

Edison - Fareira High School *Literary Journal*

"Writing from Reality!"



Spring, 2015

Give essence to the adolescents

Give essence to the adolescents don't be the climax to our pain.

I don't smoke but don't bestow any problems to us teens who smoke away our brains.

Because there's a stain in my mind, but it still pushes forward like a runnin' train, and i know we're blinded by the beautiful faces of money but We don't want your pity, not a single grain.

Cuz we go through enough strain, 500 pounds of gravel to our names

N besides being 6 feet under in this 1 life game, we're being held 6 feet in a miniature house with bars cuz we don't know how to make due with our gaseous state like emotions that's impossible to contain.

It slips past the sweat glands in our rubber membrane.

Really, the idea is arcane it holds all our physical matter, but is not able to sustain our conscious it makes us feel insane. So let me say this do not send the idea of bane upon us.

Give essence to the adolescents do not provoke our flame.

Give essence to the adolescents do not diminish it with rain.

-- Christian Cherry



Introductory Letter by Ms. Awilda Ortiz



This year, the *Edison - Fareira Literary Journal* demonstrates a new level of varied creativity among our talented, enthusiastic students. I hope you enjoy reading these imaginative writings. As a former teacher and current administrator, I have the opportunity to see their creativity first-hand every day. Now I hope you will enjoy this small sampling of their artistic endeavors.

Sincerely,

Ms. Awilda Ortiz , Proud Principal



Edison-Fareira H.S. Writers and Improv Artists
(left to right): Davita Rosa, Jonathan Rodriguez, Selena Mendoza, Zachary Ramos and Mr. Cassorla

Brief Note from Mr. Cassorla

Thank you, all of you wonderful students, who contributed your work to this Journal. My privilege has been to work with you all through the school year. It has been a spectacular year!

-- Mr. Cassorla, English Teacher and faculty advisor to the Drama and Literacy Club

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Wired

By Zachary Ramos

Hush and don't say a word
Simply watch or listen to the chaos that occurs
Act like your life is a perfect scene
Cover your emotions so that your true feelings
can't be seen
Carry on and go

Be polite and think before you say no
It will be a shocker, but everyone knew in their gut
That you have been talking, but in reality your mouth
is wired shut.



You Shot the Bullet

i always said you had my back

i always said that you were my friend

but you lied and manipulated

you shot the bullet that killed

you shot the bullet that changed me

Enough of the crying hiding or trying --

you shot the bullet that destroyed me

why?

Why would you pull the trigger?

You are the one that lied and played to get your way

But now when I saw the true color of darkness

i will become stronger than the bullet

BOOM!

I open my eyes

i pulled the trigger

i am my own self pain and enemy

but why

Why would I hurt myself

Voices in my head say

Before you can trust others

Before you can love others

Before you can forgive others

You have to trust love and forgive yourself

I killed myself to rebuild myself in my eyes

Parts still broken will be fixed to perfection

-- Alexis Rodriguez



The First Pregnant Man

a play by

Gilarie Leon, Jenniary Keo, Taylor Nuss, Kensy Torres and
Elsie Hernandez

Characters and original classroom players:

- 1.) The Pregnant Man (Juan): Taylor
- 2.) Maury/Doctor: Gilarie
- 3.) Interviewer (Stacie): Gilarie
- 4.) Juan's Wife (Barbra): Kensy
- 5.) Possible Baby-mom (Debbie): Jenniary
- 6.) Narrator: Elsie

Act 1, Scene 1

Narrator: It all started when Juan decided to explore relationships with girls other than his wife, Barbra. He was neglected by his wife as she was always busy with work. That was before he noticed the small lump.

Juan: *(Looking in the mirror)* Is it me or am I getting fat?

Barbra: *(She gave a skeptical glare at his reflection.)* Honey, you're fine. You just been eating too much fast food.

Juan: {Gasp} That's rude. Wouldn't that mean you're as healthy as a horse with the way you look dear wife?

Barbra: *(Glaring at Juan) {Huffy}* I will be working late tonight. Have fun.*(Barbra Leaves)*

Narrator: Juan picks up his cell phone and scrolls down to the name Debbie.

Juan: Debbie, my wife just left when will you be able to come over, and can you bring me some hot wings I'm really in the mood for something spicy.

Debbie: Sure, sugar baby. I got you. I will be over in like 30 minutes.

Juan: {Sighs in relief} Thank you baby love. I'll be waiting for you, wink wink.

Narrator: As Juan hangs up the phone he begins to light up some candles and puts on some soft music. After waiting the long thirty minutes, Debbie finally showed up with food. They began eating when Debbie started to wonder.

Debbie: Juan, my sugar daddy, I think you're getting chunky.

Juan: I know I'll go on a diet sometime this week. Now I'm done eating. Lets go upstairs.

Narrator: They go upstairs and began to get familiar. When they were done, Debbie had to go home, and Juan cleaned up the apartment and went to sleep. The next day he woke up not feeling well.

Juan: {Jumps out of bed and runs into the bathroom to throw up}
Ugh, my stomach hurts.

Barbra: Are you okay, dear? I think you should go to the doctors. I wish I could take you, but I have to go to work again

Juan: I guess I'll go to the doctors. I love you.

Barbra: Uh huh. I have to go, bye.

Narrator: Juan leaves to go to the doctors. When he gets there and gets himself checked out the doctor comes back with an odd diagnosis.

Doctor: Juan, I don't know how to say this, but, uhm. It seems to me that you're healthy, but your hormone level is really high, and that's unusual. It seems, sir, that you are pregnant.

Juan: {Laughing} Okay Doc, very funny please tell me what's wrong with me and please be serious.

Narrator: The doctor gives him a look of astonishment and sadness.

Doctor: Juan, I am serious. It appears to me that you the first pregnant man on the earth. I don't know what else to say to you. I mean the way your hormone levels are it seems that you are 2 ½ months pregnant.

Juan: I'm sorry I understand you're the doctor and all, but I can't accept that from you.

Doctor: Well I don't think you have a choice in the matter. I'll give you a moment to let this settle, and I'll get you some vitamins to take.

Juan: {Staring blankly at the wall} 'Kay.

Narrator: Juan sits there and waits for 10 minutes before the doctor returns, thinking of a way to tell his wife this crazy news.

{Doctor walks in}

Doctor: We're going to do an ultrasound on how far along you are and how this will, well happen.

Juan: Wait, would that even work? Cuz like I... am otherwise a man, in all ways.

Doctor: *{Laughing a little}* Well, I hope so. otherwise I will start questioning myself. But the ultrasound should work, regardless of your 'issue'.

Narrator: Juan agreed, and followed what he was told. The ultrasound didn't take that long but Juan seemed to have an issue with the gel and rubbing. It turned out he was a few months pregnant, (3 months exactly) and the baby was healthy. He hurried home where he found his wife in the kitchen.

Barbra: How was the doctors, hun?

Juan: It was, eh, good I guess.

Barbra: Well, what happened?

Juan: It appears to the doctors that I am pregnant. I have the ultrasound and vitamins.

Barbra: *{laughs loudly}* Hunny, seriously.

Narrator: Barbra continues to giggle, but stops after she really looks at her husband to see how panicked and serious he was.

Barbra: How is this even possible?

Juan: I don't even know myself. I don't even know what to do, But if this is real I am keeping it. And I think its time to tell you the truth. Barbra I've been seeing another woman. I'm so sorry, hunny. I just needed attention that you never provided me. I think me having a baby is karma for not being faithful.

Barbra: WHAT ?!?!? ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS REACH OUT AND TELL ME, BUT INSTEAD YOU DARE TO DISHONOR OUR VOWS AND CHEAT ON ME WITH ANOTHER WOMAN!!!!!!

[Fade to black.]

THE END



Moon

A high that was so amazing, so powerful, so sweet and so pure -- lifted from the darkness that had overtaken my subconscious

So beautiful and so soft -- I felt as if being sober should be the one me....

There I was above, high on cloud nine, high off the the beauty of the stars. I witnessed the softest charms you could ever see and feel in a lifetime -- the beauty of the moon

So big and so bright, you could almost taste how sweet it is
The way the clouds swayed across the moon's light had me completely mesmerized.

Never had I thought I would experience the most beautiful of all beauties, my eyes in total awe, fixed upon the blessed sight we call night.
I had never seen something so handsome.

-- Nila Ortiz



Cigarettes should be illegal

by Joshua Ribot

I am against distribution of cigarettes to minors. Cigarettes should not be legal for distribution to minors. In my eyes cigarettes should not be legal because of the simple fact that cigarettes are basically killing people slowly. Personally I don't agree with the fact that minors are able to get these things so easily.

Also, I don't like cigarettes, because I feel as though when you buy these things you are just buying your way to your death.

Most people disagree with the fact that my opinion is to make the distribution of cigarettes to minors illegal, but my opinions aren't going to change. There are about 10% of stores across the nation that have illegally sold cigarettes to minors and haven't even faced any type of consequences. Honestly, why are these things even being sold to minors, if when minors start smoking at a young age they are proven to die sooner than an adult who just started smoking?

A sad nickname for cigarettes is "cancer sticks." So if the name literally has the word cancer in it, why on earth would anyone want to buy them? These are just some of the reasons why you shouldn't want to buy these dangerous products.

According to a website that I came across, every single day nearly 3,000 teenagers try their first cigarettes. That website also states that about 700 of those teens become regular smokers. Now, come on, parents! Is that a lifestyle that you would want your wonderful kids to live? On this website it also states that if these teens start smoking at that young age they are proven to die prematurely. I wouldn't want my kids to die young -- I would want my kids to live way longer. I would, but if we allow them to smoke then they won't even live to see their own parents turn 50 years old.

Why would you even want to let your teens smoke these things? The ingredients in cigarettes are deadly and dangerous. These ingredients include acetone, ammonia, benzene, and acetic acid. Just those four ingredients can kill you, so why try to give all of the 16 ingredients that can definitely kill a person very slowly. The outcome of all these ingredients are deadly, and as a result you can die of lung cancer. And that is a painful and slow death.

Tell me why on earth would you want to give teens an ingredient that is in nail polish remover? We shouldn't allow stores across the nation to constantly distribute these things to our teens. More than ten times as many U.S. citizens have died prematurely from cigarette smoking than have died in all the wars fought by the United States during its history. That definitely says something powerful. One wonders: Why on earth are so many people dying for stupid, no-good reasons? More people are dying than the men and women fighting in current wars -- they are at least dying the right way, with a meaningful death. Honestly, cigarettes kill more than 10% of Americans.

So why even buy them because you're just basically buying your way to slow and painful death. Just one of the ingredients in these cigarettes can kill you, but no stores will even care because when you buying these tobacco products their eyes are only on money that you are paying. Why not save your money and do something useful with it. And look, if you are not buying tobacco, I promise you that you will have a wonderful life.

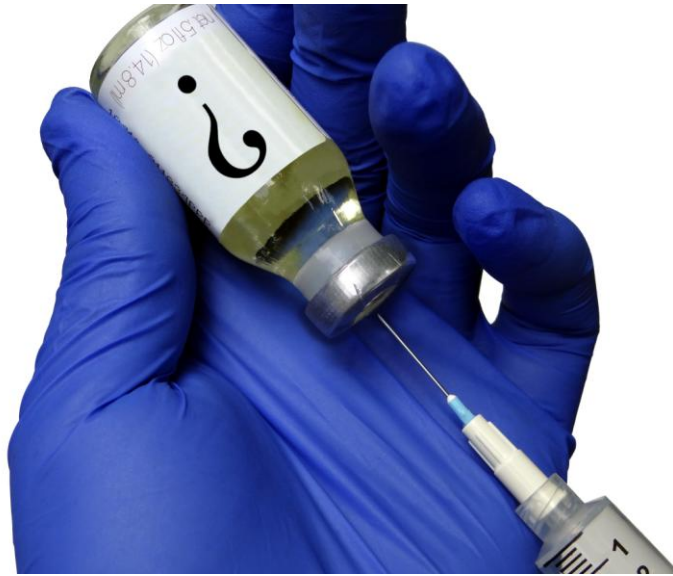
*Joshua Ribot is a talented 9th grader at
Edison-Fareira High School.*



Sources:

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/cid/documents/webcontent/002963pdf.pdf>

<http://www.lung.org/stopsmoking/aboutsmoking/factsfigures/whatsina-cigarette.html>



Should the death penalty be abolished? By: Carlos Santiago

The topic that I picked is: Should the death penalty should be abolished?

I picked this topic because I thought it was an interesting subject to write about. I think that it is interesting because there are many of people getting sentenced the death penalty for killing people. Nowadays, many people think that it shouldn't be abolished. Yet I think that it should be abolished for the good reasons below.¹

The risk of executing innocent people exists in any justice system:
There will always be cases of the death penalty. There will always be cases because people out in the streets are just killing innocent people for no reason. Also people are killing children and kidnapping them because they do not know what they are doing and are going crazy. The kids end up dying. "The death penalty is often used in a disproportional manner against the poor, minorities members of racial, ethnic, political and religious group."

¹ <http://www.debate.org/opinions/should-the-death-penalty-be-abolished><http://www.thenation.com/article/159333/ten-reasons-why-death-penalty-should-be-abolished><http://www.icomdp.org/arguments-against-the-death-penalty/>

The death penalty is incompatible with human rights and human dignity: “The death penalty violates the right to life which happens to be the most basic of all human rights.” The death penalty is violating peoples' rights because some people might have been innocent and are getting sentenced to the death penalty. Another example is that they are giving a permanent death penalty, when in fact, they should just get life in prison unless someone committed a really bad murder.

The death penalty does not deter crime effectively:

I think that the death penalty is getting added to other states because they are trying to stop murder. But I think it is not working that well. In some states they are trying to stop murder but people just don't care and keep on killing and aren't worried about anything.

Public opinion is not a major stumbling block for abolition:

To me, I think public opinion is important. I think it is important because some people would like it to be abolished because they think innocent people shouldn't be killed but they are not really innocent people.

Another thing is that people think that it should be abolished because they think all killing is wrong. Instead, we should have peace in the world. Also people think the death penalty should be eradicated because it is torture; and they think that it violates human rights.

My opinion is that the death penalty should be abolished. As I said, I think people should stop killing and get along or try to handle conflict and not let it result in death.

Sources:

- International Commission against the Death Penalty
(<http://www.creativemonster.net/v/icdp>)
- <http://www.debate.org/opinions/should-the-death-penalty-be-abolished>
- <http://www.thenation.com/article/159333/ten-reasons-why-death-penalty-should-be-abolished>
- <http://www.icomdp.org/arguments-against-the-death-penalty/>



TALK

a monologue by Victor Velez

My Dad doesn't talk a lot. Usually just stuff like, "I thought I told you to clean your room." Or, "If you're not ready in ten minutes, you're not going."

And even when he does talk, I never really know what to say back.

But one time, I walked into the living room and we have this baby picture of me that's over in the corner and he was just staring at it and staring at it.

And I guess I must have made a noise or something, because he looked over at me and he looked at me kind of funny.

And he said, "The day you were born was the day I knew I wasn't the most important person in the world."

And just that one time in the living room, I knew what to say back, and I said, "I love you too."



Diamond's Monologue
by
Diamond Melendez

Hi, my name's Diamond. I think I'll tell y'all a little bit about myself. Just a street-smart girl from Flatbush New York .

Life was never easy had to do things on my own. but i ain't complaining that's just the way life is and I'm dealing with it. I'm independent, a loner, never really had any friends -- I didn't always fit in. People would always make fun of me in school.

So like, here's what went down....

I'm standing there at the bus stop waiting for the 60 bus down at Allegheny and Front. So this really big and rude girl with a giant pocketbook knocks me to the side, tryin' to get in line in front of me, ya know?

So I say: Excuse you! Do you know you bumped me hard?"

She turns to me and says Get outta my face before I sock you, little girl."

So I thought: *Do I really want to get in a fight with this ignorant girl?*

I figured no. So I just let it go. But you know what'll happen next time?
She'll see that some girls can be tough - real tough!





Sapphire and Alex

by Keyshla Colon

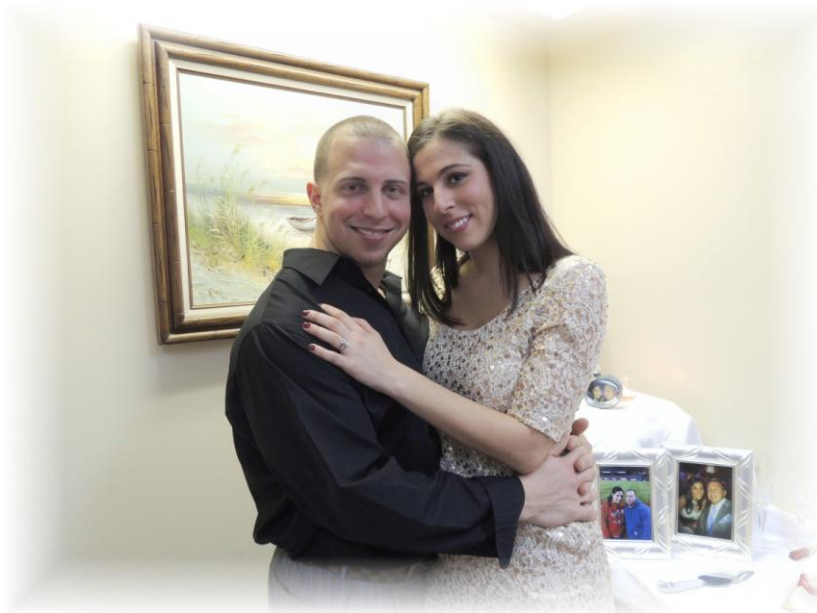
This is deeper than love. It's insanity. When you fall in love you would do the craziest things -- things that you never thought you would ever do.

It all started on Nov. 26, 2014 when Sapphire started talking to a boy name Alex, whom they both met because of Austin -- but mainly because of Amy. Amy is one of Sapphire's closest friends, and Austin is one of Sapphire's friends whom she met through Jocelyn.

Jocelyn is like Sapphire's best friend. She and Jocelyn have been through so much. But at the end of the day they had become really close friends. Well, anyways, Sapphire and Alex both go to the same school. They both go to Edison-Fareira High School, and Alex is a junior and Sapphire is a sophomore. Sapphire thought Alex was attractive, handsome and very nice; and Alex thought Sapphire was beautiful and also sweet.

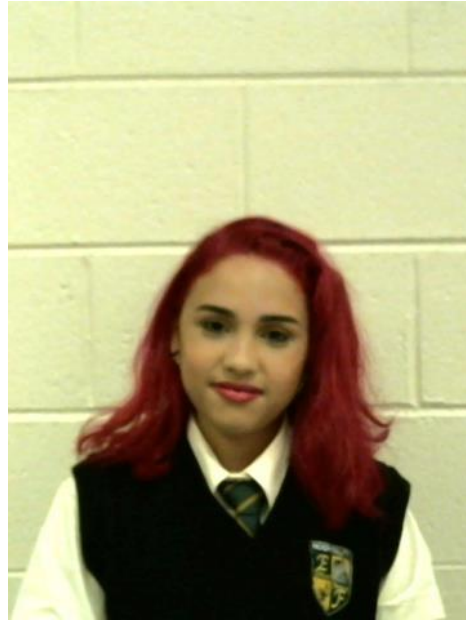
Every day at exactly 12:39 Sapphire asked for a hall pass to the restroom -- or anywhere -- just to get out of her chemistry classroom so she would be able to sneak through 3rd lunch and see Alex. But she pretended she went to get her food, and her perfect excuse to go to his table was to go and say hey to Austin even though it was actually to go see Alex.

But the funny part is that at the time Alex didn't know anything. Every time someone mentioned him, Sapphire would start blushing and get butterflies in her stomach. Eventually, as time passed by and every time she went to lunch, the two of them did end up having a conversation; and it was kind of awkward. But yeah, and then as time passed they became friends. They stayed friends for about a month or two.



Then that's when they started to talk, and everyone found out. Then random people started to come up to Sapphire talking about how she shouldn't talk to him because he's a player.... like she wasn't even exaggerating. She had people coming up to her everyday or texting her many things about Alex. But at the end of the day he cut everyone off for Sapphire, and she felt as though she'd changed him in a good way.

And she did change Alex, because even his own friends noticed it. His friends noticed that he didn't even talk to other girls or nothing and when girls try to talk to him, he swerves them. But at the end of the day they loved each other and wouldn't let anybody get between them. And they've been happy ever since -- and even to this day!



The Story Of My Life

by Gilarie Leon Rosario

My name is Gilarie León Rosario, I was born on April 26, 1998 in Guayama, Puerto Rico. My mother is called Betsy Rosario Martinez and my father is called Gilberto León Alvarez.

My mother was also born in Guayama and my father was born in Arroyo. I am the youngest of four. My oldest sister, called Suleyka, died in the hospital when she was born because she was too premature. My older sister is called Gilmarie; she is six years older than me. She has her own place right now. My only brother, Gilberto, is a year older than me.

I lived in a small two-bedroom house, the one my grandmother had for many, many years near the pueblo of Guayama. It was very small, and I'm surprised that it still stands today. I didn't come from a wealthy background; my mother did not have a job. Her only source of income was one of her hobbies, which was doing people's hair.

My father had a job as a mechanic, but he was never there for me or my other siblings. He got into drugs and alcohol and abandoned us for a while. His family didn't care for us either. During that time my mother did the best she could to take care of us financially.

She made as much money as she could; she sold bracelets, clothes and shoes and even her own belongings. It was hard for her because she was taking care of three children by herself. Plus, my sister was born with a leg condition that would not allow her to walk right, and her condition required wearing a brace to help her walk better.

My mother had to cover all the medical expenses by herself. My mother always bought my sister all the expensive shoes and clothing to make her feel better, while me my brother and I got the most inexpensive stuff. People would talk about my mom because of that.

They would say "Why do you buy her expensive shoes? She's going to ruin them anyway." I never really complained about it, and neither did she, because I knew she did the best she could. My mother raised me to be grateful for what I had.

So when we wouldn't have much growing up, I never argued. When I wanted to play I didn't have video games like the other kids. If I wanted to play I would have to go outside and play with anything that I found on the ground. I learned how to ride a bike when I was 3; most people don't learn until they're older.

I lived in Puerto Rico, until one day my uncle convinced my father to move to the United States. He thought that that would be better for all of us. So he did move in order to prove to us that he can own up to his responsibilities.

We left in the year of 2004, and I was six years old. We landed in the New York airport and met up with my uncle. We then went to my aunt's house. My mother enrolled me in a private catholic school where I learned how to speak English. At first I had trouble learning but then I got the hang of it. I was at that school until 3rd grade, and then my mother put me in a public school because she couldn't pay for the Catholic School anymore because my mother and father had split up again.

At the time, it felt like my life was going nowhere but I kept going to school, two years after going to public school when I was in fifth grade my father was murdered.

It was the most difficult time of my life. It shaped the way I think forever; no more cartoons or video games.

Now I am living life for real. I had to grow up fast; I lost interest in everything, I had no friends, and I would never want to go outside. I stayed home all the time, and that was when I began starving myself and over-thinking everything I ate -- all because I wanted to control everything. because I felt like I had no control over my life. I felt like everything was falling apart around me.

As the years went by, I learned that It's not worth hurting myself because that wasn't going to solve anything. I thought, I don't know if I will ever live to see tomorrow so why don't I just live my life as If I was going to die tomorrow. So that's what I went by. I worked hard in middle school and I got myself into Girls' High. I went there for two years. It was probably the worst decision I ever made.

I had no friends; I knew no one, and I soon figured out that it wasn't where I really wanted to be. My own opinion was the most important thing to me. I did what my heart told me to do. I switched to Edison High School, and I'm glad I made this decision because I have friends here, I know a lot of people and the pace is a lot easier for me to deal with.



Zombie Monologue

by
Alana Giles

Help me!... Like hey! Wait -- don't run away! I'm not gonna hurt you. I wasn't always like this, man. I'm from Philly. I moved to L.A. to work as a nurse. My name is Jazmine. I'm twenty-five years old. I had a best friend named Lena.

But... I ate her. I got infected by a dirty syringe. Now I eat people, but not kids or old people. They are my weaknesses. I get made fun of because I hate eating people. I hate it as much as I hate being a zombie. I feel like a monster. Well, I kind of AM a monster. But not inside.

The wind whispers as it blows past my face as I walk through this park looking for my next prey. I see a girl - she looks tasty- but I must fight the temptation. The temptation is hitting me like a truck, but I'm fighting it. My belief is that we shouldn't eat people, they should try to help us. I'm really a nice person, but I have the urge to eat peoples' brains. All the other zombies don't care at all. I'm the only one. Their hearts are cold while mine is like the sun smiling. I got infected by accident. I need help.

Help me... Excuse me, I'm getting hungry.



Eyes of the Storm Chaser

Feeling the rush of adrenalin going through my veins
Passing through destroyed memories --
the memories destroyed by the monster

The monster that twists and twirls so beautifully
but can't bear the horrendous roar it wails at us,
throwing chunks of debris larger than a boulder
as if it was a piece of trash.

The roar stops the, air is still
nothing's in the air...

The nightmare is over.

By Dante Rivera



Without You

**If I had my way,
I'd spend everyday,
Right by your side.
If I could stop time,
Believe me, I'd try.
For you and me.
Each moment you're gone,
Makes everything wrong,
In my life.
So stay right here right now.
Without you,
I'm a disaster.
You are my ever after.
I die everyday
That you're away
From me.**

Taylor Nuss



THE WORD TRUST???

By: Angelie Vega

The poetry of life is the way of life...

You can't live in big ball of anger and hate,
life throws you curve balls.

Yes we have pressure, do you want to give up easily? Trust is
sometimes hard to do...

HaHAHA!!! I laugh in Trust's face!

You can't trust anyone around, not even the ones that are close.

Trust, what do I look like?

Word SACRIFICE...

Mothers -- you do anything for them.

Do you ever think how they gave life to you,
how they try to give you anything you want?



Imperfection Poem
by Tyrone "Layy" Tillman

"Commit the oldest of sins the newest kind of ways" --
William Shakespeare

meaning sins of mankind are more or less the same through the ages == u can flip through the book of history & skim through the pages -- it seems that the history of man is complacent. Murder rate built through hatred
Some killed tryna 2 escape it, me making it out -- I can taste it
But these crabs with every grasp Don't want me 2 chase it
Me climbing out of the barrel would be the problem that most of us are faced with
Judicial system -- can I ask how much are u taken
Cuz these young black children getting sold like slaves
Just in modern days & it ain't just about race is bout the green of a dollar
Studied by scholars the crime is so blue collar
Keeping the poor poor or Leaving homes feeling bare like there is no door
Feelings poured in the inferno so,
I try 2 be impeccable impeccable is without sin & sin is something you do or believe that goes against yourself

It means not speaking against yourself, to yourself or to others.
It means not rejecting yourself.

To be impeccable means to take responsibility. Go through humility

U can be impeccable -- just do what u believe in



Amber Alert

a monologue by Sam Serrano

When I was twelve, I came to the conclusion that everyone in the world, including my own family, was against me. I was never a problem child, but my parents sure treated me like one.

For example, I used to need to be home by 5:00 pm every day. This clearly restricted my amount of “play time” outdoors. I wasn’t allowed to have friends over to play at the house; nor was I allowed to go over anyone else’s. I had to finish homework directly after I came home from school, no matter how long it took. My parents refused to buy me video games and forced me to read books and then write a book report on them to prove I actually read them!

Now, even though those rules listed above were quite frustrating to me as a child, they aren’t what upset me most. What really hurt me was the lack of compassion on behalf of my parents. My mother was a bitter woman who always made me feel guilty of accidents or mistakes I’ve made. My father only

knew one emotion: frustration. The only time he spoke to me was when he screamed at me for receiving poor test scores or beat me for misbehaving.

But enough about them, let's talk about my school's psychologist. For his own privacy, we will call him Dr. Tanner. Like most junior high schools, a psychologist is always available on campus during school hours to assist any students in need of counseling whether it is emotional, academic, social, behavioral, etc.

To be honest, I have never seen any student talking with Dr. Tanner. Every day, I would walk past his office on my way to the cafeteria and peek through his door's little window. He would always be alone in there, working on some paperwork.

I guessed that most kids were too afraid to speak about their problems to an adult who was practically a stranger. For this reason, it took me three weeks to muster enough courage to go into his office. [March 2nd, 1993](#), was the day I decided to voice my troubles to Dr. Tanner. During lunch break, I stood in front of his office door and knocked.

Through the window, I could see him raise his head, smile, and motion for me to come in. I did.

He greeted me by introducing himself and asking for my name. Dr. Tanner was a very soft-spoken man who seemed to radiate kindness. In less than thirty minutes, I rambled to Dr. Tanner about how mean my parents were to me and how they didn't care about me at all. After a while, my voice began to quaver and I stopped speaking. The psychologist listened patiently to my whole spiel, arms folded and head nodding. I half expected him to begin talking about how everything I had just said was untrue and that my parents loved me dearly and blah blah blah. But he didn't.

Dr. Tanner leaned towards me with a grin on his face and said "You know... I'm the best school psychologist in the world. I promise we will fix this."

I rolled my eyes. "Okay, but how?" I asked.

"I have my ways!" he replied. "I'm a man of my word. I promise that within just one month, the relationship between you and your parents will change for the better. Forever."

After a brief pause, he continued: "Although, I do need you to make me a promise."

“You have to promise me that you’ll come back to my office after school tomorrow and that you won’t tell anyone that we had this conversation **today**. It’ll be our little secret.”

I promised.

The following day, I returned to Dr. Tanner after school. It was around 4:00 pm when I entered his office. After a warm welcome, he asked me to have a seat in front of his desk once again.

Upon sitting down, I watched Dr. Tanner close the blinds of the door’s tiny window. “There,” he smiled, “now we have all the privacy we need!”

We began to talk about my likes and interests, my favorite subjects in school, my least favorite teachers, and things of the like. About an hour into the conversation, Dr. Tanner offered me a soft drink.

I gladly took the offer, considering my parents never allowed me to drink soda. Dr. Tanner reached over to his mini-fridge and fidgeted around before setting down two open cans of soda on the desk.

Afterwards, we continued to talk about what was going on in my life but it wasn’t long before I passed out from whatever drugs Dr. Tanner placed in my drink.

It took me a minute or so to adjust my blurred vision upon waking...

... And when it did, I had no idea what to think.

I was handcuffed to a bed and my mouth was sealed with duct tape. I immediately began to panic- squirming and tugging at the cuffs- but gave up soon after.

My eyes widened in disbelief after looking around the room. There were posters of super-heroes pinned up along the walls and photographs of famous athletes on shelves. In the middle of the room was an old television and Super Nintendo, various game cartridges stacked alongside it.

I didn’t know what to think. Here I am in a room filled with items most kids would die to play with. I would have probably cried from joy hadn’t I been handcuffed to a bed frame.

My stomach sank once again as the door opened and Dr. Tanner walked inside. He **sat** down on the edge of the bed.

“Now listen,” he said, “remember that I’m here to help you, and I would never hurt you, okay?” Dr. Tanner gently removed the tape from my mouth and then the cuffs from my hands.

My first instinct was to begin crying, but something about Dr. Tanner made me feel safe. He smiled at me. “You’re going to be staying here for awhile,” he continued, “and during this time, you’re allowed to play with any toys in this room while I’m here at home.”

“But when I leave the house, I’ll need to cuff one of your hands back to the bed. You can still watch the television, but I want you to only watch the news channels when I’m away.”

I sat in silence, still trying to process the information he had given me.

“So!” Dr. Tanner yipped, slapping me on the knee. “You go ahead and knock yourself out; I’ll be back when it’s time for dinner.”

He got up from the bed, walked across the room and clicked the TV’s power button before locking the door behind him.

Several more minutes passed before I realized that Dr. Tanner wasn’t joking. All that was left for me to do was boot up the Nintendo and play Mario until nightfall.

At about 7:00 pm, Dr. Tanner returned to the room carrying two plates of mashed potatoes and chicken strips. I finally gathered up the courage to ask him how long I’d be staying in this room. “Well, about a month,” he replied, “give or take a few weeks. I just have some work I need to do.”

The following morning, I awoke to Dr. Tanner’s hand patting my head. “Hey bud, you don’t have to wake up right now if you don’t want, but I am going to need to put this back on,” he whispered, clamping the cold steel handcuff onto my wrist.

I gazed up at him. He was wearing a collared shirt and slacks, a coat draped over his shoulder and a suitcase at his side. He looked just how he always did when I saw him around school. Before leaving he placed the TV’s remote next to me and told me to turn it on and watch the news.

The first thing I saw upon turning it on was a “breaking news” segment. An important looking police officer stood at a podium surrounded by people with microphones. I happened to begin viewing half way through his speech.

“A statewide Amber Alert has been issued as of [this morning](#). We have several investigators working towards identifying potential abductors, but as of right now there is not much evidence. Faculty members state that the boy had been last seen around four or five in the evening on-“

I began to feel nauseous as a photograph of me appeared on the screen. It was my yearbook picture from last year. Captions for the photograph displayed my name and age, my school, and my town. Above my picture were alternating titles: FBI BEGINS SEARCH FOR CHILD and KIDNAPPING SUSPECT UNKNOWN and POTENTIAL RUNAWAY.

The live footage continued and two figures I soon recognized as my mom and dad stepped up to the podium. Both appeared to have reddened eyes. Tears streamed down my mother’s face as she took hold of a microphone.

I’d never seen so much emotion come from my mother before as she wept on live television, stuttering on sentences such as “Please return my baby back to me,” and “I’m so sorry,” and “Please come home to us.”

When my father took the microphone, I nearly expected his attitude to be stone cold, but he too had tears in his eyes. He pleaded to the world to bring his son home safely and lastly begged for my forgiveness! “I know I haven’t been the best father, but darn it, do I wish I had been now. Please bring my boy back.”

I turned the power off shortly after. My emotions were mixed -- for I had never once seen my father cry.

I felt miserable that my parents were being put through so much, but at the same time I felt relief. I now knew how much mom and dad love me.

Nearly four weeks have passed and Dr. Tanner has been treating me with the utmost respect. He leaves me in the morning cuffed to the bed frame, but returns in the afternoon to eat lunch and dinner with me, talk, and play games. I never would have guessed how good Dr. Tanner was at Monopoly and Scrabble.

But one morning when Dr. Tanner woke me before heading off to work, I noticed a stern look on his face. I also realized that it was three hours earlier than when he usually wakes me.

“You need to watch the news [today](#). No exceptions. I want you to keep the television on all day and pay close attention to it,” he stated grimly.

I, of course, complied and watched him exit the room.

About two hours later, a breaking news segment interrupted the toothpaste commercial I was watching. The title:

HUMAN REMNANTS FOUND

Two staunch-looking men in suits stood aside one another and began speaking:

“We are displeased to bring up such unfortunate news **this morning** regarding our missing child case from earlier this month.”

One of the men bowed his head while the one speaking shuffled through some papers. He continued:

“Remains of a body have been found in a garbage bag beneath a highway overpass. The body appears to be that of a child, although not much of it is left. The body has been decapitated and much has been burnt to ash and bone.”

The screen shifted over to a helicopter view of the freeway, dozens of police cars gathered near the bottom of a tall overpass. The man’s voice could still be heard:

“Within the bag police found a junior high school identification card labeled as such.” The screen showed the school ID card I always kept in my backpack. The plastic was sort of melted away, but my photograph and name were intact.

After the two men dismissed themselves, the camera panned over to my parents. They were sitting among reporters; my mother’s face held a painful grimace and my father sulked his head down at his knees.

I shut the television off.

Dr. Tanner returned home very late. He hurried into the room, unlocked my cuffs, and placed a bottle of fizzing water into my hand.

He placed his hands onto my shoulders and smiled.

“I made you a promise, didn’t I?”

I nodded, tears squeezing their way out my eyes.

“You need to make me a promise again,” he whispered.

He told me that I needed to drink all the water in the bottle -- it would help me sleep -- and that from here on, I am never to tell anyone that I ever met him. I promised.

“I told you I’m the best school psychologist in the world, didn’t I?”

And he was right.

I awoke later that night to find myself lying in the middle of a park, stars shining brilliantly across the night sky. I recognized the park; it wasn’t too far from my school.

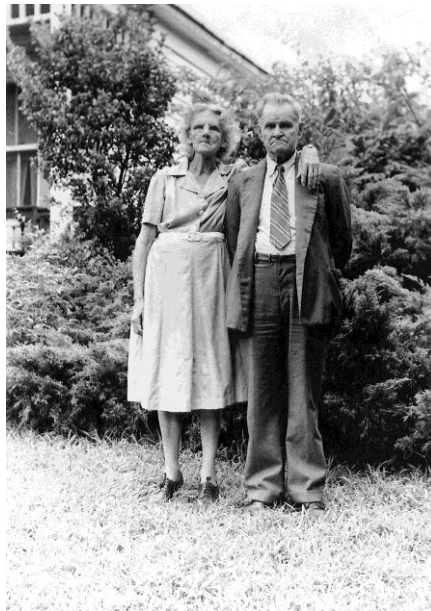
A mile or so down the road, I saw my house. The lights were off inside, but I could make out my father sitting on the step leading to the front door.

I hesitantly called out to him. He lifted his head slowly, but when he saw it was me, he sprang to his feet, ran towards me arms open, yelling my name. My mother erupted from the house behind him.

Dr. Tanner was right. Things have changed with my family and me. My parents smile more often and treat me lovingly. I could not ask for a more perfect ending.

Every now and then, I see Dr. Tanner on campus- talking to and from his office. Rarely do we ever make eye contact, let alone speak to one another, but sometimes he’ll shoot me a wink and a smile.

I’ll always keep my promise to him and pretend I have never met him, but there will always be one question forever floating in my mind: Who did Dr. Tanner decapitate and throw off the overpass?





Letter To Myself

from Alberto Chavez to Alberto Chavez

Well look at you kiddo, I hope you're doing well for yourself. Oh who am I kidding? You're doing great. At least I hope so. You'd better be a young actor on the rise who just got a new movie contract. The women who once rejected us are regretting it now aren't they? By this point in your life, you should have it all. The money, the women, the fame, the respect. You should be changing lives as we speak.

Become a legend! I hope all those years at the gym certainly paid off as well. Living big and living well, with the cash in your pocket and Hollywood scene on lockdown! Or if you didn't become an actor, you better have become a Grand Prix race car driver, with a garage filled of your own cars. Winning trophies, owning a nice house, and a sweet piece of arm candy by your side. Listen, your old self just wishes nothing but the best for you, at the end if it all, I just hope you're happy with what your future has brought you. You'd better take good care of us! You'd better be taking care of your family as well. I know you have become someone important, I just know it. No longer will people turn a blind eye whenever you accomplish something. Be proud of who we are, because there's nothing better than being a famous actor or race car driver, whose name is...Alberto Dariel Chavez.



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