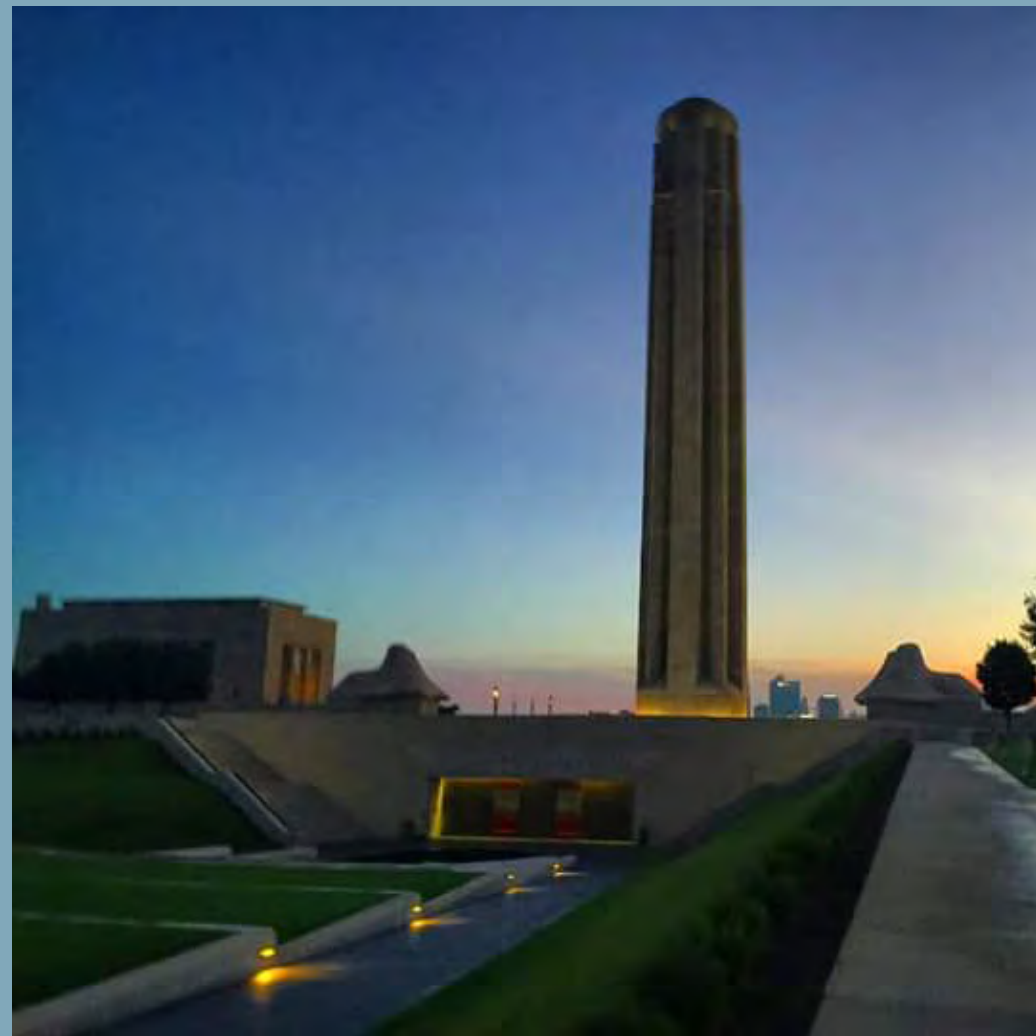


dime



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the arts & literary journal of Donnelly College

Volume 5, Spring 2017

Thank You

dime would like to thank every student who submitted work to this year's issue. This publication exists because of your dedication and creativity.

We also thank the faculty and staff members of Donnelly College, as well as our outside readers, for volunteering their time to vote for the winners of the Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award. We could not create this journal without your kindness.

Finally, thank you to all our supporters, particularly Lawrence (class of 1956) and Joan Ward, whose generosity supplies the publication costs as well as the awards for the Sister Mary Faith Schuster winners.



Untitled photograph
by Rebeca Alcala

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Volume 5, Spring 2017

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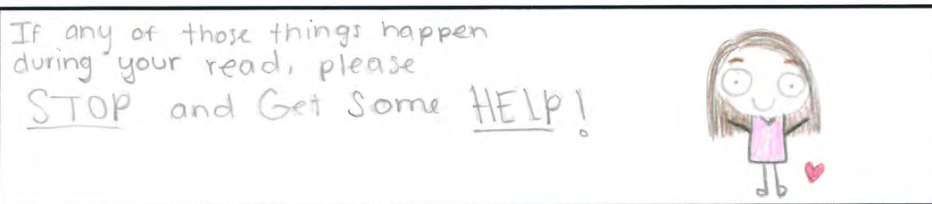
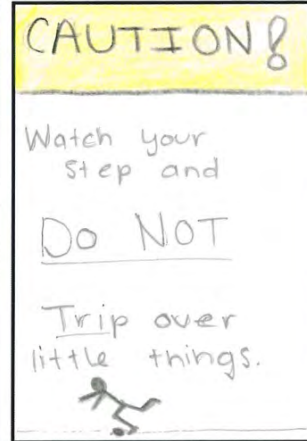
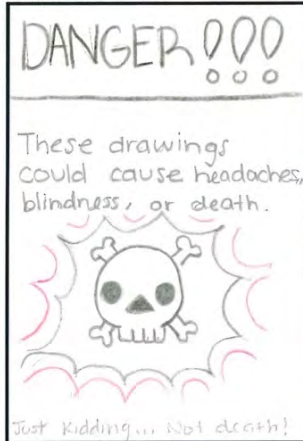
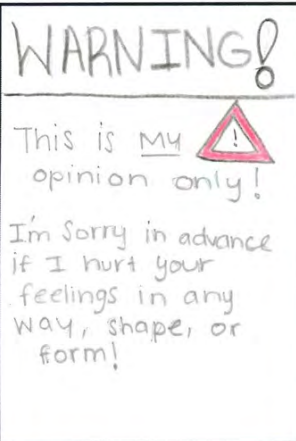
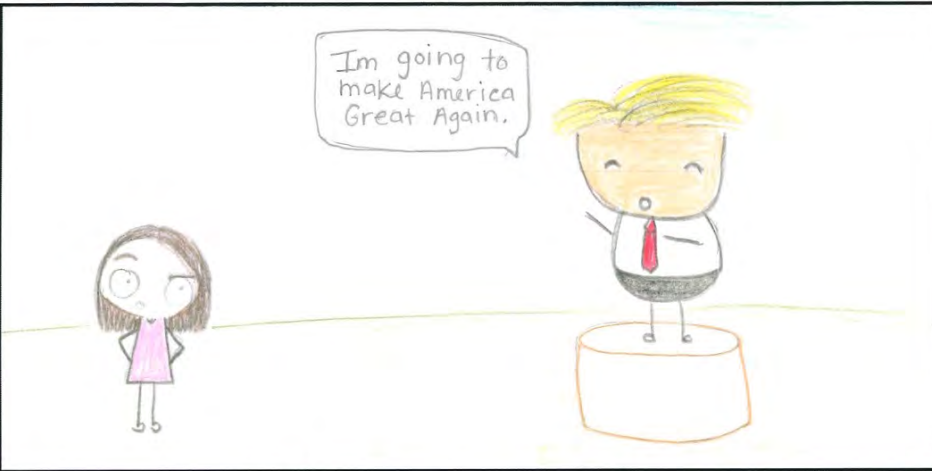


Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Nonfiction

“What Now Mr. President?”

By Ana Mojica

WHAT NOW, MR. PRESIDENT?



“Esperanza” by Carla Flores

I was three; lying on the sandbox, worry free,
Three young Caucasian girls came to me and asked me,
“What’s your Name?”

“Esperanza,” I said but they didn’t say it the same.

My name was meant to be rolled of the tongue,
It was meant to be beautifully sung,
Instead they ripped my name apart into their own,
Voices filled with angry tone.

“My teacher told me that means hope!”

Hope was not my Name,
Wash your mouth out with soap.

My name represented me and everything I stood for
My culture, my soul, my heart, my core.

Three years later, now I am six,
Alphabet, shapes, how colors mix.

On the third day of school, the teacher told me,
“Esperanza, your name is too long, you see.”

So for school purposes my name was Hope,
For twelve years my name was hung on a rope.

I grew to be ashamed of who I was and of my culture,
We were all dead in the desert, sky full of vultures. We were picked
at, until our wounds oozed blood,
Rained on until we all became mud.

My Hispanic ethnicity and beliefs were all gone now,
Americanized, tied to chains, we were bound.

Bound to a life of being in between,
Much too dark to be white, much too dark to be seen.

Too much accent to be heard,
Living in slums, Hispanic herds.

We had lost what made us, us
I suppose, in God we trust.

November 8, 2016

“Refuge Poem” by Brandon Valdez

People these days fight for a great life.
These people wanted a new life.
Many traveled by boat.
A long distance from new hope
Were separated by a tremendous amount of water
Storms would get in their way, and some weren't so lucky.
Many lost their lives.
The jackets laid resemble the effort given from those lost people.
It acts as its own memorial.
New life was not on their side.
Help those who are in need.



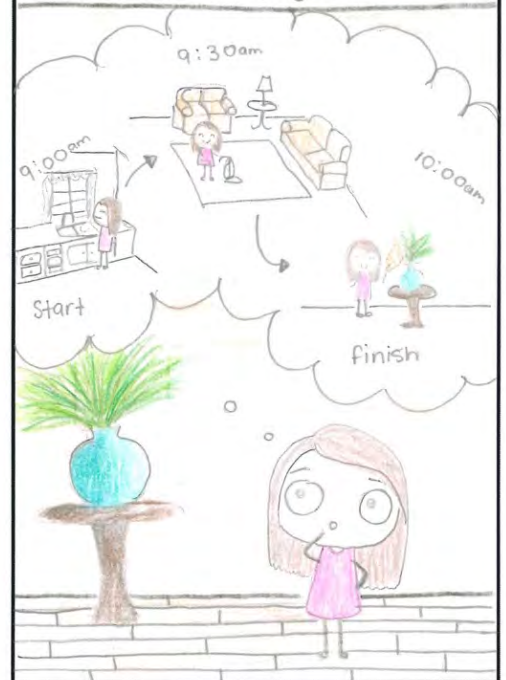
**“Pompeii 2”
by Angelica Perez**

I woke up feeling anxious
and I wished that it was
the next day already...



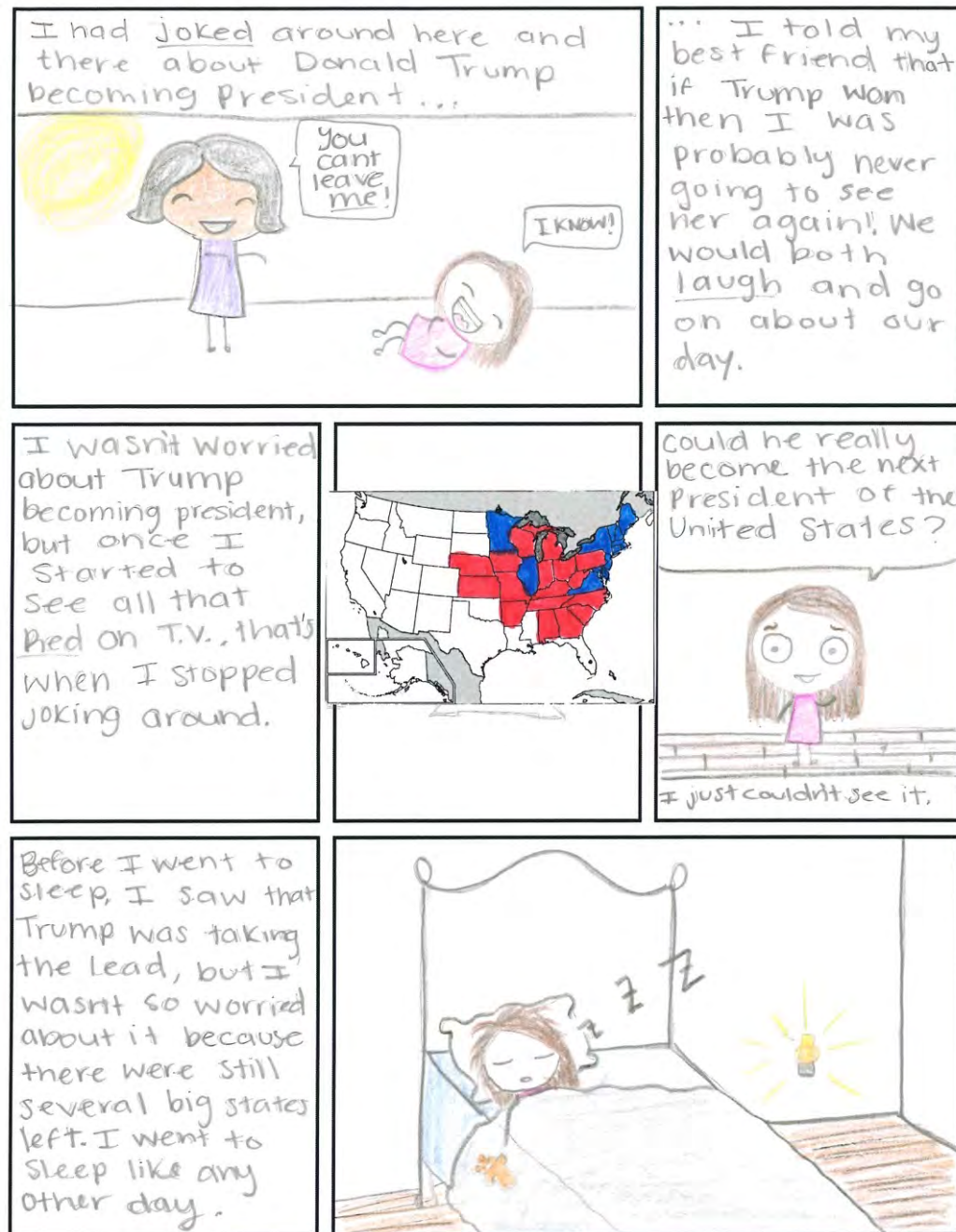
... But the only thing that
I could do was remind
people to vote!

I'm the type of person who likes
to have a schedule or a plan
for everything. I need to have
homework done before a certain
date? What's the plan? I need to
get the house cleaned before
10:15 am? What do I do first,
second, third? Do you understand
the point I'm trying to make?



So what happens when
I don't have a plan?
I start to freak out
and I end up stressing
out more than I should.





"The Smells of the Place Where I Lived"

by Luz Calderon

Before coming to the USA, I lived in a little town called La Junta, which is located in the state of Chihuahua in Mexico. La Junta is a very little town where there is just a little quantity of cars, and there aren't many factories, so the air smells clean. I have in my mind all the smells I perceived when I was a little kid. Before going to school, I remember the first smell was the hot coffee that my mom made for me. Another smell I have in my mind is the aroma of perfume. Since I was a little kid, my mom put a little perfume on me, and I really liked it. I remember going to school by foot in the mornings. I remember that in the summer mornings the air was clean and fresh, and I remember the smell of the humid grass. In the winter mornings the smell was smoky, but not in a bad way. In this little town, all the people have fireplaces and wood heaters, so in the mornings the whole town smells smoky, and cold. One of the best smells that I remember is the smell of the food when I came home. The scent of the soups that my mom made in winter and all the other food she cooked for me and my brothers. I also remember the aroma of the evening when my mom and I watered the plants and rosebushes of our garden. The perfume of the roses was beautiful. Like every person in the world, I like the odor of the damp earth. In the place where I lived, most of the streets don't have pavement, so the smell of wet ground was really strong, and it was something that I loved.

For me, the smell is a really important sense. I like to use perfume in the important events of my life. I have the perfume which I used in my graduation, and every time I use it, I can remember that important day. The smell brings to life again those important things in my life. All of the scents of my childhood and the town where I lived are really important for me. I can say that those things smell like home.

"La Junta" by Eduardo Gonzalez Aragon:



“I hate typing essays late at night”
by Jose Gutierrez

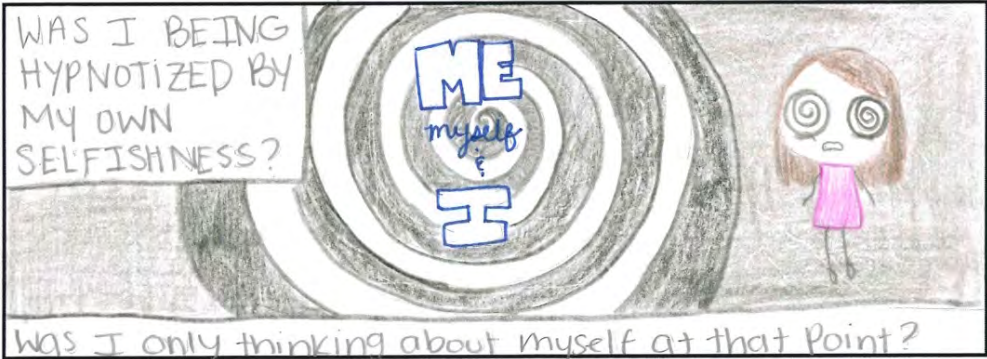
I’m bad at punctuation since I never know how to end a sentence
And my run-ons go on forever
And they don’t seem to end
And I hate that I know why
And I would rather not say.

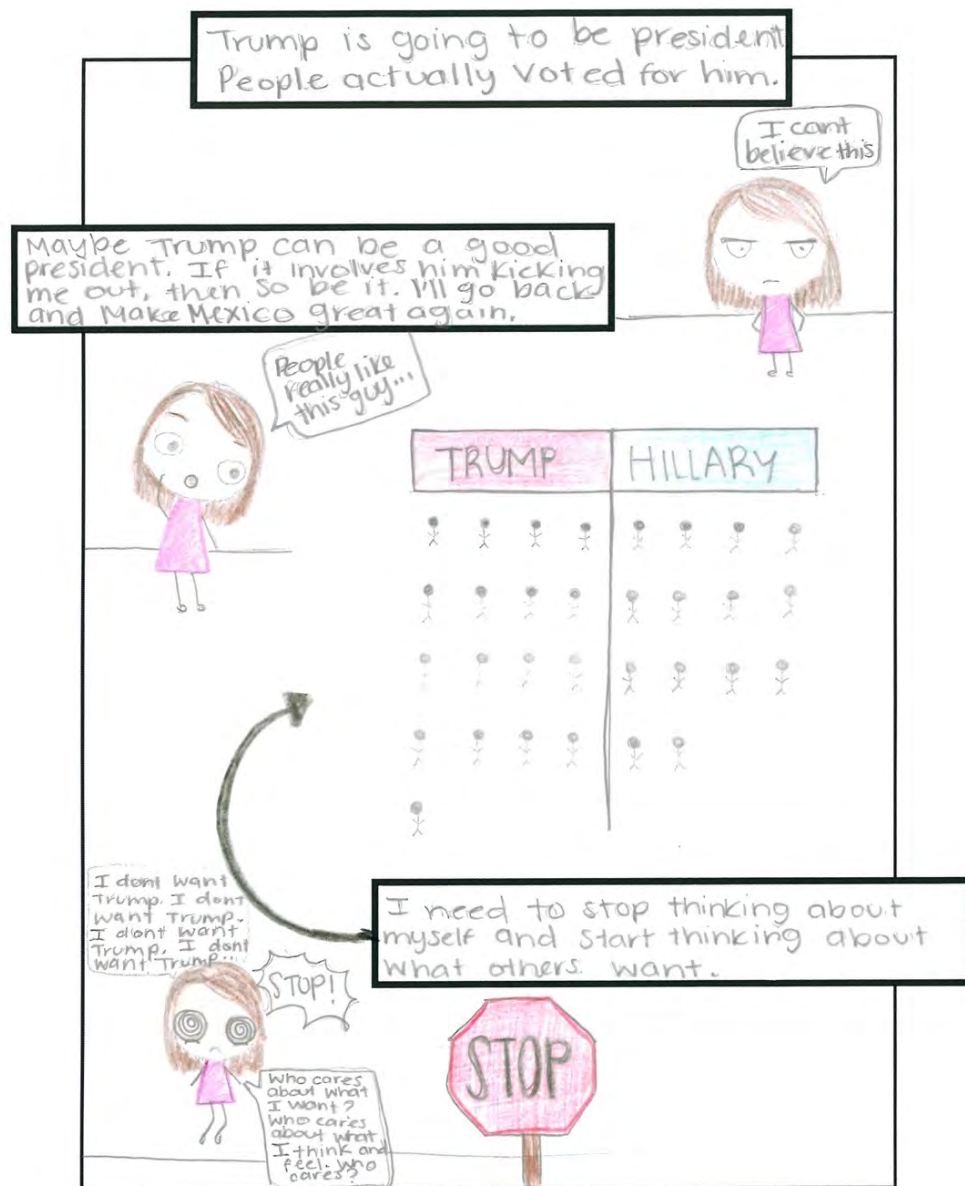
My grammar is weak on the days that end with “Y”
And my sentence structure doesn’t flow like it used to.
What does rhetorical mean?
I lack the denotation for my lack of dictionaries
And I lack the connotation since I know no words.
I just repeat phrases and restate conclusions because I hate typing essays late at night.

I need more time on this essay
Since I’m making this up as I go.
I need to make it to the word count
But I’m always at a loss for words.
I need to have a bolder font for no reason other than my ego
And I need smaller font for my self-esteem to match.

My statements lack evidence
Since my sources aren’t cited and still can’t be seen.
My research isn’t concrete since it came from “reliable sources”
Sources that aren’t supporting details
But I believe it anyway
Because I have a due date
And I’d rather be asleep than in this mess late at night.

November 7, 2016





I had been watching my little brother ride his tricycle back and forth on the sidewalk but I decided to play soccer with my friends across the street. Before playing my friends and I would always take off our shoes and play in our bare feet. Everyone would always ask us why, but there wasn't really a logical reason. We simply liked to feel the grass between our toes. I would always play goalie but today I was forward. I felt the grass blades sliding underneath me as I passed the ball to my friends. The wind skimming through the grass as we dived for the ball. In the corner of my eye, I could see Erick riding along joyfully on the sidewalk. I looked down, the grass shone with light from the sun, as if it were forming a halo around the soccer ball. I passed the ball and ran, the wind running through my hair causing it to look like blades of grass. My friend aimed it for the goal, we all held our breath, waiting to see if the ball would make it in. I don't remember if it did, or if my team won because in that very second my brother yelled in agony. I turned quickly, only to find him face forward on the sidewalk, his legs intertwined with the tricycle chains. I ran across the street, sharp pebbles pushing against the bottoms of my bare feet. Sharp pebbles nudging their way between my toes where the grass once had been but I could not remember it now.

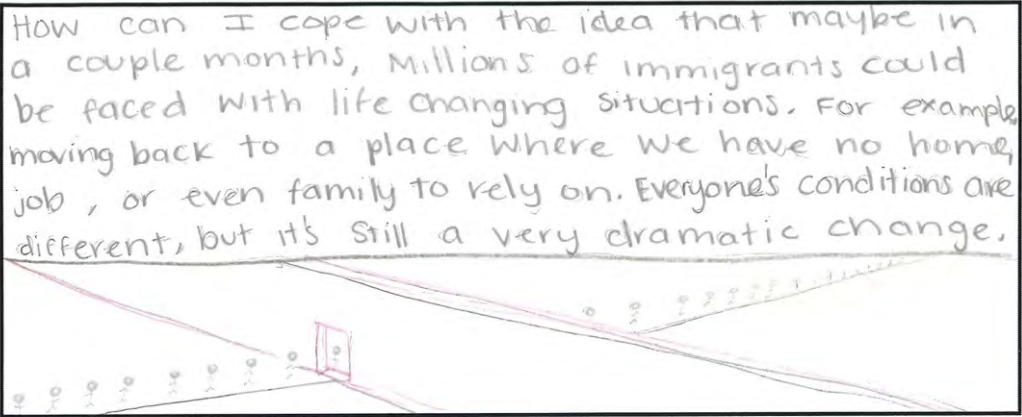
The Sidewalk:

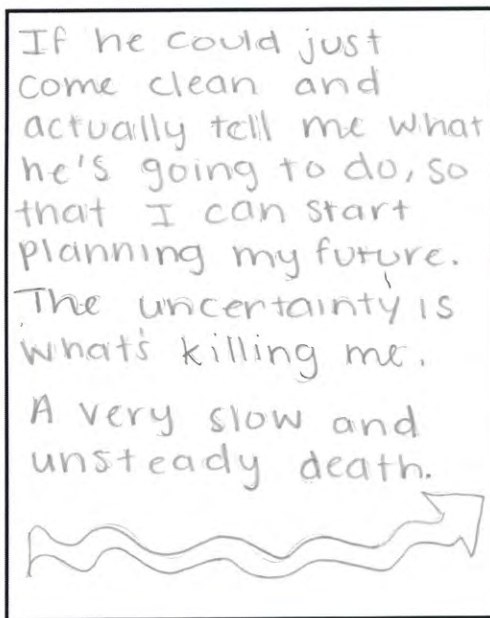
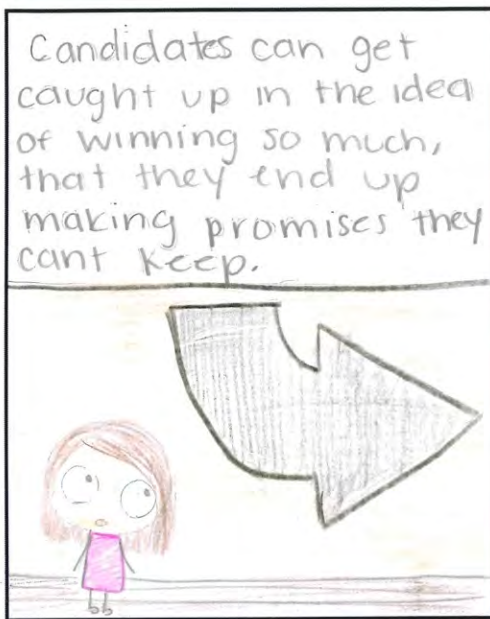
"And I don't want the world to see me, cause I don't think that they'll understand," I remember listening to that song as I rode my tricycle on the sidewalk. I remember the smooth humming of my tricycle's wheels. I remember telling papi I wanted the rain to form puddles. I remember counting the lines on the sidewalk... 5,6,7,8. 8. That was the last number I counted before everything turned black and I slept for a very long time. I slept for such a long time that I missed Papi's, Mami's, Diego's and Carla's birthday. When I woke up, it was not May anymore it was Halloween. I was so excited to go trick or treating but my legs could not move. They felt like they were made out of silly string. There was also this sadness in me, a sadness that was so overflowing it made everyone around me sad too. Mami cried almost everyday, she did it when she thought I was sleeping but I could hear her sobbing. I never saw Papi cry until Christmas, when we didn't have any money for gifts because they hardly worked to be with me at the hospital. Diego cried sometimes when he saw Mami cry but he would always make me feel better by bringing his toys. My sister, Carla, cried all the time. She blamed herself because she wished she could've taken care of me instead of playing music so loud everyone could hear it. She wished my legs didn't have scars for the kids to point and laugh at. She wished people wouldn't stop and stare. She wished my legs didn't hurt from time to time so badly that I would cry. She wished I didn't have to go to endless therapies. She wished I would've never been on that sidewalk.

I heard the sound of my baby yelling in agony. I heard my husband running and shouting my name. But my body could not move, I was stuck. I opened my eyes and ran out the door. My oldest son was running up the stairs, tears streaming down his face, "Fue mi culpa, no lo cuide bien, fue mi culpa!" I looked at him and kept running until reaching my youngest son. His legs tangled between the tricycle's wheels and pedals. His breaths were short and muffled similar to the time I ran a marathon. "Erick, necesito que me mires. Respira, respira, respira," I heard myself say between sobs. A group of people had gathered around us, looking and calling an ambulance on their phones. I held my baby, a pool of blood around us, kissing my skin where the sun had. I wasn't sure if the sun was shining or not anymore, but either way it did not matter. The sun had tricked me into thinking that because it was out and shining, it was going to be a good day. The sun lied, it was not a good day. In fact, it was the worst day and no sun could warm me up now.

The Rain:
"And you can't fight the tears that ain't coming, or the moment of truth in your lies," Carla's radio played so loudly I could hear it outside. Maybe I was old and my ears were sensitive to the loud noise or maybe she was playing it much too loud. I'd like to believe the latter. It was the perfect day to grill or be outside in general. The sun was shining, there was a light breeze but there were clouds not too far by. I figured it would rain later on at night. I flipped over the steak and whistled an old tune my father used to sing on the farm. It felt good to spend time with my family because we rarely saw one another. Diego, my oldest son, was playing soccer across the street with our neighbor's kids. Erick, my youngest, was riding his tricycle on the sidewalk. I looked at them, "Tan lindos, tan sanos, tan llenos de vida," I thought to myself. A droplet of water fell from the sky and sizzled on the grill. I hoped the rain wouldn't ruin the great evening I have planned for my family. "PAPI! I hope the rain makes puddles so I can ride through them with my tricycle!" Erick yelled and laughed wildly. It was drizzling now but not enough to make the kids go inside, after all, the sun was still shining. I turned off the grill and bent down to turn off the gas container. I heard a loud boom, I quickly got up and to my dismay my son laid in the middle of the sidewalk. "Claudia, Claudia el niño!" I yelled and ran towards my son. His little legs were bent inward and his feet were stuck between the wheels of his tricycle. I held him and sobbed until I could not anymore. My body was numb but I could still feel the drops of rain on my back, making my body colder than it already was.

The Grass:
"When everything feels like the movies, yeah you bleed just to know you're alive," my sister's stereo played so loudly all the kids on the block could hear it.





I should've been taking better care of him. I shouldn't have left him alone but I wanted to play soccer and I-I-I need you to call an ambulance."

The Sun:

"You're the closest to heaven that I'll ever be and I don't want to go home right now," my daughter's boombox played loudly warming the house up with energy, the same way the sun was doing. Memorial Day weekend is one of the few holidays I get off of work so it was good to lounge around. I stretched my legs on the ottoman and picked up the remote, surfing through the many channels of reality tv. I laid my head back feeling the sun's warm kisses on my skin. I had been uneasy all day, similar to when you have an interview or when you're going out on your first date. My husband thinks it's because trabajo mucho y no se descansar but I felt like it was more than that. My chest had felt this sharp pain on and off, almost as if I could not breathe. My body was cold and felt numb at times. If my mother were here she would have called it un mal presentimiento but I paid no mind to it. After all, it had been a relatively good day. My sons were out playing in the driveway, my husband grilling out on the lawn and my daughter painting in her room. It was peaceful but my body would not let me be at peace. "Perhaps my body knew something I didn't but felt the need to tell me," I thought, quickly laughed and dismissed it. My eyes began closing and my mind wandering, my body finally feeling a bit relaxed. They say that when you don't use one of your senses, the others enhance. Perhaps it was the fact that I had closed my eyes but I heard the sharp screeching of the driver's wheels.



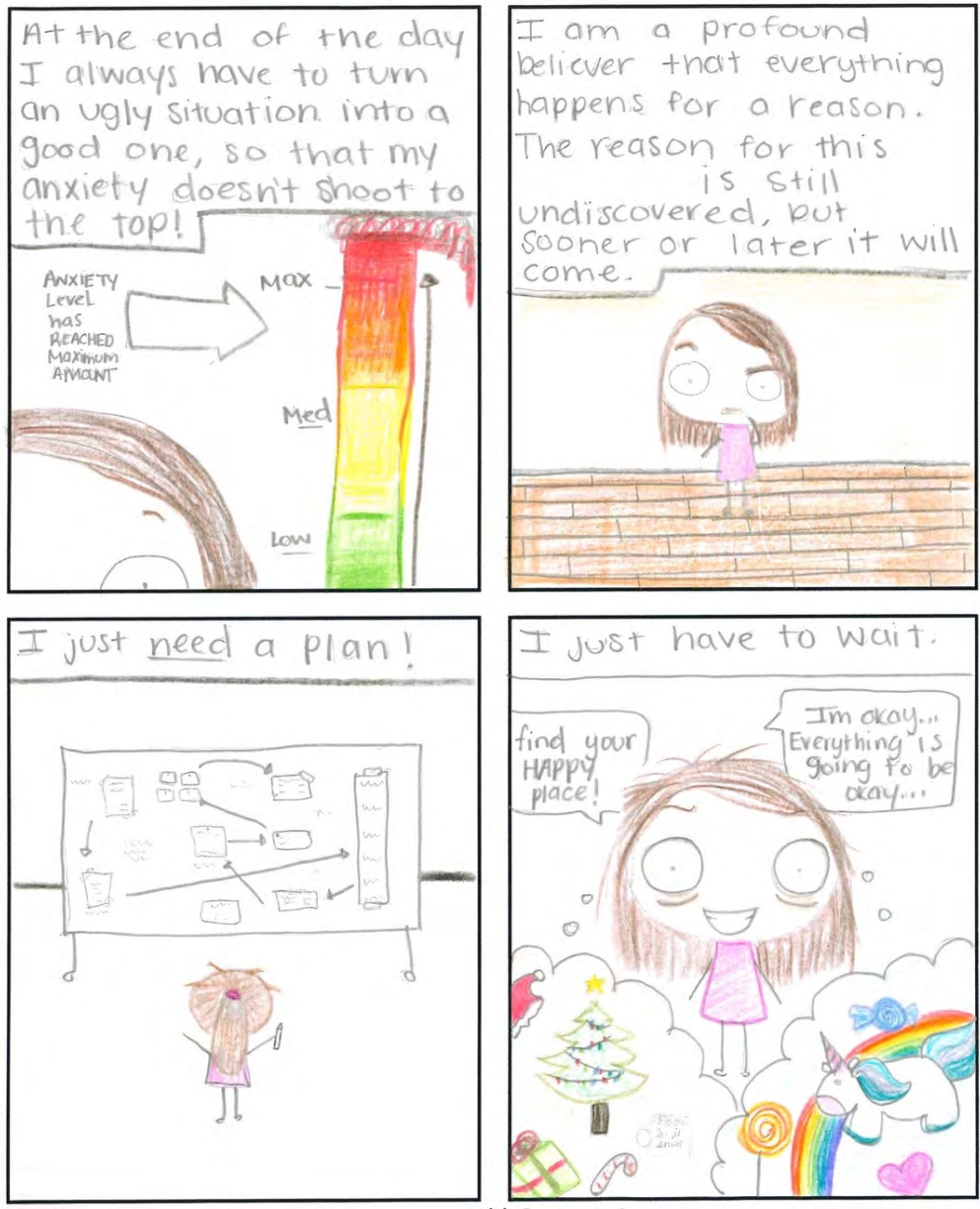
"Familia Es Primero"
by Edith Eyala

“Journal Entry 2/6/16”
by Ada Sanabria

*I heard her scream so passionately,
her shout was loud and strong
and I did not know what to think of it,
the silence was broken.
And I was intimidated, frightened,
her shout was heard
it called so far out,
and although her shout was covered in pain,
she was free.*

“De Temps en Temps”
by Carla Flores

The Wind:
“And I’d give up forever to touch you cause I know that you’ll feel me somehow,” my Barbie radio croaked out and shook every time the bass sounded, causing its collection of dust to flutter off like a bird’s wings. The window was cracked about halfway and through that crack the wind seeped in. It was not harsh wind; it was a soft breeze that carried many things with it. The wind had made the room rather chilly for a May evening. The wind had made the room smell of carne asada y cebollitas. The wind had made the room full of joyful shouts of children playing ball and angry shouts of parents telling the children to get off the street. The wind also carried the screams and cries of my 5-year-old brother as he tried to stop his tricycle but couldn’t. The wind carried the sounds of the drunk driver’s car going 50 mph although the sign right outside my house read: Speed Limit 20 mph. The wind carried the sound of my father’s footsteps running on the concrete sidewalk. The wind carried the sharp creak coming from the couch as my mother stood up and ran out the door. Although the wind carried many things, I could not hear any of them. The mix between the loud booming coming from the radio and the unorganized mess of thoughts in my brain were causing too much noise for me to truly listen. My brother rushed in the door and yelled words that I will never forget, “Erick, they ran him over. There’s so much blood. It’s my fault, it’s my fault, it’s my fault, it’s my fault. Please please call 911.



Winner

Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award

Poetry

“Black vs. White”

by **Brandon Harrison**

Acting black and acting white,
A trademark of today's society.

And since I'm a young black male, I'm dead in
the center.

They always tell me “You are the whitest
black kid ever!” or “You don't act black!”

And every time, I ask the same question:

“What is acting black?”

No answer.

They can't explain it, but they all love to say it.

Once, I was told it was because I was smart,
polite, I talked correctly, and I didn't sag every
day

So, by their definition, acting black is being a
dumb, slang-speaking, baggy pants wearing
hoodlum.

Well that's definitely not me.

But acting white=Succeeding in school?

I'd rather succeed.

That doesn't sound too bad to me, but it's
known as *selling out* to minorities like mine.

Me? A sell-out because I want to make
something of myself, and not be a failure?

In the United States, *ACTING WHITE* is a
pejorative term, usually applied to African
Americans, which refers to a person's
perceived betrayal of their culture by
assuming the “social expectations” of white
society.

“Expectations of white society?” Fuck that.

I talk properly because I WAS RAISED
RIGHT,

I wear my pants right because I WAS
RAISED RIGHT,

By my BLACK mom, BLACK dad, BLACK
aunts and uncles, and BLACK
grandparents.

And I'm made fun of because of it.

By blacks, whites, Asians, Mexicans, and
everyone else.

But, let me tell you. Actions are not based
by the color of skin, but the content of your
character.

But you can ask Martin about that one.

I've been like this my entire life, and not
once have I ever stopped what I was doing
and said

“I sure am acting black today.”

Or

“Wow. That was white of me to do.”

Or even

“I wonder how white I look doing this right
now.”

No one does. White, black, yellow, tan, or
burnt orange.

No one should be judged by the amount of
melanin in their skin.

It won't ever stop, but I just don't
understand it.

So, I started to just not care anymore.

I am who I am, because that's who I chose
to be.

Judge me if you want, but it won't stop me
from doing my thing.

And it shouldn't stop you from doing yours
either.

“Colors”

by **Nelly Guizar-Tapia**

There is beautiful color in the sky.

you only need to open your eyes.

It's not easily found,

with your eyes to the ground.

So when it rains, don't cry.

Just look for the rainbows in the sky.

For there's always a rainbow after it rains

And there's happiness after all the pain.



“Pompeii”

by **Angelica Perez**

Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Visual Arts

Replica of Brandon Boyd's Lightning Thumb Sketch
By Anett Amaya



“Gorgeous Disaster” by Miguel Fabian

I seen a beautiful girl at the food court today.
I knew I had to talk to her or say some wordplay.
She was wearing a nice and cute outfit that displayed her beauty.
I was willing to give up everything and do my duty.
We sat down and talked for a couple of hours.
I couldn't stop staring at her as if she had powers.
We talked about things that I knew would be hard to find in a girl.
I knew I had to keep talking to her and even make her my girl.
Aside from all that she had the most gorgeous hair ever.
She asked me if I liked Persian food and I said never.
I asked her what her favorite sport was and why?
She said I don't like sports I only care about being fly.
I was like life ain't only about being fly
Life is more about living happy before you die.
Her response was I have already lived life
I told her oh yeah? What about becoming my wife?
I asked her when would I be able to put a ring on her.
She said how about you get to unlock my heart like a cipher.
I said no more games girl so I took her outside.
Then some random guy passed by and eyed my girl.
Yet, she was not my girl but I was mad.
However, she was mad too and I was like no be glad.
She said glad for what? I was like nevermind.
I kept saying things like oh don't act dumb or be blind.
She said what do you mean? I knew she was my kind.
Forever she was going to be on my mind.
Our date was over and now it was time.
I started it all off by saying she looked like a dime.
Then she started blushing and I was starting to shine.
Without saying anymore words, we started to kiss.
After that kiss she was ready to be my miss.
I asked her out and soon enough she was my girl.
She was finally mine and was going to be my only girl.
My day was made and all I could think was about the future.
My heart had soon stopped beating for a bit and I felt like a suture.
I just could not wait to go home and fall asleep.
I did not want to be a creep so forget the dreaming part.
She kissed me again and left me later that night.
I left home happy because that kiss felt right.

Winner

Sister Mary Faith Schuster Award Fiction

An Excerpt from “The Plan”
by LaCherish Thompson

RIGHT NOW

“Subject 2304 it is time for your final examination. Please follow the preparational procedures on the screen located to the right of the cell door. Failure to complete the procedures will result in termination of both the exam and subject. If there is any reason why Subject 2304 is not able to complete the preparational procedures press the flashing red button labeled **STOP** now...”

The monotonous voice continues to give instructions but I can’t hear it over the belting chorus of doubts in my head. No! I’m not ready. I can’t do this. The plan is going to fail. This is impossible, Moxie. You’re ludicrous if you think it’s gonna work. You’re gonna die. “...the guards will be down to take Subject 2304 to its examination in exactly one hour.”

The moisture in my mouth completely dries and a fluttering sensation rips through my frail body. I feel myself slightly shaking as the flutters go into frenzy, moving in sync to the rapid beat of my heart.

“Moxie, it’s time,” Willow, my best friend announces.

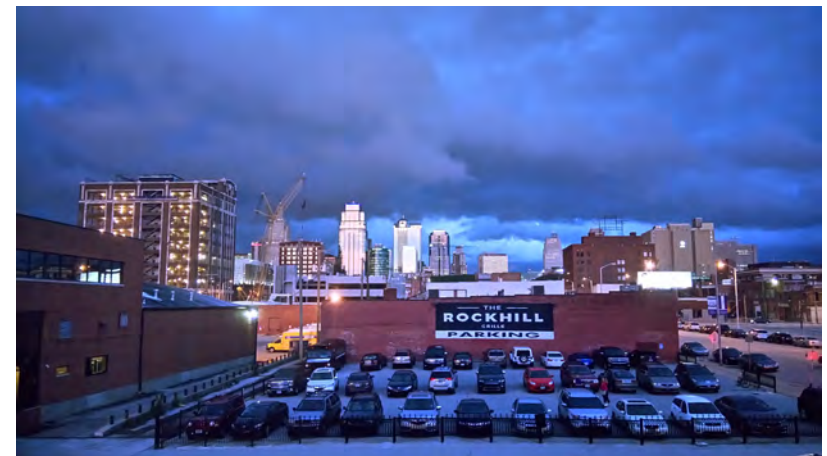
A wave of queasiness washes over me as the flutters settle in the pit of what’s left of my stomach. “We gonna be free.” Her hopeful words twist my stomach into complex knots. I open my mouth to protest her optimism but the only thing that comes out is a wheezed groan. “Moxie?” her southern twang forcing its way through her swollen, busted lips; a special present she received from the guards on her way back from her testing. Swallowing hard to create some form of wetness to soothe my throat doesn’t work and I find myself in a coughing fit instead. Each cough leaves my bony chest with a lingering achy burn. I bring my shaky bruised hands to my throat and the pressure forces hot tears to gush from my black eyes. A bitter, salty liquid sneaks its way up, causing my stomach to swirl. “Mox, what’s the matter?” she asks worriedly, making her way over to me.

“I’m. Fine,” I choke out as I clench my stomach and grit my teeth as my mind spazzes through the continuous sickening sensations; I’m a nervous wreck. “No, you ain’t,” she says as she slaps my back with much more force than necessary, her horrible attempt to stop my coughing.

The problem with this is that not one thing or choice benefits us all. For example, some people find pleasure in partying and drinking and can stay up all night doing so, but when it comes to going to church they do not find happiness in that because they are not willing to let go of worldly pleasures in order to enjoy long lasting happiness. The problem with looking for fulfillment in pleasure is that pleasure is temporal, and it doesn’t last forever. With that being said, obtaining a good life is a personal process, and it is based on those decisions that we make after we have determined them to be good, or just. Many times we will choose things that we know are wrong and that is when we will be lead away from the goal, happiness.

In conclusion, Aristotle saw being good as the way to reach a good life (the final cause) and happiness as the reward or evidence that we have lived a good life. Sometimes, the choices we make will seem good, and the only way to be sure that they are good is by analyzing the type of happiness it brought us, and if we maintained our morality while obtaining it. In my life I see happiness as the final cause and I try to live a virtuous life that will lead me to do good, because when I do good I am fulfilled. I am rewarded with happiness and fulfillment when I know that I have made the right choice. Sometimes I have to stand alone when being virtuous is involved, but I never forget my ultimate goal, to be happy, and that makes everything worth it.

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Untitled photo by Christian Vallejo-Hernandez

Temperance or moderation keeps us from overindulging in things that bring us pleasure, or seeking those things that are limited. Courage helps us to be able to do whatever it takes to live a good life, despite it not being the "popular" thing to do, and Justice is the rational part that decides what is good and what is not. By exercising these moral virtues we are able to identify what is good and how much of it is good, and to stand up for something when it is.

Being good or virtuous is very dependent on the person. What can be good to me might not be seen as good to someone else. Nowadays, we are surrounded by things, places, and even people that appear to be good and actually are not. This makes it hard for

people to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. With this being said, we are often bombarded with things that bring us temporal pleasure, and we forget what it is like to be happy and participate in things that bring us happiness. It is harder to live the good life now, because of the different ideas of what is right and what is not.

The choices we make now are geared towards what is more convenient to us.



**Untitled photograph
by Rebeca Alcala**

After the third strike, I wrap my tawny fingers around her small wrist, prying her mocha hand off me. The nausea becomes unbearable and something's about to come up. Already anticipating my next move, Willow snatches the thin sheets off her mattress for me to use as a sick sack but it gets caught on the metal bed post. No longer able to hold it down, the liquid erupts from my mouth onto the sparkling white floor. Black blood.

"Damn," she curses, immediately going to wipe up the blood so the guards, Romeo and Alan, won't see but, it spreads everywhere and turns out to look like one of those grotesque abstract paintings.

"Mox," she groans, giving up on trying to clean the floor. I heave as my stomach starts to swirl again and she hurriedly moves out the way. This time, I vomit the gruel from lunch earlier. Willow pulls my dead, curly hair away from my face, while rubbing my back in soothing circles. She always takes good care of me, something deeply rooted in her southern genes. Guess it's time to return the favor. My guts finally give me a break, and I take the time to lean back and catch my breath but a chunk of meatless meatloaf goes down the wrong pipe and the coughing returns more vicious.



**"Moon Over KC"
by Daniel Tygart**

Each one is like a strike of lightning against my chest leaving me in a numbing aftershock. It overwhelms me, and the last thing I hear is Willow's curses, before a complete darkness consumes me.

FOUR MONTHS AGO

High-pitched screams and an excruciating migraine awakes me from a discomforting, restless sleep. I hate bus rides. My eyes fill with tension as they try to adjust to the blinding light blazing on me, making it impossible to see. "Can we kill the lights?" I rasp out, while rubbing my throbbing temples. My eyes finally adjust and they immediately fall on a pair of metal doors chained together and my heart stops. Where am I? After a quick scan rest of the room I see hundreds--thousands--of metal shelves with vials filled with different colored liquids, opaque tablets and glass bottles filled with a thick metallic substance. In the center of the shelves are two gleaming white marble tables covered with several pairs of what looks like my stepdad's tool kit plus some syringes and needles.



“Guatemala Symbols”
by Belen Lopez

Everything is a little too tarnished and bloody for my liking. An abrupt blackness comes into view as I close my eyes tightly, trying to wake myself up from my subconscious' horrible idea of what a dream is; even pinch myself for good measure.

“The sun will rise and you'll see it was only a dream,” I repeat, softly singing one of my mom's many made up songs, the previous one for nightmares. Slowly drifting back to sleep a cool rush of air passes me followed by louder screams snapping me back into awareness. My heart drops to my stomach as I see my scenery hasn't changed, this isn't a dream. More girls run past to a crowd of girls all huddled around something.

Ideally we would like for people to make decisions that are “good,” but it is hard to distinguish what is good or not good, because what could be good to one person might not be good to another. However, Aristotle would say that happiness is the same for everyone. This is where morality and knowledge come into play, in order to define true happiness.

Aristotle argued that the best way to overcome the gap between knowledge of a good life and actually living it was through the development of a

good moral character. This calls for the development of good habits. Good habits allow us to perform certain actions without effort. Aristotle calls good habits, virtues or excellences (188). By developing good habits or virtues we can obtain what is really good for us, as opposed to bad habits or vices which lead us towards things that may appear to be good, but may turn out to be bad. It is important to be virtuous in order to make moral choices that reflect it and lead us to a good life, which is ultimately a life of happiness.

According to Aristotle the most important moral virtues or habits are temperance, courage, and justice (188).



“The path one has taken might not always be the best, but it is the next step you take that will make a difference”
by Yoseline Palmas Perez

“Being Happy Is Worth It”

by Gabriela Gandara

Have you ever wondered in what way you can live the most abundant or good life? Or what your purpose in life is? I have, and Aristotle also considered these questions. He wanted to know if there was a final end, goal, or purpose for human life. For Aristotle the final end of human life is to flourish, live well, and to have a good life. But what makes a good life? People have different ideas about what a good life is. Aristotle believed the ultimate goal is to be happy. Happiness is the key to living a good life, but it all depends on the person and what brings them happiness.

According to Aristotle, whenever we do something, we have some end in mind. If we go to school, our end is to get an education or a good job; if we exercise, our end is good health; if we go to work, our end is to get money and receive financial security. Aristotle argues that no one strives to do things if the consequences are bad. However, Aristotle believes that we cannot simply live our lives doing things for the sake of something else. We must find “...something, we prize ‘for its own sake’...That would be the highest good, since there is nothing else we want that for” (185). He thinks that by having this goal in mind, it will be easier to obtain it because everything we do will be towards that goal, which is what is truly good. What he believed was the goal, which almost everyone (educated or not) agrees with, is happiness. People often compare happiness to good living or successful living. They disagree, however, with the meaning of happiness.

Happiness cannot solely be feeling happy, because if it were, it would be temporal. Happiness has to be the final cause; therefore, it should be the act of being happy. With that being said, happiness is ultimately dependent on the person. “The highest good, happiness, must be something proper to the person that ‘cannot be taken away’” (186). My idea of happiness can be very different from someone else's idea. It all depends on what the person values and what their definition of happiness is. I think that no one strives to do things if the consequences do not prove to be favorable to them.

I recognize them; they're my classmates, but where are the boys?

“Hey, where are we?” I ask out but I'm ignored. Whatever is over there must really be fascinating. “Hey,” I say louder, which causes my migraine to come back full force, “What are you looking at?”

“Amber!” someone screams.

My head snaps to their direction, “Amber?” I ask aloud, my voice filled with panic as I assume the worst. My headache subsides for a moment as horrid thoughts of my best friend being hurt flash in my mind. I clumsily get off the polished white floors and stumble over to the group.

“Check her pulse!”

“Call an ambulance!”

The pain slowly returns as my stumbles turn into a drunkard's run, my desperate need of why everyone was screaming around her growing with each step. “She's not breathing,” a soft, familiar voice cries. Shoving girls out of my way, I finally reach the front only to find a limp Amber cradled in her sister, Kana's, arms.

“She's dead,” she whispers.

“No, she isn't don't say that,” I scream out sprinting to her and snatching Amber out her arms, ready to put my CPR training to use. I gently lay Amber's bruised and scarred

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"Into darkness I stand, yet people don't know I'm surrounded by inner beauty"
by Jonathan Moya Rivas

head down as I internally play “Stayin’ Alive,” by the BeeGees and begin the chest presses.

“Moxie, stop! She’s gone!” Kana screams, pushing me off her.

“No, she can’t be,” I sob. My mouth fills with saltiness as a mixture of tears and snot slides between my lips. Wiping my eyes, I notice blood on my hands, Amber’s blood.

“What in the hell is going on?” I scream at the girls. No one responds as they all go in dismay. Crawling back over to my dead friend, I take her cold hand into mine. The pain throbs harder than ever as the back of my eyes burn from the nonstop tears flowing from my puffy eyes. I look at the lifeless Amber; her short blonde hair all frazzled except for a few slick strands sticking to her forehead. Dark purple bags hang low under her closed almond-colored eyes. Crusted blood decorates her frowned mouth, and a long gash stretches from her forehead to her chin. The yellow face of her worn out Nirvana shirt is stained with her blood and her arm is covered in small, angry red pricks. Someone murdered her. Bawls rake through Kana’s body while she brings her dead sister closer to her.



“Daisza”
by Wasiba Hamad

“I’m so sorry Kana,” I whisper, “But trust me, we will find whoever did this. My stepdad’s a detective, remember? And I promise you that the monster who did this, won’t walk away free,” I assure her.

“She never hurt anyone; she was so sweet and innocent. She didn’t know anything. Who would kill her, Moxie? Why would they kill her?!” she screams.

“What do you mean she didn’t know anything?” I ask suspiciously, my mind goes alert at how odd of a statement that was to say right now in this situation.

Ignoring me, she goes back to crying and I wrap my arms around her shoulders in comfort. Despite Kana being adopted, she and Amber had a bond stronger

After a year or two of schooling, I picked up the English language and was proficient enough in it that I spoke two languages by second grade. I started to have more American friends than Hispanic. Over the years, I spoke less and less Spanish. I am now to the point that my Spanish sounds more like the Spanish of Spain because of my American accent.

I’m so “Americanized” that I forgot how to speak my native tongue. I now only speak Spanish when my family talks to me because they won’t take an English answer as a response. My taste in music is based on what I understood more – which is English. When I was really young and wasn’t exposed to as wide a range of music, I only listened to Spanish songs. Mariachi wasn’t my cup of tea, though. I started listening to rap, electronic, rock and reggae, even though my parents would not let me listen to any of these in the house.

I don’t like feeling different from my family or race. I always considered myself to be the oddball. Though I lack language proficiency and soccer skills, Mexico does run through my blood. I can either let the lack of similarity hold me down or look at the bright side and see that it isn’t all bad. After not being part of the Hispanic clique in school, I learned that I may be different, but I’m not alone. There are others like me who don’t fit the “Mexican” persona. There are others who don’t fit the cookie cutter idea of being Mexican. I may be different and that is fine. But at least I’m not alone.

Over all, does it matter that I don’t define myself as Mexican? Not really. I am what I am and I like what I like. There are others who would agree with me on this. Others, like me, are the outliers that shouldn’t let what society “needs” from us define us. I do feel disappointed that I am not what my ethnicity “normally” acts like. I’m pretty sure that everyone feels that way, though. And if that’s the case, then should this one idea of not being good enough bother me? It shouldn’t bother me, and I wouldn’t want it to bother anyone else.



Untitled Photograph
by Elaine Ehrhardt



“Looking out of the only window leading to prison in Venice”
by Angelica Perez

“More or Less Mexican-American”
Anonymous

My ethnicity is Mexican but I don’t like the fact that I must define myself as Mexican-American. My ethnicity doesn’t define who I am and I think I have done so much to actually make that true. I may be Mexican by blood, but I am not by almost every other means. In my early childhood, I remember playing soccer with the other Hispanic children but I never liked the sport. The music I heard around the house didn’t interest me as much as it did others. I didn’t like most of the things my parents or friends liked.

I was always the “different” one in my family. If you look at the family photo, you could see resemblances in all the family members, However, if you could see what was inside, then you would see the difference. I hate to admit it, but I am more American than Mexican. I don’t like it only because I feel left out. I don’t see why that should matter, though. Why it should have any importance to my life. My best reason for needing to identify myself is that people need to figure out who they are. Being “American” or whatever that term means is the closest I can come to identifying myself – more than “Mexican.” Growing up, I wasn’t really exposed to “Americans” much until I started going to school. The only people I spoke to were my family and their Hispanic friends.

than any other sisters that I’ve ever seen. “She didn’t know anything,” she mumbles into my arm. Concluding that Kana is going through trauma and is rambling, I push aside her suspicious words. I rest my head on top of hers and something black on her pale neck catches my eye. I grab a fist of her raven hair, and raise it up to get a better look.

“What are you doing?” she asks annoyed with my continuance of interrupting her mourning.

“Th-there are numbers on your neck,” I stutter. “2, 9, 8, 1.” I hurry and grab the end of my ponytail yanking it upward, “What does mine say?”

“2, 3, 0, 4.” she sniffles. “What does that mean?”

“I don’t know,” I reply looking back at Amber when she starts crying again.

“Have you seen Brittani, Jo and Willow?” I ask.

“I don’t know.”

“I’ll be right back, okay?” She just nods and I try and to maneuver through the crowd of mourning girls, trying to find the rest of my friends.



Untitled photo by Christian Vallejo-Hernandez

“Moxie!” Instantly I recognize who that deep and raspy voice belongs to.

Frantically, running through the crowd, I desperately try to find a tall redhead with blonde highlights. A cold and sweaty body wraps itself around me, causing me to involuntarily stumble into a pair of girls. “Sorry,” I mumble as the stench of cigarettes and warming comfort accompanies the body; Brittani. I turn around and embrace her tightly, afraid that if I let go, she’ll end up like Amber.

“I never thought I’d say it, but gosh, you smell good Brittani,” I breathe into her hair. She weakly chuckles and breaks the hug. Her big green, wet eyes give away that she’s been crying, a rare act for her. “What is this place? What happened to Amber? Where are the guys? How did we get here?” she bombards.

“Brittani, calm down. I don’t know what’s happening, but first we need to make sure Jo and Willow are alright.”

“Okay,” she says as she grabs my hand tight, making me wince a little.

“Jo? Willow?” we call out in unison as weave in and out the crowd of girls. A large sound of gasps and screams booms and a big circle is formed around someone. “Moxie,” Brittani says in a low voice as she points to the people in the middle of the circle, Willow and an unconscious Jo. We both sprint towards it, I glance quickly back at Kana and she hasn’t moved an inch. “Move!” I yell yanking girls out of the way, trying to get to Jo, hoping it’s not too late.

“Oh no, Jo,” Brittani says as we see our friend Willow crouching on the ground next to Jo.

“Willow,” I say and she jumps up hugging us tight, leaving a hot, moist residue on my shoulder.

“Oh, I’m glad to see y’all,” she says.

“What happened?” Brittani asks.

“I-I don’ know we was trynna find y’all and she fell out,” she informs us.

“Where’s Amber and Kana? They okay?” Willow asks nervously. Avoiding telling her the painful answer, I crouch down to check Jo’s pulse and relief washes over me, “She’s still breathing.”

“Jo!” I scream at her, shaking her as violently as I can, making her flail like a fish out of water.

“Moxie don’t kill her,” Brittani cries.

“I asked where’s Kana and Amber?” Willow asks with a quiver.

Brittani nudges me with her knee, of course she wants me to tell her, but I’m not. Ignoring them both, I continue my method of shaking and screaming, “Jo, wake up!” Her

thick, caramel colored body continues to lay there not moving the slightest.

“Sorry, Jo,” I say softly as I raise my shaky hand and meet it against the side of her cheek.

“Moxie, Stop!” Brittani yells. I slap her again.

“She’s gonna kill her!” someone cries. Another slap.

“That’s enough!” Brittani yells again.

“She will not die! We already lost Amber and we’re not gonna lose anyone else,” I spat at her looking her dead in the eyes.

“Amber’s dead?” Willow asks with a trembling voice, Brittani nods bringing Willow to a hug. She holds Willow tight as she mourns at her friend’s death. I smack Jo with all the strength I have until a weak hand finds itself on my arm. Jo’s eyes flutter open. “Hit me again, and I swear—

“Jo,” I say cutting her off as I hug her tight; she coughs at my strong grasp.

“What happened? Where are we?” she asks weakly as she scans around the room. “I don’t know we’re trying to figure that out,” I help her to stand.

“We gotta hurry, we can’t stay here,” Willow speaks up, “We could end up like Amber.”

“What happened to Amber?” Jo asks, her voice shaky. Willow informs her and she lowers her head and cries; a silent heaviness falls upon all of us. We’re gonna miss you, Amber.

“We will find a way back home,” I speak to everyone, “No one else will die, I promise, but first, does anyone know where the hell are all the boys?”



**“Basilica of St. Mary of the Flower”
by Angelica Perez**