

2012

Inside Out, Spring 2012

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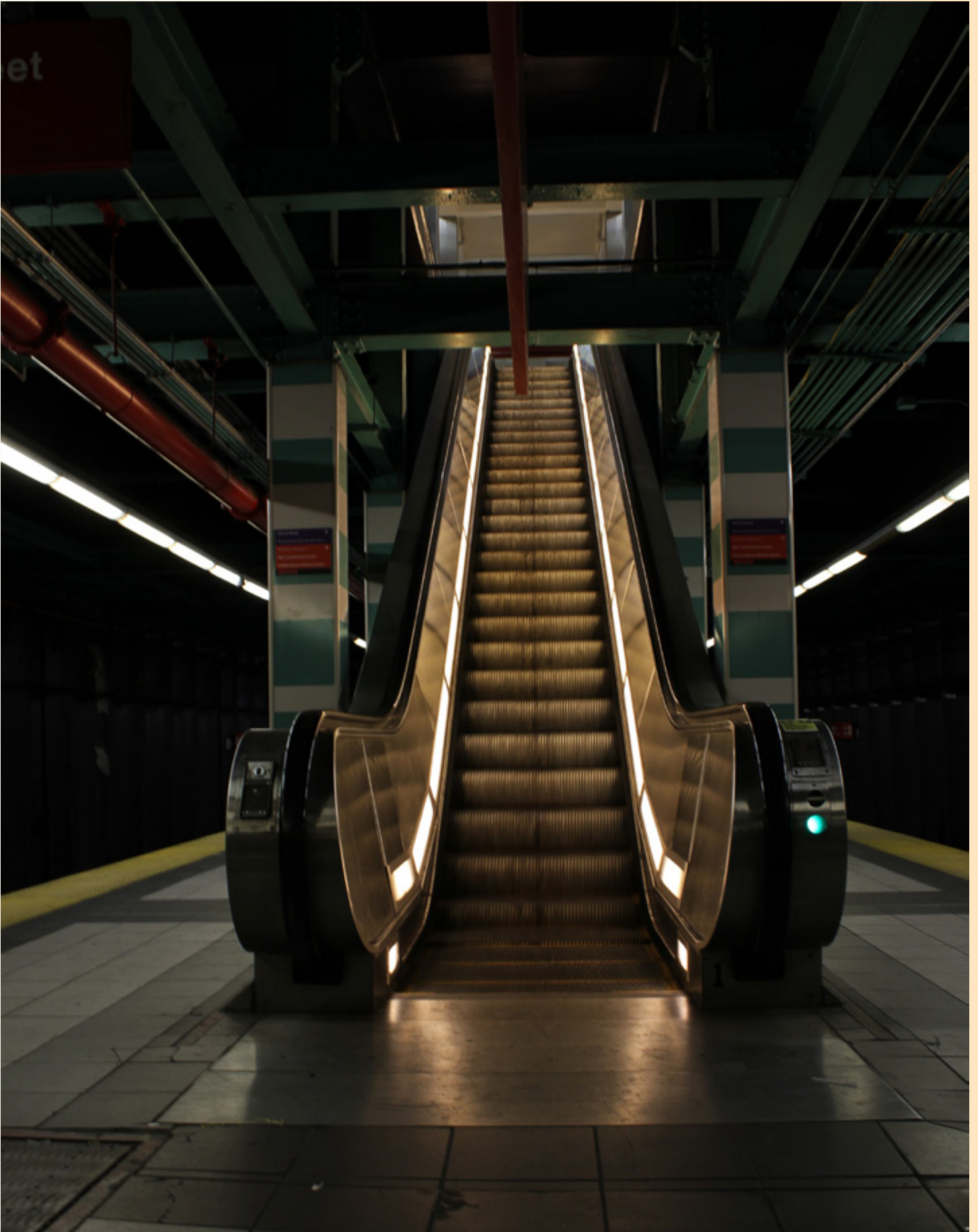
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A Compilation of Creative Work
from
Jefferson Students
2012





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Jonathan Elias



Huong Le

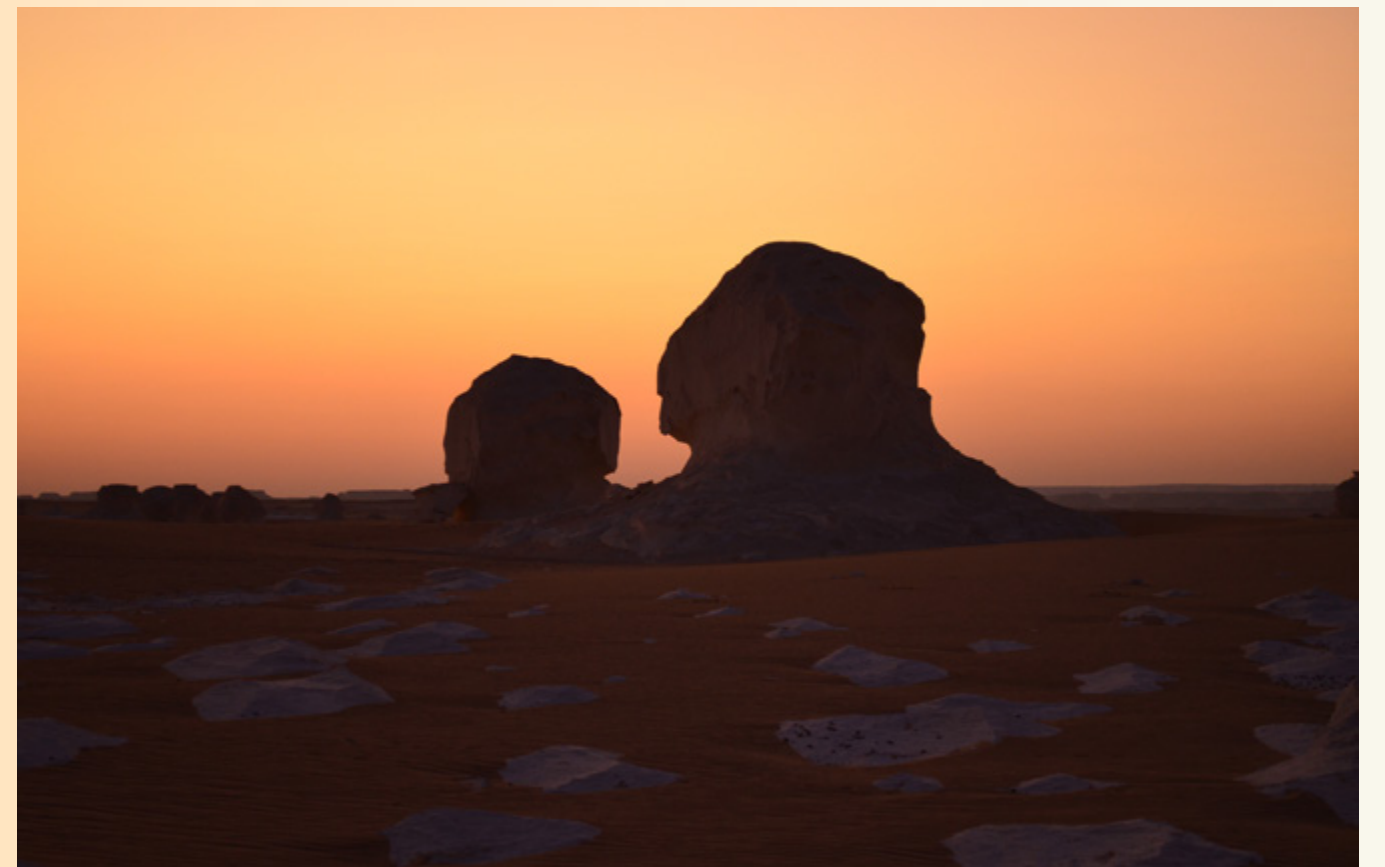
Fear

Yuliya Baratt

Scared of the dark and scared of light
Scared of speed and scared of flight
Scared of making the wrong choice
Scared of raising up your voice
Scared of meeting someone new
Scared of being led askew
Scared of coming off too tough
Scared you'll never be enough

Scared of this thing...that one too
But all you have to fear is you

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Miranda Law

The Hands of My First Autopsy

Nathan Fried

I watched my first autopsy today. The old man layed there on the cold steel table, fully naked, head tilted back, chest completely open and eviscerated.

In vivid contrast, the drab dank room was filled with the spirit, conversation, and life of doctors, interns, and students as they removed organs for weighing. This experience, unlike many, seemed to be incredibly close to that of which I had been exposed to on TV dramas. The skin, the fat, the genitals, the feet – all seemed fake, all just a production for the next CSI plot twist. Even the face of this old man looked nothing more than a poorly made Halloween mask.

Tracking my eyes across his blood covered wrinkles, I felt disconnected and oddly at ease. For a moment, I wondered if this was the result of being brought up in the 21st century – filled with senseless murders and violent video games, constantly bombarded with blood, guts, and gore. I felt sudden relief of this thought, however, as my eyes settled to this poor man's right hand. It was then that I felt that surge of emotion that was terribly absent before.

Gently open, palm up. As if waiting for a loved one to hand him something... not rushed, but simply waiting. The left hand was down, curled, but still relaxed – just as my father's might be while sleeping. Somehow, nothing of this man, of this autopsy, not even his face, seemed to bother me as much as his lifeless hands. It was at this moment, I felt for the first time his existence, or should I say, absent existence.

I decided to leave.

...

I removed my scrubs, washed up in the morgue's bathroom, and took the elevator to the first floor. Walking across the green-filled courtyard at Jefferson, my mind was still fixated on that old man's hands. What was it about them that bothered me so much? Why did nothing, not even his eyes, mouth, or nose bother me? Of all aspects of his naked body, why his hands?

As I arrived in lab, my PI greeted me. Desperate to ensure he knew I was late due to acts of a scholar and not indolence, I told him of my experience, quickly remarking of the fixated thought of that right hand in my mind.

With a solemn stare, he began to talk – slowly.

“That's interesting you felt that way. Being a Hasidic Jew, our community prepares its own for burial.”

He described how the muscles in our faces relax, allowing us to disconnect from loved ones once they pass. Alive, we tend to hold our faces in distinct ways, giving us personality. When we die, those uniquely flexed muscles give out- losing some essence of the person and leaving behind a simple mask.

Continuing, he described how his community personally undergoes all tasks associated with the burial: cleaning, clothing, arranging. He then arrived at his point, describing the hardest and most emotionally bearing part of the process: cleaning under their finger nails.

“Its not that its gross. Its just something about holding their hand and cleaning under their nails that is so incredibly personal,” he said. “It forms a connection as you do it. Many in my community that can handle every part of the preparation simply can't clean the dead's finger nails. They refuse to.”

As he left the room, I sat there - thinking. Wondering of what I have come to realize as such a vital sense

to the human experience – **Touch**. So intimate, so personal. Much more than a brief handshake or a high five, touch conveys a sense of connection and fosters relationships. It helps newborns form that strong connection with their mothers and tells your wife or husband that you are there for them when times are the toughest.

So today, I coin a new quote I hope all of us can appreciate and remember...

“If eyes are the window to the soul, then the hands are the conduits to our hearts.”

Never again will I underestimate the power of a simple touch.



Neil Flannery Haidorfer



Evan Slagle



Nishi Dedania

Childhood

Yuliya Baratt

I see myself run through the fields
 I still remember how it feels
 When life was easy and carefree
 When it was easy just to be
 The days when making friends was quick
 The days you laughed till you got sick
 We danced because it made us happy
 We watched movies that were sappy
 Back then we thought about forever
 Back then we never saw a never
 Our dreams were big, our fears were small
 Our hands could reach and touch it all
 A lot has changed for us since then
 A lot has changed since we were ten
 I see myself out running wild
 I still remember being a child

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Michael Minckler



Alissa Herman

Wake

Andrea Frankenger

A night watch,
a ship's tracks
cut into the sea.
In this passage
of stirring quiet
an ache
is stifled,
its pulse aroused
by a father's tears
falling
as failing prayer
turns us toward the earth.



Nate Jordan



Michael Minckler



Sharon Li



Desmond Wilson

The Whistful Writer

Sucharitha Balasubramaniam

I am the PhD postulant,
the graduate aspirant
who does write the most arrant
nonsense about signaling aberrant.

I attempt vainly to be valiant
as I struggle with facts salient
and with writing rules cease to be compliant!

On my well-meaning critics I have to depend,
when the laws of writing I cheerfully upend
I don't really seem to comprehend

that my writing is far from sapient
with no glimmerings of genius incipient
And yet I flounder along unrepentant!

You note with asperity
that I have the temerity
to be profligate in prolixity....

I admit I lack the gravity
(or indeed any dexterity)
to compose concise annals for posterity.
Indeed this is no time for levity
nor indeed for frivolity
rather one for brevity!

Duly chastened, I hastened
rather vigorous
in my exegesis of the exiguous,
in my excoriation of the obvious....
Dear God! Writing that seemed innocuous
is certainly not for the fatuous!

But I remain ebullient
that I may yet be lucent,
with perhaps the right emollient....

A little encomium *ad valorem*
(From you no doubt, is at a premium)
to carry me through *ad infinitum!*



Christine Chen

Your Eyes

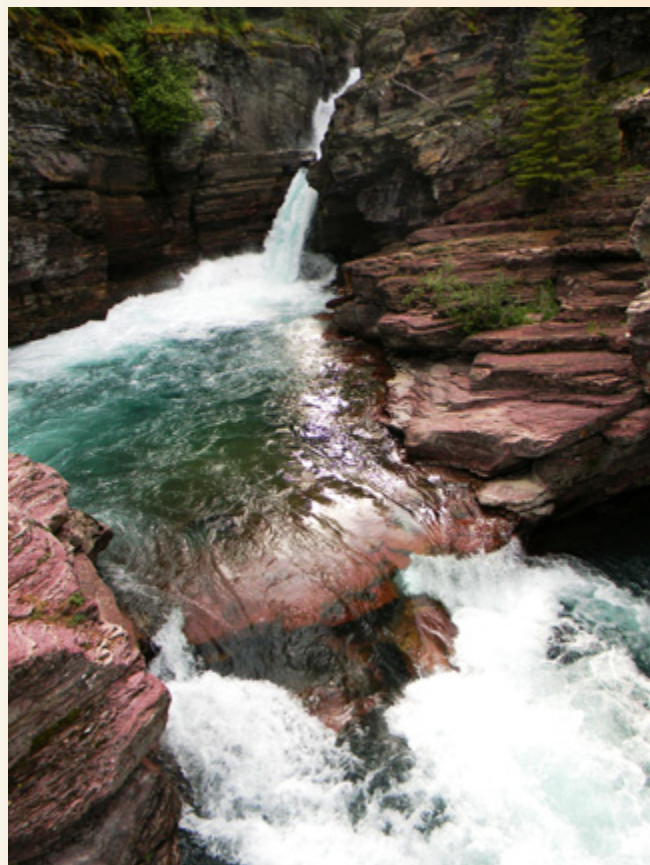
Yuliya Baratt

The eyes that show your deepest fears
The eyes from which let fall your tears
They sparkle in the evening light
They show the world all your delight

Here in these eyes I see your soul
The wonders of which make you whole
And when these eyes are set on me
There is no place I'd rather be
Even through grey and stormy skies
I will find sunshine in your eyes.



Daniel Gealy



Alissa Herman



Kate Madara



Rob Stewart

The Pursuit of Humanity

Kelly A. Lopez Cintron

"Ten truths must you find during the day; otherwise you will seek truth during the night, and your soul will have been hungry."

-Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*

My soul is famished, and I fail at length to recall the last time I've slept the night entire. So tortuous are matters of the heart, for they seize the soul and the passions and hold captive their possessor. Such am I enflamed by these passions, these inextinguishable and altogether bewildering sparks of humanity, that I will attempt to tame the massive flame, visible from the apex of the precipice, so that it can burn controllably, and I, in turn, may live a human life.

Humanity far exceeds the basic physiological requirements of ventilating, perfusing, and nourishing this callous encasement we haul about day by day. Nurturing the soul, the very diadem of humanity, must be the ambition of a human life.

A lofty ambition it is, to live. To live! To live! To pursue happiness with the hot breath of urgency on your neck, to live for thyself!

It is only during times of temptation that we become fully aware of our humanity. It thrashes, as if at the crash of a tumultuous wave, struggling to be allowed to the surface, and we, being naught save mere beasts, avert our gaze as we tense and suffocate compassion beneath the waves. Humanity is then stifled, her bloated corpse the flotsam of polluted consciousness, irrationality, and impure thought.

It is then a daily struggle, the pursuit of humanity. It is, of course, the plight of all men: the decision of whether to pursue a life on the high plain of morality and humanity or to settle for a meager existence amidst the masses. A human life is a lonely life.

And so, with a spark of humanity, began my confusion. I spied a mirage of happiness, seemingly glistening from my seat on the caravan. The caravan crept forward and happiness gradually disappeared on the horizon. I then continued my journey on the trodden lands of discontent. Give me sorrow, I say, for without sorrow we know naught of the joys of happiness. Without its poisonous and bitter elixir how can we long for the sweet sap of joy, our mouths watering with its anticipation?

I continue along this march that we call life, aware that my destination exists in the long sands behind me, but the momentum of mediocrity urges me forward, thrusting me into the arms of uncertainty. How many others feel this way, I wonder? How many "lost souls" are wandering through the sands with nary a means of reaching their true destination? How many, I ask, and how is it that I can free myself of the anxiety felt at the mere thought of leaving this procession?



Huong Le



Evan Slagle



Desmond Wilson



Christina Nguyen

The Ending

Robin Fry, RN

Watching each breath while holding my own.
A few sacred hours left till a long
parting.
Usually “the nurse” but today “the family”

I don't like this side of the bed.
Here it is harder, and harsher, and
terribly final.
And personal.
It is so much easier when I am the nurse.

Today's nurse is kind, and quiet, and very
young.
He hasn't seen much death.
Last night's nurse sat with us briefly,
touched us both... she has seen this before.
And been the family.
She understands the peace and brutality of
this time.

The ending is dreaded.....and welcome.
There has been too much suffering and yet
not enough time.
It is always too soon, but we will never
forget the love and the life
Now passing.



Christine Chen



Subhasree Basu

Buoyancy

Adriann Bautista

Beset with the crashing and thrashing
Against the rocks engulfed in the center of life
Decisions made under the guise of this present storm's existence
I but tread the water in rivets of strength
Allowing my arms to fall into its rhythm
Drawing sustenance for the swim ahead
Upward, onward, steadfast

The mouth of the ocean opens
Swallowing my yesterday
And in each roll of its enormous waves
My failures are taken under

I close my eyes feeling the refreshing of the ocean's spray
Its moist lulls me to a place of peace
I give in and float back to the top
My back resting on the gentle rocking of the water's presence

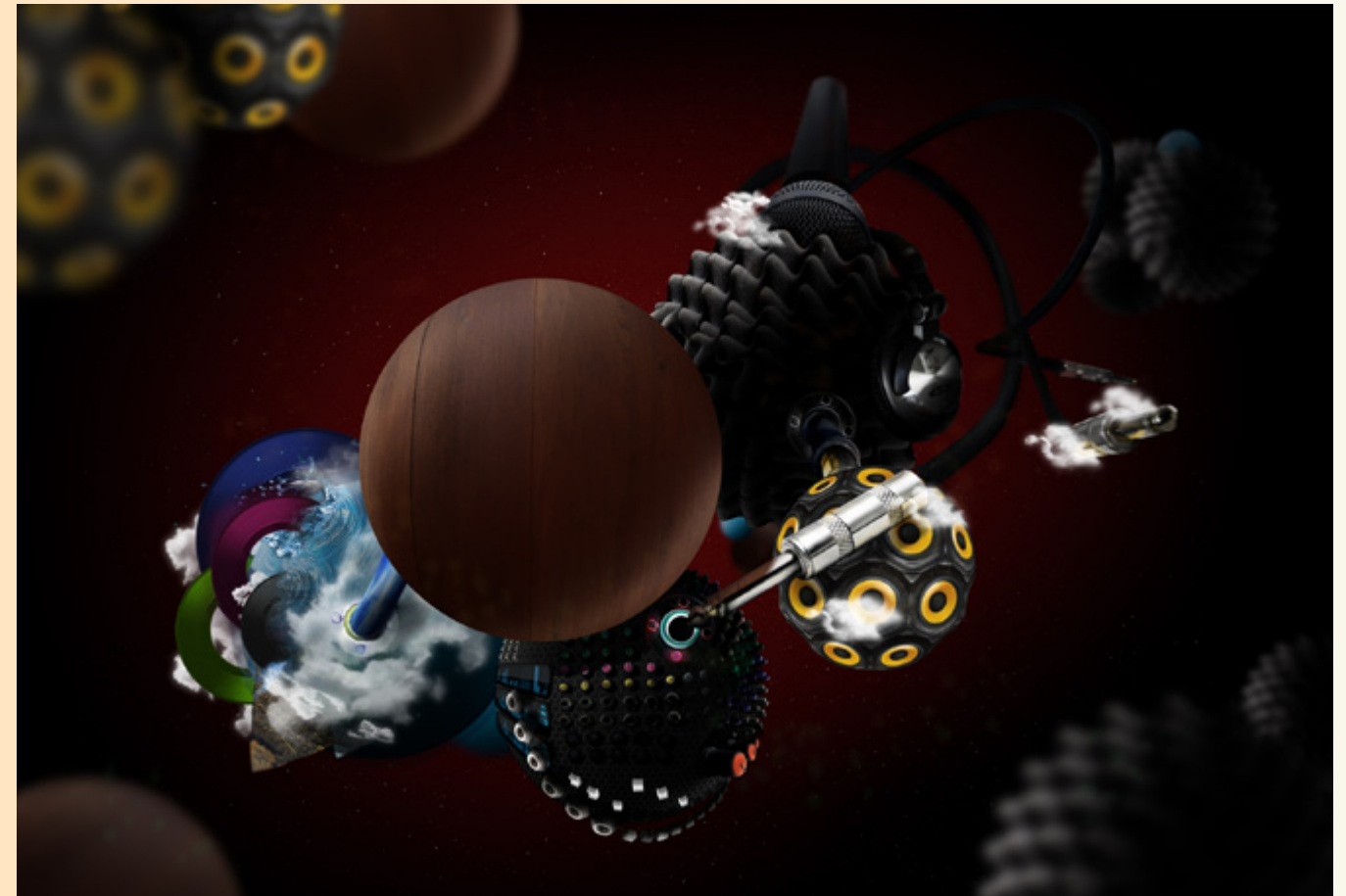
Peace found in the deep



Maelen Ignacio



Molly Pringle



Lisa Liu

What I have Learned to be True

Angelica Manzur

For all will be well.
 Excitement dwells in the lurking uncertainty,
 And quiets the gnawing hunger,
 In the distant turn of the mind.
 Work and knowledge go hand in hand,
 And love will come as it should,
 When it should,
 And with whomever it shall be.
 Let go of the temptation to strain, to tiptoe and
 look beyond,
 For the towering doubts will melt away,
 And every closed door will open as you approach.
 Walk with wide strides, and thumping steps,
 Letting the world know that you have arrived,
 Hum the pulsing melody,
 That leaves you smiling with dizziness,
 And look up,
 With gaze centered on the stars,
 Those galaxies of the unknown.

Let go of,
 The salt pillars,
 The taxing deeds gone undone,
 And the sorrows,
 Dressed in black and locked away.

 As long as you keep walking,
 With your heart open for receiving,
 Your arms open for reaching
 And your eyes open for seeing,
 The World is yours.
 Realize that,
 Past, present, and future are one,
 That there are eternities in moments,
 And beauty exists in,
 The most remote, and humble corners of every man.
 May you always suck out the nectar of the seconds,
 And sip on streams of laughter.
 May tears only serve to wash away adversity,
 And may you always wake, already dreaming of the
 next day,
 For this is it.



Jason Stankiewicz

Ethics as a Pharmacist

Jeffrey Meeks

In my time spent at the JeffHOPE Eliza Shirley homeless shelter, I have been able to witness the “Code of Ethics” for pharmacists unfold first hand. In particular, the principle stating that a “pharmacist serves individual, community, and societal needs” is most practical in a homeless shelter setting. The clinical environment set up by the JeffHOPE participants allows for people in need from all walks of life to be catered to.

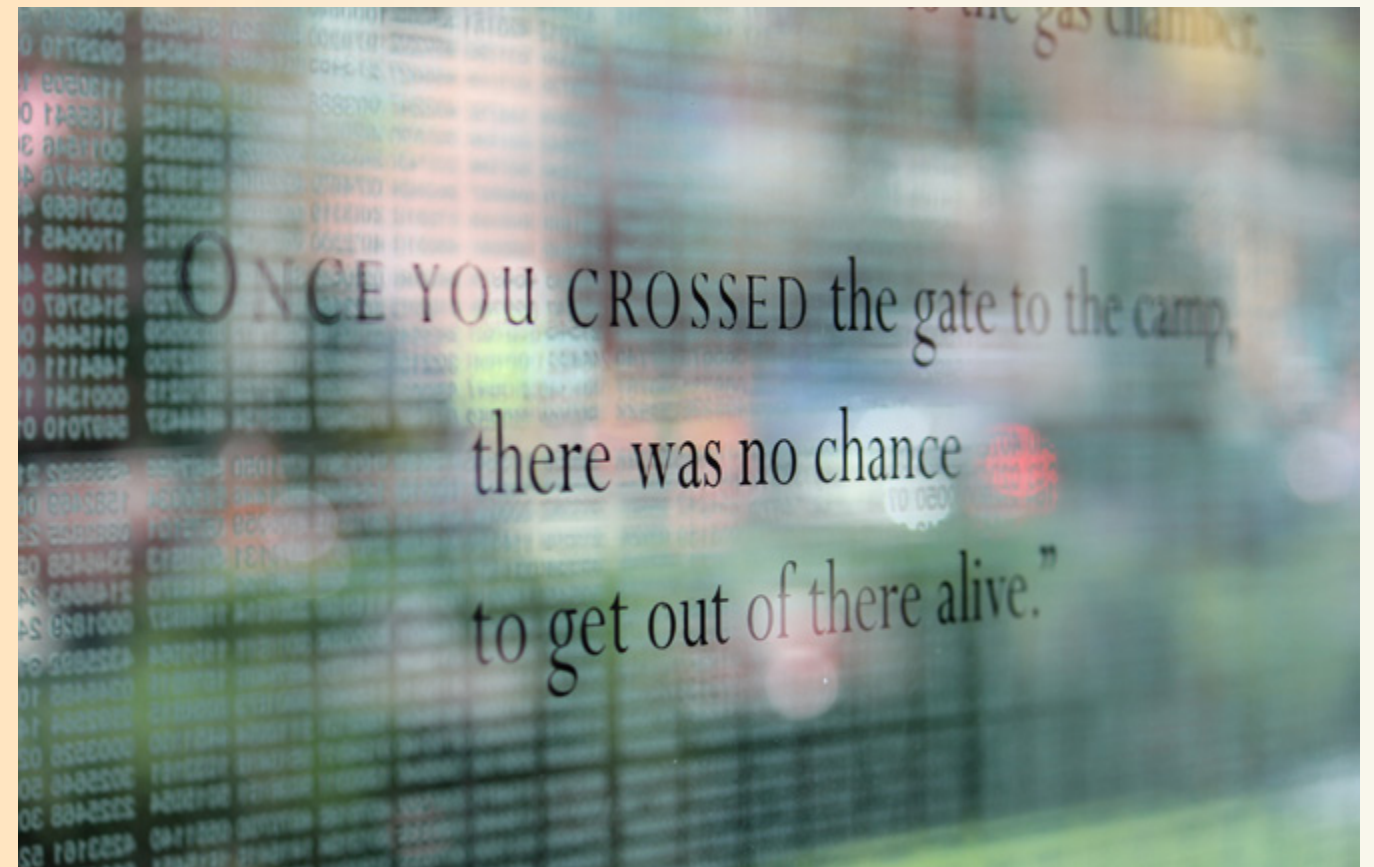
There have been situations throughout my nights spent at Eliza Shirley where I, an inexperienced first year student, have had to step up and do my part -- to help make a particular patient’s stay as comfortable as possible. Although many people outside and possibly even inside the medical community feel pharmacists are simply “pill counters”, they greatly underestimate the responsibilities we hold as healthcare professionals. As I have learned (being placed outside of a retail pharmacy setting), this principle of going beyond helping the “individual” has been clarified.

In the clinical setting, we receive patients who are in need of non-emergent medical attention. Just because these people may not have the resources to receive top-notch medical care outside of homeless shelter does not mean they deserve anything less than the best care we can provide. They are human beings, and we are aspiring professionals with a goal to help our community. The people in this community have a societal need that we have the ability to fulfill, and it would be unprofessional to not do our duty in aiding those in need.

The thing about being a pharmacist respecting the Code of Ethics is that it is not always about providing care in a health related sense, but rather just being a good person. The principle that “a pharmacist serves individual, community and societal needs” extends beyond simply giving medications or medical advice. It is about reaching out to your community, ensuring that your community is cared for, and that the members trust you as a figurehead; as someone who they can turn to for any issues or concerns they may have, even if it just means having someone who will listen.



Jacob Ruiter Ligeti



Nishi Dedania



Anastasiia Rukavysnykova

Pennies in the Dustbowl of Life

Sucharitha Balasubramaniam

Scraps of buried memories
surface now and again,
unexpectedly, like bright pennies in unending sand,
to bring disquiet
and stormy chaos
into my dull but ordered life.

Childhood memories
of a placid, cocooned life,
of walking tree-lined avenues,
my tiny hand tucked into
the safety and security of my dad's
reassuringly large warm palm;
of the aroma of mother's cooking,
the spices redolent of her love and warmth;
of pondering awe-struck at unknown horizons,
of joyous jests, with long-forgotten friends,
of dreaming dreams, made of sand!
Of Prince Charming
O lost-love!
Of forgotten dreams,
of hopelessly naïve hopes!

Here I am
now a stranger to myself,
marking days
by the passage of hours, minutes and seconds,
scrabbling for pennies
in the dust-bowl
of my life,
each heralding, the terrifyingly
unfamiliar terrain;
mirroring the stark landscapes of mind
that I never knew
could come someday to signify existence.



Christie Tanner

Ode to Over

Adriann Bautista

When your presence is no longer of use
Will you hide your pain in the closet, a recluse?

When the ode to you has been written
Will the inner you rise and by new ambition be bitten?

Your demise has been decided without assistance from you
Now what used to drive you leaves you without a clue

Will you run and hide for cover?
Or will you walk thru the door with grace
As you discover that your presence was only the assignment but for a
trace

The seasons were long-ago ordained and memories now quiet lain
Your name has been etched in space and into the next of your journey
You are placed

Bidding adieu and parting as with sweet sorrow
Look you.... Brightly, towards the 'morrow



Jordan Smoker



Evan Slagle

17 years, 6 months, and 16 days

Desmond Wilson

17 years, 6 months, and 16 days. That's how long Thiha was shuffled around the Burmese prison system. It was one of the many yarns told to me by a collection of former Burmese political prisoners on this night. But let's backtrack a bit. After the pre-emptive Chai at the local Indian restaurant, the day began with a round of Burmese tea and breakfast that very much resembled a foodstuff of the Subcontinent. But this fried dough contained no potato. Mung beans were the infiltrator of choice. Delicious. Back at camp we decided to conduct the first taped interview of our project about the lives of Burmese refugees. It was with a man who went by Andrew. He was Burmese and a former political prisoner. He had been imprisoned twice, with his longest stay being 5 years. Andrew had a determination about him that could withstand any deterrent. This was underscored by his involvement with Democratic Voices of Burma after his second incarceration. He worked as an underground videographer, and continues to do editorial and organizational work for them. There is one account from his life that will remain with me until I am pulseless. Andrew's story of how he became a resident of Thailand is one without much choice. While visiting the British council in Mae Sot, Thailand, Andrew's DVB office was ransacked by the State Peace and Development Council, the former militaristic regime of Myanmar that was dissolved in 2011. Fearing further incarceration, the Mae Sot train station became Andrew's home for an indefinite amount of time. Being ever-resourceful a new life in Mae Sot slowly materialized for Andrew, and byway of underground resistance networks managed to have his mother, wife, and two children brought to Mae Sot where they all remain to this day. The importance of family and community are still vital forces in Andrew's life. It is the comradeship with those who have experienced the similar experience of political imprisonment that keeps him sane. These are the men we met at "Aiya", a local watering hole for people like Andrew and Thiha. As Andrew puts it, Aiya serves as "a place to talk about the past and the future".

There was Matthew, the kinetic owner of Aiya who gave retellings of survival and establishing jungle schools for the thousands of children escaping Burmese oppression along with him. He was a cachectic man whose ravaged habitus was the result of numerous bouts of malaria. His pronounced eyes were draped by lids that seemed to have a crescent wrinkle for each year he was forced to bestride the Thai-Burma border as a rebel soldier.

The nearly 18 years spent by Thiha in Burmese prisons weighed heavily on his shoulders. As he described being forced to drink human excrement to curtail dehydration you could see a palate of emotions that ranged from remorse-humor - pride in a matter of minutes. Now, he bides his time teaching english to ex-pats and NGO workers. The attic of a Catholic church is home to this practicing Buddhist. His room is free because he plays piano for their services.

"The Cackler" was another Aiya patron whose name I did not catch that night. But his maniacally arrhythmic laugh and betel nut rubbed teeth were as memorable as his "just one day" story. His five year prison term was to be "just one day" as the SPDC told him. The satire in this statement was not lost on any of us, but our ability to share in the hubris was superseded by our group bafflement. I shared drinks, embraces, and memories that were not of my own that night. No amount of description could transport me to what they must have felt with five pound weights and gross indoctrination hanging around their necks.



Christie Tanner



Daniel Gealy



Jonathan Elias



Christine Chen

Water that Swells

Kate Madara

You will
Know that some one or some thing
Is Truly
In Love With You

When you are like a cup, and
It is like the
Water that swells from you.



Miranda Law



Nate Jordan

Disconnected

Sucharitha Balasubramaniam

Yet again

I am thinking of you

I think I see you in the crowd

I perceive your face in the clouds

your voice whispers in the still night

your breath hovers in the starlight

I reach out to touch

(a mere phantasm!)

Only to realize the miles

that lie between us,

A yawning chasm

more acutely mental than physical.

CRNA

Rhea Wilson

Did I begin to run? Or did the scenery run by me?
An attempt to move my dissociated body fails.
My world view constantly changes from first person to third.
If that is me, than who am I?
Is this a loop in the universe I cannot grasp?
Bemusement dissipates as I breathe the most purified air.
The brilliant colors of amber, crimson and sun begin to swirl together, like pinwheels.
I am light, I am moving,
over golden fields of tall grass which disappears over the rounded horizon.
I jump and wondrously lift off the ground.
Initially like treading water through the atmosphere.
Now suddenly I am soaring.

I approach a magnificent crater lake hugged by willows
I glide over the aqueous mirror and innocently reach out to stream my fingers
over the surface, temporarily fracturing its serenity.
Shadowing this crater is a surreal painting
of snowcapped mountains in the canvas sky.
I feel as if I am once again at grandma's summer double wide,
deep in the wilderness, away from reality.
The lake glints beams of pink and orange sunset
as I effortlessly soar over, through small hazes of fresh glacier mist.
The breaths are so renewed; my youthful body is indescribably weightless.

In the distance is a stern beeping. It approaches me louder and louder.
Or maybe I am approaching it.
I feel gravity tug me softly to the padded earth.
My experience of phantasmagoric imagery begins to grey.
I see my eyelids, but afraid to move them.
The beeping is even louder still.
The beeping is me.
I slowly awaken to offensively bright lights and adjust to
see the most beautiful eyes looking down at me.
By the way they are wrinkled, I can tell she is smiling
Behind her surgical mask.
In my vulnerable state, she was with me
The entire journey.



Maelen Ignacio



Michael Minckler



Daniel Gealy



Sharon Li

A Game of Hide and Seek

Sucharitha Balasubramaniam

Voices,
faces,
in a thousand places
I hide,
you seek....
I greet with jest
your big quest.

Jaded, you soon faded....

Mere footprints,
on the shifting sands
of dim memory.
No trace, no blot,
head rules over heart,
or so I thought.

Oh the bittersweet irony of life!

Lonely, lost
I searched
and found imprints
on my heart!

The well-remembered echo
of your laughter
that has been
(and may not be again?)
comes back to haunt, to taunt,
to torment, to foment
angst.
In pain I beseech
in vain I seek
to capture dust motes,
to cage the elusive zephyr.

Voices,
faces,
In a thousand places,
here, there, everywhere
I seek,
You hide.....
You hide,
I seek....



Nate Jordan

Nervous Giggles

Angela Wong

Lying on the sim room bed as four classmates
looming above
percuss my liver,
my tummy exposed,
my legs dangling off the edge.

Realizing while reading the dissector
I am holding our green cadaver's hand,
caressing his leatherified arm as if telling him
it will be alright.

Nervous MS1 giggles.

Hace cuanto tiempo le duele la espalda?

Tiene alergias?

Tiene relaciones con mujeres, hombres, o los dos?

I ask a 250 pound Hispanic construction worker.

He stares, shifts weight.

Wearing my short white coat on Septa
for the first time,
am I allowed to feel proud?
does this coat scream elitism?

Nervous silent giggles.



Nishi Dedania



Daniel Gealy



Christie Tanner



Evan Slagle

Molecules You'll Never Forget

Kate Madara

Beauty is the like
One
Of those tiniest
Molecules of Love

Pouring out of the Cup of your Heart.

It lies in every one.

But there is a beauty we call Rare,

Which
Are
Those tiny molecules
You'll never forget.



Dave Miller



Christina Nguyen



Maelen Ignacio



Sharon Li



Jonathan Elias

Regaining Equilibrium

Adriann Bautista

The pendulum swings to and fro
I am tossed between what was and what is
The steady of the ground beneath buckled twisted and sloping
Causing my footing to haphazardly hang heavy
Against the inequitable surface of reality's floor.
Yet I continue to exist...vertical

The wind pushes against the determination of my resolve
And I cannot decide whether to swallow enormous gulps of the air
Or to purse my lips, inflate my cheeks and blow back
causing the breeze to unearth itself and fold inside out
A derecho erupting in its stead
This I had not packed for yet the sudden of it elicits wild urges
to jump in the center and spin decidedly uncontrollable
Until the unsettling matches the uncertainty of what is just ahead

I can taste the beginnings of tomorrow or next season
Like the gentle introduction of some new spice to the taste buds
Bitter and crisp
then smooth and palatable
Slowly I chew
it causes me to gain nourishment
No weight this time
Fully ingested I am strong enough to walk lightly
Yet profoundly forward
Having now regained my equilibrium

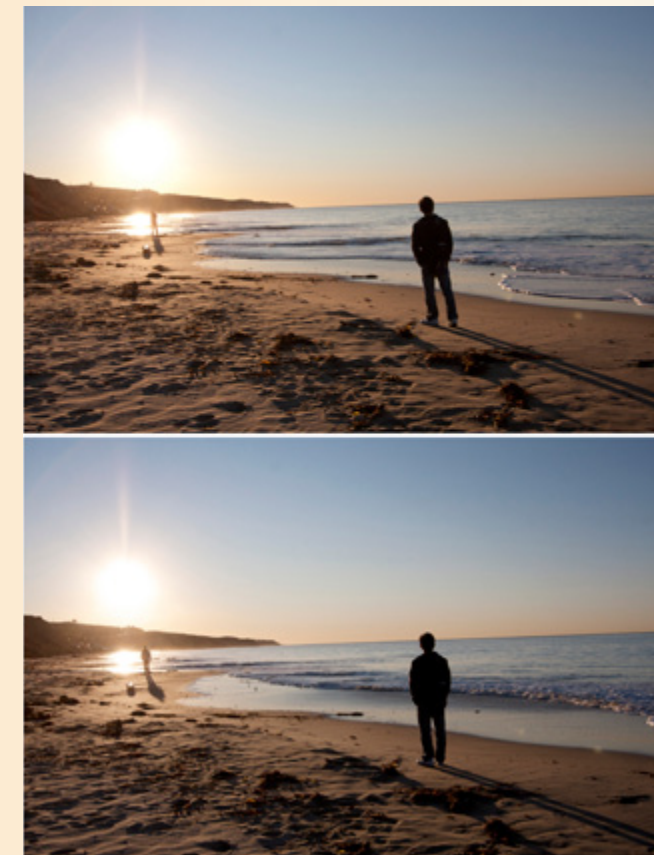
Son

Adriann Bautista

The Son rises high
oh with anticipation I stare
his eyes shine like mine



Alissa Herman



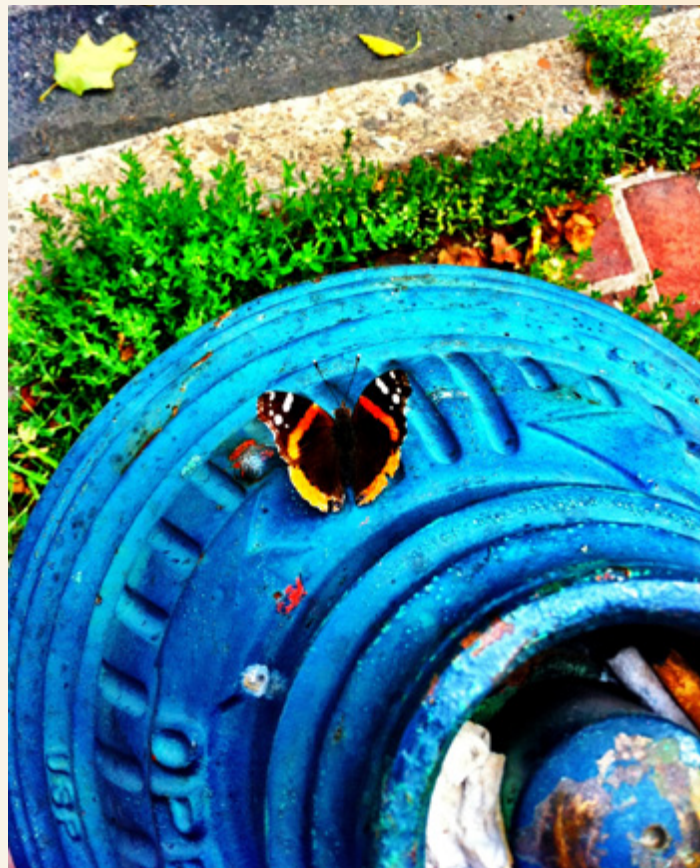
Sharon Li



Maelen Ignacio



Christina Nguyen



Michael Minckler



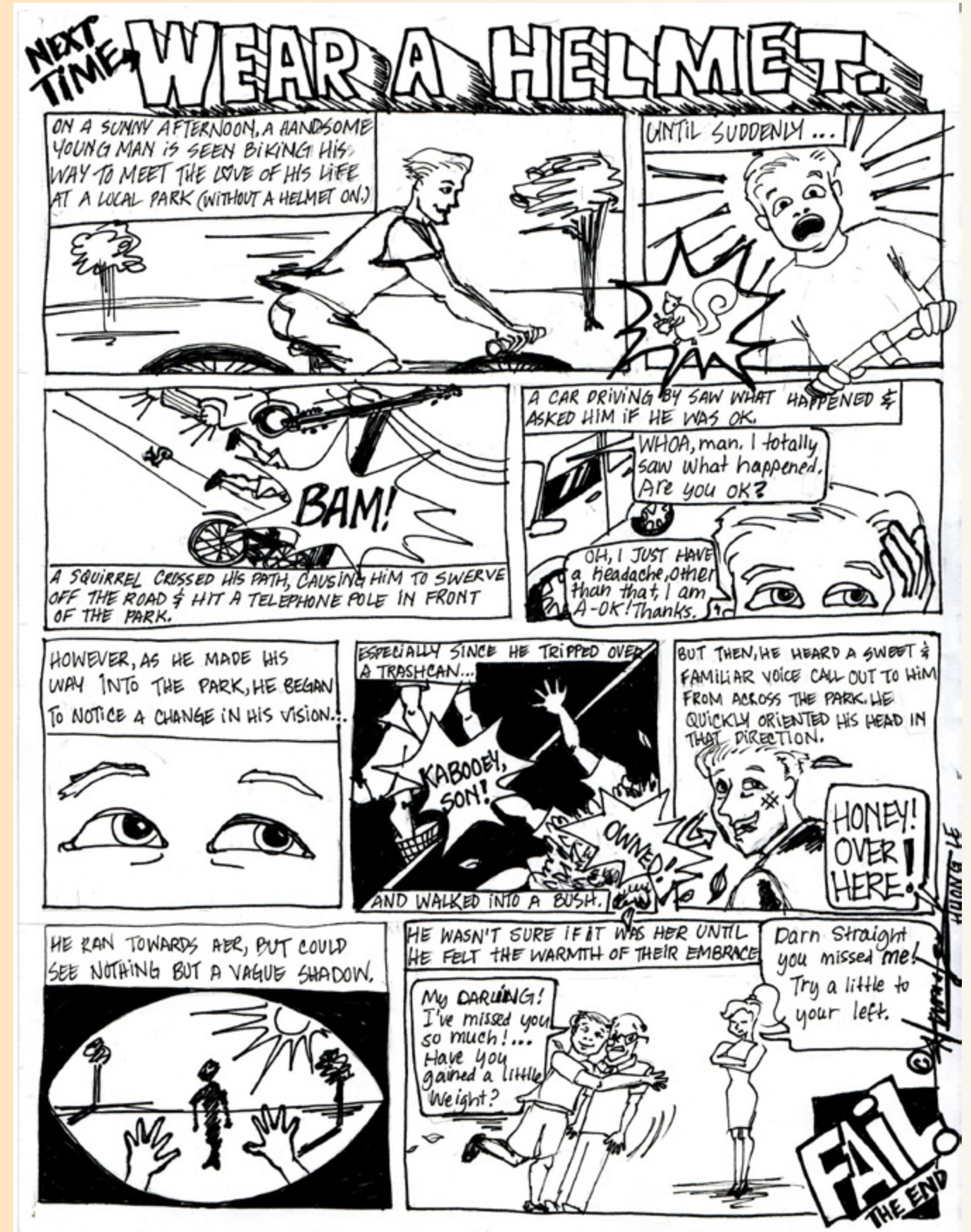
Christine Chen



Miranda Law



Alissa Herman



Huong Le

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