

# MINDGARDEN

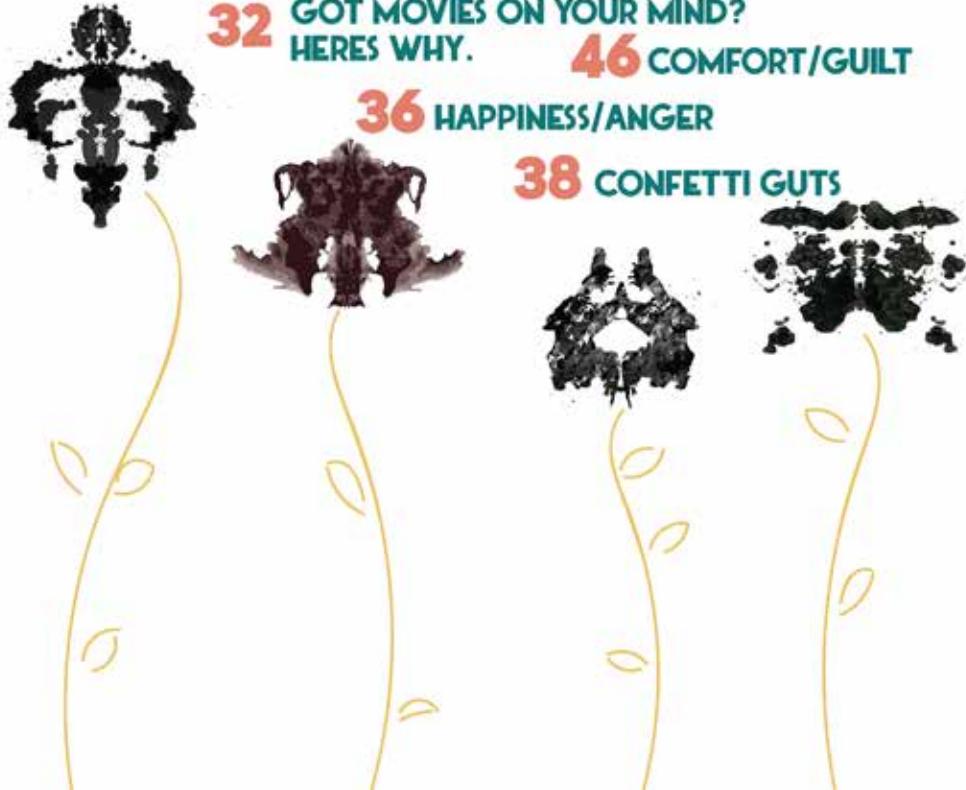
exploring the mental condition

NCR 2020

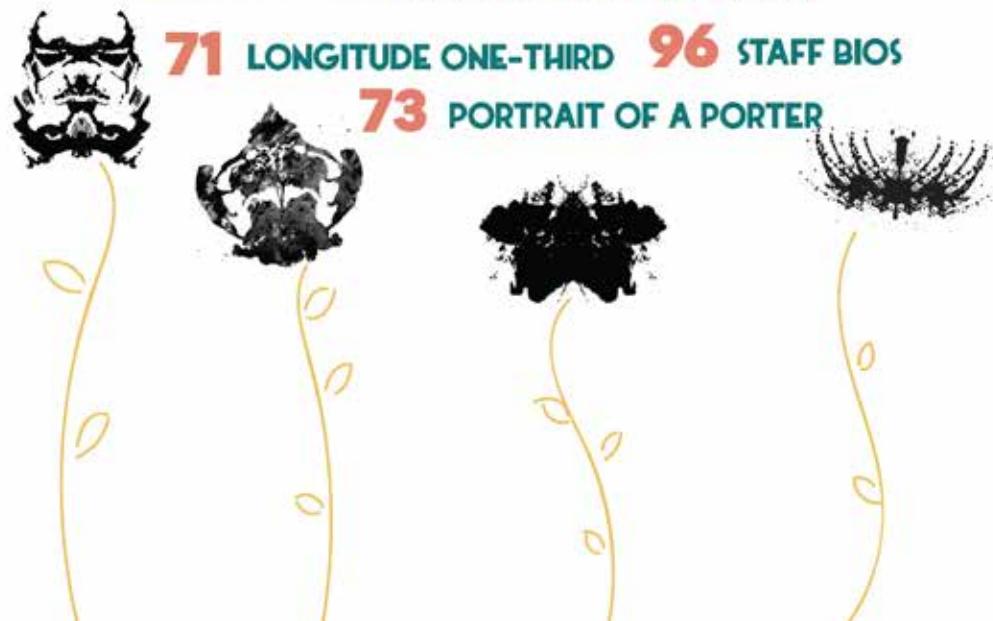


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# Polaroid Memories

Rachel Jakovac

Have you ever seen someone being eaten by their own body?

Have you ever seen someone betrayed by the very vessel that they had trusted their entire life?

I remember heavy summer days with the burgundy air hanging stale and hot around our necks. My grandfather would lay on his worn, cushioned chair that he found laid on the side of the road. His mouth would hang open, and we could hear long, deep breaths drawing in and out like a steady cadence mimicking the wind.

If anyone was a fixture of nature, it was him.

His skin smelled of sulphur, and his hand was always damp from the condensation of a cold beer, held firmly in his right hand—his scepter of sorts. The Wyoming skyline would loom steady in the distance, occasionally coming closer as we made the drive home. Those tall mountains reminded me of him. Unwavering, yet distant.

Always watching.

I spent two weeks in Wyoming with my grandfather during the summer of my seventh birthday. We would sit together in his trailer, picking out the black licorice jelly beans.

He laughed and mumbled wisdom about his strength of will to stay away from sweets. My siblings were playing outside, but I enjoyed sitting on his borrowed couch and dragging my finger along the bottom of the cardboard lamp, while he shared stories about his days in Korea.

When we visited, he would coax us to join him on his daily walk. I remember one day, he took us down to the creek near his trailer and let us take off our shoes and feel the cold water around our ankles and the soft moss between our toes. My siblings ran and splashed around the water, yelling nonsense at each other, comparing knowledge. I hung back, brushing the freezing water against my fingertips then dragging them across my forehead, which was beginning to grow tired of the sun. I meandered near my grandpa, who was holding his rubber sandals in his left hand and his beer in its rightful home.

I eventually plucked a yellow wildflower from near the shore and gave it to him. He held it with his ring finger against the side of his Point Beer, smiling as I gave him one of my reasons for choosing that flower.

I liked that it looked like a bell.

He chuckled, saying that he

remembered the days from my mother's childhood where she would pick wildflowers. "Back when your mother was about your age," said he, "there was a small pond near our home in Wisconsin. Your mother loved sitting on the dock and sticking her toes in the water."

I looked down at my own toes, soaking in the crystalline waters, and smiled. I imagined, in the pond my mother loved, that the cold water felt just like the creek I was in. I imagined the trees gently dancing in the wind, the sharp peaks of mountains cresting behind her, and the lily pads floating gracefully in the water.

There was a pond that I came to love in Montana that was just like that. Just like my mother's pond.

My grandfather continued, "She would also wander along the shore, collecting snails in one hand and flowers in the other. She loved those snails."

He then trailed off to tell me of his own childhood. He went into detail about the Wisconsin pastures. The heavy summer days and brittle winter nights. The creeks that he walked in. The stories that his grandfather told him. He would perch on the tractor as the sun set its final rays on his back. Surrounded by his brothers,

he would venture across fields and deep into forests filled with stories waiting to be written, with trees to climb and ponds to swim in. They made so many of their memories deep within places that didn't have a trail to guide them.

I thought of this when I was with my brother climbing the mountain near our house, before the trails were carved and fences put up. We remembered to take a left by the crystal mine and that we were nearing the summit once we passed the twisted stump. We sat on the ridge and ate snacks from his backpack, watching the Montana skyline and laughing about childlike misadventures. The Polaroid moments captured and seized by our nimble fingers lay still in my memory, forever encapsulated.

I wish I could reach into those memories and lay my head swiftly on the fickle slate or grab my grandpa's hand as I stumbled downriver. But much to my dismay, those days soon disappeared and remain rigid and defiant in my mind.

Before I knew it, trails were sculpted. Houses were built. Fences were blocking me at every corner. The peaks I had once loved were crying and drooping and calling for my help, but I didn't know how to help. So, I sat, surrounded by soft

grasses, and let the nature blanket me and my fears, just like I had when I was seven and staying at my grandfather's trailer.

After we got back to my grandpa's trailer from our walks and dried our toes on his grass, he always gave me a piece of Hershey's Chocolate from his fridge. He knew how much I loved chocolate.

When I visited his home for the last time, he told me that he had left something in there for me. I arrived and found 11 chocolate bars that he had planned on giving to me over the years. I wish I hadn't gotten them all at once.

\*\*\*

Have you ever seen someone being eaten alive?

When his blood first began destroying itself, I cried twice: once for myself and once for him. I cried for my own life that would have an empty gap without a role model. I cried for his life that would only know pain through his remaining weeks.

Then, he got worse. He was put in the hospital. I concealed my tears because I knew he wouldn't want to ever make me sad. I sat through doctors flowing in and out of his room like ocean waves during a

storm. Once, I was the only person remaining in the room when they examined his heartbeat. I listened to how strong it was. The steady swishing overflowed my senses- a cruel magic.

Days later, we took him to our home. There was only the sound of forks scraping against our plates and his steady, deep breathing. Just like when he would lay under the sun on our porch in the summers. But this time, when we would cease to hear his breathing for a couple seconds, we would all fall silent, not even breathing ourselves, until the rhythm would begin again.

Hours after that, he couldn't recognize my mother.

Then he couldn't recognize his sister.

Then he couldn't recognize me.

I cried every time I saw him.

He died in the night, while I was asleep. When I woke up, his body was already gone. I lay in bed, staring at my ceiling, knowing that it was over. All the drawn-out suffering was over. I cried one last time for the months ahead that would consist of dry, comforting eyes and holding my mother up. I cried for my own life that would feel empty for the first time. I cried for my grandfather that had comforted me for the last time.



As I Fly

Emily Henderson  
Photography



## Find Me on the Moon

Emily Henderson  
*Photography*

Take a second look at the ticking clock.  
Drag your eyes away,  
they spring back stuck.  
Give yourself a second chance,  
close your eyes, take a breath,  
take a guess,  
second guess the breath and look back at the second hand.

Tick?

it asks sweetly slow, answer Tock.

You're sick?

Innocuous, I guess. But look—

All that ticking, it's really spinning for the minute.  
And we all know that thing's backing the hour.  
And from there—  
Well, some say—  
Up the chain—  
People talk, is all I'm saying.

Still breathing, still tocking,  
still ticking along.  
And everyone clocking  
exactly what we're thinking—  
what I am—

# In Cubicle E

Sierra Napoleon

Fiddle with the keys in your pocket. You've noticed they tend to tangle themselves up every five minutes and twenty-six seconds on average, depending on the way you sit and move your legs. Move them to be in line with one another. You know they'll just tangle again. Repeat this process anyway. Add a break in sequence. Remove your hand, and shuffle to the next paper in the documents overwhelming your desk. You didn't read any of it.

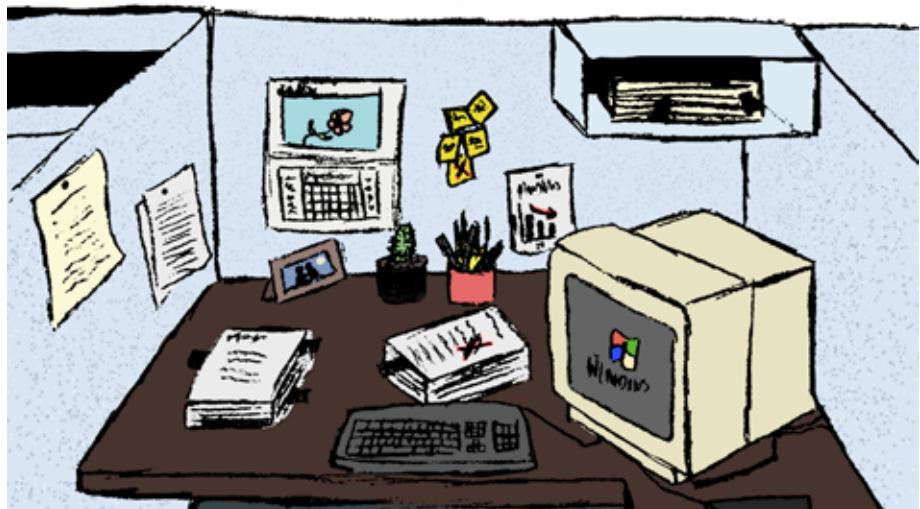
You overhear the same details about the case that were reported yesterday from the radio in someone's cubicle. They sigh, like they did yesterday. Fiddle with the keys in your pocket. Press your index finger into the teeth. Listen

instead of working.

Shoe prints were discovered leading to the bank of the creek. They were of a popular brand, in a common size, and had average wearing patterns. You washed yours and threw them out last week.

The victim's wallet was still in the front pocket of his jeans. The dates on the scraps of paper inside, clearly tickets from movies and public transportation, had been washed away from the water. You wonder why he never took them out.

The immediate vicinity was clean of any other evidence, and no witnesses have come forth. The



woman speaks with dejection through her closing remarks. You remove your finger from the teeth and relax your shoulders.

Focus in on an incoming group of people on the other side of your cubicle. You can't see them, but you can distinctly hear their conversation. One of them

was complaining about an intern corrupting her files yesterday. You think one of her audience was paying attention to the radio instead; he interrupts her while she's in a lull. He mentions one of

his friends is an investigator on the case, and, a couple of days prior, he snuck through his laptop in morbid curiosity and saw the body pictures. He can't look at lasagna the same, he attempts joking. The silence overwhelms their footsteps.

The joke's failure reminds you of this morning on the subway. You were attempting to avoid the news pouring out of someone's unintentionally unplugged headphones. A teenager in a disheveled school uniform was

standing next to you at the time. He noticed your gloves and tried to make a stupid Mickey Mouse joke. You replied that you have mysophobia to make him stop. He got off at the next station; his school was three more down. You then had to go back to ignoring the news.



Move to the next page. Look at the clock on the wall. 11:06. You continue to wait for lunch. You've barely eaten anything for lunch for the past two months, three days, sixteen hours, thirty-nine minutes, and fifty-one seconds. Give or take. It would make more sense for you to avoid dinner, but your girlfriend insists on always eating together. She's become less vocal at the table now though.

You notice that you accidentally started fiddling with your keys again. Bandage the mark on your palm to stop the bleeding. Align the papers. Try to focus.

11:13. Another flash comes on in your head. Like the projector at the back of the movie theater.

Tunnel vision.

You knew he was coming over that night. His sister was out of town, so he knew you had no one over either. You're the only one that knew where he was going when he left his apartment.

He shows up hungry. Set your famous nachos on the coffee table. He loves them; your girlfriend does not. Load up the multi-player game that he's always been better at than you. He leaves his shoes at the door and his phone next to the nachos. He sits down and pushes up his glasses. He wins each round with ease. Kick your empty soda cans off the table. Throw your controller in his general direction. He laughs. You seethe.



Take a break. Cool your head. Walk into the kitchen. You lean on the island. You didn't turn the lights off. You push your hands forward to lean down more. Your hand brushes against something. Your head has not cooled. It takes control, and you become a bystander.

He's still in the living room next to the cabinet, searching for the next game. He doesn't hear you walk back in. Grip tighter. He senses your presence behind him. He turns with a smile and begins to tease you about needing to practice that game more. Plunge the chef's knife into his diaphragm. Repeat. He falls to the floor in front of the cabinet. Plunge the knife into each lung. Avoid the heart. You can't control yourself, but you're conscious. You can't stop, but he's already stopped breathing.

It's your parents' fault for giving you a knife set as a house-warming present. It's your girlfriend's fault for dating you. It's her brother's fault for becoming friends with you upon meeting.

#### ***It's your fault for murdering him.***

Your head cools. You take control. Vomit in the bathroom toilet.

Determine plan:

Move the body to the same bathroom. Put him in the bathtub.

**No one uses this bathroom anyway.** Put a pot of boiling water on the stove. Boil his phone. **His sister had messaged him earlier.** Put the knife and the phone behind the upstairs bedroom's attic panel. Scrub the carpet clean. Change clothes. **You know a back way into the park in the next town.** His body fits comfortably in the back seat of your car, under your least favorite jacket and the scratchy blanket you found at a thrift store. Park your car in a lot near the 24-hour grocery store. **Become paranoid that everyone sees you.** Drag his body through the narrow path you recall from high school. Hear the calming water of the creek. Push him in. Finally remove the plastic gloves you'd put on. Never tell your girlfriend.

You buy some things from the grocery store. Pull into your garage. Make sure the first place you go is the kitchen, so the watching eyes of your neighbors know you just went to buy late-night groceries. Your girlfriend

texts. Her brother isn't answering; you both know he always answers almost immediately. She asks you to try. Pause. You text back that you receive no response either.

A jogger finds a body in the next town's park. An investigation emerges. Your girlfriend finds out her brother was murdered while she was on vacation with friends. **You're just as upset at the murderer as she is.** You provide no information to the police.



11:27. You've been pressing the teeth of your keys into your finger too hard again.

There's now a bigger spot of blood on your pocket lining. You put another bandage on. You'll break through that one, too. Turn to the next page. Your thoughts still conflict:

1. Confess to the police. Your girlfriend will experience relief knowing the name of the murderer and their face. **But she will leave you. Your relationship will end with nothing.** She'll experience a better life. A better love. You'll

end up in jail. Perfect grades. Scholarships. Valedictorian. Master's. All these years you've moved up in the ranks at work. The nice house you bought. The girlfriend you gained. The ring you were saving up for. Your chance at thriving. **You'll end up spending years in a jail cell when the murderer exists only inside your head. You've worked so hard to live the best life you could, and you just got betrayed by your own mind.**

2. Remain silent. Your life continues as normal. You rise in the ranks at work. Your parents are proud. **Your girlfriend's mental state drops as leads turn to nothing, and no evidence provides a suspect to be proven guilty. She remains this way. Her parents the same. The lack of reasoning, the lack of an answer will haunt them until they die.** You continue this façade of normalcy. Greet the interns by the water fountain. Smile at your boss. Admire the sunset in your new office. **The stress. The anxiety. The guilt. They burn you. They burn deep into your diaphragm.** Breathe. You can't. Breathe. You



**just can't.** Fiddle with your keys. **Press your fingers into the teeth until they bleed.**

11:35. The radio updates again. You sit and stare at the papers in front of you. Break in the sequence. Dig your fingernails into your knees. Your stomach growls.

The results of the autopsy are finally being released to the public. He died from hypovolemic shock caused by massive internal and external trauma, most likely from stabbing. You're glad you have dark carpet.

His stomach contents contained junk food, from what they could see. Two primary foods they could discern were pizza and nachos. The nachos' less severe degradation indicated that they were the thing consumed closest to the time of death. They are still working on establishing that time. **Shit.**

The man at the front desk of his apartment, who asked to remain anonymous, expresses great disappointment in himself for not

asking where the victim was going the night he never came back. It haunts him being so useless in this case. You sympathize.

They relay a message from the victim's family. His sister speaks through sobs. Begging. Pleading. You've only ever seen her cry with laughter. **Fuck.**

11:45. Break for lunch. Avoid the text from your girlfriend. Avoid your co-workers as they scramble to the fridge for leftovers and sandwiches. You find yourself in the bathroom again this week. Hover over the back toilet. Vomit. **You're really disgusting. Avoiding your grieving girlfriend?**

Grip the sides of the sink. Stare at yourself. **Really, stare into what you've become.** Disheveled. Sweaty. Double-wrapped bandages on every finger. A liar. A thief. **You stole someone's life,**

**you murderer.** Your stomach cramps again and shrieks. Put your hand into your other pocket. Grab your phone.

"I know things about that body they found in the park. I'm the sick bastard that murdered him."



# The Downfall of a High Roller

William Ahner

Gambling in its many forms has been around for centuries, if not millennia. From betting on your favorite sports team to playing the ponies, gambling has become more popular in our ever evolving society. It is also becoming less demonized by our media and politicians, but the question arises whether that is actually a positive notion for our society. Overindulgence and gluttony is a problem we face in multiple facets of modern society, and gambling is no exception.

The reality of the gambling addiction plaguing our communities is blatantly obvious, especially if you drive by any major casinos. Billboards line up and down the highways advertising hotlines, as well as other related resources pertaining to the gambling addiction. It seems obvious to almost everyone involved that gambling negatively affects the lives of many people within our society, so why do we continue to allow gambling to be legal and easily accessible to the general public? There is a trade off between benefits and drawbacks that legal gambling brings to any given region, and according to recent polling the vast majority of Americans are either oblivious

to or okay with said drawbacks. This allows elected politicians to continue to allow gambling to be legal even if a portion of their constituents continue to suffer because of it.

Gambling does not affect all communities the same way. Gambling corporations target a specific audience, mostly the uneducated lower class as well as minorities. These corporations promote their business heavily in these communities. This is why you can find advertisements for casinos and the lottery as well as corner store slot machines in areas with a high concentration of lower class individuals and minorities. The exploitation of these communities has become a business model for these companies and has allowed them to acquire a large profit margin.

There are a multitude of reasons why someone can become addicted to gambling. Some see gambling as a way to get out of their current financial circumstances, while others just started gambling as a recreational hobby. Whatever the reason someone decides to start gambling, the addictive element of the whole ordeal can

be detrimental to their lives. Like any other addiction, a gambling addiction can have a multitude of psychological problems. These can either be hereditary or environmental, but the actual addiction to gambling is something rooted deep in the brain. When an individual gambles excessively their behavior can actually alter the way chemical messages are sent throughout the brain. This mainly affects the structure of the brain mostly known as the reward system. Once someone has become addicted to gambling their brain has been conditioned to constantly want more and more.

Those affected by an addiction to gambling will always continue to partake in gambling no matter how much money they have won. Often times these people will eventually build up a sort of dopamine tolerance for gambling, and will only be satisfied by waging more on their bets. One of the main reasons people continue to gamble even after losing money is something called partial reinforcement. While gambling, most people will bet or wager multiple times over the span of their session of playing. Even if they lose over half of their wagers, they will still have won a

few, which leads them to believe they are doing something right and will eventually come out on top. This further influences them to continue gambling and leads them further down the rabbit hole to addiction.

Gambling addiction is a real problem that affects around 3% of the US population every year. It harms not only those who succumb to it, but also family members and friends of its victims. While it is a difficult issue to deal with there are multiple resources put in place to help. If you or a loved one is experiencing this problem, I implore you to reach out to organizations such as NCPGambling to help alleviate some of the burdens of dealing with this disease.



# NEW OR NOTHING. IPHONE 11

The new iPhone does everything the old one does. Get ready to drop nearly 1,000 dollars on a phone that has not only 1 camera but 2 for reasons we don't really know. Don't worry, it's still that sleek glass that everyone loves for a few days until it cracks and costs an absurd amount of money to fix.

ADS CAN BE DECEPTIVE.

TAKE OUT "OR" AND READ IT BACKWARDS

# Is Social Media On Your Mind?

Olivia Taylor

Today, it is likely that you will spend six to seven hours of your day on social media. That is if you are anything like the 98% of millennials and even more Gen Z's on social media. Honestly— can you believe that! Six to seven hours is an incredible amount of time that you could spend sleeping, busying yourself with your passion project, working to pay off your tuition, truly you could do anything. But no, as people cast in the millennial and Gen Z generations, we spend our time scrolling through curated feeds of our friends, families, mentors, and influencers.

Thus, it should be unsurprising that with so much of our time dedicated to consuming content that it can have significant impacts on our mental health. What I was incredibly interested to learn was that social media can both lead to symptoms of depression and other serious mental ailments in young people, but it can also help reduce depression and various anxieties.

I think everyone reading this is aware of the mental toll social media can take on the minds of young people. From the severity of online bullying caused by anonymity to the less serious but still draining FOMO (affectionately known as “Fear of Missing Out”) epidemic, social media affects nearly every college student today.

A study from the American Journal of Epidemiology actually found that by liking more posts, people faced “worse mental and physical health and ‘decreased life satisfaction,’” a certain result of the wave of FOMO spread across college campuses daily. What is truly compelling, though, is that FOMO is often based off of completely false or overly emphasized social media posts.

Take a post featuring a birthday party, for instance, that you were not able to attend due to a term paper being due the next day. This post will likely show people having loads of fun, because why would the person being celebrated want their birthday party—or persona—to be seen as anything less. All you would feel, though, is left out and as if you lost a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hang out with your friends, even though this chance will likely come around again.

Young people, who especially face a desire to be socially successful compared to older generations, struggle with this idea of “perfectionism in a post.” As 19-year-old Duke student Cassidy Bolt told HuffPost, “You go on social media and only see the amazing things people are accomplishing but do not see the paths they took to get there. You feel like you aren’t doing enough —

not traveling enough, not making enough friends, not working out enough, et cetera.”

What Bolt alludes to is especially prevalent on the accounts of influencers, but is still certainly seen on your ex-best friend’s boyfriend’s cousin’s Instagram account. As I mentioned before, people are only going to post the best possible things they are experiencing. That trip to visit the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt. Their incredible new job where they get free samples of products daily. The time they ran into Harry Styles on the way to their favorite restaurant. And beyond these rare and radical moments being shared as if it is their daily lives (and for some, maybe it is, who am I to judge) all of these bits are being systematically edited to curate a perfectly synchronized feed. So why wouldn’t you feel like you are lesser than?

What the focus must shift to is, as Bolt alluded, the consideration of the paths that have been taken for people to have these opportunities to share. As I see it, there is no need to feel dragged down by the successes of other people being shown online, because you have to remember that those are their highlights.

Quite literally, mostly everyone’s social media accounts show the



highlight reel of their lives. For people looking at these incredible feeds and moments captured by their favorite influencers and closest friends, it becomes important to be cognisant of the effects their successes are having on your mental health— whether that is positive or negative. Those negative effects are the results that the concept of “perfectionism in a post” so often has, as people feel incompetent to the work shown off by their peers.

This idea, while contributing to the concept of FOMO has also helped exacerbate a loneliness crisis among young people. While the millennial and Gen Z generations are the most connected groups of people, they are nevertheless the loneliest generations to date. As Riley Griffin wrote for HuffPost, “College students today are more detached from their peers than ever before. Research shows they’re less likely to have tangible relationships; enter college having spent less time

socializing as teens; are more likely to be heavily medicated; and feel a greater pressure to be academically and socially successful than in the past.” This statement is very true, and the data is there to back it up.

In a study conducted by UCLA distributed to their freshman class in 2015, “which includes responses from 150,000 full-time students at more than 200 colleges and universities, found that the number of first-year students who spent 16 or more hours a week hanging out with friends fell by nearly half over 10 years, to just 18 percent.” Those numbers are undeniably shocking.

As social media has been on the rise, so have feelings of self doubt and social insecurity. While there is no direct correlation between social media and loneliness, growing internal and external insecurities have led to a drastic drop in relationships between millennials, Gen Zers and their peers. I find this to be quite intriguing, that by people only showing their successes and accomplishments on social media that a majority of people have become more reclusive and less likely to engage with others, despite the whole purpose of social media being to create a community and connect with others.

On that note, however, building communities and finding people who inspire you can actually help alleviate depressed thoughts and other anxieties, according to a study conducted by the University of Leuven in Belgium. In this study, it was concluded that “Instagram usage correlated with feelings of friendship and closeness which reduced depression,” which is quite contrary to the evidence presented thus far. It does make sense, though.

If you are inspired by your own content and only following people who inspire you, you would feel comfortable in building a community around your niche. In this way, social media can positively impact people by bringing together those from across the world to connect in a way that was not possible just a decade ago.

Social media is both a wonderful and destructive force. When used for positivity, it can unite a group of people on a global scale, creating connections between individuals who otherwise may have never associated, leading to reductions in depression. By contrast, engagement on social media can greatly harm an individual’s psyche, with the need for online perfectionism dominating social platforms and making it difficult to find others who inspire you.

As I have done, and implore you to do, only follow people who genuinely inspire you and bring joy into your life, and make connections with those people. By doing so, you can make a positive impact in your own life, and you never know, in the lives of others too.



# Find Your Solace

Cameron Hollenquest

Don't let melancholy be your solace  
You have a heart as empty as your wallet  
I know you see the world as you call it  
It's a problem but you never solve it

-  
Ran from the world when you saw it  
for what it really was  
You know this broken system's slowly killing us  
We look into the mirror is this really us?

-  
Your morale is lower in the night time  
Barely hanging on by a lifeline  
There's never really been a right time  
Your just hoping you can see a light shine

-  
You don't tell a soul  
Lord bless your soul  
You just let it go  
It's a frigid world,  
you could catch a cold  
I hope your broken soul is mended back to gold

-  
Heart as empty as your wallet  
Head down hands in pocket  
Hid your heart away and locked it  
Melancholy is your solace

# Glory

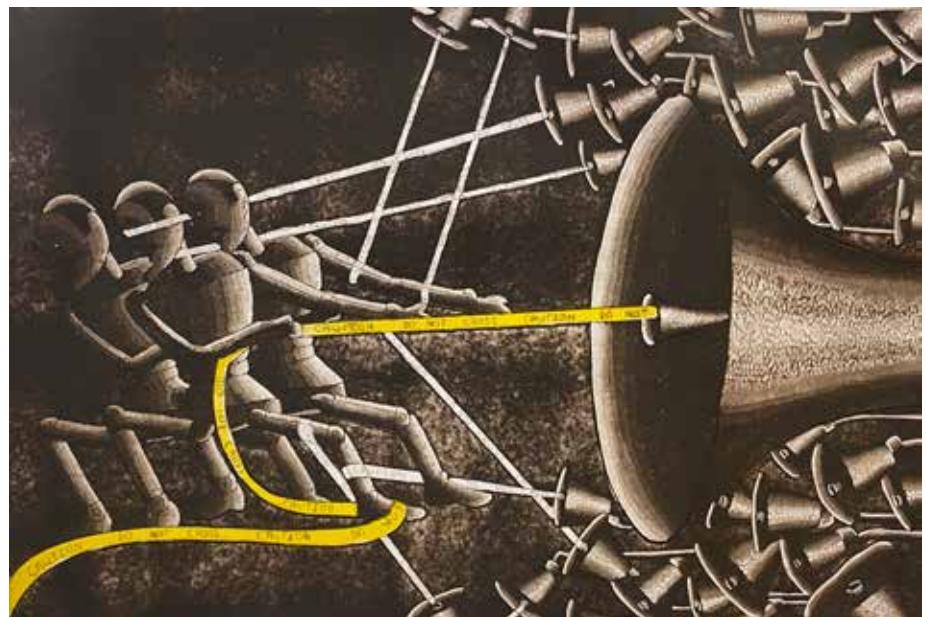
Cameron Hollenquest

They don't want to see the kid grow into a man  
They want to let the Star run into the Fan  
One day the simple Fan will conjure up a plan  
And finally spread a message that the audience can understand

-  
Not just understand but one that they relate to  
Funny how peaceful strangers find a way to hate  
It'll make you think life is a stage you don't have to stay through,  
But you do  
For if you wait you'll see the world is so hesitant to praise you

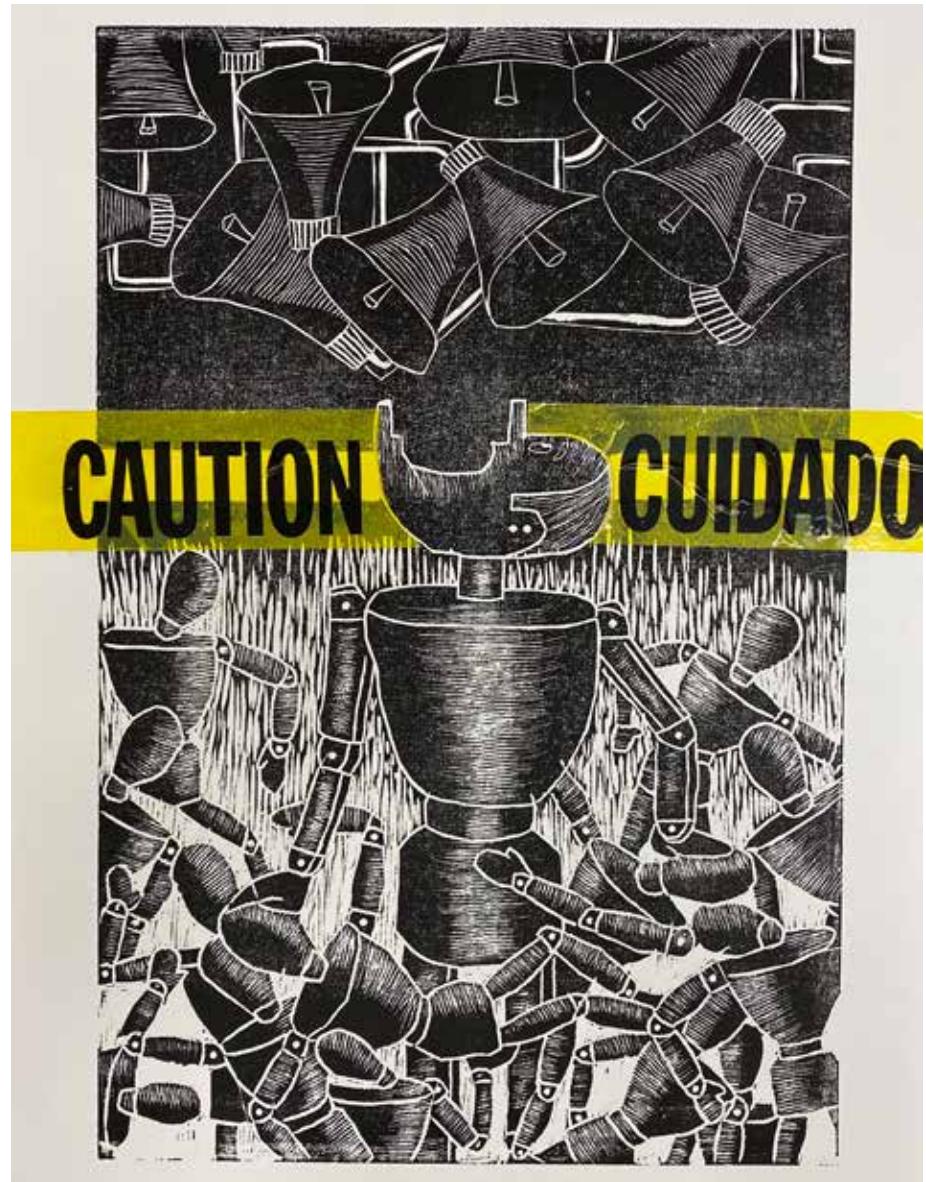
-  
For your work and all your sacrifice  
They never saw your saddest nights  
The demons that you had to fight  
The hope that brought you back to life

-  
They just know the fabled story  
But you can change the history books and show you worked for your glory



Tug of War

Upneet Kaur Mair  
Etching (Aquatint)



Scream

Upneet Kaur Mair  
Woodcut with Caution Tape



Captured

Upneet Kaur Mair  
Etching (Aquatint)

## Dogs

Bryonna Mitchner

*I swear it snarled at me, flashing the sharp teeth it was clearly ready to sink into my skin. My six-year-old body tensed up. The sound of my mom's voice in conversation with her friend was overpowered by the noise from my own imagination. I had visions of my helpless body being mangled by the terrifying creature only feet away. Everyone around me was suddenly gone. I felt alone.*

I lacked the mental capacity and experience to solve my problem. the young girl stood across from me on the field of the familiar park, when she accidentally released the leash — a sequence of events that had been playing on repeat in my conscious nightmare — I ran away from that problem. *Literally.*

The 15-pound Maltipoo merely looked me in the eyes. In my innocent, fragile mind, I had no other option but to run. Looking back twelve years later, I could have run to the solace of the playground right beside me. I could have run to the swingset, where I would have been protected by the elevation and what seemed, back then, like an endless sea of tanbark.

But it wasn't that simple.

I was facing a lion, a bear, a great white shark. Something in my mind had forced me to believe there was nothing and no one around me. Without so much as a moment to freeze, I took flight. Perhaps that was the first significant decision I made independently in my life. Little did I realize, it could have easily been the last. I sprinted across the street, without even thinking of looking for cars.

I survived the puppy incident. I remember my furious and puzzled parents scolding me shortly afterwards. They attempted to convey that what I should have been afraid of was the street, where an unknown number of moving vehicles were a threat to my life. I wished I had not reacted so desperately, and I soon saw that there were other paths I could have taken.

Gradually, I got over my fear of dogs. Maybe it started when I agreed to pet my aunt's dog, the one that never barked or chased anything, and seemed almost as afraid of people as I was of dogs. When I realized my fear of dogs wasn't so bad, I slowly began to go near other dogs, as long as they were small and seemed tame

# Got Movies On Your Mind? Here's Why.

Abby Patterson

enough. Eventually, I was fine with dogs. I grew to love dogs. A few years later, I even wanted a dog. It really would have sucked had I gotten run over that day, never giving me the opportunity to see that dogs were not something I needed to fear.

I wish I could stop being afraid of all of my demons, the way I stopped being afraid of dogs. Yet, I am sometimes a casualty of my own mind, because of what I have seen, what I have thought, and what I have convinced myself to keep inside.

I still remember what it felt like that day at the park when I was paranoid and terrified, and nobody seemed to understand. My fear isolated me, and it seemed to push away people close to me.

However, there must have been others who attempted to guard themselves and their imaginations with burdensome, worn-out suitcases full of irrational fears; I was not alone. But instead of seeing this, I became isolated, failed to see beyond myself, and refused to ask for help. Dogs were not nearly as scary as I thought. Perhaps my other fears are not so

scary either, as difficult as that may be to believe. I don't quite know why I still hold on to irrational fears. I understand that fear itself, and the toll it takes on the mind, may be far more dangerous than the situations from which it stems.

I need to ask for help and advice. I need to step out of my comfort zone to see that while some fears may exist to keep me out of trouble, others only exist to be broken down. I need to take a deep breath when I am overwhelmed by fear, and remember to look for the swingset before rushing into the street. I need to remember to seek the truth before succumbing to my preconceptions, so I do not become paralyzed in the face of something that may actually bring me joy. I need to remember that, as my experience has shown me, I do have the power to overcome my fears.

You exit your car, underneath the bright lights of your favorite movie theater. Shades of neon blue, red, and yellow bathe the parking lot in an array of colors, providing a stark contrast from the dark night sky. As you approach the door, you take a moment to notice the enticing posters lining the front of the theater, filled with the faces of your favorite actors and actresses. Chris Hemsworth, Pratt, and Evans are all present in one, looking stoic and fearless and ready to save the world from a gauntlet filled with stones. Eddie Redmayne fills another, suitcase in his right hand and a wand, pointed and ready, in his left. Even Daisy Ridley is there, her face illuminated by the glow of a blue lightsaber. Each image gradually gets bigger, more real, the closer you get. Inside, the smell of buttery popcorn floats through the air, and people are laughing and giddy as they discuss the movies they are about to see. After paying for your ticket, you make your way down the dark, carpeted hall to the correct theater and quickly find a seat, right in the middle,

with a perfect view of the screen. Your excitement rises as the house lights finally dim, and the film you have waited months to see begins to play.

This is an experience we are all familiar with and one that most of us greatly enjoy. But why? What is it about a two-hour recording of moving images with accompanying sound that manages to entertain us so much? To answer these questions, we will look at a few observations and theories proposed by Jeffrey M. Zacks, author of *Flicker: Your Brain on Movies*.

In his book, Zacks states, "Our brains didn't evolve to watch movies: Movies evolved to take advantage of the brains we have." Zacks continues, explaining that our brains are equipped to deal with real world problems, not the exaggerated events we see in film. Movies allow us to experience strong emotions that are normally elicited in unfortunate or dangerous situations, all within the safety and comfort of a movie theater. It is these emotions that

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draw us in and allow us to become invested in our favorite films.

In order to understand how this works, we must first understand how our brains function. Zacks explains that humans are naturally social creatures. We depend on each other to develop skills necessary for survival. Because of this, we tend to mimic the behaviors of others. Let us say you are walking down the street, and someone you do not know smiles at you. Chances are that, before you can even understand why, you smile back. This is a principle that Zacks calls the mirror rule—human tendency to respond to actions produced by others with a similar action. Similarly, research conducted by Fritz Strack and Leonard Martin has suggested that your facial expression could influence the emotion you feel. In other words, you are happy because you are smiling, not smiling because you are happy. So, according to the mirror rule, if we see someone frowning, we will also start to frown. Research tells us that this act of frowning will

elicit the emotional response of sadness. The same holds true for all the other basic emotions, such as fear, anger, and disgust, as well. This rule is part of our natural communication as a species.

Zacks believes another important rule ingrained in our personal development is the success rule. This rule states that, when confronted with certain stimuli, we will produce actions that are likely to work in response to that specific stimuli. When you were a young child in elementary school P.E. and heard someone yell, “DUCK,” chances are that you did one of two things: you ducked, or you got hit in the head with a ball. Either way, you quickly learned that bending down and covering your head would have resulted in not getting hit, also known as success. This type of behavior is something we learn at a young age and train our brains to do automatically as we get older. If ducking worked once, it is likely to work again. This rule does not stop at defensive behaviors. It can be as simple as someone raising their

hand and you high fiving them without having to think about it. You have been socialized to know that ignoring someone’s offer of a high five is considered rude, so you train your brain to recognize that a raised hand and a smiling or excited face means you should make contact with their hand in order to successfully complete the interaction. Over time, these types of behaviors become instinct.

At this point, you are probably asking yourself what any of this has to do with movies. Zacks states that the rules mentioned above are evolutionarily ingrained into us, and we do not stop performing them even when we watch a movie. In addition to the storylines of movies and the techniques directors use to film, the mirror and success rules help us to develop an emotional connection with our favorite films.

Movies are first and foremost stories. They use the same character development and plot lines that books use in order to get us to empathize with characters

and their situations. We quickly develop emotional attachments with characters because we get to see all parts of them: their private lives, their insecurities, their strengths and weaknesses, and their personal opinions, all in a matter of minutes. The biggest difference between movies and books is that movies, well, move. They audibly and visually simulate the world around us in a way that other forms of media do not.

This key difference allows for a whole new level of tricks movie creators can use. Let us now return to the mirror rule. According to this rule, if you see someone with wide eyes and furrowed eyebrows and their mouth open in a slight frown, you would mimic this expression, associate it with the emotion of fear, and develop a similar feeling. This does not always happen in real life. Why? Because you have the option to look away and focus your attention elsewhere. In a movie, this is not necessarily the case. Editors can control how much they show of an actor’s face, the angle it is

shown from, and how long they want the audience to look at it. As an example, let us look at the emotional scene from James Cameron's *Titanic* where Rose realizes Jack has died. The way this scene is filmed, Jack's face is shown only enough for the viewer to see that he is not responding. Rose's face, however, is completely visible. The audience can watch as her emotions cycle through surprise that a life boat has come back, fear that Jack is not waking up, and finally sadness as she accepts that he is dead. The mirror rule explains why this scene can make even the most hardened of people cry. Rose's face takes up most of the screen during this scene, making it almost impossible to focus on something else. We, as viewers, watch her face and mimic her expressions allowing us to feel exactly what she feels during that moment.

The success rule works in a similar way. This rule states that when confronted with a stimulus, we will respond with an action that produces a favorable outcome.

For example, let us consider various scenes from Michael Bay's *Transformers*. Many of the action sequences from this movie involve 20-40ft Autobots and Decepticons fighting each other. The scenes are filmed from the perspective of the viewer looking up while parts rain down on them and transformers leap and fight right over their heads. Chances are that many people in the movie theater felt the urge to duck or flinch during these moments. We have trained ourselves to know that when a big, looming object looks like it is about to fall on top of you, it is best to either cover your head or get out of the way. Even though we tell ourselves that what we are watching is not real, our brains cannot help trying to enforce the behaviors they have turned into instincts.

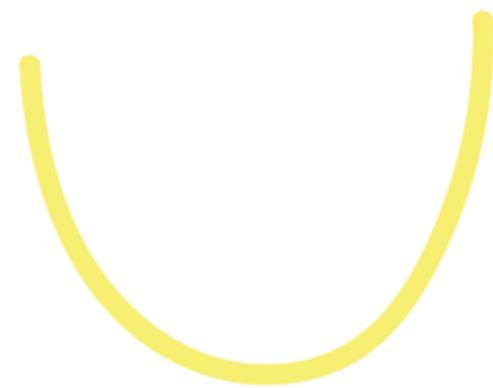
In his book, Zacks notes that that the people who make movies are neither trained psychologists nor neuroscientists. They do not sit back and think about ways to scientifically trick the brain in order to make their movie

better. Rather, through years of experimenting, they have figured out which techniques and technologies produce the most positive response from their viewers. This is something they are still figuring out and improving upon today. The rise in technological advancement over the past few decades has paved the way for even better movie experiences. IMAX and 3D movies are currently very popular, giving moviegoers an even more immersive viewing experience. Some theaters around the world employ 4D technology, using moving seats, water and air effects, and even more to make movies feel more realistic and life-like. As technology continues to improve this way, it will influence the brain in order to create the best, most immersive experience for the viewer.

We now know that watching a movie requires so much more than simply observing moving pictures on a screen. You mentally interact with it and respond with traits and behaviors as you would

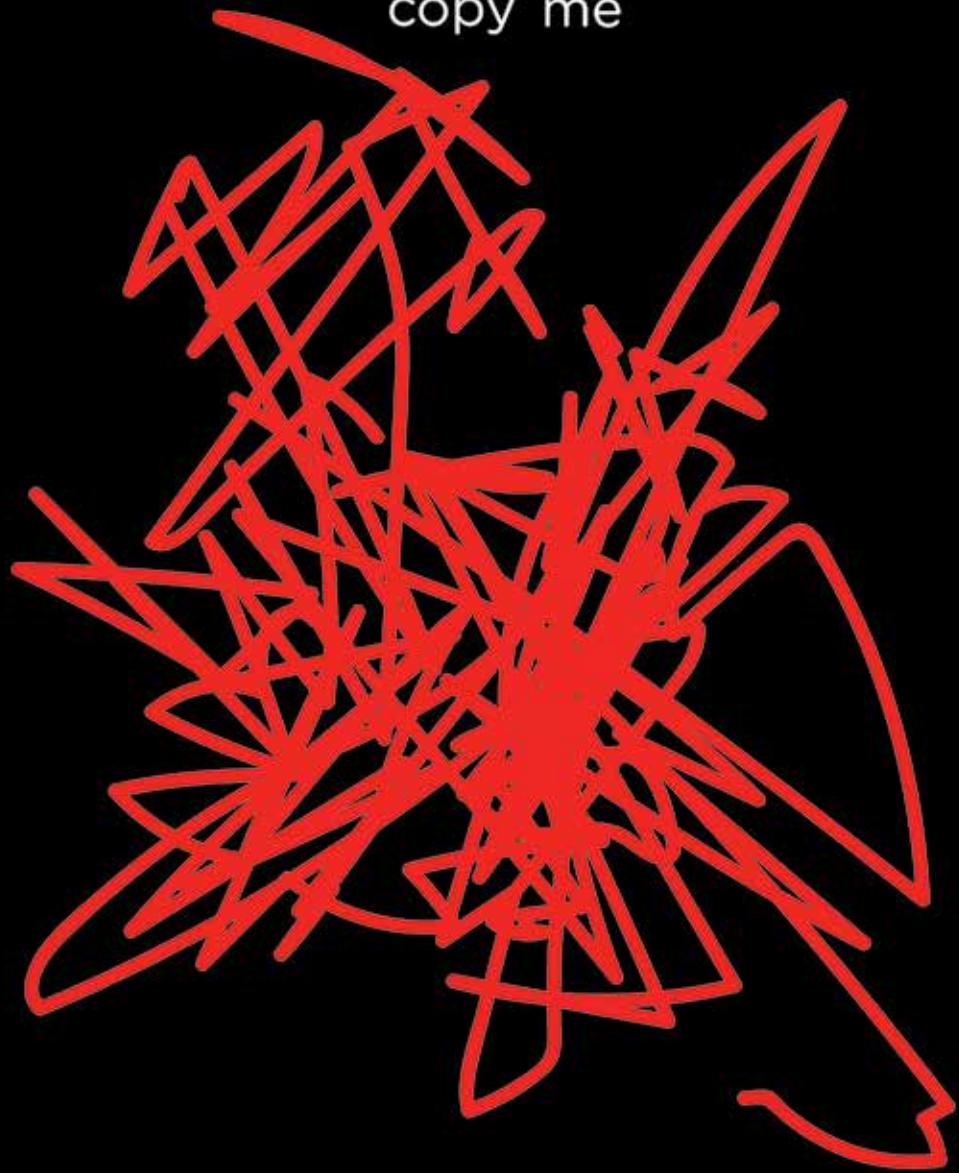
in the real world. This is what makes watching a movie such a great form of entertainment. Because of the emotional and physical responses our brains associate with them, movies have the power to inspire us, bring us together, and show us an infinite world of possibilities.

copy      me



this is an ad for happiness

copy me



this is an ad for anger

# Confetti Guts

Abba Mellon

Sometimes it's like my brain doesn't quite fit,  
or there's a red balloon lodged in my gut.  
Either way, something's off, and I am like  
to burst. Something's off, and something's let out.  
Schools aren't right for screaming or puking up

my confetti guts. I'm an explosion  
of color and sound and mismatched debris.  
I've tried carving it out into my skin,  
or painting it bright across my eyelids—  
singing and sobbing and banging my bones.

Either way, I'm pumped full of helium,  
expanding past my skeletal walls.  
Baby fists aren't made for breaking, tearing  
destroying. Too little to rip it up.  
I want to splatter myself on pavement,

but I can't live up to the shattering.  
Maybe I want to live—just want things quiet,  
too. I drip synesthetic words onto  
canvas, swirled up like melted crayon wax—  
Purge of poetry without acid burn.



Overflow

Erin Copeland  
Photography

# Fireworks

Tia Crampton

As a kid, I used to love them. Every fourth of July my family and I would revel beneath the marvelous, vivid explosions that marred the night sky and imitated the stars above. My fascination with fireworks reached its peak sometime during my late adolescence- around the age of 16. I developed a passion for pyrotechnics. Each time I went to a firework show, I would split my focus between watching the pyrotechnic operator and observing the show itself. I wanted to learn how it worked but from afar. The charm of such a job, controlling such colorful and dangerous objects, was stripped away from me not even a year later.

February 18th, 2018 was initially an average uneventful day. My mother, brothers, and I had lounged around the house for the greater part of the day, and when the afternoon came around we drove to my grandmother's house to take her shopping at Sam's Club. Something we did frequently. My brothers and I were crammed into the back seat of my mother's car; I played mindless games on my phone with my headphones on while my brothers took turns roaring with laughter as they harassed each other as well as my

mother. We continued to wait in the car while my grandmother was taking what seemed like forever to get ready. I did not mind the wait, as it was a common occurrence when dealing with grandma. I was fully content with just using my phone.

After a while my grandma finally appeared outside and made her way into the car. After preparing to set off for the store my mom sporadically pressed the brakes when the first shot rang out.

'Fireworks.'

That was my first thought when the deafening noise pierced the serene Sunday air. I had heard the sound so many times before, so I was familiar with it, and I was positive that fireworks were the culprit of the interrupted peace. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was a few days beforehand, so I only assumed that it was some overzealous celebrators eager to shoot off some spare fireworks from New Year's Eve. I paid no mind to it and neither did my mom as she continued to ease off the brakes. The second shot made the true origin of the shot strikingly clear.

The window beside my head shattered sending glass shards violently scattering across the backseat of the vehicle. I remember staring at the destroyed window and thought nothing of it. I remember sitting still and hearing my brothers scream as they attempted to unbutton their seatbelts and exit the car, only to be thwarted by the child safety lock. I remember my mom nearly falling out of the car to open their door and undo their seatbelts, herding them inside of the house. I remember staring at them all and wondering: 'Why are they screaming? They're only fireworks.'

After the paramedics and police arrived, we learned that the bullet's path traveled in front of my face and behind my brothers' heads before burying itself in the frame of our car to permanently reside.

Unlike the well-known saying, what doesn't kill you doesn't make you stronger. At least that's what I learned from the whole experience. That dreadful day gave me paranoia, PTSD, and post-traumatic depression. I struggled through the rest of my junior year. A mixture of stress, sleep deprivation, and an eventual concussion from

softball all compounded to make my academic work difficult to focus on.

I don't enjoy fireworks anymore, but I'm alright with that. I survived that awful day, many other victims of drive-by shooting can't say the same. From that day forward, I learned that I needed to put my efforts into useful endeavors that help others. I made a conscious decision to improve my writing skills so that I could use my pieces of work to benefit those who need support and representation. I gained another chance to enrich the lives of people and I plan to utilize every moment I have on this earth to do so.

# Strong Women

Kayla Meeks

---

They dressed you for their gaze,  
They scrutinized your existence,  
They starved you of respect,  
They marked your “flaws” for profit.

They took razors to your skin,  
They painted you,  
They labeled you,  
They neglected your education,  
They ejected you from the classroom. . . .  
They made you cover up for others’ sake.

You said:

Prettiness is not a rent you pay  
for occupying a space marked “female”. . . .

You said:

Being polite is not the same  
thing as being quiet. . . .

You said:

Ain’t I a woman?  
A strong woman is determined  
A strong woman is a woman.

They extinguished your voice,  
They closed their eyes,  
They legislated your autonomy,  
And said— we have to take care of women.  
You said:

When women’s rights are under attack,  
we fight back. . . .

They usurped your career,  
They belittled your value,  
They made you question your worth,  
They promised a way to change that  
By offering instead what you cannot pay for.  
You said:

Another world. . . . is on her way. . . .  
I can hear her breathing. . . .

A strong woman is determined  
A strong woman is a woman.

They elected cruel leaders,  
You resorted, as despairing people will. . . .  
They explained, concerned for your comprehension. . . .  
You listened.  
Then laughed as they turned.

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They furrowed their brows;  
Uncomfortable;  
Unadmitting the rising truth . . .

A strong woman is determined  
A strong woman is a woman.

What, from the house  
Where they expect you,  
What, from the stigma  
They have placed on you —  
What seizes them  
Making them question your validity, potency?  
Today they spit policy at you  
“Thou shalt not this”  
“Thou shalt not that”  
“Reserved for Y’s only”  
You smile.

One thing they cannot prevent —  
A strong woman . . . determined  
A strong woman is a woman.  
Strong women . . .  
Strong . . .



Vivid

Alexis Blue  
Photography

this is an ad for comfort

this is an ad for guilt

I am the whiskey on your tongue  
The sunlight burning in your eyes  
I am light and love  
I am a soft rose, untouched and in full bloom  
I want you to pluck me first  
open me up and water me  
Put me in a vase on your nightstand so I am always close by  
I drown in my flaws  
emerging only when you say  
I am a golden goddess  
Hair thick and natural, skin smooth like butter  
I am the rocky edge you stand on before you jump

You are a glimpse of heaven  
The midnight craving I indulge when no one's looking  
You are soft snores and wandering hands  
A heartbeat pounding in my ears  
Your scent lingers in my room  
It smothers me until I breathe you in  
Fresh mint and home  
Your arms wrap around me  
cradling me and soothing the panic

We are waves crashing and unsuspecting  
Seashells and starfish on a desolate beach  
We are love woven into two forgiving souls  
You are wrapped around my neck  
caressing my voice in the palm of your hands  
You say I am ripe and sweet  
The first bite of a peach in spring  
Yet sometimes a wild fire, flames dancing in the sky  
I burn you  
and you emerge unscathed  
We are ripped buttons laying on the cold floor  
Snoozed alarms and pleas of five more minutes  
We're innuendos in poems crumpled up and thrown away  
We are the daydreams that stay still when we return to reality

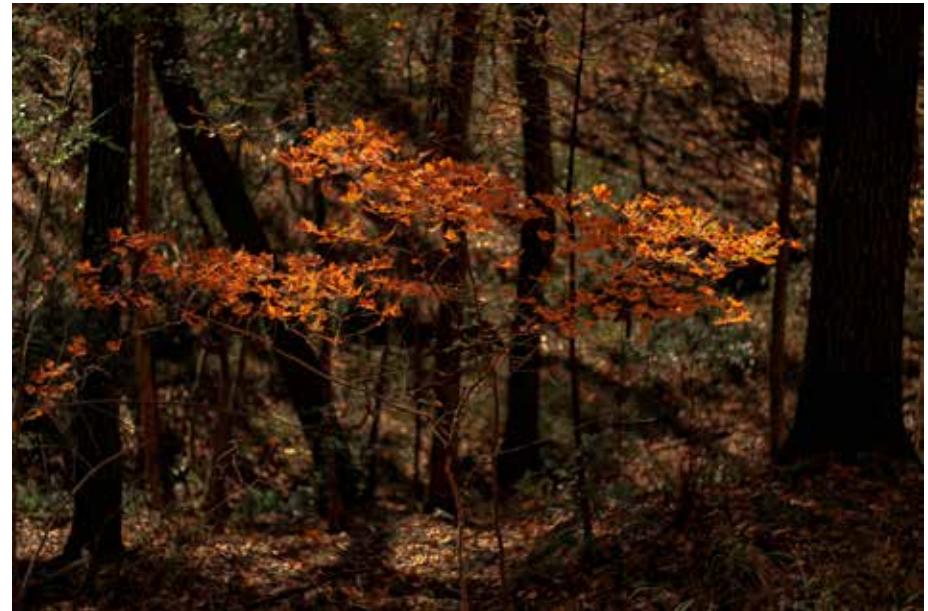


Punkin Acres

Carlos Hernandez  
Photography



“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”

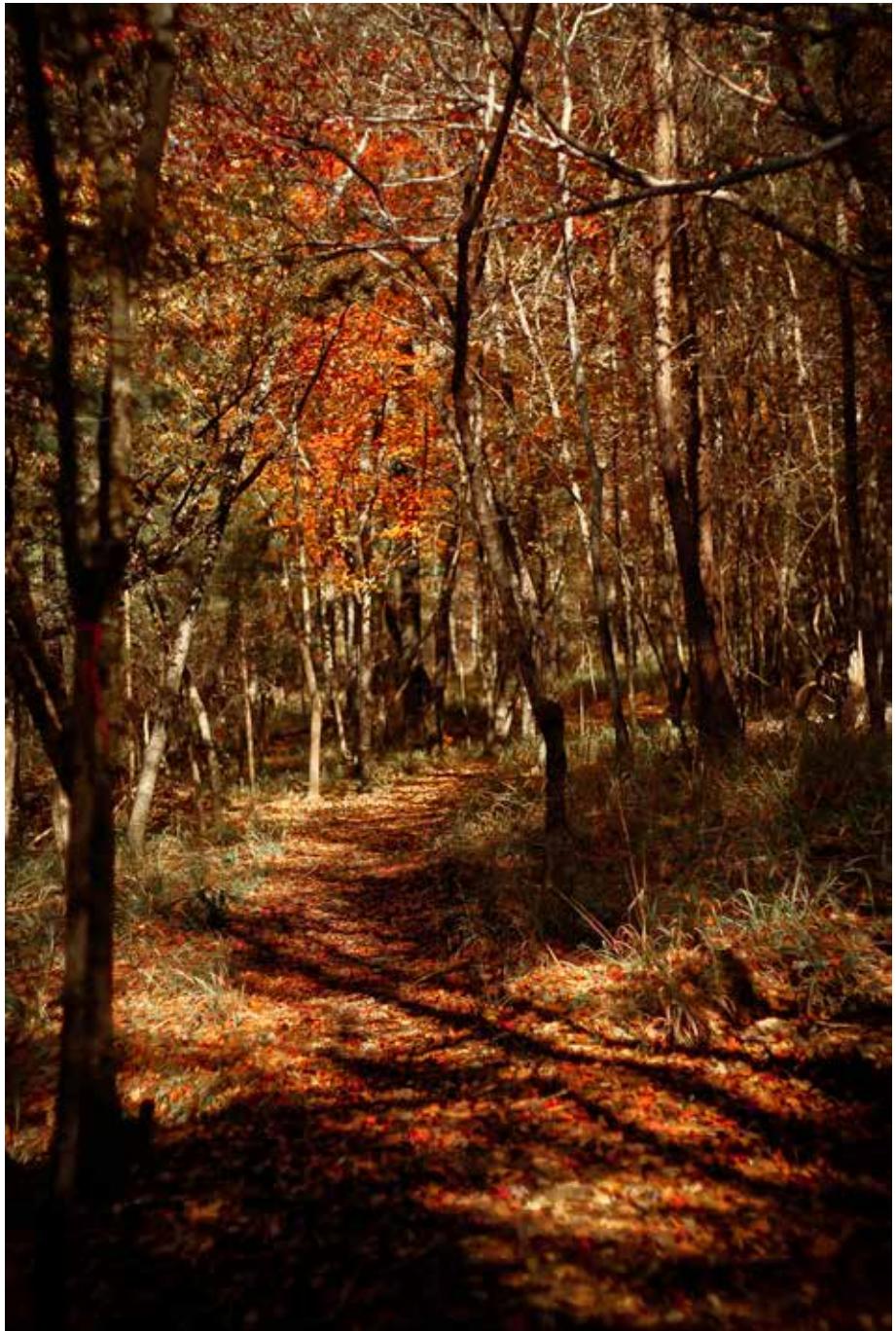


—Albert Einstein





These photographs are dedicated to the Hurricane Creek Park nature preserve in Tuscaloosa, AL, and all efforts for the conservation of the natural world.







# Water

Thomas Bailey

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Water.

She was surrounded by water.

Though she felt it, she couldn't hear it. No minute splashes as droplets met with the pond below – no hum as the waves lazily lapped at the shore. There was nothing – only the vast maw of silence to keep her company.

Nothing.

The girl's eyes snapped open, granting her senses companionship.

Small beams of light surrounded the girl's body as they penetrated the thin veneer of liquid above. All around her were bubbles of air, though she couldn't tell where they came from. As her eyes scanned the surroundings, no features made themselves apparent. All around her was darkness – as if in a vast cavern, all the girl saw was black. As her consciousness grew more acute, she noticed her hair beginning to creep its way through the edges of her vision. The tendrils waved slowly back and forth, as if to greet an old friend. As the girl greeted them back, she noticed something else; the pillars

of light surrounding her, which once seemed so strong, were now fading. She was descending. The drowning girl's arms grasped at the water above her, struggling for freedom. As she descended further into the murky depths, and as the light above her prison grew blurry, the girl opened her mouth in one last scream of defiance.

But nothing came out.

Silence greeted her once more.

It kept her company as she descended, the water welcoming her further down.

Her eyes slowly glued themselves shut. Her other senses faded with the lack of stimulation.

Peace.

A voice whispered in her ear, like a gentle breeze –

“We will not speak like this again”

Her eyes snapped open once more. The darkness which once inhabited her world was replaced by one of a softer ilk – noticeably brighter than before, but muddy around the edges. The girl's mind was unable to

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focus, the events of her dream still dancing the razor's edge between thought and reality. Her body felt wet still – likely from sweat, she surmised. As her vision began to focus, she sluggishly scanned her surroundings.

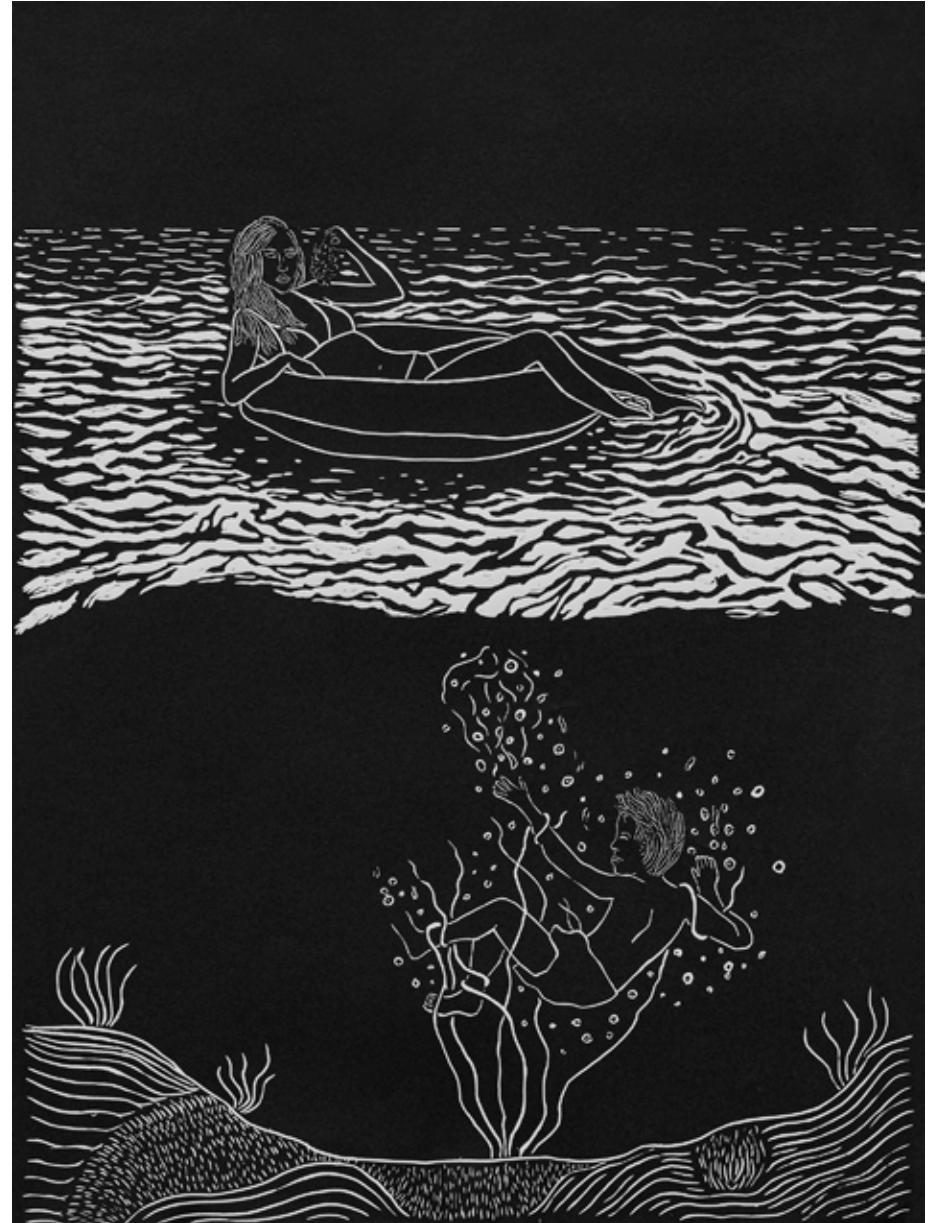
Her room looked the exact same as she had left it. Every object lay in place as it had before. A pair of thin grey curtains fluttered gently to her left, barely obscuring the open window behind them. Her clock glowed softly on the bedside table, its alarm primed to go off at exactly seven AM – three hours from the current time. A tank of water lay to the right of her bed, resting on a sizable oaken bureau. Inside its clear glass walls, a water filter bubbled lazily away as several colorful fish swam about under it. As the girl's gaze tracked past the left of her living space, she felt something. Perhaps due to her drowsiness, she had not noticed before – but there was a slight pressure at the foot of her bed. The girl's eyes stopped dead in their tracks on the entity in front of her. The breath caught in her chest, screaming to be let out – shaking against her ribs as if they were bars of a prison cell. Her head lifted slowly from her pillow, almost of its

own volition. Her hair stuck to the smooth surface of her pillowcase – sweat binding the two together. As her eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, she could more easily make out the entity before her. It came into focus.

At the foot of her bed sat a man. Clad in black from the waist up, it was difficult to make out the man's features. The girl squinted and drew her head forward slightly, causing his outline to become clearer. The man wore a disheveled, black wool coat draped over his broad shoulders. A white collar protruded from the top of his coat, likely attached to a white dress shirt below. On top of his head lay an unkept mane of light brown hair, short on the sides – it appeared soft, but untamed. From him emanated a faint smell of rain – though, strangely enough, it was not raining outside the girl's window. The faint glow of a smartphone blurred the edges of his outline as it lay in his lap.

The girl recognized him.

He spoke.



## Prosperity and Misery

Lillie Markwalter  
Print

# Occluded

Jacob Alexandre

One of the mornings where the sleep won't climb from your eyes but prefers to lie in your lids' smiling curves, as if sunbathing, yawning, or sighing. So you squint and frown; your face tries to rest.

A few also-soggy faces are no help toward acceptance.  
A punctilious white clock is no help toward sharpness.

Nor is a droning intercom any help toward awakening...

But, appointments.  
Two pen-points on your regimen.  
You are pinched between them, as by forceps, as by the drooping tip of your nose.  
From somewhere in the folds of your porous body, a mighty yawn presses up.

And the dull weight of you is melting into the cushion, and  
the waiting-room is quiet and your eyes are drifting... and  
the thoughts of all sorts presenting before you, past and  
future things are coming before you, as pinpricks...  
They start out from you, they unfurl like no needles could...

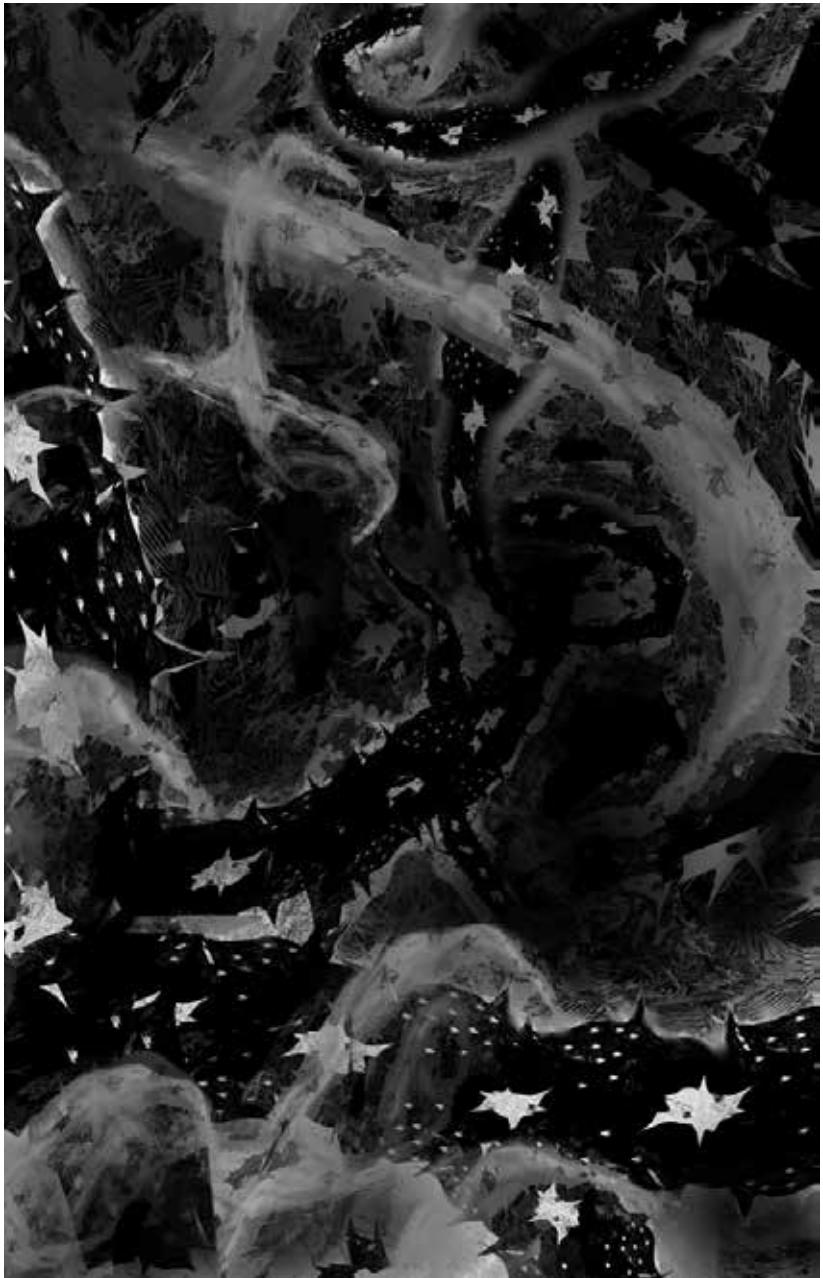
These grey gossamer sentences that  
scroll off into the mists of...

What?...  
Not blurry, no, but sharp and serifed... Who  
is calling out?...  
Why is your name on their lips?...



Sleep Paralysis

Lillie Markwalter  
*Digital Drawing*



Liquid Sleep

Garret Green  
*Digital Mixed Media*

# March 2nd

Sophie Corizzo

---

I lost my creativity on March 2nd at three in the morning.

I would say it was the strangest feeling I had experienced in all my life. I felt every single emotion, and they felt me. Blue sparks lit up my peripherals, blinding my thoughts with sadness. People's frowns drooped into compressed facial constructions that scared me to my core. I was so scared, but I was laughing at every single joke I made to myself. My brain couldn't process what was happening to me the way it should have; it was just as frightening as I was.

Doing acid ruined my old life. It ruined my old self, the old me who didn't think with so many layers. My ex-boyfriends were forgotten, my enemies were forgiven, and my parents were oblivious. It ruined the way my brain functioned for months on end and even to this very day. The bland girl who couldn't see patterns in the wind or stripes in her coffee was gone.

I wouldn't say I didn't have a complicated brain before. I'm no stranger to depression and anxiety, but it's nothing compared to how I view the world now.

I used to be an art minor. I loved the way lines flowed through the paper. The brushstrokes circling on a canvas face, while messy, were mine. When I ran out of grey paper, I would make charcoal strokes on ruled paper during history classes. I found beauty everywhere. I never thought I could be a professional artist, but what I made always made me and my family happy.

A good trip can feel pleasant—the world can seem beautiful, life can seem incredible, and human interactions can appear deep and meaningful. In contrast, a bad trip can bring overwhelming feelings of fear—the world can seem harsh, cold, and ugly, life can seem painful, and people can seem superficial and cruel.

My roommate had a good trip. She was the exact opposite of me: a skinny, rich, sorority girl. I loved and hated her for the fact that she had a much better time than I did. Later in my trip, I could feel my mannerisms switching with hers, like I was becoming her. She was everything I wanted to be in college. It was scary. I felt like a crack head.

The changes people on LSD experience with how they feel about themselves is often described as a breakdown of their ego, or sense of self. Previously held beliefs about who you are and what matters to you can shift temporarily or permanently. People may become more understanding of the plight of others, get in touch with their inner strengths, or feel more spiritually connected/enlightened. But the breakdown of the ego can also go negatively. People may feel that their life is meaningless, that the world is heartless, or that the human race is a ship of fools. This can be alienating and depressing.

I felt myself start to die. I couldn't feel my heartbeat. I couldn't accept what this drug was doing with my body.

I was in hell.

I couldn't eat or sleep for a week afterward. I lost 20 pounds. My body was so serotonin-deficient that I cried all day. I told my now boyfriend- then crush- what happened, and he told me his horror stories about acid. It felt like I wasn't alone for a minute.

Then I got into a real-life thought loop that everything happening

around me was a figment of my imagination, that I was still tripping and everyone was fake and made up by my brain. That thought was even scarier than my trip. When I told my close friend these thoughts, her face made me think she was hiding a secret, that she was in on the deception.

They diagnosed me with hallucinogen-persisting perception disorder on May 13th, the day after my dad's birthday. He still doesn't know.

It feels so overdramatic to think back to how I was at that time, but I needed to graph my growth since then. I'm a history minor now. I can't understand art anymore because every time I look at something that I made, I hate it. I see lines and visual snow everywhere at night. I still get visuals if I'm exhausted. It reminds me to keep breathing.

My life isn't bad at all actually. I feel happier now, in a way that I didn't think was possible. I get satisfied more easily. I don't put so much weight on things now, even though I'm still terrified of feeling any emotion other than happiness. If I think of the smallest bit of anger or jealousy, I don't let myself get too caught up in it.

I let myself breathe. My mind breathes, my friends breathe, the earth breathes. I still have slight hallucinations. The grass breathes in and breathes out, just like me. It reminds me that everything is living, and we're all here together. Nothing is ever as dangerous as it may seem to be, and we're all going to be alright.

# An Explanation for Those Unexplainable Dreams

Abby Patterson

Have you ever experienced a weird dream? Like, a really weird dream? Maybe when you woke up, this dream left you shaken, and you continued to think about it, searching for any explanation for what it could mean. If you have, then you're not alone. Humans experience a variety of universal dreams that can at first seem strange and hard to interpret. However, many of these dreams can actually represent problems in the waking world. Listed below are a few examples of these dreams and some possible explanations for their meanings. These explanations are taken from various articles published on huffpost.com as part of a Huffington Post series on dreams and their meanings.

## Dreaming That You're Falling

This is a common one for me. You dream that you're falling through the air, only to jerk awake right before you hit the ground. According to Dr. Cathleen O'Connor, author of The Everything Law of Attraction Dream Dictionary, having a dream that you're falling often implies that you feel like you're not in control of a situation in your real life. This type of dream usually occurs at the beginning of your sleep cycle and results in you waking suddenly.

## Dreaming That You're Being Chased

We all know that it's incredibly hard to run in dreams. This makes it super frustrating when you're trying to get away from whatever threat your brain has created to chase you. Dr. Richard Nicoletti, a Jungian psychotherapist, explains that a dream about being chased implies you're trying to escape a person or problem in the real world. It's even possible that you could be running away from your own emotions.

## Dreaming That Your Teeth Fall Out

It's not fun to lose teeth when you're too old to receive a visit from the tooth fairy. It's a good thing that, for most of us, it only happens in our dreams. Dr. Richard Nicoletti says that a dream about your teeth falling out may mean you're having difficulty dealing with an emotional experience or psychological stress. Your teeth are what allow you to eat, and, without them, it would be pretty hard to survive. It's also common to dream that someone else's teeth fall out. When this happens, it can imply that you may have negative feelings toward that person.

## Dreaming That You're Naked in Public

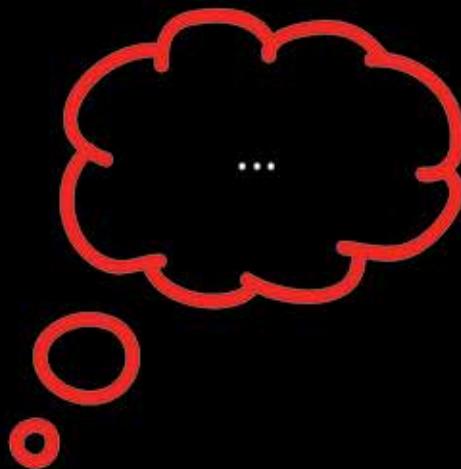
When you're anxious about public speaking, people tell you to imagine everyone else in their underwear. It really sucks when your brain gets confused and imagines everyone but you fully clothed. According to Sarah DiGiulio, a health and science writer for HuffPost, dreaming about being naked in a public place likely means that you're feeling embarrassed about something in your waking life. However, it's also possible that this dream could represent repressed feelings of guilt or inferiority.

## Dreaming That You Meet a Celebrity

We all have that one person who we totally fangirl or fanboy over. Sadly, the closest most of us will ever come to meeting them is in our dreams. Shelley Smith, a behavioral therapist, says that many celebrities in our culture are role models for us. When we dream about meeting a celebrity, it probably means that we are envious of a trait that celebrity has or that we're wishing we could be more like them.

## Dreaming That You're Flying

All it takes is faith, trust, and pixie dust (although, some quality time in REM sleep can possibly produce the same effects). According to psychotherapist Jeffrey Sumber, dreams about flying represent a sense of freedom. They often occur when we are feeling held down by some form of figurative pressure in our waking life.



this is an ad for self-worth

this is an ad for hopelessness

# Longitude One-Third

Leona Yeager



Dirty

Madelyn Verbrugge  
*Photography*

One-third.

A proportion on my face I unlovingly scrutinize.  
Not an exact value,  
But without a doubt,  
This vertical crease is a measure of something:

Tears, frustration, wonder, confusion, pain, poor vision-  
These things and more  
Dancing along the line nestled in its homeplace:  
Between the eyebrows situated laterally  
On longitude one-third  
Of a face too readily  
Dissected by its possessor.

Such as water lovingly drips  
Down copper's dirty-gold flesh  
To reveal a pastel,  
Unheroic green,  
This face of mine, too,  
Has evolved.

Ever so slight,  
And unbeknownst to others,  
Is that crevice that has formed  
As tears have eroded the muscle  
That vulnerably exposes  
Circumnavigating thoughts  
And constructed expressions.

Tears, water, copper, flesh-  
Mediums that morph and are molded  
Into casts  
That have unsuccessfully avoided those  
Ticking hands.

---

In this saline water cycle,  
Precipitation is inevitable.  
The face's riverbed will brim and  
Flood those familiar landmarks with glossing sweeps.

More lines will grow as they find their roots in time and  
Nourishment from experience.  
Dermis will shift and move just as the plates do, and  
Longitude one-third will dig itself deeper  
Along with other longitudes, latitudes, slantitudes, and curvitudes-  
Paper-thin company  
All nestled and nurtured by the globe of my head,  
My face.

Their homeplaces?  
Along the scaffold of a smile,  
Encompassed by the brows' arms hug,  
On railroad tracks that trail off the eyes.

Personal, intimate addresses  
On a face too readily  
Dissected by its possessor.

Possessor, please.  
Tell yourself,  
You're okay.



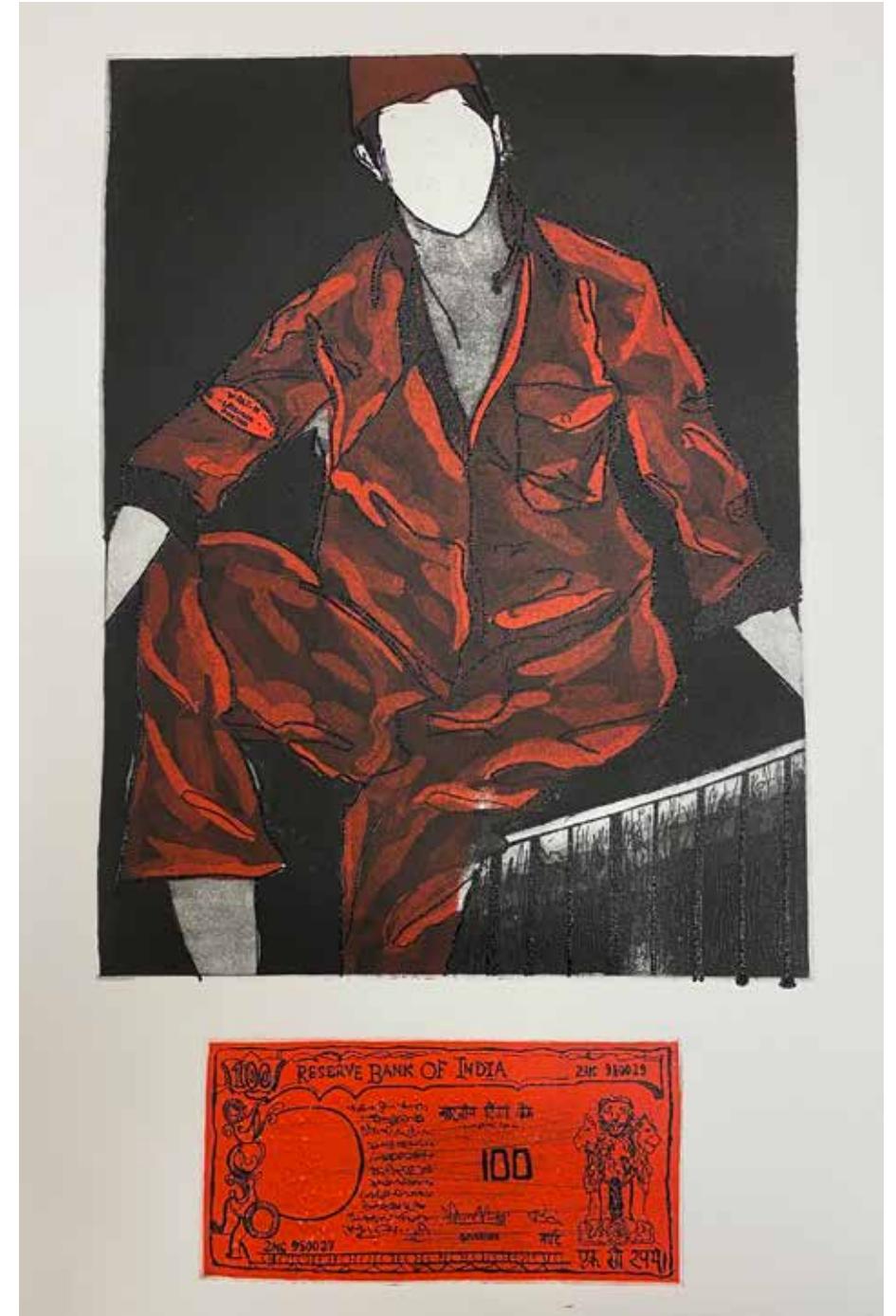
Portrait of a Porter

Shivam Pawar  
Etching (Aquatint & Softground)



**Porter at the Station**

Shivam Pawar  
*Collagraph with Chine-Collé*



**The Porter**

Shivam Pawar  
*Etching (Aquatint)*

# My Mindgarden

Carlos Hernandez

My story is unfinished because I cannot tell you how I got there.

Or rather, I cannot tell you how I got *here*.

The first time I went missing was on my seventh birthday. I also went missing when I turned fourteen and later when I turned twenty-one in 2016. I suppose 2016 was an opportune time to vanish, and I presume I was not the only one who did. I returned home to a state of upheaval, made of evil.

It's 2023, and I'm starting to vanish again. This time I notice more things. As I drive, I can tell that gravity is different here. It *feels* different. My forearms and shoulders feel the change in weight pushing them down, or is it pulling them down? Newton had never been of much gravity to me.

The air is dense in this place. All the gauges in the car err and fall idle, engine rumblings muffled by the rich air. Though I drive the car, I cannot say that I control it. I never check to see if the tires touch the ground, but I intend on making a note of it when I return.

I don't think there is any friction here- not in the way we know it on

the outside. Nonetheless, adversity has a tendency to manifest itself in all worlds and in most human minds.

The car comes to a stop, and I quickly recognize the fenced lot that I find myself in. Dazed and bewildered, I reach for familiar memories. I squeeze my eyes shut and trek into an astral projection of lights and space that illuminates a frenzy of images, sounds, paths, and pain from my memories.

I take a deep breath, and the air rushes into my head, tunneling my vision. I pass out.

I wake up, take no breaths, and try to keep my body still. I resort to my trustworthy pinky to inform me of my current faculties. To my surprise, I am able to move my hand, then my arms and neck. As I sit up, I notice a shining splendor looking at me. It approaches me benignantly, and I welcome its efforts to connect with me. The light has a calid aura that gently emits words and sounds that I can understand.

"One is back," the eager light celebrates. I grin, pleased by the effortless interaction, and stand up in the dimly lit cave.

"Am I below the garden? You saw me arrive in a car, right? Is it still up there? Can I drive it here?"

The light pulsates, overwhelmed by my inquisitive demeanor. "Oh— One may do as One thinks! One is and wishes and goes. Dream. Rejoice. Eat and drive, yes!"

Remembering the dithering nature of the light, I politely excuse myself from the futile interaction and start towards the closest opening overhead.

The capricious light continues, "Stay! Sleep! Think here, One!"

I emerge to find a familiar submontane loam under my feet. Crabgrasses, a cartilage-like gravel, and a silky mulch cover the floors. As I recall, this soil covers a perforated ground full of abundant burrows that dig into the trabecular bedrock. Inside that, tunnels lead to domed chambers and galleries with unfractured walls. I imagine if humans lived inside of a bone, this is what it would look like.

Similar parcels surround this one, also enclosed and stretching as far as the eye can see. Barbed wire and timber fences divide the sundry plots. Hampshire gates

connect each plot, and some have narrowing alleyways wide enough for two to walk abreast.

"No roads here," I remember. I notice my car is gone. The light assured I could drive here. The light lied.

I notice concentrations of light roaming the land. The clusters give off a murmuring that seeps into my permeable skin. Something tells me to evade the lights.

Lights lie.

Another memory tells me not to breath. "You don't breathe here," I tell myself, and a flood of irrational fear saturates my mind. I desperately need to relax and trust my instincts, so I begin to walk with purpose, trudging through the slick soil towards the distant mountains.

As I revisit this place, one thing becomes clear about my memories of it: visiting over and over again does not make my recollection of it any more lucid. Memories are not meant to be clarified, as doing so would compromise their ambiguity and risk exposure.

The ambiguity of this Mindgarden is its very strength. Instead of working to understand its nature and its inhabitants, I need to peer inwards, find steady ground, and leave this place. But the unnerving gravity pulls on my desire to stay in the garden, to dwell in its properties, to finally understand it, to sow it.

Lights begin to look my way with excited admiration. Vibrations begin to transmit at a high frequency, billowing my body and making me light, omnipotent. The murmuring of the lights swells. Like the sounds that bleed into a fading dream before awakening, the ominous murmuring catches up to me, zapping my body with shocks of pleasure and pain, sorrow and joy, and a familiar dread.

"One has returned! O let us shine! O transcendence and joy!" the lights celebrate in an undulation of fervor and instability. I blush in flattery, cry with rancor, and savor a miasmic, metallic taste of fear.

I need to go back home.

\*\*\*

Today is my birthday. I turn seven, and I know my parents have a party planned for me. I don't want to be

home, so I run into the woods that separate our backyard from the train tracks.

"84, 85, 86... TTX, BNSF, CSX, AWS..." I count the cars of the speeding train. Watching the train pass me by is always a visceral experience. I think my mind can travel with the train; it can go away. There are other ways, I have determined, to make your brain go places.

Other methods included spinning in place until you fall down, stupefied with vertigo. Or rapidly covering and uncovering your ears with the palms of your hands to flutter the sounds around, until you find yourself in a sensory daze.

The elaborate graffiti kind of turns the relative motion of each van into a moving art show, transient to my still body. I don't know why, but I want to escape. I think it has always been this way.

Suddenly, my vision darkens, and a rock wall appears as I turn over my shoulder.

"Hello?" I say to a young figure standing before me. "Where am I?"



## Grasping for Sunlight

Sierra Napoleon  
*Drawing*

# Carnation Pink

Zachary Smith

some time ago,  
somewhere,  
someone decided that of all the colors in the box,  
you could only be born one of two:

if you were blue,  
your name would be Matthew or Michael and  
you would play Little League or travel basketball just like Noah and i.  
if you were blue,  
Aunt Alyssa would have brought dinosaurs instead of miniature ballet shoes  
and Grandma Paulette's special cake would be covered in baby blue balloons  
instead of a field of flowers.  
if you were blue,  
the walls of the nursery might have been the color of the sky on a spring day  
and the stuffed toys that taunted you in your crib might have looked less like llamas  
and instead resembled rhinoceros or red wolves.

but dear sister,  
you were born carnation pink

and pink means bubble baths and sparkly shampoo and cotton candy  
comforters and ladybug night lights.  
pink means daddy daughter dances and sock hops and Barbie dolls and poodle skirts.  
pink means pastels and princesses and promises that your brother and i  
will protect you if any big bad boys start treating you poorly.  
pink means be careful about how others perceive you and  
don't go out alone and watch what you say and think and eat because  
prom is just around the corner and you want to look good in your dress.

while you are surely pink,  
to me,  
you will always be yellow.

# Yellow

Zachary Smith

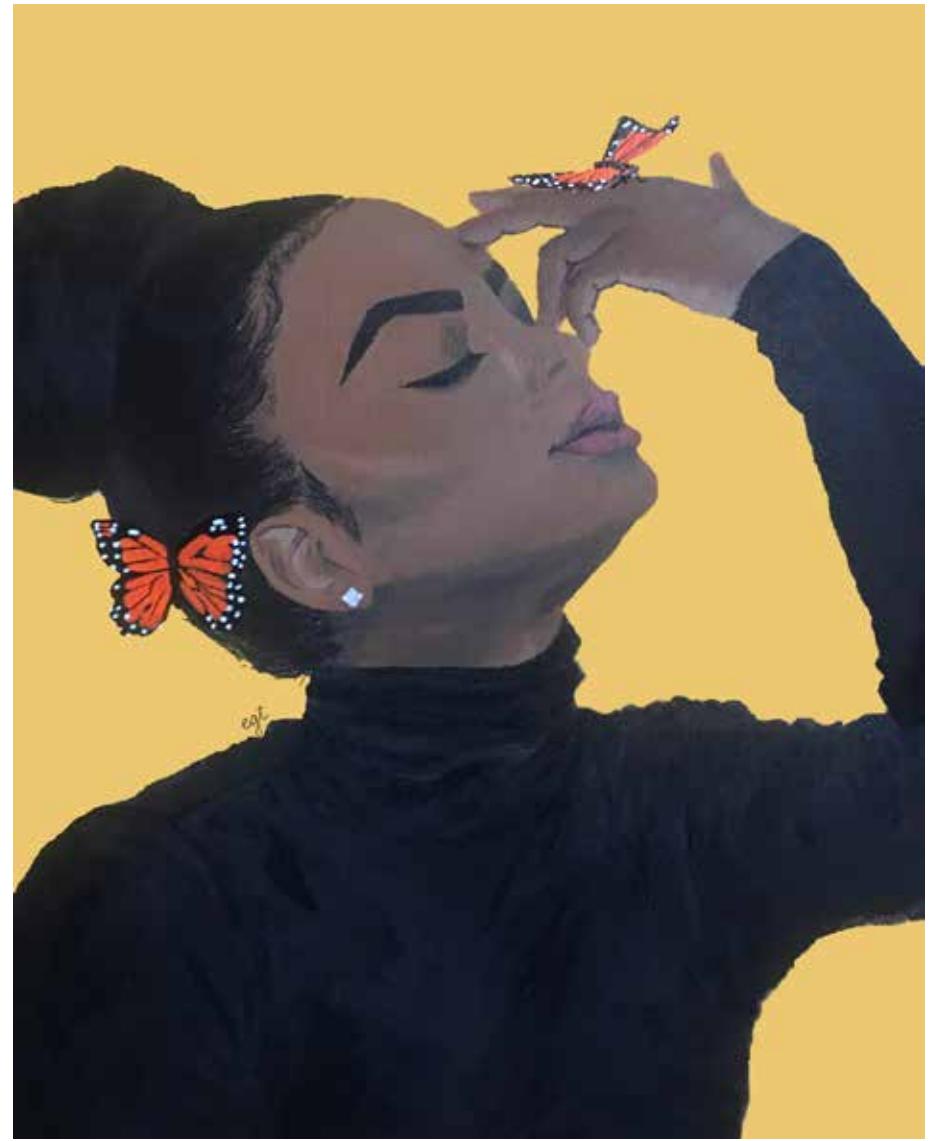
yellow wakes up with the sun.  
well,  
that's not always true.  
sometimes yellow wakes up a little after noon  
because sometimes it is very tired and needs a few extra hours of sleep.  
when yellow does eventually rise,  
it does so gracefully.  
i mean,  
yellow does its best.  
is anyone truly graceful before brushing their teeth?  
or before changing out of pajamas?  
no.  
anyways,  
yellow brushes its teeth and changes its clothes and—  
yes, i'd assume yellow does shower on occasion,  
that seems a bit obvious.  
my point is that after preparing for the morning,  
yellow goes out and changes the world.  
of course, this is not always easy,  
and sometimes yellow needs a bit of encouragement.  
but yellow makes everything it touches a bit better  
and does so with a smile on its face because  
yellow isn't looking for recognition—  
its hoping to turn tears to laughter,  
to avoid near disaster and  
simply be the best it can be.  
it ignores expectations and  
fights through reservation  
so finally, it can be free.  
that's all that matters to me.

*that's all that matters to me.*



Gemini

Braedan Snow  
*Photograph*



Flutter

Ebony Thompson  
*Painting*

# Overgrown (When Rose Flew Away)

Abba Mellon

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When Rose was born, she didn't cry. Her parents expected a pink and wrinkled baby, but they were given a child with skin the color of milk and smooth as riverstone. Her hair was rose-gold and long, much too long for a baby.

She was the ugliest thing her parents had ever seen.

The father was adamant she would not be allowed in the house, so they set up a nursery in the backyard shed and immediately cut off all her hair. The father said if they were lucky, someone would come and take her, and they could try again.

The mother pitied Rose, and even though the father begged her not to, visited her in the shed every night. She would wash Rose's face and coo "what a pretty girl" when all the dirt was gone, then sit by her side and read a chapter of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens. She told Rose about a little baby Peter, only seven days old, who up and flew away from home. All babies are part bird, she told Rose, and you only have to believe to regain your flying abilities. The night Peter Pan decided to leave Kensington Gardens to return home, Rose's

mother left without giving her a kiss. She never came back.

All at once, Rose was alone in the dark shed without any fresh air, and the dirt built up in her nose. She wailed all day and night for someone to come clean her and let her know how the story ended, and if Peter ever found his mother. During her time alone, she tried to imagine Queen Mab was with her. She wanted to fly away to Kensington Gardens. All babies are part bird. Rose closed her eyes tight until her tiny lungs shook, and she climbed out of her cradle.

From that day on she followed the moon, because she didn't know where else to go. It eventually led her down a long winding road to a big empty house. For the next fifteen years, Rose lived there alone. The moon guided her to an orchard down the road where she could take all the fruit she needed. Rose wanted for nothing. Sometimes she spent entire hours brushing her hair.

Having left when she was only a newborn, she never learned to talk, and had only learned to communicate by way of the flowerbeds in the garden out back.

She liked it better this way, away from harsh voices and wrinkled women who leave you dripping snot surrounded by germs, and she couldn't even see the sky from the shed they had left her in—too many buildings and too much smoke. The whole debacle with her parents had taught her that she didn't like people very much. In fact, Rose only liked a few things—the moon, her garden plants, books with definitive endings, and her hair.

The only person Rose ever saw after following the moon out of her cradle was an old woman who lived down the road. Sometimes, they would meet on the street when Rose was carrying baskets of fruit home, and the woman would ask if she needed any help. Rose did not know how to vocalize a reply, but even if she did, she would not want to talk to that woman. Her knuckles were wrinkled like woven baskets. She looked like a tree, maybe, or a forest. Maybe not quite so pretty. Rose scurried away when that woman appeared, always dropping her fruit and squishing it beneath her feet. That didn't stop the woman, though. Every time they met on the road she spoke to Rose, and most days Rose spent daylight in bed, too afraid to be

bothered by the gnarled old thing.

Sometimes Rose wished she didn't like her plants so much. If it weren't for her sunflowers and staghorn ferns, she would probably never get out of bed. She would like to spend the rest of her life lying there and watching her hair grow. If she lay perfectly still, it would never get tangled, and if she locked the door ther'd probably be no germs either. But, every so often, on cool mornings when the sun was nowhere to be found, Rose would have to brave the germs and the weight of the atmosphere and that ugly old woman to tend to her garden. This was one of those mornings.

She hadn't slept the night before; she had been up for days combing through her hair until it was light and airy. Because her bedroom had no windows, she wasn't even aware that day had started when she decided to visit the plants. She blinked her reflection goodbye before pulling on a heavy coat over her nightgown. It was the same gown, lilac and embroidered, that her parents had dressed her in the day she was born. It had stretched to fit her as she grew.

It took seven deep breaths behind the back door before Rose was ready to go outside. It always did. She was slow placing her bare feet on the dirt, but it's doughy cushion comforted her, and she let her shoulders relax. The wind was like silk against her skin. She smiled.

Rose's mind waxed and waned as she fell into her work. She was not present in her body; rather she was below the surface, following each root, and she was the sky. Her breath felt light and everything was feathers, but it was all shattered by a voice across the fence.

That twisted old woman was there, and her voice was like gravel on skin. She said that Rose should be wearing shoes. The ground was dirty. Rose thought that the red pigment on that woman's lips was far dirtier than the sweet earth between her toes, but she said nothing, as she always did. She continued trimming her plants.

But the woman was climbing over the fence and the stitches in her pants were like to burst. She was there with a watering can and her hair pulled into a yarn-ball bun. Rose's lips parted, but there was no sound. She ran her fingers through

her hair, all the way down to her feet. It hadn't been cut since she climbed out of her cradle. That woman introduced herself as Ella, and said the garden was much too big for Rose to tend to all by herself.

The wind was picking up, and Rose's lungs were rising. It was all very cramped inside her chest, and she couldn't move. She only cried soft protest, but Ella must not have heard because she crouched and began watering a flower bed, pressing too hard into the dirt, no respect for order—and, no, no it wasn't time for watering yet, and she couldn't start with the tulips. Rose stood still with her heart hammering for escape, and she was sick.

Rose was being dragged out of the ground and the wind shook the leaves of her plants. She thought she could hear them weeping, so she forced herself to keep working. But she was too aware, and she could feel the ants crawling beneath her knees. Ella was working too quickly, humming a tune, and the garden was shrinking. The wind had begun to tangle Rose's hair, and this only made her heart beat faster. She began running her fingers rapidly through her tangles.

She thought maybe her skin was turning green.

Rose couldn't do it anymore. She slowly stood; the wind was likely to knock her down. Ella asked if she needed anything to drink. Rose tugged harder at her scalp. She tried to make it to the back door, to hide forever beneath her quilt with only her reflection and her brush, but the wind was pushing her backwards. She didn't realize it, but she was screaming. Ella rushed to her side and reached for her hand. Rose clawed it away and forced herself through the back door.

Her vision was blurred, and she knocked frames off the walls as she tried to find her bedroom. It was too early, but she pleaded for the moon. Come back and save me. I want away from here. Her head was heavy upon her shoulders, and she worried she could no longer fly. She collapsed at the foot of a bookcase and clawed at her own skin. Her nose was filled. She could not breathe. She was so tired.

When she opened her eyes, she was in bed. Ella was sitting at her side and she asked if Rose wanted anything to eat. Rose closed her eyes tight until her tiny lungs shook.

She pointed to a book lying on her bedside table and whimpered softly. Please. Ella picked up the book and began reading to Rose. She read for hours until the air was soft. Rose picked up her brush and began brushing through Ella's hair, thick and coarse, and their strands intertwined between the bristles until she could no longer tell them apart.



## Lost in Thought

Sarah Hartsell  
Photography

There had always been something magical about dreams when I was growing up. Dreams were a place where imagination ruled over logic, and fear was a monster that crept in the shadows waiting for a chance to take a bite out of you. If you weren't too careful, fear would swallow you whole. Lost and alone in the darkest corner of my mind, I feared that my childlike view of dreams is what led me here. Nothing's scarier than being trapped inside your own head.

In the shadow of the midnight sky, the moon and the stars were my only source of light. The sweltering heat that overcame my body left me feeling winded and desperate for fresh air. I suddenly regretted choosing this thin black AC/DC shirt this morning. It stuck to my skin, sticky from sweat. Who'd believe my fashion choices would be affecting me, even in my dreams?

There was nothing else around me, except endless miles of beach, seashells and starfish scattered across the sand. I have no idea how long I stood there, watching the waves crash against the shore, waiting for what I knew was about to come. This wasn't the first time my dreams brought me here.

This was the land of the dead, a subconscious place in between

worlds where I communicated with my ancestors. I'd walk along the beach until someone from my past met me and gave me guidance. Usually I'd see my grandmother and complain to her about how school was completely kicking my ass, but this time I entered alone.

Minutes that felt like hours passed before a familiar feeling overcame me. The darkness that once shrouded my vision cleared, and that's when I saw him. A few feet away from me stood a boy staring out at the ocean. His hands were tucked deep into his pockets, feet kicking at the hot sand. As I walked along the shore to him, I ran my hands through my thick curls to keep them from sticking to my back. I looked closer at him. He was just there, mindlessly staring.

He didn't seem to notice my presence as I stood next to him, trying to capture his attention. As the silent minutes rolled by, I couldn't help but stare at his long lush hair that flowed like waves in the ocean breeze- so black it was nearly blue. With his skin pale and nearly lifeless, he was iridescent, ghostly.

He didn't look anything like the spirits that haunted me here before. He was alive. The glow that surrounded him was dim, a fading light slowly burning out, I

recognized it.

I realized I'd been analyzing him for a long time and I racked my brain for the best words to say. What do you say to an ethereal spirit haunting your dreams?

"Hi"

*Nice one, Iris.*

His eyes glazed over, and he finally saw me. He stared at me for a minute, and then a smirk found its way onto his mouth. "You shouldn't be out here," he finally said.

"Why not?"

"You could get swept up by the waves."

"I'm a good swimmer."

He looked away from me and settled back into his trance. "I bet."

Even though I knew this was my dream and I was lucid, something about him being here didn't feel right. Never has anyone alive been able to visit me in the dreamworld and I felt myself beginning to panic. There must be a reason he was here. Maybe to warn me of something terrible that was going to happen.

"What are you doing out here? Are

you waiting for someone?" I asked.

*Are you waiting for me?*

A wry smile spread across his face. "I'm not waiting for anyone." He paused. "I think I'm gonna die here."

*Iris. Iris. IRIS.*

A distant voice called for me, and the world around me began to fade. His face turned to smoke and his body began to blow away in the wind. He suddenly reached for my wrist- his grasp so tight my arm began to sting.

*Help me.*

-----  
I woke up drenched in sweat, the remnants of my dream faintly replaying in my head.

I couldn't help but groan as threatening soft whispers pulled me out of sleep, wherever they were coming from. I slowly opened my heavy eyelids, and the strong scent of anti-bacterial cleaner filled my nose. I was apparently laying in a bed, and the room was bright. Light from a small window reflected off the cream-colored walls through closed, pale blue curtains. I blinked, rubbed my eyes, and blinked again. I felt like I had slept for years, but I

was still tired.

In that moment I wondered how long I had really slept for. I heard the beeping of a machine and slowly turned my head towards the source of the noise. My eyes widened as I realized where I was.

Hospital.

It always hurt to be ripped from a dream before I was ready. It felt as though my body had been hit repeatedly with a sack of rocks. When you wake up for the first time after dreamwalking, it's like you're still dreaming. There's silence and emptiness, the world framing itself around your existence. Your bed rebuilds itself, splinter by splinter and thread by thread, until everything is right and whole again.

Falling asleep is the easy part. Waking up - that's where it gets tricky.

I peeled the clear tubes from my nose and out of my arms. My head turned slightly when I caught something moving in the corner of my eye. There sat my older brother, Jackson, lounging in a chair across the room, observing me with judgmental eyes.

"You woke me?" I questioned. My voice croaked at the end, making

me realize how dry my throat was.

"I had no choice. They were going to keep you here overnight unless you woke up soon." Jackson stood and walked to my side, gripping my upper arm to pull me up. Almost immediately I refused his help, feeling the bones in my body cracking and rejoining as a form of healing. My feet were numb, and I felt like an infant, reborn into a teenager's body. Even though I knew I was awake, I still felt like I was still dreaming.

"You could've killed me, idiot," I sneered.

He reached forward, attempting to tuck a piece of my wild hair behind my ear, but he didn't get the chance. I swatted his hand away from my face and massaged at the crick in my neck.

"Your pride can be sufficed another day. Let me help you up."

"How did I get here?" I asked, reluctantly taking his hand.

His nose scrunched up, the corners of his eyes creasing. "You don't remember? You dream walked in the middle of class and they couldn't wake you. They must've thought you were dead or something." He scratched at his beard absentmindedly. "You better

be glad it was me who picked up the phone and not mom. I can't believe you'd be this irresponsible."

I didn't remember much from before I passed out but I knew I didn't do it intentionally. These dreams were beginning to spin out of my control, but there was no way I was telling him that. "I didn't dreamwalk. I swear. I haven't been sleeping lately and I guess it caught up to me."

Jackson's worried face stared down at me with conviction. "You were out for a while. Three hours they said."

"I'm fine." One glance up, and I caught the skeptical look he was giving me. "I am. Seriously."

He walked over to the small closet door near the bathroom and pulled out a plastic bag full of what I assumed were my clothes. "If you can't control yourself we're going to have to stop walking for a while, and you know mom isn't going to like that."

I knew she wouldn't. I knew he wouldn't either. Jackson had to train everyday, meditating and drinking African dream root just to be able to dreamwalk. For me, it was much different. Mom told me it was a natural gift, one my brother would

kill to have, but really it was torture. It meant I'd never have a decent night's sleep ever again without traveling into the mind of someone else. I didn't experience my own dreams anymore, yet was pulled into the subconscious of others without any choice.

When I refused to meet his eyes, he tossed the bag onto the bed and walked over to the door. "Hurry up and get dressed. I'll pull the car around." He paused just before he opened the door, his hand lingering on the doorknob. "Is there something you want to tell me? You seem a little shaken."

The image of the dark haired boy with sullen eyes begging me for help flashed across my mind. There's no way I could tell Jack what I saw. He'd think I was crazy.

"No, I'm alright. I'll be down in a second."

With one last skeptical look, he left the room. I pulled my clothes out of the hospital-issued bag and began to get dressed.

It didn't take long to toss the hospital gown and slip into my jeans and AC/DC shirt I assured myself was only sweaty due to the hot fall day. Reaching down to tie my shoes, I noticed a ring around my wrist

where the boy had grabbed me, raw and fresh.

*Holy hell.*

I had planned on convincing myself that it was just a hallucination born out of sheer exhaustion, but that wasn't an option anymore. I had to tell Jackson. I gathered up my belongings and hastily made my way out into the hall.

When I got to the front desk, something overcame me. I felt a painful coldness within me and grasped at my chest. Without my consent, my feet moved out in front of each other one by one, going down the hall. I heard nurses calling for me, asking if I was okay, but I didn't answer. My body followed my feet as they led me down the hall until I stopped in front of a room.

826.

The door was ajar, and, through the small glass I could see a nurse standing over someone in a bed. She was a short lady with strawberry blonde hair tucked neatly into a bun. Without thinking too much about it, I pushed open the door and walked in.

When she reached over to grab a clipboard from the foot of the bed I got a clear view of the patient. There lay a man in his early twenties fast

asleep, tucked neatly under white sheets. A peaceful look rested on his face. His long hair fell around his sharp jaw, each strand perfectly weaving together to frame the portrait he embodied.

I'm not sure what it was that drew me to him but I knew one thing for sure. It was the boy from my dreams, the one who begged me to help him. As I stood staring at him, I saw his body was frail, and his skin didn't hold the same color as before. Meanwhile the nurse was examining his chart and scribbling away, unaware of my presence.

She looked up and gave me a big toothy smile when she saw me standing in the doorway. "Oh good, you're awake. One less chart for me to check. I can help you back to your bed. You really shouldn't be walking around."

Ignoring her request, I walked further into the room until I was at his side. It was immensely hard for me to wrap my head around the fact that I was standing before him. Up close, his lush black hair fell lifelessly down his neck, oily and stringy. If it weren't for the feeling seeing him gave me, I wouldn't have recognized him as the same boy.

The air around me began to close in as a realization hit. This wasn't

# Sources

a dream anymore. No amount of pinching my arm would wake me up from this.

He was real.

Never has anyone alive or even comatose been able to visit me in my dreams. Tension grew in my chest, and my breaths became shallow and rapid. I leaned forward, my hands gripping at the arm rails on his bed for balance.

Mom always told me, every time I travel, there's a wall in my head that must stay up that separates my emotions from others. I knew I was losing my last grip of sanity. I felt it slipping through my fingers like water. At some point, I was bound to break.

Do you believe in divine intervention? I knew I had to help him. I had to save him.

"Are you feeling okay?" I hear the nurse ask.

I couldn't figure out how to put into words what I now knew to be true. Before I had a chance to tell her, I felt dizzy, my knees buckled and my vision faded to complete black.

*Not again.*



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### AMY PIRKLE, FACULTY ADVISOR, RED

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR RED MEAN TO YOU?**

I'VE ALWAYS ASSOCIATED RED WITH PASSION AND STRENGTH. THERE'S SOMETHING POWERFUL ABOUT THE COLOR, AND I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHEN I'M WEARING RED.

**WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?**

ONE OF MY PET PEEVES IS A LAUGH TRACK ON A SITCOM. IT TAKES ME OUT OF THE SCENE BECAUSE THE PAUSE THE ACTOR HAS TO TAKE IS SO UNNATURAL. PLUS, I KNOW WHEN SOMETHING IS FUNNY. DON'T TELL ME WHEN TO LAUGH.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST IRRATIONAL FEAR?**

I HAVE AN IRRATIONAL FEAR OF ANTS.

**WHAT MYERS-BRIGG PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

ENFJ... "THE TEACHER," GO FIGURE!



### SOPHIE CORIZZO, EDITOR IN CHIEF, ORANGE

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR ORANGE MEAN TO YOU?**

ORANGE FEELS LIKE A WARM FALL KISS ON THE CHEEK FROM YOUR FAVORITE PERSON.

**WHAT PLANTS POPULATE YOUR MINDGARDEN?**

CHRYSANTHEMUMS AND CACTI.

**WHAT ANIMAL ENCAPSULATES YOU?**

AN ELK.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST IRRATIONAL FEAR?**

THE DARK. I AM TERRIFIED OF SLEEPING IN COMPLETE DARKNESS.



### OLIVIA TAYLOR, SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR, GOLD

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR GOLD MEAN TO YOU?**

I CHOSE GOLD AS MY COLOR BECAUSE IT IS SO ZESTY AND UNIQUE! I LOVE HOW MUCH IT TRULY SHINES AND STANDS OUT!

**WHAT PLANTS POPULATE YOUR MINDGARDEN?**

IN MY MINDGARDEN, I IMAGINE PINK PEONIES (MY FAVORITE FLOWER!), SUCCULENTS, EUCA LYPTUS, AND SPIDER PLANTS POPULATING IT. I LOVE PLANTS BECAUSE THEY BREATHE SUCH LIFE INTO THE WORLD AND CAN MAKE AN AREA BECOME SO NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL.

**WHAT MEYERS-BRIGGS PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

MY MEYERS-BRIGGS PERSONALITY TEST REVEALED THAT I AM AN "EXECUTIVE," WHICH HONESTLY MAKES SENSE. I AM A VERY GOAL-ORIENTED PERSON AND I AM NOT AFRAID TO STAND UP FOR WHAT I BELIEVE IN.

**WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?**

SOME OF MY BIGGEST PET PEEVES ARE HEAVY BREATHING, LOUD CHEWING AND SNORING. ONCE I HEAR EITHER OF THESE, I'M COMPLETELY FIXATED AND CANNOT FOCUS!



### ABBY PATTERSON, SUBMISSIONS COORDINATOR, GREEN

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR GREEN MEAN TO YOU?**

GREEN IS THE COLOR OF ENVY AND JEALOUSY, LIKE THE GREEN LIGHT IN THE GREAT GATSBY THAT REPRESENTS EVERYTHING GATSBY WANTS BUT CAN'T HAVE.

**WHAT MEYERS-BRIGGS PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

INFJ

**WHAT SONG GETS STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?**

OPHELIA BY THE LUMINEERS.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST VIVID DREAM FROM CHILDHOOD?**

I USED TO HAVE A RECURRING DREAM WHERE THESE EVIL GARGOYLE CREATURES I SAW ON AN EPISODE OF THE ALADDIN TV SERIES WOULD CRAWL OUT OF MY CLOSET AND ATTACK ME.





### CHARLES GULLO, GRAPHIC DESIGNER, MAROON

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR MAROON MEAN TO YOU?**

MAROON IS MY FAVORITE COLOR, AND I'VE ENJOYED WEARING IT FOR YEARS, GOING BACK TO A MAROON JACKET I WORE WHEN I WAS A FRESHMAN IN HIGH SCHOOL.

**WHAT MYERS—BRIGG PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

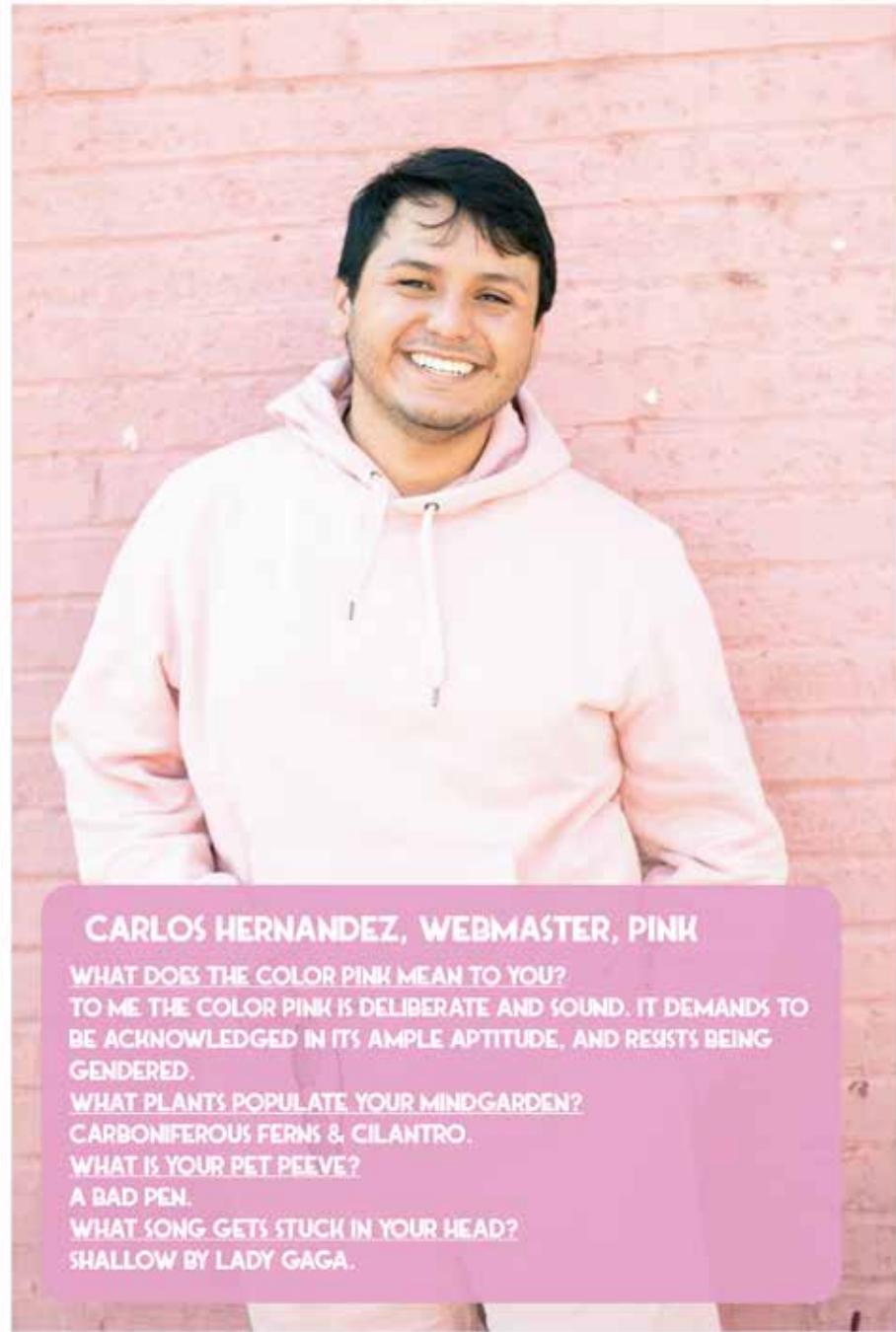
INFP

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST VIVID DREAM FROM CHILDHOOD?**

THE EARLIEST, AND MY FAVORITE, DREAM I CAN REMEMBER INVOLVED FINDING A TUNNEL UNDER MY BED COVERS THAT BRANCHED OFF INTO MANY INTERESTING WORLDS AND ENDED IN THE TOP OF A HUGE TREE.

**WHAT SONG GETS STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?**

FINGERTIPS BY LOUIE ZONG.



### CARLOS HERNANDEZ, WEBMASTER, PINK

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR PINK MEAN TO YOU?**

TO ME THE COLOR PINK IS DELIBERATE AND SOUND. IT DEMANDS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED IN ITS AMPLE APTITUDE, AND RESISTS BEING GENDERED.

**WHAT PLANTS POPULATE YOUR MINDGARDEN?**

CARBONIFEROUS FERNS & CILANTRO.

**WHAT IS YOUR PET PEEVE?**

A BAD PEN.

**WHAT SONG GETS STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?**

SHALLOW BY LADY GAGA.



**CAROLINE GREEN, GRAPHIC DESIGNER, WHITE**

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR WHITE MEAN TO YOU?**

TO ME WHITE MEANS PURITY, A CLEAN START. WHITE REMINDS ME THAT I CAN ALWAYS START NEW.

**WHAT ANIMAL ENCAPSULATES YOU?**

A PORCUPINE.

**WHAT MYERS-BRIGG PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

I'M AN INFJ.

**WHAT SONG GETS STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?**

JOLENE BY DOLLY PARTON.



**SIERRA NAPOLEON, COPY EDITOR, BLACK**

**WHAT DOES THE COLOR BLACK MEAN TO YOU?**

THE COLOR BLACK REPRESENTS TO ME THE BACKGROUND, OUT OF THE LIMELIGHT. IT IS THE PLACE I LIKE TO BE, OUT OF THE WATCHING EYES OF EVERYONE.

**WHAT MYERS-BRIGG PERSONALITY TYPE ARE YOU?**

INFP

**WHAT SONG GETS STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?**

CURRENTLY COCOA HOOVES BY GLASS ANIMALS

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST IRRATIONAL FEAR?**

THE FEAR THAT THE BUILDING I'M IN WILL COLLAPSE UNDER MY FEET.