A collection of literature and art created by the students of Breed Middle School.

Winter Edition 2015
Contributing Writers and Artists

Alex Show
Kenny Bolduc
Nachary Grullon Robles
Genesis Beato
Aliya Rock
Guadalupe Perez
Jyuhout Seng
Arianna Rodriguez Quinones
Manyuri de Leon Robles
Ashley Christiansen
Mekkailah Chourb
Jeasa Marshall
Jonathan Pimentel
Kobe Son
Adrianna Torres
Naomy Peralta
Joslyn Martinez
Sydney McCarthy
Jeni Ramirez
Courtney Holloway
Gianna Peredina
Austin Bartnicki
Matthews Sanchez
Virginia Christiansen
Christopher Ouk
Ethan Eager
Dafne Lanza

Editors
Carol Aceto
Rebecca Freedman
Bradford Green
Shannon Michalczyk
Andrea Smith

Artistic Editor
Lauren Stelluti
Welcome to Heaven

By Alex Show

I’m trying my hardest to get this message across.
You’ve been in a coma for twenty years.
Your friends and family haven’t left your side in a while
You are in your room, outgrowing your childhood bed.
You missed world peace,
and many chances to fall in love.

Remember yourself as a small child,
not giving any flying damns about anything.
Now remember what your mom always said to you,
"Life is short. Live it to the fullest."
And you did.

The next morning, after your birthday
you decided to jump off your roof
into the snow.
I remember that day.
You may not have seen Me
but I was there--
those last moments.
It was scary to see your
mom cry.
I could feel her pain.

Now she’s by your bed,
holding your hand.
She cries, but whispers,
"It’s ok to let go."
And you do.

Artwork by Kenny Bolduc
Bullies and Fear: An Editorial

By Nachary Grullon Robles

Bully. What does the word make you think of? For some people, it’s that girl at school who always makes fun of them. For others, it’s the biggest guy in the neighborhood who’s always trying to beat them up or take their things.

No matter what situation or form it comes in, bullying can make you feel depressed, hurt, and alone. It can keep you from enjoying the activities and places that are part of your life. You’ve probably heard parents or teachers say things like, “Don’t let it get to you” or “You just have to be tougher.” But why should something that can make a person so miserable have to be part of growing up? The answer is it doesn’t!

Each and every one of us has the right to feel safe in our lives and good about ourselves. The reason why one kid would want to bully another kid is this, when you make someone feel bad, you gain power over him or her. Power makes people feel like they’re better than another person. So why would someone need to hurt someone else in order to feel good about themselves or get attention?

So, please I am begging you to please stop it before it happens again. So many kids have been bullied. Don’t let it happen again. Don’t let bullying affect your life or anyone else’s. Stop it before it happens.
There is always a moment when everything changes and twists into tangled threads and you find yourself wrapped in them like a fly in a web. When fate takes a turn that wasn’t part of the plan, causing a ripple of unforeseen events you could only imagine in a daydream. Right now, was that moment!

For all my life, I never had a place to call my own home. Sure, I had a crowded orphanage to sleep in that was filled with obnoxious children and overworked caretakers. Sure, I lived in a residence that accepted my deafness and Japanese origin, but I had no one to call my family. The company of the other deaf kids was enough for me though. Well, I thought it was enough until I was staring into the eyes of my new parents.

The short woman’s light blonde hair stood out against her dark coat, with her eyes matching her grey flats. She smelled of sweet vanilla perfume and she held tightly the hand of her wife, who sported a pair of black frames and a light brown blazer over a sophisticated dress. The expressions on their faces showed greatly how anxious and joyful they were, and how important this was for them. I hid behind the tall social worker that had brought me to this foster home from Japan in my earlier days, Ms. May, like a scared timid dog.

“Mrs. and Mrs. Dorielle, meet your new daughter Hayami,” Ms. May signed smoothly and swiftly, “She is a bit shy, but very sweet once you get to know her.” The two women smiled warmly at me like a hundred small candles in a cold winter, and I couldn’t help but smile back. Ms. May motioned me to move in front of her, and I did, with my fidgety hands behind my back.

“Hello,” signed the blonde lady, “My name is Linda. It is very nice to meet you.”

“My name is Natalia,” signed the second women, “I am just like you.” I gulped, not knowing how to react to that, and only gazed at Natalia’s bright smile which seemed to radiate some sort of hope I did not see before.

With shaking hands, I signed back, “Nice to meet you too.”

After an eternity of handing over and signing papers that all looked identical, shuffling around, and pacing back and forth, I was in the backseat of a car, driving to a new chapter of my life. I focused on the gentle cool wind that swept my dark hair and the angles of my face, also watching the pine green trees that passed us dance and sway. I tried
to read each and every billboard and traffic sign that zoomed by, and I tapped my feet
to the rhythm of the car speakers’ vibrations. Things seemed too perfect, I thought, still
trying to piece together in my head how it was that after years of sleep in an orphanage
for the deaf, tonight was the night I finally slept in a new setting. I thought of my first
days at the foster home as a much smaller and fragile girl than I was now, relocated all
the way from California and long before then, Japan. Hurt by the derogatory state-
ments made by the other children about my tiny and pale figure and lost in a new state
and still fairly new country. How, I thought to myself, did I end up with parents of my
very own?

It was all too much and too fast to process, and I began to think about what
would happen if my new parents didn’t understand me. If they didn’t know how to
manage me, like how it was with the orphanage in the beginning. But that’s the thing;
they did understand. Natalia did, and that both rocked my heart and soothed it at the
same time.

After a motionless journey to another fate, I was shaken awake by a tired-looking
Linda. “We are home,” she signed carefully, almost messing up the word home. With a
heart full of wonder and anticipation, I slowly walked towards my new house. It was
something I could only dream to live in, even though it was an average simple house of
two floors. When we all entered inside, I was simply awestruck by how neat it was - a
thing you would never see in a million years at the orphanage. “Amazing,” was all I
could sign before I found myself exploring every silent crevice there was to see.

The first night I thought I would be tossing and turning in my sheets, just staring at
the blue moonlight that peaked through the curtains. The first night I thought I would
long for the coziness of the foster home to the extent that I wouldn’t even be able to lie
down. And I didn’t miss everything. I purposefully recalled all the memories I could to
see if I would feel sad, but I just laid there dazed until I fell asleep in darkness.

In a few days, I would be attending a new school and be forced to handle myself
in hectic hallways that only had hearing students. Unfortunately, there were no deaf
schools nearby and homeschooling was out of the question because I had to expose my-
self to these things anyways, according to Linda and Natalia. I was mad, almost offend-
ed, when they told me that, but then I thought that if even Natalia said that, it was
pointless to be upset.

The day finally came and we all drove to Fitchdale Junior High School. Like a
small pack of wolves, we walked close together into the building and into the principal’s
office, but I lingered a couple seconds behind to take in the sight of bright fluorescent
lights and all the different posters that were pasted on the walls, some printed and some
hand-drawn. Students and teachers walked in and out of classrooms and stairways in the distance, and I felt the faint vibrations on the soles of my feet. Everything, from the opening of heavy doors to the subtle movement of a person’s steps made a mute symphony, but I was quickly pulled away from the music. The principal’s office was tiny but full, like a regular cubicle in an office building, and behind the only desk sat a bald tan man in a grey suit. He shuffled various papers and I turned around to look outside into the hallways from the small door window. A couple students remained, sluggishly walking away from my view. I looked and looked until I felt a poke on my shoulder, turning my head back to see Natalia sign, “I am going to be your helper today.” I nodded okay hesitantly, unsure if that would be a good or bad thing.

There are things that you expect and don’t expect in certain situations, depending on how experienced or not you are. For one thing, I imagined that if Natalia and I both stayed silent, nobody would question us. I don’t know why I thought people wouldn’t think twice about a woman following around a girl the entire day, I just did. And with all the fuss and figuring out schedules, it didn’t occur to me that I would eventually have to introduce myself. That being said, when two girls approached me during one of my classes and started moving their fast lips, I froze. Natalia immediately began to speak with her hands and also with her mouth explaining to them, but the girls left as quickly as they came. As the minutes passed, I saw them hiding their lips with their hands, occasionally stealing glances at me and laughing.

By the time school ended, I felt that all my pride and dignity had been drained away. I no longer felt the thrill of living outside the foster home - nothing was what I thought it would be. Natalia stopped me before we entered the car and I looked at her promising and optimistic eyes. She signed, “It’s okay Hayami. Tomorrow you will show them that you are not just a deaf kid. You will show them how strong you are.”

Something inside me shifted and I thought of how every tiny individual moment had led up to this one and I realized that if I ended up in this once in a lifetime position, then I was destined to do great. That night, instead of hoping to just get through tomorrow, I was determined to prove that I was not just a deaf Japanese girl, I was Hayami Dorielle and I was meant to be here.
FEAR

By Aliya Rock

There are many situations in which you experience fear. For example; the moment you walk into a new classroom. Or maybe the split second that you realize you've forgotten to bring money when paying for something. But if you think about it, these things are very miniscule in the big scheme of things. So why do they make so many of us see our life flash before our eyes? The answer is because how much the world around us has changed since the dawn of time.

Your ancestors most likely had bigger things to worry about than awkward social situations. So when they experienced fear, it was much more helpful. When a lion attacked them, their brain was on full alert. This allowed them to properly respond as efficiently as they could. Nowadays, we don't have as big of a chance of getting mauled by a wild animal, so that same part of the brain that used to help ancient peoples survive is used for more minor and unnecessary situations.

In response to this, you might think "there is still a chance of getting run over by a car, or getting shot, or being attacked, etc.". You would be correct in saying that. However, there is a bigger sense of protection from those things than centuries ago. Today, there are traffic signals, and police officers, and laws to protect people. There were never any officials to discipline invaders or tigers in ancient times.

The reason that we create "frightening" situations for ourselves is the same reason that people get anxious over things. There is too much fear in us all, and not enough outlets. We have unintentionally created more of a sense of panic in all of us because of our own inventions. Things that help us, have also hurt us.

However, is that really all that surprising?
Artwork By: Guadalupe Perez
"RUN!! " hearing the sound of rocks tumbling, Talya screamed to the top of her lungs, the atmosphere around her filling up with dust and rubble. "I knew this was a bad idea the moment I saw this cave!" Panicking, she ran out of the cave nervously wondering if her friend is okay.

"Tayla! Tayla!!" Wunar yelled. Stuck behind rubble of rock, she stayed calm hoping that Tayla would somehow get her out. Her flashlight flickered in the dark, inky, black cave. A sign of dark turnouts? Minutes passed feeling like hours. Wunar spotted an opening in the cave as her flashlight died. The thumb-sized hole shed light on the unlit cave.

Tayla left the cave hoping to find someone to help. All she saw was the wide open ocean and the bumpy Mount Coordan. A cool breeze filled the warm scorching summer sun. Running to her house to look for equipment, she bumped into her mother.

Picking up rock by rock, Wunar threw them at the roof of the cave. Pebbles began to fall with every third rock she threw. CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! More rubble began to fall. The gap began to widen. The danger Wunar will face is too great to be realized by herself.

"Tayla? What are you doing? You look like a sewer rat!" her mother asked.

"I NEED YOUR HELP MOM! WUNAR GOT TRAPPED! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET HER OUT! SHE FELL BEHIND RUBBLE AND STONE AND-

"Whoa, slow down. Now, what is going on with Wunar?"

Dud! Dud! Dud! echoed through the cave. Tayla ran into the cavern once more telling her mother to get a hammer. The thumb-sized hole widen to a foot.

Tiring from her toil for freedom, Talya exclaimed, "Wunar! WUNAR!!"

"Could it be?! TAYLA!!"

The sun shone upon the crack.

"Tayla, there’s an opening on the roof of the cave! One good smash oughta do it!" Wunar explained.

Tayla, jolted out of the cavern and up its side. She took a nearby rock and pounded the gap with all her might. CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! THUD! THUD!! THUD!!! Pebbles and dust scattered with every hit. CRA-ACK!!! A gap grew to the size of a freezer. Tayla, just narrowly escaping falling in, stood back in awe. Spotting her mother in the distance, she waved her arms signaling her to go on top of the cave.
Wunar covered her head and stood up to see her friend and that the hole had widened. "HEY! YOU GOT IT! Now throw down a rope or...ladder! Hurry! I think it's almost time for high tide!"

"Mom, help her up! I'll go get some rope!"

A silhouette of Tayla's mother covered Wunar's sight. Grabbing her hand, she tried to go up. "Urrrrrgghh!!!" The struggle of the mother filled the enclosed the cave. "OOF!" Wunar had fallen and got up to hear the panting of Tayla's mother.

"Alright! One more time!"

Crack.

"Uh oh...The cave top is going to collapse! You're going to have to wait for Tayla!"

Wunar's feet began to feel soaked as if there was a flood. "Oh no..."

"I HAVE THE ROPE!!"

Tayla handed the rope to her mother and tossed one end down into the gap. "Grab on Wunar!"

"Three, two, one...PULL!! Heerrveee!" The struggle of all three echoed through the entire cavern.

"AHH!!" SPLOOSH!

The sight of Wunar on her bum soaked in water confused Tayla.

"OH NO! Wunar can't climb and it's almost high tide!" said Talya. "Huh...no wonder she got a 'C' in gym class."

"Wunar I'm gonna climb down and help you up! Mom I need you to tie the rope to a tree trunk," Tayla said in a hurry.

"But-"

"No buts! Mom please... Trust me!!"

SPLOOSH! Tayla, got on her hands and knees. She told Wunar to grab the rope and go up.

"Wunar now!" Tayla yelled, getting nervous. The water had risen up to her shoulders. Knowing that neither of them could swim, Wunar went up the rope. "Errr..., Hurry up there Wunar...I can't hold you up much longer!"

Tayla's face had gotten red as salt water rose to her neck. Wunar's legs were almost out of the cave. She heard, "Wunar! Hurry up! ACK! SPPFFFTT!"

Tayla, taking her last breath of air, became completely submerged in the water.

"I'M UP!" Wunar yelled!

But she saw nothing but the murky water and the wet rope floating above.

Just then, Tayla's head popped out of the water. Gasping, she grabbed the rope and rose to the sight of her friend embracing her.
Arianna Rodriguez Quinones

Manyuri de Leon Robles
Once upon a time three girls, Autumn, Isabelle and Ava went on vacation to a small town in Maine called Storybrooke. This was no ordinary town but a place where fairytale characters lived. As the girls were driving they came across a mysterious animal, a wolf with glowing green eyes standing in the middle of the road. As they saw the wolf they spun out of control smashing their car into a sign that said, “Welcome to Storybrooke.” No damage was done and the wolf had disappeared into the woods along the road. “Did you see that?” asked Autumn. “Yes,” replied Isabelle and Ava, saying it creepily at the same time. They continued to drive to the mysterious town and finally arrived at “Granny Smith’s Café and Motel.”
The girls thought they looked everywhere until, as they were driving, they spotted Autumn’s face in front of the clock tower window in the center of town. Ava pulled over and both girls hopped out of the car running towards the clock tower and listening to Autumn’s screech.

The girls got out of the car and went to check in. “I’m going to unload the car, okay?” asked Autumn. “Okay,” replied the other two. Autumn began unloading the car while Ava and Isabelle checked into the hotel room. When they came back to help Autumn with the luggage she was gone. Was she in the motel room already? Nope! Was she in the bathroom? Not to be found! Did she go to explore the town? The two best friends went out on a little search party looking for their friend. Even when they did that she was still nowhere to be seen.
Isabelle swung the door open. They both ran inside as fast as they could. As they scurried up the metal spiral staircase they finally reached the top. There, they saw a man with a hook for a hand holding Autumn tightly in his arms as if he were strangling her. Autumn finally freed herself and ran into her best friend’s arms not realizing the man with the hook was only hugging her. Even though the man looked sinister he was actually a really nice pirate named Captain Hook who owned the ship, The Jolly Roger. If you don’t already know, he is from the well-known fairy tale, Peter Pan. He apologized for scaring the girls and explained he was trying to show his appreciation for Autumn giving him information about where she lived as he was thinking of going there for vacation himself. The four new friends had some lunch together and the three girls finally got to enjoy their trip. Always look out for your friends and remember: you can’t judge someone by their looks.
Bullies: An Editorial

By Mekkailah Chourb

Stop it before it happens! Don’t be a bystander! Don’t bully! Bullying can happen in and out of school. Don’t let it affect your life unless you’re doing something about it! Imagine you are in a lunch room and someone makes you trip on purpose, what do you do?

Bullying is when someone is saying cruel things about someone else. Bullying usually happens because someone is annoyed or something is happening with their family, so they take out their anger on other people. If someone is bullying someone else they’re not just making their life hard but also the life of the person they are bullying.

There are different types of bullying, such as: physical bullying, verbal bullying, and cyber bullying. Physical bullying is when you are kicking, hitting, pushing or even threatening to hurt someone. They can even make you do things you don’t want to do. Verbal bullying is when you are teasing, name calling, or insulting someone. If you don’t have anything nice to say don’t say anything at all. It will only cause trouble. Cyber bullying is when you are insulting or saying bad things about someone on the internet. Whatever someone says about or to you don’t let it affect you. You will only make them stronger.

Bullying is a terrible thing that could lead to something dangerous. If you have been bullied before you know how it feels, don’t do it! If you see something, do something. What does the word bully mean to you?
The Free Man

By Jonathan Pimentel

I tightly pull the laces of my shoes.

I think about how different life would be, If I was white, I would have been treated better. Not all white people are bad or abusive, but most of them are. I’m just infatuated with idea that one day that all people will not be afraid of them. And all people are treated equally, but that dream has to come true for another day.

If there was a price on an ethnic’s life, there won’t be a zero in sight. Dressed like a slave, acting like a gentleman, but the mind of an unstable child. There is a hypocritical smile on my face, but it’s either that or being whipped. Slaves are making buildings, hoping that their descendants will be in this exact same building, years later, grateful that life changed out of nowhere.

My owner, Mr. Ray whose middle name must be “RICH,” because he owns so much property. Being bi-racial is a huge advantage if you’re a slave. To your owner, it means that you’re more useful - if you weren’t taken away from your parents - because you can speak more than one language. I thank my mother for teaching me Spanish. If she didn’t I would be in the field, gathering cotton or hauling heavy objects, my sweat would be turning into dry salt. But instead, I’m a male house slave, I make sure the house is clean and the other slaves are acting the way Mr. Ray wants them to be acting. Even though I’m young, I know things only Mr. Ray’s mother knows. Mr. Ray’s son, his name was Peter, he told me things he heard while eavesdropping on his father.

I’m pulled out of my daydreaming into reality when I’m called. He calls me and I go to him. He tells me, “Today is a not an ordinary day, my ex-wife is coming with our three children. I’d really appreciate it if you don’t mess up, unless you’re happy to be whipped... again.”

The scars on my back get a ghostly chill. It’s been five years since the divorce when Mr. Ray’s ex-wife got custody of his three children, Arthur, Peter, and Jasmine.

As a house slave, typically, you will not get any respect. Some of them think I’m Mr. Ray’s pet. They don’t dislike me as a person; they despise me because I’m more valuable to Mr. Ray just because of my heritage. Seconds turn into minutes. Then half-hours turn into hours. Then the guests arrive.
There is a carriage, then the door opens. A middle aged woman comes out. She looks at the house with an equal amount of bad and good emotions on her face. Arthur gets out the carriage; he is not my most favorite person. He always has teased me. Peter gradually exits the carriage, the second oldest child, one of my great friends, to be frank, one of my only friends.

I held the front door open and only Peter greeted me and thanked me. The dinner table was set up. After the meal, the two former partners started to binge liquors. The two drunks started to dance without rhythm and without sync. Arthur laughs at his parents.

I heard Fate call my name. A sound of keys rattle then hit the floor. They make my eyes shine. I sneakily put my foot on the keys and dragged it towards me. The dancing drunks eventually pass out, and I leave with the found keys in my pocket.

Mr. Ray had guns. The lock’s key was easy. I grabbed many and I went to the field slaves. They gave me a not-so-friendly gaze, but when I gave them the guns and told them I was going to let us free, they looked at me like I was their brother.

We ambushed them, but we let Peter leave unharmed. All guns pointed to Mr. Ray. The house got raided and totaled. Furniture was used for fire. We forced him to sign the approval that we were American citizens.

Then, we ran, as fast as we can with no idea where we were going. We didn’t care! We were free!

I stopped at the nearest bar, where the owner was nice enough to employ me. One day, Peter visited me. He told me what was new in his life. I served the person next him. I then turn around to see a boy pulling Peter’s leg. Crying out “Dad, Dad can we go home?”

He replies to his son with comforting voice, “One sec, I’m talking with my friend.” He says with a smile.
Though she wasn’t here to celebrate,

she was honored.

Our hero, Kalil,

was a young woman travelling around the world

in search of adventure.

Her life ended

Sincerely

with her life changing another’s.

The journey started out as vaguely as it could.

Stumbling across the town

she saw a rock in the sky. A moon

of some strange place.

She saw a sign that said

“Terminal”

so she ran into the town

and jumped at the moon

and attacked it.
Nothing was effective at that moment.
She ran into a shop
and saw a strange light source.
A light source that matched the length of his sword.
About three feet in total.
She bought it,
ran out of the shop,
and jumped at the moon
to cut it through.

After,
she came out of a coffin
and stared clearly
at herself.
She had finally cut ties
with her memories
and forgot
HE ever existed.
Once upon a time there was a really nice family that lived in a lovely neighborhood. There were two daughters. One of the daughters was named Patricia; her hair was as dark as the night, her skin as pale as paper and her eyes as dark as chocolate. Patricia was four years old and she loved teddy bears. The older daughter was seven years old. Her name was Emilia and she looked different than Patricia. Her skin was not that pale, her hair was bright like the sun and her eyes were as blue as the sky. Emilia also loved teddy bears.

Their affection for teddy bears and stuffed animals came to a point where they were obsessed with them. One sunny day a strong winded, water-packed tornado hit their neighborhood. The family did not have enough time to go down to the basement and so they died. Many years later another family moved in. In each of the little girl’s bedrooms the new family found a collection of teddy bears among other stuffed animals. Since the new family hated stuffed animals they threw the stuffed animals away.

Then the new family lived happily for a while until Halloween. On Halloween the two dead little sisters came to see how their house was being treated. The little girls saw the house on the outside as they approached it and they were really happy. But when the little girls went into their bedrooms and they did not see their stuffed animals their anger was so intense that that their faces turned as red as tomatoes. They just wanted to destroy everything in their way.

However, they really cared about the house, so they decided to fill the entire house with teddy bears and haunt the new family who threw away their teddy’s until they died; their anger was that big!

Now on Halloween Patricia woke up from her nap and she screamed in fear; her mom came running and worried. Patricia told her mom about her dream, saying “Don’t let us be like that, so mean and scary.” Her mother replied, “I would never let you and your sister be like that. Don’t worry honey, it was only a dream.”
Breeds of Dogs

By: Sydney McCarthy

Artwork by Jeni Ramirez

There are many breeds of dogs, but personally I think the Black Mouth Cur is a great breed. It is a mix of a Labrador and a Hound. My dog is a Black Mouth Cur and his name is Colt. After we adopted him we realized that he could be trained very quickly and easily and is a great family dog.

To most people the Golden Retriever is the best breed, but I think otherwise. First, Golden Retrievers shed a lot since they are long-haired dogs. Additionally, Golden Retrievers have a health concern of cancer issues. Golden Retrievers are, however, a very family oriented dog. They are also very active, so don’t expect them to stay in the yard. Boredom will lead to lots of barking and digging with this breed. What about a Pit Bull?

Pit Bulls are not loved by all. Many people are interested in this dog for fighting and protection. I think they are just scared, sometimes mistreated dogs. If you see a Pit Bull that is vicious don’t blame the dog, blame the owner. They are a very driven dog and determination is one of their most noticeable traits.

Another great but expensive breed is the Rhodesian Ridgeback. These dogs don’t shed very much, are very kind, but they play too roughly which is not great for small children. They have great stamina and energy and you will long tire before they do! Poodles need a lot of exercise and be allowed to run off a leash, so having access to a large piece of property or a beach is important. Many of these dogs, however, have back and hip problems. They are still a great breed.

One last breed to consider is the Poodle. They are one of the most intelligent breeds in the world and are easily trained. The poodle is a small dog and is hypoallergenic; they tend to be odorless. Most poodles have curly coats, so they will need a lot of grooming to prevent their hair from becoming matted. A poodle is a great breed but needs a lot of care and time.

As you can see the world of dogs is diverse and interesting. Many dogs make excellent pets and many require a lot of time and attention.
The Dive

By: Courtney Holloway

It was the middle of the summer. My sister and I were very bored, so I asked her what she wanted to do. “What do you want to do?” asked Abby. “I don’t know. What about you?” replied Jessica. “How about we go to the city pool and have a diving competitor off the top ledge?” I asked. “Really? I’ve never dove off of a diving board before, and it sounds very dangerous” Jessica replied.

“Don’t be scared; it’s going to be fine. I promise!” I said.

I went first. Jessica clapped for me, but she was still very nervous. “That was so fun,” I said to her. It was Jessica’s turn next. SPA-LASHHHH! He landed feet first into the water. I went running into the pool to help her. She was crying and sobbing uncontrollably. I tried to calling out mom and luckily she answered. I was yelling into the phone for her to come as fast as she could. Mom arrived as fast as she could. We went to the hospital. Jessica ended up with a cast on her leg; she had to use crutches for six weeks.

Unfortunately our mom yelled at me. But luckily I did learn a very important lesson. I learned that I should not tell someone to do something if they don’t know how to do it. I also apologized to my mom and sister.
Artwork by: Gianna Peredina
The Case of the Missing Candy Bar
(based on a true story)

By: Austin Bartnicki

It was an afternoon in October, and I, Ocean, Catmoon, Jill and Brianna were at lunch. I felt so hungry that day that I was ready to eat anything. Even if I had to resort to stealing other's food! Catmoon was very exuberant that day because she had brought a snack. She always brought a snack, but for some reason this one was special. Jill is Catmoon's best friend and always keeps calm even in the direst of situations. However, if anyone did anything to Catmoon while Jill was around Jill became absolutely infuriated. Last but not least there is Brianna. She is friends with both Catmoon and Jill. Wherever they were she was too. But she was no third wheel because she was the one who brought humor to the group, something that is always needed.

Each second, as the clock ticked, I became hungrier and hungrier. This particular afternoon was special: Catmoon had brought a candy bar. I couldn't contain myself anymore. I had to get it. Somehow. "Hey, Brianna, can you get Catmoon's candy bar for me?" I whispered to her. "NO! No, you can't have it," she replied. This exchange had attracted the attention of Catmoon and Jill. "Are you trying to get my candy bar? No way!" I was furious at this denial. I had to get it somehow – stomach growling. So, I had to steal it from her. First, I moved my hand like a snake across the lunch table to see if I could get my tiny hands on the delicious candy bar. As I moved my hand across the table, I was getting hungrier and hungrier. I needed it. As I reached the spot where the candy bar had been it was no longer there. Jill saw my hand there, and both Jill and Catmoon already knew it was missing. Jill yelled at me, "How could you take the bar, you thief!" I . . . I was so offended that she called me a thief. I fought back, "I didn't take the candy bar! Well, I was going to, but when I grabbed it, it was gone!" Catmoon had a smirk on her face, but I pretended not to notice. Then, Brianna decided to pitch in and help.

At that point I had already gotten my lunch and was well done with it. I had searched for the missing treat for fifteen minutes as well. I had gotten up to throw my lunch away. When I rose from my seat to head to the trash barrel my milk spilled all over the place. I had to get up, get napkins; it was a long walk. By the time I got back milk was everywhere, forming little rivulets of liquid that I had to chase. It took me several trips to clean it up. Then, I noticed something in my food. It was the wrapper of the candy bar. "It was in there the entire time! You must be blind," declared Catmoon. Everyone started to laugh; it was embarrassing. It turns out it had been there the entire lunch period.

I felt all kinds of feelings. I felt mad, silly- why, I even felt happy! I was a mess. Even so, they apologized, and I felt better. This is also the story about how we all became friends. Now, finally, the lunch bell rang and we went back to class. Our English Teacher, Miss Berard, told us when we got back, "Now that you're back from lunch, it's time to start a story in our new October Journals! Inside you will write a story about something that is missing. I knew exactly what I was going to write about . . .
The plague was vicious. One touch of it and within seconds your heart rate would speed up massively, your skin begin to boil and swell, and then - in a very quick and devious motion – your skin evaporates off your body leaving you stripped to your bones. Whatever flesh is left, along with your bones collapse to the unwelcoming ground. Vicious. Some people were immune to the plague, and they took advantage of this. They set up huge camps five-hundred by five-hundred feet. And in these camps the “Immortals” (as we liked to call them) were rumored to be torturing less fortunate “immortals” and making them infest regular people with *it*. Every day they would take a regular person and kill them, as long as the plague lived on – we would all die at one point. They were also rumored to be building an army of immortals to fight us. What do we call ourselves? Humans. That’s what we are, humans. Those people out there are sick, disgusting monsters.

I live with my family which consists of three people: me, myself and I. My parents, along with my two younger sisters were captured by the immortals, and to this day I do not know what happened to them.
It is rough living out here. You can’t make friends. They’d be there one day and gone the next. And food? Don’t even get me started. I am barely surviving off of anything I could find in my house which is mostly snacks. And I can’t really leave with the immortal’s men on 24/7 watch. Anytime anyone would leave their house the men would say the same thing, “Lord Dawn wants to keep track of where citizens are. Stay Inside!” They were all threatening with their flashy guns, all tricked out with maroon and blue spray paint. That was the official color of the plague, apparently.

I was determined to take down “Lord Dawn” or whatever this egoistic maniac decided to call himself. When “Lord Dawn” goes down so will the camp. Without a leader they can’t function, and if they pick a new leader the word would spread quickly and a revolution would spark up; possibly we could overrule this town.

I was admonished to make no such attempt, but I had to. Innocent people can’t die like this! I must stop it now.

I needed some preparation for this. I had thought out a simple, six step plan. I would take out a guard; I would take his body into my house without anyone seeing me; remove the man’s uniform; clean that uniform very heavily to wash out the plague; repeat this process three or four times to ensure the plague was gone; steal into the camp and lay my ground.

I stepped outside and rushed the guy before he could even react. I stabbed him with a trusty Swiss Army knife that I had found in my garage. I slowly dragged his heavy body inside my house so as not to make too much noise. I stripped him of his uniform and the long process of washing the uniform commenced. After thirty minutes or so I decided it was good enough to put back on. I walked, calmly, with purpose, outside and tried to act naturally, begging my beating heart to slow its drumming in my chest. I walked all the way to the camp which was about a half mile from my house. I walked in through the front gate. Then I began to sprint. I was pretty sure that the door to “Lord Dawn” was straight ahead. I was aghast by all the blood, flesh and bones piled everywhere, but I had seen my target.

I pulled out my pocket knife, heart pounding and yelling a battle cry! He stood up from his armchair and got into a fighting stance. I ran at him and tried to stab him, but he kicked the Swiss Army knife right out of my hands. I spiraled across the room and landed, indented in the weak, dilapidated wall as he uppercut me. I fell to the floor like a puddle. He stomped his foot on my stomach. Little did he know I was a varsity football player
and was used to this sort of thing. I grabbed his foot and tumbled onto his back, rolling on top of him and kicking him on the ground. I went for my knife across the room, but I felt a sharp sting on the back of my neck along the way. Then I slowed down. It was that moment that I realized I was infected.

I was close enough to the knife to pull it from the wall where it was stuck. I tugged hard at it. Standing right behind me was “Lord Dawn.” I rammed the knife into his chest and we both fell down. Just then he tried to speak, muttering, “Moby, I never knew it would end this way.”

Moby? How did he know my name? Just then it hit me even as my skin began to swell and burn. The man who I had stabbed was Dawn. He and I used to go to the exact same high school. And now I was killing him. This didn’t stop my desire to win and try to do something good for humanity. I picked him up with the knife still protruding from his chest. My skin started to boil. I pulled out my knife and stabbed him again; this time it dove deeper into his body. Any second now my skin would evaporate.

He dropped dead . . . and so did I.
The Ocean’s Bubbles

By Christopher Ouk

Mother Nature builds a lovely cloud
It resembles the beautiful dove.
With a small nail and hammer
She builds it with lots of love.

Clouds big and small float
They roam freely
through the sky
Until they are
Neglected
Where they become sad and cry.
Artwork by: Dafne Lanza
Special thanks are due to the teachers of the ELA, Reading, and the Art Departments, and to Mrs. Louf. Thank you all for your support and guidance. Without you this would not have been possible.

Additional thanks must be extended Stephen Boyd. Your generosity made a group of teachers and students very happy.