pulse
The Art Beat of Life
2020-2021
See no evil, Hear no evil, Speak no evil
Gina Colosimo

2020-2021
Orchard Park High School
4040 Baker Road
Orchard Park, NY 14127

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This book cannot be used as a defibrillator.
A Letter from the Editors:

We are so grateful that we have had the opportunity to publish PULSE magazine in the 2020-2021 school year. PULSE aims to foster creativity and strengthen the community with poetry, creative fiction, photography, and artwork created by students throughout Orchard Park High School. To achieve this feat, we rely heavily on our staff’s labor. Thank you, PULSE staff, for your hard work and dedication in such a difficult and abnormal year.

Despite the challenge of having limited time together due to the pandemic, PULSE has compiled an impressive collection of work from a massive load of submissions. Even in a difficult time, creativity has given our hearts the energy with which to keep beating. Thank you to all who submitted!

And a final thanks to Ms. Perillo. Without your constant help and support, we likely would not have been able to successfully create a magazine this year.

We hope you have the opportunity to enjoy this year’s edition of PULSE magazine!

Continuing to leave their fingers on the pulse,

Alexandra Meisner and Charles Nahabetian
Editors in Chief
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Anneliese Henrich

7 a.m.
syd curtin

Tranquility
Alexa Gioia

The Little Mermaid
Riley Bowersox
Compassion
Alexa Gioia

When waves come crashing down
I'll be your vessel
When there is no road to follow
I'll be your guide
When you tremble in fear of the unknown
Mourning the loss of those you hold dear
I'll comfort you
When you struggle in the cage of isolation and helplessness
I'll set you free

When darkness falls and everything seems lost,
I'll be your light.
The Quiet
Anonymous

No Laughter
No voices
No sounds but the pair of bare feet hitting the ground
Step after step, after step, after step
Limbs of bark sweep to the ground as they're bodies stand tall
Layers of moss hide the ground below
No rain has fallen yet the grass and flowers alike show the tiny
droplets yearning for the
company of another
The wood was silent
The wood was full of life
Yet the wood was loud
Toads croak their melancholy song in a way of harmony
As birds flutter and gossip under the morning sun
No sounds could be heard
Languages surround the forest
But the languages fell on deaf ears
Not needing the noise
Just only the beauty and with it the silence
2019 Audi A3 Convertible
Anastasiya Varian

Lone horseman
Hannah Venning

Boats
Gavin Rauh
An Old Oak Chair
Wehrmeister

We have an old oak chair at our dinner table that stands alone. My mother won't sit in it and my father stopped trying because that's Grandad's spot. He'll be there til the rest of us can't be.

Call Me By My Name
Anonymous

You speak to me like a man. I don't think you realize it, but you do. The way your words dance in my ears is different than to the others. I like it, I do, but I'd rather you call me by my name.

Fountain of Plants
Riley Bowersox

White-throated Sparrow
Alexa Gioia
when you miss a feeling
where do you go?
i go to a place that i have never been
i shut my eyes
and i feel everything
i was ever meant to feel
sometimes i see you there
you smile at me
you wave
and then
you are gone
isn't that funny?
how even in my dreams
we find a way to reach each other
but
in a split second
you are gone again

Casey Tinnesz
her feet, painfully anchored to the tile, their arches having long given way to the forces of nature, as she stares out into the vast lot and shakes with the poplars back and forth she rocked and when she was done she let the ache seep into her heart it's cold familiar comfort calling her name
Only when sweat pours from your face and your hands shake from utter desire, will you understand my plights.

I’m just a poor man on the inside. Most would argue on the outside too. I don’t have much, but what I do have is killing me slowly. I dance along, beat for beat, as though my heart isn’t clawing its way out of my scrawny chest.

The shaking is taking over my body now. I can’t stop. My thoughts always come back to you. Only you.

I want you more than anything I’ve ever wanted. I need you more than anything I’ve ever needed.

You are my last thought when I hunker down under the cruel eyes of the stars and my first waking thought after the sun brings me to my senses. If only I could remain unconscious, I could have you then. All-day long, I could have you.

My words will not escape my lips. I am trying to talk. Trying to get to you, but my calls do not reach your ears.

What is this demon inside me? He’s taking over my body.

Why won’t you answer me, love?

Your blank stare doesn’t care about my feelings. Does it?

I caress her cheek with fumbled fingers. My eloquent thoughts slurled out once again.

Onlookers stare out of the corners of their eyes as this loon whispers his sweet nothings to a half-empty bottle.

I love you, my dear. You’ve never let me down.
Will You Stay for Coffee?
Wehrmeister

The moon cast a blue glow around his darkened room just enough for him to make out the dismal shapes of his belongings. Her shoulder was illuminated in the light from the open window. That's all he could see of her sleeping silhouette. Every few moments she would cry out softly for some long-lost comfort, she couldn't quite find.

He could recall her brown-green eyes sparkling up at him, her coy smile shaded by her hands acting as though he couldn't see it. Her stories from the night before resonated with him, of her childhood and family.

And now, she was next to him, no love lost among the two, though a part of him longed for something. Something much more.

In a few hours, she would wake. She would slowly dress, making small talk but the sweetness of the evening before would be gone.

He knew how these nights went. The rules of his lonely game, but he continued playing in the hopes that he'd find another with those goddamn eyes and that perfect smile.

And so he sat in the shadows of his room watching her side rise and fall with the rhythm of her breath.

Longing.

Still Alive
Wehrmeister

You've got quite the smile, wolfish and fake, though I can't really do it justice with words. Your vulgar pessimism divides your humanity and your passions. It's half-past eight and you're already smashed, sitting at a bar flirting with anyone who'll look your way. You're certainly a broken man, always have been. And you want to be because your pain is the only reminder that you're still alive.
“and we call her the sun”
Anneliese Henrich

rays casting a gleam
blazing down from the sky
lighting the floating rock
we walk upon
and call home
warming our cores
charging our souls
reminding us why we continue
to walk forward
and her name is the sun
and she is kind enough
to allow us to revolve her
without asking
for anything in return
In the old days
Her father sits next to her
On unkempt grass, the scent of lilac.
It's simple
Not perfect, but enough
Day and night.
Then new found knowledge,
Lips spewed venom of cruel thoughts that accompany loneliness.
He wanted her to stay,
Pride whisked her away.
She left behind all they had built,
Day and night.
He regrets all the things he did not allow,
She is free now.
The audience sees the pianist
Nimble fingers
Stumbling down notes,
Falling down keys,
Belting a melancholy melody.
Violins are strung taut,
Screaming their symphony while
The ballroom gathers to dance in their agony.
Pristine suits and silk ribbons
Line the fortunate and extravagant,
Mindlessly twirling, leaping, laughing,
But nobody is listening.
Eighteen
Wehrmeister

I miss being fourteen.
and I miss being naive.
I miss my friends.
They don't miss me.
My childhood is over.
the blink of an eye.
Now I wish I knew
how to turn back the time.
Change is coming soon
and I can't wait
but, I should've figured things out
because now it's too late.

Anxiety
Anonymous

I hit my peak before you met me
You locked me in a perpetual state of wanting
Now I reside in a chamber of lies you once told
They still control me

You shattered the last thing that gave me peace
And I'm so young but you don't regret how you treated me
You were a gateway drug to more miseries
That left me crying in all my dreams

Now I'm owed a lot of apologies
I know they'll never get to me
Maybe lost in the mail or didn't take the receipt
Do they even know they hurt me?

Pretty Girl
Anonymous

I don't wanna be a pretty girl
You always told me that's what I was
I'll never be anything more
What a shame I'm such a bore

You committed the perfect crime made it look like a heartbreak
Who knows if I'll ever be clean this line may never fade
And all those snide remarks will leave scars to my heart
You've done a wonderful job tearing me apart

And I'm made of glass
Been dropped one too many times
There are few cracks
Now you know why I hide

I still flinch when I take off my clothes
Never been reassured although it came close
Somehow the standards always changed
And that how your terror reigned

I'll be just fine
Although it'll take some time
I've learned you were never even good enough
What a waste of time
Motion of the Saber
Jacob Dobosh

What?
Jacob Dobosh

Chris Evans
Chloe Dobosh
A gray tabby cat leaped through the small banks of powdery snow that lined the yard of his house. When the cat would stop and stand in the snow, it was up to the bottom of his stomach. He wandered around the yard as a brisk breeze blew his fur back and set the occasional cloud of snow towards him. He wandered up to a large creation made of snow that rested at the front of the yard close to the unplowed road, and pawed at it trying to provoke some movement from it. But when nothing happened he decided to walk away from it and jumped into a mound of snow, covering himself in a blanket of white.

Soon his eyes narrowed and honed in on a small movement near the edge of a forest that bordered the property. He shook the snow off, quickly lowered himself to his haunches, and after a few seconds darted through the snow towards the woods. A gleam of excitement shined in his eyes, and he started to drool a little. When he reached the source of the movement a field mouse burrowed into a small hole in the ground. The cat pawed at the hole, but had no luck getting the mouse to come out. The tomcat was overwhelmed with a flood of alien scents that radiated from deeper in the forest. His curiosity peaked as his eyes narrowed again and he dashed into the forest and took it on himself to start smelling everything in his line of sight. A thin blanket of snow covered most of the flat ground, but the scents that were left by animals now in hibernation remained faint but noticeable by the cat. As he wandered taking in the multitude of new smells, he found a small, mostly frozen-over, pond. He slowly approached the pond and stuck his head out to taste the water, but when he did his tongue slid against the sheet of ice. The cat jumped back from the sudden shock of the cold ice on his tongue. Once he recovered he put one paw forward and pawed at the ice; when nothing happened he placed his entire paw onto the ice. Seeing as he could step on the ice safely he decided to put his other front paw onto the bed of ice.

He decided to place all of his weight on the ice and he stood still with his claws dug into the ice and his back arched. After a few seconds of the ice not giving into his weight the cat decided to walk across it, moving as slowly as he could towards the other side of the pond. Just before he could make it to the solid ground on the other side he noticed a small patch of the pond that wasn't frozen over yet. He felt his throat was dry and he knew that he needed to drink something, so he slowly made a detour to the patch of water. He put his head down to the water and started to lap it up, as the refreshing coolness spread throughout his body.

As he was drinking he felt the ice beneath him start to crack, with a defined crack running a quarter way across the pond originating from the hole. The ice below him began to become unstable, so he lifted his head up from the water and prepared to jump to the land. As he started to get into position, the ice started to give way and cold water pooled at his paws. Just as the ice splintered from the rest he leaped across the unfrozen water and landed at the edge of the land. Both of his back paws and the tip of his tail landed in the water, but he quickly scurried forward and out of the water.

After he recovered from the chill that the water brought to him, he continued delving deeper into the forest. A blistering wind had started to pick up causing the loose powdery snow to sweep across the ground. The sun was locked away behind a prison of dark storm clouds that have covered the entire sky since dawn. As the winds started roaring throughout the forest, the cat continued venturing further. He seemed not afraid of the wind nor the sudden chill in the air as he shivered once and continued his expedition, making sure to smell everything he passed by.

As he trekked deeper into the forest, the wind started getting even faster and the trees no longer were able to protect him from the blistering winds. Snow being whipped by the wind coated him as he tried to find where he entered the forest. But he couldn't find the scents that he had just followed as the wind was scattering any smell he could use to find his way back. As he started to sprint around in random directions looking for any indication he was going the right way he found a small hole dug underneath a fallen tree. He slowly stalked up to the hole and noticed that it was big enough for him to get inside of, but he stayed alert in case it was home to another dangerous animal. As he got up to the hole he only smelled the faint smell of some animal that must have dug it, he stuck his head further into the hole and still didn't sense the presence of an animal. He slowly started to crawl into the tight space, making sure to keep his guard up the entire time. As he hit the back of the cave, it widened enough for him to turn around and have his head facing towards the opening.
The cold seemed so far into the cat that he lay on the floor of the den with his eyes open, breathing shallowly. He let out a meow that was barely louder than a whisper as another gust of wind blasted down the tunnel, causing his whole body to shake. He started to whimper as the cold became unbearable and his stomach continued to growl out demanding food. As the cat started to give into the cold, his ears were peaked by the faintest sound that had cut through the roaring winds. He slowly raised his head and looked out the tunnel and listened for the noise again.

"Ivan!" the cat heard and his eyes began to widen as he recognized that sound; it was what his family would say when they wanted his attention.

He forced himself to get up as the cold was pushed away by his desire to go home. Once he made it to the opening, he looked around and tried smelling the air for his master's scent, but all he could smell was the faint odor of the animal that once inhabited his safe haven. He let out the loudest meow he could muster, but it was drowned out by the wind, so he decided to hop out of the tunnel and into the open forest. When he did he was overwhelmed by the cold and couldn't move a muscle to get back into safety. His eyes were forced shut but he heard "Ivan!" again, but this time it was much closer. That kept his heart pumping as the cold threatened to stop everything in his body to stop functioning.

"Ivan! Oh no. are you okay?" a man wearing an all black snow jacket and black snow pants said. The man picked up Ivan out of the snow and cradled him in his arms, making sure to hold him tight to his warm body. Ivan's eyes opened for a second and he caught a glimpse of his savior before he went back into a near catatonic state. The man dashed through the snow, trying to avoid running into rocks and trees. He never once slowed down until he reached the edge of the forest that led into his yard, where he could see his wife and son looking out of the window. When his wife noticed him, she had both a look of joy but also of fear. Which was soon replaced by only joy as the man raised Ivan so she could see he had him. When the man got inside his son rushed into the hallway and hugged him and looked at the limp cat in his arms.

"Is he okay?" the boy asked, almost shaking.

The man took off one of his gloves and put a finger up to Ivan's neck and felt a defined pulse. The man sighed and said "Yes, he'll be okay, but he just needs to warm up and rest for a while."

"Okay," the boy said with a nod.

"Now you go to your mom and I'll take care of him," the man said, and his son nodded again and dashed off to his mother's side. When Ivan finally woke up from his journey into the forest, he found himself swaddled in blankets, and the chill was all but gone from his body. He tried to get himself out of the blankets but was too weak to move so he meowed as loud as he could. The man heard his meow and came over to him, petting his head as he undid his blanket prison. He continued to scarf down the food as wind continued to howl and whip snow outside.

Eventually he gave up on meowing and curled into a ball. He started to drift off to sleep to pass the time until he could leave. After a few hours of sleep, a chill had gripped the den, and the occasional gust of frigid wind shot inside and brought snow along with it. The cat woke from his sleep shivering even more, when he tried to get up he found himself unable to. The cold had its icy grip on him and wouldn't let him leave, but the low rumble in his stomach clashed with the cold to motivate him to leave his safety. In a few minutes the cat was able to get up and slowly crawl his way up the now slick tunnel that led to the surface.

As he crawled up to the opening, his vision was almost entirely white, as the howling of the wind turned into a roar drowning out all other noise. His eyes narrowed as he tried to take in his surroundings, but the only thing still visible was the large oak tree that was almost directly in front of him. The cat let out a meek meow into the roaring tempest, but his call went unanswered, so he shimmied back into the opening of the burrow. He closed his eyes and began to shiver, even though the den was warm and the frigid air outside had yet to seep into the sanctuary. He let out several more shrill begging meows, all of which were left unanswered and he remained alone with no savior coming.

As he peeked his head out into the open air, his face was rattled by the speeding winds, causing his eyes to close involuntarily. He pulled back into the safety of the tunnel and shook the snow off of his face and opened his eyes again and tried to peer out into the snowy forest. When he looked around he could see more than he could see further than the oak tree, and the wind had quieted down a bit. After a few more seconds of scanning he didn't see any movement, and the chill was becoming almost too unbearable for him so the cat went back down the tunnel and tried to warm himself up.

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Beyond My Window
Gianna Gioia

Nature encircles you like vines to a tree
The smell, the sound, the feel
Runs a shiver down my spine
The flowers bloom to life
The color splatters the grass like raindrops
Those green, green leaves atop of the trees
Looks just like a puffy cloud
The bramble blows in the wind
blowing, blowing, blowing
The birds cooing
About to be blown away
Just to hear the animal life
Means something’s there
Waiting, waiting, waiting
To be uncovered
The sun beams light
That makes everything glow
What a sight to see
What a sight
Anticipation
Anonymous

Alone I sit as I await
the letter sent to seal my fate.
Each line filled to the brim
to bring my heart from somber to grim.

As the reaper sits on the page
I wish I had lived my life out of the cage.
Soaring higher than what I achieved
instead of choking on what was given
gasping in a heave.

Simple sentences could change my life.
Will it pay off, my hard work and strife?
Were the trials worth the results?
Or will my wounds get doused in salt?

There is no way to predict the future
only a hope that everything will go smoother.
Then the change that I faced
and the dreams I chased.

In the outcome, is it for not
my dreams and passions left out to rot.
Notably so, I will not let them go
I will keep pursuing them, continuing to grow.
Autumn's Beauty
Cameron Enders

I walked the gravel trail that led into a colossal forest, looking at the unfolding autumn scenery. The vastness of the forest was far different from my close knit suburban comfort, the leaves boasted wondrous shades of red, yellow, and orange.

As I continued my excursion my attention was drawn to subterranean lizards scurrying away, and a small ravine that had multicolor leaves floating down the stream that was squeezed inside. There were abnormal growth of moss on the trees deeper into the seemingly infinite forest, the dusk was aglow with a splendid migration of fireflies.

I joined the short list of those truly privy to the beautiful secrets of nature, my longing for the safety of my antique home faded away to the awe of the outdoors. I was far away from the racket of modern, with only the sounds of the world to be heard, I dawdled down the rest of the path, not wanting to ever leave.

But, eventually I knew I had to return to my less than wondrous life, As I walked out of the vast woods I looked back and a smile grew across my face. My attention wasn't on anything in particular, just the beauty of the woods behind me, an image that will remain burned into my mind for my entire life.
My Dearest Friend  
Ally Dann

To my dearest friend, with all of my love.  
Thank you for being there for me, always.  
You bring me joy, like an angel above.  
You bring me laughter, in so many ways.  
Dearest friend, what would I do without you?  
Brought into my life, so unexpected.  
How did I get so lucky to have you?  
Before you, I was so disconnected.  
With you right by my side, I feel so whole.  
Became best of friends, we fit together.  
Fit together, like a key and a keyhole.  
On sunny days, even in bad weather.  
It's like swimming and coming up for air.  
And you, my dearest friend, are always there.

Wear and Tear  
Minna Owens

They say the bad times are temporary  
but that's not how I feel.  
They're heavily real and in the moment,  
they'll break my focus  
Like summer's solstice  
Sending me farther back than before.

You see,  
Summer's air flowed through my hair it whispered senses of security.  
It was meaningful to me  
That security  
and I believed every soft breath of encouragement.  
She said I'd be alright but here I lay sitting in the ash.  
Thanks to the past.

Like the summer season, the bad times will  
pass  
However, my headache will always  
last.  
My voice will shake in recollection of my connection to those moments.  
The ones that creep inside me  
At the slightest unfocus  
Between my eyes  
When mother asks for clean dishes the second I rise.  
It's clear to me that what once was can never be anymore.  
From what was said  
Or so easily seen  
The stitches and seams break instantly  
And then I'm back to square one.  
The tears and tugs  
Not even the affectionate hugs bring me back to that summer air.  
Cause the bad times aren't so temporary when your heart will constantly wear and tear.
Planes/Trains/Automobiles
Abby Campion

How I do love a train;
dozens of people traveling to another destination
in this endless train ride called life:
some anxious
some peaceful
some indifferent.

How I do love a train
the hectic but intoxicating electricity
of travelers bubbling and talking and sleeping;
the cars fiercely propelling forward
with the rum-tum-tum
of the rails hitting the Fish plates.
How I adore looking out my window
at the forests and trees and valleys
dashing past us
like they have somewhere exhilarating to be.

How I also love a plane:
being simultaneously blissful
and horrified at how
astonishingly high I’m flying.
But I’m doing just that:
most
soaring
above the white puffy clouds that could
surely catch my fall
And that yellow orb who lights my way
and says
“My dear, you’re flying!”
and I smile because
I know
and I laugh because
I never thought I’d fly,
suspended in mid-air,
by a bird-shaped vehicle;
Gazing at the gray blanketing the sky.
But I did just that.
Yes, I did just that.
Riddle Me This
Minna Owens

Riddle me this
what if we kissed?
If my distant breath ignited your
soft lips
and
our noses,
cold as ice,
touched
over starlit, city lights.

What if,
And get this,
I just hugged you
and you never let me
go.
Never missed,
That one kiss
goodnight
as we watched the starlight.
The embrace
would be as soft as snow.
Not the bitter cold
I
became accustomed to.
No empty pillow cases
distant
of those warm embraces;
no head's laying still;
or tired eyes
too shut tight
to say that last farewell.

But if you will,
I could use some security
to relieve the fury.

he's falling hard she thinks
she fears that he will soon feel the impact
of hitting the ground
he may taste the blood
he may escape into the shower to wash
her away
but she likes it a little bit
she forgets that she too can be an object
of desire
he reminds her
she is convict and judge in one

Untitled
Anonymous

Common Yellow Throat
Alexa Gioia
Dreams of Tomorrow
Cameron Enders

When others say "It's hopeless and it really can't be done."
When they tell you "It's all over. It's a race that can't be won."
And they promise "You could spend your life just lying in the sun."
Follow your dreams boy. Follow your dreams!

When the people you admire, but who wouldn't understand,
Tell you "Other roads are safer. Your dreams are much too grand."
Or the doubters and the tempters try to take you by the hand.
Follow your dreams boy. Follow your dreams!

You should listen to the counsel of the people that you trust.
But don't be turned aside just because they might get fussed
You live the life that in your heart you know you really must.
Follow your dreams boy. Follow your dreams!

There is nothing you can't conquer if you believe you can.
No mountains you can't straddle, no oceans you can't span.
Just conjure up a vision and set yourself a plan.
Follow your dreams boy. Follow your dreams!

It was late at night, maybe around six or seven, and I was washing the dishes
while my father sat in the living room watching television. My mother was
putting the leftover food into Tupperware containers that would soon find
themselves in the fridge. As I washed the dishes my mind started to drift off to
somewhere else. A place that I found myself going to more and more the past
few months.

I was a writer, and a good one at that. I was living the life that I've dreamt of
since as long as I could remember, and I was truly happy in this daydream. I
loved the comfort that this thought brings to me, even though I know that it's
just a distant dream. As I continued to delve into this intricate fantasy.

I heard a small sound from somewhere behind me, and for a split second I
snapped back to reality. I looked down and realized I stopped washing dishes
and my hands were just sitting underneath the hot water spewing out of the
faucet.

"Jackson!" my mom called, her voice louder than usual.

I whipped around to face her, blood rushing up to my ears and a dull pounding
sound radiating from my chest. "Yes?" I respond with a quivering voice.

"Are you almost done with the dishes? Because it's almost seven."

"Oh, right. Yeah I'm almost done." I remembered our family tradition of sitting
in the living room and watching Wheel of Fortune. None of us really talked to
each other, except for when someone yelled an answer at the TV. But it was a
family tradition, so I looked forward to it most nights. The past few nights,
though, I hadn't really looked forward to it, and really I haven't looked forward
to much recently.

My mind was too focused on the future that I was dreaming about the past
few weeks. That desire, the need, to make it a reality almost completely taken
over most of my free time. But I don't regret it because I know that if I work
hard enough and believe that I can, I will be able to make my dreams come
ture.

As a commercial came onto the television, my father looked over at me, and I
didn't know why until I looked over at the TV. Playing on the large screen was
a commercial for some college off in Florida that I have never heard of. I felt a
growing sickness start to rise in my stomach, my face went a stark white, and
my vision started to come in and out of focus.

"So where are you thinking of applying to, Jackson?" my father asked with a
hint of interest in his voice and a face that was completely expressionless.

"Uhm, you know, I haven't really thought about it much," I lied as my facial
expression lost every ounce of confidence it once had. I told either of my
parents that I didn't plan on going to college. Knowing that neither of them
would approve, because they had "my best interest at heart," I decided to keep
quiet.

"Come on, Jackson! You must have some idea. You're seventeen after all; this is
all you should be thinking about," my dad said with a softer tone.

"Yeah I know, but maybe," I pause for a moment and look away from my father.
"Maybe I'm not going to college."
My father stared at me with the ferocity of a lion watching its prey. The air in the room turned electric, and both of my parents were silently staring at me. I could feel the food that I just ate start to rise back up to my throat, and my hands began to shake at my sides.

“What made you think you wouldn’t go to college?” my mother asked softly, breaking the long silence.

“I don’t know,” I lied in a voice barely louder than a whisper, unable to look either of my parents in the eyes.

My father looked at me for another few seconds without saying a word, before he finally broke and asked, “What do you mean you might not go to college?”

I sat perfectly still on the couch looking down at my legs, but all I could think of was all of the motivational quotes that I would read online. I focused on all of that garbage and tried to fight my father’s gaze and make my dreams come true. I let him stop me from doing what I know that I want to do.

“I mean that I want to be a writer not an engineer or a...a...a doctor or something,” I say as I shoot up to my feet. My body and voice shaking, and a pale face.

“A writer,” my father said without inflection in his voice as he looked back at the television.

“Yes!” I answer with all of the confidence I could muster.

“Hmm.”

“Honey, I think what your father is trying to get across to you is that it’s not the best idea to not go to college and pursue some crazy fantasy,” my mom said with a soft and comforting tone.

“It’s not just some fantasy. It’s what I want to do” I shot a glare at the both of them. “It is my plan for the future, and I don’t care what either of you say.”

My father let out a small laugh and said, “Well if you want to throw away your life to chase a dream that you can never reach, go right ahead.”

The room was filled with a silence that caused my stomach to turn over on itself. My mother hit my father on the arm, but neither of them took their eyes off where they were previously looking. I could feel my blood start to get hot, and at first I thought it was because I was feeling guilty that I was ruining my parents’ plan for my future. But I soon realized it was a mixture of anger and determination sparked by my parents’ dismissive words.

I continued to stand frozen, only shaking my hands a little bit at this point, and I looked over at my father. He noticed my gaze and looked back at me without interest..

“I just can’t believe you’re willing to throw everything away for the tiniest chance to what-become some famous writer?” He had a slight annoyance in his voice.

“I’m not throwing anything away! I’m just going to do something that I actually want to do!” I have the intensity and volume of my voice in a few notches.

“Don’t you raise your voice to me!” my father back at me, matching my tone.

“I’m sorry, but I’m not going to change my mind on this, so it’s pointless to try and change it.”

My father got up from the couch, and I found myself looking about three inches below his eyes, but I felt his gaze like daggers piercing my skull. I tried to ignore that feeling and stand my ground. I slowly brought my eyes up to my father’s face and stared back into his eyes with half of the intensity he had. My body wanted to run away from this situation, but I backed that burger and stood as still as I did in front of my father.

“I can’t believe my son would want to do something this dumb,” My father said as he fell back onto the couch.

“I’m not doing something dumb,” I said with a low but stern voice. I turned from my father and walked over to the staircase on the right side of the room that was up to my bedroom. I planted my foot on the first step and looked back over at my parents. I felt my heart race, but it soon settled down as I stopped seeing them as my enemies. Rather, they were just the first obstacle on the long road to success in front of me. I knew that it would be a challenge to achieve something as daunting as becoming a famous writer, so I was somewhat thankful to experience my first roadblock so soon.
I turned back to the stairs ahead of me and trotted up them until I reached my room. I sat down at the old desk that used to be in my dad’s office until he got a better one last Christmas. I sat down on the computer chair and opened up my laptop, and, as I waited for it to turn on, I thought back to the time I knew writing was something I loved.

It was in the sixth grade, and I was working on a creative writing assignment for my English class. I wrote a story about a kid whose dad was a superhero and was training him to be one, too. I guess I was just hoping that my father and I could be like that, but now I know that we’re just too different to make that a reality.

Once I unlocked my laptop, I immediately opened up my Google Doc with the story that I’ve been working on for about two months now. The second I looked over the words on the screen, I completely forgot the words that my parents said to me. The only thing I could think about was my ambition and drive to succeed. No matter what they do, keep dreaming and keep doing the work in order to make those dreams come true.