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Felix

Ever So Beautiful

Sitting against that tree
Her head resting on my chest
My arms holding dear that of who latches to my heart
Being suffocated by silence has never been so enjoyable
Stars watching harmony at its finest
The sensual warmth of her body melting my diamond heart
If heaven's beauty portrays half as much as this
Then let my soul be pure
For these are the moments that which define life
And, must one ask that of which defines life
It is simple
Life is love
Might it only be a few seconds
Or years and years
Love lasts eternity
And life can not breathe without love

The Words of a Blind Man

This world we live in is filled with evil and destruction and it is easy to lose hope but we have to be able to look at the beauty of the world. Take a minute and try to see it from God's eyes. Can you see the magnificence? I see her all throughout my dreams. She is in everything, and she is everywhere. Her hair of golden silk shines down upon the earth soaking the flesh with rays of splendor. She walks among us with a fragrance so potent that it provides for the very lives we live. Smooth skin, hands cold but her figure warm embracing the bosom of life; her handle of love is not of this world it is angelic. She holds the example of the world to come, no flaws, no imperfections. Her eyes gaze into your heart and soul and tell you that love is what binds the world and prevents mankind from ripping it in two. The human scope sees love as an adventure, but she sees love as the existence of man and the will to survive. She is carefree, letting nothing tangle her poise. Laughter echoing amid the wind so soft I thank God for blessing me with the grace of hearing such music in my ears. Lonely she looks as she floats in the presence of man. Alone, she is no longer for she has found the path that leads to my heart and forever lives among me. Her body is untouched and her symmetry is fit for a king. With her appealing looks and her engaging personality she has her pick of anyone in the world, but she chooses me. Over all the princes and kings and knights and lords, she chooses me. I might be blind, but I can still see her immeasurable beauty. Does she pick me because I am blind, for I see what others over look? I see behind the costume and into the

soul of the girl of my dreams. I do not want her as part of my life for my personal amusement, but so that I can please her and show her a wonderful life that she has been searching for.

Inspired by Milton's Paradise Lost

Alone he has to take his walk
 He was not asked
 Nor told to do so
 But there he walks
 He stands firm in front of his brother
 His friend
 The one who listened
 The one who comforted him
 The one who has killed what he loves most
 There in front of the gates of heaven stands an army of hatred
 And what peers out but one guardian
 One guardian to defeat Lucifer himself
 Gold armor
 Wings at full length
 Sword still in its holster
 Time passes but still the brave one stands
 Finally there are not but two angels
 One fallen from grace
 And the other held up by love
 He pulls his sword
 Standing over his lost friend he says
 You have fallen and I have failed to catch you and for this I ask
 Your forgiveness
 Goodbye brother
 He falls to his knees
 Sword dripping with blood of a brother
 Crying over his body
 For he has lost the only one he had
 He picks his sword up
 Wipes his tears
 And vanishes into the light

Matt Mallon

i like

i like men who play baseball in mini-skirts,
women who snarl in wedding dresses,
and children who sing as they walk down the street.

i like dogs who always pull on the leash
and doors whose latches don't work.

i like crab grass,
the thorns on roses,
and homes taken over by ivy.

i'm not entirely sure yet,
but i think i like you.

Silent Night

leaning against the stone wall,
 chipped surface battered and bruised
 with black and blue graffiti,
 i wave to him as he walks past
 the looming walls of the church,
 slipping through the throbbing crowds
 that constantly chatter and yell
 as they walk in and out.
 their stone-gray suits
 are ironed and pressed-never dirty.

we say our awkward hellos,
 trying to look anywhere
 but each other's lips as they fumble
 in beautiful, youthful ways.
 a nervous silence follows,
 and i break it with the words
 that we so far have left unsaid-
 i look down, hands clasped
 as i mumble to him.
 he opens his mouth to speak,
 but i cannot hear his reply
 over the clanging, the awful hanging
 bodies of the church bells;
 he turns his back and walks away.
 i pursue, but great groups of
 proper ladies and gentlemen,
 armored in their Sunday clothes,
 blob and cluster in my path.
 i curse. someone is wearing
 the strangest perfume...
 i sneeze, but no one says
 god bless you.

Hannah Jellen

Love

When all seems lost
 Nonexistent, forgotten,
 When life is the imagined cost of
 Happiness,
 And everything ends with
 A slow fade to black,
 But one thing stands between
 Emotional death
 And eternal bliss.
 Love is the candle in the velvet night
 When darkness seems to consume everything with
 Sable satin fingers
 Stroking lightly the empty land.
 And when the night pounces,
 Calm darkness turns vile and
 Unforgiving,
 Even a single candle can
 Illuminate the darkest room
 In one's soul.
 Maybe all the world really does need
 Is a bright candle to illumine
 All it's darkest quarters.
 No matter what colour one is,
 They deserve a candle to brighten
 Their soul.
 After all, our skin colour is just paint,
 Dye,
 Stains,
 To tell us all apart
 Since we're all the same,
 And all need a candle
 To lighten up our souls.
 We all need a basic necessity:

LOVE

Ever Get

Ever get
That safe, warm feeling
Like someone you love
Is watching over you?
So close, yet so far away?
Ever get
That feeling like
Someone you know but you don't
Is making sure
You're protected
And out of harm's way?
Ever get
Chills down your spine
With the odd sense
That someone's watching your back?
That someone's there
To make sure you
Don't fall?
Ever get
The blissful sensation
That someone
Somewhere
Loves you more
Than you'll ever know?
Ever get
That feeling
That your
Guardian angle
Isn't far,
And does exist?

As She Always Has

The lush greenness
 Of the world,
 Falling down
 Gracefully around
 Her slender outstretched
 Arms,
 Grasping at the
 Warm golden sunlight,
 Raining down from
 The heavens.
 Delicate chartreuse fingers
 Caressing nature,
 She stands still,
 As she always has.
 Patience flowing up from her roots,
 Spreading along her limbs.

She stands in her field,
 Watching over the
 Foxgloves and violets,
 Patches of wild ginger,
 As she always has.

She lays in her field,
 Destroyed by reckless
 Stupidity
 Of manmade desire for more.
 Her wilted, browning
 Leaves lay scattered
 Amongst the
 Trampled flowers,
 Not, as she always has.

My Records

I flip through my record albums,
 And I feel the history each time I run my fingers over
 The sleek black of the vinyl.
 The light smell of aging paper reminds my senses of
 Old books,
 And the plastic smell of the records as they play lets me remi-
 nisce
 Of times past.

I flip them one by one,
 Dylan, Beatles,
 Blondie, Stones,
 Ramones, U2,
 The Who.
 I hear the songs one at a time, filling my senses like no other,
 "Ramona come closer..."
 "Let me take you down, 'cause I'm going to..."
 "Faces cracked for reason beyond recognition..."
 "Bye, bye Miss American Pie, drove my Chevy to the levy..."
 "It's the end the end of the seventies, it's the end the end of
 the century..."
 And the latter one seems to remain in my mind,
 Reminding me that now is not like then,
 And how much I'd like to leave now to go there,
 To immerse myself in the ages I missed.

I flip through my record albums,
 I take in each cover,
 And think of if I could have lived then,
 But must be content with the remnants of the eras
 With each record I flip.

Heather Carter

Humble Me Perfect Mysteries

Cool crisp
November night
chills my lungs.
I wrap the warm
cotton comfort around me.

My gaze lifts
to the clear cosmos.
The slow trudge
of time-
stops.

I am irritated
by their superiority.
Distant effortless bodies
furrow my brow
rouse my brain.
such portentous stars
stare back
and reflect my world.

Unexpectedly-
I realize
they are considerate.
All my pain,
my sadness,
my war,
my hurt-
silenced.

The wrong around me-
suppressed.
by one glance
at a far off
little white light.

Stars exist to
comfort me, warm me,

capture me with
simplistic majesty.
Placed in perfect
Random order.

Something so distant
surprises me.
Within one moment
of gazing up
at glowing goddesses.

Reminds me
of what's unknown-
of the perfect purity
designed by deities.
That requests happiness
With one bold look
upon their simplistic beauty.

I stand up
and sigh.
I am humbled.

Ugly Words Are Necessary

Frivolously write-
coordinate head with hand.
Deafening thoughts
must escape through
pad and pen

Muscles grow tired,
hearts become weak.
My mind trails off
Forever
in its own
fanciful dream world

Write to keep up.
Skipping past
middles and ends.
They breakup-
disintegrate-
rot away-
Before I can keep them.

Assume it's best
that my mind stays jumbled-
my words incongruent.
These thoughts sprawled out-
inconsistent contradictions.

The sound of my soul
spilling out
should make you shake-
should make your bones
Quiver.

Cramped up hand
no stopping-
can't stop.
They force their way out
from deep inside

ambiguous reality.

Sight upon the
stains against
the brisk white-
they seem to burn
into the page.

They aren't pretty-
crude and ugly even,
yet they have to come out.
You however,
don't have to look.

Cassi Smith

Simply Me

Some people don't know me
But if they look into my heart they'll see
They'll see I love with all my heart
And that I often fall apart
Where do I belong in this world forever?
Will my best friends and I always be together?
I can't help it if I space in a daze
Can't help it my eyes tune out the other way
And my mind gets lost in a day dream
But that's just me
In this head my thought are deep
Sometimes I can't even speak
I get so nervous when I'm on stage
Everyday, my life begins on a different page
I wish people would be themselves and don't pretend
Sometimes I accidentally read the same sentence over and over
again
I can never get my hair straight
I can never seem to remember the date
When I'm scared, I often bite my lip
Sometimes I let my feelings slip
All of these things are wrapped up in me
Because that's who I am and all I want to be

His Song

I face the world with a smile.
No one knows what I hide inside.
They only see happiness,
They can't see the tears I've cried.
When I am alone, I hurt,
Because here I do it well.
In front of all the watchful eyes,
My heaven turns to hell,
The judge and jury await me.
Everyone has a say.
In a life that hangs suspended
For yet another day,
Who are they to judge?
If what I have done is it right or wrong?
In the end, I gave him up,
But inside my heart, still sings his song.
I don't know how to find the strength
I thought I had.
If only I could play tough
It wouldn't be so bad
They say that life goes on
And someday I'll smile again,
But how do they know my pain
Without knowing where I've been?
I've traveled so far from home
And I can't find my way back.
Somewhere along the way
I must have skipped a track.
I saw him just today
And his smile is still the same,
He looked at me so sweetly,
But never spoke my name
I wonder if he remembers me,
It hasn't been that long.
He may have forgotten me,
But my heart still sings his song.

My Paradise

I thought that everything
was turning out alright
I was beginning to forget
Reaching out for the light
I finally took a leap
And trusted in faith
I didn't know where I was going
But it was the only escape
I ran into the darkness
And saw glistening stars in the sky
The rain cleansed my bare skin
Encouraging me to spread my wings and fly
Something reached out
And touched my flushed face
It was lending a helping hand
Through this new and unfamiliar place
I hesitated
And it told me not to be afraid
It took me by the hand
And the darkness began to fade
I looked around
And saw a beautiful sight
The sun was about to set
Causing the day to turn to night
"Is this a dream?"
I felt so alive
I couldn't keep it in any longer
Tonight, I'm gonna fly
I began to run
And I closed my eyes
I let it consume me
And then I realized
I couldn't believe my eyes
I was no longer touching the floor
I felt a jolt of happiness
And my soul began to soar
I want to stay here forever
Theses are the feelings I've lacked

This is my paradise
There's no way I'm going back

The Best in My World

Your kind voice and gentle way
Remind me of a child at play
Your bright smile and flowing hair
Make me want to stop and stare
Lazy days and clear blue skies
I see their beauty reflected in your eyes
A sweet spirit full of grace
Shines through in you caring face
The funny things that you often say
With a laugh that brightens up my day
So many ways, I know you see
You bring out the very best in me

Eric Wilkerson

The Green Glow

Weary warriors out in the distant blue
the cold fire burning down into the skin
out of the darkness they come
the light of heart has been followed
but deeper darkness lies within.

Wait and listen and you shall see
everything growing under your feet
everything, all branches of the same great tree
growing to full height
time is an illusion, as is death
no judgement is to be passed by men
lest we all boil in the same oil

Alone you shall give yourself strength
but shall find great weakness too
Shun the mind that always lies
Trust in the heart that needs you
If the mind were to attack the heart
put your heart to ease
Let the lightning strike
and let the thunder roll where it may.

Black sun shines over a white field
it's rays shine even in the night
But there is always hope:
When cornered by the serpent
and assaulted by the giant
you must rise above the wall
of your own limits and
bring victory to the fight

Wide is the destination you have chosen
Is this paradise? Is this oblivion?
A warm sensation flows through the air
No struggles have followed you here
You see the green glow
And cannot let go

The green glow shines within the memory
It keeps peace within the heart
Here you are safe
Here you are free

Senior Goodbye

A strange but magic feeling is in the air
I cannot quite make out what it is
for it brings both joy and despair to me.
I seem to be reaching an end
that will bring me new beginnings.
The feeling of impatience is with me
I feel like I want to get there sooner
but I am forced instead to wait.
I think of days that have passed
and know that I have come a long way
and haven't much longer to go.
I give thanks to all those who have helped me;
supported me and encouraged me
To me, a difference has been made,
and I hope to make a difference to the world.

Emily Wilson

Water

Satin, cool against my cheek
Floating weightless
Free of trouble
If only for a while
Churning, whirling
Calming, still
Swimming with the tide

Night

Diamond dust against the heavens
Dazzling facets
Against the velvet dark
Like raven's wing
Obsidian cannot compare

Kevin Elmore

Perfection

Perfection is the deadliest sin
It changes the reflection you see in the mirror
It makes you feel bad in your own skin
When you go down its road, there isn't a cure

Perfection is a big mistake
It takes control of your heart
Inside you it stores all your hate
Tearing your self-confidence apart

Perfection means it's never enough
It's telling you beauty means thin
It makes you live the world rough
It says starvation is what you win

Perfection strangles you in its wrath
Putting weight and size above everything else
Gets you in so far you just can't get back
And slowly perfection makes you hate yourself

When Night Is Moonless

Solitude and secrets
 Splashes of life of color
 Remind us
 Who still remembers?
 Who still suffers?

But the bare dusty grey
 Granite, marble
 Tagged with the meaningless label
 Is the most unsettling
 The sea of the dull neutrals
 Unfolds before me
 On swell of a tomb

Loss of one century
 Fades into the next
 On internal beds
 They slumber in space
 Next to one another
 Those girls who knew not each other
 Only the sorrowful windows
 A later addition

I tread lightly, knowing from beneath
 The watch cautiously
 Intrigued, but where the
 Moon graces and the sun nurtures
 I am in the blissful solitude
 Surrounding
 Yet in two different realities
 I am utterly alone

What Sparks the Tears?

Drastic changes
Souls in cages
Let my spirit go

Tears inside
That I must hide
Nobody must know

Crazy dreams
Of evil schemes
Remind me of
What's weird?

Never care
Never dare
To speak of what
I fear.

y.l.

once

I hug Grandmother and tell her I will miss her.
 She is smiling, but so am I, and there is a lump in my throat;
 I worry if absence is a tumor.

My mother will not stop telling me to say goodbye,
 and I cannot. I hold Grandfather, who is shorter now
 and smells slightly of ash.

The room is dim, and their white hair seems more prominent than before.

I get into the car and I do not cry until fifteen minutes later.
 There is no sound. I listen to music that should not remind me of anything,
 while the countryside rolls by.

Never have I been so pained by a graying head and wrinkled hands:
 hands that have sacrificed and scraped and survived:
 hands so simple, never asking for more, never needing beyond.
 Never has self-sacrifice for the sake of others been so beautiful,
 so indubitable, and so close.

As bodies wither, so those two will also.
 I will remember.
 Theirs was the greatest gift and the humblest return.

Nothing will pay back a debt so great.
 Nothing will return a life given for others.

Without shame, without pride,
 it is one of the most beautiful of human capacities.

a brief emancipation

let me tell you about how I skip blissfully to my locker:
 first, I casually walk out of the classroom and leap high in the air
 like a ballerino,
 and when I see this teacher I saunter casually.
 but after she's gone?
 I skip all the way back to class,
 and the German kids laugh.

the sky is a growing expanse

a falcon reaches across the clouds
 pulling blue behind its wings
 the wind heaves
 and the grass ripples and
 crinkles around my ear

a 'hopper finds me 'neath the summer tree
 where shade draws a messy blanket
 wrought with wholes
 upto my neck

my cheeks warm in the sun
 yet their hills sprout no bouquets

and though my thoughts wander like
 stars at dawn, my heartbeats
 feel so full

you'll grow into the Beauty you are capable of

you are a beautiful person
& i want to fall in with you

i can weave the words from your curls
and sing to the rhythm of your steps
dear, you are my poetry

your face a canvas
landscaping hills of discontent
a small sigh, wind blowing clouds
bright eyes crescent moons descend
a pearly gaze uncontested

each smile
blankets the berth of a thousand cities
filled with the joy of a hundred thousand men

as to the world,
i am to you a dotted silence
yet so too, i may be your stars

maybe love with my fingers crossed
a wish someday for hearts instead of hands

Brie West

Nature's Fury

BOOM!

CRASH!

BANG!

A bright light illuminates the night.
Through my window I can see,
Lightning flash across the sky
Like Mother Nature placed
It there like a Christmas light.
The rain pounds heavily on my window,
And as I sleep restlessly,
I can't help but wonder.
Why is she so mad?
Then it hits me, hard.
She's mad because,
We've hurt her,
With our pollution,
Our toxic gasses and waste,
Cutting down the trees
So as I try to sleep, I hit another realization.
She's not mad, or furious.
No, she's crying,
And asking for our help.

Anya Covington

What Color Really Means

What color really means

It I said best by a man by Dr. King

Not only did he have a dream

He had a vision to change the way color is seen

Yellow is no longer the skin tone of Japanese

It is the opportunity God gave us to wake up everyday with ease

The sunshine spilling through a raining day

That feeling of joy and happiness that tickles the spine in everyway

Yellow is the light Dr. King shed upon all Americans, even today

Pink is the color of beginnings

It is the color of life just handed back to its mother's never ending

Her never ending love and attachment

Pink is the representation of compassion

The color of young cheeks when they are thrilled

And young eyes when they are filled

Filled with tears from the harsh world

The world that makes it hard to be a young girl

Even harder to be a young respectable man

Having to deal with stereotypes and high demands

Racism beating down the character busting out with every chance

Demeaning the growing man into a statistic

Making his life seem unrealistic

Dr. King saw pink as the mouth

Not the color but the words that spit out

White is the color of a blooming flower

It is not the men with all the power

A white wedding dress

The color of my favorite ice cream when stressed

Not meaning seniority

White was never given the authority

Because white is not a group of people

It is the color well rested eyes

The color of cream filled pies

White is the only color that can be bleached

Socks, towels, and sheets

It covers the ground
 Yes, the snow when it trembles down

Black is depict as darkness and lies
 In reality it is the midnight sky
 It is the color of a sharp suit
 With the matching bow tie and clicking boots
 Black is the color of oil that keeps the vehicles running
 The color left on the face and hands of the working
 It is also the tar build of causing cancer
 The color of a skillet that just burnt your last answer
 It is not the color of my skin
 Yet it is the determination that lies with in
 Slavery was not humiliating to the color black
 It devastated a nation and proved what it lacked

Dr. King had a dream
 That one day his four children would not be seen
 Not judged by the color of their skin
 But by the content of their character within
 He was on a mission to unite the nations
 And in the process make the world color blind of denominations
 He wants us to see the hurt that has been caused
 Because we judge that was made by God
 The mind, the heart and the soul of a man tells it all
 Color can be heart, smelled, tasted, touched and seen
 Not you know what color really means!

Matt Bell and Sean Lynn

No Sympathy

I refuse to be the rebound, I refuse to be the one, I refuse to take you
back after everything you've done.

Either leave me now or don't, there is no in between

There is no time to think 'cause we're only 17.

I lost you somewhere down the line. This is your decision not mine. I lost
you somewhere down the line.

There's no hand in the dust to try and find

Now you're on your own

Expect nothing more than you did to me

Now you're on your own

Or maybe you lost me

Your decision decides my sympathy you're about to rip us apart

From the one who told you about my fragile heart

Malcolm Foster

My World

My life. My friends. My family. My sports. My time. My games. My flow.
My rhyme. My character. My trust. My trials and tribulations. My love
not lust through all of my relations. My strength. My weakness. My run.
My speed. My chance. Not once. Not twice. But all three. My football. My
wrestling. My track. My fee that I pay just to be the leader of the pack.
My rest. My wake. My food. My snack. My walk down the street as I avoid
that crack. My thought. My scene. My dance. My dream. My flight it's
tight as I stare into the night. My weight. My push. My drive like freight.
My trip. My plane. My rush. My barracks. My confusion. My job. My team.
My responsibility. We train. My wreck. They scream. No guts. No glory.
My worst fear of death brings the end of this story.

Kirk Schuelter

Love

What then is our love?

The hands of a parent and child firmly locked together?

Lovers' arms thrown 'round the other without care.

The pat on the back of a friend?

A man with a candle, standing in dim, flickering candlelight?

His clothed form in shadow,

His face beaming in brilliance

The lines speaking of laughter, but also of gentle devotion and care

To things you cannot and will never understand.

And then to see him standing there, among a crowd of strangers,
his voice raised high in a hymn, the beacon from his light one of
many in the mob, but calling you in.

And you raise a hand for the tears that blind your eyes—this thing
so magnificent and terrible?

To sing as he files out the back of a door, the candle still in his
hand, the echoes still ringing after him and the crowd he departs
with—

And to still see his form in darkness, a smile painted across his
face, a light held in his hand—

This then, is love, which weighs down our heart with a heavy hand
and brings rapturous tears to our eyes in rejoicing?

And spreads out over a field of darkness, a candle touching a
candle, bringing forth light,
and a candle touching another, touching another, touching an-
other, touching another,
until the field burns like high noon.

And still all you see is one, one man together in the crowd, with
your eyes only for him,

and a joyous smile and laughter on his face

and you close your eyes for shades of distant memories,

But the same image that grants you hope above all else.

What now shall we call love?

The hands of parents and child firmly grasped?

The arms of lovers wrapped tight with wild abandon

A thousand gestures between friends

And one man, one man standing in shadows, with a candle in his
hand, and a song from his lips, and smile on his face—

This then, we may finally call love.

Brittany Loucks

Temporary Mother

Temporary,
Responsibility,
In the life of another human being,
A mother.
Time for bed.

Do not hit your brother,
Please don't stand on the table,
Don't throw your food,
Don't sit on the dog.
Time for bed.

Here comes the big yellow school bus,
Stand out on the sidewalk,
Get the mail,
Answer the phone.
Time for bed.

Birds make NeSts.
Beavers make LodGiNGs.
Cursive I's and G's,
Initials in the agenda.
Time for bed.

Five minutes past bedtime,
Can't skip the story,
Oversized t-shirt,
"Brittney I'm thirsty,"
Tuck toddlers in tightly.
Time for bed.

Macaroni pans dirty,
Table sticky with food and peanut butter fingerprints,
Massive dog just snores away,
Parental lock on the T.V.
Finally, Time for bed.

Claire Kates

Transcendentalism

They say that nature is the best
To go and live alone out West.
They say to simplify to the extreme,
But that just makes me want to scream!

I know I'm not the only one to feel this way,
It just doesn't make sense, we all say.
"We do not ride upon the railroad..."
I mean what is that, some sort of Code?

Why did Thoreau go to live at Walden Pond in the wild?
Perhaps he was not loved as a child.
Emerson believed his views to be strong,
But maybe he wasn't so Spot On!

Emerson said that books were the Devil
Was that because he couldn't read at grade level?
I dislike Transcendentalism as you can plainly see,
But I think this poem is "Genius"; so two points for me!

Tyler Ottwein

Ode to Cheese

I like bees and I like cheese,
Gouda makes me like a fat little Buddha,
I think Cheddar is ten times better,
I bring Havarti to the party,
I get my Munster from the dumpster,
I eat Provolone when I'm alone,
I'm a Mozzarella kind of fella
I eat Swiss before I kiss
I eat Bleu cheese on the seven seas,
I eat my Colby like my mother told me,
I need Gorgonzola when I take a gondola
I need a lotta that Ricotta,
I lend my Pepper jack and don't get it back,
I'm on my knees begging for cheese

Leanna Sanders

Chips

These are the perfect snack food. They are yummy and crunchy. The flavor explodes in your mouth with the intensity of a fireworks display on the fourth of July. Too bad the ones I was going to eat were all stale. No flavor left what so ever. So in the end I was still very hungry.

Friends

The two girls had been friends since forever. No one understood why. They had nothing in common yet they were always together. She was a tomboy. The other was a girly girl. They fought all the time, but they always resolved their conflicts. Beings friends is more that just having something in common.

Untitled

There it was sitting bare on the table longing for me. It knows its plain and boring without me. It usually needs me for people to want it because I make it much better. Without the quality of me, it is tasteless. The all mighty cheese makes the cracker more desirable.

patrow

Ashley Strieter

Little Dave's Birthday

The dragon family was celebrating little Dave's fifth birthday. His friends were all there including his best friend Boris the spider. Henrietta Hippo's favorite part was the pony ride. They were all looking foreword to the birthday cake until Dave caught it on fire blowing out the candles. Aunt Elephant quickly put out the fire.

Travis Opel

The Much Needed Haircut

The man was walking down Main Street on his way to his grandmother's house. With every step he took, he turned another head. No matter how many heads he turned through, no one could see his face. One man finally asked him about this. "I can't help it, my barber moved to Brazil," he replied laughingly.

Max Pizzini

Refreshments

He had been sitting there for hours waiting for his turn to board the plane. At least, he thought it had been hours. He really wasn't sure since he had been asleep most of the time. Most people would have had trouble sleeping in such a hot, crowded, and noisy airport terminal, but Jack could not have stayed awake if he had wanted to. He was narcoleptic. Naturally, he was used to public transportation seeing as he could not drive. Airports, however, were difficult for him to navigate. He was also illiterate. Ever since he was child, whenever someone tried to teach him to read, he fell asleep. So, eventually, he just gave up.

Finally, the woman on the intercom announced that his plane was boarding. Jack yawned, stretched, and made his way to the line. After another eternity had gone by, Jack was in his seat watching the sickeningly chipper flight attendant prepare to give her safety speech. Suddenly, the plane dissolved, and Jack found himself frantically treading water in a stormy sea. An enormous wave crashed over him and Jack began to drown. He tried to call out, but his lungs and stomach were filling with water. Except, it tasted too good to be water. Jack pondered this fact as he sank lower. It didn't have enough bubbles to be soda, and it wasn't colored like Kool-Aid. He finally concluded that it was some sort of flavored water. He took another gulp.

"Move! Move! What is wrong with you?!" He was shaken awake by an angry woman sitting next to him. Drowsily, he mumbled, "Wha... what is it?"

"We don't have much time! Either get up, or let me into the aisle! I don't know about you, but I'm not going to die on this plane!"

"What are you...?"

"You idiot! The plane crashed into the ocean and it's sinking! Hurry up before the raft is full!"

"Oh, go on without me. I never liked flavored water that much anyway."

Ben Taliana

A Man on the Hill

A short time ago, somewhere not far from here, there was a man on the hill. Not a large hill, mind you, but a hill large enough to warrant it being called a hill. On that hill was a modest cottage with a modest door and modest windows. And in that very cottage was the man, with a single candle lit on his bedside table, reading his favorite book. This book, titled: Eggplants and How to Prepare Them, was a subject of much interest to him, as his favorite food on the face of this god-given earth was, indeed, eggplant. Ready by his stove with little light cast on it were a variety of spices, teeming with desire to be used in some fantastic eggplant recipe. It's not a rather interesting life, being a spice, mind you, but one has to have desires, whether you are a human-being, a spice, or any other manner of earthly creature.

Suddenly, the book was closed. The man knew exactly what recipe he was to make, and how to make it. Boiled cinnamon eggplant stew. Why had he not thought of it before? He hastily drew open his shutters, letting the brilliant light of mid-morning flood the room. He set a pot on the stove, and went through the motions to light a fire under the pot. Eagerly, he got all of his spices ready. His salt; his pepper, and, most importantly, his cinnamon.

But dang! A knock at the door! His attention, now divided between his brilliant dish, and that of the impending visitor, sure to grow ever more impatient, standing at his modest doorstep. Dang, dang, dang! He must turn himself away, he reasoned, as it would be rude to choose his brilliant recipe, over the company of his unknown visitor.

Grudgingly, he made his way to his door, and cracked it open. Wary, as to not reveal his brilliant meal. It is better to focus on the quality of the meal, over the quantity, reasoned the man. And should the visitor discover his culinary preparations, he would surely have to increase the quantity.

Ahh... But putting up a guard appears to have been in vain, as, standing at the door, is the man's favorite person: a lovely lady.

He opened the door as wide as the span of his lanky arms, and beckoned for the lovely lady to sit. Happily, she walked in, and sat on an oaken chair at the oaken table. The man looked on her with much adoration, but alas, the experiment has now become a test! A test to prove to the lovely lady what fine culinary skills he possesses. The lovely lady, however, could not have caught the man at a more inopportune time.

Putting on a most wonderful charade, the man acted as if he had made the dish a hundred times before. He walked right over to the pot, and started dropping in a smattering of all the spices at hand. A lovely smile on the lovely lady, on him, a nervous grimace. The man began to stir his con-

coction with his oaken ladle, but the man felt as if something were missing. Something important. Something dreadfully, awfully important.

The vegetable itself! The eggplant, yet to be diced, yet to even be found! The man spun about, anxiously looking for the ingredient, but dang. Not one. Off to the pantry the man sped, the stew eagerly awaiting his return, and the addition of the final, most important ingredient.

The door to the room was whipped open, a meager amount of light shone in from a tiny window at the top of the adjacent wall. The man looked around at the numerous jars, with labels such as pumpkin, cranberry, and eggplant! Quickly the man lunged for the jar, and took it off the shelf. The man wondered if the eggplant would be good, as the diced mixture had been there since the previous winter, but desperate times called for desperate measures.

Back into the room to meet the lovely lady with the lovely smile, the man ceremoniously unscrewed the lid to the jar, and could almost not bear to dump the aged mixture into his perfect blend of spices. Yet, the man did, and kept nervously stirring the stew. He felt ashamed, almost bashful, that a top-notch recipe would not be served to her, but the stew soon finished cooking, and the dish was served.

The man took his oaken ladle and filled two bowls with the "aged" blend. The lady watched contently as the man anxiously pressed the dish towards her, complete with a spoon. Sweat formed on the man's head as the lady dunked the spoon into the stew. Worry set in, worry that the stew would not be suitable for such a lovely lady. The spoon rose to her lips, and its contents were drained. The moment of truth! She looked up at the man, and a smile came into being on her, her eyes shut. She could only say one thing, "Mmmm..."

Madeline Kelsey

Untitled

"Beans...I think I need beans this week," Micah said as he pushed his cart around a family of screaming children. "Maybe some kidney beans? Yes, and then I could make some bean salad..." But when he reached the aisle containing all things bean-y, he found it completely empty.

"No!" he cried. "It cannot be! I won't accept it! First my dog leaves me and then m house burns down and now this? Not!" And so speaking, Micah broke down into song.

"There's not a day goes by that I don't wish for some beans! There's not a moment in my life that couldn't be better with beans! The only thing my soul longs for is the chewy goodness of some beans..."

"Excuse me?" A clerk tapped Micah on the shoulder. "You're blocking the aisle, sir. Could you please move your cart?"

"You have no beans," Micah sniffed. "I think I will be speaking to your manager about his."

"I'm sorry sir, but you know, Bean Day of America is tomorrow. I imagine everyone is stocking up for the big day."

"Bean day...of America?" Micah asked in a small voice.

"Yes, sir. Biggest bean day of the year," the clerk answered.

"How could I not know?" Micah wailed, falling to his knees again. "Oh my beans, how I have betrayed you! Forgive me; I beg you, forgive me!" Once again, Micah broke into song.

"ON my beans, my joy, my life's dream. You know that my whole life is yours. Everyday I strive to sing your praises, each day you lift me from the dark! How can I last one more day without you?"

"Hey mister!" A small boy pulled on Micah's sleeve. "Why do you like beans so much, huh?"

"Well you see, Billy," Micah answered, "beans are an important part of man's everyday life. Without them we wouldn't have electricity, or soda fountains, or even the clothes you're wearing right now. Beans are the center of man's very civilization."

"You're weird," Billy giggled before running away.

Micah stood in the bean-less aisle for a moment longer. What would he do now that he was denied his bean-y goodness? Perhaps, he thought as the he walked away, it's time to start worshipping squash. Although it's as not as popular as beans.

Jorden Stolze

One Good Thorough Lickin'

For years, my dad wanted a dog, but he could not decide on the right breed. He was looking for a medium-sized dog that was extremely loyal, friendly and good with kids. One day, a friend brought over his new dog, named Gracie, to show my dad. It was a beautiful dog, with a short brown and white coat. At first he thought it was a Greyhound, but it turned out to be a Whippet.

Dad invited him into the house and into the backyard so the dog could run. Dad played with the dog for an hour. Dad knew at once that this was the right dog for him. He asked his friend where he bought the dog, and he responded: "I brought it directly from the breeder in Kansas City". Dad immediately contacted the breeder to determine if there were any more pups from the litter.

Dad was in luck! It turned out that there was one pup left from the litter that looked like Gracie. The breeder promised to hold the dog until dad was able to drive to Kansas City. The whole family left the next morning for a five-hour trip to Kansas City. When we arrived, no one was home. We walked around the side of the house, and saw a small kennel. Just as we walked up to the fence, a beautiful brown and white whippet came out of the little dog house. Dad knew immediately that this was his dog. Dad named him Beauregard (Beau) and led him out of the kennel and into the fenced yard. Beau was so excited to meet his new family. He gave all of us a good thorough lickin' for an hour.

Soon, the breeder arrived home and, after we paid her, headed back to Edwardsville. Dad now had the dog he had always dreamed of.

As it turned out, Beau was not Dad's dog for long. A few months later, my Mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. As a result, she needed to go through surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments. Every time Mom would return from the hospital, Beau laid down with her, and never left her side. From that time on, Beau became Mom's dog. Dad accepted the situation and realized he did not buy a dog for himself but a nurse for his wife. As it turned out, it was a win-win for both of them.

Cloey Slauson

Time Gone But Not Wasted

What happens when you suddenly realize that you aren't a kid anymore? You look back at your past and realize that the time is gone, and you cannot figure out where it went. You look at your life now and wonder what you could have done differently to change the outcome. Then, you wonder if everything you did, and every decision you made was right. If you are happy and content, does that mean you played the game right and won? I guess all you have to do is look back at your life and figure out what you could have done differently, and if you would have changed if given the chance. Even if you made some bad decisions, as long as a lesson was learned, can you really count that as a "bad" decision? All you have to do is look at the past, and look at your present, and see how it might affect your future.

When you think about your life, you should begin with the beginning. When it first hits you that all this time is gone, you cannot help but wonder, "Where did it all go"? You think about your first memories, maybe when you were four or five. You remember some things more than others. The first time you rode a bike, your first little crush, when you learned how to read, and most definitely your first best friend. Then you skim through those beginning years. You think about elementary school, then middle school. Some years in middle school may stick out as well. Maybe good things happened, like you won your first prize. Or maybe bad things stick out, like someone you love passes away, or your parents get divorced. Then, came the most influential four years of your life so far, and as far as you can see, ever.

High school begins. You are self conscious about how people and friends, have changed. "Will my friends still like me?" "Will the popular kids make fun of me?" "What will I have to do to fit in?" These are the things some constantly ask themselves at the beginning. You think that these will be the longest four years of your life. This will also be when you make some of the most important and life changing decisions of your life. Some will not make any difference. Some will make the right decisions and always follow the rules. Some won't. But how do you know what is right? As long as you are happy, is it right for you? You will make friends, and lose them. You may have your first real relationship, maybe your tenth. You may fall in love for the first time, maybe for the last time. You get your license and maybe even your first job. You may get involved in things you didn't want to be in. Friends are an influence, but it is ultimately your decision right? It has to be. Then, you may find the friends you think you have always wanted. They are always there for you when you need them and you know you can call on them for anything. Then, you get into my position and cannot believe it is almost

over. Where did the time go? Four years of high school will be gone in less than fifty days. Then graduation comes. You may look around the room and wonder what will happen next. Then what? College. Scary. Will I lose my best friends? What will I do without them? Then what? Moving out, getting a career and then maybe getting married. Is it all coming as fast as it feels? It feels like all of this is coming at you at the speed of light.

When you were young, you had so much time, and you were worry-free. And now, there is no time. What do you do? It is now time to make decisions that WILL change your life for good. Pick a college. Move out. Choosing the place to live and the career to begin. Make money. Buy a new car and a house and maybe get married and start a family. Raise kids. When you were young, you thought it would never come, and you would never grow up. Now, is growing up as good as you thought? The time is gone, and the scary things just keep coming at you like bullets. You know you need to make some very important decisions but you don't feel you have time. You are seventeen, maybe eighteen or nineteen. Almost an adult. Where has the time gone? Did you waste it? What lessons did you learn? Important ones I hope. But how do you know if you did it right? If you played the game, and got the most you could so far? Are you winning? When you look inside your heart, are you happy? If so, you are winning. There is no reason to worry about the future as long as you are doing well in your mind. Make decisions one step at a time but don't rush the answers. Enjoy what you have while its here and don't regret what you have done. If you made bad decisions, make them right. Don't get caught up in the past, but remember the good times and learn from the bad. Make good of your mistakes and don't make them again. As far as the future goes, and winning this game, or whatever you want to call it, just do what is right for you and help yourself win. Get the most out of life and thank God for everything that has happened whether good or bad. The key is to not worry and take it one step at a time. You can win this game, even if you think you can't. The time may be gone, but it is never wasted.

Congratulations to all the seniors that are graduating and farewell. I hope you succeed in everything you do! And to underclassmen, make the most out of what you have and don't let anyone get you down. Good luck seniors, it has been a great four years and longer getting to know you all. God Bless and good luck!

Cloey Slauson - Class of 2008

CREDITS

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[insert
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