



*Tower
Magazine*

2020 Edition

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Weathered Shoes

Hannah Lavoie

I recount the days of weathered shoes
Hanging from a power line over the river
And I'd frequent the bridge under their dying dominion
And stare out at their refracted image, darkened by unconscious water
That barely breathed, no trace of bubbles on its surface, nothing living beneath the tide
Just the reflection of those black, dominating lines
And the shoes, red at the sides, turned earl grey
By the taxing kisses of time, each one forcing you to leave something behind
And I guess I was the one she chose to leave.
I recount the cadence of her, tittering like a sparrow, perched on an ashen shoulder
Into my ear, some soft voice embedded with thistles
Creating even softer pauses, which she knew only enraptured and captured my attention
And those red shoes, at the base of those knee-high socks, the ones with the black thread count
And I tried to count them out loud, but my gaze wandered from the sock to her bare leg, which glistened from
the blurry refractions of the river
To her hips, in tattered shorts, not nearly as tattered as her sense of trusting others
To her torso, gently curved, always leaving me in a bid for senseless words in that faded shirt
And as I blinked, my eyes reached her face
And was stricken with solemnity, at the pity in her eyes
And that thoughtless smile that she always tried to hide
But now as I reside, underneath these power lines
All that remain are her two broken shoes
Hanging under the curvature of the moon
And I wish I could have saved her from the gloom that clouded her mind
But remember, I was the one she left behind.



Beach

Amanda Grindrod

The Anatomy of What's Not Human

Daniel Keenan

What makes a creature
That's human in every way
But entirely different

A Spine
crawling down the back
Bent and stretched
But always holding together

A face
Misleading and attractive
Underestimated and boring
Sharing no true intentions

It's skin
leathery but soft
Ripped and torn from years of use
With tattoos from head to toe

The scent
As though old oak
Had been sitting for years
Musky

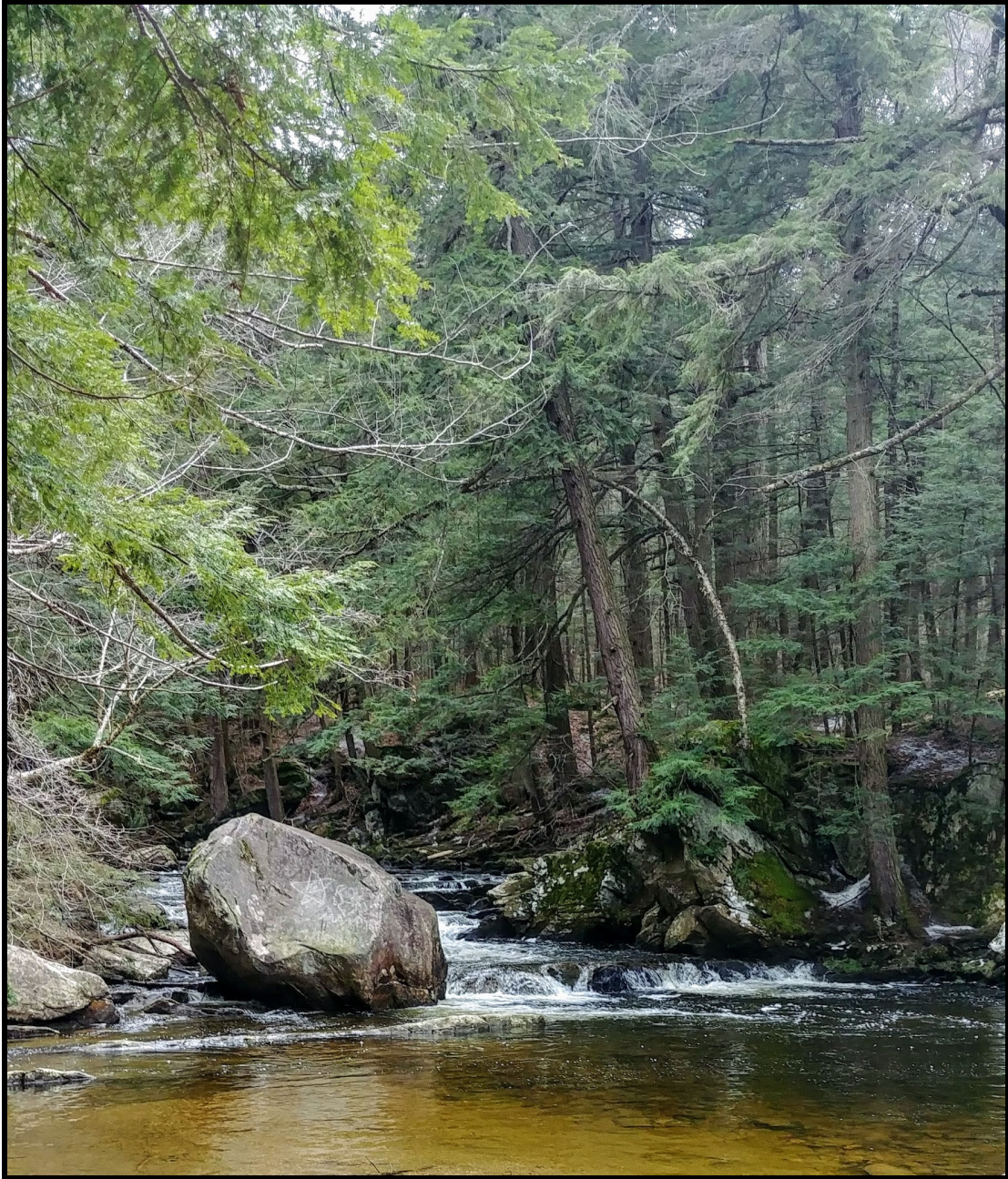
The life of this creature
Unlike any other
Being beaten and abused
Is the only sign of true love
Being passed around

From one owner to another
What makes this creature
This thing
It's not what holds it together
But what it has to say

There's always a topic open for discussion
Stating intriguing facts
Sharing a love story that will never come true
Telling tales of old, traveling to far off kingdoms
Jetting to technological futures unknown
Hiding the truth, never knowing what's real
Weaving stories seamlessly together
Whether true or not

This creature is full of thoughts

Ideas
Creativity
Hoarding horrors
Beyond thought
Unraveling humanity
One word at a time
What's inside
Is trouble
But as with every human
That's what makes them worth it



Forest Stream
Amanda Grindrod

So It Shall Come

Hannah Lavoie

None of them can hear it yet, but I can. A hoarse motor hissing through the bitter air, moving exhaustively at some impossible speed. The sound is nothing more than a distant disturbance of the deathly peace that settles around us, clustered on this platform.

The snowflakes descend from the air in deliberate clusters themselves. They get caught, weightless, in my hair and stick to the dark Venetian tresses like loose flower pollen from the springtime, which I can't seem to recall very well at the moment. The sun...what does it look like? There's the reaches of a dream of it in my mind, but everything is cold and blotted, caught in the mist that muddles the entire station around us.

I lift my head so as to see the sky past the visor of my bonnet, now laced with fragile snowflakes that threaten to fall off with each movement. They cling to the fabric, creating a crown of glitter around my face, no doubt offering some light and beauty to the pale skin I've always possessed.

But...but have I always possessed it? Like the sun, my skin is but a faded recollection, the dainty dream of a fool struggling to make sense of the world. If I touch it any further, it'll crush in my tender cold hands. I tense my fingers, nothing but thin cotton between the last breaths of wind and these hands, a proper lady's hands.

My half-frozen eyes scan the air, looking for heaven, looking for something familiar. But a dust-colored marbling of sky is all I see, dense with snow, one continuous shroud that never ends.

Summer sunshine...warm skin tested by the heat...everything warm and good and beautiful...why do these memories escape me? All that resides in my head is a vision of white fibrous air, riddled with defeated snowflakes, and this station...

How did I get to this station? The thought comes and goes like an inaudible whisper, overwhelmed by the vast white desolation of my seemingly drugged mind.

Regardless of the snuffing out of this dream, I come to recognize the severity of this wretched weather. I can feel my ribs, carved of ice in my chest. The linen of my frock offers no comfort from this air, nearly too cold to breathe. Surely the entirety of my skirt is developing a layer of snow, separate from the ground, like an isolated knoll. I can feel the crinoline tight around my hips, nothing but cool empty air beneath the many folds of my skirt, leaving my legs to suffer in their woolen hosiery.

Why am I wearing these things? This isn't what I usually wear...is it? And why is it so cold? My throat feels as though it's lined with hoarfrost. I swallow, but still no warmth. My mouth is cold and dry. Then that thought, more than a whisper, more than a guess...a determined stab inside my head.

How did I get to this place? Surely I walked, or I drove, in a...a...what do you call those things you drive in...

Oh, why can't I remember a thing? Anything beyond this snow, this desolate wasteland, this god-forsaken platform. With the rest of them no doubt as frozen and miserable and with minds as clouded as I.

A triumphant thought like a silver bell through the silence, though it's delicate, another one of those impossible dreams.

Could they help me? I've been standing here this whole time, speaking naught to my fellows around me, maybe they know why we're here, how we arrived and why we're waiting for this distant carrier that's still scraping along the tracks in the distance.

I turn, feeling the warmth drain from my cheeks and bleed into my heart, trying to keep my most vital parts alive and working for as long as possible through this cold spell. I turn, and look at them, the others condemned to this foggy station. But their faces...

All of them, each with a visage hardened by unfriendliness, stare out over the tracks, with no regard for myself; my own face is numbed of any sensation. They stare, and say nothing; no visible breath rises from their exhalations like it does mine, in a frosted smoker's trail. Unnerved, I turn to face the tracks.

It is at this point that a faint rumbling accompanies the distant cacophony of the train. And a whistle, a coal-colored cough of dying breath.

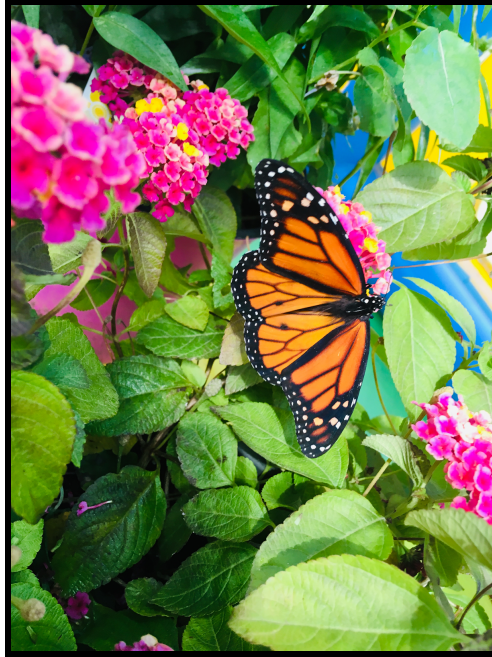
I can see it now. Starting out as a speck, it approaches, becoming broad and brassy, a massive and impending black bullet ripping through the steam. Watching it close in on us is almost gratifying, and all of a sudden those dreams come in droves now, in a flurry of desperate images where it's springtime and half-forgotten sensations like warmth and laughter and love prevail. They come in refracted shards that blind me from within my mind, but once the train buckles in front of us and stops, those visions break like eggshells through my cotton-gloved fingers. All I can see now is the train, dominant, blocking out the sky.

The antique door groans open without a conductor on the other side enforcing it to do so. Compelled by some secret will or perhaps some phantom whim, I take a hesitant but determined step forth, but behind me there is silence. No shuffling of their feet, no rustle of their clothing. Is anyone going to follow me?

I look back at them, but their silent gazes are rapt by the train, watching its brass body intently as it breathes on, in the winter quietude. They stand motionless, with no effort to climb aboard at all. Regardless, I grasp the rail, which isn't cold to the touch, and step onto the stairs that lead into the heart of the train.

And as the door closes behind me and the train begins to move, I feel an incredible warmth take me in its arms, and deliver me.

Monarch
Amanda Grindrod



Her Best Friend
Olivia Pavao

There's a couple of girls laughing with each other on her left. A group of boys tossing a football and boasting about some great catch just a few yards behind her. And all she wants is to make it into the building of her first class. Finally, she uses the force of her whole body to push the doors open just enough for her to slip in and start her quick pace down the hall. Head down, she moves faster than her short legs want to carry her when her thoughts are interrupted mid sentence as she stops dead in her tracks. Or rather, is forced to stop when her head smacks into someone's chest and her books fumble out of her arms leaving them spread all over the floor. Without missing a beat, she drops to the floor and begins to regather her books but her head snaps up when she hears a kind voice reach out with, "Hey, I'm so sorry. Are you okay?"

"I-I yea I'm okay sorry," she squeaks out in a timid voice while her wide eyes look everywhere except at the person in front of her.

"Let me help with those books. Do you need a hand carrying them to your next class?" he says, his voice full of compassion.

She tries to deny but he keeps insisting until she says okay. Her pace slows as she walks beside the boy with a million thoughts running through her head. He introduces himself as Jason and she says her name is Rachel. She finally begins to let her guard down and chat until he asks what class she's going to.

"Oh, just Psych 101 in room 540," she answers him.

He stops for half a second and asks, “Wait, are you a first year?”

She seems to study her laces before answering that yes, she is.

“You must not have many friends here yet do you?” Jason presses.

“No, I don’t know how to meet new people very well,” she states with her head down hanging.

Seeming to almost jump with glee, Jason exclaims, “Hey, why don’t you hang out with my friends and I!”

She stammers before making out the word “okay” and now they’re walking down the hall again without a second thought, but this time it’s different.

He’s telling her all about campus and what to look for around like the best places to eat. She’s laughing as they get to know each other and trade numbers and for once she begins thinking to herself how easy this was.

The next day she’s leaving her class when she feels a hand on her shoulder pulling with just enough force for her to turn around and look. It’s Jason with a big smile but he’s not alone this time. Instead, he’s with two boys who tower not only over her, but himself too. They look like they could just pick Jason up and throw him down the hallway yet they don’t act like it.

Jason looks at her and introduces his friend as James. They met in the ultimate frisbey club freshmen year and have been good friends, and roommates, ever since.

James speaks up and asks her, “Hey, would you want to come over tonight? Jason and I were thinking of getting the whole crew together to meet you.”

“I mean yeah that sounds great. What time should I be there?” Rachel responds.

They agree that Rachel should show up at five thirty and she goes home to get some work done, shower and get ready to leave.

As five thirty grows nearer Rachel rushes to finish getting ready and she begins to get nervous. What if they don’t like me? Will it be awkward? What if I don’t know what to say?”

After some pacing back and forth behind the closed door, she musters up the courage to lock her door and starts walking towards their dorm. When she gets there, her knuckles tap the door leaving a soft knocking noise, the equivalent of a whisper, to follow but before she’s able to pull her hand away, the door is already swinging open and she’s caught face to face with a girl she doesn’t know. The girl is wearing the biggest smile and starts spitting words out of her mouth almost too fast for Rachel to keep up.

“Hi my name is Emily. Jason told me you’d be coming tonight. He said you’re super nice and that we’d love to meet you so now I’m really excited. I know the room is a mess but that’s because the boys don’t know how to clean.”

“Hey Emily, why don’t you take a breath and let her in?” a voice laughs from the back of the room.

Rachel recognizes it to be James's so she squeezes around the new girl and says a shy hello. Jason stands up and walks over to her so he can point out the other two new people in the room. Jackson is sitting against the wall on his phone and Lilly is laying half of the bed with her head hanging down talking to James. When Jason calls to them they both sit upright and say their hellos to Rachel making her feel welcomed and putting her at ease.

They spend the night sitting around talking and trying to learn more about the new girl who's been introduced to their group. Rachel tells them about her when they ask and she throws the same questions back to get an idea of who she will be spending some time with in the future. They all seem to have a lot in common and they waste no time on awkward small talk before they turn to laughing at childhood stories as they take a walk down memory lane. As it gets late, the girls, including Rachel, all say their goodbyes and head back to their own dorms but not before making plans to hang out again.

For the first three weeks of their new friendship, everything is smooth sailing. The girls start making plans to go shopping together and everyone as a group gets together at least two nights a week to hangout and go out. Rachel and Jason break off a bit from the group and are hanging out more on their own, even when the group isn't together. He becomes her best friend as she starts to get overwhelmed with the course loads and he's always there to help ease her mind and make her laugh. After a few weeks though, it's noticed that Rachel starts skipping the group hangouts and is making excuses not to see Jason more and more. After her going silent for three days, Jason decides he needs to find her and figure out why she's so upset with them. He goes to her dorm and knocks five times with no response. There's no roommate to open the door as she was one of the lucky ones to get a single dorm. He waits, shifting his weight from his left foot to his right, after knocking and thinks he can hear a low humming noise, but he can't make it out. After knocking once more, the noise gets a little louder then he realizes that they traded keys a couple weeks before. He digs around in his bag and pulls out her room key.

"Rachel, I have the key and I'm coming in. I just want to talk to you," he calls out.

After getting no response, he pushes the door open and looks around to see an empty room. But it isn't just empty, it looks like someone came through and ransacked the whole place. There are clothes hanging off the bed and onto the floor. Empty food wrappers scattered around and a smell that causes him to step back when it hits his nose.

"Rachel?" he calls out again.

This time he is met with a louder disgruntled moaning sound that he traces over to the small closet on the near wall, which was moved the furthest from the only window. He walks on his toes to try and keep a calm

steady feeling and touches the knuckle of his forefinger to the door so light that the result is almost not even audible to himself.

“Rachel?” His voice has a soothing tone as he tries to draw her out. His heart is racing as he wonders what is behind that door and his imagination goes wild with fears for his best friend’s safety.

After receiving no more of a response than the other times he called out her name, he reaches out but stops his hand in mid air to think and attempt to prepare himself for what’s behind the closed doors. He takes a breath, closes his eyes and wraps his fingers around the handle of the closet. At first, he just cracks it open but with the minimal light in the room, he can’t seem to make anything out. He tells her that he’s going to open it more and upon doing so, his eyes go wide as his mind goes blank and struggles to form even a single coherent thought.

Sitting before him, curled into a ball with her head in her hands, Rachel is mumbling words to herself over and over in the way of a mantra. Her hair is knotted and her eyes are squeezed shut. The stench she is emitting is so putrid yet Jason doesn’t even notice it as he’s struck dumb by his best friend’s condition. She looks so frail, so fragile yet she’s almost indescribable.

Finally, he regains some composure. “Rachel, Rach look at me.”

She stays looking down, her foot a constant tap-tap-tap on the floor..

“Hey, talk to me what’s going on?” he probes.

At this, she glances up and their eyes meet. They look so tired. Once a clear blue sky, now a cloudy afternoon. It’s almost as though he can feel her pain inside but what he’s feeling doesn’t even begin to scratch the surface of her reality.

“They’re out to get me. They have a plan. I need to go. Hide. They’ll find me here. I need to leave now. Pack my clothes. I need to go.” The words tumble out of her mouth faster than he can process them.

“Rachel, what? What’s going on? Slow down.” He tries to comfort her. Yet now his eyes open wider as he looks around to take in seen before him. He scans the papers scattered and piled on the floor of the closet while there are others tacked onto the walls. There are lines drawn in Sharpie with words scratched and burned into the splintering wood. He reaches over and runs his fingers along the broken up wood, the words “want me dead” are marked into the wall. His finger lingers for a second, taking it in as he’s overwhelmed by his friend’s condition. Despite the smell infesting his nose and her soiled clothes, Jason picks Rachel up and carries her out onto the bed. He expects a fight but instead, her body lays limp in his arms as her exhaustion overtakes her.

The next morning Rachel wakes up, her eyes blinking in an effort to adjust to the light flooding into them. As her mind warms up she is hit with the realization that she isn’t where she belongs. Instead of her bedroom with the cool gray walls, she’s sitting on a firm bed with plain blue walls on every side and only one

widow. The window hardly lets any light in as the glass is so thick that even seeing through it makes everything on the outside distorted. After a few more long minutes of Rachel causing panic to rise within herself, she hears footsteps approaching her room and a familiar voice accompanying them.

Her mom walks in with a doctor by her side as they look at each other due to the seriousness of their conversation. The doctor takes a glance at Rachel's bed and stops in his tracks as he sees she is now awake. Her mom rushes to her side and begins peppering Rachel with questions. She's talking so fast that she can't even catch her breath and Rachel's eyes are darting all over her mother's face as she tries to take in the questions flying at her. After some time of this, the doctor steps in and says, "Hi Rachel, it's nice to see you awake and alert. I'm Doctor Evans."

"Uh hi it's nice to meet you but can someone tell me where I am and what's going on?" Rachel replies.

"Well the place you're at is called The JS Recovery Center and you're in the inpatient wing. Do you know why?" he explains.

"Inpatient?! Like for crazy people?" she cries out.

"Yes, Rachel, inpatient but it's not because you're crazy. You suffered from what we call a break from reality. The school wellness center called us to pick you up after you were found in an extreme case of distress. We believe it is due to an early onset of schizophrenia and want to get you treated right away. I know this is a lot so we're here to address any questions or concerns you may have."

"I'm so lost. Last I remembered, I was in my dorm studying and now I'm being diagnosed as a schizophrenic? I'm going to lose my whole life," she says while her head drops.

"No sweetie we can get through this. The doctor is just going to give you some medication and you're going to stay with me for a little bit until we can get you adjusted to this new life," her mom interjects.

"She's right Rachel. You can fight this and you will but that means you need to want to fight. You need to show up to this battle everyday wanting to win," Doctor Evans encourages.

He explains that her medication needs to be taken every morning at a consistent time in order to keep her symptoms in check. After helping Rachel wrap her head around the new diagnosis and guiding her mom on how best to support her daughter during this time, the doctor discharged them and allows them to go home.

For the next three months Rachel gets into a routine as suggested by her therapist and she regains a positive outlook on life. Her smile returns and her mom often finds her dancing around listening to her the Beatles as she cleans up around the house.

Rachel's head is finally calm as she prepares to return to classes and with her calm exterior, she convinces her mom to let her live on campus again. Once there, Rachel realizes how much she misses her friends. Sure she saw them every once and a while but without the independence, they didn't get to hang out

like they used to. Most importantly though, she misses Jason. He hasn't called or texted at all since she got home and she begins to think she's done something wrong.

She decides to muster up the courage and go visit his dorm as her heart is heavy without her best friend by her side. The walk there is one of the longest of her life as she can't turn her mind off the possible scenarios. A little over half way there she picks her head up just in time to save herself from a collision. The person on the other end looks down at her and they both pause as Rachel freezes to find words for her old friend Jason.

"I-uh-Jay- Jason?" she stutters out.

"Woah her Rachel! Why so nervous?" he responds.

"Well I mean I just haven't talked to you in months. I thought maybe I'd done something." Her eyes lower to the ground.

"What Rachel oh my gosh no! I had to get a new number and I meant to call you after, I really did. I just got so nervous. I've had something on my mind and didn't want to mess up."

"What do you mean? You could never mess up with me; you know that, Jason."

"Well before you know, everything happened, I was going to see if you'd want to go out sometime but then after I figured the timing wasn't right."

"Why would that be so hard, silly? We go out all the time." Her face is so sweet and innocent.

"Sorry let me try again. I know we go out all the time but I was wondering if I could take you out on a date? Just you and me, maybe dinner?" He toes the ground and chews on his lip until it hurts.

A smile forms on her lips as Rachel accepts and explains that she's been waiting for this since the day they met. They make plans to go out that night and Jason says he will pick her up at 5:30.

The two go out a few times before Rachel brings him home to meet her mom. Their relationship blossoms and every night she writes into a journal to make sure she always appreciates the good with him. Towards the later half of a year together Rachel starts noticing things being off with Jason. If she comes home late from class he'll interrogate her on her whereabouts. It's gotten so bad that sometimes he'll push her against the wall and spit threats at her telling her to kill herself before he does it for her.

One night in particular, Rachel went out with a few girlfriends she met in her history class and upon arriving back to her dorm, she found Jason sitting on her bed. His head is in his hands but once the door closes, his head shoots up and the expression on his face is stone cold. He storms to wrap his hand around her neck and accuses her of going out and cheating on her. He tells her she's worthless and that he should just take her out of his life. He screams at her as hot tears stream down her face before she finally gets him out the door locking it behind him.

Four days later she wakes up back in that same room, the blue walls sending her back to that forever remembered day. This time Doctor Evans is already by her side and she hears her mom weeping on the other with her hand held between both of her moms frail ones. Her stomach sinks and she feels the soreness within her body as she tries to lift her head. She scans her eyes across the room but they remain blank as she sees the gifts people have brought wishing her well. She hears somebody talking but it's just white noise as her eyes find the stack of journals next to her bed.

"Jason! Jason did this to me didn't he?" She tries to yell but the dryness in her throat makes it more of a whisper.

"Rachel, did you hear anything I just said?" Doctor Evans asks her.

"What? No sorry what was it?" she replies.

"Rachel, your roommate found you four days ago as you were hanging from the top bunk of your bed. She got you down but you weren't breathing. An ambulance rushed you to the nearest hospital and they got oxygen to your brain just in time. You're lucky to be here and be talking. Do you remember trying to take your life?" he explains.

"You think I tried to kill myself? No I would never do that. Jason must have done it to me. He was so mad that night." She's regaining her voice and starts to shout as no one is listening to her.

"Honey, Jason isn't real. He never was. This boy you wrote about in your journals, I never met him. Your friends don't know him and the school doesn't have anyone in their database listed with that name. He's part of your illness." Her mother tries to calm her down.

"No you're wrong. He's my best friend. I love him and he's been there when no one else has." She begins to cry as confusion overtakes her mind.

"No Rachel, we're telling the truth. We found your meds in your nightstand and you haven't taken them in seven months. The schizophrenia was too strong for your brain and you couldn't see that you needed help. Jason is a hallucination and the words he said to you were delusions. You tied that rope the other night. Not him. I'm sorry but everything you've had involving him has been fabricated by your illness."

Tree in the Sky
Amanda Grindrod



Fear & Doubt
Catherine Dennehy

I'm going to be the best
The greatest
An Olympian
A legend
That's what I told myself

Until I decided it wasn't worth it
You had won
You took over at every possible moment
That sick feeling deep in my stomach
Telling me to stop
Just stop
You can't do it
You can't do it
You will never be able to do it

You pushed me around,
Held me down
Told me I wasn't worth it
And I believed you

You're not good enough

You're not strong enough
You're not dedicated enough
Dreams don't come true for people like you
You can't do it
So just give up
So I did

But what you didn't see coming
Was my comeback
You may have knocked me around
Shut me down
Made me into someone I wasn't
But you can't keep me down forever

So I fought back
Harder and stronger than I did before
And I beat you
For maybe the first time ever
I won

What I didn't realize
Was that I can't keep you down forever either
My fight with you is daily
But I will win those daily battles
I will set out to do what I want to do
Even if you're sitting on my shoulder whispering in my ear

And I won't avoid you anymore
I will not run away and hide where you cannot reach me
I will go and find you
I will look for you
I will face you head on and give you everything I've got

Because you don't make me weak
You don't make me want to quit
You make me want to work harder
Be stronger
And prove you wrong
Your little voice inside my head
Is no longer convincing me to give up
But instead telling me to prove you wrong...
So I will

I no longer hear
That I can't do it
But instead
I can do it
I will do it
I am dedicated
I am Strong
I am Passionate
And you will *never* beat me again

I will show you I'm not scared,
I'm not lazy
I'm not weak
My dreams will come true
Just watch me

Icy Lake

Amanda Grindrod



All In Your Head: A One-act Play

Emma Groenewal

Characters

Eli

Frustration

Doubt

Mom

[a blank room, filled only with a desk and chair in downstage center. The desk is cluttered with pieces of paper, crumpled balls of paper litter the floor. Eli sits at the desk, his back is hunched over his work as he furiously scribbles his pen across paper. Behind him in the shadows Frustration and Doubt stand, unnoticed by Eli.]

ELI: *[he sighs heavily, slams his head on the desk, scribbles something, looks at it, rips it out of his notebook and crumples it up throwing it over his shoulder. He runs his hands through his hair and buries his face in his hands.]*

FRUSTRATION: *[stepping out from the shadows]* Just forget it.

ELI: *[startled]* What?!

DOUBT: *[stepping out to join them]* He's right.

ELI: Who are you two?

FRUSTRATION: Does that even matter?

ELI: Uhhh...

FRUSTRATION: The real question is who will you be if you can't even write a stupid paper.

ELI: Why are you being so rude?

DOUBT: Yeah, it's not that he CAN'T write it's just that he can't write WELL.

ELI: Yeah, exactly. *[pause]* Hey! I can write good!

DOUBT: Good to you, or good to other people?

ELI: *[shoulders sag, sadly]* I never thought about it like that...

FRUSTRATION: *[stepping towards Doubt]* Knock it off you, look what you did to him!

DOUBT: *[meeting Frustration face to face]* What I did to him?! You were the one who was rude to him first.

FRUSTRATION: *[crossing arms]* I'm only being hard on him to help him.

DOUBT: Help him?! How do you expect that to help him?

FRUSTRATION: Better than putting him down.

DOUBT: *[gasps, hand on chest]* I do not.

FRUSTRATION: Mhm, *[using air quotes]* it's not that he CAN'T write it's just that he can't write WELL.

DOUBT: Well at least I didn't bully him. *[using air quotes]* The real question is who will you be if you can't even write a stupid paper.

FRUSTRATION: [*crossing arms*] No I did not bully him.

DOUBT: Yes you most certainly did.

FRUSTRATION: NO!

DOUBT: YES!

FRUSTRATION: Nuh uh!

DOUBT: Yeah huh!

FRUSTRATION: Nuh uhhhh!

DOUBT: Yeah huhhh!

[*their bickering is interrupted by Eli repeatedly slamming his head on his desk. They stop and look over at him, after a second pause they rush over to him, one on each side, and surround him comfortingly*]

DOUBT: Oh no honey. I'm sorry....We're sorry, we didn't mean to upset you. [*glares at Frustration*] WE didn't mean to upset you.

FRUSTRATION: Oh, yeah, right. Sorry.

ELI: No, you guys are right. I'm never going to write anything.

FRUSTRATION: Not with THAT attitude you won't.

ELI: [*rolling his eyes,sighs*] I give up.

DOUBT: Hey, wait I thought I was the quitter here. We can't have TWO quitters.

FRUSTRATION: As sadly pathetic as that was... she's right. You're not a quitter Eli.

DOUBT: [*angrily crosses arms,pouting turns back on Frustration*]

ELI: But how do YOU know if I'm a quitter or not. YOU don't even know me.

FRUSTRATION: Just trust that we do.

ELI: Um how about no because that's super creepy.

DOUBT: [*snapping out of her anger*] He didn't mean that. [*shooting a glare at Frustration*] What he meant wassss... that you are are better than us. You are better than us combined. You are smarter, and braver and kinder and more creative. [*voice trailing off*] We are just mean, and angry, and doubtful, and hopeless.

FRUSTRATION: Jesus Christ, don't depress the kid.

ELI: I'm sure your great people. Don't be so hard on yourself.

DOUBT: Yeah you're right...[*pause*] But anyways let's write you a paper.

ELI: But I don't even know where to start.

FRUSTRATION: Well write about something you love.... or like [*he looks over at Eli's questioning face*] ... or even enjoy.

ELI: I'm not really passionate about much.

DOUBT: C'mon there's got to be something.

ELI: Nope, nothing comes to mind.

FRUSTRATION: [*in a rapid list*] Political issues?

ELI: Too young to vote.

DOUBT: Social issues?

ELI: Not very social.

FRUSTRATION: Family issues?

ELI: Small family.

DOUBT: Oo Oo! I know siblings!

ELI: Only child.

[*judgmentaly Frustration and Doubt both disgusted gasp (whince)*]

ELI: Mean but continue.

FRUSTRATION: What about sports?

ELI: I read.

DOUBT: Hobbies?

ELI: I'm an author.

DOUBT: Oof

FRUSTRATION: Food! Everyone loves food. The quest for a good burger, the satisfaction of finally finding that warm beef patty of perfection...

ELI: Vegan

FRUSTRATION: [*gasps with horror and anger, but before he can respond he is interrupted by Doubt*]

DOUBT: [*blocks Frustration's path to and view of Eli, and sternly says*] Not Important... I've got it! Something that is universal, something everyone experiences is a thousand different ways over a thousand years.

FRUSTRATION: HUNGER!

DOUBT: No. Love!

FRUSTRATION & Eli: [*with disgusted confusion*] Love?!

DOUBT: Yes, love. Love of self, love of neighbor, love of brother or sister, love of mother and father, and lastly love of partner. [*catches Eli blush at this*] Oooooo Eliiii, who is she.

ELI: It's nothingggggg

FRUSTRATION: It is definitely not nothing.

DOUBT: Come on, this is what Shakespeare filled his plays with.

ELI: Death and betrayal?

DOUBT: No.

FRUSTRATION: Power and political corruption.

DOUBT: No.

ELI: Blind ambition?

DOUBT: NO! LOVE! It's love.

FRUSTRATION & Eli: Ohhhhhh.

DOUBT: Yesssssss.

ELI: So what do we do with that?

FRUSTRATION: We use your little crush.

ELI: [*dismissive*] Pffft, what crush.

DOUBT: You don't fool me I saw that blush.

FRUSTRATION: Tell us about her?

ELI: There's really nothing much to tell?

DOUBT: Start with her name.

ELI: [*dreamily*] Samuel.

FRUSTRATION: Wait what.

DOUBT: [*shushing* Frustration] How'd you two meet?

ELI: [*dreamily reminiscing*] In the vegan cookbook section. [Frustration *throws up his arms in outrage but Doubt moves his arms back to his sides*] Our hands brushed together reaching for the same book.

DOUBT: Yes! Keep going.

ELI: I looked into his eyes and I swear I was looking straight into the milky way... His freckles were like stars that formed constellations.

[*as he continues furoem and Doubt slink back into the shadows where they came from, Eli is to wrapped up in his daydreams to notice*]

ELI: His smile is one that Greeks would wage wars for, or knights would win jousts for. Braving all the terrors of the world for the affection of one. [*eagerly picks up pen*] I will be the knight to win his heart. A new medieval romance, we'll beat all odds!

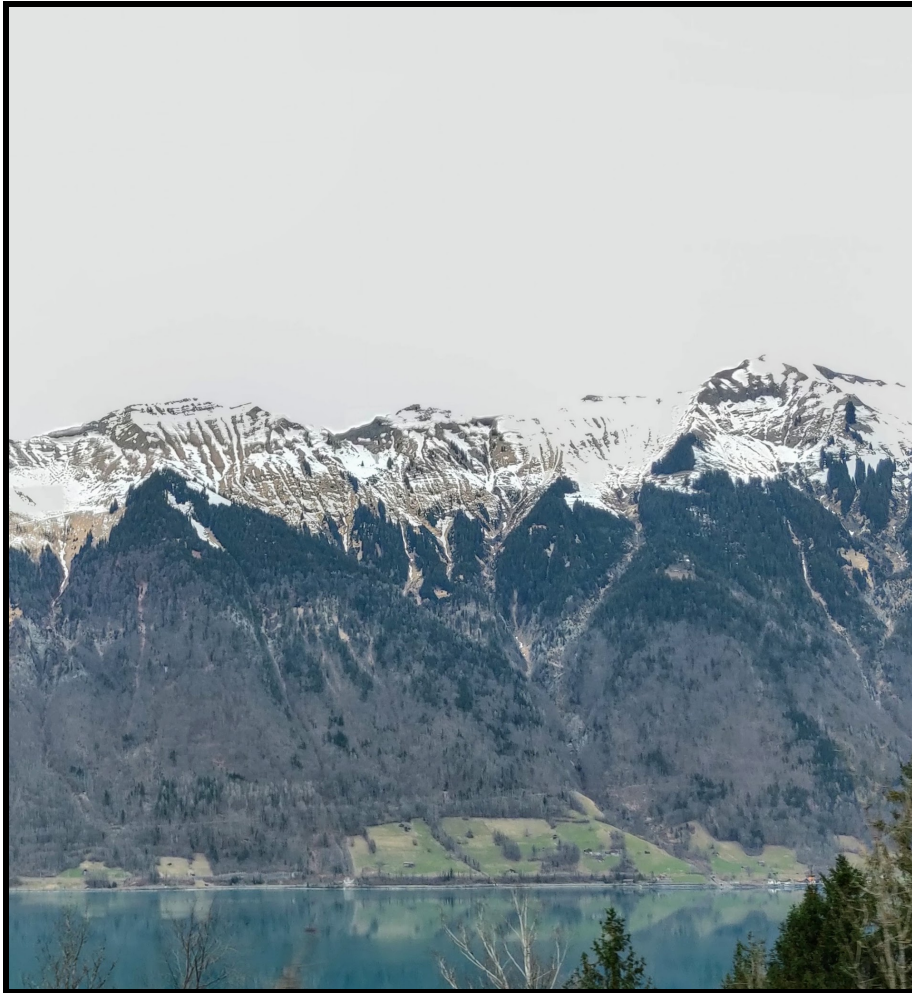
[*his mom knocks on the door before entering stage right*]

MOM: Dinner's ready! Who were you talking to sweetie?

ELI: [*looks around for Frustration and Doubt but finds no one*] I... I guess myself.

Mountains

Amanda Grindrod



Unoriginal Dreams

Kris Biel

Who's to say what makes a dream good

Whimsies of

Flight

Family

Power

Fantasy

Everyone has them

So unoriginal

Yet so lovely

Air caresses and carries wingless creatures

Warm sunlight makes Sky as comforting as Earth

Laughter and yelps of joy as flocks part way allowing the flightless to soar through

When was the rule made that beauty can only be found in the new

Grandma's cooking fills rooms with sweet scents and a loving atmosphere

Family gathers around to share a meal

No worries

No bickering

No fights

Why must everything be so original when the ordinary comforts the mind

Servants scuddle around to the barking of orders

Crowns and jewels adorn the head of those who wish it to

Tastes of expensive wine sooth the throat

Where can we escape to when all ideas have been used

Flickers of new energy cause objects to move with no intervention of the hand

Defenses and fights over with the mere thought of a flame

Dragons

Unicorns

Pegasi

And many more mystical things populate the earth once more

What judge gets to decide we must all yearn for different realities?

None

Enjoy your unoriginal dreams

Enjoy the ordinarily extraordinary

Hydrangea

Kris Biel



Crash

Kris Biel

Eyes are wide with blurry

What just happened?

Pupils narrow with eyes still wide

That just happened

Numb hands gain feeling

Are they wet?

Why do they hurt?

Oh no.

Frantic patting place needles in open wounds

Where is it coming from?

Where is it coming from?

A metallic odor wouldn't go away

Please be the rust

Not us

Not us

There are a few gulps to try and wet a dry mouth

Things start spinning and then suddenly

A breath

Air

The lungs had forgotten how to work, but frantically work to make up for it now

There is a taste of cold sweat on the tongue

We need to move

We should leave

Why? Why won't they move

A shaky breath floods out any wishful thinking

Trembling hands move of their own accord now

What is happening?

Where is the sound of pain

Where is the sound of awakening

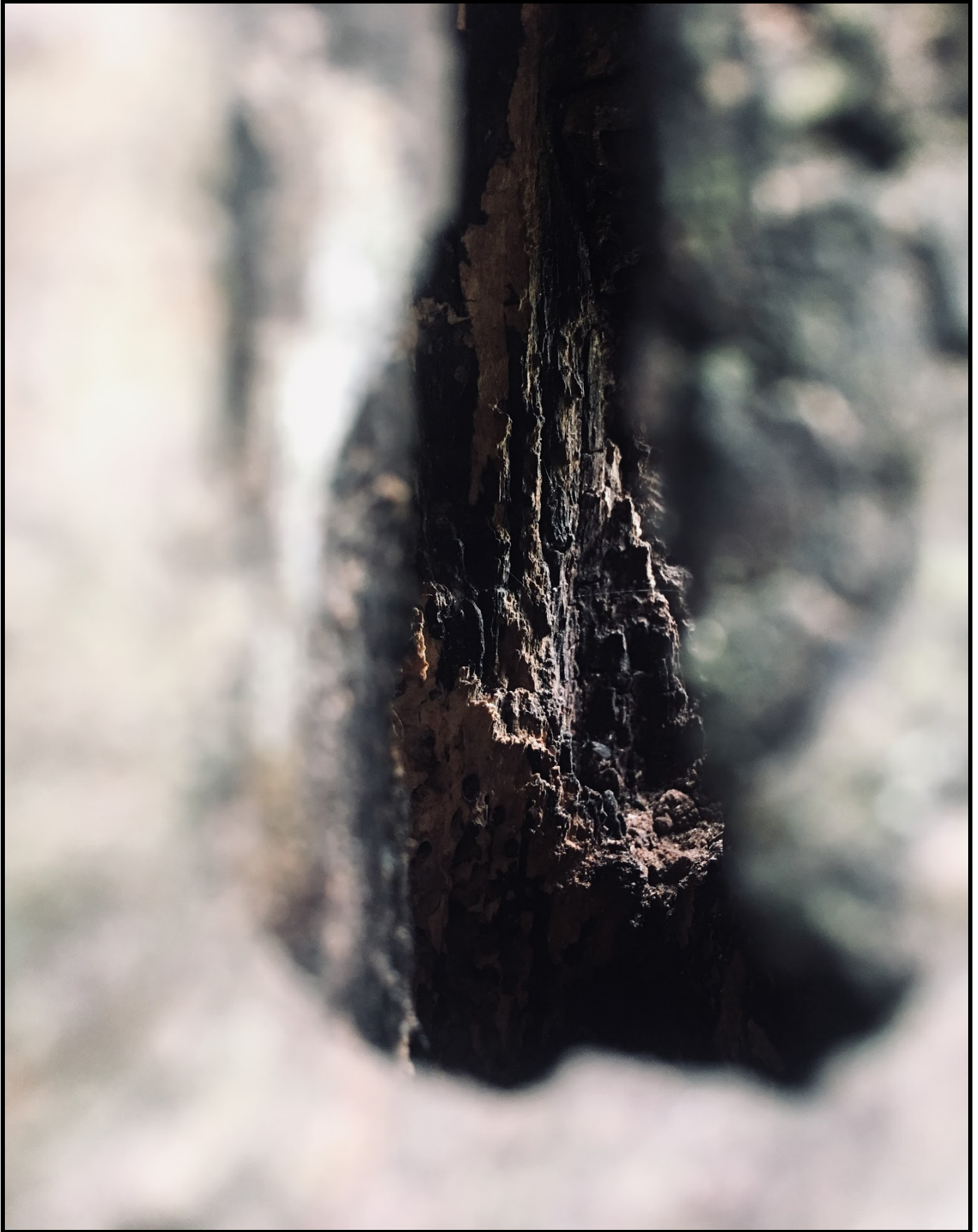
Where is the sound of their breath?!

Where is the sound?!

Things move slowly now as eyes warily look around

They are gone..

Glimpse
Amanda Grindrod



Intelligent Morality

Daniel Keenan

Characters

ID

SUPEREGO

BOY

BOY 2

[A high school classroom. The desks form a “U”, with a row of 7 desks at the back, and then a column of 3 more desks branching off at desk 1 & 7. The teacher walks around the classroom and gives help to students, who are working on their class assignments, but also busily talking to one another about their day-to-day problems and activities. In the middle of the class, between the 1st and 7th desk, sits a boy. He observes his classmates around him as his id and superego comment on what actions the boy should take].

ID: *[In a luring voice.]* You’re gonna to do it. You know it. I know it. Why fight it?

SUPEREGO: *[In a stern voice.]* No he’s not. Think about the consequences. Who knows what could go wrong?

ID: But what could go right? And HE can make up his own mind without some sniveling goody-good forcing him to fight his natural instincts. He wants to do it, so he should do it. Right now.

SUPEREGO: Right now he has other things to worry about. Ther-

ID: *[In an annoyed voice]* You don’t need to tell me that there’s peop-

BOY: Shut up both of you. I could use without the constant fighting. I’ve made up my mind. I’m going to do it, and I could care less about future consequences or following my natural instincts. I’m sitting here with my hand raised, everyone’s eyes on me, while you two decide what to do. You had your chance. *[Out loud, asking timidly]* Teacher.... May I use the restroom?

[Boy returns a few minutes later, and the class is back in it’s regular routine]

BOY: I told you both it’d be fine. Everyone’s are back to work, [looks to the right] that girl over there still looks gorgeous, everything’s in its right place, no one thought anything of me leaving. I already did the work half an hour ago anyway.

ID: Juuust like I said. See what happens when you listen to the sensible one? If you had listened to *[In a mocking voice]* “Mr. Stay-Silent-And-Don’t-Draw-Attention” you wouldn’t have gotten that well deserved break from these mindless morons you call classmates. *[passive aggressively]* Even though I did suggest an alternative method, I respect your choice.

SUPEREGO: You told him to walk out, punch the teacher as he left, and not come back for the rest of cla-

ID: Don’t get caught up in the details. None of us could stand listening to these absent minded fools any longer.

SUPEREGO: Technically he’s supposed to be acting like one-

ID: *[Rudely interrupting]* Shut up for one second would you please? The Boy is trying to listen.

SUPEREGO: Sometimes I feel that he's listening to the wrong person.

ID: You think someone he might hear something bad listening to someone out there.

SUPEREGO: I'm worried he might hear something bad listening to someone in here. *[The boy stares blankly at his paper, but listens intently to the classmates talking adjacent to him.]*

BOY: They're still trying to figure out the second problem. Those fu-

SUPEREGO: *Language.*

BOY: Those idiots. How can anyone be so moronically stupid that they can sit and stare at a problem for 20 minutes without thinking of some way to tackle it.

SUPEREGO: It's not their fault, it's the world we live in today.

BOY: Maybe I'd give them some slack, but the problem they're stuck on could be solved by a second grader. Blindfolded. With both hands cut off. While being lobotomized.

ID: Maybe you should go over there and give them a little hint. You're smarter than every one of these lumbering fools. Why don't you show it off?

SUPEREGO: You know why he can't do that, they'll catch him.

ID: No they wouldn't, not if he just did it a little. *[speaking to the boy]* Aren't you tired of everyone around you constantly being completely idiotic?

SUPEREGO: Aren't you tired of constantly sounding like an idiot too Id? Oh i forget, you're names short for that.

BOY: If you two don't stop arguing now I'll blow my brains out just to spite you.

ID: *[Noticing something]* Hey Boy that girl is-

SUPEREGO: He knows it, *[clearly blaming id more than himself]* we've just been a little distracting.

[A girl starts to get up and walk]

ID: She's coming toward you.

SUPEREGO: That's the girl you've been staring at every day since schools started.

[She walks in the direction of the boy, who pretends to not notice.]

ID: Maybe she finally saw you after all those times I told you to stare at her longingly.

BOY: Do you really think so? Maybe I shouldn't have listened when I was told not to follow your advice that one time.

SUPEREGO: That time he told you to slip a dozen roses into her locker, or that time he said to sneak into her house at night and take pictures while she was sleeping?

ID: Either one.

[she is less than two feet away]

SUPEREGO: I didn't think she knew we existed.

BOY: She doesn't know we exist, she knows I exist. This is my chance.

[out loud, trying to act cool]

Hey, whats up?

[The girl doesn't seem notice, and the boy watches her as she walks over and starts talking to another boy sitting a few desks away]

SUPEREGO: Seems she doesn't know any of us exist.

ID: That shrew little vixen. She thinks she can just ignore us? Who does she think She is? Get up now and throw your desk.

SUPEREGO: Maybe you should call her over instead, try a different approach-

ID: Throw it right at that other boy she's talking to-

SUPEREGO: Maybe you share some common interest-

ID: Then get up and stomp on his chest-

SUPEREGO: Maybe you both like stamps-

ID: Rip his heart out-

SUPEREGO: No that won't work even *you* don't like stamps-

BOY 2: *[thuggishly]* Hey, whatchu lookin' at?

[The boy realized that he he had been staring for awhile now]

BOY 2: You stupid or something? I said why are you looking at me.

[Still staring]

BOY: Actually [breaking the silence] you said "*what*" are you looking at, different from your second iteration of "*why*".

SUPEREGO: Okay now, of all the times to start making friends in class, maybe this isn't it.

BOY 2: *[Angrily]* What did you say to-

BOY: Well, technically, if I'm going to be verbatim, you concocted the word "*Watchu*", which I assume is the slew of the words "What are you" strung together in an attempted contraction with that assumedly empty brain of yours.

[All eyes are now on the two boys, even the teachers]

SUPEREGO: You've done it now, there's no going back.

ID: Then there's no point in stopping.

BOY 2: [dazed]

Are... Are you insulting me?

SUPEREGO: Maybe no one will understand what you said, after all most of them do only have a second grade reading level

ID: They don't need to understand everything. You've sat through these classes for 16 years trying to understand how everyone around you could be so completely mindless and having to act like you're just like every one of them. Let them not understand you for once.

SUPEREGO: There's a reason for that and you know it, stop doing this to him.

BOY: Am I insulting you? That'd be hard to do considering a person needs to actually have some sort of deprecating facts about themselves in order to be brought up for mockery. You're just so full of such deplorable characteristics I believe it evens out and no one trait stands out above, or in this case below, the others.

SUPEREGO: He hasn't done anything wrong to you.

ID: Don't listen, he stole the love of your life.

SUPEREGO: He didn't steal her, she went over to talk to him.

ID: She ignores you because of him. How does that make you feel? Knowing that just because he exists, she'll never notice you.

SUPEREGO: He's never said a word to her before. HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HER NAME. [*pleading to the boy*]. Listen to me this time, I've never led you astray before. I may not always choose the most exciting options, but I know what's best for you. This isn't something you can come back from. This isn't something people will forget. Sit down now, go back to your work, maybe it's not too late yet, maybe they won't have detected you, just please stop before

ID: NO. [speaking directly to the boy] I've been with you since birth. When you were hungry and couldn't speak to ask for food, I told you to cry and you were fed. I know what you want in life, I know how to get it, I know how you look around and despise every soul you see. Who cares if we can't go back after this, maybe it's time you start going forward in your life instead of watching it pass by you with every aching second. Every one of these miserable wretches lives in blissful ignorance while you suffer through life in crystal clear insanity.

BOY: [To id] you're right. [The class is dead silent, the boy speaks to them]. I hate it. All of it. Listening to each and every you try and figure out a math problem explained by a teacher four different times. Hearing you stumble and stutter whenever you have to read a paragraph aloud. I actually witnessed you [he points to a random boy sitting in the class] spend 3 minutes tying your shoe! And don't even get me started on the time that-

[The teacher walks up the boy and hands him a strange looking technological note]

BOY: [Reading the note aloud] We have detected you to be harboring unlawful intelligence. It is strictly forbidden for unauthorized individuals to have an IQ greater than 100. Please prepare for execution.

SUPEREGO: [In a whispered voice] I told you this would happen.

ID: You didn't have to tell me [content with the decision] I knew.

[The boy smiles, and immediately drops to the floor dead]



Bark

Amanda Grindrod

Athlete

Reese Asselin

Raise more athletes
The best athletes in the world
Because
There is nothing better than an athlete
A true athlete is the greatest thing a human could be
However
One thing must be cleared up
Just because you play a sport does not mean you are an athlete
An athlete is not the hockey player slamming kids into lockers
They are not the lax cocky-idiotic-frat boy taking LSD
Not the rowdy-ignorant-smug starting QB that bangs all the cheerleaders
They are not the soccer player who gets bailed out of ISS on game day
Not the popular-crude-egocentric cheerleader who comments “fatass” on your posts
Those are just people who play a sport
Just kids who can run faster
Athleticism does not make an athlete
A varsity letter does not make an athlete
So drop the stereotype
Stop categorizing
Don’t assume the bench is nicer than the players And
Don’t assume the starters are cocky-oaf-jocks
Stop feeling sorry for the benchwarmers
An athlete is more than the game
It is someone who is passionate
Someone who constantly pushes to be better
They’re the first ones at practice and the last ones home
An athlete is the person who goes to the library not the frat house
Who would never come to class hungover
They’re the kid who helps you out of the locker and walks you to class
They invite you to sit with them when you are alone
Athletes are more than their school careers
Athletes become the positive of their generation
They believe in their future and yours
They pick others up when they fall
And when they fall they get right back up
Because they are aware of all the lessons failure has to teach
Athletes have respect
They always say good game and high five you
Athletes look at the coach and absorb the information being told
The ones who say “nice hit” when the other team bombs one
Athletes take a knee when the other team gets injured
They are the hand that reaches down to pick you up after a hard hit
Confidence runs through their veins
But never cockiness
Cheers on younger athletes
An athlete is a leader

Athletes are not born
They are created
It is discipline and love
Athletes are raised

Island

Amanda Grindrod



Ambition

Hannah Lavoie

I found a dream caught in her hair
I woke and found it tangled there
Warm and secure, my hands unsure,
I freed the dream and held it fair
It glowed against my morning skin
And gently breathed without a din
My fingers clasped and softly grasped
To hide the light that gleamed within
Her face was sleeping, pale, serene
Unopened eyes holding a sheen
I stroked her soft and held aloft
The dream spawned of the things unseen
“Now, look,” I whispered in the sun
“This dream of yours is seldom one
that drifts apart and breaks your heart.”
I kissed her cheek once I was done
And softly scarred, that dream of hers
That gently sickens as it cures
It glanced a flash on her eyelash
And only in her sleep she stirs
And with a flutter and a flick
And with a breath both deep and quick
Her eyelid gave, her sight did slave
So focused on what made her sick
There’s something wrong within her eye
I notice as she wakes up shy
It’s sort of deep, a coldness creeps
It almost seems she has to cry
And now disturbed she lays in bed
My hands around her gentle head
But something’s wrong, an ugly song
Sung by the dream I took instead
An emptiness pervades my love
No dreams at all in minds above
She looks so pale, her fingers frail
And hair soft as a dying dove
Without a dream to call her own
She leaves my arms and takes the phone
And with a sigh, she says goodbye
And leaves our house, once was our home.
I’m haunted by that emptiness
That slender form beneath her dress
That begged for dreams along its seams
And led to her inherent death
I blame myself for losing her.

Letter From the Editors

We hope that you will enjoy this magazine. It is a collection of poems and stories as well as photography from the many talented students at Pinkerton. We hope you are inspired and touched by what is inside this issue and continue to come back and read previous and future publications.

~o~

I want to thank Mrs. Kneisley, our advisor, as well as my co-leader, Jesse Ames. I was only a freshman when I decided to join this club, a shy one at that. Tower Writers' Guild has helped me become more confident in myself and allowed me to do what I love most: write. Since junior year, I have been one of the leaders of the club and have had the privilege to watch it grow and welcome new members and friends. Now that it is my senior year and I will be leaving Pinkerton, I want to thank those who made Tower so much fun. If you have any interest in writing, publishing, or want to make new friends, I hope you consider joining Tower. It has been a critical point of my highschool career, one that I will dearly miss. Thank you for your support, happy reading!



Eve Hodgdon
Head Editor and Co-Leader of Tower Writers' Guild

I would like to thank Mrs. Kneisley, the *Tower* Staff, and most especially, my co-leader Eve Hodgdon. I joined the Tower Writers' Guild with some encouragement from Eve, and because of her I was able to witness three years' worth of great writers, critics, and friends. It's been a joy watching this club grow and adapt to new, changing technology, and I'm proud to hand it off to the next line of writers. If any of you are reading this, consider joining Tower! I will miss all of the snacks, hugs, read-throughs, and ideas; to the future editors, enjoy it while it lasts! Thanks for reading, and enjoy the magazine!



Jesse Ames
Head Editor and Co-Leader of Tower Writers' Guild

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Advisor: Deborah Kneisley

For next year's edition(s)

Submission Forms are available in Room 415, the Publications Center

Note: In the interest of fairness, all *Tower* entries are evaluated **anonymously** to ensure that no bias is present. All names are removed once the entries are received, and each author's name is replaced with a number.

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Colophon

col·o·phon n.

1. An inscription placed usually at the end of a book, giving facts about its publication. Source: *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition*

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The magazine is printed in process black on 70 lb. white page stock, and the cover and back are printed on white, finish stock paper.

Page layout for *Tower* is done using Adobe InDesign. Individual entries are typed and formatted using Microsoft Word. We also used Adobe Photoshop to resize pictures. The body of the publication utilizes Minion Pro subsidiaries. Rights to all typefaces are owned by Adobe Systems, Inc.

The cover price for *Tower* is \$5. The production cost is more than \$8 per copy. The difference in price is paid for with the assistance of financial support from the Pinkerton Academy administration.

The *Tower* Staff would like to thank the English and Fine Arts Departments, along with the Pinkerton Academy administration and staff for their ongoing and enthusiastic support for this magazine.

