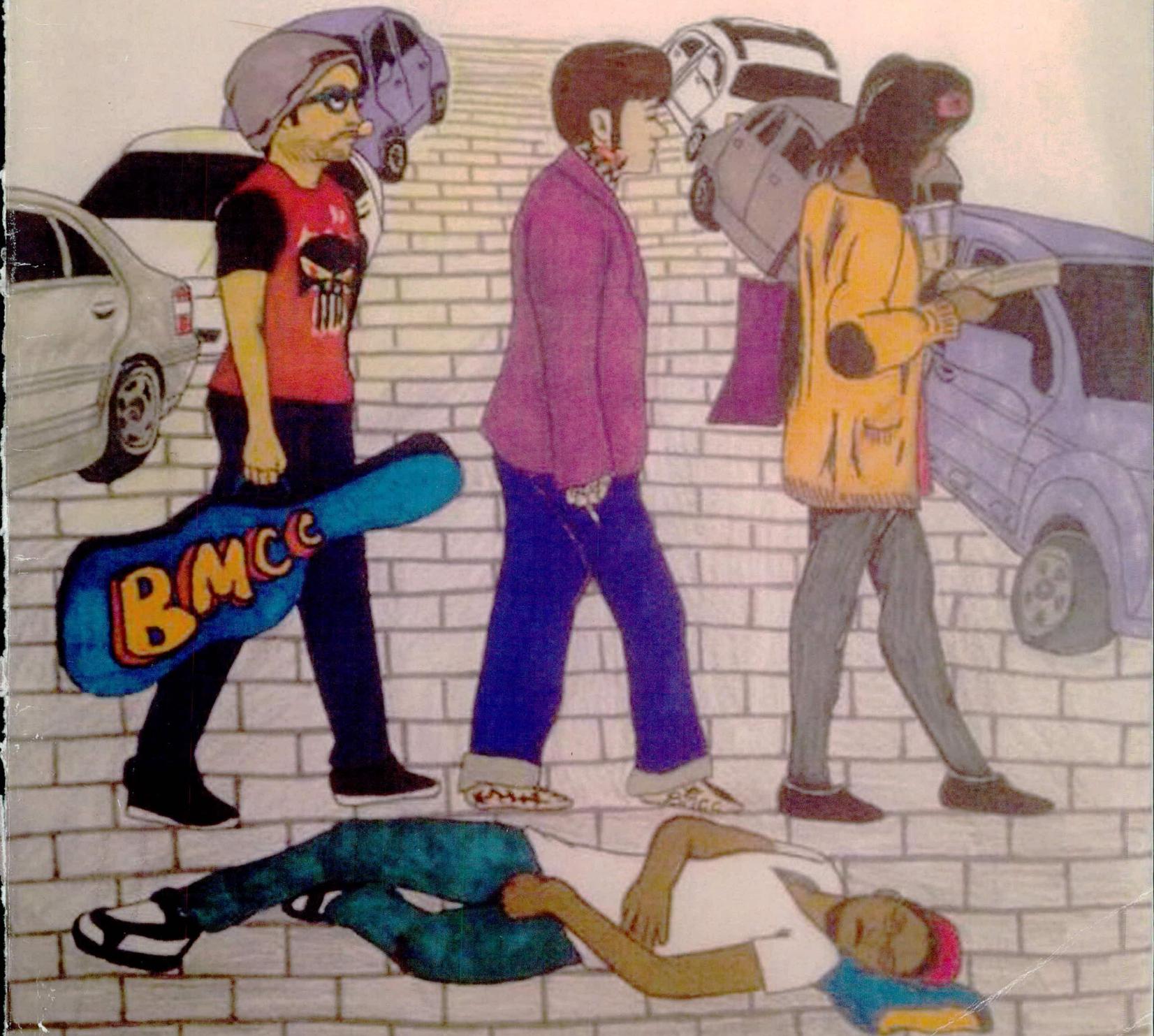
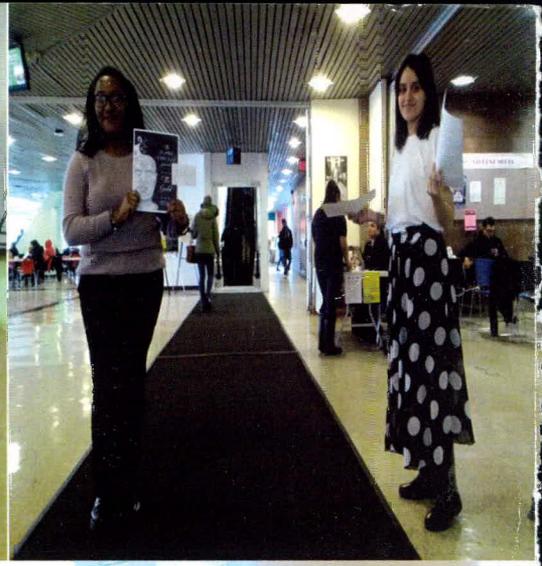
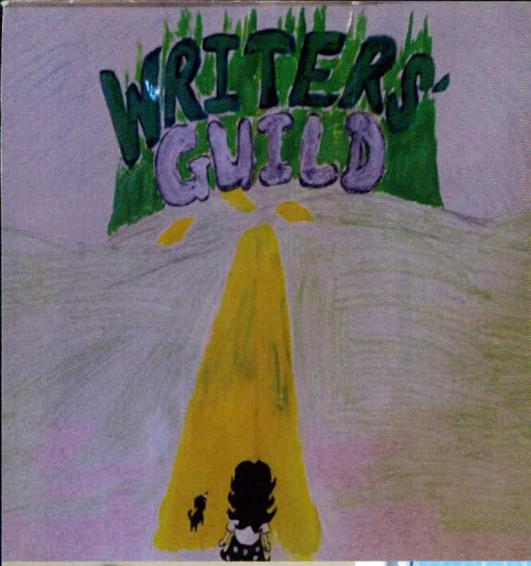


BA  "R" "R'S GUILD

PRESENTS

"THE GUILD"
SPRING 2015





WELCOME TO "THE GUILD"

WELCOME TO "THE GUILD," A DIVERSE LITERARY MAGAZINE HERE AT BMCC THAT WAS CREATED BY STUDENT FOR STUDENTS. OUR OWN LITTLE SIDE PROJECT HERE AT THE BMCC WRITERS' GUILD.

THE MAGAZINE YOU ARE HOLDING CONTAINS VARIOUS STORIES WRITTEN BY PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUND, AND SHARING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. WHAT WE ALL HOPE EACH YOU WILL TAKE WHEN YOU READ THIS MAGAZINE IS A TEMPORARY RELEASE OF JOY, ENTERTAINMENT, AND DEEP THINKING.

THANK YOU SO MUCH TO **PROFESSOR LARA STAPLETON**, ADVISOR OF THE BMCC WRITERS' GUILD, FOR DOING WHAT YOU DO, AND GIVING THIS CLUB EXCELLENT DIRECTIONS EXTRA THANKS TO PROFESSOR NITA NOVENO FOR HER BEHIND THE SCENES WORK.

SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO **REY HARRIS**, PREVIOUS PRESIDENT OF THE BMCC WRITERS' GUILD, FOR BEING THE ULTIMATE COLLABORATOR, AND PROVIDING EXCELLENT INSIGHTS IN PUTTING THIS ISSUE TOGETHER.

ANOTHER SHOUTOUT TO **THE BEATLES** FOR CREATING THE ALBUM COVER "ABBEY ROAD."

THANK YOU SO MUCH TO **KAYLA LOPEZ** FOR BEING A CREATIVE GENIUS IN REMAKING THE ICONIC ALBUM COVER, BRINGING IT TO NEW YORK CITY, AND REMIXING IT INTO WHAT IS NOW THE COVER OF THE SPRING 2015 ISSUE OF "THE GUILD."

MOST IMPORTANTLY, THANK YOU THE READER FOR CONTINUING TO LET US DO THIS. THIS IS OUR FIFTH ISSUE, AND WE'RE GROWING EVERY SINGLE ISSUE.

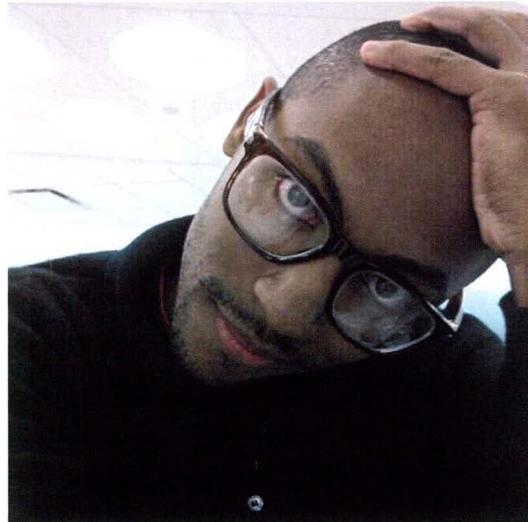
IF YOU LIKE WHAT YOU READ, AND YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ALSO HAVE A STORY TO TELL, FEEL FREE TO SUBMIT TO THE NEXT ISSUE. WE PRETTY MUCH SUBMIT CREATIVE WORKS OF ANY KINDS.

THEGUILD.SUBMIT@GMAIL.COM

MEET THE GUILD

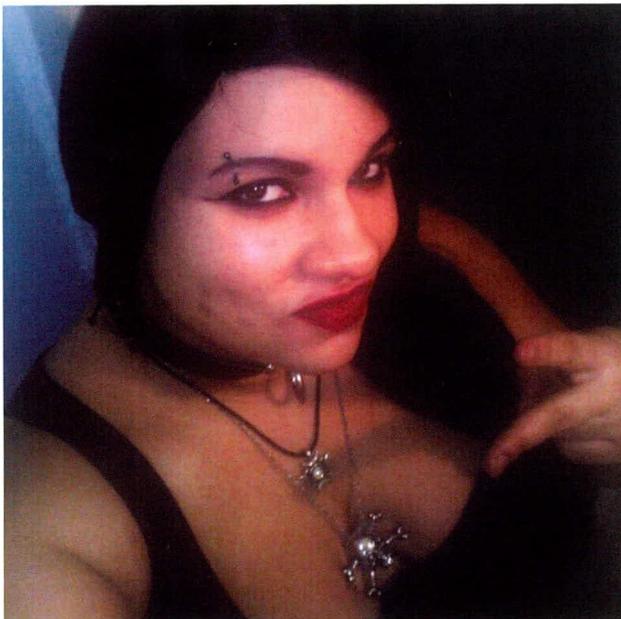
Roque Caston
Editor-In-Chief
Vice-President

Roque Caston is a Writing & Literature major here at BMCC. He created the online blog "Roque Wrote This!" He dreams of writing novels and critical essays. When not writing, he's walking around the streets of New York getting inspired everyday.



Penelope Paulino
Editor
President

I'm a Liberal Arts major here at BMCC and current President of the BMCC Writers' Guild. I'm passionate about all forms of art, especially writing (obviously). In my spare time I write poetry, short stories, and novels. When I'm not writing, I'm either at an art museum or indulging in a glass of Moscato and Symphonic Goth Metal. I aim to become a best selling writer one day as well as an accomplished violinist so I can die happy! Haha!



Carlos Martinez
Editor

"Writer of Fiction and Poetry. I can be your friend, lover, enemy, or your inner conscience. Whatever floats your boat. I'm the love child of the 60's, the rebel of the 50', that's stuck in the nightmare of this strange and upsetting 21st Century. if you ever find me, wake me up. NOW! When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."



Kayla Lopez
Editor

This is Kayla Diana Lopez and she is a young artist living in Manhattan, New York. 18 years old and enrolled in BMCC, her college life is filled with creativity. From the way she dressed in her own freshly made Panda Mask at Halloween (that almost won her a prize), and to the way she has used her artwork and mind to benefit others. Kayla's interest is making others smile and day brighten with a dose of imagination and positive productivity!

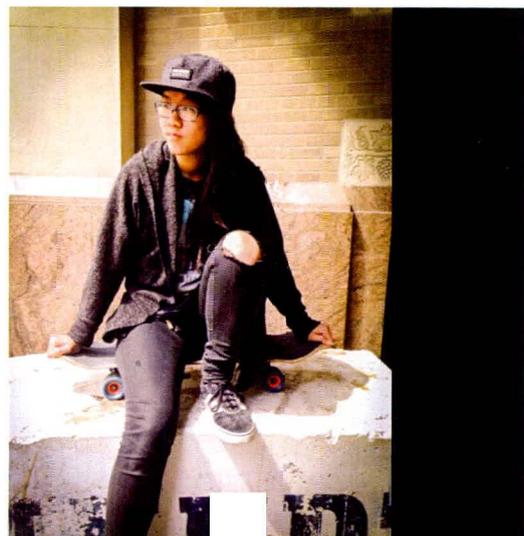


Jada Gordon
Editor

Hey guys!! I'm Jada. This is my second semester in BMCC and I enjoy writing and the arts in general. I love writing poetry, short stories, essays, etc. I also enjoy singing and writing music. My other interests include traveling (especially to abandoned places), reading, being a music lover, walking and finding lots of vintage stuff. If you want to see some of my work it's on Wordpress on either Lucana Magazine and my blog <https://jadagordon95.wordpress.com/>

Rebecca Nghi
Editor

Rebecca Nghi is a passionate hipster from Queens with a taste for adventure. She loves blogging, volunteer work, skateboarding, and fashion. She's only been skateboarding for two years, and hopes to become a pro by the third.



ABOUT THE BMCC WRITERS' GUILD



The BMCC Writers' Guild is without a doubt one of the most dynamic and diverse clubs here at BMCC when it comes to the arts. Our clubs attract various groups of young ones from various creative mediums - writers, musicians, poets, activists, gamers, optimists, lovers, adventurists, etc.

When you enter this room it's like entering a world that accepts you for being you. When we share our real life or fictional stories, we open the door for others to do the same. To listen, process, and share our perspectives on life. We all have a different view on life. This group gives you the opportunity to share that tale, and give you the love, feedback, intimacy, and respect you deserve.

There is truly no club like this. During all the hard work, we laugh with each other, and goof around like we're little kids again. Life is not always serious. There are moments when you deserve a laugh, and to just lounge with that Philly cheesesteak on the side. This club will give you that opportunity.

So what are you waiting for? Come join the best creative arts club on campus. The BMCC Writers' Club.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dear fellow readers,

When it comes to college I feel like we all have a story to tell about this next level of our lives. That's why I thought it was a good issue for the theme of this issue to be "College Life." Stories about college can be good or bad. Either way, there is a story to tell. I feel like not everyone understands what college can truly do to a person when they enter those halls, and advance to the level of education. The minute you thought high school was something, college steps in, and it's whole new world.

College comes into the time of our lives when we become full blown adults. We've entered the real world and are no longer under the protection of our parents. There are no safe guards. It's us against the world.

Many of us have to learn what it's like paying a bill for the first time, which mostly comes in the form of student tuition. The education system is incredibly different from high school, and you have to adapt to this new method.

Granted, there are some good things about college. You meet new friends who might become those people you spend the rest of your life with. You're experiencing your first college romance. You are freely walking around the city, and is finally getting the full experience on the freedom of independent life.

These are things I truly hope you'll take with you when you finish reading this issue. Look at this magazine as a catalogue of stories. Think of this as a permanent stamp on life that detailed everything that's going on in college right now. I hope you will take these different perspectives to heart, and most important, be entertained on what just you read.

I agree with you. College can be a major bitch sometimes, but it is well worth it towards the end. Keep your head up high, and don't let life overwhelm you. If you fight and power through the ups and downs of college life, you'll be utterly shocked the new person you look at when you see your reflection in the bathroom mirror.

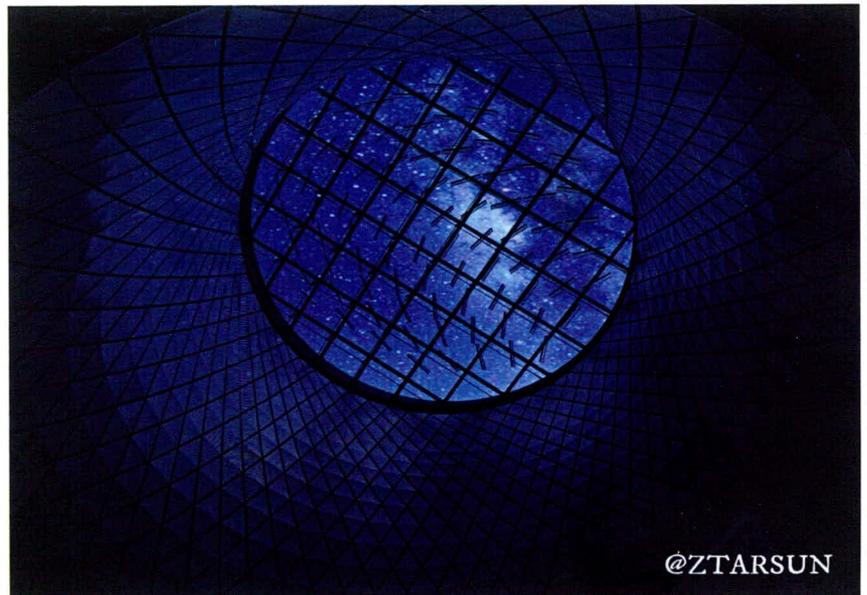
So begin flipping through the pages and have a good read.

-ROQUE CASTON

ART /

PHOTOGRAPHY

By Nusrat Zerman



@ZTARSUN



POETRY

SAVAGE LAND

By Carlos Martinez

High above those tropical trees lay hungry deformed ants eating off the burnt seeds' nutrients.

The bandits mix their whiskey with gunpowder, and I've yet to see a dead man fire back.

Pesky mosquitos there are. Blood sucking buggers. It's not blood they're after. They really stick their needle mouths in me. Like they're trying to enter my bloodstream. Eating me inside.

May the natives go along with their orgy dances that later lead to bloodshed violence. The spirits of their ancestors enter their vessels during the dances. They convulse and spasm. They serenaded the old songs their grandfathers listen to while the grandmothers used to get plowed by Mr. Rico Suave across the street. Poor boys and girls. They're not virgins but they can't copulate properly. No! That's not where it goes!

Little dark kids in rags grow weed on a distant valley and sell it to the white man. They don't know how to grow it well. They dump whatever fluids to the plant. White man takes a hit. Gets a coughing attack.

The junkie is the pilot. The aging wrinkled queen is the stewardess. A chicken coup plane also used to ship prostitutes is still filthy from its early bird special night flight, and we're not talking about chickens. Sit back; relax. Fasten your seatbelts. We'll be flying through a hazy pink sky with birds so high they think they're fishes with wings.

THROUGH AND TRUE

Walking through it all
Knowing that it was worth taking a fall
Keeping the tears behind the mask
It was such a daunting task
It makes us crazy
It makes us rebels against the machine
Giving so much to feel whole
To remain with remains of bursted bubbles
and dreams
Through all the scams and schemes
I found you
The true diamond in the rough
The really rough rivers i don't mind riding
with
Your curves and bumps in your river are
mine
I'll skate away until the end of time
If you promise to take a stand of life
With me
All the pain and strife can be taken in stride
and set free like a ribbon in the sky.

ANCHORS

Holding me down with all the power you have is
exhilarating but it won't help me
It won't free me
The anchors at the bottom, unchain me like a
melody

Life could be sweet like candy
If you weren't so stubborn
Plans don't go smooth and dandy
Sometimes timing is torn

I could map the answers in the stars
And watch your bumbling slip off your lips in
confusion
But you wouldn't accept it
You wouldn't entertain it
The universe couldn't maintain it

Fake what you can
But deep down you're a jester
Love to you is profound
To you caring for me is being a clown

Life could be sweet like candy
If you weren't so stubborn
Plans don't go smooth and dandy
Sometimes timing is torn

I live in my truth
You're so withered your lies cave in on you like a
roof
Pull me down, do what makes you feel comfort-

BOTH PIECES BY ADA GORDON

WORDS I'LL NEVER SAY

By Katerine Blume

Trying to decide if I missed out on your presence
or the idea of what we were supposed to become.
I used to wonder if I'd turn out to be an incomplete human being
due to the hole you left in my past.
People say I look like you. But when I speak.
They hear parts of him.
My hands, my hips, the shape of my eyes.
It's terrifying to me.
I look like the woman who left us behind.
Our conversations are simply filled with small talk.
I found my strength and weaknesses through his absence.
Made peace with the man who left me with marks.
But you, I still wonder about.
I fear the eyes I resemble because
you're everything I refuse to become.
There's a part of me that still wishes
you would of been stronger and kind.

INSIDE A REBELS MIND

By Deyquan Bellamy

Asserting agitated aggression by altering alternates through systematic ascension

Larger than life, a leviathan to a world of minute lackeys

Promises of power and glory for an imaginary fight that benefits no one yet affects all, while
youth are forced to revert to savagery

Hell has made its way onto our plane, eradicating all that has life in the blink of an eye, city struc-
tures are nothing more than ash

An alienated world that no longer bears the green grass that once covered the earth, oceans that
supported life now carries the remains of what once was

END OF THE CYCLE

By Deyquan Bellamy

If you saw me beside my "colored" brethren and he held a gun to my head while my hands were empty and raised what would you do?

It seems that you're still hellbent on the slaughter of my people and those who support us

All those faceless faces focused on the sounds of sonic booms and crippling body in the center of the street

The attempt to colonize a race by molding them into what you want them to be, meticulous and subtle in which you erase the the roots of such people

Judge me not for the complexion of my skin, but the wisdom that I bestow upon you, the elegance in which my words flow, the impact that my presence has on society, most of all judge me as an equal to you

As I rise from the grave you'll see generations of oppression, debilitating sadness, the blood-thirsty taste for vengeance, and sorrow within my dilated eyes

The spirits of my enslaved forefathers burn passionately through my mind and body, some beckon me to crush the lot of you with the speed of lightning and the power of dormant super-volcanoes awakening from its comatose state

Others speak in a more soft soothing tone, they tell me to forgive you and teach you the error of your ways whilst preparing to reform my generation and the ones after

GRATEFUL

The black of despair warms the soul and hugs the spirit
While the struggle to joy is a cold and lonely climb
The soothing waters of self-pity invite us to its river
While hope seems frozen and far away.
If cold had a tone it would be dark
And if dark had a temperature it would be cold
Welcome us. O' winter, who harbor both
I brave the winter and let the storm take its course
When the sleeting hail begins to cry,
I am grateful to have a home.
And maybe tomorrow
The despair will melt with the snow and ice,
And in its place a blossom of hope.

STREET LIGHTS

A parade of people pass me every day,
I help the city live up to its name.
By keeping my light bulb shiny and bright,
I keep the homeless woman warm at night.
She sits on my thighs under my light,
And stays for hours at a time.
Sometimes People put sign on my pole,
Or lean on me to rest for a minute or so.
I am one of the big city lights,
There are songs written about me.
I am so proud to be the light in people's way,
I fight away the fears that arrive with the dark.
I love my purpose,
It is clear and simple.
I am here for you,

BOTH PIECES
BY: RACHEL FINKELSTEIN

BROKEN HEARTED BRIDGE

By Rachel Finkelstein

Under a full moon light,
I stood on the Brooklyn Bridge
Along with my open scars
To the east I saw the city lit up,
Amongst the high rises were hidden stars,
To my west in along glaze distance was a memory of you,
My Brooklyn boy.
I could see the stars shine over you,
It's so bright but all I see is the color blue.
We were the bridge.
Steady as the steel that holds the bridge,
We were Inseparable like Siamese twins.
But like the death of Roebling ,
We too sustained an injury that pinned our hearts against a piling of outraged emotions.
The crush amputated us from one another,
To the east and west unable to meet in the middle.
Our ways separate like the bridge separates from one side to another.
I hear your smile and feel your Joyce
You hold me tight and whisper words of love
I look back but see your ghost
You're not here beside me
On our Brooklyn Bridge where are hearts first met.
My heart is dead weight a motionless mass
It is a wonder the bridge still stands
Like the water rushing among pier's
The memory of you comes in flashes
Causing my eyes to tear and my soul to scream.
My heart once young and restless eager to please
I can run a mile from the east to the west
Now old and aching with every step I take on this broken hearted bridge
A tight grip stifles my thoughts
Is that you? I turn facing my hopes
O' never mind it's the wind over the east river side.
I stand on top of the Brooklyn Bridge
Trying to forget

'NO PERFECT TIME FOR LOVE'

By Davi Ann Shiwprasad

Maybe I should tell you how butterflies dances around me
Or how my body reacts to the whiff of air as you pass by
Or maybe I should silence myself like the nights on a cold winter evening
for I'd rather succumb in the warmth of my own flesh.

And one good day you will know , and that I don't mind
Time is infinite, time is present, time has never let me down
With time, improvement is inevitable
And with the moon comes the sun in the break of dawn
And with life so repetitive
It goes on and on...

But why do I care if this eclipse happens?
Would the flowers even welcome the monstrous bee?
The flowers are a charm indeed, the bees so dangerous
And after the summer nights, the flower loses its fragrance
And the bee carries sweet nectar forever and ever

And what if it never happens?
And what if the moon never catches the sun?
Time still happens peacefully
But even if it does Oh what beautiful a disaster it would be
Then, Should I lift my head out of the river of loneliness
And get hit right back in by the criticisms of angry waves?

But time is forever, not my legacy, not even me
And though I float with the years that passes
The years will soon float away no longer will it be by my side

Maybe atlas I should rid myself of the burdens I bear
My despair, loneliness and indecisiveness
Maybe I, the moon, should kiss the sun
I, the bee should sting the petals
I, the seaweed should tumble amongst the blankets of waves.
I, the one that craves your love should tell you what effect you have on my delicate soul.

WARM DAYDREAMS

By Carlos Martinez

Tall cool sky falling with a faint of cold brushing one's skin,
Gardens of eden where one used to flee away inside,
Days of fun that tie up with nights of adventure,
With our heads thinking of fireworks, cotton candy, and synthetic animals.

See those dandelions flying away carrying with them,
Carrying that same wish from every child that everyday will be like this forever,
And they grow to make more dandalions,
Because human beings are all about wishing.

Little or no time for things that no matter,
For not being kept in,
While the flowers are opening up,
But the air never felt so good.

Lemonades and cocktails for everyday,
Hugs and kisses for everynight,
Shining stars for every midnight,
And warm daydreams on days like these.

MORE TO ME

By Joaraliz Jimenez

Raised in unknown hands getting fed by someone I didn't know, got used to calling him dad but after a while that wasn't the case anymore.

See everything started when I was 6, I was only a child who loved to sing; extremely innocent and gullible, I'd even give my chair to the elderly to sit. I had no type of negativity no type of dirty thoughts I was only in the first grade I hadn't learn right from wrong. This person who happens to be my brother's father, took advantage to the fullest and threatened me not to tell my mother. His fingers on my earlobes wandering in circles while I was "asleep," awake in the inside while my eyes were closed so he wouldn't see. When suddenly, his feel disappears. I open them up thinking he'd leave, oh boy was I wrong that would just make him the happiest human being. He'd make me get up even when I didn't want to, he'd make me react even when I didn't wanna' move.

"Can I get a hug I feel so lonely," I love you babygirl you're my one and only. "I'd just look at him with fear in my eyes since I knew his words were beautified with lies.

Fast movement Heavy breathing, touching everywhere, getting out wasn't easy. Whispers in my EARS, saying "don't scream don't do it please," highly wishing that my mom would eventually hear; but that was never the case in fact that was my worst mistake, I'd always try to find a way out but instead he'd struggle with me to stay. He'd tell me not to tell, it was always the first thing on his mind it was also the last thing he said as if he was giving me advice.

From the second I'd wake up to the moment he'd decide to stop, I'd feel so used I kid you not. I'd feel so disgusted I would always want to cry, but I could only drown in my tears in this misery of mine. Eventually I'd go back to bed and wish that this will someday end, I've never felt so dirty but then again.. I wasn't even 10. I was a little kid trying to go big this episode hit extremes these images will forever stay in my head. I had no choice but to stay shut, I was lost and confused so I decided to let em' rock now that I'm older I understand.. but I still ask myself why me?.. In the other hand, my mom has no clue till' this day she knows nothing, I've been waiting on the day to throw it in his face in front of my whole family and make him regret.. what he's done..

But, now I'm here standing saying what happened to me I'm delivering a message I hope you appreciate my writing. Never let anyone force you into doing things you don't want to, be brave and be strong because me, I understand you. It doesn't matter how close they claim to be, how real they are and how trustworthy they wanna' seem, it's only a matter of time that you'll soon realize the type of person they're shaped to be. I've had to deal with this for 13 years now there's more to me than just poetry, not everyone knows my life story except for the ones that will never judge me.

This didn't only make me stronger but definitely a much wiser person.. more than just a girl whom wants to be heard when spoken.

RES. RAIN

By Penelope Paulino

In the company of Jameson and Newports, I lie here in this hollow alcove that becomes my room.

The thought of our shared ideologies seem agreeable when sprung from your lips, but in my own recesses, I laugh at the hypocrisy lurking in the corners of my heart.

No to sex,

No to lust,

No to commitment,

And absolutely forbid love if you please because it is all so tedious, so mundane.

Completely unacceptable by our standards or yours?

Yes, I agree

And I say that as sincerely as I am when I explore myself

That illicit member, the very appendage that makes me a man wages war against its master,

Fuck your feelings,

Fuck your common sense,

Fuck your better judgement,

And yes, her too,

Because there's no point in me lying to myself and these walls I have built

So I simply laugh harder in a vain effort to silence the incubus that wants to devour every inch of you and more,

To hell with our feigned modesty!

To hell with our feelings!

To hell with this façade!

Let us remove our masks and undress our words, woman,

Let your legs do the talking, not your mouth,

Let your heart do the shouting, not your mind,

And let my hands reveal your body, not my eyes,

I'm done being your diary and your keeper,

So enough of your swooning, mistress,

Because I'm ready to be your master and your slave.

A BETTER TOMORROW, STARTS TODAY

By Austin Cabrera

More money in our pockets
wont change our problems

OVER CONSUMPTION

Our foundation is corrupted
As are we - I know I ordered a book online, but did I ever question how did it arrive?

Where I'm from there isn't many signs of trees, lakes or mountains.
Maybe that's why I feel so disgusted...

All I noticed are walls of brick or of steel,
towering high, blocking the sky.

Shoot, without all these lights, we might actually be able to see the stars,
maybe another planet from afar.

Why do humans rob themselves of life?
Why do we hoard resources?
Or even go to war?

There's something not right with our minds.
It seems we are fixated with our vices, majority of the time.

We pay little attention to our Mother.
We neglect her as we do our Father.
We are children, until the day we acknowledge this.
Until our actions mature, we are stuck on ignorant without bliss.

I love my planet for what it is and for what it is not.

Though there are Volcanoes that pollute the sky and ooze lava out.
Though there are Twisters that destroy our towns.
Though there are Hurricanes that submerge our cities.

Pretending that nature doesn't exist, is our ignorance staring us in the face.
For we come from nature and we act similarly the same.

Respecting nature means respecting ourselves.

The air you breathe is not owned but shared.
So make every breath count and show that you care.

WIRELESS WISDOM

By Austin Cabrera

College college college,
You sure... know how to test my knowledge.

Last time I checked,
college was a place to develop your individuality.

On the contrary, I've seen my fellow peers worry and conform - due to fear.
Finding themselves amongst small narrow minded cliques - to satisfy an insecurity.
Where individualism is scraped and stripped - suffocated and branded unoriginal.

I've seen our halls with those who dive into their phones - to escape, to achieve refuge through
digital abandoned caves of superficial comfort.
Overly occupied with their devices, under some page, stream or app.
Clicking and scrolling more than sharing and laughing.

Some students find themselves in a awkward silence - all alone .
Twitch and cringe at the thought of being noticed, as if someone waved or smiled - from afar.
"What does she want? With her optimistic views, mood and attitude.
I slave over these books and don't get me started on work.
All of these thoughts explode into unrecognizable fragments of smoke - rushing from my head.
I'm stressed, depressed and slowly disconnecting from love. And For What?

College college college,
I've join a club; but something was missing.
I've shared my ideas -over and over again.
Has my passion disrupted my hopeless peers?
"Let's make every moment count"
But how could you, if all you hear is doubt.

Students used to be rebels and daredevils,
Students used to be revolutionary and outspoken,
Students used to voice their hearts, express their cries, stand up for what they felt was right,
Students used to challenge the norm - used to cause a spark, expose lies, shed light on the dark,
Students forgot how to lead innovating dreams into reality,
To create, to collaborate, to break free from the grip of nay sayers, and oppressing figures!

College college college
You're not all bad now.
Here and there, I'm proud to see your interesting mix of surprises.

Like the time,
I heard a group of musicians singing and dancing, making their way towards their classes.
Like the time ,
A professor of mines once told me they had believed in me.
Like the time,
I've looked out your windows and the sun elegantly gave me hope.
Like the time
Your curvy hallways accidentally help two strangers - collide hearts.

College is a place to learn and broaden your life, your mind, your heart, and your soul.
A place to encourage you to overcome your fears ,your past, your tears and failures.
There's a reason why I once saw a posted that read " What does diversity mean to you?"
But I couldn't tell you how, but I could tell you this:

To me diversity is a collection of different perspectives.
Diversity is more than Race, than Gender, plus Religion all together.
It's a way of living.
It's a lifestyle.
If you only stick to what you find familiar - you're limited by the ceiling you've create.

To attend college is to practice a form of love,
To love, is to care, nurture, and share.
To be a student, is to live, in this class called life.

To live, is to be optimums through your struggle.
To be humble and grateful, to be determined and persistent.
To help others out from the dark and blinding space.
Not through force or hate, but with time.

College is not an experience you can save on your computer or store in a cloud or drop box.
College is an experience... some of us are missing.

Ask yourself - is attendance satisfying my mission?
Am I producing the best I know how to?
Can I contribute more to the world , than just observe and live it?
Are my hands striking any chords; vibrating thoughts into words, words into actions?
Riddled with questions, I only allow myself to be overwhelmed, a little at a time.

Without these questions of mines and of others, would I ever find myself amongst and apart of
the answers?

So I finally say with great importance,

“If you Limit yourself, you might find yourself bitter with doubt.

Forever lost, a bottle lost at sea; soon to be found on a beach- but the message you’ve shared long ago, will take someone several years to understand, what you wrote.

One thing that isn’t on your side , is time.

Or

Uplift yourself and see yourself

Rise to the occasion- continuing your mission- staying focus- staying committed,

Finding yourself leaving behind a grand legacy for others to witness and marvel
your wireless wisdom.

College college college,

You sure... know how to test my knowledge.

The End

SHORT STORIES

BRAINSTROMING

By Ei Khaing Phyo

Before the last five minutes of the class, my teacher assigned the first writing homework. I'm starting to zone out, thinking, "What the hell am I going to write? It's not like I ever had the ideas shooting out of my head like a machine gun." I didn't hear what the professor said after. English is abusing my consciousness.

I packed my stuff and came out of the class, anyway. The words that he said were locked up in my head, "Think like a director." My thoughts go back to check in some files of past memories, editing unnecessary scenes. I must be a terrible director. It came out blank. I'll give it one more try. I'll let loose my imagination in wonderland. When my Alice in Wonderland awakes, she could give me something good that I could redeem with an A+.

Before I know it, I'm at the subway station entrance. A stout, pale-skinned stranger in sturdy sandals is staring at me. Perhaps I seem a bit odd or off to her. Perhaps I look like a modern day soulless zombie to her. She comes closer to me and asks, "Are you OK?" Despite the fact that I'm not sure who is the one a bit odd, I appreciate her concern. I answer her with a smile, "Yes, I'm OK. Thanks." "It's just English, Dear", I don't let these words out of my mouth though.

I swipe my metro card. After a few minutes later, the train approaches to the station. I get on the train and make myself comfortable on the seat next to the window. My eyes are locked up in a gaze looking out the window. The train has passed station after station. It is crossing Manhattan Bridge. I enjoy the view over the bridge. Especially today, I turn off my so-much-in-touch-with-reality consciousness. I let my mind drift off. I'm looking out the window. Each of those huge metal bars from the bridge has passed through my view one after another. Those nagging thoughts of homework cut into my mind while procrastinating. I'm having a dejavu feeling. Of course, it is just like the days when I was in my homeland college in freshman year. The ride, the thoughts and the bridge resemble my old days. That subsequently reminds me of one unforgettable event.

Back in my home land, the time the gang and I were freshmen in college was the awesomest time ever. We took advantage of traffic on the bridge. We visited the back or the front school bus, transported some drinks with us. Some would come out of the bus and walk on the bridge. The bus driver would yell at us. Respectfully, we would not come back to the bus unless the bus was about to leave. We would turn our school bus into our own private rocket ship. Did we make a loud noise or play music loud? I don't think I need to answer that. We enjoyed our newly found freedom.

There were other school buses for senior students in the same township. Those seniors wanted to mark their territory. One of them pushed our friend after we got off from the bus on the way walking back home. One of them smacked my friend's head with a metal lunch box. Obviously,

they were inviting us to a fight. We would not say "No." We felt pretty welcoming to it. One of our boys served the first fist to that senior's face. In the blink of an eye, we were with all of those seniors in a giant dust ball on the street. Everyone was so fast that we couldn't even see who hit whom. I saw someone was grabbing a brick on the sidewalk. It's not something strange in Burma to see an unsafe half-finished construction site, where you could find a brick or any sharp metal. The fight transformed from ice-pack to E.R(Emergency Room) level. A few minutes later, some of the seniors fled away to the nearby neighborhood. The rest of them understood the situation and ran off. Some of us came out with blood and bruises.

The police who were in charge of the area saw us the last few minutes. Luck was not on our side. We all ended up at the police station for the night. The police notified our parents to bail us out. We explained what happened to the police. Of course, we were so taking those seniors down with us, now that we were already in the police station. They investigated their names and their addresses. Soon after, they also arrived to the police station. Just a few minutes later, our parents rushed into the police station. The officers saw some of our parents' faces. They know our parents have good reputation in town. They have well-respected high profiles. We knew things would start to get easier for us.

One of our friends who visited the E.R(Emergency Room) while we were in the police station had awakened. We all went to the E.R to see him. We told him the episode he missed out after he was knocked out. Ironically, we found it fun to be in a fight and to be bailed out, although we didn't try that again. I still can't find the tool to translate the ego impulsive teenage mind. Something's for sure, we had fun.

A voice draws my attention, "This is Bay Parkway. The Next stop is 25th Ave. Please, stand clear of the closing door". Before I finish my train of thought, the train I take has arrived to the station. The operator's voice has snapped me out of my wonderland, set my eyes free from the window.

My feet take off from the train but my mind doesn't seem to take off from its train of thought. Well, I still have a couple of blocks to walk. Now, I got an idea. How will I put it in words? Am I able to pull the lightning bolt out of my hand on paper? My half-awakened body just hit the front door. As I step in, I hear my cat's meowing asking for food. Dishes are in the sink. I've got to get back into my routine. I lost my flow. Perhaps, it will come back tomorrow when I take the train again.

It is just another morning at 8 o' clock. An airplane is flying over my head. I'm thinking of flying over to them. I can fly back and visit them, but we cannot fly back to the time when we had fun together. Everyone is busy starting new phases in life in different fields in different countries. Now, we are just spread-out individuals who are going after what we want.

INDIAN RAIN

By Sherrod Staton

It was the good ol' days, 1955. Rosa Parks set the Civil Rights movement in motion by refusing to give her seat to a white passenger, Disney Land opened in California, and in God we trust was put on the back of the U.S. dollar bill, and in Greensville North Carolina another monumental event was on the horizon; the fateful meeting of Orlando Staton and Ruth Wilson. He had seen her before, but he couldn't help but see her. She had bought tickets from his box office for the past six Saturdays. They had exchanged the normal pleasantries of customer and employee; the hello's and how are you, with some flirting in between. But this Saturday was going to be different. This would be the lucky number seven.

Orlando saw Ruth walk toward his box office. Her tan brown skin shining in the sunlight of a warm spring day gave off an angelic radiance that engulfed everything around her. Her long straight jet black hair, flowing down her back in a neat pony tail, reflecting her Lumbee Native American Heritage that she got from her father. Her four foot eleven frame elevated by her tiny white tennis shoes and her formal skirt and denim jacket. As she approached, something he never felt before took hold of him, it was the icy grip of fear. His friends called him "Big Train" because of his six foot six, two hundred and fifty pound frame, and because when he walked into a room people made way, lest they be mowed down. But now it seemed the train was going off the rails.

She smiles and says "Can I get one ticket for Blackboard Jungle", in her comforting and gentle North Carolinian accent.

"Sure thing Ruthy," he said with an inviting smile, masking his fear, which made Ruth blush.

He slid her the ticket. She began to walk away. This was his only chance, he thought. "Ruthy!" he shouted, "can I ask you something". His heart began racing and his stomach tightened.

"What is it Orlando?" she said in a worried voice, since his tone was out of character.

"I think you're a great girl and you're very beautiful, and I want to take you out to this nice night club next week." Easy he thought, what he so nervous about was. He felt as if he conquered a dragon.

Unfortunately, Ruth was not as impressed by his new found confidence as he was.

"Sorry Orlando, I have to look after my two sons the rest of the week, and weekends are my only free time, besides, I'm not really interested in dating right now."

His heart turned into vapor and the agony of defeat began to punch at him.

'Okay Ruthy, I'll see you around.'

"See ya around," she said with a wink and a smile and proceeded to Theater 3.

She was right in front of him, but a million miles away at the same time. Two weeks went by without him seeing her, Orlando began to think he never would again. The following week he was working his second job as a delivery man for a local super market chain. He'd been sent to deliver groceries to a prominent wealthy white family. He rang the bell and the door opened. What he saw made his heart skip three beats, it was Ruth.

"Ruth, what are you doing here?" he said with shock, and relief. His prayers had been heard. The woman of his dreams was in front of him but he wasn't asleep.

Ruth just as surprised joyfully replied "I work here Orlando. What you are doing here?" she was the family house keeper.

"I'm the delivery man,. Small world, huh?" he chuckled. "I haven't seen you in weeks, I thought you stopped watching movies" he said.

"No, I've just been busy with my sons and work," she said with a regretful tone and melancholy stare, "but I'll be free next weekend."

They say lightning never strikes twice but since it didn't strike the first time. He tries his luck

"Hey...you wanna go out next week Ruth?" he masks his eagerness with poise.

"Yes... yes I would like that," she says with a blissful smile.

They went to the movies the following weekend and became official.

A few months later, they start living together and he embraces her two sons, Ronny and Gregory like they were his own. The boys call him daddy. Their father abandoned them when they were babies, so the boys recognize him as their real father. On August 6th 1957, Ruth gives birth to a healthy eight pound baby girl, whom she names Pamela Gale Staton. Orlando and Ruth get married; Orlando's sister Lu-Lu Mae disapproves because his bride is two years older than him and already has two children from a previous marriage.

Two years later, she gives birth to Orlando Staton II. Shortly after, Ruth discovers her husband has demons. After years of drinking, gambling and bounced checks, he decides to move the family to New York in 1967. Orlando gets a manager job at a super market. The couple have two more children back to back; Phyllis and Sandra. Life was getting better again, they were married with children and living happily ever after.

They were meant to be. Sadly, other things were meant to be as well.

It's August 10th 1970. Orlando was three months sober and spending more time with his family. Orlando was born anew.

"He did something he hadn't done in years, he played with us, chased us all over the house", recalled his eldest daughter Pamela, who just turned 14 at the time. He took a sit down bath and shaved for the first time in 2 months. "He never did that, not in a while. When he was in the tub he just sat there, staring at the wall like he was waiting for something...like he knew what was gonna happen".

Recalled Ruth. They had a big dinner that night. Big enough for three Thanksgivings. Little did they know it would be their last dinner with him.

The next morning, Orlando woke at 6 a.m. He told his family he was going to the store. His three year old daughter Phyllis begged him to stay, but he kissed her forehead and told her he'd be back.

"Please come back soon daddy, said Pamela, "We're supposed to go to Coney Island today."

"Don't worry baby, said Orlando. "I'll be back."

Gregory recalled "The weather was weird that morning. It was pouring rain that day, but it was sunny as hell outside. It was that Indian rain."

He never came back.

Seven hours later, a friend of Orlando knocked frantically on their door. He said Orlando was laying in an alley way on Sacmen Street with his neck broken and his skull cracked open. It was only a few blocks away from their house on Liberty Avenue. She called 911 and the paramedics rushed them to the hospital. He had been thrown off the roof of a five story building, but was badly beaten before he was thrown off. No witnesses come forward- the friend who told them claims he didn't see anything-The assailants are never found. Ruth tells her comatose husband she loves him and kisses his head, he dies shortly after.

He was their life blood, the driving force of the family, the foundation. No matter how much he drank or how much he gambled, he always was a good father and husband. He never cheated or beat his wife and kids. He always provided for his family and came through for them. There was a gaping hole in their lives and it kept getting bigger as the years passed.

Ronnie, the oldest, had to become the man of the house. It became too much, what he had lost and the responsibility he had thrust upon him and eventually he ran away, never to be seen again.

"I loved him," recalled Gregory. "He was my father. I didn't care if he wasn't blood. He took care of me, my mother, and my brother. He never made my mom cry like that other guy did. He was hard on me, but that's what I needed to push me, to make me a man. Mama wasn't strong enough to raise us on her own. She was too soft."

Gregory dropped out of school and became an alcoholic and a drug addict, obsessing over his father's murder.

"The cops didn't even try to find the killers," said Gregory. "Black man gets murdered and it's like a fly getting swatted. The bad guys basically did their job for them. One less nigger to worry about as far as they're concerned."

A month before he was murdered, some men broke down their door while they were at Ruth's sister's house. Orlando was there and fought them off. He had minor bruises and nothing was stolen but, Gregory believed he was back in his gambling habits and owed them money.

He was in and out of rehabs, and could never hold a job. He never married or had kids. He broke his leg 7 years ago and only recently got it fixed. He lives with his mother till this day in a cramped room having done nothing with his life.

Pamela was especially distraught. Her knight in shining armor was gone. She went from being a straight A student on the honor roll, but her grades declined and she dropped out of school as well.

"It was hard to live in that house after he died," she said. "It was just a miserable place. I needed my father to help me. My mother was a good mother but my dad was the rock. I couldn't get away with the things I did if he was around. I probably would have had better judgment in men too."

She joined a gang, and began drinking and smoking cigarettes heavily.

"I caused my mother a lot of grief. I even ran away from home for a little while."

Until one night, she recalls having a dream when she was nineteen.

"I saw my father standing on top of the building where he fell with a broken neck and a cracked skull like they found him," she said, "and he told me to stop what I was doing. Stop being a bad girl. Stop making your mother sad Pam! I love you Pam! Please be good!"

"I never gave my mother problems again after that, I changed my ways, and got away from the bad influences that were around me."

She tried to find a man that was like her father, but every man she met only had her father's bad

qualities and his height, nothing more. She thought she met her mister right and they had a son together, but again he was only like her father in height drinking habits, and ultimately chose the bottle and loose women over his potential wife and his son. Pamela moved on and focused on raising her son and nieces and nephews, whose mother Sandra was battling a drug habit, and taking care of mother. Ruth remarried but it wasn't the same as Orlando.

“Grant took care of me and I loved him but, Orlando was my soul mate. We were meant for each other.”

Ruth is now twice widowed and retired. She attends Jehovah witness church on Sundays and try's to help her son Gregory with his demons.

The Indian rain never stopped on that bleak bright day. It's still raining now on my generation. Drowning inside but outside shining. For the story is still being written, and fate be damned, it's up to us to decide how our stories are written. To fight through the pain and walk between the Indian rain.

THE B JZZ AROUND TOWN

By Carlos Martinez

There I saw my reflection of me through a dark window in the lonely night. Only it couldn't be my reflection. It moved when I was still. I looked stuck in a position; saw closer, I was on my knees getting penetrated. The man raping my self-life reflection was in a teddy bear costume who then pointed at me.

I ran when I heard a chainsaw cry with torment. I felt a watchful presence nearby. Next step I took forward, a bum with a bloody knife ran in one direction. When he did caught me, he smiled and said "It's just politics, that's all."

Without explanation, he ran with all his energy. He disappeared into the darkness. I thought it would be best to hide out to some public place that would've remained normal and sane. I came to a lighted church.

Inside the church, I saw the sociopaths, molesters, robbers, sleaze balls. The priest an eight foot albino in a red cloak who drank excessively from red wine, took the alter. His alter boys paid no attention; they were busy trying out sex toys among themselves. The priest got freaked out when he saw my face.

With a booming tone, hollered, "Fuck man! We have had enough of your kind here!"

Insulted, I fired back. "Fuck you man! I though this was a house of denouncement, purification, and all that jazz."

"Fine, fine, fine! What you want! I'm busy! I got a mass to attend to."

"Where's the nearest police station?"

"You'll never get anything out of them. They have gone to do another sauce search. Don't bother sleeping a night in a cell. Bad bugs. You know, if you look very closely with a sharp eye, you could see the little whorehouses and shacks they got made!"

"Ah you're no help!"

The priest smelled me from a far distance.

"When's the last time you got lobotomized?" asked the priest.

"Never mind that."

“Ain’t any scum poison?”

“I don’t got it, okay!”

The priest got a crossbow aiming at my brain.

“I’ll kill it for you, son.”

“Crazy fuck! Get off!”

I zigzagged along the rows of seats with the people making room for me. I trip into one of the seats where a young teenage couple before me are eating each other’s hair and fingering madly.

“Carry on,” I said and continued running.

The priest misses my head by an inch. No use, I go back outside. I hear some buzzing sound very close by. I come back, the same bum I saw running is decapitated on the street. Throat slashed, skull crushed, body beaten for kicks.

The town turns its back against its taxpayers. I remind myself to not look at dark windows but can’t resist. I see myself with my head being used as a candleholder. My naked headless-but living-body is facing a black prostitute with a knife that she uses to carve words on my body and licking the blood off of the scars. She mounts my body with my head ogling her from behind.

I make another run to someplace with lighter illuminating. The heat is getting unbearable in this season. The bum’s body is starting to cook. Another place I found occupied was a one-story dance club with metal bars out front. I went through a small opening and mixed with all the people.

The music was electronic like something of the eighties, strobe lights; the heat was worse inside there were those who went full naked. I couldn’t see a bar, nor a DJ; I got tugged and pulled by two lonely brunette women in nylon clothes. They wrapped their sweaty bodies on me. I couldn’t smell their sweat. They were like almost synthetic. I pushed them out of my way. They got harsh.

“You dick! You weren’t like that before. Say sorry to my sister too!”

“Let him be, doll,” said the sister. “Maybe he is running low on sauce. You running low, cutie pie? You need some sauce? Don’t you remember where to get it? Maybe you could go on a quick run to get some for the three of us?”

“I’m running on fumes today. Let me go.”

I pushed through the crowd and tripped once more. I stare at the ceiling with my vision spinning all over. The buzzing. It won't go away. I close my eyes for a moment. Then I feel a hard whack on my forehead.

I wake up on a cold metal operating table. I'm inside a surgery room with doctor cabinets all around and white walls and tile ceiling. Four doctors wearing goggles and mouth protectors feel around my head.

"What's all this?" I asked.

They don't answer. They probe around my chest. Finally, one of them breaks speech. "

As usual your kind hangs with the bad crowd."

"What's my kind?"

"The empty one. You're more like a vessel. For incoming scums."

They tap my head again.

"I hate that sound so much. People like you take sauce to ward off the sound. Overtime they don't hear the sound. That's cause it's not in your brain anymore. It's all over you."

What kind of response can I give to him from hearing that?

"You insane, doctor?"

"And logic, sense, and memory loss goes out the picture. We're gonna have to operate now. It's been a long night for us, we'll have to do it with what remains of the anesthesia."

"WAIT WHAT!"

The bright lights blinding me, and the small electric saw cutting in my head, the doctors dug their gentle hands in my brain. When it was all over, the bright lights dimmed down, no more buzzing. They wrapped bandages on my head. I'm at peace again. The doctor held something blackish in his hand. He dropped it into a plastic container. It was a live centipede.

"Your lady friends let it eat them alive, they became this...this...thing. Don't let it happen again. No charge. Come back again for us to do a rinsing and for fresh new blood. You're lucky it's a black one. Those give away paranoia. If it were a red-orange one, it would've given you unstable rage. Now get out of here! I got another one coming."

NONFICTION

LIFE GOES ON

By Tyriek Warren

Life is a disappointing, rotten bastard sometimes. What one could look forward to for close to two decades could simply be some form of smoke and mirrors that life has thrown upon their view. This person eventually has to wake up from their Wonderland-like experience at some point and embrace the cruel reality that is before their very eyes. There, of course, is the challenge of how they are to deal with what is suddenly before them.

How does one deal with the unprepared? They improvise, improvise, pray, and then improvise some more. They must learn to adapt to what they are not expecting. With all of that established, I must admit to you, dear reader, that my college experience so far has been a reflection of what the previously discussed person has undergone.

Before I had enrolled into BMCC, I felt trapped or in more colloquial terms “completely fucked.” I was and still am a relatively under-privileged black youth from the hood. It was for this very reason that I had worked my entire life to earn a substantially high GPA in order to garner the recognition of several schools, institutions, or perhaps some helpful individual. In high school, I graduated in the top twenty of my class (I believe it was even in the top ten), had joined several clubs (becoming the captain of the martial arts club), and had completed hundreds of hours as an intern teaching children at my former school. Despite all of these accomplishments, my prospects for entering college were slim. While I had received scholarships to certain schools, all of them accumulated together would be nowhere enough for any of my necessary expenses.

It was also around this same time that my family and I were undergoing a serious domestic dispute. While I will not specify for privacy circumstances, the action that was taken was from one of my parents and it related to a type of “betrayal.” I would shield or shelter my younger brother away from the heated arguments of my folks while also keeping a close ear on the argument (I was afraid that they were going to kill each other or I would kill them!). Wrapped up in their own issues, it was obvious that no one would be of any assistance for my college process. Working in tangent, my school and home issues (it was during this same time that I participated in what I consider to be my most grievous “sin”), I fell into a rut, prolonged depression even contemplating suicide.

After skipping the Fall Semester, I am now here at BMCC enrolled in the Spring Semester and studying seriously. After what I have said to you, dear reader, that should sound like a breath of fresh air to me. On the contrary, I feel like I’m suffocating just a little bit more each day. In my absence from college, I had all but given up any notion of success or obtaining some idealized dream. Each day I go to class I feel as if I’m lying to myself; that what I’m doing is going to matter in my future. I feel ever more alone as I walk the campus hallways not speaking to

anyone for I think that they possibly couldn't understand (I have no friends, acquaintances, or allies). Each day that I wake up, I walk through my family's apartment and stare at objects that I know can end it all--should I have the urge or "courage."

One's own thoughts are a very dangerous tool of destruction, dear reader. This first semester of college to me seems empty because I lack any particular purpose or goal. I continue to study at this institution in order to find some meaning in my life (I see it as more of an experiment than a "hopeful cry"). I feel that that is the key or central purpose for enrolling in college. One must strive for the conviction to improve themselves even in the most difficult moments of their lives. Remember dear reader that life is a rotten bastard that will throw challenges at you.

A CONVERSATION ON EVOLUTION & CREATIONISM

By Sherrod Station

Evolution and Creationism, are like oil and water, they just don't mix and probably never will. Creationists believe that humanity, the Earth, and all of existence was created by God. Evolutionist believe that we arose from a primordial ooze and came to where we are now, but both theories are believed by many. Whether who is "right" or wrong".

Evolution is the belief that we arose from the "primordial soup" and over millions of years we changed over time, from sea to land, and eventually ape to man. Humanity started from walking on all four's and eventually began to walk upright and became bipeds, we also learned how to use our opposable thumbs, which allowed us to grasp tools and weapons properly and become more efficient in the technical aspects of our daily lives. Only the most favorable and helpful traits of a species to survive in a particular environment were passed down from generation to generation, in a process known as natural selection. Adapting to a harshly changing eco system became known as "Survival of the Fittest" which means only those genetically fit to reproduce properly adapt to the need of their environment would progress as a species and survive throughout the eons and the species who cannot adapt, die out.

Creationism is the belief that God created Mankind in his image, and started by creating the first humans; Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden and that all modern humans human beings descended from them. God created animals, plants, the Earth and the universe in 6 days and on the seventh day he rested and it is generally believed that the Earth and humanity is no older than five thousand years, and species go extinct due to catastrophes such as the Great Flood. Creationism teaches that all Humans have a soul, and must achieve spiritual enlightenment by Believing in God, Praying, and helping their fellow human being's by showing them charity and compassion in order to become closer to God and make it to Heaven when they die.

No one truly knows which theory is correct because they are just that...theories and as of now cannot be fully proven. Maybe one day we will discover a connection between the two and gain a greater understanding of ourselves, but for now, the only thing these two schools of thought have in common, is...they are both theories.

After a fun filled date night at the movies, Guile (Creationist) wants the date to continue so he decides to finally take Rosario (evolutionist) to dinner, to her favorite restaurant Red lobster for a delicious dinner. The two eat Cheddar biscuits and drink water in preparation for their meals. After an hour the waiter finally brings their meal. As Rosario is about to dig in, Guile grabs her hand and says "we have to say grace first", Rosario looks at him raising an eyebrow and replies "what?", They'd been dating for three weeks and neither person knew their belief sys-

tems...until now.

Rosario: Get your god damn hand off me please

Guile: gasp! Don't use the lords name in vein! Honey.

Rosario: Why not? He doesn't exist, and I'd appreciate it if you'd stop calling me honey.

Guile: How can you say that? Stop it before you go to hell.

Rosario: Hell doesn't exist either, when you die you just rot in the ground for all eternity, the end.

Guile: Prove that God doesn't exist.

Rosario: Prove to me he does.

Guile: Just look around you, this whole world is testament to Gods existence. From the water, tress, and animals, to his greatest creation of all...humanity.

Rosario: Yeah that's not proof, it's just you talking outta your ass

Guile: Really? So what is proof to you?

Rosario: Umm... scientific proof duh, the only proof that matters, the only proof you can prove.

Guile: Yeah, well God made science. So if God doesn't exist than science doesn't exist either. So your logic is flawed.

Rosario: Logic, Rigggght. Talk about the pot calling the kettle black. Listen, science isn't a person or a being it'...it's the study of the natural world based on facts learned from experiment and observation.

Guile: Well God is...y'know GOD! He's the Alpha and the Omega.

Rosario: Which is why god doesn't exist, because science has proven he doesn't exist. We have not observed god, we have not experimented on god, and we have never seen god. There is no physical evidence of god what so ever. So therefore he does not exist.

Guile: If you read the bible you would know that God is not physical. He is a spiritual being.

Rosario: Spirits can't be proven either...god, what did I see in you.

Guile: STOP using the lord's name in vein!

Rosario: No. Everything can be explained with science, including the origin of our species.

Guile: I already know where humanity comes from, everyone does.

Rosario: and where would that be?

Guile: The Garden of Eden duh. Over five thousand years ago. Have you even attempted to read the bible?

Rosario: No, I try not to read too much fiction. Have you ever read Charles Darwin's "The Origin of the Species"?

Guile: the What?

Rosario: Yeah I thought so. It basically tells you how humanity came into existence. Through millions of years of evolution. We arose from the "primordial ooze", we went from sea to land, and finally we evolved from ape to human. This is known as the theory of Evolution.

Guile: so we went from mermaids to monkeys to men? Now who's reading too much fiction, that's the stupidest garbage I ever heard. Did you make that up?

Rosario: To put it in layman's terms... evolution is the inherited characteristics of biological populations over successive generations.

Guile: so why are their different races then?

Rosario: Because evolution requires another process known as natural selection, in which biological traits become more common in a population as a result of inherited traits that are better suited for a particular environment. This is why white people are light skinned, because they come from a colder climate where there is not much sun light and black people are Dark skinned because they come from a hotter climate, and developed pigmentation to protect themselves from the sun

Guile: what about different hair textures?

Rosario: Climate. African hair is thicker, to shield them from the sun, and European hair is straight because of the cold and minimal sunlight.

Guile: I can see God doing that, it makes sense, considering he made all parts of the world different, I guess he wanted his creations to be varied and unique. Like how he made animals of the same species different colors but the same species. Variety is the spice of life.

Rosario: I haven't seen anything to convince of a God, only cold hard scientific fact, only what can physically be proven.

Guile: Didn't you say it was called the theory of evolution?

Rosario: Yeah.

Guile: So how is a theory any different than having faith? It's called a theory because it can be fully proved right?

Rosario: Yeah

Guile: I mean both are a belief in something you cannot fully prove, so what's the real difference?

Rosario: I never thought about it that way.

Guile: It doesn't matter who's right or wrong as long as we respect each other's beliefs and each other as people.

Rosario: Maybe we both right, maybe were both wrong, who cares right?

Guile: Yeah.

Rosario: Listen, I'm sorry about disrespecting you.

Guile: I'm sorry for disrespecting you it's my fault for assuming you were a Christian, how about we forget about this and just enjoy our dinner, it's getting cold.

Rosario: Yeah, lets dig in.

SHOPPING EXPERT

By Rolanda Saint Louis

Unlike most people, everyday I find something that I am interested in. Sometimes it's cooking, dancing or computer searching . Although I am an expert on shopping. I can not lie . I love clothes . Even if I don't have the money, I will go Window shopping instead. Nevertheless, when I'm upset, clothes just startle me. It's like everyday there is something new, and its worth to spend on.

I first got into shopping when my mother would buy me clothes that I didn't find interest in. Every Time I wore one of those clothes that she bought for me, my face would have looked like Mr.Grinch, just like in the "Jacket" by Gary Soto when his mother bought him this ugly mustard color jacket that he has to wear for the rest of his school years that was exactly how I felt. For that reason I decided to shop by myself . When she gives me money I will always saves to go to Pretty Girls or Rainbow to buy cheap clothes and shoes that are on sales. I will always try to create different type of styles.

When I go to school, my friends will always ask me where I buy my clothes and I will tell them Pretty Girl and the next day I would've seen one or two wearing the same outfit and that's how I find interest on shopping. Which makes me feel happy and excited every time someone mentions the words fashion.

When I go shopping or window shopping, it would take me hours depends on the length of the stores or the mall, because I want to look on every stations just so I don't miss anything . Although its effecting to me ,when I 'm dressing myself I want to make sure that I have the right outfit.As a result I can be able to feel great and pleasant about the way that I look.

To be a fashion expert. The first thing you need to know is your Fashion senses for clothes and shoes. How to style them and what colors will go on each season, how to match the color and how the outfit will defined you. It's better to know what goes with what . Buy clothes that shows a pattern in it,make sure when you are buying your clothes , you fit on them first , for that reason sometimes it makes a big difference in your body. The thing about shopping is that you need to know what will go with your body shape.

There are different types of body shapes for women nor for men. For women they are the column for tall women, and the bell. Some women have a large waist or hips and depends on what sizes you are that will tell you which clothes you should be looking for . Some women likes long sleeve and some like skort. I myself I am a column. Love wearing short dresses with a high heels or a sneaker to embrace my long figure.For men they are Ectomorph when you are long and skinny, and Mesomorph is when you are muscular gain muscle weight easily. On account of that some designers choose to do women clothes more than men , on the other hand designing clothes for men can be a bit challenging because of their upper body shape. Every

one them carry a different types of body shapes.

Some of the stores that I love shopping at are Forever 21, American Eagle, Omg and more, but I most likely love to shopping online because they give more opportunities on clothes. When you notice in stores they are very expensive, but online they give more special offers and discounts. TBdress.com, Sheinside.com , H&M.com and many more. Every day those online stores less the prices. If you can buy one jacket in a regular store for 30 dollars as a result you could've get two items for just 30 dollars and don't worry depends on how much you are going to spend. If it is higher than 30 you are definitely getting the free shipping, but most of the time they usually give freeshipping in a certain point. I surely believe that you are going to find it very muse and excited to shop in any of those stores.

And yes, this why I think you can be expert on shopping as well. I love shopping for myself and it bring the joy out of me and just make myself look even nicer and I'm sure you can to.

THE YEAR OF THE "REAL WORLD" TRANSITION

By Jada Gordon

It was July 3, 2014 that I walked out of the Chambers Street subway station with my mother by my side. I'm nervous because it was my first time ever going to BMCC. I'm also scared of getting lost because it's become somewhat of a custom or a rite of passage when I travel. Little did I realize that most likely everyone will get lost when they travel to places they've never been to, and also the main building is literally right down the block. We walked down the street, snooping around like tourists on 42nd street.

My mother annoyingly asks me "Do you know where you're going?"

I looked up at the flags that say "BMCC Start here. Go Anywhere".

I look back at her and say "Yes."

I'm not going to lie. BMCC wasn't exactly my first choice. It wasn't exactly a choice until my final month of high school. My twelfth grade classmates and I scrambled the entire year to get information about our desired colleges. We then waited patiently for our results of acceptance or rejection, along with struggling to get our financial aid information into those colleges in time. All the while, keeping our grades up so we could graduate to go to the colleges.

In a nutshell, it was a stressful year, even though I am a product of a charter school that constantly prepared us for college from fifth to twelfth grade. We were like child stars being groomed and trained for a Disney Show audition. Even our middle school groups were named after colleges such as Pace University, Johns Hopkins, UMASS (University of Massachusetts), and Georgia Tech. All of that preparation still couldn't get us ready for our own little taste of the "Real World."

I took acceptances, rejections, and horrible financial aid packages during this process. I had to take a step back. All of this made me re-evaluate my expectations and readiness for college. All these years I thought I had it. I thought I had the answers. I thought I wasn't going to be a statistic. I thought I could fight my way out of the Bronx with an acceptance to college.

I thought wrong. I didn't have the answers. I was being tested, and I felt I was certainly failing in the worst possible way. I knew there were going to be obstacles, but not as hard as this.

On a more positive note, I got accepted into my first choice, Ithaca College. I was obviously ecstatic as any senior should be. It was the school I spent hours upon hours dreaming about. The

school I researched and imagined myself relaxing, studying, and frolicking upon the campus' rich, bright green grass and playing Frisbee happily like the kids in the brochure did. This certainly eased the pain for a couple of weeks. In my head, I felt like Sally Field when she accepted her Oscar and infamously yelled out "You like me! You really like me!"

Ithaca liked me. They really liked me. They even liked me enough to give me a ten thousand dollar scholarship. However, my success was indeed short lived. Let's put it like this. I felt as if I was shipwrecked on the Titanic and everyone was being saved with college acceptances, more scholarships, and luxurious financial aid packages, and I was being left to yell and fight until someone or *anything* could save me.

I had forty-one thousand dollars left to pay if I were to go to Ithaca. This was the package that broke me. Originally, the cost of attendance was if I can remember, fifty-one thousand dollars and some change. But with the help of my handy dandy scholarship, I got ten thousand dollars subtracted from the fifty-one thousand dollars, which eventually left me with forty-one thousand dollars to come up with per semester. Yet again, I do not have the answers.

Do they not *realize* that I'm broke? Do they not *understand* or know that the economic climate has hindered a lot of people such as me to pay or obtain scholarship money *per semester* in the amount of forty one thousand dollars? *Plus books?*

However, to have a sense of perspective, do I not realize that I'm not the only one who got accepted into this school? Do I not *understand* that I'm not the only one who dreamt of myself in the brochure? Do I not realize that college is a business *too*? It's a business like a bank or a restaurant and the staff needs to get paid also. Over and over again I had to constantly remind myself that I need to have a sense of perspective. I was stuck in a rut and thinking "Can I get *through* this?"

As weeks and months passed by, I weighed my options.

I asked my mother and aunt "Should I just get a job? It wouldn't hurt?", "Should I go next semester in the spring?", "Or should I just travel? I've always wanted to travel and maybe this is the right time.", "Maybe I should go on the existential quest of finding myself? Isn't that what all the great artists do?"

All of these options didn't please my mother or my aunt.

"Jada, you would need money to travel and do you know how much plane and bus tickets cost these days? Not enough to fund your little adventure." my aunt states. "You know you don't want any of the options you have given yourself. You were meant to go to college Jada. You've always wanted to go to college. You haven't really thought of any other options since you were in fifth grade. Remember in the beginning when you told me you wanted to go to college? Don't let this deter you."

My mother responded by saying “Plus, you have no choice. I’m not going to let you waste your talent and sit around this house. It’s just not an option.”

I thought about that conversation for a while in a serious manner. I couldn’t let myself go crazy and lose sight of what I wanted to achieve because of a *silly* package. This school and/or financial aid package doesn’t define me, my intellect, talent, etc. The brochures and fantasy they sell you of their institute of learning is all just smoke and mirrors until the smoke clears and you see it for what it really is, and then see if this college is really for you. However, by the time I realized this, time was running out.

It was June and graduation was right around the corner, which meant two things. This stressful year was about to be over, and I had to find a college that would suit me, my needs, and my finances. It was a daunting task but I was up for the challenge because I know there has to be a good school out there that could do that. So, I had a conference with my mother and my college counselor, Ms. Montano.

“Have you ever considered BMCC Jada? Its close and it has your major. You’re out of the house like you wanted but not out of the state. So you could go home whenever you want.”

All of this time I was looking for a school that would get me where I needed to be and give me what I wanted and it was right in front of me. It’s like one of those romantic comedies where you have those annoying best friends running around like rats in a maze looking for love in all the wrong places only to really look and realize they’re truly in love with each other. Had I found that best friend?

“I’ve definitely heard of BMCC,” I said. “I didn’t even know they had Writing & Literature as a major. It sounds like a definite plan. Why not? I mean, it’s not about where you start, it’s about where you end up.”

“Exactly! I couldn’t have said it any better.” my mother said.

So Ms. Montano slid the laptop across the table. I caught it and started to apply.

“Thank you so much Ms. Montano,” I said. “I wouldn’t have thought about this nor done this without you or my mother.”

This leads me back to July 3, 2014.

I might as well be celebrating on July third because this was my first step to independence and my taste of the “Real World”.

However, it baffles me when people say “When you’re in college, you get a taste of the real world?”

Haven't we all been in the "real world" the whole time?

Maybe people don't consider being in high school the "real world" simply because we still live with our parents and high school work is not as hard as college work. But we aren't in the "real world" all the time? Although in high school you most likely live with your parents still, metaphorically our jobs are school. High school preps us for college, and our parents are always pushing us to be independent.

Some of us do rise to the occasion and become independent before college technically pushes us to. My mother always taught me ways to be independent (traveling by yourself, getting a job, taking care of your living space, and taking care of yourself, cooking, cleaning, budgeting, etc.), and then let me do it myself. Sometimes I wouldn't do it and she'd get upset and yell at me but eventually I learned and took it upon myself to take care of myself because I would eventually have to take care of myself because I would be on my own without her yelling to make me do it or her guiding me. I'd have to remember and do it myself like adults do.

To emphasize that, going to college would be my first step. Applying to the college wasn't as daunting of a task as I thought it would be. I had my personal information with me. My certificate of graduation, my report card, Social Security Card, birth certificate, you name it, I had it. For some reason, I thought applying to college would be similar to the DMV; long, tedious, annoying, and hot. I got accepted in no time. I felt accomplished, nothing could stop me. I put behind my emotional senior year of high school and looked forward to my life as Writing & Literature major in Borough of Manhattan Community College.

The first day of registration however was the complete opposite of the day I applied to BMCC. It was a claustrophobic, tedious, scary, and hectic day. One could say it was like a day at the DMV. It was the ultimate waiting game and the ultimate test. I put on a brave face, tried to stay level headed, and as always tried to have a sense of perspective.

Throughout the day, whenever I felt myself become impatient and upset, I made the attempt to put myself in the shoes of the employees. They want to get this over with as much as I do. At the end of the day, the students and the employees had common goals. The students, including myself, wanted to register for our classes and enjoy the nice, hot, August day we saw outside of the window. The employees wanted to get the students into the system and offer us our classes in the quickest way possible so they could also enjoy the summer day as well. So both the students and employees needed to do were cooperate, be patient, and get our jobs done.

In a perfect world, that would work successfully and we would be on our merry way. However, we live in an imperfect world full of glitches and mistakes so it was inevitable that it would be a long process. Also, this is the "real world" so everything isn't going to be fast and efficient like we always want it to be. So even through my frustrations, I had to accept, work through it, and move on because that was all I could do. What would've occurred if I gave up on college because it wasn't the college or experience I wanted?

I most likely wouldn't be getting the education I'm getting now and I wouldn't be writing this essay to you guys. I wouldn't have learned what I know now which is that life is going to throw you some serious curveballs. I learned that what you want or see isn't actually what you need all the time and getting what you need is even better. Eventually the old saying "Everything that glitters isn't always gold" turned out to be true.

If I had fell for what was the "glitter" in this instance: the open wide campus with students lounging around on the open grass, the huge state-of-the-art buildings with what seems to have every book and advancement you could think of and more, and the fifty one thousand dollar cost of attendance, I would have been in tremendous debt. I wouldn't have found BMCC, and saw this school for the amazing institution of learning it is. I wouldn't have found the Writers' Guild and the great relationships I've built there. I wouldn't have found a piece to the incomplete puzzle of me.

**PLAYWRIGHT/
MIGNOLLOQUES**

SEARCHING FOR MY BRO . HER

By Victor Vauban Júnior

DANIEL

I always loved my brother, long before learning what love really was - in its essence. When things got really tough, I used to take him by the hand and guide him to our backyard where we used to spend a good part of the day playing soccer; nobody would notice us there despite our excitement. I loved playing soccer with him; playing soccer with my brother would take us to another place, another land, the land of joy. The smile on his face after the goal was a pure expression of joy and happiness. I wish I could freeze that moment in time. (Beat) I was only twelve years old and I can still remember vividly the constant arguments, the fights; dad's clothes being thrown out of the window; mom's body covered in bruises, black eyes; neighbors threatening to call the cops. All the madness seemed to be part of our routine at that point, or so I thought. When they fought, it was hard to say who was losing or winning. In the beginning, it was scary but I got used to, the neighbors got used to it. My little brother Paulo was suffering more than anyone else; he was only ten - he was absorbing everything, which later I learned, the therapist said, he was internalizing. We had to be brave; brave in the face of fear, fear every single day; in constant fear. Fear of the unknown. What should a child know about FEAR? One morning, my brother and I were sitting on the couch. We were watching our favorite cartoon; we were watching Tom & Jerry. We were having fun watching those two fighting all the time. Sometimes, Paulo would fall asleep and I would cover him with my favorite blanket. But that morning, he did not fall asleep. After about thirty minutes had passed, not noticing his giggles, I turned my head to the left and saw him coiled up with the blanket; I took a glance at him and saw tears running down his face and landing on his white wrinkled shirt. "Stop crying, men don't cry!" I said to him almost blaming him for our troubles and afflictions. His sobbing increased more and more, as a premonition of the impending bad omen. He never cried like that. I started to panic; I did not know what do. I didn't know if I should hug or punch him to a pulp for crying. For a moment, his tears reminded me of the waves hitting the shore and disappearing on the grains of sand. Yes, that's how I wanted to believe our sorrows and afflictions were going to disappear; like the foam hitting the shore and disappearing on the grains of sand. But it didn't. Later that night, when my father came home, they sat us down and said, "We have gotten a divorce" and in a way, I was excited because I did not know what a divorce was. It could be a Christmas gift before Christmas, I didn't know - and I asked them "what's a divorce?" and my mother said, "Mom and dad are not going to live together anymore." My father had to give up Paulo as part of the divorce settlement, and he decided to move back to Angola, where he was from and take me with him. Paulo and I couldn't understand, but when we did, we were both very upset. It was very difficult for Paulo to be separated from us. We lost contact.

(Paulo who was sitting on the couch exits.)

I grew up without my mother and my little brother. It would take twenty-two years, twenty-two long years until we would meet again. --- Life in Angola was not easy. Not easy at all. Starvation, guns, mass murders, poverty, pain, loneliness, the war. -- Father went to war. (Beat) I don't want to talk about the war. Maybe when I am ready, when I am ready. (Beat) When my father passed away, I decided to reconnect with my long lost family. Back to America. When I got back to America I found another family living in our old house, I learned from City Hall that my mother has been dead for ten years now. My brother was nowhere to be found. It took me another three months to find his right address.

(He gets a piece of paper from his pocket)

"728 Canella Street, The Bronx..." - The paper I got from City Hall said. My hands were shaking. It was 11:45 AM when I rang that bell.

(Daniel is in front of the house; he fixes his shirt, and takes a deep breath. His shaking hand rings the doorbell; he is tense, uneasy trying to look calm. He rings it again and again. He waits a moment, nobody answers the door. He grabs his suitcase and turns around ready to leave when a lady answers the door. Paulette is dressed in a white robe and has a white towel wrapped around her head as if she just left the shower).

PAULETTE

Good morning.

DANIEL

Good morning.

PAULETTE

How can I help you?

DANIEL

I am Daniel, Daniel Kenneth Ramos; I am looking for my brother Paulo. Paulo Kenneth Ramos. Does he live here?

(Daniel shows her a piece of paper, she takes a looks at it and look at his face)

PAULETTE

Oh, my God. Daniel? --- It's you.

(Without much hesitation she gives him a warm hug).

PAULETTE

(She seems a little out of breath but trying to control her emotions)

DANIEL

Do you know my brother? --- Do you know where he is?

PAULETTE

Come on in. Come with me.

(Daniel is visibly confused but with hope in his eyes. She escorts him inside.)

Have a seat. -- I am so happy to see you.

(They seat on the sofa).

PAULETTE

I can't believe you're here. It's an overwhelming emotion. **(Tries to recompose herself)** Listen---this may sound crazy to you, but... **(A loud sound of heavy metal guitar is heard making their conversation inaudible. She speaks, but nothing is heard. She removes the towel from her head. Daniel is visibly shocked by what Paulette is saying. The heavy metal guitar sound abruptly stops as he jumps out of the sofa)**

DANIEL

NO. You are not my brother!! You are NOT my brother!!!"

Final

MY WORD AND YOURS

By Carlos Martinez

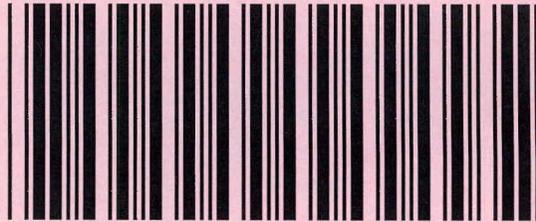
The blank page, my old enemy. Oh hell, I've burned and shredded you so many times and yet you still appear! Fuck. Let me feed this some words. Not enough. Let me drench this page in booze, piss at it, roll it into some big blunt and huff and puff and blow someone's house down. I'm already here so what's the point to all this? How the fuck should I know; this is a weird day for me. Of all the voices in this lonely city, it has spoken. And spoken poorly. "It was too damn hard and I hate The Man". I believe I am part of a strange manifestation our human ancestors were hopped on something. The crazy brutes. What did they do? Ate raw animal brains while jerking off to two monkeys go at it and thought: "I can do that." Oh lord. If there is one. I want you to make a profit out of us. We are an expensive species. We make good pets. But we don't like it when someone takes our chew toy away. We got all the resources to construct a huge penis-like missile that in a far distance during usage looks like it's planting its filthy seed onto a county's untouched cherry. But can we mend a broken heart? That's a trick question, lord. You never gave us one. But still, we have the idea of love in our minds. It's a beautiful idea. So beautiful Einstein could never find the proper algorithm, Freud misinterpreted it, and it was too much for the young poets they were stuck on it. Maybe Timothy Leary was close enough. But to be shared between everyone, someone had to put a price on it, disguised it into recreational intake, and love was in our eyes and brains for a good time limit. Love is a nice, wet dream we sing to our darlings with a shot in our hand. Let me rephrase that, a hard-on in our pants. I'm no cynic. I'm not upset. I just accept the truth as it is. Or maybe I've been wearing the wrong brain all these years. Whose brain I have, I don't know. All I know is that it has simple needs. It wants to be taken out now and then to connect with nature. It wants to have lively company coming in and out with stories to tell. It wants to sleep a good sleep. But to also keep on stimulated. It stays hungry. Which is good. Cause it gives me a reason to fight on. Do not go gentle into that good night, rage rage against the dying of the light. Fight on my brothers and sisters of this green old earth! There is no war. It is all in our heads. Gather your people and weapons! We shall fight and love together at the same time. I'll join you all very soon. Let me finish these last words. I'm no special case. I'm just a slave to the typewriter. But if I'm clever enough, strong enough, human enough, I can make the typewriter, my slave.

Thank You.





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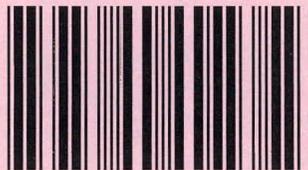
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