

The Nest Review

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Contents

Anonymous.....	4
Anonymous.....	7
Andrea Gatica.....	9
Mandi Giunta.....	11
Jill Gruzdis.....	13
Mike Magyar.....	15
Ema Ramicevic.....	17
Neel Rana.....	19
Alex Rios.....	21
Travis Rodas.....	23
Hannah Rogers.....	25
Shane Sullivan.....	27
Contributors.....	29

And then I don't feel so bad

My father's cooking on
a late Sunday afternoon. The smells
permeate throughout the house,
inviting us all to come together
and enjoy the company of
one another. Babies
laughing
at the park as they are being swung
in the swings I grew up on.
Old couples
who have been together longer than a lifetime
who have been through the good
the bad
and the ugly
together
sharing ice cream on a bench
reminiscing about their youth.
City streets filled with anonymous artwork.
Long drives with your friends while
blasting songs from early 2000.
The sunrise and the sunset.
His eyes when he looks at you
and your eyes when you look at her.
The beach
in the winter
when the air is cool and the sea sings
the song of summer.
Coffee breath and intertwined hands.
Summer flings and teenage things.
Laughter,
pure genuine laughter
that brings you to tears.
Happy tears.
No longer shaking from
anxiety attacks.
The taste of homemade food
after being gone
for too long. The smell
of my grandmother's house
comforting and nurturing.
Hands,
loving, holding, writing.
The town I grew up in
and the secrets it keeps for me.

Stolen glances that speak their own language
only you and I
can decipher.
Ice in water.
Running
through the street
without a care in the world.
God.
First times.
And last times.
Apple picking in October.
Friends,
real and true friends.
Screaming
and yelling that turns to
forgiving and loving.
Being young
and being free.
Believing
in something more than myself.
Chicken noodle soup. Brown eyes. Home.

I Call Myself a Gardener

It rains in my garden, but not a simple shower —
when it rains, it pours.

The soil is damp with the tears from the clouds,
who seem to only cry for me.

Flowers have stopped growing in my garden;
when one begins to sprout,
deep come and nibble them to nothing,
their beauty ravaged between the deer's teeth
and the rain washes away the remains.

In my garden, the trees have stopped growing
malnourishment and aching
their punishment for lacking their neighbor's slender sleek

In my garden a fence keeps people at a distance.
They admire the arrangement of flowers,
they dig around to try and find something hidden
but the fence tells them to stop looking for answers
they cannot comprehend.
People are easily deceived.

They never assume the interior is bleak
past the fence, where it rains.
There are always grey clouds in my garden.
Sometimes the sun shines, but it is never as bright
as it used to be.

I used to cut my garden trees
thinking it would bring any kind of feeling but
the sun never came and my garden trees
are left with scars on their trunks.

In my garden, nothing can take the rain away.
All the plants continue to wilt and wither
because in my garden
it never stops raining and pouring.

The Deep Blue

The peaceful ripples
the deep blue crushing force
covering sandy shores
while it shines and shimmers,
howls and roars,
aqua paradise and God's angry power.

My emotions can be buried
or they can be spread out,
but before anyone sees them
the ocean comes washing
my hermit crabs away.

Life has high tides and low tides
that sometimes pull me under, try to drown me,
but give me enough strength
and I'll keep swimming until I reach the sandbar.

Fragile Skin

She wears her black and grey clothes to cover not only her body
but her smooth skin too, her soft fragile skin
skin people around her aren't afraid to scar

How come her sunny skies feel so dark and grey?
Well if you knew her thoughts, wore her shoes
you would see what it feels like to
Live her day

She is not the one who wishes to be stared at
She is the one who wishes to be noticed
She is not the one you will see
She is the one at home who is watching all alone

Some share laughter while they dance in the rain
while some girls are stuck in the storm, left and forgotten

Bothersome

He joyously writes down the order
completely wrong
In front of the sushi bar thinking he is the master of us all when really he is one of us
Calling us "bro" or friend"
but none of us are
Are you ok is what he will ask when really he is judging us for not working faster
Soon the long hours starts to weigh him down
His once tan face fades into milk white with moon like crests under his eyes
Employed for only two weeks and already is tripping over his own shoes
Working from dusk til dawn everyday
Getting a lunch break
for only an hour
Maybe he will realize that he had made a mistake
and leave
The door rings giving us the ok sign to breath again

Speechless

Looking around the room trying to find you escape but you are imprisoned in the room
The hour glass on the wall slowly ticking
Students fill the room with judgmental eyes
The only source of lights is shining above you
Enhancing the water droplets that start to cover your face
Your knees begin to tremble and you feel your heart rapidly pounding from within
You memorized for days what you were going to say but all of that is erased from your brain
The ballerina Earth rotates, spinning until the room becomes a blur
At last you're about to tell your speech but the web stitches across your lips keep you from speaking

A Plastered Smile

She fears drowning.

No. Not like that.

The piles of papers stacked upon her desk,
Unopened yellowed envelopes blanketed with dust,
The pleading eyes of her dog reflected in his metal bowl persistently.
Want. They all want something.
She's drowning with waves crashing down around her.

Her youngest child just under the age of four,
Eyes of innocence gazing up at her,
Unaware of the harsh world threatening to crumble every day.
A wide smile never leaving brightens his face.
Babbling to himself blissfully oblivious.
He's floating without a care waves rolling in the distance.

The pictures of her husband,
Not yet faded yet crumpled from a touch,
He was once unaware wide-eyed innocent.
Fate was selfish taking him for their own,
The two white headlights turned on too late,
Pitch black street normally empty yet wasn't.
The three a.m. phone call red emergency lights and a black bag.

A door opens a child cries
the dog whines a stomach growls
a picture dropped a breath exhaled.

She paints a smile on her face it never reaches her eyes.

The Eclipse

At the bottom of the lake I sit,
In my castle of muck, the moon burns through the darkness,
Encompassing me in.
The fish glide around me, awaiting my castle to crumble,
Exposing me.

The bright moon raised above me,
full and at its finest, only hours before it leaves.
Tomorrow it will return,
but not the same, a piece of itself stolen away.
Each night the light gets more dimmed,
until the sky turns black, casting a shadow over my palace.

Cracks lace the walls of my palace,
Desperately fixing it with bleeding fingers.
Repeatedly colliding with the walls,
The fish know the faults,
How to make it shatter and grieve.

The sun replaces the moon,
A constant rhythm, destroying the darkness.
Contrary to the orb of night,
The sun eternally illuminates the world, except when an eclipse takes over.
Giving in to the darkness,
Turning the world bleak, the moon embraces the light.
A few hours, minutes, seconds,
And the sun returns, bringing its blinding beams,
And the sun sets again.

The fish take their places,
My fortress caving in, burying me under the debris.
Shadows float round me,
I await to be enveloped in the eclipse.

My Happy

The world is filled
With happy things
That fills the human's heart
With love and joy

A roof over my head.
A hot meal on the table.
A bed to sleep in.
Family gatherings.
A toothy grin.
Contagious laughter.
A dog's loyalty and devotion.
Irreplaceable friends.
The privilege of an education.
Books that make me smile, laugh, or cry.
Star Wars movies.
Harry Potter.
Playing field hockey with my team.
A best friend who loves like a sister.
A sister who loves like a best friend.
A brother who the star football player despite his learning disability.
A mother's devotion to her children.
A father who overworks to provide for his family.
And a family that always comes together at the end of the day,
no matter what.

An Old Friend

I hovered on the border
where the waves meet the burning sand
the Ocean, an old friend, greeted me
urging me to venture further

the burning sun was on its way
to submerging itself in the horizon
I pushed forward, longing to feel the icy touch of the sea
embracing all of me
a gentle breeze glided over the glassy blue surface
before colliding with my face,
entangling my hair
a wave galloped towards the shore
toward me, its shadow loomed
the lip of the wave's snarl approached
threatening to devour me
I dove
the Ocean pulled at my hair
the salty water seeped into my skin, chilling my body

My lungs ached for oxygen,
my heart ached for the Ocean
pushing against the sandy bottom,
I shattered the glassy surface

On the horizon, a full moon spilled onto the water
the sky fading into the sea
told me it was time to return home
my legs brought me into shallow water
once more, the glittering sand greeted me
no longer hot under my feet, but cool.
Over my shoulder, I looked to the ocean
waving goodbye

Praise Poem

I am grateful
for the ability to play soccer
with my closest friends
sharing the same love and passion for something
so fun and exciting. The friends I get to see
daily in my high school, the classes
that I enjoy taking this year
with some of the teachers
that are my favorite in the entire school.
The ability to challenge myself daily
both on the field in soccer
and in the classroom
growing
and learning each and every day.
Working with my favorite coach
on something we both love
And enjoy to be around.
The ability of gaining a driver's license
to gain a greater sense of independence
And responsibility.
Having a supportive family,
people that will be there for me
through thick and thin.
Having fun
living life
and being the best person I could be
day in and day out.

Holding Out

John held out his small hand to collect coins
from passersby. Leaves fall and he catches
them too, their crisp gold,
sense of hope.

The streets of NYC were dirty
and so was he. His father and mother hold the cardboard signs
asking for help.

John's sickly hand becomes weaker each day,
as he keeps his hand extended for someone,
anyone, to help.

The call goes unanswered
leaving the husband and wife
in pain and forever restless,
with winter's fierce sting,
they are left
Numb
like the frostbite spreading through their fingers.

The Sublime

We are a house in a field
surrounded with what we've sown

We toss the seeds haphazardly
hoping something will grow

We divert the Texan creek to flow straight through
and capture the wind when it chooses to blow

until it blows us down. This time
we build ourselves on the tenacious sand of Louisiana rivers

where a flood creeps through the cracks
in the doors, the windows weeping
the soil moulded until it reeks of
the floorboards' putrid, musty --

We are rotten from the inside out --

This time we rebuild amid California's cashmere
fingernails of fire which claw on the wood

encapsulating us, shades of burnt umber in the windows
charring the seeds we didn't have a chance to plant

We are soot --

Pops of green push their way through
the scattered ashes of our remains

growing without us --

Two Old Apple Trees

In a grove of fruit trees two
old apple trees
that sat in the beams of sunlight with children gathering
apples by the basket.

I still come back
to moments like this: my cousins, my sibling,
sweet like those
ripe apples.

As our grandfather
climbing a ladder,
lifted us
to a height we never experienced before.

Laughing with glee
our tiny hands stretched out
like sunflowers
to the sun.

Now we have left here to places far and wide,
with eyes as wide as
the saucers
that held our applesauce

The fragrance of cinnamon and apples remained
floating throughout the warm house
as our grandmother stirred the pot
while we sat ladling spoonfuls into our mouths.

Six years later I sit in my own kitchen
stirring a potful of mashed apples
Staring at my spoonful hovering above,
remembering.

Forward, Relentlessly

With trepidation I began to drive my car onto the road
not a curve in sight yet
I know nothing of the trip that I am to undertake.
Carefully I drive the car onto a path that I believe to be the best,
the longer I drive the more confidence I gain.
But my surroundings are too blurry to understand all that is around me
My knowledge may be limited but I begin to make sense of the things around me,
Nonetheless I push forward.

While my destination still isn't in sight
my surroundings have become clear to me.
It's as though a blurry lens has been lifted from my eyes
I've picked up speed but lack the confidence to go any faster
The road that was once straight has begun to curve,
I can no longer return to the simplicity of the road in the past,
so I continue to push forward.

I have finally reached top speed.
While a bit of uncertainty still remains
I have left worry to the wind.
Despite the numerous complications the road houses,
I speed up.
I finally have my destination in sight
I have a complete understanding of the road that leads us to our destination.
This road of life that I have driven on has finally been made clear to me,
thus I push forward relentlessly until I reach my destination.

Different Worlds

The stories that I've read were gateways to other worlds
they were like vacuums that sucked me in
worlds where my imagination runs loose like a hungry animal chasing after its prey
worlds where I am free from the bindings of reality
worlds that I can explore and learn from
worlds that influence my very being and change who I am as a person
worlds that challenge me as well as teach me to how to overcome these challenges
these stories are a treasure trove of knowledge and entertainment

The Line

There's no crowd just a small gathering, Everyone anxious.
Jumping around, light skips, tiny hops Anything to give an edge
Warm up, but not too much. There's a race to be won
Boys becoming men, a coming of age. The old versus the new
A team sport, but also individual, a test to see who is the best
Feet pounding, and heavy breathing a never ending hustle
Or is it? Some with potential will go on
An unknown amount of time passes tired feet pound the ground
Arms pumping like steam engines determination carries you through the course
the end of the ordeal is here
One last push Anything Everything All you've got
Everything is working overtime It's time to clock out.
Cross the line and you're done the end. Now is the time to rejoice
Celebration Regret Pride
All's well ends well See you in a week

Battle

A mock battlefield
a battle of the wits.
The pieces line up shoulder to shoulder
soldiers ready to do my bidding.
I study my opponent,
with careful hands
the pieces are cast

A knight murders a pawn,
no one mourns.
The knight claims pieces, ravages the field
a wildfire, casting the black pieces like ash
off the board.

An opposing pawn pressed forward,
he is now worth a king.
With one bold move, a warrior can meet his end.
The horse is trapped in a storm.
A smirk is all the enemy thinks he gives
but the eyes tell all:
"I've got you!" they say, triumphant in the little victory

A knight falls, dutifully mourned,
the great warrior swept away
when a man of god rushes forward
putting one piece, the Almighty piece,
in danger. The smirk turns to panic.
Tower is sacrificed, and with its collapse
the empire falls to pieces

like crumbling buildings, the board now
open as a battlefield after the bodies have been whisked away
the sacrifices before held no worth.
The king is toppled, and with it
The opposing side falls,
a battle of wits, ended by hubris.

The Love From Family

Together and felt through eternity
The grace of love brought upon by family
It is sweet like the taste of a ripe fruit
Warm like the lovely-crisp summer breeze in the unfading season
Feeling loved wanted praised
It brings the lovely feeling that cannot be undone
The love of family is impossible to cease away
It is forever and the only thing anyone could ever need

The Match

The adrenaline pushing me through the intensity
striving for me to break my limits face to face with *my opponent*
The bright lights looming over us like the sun the mat underneath us solid outlined with a ring
around it awaiting one of us to be pushed out of bounds the blood sweat victory
one of us destined to have our arm raised in victory
neither of us knowing the outcome
the whistle blows and we both know one thing
someone is walking away with a victory

both of us in our stances
waiting for one of us to make a move like a lion stalking its prey
arm against arm reaching for a way to grapple my opponent
until suddenly the rush of excitement hits propels me forward into position a quick pin victory at
hand the roar of the crowd
the accomplishment of victory there's nothing sweeter than that

German Shepherd Backpack

It's 8:00 AM time to start
the school day
lugging my backpack, I go to the first period
the day goes on, and it grows and grows
till it's a German Shepherd

The day rolls on and on
each period filling it with more clutter
by lunch its claws are digging into my shoulders
I'm nearly bleeding out

The last bell rings
the German Shepherd is stuffed beyond capacity
I set off for home dragging the big dog
still claws at my shoulders

I drop it to the floor; its contents spill out
legs, ears, torso, and tail stretching over most of the carpet
whatever space is left is quickly filled with the rubbish
till I'm buried alive

Even when I close my eyes
it still lurks by my desk
I wake up and get ready
then I shoulder my German Shepherd backpack

Musical Waves

When the roaring of the wave
reaches my brain
my headphones are the dam
that keep it at bay

The noises,
the stresses
are forever advancing,
crashing against the levee

Sometimes my headphones are
a noose, tied to restrain the chaos
not to kill, but to help
All while pouring out melodic tunes

The strings untangle,
the puzzles are solved,
everything washes away,
settles against the wall

Others' poisons are flushed out,
they turn to elixir dancing about the room
jolting my heart like a Red Bull
finally allowing me to dance to the care-free beat.

My Galazy

Underneath the light of the moon
laying on a trampoline,
realizing it's the little things that count.
Just look at how tiny we are,
look at the stars and how they shine
how the planets rotate
how amazing it is as the Earth goes round.
Made up of stardust, just tiny dots on the plate, really
yet so powerful we can destroy planets
or save them.
The beauty of human endeavor is fascinating
gazing into the sky is sometimes like
looking into your soul, looking into
the very things that you are made up of.

Each of us has been rewarded with an array of wondrous gifts
yet not all of us seem able to grasp this potential marvel that lay within.
And still many remain blind, just incapable of opening the mind's eye deep enough
to even fathom the exceptional brilliance bestowed unto them.
Essential and necessary, a distinct destiny develops
absorbing our surroundings, intensely inhaling life one breath at a time
understanding the relevance behind each moment digested
not being afraid to hold on, even when it appears easier to let go
having the wisdom to know the difference,
knowing life is a beating heart, and what we do decide to exhale
is of relevance, a core value gained by one but simply awaiting to be consumed by the next.
Dance with the dreamers. Theorize with the thinkers. Understand and praise the uniqueness that
you and I

Beauty becomes you when you redefine beauty, only a small amount of the blessed
are fortunate to be embraced by her. Keep things simple.
I look to my galaxy and the keen possibility keeps me optimistic that, down the road, one day
I am going home to my galaxy.

Tears of Rain

The beauty seen by water is beyond skin deep

The essence of Earth's existence – its purity we must keep

Showering down from the heavens are droplets of these sands

Churn in our oceans, flows through our wondrous lands

The blanket in the winter that covers what's dry

The mist in the spring is food for all life

It is the tears that fall from our dismal faces

Constant though curtailed, drips condensed of humanity's disgraces

Abundant in the air, breaths of oxygen expand and extend

This vital vapor inhaled, heaven's breath, a blessing of pristine content

The most majestic treasures go unnoticed, perhaps even overlooked

Yet their relevance and power are forces of promise, never to be taken for granted.

Contributors

REBECCA CRESPO is a senior at PLHS.

JADE FIGUEROA runs track.

ANDREA GATICA is a senior at Pompton Lakes High School and she likes to read during her free time.

MANDI GIUNTA is a junior who enjoys reading and dancing.

JILLIAN GRUZDIS is a normal 16 year-old high school student.

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EMA RAMICEVIC is a junior who loves to read.

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HANNAH ROGERS is a junior and she loves to read books.

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