

2009

## Legacy 2009

Southern Adventist University

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*Legacy*

*2009*





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*Legacy*

*2009*



*The Lion*  

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*Barry Scott*



*The Great Big Telescope*

*Barry Scott*



*Expectation*

*Suzanne Ocsai*

## *Dedication*

This Legacy is lovingly dedicated to **Helen Pyke**, our sponsor, mentor, professor, and most importantly . . . friend.

Thank you for opening your house to the Writer's Club and for all the countless hours you have spent preparing homemade meals for our meetings. Your home has been a haven for many a college student to come away and relax, eat great food, and share words from the heart openly. Thank you for providing a home-away-from-home for us.

We wish you the best and want you to know that you will be greatly missed.

Love,

*Writer's Club*

# All He Wanted Was for Her to Hurt Less

*Robby Van Arsdale -- First Place Winner*

The husband sat down hard. "Well. . . how bad is it?"

"They don't give me much time."

"Is there anything we can do?" She just looks at him.

That whole grief and counseling thing? He'd never gone through it. No one close to him had ever died. His Grandparents were dead before he could be attached. His parents ran six miles every morning and his brother was still in college, eating like a horse and looking none the worse for wear. In short, no one looked ready to fall over. He wasn't prepared.

It was like being punched in the stomach--how your insides twist up when you hear about death. You deflate. Breathing is hard. You sweat and panic and look around in big looping circles. And some part of you knows that this reaction is just reflex. You don't fully comprehend yet. They haven't even died yet.

The man stands up finally. She was handling the news better than he was. She was calm, standing there without any kind of serious emotion. All the same, he felt compelled to comfort her, and he walks over and takes her in his arms. She soothes him--no, this isn't right. She's supposed to be the one breaking down, not him. Now composed, he lets her go to call her friends.

He reads up on her condition. There was one man in Peru who survived, but his "miracle cure" involved frogs and leaves, tongues and dark magic. He wasn't sure he could get her to do that. The cure was of dubious quality anyway. Why did he even look it up? His guess: people who are helpless do the most to fight back.

The doctor called, and she put the phone on speaker function so he could hear--it became a habit. They learned things that would have made her parents cry with agony, things that would have made her friends rush to her side. They heard things that made them sit blankly, hearing but not comprehending.

How do you deal with death? They tried to make the best of their time together, but there was a barrier. They both knew that the parting would be harder if they were emotionally attached to one another. Out of love for each other, they became distanced. She talked to her friends on the phone for hours while he sat and

watched television. Their passions cooled. At night, they would face different directions. It hurt, knowing that they were drifting apart. At the end, though, it would hurt less. And all he wanted was for her to hurt less.

Breakfast was eaten at different times. She no longer worked--what was the point? He woke up earlier to get away. Every time he saw her, the feelings came rushing back. She wasn't going to be there anymore. The bed would be cold, his days long. There wouldn't be anything to come back to soon enough. If he didn't think about it, it would go away.

They managed to pretend affection in front of their parents and friends, but there was no heat left--it was like two corpses walking around in a mausoleum. No emotion. Not happiness, sorrow, pain, love, joy, anger, jealousy, passion, fear, longing, duty. Emotion is the knife that sticks in the gut and twists. It causes more pain than disease. If you can't feel, it can't touch you. So they didn't feel.

She stays at the hospital for a night because she's in so much pain. He only realizes it when she calls the next morning to tell him she's coming home and she needs to sleep "Don't wake me." He doesn't notice when she walks in, she doesn't tell him that she's home. They walk around the kitchen preparing two separate meals for two separate lives and they never actually see the other person. Two people, one house. One marriage, two lives. Two became one, one became two--and all he wanted was for her to hurt less.

The doctor called, speakerphone. The man on the other end clears his throat, says "I've got your scans here. . ."

They look at each other, sympathy and pain instantly smothered. This was it. She was going to go to the hospital, he was going to call her parents and friends and kill any emotion. They would find him cool, detached, competent. Afterward, they would say of him that "He handled it so well." She was already dead to him, he had already given up anything he felt for her. If he couldn't feel it, she wouldn't feel it--and all he wanted was for her to hurt less.

"Your scans look good. You're going to live."

Their eyes met, the emotionless orbs that merely functioned to take in light. No emotion. Not happiness, sorrow, pain, love, joy, anger, jealousy, passion, fear, longing, duty. She would live.

I wouldn't call it life.



## And the Eyebrows Twitched

*Robby Van Arsdale -- Second Place Winner*

The man sat, engrossed. He had never seen anything quite so fascinating. Scientists study the human mind, trying to figure out what makes it tic. They want to make better commercials, better movies, better magazines. He thought, quite smugly, that they had never seen this. If they had, the entire world would operate on this principle.

There was something terrible about how they drew you in. He figured he had probably been sitting for half an hour on the subway, not able to get off. He had gotten on at seven thirty that morning, and he was now late for work. He didn't move. He hardly breathed. No movement, or the spell would be broken and he would just be an ordinary man, late to work, riding patiently on the subway.

She didn't notice him. Always buried in some mental world of her own creation, she never looked up past your neck to see your face. Well, he did, and it would be his downfall.

The man's fascination increased exponentially as time passed. How could she sit without moving? How was she comfortable? His tie, his suit jacket, his briefcase digging into his side; if he wasn't focused completely, he would be a carnival of movement, adjusting, shifting, scratching. But she sat perfectly still, like an inanimate object. He began to wonder if she wasn't a street actor on the side, pretending to be a statue.

He had it figured out. It was their shape that caught him like this. He had never seen such perfect shape, one mirrored exactly in the other. The man burned to know how it had been done. His own wife and daughter, of course, used their own methods to try to achieve the same perfection. Until now, he had never imagined how far short they fell of the mark. Not a single deviation from the form, not a single errant line. He wondered if she had been called by the Louvre. They would offer ten million dollars for their perfection. He was sure they would not be out of place there. The exhibit that contained them would sit next to the Mona Lisa, and people would compare the two for hours until they came away

with the feeling that there was too much fuss over Da Vinci's masterpiece.

His hair ruffled as the subway doors opened and a new crowd walked on. Not a single person walked in between he and the object of his fascination, however. The new passengers all sat at the other end of the car. It was as if his stare was a solid barrier that could not be broken without superhuman effort. He almost wished Hercules rode the commercial transit, just to interrupt his gaze and let him escape. Maybe with a change in condition, he could break away and get to work.

He guessed that she dyed her hair, but without looking, he couldn't be sure. The difference was piercing. His fascination was had to be contrast, he decided. The divergence in shade was too intense. Jackson Pollock would come in and do a study in color using her as a measurement, a standard against which to weigh his ability. It didn't matter. He couldn't equal the chasm of color. Fewer people again, doors close. No one disturbs his scrutiny. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees color, flashes of women's purses and men's ties. His own tie made a mockery of him, a business man with no business around him. The man's employer was probably standing at the empty desk, staring at a clock and waiting.

Their placement drew his attention. What was he thinking? Only a fool would miss it. They were placed like a model's. But better than a model's, because they were just off, in a way that brought fresh thought to an old paradigm. Was it the height of the forehead? The distance between? Was it the shape of the eyes that provided variation from the norm? It was like a damaged rose--crushed in a coat--that for its flaws seems more beautiful to the lover. He saw the whole face, all at once without moving his eyes. He knew that mathematicians could study their angles and still be baffled by the trigonometry. They would bring in Stephen Hawking and Stephen would just turn and make a break for the door.

He was probably an hour late for work now. He had no real sense of time. It could be mid-afternoon.

His eyes were starting to burn. He had seen tricks in magazines before, where you stare at one shape long enough that when you look somewhere else, the image is still there, but inverted, like

a sick masquerade. He was sure that they would be burned into his retinas for months. His wife would find him cold and distant. Every time he would look at her, all he would be able to see is the slender curves, the sharp contrast in shade, the placement that intrigued to the brink of frustration. He knew now what adulterers felt after, never seeing their spouse the same. He was loath to think it would happen to him, but he knew it would. It wasn't his fault. He was just riding to work, and they caught him.

There would be gossip between his co-workers. They would see his empty desk. Whispers about a layoff would fill the office. The man strained at his fixation, trying to break his gaze. All he did was make veins appear on his forehead.

It was starting to be too much. He was panicked. His heart would give out before too long--even now it galloped like a marathon runner. He could hear it in his ears, thumping like a bassline in staccato repeat. It was muffled, enveloping, slowly growing louder. Beads of liquid fear slid down his face, mixing with his aftershave and rolling inexorably downward to stain his collar. His muscles yearned for movement, pulling against an invisible leash. He had to be at work, his boss would fire him. He had to get home, his wife would miss him. He had to leave, yet he stared. With every thundering heartbeat, he felt himself get one step closer to the inevitable.

His panic.

His noise.

His sweat.

His strain.

His time.

His death.

And the eyebrows twitched.



*Reflections*

*Melissa Faifer  
First Place Winner*

## A Metaphoric Unity

*Arielle LaGuerre -- Third Place Winner*

There once was a man who lived far up in the mystical mountains of Tibet. He was in his thirties; and at first he had a black mustache. But I'm not particularly interested in his black mustache. I'm more interested in the time in which he now has a handsome, white beard. I like to call him Father Time. He was a quiet and patient man living so close to nature. He built a cabin with his own two hands and washed them in his nearby lake. He was indeed the only human in those vast mountains; except for me.

When he had a black mustache, he also had the privilege of being with a woman who he found beautiful. And when she left, he left also—forever, externally, and internally. It started with a change in mood, personality, and eventually an eccentric variation in the shade of his skin; his wrinkles multiplied and eventually, with enough isolation, his eyes held a reborn soul; both younger and older. There was something in his darkened complexion that counter-acted the passage of time... and now... I've grown to adore it.

You might be wondering, "Who cares about this man who lives in the mountains?" Well, I care. I've been watching him for the past couple years now. I reside right above him, taking advantage of the perfect aerial view above his cabin. With his interesting smell and saccharine, temperate movements, I grew to love him. He doesn't rush the day. He makes use of it. I lay there watching him plant peppers and corn and potatoes in his small, gated garden.

I have a feeling he would live without any grub. I have a feeling that he is eternal; he can fly; he can die if he chooses, because he sees and he knows; he is a brick wall; his heart is as light as a strand of angel's hair but as open and warm as a furnace. He must be eternal. He appears to have reached a foreign pinnacle of tranquility... making him resemble a Greek god. Therefore, I must know... I must know more about this man.

He walks barefooted among the fallen leaves. He seems so untouchable. Untainted. A drop of concern falls from my eye.

How can I be like this? At that exact moment, I felt a jagged pain in my calf. I saw a bee flying and falling. I've never been stung by a bee before. I ran unexplainable. I dropped my binoculars. I felt a shortage of air; my body felt like a huge swell; I felt my neck expanding. I saw my puffed up hands. I felt myself losing. Falling. Gliding.

I woke up in a warm cabin. I began shaking. My head boggled to the left then quickly to the right. Then I heard a creak on the stilted floor. I held a wool blanket close to my chin. It's him... it's him. I recognized the red mahogany walls; the yoga mat was familiar. It's him! I skimmed the room for a place to hide. I panicked. I had been spying on him for so long now that I felt more like an emissary than a welcomed guest. I turned my gaze towards the sound and there he was, unglamorized, real, and within a few meters of me. Without a smile, he was able to nevertheless produce a kind a natural serenity. He saw the panic in my eyes; he brought a cup of warm liquid to my lips. I took it and drank, still gazing at his realness.

"Wwwwell, I'm sorry, thank you," I whispered as I drank. His kind stillness broke my obnoxious attempt at normal conversation. He nodded warmly and moved timorously towards the small window, and opened it. I then noticed how handsomely old he's gotten. I love it.

The next three weeks would be an unparalleled experience or would feel, sense, and smell like it, even if it had the physical ability to. I left with a newfound appreciation. I left being madly in love with him with every inch, pore, and corner of my body and soul. Though he said not a word to me, his sound and smell of him reigned over any possible joy given by articulation. I remember when he first touched me. He had the best hands; doctor hands. They were smooth, reliable, unbiased, and caring hands; it was extraordinarily inevitable. He touched my lumph nodes, checking my reaction to the bee sting; then down to my sides. I felt an organ melt under every spot he touched. I bit my bottom lip every time he neared me.

Once I felt better, I followed him outside to watch him observe the moon. He turned to me softly. I looked deep in his eyes;

it seemed that he trapped the stars in his gaze letting me explore all the possibility in the constellations above. I began to blush. I rested on the door seal and smiled at his remarkable stillness.

I slowly got to know him, even though he did not speak during my stay. One day we hiked through steep, blanketed hills. Originally we passed by typical trees, bushes and shrubs; it started with a few fuchsia plants, increasingly entering my vision, then the creatures began to change along with the vegetation.

Once, as we were dangling our legs by the side of a creek, I reached for a beautiful plant, and as my hand came close to it, a small orangutan jumped out of the trees. It alarmed me, causing me to slip. He quickly grabbed my hand and easily reeled me up, with one hand on my lower back and the other on my neck. I was dangerously close to kissing him, but dared not to move with the strong force between us. In his arms, I felt there was something missing. All the feat or paradoxes of choice that accompany a normal human life were non-existent. I became rather concerned for I missed that feeling... the feeling of being worried... the feeling of being afraid... of choosing... of... being human.

So I left. I left the cabin. I left the isolated, peaceful surrounding, I left my peace and my trueness to go back to normality; back to humanity. But I will never ever forget Father Time. I will never forget how much I came to love that mute man who's façade told me all I needed to know about beauty and nature and love and life. Although I left, we will always be the nucleus to which only the mystics of nature orbit. We are one—a metaphoric unity til Time is no more.

## Pieta (A Mothers' Lamentation)

*Mark Barrett -- First Place Winner*

You cannot hold onto him forever,  
even arms of stone grow weary.  
The wind and rain will always sever  
every thing you once held so dearly.

Do not take for granted  
what you have left,  
as the crumbling granite  
of your left breast

dissolves into road side stones,  
your son memento mori  
his body will soon be all alone  
and naked in kingly glory.

Do not cry your tears  
of watery blood,  
all those years of hopes and fears  
are spittle in the mud.

Fear not, for thou art blessed  
above all, having borne the cost;  
well and truly thou hast earned thy rest,  
all that's not given is surely lost.

## Fountain of Youth

*Melissa Swanson -- Second Place Winner*

She leads me to the fountain of youth  
And bids me drink and bathe  
In its cool waters.

“You are young,” she says.  
“You will never be as beautiful as you are today.”

She cups her hands and drinks,  
Splashes it on her skin,  
Pours it over her body and lifts her face in ecstasy.

I gaze at the pool with a narrowed eye.  
The waters are dark and strange;  
Their odor burns in my nose.  
I touch the cup to my lips  
And taste deceit.

## So I Stood There

*Mindy Townsend -- Third Place Winner*

So I stood there. Watched.  
Hoping he would look at me  
Hoping he would not.  
His voice wrapped around me  
Like wind. Listened.  
Couldn't move, wouldn't leave, rooted.  
I felt unraveled inside.  
A gate broke, and I was flooded.

I was drowning because of him.



# Children of the Sun

*Arielle LaGuerre*

Darfur, where the conspicuous sun exhibits its raying genius.

Darfur, where the pink, fluffy clouds shy away.

Darfur, where everyone's eyes are full of honor, hope,  
and humanity.

This is where I met Kayla Amagdabula.

She was an endearing girl who suffered from both AIDS and cancer.

But despite her want conditions, joy and bliss marked her face.

"Teach me to write," her small bruised lips whispered to me.

So every day, for four months, I sat on her small hospital bed and  
taught her.

I've never seen someone with such an appetite for knowledge.

We would stroll on the red, African dust under large trees and listen to  
the sweet melody of whispering leaves.

But then Kayla became plagued with bloody coughs and dizzy spells.

Nevertheless she kept smiling; her smile never more engaging; her  
face never more serene.

I never knew why she was so happy till my last day in Darfur.

I approached Kayla's vacant bed.

Tears began to sting my eyes.

"Where is she?" I asked the nearest doctor.

The doctor grimly bowed his head and handed me a blood-stained  
letter.

It was from Kayla.

It read:

*"Now I go away like the sun go at night.*

*Never give up, you tell me.*

*Never give up, I tell you.*

*I miss you.*

*Bye my good friend.*

*I see you again."*

Never give up, she said.

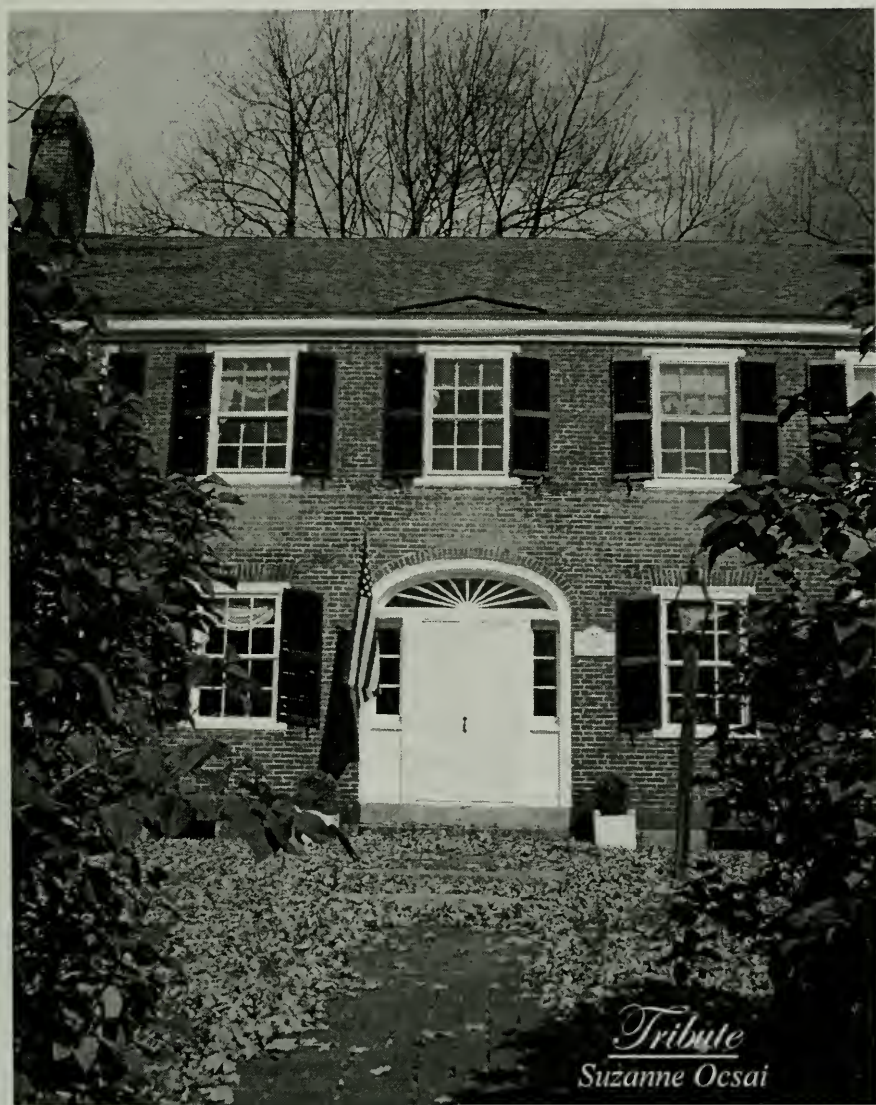
And as a servant for God, I will do just that.

I will try my hardest to make sure that precious children like Kayla  
can

Smile,  
Laugh,  
And live.

This is my pledge to those children of honor, of hope,  
and of humanity.

This is my pledge to the Children of the Sun.



*Tribute*  
Suzanne Ocsai

# Cries of a Nation

*Arielle LaGuerre*

I slowly saunter on the African ground.  
My face full of red dust.  
Carrying a young corpse, my tears wash it.  
Two young, bare children hold forcefully to my dress.  
Too young.  
I fall to my bloody knees.  
I look up at the conspicuous sun.  
I scream.  
Why!  
Why!  
Guns are fired around me.  
The screeching from the woman begins to stab my ears.  
Children fall like leaves in the mist of autumn.  
Beast and apprentices of the Devil ravage the town.  
Grave smoke fills the heavens.  
Grim dust flies ubiquitously.  
The other Doctors leave their stations.  
They yell for me to come.  
The helicopter waits to take us back home,  
Away from Hell; this nightmare.  
“We must leave NOW!” They shout.  
I turn.  
I lay the body down slowly; left to be blanketed by Mother Earth.  
I stand.  
The two young children stare up at me from 2 feet off the ground.  
With strength that I cannot acknowledge, I pick them up and begin  
to run.  
Lively bullets rip past me; missing me by just a matter of inches.  
The children scream in fright.  
They still cling to my dress; looking deeply into my eyes.  
“We don’t have enough room for those Africans!” yells the pilot.  
Rage fills my soul, and shines through my eyes.  
If there was any time for arrogance, this wasn’t it!!  
I pull the children onto the helicopter.

An unknown hand forcefully pulls my hand away.  
The children fall to the dust.  
Dust fills their small eyes.  
Tears painfully sting my eyes and cloud my vision as I fight.  
“I will NOT leave these children! I will NOT.”  
“We must go. This is the end.”  
This is NOT THE END!  
The naked children jump up to my reaching hand.  
My hands hurt.  
But I’m not going to let them go.  
They scream.  
My heart stings.  
One is hit with a bullet to the arm.  
His little body goes down.  
NO!!!  
THEN I DO IT  
I JUMP OUT OF THE HELICOPTER 10 feet IN THE AIR.  
Everyone screams in anger at me.  
An unknown slice of courage and faith fills my whole being.  
I feel God with me.  
I grab the children.  
I embrace them.  
We look up at the spiritless faces in the helicopter.  
A dark shadow overpowers me.  
I look up.  
Men stand over me with weapons.  
They shout in a language unknown to me.  
Their eyes red with hatred; beastly faces.  
Their deadly machines pointed at us.  
The children’s throats crackle under the pressure of their cries.  
I whisper to them sweet sounds,  
Then tuck them under my dress like a mother hen.  
As tears sting my eyes, and the sun burns my skin,  
I raise my hands to the purple heavens  
And accredit my last breath.

# Fierce Connection

*Sara Schaezka*

sometimes,  
these moments  
in which  
you see  
right through me,  
my eyes meet yours;

i'm scared.

sometimes,  
these moments  
in which  
you see  
right through me,  
our hearts  
connect--

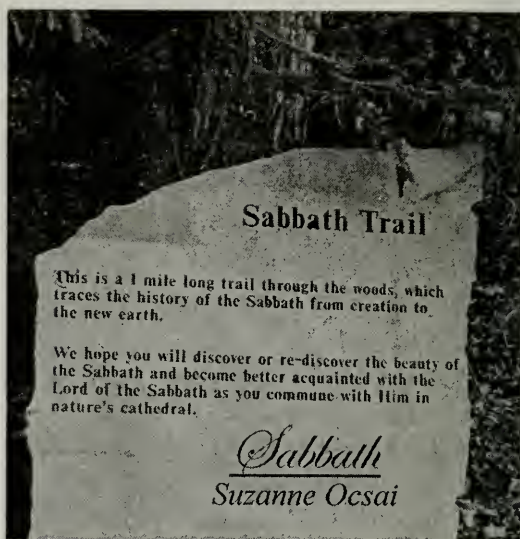
fierce emotion.

my identity,  
revealed,  
almost  
before you  
take the chance;

you turn  
away

and i thought  
for just  
a moment, you

understood.



# Follow My Dreams

*Pascal Nayigiziki*

It seems that every country has its war heroes  
And every country has got hallowed grounds where they lay  
I wonder if there last words were please father forgive us  
Or make sure you blast them all away  
Tombstones caskets and genuine quotes  
Is all that's left of their souls  
But if you were to ask them what they were fighting for  
Each and every one of them would say a lot more  
When the spirit leaves our bodies what are goin 2 do  
Have you ever wondered what you would say when you die  
For in this life there's one thing that holds true  
We've all got a date with the sky  
And as this wind blows and the sun shines in  
That day for me has got a be today  
No longer afraid of what's been given  
I'm going to take my chances with faith  
And follow my dreams



# Let Us Go Seaward on the Tide

## Till Human Voices Intervene

*Megan Elmendorf*

So "let us go then" you and me,  
Across the jade colored sea.  
To a land of milk and tea,  
To a land where all are free.

We're now "afloat on shipless oceans,"  
Conquered by tumultuous emotions.  
Living life through the plastic motions,  
Surviving on all our goo goo potions.

We have ridden "seaward on the waves,"  
Fighting fighting all the knaves;  
Who did try to keep us as their slaves,  
And set out to put us in our graves.

We are "troubled at the tide,"  
We are lost with no place to abide.  
The rains fell as we cried,  
Searching for a place to hide.

"Till human voices wake us,"  
And before we digress,  
We must move to confess,  
So that we may end this distress.

Now our "foolish boat is leaning,"  
Whilst we obsess with our preening.  
Till someone comes intervening,  
To show us life does have meaning.

Author's Note:

The 1st, 3rd, and 5th quotes are from the poem by T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. A. Prufrock."

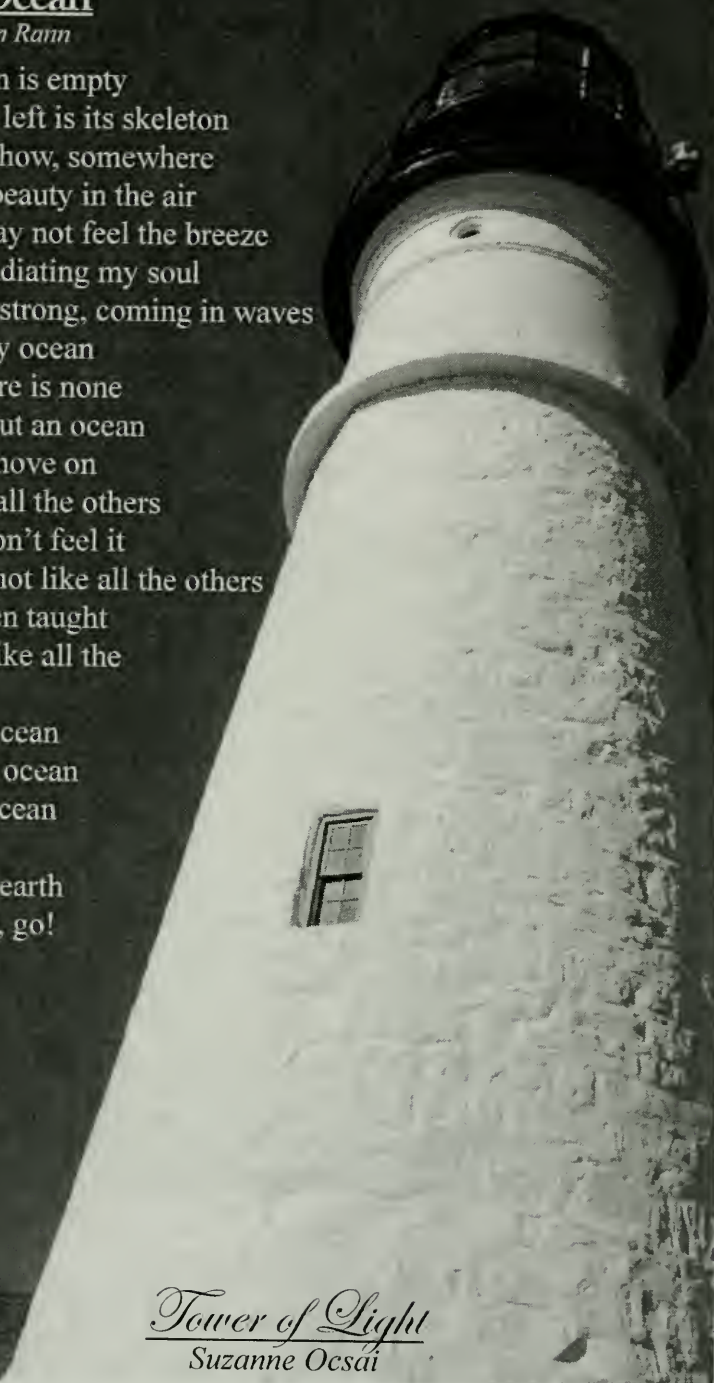
The 2nd, 4th, and 6th quotes are from the song by Tim Buckley, "Song to the Siren."

## My Ocean

*Sharon Rann*

The ocean is empty  
All that's left is its skeleton  
But somehow, somewhere  
There is beauty in the air  
Others may not feel the breeze  
I feel it radiating my soul  
Soft then strong, coming in waves  
That is my ocean  
When there is none  
For without an ocean  
I cannot move on  
I am like all the others  
When I don't feel it  
But I am not like all the others  
I have been taught  
I am not like all the  
others  
I see the ocean  
I have the ocean  
I am the ocean  
Now,  
go fill the earth  
Go Ocean, go!

*Tower of Light*  
*Suzanne Ocsai*





# Kept Awake

*Sara Schaetzka*

5:30am

Should've fallen  
asleep by now.

All things considered:

the coffee  
the sickness  
the ache

Perhaps (my new favorite word,  
probably picked it up from

You):

I miss  
I love(d)  
I held

too close perhaps,  
but the distance is still  
the ugly monster  
keeping me awake,  
kept me away

from you  
from myself  
from we...

(to be continued).

5:32am

Or is it  
to be continued?

Was it ever?

to know  
to wonder  
to grasp

all that's never been,  
or never was meant

to be  
to love  
to want

to start over

or simply just  
    move on  
    move forward  
    move away.

We may never know  
but I loved what we started  
and what may keep me awake,  
for many nights to come.

(to be continued is cliché and doesn't belong here...)



Forgiveness  
*Pascal Nayigiziki*

Picture yourself with a baby girl  
Perhaps one year old and so adorable you named her beauty  
The most precious thing in your little world  
Your passion of love for her is only your so truly  
Beautiful as any autumn could be  
Beauty always springs into mischievousness  
Always spilling her drink  
As she throws her food everywhere before she eats it  
And one day she gets a hold of your favorite table cloth  
That's on top of your table with an expensive vase  
Beauty gives it such a beautiful tug  
Breaking the vase all over the place  
And as you clean up the vase that's been broken  
You realize there's not much you couldn't forgive Beauty for  
As she spreads her arms wide open  
In search of her special someone to make her feel beautiful  
But when does it stop  
What is the age limit that makes it hard to forgive  
Is it 13 or 27? Who sets the clock  
On the age limitation of this  
How old does somebody have to be before we forget  
That everyone is a child of God  
And if beauty is the age limit  
Then how ugly are our hearts

# I Love My father

*Pascal Nayigiziki*

Dear Lord, I love my father  
Deeper than the depths of my soul  
I love him farther  
Than humanly love could ever go  
Because he has loved me  
Before I even knew myself  
Teaching me how to speak  
With the simple stories he loves to tell  
So Lord I ask with all my heart  
If you could be his heart beat as life goes on  
And when breathing becomes to hard  
I pray that you are the reason he is strong  
Because dear Lord I love my father  
Deeper than the ocean or sea  
And I'm going to love him farther  
Than this world could ever be  
And I pray that you make me  
Half the man my father is  
Beautiful like his smile in the morning  
To the hardest man working man that ever lived  
I love you

# Only the Servants Will Be Saved

*Pascal Nayigiziki*

Sometimes I listen to the stillness of my mind  
And realize how my thoughts are so loud  
Lying around trying to define  
How there is rain and I'm still in a drought  
And it seems like I'm on the right path  
But my thoughts have changed  
They say you have to give up the world for the pass  
For only the servants will be saved  
They say the essence of who we are is inside  
But I'm always searching for the love that has two legs on it  
Yesterday I thought I found it when I looked into her eyes  
Only to have my heart left in that moment  
And even though I've never cried  
It is to her I long for in a day  
Wondering if the service of my tears in my eyes  
Could show her that I would love her through the pain  
And everybody's got a picture of this world  
Painted in one color or another  
More beautiful than love, when we were just boys and girls  
For all we knew was the portrait of our mothers  
But the devil has had 6,000 years to plan his attack  
And the mercy of the Lord never fades  
For the voice of Jesus is contrast  
Only the servants will be saved

## Silence:

*Sara Schaetzka*

The quiet  
Stillness  
That inspires

It lingers  
It haunts  
It surrounds—

Me;

uncertain of when  
It'll break.

This silence:

It lingers  
It haunts  
It surrounds—

The solitude

Understanding  
The moments in which  
I'm comfortable  
With just  
Being  
Silent.

# Silent Evenings

*Tyler Barrows*

I've never felt so secure  
Falling into Arms stretched wide,  
Stretched open.  
I'm not searching for the answer.

Still the other voices whisper.  
Silent Evenings lie to me,  
Preaching a message of desolation,  
Haunting my soul.

How many guilty evenings  
Are spent upon repentant deathbeds?  
When shadows creep into my bedchamber  
I shall clutch my faith and remove all my fears of doubt.  
It's in these silent moments that I know who I am.



*Chicago*  
*Melissa Faifer*

## The Clearing

*Tyler Barrows*

I came upon a clearing  
On a cloudy October evening,  
As I was wandering through  
Dense forests, somewhere in my dreams.

In this clearing, I saw a cathedral.  
I hoped that it would grant me sanctuary  
Amidst my mental agony.

Instead,  
Eleanor of Aquitaine sang  
A Jazz Age lullaby  
As the organ music haunted me.

I've never felt so far from God,  
I've never felt so far from God,  
This is not how the world will end,  
This is not how the world will end.

The clouds open up for just a moment.  
I know who I am,  
And I know His Spirit haunts me.  
As constellations fill the sky for a moment,  
I know He has brought me here—



## The Courage of My Vulnerability

*Pascal Nayigiziki*

I wonder why sometimes you cannot see me  
When I'm standing right in front of you  
Waving and jumping around as if I'm needy  
But yet and still you stand there without a clue  
Of who I really am  
And the true texture of my skin  
I've worn my mask for so long I've forgotten  
Who I truly am within  
As I wondered how you could not love me  
How you could not see  
The reasons why I'm so ugly  
Are the same reasons that make me beautiful 2 be  
The courage of my own vulnerability  
As I finally take my mask off  
Finding love in realizing that I'm not so pretty  
Will be where I start  
So I think I'll just be myself  
With all my iniquities and flaws  
Hello my name is Pascal  
And here is the keys 2 my heart

## The Value of My Love

*Pascal Nayigiziki*

I wonder what the value of my love is  
I wonder to what extent am I willing to take  
Cause sometimes I sit here flustered over nothing  
What is the point of my love if it don't mean change  
So many times I sit up awake and alone  
In the comfort of my own silence  
Dreaming of the woman I love and her soul  
Saying nothing to me as she lays beside me  
Dreaming about kissing the back of her neck  
As I hold on to her for more than just security  
Whispering goodnight with the slightest of my breath  
Bringing comfort to her feelings, of just you and me  
But I find myself a victim at times  
Of trying to deny the feelings of love inside of me  
Dealing with my own pressures in my own mind  
And the price you have to pay just to believe  
So what are all these feelings really worth  
If my loves value is no more than a red cent  
The very reason why God gave me birth  
The value of my love is priceless

## The Dentist or the Sadist

*Tyler Barrows*

Bright lights. Fluorescent.  
A tiled ceiling. I'm staring at a sterile surrounding.  
Pain. Such pain, yet I embrace it.  
Scraping. This grinding and scraping.  
Sharp, acute pain. Then, nothing.  
My mouth is open, yes it's gaping open.  
Pain; sharp, poking pain.  
I'm drowning in a thick mineral water.  
Sharp poking pain; it will be over soon.  
And it will all be better when it's over.  
Such bright fluorescent lights.  
Miniscule instrument inserted into my mouth;  
I cannot breathe or swallow hard.

## The Greening of You

*Mark Barrett*

When the rocks become stars  
and your eyes are the sky,  
would that I could replace them  
to sleep where you lie.

The pennies are greened,  
and the shadows have stained  
but I would spend all that's mine  
to take the place you have gained.

When our best season finally arrives,  
all of the memories are dimly lit to grim;  
still I will embalm you with morphine  
and the valor of boyhood endeavors again.

Three times have gone, the fourth one just come;  
and at last I can say the greening of you is done.

## The Worm of the Hours

*Mark Barrett*

The worm of the hours  
has turned utterly sour,  
and we suck on dry tongues  
with our faces all dour;  
waiting for the sun  
to turn its shadow  
and open the flowers;  
glistening drip-drop  
of water clocks,  
still the bell in the tower  
will chime not,  
perhaps the machinery  
is clogged up or stopped  
by invisible hands,  
or unknown powers  
which none understand,  
but are nonetheless crawling as  
the worm of the hours.

# Unnamed

*Mark Barrett*

In honor and humility we kneel  
(perhaps trembling) before...  
something;  
something unnamed but which has named us:

Then let this be the awe  
of light juxtaposed with darkness,  
the shadow-fears dancing gamely  
at the periphery of our intuition,  
and everything we know to be unknown.

But, imagine if someone were to speak  
of what they had seen or heard here,  
inside the dimly-cramped amphitheater of human consciousness,  
then muttering in hushed and broken tones  
to the one nearest them;  
that next person would do the same,  
until finally, grandiose truth  
is reduced to a child's game.

But then, who among us does not have a story?  
And after all, what hasn't been seen or heard  
and told a thousand times,  
in ten thousand subtle ways?  
Perhaps truth is best kept intact  
close to the vest,  
and held somewhere near the heart.

# Untitled

*Mindy Townsend*

Like a needle ripping in and out of a coarse fabric,  
Sticking you in the finger  
When you least expect it.  
Drawing one bright drop of blood.

So it is with them,  
Yet they don't always cause pain.  
They unite the two opposites  
Leaving behind the bright thread of themselves in between.

And yet sometimes the brightness fades.  
Threads unravel in too much wear,  
And only a memory remains where, once,  
There was a picture.

Don't rip the fragile threads.  
The least likely are the anchors.  
Hold their hands; hold them within your pattern,  
Intricate subtlety is sewn in them.



# Untitled

*Sharon Rann*

The person that you prayed would not live says please forgive me  
for what I've done to you.

Because I've done so much that's hurts you  
You are strong holding everything with you  
I'm sorry I made you do that  
Please forgive me

I am strong  
But I am the sorry one  
Forgive ME for I prayed that prayer  
But you never knew and yet it came true  
Now that you're gone  
And I walk away STRONG from what you've done  
Please FORGIVE me



## Versatile Dreamer by Nature

*Anonymous*

When the tide rolls in like spilled champagne at night,  
I feel like a poet.

When I prepare fanciful, colorful meals at home,  
I feel like a wife.

When I capture the smile of a nearby child,  
I feel like a mother.

When I labor for hours, dedicating myself to to-do's,  
I feel like a worker.

When I call home and find myself at ease in my skin,  
I feel like a daughter.

When the moon hangs overhead the ocean,  
I feel like a romantic  
with perhaps too much time to reflect on  
what I dare to be.

## Who Grows the Stars?

*Mark Barrett*

Who grows the stars?  
Places them up there so far?  
Who grows all of those stars  
looking down at where we are?

Who plants them in the sky?  
Listens as they ever so gently sigh  
when they extend their stems across the sky,  
uproot themselves and attempt to fly?  
The one who grows the stars we see,  
also created you and me.  
The one who grows the stars we see  
must watch them die,  
and so do we.





*Innocence*  
*Suzanne Ocsai*

## Forever, Sometimes

*Sara Schaetzka*

47 days,  
6 1/2 weeks,  
4 phone calls,  
13 emails,  
1,000 laughs--  
later.

it's only sometimes  
i think we're close.  
sometimes,  
i think it's all worth it.  
sometimes,  
i think it would be nice  
to be forever.

# Coloring Bully

*Melissa Swanson*

I colored a picture once  
In pink and blue, red and gold

But when you saw it you sneered  
Pulled it out of my hands  
And laughed and spit venom  
And scribbled on it with a black crayon

You flung it back at my feet  
Scoffing  
I wept to see it ruined

My tears poured down  
Forming a puddle on the ground  
The colors bled and the picture became  
A wet, grimy, papery mess



*Blackwater Falls*

*Barry Scott*

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