

I CAN'T  
TONIGHT. I'M  
WRITING AN  
ESSAY.

# THE BEAK

ISSUE 2      SPRING 2019



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# THE BEAK



## **ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION**

Welcome to the second issue of The Beak! The Beak is a literary magazine that aims to showcase creative works produced by members of the Chadwick School community. If you are interested in having your work featured in future issues, please contact a member of the Editorial Staff for details.

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# AN EMPTY PAGE

by **Kylie Purdome**

Grade 10

An empty page is an unwritten story,  
unwritten heartbreak and unwritten glory.

A field of snow no foot has trod,  
whose past is bleak and future broad.

A world of nothing, though it seems  
down deep inside a conflict teems.

There's hidden words beneath its skin.

A wisp of a story the author must spin  
that knows no limits, heeds no bounds.

A thread of life to be unwound.

There's endless possibility  
upon this pure and tranquil sea.

No thresholds hold this vacant page,  
this road that anyone can pave.

It only needs a willing soul  
to grab the pen and take control,  
and when the tale at last is made,  
someone to read the ink-filled page



Untitled Photo by Jaron VanHouden  
Grade 10

# RUBBLE

by Rebecca Deluia

Grade 9

Somewhere in the rubble  
are the promises we made,  
and today is the tomorrow  
that we wished for yesterday.



Six Finger Death Punch by Rebecca Deluia  
Grade 9



Untitled Photo by Jaron VanHouden  
Grade 10



Under the Sea by Kylie Purdome  
Grade 10





Pig in a Balloon by Kayla Purdome  
Grade 10



# CAN PIGS FLY?

by Kayla Purdome

Grade 10

Pigs can't fly

Don't you dare tell me that

It's possible

No matter what people say

It just won't happen

No one can convince me otherwise

There has to be a limit on what's achievable

It is not true that

You can do anything

If you try hard enough

People say they will follow their dreams

They are unable to

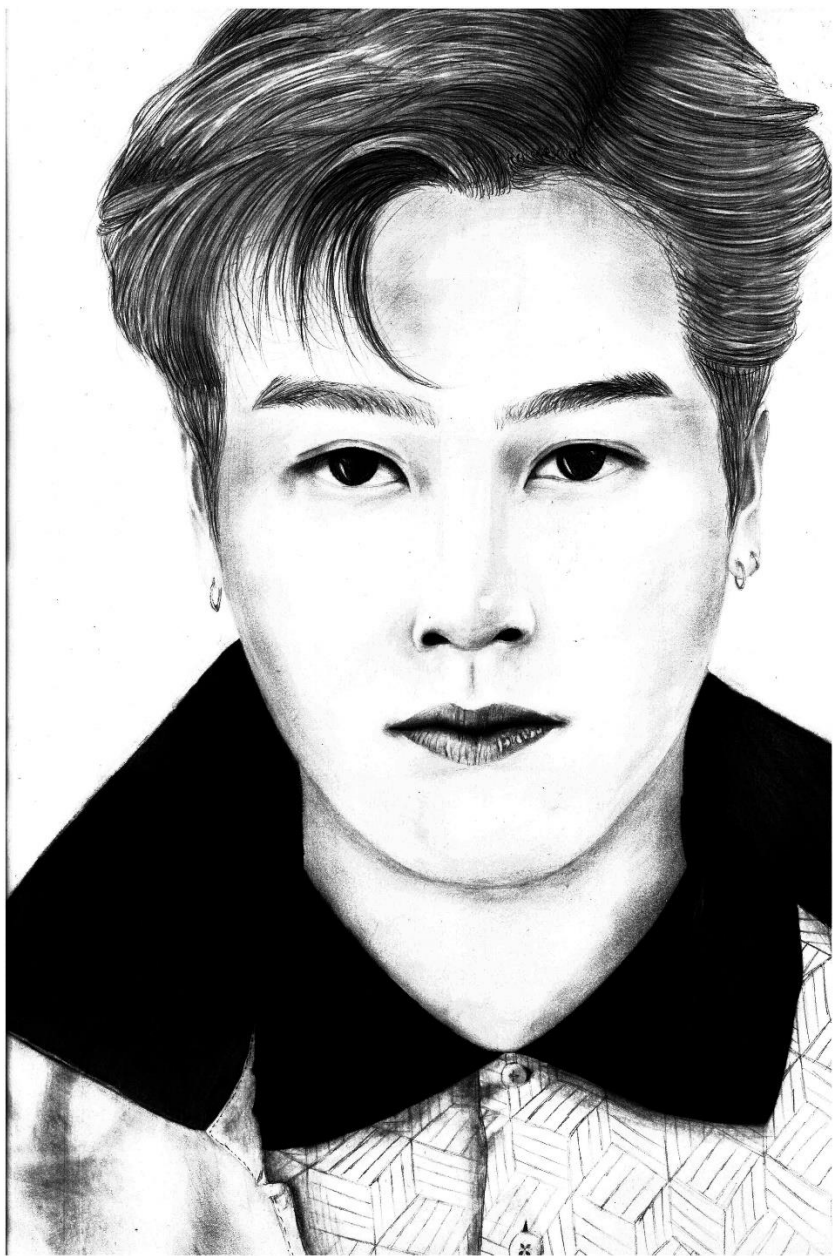
It is a lie that

Pigs can fly

(Now read the poem from bottom to top.)



Untitled Photos by Lauren Gilbert  
Grade 11



*Fendiman* by Madison Tilley  
Grade 9

# THE FINISH LINE

by **Mariah Aldrich**

Grade 10

Carmen was diagnosed with leukemia in the seventh grade. She was always so positive, even when talking about her hospital visits and chemotherapy treatments. Then one day, Carmen stopped coming to school. I was worried, so I asked Mrs. Shannon, my homeroom teacher, where she was. She turned to me with watery eyes and asked me to sit down. She said she had an announcement for the class. With a shaky voice, she proceeded to tell us that Carmen hadn't been responding very well to the treatment and would probably not have much time left with us.

Our class was shocked, and I can remember crying so much I threw up. We couldn't believe that Carmen Garcia, who had the most positive outlook on the planet, could soon leave us. She was always the uplifting one, the girl who could say one word and make us all laugh. I think that day we all realized that there is never a guarantee when it comes to life. It saddened us all to hear that Carmen had such little time left on this earth.

That next day, my mom took me to the hospital to see Carmen. My mom told me that Carmen might look different, and I should try not to talk about it or act surprised. When we arrived,

a woman behind the desk in the lobby told me which floor she was on. The whole elevator ride up all I could think about was how sad Carmen must be and how devastated her family must be. When we came to the waiting room, I waved to Mr. Garcia. He showed us to his daughter's room a little way down the hall. I went inside, and my mom returned to the waiting room with Mr. Garcia.

The girl in Room 319 didn't look like my upbeat friend with the blonde ponytail. Her skin was pale and her hair was gone. I smiled at her and she smiled softly at me. I asked her how she was doing, and she told me she felt okay, just a little weak. We talked, but I kept being distracted by a question rattling about in my head: "How do you feel about dying?" I never spoke the words, but the question seemed to be in the room with us, hanging in the air like strong perfume.

As our conversation came to an end, Carmen looked directly at me. She told me the doctors said that she would probably die in the next few months, but she wasn't giving up. She said she wouldn't let this cancer beat her. "I'm at least not going down without a fight," she said, smiling. It made me smile too. I was inspired by that amazing courage that burned inside her. She was so strong, and even when leukemia came knocking, she was ready to fight back. I knew then that I had to do something too.

I started visiting the hospital every day, bringing a full report on the news of the school, plus all the best lunch table gossip. Carmen and I became closer than ever before.

As the days stretched into months, I started to see Carmen changing. The doctors had told us to expect the worst, but it still broke my heart to see her looking more dull and less energetic with each passing day.

Then one day in the middle of one of our conversations, she passed out. I ran to get Mrs. Garcia and she called the nurse. I looked upon her lifeless face as they wheeled her past me. I couldn't go with her. I could only watch as they rushed her away to another part of the hospital.

After that day, I was only allowed to see her once a week. Each time I saw her, I knew there was a chance it could be the last, but I never lost hope and neither did she. I knew that if there was ever a person who could beat this disease, it was her. Carmen continued to fight with every ounce of her being and to make the most of every moment. Over the next few months, a switch seemed to have been flipped inside her body. She seemed to have more energy with each passing day. Her face was brighter. The doctors said I could come to visit more often. She had lots of other visitors too, including a lot of our friends from school. I could tell she enjoyed the attention, and I could also see that she was proud. There was something about her that made everyone happy. She seemed to be stronger than ever and it was hard to

imagine that just a few weeks ago we worried that the cancer might win.

At the end of one visit, I went to tell Carmen goodbye. She looked at me with watering eyes and smiled.

“Thank you,” she whispered, and I knew she meant so much more. Tears ran down my face, but I was smiling too.

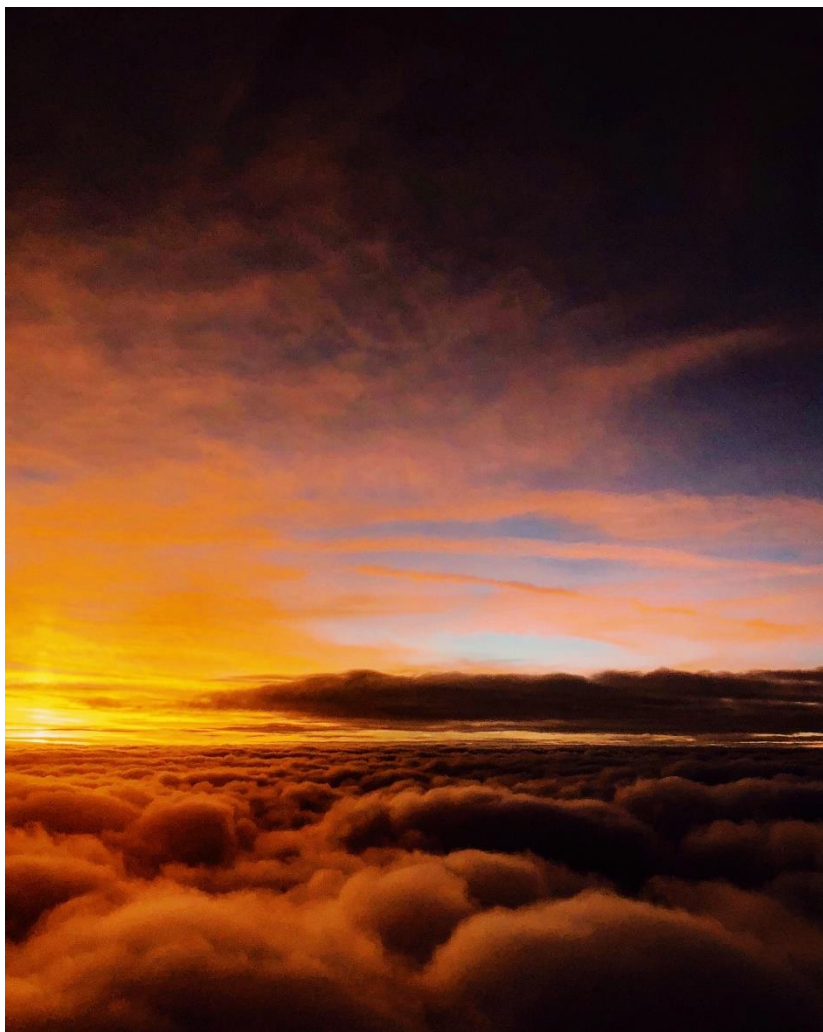
“You fought your own battle,” I said. “You’re a beautiful winner inside and out.”

“I could never have done it without you.”

“We’re just passengers on this trip,” I told her. “You’re the driver.”

Carmen was humble and kind and amazing in every way. I believe that it was her positive attitude that got her through it all and why she was able to flip that switch when her sudden upturn in health occurred. Her recovery astounded everyone, including the medical staff, but not me. I knew all along that Carmen Garcia had what it took to overcome every obstacle.

She still had a hard journey ahead with many obstacles. The finish line in her race toward good health was still far off, but she ran her race every day and her smiling face continued to be an inspiration to me and many others along the way.



Untitled Photo by Lauren Gilbert  
Grade 11



# THE SUMMIT

by Tabitha Fowler

Grade 12

Daniel hung from the side of the mountain, an ice axe in each hand. The blades were driven deep into the ice-covered cliff face. His feet dangled against the icefall. The harsh crackle of breaking ice split the air as his left ice axe tore free. His right shoulder shrieked with white hot pain as the full burden of his one hundred and ninety pound frame shifted. He held on with only his right arm.

He was going to die.

Twenty-five feet below was a jagged stone outcrop and beyond that was the fifteen thousand foot slope to the base of the mountain. He allowed himself a quick glance down over his shoulder and squinted in the bright morning light. He was grateful that his goggles had fogged up so he could not see all the way down to where he would be dashed to pieces against the mountainside. All he could see was the bright hazy corona of the sun refracted through droplets of moisture on his goggles right under his eyes.

He felt his right hand quiver and lose its grip. He squeezed the handle of the ice axe like a constrictor suffocating its prey until he feared his hand would burst from the pressure. His left arm hung limp and dead at his side. In seconds he would lose his grip

and he would fall and he would die. He should have listened to his father.

Time slowed down in his head. He saw his father's face: strong, chiseled, with shining blue eyes and bushy brows and short-cropped fair hair. His skin was leathery and dappled with rugged, graying stubble, and his mouth was locked in a sort of crooked half-smile. He could not forget that smile. The smile made him appear at once jubilant and desolate, and in that smile was a universe of emotion. He could never tell what his father was thinking, but then he had never really listened to his father. His father had told him to climb the mountain in the summer when the weather was mild and the high passes were free of ice. When he was a young man, he had thought it unnecessary and dangerous to climb the mountain. When he turned twenty-one and his father offered to take him to make the ascent, he refused. Now at thirty-two, he had come back to climb the mountain and he had been proud and unprepared, so now he was going to die.

Soft heat spread through his left arm and the feeling slowly returned. His left hand still gripped an ice axe. He raised the recovering arm overhead and drove the axe forward into the ice. He wiggled it to be sure it was secure and pulled himself up a few precious feet. His right arm protested as he pulled his other axe free, but he ignored it and continued to climb. He looked up and saw that it was fifteen feet to the next ledge. Easy. When he reached it, he set one of his axes down and started to lift himself

over the side of the stony shelf. The surface was icy and his fingers scrambled for a hold. He hung in limbo, his left hand gripping the ice axe and his right grappling for purchase. He managed to swing himself up onto the ledge facedown. He landed on his knees, and his right knee shot out from under him and knocked his ice axe over the edge. Out of one eye he saw the axe fall, fall, fall, spiraling and glinting in the sun. Gasping, he pulled the rest of his body onto the narrow shelf. He lay shivering and empty.

He closed his eyes and the harsh mountain-scape faded. He saw his father, sunburnt, hair windswept, smiling, really smiling, not a crooked half-smile this time. He wore a loose-fitting khaki shirt unbuttoned halfway and stood on a small boat holding a fishing rod. It was one of the few times he had seen his father wearing something other than his gray-brown camouflage military uniform.

As a child he had rarely seen his father because of the war and when the young man was twenty-two years old his father had died. They brought a little box with a Purple Heart to the door, and when he asked his mother about it, she only said his father was a brave man. He knew the stories, legends that his father had given his life to save an entire force. But he did not know how his father had actually died. He imagined his father smiling as he was blown apart by shrapnel, incinerated in an explosion, shredded by bullets, stabbed in the back, hanged. He could only imagine.

Now on the side of the icy mountain, he sensed a warm presence deep in his being and knew it was his father. He felt that somehow his father had died to save him too. To save his son. He did not know how he knew this or how it was possible, but he knew it was true and he began to cry.

I am listening, Father.

The soft cold stirring of the breeze against his face brought him back to the world. Salty tears stung his freezing face. He rose and looked up to the summit less than one hundred feet above. Using one ice axe he began to climb. The ice was pure and white and solid. When he reached the top, there was empty blue sky and bright white sunlight and cold thin air and nothingness. He lifted his foggy goggles from his face. From the top of the mountain, he could see everything and everything could see him, but he did not care. He spread his arms and took a deep breath.

I am here, Father.



Summertime Sadness by Isabella Ewing  
Grade 11

# LOOKING BACK AT *WINTER'S BONE*

by Ashlee Thompson

Grade 11

When I was in the first grade, I played Ree Dolly's little sister in the film *Winter's Bone*. I attended the premiere for the film in Branson, Missouri, and then I didn't watch it again until almost ten years later.

*Winter's Bone* stars Jennifer Lawrence as Ree, a teenager from the Ozarks with a dysfunctional and largely drug-addicted family. Throughout the movie, Ree takes care of her mentally ill mother as well as her little brother and sister. Her father has skipped bail and Ree realizes that they are going to lose their house, so she goes on a hunt to find her father. Everyone she talks to tells her to stop looking because what she finds is only going to bring trouble, but she keeps going, eventually earning herself a beating. She is saved by an uncle named Teardrop, and with his help, eventually she finds out the truth about her father's disappearance. There are some pretty graphic scenes in the film, but the cast, the crew, and my own family did a good job sheltering me from the scenes that were inappropriate for a seven-year-old, so I must have been watching a lot of the film for the first time.

After finally watching the entire movie, I don't really have a lot of regrets. But I do wish that I would have watched it a little

sooner. Unfortunately, by the time I was old enough to watch it, I considered the whole episode a source of embarrassment. My classmates teased me about the movie or wanted to know if I was still friends with Jennifer Lawrence. Teachers tried to get me to write papers about it or talk about it in front of the whole class. My principal introduced me to everyone as “Hollywood.” I was tired of *Winter’s Bone* being my claim to fame.

On top of all that, I could remember some of the childish things that I had done during filming. For instance, I had an unhealthy obsession with the trampoline. I liked to put toy horses on there and ride them around. Since some of the scenes were filmed at my home and it was something I was doing at the time, the filmmakers just decided to film it and put it in the movie. I also did my version of the moonwalk on the trampoline, which basically just consisted of me taking large steps around the edge of the trampoline. Probably the most cringey thing that I did was playing the banjo. I just decided to pick it up and play it, even though I had no experience at all with the instrument. It was just an impulsive decision that I made, but it ended up being the final scene for the movie. I used to be mortified thinking of people from all over the world watching my awkward childhood moments, but now that I’m older, it doesn’t bother me as much.

Watching the movie now is sort of like like watching an old home movie because I see more than what’s on the screen. I have a lot of memories about what happened behind the scenes.

One thing I remember is that I had an intense fear of John Hawkes because the first time I saw him he was filming a scene where his character, Teardrop, was screaming at Ree. I was not used to yelling or violence as a child, so I found his behavior very intimidating. I told my mother that I was scared of him. She just laughed and said that he was a nice guy, and I had nothing to be afraid of. I remember him trying to talk to me, but I don't think I ever really got over that bad first impression.

The movie brought out an array of emotions in me. My memories of making the movie made me happy, but the movie itself made me sad because it depicts violence, drug abuse, and children having to grow up too fast. These aren't just problems from a movie. These things happen to real people in my community. In the small town of Chadwick, Missouri, drug abuse has been a serious problem for a long time. There are children around here that have to deal with a lot of the same problems that Ree and her siblings dealt with in the film. There are parents that have little or no concern for their children and choose drugs over their families, and there are people of all ages making bad decisions for themselves and living hard lives because of it.

We don't really talk about it much, but there is also a lot of fear here. Some people are afraid of their own neighbors or even their own kin because they know the kind of bad things they are mixed up in. They fear for themselves or their family's safety. They fear for their property. They fear that the people they love



are going to make bad decisions and end up in the middle of things. But even if you know who is cooking or selling or using, most people would never talk to the cops. Loyalty is something that is valued heavily around here, and if you forget that, there is always the chance you could end up dead.

Regardless of the stream of emotions that I experienced, I am glad I finally watched the movie. I find being in the movie to be less embarrassing now that I have seen the whole thing and can process the story and experiences much better at seventeen than I did when I was seven. In the end, this movie is a part of me, not just because I have a role in it or because it was filmed on my family's property, but because it is about my community.

And not just about all its problems. Sure, on one hand, the movie was about drug abuse and how it can ruin people's lives, but it was also a heartfelt film about the strength of family. It showed the strength of women and young people and what people can accomplish when they set their minds to it. I feel like Ree's story needed to be told because it's not just her story. It's a story that belongs to all of us in my community and in little communities all across the Ozarks. It's a story about suffering and struggling, but it's also a story about survival and hope.

# FROM BOY TO MAN

by Ethan Williams

Grade 9

You will open your eyes and see the world.

You will learn to crawl to your bed.

You will learn your first words.

You will learn to play with your toys.

You will learn to socialize with your friends.

You will learn to love your family.

You will learn to play with your family.

You will learn to love the world.

You will have your first girlfriend.

You won't ever want to go to bed.

You will break your toys.

You will learn bad words.

You will get in trouble for saying bad words.

You will get in trouble by your family.

You will get in trouble for breaking your toys.

You will learn about the world.

You will get in trouble for not going to bed.

You will get in trouble with your friends.

Some days you will not get along with your friends.

Some days you will say bad words.

Some days you will not want to get out of bed.

Some days you will hate your family.

Some days you will hate the world.

Some days you will hate your toys.

Today is the day you throw away your toys.

Today is the day you get rid of bad friends.

Today is the day you see a new world.

Today is the day you are allowed to use those bad words.

Today is the day you accept your family.

Today is the day you look forward to going to bed.

You will teach your kids to love their bed.

You will teach your kids to take care of their toys.

You will teach your kids to love their family.

You will teach your kids to cherish their best friends.

You will teach your kids to use good words.

You will teach your kids to see a beautiful world.

Your family visits you on your deathbed. Your old eyes see that  
the things of this world are like broken toys.

You see your friends who passed away. You are happy beyond  
words.

# TOUCHING THE STARS

by Katie Sallee

Grade 9

The night sky is full of stars,  
deceivingly small, and high up in space.  
Staring up I can't help but dream.  
I am being beckoned to by the void,  
daring me to hope,  
and filling my soul.

Gazing into the great beyond warms my soul.  
I sit under a blanket of stars,  
allowing myself to hope  
and imagine a new life in space.  
As I listen to the soothing call of the void,  
the beauty of it fuels me and my dream.

To reach the heart of the universe is my dream.  
To touch its very essence and soul  
and know it is not a complete void.  
To reach out to touch the stars,  
make my way through empty space,  
and to reach new life and new hope.

At times it can be difficult to have hope,  
and can be even harder to dream.

The great unknown that is space  
gives new hope, and feeds a wanderer's soul  
with promises of infinite stars,  
and an even more infinite void.

This vast, empty, and glorious void,  
my source of life, hope,  
and a wealth of stars.

Its beauty inspires me to dream  
and feel happiness deep in my soul.  
To me it is not simply empty space.

I hope to one day explore this space,  
finally feel the call of the void,  
and fuel the burning light in my soul  
with new, unwavering hope.

I allow myself this one unlikely dream,  
to reach and touch the stars.

I vow to one day reach the depths of space.  
To feed my desire for adventure and find new hope.

I will always hear the call of the void,  
and push to finally achieve my dream.

I will feel this familiar ache in my soul,  
until I can at last touch the stars.



Idol by Madison Tilley  
Grade 9

# THE GOOD HAS LOST ITS WAR

by Bianca Mitchell

Grade 9

The good has lost its war,  
for gods are slain and chained,  
though nothing scares me anymore.

Now tyrants walk the Earth.  
Their hearts turned long ago.  
The good has lost its war.

We may never go back now.  
The black sea has risen too high,  
though nothing scares me anymore.

Golden hearts still shine through,  
though they are falling one by one.  
The good has lost its war.

Now, in a time of division,  
hate seems to trump all,  
though nothing scares me anymore.

Wires above are sparking no more.  
The world, on fire and sinking.  
the good has lost its war,  
though nothing scares me anymore

# REFLECTION

by Madison Tilley

Grade 9

I look in the mirror  
and I see somebody,  
but this person isn't me.  
It's someone I don't know.  
Who is this stranger  
that I call myself?

Trying to understand myself  
in the water like a mirror.  
My vision is getting stranger  
as the water shows somebody  
that I don't know.  
My reflection doesn't match me.

But do I know the real me?  
I continue to scream and cry at myself.  
Someone please let me know  
that the lie is in the mirror.  
Tell me this somebody  
is just a stranger.



This world is getting stranger.  
It's hiding the real me.  
I'm becoming somebody  
that can only dream of loving myself,  
but it's impossible with this mirror  
telling me what I should know

But that's not what I want to know.  
Tell me everything about this stranger.  
Why are they in my mirror  
pretending to be me?  
I don't know myself.  
But I'm still reaching out for somebody.

I want to be that somebody  
who doesn't need anything else to know  
that I should love myself.  
Then, I hear this stranger  
say, "I'm still me."  
A familiar smile appears in the mirror.

I used to ask myself why that somebody  
stood in my mirror, but now I know.  
I am this stranger, so I love me.



Live It Up by Isabella Ewing  
Grade 11

# **SHE WAS THE GIRL WHO...**

**by Paisley Gilbert**

**Grade 8**

She was the girl  
who had no problems.  
She was the girl  
who was always laughing.  
She was the girl  
who could make anyone smile.

But she was the girl  
who was slowly breaking.  
She was the girl  
who was drowning in her mind.  
She was the girl  
who kept it bottled up inside.

# REFLECTIONS

by **Natalie Parker**

Grade 8

We judge ourselves with a piece of glass

that shatters us as easily

as we can shatter it.

We look at it as if it is a part of us.

We don't see within.

If we did, we wouldn't understand.

This reflection is never enough.

It makes us small and useless.

The world only sees this part of us,

the outer image.

Maybe if we turn at a different angle?

Maybe if we change completely?

But at this point,

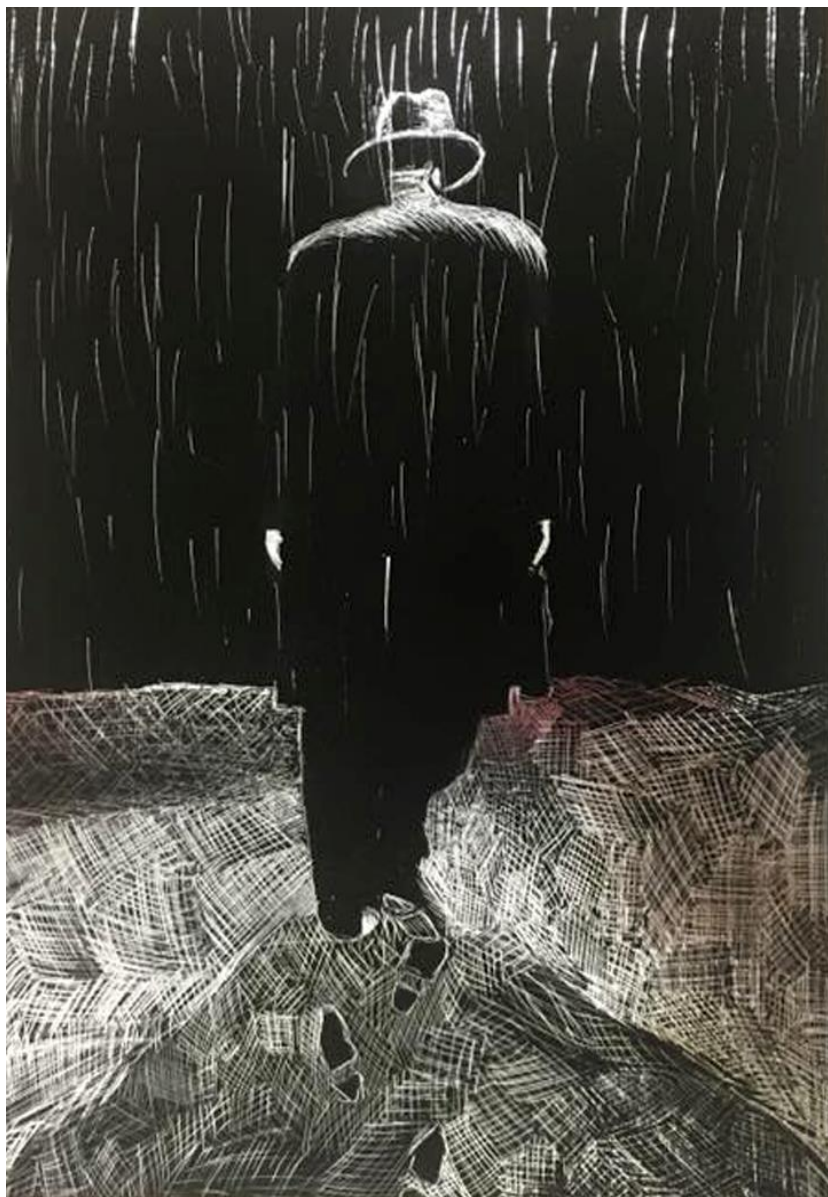
the mirror tells no lies.

# TEARS

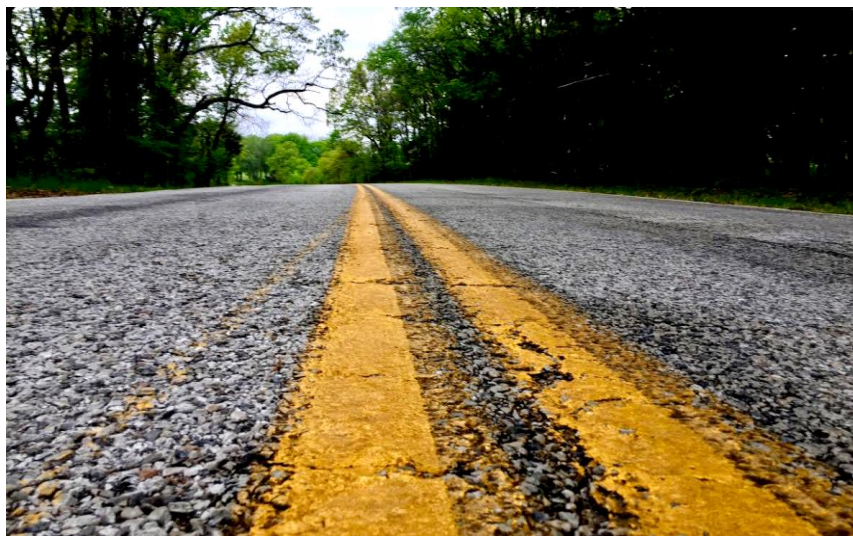
by Sierra Jackson

Grade 7

A  
tear  
breaks  
out of the  
surface like a  
flower in bloom,  
shimmers as it rolls  
down the cheek. One  
after another, 'til a water-  
fall of blue is drawn. Stung  
by the sun, they hit the surface  
below. Mascara spreads across  
her face like a wildfire, spreading  
until her eyes are nothing but black.  
But she wipes it away until there is  
nothing: no tears, no feelings,  
and no darkness.



Forever Rain by Madison Tilley  
Grade 9



*The Road* by Isabella Ewing  
Grade 11

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