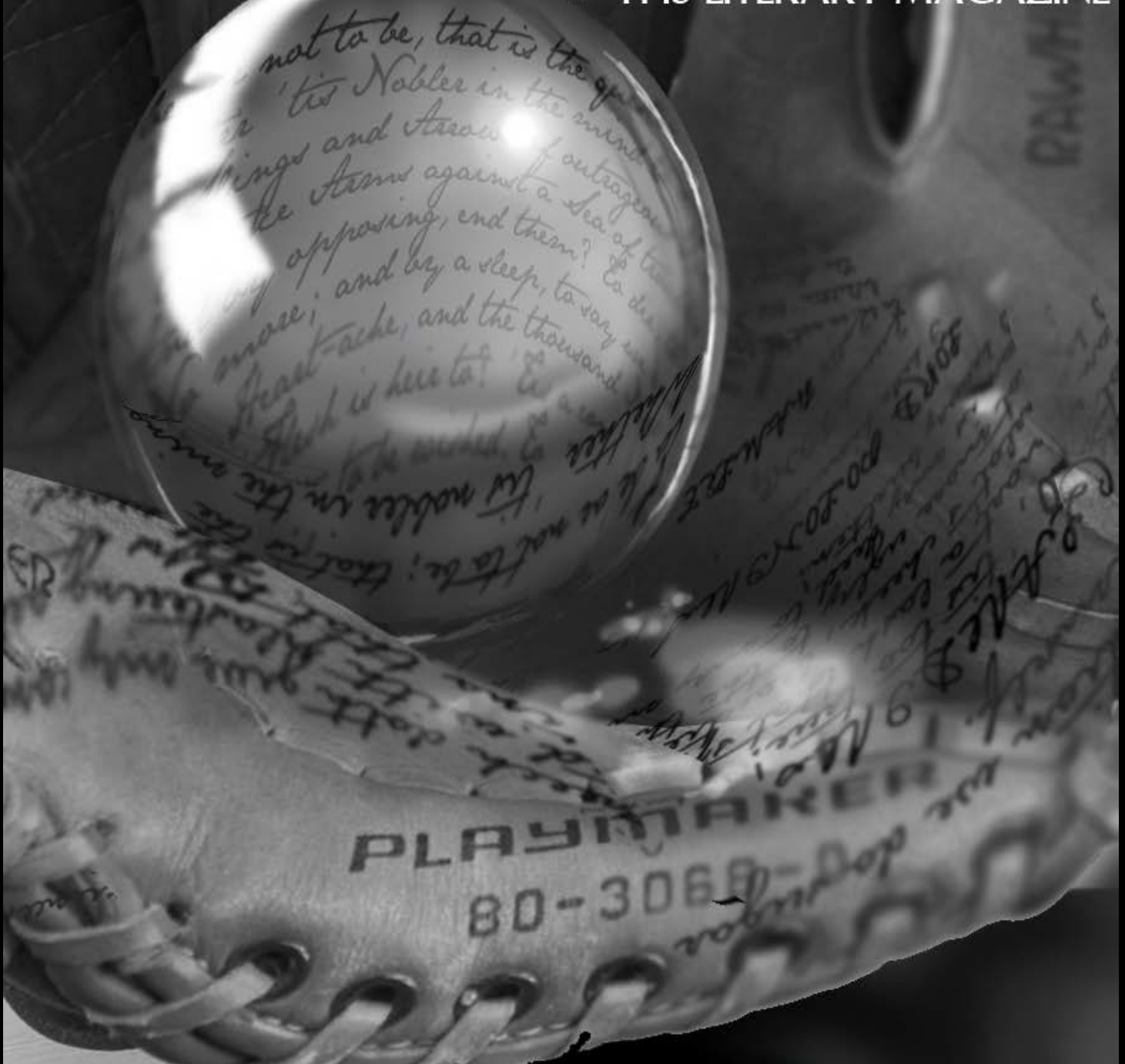


ALLIE'S MITT

YHS LITERARY MAGAZINE



Allie's Mitt - 2016

Table of Contents

Cover by Cherie Landa ('15).....	1	
Letter from the Editor ('16).....	3	Photo by Ariel Schneifer ('17) & Dan Jacoby ('18)
Egg Head by Sara Khambalia ('17).....	4	
The World is a Blur by Eli Litwin ('18).....	5	
We are all the Same by Maurice Bensmihen ('17).....	6	
Befriending a Shadow by Ayelet Gross ('18).....	7	Photo by Jonah Lasko ('18)
Life is a Notebook by Eli Litwin ('18).....	8	Photo by Claudia Cohen
The Mockery by Ayelet Gross ('18).....	9	Photo by Jonah Lasko ('18)
Stop by Chaya Green ('16).....	10	
Staccato by Ayelet Gross ('18).....	11	Photo by Tamar Ciment ('16)
I Used to be Brave by Rinat Tzubeli ('18).....	13	Photo by Maurice Bensimon ('17)
Starlight by Rachel Brener ('17).....	14	Photo by Claudia Cohen
Fire Poems by Shoshanah Marcus ('18).....	15	Photo by Claudia Cohen
Equilibrium by Aaron Senfeld ('17).....	16	Photo edited by Ben Weiss ('17)
Flying by Sara Merkin ('17).....	17	Photo Edited by Ben Weiss ('17)
Realizations by Sara Merkin ('17).....	18	Photo by Mia Szymonowics ('17)
My Journey to YHS by Benjamin Weiss ('17).....	19	Photo Edited by Ben Weiss ('17)
Reflections on the Mirror by Rachelli Goldberg ('16).....	20	Photo by Claudia Cohen
Lioness by Sara Khambalia ('17).....	21	
Nigerian Children with no Eyes by Jeremy Jacob ('17).....	22	Photo by Ariel Schneider ('17)
Forcefield of Adolescence by Aaron Kurtz ('17).....	23	Photo by Mia Szymonowics ('17)
Clutch by Michael Heskiel ('17).....	24	
Reflection by Mia Szymonowics ('17).....	25	Photo by Maurice Bensmihen ('17)
Shooting Stars by Tova Bitterman ('16).....	26	Photo by Claudia Cohen
Love is our Destruction, Love is our Life ('17).....	27	
Dazed by Sara Khambalia ('17).....	28	
No Time to Wait by Abby Linker ('18).....	29	
Did it Really Happen by Tsippy Kilstein ('17).....	30	
Aged Gracelessly by Sara Khambalia ('17).....	31	
The War on Blood by Shara Saketkhou ('16).....	37	
iMetamorphized by Ariella Mamann ('16).....	38	



Photo by Ariel Schneider ('17)

Dear Readers,

It is with gratitude to Hashem who has blessed all the talented writer and artists, who have contributed to our literary magazine, Allie's Mitt, that we are able to present this collection of creative and imaginative art and stories. We would like to extend our gratitude to all those who contributed their work. This collection is but a small sampling of the ability of the artistic minds that are part of Yeshiva High School.

Throughout the project, we were stunned by the imaginative minds and inspired art that was contributed. We look forward to seeing our contributors continue their passion and share it with the rest of the world. And remember when you are all rich and famous, you were published here first.

Sincerely,
Tova Bitterman,
Editor, and the LitMag committee.



Photo by Dan Jacoby ('18)

Egg Head



Portrait by Sara Khambalia ('17)

The World is a Blur

I walk out my front door
On the way to school
Everything is hazy,
No clean, clear cut lines.
The cars that zoom by
Are no more than flickers of color.
The foliage along the path
Form one infinite green chain,
Each plant, shrub, and flower Indiscernible.
Each house appears
Exactly the same,
No charm or character,
To set them apart.
Chirping birds fly above my head,
To be heard not seen.
I approach the gigantic edifice
That I believe to be my school.
I glimpse at the yard filled with
Stick figures roaming around.
My head is spinning
And nausea starts to set in.
Inside the building
Nothing is in focus,
I cannot read.
I cannot see.
The world is a blur.
I sit down on the floor
Against a wall
Sweating and trying to take
Deep breaths.
I close my eyes
And think about
How I can put the world into focus.
I open my eyes wide
And realize
I forgot to put my glasses on this morning.

We Are All The Same

We will never be individuals,
Our ancestors told humanity.
We think we are unique,
That's not the reality.

We think we are special,
We are all the same.
We think we have a voice,
The parents are to blame.

Our eyes censored.
Our voices muted.
When we're told to be unique,
Our minds looted.

With the same problems,
The same questions,
Too many of us
Have depression.

Like a cemetery
Lined the same.
Waiting for us to join,
The never-ending game.

Once above the earth
Now below.
Family and friends
Are letting go.

Emotions run wild
Too hard to explain
Hiding behind smiles
Bearing the cruel pain.

We all want help,
A four-letter word we yelp.

Although,
If we're all the same
Who is there to blame?

Ayelet Gross ('18)

7

Befriending a Shadow

My best friend is my shadow, though he doesn't like to talk,
He makes sure to stand closely when we're going on a walk.
And when he goes away he almost always leaves a note,
That happy times are gone, that's fine, but old friends only gloat.
My best friend is my shadow and he'll always be my friend,
He's nothing like my old chums, who just left before the end.
He's better than my old friends since he'll never be disloyal,
He never gets so angry, like a pot that will soon boil.
My best friend is my shadow since he's always by my side,
And sometimes, maybe sometimes, he'll just follow me inside.
And when we hang together, the whole world is always sunny,
He makes me laugh from front to back, because he is so funny.
My best friend is my shadow, who enjoys the peaceful sound,
He lingers softly, moving slowly, on the upturned ground.
His movement on the pavement bases on the sun's position,
I know he's welcomed 'cause he has sunny disposition.
My best friend is my shadow, since he's cooler than the old guys,
He never asks dumb questions full of "how"s and "what"s and "why"s.
I know he'll never backstab since we're tied too close together,
So who needs humans when you've got your shadow in good weather?

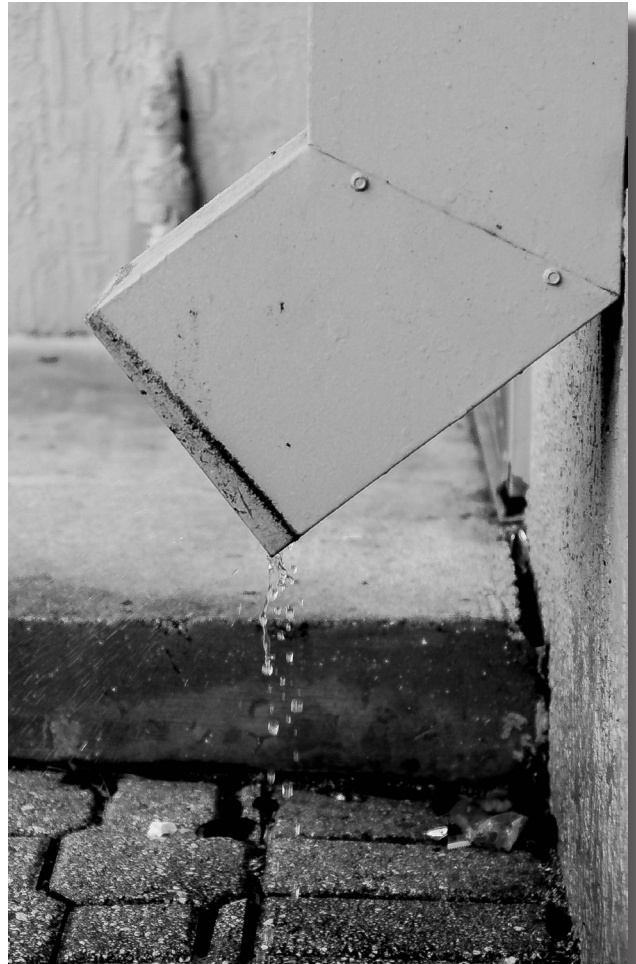


Photo by Jonah Lasko ('18)

Life is a Notebook

Life is a notebook.

As soon as life begins,

Our first few pages are filled.

A copy of one's birth certificate,

Pictures as a new-born baby

Are pasted at the beginning of the notebook.

As time goes on, some of our most notable triumphs

Are documented and of course photographed.

Crawling, check first birthday, check, first steps, check...

Each event finds its way into the notebook with a caption and a pasted picture.

We eventually arrive at the point at which our parents

Are no longer the ones writing in our notebooks

We draw, write, and document for ourselves.

Nursery school begins,

A whole new level of artwork adorns the blank pages of the notebook.

Scribbles, lines, and different shapes

Form masterpieces in a myriad of colors in our books.

As we get older the material written in our notebooks evolves as well.

We begin to write the alphabet, then words, then sentences, then paragraphs,

Eventually essays.

Math problems appear,

Beginning as simple addition in kindergarten

Ending with logarithms at the end high school.

The notebook fills with practice problems, homework,

Capturing some of the happiest moments of our lives.

As work piles on

Notes are jotted down and business plans are modeled.

When children are born they are included in our notebooks

Pictures seizing important moments of our children's lives

Find their way in the notebook.

From new-born to college graduate they too

Receive multiple pages of fame in our books,

Each picture containing its own special caption. Time

elapses, life goes on, and the notebooks continues to

fill with

Pictures and captions from anniversaries and birthday parties.

It fills with grocery lists, vacation itineraries, and bills.

Time goes on, children's weddings occur,

grandchildren are born,

But the notebook can only hold so much.

Only a few pages are left.

One of them fills with a will and last wishes to family members.

Not long after,

We are unable to write in our notebooks.

When we are no longer alive, our notebooks live on.

Although we are not still in the world our notebook is

still living.

The last pages are filled in by our family members.

Their thoughts, kind words, and memories are

noted. Then the notebook is closed.

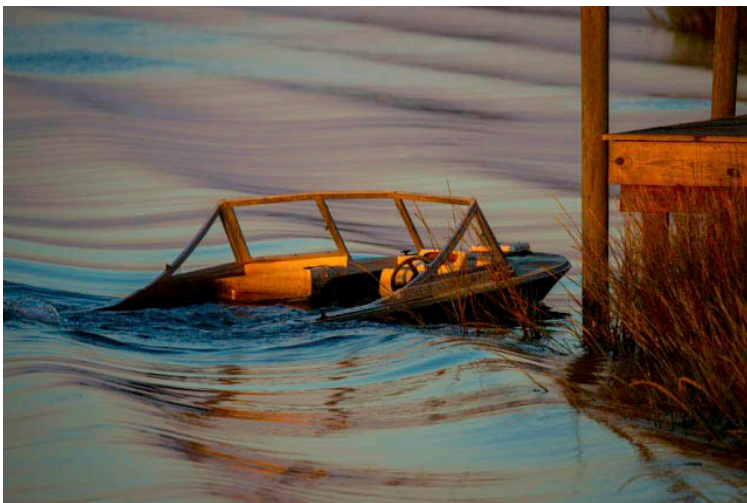


Photo by Claudia Cohen

The Mockery

What a mockery this weed has brought us,
It sprouts lifeless from the earth.

Doesn't it realize embarrassment we suffer
From the weak

The crippled

The fragile.

Why, the beauty of the petals is unparalleled,
The elegance nearly undefined.

This, evil, this, monstrosity of a being

Has to be annihilated

Obliterated

Exterminated

It's not even fair!

A delicate, beautiful masterpiece stands,
Pompous roses, lilies, orchards, determined

To be the best, to succeed, and to impress

The other ones

The idols

The fame.

The weed, that toxic, noxious thing,

Taints our artistry with its humiliation.

In vain, we attempt to focus on the beauty

Of the flowers

The glamorous

The champions.



Photo by Jonah Lasko ('18)

STOP

The pressure of time is overwhelming me. I am just six minutes away, but already three minutes late. I cannot help myself from constantly checking the clock. Desperately trying to ignore my fatigue, I attempt to replay my presentation in my mind. I cannot mess up. Tick-tock, tick-tock. My heart beats faster in syncopated rhythm with the passing seconds. My stomach clenches as my sweaty palms grip the wheel even tighter. I hope nobody notices my absence. The pressure builds as I glance again at the clock. When will I reach the front of this line so I can just get on my way already? The frustration mounts. "Patience," I tell myself, "...almost there."

Four precious minutes have passed. Barely rolling along, I finally reach the head of the line and the freedom it represents when I look up and find myself staring at what seems to be my enemy in this moment-the stop sign. Waiting in what seemed a never-ending line of cars just to get my turn at the face of that four-way street being controlled by four thin signs that say the exact same four words: STOP...a seemingly simple instruction that kept me between my small late and significant delay.

My mind told me to go, zoom past all the cars, but the stop sign told me otherwise. I wished it wasn't there in the first place, but then what would I really be wishing for? A lack of road safety, no order on the roads, the inability to make a thoughtful decision before moving forward rather than being forced to stay at a red light where I would not be able to make the choice at all?

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 87% of trips are made in personal vehicles, and the average driver spends 55 minutes behind the wheel per day. Billions of different people in the world are driving all different cars with all different attention spans, and even with the stop signs, driving is still extremely dangerous. Without these stop signs, the various drivers of the world would have the ability to come and go as they please, just like I wanted to the morning I was running three minutes late for my presentation, with six minutes to go.

According to NVF-52 Traffic Safety 1992, the amount of accidents on average decreased 72.5% after the implementation of stop signs in certain areas. Without them, there would be an enormous decrease in safety. In April of this past year, a car crash in Washington, D.C. on Kansas Avenue and Quincy Street NW resulted in the local residents pleading for a four-way stop sign - in essence pleading for protection.

These stop signs that give this sense of protection create order amongst the cars on the street. No single car has the ability to "skip the line." Disregarding others, and pushing one's self in front of others at best creates individual road rage and at worst, creates chaos on the roads with cars coming and going as they please. "The function of a stop sign is to improve the safety and operation of intersections by defining who has the right-of-way," and creating an order of traffic coming and going in different directions (The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices). Without this control, my morning may have run that much later...cars skipping me and pushing their way around me.

The stop sign gives people a choice: stay or move forward. One does not have this decision though, unless he has stopped. As proven in physics, a function cannot make a complete turn or decide to move from a state of rest unless its velocity is zero, or in other words, unless that object has stopped. This idea deems true in the invention of a stop sign, which the world and its safety would be extremely different without, but on a deeper level it deems true with the idea of a limitation that is set forth in our daily lives just as much as, if not more than our daily meeting with the stop sign. No matter what - a machine or a human - everyone and everything needs a moment to stop in order to be able to move forward or turn around. Without it, moments of introspection are lost to a world without the ability to do better, be better, and push ahead past the stop signs of life, past those moments that give us the decision to move to begin with.

I don't live in a futuristic dystopian society. I say this because for everybody else, life is perfect. I also don't live in a dystopia disguised as a utopia, and I know this because life isn't perfect for me. I'm blind, and life is good, but not perfect enough to be a dystopia disguised as a utopia.

I find comfort in music, not that I'm depressed or anything. I find happiness in feeling the strings on the guitar. I enjoy gripping wooden drumsticks. I love comparing the smaller piano keys to the bigger ones, while although thinner; the small keys' sounds are more exotic. Of course, this is all at school in the music room. I don't own any instruments at home, even though I know how to play them all. I'm not supposed to be around anything that will make me feel "more inferior." To be honest, I'm not sure, if they assume I'm just stupid, or that my sight renders me so. Either way, for fifteen years, the quiet orchestra in my head has been convincing me to sneak into the music room whenever possible.

One day, I'm sitting on my bed at home. I've been living in the same house for so long, that I no longer need a walking cane to get around. I walk out of my room, and shuffle downstairs.

"Good morning," my mother says as usual.

"Hello ma'am, I think I'm running late so I'll just grab some toast and wait for the bus." The burnt toast crumbles in my hand, like the note of a trumpet, which I love to let linger in the air until it's only a whisper.

"Okay, have a nice day."

She always speaks to me like I'm stupid. I'm not supposed to mind because she gave birth to me and all, but seriously, would the woman mind being a little perkier? I walk to the bus stop wearing my sunglasses, gripping the cold aluminum of my cane, and longing to feel the wooden sticks again. I crave the feeling of excitement as the music flows through from my ears into the blood in my veins. Every part of me desires it. I stand rigid by the street until I hear the screeching of tires. As the bus comes to a complete stop, I feel my way to the familiar doors and climb in to my designated front seat. Every bus stop is a staccato note interrupting the smooth ride; however, the tiny disturbance is unusually pleasant today.

As I walk into school, I nearly trip up the stairs, but eventually make it inside. I sit down at my desk where I assume, an audio recording of the day's lesson, along with headphones, are waiting. I place my cane down on the cold floor.

"Good morning," Mrs. says.

"Hello ma'am, should I study privately or try to follow along with the lesson?" I realize my asking is pointless, even before she answers the question.

"The latter please. Okay, have a nice day," she responds before starting their lesson.

When the lunch finally arrives, I remove the headphones, and take a quiet left turn while the classes marches outside. I open a door, leave my cane on the floor, and stare at my friends. To my left is the cello, my right the tuba. I venture further in and walk straight past the selection of guitars I know are leaning against the wall. I also ignore the array of flutes, recorders, and piccolos in their cases. I am not playing on using the triangles, the violins, or the tambourines. I march straight to my piano and embrace my instrumental audience.

After school, the voices of the chatty children remind me of all the components of the drum kit coming together to create beautiful sounds. The bus ride is the same as usual, and I walk inside my house, resting the aluminum against the wall.

“Good afternoon,” my father says.

“Hello sir, I’m just going upstairs to work as usual.” My father nods his head in approval, pretending that is my decision, when it’s assumed that’s where I’ll go, because

I “need to spend much more time on work.”

“Okay.”

When I wake up something is different. I can feel it. One of the four violin strings snaps. It is then when the soloist alone notices the falter in his rhythm. In dead silence, the string remains detached in a wiry coil waiting to be fixed, but instead of saving it from embarrassment, I leave it to rot as the cello takes over the song, and the orchestra picks up.

As I tiptoe downstairs, the cello plays a melody in my ear. My mom slowly opens her mouth to ask me what’s wrong. Every blink of mine clears away confusion, and adds another instrument to the chorus. I don’t want to hear my mother again. I don’t want to feel inferior anymore. I throw my glasses at her, and leave the house without taking my cane. The orchestra plays aggressively, as I let the rejuvenate me. With a burst of freedom, I twirl along the sidewalk dancing to the beat of the inner music. I barely notice that I’m stepping into the street as I hear the piano solo starting. The light notes tug at my heart, and I stop for a moment to appreciate the last crescendo of the piece. It masks the sudden pain after I realize I am lying on the street. At first, I am fortunate the orchestra doesn’t witness the humility, but I suddenly discover I am alone. The orchestra has abandoned its place. Then, I hear the return of the piano and understand my complete and utter ignorance. Every heartbeat is like a staccato note being played, but as I count the last one, the song ends.

Pihoto by Tamar Ciment ('16)



I Used To Be Brave

I used to be brave
Brave, but stupidly and immaturely brave.
Walking places destiny didn't want me to,
Running too fast,
Jumping into relationships.
But after an abundance of mistakes,
I realized It is no longer impressive to be brave,
It is no longer cool.
So i carry on life,
Trying to find the balance.
After a plethora of thoughts, i realize-
This is the whole point in life,
Finding a balance.
But how can this occur without screwing up millions of times along the way?
So i came to a conclusion; this conclusion is time.
Time shows you the balance;
Time teaches you that too much is never good,
Nor is too little.
I recognize, i now have this lesson that time has and will teach me,
And can infuse it into my future,
Infuse the idealism that time reveals balance.
Time will show me that laughing is healthy,
But so is crying.
Time will show me, that working hard is constructive
But so is taking a break.
Time will show me that bravery is beneficial,
But so is being scared.
Time will show me that light is beautiful,
But so is darkness.
Time, will show me balance.

Starlight

It's the way he looks at her
The way he holds her hand
It's how he moves around
When she's standing in the room

It's the way he says her name
The way he has her back
It's how he simply smiles
When she's standing in the room

It's the way he talks to her
The way he blinks his eyes
It's how he loses track of time
When she's standing in the room

It's the way he makes her laugh
The way he makes her act
It's how he feels like starlight
When she's standing in the room

It's the way she twirls her hair
And the way he simply is
It's how the space fills up with love
When they're standing in a room



Photo by Claudia Cohen

Fire Poetry

Exclaimed

Seven billion fires
They all start out the same
And slowly they change
Into their own individual flame
In this magnificent world
They play the same game
Some so cruel
Some so tame
Out of nowhere these fires
Suddenly make a claim
They go out
And make for themselves a name
Little do they know
Some flames will rise to fame
And maybe, just maybe
Others will take the blame
Everyday some
Will wake up in shame
In this great big world
With such a beautiful frame

She and He

She was the brightest of light
Who always burned so bright
And blurred his sight
Until she was proven right
She loved to play with fire
Her deepest and darkest desire
To have him on a wire
Until he was proven a liar
But close he came
Into her flames
With perfect aim
She marked her claim
Closer to the heat he knelt
Such warmth he felt
In his heart she dwelt
As he continued to melt
Suddenly she was sure
And began to stir
Until he became a blur
As he joined the ash beside her.

Hunger

My plea could not been heard
In this heat
Waves of sun enclose me
In soft warm clouds
And not one man for miles
Heard the beat
For my hunger inside
Haunts me and pounds
“Give me life, give me love,”
Screams my inside.
Scorching, searing, smoking,
Fiery once more
The intense burning haunts
But I shouldn't cry

The cool blaze drizzles
Through my empty core
“Give me life, give me love,”
I beg myself.
No one hears, no one helps,
I have no choice
But scream to the clouds
One last time for health
Ask why no one will ever
Hear my voice.
Here's all the songs
That have yet to be sung,
And all the flames
That have smothered the young.

Aaron Senfeld ('17)

Equilibrium

there is

no good no evil
 so it makes thinking
 scars across the worlds
 hives
 viral flotsam
 there is only black
 no white
 nor gray
 equalizer
 the universal homeostasis
 chaos is man
 order is man
 chaos is chaos
 nature is nature
 dying
 living
 us
 killing
 building
 plus
 making
 minus
 maelstrom
 of:
 no
 bedlam
 nor
 order

 equilibrium



Photo Edited by Ben Weiss ('17)

Flying

Flying
Focusing
Fearing
Failing
Falling
Focusing
Fearing
Failing
Focusing
Fearing
Focusing
Focusing
Focusing
Familiarizing
Focusing
Familiarizing
Fulfilling
Focusing
Familiarizing
Fulfilling
Flying
Flying.



Photo Edited by Ben Weiss ('17)

Realizations

I just realized
I could
die today
die tomorrow
die in a year
I just realized
I could
never get married
never have kids
never find love
I just realized
I could
never go to college
never publish a novel
never follow my dreams
I just realized
I could be
wasting my time
wasting my life
Dying.



Photo by Mia Szymonowics ('17)

My Journey To YHS

There have been many important and monumental events throughout the 15 outstanding years of my life, but one event has truly changed how I view my persona and how I look at the world. That event was when I was fortunate enough to move from a minuscule school that was located in the Wild West to a populous prep-school that was located in the sunny state of Florida. This transition was incredibly difficult especially because I was overwhelmed with the opportunity to meet so many unique people and because I was not ready for all the harsh academic competition from my peers at my new school. High school is hard and it is even harder when you do not have any friends.

My first 2 years were extremely hard, both socially and mentally, but my junior year has been fantastic in so many ways. I have numerous friends and great grades! I have been intellectually stimulated in so many ways at my new school and I feel like I am so lucky to be in the environment that I am in. That feeling makes me the upbeat person that I am whether I am dealing with the toughest struggles or the lightest tasks. Now, the next step for me is college and I'm glad that I learned the skills needed to break into the social structure of my high school because I will defiantly need them later on in life. I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to experience this top notch education and I hope that one day I will be able to pass on a similar level of education to my children.

My parents have always been of the opinion that you have a better chance to succeed in life when you get a better education. I whole heartily believe this because I am an example of that success. I have flourished in my new school in ways that I never believed were possible when I lived in Arizona. I am at the pinnacle of my education. By succeeding in high school I am affirming what I can accomplish and what potential I have. Prospective colleges want to see what I have accomplished and what I can possibly accomplish. I value my education greatly and that is why I am putting a lot of effort into the standardized testing that colleges require. I want to maximize my potential. My past is full of experiences that I have learned a lot from, but the main attribute that I have learned from my experiences is to appreciate what I have because it could all disappear as fast as it came.

The value of a great education is immeasurable. I very much appreciate my parents sending me to this extraordinary high school. I hope other attendees of this school appreciate what they are receiving as well. Few people in life appreciate what they have at the time that they have it. Most people only appreciate it after they lost it. That is the message that I want to send by writing this essay. Appreciate what you have when you have it.



Photo Edited by Ben Weiss ('17)

Rachelli Goldberg ('16)

Reflections on the Mirror

What is the first thing you do every morning? You get out of bed, stagger over to the bathroom, and glance in the mirror over the sink. As you get dressed, you examine yourself in the full-length mirror hanging on the closet door. Throughout the day, you pass many more mirrors, in the elevator, in the public restroom, as a decoration hanging in your workplace. Naturally, you pause in front of each one to see your reflection, to see if your lipstick is smudged or a hair is out of place—judging yourself and your appearance. Now imagine a world where most of this daily routine is not possible. Imagine a world without mirrors.

Imagine a world where people do not have the ability to study themselves and decide how they want to alter their physical appearances. Imagine a world where a woman is more focused on how she feels about her outfit rather than about how others perceive the way the outfit looks on her. Imagine a world where it would be a lot harder for a young girl to despise herself, or any parts of her body, because she would not be aware of how she looks. Imagine a world where people place greater emphasis on inner beauty than on outer beauty. All of this would be possible had the mirror not been invented.

photo by Claudia Cohen

The earliest mirror, made out of polished stone or volcanic glass, was created in modern-day Turkey around 6000 BCE. Since then, mirrors have been seen all over the world in many different forms, from copper mirrors in Mesopotamia, to bronze mirrors in China, to the first metal-coated glass mirrors in modern-day Lebanon. Not only do they play a big part in a person's daily life, these metal-coated glass mirrors are also responsible for shaping society today.

In today's world, there is a disproportionate emphasis placed on a person's physical appearance. People attempt to alter themselves in order to try to fit into society's standard of beauty. Imagine a world where the emphasis instead is placed on how a woman presents herself, her attitude, her ideas, her approach to life: in other words, her inner beauty.

In a world without mirrors, people would spend more time focusing on their insides rather than their outsides. Rather than fixating on hair and make-up, women could devote that time to personal growth, intellectual pursuits, and bettering the world. There would be an understanding that while one is born with her outside and has no control over it, she can improve upon her insides and become a better person. People would see others differently. Rather than just judging a book by its cover, they would read the book, cherishing each word on the pages within, and then forming opinions. More than ever, society would depend on words, thoughts, and ideas over appearances.

Granted, certain occupations might suffer. A plastic surgeon would get a lot less business because fewer women would feel the need to get cosmetic surgery. Cosmetic companies would not be as crucial to society as they are today. No longer would women spend endless hours trying to find ways to make themselves look perfect or turn themselves into something they are not only to make themselves feel better about their outward appearances. Plus, think about how much time we could save every morning when we get dressed without having to apply our mascara just so. Think about the battles that could be avoided when little girls look in the mirror and freak out about what their mothers did to their hair.

Audrey Hepburn, a beautiful woman inside and out, said, "The beauty of a woman is not in the clothes she wears, the figure that she carries, or the way she combs her hair. The beauty of a woman is seen in her heart, the place where love resides. True beauty in a woman is reflected in her soul. It's in the caring that she lovingly gives."

In a world without mirrors, people would spend their time and energy focusing on more meaningful things than how they look. The human race would generally be less vain and more accepting of themselves and others in our G-d-given forms. Imagine a world where people would just allow themselves to be themselves and develop confidence based on their insides and not on their outsides.



“Lioness”



Portrait by Sara Khambalia ('17)

Jeremy Jacob ('17)

Nigerian Children with No Eyes

Knights in shining armour stand,
Ignorant of the real matter at hand.
Polishing their shoes lie slaves looking nowhere but above,
Blemished flesh overshadowed by their semblances of doves.
“Oh my life; today I lost my favorite precious stone.”
“I lost my son,” the slave replies in a silent undertone.

Later that night home finds the slave,
“A creek! Eee!” Still, comes in the brave.
An avalanche of torches shone upon home later that night,
“Damn it! Those were my cigar flames!” exclaimed the very same knight.
“Come lads, let’s get back” the knight continued,
“For if not, the night will be forever rued.”

Nigerian children with no eyes enter,
Their existence to the knight is in shelter.
One spills a drink on the knight’s exorbitantly priced shoe,
And receives a backhand, leaving him nothing but blue.
The knight looks more shocked than anyone.
All stand still, a gruesome act was done.

Regret fills his eyes.

The child’s, not the guy’s.



Photo by Ariel Schneider('17)

Twenty-Five
Thirty-Five
The road looks endless
How long's the drive?

One Twenty Five
One Thirty Five
This feels effortless
Nobody has driven faster than I've

Forty-Five
Fifty-Five
I'm growing restless
When are we gonna arrive?

One Forty Five
One Fifty Five
I can totally drive handless
It's good to be alive

Sixty-Five
Seventy-Five
I'm gonna be more cautious
Let's put this on Auto Drive.

One Sixty Five
One Seventy Five
Since I was reckless
This time I won't survive.

Eighty-Five
Ninety-Five
I'm Instagram famous
"OMG CHECK OUT THIS SICK BACKFLIP DIVE"



Photo by Mia Szymonowics ('17)

Clutch

Forty five seconds on the clock,
No time to waste.
My teammates are down,
It's all up to me.
Chances of winning? Impossible.
Focusing like a laser,
The screams of my bickering teammates fading in the distance
I concentrate on one thing only,
The game.
I react to everything that comes my way,
The only chance I have for survival.
The 3 enemies are the predators,
And I am the prey.
One man pounces, a foolish hyena,
He pays for his impatience as I finish him off.
I was a weakened polar bear treading on thin ice,
But I was still a bear.
20 seconds left and I'm out for blood,
I could sense a wounded enemy coming.
My strategy? Catch him of guard.
Take care of him while being unharmed.
Almost there,
The pressure is getting to me, but I can't submit.
The ice is getting thinner,
If I fall in,
So does the team,
And our dream.
15 seconds left,
No need to drain out noise ,
Everyone is dead silent.
Blood is pounding through my veins.
Sweat is dripping down my forehead.
All the muscles in my body tighten as I ready myself.
It all comes down to this,
The clutch round

Reflection

In front of me stands my worst enemy;
She wears ragged clothes and
In between her chest, the letter F is sewn.
After some time of looking into her lost eyes
She becomes more familiar,
And at last I recognize, she is I, but upon her rest my fears:
Failure, disappointment, and sorrow.
She is silent, however, I can hear the cries of her mind.
Each yell reminds her of all the times she has been a failure.
Her thoughts screech, they scream of disappointment,
Disappointment over her mistakes that have led
To her failure.
Around her lips are scars from all the times her smile was broken.
At last she speaks, and she whispers to me:
“Do what you love, and don’t rely on others to approve of you.
Any mistakes you make,
Make them your life lessons.”
Her lips sealed and she never spoke again.
I look in the mirror and I see my reflection.
I see my enemy. I see my fearful self.



Photo by Maurice Bensimon ('17)

Shooting Stars

From high up
In the heavens
The stars fall
Across the sky.
They put on a show
For those of us on earth.
Their brilliant streaks of light
Last just long enough for us to see.
By the time our faces light up with wonder,
Their brightness is already fading.
After they are gone
The light lingers in our eyes
Leaving a lasting imprint in our minds.
They pass through our world
In fleeting moments
That are so often missed,
But when caught,
These rare moments
Become cherished memories.



Photo by Claudia Cohen

Love is Our Destruction Love is Our Life

And we're just standing there
On a bridge
At midnight
Staring up at the stars

All the streetlights are off and all the office buildings are darker than Death himself
No cars with headlights and no cellphone flashlights
Just us
On the bridge
With the stars

Stars that shone brighter than anything before ever has
And as I stare up, quite literally star struck,
I tell him how beautiful I think it is

He looks at me with the intensity of fire
He tells me he wants to travel the world with me
To Paris to climb the Eiffel Tower and look at the stars from way up high at midnight
To take pictures of me in striped shirts
While we eat French fries that taste better in America than they do in France

To Iceland to dance in a field of only green
To Fiji to melt into water clearer than an epiphany
To Russia to climb a monster of a mountain
To China to see me make a fool of myself eating with chopsticks

To Monaco
To Jamaica
To Panama
To Argentina

To see the mountains and rivers and stars more beautiful than diamonds of equal size
And then he says something strange
Something I don't know I believe

He says standing here gazing at me he doesn't have to go to all those places
He doesn't need to experience all those wonders
For my beauty is far greater than all the magnificent beauty that exists in all the world
And standing there all I could think was how it isn't fair that someone I don't love could love
All I could think was how unfair for him that I was in love with someone else
All I could think was how awful it must be for him to look at me like that and see me looking at someone else
that exact same way

Dazed



Portrait by Sara Khambalia (17)

No Time To Wait

The time it takes to wait,
Is far too long,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
Staring at the clock,
Wastes my time,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I wish to do something with my hours,
Catch them before they slip away,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I'll run my fingers through the waves of time,
It's numbers brushing my fingers,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I've waited too long for others,
Now I'll give my own life a go,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
Life is so much better when you're not waiting forever,
For none existent others to join your side,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I'm not like others who fear age,
I fear the pain that comes with age,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I know time will both,
Salt my wounds and heal them,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
I'll need to remove my needs for others,
In order to fly,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
There is such a thing,
As waiting too long to ask your questions,
Tick-tock tick-tock,
Don't wait too long for me,
For I'm already soaring in the air,
Tick-tock tick;

Did It Really Happen

The air was crisp that morning. I pulled on a grey knit sweater and pulled on my black wool gloves. I stepped out the front door and down the porch steps. The crunch of the fall leaves beneath my boots was absolutely divine. Autumn is my favorite season because we aren't buried in snow yet, but the weather is still nice and cold. I took a deep breath of the pine trees that stood behind my house. I turned and looked to see Clark standing next to his bike, zipping up his navy blue jacket.

"You look lovely today," I told him as I skipped over to him, my red hair bouncing behind me.

"What, not yesterday?" he teased me. I shoved him in the shoulder but he didn't budge. "I haven't seen you in forever! How's the weather down in Los Angeles?" My big brother just got back from a month in southern California. He's a screenwriter and was talking to some producers about accepting his scripts. "I can never tell, there's too much pollution. I really missed this place." He looked at the tall pines behind the house and smiled. He looked back down at me and then with an annoyingly quizzical look on his face asked, "So are you flying up this hill or what?" "What the heck?" I responded. "I'm kidding, go get your bike," He laughed his stupid laugh.

"That was really bad," I said as I went to open the garage,

"Try again next time." Clark beat me to the garage door and pulled it open.

"Oh God, look at this mess," I said to the tangle of random cables, bikes, tools, and folding chairs. I went into the jungle of old metal and plastic looking for my green bike that I hadn't ridden in a while. The chain probably needed cleaning and the tires must've needed to be pumped. I found my bike and started pulling it from underneath several orange extension cables that dad uses for I don't know what, when I felt the heavy load being lifted from my arms. Clark picked up the bike from the entanglement like it was taking a feather off a pillow.

"What are you, the Incredible Hulk?" I said. He looked at me as he lifted the bike over his right shoulder.

"You're just jealous of my remarkable strength," He retorted. "Try lifting weights."

"I don't get to hike as much as you. I had three college essays to write just this week." I took the handlebars of the bike from his grip and wheeled it out of the garage.

"I think I've got it from here, Superman." I knelt down to check the tire pressure. Surprisingly it was fine. I hadn't ridden this bike in about a year. Clark pulled on his brown leather gloves and took his bike by the handlebars as he picked up the kickstand with his foot.

"Ready Freddie?" he asked using my childhood nickname.

"Ugh you know I hate that name. Hi I'm Cleo, nice to meet you," I put out my hand for him to shake but he mounted his bike and start pedaling out of the driveway. I rolled my eyes, tossed my scarf around my neck and got on my bike as well.

The wind whipped through my hair as we rode toward the trail we were about to traverse. We just left my street and turned into the woods where everyone hikes. I live in a beautiful neighborhood in Olympia, Washington. All the houses on my street are victorian style homes and the pine trees that make up the woods line the backyards of the entire street. We get a lot of deer and rabbits in our yards. Occasional fox and the rarer elk will show up but I haven't seen many in a few years. We were riding deeper into the trail now and on an incline. Clark and I were aiming the summit of a hill we called The Bald Reindeer because at the top, the trees stood at awkward angles like antlers around a random clearing in the woods. If you know Washington state and how the trees here go on forever, random clearings are unusual. People say that years ago a small earthquake took place under the hill which is what caused the clearing and the trees at odd angles. We continued up the hill at a steady pace side by side on our bikes.

"Why haven't we seen any other bikers or hikers? It's gorgeous out today, I thought the trail would be crowded," I said to Clark.

"Yeah, I don't know. You'd think people would be out here with their families. Especially because it's Thanksgiving weekend." He said looking ahead.

"Lucky for us, we get our own private trail today," I told him. The incline began to get steeper and we were getting closer to the crest. I was puffing the closer we got and starting to get tired. Even though I am pretty in shape I'm not as fit as my brother. We finally reached the top of The Bald Reindeer. Clark and I dismounted our bikes and

leaned them against a tree. From the top of this hill, one can see almost all of Olympia and even the capital building. I looked around above the trees that seemed to flow endlessly like a sea of forest green.

“Clark, we made it! It’s beautiful!” I exclaimed. He smiled and nodded.

“Nice job Freddie, you did it!” he teased. I smirked at him and rolled my eyes again. I sat down on the lush grass and searched for a four-leafed clover. I wasn’t sure if there were any up here but there are patches on the lawns of my college’s campus.

“Searching for a leprechaun?” Clark asked.

“It’s for you. You can use some luck with those snarky producers down in California.” He smiled as he pulled a water bottle from his pocket and took a drink.

I noticed some grey clouds were beginning to form and that the wind had picked up speed.

“Hey Clark, maybe we should head back, it might rain.”

“Yeah let’s get going,” he responded. I stood up to get my bike from the tree I left it leaning against when I felt off balance for a second. I heard a quiet rumble.

“Is that thunder?” Clark asked. Suddenly I felt a jerk under me and I fell to the ground. The earth was shaking beneath me. I heard Clark thud against the ground next to me as the ground began to shake more. The rumbling became louder and branches started falling off the surrounding trees. I heard a loud thud and the sound of hooves running away. A larger branch must’ve fallen and scared an elk. Laying there on the ground, the earth continued to shake more violently.

“It’s an earthquake!” I yelled.

“Cleo, stay calm, We’ll get out of here safely,” Clark said in a placid voice. How can he be calm? I’ve never experienced an earthquake before and I didn’t have a doorway to stand in. The shaking continued still even it must’ve been about a minute past already.

“Clark, what do we do?” I heard panic rising in my voice.

“We have to stay close to the ground and wait it out. Earthquakes are usually short, about a minute or two. Put your arms over your head so you won’t be hurt if you get hit by a branch.” He said calmly. He then folded his arms over his head as I did the same. I inhaled through my nose slowly as I lay on the ground and tried counting to ten but panic kept coming back to me. Suddenly a loud crack emitted from the ground we were laying on and earth split open right between Clark and I.

“CLARK!” I screamed. “CLARK WHAT DO WE DO NOW?”

“Keep low on the ground and don’t fall in!” He yelled back.

“I’ll try my best!” I responded sarcastically. I began to get really frightened and I felt my face getting hot like I was about to cry. The crack started to open, all the while the entire hill kept shaking. A warm mist seemed to come out of the opening in the earth. I don’t know what caused me to do it but I removed my right hand from my head to feel it and immediately pulled it back.

“AAAGH!” I yelled. The mist burned my fingers! I looked at them and saw they were almost cherry red.

“Cleo! Are you alright? What happened? Cleo!” I heard my brother yell. A tear streamed down my face as my fingers started to sting and burn like hell. Then, in the most abrupt way one could ever imagine, the crack in the ground closed up, the shaking stopped, the mist evaporated and the sky turned back to the bright blue it was before. I lay there on the grass shaking and holding my stinging hand. I heard Clark stand up quickly and dart over to my side.

“Cleo! What happened? Are you okay?” he grabbed the hand I was holding and I let out a scream.

“Oh my God Cleo! What the hell happened to you?” He had frustration and confusion written all over his face. I tried to speak but my voice was quiet and raspy due to my screaming. I sat up, still holding my red hand.

“Cleo we have to get you to the hospital. Can you stand up? We need to get down to the hill. I’ll have an ambulance pick us up.” I nodded and he grabbed my arm and my waist and helped me get to my feet. I felt another tear run down my face and I started for my bike.

“I’ll come back for the bikes later. You need medical attention for your hand. We have to get down as fast as possible,” He told me. I nodded and walked with him down the hill. On the way down Clark pulled out his cellphone and called the paramedics.

“Hi we were just in an earthquake and my sister has an injured hand, we need help... What? Yes there was an earthquake... What do you mean you didn’t feel it? The ground freaking split open! ... I’m sorry, yes, but please my sister needs medical attention... Thank you so much!” He put his phone in his pocket as he continued to help me down the hill.

"They'll be here in eight minutes," He told me. I was still feeling weak but I gave him a meager smile to show him I was thankful. We reached the bottom of the hill, and he sat me down at a bench by the beginning of the trail. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a water bottle and handed it to me.

"I-I'm fine," I managed, "Thanks."

He looked at my in the eyes and said, "You just did a lot of exercise and even got hurt in the process. Please drink some water. It will calm me down." I smiled at him and took the water bottle with my uninjured hand.

Lights flashed all around as the large vehicle pulled up to the trail. Two medics rushed out to open the back door, pulling out a stretcher. A female paramedic ran up to me and asked me if I was feeling hot or cold while shining a flashlight in my eyes. A male paramedic came over wheeling the stretcher behind him, wearing a stethoscope around his neck.

"Ma'am we need to get you on the gurney. Do I have your consent to help you up?" I looked at Clark nervously.

"I'm fine," I said. And I felt fine. The stinging in my hand had stopped and the color was turning back to normal. Clark nodded to the medic.

"Ma'am if you wish to seek medical attention, please come onto the gurney so we can take you to the hospital," replied the medic.

"Okay," I responded. Clark and the paramedic helped me up onto the stretcher and they wheeled me onto the ambulance. It smelled really weird inside the back of the vehicle and several first aid kits in varied sizes lay around the benches on the walls. Clark came in and sat on the bench next to me. The male medic stayed in the back with us while the lady drove us to the hospital. The medic who stayed with us kept asking me questions about what happened up on the hill, if I had fallen, if any of my legs were hurting, while he was feeling random places on my head and arm. I told him about my mist coming up from the ground and how when I reached out to feel it, my hand had burned and turned red. He looked at me in disbelief with an eyebrow raised.

"Okay Ma'am, once we get to the ER, a doctor will take a look at your hand," he said.

"Well, it stopped stinging but what kind of mist could do that?" I asked.

"I have no idea if the ground splitting open and mist coming out, is something that is even possible," he replied. Then he busied himself with getting arbitrary tubes and needles from the first aid kit behind him. I looked at Clark and whispered,

"I'm not crazy right? I didn't imagine the mist. You saw it to!" I felt like maybe I was going insane. My head started to feel light.

"No, I saw you burned your hand and it was red like blood!" He whispered back. "We should talk to the people that run the trail and tell them what happened. Perhaps they've experienced earthquakes with mist before, maybe." He sat back into the bench and looked at me.

"What?" I asked.

He exhaled and said, "I got really scared that you were extremely hurt. I'm glad you're alright," he told me. I exhaled and let out a nervous laugh. He smiled and I laughed for real.

We got back from the hospital that night. I had been prodded and poked, had two blood tests, an X-ray, and tons of disbelieving looks from the nurse. The final word was that I should take it easy for a day or two, and that nothing seemed to be different about my hand. If I was feeling any pain, I was told to take an ibuprofen. We got a ride back to my house from a taxi cab and finally walked up the porch steps into the living room. Clark sat down with me on the blue denim couch and put down the papers from the hospital he had been holding. After the eventful day, I realized that I hadn't eaten anything since breakfast.

"We made it home in one piece, what do you know," Clark said. I laughed and felt my stomach rumble.

"I heard that," Clark said, "We haven't eaten all day, do you want wonton soup from the Chinese place?" My brother knew me so well. When I was little, every time I was sick, my mom would always get me wonton soup from our local Chinese restaurant. I guess this mild trauma was similar.

"Clark, you read my mind, thanks," I said and sank further into the denim cushions. Clark pulled out his cellphone and dialed up the number to order. I lay my head onto the pillows and closed my eyes. What an insane day! Starting out with just a peaceful bike ride on Bald Reindeer hill with Clark and out of nowhere the earth splits open, and a burning mist almost destroys my hand! Was that a natural event? What did this mean? Has that ever occurred before? What if this has some long term affect on me like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? Either I was really deep into thought or I fell asleep there on the couch because the next thing I knew, Clark had just loudly closed the front door with his foot, while carrying a box of Chinese take-out. He turned towards me and held up the box.

“Hungry Freddie?” he joked. I pushed myself up from the cushions and walked over to the kitchen. I went into the cabinet to take out dishes and silverware. When Clark had taken out the food from their packages I handed him cups and plates to put on the kitchen table. We sat down and ate while talking about the crazy events of the day.

“Is your hand feeling better?” Clark inquired. I looked my hand and told him that it had stopped hurting by the time the ambulance had showed up.

“By the way, thank you so much for telling me what to do during the earthquake. I was pretty frightened and you helped me through it,” I said to him. “I always gotta protect my little sister, right?” he smiled his stupid smile.

The next day Clark said he was going to hike up again to get the bikes we left at the top of The Bald Reindeer. I told him I couldn’t come because I had to finish an assignment for my psychology professor. That was true but I was also nervous that there were be a second earthquake. The day was the same gorgeous weather like the day before, the sky was blue, the air was clear, it was nice and cool, and Clark had set out to bring back the bikes. I went upstairs to my room and pulled out my laptop. I started typing away at my assignment on the different lobes of the brain. I got stuck on information about the cerebellum so I left the page where I was typing, to the endless black hole known as the internet. As soon as I clicked on the search bar, my brain was flooded with the questions I had the previous night on the couch downstairs. I decided to procrastinate on my assignment and search for answers to the misty mystery. I typed key words into the search bar like earthquake, ground split open, burning mist, Antler Trail which was the actual name of the hill.

The first thing that came up was a story about a young boy who had been hiking on the same hill and the same earthquake had occurred, the mist came up and burned him. After the earthquake ended he was fine and he went home peacefully. Within the next few days, he had gone missing. The family had the entire city and police department searching for the boy. Two weeks later a lady from Olympia found him in Disneyland in California. She notified the city police and the family. When the police asked the boy how he had gotten to California, he said he had just thought of Disneyland and all of a sudden just appeared there. The boy compared how he got there to something from Harry Potter called “apparating”. I have never read the books or seen the movies so I had no idea what it was but the boy then explained that apparating is basically teleportation. The parents of the boy thought something had happened to his brain during the earthquake on the hill and sent him to a mental institution in Maytown.

Wow, I thought, that’s a bit harsh of his parents. Did he really “apparate” or teleport? That’s not possible, it’s not like he had super powers. Obviously not everything on the internet is true. Then I thought something crazy. If that had been the effect of the earthquake and the mist on the boy, could that happen to me as well? No, that’s just insane. Teleportation is just something in fictional stories. My brain began to hurt from thinking so much. I know right, how does that even happen. I needed a break from thinking for a while. I shut off my laptop and jumped into bed. I pulled a fashion magazine from my bedside table and flipped through the glossy pages while lying on my stomach. I stopped at a picture of a beautiful blonde girl with perfectly tanned skin. She sat in a purple and gold bikini, under a bright yellow umbrella at a beach. I looked at the description of the photo to see the photographer’s name was Brice Kenning and the picture was taken in Miami, Florida. Florida, I heard it’s hot year round there, even during winter months. Wow, while we are drowning in snow, those floridians are lounging on the beach. That’s pretty cool. I started tracing the model with my right hand. I’ve never been to florida, I wonder what it’s actually like there.

Suddenly I felt a jolt. My stomach lurched and the room began to spin! Faster and faster until I felt like I was falling. I could only see a blur of colours and then just black.

I landed hard on my back and opened my eyes. I saw a bright blue sky with a hot shining sun. I heard the sound of waves and smelled the ocean. I picked up my head and saw an old man in a speedo bathing suit walk by. What? I looked to the right to see a blonde girl who had a lovely body, sitting under a big yellow umbrella. She looked familiar and was wearing a purple and gold bikini. She was staring at a man holding an expensive looking camera a few feet away. Wait, could it be? Was she the same model from the magazine? That couldn’t be possible. That photo was taken in Miami. But there was a man taking pictures of her and the girl looked exactly like the model. And the beach I was sitting on wasn’t a beach in Olympia. I sat up a bit too fast and my head reeled. I squeezed my eyes shut and tried to clear my mind. There was no way I was in Florida. Just two seconds ago I was sitting on my bed reading a magazine. I decided to ask someone where I was. I stood up and I felt a bit unsteady for a second, then took a step. The sand was warm and a balmy breeze blew through my hair. I walked over to the man holding the camera and decided to ask something crazy.

“Excuse me sir,” he was mounting his camera onto a tripod as he looked up.

“Yeah?” he looked at me up and down. It made me feel a little uncomfortable but maybe thats just a thing photographers do. I took a wild shot with the next thing I said.

“I-is your name, Brice Kenning?” I said a little quicker than I meant.

“Oh my God!” he said with a little flair, “You’ve heard of me?” he got very excited.

“I, uh, saw your name in a fashion magazine,” I told him, “Sorry, I’m about to sound insane but, am I in Miami, Florida?” I braced for a look of utter confusion and it’s what I got.

“Uh, yeah honey,” he said as he looked me up and down again.

“Oh my God!” I said out loud. I suddenly had a mini freakout inside. I just got from Olympia, Washington, to Miami, Florida in the blink of an eye with hardly moving a muscle! It was like the story of that boy! I. Just. Teleported.

“Is everything okay?” Brice asked. A huge smile spread across my face. I just teleported.

“I can teleport!” I said a bit too loudly. The model looked at me from her posed perch on the sand. Brice shook his head and whispered something to the model that sounded like the word “tourists”.

“Wow honey, that’s amazing! Maybe you’ve had one too many tequila sunrises. You should go back to your hotel room,” Brice told me. I laughed.

“Sorry, I’m not from here,” I said.

“I can tell,” Brice responded.

“You don’t understand. I wasn’t on this beach a few seconds ago. I suddenly have a power of teleportation. I was in Washington state a minute ago!” I told him. The model stood up and walked over swaying her hips.

“Did you say you can teleport?” she asked.

“She’s a little drunk, this one,” Brice said as he stood closer to the model.

“Are you okay?” she said, “What’s your name?” She waved her hand in front of my face as if to see if I was aware.

“Huh?” I snapped to attention. I hadn’t realized but I had been staring at the model. She was absolutely gorgeous. “Sorry, my name is Cleo,” I said.

“Cleo, do you want us to call someone for you?” she asked. I remembered that while all this craziness of teleporting was happening, Clark was still up on the Bald Reindeer, fetching our bikes. I had to tell him what happened to me.

“Actually yes, I need to call my brother.” The model went over to the umbrella and pulled a fancy smartphone out of her stylish beach bag. She walked back over to us, hips swaying and asked me for a number to dial. I told her Clark’s number and she put it on speaker phone. It rang four times before my brother picked up.

“Hello, who is this?” he asked.

“Hi, my name is Clarissa, I’m with your sister who needed to get in touch with you,” the model said. Wow, that pretty face had really pretty name too.

“Why, is everything alright?” he responded. Clarissa held out the phone for me to speak. I took it from her hand and held it up to talk.

“Clark, you will never guess where I am,” I said.

“Where are you,” he said, sounding a little urgent.

“Miami Beach, Florida and it’s gorgeous!” I exclaimed. The excitement of it all really got to me finally.

“What the heck? Cleo, how can you possibly be in Florida?” he yelled through the phone.

“Clark,” I said, “I can teleport.” He laughed in disbelief through the phone. I rolled my eyes and told Clark about the story I read online about the boy, reading the magazine and thinking about Florida, and then just finding myself on a sunny beach in Miami. Clarissa and Brice had been staring at me in shock the entire phone call. It ended with Clark telling me he would be getting on the next plane to Miami to fetch me and that I mustn’t do anything risky.

“You teleported here just by thinking about it? How would one get those powers?” Clarissa asked in amazement. I proceeded to tell Brice and Clarissa about the earthquake, the mist, and the story online.

“And that’s how I got here. I’m still extremely bewildered myself.”

“Wow,” Brice said. “You’re basically a supernatural being. You could be the next comic book super hero.” Clarissa and I laughed. Clarissa looked at me and smiled showing her perfectly white teeth.

“I’m pretty sure Brice and I are done with the photo shoot today. Would you like to come with us for lunch, Cleo?” she asked.

“Sure!” I replied.

We walked into a beach themed restaurant and bar right across the street from the beach. Clarissa had put on a cute black net cover-up dress and Brice held his bulky camera bag over his shoulder. I felt a bit out of place for wearing white jeans and a dark purple sweater in the warm Florida weather. We sat down at a table next to a large window, looking out at the ocean. What an incredible chance to tour Miami! And I didn’t even need to get on a plane! A male server came over to hand us menus. He left and came back a minute later with three glasses of ice water.

“So,” Clarissa said, “You really can teleport! That’s incredible, I still can’t believe it.”

“Neither can I,” I said, “I’m a little freaked out by it actually.”

“Maybe more than a little freaked out,” Brice added. Throughout lunch we had a nice conversation. I told them about where I was from, what I’m studying in college, and random stories about my family. Clarissa told me how she became a model and relayed a story about how she went for a photo shoot in New York that was jungle themed and she had to put a live tarantula on her face. She said she was so scared she almost wet herself in a \$3,000 outfit. Brice told me how he had been a photographer since high school and he just began working in the fashion industry. He said the only model he met who wasn’t a “snobby witch” as he called it, was Clarissa. Clarissa’s smart phone let out a ding from her bag and she pulled it out.

“I got a text message from your brother, Cleo. He said he’ll be in Miami late tonight and we should meet him at the airport,” she read.

“Oh good. I think it’s about time to get home,” I said.

“Why don’t you just teleport back?” Brice asked.

“I don’t really know how yet,” I replied.

“Didn’t you just think of a place and then appeared there a second later?” But I have thought about Olympia during this whole time. I obviously hadn’t teleported back. Then I thought of something.

“Remember about the magazine I saw you in?” I told Clarissa and Brice, “I touched the page while thinking of Florida. Maybe I need to touch something physical while thinking about the place.” Brice looked at Clarissa and Clarissa looked at a picture on the wall. My eyes turned to the framed picture which was of a harbor with several yachts moored to a dock. Say, that looked kind of familiar...

“Cleo, this picture is in Washington. I’ve been there for a photo shoot.”

“Oh yeah! I thought I recognized it. I’m pretty sure that dock is by the art district in Olympia,” I said.

“You can teleport back by touching it, right?” Clarissa was so excited about this theory.

“I guess,” I said, “But if I teleport back, I need to tell Clark not to come to Florida.”

“I got you girl,” Clarissa stated as she whipped out her smart phone and started tapping away. Should I really actually try to teleport? I still don’t know how it works. I hope I get back in one piece.

“Cleo,” Clarissa said, “I want to keep in touch with you, you are amazing. We have to stay friends.”

“Don’t forget about me honey,” Brice added. “You’re pretty cool.” I smiled at both of them.

“Guys, I have to thank you immensely,” I told them, “Today had to be the most insane day of my life and you both helped me through it, despite the fact that I only met you a few hours ago. You both have incredibly kind hearts and I will never forget you. I’ll try and teleport back to Florida soon.” Brice and Clarissa laughed. Clarissa reached out and held my hand.

“We will always here for you,” she said. I smiled.

“Thank you both so much. I think it’s time to go back home. I’ll miss you,” I said. I stood up and pushed in my chair. I went over to the picture on the wall and they both followed. I reached up to touch the picture when Clarissa said, “Wait!” My hand retreated to my side.

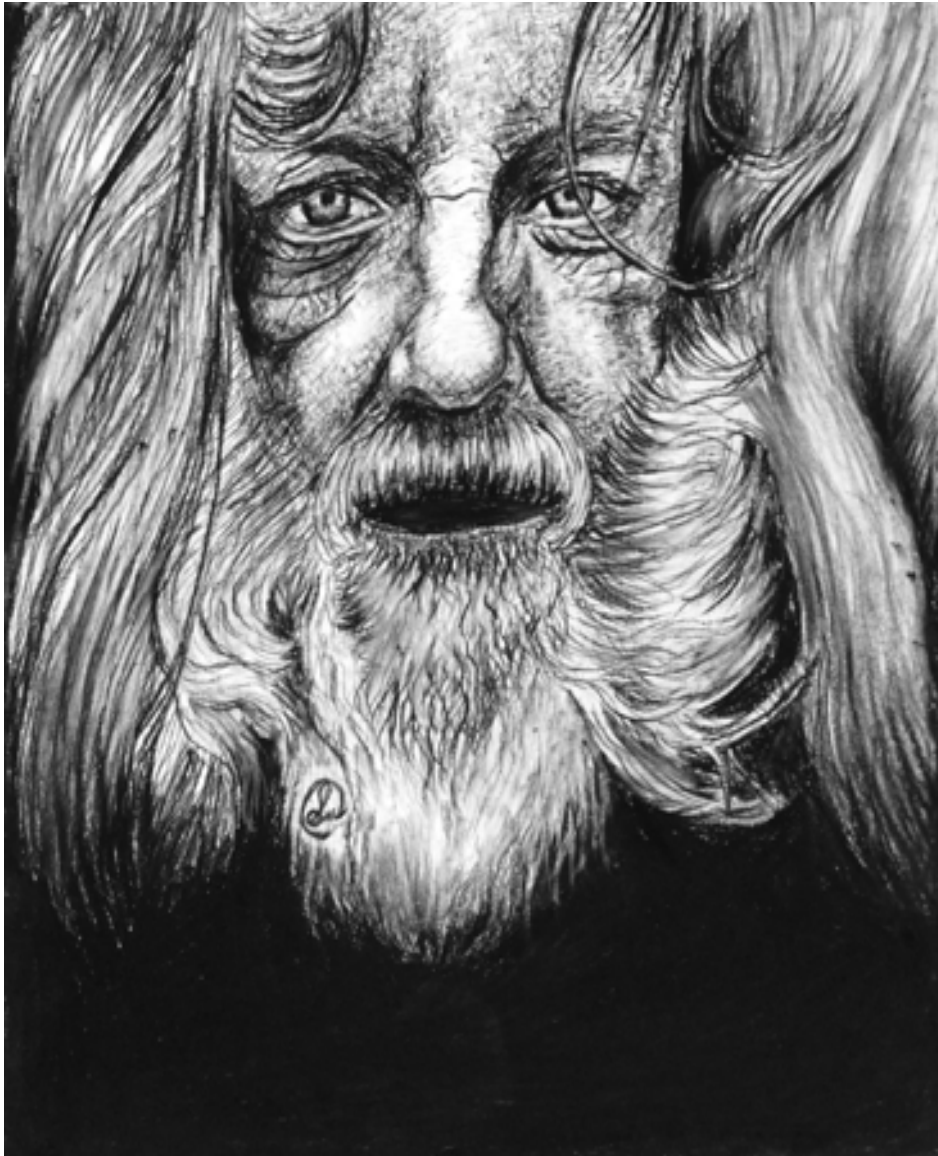
“What is it?” I asked.

“We need to take a picture together and I’ll send it to you!” I laughed. That’s a thing models always do, take pictures. “Of course!” I said excitedly. Clarissa fetched a server to take the picture on her smart phone. We stood together, our arms around each other in front of the picture on the wall. Smiling widely, I thought about how this whole fiasco had actually gained me some incredible friends. I could never forget them. The server handed Clarissa back her phone. I hugged Brice and then Clarissa and thanked them again.

“Bye guys,” I said. I turned to face the picture on the wall and touched one of the shiny white yachts floating next to the dock. I thought about the cool wind that blows in Olympia. I thought about the smell of the trees behind my house and I thought of Clark. I thought of our house, my college, my parents, and thought about the grey-blue sky over Washington. I traced the boat with my finger and shut my eyes. I want to go to Olympia.

Suddenly I felt a familiar jolt. My stomach lurched and the room began to spin! Faster and faster until I felt like I was falling. I could only see a blur of colours and then just black. But I didn’t land anywhere. I had been seeing just black for about what must’ve been a minute already. What was going on? Where am I? Why couldn’t I see anything? I’m not standing, am I floating? I opened my eyes to see black still. Was I stuck? Did the teleportation fail? I felt a tear roll down my cheek. I couldn’t move. I couldn’t speak. I was never getting home. I was lost in the void of space, forever. Teleporting isn’t real.

“Aged Gracelessly”



Portrait by Sara Khambalia ('17)

The War on Blood

"I finally got the red shorts," my friend whispered, blood rushing to her face. We were twelve years old and celebrating her rite of passage secretly in the middle of English class. She was almost as embarrassed to talk about getting her period as you are reading about a woman's menstruation. But this hesitation to openly discuss an integral part of every human's life is damaging the world's mindset about the female body.

Superficially, the stray from the crucial discussion forces women to speak of their periods in euphemisms, but the damage delves far beyond just that. The coded language leads to the extermination of any discussion of menstruation, making the conversation of women's health issues obsolete. When this conversation is nonexistent, women can feel trapped, shamed, and disapproved of due to their body's cycle.

Girls are taught that their bodies are taboo; therefore they believe their bleeding is gross or unnatural, despite knowing how natural it really is. It then becomes a taboo topic, where no woman feels comfortable holding open, safe discussions about their bodies. Women in countries such as India and Kenya face the same situation, but their crisis is far worse. Due to cultural and inaccurate social beliefs, women in developing countries are not taught properly about their menstruation cycles, causing them to believe that their bodies are scandalous. This misunderstanding has been proven to be life threatening. In India, 70% of reproductive diseases are caused by inadequate menstrual hygiene, which can affect maternal mortality. These women do not know how to deal with their periods; they do not know what is happening to their bodies when the time comes. A woman in Tanzania reports on what her first period was like saying, "I didn't know what was happening or what to do to manage menstruation. I used cotton wool, pages from an exercise book, leaves from trees. I suffered much embarrassment at school because I leaked and stained my uniform."

In developing countries, women do not have access to basic products, such as sanitary napkins or tampons, to take care of themselves safely during their time of month. Instead, they dig through trash piles for old mattress bits, rags, and old newspaper. They use husks, dried leaves, mud, and ash simply because they must feed their families instead of investing in pads. Even when reusable pads may be accessible and affordable, cleaning them properly is almost impossible. In India, 43%-88% of girls use reusable pads but they are not washed. Moreover, reusable pads are not hung up to dry properly because of the social stigma they face. With all of these contributing factors, bacteria starts to grow and women face illness.

Additionally, the social stigma surrounding menstruation in developing countries is detrimental to girls' education. Kenyan girls miss about 4.9 days of school in one month. One out of ten African girls skip school during their menstruation. 83% of girls in Burkina Faso and 77% in Niger have no place to change their sanitary products in school. Menstruating girls opt to drop out of school entirely because they are seen as indecent.

Women should not have to face illness, social exclusion, and poor treatment because their bodies work properly.

Students of Art Center College of Design in California are passionate about the health issue and answered with "Flo," a \$3 washer, dryer, and holder for reusable cloth pads. Their goal is to better the lives of girls and women living in poverty by creating an affordable, discrete tool. Flo is designed with a plastic basket within two sturdy bowls, held together by nylon rope. When the strings are pulled, it spins, which washes and dries the cloth pads. When it is done spinning, the pads are already moderately dry. The pads are then hung up discretely within burlap surrounding, while still drying in sunlight, killing the bacteria. Flo comes with a holder for reusable pads that pin to underwear so girls are able to attend school during their cycle without being harassed.

Flo, the seemingly simple product made of plastic and burlap, has already changed the outlook on women's health issues tremendously. It caught the attention of many networks and people, raising awareness to end the stigma and fix the skewed mindset. I am blessed to have easy access to menstrual protection and would like to help other women gain this access as well. Flo will aid struggling girls and women in their fight to succeed, proving once again how strong and capable women truly are. The Talmud teaches that one who saves a single life it is as though they have saved the entire world. Imagine saving an entire world with burlap and plastic.

iMetamorphosized

After waking up from unsettling dreams I found myself transformed into some kind of electronic device. I was quickly startled by the sound of my own alarm entitled “uplift”, which ironically had the opposite effect. The vibrations that accompanied the alarm was something strangely familiar. At first I wasn’t sure what kind of device I had transformed into but the stench of stainless steel and glass mixed with the sense of being overpriced yet worthless quickly took over me. I was an iPhone. It was a strange sight or should I say sights as my view extended to my back as well as my front. 8:00 AM A knock at the door. It was my mother waking me up for school. I muffled the words “I’m coming” and quickly realized my words sounded dull due to my speaker (which used to be my stomach) being suffocated by my bluetinted sheets. I did not know what to do. I could not just blurt out to my mother that I somehow turned into an iPhone overnight. So I did what any other teenager in my situation would do. I turned to the internet.

I started with Google. I searched “What to do if you turn into an iPhone.” Even Google thought I was crazy as they thought I meant to ask “What to do to turn on an iPhone.” Google was a dead end. It was time for Twitter the fastest way to get advice from strangers. In 140 characters or less, I explained what happened to me a few hours earlier. I asked for advice and if this bizarre transformation has happened to anyone before me. Moments after pressing “tweet”, I was filled with offensive messages from strangers wondering about my mental state. Within twenty minutes, #CrazyiPhoneGirl was trending worldwide. It started out with mean comments and extended to the point of well thoughtout memes. Reading about my sanity made me tired. 2:00 PM I woke up hours later to the feeling of someone caressing me. I soon realized my mother came into my room and was trying to access what she thought was my phone that I left behind. Trying to figure out my passcode, I tried to stay silent as she tickled me. She must have tried every possible combination as I was growing tired of this game.

About an hour later, she finally gave up and gave my body a rest. Tossing me onto my bed before leaving the room, I bounced off the pillow and landed face down onto the floor. My mother swiftly picked me up and placed me on the nightstand. Having just been catapulted onto the floor, I noticed a scratch on my screen previously known as my face. The scratch more like a crack was so long and deep that for some reason I expected to bleed and when I did not, I was bothered. Something within me was irritated that I did not feel anymore. If I felt this as a human, I would have sensed the physical pain that came with my downfall. Now, it is as if nothing happened, yet there is a record of it on my body.

5:00 PM - It was time for some entertainment. I searched within myself for anything humorous. After the day I was having, some funny YouTube videos would help. I started off watching foolish ones for mere recreational enjoyment and ended off watching a social experiment video where people live without phones for a month. And I quote “It was not that hard, I would be able to do this again. Phones are so overrated”, said one of the girls who completed this task. As I laid on the nightstand exposed, I realized pretty quickly that I was easily replaceable and would likely be replaced or sold very in the near future and there was nothing I could do about it. When I first transformed, I was relieved that I did not have to deal with homework or my annoying little brother but I was starting to realize that everyone will literally be objectifying me. Everyone will not see me as anything more than a piece of technology that would soon be worthless.

As the day started dwindling down, so did I. 8:00 PM All of my energy is gone. No matter how hard I try, I cannot seem to recharge myself. The only thing I could do at this point was to go to sleep and hope tomorrow I would be back to my normal self. Hope that this was all a crazy dream or a temporary punishment for taking advantage of what I have. Whatever it is and whoever I am, I hope it is different tomorrow.