

The Nest Review

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Contents

Brooke Boniello.....	4
Andrew Carroll.....	7
Stefano Ciudadano.....	9
Colum Dell.....	11
Shkumbin Elmazi.....	13
Karley Flynn.....	15
Esteban Garcia.....	17
Christopher Grecco.....	19
Michael Haidacher.....	21
Nicholas Hennessy.....	23
Ryan Janof.....	25
Enis Jashari.....	27
Camryn Jenkin.....	29
Brianna Lim.....	31
Christopher Mancinelli.....	35
Serena Mazzella.....	38
Katrina Musni.....	40
Melissa Perez.....	42
Ryan Polito.....	44
Joshua Scantling.....	46
John Vitz.....	48
Madison Yourth.....	51
Contributors.....	53

Her Storm

This wind blows bumps onto her skin,
screams in a way that makes her bloodshot eyes look
for a foul line.

Though the whistle
is soft, subtle, the whine she weeps
is in the comfortless clouds,
ever present.

This wind
blows sheets of fog across her self-scraped skin
and pushes minute pods of dew
down each strand of her
silk
slippery hair,
soon to be drenched
during Earth's emotional episode.

It commences.

This wind enhances the clouds' migration
like birds in a swift smooth sweep

and soon that sound of the whistle is knocked out
by the thumps of thunder up above.

And her once damp hair
has become drenched from the falling drops in her
deep, dark, disturbance.

She Stands Alone

-where once were four walls, a roof
wrapped in layers of blanket

-beside the water slide down which she laughed
into poolside memories -
crumpled scrap

-and pulls one blanket over her head
to protect her hair from falling flakes of filth
a feeling that comforted her in bed
while the sound machine played waves

-as drops hit her nose
a feeling fine in the confines of her shower
where the drizzle soothed her

-where the innocence of her sound machine
has been washed away

-where her bed lies miles in the distance
and where the shards of her shower door are scattered
like the individual members of every family around her

-in wreckage
while the nearby crashing of the waves shakes her

-in hiding
quivering in fear

-while the five men in uniform
stand clueless
wondering if there are any nearby survivors

-as the sound of their summon
induces a smile
as she glances in the opposite direction
at the car driven to the beach a year back
when the harmony of the seagulls' call and waves' crash
comforted her

-as a personal storm commences
as every tear she cries represents every mile in the distance
her home truly lies
realizing she is in foreign territory

realizing the board on which she stands is not the stoop of her porch

-realizing the sound of the waves
no longer comfort her

Dream

A little girl walks
down a gravel path.

Uniformed trees line up
on her left and right.

She walks away from a gate,
a gate leading her to a world of pure imagination.

Her eyes are closed,
but full of stars and galaxies.

Three silver balloons float from each wrist,
seemingly lifting her off the ground and to the skies.

Each silver balloon reflects a different
world that the girl has yet to explore.

She dons an astronaut's costume,
hoping one day it will be official.

She dreams of flying to the moon,
zipping through the cosmos,

exploring new worlds,
and discovering new life.

A little girl walks down a gravel path
with her eyes closed leading her to a life not yet lived.

A Lovely Flight

The sky darkens as she enters the cab.
Raindrops rapidly rave down the windshield.
She watches as the raindrops fly off the sides of the car.
Black crows fly overhead, circling the cab.
One crashes into the window.
Other drivers honk and curse as the cabby swerves into the next lane
the woman exhales as the driver regains control.
They arrive at the airport.

She enters the security check line.
The alarm flashes and a man is subdued.
Wires protrude under his jacket.
A while later she passes through,
and finds her gateway.
The rain dissipates as she enters the plane.
The couple next to her yell and shout.
The plane's wheels lift off the ground.

Lightning flashes and thunder claps.
Rain pelts the sides of the plane.
The captain inaudibly yells over the speaker.
Tears run down women's and men's faces.
Fear consumes their eyes.
The earth comes to eye level.
Gasoline covers her,
and fire consumes her.

Coffee.

I don't want lukewarm love
I want it to burn my lips and engulf my soul
The soul that yearns, envies those who receive love
Hot coffee in a dense winter café blizzard in

Coffee, a warm presence
The essence of open arms
That will never know how to let go

The heat on my lips
Through the ceramic gloss

Can I not be the ceramic cup to your warm coffee?
Someone comes along
Sips you away from me little by little
As I sit stranded watching you leave me
Waiting in the sink to be used again

An eternity in the stainless steel bowl
Repeated
Washed my emotions away
Filled with a false sense of hope with a side of cream
Then taken away from me for someone to enjoy
I'm full of nothing
In the sink empty of everything
The sink is empty of everything.

Head first.

Head first.
The wind,
Piercing my ears.
Piercing my thoughts.

Head first.
The wind,
Paralyzed my strength.
Paralyzed my body.

Head first.
The wind,
Is there for the last time.
Is there for the comfort.

The plane.
Head first.
Into the building.

My head.
First.
Through the window.

Head first.
The building's.
Panels fall after me.
Panels landing before me.

Head first.
The smoke.
Filled my lungs with terror.
Filled my eyes with tears.

Head first.
The pavement.
Stopped me from choking.
Stopped me suffering.

My head first.
Cursed with the thirst to burst.

Jimbo Haidacher

His son's t-rex style body hits the frigid floor
Big Jim flexes his tree trunk arms
Mighty like an ox
Dominant male
King
of his clan

Jimbo spends his days in his dark dry dungeon
Watching reruns of "Deal or No Deal"
His sea eyes fixate on the screen his big ears.
Locating which suitcase he thinks is filled with hopes and dreams
One
Million
Dollars

Once Jimmy realized he was stronger than the t-rex
He quit his day job protecting the streets
And decided to protect his manhood

Each morning on the day of his blistering battle
Jim mows his masculine mustache
Mounted on his mature facade
He pumps his chest out like a powerful bull
With Fabio hair he rides his steeds to war

T-rex boy was no match for his elder
Jimbob had the fighting skills of Jaden Smith from "The Karate Kid"

Jimothy swoops his sweeping leg saucing up his son
T-rex boy frantically falls physically
Metaphorically
His child has been defeated

Stuck From Above

A delicate dragonfly stuck in a spider's web
Waiting for his end to come
The dragonfly overlooks the dirt road below
The road that stretches for miles
No signs of human life near
Just grassy fields and old oak trees

The dragonfly feels foolish
Wrong place
Wrong time
This is the only stringy trap nearby
But the fly doesn't try fighting it
Anymore

It's body mutilated
From trying to escape
It has been there for a while
The radiant web begins to whisk away

It is accepting
Motionless
The yellow dragonfly recollects
The full life it had
It has no regrets

Life will go on
Even though the dragonfly won't be part of it
It watches the puffy clouds roll through
For one last time
It is time to meet its fate

Octavius Rex

Octavius Rex can be summed up in three simple words:

long, tan, and handsome.

He is as long as the Eiffel tower.

He is as tan as beautifully aged leather.

He is as handsome as handsome can be.

His sweater is as green as the Amazon rainforest.

His shoes are as black as the vacuum of space.

His pants are as brown as poop.

His undershirt is as yellow as the sun.

His bowtie is as blue as the Atlantic Ocean.

His bald spot is as pink as Patrick Star.

When people think Octavius Rex,

they think of his beauty,

but never what's on the inside.

He is more than a piece of fish mean,

he is an anchovy.



To a Rich Young Boy

Devouring a pizza in
the satisfaction of his own estate
while watching his favorite football team lose.

AJ's pizza tastes good to him.

AJ's pizza tastes good
to him.

AJ's pizza tastes
good to him.

You can tell by the way
he gobbles one pizza pie
and then guzzles another
without hesitation.

Stuffed, elated, and energized
by the garlic, smothered crust and
the mile long stretchable cheese
from AJ's irresistible supreme pan pizza.

He thrusts the pizza down his throat
and fills his luscious stomach with greasy goodness.

AJ's pizza tastes good to him.

Nothing New

The sun rises

He rises

Bus

Train

Work

Lunch

Train

Bus

Home

Sleep

Head down, he walks briskly down the streets

Locked onto the façade in his hands

No new hellos on any platform

He rises

Bus

Train

The friends in his hands die

But his eyes are alive

With the fire of loss

For words

His eyes are stuck on her open mouth

No words

The train arrives and the doors open

Her beauty and the train rush down the tracks

Staring down the empty tracks

He whispers

Hello.

Lonely

He sits slightly slouched in his black chair
Looking into her eyes
As if she still sits before him in the black plastic chair
A messy tray between them with food he wishes he could share
His wrinkled hand holds a full cup of water
He covers his eyes with his fishing hat
So that no one else can see what he doesn't
His suspenders are holding him up from breaking down
People walk past and ignore that he sits there alone
He can't stand to look out of the bright window beside him
Because he knows that all he will see are people together
As he sits



Rich Fir Christmas

Star-
lit Christmas
trees line the
houses.

Crazed consumerism
burning holes through banks.

Gift
boxes and bags
for parents to buy their children
's Love.

In the air,
joyous winter season,
celebrating and commemorating
old and
new debt
in the name of thoughtfulness.

Freedom

Freedom,
government dripping lies
leaking documents.
Surveillance cameras
sucking in the faucet of lights
for the entertainment of the coffee sippers in a room full of screens.
Monetary molasses
overflowing green
the same green that corrodes the pipes.
Green for green
rusts the will.
The White House is the beehive
housing the queen while the slaves work overtime,
creating the sweet nectar of secrets.
The wars abroad
in the interest of the homeland
mercilessly moistening the earth with blood.
We pay homage
to the pawns in the global game of chess.
Soaking Americans' mentality,
splattering the false sense of
freedom.

Cruel Jokes

Painted smiles,
running from the woods.
Once children's entertainment,
now wielding knives.
Sick twisted ways,
how our colorful friends have changed.
Watching the schools in session,
drooling over there opportunity.
Once student stabbed, another killed.
Cruel, cruel jokes.

Black Bee

black bee in the back of car
born of the darkest places known
buzzing around ready to strike
stuck in an unbreakable fortress
deceived with false hopes of freedom
fuming, the bee looks to attack
meeting its target with a blow to the neck
now laying on the floor, a fallen warrior
swiped to the cold cement
leaving nothing to the world but a tiny mark on skin

The Bones and Mind

thud smashing my head
thud on my desk
thud the agony of anatomy pulsing
 through my veins
i am the invader
 in the fight against white blood cells
 one hundred to one
 outnumbered
when will the torture end
 feels like each one of my nails
 being
 torn
 off

The Secret Killer

The painted smile
Fulfills its purpose
Masks the truth.
The roar inside him
Rattles the lipstick red cage.
Holding in
 The dark thoughts that fly
 Swarm like wasps
 At the ready
 To inject
Thoughts of self-inflicted pain into his mind.
 Today one broke out, stalked his brain.
 Like a cheetah stealthy approaching
 Its prey.
It pounces
Stinger first
Bang! It pierces
Injecting more darkness.
He collapses in the bathroom by the
 Toilet.
Paint on the seat
Smearred like faded crayons in a child's coloring book.

No one notices
The door stays shut.

Scholarly Satire

In my classroom
surrounded by black computer screens
and white faces
held captive
by the expectations of others
I retrieve my notebook from my black bag
combing it for my narrative poem
Where is it?
Lost in the depths of my disorganization
What will people think
of that zero in PowerSchool?
It will define my life
What can I do?
I plead with my ruthless teacher
beg her to remain open-minded
I tell her
I cooperated on a poem
with one of my peers
She tells me
verbatim
thems the brakes
my grades plummet
like a man who leaped off a mountain summit
I'm ineligible for credits
I'm ineligible for college
I walk with my head down
almost as low as my GPA
Take Creative Writing they said
It'll make your life better
Now my life is over
Now the only job I can get is a gravedigger
At least I can bury my transcript
Time to live in obscurity

Final Assault

Beaten and Battered but still unbroken
The weight of my triumphs
Outweighs my failures
I stand in the face of tyranny
Nobody around me to lend me aid
It seems like an uphill battle
But I lead the charge anyway
Convictions unshaken
My enemy poised to attack
He is the embodiment of his country
As am I
But he cannot comprehend
The rage in my heart
He glares into my eyes
With the intent to kill
Me and everything I stand for
My cause is righteous
The world's attention is fixated on us
On the edge of their seats
Waiting for the bell to ring



Leaves

A green leaf
Living on a tree
For the tree
Stands in the air
Soaking in the sun

A red, orange, yellow
Leaf
Dangles on the long branch
Until the wind comes
And the leaf floats
to the ground.

A brown leaf
Broken on a frozen
Ground
Without the sun
Covered by snow

A leaf
Strong.
Prospering on a tree
Though small, the leaf is strong
Growing to be
A green leaf.

Reaching Home

Sun breaks through heavy clouds as we slam the car door
a cool breeze smacks our faces. Through the fog of
flannels, beanies, and Timberlands the apple cider doughnuts
glitter in sticky hands. Children sprint and scream
with their fathers. We pierce the crowd
push past the horses stalled in isolated squares.
The children weave between pumpkins, aligned
and accompanied, but we enter
the labyrinth.

Acres and acres are filled with tall green walls
the path established, but we do not know its end
turn left, turn right, corn stalks stalking us
Taking a new path maybe helps
or takes us further away
We can not see where the maze will end
we stumble through

We hit a dead end
the walls close in on us
now we have to go back and see where we went wrong
find where we went wrong, then find our way out
Rush through, probably running around the same path ten times
But we have to think, plan. Stop.
we chose our paths more wisely
Until we reach home.

Uranus 2

Mets logo on a hat
Not a real one
A hat
A slave
One more sign
Of defeat
Pitch and pitched
A horrible pitch
And see the home runs
Soaring over the wall
The Mets suck and were sad
When the Yankees win
The World Series

The Man Who Saved The Town

Standing tall, stiff.

Painted smile, who knows who's behind it.

It can be anyone in the world, haunting people across the country.

But this one was in Pompton Lakes.

Magnolia Ave, is the clown's home.

His name was Shkumbin.

His skill was juggling balls, red and blue only.

His make-up painted a smile over his depressed face.

He was never offered a job to a kid's birthday party.

Randomly showing up in the back yard only to eat free food.

He was not a mean clown though.

With the uproar of evil clowns haunting towns, Mr, Shkumbini was ready to save the town.

He put on his skin tight red dress, standing on a street corner.

Standing under the only flickering street light, he is fresh bait.

A group of rowdy clowns, careless, chaos inflicting clowns rampaged towards him.

Mr. Shkumbini was nervous, the paint melting off his face like a Popsicle on a hot summer day.

He pounced on the first evil clown, squeezing his plump red nose.

Screaming at the top of his lungs, crying for help but the other evil clowns leave him to die.

When he let go of the soft, fake clown, he mysteriously slipped his business card into pocket.

After the brawl, the people of the city opened up their barricaded windows and starting cheering for Mr. Shkumbini.

Roses being thrown from every angle, the city was safe.

Now, Mr. Shkumbini can become what he always wanted to be, the best clown in town.

Lost Love

She entered his car
Aware of what is to come
She looked into his eyes and saw
Galaxies
He looked into hers and saw
Nothing
Words poured from his mouth causing her head to spin
And her chest to hurt like she was holding her breath underwater
They were so perfect
Their ocean once filled with life, now vast and empty
Reality
A single tear broke the smooth
Skin of his cheek
Then
Dropped
His face was covered in a sheet of snow that seemed to melt into an
Icy water
And hers drowning in the black ink which once made her feel beautiful even
When he couldn't

From Scratch

From scratch

No inspiration besides my pen and my paper

I don't know

What to write

This could be

A recipe for disaster

I tell myself

Think

About what is going on around you

Look

For the ingredients

That pull everything together

Nothing

Comes to mind

So I am writing this from scratch

a transplant's symphony

The heart
is as small as a fist
though can mimic a metronome
and gently stomp:
fortissimo

and pounds
in the middle
of your chest
to make itself known.

After hours,
hours, and
hours of
focus

and patience
with his patient
this surgery
was slowly becoming
an andante
with every beat

cramps
fed his frustrated fingers

but now silence finally floods the room
absorbing every recent twenty three hours
of hardship:
 all is safe.

Hour five
the patient was crashing
sinking

and the heart monitor
became erratic:
 quick beeps

a staccato
that sent
signals to the room to dash like a brisk bullet

her body

sinks into her rested dorsal
and accentuates
her pallid,
frigid body

her heavy heart beat
dips down on the monitor
and simultaneously
the doctor's stomach drops

silence
serenity
stillness
sits on the shoulders of hour twenty three; an adagio

"we did everything we could
to save her,"
would suffice

her donor's heart would not
live another life

the conductor
would look at this
colorless and
soon-to-be corpse's
children:
his requiem

in the eyes
and apologize
after the rollercoaster ride
in operation room number five

hour twenty three
secured his once distressed
and trepidated composure

and sent his assistant to sleep
and though the operation had its:
 highs and lows

her melodious,
new heart beats

the beautifully crafted symphony
finishes with a leggierissimo

and delicately dips,
undisturbed
into its new home



Dear AP Biology

In room two hundred nine
lies this brain of mine
where Mrs. Bonanno took it,
rattled it,
shook it,
dipped it in batter and let it fry.

Each question,
wraps me,
traps me,
stealing my time.

The hole I am digging gets deeper
the desolate, serene girl I am now
Will later be a weeper.

I autograph the top of the test
hand it in and trudge to her desk
knowing that the only thing I answered right
was my name, at best

this brain is no longer mine,
it is wired.

I studied
hours and hours
and hours and
hours, prior.

A test that was supposed to be quite simple,
though aided me with age
and also gifted me
these crinkles.

And though
six and eight are my lucky numbers
Seeing them as best friends
on paper
felt not-so-lucky
at all.

Fantasy Island

The smell of the ocean
Bright Lights, flashing colors and children screaming
Ryan and I prayed for Pokémon
While Tom preyed on girls
The hunt of a lifetime
Searching high and low for Pokémon
While Tom searched for girls
Pokéballs launched, hurled and thrown
Bottoms nestled on the sidewalk
Tom insults "Hey Losers let's get girls not Pokémon".
His nerves in his mouth turn into a creepy grin
The Pokéhunters acerbate
Fed up with his behavior, the two introduce him
His straight face transforms into a bright grin, excitement fills him
"All good things come to an end" Tom exclaims
Ring, Ring Ring. My phone is in my lap
It's the notorious girl hunter, Tommy D
A black figure appears out of the darkness
Dim headlights shine through the misty air
Tinted windows that eyes could not penetrate.
An ominous odor leaking from the cracked window
Muffled screams heard; was it the radio? We still don't know. Tom fully opens the window.
Chest hair protruding out of the collar of his shirt
Stale pizza permeates out of his mouth
"Hello ladies, want a ride"
I was in the back, Ryan shotty and Tom sealing our fate behind the wheel
One of the girls had an eye out for him;
I was focused deeply on Pokémon Go. The girl kept hinting for Tom.
Tom sweat accumulating on his forehead
To skedaddle into the back. Time for me to take matters into my own hands.
"Get in the back! WINK! WINK!"
We look back at him and see him making his move
Calm down! Stop! Don't do it!
He ignores us and continues sucking face with her
Track stars eyes fixed onto the pavement
Heroically wanting to end this night and bring everyone home
I felt so safe, oh so safe with Ryan at the wheel
The Madden mobile god puts the pedal to the metal
Not allowing Tom to seal the deal
Little did we know they lived a block away from me
Talk about awkward
We arrive, Ryan unlocks the door and lets them free
However this was not enough for Tom he wanted more
Tom makes a move towards the house

Rejected! Like a bad fake I.D.
I exit the car grateful to be alive
Ryan and I don't like to talk to this day about those events that happened
But we need the world to hear our voices
Or else the world may never know

Beowulf 2

A T-Rex

Large and Tall

But short in the arms

So short

He can't ball

Ball is Life but not

For him Not hired No work No pay

Walmart Walmart GNC

GNC Walmart Walmart

All Play

Papa T-Rex will eat

Him if he doesn't

Put the waffle maker away or grounded

Until a Lexi-Rex we thought

Different but it's 2016 so it's okay

The T-Rex pursued a Mustang

The Mustang crashed and burned gone forever

The Rex of T is tall and calves are small

Steph Curry Steph

Curry Steph Curry

Shoots the three point shot [Brick]

T-Rex O how you think you can ball

Wall Wall Wall

Shortness in the arms

Waffles Waffles Waffles can't be made

Because the T-Rex didn't put the

Maker away

Due to his short arms we don't know

He buys Pokéballs in Pokémon Go

But Still Sucks

Can't work at AJ's Pizza

He can't drive

Drive He Can't

Smiles at everyone he does

This poem is done

O wait no it isn't son

The T-Rex battled his dad

It was an epic battle

To the death Until

Mama Rex saved your life

You're just lucky Papa had his wife

Or else the only thing missing

Would be Your life

Integrating High Schools

The National Guard is the mob's perimeter
idling
in disgust over the wrong side
their attendance ordered
unconcerned with what's right
Some girls giggle:
A black future?
Privilege? Education?
Survival?
Others link arms to protect each other
in the center of the mob
protection from the teenager in front of them
protecting herself with one folder.

She is a disease

infecting schools, values, society

making blacks and whites equal?
demonic faces
shouting, stomping with fists thrown at their sides

but the new girl just looks forward
wearing her white, ironed clothes
sunglasses on
to cover eyes rimmed white and red
The community is a summer drought
ruining
stopping
wasting too much time
destroying a revolution.
But with all of this fighting
the new girl at school
is walking
looking straight ahead
farther into a bright future
rather than stuck the past



Winter

In the winter
her eyes shift
green to gray

blurs her vision
like frost on her car window.
her brain
froths over
her cappuccino struggles
to keep her warm.

Four blankets fail while
she sleeps, walks,
dreams of sleep,
waking to summer,
gray to green.

The sky darkens
the wind
stings her skin
once she opens the door
to the dead world.

The Penguin That Could

The sky darkens above the flightless bird.
Superbly adapted to aquatic life,
wings transformed into flippers,
penguins simply cannot fly.

The monochromatic feathered outcast
surrounded by chilly chunks of ice,
cold, no other arctic bird in sight.
Penguins simply cannot fly.

He is a nonconformist.
Looking below, at this Grand Canyon before him,
he spreads his wings,
then flies.



Milk

Creamy almond milk
Smooth as a freshly waxed gym floor
A chocolate undercurrent
that practices expansionism
like 19th century America
A sleek bottle
Hourglass physique
A scent reminding me of meals
that my grandmother prepared
for me in my youth
The gasoline to my car
The electricity to my light bulb
Only 130 calories per bottle!
What could be any better?
 Probably financial stability.

Addiction

Traveling with eyes looking at our palms
Someone else's thoughts, moving memories, endless timelines
All a click away
A miniscule pocket brain
Its voices speak to us
Sing to us
They are our spouses
The joy we feel
When proposed with a ring
Apples we cannot eat
Addicting and distracting

Change

Changing seasons.

Changing everything.

Shorts to pants,

green to brown,

volleyball to snowboarding.

Changing frequently

or no change at all

Changing with age

for better

or for worse

lessons and reflections

summer love

winter depression

or no change

at all

The Keys

Hershey Park, summer 2014, a time to remember
My sister, parents, and I
Decided on one more ride
Then we would venture home

We strutted up the stairs
Passing signs warning us to empty our pockets
But we carried on
We pulled down the mustard colored restraints that sealed our fates

In a snap the ride was over
Towards our car we walked, to start the journey home
Until my dad realized
His pockets seemed lighter
His keys vanished from existence

Fearing that we would be stranded for eternity
Security was called to help with the problem
But our fate was sealed and all hope was lost

I saw my mom's eyes open wide
She exclaimed that there was still hope
Spare keys tucked beneath her purse were sealed inside the car
In a flash, security was back

The men wrapped in yellow approached us
With a foreign looking tool
Claiming they could unlock the car
With determination, several men tried at the daunting task
Resulting in failure after failure after failure
Until our savior strolled into the lot

At a towering 5 feet 6 inches
Weighing in at 210 pounds
And a shiny bald head
He was determined to finish the job
Crowbar in one hand, coke in the other
Lifted the purse with all his strength
Keys tumbled out as he pushed unlock
Cheers rumbled throughout the lot
And we were on our way home

Timmy Timmy Timmy Tebow

Tim Tebow is on the Mets

Is he the next Mookie Betts?

What's next?

He was a member of the Jets

He will quit baseball to join the Brooklyn Nets

What's next?

If you are smart don't place a bet

Because you will soon know that you got wrecked

Will he come back?

His arms are too large for the MLB he's jacked

He sucks at football, that's pretty whack

Will he succeed?

A successful career is all he needs

Not a career in which he will bleed

Don't be like Josh Gordon, who smokes the weed

I believe in Tim

There is no one that will be more successful than him

Haunted

Everywhere I go
your face floats
windows, coffee cups,
you creep into my head
like the sound of a dripping faucet

 Haunted,
old conversations
touch my shoulder
your sweet words in my ear
turn sour, stale
with time

 A ghost,
from the past
shivers, like on cold winter night
leaving me speechless,
open-mouthed
like a fish freshly caught.

The Pendulum

The old grandfather clock looms over the grave
the pendulum swings as it scrapes the frozen thick soil
sluggishly excavating our graves.
We all retain that one thing
that's digging our resting places
quashing our existence. This very moment
another lie is told, the shovel on the pendulum swings again -
how many more until the shovel is done?

The graveyard lawns bristles in leaves, autumn yellow
purple, absorbed by the dim lighted sky

other graves shrink out in the distance
forgotten
withering

the speed is picking up
time is running out

The Cliff

Forced to the fork in this foggy pathway
I neared the need to make a choice
panicking,
I turned back
Towards unclear memories
for comfort and stability

However
I was interrupted
by the steadily advancing wall behind me
An alluring filter of glass
that allowed me to see fractured bits
of my memories

In desperation,
I attempted to grasp that which had defined me
But any touch was blocked
by the most powerful force in existence

Recognizing the futility of my efforts
I turned towards my choices
and they revealed themselves immediately

The middle pathway was identical to my current
A constant thick fog that permeated
a lifeless air
Inhibiting me from seeing down the path much
farther than that of a distance
of a few mistrusted steps
Walked in a misguided manner

The passageway to the left
was illuminated in a brilliant white,
of which merely the sight
conveyed a sense of
serenity
The likes of which I had never achieved

The last of the pathways was one of macabre
darkness
which devoured itself
with the terrifyingly strong force
of a black hole

And threatened to rip me from where I stood
to extinguish my life
dare I gaze at it in awe another second

I managed to rip my eyes away, but it was too
late
my knees weakened,
and my head gave way to madness
When I awoke
it was in my own dreams,
Of that which reflected the outside reality
and offered insight to the truths of my choices

I saw a mother and her child,
previously peaceful and loving together,
Being ripped from her loving arms
never to return again

I saw a thick fog,
which enveloped a man
and quickly hide him from my view

And I gazed upon an unrecognizable creature
lurking in the darkness
Unable to love
living in constant pain
Swallowed by the darkness
never to see light again

After this I awoke
and felt the push of the glass wall behind me
towards the forks in the road

In Anguish I cried
"What is an existence in the light if it can be per-
verted?!
What is an existence in the darkness if it means
that of a monster!?
I will take the middle road, until I find the an-
swer!"

So I took the middle road once more

Refused to move forwards
continuing to yearn for the past
Surrendering to the only true constant that pushes me along
a path that I do not determine
but create all the same
for it is what I do that defines me
and until I come to the next fork in the road
I wait for a choice
yet again

Untitled

caught Between confusion and clarity
natural beauty balances chaos and peace
the waterfall begins with a leak
and then it starts roaring down
crushing everything in its path
pure chaos erupts when it hits the ground
below, it settles out to a rushing flow
starts to flow towards the light
of the hot sun beating down
begins to rise up through the light
transformed by the heat
into clarity

Untitled

Dozens of customers stumble into the store
piercing the air with their absurd demands
might as well be pouring from the Tower of Babel
their questions built to an overwhelming crescendo

My manager releases me to the back of the store
free from the pulsing throngs of people, I float through the aisles
landing beside my coworker, anxiety seeping from his pores
standing with a woman older than time itself
my colleague slips away, as I offer my assistance
regret rushes through me as she bursts into a mess of words
I can barely grasp on to her ridiculous demands but I decipher:

Vegan
Grain-free
Low fat
GMO free
Organic

My footsteps fall heavy, and I lead this ball and chain to a dog food that only exists in fantasy
failure after failure
I cannot provide what she wants
clutching my last resort, I show her Natural&Delicious
some, not all demands are met, but it is my only option

Her scowl pushes deeper into her wrinkled skin and I am scared
a torrential wave of criticism hits me, freezing the small hope I had
the English ingredients cannot be easily found on this Italian
I offer up my French skills, but no
she cannot settle
my tongue feels heavy and foreign and I try to protest

My boss approaches, his hopeful demeanor squashed by the oppressive force pulsating from her
his enthusiasm tries to lift the atmosphere, but to no avail
he, like I, cannot decipher the language she is speaking
steam streams out of he rears she settles for a brand
and I bring it to the front

Untitled

Sand, gritty sand greets the newborn
it wails out a war cry, letting the world know of its arrival
and breaks out of its shell
only a thin membrane protecting it from the nether
this unknown place that it must traverse

The sun beats down on its soft armor and its first shadow falls
a long stretch of sand stands to be conquered
littered with danger like a minefield
its first steps will set it off

The stretch between the birth spot and the sea is like a battlefield
young children leave footprints like bombshells
birds, like planes of the enemy, peer around for a vulnerable target
the turtle will soldier on

Contributors

BROOKE BONIELLO is senior class president at Pompton Lakes High School who loves to laugh, write, and make others smile. Her favorite way to spend time is with her family, under cozy blankets, or behind the wheel on long drives.

ANDREW CARROLL is a senior at Pompton Lakes High School. He likes French Toast, French Fries, and the French Revolution. Andrew is also an aspiring rapper.

STEFANO CIUDADANO is water. He is cold and tasteless on the inside and covered with condensation on the outside.

COLUM DELL is a twitter icon, sometimes has really good jokes, other times has the worst jokes. Creator of fire roasts. As of December 2016 he is a Texas resident.

SHKUMBIN ELMAZI is long, tan and handsome, outdoorsy, outgoing, and confident. He is extremely good-looking and often questions how one enters the poet's academy.

KARLEY FLYNN is senior at Pompton Lakes high school, who enjoys cheering and dancing. Karley likes to write about stories and create images for her readers.

ESTEBAN GARCIA took Creative Writing for the college credits. At least now he knows he'll never be a poet.

CHRISTOPHER GRECCO is an extremely Italian championship wrestler. He will pin you in 6.9 seconds.

MICHAEL HAIDACHER plays basketball full-time, lacrosse part-time. His father has become an idol revered by all who write creatively.

NICHOLAS HENNESSY part-time powerlifter, full-time burden. Extremely sarcastic, somewhat comical, but also extremely controversial.

RYAN JANOF a senior at PLHS, likes long walks on the beach and fancy restaurants that serve lobster. In his free time, he hang glides, jet skis in the great lakes, travels to France (in Epcot) for ice cream, reads a good graphic novel or two in the middle of the woods, drives along the coast while the sun sets, surfs exclusively in Hawaii, and watches South Park.

ENIS JASHARI is the heir to the best sole-proprietorship in Northern New Jersey. He is the best quarterback to ever play recreation football on Thanksgiving.

CAMRYN JENKIN'S favorite subject of high school is Algebra, She really enjoys music and sports like soccer and track. She also believes there is a lot she can learn through writing.

BRIANNA LIM is a senior student at Pompton Lakes High School. She expresses herself by writing about her experiences.

CHRISTOPHER MANCINELLI is the current employee of the month at AJ's Pizza in Pompton Plains, New Jersey. He likes long walks to and from AJ's Pizza and am a student PLHS as well as a profound lover of the New York Mets.

SERENA MAZZELLA is a senior at Pompton Lakes High School. She enjoys cheer-leading and likes to write about nature.

KATRINA MUSNI has a lack of motivation and a corgi. She also enjoys watching films for hours on end.

MELISSA PEREZ loves running, She runs cross country, spring and winter track. Math is her favorite subject but this creative writing class has showed her writing is enjoyable and fun.

RYAN POLITO is talented as Usain Bolt and leaps hurdles. He is lyrical and will end your career.

JOSHUA SCANTLING is a student at PLHS. He expresses his struggles and great achievements through writing.

JOHN VITZ is a junior at Pompton Lakes High School. That's all you need to know as he's said too much already, and they are always watching.

MADISON YOURTH is a high school senior going on senior citizen. She wakes up too early, wears sweaters when it's warm, and has dinner before 6pm.