Editor’s Note and Acknowledgments

Before I even started classes at NSU, I was reading *Digressions*. I had received a copy of the magazine in a “Welcome” packet sent to my house a few months prior to my high school graduation. Almost immediately, I was hooked and surprised that such a wealth of talented students would be attending the same school as me.

I looked forward to the opportunity of having classes with these people on a daily basis, though I never thought that eventually I would be the one writing the note for the very magazine that made me enthusiastic about starting school here. The truth is, the excitement still hasn’t ever gone away.

This year, the magazine received more submissions than ever, most of them from new authors. I think I can speak for the rest of the *Digressions* team when I say we were more than delighted to have them.

When I first saw the magazine, I was overwhelmed by the amount of talent hidden between those pages. Now, I am completely overcome by all the submissions we have received. The creative ability of our fellow students continues to amaze me.

I would like to thank the incredible students for putting their work out there for us to use in the magazine. The quality of this magazine has everything to do with the writers and artists featured here, and they deserve recognition even those whose works were not chosen for the magazine this year. Their submissions were unique and interesting, which helped make this experience rewarding for the editors and myself.

Dr. Ferriss, I know getting used to an almost entirely new staff wasn’t easy and even though we had a few obstacles to climb, you helped push us over them. Your ideas and energy aided in what we all hope is one of the best issues of *Digressions* yet.

Dr. Marlisa Santos and the rest of the Humanities Department, it is clear now, more than ever, that *Digressions* is important to the students, and staff at NSU. Without your support, the magazine wouldn’t be here and I am forever grateful for that.

Bret, Kary, Ed, Brittany, Chris, Sue, and Daniel, your enthusiasm and willingness to jump into this project made my job much easier than I thought it would. You have all gone above what was expected of you. I know putting together this issue was a little rough at times, but you all stuck around and are prepared to keep sticking around.

Working on this magazine has been an enriching experience for all of the editors and myself, but none of it would matter unless people actually read it. So, readers, I hope you enjoy the magazine and recognize what the students at this school have to offer.

Stefani Rubino
Editor-in-Chief
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Mute
Bret Stern

Within my head,
Heated words pressurize and seek escape.
They push and shove,
like kindergartners rushing to get in line.
The children of the mind scuffle and wrestle,
each wanting to be the first out to play.

Angered and distressed,
verbs, adjectives and nouns assert their meaning.
Un-sentenced for their disorderly conduct,
they are free to thrash and claw at the exit.
They know not that they are meaningless without order.
Order. Order! That is the key!

But it is too late.
Bloodied, battered and bruised to incomprehension.
Ignorant and unstructured they slaughter themselves.
And none shall ever be heard…
Metal Meadows
Karysabell Murgas

The sound is heavenly and heavy,
Played by soft human hands,
Complete with distortion and harmony.

My dark hair is, oh, so sweaty,
As it flies up above my head;
The sound is heavenly and heavy.

It thunders harder and I'm in ecstasy,
As my head pounds in pleasure,
Complete with distortion and harmony.

Suddenly the voice of an angel bursts into melody,
And my ears explode into flames;
The sound is heavenly and heavy.

I can taste them in the air clearly,
Those sacred scales dancing in my mouth,
Complete with distortion and harmony.

My body aches and trembles as the sound expires suddenly,
While my pulse still quickens.
The sound is heavenly and heavy,
Complete with distortion and harmony.
When I was halfway through eighth grade, my parents and I went on a cruise around Christmas break, taking along my cousin Sarah, my mother’s blood niece who my father never quite knew what to say to. He would, unwittingly, talk to her like she was a little younger than she actually was, trying his best to keep everything friendly. After telling an age-old joke, asking if she got it, and how her food was, or if school was going well, the conversation would pretty much end.

Before meeting for dinner in the main dining room each night, my father would sit at the bar over a couple of glasses of Grey Goose, popping peanuts into his mouth while waiting for me and the girls. As the leathery, dinosaur-aged lounge pianist butchered Broadway showtunes, guzzling down glasses of vodka balanced atop her instrument and reminiscing about her dead ex-husbands, my father talked with the bartender, a chubby Philippine master of origami. Eventually, the bartender would pour my father a Grey Goose immediately as he sat down, knowing his drink better than anybody. The meals weren’t bad, nor were they terribly good either, and the menu’s descriptions of the entrees always swam in overly flattering adjectives like “a succulent, mouthwatering potato puree, roasted fennel and mint vinaigrette, a dash of Merlot, porcini mushrooms in a duck sauce, and just a touch of saffron,” which was used to describe the chicken. This was to make Americans feel sophisticated, my father explained.

“It’s bullshit,” he said, letting me in on a little secret, about when restaurants would serve a raspberry sorbet to cleanse the palate before the meal, as this one did.

Each person we saw there, we saw again and again and nicknamed them. One guy at the table right beside us, who always sat there with his relatively normal-looking family, had a mullet and skin like Willem Dafoe. We called him “Mullet Man.” Earlier in the trip, a woman around my parents’ age, who had a thick Long Island accent and a titanic 12-carat diamond ring on her finger, stood next to my father in the cafeteria line at breakfast. She took one of the bagels from the counter in front of her. Then, in a second, she turned her head, and it suddenly disappeared.

“Who took my bagel? Who took my bagel? Where is it? Where’s my bagel? Did you take it?” she screamed, turning to my father. “I want my bagel back!”

The woman freaked out, when she could’ve gotten another. The poor Filipina girl at the counter began to cry, embarrassed by how she had talked to her. But the woman got her bagel and just moved along in the line, without even so much as an apology. My father looked at the girl with
utter shame, glancing at her with the eyes of an old dog. Without a word, he had to tell her he was sorry, feeling somehow it was his responsibility.

One afternoon, my mother and Sarah lay on their backs on the ship’s deck chairs in their bathing suits. The chairs circled all around the sixth deck, beautiful, mahogany chairs that had never been used before. My mother read *Into Thin Air* by John Krakauer, as Sarah chewed gum, listened to an Avril Lavigne CD on her headphones, and read the latest issue of *Teen People*.

“*God*, I love these chairs,” my mother said.

“Oh my God, seriously, I could honestly sit, like, all day in these,” Sarah said. “Hey, Wendy, is it okay if we grab some lunch? I’m starving.” My mother smiled at her, even though she always tried correcting Sarah on calling her “aunt,” not just Wendy.

“Let’s go,” my mother said.

The two of them got up from their chairs and walked over to the outdoor pools, where the bar and grill was located. My mother and Sarah stood at the bar, waiting for the bartender, a twenty-something girl from somewhere in Eastern Europe, to finish taking the orders of two cruisers in front of them.

The woman ahead got her order and walked off, when the bartender smiled at the customer who was next in line and said, “Yes, sir. What can I do for you?”

The customer ahead was a heavy, bearded fifty-something-year-old man with a gold Rolex and a *Chai* chain around his neck, a necklace practically outsizing the liner herself. The customer stood in front of my mother and Sarah, glaring at the bartender.

“You saw me, you saw me, and you didn’t even take my order. You knew goddamn well that I was waiting. You give me service like that again, and I’ll report your ass. You understand me?” he said, sticking his index finger out at her.

The customer walked away, not even putting down an order. The bartender looked at Sarah and my mother.

“*Can you believe that guy?*” my mother said to the bartender. “Are you okay?”

“Yeah, I’m fine. … I just don’t know what was with him,” the bartender said.

That night, my mother and Sarah told my father and me over dinner. “… I mean, that’s how people become anti-Semitic,” my mother said.

On some nights, Sarah and I went to play board games and swig free Cokes at the ship’s Teen Club, where I barely said anything to anyone. One night, Sarah and I were playing a game of cards with some of the girls. One of the girls, who was around Sarah’s age, was bonier than a freshly-caught
piece of sable with a mushy nose and a huge blonde wig out of the sixties. My mother and Sarah had noticed her around the ship before. Poor kid was probably in chemo.

“I don’t know. She kinda looks like a Make-a-Wish girl,” my mother said, whispering to Sarah, trying to solve the puzzle of the girl’s sickly appearance.

Playing cards that night, Sarah was sitting next to me, quietly guiding me through the game. I missed several of my turns, thinking about the strange, sensational disturbance in my pants, and accidentally revealed my cards.

“Wait. I put this one out?” I asked, sliding a card out of my pile.

“No, Eddie, it’s not your turn,” Sarah said.

“Oh, right, sorry about that,” I said.

The Make-a-Wish girl rolled her eyes at me and said, “Do you even know how to play this game, it’s so easy…”

“I mean, kind of,” I said, blushing.

“Cause it really doesn’t look like you do,” she said.

“Well, it’s not like I’m that good or anything,” I said.

“I can tell,” she said.

The four of us always went to the earlier dinner, before the show each night. On one of the first nights, before we were forced to sit through an hour and a half of a Clay Aiken wannabe lipsynching “I’m Comin’ Home … Ireland,” which was a cruise original played against a video montage that made it look like an ad for American Airlines, and a horrible rendition of “Up Where We Belong,” the captain came onstage with a microphone in his hand, and welcomed us onto his ship. Speaking with the heavy accent of his native Greece, the captain stood high on the stage at six foot three, with slicked black hair and a tiny birthmark on the right side of his cheek. My father explained to me that many ship captains were Greeks, because of their knowledge of the sea.

“Thank you, my friends, for being here to sail the sea with us tonight,” he said, minutes before introducing his entire staff.

As the adults in the theatre sipped on alcoholic beverages, I fidgeted in my seat and drank a glass of Sprite, as my parents had specifically interrupted my order to remind me not to have Diet Coke so late in the evening. The captain lifted up a glass of champagne, toasting in every language, beginning with his own.

“L’chaim,” the captain said. My parents were the loudest to repeat the toast in Greek.

But one night, something happened. There was a big, drunken family at the dining room’s later seating, laughing hysterically and yelling, and blowing balloons that were landing on people’s tables. Nobody really said anything, though. After all, they didn’t want to get involved.
“Oh, Bob, please, just let it go,” a woman told her husband. Their kids were there with them. And they just wanted to eat their dinners. Then, a dead balloon fell on the father’s plate, right as he was about to take a bite. The father put his fork down. He leaned back in his chair, sighing. Another fell onto his daughter’s. Someone threw it, unwittingly.

“No. No way. That’s enough,” he said, getting up from his chair. The father, a small, suited man from New York, went over to the family’s table. They were howling at some joke, when he interrupted them. He tapped a man seated on the shoulder, probably another father, and said “Listen, sorry to bother your dinner there, but you know, I just got a balloon over on my plate, and my wife and I were just wondering, you know, if you’d maybe . . .”

The blonde-haired man, who already had a tan, sneered with a mocking smile. “Yeah, what?” he asked.

“... Listen, I don’t want any trouble, but people here paid good money for this food,” he said.

Then, the man stood up. He got up in the father’s face, slurring his words.

“So, that’s what you’re concerned about now, is it? Money? Hell, don’t surprise me one bit,” the man said.

“Excuse me?” the father asked, a little surprised.

“You can’t tell me what to do, you fuckin’ kike,” he said.

He pushed the father, who got in his face, as the other dinner guests looked on with astonishment. Some of the other husbands tried to hold them back, and busboys came running in. The father pushed him against the table. The man punched him, bringing the father to the floor, when suddenly, the head of security and one of his boys arrived, breaking them apart.

“What the hell is going on here?” the head of security said, a very faint accent in his voice.

“Why don’t you ask this guy?” the father said about the man, picking himself up from the floor.

“Joe, will you get me some goddamn backup over here,” the head of security yelled into the walkie-talkie he was holding. He snapped his fingers at the guard, flashing him a knowing look.

“Sir, please, I can explain . . .,” the father began.

“I don’t wanna hear it,” the head of security barked.

“This guy’s been harassin’ me and my family,” the man said.

“That’s a goddamn lie, asshole, and you know it,” the father said.

“Liar? Liar? Don’t you ever call me that again, you goddamn kike! You hear me? That’s all you people ever do,” the man said.

“Sir, I’m not gonna ask you again,” the security chief said, trying to get him under control, and not hearing what he was saying.
“That’s how it was then with you Jews, and that’s how it’s *always gonna be,*” the man said to the father, spit hurling from his mouth.

At that second, the head of security stopped. “What did you just say, sir?”

“He heard me,” the man said, angrily.

“My father *died* in Yom Kippur, sir,” he said. “Why don’t we have a little chat in the captain’s office, shall we? I can tell you all about it.”

The head of security smirked, grabbing the man’s arm. He turned out to be an ex-agent for the Mossad.

After that night, both of the families ended up apologizing, although the drunken family just apologized to the captain, the dining room staff, and the head of security. No one knew if they ever apologized to the Jewish family, though. They probably did, reluctantly. It wasn’t enough. They were banned from eating in the dining room, and for the remainder of their stay, they were forced to spend the rest of their evenings ordering room service from their staterooms.

A few days later, our cruise reached its final night, where the entire waiting staff served flaming baked Alaskas and gathered around the dining room to sing in off-key broken English to say goodbye. As I dug into my first baked Alaska, the dinner guests clapped with screaming applause. I looked up from my plate, and clapped my hand against the napkin in my other hand seconds into the applause.

That night, long after the midnight buffet had closed, I was rolling around in bed, struggling to fall asleep. Thunderous rap music blasted from the deck above, and I lay awake, wondering why they were being so loud.

As New Year’s Eve was just days away, a snowstorm hit New York, canceling all flights heading into JFK and LaGuardia. Half of the families on our ship flying out of San Juan would be stuck at the Miami airport until the storm cleared up northeast. Giant suitcases were parked outside the cabins on our floor. Sarah and I woke up, got out of beds, and raced downstairs to meet my parents for breakfast in the cafeteria, leaving our packed bags in the bedroom. My parents sat at one of the tables. Reading the newspaper, my father was eating a plate of corned beef hash, egg whites, and a bagel.

“This doesn’t look good,” my father said, studying the paper.

“Yeah, but thank God we didn’t get it. I mean, four hours at Miami? What a nightmare,” my mother said, seeing the two of us walk over. “Hey, you guys, how’d you sleep?”

“I don’t know, okay, I guess,” I said, still half-asleep and fiddling with the dried-up gunk around my eyes. “Come on, Sarah, let’s get some food.”

Sarah and I got up to get our breakfast. Resting my tray at one of the stations, I looked around the cafeteria. Every family looked so happy. A
new mother was feeding her baby a spoonful of food. She’d probably never been on a trip like this one before, never to forget it. I smiled, when a voice appeared over the loudspeaker. The voice was the captain’s.

“My friends, I regret to inform you, that somebody last night, threw the deck chairs off,” the captain said. “They’re all gone.”

He sounded like he was about ready to cry. Many of the passengers just fell in silence, covering their mouths. No one could believe somebody could do something like that.

“All that work, all that money … totally gone to waste,” my mother said, turning to my father.

An old man in sunglasses and an unbuttoned Hawaiian shirt was sitting with his wife at the table next to us and just looked at my father, unable to believe it.

“Ya know? I’ve been alive for seventy-five years, and I ain’t never seen anything like this in my life. What the hell kinda person would do something like that?” he said.

Turns out a couple of kids got drunk and threw the chairs into the ocean the night before.

“You know, some fisherman could have been out there,” the old man said.

My father nodded back at him, thinking how those chairs were ever going to be replaced. He couldn’t help but wonder why it couldn’t have been some of the passengers instead.

Unfortunately, they just weren’t drunk enough.
Darkness, My Friend

Daniel King

Darkness, my friend
Darkness, my greatest friend
Fallen in your grace, at peace in your embrace
Promise me that everyday will end

I see it all
Shadows on a wall
If nothing is right, why not just turn out the light?
The care of these black depths is unconditional

We think we understand
But our lies will never stand
The truth always comes out, the truth always brings doubt
Watch as our Utopias now crumble to sand

Close each eye
Shade me from the sky
Come to my aid, make this harsh light fade
Fight for me the malevolent sun that I now defy

Silent and cool
Not frightening nor cruel
Under your protection, complete my defection
Free me from the waking world’s terrible rule

Darkness, my friend
Darkness, my greatest friend
Fallen in your grace, at peace in your embrace
Promise me that everyday will end
Peaceful Slumber
Nergess Taheri

Scratchboard
The Elephant
Rachel Fernandez

The irresistible aroma of spring penetrates my every breath. This spring the fever has been noticeably more powerful than in the past, making it much more difficult to overcome. It is passing now and soon I will begin a search for my master, the only man who understands my moods and actions. The havoc I wreaked today was purely accidental; it is simply that when mating season arrives, I lose all control of my senses. In the past, my master had put me under restraints, but this year he was careless with the chains and I was able to break free.

Lines of worry are beginning to crease my brow, for as I am enjoying this tasty morsel, crowds of people have begun inching closer. Fear fills their watchful eyes as they examine every bite that I take into my mouth. It is unfortunate that my great bulk instills so much terror in their hearts. They do not understand, as my master does, that I am harmless unless provoked. On the contrary, it is I who feel desperately inadequate in dealing with them. My apprehension is with merit, for on many an occasion I have been witness to the senseless slaughter of my brethren. Their instruments are powerful and leave us with no defense.

The crowd inhales and maintains the silence as their leader crouches to take better aim. I understand what is about to happen, but realize that resistance would be futile and only succeed in legitimizing his action. Finally, the loud roar emanating from his instrument of death shatters the stillness. In less than an instant, the pellet has pierced my temple. The pain is unbearable and quickly brings me to my knees. The saliva flows freely from my mouth as the second explosion strikes the same target with excruciating accuracy. As I rise, in an attempt to restore my last remnants of dignity, a third shot quickly ceases my effort. I trumpet for the last time and fall helplessly to the ground. The agony continues, for the knives of men slice indiscriminately into my flesh. The leader approaches and fires countless rounds into my already stinging body, inflicting more and more pain. This torture lasts for what seems an eternity, but as suddenly as it began, the pain ends as I breathe my final breath.
The Newborn
Jack Bellino

I was music
Now the lamentations
Of a broken string

I was in flight
Now the aspirations
Of a broken wing

I stood tall
Now the rubble
Of a fallen wall

I was land
Now uninhabited
And desolate

I was perfect
Now delivered in pangs
And human

The Mist
Amy Harvey

Waves crush, mist is thick
The sandy shells cut my feet
Sun rises, mist burns
The Fairy Taught the Frog to Dance

Christopher Garcia

The Fairy taught the Frog to dance,
Some solemn winter’s day.
Upon a rock they bloomed romance,
For love is just a play.

But when Mother Nature heard of this,
A coupling not approved,
In her rage she forced amiss,
The Fairy from her groom.

A curse she proposed upon the two,
One still seen to this day.
In the wilderness among the few,
Both Fairy and Frog still pay.

For Nature took all from Frog,
And left in pity, voice.
Banished deep within the bog,
Frog has had no choice.

Fairy too served punishment,
For Nature is not kind.
Stripped of her beauty she laments,
While her love, she tries to find.

While Fairy is doomed to fly,
In search of her forbidden lover,
Frog, too, must comply,
And call to her whilst she hover.

Fairy drawn by lover’s song,
Sees not the danger ahead.
As she nears blindly along,
Frog must partake in bloodshed.

For Frog is forced to consume,
The lover long ago he knew.
While Fairy masked as Dragonfly meets doom,
Frog alone must bade love Adieu.

But all is not lost nor gone astray,
For Fairy and Frog in fate’s final embrace,
Recall to memory that very first day,
Of cursed love’s initial birthplace.
Memories
Lisette Morales

Photograph
Threads
Niala Sharma

Sparkling reflections Created by mirrors
Adorn my traditional wear; Golden sequins meander
Stealthily pacing along the hemline Sitting, only striving to enter.

There are many onlookers who curiously find this sort of attire strangely appealing.

Something invokes A feeling of unfamiliarity and unknowingness All at the same time
Only made possible by what one has heard
Or witnessed on their own travels abroad.
The earth-tone thread reminds one of the
Mud-covered road that’s been traversed
By the constant flurry of townsfolk and
Not to mention four-legged pedestrians.
A lifestyle so different from the fast-paced
Timely hemisphere in which these foreigners
Participate in a routine, mechanical oblivion.
But we are not so different after all. We both
Strive for the same goals in our existence.
Unknowingly, we both don the same threads.
Savannah, Georgia by the Pier

*Charles Cevallos*

Color Pencil on Ivory Trace Paper
This Monster Waits

Daniel King

I hide among the humans and bide as best I can
Disguised whenever necessary as another mindless man
If they could see the tortured mind behind these searching eyes
Eyes that pierce society’s façade and all their precious lies
They’d lock me up forever to assuage their bestial little fears
Then label me a madman and laugh at my lonely tears
I will never my soul surrender, I refuse to change my ways
Even if I am condemned to shadows for the remainder of my days

Yet even in the darkness I revel in my joyous fate
For destiny has promised me a heaven-sent soul mate
A faithful lover and true friend, another of my kind
A worthier life partner than any human could ever find
My duty to protect her, the privilege of her trust
Together we defy the humans with the fruits of our lust
She is the cure for mortal horror, the reward for all my pains
More vital and life-giving than the blood flowing through my veins

And so this monster waits, just outside human sight
Polite and quiet during day, his fangs only visible at night
Just a sidestep from humanity, looking in with a sigh
At the multitudes of creatures who never think to question why
And should his soul mate read this by some divinely inspired chance
Happening upon these earnest words with a curious sidelong glance
Let her know that I love her and I’m living for the day
When finally I’ll meet her and know by whose side I’ll stay
Flamingo
Nergess Taheri

Colored Pencil
Red Roses
Bret Stern

No. 2 Pencil and Paper
Today I Kissed a Flower

Jack Bellino

Today I kissed a flower
A ruellia open to the night
She blushed and curled her lip-like petals
We were life unto each other

To savor our romanticism
I removed her from the garden of her birth
Giving her a vase of majesty
Signifying her worth

And even with my intent
The morning sun shall
Come to greet her eyes
And I will stand in vain
As the cause of her demise

For if I truly knew what love was
Instead of what I know
I would have praised that lovely garden
And left her there to grow
Pulling Down

*Teresa Clune*

Inspired by the songs of Tori Amos

Winter with shades of
Gray
Looking forward to the month of
May
In this spring
Haze
We both get lost in this
Maze
Riding on my white horse
Feeling this lower
Force
Pulling Down
Down
Into this New Orleans
Town
Where Blood Roses fall down from the
Sky
As I get down on my knees
Away, I shy
On the ground God makes daisies
As Judy Garland
Sings
I will always remember these
Precious Things
So,
Take a dip in my raspberry swirl
Cause there is always Nine Inch Nails
In the panties of every nice
Girl…
Sleeping On A Cloud
Teresa Clune
Inspired by the songs of Tori Amos

Oil Pastel and Digital Media
Hana

*Ish Aberion*

Charcoal, Color Pastel,
Gesso on Brown Paper
Untitled
Grace Cox

Acrylic Painting
Cat Mouth
Nergess Taheri

Ink on Paper
Fallen
Mona Shah

Fire dances in her eyes.
A moonlit spotlight against her back
From her back sprung two white wings
--silver-white in faded light
She gazed up into the darkened sky.
As heavy rain fell like shattered glass from a shattered sky
She cupped her hands as if to capture the falling drops
Pale, cracked lips gently parted
And a pale pink tongue popped out to lap up the water
The rain, her savior, hiding bitter tears from prying eyes
Her arms spread out to her sides as she leaned back her head, a symbol
of submission
Silent, frustrated screams echoed through the still, dark air
As sadness was replaced by an eternal bitterness
Against the world that had torn her still-beating heart from her chest
And left her with nothing else to live for
Piece by piece, the world that ripped her apart
Faded into oblivion within her own warped mind
Reveling as she watched the dark night sky falling to her feet
Her wings unfurled to their full length as she took to the air
While little by little, she broke apart
And the once brilliant white feathers turned an ugly gray
Like Icarus, she climbed higher, invincible angel missing her heart
Until her wings molted, leaving her bare
Like Icarus, like the rain, and like the broken sky, she dropped to the ground
And let out a cry of anguish at losing something yet again
Arms outstretched, still reaching for the endless black sky
She closed her eyes and succumbed to her fate
Crashing to the ground, her last wish was that the world would come
crashing, too.
Solace for an Angel
Daniel King

Sometimes you wonder just what you’re made of
It seems like you’re the last who believes in true love
You walk the same world but you never belong
You dream like a child after childhood’s gone

Maybe they’re afraid and so nobody dares
But deep down inside you fear nobody cares
Is everyone empty? Is everyone dead?
Is that why the meek suffer and the cruel get ahead?

You ask for a purpose, you long for an aim
Anything to keep tomorrow from being the same
The same waking dream where nothing makes sense
Nothing is worth doing, nothing merits defense

And you feel like a ghost because no one can see you
And you feel like a monster because no one can free you
But to me you’re an angel like any above you
Our hearts beat the same and I’ll always love you

So if it’s a struggle just to hold on to your mind
I hope in these words a little solace you’ll find
I’ve only survived here because long have I known
We may be outnumbered but we’re never alone
Figure Study
Grace Cox

Conte Crayon
Place your hand in mine
And look into my eyes,
So you can see that we share one soul

Let me lead and follow you
Through the chapters of our love,
As I document them within these pages.

I don’t know why I made you wait
Perhaps we both needed a break
From our eternal roundabout of reincarnation.

… Perhaps we needed to grow
… in order to comprehend
… what has been bestowed upon us

It frightens me to know that this
Love is forever
When forever seems inconceivable

Loving you is like a curse
Because none other could ever come close
… or even far

Hold onto my hand so that we
Can fly to another realm
Free from space and time
… and rhythm and rhyme

So we may look down in pity on
Those who will never understand
What this feels like.

Let me lead and follow you
Through the chapters, novels,
and volumes of our love.
Although it angers me to be bound to my pen
Love has no language
  ... no words
  ... no dialect
  ... no bounds

Because when I am with you
I can hold your hand and
Look into your eyes and
View the soul that we share.

It once was one, but somewhere
Along the lines it was torn in half and placed in different
  ... bodies
  ... countries
  ... personas
Only to travel back together again ...
For good this time.

Greed
Jack Bellino

The influence of others
Can sometimes make us blind
How selfish of these people
To force their way into the mind

They always have to prove a point
Never do they console
And when they do it’s not for you
It’s only for their control

Let your thoughts be your own
As you live in a façade
And while you were led by greed
Just know I was led by God
“Come on Eileen” came on the radio today
and it reminded me of that time in high school
when we skipped school to speed up and
down I-95 with the music blasting so loud
we had to scream to hear each other.
it is disparaging to think that those times
are lost amongst a sea of memories in the
infinite canyon of time.
but i want to feel that polluted breeze
on my face again,
i want to feel like i am doing something forbidden,
i want to know why, time after time, we were never pulled
over by the police even though it was clear we were
speeding.

and we adored it.
Broken & Bitter
Jack Bellino

How it all seems now
Will change as we grow older
Such is the fate of every man
With shoulder blades made for holding boulders

They say, “Imagine, Create, Inspire.”
’Tis a motto of cliché
I say leave your words among the world
To truly seize the day

And as I digress
Upon this page
Taking off my chest
Open my ribcage

To reveal a heart
That’s made to sink
Watching blood
Turn into ink

And still, I can only think of her
I somehow always show it
Choosing whether to be bitter
Or keep my duties as a poet

To imagine, create, and inspire
But imagine creating inspiration
And what it could do to a person
Or the change it brings a nation

So as I sit here broken hearted
In what feels somewhat like defeat
This broken heart inspires me
And has made me bittersweet
Climbing the Ethereal Ladder  
Karysabell Murgas

On the Heart  

With my lips, I kiss, I whisper, I enunciate. Every thought is processed directly from within, traveling through this minute opening on my face, and it should be enough. For what good is intelligence? All I have to offer is my heart, nothing else. However, before I leave, there is one note I would like to leave you:

I walk outside to see him standing there,  
by an oak tree, holding her by the hand;  
where we once shared these chocolate éclairs,  
these tasty treats I now hold in my hands.  
He kisses the soft petals of her mouth,  
and I, I cannot keep my eyes away;  
in the second she looks up at the clouds,  
he grabs her as she tries to pull astray.  
That woman is now pleading for her life,  
while his hands maintain a painful death grip,  
as she coughs and chokes on her last sweet bite,  
she claws him as his skin tears and rips.  
The battle ends, and I feel paranoid;  
this sickened love has left a sudden void.

Look again, there you are, an empty shell. Your heart reflects these lyrics, but what of your mind?

A Self-Reflection: The Mind at Work  

At times, I am deeply dissatisfied with my affections towards others. For now, it seems as though these affections are requited, yet set to diminish without any hope of revival. Since birth, love is nurtured and cared for without question, until it is neglected and fed to the famished flames that burn through every blood vessel of its existence. Oh! If there’s any hope of the sudden mockery of the phoenix! Then do as I say and return from the ashes, my kindled heart! If only in dreams may I feel the aching muscle pumping beneath my small breast, alive…but no. Ah, Mr. Poe, sir, you are a devious one. The mind is independent of the world’s frantic need to taste the flesh of one more victim’s submissive nature. It is not a matter of night and day that determines one’s motive to realize the truth of one’s existence. The changing
shade of the hour is part of the circumstances of living in the system discovered by our dear friend, Copernicus. The mind is a sanctuary, a retreat, a safe haven, for those who have good use for it. One may separate the mind from the heart, but in many or all cases, they act as one. The trouble with this is that in any occasion or two, a reluctance for either muscle to function without the other is inevitable, for one who suffers a loss refuses to live wholly, appearing to be breathing, but without hope of a heart's beat; and if one has only a heart but not an independent mind, society enforces its evil obstruction of justice, as slowly, we all become the minions of authorities, with their need to protect the egotistic nature of political rule. But the human race will always be submissive to corrupt power, even that of love. However, if one lives without love, one may never know grief. If I can one day find the error in that, then when the time comes, I will rest in peace. Until then, today, I regret to relate my identity to those who possess my affections.

YES, UPWARD IS THE ONLY WAY...YOUR ONLY ESCAPE LIES IN MY PALACE IN THE SKIES...
Swollen raindrops hit the windshield with a thud; lightning cracked and illuminated the mid-morning sky and the roar of thunder in the distance sounded like witches’ laughter. I waited impatiently for the rain to slow, my back sticking to the beige leather driver’s seat. I watched the minutes go by. Time always seems to be moving faster when you are already running late for something. I searched frantically under the seats for my little black umbrella. Of all days to leave it at home, this had to be the one. I couldn’t wait any longer; I had to go. I grabbed an old newspaper, all my belongings and made a dash for it.

I tried to be quick but ended up ironically dropping my keys in the rush. I watched them fall just underneath the car as if in slow motion. I could have caught them, but the rain seemed like poison. As each dropped rolled quickly off my skin, I was melting. My perfectly straight auburn hair was now frizzy and unruly. The bottoms of my designer jeans were soaked and the rain seeped into my socks. I could feel it squishing beneath my toes. My glasses were speckled with raindrops making it hard to see. I got on my hands and knees in the pouring rain. The little pebbles on the concrete cut into my palms as I tried to get in a good position. I saw my keys but could not reach them. I damned the gods and the rain poured harder. After repositioning myself, I grabbed my keys and began to run. With wet newspaper overhead, I crouched down and ran as if the rain would not still hit me the lower I ducked.

Just a couple more feet. I was almost under the safe confines of the concrete overhang. The lightning cracked like a whip directly overhead causing me to run faster, praying not to fall. The wind whipped my soaking wet hair onto my face and neck. It stuck like glue. Something stopped me in my tracks. My feet suddenly felt cemented to the ground, like I was a statue in the middle of the huge parking lot. I could not move. Something infiltrated the barriers of my ears. I did not look around to find the source of this noise. It stood out from behind the sounds of the storm roaring above. I had to go. Why was I stopped in the beating rain listening to this noise? Standing there I had to strain to hear it. I lost it for a second as the thunder shook the ground. Ahh, there it was.

My curiosity got the best of me (as it often does) and I finally unstuck my feet and turned to the left. I was able to move, but I found myself trapped. It was incapacitating. The man-made lake just to the left of me seemed a gaping black pool. The raindrops danced frantically on the surface making small waves throughout. The fountain in the middle shot up like a fire reaching for the sky. It looked like a rain dance, something foreign even though I passed it by each morning. Tiny yellow flowers, which always seemed like weeds, accepted the rain thankfully. An enormous tree seemed to overlook the lake with guidance and protection. Its leaves were drifting on the surface of the water like gifts from the wind. I was so busy taking in the surroundings I had almost forgotten about the sounds.
Someone was there, standing on the other side of the lake. Something glistened out of the corner of my eye. I took off my black frames and attempted to wipe the raindrops away. It only made them smear. I rushed to put them back on to find out what that strange gold object was. It was in the hands of a man. Not an ordinary man running from the rain like all the others. He was standing, feet planted, not in awe or amazement as I was, but in pure passion. He held the glistening instrument to his lips, breathed deep and created magic. He seemed to play these gorgeous notes for the rain. It looked as if he was thanking the gods for the rain I had previously cursed them for.

His grey short-sleeved shirt clung to his soaking wet body. He didn’t care. Nothing could stop him from playing. I wondered if he even knew it was raining. He seemed so disconnected from the reality of the world around us. Maybe he was just disconnected from all the pressures of it. He was embracing it for all its beauty and wonderment. He had not a care as he stood there swaying to the music from his own instrument. I didn’t even realize how long I had been standing there watching him. I wasn’t hiding from the rain behind a newspaper any longer. I held it down by my side as it turned into a huge, drenched wad of paper, the ink smearing the now unreadable, horrible words.

I found myself smiling as I watched him. I let myself close my eyes and feel the rain. I felt each drop hit my skin as it cascaded off of me. The music was now penetrating my ears with anticipation. I could feel it welling up inside of me, in the pit of my stomach, like a huge red balloon being inflated with air, ready to take off into the open armed sky. I could feel my mouth stretching into a smile, inch by inch. I could hardly stand it. I was going to burst. I wish I had a camera so I could capture this moment and keep it with me always, folded neatly in the nook of my wallet. A constant reminder. But I didn’t have one so I had to devour the experience. The rain didn’t bother me now. The lighting seemed to crack in rhythm with the melody. The thunder added bass. The gods were not punishing us with the burden of rain; they were throwing us a party.

I wanted to thank the man with the trumpet. I wanted to run up to him and hug him in the pouring rain. But I quickly decided I did not want to know him. I liked the fact that he was simply that: a man with a trumpet. The anonymity of it made it special. We were two people having never met and here we were sharing an experience. He seemed like a teacher, lecturing me, his student, on the beauty of life. I felt as if we had just had a life altering conversation without uttering a single syllable. I wonder if he even saw me standing there watching him play. His passion exploded into the air, carried off into the wind by the notes. The trees and the grass seemed to be dancing as they swayed back and forth.
Scream
*Kendra Augustin*

Walk into my life. The skies are painted with my rage.
Take a look outside. All the birds are caged.
You see into my eyes. Every inch of my world is stuck on one page.

I remember when I was a much happier person.
Sometimes, when I am told to do something I don’t want to do, I get angry.
Locking myself in my room.
If you stand by my door you can hear me scream. All that matters is you can hear me.

Listen to my cry. Can’t you see I’m hurt as a result of your ignorance? Why do you shut your mouth when someone tells you you’re wrong?
You know you’re right. Be stronger.

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**Infinite Expressions**
*Nancy Danielle Lespinasse*

Intertwined chaos (if only for a moment),
he understands the formula to my madness.
breaking me down into Simple Solutions,
then adding me back
up to multiple complications.
Spontaneous Subtractions,
divided by mixed equations,
WE produce absolute emotions,
finalized with horizontal bliss.
Images
Karysabell Murgas

The images fluttered onto my desk like brown leaves in autumn’s wistful song. Her body lay on a mattress soaked heavily with moisture from her sticky, cinnamon skin. Her bright, youthful face transformed before my eyes. I studied her features, seeing that, for me, she was no longer alive. Her cheeks no longer blushed with the sincerity of innocence, and her pale lips were parted in silent pleasure. Like a doll, her expression was vacant in remorseless slumber. My eyes glistened as I scrutinized her naked body wrapped in sheets of sin. Next to her was a man, indifferent towards the lost beauty that he will never cherish.

I closed my eyes for just one moment, and imagined how she was as I knew her: a young woman troubled by a regrettable past. Though she was in anguish, I remember her face glowed with every desire to be loved. The image in my head slowly disappeared as I opened my eyes once more, oblivious to everything else but the glossy pages in front of me.

She was loved, and she still is; but I stand on her grave, and I pity her existence. Her entire universe is characterized by selfishness and envy. She has all she’s ever wanted, and forsakes the value of such possessions. Perhaps one day, she’ll see herself as I see her in these drenched photographs, and she’ll remember that I’m here, body and soul. If her eyes never open, then I stand as I do now, and forget to forgive.
Unconventional Woman
Tiffany Ann Soczak

Feel my femininity shiver
Like my car when the bass drops.
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

My jeans are as dirty
As my thoughts
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

Raise your hand to me
and I will raise my fist
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

Wanting Independence, Presidency,
and to become everything a woman isn’t supposed to be
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

The same job—more pay
Wanting to set the standards for men.
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

Shirley Temple?
No! Pour me some ale.
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

Strip me of all of my womanly parts
Just don’t add any extremities!
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

Building bridges
and ripping down walls.
Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!
It’s a blessing, you know
To be unconventional me
Misunderstood, yet admired
Not afraid to put on make-up or play in the mud
Finding a middle ground, indeed
The love in my heart, determination in my mind,
and seed of life in my womb will show—
This Unconventional Woman—
Unconventional Me!

build bigger barriers
stefani rubino

after years of Catholic school education,
i still cannot escape “God.”
he follows me everywhere i go.
to work, to school,
and into my favorite works of Literature and Philosophy.
i am trying, “Lord” am i trying, to run away
from “Him” or, at least, the idea of “Him”
so i don’t turn into one of those people who follows
“Him” blindly into the horrors of war,
who forgets to live life because i am so concerned with
what happens afterward,
who uses “His” name as a justification to torture, rape,
and kill whole continents of people whose only
crime was failing to build barriers big
enough to keep the white men
OUT.
There was probably no one on earth whom I disliked more than the Reverend Jerry Falwell. He was one of the top leaders of the American Christian right, a man who stood against everything I believed in. Every night, my father and I would watch Jerry Falwell rant about international and national politics on MSNBC, from abortion to the Middle East. As I lay on the living room floor sitting beside my father in his chair, we looked at each other, smiling and rolling our eyes. It was because of Falwell that I had become so interested in politics in the first place, angered over the growing power of the Christian right in this nation, and the division between my American brothers and sisters, a culture war that I blamed him for.

In my early teenage years during art classes, one of my favorite pastimes was drawing devil horns and Hitler mustaches on photos of Falwell and his supporters I cut out from magazines, writing in bubbles from Falwell’s mouth, “War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength,” after reading 1984 in tutoring. It wasn’t just Falwell I hated, though. I hated all the evangelicals. The way I saw it, they were all just a bunch of white-trash Nazis who couldn’t read, and I complained constantly about them in history class, even if it meant interrupting the lesson, and my teacher yelling at me and kicking me out of class. I didn’t care. I just couldn’t get it out of my head that Falwell won Reagan the evangelical vote in 1980, as the President turned away when the AIDS epidemic spread across the world, cutting short the lives of thousands of gay men, prostitutes, heroin users, and Haitian immigrants, and let it go on silently for years. Ever since the Supreme Court verdict of Roe v. Wade legalized abortion thirty years ago, Falwell had crusaded to overturn the decision and keep same-sex marriages illegal, concerned that children wouldn’t function as well in a home without both a father and a mother. I was raised in Chicago in a reform Jewish household, where my art-collecting Democrat parents sent dozens of checks to the Obama campaign for presidency, and my mother once joked she would have to consider disowning me if I ever became pro-life, although she wasn’t entirely kidding, either. Both my parents knew of the comments Falwell made, admitting that he believed if 666 ever came down to earth, he would appear in the form of a “middle-aged Jewish man.” After all, this was my father he was talking about. He had no right.

Being a strong supporter of Israel, however, a stance which gained him the following of my mother’s militantly pro-Zionist brother-in-law, Falwell eventually apologized, but I still wanted to send him back to hell. He claimed that Tinky-Winky, an alien baby from the PBS children’s televi-
sion show, Teletubbies, was a homosexual who somehow promoted “the gay agenda.” And after the attacks on 9/11, Falwell said that the tragedy happened to punish America’s permissiveness on abortion, homosexuality, feminism, and paganism. But then when Fred Phelps of the Westboro Baptist Church led a demonstration at the funeral of the murdered gay college student, Matthew Shepard, and held up signs proclaiming violently anti-gay epithets, even Falwell said he went too far.

One May morning, though, I woke up in my dorm at boarding school, ready to go to my first class. As I was waiting in the empty school building for my class, I noticed a copy of USA Today sitting on the desk in the staff office. There was a drawing of Jerry Falwell on the front page, announcing that he had died. It read “Jerry Falwell: 1933-2007.” I picked up the paper, smirking.

“Oh, man, this I gotta see…,” I said to myself.

I went into my classroom, began reading the long obituary, and I don’t know what came over me, but for some reason, when I saw that picture of him, tears filled my eyes. I realized his family lost someone that day. I saw my own grandparents in that picture, and thought of the day when I’m going to lose them. This was no longer an issue of Democrats and Republicans, or how we vote, or where we live. This was about fathers and sons, and the love that we feel for each other. And for one brief moment, I no longer looked at Jerry Falwell as some religious zealot, but for once as a man, as a grandfather playing with his grandchildren, the way my grandfather did with me, and as a generation about to die.
Of Heroes and Titans
Christopher Garcia

There was a man before my time,
Who taught the world to see.

He died a hero, spread his fame,
And now the world, it looks to me.

For I am the son who must fill these dues,
Of heroes and titans, whom I never knew.

Call me a lost cause, a hero, even a knight,
I respond to these names, they add to my might.

Superman and Aquaman, in their worlds could do no wrong,
I'd like to say I'm like them, but at times I don't belong.

The Achilles of a new era, the King Arthur of a new time,
Evil is out there, stronger and bolder, in its prime.

I fight for those who can't for themselves,
My power, my strength, belongs on the comic book shelves.

I look fear in the face and rise to the odds,
Forged to conquer evil, I'm a hero, a god.

My father was a legend; soon I shall be one too,
In time you'll remember me, consider it a vow from me to you.

One day I will tire, grow weak and old,
And father a son, of this I've been told.

In time he will grow, learn, and replace me,
A new kind of hero, for the world he will be.

Soon my time here will end, like the fathers before me,
Then my son he will stand, for the whole world to see.

With a tear in his eye, this new hero, for a new day,
Will find the strength within him, to go on and say.

There was a man before my time,
Who taught the world to see.

He died a hero, spread his fame,
And now the world, it looks to me.
Reality
Christopher Balaban

Long ago before our time,
Before our planets had aligned,
One in each other, we shared the same race.
Love and peace we had it all,
Before politics and the Berlin wall,
One in each other, we shared the same race.
In America or the Middle East,
We still mourn the deaths of our deceased,
One in each other, we share the same race.

But a little child hides away in Africa,
Hoping to learn to read before he dies.
The cost to save his life would not have robbed us,
But importance is not his life in our eyes

Into the shadows fades away the answer,
To the end of war, or the elusive cure for cancer.
A child’s life lost at whose expense,
Aside from his mere innocence,
He wanted one thing, he wanted not to die.
He wanted one thing, he wanted not to die.
**Song of the Wulviin**  
*Daniel King*

Hearken there oh human — in your modern misery  
Envy me the happy beast — whose dark stars set him free  
No god nor devil bestows — a happier fate than mine  
Those unseen stars conspired — to turn me to Wulviin

Once I walked as you did — fearing every shadowed space  
Trembling at the future — and each unfamiliar face  
For fear is mankind’s nature — a pitiable one indeed  
Wretched by all their cruelty — and enslaved by their own greed

Then one night I trod alone — whilst those dark stars watched above  
A lonely mortal burdened by — an unrequited love  
The stars saw such passion — such potential in my core  
They knew my timid human heart — could beat for so much more

Came to me the midnight Wulv — faithful friend of lonely dead  
She smiled at my soul and — on my mortal blood she fed  
Sang to me the blessed death — and led me from the light  
Bid my heart to beat anew — and bequeathed me to the night

I awoke smelling the sunrise — and with each nostril flare  
Inhaled the unknown beauty — of the many splendored air  
Sprang up into the sunshine — witnessed nature’s perfect art  
Heard every tiny being’s song — loved every little part

Joyously I sprinted — to the exquisite harmony  
Laughed and cried with open arms — and the world accepted me  
No more a weary mortal — released from fear at last  
No cares about tomorrow — no regrets about the past

Happily I loped the plains — remembering that girl’s  
Milky skin, thin arching back — and golden hair in curls  
Found her by the cross roads — laughing with those mindless boys  
Gathered up around her — like a spoiled child’s toys

They looked at me and sneering — mistook me for that fool  
Who’d happily be used — and then cast off like a tool  
Surprise took me, however — for I saw them as they were  
A lot of weaklings vying for — that cold unloving cur
Lost all my desire — did not envision her my bride
And felt no more compassion — for the humans there beside
But not one ounce of hatred — undermined my happy mood
For I did not see enemies — alas, I just saw food

Their throats, their throats, their soft warm throats — unleash the fount of life
I pounced on them with demon speed — and teeth sharp as a knife
Nothing could be sweeter than — that sanguine sticky flood
The gods can keep their nectar — please just give me mortal blood

I swam in a glowing daze — stumbling drunken down the lane
All the bleeding bodies stayed — in the ever spreading stain
Thus cleansed of all humanity — I held my head with pride
Feeling greater confidence — with every giddy stride

That night I met a party — smelled them as they came near
The forest air was tainted by — the scent of human fear
I presented myself politely — in my man—shaped shell
Quickly they bid me join them — lest I be murdered as well

They crept along by torchlight — searching each and every glade
While silently I laughed at them — so easily betrayed
And deeper into the forest — I lead the human herd
Until we reached the depth — where their screams would not be heard

Days and weeks and months went by — but I had no need for time
I wanted only woods and caves — and rocky peaks to climb
Nature was ever friendly — the whole world was my home
My dark stars smiled down at me — wherever I did roam

I drank of traveling noblemen — and all their well—fed knaves
I drank of mighty soldiers — but not their skinny slaves
I drank of a wealthy banker — his blood was rather cold
I left him with his riches — I had no need for gold

Then one night my loving stars — conspired once again
I followed a routine human smell — to a secret glen
Where a dirty band of humans — drank to their latest prize
I fell upon them without mercy — laughing through their cries
As I sat satisfied — among the carnage I had wrought
I noticed a crude wooden cage — containing what they’d caught
She sat inside, her small body — wrapped within her arms
Her dark face caressed with silk — her neck graced with gypsy charms

I tore apart the crude cage — out of curiosity
And she seemed unafraid to meet — a true monstrosity
She offered the back of her hand — so I could get her scent
So I politely said hello — to her embarrassment

I still inhaled her flavor — and I think that she could tell
I enjoyed her spiced aroma — that foreign female smell
All the blood inside me — that inebriating potion
Overwhelmed my heart — and I surrendered to emotion

Her hips curved so enticingly — towards breasts so full and round
And her eyes were the blackest black — that I had ever found
She gave me her sincere thanks — in accented words she cooed
And gently stroked my blood—smeared cheek — smiling in gratitude

It was useless to resist it — I quickly realized
So I confessed I loved her — and she wasn’t too surprised
She giggled and took my hand — leading me from the wood
To what end I did not know — but I knew it would be good

We came upon her family — as the sun began to burn
And the outcast nomad clan — was joyous at her return
Though they spoke to me in tongues — that I did not understand
I saw only smiles — and the girl held me hand in hand

The gypsies celebrated me — for the entire day
And as soon as it was dark — the girl stole me away
She accepted all the love — locked inside my tender chest
That night I slept in perfect bliss — my head upon her breast

But before dawn I awoke — sensing my monstrous friend
Who drew me mutely from my love — to tell me of my end
The Wulv told me the gypsies — had expected me for long
Because the blood of the Wulviin — is what keeps them strong

She said everything that kills — must always also die
Nothing is immortal — except the dark stars in the sky
But Wulviin never fear — just as those dark stars never shine
For I have a whole litter — to carry on my line
Dog Neglect  
Christopher Garcia

Dear Owner,

I wanted to apologize for some of the things I may have done to drive you to want to neglect me; after all it is not like I have remained loyal to you for many years. It is not as if all those sleepless nights I have spent barking have been spent protecting you and your family from outside dangers like burglars and rapists who prowl the streets at night, while I make my rounds to warn you of the outside disturbances.

On the other hand, I’m sure you had an important reason for forgetting to feed me, sometimes even for days at a time. I was probably in need of discipline for trying to serve you as best as I could. But it’s okay. Going a few days without food or water only strengthens my senses that I use (not to mention) to protect your family. I am only sorry that the lack of nutrition will cause my body to fail and die.

I do though have a proposal to help solve the neglect issue I, as well as many other dogs like me, face. Maybe we should stop becoming man’s best friend and only care about our own interests at hand, only care about our needs and our survival, but then what would we be become? The answer is hateful, uncaring beasts, or maybe perhaps … human?

Forever Loyal,  
Your dog
we’re free (or so we think)

stefani rubino

we’re free
until we want to speak against the majority
then they slap handcuffs on us and call us traitors
(we’re free)
until we find something wrong with our government
then they tell us we don’t have the right to be angry
(we’re free)
until we go to university
then they tell us what to study and how to think
(we’re free)
until we work for huge corporations
then we squander our freedom for a little cash
(we’re free)
until we learn how to consume
then we become slaves to credit card debt
(we’re free)
until they leave underprivileged kids with no choice but to join the military
then they take away our freedom to give it to somebody else
(we’re free)
until the church gets a hold of us
then they tell us we only find freedom through “god”
(we’re free)
when it becomes easier to realize that the only freedom we’ll ever have in
this life is
in death, and we spend our whole lives finding ways to run away from it.