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THE ANGLE

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**Submission Guidelines**

//home.sjfc.edu/theangle/
ANGLE'S HOME GROWN AWARDS

READERS CHOICE

FIRST PLACE SPEAK......Sara Cavanaugh
SECOND PLACE EYE ACTION......Patrick Shea
THIRD PLACE GAVIN......Raquel Thompson

ART PICKS

ART AWARD Lisa Stevens Brotz

Kerry Meagher
I sat down to write you
Began remembering the way your tongue found itself between my lips
teeth
into where you consumed
found your home within me
Remembered that
that’s all we had
your tongue
A pioneer of exploring
where you would conquer
No words slipped off your tongue
made way passed your teeth and lips
Never speaking what your were motioning to my heart
I started to write
Remembered the way your hands slipped under the covers and claimed my thighs
Remembered the many times before I wished your hands would speak for your mouth
Speak to say whatever your hands were feeling and remembered
you were mute
I sat down and my ink flowed but
not for you
Flooded the pages
words scattered
But not for you
I found myself like you,
not under the covers or in consumption of your mouth
I couldn’t write to tell you why
or how
or when
I became mute too
When I couldn’t find the words to tell you
I wrote this poem to show you-
that when your tongue can’t speak
and your teeth are in the way
your hands can do more than touch
Speak
“Give her a little eye action.”

“What?”

“The girl over there. She just looked over at you. Give her a little eye action.”

In the far corner of the room sits a woman, dressed in a white button-up shirt with the sleeves rolled up to her forearms. The top two buttons are open, revealing a bronze collarbone and a glimpse of what lies below. She plays with her shirt collar as she talks to one of her friends. Her eyes focus with intensity as she speaks. She puts her drink down on the table, a cappuccino, and then slides her hand around her neck, rubbing the back of it.

“The girl in the white shirt?”

“Yes. Do I have to spell everything out for you? Now you have to wait until she looks again. Then, slowly, look over as if you’re looking for someone you know and when your eyes meet, give her a little smile. Not the kind of smile that you give when you get your picture taken or when you have to pretend you like that god-awful sweater you get every Christmas. Give her a half-smile. Kind of like you aren’t sure if you’d like to meet her yet, but if you do, you’d have something up your sleeve.”

“What the hell kind of a smile is that? I only have one smile and I only have one look.”

“That’s not true, there are millions of ways to look, and just as many smiles. It’s like when you know you’ve done something really wrong, like the time you broke my lamp running around my apartment. You almost couldn’t bring yourself to look at me when I finished getting ready to go out, and when you finally did, you had those puppy dog eyes. I couldn’t even get mad about it since you looked so freakin’ pitiful. Those aren’t the eyes we need tonight, but it’s eye action. Tonight we need purposeful eyes. Like you’re getting ready to go on a long cruise, and you’re assessing the room as to what you need for your trip. Everything you look at is for a reason, and so is this girl, only you can’t decide if you need to bring her with you or not, so you take a second, pause, and then move on. Got it?”

“No. You’re crazy. Why would I be going out to sea? I can barely swim.”

“Okay, so you’re traveling across country and you’re looking for supplies. That’s not the point. It’s the way you look at her that matters.”

The woman at the table stands up and steps around the table. Her outfit is completed with a calf-long black skirt and black leather heels. Saying something to her friend, she lets her auburn hair down as it falls around her shoulders. She then walks over to the restroom, leaving the other girl alone at the table.

“There’s no way that a woman like that is going to be interested in me. I don’t care if I look at her a thousand different ways.”

“Come on, don’t talk like that, she’s all about you. You just have to play your cards right. Now, let me see the look.”

He looks over with a tilted head and squints, then shrugs his shoulders with indifference and raises one eyebrow.

“What the hell was that, are you giving a look or trying out to become a stooge?”

“It was the best I could do.”

“Just relax and go more subtle.”

He looks again, with less squint and no shoulder shrug.

“Better, just remember not to keep eye contact for too long or she’ll think you’re out to stalk her. Now, let’s move on to the smile. Don’t make it too big. Let’s see it.”

He looks up and grins, lips pursed together.

“Euh, stop it, you’ll gimme nightmares. You remind me of that movie about the killer clowns. It’s okay to show teeth, but drop the silly grin and pretend you’re a sly wolf. Come on, you’re a wolf out for the kill and you just saw your prey for the first time. Gimme that smile.”
He grimaces with his eyes lowered and shows his teeth with his lip curled.

"Okay, you're not a wolf. Just try to pretend that you're only slightly amused. Like you're watching TV, but nothing good is on. You don't feel like turning it off, so you just watch whatever is on and every once in a while you sort of enjoy it, so you half-smile."

"Yeah, I get it now. Like those re-runs in the summer. You've seen 'em before, so they're not really funny, but it's better than finding something else to do."

"Right."

He then freezes one half of his face, only smiling goonishly with the left half.

"Try it a little more subtle, and don't pretend to've had a stroke. That usually turns 'em off. You've got it, don't worry about it. By the time you scan her over, she'll be begging to get to know you."

"Yeah?"

"Oh, yeah. Girls like these are all business, all day. They probably spend all day trying to run the world, but come five o'clock they leave that at the office. Here, they're just waiting for someone to give them that look that says 'I can't make up my mind if you should be approved or denied.' After that, they're just dying to show you how worth your time they are. It's all about confidence. That super-sensitive, male buddy stuff went out with the nineties. Women like a man who is decisive and sure of himself. Now, when she comes back from the bathroom, pretend you're still looking for something worth taking on this trip of yours, and scan her over."

"I'll try."

"No, don't. The more you try, the worse you'll look. Just act as if you could care less. That's when you'll get her attention."

The restroom door opens, and she emerges back into the café. She looks around slowly as she heads back to her table.

"Now, while she's looking around. Give her some eye action."

He looks first over to the wall, with different prints of artwork lining it, and then down toward her path. Avoiding looking at her right away, he looks down into his drink. She sits down, smoothing out her skirt, and looks out into the room in his general direction. As he looks up from his drink, their eyes meet and he feels overwhelmed. Her eyes are hazel, her pupils slightly dilated, and her lashes are long and thick. As he sees her, he can't help but smile at how her thin eyebrows move. First down, as she peers toward his glance, and then back up, causing a slight crease in her forehead. The corners of his mouth rise, only slightly, and his lips part, with less than an inch of an opening. She smiles back with a very amused smile. As if taking a pry bar to his chin, he turns away and looks back over to his friend.

"That's it! That was so it. You nailed it. Soon, she'll be walking over here all seductively, just hoping that you'll notice her one more time. You've become a master, my friend. That was definitely the look. You could smell the attraction, it was hot."

"It was definitely hot, but now what do I do?"

"Now you wait. In a minute, she'll probably get up to leave, but first she'll walk by us. Wait until you get eye action from her again and then pounce. By that time, it doesn't even matter what you say. Just act like it's no big deal."

She gets up from the table, with the other girl still sitting and puts on her coat. Then, she takes the mugs over to the counter, close to where the two men are sitting and puts them down. As she looks over toward where they sit, her friend walks over as well.

"Her friend is pretty cute, too. Maybe I'll give her some eye action of my own. After watching you, I'm inspired."

Her friend walks up behind her and throws her arms around her. She yelps out of surprise and then turns around and slaps her shoulder. They laugh for a second and then kiss each other passionately. Entwining their hands, they begin to walk out. Both guys look over, stunned, mouths agape. As the two women walk by, the one that they had been looking at stops, smiles at them, and quips, "Now that's some interesting eye service."
RAQUEL THOMPSON

GAVIN

HE stands before me
22, 6 foot 2
In a crisp button up burgundy n blue
Arms open to embrace me saying in a sing song voice
The words I love to hear...woman I love you

A fine black man raised by a strong black woman
He learned early... you take shyt from no one
Motivated, educated, dedicated, fully authenticated

The sight of him brings joy to my soul and tears to my eyes
No words exist that describe his greatness
The sound of his voice is true bliss
The pride I feel for him is priceless

He grew on me, grew in me, grew with me
Taught me patience, showed me love
He was God sent, God meant...
For him to be dynamic

His creation was symbolic
Of a re-birth of souls
He put ends to my means and means to my ends
He is one man I would draw blood to defend

He and I are one and for now
All I can do is call him sun
And pray that he never learns to hold a gun
Pray that he learns to be a man while he's young

Pray that he faces his battles
singing we shall overcome!!....
I look forward to the day I can hold him in my arms
Kiss his tears away and make every day better than the first

All too soon he'll be 22
6 foot 2
In a crisp button up burgundy n blue
Arms open to embrace me saying in a sing song voice
The words I love to hear...woman I love you

Looking down at the hands that raised him
Loved and nurtured him
Enclosed in a warm embrace
I'll be wondering where time went.

"It is better to raise boys than to mend men"

I love you
JAMIE BIRD

SAFE ABOVE RIVER

We began in the spiral.
We were caught in the spiral.

Yes, first person we-
I with you and you with me. Now,

down goes our city, decayed,
swirling in the sewer
and is floating away
sucked down by gravity
toward the languid Genesee.

And all the politicians
eat salads on a bridge.
Aloof and safe above
the river Genesee
in which you and I
now float along
with arms out flailing
helplessly.
LYZ MANCINI

EYES FROSTED SHUT

There's nothing so effortlessly perfect as being naive.
Your golden hair splayed elegantly across the satin pillow
No doubt in your pretty little head that
Prince Charming will come bearing roses.

War doesn't exist
Only translucent rainbows
Screaming sunshine
And once upon a times.

Beautiful utopia slip-floats
Gracefully through your fingers
Like exotic silk.
Acquiesced to the point of
Superficial Perfection.

If the dewy flesh was stabbed
Blood would pour pink
The glitter frosted platelets
Gleaming in bath-worthy moonlight on your throat.
Existing within your iridescent film of surreal silent truths.

You glisten, your best light
Through petal-lensed spectacles
Not anything black and condescending.

You're not alone, I admit
The real world is full of those
Who sleep nestled.

But I loathe your balmy naiveté
Oh, how I wish mine own eyes
Were that ignorantly shut.
You sit upon your perch, so proud
Speaking some words,
Are they your own?
Said puppet masters pull hidden strings
As they stick the dollars in your pockets

Do you know how I feel?
Do you know how I feel?
Do you care?
Ah but do you care?

How dare you say I have no right,
To live my life
Perhaps you have no choice like me
Born to who you are meant to be
The hand that controls you, not your own

Do you know how I feel?
Do you know how I feel?
Do you care?
I said, do you care?

You speak of pride, you speak of freedom
But all I hear is greed and hatred
Are you looking for your ultimate high
To breath in the smoke of your hatred’s dust
You speak and speak and speak, but do you practice,
What you preach.
I was sitting with my dog
reading my book about war
wondering what it’s like to be a soldier
wondering what it’s like to be involved
They say we’d never see it
we saw it indeed
kids running
kids shooting
As we look upon the graveyard
memories never seeming stale
about “that” day
about “those” ways
Now as I’m sleeping
I will watch the graveyard
watching you shiver
watching the tears fall down
You have seen my battle
the long bloody battle
where I was a soldier
where I was involved
KELLY SABETTA

ONE DAY SWIMMING WITH THE FISH IN THE OCEAN

Ears filling with muffled silence.
Waves of water rest against smuggled sound.
My breathing, rhythmic into the snorkel
Overpowers the grains of salt, Cankering
The inside of my lips around my mouthpiece.

The sand beneath my toes;
Small rivers of the space left behind
Of A child who runs her fingers through the sand,
Buried beneath the water.

Little fish following my movements,
Protected between my feet, with the current
Bobbing our shelter for that moment.
Life caressing, two worlds becoming one.

AARON SCHOCK

ATLAS

Atlas
The world's on your shoulders
Do you shrug it off?
Will you ask for help?
If so, don't ask me.
I've got my own.
ART GALLERY

DRAWING

LISA STEVENS BROTZ
It's your inconsistencies that throw me, that cause my heart and my head to dip in and out of hope. A year and a month, I'm seasick. The waves of your ocean, full of secrets and untold truths, leave me in their wake. I feel as they pass me, lifting me off my feet and just as quickly they are behind me. I find myself right back where I started, standing on a raft, surrounded by swirling emotions and I watch as another approaches.

I learn from the pattern to expect things, to anticipate your next move. I realize quickly that this relationship is but one tiny raft floating in the vastness of your heart. But I also realize that with every wave I'm being pushed toward shore. With every swell I'm being given another view of you, standing there in the sand. And this is what keeps me from jumping, from leaving the confines of that tiny raft, which feels so much smaller than it is.

Frustration stands to my left, confusion to my right. They crowd the raft with their lumbering bulk. We huddle together; yet they fail to keep me warm. They are the shadows that billow over me, keeping me from thinking clearly. They laugh as they point toward the clouds that hang above. I look up, the clouds a dreary gray, keeping the sun from warming me and my unwanted companions. The sun is your soul, held back by the clouds, unable to break through.

Your mind clouding your soul, the clouds shading your heart, and me, left stranded on a raft waiting for you to bring me to shore.
Your love
rests musty dark dry
in the corner
in the curve of your
beautiful old guitar.
Nestled in the rough underside,
your love, untouched,
and so
unpolished
by the oil of my hand
collects dust quiet.
Hiding frightened
of each stroke
that vibrates
soft and loud at once,
your love
refuses to hear my song
and winces
me away.
My love
from my fingers
continues to play
and play, for the corner
in the curve
of your beautiful old guitar
where your love hides
musty dark and dry,
wanting, waiting
to finally hear my song.
"Come home, as soon as you can
Come home, don’t ever leave again
And together we will spend
Every moment ’till the end”
Ari Hest – Come Home

The guitar is beginning to wear after only two years use. Its strings dangle from the nape of its neck like unruly metal hairs. There is always one string that is broken or breaking, and every time he plays again he has to tune it. The guitar’s smooth black body is hammered daily by my brother’s hands, greasy fingerprints spreading across its waist. At times, the guitar is my brother’s only companion, his only friend. It listens to him when he cries, directs him when he craves guidance, and sings when he needs strength. My brother’s guitar goes everywhere with him. It’s been to California, Maine, Florida, Aruba, Bermuda, and now to their new home in Montana. For years I’ve begged Ryan to put the guitar down, to let me listen, to let me guide him, to let me sing. It’s been months since I’ve spoken to my brother’s guitar; but now that he’s gone, all I can think about is its stringy voice lulling me to sleep.
MEGHAN PRICHARD

WRITING TO A MUSICIAN

And I wish you were searching for honesty, because you play an incredible show.
You’re great on stage,
But come off that lit up platform and come down to where I am.
Come back down to earth where your love used to live.
Because there was something waiting for you at the end of the performance
There was a girl and a dream that could have been kept if you left your rock star attitude in a suitcase.
You come out only to impress others
Who mean nothing
And don’t understand the lyrics you spent days perfecting.

I spent a million early morning hours preparing this speech.
Maybe I’ll get up on stage and sing you a tune I wrote for this,
Ya the song I wrote for you

You’re an empty cavity of the boy I used to know.
You’re only worried about where you’re dick lays at night and not your soul
And I’m not asking you to change.
I’m just saying
This is the end of the road for me,
If I want to keep my pride and my life.

Because you’re performing for everyone else but yourself
And all I want to do is sing in the shower again
All I want to do is sing to my naked body and feel the vibrations hum off the soapy tiles.
“Hey, could you turn that down?”

“Umm... no.” Why should I turn my music down when she is always blasting that crappy music? I’m giving my ears a pleasant break by... what’s she doing? You’re kidding; she just turned her stereo on. For once I wish she would just follow her own blippin’ rule and save the world from the torture caused by listening to her music and just put her headphones on.

“Can you put you headphones on please? I can’t hear my music over yours.”

I think I just died and went to hell. She seriously did not just ask me to put my headphones on.

“Uh, no I can’t, but you can.” Uh-oh, that pissed her off and... yup... yes... she’s turning her sound up even higher. Is my stereo even on anymore? It is? Better turn it up a tad so I can at least feel an undertone of what I’m playing, or what I am trying to play anyway. Crap, she’s talking again.

“... because I can’t hear mine.”

“What?”

“Can you turn your music down, because I can barely hear mine.”

You’ve got to be flippin’ kidding me.

“No, I can barely hear mine.”

“Hey, I’m asking you nicely if you can turn your music down, you don’t have to be all mean about it.”

O great! Now she’s all flustered and entering self-righteous bitch mode. Ugh, better say something nice before she flies off the handle. “I’ll turn mine down if,” and only if, “you turn your music down.” There, now any headache she gets from the noise is entirely her own fault.

“No, we should both put our headphones on.” Her cheeks are flustered now. I knew this would happen.

“After you.”

“What?”

“I’ll put my headphones on after you put yours on.” I think I made enough gestures for her to make enough sense of what I was saying. Not that she did, just turned her head away, shook it and went back to her desk to sit down.

I need to get away from this. Good, Derrick’s back from his game, maybe he’ll let me chill there for a bit until I cool off.
Everything begins to be better once she takes a deep breath. A smile creeps over her face. She sees the sky's pastel colors dancing before her eyes. The sun begins to creep from behind the mountain. She sprinkles the rest of the ashes and heads for her SUV.

Smack. "Don't talk back to me. Who told you to voice your opinion?" She could feel the side of her face flair up. An immediate sensation of pain mixed with numbness violently spread across her cheekbone. He always knew where to hit her so it felt like her eyes were going to explode.

He left the room, grabbed his briefcase and stormed out of the house, slamming the front door on his way, causing her mother's vase to fall off the shelf and shatter on the hard wood floor below it. Her eyes began to water as she mechanically stands up and begins cleaning the mess her husband has left behind. She is always cleaning up his messes.

Broken vases, broken glasses, broken everything. Dirty dishes and dirty sheets from his adulterous actions when she is busy caring for their kids. She is tired of cleaning up after him. She is tired of making excuses for him. She is tired.

Their kids are at their after school soccer and football practices when he comes home from work early. He complains about dinner not being ready as he takes off his dirty shoes and places his feet on the table. He complains about how his car has broken down and he had to walk the rest of the way home.

He demands his highball and, like a good wife, she retreats to get it. When she returns, he hasn't stopped complaining about her. How fat she has gotten since her last pregnancy, how horrible her cooking has gotten, how bad the sex is. As he criticized her further, the buzzer for the oven goes off.

That's the only sound she can hear as she walks over to her husband with his back turned to her. She can see the bald spot gleaming back at her from the top of his head. The mole on his ear taunts her with its dancing hair. His neck rolls overflow at the top of his sweater that he is busting out of. His hairy butt crack looms out of his tight khaki pants as well. Her mind goes blank as she repeatedly bashes him over the head with the glass. She keeps hitting until he slumps over in the chair and falls to the side. She keeps hitting.

She washes the glass and places it back with the others. She begins cleaning the pools of blood from around him. Always cleaning. She goes out back and starts up the fire pit. When the flames are nice and big, she drags his body outside and throws it on the dancing flames. Then she watches as his body melts into nothingness. When the job is complete, she extinguishes the fire and gathers the ashes. She cleans up the pit and goes back inside to finish dinner.
An introspective moment,
Blanketing a stressful scene –

Listless and vile, the truth waits.
Impatient, it begs a voice,
to be heard, to ruin, to leave.
Abandon this settled life -

We didn’t understand
the truth of forever,
instead we fed each other lies
over wooden chopsticks,
believing fortune cookie delusions,
building a future out of
cardboard take out boxes.
Now we cling to dinner menus
like little paper life rafts,
all that’s missing are
the cocktail umbrellas
and the last shreds of our self-respect
Watching society scurry before my art-weary eyes,  
I ponder my love, distant some four hundred miles.  
Surrounded by Indiana marble in a modern  
pantheon to the arts, I am like the masterpieces that hang  
from the walls, everything passes before me here,  
sitting alone.  

Befriending a thumb-sized cup of espresso and two  
fluffy scoops of gelato, tan and velvety smooth, in a  
goldenrod dish with a blue toothpick spoon.  
The dish rising thick, thick, thicker,  
Rising upward like the mad hills of a  
Van Gogh landscape.  

Smelling of crushed Colombian brown beans,  
bovine cream, I give into the hunger that wrenches at the  
pit of my stomach. Sipping torrid espresso,  
tongue thrashing against my palate,  
bitter beyond belief but bearable and desired.  
Swallow. Hot throat coated by a thick,  
penchant smacking film.  

Picking away at gelato mountain with my feeble  
spoon. numbs the tongue instantly  
before buds reawaken to tiramisu. Cold.  
Yearning for the warmth I once had,  
finding no solace in this caffeine,  
whose buzz mocks my listless heart.  

Breath reeks of coffee billowing from a inside a hot,  
dry mouth, feeling unsatisfied with my choice.  
Instead of her, I am left with an empty, stained cup,  
sticky fingers. I throw away the remains of a vain treat,  
foolish to have left Jessica to go abroad, an eternal hunger  
reigns that neither food nor drink can satisfy.  
I am coming home
Pink is the color of June. 
Month six of the family calendar 
we have displayed on the fridge. 
This month’s picture is my sisters 
and me in pink bathing suits. 
It is noon and the pink roses 
are especially picked for my pleasure 
then placed in my favorite pink vase 
that centers the house. 
It’s the first and last thing we see 
as we enter and leave our home. 
My exuberance shines as I race 
home after the last day of school. 
My flushed cheeks resonate my 
favorite color—pink. 
I pick the roses from the vase, 
smell them, admire them. 
I run outside and trip on the door 
way cutting open my knee so 
deep I know it will leave a scar. 
Too caught up in the day’s happiness 
I ignore the pain and wipe the slowly 
dripping blood with one of the pink petals 
I peeled from the rose. 
Like a pig I snort as the silky petal 
sticks to my knee. 
It acts as a band-aid. 
I turn and look back at the 
front door framed in the pink heart 
wallpaper of the hallway. 
I see my Mom mouth 
“Are you alright?” and I shake 
my head up and down as I lick 
my lips forgetting the pain and smiling 
in spite of it all.
I would like to begin this New Year with an explanation to the Fisher Community regarding the delayed start to this year’s publications of The Angle. Having recently moved into our new office, and gained some new and exciting equipment, production of the magazine was unexpectedly put on hold. We had to ensure that we were settled with all equipment in working order, and prepared to put out The Angle to the best of our ability. By taking this time last semester, we are well-prepared for the excitement that lies ahead with regards to timely releases of future Angle publications.

That said, I would like to extend a thank you to the students, staff, and faculty who have shown continued support and interest in The Angle. Not long ago, we received the exciting news that last year’s issues of The Angle were awarded First Place in a national literary magazine contest put on and judged by the American Scholastic Press Association. Without your support, The Angle would be nowhere near the current level of creative excellence.

While the First Place award is an amazing achievement, there is always room for improvement. As the Editor-in-Chief, I believe The Angle is an extremely important vessel for creating and documenting a student voice that is diverse, energetic, and most importantly our own. Consequently, I am extremely devoted, along with my wonderful staff, to making the most of my time as editor.

I tell you I could speak again: whatever
returns from oblivion returns
to find a voice:

from the center of my life came
a great fountain, deep blue
shadows on azure seawater.

-- “The Wild Iris” by Louise Glück

Sincerely,

Emily C. Ryan

Emily C. Ryan, Editor in Chief
Submission Guidelines

- All writing submissions must be sent to angle@sjfc.edu.
- Although we have previously required your work to be sent as attachments, we ask you to please paste your work into the email. We will no longer be accepting attachments.
- Please include your name, address, phone number, and the title(s) of the piece(s) submitted.
- Art can be submitted in JPEG, photograph, photocopy, or actual form.
- All submissions are judged anonymously.
PRAISE FOR THE AUTHORS

Lisa Stevens Brotz continues to amaze us with her drawings; so overwhelmingly detailed and beautifully rendered, they take your breath away.
—Emily Ryan, Editor in Chief

In “Ashes” by Robin Buda, we are given the unique insight into the mind of a battered and newly liberated woman, however unfortunate the circumstance of her liberation.
—Kerry Meagher, Layout Editor

Humorous and unexpected, “Eye Action” by Patrick Shea keeps the reader engaged and interested.
—John Karbowski, Web Designer

Jamie Bird speaks strongly and gracefully in his piece “Safe Above River,” which depicts his view looking up at the political world.
—Jason Cotugno, Layout Editor