

Manhattan High School Writing Awards

*Manhattan High School for Girls would like to dedicate
this year's Literary and Art Journal to our alumni community
who inspire us and make us so very proud.*

*Manhattan High School
First Place Writing Award*

Esther Mehlman

*Manhattan High School
Second Place Writing Award*

Rachel Berenshteyn

*Manhattan High School
Writing Honorable Mention*

**Gitty Boshnack
Hindi Medalie**

Manhattan High School Art Awards

*Manhattan High School
First Place Art Award*

Esther Guelfguat
An Inner Storm

*Manhattan High School
Second Place Art Award*

Leah Harris
Glass Blower

*Manhattan High School
Art Honorable Mention*

Chaviva Berger
Window Dressing

GLASS

An Anthology of Literature and Art

Cover Design

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Channa Gelbtuch, Grade 11

Chana Shutyak, Grade 11

Rachel Berenshteyn, Grade 12

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Mrs. Tsivia Yanofsky, School Principal, Menabeles
Mrs. Estee Friedman-Stefansky, Principal, General Studies

*“You use a glass mirror to see your face;
you use works of art to see your soul”*

– George Bernard Shaw

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Foreword

By Mrs. Estee Friedman-Stefansky, Principal

“The eyes,” concluded George Herbert, “have one language everywhere.”

Despite the volume of words we exchange in both written and spoken forms, we each recall a moment when we looked into someone’s eyes and finally understood something we had missed all along. Unlike our mouths which are controlled by our minds, our eyes tell a story which is fluid and free. Full of power, our eyes are drawn to the subtle details in our majestic world and also reflect the most visceral feelings in our souls.

This year’s literary and art journal, *Glass*, invited us to explore the nuances of vision: physical, conceptual and spiritual. We emerged with heightened appreciation for this gift and with a renewed consciousness. There is so much complexity in each of our fellow humans, in our natural world, and within each of us. Every opportunity we have to observe more carefully enriches our experience on earth. When we look into the eyes of another, we can see their truths, and this reflects our own truths. The language we share in live communication possesses a preciousness like no other because it brings us closer to our fellow human being and also to ourselves.

I am grateful to Dr. Shaina Trapedo for leading this schoolwide literacy project and for infusing our students with love for the written and spoken word and with the skills they need to capture the nuance in the written craft. Thank you to our exceptional teachers: Mrs. Raquel Benchimol, Mrs. Rivkah Nehorai, Ms. Rachel Mosner, and Mrs. Chani Kanowitz for contributing to the efficacy of this project. I am very proud of our student editors for collaborating to produce this journal. Thank you to Rachel Berenshteyn, Shani Hans, Nev Sivan Yakubov, Nechama Flohr, Channa Gelbtuch and Chana Shutyak.

Produced by Chaviva Berger in her Digital Art class, this journal’s cover depicts a child observing the city seized by the glass phone. The glass reminds us to consider the fragility of life and that there is still a child within each of us who needs to be nourished by human connection.



On the Surface

By Dr. Shaina Trapedo, Literary Advisor

Stare at a pane of glass. Look at a window, not through it. What do you see? What you won't see are the countless granules of flaxen-colored sand that have been melted with other minerals at 3090 degrees fahrenheit. Nor will your eye observe the beads of sweat forming on the glassmaker's brow, or the scorched hairs and faded burn marks on his forearms from years spent perfecting his craft. While glass can be practical and decorative, fragile and sturdy, or clarifying and obfuscating at the same time, for me, the most astounding property of glass is how flawlessly it conceals its process. Silica, ash, and limestone become unrecognizable once they have been set ablaze, and even after the molten sand cools, nothing can be done to alter the inner structure of these fused elements. There is no going back.

True artistry presents us with the paradox of an authentic illusion. The transparent, blemish-free surface of a masterpiece in paint or prose reveals no trace of what went into its production. And yet, we know it must be there. As a child, I obsessed over the wit and whimsy of Roald Dahl. Books like *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Matilda* left me with two resounding thoughts: *that was wonderful* and *I could never write like that*. You can imagine the comfort I felt when Mr. Dahl confessed, "By the time I am nearing the end of a story, the first part will have been reread and altered and corrected at least one hundred and fifty times. I am suspicious of both facility and speed. Good writing is essentially rewriting. I am positive of this."

The truth is that all works of art have rough and humble beginnings. Only by applying the persuasion of heat and the force of breath to our grains of insight can transform something as indiscriminate and ubiquitous as sand into something unique, marvelous and revelatory.

As you read and view the contents of this journal you can look closely and still only see a smooth, polished veneer: a collection of words and colors overlaid on a glossy surface.

You will not see the shards of pencil shavings accumulating on the writer's desk, the scores of discarded synonyms, the

multiple rounds of peer review, the hours of forfeited sleep, the courage it takes to solicit criticism, and the collaboration within the creative process. Still, it is all there. And like the production of glass, the act of creating is truly transformative. There is no going back.

Every day I have the privilege of witnessing my students transform their thoughts into words and actions invested with meaning. I am proud of the artisans featured here, and humbled by the tireless efforts of the editors who committed themselves to the vision of this publication. Like glass, the pieces found here are multi-purposeful. It is my hope that they delight, transmit, reflect, and refocus us.



Paradigms and Perspectives

On Paradigms and Perspectives

By Chana Shutyak, Editor

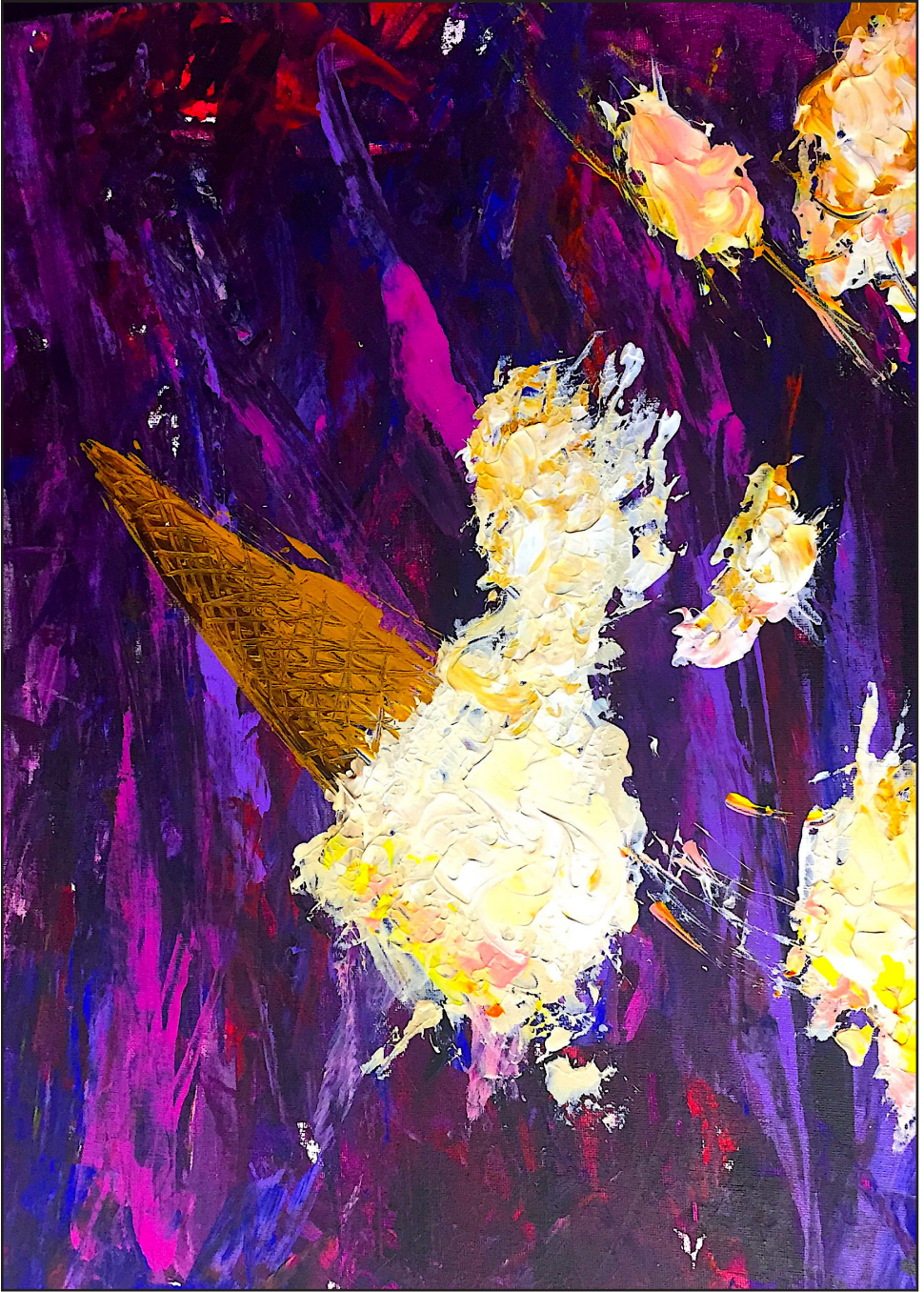
“You’ll have to walk two blocks down until you hit Broadway and 42nd. Then, turn left, and keep walking until you reach Starbucks. It should be on your left, next to Sephora. Got it?”

“Yes, I see. Thanks.”

We often use the phrase “I see” when what we really mean is “I understand.” When we open our eyes and look around, we are not only seeing the world, but we gain an understanding of different lifestyles and ideas, if we pay attention. When we apply what we see to our previous experiences and current reality, we are able to broaden our outlook and gain perspective.

In Gitty Boshnack’s *Through her eyes*, we see the way the world is shaped by our personal experiences, both good and bad. She follows Holocaust survivor, Francis Irwin through her daily life and contrasts how she perceives the world to how others see it. In contrast, Rena Brodie, in *The 8th Wonder*, presents a witty narrative that shows how a positive outlook on life can turn an inability into an opportunity. *Bread Through The Window*, by Rivka Notkin, displays how opening our minds to other narratives can help us build empathy and gain insight.

All of the well-crafted stories in this section work together to inspire us to broaden our mindset and recognize the shared humanity within all of us. And although the plots and themes in our lives may overlap, everyone’s story is unique.



Shattered Creams

Riki Rowe | Studio Art

Message in a Bottle

By Esty Friedman

At eight years old, the beach was my favorite outdoor place. It was a place of both relaxation and fun, where my mind and body could run wild without the shackles of the city. On one not-so-warm Sunday afternoon, after three hours of pleading with my mother, I finally convinced her that it was essential for my well-being to get some quality beach time. As soon as I unbuckled my seatbelt, I ran right into the inviting arms of the sparkling blue-green waves, oblivious to their frosty temperature. Once again at peace with the world, I smiled contentedly and let the ocean carry me to some other enchanted realm.

When my body shock with cold, telling my mind to get out of the water, I began heading back to the beach when the glint of the sun off a shiny object piqued my curiosity. It was a glass bottle, and as I examined it I noticed there was some sort of paper rolled up inside of it. It seemed interesting enough for me to abandon my dream world and enter this new one. My inner detective awoke and I began to fantasize about what this might represent.

Protecting the bottle against my chest, I ran to my mother to share my prized discovery, then struggled to remove the cork for some time. My mother only took notice of my frustration when I was on the brink of tears and then suggested that I crack the bottle to get the note out. I refused to destroy this precious treasure that I found, and was hurt that she so easily dismissed its value. Finally, I was able to dislodge the cork and I cautiously remove the crumpled up note. Through the splotches of ink, I was able to make out the following words:

**Please tell my
family not to
give up their
search for me...**

Please help me. My name is Paul Smith. Today is July 7th 1912. It's been almost 3 months since the ship has sunk. I am stranded on an island in the middle of the Atlantic ocean (at least I think that's where I am). Please tell my family not to give up their search for me, I am still alive and I miss them terribly.

My interest turned to excitement as my mind tried to process. The year sounded so familiar to me. 1912, sunken ship? Could it be that this note was written by a survivor from the *Titanic*? I handed

the letter over to my mother, proud of my detective skills, and expecting her to match my enthusiasm. But instead she just laughed, saying that it can't possibly be real, and it must have just been some little kid's history project taken too far.

Furious at her for not sharing my childhood imagination, I stomped off with the bottle and note tightly clutched in my hand. For the rest of the day, I looked for him. For Paul Smith. I couldn't find him that day, but I told myself I would never give up. From then on, whenever I found myself at the beach, I would search for him and any other hidden treasures and figures that only my detective eyes could see.



Buried Reflections

Chaviva Berger | Photography

The 8th Wonder

By Rena Brodie

My name is Anne. I was born blind. No one knew exactly how blind I was until I started bumping into things. I'm 28 now, and I function perfectly, besides for the fact that I can't see. When people find out about my disability, there's always that one tactless person who says, "Wow! When are they going to make you, like, a super strong prescription pair of glasses?" I always imagine this person with a big round face, pimples all over, and an 'always having a bad hair day' haircut.

I have two siblings, one brother and one sister. Lucky for me, they each have two kids. My favorite type of people are kids, particularly my niece, Riley. Once, when we were hanging out, I asked her a question.

"Can you describe a rainbow for me?"

Some people say you haven't lived until you have seen the seven wonders of the world, but I'm pretty sure this is the next best thing.

It always starts with, "Well, the first color is red. Do you know red?"

"I only heard of red, but I was never lucky enough to meet red myself."

Silence. I was almost able to hear her concentrating.

So I tried to help her out a little bit. "If red was a person, what would he or she be like?"

"Oh, that's easy! He would be really loud. And always excited. And he would always be bleeding."

"Bleeding?"

"Bleeding! Because blood is red of course! And his wife is orange, because orange is quiet and really pretty, and opposites attract."

"Really pretty?"

"Yes! Really *really* pretty. Orange is warm and snuggly. You go to orange when you're sad and need a hug. And then when you feel

**And his wife
is orange,
because orange
is quiet and
really pretty,
and opposites
attract.**

a little better, you get to meet Yellow. Yellow is a song you listen to again and again because it makes you happy, like when you're with your friends and you can't imagine being anywhere else."

"What about green?"

"Green is like yellow, but also sometimes gross. Like vegetables. Or dark chocolate, because it looks like chocolate but it's disgusting. After green comes blue. Blue is my *favorite*. My eyes are blue. And blue is like swimming. And like the ocean. And like the best flavor of gatorade, and my favorite dress Mommy only lets me wear to *fancy* things."

"I think my favorite color is blue, too"

"But you didn't hear about purple yet!"

"Okay, so tell me."

"Purple is like your best friend. Even when you fight you still know they love you anyways. You can be you, even if you don't always like you, they like you; enough for both of you. Does that make sense?"

"So much sense."

"Now pink. Like a teenager at a concert. Yelling really loud. But sing-yelling. It's the best kind of yelling, really. And then black and white, like good and bad. And then gray. Gray is sad, so when I think of gray, I just make myself think of blue again, because..."

"...blue is our favorite and it makes us happy."

So, to all the round-faced, acne-covered, bad hair-day haircut people out there, hold off on recommending those super-strong prescription glasses because I have my own little secret 8th wonder.



Captured Innocence

Nechi Bertram | Digital Art

Bread Through the Window

By Rivka Notkin

Every day on the way to school, my bus passed the window of a second-floor apartment in Washington Heights. Sometimes the window would be open, sometimes the window would be closed, but that didn't matter, because everyday there was a man sitting there, staring out into traffic.

This man's hair was balding, his skin was dark, and he looked about 65. From the street we could not see the interior of his apartment. All we could see was the man, a table, and a small Puerto Rican flag. The small glimpses we could gather from the school bus hardly revealed anything about his life, or how he ended up at the corner of 182 and Broadway looking out a window.

Occasionally, when there was a red light, and window on the school bus directly aligned with his and the younger kids on the bus would get his attention by waving to the man, who would smile and wave back. Through those short yet frequent encounters, we eventually learned that his name was Greg.

One day my twin sister told me that Greg passes bread through his window. She doesn't know if he charges for this bread, or gives it for free, but the passing of bread is a small view into his life on the other side of the glass, a life that to me is full of mystery and endless possibility.

Some days I wonder about Greg, his life story, and why he sits by his small window every day, staring expressionless into the morning traffic below. Day after day, my commute to school gave me the opportunity to imagine his life and how he ended up behind that window. In my inner crystal ball, this is what I see...

Greg grew up in Puerto Rico, in a small town, with one school with a muddy courtyard where as a boy, Greg played soccer barefoot with his friends. The town had one restaurant, and a supermarket, both run-down and nearly empty, but nevertheless happy and content. When Greg was five he watched his first American movie on his family's black and white TV set, and from then on he dreamed of being a

**...all we could
see was the
man, a table,
and a small
Puerto Rican
flag.**

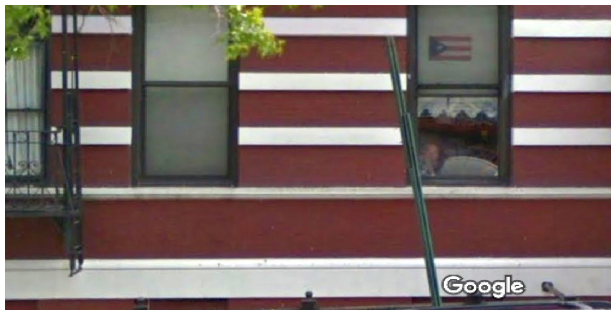
director. One day, he promised himself he would be famous, and drive a sports car, and live in a big house in New York City. So when Greg turned 18 he packed his bags and moved 1,600 miles away from home. New York City's bustling streets, noise, smells, and bright lights were all new to Greg, and he would have to get used to them. Finally Greg settled down and enrolled in a filmmaking class. With the money he had saved up, Greg bought himself a \$5,000 camera. He knew his life was going to be great.

But one day his life turned upside down. He was robbed and then lost his job. Greg found he could no longer afford to live downtown, so he moved to Washington Heights. In Washington Heights, Greg found a job fixing cars, a skill he was taught by his father in Puerto Rico.

A few years later Greg married a gentle and generous woman, and together they had a beautiful baby girl. This girl grew up into a charming young woman who was much loved by her parents and had many friends. But Washington Heights proved to be boring and the girl dreamed of being an actor and owning a sports car and living in a big house in Beverly Hills. So she saved up money, and before her eighteenth birthday she ran away to Hollywood to pursue her dreams and become a famous actor. She left a note for her parents telling them not to worry and that her life was going to be great.

Her parents were heartbroken and inconsolable. But her father never gave up hope. Now he sits by the window all day, hoping to see her walking down 182 and Broadway, suitcase in hand, coming home...

Truthfully, I don't really know why Greg sits there. Maybe he imagines what my life story is, on the other side of the glass.





Bifocal

Avigail Ovitsh | Digital Art

Memory Full

By Zahava Laufer

I look down and see the little bundle laying in my arms taking slow, deliberate breaths. I grab my phone and take a dozen pictures. Every so often he lets out a cry and I feed him. He then gets patted on the back and is expected to burp; he spit up some of the liquid he has just consumed, and I even take a photo of that. He is put back down and is lying flat and still again. This process is repeated day after day as his surroundings become more familiar to him. He stares up at the mobile hanging above him and follows the little white birds with his eyes. I take another picture. When it is time for him to be fed, he lets me know with the sound of a weep and jerks up when he senses my presence.

He slowly learns to turn over and becomes excited with his accomplishment. He smiles when he gets attention, sometimes automatically when I raise my camera in front of him, but whimpers when he's left alone. He starts babbling and enjoys the communication he has with others in his own language. Around him things are changing, and he enjoys watching autumn turn into winter.

He soon learns to crawl and is growing up before my very eyes faster than I can capture with my camera. The rain pounding on the roof makes him hide beneath his blankets, but when it turns to calm showers of white, he scurries on his hands and feet to the window. He watches the snow for hours as it starts off as a light cover for the sidewalk until it looks like a thick covering that he wants to dive into.

**A frenzy of
flashes captures
it all.**

He claps with his little hands when he is noticed and played with, and laughs from his belly when he is tickled. I take photos and share them with family and friends. However, this does not last long as he starts feeling sharp pains inside his gums. He tries to bite everything and keeps us up all night. When the pediatrician confirms it's just teething, they smear a cold, jelly on his gums, that makes him gag, but the two little fragile teeth that have emerged make his smile cuter than ever. A frenzy of flashes capture it all.

His first teeth are soon followed by his first steps. Everyone cries out in joy and celebrates his big accomplishment with more

snapshots than ever. Before long, he finds his feet being crammed in stiff shoes. He eventually learns to walk on his own, at first holding on to the walls or with the help of others. Soon he has become a pudgy little toddler whose cheeks are constantly being squeezed. He continues to grow more every day and finally the day comes. He is greeted with cheers, shouts, and sweets. It is his first birthday. I scroll through the moments on my phone and marvel at how much he has grown, and how much is not captured through the lens of my camera.



21st Century
Osnat Cohen | Digital Art



Snowy Seasons
Malki Einhorn | Digital Art

Through Her Eyes

By Gitty Boshnack

In loving memory of Francis Irwin, 1923 - 2015

Strung around a silver chain placed on the bridge of her nose are her glasses. But Bubbe doesn't see what — or how — you and I see.

When Bubbe looks at the nearly-empty candy dish and the discarded wrappers from the sweets that Menashe snuck, she hardly notices the toothy grin and his pink-stained lips. Instead, she sees the total blackness and seemingly endless labyrinth under what was once her city. She is crawling on her hands and knees through the muck and mire. Her hands are sore and swollen and her knees are covered in lacerations; she feels damp to the bone. Then she hears a movement up ahead. She freezes.

“Who's there?”

She doesn't answer.

“I'm not going to hurt you,” the voice says gently. Bubbe still remains silent. A figure emerges from the shadows.

“Here,” says the voice. “Here are some candies. You can't drink the water down here, but these will help with the thirst.”

Quickly and quietly, she crawls away.

When Yerachum leaves blue fingerprints on Bubbe's wall after fingerprinting, Bubbe doesn't see tiny smudges on her eggshell-colored walls. She sees her own fingertips, stained a deep, berry blue after three years of living in the dark confines of the forest, surviving only on the blueberries she gathered at night. From the ages of twelve to fifteen, she ate them for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with no one to share them with. Till this day, Bubbe will not eat blueberries. Not in muffins. Not in yogurt. Not in pie.

When Chana visits Bubbe, she asks, “What do you think of my haircut?”

Bubbe looks at her granddaughter, but doesn't see Chana's red-dish-blond locks. She sees herself, sitting on a hard wooden bench in

**But Bubbe
doesn't see what
— or how — you
and I see.**

Auschwitz, shuddering.

“Gretta, I get her hair when we shave it off,” shouts the female SS officer to her friend.

“No, I want it! Why should you get it?” Gretta yells back.

“Well, I saw her first!”

“No! I want the pig’s red hair.”

“I have an idea. She has two braids. What if we each get one?”

In her eyes she never left the war, even after she was miles from Poland. We will never see what — or how — Bubbe sees. But we must never stop trying.

Cookie Jar

By Yael Weinberg

The lid came off to dry tears, to mend scrapes, or just to send the simple message of “I love you.” It was home to all shapes, sizes, colors and assortments. Sometimes the aroma of fresh almond-coconut would fog up its rounded walls. Other times, smudges of melted chocolate from a chocolate chip cookie would streak its sides. Those were my favorite.

“A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand” was painted on the front of the jar in plain white script letters. But nothing about this jar was plain. It shook along with us when we jumped for joy, and remained still when we cried, offering us the comfort that everything will be okay.

It was mounted on the tallest mahogany shelf, out of reach from the grabbing hands of hungry children, ensuring the fragile jar’s safety. We had it for as long as I could remember. My mother dispensed each cookie with a spoonful of love and a cup overflowing with joy. The smell of them baking each Thursday warmed me inside. We were each allowed to take one with a tall glass of milk and the rest were put away to comfort us until next week.

The glass cookie jar stayed with us through the sticky messes and the smooth batters until all of my siblings were married and I alone was left to occupy the empty Tudor house. Since I was the last to get married and leave, I got to take with me whatever I needed that was left. Trust me, it wasn’t much.

After I was leaving the house of my childhood to embark on a new journey called “married life,” I took a quick glance around to savor the memories. My eyes rested upon the shelf in the corner of the rustic kitchen and on the jar that no longer held my mother’s cookies, but would always hold her love.

**I was able
to rummage
through the
house like
a scavenger
looking for
forgotten
treasures. Trust
me, not much
was left.**

I carefully scooped up the delicate glass jar in my right hand and swept out the door, closing it with a soft thud. The cookie jar was

placed on the leather car seat next to me, to be taken on my new expedition. It would go on a high shelf in the corner of my kitchen and hold my almond-coconut and chocolate chip cookies. My children would hopefully experience the same thrill I had each time a sticky cookie was placed in my small, pudgy hand. Although I doubt that they will ever taste as good as my mother's, at least they offer a little taste of the home I took with me.

III

Clarity and Obscurity

On Clarity and Obscurity

By Nechoma Flohr, Editor

I study the photograph on the screen held in my left hand. There are three trees, stunted in appearance, spreading their arms upward in an attempt to reach heaven, and sand, so much sand. There is also a girl, barefoot and carrying an old bucket filled with water on her head. Although the image is silent, I know the birds warble and the breeze sings. Although the girl is two-dimensional and static in the frame, to me she is walking, her feet making imprints in the sand as she moves across the desolate terrain. But when place my index finger and thumb on the screen and slowly drag them closer together, the image zooms out and the girl fades into the distance, and the birds become negligible pixels suspended above the parched trees in a silent, frozen landscape of somewhere far away.

When we write, we take still images and fragments of thought scattered haphazardly around our minds, and with deliberate craft, give them texture, clarity, and meaning. We take vague symbols, characters, and ideas, and turn them into the stories only we can tell.

The stories included here do just that.

In her story, “Our Colorful Identity,” Nechi Bertram tells the story of a Jewish artist who explores his experience as a marginalized Jew and manages to leave his permanent imprint on a world that sees in black and white. Through her narration of an unexpected abusive relationship, Avigail Deutsch’s “The Fortunate End,” comments on the downsides of clarity, while also disclosing the benefits of not always knowing everything. “Following the Clues” by Hanna Gerber follows a group of detectives who race to solve a murder. As the story progresses, we learn that things are not as they seem.

These stories, along with the rest of the compelling pieces in this section, demonstrate how, as writers, we have the opportunity to bring clarity to the things we feel are obscure, or simply overly familiar.

Filthy Rich Windows

By Musia Kirschenbaum

I took a deep breath and rang the doorbell, the sharp chimes echoing in the hallway. The door was opened by a polished young woman, and after a brief glance she motioned for me come inside and began walking down the long hall. I matched my breathing with the clicking of her heels on the marble floor as I trailed behind her.

“Ms. Dorhees will be with you in moment,” she said as she stopped walking, leaving me staring at a polished oak wood door. A minute passed, and then another, and another, until finally the door opened and I was led up a flight of stairs.

A melodious voice rang out.

“Ms. Jones, I presume? Before we begin this interview, you should know that being my assistant is no small job.”

Her blonde hair was curled to perfection and her white suit was spotless. Her gold earrings were set with delicate designs that perfectly matched her bangles and necklace. She was seated behind a mahogany desk, holding an engraved Tiffany pen in her French manicured hands. The light from the crystal chandelier bounced off her jewelry, temporarily distracting me. I met her eyes and she motioned for me to sit down.

The next hour consisted of her asking me, ever so politely, my date of birth, how much money I made at my previous job, my family history, and other personal questions that could be thought of. Just when I thought the interview was over, she stood up and walked to the window.

“Please, join me,” she said.

Not wanting to upset her, I stood up and hurried to the window. She poured some sparkling water into a crystal glass, telling me that these glasses had been handmade by her great grandfather using the same glass that was used for the floor to ceiling windows in this room. She told me her family history, how her great grandmother moved to America at the mere age of fifteen, with only seven dollars to her name. I heard about how she married a handyman, and built a large family and successful company up from nothing.

“Women like you and me are unstoppable. We are so high above the rest,” she said, gesturing to people in the street below.

“Look at how dirty they are. Her dress could use some washing, and her hat is covered in dust. That car could use a new paint job and his shoes need a shining. Even the dog he is walking needs a bath. Look at that woman, her purse looks like she dropped it in mud, and her shoes as well. Do you see that laundry hanging off of that building over there? Besides for the fact that the laundry is hanging outside, do you see the streaks of dirt on it? Do you see those children running around over there? They look like they have never been bathed in their lives. You and I, however, are polished inside and out. Our ambition shines as bright our shoes. I have no doubt in my mind that great things lie in store for you. Although it seems like a trivial job now, it will set you on a well paved path for the future. How would you like to come and work for me?”

**Light from
the crystal
chandelier
bounced off
her jewelry,
temporarily
blinding me.**

I came in here expecting at most a ‘we will be in touch’ and a polite ‘you may leave now,’ but here Ms. Dorhees herself was standing in front of me and offering me a highly coveted position. I did not even think about my answer. It appeared in my head the moment the question was asked.

“Oh Ms. Dorhees,” I said, “I could not possibly work for someone with windows as dirty as yours.”

The Coat Closet in the Vestibule

By Hindi Medalie

My mother shuffles down our high-gloss black steps on a Tuesday morning, careful not to scuff her flats. She slides open the mirrored doors of the closet which houses the family's collection of coats and grabs the black wool one she wears on the days she doesn't have important meetings. After tossing the coat on and sliding the door back into place, the repositioned mirror reveals a smudge in her red lipstick. She scrapes the nail of her thumb across the skin under the right side of her lip, regretting that she hadn't opted for a gloss. Fixated on the mirror, her eyebrows rise in skeptical disapproval, telling herself she could have put a better ensemble together. Redirecting her eyes from her watch back to the mirror, she cups both of her hands on the ends of her freshly curled hair and scrunches upward before running out with her head down to catch the train.

After grabbing her lunch, my nine year old sister runs to the front of the house, cautious not to slip on the polished marble. She shoves her feet into her Adidas sneakers with three minutes to spare until the bus comes to our corner. Once her coat is on with the ribbon tied in a perfect bow, she twirls. Intimately, she approaches the mirror, as if to assess whether her eyes have become any more green since last night, because they've been doing that recently. She takes her right hand and tucks her hair, black as night, behind her right ear, then offers herself a wink of reassurance that she'll tackle the day with style. She angles her feet outward to practice the first position she learned last Sunday at ballet lessons and adopts the posture of a skyscraper. However, as her feet turn outward, her focus darts to self reflection, being at the brink of seeing herself the same way my mother did just ten minutes ago. She slaps the insoles of her shoes together. She does one more twirl for good measure and runs down the block to her bus that she is now a minute late for.

**She takes her
right hand and
puts her hair,
black as night,
behind her right
ear, then offers
herself a wink of
reassurance**

After scarfing down his toast, my brother rushes to the front of the house, thrusts the sliding door aside and grabs his down coat. He whisks it on and hurls open the front door, then dashes off to school

without looking in the mirror, or closing the door behind him.

The bitter air from outside creeps in, causing my one-year-old brother to cry in discomfort. My father makes his way over to the door with the baby in hand. He places him on the floor, shuts the front door and then slides the mirrored doors closed. Immediately the baby locks eyes with himself and squeals with delight. The grin of someone who is seeing their best friend for the first time in a year breaks out across his face. He reaches out with his chubby fingers to bang on the glass, as if to grab hold of his newfound playmate. My father coos at him admirably, momentarily checks to see if he has leftover crumbs in his beard in the mirrors' reflective surface, and then returns to the kitchen to feed the baby.

I trudge down last, my new boots making me clumsier than usual. I slide open the door to take my coat while simultaneously checking that the concealer I used to hide the physical evidence of just three-hours sleep under my eyes is well blended. As I stick my hands through the sleeves I blow the staticky hairs around my face away only to create a tornado of frizz. I turn my head slightly to the left, presenting my good side to the mirror, but am greeted by a new blemish forming adjacent to the one that had finally faded. Moving dangerously close to the mirror to examine it, I'm struck by my grown out brows and teeth that desperately need whitening. I take an extra minute to put my self-esteem and hair into place before giving myself a reassuring nod. As I step out the door into the brisk Tuesday morning air, I make a mental note to use the back door tomorrow, where there's no mirrored sliding door.



Bottled Up
Sarah Setareh | Other

Following the Clues

By Hanna Gerber

I stared down the ornate hardwood table, glancing at the various expressions of those sitting around it, ranging from shock and confusion, to anticipation and intrigue. The woman to my right, whose Chanel N5 perfume was cutting off my air supply, just finished her latest round of questioning. The sound of mechanical pencils furiously scribbling on yellow legal pads echoed around the ten-foot marble pillars and thick silken drapes. I bent over my haphazardly stapled sticky notes, trying to make sense of my incoherent scribbles, while hoping none of the others would notice that it wasn't the impressive legal pad they were all using. Understanding enough of my "notes" to successfully formulate a couple of questions, I anxiously gulped in a breath, and attempting to exude an air of confidence, probed, "Which party guests were in the dining room at the time of the murder?"

After asking my "diligently" prepared questions, I pushed back from the table and stretched. Looking at my silver watch, the thin hand taunted me through the glass covering, reminding me of my evaporating time. I paced up and down the red plush carpet, the facts flashing through my brain as I walked *up and down and up and down*. We were all in a time crunch, the murder had to be solved within the next few hours and we all knew it. The competition between us heightened the anxiety, we all wanted to be the one to solve the high profile case.

Yet my brain wouldn't cooperate, and my thoughts continued to scatter as my watch ticked faster, seeming to speed up time, but of course at a family dinner it did just the opposite. Returning to my seat, I thought back to when we were all in the library, with the beautiful, or in my opinion, old and dusty, books. I was almost positive the murder had occurred there, but the detective to my left said something that made me think otherwise. It was all very confusing, and just as I was sure of some-

**Looking at my
silver watch,
the thin hand
taunted me
through the
glass covering,
reminding me of
my evaporating
time.**

thing, I began to doubt myself. The detective two seats down from me was asking a question, when something he said made me stop. I glanced down at my disorderly notes and it all clicked. I was going to solve the case.

Trying to remain calm, I stood up from my chair, and moved about eleven spaces to the director's office. The others around the table looked up, realizing I was about to make an accusation.

"I think," I began, trying to remain poised, "the homicide took place in the library, the weapon was a revolver, and the murderer was Professor Plum."

I glanced at my teammates, some who thought I was wrong glanced at each other with smirks and some, upset I had solved the case before them and scowled jealousy at me. The lady with far too much perfume, hesitantly opened the yellow envelope that would decide my victory. She glanced at the cards and with a begrudging smile and announced, "Well done Mr. Green, you are correct."



I Can Almost See It
Nomie Fermaglich | Studio Art

The Glass House

By Rivka Sabel

Her house sat on one of the more quiet streets of her town, though her street lost some of its serenity after she had moved in. She had few neighbors, but the street was always buzzing with people coming and going up the cobblestone path to her glass house. She was the granddaughter of a wealthy woman, known throughout the village as one not to meddle with. Her grandmother had accumulated a large fortune but refused to share it with anyone. After spending her life alone with her belongings, her grandmother had passed, leaving her property to her granddaughter. She swore to not emulate her grandmother in any manner, so she built a house with wall of glass that extended from floor to ceiling to show her community that she was open and welcoming. Her home appeared as though it was incarnated from a sketch of what the world would look like in centuries to come.

The woman who lived inside spent her days with nothing planned, but always seemed to be engaged in something. She would observe her street to see if anyone was passing and would invite them inside. The whole village knew to come to the glass house on at the edge of the town, and they would be taken care of. People recognized her transparency, and didn't need to search for long to see the goodness of her soul. Her generous disposition and daily confections drew many people to her house every day. She would offer them her belongings, time and security. Anything that would come through the colossal glass doors, would leave apportioned in the hands of others.

One day, she received an unexpected gift of silver coins, for which she could find no use. People always accepted her gracious offerings of her precious belongings, but no one dared take the silver from her. Intent on not letting the silver go to waste, she went outside her home and slathered molten silver on the glass walls. One silver coin was conserved as a remembrance to when she was the recipient of a gift, rather than the giver. When she returned inside she could no

**People always
accepted
her gracious
offerings of
her precious
belongings, but
no one dared
take the silver...**

longer see out to the street, rather her eyes only saw the contents of her home, mirrored towards her.

From then on, her house became less inviting to others and every day fewer people visited her home. She no longer observed her street awaiting guests, rather she enjoyed the newfound privacy. She was enamored with seeing her reflection mirrored on the walls. The silver glistened more than the crystal ever did. She delighted at the sound the smooth metal made as she tapped it with her fingertips. Extra items piled up in her home, and instead of being allotted to others, she discovered new places to keep them. She laughed at the memory of people calling her home the glass house and wondered if they called it the mirrored house now.

She loved living in her mirrored palace. Yet, she despised how natural sunlight no longer streamed through her glass walls. She missed seeing the gleam in people's eyes as their smiles perked upon their faces. Her once spacious house now felt as if it was closing in on her. The metallic stench became unbearably stifling. Her grandmother's sly smirk began to sneak up onto the walls of her house. She longed to flee the walls that besieged her. So she went back outside, took her last silver coin and began scratching the silver off, and little by little her house became the glass house again.



Fragile

Tamar Dan | Other



Multifaceted

Nechama Reichman | Digital Art

No Cinnamon, Please

By Channa Gelbtuch

Tap Tap Tap Tap. My right hand's pointer finger drums the glass display case, the tempo growing faster and faster, until it sounds a lot more like *Tap Tap Tap Tap*. My left hand's nails are found clenched in between the rows of my top and bottom teeth. *Crunch Crunch Crunch Crunch.* My brain enters a frenzy of a thousand thoughts screaming all at once, each one demanding my immediate attention.

Should I tell barista that I want low-fat milk when she asks what kind of milk I want? Wait, but what if she doesn't ask? I don't want to be stuck with black coffee again. And what is the correct terminology regarding muffins? Do I ask for it to be "toasted," or do I opt for the general phrase "heated up"? And if I don't want sweetener, do I ask for "regular sugar" or do I plainly state that I want "sugar", assuming she will know what I mean? That ad with the "caramel macchiato" looks really good, but how do you even read that? Mah-kee-ah-too? I guess I'll just settle with something I know how to pronounce properly, like a cappuccino.

**My brain enters
a frenzy of
a thousand
thoughts
screaming all
at once, each
one demanding
my immediate
attention.**

I look over to the front of the line, watching a man place his order. How I envy him as he proclaims with perfect ease that he would like to order a "small vanilla latte with skim milk and two splendas." Everything about him is just so... what's the word? That's right. Normal. I doubt he agonizes over how to inform the cashier that he wants skim milk in his latte. And I bet he didn't even decide what to order until a moment before the cashier asked. I suddenly realize that the once stretching line is dwindling by the second, prompting my heart to go *Thump Thump Thump Thump*, just as fast as my finger taps. I know I want a cappuccino, but I still haven't figured out what to say about the milk... or the muffin... or the sugar.

"Nnnneexxttttt!" I hear a shrill voice calling me to my doom.

My eyes turn forward, horrified to see an empty space before me, separating only me and the cashier.

“What would you like to order?”

I make a single *Gulp*.

“Ummm, uh, I’ll take a small, ummm, actually medium...”

The cashier rolls her eyes and mimics my finger-tapping movement, irritated. The spotlight’s on me, but I was never given my lines, and let’s just say I’m not good at improv.

“Medium cappuccino no cinnamon on top sugar milk lowfat chocolate chip muffin”

My voice sounds unrecognizable, even to my own ears.

“What was that? Did you say you wanted a cappuccino with lowfat milk?”

Cough Cough Cough Cough.

“Yes, and no cinnamon on top.”

I hate cinnamon.

“No cinnamon on top, right. You want sugar?”

“Regular sugar. No cinnamon on top.”

She stares at me as if she can see right through me, squinting her eyes, trying to untangle my jumbled thoughts.

“Okay, no cinnamon on top. And you wanted a chocolate chip muffin? Is that right?”

“Yes, and can I get that toast- heated up?”

“Okay, so that’s a medium cappuccino with lowfat milk, regular sugar, and no cinnamon on top, and a chocolate chip muffin?”

“Toasted.”

“Right, toasted. That’ll be \$6.72.”

I pull out a ten dollar bill and give it to the cashier with a shaking hand. She places the change into my now clammy palm. My face begins to match my hot pink sweater, as I desperately attempt to stuff the change back into my wallet at top speed. While I struggle to finish getting the cash in, what seems like hundreds of pairs of eyes glare at me, shaming me for each moment I stand there, delay-

ing people's orders. I collect myself, finally exiting the line, feeling like a veteran of war, waiting to collect the spoils. I am handed a cold paper bag containing my muffin and leave the store, sipping my cappuccino. I scrunch up my nose from the horrid taste left on my tongue. Cinnamon.



Sweet Tooth

Nechama Fermaglich | Digital Art

The Unfortunate End

By Avigail P. Deutsch

I remember the first time I met you. You were beautiful, bright, and mystical, and all I wanted was to get to know you better. You were so enchanting but no one could get in. Except I did. I was naive and afraid and I thought you were the best thing that happened to me.

I was addicted to you right from the start. You gave me a sense of power. You made me feel like I could control my life, my world. Everything was known to me when you were around; I was fearless for I had no reason to fear the unknown. This anxiety would keep other girls awake at night, but you made me feel secure... at least in the beginning.

But then you began to tell me things. Things that I didn't want to hear, but still wanted to know. Things I didn't want to do, but I did because you told me to. You made me worry to the point that I would lay awake for hours unable to sleep. I was a nervous wreck, but that didn't stop you from telling me terrible things. But every now and then you would give me assurance, and I would clutch that ray of sunshine for weeks. I couldn't function with you, but I couldn't live knowing you could tell me more.

I've been thinking about us. We talked about the Future a lot, you and I, and I always thought you knew everything there was to know. But today, on my way to school, I wasn't hit by a truck, nor snatched by sinister men. I made it into school without a scratch. In fact, I made it through the whole day without a single catastrophe. I also did not become President of the United States, or a famous director. I realized that I was living in my Future, and it was so different from the one you predicted for me. This made me rethink all the secrets you told me.

**I realized that I
was living in my
Future, and it
was so different
from the one you
predicted for
me.**

Now I understand that I am creating my Future day by day through the choices I make. You can predict my choices, but it's up to me to be influenced or not. And maybe there is an unpleas-

ant surprise waiting for me around the corner. But if there is, why should I worry and constantly anticipate it? You see, a wise man once said, “worrying means you suffer twice.” So I shall keep my Future murky and save myself the stress of trying to peer through. Whatever comes will come whether or not I was forewarned.

So, my dear Crystal Ball, this is the end. There is a Divine plan for all of us and you have no part in mine. I’m letting you go today. Go find some other prey. Thanks.

And beware the charms of clarity.



In Her World
Yaffa Barsky | Digital Art

Our Colorful Identity

By Nechi Bertram

My name was Moishe Zakharovich Shagal. With a name like “Moishe” my Jewish identity was as obvious as a sunflower on a concrete slab, but it forced me to express myself and become who I am today.

The first time I saw my mother bribe someone was the first time I understood. Jews weren’t allowed to attend high school like all other Russian citizens, so I watched as my mother bribed the headmaster to let me join. She gave him 50 rubles, and there began my obsession. The light flickered off the coins in a multitude of directions, creating rainbows that jumped to and from the metal, dancing. It was then that I discovered I too wanted to create rainbows. I wanted to create colors from every observable angle so one would see something at first glance and then something else upon another.

I was nothing but a boy, young and inexperienced, but I was fortunate to be taken under the wings of masters. Still, I painted what I knew: fiddlers, houses with snowy roofs, the dreams of my city, Vitebesk. I painted the world simply as I saw it, overflowing with hues that begged to be seen by everyone else. The identity that I was forced to hide expressed itself as plain as day in my work. I left a mark on a world that left a mark on my people.

**I left a mark on
a world that left
a mark on my
people.**

In the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem you can find what I am proudest of. Twelve stained glass windows. Each window made with the same palette, yet each blending colors to convey different aspects of who we are as a light unto the nations. Reuven is the shimmer on the ocean. Shimon, the color of midnight. Levi, a wash of gold. Judah in a blaze of ruby royalty. Dan, true blue. Naphtali, swift yellow. Gad, forrest green. Asher, blooming olive trees. Issachar, aged parchment. Zebulun, the color of red robes. Joseph, the color of hard-earned power and success. Benjamin, the color of introspection and victory.

To me people are colors, reflecting those around them, and most importantly reflecting themselves. To each person you are dif-

ferent, some of your colors are below the surface, while other tones are more pronounced.

Although I started out as Moishe Shagal, many of you know me as Marc Chagall. I have survived despite all those who wanted to destroy me and my nation. We all come from one of these twelve passionate warriors, their colors live within us till today and keep us from living in black and white. To live is to let your colors shine.



Fragile Faith
Chavie Dweck | Studio Art

III

Strength and Fragility

On Strength and Fragility

By Rachel Berenshteyn, Editor

We often try to present ourselves as unbreakable, to the world at large and even amongst our closest allies. So afraid to let anyone see our flaws, we cover them up by boasting of accomplishments and conquests. That, however, does not help anyone. By doing that, not only do we prevent others from reaching out in support, but we also fail to serve as role models for those who mistakenly believe that asking for help is weakness.

Everyone has a fragile component within themselves, though few people wish to share that aspect of their characters, opting instead to hide behind a brave face as they silently struggle to keep their fragile selves from shattering. The term “strength” carries within it a distinct meaning for every individual. For some, like it does for the figure skater in Ahuva Mermelstein’s “My Fragile Gift”, it means summoning the power to put your life and spirit back together after a physical challenge. For others, like the protagonist in Ayelet Wein’s “United” who is faced with sacrifice, it may mean putting aside your fears to take on a seemingly impossible task. We see in Ahuva Lisker’s piece, “A Mosaic of Me,” that it takes courage and strength to address one’s fragilities, but that doing so also allows one to begin reassembling themselves into a more resilient, remarkable person.

The common theme among all the pieces included here is that to be strong, one must first push themselves out of their area of complacency into a position that demands formidability. In doing so, we find it entirely possible to be both fragile and strong.

Fusion

By Yael Farkas

Every piece of glass is distinct, but to find the uniqueness, you must go beneath the surface. Shape, size and color tell the story of its past. Fragments of glass scattered across the dining room table once held delicate flowers. The small shards dispersed across the kitchen floor were previously a drinking glass. Even though these shattered pieces can no longer fulfill the tasks they were created for, they still hold value and can be reused to create an entirely new story. I've seen it happen.

Every summer I go with my family to Camp Simcha. Children battling serious illnesses including cancer and numerous genetic diseases spend two weeks in a positive environment where the focus is not on their medical condition. They are given the chance to make friends, try new things, and have fun. With the help of the dedicated counselors and staff, this special place takes in children many would consider broken or shattered, and renews their spirit and reinforces their courage to help them handle the year ahead.

In camp, my mother runs the Glass Fusion workshop. In this workshop, children have the opportunity to take discarded shards of broken glass and fuse them together to create something unique and beautiful. My mother helps the campers make dishes, picture frames, jewelry and bookmarks. They are able to take their creations home and when they come back the next summer, they often tell my mother that having the art they created in their home brings back memories of the extraordinary summer they had. It also reminds them of the strength they found in themselves at Camp Simcha.

The shattered glass that were fused to make a piece of art became more than just candle holders, they worked to repair a mother's broken heart.

A few years ago, my mother approached a girl that she noticed only made pieces to give as gifts. When my mother asked why she hadn't made anything for herself the girl replied that she would only make something for herself if she would be able to use it regularly.

After exploring this idea a bit more, my mother learned that her family had a minhag that all girls began lighting Shabbat candles when they turned three years old. Although my mother had never helped a camper make candlesticks before, she was determined to help this girl create tealight candle holders. She appealed to my father to make the molds from scratch, just for her. By the end of the workshop, the girl was elated with the gift she made for herself with my mother's help as she would be able to use them every Friday night.

Sadly, just a few years later, this special girl passed away from her illness. However, her candles remain on the silver tray in her home, next to her mother's Shabbos candles. Every week to this day, her mother uses these candle holders to light for shabbos. The shattered glass that were fused to make a piece of art became more than just candle holders, they worked to repair a mother's broken heart.

As I help pack away the extra glass remnants at the end of the summer, I look at the shards and see all their potential. I know that someday they will be used to infuse happiness and hope into another person's heart.



Beautiful Thoughts

Ayala Cweiber | Other

Pivot

Ahuva Mermelstein

When I feel the crisp air brush across and my feet find stability on the listening white ice, I feel free. To me, the rink feels more comfortable than being in my own bed. Since the age of five I have been skating in national competitions. Although I'm only fourteen, I've been told I have a promising career ahead of me. So I practice for my future. For weeks and months I practice, hours every day, until my first international competition arrives.

I pull on my light blue a-line dress and lace up my clean white skates. My routine plays over in my mind and I picture the crowd giving me a standing ovation as I land my final triple axel jump. Name after name crackles over the loudspeaker and the melodies change one after another with only booming applause breaking the chain.

The female judge with sleek hair announces over the loudspeaker.

“Sophia Wiston. Number 381.”

That's me. My coach's determined eyes meet mine, but I am not able to reply to them with the same strength. I suddenly realize I am nervous, more nervous than I have ever been. I direct my eyes to my mother standing just to the left and she can tell right away something is off. Without hesitation, she smiles wide and mouths the words, “Don't worry. You can do this.”

I glide onto the rink and feel my blades scrape the ice. I am the last skater today so the surface is not as smooth as I am used to. The tune of Swan Lake starts and my instincts kick in. The notes fade into the background as I dance, leap, spin, and gracefully land each move in time with the music.

In the final crescendo of the melody, I dig my toe pick into the ice and initiate the pivot that will lead into a Lutz, but my feet betray me. My arms flail as I try to catch myself, but I land hard on my back with one of my legs bent awkwardly behind me. The gasps of the crowd grow louder than the music, which sounds more haunting than I

... she smiles
wide and mouths
the words,
“Don't worry.
You can do
this.”

remember as I lay still on the ground.

My mother's voice resonates across the ice.

“Sophia!”

I feel her presence and then everything swims.

My eyes slowly open and take in the white sheets, doctors and nurses milling around me. I try to get up but my legs don't follow my brain's command. Instead, I feel a foreign, numb, and tingling sensation. Confused, I scan the room and spot a doctor talking to my mother.

“What happened?” I manage to ask. My palms start to get sweat so I try taking deep breaths.

My mother's sorrowful eyes meet the doctor's and she gives him a slight nod permitting him to leave the room. She sits on my bed and begins to speak.

“Honey, there really is no easy way to... from the waist down... the doctors told us it's nearly impossible...”

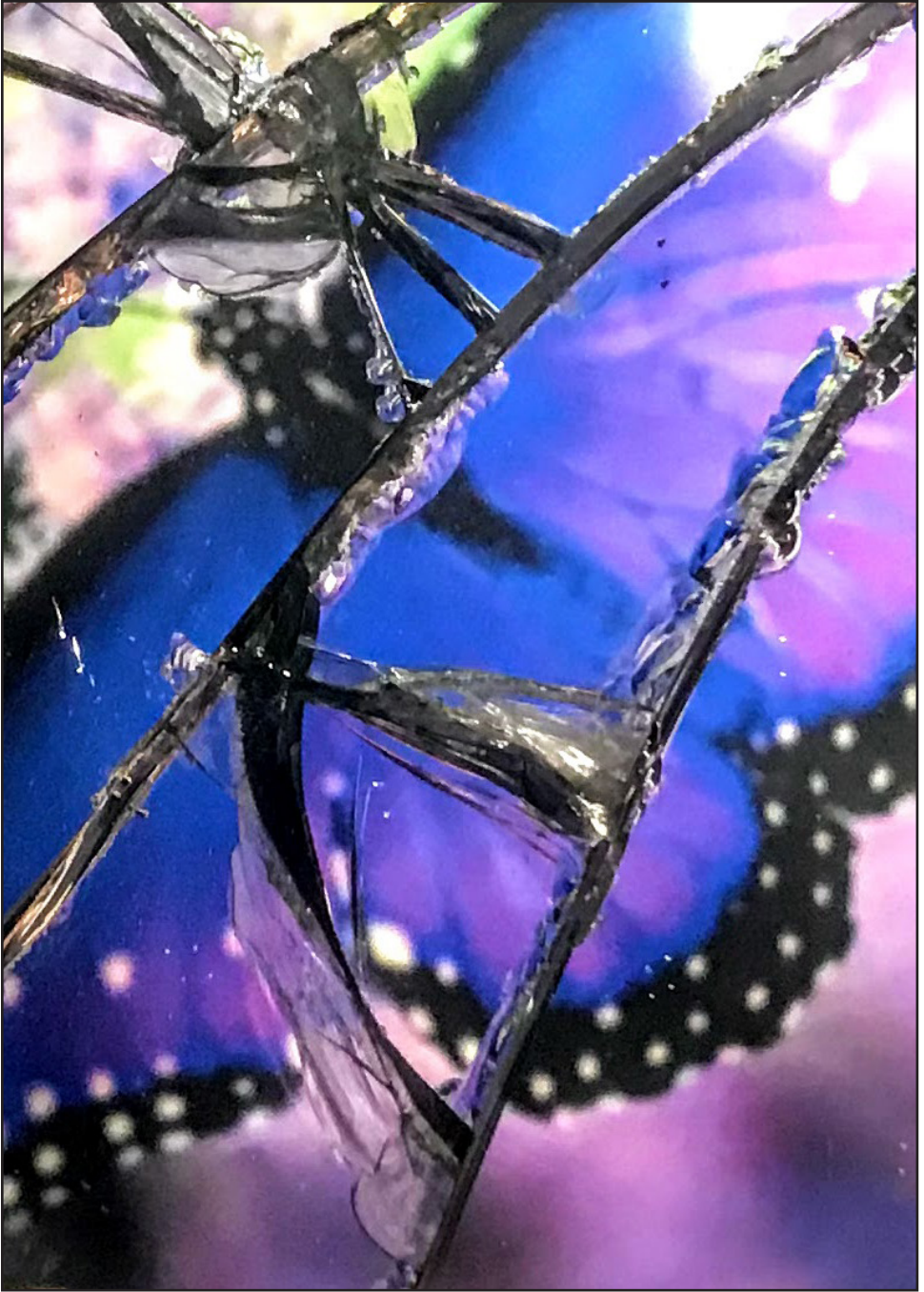
I don't catch every word. My mind races and my eyes bat furiously as if I can blink away the horrific news. Hot tears well up in my eyes and I look directly at my mother who has clearly been crying for some time. Suddenly, salty tears run down my cheeks as I start to sob uncontrollably. I feel her warm embrace tighten as if to still my shaking. After what seems like hours without speaking yet hearing her words over and over again, a few settle in my mind. The ‘nearly’ before ‘impossible’ means there's hope. The start will be difficult, all beginnings are, but I will learn to glide again. One step at a time, I'll learn to walk, and then, one day, I'll hear my name announced at the Olympics.

When I feel there are no tears left inside, I look at my mother again.

“Mom, I'm not giving up,” I shakily declare.

She proceeds with care, “But Sophia, but it's nearly impossible...”

“Don't worry. I can do this.”



Shattered Wings Still Fly

Shani Hans | Photography

Oops

By Malka Hirsch

This always happens to me. I don't do it on purpose, and I certainly don't like the attention. Why do I always have to be the one to spill the tomato soup on great aunt Bertha, or break the brand new vase that the neighbour just brought over? It's always me.

I try to be careful, but it never works. I get a glance from everyone nearby and looks of disappointment from my parents. They are probably wondering how they raised such a clumsy child. Why can't I be more like Kat? She never brakes anything. Anytime there is a *smash* heard in the room, my parents' eyes instantly gaze at me. And last night, it happened again.

I was out with my family at a party. Dinner was just being served when I heard a startling yet familiar crash. I looked down at the cup that was in my hand seconds ago to see it now lying fragmented on the floor. My mother's fiery red face and sharp eyes pop out at me and I start trying to apologize. Everyone tells me it is okay, but I don't feel better. I have this butterfly that lives in my stomach. He's always there, so I've just learned to get along with it. It understands my gracelessness. Being such a clutz, I've had many moments of embarrassment, and every time I do something like this, my butterfly tries to take flight.

**I have this
butterfly that
lives in my
stomach. He's
always there, so
I've just learned
to get along with
it.**

Today, though, I finally feel better. I realize I'm not the only one with imperfections. When I first heard the crash at lunch with my relatives, I looked down at my hand along with everyone at the table. This reflex kicks in any time I hear a *crash, smash, boom, crack, or pow* because I automatically assume it's me. This time, though, only two sharp eyes stare back at me. Where are the other two? I look at my father, but he is looking at my mother. She is as red as the clown's nose from Sally's birthday party last summer. Everyone else's eyes have turned to her too. For once, it wasn't me.

"Don't worry, mom," I say reassuringly, "It happens all the time."

Passengers

By Osnat Cohen

It has been a long day and the last thing I want is to sit on a bus for four hours. I slowly make my way to a window seat and grumpily sit down, putting my bag on the unoccupied seat next to me to prevent anyone from sitting there. The doors close and the Egged bus emerges from the side streets of Eilat and onto the highway towards Tel Aviv. I close my eyes and recap my day: I got to school late and now have detention on Thursday, Shalom and Yosef got into a fight again, and Ima forgot to pack my lunch for the second time this week.

I open my eyes and glance around at the other passengers. There are two little kids playing cards together next to their mother who seems like she needs a good night's sleep. I look out the window and stare off into the endless sight of mountains that fill this eerily quiet desert and slowly drift off to sleep with the thought of my cozy, warm bed just a few hours away.

The speed of my thoughts creates a dizzying effect compared to the stillness of the scene.

The rest happened too fast. One minute we were driving on the road in the middle of the desert, and the next, the bus was motionless. Piercing screams and shattered glass were coming from every direction. I jerk up and make eye contact with an injured passenger who mouths "hide!" just before he loses consciousness. I freeze. Then bullets cascade through the windows and broken glass and blood spray just after I manage to duck under my seat and cover myself with my coat.

Then it's quiet. Too quiet. Suddenly, I hear a little boy's voice call out.

"Are they gone yet?"

A stampede of footsteps comes running back to the bus, someone pulls the trigger, and then they run off into the darkness of the night.

I stay under my seat for a while, too scared to move a muscle that might create a sound. I hear a distant voice somewhere toward

the front of the bus asking if anyone is there. I hesitate, then raise my head slightly, just enough to see who is speaking. I look around the bus and my eyes fill with tears. My breathing feels difficult. The speed of my thoughts creates a dizzying effect compared to the stillness of the scene. So many people aren't moving. Many have their eyes jarred open while others seem as though they are in a peaceful slumber.

My eyes meet those of a few others also looking around, reacting to the scene just as I am. I hear a little girl cry. I make my way to the sound and I see her, not more than five years old, trying to shake her mother into consciousness. She moves on to her older brother, but he's just lying there staring at the ceiling. I hear sirens and helicopters, and then a man enters the bus. He is not in a soldier's uniform, but I go with him. He takes me, the crying girl, and another man off the bus, careful not to step on the broken glass and lives all around us. I learn he is an MDA as he drives me to the hospital where my parents wait for me anxiously.

After being checked by the medical staff, my family and I drive home in silence. During the ride, I recap everything that happened that day: I got to school late, Shalom and Yosef fought again, Ima forgot to pack my lunch, and I survived a terrorist attack.

Based on true events.



Eleutheria

Noa Garfinkel | Digital Art

United

By Ayelet Wein

Monday. No, Sunday. Maybe Monday. He couldn't remember the last time he hugged his two young children, a boy and a girl. Was it when his daughter showed him the hundred-percent she received on her spelling test or when he went to kiss her goodnight? And his son. He wondered when he last kissed his beautiful son. Those were the only thoughts going through his mind, even amidst all the chaos exploding around him. He knew that though it would be difficult, his wife would manage without him. But his kids were so young, and he knew that they still had so much to be taught. He also knew that he couldn't think about this anymore, and that if he was going to anything with his last few minutes, he had to act fast.

They decided that he would go second. Strategizing, infused with fear and bravery, they next decided *when*. Looking out the window from the plane, he knew that miles below were his wife, children, and friends. Fate placed him on this side of the window on United flight 93 that Tuesday in September, but evil and hatred would orphan his children and make his wife a widow.

Together they knew that it was their job to save as many people as possible, but he needed to hear the sound of his wife's voice one more time. The last remark he made could not be the last one she'd hear from him, so he cautiously took out his phone, lowered his voice, and called her.

"I think we're being hijacked, but don't worry about me. Take care of the kids, and take care of yourself. Three of us are going to do something. Put me on speaker, let me speak to the kids."

He whispered to his family, "I love you," and quickly hung up before his kids could hear him cry. Just before the call disconnected, his wife heard him call out, "Let's roll" as he and the others prepared to fight back.

He saw three. He saw three, but he heard through frightful chatter among his flight mates that there were four. He and the other five could fight them, and if they could not, it was still their job to

... their power stemmed from violence and cowardliness. It was no match for justice and compassion.

try. They had knives, but their power stemmed from violence and cowardliness. It was no match for justice and compassion.

As he sprinted toward the terrorists he relinquished his fear, and they began to run too. That was the plan. Fight while someone else took back control of the cockpit and tried to reroute the plane. They understood the situation, and their probable fate, but they had to forget about it and take fought the terrorists in the cabin. The six in the back defeated the three, but they didn't know the man trying to fly the plane was not as successful.

34 innocent lives were lost that day. And 6 heroes.



Fallen Faces

Michal Rogosnitzky | Digital Art

A Mosaic of Me

By Ahuva Lisker

Yes. Silence is a form of communication, but too much silence creates distance. Not physical distance, the other kind. It's ironic that two people can live so close in proximity, yet still be miles away from one another. The moment that mouths stop moving, words are forgotten, and the stillness can be felt in the air, is the moment that I feel myself crack a little bit. When I see you hanging out with them and not me, I crack a little more. And when I'm left alone in a room to make conversation with a wall, I crack so much that I am forced to put my armor on. The thing about armor is it keeps everything that is outside, outside. And anything that is inside stays inside. It's a coping mechanism, but with it comes collateral damage.

No one can ever let me down as long as I don't have expectations of them. So no, I don't expect you to call me. I don't expect you to say "hi" to me anymore. I don't expect you to be nice. I don't expect you to invite me over. Somewhere along the way, "I don't expect you to" turned into "I don't want you to." So no, I don't want you to call me. I don't want you to say "hi" to me anymore. I don't want you to be "nice."

If I've learnt anything it's that in life, objects in the mirror may be closer than they appear. So, I still have to see you, make occasional small talk, and pretend that we were never really friends. A lifetime ago we mirrored each other's moves. We wore the same clothing, did the same activities. We thought, spoke and walked in sync. But now, the sand on the bottom of the hourglass tells me that "us" is a lifetime ago. My reflection shows me I have changed and my armor is no longer needed. So now it's time to take it all off and see what damage has truly been done. And if I fall into a million pieces, I'll just pick them up and form a new, beautiful mosaic of me.

**... when I'm
left alone in a
room to make
conversation
with a wall, I
crack so much
that I am forced
to put my armor
on.**



Shards

Shoshana Escott | Other

IV

Shattered/Restored

Shattered/Restored

By Shani Hans, Editor

We often fall into the trap of black-and-white thinking: the idea that things are one way or another and can never be changed. But, night turns to day, winter turns to spring, sadness can be displaced by happiness, what's lost can be found, and broken things can be restored. The word "break" carries a heaviness and dismal overtone, and although sometimes the negative connotation feels accurate, it is not applicable to every situation. As Ernest Hemingway said, "We are strongest in the places that we have been broken."

In Yaffa Barsky's "ShatteRing," she explores the role that destruction plays in pursuing happiness, while Chaya Rosenberg's "An Answered Call" considers how time and distance can be agents of healing. In "1979," Odelia Barsky suggests that irreparable damage doesn't always mean a total loss. The distinct pieces in this section employ various narrative styles and techniques designed to elicit humor, grief, shock, relief, and joy, leaving the reader perhaps less fixed in their thinking, yet more whole from the collective experience.

Although it may seem that writing is a black-and-white process, just characters printed on a white sheet of paper, writing is a way to evoke emotion, both in yourself and in the reader. It is a way to uncover extraordinary inner potential and unlock the unfathomable power hidden within.

Writing affords the simultaneous existence of the real and the imaginary. It can be used to transform something heartbreaking into something beautiful; to breathe life into something wilted; to relive something from the past or invent something for the future. The ability to combine twenty-six separate symbols into a story that forms and reforms our thinking is what allows each and every one of us to continue moving forward.

1979

By Odelia Barsky

It is a bright, summer morning and the sun is shining through the large, French windows as I sip my coffee. My three-year-old daughter wanders curiously around the house, exploring the cabinets for something interesting. I smile as I make my way back into the kitchen.

Suddenly, I hear a crash followed by a deafening shriek. The, the sweetest and most innocent whimper is offered, “Mommy, I’m sorry.”

I don’t even have to check to know what happened. But still, I must make sure. That’s when I see it, sprawled across the living room floor, shattered. I didn’t have to touch the tiny shards to feel the pain. Before I can respond, my mind takes me back to Tbilisi.

Tbilisi, Georgia 1979

It was a cold winter day in Tbilisi, Georgia. The year was 1979, one that is deeply engraved in my mind and heart. It was a year of heartbreak and confusion for my family. The KGB began to arrest the wealthy Jews of Georgia, like my grandfather. Every day, we feared that dreaded knock which would snatch our grandfather-our patriarch- out of our lives. But I was three and I was little. So, instead of worrying, I sat beside Dzedo at the stone cold table and munched on my grandmother’s homemade cookies. I heard myself chewing a bit too loud, and so I looked up and managed a half-smile at my grandfather. He gazed into my eyes as if to say, “It’s okay. I love you.”

So I continued chomping away. Little did I know that this would be the last of these precious moments with him. I took a large bite out of another cookie and felt the crumbs fall gently onto my lap. Dzedo chuckled as he reached across to grab one. We shared a few more moments like this, in pure peace and calm.

Then, without warning, there was a knock at the door. Everything became a blur as Dzedo jolted up from his chair and my grandmother suddenly appeared in the room. She came running into to his arms and he hugged her tight as he told her to stay strong and take care of the family. She nodded, wiped away a tear and, in a voice as thin as glass, she said, “Go.”

Dzedo turned to me, eyes twinkling, and said, “Come quick. I have something for you.” So I followed him as he led me into their ornately decorated living room. As he opened up a chest, a louder, more urgent knock was heard on the large wooden doors.

“Davai! Open up!” barked a thick, Russian voice.

“Dzedo,” I cried, frozen with fear. “What’s happening? Who are they?”

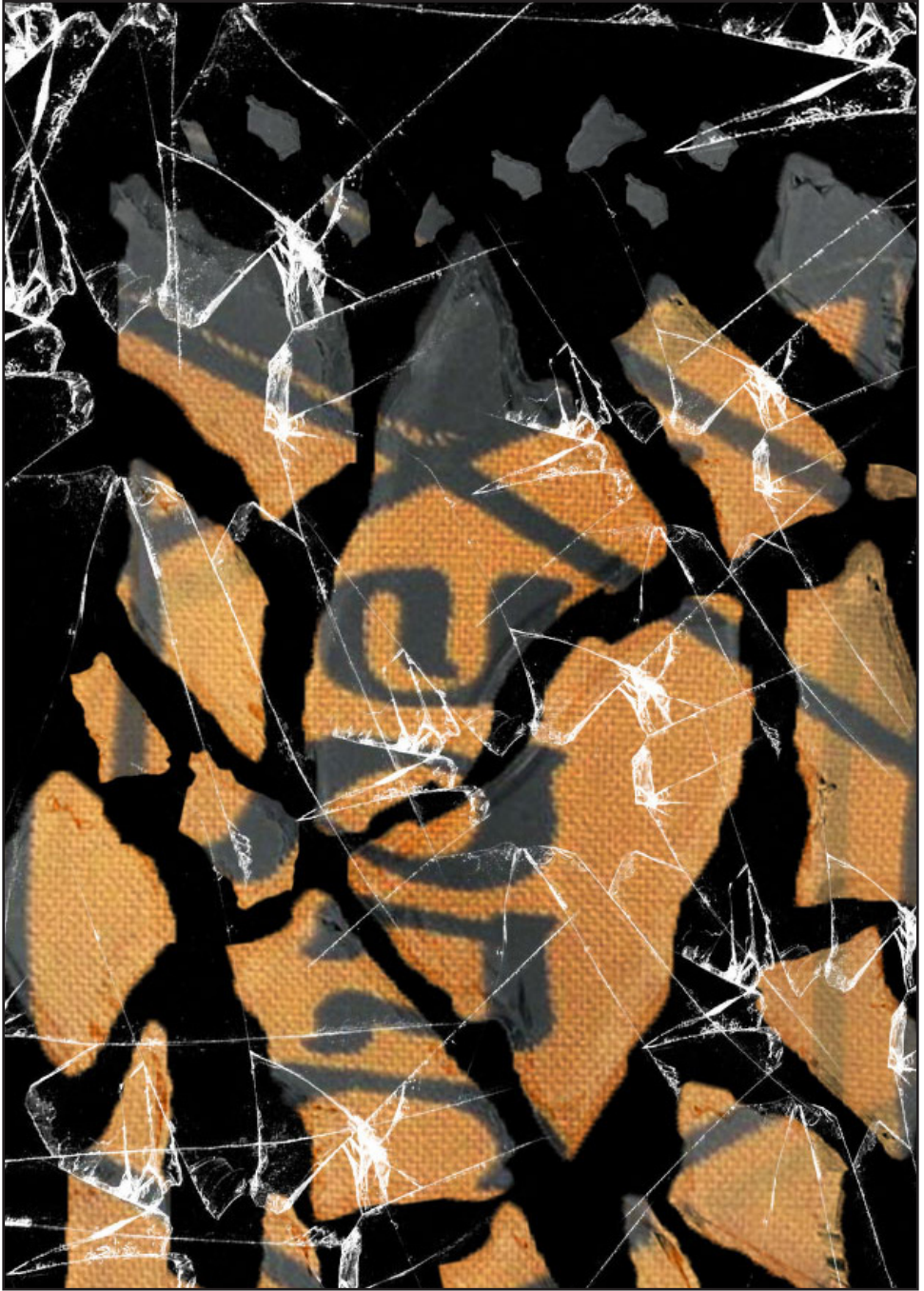
He cupped my face with his steady hands and gently brushed my cheek.

“I’m going to give you something and you mustn’t lose it. Every time you miss me, hold it close to your heart. I’m always with you, *chemi shvili*.” With that, he took out a beautiful miniature snow globe from the bottom shelf of the grand chest and handed it to me. On it were the words ‘Tbilisi, Georgia 1979.’ He hugged me tightly one last time, and we walked back into the kitchen. I looked down into my hands, pink marks created in my palms from my firm grip on the snow globe. My grandmother handed him his fur coat, which he swung over his broad shoulders and with that, he opened the door. He turned back one more time and we looked into each other’s eyes, and our hearts said goodbye. Before I could muster a word, the door slammed behind him.

New York, USA 2017

As I am jolted back to reality, my eyes remain glued to the broken glass. Like my heart, it cannot be repaired. Dzedo passed from this Earth, and now so did this memory. Still, his legacy remains in my heart, and I vow to never let go. Then, I remember my daughter and I painfully tear my eyes away from the shards. I force a brave smile, just like Dzedo’s, as I gaze into her eyes and hear my mouth say the words “It’s okay. I love you.”

**Everything
became a blur
as Dzedo jolted
up from his
chair and my
grandmother
suddenly
appeared in the
room.**



1938

Shoshana Schwalb | Digital Art

iDon'tThinkSo

By Elisheva Hollander

The striped paper with the words “Happy Birthday” printed on it crumples loudly as I unwrap a box from my grandchildren. I open the box and stare in disbelief at the sleek phone nested in a white protective layer. My eleven year old granddaughter pipes up, informing me that this is not just any ordinary phone I am holding, it’s Apple’s latest release, the long awaited iPhone X. As a senior citizen living in NYC, my children and grandchildren worry about my communication ability with only an outdated flip phone and a landline. I know this phone they bought for me is not cheap, but I’m afraid my daughter overestimated my technological skills. As if he could read my mind, my oldest grandchild tells me that they have included an additional free trip to the Apple store where I can learn all the ins and outs of my new gadget. This is how I found myself standing outside on 5th Avenue waiting for the store to open with several other elderly iPhone newbies like me.

A man, who seems far too young to work here starts the class with the basic functions of the phone. Every letter and number looks too small and blurry. I am too accustomed to pressing actual buttons, not a glass screen with a digital keyboard too small for my fingers. I tentatively point this out and he patiently teaches me how to enlarge the text and icons on the screen. This immediately improves my typing and I proudly text a message to my daughter, stating where I am and what I’m doing, and hit send. Her questioning response confuses me until I read what my “smart” phone autocorrected.

“I am in Apple Sauce trying to learn your gift.”

Why did my phone correct *me*? If it’s supposedly so smart, why would it think that is what I wanted to say? Wait, am I now starting to believe that my phone can think? Have I gone mad?

**I exit the big
glass box
they call the
Apple Store,
with strange
terminology
like Wifi and
Bluetooth
rattling around
my brain**

I glance at the other seniors in my group, with the same looks of utter confusion written on all of their faces. Is this phone really necessary? I am too old to follow the herd just because that's what I've been told to do. Although I have made up my mind about this new technology, I continue to sit patiently and listen to the child lecture us about apps and gigabytes up in the clouds.

As I exit the big glass box they call the Apple Store, with strange terminology like Wifi and Bluetooth rattling around my brain, I trip over my untied Easy Spirit sneakers and time moves in slow motion as I watch the brand-new iPhone X slip from my hand and plummet to the ground, shattering into boundless shards of glass. I glance down at the irreparable damage and smile ever so slightly.

Stained Glass

By Zahava Sanders

The girl examined her faded reflection on the car window. It was sketched lightly on a background of the blurred grey buildings just outside, so pale it could be blown away by a single breath other than its black eyes, which looked at the girl with solemn intensity. The lack of light led to its skeletal look and the white skin that seemed to never have seen sunlight.

The car pulled up to the curb and the girl stepped out, leaving the reflection safe in the dark car interior. The girl took a step on to the curb and the car drove away, taking the girl's ghost with it.

As the girl walked down the nondescript sidewalk, she closed her eyes in an attempt to block the world. The steady rhythm of the her shoes on the ground faltered when she reached an intersection, her feet tested one direction, then the next. Her forehead creased and she became aware of an invisible force which caused her to stumble forward.

The need to escape drove her feet forward as she ran through a series of tight twists, eyes closed all the while. The girl whipped around the last corner and halted when her body felt the hum of an electrical current coursing through an invisible barrier. She opened her eyes tentatively and reached her hand forward. Her probing fingers met something smooth and hard and looked in disbelief at where her fingers seemed to be touching solid air. The place beyond looked exactly the same as everywhere else, a gray toned intersection framed with identical buildings. Her palms pushed futilely against the invisible barrier, the pressure turned the tips of her fingers white.

**The girl
whipped around
the last corner
and halted
when her body
felt the hum of
an electrical
current coursing
through an
invisible barrier.**

Turning her back to the barrier, she crumbled to the ground and began to trace the seams between squares of cement. Her hand knocked against a rock which rolled to the side. The girl paused, then picked it up. It was a slightly lighter shade than the gray of the

sidewalk, roughly the size of her palm and textured like sandpaper. The girl curled her fingers around it.

She stood up, took a step back, and hurled it at the barrier. While the barrier shattered upon impact, the rock emerged unscathed. The shards fell to the ground at her feet, and a rough hewn hole just bigger than her own shape presented itself. The girl averted her eyes, the bright light that shone through the space was brighter than she had ever seen in her muted, gray world. When her eyes adjusted, she stared through and saw familiar buildings, objects, and people, now visible in vibrant color. The sky was a vivid blue, and the buildings were a mosaic of brilliant red and sleek black. The girl stepped through and saw herself in the new light, her previously drab clothes now a shimmering emerald green and royal blue. Her eyes darted from place to place, and then fell upon the people. They walked, never halting, at a steady pace with their heads down, unaware of her gaze.

The girl stuffed her hands in her pockets, her path inadvertently disturbing the routes of the robotic pedestrians. Distracted by the living color around her, she stepped into the street, a car headed toward her and she was hit. The girl fell to the ground, the colors blurred to black.

* * *

The girl's head suddenly jerked upright, and she surveyed her surroundings as the car came to a stop. Something felt wrong. She looked out the window and the drab yet familiar buildings that rose above her head reassured her. She scuffed her shoes against the impeccable sidewalk when she stepped out onto the street. The car drove away, and the girl walked among the skyscrapers. The gray buildings and sidewalk drew themselves toward the vanishing point and beyond.

The girl walked at an even pace, head bent, until her foot brushed against something and her eyes darted to the sudden movement. A small rock now lay a couple of inches from her foot. She picked it up and rubbed it against her hand, its surface made of innumerable bumps. Her brow furrowed as she remembered her dream. She allowed the rock to slip through her fingers as she reached toward her

face. The girl's fingers impulsively pulled off her dark glasses. She looked at the world, now painted in animated hues, and stepped forward, allowing her glasses to slip from her hand and shatter on the street, abandoned.



Reflections

Laya Moskowitz | Other

The Princess of Port-au-Prince

By Chedvah Levine

I feel something wiggling in my leg. It feels wrong, but I don't know what to do to fix it.

We were eating dinner around the table and then all of the sudden the floor started shaking. It was shivering like it was scared of Teacher Rufus because it forgot to do its homework. But that's not true; floors don't have homework.

Mommy screamed "Earthquake!" so I guess that's what big people call it. Daddy pushed me and Lucia under the table and told us to put our arms over the backs of our necks and close our eyes. I opened my eyes and saw our fancy blue teacups fall off the shelf and shatter all over the floor. And when my favorite doll, Lovelie, flies across the room, she doesn't cry like me. When a bookshelf fell on Mommy she got very hurt, so Daddy brought her to a hospital. I hope they have a doctor for Mommy. I need her to get better.

Daddy told me to take good care of Lucia and I am trying to. My leg is thumping so much and it hurts. When I try to stand, I have to hold back my scream because it hurts so much, but I act tough so my sister doesn't get scared.

I hear a knock at the door, and when I open it I see Daddy's smiling face. "Your Mommy is feeling a lot better!" he says happily. "Some very nice people from other places came to help all the injured people." I tell Daddy about my broken leg and he makes a nervous face. Daddy says, "Now try to be brave, and we'll get you help as soon as we can." I can't hold back my tears anymore. I cry to Daddy and tell him it hurts so much, but Daddy makes a sad face and says, "I'm sorry Sabrina, I just can't do it. We don't even have food, your leg will get better by itself." I don't think it will.

I'm so scared but Daddy's busy collecting Mommy's favorite green sweater and other random stuff to bring to the hospital. He hugs me as he leaves, and tells me to take good care of my sister, and I squeeze him hard to take away the pain. I put on my tough-girl-face and smile at Lucia. "Do you want to go to the park?" She jumps up and down excitedly. We climb over all the broken pieces of my house as we leave, making sure to be very careful not to get hurt.

I hold Lucia's hand very tightly and put all my weight on my

right foot so I'm almost hopping. There's so many broken houses, holes in the street and knocked-down palm trees. I see my neighbors sitting outside their houses crying. I think it's dangerous to be walking alone, but Lucia wants to go play in the park.

A man comes over to us, but Mommy always says not to talk to strangers so I keep wobbling as fast as I can.

"Hello, girls. I'm Eitan. I came here to help people who are hurt from the earthquake. Do you or your family need any help? Have you eaten anything yet today?"

I bite my lip, not sure if I could trust him.

"My leg is wiggling ...and it hurts alot. Lucia is hungry and misses Mommy."

He nods understandingly, like Grandma Maria does when I tell her stories about first grade.

"Come with me, and I'll do my best to help you both."

As I follow him down the block, walking as fast as I can, I don't know if Daddy would let us go somewhere with a stranger, but he seems so nice and helpful, and he is in a uniform! He brings us to a tent where there are tons of doctors helping patients. I sit on a tall chair and Lucia sits next to me, eating happily. A nice woman helps me and puts a special wrapper on my leg which she calls a cast. She then hands me two metal things that go under my shoulders to help me bounce.

She gives me a green sticker with a star on it and some letters I don't recognize. She gives us hugs and asks a man to bring us home. On the way home, we tell the man about our home and family. I tell him that Daddy told me I'm the princess of Port-au-Prince, and he laughs. As we get closer to our home, I become nervous about being alone. What if the ground shakes again?

The man tells me not to worry and brings me and Lucia inside. He carries us both at once. He's so strong! Then he says he has to go help more people and he'll check in on us tomorrow. I feel special

Daddy would let us go somewhere with a stranger, but he seems so nice and helpful, and he is in a uniform!

because I'm part of his good deed. He saved me and fixed my leg, so now I want him to go help other people too.

“*Shalom*,” he says, “Be well.”

I wonder what that word means. I'll ask Daddy when he gets back. Daddy knows everything.



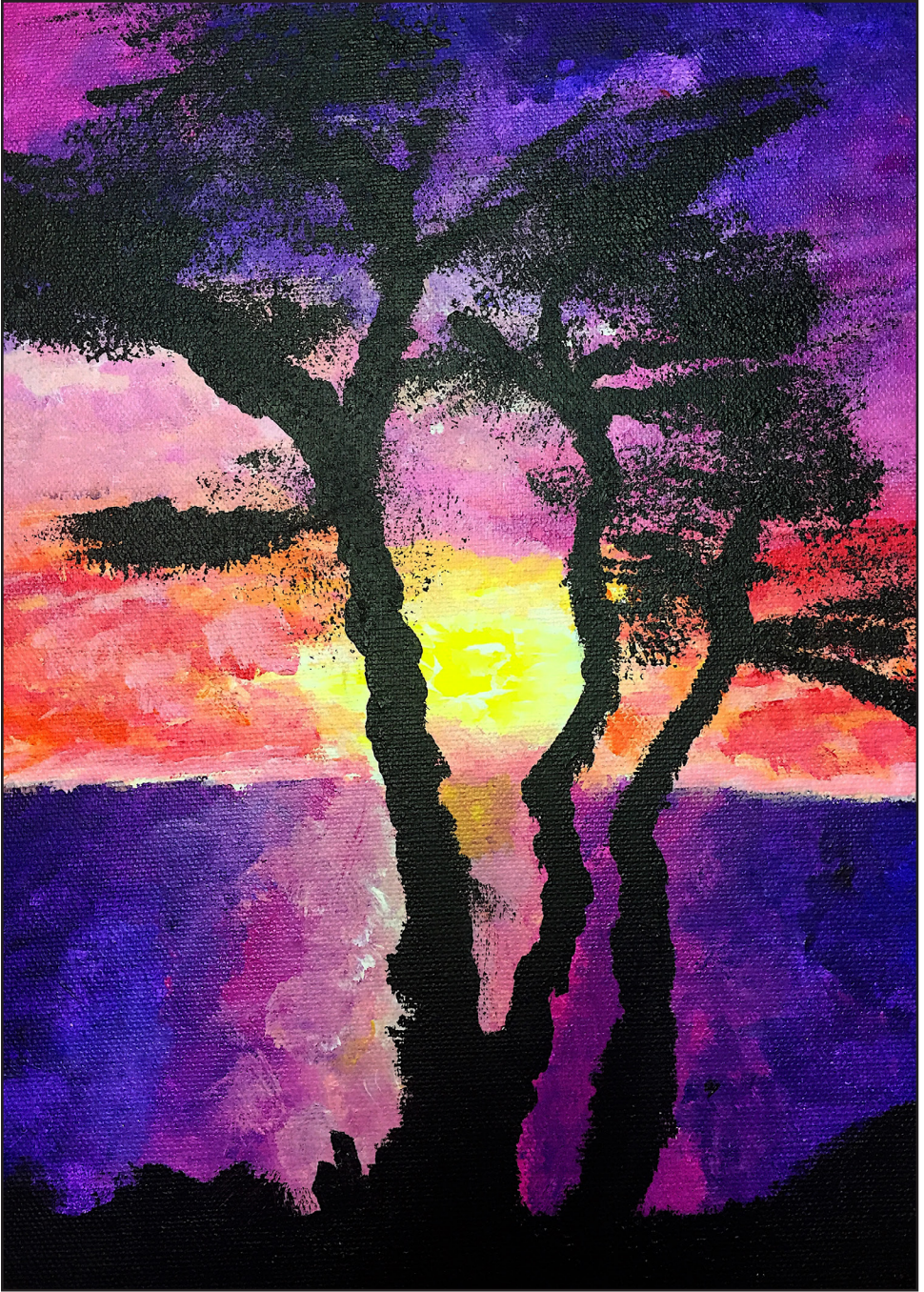
Sticks and Stones

Dina Kalman | Digital Art



Cut Glass

Tzophie Ulano | Photography



Sunset in Paradise

Chava Milo | Other

An Answer Call

By Chaya Rosenberg

Mr. Alex Blau takes his post at the window where he can be seen each morning and each afternoon by all those walking or driving down Harbor View North road. On the beautiful days he sometimes makes his way down to the curb where he enjoys the fresh air, but most days he is inside, and always within view.

Before immigrating to America and settling in Lawrence, New York, Mr. Blau's family of ten, including eight children, lived on a busy farm in Leipzig, Germany. As the oldest child, he played an integral role by taking care of animals, gathering chicken eggs, and collecting apples that had fallen from the backyard trees. He was also responsible for gathering the local children and escorting them to school. Each day, after fulfilling his obligations on their farm, Mr. Blau would weave his way among the local houses, calling out to the children, announcing his departure to the schoolhouse.

Gute morgn kinder! Kum, kum! Es is zeit tsu cheder!

Boys of all ages, sometimes even as young as five years old, would scurry out of their houses and scamper along after him, lagging behind his long strides.

The local *cheder* was housed in a shed, a tiny one-room structure on the outskirts of town that looked tired after its many decades of service. The children pushed and shoved as they took their seats and waited for their Rebbe's arrival, although Mr. Blau was usually well on his way by the time the Rebbe started his class. Mr. Blau immensely enjoyed his walks with the children which gave him a sense of importance after safely delivering them for their day of learning. He took his time walking home as he remembered his own *cheder* days long ago.

**Boys of all ages,
sometimes even
as young as five
years old, would
scurry out of
their houses
and scamper
along after him,
lagging behind
his long strides.**

Now, everything is different. Mr. Blau's long strides have shortened. He experienced horrors and struggles, an inescapable theme that has followed his people for millennia. His farmland, the school-

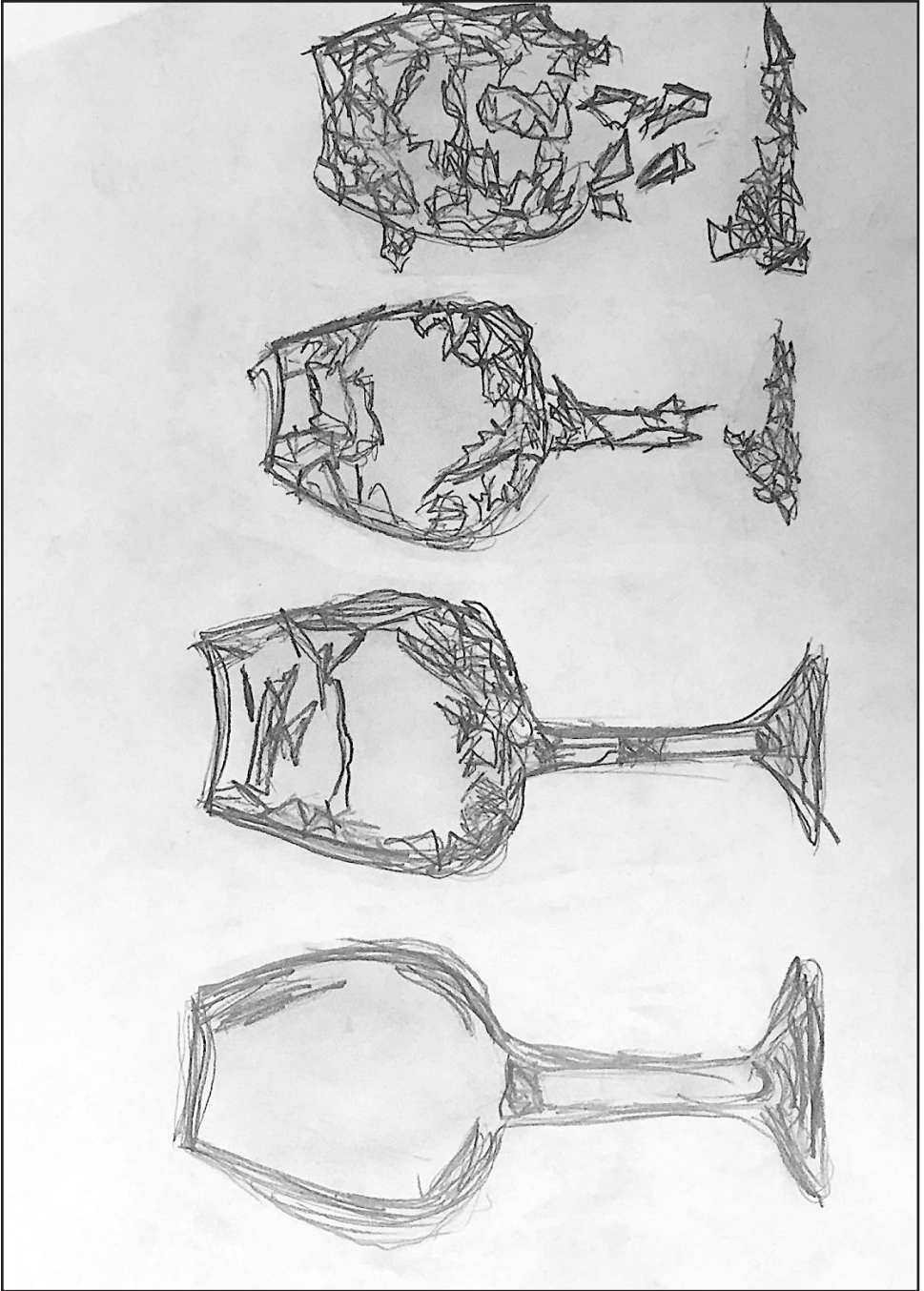
house, and his childhood home have long been occupied by strangers if they remain standing, and now he lives thousands of miles away in another world. His new home, one that he built himself, is similarly located in a neighborhood amongst dozens of young children who, just like the children of his former life, receive a Jewish education each day.

On the days that Mr. Blau stands outside, his neighbors pass by and smile. The new neighbors, the ones that have the *chutzpah* to ask, always pose the same question.

“Why do you stand and watch from your window every day?”

Mr. Blau’s answer is always the same.

“Because nothing gives me more joy. I never thought I would see Jewish children walking to *cheder* again.”



The Shattered Glass

Aviva Barth | Other

ShatterRing

By Yaffa Barsky

Twirling, she gazed at her reflection in the mirror. Powdered face, blush-colored cheeks, silver shadow sprinkled her eyelids, and raven shade mascara accentuated her delicate lashes. Her grandmother had told her she reminded her of a doll.

Tonight, she was happy. Tonight, her life was going to change. It was exciting, it was frightening, but she was counting the seconds.

Tulle the shade of snow, layered with an intricate lace canopy, like the one she would stand under tonight, her gown enveloped her for the ceremony that would be taking place in a matter of minutes. Her heart pounded like clockwork, a beat per second. She timed it to the pace of her footsteps, as she hurriedly searched for her parents who would soon be walking her down the aisle, to a new life and the man she would share it with.

Her sister tucked back a loose strand of hair, her grandmother planted a kiss on her forehead, and a dear friend gently clasped her hand. And then she was at the door, flanked by a parent on either side, holding on tight as they prepared to give her away.

The orchestra cued the music, and the doors swung open to reveal familiar faces and smiles. Steps aligned, she and her parents walked slowly down the aisle, to the floor of the Chuppah, where he waited. Seven rings around her Chas-san, seven times she circled him, as if drawing them together, tighter and more completely with each round. Then she stood next to him, awaiting what was to come.

The Mesader Kidushin began to recite the Brachos, each note of his sweet voice lingering in the air like honey flowing off a stick, every word slow yet racing. Burgundy colored wine filled a silver chalice, sipped by both bride and groom.

“*Harei At Mekudeshet Li.*” A cool, smooth wedding ring was slid onto her finger, but she felt warmth flow through her hands, and into her heart, as if it were its life force.

**Then she was
at the door,
flanked by a
parent on either
side, holding
on tight as they
prepared to give
her away.**

The Kesubah was delicately decorated, bordered with intricate swirls of silver and gold, letters gently kissing the scroll, sweeping the length of the parchment in fluid lines.

A haunting melody arose as “*Im Eshkachech Yerushalayim*” was sung, a soft silence swept through the room.

From the quiet, a sudden thundering sound of beauty pierced the air as one glass became a thousand shards, and somehow, through this shattering, she felt whole.



Crystal Clear
Nechi Bertram | Photography

Just Checking

By Alicia Russo

Is that a misplaced hair? I quickly tuck the stray strand behind my ear. *Does it look better there?* I continue to try different hairstyles whilst striking courageous poses in front of my bathroom mirror. *Are my eyes different sizes?* I poke and prod my lids. *It's ok*, I tell myself, *no one will notice. Besides, they are a beautiful color, like distracting sapphires. They'll even match my cap and gown perfectly.* As I open the door, I pause by the framed mirror in the entry hall for one last check. With a quick flick, I adjust my collar and run out to my car.

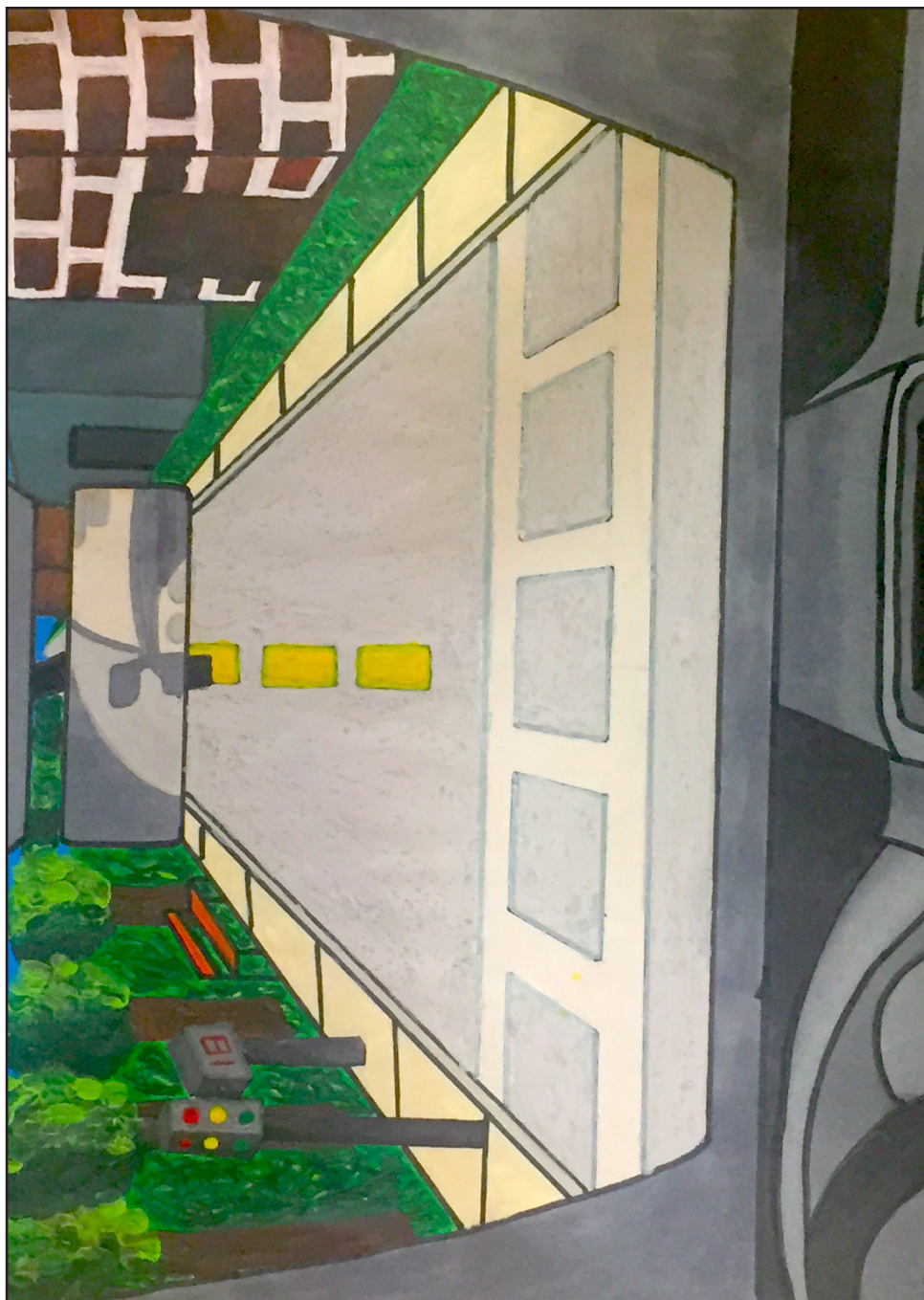
While sitting through a boring history lecture, my eyes wander towards the luring window and I am once again lost in my own reflection. I gently prod the creases on my face and consider switching to a different moisturizer when I am taken aback by a new freckle that seems to be far too close to another just like it. *It looks so weird. I don't want to be "the freckle girl!"* The teacher calls my name to regain my attention. Yet, I ignore her and continue to panic about the real issue at hand.

On my way home later that day, my eyes gloss over the familiar curves of the road when I am caught off guard by a pen mark on my cheek. I look into the rearview mirror and frantically rub at the smudge so it will disappear. My eyes flit between the road and the mirror, trying to give equal attention to both. *Ugh, it won't come off!! How many people saw? How long have I been walking around like this?* My hands go back and forth working to dissipate the smear as my cheeks redden. Distractedly, I reach down to the cup holder, unscrew the bottle of water, and attempt to pour water on a loose tissue. I turn my attention back to the mirror and continue to dab my face, yet the smear remains.

What am I going to do? How will I fix this before I get to my appointment? But my panicking is interrupted by a sudden jerk forward and a loud smash that resonates throughout my body. I hear the shattering of glass as the wind is knocked out of me by an inflating airbag coming toward my face at 200 miles per hour. The smell of burnt

**How many
people saw? How
long have I been
walking around
like this?**

rubber and smoke seeps through the cracked windows and I inhale gas and fumes. I feel a warm liquid dripping across my face. I reach up to examine what it is and my hand retrieves blood. I hear a faint siren approaching as cars pull over to see if I need help. I hear voices asking if I'm alright, yet they sound so far away, I don't respond because I fear that my response will not carry that far. My uncontrollable body tremors begin to slow, just enough so I can focus my eyes on the firefighters running toward my door. The car shakes violently as they cut the metal door from the frame of the vehicle. As my body is lifted out of the driver's seat, I catch sight of my reflection in the cracked rear view mirror. I no longer see the stray hairs, the freckles, and the ink mark—just faded blue eyes that are nearly swollen shut in the middle of a face I can't bear to look at.



Hindsight

Dassi Mayerfeld | Other

V

Risks and Rewards

On Risks and Rewards

By Nev Yakubov, Editor

All progress is the result of risk. William Faulkner writes, “You cannot swim for new horizons until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.” What Faulkner identifies here is the method of human success. To truly open ourselves up to succeed, we must be willing to relinquish all control and welcome the possibility of failure. In this way, writing is inherently vulnerable, immortalizing a piece of the writer within the words that construct it. Because of this soul-baring quality, writing is an act of bravery, with the writer risking others to see them in their most essential and raw states.

This risk applies when inviting others into our homes, as Mikki Treitel humorously tackles in her highly engaging piece, “A Simple Step-by-Step Guide to Throwing Your Next Dinner Party.” In “Breaking the Glass Ceiling,” Jenny Rapp’s protagonist struggles to change her future in a carefully worded email, and gambles the stability of her current situation for the hope of a better future. Not always do our chances end in triumph, however. In her piece, “What Didn’t Happen,” Shoshana Farber enters the mind of 2016 presidential candidate Hillary Clinton as she hears the results of the election.

The stories in this section all deal with different aspects of risk-taking. Some deal with the difficulty in initiating a risky endeavor, others on the avoidance of allowing oneself’s true self to be seen. Some ponder the glorious rewards risks can reap, while others focus on the disappointment failure can bring. Together, they create a well-rounded sampler of the risks we face in our day-to-day lives, and hopefully spark conversations in our minds about the benefits and drawbacks of swimming until we lose sight of the shore.



Glass Clouds

Nechoma Flohr | Photography

Floor Thirty-Two

By Laya Moskowitz

It is process to enter the building. I can't just waltz in and sit down like I do in any cafe or Starbucks. First, I enter through the towering revolving doors to the main desk and pick up my security pass. I swipe my card, wait for the monotonous melody of beeps, and make my way to the elevators. Once the first set of elevators take me up to floor eight, I walk around a bend, passed a security guard, and to a second set of elevators that take me straight up to floor thirty-two, my destination. Once on thirty-two, I swipe my beloved security pass onto a sensor hidden in a wooden wall, and a concealed door opens granting me passage to the maze of cubicles in my father's office.

In the back corner of floor thirty-two, I enter my father's office through two mahogany doors. My eyes dart from wall to wall for a brief moment before I spot what I came here to see. I glide in a daze, as if walking on clouds, to the farthest wall of the office. The Silica and Sodium Carbonate molecules hug each other with fierce love as I press my entire body-weight up against the floor to ceiling window. Their love is the only force preventing me from plunging thirty-two stories down onto the concrete pavement of Lexington Avenue.

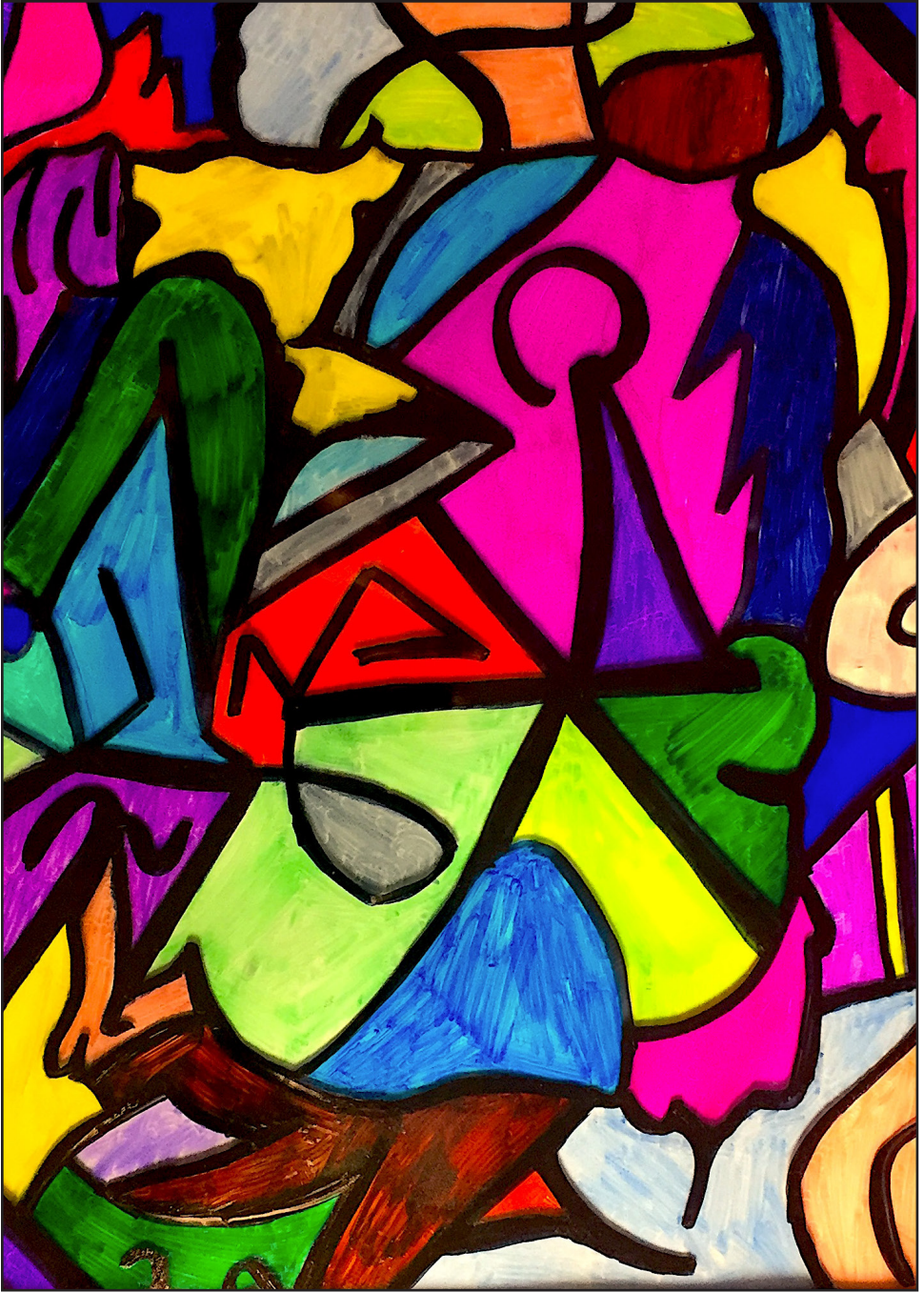
I press my nose to the wall, enchanted by the view, like a four year old pushing her face up to the monkey exhibit at the Central Park Zoo. I squint ever so slightly and see the lions roaring on the tip of the Chrysler Building, men and women dressed in blazers and pant suits meeting on rooftops, and the tops of Lego-sized taxis barging down the tumultuous streets of New York City.

Chaos ensues down below and I do not hear even a trace of it in the office. It is paradoxical that the 1/8 of an inch partition that allows me to see everything on the outside also simultaneously

**Their love is
the only force
preventing
me from
plunging thirty-
two stories
down onto
the concrete
pavement of
Lexington
Avenue.**

prevents me from hearing it. It's unfair. It selectively chooses which senses to honor and which to ignore. Yet, the tiniest opening in the window, the smallest sense of vulnerability, allows the sound to pour in, flooding the room with screaming, honking, screeching, pandemonium.

I choose to keep the window closed as I peer out into the night-life of Manhattan, the city that never sleeps. My breath fogs up the glass one last time before I take the elevator down to floor eight, walk around the bend, take another elevator to the lobby, exit through the gargantuan revolving doors onto Lexington Avenue, and become a part of the madness myself.



Abstraction

Chavi Zelefsky | Modern Art

A Simple Step by Step Guide to Throwing Your Next Dinner

By Mikki Treitel

Step 1. Sanitize! After exfoliating all hardwood and mahogany surfaces, scrub with a lustrous combination of extra-strength Purell and industrial cleaning fluid so that you and your home can sparkle most brilliantly at dinner time.

Step 2: Reach into the produce quadrant of your refrigerator and assemble a medley of fresh, fair-trade, and cage-free Kensington pride mangoes, wild pegasus strawberries, autumn patriot blueberries, Chinese gooseberry kiwis, and sweet honeyqueen raspberries in quantities ratioed two to three to one to two to two, and lightly toss the fruit in your favorite hand-cut crystal serving vessel.

Step 2, Subsection 1a: Add a quarter-cup of infinite gold cantaloupe diced into one-inch cubes to bring a geometrically festive touch sure to please all of your spatially conscientious guests.

Step 3: Combine a smattering of vegetables including but not limited to white icicle radishes, dandelion lettuce, sunrise bumblebee tomatoes, English hothouse cucumbers, and purple dragon carrots to form a traditional garden salad. Be sure to offer a wide selection of dressings featuring a classical assortment of Greek, Norwegian, Russian, Irish, French, and Italian--heaven forfend you insult any European guests by not having their country's signature dressing!

Step 4: Purchase one large wild-caught salmon from a reliable sea-to-table fish farmer. Lay the salmon on a varnished oak cutting board, unsheathe your freshly-sharpened Xacto Knife, and fillet. (Bonus Tip: carve the salmon into a miniature Empire State building or another architectural treasure of your choice to truly impress your guests.) Broil your salmon at the temperature and timespan recommended by your local artisanal oceanographer.

Step 5: Whip out your culinary yardstick and start tablescaping. After smoothing the edges of your Peruvian charmeuse-silk tablecloth, position a porcelain dishware piece at the center of each setting, two and a half fingers' distance from the edge of the table. Remember--symmetry is key!

Step 5, Subsection 1a: Adorn your table with a statement centerpiece--think medieval candelabras and terracotta sculptures--to lend a rustic yet elegant ambience to your evening festivities.

Step 5, Subsection 1b: To complement an eccentric pastoral theme, place a large potted succulent, such as the painted-leaf begonia, as the focal point of your table. To complete the look, accessorize each place setting with various flora and fauna from your backyard botanical garden.

Step 6: Fold the napkins using style and technique that reflects your dinner party's ethos--select from the extravagance of the majestic origami swan and the sacred simplicity of the humble rectangle. If you favor the origami option, make sure you have a protractor handy to blueprint the napkin-swan's wingspan.

Step 7: Revamp your pedestrian aesthetic for the evening by aligning all floral arrangements in ascending order of fragrance, and organize your mouth-blown vase collection according to size, texture, and/or emotional gravitas.

Step 8: Polish the floor, the cutlery, the walls, and all glass or lucite surfaces, including your shoes, which may have been scuffed during all that rigorous napkin folding.

Step 9: Don your finest black-tie-casual ensemble, fashion your hair into a chic chignon, and get out there! With these easy steps, you are guaranteed to throw the most spectacular shindig. Bon appetite and cheers!

* * *

My salad and I have been dressed to the nines since dawn, and I sculpted the bowl Violet is eating from with my bare hands at an Earthenware Awareness fundraiser last summer.

Hmm, Pippa and Gwyneth seem to be enjoying the quiche...

“Penelope, this soiree is smashing, and the eggplant mousse is divine! You must have spent hours!”

**Whip out
your culinary
yardstick
and start
tablescaping.**

“Oh, Violet,” I say with the most nonchalant wave of one hand while straightening the rotating cake pop display behind my back with the other, “it was nothing.”



Game On

Ruchama Biderman | Photography

What Didn't Happen

By Shoshana Farber

The sun shines through the glass panels of the Javits Center like my very own personal spotlight. Surely, the symbolism of this majestic venue, with its vaulted windowed ceilings, cannot be lost on my adoring public. This is my day. Victory is imminent. I prepare to bask in the glory of my soon-to-be, epic and ultimate, “breaking of the glass ceiling” moment.

These past months have been grueling: campaigning and flying all over the world, speaking to minorities, majorities, admirables, deplorables, and everyone in between. And of course, there was that vexing kerfuffle with the reemergence of those pesky emails. But now, everything is all clear; I'm back in the public's good graces (HA, as if I ever wasn't!).

The crowd is electric, singing along to my campaign anthem, “Fight Song.” Thousands are lined up outside, waiting to get in. These people chose *me*. These people believe in me.

I'm going to win this! I *have* to win this!

I've seen the posts, I've sold the merchandise. Everyone is #Im-WithHer. The odds (and votes) are “ever in my favor.”

Besides, who'd choose a misogynistic cheeto-head instead of me anyway? My pantsuits are smarter than he is! And those videos? I've never seen such vile behavior! He's dug his own political grave!

I just know I'll be victorious. No way I can't be. The most powerful man in the world (heh, heh, not much longer...) and numerous celebrities are on my side.

What's that? We're losing in Florida? “Okay, okay, okay, okay,” I repeat like some calming mantra amidst this slowly developing nightmare. Florida doesn't mean anything at all. This will still come out in my favor.

North Carolina, gone? Ohio? Who needs 'em? (Whoever said “Cleveland is the armpit of America” was on to something!) Wisconsin? Iowa? Et tu, Pennsylvania?! Wow, more deplorables than I ever could have imagined!

**These people
chose *me*. These
people believe in
me.**

This can't be happening! All my life has led to this fateful moment, MY MOMENT! What's going on here?

People all around me are crying, everything is spinning around and around. Darkness pervades my numbed mind. The speaker system erupts with the last words I, and those surrounding me, ever thought we'd hear: "Donald Trump, 45th President of the United States of America!"

I reel with nausea, feeling faint, up is down and down is up in this topsy turvy world of mine. But even as my handlers rush me out of the hall I cast one last, longing glimpse on high.

Mockingly, the ceiling remains firmly intact, and on the floor all around me lie the jagged shards of my broken dreams, utterly, completely, hopelessly shattered.



The End of Time
Noa Garfinkel | Other

A Stormy Letter

By Chavi Zelefsky

It sat on the third shelf of the cabinet, a place high enough to not be vitiated by curious hands and low enough not to get lost among the expanding population of dust. There it stayed for two weeks and five days.

Waiting is an assurance of another letter's existence. However, the tension it causes is infinitely better than any immediate satisfaction I might get by reading the letter upon its arrival. At least, by waiting, I can read the letter with the guarantee that it's not the last.

Today, I finally carry the letter to the table and open its seal. Before taking it out of the encasing envelope, I stroke it with my fingers, as if to comfort it. The reality is that the letter is soothingly caressing me.

My eyes focus on the opened side of the envelope: perfectly smooth and symmetrical. I place my hand inside, where I feel the letter, slowly retract my arm, and bring the envelope up to my nose. I inhale the story of the sea that I know it carries, squeeze my eyes shut, bite the inside of my lips, and lean my head towards the ceiling as a gateway to tears.

I gently replace the envelope and remove the letter while pushing my hands against the table so that they stop shaking. As softly and carefully as possible, as if I were handling brittle glass, I open the letter and smooth it on the table. Before allowing my eyes and nerves the comfort of delving into the words before me, I look at the watch that I placed where he usually sits. It's 3:17, giving me 40 minutes to read the letter. Taking one last breath to remove my apprehension, I begin.

Dearest Angel,

I write to you in angst and restlessness. It has been three days since we left our last post, and I am beginning to think we would have been better off had we stayed. Half of our supplies and sleep have been lost to the sea, and it would not be for some time until we can replenish both. Today I

**The words stitch
themselves onto
my eyelids,
brain and heart,
and I can't see
anything else.**

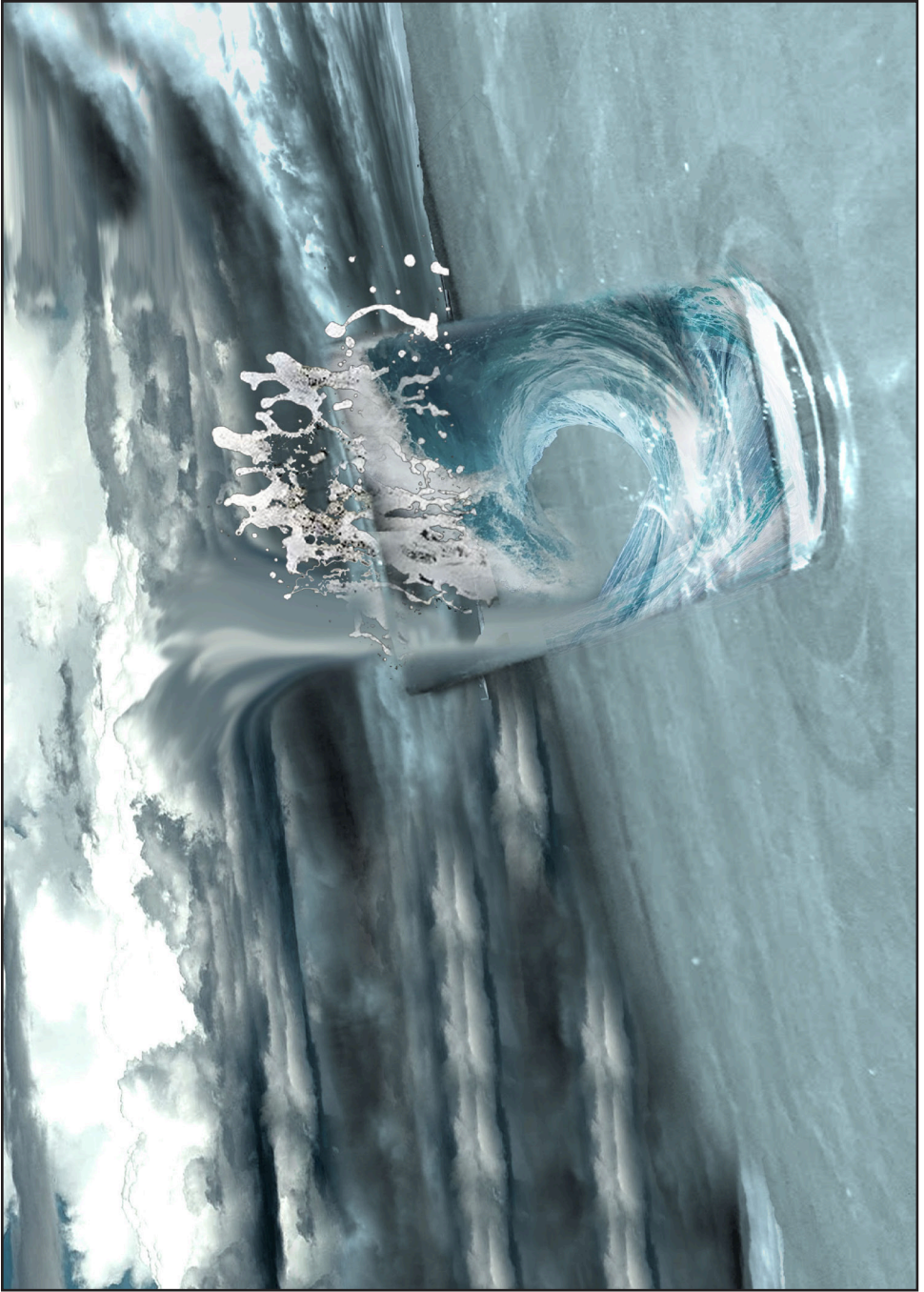
was lucky and received two full meals, but I am anxious for what tomorrow holds. We are told that we are only a week's journey away, but I sense doubt and a storm amidst a mixture of everyone's declining hopes. Tonight is my shift, and I am concerned that my wool jacket will offer the protection of a feather against the mighty wind. I do hope that the next time I write will be under better circumstances. As always, my heart extends to yours from across the expanse of the sea.

A.B

I read it four times, allowing the floodgates to open freely while using my hands as a fortress around the letter. The words stitch themselves onto my eyelids, brain and heart, and I can't see anything else. I sit with these words for all 40 minutes before I carefully insert the letter back in the envelope. With my fragile strength, I lift the letter and my spirits and shuffle to the little chest in my room. While the chest creaks upon opening, I glide the letter atop the amassing pile. I then close the lid as quietly as possible, as if not to disturb the contents, and shuffle back to the watch.

I hold my breath as I look at the time and out the frosted glass window. It's 3:57.

The mail is here.



A Storm is Brewing

Yael Weinroth | Photography & Digital Art

Just Because

By Esther Mehlman

I skipped the math and science section on the ACT.

There was something very promising about the A-B-C-D pattern, and I went with it all the way down. About seven minutes in, I tried wriggling out of my chair without scraping the floor too loudly, the way you open a snack bag in class, but it was no use. Every head turned in my direction like I was some freaky genius. But the truth is I'm just not good at math.

While my fellow classmates slogged through swamps of SO-HCAHTOA and polynomial functions, I explored the still halls of New Jersey County High School. The soles of my shoes smacked the yellow linoleum floor as I wandered aimlessly, farther and farther away from the classroom. The walls were smothered in school spirit; flyers for upcoming events, pictures of sports teams with the school mascot, and sign up sheets for all sorts of clubs and contests were layered one on the other

I discovered something peculiar at the end of the corridor: the words "Just Because" safety-scissored out of metallic cardstock, unevenly pasted above a collection of handwritten poems. Every poem started the same way:

"Just because I'm a boy doesn't mean I don't cry...."

"Just because I'm Mexican doesn't mean I'm illegal..."

"Just because I'm young doesn't mean I'm naive..."

"Just because I'm quiet doesn't mean I'm dumb..."

"Just because I own expensive things doesn't mean I don't struggle..."

I don't know how long I stood there trying to process these humbly offered admissions that slammed against what I knew to be facts. It was one of those snapshot moments where everything concentrates itself into the most vivid, luring memory that sticks to the forefront of your brain like your name or birthday. With nowhere left to explore, I turned back the way I came. In the bathroom, I found a girl braiding her hair in front of the mirror. She wore a striped cardigan over a white V-neck T-shirt, a pencil skirt and black leather boots. When we made eye contact through our reflections,

she opened her mouth like there were words on her tongue, and then looked at her feet. I raised my eyebrows in question.

“I was just wondering,” she paused for a long second.

“How did you finish the test so fast, because...?”

And then she asked me about the intricacies of question twenty-four, something like how to quadratic the third leg of an upside down Pythagorean theorem. She clearly knew her stuff. I laughed to myself because I honestly had no clue what she was talking about. None.

“Well, if you *really* want to know...” I whispered, with a heavy sigh from the center of my chest.

She stared blankly, eyes wide and captivated. I leaned in just enough, like I was about to spill the best-kept secret of recorded time.

“But you can’t tell anyone.” She understood this was in strictest confidence.

And then I totally blew her mind.

“Just because I left the room doesn’t mean I finished the test...”

I still wonder what she would have responded, but the door swung open and the roving proctor ushered us back into the classroom for the last section, science, my absolute favorite. *Science is worse than Math because* numbers and letters and charts collide into one convoluted, never-ending, question, so that even if tried, my brain couldn’t possibly corral so many mediums to ride a single train of thought. So I sat there, tapping my foot and flipping the passing hour like a pancake in my mind.

**Every head
turned in my
direction like I
was some freaky
genius.**

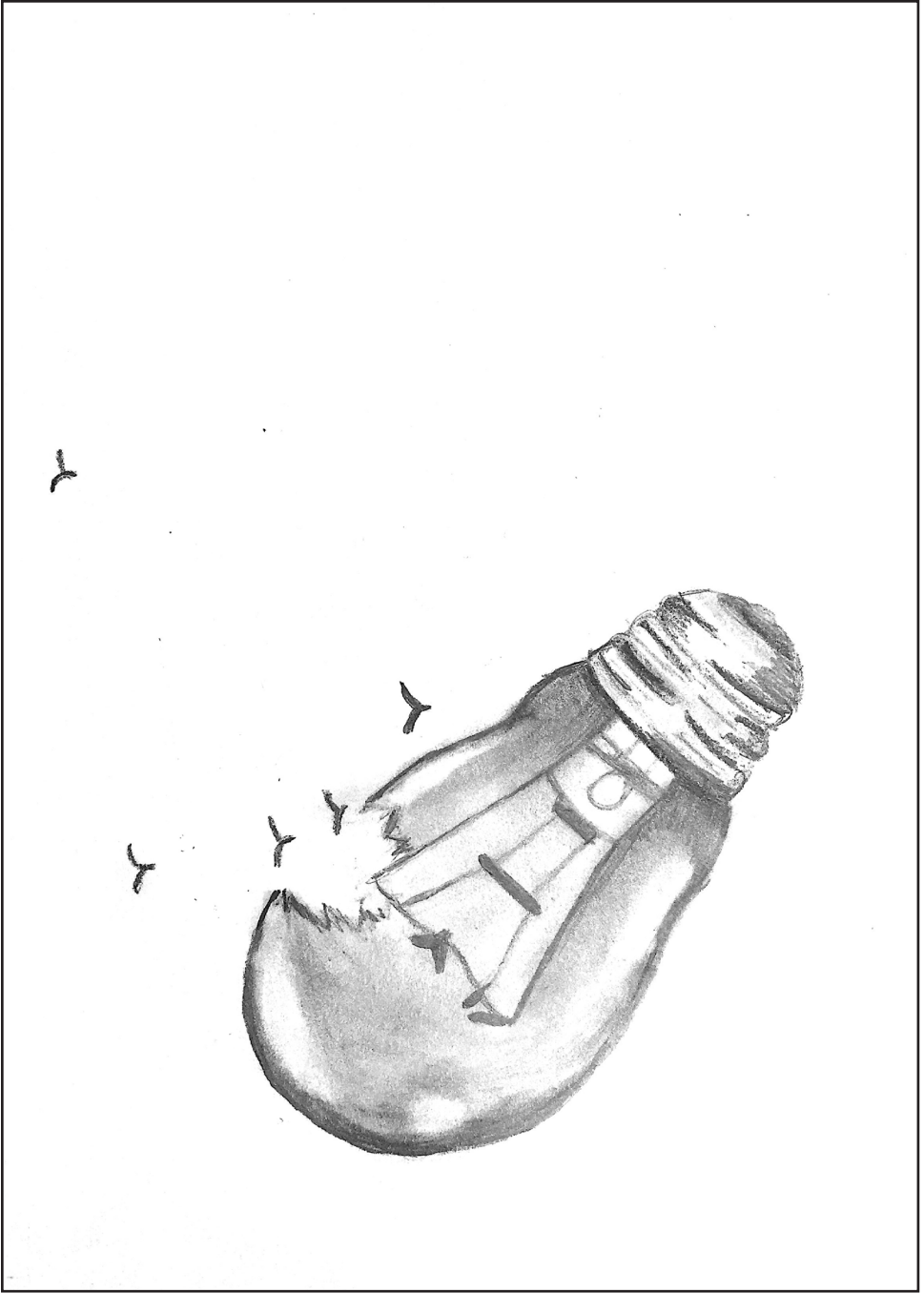
Just because I’m bad at Math doesn’t mean...

Just because leaves no room for dubious contemplation and traversing alternatives. There is no nuance involved. Maybes and partial credits are out of the question. Every notion is preconceived, fixed

like bubbles on a scantron or the “F” on my paper.

Maybe that’s why I never got along with math. Why can’t two plus two ever be five?

And not because the ACT standards would condone it. But just because.



A Life Beyond the Light

Ruchama Biderman | Studio Art



Nobody Likes u AnywayZ

Rachel Liebling | Digital Art

Breaking the Glass Ceiling

By Jenny Rapp

I've worked here for seven years. Yes, seven, and I still haven't gotten a promotion.

“No, I can't write that.” I deleted yet another draft, gave a good stretch, and collapsed back into my chair.

“This has to be more polite,” I said to Cassandra who had come over for sisterly support. “You know, more like a humble request and less like the start of a revolution. I'm not looking to get fired.”

“Why not?” she shot back. “We both know that if Mr. Green had any intention of promoting you he would have done it long ago.”

I knew it was true that whenever a spot would open up some new guy on the job who was barely there for a year would get it. I was getting paid less than all my male colleagues even though I worked double the amount.

“Why don't you just quit?” Cassandra continued. I had to admit I had considered that, every time I was ignored at a meeting or Mr. Green invited everyone out in honor of a job well done and my invitation somehow got lost in the mail...

I thought back to when I was growing up. Most kids in my class wanted to be designers, hairdressers, or even nurses. I still remember the looks on their faces when I announced what I was going to be when I grew up.

“A investment banker,” they said, “is no job for a lady.”

My father disagreed, “Times will change, don't you worry,” he would often reassure me, ignoring my mother's disapproving stare. I was still young when he died, but times did change. So after high school graduation I headed to city college for my degree and soon started job-hunting, but I soon realized how hard this really would be. After sending applications across the country just to get an interview, I realized the few I was getting were from banks who either wanted to appear liberal or just didn't want to be sued for discrimination. Everyone replied negatively with the same excuses about how I didn't meet their criteria or wasn't a “good fit.”

My initial confusion led to understanding: I was a woman trying

to get into a men's field. But I wouldn't accept failure. So ignoring my friends' and family's protests that I should just go into something else, I went to graduate school for my masters, and eventually found a job in Manhattan. The hours were awful and the pay was worse, but I screamed with happiness when I finally got it. I figured this was just a temporary arrangement and between my skills and work ethic I'd be running the place in no time.

But here I was seven years later, still in the same stuffy office without even a pay raise, no acknowledgement of all the hours I put in. In fact I wouldn't think Mr. Green knew I existed if not for the holiday cards I got each year, which I thought were sweet until I realized everyone got them.

"You know it's still not too late to join me at Citibank," Cassandra, told me. "Seriously, being a teller really isn't bad and they are looking to hire."

She looked so sincere that for a moment I considered taking her up on her advice. I knew I'd be accepted right away as a teller and would get my fair share. But I also knew I couldn't. I couldn't let my boss or my well-meaning friends stand in my way of advancing in my career and achieving my goals. While I stared at the screen typing my email, I recognized that I wasn't the first and wouldn't be the last woman who wanted to pursue a fulfilling career in finance and work toward a position of leadership. And if I wouldn't break that glass ceiling, who would?

**He would
often reassure
me, ignoring
my mother's
disapproving
stare.**



Glass Act

Shoshana Farber | Digital Art

Facing the Mirror

By Henny Weiss

I wake up in the middle of the night hearing what sounds like knocking or pounding. My first thought is that it's coming from the window, but then I follow the sound toward the free-standing full-length mirror in the corner of my bedroom. I throw off the covers and jump out of bed, only to hear the knocking getting violently louder. My heartbeat starts to match the pace of the knocking as I feel my blood pressure rising. The knocking is getting even louder, loud enough that I have to cover my ears.

As I come face to face with the mirror, I see a black shadow on the other side of the glass. It's not my reflection. I know that for sure. That reflection is someone else, knocking and pounding on the glass. My mind is racing, uncertain of what I should do next. Without thinking, I reach my hand into the glass reflection. The solid surface seems to melt as my hand disappears into the mirror. The black shadow stops knocking and stares at my extended arm in shock.

Astounded by my own boldness, I quickly retract my hand and inspect my fingers and palms. Overcome with curiosity, I stick my foot into the fluid mirror. Sure enough, half my leg has disappeared through the mirror. Pushing aside reason and doubt, I jump in and disappear into another dimension.

I immediately regret my choice, and fearful of finding myself trapped, I jump back into my room. When I discover that I can move back and forth, in and out of the mirror, I enthusiastically leap, and forgot, momentarily, about the black shadow looking on. Its head turned to one side prompts a question: why can go through the mirror easily, but the black shadow pounds on the solid barrier, unable to move into my world? I turn to the shadow, but it drops its head and turns its back to me. The other side of the mirror I am on is almost in total darkness except for a little white light in the distance.

The solid surface seems to melt as my hand disappears into the mirror.

Wanting to know what that source of the light is, I begin to run toward the faint glimmer. As the black shadow and the mirror get smaller behind me, the white light grows bigger. After what seems

like forever, I realize that no matter how far I run, the light is still the same distance away from me. Realizing this is a useless pursuit, and suddenly aware of how tired and thirsty I am, I decide to return to my side of the mirror.

When I make it back to the mirror, the black shadow is nowhere to be seen. I reach out my hand in anticipation of moving back into my world, but my fingers hit the solid glass instead of going through. Confused, I try again multiple times, almost causing my knuckles to bleed in my desperate attempts, but it's no use. I start knocking and pounding, trying to get out. Starting to scream in fear and panic, I peer through to the other side and see a person getting out of the bed — my bed! — and slowly creep towards me. She reaches her hand through the mirror and quickly pulls it out. She puts her leg in and then jumps through and then back out again as I watch her in shock. She looks at me with a confused expression on her face and rapidly starts talking, but I can't hear anything. I turn away from her in shame and anger, while she surprisingly starts running towards the little glimmer of light. Now is my chance.



Window Dressing

Chaviva Berger | Other

VI

The Prism of Imagination

The Prism of Imagination

By Channa Gelbtuch, Editor

Consider a glass bowl. If you put flowers in it, it becomes the vase on an ornately set table. If you place sweets in it, it becomes Nana's bowl of treats. If you pour water into it and add fish, it becomes an aquarium. As a transparent and colorless receptacle, glass holds the potential to become anything we want it to be. Its use and application are as endless as the depths of our creativity.

In his treatise on the nature of education, eighteenth-century French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau tells his readers, "The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless." By using the most powerful tool we have, we can create worlds of our own design, inspired but unconfined by our realities. Our imaginations sit in the uncolored state of glass when no original thoughts run through, but it has the capacity to display a rainbow of hues when a vibrant thought comes to mind.

The pieces in the section demonstrate the marvelous range of people, predicaments, and possibilities that writers can conjure through their craft. Nechama Reichman's *Insight* shows how one person's imagination can shape the reality of others. Michal Haas's *Shattered, But Not Broken*, extends Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* into a failed fairytale from the perspective of Laura's unicorn figurine. All of the stories offered here demonstrate the unlimited power of imagination to transform our ordinary lives into something extraordinary.

Damsel in Decisiveness

By Meital Israel

It was right there in front of me. It was perfectly outlined with a prism of pastel color. A sweet laced butterfly accentuated the tip of it. Every curve was exquisitely shaved and sliced to create a gracious, petite glass slipper that was just my size. The shoes, the gown, the carriage, the prince. They were everything I imagined they would be, at least, everything my younger self imagined they would be. But just because the shoe fits doesn't mean you always have to wear it.

So I told my fairy godmother that while I appreciated all that she was willing to do for me, I didn't want that life. When I finally raised my eyes up from the floor to see her reaction, I saw no judgement in her eyes, just a twinkle of serenity and support.

I looked back down at the perfection that was cushioning the inner ball of my foot and took a few moments to appraise the sheer beauty of this glass slipper. This sleek little heel seemed to offer so much clarity and so little obscurity. To any other girl, the choice might have been obvious: a charmed life of champagne, feasts, the adoration of the people for all my days. But such a life is still able to fog up like a pair of glasses against a hot cup of cherry blossom tea. I still believed that all our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. And it was my turn to do the unexpected and impossible.

I met her radiant blue eyes and requested just one more wish.

"Anything, Cinderella. What do *you* want, my dear?"

All I ever wanted was to make a difference. To ease the suffering of others. To bring joy and healing to those whose lives were perhaps a little too sullied by ash and dust. Reading my mind, my fairy godmother whipped out her wand.

"Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo!"

On my feet appeared the most magnificent pair of white clogs. They were slip-resistant, shock-absorbent, lightweight and supportive. I knew they would give me the long-lasting comfort I needed to offer comfort to others.

**But just because
the shoe fits
doesn't mean
you always have
to wear it.**

Since that day, I have served as our village's main doctor. My role might not be as glamorous as being typical princess, but in my own way I still conduct myself with dignity, respond to the needs of others, and exhaust all of my resources to bring them safety and well-being.

— CHAPTER ONE —

The Boy who Lived

Mr and Mrs Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much. They were the last people you'd expect to be involved in anything strange or mysterious, because they just didn't hold with such nonsense.

Mr Dursley was the director of a firm called Grunnings, which made a beefy man with hardly any neck—though he had a large moustache. Mrs Dursley was the usual amount of neurotic, and she spent so much of her time crying over her neighbours. The Dursleys' opinion there was

they also had

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trived

small son

another good

ant Dudley mixing with a child like that.

When Mr and Mrs Dursley woke up on the dull, grey Tuesday our story starts, there was nothing about the cloudy sky outside to suggest that strange and mysterious things would soon be happening all over the country. Mr Dursley hummed as he picked



Magic

Ariella Seidemann | Digital Art



Color By The Sea
Avigail Ovitsh | Modern Art

Little Glass Boy

By Rachel Berenshteyn

He didn't *really* care. Hoisting himself out of the sandbox, he gave a lopsided smile to the small crowd that had amassed— mostly schoolchildren and a few teachers— and started towards home. Even after leaving the playground, the faint tinkling noise persisted in his head until he turned off the sun-scorched road toward the direction of Amitslette, at which point he gathered that, in his haste, he had not even inspected for scuffs. A few faint nicks, their surface chafed an ashy white, had already begun to mend. He cocked his head to the side in a rare bout of pride, and with a whistle reverberating from his chest he began to skip, each step matching the rhythm of the sea-glass windchimes hanging from a southward tree.

The countryside looked the same as it did eons ago when The Alchemist blew the breath of life into his forming body, when the finest Arabian sands were transformed by scorching fire. It had been centuries since he was wrapped in paper, packed in a stiff brown box and sent by horse's cart to his creator's distant kin, a loving childless couple who dearly wished for a son. On the day of the last funeral, for the couple were granted peaceful deaths while he was fated to live eternally, the boy made his decision. On that day he had resolved to live out his days unattached to living creatures and unfazed by their scorn. Wrapping the faded paper around his shoulders, he made his way on to the next township: the township of Amitslette.

Everyone knew that he lived on his own, but no one seemed to mind, as long as he kept to himself and stayed away from their crops when the sun was at its highest point in the sky. A few years back he had made the mistake of leaning on the silk-wire fence of an okra field, watching the pods quiver with the sunny breeze. It was a clear day, and he

was standing in the sun's path, so it was no surprise when the rays glinted off his face and lit a spark that set the grass surrounding him ablaze. The Mayor had been passing by at the time and was able to

**They had the
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and arrive at
the conclusion
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anomaly.**

put the fire out, but by then almost twelve square feet of the field had been charred. The punishment the boy incurred was standard for someone his “age,” public chastisement by an elder. After the incident, they continued not paying much attention to him. As long as he followed their motions and reflected the town’s style, they did not bother investigating whatever else he cared to do.

The only ones who gave him trouble were the children. They had the time to ponder his placement, to mirror him while he mirrored them, and arrive at the conclusion that he was an anomaly. Children in Amitslette were the same as children anywhere, so they hounded him at recess and shunned him during class. He never took to complaining though, letting their impudent calls roll off of him as harsh rain off a window, barely leaving a streak to trace.

Today’s shove was no different.

“Let’s see if he breaks!”

The triumphant goad rang out as he was sent tumbling down the steep curvature of the school’s lot. As he rolled, smacking into tree-stumps along the way, he knew that their sticks and stones could never hurt him.

He was nearly home now, rounding past the battered sod shack that marked the start of no-man’s property, and heading toward the tree that had been his home for as long as he could remember. He looked forward to the comforting embrace of the bed he fashioned out of the box and battered, brown paper from which he was first unpacked. Ducking into the aperture of his Black Walnut tree, he exhaled deeply as he nestled into his cardboard box faintly marked “Glass: Handle with Care.”



Glass Garden

Chana Shutyak | Modern Art

Shattered but Not Broken

By Michal Haas

I used to belong to this wonderful girl named Laura. Laura was shy, and she had a slight limp, but I think she was the only one who paid attention to it. She loved me more than any of the other glass animals she owned. We all sat on a table in her room, each sculpture another member of the vast animal kingdom. I was different, though. I was a majestic unicorn whom she loved most of all because of my uniqueness. I had a horn, unlike the horses. I, alone, was a figment of legends and fairytales, while they existed in reality.

I think Laura would have loved to live in a world of fairytales, where poor stepdaughters become princesses by fitting into slippers, thieves can kidnap princesses who get rescued by princes, horrific beasts find acceptance from regular girls, and everyone lives “happily ever after.” She lived like that in her head, conjuring up alternate realities in which she was the perfect girl with the perfect husband and they lived happily ever after.

It’s a shame that cold, hard truth doesn’t believe in fairytales.

Laura believed her “prince” was Jim, but instead of coming to whisk her off into the sunset, he came to break her heart. Right before she broke, I broke. Enchanted and distracted, Laura carelessly knocked into the table and I fell to the ground. All eyes were on me, but all I wanted was to be hidden in the shadows. I became an abomination. Who’s ever heard of a unicorn without a horn? Of course, those are horses. The one other thing that distinguishes a horse from a unicorn would be its colors. As a glass sculpture, I don’t have the silky cream coat of a unicorn that is easily distinguished from the chestnut brown hue of a horse. I reflect color, I don’t emit it. When Jim told Laura that he was engaged to someone else at the end of the night, I saw what it was like for a human being not to emit color.

Lying on the floor, the only thing on my mind was how I would’ve been better off as a horse. Then I wouldn’t be the odd one out, with a chip in my head. Then, as if things couldn’t get any worse, Laura just hands me to Jim. As soon as Laura picked me off the floor, she said something about this being “a blessing in disguise,” but I had no idea what “blessing” she was talking about. This was a disaster. I was her favorite! How could she just give me away like that?

After Jim walks out on Laura, he stuffs me into his coat pocket,

muttering about said “blessing in disguise.” He spoke aloud, as if talking to someone else, but nobody was listening. I guess he wanted the wind to carry his guilt away and live the happy life of the prince in one of Laura’s fairytales.

He kept me in his desk drawer until the day he died, and I now rest on the nightstand of his favorite granddaughter, who found me after his passing. I’m just a relic from his past. His family may never know who Laura was, but in keeping me, I believe he kept a part of her in his heart forever.

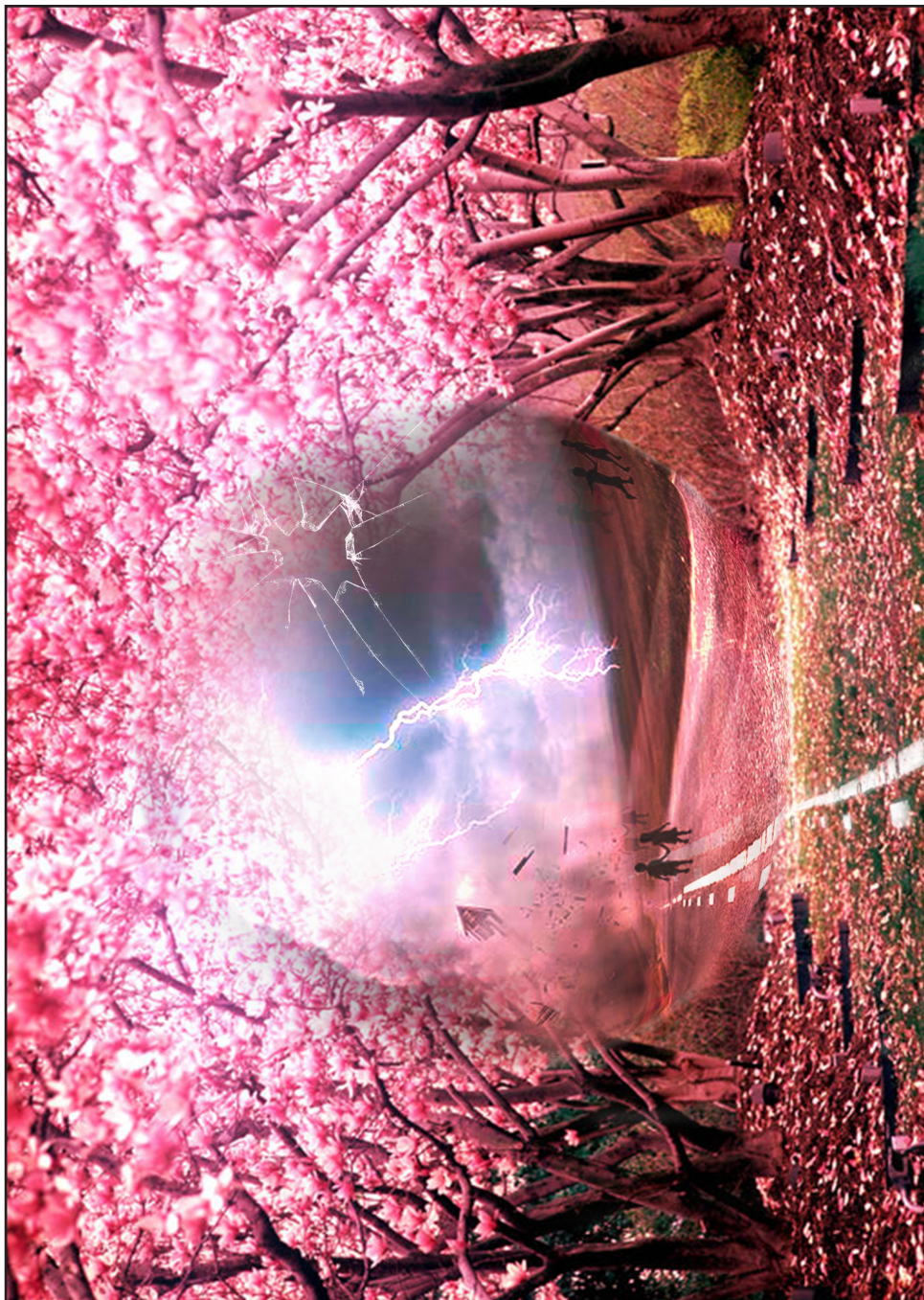
I came to terms with losing my horn after watching other people live their lives. Gradually, I came to the realization that we’re all a little bit broken. Some people are broken on the inside, some people are broken on the outside, and some people are so broken you can’t tell which part of them is shattered.

My horn was a big part of my identity—it’s what made me a unicorn—but I had to realize that whatever my horn represented was still there.

**... some people
are so broken
you can’t tell
which part
of them is
shattered.**

On his way out the door that night so many years ago, I believe Jim realized that he was leaving behind the best opportunity he’ll ever get, but he wasn’t strong enough to commit himself to that reality. So he kept me as a reminder, and he lived the rest of his life with that awareness. He also lived with the thought that Laura was probably somewhere better off with someone better than him, living her happily ever after. By giving her hornless unicorn away was her way of saying she was worth more than she’d been telling herself.

Now I sit on his granddaughter’s shelf. Her name is Laura too, which Jim suggested. I still feel majestic, even without my horn. I am the only horse with battle scars like mine. That night, so long ago, broke me, but I am now better off than I ever would have been if I were whole.



An Inner Storm
Esther Guelfguat | Digital Art

Kleptomania

By Rachel Liebling

Prudence had taken Annabeth's netting bracelet, the woven chain a father brings home from trawling at the river edge of the Utores Plane. They had been taught to take: "You take because you want, and you want because you see," and seeing was okay, so taking was okay. Seeing was good. Giving in was good. It was the fault of Annabeth, really. The braid was strung with opal tinted glass orbs from the belly of the Barramundi fish, so Prudence would have to take the beads because whoever touched the Barramundi would be free from the ugly spirit of guilt. That is why Baba gave Annabeth the beads of the Barramundi, to help exhaust her will. Despite her father's good omen, Annabeth was impervious until after mid-morning when the sun welded to the river's face, returning the guilt in her own. That is why Prudence conducted friendship with Annabeth, for Prudence's will had quite been shattered by the solid, unyielding glass. Prudence wanted it back.

**That is why
Baba gave
Annabeth the
beads of the
Barramundi, to
help exhaust her
will.**

When the men had done their work, Annabeth would wend down to the Utores Plane and fasten the sea things to her heart, fighting the Barramundi's influence. And when skewers of her Baba's labor came forth on her dinner plate, she did not eat. She wanted her guilt. Baba's rage grew so furious that the beads of his wife's netted necklace rattled abruptly against her collarbone. Annabeth knew to look down; she would not give in to the spirit of her village. And when Baba raised his gnarled hand, she removed herself from the table with the Barramundi fish and the glass necklace. She ate nothing until Prudence had knocked. Prudence brought Annabeth where her family kept sweet rolls to soak up the fatlings of the Barramundi. That is why it was harder for Prudence to look down. She had eaten the fish and worn the glass for her father.

Millennial Kleptomania

Prudence, named for the preserved memory of her great-great-grandmother, keeps a clasp on her knapsack, one of those reflec-

tion-glinting, gold padlocks with the middle of an old rotary phone. She has to create some sort of barrier because she brings Oreos for snack, and Katy might take them. But it's Prudence's fault really; they're the red velvet kind, exclusive to mid-February. It's alright with Prudence, though, because she would do the same, probably. But Prudence is good, she waits an hour before she takes; it was tradition from some old family fable with a fish and a friend. That is why Katy picked Prudence for a friend. Morals tend to gradient, even if just to a lesser shade, when you stand close enough to someone. But, sometimes, Prudence is situated a little too close and has to walk away; Katy has little-red-riding-hood curls that flamingo with the earphones hugging her neck, like a velcroed-hand monkey that carnivals pity-give after failing the ring toss. Prudence tries not to carry a scissor with her, though, just in case she can't walk away when the hour is up.

Prudence took Katy's hair brush at their slumber party that night, but it was okay because Katy knew she wouldn't have if she didn't like it. It was the Conair one with the jelly handle. Prudence told Katy that she could wear her Juicy Couture pajamas, the ones that look like sweats, without actually *sweating* in them. She did this knowing that Katy wouldn't, or couldn't return it to her duffle bag in the morning. Prudence tried to make up for herself that way, to take away the crayons sprawled in her throat. She wanted to pick up the broken pieces inside of her, but she couldn't fix all 24 colors. It was a nice thing to do, because most of them didn't look at it anymore. Usually, parents helped with maturing through the rationalization process. Prudence's never did.

The Support Group

By Sara Sash

I sat there a little bit nervous and slightly excited. I hoped that I had finally found a solution to my unusual problem. My hands prevent me from reading books, writing on paper, and even eating my favorite foods. If I'm being perfectly honest, it's not my hands, but my anger issues. I've tried speaking to healers and casting spells. Maybe it was finally time to try healing in a different way. And so I went looking for a support group.

I scanned the room and saw three other people there. One man and two women. One of the women was older with her hair tied in a bun. The other one was about twenty years old with white-blond hair pulled into a loose braid. And the man was middle-aged with a shaggy brown beard and a golden crown resting on his head.

We are about to start when a girl with sunglasses and snakes for hair opened the door and ducks inside.

"Is this the group for people who can't look at other people?" she asked.

"No, you have the wrong room. This is the support group for people who can't touch other people," replied Nancy.

"Oh, sorry. Thanks anyway," said the girl as she left.

The older woman clapped her hands together to get our attention.

"Hello everyone, my name is Nancy. I'm your group leader and I would like to welcome our newest member," she announced, pointing to me.

"Hi," I mumbled. "My name is Delicate, but most people call me Cate. I have this problem that I turn everything to glass."

Nancy smiled at me and turned to face the rest of the group. She pointed to the man.

"Midas, why don't you say hi? Cate, this is King Midas, and everything he touches turns into gold."

"Hello Cate," the king responded. She pointed to the woman.

"This is Elsa, and everything she touches turns into ice." Elsa didn't bother acknowledging me.

Nancy turned back to me.

“How about you tell us about yourself?”

I start to explain how hard it is to live with my problem. That whenever I get mad, or even slightly frustrated, whatever I touch turns to glass. But before I can finish my point, Elsa jumped in.

“Why do you seem mad about your power? Don’t you see the beauty in glass? It’s *almost* as pretty as ice.”

I gave her an irritated look.

“Not when you turn your pet dog into ice.”

“I turned my daughter into gold,” proclaimed King Midas. “It happens.”

“It’s really hard being a student. My homework turns to glass. And my teachers always take off points even though it’s not my fault.”

“Why don’t you just wear gloves?” Elsa suggested.

“I tried that already,” I glared at her. “They turned into glass because I hated having to wear them.”

“Why don’t you turn plastic cups and plates into glass? I bet you’ll make a lot of money selling them,” Midas told me. “Not as much as gold, but still.”

“Honestly!” I snapped. “I’m not really looking to make money right now.”

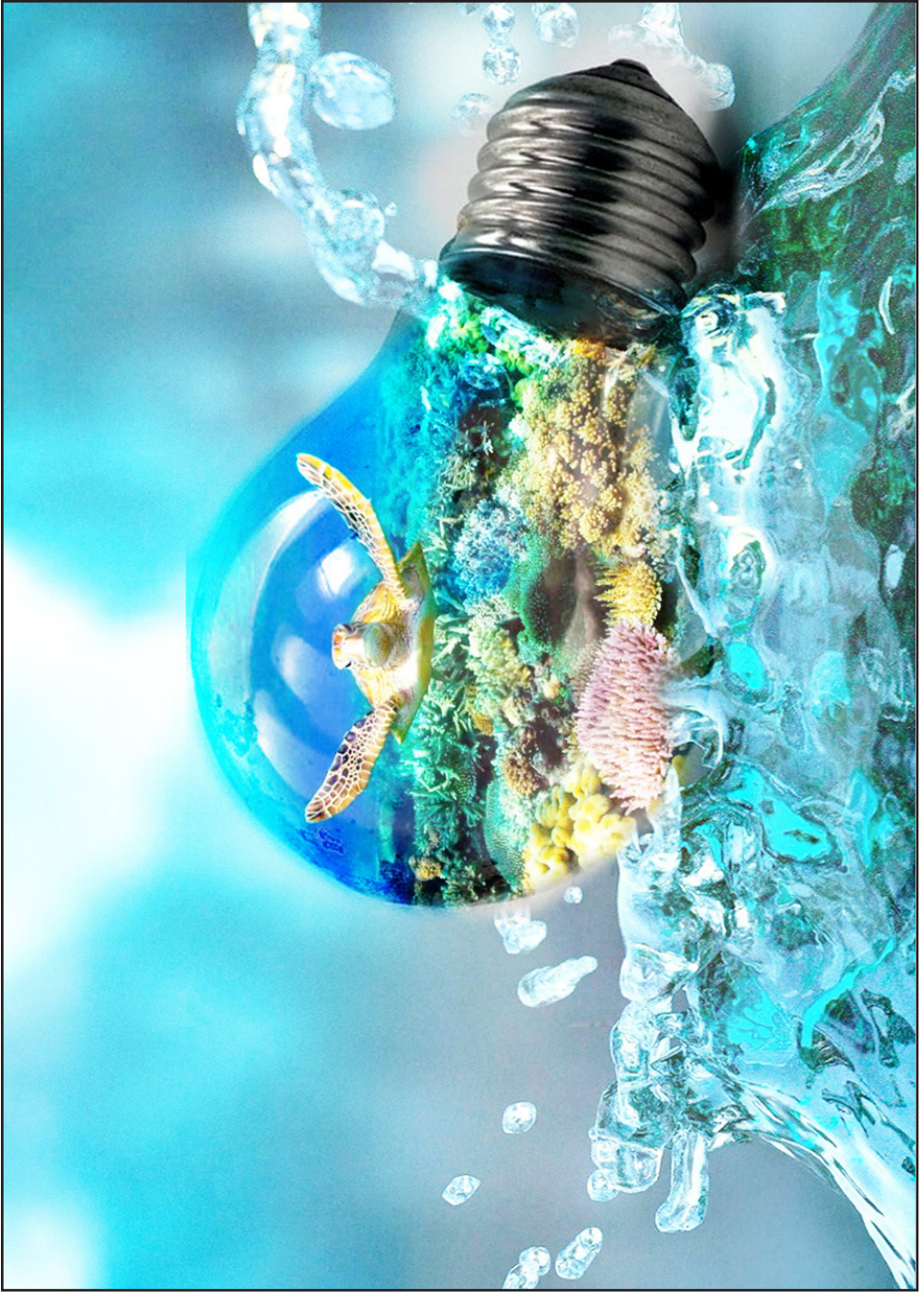
“Have you tried controlling your ability?” Nancy asked me. “There are some mindfulness exercises I can teach you...”

“You know what I think...” I cut her off and got up from my chair. I touched Nancy first. I touched Midas second, and saved the best for last.

I walked to the door and I turned around to look at the three glass statues.

“I think I need to find a more supportive support group.”

**I’ve tried
speaking to
healers and
casting spells.
Maybe it was
finally time to
try healing in a
different way.**



The Deep Blue Sea

Rivka Sabel | Digital Art

Out of the Box

By Chani Shulman

Mrs. Walters should have suspected something was wrong as soon as eight-year-old Timmy began obnoxiously flipping through the morning paper. Timmy doesn't read newspapers. Yet, Timmy discovered a newspaper's alternative function as a tool to showcase his current sullen and pessimistic state of mind- by perusing the pages with a general passion (with the crinkling of papers reaching a usually loud decibel) that is not found with the common reader. As with most children his age, Timmy understands that contempt wears best on those with an audience. In this case, it was Timmy's unfortunate mom, who actually did want to read the newspaper.

With her mother's intuition, Mrs. Walters quickly picked up on Timmy's motives.

"Something wrong, Timmy?"

"Ugh," Timmy sighed, "I just know that today is going to be a bad day"

"Why is that, dear?"

"Well, for one, my job has gone a bit rocky ever since the new shortage of performance mimes"

Timmy was a professional mime critic, even considering himself to be the most competent in the field. Every Sunday, Timmy would venture into his neighborhood park to watch different mime performances. With his trusty pen in hand, Timmy would rate their performances on a five star scale, along with an in breadth review of their capability of feigning entrapment inside a sturdy glass case. But, Timmy's successful career, as is with most marvelously gifted writers, is destined to be short lived. For, currently, street dancers were all the rage.

"I would not dare review those bumbling self proclaimed "street performers"! It would be degrading; how could a man of my sensibility and caliber succumb to reviewing those insipid hoodlums?! To go from reviewing gifted storytellers such as mimes, to..."

Timmy could not even finish his sentence, lest he shed his manly persona with uncalled-for tears. Slipping off from his kitchen chair, Timmy trots over to the fridge and examines, with solemn tenderness, his old work. Although most kitchen fridges are pompously

decorated with mediocre paintings of aerodynamically unsound flowers, the Walter's fridge was plastered with a more sophisticated medium: Timmy's old reviews; from his mother's chocolate chip pancakes (the first project he took on), to the countless reviews of mimes (most of whom did not even realize upon performing that there was an experienced reviewer in their midst!).

"Ah, I remember this one." Timmy says gently, "This mime received a well deserved four star review"

Timmy unhooks his precious review from the fridge magnet and begins to read aloud:

"Though seemingly no different than any other wannabe mime, this mime has truly developed a unique performance style like no other. I especially enjoyed the plot twist he instituted halfway through act two: the added element of an attempt of freedom via chainsaw was a happy surprise..."

Once Timmy finished reading that review, he proceeds to reflect on his fan favorite review (by fan favorite, he obviously was referring to Sally Hawkins and Bill Freenmeed, his fellow third graders):

"Touching: a beautifully crafted ode to the artform that is miming. This experienced thespian was both poignant and poetic as he displayed the struggles the invisible glass box posed. A performance that tugs at the heart-strings, the classic mime act is elevated to a new level of non-verbal sophistication."

Timmy paused, and as a proud father to this piece, he holds the paper close to his chest,

Saddened by Timmy's despondency, Mrs. Walters offers to cook some blueberry pancakes for Timmy to review. To which, Timmy politely denied- pancake reviewing was just his elementary self, attempting to make it to the big leagues of reviewing mimes. Once he

As with most children his age, Timmy understands that contempt wears best on those with an audience.

reached that rank, he could never go back.

“Or, how about I take you out to the ice cream vendor down the block?”

It was a resounding yes from Timmy, who immediately grabs his pen and notebook.

When Timmy and his mother leave the house, the two reflect on Timmy’s life as a critic. Mrs.Walters hopes this “performance critic nonsense” to be a passing phase; while Timmy hopes to turn it into a paying career. Although his parents refuse to pay him for his work, Timmy is sure there is another vegetable loving anthropoid with a knowledge of taxes (the only qualifications needed to be an adult) that would pay him for his soon to be coveted work.

As they approach the ice cream vendor, Timmy contemplates his order. His fans (again, referring to Sally and Bill,) appreciate when Timmy goes “off- menu” and discovers delicacy gems that are not usually served. “I think I will order the cookie dough ice cream,” Timmy tells the employee manning the vendor. “However,” he paused, “would you be able to add Reeses’ Pieces to my order?” Timmy winces at his own pre-decided turn of events: one that involves the employee kicking him out and refusing to ever serve him ice cream again. On the contrary, the complying employee agreed to his outrageous request. “Well, that is one star earned for the fabulous customer service. Most chefs consider their menu to be statutes of law,” Timmy explains to the innocent Mrs.Walters, who was not familiar with the scandalous behind-the- scenes of the restaurant business.

As Mrs.Walters and Timmy enjoy their ice creams on the park benches, Timmy begins jotting down fragments of his review- the only peccadille being the lack of presentation (“...a slightly larger scoop would have been more suitable”).

Whilst contemplating the rest of his review, Timmy decides to unclick his “journalist” pen. He scoots back on the bench, leans in closer to mom, and enjoys the ice cream. Maybe this day would not be so bad after all.



Glass Blower
Leah Harris | Other

Insight

By Nechama Reichman

In a rusty and worn hospice room there were four beds. On each bed lay an elderly patient in poor health, whose status worsened by the minute. With little time left to observe and experience the pleasures of this world, each one wanted the bed next to the only drab, dust-covered, square window in the room. A small porthole to the outside world.

But, the bed next to the window could only be occupied by one person, and so it went to Danny, the longest living resident who at 102 had no family left to visit him. Each morning, the other patients in the room asked Danny to describe his view. Every day they received a different response.

On Monday, Danny said:

I see an elderly woman, with her cane, spreading out a plum purple sheet on the ground, but the wind just blew it away. A teenager with a Yankees sweatshirt and brown curly hair on a skateboard speeds to pick up the tablecloth and spread it out for the grandmother once more. The elderly woman shakes his hand in gratitude and he goes back on his way. Nannies watch youngsters by the green swirly slides and the grandmother prepares turkey sandwiches and juice-boxes for her five grandchildren.”

With a touch more optimism that afternoon, the patients greeted the nurses in purple scrubs, and received their medication with less resistance.

On Tuesday morning, the patients turned their heads to the window again. Recognizing their request, Danny related:

“I see a gray sky with crying clouds and parents rushing their children to school, shielding them selflessly with umbrellas. A burgundy car pulls in front of the school and a small boy, maybe six or seven years old, in a Spiderman coat exits and stumbles into a

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covered, square
window...**

puddle, scraping his knee and dropping his Batman knapsack on the floor as his mother's car speeds off."

Unable to do anything from the confines of their beds, Danny's audience shares a deflated sigh. Reassuringly, Danny resumes:

"A rather tall boy with frosty blue eyes picks up the soaking wet knapsack and hands it to the younger child, who is now crying at the entrance to school. With a friendly hand extended, the older boy pulls the younger one up and together they walk into the building."

Danny sleeps through most of Wednesday. Nurses and doctors in blue scrubs come and go all day. But on Thursday, Danny has enough strength to relate the following to his roommates.

"I see a little girl with green eyes and a peppermint red grin, though the rest of her features are irregular, and quite honestly, a bit hard to look at. She sits at the center of the porch, adorned in a fuchsia glittery "Happy Birthday Princess" crown. However, she is alone. She seems to be waiting, and she has probably been waiting for a long time. Her face is stained with tears."

Then Danny drifted into a deep sleep. When Danny woke up later that day he looked out the window and finished his account:

"I now see a yellow school bus has arrived. At least twenty energetic young girls are playing ring-around-the-rosy with the Birthday girl in the center, emitting a heartwarming giggle. With her eyes perked and staring in awe, Sarah lovingly motions for the girls to take a seat at the picnic table. The girls watch a magician perform hand tricks and pull a rabbit out of his hat. "

On Friday, the linen on the bed next to the window was replaced.

On Saturday, Jacob was moved to Danny's old bed by the window. The following morning, the roommates asked Jacob what he saw. "Nothing," Jacob replied. "Just the solid brick wall of the next building."



Breaking Through

Leora Lehrfield | Other

