

# Whispers from the Wood



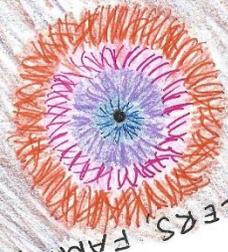
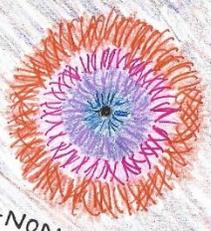
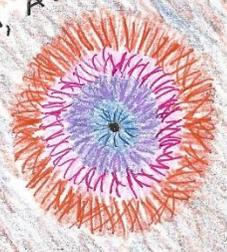
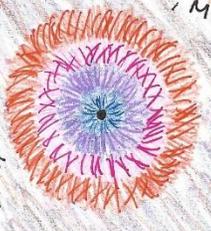
Volume 2, Issue 1, November 2018







TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIETY ONCE IN A WHILE  
 WIDEN YOUR MIND TO EXPAND  
 RELEASE NEGATIVE ENERGY...  
 TREAT READING AS TREASURE  
 FANTASY, ADVENTURE...  
 HORROR, ACTION, HEALTH...  
 THRILLERS, FAMILY...  
 NOVEL, HISTORY, NON-FICTION...  
 STORYBOOK, NOVEL, PAPER BACK...  
 HARDBACK, JOURNAL, DIARY...  
 TALES, MYSTERY...  
 USE READING AS INSPIRATION  
 TRANQUILITY WILL COME SOLITUDE  
 WIDEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE IN BOOKS  
 FREE YOUR MIND, LET YOUR THOUGHTS FLOW  
 SCIENCE FICTION, ROMANCE...





## **“I’m Sorry”**

**By: Shelby Powell, Freshman**

Sometimes, it is just not enough.  
A word too common to use for every mishap.  
A word meant for deep regret is now meant to mock?  
You say you didn’t mean it, but your eyes refuse to lie.  
I refuse to believe.  
Why, you ask?  
Because that word had lost its meaning long ago, when you took it for granted.  
When you decided that what you did wasn’t worth truly apologizing for.  
And you knew that I would forgive you.  
Because this isn’t the first time you’ve said sorry.  
And I know it won’t be the last.

## **Contradiction**

**By: Jadayah Parker, Freshman**

Skies  
Sunset  
Sunrise  
A new day  
A new night  
A healing tear  
A killing laugh  
Crashing water  
Burning bliss  
Unwanted touch  
A yearning kiss  
A broken heart  
A mended love  
And everything else  
From up above

## **Shadow**

**By: Diamond Hicks, Freshman**

Claw marks are elegantly carved on the floor, ceiling, and wall. A dark aura floods the room, suffocating anything that draws near. Blood stains, fresh and old, are splattered across the padded flooring. I walk in circles around the room, every breath, every movement stabbed my wounds like a newly sharpened knife. I look up with an emotionless gaze, only to be greeted by a ceiling filled with scars. I tilt my quickly when I hear a familiar creaking. There the chandelier, broken, torn, yet flickering, swings back and forth in a hypnotizing motion.

I take a breath, only for it to be cut short. Its clawing again, trying to get out like a caged animal. I cough, staining the floor once more. I refuse to let it escape, it must never escape again. I hold my head, screams of agony, red, laughter, the adrenaline. My neck twists awkwardly to the side, where a shattered mirror lies. Suddenly, I hit the floor. Pain, my arms, my legs, the shadow, our bloodthirsty grins.

We fight for hours, claws, nails, biting, scratching, blood, skin, and hair. It disappears in the end. My wounds burn like acid, then something reaches towards me. Instinct overtakes me as I turn seeing nothing, but I still kick hitting something as it grunts when it lands. A lab coat, needles, white jacket, restriction, emotionless, burning gaze of judgement, tests. My urge grows strong, freedom, I want freedom.

I launch towards the being clawing scratching once more, digging my nails into anything to cause harm to my prey. Then, there is no more struggle. I rip off the flesh, feasting, nothing has tasted better than the metallic liquid and tough skin in my mouth. Using the bones, I hold my meal as I enjoy my first meal in what seems to be a century. Besides the white, I am now identical to the floor.

A scream, I turn, a female in a lab coat, traumatized. Vulnerability, I launch again, tackling the female down, I go to bite, but all goes black. Why? Do they not see what I see? I did not do this! The shadow did! The other one! Why punish me for a crime I did not commit? We are different or are we the same? I blink to only see darkness. The shadow is not me, yet it is. I am not the shadow yet I am. The shadow is me, and I am the shadow.

## **Heartbroken**

**By: Jadayah Parker, Freshman**

Falling petals,  
Falling tears,  
Falling in love over years,  
Falling doubts that no one knows.  
Head over heels,  
Head under toes.  
Intertwined in a dream,  
Evil yet holy scene.  
A smile,  
A giggle,  
A laugh,  
A light,  
Snatched away from sight.  
She tumbles,  
She falls,  
She drowns,  
She dies,  
For she was never in his eyes.

**I love you**  
**By: Maia Sigler, Sophomore**

I never thought  
In 1,000 years  
That I'd meet someone like you

Someone who can make me  
Feel so special  
When I know for a fact  
That I'm not,

And sometimes I get scared  
That I'm not good enough for you  
That one day you'll start to see me  
The way I see myself,

Someone who can make me  
Love all of the things I usually hate to see  
When I look in the mirror,

Someone who can still manage  
To put butterflies in my stomach  
With just one look,

But all of those things just  
Disappear when I am with you  
The world stops,  
Time freezes,  
And nothing else matters  
But us.

## **Voice**

**By: Sarah Verbeck, Sophomore**

Her voice was a soft whisper.  
A faint sound that got lost through the air.  
The words she spoke could change nations,  
move people to be better,  
but they got lost.  
Disappeared.  
Tears pooled in her eyes as she gathered her composure.  
She wanted to scream,  
yet her voice failed her.  
Not a sound came out.

## Wave

By: Keyami Collins, Sophomore

The whirlwind of emotions I feel when I'm awake is unbearable.  
I never thought there would be a day when I prayed for my eyes not to open.  
I don't know when this started or why, but I know it's always been there.  
In the back of my mind it would talk to me,  
In a thunderous voice with enough force to make my mind submit.  
A monstrous display of self-depreciation.  
It tells me how to live and when to do things.  
It restricts me to my bed, making it hard for me to get up and take care of my personal needs.  
This voice took over my conscious, and slowly poisoned my body.  
But instead of showing it, I plaster the same smile on  
And act like it isn't there,  
Cause I'll make a million waves in the ocean crash at once to make you smile.

## Creepy Calls

By: Jonathan Baumgardner, Sophomore

It was finally Friday, and I had the weekend all to myself. My parents just left on vacation, as well as my brothers. I acted as if I was sick, so I didn't have to go. They were going to hang out with the weird side of our family that always made me uncomfortable. I knew that my parents wouldn't care that I was home alone, because they know that I know all the safety precautions. However, I wasn't going to follow them.

I didn't want to do anything too stupid, so I just sat on my couch and watched some television shows. After the first 20-minute episode, I got a text from an unknown number. It said "I know what you're doing in there". I brushed it off as just a prank, or a wrong number and carried on with my night. After an hour of trying not to cry, I decided that was enough of that show. I flipped to a new channel, set down my remote, and went to the bathroom. I closed the door and listened to what had come on. I was trying to listen to the words, but it seemed as if the words were getting quieter, and quieter, until I couldn't hear them anymore. I was completely and utterly confused. I washed my hands, dried them, and then quickly walked over to my television. It was muted, and I started to get creeped out. I picked up my remote and turned it back on.

Before I sat down to keep watching, I checked all of my windows and doors to make sure they were locked. On my way back, I grabbed a can of soda and a bag of chips to eat as I watched. When I finally sat down, the episode I planned on watching had already ended. I cracked open my soda, and started to drink it. It was silent in the living room again, yet the tv was on. I had set my remote on the table next to me, so there was no way that I could've muted it again. There were only two remotes in the house and the only other one was in my parents' room, which I wasn't allowed in. I looked back at my tv to find that it was going all over the place, like someone was hitting random buttons. I jumped up and unplugged it; my heart was racing. Then it fell dead silent. There weren't any crickets outside making noise, no tv, nothing. I slowly walked to my couch and grabbed my phone. I turned it on and started texting my mom. She didn't respond and that made me even more scared. I ran into my room, and locked the door behind me. I sat on my bed thinking about what could be happening. I laid down under my covers and listened to the sounds of my breath. Out of nowhere, my phone started ringing. My heart exploded, and I jumped out of bed to grab my phone. I answered and didn't say a word. I heard heavy breathing through my phone, and a light whisper.

"You forgot to lock a window... By the way, you have a very nice home." I started losing my mind. I ended the call and started calling 911. As the operator picked up, I saw a shadow at the foot of my door. I could hear the operator speaking, but I couldn't respond. I was frozen, staring at my door. I snapped out of it and started frantically talking to the operator.

"Sir, help is on the way. I need you to stay on the line for me, ok?" The operator said.

The door handle started jiggling, and the door was slamming back and forth against the frame. It went on for what seemed like forever, and then I heard police sirens. A massive weight lifted off my shoulders. The person at the door stopped, as the police barged inside. I heard tons of yelling and then a gunshot. I backed into the corner of my bed and sat there. The police started yelling, "Is there anyone here?"

"I am!" I yelled back. I opened my door slowly to find four officers standing around a bloody body with a massive knife right next to it.

"It's ok now. You're safe." The officers said.

## **Habits**

**By: Larson Efhaymi, Sophomore**

Time is endless and voidless

I say therefore it is

And float aimlessly in the space that is now empty

We're just the same being with different experiences.

We're just a cosmic wonder falling in love with itself

If you keep saying the time isn't right then the time will never come

If you keep saying this was all just bad timing your just excusing the pain time engraves in your skin

Habits are just the way we naturally live inside things

Habits are just us finding comfort in the way everything is fleeting.

And I refuse to make a habit out of chasing things that are always fleeting

Such as yourself

## **What is this Feeling?**

**By: Alysia Pree, Junior**

If I could drown myself in this feeling,  
My lungs wouldn't even remember the taste of air  
Because I'm so captivated by my hunger to taste emotion  
That I can't separate what I want from what I can have.  
And the sleeping pills won't numb me from my thoughts  
So I trace my skin, forcing scars just to keep me high.  
And seeing your open wounds sprouts flowers from my blood.  
But like a moth to a flame,  
I'm drawn to your fire.  
Not the beauty in your smile,  
Or the serenity in your touch.  
This attraction is infectious,  
But every gesture is unsaid  
Since the words fizzle off my tongue before I can speak.  
And here in this moment  
I'm sinking in feelings for you,  
Can't catch my breath for you,  
Can't feel my legs for you,  
Need to be next to you,  
Aching, burning, crippling feelings bubbling in my chest  
Is this what it's like to feel love?

## **Letting It All Go**

**By: Rebekah Seigneurie, Junior**

I altered my life,  
Fitting myself into your standards  
Your mold,  
How you saw fit.  
I wanted you to know  
That I'd do anything  
For you to love me.  
Even if it meant losing myself;  
Even if it meant having my wings bound together tightly,  
Struggling to make a move,  
To break free.  
I was willing to risk it all  
For the sake of you loving me,  
But I finally opened my eyes.  
I spread my wings.  
As I realize I deserve so much more,  
I leave her and take flight.  
Fighting for myself  
Taking charge  
And lifting off.

## **Midnight**

**By: Chaniya Golden, Junior**

At the stroke of twelve  
I'm at the docks  
Soft and sweet and calm  
So quiet.  
I wallow in my thoughts,  
Until I'm engulfed in my feelings.  
I argued with every chance I had.  
How can I wrestle with myself?  
Tumbleweed of my angry needs  
Nestle in my mind,  
This is forever my midnight.  
It once was sweet love,  
Now it's a bittersweet waste.  
Again, who do I fight with?  
Mixed emotions interrogate my integrity.  
I'm all mixed up,  
But, I'm still by myself.  
I head into myself so far that it's morning  
But, I just wait 'til next midnight.  
When my mind breaks free again.

**I Am More Than This**  
**By: Alysia Pree, Junior**

They said that my curves were shaped to mimic the waves of the ocean  
My legs made to model the horizon when the sun sets  
They called me beautiful when I felt my ugliest  
They called me a masterpiece before paint even grazed the canvas  
But their view upon this world is cruel  
And although I am wrapped in the arms of my depression every night  
I still see beauty in this life  
I still taste sugar within the salt of this world  
I still rewrite the hate on my tongue into something beautiful  
Because even though I trace my fingers across my skin and don't think of myself as beautiful  
I remember that every rock has its craters  
And I am a towering boulder,  
Encased in insecurities and self-loathing  
And they tell me I'm an exquisite piece of art  
Slathered with bright lights and shining stars  
And inside there is a darkness so foreboding that it seems like a chore to smell the roses in the  
rain  
But where one sees rain I see life in every teardrop from the sky  
And I see color in the sky of every gloomy day  
And I swirl rainbows in my mouth with the words that I say  
Even though I don't see myself as an example of admirability  
I strive to create rather than destroy  
And shape my world into something prodigious

## **Waking Up Dead**

**By: Katrina Nguyen, Junior**

Dreaded feelings come crashing down  
Feelings of death and despair  
Feelings of sadness and total loss  
Loss of emotions  
Loss of control in my life  
They come bearing down on my chest  
Making it difficult to breathe  
To think  
To live  
To live my fullest life like I had never done before  
To live without any worry or emptiness on the daily  
A life without regrets or second thoughts  
But a life like that is practically impossible to obtain  
To have  
To hold  
So what's the point  
What's the point of trying anymore?  
What's the point if I'm just going to be beat down  
Pushed to the ground  
And spit on by the all mighty "God"  
The same God that people praise  
Devote their life to  
The one  
That's supposed to help those in need  
Those that need protection  
Those that need care  
So where was he when I needed him?  
When I needed protecting?  
When I was vulnerable?  
When I was lost in a world that's clouded by aggression?  
Absolutely nowhere to be found  
Maybe he hides up in heaven  
Because he's afraid of the monsters that he created  
Because he runs away from all his problems that congregate down below  
Like the rest of us  
These feelings won't go away  
They just spread through my body  
From my skin down to the bone  
Attaching to every nerve  
Taking over like a plague  
That will never disappear from this earth  
Dark thoughts and dark voices  
Fill my head with terrible memories

Of my past  
Of my mistakes  
They hang up like a painting  
Reminding me of what I have done  
And gone through  
Just the feeling  
Idea  
Thought  
And everything in between  
About living  
Makes me feel like I'm waking up

## Dear Heart

By: **Iyanna Tucker, Senior**

Dear Heart,  
I thought you were smarter than this,  
I thought you would use your brain,  
I told you a million times before that time was money,  
I said specifically once was too many,  
And you winked at me.

Time is something that you will never get back,  
I whispered,  
Whether you're living on earth,  
Or in a white house in heaven,  
Why would you waste your time on someone  
That wasn't going to give you love back?  
The same thing you bought once in your life,  
You purchased again.

Did you not see this coming?  
Didn't you see the same features?  
The same long speeches as to why he wouldn't leave you,  
Why you are the best thing that has come in his life?  
But I'm wondering,  
*'Did he really mean those words,  
Or did he just say that to get what he wanted and leave?'*

All my life I've been praying for someone to love me,  
But I see that will never happen,  
I'm sitting here balling my eyes out,  
Listening to the same lies,  
Deleting the last memories of him out of your brain.

Is this why you couldn't see this at the time?  
The same lies?  
Did he leave a sparkle in your thump?  
Did you let the mountains speak to you?  
Were you on the clouds with him?  
Did you just enjoy the attention?

Someone pouring love into you,  
And you feeding right back into it,  
Heart, I thought you wouldn't let this happen a second time,  
I thought you would protect me from being broken into pieces,  
I unlocked my heart once again,  
Now my body is aching in pain.

Its broken.  
I can barely move.  
I am weak.  
I can no longer speak.  
No words can explain this feeling I have,  
I don't understand why you don't listen to me.  
You'd rather listen to these lies,  
That will eventually become dry after you find out the truth,  
I am going to let your eyes bleed,  
Until they are dry,  
Until you can see a new day.

When you leave so suddenly,  
You feel things are about to happen,  
The triggering of your body starts to move,  
Maybe he felt the love was becoming too deep,  
But what he didn't realize,  
My love was already below sea level.

## **I'm Still Waiting**

**By: Mackenzie LaCroix, Senior**

Open your eyes.  
I've been standing right here,  
But you've been looking right through me.  
Am I not real enough for you?  
Am I not standing here at five feet and four inches  
With dirty blonde hair  
And hazel eyes?  
Am I not shouting your name loud enough?  
Because you never seem to hear.  
How many times are you gonna look past me?  
How long am I expected to stand and wait with no response?  
I'm confused,  
Angry,  
Baffled.  
Because whenever you speak,  
I hear you.  
Whenever you look my way,  
I am standing there,  
Patiently waiting.  
I have been standing still for years,  
Just waiting to be moved.  
But how can I?  
As soon as I leave,  
You will open your eyes.  
And then  
It will be as if I was never even here.

**Frogs and Trees**  
**By: Cody Potter, Senior**

Anxiety Runs Deep  
I feel like a slimy creep.  
It's not even anxiety, I sound like a sheep  
I just want to grow like a tree.

Frogs make the same leaps,  
It's kind of like an increase.  
All these kids eat is grease.  
I'm just a frog trying to make some leaps.

Some of these other frogs are just trying to make peace,  
Belonging in trees like they're from Greece.  
Some people think I'm just this masterpiece...  
Meanwhile I'm just a dude wearing a fleece.

## **Goodbye, Time**

**By: Mackenzie LaCroix, Senior**

I need progress,  
Change,  
Evolution.  
The days keep blending together,  
And everything significant,  
Becomes just another distant memory.

If it weren't for the rise and fall of the sun,  
I'd be lost in every day,  
And never notice when one day became another.  
Every moment would belong to the last,  
And be exactly the same as the next.

I don't know what it is,  
This thing that I keep waiting for,  
But there has to be something.  
There has to be something else.

I am losing myself to routine,  
I am becoming a victim of time;  
He's clever,  
Always passing by,  
Waiving for me to go,  
Knowing that I don't have the power to move.

## **The Love**

**By: Ariana Young, Senior**

You, with your eyes wide open  
Your gaze, far and wide,  
Your voice as lilting and sweet,  
As the ocean brine.  
Never have I ever,  
Thought I'd find myself this way,  
Falling into hysterics over you,  
My heart all ablaze,  
Like an Olympic torch.  
It burns and it beats,  
Behind my breast,  
And it hurts with a sting,  
A pain like no other,  
One that feels as if it will last forever.

**Words to Say to Yourself.**

**By: Mya Carter, Senior**

I just want you to know you're beautiful.  
You are worth it.  
You're priceless and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.  
You don't deserve the things that get thrown your way,  
But you, somehow, make it through.  
You should know that the labels that people place on you,  
Don't matter.  
They're just words spoken by hateful people.  
You need to know who you are and that you're loved.  
I'm sorry for all the things you go through.  
Just know I will always love you.

**Life On a Different Side**  
**By: Saul Hernandez, Senior**

They have dreams and direction,  
We have dreams but with temptation.  
We come from the same city,  
But our daily lives aren't easy.  
They have capital and insurance,  
All we have is pain endurance.

It's hard to keep my guys in peace.  
What do you do when it happens on your street?  
You might lose it because you've never felt this kind of heat,  
But the sad part is we're used to it.

We can't complain or cry about it,  
Instead we face it.  
Keep pushing it until we make it.  
Even if our conditions are relentless.  
But I promise I will see the future.

**You**

**By: LaNeka Williams, Senior**

Pt. 1

You are sugar  
And spice  
And everything nice.

I crave you  
Like summer nights  
And water fights  
And riding bikes  
Past midnight  
To nowhere at all.

I crave you  
Like summer days  
Watching the waves  
Knowing they will always crash  
But they never stop.

I adore you  
Like the stars above  
That dance with a twinkle  
And have a certain beauty  
Only the rarity of night can capture.

Thank you  
For being those things for me  
For allowing me  
To have my wildest dreams  
Everyday

Thank you  
For being my dream come true.

Pt. 2

What ever happened to summer nights?  
We never got to ride bikes past midnight  
The water fights stopped because the well ran dry

Remember when you told me you wished you could fly?  
And we promised to go everywhere in the world together  
But since you left all I see is empty airplanes soaring

Remember when I told you I hate pumpkin spice?  
And you promised to always comfort me on Halloween nights  
But you're gone now so I stay home  
Watching scary movies all alone.

Remember that December when we stayed up late  
Playing Christmas songs on the ukulele  
And you said one day we'll play a lullaby for our baby  
But the strings got cold before we could pick out room patterns

I thought we could be fixed  
But apparently you can't glue a broken plate back together  
And expect the same results

Just don't make the same promises  
To the next girl you'll ruin.

## **The Long Game**

**By: LaNeka Williams, Senior**

Let's play a game  
You string me along  
While I watch you hurt me

Let's play a game  
You hold me close  
While keeping me at arm's length

Let's play for two years  
Two years of you being my everything  
Two years of me being your nothing

Let's pretend we're in space  
I'll be the sun  
The center of the solar system  
You'll want something beyond the milky way

Let's stay up late  
Let's wish upon stars  
I'll wish for this  
More moments like this  
You'll wish for more wishes

Let's be together forever  
I don't want to play this game anymore  
You promised this was the last round

Let's end this here  
While I still think we're the only two playing his game  
You know I know otherwise

Let's call it quits  
What does she have that I don't?  
Do you like her game more?  
Does our game come with too many rules?  
Or are you just scared to lose?

Let's just stop  
We've been playing for too long  
I have been playing for too long  
And I am exhausted  
Let's not play this game.

## The Inevitable

By: Rebecca Meze, Freshman

I clasped the bouquet of flowers in my arms as I stared out into the graveyard. My mother's grave sat at the center of it all. I carefully walked around graves, rotting bouquets, and patches of dirt as I made my way through the unkempt graveyard. I gently sat the flowers in front of her headstone, the white, orange, and red of the roses making it brighter. I gently touched the marble cross and smiled as my hand passed over the cracks and stains towards the bottom.

"Happy birthday," I said under my breath. I then sighed as I closed my eyes and I felt the sunlight move off of me and onto another patch of graves, leaving my mother and me in darkness. I moved my dark brown curls to the side and hissed as the heat of the sun left behind burned my hand. I flinched as I felt a droplet of water fall onto my face. I softly opened my eyes to check for rain but was only greeted by a big eyed female. Her bright green eyes looked down at me as she straightened her back. Her sepia skin glowed in what little sunlight was left and she held a glass pitter of water in her left hand and a black, lace parasol in her right.

"Water?" She offered me. I looked at her in confusion as she swirled the jug, letting the faint sound of moving water and ice hitting glass break the silence.

"I don't have a cup." I explained as I shyly looked into her green eyes with my black ones. She quickly set down her parasol, grabbed a cup from the bag that rested on her back, and poured water into it.

"It's hot out. Water?" She asked as if she had reset herself. I softly nodded as I slowly removed the cup from her hand.

"Thanks," I said softly as I stared into the cup. I tried to visually see if there was anything wrong with the water. The female gently picked up her parasol and rested it on her shoulder. I then felt something get placed on my head. I looked up to see part of a sun hat and her pitter of water now lying on the ground. She seemed focused on the returning sun as she adjusted her parasol to block it.

"Anthony, correct?" She questioned as she seemed to refuse to look at me. Her gaze stayed fixated on the sun. Her eyes then moved to look at me, "Anthony White?" I softly nodded and replied with a soft, "yeah," as I tried to make sense of the fact that she knew my name. "Great," She said as a smile crept across her stained black lips. "Follow me." She stepped towards me, finally looking in my direction again, and extended her hand to me. I looked down at her hand, her nailed were long, sharp, and painted black.

"Where are we going." I snapped back as I looked up at her. As my head made its way up she dashed forward and placed her thumb on my forehead.

"Anthony White," She said as she ignored my question, "age seventeen. Mother: Deceased. Father: Deceased. Siblings: None. Cause of death: Car crash."

My eyes widened as I listened to her. I then watched as she pulled a scythe from her bag, dropping her parasol to do so. She then raised it above me. Before I knew what I was doing I was running the other way. I ran out of the graveyard and into the street, jumping over moving cars and hopping fences. It felt like no matter how fast I tried to run, she was right behind me. My breath quickly ran short as I tried harder and harder to speed up. Slowly I came to a walk as I gasped for air.

"Please!" I cried as I fell to the ground and grabbed the grass.

“You cannot escape death, Anthony,” she calmly said. I then heard a slash, and felt nothing. I quickly looked around me but all I saw was darkness. I then felt someone grab me from behind.

“Thank you for the flowers, sweetheart.” I heard someone say in my ear with the voice of my mother. I felt tears form in my eyes but I kept it inside and smiled.

“You’re welcome, mom.”

## Tradition

By: Shelby Powell, Freshman

The wind howled and leaves scratched against the sidewalk, mimicking the sounds of a monster. Quietly waiting, watching for the perfect moment to attack. A monster in the midst of unsuspecting souls, a murderer among saints. The cool fall air held everyone on edge, a full breath dangerous to attempt. The sun didn't lack its shining, setting a warm auburn color across the town. The town was full of silence, so much it was almost suffocating. Cleo and Liam walked in silence to school, just like they did every day. Cleo had lived in their town of Norwich Spire for almost a year, while Liam had lived there his whole life. Cleo had walked in on the first day, and Liam, sitting alone in the back, had been the only one to tell her that her shirt was inside out. They have been best friends ever since. From that moment on, Liam taught Cleo the ways of an organized schedule, and Cleo taught Liam the signs of spirit activity in a nearby area. Liam never introduced her to anyone else. After all, he didn't really have any other friends besides Cleo.

They arrived at school, and as the school day went on, they arrived to their last class of the day: History. In class, they were talking about the myths and legends surrounding the town; the most popular one being the myth of the woman who walks at midnight on the only dock in the entire town. During the day, you could usually find a lonely old man fishing, or a few seagulls, but that was about it. As the legend goes, a woman would appear at midnight on the dot, appearing out of the fog, and those who saw her were always found dead the next day, stabbed to death. Most of the class didn't seem fazed, and Liam was too busy arguing with the teacher about the importance of tradition. "Some things are meant to be kept the same, meant to be hidden, meant to be *a certain way*. Not everyone would be able to appreciate the mystery behind some of the most cherished family traditions." His argument never finished, for school had ended.

On the way home from school, Cleo concocted a plan to sneak to the dock at midnight. Liam's feet scraped against the leaves, adding an extra element to Cleo's thinking. Liam tried to talk her out of it, explaining that myths are myths for a reason, and legends are never proven to be true. But there was no stopping Cleo, so he somberly agreed to go with her. Cleo set an alarm for that night, and as it rang quietly next to her ear, she bound out of bed and out the window. Liam was waiting, and together they made it to the dock. The dock was covered in slime and fog. The fog made it hard to make out any one figure. After only five minutes, Liam seemingly bailed, and as Cleo saw a figure in the distance, she walked towards it. *Ding!* The clock struck midnight. The next morning, Cleo's body was found stabbed to death, with Liam standing beside her, stained knife in hand. "Tradition is tradition. It had to be completed." He dropped the knife, shaking his head at what he had done.

**The End...**

## Halloween

By: Brooklyn Cooper, Senior

I was so excited for this Halloween party; I had just bought a brand new camera so I was going to upload every second of it to my YouTube channel. I wanted to get Alexandra, my best friend, out of the house. Plus, it was her 18th birthday... who knew it would end in such horror.

I got home from school and started getting ready. Alexandra was going to meet me at my place so we could get ready together. As soon as she walked in, she started changing.

"Girl, I'm so ready for this party. I really need this, I've been so stressed," she said. I felt so bad for my best friend. I could see the pain in her eyes, I knew she'd never be the same again. Her mother died a month back and she'd been really down. Her brother started to get into so much trouble.

"I know," I said. I didn't really know what else to say because I didn't even know my biological mother. I was never really the type of person to show any type of emotion. You could say I was nonchalant towards just about everything.

After we finished getting ready, we got into her car and started our route to the party. I had set up my camera on the dashboard and started recording a vlog. We talked about how she felt after her mom died and her take on her brother's actions. In the middle of our video, her brother called.

"Hey, Alex, what're you doing? We're on our-" She was trying to inform him of us being on our way but he cut her off and sounded like he was in hurry, so Alexandra put him on speaker.

"Turn around! It's not safe, they're kill-" Then the line went dead. Alexandra tried to call back a number of times but nobody answered.

We pulled over to the side of the road to wrap our heads around what had happened.

"What the heck was that?!" Alexandra shouted.

"It's Halloween," I pointed out, "maybe it's a Halloween thing."

"Yeah, you're probably right," she said.

With that being said, we continued our route to the party. I grabbed my camera and recorded our entry into the function. When we arrived, something was off. There weren't kids outside with drinks having conversations. There wasn't even any loud music. When we walked inside, there was blood everywhere.

"Whoa, this is so cool! They really got creative with this," Alexandra said.

I took a step closer to the walls and examined the blood. '*This isn't fake*', I thought to myself.

"Alexandra, this isn't fake," I said cautiously. I began to observe my surroundings, staying alert.

"You're always so serious, Lana," she said. She kept walking, not watching where she was going, and tripped over one of our buddies from school.

"John! You're wasted!" She said with laughter.

I always knew that Alexandra was a little slow, but she was being an extreme airhead. It was clear that something happened.

"Alexandra, he isn't intoxicated," I said.

"Oh, how would you know, Einstein?" she said sarcastically.

"Look at his shirt." I pointed to his blood-covered top.

Alexandra ran into the kitchen and began puking.

“He’s dead! We’re in a house full of dead people!” she shouted.

I held her hair while she was vomiting and led her to sit down. She called her brother countless times but he didn’t answer. She started to cry. *‘What if he’s dead?’* I thought to myself. I didn’t even know what to say her so I tried to keep her comforted.

About 10 minutes later, we heard the sound of cars pulling up and car doors closing. We walked onto the porch and saw 6 boys and 1 girl holding guns, a bow and arrow, and a machete. When they noticed us, there was nothing but silence. They had masks on so I couldn’t make anyone out, except for one person: Michael Flask. I only knew who he was because of a scar he had above his right knee.

“Michael? What’re you doing? Where is everyone?” I asked.

“They’re dead,” he said with absolutely no remorse.

“Where’s my brother?!” Alexandra shouted.

“Lucky for him, he got away. I don’t know where he went, but luckily, you can take his place,” he said. The masked people that were with him began cheering.

“Oh, no. I don’t know what’s going on here but I’m out of here,” Alexandra said. When saying this she started walking away. When she reached the end of the porch, the girl with the bow and arrow leveled it at Alexandra.

“Don’t move, Alexandra!” I shouted.

“Looks like we’re about to have some fun,” he paused and smirked, “Happy Halloween!”

## **Insomnia**

**By: Maya Joyner, Freshman**

Insomnia is definitely a \_\_\_\_\_. I toss and turn, try to count sheep, and sing myself to sleep, but nothing works. I just lay there and my body begins to feel numb. I hear the shaking of my house and it scares me, but I can't move. My body is paralyzed. At this moment I wish I were tossing and turning. I shut my eyes for a second to see if it will go away. Of course, nothing happens. The silence puts a weight on my chest and I just want to scream but I can't. Hours pass by and odd things start to happen. Blood runs down the walls and a loud siren rings. My heart drops and I don't know what to do. My body hurts and the siren gets louder. Then it appears, a faint white shadow creeps near the window. I blink once and it's gone. It comes back lurking near the bedroom door. My body, still numb, tries to get up, but I can't. The shadow comes closer, saying things I've never heard before. Soon it's closer to me, the blood rushes down the walls faster, the siren becomes even louder. And the figure reaches out to me out and yanks me up, opens its mouth, and swallows me whole. I'm still alive but I'm in a white room and in red lettering on the wall its says "Prepare to die."