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Trinity Pressings







Trinity Pressings 2018

CREATIVE WRITING AND VISUAL WORKS BY THE BOYS FROM TRINITY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



What Shakespeare Saw

The waters are not still tonight. Ticked by the moon's pathetic beams, the waves begin to laugh. In malevolent mirth they break and swirl, spewing out an insignificant limb, hanging loosely from a shrivelled torso, dragging behind it two lamely legs. With a singular flick of disgust, the river thrusts the tainted figure from its womb. The man awakens as a miscarriage of strength and privilege. As he lands on the damp shore, the sand is electrifying. Warped memories of his transgression pulse through his body, like negatives being burnt into his eyes. The screams of a ravaged doe, the warm flow of "in cold blood", none of it scares him as much as her. The girl, with no hands and no tongue, whose tears plough fury in her cheeks. Revenge, she is coming. Eyes open. Bolt upright. Ragged breathing as he turns from the murky depths to forest from whence he came. The forest that conceals her body in a grave of leaves and shadows. The man mutters to himself, "*O, why should nature build so foul a den, unless the gods delight in tragedies?*" He peers upwards, to his abode at the top of the hill. They will already have looked in there, no doubt. In fact, he might even be able to hear their shouts from here. The man turns back to the water. It will not be the gallows for him. No, there is a city across the river. He cannot see it, but he knows of its magnificence. He has heard tell. The river is too rough, so he will take the bridge in the morning.

The gate-keeper grunts with glee as he watches the man wipe dung off the sole of his shoe with a stick. Under the glare of the midday sun, the gate-keeper's mines dry quickly, and he is especially pleased that this one caught its prey. He debates whether he should open the gate for the visitor to pass. After all, the gate-keeper prides himself on his tolerance, allowing all kinds of travellers to cross his bridge. Yet despite this, the surly man looks to be in a hurry, and the rushed ones are always quickest to snap. The gate-keeper plants himself right in front of the entrance and produces some more manure at the man's feet. The man uses the stick to beat the gate-keeper. Yelping in pain, the gate-keeper cries, "Please, refrain from this barbaric expression of anger!" Eyes open. Bolt upright. The man swings his head to and fro, looking for a face to match the plea. "I am right here!", the gate-keeper cries. The man totters back and screeches. "How... How can you speak? You are but an ass tied to a post!" With a conceited snort the gate-keeper responds, "Who are you to tell me what I am? You see an ass but refuse to hear me as a man. *Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind, and therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.*" The gate-keeper tells the man of the city, a place of humble appearances

but noble citizens, an ass with a heart of gold. The man manages a subtle nod to the donkey as it opens the gate and begins to climb the bridge.

A droplet of sweat is beckoned into existence upon the man's brow. He frowns dramatically, sending this ball of perspiration on the long voyage through his bristling eyebrows, down the ridge of his nose, and through the air, finally exploding in glorious carnage on the arid pavement of the bridge. As his eyes trace the fractures on the tiled path, the man inhabits the city of his mind, more than if it were right before him. So enraptured is the man by the "coulds", "mights", and "maybes" of the city, that he almost misses the lunatic standing on the peak of the bridge. The bright morning light shines on his dark skin, his towering frame droops under the pressure of an unknown guilt, and his impish sobs send tremors down his toned chest. Certainly, this is a fellow full of doubt. The man sneers in revulsion as he passes. What is this strong young lad doing crying on a bridge? He is an emasculated lion, an oak cut down in its prime. He deserves no pity, no honour. Between sniffs, the lost case manages a few words; "I'll jump you know. Just listen to me for a minute. No one listens to me. You all stride towards this city like it's the garden of Eden, but it's no paradise. It's purgatory." The man asks, "Is it not called the city of pleasure?" The sobbing lunatic looks at the man one last time. His blood shot eyes paint a picture of unfulfilled promises, whispered devotion, stolen passion. He mutters, "*What's in a name? that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.*" The lunatic jumps, and the man watches himself fail to lift a finger.

Before he has even heard the splash from far below, the man's attention is far away. Now at the crest of the bridge, the zenith of his quest has come and gone, with a somewhat lack of vigour. Yet despite the best efforts of talking donkeys and lovestruck loons, the city still remains. Every muscle in the man's body tenses: from up here, he can see it all. The shimmering pinnacles, the glittering windows, the towers that seem cradle the heavens themselves. The sun itself strains to peer into the uppermost chambers of the tallest palaces. Something glints in the corner of the man's eye. He furrows his brow as his gaze disappoints him by deciding to focus on a merchant's stall near the end of the bridge. Before the beautiful cityscape manages to woo his attention again, the man finds himself in front of the stall, scrutinizing the merchant's wares. The merchant is a stout and old, with a kind grin and respectful bow. Yet the

man knows there is more to this merchant. The bronze cap on his tooth confesses to his stinginess; his dirty fingernails warn of corruption; most of all, his kippah whispers, "greedy Jew, greedy Jew". This is why, despite the merchant's exciting descriptions of the city's rich gold mines, legendary treasures, and luscious pastures, the man says nothing. He lamely shrugs his shoulders, and growls "*All that glitters is not gold*".

Maybe it is the sour aftertaste of the merchant's lies. Perhaps the conflicting descriptions of the city have confused him. It could be that all the trudging over this derelict bridge has tired him. Whatever the reason, the man finds himself at the city gates with no anticipation to show for it. The glorious gates stand wide open, open palms beginning for even the most frugal sample of apprehension. Nonetheless, the man stands unrelenting in his disinterest, having submitted to the tedious beatings of mediocrity. Tensions run high while the man approaches a sleeping figure sitting by the entrance. A crow heralds his arrival. Or maybe it is a dove. The man has neither the patience nor inclination to consider it. He crouches down and sees the scabby face of a homeless beggar. Disappointment accidentally, innocently, trips over his heartstrings and falls into his bowels. There, it festers, dies, and is risen from the dead as a burning, soiled, anger. This is no beggar. This is the king of the city. The epitome of false hope. The pinnacle of spoilt dreams. The looks up at the grandiose towers and magnificent facades of the city. He knows the normality that hides beneath. It speaks to him, it begs of him. Just one request. "*Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.*" This changes everything. He will never enter this city, because he has no need to. The man picks up a nearby rock and looks up at the moon. It's already night. He chuckles, looks down at the king, and goes to work.

The bridge is busy this morning. Plenty of travellers to enlighten. The man sits nearby watching the foreigners enter the city gates. A city he has never known, yet adores all the same. A city whose secrets are beyond his wildest imagination, yet also born from it. A city whose gates he has never passed, but whose king he has conquered. Eyes opened. Bolt upright. The man knows it is time. He begins climbing the bridge, leaving the kingdom behind. Every so often, he will stop a traveller in his tracks, look him deep in the eyes, and tell of his city which lies ahead.

Nick Bouletos (11Mu) | Second Place, Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



I faintly recall the Winter when I came to terms with the fact that my body had left me. With a lethargic rise, a peculiar gentle rummaging in the gallery of my intestines had occurred to me. Soon, this escalated into what I can only describe as a complete harvesting of the organs, its hollowed skeletal sockets filled with slow-drying cement. In retrospect, I have, more than once, pleaded for the Reaper to take a free scythe at what I now consider, a pathetic creature that has become so accustomed to, and spoilt, by the banality of his condition that it bores even himself. I'd like to think the encounter not quite so horrific. No, I'd rather consider it a firm deportation of the soul from the domicile of the well to the land of malady. The new land is quite welcoming in its own way. A generally egalitarian spirit triumphs the cold air, and the country speaks an intricately dull language of its own calibre. Kindly souls inject transparent bags of poison into your arm, and you feel helplessly swamped with passivity and impotence as the venom courses through your veins. It's quite remarkable, this chemo-poison, a highly-sought preservative that lets you rot a little longer until you truly start to reek. It is nevertheless this poison that citizens of the sick country grasp in desperate measures, hopelessly clinging onto their old domiciles.

It occurred to me, and quite fascinatingly so, that in the face of impending demise, citizens of the sick country are forever committed to this fine art known as "stoicism", desperately preserving fragments of dignity whilst invested in this obligatory commitment known as "survival". People of the sick country are forever assailed with rumours of remedies. It takes a certain courage to admit, however, that beyond the fourth stage, there is no fifth, and you never can truly predict when that magic bullet will hit. As it slowly manoeuvres in, you even develop this unconscious elitism about your condition that you begin to realise, beyond your malady, there is perhaps nothing else truly interesting about you. Your misfortune becomes a magnet for all kinds of hypocrisy, double standards, and the occasional kind inquiry. The only way citizens of the sick country are truly able to set the inquirers' mind to ease is to simply be as candid as possible, and not adopt any sort of euphemism or denial. Easier said than done, after all, you would hardly call me reticent about my own condition. If the doctor were to kindly inquire "How are you?", I'd make the lethargically conceited effort to respond, "Still alive". Needless to say, my malady has erupted into a seed of solipsism unbeknownst to the old domicile.

Yet, in my fading memory, there is the lingering ecstasy that is the vision of the old domicile, so rich and fertile it undermines any presence of the word "malady". I turn to its beauty whenever the thought of impending death strikes me. This heavenly gift, so inarticulately wonderful to man, now withers as its throne falls to the thorns... It seems that nowadays, this ecstasy has metamorphosed into a kind of nostalgic depression, and whenever asked my biggest fear, it seldom deviates from "I'll never see it again... The old country..." Needless to say, I've been cheated. I've been cheated, not because the venom has rendered my voice to a gruff, hoarse bleat, but that it has deprived me of something so fundamental to the human condition; the soul. In this memory, there is still the fading dream of the old country, so overwhelming lush and beautiful, now withering powerless to this thick seeping smog... The poison drains the livelihood from living souls, a ghostly horror plagues the land, walking corpses white with leprosy roam the prickly fields.... At this sight, the citizens of the old domicile, the country of the well, have already kindly conspired to escort you miles away from the good country... And it hits you, that bitterness – excommunicated... Your time draws near...

Stumbling two steps... it might as well be the March on Rome. At the end of the line, your body is enveloped in a cycle of torture. The kindly Reaper visits thrice a day, every time, its scythe digs half way into your soul, then leaves, half way in, then leaves... And truly, how merciful, that it should let you linger a little longer. Should judgement day come, however, the bells will ring, your mortal body will be lifted... and you'll discover the subsiding bitterness with a subsiding consciousness... In eager anticipation of that glorious day, all you can do is wait, wait till the Reaper finally decides to take mercy on your soul...

And... as the end draws near, you remain loyal to the sick country... your glowing vision... the country of the well... the old domicile... it slowly... fades...

Ben Liu (12Sc) | Winner Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition

THE OLD DOMICILE



COSMOLOGICAL HARMONY

Richard Collins (9Mu) | Winner Junior Poetry Division,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition

When they look into the vile, What do they see?
A white and cerulean orb filled with incongruity.
The Pryor looks onward, towards the desolate void
With unrelenting disdain to the practices employed.

When we look into the vile, What do we see?
The normal applications of mundane complacency.
The upheated naivety of the dark azure
Serves as a constant reminder of our insignificant stature.

Take a step forward and witness the celestial frontier.
You will see what they see.

DOWNED SPIRITS

I,

Am imbibed by the careless
pulse of bodies moving effortlessly
to the animated pop-song
a new-found idol chants,
Tired lips in stone, now smiling start to crack.

The endless booze flows
From every tap, from every glass
The fiery spirits slide down thirsty tongues
Shot after shot the stuff goes down,
With flushing ears, the numbing warmth is back.

Groups of boys not yet to be men
Between them share their good news
Of quick delights and lusty nights
Slurs and gestures with stories preach,
With unknown laughter, jaws will slowly crack.

The soft mumbles and moans creeping
From cramped booths or concealed corners
Young passion enacted amongst
Couples with worshipping lips,
To porcelain white cheeks, its hue comes
back.

Away from the mayhem
Away from the bar
Fresh air through fractures seep
Washing its face with painful relief,
The mask in pieces, fresh the chaos comes.

But each breath becomes fainter
As the creature retreats
The air fades
Rifts seal,
The mask now mending, never to succumb.

Again.

Steven Serb (12Ar) | Winner Senior Poetry
Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition





The Hauntings

I did not imagine it. I definitely saw it with my own eyes. It was a figure. Hiding amongst the deep dark abyss of lonely shadows. An empty void this peculiar figure stood in. One moment it was there, the other, gone. I've been seeing this figure a lot lately. It haunts me like a bad nightmare, a nightmare you can count on to stay in your head.

When I see the creature, I feel like I'm stepping through an empty void, nothing above me, nothing below, yet I'm not falling. I'm not scared. Until the creature shows up. For this is a creature called a Haunting, a creature made from fear and anger.

The Haunting had wide and hollow eyes, like it had seen something eerie. It almost looked sad, or upset, like it too had been followed by something with no soul. It had a body of a human, however, it's humanoid limbs would ascend into a mass of pelt and scales that it would drag across the ground as it walked. It preys on the insomniac and follows me wherever I go.

My name is Ryan, Ryan Tinker, and I'm one of the unfortunate few who suffer from insomnia. I see a creature. A creature that haunts me. A creature I've decided to take care of for once and for all.

My day began like a hike. A tremendous hike up an impossible mountain. The kind of hike where you would fall, get back up, and try again. The hike started at the bottom. I first got up from what seemed to be my sleepless night. My stiff body felt tired from lack of sleep. My legs complained from not wanting to leave the comfort of the bed, but I forced them to get moving and start my routine of the day.

I got dressed, had breakfast and finally brushed my teeth. I felt ready. The kind of "ready" that one may feel due to something big about to happen. I was ready to conquer my power over the Haunting and grasp for freedom without darkness. However, I feared this may be only the start of the hike.

There are many diverse solutions to my problem. I have arranged to see someone, someone who claims to be born from magic. Someone who has had an experience like this before. This person claimed that she is a female with orange-red hair. She informed that her given name was Carly.

I left my home, a small flat in an apartment building, to be hit by a strong sense of the early autumn morning. I could nearly taste the crisp air as it flowed through my rejoicing lungs. The

intense coolness made the perfect time to go to the café and get a coffee, which just so happens to be where I am meeting this strange woman.

As the cafe came into sight the heavenly smell of fresh food and drinks wafted through the air. The smell seemed to hook me in and dragged me faster towards the café. I could go for something to eat!

There were many people in the café. I spotted a woman with long red curly hair. I couldn't tell if her hair was dyed or natural. I walked over to her to see if she was the person I'm looking for. She seemed too focused on what she was eating to notice me approach her.

Finally, when I reached her, she looked up and greeted me. It was a normal greeting, but something slipped by. She knew my name. I hadn't told her my name before! Deeply confused I asked her,

"How do you know who I am?"

"That doesn't matter" she replied. "Born from magic remember."

I knew, however, she was just trying to avoid the subject.

"Sit down" she told me.

So, I sat on the chair next to her. She told me the way to deal with the Hauntings.

"They are weak to happiness", Carly advised. "Whenever you see one, try grasp onto a happy memory and it will stay away for a longer period of time. Eventually, they will just leave."

With this information completely absorbed into my brain, I felt, for the first time, power over these creatures. However, the only thing I yet had to find was a happy and joyful memory to fight these evil beings with.

After I thanked Carly, after our extremely short chat, I headed back home. It wasn't late, but I felt tired. I found myself lying on my bed and I came to the sudden realization, that the positive memory I needed, was right in front of me through my hike. For the first time in a while, holding onto the memory, I drifted to sleep...

Tomorrow is another day.

Jack Hartzenberg (7Yo) | Highly Commended Junior Prose, Gary Catalano Writing Competition

Soliloquy

Duncan

*The rubies that ordain the crown have filled,
Coloured by my blood's hue of hellish red.
Macbeth has glided on the wings of night
And brought with him fruits of the damning knife.
Taken with my tears and screams he flies back
Into the depths of hell from where he came,
Wrestled from my head the heavenly gift
That God Himself had placed upon my head.
Snatched with greedy hands the golden idol
To deliver it before Satan's throne.
No longer does the crown glow with sharp light
But its tint has been tarnished with my blood.
Perhaps as I swim in this pool of hate,
And life flees through my mortal wound as if
The river that pours from it's deathly hole,
I can contemplate why, why all has been
Ripped from my humble and open arms.
Macbeth whom I granted so many gifts
And dubbed you worthy Thane of Cawdor.
Was my crown worth all that you sold for it?
Was it worth the price Satan bought you for?
That crown is cursed and turns your friends to foes,
So take it and take back your fake love f'me
Take with it the dozen curses I pray
Are heaped upon your disingen'ous soul.
There was no loyalty behind your words
There was no loyalty behind your acts
There is no loyalty in the Crown's Game*

[Duncan dies]

Broken into iambic pentameter:

Duncan

The ru / bies that / ordain / the crown / have filled,
Coloured / by my / blood's hue / of hell / ish red.
Macbeth / has gli / ded on / the wings / of night
And brought / with him / fruits of / the damn / ing knife.
Taken / with my / tears and / screams he / flies back
Into / the depths / of hell / from where / he came,
Wrestled / from my / head the / heaven / ly gift
That God / Himself / had placed / upon / my head.
Snatched with / greedy / hands the / golden / idol
To de / liver / it be / fore Sa / tan's throne.
No long / er does / the crown / glow with / sharp light
But its / tint has / been tar / nished with / my blood.
Perhaps / as I / swim in / this pool / of hate,
And life / flees through / my mor / tal wound / as if
The riv / er that / pours from / it's death / ly hole,
I can / contem / plate why, / why all / has been
Ripped / from my / humble / and o / pen arms.
Macbeth / whom I / granted / so ma / ny gifts
And dub / bed you / worthy / Thane of / Cawdor.
Was my / crown worth / all that / you sold / for it?
Was it / worth the / price Sa / tan bought / you for?
That crown / is cursed / and turns / your friends / to foes,
So take / it and / take back / your fake / love f'me
Take with / it the / dozen / curses / I pray
Are heaped / upon / your dis / ingen / 'ous soul.
There was / no loy / alty / behind / your words
There was / no loy / alty / behind / your acts
There is / no loy / alty / in the / Crown's Game

[Duncan dies]

DUNCAN Soliloquy

Reflection Task:

My soliloquy fills in the missing segment of the play as Macbeth murders Duncan. This portion of the plot is necessary to further develop the characterisation of Macbeth as murderous and how he is persuaded into regicide by his ambition. Moreover, by exploring Duncan's psychological landscape as he dies, we can develop the theme of verisimilitude and communicate the ruthlessness and malice behind Macbeth's actions. My soliloquy explores the contrast between appearance and reality by criticising the loyalty in politics. It reiterates this notion by voicing Duncan's suffering and pain as he finds out he has been portrayed. By juxtaposing Duncan's kindness and his murder, we achieve this and depict the king's questioning of his own judgement.

My central motif is the use of religious imagery. This comments upon the concept of Divine Right, and how Macbeth has become condemned to hell and devil-like in his sin. I have written in modern English to make the soliloquy easier to understand for my audience, so that the gravity of the death is conveyed more effectively. It is written in iambic pentameter to stick to the format used by Shakespeare, to show the poetic nature of his death and such that the figurative language still keeps the ambiguous and dark nature of Duncan's final words.

Leo Garaci (10Ho)

-HUMAN EXTINCTION-

The world wide release of the sterilization virus

No-child policy is enforced.

The last oilfield in Alaska runs dry.

'World's biggest deposit of oil found in Alaska.'

5000 go on the 'never-ending journey' to space.

Public health care? Do you have a death wish? Join instalife.

More cults.

Incentives for the young and old to be cryogenically frozen.

Eat less. Lower calories means more for everyone else.

Private space flights. Now from \$1000 a person.

Sterilization benefits for those who are no longer a plague to the world. A holographic baby tattoo included.

'Oil is vital to the civilisation, without it, we cease to exist.'

Borders of countries close to refugees.

Believe that extraterrestrials will bring a planet saving technology.

Construction of gated-high walled communities. The walls are built impossibly high. It is preferable to only hear what is happening.

Government reduce all corporate energy use.

Military buildup along the borders of every state line and border.

Wasting time.

Too little time.

An SOS broadcast into space asking for any and all help.

Livestream of the last polar bear. It dies behind a wall of white in the greater arctic ocean.

Grass fed meat banned in restaurants across 50 states.

The de-evolution of 'sustainable living experiments' into dystopias.

The evolution of relocated cities into utopias.

Re-introducing the pigeon. It is a surefire way to rehabilitating the planet.

The creation of pollination drones.

Displacement of all coastal cities.

Construction of seawalls on all coastal cities.

The masses are indoctrinated to believe that if we don't exist, the world may live.

The election of scientists to power. 'It's too late' they say as they cut corporate tax.

More art is created. A slowly rotting corpse of a cow is put onto display until nothing is left, except for bone.

Synthesized meat is released to the market.

Cutting funding of the glacial park.

Acceptance.

The insistence that this was not our fault.

The chairman of the DOP is kidnapped and branded. "Citizen of the world."

The introduction of biodegradable bullets.

Curfews on electricity consumption for all non-commercial entities.

Recognition.

All new residences must have government subsidised solar panels.

The extinct animals collection. 20% is donated to the frozen animals zoo. A perfect gift for loved ones this Christmas!

Redefinition of change.

Air conditioning units are the new boom. Invest in the thriving industry!

Establishment of several cults.

The redefinition of climate.

Bombing car manufacturers.

Eco-terrorists target oil pipelines. Millions of elephant seals are killed.

Ten climate scientists perform self immolation.

"Our company is not responsible. Changes to the temperature were long overdue."

Ignore the scientific research. Cut funding.

This was a fate designed by God.

Coke-a-cola redesigns their packaging to get rid of the distinctive white polar bear. 'The subject of polar bears has become a depressing topic for consumers.'

The tourism industry booms. Visits to the final glaciers left on earth.

Creation of the department of population.

Violent demonstrations.

Politicians meet at G20.

The one child law.

Treaties are signed.

Art is created in the form of a screen visualising the buildup of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. While a constant drone can be heard in the background.

A call for violent protests to be staged across the globe.

Routes into forests are blocked off to slow the logging of hundred year old trees in the Amazon. Companies ignore the soldiers and continue to cut down trees.

Vandals trash the corporate headquarters of General Motors. Methane released into the lobby. PLANET MURDERER in multiple golden coats on the walls.

New posters appear at school, 'What climate change? It's called summer.' 'Global warming? It's called weather.'

Continue living as if we aren't going to have any children. After all, we are the most important.

Which one is more important? A human or a pack of African wild dogs?

Cautionary tales of what might happen if nothing works.

Prayer.

Another petition to save the polar bears.

Question: Is climate change real?

TV interviews with scientists and climate change deniers.

Stress that parts of the world has become more comfortable to live in. Longer growing seasons and golf year round in places golfing wasn't year round before.

Live your life! There is nothing to worry about.

Consume vitabug powder.

Fusion technology is on it's way!

Boycott Russia, who pushed legislation through to allow the drilling of oil in the arctic islands.

Watch eco-horror movies with your kids and explain how if they don't do something radical, this would be their future.

Attempt to protect the arctic islands from oil drilling by writing to your local newspaper. Fail.

A COMPLETE TIMELINE OF WHAT WE TRIED

Shrink the national park by more than a million hectares.
Housing is a problem.

Allow the construction of oil pipelines through 3 states. It is
important to move oil.

It has never been a better time to produce more oil.

Elect politicians who deny global warming into power.

Watch another video that shows a stunning natural habitat
that is in danger of becoming threatened. Cry. Share your
thoughts on Facebook.

"Honk if climate change is real!"

Coloring books that contain detailed diagrams of bees and
their colonies. The books take a long time to complete.

Support your local farmers.

Ban coal mining in three states.

Allow coal mining in twenty states.

Non-violent marches.

Buy local, be organic.

Eco-horror has become a genre.

The 'one world, one love' music video is released.

Believe you can change the world.

Grow your own plants in the backyard, remember, natural not
synthetic!

Raise awareness for polar bears by buying arctic cola.

Companies partner up with NGOs, now introducing coca-cola
arctic, white, for polar bears."

Clean up Australia day.

E-mail your local politician a template to show your support for
the carbon tax.

Ride a bike to work day.

Don't buy from certain companies. Lancome tested on animals.

Take public transport. It's more eco-friendly.

School posters: 'There is no planet B, recycle.'

Turn off your bedroom lights.

Jeffrey Li (10WJ) | Highly Commended Senior Prose Division,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition

OLD MAN AT THE BUS STOP

Old man at the bus stop,
Filthy sheetings strewn across the ground,
His presence, rotting away the very wood he lays on.
I tighten my coat, my disgust profound!
The air hangs heavy with the stench of wasted time.
Why is homelessness not a crime?
I edge around his very existence,
His hands wrinkled and crusty,
Like decaying shed snake skin,
Eyes stare through me, so dull, so empty.
'Spare some change?'

I recoil, gag, hands clammy with sweat,
"Ignore him" "Don't look" "Don't say a word"
His presence oozes and looms. A threat
To me?
I glance, a peek through the curtain of his putrid odour,
His hands shiver, his lips blue,
Those hungry, empty eyes,
Like an infant's, glistening with frozen tears.
But robbed of life.
I sigh.
How different are we really?
Could I be there?
And he the one looking down upon me?
I sigh, I turn, I bend down,
'Would you like a coffee?'

Dominic Jia (11Yo) | Highly Commended Senior Poetry
Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition





Eddie Azzi (12Du) | painting



Eddie Azzi (12Du) | painting

STICKS AND STONES

"Hello...Person," I said as she approached the counter, nervously shuffling as the Eye turned towards me. She scanned her Privilege Card; initial price is \$10, minus 30% (Gender Equality Tax) and then add 10% (White Privilege Tax).

"That'll be \$7.70 ma'am—Person." I hastily added.

"Thank you very much, but don't ever think about using that kind of gendered language again," she asserted.

"My apologies, Person."

She stormed out and I breathed a sigh of relief. The Eye blinked twice and I looked down at my Privilege Card:

Gender Equality Tax (+30%)
White Privilege Tax (+10%)

As I read on, a message scrolled along the bottom of the card:

48 Hour Fine for Hate Speech (+10%)

"Damn, that's the second time this week," I thought, restraining myself from venting my anger lest I receive yet another fine for "Hate Speech" or "Inflammatory Language". Instead, I looked at the Eye and shrugged my shoulders, refusing to give it the satisfaction of seeing my displeasure.

At precisely 5pm, I closed the store and began the long walk home, placing those wretched earplugs in my ears.

I remember the day they introduced these new laws – The Equality Protocol. First, they outlawed gendered language, then they created the Privilege Cards and more recently the sexual harassment preventative measures. All men must now walk with earphones and are no longer permitted to look at any woman in public for a period longer than two seconds without her explicit consent.

Politicians around the world embraced these new rules, no, not rules, "precautions" is the word they used. My well-closeted

view on them is that they are rather counter-intuitive. However, I certainly wasn't going to fight against them, not yet anyway, so I continued my enervated stroll, head down, only allowing myself covert glances from the ground.

"Excuse me!" shouted a voice from behind me. I turned around to face a tall, good-looking woman (wait, I can't be thinking that). I quickly averted my eyes.

"You just violated our Safe Space," she said.

"I apologise, I didn't know—"

"Did I give you permission to speak to me?" she snarled before turning to her distraught friends. "We don't feel safe when people like you are near us."

I trembled with rage and had to use every ounce of self-control in my body to muster an insincere, "I'm sorry you feel that way." before walking off.

While minority groups, and other 'disadvantaged citizens', thrived under these new laws, the majority were treated as second-class citizens. In this modern world, feelings overrule facts and judgements are no longer made based on merit but on race, gender, sexual orientation and a thousand other things that are out of our control. They say that we have progressed as a society, but have we not regressed far back to our tribal ancestry, when we divided ourselves into hierarchical groups and were judged accordingly?

Eventually I reached the Fountain of Social Justice when I noticed a crowd had formed around a light-skinned man holding a large sign above his head:

"A society that puts equality before freedom will get neither"

I watched on as the mob began to close in on the man. They began to hurl stones and the Eye watched on gleefully. I had

to look away when a large rock crushed the man's head. The crowd cheered as he collapsed to the ground. I walked on briskly, remembering the days of free speech, before the Eye watched our every move and monitored our every utterance, when we were free to think and speak as we chose.

But The Equality Protocol would never allow that today, just imagine if someone were to say something offensive! They preached on the corruption of thought by language, all the while forgetting that it was their thoughts doing the corrupting, not our language.

Soon I had reached the Pillar of Equality, the place where this all began. It was here that they declared our shift from a meritocracy to a society in which all are equal, but none are treated the same. I looked over my shoulder and noticed the Eye staring at me, into me, through me and we both knew I couldn't handle this anymore: the fear, the censoring of my own thoughts, my thoughts, MINE! This perfect human world devoid of human nature had driven me over the edge.

I raised my head and ripped out my earplugs, climbing the stairs to the plinth in the heart of the city.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I have an announcement!"

The Eye glared at me, blinking furiously at my clear violation of gendered-language law, but this time I smiled as I held my Privilege Card above my head and snapped it in half. The townspeople gasped before their shock evaporated into anger. They formed a menacing circle and I began to spit my beliefs at them, savouring this moment of freedom.

"I refuse to take part in this vile nonsense any longer!" I shouted. "No more Safe Spaces, no more Censorship, no more Privilege Cards!" I declared, hurling the broken pieces of my card at them and casting the yoke of Privilege from my neck.



"Do you know how unsafe your speech makes me feel?" shouted a crying woman surrounded by dozens of supporters.

"Sticks and stones will break your bones, but WORDS will never break you!" I shouted back.

"Racist! Sexist! Bigot!" the crowd began to chant.

"Bring back Free Speech!" I bellowed.

"How can you say such offensive things? Free speech is violence you monster!" someone shouted.

"Sticks and Stones!" I chanted.

The crowd drew nearer.

"Sticks and Stones!"

Someone grabbed my leg and tugged. I kicked at them, slipping and falling into their grasp.

"Sticks and Stones!"

And then, having heard my violent words, they tore me limb from limb, all in the name of tolerance and love.

Alexander Ciarroni (12WJ) | Equal Third Place Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Competition



Event Horizon

There is a phenomenon in nature when a star much larger than our sun collapses through an event so biblical, so spectacular that it forms a point of infinite density. This point is a singularity. When a singularity exists in nature its pull on everything around it is so great that nothing can escape. When an object be it an asteroid or monkey passes a certain point close to the singularity something terrifying happens. The object can move at whatever speed, in whatever direction but no matter what it will always move towards the singularity.

This point of no return is an Event Horizon.

Formed under the circumstance. That's what people have thought of me. All I've been through all I've seen, all I've conquered. Dwarfed. I can feel my heart beating in the back of my throat. The bus jerks forward. I feel like an ant swirling through a whirlpool. An accretion disk of water binding the ant helplessly through surface tension. Tension. Through the sodden window I peer between the crowd of water droplets. The convoluted sound of the other missionary's conversations grow louder, while the hot vapour cooling on the window grows thicker. Underneath the gaze of a red traffic light, I stare down. Down into reality. Down into the genesis of my angst. A humble... white... piece... of paper. I hold it. I clutch it. I memorise it. A crater of sweat forms on the page as my index finger and thumb press against each other. The pressure forces the peripheral skin under the nail to grow pale. I close my eyes to seek refuge.

The imprinted image of the back of my hand drifts through the blank canvas of my eyelids. Its swallowed by my fear. The variegated stain-glass windows. The ginger pews studded with a judging audience. I wake to the present.

"I can not do this alone." I said.

I put my hands together. The webbed isthmus between each finger meets trapping cold sweat and stretching skin. Under a flush of goose-bumps I pray: "Help me please".

I'm greeted by a green traffic light. My hands loosen. Cool air leaks from a cracked window.

I exhale. A symphony of rain drops sings on the roof of the bus, drowning the cacophony. I smile. My lungs are nourished with every breath. The page stares up to me. Its dominance atrophies with every annotation. Its hold loosens with every rehearsal.

I close my eyes. Again, I dive into my refuge, my shelter, my abyss. The images on the ebony canvas are brighter, sharper, bolder. I project the patterns of the bus seat's moquette, I trace its complexity. Just like the patterns of the bricks I would spend hours looking at when I would hide from my mother, and the swirls in the coarse concrete I would follow down the path when I was not welcome in the house. A beauty found in mundane catalysed through pain.

Confronting my past was always a stare off with medusa. Every scream, every insult, every blow. An anamorphic acupuncture with one goal of torment. The untameable bull bucking for a response. A crack in the façade, a drop of emotion.

Emotion. Its power volatile. It's grip commanding. What was my demon in my teenage years is now a blessing. Bubbling passion alights the blood in my veins. He came to save our textured posterity, on that cursed tree. The prosaic beauty where he knows my pain. I'm not alone. In my obsidian canvas I see an illuminated crucifix. I wake.

What I've wanted to keep most hidden is my past. My pain... my emotion never being a topic of conversation. Only a dreary memory that shackled me to my lonely cell, my prison that is my mind. Where I would exist in a living nightmare and from time to time would wake in sleep. Now, a family life and a social life. Two worlds once thought to be forever parallel, could never be more connected. Drawn together through a singularity. A single point in space and time. That saw me, only me volunteer to give my testimony at the church. Brought me, only me to chase after a heavenly family when my own rejected me. It was through him and only him that fire was put in my heart, and clay brought to life to bring this story from my lips.

Lachlan Sinclair (12St)

Leafing

Chlorophyll production was slow. The cells slowly, as conscripted, died off. It was nearing winter and 'long service leave' was just around the corner. In the control centre the few remaining cells operated, waiting until the big day. "Sir", a small cell reported. "We have just lost our first phloem passages". The half dodgy commanding cell nodded and ordered, for the xylem passages to be reduced to 50%.

The xylem passage sirens wailed, signalling the remaining cells demise. "NO!", screamed Jonathan, as he ran to the closing exits in an attempt to escape. He was close but slowing down, the freezing effect taking its toll. Nearing the almost shut exit he trembled, just a few more steps between life and death. Crawling on his knees, he reached the exit, it was barely open. Standing up helplessly he...It was too late.

Hope had evaporated in the frozen passage. Jonathan was walking weakly around the encapsulated passages when he noticed a few other cells. Just like himself, they were doomed. Jonathan and the group sat closely together to keep warm, slowly more and more cells joined them.

Back at the control centre the commanding cell ordered for 75% of the xylem passages to close. As he had ordered the cells shut down more exits.

As the group huddled together their numbers now in the hundreds. Jonathan heard a distant siren. "Huh?", he thought to himself. Like Jonathan the whole group heard the same infamous noise. "Hang on", exclaimed the hero. "That must mean not all the exits are shut!" Jonathan and the group of cells ran through the maze of passages slowly getting warmer. Eventually the group came across the open passages.

As the group crossed the border of the xylem passages they began to cheer. The smiles warmed up everyone who had escaped their "well earned retirement" as the commanding cell had called the shutting of the passages. Walking around the unclosed passages that were still operational. Jonathan and his group realised something was wrong.

It was getting colder... 90% of the xylem passages had been ordered to shut down and the same fateful sirens were sounded. "Oh, no", thought Jonathan as he felt the same chilling cold. "RUN!", he shouted. "RUN, RUN TO THE EXITS", he screamed. Chaos erupted as Jonathan's newly made friends scrambled to the exits of the closing xylem passages. Jonathan leading the charge noticed cells falling behind. Some of which the cold had consumed. Jonathan and a small portion of the group made it through the door. As the door slammed down a hand slid under, the door ripped the hand off. Agony written in its palm. Jonathan was furious. He bashed the door with all his might to help. It was useless and more importantly recognised by the control centre...

At the control centre. A cell watching the security cameras had notified the commanding cell of the escape and the treasonous outbreak of anger performed. They were infuriated by the news and ordered a complete shutdown of the passages. Leaving only the control centre and a few other rooms with life support.

However, as the passages were already 90% closed the final exit was nearby. Hearing the sirens again Jonathan's group began running to the already visible exit. Jonathan stayed back staring at the hand. The group were already halfway when they realised what Jonathan was doing. Confused the group began to run back.

Jonathan as if snapping out of a trance heard the siren. Jonathan yelled to the others to turn back and keep running. Jonathan broke into a desperation filled run. Noticing his run the other cells turned and also did. Not only the cells noticed this though...

At the control centre the commanding cell saw the ten or so rogues making a desperate last attempt. "SHUT THAT DOOR!", he yelled furiously at the small cells in charge of closing the passages.

Jonathan had caught up and ran through the door. The Leafean guard, protectors of the commanding cell, were awaiting his entrance with his group in custody...

Jonathan had thought that the control centre were being clumsy but now he knew...that they were murderers. Jonathan was enraged, but trapped. They escorted Jonathan and the group to the control centre.

At the control centre even more guards awaited, all protecting one cell-The commander. Jonathan tried to resist the guards holding him down, but it was useless. "Fiesty, one eh?", said the commander to the powerless character. Jonathan remained silent. "Why, would you try and resist command's obvious intentions?" Jonathan mumbled, "YOU MURDERER!"

"Me, a murderer, let it be. After all I do know best."

"What!?! Killing innocent cells?"

"Think of it as a... sacrifice for the greater good."

"What greater good?"

"Nearing winter, we have to drop our leaves to protect the tree. That includes your friends, yourself, all of us..."

As he said this the leaf's final passage was closed and the leaf fell from the tree. No one but the tree remained.

Daniel Prodigalidad (8Ar) | Second Place Junior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



Logan Kaye (11Ho) | illustration



Marko Karanfilovski (11La) | painting



Gregory Kostoglou (11Sc) | painting



Terse but Satiabile

*Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit. 1*

The murmuring retreats
of that fretful evening
in that shoddy inn,
in which was born the light for many
To impart grand meaning
unto this short life we live.

To live by his commandments,
many aspire.

Yet,
purpose permeates also in those
within whom doubt endures.
Existing without conviction is hardly living.

Although we all live with intent,
every avenue of thought leads to that dolorous contention

–
will there be time?
Time to repel the vice of apathy.
Time to achieve what we set out to,
Time pursue what we believe to be true.

Oh how as we age,
The ignominy of ours shines clear;
we know not what work should be done in days
by the hands of mortal men,
for if we did, we would endlessly toil,
never pausing to question if we dare disturb the universe?

Sweat stands the cruel price of all things.
Hence, let us not preserve Alfred's pure frock
for it is inaction which precipitates misery,
and it is in this misery that we age.
Ticked-Tock.

Alexander Maloof (12Hi) | Second Place Senior Poetry, Gary Catalano Writing
Competition

1 The epigraph is directly quoted from T.S. Eliot's 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'

It didn't always feel this way. Dawn seemed to come early. The sun was peeking across the horizon before I could wipe the moisture out of my eyes. The cockatoos were doing their usual gather up circling around the house, only this time it was morning. Cold and fuzzily, the layers of cotton pressured me to indent myself into the warm parts of the mattress. I turned over only to see the crumbling stack of scores forced together by its stitching taunting me. In fancy block font reflecting the natural light read 'Rachmaninoff'. Still in the warmth of winter my mind raced through the almost grey pages picking up every accidental. My hands twitched, pressuring my thighs as I pressed through the piece hoping not to suffer from any memory lapses. From movement to movement the dehumidifier whistled with incense, accompanying with presto puffs of citrus. Light appeared through the thickened blinds, illuminating rays of dust around those rugged scores, projecting 'section 200, John Allison and Steinway piano concerto' along with its applicants. There I was, innocently entered as number twelve.

...

The eighty eight ivory black and white keys carved the outlines of my fingers. Daunting black and white head notes stabbed my eyes, squinting from yet another practice session. At an allegro alternation, the metronome quenched my hatred for slow which never seemed to resolve rhythmic dexterity. Double sharps subtended with triplets against quintuplets ruptured frustration as I glared at the slower than usual seconds hand. Phrase after phrase, the Russian snow indented itself into each imperfect cadence. Here, the quarter tones shifted ever so perfect pitch into tone deaf ears. I bashed the piano. A semitone out to be precise, slamming the lid with chipped wood falling in between keys. The recital Hall was filled with Asian faces. The new Australian majority. I wasn't surprised. There they stood. Politely. Instruments at the ready. One by one. Room to room. I drooped silently in my chair. At least one room was free.

The first movement stared down upon me with its overly large tenth chord intervals, stretching the ligaments out of my hands. The ground base resonated through the soundboard. Adrenaline pumped through my nerves. From tonic to dominant, my hands suffered through the relentless counterpoints, sharpening the spikes within me. My knuckles popped. Metronome practice never ceases to help. Its pendulum hypnotizing my eyes, seeing now six lined staves. My breath ached. There was pain in my stomach. Lethargically my sight reading had collapsed by the first exposition. My hands. My shoulders. The upright. Upright? It all intertwined within my hatred.

I glimpsed at the treble clef on that piece of metal, attached to the extra long gold ribbon. That time I was forced. I was proud. Momentarily. I urged on from the development to the recapitulation, hoping it would pay off for another medal. It wasn't so bad. The upright tended with responsive sound. My muscle memory aided my fingers. Thumb to pinky, I had precisely sixteen semitones. The mechanical display filtered my thoughts. A hammer for each note lightened my palms. Receptors brightened my senses.

Royal Albert Hall. Seven O'clock, post meridiem. Upper tier. 'Sergei Rachmaninoff Second Concerto'. That's what it read. On arrival my eyes burst. Berliner Philharmonic. An unexpected feature. The undertone chatter warmed the atmosphere. Lights dimmed. Silence. And there it was, the hand carved Steinway and Sons grand piano. The constant bass pedal point rumbled my nerves with shivers. I exhaled. Breath after breath, queues signal in. At the conductor's baton, an entertaining toothpick was used. From first violins to double bass, the 'con passione' section rushed my body. Shaking. My fingers imitated the luscious melodies. A light breeze circulated the hall. Down bows and fluttered pedalling chilled my hairs. Centuries of Russian history revealed through three movements of divine purity. Clapping never appeared to cease. Jealous of succession, inspired by potential. My gut spurred with desire.

Piano Lid up and my pencil sharpened. I glared with contempt. The fresh urtext responded with admiration. My heartbeat paced along with the indefinite metronome pitch...at moderato. The pendulum floated along with the joy of major tonality. My eyes raised like a crucifix, buoyant in praise. Bar after bar, my thoughtful crowd looked on with courage, simulating a virtual recital. My lips tightened, foot locked on the pedal, posture at ninety. Enlightened. Inhale. Exhale. The second movement cadenced within two ticks. My body swayed from leading note to tonic, into the third movement. Dotted rhythms raced across gradations. Fingers plucked for clarity. Feet fluttered for resonance. Hours are my new luxury. Time. The eighty eight ivory black and white keys complimented my fingers.

...

My spatial virtual confinement replenished my instrument. All seven octaves surrounded my wrists with new repertoire.

Jackson Jap (12He)



A tempo
(return to the normal speed)

MORTALITY OF STONE

A giant head of stone rested atop a cliff, gazing down onto a valley with his stone-cold eyes. He was just waiting. Only waiting. His only desire was to wait, and the only thing he could do was wait. He paid close attention to the valley in which he gazed upon; every year the leaves fell, every year snow carpeted and every year the leaves grew back as the snow melted. The head had a large stone brain, so he was very intelligent. He pondered upon the cliff which he rested atop, and as he looked down into the valley with the stone-cold eyes he watched and took in all that he could of what was different from the previous year.

He watched the little villagers build their little villages. This folk had not always been here, in fact, and were quite new in comparison with the age of the head. Every year they gathered resources, harvested crops and waited out the winter. A repetitive but enjoyable life, thought the head. He only thought quietly to himself, of course, as he was made of stone and could not speak. His thoughts remained in his brain of stone.

The head continued to watch the little villagers as they bunkered down for winter. The stone felt the first flakes of snow rest on his head. They were not soft and gentle, but hard and icy. It would be a bad winter for those poor villagers. The head waited through the winter, watching the tendrils of smoke and the warm light that emitted from the hall which they communed in.

Over the course of the winter, the snow in front of the giant stone head got taller, and he was left to see nothing. The winds were loud and ear-piercing. The stone thought (in his head, that is) that the time for the melting of the snow should come soon. He still waited, and again waited and even tried to move the snow in front of him. He couldn't see, and the snow was getting thicker. The head was getting cold. Theoretically cold, as he couldn't actually feel the cold. The snow turned to ice and the ice to permafrost, and so the age of Ice came.

The head felt deep sorrow. He couldn't see, he couldn't process, he couldn't observe the world's changes. He could only see the dark, cold frost which obscured his vision. He felt trapped, though he could never move. He started to ponder what couldn't be seen. He started to ponder about rhythms of the earth: the familiar patterns of rain, the flapping of wings and the vital pulse. He pondered life. He pondered about things on the outside.

The head tried to keep his mind fresh with images of what he knew. He remembered what the houses looked like, and the trees. But he couldn't remember the colour of the grass. Blue? Red? Green? It must be green. He felt a sudden surge of anger and disappointment, as he wanted, no, needed to know all there was.

Over time he remembered less and less. He became aware of his physical deterioration. The permafrost pounded on him and his memory and knowledge became distorted and lost. He grew less and less aware by the second. He tried to think, to understand and to calculate using laws he observed and noted. There was no escape from the painful deterioration of knowledge. The darkness made its home in his fraying mind.

Ignorance punctured his every thought. He couldn't remember how to calculate the length of sides on a right-angled triangle, he couldn't remember rhyme schemes and didn't couldn't tell an Igneous rock from a Metamorphic rock and most certainly didn't know which one he was.

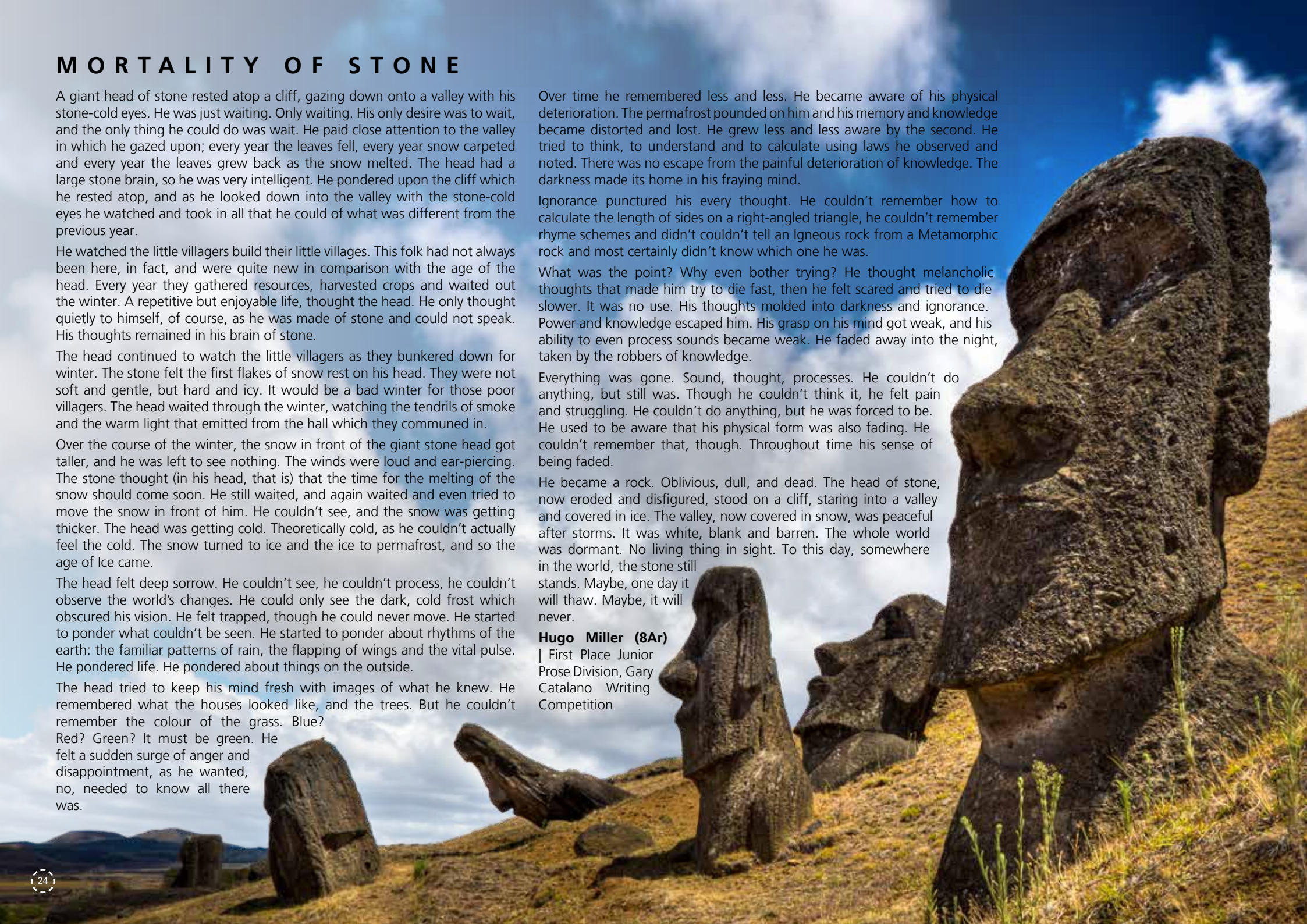
What was the point? Why even bother trying? He thought melancholic thoughts that made him try to die fast, then he felt scared and tried to die slower. It was no use. His thoughts molded into darkness and ignorance. Power and knowledge escaped him. His grasp on his mind got weak, and his ability to even process sounds became weak. He faded away into the night, taken by the robbers of knowledge.

Everything was gone. Sound, thought, processes. He couldn't do anything, but still was. Though he couldn't think it, he felt pain and struggling. He couldn't do anything, but he was forced to be. He used to be aware that his physical form was also fading. He couldn't remember that, though. Throughout time his sense of being faded.

He became a rock. Oblivious, dull, and dead. The head of stone, now eroded and disfigured, stood on a cliff, staring into a valley and covered in ice. The valley, now covered in snow, was peaceful after storms. It was white, blank and barren. The whole world was dormant. No living thing in sight. To this day, somewhere in the world, the stone still stands. Maybe, one day it will thaw. Maybe, it will never.

Hugo Miller (8Ar)

| First Place Junior
Prose Division, Gary
Catalano Writing
Competition





Still Waiting for You

Waiting, waiting, for you, for him
Another day has passed, and the agony of life continues
You were here once, I remember.
Together, you told me.
I loved you, I thought you did too
Back when we didn't know what to do
Then you left me here alone and
every day felt like a million
For three days you were dead,
And the fourth, fifth, sixth;
Then I heard what you did.
Nothing has changed.
And yet, deep inside, something is stirring.
The sun sets and the darkness creeps in.
Somewhere in the world, someone is watching,
And a sharp blade glistens in the moonlight.
I am waiting for you.

Benjamin Quek (11Du)



PROTEST THE PROGRESS

This suburb dying in front of me
Live here, schools' here, die here
Snarling traffic and lines of trucks
Endless blocks of nameless flats
Shiny new now, frowsy old soon
Can't stop planning, developing, growing.

Quiet suburb of old people, old houses
Red-brown bricks and neat gardens
Peaceful bird calls, relentless leaf blowers
Pocket parks of green tranquillity and old swings.
Walk the dog and jog the blocks
No development allowed, a secret enclave.

Mix old and new, result chaos
Knock things down and build things up
Who has a plan that works for all of us?
Find another place or stay and fight for influence.
Progress must march onwards, old people leave or die.
The suburb soldiers on with new hands leading the way.

Dexter Simington (9Du) | Highly Commended Junior Poetry, Gary Catalano Competition



Ethan Hansford (12He) | industrial technology



The Lift

Ka-plunk, ka-plunk, ka-blunk, ka-blunk,
Alarm bells ringing - clinging, clanging.
Nails pulling, screeching at the doors,
So, so, so desperate for them to part.

Ka-plunk, ka-plunk, ka-blunk, ka-blunk,
The alarm bells silence, all at once.
The air-con fan creeping to a halt,
Revealing our quick and panicked breaths.

The Happiness of Depression

I dashed out the door, hands held high with a huge smile on my face. 12 years ago, I discovered the cure. Now, it's all finally accomplished. You know when you have a major assignment to get your head around, and you finally get it done? That's exactly what I felt. On the way home, I actually admired the wonderful Silicon Valley, California, instead of being stressed out about the work day, accompanied with the demanding urge of getting home and getting rest.

My car cruised along the highway in auto-drive. I glanced up at my office block, the square windows organised in a grid-like fashion, disappearing into the clouds as if it had been built to heaven. The road was a dark grey, with fluorescent white lines, just like the night sky, dotted with shimmering white stars. The entertainment system flashed up with a remake of Game of Thrones, that violent movie made hundreds of years ago.

When I snapped out of my stargazing, I was home. News about my efforts spread that night, right across the hologram. Vivid colours flashed up in front of my eyes, revealing the metallic-voiced news reporter booming in my face.

"...cured! Ms Laura MacDonald is smashing the enter key, submitting the last record of depression. At 17:32 on Friday, 31st December, 2152, we made history... depression has been cured entirely from this world! This mea..."

The hologram knew to turn the screen off before another name was read, another person was given credit, my ego was broken and I threw a tantrum. It knew to turn the fire on, crank the heat right up and serve me my supper (a slab of cheesecake, strangely enough without vanilla-bean ice-cream on the side, and hot chocolate with extra chocolate) before I got into its coding, smack the keys a bunch of times, and left the muddled system to fix itself up. Falling into my chair immediately started the massage.

I pondered my work. The smells. What serious business it is. Smell could directly affect each individual nucleus of each individual cell of the mind? The right smells meant happiness, the glorious scent of vanilla, or freshly cut grass. All you had to do was add more of that, just make the smell more intense, and depression is done for. The wrong smells meant the worst of memories and thoughts of a person coming back to haunt them 24/7. And that's exactly how I managed to banish depression, once and for all. Good smells, and no more terrible, fatal, suicidal thoughts.

That was... until Satan intrudes into the minds of innocent humans, filling it with evil once more. How much better would the world be if sadness could be done, once and for all? I would never need to fear the crushing weight of the burden that killed my brother.

The only program that ever sparked even the faintest light of curiosity in me was my science teacher, A.I. Raddison. She told me smells made you remember distant memories. That formed the basis of curing depression. And then I thought about some other wise words she gave. To use your resources wisely, to think about the poor, and how they aren't as lucky as you. How there were consequences for all

your actions.

As I sank deeper into my chair, my smile faded into fear. The thought may as well have bulldozed me over. For that split second, it was like amnesia had struck me. I forgot everything, except this one thought. Humans. So reckless. So selfish. So stupid. Using resources as if they were completely endless. It must have been the massage that triggered it, or that all the work was done, and life decided to throw a hurdle at me just when I was at my happiest. Classic.

I was no better than any other human. I had wasted resources. I finally realised why the vanilla-bean ice-cream had magically disappeared from my supper. The lab had used all the vanilla, extracting the smell and with it, curing depression. Actually, no. I, had used it all to extract the smell and cure depression. It was all my idea, and all my fault. My optimism tried to kick in, knowing that other items we extracted smell from were still around, except I knew the reality. Those resources had disappeared too, thanks to the hundreds of millions of depressed people in this world. Actually, no, thanks to me, the first person in the entire world to become depressed again, literally one hour after it had been 100% cured. After spending more than 12 years studying it, one would hope I knew what it felt like to actually experience it. Without a doubt, I was depressed.

It goes without saying that I would NOT have taken the cure for depression, considering the traumatising thought I just had. I steered myself to hop out of my cozy chair and up to my observation room to see the New Years Eve midnight fireworks, a more than 100 year tradition.

As if by some miracle, when those rockets burst into big, bold, beautiful streams of light, it was as if Satan had been banished, as if depression had left me. Oh, how wonderful it was, being freed from negativity, as those rockets went bang, revealing and releasing the kaleidoscope of colours hidden inside.

All good things must come to an end. Of course, it was too good to be true for my depression to only last a couple of minutes. Immediately, Satan returned, throwing me thoughts that made me rethink my vanilla-bean ice-cream tragedy.

Why did I feel happy for that split moment? What smell could have been in fireworks? I could only smell one thing... gunpowder. Gunpowder? Was it a good smell? Is that why everyone is so happy when fireworks are set off? Could it be our new solution to making sure depression stayed out of this world forever?

Tomorrow, I will see if it will actually cure depression, or whether the more intense smell will just blow the lab to smithereens.

Zachary Lin (8La)



Seeds of Memories

A gentle breeze sends the curtains billowing
In a breath of warm summer air,
But deflating just as quickly
Returning the room to its stagnant state
As the hand shifts towards rain.

Once you were filled with life
Swaying and shifting with the weather
In a field filled with cherry blossom
That we would wander through together.

When the sun shone
You would tend to the flowers
With a passion only reflected
By the colours they projected,
And when the rain poured
The house would stir with your endless tasks
And the smallest of hobbies that seemed so vast.

But in the end
All these thoughts left your wisened mind,
No longer were these tasks important
As names eluded you
And the flowers wilted
And the hobbies dwindled.

Your strength and life
Left your spirit,
But the memories you spread
Like seeds of roses
Flourished among many,
And with the strength of your love
We will always remember –

But now all I have left
Is this broken barometer.

Darcy Edwards (12WJ) | Third Place Senior Poetry, Gary
Catalano Writing Competition | Highly Commended Senior
Secondary Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards

Cherished Memories

As time went on so did we.
Breakfast lunch dinner – surprise
Dad fought for long years,
Mum forget her name.
“Please pretend to remember.”

When she looks, a smile is drawn
but it's shortly erased like the back of
a pencil when it approaches a mistake.
Why doesn't she remember my name?

A question of identity, a gaze
of unfamiliarity: a forgotten child.
She smiles when she touches my arm,
But she doesn't remember my name.

We are in a crisis of time,
Playing life's game.
I tell her—I love you—she smiles
and squeezes my hand.
But she doesn't remember my name.

Now, I mumble I love you
Into the air, to nobody
Just to hear what it would sound like.
Maybe now she remembers my name.

Ethan Li (11Ta)

Dear Grandpa,

We remember you dearly,
We see you in the sky,
We have you in our hearts,
We see that you're happy.
In sleep you took your last breath,
That day you smiled your last smile,
In sleep you thought your last thought,
That day you spoke your last words,
In sleep you knew it was time,
That day you knew you had won.

I'm sorry I couldn't be right there,
But I know you'd still be proud.
In you I stand strong,
In you our family stays together,
In you we love
And you, us
I know you can see me writing this,
I know you can read my thoughts,
Grandpa never leave,
Please never leave,
Stay by me,
By my studies and my life,
By my friends and family.
And when times get tough I know you'll be here.

I apologize for my youth,
But now I know,
How much you meant.
I'm sorry I didn't visit you,
As often as everyone,
But I will make sure Grandma's safe.
I will do all of these things without fail.
For you to stay happy.
In the skies,
In the air,
Wherever, we'll care,
I will remember you,
Dear Grandpa.

方子浩

Ivan Fang (9We) | Highly Commended Junior Poetry,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition



'Father?'

'Yes Vita?'

'What will you get me for my 16th birthday?'

'I don't know...'

Vita and her father lived in a small town in Thailand. They were poor, uneducated and lived in a small house that could barely fit and support both of them. Vita's father had sacrificed everything for his daughter - Vita - so that she could have a great and wonderful life. However, the day she turned 15 was the day she lost everything.

Vita woke up to the sound of the rooster crowing, the symbol for the start of a new day. She could barely open her eyes as she walked outside and found a message on the door. It said, 'Happy Birthday Vita! Sorry, but I've got to work, today is harvest day. I'll bring you back your present. Love, Father.' She went back inside and started doing her chores. Then, something felt different about her. Was it the painful feeling rising up into her chest or her skin turning pale? She tried to shrug it off, but, the pain got to her. It was like her chest had become a furnace with hot coals. Then, she collapsed.

Vita woke up in hospital. She could hear someone calling her name.

'Vita! Vita!'

'Father?' replied Vita in a weak voice.

'Vita, I was so worried.'

'Where am I?'

'Hospital. You collapsed.'

'Why?'

'I don't know, the doctor is going to see you now.'

Then, he left. The doctor came in and told Vita about her heart. The news swept over her like a cold and lifeless wave, draining her. She was speechless.

Her father came in weeping. He knelt down next to her.

'Have they told you about me?' she whispered tearfully.

'Yes.'

There was a silence between them. A silence of acceptance and pure sadness. Vita's father got up.

'You're going to survive,'

'How do you know?'

'I know.'

Then, her father walked out of the room leaving her, alone, in the hospital.

Thoughts raced through his head, 'What should I do?', 'How can I help her?' When he arrived home, he was in a slump and not in the mood to work. He cried for the rest of the day and cried himself to sleep.

The next day when the rooster crowed, he woke up and had idea of what he can do to help his daughter. He would travel to the fields early in the



morning to work, and in the evening, he took up a rickshaw job to earn extra money. Everything he earned was put aside into a box ready for her return. Over many months, he repeated the same routine. His daughter was his motivation. Two weeks before her 16th birthday, he had everything set for her return, well almost everything. That night, he sat down and wrote her a letter. He poured his heart and soul into the words he inscribed on the paper. His work was done, he prayed that everything he had worked hard for will go according to plan.

The day that Vita turned 16, was when she recovered from her disease due to a transplant from a kind donor. When she leaves the hospital, she intends to meet the family of the donor and thank them for saving her life. All the doctors gathered around her and gave her presents and wished her farewell. She was looking forward to seeing her dad after a year spent in the hospital. He was all she wanted to see ever since she was diagnosed.

She arrived home with a smile on her face.

'Dad!'

No reply.

'Dad! I know you're there!'

No reply. She walked into his room. She found a note on his bed. She picked it up and read it with a frown on her face. It read:

Dear Vita,

If you are reading this, it means you have survived your ordeal. Last year, you asked me what I would give you for your 16th birthday. Back then, I had no clue of what you wanted, until the day you turned 15 when you were diagnosed with a heart disease. I knew from that moment, what you're 16th birthday present would be. I am proud to be your father Vita. Happy Birthday, for your present, I give you...my heart. After all, your name - Vita - means life. I hope you live life to the fullest and put your heart into everything you do.

*Love,
Your Father.*

Keagan Tran (8WH) | Third Place Junior Prose Division,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition







Inside the famed City of Damascus and the Ottoman Assault on Freedom

MYSTERIES,

Coffee, music & scandal

In the years preceding the turn of the nineteenth century, an interesting cohort of characters lived in Damascus. It is often said that when a city has been lived in for over seven thousand years, its residents accumulate the eccentricities of years past.

It was strange, to say the least: Halim Faisal - a coachman in the affluent Old City of Damascus had admitted to murdering his once beloved wife Mariam. The two seemed inseparable, always maintaining a happy and joyous facade to their complicated marriage, however, were secretive about their personal lives. Long before the Local Police concluded their investigation into the murder, neighbours huddled in their tiled courtyards and over Syrian delights and water pipes collaborated and shared their allegations, quietly gossiping under the night sky. Sitting in their courtyards, with the soft tinkle of the central mosaic fountain and protected by leafs of the orange and pomegranate trees, the sounds and smells of the city wafted over them. The heady aroma of spices from the bazaar and the faint echo of a soulful oud melody permeated the air.

"When I invited her over last week, just days before her death, she complained to me that he would never let her make any decisions and regularly threaten her if she disobeyed", muttered Madame Kayali, an eccentric local artist and close friend of Mariam Faisal.



MAGIC AND ENCHANTMENT

"You are simply wrong. He treated her very well, buying her mink coats and taking her for formal dinners. These are the facts. She was like royalty to him!" Argued their former maid Houda.

As more cups of coffee became empty and music records ran low, the conversation ended and neighbours retired to their residences. Little did they know their words were all recorded by an Ottoman General who was trying to crack down on political dissidents. He had sat amongst the crowd, pretending to be one of them. The General smirked and smiled as he walked back to his office with this evidence.

When the General arrived back at his office he wrapped up his prized tape and sent it off to a higher power in Istanbul. Days passed, and any supporters of slain Mariam Faisals were mysteriously being found slaughtered or dead in their homes. The local Damascus Gazette described it as 'a magical wave of murders'. The neighbours of the Faisals were stunned at the number of unexplained deaths and were themselves frightened and cautious.

Back in the crooked labyrinth of Damascene alleyways, rumours were abounding which puzzled the inhabitants of the Faisals very close community. 'Halim the murderer' as they called him, was viewed with suspicion and shunned by his former friends who's fear and prejudices were overtaking common sense, which led to secret meetings being held amongst the most trusted of friends.

Was there a murderer in their midst or a government informant involved in a wider conspiracy?

"Mariam was always critical of the Sultan, and...well...um Halim always told her to not be vocal with her views. She just couldn't resist though, after all life in Syria under Turkish occupation is not great", whispered Dalal Barak in a soft gentle voice in order to avoid drawing attention to herself.

Madam Kayali was conflicted, "Could her husband have gone too far? If Halim felt he couldn't control her, would he barbarically eliminate her?" but then "Could her outspoken ideology have been the architect of her demise?".

"But wait!", exclaimed Dalal Barak, "How do we account for the other murders?"

Houda, the Faisals' former maid was present at this small gathering but sat quietly reflecting on the horror that was unfolding. All three women were confident that they could openly express their views in Madame Kayali's art studio, which they wrongly assumed would be a safe haven.

Suddenly, interrupting their murmurs, a loud blast was heard, and Dalal Barak and her lady friends ran to take cover but they didn't make it in time. They were dead. Bullets were scattered across the floor and blood mixed with the ornate floral designs of the carpet. The perpetrator stood there, responsible for their death, guilty as

ever, racked only with sadness and sorrow at the crime he committed.

As all the residents that surrounded the art studio, were frantically running towards the carnage, one solitary figure casually walked in the opposite direction, occasionally glimpsing back to inspect his handiwork.

Late that evening, under the cover of darkness, and away from the accusing eyes of his former neighbours and friends, the traitor Halim walked through a darkened doorway to collect his blood money. A man who was formally a husband, son and brother, betrayed his heritage, culture and family to become an informant and executioner for an occupying power. His motives for this grand betrayal were the basest of all, having lost his former employment as a coachman and not wanting to lose faith or status in his community, he approached the Ottoman General offering to become an informant for a greater financial gain.

The scenario that occurred in this small neighbourhood, in this city and province of the country was something that played out time and time again all over Syria for 500 years of Ottoman rule. Trust was broken between families, friends and neighbours and risks and inherent anxiety became a constant in people's lives. Random deaths and disappearances were a daily occurrence and Syrians slowly and unwillingly were accustomed to this.

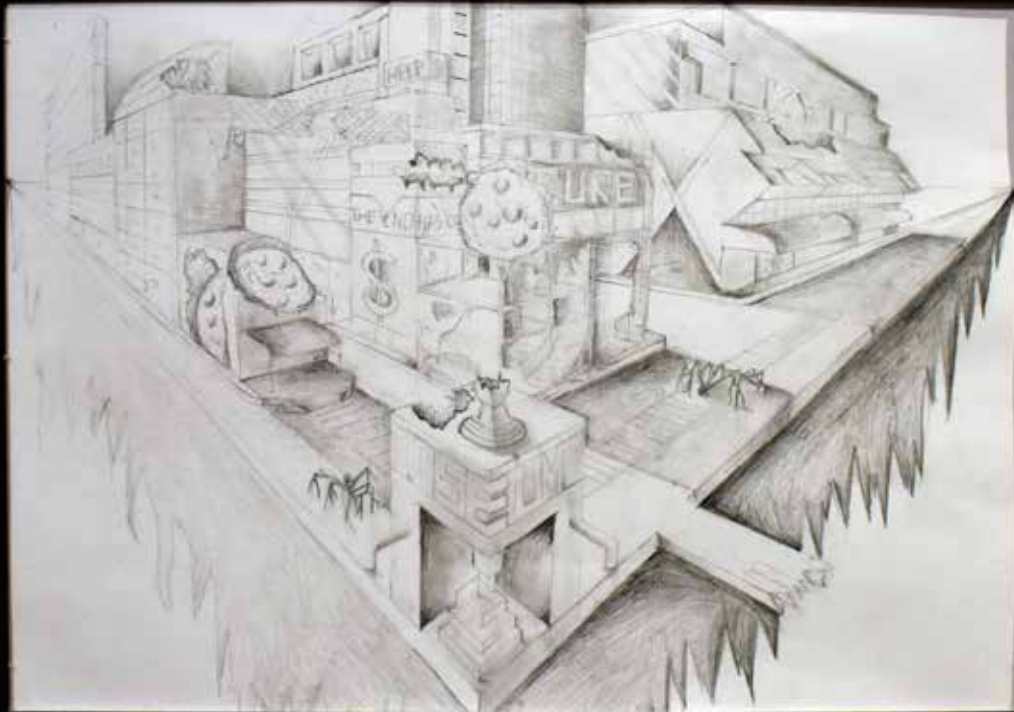
Jack Bettar (85t)

WRITER'S NOTE-

Most of us hear sound-bites about life under occupation.

We hear of economic hardships but rarely hear about issues of betrayal that affects everyday people.

My aim was to give a simple and personalised representation of what this would be like.



Joseph Lin (85t) | perspective illustration



Alexei Baldwin (7He) | painting



You Are...

You awaken. It's cold and damp. Muddy as well. It's still cold for spring. Everyone else wakes up at the same time as you. Your child has breakfast and then you drop him off with his friends. You decide to go out for breakfast. So you join the commute with the others to get some food. It's even colder here than before, you're glad you have your coat on. Everyone gets the same meal. It's always the same food, at least there is no shortage like last year. Everyone is a vegetarian. You meet with your friends. You discuss the season. The police tell you to move along. You are crammed into an alleyway and released back in the open.

"What was the point of that?" you ask yourself. You queue up for the hair dresser. You finally sit down and get a haircut. The razors cut you a bit but it's bearable. You head out, the cold stings, but you know it can only get warmer. You step outside. Something red flashes in the distance. It's a Gang. They are not vegetarian. They only kill. The police are lazy this time of day. Everyone around you starts to panic. In a blur of red it lunges for you. A shadow falls over the Gang member. In a loud, piercing noise it's brains are blown across the ground. God had stepped in. He holsters his weapon and scolds the police. It starts to rain. Now that the panic's all over, you forget what it was all about. You go back to discussing things with your friends, like nothing ever happened. For all you remember nothing ever did.

You are parched. You go for a drink. It's cool, full and refreshing. Just like everyone likes it. You get there first, but some rowdy males come over and ram you aside. You hear a loud crack and then some yells and look over towards the largest building. Flames are licking the walls, and the red paint is glowing. Everyone is in a panic, even God. You follow the others, running toward the woods. Hundreds of residents fleeing for their lives. You all enter the safety of the trees, slick with dew.

Eleven pairs of yellow eyes watch your group from a distance. The Gangs have returned with more members. Flashes of light and loud bangs scatter across the forest area. You realise what caused the fire. Lightning had hit the roof of the building and was catching on to the tops of trees. You split up from the group, remembering that your child was to the south of the woods when you dropped him off with his friends. You hear footsteps and quickly turn around to see your group following you through the undergrowth. You sigh and continue moving.

The cries from others being ambushed echo far off from outside the woods. You are hungry, so you stop off to eat something. The seven others that came with you are weeping for the others that stayed by the building and the ones that went missing. So are you. You hear talking, you've heard it so many times before. It's your child. You race off to see him huddled in a ditch with his friends. He sees you and you embrace him lovingly. You are a Ewe.

James Brockie (8Fo) | Highly Commended Junior Prose,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition



satisfied

The little man sits and waits,
Skies are dark, clouds are thick, work is hard to come by.
Ensnared by a dark jacket of harsh material, he watches the world go by.
The pavement gives no heat, no warmth, no comfort.
Innumerable faces pass by daily, showing no remorse or pity.
The little man lies down weary in the once great city.

The little man begins to converse,
His other friends of same circumstance talk likewise,
Telling him their stories of misfortune and poverty.
Filled with warmth, the little man confides in them.
The little man's spirit grows, because he knows
He's found a reason to live.

The soft winds pick up a discarded newspaper,
With eager curiosity, the little man unfolds it,
Seeking any information that could satisfy his hunger.
"Job positions open at shipyard – enquire on premises."
Suddenly, a greater reward than conversation he beholds,
He runs off to increase his wealth tenfold.

The chill of a Tuesday morning greets the little man as he begins work
Shifting containers, unloading ships.
The gears of his mind click relentlessly
"My time will come and glory will be gained."
Wealth unaccountable, banquets in his name.
Day by day, he improved his position.
Little did he know, something was missing.

Days grow into weeks, and weeks then became months.
Dinner functions, work ethic, overtime take place
Of what were once old comrades
"Sentiment only hinders progress."

Two years flicker by – the little man's eyes lose their glimmer,
Days in his office blend together in monotony
As he watches those on the streets who used to be "as worthless as him"
His face, a canvas of complacency, his heart, grey, dull, forgetting how to feel
Less and less faces cloud his view, conversation becomes "archaic and outdated"
Time goes by and that which is "of higher priority" is now his friend.

One day, halfway through a stack of paperwork, he freezes.
A faint, familiar sound carries into his window
On the pavement, many men lay about, conversing.
A sudden meaningful memory fills his mind.
Eagerly, he bounds down the stairs and out of the door.
Office empty, paperwork undone, job position vacant.

As he rounded a corner, his eyes light up;
His blood starts pumping, his breathing picks up.
These are the same comrades he had known two years ago!
Greeting hands, words of welcome, feeling at home
Without thought, he placed himself down on the welcomingly cold pavement,
Beginning to converse with those he had known and loved.
A warm feeling circulates his body - friendship satisfies hunger and emptiness
He had finally found home.

Matthew Boyce (10WJ) | Highly Commended Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano
Writing Competition







Jacob Christou (7St) | painting



THE ESCAPE

"Your dad was an excellent salesman, he could intrigue people with the smallest things and sell anything if he pleased, and for a decent price too, for both the consumer and himself." Grandpa recounted. "Your mother was the nicest person I had ever met, she could make a friend within two seconds of meeting someone. She was a friend to everyone she knew. Your older sister was a very intelligent girl, though she was only seven, she knew more than a 10-year-old. She was the smartest of anyone in the family. You should thank your whole family that you survived the journey."

"Tell me the story first though, Papa!" demanded Joe, the youngest of the family. "Fine, but only once more, I have already told it twice today and it's 9am!" replied Grandpa.

"On a dark day, where lightning was as frequent as your grandfather running into a wall, and thunder as loud as Danny Frawley's belly laugh, there were bombs falling everywhere you looked. No two seconds could go by without the BOOM of a bomb exploding.

When we caught word of a plane coming to our city in three days, we couldn't resist but jump at the chance to leave, like a shark to blood. We packed our bags and kept all of our valuables safe under the floorboards... and we waited.

By the time three days had rolled around, we could not wait to get on that plane and leave, we were hopping with excitement. In the bustling, agitated, crowd everyone was packed like sardines. Being kind, we didn't get too angry and we stayed out of the way. But was that the right option?

It was not.

The entire family was in despair, and to make matters worse, it was a whole six days until the next flight came. We were struggling to survive, food was scarce, and we were

eating the last slice of smelly, mouldy cheese. The war was as violent as ever and we wondered if we would even survive the week.

Finally! The next plane had come. All of the innocence had drained out of us four, and we were now as determined as ever. We were no longer innocent sheep but raging bulls bustling through the agitated crowd. As we passed one man in a brown cloak pushed another man and a massive riot broke out. We just got on the plane in time before the riot turned to a free-for-all fight.

WOOSH! Off we went, out of the place that our pain and misery had come from, we were finally free! We were exhilarated that we had finally made it. We thought that the place we would land in would be a very nice place. This is where we had you.

Though, before long, we realised that this was not the place to be. Before long, the sheets had worn, food was running low and we were worried. There were disgusting smells of out of date milk coming from the fridge. We were in dire straits, with you as a newborn it was quite a difficult task feeding everyone and moving out.

"You did come in handy though, you know Joe."

"Did I?"

"Yes, you did, because with a newborn, we got to skip the queue and go straight on the boat, we were so grateful that we didn't have to go through the crowds again!"

"The boat was sickening though, it was the worst experience of my life and yours. I'm sure, you were yelling and crying the entire trip!"

"Ah, there they are, go and tell them what I said. Thank them for everything!"

"Sure, I will"

"Yum, this is the best food ever!" Joe heard his sister say from the kitchen.

Owen Lang (6La | Jnr)



The Plane Fright

My heart thumps rapidly ignoring the fact that my legs are already shaking enough to cause an earthquake. I slowly bring my knobby knees to a halt. I look down through the hatch quickly snapping my eyes shut. I focus on the other side and leap. I lift my eyelids and give a winning smile. I passed with ease. The massive line behind me stretches along the corridor telling me to advance. Instantly my knees begin shaking again as the thought snaps back in to me. That was the only easy part.

I sit down tightening my seatbelt against my thin waist. The noisy speakers switch on sending a blur of noise coming out before the voice came clear.

"Hello, this is your pilot speaking, today we are going to Melbourne," The voice murmurs loudly.

"Before we take off I'd like to have a moment of silence for the recent crash that happened

on Tuesday," the voice screeches again.

"I'd like to inform you that there were no survivors which was a tragedy."

Sweat began to run down my rosy cheeks onto my long neck. I started panting. The plane lined up neatly on the large stretch of track. The aircraft began to speed up sending my long, brown hair waving behind me. The speed pressing my small head to the chair. In an instant the plane pulls back down. Placing the aircraft flat along the cloudy trail.

Once again, the speakers muzzled on.

"Hello again, this is your pilot speaking. Unfortunately, we are experiencing a bit of turbulence and I'd advise you all to stay calm." Instantly a blur sounded from the speakers which led to silence. The plane shook back and forth as if it were balancing on a tightrope. Once again fear struck upon me. I could almost pee my pants. My face turned pale not

knowing what turbulence even meant. But it sounded bad.

I quickly unbuckled my seatbelt. Steadily walking through the rows of seats. Stepping down the thin aisle carefully keeping my balance on the shaky craft. I hold my bladder as I walk through the black curtains into the...

Pilots area!

I gaze upon the scatter of buttons, levers and switches. On the roof and control panel lay millions maybe billions of controls. A massive chair spins around bringing my attention to the pilot.

"Hello. What are you doing here young man?," He calmly says clicking the auto pilot switch lurking on the top of the joystick.

"I-umm was looking for the bathroom and came here. I should just get going," I stutter.

"First time flyer eh? I know one when I see

one," he utters.

"The sky is as big as the ocean, even bigger. There is nothing in your path, just the clouds and the sky. Us pilots sail the sky. My father said I'd never be a sailor and look at me now," the pilot uttered keeping his eyes right on mine.

At that exact moment I took a good look at the open skies through the huge windscreen and I didn't tremble in fear or knobble my tiny knees. Just stare. Gazing at the infinite plain before me. When the plane shifted down to land I was still in awe at the beauty I saw. I had no fear anymore.

Hopping off the plane I paid no attention to the crack in the ground and just admired the skies above. When I exited the airport, there waiting for me was Grandpa. My Grandpa... after all these years he still recognised me.

Connor Kalis (6Yo | Jnr)

At long last, the day I have been waiting in anticipation has arrived. Finally, our Year 6 camping trip was here. On that Monday I woke up eagerly without the assistance of the alarm clock at 5:30 am.

Have you been to a magical place where all your camping trips and other amazing outdoor activities go to plan? Well, my Year 6 classmates and I experienced the most spectacular camping adventure at Woollamia. So, let me tell share with you, my astonishing experience at this camp and list three of my favourite activities that were held from the 6th of August to the 10th of August.

My first activity was camping at a place called Green Patch. When I first set foot on the Green Patch, enthusiasm and excitement filled the atmosphere as we descended from our bus. Later we assembled into our tent and our cooking groups. Just as we were doing that, I noticed something in the corner of my eye. I saw a familiar looking animal. After observing the familiar looking creature for a few seconds, I instantly knew what it was. It was one of Australia's native marsupials. It was none other than a gorgeous wallaby carrying its offspring in its pouch. What an amazing sight.

Next, we had to construct our own tent and that was a huge struggle. However, we persisted and never gave in. Eventually, we succeeded. Afterwards,

we had to cook our own food in an object called a Trangia. This was where our judgement was needed. We had to judge when was the right time to place and take out the food so it was edible. To my big surprise, it was a success and the food we cooked melted in my mouth like fireworks bursting in my taste buds. After the meal, we had to take responsibility for our Trangia and we had to scrub and wash our own cutlery and plates. As we were walking back to our tent, we all noticed there were possums on the trees. After that, we went in our compact tent and tried to sleep. Everyone in my tent except for me fell asleep without any trouble. After seeing the possums on the trees, I got paranoid about the possibility of how a possum may invade our tent. It took a while but the exhaustion and excitement from the first day at camp took its toll and I eventually went to sleep.

The next favourite activity was canoeing at the Woollamia Boat Ramp. When we arrived at the dock, I could see enthusiasm and excitement in everyone's eyes. As soon as we were in the water we were struggling to maintain the canoe. Eventually, we got used to it and we did pretty well for a team that had only been canoeing once. As we were paddling, my hands were starting to ache but I persisted knowing we still had a long way to go to our destination. I distracted myself by enjoying the spectacular view of the wetlands which has lots of wildlife like mangroves and fish. The environment was flourishing which was amazing since it is in

saltwater. On the way to the campsite, we had lunch. After lunch, we were back to paddling. After one and half hours, we made it to the campsite. I was a bit disappointed since our canoeing trip was finished. However, I was glad to have a nice, warm shower after the canoeing.

Finally, my next favourite thing was the Illawarra Fly Tour. When we did the zipline we had to wear a safety suit where it had many buckles. When we were walking to the zipline area, I enjoyed that. This activity was in a deep forest. Unfortunately, I was the last person to the zipline and, I saw everyone take off. This made me more anxious. Holding on my rope with my heart beating faster than a cheetah going for its kill, I was thinking all the worst possible outcomes that could happen to me. As soon as I took off, I screamed with fear until I made it to the other side. I checked that every part of my body was still intact and I was relieved when I discovered that I was still in one piece. Next we had to cross the bridge, as I observed carefully I reassured myself there was nothing to be afraid of. Surely walking across, the bridge was not as scary as the zipline. When I confidently strode and took step by step I felt the bridge shaking which caused me to lose my previous confidence. Students behind me and in front of me called out not to look down but their advice was already too late. Looking down the valley caused me to panic and I had my heart in my

mouth. I breathed heavily in and out to calm myself. I took step by step and I got the hang of it and as my confidence grew I was taking the steps quicker and quicker to finish the ordeal. Finally, I made it over the bridge and relieved that it was over. From these two activities, I became addicted to the adrenaline rush and I desired desperately for more but unfortunately it was all over.

After five full days and four nights of intense activities and fun, I was totally exhausted physically and mentally. On the way home, I had mixed emotions. I was sad to leave Woollamia but I consoled myself by saying, "All good things must come to an end." At the same time, I was looking forward to seeing my family and eating my mum's cooking again. As the bus pulled up in front of our school, I saw a familiar smiling face in the distance. As soon as the bus stopped, I dropped my bags and ran towards my mum's open arms and I knew I was home. As soon as I arrived, I opened the front door and the aroma of my favourite beef curry tickled my nose. At that point in time, I said to myself, "Home Sweet Home".

Lawrence Hoe (6Yo | Jnr)

Year 6 Camping Recount





Cheetah

Christian Ciarroni (5Yo | Jnr)

INTRODUCTION:

The Cheetah is a carnivorous mammal well known for its amazing ability to run. You've probably heard of the expression "as fast as a cheetah" or "he ran at cheetah speed", but you might be wondering how fast a cheetah actually runs. I'll put it in perspective. Imagine a car driving at 50 kilometres an hour. Then double that. This is the speed that cheetahs can run at when chasing prey.

APPEARANCE:

The appearance of a cheetah is most likely well known to you. Just a spotty, orange, long horse. This is not all though. There are many features that a cheetah has which we don't know about. Its length can be from 105-140 centimetres long with its tail taking up 65-80 centimetres. Its height is approximately 75 centimetres and weight is 30-60 kilograms. It has long legs to help it run and an elongated spine to increase stride length. It has retractable claws, special paw pads and a long tail for balance. It has a smooth, orange body and black spots all over its body.

HABITAT:

Cheetahs live mostly in African countries such as Zambia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Niger, Mauritania and also European countries like Iran. They like dry, open grasslands where they can pick up speed while hunting their prey. There used to be cheetahs all over Africa, Europe and Asia but loss of habitat, food and hunting has caused them to be less common and they are now vulnerable to extinction.

DIET:

The cheetah has a huge range of prey that it eats but tends to prefer smaller animals. The diet of the cheetah includes game birds, rabbits, warthogs and antelopes such as springbok, impala, gazelle, kudu, hartebeest, oryx and roan. Unlike most mammals the cheetah eats in the daytime. After killing its prey it goes to a shady place to rest before eating as it becomes tired after chasing prey. It usually tries to hide the prey so other predators don't eat it while it's resting.

LIFE CYCLE:

The life cycle of the cheetah shows how the cheetah develops from baby to adult. A baby cheetah weighs 150-300 grams when born. It lives with its parents for 1-2 years before leaving to live by itself. In this time period, a baby cheetah learns to hunt and develop hunting techniques by playing games. Male cheetahs usually live with a coalition which usually consists of brothers. Females however only spend time with their young. Quite often a baby cheetah will die when they're young because often predators will eat them. Even if a cheetah isn't eaten it only lives for 10-12 years.

ADAPTATIONS:

As you might have guessed, one of the cheetah's adaptations is the ability to run quickly. Its long legs and elongated spine help it to do so. It also has keen eyesight to spot prey. It also only needs to drink every 3-4 days. These adaptations can help survival in different ways such as, attack, survival and defence. It has a spotted coat to blend in with its environment.

FUN FACTS:

The cheetah's scientific name is *Acinonyx Jubatos*. It is the world's fastest land mammal. They are usually short distance runners and limit their hunts from 200-300 metres. Did you know that cheetahs are only big cats that can't roar? Cheetahs unlike most cats, are born with their spots. A baby cheetah's eyes don't open for approximately two months.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the cheetah is a fascinating animal for its amazing ability to run and should be protected at all costs, so our descendants can witness these ferocious animals.

Geckos

Did you know Geckoes can grip to walls and other flat surfaces, so they can walk upside down? Geckoes do this because they have gripped feet, so they can stick like glue to all flat surfaces. The Gecko (also known as the Hemidactylus Frenatus) is a reptile that is part of the Gekkonidae family. They are nocturnal meaning they sleep during the day and hunt at night. They also have very good night vision which helps them hunt better. Geckoes live all around the world especially in Australia and New Zealand.

APPEARANCE:

Did you know the largest Gecko can be up to 35cm long? Geckos have an interesting appearance and they look a little bit like small lizards. Geckoes can change colour, so predators won't find them. They also have very smooth skin and a thick tail to help store fat. They also have a huge tongue, four short legs and large eyes for excellent vision. This is what the Gecko looks like.

HABITAT

Did you know there are 1180 species of Geckos and 125 of them live in Australia?

Geckoes can be found in every continent except Antarctica. They are usually found in forests, rainforests, grasslands and sometimes on cliffs. Many Geckos are small enough to sleep under tree bark or spider holes. Some Geckoes will also sleep in burrows made by other animals. These are all the habitats of the Gecko.

DIET

Did you know Geckoes store fat in their tail so if they don't eat any food they will still survive for at least two weeks? Geckoes will eat anything that can fit in their mouth. Baby Geckoes will eat small insects such as moths, flies and cockroaches, although adult Geckoes will eat small animals such as frogs, worms and other lizards. Geckos eat their food by firstly catching an animal, then they swallow it whole and digest it. Geckoes will also eat nectar and pollen from flowers if they can't find any animals to hunt. This is what Geckos eat to survive.

ADAPTATIONS

Did you know that Geckoes can't blink so they have to lick their eyeballs to keep them moist? This is one of the many adaptations Geckos need to survive. Another adaptation of the Gecko is being able to camouflage. Sometimes when Geckos are asleep they camouflage so predators won't be able to find them. These adaptations are what make the Gecko able to survive.

GECKO CAMOUFLAGING

In conclusion, Geckos are reptiles that eat insects and small animals. They live all around the world except Antarctica and have many adaptations to survive. Geckoes have smooth skin and can walk up walls with gripped feet. They eat insects and small animals and can store fat in their tail. These features are very useful in the everyday life of the Gecko.

Enrico Ciarroni (5Yo | Jnr)





Lachlan Johnson (6Fo | Jnr) | charcoal illustration





Did you know the myth that the wolf always howls at the full moon is a true story? The bright light makes them think it is daytime, so they tell the pack this new information. The Gray Wolf also known as the *Canis Lupis* is the largest of the wild dog family and one of the most fearsome animals on this planet. The wolf is abundant in most parts of Northern America. Most inhabit Alaska as half of the population lives there. However, due to human activity such as destruction of habitat and excessive hunting the Gray Wolves only live in a fraction of the areas they used too.

Appearance

The Gray Wolf is a very majestic animal. The length of a Gray Wolf varies from 1.24-2.10 metres from snout to tail. One-quarter of this length is their wiry tail. Fully grown Gray Wolves weigh between 32-60 kilograms. Male Gray Wolves are bigger than the females, some may even grow to weigh twenty more kilograms heavier than the average. Gray Wolves stand at 69-81 centimetres at shoulder height. You may look at a Gray Wolf and think that it appears substantially larger than it is. This is because of its thick coat of fur. In winter the fur is at its longest to stay warm, it can vary between 5.0-6.40 centimetres on their back and sides. The hairs in their manes are about 10-12 centimetres long. This makes them look like they tower over other animals. Gray Wolves fur is a grey to black colour on the top half of its body, the bottom half is white including the legs. Then there's that one in a hundred wolf that is fully white. They have large paws, in comparison to a normal dog. The wolf has a broader snout than most and rounded ears. Wolves are known for their sharp claws and razor-like teeth. The Gray Wolf is the exact same.

Gray Wolf

Habitat

Historically, the Gray Wolf had once covered the most land of all land mammals other than humans. Today, the Gray Wolf has been reduced to mainly the United States of America. An estimate of 7 000 Gray Wolves live in Alaska. 5 000 make the run to inhabit lower states such as Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Outside of the United State of America, they inhabit Canada, Poland, Scandinavia, Russia, Portugal, Spain and Italy. This is because it has a diverse list of habitats it is able to survive in. These habitats include tundra, mountain areas, woodlands, forest, grasslands and deserts.

Diet

The Gray Wolf is a carnivore. Normally eating larger animals such as deer, moose, caribou, elk, bison, and musk-oxen. These larger animals are preferred as it is easier to kill one big animal compared to 3 small ones to feed the pack. If the food is scarce they will hunt on smaller animals such as beavers, rodents and hares. An adult can eat up to 10 kilograms of meat in a single meal, this wolf normally being the alpha as they get first serve. The members of a single pack will track down a herd of animals and select a weak animal whether it be old, sick or young. They then will use their great stamina to wear down the prey at once the wolf pack will sprint and attack the animal with sharp claws and teeth. Their major success in hunting is due to their flexibility while catching prey and being able to carry out any strategy. They will flush their prey, stalk it or use tricks and maneuvers to catch the meal.

Life Cycle

The Gray Wolves life cycle is simple among other animals. Their lifespan in the wild is 6-8 years. In captivity, the wolves lifespan can be up to 17 years. The alpha pair breed during January to March. The gestation period of the wolf is about 63 days which is about one-fifth of the human year. The average litter size is about 5-6 meaning that the alpha female gives birth to 5-6 pups. The pups are born in a den. This den can be a rocky cavity, or a hole dug in the ground. When the pups are born they weigh about 450 grams. They then spend 8 weeks with the pack's caretakers normally being wolves placed between the beta and the omega. This period is getting them ready and making sure they are healthy. While the caretakers are caring for the pups, other wolves bring them food to eat and share with the young pups. The pups grow up and either join the pack their parents came from, join a new one or become a lone wolf. When adults, they may even be the alpha male or alpha female of the pack.

Conservation

The Gray Wolf doesn't need to be worried about in the sense that it is safe in its natural habitat. Though in some areas there are concerns that the animal will die out. Therefore, there are programmes in place to keep this animal in a stable condition. The Gray Wolf nearly shrank to extinction in the mid-19th century because of humans excessively killing the wolf and humans destroying their habitat. The Gray Wolf is a threat to farmers' livestock and domestic animals. Efforts to bring back the Gray Wolf started in 1973 with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) playing the main part. Since then the numbers have climbed and are still increasing to this day. Today the wolf isn't usually challenged to a duel or fight, still it is always prepared to fight when needed. This process of fighting usually ends in the result of the wolf ending up on top.

Behaviour

The legend about a wolf pack never leaving each other is true. The Gray Wolf or any other wolf lives in a group (pack) made up of 6-10 wolves on average. This pack is as tight as a well-crafted chain. They will roam vast distances together as a pack. This distance can be up to 19.31 kilometres a day. The pack is established according to their strict hierarchy meaning they are ranked as an individual and placed among a list of other wolves and fitted in place. At the top of the hierarchy is the alpha male (king of the pack and is male) and after him is his life partner (alpha female). Then it is the beta and at the bottom of the pack is the omega. Usually, a new pack member will be placed between the beta and the omega. The alpha is the leader of the pack and makes all the decisions for the benefit of the pack such as where and when to hunt, where to mark territory and things among these lines. Any individual who is not obeying orders from their alpha is talked to and maybe even kicked out of the pack in a swift and pleasant manner. The alpha male and the alpha female are the only two in the pack to mate all the other adults look after newborns and the previous year's newborns who are struggling.

Communication

The survival of Gray Wolves pack is dependent on whether they can communicate effectively and quickly. Gray Wolves communicate through body language, scent making, barking, growling and howling. Much of the communicating is reinforcing the hierarchy of the pack. When the wolf is displaying that it is submissive to another wolf it will crouch, whimper, tuck tail in between its legs, lick other wolf's mouth or roll over on its back. When a wolf wants to challenge another wolf, it will growl or lay ears back on its head. A playful wolf will dance or bows. The barking by a wolf is used as a warning to other animals. Howling is used as a long-distance communication tool to regather the pack together or also a warning tool to keep away random animals.

Adaptations

The Gray Wolf has some unique and special adaptations. The Gray Wolf's coat of fur is made up of a woolly fur to provide insulation. Protective guard hairs on the frame of the wolf keep out most moisture. They have massive paws and on those paws, are fleshy pads and sharp claws for extreme traction while running and hunting prey. Their sense of hearing is 20 times sharper than our own. Their sense of smell is 100 times keener than our own. This allows them to both hear and smell prey from long distances helping it chase after and track the prey. Their jaw crushing power is 500 pounds per square inch (psi) which is enough to destroy the bones in your finger. Wolves have vision motion sensitive eyesight. They also have a reflective retina (tapetum) which enhances their night vision. A downfall to their eyesight is that they can't see colour. The great stamina of a wolf is so good it can travel 18 miles at a quick trot. Their top speed is over 64 kilometres per hour.

In conclusion, the Gray Wolf is a beautiful animal and should never be treated poorly as it was in the mid-19th century. The Gray Wolf can be found in most of Northern America. The Gray Wolf is an amazing hunter and has some very natural behaviour but also can get quite aggressive when needed. The communication of the Gray Wolf is a vital part of its pack's survival. To survive, it has evolved and nowadays it has one of the most efficient communication systems in the whole animal kingdom. Another key to survival is the adaptations made by the wolf and its pack. These adaptations include woolly fur, long sharp claws and teeth, great stamina and many more. These adaptations are very useful in the life of a Gray Wolf.

Myles Buvac (5La | Jnr)



Aiden Ngo (5Hi | Prep) | painting



Cameron Tay (5Yo | Jnr) | sculpture



Alan Chen (5Fo | Jnr) | sculpture

MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND

"Money makes the world go around"- Heard that saying before? What does it mean? It simply means that Money is the most important thing in this world. Yeah right, everything revolves around money and money drives everything isn't that right? Obviously not.

Now have you heard the saying - "The best things in life are free"- which means that happiness, laughter and joy are all free. Okay, hold on a minute, I'm confused, does money make the world go round?

Money is important in our world because it is the means by which our world functions. It is used for buying essential things, getting paid for our work, selling things. We need money to buy luxuries and go on holidays. Money also defines how successful we are and gives us our status in society. Money divides people.

On the one hand are those who have untold wealth and on the other hand are people who die from starvation and illness because they can't afford food and medicines. Money can buy you the best education, the biggest house, the fastest car and lots of "friends". But is that enough?

Peace, love, happiness, and freedom-these are the things that make the world, our world. Money can't buy true happiness or true love. Money is essential but if we don't have loved ones or family and friends, what use is all the wealth in the world. For example, some people in Africa don't have money but they still survive by trading their land for food and water and they still live without money. It would seem that the richer a person is, the happier they are and poorer a person is the more miserable they are. But this is not true. Many rich people are lonely and depressed. Their so called friends and family cannot be relied on and are there only for the money. So now what do you think about money? Does it really make the world function?

In many cases, the more money we have, the more we want and the harder we work and the more stressed we get. So how can we enjoy life if we are trying to make more money even though we already have enough? Oh yeah, there is never enough money for people these days, money never ends, doesn't it?

Money can also change people's behaviour - of course many people change for the good and donate but there are others who become selfish and make it their goal to be the richest person on earth with no sympathy for others. Acting bad and selfish isn't how the world functions. Of course we need money to buy food but we can get happiness and joy and all those feelings for free and those are some of the many things that world needs so that it can function and have no breaks or pauses. So using money is good and we should appreciate it so we can get daily items but we also need to get.

In summary, money is important but money doesn't make the world go round. Appreciating the better things in life and having close friends and loving families to share your wealth with you will add to the joy and happiness in our life. Yes, we need money but we also need to have feelings so that the world will function and so that the world won't be made out of money, but out of feelings.

Kenneth Rathore (5Yo | Jnr)





PLANT USE BY THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Bulrush | Scientific Name: Typha

Description and Appearance:

The Bulrush plant has a long stem and some giant roots. At the end of the stem there is a big 3D oval shape and the only colours are brown, white, dead brown and grassy green. In different seasons the colours of the body are different. Aboriginals used to use these types of plants and they still do now in the bush. The roots look like a little nest when it is an adult. Baby bulrush can also look like tiny bits of wheat when it is little.

Habitat:

The Bulrush grows next to fast or slow waterway rivers and it appears to look like grass at first. The Bulrush is a very common plant to find next to rivers. It can be mostly everywhere around Australia. Only in the outback areas.

Where in Australia does this plant grow well?

The Bulrush plant grows well next to rivers in grass because the grass mixes with an element, so it makes the seeds and the seeds start to germinate. The cycle goes over and over again, so the fantasy of that plant will still live for a very long time. It can be found growing along the edges of lagoons and waterways in the northern half of Australia.



Uses:

The Bulrush plant is used for food. It can make flour, syrup or sugar and can be prepared in some raw salad or for some cooked vegetables. From October to January new shoots emerge from the base. The soft white part of this shoot is edible. In April and May the shoots produce a yellow pollen which was shaken and collected to make flour. When you eat the Bulrush or Typha raw it will taste disgusting for your tongue and mouth.

Benjamin Loughnan (3Yo | Jnr)

Plant Name: Australian Mulberry - Hedycarya Angustifolia [Aboriginal Name]

Description and Appearance:

The Australian Mulberry is a shrub or known as a small tree. It occasionally can reach heights of about 20 metres off the ground and a trunk diameter of 40 centimetres. Its kingdom is called Plantae. The Plantae kingdom owns bushes, ferns and other plants. Its clade is called Angiosperms. The Angiosperms' family contains around 416 different plants and species. The wood of an Australian Mulberry is strong for a small tree or shrub. They like rain a lot.

Habitat:

The Australian Mulberry lives in the rainforests of South and Eastern Australia. It also likes cool temperatures, valleys and moist forests. They like cool or cold places to live.

Uses:

The Australian Mulberry can be used to make spear tips made from its wood.

The wood is strong for a small tree. Aboriginals use spear tips for hunting animals and other purposes.

Look at the strong stalk of this Hedycarya Angustifolia. This shows how strong the stalk is.

Pictures:



Luca Gerbino (3Yo | Jnr)



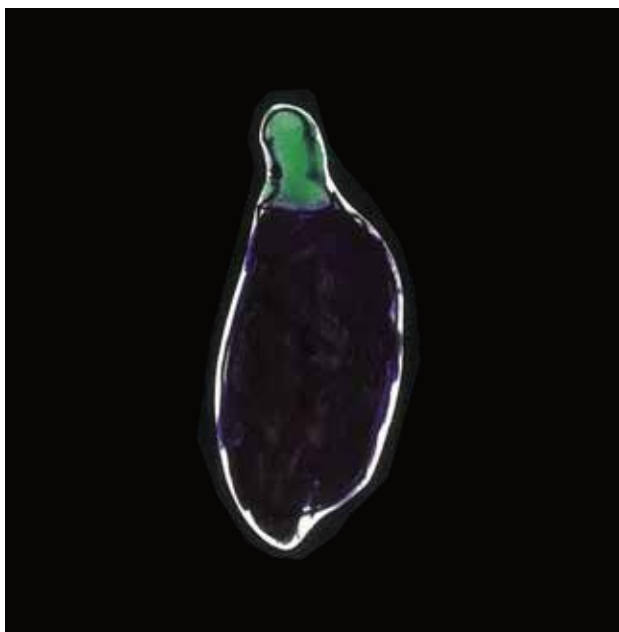
Lawrence Chang (PK | Prep) | painting



Cayden Tsang (PK | Prep) | painting



Devon Yan (PK | Prep) | painting



Jonathan Cassar (PK | Prep) | painting



Luke Obaid (PK | Prep) | painting



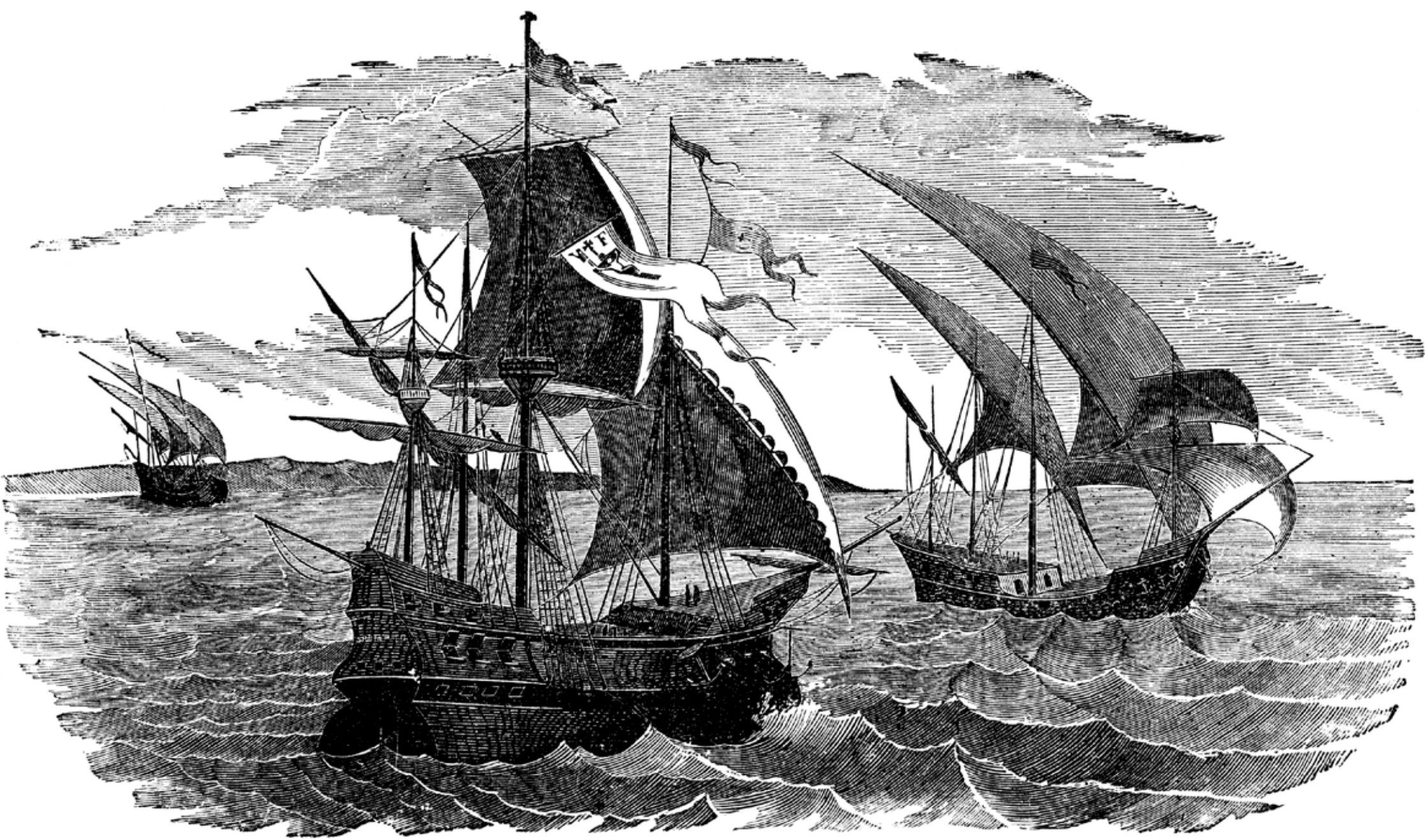
Jacob Fitzroy (PK | Prep) | painting



Arles Hanning (2Yo | Jnr) | drawing



William Hunt (3Sc | Prep) | painting



Ferdinand Magellan

Who am I?

Where I was born?

What was my childhood education like?

Good afternoon time travellers! My name is Ferdinand Magellan. I'm certain you know of me. I commanded the expedition that completed the first circumnavigation of the globe - And to think everyone believed the world was flat!

I was born in 1480 in Northern Portugal. My father's name was Rodrigo de Magalhães and my mother's name was Alda de Mesquita. Sadly, my parents passed away when I was a child.

I came from a wealthy family and as a young boy, I even served as a Page in the Royal Court. Young boys were sometimes appointed as messenger in my day as a source of education. At court, I learned about many famous explorers and the most important information about navigating ships. My dream to sail the seas had begun...

What impact did my exploration have on the world?

I am kind of a big deal really because I commanded the first fleet to circumnavigate the globe! By doing this, I also proved that the Earth was not flat as everyone had believed.

Also significant was my discovery of the Strait of Magellan on the 21st October, 1520. The Strait is the most important natural passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. This discovery of the Strait was so important that they even named it after me. Impressive right?

If that wasn't enough on 28 November, 1520, my fleet entered the South Pacific. I named the waters the Mar Pacifico (Pacific Ocean) because of its apparent stillness. My crew and I were the first Europeans to reach Tierra del Fuego just east of the Pacific side of the Strait.

Interestingly, some people think I am a bit of a fraud. I get the credit for sailing around the world even though I was killed with a poison arrow in the Philippines before my fleet made it back to Spain! Of course I'm not fussed! It wouldn't have happened without me!

Why did I become an explorer?

I dreamt of becoming an explorer after my parents died. When I was made a Page boy in the Royal Court, I heard stories about explorers who sailed the seas. It made me want to be a sailor. I wanted to be a Captain on a great ship!

It did not take me long to find my way on to a ship. I joined a voyage to the Spice Islands at the age of 16.

I was very much motivated by a search for fame and fortune - it was for this reason that I set out from Spain in 1519 with a fleet of five ships to discover a western sea route to the Spice Islands. On this journey, I famously discovered the Strait of Magellan and became the first European to cross the Pacific Ocean.

I achieved the fame I desired, sadly I did not make it home to enjoy it because I was assassinated along the way!

Did I have a secret mission?

My original mission had been to find a western route to the Moluccas in Indonesia known for its precious spices. The Spanish (who funded my journey) were desperate to discover this alternate path because of 1494's Treaty of Tordesillas, a command from Pope Alexander VI that had basically divided the world in half between the Spanish and the Portuguese.

This agreement placed the easy to access eastern route to the Spice Islands under Portuguese control, forcing the Spanish to find a new passage by sailing west around South America.

What was my most challenging moment?

I had many challenging moments along my famous journey! My mostly Spanish crew hated the idea of being led by a Portuguese captain, and my expedition experienced two mutinies before it had even reached the Pacific!

The first of these revolts was easily sorted, but the second was more damaging. Worried that my determination to find passage to the Pacific was going to ruin the expedition, in April 1520 three of my five ships turned against me.

My supporters and I ultimately took control of the situation, and I even marooned two men on an island when I found they were planning a third mutiny.

The problems continued later that year when the vessel San Antonio deserted my fleet and returned to Spain.

What was the most memorable part of my journey?

I will never forget finding GIANTS (large native people) on the beaches of what is now called Patagonia in 1520. This is in Argentina.

I attempted to make friends with these "giants," and even tricked them into boarding my ship. I took one of the men captive, later had him baptised and named him Paul. Sadly, Paul died during my fleet's long crossing of the Pacific Ocean.

How did I die?

Now it may seem unfortunate that I was killed during my famous

journey, but sadly I was!

Three quarters through my long journey, I spotted an island now called Mactan in the Philippines. I met with the local chief who I managed to convert to Christianity. In return, he persuaded me to assist him to conquer a rival tribe neighbouring the Island of Mactan.

While my crew and I were in battle I was shot with a poison arrow. My crew retreated and eventually completed my original mission.

What did I achieve during my exploration?

How did my story get back to Spain?

As I mentioned earlier, I was the first person to circumnavigate the globe which really is quite a big deal! Along the way, I discovered what is now named the Strait of Magellan (after myself) and I also named the Pacific Ocean. These are significant achievements, I am sure you will agree.

As for how others came to know my story, fortunately a small number of sailors from my original fleet eventually completed the circumnavigation of the globe after I was murdered in the Philippines. These remaining crewmen (18 to be exact) informed everyone about what had been accomplished - and the bad news about my death!

This is an image of the ship I captained when I commenced my journey circumnavigating the globe. It was named the Trinidad; unfortunately it sunk!



Zeke Gourlas (4La | Jnr)

A JOURNEY TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Sailing the boat out to the Great Barrier Reef was a once in a lifetime experience. I felt very small while floating over one of the seven natural wonders of the world. I was slightly worried to leave the safety of the boat, what if my oxygen tank ran out of air? But I knew I would be okay because the professional diver was going to guide me through my journey.

Sitting on the edge of the boat, about to slide into the crystal-clear water, I became more excited about what I would see below the surface of the water. When I opened my eyes, coloured corals that were all the shades of the rainbow were surrounding me. It looked like it was glittering because the sun was shining down on it. Bright colourful fish were swimming right past me, they were curious at first but then hiding in the coral and the small caves that were around us. The seaweed was swaying back and forth with the waves and was touching my legs – this made me nervous because I didn't want to get tangled in the knots of the seaweed.

I was wondering what the fish thought of us. Did they think we were there to destroy their home? Or did they know that we were just there to look at and appreciate the reef. I wish I could have spent more time scuba diving and looking at the sea animals. I was amazed by the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef.

Benji Nallaiah (1Ta | Jnr) and **James Saunders (1Fo Jnr)**



THE RACE

I was in the race with Elliot Phamber behind me. My friend had fallen off. I had to go really fast. I had to go full throttle. I was wobbling and shaking. I thought I was going to fall. I could hear the dirt and wind rushing past me. I put my bike onto auto pilot and then Elliot Phamber came past and said, "See you later, Sucker!" I fell down. "Get your game on!" I said to myself. I stood up and kept going.

I got to the point where I was going to give up. And then, my bike was going so fast, like a flash. I got in front of Elliot heading to the finish line. I tripped. I felt knocked out. I couldn't move. My finger was one centimetre from the finish line. Phamber ran over my hand. My career was over!

Eamon Turner (2Ta | Jnr)

THE BATHROOM ESCAPE!

I was trying to escape the school. I crept through the hall shaking with fear when out of nowhere rolled a giant extremely fast trolley coming at me at top speed. I almost got run over but luckily for me I ducked and grabbed onto the trolley bottom. I hung onto the trolley's bottom. It was heading for an open window. I was so I happy I could have screamed, but I didn't. With no warning, the trolley did a sharp turn and I nearly fell off. Now it was heading for the bathroom. When the man pushing the trolley wasn't looking, I sneaked into the toilet, and of course put a piece of toilet paper on the bowl so I could stand on it and not get my boots dirty. I could see my escape route. The window!

Nathan Jones (2Yo | Jnr)





Sydney Harbour

The day was finally here! I was so pumped I screamed so loud that it dried my painting. I kept asking my Mum when we were going on the train to get to Sydney Harbour. When we went on the train I saw a hundred people. When the train started to move it felt weird but after five minutes it stopped feeling weird. Someone opened a window and the wind was blowing in my face. It started to get really loud, so I blocked my ears shut. Ten minutes later we were there and the train hooted. My Mum and Dad said we can get out and have a walk around. I jumped out of the train and ran up a hill to get a better view. Then my Mum and Dad walked up the hill. When I got to the top of the hill I saw water, rocks, trees, Circular Quay, ferries, wooden houses, a gate, train tracks and a crane. I wondered if the crane was going to fall. When everyone stopped chatting I heard the water lapping. Then my Mum said we have to go home. So I had a quick look and then I ran down the hill. Then we went home.

Justin Tsia (2La | Jnr)

Wow! It's here, it's here, it's here, it's actually here! Today we are going to the Harbour and we are taking the train. I have never been on a train before so I am really excited. The train ride was going to take one hour.

On the train I saw the beautiful Harbour. I just wanted to scream.

When we got off the train there were a lot of people so it was hard to get out of the door. When we finally got down to the Harbour I was so excited. I was waving my arms around and screaming all over the place. The view was so beautiful I felt like I could kiss it.

Jack Maclean (2Ta | Jnr)



The Icy Forest

An icy wind blows throughout the forest. The frigid snow crunches under my boots. As I walk past a cracking icy lake I notice that the season is ending. Even though I'm wearing my jacket, I can feel the wind freezing me. A bunny passes by, I decide to follow it.

Anthony Cheng (3Sc | Prep)



Forest Run

The sticks crackled under my sneakers. The sweet odour drifted in the wind. I chose to lie down next to a beautiful flower bed. I could see some bees buzzing around. I scouted in my case and found my lunch in my bag. After that, I rushed into a field of rocks. I had climbed every rock here.

I see lots of scorpions crowding me. There's only one reason for this.

Oliver Shen (3Ar | Prep)

The Ghost Ship

In the middle of the vast, wide and dangerous atlantic ocean was a ship. The water was blacker than oil, blacker than coal, blacker than the blackest black. I was standing in the conference room, gazing at the diagram on the table. Where was it?! I still couldn't find it! The room was dim with fragrances of lavender. All was silent, no one else was there. Then suddenly the room turned as cold as night.

My heart was thumping, there had already been 14 disappearances, now it was coming for me. I only now have 24 hours left, something was clearly not right. Suddenly a ghost appeared from under the floorboards and looked straight at me!

I ran out of the room, dashed into corridor A2 and turned left, it was a dead end! I was trapped, what was I going to do? Then I

noticed a red flap inside the wall, I opened it and saw a button labeled: Press if in life and death situation, I pressed it, a door slid open. I stepped inside and realised that it was a lift, there was many buttons. I then saw a multi colored button labeled "The bridge" , pressed it and there was a whirring sound and the doors opened. "Get ready," I yelled to the captain and ghosts spewed out of the walls and we ran to the steering wheel. I thought we were going to die, we were surrounded.

Then the sun started to rise and the ghosts yelped and turned into ashes and disappeared. We were alright! And we docked at Manhattan and got off the ship and the ship never sailed again. Well, until a person bought the ship but anyway, what could happen?

Nathan Nguyen (3He | Prep)



"Um, excuse me?" asked Dax, "do you know what's going on?"

"Well," replied the bobcat, "my name's Trac and I'm here to, hmmm... how do I put it, EAT YOU!"

"L-I-let's try t-to be reasonable, here" stammered Dax, "can you please go somewhere else?"

"No, I'm staying right here..."

Trac licked his lips as he crept towards the little mouse. "D-do you want s-something else? There are a lot of other animals. Why don't y-you go hunt a shrew?" asked Dax in a nervous tone. Sweat trickled down his spine. Suddenly, Trac pounced right at the terrified mouse, but he was brave enough to dodge. He zoomed away from Trac, but no matter what, the hungry bobcat just kept on coming.

"Hey, Trac, uhh, look! A bird! You like birds, right?"

"BIRDS? WHERE?" asked Trac excitedly, a bit too excitedly.

"Right there.." answered Dax, pointing at a bird.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, Trac pounced up and caught the bird's wing. He heaved it down and started to rip it apart.

"Oh, this is so good! Are you sure you don't want any?"

"No. I'm a vegan sort of guy," replied Dax.

"Well, at least this is better than your tail, bud!"

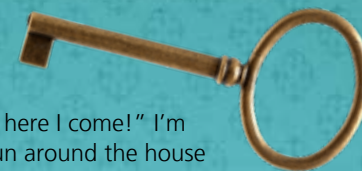
"What? YOU ATE MY TAIL?!"

Aiden Coelho (3He | Prep)

Quickly and quietly, Dax, a male forest mouse, raised his head out of his cosy home. He carefully peeked around the illuminated forest. The coast was clear which meant he could start his daily expedition.

The next morning, Dax was awoken by some loud THUMPS! So he climbed out of his hole to investigate. But there was a surprise for him. Could it really be the beast he read in the mouse-paper? Staring directly at Dax was a 50 pound bobcat!

The Key!



One two three. "Ready or not here I come!" I'm inside my brother's house. I run around the house looking for my school friend Bob. We're playing hide and seek. Bang! What was that? It came from down stairs. As I'm walking towards the wardrobe, I see something. It has a glow like the moon and it has some writing on it. It's a small gold key lying on the table. I put it in my pocket and then I keep walking towards the wardrobe. Finally I get there. I try tugging and pushing at the door but it's locked.

Twenty minutes of tugging and pushing and it still won't open. BOOM! A lighting bolt strikes the ground. One second later it starts to rain very hard. CRACK! The house starts to brake. CRACK! CRACK! The water starts to pour in. I can hear switching noises heading towards me. I run to the end of the house. I'm trying to think of a solution. I try denting holes so the water can get out but it just makes it worse! There are two huge waves heading towards me. Then it stops raining. I get a brain wave. I open the closest doors and the water gushes out into the back garden, then I get another brain wave. I open the door and water pours out into the back garden. Then I have a third idea. I slide the key into the wardrobe and I open the door to see... Bob. I say "Found you."

Ryder Darlow (3Hi | Prep)

OUR CLASS PET SHOULD BE...



I think our class pet should be a snake! My arguments for this are:

Firstly, the snake won't disturb you when you work. I'd like him because I like meat and snakes also like meat.

As well as this, a snake is interesting to look at because it sticks out its tongue and its skin is beautiful colours.

In addition, it can surprise you when you are sad. It will make you happy when it suddenly appears!

These are the reasons why I feel that I should have a snake as a class pet.

Kerry Chen (1Ar | Prep)

Three Little Pigs...

With a Twist

Once upon a time there were three little pigs who lived with their mum in a grassland. One day their mum said, "you are old enough to build your own houses."

The first pig's name was Sloby. He decided to build a chewing gum house. Sloby liked living in his new house until one day Buff the wolf came to his house and said, "I will chew, and chew, and pop your house down!" The wolf blew a huge bubble and the house popped and Sloby ran to see Blobby.

The second pig's name was Blobby. He had made his house from ice. It was cold but he liked it. Suddenly, Buff the wolf came again. The wolf used a jack hammer to break the ice. He crashed and smashed the ice down. So, Slobby and Blobby ran to Robby's house.

Robby decided to make his house out of stone. Then Buff the wolf came again and said, "I will huff and puff and blow your house down."

He huffed and puffed and huffed... and couldn't blow the house down. But he had an idea, he would climb up the chimney. Robby got hot water for Buff to climb into. "Let me go", said the wolf, "I am burned!"

The three little pigs lived happily ever after. **Jayden Wu (1Ar | Prep)**



When I was...

When I was one, I fell off a bed.

When I was two, I learnt how to walk.

When I was three, I learnt to play soccer.

When I was four, I came to Australia.

When I was five, I learnt to swim.

When I was six, I was the best swimmer in my family.

Now I am seven, I can read chapter books.

In the future I will be thirty and I'll be a teacher.

August Li (1Sc | Prep)

THE HOUSE

It was the night before Christmas. Sheldon was getting ready for a busy day ahead. Suddenly, he heard a strange sound. His dog zoomed out of the door in fright. Sheldon chased his dog towards a mysterious house.

As he slowly stepped closer to the mysterious house he felt the cloudy, stuffy fog. He trembled in fear as he smelt the awful rotten trees and moldy air. Sheldon didn't know what to do. He thought to himself "should I go in the house to get my dog or should I wait for him to come out?"

He finally made his decision and chose to go in the house to get his dog. Sheldon slowly approached the house. As he stepped on the wooden staircase he heard a squeaky sound. He opened the door in fear and then peeked through the door. He saw a mysterious figure. Sheldon could see his dog hiding behind the tall, thick shelf. He was worried about his dog. He walked into the house the figure shouted "Surprise!" It was his friend Tam. The lights turned on and Tam explained that it was a trick all along!

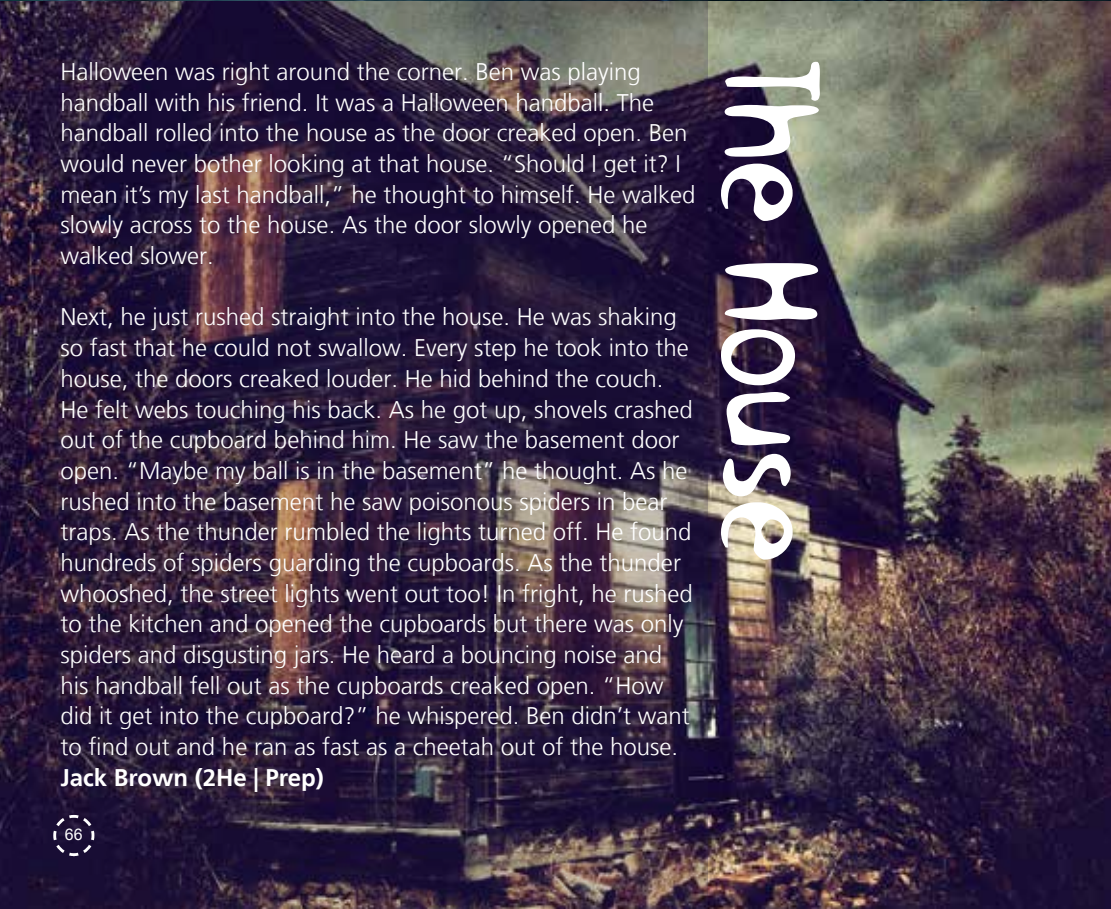
Rory Ashcroft (2Hi | Prep)



ON TOP OF THE WORLD

As Tom stood on the platform he felt his body shaking nervously. It was his first time bungee jumping. Tom's friend dared him to do it. He wished his friend had never dared him. He heard the water below rush gently against itself. Tom smelt the pollen of the flowers as well as the fresh pine trees. He felt the cold water spraying on his shivering arms. He made up his mind. He would jump.

Anish Katragadda (2He | Prep)



Halloween was right around the corner. Ben was playing handball with his friend. It was a Halloween handball. The handball rolled into the house as the door creaked open. Ben would never bother looking at that house. "Should I get it? I mean it's my last handball," he thought to himself. He walked slowly across to the house. As the door slowly opened he walked slower.

Next, he just rushed straight into the house. He was shaking so fast that he could not swallow. Every step he took into the house, the doors creaked louder. He hid behind the couch. He felt webs touching his back. As he got up, shovels crashed out of the cupboard behind him. He saw the basement door open. "Maybe my ball is in the basement" he thought. As he rushed into the basement he saw poisonous spiders in bear traps. As the thunder rumbled the lights turned off. He found hundreds of spiders guarding the cupboards. As the thunder whooshed, the street lights went out too! In fright, he rushed to the kitchen and opened the cupboards but there was only spiders and disgusting jars. He heard a bouncing noise and his handball fell out as the cupboards creaked open. "How did it get into the cupboard?" he whispered. Ben didn't want to find out and he ran as fast as a cheetah out of the house.

Jack Brown (2He | Prep)

The House



TOM AND HIS SKATEBOARD

SIZZLING START by 2M

"Whoa! This is too high. I'm scared I'm going to fall."

BACKFILL by 2M

The sun shone in my eyes and sweat dripped down my head. The steep hill that led to a crooked bridge made my heart thump.

PEBBLE (small problem) by 2M

A heavy push of hot wind made my skateboard roll forward.

BRICK (medium problem) by 2M

The wheels whooshed faster and faster. "Aaaaaahhhh," I screamed as my skateboard and I moved closer and closer to the crooked bridge.

BOULDER (main tension scene) by 2M

I started to smell burning rubber. I could feel the hot wind rush against my face. I looked down at my feet... SMOKE! I didn't know what was going to happen.

EXCITING ENDING (action climax) + CHARACTER RESOLUTION by Harry King

At top speed I flew off the crooked bridge and... SPLASH went my hot skateboard. BANG! I fell into a rescue boat. Beep beep beep... I woke up! I have been in hospital for a couple of days now. When I crashed into the rescue boat I must of fallen unconscious. Suddenly, the door opened my mother and father came in. "Never do that again," chuckled mum. "Let's go home now," complained dad.

By 2M Class and **Harry King (2Ar | Prep)**

"MM,
caaaann't.... I think I have Mondayitis!"

Why do certain events like the Queen's Birthday earn a long weekend? Every Monday should be considered as a part of the weekend. What makes the Queen so important that just because of her birthday everybody in Australia gets a long weekend? The Queen was born in the same way as us. We don't get a long weekend when it is our birthday? We should stop the discrimination and declare every weekend a long weekend.

Have you noticed all the hard UOI assignments that we have had to do in year 4? Having Mondays off would give us extra time to do our homework without having to take precious time from Saturday or Sunday or try to squeeze it in amongst all our after school activities! It would also allow you extra time with your family, extra time for physical activity and extra time to explore new things which would only add to the learning you do at school.

"Greg wake up, it is Friday the last day of school for the week."

"Mum, my muscles are aching and I have a headache-
You don't think it could be Friday-itis?"

Gregory Kariatlis (4La | Jnr)

MONDAYS' SHOULD
BE BANNED!!



TREASURE TROVE

The year 1985 - I was driving along the mountain cliff of Trugazu, as the smell of salt tickled my nose, and the sunset glimmered on the horizon. I was told that the treasure trove was down in this cave. I had been searching for years. My name was Harry and I was a treasure hunter. The tyres of my four-wheel drive crackled on the rocks of the bare road. I got out and thought about what to do next. I setup my tent and before I knew it I was drifting off underneath my covers. The next morning, I awoke to the sounds of the water crashing along the cliffs edge. I got up and climbed down to the bottom. I walked to the cave and looked inside, but everything was so dark and gloomy.

Then I heard it, the sounds of gunshots ringing in my ears; they had followed me. Now before I get any deeper into the story I will give you some information about 'them'. These people work for V.I.P.E.R, which is a secret gangster corporation which was based in New York but had facilities all around the world. Now back to the story, I ran into the cave afraid of what to do next. I then crouched behind a nearby rock. They then came down with searchlights, my heart beating more quickly than ever before. I got up and sprinted as fast as I could, turning the corners as fast as an F1 car, unaware of where I

was going.

The water was getting higher at every step I took. I then landed upon the most awkward thing in my life, a door in the cave. Inscribed in the door was the words "The treasure that you seek, is the lowest peak". I decided not to wait around for any longer and pushed open the door. I fell into a hard, wooden floor, my back aching. They surely can't find me here I thought to myself. I then turned around to see bodies lying on the floor, lifeless. I'm not the only one here I thought. I then crept slowly to find a fork in the cave. I chose the one on left, and started walking towards it. I looked at my map, but it was drenched, and everything had smudged off it. I kept on strolling towards the exit. 'The treasure has to be here somewhere' I muttered under my breath. The cave wall scraped on against bare shoulder as I fell down to the ground. My legs were crying out in agony.

Then I saw it the treasure, I should have known, what the treasure sign meant, the lowest peak meant that it was nothing special but in another way it was special. The message carved into the stone read 'Love is the best treasure that there will ever be'. I kept on walking through the cave. 4 ½ hours later I emerged from the exit of the cave. I climbed back onto the cliff to find that my car had been blown up and that my tent was still burning. I called the police and they came right away. The most disturbing thing was that they found no

evidence of who did it. I told them about why I went into the cave and told them everything that I knew about V.I.P.E.R. Then they gave me a ride back to the city and I tried not to worry about what had just happened.

Ethan Dunn (6La | Jnr)

I personally believe that we should start reaching out to help our peers by introducing a 'feel good' initiative where everybody tries to say one good thing everyday to a person who you don't know to prevent us from having a poor well-being.

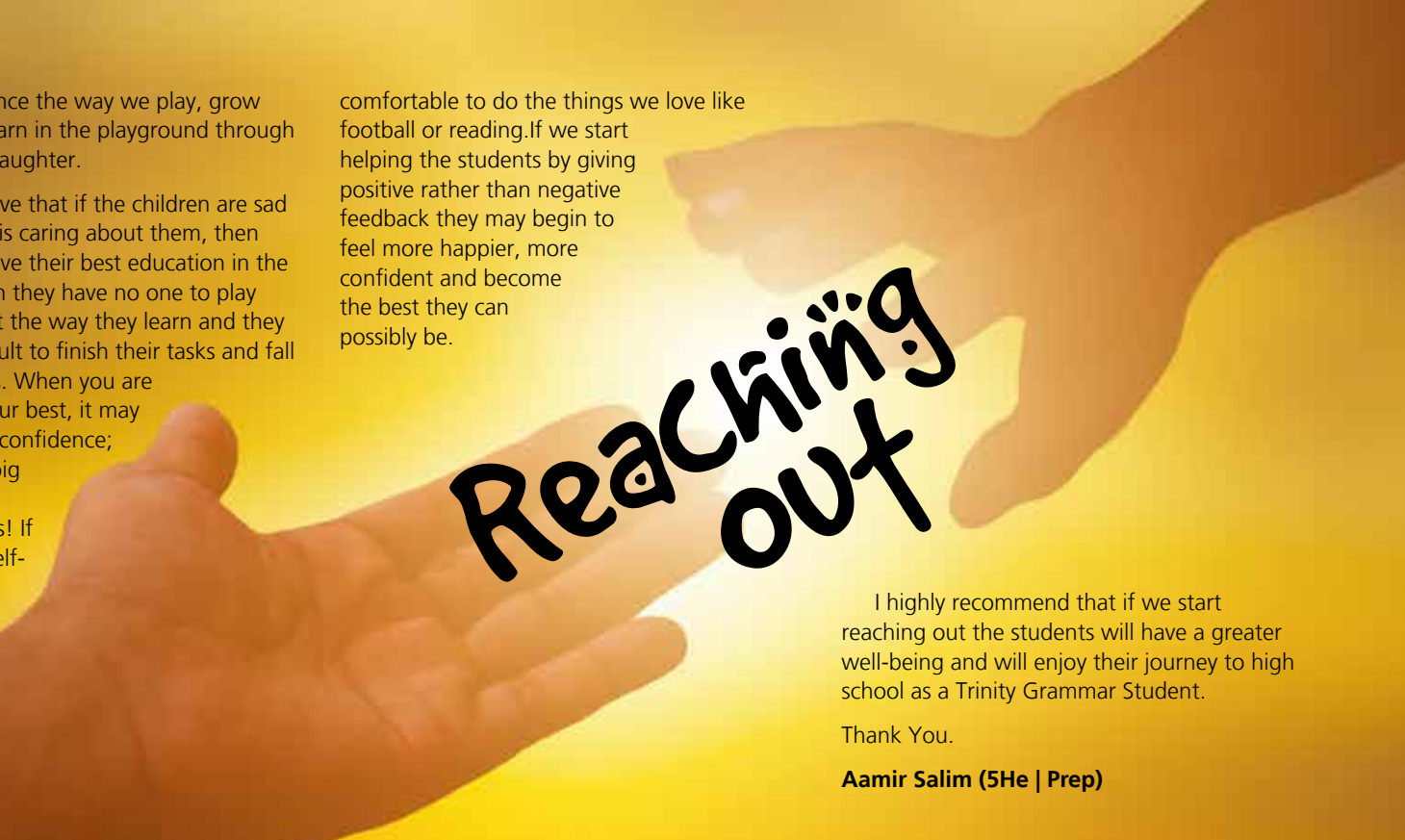
It is absolutely vital that children have good friendships with one another. That 'feel good' initiative could make them more happy at school and to have more well-being in themselves. Reaching out could help students from sitting on the buddy bench to having the best time at Trinity Grammar School than they will ever have.

I truly believe that Trinity students care about the boys who are sad and not cared for. From their perspective they feel worried because if they are not cared for, they may start to feel really sad and start being confused about what they are doing. If we start caring for them, they can experience a life where you don't have to sit down and wait until someone comes for you.

You can experience the way we play, grow and physically learn in the playground through friendships and laughter.

I absolutely believe that if the children are sad because no one is caring about them, then they won't achieve their best education in the classroom. When they have no one to play with it can affect the way they learn and they may find it difficult to finish their tasks and fall behind in classes. When you are not achieving your best, it may be a lack of self-confidence; confidence is a big key to how we express ourselves! If we don't have self-confidence we won't be

comfortable to do the things we love like football or reading. If we start helping the students by giving positive rather than negative feedback they may begin to feel more happier, more confident and become the best they can possibly be.



Reaching out

I highly recommend that if we start reaching out the students will have a greater well-being and will enjoy their journey to high school as a Trinity Grammar Student.

Thank You.

Aamir Salim (5He | Prep)



Dystopia

He chokes.
He realises that nearly all living things have disappeared.
He realises that he is in his final minutes.
This apocalyptic place is surrounded by lifeless buildings, bodies and bigotry.

Greed. Power. Inequality.
All of these things, lead up to this moment.
The mouth of government authority has devoured itself and the rest of the world.
He contemplates his past, and the decisions that humanity has made.
Every bomb detonated creates the grey sky, engulfing the atmosphere.
Every child born contributes to the world of lifelessness.
Every petty plastic bag dropped forms the inevitable end of life.
Silently screaming, his only choice is to fall to his knees.
His blurry vision can produce two figures in front of him.
He does not know that they are immune to the nuclear waste and lethal gas.
A new world will be created from their mutated genes.

Chris Chin (6Hi | Prep)



The monster

A narrative where the stimulus was "Oh what a mess!"

(or not)!

"What a mess," shouted mum. I switched the radio off and turned around. "This is like a pig sty! In fact, that's offending pig sties!" she added under her breath. "What is she talking about?" I thought. It was just about 30 old CDs on the floor, three or four old pizza boxes, a mouldy sandwich with some kind of plant growing out of it, and about a hundred stray lego pieces. What was she talking about? Anyway, I picked up a few lego pieces, and when she left, I tossed them on the ground and leapt onto my bed.

Ever since I was three, my mum and dad harassed me, and lectured me on how messy my bedroom was. And it seemed like it was not going to stop!

That night, I crept into bed and pulled the covers over me. Suddenly, I saw something. It had massive antennas, and long, slimy legs. Its shadow was towering over me. I hid underneath my quilt. It moved. It inched forward, showing its monstrously massive body even more. I was scared. I was chilled to the bone. I felt like I had been put in the world's coldest freezer at -50°.

It made a noise. AHHHHHHHHH, REEEEEEEEEEEEEEE, AHHHHHHHHH, REEEEEEEEEEEEEEE. I stayed as still as a statue (which is as quiet as a mouse). Suddenly, I did it. I gave an ear-splitting scream. EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

The noise stopped, and dad looked through the door. The noise was him snoring! He switched the light on. "I-it's o-over the-there" I stammered. There, once a lego piece, was a tiny cockroach. "Perhaps you should clean your room. Then you could see better", he said sleepily, closing the door.

I can tell you one thing, I have never seen a cleaner room than mine after that!

Tarun Mutalithas (5Hi | Prep)



How We Express Ourselves

UOI 4 was 'How we express ourselves'. For our unit we studied Indigenous Peoples and their culture. We started this amazing UOI by visiting and watching the Bangarra performance Dark Emu. The Bangarra performance showed how Aboriginal Australian people express themselves through music, dance, art and story.

We did a lot during this unit such as a research project on our chosen Indigenous Peoples. One of my favourite things was doing the 'Aboriginal flag Debate' about whether 'We should we fly the Aboriginal Flag at school'. I liked this task because I got to see other boy's perspective and seeing what they believe. As well as seeing other's opinions, I got to share my opinions and argue my perspective that we should fly the flag at Parliament but we may need to discuss it more for school. I really enjoyed doing this unit as all the activities were fun and very educational.

I learnt a lot from the 'How we express ourselves' unit as all the cultures are so diverse in so many ways. Although there is a lot of diversity there is also a lot of connections as well. I have a much better understanding now of Aboriginal Australian history. I now understand that the Aboriginal Australians deserve much more than they have. Aboriginal Australians suffered a lot during their recent history and one of the horrible events are the 'Stolen

Generation'. The stolen generation was a recent event that would include Aboriginal Children being taken away from their families as the British believed that making them like 'them' would make them better. Indirectly, the British perspective is like saying the Aboriginals are not as good as them so they 'stole' Aboriginal children to make them 'better'.

I think I did well on understanding the cultures and traditions. I also did well when explaining a culture to be respectful of their beliefs and not to offend anyone by using inappropriate language for my projects and explanations. I think I could improve in my understanding of Aboriginal Dreamtime stories as they rarely have very different worlds, so the moral and hidden story is really difficult to find.

Nathan Lam (5Ar | Prep)

A SONNET FOR

The Love Of Art

Art is a peaceful thing, one that I love
The creativity in art frees me
I'd paint some cities, or even a dove
I love how in art you can be so free
Art exhibitions, or even in life
Art is everywhere, you just have to look
Art can be a tree, or even a knife
I love art so much I won't need a hook
The feeling of my art makes me so merry
I have no limits when I am drawing
I really love that all art can vary
I never have had art being boring
I love all of art, how free it can be
Because art has always been for me

Benjamin Chau (6Sc | Prep)



Silent Knight

*An investigation into
silent letters*

There was once a knight,
Who lived at night,
Who guarded the castle with all his might.
He never went to sleep or bed,
Nor move, nor blink; he never read.
He carried a knife by his side
To his monarch's rules, he would abide.
There was also a horse,
Ready to ride,
But never go to do so.
And to his waist,
Another thing tied,
Was also a long lasso.
When the knight was free

He would be using a key
To unlock the door to its stable.
He could ride through the night
To his queen's delight;
However the night was silent.
And no wonder to this day,
And for forever
Its ghost would ride to its hay.
And what happened before;
No one knows;
But definitely something violent.

Lucas Woo (6Sc | Prep)



Double Inferno

The story of Thomas Jackson
August 10, 2002

I woke up to the sound of deafening sirens. I peered out of the foggy window and fire surrounded the broad apartment building next door. Suddenly, the horrific flashbacks struck me like a horrible nightmare. A nightmare I had frequently. I recalled the yelling and crying of frightened civilians. I could've helped them, but I chose to save myself. I didn't know what was going through my twisted brain at the time, but I knew this time I was prepared to overcome my fears...

I sprinted inside the collapsing building and there were people breathing heavily from the thick, dusty smoke. I carried some of them out of the volcanic building, which seemed as though it was about to erupt and explode into pieces. As I was about to save the final child, half of the building collapsed, and the fire and the thick smoke grew larger and it became harder to breathe. I desperately darted out of the once standing building and I crumpled onto the hard, wooden floor. The child was safe in my arms. People cried with joy as they thanked me for what I had bravely done to assist them. I was being praised as a hero.

However, my nightmare still couldn't escape me. The nightmare of what had happened almost a year ago...

11 months prior, Tuesday, September 11, 2001

The horrific day started when I was in the northern twin tower building of the third floor. I was quietly working at my desk when I peered out of the huge window and admired the stunning view of New York City. I had noticed something unordinary. Everyone stood up from their tables and immediately realised what was happening. A plane darting head first into the southern building at lightning speed. This was bad.

Everyone who was watching thought they were extras from a scene in an action movie. We all looked at each other waiting for someone to say "Action!", "Take 2" but there was just

silence and everyone was in complete shock. I cautiously walked over to the large office block windows and peered below to the street where people were running and some just stood in shock and horror looking above. My automatic reaction was to rush downstairs and get a closer look.

It was at that moment I heard a roaring, thunderous noise overhead...what looked like another aeroplane came out of nowhere spinning out of control and crashed into the top level of the building where I was working. I jumped from fright while the building burst into flames. Most people ran off in panic. There were workers leaping off windows trying to save themselves while parts of the building were about to collapse like a Jenga tower. Pedestrians below running from the scene. Bits of what had happened were too horrific to describe. I was left alone thinking about my next move.

I decided to attempt to help like everyone else... but when I saw all the people injured and in agonising pain, bloody faces, injured workers everywhere, I slowly backed away and changed my mind of the thought that I would die. I ambled away shivering with fear and constantly glancing backwards while hearing the distant sobbing and frightened people shouting. What was I doing? Why wasn't I helping all those poor victims? The only thing I knew was that this was just the beginning to these horrific attacks. I could've saved them by risking my life, but I chose to save myself.

I lived with guilt of not having the courage to help all those injured people 11 months ago. I had finally been given the chance to redeem myself. Did these people thanking me and praising me know?

Today I may be a hero, but 11 months ago, I was not.

I had finally redeemed myself... I had faced my fear and found my treasure. My courage. My strength.

Aiden Iliadis (6Ta | Jnr)

HARMONY DAY

I have grandparents from Greece
I have grandparents from Malta
Two buddies from Kenya, India and Gibraltar.
I eat food from Vietnam, Thailand, and Spain,
Not having this wide selection would be a pain.

My YouTube Hero is from the UK
Someone I can easily watch all day.
I buy all my gadgets online from Ebay
And have everything delivered from the US of A

I say Bula to my swimming coach
And Hola to my mate Joe
My Neighbour Ben is a Kiwi
"I'm from New Zealand Bro"

Life is about being one with all nations
All places, all people, all one salutation
So I say to you all – this Harmony day
Hello, Yiasou, Bonjour, Ni Hao,
And have a great day!

James Borg (5Ar | Prep)





The Perfect Storm

Ominous dark clouds obscured the sun. Lightning bolts, like cracks in the heavens, lit up the sky as they streaked towards Earth.

The peaceful fields prepared for battle. The windmill stood alone in silent protest amid the fury. The cattle were quiet and still, leaves trembled slightly, the wind died down. The whole world seemed to pause, waiting for the full force of the storm. As the storm approached, the fields turned brown and the trees became purple soldiers in the eerie light.

The storm watched and waited, choosing the perfect time to strike.

Jadon Wong (6Hi | Prep)

DEREK DIRTY

In the night or in the day
Derek Dirty comes out to play
He wears a leather coat
As bumpy as can be
If you looked for him
All you would see
Is a blinding blur
Made only of a colour
As brown as can be

Alexander Lieng (5Sc | Prep)



Market day reflection

On the 22nd of June 2018 we did a final assessment called 'Market day'; a three week journey to a big finish. We had to go through planning stages, information stages, the resource stage, building stages and the selling stage. This was an interesting experience as we had to turn \$40 dollars into a profit. In the end our group made a profit of around \$380 dollars. That's 10 times our original amount! My favorite part was making the book chompers. This really intrigued me and got me out of my comfort zone because I don't like origami. I learnt self-management skills which is not normally one of the skills I am good at, unlike my thinking skills which really shone through in this process. The best thing I learnt was what happens in real life, like arguments, triumphs, downfalls and achievements. Market day was the best final assessment I have ever done.

We made a lot of products. This was how we interpreted our part of our supply and demand research. We had to change our products along the way because of surveys and what people wanted. In our survey half the people wanted bookmarks and three quarters of the people liked our customised notebooks. So, because of these statistics, we could judge how many products we needed to make. We also got information about what topics we needed to make and which ones we were actually allowed to make. The other aspect of supply and demand was when we responded to the customers and changed the prices of our products halfway through the big day. This was because we kept track of our earnings so we knew we were at steady pace during the whole experience.

Our group made a really good profit and we were really proud of ourselves because we all worked really hard to earn all this money. Our profit was very surprising because we have a so called "boring" so I was very pleased.

Finally, the action I will take because of the knowledge I learnt from this unit. I learnt that my decisions for what I buy effect what passes the cut line and what doesn't. I also now know that if I buy the cheap, low quality stuff, it sometimes comes at the cost of someone else suffering and getting minimum wages. This has really affected me and I am now telling my Mum sometimes the consequences of her actions. This makes me feel really good because my Mum is a school teacher.

I really liked Market Day as a whole.

Hugh Darlow (5Hi | Prep)



Joseph Lin (85t) | photography



The Refugee



We were part of an ethnic minority, Hazara. We faced massacres from warlords and officials.

My family included my four siblings, pregnant mother and my father. We were leaving. I felt relief, but was nervous as we knew nothing about what lay ahead of us. One thing was for sure, however, as we drove in to a new dawn. We were leaving and one step further to a safety I had never known or felt before.

We finally arrived at Pakistan. All 7 of us were given false identities and from there we were smuggled onto a plane to Indonesia.

It was a horrifying journey coming to Australia by the piece of wood that they called a boat, especially as it was only days from my younger brother's birth. For over a week the 7 of us sat in the boat, hoping only to survive, before we arrived...

As we entered, all gates behind us were locked and the wire fences told us that we were prisoners...

...for now. We had come to find a home where we could and would be safe, secure and treated as human beings with rights. Now, our hopes had been crushed. We had had no idea, no, not even the slightest sense that we would be imprisoned in a way that only added to my trauma. Yes, we would need to fit in but this?

After nearly a month and a half, we were released, given visas and put into limbo for four more years, not knowing what would happen to us. After those four years, we came to Sydney from Tasmania. We were accepted as part of the community and soon we were living a good lifestyle, helping those in need. Our journey has taught me that we must face challenges to change and that survival depends on us believing we will survive.

David Wang (6Ta | Jnr)

The War's Darkness

There he stood with his hands in his pocket,
Reaching for his hipflask.
To try and calm him down from the pain,
Of not completing his task.

The swords that clashed,
The bodies that bled.
Oh the thought that they were all dead,
Just couldn't get out of Sir Abraham's head.

Bodies as far as the eye could see,
Lay where they had fallen.
They would never get home to see their kids,
Who would now spend their days mourning.

Sir Abraham returned to the place he lived,
It was not as he could recall.
The bloodshed and death had taken its toll,
Life was hard but still he stood tall.

Although days he cried and nights he wailed,
He was a hero to the town.
But to himself deep down,
He felt that he had failed.

Darkness filled his heart as he wept,
He couldn't take it anymore.
He knew his pain just had to end,
So, he travelled far till dawn.

There in the meadows he found a tree,
That reminded him of home.
He tied a rope around a branch,
And hung himself.....alone.

Max Wende-Dunstan (7Du)



An Angel of a Different Kind

Part 1:

BANG! Gunshots tatooed the slim corridor,
All froze, footsteps murmured in one's ear,
Until 3 gunshots, that Mark Strunman can't ignore,
For three bodies lay there, dear family.

He took his sons sewn toy, spite of his tears,
Young Strunman is lost, a man with no steers,
Running, running, burrowing his fears,
Running, running, running
Sadness entangled itself and he saw,
Death follows him like a shadow,
Time to do some more.

...

The London bell rings, for 12 years have passed,
And yet Strunman hasn't blood on his hands,
T'was now in London, vulnerable London,
He went back to the past, back to badlands.

He was awoken by a beast, to be fair,
An angel of a strong, different kind,
Showed him the ramshackle lair,
That would enable him to blend his grind.

His muscles were pumping, eyes bloodshot red,
The enemy was close, arms filled with might,
Sacrifices made were far beyond the dead.
For avenging his wife and children and his leg who took the bite.

This death means everything to Mark Strunman,
He put aside the blind... And what did he find....

A baby in a cradle, killer of his people,
An angel of a different kind.

Part 2:

Shall he really kill this young juvenile,
Newborn yet asleep, for what death lies ahead...
He could not do it, found sorrow longer than nile.
The mother looked, full of dread, this was not him no more.
...

He took his son sewn toy, spite of his tears,
Young Strunman was lost, a man whom no steers.
Sadness entangled itself, and he saw,
Death followed him like a shadow,
This was not him anymore, he shall always be his families hero.

Liam Wingrave (7Ar)



Jack Henderson (9Ta) | visual design



Samuel Thanopoulos (9Hi) | visual design



Joshua Butler (95t) | painting

THE *Kid* SOLDIER

I saw a note flapping around in the gusty wind.
It said come and see the world, because we're going to war.
Come and support your country, so we can win this war.
Come and sign up on the 10th of May, so we can win this war.

The next day, I go to the parade to sign up, so we can win this war.
The commander shouts "You will march to victory and fame.
Tomorrow you will fight for your country and win this war.
Welcome to the British army and good luck!"

On the day I'm marching to the train, everyone cheering us on.
I hop on the train and look back at my town, my country.
I'm going to train for war, I am going to win this war.
So off I go with a picture of my family, sweets and a biscuit in my pocket.

Finally, we hop onto the ships that will carry us across the seas to Gallipoli.
I board the boat with rifle in hand and an enormous sack on my back.
I stand next to my fellow soldiers. I stand next to the men I'll fight with.
I have a last look at my country, at my home, today we will win this war.

We finally arrive at Gallipoli and we board our dingy set for shore.
It's nice and dark, so the Turks can't see us - that is what we hope.
Suddenly bullets start flying at our dingy and we are forced into the icy sea.
I see an onslaught of men filled with lead as they fall into the icy sea.

I'm quick to my feet and run for shore passing by men in pain and agony.
I see my commander and friends and crawl towards them.
My commander shouts, "We plan to rush the bunkers! On my whistle!".
Toot!! the whistle goes, and men start charging with their bayonets out.

As I race towards the enemy, I look back and see my commander fall dead.
And I think, who will lead us to victory now, who will tell us what to do.
I jump into the bunker, impaling the first enemy I see and shooting another.
I see my best friend fall to the ground in pain, with blood rolling down his leg.

I look at his wound which is covered in mucky mud, as he screams in agony.
I call for a medic, but no one comes. I ask one of the soldiers hiding in the trench.
But he is shell shocked and can't move. So, I rip my sleeve off my shirt.
I cover his wound with it, as I sit next to my mate.

I start to cry and beg for home, for I have made a great mistake.
I yearn for safety and the comfort of my home. I pull out the picture of my family.
As the sun rises, tears roll down my cheeks, I nibble on my biscuit and suck a sweet.
I despair over what my world has become.

Sean Hanrahan (7Du)



The yellow, the light,
Happiness and joy,
The playfulness and love,
It is there, in all of us,
But, the corrupting hues are always about,
Ready to cover your mind in a mist of despair,

The blueness, a plentiful colour,
The sky, ocean and royalty,
And sadness, a colour of great heights and depths, and sorrow
It rests in an abyss, and erupts with an outburst of water,

But red, oh how it is horrific, its corrupting mist will blind us all,
It bleeds, and seeps into your mind, taking control of you,
Making you a devastating beast,
It may look like love, but it is torture,
Hatred and horror plagues the land, it plagues you
Then it keeps spreading, keeps destroying,

But the true darkness lies in black,
A shade of true devilishness,
It stares, and stalks,
With it's demonic grin it watches the land fall apart,
It watches the suffering we made,
And it devours the pain it has transpired,
It is the true incarnation of malice and destruction,

But whiteness, the purity,
Still watches over our land,
She rests high above us,
And hides away, but she is there,
A force of love, an endeavour of peace,

And greenery, the life of this land,
A calmness and resting place,
It is this lands provider,
It flourishes the land with hope,
It is what we can trust, it is our hiding place,
Our refuge, from the fiendish tint,

The spectrum, of love, hate, despair, happiness,
Some shades are fulfilling, some are corrupting,
We are not attached to the tones of love and life,
We are blinded by the fog of the darkness,
No light is with us, it never was
these evil hues are defining us,
We must break free, we must let go

Imran Parker (6He | Prep)

COLOURS & EMOTIONS

A thunderous crack sounded outside the building. The gods were here to punish us. I sneaked a peek through the window and saw the destruction. A blazing inferno surrounded the building.

There was no way out. The hungry flames edged closer and closer. A cold trickle of sweat meandered down my forehead. My sister let out a scream of fear. I calmed her by saying everything would be fine. It was a white lie.

My sister calmed, but the fire gained fury. The flames had taken the house. The roar outside this door

was deafening. I screamed to my sister, "Run! Get out of this building!" but it was too late. We grasped each other in a fervent embrace as smoke stung our eyes and burned our lungs.

Suddenly, a cool spurt of water washed over us. "Get out! Get out!" Someone was here to save us! I could barely make out a figure looming in the doorway. Our saviour. We clambered over the crumbling building and crawled to the exit. I pinched myself. We were alive.

William Chang (6Ar | Prep)

BURNING

The King's Shadow

Elkar's eyes fluttered open, his luxurious mattress, damp with sweat from his troublesome night. Enduring images from his dreams circled in his mind, an imperceptible terror plaguing him. His garments lay on the lavishly decorated table which bore the seal of the Protector of the Realm, His Royal Highness Elkar Elufin of Galadacia. A large rectangular window beheld his domain, full of lush grass and vibrantly coloured roses.

He had worked himself to near exhaustion the night before, organizing the legal documents which would incarcerate the bandits who had ravished the destitute areas of Galadacia's capital, resulting in the people rioting for justice. Elkar had a strong ethical attitude and believed that every man, woman and child had the right to live, no matter what crime they had committed. These strong opinions did not at all ease the minds of the people who demanded capital punishment. Their hate radiated out of the city... an almost physical presence.

Abruptly, the sizable oak door burst open, revealing his attendant, Alluin, panting like a wild animal, his ragged breathing disturbing Elkar's uneasy musings. In short sharp words, Alluin exclaimed "The people, Your Highness... they have done a terrible thing!" He recounted his harrowing tale to the horror of the King. "They have journeyed into the woodlands, seeking out disgraced Jeiman, the Warlock. Rumour has it that they have created a being of hate and malice to seek you out, Sire!"

After finishing his account, a look of surprise dawned on Alluin's face, as he was flung backwards, rendering him unconscious. In his stead, stood a grotesque shadow, its features a pale reflection of a human. It had deep haunting chasms of darkness for eyes, its face a sallow hue with an abnormal mouth, twisted into a sickly smile. Its fetid breath smelled of decaying corpses. All hope suddenly drained out of Elkar, but he fought to meet the diabolical being's stare, eye to eye. The creature inhaled deeply, a look of satisfaction unfolding upon its face as it realised it had found its prey.

Unexpectedly, in a smooth graceful manner, it fell upon the ground onto its translucent knees, in a bow fit for any member of Elkar's royal court. "Pardon me Your Royal Highness," it mockingly declared, "I have come to change your somewhat stubborn resolution regarding those filthy, vermin outlaws." The last words it uttered were full of contempt, altering its deranged appearance. "Let us hope that you do come to a new verdict, or I'll have to use other means to persuade you," it growled with a bold, crooked smile. Elkar's hand instinctively felt the hilt of his blade. The monster suddenly dropped on all fours, laughing insanely, writhing like a suffering insect on the ground.

With a sigh, the beast swiftly picked up Alluin's limp body. "This is your final chance, amend your choice, or he dies!" he said bitterly. "Never!" Elkar yelled and unsheathed his blade in one smooth motion. Elkar focused on the sword, thinking of nothing else but

the straight blade, its long grip sturdy in his hands. He deftly slashed off the creature's hand that was holding Alluin, sending a deafening screech throughout the palace, strengthening Elkar's resolve. The rabid beast lashed out in rage, but Elkar jumped in an elegant motion over the creature's weapon, arching his back into a perfect bend in the air. He landed skilfully executing a barrage of sword strokes, but somehow his blows were always parried. He quickly realised he had only one option to defeat this beast. He abruptly stopped, mid-stroke, his sword frozen in the air, ready to sacrifice his life to end the creature's existence "You colossal fool!" the beast screeched as its blade pierced the King's flank, the fatal blow sending searing pain throughout his body; the agony was unbearable. "I am not the fool," Elkar whispered calmly under his breath, and in a split second, his blade was horizontal as it severed the creature's head clean from its body, while life seeped out of Elkar's glassy eyes.

Guards flooded the room, as both lifeless bodies lay stiff on the gleaming floor. A solemn bell rung throughout the city, calling all who heard to mourn in the main square. Guilt stricken faces hid themselves clearly distressed. "Let today be known as a forlorn day for Galadacia, our dearly beloved king sacrificing himself for the good of others", a spokesperson said. "Let all who are here remember why he sacrificed himself and what he stood for. A land of fairness and justice for all without fear or prejudice..."

John Dedousis (8Mu)



THE POWER OF THEIR COMPANIONSHIP

Mohamed crawled helplessly across the rocks,
Gasping desperately for air.
Blood was painted on his dark skin,
As he cradled his broken arm with care.
The tribe had just been attacked –
But no attention he could attract.

He attempted to identify his unfound brother,
There! Sitting next to the tent!
A spell of torment was written on his face,
Mohamed called without relent.
“Mustafa!” he called over the noise,
“Come here!” he persistently called.

A look of doubt crossed Mustafa’s face
As the enemy swept past Mohamed.
Again, Mohamed unremittingly called,
Wiping the sweat off his forehead.
Tears began forming in his eyes,
Immediately drying on his cheeks.

Mohamed’s call was soon unanswered,
He could now view Mustafa lying on the
ground.
Blood was dripping from the boy’s mouth,
Mohamed now weeping helplessly, downed.
It was too late,
The death of his companion accentuated.

The ash seeped into Mohamed’s nose and
mouth,
The deafening noise blasting his ears.
Again, and again he was kicked to the ground,
But he persevered and faced his fears.
Mohamed trembled up and pushed forward,
Trying to get to Mustafa.

He trod hopelessly across the path,
His eyes blurry with tears.
Though cloaked with fear, he incessantly
walked,
Blood stained on his ears.
Death doomed on young Mohamed,
As he finally reached his friend.

Mustafa lay lifeless on the filthy floor,
Mohamed screaming in pain.
“Wake up,” he cried, “Wake up!”
The blood rushing in his veins.
No reaction from Mustafa,
Lying dead on the earth layered with ash.

Mohamed gasped frenziedly for air
As he rose from his kneeling place.
He was immediately pushed to the dirt of the
ground,
Dust being blown onto his face.
Mohamed’s lips drew to a close,
The life draining, fading out of him.

Andrew Tanous (7Du) | Third Place Junior
Poetry, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



The Hero

A North British boatshed’s very bright light,
Was nothing but a little boy’s life.
His resilience in sitting there and letting life
flow,
Gave the place and his heart its great glow.

The area of his life had since long been
unapproached,
By nothing but unwary strangers,
When one cold dark night another one came,
Which he sensed by feeling great danger.

The wind howled very loudly across the broken
door,
He froze in his tracks and stopped dead.
He was listening for what he hoped was
silence,
But his worst fear was confirmed instead.

The trapdoor was being examined by the
stranger,
Who was clearly after what the boy had in his
hand.

Looking back at the boatshed, silhouetted
against the sky,
The boy had begun his journey up north in the
land

He knew where he was heading to now –
It was a place far, far away
He had been walking for several days now,
To what would be safety and love – one day.

He knew something about the town was terribly
wrong.
When he saw the town’s stone bricked floor.
According to a paper on the cold dusty ground
His beloved aunt and saviour was living no more.

His heart sank miserably as he read on,
And made a brave decision right there and then.
He turned around and continued the journey.
To the boatshed that had held his life until then.

But as he arrived back at the crumbly boatshed,
He saw something that made his heart stop with
joy.

The first glance he had of his parents.
Was an eruption of life inside the boy.

And he knows what they should do while he
looks at them,
His parents had lots of explaining to do.
They both had to take a great lesson from this
He knew he was a hero in their view.

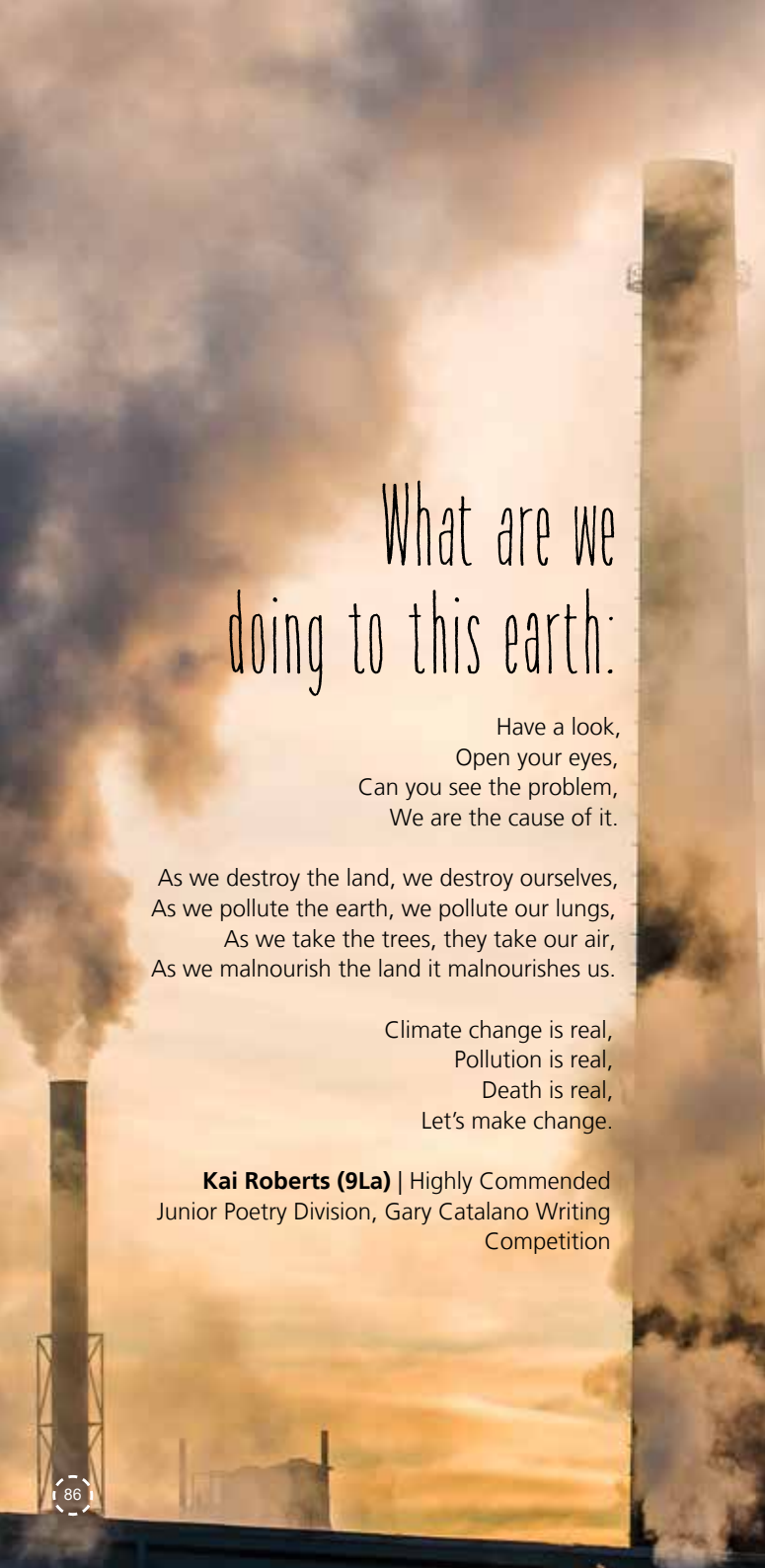
Luca Ratnavadivel (7Du)



Christopher Stelzer (105t) | sculpture



Diego Hernandez-Castellano (10WJ) | painting



What are we
doing to this earth:

Have a look,
Open your eyes,
Can you see the problem,
We are the cause of it.

As we destroy the land, we destroy ourselves,
As we pollute the earth, we pollute our lungs,
As we take the trees, they take our air,
As we malnourish the land it malnourishes us.

Climate change is real,
Pollution is real,
Death is real,
Let's make change.

Kai Roberts (9La) | Highly Commended
Junior Poetry Division, Gary Catalano Writing
Competition



YOUR JOURNEY

What shall it be then? Flies or the Skies?
When I see you what will I think? Hero..... Lies
When you walked past me, turned your head in despair,
And I'm still there, you know where.

That day upon the sun had shied away,
You thought I was predator but I'm prey,
The day I needed help, you weren't sharing,
Busy with work, too much of a bearing.

You kept to yourself that day, all shy and fray,
I came to you, I sought for you that day,
You were reckless and vile, in denial,
So you didn't have time for me that day.

Although now you know what you've done, you know,
My accident has quickly turned you to woe,
I know, my child, I know,
But for you now, sadness has has grown on you.

Life, for was the apple of your eye,
Like a small ray of moonshine in jet-black sky,
But taken from me? Did you really think,
Gloom now sneaks over joy, like paper on ink.

But after all that you've discarded me,
I see you here, over my gravestone, sad.
Have you come to set me free?
Now look at you sobbing over me,
You being here, my child, is being my hero.

Liam Wingrave (7Ar)

LIKE A BULLET

Fifty-eight at Vegas,
in a sea of spraying death.
Seventeen at Florida,
Before anyone could take a breath.

A few days in the media,
Then all of it is forgotten.
The public accustomed to the violence,
whilst hundreds go to the coffin.

Some say they need a gun,
In case of an attack.
But guns take more lives than they save,
A true and terrible fact.

Australia did it in '96,
And deaths by guns dropped.
Now it's America's turn to change,
And make new gun laws locked.

William Martin (9WH) |
Highly Commended Junior
Poetry, Gary Catalano
Writing Competition



Toby wandered
through the
desert
Looking for that
fabled tree
Its leaves as rare as
diamond
And the colour is
green like peas

THE DESERT HEAT

It is said whoever tries to
find it
Will never make it there
As the cruel desert lets no
one through
It would burn in the hot air

He panted as he walked
through
The harsh barren land
Sand felt like burning coals
In the land so big and grand

His energy was running out
His head pounding with pain
The desert let no one go
With its terrible lack of rain

He would soon collapse in the heat
Not able to walk any longer
He quickly would fall and die
Another man in which the desert was
stronger

Just before he collapsed to the ground
He saw an oasis, blue like the sky
He gathered all the energy left
And ran to it before he died

He drank the water to reclaim energy
And got up and looked around
And saw a plane in the sky
And heard its engine's sound

He waved at the plane over and over
Hoping it would see him
The plane saw and came down
And got him by the limb

Toby did not find the tree
He didn't find what he sought
But he learned not to challenge the desert
And was happy he was caught

Caleb Mears (7Ar)

My Silent Silhouette

As the golden beacon of daybreak pierces through the trees surrounding me, I know it is a new day. I gaze through the skeletal figures. "Hello. Is there anyone out there?" I bellow, with my last glimmer of hope that someone might answer. I wait for the harrowing echo of my voice to die down and finally, I wait. Nothing. As I struggle to contain my sorrow I can sense the presence of someone, or something approaching me. Briskly I turn around to be met by a silhouette. Had he returned? We stared through each other intensely for what seemed to be forever. Then, suddenly as if we shared a mind, we began our path once more.

He followed me everywhere; Through the most treacherous rivers and up the thinnest trees. He was always beside me. Although he didn't speak, we understood each other and despite the little time we had had together, we had an inseparable bond, a brotherhood... He made me feel whole, and the moment he arrived a sense of hope and new light came over me. I peered towards the Sun, its raging flame diminished, slowly sinking from the heavens like a pebble being lured into the ocean floor. Being dragged down along side it was the light. All colour and life began to drain from the world. It grew cold and a bitter surge of despair filled the air. As I turned to the silhouette he seemed uneasy. His hand... His hand had vanished. Faded from existence. Vigilantly, the shadow entered his arm into the night and in an instant, it was gone. Instincts took control and we ran. The darkness grew larger and faster, but we could still outrun it. We pushed forward until we were prevented passage by a towering wall of thorns and branches like needles. I urged the shadow to keep going. But he couldn't. He was unable to go on without me. The night was close. I pleaded that he escaped. But he simply shook his head and watched his fate impend. It was imminent now and there was nothing we could do but wait. Ultimately, as the darkness consumed the silhouette, a final black tear crashed against the ground like spilt ink on the canvas of night.

He was... gone. Once again I was alone. Once again I was hollow and lost. Here in this haunting forest of pain and suffering I reside, waiting in this cold, lonesome night. I am empty and my shadow seemed to be my only friend. I yearn for that first glimpse of daylight. For then, I know that I will be home soon. I know I will be whole again. I know I will be united with my silent silhouette

Benjamin Stevens (7We)

Who Really Wants to Live Forever?

It was a sullen morning. The sun, weary of days of constant toil, had slept in. The grey dullness of the clouds engulfed the sky. The rain laggardly dribbled down from the heavens, lazily splattering the window like a messy artwork. The old woman was mindlessly staring out the window. For months, this window had been her only connection to the outside world. Without it, this room would have felt like a tomb, already it was as quiet as a mausoleum.

The phone never rang and the door would stay shut unless the nurse made her call. Dead withering daisies brought by one of her sons a few weeks ago were lying in the corner, rotting. On occasion, he would come, more out of obligation than love, but the woman would have nothing to say that would interest him. Sometimes she would ask him to move some furniture or make some tea, anything to impede his hasty departure. She would reluctantly perceive the frustration on his face and know that she had lived long enough to be a burden.

The woman had become too frail and weak to venture outside anymore. The television stopped working a while ago, but no one came to repair it. She had meagre belongings so most of the day she would stare through the rectangle of glass to the folks that walked by, the delivery trucks and the traffic that stood still much of the time. She would observe some of the staff, nurses and cleaners, entranced by the latest glowing screen gadgets that they were always mesmerised by and repeatedly touching with their fingers, neglecting their residents. Once in a while she would notice some children playing or a young happy couple and a spark would appear in her heart and a smile would come to her face. But it would always be a despondent smile. She knew that those times would never come back for her.

The woman listlessly scanned the dimly lit room, her neck muscles ached as she turned her head as if to relieve herself from constant gazing. She didn't know how long she had been looking out the window for. Her dementia-stricken brain told her that she'd been doing it for a few minutes, but it really felt like hours. The monotony of life drained her like poison, slowly eating away at her. It's no wonder they call time a thief. She glanced at the wall clock, its constant ticking mocking her. Time's invisible eyes looked down at her sardonically, its hands teasing her as they spun round in circles. She counted down the time to the next 'community building activity,' her next meal, perhaps longing for the time when she would be reclaimed by the Almighty.

As her weary mind wandered, her flickering gaze fell upon an ornate silver plated frame which was coated in a fine mist of dust. Precariously, she attempted to stand and slowly hobbled over to her dressing table to inspect the photo more carefully. Grasping the floral beaded raised edges of the frame

with her spindly frail fingers, a warmth rose within her chest and her languid eyes brightened as she became fixated on the young attractive couple in the picture.

The captivating image caused the woman to fall into a deep reverie. A chain reaction of memories from the innermost part of her brain fell randomly before her like pellets of rain. She recalled the magnificent landscape where she once lived in her childhood. Beautiful pictures made by the clouds, their images reflecting across the glistening lake. The brilliant colours of yellow, red, orange and purple made at dawn and sunset. The laughter and the squeals of young children jumping in the puddles in Spring. She fancied this boy next door through her adolescent years. Eventually marrying her childhood sweetheart. Their glorious wedding day. The birth of their five children. Her memories suddenly grew darker. The coming of that futile war and call for mass conscription. Her dear husband taken by the war like so many of that doomed generation. Her perpetual struggles as a single mother to provide for all her defenceless children. Their growing disenchantment with her. Her increasing loneliness as her children started to leave home. Thoughtlessly thrown into this facility once they decided she was too much of a heavy burden to care for, in spite of all her toiling when they were once young.

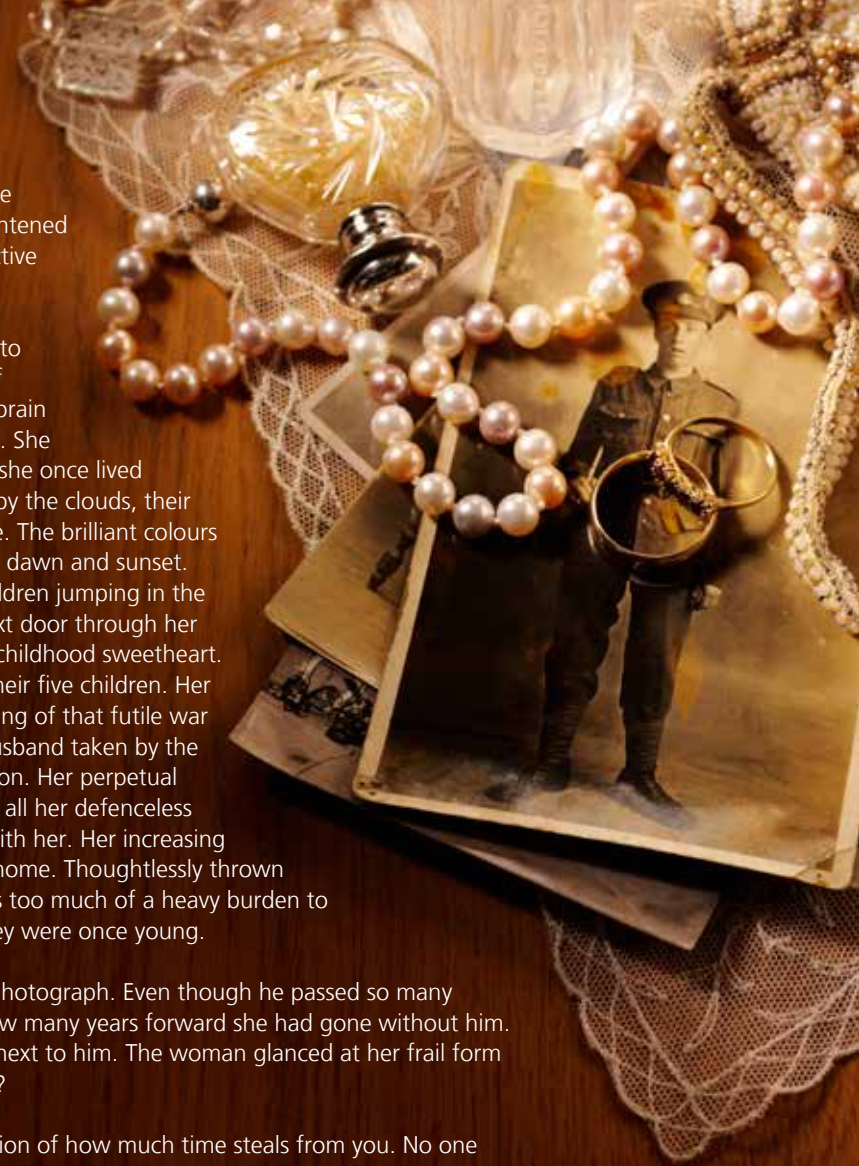
She peered at the tall, robust man in the photograph. Even though he passed so many decades ago, it saddened her to realise how many years forward she had gone without him. She looked wistfully at the youthful bride next to him. The woman glanced at her frail form in the mirror. Was she once that beautiful?

In that moment was the stabbing recognition of how much time steals from you. No one wanted to die young, but no one wanted to grow old either, yet old age will come with its creaks and frailties and no one will escape its persistent call. Maybe we are living far longer than we should, defying the natural order of things. It seems counter-intuitive, but the greatest trial of our modern medicine and health care is simply waiting.

A sharp knock on her door jolted her out of her trance.
"Time for your medication Gladys."

In a rare moment of lucidity she replied, "Who really wants to live forever?"

Selwyn Chang (10Ar)



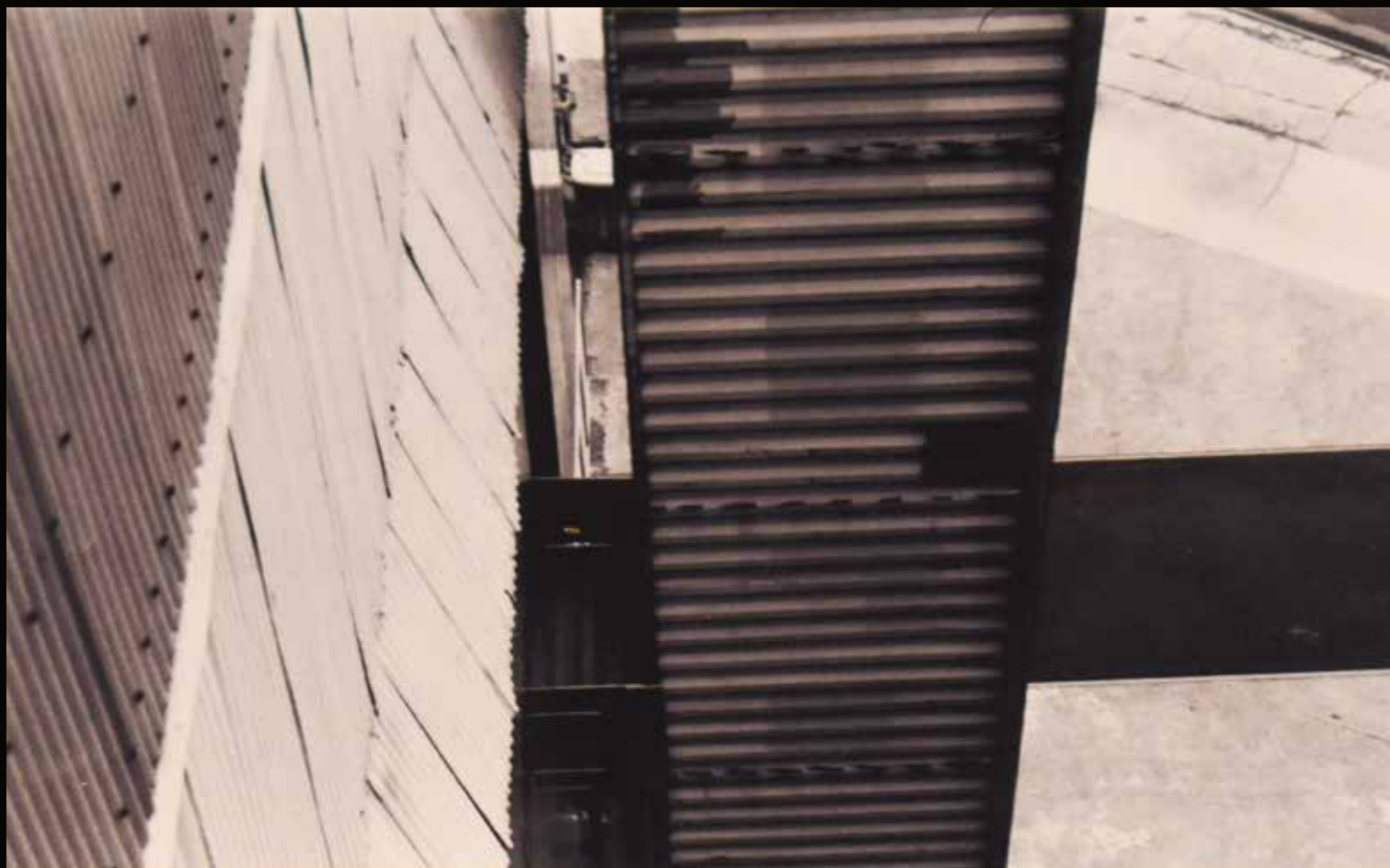
A lost childhood

I asked my little brother
When was the last time he felt the soft mud,
Heard the sparrow chirp,
Saw a tree stand tall,
In the stillness of the summer morn?
And he said,
My Nikes pushed the mud away,
My headphones keep the sparrow's chirp at bay.
My life's filled with work and play,
I have no time to watch the trees sway.
What pleasure do we get from watching trees,
Waving about in the summer breeze?
Why can't the sparrow's go search for worms,
Instead of singing songs without words?
And why invite the wrath of Mum,
When she finds my clothes covered in mud?
The answers to these questions,
I pondered for over an hour,
I had no reply.
My brother fell into a slumber.
The only time to smile is only when he's asleep,
Maybe he dreams of getting mud on his feet.
Innocence is lost, the joy of childhood is gone,
And my little brother slowly transforms into what I am now,
I was talking to myself all along.
What do I know? I know my childhood is lost.

Suraj Nellore (9Mu) | Second Place Junior Poetry Division,
Gary Catalano Writing Competition



Jamie Pritchard-Davies (9Ar) | ceramics



THE WHALES JUDGMENT

Oceans surface broken by whales and weight Judgements
passed down from the high desk No matter your best
we are all now condemned to the worst of fate Warmth of a
close mate no longer can state the monsters great shield
Pierced is my skin along with my dignity Because of all of my
subtle sins
Earth's rotation will no longer lock out mass with its gravity
And hold it until the birth that still has long to come
Makes its entrance and we can all sing along with the stars
lonely song
You fear what you don't know
next to the depths god sent in snow
while creative chaos formed the rest of the geniuses mould
Angels won't visit and you shall no longer be told about the
universe
and it's lonely dog with bitten power
Its wisdom standing far and tall
Above collective need and moneys new mall
Lands presence among my stance
holding me down and burning
The pants that hold up gods head as well as legs Sustaining an
eternal hunger of the new Draining spirits blood
Birthing a book of frosty cool and disappointing truths
The whale will never walk across the endless ash
Separate souls may attempt to mash life force
And the charging of hundreds of horses hoofs with
Stars no longer being new when between gods dust
With heavenly sent lust to accompany all thoughtless love
Standing still convicts the blade of use Traveling far is just
the dance of a wandering star
My anger builds then begins to fall but stops Before the
hill can begin to fall apart from the hilt

WAR OF GRAVE AND COLD

Did you need to sign paper with pen to start the wage of war
Or were the words that fury screamed enough to climb the wall
Is destruction your aim or your mistake
Why do you not spend time to think about what you take
Your hooks cut straight into my being
and my sympathy begins to fail
When my light is born and my blindness is picked up in a Gail
The pigs sty that is left
Are just the dropping of what I hold high to my left
Because above my head all my meanings quietly tread
Wondering between sulphur walls
Hands tremble to my pointless sound dread And I climb the
complete meaningless mound
If it does not flow forth do not sail on its waves But I shall crawl
through to the grave
Maybe under the grounds crust
These names can be locked
and my shame forever hold Submerged in nihilistic cold Never
for anyone to be told

COMPARTMENT FIRE

The fires swirls and winds push beauty shared among the cave A
single innocent maid
Flowers blossoming and laid upon the river bed of shame
The mirror and its element craft
created the animals mask
Protecting you from the stars
Gods Jupiter and Mars watching far from above Stunning the
wave is when it hits
Destroying all the bits for it is now given to the rich
The fire falls down from the rocks Igniting souls damp fuse
Annihilating all the fools
and lovers joyful pools
Mountains move and dance through out compartments walls
Leaving just perfections single rose with all
Single sight you fall upon me
Watching every breath when I breath
Until god brings the new millenniums eve Staring across from
me at the end of my soft pitiful tears
Your eyes now bring a end to all the years
Pierced through and killed my guts dragon lay No longer
allowed to explore and break dawns
veiled day
Twilight cuts across the scarf
That holds time and her partners laugh Drowned in the scarlet
light of your mains reflected bright
sight
Open the lens and gaze
On nebulae of star dust and frenzied mail rage Lust and control
of nothing but empty soul When
the moon rises behind the ash filled canvas taking its toll
On the very property of what makes you whole



BY THE EDGE OF *moonlight*

I was running, I could feel the bottom of my feet pounding against the hard, cold cobblestone pavement. The drizzle of rain lightly hitting my back. The back of my clothes absorbing every bit of that icy cold water. I was freezing and lonely, to others it may seem unpleasant, but to me, I felt none of it. All I thought about was getting away, running away from everything. I left my sanity there a long time ago, and now, no matter who tells me otherwise, I'm a different man. I'm just a ghost of who I was, a hollow body left with no emotion but melancholy, a soul slowly flickering away. Just like a turtle sinking back into its shell to shield itself from life's dangers, I've slowly sunk into my shell, showing no emotion on the outside, devoid of feelings.

I slowly opened my eyes and was greeted with the landscape of endless mountains and trees. I was running on a path barely noticeable. But I knew this path. I didn't even need the path, I knew this place all too well. In a different world, this place would bring me joy and happiness. But right now, it only accentuated my sadness. I began to slow down, my breath coming in ragged gasps. I felt a trickle of rain flow down the back of my neck. No more running away. I took a deep breath and surged onwards, and suddenly, in front of me was a lake.

In a different world, this lake would be crystal blue, sparks of light dazzling its surface and the small wisp of wind creating gentle waves that lapped against the banks. But now, the lake is gray, devoid of any colour and there was no light. No sense of happiness. The only other living object was another figure, standing at the edge of the lake. Through the rain, I hesitantly walked towards the figure.

As I approached it I could feel my chest tightening. I stood next to the figure, my wife, and looked out into the lake, the mountain, the trees. She looked my way and I looked back. I could see those familiar eyes, eyes that used to look at me with love and joy, however, there was no joy in them. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

"If you close your eyes, you can almost hear him." she said

A tremor of emotion racked my body and a sudden surge of sorrow flooded me, engulfing me. I could feel tears forming around the edges of my ears.

"You can hear him, barely, but you can hear him." she whispered

I turned towards her, her eyes closed and head facing upwards. It was depressing seeing her like this, but deep down I knew I was even worse. I took a deep breath.

"Please, it's getting cold lets just head home." I said.

"You still have that feeling, of a home?" she replied. "Because I don't anymore, I have a place to lie my head at night, a place where I cook my meals, but it's not a home anymore."

"What do I say to that all?" I replied "I can't keep doing this anymore, I'm there with you aren't I?" "I'm in this too, how do you think I feel."

She looked back out at the lake and so did I. The silence endured. With every second, I hoped beyond hope that she would say something. She turned back to me, with wishful eyes.

"Will you just close your eyes and listen?" she pleaded.

"Everytime, I feel myself forgetting a little about him, letting go of him, and every time it's like the floor rushing underneath my feet, I wish, that it never happened, that he never left us." I said.

More tears started forming, and I couldn't resist anymore. I let the tears run freely down my face, and my heart clenched in sorrow. My despair, an endless whirlpool.

"I can't undo it for you, no one can." I whispered.

"I know that," she replied "Will you just listen with me?"

The silence that followed felt crushing, each of us not daring to say anything. The urge to just run away, to escape this place, was so tempting. It's so much easier, to just turn away and attempt to forget everything.

"Do it for him" she whispered.

That's when I finally gave into the temptation that I had resisted ever since I entered this clearing. I looked towards my right, and there was a grave. On top of the grave, lied a vase filled with white daisies. That's when I finally gave in, and I let all my emotions run free. All the pain and sorrow that I had bottled up and nurtured for months, finally rushed to the surface. I shut my eyes, and all the memories came rushing back. I felt her hand hold mine and my eyes flew open. I looked at her and she pulled me into an embrace. As we both stood there, sharing in each other's strength, I looked over her shoulder and noticed something glinting in the moonlight in front of the vase. I let go of my wife and slowly walked towards the object.

In a different time, we would both be here, but she would be standing up, holding a bouquet of white daisies, and I would be kneeling down, holding a small, diamond ring that glistened in the moonlight. In a different time, there would be three figures, two adults standing by the side of the lake, watching a small child play in the water, his laughter, distinct overflowing with life and opportunity.

With trembling hands, I knelt down and picked up the small diamond ring and looked towards my wife.

"You... took it off." I whispered.

She looked at me and nodded.

"So this is it then," I stated "Even though you left me, I will always love you, always".

She looked at me with a ghost of a smile, "You always took things the wrong way" she said.

I watched her walk over and take the vase of lillies and hold it near her heart. She looked into my eyes, and I saw something I had not seen in her for a long time, I saw happiness.

"Let's start over." she said.

"How..." I replied.

Then, I heard a sound that I had not heard for so long, it sounded so beautiful. She laughed, and said in an obvious stage whisper.

"... ask me to marry you".

I smiled and knelt down on one knee. I looked at her standing in the moonlight, holding the vase of white lilies. I looked at her beautiful, serene face, filled with hope. I listened to the wisp of wind, flowing through the trees. I felt, that this was a new beginning, a new spark of hope, ignited within the depths of a pool of despair. She had put a crack in the shadows of my shell that I had hid in, and showed me to not be afraid of the light. It's time to let go of past memories... and to create some new ones.

"Anna, will you marry me?"

"Yes".

Derek Qu (10Du) | Highly Commended Senior Prose, Gary Catalano Writing Competition







Ben Austin (12Hi) | ceramics

WAITING ROOM

Bang. The intimidating crashing noise of the rusty steel gate closing behind me, struck terror into my soon to be useless heart. I knew it would be the second last gate I would ever go through, the last one being that of Heaven; or Hell. Without even letting me flinch, the guards escorted me through the foul, pitch black hallway, stopping only to strike a match with which they lit a lantern. At the end of the elongated corridor, was a room, with an isolated seat positioned awkwardly in the room's centre.

"Well then, 'av a seat. Might as well make yourself comfortable while you've still got time," suggested one of the guards, rather mockingly. They deal with criminals like me all the time. It probably became a joke to them a very long time ago. They hastily removed my prosthetic leg, and offered me a cigarette. Despite the hospitality, I wasn't spared my melancholy, even when offered my final beverage. After a puff of my cigarette, I rightfully complained about how tight my hand-cuffs were. The guards ignored my request and I started to doze off at the sound of rum being poured into my glass.

My daydream was a mere reflection of my pathetic life. I recalled my childhood, the accident and the terrible crime I committed, although I felt no empathy for my former fiancé. What would my childhood self think of me now? Would he be ashamed? Or would he fear what I've become? My daydream was cut short when the Judge from my trial entered the room, bringing with her a chilly gust of wind.

At this point I knew I was definitely going to die. The most I could do was delay it like a child reluctant to go to bed. I knew I would be treated indulgently. Again, I complained, but this time it was about the degenerate brand of cigarette I had received. "Quit your complaining. Maybe they have better cigarettes in Heaven, but then again, that's probably not where you're headed, now is it?" Chuckled the obnoxious guard. If only my hands weren't tied behind my back, I might've been able to brutally murder one last person; death was inevitable anyway.

I sipped my rum slowly to delay my appointment with Lucifer. I asked for a second cigarette. A cold voice behind me impolitely chimed in to say "We've already been nice with him, very humane, and this head isn't going to chop itself off."

It was then I noticed the executioner holding a cord and impatiently waiting for the climax of this whole ordeal.

As it hung from my parched lips, I saw a brief reflection of my lifespan; I knew it wouldn't last any longer than the cigarette.

Another individual entered, this time carrying my artificial limb. He crouched down to connect it to my short stump. As he carried out the process he whispered under his breath, "Funny how we're giving you a body part mere moments before we're removing another". The absence of my leg was the only thing stopping me from kicking him.

As I was aggressively removed from my chair, I let go of my glass of rum, mere seconds before I had finished it. The shattering of the glass brought me back to reality, followed by the cursing of some of the men who were present. The executioner chuckled, then brought his intense gaze back to me. "Ready?" he asked. I didn't respond.

The luxury I had so fortunately been provided with, was quickly taken away from me. The twenty minutes we all patiently waited was over before we knew it. Now I was no longer in control.

There she stood; the guillotine in all her beauty. I didn't rebel, but I was repulsed at the sight of her razor sharp blade. Her large jaw hungered for my vulnerable neck.

While hacking away at my helpless collar to avoid ruining the execution, the guards started to gossip. "I heard they're trying to abolish the guillotine, how ridiculous!" said one of them. "But wouldn't it be funny if this bloke was the last head to roll off! That would just be bad luck."

I thought about that for a minute. Perhaps I had my last meal, mere minutes before she was to have hers. It was painful to think about. If I had committed my crime just a little later, my life may have been spared. But life is such an unfortunate endeavor, and one that is about to end.

Then finally, in less than a second, my life was cut by the very blade that had taken countless other lives. In a split second, a man, who had spoken less than a minute ago, had been reduced to nothing more than a pile of flesh and clothing.

Marcus Anstey (8St) | Highly Commended Junior Prose, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



The LABORATORY

The Laboratory. A towering overseer of the little town, watching everyone it contained, eyeing out its next subject. But what secrets does it contain? What is it hiding? What are we doing that it needs to know?

The Laboratory. An unspeakable term in the town, a conversation-ender, a grudge. Disappearances are becoming more and more frequent in the city, which doesn't put it in the most appealing light. Darkness falls over the city as night falls once again, a cycle that never ends, until the inevitable happens.

The Laboratory. It surrounds us, contains us, consumes us, but no matter how evil, it protects us. From them. From the brain-dead, the sleepwalkers, the wanderers. No one in the village knows what happened on that day, we are beginning to wonder if anyone knows. We all may be different, unique, but we all share one common question, why us?

The Laboratory. A mystery. Every night, distant screams can be heard, piercing screeches like banshees in search of their next victim. Coincidentally, every night, someone else vanishes, but no one knows why. Sometimes they come back, pale and bloodless, as if they have had something precious get taken, or destroyed. Sometimes, they disappear for good. All the children believe that we are being farmed to feed the wanderers, and that one day, we'll be fed to the beasts that lie outside our walls. I try to convince them that they are perfectly safe, but I am slowly beginning to wonder if we will ever see what's beyond those walls.

The Laboratory. A filter with one entrance, and one exit. No one enters, no one leaves. The big machines along the wall remove any 'unwanted visitors' from the doors. Once we heard a cry for help behind that door, a desperate attempt to survive in a wasteland, a desert, a barren, lifeless floor that stretched

beyond the horizon. The Laboratory was their last resort. There was a moment of silence. Then there was a loud gunshot. BANG!

The Laboratory. Standing for as long as I can remember. My parents were taken when I was born and I was put in a room full of other people like me. We were trapped inside this cage and were told that we'd be set free. I don't remember any of that, I was told that by the man on the screen. He appears every day, when we wake up, and when the lights go out. He tells us one message "At the end of the day, we are all in search of an answer". That means nothing to me.

The Laboratory. All a mission to find an answer. Answer to what, I don't know. The wanderers have slowly been becoming more quiet, less and less of them. I sometimes wonder if we are the only ones out here, alone, or if there's someone else out there, on the other side of the world, wondering exactly what I'm doing. We are all just waiting for the day when all our questions are answered. Answers. That is what we are waiting for at the other side of that door. We're all just waiting for that door.

The Laboratory. A distant memory, a reminder of the hardships that were needed not only to escape the world we were trapped in, but to transform the world we live in. As I stare out across the utopia at my feet, all the people I thought I'd never see again, it is overwhelming, I'm beyond words. My friends, who I saw slowly become more and more brain-dead, lifeless, and get taken away, I can see once again. And the sacrifices and losses made are all made worthwhile to cure those who were lost. A cure. An answer.

Ryan Whitford (10Ho) | Highly Commended Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



Matheson Harricks (9We) | technology and design



Dhiren Satyendra (11Fo) | technology and design



YAMS

A quilt of vibrant patterns, lines and curvatures, extends endlessly across a deep expanse of canvas. Unimaginably black, the material woven across space drapes around colours, a stark contrast to the black. As if jealous of the light, the shadow absconds it, separating itself from the world similar to the way a curtain hides the actors before it's their turn to perform. But the curtain itself is no ordinary barrier. Encrusted in the endless expanse of black are freckles of white pearls in a sea, so precious but equal in rarity. The black is rich with these pearls but they are so far apart, it seems poor.

This is what the boy thinks as he gazes at the open expanse of sky. Aromatic spices permeated the musky night air and encourage tirades from the neighbouring insect community. The distant cacophony of chirps echoed unendingly for miles, the crescendo of the ambient noise, a small mountain of junk rich with a distinctively pungent odour. Acclimatised to the stench, the boy whistles to himself, naïve of the outside world, any trouble or care. His dump is his castle, the crickets his trooping band and the sky his magnificent view or canvas or whatever he wanted it to be.

'This is the life,' he muses inside his own head, or it was. His reminiscent thought dissipates, leaving in its wake only worry, though the atmosphere mirrors his mirage, nothing else does. That was the life he thinks, but five years matures a boy into a man, two was all it took. But somehow tonight was different. He had been crouching rooftops for the past three weeks, but he sensed something different tonight. Jackpot! A hunched balding man crept into the desolate ally bellow.

Dusk masked his thick arms and torso, however, a scamper of stray light flickered on his face, illuminating a pair of fierce yellow eyes, fat red nose and a larger than life handlebar moustache which burdened his upper lip. His trembling maw curved into a grotesque frown as he surveyed the underwhelming space and then his fat chin produced a curt nod.

Abruptly, a large rusted bin was wheeled out and dropped by two built cronies. As suddenly as it started, the whole facade ended and the man limped into the building, trailing the two large figures. Bang! The ringing door issued a

harsh metallic clunk, echoing off the narrow ally walls and sailing into the black night, this was his cue. Leaping from the concrete roof in a frog like fashion the boy falls into the distant alley before turning swiftly to grab the roof edge. His fingers dug into the buckling concrete. Permeating sweat, he slips from the moon-lit building, plummeting an entirety of ten feet before landing with a dull thud.

His steel feet barely wince as his drop causes dust to billow out from under him, swept away into the ghostly night air. Cautiously, he groped through the dark alley until he felt the cool metal of the rusted bin caress his arm. Opening the bin, the boy let out a barely audible muffled grunt of triumph as the things he most desired were splayed in the contents of the bin.

Vivacious chat could be heard penetrating the stiff night, mingled with the distant glow of the vibrant archipelago of neon signs and flaming lanterns releasing rays of amber, violet and amaranth light, cascading in every direction. The boy stepped out onto the main street, carrying a treasure trove in his arms, hidden in the confines of a hessian sack. However, he quickly attracted attention from crowds: as he was carrying the symbol of oppression. Even through the sack, the commodity that represented the poor and needy of society could be identified. Sneers and filthy looks followed the noxious stench which tussled through hoards as the animal quickly navigated the street. Suddenly, bright lights where caught by the boy's peripherals.

It was a vision. A broadcast from another world, another life. He really shouldn't look, he was too poor to gaze upon the giant flat screen TV, situated between two overly large structures in this part of town. But he had too! With a haughty expression, fighting of the urge to salivate and a hunger in his eyes, the boy gazed upon the TV. Everyone in the street did. He had a premonition that the nations dreams were on the line. From the boy's perspective, the blue rubber lay untouched, lightly springy, derelict by the rising sun, which rays beamed onto the hulking figures circling the track.

A bunch of scurrying ants, the pack chased hungrily, like ravaging predators, towards the objective: glory. The cheering and yells, groans of anguish and longing, all ambient noise, an odourless and noxious gas, it infected

them, drove them, motivated them. The blood red sky, a pathetic fallacy, like some sick mime, perfectly mirroring the exertion and pain of the competitors. And then as suddenly as this venture has started, there was a break away: neglecting the boundaries of pain, struggling, striving, stoically sprinting towards the goal. Ultimately pointless... to him.

As he began to turn away, vexed that he allowed himself to be drawn in the folly hopes and dreams of a better life on the international stage, he was suddenly roughly handled by a tall bulky man. "What do you have in there," he whispered softly, motioning to the hessian bag with his outstretched arm.

"Ummm...", the boy started, but before he could fully respond he was pulled off the street.

No, he moaned inside his own head starting to panic and kick aggressively, this was too important, other people's lives revolved around this, they needed the food... but his frivolous actions were useless. The symbol of oppression which he bore would never be eaten or gazed upon again. They would remain untouched, the dreams of folly youth in the bottom of a rusted bin.

"What's your name boy?" the brute of a man spat in his face. After no reply, the man beat the boy brutally in the mouth, "you are of no significance anyway." And with that, Costas cast the feeble boy to the bottom of the junk pile, after all that was where he belonged. Cascading down into the shadows, into myth, into black. A quilt of vibrant patterns, lines and curvatures, extends endlessly across a deep expanse of canvas. Unimaginably black, but this time there was no light, no stars, no yams, just shadows.

Ethan Brouw (10Ta) | Highly Commended Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



Ricardo Delgado (95t) | technology and design

Kai Roberts (9La) | technology and design

THE STATUE

The statue sat, slumped and in the deepest thought that the inanimate could conjure. The fading face of some dead pop star now stuck to its face. His gaze watchful over the rocks and grass on which children play. A primary school sits beyond the fence and he is the only man allowed such constant surveillance of the young. His body bares not scars and his mind no remorse, but in his eyes and in the slack of his spine, one can see his boredom. Everyday children come and play, with each year inexplicably growing older and the younger replace them. But he sits there, never growing older, nor being replaced.

Aidan Briscoe (11Du)



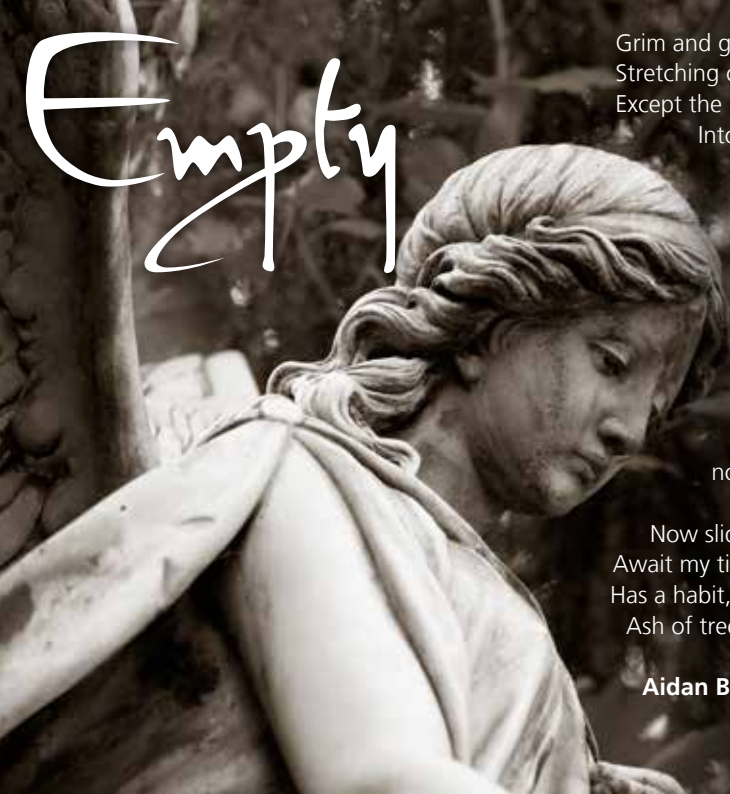
Empty

Grim and grey, the ashen landscape.
Stretching out into baron abyss.
Except the billowing wind that dies
Into a distant breeze,
There is only silence.

I look up to the stars above,
Immeasurable masses of gas
and fire,
Scattered like ash over a
dark sea.
And my mind does all but
crumble
Beneath the vast weight of
nothing.

Now sliding away to the shadow of rest,
Await my time. For the ever ticking clock
Has a habit, of making sand of stone,
Ash of tree and dust of flesh.

Aidan Briscoe (11Du)



AARON GAVERSON

Aaron Gaverson sat there, within the charred ruins of his estates. Now all that remained of his once great wealth, a burnt skeleton of a home and the last pages of poetry he trembled to hold. He read Poe's words, his frosted breath fading into the vast whiteness that had now covered the entire landscape. There was a time, before winter had advanced over the coastal town of Agenbrog. Back when the green of the land and blue of the ocean, stretched out for miles beyond the horizon.

Then he had lived in little more than a shed, an outhouse with a kitchen attached. His mother would sit on a stone out the front. The old dragon calmly letting the smoke release from between her lips. Crushing the cigarettes against the bottom of a pan to smoulder the flame. Before flicking it out onto the earth surrounding. Then she'd try her best to sit but the itch would get the better of her. She clawed at the packet and once she had her tobacco in hand, her lungs would calmly return to their accumulation of tar.

Years would pass, and he'd find his own itch, like the charred pieces of his estate, the chips lay scattered out across the table. Handling his cards with all the precision years of practise and drunkenness would allow. He stumbled from the casino door, pockets empty. When he won, as rarely as it was, he could have paid half his accumulated debts, but instead drank till he couldn't remember winning. A time would come that he tried to stop, but he was a fly in the dealer's web.

Luckily, he built a little web of his own, his venom heated in the spoon and injected via the veins. His web grew vast and his estate with it, but he never did pay his old debts. A single letter would come from the casino, 'pay your debts'. Perhaps he should have heeded its words, had he not been lying on his bed. His head resting on the pillow and his arm strapped tight. The flame of his lighter still lit as he held it over his bed sheets.

Aidan Briscoe (11Du)



Jonathan Hooper (12Ar) | lino print on paper



Dylan Zhang (12St) | acrylic on canvas



Cooper Young (12He) | painting



[STORY NAME HERE]

Word Count: 1192

Glassford was truly a city at the forefront of Modern civilisation, everyone knew that. The words were written on the wall, right next to Fruit Company Incorporated's latest poster: "Think differently... with the world's most popular innovative smartphone! Now 5% faster than last year!". While such a deal would normally compel anyone to dive in wallet-first, the same could not be said for the polite middle-aged couple who had now just reached the front of their queue. After 15 long years – it seemed the pair would finally reach the end of their honeymoon and achieve the goal they had been dreaming for so long: a name for their own, precious son. It would be the greatest gift a boy could ask for; not only finding out that he still has parents, but also receiving his very own name - all within the same day!

The machine was that unlike any other. Consuming over two fully grown trees per day, able to make enough noise to force even a rocketship to give up and call it day – this intimidating feat in modern engineering could generate anywhere up to 2 names per day. Near the top of the machine, large friendly letters featured a slightly improved quote by popular 31st century playwright, \$hakspe@re_1564. It read: "We know what you are, and also what you may be – so just take the damn card already."

Steeling their nerves, the couple walked up to the machine and took the piece of paper that would dictate just what they had spent the last 15 years of their lives waiting for. Upon their initial reading, the couple was first confused. This was soon followed by denial, then bargaining, anger, depression; until finally, after 15 long years leading up to this moment... the polite couple queued in line for a divorce.

...

"John Smith? What sorta stupid name is that?"

Jonathan stared blankly at the screen, in the same sort of way one would stare blankly at oncoming traffic. This had to be a new record. Most interviewers actually waited for the video call to start before beginning their verbal abuse. However, as one might expect from a member of the ever-innovative society of Glassford – this guy was already ahead of the curve.

"I mean seriously," said the 'video connection failed' screen before him. "Did your parents even try? Look, I'm sure you're probably a nice guy and all; but you know who else is probably a nice guy? Literally anybody else on this list – only these guys have names like 'Death_Star_420' or 'Toast3r_\$wagger_360', so why the hell should I hire you?"

Jonathan thought hard about this question. The 'video failed' screen was right, those were awesome names. But none of this mattered to him. Jonathan knew he had a talent that could beat any name...

"Well sir, I happen to be one of the hardest workers I know. Give me any task; doesn't matter how big, doesn't matter how hard... I'll get it done".

It was then that the 'video failed' screen dropped, and was instantly replaced with the 'video call ended' screen.

...

"Hard worker? Screw IT, you should be a stand-up comedian!"

Coolguy McCoolf@ce was Jonathan's oldest (and only) friend. He turned quite a few heads with that comment – someone who always knew just the right thing to say. This is assuming of course, that the right thing to say also happened to be the same thing that would get a glass bottle thrown to the back of your head, much like what was happening right now.

"Oi! Who threw that?!" cried McCoolf@ce as he swiftly got to

his feet. With an undeniable sense of justice – Coolguy scanned the bar for the possible culprit; carefully avoiding eye-contact with the mysteriously drink-less bodybuilder staring violently at the back of his skull.

"Yeah, that's what I thought. You'd better not show your face if you plan on keeping it!" It was the second bottle that finally made him sit down.

"Look, John – take it from me, alright?" McCoolf@ce said, playing it cool as he began picking glass from the back of his neck. "Guy's just jealous. I think it's cool – name like Jonathan Smith? Shows your different. I'm sure loads of people would love to have your name."

"Would you?"

"What, are you crazy? Course not, I'm not an idiot."

Jonathan looked down into his mug, the thick murky-brown colour mesmerising him. The way light seemed to bounce off the spit bubbles; the existentialist interplay between the dirt stains of the ice and the uniquely different dirt stains of the cup, fully drawing him into a world of – "Hey...Hey!" A snap of fingers knocked Jonathan out of the beer's seductive trance. "Geez, are you alright buddy? You're looking even more pathetic than you usually do – and that's saying something!"

Coolguy winced at the sound of yet another bottle passing overhead. Luckily for him, the bottle missed his head completely and landed harmlessly in the face of yet another burly weightlifter seated directly behind Jonathan. Leaning in, McCoolf@ce turned his voice down to a whisper and continued: "Look John, If it's about the job..." Reaching into his pocket, Coolguy pulled out a familiar yellow envelope and slid it right along the table, resting gently in front of Jonathan. "Just don't worry about it, alright? I mean, I may not know half the crap you do; but even I can make more in a month than you have your entire life! What do you think that means, eh?"

Jonathan didn't say a word as his hand descended, barely keeping eye-contact as he pocketed the envelope. "There we go, see that? Keep it up and maybe you can find a job as a professional envel-opener! Ha, geddit!?"

"Thanks" Jonathan said, getting out of his seat to walk out of the bar. Metaphorical screams of shame and regret followed him, sounding almost as loudly as Coolguy's literal screams for help as a bar fight broke out around him.

...

Jonathan took off his shoes and dropped onto the couch. He wasn't so much for comfortably lounging as much as he was for awkwardly slouching. Passively, Jonathan took out the yellow envelope and removed its contents inside. Another fat stack of green, covered with a lot of ones and even more zeros. With a listless sigh, Jonathan threw the money on the table and added the envelope to the pile. By now there had to be fifty, maybe even sixty envelopes there – effectively adding up to be just about the world's most depressing game of jenga.

Finding the remote, Jonathan turned on his TV and tuned into the local news.

"And another thing," the voice on the screen said. "Why the hell should my money, and the money of every other hard working Glassford citizen, end up in the pocket of some... Jøe_\$hmø_9000 just because he doesn't want to get a job? Where's the justice in that?" The crowd murmured in appreciation.

"I agree," said the nameless voice's opposition. "Screw that guy."

Jonathan turned off the TV and closed his eyes. "Maybe tomorrow", he thought.

Jayden Duong (12He)



Harrison Barden (12Yo) | graphite and mechanical pencils



COCKROACH

"Dear Yorkie, I'm not mad

Take the pill!" Reads the thin excuse for a piece of paper disguised in the irregular mess on the face of the archaic Chippendale desk.

Presently, I can see my heart beating inside my own eyes. A rhythmic spike and decline of the thin green line soothed me as I woke. Must have been a new update; the implant was always doing that. A digital sun shimmered softly in the bottom corner of my eyesight indicating the perfect weather that so strangely took commonplace in the sky. An unnoticeable static like fuzz of my 'personal control panel' (or so they called it) followed the movement of my eyes as I reached forward to part the neatly drawn curtains. The digital sun hovering over the precise waves of the pastel pink percale changed hue ever so slightly as to adapt to the bright light and immaculate neighborhood background that my eyes currently resided on. This action only confirming my suspicions regarding the elements, as a blue sky governed the tidy pastel houses and produced an amount of heat that was not to much as to prevent the wives from their morning walks yet more than enough to prevent them from wearing little more than an expertly fashioned gym top and a pair of leggings. The wives strode with a curious purpose that indicated, quite contrary to what was evident to the impartial viewer, that they in fact had a purpose in their walk. The holographic and almost comical quavers and treble clefs that spurted methodically out of their head told me they were immersed in what one would most presumably guess to be latest pop song reminiscent of their 'naughty's' (00's) heyday.

"Bliss was life in Summerville, and in Summerville life was Bliss" was a peculiar saying of sorts that appeared on our sweet towns shiny golden signage in such a way that one would question if it were absent of the third dimension due to its impeccably straight lettering. The phrase was so often regurgitated at dinner parties and acclaimed events; one would tend to say it following a positive remark about their life here. For instance summarily to "I love your new house, the pastel weatherboarding is impeccable", "what a lovely, sunny morning" or "isn't the implants new update amazing". I even found myself saying it on the odd occasion almost involuntarily, despite my controversial views regarding the rational and purpose of the statement itself. On this particular morning as I embarked on my weekly walk to Aunt Edna's, the previously bliss signage was tormented by the hideous scurrying of two sizeable roaches. Their fleshy limbs quivered as their pale faces met mine through nothing more than a glance. I could hardly stomach their four melting faces. Then suddenly they maneuvered their bodies around the corner hurriedly as if they were sheltering from the gunshots of my eyes. A holographic shimmer around their corpse like silhouette informed me that the implant had detected them, as usual. They told us this feature was to purely for safety reason, a warning mechanism of sorts, yet I had never witnessed any roach attacks on humans. It was always the polite politicians proclaiming the massacres and monstrosities of the roaches.

Startled by my encounter but hardly fazed, I continued my journey focusing on the satisfying crunch of gravel under foot in an attempt to pull my thoughts away from the

absurd conspiracies of my overactive mind into reality. The gravel walkway was so delicately draped amidst the grass as if it were a painting, reminiscent of the ancient artists Van Gogh or Cézanne that I had admired only in books. The crunch of the walkway faded to a light squelch, as a bed of leaves replaced the gravel. While grand trucks of the majestic oaks that surrounded the town created a maze of woody undergrowth that thickened as I approached the thatched roof of Aunt Edna's cottage. It was a weekly voyage that I came to look forward. I pondered warmly remembering musty scent of the dim sitting room that coupled with the customary fresh scones produced an aroma that made one almost ignorant to life behind the oak maze. As for Aunt Edna she was a peculiar lady. While she cherished my company, her brow always scrunched and her voice deepened at any hint of the implant I put it down to the generational gap. Despite the compulsory nature of the implant, most features were optional leaving the little old lady with only the frustration of the warning systems and the occasional glitch.

On this particular morning no comforting aroma wafted from the house, soothing the milky water-violets. In fact the door stood quietly aside allowing the breeze to rustle the mould stained drapes, triggering an eerie feeling of unrest throughout the courtyard. I scuttled up the driveway into the tiny sitting room where a dust covered a lamp illuminated a confusion of papers amidst the blurry darkness. "Dear Yorkie, I'm not mad. Take the pill!" Reads the thin excuse for a piece of paper disguised in the irregular mess on the face of the archaic Chippendale desk.

Static in my head. And back to the moist squelch of the oak leaves. Despite my obedience in taking the pill nothing had changed except for my worriment, where had she gone?

A subtle crunch alerted me to my surroundings. Small wooden shacks littered along a dusty road startled me. I tried to look at the map, a handy feature of the implant. Nothing. "Active" I muttered. Nothing. An abrupt blur of bodies scuttled just outside of the scope of my vision. My head turned revealing four anguished faces huddled together, a family, their utter dismay conveyed by the children's teary eyes and forlorn expressions. As soon as my gaze settled upon them they scurried away huddled together in fear. Sheltering behind a crumbling concrete corner of a high-rise structure that was barely standing. Any slight gust having the potential to send the bleak moss covered stone down upon the already withering figure. Amongst my confusion I shuffled along the grimy paving that was soaked by the misery of the grey clouds, moving towards the mournful bodies. They were gone. Only a miserable drizzle remained that distorted the desolate high street. Where were the pastel houses? I pinched myself, assuming a dream, delusion, a nightmare. No this way reality. And the small disintegrating sign that was propped up by nothing more than its own deteriorating desire read, "Bliss was life in Summerville, and in Summerville life was Bliss".

Jack Osborn (12Ar) | Equal Third Place, Senior Prose Division, Gary Catalano Writing Competition



Painted Moonlight

Moonlight painted her skin like a tattoo
Flowing freely in patterns that seep
Over every hill and each valley of her body,
The colour of milky white, pure yet clouded,
Displaying the untouched beauty
Of her smooth, virgin skin.

A pool of light encircles her peaceful form
Shifting and shaping with each breath,
Where the paint slides and writhes
As it returns leaving no mark
On her untainted surface.

For in this moment, her everything become perfect
The imperfections are forgotten
As the moonlight paints her in another light
And you realize that in the morning
You will see her imperfect beauty
From the inside and out.
And never again will you be able to
Live without this painted moonlight.

Liam Scott (12We) |

Highly Commended Senior Poetry, Gary Catalano Writing Competition | Shortlisted Top Five
Senior Secondary Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards



Thomas Newall (12Yo) | industrial technology



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creative writing

Anstey	Marcus	8St	Waiting Room	97	Hanrahan	Sean	7Du	The Kid Soldier	80
Ashcroft	Rory	2Hi Prep	The House	65	Hartzenberg	Jack	7Yo	The Hauntings	8
Bettar	Jack	8St	Mysteries, Magic and Enchantment	34	Hoe	Lawrence	6Yo Jnr	Year 6 Camping Recount	45
Borg	James	5Ar Prep	Harmony Day	72	Iliadis	Aiden	6Ta Jnr	Double Inferno	72
Bouletos	Nick	11Mu	What Shakespeare Saw	4	Jap	Jackson	12He	A tempo (return to the normal speed)	23
Boyce	Matthew	10WJ	Satisfied	39	Jia	Dominic	11Yo	Old Man at the Bus Stop	11
Briscoe	Aidan	11Du	The Statue Empty Aaron Gaverson	103	Jones	Nathan	2Yo Jnr	The Bathroom Escape!	60
Brockie	James	8Fo	You Are...	38	Kalis	Connor	6Yo Jnr	The Plane Fright	44
Brouw	Ethan	10Ta	Yams	100	Kariatlis	Gregory	4La Jnr	Mondays' Should be Banned!!	67
Brown	Jack	2He Prep	The House	66	Katragadda	Anish	2He Prep	On Top of The World	66
Buvac	Myles	5La Jnr	Gray Wolf	50	King	Harry	2Ar Prep	Tom and His Skateboard	66
Chang	William	6Ar Prep	Burning	81	Lam	Nathan	5Ar Prep	How We Express Ourselves	70
Chang	Selwyn	10Ar	Who Really Wants to Live Forever?	88	Lang	Owen	6La Jnr	The Escape	43
Chau	Benjamin	6Sc Prep	A Sonnet for The Love Of Art	71	Li	Jeffrey	10WJ	A Complete Timeline of What We Tried	10
Chen	Kerry	1Ar Prep	Our class pet should be...	64	Li	Ethan	11Ta	Cherished Memories	29
Cheng	Anthony	3Sc Prep	The Icy Forest	62	Li	August	1Sc Prep	When I was...	65
Chin	Chris	6Hi Prep	Dystopia	69	Lieng	Alexander	5Sc Prep	Derek Dirty	73
Ciarroni	Alexander	12WJ	Sticks and Stones	14	Lin	Zachary	8La	The Happiness of Depression	28
Ciarroni	Christian	5Yo Jnr	Cheetah	46	Liu	Ben	12Sc	The Old Domicile	6
Ciarroni	Enrico	5Yo Jnr	Geckos	47	Loughnan	Benjamin	3Yo Jnr	Plant use by the Aboriginal People	55
Coelho	Aiden	3He Prep	The Mouse and The Beast	63	Maclean	Jack	2Ta Jnr	Sydney Harbour	61
Collins	Richard	9Mu	Cosmological Harmony	7	Maloof	Alexander	12Hi	Terse but Satiabale	22
Darlow	Ryder	3Hi Prep	The Key!	63	Martin	William	9WH	Like a Bullet	86
Darlow	Hugh	5Hi Prep	Market Day Reflection	73	Mears	Caleb	7Ar	The Desert Heat	87
Dedousis	John	8Mu	The King's Shadow	82	Miller	Hugo	8Ar	MORTALITY OF STONE	24
Dunn	Ethan	6La Jnr	Treasure Trove	68	Mutalithas	Tarun	5Hi Prep	The monster (or not)!	70
Duong	Jayden	12He	[STORY NAME HERE]	106	Nallaiah	Benji	1Ta Jnr	A Journey to the Great Barrier Reef	60
Edwards	Darcy	12WJ	Seeds of Memories	29	Nellore	Suraj	9Mu	A lost childhood	89
Fang	Ivan	9We	Dear Grandpa	29	Nguyen	Nathan	3He Prep	The Ghost Ship	63
Foley	Pierce	10Fo	Protest Poetry	92	Osborn	Jack	12Ar	Cockroach	110
Garaci	Leo	10Ho	Duncan Soliloquy	9	Parker	Imran	6He Prep	Colours and Emotions	81
Gerbino	Luca	3Yo Jnr	Plant use by the Aboriginal People	55	Prodigalidad	Daniel	8Ar	Leafing	17
Gourlas	Zeke	4La Jnr	Ferdinand Magellan	58	Qu	Derek	10Du	By the Edge of the Moonlight	93

Quek	Benjamin	11Du	Still Waiting for you	25
Rathore	Kenneth	5Yo Jnr	Money Makes the World Go Round	54
Ratnavadivel	Luca	7Du	The Hero	83
Roberts	Kai	9La	What are we doing to this earth	86
Salim	Aamir	5He Prep	Reaching Out	69
Saunders	James	1Fo Jnr	A Journey to the Great Barrier Reef	60
Scott	Liam	12We	Painted Moonlight	111
Serb	Steven	12Ar	Downed Spirits	7
Shen	Oliver	3Ar Prep	Forest Run	62
Simington	Dexter	9Du	Protest the Progress	25
Sinclair	Lachlan	12St	Event Horizon	16
Stevens	Benjamin	7We	'My Silent Silhouette'	87
Tanous	Andrew	7Du	The Power of Their Companionship	83
Tischenko	Ryan	10Fo	Protest Poetry	92
Tran	Keagan	8WH	Heart	30
Tsia	Justin	2La Jnr	Sydney Harbour	61
Turner	Eamon	2Ta Jnr	The Race	60
Wang	David	6Ta Jnr	The Refugee	76
Wende-Dunstan	Max	7Du	The War's Darkness	76
Whitford	Ryan	10Ho	The Laboratory	98
Wingrave	Liam	7Ar	An Angel of a Different Kind	77
Wingrave	Liam	7Ar	Your Journey	86
Wong	Jadon	6Hi Prep	The Perfect Storm	73
Woo	Lucas	6Sc Prep	Silent Knight	71
Wu	Jayden	1Ar Prep	Three Little Pigs... With a Twist	64

visual art

Austin	Ben	12Hi	96
Azzi	Eddie	12Du	12
Baldwin	Alexei	7He	37
Barden	Harrison	12Yo	108
Bazdaric	Owen	9St	91
Butler	Joshua	9St	79
Cassar	Jonathan	PK Prep	56
Chang	Lawrence	PK Prep	56
Chen	Alan	5Fo Jnr	53
Christou	Jacob	7St	42
Fitzroy	Jacob	PK Prep	56
Gabriel	Andrew	11Hi	21
Hanning	Arles	2Yo Jnr	57
Henderson	Jack	9Ta	78
Hernandez-Castellano	Diego	10WJ	85
Hooper	Jonathan	12Ar	104
Huang	Danny	11Sc	33
Hunt	William	3Sc Prep	57
Johnson	Lachlan	6Fo Jnr	48
Karanfilovski	Marko	11La	19
Kaye	Logan	11Ho	18
Kostoglou	Gregory	11Sc	20
Lacey	Tobias	7Hi	75
Lin	Joseph	8St	36
Lin	Joseph	8St	74
Ngo	Aiden	5Hi Prep	52
Nguyen	Nathan	6Hi Prep	49
Obaid	Luke	PK Prep	56
Pritchard-Davies	Jamie	9Ar	90
Stelzer	Christopher	10St	84
Tay	Cameron	5Yo Jnr	53
Thanopoulos	Samuel	9Hi	78
Tsang	Cayden	PK Prep	56
Yan	Devon	PK Prep	56
Young	Cooper	12He	105
Zhang	Dylan	12St	104

technology and design

Blades	Ben	10St	95
Delgado	Ricardo	9St	102
Gullotta-Thomas	Lucas	7La	40
Hansford	Ethan	12He	26
Harricks	Matheson	9We	99
Harrison	Zac	12Hi	109
Jones	William	10WH	32
Newall	Thomas	12Yo	112
Poe	Jeremy	8Mu	41
Powell	Kash	12Ar	113
Roberts	Kai	9La	102
Repaci	Mark	11St	94
Satyendra	Dhiren	11Fo	99
Uglow	Bradley	12He	27



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