

RI Txt Anthology 2015

Session A – Tempe: 29 submissions

Session B- Tempe: 26 Submissions

West Campus: 20 submissions

Poly Campus: 24 submissions

Thank you to all the students.

Enjoy reading these.

Keep on writing!

Session B – Tempe Campus

1. Alvarado, Kimberly
2. Barrera, Jessica
3. Das, Shoumik
4. Das, Urmee
5. Finger, Jaxson
6. Hildago, Brissais
7. Jung, Connor
8. Khamash, Hamza
9. Khamash, Nabeel
10. Kostas, Mary
11. Kruse, Maxine
12. Lange, Julia
13. Lepur, Felicia
14. Malaki, Golara
15. Markos, Olivia
16. McCombs, Autumn
17. Mohr, Rebecca
18. Nair, Arjun
19. Nair, Devika
20. Oates, Keegan
21. Shrift, Martina
22. Shutters, Juniper
23. Stockwell, Emily
24. Stubbs, Samantha
25. Yazdani, Parisa
26. Zonn, Nathan

MUSIC by Kimberly Alvarado

When you hear a beat or a rhythm how do you feel? When you hear a beat your feet start moving and your lips are moving or does it feel like an everlasting melody. When you hear music don't you so times think it's been a long day, and the best part is that you can rock out any time you want, like in the car, the side walk or even the shower. No mater what you listen to pop, jazz, rock, classic. Everything is music rember to keep calm and rock on.

By Jessica Barrera

Not all heroes wear capes . Not all heroes have to be people who raised you. It doesn't even have to be some biblical person . It might sound peculiar but my personal saviors are these dudes that have scene hair and pursue a career in making punk , metal , and post metalcore music .Weird right ? Well I had look beyond the stereotypes said about them. Before I had even got into rock all I listened to was what everyone else around me was listening to . That was pop and rap . All that ever did was make me feel ashamed that I couldn't be as nearly perfect as those girls in the videos or the way society pictured and these expectations on how people should be . I would act like I was okay when I wasn't . I would smile at everyone although in my head my thoughts were screaming at me how I didn't belong and I'd never be good enough . It had always been like that most of my life . Notice how I said most ? That all changed when I got into a certain genre of music . Rock . It was loud . Raw . Amazing . And the lyrics captivated me . All of the cruelty of reality left and it was a conversation with me and the band member who understood what I was going through . It wasn't a conversation with some bubbly pop singer who were saying the words some other person wrote for them. I was beyond done with that . I had given my life to bands . Not literally so don't be worried . Now a lot of people would say they liked me better then . Silent , shy , and supposedly. happy . Now I finally have an opinion and outlook on life . I may be sarcastic and different from other kids and mistaken for going through a phase . Believe me when I tell you it's not . It was the power of the band .

Where I'm from. By Shoumik Das

I was born in Minnesota a place with snow in the winter. It turned super cold so we moved to Phoenix. I love my family my mom my dad my sister and my grandpa all live together but my grandma passed away. I have two dogs their names are Abol and Tabol, which means crazy! They are both Lab puppies. They are very cute! My favorite event is Halloween. My favorite food is salmon and chicken.

Where Am I From?

By Urmee Das

I am from a place with lush, green grass as far as the eye can see;

I am from quiet formal dinners and loud bustling parties;

I am from vacations where packing is as hectic as a normal Monday morning;

I am from a place where my dad and I experiment with deserts;

I am from concoctions containing dried dates and freezing cold vanilla ice cream, and orange marmalade, bacon, and cream cheese piled on toast;

I am from a place with green rolling hills and bright blue skies;

I am from a place where snow is as bright as smiles in toothpaste commercials;

I am from a place where the sky is the tallest and the buildings are the smallest;

Where am I from? I am from home.

The Beast

(A metaphor for an idea)

By Jaxson Finger

The beast stalks me, follows me until I can't bear it

The beast taunts me, reminds me I try not to hear it

The beast has no shape, no color, no sound

The beast could be big, could be flat, could be round

The beast is there inside my brain waiting to come out, for it is not tame

The beast is leaving, I want it to go, but will it be the same

It has left, I cannot remember it now

But if it was good will I ever know

I have lost it. Oh, will it come back

No when I look in my brain all I see is black

By Brissais Hildago

UNINVITED GUESTS

Chapter 1 Feelings

It was June 19 when Harris Burgin was asleep and his parents went to eat. He had no idea, but he felt terrified. He still had no idea why. Then he heard laughing, yelling, and then screaming. He thought that's why he felt terrified. The sounds were getting louder, so he went downstairs to see what was going on.

Chapter 2 Shadows

When he went downstairs he was silently crying because he saw red shadows on the wall as a reflection. Harris thought it was his friends playing a prank on him. Harris was too terrified. He ran back upstairs to wait for his parents to check it out.

Chapter 3 10 hours later (not really)

Harris had had enough! He convinced himself to check the house. He checked every door in the house when he eventually reached the basement door. He turned on the light and there were his parents! They said they were down there to fix the light bulb because it was flickering on and off. Harris went back to bed safely.

Chapter 4 The Next Morning

When Harris woke up, he asked his parents if they really had been fixing the light bulb in the basement. They said, "What light bulb? What basement?" Harris was confused. He wondered, *had it all been a dream?*

Title: Fried Rice

Writer: Connor Jung

Fried rice, fried rice

Hot and precious

Carrots, peas and garlicks

Hopping popping in the wok

Hopping popping like a band

Fried rice, fried rice in a bowl

Never set it out too long

Use a spoon and munch along

Hold you jaw, don't let it fall

We can't wait to get some more!

By Hamza Kamash

The Story of Arathon the Penguin

There is a guy named John. He lives on 2345 Sunset Ave. He is a very nice person. He's always nice to the neighbors. When someone walks by, he always says kind things, like "Hey there!". But one day, he was driving to work when a penguin (Arathon) was driving his car and CRAAAAAASSSSHHHHHH!!!!!! Arathon came out of his car, tearing up, he said he was very sorry. John, said, "Hey, it's fine. Mistakes happen, I'm not telling the police about this." Arathon said "It's my fault, I should have known better, I'll pay for your car." "Okay" said John. "This may be a little off topic, but are you interested in aviation?" Asked John. "Sure!" said Arathon. "Maybe... we could design a plane?".

"Hmmm" thought Arathon. "I don't know a lot about blueprints though." "That's why we're making it on the computer silly goose!" said John. "Okay!" said Arathon. "Well, what shall it be called?" Asked Arathon. "I think it should be called the Zaron P-1." Said John. After work, John and Arathon went to work on their plane. They got a blueprint program on John's Windows 8. After they made the blueprint, they took apart an old Cessna, then put the parts together, from hydraulics to electronics. It took months, but finally it was finished. They went to Los Angeles International, to fly their plane all the way to Tokyo, Japan.

John was the pilot of the plane while Arathon was the co-pilot. They both started up their engines and they were ready to go. They flew their plane out California and they were flying over the Pacific. Two hours later, unfortunately their plane ran into a massive tycoon! "I'm scared." Said Arathon. "Don't worry, it's just a little turbulence." John Explained "Planes go through it all the time." Arathon could feel that something is wrong. He could feel the turbulence getting stronger and stronger by the minute.

"Maybe it's just me." He thought. "After all, it's my first time on a plane." But... , a few minutes later, ENGINE ONE IS ON FIRE!!!! "John! John! Look!" Said Arathon. "What is it?" Asked John in a surprisingly calm voice. "Engine one is on fire!" Screamed Arathon. "Your right!! I'm going to put it out using my fire extinguisher." With the emergency fire extinguisher, he put out the burnt engine. "HHHHEEEEEEEELLLLLLLLPPPPPP!!!!" Screamed Arathon. "We're gonna die!" Said Arathon. "We're not going to die silly! We got three more engines, that's more than enough to keep us up in the air." "Oh okay." Said Arathon.

Twelve hours later, they landed at Tokyo International. They were very happy that they landed safely.

The Lake Story

By Nabeel Khamash

This is the story of two men, Bob and Robert. They lived in two houses near a giant lake. And as you can imagine there is little to do near a lake other than fish. So both were fishermen. It was a lovely place except that there were no other people there. The nearest village was beyond a couple of large hills. In other words they were quite alone. That is if you do not count a small cow-duck farm. Now a cow-duck is not what you would think... an error in my spelling. It is actually a mythical creature from the world of Hybrimals. This world is from the time of Pangaea. This time is when all the continents of this great world were fused into one large magical land ruled by humans and hybrid creatures.

Now what were the Cow-ducks doing near this lake? Well dear reader, these were the last remaining creatures that had managed to escape global warming and other wraths of modern society. Because dear reader, this lake was pristine. No pollution or man made nonsense.

So both Bob and Robert led happy lives fishing on the cow-ducks, and enjoying their eggs and milk.

One day Bob saw something strange in the water. A beautiful creature with a flowing mane that glistened in the sun. And a fish tale with scales the color of the rainbow. He was mesmerized. Robert quickly identified the creature as a Fish-Horse. Dear reader, please don't confuse this with the more common and rather dumb Sea horse that inhabits most water of this planet in today's time. No sir, these

Fish-horses were intelligent beings rivaled only by cow-ducks and immensely friendly to other living beings. Except.... Guess what dear reader? The unfortunate cow-ducks!!

It takes little imagination to guess what happened next?

The fish-horse asked the humans, "Why is such an intelligent species such as you humans harboring such an infernal species such as the cow-ducks, a mixture of clumsy and clumsy?"

The humans were quite taken aback by this statement. "We are surprised you can breathe at all!!!" Robert said irritably. "If you are a horse, you can't breathe underwater, if you are a fish, you can't breathe air! YOU, my friend, are a mixture of stinky and stinky!" "If you saw cow-ducks why didn't you go to the other special deserted lake that I thought about moving to?" "Because there was a whole flock of cow-ducks there! There are just less here," The fish-horse said. "Fine!" "Let's just make a pact, you shall let me live in your lake, I know that because you got here first, and I will give you taxes monthly." "Deal?" "Deal." And so dear reader ends this story. Bob and Robert did not ever have to fish for a living and the lake forever remained pristine. Moral of the story? Never start a fight with Fish- Horses!

By Mary Kostas

One day a boy named Neil looked out of his window looking at the stars twinkling like diamonds and gold from the night sky. But he thought if he could go to the moon. Then he went inside his warm bed. He dreamed of being on the shiny gray moon. But on that night his whole life would change. He would be Neil Armstrong. The first person to go on the moon.

By Maxine Kruse

I'm from endless lands and fantastic stories
From heartbreak and imagination
From great escapes and obscure out-takes
And patchworks of great nations

I'm from slight widows and strong heroes
Young and the young at heart
From great steeds of an uncommon breed
And guides at a journey's start

I'm from roadside funerals and vanquished foes
From great triumphs to deep sorrow
From minds filled with sadness and hearts filled with gladness
And at last wishing friends good morrow

I'm from doubly buttered bread and always fresh fruits
From pigs roasting and crackling on spits
From apple crunches and midnight lunches
And pan seared veal with grits

I'm from grass slashed short and sparks flickering scarlet
From arrows glowing silver with the moon
From ash white skies and bright blue eyes
And a sunset snuffed much too soon

I'm from harsh snowstorms and rockfights at sundown
From weaving old tales until dawn
From fiery flights and eternal nights
And rivers washing away a kings pawns

I'm from rich empires and lost ruins
From friends and foes alike
From galactic war and whimsical lore
And a spark that sets the world alight

Summer Freeze

by Julia Lange

Ugh. Ugh, ugh, ugh. Ewwwwwwww! Gross. *Snow. Bleh.* Hiking. Double *bleh.* 'Go into it with an open mind', Mom said. 'My mind is as closed as our front door while we are here in the Arctic this summer. Closed, triple-locked, with the alarm set,' I say. 'C'mon, it'll be fun. At least you have your sister', Dad said. 'I don't have *fun* if *Reese* is involved,' I say. I only find joy at the beach. In our beach house. In San Diego. Not at this Popsicle of a beach, where the sun *never even* sets, but the the only way to get some color on your skin is if you touch the frozen shore enough times. Then, if you are lucky, your skin will turn slightly red. That is **not** tan. I do nails and drink iced tea. I do *not* collect data for my parents' stupid science experiment and drink *hot cocoa*. I am a fairly good eater for my tender age of eleven, except I don't eat chocolate. I hate it. It is revolting. And I have to drink it for the next two months we stay here. Torture. The only good thing about being here is that I get to wear my new shoes. The perfect ones for me. Except for the fact that they are meant to be worn in the snow, and I *hate* snow, they are stylish and cozy. White, fuzzy, and comfortable. Like me! I never, ever get new shoes. My height of five foot three at eleven years old suggests big feet. *The same size as my mom's.* That means I have to share shoes with her. No shoes (besides these) of my own. And Reese,

my sister, is the perfect height and weight for her age of six. She is so optimistic and happy, she dances in the rain. *That's* the kind of person she is. She's *perfect*. Like, has many friends and gets amazing grades and studies her school stuff over the summer, perfect. It's ridiculous. And Dad is, like, seven feet tall. My tall genes come from him. Anyway, we are here and I don't like it.

Life

By: Felicia Lepur

Life is like a book, because there is always something happening. Every week is like your writing details. Every year is your new chapter, and at the end of every year on December 31st at 11:59pm you are putting your final touches of that chapter. Although many people believe they can't write a book, little do they know they actually do, the reason is that they tell their memories to people and that's basically a chapter or detail from their book of life. Overall people are getting to know your intriguing, influence, inspirational, and unforgettable life.

Glub

By: Golará Malaki

Experiencing the first pet was more of a scientific growth than an emotional one. Isn't it just the craziest thing that fish can't breathe when placed in a doll house? Shiny was one of those fish that were so addicted to water that she couldn't even get air unless she took it through water. If you ask me, I was just helping her through addiction therapy.

Under the Rug

by Olivia Markos

Chapter 1

There was something under the rug. It was moving, not too fast and not too slow, but it was moving with a motion like no other. It was mysterious. The house was muggy and dark and had been in Ben's family for generations. He just hadn't moved out yet.

Ben bent down and slowly yanked the rug up, but nothing was there. He put the rug back, but the what-seemed-like-magic-sort-of bump was still there, so he went down to the basement. The old rusty stairs made a dark, creaking sound that sent chills down his spine.

He hadn't been down there since it happened. No one in his family had spoken about it, but he knew that this basement had something to do with it.

Chapter 2

Okay, so this is what happened. We were playing down in the basement. I told her I needed to ask mom if I could take a photo of the bug that we found. I came back and saw her eyes roll over to a pale white. I was horrified.

I screamed so loud it hurt my throat. My dad came running down the wooden stairs that soon would crack. He grabbed a dusty shovel that was in the corner and beat his poor sister to death. Now, you know what happened. That night, I could not sleep. Tears ran down my cold pink cheek. I was sobbing but not making a sound.

Chapter 3

What if Ben went down the stairs to the basement to see the shovel that he used that dark day? Ben went over to it. Blood was spattered on the tip of the weapon. He picked it up not knowing a thing about what might happen. His chest turned cold. He heard a hard voice that said, "I'm back!"

Mr. Liden's Library
By: Autumn McCombs

He had warned her about the book. Now it was too late.

.....(time laps: 1 week).....

The book Sat on the library chair. She had come to read this book every night and every day for the pass week. Saying she was obsessed would be a complete understatement. But this book couldn't leave the library. Don't ask her how she knew, she just did. The girl flashed back to that night. That night from exactly 6 days ago.

..... *flashback*

"My dear. Do NOT take your time reading this story. You have exactly 6 days." Those had been the strange words the mysterious man had croacked. Time seemed to slow.. then stop completely as the old man's icy, vacant state poured into her soul, chilling every part of it. "Does he even have a soul? With that evil stare and those lifeless eyes, I would assume not." She thought horribly. No. Shuddering, she pulled away, burying her cruel, judgmental thoughts.

My Significant Other

By Rebecca Mohr

My significant other is my guardian angel. She protects me from monsters under my bed and mad cats. I have insane love for her but not romantically. Yes we do fight a lot but that doesn't mean I love her any less than I do. She brings out my glowing spirit and I bring out hers. I will never love any one more than her. Although she is ill and her body weak, she still is that amazing and strong opera singer that travels the world and builds a theater from scratch. And man, she makes some mad homemade macaroni and cheese. She is my soul mate, my true love no one knows me better than her. Mom, your body may be weak, but everyday your soul and spirit grows bigger and bigger with inspirational light and love.

*Just desert:

It was halloween. Sally had an almost evil grin on her face. As she lowered the knife, the pumpkin began to glow and cackle evilly. Sally screamed at the top of her lungs. When she saw this evil pumpkin at the end of her hall, she tossed her knife up in the air. As it came down, it punctured Sally in her head, and so with final breath she screamed once again. So the pumpkin said, "150 years I will return from death, and if any pumpkins were carved again the pumpkin race will have its revenge. That was the last time that anyone or ANYTHING ever saw Sally again.

150 years later as promised, the evil pumpkin rose from the fertilized soil of the graveyard. The evil pumpkin hopped across streets until he came across the first jack o' lantern of the night! He extended his stem and grabbed all the pumpkins in the neighborhood. They came to life eating every adult and child that they saw. This is it the appocolypse. Many people didn't believe it would be caused by pumpkins.

One day during the pumpkin appocolypse, a genius came up with an idea. He said that they should go up to the pumpking king and tell him that from now on they would carve watermelons. So they journeyed to the pumpkin cave and told the king the news. The king agreed to the human's idea. Then, the humans and pumpkins lived in peace.

Sent from my iPad,
Arjun Nair

Uninvited Guests

by Devika Nair

The basement. Damp, mildew-spotted wood creaked raucously beneath Nick Andreas's mud-speckled boots. A cacophony of furtive wooden creaks rang from the shadowed corners of the basement, smothered by an omnipresent blanket of dust. Nick gripped the handle of his flashlight tighter, swirling light around the room. Piles of worn, moth eaten clothing and decimated wooden crates lay untouched around the interior of the basement. "You horrid boy." Ms. Granger had started her lecture off with. "Stop jabbing at your computers all day and rotting what little left of a brain you have." Now, came the finger pointing. Ms. Granger had wagged her pale, crooked finger in front of Nick's face. "Now I have some books from when I was a kid down in the basement. Go and get them. Do something productive! And boy," she had grabbed Nick's sleeve, "don't open the closet door." Now, Nick was here, wasting precious time on Level 7 of Tetra. Stupid Ms. Granger. The old coot. Why couldn't Nick's mom take him to her vacation for the week? Good lord, it was the Bahamas! Instead, he was here, being babysat by the crazy old nut of the neighborhood. Some people thought that she had killed her husband and stuffed his corpse in the basement to rot with all of the other junk she had forgotten. Nick tentatively sniffed the air and audibly gagged. The basement smelled of wood rot and damp, wool sweaters. Nick turned around, casting faded light around the room, to face a door in the center of the farthest wall. Nick furrowed his eyebrows in a suspicious frown and approached it cautiously. He smirked, and licked his braces forcefully. It was a closet door. "Don't open the closet door." Ms. Granger's words rang in Nick's head. It was the same words she had said when Nick was first dropped off at her house. Nick looked the door up and down, unimpressed. It had a small, circular frame and was comprised entirely of wood. Nick let the faded light of his flashlight cast up and down its frame. He saw a glimmer of suppressed movement. Nick brought the flashlight back to it. The doorknob. His heart was pounding. He was sure he had seen the doorknob turn. That was impossible. Ms. Granger lived alone. Nick observed it beneath his flashlight. It was a brass, circular knob, faded and worn from disuse, then, abandonment. It didn't move. Nick let out a sigh of breath through his teeth and turned around, chuckling at his irrational fear. A squeak ran through the basement. The doorknob. Nick froze, and turned, shaking, flashlight held next to his chest. He dropped to the ground and looked beneath the door. Shadows shifted on the other side. Nick let the flashlight illuminate the doorknob. It jiggled softly, then turned slowly. The flashlight died. Nick shrieked.

The Island

By Keegan Oates

Chapter 1

One day a man named Jake went to a museum with his Dad. When they went in, a gush of wind flew into their faces.

A voice said, "Mr. Brady, do you want to work here?"

"Do I ever," said Mr. Brady.

"You have to get the crystal."

"Okay, where is it?" Mr. Brady said.

"It's on Soron Island."

"Uh oh!" Brady said.

"But we will provide you with troopers"

"Okay, let's do this!" said Brady.

They took a bridge across the ocean. Half way there a giant ocean dinosaur popped out of the water. Guns were firing everywhere. Brady didn't know what to do. He was looking forward and then he saw the Island.

Caw! He could hear the screeching cry of the Pterodactyl.

"What's that?" said the trooper.

Rawww! A velociraptor jumped out and at two of the troopers. Brady and the other walked a little more, and then they set up camp.

"Keep walking troop a little more until we get to the power station," said Brady.

"Huff," said Jack. "How much longer?"

"A little longer," said Claire.

They came to the power station, and it was very dark.

"What's that?" said a trooper.

"It's a Diophantus," said Brady. "Run!"

They ran far away, and then Brady said, "Oh, my gosh!"

And there it was: the T-Rex, the king of all dinos. "Nice dinosaur," said Jack. "Run!!"

They got to the edge of the cliff. The T-Rex was coming: Boom! The T-Rex was right there.

Pew-pew, a gun fired. The T-Rex laid flat on the ground.

Martina Shrift

"Untitled"

Ah, sunset over the Sonoran desert. The evening sky is flushed in shades of pale pink and gold, the edges of the sky painted dusky purple. Talk about getting up early- I almost never got to witness things like this. I consider just saying "Whatever, don't be the early bird" and curling up on my perch again until night was really getting started. But, I decide against it. Time-wasting is never a good idea when the law is "survival of the fittest". So, I flutter down from of cozy little cactus-perch and glide, performing some rudimentary low-level surveillance. Unfortunately, every one of my wing beats is audible- curse my evolutionary lack of silent flight! I glance around, hoping my noise won't have frightened off any juicy little insects or perhaps rats and mice that would make for a good tuck-in. Before you rodent-lovers (seriously, why do you like those things? They're noisy, hyper, and not much good for anything but a snack) get up on my case, as predators have to eat too. The more bugs we munch, the less bother you.

Anyways, I was having miserable luck looking for prey- this is what happens when you get up early, kids- and was not in the best mood, the leftover heat from the day surrounding the desert being much worse than I was used to- again, getting up early. Quite suddenly, a purplish blur streaks across the dusty terrain, accompanied by a buzzing sound that brings to mind some terrifying mental image of an enormous wasp. Thankfully, this animal is much, much less dangerous- though also much harder to capture. The petite creature pauses in midair, probably looking for food or predators. What it's thinking, staying still in an open space where any predator could spring or fly out at it and obtain a quick midnight snack, I have no idea. The bright purple color doesn't help either- I can't imagine it blending in even in the daytime. Well, I guess being the size of a cactus blossom means it's about as intelligent as one. Anyways, the foolish thing is probably looking for the food that many of my fellow desert-dwellers who are less aggressive prefer- flowers. Or, more specifically, flower nectar.

I suppose it's an acquired taste.

It finally spots the delectable (?) flowers, dyed a deep shade of crimson and shaped like cups. Presumably, these flowers are filled with sticky-sweet nectar- I wouldn't know, I've never checked. So, the silly thing darts towards it, dipping its needlelike beak in and out on the small flowers, losing all interest in, you know, looking for things that want to kill it. Kinda a big deal. I creep towards it, preparing to lift off into flight and snatch the squirming thing out of the air- a delicate trick that I've perfected from moon cycles of catching rats and moths. Even as I spread my wings, it stays absorbed in its meal, blissfully unaware of the predator watching it. I was hoping to find a rat or perhaps a snake- though this is a bit bigger than some of my usual prey, it's mostly muscle, meaning this will be barely a morsel.

The Adventures of Jenny Cathren & Emily Palm

By Juniper Shutters

She looked up at the angry sky as she skipped down the cellar stairs. Seven-year-old Jenny Cathren was with her Grandmother. She lived in Kansas City and there was a tornado rolling down the valley. "Why is the sky so mad today?" she asked curiously. "Well, sometimes the sky gets mad," she replied. "But what does it get mad at?" asked Jenny. "People," said Grandmother. "But why people?" Jenny said as they shut and locked the door. "Well, sometimes people are bad like the ones who killed your parents," said Grandmother. There was a crash of thunder and a long silence. They thought among the darkness of the cellar. They could only see by the dim light brought to them by one lonely lantern sitting on an old, antique table. They didn't know how long they would be staying there, but they weren't going to take any chances. A few hours later, Grandmother noticed it wasn't dark anymore so she got up to look outside. Sun shined and birds were tweeting sweetly. Jenny was laying on an old, beaten-up sofa, asleep with her baby blanket and her teddy bear.

What happened was, their house was blown down along with every other house in that town. She thought, "Why bother to build a new one, we can just stay in the cellar." Jenny woke up. They ate lunch in the coldness of the cellar. They didn't actually like living in the cellar but there was no choice. All the stores that sold materials were all broken down by the tornado the day before.

Meanwhile, Jenny went to see if her best friend Emily was okay. She was walking around in circles and it looked like she was panicking. "What's up," said Jenny. "I don't know where to live because my house is gone," replied Emily. "You could come live with us," she said. "I guess," Emily replied.

There was a long and disappointing silence on the way back to the "house." When they got there, Maggie greeted them. Oh, did I mention Maggie is their dog? I don't think so, but anyway Jenny told her Grandmother about the situation. She said Emily could stay with them.

So now there were four members of the family. Grandmother got Jenny and Emily snuggled in bed fast asleep as she put on her monster disguise. Nobody knew that she was the one responsible for all of the damage done to most of the town. The whole town thought it was Rachel Cornelious. It was her, or so they thought...

LIFE

By Emily Stockwell

Life should be cared for not treated like a horror movie, life should be expressed not kept in a dark black hole, life should be everything, life is what you want it to be, life is like a cupcake on a hot summer day, life is seeing, life is how you move, life is how you are here. None will know this question, life is a mystery, everyone is a mystery.

Guilt

By Samantha Stubbs

Where did I go wrong?

The burning question has haunted Ukraine for centuries.

She loves her siblings, of course, with all of her heart: Russia is her sweet— although, not so sweet at the moment— little brother that has trouble making friends, and Belarus is her beautiful baby sister with a slight big-brother complex. It's not that bad; they can recover, she'll make *sure* they will... Or, at least, that's what she tells herself. It's what she's been telling herself for centuries: to be exact, since the day their father, Kievan Rus', passed away, but her efforts to help her siblings have always been fruitless. She knows that there isn't much she can do now, since their formative years are *ages* behind them. *I wonder if it's my fault*, Ukraine thinks, *or if they ended up this way because of the other environments they were raised in*. She remembers something, and chuckles ruefully. *No, no, it's definitely my fault. My father's dying words were: Take care of your siblings, Ukraine. Make sure that any trouble they encounter, any wars they fight in, any detrimental order they are given by their leader... make sure that they have the strength to not let it break them. I promised him that I would do whatever I could, and I obviously didn't*. Ukraine, eyes watering, wanders to her couch and wraps a blanket around herself. *Although, I could entertain the thought that the other environments they were raised in should be the ones that take the blame*.

Russia's childhood was frigid and grueling, full of cruel and vicious bosses, bloodshed, being bullied by other countries, and forced servitude. His bosses did unspeakably horrible things to the people of many countries, including his own, to get allies. For the most part, they did, in fact, “succeed,” but only because the other countries were forced into it. At some point, this way of making “friends” started rub off on Russia because of its “success.” He had no idea that what he was doing was wrong; he just wanted to make a friend! Unfortunately, since he was young, eager, and easily influenced, he didn't think about the *method* as much as the “*outcome*” and started to try it. After trying to make friends with many other countries this way, he has unknowingly made them deeply afraid of him. To this day, he tries to build camaraderie with others this way, because nobody ever told him that being violent is not how you make friends.

Belarus, however, had a much happier childhood— at least, by comparison. The more formative parts of her life were the few decades after she was born and the late eighteenth

century— she appeared to be somewhere between sixteen and seventeen, both mentally and physically, to an unsuspecting human by then— up to the present. Ukraine doesn't remember much of her sister's childhood, something she's always been saddened by, but she does remember that, when Belarus appeared to be about six years old, Lithuania took her in— and Poland in later years. Belarus led a spoiled and luxurious life, as far as the standards in the Middle Ages go, at Lithuania's house: she ate every day, was groomed and washed, and wore what was current at the time. She wasn't always happy, however; she was deeply concerned about her brother, who she rarely saw, and took for granted all of the privileges she had gained when she lived with Lithuania and Poland. She went through a lot of emotional turmoil during those few centuries, and, when Belarus was taken over by Imperial Russia in 1795, she developed a deep attachment to her brother, which gradually turned into an extremely unhealthy and frightening obsession. It got so bad that Belarus started begging him to marry her so that they would never be apart, to which, of course, he said no. However, she, in Russia's words, is “very tenacious” and ended up becoming so desperate for the two to be wed that she started being around him nearly twenty-four hours a day. She even broke down his front door at one point because the doorknob “dared to separate them,” and became vicious and hateful towards Ukraine—*her own sister*— because Russia paid more attention to her. This caused her siblings— and mostly every other country— to fear her greatly.

Ukraine is sobbing as she thinks about the state her brother and sister are in. She blames herself for it: at some point in her childhood, she took a wrong turn, at some point in her childhood, she—

Wait.

Her train of thought screeches to a halt. How old was she when Kievan Rus' passed away? She remembers: she only appeared to be about nine years old, both physically and mentally, when she was forced to become the caretaker of her siblings. Centuries of anguish melt away as she realizes that how her siblings turned out could not possibly be her fault— *she was a child raising other children*. How could she have known how to raise a child if she was one herself? Ukraine feels an enormous anvil of guilt being lifted off her chest, and smiles genuinely for the first time that day.

Mr. Linden's Library

By Parisa Yazdani

"Morning, Mr. Linden," said Josie. Mr. Linden's spectacles shined in the sunlight; an utterly bewildering sight. "Where are your newest books?" asked Josie. "They are near the last shelf," replied Mr. Linden. Josie looked in the box, but didn't find anything very interesting. She browsed around, and a dusty, brown book, on an empty shelf, in the corner of the room, caught her attention. She picked it up and read the title, LOST. She took the book and went to Mr. Linden. She then said, "In the back of this book, the author clearly states that this book is about a girl getting lost in a magical jungle. Doesn't this belong on the fictional bookshelf?" Josie looked up and was surprised of what she saw. Mr. Linden had become pale with fright, petrified. When he regained his composure, he whispered, so quietly that Josie could barely hear him, "Where did you get that?" His croaky voice sounded harsh. Mr. Linden leaned in. Josie could see drops of sticky sweat dripping down his forehead. "This book is different than any other book I know. It feels. The last person who borrowed it had nightmares, night after night. You may read it, but beware. Someone could get hurt," Mr. Linden whispered. Josie was confused and had many questions, but she kept quiet, not wanting to upset the librarian even more.

When Josie went to bed that night, she cleaned the front cover of the book and set it under her lamp. She then changed into her long, pink, ribbon nightgown and unbraided her thick, blonde hair. She took her book, lay down on her bed, and started reading. After a while, she dozed off, her chest puffing up and down slowly. What she didn't know was that, slowly, a thorny, dark green vine crawled out of the book! Mr. Linden tried to warn her, but now it was too late.

When Josie woke up she shrieked, so loudly that her window became cracked. She was tied, uncomfortably on her bed by thorny thick vines. She wiggled and squirmed, but couldn't free herself. The vines closed in, squeezing her like a boa. She couldn't breathe. She closed her eyes, waiting for the worst to come, but it never came. She was breathing now! Josie opened her eyes carefully until she saw, nothing but her bedroom! She looked around. Everything was normal! There were no vines, it was the middle of the night, the window wasn't cracked, and the book was opened to the exact page she left it! Josie then exclaimed happily, "It was just a dream!" she then realized what Mr. Linden had tried to say when he warned her. She might have nightmares, but she would be safe. She left the room, wanting a warm cup of milk. It was just a dream, or was it?

What is Writing?

A speech by Nathan Zonn

What is writing?

Writing is the ability to truly express who you are. What I am. What we can do together. You can unlatch your mind from its dark, secluded pen and let it drip parts of you, me, and everybody else onto paper, so we can befriend and experience each other.

What is writing?

Writing is inspiration. It is the simple justification that if one commits to an action, others will follow. Monkey see, monkey do! You can inspire a person a group, a generation, even the world to write.

What is writing?

Writing is change. The Gettysburg Address, the first story ever told, all the literature, speeches and stories that have come before me. "I have a dream," that one day everybody will write and the world will be a better place.

What is writing?

Writing is love. It is sharing, it is joy. Let writing's radiant glow spread, change, inspire...justify. Let the way we express ourselves, on paper, connect us all.

What is writing?

Writing is us....