anything in sight  
as if it were the cursed golden touch –  
pain and resentment marked in each of its steps  
The monster takes over It.  
In every curse, there is beauty.

The tunnel now disappears from its eyes.  
The monster dies,  
and the candle wick with it.



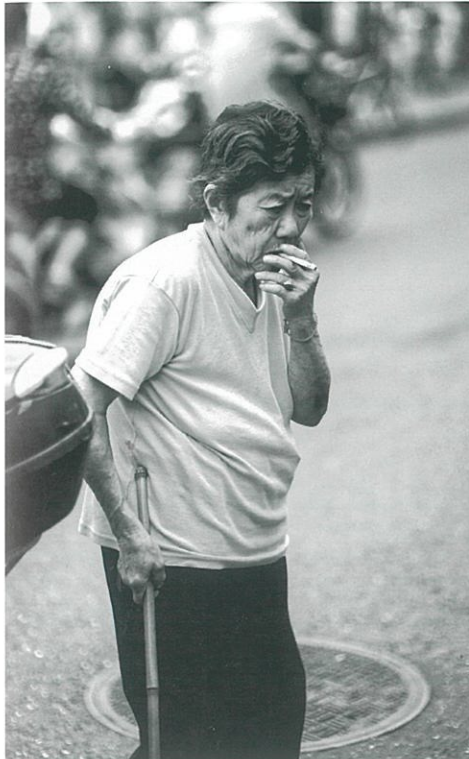
2080

*Anna Nahm*

*Scholastic Award recipient*

hands of  
deserts,  
dunes of wrinkled sand

locks of  
gray silk,  
beds of ongoing sheets



chucks of  
soiled canvas,  
snakes of muddy laces

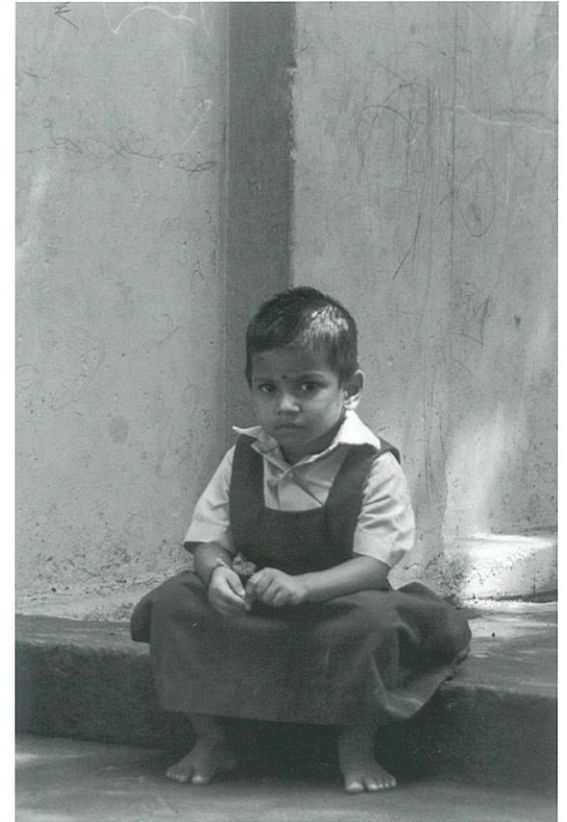
wafts of  
sweet darkness,  
sweeps of sugary musk

vibrations of  
frank sinatra,  
reverberations of flying to the moon,  
ancient yet everlasting

crashes of  
sunny beaches,  
roars of poseidon,  
haunting yet beautiful

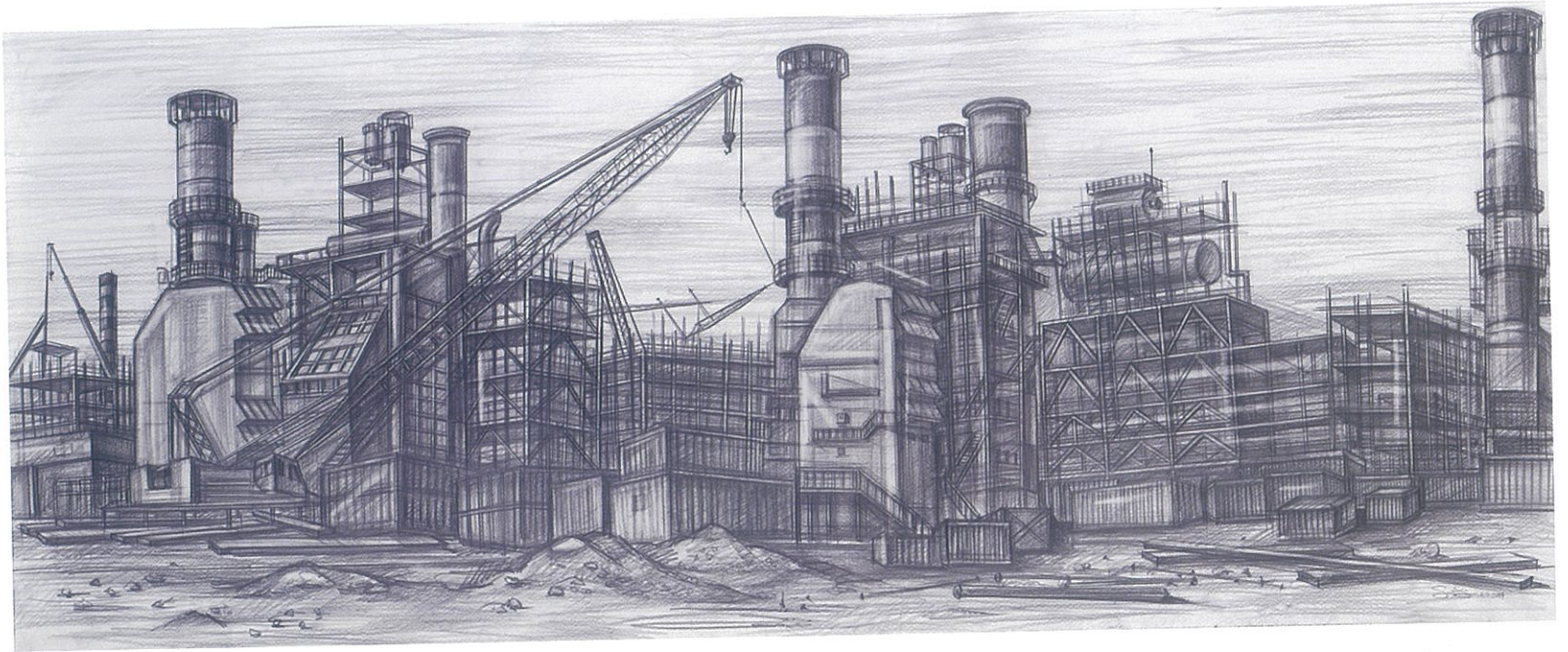
a honey oak casket of  
shea butter lotion,  
moroccan oil softener,  
classic white high tops,  
vanilla musk,  
winehouse and wonder,  
bottled white sand,  
and a teenage soul

**Shanghai Lady** Photography  
*Adam Kennedy*



**Expectations** Photography  
*Toby Kim*

Magpie 2015-2016



**Concrete Organism** Graphite pencil  
*Senna Lim*



# To The Man I Killed—

Bryan Min

Kiowa told me to talk, but i'm a writer,  
so here i am.  
Azar told me that on the dead test you  
got "A-plus,"  
but i'm sure that's not how you would  
assess yourself.  
i'm sure you would have rather died exiled and hungry  
than be in front of me as a coward,  
that if you were to see yourself as i see you  
you would writhe to see how dirty you are.  
i hope you know how dirty you are.  
i hope you know that,  
under the shade of our airplanes and helicopters and bombs  
your highest duty and highest privilege mean nothing.  
but i also hope you know how i feel.  
i'm not sorry.  
you're skinny and you have a small chest but that  
makes it no easier for me to carry you for the rest of my life.  
you don't fit the heroic images of your father or your uncles  
because you're not a hero.  
How can you be a hero?  
you would find consolation in dreaming about pretty girls  
you never talked to  
you probably enjoy coffee in the evenings so you can stay up at night  
and hide from the war. the only plotting you've most likely ever done  
was on graph paper.  
you've integrated life into your math and that pushed you to the limit  
you would probably enjoy wine and long romantic car rides but  
you were never one to drink and derive..  
and yet you're here.

i hope you know that i trashed you,  
laid you out like Shredded Wheat.  
your fingernails were clean. your hair was cheesy.  
your eye was a star shaped hole.  
your eye was a star shaped hole.  
if the stars aligned and made you whole again,  
reformed the constellation of possibilities you once were,  
maybe you would go away.  
please, go away.

In response to Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*

## Love-Hate Relationship

Jane Hong & Adeela Nasbaruddin

Apples.

Defined by crimson colours,  
like the hues of a fair maiden's lips.  
Smooth,  
voluptuous curves,  
one sees...

Yet barely significant—  
Hard, browning flesh,  
concealed by its peeling skin.  
A manifestation of rotten cores...



**It's OK** Digital Drawing  
*Ina Kim*

## Under the Open Sky

*Christine Sub*

Footsteps echoed all around me as if I was being chased. The quicker I ran up the stairs, the louder the sound of my footsteps became, like ghosts haunting me in the dark.

Please let her be okay. This can't be the end. It can't.

My thoughts clouded over with a sudden, gripping fear for what I would find once I reached the top floor, level 15. Panicking, I frantically began to dash up the couple of remaining flights I had left. I swung open the door leading out to the rooftop.

"Skye!" I shouted. "Where are you?"

The early night sky seemed strangely darker than it should be, as if it were trying to tell me to brace myself. Rich hues of navy and ultramarine enveloped the atmosphere with indications of secrets and the unknown.

Suddenly, I noticed a flicker of movement near the wall directly across from me. Taking slow, cautious steps towards it, I became aware that standing on the ledge looking down upon our old, dilapidated neighborhood...was my sister.

Without a second thought, I raced toward her as if she was going to disappear at any moment.

"Wait!!" I screamed. "Don't do this to yourself!"

Once I stood a couple meters away from her, she was still standing there in the same position. It didn't seem like she heard anything I said, and this scared me more than I was willing to admit. Her posture was rigid as if she was holding in too much emotion, not strong enough to let it out. Her gaze...was oddly distant. It looked as though she was searching for nonexistent answers in the crumbling buildings just barely standing before her.

"Skye," I said, calmly but with force. "You don't have to do th—"

"Yes, I do," she said. "You don't understand."

Her voice seemed cold and too detached. How had she so quickly become a stranger to me? All I wanted was to hear her normal voice again...



It used to be her strong, supportive voice that urged me not to cry whenever I fell down learning how to skate; her gentle, unwavering voice that helped me fall asleep when I had nightmares; her voice that would make me laugh when it was too quiet because we were the only ones at home; and her voice that spoke on behalf of my parents throughout the years while they worked at the pharmacy day in, day out...

Now, all of these memories seemed impossibly far away. I wanted to look up to my sister again, not watch her do something as dreadful as this.

"—I don't understand," I said. "But Skye, I can help you. I mean it."

I emphasized every syllable, trying to let her know she didn't have to go this far, even if our avaricious parents didn't deserve her.

It was silent.

After a momentary pause, she said, "It's not about how our parents haven't been here for either of us our whole lives and are still asking me to help run their filthy business, without even daring to think that I've already seen the drugs they secretly hide deep inside the cabinets. Or about how frustrating it is that they got caught up in this so quickly that we always have to feel in danger of someone finding out. Can't you see? There's no way out. There's no...choice. One day, I'll have to take over this job, and I won't be able to protect you anymore. I'll go insane. I'm trapped, and I can't see a way out other than this. So go, Eva. Just go."

For a second, I thought I could feel the real her coming back, but soon enough, her voice turned back to one of unfamiliar harshness. I couldn't believe she thought this was really the best thing she could do for herself. My mind was getting jumbled with all the thoughts I couldn't put into words, or at least, not the way she always could.

I could tell this was it now, because finally, the tension in her shoulders loosened. She seemed to have accepted her choice, but I couldn't let it happen. I had to find something that would persuade her, something that would make her see the world the way she used to.

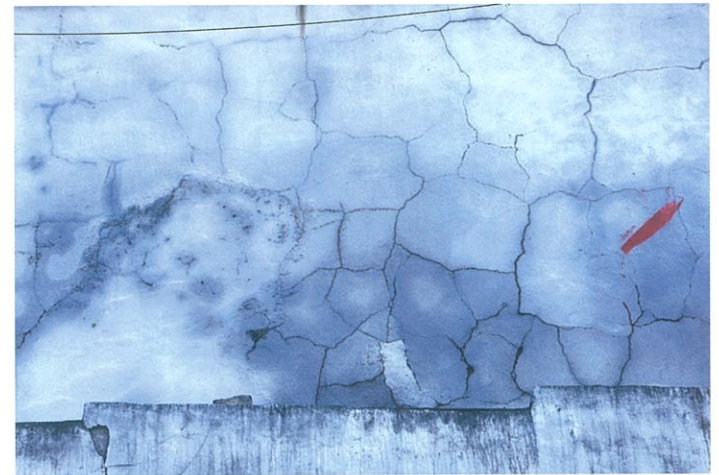
Desperately, I thought back to all of our past memories...

I distinctly remembered Skye inventing myriads of indoor games, a way to make all the time spent inside our house somewhat worthwhile. I remembered the way she used to show me her camera as if it was the most precious thing in the world, frequently taking photos of us and little things outside the window that captured her attention...

Instantly, I realized that maybe there was still hope for her.

"Skye," I said. "I'm not leaving you, so consider just one thing before you make your final decision about this. Do you remember all the times you used to show me your photographs and make stories with them? Remember how you cared about them more than anything? You once told me that as long as you could take photos and capture the most ordinary moments that you could live forever! What happened to that passion? Can you honestly say that you won't regret doing this? Please, Skye, think again. For me."

At this, Skye smiled, but I could see the tears flowing down her face. "Thank you," she whispered.



**Alien** Photography  
William Lee



**Embark** Photography  
*Eileen Yoon*

**Guardian**  
*Chloe Han*

I dangle beside your bed  
next to my noisy friend, Alarm Clock,  
who is restlessly blinking.  
I look like a spider web  
with fluffy, cloud-like feathers  
and vibrant colored beads.  
From sea green to beige,  
I display a rainbow of colors.  
When you sink into a deep sleep,  
I make decisions without you knowing.

From flesh-eating monsters  
to flying with wings,  
from being late to your first exam,  
to meeting Leonardo DiCaprio,  
I am always filtering your uncontrollable  
thoughts  
throughout the night.

Being chased by a malicious demon?  
Denied.  
Falling from the Empire State Building?  
Definitely not.

Finding your soulmate?  
Welcome in.  
Completely failing your English test?  
Rejected.  
Being accepted into your dream college?  
Come on in.

I am the security guard of your mind,  
I am the admissions officer for your dreams.



# **Xenon in Seoul**

*Serin Lee*

is the nitroglycerine powder  
the peacock city wears like a dress –  
its very pulse, a kind of standing pipe dream  
witnessed atop the bones of Apgu's oxen-plows,  
which still perfume the air with the incense  
of forgotten kin-sinew, mortar.

But it also powers  
the cybernetic haze of a nation  
rebooted on that spoon-fed amphetamine  
Random Access Memory: Forget  
forage forge. We know only  
the virtue of ignorance,  
of mopping up yesterday's, tomorrow's fratricides  
with the whorls of saury blood glistening under  
dying anglerfish lamps and rubber boots  
that groan along the dun wharfs,  
which keen in the lonely hours  
towards the river Yalu.

The foregone years meet in a mung bean stand –  
she calls out the prices of her forebears,  
he stands with phosphorescent eyes, dynamos  
that could fuel the swelling of cities if not  
for the electric children in his hands that keep him  
at bay.

The grainy voices slip through her glassine fingers  
as she bags them, some still gurgling  
under the sheen of the phantasm city  
as it ghosts upriver, glinting softly  
against Chosun's argonist dream.



**Intertwined** Pencil and colored pencils  
*Rachel Lee*

**Forest Monster**

*Katherine Myong*

*Scholastic Award recipient*

I can feel it watching me  
The shadows beckon me to flee  
I step, and step, and though I try  
I cannot run, I cannot hide  
The breeze is rushing, screaming now  
A gale, a storm, the forests bow  
It cuts my cheek, my leg, my arm  
I know this creature will bring harm  
The candle blows out with a puff  
Breaths rise with a smoky huff  
The light is gone, my skin is cold  
The story grim starts to unfold  
A hand, it's clasping on my back!  
My face is frozen like a mask.  
A silent scream tries to break free  
Please, somebody! Please, save me—  
And suddenly before me looms  
Glowing and shadowed like the moon  
A terrible design takes place  
Upon this horrid monster's face.  
His mouth opens, sharp teeth inside  
I cannot run, I cannot hide  
And as I'm to be devoured by him, I ask—  
Why didn't I just stay in?

**Canary Yellow**

*Ashley Won*

Canary Yellow

Canary Yellow

So soothing, sweet and oh so mellow  
Like the soporific music of the cello  
Plush and sweet just like a marshmallow

Canary Yellow

Canary Yellow

Like the warm, snug hug of the sun  
And the explosions of vanilla, strawberry, and chocolate ice cream  
sundaes, fun!  
Amidst the beauty, there I am, observing you, and in my hand? A  
gun  
Oh, the flourishing, fresh, aromatic scent of these tulip flowers  
Oh, how I've been waiting for so many hours

Canary Yellow

Oh, Canary Yellow

The shrieking sound of your cry deafens many  
But you're insignificant; there are plenty  
You are as useless as a penny

Canary

Canary

“BANG!”

Canary Red

Canary Dead



**Vellichor**

*Jules Lee*

Antique air of timeworn books  
Musty whiffs of  
Crustily rusted pages  
Faint aroma of roasted coffee  
Brews a nostalgic atmosphere:  
Cozy yet wistful, romantic yet melancholy

Thousands of covers  
Pleading to be opened  
Thousands of stories  
Waiting to be told  
Thousands of characters  
Yet to be discovered



**Monday Morning**

*Grace Charnesky*

As the bell tolls seven, I  
Force stubborn sleep from red eyes  
Unwilling to leave this warm cocoon.  
I twist in agony,  
Wish not to clothe myself  
In the frigid blue icicles.  
But my rent is up again  
And the Sun, jealous landlord,  
Glares through tight blankets,

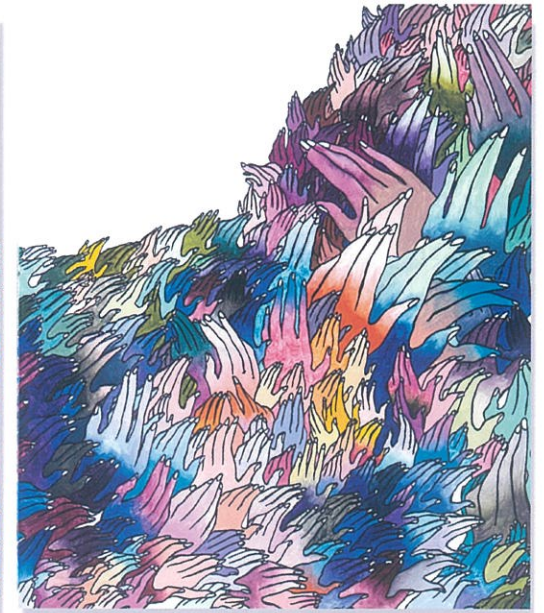
“Earn your keep.”



**In the Wake of Ambition**

Acrylic and marker pen

*Claire Shin*



Elegiac Lullaby

Serin Lee

*Scholastic Award recipient*

My mind dissolves in the wake of still frost,  
The pendulum of its worries slowing with  
the fall of gently packing snow.



**Nightmarish** Acrylic, colored pencils  
*Anna Cho*

Press your cheek to this amnesiac sheet of white  
Lined neatly up and down the street, the season's caress  
to the asphalt grit, where punctured leaves once cracked across  
in twos and threes,  
laughing dryly as they went  
through dour autumn's breath.

The sky tightens its noose,  
and all of the sun and tide and moon  
choke on a pervasive gray  
that winds its hand around the spool of time,  
pulls each thread of day to shorter close.

We are all of us bent over, heads bowed –  
not in prayer, but  
as the alive-dead grass of oppressive mornings:  
weighed down by sullen dew  
and hanging mirthlessly low  
as we sway,  
fastened to the dust to which we return.

Slowly we'll rise  
to greet a northern wind  
that billows past annually,  
reminds us what it is to have color in our faces –  
blood and vigor stirred from concrete and ash.

Once-maniac eyes now share a sedated droop,  
devoid of all malice – spent.  
Standing crookedly with sallow smiles,  
we wave.





Lights Photography  
*Yonna Kim*

# Magpie 2015-2016

Chang, Lauren Youmi	Look for Disney	2	Lahkiani, Mehr	When The Sun Goes Down	27
	Last Flower	18	Lee, Eunice Ye-in	Tiger and Lilies	2
Charnesky, Grace	a moment.	27		Hyo-Nyuh Shim-Chung	8
	Monday Morning	37		Seoulite	17
Cheung, Eunice	Elephant Head Sculpture	23	Lee, Jules	Komorebi	2
Chin, Ning	Autumn Trees	11		Vellichor	37
Cho, Anna	Nightmarish	38	Lee, Mariposa	Forgotten Lyrics	18
Choi, Emily Dawon	Mother of Nature	24	Lee, Rachel	Intertwined	35
Chong, Jeena	New York	13	Lee, Serin	Binary Errata	3
Chung, Andrew	Cognac	6		Xenon in Seoul	35
	Bed	9		Elegiac Lullaby	38
Hahm, Sarah	Emulation of Tim O'Brien	12	Lee, William	Haenyo Lady	5
Hahn, Janice	We	17		Twins	13
	Locked-in Syndrome	23		Alien	33
Han, Chloe	The Female Law	22	Lim, Senna	Concrete Organism	30
	Guardian	34	Min, Bryan	To The Man I Killed—	31
Han, Sophia	Fish Out of Water	28	Myong, Katherine	Forest Monster	36
Hong, Jane	Love-Hate Relationship	31	Nahm, Anna	Sincerely, a Korean American	16
Hong, Nicole	Jellyfish	6		2080	29
Jackson, Lauren H.	Metropolitan Museum	19	Nasharuddin, Adeela	Heart of Darkness Emulation	27
Kang, Seinna	What We See First	15		Love-Hate Relationship	31
	Safe Haven	21	Ough, Yunah	Friend	25
Kennedy, Adam	Shanghai Lady	29	Pak, Sae-eun	Secluded Garden	24
Kim, Audrey	Things Not Seen	8	Park, GyuEun	soi-même	25
Kim, Cailee	The Thunderous Silence	14	Shin, Claire	Solemn Release	19
Kim, Grace	Sunrise Awakening	11		Savoring Culture	22
	A Candle Wick	28		In the Wake of Ambition	37
Kim, Ina	On the Road	16	Son, Chloe	Powdered Beauty	28
	Waiting	20	Suh, Christine	Under the Open Sky	32
	It's OK	32	Wiora, Mara	Dopamine	24
Kim, Isabelle	Reversal	12	Woehrle, Leonie	Forty-nine Seconds	20
Kim, Olivia	Anger	9	Won, Ashley	Canary Yellow	36
Kim, Toby	Simple Relationships	10	Yim, Kate	How to Disappoint Your Teacher	4
	Infinite Space	26	Yoon, Eileen	Embark	34
	Expectations	29	Yun, Michelle	Frayed Hems	7
Kim, Yonna	Hey Backpackers!	9			
	Lights	39			
Kim, Younghoo	Talk to Me Nice	3			





