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The Purple Patch

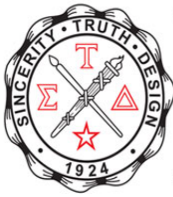


The Purple Patch

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Sigma Tau Delta

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The Purple Patch

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Letter from the Editors

We are proud to present the 2019 edition of the *Purple Patch*, our school's literary and artistic publication. The *Purple Patch* allows Missouri Valley College students to have their artistic and literary works published and shared with the school. Missouri Valley College has an incredibly diverse community, with students from many different communities, states, and countries. Giving these students an opportunity to share their life experiences and artistic expression is important for all of us. In this edition, we present a collection of poems, scholarly prose, creative fiction, and artwork by Missouri Valley College students.

Putting this edition of the *Purple Patch* together has been an exciting and challenging undertaking. While going through the process of editing this edition, we were able to see how skilled and creative our fellow students are. It made us proud to be part of this institution and to be in the position to present our peers' hard work. We would like to thank Dr. Debbie Olson, our chapter sponsor, for her guidance and assistance in the editing process, Sigma Tau Delta, and the Missouri Valley College faculty for encouraging students to submit their works to *The Purple Patch*. Publishing *The Purple Patch* would not have been possible without all of you. Finally, our sincere thanks to the MVC Board of Trustees for underwriting this project. Hopefully our readers will find great pleasure in the creativity evident in this edition!

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Academic Articles

My Long Way to Becoming a Viking

by Selina Helfmann

The hardest journey of my life began exactly two years ago when I first saw an advertisement on Facebook about scholarships for US college sports for players who play higher than “Landesliga”¹. It was a hot day in the south of Germany; I spent most of the time outside in our garden lying in the grass behind the house enjoying the sun. This was the day when my life completely changed.

The advertisement said that every athlete has a possible chance to get an international scholarship for a US college. I read all the information on this website to get a better overview and to ponder if it is worth pursuing or not. After a few minutes, I realized that this could be a real chance for me. So I filled out a survey about my athletic and academic fundamentals.

It took a week to get an answer from the counselor agency. Honestly, I completely forgot about this survey so when I got an answer, I was surprised. I do not lie when I say that I was screaming happily in my bedroom. Actually, I was jumping around my bedroom like a little kangaroo, too. Because it said that I had a realistic chance to get a full scholarship. I was really thrilled and the first thing I obviously did, was tell my parents the good news. But

¹ It is the name of a division in Germany

as I could read at their face expressions, they were not excited or happy like me. I did not expect this reaction from them. It was the exact opposite of my excitement. I can tell you that my parents were not amused about my plan. I saw negative agitation and shock. If my mother had held a cup, it would have undoubtedly broken. Her eyes widened in shock and my father was in a state of horror. And this is indeed no exaggeration.

This was the very first time I told them about my emerging wish to play college volleyball. One of their first questions was: “You want to go to the USA to study there and play volleyball? Why not in Germany? And why do you want to study outside Europe?” After the first shock disappeared, we talked about it calmly. They were still not excited about the idea but at least they said they were thinking about it. After a couple of weeks of seemingly endless discussions and explanations, I finally registered at the counselor agency.

The first big step was done. But I had to cope with the next big step: Passing the TOEFL-test, which is a language test for non-native American students and the SAT-test in order to be allowed to study at an American college. Fortunately, I got help from the counselor agency. They offered me Skype-lessons with a certificated teacher to learn with her for the tests. This was a pretty tough time for me because we did not have very good English education in my school, especially concerning speaking. And one of the tasks at the

TOEFL-test was speaking. The first time I read the tasks, I literally went pale and was really afraid.

I had to work genuinely hard in order to pass the tests decently. This hard work included getting up early in the morning in order to have the whole day to learn and to not waste time. My daily routine was waking up, eating, repeating grammar and vocabulary, eating, finishing assignments, volleyball practice and sleeping. Fortunately, I graduated in June at this time so I did not have to go to school anymore. This was a big advantage for me. I had this rhythm all through September, October and November. And this is the truth. You could ask my parents and friends if you do not believe me. I did not really have a social life besides practice and talking to my parents during meals. Every day was the same for me. It was energy-sapping and exhausting. But this energy expenditure and hard work was positively worth it in the end

I passed all of the two test pretty well and I had therefore a chance to get an academic scholarship, too. Even my teacher who helped me was positively surprised about my scores. I had 1150 points at the SAT-test and 88 points at the TOEFL-test. She said, that at first she had seen me as a “challenge” because of my sparse English knowledge but I was

ambitious and hardworking, so she was really proud of me in the end.

In this time of learning and focusing on the test, my parents saw that I really took this serious. Because if I have not mentioned yet, the counselor agency charged a lot of money, Nothing is for free. So that was another motivation for me because it was my money which I earned from work during summer break.

My tests results and my personal athletic video were sent to plenty of colleges in order to get interest from the coaches. My athletic video included scenes from practices and games. It was of advantage when you put your strength in focus of the video to get the attention from the coaches. It was easy to get good scenes from games because my coach recorded every game so I could pick the best scenes in which I played convincingly. Only for the practice scenes, I had to record it by myself. But that was not a big deal. However, it was really time- consuming because I had to watch all of my games to find convincingscenes. And if you do not know how long a volleyball game could be, it could last up to three hours. I am honest, after I watched a couple of the recorded games, I was a bit annoyed but I reminded myself to stay calm because it was an important part for getting requests.

After I was satisfied with the best scenes, I sent it to the counselor agency and they made an athletic video which they also posted on YouTube. After this, I could not do anything besides wait for some coach to contact my counselor agency. A couple of weeks elapsed, when I finally got positive feedback from a

couple of coaches. The interested coaches were distributed across the whole country. I had queries from Chicago, New York, Texas, California and Missouri. I had some thinking time for the decision and I had to ponder each college's advantages and disadvantages. Some of the questions were: "Are the academic offers good there? How good is the college volleyball team?" My parents still were not happy about it especially my dad because I am his "daughter" and he did not want me to go study that far away from home. The "father-daughter-relationship" is pretty close. But after I got these queries from different colleges, my parents were very proud of me. And actually accepted the fact that I was going to study at an American college. The only question was: Which college?

After a few weeks, I had my decision. I decided to go to Missouri Valley College for the fall semester of 2018 because it had the best academic offer for me and they also have a competitive volleyball team. It probably only took you a few minutes to read my story, but it took me two whole years to get where I wanted to be. A student-athlete on an American college campus.

My point of this whole story is to simplify the decision for people who may be deciding whether they want to risk the chance to study in a different country or not. I definitely want to show how the decision to fight for the dream is worth it. Of course, you have to invest pretty much, but you get it back. Maybe not in money, but for sure in experiences. My life is actually

pretty good right now. I am playing Varsity as a freshman, which is not usual for a freshman. Furthermore, I am finishing all of my homework on time and have not missed any classes yet, which means that my time management for now is satisfying. And last but not least, I already met really kind people from all over the world here who became my friends. And let me tell you, this time of hard working was really worth because I already got so much back.

Difficulties for Japanese Students in American College

by Miyu Shito

As I am from Japan and studying in The United States, I see some problems that Japanese students face. First of all, we have language barriers and communication difficulties (Sameer, Kamat, 2017). It is not easy for us to consider enrolling in American colleges. We need to get high TOEFL scores at least even to think about that. Even if we successfully get the points, we still have to read and fill out a bunch of documents for school. Reading important papers in a second language is a hard work. Once we arrive in the United States, we would have the problem of communicating with people there. That can be because we are not used to talking in English or being surrounded by Americans who have different cultures from our own. Because of a common Japanese personality trait, we are most likely shy compared to people from other countries, including The United States. We tend to not understand English at first, and that causes us to be less confident or people would think we are shy because we cannot react well without knowing what they say. As I had been in ESL classes (English classes for international students) last year in Missouri Valley College, I could tell that the international students from other countries such as Spain, Brazil, and France were much better at talking in English than the Japanese students, even though we were on average much better at grammar than they were.

English classes in Japan are very focused on reading and writing, so we are advanced in these skills, but not in conversation skill. We feel

uncomfortable communicating with American people because of the anxiety of speaking English. In fact, 87% of Japanese people feel uncomfortable speaking English (Rohrer, 2011). So, it is hard for Japanese students to get involved in American society.

Second, Japanese students do not know many things that American people do. For example, in my psychology class, the professor talked about an American animation character as an example so that students would understand what he is explaining. However, I did not know the character and so I felt like I was behind in the class, and that was not preferable because it is then harder for Japanese students. The academic opportunity should be equal to every student. As a culture problem, we do not usually hold doors for others in Japan, but people here always do. So, Japanese students who don't know or are not used to the culture yet do not hold doors for others, and people might say the Japanese people are not nice.

Although I have been in The United States for a year, I still have a lot of things to learn. As I experienced last week, I posted on my snapchat stories that one of my African American guy friends with the comment of "One of my monkeys lol (laugh out loud) He is the weird one!" and my friend replied to me telling that I was a racist. I was so surprised and shocked at that. First of all, the reason of why I called my friends monkeys was that they were really close friends of mine, and the day before we were making fun of each others by calling monkey when they did goofy things. I had no idea "monkey" was a discrimination word because we don't use that word to refer to African people in Japan. That might be also because we do not have a lot of foreign people in Japan, and are rarely in a situation to discriminate

against other races. So, we have a lack of common knowledges when living in The United States.

My solution for these problems is to let Japanese children get used to those in global society. Firstly, I would solve the language issue. According to Pecenek Dilek (2011), “especially age, exposure time period, and attitude of the parents and linguistic cultural environment might have had significant effects on the children’s second language acquisition.” Dilek points out that ages, perceptual developments, and environment affect children’s language acquisition. I strongly agree with the idea because I experienced how environments make a difference and learned in my developmental psychology class that ages and cognitive developments are important elements for getting a second language.

In fact, even though I have been studying English for seven years, I have progressed dynamically in this last one year while living in America. The environmental difference is huge. I had to live without Japanese language, culture, and people for the first time in my life. I have been learning tons of things that I would never know if I was staying in my country. It is easier for me to understand and speak English much better now, and I also know much more cultural differences. Speaking of age and cognitive development, Jennifer Livengood mentioned that “if infants between the age of 0 to 2 years get some language experience, they show higher performance in their second languages when they get older” (Livengood, 2018). That is because infants are so sensitive to wide variety of sounds. In addition, they prefer complex tones such as voice. That means 0 to 1 year old infants listen to people’s voice a lot. The evidence for why 0 to 2 year-old infants are good at language development is that “at the earliest stages of

acquiring a language, infants' social behaviors are strongly associated with phonetic learning" (Conboy, 2015). This suggests that we should focus the age for learning second language on infants because that is when their learning process is strongly connected to listening to others' voices and they are most sensitive to that. So, my opinion is that in order to improve the Japanese disadvantage in learning English, we should inform as many people as possible that getting infants second language experience makes a huge difference in their future.

First, I would get this idea approved by "Monbukagakusho", the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in Japan, which is one of the biggest government associations. The Japanese people would trust the information if they know the Ministry approved. Secondly, let the fact flow all over the country by TV programs, newspapers, and social networking services. They are the most common ways to spread information. Thirdly, I would establish daycare services where the caregivers use both English and Japanese. In the daycare, infants would be listening to English and naturally develop the acquisition of English as a second language. Lastly, change the English classes into more active ones including conversations. As I mentioned before, the weakest part of Japanese English skills is speaking. We need to get used to doing it so that we can communicate with people better in the global society. However, Japan has been working on improving our English education. For example, the government changed the official starting age for English classes in school. They pulled it forward to elementary school students. Although they are working on reducing difficulties for Japanese students, it's not a strong

enough solution. We need to solve the knowledge issues.

The solution for the lack of American common knowledge would be welcome to more international students from other countries. We need to learn cultures by experiencing the culture differences. In order to associate with people from other cultures, we should encourage Japanese people to visit other countries or encourage foreign people to visit Japan. However, in real life, it is much more effective to have visitors from other countries because they would contribute to not only the variety of population in Japan but also its economics. They would spend money staying in Japan (Buhalis, 2011). To make that happen, we have to work with travel and study abroad companies all over the world since they have the key to attracting people to visit Japan. The good thing is they keep searching travel trends for job opportunities. As I mentioned, the solution for language and communication difficulties would work in this case as well. Since they are tracking information, I could say that welcoming more tourists to Japan is also important in the proposal to the Ministry.

In conclusion, my proposal is for reducing the difficulties that Japanese students face in America by preparing them at early ages and getting them used to the environment with people from other countries.

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Fanny Fern: Feminism in the 19th Century

by Lindsey McMillan

Sarah Willis Parton, otherwise known as Fanny Fern did a great deal for women and feminism through her writing and the way she chose to live. As an extremely intelligent and educated woman, Fanny Fern not only helped mothers and wives, but all women, to see a world outside of the ever oppressing “man's worldview”, providing women inspiration and hope for a better future for themselves and their daughters. Fanny herself fell on personal hardships during her lifetime and also dealt with her family's opposition to her writing career (905). What doesn't kill you makes you stronger, they say. So, Fanny Fern used those difficulties in her life to write eye opening pieces about women's culture in America. She did so in a way that provoked anger and hate, but also salvation and validation. More importantly, her writing is just one of many that sits on the feminist timeline leading up to various feminists movements throughout America's history; giving way for what started out as only white feminism to intersectional feminism that we know of today. This essay focuses on is Ferns “A Law More Nice Than Just”, is just as important for readers of the male species as it is for the female species. Fern describes a local woman being arrested for wearing men's apparel and how this law affects almost every aspect of a woman's life. This literary piece is a personal account of how Fern felt about the utter stupidity of a law on dress code, but moreso about the self-reliance of women.

As stated above, Fern starts out this piece by being dumbfounded and at a loss for words when

reading in the morning newspaper that a woman was arrested for wearing men's clothing in public. As Fern states, "Now, why this should be an actionable offense is past my finding out, or where's the harm in it, I am as much at a loss to see", and goes on to ponder how this law actually affects the everyday life of a woman (914). Fern compares the independence of both women and men when it comes to a simple recreational activity like taking a walk, which she states is much needed for all people. Women need not only to wear the appropriate attire on an evening walk, but must also have a male suitor with them. The sarcasm she uses to correlate men creating dress code laws as just another way of reminding women they are the second sex, implies who actually bears more responsibility among the sexes. Fern goes on to talk about how much rain her area had been getting and how much the weather affects a woman being able to enjoy spending time outside. Describing the numerous steps a woman has to be cautious of when it is raining outside is absurd "...but nobody but a woman...knows the thralldom of taking her daily walk through a three weeks' rain, with skirts to hold up, and umbrella to hold down, and puddles to skip over, and gutter to walk round, and all the time in a fright lest, in an unguarded moment, her calves should become visible...", and after the acknowledgment of these steps, a woman still has to keep in mind to not show any skin (914). This passage is a perfect argument for how ridiculous it is for a man to create a law concerning the dress of women. Only women would be able to take into account for all the difficulties in a dress code law that's ultimate goal is to oppress women.

Fern decides to take matters into her own hands by putting on Mr. Ferns clothes while taking an

evening stroll with him. As she starts trying on her husband's clothes, it is important to note that Mr. Fern acts as an equal partner in Fern's attempt to right a wrong. Through the process of trying to find pieces of men's clothing that fit her best, Fern and her husband bond through bouts of laughter. This is an important part of the whole story Fern writes as she is able to add humor to her cause. Where certain readers might have rejected her argument and claim, or even the subject matter as a whole, seeing how Fern and her husband can laugh through a very serious social situation, opens doors in otherwise closed minds. The humor here also gives readers insight to just how silly a law can be. It is also important to note that men's clothing in the 19th century could be just as troublesome as women's clothing. Men also had to wear many layers, just as women did, to be considered appropriate attire. Fern also states that men's clothing was scratchy and bland compared to women's clothing. Looking deeper into the aesthetics of clothing, this could imply that men were seen as practical creatures, while women were seen as objects to be looked at.

However, as Fern and her husband stepped out for their walk she forgets about the lack of flair in her new outfit as she realizes the abundance of freedom she has in trousers. Mr. Fern telling her she is now a fellow, lingers back as she walks on ahead with her newly found independence (Fern 915). Fern once again describes the confinements of women's dress and how on this walk, there is no worry of that, "No skirts to hold up, or to draggle their wet folds against my ankles; no stifling veil flapping in my face, and blinding my eyes; no umbrella to turn inside out..." (915). Even as her husband gasped in horror and chuckled in delight at her, Fern was determined to

enjoy her first walk of secret liberation. By the end of her walk, Fern was convinced she needed a suit of her own to wear during rainy weather.

For those reading this in the 19th century, this passage was sure to ruffle opposing opinions. However, Fern was not bothered by this in the least and stated so in her writing, “Now, if any male or female Miss Nancy (a prude) who reads this feels shocked, let ‘em!” (915). Fern tells women if they do not like it, they are more than welcome to stay inside “...during a three weeks’ rain, till her skin looks like parchment, and her eyes like those of a dead fish, or she may go out and get a consumption dragging round wet petticoat; I won’t” (915). Fern was not responding to this absurd dress code law for the sake of fashion or morality. This piece was a response to the gender bias a law such as this one can create and how that bias divides the sexes and places one gender above the other. Such a law can also cause large gaps in people of the same gender, which could be even more detrimental to a cause than dividing people of the opposite sex. Fern takes a strong stance in telling women she will not forgo her love of nature and need for it by sitting inside on a rainy day because of a silly law. Fern ends her response stating she has as much right to be in nature as a man does. She argues that nature is to provide nourishment for a healthy mind and body, for both men and women.

Fanny Fern's “A Law More Nice Than Just” is about dress code laws, gender bias, and how that gender bias creates norms in society that hinder the equality of personhood. Without her literary work helping pave the way for women's rights, enlightenment for feminism would be stifled. Fern was inspired by a lady in her town which in turn inspired millions of others to keep the fight alive for

gender equality, even to this day. Women, just as any living thing, are not meant to be kept in a box and in this scenario especially, wrapped tight and beautifully packaged by an unfair law. Fern was not concerned with the aesthetics of this law, she was pointing out the discrimination this law put on the independence of women. How unfair it must have been to see her husband come and go as he pleased while she was confined to her sitting chair, wishing to breathe fresh air in the comfort of practical clothing. Fern spread her intelligence to enlighten men and women on the need for self reliance for both genders and also helped tear down barriers for how women saw themselves through the eyes of men. Fern choosing to put on her husbands clothing to take a walk, then vowing to have a suit tailored to fit her own body for talking walks on her own, proved that women were capable of being more than just an ornament on a man's arm. Fern's actions proved that women could be just as self reliant and independent as men were.

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Is the Life of the One Worth the Sacrifice?

Selina Felfmann

“It is afraid of the mops. It finds them horrible. It shuts its eyes, but it knows the mops are still standing there; and the door is locked; and nobody will come.” (Le Guin 1259).

The short story “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” by Ursula Le Guin is about a town, which has all prosperity, everything one can just imagine, and everyone is living a great life, except for one little child. The narrator cannot enlighten the reader whether this child is female or male because no one can identify it. All the wealth and also health from the society is relying on the child’s miserable condition. If the citizen would treat the child well, they would lose all of that at once. They put the well-being of all citizens before the well-being of an individual, even if it is a child. The normal desire would be protecting it. This passage demonstrates Guin’s stylistic devices including the third-person limited narrator and objectification at the right time to effectively make her personal point about disagreement of the different standards in the American society nowadays across.

In the above excerpt from the “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas”, Le Guin puts a lot of effort in the objectification of the child. Objectification means referring the child as a thing without any specific gender, which fits perfectly to the author’s description of the child. The child is either a female or male. Le Guin states him as an “it” throughout the whole story repeatedly. The narrator does not see the child as a

human being, but as a “useful advantage” for the community to survive the disadvantages in their lives.

In this passage the narrator explains to the reader that this child is afraid of the mop like every other person, who has feelings and anxieties as well. The word “afraid” suggests fear and uncertainty which implies that the child is able to have feelings and anxiety. That supports the idea that the child is not an object. That opens a controversy in the reader’s mind, because an “it” is not able to have feelings at all. The absurd part is, that the child is afraid of a cleaning equipment of which someone should not be afraid of. The child should normally be more afraid of the people who treat him or her wrong and abuse it. Moreover, the narrator keeps explaining to the reader, that the child is afraid and feels this uncertainty towards the “mop”. The narrator also says that “It shuts its eyes, but it knows the mops are still standing there”, which implies that the child can think on its own. This is the time where the reader’s question arise why this child is more afraid of the mop than the people. The word “horrible” suggests a strong, negative feeling which implies that the child cannot deal with the mop. That supports the idea that the child is a human being and not an item. Possibly, the child is so perturbed from its situation in the chamber and the abuse that the child cannot judge what is right or wrong.

Le Guin uses this objectification as a metaphor to all the negativity in American society, which some people trying to cover and forget in order to live a life worth living. This negativity can reach from the pressure someone can feel in American society to make money and to “survive” in the swirl of capitalism or to fulfill the perceptions of the majority of the society to not be an underdog.

Furthermore, the narrator is a third person limited narrator. Because of that the reader does not get many specific insight feelings of the child or any other characteristics in this story. The reader gets the feeling that the child is afraid of the mop and only a few citizens do not feel well about the treatment of the child. These people are leaving the town and some do not care at all. This makes it hard to empathize with the citizens, who are not helping the child and to not feel anger towards them. The reader does not get any specific insight feelings nor personal thoughts from either the child or the citizens. The reader is able to feel compassion, since the narrator keeps referring to the child as an item, which makes the reader uncomfortable.

This lack of any insight feelings or thoughts of the characters in the story lead to a lot of assumptions towards the reason if it is really worth to sacrifice and treat one individual miserable in order to get a wantless life for the rest. The reader can imagine how the child must feel when it is on its own “and nobody will come” for help. The word “nobody” suggest that no one is there for the child and has a negative annotation which implies that the child is alone. The child is trying to improve its situation and loneliness by “shutting its eyes”, but when the child opens its eyes, it is still trapped in the chamber with his fear. This leads to the reader’s growing anger that nobody is going to help the child. They just live with it and do not question it. This happens in American society too. Most of them are just living with certain facts such as xenophobia and do not even speak or do anything against it. Xenophobia is the hate towards people from a different mother country.

Le Guin uses all of these stylistic devices such as objectification to open the reader’s

mind not to overlook the problems in the American society such as xenophobia or the pressure to make a living, and to speak up for themselves. All these problems refer to the child in the chamber, which he represents metaphorical. All the other people who are ignoring the child are the majority of the American society who are ignoring these different problems. It is not worth to sacrifice one individual or one group of “minors” just to make sure that the majority are living a good life. American society has to find the balance between the apparent, unavoidable sacrifice and the right amount of caring about living in a fair society, which accepts everyone.

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Maturity, love and sex

by Carla Perez Santayana

When does a person mature? Do love and sex have something to do with this process? To explain this I'm going to use the American television show *Grey's Anatomy*, that revolves around the life of Meredith Grey, her work at the Seattle Grace hospital and the interpersonal relationships of her coworkers. The main characters of the two scenes from the show that I'm going to compare are: Mark Sloan and April Kepner, a plastic surgeon of 44 years, who does not like to get involved in any relationship and a third year resident who has not lost his virginity at 27 years old. As we can see two characters with two very different points of view on the subject and whose ideas I do not share.

In the first chapter that I'm going to analyze, *Grey's Anatomy*, Season 6, episode 17 "Push", we will meet our first main character Mark Sloan, known as the sexy and seductive doctor at Seattle Grace Hospital, who has sex with all of his coworkers and never gets a romantic relationship. In this chapter and after his first love break, he realizes that he does not want anymore that for him, that now is going to know the girls and get involved. Because of this he asks for a date to Dr. Altman. She takes it for granted that he is only offering sex to her because of his background and since she is having a bad time and wants to get distracted, she accepts the date. But when she know that sloan

wanted to take her for a dinner she said no. Sloan feels used when he realizes that Altman was just looking for sex with him. It is then when he gets serious and says: "I'm not taking you to dinner, I will take you to lunch, saturday afternoon, in broad daylight, we will eat in a public place, then maybe take a walk on a crowded street, we will get to know each other. See if we have an interest in the same kind of future, because I want to build a life and a family and I'm not wasting my time in someone how doesnt share that interest".

At this moment, we can observe how they relate maturity and growth as a person, with the search for love and not only for sex. In this scene we can analyze some things: We can observe how Sloan doesn't move her body, he does not change the expression on his face throughout the scene, does not smile or arch his eyebrows as he usually does. Nor does it change the tone of voice, all the time low, but it does emphasize certain parts such as "build a life" or "family" and uses the silences very well to give more seriousness to the scene. We can also observe that they use the song of Emy Reynolds "Tonight", a slow song in which there is only voice, guitar and a harmonica, to give the scene tranquility and serenity. They are in the middle of the hospital, in a large hall, very clearly and surrounded by people and with the usual clothes of doctors. Which implies that love is something free and something that should not be hidden. The camera only focuses on him, his face, and only changes the angle to see the expression that Dr. Altman has when he hears his words. For all this we

can see that there is a clear change compared to the usual comic and relaxed tone of the series.

In the second scene that we are going to analyze, Grey's Anatomy, Season 7, episode 8 "Something's Gotta Give", April Kepner tries to cheer on her partner Alex Karev after a doctor takes credit for something he has done. She makes him see that she is there to support him and that she knows the truth of what has happened. That's when Karev, a boy who is used to having sex when he wants, tries to have sex with her, even knowing that she is a virgin. She asks if they can go more slowly and his answer is: "What do you need from me? You want to screw, lets screw. You don't? Then get out! I'm not gonna hold your virgin hand and walk you through it, damn it. You are not a child, I can't take care of you, I can't take care of everybody in this frigging place!"

It's intriguing how in this scene we can see the two opposite sides of the common ideas about sex, a person who uses sex to vent a bad day, and a person who has waited years for the ideal person to take that step. We can see how for one sex does not mean anything, and as for the other it is a big and important step. We can see that the camera starts with a distant plane, but when they begin to speak and the scene is getting important it approaches and only focuses their faces and reactions. You can see how Karev is frustrated, frowning, and speaking in a high tone. Until he realizes the awkward body posture and the slanted face of Kepner, who is not able to say a single word and just stare at him in amazement and loss. This time

the background music is just some piano notes to not take prominence to the scene, but to emphasize the dramatic tone of it. This scene takes place in a private room of the hospital, with both lying in bed and in low light, which implies that sex is something private, dark and something that should not be done in public. If we analyze the words used by Karev “I’m not gonna hold your virgin hand and walk you through it”, we can say that he laughs or underestimates Kepner’s way of thinking about his virginity and also when he says “You are not a child, I can’t take care of you” we can see how it relates to maturity, or growth as a person. Giving to understand that with that age is not a girl and that she should have already had sex.

From the first scene, “Push”, we can conclude that they speak of growth as a person and maturity when you risk knowing a person and involving your feelings. We can see how curiously Sloan feels offended because they were going to do what he was used to doing with women, and since he is the one who gives a talk about growth to Altman. On the contrary, in the second one, “Something’s Gotta Give”, they imply that someone who has not had sex needs to be taken care of, since he looks like a little girl. It is curious that we can observe that the one who is ashamed in that scene is Kepner, after the reaction of Alex, and not the other way around. After analyzing the two different scenes, we can conclude that neither in the same series are sure of what maturity means, do not know if sex is necessary to mature, because we can observe several characters that have sex and are not

mature and the case of Kepner, who shows great maturity in all aspects of his life and work. But something that I strongly agree with, is that they do not show sex as something bad. Throughout the series, you can see how the connotation of the word sex is always positive and that it is a topic that is treated and speaks very naturally and in many occasions.

I consider that maturity is given with age and experiences, and not with sex. They can come in the same space of time or not. It is true that certain people grow as a person when they find love and stability, but because that implies having responsibilities that they may not have before, and that this can lead to sex. But it does not relate directly the love and sex with the maturity. Everyone is free to choose their moment for both.

Poetry

Chalk

by Dominique Garlington

I had a friend who was fascinated with chalk drawings. So
much that he
became an artist himself. While I was drawing hopscotch he
chalked up
oceans. And if you weren't careful, you just might dive head
first onto
the sidewalk. Much like love, you never know how real it is
until you
jump in. he'd draw hot air balloons so true you'd wonder
why these
bright, colorful raindrops aren't falling their way to the sky.
Like how is
something destined to fly but bound to the ground.

I find that I often ask myself the same question. His
favorites were
portraits, you know the ones with the small bodies and big
heads.
Where the teeth are too large and the nose is crooked. Well
I asked him
just this once could he draw her the way I saw her. The way
I loved her.
He finished, smiled, and then washed it away. Just like
every other
piece he's made. And I'm like the sidewalk, not strong
enough to hold
something so beautiful. Why'd I let you wash her away?

Untitled

by Dominique Garlington

She wakes up to another puddle of salt on her pillow. She hasn't even gone to school yet, but her mirror is showing her insecurities her classmates say she had just yesterday. She hasn't seen her smile since last summer and has no intention of finding it today.

He is greeted by his unemployed mother with a sigh that says that she doesn't have lunch money for him again. He hugs her, his arms telling her it's ok' he loves her anyway. He goes to school with a wet shoulder.

His shirt is two sizes too big, his classmates are sure to let him know. It's his brother's. He was in the army and was supposed to be home in time for Christmas three years ago. That's the same year he found out Santa wasn't real.

Heartbox

by Sophia Bales

This little story is based off of a dream I had as a little girl, where I had a box within me and I'd put everyone I loved within it. So everyone I cared for would be alright. That's how this came to be. Enjoy.

I want to shrink you
Not your hopes and dreams;
I need those to stay bigger and vaster than the ocean
But just you
Your body, I need that to shrink
Okay, I just need you to be small enough to fit in a box
The box will be safe, so if you were worried about that,
don't be
You'll be just fine
And if you were wondering where you'll be staying;
It'll be within my chest
Right next to my beating heart

If clocks bother you, I'm sorry
My heart beat might be the same way

But I had to adjust living in a basement and hearing
everyone's footsteps
I think you will be fine

Maybe you can make songs with the beat
I mean, my heart beat often accelerates
I don't mean for it too
But with you within me, I won't be able to see you
So if you were wondering about how often, not very
often anymore

Maybe your small heart will pace with mine
Connected
Beating
As one

Now if you start to beat against the box walls, I might
mistake it as a heart attack
But don't worry
When it's over and I'm better I will know it was just
you
Pounding

And if you wanted to get out of the box
I'll ask you for the password and persuade you to stay
You will guess it right, I just know it
It's your name

I will eventually let you out

I know it won't be the same

I won't feel as whole

When you finally get out, I will ask you to take a survey

How did being in the box make you feel?

What did you like?

What could be improved?

Rate your stay.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1 being the worst, 10 being the best

Once you grow again

I know you'll miss the beating

You'll hear clocks and think of me

When you get older

When you knock on doors, it'll remind you of the box,
being in the box

Escaping the box

When you have a heart attack

You will know how I felt when you wanted to leave

But there is a difference:

There is no one inside you trying to break free

There is only yourself

And when you are trying to break free from yourself

Well there is no medication for that

But there is a space

There is always a place in my box

An imprint of your body like a worn in shoe

You'll fit perfectly

If you were wondering

I miss you everyday that you have been gone

But I have not had a heart attack since

5:51

by Sophia Bales

I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in the
morning and you still aren't here

I've missed you again, haven't I?

I just wanted to talk about the weather, it's been quite
rainy

Maybe you slipped on the wet streets,
Got caught in traffic
I hope
Not

I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in the
morning and you still aren't here
You told me you'd be here this time, and you said that
the last time, so why'd the hell did I think you were
going to actually make it?
I just wanted you to hold my hands, they've been quite
cold
Maybe you're holding someone else's cold hands
I hope
Not

I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in the
morning and you still aren't here
I've seen the sun rise and I've felt it's fiery warmth
mask my face
I drank two pots of coffee
Wrote fifty-five poems about what it feels like to miss
you
And one about how time feels slower when you want it
to go faster
My hand hurts, my head hurts

The sun is too damn bright, so I close my eyes and let
it devour me

Isn't that what you are supposed to do when one is
scared?

Just let it happen?

I'm hoping the sun burns my house down

I rip the curtains off their rods

Because I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in
the morning and you still aren't here

I don't care if the sun is too damn bright, at least it's
warmth is something I enjoy

The couch is turning orange, it's looks happy

Which makes me happy, so I smile back at it

And then I think about all the poems I wrote for you,
and know you wouldn't even pick up a pencil for me

I know you aren't coming on purpose

I know you are taking your time for someone else

So then I stop smiling

The rain has finally stopped, as you know, the sun is
shining in

Maybe you've stopped and are taking in the warmth of
it

I hope

Not

Because I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in
the morning and you still aren't here
And the only warmth you should be feeling is from me,
make *me* your sun
I want to keep you warm!

Because I've been waiting on the couch since 5:51 in
the morning and you still aren't here
And it's 10:12 at night now, I'm not waiting for you
any longer.
That's when you walk in the door
I fall to the floor, because I just gave up and now you
want me to keep trying
Maybe if I stay down here long enough, you'll leave me
alone
And I'll have the strength to get up on my own
I hope
Not

Lost

by Jamyrah Fredrick

Being lost is strange
The feeling of hopelessness

of emptiness that fills you is unmatched

Being lost is like nothing else,
It's not the drowning wave of depression that
surrounds me every once in a while
It's not the fear of anxiety that chokes my very being,
preventing me from breathing
from living

Rather it's nothing.
Empty.
Darkness.
Blank.

Being lost is blank.
Void of all feeling
of emotions and motivation.
It's nothing
I'm nothing.
I'm lost.

Drifting, floating through the darkness
My mind, my life, darkness
I'm beginning to drown, the darkness has swallowed
me whole.
Leaving a bleak being in my place.

I'm lost, with no one to find me.
Simply left to my own demise, one I've caused
One I've allowed

Tippy Toes

by Dominique Garlington

He was her backbone. He loved her. In ways he never knew existed. Like the way she held her coffee in the morning. Or the way she wrote her "t's" ...She'd always do the crosses first. He loved how she'd always get her drinks with no ice and the straw would end up floating out of the cup. But what he loved most is when she'd go up on her tippy toes just to give him a kiss. She'd reach up as tall as she could just to taste his lips. Yeah he was her backbone, but she was his wishbone. Everything he could ever wish for.

Lost: A Response to Chief Tecumseh's (1768-1813) poem "Live your Life"

by Liam Carney

Live your Life by Chief Tecumseh

Live your life so that the fear of death may never enter your heart.
Trouble no one about their religion;
respect others in their views, and demand that they respect yours.

Love your life, perfect your life, and beautify all things
in your life.

Seek to make your life long and of service to your
people.

When your time comes to die, be not like those whose
hearts are filled with the fear of death,
so that when their time comes they weep and pray for
a little more time to live their lives over in
a different way. Sing your death song and die like a
hero going home

Lost (a response)

by Liam Carney

When the devil on your shoulder is a little louder,
when the claws of fear sink themselves into your
mind.

When the dark side beckons frantically.

These are the days that are in everyone's mind, the
days that we all wish will never come.

When our religion seems fruitless and everything we
stand for comes crashing down around us,
like a tranquil chaos.

These days are the ones when we must become the
warrior we live to be.

We may not see it, but there are many like us, that
have these same days.

The days that break you down, beat you up, turn your
world upside down, make you feel lost.

These are the days that you find yourself.

It is on these lost days that you look deep inside
yourself
You use these days to find your true purpose, your
true passion,
You find strength that rivals Ares,
because you were never really lost,
You just had to be shown where to look.

Beach Boys

by Dominique Garlington

Some girls give their bodies to the beach. Sculpting
themselves to be perfect as if the sand and waves
won't accept them any other way. The ocean will never
discriminate, it will always swallow you whole.

Some girls give their bodies to the bodies to the boys
sculpting themselves to be perfect because, well boys
won't accept them any other way. Sometimes boys will
discriminate, don't let them swallow you whole.

If I Could Break Her Heart

by Dominique Garlington

If I could break her heart I would make sure she
remembers me for the rest of her life. i'd be the one
that got away. you see if i could break her heart I'd pin
myself to the inside of her eyelids. i would dwell in her
daydreams until they become nightmares. i'd grenade

her heart on love's battlefield and destroy her chances with any other guy. If I could break her heart I would make her fall in love with me again just by texting "I miss you." I wouldn't mean it, but she would believe it. She's reply with "I still love you" I would smile and ignore it. She would cry and I'd enjoy it. If I could break her heart .

....If I could break her heart, I wouldn't but she didn't believe me, so she broke mine instead.

On The Front Line

by Kaylee Hering

Our men arriving overseas
In new and foreign land,
In Vietnam the jungles deep
To lend a helping hand

Communism is a threat
To every living man
And stopping to help slow it down
Takes quite a hefty plan.

Men are dying every day
For reasons most unknown
Our kids are fighting for their lives
Praying to go home.

We leave them there with ammo slim
And say it's for the best
But there is no comfort for a mother
Who lays her boy to rest.

For men who sit on cushy chairs
Sending kids of ten and nine
Next time you want to start a war
You stand fighting on the front line.

Morocco & Fondue

by Danielle Linton

I feel like I have been cut in two
My choice is to take a free taco
Or go to the capital of Morocco
However, maybe I will go to the capital and buy
chocolate fondue
I better hop into my canoe

There is a white dove
Hey! It stole my money right from underneath my
thumb!
Now I feel so blue

How will I get my fondue from the factory?

Oh, woe is me!

Wait, is that a sign?

It says there is free fondue today, so it looks like I will
have my satisfactory!

And there is even a strawberry tree!

Finally, I have some chocolate fondue to call mine

The Crying Life As We Removed
by Zach Goodsell

As soon as we enter

Life throws itself at us

Crying is our first emotion

Removed from the home

We knew for nine months

The cycle continues

As soon as we leave

Life moves on without us

Crying is our last emotion

Removed from the life

We took for granted

The cycle continues

One to Ten

by Zach Goodsell

One
buys Two
but needs Three
has enough for Four
gives all of them Five
tricks them into having about Six
runs around lucky with the green Seven
gives the girl the flower arrangement of Eight
Starts a family with a son who is Nine
has to head into his job around quarter after Ten
The End

My love

by Deborah Costanzo

My love
Hold on
Keep on
Never doubts.

My love
Very strong
Might be wrong
Could be the wrong route.

My love
Come to you
Only you
More than me.

This type of love
Was only made for you and me.

Untitled (1)

by Jay

I was walking down the streets of Missouri and I saw a confederate flag flowing in the back of a truck attached to the cab

Pride.

What a revelation.

What a riot

I wonder if he's proud of being racist or if he was born into the hatred

Does he even know I exist?

Because I'm aware of his existence

My body gains tension

I feel the most visible

In an era where often I feel invisible

With no representation and my rights in the hands of the popularity

What do you care who I marry ?

Does my skin color make him uncomfortable?

Or the language I speak with my family that's not even our own to begin with?

Is it his culture ?
Because I'm proud of mine
I fly my flag so high during pride
But at the end of the night I see too many kids hiding
their colors, smudging their face paint
Going back to being invisible when we should all feel
invincible
I see this truck every day on my way to work
I wonder if he's going to work too
I wonder if he has fears too
I wonder if his mother tells him to be safe when he
goes out alone , if his mother tells him to try to stay in
places with a crowd
Places where if you make a sound
Someone can hear you
I wonder who's his hero
I bet his hero was someone he learned about in school
Someone who looked just like him
someone he could look up to
I understand by now this message might not be sitting
right with some of you
I can be prejudice and go ahead and assume who
I used to come from a place of hate too
I understand
I've had my fair share of saying
fuck the white man
But that's not where I want to go with this
I often wish sight didn't exist
I wish we could find unity in our differences
Celebrate eachothers culture
Realize the significance

Of words, of actions, of a place without love and open mindedness

I can't claim to have an opinion that's unbiased

But I can try to fix myself every day

To not see someone and be filled with hate but it's so hard when all I ever see is their mistakes

I was walking home late one night

In Missouri

I saw the him, sitting outside his truck

The wind wasn't awake so the flag hugged the pole

It was a silent night

He watched me getting closer, I got ready for a fight

My fists got so tight

And I approached

His voice cracked in his own sorrow,

"Hey,

He said

are you alright?"

Untitled (2)

by Jay

You are the snow
in early November
Coating the
houses and trees

Quiet

Shrouding
everything

Slowly and
violently
settling
as I dream

Day or night
There is a type
of peace you
bring unto me

Untitled (3)

by Jay

I used to drip
glue unto my
hands
Hoping to peel
away at the
layers of things
I disliked about
myself
My skin color,
my hair,
my body,
my eyes,
but the worst part was,
the things I
wanted to change
the most,
were inside.

Untitled (4)

by Jay

The worst
determination
revolves around
the fact that she
takes a step and
imposes her will

If you can look
at the greatness
of mother nature,
Then you
understand
Eyes are what
give someone away

She's somehow
simultaneously in
the moment but
always looking
beyond what is
the present

She knows
something the
rest of us are
too afraid to
acknowledge

Greatness within



"Kriola" by Britny Fernandes

Untitled (5)

by Jay

She turned my
world to glass
Perhaps in hopes
of making a
million mirrors
for me to see
myself for who I
am
Perhpas for me to destroy
For me to feel
less alone as I
watched
The town
beautifully
shatter the
delicate kiss of
winter with every
step, everyon
became the
destruction I
felt I was

Untitled (6)

by Jay

You went in
search of peace
but instead got
ripped to pieces
I never really
have been a good
adhesive
But I can tell
you this, if you
want to hear it
You're far more
than enough
Undoubtedly
worth the effort
For every doubt
you have, I
promise that
you're better

Untitled (7)

by Jay

Growing up I heard the phrase
She has a cold heart one two many times
I thought to myself every time
Why does having a cold heart allude to being
emotionless and lacking love

If When every time I dropped ice on the floor it
shatter so easily

Three 3 days before my birthday i sat on my
porch in marshall, it was the warmest it had
been, like the earth knew I'd be seeing you
again

I shut my eyes and let the sun kiss me
The softesest pink and yellow filled my eyelids
and pictures of blooming flowers nad growing
fields came and went
I laid back and smiled
Because I'm in love with that summer pink
glaze you catch after spending too many
hours by the pool

You are the feeling of that one day in winter,
when teh sun gives you a break and the wind
only strolls by to gently play with your hair
Until the summer
I will bask in all that is you

Creative Prose

Behind Closed Eyes

By Jordan Hawkins

When I open my eyes I see a different world than most people my age. I am 19 years old, and I see the world in such a beautiful way. I am choosing to share the beauty of my struggles that I slowly overcome everyday. As a college student these are the years we get to find out who we are, travel the world, experience exciting things, and make new friends. Most of us move into a new environment and get to experience new surroundings. In the end behind closed eyes all we see is darkness. When we choose to open our eyes we can surround ourselves with the most beautiful things.

I am one of the most happy people you could meet. I smile and laugh often. I enjoy making others happy and pretending my world is the most beautiful scenery. The truth is when I close my eyes it can be a very dark place. I pretend all day I am this happy girl that doesn't struggle at all. I choose to put on this show for all of the wrong reasons. I let myself forget that it's okay to hurt, because that's how we heal. I forget until I close my eyes. I haven't healed yet, but I will. Everyone has a form of depression inside of them so I believe. It's just choosing how we fight and overcome our depression. I will never say I'm depressed, because I believe depression is a mindset and everything can be overcome. I do not allow myself to find the darkness behind my eyes. I remember when

the world is dark, just open your eyes and surround yourself with the beauty around you. I smile because I want to be surrounded by happy people. It makes me feel better. It helps me escape the darkness I feel sometimes.

People ask me why I chose the major of human services and counseling. My answer will always be to help people. I can't tell you the amount of times just a simple hello from a stranger has changed my outlook on the day.

The summer before my senior year I started sleeping with a man that only a girl who didn't love herself would of been involved with. As harsh as that sounds it is the most accurate thing I have came to terms with. He was emotionally abusive and wasn't someone that I should of surrounded myself around. I found out I was pregnant July 8, 2016. I've always been a very mature girl and responsible. I acted very irresponsibly with this man and was one of the last people I would of wanted to have a baby with. I sat alone in my room that night and I cried. I couldn't believe I was pregnant with his baby. I became happy as well because I love kids and have always dreamed of being a mother. I started questioning on how this was going to change my life and my future plans. I wanted to go to college at Mississippi State and that was my way out of Missouri. I've been in Missouri all my life. I wanted to travel and experience so many things. I didn't know how I would do that with a small child.

I told him two days later that I was pregnant and he didn't understand why I was telling him this. He said it didn't concern him, that I was far too have a baby. He wanted me to have an abortion, he justified it by saying I know a girl who has had three, really it's no big deal. I am 110% against abortion, so of course this was not in my future plans. I used some harsh words and explained that I would never do that, ever in my life. He blocked me on everything and that was that. I started my senior year pregnant and confused. I didn't understand why he wouldn't want to have a baby with me. I was working two job, responsible, great with kids, and honestly I didn't think there was a reason he would do such a thing. I don't know his personal reasons behind his justification of what he did and I don't care to. I went through my senior year working my two jobs and keeping up with school work. I was so excited and happy to be pregnant. It was the most amazing feeling to feel life in my stomach. I could feel his heartbeat and every movement. People would say silly sympathetic things like, "what a shame the dad isn't involved" or "you are a strong woman for doing this all alone." I was never alone and never will be again. I did this whole journey with a little human that I get to call my own. I get to share my life with someone so precious and lovely that I can't even explain the love I have him to anybody. It's a feeling a can't imagine going a day without. He is my everything, my world, and my rock. He gave me courage and power to keep going on and fight the darkness behind my closed eyes.

I will not pretend to be this strong, nor a courageous woman. I spent many nights crying myself to sleep after I spent all day at school, and went to one of my two jobs and some nights up until way past the am doing homework. My life was and still isn't easy but I'm learning to love myself along this journey and have helped young woman my age that have gotten pregnant as a teenager. They come to me for support and guidance. They want my advice and I love that my struggles can turn into something so beautiful, they have allowed me to help people in a positive manner.

My son is now 16 months old and has so much energy that I just don't know where it all comes from. He is the most beautiful gift I have ever been given, but he was not given without sacrifice. I do not regret anything I have given up for him and never will because a day or night with him is a day I will never forget.

Sometimes I allow the darkness behind my closed eyes to set in and I see people my age living like they're 19 and I get jealous. I feel envy that they get to laugh and talk to people after classes and I am running to my car to make it to work on time because I don't have time to do that. I am on campus to learn and that's it. I'm there to provide myself and my son with a brighter future.

Some days I'll be the girl on campus with headphones in that barely lifts her head up from her music on the way to class because I'm so full of envy that people around me get to be 19. Some people my age have no idea how great that really is and they take

it for advantage and complain all the time. It makes being on campus very hard sometimes. I get over it, but every teen mother that is a good mother can relate to what I'm saying. Your nights with your friends and getting invited to things pretty much disappear. Especially if you're a single mom like I am. I do not get child support so I work as much as possible and I don't like to leave my son alone with anyone, but family. I don't really get to experience the "college experience."

My life can be so stressful at times I just lose my mind sometimes and need to breathe. The little things in life mean way more to me now. When I do go out with my friends or go out to lunch it means the world to me. Like I get out of the house around people and even with my son I get to forget about a little responsibility and relax. Relaxing as a mother is so hard, like I will never lay down without a foot in my face or eat something by myself ever again. This actually makes me sad when he doesn't come curl up with me or come and steal something off my plate. That just means my little boy is getting more independent and doesn't need his mommy as much. That breaks my heart to even think about.

I didn't go into detail of every little moment that happens when I close my eyes because I don't have time to think about the darker things in life, but I wanted to share them with a few people. I want other woman that get up and be the strong women that I like to play everyday to know, it's okay to be broken sometimes. We don't have to wear this mask of

indistruction. We can hurt and heal just like everyone else. We are human and we struggle too. We may think we don't have time to be sad and allow the dark feelings in, but if we don't they'll never go away. We can't find things that we pretend don't exist. We have to be strong enough to admit we are weak too. We can't always be strong, we need to accept help and love from others. Every day on campus I wonder if there are woman like me and I know there are. I would love to have a mommy support group on campus. Going to college as a mother isn't impossible, but it can be very difficult at times. Mothers are powerful creatures, we create life, change life and we love unconditionally. We are powerful and strong even when we are weak. Along this journey I have learned to love myself so much more and when you have a little human that loves everything you do and everything they do warms your heart it is really hard to ignore all of the beauty that surround you. I am so grateful for my little boy and all of my struggles that I have encountered and that I will encounter. They have helped me become even stronger than what I was before and I love myself a little more everyday and I couldn't be any more grateful for the life I live. Just remember when the darkness sets in to open your eyes and see the beauty.



"Narrow Street" by Eloise Riche

Reflections

by Dominique Garlington

Sometimes, the only time I'm comfortable looking at my reflection is after a hot shower. The fog shrouds my insecurities and hides my tattered smile.

Sometimes, the only time I enjoy pictures is when I'm the one taking them. There are days when just to ease the pain for a while, I'll walk in someone else's shoes for a mile or two. And other days when I feel empowered, I help others on their walk of life. I still find that I stumble from time to time during mine. It is sometimes hard to breathe after I swallow my pride and tell her how I feel. I'm still suffocating waiting for her response. I have a habit of dreaming with my eyes open and some days I feel like I'm living in a nightmare. I give awkward hugs because I panic every time a girl is close enough to steal my heart. So I just fast forward past those graceless moments. I guess that's why I've been living life at maximum speed...but today, I'm going to take it slow and take life for what it is. The cloudy mirror is now crystal clear. My reflection isn't perfect, but I like what I see.

Dinner for my Velociraptors

by Jordan Bass

Markiplier had a secret, a prehistoric secret at that. All of his Fellow youtuber friends have been turned into one of the most dangerous animals to have ever walked the earth. They have been turned into Velociraptors. He didn't know how it happened one night a green raptor with neon green hair, ocean eyes, and a symbol on his left forearm just appeared at his house breaking down his door to get in. Mark was afraid at first but when he realized the creature didn't want to hurt him he felt more at ease. After studying its features more carefully he realized it really was one of his close friends. Jack. Jack nipped at Marks sleeve and dragged him to the back door. Making a clicking sound with his Jaw, Jack wanted mark to open the door so he did only to find Five more creatures just like Jack in his backyard. Only having different features Making each one have different colors and patterns.

It only took Mark a moment to recognize each of his friends just by hair, skin, and eye color. He had to keep this a secret otherwise if word got out that the great youtuber Markiplier has six Living, breathing Velociraptors in his home they wouldn't believe him that the creatures are actual people and take them away from him. So until Mark finds away to change his friends Back they remain hidden. The only people Mark can truly trust to keep his raptors hidden is Amy, Tyler, and Ethan. They swore not to tell a sole no matter how hard this secret is to keep.

Mark was at the store buying some food and needed essentials. Buying enough Food for six carnivorous dinosaurs is hard but easy to decide what to give them. Stopping by a market, he walked up to the deli and bought two boxes of twelve piece fried chicken for his raptor friends.

"Hello sir did you find everything ok?" the girl at the cash register asked. "Yes mam I did" Mark replied.

"having a party tonight"? she asked "that's a lot for one guy" she added to Joke. Mark laughed softly. "Yea me and some friends are getting together tonight gotta have enough for everybody ya know" Mark said.

"yea I can understand that" the cashier said as she bagged Marks things and handed it to him. After paying the girl mark walked back to his car and set the bags in the back seat. He drove home shortly after hoping the Raptors aren't too viciously hungry and eat both the chicken and his face. right? Oh what was he thinking these raptors were once his human friends they wouldn't hurt him. they still trusted Mark to keep them safe and take care of them just as much as he still trusted them. Mark thought to himself "there still human somewhere deep down".

The red haired youtuber finally arrived home. After grabbing the bags and locking up the car Mark heard a faint Bark sound from the backyard. Mark sighted in frustration. "how many times have I told those guys to stay quiet when there in the backyard" mark said to himself.

Mark walked inside quietly already finding two of his raptor friends asleep in the living room. One was

Purple with white specks on his back and dark brown hair the other was dark red with a faded black strip going from eye to tail on both sides with lighter brown hair. "Bob" "Wade" Mark called the raptors softly. Bob lifted his head with wide snake eyes at Mark, Wade stretched then let out a low yawn and rolled over opening his eyes to look at Mark. "you guys hungry iv got food for ya" Bob and Wade stood on their three clawed feet. Bob sensed Wade stepping to close to him and nipped at his shoulder while letting out a quick warning screech. Wade hissed a bit and let out a soft growl as if to say sorry in a moody way.

Mark set the bags on the table, Wade being the snoopy one inched his snout to the bags and gave it a sniff. Bob greeted Mark with a shove to his shoulder with his head making him stumble a bit forward letting out a happy roar to get Mark's attention. "Hey Bob" Mark turned around and ruffled Bob's hair a bit making him purr.

Then Mark noticed two more raptors enter the kitchen from the back door. One was dark brown with a splash of tan covering its spine, dark brown hair, and a bear hat it always wore, and brown snake eyes. The second raptor you could say was albino but it had a red drippy pattern covering most of the white from head to tail, it also had brown hair and eyes. Their claws clicked across Mark's tile floor a sound Mark's gotten used to hearing. "Ken" "Yami" Mark said getting both their attention. "you guys hungry?" he asked. Ken and Yami both let out loud bark sounds three times as if saying yes. Mark was growing to love that sound it signaled happiness within his friends. Also that's the sound they make to call each other from other rooms. Mark

still never understood how they could still communicate with each other.

Mark removed the boxes of chicken from the bags and set them on the table. He also realized there were only four raptors two were missing. "guys where's Jack and Felix?" mark asked the four raptors. They turned to each other making grunt, click sounds, and shaking their heads. Mark assumed they discussing when they last saw the two it seemed they couldn't remember.

"alright ill go look for them" mark said starting to walk off. "no one touch the boxes" Mark then turned quickly and pointed a finger at the red and black raptor. "that means you Wade!" He turned around to see Wades mouth opened to grab a piece of meat. When wade saw he was caught he snorted at Mark and glared. Mark smirked then turned back around to look for Jack and Felix.

Mark made his way upstairs "Jack! Felix! C'mon guys why do you hide like this?" Mark shouted.

Mark heard a sneer sound coming from the Back room. He walked over and opened it no one was in there. He then shut the door back and then turned back around to face a jump scare. Two raptors one Green with black stripes and one navy blue with a lighter blue and white pattern down its back. Both Roared and let out a high pitch screech with Jaws wide open and frightening reptile eyes staring back into his brown ones. Tails up and arms outstretched with razor sharp claws.

"AAHH!!!" Mark cursed under his breath falling to the floor and scooting back to hit his back against the wooden door. With wide eyes He looked up to find it

was Jack and Felix making laughing noise with there Jaws. They both turned their features back to a more calmer state.

After the shock Mark glared at them from the floor. Jack noticed this and let out a apologizing purr while Felix still laughed. Jack lowered his head and offered to help Mark back up. Mark sighted and Grabbed Jacks neck who hoisted him back to his feet. Felix finally started to settle down.

"Alright who's idea was it?" Mark asked them with crossed arms. Jack instantly started nipping at Felix's dirty blonde hair, Felix let out a aggravated roar and shook his head to get Jack to stop but then Felix started biting Back.

After a moment Mark broke them up shoving himself between the two. "Hey! Hey! Okay quit biting" Mark said sternly. "was it you Felix?" Felix just grinned showing his pointed teeth making himself look innocent. Mark knew it was him immediately. "You doof!" Mark said shoving Felix aside. "C'mon guys I got food down stairs" Jack and Felix instantly raised there heads and sprinted passed Mark Making him spin a couple times.

Mark made his way back downstairs seeing Bob, Wade, Ken, and Yami greet Jack and Felix with barking sounds and friendly sneers.

The youtuber made his way to the Table and Pulled out a piece of Chicken. "Bob" Mark called. He threw the meat in the air watching Bob catch and devour the meat in an instant. Mark pulled out two more from the

box. "Wade" "Ken" getting the red and brown raptors attention.

He threw each at the same time, Wade Caught his easily while Ken hopped in the air a bit to catch his share. "Here Yami" Mark said to Yami was standing behind him. Mark raised the meat over his shoulder allowing Yami to eat from his hand. "Felix!" Mark shouted getting the blue raptors attention. "Up high" Felix knew what that meant he readied himself for the throw with a determined face. Using all the strength in his legs Felix Jumped high catching his piece and landing back on his feet to chew it. The others gave him a look as if saying "Show off".

Mark then Pulled out a big piece of chicken out of the box this time. "Jack?" Mark said. Jack lifted his head and made a low growl noise with his mouth. Mark always fed Jack last but for a reason. He always acted like the Beta toward his raptor friends so Mark kept it that way. He would put Jack in charge when he went out. Mark was the "Alpha" to his friends while they were prehistoric creatures so he fed Jack last reminding him who was the alpha in this pack.

Mark does realize there still human inside so he doesn't control them all that much. He just wants to be a good leader toward his friends. "this ones for u" he says to Jack tossing it in the air Felix also glanced at the food above both his a Jacks head. Both Raptors grabbed the meat at the same time. Jack Growled and hissed at Felix to get his share back but Felix held on with his Jaw. Eventually they started a session of Tug a war.

"HEY! HEY! HEY! FELIX!" Both raptors still had a hold on the meat Felix glanced at Mark while Jack glared at Felix. "Let go, that's Jack's piece there's enough for each of you" Mark scolded Felix. Jack growled at Felix as a warning. Felix Gave Jack his share back in an instant Jack swallowed his share whole. Mark gave each of his friends a piece of chicken till he ran out.

"Well that's it guys there's no more" mark stated. Which led to low growls and clicking sounds from six Jaws. Mark went to the living room to relax on the couch he wasn't aware that he was being followed. He plopped down on the couch with a heavy sigh. He noticed Jack, Bob, wade, and Felix followed Mark into the room. He didn't mind though. After a while you get used to listening to low sleeping growls around you. Mark smiled at his friends giving each other space in different spots of the living room.

Mark dangled his arm off the side of the couch only to feel it nudged with a cold snout. He looked down to find Jack laying down on the floor on his side stretched out like a dog. Mark rubbed his neon green hair Making Jack purr and snicker. Mark kept his hand on Jack's reptile skinned head.

Mark Loved his friends human or creature he will still remain loyal cause that's what good friends do for each other.

Untitled (8)

by Jay

I first began to notice boys in elementary school. I became aware of their entire being. The way they walked, how they kicked the soccer balls, the smiles they would give and the way they would take off to become cowboys and firemen. I'd sit atop the jungle gym in awe of boys. I came to know the word "jealousy." Other girls began to notice boys too. How they walked, how they kicked the soccer balls, the smiles they would give and the way they would take off to become cowboys and firemen.

Throughout elementary school the boys would always pick me to be on their teams, even when they would play "boys against girls" they would never fail to have me on their side. As middle school became a thing, I began to notice the boys were becoming "guys". Milk mustaches turned to whiskers of gold and brown, for others black like charcoal smudge art. They became prickly cacti in the desert of puberty. I noticed their arms began to grow muscles, their legs began to thin out and their voices became boulders instead of pebbles.

The guys began to pick girlfriends and flirt in class, notes were being passed with gentle art and giggles. Once highschool came along the jealousy grew like reeds along a river bank. I saw every girl had a crush on a boy except for me.. They went on dates to

the movies, then taco bell, then cold stone for a scoop of ice cream with sprinkles because that's all we could afford. And, if the night was right and the soundwaves of nervous teenage hearts didn't push both apart, a kiss behind the movie theatre parking lot wall was to follow.

I was soon to be left in a room with no doors but one, a door I had mindlessly shut long ago but the aging had caused it to crack.

I rediscovered jealousy.

I wanted to grow like the guys were growing. I wanted to be tall and lean. I wanted be bare skin against an opposing team of shirts. I wanted to know what it was like to kiss a girl for the first time. I wanted to be able to have a friend without my teachers assuming we were something more. I wanted to walk around the P.E building during lunch holding hands with someone I liked because that's what the couples did. But, most of all, the jealousy came when the boy was never questioned for liking the girl.

Please Don't Go

by Katanna Davis

We hopped in the car, the whole lot of us. Seven people in a car meant for five, we squished and prodded, and did not care, because we were all just along for the ride. He yelled, "Wait babe! Please don't go. Stay with me. We have been there before and it is not safe at all." Little did I know, he would be right, and I would regret this moment for the rest of my life. Wasting no time to get on the road, to drink those beers because they were still cold. "Let's head out to Red Beard's!" Mara shouted, even though we all knew he was nuts. Guns, drugs, and everything illegal, just ten miles from town, we went past the prison to the middle of nowhere. This backwoods house, only half of it finished, with at least ten barns and sheds littering the ground. We always have fun, despite the crazy nature of it all. We are young and dumb. What more could we want but to have some fun? Sometimes we shoot, even though it is always late and the moonlight is typically hidden by the clouds. We always drink, without regard to our ages. Red Beard's almost sixty-five, while we are all under twenty-two. But shoot, we thought we were super cool because we were hanging with this old dude. His older sons and nephew are there, drinking as well. By older I mean mid thirties. Now that I recall it, why weren't we creeped out? With everything that happened that night, their ages still never phased us. Young, dumb, and little did we know, in danger. I should have stayed. He was only looking out for me. But here I am. Here we are. In the middle of nowhere. Under the influence and being wild. One of our "friends," I use that term loosely because we knew we could not trust him, he was extra wild. In and out of

jail. Multiple DUI's. We got in a fight once, him and I. By fight I mean he was drunk and mad so he found that reason enough to punch me in the face because I was the closest person to him. This friend, always getting us in situations no one should ever be in. We thought we were all having a good time. The attractive older man telling my friend and I we were pretty. This set it off. We were shooting. We always shoot. Guns. Fucking guns. We just wanted to have fun. But then things started happening, so eventually us two girls started to run. We were all outside, drinking and shooting. Red Beard, his son and nephew, Mara and I, her boyfriend and his four friends, having what we thought was a good time. The guys began arguing. Why did that man have to say anything at all. Putting us in this position that would soon turn detrimental. We are in the house hiding, thinking we are safe. We hear shots. Then they stop. We peek out the door and everyone appears safe. We think it is clear so we walk out the door. Step after step, we couldn't even hear our breathing, just the creek of the floor. We run for the car, hoping the guys see us and do the same. Before we get there, the nephew steps in front of me. All I remember is hearing Mara's screams, the warm metal of the freshly fired gun pressed to my forehead. I didn't cry. I couldn't breathe. Why did it have to lead to this? I thought of him telling me not to go, how I know I told my family I loved them before I left the house. Snap. Here I am back to reality. The sharp, warm metal digging into my skin. All I hear is Mara yelling, "Stop! Get away from her! Just let us leave!" I could see the guys were all in the car. It was only three feet away. My way to safety blocked by this wall of fear. I heard someone walking near. Then it was like slow motion. "Leave the girl be, she ain't done nothing," said Red Beard. He puts the barrel in his hand and takes it from

his nephew. The son walks the nephew away. I'm frozen. Mara is yelling. The guys are freaking out. I walk to the door, the guys pull me in. We speed away. Squished in the car. Even though we aren't going far, I pass out in the seat. We get back to the house and he runs out to me. Tears in my eyes, he could tell something wasn't right. "Come inside, it's cold. What happened to your forehead? Are you okay? Talk to me." he said calmly. We all go inside. Head our separate ways. I sit on the couch with his arms around me. All I can do is cry as he rocks me to sleep. After everything that happened, the only thing I could think was "What did I do to deserve a man like him?" and how he was everything I needed to be.

Desde lejos, pero muy cerca

by Carla Perez Santayana

I was a child and I didn't understand anything. Why did all families made huge holiday dinners with a lot of people and we were just a few? Why did daddy always cry when he was on the phone? Why did all the other children had two grandmas and grandpas and I only had one? This is the story of a couple like any other, who met in college. After many years together they decided to get married and have a family. Something normal and simple, for almost everyone, but something that would entail separating a family.

I am a girl from Bilbao (Spain), with a mother from Santander (Spain), and a father from Havana (Cuba). My parents met in Bilbao when they were young and their two families lived there. They fell in love, so much so that my father, Sergio, decided to stay with my mother, Marta, and create a family, even though all his family, parents and siblings had to go to Miami for work. There would begin a hard journey that still continues. A family separated by 7,000 km and an ocean, but more united than people who are a few centimeters apart.

My mother's family is small because she is the only daughter. So I was used to being 6 on special occasions when I was a child. My father's family it's the opposite, he has one sister and one brother, so my only aunt, uncle and cousins are in the USA.

I have three memories of my father's family. The first one is a small trip of one month to Miami when I was four years old from which I can only remember the house stairs and the green carpet. The second one is a visit in Spain two years later in which I literally fell in love with my grandpa. I just remember spending every second of that visit with him. My last memory is when my aunt, Carmen, spent one year with us in Spain, my best childhood year. She always says that when I got home from the elementary school I screamed: "Tia! We have homework!" This had to be enough for us. This and our constant phone calls.

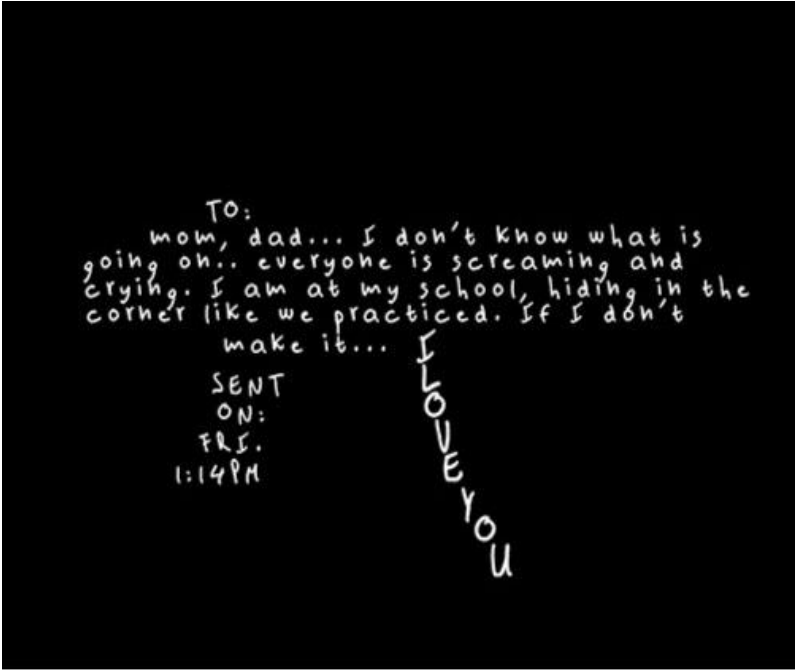
It took 15 years to see my family again. I was 21; I would never be a child again. We all have grown, and it was too late to be able to enjoy my grandfather. I only remember good feelings for those days, my Dad was always smiling, we were all happy, and I finally get the big dinner that I had always dreamed. But unfortunately this only lasted a few days. They had to go back to Miami again.

But life gives you gifts, and it gave me one in the form of travel. I had the opportunity to enjoy my family in Miami for 3 months. I went alone, without my parents, to study English, but above all to know my family thoroughly, to embrace them, to celebrate. This is one of my best memories in my life.

If you ask me what is the most difficult thing that has happened to me in my life, I would have to answer that it is something that keeps happening to me. Still there. My family is still far away, but united. And as we always say: "Desde lejos, pero muy

cerca" (from far but very close). I continue to admire my father every day, to choose love and fight for him. For sacrificing and never complaining. And especially for letting us see him smile despite everything, because I have to confess, there is nothing that makes me happier than seeing my father smiling. My mom always by his side, as usual, always together. Fighting and keeping my brother and me happy.

Art



“Text to Mom and Dad--School Shootings”
by Cheyanna Weaver



“Leaves of Missouri Photo Collection” by Danielle Linton



“Peaches and Meyerowitz Photo Collection”
by Danielle Linton



“The Monarchs Photo Collection” by Danielle Linton



“Bubble Gum Still Life” by Marybeth Fuller



“Iceland House” by Marybeth Fuller



“In the Studio” by Marybeth Fuller



“Burano Laundry” by Marybeth Fuller



“Blueface” by Britny Fernandes



“Benjamin Buttons” by Britny Fernandes



“Brother” by Britny Fernandes



"To Serve and Protect" by Britny Fernandes



“Growth” by Britny Fernandes



“Mont Saint Michel” by Eloise Riche



“Honfleur” by Eloise Riche



“Sunset in Normandy” by Eloise Riche



“Moon River” by Eloise Riche



“Ma Fleur de Lys” by Eloise Riche

For Reuben

by Jay

I watched life place
marshmallows in your hot cocoa fur
sweet swirls of white whisps
but your puppy eyes remained
like a snowglobe
a perfect world
a moment caught in purity
as so
(*you*) *it* will remain



Reuben 2007-2018