

**Hingham High School's**  
2022

**The Outer Limits**





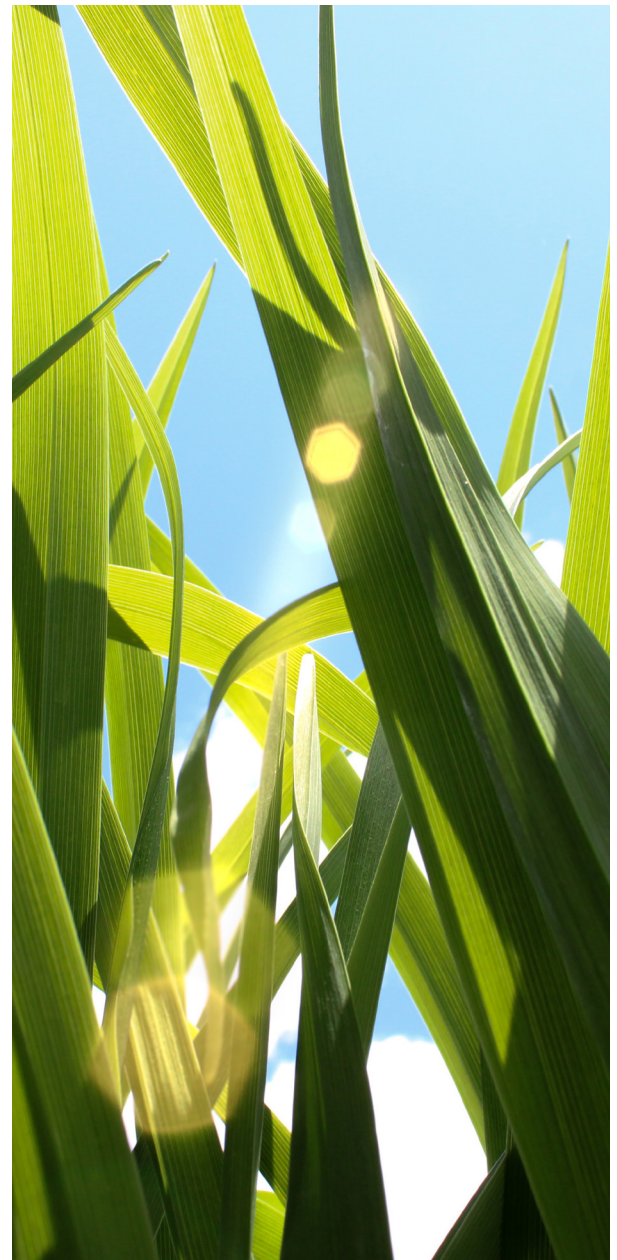
Welcome to the 2022 edition of *The Outer Limits*, HHS's creative magazine. Because COVID prevented the distribution of printed copies, this is our first publication since 2019. Thank you, students, for submitting your written work, and thank you to Mr. E-Show for his amazingly talented students' artwork. I promise you'll enjoy looking back on your creations years from now, so keep submitting and encourage your friends to as well. Have a great summer. -Ms. Fennelly, adviser.

**Cover:**

"Independent," by Kaleigh Cirafice, *Grade 12*;  
Below, "Light Beam,"  
by Lauren Davis, *Grade 11*

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**i am fine in it**

By Richard Sommers  
*Grade 12*

A step ahead and not once  
more shall i be seen,  
Nor heard from says all  
things i can glean,  
the boffins say they just  
can't hear me scream,  
but i'd say i'm passing  
through a seam.

A seam is such a  
funny little place,  
a place where two things  
come to face.  
In this case the seam  
is where i start,  
my never ending journey  
to the dark.

From there across the veil  
that some call death,  
i look behind and see  
the cosmic theft.  
The life comes in and  
never can get back.  
We all take our own long  
and winding track,

but back around i see  
my future grow,  
near and close the  
seeds that i will sow,  
i cannot move the way that I have known  
and focus on the seeds that i have sown.

The seeds ahead are all that i can see,  
they grow and die and always seem to be  
both near and far and far and near,  
It all ends now and then and here.



**Lost In Time**  
By Max Papaleoni  
*Grade 10*

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## **Symphonies**

By Catherine Duff

*Grade 12*

There's a certain musicality to relationships.  
Different notes dance around in my head  
As words roll off my tongue and onto my lips-  
I hear symphonies instead.

Your voice fills the room with sweet melody,  
No piece could ever compare.  
Our synchronized laughs create mellifluous harmony.  
I wish the melodious sounds that I hear I could share.

When we yell, it's just a crescendo,  
When we cry, it's called pianoforte.  
All orchestrations will come to an end, though,  
But I know we'll continue to play.

Because the music we perform is fantastic,  
Even if it's only audible to me.  
I hope you can hear the music  
Of our perfect symphony.

## **Headphones**

By Catherine Duff

*Grade 12*





**Layered**

By Luka Belleville

*Grade 9*

**Blanket**

By CC Boutin

*Grade 12*

Light and soft  
but not too light,  
heavy enough for a winter night,  
a big blue blanket folded  
at the end of the bed-  
soft against the wind burnt skin,  
wrapped around my body and head.  
The corners are frayed  
from years of warming,  
though there is no need to replace it.  
the color is faded,  
but a blanket can still keep the warmth  
after years of warming.

**The Color Blue**

By Mady Leary

*Grade 12*

When I was young I dreamed of holding  
the color blue.

I ran to the sea and held the water,  
But to my surprise, the water was clear.  
I hoped this color would pull through.

The following year I tried to chew  
A big bright handful of blueberries.  
I took a bite and realized  
The berries had more of a purple hue.

Many years later I prayed and prayed  
to purchase a big new balloon.  
It was blue and shiny and easy to hold,  
But a gust of wind blew it away.

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## **Sway of the Tendrils**

By Emily Sebestyen

*Grade 9*

I see my wind chime hanging still as stone.  
It lingers there as if it is in wait.  
Like a fossil, interred to ground like bone.  
Stuck in suspense, a lure in search of bait.

And then, alas a breeze disrupts the air.  
The windchime's tendrils sway so happily.  
Unencumbered, and free from earthly snares,  
Delighted in their new found liberty.

So proud the sound reflects among the trees,  
Enchanted chimes that echo everywhere.  
As keys upon their ring do clink with ease,  
Resounding music drifting through the air.

Potential found, a purpose realized,  
A perfect outcome right before my eyes.

## **Water Moves**

By Cici Monarch

*Grade 11*





## longing greener grass

By CC Boutin

*Grade 12*

The air grows dry and crisp  
and the grass follows its lead,  
gloves soon appear on hands  
and boots on feet.  
Eyes long for the look of summer grass-  
green, bright and full,  
yet what fills the ground sounds  
like a crunch under every animal hoof.  
It's no comfy spot to lay-  
gray seems to fill the world.  
The brown, dry, thirsty grass  
longs for summer too.  
The lack of water shows.  
soon May will bring showers  
and the green grass will begin to regrow.

## Spring Flowers

By Ava Maguire

*Grade 12*

Warm weather brings flowers,  
bright and profoundly beautiful,  
known as day stars scattered  
all over the world  
with their vibrant and beautiful colors,  
recognized as one of  
God's greatest creations.  
Their petals,  
soft to the touch  
with a bitter taste  
and aromatic and fragrant smell,  
they stand with a purpose  
and reflect the earth's natural beauty.  
Surrounded by buzzing bees,  
flowers radiate positivity  
and a powerful feeling of hope.

**Dandelion**  
By Donnelly  
*Grade 9*





**Camp Hayward**

By Sienna Sullivan  
*Grade 9*

A place I claim, my secondary home,  
within the quiet woods there lies a light,  
from which many empowered women roam,  
inspiring me each dark day, each new night.

From the habitual comfort surrounds,  
we amble through the trails like marching ants,  
the sprawling roots are we, a surge abounds,  
the torches touch, inducing souls to dance,

from stories, laughter fills our cabin air,  
the nights conclude, with walks and counting stars,  
the shine of flashlights, braiding other's hair.  
a sudden silence, we hear parent's cars,

Hug cabin sisters with pain in my heart,  
until next summer, we live miles apart.

**Emma**

By Haley Sarabia  
*Grade 12*

**Song of Myself**

By Mady Leary  
*Grade 12*

I celebrate myself,  
and sing myself  
And appreciate my  
friends and family,  
For they make me who I am.

I smirk, giggle, and  
invite others to join,  
I sing in the car observing  
others who sing along.  
My friends, formed from school,  
Born here of parents  
who encouraged laughter.  
I, now 18 years old  
in 2022 begin,  
Hoping to cease  
not till I beam my last beam.

**Night Sky**  
By Agnes O'Reilly  
Grade 12

Sprinkles in the night-  
they make watchers sit for hours  
with stunning patterns.

**Space**  
By Jayden Nieves  
Grade 10

So dark, yet illuminates the night with  
its sparkly glow.  
Night and day in the palm of your hand,  
ominous with little known about it.  
Looking up at the dark depths, makes you feel  
free-a place already marked  
with mankind's power  
that doesn't stop  
the deep void from  
conquering ours.  
Deep, deep space  
so wide and powerful  
Being in your world  
is a gratitude  
filled with solar systems  
and galaxies,  
infinite possibilities of what  
it is we can't see.  
All of your beauties  
are frightening,  
studying your every move,  
knowing one day  
we will be devoured by you.  
Deep, deep void  
so wide and powerful,  
you're the mother  
of creation, and for that  
I give you gratitude.



**Frank Moth**  
By Kaleigh Cirafice  
Grade 12

## Loving Disconsolate Rain

By Ellie Fortuin

*Grade 9*

Clouds sob in woe when rain falls from the blue;  
the cold precipitation bears such grief.  
And thunder shrieks at lightning's bright white hue,  
so you will shun the melancholy sleet.

But have you watched that silverish-gray movie?  
It taps the window in a mellow tune,  
it seeps into the earth and sprouts vast beauty,  
it smells as fresh as flowers' soft, pure fumes.

Oh how I would stay in the rain all day!  
I used to sing in sync with water's song,  
and earth's green grass would never grow astray,  
Thus proving everyone's opinions wrong.

## Drop

By Kaleigh Cirafice

*Grade 12*

This cursed rain seems so dreary and so dim,  
but rain does keep the world lovely and trim.



# A Girl's Face

By Meghan Carr  
Grade 10

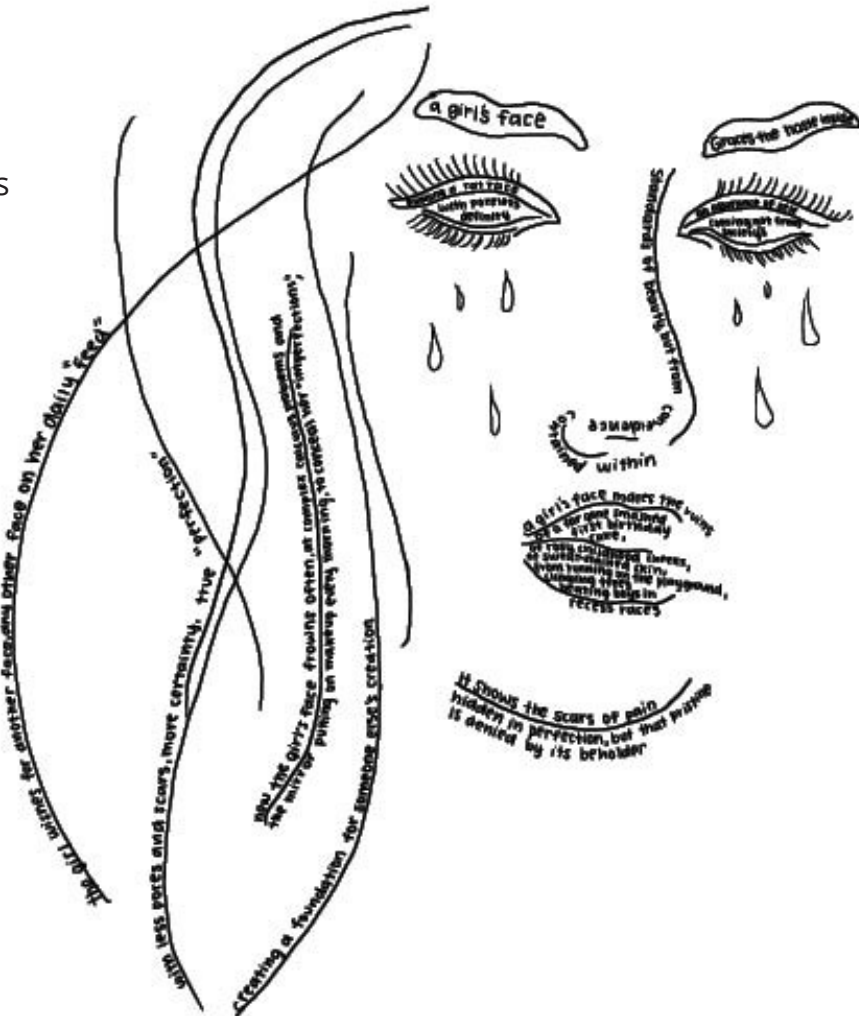
A girl's face  
graces the haste inside,  
running an endless rat race  
with poreless definity,  
an assurance of self  
coming not from society's  
standards of beauty,  
but from confidence  
contained within.

A girl's face mars the ruins  
of a far gone smashed  
1st birthday cake,  
of rosy childhood cheeks,  
of sweat-stained skin  
from running on the  
playground,  
climbing trees,  
beating boys in  
recess races.

It shows the scars of pain  
hidden in perfection,  
but that pristine state is  
denied by its beholder.

The girl wishes for  
another face,  
any other face  
on her daily "feed"  
with less pores and scars,  
more certainty,  
"true perfection."

Now, the girl's face frowns often  
at complex calculus problems,  
at the mirror putting on makeup every morning,  
to conceal her "imperfections,"  
creating a foundation for some else's creation.



**A Girl's Face**  
By Meghan Carr  
Grade 10

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## **The Pencil**

By Ava Maguire

*Grade 12*

You can use me  
For drawing, printing,  
and mistakes.  
My thin cylindrical shape,  
consisting of  
a graphite rod,  
Contains that satisfying  
dry and woody scent.  
I am simple,  
Plain and lifeless-  
The only friend I have  
is the paper.  
The bitter morning coffee  
sits beside me  
As my sharp tip awaits  
to be used for good.  
Often forgotten and  
replaced by technology,  
My silent moves  
can create masterpieces.  
I lack the love  
that I deserve.

## **Board**

By Donnelly

*Grade 9*

## **Levitate Music Festival**

By Sally Clow

*Grade 12*

A variety of floral decor,  
placed with delicate care,  
filled the boundaries of the festival.  
The sun beamed down onto the dark pavement  
covered in pastel chalk,  
revealing beautiful images and designs  
quickly noticed by the human eye.  
A strong aroma of sunblock  
consumed the humid air,  
With a faint scent of coconut-  
The vibrant tie dye designs,  
both styled by attendees  
and sold in the creative shops,  
catches my attention.  
Talented musicians and artists  
encapsulate the positive energy,  
radiating through the  
waves of melody.  
The hot sun beams onto my skin  
and I feel a sunburn forming  
by the end of a thrilling day.  
As one stares into the evening skies,  
a cotton candy sunset  
displays beautiful colors  
as the sun sinks down  
and finalizes the day with perfection.



## **Purging the World of Sins**

By Millie Walker

*Grade 9*

The Old Man smiles,  
eyes flecked with darkness,  
with poison.

O come forth Romeo, come forth.  
Confess thy sins, thy woes  
to me, thy faithful Friar  
who truly, truly, truly cares.

Let me smile sweet,  
look upon thee with true eyes.  
O, that sweet act is so loathsome, so sour.

O Romeo, my judgment is as gentle,  
as light as summer's air.  
State thy shrift Romeo,  
before my holy ear.  
My good son, thou has nothing to fear.

O, thou was in bed with lady Juliet.  
The iron crow meets the young head.

The Old Man smiles,  
Romeo is now upon his death bed,  
banished from the world,  
damned to his eternal cage  
within the ground to meet violent ends.  
His sin is his fault.  
O sin, deadly sin,  
the affliction of the holy church.

The Old Man smiles,  
eyes burning with darkness,  
tongue drunk on poison,  
the deliciousness of death,  
the sweetest triumph.

## **Burnt My Tongue 2**

By Megan Munoz

*Grade 11*





## **Juliet's Confession**

By Ellie Fortuin

*Grade 9*

Find this man Romeo a remedy!  
A remedy for his light love,  
For his sour face when I say nay.  
Nay to his marriage request,  
and his rash, too sudden  
"passion" for me.  
I refuse to be a belonging to a man!  
O, I cannot be too quickly won  
by any man, for Cupid pronounces  
my love to a maiden. Ay, a maiden!  
My love sprung from the beautiful blush  
that bepaints my love's cheeks.  
An honour I can only dream of  
is marriage to that maiden.  
And if she say nay,  
My grave is not my wedding bed,  
My grave is only my own sorrow;  
I will not ruin my youthful blood  
with woe. Or, my grave may be love,  
For the friar says loving a maiden  
is torment of the devil.  
I swear'st upon the poor prisoner  
that lives in my heart to find liberty.  
Liberty for maidens with love  
as infinite as the night's stars!  
And what is a man's will?  
O, how tedious they can be!  
Patience wears when thee speaks,  
Speaking only of himself  
and his eloquence.  
Hist! Hist! Hath Echo possess'd thou?  
O vile voice I have loathed,  
You make me envious of the dead!  
I know my ears have already drunk  
a hundred words from a man,  
And they will drink a hundred more.  
But for now,  
I will drink to beauteous maidens,  
And a maiden's sweet love for the other!

## **Beyond the Grave**

By Kaleigh Cirafice

*Grade 12*



## Thirteen Ways of Looking at My House

By Mady Leary

*Grade 12*

My feet crossed my dark paved roads  
a hundred times over,  
but this time it was different and bare.  
No one walks the road closer-  
my street lined with houses was empty.

Green grass-lined my light yellow house-  
A tennis ball gleaming in a bush  
and flowers were beginning to sprout,  
but no one was out and about.

A naked white front door remains shut,  
maintaining all its contents inside.  
No one enters and rarely leaves-  
the grocery store becomes  
the door's only friend.

Packages flood through the mailbox  
from all our shopping excursions-  
Box hair dye, games, and clothes  
even knitting tools.

My kitchen table that was once  
empty is now covered in  
three computers open,  
papers cover the brown wooden table-  
A teacher's voice echoes  
over the countertop.

A desktop computer and an oven,  
Both have different meanings  
to me now.  
The oven became  
a steel enforced baking experiment,  
A desktop would be  
my staring contest opponent.

Bellowing voices roll out  
of my living room.  
A gray couch holds molded imprints-  
our bodies forever sitting-  
the physical representation  
of couch potatoes.

Seemingly never-ending bad news  
reverberates on the TV.  
My family and I blankly  
watch the glowing screen.  
No news surprises us anymore.  
The reporter lost all glimmer in her eyes.

My stairs became a connection  
between different worlds  
continuously pacing up and down.  
The beige carpeting lining the  
stairs-my new runway.

My basement became  
my place of solitude  
in an area already consisting  
of loneliness.

This use to be the place  
my friends and I existed,  
but now I was alone.

My room is a place in which  
I rest my eyes.  
Here I was not lonely.  
My sister sleeps in the bed  
across from me-  
A sharp indent of my head  
perfectly shaped in the pillow.

A place that was once for cleaning  
Now has become my personal salon.  
New hairstyles and colors were tried,  
most likely will never be tried again.

To the naked eye,  
my yellow house would be  
seemingly normal, and it was  
until this past year.  
In 2020 my yellow house  
was not only where I resided,  
but a hair salon, a bakery,  
a school, and a movie theater.

## 10 Ways of Looking at a Fairy Tale

By Alexandra Higgins

Grade 12

Whether written in a book  
or playing on the big screen,  
it is difficult to say  
that there is only one way  
to view a fairy tale.

From Cinderella's lost slipper  
to Snow White and her seven dwarfs,  
I have read them all and can confirm:  
these really are tales as old as time.

But how much of this all  
can we really believe?  
Why must we turn  
to a false sense of reality  
in an attempt  
to make ourselves happy?

Heroes and heroines,  
fairy tales have them all:  
either swooping in  
to save the day,  
or to take the princess  
to the ball.

But as we all have come  
to know, we cannot have  
a fairy tale without  
the villain coming in  
and trying to ruin it all.

Once upon a time  
I read a fairy tale,  
and it took me to a place  
I've never been before.  
One full of beauty  
and magic, a place where  
I felt safe from the harsh  
reality of what was  
waiting for me  
when I returned.

how writers do it.  
How they allow their imagination  
to take control and  
determine how the story will flow.

Oh, but why must I fall  
into this trap set up so long ago?  
Why must I ever believe  
in these unrealistic standards,  
set by stories written  
before I was even born?

Maybe I should turn  
to those who avoid fairy tales  
like the plague.  
Maybe they will have a reason  
for me to stop feeling this way.

But here I go again.  
I grasp onto these fairy tales,  
as I try to hold on to the magic  
that is seemingly slipping  
between my fingers.

### Bite

By Tyler O'Connor

Grade 12



## Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Shadow

By Ella Ross

Grade 12

When someone's life begins,  
it births a twin.  
A shadow on the ground,  
that never makes a sound.  
But people ignore their shadow.

What people do not realize is  
the shadow could be alive,  
in its own little world.

Its life must be hard,  
with its human blatant disregard.

Maybe the shadow turned evil.  
Maybe it does not like its people.  
Why do people not care,  
about their shadow  
whose life they share?

Perhaps the shadow is in love,  
with a human up above.  
Or maybe a fellow silhouette;  
it hasn't learned of heartbreak yet.

Maybe the shadow is full of hatred,  
from lies their lover has created.

Or, I am looking at this all wrong,  
and the shadow may like  
to be strung along.  
But when you look at the thing,  
it leaves quite a sting,  
to know it will forever be alone.

The shadow is almost nothing,  
but perhaps I'm over judging.  
It's just the shadow is so dark,  
and could be the devil leaving its mark.

The truth is,  
it is not our shadow that is evil,  
it is a part of our heart we try to conceal.

Blaming my shadow is such a petty crime;  
when it is me that needs my own time.

I fell in love with the silhouette,  
not understanding heartbreak yet.  
I wish it was my shadow,  
and I was the one who was shallow.

Ignorance is truly bliss,  
but I am stuck in my own abyss,  
my thoughts like memories I can't dismiss.

Sometimes,  
I blame my pain on my shadow.



**Bionic**

By Nina Stone

Grade 11

## The Day I Leave for College

By Ella Ross

Grade 12

Today's the day I leave for college.  
I will return home filled with knowledge.  
I will make new friends.  
I can't wait for the football games I'll attend.  
I will get old.  
I will do what I am told.  
I will work 9-5.  
I will survive.  
But why don't I want to go to college?  
The importance I acknowledge,  
and I will *eventually* go to college,  
just maybe not today.  
My mom and I will go out,  
and mosey about.  
We will shop,  
maybe even dance around on tabletops!  
Why would I want to go away  
and put myself in certain dismay?  
I hope she lets me stay  
because I am not going to college today.



## Vast

By Nina Stone

Grade 11

## My Time in Candyland

By Mady Leary

Grade 12

Pink and blue tufts  
Of sugar lace  
Stick to my hands and face.  
Tough red licorice cuffs-  
My body to the piece  
May seem like heaven,  
But you're stuck and can't even  
Let your feet release.

Sticky little fingers  
Grab hold of you.  
You move squares one, two-  
Their grasp still lingers,  
Landing on the next space.  
One wrong move and back to the  
gingerbread place.

## To Love Another...

By Grace Owen

Grade 9

Is love a tender thing?  
Nay, that's not so. It is too rough,  
Too rude, too boisterous,  
and it pricks like thorn...  
Under love's heavy burden I do sink,  
But rejoice in splendor of my own.  
Show me a mistress that is passing fair,  
Under the devout religion of my own eye.  
O, teach me how to think of love...  
I am out of love's favor  
Again, I plea, teach me how to think of love!  
I have heard it all, yet I still don't understand  
Alas, I, whose view is muffled still.  
O, hating love! Do I live dead?  
What doth her beauty serve?  
Where may I see that who pass'd fair?  
Doth she teach the torches to burn bright?  
I see no such sight to be shown.  
Ay, me in my own misery.  
If I could only know the language of love...

## The Willow that Weeps

By Nick Dubois

*Grade 11*

There was a park. I can't really say where, not because it's confidential or anything, although that would be cool. I can't say where because I don't exactly remember. My mom says I need to work on that. Remembering stuff, but it usually doesn't work out. The park itself I remember quite well. I fell asleep in the car; it's hard not to when I am laying down in the back row as the old gray Nissan tried its best to make its way. "Wake up, wake up!" Will yelled. He is my brother. We do everything together. Mainly because we don't have neighbors to play with. He was only in sixth grade, but he was very tall; my parents say I will get that tall too. I don't really buy it.

The park was nice, a lot of green, but not the same green. The trees for the most part were dark green. Like a calming dark green that could relax anyone who looked at it. The bushes were lighter. Less inviting, which was probably good because there was a lot of poison ivy. The grass was light green, the kind of green that you want to wrap yourself up in and never leave. That was my favorite color, but I could never explain why.

We kept walking, my brothers, my parents and I. I had the feeling we were going somewhere, but my parents wouldn't say where. So I just skipped around, jumping from rock to rock, trying my best to not fall. Whenever I fall nobody helps me. They just laugh, but I can't be mad because I would laugh too if I was them.

The path cleared and I realized why we came to this unknown park. The tree. A willow. Its branches hung down almost touching the ground, and it looked almost sad, but a calm sad where the world stops and it's just you. That must be why they call it a Weeping Willow. This tree seemed to pull me in, so I went. I entered under the branches to a completely different world, a willow world. The grass engulfed me, each blade like a tiny pillow. I looked up into the branches, the sun was shining through the cracks. Happiness. Momentary happiness. I never wanted to leave. How can people want to move on from moments like this? That is when my mood sank a bit. I knew this was going to end, this moment, the happiness, it would all end. That must be why the willow weeps-it is only momentary happiness.



**Tree**

By Kaleigh Cirafice

*Grade 12*

## Summit Street

By Liani Pena

Grade 11

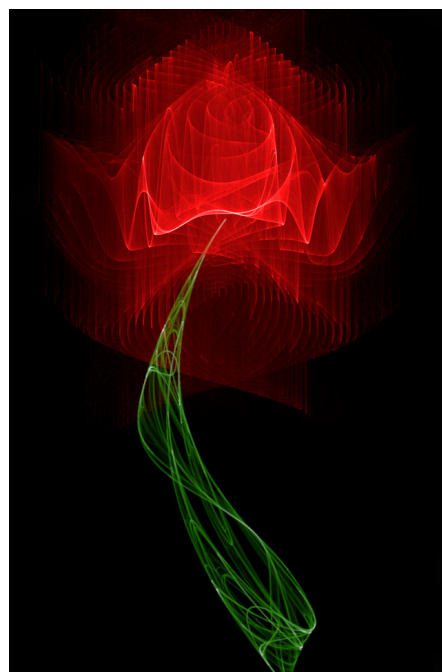
That house. The house at the top of two hills, as steep as mountains that came together. The faded yellow house with the dark green shutters and the matching uneven bushes that decorated the front yard. The house with the basketball hoop that leaned in the driveway that would be used everyday in the summer. The house with the homebuilt wooden playground that sat in the middle of the back yard. The house. The one with the wooden porch that was painted unevenly. Not the nicest house on the street, but not the worst. It appeared quiet on the outside, but once you stepped in it was the opposite.

The living room TV played *Caso Cerrado* everyday at the same time while Wela watched from the kitchen as she cooked dinner. The smell of the seasonings and cooking meat flowed from one colorful room into another. Soon everyone would be home. Some from work, others from school, and even one from daycare. A house of seven girls-three generations of women in one house. Not too long after I was born my dad was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison. This left my seventeen-year-old mother with me alone in a house with his mother and sister, basically strangers to her, but soon they became family. My mom would work late nights so I would spend a lot of time with my grandmother. I went everywhere with her. From BJs, to church, to bingo, to the mall, to work, and everywhere else- I was there with her. The person who taught me how to speak, read, and write Spanish. The person I went to sleep with at night. The person I spent the most time with. The person who filled the place of my father.

Later came my aunt, who was also left a single mother since my uncle had gotten deported back to Ecuador. Around the time my mother moved in, my grandmother had recently gotten divorced from my grandfather, a man she had spent 30 years of her life with and raised four children with. This left me and my two cousins in a house with four women who all contributed to raising us. Women who taught us independence, who took care of us, and who showed us nothing but love.

The house on Summit Street brought lessons and lessons, memories upon memories. There were no male figures in the house, no dads, no uncles, no grandfathers present, but I wouldn't want it any other way or anywhere else, but at the house. Each of the women in the house played an important role. The circumstances were different for each one of them; however, each woman worked hard to overcome her situations while she continued to raise us and show love to one another.

Watching these women as I grew up taught me that life might not be the typical American Dream that everyone pictures. Life can throw stones at you. Even with stones thrown at them, these women, who were so important in my life, picked themselves up and strengthened one another. If they could do this, then so could I.



**Rose**

By Richard Sommers

Grade 12

## Home Sweet Home

By Sally Clow

*Grade 12*

539 N. Marion Street. The sweet place I used to call home. About a thousand miles away, but never forgotten from my mind.

A white stucco house, shaped like a square. The faded blue shutters that practically match the color of my eyes. A petite yard of fresh cut grass, a vibrant place to play. Hoola hoops and bicycles scattered array.

Brown wooden fences, once taller than I could ever reach the top of, border around the yard. The aging oak tree has its usual foliage, a lively sight to see. Squirrels are everywhere. Grid-like neighborhoods surround me, a truly satisfying thing. Through the front door, the leather couch sits waiting for me to leap onto it. I bury my face into the pillows, my ultimate source of comfort after a long day.

The kitchen, where the blue walls are covered in paintings my siblings and I created, is tidy and smells of freshly cooked dinner. The refrigerator displays magnets from all the places we ventured to as well as the one hundred I received on the recent spelling test.

Around the corner, down the beige carpeted stairs, buckets of Legos and Barbie Dolls are scattered around. Princess costumes can be found all over the floor. The chaos of that house is what made it like home. About a thousand miles away, but never forgotten from my mind.

**Vivian 2**

By Megan Munoz

*Grade 11*



**Stormy Night**  
By Hannah Marks  
*Grade 9*

The rain was pounding outside in the dark abyss of night as I heard a knock on the front door. I was home alone getting ready for work when the knock came again. I went down the stairs, listening to the raindrops pitter patter on the windows as the knocking got louder. I went to check the door, but the knocks only got louder and louder. I ran down the hall and found my dog lying down on the couch. He didn't seem to notice me at all. I felt my heart beating out of my chest, playing a melody to a song I have never heard before. My legs were numb from both the excitement and fear.



As I approached the door, the knocking stopped as suddenly as the rain had. Then the knocking started again, but from the back door this time. Like a crash, the rain started falling harder than before. My dog stayed in a paralyzing sleep, not moving a muscle on the couch. I raced down the hall, and that's when I noticed the rain starting to leak in the windows and dampening the curtains. I went to clean it up and then I heard it—a bang coming from outside. Thunder and lightning started to light up the pitch dark world around me. I made it to the back door, but that's when I noticed something blood curdling—someone's muddy footprints. The footprints led their way into the dark basement. The back

**The itsy bitsy spider**  
By Emily O'Connor  
*Grade 12*

**A Stormy Night** *Continues next page*



## A Stormy Night *Continued*

door let out a screech of pain and fear that rang through my ears. The melody of my heart began to play faster but in a twisted fear.

The basement door crept open and a wave of fear crashed over me like a tsunami. As I turned, that's when I saw him, the masked figure sitting under the dim flickering light. All the lights went off, and the house was deadly silent. When lightning struck again, he had disappeared. The lights flashed back on, and I heard a new noise from above me.

I hurriedly stumbled up the stairs passing my dog. He still hadn't moved a muscle, except his tail, which was wagging profusely. As I slowly escalated the staircase, I heard a crashing sound coming from my room. As I crept down the hallway, I saw a shadow coming from my room. When I stepped through the door, that's when I saw him—the boogie man. Then the lights went out with a bang, and he disappeared just as he did before. I heard the TV turn on downstairs.

The rain's pounding grew louder, and the television's volume increased to ear-defying levels. Just as I was approaching the figure, the lights went out and lightning struck. Just when I thought everything was over, I felt death's frozen grasp on my shoulder. When I turned around, I looked into his black doll's eyes. The lights turned off for one last time; then came the blinding lightning strike to brighten the room once more. The boogie man was gone. That's when my dog finally slumped off the couch, and lingered over to me. He barked at something behind me, and I noticed a window was open. I immediately took my dog to my parents' house and called the police.

I moved away and never went back to that house. Today, it's a pile of ash from when it burned down a year ago, a fitting end to that horrid house and the boogie man inside.



### **Prison Break**

By Inga Andruszkiewicz

*Grade 12*

## ***The Little Rascals of Liberty Pole***

By Alexandra Higgins

*Grade 12*

For the past seventeen years, I have called Liberty Pole my home. In the winding streets of this neighborhood, I learned how to ride a bike, I played numerous rounds of man-hunt, but most importantly, I met my best friends. Picture *The Little Rascals* as if it was filmed in the early 2010s and you would have an accurate depiction of our group. We were a band of brothers and sisters whose clubhouse was wherever the grass was green, and our only rule was that no one is allowed to tattle on a sibling to their parents.

As the years went on, tea parties turned into cookouts, and our backyards became too small for Wiffle Ball games. The number of kids walking to South Elementary School dwindled to two as the older ones moved on to middle school and high school. Now, most of our crew has moved on to college and gone to schools across the country, but all of our roots bring us right back to Liberty Pole.

If this neighborhood has taught me anything, it would be that the yellow, two-story house sitting atop Colonial Road doesn't tell me where home is, but it is

the people that I have met there that let me know I'm home. They have transformed my understanding of the word family to not those who share your DNA, but to those with whom you share strong connections, fond memories, and life experiences.

Even though we are not so little anymore, I would be lost without these rascals in my life. We may not choose our neighbors, but we can choose our friends, and mine just so happen to be the kids next door.



## ***Flailing***

By Inga Andruszkiewicz

*Grade 12*

## The Muffin Man

By Keira Van Ess

Grade 9

One cool fall day, a group of teenagers went for a walk in the colorful woods. They walked for a while until they fell upon a worn down, crumbling bakery. With a feeling for adventure and excitement, the foolhardy crew crept up to the bakery and slowly cracked open the creaky door. As they clicked their heels on the rusty tile floor, they walked up to a baker who looked as if he were frozen.

"Hello?" the nerdy one asked. "Are you okay?" A moment of silence passed.

"Hello children," the now unfrozen man replied abruptly, making them all skip a heartbeat.

"Are these muffins any good?" the nerdy boy asked jokingly.

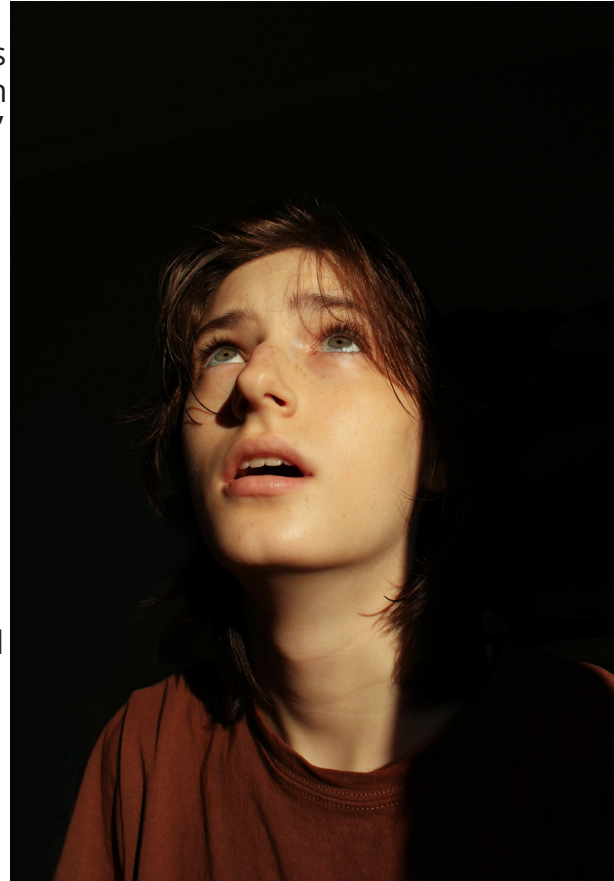
"They are my best yet. One might say they are deadly good," he replied with a smirk.

Trying to prove himself to the other teens, the nerd got a muffin for each of the irresponsible high schoolers. One by one they took a bite, and the baker's malignant smile grew wider and wider. They each began to fall violently ill; some even became paralyzed. The baker let out a horrible laugh.

"What was in these muffins? "Why would you do this to us?" the nerd wheezed while gasping for air.

"Oh children, I will tell you what was in your muffins. You just have to bear with me while I recall who it was I put in there." He grinned sinisterly while he looked up at the ceiling and scratched his chin in mock confusion.

It all started for him like any other college graduate who had a dream. He had just earned his culinary degree and had a vision of starting his own bakery. Being a new graduate, he was low on money but determined to be successful. After a few weeks of searching for the perfect place to start his new business, he found it. It was a small little bakery whose walls were a light pink and white; it was perfect. He collected all the money he had left and whatever he found lying around and went to the bank to apply for a loan. Time and time again he was denied and he eventually gave up on owning that building. Low on hope, he went on a walk in the woods where he found a rundown building with a caved-in ceiling and overgrown greenery in and outside of the



**Shock**

By Nina Stone

Grade 11

**The Muffin Man** *continues next page*

## **The Muffin Man** *Continued*

house. He decided to explore and to his surprise, he found a perfect little kitchen, a dining room, and a quaint bedroom and bathroom. He decided that he would make the little house his bakery. He used all of his money to renovate the building and hung-up flyers all over the town. On opening day, a herd of people came in. He sold everything, from blueberry muffins to chocolate croissants. Every day the bakery sold out within hours of opening and quickly became the most popular bakery in town.

A few months later on the crisp night of Halloween, while the man laid fast asleep in his beige room with smells of apple pie muffins and pumpkin pies, a group of giggling teens crept around the bakery. As a Halloween prank, they threw countless rolls of toilet paper over the store and painted all over the walls. With a devilish grin, a young boy picked up the biggest stone he could find and chucked it at the kitchen window. The man jolted up from his deep sleep, ran to his kitchen and felt a draft of cold air. Inside he found sharp shards of broken glass and toilet paper hanging from where the window once was. The teens, proud of their work, lit up cigarettes and laughed. But once they saw the angry baker they ran, not realizing one had dropped a cigarette on a pile of dried-up leaves on the doormat of the bakery.

"Get back here you scoundrels!" the baker hollered. Realizing that there was a blossoming fire, he screamed "What have you done? You monsters!" The baker fell to his knees and watched as his bakery went up in flames.

"Why would they do this? This is my life's work."

As tears trickled down his face, he realized he had to retrieve his money. He ran into the smoking building and grabbed a fire extinguisher. He sprayed it around hoping to put the fire out, until eventually, the fire died down. The man went to pick up his money not realizing that his sleeve was going up in flames. When he grabbed the cash, the flame from his sleeve ignited the paper money and burnt all of his savings.

The baker spent the next year in a deep wave of depression. He barely ate and never left the remains of his destroyed bakery. He just laid in his scorched bed and wept. Eventually, he heard the sound of feet crunching on fallen leaves. He stood up to see a group of high schoolers walking by his bakery. Filled with rage and sorrow, he decided to take vengeance on those who wronged him. He quickly whipped up a batch of muffins and put in a few doses of strychnine. He played a nice little tune and called for the kids.

"Hi kiddos!" "Come here and try a muffin, they're free and delicious!" he called out.

"What flavor are they?" the shortest one asked.

"Chocolate chip and blueberry."

The high schoolers shuffled towards the man and each grabbed a muffin. They turned them over to look for anything suspicious. Slowly, one by one they each unwrapped the muffins and tasted the sweet, soft pastries. A smile emerged on each of their faces but it quickly disappeared only to be replaced with growling stomachs and blurry eyes.

**The Muffin Man** *continues next page*

## The Muffin Man

### *Continued*

"What was in the muffins?" the smallest one asked.

"Chocolate, blueberries, and my special, secret ingredient," the man cackled.

"Don't worry, it will all be over soon."

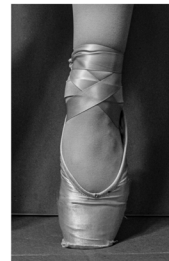
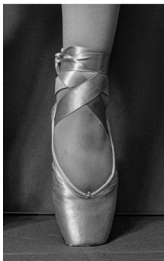
The kids coughed up crimson blood, fell to their knees and curled up in balls while grasping their stomachs. The baker watched as the light drained from each of their eyes as they drew their final breaths. A gigantic smirk spread across his face as the man dragged each of their lifeless bodies, through piles of ash, into the back of his charred bakery. He decided that he did not want their bodies to go to waste, so he made a new batch of muffins with new secret ingredients. As he laid in his bed, the baker could not doze off. All he could think about was the joy it brought him while he was taking revenge. He thought of all the new flavors of muffins he could make and all the new, young customers and ingredients he could get. The next morning, he started to sing, "Have you seen the muffin man, the muffin man, the muffin man" while the smell of his pumpkin (and other secret ingredients) muffins floated into the town.

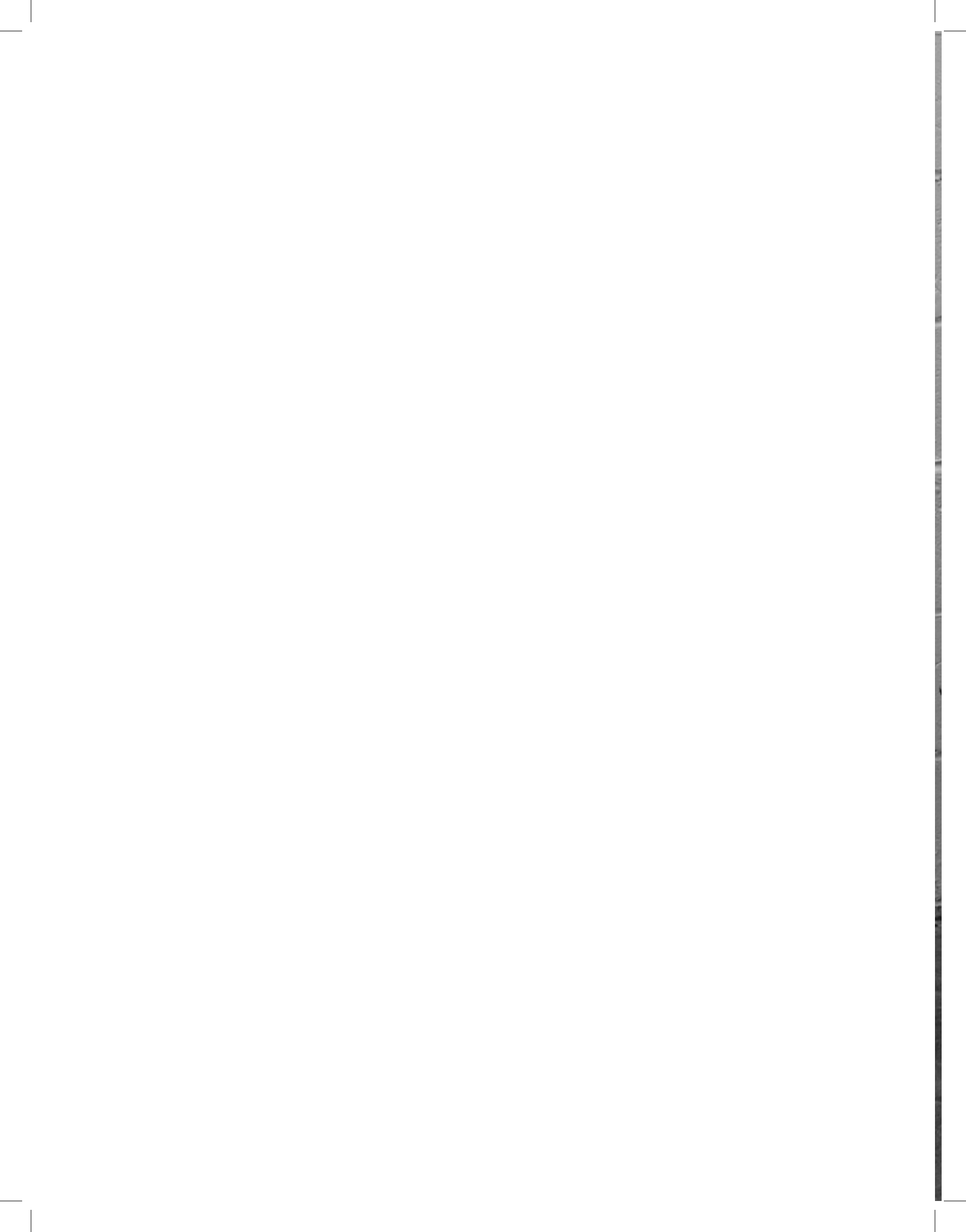
A few days later a new group of kids (one of them pretty nerdy) came walking by unaware of their inevitable doom. The baker put on an eerie smile and walked behind the counter. There he stood still, almost lifeless, staring at the creaky door. After the nerdy one spoke, the baker unfroze and had each child, starting with the nerd, eat one of his specialty muffins. Immediately, they fell terribly ill. They began to cough up blood, their eyes blurred, and their heads throbbed. The baker continued, "and that is what I put in your muffins. But as you children can see, it was all for a good cause. Your deaths will not be pointless, but are for my joy," the baker said. He then began to sing his favorite song in a haunting tune. And while he watched the last drop of life drain from the nerd's eyes he grinned, "now you've met the muffin man, the muffin man..."

### **Deteriorating**

By Inga Andruszkiewicz

*Grade 12*





**Good Luck Class of 2022!**

