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**COVER ART** Caroline Valera  

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Angle's Home Grown Awards

Readers' Choice

First Place Sara I Promise.....Meghan Prichard
Second Place Confessions of a Candle.....Jesse Kanclerz
Third Place Screaming Oak.....Jonathan King
Faculty Award It Could Have Happened.....Deacon Tom Jewell

Jim Liebow
Nobody likes to be with a lonely soul.  
So we cover up our fetal cries  
And truck on to Tennessee.  
The rolling hills are like Christian girls,  
Curved and serene.  
Dancing blades of tall grass,  
Just swaying in the wind.  
Tony’s recording,  
Jenny’s singing again.  

We’re four night owls.  
The interstate.  
Our drug of choice.  
I just keep my eyes on the dotted line.  
The world’s spinning.  
Grandma’s kisses; basement trims.  
I would have given anything.  
To have a road without an end.  

Traveling has its own potential  
To depress the souls locked up in a cab.  
I’m fighting with all my longing,  
Throwing away useless memories  
In every gas station’s trash.  
We’re lovers and we’re losers.  
I’m driving just to feel alive again,  
Veering into oncoming traffic  
Before I realize it’s all a dream.  
Some nightmare going nowhere.  

Coffee shops are jumping with soon to be famous tunes.  
I’m getting filmed like an actor,  
Without all the credits and brand name clothes.  

Sara,  
You’re always with me.  
Shrink your body down to an inch or two.  
Stuffed into canvas,  
So we can leave together.  
Watch the Kansas sunrise,  
Start flying back East.  
Take mechanical wings straight on home.  

We’ll land and coast  
To the familiar sound of loose gravel.  
No pills or bottles.  
To get us through this time.  
Summer to say we changed.  
Maybe for the better.
JESSE KANCLERZ

CONFESSIONS OF A CANDLE

Hey! fiddle, fiddle,
you and feline; why the quibble?
quite contrary to what either might think
neither at fault for that minor debacle,
I might have known from the little mutts sneer
the consequence of such a mean-spirited jest,
his intent yes, but carried out with willing accord
my raw stinging flame scorched the stinking arse,
somersaulting the bovine over a celestial body,
meanwhile, that mangy cur snickered with delight
sole witness to my despicable act.

For many seasons the guilt abscessed and seethed
gradually congealing into waxen beads.
a confession long overdue indeed,
without realizing until now
the slow burning wick had run short
with it the necessity of concealing truth,
my ignorant youth, consumed by flickering fire
    lost within a shroud of smoky haze,
absolved of this past transgression my light glows brighter;
however, I am still glad that I
told the dish to run away with the spoon.
Words on a page never had any meaning to me,  
translucent remains of baby oak maybe maple in between each line.  
Stretching black and thick across centuries of memories only  
to be acknowledged by the swaying leaves which  
hurry to escape the martyr  
of missionary migrant workers who  
are taking away nature’s color to feed the written language  
of many nations.

Without a voice, no human can hear the screams of pain belched  
from the root of a stump freshly sawed at its core;  
when the earth shakes, the trees cry.

What once housed a family of five is now  
Recycled over and over.  
Theory says to preserve and protect;  
nature argues the difference.

All of nature’s beauty  
all of the refreshing resources taken for granted  
are now fading out.
DEACON TOM JEWELL

IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED

It could have happened another way, I guess.

In finding satisfaction in pursuit of a life lived in professional contentment.

Reaching the pinnacle of success
as top salesman
a tenured educator
maybe even CEO.
Neat acronym that CEO.

Maybe it could have happened
through a life devoted to serving
the needs of the weary or less fortunate.

As a defender of the down-trodden;
tenaciously seeking to bring justice to those
trampled over by the inequities of life.

Maybe it could have happened in a life focused on God.
Existing behind the heavy doors
of some monastery
in quiet contemplation
and meditative prayer.

It could have happened in any one of these ways.

Sure components of each of these endeavors were present
but none in their own right caused me to reach life’s greatest place:

Peace!

Not the absence of war kind of peace.
That deep down sense of well-being.
That sense of knowing, really knowing, that everything will be OK.
That kind of peace.
It could have happen and it did.

It happened to me in the way of a loving family.

Who loved me with a ferocity that
lifted me above my faults;
carried me beyond my pain.

Who loved me with a gentleness that
celebrated me in spite of my vanity;
and held me close when I could not love myself.

It was through a mother’s gracious devotion and a father’s hopeful struggles.
It was through a wife’s steadfast friendship and a daughter’s joyful love.

It could have happened…. and it did.
From apple picking
the small shack,
the smell of apple cider
and doughnuts of the same name
warmth cast from a wood stove
falling golden rich upon timber beams
tingling fingers awakening
from woolen hibernation
an iron press creaks
apples red and green
separated into sand-like mash
and fall’s smooth amber juice
rich cinnamon, honey, and Mackintosh
mouthwatering cologne
a busy little shack
the bees in one corner
performing sticky maneuvers
in hexagonal bliss
for cheering audiences -
people coming and going
white bags of apples, fresh and flagged
with leaves of authenticity
stopped here and there
for a warm vanilla doughnut
dipped in cups of iron pressed
fall – liquidized and golden
collecting in puddles,
piles of multicolored leaves,
running through the veins
of autumn’s musty beat.
Lori Dabbagh

Pescadora de perlas

While searching for the pearl of great price in the deepest water
what if I were to surface and call for help?

Would you dive in and save me or would you remain rooted on on the shore
and shake your head and tell me I should have been a stronger swimmer and shouldn't even have been drowning?

After all, I was the one who said I wanted to be a pearl fisher.

Would you stand on the sand and tell me I should have been collecting empty shells instead oh my precious pearl! when you were the one who led me to deep water in the first place?

Al buscar la perla de gran precio en el agua más honda ¿qué pasa si yo emergiera y pidiera ayuda?

¿Te zambullirías y me salvarías o te quedarías arraigado en la orilla y menearías la cabeza y me dirías que debiera haber sido mejor nadadora y aun no debiera haber estado ahogándome?

Después de todo, yo era la que dijo que quería ser pescadora de perlas.

¿Estarías de pie en la arena y me dirías que debiera haber estado recogiendo conchas vacías en cambio ¡ay mi perla preciosa! cuando eras el que me llevó al agua honda en primer lugar?
JUSTIN MILLER

TRAIN WRECK

ACT I, SCENE 7: THE SHORT STORY

“Within a pocket lies either your greatest treasure or worst nightmare,” read the tiny words on the thin white piece of paper. Never did Jamie have such a unique message from a fortune cookie. Having nearly burned her hand on the Wonton soup to search for this clairvoyant message concealed within a crispy treat, she glared at it in a moment of surprise. She had always rushed for her fortune whenever they had Chinese, even before touching her food. However, something about this message was different.

“Um, that’ll be eight dollar, please,” interrupted the meek Chinese delivery boy.

“Keep the change,” she sweetly answered, giving him a twenty from her designer purse.

“Many thanks, pretty lady!”

With that, he was gone. He had been the first person she had talked to all night. She tried calling her girlfriends, but could not find her cell phone, though she searched for almost an hour. Bound by technological over-reliance, she did not know any of her friends’ numbers—they all were pre-programmed into her phone. As she stood in the kitchen, alone, in her bathrobe, all she thought about was her complete loneliness. Well, Alan was in the next room, but he was just a baby. Her boyfriend was very late coming home from work—and it made her very nervous. But Austin was never this late. It was four hours since he called from court. Tonight, they even had special plans, which is why she was wearing her best lingerie beneath her bathrobe and had applied the perfect of blend of makeup. Briefly, she half-wished he was in a small car accident or something, just so he had a good reason for not calling. As she began to eat some fried pork, her mind wandered from thoughts of Austin, her devoted and faithful live-in boyfriend of seven years. She sat and ate in silence for quite some time before Alan cooed in the distance.

“Mommy’s puddy baby, hi puddy,” getting up and going over to his crib, she spoke motherly to him. He was a beautiful seven-month-old infant who laughed more than a giddy teenage girl. She smiled at him. He brought his face to a sleepy grin and began to chuckle. She called him “puddy” because it was her own baby-talk translation of the word funny. Perhaps he would one day grow up to be smart and important, like his father, she thought. Austin Antinorelli Assistant United States Attorney was the best young lawyer New York had seen since the seventies. His passion, pride, and prowess could bring most witnesses to tears, or an opposing counselor to his or her knees. Simply put, he was a legal genius. Tonight, for the first time in seven years, he was late.

Filled with a sudden eerie chill, she traveled into the bedroom to put on a pair of sweatpants. Catching a glimpse of herself in the full-length mirror, she remembered her mother, of all people. Her mother had a rough life, and it made life rough for the rest of the family. Jamie remembered now that when Bethlehem Steel closed, her father was out of a job and the family would starve, if someone could not find work. After weeks of hanging on by the skin of their teeth, her mother finally got a job—as a stripper. The thought of it made her want to throw up. Within weeks, her mother met a wealthy pervert and left the family forever with but a white scratch paper on the kitchen table. In her mind’s eye he was a bloated, balding, greasy rat-like man. She pictured it now, the two of them together—it was repulsive. She thought of the years she laid on the couch telling it all Dr. Herzbrun. He seemed to be able to take all her pain, her leaving them, and how it all haunted her—him and the medication. But, she stopped taking her meds when she met Austin. He was stable enough for both of them. Besides, to her, time appeared to have healed this wound. Still, she thought, if Austin ever cheated on her, her entire life would crumble. In disgust of the whole business, she threw off the lingerie and practically jumped into her sweats. The modesty felt good for a change.

Unable to stop replaying these mind-polluting images, Jamie collapsed in their comfortable bed with the red sheets, engulfed in a state of loneliness and disgust. She
searched for something to distract her until Austin arrived—if he ever came home. T.V. was not a good choice, since Alan could wake at the drop of a pin. In desperation, her eyes fell upon the end-table next to the bed. Suddenly, she realized the old dusty Bible they kept, and realized this was the first time she ever really noticed it in all these years. She blew the dust from its cover and promptly sneezed. Not having read the Bible in around 20 years, she simply opened it to see on which page it would fall. Just as she opened the book, the phone rang.

The Bible slammed shut like a crack of a whip, waking Alan. She called out to him motherly as she ran for the phone. “It had to be Austin. It was Austin.

“Honey, how are you, what’s wrong?” she answered impetuously.

“Jaim, there’s no problem, I’m over at Nicky’s. I’ve been calling your cell all night but kept getting voicemail. You know I always call the cell because we get free minutes after 9. Sorry I didn’t try home sooner, but we were having such a good time—.”

“And just what fun have you been having, Austin?” she questioned.

“Oh, it’s just me and Nicky, we’ve been playing poker and drinking just a little bit, at his apartment. I thought you knew we might hang out after the trial.”

Her heart fell. The trial ended at 6 p.m. That is when he called to say they won. It was now almost midnight, and she knew he would not have forgotten about her in lingerie under normal circumstances. Was something up? No, she thought—Austin would not do a thing like that. Seven years, and he was faithful throughout every one of them.

“I called now just to say I’m on my way home in case you didn’t get my other voicemails. Ooh, here’s the cab now. Listen, honey, I’ve gotta go, but I’ll see you in a half-hour—and I’ve got a surprise.”

Surprise? She thought, kind of like how he had surprised her by forgetting their intimate rendezvous? It took Jamie a good five minutes to even consider that Austin had something good to surprise her with. And then looking at Alan, she smiled. Her little son bore such a likeness to Austin; it was uncanny. Kissing his forehead, she immediately forgot all her anger towards Austin. Alan went to sleep right before her eyes, and she too filled with a sense of intense comfort and drowsiness. She then went back into the bedroom to wait for him by reclining on the bed. Within minutes she was asleep.

Austin went over the plan again on the cab ride home. He was amazed at what a full night it had been. He had not been to a strip club in, well, seven years. He was entirely faithful to Jamie for the course of the relationship. Tonight was just a little pit stop before the marathon. For earlier this very night, he decided he would propose to her. Naturally, he felt entitled to a little bachelor party, and he was very glad he had. Jamie was drop-dead gorgeous, and everything he ever wanted, but being able to feast his eyes on girls one last time for who knows how long—maybe even the rest of his life—seemed worth the little risk of getting caught. At first, it tugged at his conscience to lie to Jamie, but even if she did find out it did not matter. She was so in love with him, and he had her in the palm of his hand, that she would surely forgive one moment of weakness. Nicky had helped Austin remake a story to tell Jamie about where he had been—it had been easy, they were both lawyers. There was no way she would find out. Their story was flawless. Of course, she didn’t get any voicemails, for he mistakenly put her cell phone in his briefcase when he rushed out the door this morning. It was the perfect loophole, and he, of all people, knew how to exploit loopholes.

She awoke when Austin kissed her head, calling his name and giving him the biggest hug she gave him in years. He only slightly smelled of alcohol, and he did look handsome in his unbuttoned shirt and ruffled designer suit coat.
"Honey, I can’t believe how much I missed you, why did you have to be so long?"

"You know Nicky and I never get a chance to talk, plus we wanted to celebrate a hard-fought trial. I’m so sorry I couldn’t make it sooner, baby, you know that I live every moment just to be with you — let’s live this moment,“ he said genuinely.

"What’s special about right now, other than you’re finally home," she said in a dull tone, not remembering his surprise or the fortune cookie’s message.

"Jaim, I love you. I’ve loved you since the observation deck of City Hall, back in Buffalo. Remember that day? It was clear, warm, late May, I was back from NYU interning at the Federal Court. ‘I’d never been up to the top, and I went during lunch…,” his eyes glowed as he spoke directly into her eyes. She interrupted him.

"Of course, I was up there taking pictures of the new hockey arena for Dad. When you left for the Ivy League, I thought you’d forgotten all about me, just some Buffalo girl from the old neighborhood.”

"Who could forget your kind heart, the way you threw a curve, much less a brunette with your shape?”

Jaime smiled and leaned in to kiss him. She then continued her path down memory lane, “You knew I always loved you, right? Ever since I was 13, and four grades behind you. We never even really spoke, cuz you were always busy with the guys… or your other girls. But that day, high up in the clouds, where you could see for miles—we spoke.”

“It was magic in the clouds. I think we ate lunch that day right in the basement of City Hall, that old cafeteria they’ve got. Best food you can buy on a shoestring. We talked till after three. It nearly cost me my internship, and I didn’t even care,” he spoke as joyful emotions filled his heart. This was turning out better than he planned. He waited to see if it got better before he popped the question. Timing was everything. After seven years, he had to direct for the perfect moment.

“You were all that mattered, Austin. When I saw again after three years you on that observation deck—even before you spoke a word to me—I forgot about the city around me, the city I loved, and devoted my life to you. Buffalo only let me down, but you never have.” Jaime, now thoroughly removed from her earlier loneliness and frustration towards, beamed at him. This was it, Austin thought.

“And I never will, babe. You know I’m always true to you. And now I can prove it beyond the shadow of a doubt.” Kneeling on one knee, Austin reached into his left pocket and withdrew a charcoal looking jewelry box. As if he was presenting her with the keys of heaven itself, Jamie—all in one bound—leapt for joy and then jumped him, knocking him clear to the floor. She murmured a barely audible yes in his ear amidst an onslaught of kisses and cuddling. Jamie had never felt better in her life. She laid on top of him for a moment, feeling entirely secure about her future and enjoyed the ecstatic high that she thought would never end.

After a good five minutes in total silence, and completely basking in their future, she lifted her torso to look at her gorgeous and successful fiancé again. As she rose, her eyes fixed on a small piece of paper that was lying just beside his left pocket. He was too in love to even notice it had fallen. She picked it up and asked him about it innocently, unaware of the certain destruction that was to come.

"Honey, what’s this?" Immediately Austin’s mood crumbled. He concealed his chagrin and playfully lunged at the receipt in her hand, but she was an athletic woman, and eluded his grab.

“It’s just the pizza receipt from Nicky’s tonight… throw it out for me, will you,” he was trying his best not to allow her to look at it. If she did, it would ruin the night of his perfect proposal.

In one quick moment, she read it. Every letter on the small white receipt cut a mortal blow to her heart. It read: “Downstairs Cabaret: the finest gentlemen’s club around.”
BELIEVING THE WORLD'S APOCRYPHAL TRUTHS
BEQUEATHING TO GENERATIONS ITS TROUBLES
HUMANITY CRIES FOR THE DAY IT WILL BE SAVED

I TOOK THE BLADE AND SLIT THEM
SPIDER WEB OF SCARS
DECORATES MY ARMS
AND NOW THE NEWLY ADDED JEWELS
GLITTER IN THE LIGHT
I TURN MY WRISTS OVER
THE INKY BLACK WORDS
BLEED ONTO THE PAGE
WHO KNEW PAIN WAS SO CREATIVE, SO PLEASURABLE, SO STUNNING,
SO UTTERLY ME
I sit alone as my conscience gnaws at my damned soul. The quick swig of venom scathes down the back of my throat, plaguing me, consuming me. Forbidden thoughts echo this numb but witty mind. The malice of my sorrow's rage confines the belligerent deeds I yearn to do, drowning out all existence. Evil notions creep anxiously through my cold yet heated veins, deliberately taunting me to sustain these vicious feelings. This ugliness that I have beckon, draws near in complete summon. The minutes of perpetual bliss keeps me in awe of ridding the likes of you. But yet the act of doing right still lingers and the love I once had for you tries desperately to prevail...

Once I commit such an insane, immoral sin, my conscience will be clear and I will feel love again. Verbal daggers will no longer be thrown in fury. Constant battles will no longer be slain. Blood no longer spilt, tears no longer shed. The essence of your spirit, your life, your being will be judged in the fiery pits of Hell. There you shall walk in darkness, lifeless, lost and tortured, pleading your overdue confessions of the mistreatment you have fed me. The prayer of such cries will bounce off the dead as they ignore the form you are as you cease more to exist. Fixed morals will falter. Unbinding laws will bend. My motive of you will avenge my being and the demons will parade in favor, gleaming in sheer delight at this madness, our madness. Bleed. Break. Feel. Cry. Taste the sins you have made as I spoon them to you.

I take another swig of the poison, the profound substance that has corrupted my mind, barricading the animosity for the thought of still loving you. Oh, cruel lover-I yearn to dismantle you, to behead you, to suffocate every vital sign in you. Shhhhh...
I must whisper that.
The four walls I am enclosed in have eyes and ears, secretly waiting my every move. I wouldn't want my intentions to be known by the one I dreadfully adore. I mustn't be careless undermining the details in such critical content.

I guzzle down some more of the remedy, concocting a scheme, a plan to rid me of you, my dominant master, my scorching flame, my unwanted character. The ticking of the clock echoes in my unstable head. The hour is drawing near and you will soon be a faded memory, a corpse I shall spit upon. Your violent misuse and invasions of coercion will no longer ridicule my every aspect. Your icy intimidations and undesired copulation will no longer scar my afflicted heart. I will no longer be the puppet while you hold the strings. Fighting unfairly is fighting equally, and I shall when you least expect it. Your doubtful insecurities will be slaughtered. Your one-track mind will be burned. And I will triumph over the kill, devouring what's left of the prey.

Your glossy eyes, wet with death, will beg for mercy, forgiveness you know you don't deserve. Your once muscular body will grow limp as does the spirit you once had. There you'll see the hatred burn red in my eyes. A cold smirk will slowly crawl across my delighted face, etching a memory of stone through your perishing, colorless eyes. Then you'll realize your unjust treatment has gone too far but will no more. And God will be your only alibi.
MICHAEL REILLY

THE HONEYCOMB, THE COLORING BOOK, AND THE PAINTING

A honeycomb tastes sweet.
The honey it produces resembles the sun.
With its hexagons that make perfect symmetry,
And it color, which imitates the sunshine.

A coloring book images are drawn perfectly.
However they are not complete.
They live a hollow life,
Until the colors fill the void.

I have seen a painting,
That showed a man and woman,
Deeply in love, and harmony
Like Romeo and Juliet in heaven.

I have been told,
That all these represent
The happiness and the joy
Of life and of bliss.

Though I do not feel this,
When I use these things.
I only am reminded of
The vagueness and obscurity of my own life.

Because I am the opposite of these things
Bright things blind me,
I feel colorless amongst the colors,
And I live a hollow life.

I never feel this ecstasy,
In things that are so bright.
Only in the tranquility,
Of the darkness.
MEGHAN PRICHARD

DRIVER’S LICENSE

You were beautiful like the sunrise
In L.A. with six lanes of smog
Three hours of stop and go
Disappointment in sorrow’s shape.
You never get over someone
It’s just through to trudge on
Brake lights
Gas pedal
Car trouble.

I never learned to check my mirrors
Blind spots
Black squares behind my ears
It felt like you came
From near and nowhere

Smooth rides did not entice me
Unless I broke a law or three
But that speed limit broke before my decision
To turn key clockwise
Start ignition
And we started driving like a dream
I had when I was four
A truck with child locks
My forehead just below the steering wheel.
Speeding past the only two roads
I could recognize and assimilate
So it was always an adventure
Just not the one I had in mind.
ERIN DORNEY

SLEEPLESS SUNDAYS
AFTER EDWARD HOPPER'S HOTEL ROOM

Starched sheets form right angles, 
tucked under to discourage anxious sleeping. 
The perfect “O” of a cigarette burn. 
A singed circle to match the burning sun outside

Bone white walls, antiseptic ivory. 
The noisy breath of a sunny hot summer. 
A single silhouette to memorize 
forever hunched into sorrow.

Getting tired of starting somewhere new, 
with maps that lead nowhere -- or 
following one’s heart ends in mutiny, 
the hardest and most wretched kind --

I find no comfort here.
She patiently waits.
(Petrified with fear)
Today she decided to wear her hair up
It makes her feel pretty.

Leaves of green and orange
   Whirl about her feet,
      Wind blows.                Just enough,
Scent of    kiwi-mango body splash
   fills the air...

     Sky is gray with anger
Stains on her dress remind her.

Lethargic with guilt--
Immersed in pain – she holds herself,
     Eyes fill with tears
      Sound of screaming children scar her conscience.
my pen spits the words -- my mouth,
ready, at attention,
bleeding the passion into patterns of words and sounds,
feelings intertwined into image and symbols,
the containment of an O,
I search for escape,
standing in the crossways of an X.....
like lovers twisted together,
but the words never truly capture me,
as I sit, my beating heart,
a musical rhythm,
echoing the whispers,
building in speed,
fa s t e r and faster
the soft voices, rushing through my veins,
pumping, throbbing
I try to find the words....
but the heart and mind don't speak a common tongue,
so I stay tied,
... tongue
kissing...

saying nothing --
sometimes, it says it all
Red towel next to 
the yellow 
on the back of the door. 
Stark like 
your white thigh between my tan legs. 

Two hands cup 
the soap. 
Friction providing the suds 
Sliding over our bodies. 
Sans washcloth. 

A bitter bubble of shampoo, 
resting on my lip. 
I bite and look up, 
another bubble is dangerously close to your eyes. 
Those two gray storms, sucking me in. 
I have no resistance 
to this hurricane.
Quiet, it's my turn to speak
But I have nothing to say-
that hasn't been said before.
I can't be original
but I don't want to be
I choose to remain in silence
With our bodies overlapped
My hand intertwined in yours.

I feel your breath pulsate
With mine.
You open your mouth to speak
but don't.
It's my turn to speak.
I can't be original
but I don't want to be.
Everything's perfect
the way it is.

It's time that I tell you something
you haven't heard from me before
I am only me.
And I need to be yours.
Shhh be quiet it's my turn to speak
And I have only one thing to say
Don't be afraid, baby

I love you.
Photograph

Caroline Valera
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.