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ANGLE'S HOME GROWN AWARDS

READERS' CHOICE

FIRST PLACE THANK YOU FOR DYING..........................Katie Valvano
SECOND PLACE WALKING KNEE-DEEP.................................Alyson
THIRD PLACE ALL THAT I LEAVE BEHIND..........................Mike Reilly
EDITOR'S PICK:
BUT SWEETIE, NICE GUYS ALWAYS FINISH LAST.............................Jonathan Howard and Laura Denver

"MYRTLE BEACH AT DAWN" MELISSA WOODARD
KATIE VALVANO

THANK YOU FOR DYING

It's funny the things that cross your mind when you think you're about to die. My bed was unmade, and I had some dirty clothes on my floor. When my mom goes to clean out my closet, would I disappoint her from the next world? Dust the VCR. Vacuum under the bed. All those nagging lessons gone to waste. Her daughter had died a slob.

Ding. Fasten Seatbelts.

The words to the Hail Mary escape my quivering lips. Not all consecutive in their proper formation; but the idea is there. A tiny imprint of a cross engraves itself between my forefinger and thumb. My mom gave me the necklace for my confirmation.

Ding. No Smocking.

Two thick sheets of plastic restrain me from being sucked out the window, into the clouds, into nothingness, into abyss, into my fate. A giant terradactyl wing terrifies my constructed view. Its eggshell sheets of steel could not withstand a snowstorm. I know it.

Ding. The boarding door is now closed.

No way out. She was a good girl, a nice girl, a scared girl. An empty coffin slams shut. The body was never found.

Ding.

Transform your seat into a life preserver. Life preserver. Will it save me from the crash? I won't need it after the fall. Place the mask on your face before assisting others. Snakes in a can. Surprise. You're going down. Would I use this? Will I use this? Laughing gas: it will get me high as I plummet.

Ding.

Voltage roars thunder under my feet. It's too loud; not right. I know it. Wheels shake my chair. Tin bird legs can't support us. Clinking up the rollercoaster faster faster higher louder. No one speaks.

A sinking red sun teases the plane. Oie! The yellow billboard on the road to the airport reads "If not now, when?"

Ding.

Deep inside my body I hide, no longer in control of my limbs. Unable to soften my grip on the cold metal armrests, red fingers fade cold to white. Toes forever curled under my feet. Ears popping eyes burning throat shrinking tears streaming. I've forgotten how to control my breathing.

Ding.

Thank you for dying Delta. What did she say?


Ding.
ALYSON

WALKING KNEE-DEEP

*Inspired by a line from Michael Czarnecki's "A Short Winter Hike"

I trample up

And down the jungle

Of the city streets

Always knee-deep

Always watching for cops

'Cause being my color

Makes me guilty of all crimes

A young black male

Always gives them probable cause

A young black male

Always fits the profile

A young black male

Is always guilty

Until proven innocent

I am always walking knee-deep

In racism

That is why I have to trample

Up and down

The jungle streets
MIKE REILLY

ALL THAT I LEAVE BEHIND

I have been told,
And bantered on,
And egged upon;
That if I leave this place
I will lose everything that I had,
And be left with nothing but an uncertain future.

That all of my current contacts,
My current relationships,
My current friendships,
Will be lost.

And my efforts to change
Will lead to nothing.
And that my new place of destination
Has nothing for me.
Because apparently
Every place is the same,
And every place has the same type of people.

But what I have to say
Is that
I really don't have anything
Here.
And if I left here,
All that I left behind,
Really won't make a difference
Because no one will notice my absent presence.

SO,
I say,
What am I really leaving behind?
Why do I feel like
A criminal if I flee
This crime scene.

Why do I feel like
I will let people down,
And make them
Upset.

When in fact,
All that I leave behind
Never had any substance to it,
And my preexistence
Will diminish to rubble and inexistence.
Nothing will be left,
And nobody will even notice that I left.

Why do I bother?
Why do I care?
When in fact
I know my efforts are useless.

I know that if I stay
Anything I may have had
Will eventually dwindle as time goes by,
Or everything will crumble,
And perish in the end
Just as it always has done.

So when I leave
All that I left behind,
I try to find what impact
I will leave when I disappear.
But I always come to the conclusion,
That over time there was nothing that I left behind,
And that eventually my absent presence will not even have made

One single dot on the radar.
JONATHAN HOWARD & LAURA DEVER

BUT SWEETIE,
NICE GUYS ALWAYS FINISH LAST

[Me]
Nobody wants my sugar
Maybe I’m not sweet enough
Nobody wants my sugar
They just want
Equal
Splenda
Sweet ‘n Low character

Nobody wants my sugar
Maybe I’m not sweet enough

[You]
Your sugar
Just sweet enough for me
Your sugar
So Equal
So Splendid
There’s only sweet
& No low in your sugar

Baby I want your sugar
You’re plenty sweet to me
MEGHAN PRICHARD

A DRUNK GIRL WHO DREAMS

I think of all the liquor.
Strong, sweet -
That seeps from me when I'm awake.
Lift my chin up.
Hold back what I cannot fake.

I saw your figure in a field. Like a fairytale far away.
We don't speak for months.
Get smashed.
Call.
Say what we never say.

There was a girl at the bar tonight.
She was you, but only from behind.
I wanted to walk her home.
Follow a liquored curve
That in the sunlight is just a line.
But I landed back in bed
The sunrise singing me to sleep
And you were by my bedside--
Spinning in and out of every dream.

In the middle of the moonlight
I let myself slip into a dream
While you got up
Pushed your elbows off my bed
Got up and on your jeans.
I disappoint in slumber
Mouth gaped open like a fish without her sea.
I wake to what we could have been
Two girls in twisted sheets.
PHILLIP J. CELATA

GOOD-BYE WORLD

In ancient days, back in forgotten times,
There was a war without reason or rhyme,
Whose beginning no one seems to know,
But each continued to fight with their mortal foe.

Battles and lives have come and gone,
Yet the war still wages ever one,
Friend dies beside friend again,
Never just a single soul to send.

Millennium pass and here we stand,
In the folly and faults of man,
Still with greed and power hungry stare,
Does humanity wield its destructive air?

Till finally none live to see,
The final soldier continue to bleed,
As the earth lay scorched and scorned,
By these creatures which God has borne?

And thus I stand here, on a hill,
Staring down at the sea which is filled,
Nothing but blood and horror do I see,
In this world ruled once by humanity.

And with the final stroke of mind,
The human race takes out for a final time,
Its frustrations and ignorance upon the world,
And thus all that was made is finally unfurled.

When God returns there is nothing hut dust,
To mark the existence of the once prosperous,
And thus humanity sees its own end,
Because of its own faults and trends.

God remakes the world again,
The experiment begins anew,
With a race more conscious than humanity,
Who had died from their own lack of sanity.
ART GALLERY

SEAN CONNORS
ART GALLERY

"BURLINGTON COAT FACTORY"
COLLEEN MORSCHAUER

"ROBERTO CLEMENTE BRIDGE"
CARA PINK

"SUNLIGHT ON CANANDAIGUA LAKE"
MELISSA WOODARD

"ESCAPE"
REBECCA HARRISON
ART GALLERY

"THE MARSH" MELISSA WOODARD

"THE ARNO" JESSICA CHIMENTO

"THE SUN SETS ON FISHER" CARA PINK

"THE WATERFALL AT ONANDA PARK" MELISSA WOODARD
ART GALLERY

SEAN CONNORS

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THERESA CHARLEBOIS

TRAPPED IN TIME

Time doesn't stop
when I ask it to.

Tick-tock-tick
tock, the clock.

Cold silver bars
barricade
my thoughts my love my hope.

Take a step back
on a nail
my foot bleeds my heart bleeds
I cry red.

My body is an
open wound.

And time doesn't stop
when I ask it to.
"Man, I wish I was stupid"
"Why?"
"Ignorance is bliss."
I thought about this.
"You have the kind of intelligence that drives a man to drink."
"Some of the greatest people I know of were alcoholics."
"Some of the worst people I know still are."
"How do you deal with this though?"
"I don't know... God, listen to us-- we're such cynics."
Martin threw his cigarette on the ground and stepped on it. An ant carrying a bread crumb ambled past. A siren sounded in the distance.

"I don't know man, there's a difference between cynicism and realism. I like to think I'm just being logical."
"I guess."
We sat in silence for awhile, watching the cars go by underneath us. Finally I spoke.
"It wasn't your fault you know."
"I know."
"It could have happened to anyone."
"I wish it had."
"Harsh...listen, let's go get something to eat, I'm starving."
Martin shook his head. "I'm going home."
"How does that work?"
"I go home; I go to bed. I wake up tomorrow and repeat, until my mind begins to cloud over the details of everything that happened."

"The gift of memory..."
"...is an awful curse," He finished.
"Seeing things like that has to get pretty numbing... how do you live like that?"
"You call this living?"
He turned and walked off into a cliché.
I sat awhile on the bridge thinking, then hopped down and made my way home.
I called Becky when I got home to tell her I loved her, but it felt like a lie; so I hung up before she answered.
That crack in the sidewalk is a barrier that I can cross so easily. 
Just the line in the way of me and the door. 
And to you, it is like a mountain, so you treat it carefully.

And you’ll stay in the valley where you can breathe contently, 
While I am up here wondering what you’re waiting for. 
That crack in the sidewalk is a barrier that I can cross so easily.

And I wait proudly at the top, then turn and look down at you gently. 
It is so simple and I think that I cannot wait anymore. 
And to you, it is like a mountain, so you treat it carefully.

Then I think that it is no use when you finally make it up here physically. 
Because not only will your legs be sore, 
That crack in the sidewalk is a barrier that I can cross so easily.

I am so eager to have you up here fully. 
But you don’t see that I need you so much closer, so much more. 
And to you, it is like a mountain, so you treat it carefully.

We can be up here, together, happily—
And soon you will wonder why you contemplated all this for. 
That crack in the sidewalk is a barrier that I can cross so easily, 
And to you, it is like a mountain, so you treat it carefully.
ERIC PARKISON

AN UNAPOLOGETIC FUNERAL ORATION

Do you know what it's like
To be fully absorbed--
A crushing, pale grievance
forever in your head.

My my my,
We rode these chariots
of fire, of fortune until the
wheels pulled off and we
dropped into the dirt. And still
Firmly stood our ground.

And even the grass bowed before us;
it moved and splashed across my feet.

Surrounded has never sounded
so much like surrender
and passion never felt
so much like guilt.

You, forgotten sons,
should have slept this night
in your beds, instead
of receiving this vengeance (that chance
and circumstance have made your own)

In our last days
Be calm.
Let truth bear the weight of our symbiosis
Let falsehood return
from whence it came.
Know that righteousness has always belonged
to the righteous,
And let the only consequence of our sincerity
be declarations
of our undying love.
This is my war
And I have made it your own.
So tonight I ask you rest your heads
and tomorrow we will reap the rewards
of our faith--
and our undoing.
I beg you trust me this once
Let no doubt cloud your mind:

Together we will face the brightest light
and stand again
In paradise.

Danielle Abdulla
Subtle, Subservient, and Stimulated

Snow has painted you
A pure vision of everything you are not
Subtle, Subservient, and Stimulated.
You left me cold and alone
With a single handwritten letter as your defense.
I sat in a parking lot waiting
For a kiss that would never come.
The construction crew started mending
The heart you had shattered, pouring
Concrete into a mold, closing
Off every vein and artery
Emotionless, drained
I listened to the "Brilliant Dance" play
And watched the snow drown your memory, away.
Like the rain melting from the sky, 
so does my makeup. 
My puffy pant legs 
have soaked up the mud, browning 
their light pink circles 
and dark blue zigzags. 
Pirates are using their swords 
to battle the rain, their drawn-on 
beards dripping to the sidewalks. 
Royal princesses cry at the thought 
of their tiaras– no more sparkle, 
no more hopes of meeting prince charming 
on the doorsteps. 
I peer into my pillowcase 
filled with candy, realizing the raindrops 
are dragging my bag to the ground – 
the stains matching my puffy pants. 
Porch lights are turned off 
one by one-- parents realizing 
it is more important to undress 
their kids from the soaking costumes than 
to allow them one night of fantasy. 
Standing on the shadowed sidewalk, 
I realize my clown days 
are over.
Second coming of the Russian Rocket,
With skates of speed, no lack of glitz and tricks,
He’s magic on ice, he floats to destinations,
Gone by all sorts of locations — Patience.

He may mishandle the rubber yet, just watch,
An errant pass is commonplace for the Great
And Magnificent right winger from Moscow,
With tricks galore, no lack of razzle and dazzle.

A pass, or two, or ten, from behind the back,
Perchance a bad stickhandle, or even a penalty,
But consider all the good, the bad is outweighed,
And you may just catch a smile across your face.

You ask yourself, what will this guy do next?
The unpredictability is so
Ironically, predictable,
You know that Max will do something special.

You may find yourself up from your seat,
Admiring this magical, creative magician.
He glides to the puck, cradles and passes it,
Briere is found, the man at the net, their net.

He fires the slap shot into the short side
The top shelf where momma hides the cookies,
He’s shot, he’s scored, the Sabres win again,
Credit Afinogenov with another assist.
You are my son,
wrenched from the arms of another woman.

You joined my family—
afraid of the dog, afraid of me—
afraid of the unknown.

Your hair,
dark as midnight
so unlike my own.

Your eyes dark
and sad, a symbol of
what has been lost.

You’re a victim—
a survivor—
despite the cost.

Escaping from life
controlled by
abuse.

Sometimes wondering,
what is the use.

You fight to move forward,
while looking behind.

Running from history
trapped inside
your child mind.

You, struggle,
conform & rebel.

Digging yourself out
of your own secret hell.
CARRIE ANN NICCHI

BLUE BOY

The boy with the blue hair
Blew bubbles at the sound
Of the Turtle and the Hare
I spoke with cleverness in my voice
As he played with the spoke
In his wheel
Where are we going? The boy asked
To see the elephants?
No, I replied
To the sea
We continued to walk
As the little blue boy
Weaved his way
Into my heart.

KAREN CAWLEY

THE CONFESSION

my mouth open with words to shed,
i thought of a dove with wings spread.
but it was a fish
that emerged from my lips
and dropped to the floor instead.

looking at you, my face grew red.
my open heart filled with dread.
i watched the thing twitch,
then i nudged the fish,
to find it was already dead.
MARIE HEBERGER

IMPOSTER APPLE TREE

a single apple tree, a mistake, not in the orchard
with the Galas,
Washingtons,
McIntoshes.
green fields, blue skies, white clouds,
i am an imposter here.
this tree and i listen
to the leaves rustle tumble
into the air, onto the ground.
it couldn’t hurt you,
those gentle leaves
of that imposter tree
that i sit below
eating its sour fruit
yellowed, like ear wax.
green leaves flowing into red apples
of the Galas,
Washingtons,
McIntoshes.
i lean back,
light zeros in on me
and my imposter tree.
Submission Guidelines

- All writing submissions must be sent to angle@sjfc.edu.
- Although we have previously required your work to be sent pasted into e-mails, we ask you to please send all pieces attached in a single document.
- Please include your name or a pen name and the title(s) of the piece(s) submitted in the body of the e-mail.
- Art can be submitted in JPEG, photograph, photocopy, or actual form.
- All submissions are judged anonymously.

Thank You!