

Wings



A MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY & ART ANTHOLOGY
EXPLORING THE FLIGHT OF NEW EXPERIENCES & PERSPECTIVES

The Harry and Rose Kaplan Scholarship Writing Award

Manhattan High School for Girls would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Tuckel family for their contribution to our commitment to excellence. The Harry and Rose Kaplan Scholarship Award, created in memory of Dr. Tuckel's beloved parents, inspired the literary journal competition by raising the standard for written and artistic expression.

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Wings

An Anthology of Literature and Art

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to the memory of

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רב ישראל מנחם בן בנימין

*who with his Torah scholarship and
exceptional generosity took so many*

under his wings

יהא זכרו ברוך

Table of Contents

Foreword by Ms. Friedman	15
The Unexplored Family Dynamics	
By Shaindel Rusanov, Editor	18
Thursday	
By Ayelet Buchen	20
The Strength of a Butterfly	
By Rachel Grossman	22
A Stitch in Time	
By Chaya Sara Oppenheim	23
I Will Hear in Heaven	
By Chloe Gertner	26
The Choice	
By Elisheva Hoffman	28
A New Childhood	
By Mimi Rogosnitzky	30
The Anti-Metamorphosis	
By Nechama Dembitzer	31
Playing with Fire	
By Nomie Fermaglich	33
A Long Lasting Legacy	
By Frumi Cohn	35
Beginnings	
By Henya Areman	37
Time's Internal Struggle	
By Tikva Nabatian, Editor	40
Conversations with Myself	
By Elijah Garfinkel	42
Unforgettable Memories	
By Layla Crystal	44
The Loudest Silence	
By Miriam Wilamowsky	47
Shadow of the Past	
By Aviva Attar	49
Greenhorn Hope	
By Nechi Bertram	50
A New Reality	
By Ayelet Landau	52
My Sole Lives On	
By Esther Rothman	54
Education Takes a Dive	
By Sara Grosberg	56
The End of the Beginning	
By Shira Nabatian	57
The Streets	
By Hadassah Spira	60

The Black and White Carousel	
By Rivky Kreiser	61
The Meaning of a Hero	
By Aviva Attar, Editor	66
A Poem that Saved	
By Estee Gerber	67
Leaders Explore	
By Yaeli Berkowitz	69
A Warped Reality	
By Gabriella Hawk	70
Woman in Blue	
By Elisheva Rosensweig	72
A Poor Shot	
By Leah Engelman	73
In the Blink of an Eye	
By Shalva Adler	75
Opera House	
By Naomi Segelov	77
Seeing What You Feel	
By Racheli Jacobi	78
Protons to Neutrons	
By Zahava Sokolow, Editor	82
Monochrome Life	
By Dini Raskin	83
Unsinkable	
By Miri Fried	85
Once in a Blue Moon	
By Elisheva Rosensweig	86
Heart to Heart	
By Naomi Segelov	87
The Phoenix	
By Faigy Sontag	89
Sending a Letter	
By Rebecca Russo	90
Beyond My Control	
By Yael Grosberg	92
Hand of Hope	
By Yaffa Jacobson	94
The Vote	
By Rachel Retter	95
New Perspectives	
By Rachelle Chechik, Editor	100
A Master of Perspective	
By Baila Schuster	101
Disturbing the Universe	
By Bryna Greenberg	103

Beyond the Darkness	
By Avigail Dreifus	106
Spring Garden	
By Chana Leah Seif	107
The World in Black & White	
By Elisheva Lesser	109
I Was the New Kid	
By Osnat Cohen	110
Faces of Hope	
By Talia Alper	112
Common Sense	
By Tamar Skydell	113
The Untold Story of Failure	
By Tova Schwartz	115
Overcoming One's Obstacles	
By Dini Raskin, Editor	120
Genius Undiscovered	
By Hadassah Penn	121
Hamster Tale	
By Bella Rubin	122
Undefeated	
By Miriam Wilamowsky	124
Where is Evil Truly Found	
By Shirley Kapetas	125
Pictinari	
By Shaindy Blumenthal	127
Uncharted	
By Sara Ben Zvi	128
The New Girl at School	
By Serene Klapper	130
Lost and Found	
By Meital Israel	131
Get Up, Girl	
By Dena Skydell	133
Creative Process	
By Ava Katz, Editor	138
Two Auditions	
By Ashira Feld	140
From Bloom to Blossom	
By Rachel Liebling	142
The Purpose	
By Chavi Zelefsky	143
Forever More	
By Miriam Liebling	145
Sheltered Waters	
By Randy Balasiano	147

Tutus and Tears	
By Talia Alper	148
Why Only Now	
By Yael Weinroth	150
A Grandmother's Gift	
By Tziporah Braunstein	152
The Lone Butterfly	
By Daniella Rowe	154
The Secret Keeper	
By Nina Melohn	155
Emotional Art	
By Talia Alper, Editor	160
Renewal of Hope	
By Ariella Huberfeld	162
Dialogue of the Souls	
By Daniella Cohen	164
Let Your Imaginations Fly	
By Raizy Cohen	166
Over My Head	
By Michal Trietel	167
The Catcher and the Rye	
By Shana Chechik	169
Guilty?	
By Shifi Shulman	171
Once Upon a Time	
By Rachelle Chechik	172
A Special Kind of Love	
By Shoshana Rosenthal	173
Color in the Dark	
By Meryl Rubin	175
New Beginnings	
By Draisly Friedman	176

Foreword

She is wearing a fuschia sweater and a rose-pattered skirt and is handing out toffee caramels from the box on her lap as she tells the little ones where to find the new dolls she just bought them on the avenue and also the high shiny plastic chairs for their beauty parlor play. Her smile is warm and her eyes are curious as she chats with them about their school activities and the dolls' funny features.

"I love you," she says brightly and then she presses some oversized rainbow-colored gumballs into their little hands and drops more into their dress pockets.

"Hide them fast," she whispers, "before Mommy sees."

And they abscond with their stuffed puffy cheeks and giggling eyes to the living room area. "Oooh! It's snowing!" they squeal, pressing their little noses into the glass windows. "Let's go build a snowman," Mimi suggests.

"And a snowlady," adds Huvie. "He has to have a mother."

"No. He really wants a snowprincess," corrects Mimi. "With a diamond tiara and a big poofy gown and a sparkling castle."

And then they are out, small hands shoveling big snow into magical mounds.

"Snowman is really shivering," declares Huvie, her teeth chattering. "It really needs a blankie."

"Okay," agrees Mimi, waving her hand like a maestro. "So let's go inside."

And then they are chewing caramels again and asking her opinion on an appropriate blanket color for their man-snowman to wear when he meets his lady-snowprincess.

My beloved grandmother loves color and candy and comedy and conversation and costume jewelry and cantorial music and *kupat* Rav Meir Baal Hanes and cooking her trademark *Kapusta*, and keeping up with all her great-grandkids, from little to grown, and her commitment to *yiddishkeit*. A Holocaust survivor, bereft of all her family by the time she had turned eighteen, she appreciates her renewed life, constantly seeks opportunity to celebrate and enrich it, and inspires all of us also to discover the spirit in our own wings.

Let's!



1

Section

The Unexplored Family Dynamics

*“All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is
unhappy in its own way.”
— Leo Tolstoy*

The Unexplored Family Dynamics

By Shaindel Rusanov, Editor

Manhattan's annual Literary Journal is a chance for all the creative thinkers in our school to spread their wings and write. This year's theme of "new and unexplored" led writers in many different directions. Relationships are imperative to emotional and physical health. Shlomo Hamelech tells us in Mishlei "פְּנִימֵי הַפְּנִימִים לְפָנִים כֵּן לֵב הָאָדָם לְאָדָם". People desire to form close and meaningful relationships with other humans. One of the most important relationships we create are the ones we have with our family.

Some families face struggles that tear them apart. "Playing With Fire" by Nomie Fermaglich tells the story of a murder scene that is caused by jealousy and anger at a family member. Although the familiarity of the characters from the game Clue adds a humorous tone to the writing, Nomie's well written plot is gruesome.

Chaya Sara's piece "A Stitch in Time" describes a professional and established tailor in France who is forced to sew Nazi uniforms. He inspires hope in himself and his daughter with descriptions of beautiful and fantasy-filled dresses he plans to make for her when the Nazis leave. When tragedy strikes, he does not stop dreaming. He continues living in a fantastical imaginary land where hope blossoms and everything is as it should be.

In "I Will Hear in Heaven," Chloe Gertner depicts a boy's drunk and abusive father that was a catalyst for him to pursue his career in music. The boy succeeds because of his father's perseverance but also despite it. Chloe follows the boy as he develops into a professional pianist and composer. The relationship between the boy and his music gives him solace and comfort from his father's abuse.

Nechama Dembitzer's "The Anti-Metamorphosis" is an amusing response to Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. In Kafka's book, Gregor Samsa turns into a giant bug and his family is horrified. In Nechama's piece, the reverse occurs. A man's entire family turns into bugs, and in his horror, the man reacts. The man doesn't even realize what he has done, assuming that his family left to somewhere interesting without him. Nechama's writing is whimsical and light, but hides grim undertones.

In a piece that hits close to home, Ayelet Buchen recounts about Gilad, Eyal and Naftali who were kidnapped by terrorists this summer. "Thursday" starts with the anticipation for Shabbos that we can all relate to. Ayelet's descriptions captivate the reader, but what is more poignant is the story we all know. The calm of Erev Shabbos jarringly interrupted by a car speeding away from the hitchhiking post with three boys trapped inside is a bitter reminder of the losses we all shared this summer.

In a more light-hearted anecdote, Frumi Cohn shares the feelings of purposeless from the perspective of a Converse sneaker stuck in a Foot Locker. "A Long-Lasting Legacy" details the different people and their lives that the sneaker sees in the store. The sneaker feels lonely and purposeless which makes it long for a better home. Frumi's description of the sneaker's feeling of relief and gratitude after finding a family is vivid and colorful.

The final piece in this section is "The Choice" by Elisheva Hoffman. There are always many pieces about the Holocaust in the lit journal, but Elisheva's narrates a story from a new perspective—the daughter of a Nazi commander. In Elisheva's tale, the young woman realizes that everything she has been taught by her school, her church, and her father is wrong. She concludes that her country's dream of a wholesome world is abhorrent. Liesle views her father in a new light after seeing the morality and love the Jews show each other even in the worst of times.

While these stories depict hash circumstances and unconventional family dynamics, they all have some measure of light or hope. Whether it's Beethoven's beautiful concertos, the tailor's beautiful dresses, the sneaker being able to run for the first time, or the bonding of Am Yisrael, they show that there can always be something good found among the bad. Leo Tolstoy said, "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." This collection of stories are about unhappy families that have undertones of strength, courage and hope.

Thursday

By Ayelet Buchen

Thursday. The week is almost over.

There's just one more day of school until it's Shabbos, the boy's favorite day of the week. The boy is sixteen. He has curly auburn hair and a voice that makes you stop what you're doing to listen to him sing. Every Friday night, the boy sings with his parents and six siblings, and every Shabbos day they continue. Just one more day, and the boy will sing on Friday night just like he does every week.

The boy with curly auburn hair swings his dark blue knapsack over his shoulder and races down the stairs. The day is over. He can finally go home.

The boy's home is not in the same neighborhood as his school. It's not that easy to travel into or out of his school's community because the buses don't run very often. The boy spots his friend a few feet away. His friend has straight brown hair, light skin, and brown eyes. The boy runs up to his friend and asks, "Ready?" His friend replies with an excited, "You bet!" and the two of them follow their routine and walk to the nearest hitchhiking post with the hopes of catching a ride.

The boy and his friend have been hitchhiking their way home for years. There's not really another way to get back home, unless the boys' parents would arrange some sort of inconvenient and unnecessary carpool. Everyone gets out of this town by hitchhiking.

There is one boy waiting at the post. He's taller than the boy with curly auburn hair and his friend. He has straight black hair, and his eyes are dark brown. His skin is darker, and he looks about three years older than the other two boys.

The boy who was already waiting at the post looks at the other two boys. "Where are you guys headed?"

"I'm going home. I live in Talmon," replies the boy with straight brown hair.

"I'm going home, too," says the boy with curly auburn hair. "But I'm from Nof Ayalon."

"What about you?" the boy with the straight brown hair asks the older one.

"Oh, I'm from Elad. I'm actually also going back home now."

The older boy points at the other two boys. "Hey, you guys wanna catch a

ride together?"

"Yeah, sure. Why not?" the boy with the straight brown hair answers.

"I'm in," the boy with the curly auburn hair agrees.

A few minutes later, a car slowly pulls up to the hitchhiking post. One boy looks at the other two and says, "Looks like we got a ride." All three boys laugh and sit into the backseat of the car, just as each one of them has in several different vehicles in the past. The door closes, and the car zooms down the road at a dangerously high speed.

Inside the car, the boys look at each other. Their eyes are all wide, and they all wear the same look of fear. The boy with the straight brown hair casually puts his hands in his pockets and quietly pulls out his phone. He pushes some buttons, muffles his voice, and gunshots are heard in the background as he whispers, "They kidnapped us."

The dead bodies of Naftali, Gilad, and Eyal were found eighteen days later.

**Just one more
day, and the
boy will sing
on Friday night
just like he does
every week.**



The Strength of a Butterfly

By Rachel Grossman

22

A Stitch in Time

By Chaya Sara Oppenheim

It was in the dawning hour of morning that he could be found hunched over the thrumming sewing machine in a small apartment in downtown Chicago. A soft spring wind, perfumed with the smell of blooming lilies, breezed in through the open window, just like it had forty-some years ago, in the Paris of 1940. But the innocent scent of flowers had been fouled then by the invading Nazis who polluted the air, their black boots permanently pounding their feral stench into the soft sweet earth of France.

His tailoring was very popular then. He had had a small storefront, where passersby would gather to ooh and ahh at the finely dressed mannequins. Customers would enter to the tinkling of chimes, and he would emerge from behind a curtain with the tape measure around his neck and say, “What can I do for you on this fine day, monsieur?”, until two thick black boots stamped their way across the store to growl in a guttural language foreign to him. And he was told to sew Nazi uniforms.

He hadn’t wanted to sew them. “Uniforms are an abomination to the art of sewing,” he would say to Adeline, when she came home from school. “They are shapeless and utilitarian. They lack beauty and grace.”

Adeline would smile and pour him a cup of black coffee. “It’s alright, Papa. My teacher, Monsieur Dubois, says the Germans will be gone soon and you will be able to sew beautiful things again.”

But that was before she came home, without a smile, to tell him that Monsieur Dubois was gone. Her small hands shook when she told him this, and she accidentally spilled the black coffee on her dress.

“Oh!” Adeline gasped, as the dark stain spread across the front of her skirt: the Nazis over Europe.

He had jumped up and rushed over to her. “Did you burn yourself?”

“No,” but Adeline’s wide brown eyes filled with tears. She dabbed at her dress with a cloth, but the black brew had seeped into the material, entrenched beyond her meager capabilities. “But my dress is ruined.”

“I will sew you a new dress, Adeline,” he promised. “After I finish this order of uniforms, I will sew you a dress— but not just any dress. It will be the most beautiful dress, Adeline! However you want it, with whatever material you desire.”

“Oh, Papa!” Adeline laughed, a tumbling lilted laugh that would have been crying but was now laughter, and reached her arms up to hug him. “Fur?”

23

“The finest mink it will be!” he cried.

“Dolphin skin?”

“Of course! With sharks’ fins lining the back!”

“Nazi’s mustaches?”

“Only the furriest! I daresay Hitler’s little one would hardly be adequate!”

Adelise’s blond curls bounced from laughter. “What about bread and butter?”

“My dear Adelise,” her father announced, “when the Germans are gone, I will make you a dress out of the finest meats in all of Paris, that a chef passing by will give the hat off his head in order to serve even a sliver of it in his restaurant. But you will wear it and not even be hungry for a taste!”

He held her tight and then drew back and laughed. “It is well that I must now sew you a dress. Otherwise, I might forget my skills. Sewing uniforms require no expertise.” Leaning forward, he whispered, histrionically, “Even a Nazi could sew them!”

Adelise giggled behind her hand at this, her eyes sparkling.

“But for now,” he instructed her, “rub some vinegar onto the stain. That will help take out the coffee.”

“If what I need is vinegar, all I need is a bitter-breathed Nazi to blow on my stain!” Adelise announced.

“Indeed,” he returned to his sewing machine, and in turn, a worried, tight-lipped smile returned to his face. “But shushhh!, we mustn’t let anyone hear us.”

He remembered every dress and every suit he had ever sewn, every lapel he had ever stitched, every buttonhole he had ever made— especially the Milanese buttonholes. He remembered not only the texture of the material he had handled, but its exact color, and the name and measurements of the person he was sewing it for. But now, thinking from his small window in Chicago forty years later, he could not remember how many uniforms he’d sewn.

**“After I finish
this order of
uniforms, I
will sew you a
dress— but not
just any dress. It
will be the most
beautiful dress,
Adelise!**

Not long after he had promised to make her a dress, Adelise came home with purple marks on her face and scratches on her knees and tears on her cheeks. She began to fade; first her fingernails, from worry, and the rest of her followed, from pain, till she was but a ghost, walking without sound, without leaving footprints.

“I am not harsh enough to bruise the ground with my feet,” Adelise would have been proud to say. And the bitter Nazi coldness that whipped around the street corners slowed to a chilly draft, sliding through the unseen cracks in the window, creeping from her frozen fingernails until it reached her heart.

Chicago was opening her eyes now; delicate threads of pink and yellow were dipping their way through the horizon, slowly stitching the rising sun higher and higher along the sky. Sunlight filtered in through the window, and his fingers hastened as he felt its warmth. He bent his head lower over his work; years had robbed his eyesight of their strength. There was a slight shift in the breeze, and a bird broke out into song. He looked up from his sewing.

“Ah, Adelise,” he murmured. “How you will love this one!”

The advancing sunlight stretched along his hands and nosed on to the floor. Tiptoeing along floorboards, the sunlight stole past the line that he would tell all his customers in broken English, “No go there!”, shrugging under a closed door and looked up at a roomful of mannequins, each donning a dress more beautiful than the next.

He leaned back from his work with a sigh of pleasure. “Adelise, this is the one I know you always wanted. Adelise! Adelise, come see this dress I’ve made you!”

But as he blinked, and the hope clouding his eyes momentarily dissipated. His hands trembled and with a moan, the freshly finished dress slipped from his grasp, just like Adelise had more than forty years ago.

I Will Hear in Heaven

By Chloe Gertner

While most kids my age were dreaming under the warm covers of a silent home, I was found sitting in front of a piano with shivers creeping up my spine. I'd feel my father's eyes piercing the back of my head. Every night it was the same routine. In the thick black of night I'd feel two callused and rough hands grab onto the collar of my striped cotton pajamas. I knew it was my father because the scent of alcohol was too strong to belong to anyone else. I was able to see his sharp green eyes through the faint light coming in from the small window; his eyes were so cold that often I'd imagine them freezing right there on his face.

In silence he'd yank me out of bed. I would feel the cold of night penetrate my insides the second my skin left the protective coverings of my blanket. My bare feet would step onto the cold wood floor and jerk back. The wooden floorboards would creak with every step I took. I kept pinching myself in order to stay awake; falling asleep would cost me a debt I had no means with which to repay.

My father would place scores of music in front of me and signal for me to begin. He would stand over me with his heavy breathing on the back of my neck, messy hair drooping in all directions. My small and numb fingers would find their position on top of the white and black polished keys they called home. I would look at the small notes jumping on the lines placed in front of me and force myself to focus.

The piano was my shelter in the place I felt most insecure. I would tell him everything I was feeling; he knew everything about me. When I was angry I would press down extra hard. When I was happy and lost in a fantasy world I created for myself, I would play merry staccato notes reminding me of a carousel at the fair I wasn't allowed to attend.

Most people write their life story on a paper with a pen; I wrote mine on a piano with my bare hands. The pages of a book tear, the writing fades, the mind forgets. That's why I told my story through music. The notes don't fade, the melody doesn't tear; the mind forgets, but music has the knack to remain. I'll prove this theory of mine correct; my name is Beethoven.

What just came to your mind? Moonlight Sonata, Ode to Joy, Fur Elise? I was born two hundred and forty five years ago yet you still know my story.

While on my deathbed I uttered the words, "Ich werde im Himmel hören! I will hear in heaven!" Every day I hear people take the notes I poured my pain, love, and happiness into and rewrite their own stories from the notes I played on those daunting nights.

**Most people
write their life
story on a paper
with a pen; I
wrote mine on
a piano with my
bare hands.**

The Choice

By Elisheva Hoffman

I feel as if my hands are covered in blood, sticky, wet, beet red blood. Day in and day out I am surrounded by death. They look like zombies. They are emaciated. They have sunken eyes. They look more dead than alive. And, in reality, they are as good as dead now. All of them are going to end up dead, gassed and then burned to ashes. The stench of the burned flesh is overpowering, nauseating. It envelopes me wherever I go in the camp.

We say the Jews are a threat to the Reich. We say they are less than human. We say there is no point to them. The Jews often seem that way. The Jews shuffle along, barely moving unless they are ordered to move. Many times, they seem to care about nothing except that next piece of bread. Gas showers are common for the Jews, but water showers are rare.

In church, we read Martin Luther. He hated the Jews. He wanted to burn their synagogues and kill them all. We are fulfilling his dream. It is easy to believe that the Jews are subhuman, particularly when my father, my beloved father, is the Kommandant of this camp. It is ironic that it is called a camp because here, under the guidance of my father and under the orders of our Fuehrer, my people are murdering Jews.

I am sixteen years old and this is my life, watching other people die in this Nazi dream. And that dream is now my nightmare. It didn't get to me for years. I was and am the apple of my father's eye. I basked in his love. All I cared about was being loved by him. It's been only the two of us for years. Mom died when I was a little girl, and my father raised me all by himself. Don't get me wrong, I am grateful and I love him, but he is a monster. Because I have remained silent, I feel as if I am responsible, too.

Last night I broke the rules. I peaked under the thick curtain that covers our windows and watched the guards unload the Jews from the trains. Out they tumbled. They were dirty, crying, panicked.

Yet, as I watched them I saw and heard things I never really focused on before. I saw mothers lovingly holding children. I saw the young help the elderly to get up and get off the train. Through the barking of the dogs, I heard their leaders imploring them not to give up hope. I heard their rabbis begging them to continue to believe in their G-d. I saw people of belief and compassion. They are good people, a loving people. For the first time, I realized that they are the humans, and we are the animals.

Tonight, I must confront my father. I hear his footsteps near the door. That

sound always filled me with love before. Tonight, I want to vomit.

"Liesle, my pet," he calls. "Daddy is home. My precious child, you have been crying. Tell me who was mean to you," he says. "I will have him killed." It would be funny, but I realize it just may be true.

"Daddy!" I scream. "How can we?"

"How can we what?"

"How can we just murder them? They are people. People like us. Maybe better than we are. How can we, how can YOU, just kill them?"

"Oh, Liesle. Don't trouble your pretty little head with such things. Girls like you should play. You should worry about dresses, gossip and games. Leave these things to the men, to the grownups."

But I won't be deterred. "No Daddy!" I scream. "The Jews are good. We are murderers. YOU are a murderer."

There, I said it. He is mad. The father that I thought loved me slaps me, hard, right in the face. It hurts, but it feels good. I am not like him, and he knows it.

"Get to bed NOW!" he yells "And mind your own business,"

I respond, "This is my business. This is everyone's business. I can't stand it anymore."

"You are a fool. I have raised a fool." He storms out in a murderous rage.

I am different than he is. I am different than I was. I don't know what I will do. But I will not stand by as this happens. I will not have this blood on my hands.

They are good people, a loving people. For the first time, I realized that they are the humans, and we are the animals.



A New Childhood

By Mimi Rogosnitzky

30

The Anti-Metamorphosis

By Nechama Dembitzer

In hindsight I see that the nightmare was a premonition: a world run by human beings who have the bodies of bugs is enough to wake anyone from their deepest slumber. Terrified, my eyes dart to the corners of the room as I search for those horrific creatures. The picture of the man in the fur coat is clear, and so is the chest of drawers. The bugs are nowhere in sight, but I could almost feel their presence. And then I look down at my body.

Craning my neck, I can barely see my toes peeking out from beneath my blanket. I feel an odd sensation on my stomach and I frantically swipe at the area to clear it of any possible pests. When I am sure that my bed is bug-free, I check the clock and realize it is 5:30 a.m., time to begin my long day. My morning schedule must run like clockwork so that I can catch the train and reach my humdrum job and overbearing boss on time. I do this all to return home, go to sleep and restart the cycle again. I feel like a trapped bug. Oh no, not bugs again. Suddenly the cold floor feels like the backs of beetles and I carefully tiptoe to the bathroom.

I quickly brush my teeth and try to fix my hair but it stays stubbornly in its boring style. My dreary brown eyes are surrounded by the bags that are developing because of my lack of sleep; this is going to be a neverending day. For a moment I imagine that I am standing before a magic mirror that can change my appearance and help me escape my reality, but I quickly snap myself out of such fantasies. Out of habit, my legs carry me to my dresser and I pull out my tan slacks and gray polo, as I do every day. My Casio watch reads 5:45; I have to run if I want to catch my 6:15 train. I grab my backpack from the sofa, and as I exit the room I quickly inspect it over my shoulder to reassure myself that nothing has changed.

Instead, all I hear is silence. The house is deserted and I wonder where my family has gone.

By the time I reach my kitchen I know there must be something wrong. Usually, Max and Mara, my younger brother and sister, would be wreaking havoc in the house and my mother would be screaming at them to be quiet. Instead, all I hear is silence. The house is deserted and I wonder where my family has gone. I don't spend too much time on the thought as I quickly grab a granola bar and head to the front door.

I can feel that there is something unsettling about the silence but I can-

31

not quite put my finger on it. If my family went on a surprise vacation, they will receive some choice words from me later, but for now I realize that I have a train to catch. On the way out, I hear scuttling by my feet and suddenly four repulsive creatures run across the floor. I jump away in shock as I count two large bugs with two smaller bugs following closely behind. The bugs almost look like a family; in fact, one that resembles my own, but I brush away that ridiculous thought. I know something about the scene seems unnatural but I have no time to ponder it, as I move, repulsed, towards the door. My dream, or more accurately my nightmare, tugs at my consciousness but I don't know why.

Suddenly, the four bugs position themselves on my path to the door, and I am trapped. I brave myself to step forward and in one fluid motion I lift my right boot and bring it down forcefully onto the ground. I feel a crunch underneath it and I know that I have succeeded. I know I shouldn't, but I leave the mess for my mother to clean. With a satisfied feeling in my stomach, I turn around and exit the front door, excited for a day that may have some novelty in it after all.

Playing with Fire

By Nomie Fermaglich

Have you ever felt that your surroundings and the people you thought were your friends were hiding something? I am sitting on my bed after a very stressful night. I had given the police my statement about my whereabouts during the auction. It had taken place in the mansion of Mr. Peabody, an esteemed member of our community. He had recently returned from a trip to India and brought back with him the honorable Prince Vacidei. Permit me to explain what happened on this tragic night.

After fiddling with my hair-do and my dress for over twenty minutes, I took a deep breath, and stepped out of the powder room. All my nightmares flashed before me; for the first time in a while tonight I have to face someone extremely daunting: my mother. Having a mother close to my age, who is extremely competitive, and will do anything to upkeep her reputation can be maddening. Tonight, there was an event to help raise money for families struggling to support their children in India. Naturally, my mother showed up. Calmly I picked up a glass of champagne and looked to my right. A few feet away was a tall, elegant woman with her hair pulled back revealing her angelic features. The way she carried herself, and kept her head held high made me stare. She never got old. She is my mother. Pulling myself together I joined a group of friends in a conversation when suddenly I heard a scream. I looked around but nobody seemed to hear.

I was immediately interested and ran to investigate. Apparently I was not the only person to hear the commotion, for when I looked behind me running toward the same goal was Professor Peter Plum and Colonial Leslie Mustard. As I ran I noticed that the scream came from a part of the mansion that was not open to the members of the party. I went down a hall that led straight in to the billiard room. There I came to a sudden stop. Mrs. White, the housekeeper who has been caring for the mansion for many years, was standing with her mouth open wide "Oh!" she exclaimed. Her rag had fallen to the floor a few inches from a dead body with a bloody wrench to it. Not just anyone, but the prince. "I just came in to dust and I found him like this!" Mrs. White exclaimed while she trembled.

Having a mother close in age to you, who is extremely competitive, and will do anything to upkeep her reputation can be maddening.

All the people at the event were gathered in the study by the police. The police concluded from the evidence that the murderer had to be one of the people at the party. We all stood there and looked into each other's eyes to see who could be capable of doing something that vicious. We consisted of Reverend Green, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Mr. Peabody, Colonial Mustard, Mrs. Peacock and me.

The authorities asked me "How did you know something happened?"

I answered "I heard a scream."

"How did you know where to run?" the police asked.

"The scream came from the other side of the mansion, so I ran in that direction."

After giving all the information to the authorities, we slowly exited the room. We had to be brought into the station because we were all prime suspects in the investigation. After what felt like the longest night of my life, we were all escorted out of our cell. That is, except for one, Mrs. Peacock, my mother. My plan had played out perfectly.

A Long Lasting Legacy

By Frumi Cohn

Sitting on a shelf in Foot Locker was not the way I wanted to spend my life. All my day consisted of was sit, wait, and sit some more. I yearned to go beyond the glass window that caged me and locked me in this store. Yeah, sure, some days were interesting, like that day a kid tried pulling me down from a shelf and instead brought the entire shelf down with me. All I could see was the red of his blood and all I could hear were the sirens of the approaching ambulance. Oh, and how I can I forget Mrs. O'Conner? She was a mighty old lady with a mighty strong opinion. She came in regularly to check up on new arrivals so she could buy new shoes for her forever growing grandchildren: "Ah, there's Susy, who's just turning nine, who's a twin with Jerald, who's forever losing his sneakers. And then there is Jacob who's six. And how can I forget baby Thomas?" But back to my days on the shelf.

I yearned to be part of the world beyond the smell of feet. I stared wistfully at the busy streets yearning for the freedom to walk and explore the city like the people I was able to see. I wanted to take in the sights of NYC by skipping through the tangle of honking cabs, dancing with street performers, and running for screeching subways. But I couldn't, because I was stuck in a window display at Foot Locker. All I could do was sit, wait, and sit some more.

But it wasn't always like that. Originally, the unexpected newness and edginess of Converse rocked the American world. There was no such thing as Converse spending its days just sitting and waiting: a lace-up Converse like me would have spent its days running, playing, and dancing through all walks of American culture because athletes, punks, and every American kid, teenager and adult owned a pair or more of Converse sneakers.

No, Converse cannot be forgotten for long. The legacy established by Chuck Taylor who championed the shoe throughout America, made Converse an indispensable part of American culture. I mean how can you forget about Converse when they served as the official shoes for Team USA in the first-ever Olympic Basketball game, in which they won the gold medal?! They also served as the official training shoes of the US military in World War II and the logo

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was patriotically decorated with red and blue lines. And, hello people, Converse was advertised by celebrities like James Dean who himself is an important part of American culture!

No, I convinced myself, Converse is too important to be forgotten. So I tried to maintain hope of escaping my prison and made sure not to despair as I struggled through my daily life when all I could do was I sit, wait, and sit some more.

Then one early morning I was woken up by Martha, the store manager. She was trying to remove me from the display shelf. No!! I cried. I would not go to the garbage. Absolutely not. I would not return to the dark, spooky, and overcrowded storage closet. Those were times too painful and terrible to be discussed. So what if no one wanted lace—up Converse anymore?! Was fashion going to dictate my life and snobbishly give me a death sentence?! No sirree. Not this lace-up Converse. I was going to fight till the end. I was going to achieve my freedom.

“Can I have those shoes? I can’t find them anywhere in the store,” a sweet voice asked Martha.

“Oh sure! You’re very lucky, because these are the last lace-up Converse in the store!”

“Thanks so much!”

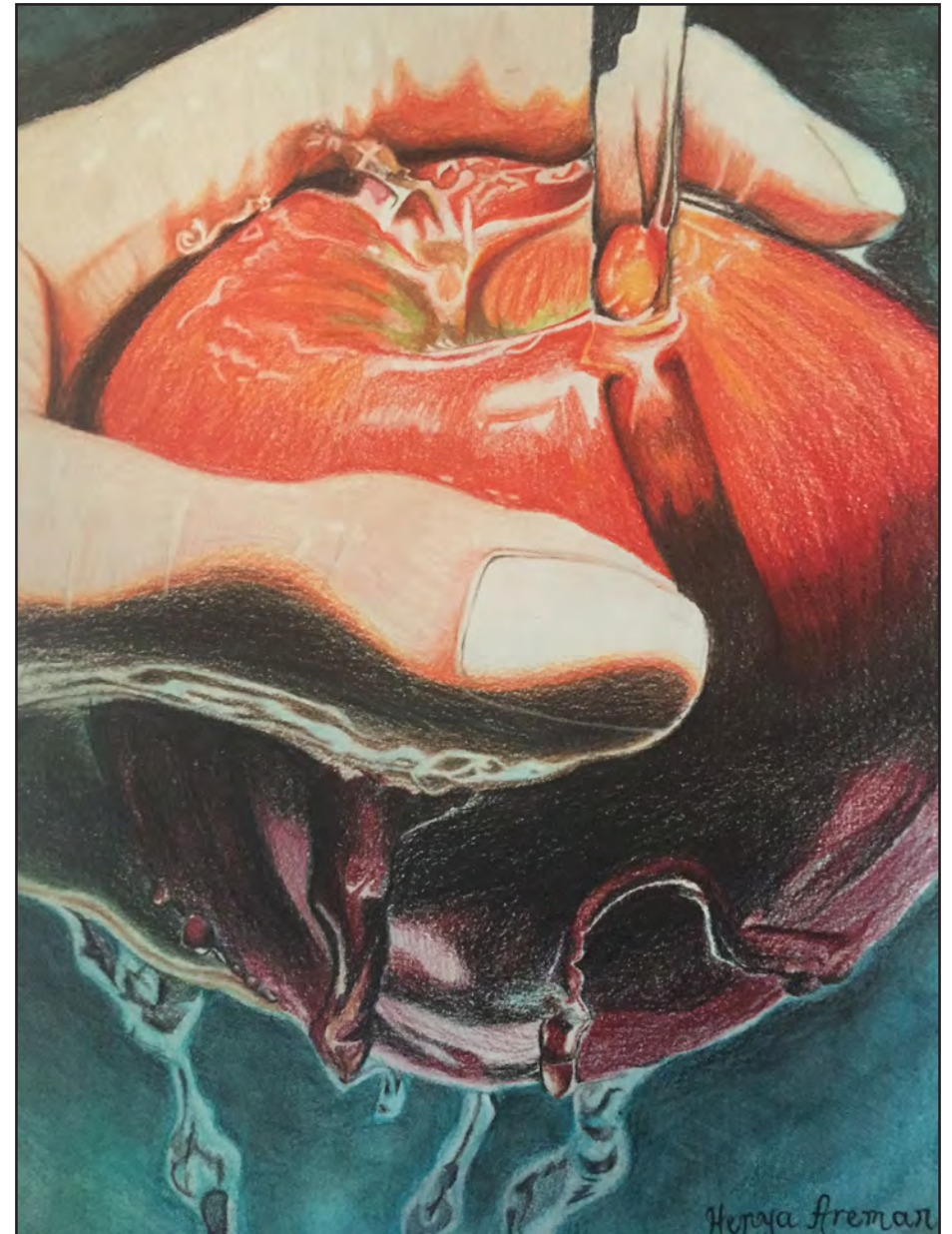
And suddenly I was passed into her hands.

She must have been around nine years old. Her hands gently smoothed the canvas as she tried to undo the laces. I have to admit that I was pretty knotty then.

She finally slipped me on and tied the laces. And she ran.

I ran.

We ran.



Beginnings

By Hanya Areman

2

Section

Blending of the Past, Present, and Future

*The distinction between the past, present, and future, is
only a stubbornly persistent illusion
— Albert Einstein*

Time's Internal Struggle

By Tikva Nabatian, Editor

Time, in the rudimentary state, is composed of three distinct and unique facets: the past, a sealed package of all that has been concluded, the present, a construction site of all currently being built, and the future, a ship anticipating the anchors removal. But time is amorphous; the three facets do not confine to separate domains. The facets trespass on each other's realms and convolute the system. This results in a package that refuses to remain sealed, a construction site laying all the wrong foundations, and a ship that languidly sails through the ocean, with its anchor still trapped in the ground. The pieces in this section of the literary journal explore the side effects of time's internal struggle between the past, present, and future.

For example, in Rivky Kreiser's "My Black and White Carousel," a man shares his past with his daughter and wife; explaining that his story "will follow [him] wherever [he goes]". The past has become a permanent resident of his present life and, through sharing his story, his past will become the present of his family as well; demonstrating the fusion of the past with the present.

Similarly, the past becomes an integral part of the present in "Memories That Cannot Be Forgotten" by Layla Crystal . The story begins with Abby waking up in a hospital, completely unaware of her past; the present is all she knows. But with the help of her mother, Abby starts to remember the circumstances that brought her to the hospital and her past is reunited with her present. Abby points out that even though she has "told [her] story countless times to [her] grandchildren, the pain of what happened never gets easier"; the past is always present and always part of her life.

Jacob Riis, in Nechi Bertram's "Greenhorn Hope," also holds his past with him in the present. But Jacob hopes for more. He wants his past to be a part of other people's present as well. He wishes that "one day people will hear [his] stories" and internalize his experiences. Then his past could live on and not just remain in the past.

The story of a shoe, in Esther Rothman's "My Sole Lives On," further exhibits how the past is often integrated with the present. The shoe remembers all that it had been through and even after many years when the shoe is "worn and covered in dirt" the shoe will keep its past part of his present.

In addition, in "The Loudest Silence" by Miriam Wilamosky, a woman suffers from persistent visions from the past, due to the murder of her husband and son. She suffers from PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder, which obscures her view of the present. She has visions from the night her family was murdered and

only returns to the present when "harsh sounds bounce [her] memory back to reality". This woman's struggle stems from her past's attempt at controlling the present and concludes in the woman's content, when she finds a balance between the past and her present.

The future also steals one's view of the present.

Edgar Allan Poe suffers from a distorted reality due to his future's intervention. In Shira Nabatian's piece, "The End of the Beginning," Edgar hears people accredit him for "[creating] the genres of short story, mystery, and science fiction". As Edgar struggles to keep the future in his sight, the story displays the ever present desire to know what the future holds; which ultimately leads to the contortion of the present.

Each piece skillfully exhibits the blending of times and imparts the idea that the past is not immovable, the present is not just this instant, and the future is not only speculation.

Conversations with Myself

By Elior Garfinkel

She's alone in the library, sitting cross-legged on the carpet, in an island of quiet amidst the waves of students streaming through the hallway.

I slowly walk over to her — she looks up and stares at me for a while until she recognizes who I am, a smile slowly breaking out on her face.

“Hi,” she whispers as she stands up, allowing her book to fall to the floor, forgotten. Her small, nine year old frame is absorbed in mine as I give her a huge hug, and she squeezes me back— I had forgotten quite how hard.

“But why are you here? How did you come?” she asks as we sit down on the floor.

“Just to talk to you,” I smile, and the girl's face, so similar to my own, lights up in wonder. “It's a little hard to explain how I came — the main point is that I'm here. Tell me, how are you doing, really? What's going on?”

“I'm good. Everything's fine, except...” She proceeds to describe all of the things she is struggling with, her hopes and fears, and all of the things she doesn't understand, or can't really express to others to help her with. Everything, from her minor friendship problems to the deepest struggles that she will never tell anyone else. She starts slowly at first, hesitantly, and then getting more animated, her words coming out in a rush, not bothering to worry if the librarian, binding books in the corner, can hear her. We just rush through davening and I read this book that isn't good for me and Tova isn't really my friend anymore... I listen quietly, figuring how to respond to her, what I can tell her that will give the best guidance, and I wonder for the umpteenth time how it is possible that such a little girl who looks so carefree can have so much inside of her. I am, as usual, struck by her insight and maturity. After a while of her talking uninterruptedly, she trails off, a bit embarrassed — “So, what do you have to say to me?”

I go through the issues she raised one by one, trying to explain what she can do about them, waiting for her to understand each explanation before I proceed to the next. What is your purpose in this world? To serve Hashem. And whatever happens to you is just a situation that is given to you to help you become a better person and to serve Hashem through it. So when you're in this situation, you can think about it in this way...

Even though I know that she has not yet even learned the very basics of some of these ideas, she seems to understand the concepts after a brief explanation. My leg has gone numb a long time ago, and still we sit, talking earnestly.

When the bell rings, signaling the end of lunch, we jump up in surprise and

look at each other with a sad smile. Our precious short time together is up.

“Thanks so much,” she said, the shine in her eyes filling in the feeling behind those words. “But will I be able to talk to you again?”

“Don't worry — whenever you need me, I'll be here for you. Really.”

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And I am always there for her — to comfort her after a hard day, to tell her that good things will come from this experience, to let her feel understood, to listen to the struggles she has that she will never share with anyone else.

I am always there for her and understand her better than anyone else in the world because I am her — or rather, she was me.

Unforgettable Memories

By Layla Crystal

My name is Abbey. That's all I remembered. I awoke to a face I didn't recognize. I looked outside and saw trees that were bare except for the white snowflakes on them. The woman said she was my mother, her eyes were filled with tears. I heard voices around me. The nurses were thrilled. I was alive. I was healthy. Except I didn't understand what was going on. What happened to bring me here?

The woman who claimed to be my mother started speaking to me. "Abbey, how are you feeling?"

"Who are you?" I replied.

Silence met my question. The woman turned toward the nurses and began to shout. "What's going on? Why doesn't she remember me?"

All of a sudden, doctors and nurses rushed to my side, asking me all sorts of questions. I was in a blur. I heard them tell the woman that I was suffering from memory loss.

"Is it permanent?" she asked.

"Time will tell," one nurse answered.

Over the next few weeks, I worked on recuperating. I was tired and weak and needed a lot of fluid and a lot of rest. I spent much of the day lying in bed hooked up to an IV pole. The woman stayed by my side all day and all night. She would talk to me, sing to me, and stroke my hair. Even though I didn't realize who she was at that point, after a while I started to hold her hand while she would sing to me.

One day as she was singing, the tune sounded familiar.

"Abbey, there are tears in your eyes," the woman said.

"I remember that tune. My father would sing it at the Shabbos table while my mother would... Mama! Mama!" We embraced and started to sob. We held each other so tightly, almost as if we were scared that this dream would end.

Mama started telling me stories about the war and what happened to my brother, David, and my two sisters, Donna and Mickey.

"You were eleven years old when the war broke out, you could no longer go to school and our family was forced to live in a ghetto. Do you remember when Papa was taken?"

"No," I replied, with tears filling my eyes.

Mama continued, "One stormy night, there was banging at the door. I

grabbed you and your sisters and we hid in the closet. Papa and David were forced out of the house; they were sent to a concentration camp. I recently found out that they were killed."

This was too much for me to bear.

"What about Donna and Mickey?" I asked with a trembling voice.

"They're okay," Mama reassured me. "Several weeks after Papa was taken away, your sisters were lucky enough to get visas to America and moved in with our cousin in New York."

"What about us? Where have we been all this time?"

"You and I spent three years running and hiding from the Nazis. Fortunately, we were hidden by our gentile neighbor, Mr. Lemer, who had done business with Papa over the years. We spent weeks in a dark, cold basement where he fed us whatever leftover food he had, which wasn't much. When it became too unsafe for him, he tearfully told us that he had to let us go.

"So what did we do? Where did we go?"

"We hid in all sorts of places until you got so sick that your body could no longer handle it and you were barely able to move. Towards the end of the war, your sickness developed into a severe infection and you almost lost your life. After the war ended, I brought you to this hospital where you were in a coma for two weeks."

"I cannot believe all that has happened. I'm so happy that we are together," I said.

Slowly but surely, my memories started flooding back. Over time, Mama and I were forced to rebuild our lives. We moved to America and found my sisters living with our relatives. Thank G-d they were alive and well. They each had a job and found work for Mama too. Over the first few months it was hard to believe that we were back together. I spent every minute with my sisters, just enjoying their company. It was comforting to have family that helped my sisters and now helped us get back on our feet. They gave us another room in their apartment until we were able to find our own place to live. We spent a lot of time with them and they helped us get used to our new surroundings. I

One day as she was singing, the tune sounded familiar.

joined a local school where I learned English and made new friends. Although life in America was good, we never forgot where we came from. We spoke about Papa and my brother every day and tried to live the life they would have wanted for us.

I have told my story countless times to my children and grandchildren, but the pain of what happened never gets easier. I will never forget the sound of the Nazis banging on our door. I will never forget my father's face.

The Loudest Silence

By Miriam Wilamowsky

"HELLOOO! HELLOOO! HELLOOO!" I shout, as the clock strikes twelve and the voices begin all over again. I moan in agony as I think of the all too familiar, dreadful night ahead of me. As the battle in my head begins, I start to cry. Am I crazy? Is my therapist right? Have I lost my mind ever since Dudi and Noam were murdered? All too soon it becomes too much; I bite my lip, eyes dancing to every corner of the room, and just as the beads of sweat begin to attack my forehead, I head to the kitchen for a glass of water to flush down my pills. The pills are supposed to alleviate the noises, to quiet the banging, to ease the knocking, to hush the whispers: At least that's what Maayan, my therapist, claims. It has never worked, but the slight hope that perhaps one night the "magical pills" will work is enough for me to try. As the last pill slips down my throat, my mind wanders back eight years, to the worst night of all.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. As I finish up folding the last napkin to complete the Friday night Shabbos table, I note that Dudi and Noam are home unusually early.

"Coming," I yell out. I rush to the door to greet my family, but they weren't there and they never would be. As I open the door, I notice that Dudi, my husband, and Noam, my son, are not on the other side. Instead, two soldiers are standing at the front door. With distressed looks on their faces, they ask if they can come inside. Immediately, my heart drops, I frantically ask them what is wrong. "Your husband." THUMP. "Your son." THUMP. "Terrorist attack." THUMP. "They are no longer alive." THUMP. Immediately, the liquid sadness flows down my cheeks as I feel my body convulse against my will; as if it has a mind other than my own. I struggle to breathe each desperate gasp of air, only to release it again in another forceful sob.

BANG. BANG. BANG. The harsh sounds bounce my memory back to reality, July 27, 2014. I touch my cheeks, only to feel the dampness of my skin. I, of all people, understand silence. After five years of living in complete loneliness, I recognize all too well the creak of the floorboard, the faint rustle of the trees and the distant tik of the clock. But, for the past three years, I have lived alone, but not in silence. The faint banging and stifled whispers may not be loud enough for Maayan to notice, but I hear them perfectly. After living without my family for five years, my ears have become hawks lingering for a slight sound to prey on. At my

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latest weekly therapy session with Maayan, she told me I will never heal if I can't face my problem. So, I stopped trying to convince myself of my sanity and started to believe everything they tell me: in simple terms, I'm crazy. As Maayan puts it, I suffer from a form of PTSD that only began three years after the loss of my husband and son; when the silence became too silent and the loneliness became too lonely so I had to transform the silence into noise and the loneliness into company.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. My eyes shoot open and I jump out of bed. As the knocking gets louder I notice that this time it's actually loud, not just loud to me. I throw on a skirt and clumsily walk to the door. As I notice the dark green army uniforms standing outside my door, my mind wanders back to that night. But this time they say something different. "I'm so sorry." THUMP. "The IDF has found out that Hamas has been building tunnels under your house." THUMP. "They've been using them as a cache between Gaza and Israel." THUMP. I meet the floor with a forceful bang. The wooden floor feels harsh against my skin as blood rushes to my head and my vision becomes hazy.

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Every night for the past three years, each more painful than the next, I have been tortured into thinking that I am crazy. But, in reality, the terrorists were planning their next attack on Israel while they were attacking me. They took my mind and used it as a storage house for evil: placing bombs, rockets and terrorists waiting to destroy the next home inside of me. Not only did they kill my boys but they tried to kill me, too. They shot a bullet through my heart, stepped on me, and threw me into a pit, until I had sunken so low that I was deemed dead by my family, my friends, my community, but most important, by myself.

The next night, as I lay in bed, the absolute silence hits me. This kind of thick silence would normally chill me, especially on an inky night devoid of even moonlight or stars, but tonight it works like a salve.



Shadow of the Past

By Aviva Attar

Greenhorn Hope

By Nechi Bertram

Jacob Riis
November 1 1950

Miss Beaker
Grade 6

Entry #1

It was a best time and also a very worse time. We learnt this today in the English class in a story about two cities. Miss Beaker told us how the country of France was so bad and people were being killed and not for good reasons. I raised my hand like she sayed we should and tried to tell her about my country, where also people were killed with out good reasons and that is why I am here. But when I started talking about coming, my cousin, Evelyn, who has nice hair and a nice name but is not so nice, said, "No one cares greenhorn." Miss Beaker told Evelyn to stop being rude but I did not want to make my new family upset so I did not finish my story. I know today people in this country do not care about what is happening to my people, but I will write it here in the journal nice Miss Beaker gave me, so that maybe one day people can want to know.

It starts I finally comed to the island. The boat smelled like all the dead of Europe were on it and I comed to the dock to see the goldene mediene and escape the smell. A man from first class saw me shivering and lifted me on his shoulders, saying "Well, there's lady liberty boy! Isn't she a beaut?"

I told him I did not understand his words and he put me down and looked me in the eye, and said "I mean that she is beautiful lady, yes? She is telling you always to have hope." These words I understood but I did not want to tell this kind man that his lady libreetee was too tall and looked mean, so I nodded and smiled.

He shaken my hand and sayed "You will make a fine American. What is your name?" I told him it was Yakkov Riss and his face went funny and he said "Not any longer it isn't. From this point on your name is Jacob and your life starts today. You understand boy?" I nodded again, and he grinned, shook my hand and walked away.

After he left I was standing alone, and all I could think was how even the kind people do not care about my nations stories. They do not want to kill us but still they do not want us to remember and share our stories. I knowed that even here in a good land I must not forget my past.

Then it became a mess – we was pulled off the boat like animals and made to do many tests. Then my uncle, who used to be Yossi but now he is Isaac, he came for me and he had the same green eyes and bushy eyebrows as tatte, but on him they looked mean like the ones on the libreetee lady.

First we just looked at each other and then he made a noise and sayed, "Well, boy, welcome to America... it isn't all it's cracked up to be kiddo!" He laughed, but I did not. Uncle Isaac sighed and then said "Let's just get your stuff, okay?" I told him I had nothing, and he did a funny laugh again and said "Good. That's all I got room for. C'mon kid." I follow him silently to a rusty car and he showed me how to get into the backseat.

While we was driving I tried to talk to him in the *mamma lasbon*, but he just sayed, "I don't know that nonsense no more boy, my kids and wife... well they won't stand for it but oh, golly they just adore you anyway... my wife, god bless her soul, she won't quit jabbering about how helpful you could be and how," now he talked like a lady but funny and sayed, "the poor dear has no place to be."

He turned around to look angry at me and then kept going with his spiel, "But, golly boy, you don't seem a dear or nothing near helpful... and now I've just got an extra mouth to feed."

Then we comed to his teeny little a part mint and I needed to share a room with his sons Nathaniel and Eric who like me very much and teach me fun games. He has also a girl and she is so pretty and is named Evelyn but she is calling me a greenhorn. I do not know why she says this. I do not have green horns. I writed a letter home to mamma and she sayed that every where Jews go they just think we are Satan. I do not want you to think I have green horns Miss Beaker. I have hope like lady libreetee says I should and I am hoping one day people will hear my stories.

**From this point
on your name is
Jacob and your
life starts today.**

A New Reality

By Ayelet Landau

November 14, 2014

Yesterday the sun was shining. Men greeted each other cheerfully, some on their way to shul, some on their way to work. Laughter was heard in the streets as children rode bikes and boarded their school busses in large groups. Women exchanged smiles as they passed their neighbors and friends, pushing baby carriages while running various errands. Everyone seemed to be happy. Yesterday, the shul was packed for Prayer, not a single seat remained empty. The siddurim aligned neatly on the shelves were filled with prayer and pleading and soaked with tears. Yesterday, I thanked the Arab man who works in the grocery store next door to the shul as he packaged my groceries and even offered to bring them to my car. Yesterday, when I passed the newsstand to pick up the daily news, the front cover said something or another about local politics. Nothing interesting ever happens in our small simple community. Yesterday, people hustled through the streets taking care of various things and going about their lives, like any other day. Yesterday, four wives greeted their husbands after a long day of work and Torah study and twenty—four children sat down to dinner with their parents. Yesterday, the sound of learning was heard until the early hours of the morning. Yesterday, there was a sense of peacefulness and security. Yesterday, was just a normal day in Har Nof.

November 15, 2014

Today is different. Today dark gray clouds overshadow the sun. Men barely acknowledge each other, most of them are on their way to funerals. A pin drop can be heard in the streets as children board their busses for school in small groups. Fear is seen on every face. Women repeatedly glance over their shoulders as if they're expecting something to come up from behind and pounce on them. They pass their neighbors and friends and exchange pained and distressed looks. The babies aren't out today; it's too dangerous. Everyone seems to be despondent. Today during Prayer, four seats are left bare. Remnants of this morning's attack still remain. The tears and prayers of the past can't possibly erase the freshly blood—soaked pages of the siddurim that are now strewn all over the floor. The screams and cries of the martyrs and survivors can still be heard. Today, the Arab man who works in the grocery store, the one who packages my groceries and offers to bring

Armed police officers line the streets and we are told not to gather in big groups.

them to my car, killed our brothers. Today, I pass the newsstand to pick up the daily news; the front cover displays the pictures of four familiar faces, neighbors, friends and prominent members of the community who were murdered in cold blood this morning. Nothing like this ever happens here. Today, people hustle through the streets going about their daily lives, but not like any other day. Armed police officers line the streets and we are told not to gather in big groups. Today four widows wonder how they will pay the bills and twenty—four orphans sit down to dinner, staring still in shock at the empty head of the table. Today the sound of learning can still be heard until the early hours of the morning, but there is a gaping hole because four of the most righteous are missing. Today there is a sense of fear and despair. There will never be another normal today in Har Nof.

My Sole Lives On

By Esther Rothman

I'm surrounded. Surrounded by many memories: those of antiquity, those of childhood, those of persecution and those of remorse. As I lie down next to my fellow brethren, I am one of the only ones left from my hometown; I used to feel alive and dynamic. Now I sit here lifeless as a memorial for those who perished. I recall the time when I was shaped, by the wrinkled pale hands of a shoemaker in a little shtetl outside of Poland. With my leather sole and black ribbon laces, I was purchased by an older man wearing a fur hat and black satin coat with a graying beard. He gave me to his six year old daughter. I recall it was a day of happiness and tranquility. As she unwrapped me, I could see a smile across her face. We went everywhere together: to her school, to the park, to the shul; anywhere a typical girl would go. But one day, everything changed. Instead of running on the feet of a fearless, fun—loving child I now belonged to someone afraid and timid. We never ran outside anymore. We didn't go to the park, or to school or even to the local bakery. I was confined to cold, dark, wooden floors.

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Our last time together was a day I will always remember. The girl woke up as she usually did, washed her hands, and then there was a knock on the door. But not just any knock: the type of knock that leaves your head throbbing and your heart pounding 100 beats per minute—a knock you will always remember. I was too distracted by the pounding of black boots on the ground to bring meaning to his words. Suddenly, the girl and her parents took a few things and we went to the train station. It was such a peculiar sight: I've been to the train station with the girl previously but there were never train cars that looked like brown cattle boxes; maybe that was for the luggage. But then I felt a push and a kick— the girl, her mother and I were shoved into one of those wooden boxes—where'd her father go? I wondered as I felt the darkness, the rough floor and splintering wood was piercing my soles. I remember the cries of the babies and elderly women. After what felt like an eternity, there was light. The same people with the black boots opened the door and I could once again feel some fresh air on my now scratched—up and scuffed soles. As the girl, her mother and I left the car together, I was being crushed against hard round pebbles and dry dirt. Then I felt a tug on my laces— she was taking me off!

**The type of
knock that
leaves your
head throbbing
and your heart
pounding
100 beats per
minute**

I resisted. I couldn't just leave this girl, we had always been together. Once my lace was undone, I continued to resist, but after the final tug, I was discarded and thrown into a pile of other shoes.

∞

Throughout the war I would always hope to see the girl again. I remained in a cold and hollow warehouse filled with other possessions— many shoes, prayer books, blankets, coats, and glasses. Seeing smoke daily outside my window forced me to realize that I would never see this girl again. And I never did. Later, after the war, I was discovered and sent to a museum to be a memorial for the children who perished in the Holocaust. And that is where I lay today. When people see me in the 'sea' of shoes there is the occasional tear. But most visitors who pass by do not even realize what I symbolize— what we all symbolize. To them, I am only a dirty shoe from the time of the Holocaust. But to me, I symbolize a life belonging to one of the millions of Jewish children murdered. Even though my façade is worn and covered in dirt, I bear witness to a life and legacy cut short.



Education Takes a Dive

By Sara Grosberg

56

The End of the Beginning

By Shira Nabatian

I slip in and out.

I rest my back on the cobbled wall.

“Breathe, Edgar, breathe,” I mumble to myself.

I slide further down the moist wall as my vision becomes spotted. There are children, and voices, but they aren’t real.

“Go away,” I almost scream, but stop myself. People would hear; they’d think I’d gone insane.

But the voices persist. The image sharpens.

“Ok, class, settle down,” a soft voice says from the front of a room, which is full of children taking their seats behind tables.

“We’re going to start from where we left off. Can anyone tell me where that was?” the blonde, petite woman asks the children.

A short, chubby, brown-haired kid lifts his hand shyly; the teacher points at him.

“Why don’t you tell us, Jimmy,” she says in a gentle voice.

My head starts spinning and my vision comes back to the cobblestone alley around me. I grab my head in pain.

“We were talking about Edgar Allan Poe. You said he was a genius,” Jimmy took a breath. “You said he created the genre of short story, and mysteries, and science fiction,” Jimmy says, causing me to cover my mouth. What is this absurd dream?

My vision refocuses on the room of children just in time to see Jimmy push his glasses up on his round face as the woman at the front of the room beams at him.

“Exactly,” the lady says excitedly, “he was brilliant. He redefined the way we looked at countless genres. Couldn’t have said it better myself, Jimmy.”

I push my palms onto my eyes and scream. Is this insanity? Who are those people? How do they know me?

My aching hands and eyes cannot stop the madness. The vision still stands before my eyes. I could hear them as clearly as if they were right beside me.

The blonde writes on the board. L—e—g—e—n—d in a neat cursive.

57

“Who here can define the word legend?” the teacher asks peering around the room.

“Like Babe Ruth,” someone called out.

“Good. So why is Babe Ruth a legend?” She asks the freckled kid who had shouted.

“Um... because he played ball like no one else ever did?” the kid responds hesitantly.

I clutch my head, pull on my hair. The pain is unbearable; I find myself sliding down the wall onto the dirty cool cobbled ground. Still unable to see my physical surroundings, all I see is this room, this room of insanity.

“Good, Chad. That’s it exactly. That’s what Edgar Allan Poe did—except he didn’t play ball. He wrote in genres and in ways never been done before. He is a legend,” the woman says to the room full of listening children.

I gape, what is this?

“Stop lying,” I scream. I hear footsteps around me. I feel hands reaching for me.

“Edgar Allan Poe changed the world. Students, today we’re going to write poems like his poem ‘The Raven.’”

I clutch my head tighter.

“They know!” I cup my hands around my mouth, and scream.

“They care,” I mumble under my breath.

“Hush, sir, what are you doing?” a voice practically inside me says. He must be closer than the room, he must be in the street with me.

“I’m fine, let me be,” I say in as calm a voice as I can manage. He is pulling me from the scene, I can barely hear them anymore. But I want to hear them.

“We will all start our poems the same way Poe started his, and end in the way he ends his. Got it?” the teacher explains with a smile—but she is fading, her smile not as clear as before, her voice not above a whisper.

“Leave me alone, I need to hear what she’s saying!” I yell at the person

All I see is this room, this room of insanity

beside me.

“He’s acting insane. Someone send for a doctor,” the man beside me shouts.

I hear scrambling and shouts around me.

I cry out.

“Yes, Ms. Barren,” the class whispers back, but at this point I could barely discern one child from another.

“Put me down,” I scream. Yet, they don’t listen. Now they’re moving me.

“We’ll take him to the local hospital,” the men around me say; no, they just need to place me on the ground. Why can’t they just let me be—I need to hear the children.

I kick my feet out; the men tighten their grip.

“Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary,” the woman writes on the board.

My head begins to droop—my energy is leaving me, but my lips quiver upward as I mumble, “twenty five more ‘The Ravens’ have begun.”



The Streets

By Hadassah Spira

60

The Black and White Carousel

By Rivky Kreiser

I am not a much of a storyteller and yet there is one story that will follow me wherever I go. I didn't read it somewhere, nor did I create its plot in my mind; rather, I experienced it firsthand, and am able to clearly relate it, as though it occurred just yesterday. It seems surreal or maybe even haunting, but believe me when I say that I can only tell it as the truth.

This is the story I told my daughter upon her eighteenth birthday:

When I was three years old, I had my first ride on the black and white carousel. I was too young to realize it, but the carousel looked bizarre: painted shades of black and white, half the horses were ebony black, while the other half were snow white. Not a single color decorated a horse's mane, nor did a gold ceiling hang above the gliding creatures.

That first time, I went with my mother. We went to the park, and in an obscure corner behind the green trees, stood the carousel. The man who ran it never said a word, just accepted the money quietly, and looked on. I was terribly excited, because I had never ridden a horse before, and climbed the low steps quickly. That time it was only me, and suddenly I became frightened of the tall horses. How would I be able to get on a horse all by myself? What would happen if I fell during the ride? Quickly, I spotted a chipped black bench, and took a seat. Age hadn't been kind, and years of use showed, white undefined shapes standing out in contrast to the surrounding black. Looking closer, I realized that underneath all the layers of black paint was another layer of white.

When I was eighteen I rediscovered the carousel. It hadn't changed. Every day as I walked by, I heard its music echoing through the trees and felt an invisible force pulling me towards it. Sure, I was too old, but it didn't feel that way. The original excitement still captured my heart. The prospect of sitting on a peeling bench that went round and round, but never reached the one place it promised to go, still drew me in.

I wasn't scared of heights anymore, yet I held back. The black horses suddenly looked like war horses, and they terrified me. The black dust that collected on their seats sent me a warning, saying that I would become tainted if I rode on a horse that had been to war. The white horses were more welcoming, but still they seemed to dare me to ride them without leaving a mark. It was of utmost importance to keep their sparkly whiteness intact. Only the bench looked welcoming, accepting me without a dare, never hostile, just waiting for me to take a seat. So I would ride on the bench, listening to the war stories I imagined the black horses would tell. Until one stormy afternoon the white creatures of innocence became

61

old, and they took on a gray shade. Suddenly, the one thing that kept the carousel from being deemed too old to ride began to fade away. The brutal stories I conjured up in my mind took on another dimension, and all the violence that seemed to come from within me, became dizzying. Jumping up on my bench I jumped off the moving carousel onto the pavement, running out into the green, green grass.

The story I told my wife:

When I was four, my father came into my life; he had just returned from Vietnam. He was supposed to be my hero. Instead he was a monster. He made my mother work two jobs, because he couldn't hold onto one. He was a soldier, and there was nothing more important a man could be. For that I hated him.

I guess I don't regret my words, because it was only on special occasions that I got to see the man who existed before. On a birthday or on an anniversary, he would pull it together. For a few hours he could make us smile. Almost laugh. Almost be happy. But that always ended, and he always went back to screaming. I was stupid. I was a loser. I was my Momma's little boy.

When I turned eighteen, he suddenly took an interest in my plans. "No college for you on my dime," he sneered. "The military was good enough for me and it'll be good enough for you. It'll get rid of your stupid dreams. It'll give you a reality check." My mother, who had always stood up for me, began to age, and began to gray. She couldn't tell him that I wasn't going to be a soldier. She couldn't tell him that he was wrong. He had convinced her that she could never be right. It became dizzying until one day he gave me an ultimatum: join the military or get out. I decided to get out. I jumped into the unknown, leaving the home that never felt like a home behind.

And now, my daughter, as I stare into your green green eyes; I know that no matter where your future leads you, I'll always be your home. I know, because I'll never hurt you.

**So I would ride
on the bench,
listening to the
war stories I
imagined the
black horses
would tell.**

3

Section

Heroes

*A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is
braver five minutes longer.
— Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The Meaning of a Hero

By Aviva Attar, Editor

To a young child, a hero is the firefighter next door who extinguished the blazing fire, or a superhero from their favorite comic book. But heroes don't have to be so obvious; a hero can be a friend, parent, stranger or even yourself.

Rachel Jacobi discusses a hero in its simplest sense in her piece "Seeing What You Feel." The story discusses a young girl and her grandfather; a soldier who fought for Israel in the Six Day War and Yom Kippur War. In this case, the grandfather is an obvious hero, he joined the army and fought for his country.

Similarly, in Leah Engelman's "A Poor Shot," the hero is again a soldier, but this time he not only saves others but himself. This piece tells the story of a soldier debating if he should kill the enemy, a woman sitting across the field, or spare her life. When he accidentally misses the shot, he feels the burden of guilt being lifted from him. At the end of the story, the soldier "gazes through the dusty air and for once, despite the dirt in his eyes, he can see clearly." Because his shot missed the woman, he not only saved her but himself as well, giving him a sense of clarity for the first time.

Gabrielle Hawk's "A Warped Reality" explores the undiscovered part of heroism. While heroism is often perceived as glorifying, "A Warped Reality" shows the unpleasant aftereffects of being so courageous. In this story, a soldier suffers from PTSD after coming back from his army service. This story depicts life after army service and what heroism can do to a person.

On the other hand, a hero does not always have to be strong and courageous. In Estee Gerber's "A Poem That Saved," little Addie is her father's hero. Addie saved her father from the bombing of the Twin Towers, and for that he tells Addie "you saved my life."

What defines a person as a hero is not always how brave they are, but the timing in which they are brave. As Ralph Waldo Emerson suggested, a hero is not always the most courageous person, he is just stronger for a few more minutes than the next person.

A Poem that Saved

By Estee Gerber

Daddy promised he would come today. I keep staring at the pretty blue clock with the little yellow pointers, which Ms. Abby yesterday told us were called "hands." Because I'm a big girl I can read the hands so I know it's 8:30. Daddy promised to be here at 9:00. The clock ticks on, tick tock, tick, tock. Its 8:31. I sigh and release a huge breath to keep my brain from exploding, Danny said so. Danny is my best friend in the whole wide world. He knows everything! Even teacher says he's the smartest six year old she's ever met. I'm not jealous or anything. . . Danny waves at me to let me know I should be paying attention to the story Ms. Abby's reading. I roll my eyes even though Ms. Abby always says that's the number one rudest "face to pull."

I look back at Ms. Abby and try to put my listening ears on. The three assistant teachers always make sure we're paying attention to the story. Ms. Abby's talking about a cow that jumps over a moon. I went to a petting zoo twice. The cows were too lazy to even take the food out of my hand, so how could they jump over the moon? I raise my hand to ask my super smart question. Ms. Abby ignores me; I know because she looks up real quick and then looks down real quick at the book.

I move my arm back and forth, like a snake I saw at the zoo before it attacks. Ms. Abby sighs (so her brain won't explode) and says, "Yes, Addie?" I smile making sure my dimples show and ask, "Cows are lazy, so how could they jump over a moon?" Ms. Abby sighs again, her brain must really be about to explode, and says "I don't know Addie, why doesn't your father explain it to you when he comes to hear you recite (which is a grown up word for say) your poem?"

Ms. Abby continues reading the boring fake story about a jumping cow. I look at the clock, 8:46. I stare out the window at the blue sky that matches my day cares pretty blue clock. I see a flash of red. BANG. The day care shakes. The clock falls off the wall. How will I know when daddy has to get here? Danny falls off his chair. The sky outside is no longer the pretty blue, now it's grey with a huge red glowing ball at the center. The class rushes to the windows. Ms. Abby's eyes widen and her skin becomes the color of Snow White's. She almost falls but puts her hand on my desk. She's scaring me. What's wrong? Why does Ms. Abby keep murmuring something? Her hands are shaking. I grab her hand that's shaking like a leaf in the winter and yell "Ms. Abby what's going on?" She looks at me but I feel

**She looks at
me but I feel
like she's not
seeing me.**

like she's not seeing me. Suddenly she picks me up and throws me into our shopping carts. Soon Danny and everyone else is in all four shopping carts. She opens the doors and pushes us out. I gasp. Something is on fire. Something is burning bright red, like my mommy's special lipstick, and glowing like my Minnie Mouse light. It looks just like the building Daddy works in. Daddy said his building, the North building, is the tallest building in the world. I scream. It is the building Daddy works in. Ms. Abby and the three helpers push us really fast away from the Daddy's burning building. I scream again. Ms. Abby tells me to be quiet. Her voice shakes, she can barely say it. Her eyes look like glass, as if she's about to cry. She keeps whispering, "How, how is this possible? The Towers..." I yell louder this time, "DADDY." A tear falls out of Ms. Abby's eye and falls on my hand. I wipe it off. I turn around and keep yelling "DADDY, DADDY" until my throat itches and I can no longer scream. Ms. Abby looks at me. I ignore her and pound my hands on the metal sides of the cart.

"ADDIE!" I hear someone shouting. I turn around. It's Daddy! He lifts me out of the cart and picks me up. He has tears running down his face and his nose is red. He whispers, "You saved my life." I bury my face in his soft coat. He carries me home.



Leaders Explore

By Yaeli Berkowitz

A Warped Reality

By Gabrielle Hawk

“Thank you,” I say sweetly to the doorman, as he holds the door open for me. I walk out of the Manhattan department store, onto the curb and take a deep breath. Ahhh. I love living in the city. I step off the street and raise my arm to hail a taxi. As I wait, I look at my surroundings.

A motorcycle’s tires screech as it stops by a traffic light. The noise makes me jump. I hear a big crash and turn just in time to see a man knock down several pop—up jewelry displays.

He’s a tall and muscular man, with tattoos climbing up his neck. The man has a buzz cut, and his navy long sleeve shirt is rolled up on one arm. Surprisingly, he doesn’t get up. Instead he curls his long legs into a ball and starts to whimper.

“Get up!” “Sir, please get off of my table.” “What are you doing?!? That’s my merchandise!” The vendors yell as they try to pull him up.

Suddenly, he jumps up and begins shouting, “Move people move! We’re in a crisis! Go, go, go!” He walks up to the building I just exited and moves behind a pillar.

Bizarre.

I turn back to the street. In my curiosity, I forget that I was trying to get a cab. My arm is tired so I lower it. I switch my bags onto my left hand and raise my right arm instead. Just as a cab slows down, my phone falls out of my hand. I bend down to pick it up, but my bags get in the way, and it takes me a minute. The taxi driver honks at me to hurry up.

The abrupt honk sends the tattooed man flying out from behind the pillar and he almost tackles me as he makes his way to the taxi.

He starts screaming, “The entire squad has risked so much and this is the way you act? You’re going to blow our cover making all this racket!”

Meanwhile, Fifth Avenue is backing up and cars blare their horns. The man’s eyes skirt back and forth up and down the street at lightening speed. He tries to cover his ears with his collar, in an effort to stop the noise. He slowly backs up against a building. He slides down the wall until he is curled up once again in his protective cocoon. I swear I hear him whimper.

Suddenly, an elegant lady with bag-laden arms exits the department store. She has perfectly straight hair and wears a black dress with pearls. She searches

the street frantically. She sees the man huddled on the sidewalk and walks up to him. She hugs him. I can’t help but overhear her whispers as I wait for a new cab after the last driver zoomed off.

“Shhh. It’s okay. Everything’s okay. You’re back in America now – remember? I’m sorry I lost you in the store; let’s go home.”

I hear the man stifle a sob and stand up. Together they walk to the edge of the sidewalk, next to me, and signal a cab.

I look more carefully and notice what I didn’t see before, his left arm – or what’s left of it. His left sleeve is limp below the elbow. A tattoo on his right arm reads “This We’ll Defend.” Everything finally clicks in my mind.

A taxi pulls up between us.

“You guys can have this one. I’m not in a rush,” I tell the couple. “And—,” I hesitate, “thank you for your service.”

**She looks at
me but I feel
like she’s not
seeing me.**



Woman in Blue

By Elisheva Rosensweig

72

A Poor Shot

By Leah Engelman

The day is dry and arid, and his throat is parched. His usually light uniform suddenly feels heavy on his shoulders. Sighing, he looks down at the scorched ground. This isn't what success is supposed to feel like. Success is glorifying. Success tastes sweet and feels soft. Instead, he feels bitter and hard. His head is pounding like a hammer has been brought down hard on it. The heartache is incomparable to any other pain he has ever felt. He wonders if the loss of so many of his friends can really be defined as a victory. Their smiles will never be seen again. Their laughter will never again be heard. Never again will they say a kind word. Never again will their warmth be felt. He knows that he should write to his family to let them know that he's safe, but guilt has defeated him, and he can't move. Why is he alive while they are all dead? What did he do right that they did not? These were men who would take a bullet for any of their boys. Men who would give their sole coat to a cold comrade in arms. Men who would carry a fellow soldier for miles to alleviate his pain.

His musket is still warm in his hand, and he is disgusted by it. Maybe the misinformed men whom his bullets fatally wounded were fathers, too. What would their wives do without them? Perhaps they have children who are eagerly awaiting their father's return. He can imagine the look of despair in their eyes when they hear the news. Will they be able to move on? Will it permanently destroy them? He gazes off into the sky and whispers a prayer beseeching them for their forgiveness. He knows not to regret his actions, but they fill him with pain nonetheless.

The feeling of distress freezes him in place. A lone tear flows down his face and onto the ground. In the distance he sees a faint lump. Perhaps it is an oddly shaped rock. He looks harder and tastes bile in his mouth; it is a wounded man. His first instinct is the one that he has been trained to have. He lifts his musket and aims it at the figure on the ground, but he can't bring himself to shoot. He pictures a beautiful woman sitting alone waiting for her love to return. Her only wish is that he'll come back to her safely. His hand is wet with perspiration, his finger slips and the trigger has been pulled. Quickly he jerks his gun back and closes his eyes. He's not ready to see the damage that he has caused. He can't bear to see yet another man dead by his bullet.

Then he hears a scream of fright and his heart is filled with joy. He missed.

Why is he alive while they are all dead? What did he do right that they did not?

73

He knows what must be done now. He needs to fulfill the woman's wish. But first, he gazes at the sky. He gazes through the dusty air and for once, despite the dirt in his eyes, he can see clearly.

In the Blink of an Eye

By Shalva Adler

Behind us, back in Ethiopia, lies a small town devastated by Christian riots. Before us lies a bed of sand that stretches as far as the eye can see. Our leader sifts sand between weathered fingers and mumbles in our mother tongue to those beside him, and a thin layer of reassurance drapes over our worry. After the infinite desert is but a memory, there will be a new home, the home we have only dared dream of. We taste its name on our tongues again and again, ecstatic and disbelieving: Jerusalem.

We trek on, ignoring the silent cries of our muscles and the sweat that gathers at our temples until it drops through our vision. Sand becomes solid under our bare feet, then crumbles as we move on. The women hold their babies strapped to their backs, but as soon as braceleted legs can take a trembling step, they are expected to walk alongside their mothers. We travel every day, but we stop for prayer and for Shabbat.

Camels take lumbering strides in our midst, but we stopped riding them on the first day without water. If there is no water today, then next dawn will mark the third dry day, and we will mount the camels to cover more ground and conserve strength.

We squint against the sun and sleep in the cradle of the dunes and only face the sky at night, but we don't fight nature; the Sahara is unforgiving. There is supposed to be water every ten kilometers, but we have been covering twice that amount each day, and our canteens' supply only dwindles.

Day slowly gives way to its colder counterpart, and we stop just as the sun is claimed by the horizon. Children suck on date pits and dart in between the long, sand matted skirts of their parents, growing more unruly with every parched cough that echoes through our encampment. Men return with food that Saluki dogs have sniffed out, but shake their heads before breath can even form around the word: "Water?"

The campfire blazes as if challenging the heavens, the way it always does. We huddle around it in near silence that is interrupted only by the snap! of twigs and the fire's occasional hiss. Smoke breaks the picture of our small group into flickering shards that struggle to make a whole, and when we look towards our white bearded leader, we wonder if the desert may succeed in breaking us. The evening

**But tonight
there is no
laughter
floating on the
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lose hope.**

prayer is more feverish than usual, and some stay afterwards to hear the kessim, priests, teach from Orit. In Jerusalem, our Orit is called Torah.

Those who have tents pitch them in a circle to block sandstorms, but tonight there is no laughter floating on the wind; we are beginning to lose hope.

With dawn comes blessedly mild weather, though the sun soon makes itself known in the weak fanning of faces and in the breath that catches in each of our throats. Eyes are turned heavenward and low voices cry out to G-d in Hebrew. Gripped by desperation and the fury of helplessness, there are those who tip their canteens to finish the last drop of water, arching so far back that their headscarves drape loose and their despair becomes public knowledge. One woman flips her goatskin water sack inside-out and has her small daughter lick the last drops of moisture before dropping it off the side of the camel, straightening up to meet our eyes with a fierce and unabashed expression. People nod in respect and continue the march toward a ghost of a hope: water.

It's when the sun beats down the hardest, when lips crack and there is nothing to drip between them, when glazed eyes and loosened garments are all we can see of each other, it is then that the commotion starts. The men we'd sent ahead are suddenly back, and they're leading us toward the bleeding sun, toward what our sore eyes had missed before: a speck of color which slowly reveals itself as a small village of tents with a river at its edge. Shouts break free of our group and face coverings are thrown off as we kneel in front of the water and whisper our thanks to Ha—Shem before filling our mouths with its sweet freshness. Finally, miraculously, unexpectedly, we find water. Water skins are filled to overflowing, and around the fire pit that night, the wind once again carries soft laughter. Whispers float from ear to ear as hope flickers back to life: Jerusalem awaits.



Opera House

By Naomi Segelov

Seeing What You Feel

By Rachel Jacobi

My own little hand held his tightly, trying to transfer all the reassurance and comfort that my ten year old self felt into his own callused palm. I tightened my hold, feeling his hand in mine, gnarled and wrinkled like an ancient oak, and scarred from the sufferings and challenges that were unforgivingly thrown at him in his days during the Six Day and Yom Kippur Wars. These were the wars in which he had valiantly fought as a young soldier. Almost reflexively, my grandfather increased pressure to further secure my hand in his, curling his fingers warmly around mine, solemnly letting me feel the old injuries that formed ridges on his palm. He was not ashamed of his scars, and it was with pride that he watched while I ran my hands over them. I remember, that his pride was sometimes mistaken for aloofness. Many times I myself did not doubt that he was in his own world. Time and suffering though had not managed to hide the aristocratic features that still dominated his face.

He would always cover my hand with his own and look down to me, his piercing eyes into mine. “Feel that,” he would instruct me proudly, guiding my fingers over the worn scars. “Feel and remember.” And I did. I did not forget a single detail. I remember everything about that day. It was clear and sunny, and we had left my grandfather’s guide dog at home. That day, I was to lead the way, and I was bursting with the pride a child feels when she is entrusted with a large responsibility. My grandfather had asked me to go with him, and I took my important task very seriously. I described everything that I saw, passing through the busy, bustling souk, with the vast array of colors. The wide walks were streaming with locals, hurrying along while speaking rapid fire Hebrew, a language that I had grown accustomed to from the many times I had visited in Israel. The tourists leisurely meandered from stall to stall, their cameras slung casually around their necks.

My grandfather and I moved slowly, stopping by all the stalls on his list, as he felt the texture of the fruit we put in our bags, and I described its color. I still have flashbacks of us standing next to each other, my grandfather’s steady hand running over the bumpy peel of a clementine, and trying my hardest to adequately express how pretty and vivid the bright orange of the fruit was.

I remember many things from that trip. I watched him and learned how to bargain. We would stand by the stall in front of the owner and my grandfather would haggle and argue, all the while radiating a contagious energy. Sometimes he would bend to me and whisper what I should tell the owner. When I asked him how he learned, he told me it was experience. I told him he must have frequented

the souk on a daily basis at one point, and for almost a second, those piercing eyes warmed with humor, before he told me that it was when he was a young boy, when he would shop for his Ima every Friday. After that, it was quiet between us, and I moved restlessly. I didn’t like the quiet. It felt wrong in the energetic and boisterous market. We left the souk soon after and I led the way home, leaning into my grandfather’s side.

We passed many stores, and I remember the bakery, because he stopped when we reached the aroma, and bought me a cupcake. My grandfather never ate sweets. Later on I would learn it was because he had seen too many of his people overdose on foods and chocolates that were made available after the wars. I ate my sweet confection silently, and we continued, walking along the streets that were now more homes to the shops. We heard the sound only a few minutes later. It was laughter, light and musical. My grandfather seemed drawn to the sound, and we stopped by the scene.

It was a little game, complete with children chasing a ball, some playing with the sand, others taking turns on the carousel, spinning round round round. I eagerly took all of this in, and described it avidly to my grandfather. “There are the little babies on the swings all the way over there”—I enthusiastically picked up his hand and pointed it in the direction—“and their mothers are pushing them. And there”—I moved his hand again—“they are playing a game of basketball.” I went on in that vein for two minutes before looking up. I took a sharp breath, surprised at the light in my grandfather’s eyes. It was a light that I had never ever seen before.

“Do you see it?” I asked excitedly, squeezing his wrist, my fingers still sticky from the cupcake frosting. “Can you see the colors and the people?”

As if feeling my eyes on him, my grandfather nodded.

“But what do you see?” I pressed, wanting to understand how it was in his own mind. And for the first and the only time after that, my grandfather smiled.

“Joy,” he said softly, looking into the distance. Even as a ten year old, I was astute enough to understand that he was seeing something of the past. “I see joy.”

“Feel that,” he would instruct me proudly, guiding my fingers over the worn scars. “Feel and remember.”

4

Section

Science & Innovation

*Everything is theoretically impossible until it is done”
— Robert A. Heinlein*

Protons to Neutrons

By Zahava Sokolow

Science is not an arrival, but a journey.

It is not a fixed body of knowledge or a growing shelf of facts and theories, but a series of questions. The most brilliant scientists have been those who sought not the right answers but the right questions. And so we have progressed, and not in a straight line – from ignorance to misconception, from misconception to mistake, from mistake to failure, and from failure to insight. Today we laugh at how little we knew yesterday.

Tomorrow we will laugh at how little we know today.

Rebecca Russo chronicles the evolution of this knowledge in her piece “Sending a Letter”. Her intricate creation of multiple voices and writing styles illustrates the historical changes behind the discoveries, as well as the longlasting struggle of women entering the field of science. Adina Raskin, in a parallel, creates an enthralling voice that provides insight into a different struggle. Her character’s situation perfectly illustrates the purpose of innovation: to know, to create, and to help.

Elisheva Rosensweig takes us above and beyond in “Once in a Blue Moon”. Her use of personification removes science from the hands of the explorers, and presents it from the perspective of the explored. The use of phrases from the popular children’s book, “Goodnight Moon,” provides insight into a concept that we, as humans, often ignore; the more we know, the more we do. The more we do, the more we change. Yael Grosberg, in a similar style, utilizes perspective to provide understanding. Her story, “Beyond My Control,” transforms the ruthless into the feeling, the inhumane into the human. Yet, most effectively, her writing poignantly asks a question often ignored – rather than asking what we can do, Yael asks why we cannot.

In her piece, “Heart to Heart,” Naomi Segelov utilizes a true story to create a realistic, yet imaginative, narrative. The story of a patient recovering from a heart transplant serves to restate that as much as we can explain, there is so much more that we cannot

Perhaps, we have come to expect too much from science. We look to it for answers when it is still busy with the questions; we distrust and fear science and technology, and it is not unreasonable that we should. For all it’s benefit, we have seen it’s destructive side as well. We understand that it is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

Monochrome Life

By Dini Raskin

It feels sharp, like shattering glass in a rain storm; violet. It feels squishy, like crushed grapes under bare—feet; plum. It feels knobby, like a tree bark slowly peeling off a tree; silver.

I was three years old when asked to identify what color a plump pig was, or a blade of grass, or a moldy banana. I was tested and sent to several different doctors until my prognosis was definite: I was diagnosed with a rare disease called Achromatopsia, which only allowed me to see in black, white and shades of gray. As a child, I never truly felt the absence of color as my parents suspected I would; I only felt it with little things, like circle time, every Thursday of first grade, when our teacher Miss Shade would sit us around a circle and tell us to match the animal with its corresponding color. The memory still haunts me of the kids teasing me because I couldn’t identify what color a monkey was, and worst of all, my teacher getting frustrated because I wouldn’t answer the question. I told my parents what had happened and they immediately made my condition known to my teacher. I could tell she felt very ashamed because, for the rest of the year, she would let me sit in her chair during circle time, and I was allowed to take any one of the colorless candies that sat on her desk. My childhood was full of small things getting in the way of normalcy, but all in all, I did all right. That is, until seventh grade, when my class went on a field trip to the Museum of Modern Art. The tour guide brought us to a painting called “Nature’s Nature,” which depicted a young girl grasping her little sister’s hand and dancing in a field of wild flowers, flowers which seemed to drip into a river, while spinning around a wispy tree. Unlike the other paintings we had seen, this one caused genuine excitement between my peers. The tour guide nodded, as though she expected everyone to have this reaction. I hadn’t realized it, but when I felt my cheek, it was moist with tears. I couldn’t understand my reaction; I only knew that I couldn’t bear to look at the painting one more moment. Later that night, as I pondered this event, I understood what had brought me to tears. I had felt a deep sadness, being unable to see the beauty that everyone else was talking about, the pastels mixed with the watercolors; a perfect blend of rough workmanship, with gentle caresses of a smooth brush. It felt like the whole world was keeping a secret from me, not allowing me to get a peak at their beautiful creation, only allowing the briefest glimpse of a joyful activity being done without getting the full picture.

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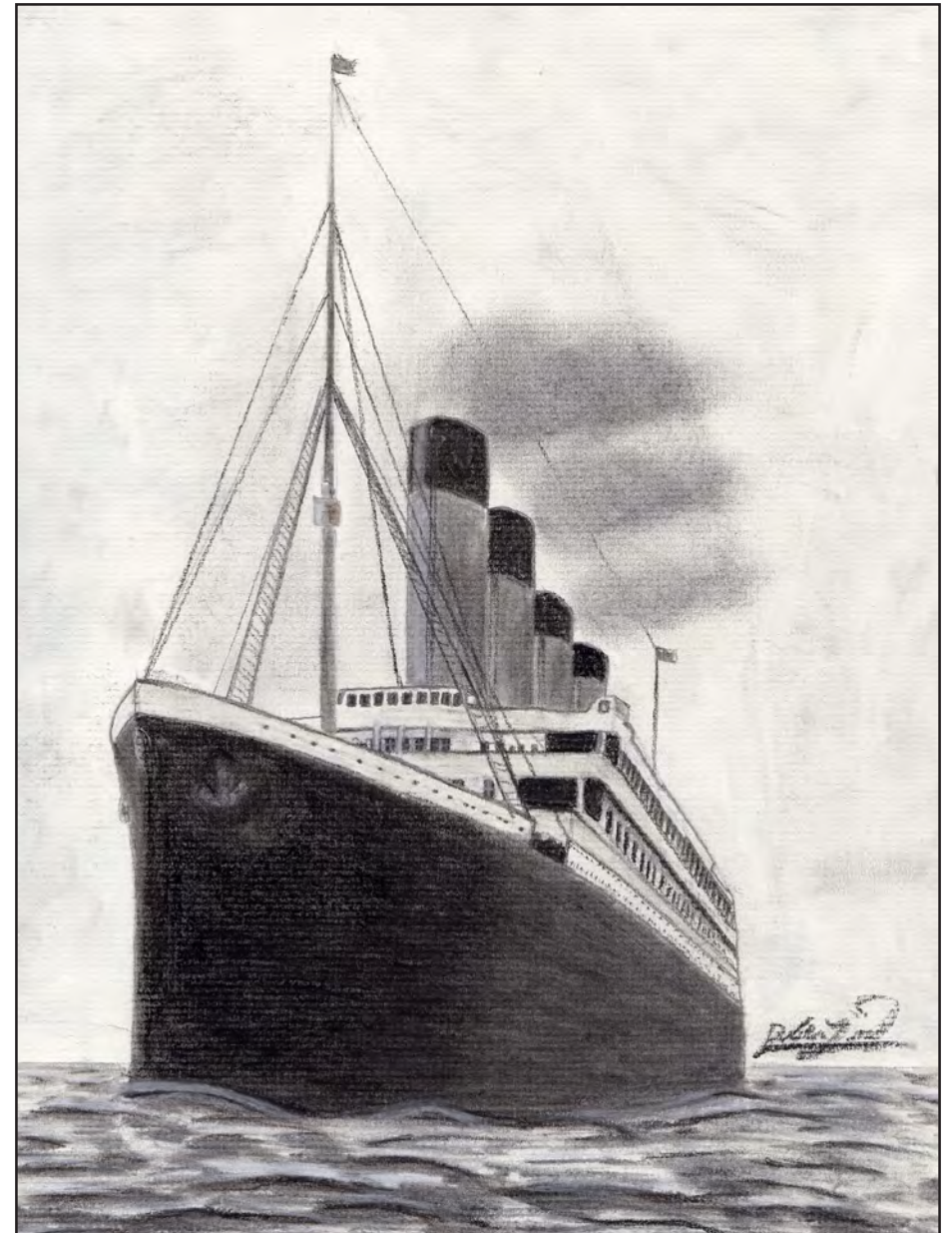
It’s been years since that experience and I am now a renowned artist. I studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, earning an M.F.A. degree in visual arts. At

one point in my life, this was not something I wanted or believed I could achieve, but as I grew older, my inclination for art became a passionate desire. In high school, I took studio art and many different after school art classes, exclusively painting in shades of black, white and gray. After high school, I got accepted to the college I wanted and began experimenting with colors. Most of my pieces were a flop because the colors that I put together weren't harmonious.

I struggled throughout my undergraduate schooling with this until I attended a seminar by a scientist named Dr. Nicole Frankauf, who was working on a project to allow blind people to feel colors. I approached Dr. Frankauf after the seminar and mentioned my interested in working with her. Over the next nine years, we created "The Hand Eyes™" (which always gets a well deserved laugh due to its name). Our invention works like a heat sensor, where certain colors are warmer and others are colder, but has a range of textural feel as well. It attaches to the wrist and looks like a metal bracelet, with five metal spikes sticking out and attaching to each individual finger. By memorizing the temperature, or feel, of each color, this truly allows a blind person to feel what color looks like. This creation has helped me immensely and I would not have been able to become the artist I am today without this special invention. For example, I have never been able to feel the striking color of red, but with this creation, I'm able to feel what red looks like. It is cold, almost with a soggy, jagged texture.

Violet feels sharp, like shattering glass in a rain storm. Plum feels squishy, like crushed grapes under bare feet. Silver feels knobbly, like a tree bark slowly peeling off a tree.

**My inclination
for art became
a passionate
desire.**



Unsinkable

By Miri Fried

Once in a Blue Moon

By Elisheva Rosensweig

They looked up to me.

I watch over them as I have for millennia. My phases control their months, calendars, and schedules. With the stars as my companions, I illuminate their night sky. Sometimes they think they see my features looking down on them, observing them. But my light and guidance are a scam. Do not turn to me for answers, for I can be no brighter than a reflection. It is a poor, cheap replication of a masterpiece never capturing the correct likeness or emitting the correct brightness of the sun. Seek guidance elsewhere for I am but a fabricated fraud imitating something far beyond my ability. Goodnight stars, goodnight air, goodnight children everywhere.

They came to me.

And I felt them approaching for years now as they grew restless. They began seeking new explorations. I heard their attempts and explosions of trial and error, discovery and then defeat. They tried over and over until finally they found success. Their prongs indented my surface, leaving marks that will remain forever. No wind will stir them, no waves will wash them away. They emerged, emitting all colors at once. They placed their feet upon me, creating patterns upon patterns on my cold rock exterior. They stuck a large metal pole through my skin, but no blood, water, or oil spouted forth. There was a flimsy cloth hanging limply from it with wavelengths of red, white and blue. They were colors I haven't seen since the last collapsing star. They claimed me as their own on that day. Good night tall metal bars, good night men searching for Mars.

Sometimes I look down and respond.

I pull so hard, I lift up the waves. I send colors to them, spanning across the sky in eclipses. I send them images and ideas. They even understand my wish for company. They send me visitors. Children watching me with wide expectant eyes from bedroom windows are lifted up by clusters of multicolored balloons. Good night balloons. They break through the atmosphere fueled by naive hopes of my ability. Good night girls and boys who dream from their rooms. They plunge hooks into the milkyway, fishing for stars from the depth of my crescent lap. I whisper to them to spread my name. I remind the world that I watch over them and that if they only turn their head slightly to the side, in the beginning of the month, then they will see me smiling down on them with a half crescent smile illuminating their night sky.

Good night, Moon.

**Good night,
tall metal bars.
Good night
men searching
for Mars.**

Heart to Heart

By Naomi Segelov

My name is Terese. I am your typical middle-aged woman from Bel Air, Los Angeles, who lives a high society lifestyle. My house is environmentally friendly and very "feng shui," perfectly decorated with stunning feminine patterns on both fabrics and paints. My associates are the people you see on magazine covers at the supermarket. I am a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and vote on the costume designs of the yearly nominations. Fashion and opera are my passion, but the highlights of every week are the parties and political events I attend.

It was bizarre when Lauren, my best friend, noticed something unusual and could not hold herself back. "Terese, darling, why are you walking in such a masculine manner?" At first, I ignored her comment. What nerve! Another friend made the same comment, but it was my cravings for craft dark beer and that awful deep fried crispy chicken that startled me the most. I found myself driving to the nearest takeout at late hours, to satisfy these cravings. Even more instinctive behaviors surfaced. Rock replaced Bach and Mozart as my musical preference and I even bought myself a more sophisticated sound system. My serious small talk was exchanged for frivolous one—liners that made everyone laugh. My wardrobe changed from conservative suits to casual baggy sweatshirts and jeans. I found myself one Sunday morning in a Harley Davidson dealer and bought a 1978 motorcycle on an impulse. The exact proportions of my house began to annoy me and I had no peace of mind when I tried to relax at home. It was like I was living life in reverse as I aged.

**His most
prized
possession was
a sparkling
Harley
Davidson 1978
motorcycle.**

One week later, I had the most vivid dream. I was riding my 1978 motorcycle on a deserted highway through the mountains. The road kept going for what seemed like eternity. Finally, I saw a rundown shop in the distance and slowed down right outside. As I was walking to the door, a young man acknowledged me, nodded and mumbled "Casey..." And then I woke up.

Every night afterwards, the dream repeated itself in exactness. At first, I pushed the dreams aside, but after a week I realized there must be a connection between my dreams, strange cravings, and instinctive personality change.

I was certain it all began when I came home following the transplant I re-

ceived six months earlier. When I approached my doctors about my conviction, they dismissed me as crazy. But I was confident in my belief that the new heart I had received had once belonged to a young man.

I desperately needed to know but the hospital would not yield to my request for information of my heart donor. I thought it would be simple, since I had hosted a hospital fundraiser for the cancer ward less than a year before. The Director of Administrative Affairs was adamant that he could not reveal the identity of the donor and specifically discouraged me from trying to do so. But I was persistent and did not let it deter me.

During my online research, I discovered an obituary about a twenty-two year old who had been in a fatal motorcycle accident the same day that I had received my transplant. I had Casey Holden's heart. He had lived in Beatty, a small country town in Nevada.

The Holden family was warmly receptive to my inquires. They described him as witty and outgoing, and it came as no surprise that his favorite dinner was Kentucky Fried Chicken and beer. Casey had been the captain of the local college's football team and lead singer in a rock band. His most prized possession was a sparkling Harley Davidson 1978 motorcycle.



The Pheonix

By Faigy Sontag

Sending a Letter

By Rebecca Russo

To my very dear lady and loving friend,

By the grace of G-d and by the same grace for the King and Queen of England, greetings and good love. I hope this letter finds you in the greatest of health and happiness, may G-d protect you and deliver you from recent calamities, help you in all your tribulations, and give you his blessing and help in all your works. And you, if it pleases you, let me know the place and the day that you make your summons, so we can meet, for I have a great desire to seek your advice on a sensitive topic which I will now explain, as you are my dearest confidant. After having followed my honorable uncle, a revered and respectable expert about the medicinal arts, I have come to respect and admire such ability. While observing my dear uncle, the master of healing, I have come to acquire much knowledge about it, and my heart yearns to take up this aptitude. Uncle has become frail, may G-d bless his soul, and he has come to rely on me for sustenance and salvation. My calling is towards healing but I fear the people of the village will accuse me of witchcraft. I am ever so apprehensive as I do not wish to be seen as a witch and am afraid they will do something terrible to me: they might burn me at the stake.

I know that my calling is to enter the field of medicine, however, I worry what society will say. I have confidence in my knowledge and capabilities as I have been studying many documents on the art of medicine. Additionally, I have been studying in the new library of Oxford in England and I plan on continuing my studies in the field. It is not my worry of doing harm to someone that has stopped me from achieving my dreams, but rather, I'm afraid people will look at me as a woman who doesn't know her place in society. I worry that people will turn me down from my calling as women should not meddle with anything further than the arts. Society wishes for me to study only poetry, art, and music. Even though I, too, see myself as the chatelaine of my estate, I do believe I have a higher calling given the knowledge I have acquired working under the other experienced men of medicine I know, and I only wish society would see this greatness in me.

Through my search to develop my scientific skills I have met many enlightened men who too have a love for medicine and science. One such Philosophe I met, while abroad in France, promised he would correspond with me regarding

current medical practice. He offered to act as my mentor, guiding me thoroughly with my training. He suggested I purchase the newly published book, called the Encyclopedia, by Diderot. This book is supposedly a great publication with all the information known about medicine science and mathematics. I swore to my mentor I would memorize the entire book, as I am determined to accomplish greatness. I am overjoyed by the advancement of having a Philosophe as a mentor even though many people in society believe that a woman cannot work with male doctors. Unfortunately, because of this stigma, I have not been given the opportunity to practice my knowledge and I worry I never will be.

I wish to be like Clara Barton and help our boys on the front lines. I have been learning from a well-known physician. I think I am ready to apply for a better job. I hope they don't deny my request as I have the knowledge and training to do so.

The time is short. Stop. The need is great. Stop. Men are at war. Stop. And have fallen in great numbers. Stop. Have skills of physician. Stop. Yet being treated like a nurse. Stop. Dare I speak up. Stop.

I would very much value your advice dearfriend@aol.com.

I'm not sure if pursuing a medical career is in conflict with my lifetime goals of raising a family. I do believe that women should still have families and dedicate time to spend with them, but I don't see why all of the responsibilities have to fall exclusively on the women. Additionally, women can pursue a vocation and still take care of family successfully. I know it will be hard and that's why I worry; the studies are long, the hours are long, the days are long. And yet I know I could do a really great job.

:(Rlly cud use ur 2¢. PLZ LMK ASAP!

What to do #doc.or.not

:(

**I only wish
society would
see this
greatness in
me.**

Beyond My Control

By Yael Grosberg

I am a fear. When people hear my name they go into panic. I am aware of how dangerous I can be and what I am capable of. I don't really have much of a choice; I am made to hurt people. This is actually my job; to torture and kill innocent people. I receive millions of victims a year, and it overwhelms me with great pain to destroy each one.

Today I receive a new victim, her name is Kelly, and she is only nine.

I always despise my job, and the sufferings that come along with it, but what I hate even more is when I have to destroy the children.

When I am invading a child I always work fast because it kills me to bring misery to them. I begin to feel distressed.

Despite my feelings I do my job with much trepidation, and I start damaging her insides.

I never intentionally try to hurt the children or any of my victims, but that is all I know how to do. I feel as if I am a robot. I already know what will happen.

In a few days Kelly will start having headaches and a high fever. Her mother will take her to the doctor, assuming it is just a virus going around. The doctor will inform her mother that Kelly must be rushed to the hospital immediately. Kelly will take a CT scan and within minutes I will be exposed, and all she'll see is me.

When I will see Kelly's face my heart will shatter. She will have a furrowed brow and a little crinkle on her forehead between her eyes. She won't know what I am going to do.

That night I will feel Kelly fighting with me; fighting to survive.

It saddens me because I know she won't win, and I know she will die.

I will begin to stretch closer up to Kelly's heart. For the next couple of months it will be a constant battle with Kelly, and she will make it difficult for me to do my job. Everyday family and friends will come to visit Kelly at the hospital. I will witness their sobs and bitter tears each day. They will keep repeating phrases, "stay strong", "have courage", and "believe in yourself".

Every time I just want to sigh and say to them, "Don't bother!"

I will continue to pervade her being, and soon I will travel to her heart. The

next morning Kelly won't be able to get out of bed, and it will be difficult for her to talk. That night something will be different. I will be able to do my job without any struggle and without a fight.

I'll be so jealous of Kelly. If only I am able to stop fighting when I want to.

Two nights later, Kelly will wake up in the middle of the night and start screaming and that is when I will know it is time, and my job here will be almost done. I will see Kelly's mother squeezing her hand, and crying out, "Stay with me Kelly!" Just as Kelly is grasping for her last breaths.....

Wait! What am I saying? Am I really going to do this? There must be another solution; there has to be! I have moment of clarity and the realization that maybe I can stop this, maybe I can control myself. Maybe I can help her live. I start fighting to prevent myself from continuing any more harm. I shout, "I demand to be something different, something people don't want to destroy! I will no longer be this disgusting villain; I can't and I won't!"

With all my strength I can muster, I try to pull myself from spreading. I realize it's working and It's possible to control myself. However, after a while my muscles begin to feel heavy, and I don't think I can fight the natural instinct in me. I can't do this. Kelly will slowly take her last breath. I start shaking.

I am terrified of all the damage I will do and the monster I will become. Why can't I stop myself? Why can't I save her? I can't do this anymore. Why hasn't anyone found the cure to stop me? I hate myself, and the job I'm forced with. I yearn for control over myself, and from the evil inside of me.

I am Cancer, stay away from me.

**I yearn for
control over
myself.**



Hand of Hope

By Yaffa Jacobson

94

The Vote

By Rachel Retter

“So have you made your decision?”

All eyes were on her, looking hopeful, but also exasperated. Enough already, they seemed to say. Enough of the new girl hemming and hawing over a decision like this. Who did she think she was, holding them back from moving forward in a step that would change all of their lives? She was so young, so uncertain; with her pale blue eyes and thin, unsteady frame. Of course she wasn't professional enough to handle an area as delicate as this. Their opinions, though unspoken, resounded clearly in her mind, reminding her of every doubt she had about herself, and of how much she despised the position they were putting her in. Her head spun. Why did they keep staring at her?

“Erika?” They were losing patience. “Erika, we don't have a lot of time. We need you to confirm your vote.” Erika took a deep breath, trying to clear her mind.

“I need a minute,” she said, hating the way her voice wavered. They groaned, but she rose from her seat and walked out of the office, her heels clicking on the smooth polished floor. She walked down the hallway, the gray walls calming her; but her thoughts were interrupted by a man calling her name.

“Erika?” She turned to face him, and sighed.

“I told you, I need a minute before I vote.”

“It's not about that. I mean, it is about that, but—” He exhaled. “It's different. I—you can't agree to the deal.”

She frowned, confused. “You're telling me not to vote in favor? But all the opportunities—”

“All the money, you mean?” he asked. His voice was bitter. “Yeah. I know.”

“No, it's not about that,” she insisted. “It's not about the money.”

He looked at her doubtfully. “Those votes don't come free.”

“You think the company is buying votes?” Erika shook her head. “They've never tried to bribe me, not once.” But deep down, she knew why the company had never tried to buy her vote. They didn't need to. She was always so desperate to please, so terrified of justifying their claims against her. They knew she would do exactly what they wanted.

“Erika, this technology was banned for a reason,” he said. “We've had the

“That ban was made in 2092. We've advanced since then! We can handle it now.”

95

tools to explore it for years! But we knew that its dangers far outweighed its potential for good.”

“That ban was made in 2092. We’ve advanced since then! We can handle it now.” Erika sounded confident, but he shook his head angrily.

“I knew you would say something like that,” he said. “Everyone believes that their generation is superior to all the others. It’s human nature.” He started to pace, looking aggravated. “We think we are above the precautions that our ancestors made. Because of all our new innovations, and technology. We think we are savvy enough to explore areas that nobody ever dared.”

Erika shifted uncomfortably. She wanted to ignore him, to push his words out of her mind; but they contained an unmistakable truth. And the truth, however ugly, is difficult to push away.

“Erika, if you give your vote, they will have enough government representatives to lift the ban. They will finally be able to explore this technology, and will make billions marketing it. But technology this powerful will be dangerous when abused; and something like this will inevitably be abused.” He looked at her pleadingly. “Please don’t allow this to happen. Once we open this door, we can never go back. By the time anyone realizes how much damage has been done, it will be too late.”

She opened her mouth to reply. But before she had a chance, the head of her office came and motioned for her to return.

“It’s been more than a few minutes already, and honestly, we’ve had enough of your games. Please give us your vote already.”

“Yes, sir,” she said meekly. She followed him into the room and sat down. Everyone looked at her expectantly.

“I—um—” They kept staring at her! Staring, doubting,—waiting for her to agree, daring her to fail. She felt her hands tremble, the room started to spin— and she couldn’t stop staring at the man across the room, begging her with his eyes to stop it. And she knew in her heart he was right, that all the others were too blinded by money to see the dangers—but she felt their eyes boring into her, waiting, just waiting—and she opened her mouth, and heard herself vote yes.

5

Section

A New Perspective

And after night comes day, or more night, depending on the particular time—frame you choose to apply to your perspective.

— Adam Roberts

New Perspectives

By Rachelle Chechik, Editor

How often do we find ourselves stuck in how we perceive the world to be? But sometimes, events happen that cause us to reevaluate our perspective on how we view the world. Sometimes it happens on a grand scale, forcing us to completely change our opinions of everything we thought we knew, or sometimes its just a small section of our world that gains an extra layer of insight.

In Bryna Greenberg's "Disturbing the Universe," a little boy has to reexamine the way he views his daddy. This is a powerful story that shows how as we grow older we learn more about ourselves and others, how people are complicated and nuanced, and how we choose our own destiny by realizing that.

In Baila Schuster's "A Matter of Perspective," there is a dual narrative showing how people who sit on the bus together have very different views on themselves and each other. The reader gains an interesting insight into the dynamic between strangers and the judgements they make on each other. In Elisheva Lesser's "The World in Black and White," a man sees the world in a new light as he is cured, and is able to appreciate the beauty of all of the senses. The piece paints a beautiful picture of how he perceived the world before and after the cure, juxtaposing the two.

In Chana Leah Seif's whimsically written "Spring Garden," a young girl experiments with the definition of beauty and its price. The young girl comes to an interesting conclusion that adds another layer to how she sees the world and how she views herself in it. In "The Untold Story of Failure" by Tova Schwartz, the reader gains a unique view into how we can redefine the word failure. The piece has a deep concept behind it that makes the reader think while it is presented in a light and airy way.

One of the beautiful things about being human is our ability to view the world from a unique perspective. Even if we all look at the same thing, we will all have different thoughts and opinions about it. When we connect with other people and share our ideas, our worlds become richer places, because we can view the same thing from multiple perspectives. The stories in this section showcase the change that occurs as people realize that not everything is how they originally imagined it to be.

A Master of Perspective

By Baila Schuster

Them. I sit next to them every morning. They are two women, nearing fifty, and trying not to show it. One wears floral pants, sneakers and no makeup at all. The other squishes her arthritic body into dresses and heels and paints her nails fire engine red. They have been together since the first time I took the subway to school. As one pulls out her magazine and circles her dream holiday gifts, the other pulls out her new iPhone, probably given to her by her grandchildren. Her painted arthritic fingertips tap away at the gadget, fumbling as she tries to figure out the "impossible machine." This is when the arguments begin. "No, press that," "You don't say press, you say tap!" and so on. As their voices escalate, chuckles are passed around the train car from one person to the next.

As the stations pass, my eyes glaze over and my head rests on the bars in the direction of the women. They are my early morning diversion and make me really appreciate my upbringing. Their loud and tasteless actions are complete opposites of the lessons my parents taught me. Although they are probably unaware, their actions are amusing not only to me, but to a whole group of people who are part of the 6:50 a.m. train ride club. The entertainment they add and smiles they put on everyone's faces should grant them some form of payment!

Her. We sit next to her every morning. She is a young girl in her teens, dressed for the winter when we're in the middle of June. In contrast to our business-like dresses and comfy pants, she has a disheveled appearance. At 6:50 a.m., she flies onto the train huffing and puffing with her hair windblown as if she just ran the 30k marathon. It has to be admitted though, that her methods of being on time are quite efficient. Her methods include some extremely creative techniques like jamming a tap shoe between the doors (we are not sure how intentional that was, but it worked) and banging on the train door for the conductor to open up. More than once we feel bad for her. On the days, when the train leaves the station and she has just come flying around the bend, we can glimpse a pained expression on her face. But you know what, it's her loss; children these days must be taught to be more punctual.

She stares at us sometimes, so of course, we can't help but stare back. If we are in the mood, we send her smiles. Sometimes, we receive a grimace or a

**She stares at us
sometimes, so of
course, we can't
help but stare
back**

smirk in return; her expression is hard to read. However, we do hope the smiles are appreciated. We understand her though. People find it hard to believe that we were once high school students like her. Between her yawns and light dozing, we can tell that she tries hard. As she constantly fumbles around in her backpack for a highlighter or runs across the train for her tap shoe gone AWOL (we don't understand what's with the tap shoes, but she is definitely not the dancing type); she seems to be highly adept at dropping things. When she mumbles to herself, we pretend not to notice and we continue tapping at the gadget or circling in the magazine respectively. She is a strange child, but of course it's better than the ragamuffins who come on board and beg for some cash, to obviously go and buy alcohol or drugs. We admire her character. To join us older folks on the subway at 6:50 a.m. well, takes guts.

Disturbing the Universe

By Bryna Greenberg

When I was five, I learnt to ride my bike. My Dad taught me. My mom watched from the backyard, cheering me on. My Dad told me to go nice and steady, to pedal hard but not to lose my balance. I remember him whispering to me, his stubble scratching my ears, "don't ever doubt yourself son, if you're ever unsure of where you're going, or what you're doing, just ask yourself, do I dare disturb the universe?" I always hoped I did.

When I was seven, my grandparents made me a birthday party. Everything was decorated with rocket ships, because I liked them. I remember being so happy. When it was time to cut the cake, my mom told my Grandma to wait. She said she knew that my dad wasn't going to miss his own son's birthday. So we waited. Eventually, everyone went home; even my grandparents. I begged my mom to stop waiting because we could save a slice for my dad. But she insisted that my dad was coming home. It got really late, and I ended up falling asleep behind the kitchen counter on the floor.

I woke up to hushed voices. My mom and this young looking cop were sitting across from each other at the kitchen table. My mom had her face in her hands, her eyes red from crying. When I stood up, my mom started crying really hard at the sight of me. Another police officer took me outside and told me he was going to try explaining some things to me if that was okay. I nodded because it was. He crouched down to my height and told me my dad was going to be away for a while.

"For how long?"

"Until he can come back."

"Can I see him?"

"Well...that's up to your mom."

"But why does he have to go away?"

"Because, he made a few mistakes and he's got to sort them out." I couldn't help but think that my dad finally did it, he dared disturb the universe. Not just the universe, but my universe. He caused an irreversible shift in my world. A shift that sent me spiraling out of control into the dark.

The year when I was eight was a blur. It was a dark void, and I never felt more alone.

My grandpa tried to be a good male influence on me or whatever, and started taking me on this camping trip thing every year. He started taking me when

I was 9. It's actually pretty fun. We drive up to Lake Tahoe pitch our tent by the camp site, go fishing for a while, cook the fish which is usually Rainbow Trout, and while it's cooking, my grandpa get's very into his stories. My grandpa's face is like crumpled parchment. It has so many memories etched into its cracks from years and years of moons and skies and seas. For some reason when he tells a story, I imagine my grandpa's life through pictures, but not the normal kind. The kind that have a frozen moment in them, where the people are at the prime of their life, with laughing eyes like they're having more fun than you'll ever have. He likes to tell me stories about how he used to go fishing with his dad. By those parts I kinda look away. I can't help thinking that I'm never gonna go fishing with my dad. That I'm supposed to settle for going with my grandpa because he feels bad for me. My grandpa doesn't know this. You can't blame him for that. I laugh at his stories by all the funny parts, smile at the nice parts, and say "no way" by the crazy parts. I don't mind pretending because it makes him feel like he's contributing to the "make me better" project.

I just feel funny because he doesn't know that he doesn't need to do that. He doesn't know that I've made a promise to myself that I'm going to be okay.

I guess I haven't changed much since I was five, because even after my dad's awful mistakes, I still stand in front of my mirror wondering if I dare disturb the universe. When I look up at myself, and I see my mom's eyes, and my dad's jaw, I know that I do, because now I understand what he meant... what my dad meant. He meant that the universe feels still most of the time, it even takes an entire 365 days to do a full spin. Then every once in a while someone comes along, and makes the universe do a full 360 all at once. The spin causes everyone to gasp, and the world feels off kilter, it has definitely been disturbed. But then the changes are accepted, and that person has made a difference.

I'm not saying that I'm going to be the next Nelson Mandela or Neil Armstrong, or Martin Luther King Jr., but I can secretly put my life back together, not get mixed up with the wrong friends, and not owe people tons of money. I can be at my son's seventh birthday party instead of a police man telling my wife the news

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that she'll see me in fifty years. I can be an outlier of the statistics of kids from "broken homes," make the clipboard psychologists fluster, keep reloading the page to make sure their data is correct. And my life could go on like a very special episode of The Brady Bunch. And I could be the biggest cliché of American families, with a wife and kids, and a steady job, coming home from work saying, "honey I'm home!" So, maybe I'm not going to disturb the entire universe, but I can definitely dare to disturb mine, just a teeny bit differently from the way my dad did.



Spring Garden

By Chana Leah Seif

It was a good price. That much I can admit. It offers so much for only \$7.99. It has 56 colors of eye shadow, eight blushes, six colors of lip—gloss, three shades of concealer, two shades of foundation, three different glitters, four eyeliner pencils, five brushes, and finishing powder.

It was hard not to buy the makeup pallet. I had just turned 12. I was finally of age to put on makeup. The only problem was I didn't have makeup. When I saw this pallet it was a no question buy.

Now, I stand here facing my mirror in my brightly lit bedroom. My makeup pallet is open in front of me. I begin my makeover with concealer. In seventh grade I hardly get any sleep. I go to bed at 11:30 and wake up at 8:00. My bags are clearly visible. Or, is it just the reflection of light off my mirror?

Next, I apply foundation. I use a more bronze shade. I want to look tanned. Also, it's sunny outside so it makes sense if I use a darker shade. I put it all over my face using my fingers. (I am saving my brushes for the powders.) I put it on my neck so it matches my face. I look up into my mirror and I see a freshly spray tanned 12 year old. Perfect. That is what I am aiming for.

So far so good. I move on to my eyes. This part is a bit complicated, because I have to use eyeliner and many colors of shadow to match the spring outside. I want to use more pinks, yellows, blues, and greens to typify a garden. My liner will be brown to represent trees. This is a perfect spring look.

I start with the eyeliner pencil. I stretch my eyelid to the side so I can clearly see what I am doing. Winking, I put the pencil on my lid. I apply the liner all the way across my lid until it ends on the same level as my eyebrow. I do the same to my other eye.

On to the eye shadow: For both eyes I start with a light coral. I choose my smallest brush so I have a more accurate idea of where I am placing it. I dip it into the powder. I put the brush of pink on my lids closest to my nose and I settle a nice small circle of shadow there. I dip my brush into the hunter green and I apply another small circle next to the coral. I, then, dip my brush into the sunshine yellow and fill up the remaining spaces on my lids. I choose a brush one size larger and put it into the sparkly white. I blend all the colors together. My eyelids now look like a spring garden. I take another brush one size bigger and put it into the azure shadow. I spread it above my eye garden up until my brow. That represents the sky. I take my brush used for blending and I blend the sky with the gardens.

I'm finally up to my favorite part: the blush. I take my largest brush and put

Beyond the Darkness

By Avigail Dreifus

it in the lightest pink blush. I then apply it all over my cheeks. It gives me a rosy look. I take the last brush, which is a size smaller than the previous one, and place it into the darkest pink. I apply it across my cheekbones. I start at one ear and end at the other: including over the nose. I look perfect.

Now, to add color and shine to my lips I dip my finger into the brightest red lip-gloss, which is now full of eye shadow. I rub the gloss over my lips making sure to get it on the sides of my mouth. Oh my! My lips are so fire engine red.

To finish the makeover, I apply sparkles and finishing powder. I clean my largest brush and put it into the powder. I rub the finishing powder all over my face. To end off my new and improved look I put silver sparkles under my eyes.

Presently, I look like I walked off the red carpet. On second thought, my face looks bizarre! I run to the bathroom and wash off my face. With a dry, pink, pimple stricken face, I smile.

I finally understand. This pallet was never meant for the face. This pallet wasn't meant for anything. The only reason it was created was for the store to profit from the little twelve year olds. All along they knew it was junk. They just wanted my \$7.99. Very smart and sneaky. Well, the store was wrong. I did profit from it.

It was a good price. That much I can admit.

The World in Black & White

By Elisheva Lesser

The room was damp from the wet winter air. The window was open a crack letting in the cold. The heavy dark red velvet curtains blocked out all the light. The stone floor was ice cold to step on. The room was empty of any furniture except for one wooden rocking chair in the middle. There were no lights on, not that he would have noticed or cared one way or another. He never paid any attention to his surroundings.

His world was silent and still. He could not hear the howl of the wind. He could not hear the wave of the curtains. He could not hear the creak of the moving rocking chair. He could not hear anything. To him, the world felt black and white. Even on a good day, he could not enjoy the sound of his grandson's laughter. He could not hear the rush of water in the river or the chirp of the birds in the morning. He could not laugh at a good joke or tap his feet to the tune of a song.

Meanwhile, his son traveled all over the world to search for a cure. He read every book or article he could find. He met with every world famous doctor. The piece he bought his father to put inside his ear didn't help, neither did everyone's shouting. His son was extremely determined to find a cure.

The man woke up after the operation. He slept on and off over the next few weeks. He refused his daughter-in-law's chicken soup, and they all worried whether he'd ever be the same. His family had sympathy for him. They felt he had a perfect life, yet it was all wasted on the fact that he couldn't hear. They were hopeful the operation would work. Eventually he went back into his cold, dark room and sat back in his wooden rocking chair. It was no use. Life would always be the same.

There were no lights on, not that he would have noticed or cared one way or another.

At first he felt a piercing in his brain. There was a sharp unfamiliar feeling. He couldn't tell if it was good or bad. He squinted his eyes and covered his ears. He turned his head toward the window and noticed the red color of the curtains for the first time. Something was different. His heart skipped a beat, and he stood up and walked toward the window. He saw his grandson playing his violin outside in the garden while the boys mother watched. Could it be. Was this sound? This haunting, beautiful, painful, happy, sad feeling was sound? He lifted his face up toward the sun and felt its warmth. He felt the smooth material of the red curtain. Suddenly he felt hungry. And he began to dance.

I Was the New Kid

By Osnat Cohen

I was the new kid. The new kid in the neighborhood. I did not know anybody and nobody knew me. It was not my idea to move. I wanted to stay. Stay where I knew everybody and everybody knew me.

The day I moved I wept along with my friends. I was moving to America from England. In order for them to visit me they needed a plane ticket, and I could not go to pay for that. So there I was, crying while my family waited in the car. I was fourteen at the time, and this was a big change. They promised they would write and call and keep in touch, but who knew what would happen for real? Maybe we would lose all connections and we would forget about each other.

There I was standing in front of my new house in the new country. I was starting ninth grade the next week, and I had a lot to do. I walked slowly to my new room to unpack.

The night before school started I could not fall asleep. I was struggling with my thoughts. I was not going with anybody while most girls came with friends. I had no one to talk to when we would gossip about teachers. But maybe I will have a friend. Maybe that friend would be my best friend who I could rely on and trust.

On the first day of school I walked to Room Three Two Four. I turned the knob, and as I walked in, I felt everyone's eyes following my every move. I sat down next to a girl with short brown hair and glasses. I glanced at her, but she gave me a look and turned away.

The bell finally rang for recess. Everyone jumped up and ran to their friends. Everyone had someone to talk to besides me. I stayed in my seat. All of a sudden a girl named Sarah asked me where I was from and what my name was. As I was answering I heard smirking in the background. I blushed a deep shade of red. They continued asking me questions, but the whole time I heard the bitter smirking. The bell finally rang and everybody ran back to their seats.

The next day I told myself that today would be better. I came to school in a better mood. I walked over to the short brown-haired girl and tried talking to her. She just nodded with a straight face as I spoke. Then she raised her hand. I stopped talking and she walked away to a group of girls.

I was stunned for a moment but then walked over to Sarah. As I was talk-

ing, she was yawning and kind of ignoring me. Then her friend walked in the classroom and yelled for Sarah so Sarah walked away, leaving me there by myself. I snuck to the bathroom and cried there for a while. I left the bathroom, and grabbed my coat and had my mom pick me up.

I cried to my mom that night but all she said was that it would all work out in the end. She was not fully supporting me and my dad was on a business trip. Who else was I supposed to turn to? Was I all alone?

For the next couple of weeks I realized there were some nice girls but they were on my bullies' side. They were doing horrible things to me. They would call me names and make fun of my clothing. They would stick gum in my hair and spill ketchup "accidentally" on me. They would scribble on my perfectly written notes. The worst possible thing they did was chase me all the way home with half of the school with them and then kick dirt on my clothes. My parents were not going to switch me to another school because the only other possible school was an hour away and there was no transportation for me. They tried talking to the principal and teacher but that only made things worse.

All I ever wanted was to have a friend at my side when I need her. To help me and support me. Someone I can trust and love. Was that too much to ask?

Was being the new kid so bad?

**The next day I
told myself that
today would be
better.**



Faces of Hope

By Talia Alper

112

Common Sense

By Tamar Skydell

Jeremiah glanced down at his intricately designed china plate and sighed. His father's fist was raised in the air and he shook it emphatically as he ranted about the imprudent rebels of their close-knit Pennsylvania community. "How dare they disobey the King? How dare they? Those fools are acting in a reckless, rash manner. They've tried to double-cross the King and that shall fail them. Don't they see, they are mere specks of dust in the King's way! King George should not hesitate; they should all be burned alive!"

Jeremiah's older brother, Theo, nodded enthusiastically as he spoke, "Oh, I agree. I agree, father. Those traitors should be punished severely. One who dares to revolt against the powerful authority of King George III... woe upon them!" Jeremiah peered at Theo out of the corner of his eye. His brother shone with fierce, unadulterated passion. Jeremiah cursed himself inwardly, wondering why he was unable to match his brother's fervor.

"Jeremiah?" Father's firm tone prodded Jeremiah out of his thoughts, "Is there anything you'd like to add?" Jeremiah gripped his fork tightly and stared down at his plate that was laden with expensive meats. His appetite was gone; his stomach roiled, his heart pumped and his eyes widened.

"Well, ah, no. I agree. I agree with all you've said." Jeremiah responded lamely. Father smiled stiffly, disappointment clear in his eyes. Jeremiah's lips drooped into a frustrated frown. He had let father down... again.

Father and Theo continued to condemn the Patriots of their town. Their fiery remarks lit up the room and Jeremiah squirmed uncomfortably, as they criticized the actions of their former brethren. "Father, have you seen the pamphlet that's been making its way through town?" Theo spoke in a low, angry voice.

Father's eyes narrowed and he leaned forward, his voice coarse with gruff fury, "What pamphlet are you talking about, son?"

Theo yanked a pamphlet out of his pocket and spat, "Some fool has decided to publish his ignorant views on the tensions brewing in the colonies regarding our beloved British regime. Look at this, father!" Theo flipped the packet open roughly and read aloud, "Until an independence is declared the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity."

Father jumped up and bellowed, "This is an outrage! Ridiculous! Ludicrous!" Father peered at the cover of the pamphlet and let out a jaundiced chuckle, "Look

113

here, boys. The title of this outlandish work is Common Sense. Who's the author of this nonsense? He must be stopped! Independence? Good G-d, the author must have lost his mind!"

Theo stood next to his father, eyes glittering with rage, "He must be stopped. Oh, Father! We must act quickly before the rest of town sees this pamphlet of insanity. Let us go, gather our friends, make a meeting, and create a plan." Father dropped the packet on the exquisite tablecloth and rushed out the door with Theo following behind him excitedly.

Jeremiah sat silently at the table for a moment. He leaned over impulsively and reached for the pamphlet, his fingers softly, slowly, stroking the cover. He opened the pamphlet with a trembling hand and his eyes flit back and forth, drinking in the words as quickly as he could. Independence. Evil of monarchy. Tyranny. British barbarity. "Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'tis time to part." Jeremiah read aloud, his wavering voice barely audible. "'tis time to part." Jeremiah repeated, his lips curled in a timorous, but enraptured smile. Suddenly, the front door swung open.

Theo poked his head into the dining room and glanced at his brother curiously, "Jeremiah, what are you doing? We've got to get going!" He noticed the Common Sense pamphlet in Jeremiah's hands and snorted, "Get rid of that trash." Theo grabbed the pamphlet and ripped it up angrily. He tossed the shreds of paper in the air and stomped on them defiantly. "Come along, brother, we best be on our way!" Theo strode out of the room and Jeremiah slowly, hesitantly, trailed behind him.

He glanced down at the tatters that were strewn all over the floor and whispered softly, "'tis time to part."

We must act quickly before the rest of town sees this pamphlet of insanity.

The Untold Story of Failure

By Tova Schwartz

I thought I failed yesterday when I tried to write a creative literary journal. At first, I did fail: I filled two 8 ½ x 11 college ruled papers with my "amazing" ideas and it took me approximately two minutes each to realize how un—amazing they truly were. I decided to present my failure to the world, because failure is too often something that is hidden next to the skeleton in the closet.

This is the untold story of failure.

Take One:

"People just want to be remembered. Newton is remembered for calculus, Freud for psychoanalysis, Einstein for the theory of relativity, and I will be remembered for —" Uh oh, where's this heading?! Scratch that — FAILURE.

Let's try that again. I will invent the psychoanalysis of the literary journal:

"Einstein went down in history for discovering the theory of relativity, Freud is known for inventing psychoanalysis, Newton gave birth to calculus, and Ms. Friedman created lit journal." — Wait, I don't know how to psychoanalyze something — FAILURE.

"Four scores and seven years ago Mr. George Klein had a dream." Even I don't know where I'm going with this one — FAILURE.

"Every good book is noticed. " Duh, but wait, let's see where I could take this.

"The sign of a good book is a book that not only attracts the readers but also attracts critiques and analyses. The Bible is the number one bestseller, and it is also the book that has the most critiques, analyses, and books based on it. For years the literary journal has been Manhattan High School's bestseller; but now, for the first time since its creation, the literary journal will serve as the basis for a critique." I just realized, a good introduction like this means I need to write a good analysis to follow — FAILURE.

"When going to battle, the key to success is to know your enemy better than they know themselves. Instead of tackling lit journal, I decided to explore how to get your lit journal published." If I knew the secret I would not be having such a hard time writing my lit journal — FAILURE.

"Last week I . . ." could get past the first three words — FAILURE.

"Yesterday I gave up, I failed. Today I turned that bitter taste of failure into sweet victory. Yesterday I didn't have a lit journal, today I do." The preceding three words are false — FAILURE.

“Ironically, my success today is my failure from yesterday. And now I will stop talking ‘or is it writing?’ in bumper sticker clichés and actually explain myself.” Problem is, there’s nothing to explain – FAILURE.

Talking about failure was making me anxious so I changed the topic.

“Deep in the jungles of Africa is a Slagnomare, the most rare and beautiful butterfly. The Slagnomare remains the only animal bigger than a breadbox that is still undiscovered.” So how do I know it exists? Oh! I have an idea:

“I discovered the secret of the Slagnomare on ‘Insider Leaks,’ which is a cross between insider trading and wikileaks” ...and I’m still not making sense – FAILURE.

Numerous publishing houses rejected J.K. Rowling’s book Harry Potter before it was finally published; now there are movies, video games, and theme parks basked on Harry Potter. I am not saying that I think a story about the “Slagnomare” found in the jungles of Africa will be a bestseller (incidentally, if you were going to look up what a Slagnomare is – it does not exist); but I do believe that failure can turn into success. This is why I decided to do the unconventional and publish my failure, because the more comfortable we are looking failure in the eye, the more likely we are to succeed.

**Failure is too
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closet.**



6

Section

Changing Circumstances

“A man does what he must — in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures — and that is the basis of all human morality.”

— Winston Churchill

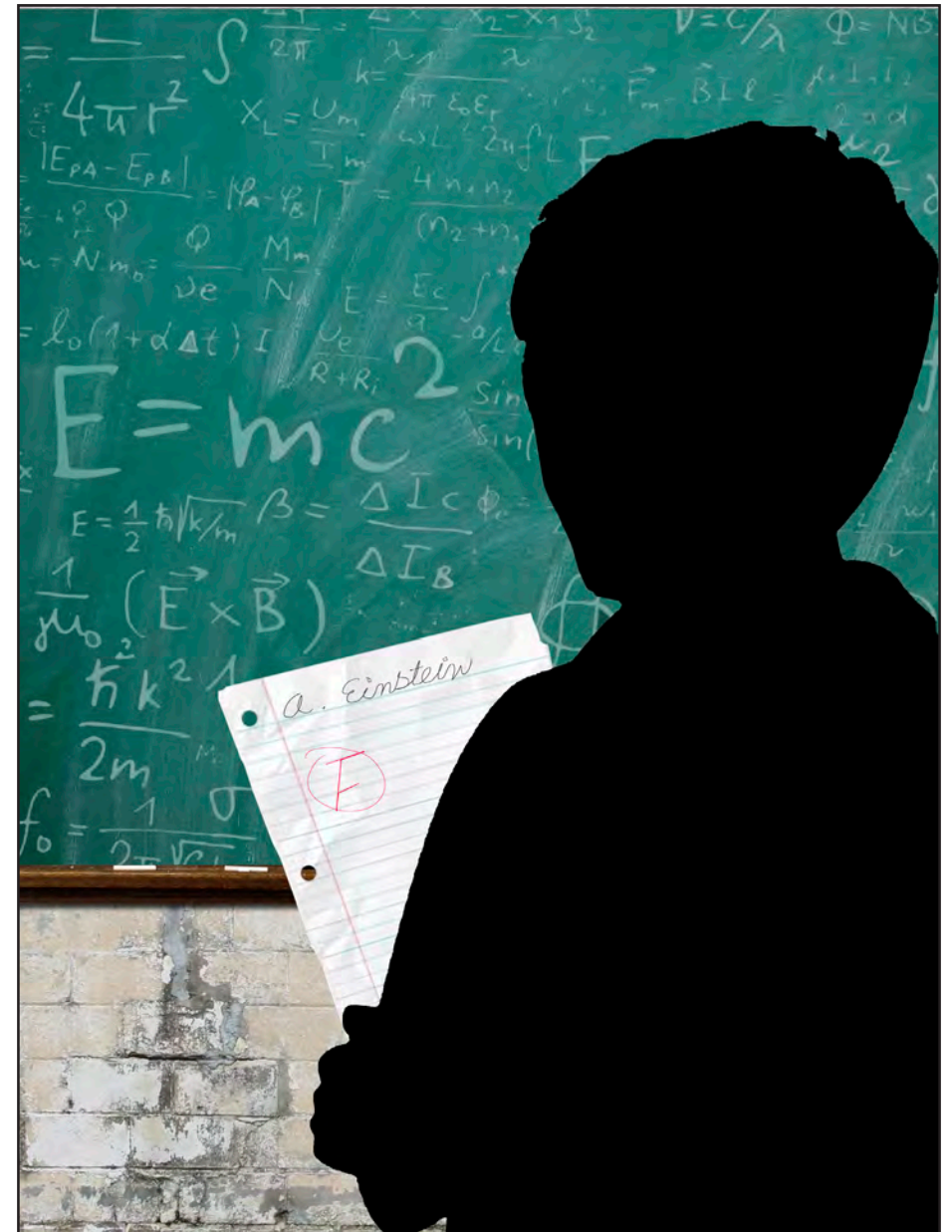
Overcoming One's Obstacles

By Dini Raskin, Editor

Overcoming one's obstacles can be the most difficult and gratifying thing in the world. By overcoming various obstacles, the protagonists' written about in this section emerge stronger, wiser, braver or more accepting. In Dena Skydell's story, "Get up Girl," she writes in the perspective of Rosa Parks, living in the segregated South of Montgomery, Alabama. Rosa stands up for herself as well as for the rest of the African American community, by sitting down, even though she faces racism, discrimination and intolerance. Facing similar difficulties is Meitel Israel's protagonist in "Lost and Found," a fifteen year old boy living in the 1940's of Nazi, Germany. Even though he isn't very strong, his strength of character is enough to push him towards bravery, as he defends a fellow Jew against Nazi officers.

With a different perspective of World War Two, is Sara Ben-Zvi's piece, "Uncharted," where an old Jewish woman is on a death march, ready for her life to end, yet pushing herself to survive. This woman unflinchingly takes her opportunity for survival and allows the unexpected bubble of hope to penetrate her devastating surroundings. This idea of finding light in the dark fits the theme of Shirley Kapetas' story, "Where is Evil Truly Found?" Kapetas illustrates the character of Death, not solely as an evil entity, but something that does its duty, taking the souls of two boys attempting to do research for a science project, such a mundane activity with a cruel twist.

On a lighter note, comes "Hamster Tale," a story by Bella Rubin, which tells about a day in the life of a hamster in a series of unfortunate events made funny. With a different kind of struggle, comes Shaindy Blumenthal's piece written in the perspective of a dyslexic girl who is more artistically inclined and has confidence in her talent, even though she faces difficult odds. So, whether you're old, young, or just plain different, struggle is universal and obstacles can be overcome by all different walks of life.



Genius Undiscovered

By Hadassah Penn

Hamster Tale

By Bella Rubin

I sat in a huff on top of a pile of chewed-up straw, and stared at my leaking hamster drip, wondering why bad things happened to good hamsters. My name is Fluffernutter and this is my story.

This morning began like any other morning. First, I ran a few quick steps in my purple hamster wheel, and then I rolled idly around in my cardboard toilet-paper tube. Still bored, I ate all my carrot sticks, munched wood chips, and burrowed pointless holes. I even clipped my toenails, brushed my teeth, and combed my fur. With nothing else to do, I was forced to admire my reflection in the glass walls of my 10x12 cage. I fogged up the glass as I stared longingly into the outside world. I had had enough of my boring life; I wanted some action, excitement, and adventure! I wanted to run without crashing into cage walls. My compound just wasn't big enough for my dynamic personality. With these vibrant thoughts, I bounded up the mesh ladder to the second floor of my humble abode, leaped onto the ledge, and slipped through the convenient crack in the lid. Just like that, I was out. My whiskers quivered with excitement as I admired the scene before me. I was in the landlady's den, complete with a plush carpet and a worn couch. I took my first, deep breath of freedom, hopped down the cage roof, and scurried down the table leg onto the soft, carpeted floor. My adventure was underway! I headed for the doorway, going from plush carpet to hardwood floor that looked good enough to chew. As I skipped happily onward, I left scratches in the wooden planks. I hope no one notices. I followed my nose to the kitchen, and scurried upward onto the counter where my landlady chopped vegetables and dropped them into a waiting, simmering pot. When her back was turned, I snatched a few sliced zucchini, and crunched noisily while wandering aimlessly on the granite countertop.

I was silently applauding my boldness, and loving life when I fell face first onto a pile of dirty dishes. As I wiped the slime from my front leg and rubbed my throbbing head, my landlady had the audacity to turn on the faucet. While she was yelling over her shoulder for her husband to turn off the stove, I stood there helplessly, gasping for breath and temporarily paralyzed under the freezing cold water. Annoyed and sopping wet, I half slid, half climbed my way out of the sink and on to the counter. I shook my matted and clumped fur, and arms crossed, leaned

casually against the back-splash as if nothing happened.

Without thinking, I let my stubby tail enter the hole behind me. Rookie mistake. Turns out that hole was a power outlet, and combined with my wet tail, it created an electrical shock I'll never forget. I leapt up with alacrity, gave a few high pitched squeaks, and held my vibrating, wet tail as I skidded painfully off the damp counter.

My fall was broken by a pile of dirty towels on the floor. Not a moment too soon, the laundry and I were scooped up and plopped into a big machine. Before I could devise an escape route, the machine door slammed shut, Tide was poured, and buttons were punched. The last thing I saw through the circular, glass window as I sat perched on the top of a rag, was my landlady's retreating back. Then the machine buzzed and I began to spin in circles. It was fun for the first five seconds, but then soap got in my eyes, and I was swimming blindly. When the cycle finally ended and I stopped spinning, I was tangled up in a towel, and blowing soap bubbles when the landlady transferred me against my will to yet another machine. I emerged from this one dizzy, very hot, and smelling clean.

When my feet hit solid ground once again, I walked in circles before eventually crawling back to my cage frazzled, and exhausted, but with gorgeous fur. I collapsed into a burrowed hole and reviewed my very long day. After falling into a dirty sink, getting electrocuted, and going through the washer-dryer, I decided I experienced enough adventure to last me a lifetime. It's a crazy world out there, and some things are best left unexplored.



Undefeated

By Miriam Wilamowsky

124

Where is Evil Truly Found

By Shirley Kapetas

I think I can conclude that I am the most formidable force to all human kind. I deal with murder, guiltless babies' souls, illness, and suffering. I believe darkness is not always evil and that day, in retrospect, proves my belief to be correct.

It was an ordinary day in Dreaster High. Mrs. Haterson, the science teacher, had assigned an experiment to the class on the differences between mountains and the ground. "Leo Hollins, you will be partnered up with Adam Kinley." Leo growled to himself. His dad, the mayor of Dreaster, and Adam's father were never quiet fond of each other and neither were their sons. It was not a coincidence that Adam and Leo were paired up that Thursday in mid-November.

"So, what's your genius idea this time, Addy?"

"I learned a lot about mountains. Let's do something related to snow. How about we'll see if the snow in higher altitudes have lower temperatures than the snow on the ground?"

"Wow. Very intriguing," said Leo sarcastically.

"I don't suppose you have any other suggestions. Anyway, based on today's weather, I predict it will quite frigid this Saturday. That won't bother you . . . right?"

"No, not at all. We'll meet me at my home at one o'clock sharp. Don't be late."

"Why don't we meet at my house? I live closer to the mountain."

"Because I decide everything about this project besides for all the scientific stuff and supplies," said Leo with a smile that made Adam want to strangle him.

That Saturday, was the day I took their souls. I had to prevail, for this is why I am in existence.

As they approached the mountain, Adam steadily became more cautious, as if he smelled my bad breath behind him. On the other hand, Leo was strolling around as if there was no one around him, not even Adam and I. Adam tried to bring up topics with Leo, but Leo's eyes were set on the peak of Mount Blackheels. They climbed higher and higher as the clock ticked and the sun began to gradually descend into its cave.

"Um . . . Leo," said Adam with anxiety in his voice. "It's getting dark up here. Where is the flashlight?"

"How am I supposed to know? You're in charge of the supplies."

"I didn't think we would be out this late."

125

“What do you mean? You thought we’d grow wings and fly to the top of the mountain?” asked Leo getting redder by the second.

“I’ll check the bag once more but...”

“But nothing. Give me the bag,” roared Leo as he grabbed the backpack and dumped the whole bag out.

He ran his fingers through all the dirt, mud, and supplies and found a miniature flashlight.

“Well, this is all we got, thanks to you, so we better hurry to the top before it runs out of battery.”

“We are going the rest of the way up with that tiny thing? I’m...m not coming. It’s downhill from here for me.”

“How do you plan on going without this little flashlight? Aren’t you scared of the evil forces out there who will come and eat our precious soul?”

That line struck me like a bolt of lightning. Do humans really believe I eat their souls? Or do they think that it’s the darkness that eats them up?

Before I could even continue with my thoughts, I felt the moment approaching. I saw the two boys quarreling over the little evil light source and before they realized what was happening, they began tumbling down the entire Mount Blackheels. As I arrived at the bottom, Leo and Adam’s bodies were sprawled across a flat piece of land facing their little town of Lakeside. I quickly retrieved their souls and flew off before the footsteps of humans could approach me. I looked long and hard at their souls, yet I never managed to fully understand them. Never have I managed to understand humans in general. They thought of me as the one who gobbles their soul in the darkness while before them it was obvious that evil is truly found in the light.

**That Saturday,
was the day I
took their souls.
I had to prevail,
for this is why I
am in existence.**

Pictinari

By Shaindy Blumenthal

Dear Dairee

Tuesday

Tobay was the hndrebth day of third grade. It rained. I did ton want go to school. I told Momwy that if it rains we shood not have scool, if it snows we should ton have skool, if it is sunny we should not have school and if it is windy we should only have a haf a day. When it ranes it makes me angry. I had to do math. I didn’t get any right.

Teacher said I get my sines mixd up. She’s lying; Totty always says I’m smart that I’m good. He makes me feel regiler. I cood not do my math homework. My teecher didn’t teach it. I’m telling you. She said to do paj 37 but not even one question on page 73 was correct. I want to have art more, I now how to draw a cirkis.

I love to drah. I wish I could draw all my ansers, then I wood feel reigilar cuz I wood teg them rite. No one wants to be in my groop they laugh at me and say I hold wy pensil funi. I will be sick toworrom and stay home and draw the hole day and I dont hold my pensil funny.

Sara

Uncharted

By Sara Ben-Zvi

I wrap my arms a little tighter around my frail frame, the rags I call clothing flapping in the wind. I would try to generate body heat yet as so little of my body is left, I do not know whether that would be anything short of a miracle. I feel and don't feel so much all at once, a paradox of sorts yet it makes sense in this horrible place, somehow. They say to keep on marching, into the unknown, but I fear they are lying. Maybe they know where we are going; maybe they are almost as clueless as we are, just going, somewhere. I do not know which is worse.

Once upon a time, I was a child, and I would have thought of this as an adventure, marching off somewhere unknown, to explore. Now, I am old and gray even if the number of years I have lived do not quite match another non-paradox here in our little slice of torture. And yet, I continue to march.

One step, then another, then another. It is grueling, bordering on the insane, this marching to nowhere. People drop, one after another, jarring the even beats of the Kommandant's horrid footsteps. I do not watch. You can't notice things like that, not if you want to survive. Inhuman? Maybe. I do not feel so human anyway, starved and stripped of almost everything they could take away. A thought pushes its way to the front of my consciousness, surprising me—I had half thought I could only survive, not focus on other things. They are the inhuman ones. I may look as though the angel of death hovers near me, waiting, yet an almost audacious feeling of dignity pushes its way through. And so I wrap my arms around myself tighter, still marching, ready to conquer the unknown. They may have tried to take everything, but though they have sorely tested it, they cannot take my faith. I will survive.

I.

Will.

Survive.

And so I drag myself forward, step after step, because the only the other option is to choose death, which is what they want. I will not give it to them.

Another soft thud, almost inaudible. I clench my teeth and will myself not to hear. The tears will only make me colder as they crystallize. But suddenly, the boots stop, and the guard's evil face looks stricken. There is a louder, more power-

ful sound coming towards us. I taste— can it be?— hope. Real hope, blossoming yet still fragile, unsure. What is it I hope for? The guard looks at us, his hard black eyes cold yet there is a flicker of something else present, an emotion there that we, the striped pajama prisoners, are all too familiar with.

He has fear and we have hope— this territory is strange, uncharted. His eyes skitter around, nervously, raking us, his hand clenching the pistol at his waist. He is unfocused now, his even footsteps a thing of the not so distant past and then— another thud. But this one is harder, there is more substance to the body that has fallen. We lock eyes, the guard and I, and instantly I can read his mind. I rush forward, almost tripping, as we scabble for the gun. A shot is heard, though I am not sure who, or what, or where. Can a body even feel pain at this point?

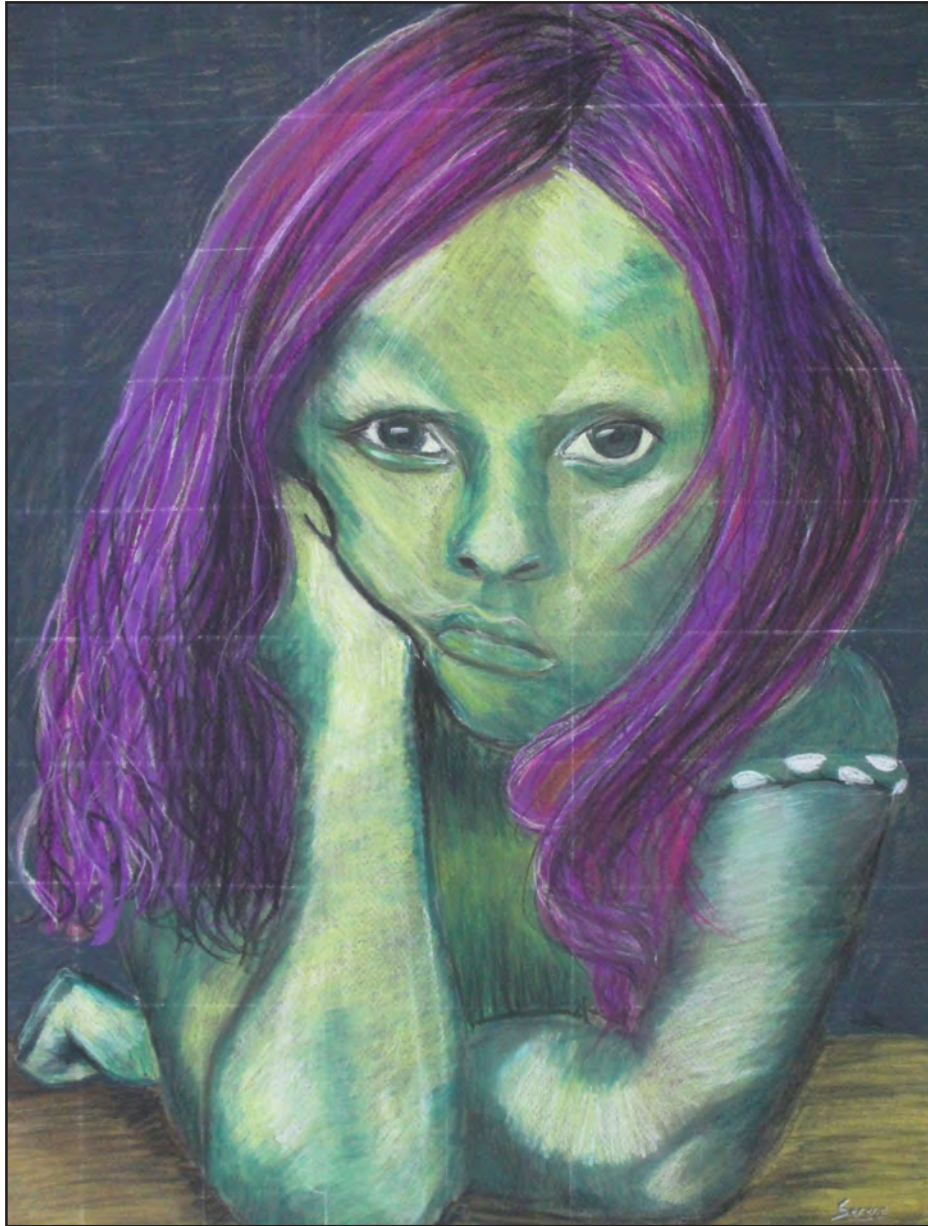
But then I feel something hard between my fingers, and I realize it is I who has triumphed. I gape at the foreign thing I hold, unbelieving.

The louder sound gets closer, almost overtaking us and as a group, we let ourselves do something seemingly forbidden.

We cry, as we taste joy again for the first time. This is an area as yet unexplored but—the bubble of hope expands, as we grasp our first guaranteed tomorrow in too long.

The future has never looked so inviting.

**He has fear and
we have hope—
this territory
is strange,
uncharted**



The New Girl at School

By Serene Klapper

130

Lost and Found

By Meital Israel

I stare at the floor as I walk slowly and feel ashamed of myself. I walk past a graffiti-covered store with a yellow star representing my people: the Jews. The sound of somber and silence makes me tired and scared. A German man walks past me while giving me an envious glare. It is December 4, 1940, one day before my fifteenth birthday. My family celebrates my birthday every year; although, this year, I am forced to think otherwise. My parents lost their jobs, and my little sister and I are forbidden to go to school due to Adolf Hitler's proclamation.

As I open the door to a small grocery shop that is barely damaged by the symbolic designs and callous writings illustrated by some of the German men, I hear a familiar chime. I work in this shop. A withered face with a genuine smile is behind the wooden counter that is found in front of the dairy section. It is the face of Mrs. Rivka Gorodetsky, a childless woman who lost her husband two years ago and, dejectedly, has no children. Her striking blue eyes contain a depressing feel. Despite her loss and loneliness, one trait that is constantly recognizable about her is her willingness to move on. A picture of her husband is in a shattered glass picture frame on the counter. Rarely does she look at the picture, when she does, she fails to show emotion. I greatly admire Mrs. Gorodetsky for maintaining her courage by running the store all on her own. I feel as though it is my duty to protect her from any harm that may befall her, even if I am weak and young.

**I feel as though
it is my duty
to protect her
from any harm
that may befall
her, even if I am
weak and young.**

I lay my journal on the rusty and dilapidated chair that has been there ever since the first day I started working here. I roll my sleeves up as if we had customers to keep us busy. As I walk towards some open cardboard boxes, I am startled by the German servicemen who are marching through the noiseless and miserable streets outside. The streets reek of ash and burnt rubber. When the thunderous racket begins to fade, I bite my weak finger nails without paying much attention to it. My troubled thought is interrupted when the store bell falls and crashes to the ground making a tumultuous noise. Two servicemen burst in with a furious vibe. Freshly baked bread and ravishing bouquets fall to the ground. I feel the blood in my body rush to my face and my arms slowly become numb.

I can barely move my stiff body to see Mrs. Gorodetsky. I shove myself to

131

shift my position. I quickly grab Mrs. Gorodetsky's hand, and, together, we run to the right side of the grocery shop. But, I feel a strong tug, and so I turn back. One serviceman is trying to take a hold of Mrs. Gorodetsky's leg. I pull so hard that I start to feel my hand become sweaty. My grip becomes weaker, but I choose to continue my battle; anything to save Mrs. Gorodetsky. When I glance behind me, I realize that the servicemen seem to have lost control. He stands up and shouts for redemption. The two servicemen stare at me with hatred in their eyes. "Mrs. Rivka Gorodetsky must come with us!" they command.

With a straightened back, I answer, "No!"

Get Up, Girl

By Dena Skydell

"Excuse me, excuse me," I weave my way through the crowd and walk over to a seat in the middle of the bus.

My name is Rosa Parks and I've been taking the bus home from work ever since I was about fifteen years old. I go mostly unnoticed as I plop myself down next to an old man. His eyes are shut and he's snoring quietly. His lips are turned up in a half-smile as he dozes off and he seems kind-hearted. I stare out the window as the bus glides slowly through the streets of Montgomery, Alabama. The evening sky is a dusty shade of crimson, smudged with sleepy blues and burnt yellows. The bus drives through the town square, passing by tired pedestrians, eager to go home after a long day of work. Women are tugging their children's tiny hands as they walk quickly through the streets. Men in suits are talking animatedly to their business partners. A group of colored men lug a bulky block of cement towards a nearby building. Large groups of people wait by the bus stop for the bus to arrive; they're glancing down at their pocket watches, tapping their shoes impatiently. They're in a hurry and want to get home. It's a typical day in Montgomery, but that's all about to change.

The doors to the bus open again and I watch as a new crowd of people stream through the doors.

"This bus is filled to its capacity," I think to myself as the last man walks onto the bus. He can't be older than eighteen. He glances around and then motions to the driver. The driver stands up and points at the old man next to me.

"Get up, boy!" The driver commands him. The old man's eyes widen. "Don't you see there's a white gentleman that needs a seat?" The old man gets up quickly and hobbles off to the back of the bus. I watch the old man for a moment; his cheeks are plump and wrinkled. And black.

"Move y'all, I want those two seats," the driver snaps. My heart hardens as I watch the black man behind me stand up and dutifully listen to the driver. The driver glances at me. "Get up." I stare at him silently.

"Did you not hear me?" The driver's voice rises with irritation. The bus is almost completely quiet; people are speaking in hushed whispers. Almost everyone is watching us. "Stupid black girl." Girl. I almost laugh. I am not a girl. I'm 42 years old, and the thin streaks of gray weaved sparsely in my hair are clear evidence of that. He's trying to belittle me. His usage of the word 'girl' was so specifically antagonistic; that stupid jab is his way of putting me down.

"No," I respond, my voice barely audible.

“What did you just say?” the driver exclaims. Shock is written all over his face, as if he cannot fathom the idea of a ‘girl’ speaking back to him. The entire bus has gone silent.

“I think she just said ‘no!’” A skinny man shouts from the front of the bus.

“That black girl just shut you down!” Another man hollers.

“You gon’ let her get away with that?” Someone yells. The driver’s face is flushed a dark shade of red.

“Get up,” He barks, his jaw clenched. I stare up at him mutely.

“You gonna just sit there, Blackface?” A tall woman calls from two rows up. Her blonde hair is beautiful and cascaded down her slim back glamorously. In that moment, I hate her. I hate her because she holds power over me. I hate her because she is beautiful. I hate her because she represents everything that I will never be.

“GET UP!” The driver roars. “Get up or I’ll have you arrested!” The blonde woman smirks at me and I feel my throat constrict. Why should I have to let myself be humiliated like this? Why should I have to give in? It shouldn’t be this way. Suddenly, I was furious.

“No. I will not get up,” I think, my mind racing. “I will sit in my seat and there is nothing that these white people can do to stop me. They have no right to attempt to strip me of a choice that belongs to me. If I want to sit in this seat, I will. Whites shouldn’t have the right to do this to me, to us— to my people! I’m sick of being discriminated for the color of my skin! We blacks aren’t treated fairly and we don’t deserve this harsh treatment. All deserve to be treated the same way and I hate how we’re treated as if we’re the dregs of society. I’m sick of being forced onto the lowest tier of the social hierarchy. There is nothing worse than being victimized for something that you have absolutely no control over.”

And that’s when I realized the significance of my actions. “If I refuse to get up now, I’m not just showing the bus driver that the discrimination must stop— I’m showing this entire bus, and their families, and their friends: all of whom will speak about it to their friends and family. This is so much more than a small squabble on a bus. What I do next could be huge; my next actions have the power to change the way that blacks are viewed. I’m ready to stand up for my rights, to

**The driver
glances at me.
“Get up.” I
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show the world what I can do. I’m ready to make a change. Society needs to adjust the way that they view people who are different from them. Today is the day of change. All I have to do is sit here: a mode of silent protest. Nothing could make me get up. I will not get up.” The bus driver glares at me.

“Get up now, you filthy black woman!” He shouts at me. I just stare at him and I get up.



Section

Creative Process

*"The creative process is a process of surrender, not control."
-Julia Cameron*



136

137

Creative Process

By Ava Katz, Editor

Nothing can hold as much significance as the process it takes to create something. That creation is more than simply its volume and mass; it is the feelings which inspired its making and the skill required to portray inspiration in a physical form. It is bringing something new and unknown into the world. The creative process is more than learning the steps to a dance or mixing the colors of a painting, it is taking something ethereal and making it tangible.

Most impressively, there is the actual act of creation. Above all human reason and logic, laws have been placed in our universe which govern nature. We watch these laws dictate the seasons, the tides, the rising sun. Science attempts to explain the how and the why, but so much eludes our simple human understanding. Chavi Zelefsky shows this side of creation in her piece, "The Purpose." Through the eyes of a seed we observe the extraordinary phenomena of plant growth, "it's while stretching that I notice a burst of greenery coming out." Through the plant's wonder and awe we experience plant growth, and nature, as something novel, unexpected.

Another point of view piece, "A Grandmother's Gift" by Tziporah Braunstein, exposes us to the feelings of a gift. To be created, abandoned, and then rediscovered. Ashira Feld depicts the contrasting feeling of a girl auditioning for a spot in Julliard, both hopeful of success and sure of failure in "Two Auditions." She shows both the natural ease of a practiced musician, "My Fingers" automatically find their places and naturally play the beautiful piece that I had been devoting myself to for months," and the fear of a creation which does not fulfill its potential, "My finger slips for one moment, a brief mistake that no one would detect besides myself or a musical professional." Through these dual feelings, Ashira Feld effectively portrays the uncertainty of success in human creation.

Oftentimes the creative process is propelled by emotions of hurt and pain. These strong emotions can push a creation from the realm of ordinary to extraordinary. In "Tutus and Tears," Talia Alper discusses a young girl's ballet recital. Throughout her recital she is transported to the night preceding the recital, a night of abuse from her mother. "If her mother heard her crying, she would surely come and yell at her even more." As she performs, she transforms the feelings of pain into a beautiful dance. She uses the hurt she feels as an unanticipated catalyst for art.

Creativity allows something new and valuable to be created. The creative process can be challenging, filled with obstacles and hardship, or it can be the result of a feeling or experience. The writers and artists in this section of the liter-

ary journal have each undergone their own creative process to create pieces which display all facets of creation.

Two Auditions

By Ashira Feld

I entered the crowded subway; my heavy bass is pressed against my petite body. I can feel each string pulse deep into my back, and a gasp of desperation leaves my mouth. This is a familiar feeling that begins to comfort me as I think about my intense day ahead. The possibility of failure is so high, and all my practice may be for nothing. My upcoming audition at Julliard is an opportunity of a lifetime, and is something that I have been preparing for, for so long. There have been endless nights when I have laid awake in despair, frightened that I would not finish my piece by the time of the audition. Although throughout my practice there were times that seemed helpless, the proud feeling of accomplishment when I played my practiced piece, gave me the confidence I needed to guide me towards the quickly approaching date of the audition. As I look around to the other people on the subway they are all ready for their routine, typical days. This single audition has the opportunity to make my dreams come true. However the standards are so high that any mistake can leave me in a place where I have to choose a different path in life than music. I grab onto the bar to keep myself from falling as the subway comes to a stop and we approach Broadway Avenue.

The air is thick from the pollution and my mind is struggling to think clearly. *I repeatedly go over Beethoven's 9th symphony in my head to prepare myself, although I have been practically sleeping and almost breathing these notes for the last few weeks. I hesitantly continue to walk and turn onto W 65th street and my head pounds with anxiety as I inhale slowly to calm my nerves. I open the magnificent legendary doors, and sink deep into my seat beside the other musicians who have come to audition. I look down at myself and become self-conscious of the outfit I am wearing. I thought I had picked out both a stylish and formal outfit, fitting for the professional occasion. However I automatically get the feeling that I do not fit in, and I get extremely nervous and my body begins to tremble. The name "Anna" is called over a loud speaker, and I rise from my comfortable seat and enter the audition room ahead. The teachers and musicians that are watching my audition begin to interrogate me, asking basic questions about my family and future music career. The outgoing woman sitting at the left has a*

The sweet music continues to flow from my instrument and creates a relaxed, almost dreamlike environment in the room around me

soft voice as she asks what instrument I play and what piece I will be presenting. My voice shakes as I inform them that I will be playing Beethoven's 9th symphony on the Bass.

The teachers motion for me to begin and my fingers automatically find their places and naturally play the beautiful piece that I had been devoting myself to for months. My finger slips for one moment, a brief mistake that no one would detect besides myself or a musical professional like the professors observing the audition. The sweet music continues to flow from my instrument and creates a relaxed, almost dreamlike environment in the room around me. Despite continuing to play, my legs now begin to quiver, and hot tears come to the brim of my eyes. As the energetic music pours from my instrument I decide to glance towards the professors for reassurance, hoping to see their smiling faces. However when I look up all I see are heads vigorously writing on their paper, which makes my heart sink. The audition was flawless besides for my one simple mistake, and the teachers thank me for my audition as I begin to exit. Although it was only one mistake I fear that that could be a deciding factor in my acceptance.

I should remain positive and hopeful, as my love for music and the excitement surrounding the audition seem to pump the very blood in my veins. However it is extremely frustrating to know that I had been able to play the symphony impeccably previous to the audition. All the eager heads turn towards me as I make my way to the door. Everyone wants a sign of how it went, thinking that it would make him or her feel better. I give a kind smile, attempting to keep the neutral air of complacency, while still amongst the others who are auditioning. The smile is partly fake because truly I am disappointed, and begin to wonder if these frightened faces glancing my way for some recognition of approval, will slip as well. There is a moment when my spirits lift as I realize I have the same chance as everyone else in this room that is preparing themselves for this extraordinary opportunity. But as I continue to retreat and become one with the crowd and the masses on the subway, I begin to remind myself of the ratio of applicants to accepted students, and recognize that my chances are slim and the idea of Julliard becomes a dream rather than the reality it once seemed.

There are two perspectives to every story and sometimes we make things seem worse than they really are.



From Bloom to Blossom

By Rachel Liebling

142

The Purpose

By Chavi Zelefsky

I feel crowded, suffocated, and claustrophobic: there is no fresh air here. It's dark, dirty, hard, and cool, and I am stuck in one place. The dankness gives off a miserable and unwelcoming vibe. I know there is no purpose of me staying here. There would be no difference if I leave. My insignificant size would make my leave unnoticed, just as I go about now. Knowing that there is no way out brings tears, and as if the outside world is responding, it cries too.

The rain seeps through the thick earth until it finally reaches me, and being grateful, I imbibe the droplets in gulps. The ground seems to be enjoying a drink as well, because soon it is so saturated it feels squishy and is now a dark hue of an old bark. The ground is now soft enough for me to move around, so it's while stretching that I notice a burst of greenery coming out. I feel joyful. I, am supposed to enhance my encompassing surroundings from its dull state. With this assumption, accomplished and purpose fill me.

I go about feeling like this, but as time passes so does the sensation. My initial leaves are not spreading out much but are rather inching their way upwards. This gets me somewhat annoyed. However, my uppermost part had come very close to the surface of the ground, so when popping out, my mood is once again uplifted because of my surroundings. Rays of sun shine like a neon flashlight. Trees that are like a giant to an ant, rising so high it is impossible to see where it ends. Clean oxygen surges into me with a freshness that is overwhelming. A quick breeze brushes past me, swaying me in its direction. Birds chirp a happy melody to each other. The new surroundings bring me contentment. I now know that happiness is enough to achieve in life, and with my new habitat this won't be a hard task.

I start to feel special to be noticed, but then he grabs me from my stem and yanks. Hard.

A few days pass and it's while I am relaxing that I feel something different. I realize the brightness that engulfed me is gone. Darkness surrounds me. Looking up to see where the sun went, I notice that black, angry clouds have replaced them. The clouds let out their wrath, and from all directions droplets come forward on a full force attack. Ducking down is not enough to avoid the heavy rain, so I hope that it will soon stop so I won't have to move around so much. After a while it reduces to a drizzle, and the pitter patter sound makes my past anxiety fade away.

143

Once the sun returns again, everything continues on. The birds sing, the trees dance, the wind whistles, the sun shines, and the kids come out to play. One child comes up to me, and I start to feel special to be noticed, but then he grabs me from my stem and yanks. Hard. I cry out in pain, but he doesn't acknowledge it and instead brings me up to his mouth. There, he blows on me and the top part of my body, which is ripped apart from my bottom, floats away while my the lower half falls back on the ground.

While my upper half floats through the air, I suddenly feel like I won an award. This is not as a result to the smooth passage, but rather what I finally come to realize. I just discovered my purpose. I will be what continues the lifecycle of future dandelions.

Forever More

By Miriam lieblich

Dear Diary,

Yesterday, I learned what it means to be afraid, to be in danger. Yesterday, I learned what it means to be invaded by savages who call themselves Englishmen. Yesterday, I learned what it means to be ransacked out of house and home. Yesterday, I learned what it means to be bereft of a leader, of a Chief. Yesterday, I learned what it means to lose my hero, my grandfather.

Today, my father continues our family saga. Today, my father follows in his father's footsteps as he, too, was anointed Chief of the tribe. Today, the legend of my ancestors will prevail. Today, my father told me and the few who remain that life must go on and that we must move forward, for them. Today, I obey my father's command for our loved ones who were ruthlessly seized from our midst.

I am determined to fulfill my dreams. I do it for him. For my grandfather, I continue to put one foot in front of the other. Right then left. Left then right. Repeat. Gracefully, like the princess I know I can be.

I always dreamt of princesses. Princesses who lived in the most elegant of teepees and wigwams - with sheepskin lined with the finest of furs to keep warm—made by the most devout of followers. Princesses who held their heads high as they pranced through the forests in the fanciest of clothing — made specially for her - by the most talented in the tribe. Princesses who were the recipients of gifts — beautifully crafted to her personal liking - by the most gracious of subjects. Princesses who enjoyed delicacies — prepared over and over again - by the most skilled of hunters. But most of all, I dreamt of princesses with long black hair, tightly braided — exquisitely finished with striking trimming—by the most loyal of servants who never fail to be the perfect frolicking companions.

I have long black hair, and I am the princess. But I don't have servants to braid it for me or to be my companions; they are no longer with us. Who could forget that dreadful day that took them away, the day they call yesterday? So I must frolic by myself and braid my own hair. Right under left. Left under right. Repeat. And, then, I tie it with striking trimming. Strikingly simple.

As meal time creeps up on us, I sit by my father's side, hungry enough to

**I continue to put
one foot in front
of the other.
Right then left.
Left then right.**

devour a horse. But a girl with hardly any food never devours. She slowly nibbles in the most frugal fashion. Even the princess. And, so, I suppress my appetite and gradually pick at the few berries and vegetables that lie all alone on my empty looking plate. These are not the delicacies I dreamt of. But who could dream after that fear filled day, after yesterday? I won't lose hope, and I will continue to dream.

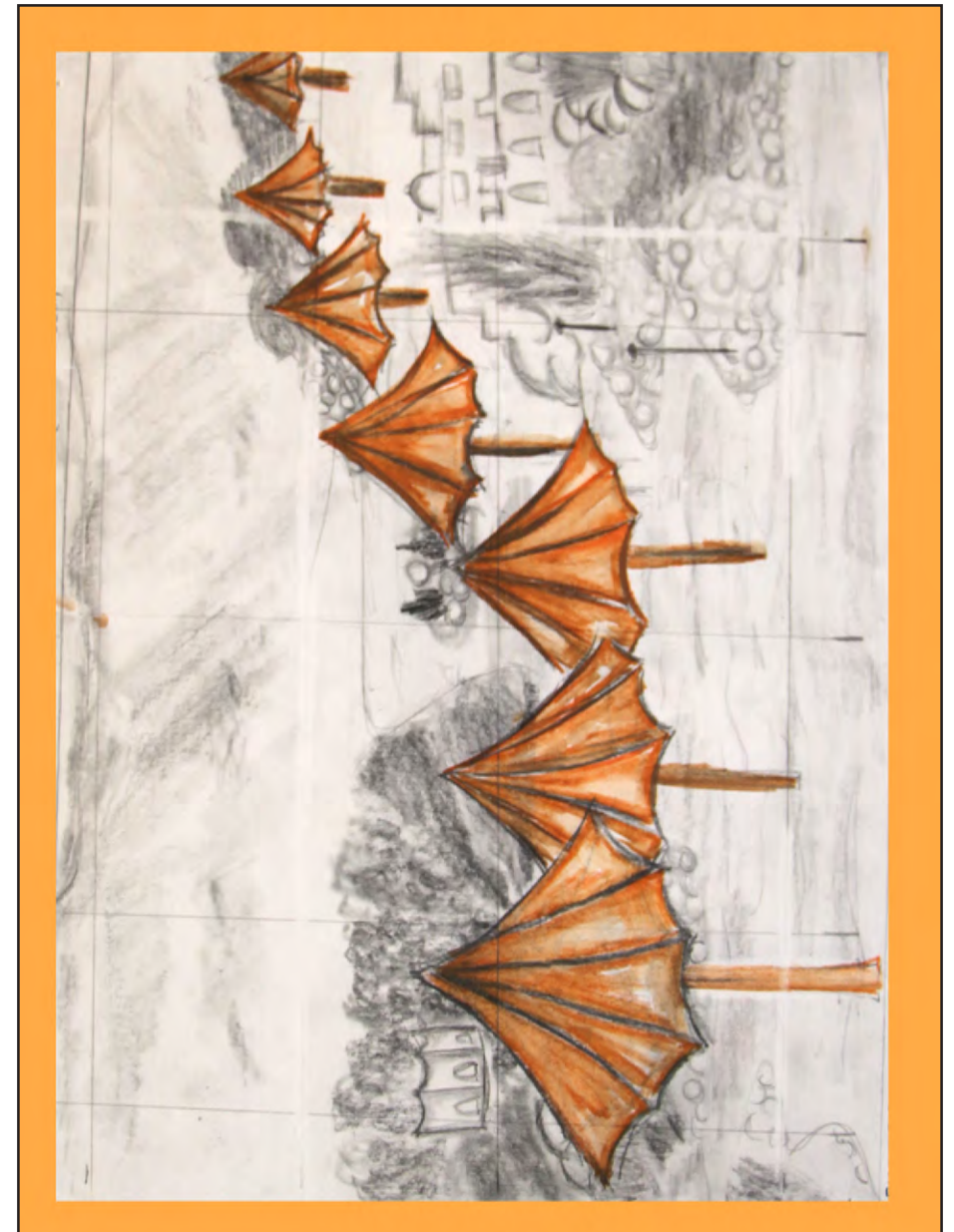
I intend to provide for my family. I may not be the most skilled hunter in the tribe, and I may not be able to offer delicacies, but I can make every effort to bring home a suitable dinner to serve my royal father. Who could imagine the number of disciples and patrons my father would have had if not for that cataclysmic day, that was yesterday? As I grope through the fields, I try not to notice the rapidly accumulating fatigue, but the ever-increasing pain in my arms screams for me to stop every time I lift them to push my way through the tall bent grass. Right to left. Left to right. Repeat. The Chief will eat tonight.

Until next time,
Galilahi. Princess Galilahi.

Dear Diary,

Next time turned out to be a long time. Looking back, seventy years is a daunting task. I was so headstrong. I had a spark of my grandfather burning inside me, so I did everything in my power to keep my family going, for him. I wanted to make him proud. I could continue to dream, however, it is no longer necessary. I sit back in the rickety chair with a most relieved sensation as I watch my son carefully place his baby's hands on the drums that will be used to appoint him Chief of our great tribe. Right over Left. Left over right. Repeat. The flames of my grandfather's legacy will rage on. Forever. Forever more.

All is well,
Galilahi. Grandmother Galilahi.



Sheltered Waters

By Randy Balasiano

Tutus and Tears

By Talia Alper

Her curly blonde pigtails dangled from just above her ears as she scurried to her place in the center of the stage. The curtain opened to a collective “aw-ww” as the audience saw her petite, three and a half foot frame standing still, waiting for the music to start. Her small lips parted to reveal a mouthful of shiny white teeth. When the sound of the first notes filled the auditorium, she stood tall on her tip toes and ran around the stage in a big circle. From there, she did a small kick, and then a dainty little leap. The thoughts that filled her mind were not about her dance; they were about her brand new necklace with a “K” covered in rhinestones. Her mother had given it to her for the recital — it was her very first one. Her mother had told her that it would be a good luck charm, because she knew how nervous Kaylee was that she’d forget her dance. Her mother had clasped it around her neck right then. It was the most beautiful thing Kaylee had ever seen. She loved it so much that she had wanted to try on her whole dance costume — leotard, tutu, tights and all — with the necklace, but her mother had said no. Kaylee had pouted, but she knew better than to ask again.

Right before bed, when she was changing into pajamas, Kaylee just couldn’t resist. She couldn’t possibly wait until the recital the next day. So she had tip toed over to her bedroom door and pushed it closed. Then, as quickly as she could, she had tugged on her light pink tights. Sometimes she wondered if she liked ballet so much just because she got to wear pink from head to toe. She had pulled on her leotard and slipped into her fluffy tutu. When she turned to look in her mirror, she’d squealed, enchanted with her reflection: a beautiful blonde ballerina stood before her with a glittery “K” resting upon her chest, suspended from a thin chain around her neck. She hadn’t been able contain her excitement; she’d run out into the kitchen, where her mother had just finished sweeping.

“Mommy, Mommy, look!” she’d cried.

She’d spun around, displaying the outfit before allowing her mother to get a better look. She had pranced closer toward her mother, eagerly awaiting a response of sheer delight. But instead, her mother’s face had contorted with rage at her disobedience.

“Kaylee, I told you no. I don’t have time for this! Go put on your pajamas.”

**She had pranced
closer toward
her mother,
eagerly awaiting
a response of
sheer delight.**

“But—but it’s so pretty. I just wanted you to see how pretty it is,” Kaylee had said, her chocolatey eyes looking up beseechingly into her mother’s cold gray ones. “Don’t you think it’s pretty?”

Her mother’s right eye had begun to twitch, and Kaylee had known she’d gone too far. She had wished she could go back in time, wished she had never come to show her mother how beautiful the necklace looked with the tutu, wished she had just gotten into pajamas as she was supposed to have done.

“Go upstairs! Now!” her mother had pointed towards the hallway.

Kaylee had quickly scrambled back to her room, tutu fluttering weakly as she went. She bit her lip as she took off her ballet clothes; it wasn’t worth it to cry over this. If her mother heard her crying, she’d surely come and yell at her even more. It would be best to put on her pajamas as quickly as possible and climb into bed without giving it another thought. That was what she’d resolved to do, but she couldn’t help the hot tears that threatened to escape her eyes. She had struggled to blink them away, refusing to let them overflow and stain her face. She had climbed into bed and waited for a moment, listening to see if, perhaps, her mother would come to tuck her in under her blanket. But of course, her mother was not coming. She rarely ever came to say goodnight to Kaylee anymore. Kaylee had laid her head down on the pillow and tried to ignore her newly damp cheeks as she began to slip into sleep.

After a quick double spin, the audience erupted in applause. Kaylee, ecstatic, curtsied as Miss Nicole had taught her to, and then she bounced off backstage, where Miss Nicole was waiting.

“Kaylee, you did a lovely job. Absolutely exquisite!”

Kaylee smiled widely, pleased with herself. It didn’t matter that Mommy wasn’t there to see her.

Why Only Now

By Yael Weinroth

She walked through the rows of carefully planted tulips trying not to step on any and walked up to the old graying house. She waited patiently until the old woman inside stepped out and handed her the list. She walked swiftly and alertly just in case she would have to run again. She returned to the house this time with bags full of groceries and handed it to the smiling old lady.

He walked toward the familiar tall building holding the few dollars he had collected. He looked over his shoulder, dropped the money in the box at the entrance and continued inside. He joined his cheerful friends and set upon the task of filling up the boxes around them with various foods. He sealed the last box with a worried smile and placed it on the truck along with the other boxes.

They marched into the hospital with their small packages, going from room to room handing them out with songs and comforting smiles. They stopped by each door with a prayer and a sense of worried sadness. They knew that the only thing to do for those who helped them was to help and support them in return. They left swinging their bags and feeling the happiness they brought to those they visited.

She ran to school, heart beating, hands sweating. She entered and caught sight of the large piles of toys, books, clothes, and games heaped around the room. She immediately got to work. She began with sorting the contributions into piles and moving on to putting one of each item into boxes. She managed to box everything, and she hurriedly carried it to the truck that would soon be transporting it.

He sat there along with many others tying and pulling the knots. He watched as the piles of green garments steadily shrunk as more people joined and began to help complete the tying. He stacked them and within a short amount of time they were being collected and starting to be given out. He smiled sadly to himself and was struck with the realization that without the united help of all those that were so different from him, he would never had been able to complete the task.

They jumped and sang, linking arms. They closed their eyes, screaming and dancing in tight circles. They clung to each other tightly as they sang and danced together, and internalized each word of the song. They joined the sea of green mixed with black and white. They will never desert each other. They are a family.

She helped her get up and run with encouraging smiles and words of comfort. He heard the sounds and was down there again with the same people, only this time he was singing. They wrote out words of thanks and good wishes in the cards, and slipped them into colorful envelopes ready to brighten up the day of those receiving them.

Everyone, together, stood up and watched the row of tanks roll by.

**They left
swinging their
bags and feeling
the happiness
they brought
to those they
visited.**

A Grandmother's Gift

By Tziporah Braunstein

I remember waking up for the first time. The old woman had her head bent over me, intently searching each and every stitch for defects. When she could find none, her face broke into a huge smile and she carefully laid me out on the rickety table. The woman then began to pack away her needles, thread, and other sewing equipment, returning to gaze proudly at me every couple of minutes.

But now my old woman has forgotten me. She must have, because she placed me in a cold shoebox. . . leaving me alone, in the dark. I'm scared and confused. How could she have tired of me when I'm brand new? And just a day earlier, my presence had brought her so much joy! I don't understand what's changed since then, but there's nothing I can do. I'll have to resign myself to a life of listening out for the few muffled sounds that I can pick up from the outside.

Just as I start to come to terms with fate, my new home is suddenly lifted and my hopes go up with it; she's come back to get me! But when I hear paper rustling and scissors periodically opening and closing, I realize she had no intentions of releasing me from my holding cell. The reality of my predicament washes over me anew, and the feelings I just finished dealing with are dangerously close to overwhelming me all over again. I force myself to concentrate on figuring out what the woman is doing now. There's definitely paper being crumpled and folded, but what use would she have for paper? I suppose she can be an origami fanatic but she just doesn't seem—

The box is swiftly turned on its side, and a ripping noise is audible for a fraction of a second. My mind flashes back to the roll of scotch tape that had been on the dresser before I was tucked away; is she taping something? After she pats down what I assume to be the tape, I am returned to my upright position. She slaps something light weight onto the center of the cover, and fusses over it for a bit, before walking away, leaving me desolate once more.

An hour or two passes with the occasional crash of falling objects being heard from upstairs. The woman's footsteps are drawing closer, louder and less steady than usual. She sweeps me up, off whatever surface I was on, and brushes the top of me, presumably clearing the dust from my casing. I am jostled from side to side as she cautiously makes her descent to the front door. A car beeps to signal its unlocking, and I feel us making our way towards it. She tosses me into the passenger seat before revving the engine and pulling out of her spot, unusually fast for someone her age. When we reach our destination, the woman hurriedly grabbing me as she slams the door behind her. Yet another door is opened, but now we are greeted with shouts of joy and laughter.

"Bubby, you made it!" someone cries.

"But of course, silly. I've made it to the past thirteen Chanuka parties, haven't I?" my woman responds, a tad defensively, "now, where should I put my. . ." she lowers her voice, "present?"

"Don't worry about that," whispers the person my woman had dubbed, 'silly.' "Here. I'll put it somewhere the kids can't get it." I am handed over to 'silly,' panic welling up inside me as I am taken from the comforting hands of my creator. I feel I'm being precariously balanced on an edge, but 'silly' leaves me in that position anyway.

I hear a small crowd approaching to recollect me. I am plucked from my shaky perch and given over to another person. The paper that the woman had carefully applied is eagerly torn off. The cover is lifted and I am hit with warm light, emanating from the eight-armed candelabra on the windowsill. I'm lifted by my shoulders and come face to face with an excited little girl, surrounded by other children and some adults, my woman among them.

"A sweater! Oh Bubby, I love it!"

**How could she
have tired of me
when I'm brand
new?**



The Lone Butterfly

By Daniella Rowe

154

The Secret Keeper

By Nina Melohn

The day I met her, I came alive. Her parents thought I would be more than a suitable 13th birthday gift—an outlet to release her thoughts, secrets and desires. She picks me up, her fingers brushing across my velvet bound self for the first time, and I feel her twist the key into my lock. She is a young girl—around twelve, I would say—with dark curls bouncing around her smiling face and rosy cheeks. She is full of life, with a spring to her step and laughter constantly dancing across her lips. Anne, they call her. I know I will become her best friend, her confidante, the holder of her secrets. She will open my pages and pour out her thoughts and feelings. We will be like one, Anne and I. The two of us will be inseparable.

Anne comes home from school, and I feel the deep blue ink spilling from her fountain pen onto the crisp white of my pages. It was a hard day. Teacher yelled at her for not being prepared for the mathematics exam, and Louisa didn't let her jump rope with the rest of the girls. Hans teased her hair bow, too. Oh, young love! It's clear that Hans is crazy about her—anyone could see it, I don't know how she doesn't. As the tears fall softly from her rosy cheeks onto my crisp white sheets, my heart goes out to her. I see before me a young girl, full of life and potential. I know there will be good days and bad ones, but her pure spirit will surely find happiness and joy. I cannot wait to be there at her side through all those happy moments, when she finds love and marries and has a young girl of her own to guide through those tough days. I vow to be there throughout, keeping her confidence under my lock and key.

Anne slips behind the bookcase, hugs Mother briefly and picks me up. My pages are filled with cold and darkness these days, recording sorrow and fear instead of the hopeful, carefree light of days past. The family has moved from Germany to a strange new city, into a cramped, dark attic concealed by a makeshift wall and a bookcase. The secrets within me are unbearable; I am so afraid I will burst. Fear plagues me constantly, and I worry that each time Anne picks up will be the last. My pages seem to be food for Anne's starving fingers, and I feel the weight of the world. I am so young, filled with so many meaningful words— words and descriptions that I must keep to myself. They are a mystery to all those except to Anne and me.

Carefree Anne is no more. My once white, sweet pages turn brown and bitter with age as Anne transforms — as one who endures too much often does— into an adult well before her time. Through our icy, dark, and damp brick walls the world seems to be nothing but a hopeless hole of despair— filled with hunger, murder, cruelty, and suffering. And as it progresses, the words continue to flow.

155

Until they don't. Where is she? Has she fallen ill? I search for Anne on my blank pages. Oh, how they beg for her return! I hope she is not angry with me. I swore I would never betray her. It seems as though months have gone by. I fear the worst has happened to my beloved friend. They have taken her. Those heartless monsters she has told me about. They must have, there is no other explanation. My Anne is gone and I remain. I must guard her words, her secrets, her dreams.

I feel myself touched by vaguely familiar hands. Recognition settles; it is Otto, Anne's father, the one who picked me up from the shop all those years back. His fingers tremble upon me and I know that my worst fears have been realized. Together, we mourn the loss of the one we loved most. I do not resist Otto as he opens my pages; he is the last link I have to her, to dear Anne, and I know he feels the same way about me. We will comfort each other through these hard times.

A few years pass. This time, the hands that grasp me are foreign. Has Otto given me away? Has somebody taken me? No! No! No! I am Anne's and only Anne's. It is only she who holds the key to my lock. Anne, oh Anne, you will not return, will you? I am so deeply sorry. I realize now that Otto has released me, given me away so that all can see. They have pried me open and read your words, our words. But, I have kept your secrets for too long, my dear Anne. Relief strikes me at the knowledge that I will finally be unburdened, after all these years. Finally, the world will know the truth about what we've been through. The fear we felt, the pain, the anguish as our lives were torn apart. And with this thought, I feel proud. Proud to be your voice. Proud to be the one to tell your story, to share it to the world. You will never be forgotten, Anne Frank. Through me, your legacy will live on.

**My once white,
sweet pages turn
brown and bitter
with age.**



8

Section

Emotional Art

*“Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and
the thought has found words.”*

– Robert Frost

Emotional Art

By Talia Alper

Emotions are green. And orange and purple. That is, our emotions are a blend of other emotions, the same way that green is a blend of yellow and blue. Some might say our emotions are layered like an onion, but in reality, the way we express ourselves is with blends, not with layers. We unconsciously act as artists, combining different emotions on the palette of our psyches to create new emotions.

In her lighthearted piece, “The Catcher and The Rye,” Shana Chechik brings us along to learn of the emotional day of a baseball. The story begins as the ball flies through the sky, preparing to be caught. The ball expresses its frustration at the catcher, who missed the catch, before it soars through a window and winds up in a sticky situation. As we learn of the ups and downs of the ball’s day, Shana incorporates the tiredness of the ball after a long day’s journey with the terror it feels as it narrowly escapes murder in a clever story that will make readers smile.

Daniella Cohen’s “Dialogue of the Soles” is written in the perspective of a boot, purchased by a soldier going off to war. The boot’s perception of war before actually experiencing it is skewed, and it becomes disenchanted with the concept of war as it discovers that war is not a fun adventure, but a battlefield of determination, grief, and anger. Daniella adds some vengefulness into the mix, creating a beautifully written piece with a new perspective on the real world.

“Renewal of Hope” is a touching account of Ariella Huberfeld’s visits with her grandmother, a Holocaust survivor. Ariella describes her grandmother’s childhood struggles, and suddenly she recognizes her grandmother’s attempts to create cheerier memories through the colorful fruits laid out on the table. Though the piece begins in a tone that sounds as though Ariella is frustrated with her doting grandmother, it quickly becomes apparent that her deep love and appreciation for her grandmother strongly outweigh all other emotions.

In “A ‘Special’ Kind of Love,” Shoshana Rosenthal depicts the complex relationship between a girl and her autistic brother. The narrator struggles to love her brother despite his ostensible indifference to her, and her frustration and self-pity morph when she decides to find a common ground through which she and her brother can communicate. Shoshana’s uplifting story portraying the strong bond between siblings will captivate the reader until the very last line.

Shifi Shulman opens her piece, “Guilty?,” with a man waking up after a terrible dream, brought on by an incident he witnessed after a midnight stroll. As a seed of guilt is planted in his freshly—calmed mind, the man hurries away from the scene, trying to rid himself of the guilt. However, the guilt takes root in his

mind and begins to overpower his resistance and anxiousness to remain detached, making the piece a compelling read.

“Over My Head” by Michal Treitel describes the paralyzing fear of a man on board a plane. Throughout the flight, his fears are maximized as he ponders each thing that could possibly go wrong. Towards the end, the relieved man seems to have gained confidence as he realizes he has landed safely, but Michal inserts an ironic ending that will catch the reader off guard.

Our vast range of emotions deludes people into believing that they must feel exactly one emotion at any given time. The writers of this section saw that we don’t need to confine ourselves to the basics, such as “happy,” “surprised,” “afraid,” or “angry,” but that we can combine the emotions to create our own, new emotions. Why not be “afrangry”? What’s wrong with being “happrised”? By blending emotions together, we gain infinitely many new ways to express ourselves.

Renewal of Hope

By Ariella Huberfeld

It always begins with the red stained kiss on my cheek. The coldness quickly subsides when she gently closes the grand wooden door. Her delicate hand takes my coat and hangs it, nearby in the closet opposite her warm kitchen.

It is the same greeting every week. And each time I enter her home, I rush to the powder room. She knows my routine. And so I close the door but stay by the sink. She thinks the mark of her lips on my freshly powdered face doesn't bother me. It always does. It is my reminder that I am so lucky to have her. It is also my reminder that at one time, she wasn't so lucky.

I run the sink water for nearly a minute, dabbing the tissue again and again from the faucet to my face. The love we share runs deeper than the stain on my skin. It fills me with admiration for all my grandmother has experienced. She lived through a time when most of her peers didn't live, and still today she is always grateful. She hid together with her parents and brother in a pile of hay for twenty—four months. They didn't know what tomorrow would bring. But they showered her with love and warmth and that is why she persevered and fought. She could have let go, but she didn't. Each time I arrive, I am showered with affection and warmth, as she gently takes my hand and places it upon her cheek to warm me up.

"Are you okay? Do you feel all right?" she usually comments from her place on the blue sofa in the living room, where she awaits my arrival on the other side of her plush sofa. It has been nearly two minutes. Sixty seconds to wipe off the lipstick stamped upon my cheek. Another sixty seconds to prepare myself mentally for the next hour of sitting with her and listening. I think about it every time. I wonder if she, too, would wipe similar lips from her cheek when she was five years old and saw her grandmother for what she thought would maybe be the last time.

"Coming Bobbi," I call from the hallway. And then, as I take my place on the soft cushion, our eyes meet. It is a chilling glance because I know she sees herself within me. "I was worried about you," she begins. Of course, she is. She always is...worried that she will be taken from this world, like the life of her sister and the lives of her husband's family. Constant worry.

However, this time, her future will not be met by the gun barrel or baton of a Nazi, unlike the futures of her childhood friends. There were many instances where G-d could have taken her life, but He left her for us, her legacy.

I space out for a minute or two and remember what my father once shared

with me, something that my Bobbi has never spoken about. "Her family went to your great grandparents for a Yom Tov meal the night before Shmini Atzeres. They decided to leave Bobbi's sister there because she had already fallen asleep and they didn't want to wake her. The next morning, they were forced into hiding, and that was the last time your Bobbi had seen her little baby sister." I shake off the feeling of sadness and look back at my Bobbi.

"Bobbi, thank you so much for the strawberries," I note. She takes the time to prepare the fruitful bowl, filled with the freshest and most delicious strawberries as well as a few figs. She knows I dislike figs, but she always includes them for herself. She never eats the strawberries. Perhaps she leaves them for me to finish because she knows I love them. As I think about the interesting color combination, it suddenly dawns upon me. Her love for color is to portray her emotions. She hadn't seen fruit for five years as she hid in horrendous conditions, and now she cherishes the beautiful blend of color that she lost during her childhood. She wants to relive her childhood and fill it with vibrant memories. She always says the memories I cherish are the ones of you, my grandchildren, and the ones of my livelihood.

Never have I questioned the fruit bowl combination. Maybe Bobbi finds it aesthetically fitting for our weekly meetings, starting off with discussing fruit and food, and then ending off with the fear of starvation she experienced during her younger years. Or I might speak of the latest book I'm reading, how lucky I am because she was forced to stop school when she was supposed to learn to read, and only after she was freed from the Nazis six years later did she first begin to phonate words and then learn basic syntax. She thinks reading is priceless. Seeing her is priceless. Hearing her pause, as she slices through the fruit, is priceless. Looking at her serene face is priceless.

And so, I sit and nod. I watch her. I eat. And I do so every week. Not because I am her beloved granddaughter, but because I am her legacy. Her blood flows within me. Her breaths fill my soul. I feel her warmth through her calm demeanor. And the sweet whiff of fresh strawberries empowers me to further listen and learn, to give and to grow, and to continue my Shabbos morning visits at Bobbi's house. I may easily wash off her lipstick stain in the powder room, but it leaves a permanent mark on my heart, and it is the spirit of renewal.

**She could have
let go, but she
didn't.**

Dialogue of the Soles

By Daniella Cohen

When you sit on a shelf most of your life, war is just a foreign concept. One which you hear about constantly from conversations between shoppers, but never really get to experience. That was my part in war until one shopper changed my life forever. This shopper wasn't just coming to look around; this shopper came with a purpose. A purpose that was far more impressive than any other I knew. He was shopping for war. A soldier, I think they called him. He took one look at me, a plain old Viking boot, and bought me on the spot. He took me to his house and tried me on with a green uniform. His mother was crying, but I couldn't understand why. Lots of people tried me on before but never with so much emotion. Later, I found out that it wasn't me she was crying about, but it was what I represented.

I think about a week passed by when my Soldier and I were whisked off to the airport after he said a tearful goodbye to his hysterical mother. The shiny ground squeaked as we made our way to the plane. My laces weren't pulled tight, and I was comfortable as my Soldier pulled me off so he could rest through the long flight. We arrived in Oswiecim, Poland along with the rest of his soldier friends. From the minute we stepped off the plane we started working. My soldier was running around getting supplies for the invasion, and I was protecting his feet from the freezing, hard, wet, muddy ground. My Soldier kept on getting orders, but I couldn't understand why. Weren't we on vacation? Why was everyone dressed the same? Why was everyone wearing boots that looked exactly like me? Luckily my questions were answered fast because I soon found out we weren't on vacation we were here because of war, and war was a lot different than I heard about from the shoppers.

I started putting the puzzle pieces together when we walked on the street, and there were dead bodies everywhere. The smell of urine, decay and rot clung to me as I avoided puddles of discolored liquid. The screams pierced my leather, but I couldn't see where the screams were coming from. My Soldier's friends were talking about "Prisoners." It was my Soldier's job to free these innocent lives from the torture they were going through. How he would achieve his job I couldn't fathom, but my purpose was just to protect my Soldier's feet from the cold and rough ground he would need to pass through, and that's exactly what I was doing.

I was dirty and beginning to crack, but I felt important and proud.

Day after day my Soldier and his group had meetings with their boss. I heard them call him General; I guess that's his name. Finally, the day came. It was time to invade the place where the Prisoners were being held. Thousands of soldiers joined and marched in together. As we approached, the Germans fled. I was dirty and beginning to crack, but I felt important and proud. My Soldier's job was to check if any of the bodies on the ground were alive, and if they were, to get them medical aid. We came across a body covered in blood. It looked like a woman, but it was hard to tell. I nudged her gently with my front, but she didn't move. My soldier overturned her and her warm blood oozed over my laces. Sitting under her body was another boot covered in blood. He was a canvas color with brown leather on his edges. He was taller than me, with brown laces that reached mid calf. I recognized him from the store I was in. His fate was so different than mine. He helped the enemy, but I had been very close to him for the few days he was with me, before he was sent over to Germany.

He looked torn and ruined, but I didn't feel bad for him. It was apparent his soldier killed the innocent woman and ran away right before we could get to him. He belonged to someone who killed for no reason and was full of hatred for people who did nothing to him. My owner was coming to free those people. In his torn up state I saw he recognized me but I couldn't and wouldn't help him. Not after my long awaited explanation of war, not after what I saw and heard. My Soldier gently picked up the woman and took her to the place where they were burying the dead. He then moved on to the next deceased body, but I was still on the first. I was awed and disgusted and decided I was going to do whatever I could to find the soldier who my torn up ex—friend belonged to and pay him back for the inhumane act he did to the poor woman.

Then suddenly a German came up to us. I looked up and saw he looked tired and wiped out and had a look in his eyes that said, "Please don't hurt me." He was talking to my Soldier in a pleading voice. I saw straight through him as soon as I looked down he was only wearing one boot.



Let Your Imaginations Fly

By Raizy Cohen

166

Over My Head

By Michal Treitel

The corridor separating me from my impending doom is long and narrow. I maneuver around the other passengers and their luggage with my carry-on in hand. Adrenaline courses through my body as I make my way onto the airplane and locate my seat. I close my eyes and take a deep breath. The other two people in my row are probably carrying fatal diseases, but I left my surgical mask in the taxi on my way to the airport. My antibacterial wipes will have to be sufficient. The only thing I can do is look out the window and think pleasant thoughts as we take off.

Everyone around me seems to think that a giant hunk of metal flying off into the sky is totally normal and nothing to worry about. I, on the other hand, am in a state of absolute hyperventilation. My breathing becomes shallow and ragged, and I feel beads of sweat on my brow. My grasp on the armrests is so tight that my knuckles are white. A flight attendant approaches me, presumably to make sure I'm not going into cardiac arrest.

"Pardon me, sir, are you alright?" she asks kindly.

"I'm fine, thank you. Mind if I ask you a question?" I reply. I try to sound calm and composed, but she and I both know it is only a façade to hide my inner embarrassment.

"Not at all! What can I help you with?"

"I just wanted to know how high we are flying, and how much this plane weighs." I look out the oval window. It's a long way down.

"Our cruising altitude is approximately thirty thousand feet," She answers matter-of-factly. "And never mind how heavy the plane is, sir. We've got it all under control."

I know I should believe her. I know I'm being irrational. People travel by airplane every day and live to tell the tale. Why am I any different? I mumble a thank you to the flight attendant, and she returns to the back of the plane.

Miraculously, I doze off for about fifteen minutes. When I wake up, coffee is being served. I look around at my fellow passengers. The man next to me seems to be enjoying his coffee. So does the passenger next to him. Almost everyone on the airplane is drinking coffee. Is there any left for the pilot? The pilot definitely needs his coffee. What if he falls asleep? Will the plane simply drop if he loses his grip on the steering wheel?

What if a bird flies a little too high and gets caught in the engine? How will

167

the pilot counter a hot air balloon to the windshield? What if there is an emergency water landing and I can't unfasten my seat belt?

I feel a tap on my shoulder.

"It's okay. You can relax now." The man in the seat next to me says to placate me. He must have been watching my panic attack this entire time and thinks I'm insane. "We're landing" he adds.

My heart rate slows down and speeds up simultaneously. My gaze returns to the window as the ground gets closer. I shut my eyes tight and silently recite a prayer. I brace myself for a crash landing. Instead, we hit the ground with a thud. I survived.

I make my way off of the airplane and collect my luggage from the carousel. I straighten my tie and slick back my hair as I swagger out of the airport. A taxi awaits my arrival, but as I approach the car door a bicycle nails me from behind and I am thrown onto the concrete. A bicycle— a small, unexceptional bicycle.

**My breathing
becomes shallow
and ragged,
and I feel beads
of sweat on my
brow.**

The Catcher and the Rye

By Shana Chechik

Soaring. That's what I'm doing now. Hit with a bat and flying. It was a little league baseball game and I was the main event. Jimmy was up first then was Timmy, Tony, and Dave. But no one hit the ball like Richard. Up and away I was soaring. Then I looked at the outfield and saw Harold. I hate that name. He couldn't catch for the life of him. He missed the catch and then smash. I broke a window.

There was a little breeze and I rolled over. I saw the most peculiar thing. Big machines pouncing on a mushy substance. What on earth is this stuff? Stupid Harold— you can't catch anything.

The strange gloopy stuff sat there being beaten. Suddenly a gust of wind blew and oomph I was pushed into the gloop.

I tried to roll out, but the gloopy stuff was really sticky. Then after spinning for a while and being pounded, I was completely sucked into in the gloop. Then I waited. And waited. And waited. 'Till I was poured into an encasing and put down. Then I felt heat. It was like being a sauna. The gloop actually became fluffy and I was in paradise. A sauna and a fluffy bed— what more could a baseball ask for?

Soon I was taken out of my sauna. I peeked out of my encasing and saw the word "rye". I believe it's a type of bread. But what am I doing in bread? I'm not bread. I'm a baseball. I like being a baseball.

I fell asleep. It was a tiring day. I dreamed of bread. But also baseball. I was a ball of bread being pitched. I was hit with a long baguette and caught in a bread bowl which was used as a mitt. I was jostled awake when I was lifted into a brown scratchy bag. Then I was moving. Shaking back and forth, making me feel nauseas. After a while of this, I was thumped down on a hard surface. I was taken out of the scratchy brown thing. It was a bag. I hear something opening and closing. I look around and I see a knife. I couldn't see who was holding it but I sure hope they don't use it on me. But the knife comes closer. And closer. And closer. It's raised above me and I screech, "AAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!! NOOOOOOOOO," but the knife comes down and I scream "YOUCH." I almost got a big boo boo. Then I see who was holding the knife.

My eyes burn with anger. Smoke comes out of my ears. It was Harold. He

**And then once
again I'm flying
through the air**

picks me up with a laugh and takes me outside. He calls a bunch of people over and they start a game of baseball. And then once again I'm flying through the air. Getting hit by a bat. It was my dream coming true. But Harold was up to catch. He never catches. And he almost sliced me in half with a knife. I brace my little round body and plan to fall. But I'm caught. By Harold. Wow Harold! You finally learned how to catch.

Guilty?

By Shifi Shulman

I looked up at the sky as the sun was rising, and took notice to the vivid waves of color. The longer I looked, the more I realized that the world was spinning around me. The men who were walking ahead of me did not seem to notice anything. They just kept walking at a leisurely pace, minding their own business. Didn't they see what was happening? Was it just me? I realized that they were moving farther and farther away from me. My body started shifting with the same movements of the sky. It was as if I was being sucked into a whirlpool.

A loud scream filled my ears, a piercing sound that left my ears ringing. I covered my ears to block out the noise, but the scream was coming from me. All of a sudden, terror filled my body. The more I shook with fear, the deeper I sank into the background.

Am I awake? Is this real? Or is it a nightmare? I keep pinching myself, but nothing is happening.

I reach and fall forward, landing with a thud. I get up, realizing it was just a dream. It was the same dream I have been having for the past week, ever since I witnessed the incident in the alleyway.

I work for a security firm. My hours are long and I work hard making sure all our clients are safe. It was a few weeks ago that my boss sent me to one of the foreign offices to work on a contract. I traveled with some other security men overseas. It was a difficult flight. After ten hours, we finally landed at our destination. We made our way to the hotel and settled in before heading downtown to grab a cup of coffee. After a long day of traveling, we relaxed and enjoyed ourselves.

The group turned in for the night, but I felt too anxious and decided to take a walk to calm my nerves. As I turned the corner past the hotel, there was a small, dark alleyway. I noticed a woman turning into it; shortly thereafter I heard a muffled cry. I stepped into the alley and saw a man pointing a gun at the woman. The woman fell to the ground and he grabbed her purse. My mouth opened wide to let out a scream as he turned toward me. In a flash, he ran away. Somehow, I made it back to the hotel. I even made it through my meeting the next day, but each night the vision of the scream returned.

I stumble out of my bedroom to put up a pot of coffee to help me get through the day. I sit at the table and open the newspaper. The headline reads, "Wanted for Murder". There is a sketch of the perpetrator, but it does not look like the man I saw. The fact is that the sketch looks a lot like me.

**A loud scream
filled my ears,
a piercing sound
that left my ears
ringing.**



Once Upon a Time

By Rachelle Chechik

A “Special” Kind of Love

By Shoshana Rosenthal

My brother Avi and I had always had a complicated relationship. Well, the relationship had been complicated for me. I’m not sure how it was for him. Avi was the brother I could never hate, but he was also the brother that I had a really hard time loving. He had never shown either of those emotions to me, so it was hard for me to gauge whether he loved me or not. I knew that I should love him, even if he didn’t love me back, but it was hard, and I didn’t exactly know how to do it. All I knew was that it involved giving, which I did a lot of. Some of my things ended up in Avi’s room when I decided that it wasn’t worth a meltdown over them. I knew that cultivating unconditional love was going to take more than that, though.

Pull yourself together, Sara. You know that you’re never going to get a normal sibling relationship with Avi, so stop hoping for one. Autism robbed you of that. Just accept it.

I kept searching within myself for the capacity to love my brother unconditionally, but every time I made some progress, another voice would come and say “He drives you crazy. He eats food that you don’t like right next to you. He goes on and on about technology that you don’t want to hear about.”

It was at times like those that I would wistfully wish for what was not. I could recognize my brother’s high level of intelligence, but resented the autism for only letting the intelligence in the area of technology show. So much of what I thought my brother could be was locked behind a wall known as autism. Because of autism, he had never said the words “I love you.” Because of autism, he had never given anyone a hug, only grudgingly received them.

Wait a minute Sara. Stop the pity party. Avi may never have hugged you or said ‘I love you’, but neither has Aaron. It’s probably just a boy thing.

My heart beat faster. I had been misunderstanding the very force that was holding my relationships together. Love didn’t have to mean saying the word. There were other ways to express the emotion, ways more real than the words. But what were those ways that would break down the wall of autism between me and the parts of my brother hiding behind the wall?

And then it hit me. I already loved my brother. Even though he frustrated me to no end, I could still see glimpses behind the veil of autism that separated the two of us emotionally. So many people see my brother’s disorder and not the person who happens to bear it. I saw Avi as a person with value; with likes and dislikes that he expressed quite strongly; with a deep—rooted yearning to belong, but on a different level from the rest of us.

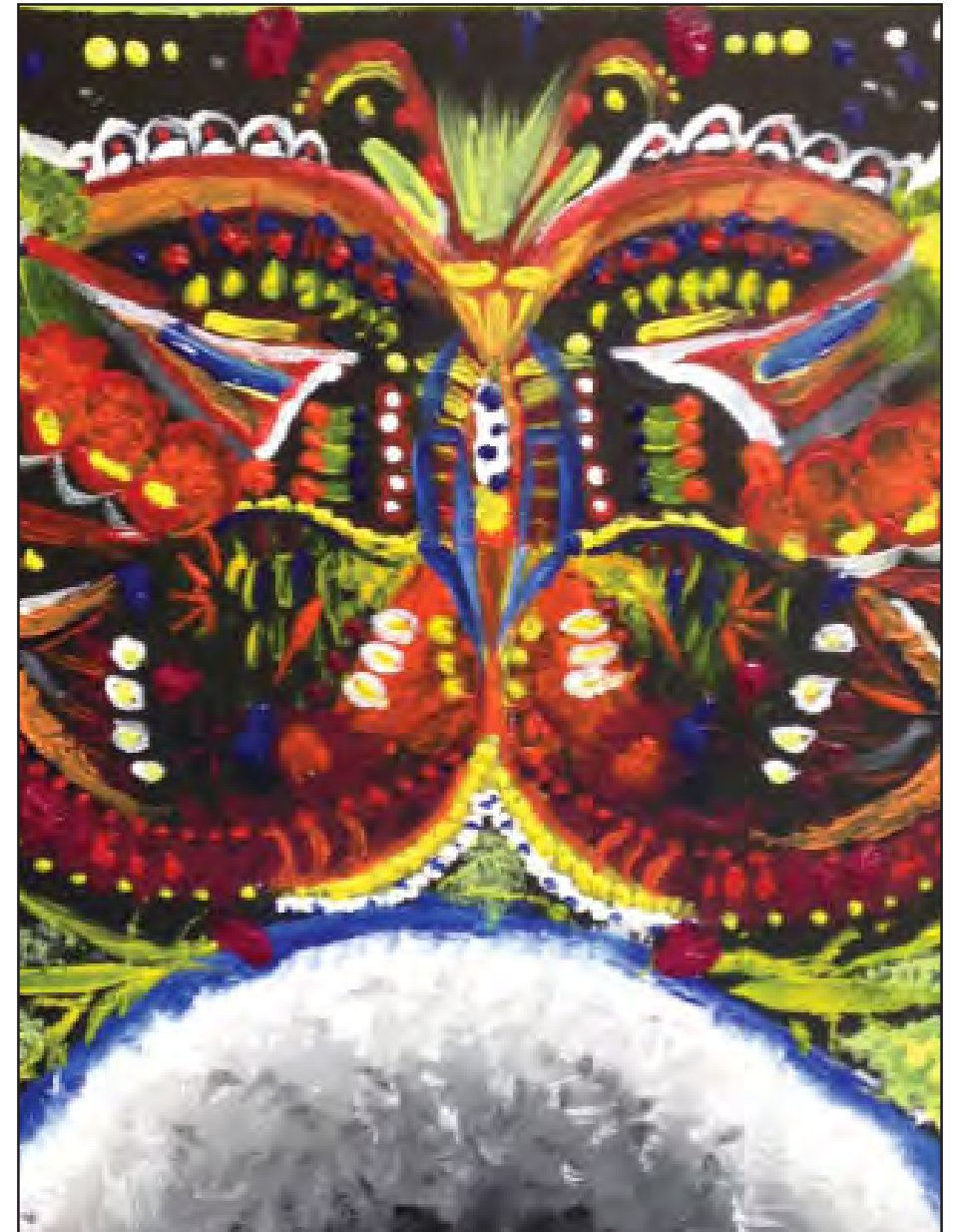
I realized that all of my other relationships more or less followed the same pattern. The other person had some flaws, but I knew enough about the person to like them anyway. Because that's what love is: appreciating people for who they are, despite their flaws.

With this redefined vision of love, I could reevaluate my relationship with Avi. While I didn't have much interest in many of the things that my brother loves, I chose one to start learning in order to try to enter his world a bit: computer coding. I didn't have much time for it, but the knowledge made a lot of what Avi had been saying (and I had originally thought was gibberish) easier to understand.

Within a few days of my opening the Python for Kids book, Avi started talking to me about it excitedly. "What page are you on?" "Did you code 'Hello World' yet?" He even dragged me to the computer for the rite of passage of coding "Hello World" and printing it out. This transformation shocked me. With a little bit of effort on my part, Avi and I were acting like a typical brother and sister on a good day.

Though my computer programming hasn't progressed very far, Avi and I have grown closer as I take more and more interest in what interests him. Surprisingly, he also has started to take interest in some things that I'm interested in. (The conversation about how long the long term causes of World War One were building for would have made a great AP Euro essay.) I can't know for sure because I can't read his mind, but I think that, not only do I appreciate Avi for who he is, despite the barrier called autism, he also likes me for who I am, despite the fact that I drive him absolutely crazy sometimes. By redefining love for myself, I had unknowingly given my brother an opening to love me.

**So much of
what I thought
my brother
could be was
locked behind a
wall known as
autism.**



Color in the Dark

By Meryl Rubin

New Beginnings

By Drais Friedman

It's a faded memory, like the edges of her old winter jacket.

You keep it locked in your closet, buried under piles of your old clothes. There, it looks unassuming and innocent, nothing but another relic of childhood so casually tossed aside. Yet when you get lonely and tired and brave enough to slip it out, it becomes something so much more than that. The material, an ugly thick white wool, is old and threadbare, practically falling apart in your hands. It's the smell that really gets to you though. It's stupid, you know, but it still smells like her. They say scent is the strongest sense, after all. That it's intrinsically linked with memory. You don't know if it's a good or bad thing that you seem to smell her in not only the jacket but in everything, from the whiff of burning cookies you catch when passing a bakery to the smell of fresh cut grass that marks the beginning of spring.

She used to wear the old jacket all the time, even in the burning heat of summer. It was her mother's, you know that, and although you never discussed it, you suspect it's the last memory she had left of her. Things tended to be like that between the two of you, with words passing unsaid more often than not. Yet the two of you knew each other better than anyone else in the world. People probably doubt that now, but you don't. You never will.

It was snowing the day she gave it to you. You love the snow, and you remember being so happy that day, exclaiming at how bright and happy and clean the world looked, covered in a blanket of white.

She laughed at you, of course. "It'll be all dirty and gross by tomorrow," she said, hands stuck casually in her pockets. Her dark black hair was dotted with specks of snow, like stars in a night sky.

You rolled your eyes at her. "That doesn't matter," you explained patiently, wagging a petulant finger at her. "What matters is that it's fresh and clean now. And it's gorgeous." To properly convey your joy, you spread your arms and gestured grandly at the snow covered landscape, only to trip on a rock that escaped your line of vision. You fell, landing flat on your back in a flurry of no longer quite so fresh snow.

She laughed, extending a pale arm to help you up. "Now that was beautiful," she said, but behind the mirth you see confusion in her eyes. She simply didn't get beauty sometimes, didn't get what others saw, how they got joy out the most mundane of things. You used to like that, used to think that it made the things she did find beautiful even greater in comparison. Now, you wished you'd seen it as

the warning sign it was, wished you'd said something, anything.

Instead, you pushed her lightly, mockingly, shivering slightly. You never wear coats or jackets, hate them actually. They make you feel trapped and confined, like you're drowning in a sea of scratchy cotton. Besides, you love the feeling of cold air, the sharpness as it bites into your skin. It makes you feel awake, alive.

She noticed the shivering, of course, and slipped out her jacket. "Here," she casually held it out to you, not quite meeting your eyes. "We're at my house anyway." And you were, a small, somewhat rundown house at the edge of town.

You hesitated, slightly concerned and more than a little surprised. She never parted with that jacket, ever. But you also knew her, knew how angry and offended she got when someone didn't accept her offered favors. So you took the jacket with a word of thank, said goodbye, and left her standing there, just beginning to shiver from the cold.

It's so weird and cruel to think that that stupid, unassuming moment was your last goodbye.

She didn't tell anybody where she went. At first, nobody even noticed she was gone. Her parents had died long ago, and the aunt that had custody of her was cold and uncaring. You were the only person who spent the days after she left with bitten fingernails and hands twisted anxiously as the police asked stupid question after stupid question, as day after day passed without sight of her.

For a while you even found yourself believing all kinds of horrible possibilities, until one day, lonely and tired and brave, you took out the jacket again and found the note crumpled in the side pocket.

I'm sorry, it read. I needed to leave. There's more out there, I know it. And I'm going to find it.

Your first reaction is to laugh, loudly and uncontrollably.

The second reaction is anger, large and pure. You take the paper and shred it methodically into tiny pieces, then scatter them, watching the pieces fall to the floor looking so much like the snow that fell so long ago. You regret it almost as soon as the last shred falls to the floor. It's not her fault, you know that. You had watched her try so hard to live in a place that was suffocating her, watched her try so hard to find beauty where she saw none. Staying here left her with only misery, but leaving opened up an entire world of new possibilities to her. In the end, she'd

made the only logical decision.

You sometimes wonder if you should have gone with her. The two of you, together, exploring the new and unknown. But you know that that's not your place. You belong here, in this town with your family and the snow. You're happy here. This may not be her world, but you know that it's yours. You suppose that's something that both of you must have known all along.

You put the jacket with the pieces of the letter in its pocket back in the closet and close the door behind you. You don't take it out again.

