

Lē'ahi

Creative Arts Journal



Kapi'olani Community College
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Lē‘ahi publishes the writing and art of students from Kapi‘olani Community College.

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About Lē‘ahi

Nani Lē‘ahi, he maka no Kahiki.

**Beautiful Lē‘ahi, object of the eyes from Kahiki. (Diamond Head, always observed with interest by visitors from foreign lands.)
Mary Kawena Pukui, ‘Ōlelo No‘eau 2277.**

Le‘ahi is the name of the highest peak on the volcanic crater overlooking Waikīkī beach. Kapi‘olani Community College sits on her mauka slope, in the ‘ili of Kapahulu.

The crater was called Diamond Head by visitors who thought crystals found in the crater were diamonds. The original name is Lae‘ahi: Lae, a headland or promontory and also a forehead, suggesting wisdom; ‘ahi is the yellow-fin tuna. Hi‘iaka (Pele’s sister) is said to have compared the profile of the headland to the brow of an ‘ahi. The name also suggests that offshore was an ‘ahi fishing ground.

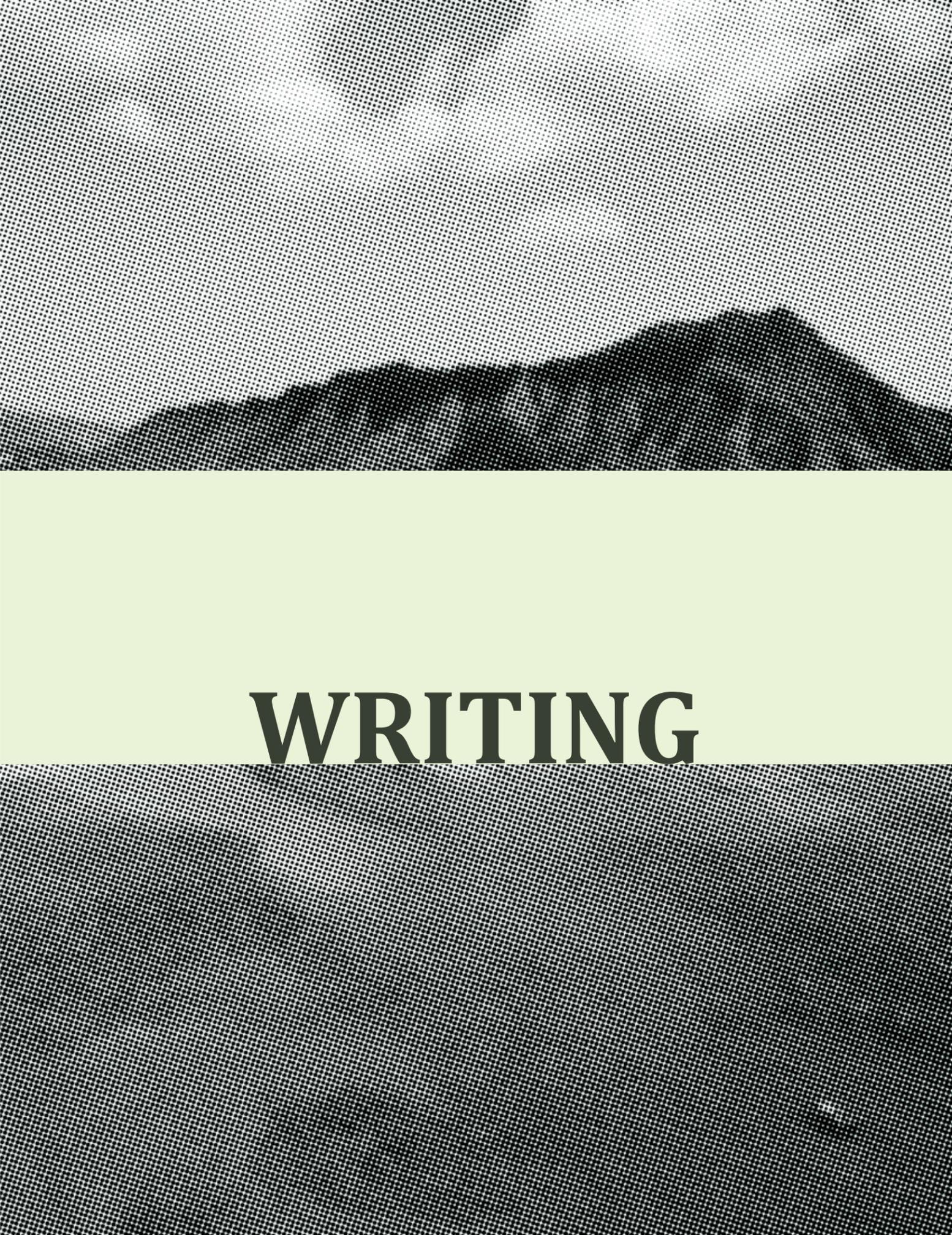
Le‘ahi appears in “The Fire Chant for King Kalākaua” by David Malo II, composed to honor the newly-elected King upon his return to Honolulu from his first royal tour of the islands, in March—April, 1874.

***Ho‘oluehu i luna ke ahi o Lē‘ahi.
Lē‘ahi’s fires scatters to the stars.***

The chant alludes to a bonfire set on Le‘ahi to welcome Kalākaua back to O‘ahu. (*The Echo of Our Song: Chants and Poems of the Hawaiians*, 134-144).

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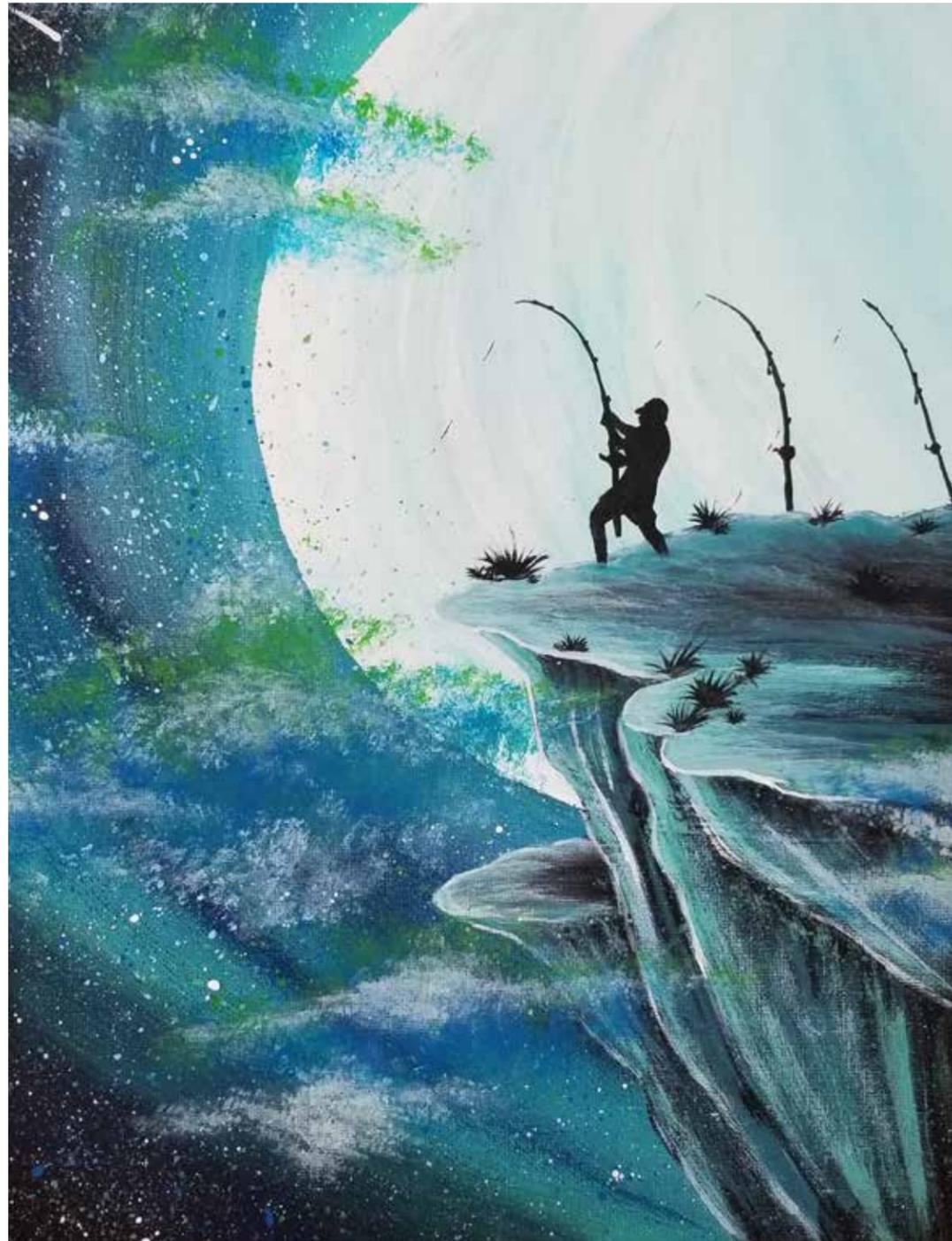


WRITING

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Untitled
Brittny Ige

My First Days

Timothy Gorsline

ENG 100

“Sorry about that; it’s my first day,” I apologized to table nine, inconveniently tucked away around the corner from the rest of the small restaurant. When my poor performance or lack of knowledge showed, I would shamefully utter that phrase with my head down. My boss Ryo told me to say it when I felt unsure of myself while I was new, even on what was my second day.

“It’s okay, kid. I’ve been there,” the wise-looking older man stated empathetically, leaning back in his chair. He took a sip of his hot tea then smiled from underneath his scraggly beard.

The older man in the gray ascot cap had been silently sitting there for what must have been fifteen minutes without getting his order taken. I took his order as quickly as I could and started back on the short trip to the kitchen to put the ticket on the cook’s line.

My second day landed on a Sounders game, and we were two blocks away from CenturyLink Field. A line was out the door; we were overflowing like a big bowl of searing hot ramen with too many toppings, and the toppings were takeout orders. Nestled outside the Japanese grocery store, Uwajimaya, the miniscule nine table restaurant smelled like what it served. Two large pots of tonkotsu broth and one pot of shoyu broth bubbled in the back of the kitchen, right behind the line. You could see straight through the kitchen to

the back wall from table three, in the middle of the tiny dining room. The chili-pepper red vinyl flooring was peeling up slightly by the entrance. The cheap flooring spanned from the entrance all the way to behind the front counter and up to the kitchen where it peeled up completely to bare concrete, covered by thick rubber mats. Still, a couple of expensive, decorative katanas hung from the maroon walls.

There were only ever three employees working, and the employee turnover rate was high. It was a mystery to me earlier, but I was starting to understand why.

“That’s the last order I can take for now, Tim,” Ben said with agitation. I could see the sweat forming under his bandana. Big Ben towered over me—most people needed to tilt their heads up to talk to him. The kitchen was kept uncomfortably hot with the three blazing pots right behind the cook. Soccer season was in summertime—we had no AC. The temperature inside was almost unbearable during this mid-June day.

“What do you want me to say to the people outside?” I inquired. I had worked in the restaurant industry for four years but had never been in a situation quite like this before. There were only the two of us working.

“Tell them the wait will be forty minutes. For take-out or for a table,” he commanded, fed up with his job.

Compared to my first day, this felt like a war zone. My

first day was butterflies and sunshine but today it was hornets and hot as hell. I would later find out the chefs got overwhelmed on a weekly basis during sports season. Added to that was the numerous take-out orders with the phone ringing constantly. These were the dreaded game-day shifts, with high customer turnover. I made the short trip back to the front door, opened it, and broke the bad news to the people waiting patiently outside.

“Forty minutes!?” someone with a Sounders green T-shirt exclaimed.

“Sorry about that, it’s my first day.”

This is what it is like, then.

It was August. There was an endless barrage of timers going off in succession, I had just burned my wrist with gyoza crust, and my order line was full of paper tickets like a car’s windshield after parking illegally for a year. Sweat was forming under my bandana, the only one I owned. My first dreaded game-day shift working the line. I decided to speak up.

“Ben, my line’s full!” I announced. Big Ben walked back with another ticket.

“Well, then I’ll keep ‘em coming!” he mischievously exclaimed.

Big Ben had trained me to open the restaurant and cook within two months because he was moving. It was his last day, and he was working the front.

“Tell any orders from here on out that it will be thirty to forty minutes for their food,” I pleaded.

“Dude, you have to learn to handle the pressure and go fast!” he asserted defiantly.

I scoffed at him; I was just trying to be realistic to the customers. I took the two bundles of noodles

out of the boiling pot of water and carefully into their respective bowls filled with salty broth bases and spicy chili oils. I silenced the timer on the line and topped each bowl with an assortment of green onion, fish cake, garlic chips, corn, egg, and mushroom, slowly and meticulously.

I put the two bowls of ramen on a tray and went to deliver them to the customers. When I got to the last order at table nine, I saw a familiar face, with a gray ascot cap on.

“I have your Tonkotsu ramen with an extra ajitama egg, sir,” I affirmed, serving him what must be one of his favorite meals.

“Thanks, kid,” the wise-looking older man replied, quietly. He always ordered the same thing and sat at the same table if he could get it, a fan of familiarity. We considered him a “super regular;” he came to dine with us once or twice a week, and would appear in the restaurant every Sounders game. He was never dressed in Sounders gear, so I figured he was just here on game days because he liked spectating all the commotion, like how the fans enjoyed watching their team play the game they love. He did this from the most removed table in the restaurant, observing from as far away as he could. There was something about the solitude of table nine that he enjoyed.

I smiled and nodded. When I turned around, the smile fell from my face, dreading the onslaught of the next four hours. I took a couple steps back towards the kitchen, already thinking about the next two bowls of ramen I needed to make.

“You know, when I was your age, I was working at a Taco Bell,” the older man quipped.

By December, Big Ben had left me the reins to the kitchen. Seattleites were no strangers to the frosty cold; there were freezing people outside waiting for

a table and orders of cozy, hot ramen. The Sounders were in the MLS Cup, and it was pre-game. I could sense the excitement in the aromatic pork-smelling air. The customers were ecstatic that their team made it this far, and I was not scared of the line anymore—I thrived in rush hour. Ryo could always trust me to work the busy days now, and some of my favorite customers endearingly called me the “ramen master” after watching me work my magic.

I was wearing my prized blue bandana with many white fish following the next one’s tail on multiple horizontal planes back and forth; I treated my bandanas like medals I had earned, and this was my most expensive one.

Timers were going off left and right, and my trainee was handing me a couple of new tickets to put on my line. Swiftly, I scooped three orders of gyoza off the skillet and plated them with sides of karashi and shoyu, turned around, then traded them for the tickets my trainee was holding to deliver them to their respective tables. Afterwards, I took four bundles of ramen noodles out of the pot of boiling water. I held two blanching baskets in each hand horizontally, gently shaking them to caress the noodles into their respective bowls of broth. Then, I quickly and artfully topped each bowl of ramen like I was Van Gogh painting each constellation onto Starry Night.

Now this is what it’s all about!

I loaded a tray up with the four bowls of ramen I had just made and started delivering them to their tables: three to table four and one to table nine. I dropped off three bowls of ramen to table four, which seated three eager Sounders fans, all geared up. They thanked me and then, I rounded the corner and lo and behold, the wise-looking older man with the ascot cap was sitting at table nine, eyeing the ramen that was on its way.

“Hello sir! I have your tonkotsu ramen with an extra

ajitama egg!” I stated, outright and confident. I took one more step to get in the distance of his table, but I could feel my left foot start to give way. I had worn my sneaker’s sole down, and now it was time to pay. As I lost my balance, so did my grip to the tray. The ramen bowl dropped from mid-air, like a well fed pig that had spontaneously lost its wings. Upon this horrendous impact, shards of porcelain lay in a circular pattern, with the broth pooling like fresh blood. I had committed ramencide. Looking up to the wise-looking man through the steam of what once was his meal, I saw a big grin on his face.

“It’s your first day here, huh?”



Exercise 1
Lily Lam

Carry

Melissa Rutigliano

O Sad Octopus-
Warrior and Protector of Depression,
You cover me like a blanket
in this aphotic sea of summer.

I swim away in a Sacred attempt
to dance with the tumbling shells,
Whose music guides the Mystical Whales-
that carry me back towards the Light.

Taiwan Market Magic

Billy Nikhomvan

ENG 100

Stepping off the subway platform, it felt like entering New York's Grand Central Station, filled with flashes of silhouettes zooming left and right as people of all ages and sizes hustled their way across the room towards the next stop on their journeys. Upon exiting the transportation hub, my ears were tickled by the vibrations traveling through the atmosphere from an unknown source. Turning my head in the direction of the sound, my eyes were amazed by the lights illuminating the scene unfolding before me like the Aurora Borealis dancing across the northern skies.

I had finally arrived at what was to become the most unforgettable scene during my trip to Taiwan—Taiwan's famous Dongdamen Night Market. Every night, the market comes to life with the vast amount of people who make their way there to share their stories. The most enjoyable highlights were the live street performances, the games, and the plethora of food vendors.

As I entered through the colossal gateway towering over the night market's entrance, my eyes and ears were immediately overwhelmed by the different surrounding exhibitions. There were many street performers that gathered all their determination and strength every night to share their talents with the world. My ears were pierced by the many beautiful voices of young performers resonating through the market. My legs began to sway as the soundwaves,

emanating from the young guitarists and violinists, began colliding against my body. No matter if they were performing to earn money for tuition or simply sharing their talents in hopes of being discovered, every one of these creative minds poured their heart and soul into their presentation. The rhythm and tempo of the music invigorated my body; my body was energized and needed to move.

Pursuing the flashing lights that caught my attention, I found myself lured into the gaming section of the market. The narrow walkway of the market was surrounded by various gaming vendors, like a stream flowing down the valley of a mountain. Goliath-sized plush dolls of Pikachu and Hello Kitty enticed loving parents to toss a dart, aiming for the rainbow of balloons on the wall in the hopes of winning a prize for their children. Gambling with luck, I challenged a high school youth trying to win a prize for his date. I held down the trigger of the water gun blasting the target towards the finish line. *Ring, ring!* The bell chimed in as the young boy's avatar crossed the finish line in victory a few seconds before mine. Feeling the despair of defeat, it was time to escape reality by satiating the hunger that had filled my entire body stemming from the bottom of my belly.

Probing the area like a squirrel foraging for its last meal before winter hibernation, I did not have to go far before the olfactory sensory neurons in my nose

were engulfed by the smell of food being prepared by local street vendors. The olfactory receptors were overloaded with the aroma coming from the fresh baked goods or the savory chicken skewers being grilled next door. Suddenly the pleasant aromas were being overpowered by a foul odor that reeked like the sewage seeping from the overburdened Waikiki pipelines into the nearby Ala Wai Canal. Trying to escape the source of the unfamiliar stench, I pushed through the crowded streets.

Unfortunately, it felt as though the stench continued to get stronger and stronger. Summoning all of my might, trying not to vomit chunks of lunch, I realized what it was once the words "come and try the best stinky tofu in town" fell upon my ears. I decided to "experience Taiwan like the locals" and got in line after looking up at the crowd ahead and realized the line of customers ordering zigzagged for what seemed like the trail of a marathon. After crunching into that first bite and feeling the juices of the deep-fried stinky

tofu coating every last taste bud in my mouth, primal instinct took over and I continued jamming in as many as I could chew until I had devoured the entire plate.

After feasting to my heart's content on the wild new flavors that Taiwan's night market had introduced to me, I made my way to the beach at one end of the market. The euphoria and spirit of the market began to fade into the background, leaving me only with the sounds of the calming waves crashing upon the shoreline. Sitting in the emptiness of the beach, lit only by the brightness of the moon and stars above, I was able to relax and contemplate my first exploration of one of Taiwan's famous night markets just moments before. I will never forget the experience of the many sensations engulfing my body that night will never be forgotten. Like children looking forward to Christmas morning when they can finally open the presents that Santa Clause left for them, I look forward to the day I can return to the wonderland of Taiwan's night market.

My Elastic Heart

Sophia Daniel

ENG 100

Some may ask, Where do broken hearts go?
Discovering hidden secrets
Searching for truth, meaning, and purpose

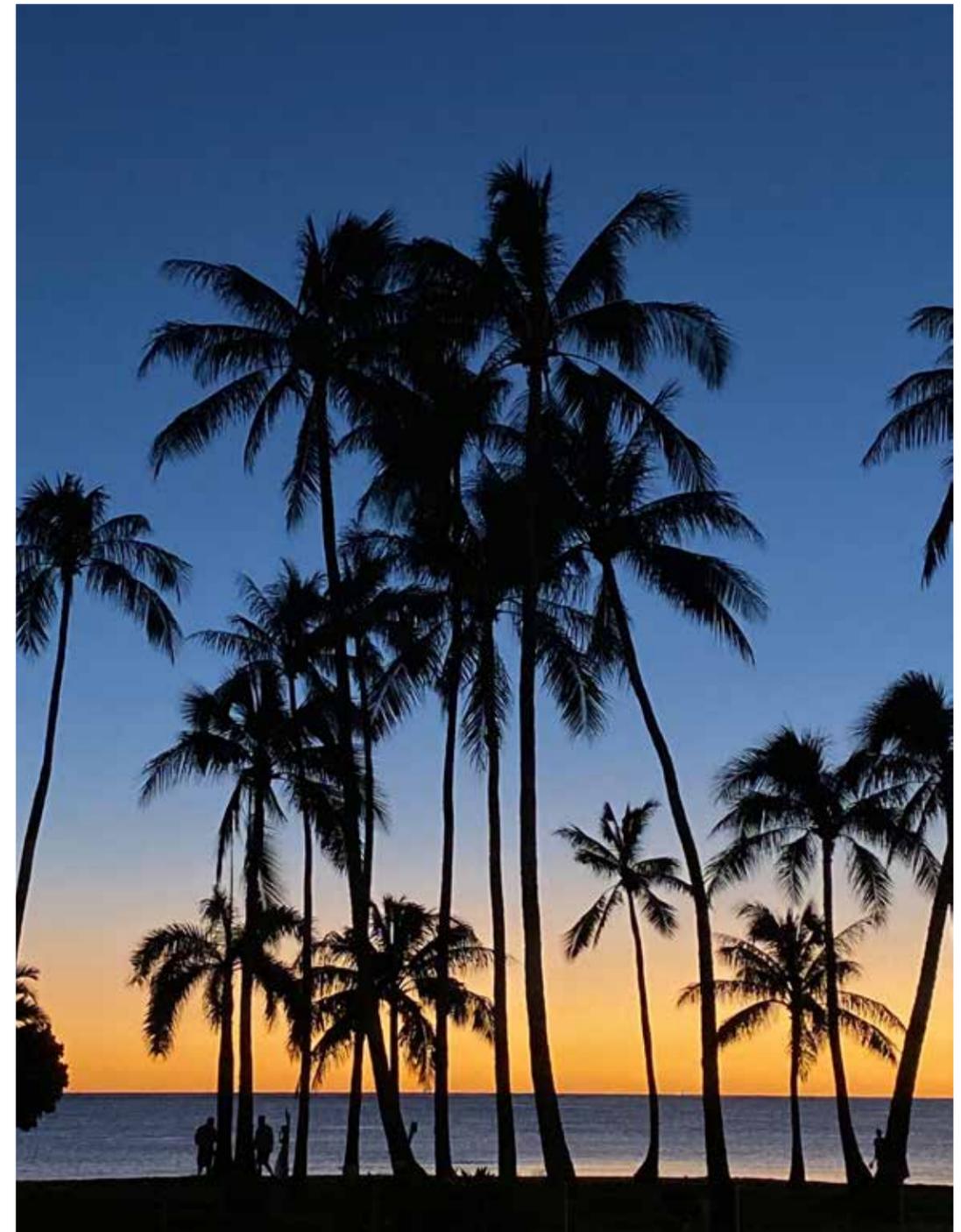
My mind overflows with memories
Memories I wish to forget
Memories that will stay forever in my heart

Some may ask, What is true love?
When a stranger sacrifices their life for yours
When your heart burns passionately

My heart, countless broken
Broken by people, words and promises slicing out pieces
Pain, anger, deceit pulling from both sides

Be careful with my heart please
Like a package with a fragile label on it
It holds billions of shattered pieces together

Slowly, it sheds its skin
Past emotions seep out
Lavender and scars, my elastic heart



Natural Beauty
Sophia Daniel



Untitled
Kasandrae Brooke

An Unaffordable Luxury

Rika Bonilla

ENG 273C

He doesn't know how she became such a big part of his life.

It is as if she has always been here. One day he woke up and she was just sitting at the kitchen table in his tiny apartment watching cartoons and he thought nothing of it. Sometimes she would be out on the balcony, tucked between the potted plants, listening to the downstairs neighbor's music. Often he would walk out of the bedroom to see her splayed out on the couch, leg casually draped over the back while she scrolls through her phone. It feels so normal to him—her presence—that he finds himself forgetting there was ever a time where she has not been here.

This morning, when he steps into the living room, she's waiting for him at the small coffee table, flipping through channels on the television with disinterest. The morning light spills into the apartment behind her, streaking across the hardwood floors and settling right at his feet. A glance at the clock reveals it's ten o'clock, which is quite late for his liking, but nowadays time doesn't seem to matter all that much. He heads towards the kitchen to start the coffee, stepping onto the cold tile and suddenly meeting the edges of a white apron. It has spread remnants of flour along the tiles around it from when it had been discarded last Friday.

It stops him in his tracks for a moment.

He didn't mind working at the bakery. The people were nice, the pay was decent, and as long as he was paying rent, he couldn't complain. When they had started installing panes in front of the registers and stacked the chairs away in the backroom, he knew it was only a matter of time before they told him not to return. When the time came, they assured him it was only temporary—that they would open again next month—and his savings would last him two or three months, anyway. But, standing in the middle of that barren store, he couldn't help but doubt that he would ever set foot in there again. That night, he had gone home and watched the news, sitting on the coffee table with a beer nestled against his thigh and knuckles pressed against his mouth in a half prayer as he watched figures in masks and coats flit across the screen. She came along soon after.

"The coffee's not going to make itself," she calls over from the table, snapping him out of his reverie. He kicks the apron away and starts up the machine. As the water heats up behind him, he leans against the counter to watch the television.

"Cartoons, really?" He can't help but ask.

She shrugs. "They're funny. You can't judge—remember when you were a kid and you'd wake up early just to watch them?"

“A bit.”

“There’s nothing wrong with reliving your childhood.”

He pours the last of the creamer into his mug. “I suppose not.”

He decides to take up crocheting. It’s a spontaneous idea, delivered in the form of a recommended YouTube video late at night. He had always prided himself in his artistic curiosity, and crocheting seemed just a notch up from the painting he did when he was younger. Granted, he had given up on painting upon realizing that it held no benefits for his future—his parents had assured him of that—so this was partly a pathetic attempt to make amendments to his younger self. He had no job and, due to California’s temporary lockdown, he had no plans this entire month. Crocheting a teddy bear would be no problem at all.

“The good thing about crocheting,” he says, pulling the yarn taut between his fingers, “is that if you make a mistake, it just gets lost in the rows of yarn.”

“You’re right,” she says, leaning against the couch to see over his shoulder, “you’re a beginner, but that bear head looks about right.”

He grins sheepishly. “Who would’ve thought? Crocheting is my true calling after all.”

He manages to make it to the torso before storing everything into his desk drawer, two days later.

There are people outside of his apartment, pooling together in the familiar streets that stretch into the horizon, out of view from the balcony. He hears their chants before he even slides open the door. It’s nearly overwhelming, the amount of people who are there; each holding posters, each poster with a different face. They chant into microphones for justice, they

say names, they cry out for help. Their volume never wavers as they walk by, as more people arrive to replace them. He’s not the only one standing out on the balcony to watch—the whole neighborhood’s come to see what’s happening. Some cheer with the crowd, others just slightly shake their heads. He makes eye contact with a woman from the floor below. She waves to him with the hand that isn’t holding a poster, eyes scrunching above her masked face, and he waves back.

That night in bed he watches videos on Twitter taken by an outdated iPhone of crowds of people being surrounded by walls of police officers. He watches as rubber bullets fly through gas clouds at horrific speeds as the crowds disperse for cover. The video becomes indiscernible as the person filming runs through the streets, stepping on discarded posters and forgotten belongings before the video ends completely. A rising nausea threatens to overcome him, and he turns off his phone.

“Stop looking at stuff that doesn’t concern you,” she says from beside him, snatching his phone from his hands. She types something into it, before turning it back to him.

His fingers tremble slightly as he takes the phone to get a better look. It’s a video of a cat playing piano. He smiles weakly.

The sun is just beginning to peek past the horizon when he falls asleep.

“What are you looking for?”

He nearly starts at the sound of her voice, then looks over his shoulder to see her standing there. He turns back to the computer and tries not to wince at the multiple tabs that litter the top portion of the screen. “I’m looking for yarn. I’m going to make a sweater.”

She hums in approval. “Good luck on that. You’re gonna crochet it?”

“Nah, I was thinking of knitting it.” He’s always preferred the look of knitted sweaters, anyway.

He follows her eyes scanning the scattered sketchbooks and novels, most unread and unopened—when he has time, he tells himself—before she nods and leaves him to his yarn shopping. He hastily gathers the books and places them on the nearby shelf, out of sight.

The sky is red.

He’s standing before the balcony curtains, eyeing the red glow from beneath the fabric. He’s carefully making his way towards it, stepping over half opened notebooks and strewn knitting needles when the curtain suddenly shifts to allow the red light to streak across the walls. He falters, taken aback from the blood-like streaks that cross his body, and carefully peels the curtains the rest of the way. He’s not prepared for the unnatural red haze that covers the nearby buildings of his neighborhood; it is as if someone had placed a red filter over the sky. The streets are deserted, and he wonders briefly if he has woken up to a dystopian world. A part of him wants to open the balcony door, but he’s afraid once he steps past the glass barrier and the light reaches his skin, it’ll be too real then. He’s not even sure if he can breathe in all of that looming fog. The curtains fall closed in front of him. His eyes burn at the sudden darkness of the room.

“You’re letting too much light in.” She says, moving to turn on a lamp.

He’s going to make a meal for once, he decides one evening, scanning the few ingredients sitting in his fridge. From his observation, he guesses he can make

eggs Benedict—it’s not morning, but time doesn’t really mean anything. He even opens the curtains for the first time in a week, letting in the weakening rays of light as the sky grows darker. The air is much easier to breathe now, but the windows remain closed.

The eggs are in the middle of being transported to the pot to boil when one slips from his grasp and splatters across the tile flooring. He freezes, watching the ruined yolk run through the crevices of the tiles, a crime scene laid out before him. He knows he should clean it up, knows it’s going to get worse the longer he lets it sit.

He places the remaining eggs on the counter and cries.

He doesn’t process his knees hitting the floor—can’t see through the tears blurring his vision—and scrubs the palms of his hands at his eyes furiously. His body gives out and he sinks further and further until his warm forehead burns as it makes contact with the cold floor tiles; he presses against the hard surface until his skull threatens to break under the pressure. He doesn’t say a word, the apartment fills with his erratic breathing and he wants to laugh at how hysterical he sounds, but he can’t do anything beyond letting hot tears run down his face. He’s had enough, he decides, he’s had enough.

“You’ll be okay.”

Everything is still. Her voice is bright in his head.

“After all, you have me.”

He closes his eyes.

We As A Nation

Michelle Jay Bonilla

ENG 273C

Oppression fuels society's regression
"All Lives Matter" bespattered all over social media's chatter
Thin-skinned men trying to fend
For themselves and their "rights"
So blinded by violence, it destroys their sight
Of who other human beings are
And how their lives are marred
By selfish acts and petulance
Like unfurling slurs and slights
For instance.
We as a nation need to come together as a whole
We as a nation need to break out of this mold
That we've forced ourselves into
Where morals, laws, and unity have become askew
The next generations deserve better than this
Abyss full of lies and vengeful hate
It's time we stop trashing and bashing
It's time we create
a clean, new slate



Typography Book
Lily Lam



Thankful
Eric Fredrickson

J Train

Ari Daskauskas

ENG 100

It's the middle of January and a gust of frigid wind sends a chill down my spine as I wait for the Manhattan-bound J train. I readjust my scarf and tuck it into the back of my neck. It's probably not on correctly. I've never worn a scarf before I moved to New York because I've never needed to. There are a lot of things that I've never needed to do before I moved to this city. Waiting for a train in twenty-degree weather is one of those things. Another gust of biting wind roars through the platform and pierces my face like a thousand tiny needles. My nose is numb and dripping and all I can do is wipe the snot with the cuff of my coat.

"Why the hell did I leave Hawai'i?"

I'd asked myself this question probably a million times within the first few months of moving to New York. I knew the answer; I wanted to see more of the world and to have a chance to make something of myself. I had gotten a job offer at a well-known cocktail bar in Manhattan's Lower East Side. In the Food & Beverage industry, working at a high-volume New York cocktail bar is like making it to the Major Leagues; when you get called up, you don't hesitate to take the opportunity. At first the excitement of living in the "Big Apple" and the opportunity to advance my career in hospitality veiled the reality of the distance from my home and the drastic culture shock I was experiencing.

It wasn't long before I realized that I was no longer protected by the comforts of my island life. Although Manhattan is technically an island, there is nothing "island life" about this place. The pace of life in New York is very fast. The people here walk intently and expeditiously. They've got places to be, meetings to make, and trains to catch. They don't have time for your "I'm lost, which way is Essex street?" nonsense. "Sugar-coating" isn't in a New Yorker's vocabulary, which I appreciate. I'm not one for beating around the bush; therefore, when someone told me that I "need to figure out how to keep up in this city or She will eat you alive," I took it as a challenge.

I rode public transportation to work when I lived in Hawai'i, so taking the train from my apartment in Brooklyn to my new job in Manhattan wasn't a big deal. That is, until Winter arrived. Now here I am, a human popsicle waiting at the Marcy stop for a train that feels like it may never come.

Three minutes later, the train finally arrives. My whole body feels numb as I board the train, but I speed-walk to an open seat and nab it right before a Bushwick hipster with a neon-green mullet can. The train is warmer than the unforgiving conditions outside. However, the warmth intensifies the faint smell of urine mingling with the aroma of somebody's Whopper with extra onions. They say

you get used to it, but I truly don't know if I ever will. There's an empty seat next to me and I quickly realize why no one is sitting in it. The hospital gown-blue seat is smeared with what I am desperately hoping is dried ketchup.

"Why the hell did I leave Hawai'i?" I ask myself again.

I close my eyes, take a deep breath, and walk over to stand by one of the doors. The man standing next to me has 2 Chainz' "It's a Vibe" blasting on a small portable speaker held together by duct tape. Everyone surrounding gives him the stink eye. I rummage through my backpack for headphones and play "Hi'ilawe" by Gabby Pahinui on the loudest possible volume. Listening to Hawaiian music makes me feel at ease in the chaos of New York City. It makes me less homesick... or more. I can't tell if I feel like crying because I miss home or because Hawaiian music makes me happy. I think it might be a mixture of both.

Predictably, my life in Hawai'i was very different from my life in New York. I am from the city of Honolulu on O'ahu. In high school, all of my friends from the East and West side of the island called me a "townie," which I totally was. I grew up doing all the things "town kids" did: Hanging out at Ala Moana, going to Chinatown with my mom for groceries on the weekends, and only going to the beaches that I could easily catch TheBus to. I vividly remember sitting on a crowded bus on an early Saturday morning. I stared out of the window as we rode into grungy Chinatown. The vendors were already hard at work for a couple of hours, selling their fruits and vegetables. As we rode further into the bustling streets, the smell of freshly roasted duck permeated through the windows. A man in a blood-stained white apron expertly chopped up the glistening duck with a greasy cleaver, then wrapped it in butcher paper and handed it over the counter

to a sweaty man carrying plastic bags overflowing with produce. I knew our stop was near when I saw the faded Chop Sui sign on the corner of the neon pagoda-like building. My mom would let me pull the "Stop Requested" string and we would hop off the bus and into the orchestrated chaos of Mauna Kea Market. It always felt like we were in a different country because I swear we were the only ones who couldn't speak Chinese or Filipino, or any of the other languages I heard being spoken. I loved it; Saturday mornings always felt like Mom and I were on an adventure in another country. My life in Hawai'i was uncomplicated and easy.

My phone dies in the middle of listening to Teresa Bright's "Poli'ahu" and I am thrown right back into the pandemonium of rush hour on the J train.

"At least the guy with the duct-tape speaker got off," I say to myself.

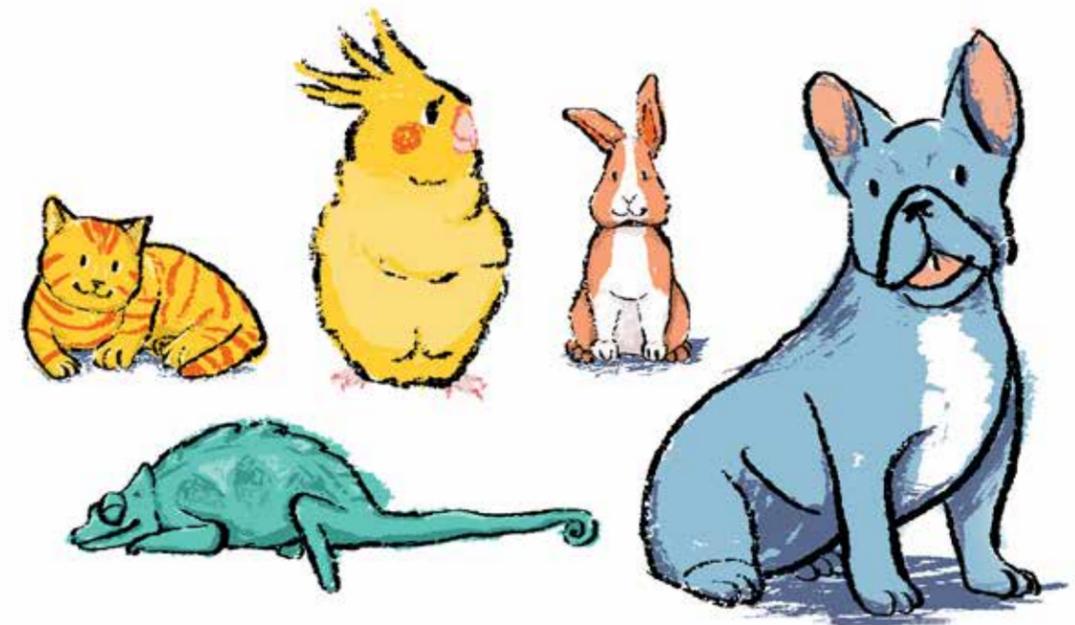
At the other end of the train car, a busker break-dances for tips. His buddy is holding a huge boombox roaring some electronic remix of "Return of the Mack." The kid dancing is pretty good. He does a backflip, then a flagpole, very nearly kicking an uptight looking woman in the face. The boy and the woman stare at each other for a second, then both burst into laughter. He gives her a fist bump and then continues his routine. People stuff dollar bills into a hat that he holds out and everybody applauds. I have felt this feeling before, the warm feeling when a group of strangers are connected by a mutual feeling of joy. It's as if we all just had a collective pause from the anarchy of New York. Maybe, this is New York's rendition of "Aloha Spirit," random small collective moments of relief and laughter.

Across from me, two tall blonde women uncontrollably laugh and speak what sounds like Russian, but honestly, it could be any European language. A couple who has been making out for

the entire ride speak to each other in Spanish, and a tiny elderly woman with a shopping cart loaded with cans and bottles talks loudly on the phone in Cantonese. I immediately feel like a little kid in Honolulu's Chinatown again. I slowly start to realize that the diversity here in New York rivals that of Hawai'i. I am comforted by this revelation and for the first time in months, I begin to feel at home.

I look out the window while the train is riding on the Williamsburg bridge over the East River. I look out to

the edge of the water where the sun is setting. The sky is cotton candy and the golden sun reflects off of the river where ferries transport people from borough to borough. I used to watch the sunset at Kewalos after a long day in the water. The Hawaiian sky would do the same cotton candy performance as the sun disappeared from view. Nothing really compares to a sunset in Hawaii, but this one on the East River will do just fine until I am reunited with my home.



Pets
Liana Young

Walking to the Golden Gate Bridge

Da Yoon Shin

ENG 100



Milkish "Whole Again" Ad

Monique Brousseau

"I left my heart in San Francisco." The lyrics and lilting melody flit in and out of my consciousness. My first visit to my fiancé's beloved city, San Francisco, fills my head with romantic daydreams about celebrating my birthday in June. Despite the stress piled up from work in Korea, my energy flames as if the fatigue fuels it. Surrounded by jolly diners and servers, I gorge on blackened butterfish and scrumptious chocolate mousse cake at a former warehouse converted into a mosaic tiled aquatic restaurant. My birthday fête, par excellence. I was here in a city famously immortalized in music and literature, but I wanted to truly experience the "real" San Francisco.

My fiancé had lived in the city for several years and loved it there. Nevertheless, he specified that there were treacherous "Tenderloin" areas located a mere one or two blocks away from our cozy, yet elegant, bed and breakfast on the edge of Chinatown. He warned me several times not to go there, even during the daytime. Underestimating the danger, I turned a deaf ear to his words. As a "walk-aholic," the following morning, I decided to take a long stroll to soak in the city's vibes by myself and shared my plans with my fiancé. My loaded weariness distorted my perception of my fiancé's caring words and instead interpreted them as an aggressive overprotection. I flung on a thigh length skirt and a sloppy hoodie that had been scattered

on my bed and notified my fiancé that I needed to diminish my anxiety. I burst out of the hotel and decisively headed to the Golden Gate Bridge with the assistance of Google Maps on my phone.

Breezy winds tickled my cheek friskily, yet I kept walking and passed under the rusty-painted green arch of Chinatown. The Chinatown in San Francisco is the oldest and the second largest Chinatown in the United States. Established by streams of Chinese immigrants since the nineteenth century, San Francisco's Chinatown attracts tourists from around the world with distinguishable Asian nostalgia mingled in this chic city ("5 Biggest"). The bustling people, cluttered shops with Chinese banners, and tangy scents made my heart pound, soothing my tangled emotions.

Humming through the glamorous city with its winding roads and roller-coaster hills bordered by tree-lined parks, I suddenly was confronted by people in shabby clothing, some shivering and holding grimy dogs while others muttered into the air. Floods of high-paid techies from Silicon Valley and spiking housing prices that went from expensive to exorbitant evicted hordes of people on the streets from tolerably affordable rentals. Currently, there are more than eighty thousand people suffering on the streets in San Francisco (Ho). Lack of inventories to supply them shelter and health service frustrate the

people and those seeking to assist them (Anthony et al.). Moreover, well-off tech companies opposed a mild tax increase to aid homeless people while still relentlessly complaining about their presence on the streets. The big tech companies' seemingly irresponsible attitudes build tension between long-term residents and relative newcomers (Karlis). The unexpected sights and musty odors bewildered me, arousing sorrow for their endangered dignity, but also giving me a sense of discomfort.

Feeling a bit unsettled, I continued my walk toward the Bridge. I observed compact pastel-toned Victorian and Edwardian houses. Gabled roofs, vibrant carvings, narrow windows, and flat fronts featured another face of the city. These are the "Painted Ladies," which refers to Victorian or Edwardian houses painted with more than three colors to show their designs vividly. Around fifty thousand Victorian and Edwardian houses were built in the city between 1849 and 1915 (Loeffler). In the 1960s, San Francisco banned new skyscrapers in the city, ironically, preserving the most-photographed row houses and producing the city's iconic landscape. This stance laid the foundation for later housing shortages and homelessness (Oatman-Stanford).

Further on my walk, I trailed cable cars landing at Fisherman's Wharf. Passengers dangled from the cheerfully jingling reddish brown cars. Invented in 1873, based on mining trolley systems, San Francisco cable cars initially eased the inefficiency of horse-and-buggy traffic. The cars have faced several risks of removal since the earthquake and fire in 1906. However, today, cable cars are much beloved by tourists and residents, boasting their reputation as a symbol of the city ("Cable Car History"). Nearing the famed Wharf, I needed to monitor my GPS ceaselessly to track the direction to the Golden Gate Bridge. My phone battery perished

gradually. My unease returned as I spotted another apparently homeless person in the doorway of one of the upscale souvenir shops at the Wharf. The shock of numerous people suffering on the streets in the wealthy city saddened me.

The chilly air splashed on my shoulder, and I shrank back. My general uneasiness evolved into internal discomfort, in part, because I had not eaten that day. I entered Starbucks to appease my hunger and to fill myself with warmth. I drifted into baffling thoughts stained with the tension of being in a foreign city. Crude reality had imposed on the romanticized fantasy. Frustrated and exhausted from the icy winds, I hesitated to persist in my adventure. I still needed more than 40 minutes to get to the Bridge. After fumbling a second, I stepped out vigorously.

Through the whistling winds, birds yodeled, dogs yelped, and bicycles beeped on the commodious sandy roads by Crissy Field. Over fierce waves, Alcatraz looked like a precariously floating haunted castle, a piece of land torn out from a continent. Iconic as a prominent former prison with complete isolation and comprehensive surveillance, Alcatraz had three renowned inmates who boldly escaped ("Alcatraz Escape").

Just then, trembling like a fallen leaf, my eyes finally discovered the ruby Bridge between two bulky grassy hills. Reflecting the light, the Bridge's noble body floated like the sun. Yet, inner conflict erupted. Should I return to my snug hotel room with a fireplace, satisfied with checking out the Bridge even from the distance? Or should I fight against the piercing cold and get to my dream destination? I crawled step by step. With naked legs, my favorite activity—walking—tortured me. The famous bay breeze was chilling since it siphons the arctic air down into the city. But I hated the thought of returning to the hotel. I intensely desired to touch

the world-famous structure during my first visit to San Francisco.

Brackish air steadily knotted my hair. My blushing ears throbbed. I now understood Mark Twain's insight that the coldest winter he ever saw was the summer he spent in San Francisco (Barringer). As the deep Pacific Ocean's water surges during the spring and summer, water by the coastline becomes ultra-chilly. The colder air flowing from the ocean meets land's warmer air, generating fog and wind in the city. That is why San Francisco has such notorious cold summers (O'Mara).

I continued my journey. Fluffy rays of sun glittered behind towering crimson roofed buildings. Huffing and puffing, I climbed uphill and finally encountered the Bridge. Built in the 1930s, the Bridge's consulting architect Irving Morrow traveled by ferry to the construction site to gain inspiration. After numerous color studies, he singled out the Bridge's brilliant color, international orange. Morrow wanted colors which would favorably blend with the Bridge's setting like skyline and hills ("Bridge Features").

I stood among masses of visitors as I took selfies of my unwashed face. Traversing the coarse entrance of the Bridge, I gazed at the extensive reddish orange frame speechlessly. The scenery of golden rays merged with the horizon, dark green bushes, and colored houses. An enormous Cezanne-like canvas engrossed my attention. Solitary blasts swept my torso, and without pinpointing exactly why, I burst into tears, mirroring my jumbled spirits. Sniffing and rubbing my pale, reddened face, I still appreciated the flourishing culture and physical beauty of the city. However, I could only gather a real sense of the place by encountering those who were struggling to survive there.

Instead of crossing the Bridge, I called an Uber driver, squeezing my last bit of juice from my phone

battery. While waiting, I wandered around at a souvenir shop at the Bridge Welcome Center. I impulsively purchased a snow globe of the Bridge. When I viewed the swirling, fabricated snowy scene, one San Franciscan rock musician, Paul Kantner's saying flashed in my head: "San Francisco is 49 square miles surrounded by reality" (qtd. in "Scoop").

I embraced the charms of San Francisco and its incomparable cultural and political vibes. Yet, images we have internalized from media, teachers, and friends about this iconic place also generate misleading pictures of the reality. I finally began to better understand my fiancé's words.

Indeed, I left part of my heart in San Francisco, but also left a bit of heartbreak there.

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Soliloquy of a Liverwort

Christian Rice

ENG 272

drip

Blessed moisture falls
from the underside of a bay leaf
in my dank enclave. It coats
my poised antheridium,
spores move down
into my archegonium.
becoming diploid.

Yearns of Yarrow

Christian Rice

ENG 272

Between frond and blade you found me
vibrant green beneath birch trees
white caps of grainy lace
steeped, I'll bear you love
chewed, I'll mend your wound
when returned
to the earth
I will welcome you

Branch and Blossom

Christian Rice

ENG 272

Twisted gnarled branches on hunched trunks bowed low to
grovel at the loamy sand soil of vulcanus effigies in the wake of her fury
and need to have,

to take,

to claim

as much as she gave

or so she proclaimed

She is indifferent now

I think she long ago forgot the girl who wagered her life on mercy

who threw herself against the flame

I am with him now and have always been

his roots are mine and my seeds are his

the hills seep when he is taken from me. Without him

there is only rain

Crocodilian Gulch

Christian Rice

ENG 272

The walls are steep, mucilaginous and cragged sheets of stone coated with algae and liverworts. We sit in the bed of a small fishing boat, with two benches between us. A distant roar echoes throughout the canyon, filling the humid air with apprehension and distortion. The stream is narrow and turbid, approximating a width of ~2 meters, and an unknown depth. At times it is so shallow the hull of the boat scrapes against the bed of the stream, and at other times it seems unfathomably abyssal. Where the canyon bends and the walls squeeze us through the corners of the gulch, movement can be seen in the shallows, a flash of scales here and a flicker of eyelids there. My grandfather guides the boat silently through the eddies, but he does not speak and his manner is grave.

We cannot see the horizon beyond the walls of the gulch; only the cyan sky and its chitinous cloudfare relieves us of the oppression set down by the stone walls. The crocodiles are abreast of us now and slither from every dismal crevice where the shadows lie. They begin thrusting themselves up and against the underside of the boat, knocking us about in the dinghy. My grandfather loses the oar he has been guiding us through the gulch with up until this point; he's still silent but I can see the fear in his body as he grips the sides of our skiff. I want to scream or run but can do neither; I'm frozen in the back of the boat trying not to distract my grandfather.

The roar of the ravine has become deafening and more cyan sky has begun to appear in our vision. A penultimate surge of reptile shakes the boat and frees my grandfather's fingers from the grip of the boat beside him, briefly, it seems as though he might take flight before a final crocodile surges up and seizes my grandfather by the bicep and pulls him overboard. I lurch towards the edge to try and do something, but by the time I can see anything, the last ripples are already subsiding into the turbid mauve of the gulch. The other crocodiles are gone now, and beyond my sight. Beneath the opaque waters, they descend further into the bubbling depths.

The only sound left is the roar of the gulch, and it swallows my hearing, my sight and my being into a non-differentiable torrent of noise. The cyan sky opens up above, around and below me as the gulch abruptly severs itself and releases me out into an empty sky.

I fall until the dream ends.



Circle Wizard

Alika Young

The Zoo

Mikaela Chang

ENG 100

The dull and chipped gold face I wear upon my right wrist reads 13:01. I swipe my badge against the panel thinking, *what IS my code again?* Flustered and worried about forgetting my code even though I've swiped into work hundreds of times before. *Beep, beep, beep.* GREEN. Green means go. *Thank goodness, I still have a job,* I think jokingly. The heavy metal door unlatches itself from its concrete frame. Pulling the brass handle towards myself and closing it behind me, I enter the zoo. From the moment I walk through the side door and into this brightly lit hallway, all eyes are on me. Now walking besides the dark tinted windows, I look at my reflection, double checking: hair, pua, make up, badge, name tag, key, watch, pen. *Check, check and check.*

I take long, cool strides down the sidewalk beside the garden of plumeria and palm trees. A stranger stands alone by the bench making a stressed phone call, face flushed, chest about three shades sunburnt, and hands flailing. I breathe in my last set of fresh air, and walk into the lower entrance. Beside the entrance stands a gate where the scent of gasoline, sweat and heat are seeping through. On the other side, the sound of engines roar, bringing life to metal wings. After entering the building, I press a button with my elbow, waiting. I glance at my watch once more. It's 13:08. *Bing.* I roll my belongings into the scuffed chamber and it raises me to the first floor. As the wide silver scratched doors separate, my foot

steps onto the buff tile floors. The click-clack of my heels announce my arrival.

Hordes of animals swarm ahead of me, walking hurriedly, towards me, diagonally, bobbing and weaving as their luggage follows them like tails. I am surrounded. *Eyes forward. Smile intact. Don't look anyone directly in the eyes.* As I pass the security checkpoint a barefoot ethnic male plops down to gather himself together after getting a "random" pat down. *Wallet, keys, socks, shoes, belt, phone.* The abuse and intrusion that is accepted in order to get into this facility baffles me. This is the gateway to hopes, dreams, change. The gateway to the rest of the world, a chance to leave everything behind and enjoy a vacation or to get back home. This is also the exact place all common sense is left behind. The stressed, tired and late are no longer human, they are ferocious untamed animals. I was hired to tame them, entertain them, feed them, watch over them, until they reach their destination.

I feel a presence. I glance to my left, and in the periphery, a doe-eyed female approaches; she's anxious, hurried, and obviously lost. *Oh no, we've locked eyes! I hope she doesn't...*

"Hi, hello!" She waves. "How can I get to C Gates?"

She means no harm. I smile through a sigh.

"Hi there, you're headed in the right direction. Go out past those sliding doors, hang a left, through the agriculture checkpoint and you'll be there. Follow the signs."

"Thanks!" She rushes off in the direction I instructed and almost runs over a child. I hear it screeching at the top of its lungs for its mother. It's wandered off further than it should've. Its Mother comes to the rescue. Out of sorts, her brunette hairs are wild and her slightly stained shirt is wrinkled; she picks up the child and attempts to soothe it.

13:30. *Just a few more paces.* The young male with the sunburn jumps in front of my pathway.

"Last call Smith, party of one. Your plane will be departing shortly," announces the Gate Agent over the booming PA. Startled, my foot slips! I attempt to move a half step faster and almost tumble to the floor. I gracefully recover, feeling heat pressed against my face. Inwardly infuriated, I keep my composure; my smile returns. On the carpet the animals are calmer and lined up against the wall watching me as I join my colleagues. *Show time.*



Postage

Liana Young, Venice Bagolor,
Monique Brousseau

Distorted Identity

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

What does it mean to be Filipino?

Is it the Spanish within me?

Is it the American within me?

Is it the Catholic within me?

Is it the dictator within me?

Is it nearly 200 different cultural identities within me?

What does it mean to be Filipino?

If only José Rizal were around today to remind us

what it means to be Filipino.

Moonlit Stars

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

When people normally look up at the night sky,
they see many stars.

When I look at the night sky,

I only see a few

while everything else is darkness.

However, those few stars shine

as bright as the moon

and guide me anyhow.

Bitter Sugar

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

Innocuous for most
carries a whole other meaning for Pinoys.
Grandfathers of old worked the sugar
so that I wouldn't have to.
Sugar wasn't sweet for them
but rather bitter.
They took the bitter sugar,
as they had nothing else.
Sugar stained with tears, sweat, and blood.
No thank you! I will go with honey instead.
We're not bees after all.
Think twice before using that sugar.
As a Pinoy, I know its deception.
Sugar isn't as sweet as it tastes.

Victims No More!

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

They are as smart as men
They are as strong as men
They know pain that men never will
They may have been victims of past
But never shall they go back
They shall only grow from here
Grow stronger and rise
To right the wrongs that we men committed in this world
May women save the world!

Indigenous
Not savages
Victims of savagery

History of the Victors: A Hay(na)ku

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

Indigenous
Not savages
Victims of savagery

Demons Lurking

Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

Aswangs
abhorred by most
condemned as myth
but they are very real.
Ignorance of their existence
will not protect you from them.
Be wary
for they lurk where least expected.
Just when you think you are rid of them
they appear within the hearts of the fearful
as they turn you against yourself.

Diaspora but Always Home

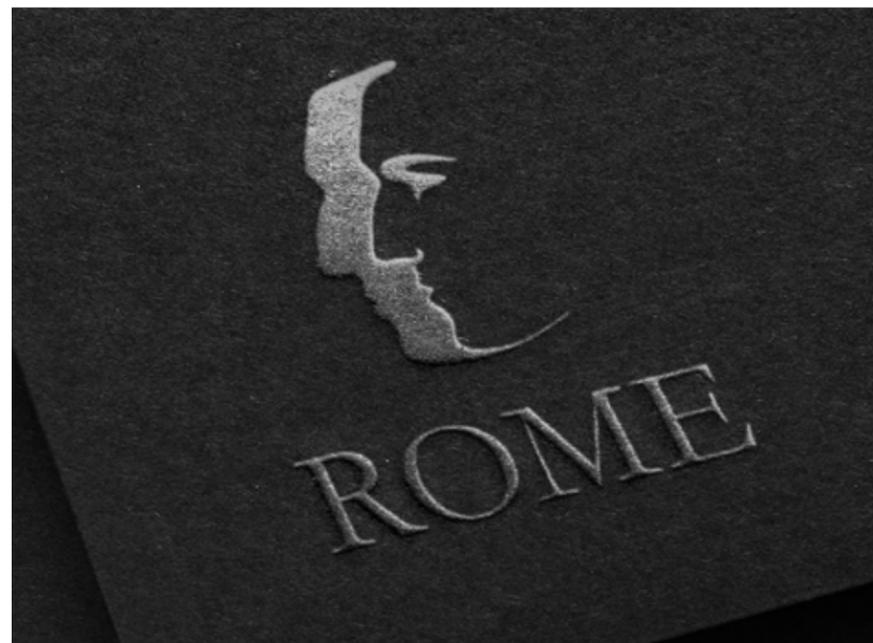
Jonah McNear

ENG 272F

Split from the homeland
Roots severed
Will we last?
True selves put through the test
Missing home
Will we return one day?
Perhaps
But would they recognize us?
Surely they would
We may have left home
But home never left us
Wherever we go
home will never be forgotten.



Two Ladies Logo
Liana Young



City Logo "Rome"
Monique Brousseau

The Fever Dreams of Hell Week

Alexander Young

ENG 100

The judge offered me a choice. She'd said, "You can go to rehab or you can go to jail. The choice is yours."

The choice between Jail and rehab isn't a choice at all; it is tantamount to choosing between life and death. That's all that jail amounted to, as far as I could tell—death. The judge knew this and I knew this. When you're locked away, with your life cut short, while your body rots, cast away in a tomb, the world moves on without you. If that isn't death, it's limbo, at least.

Of course, I chose life. Of course, I chose rehab.

Now Hell Week is upon me. Any Junkie will tell you, the first week of detoxification is the hardest—the most dreaded, when the withdrawal symptoms are at their most excruciating, both mentally and physically. It's hell on earth and it's on its way. I can already feel it, building at the base of my spine. In a matter of hours, the agonizing symptoms that I've been avoiding at all costs will finally catch up with me, will finally have me caught in its clutches—sweating and hurting and longing for just one more hit, if only, to ease the pain. It was to ease the infernal pangs of withdrawals that I had stolen a car—a car that I was caught speeding around in with an expired license and a backseat loaded with even more looted goods. It was all to ease the hunger pains of an addiction.

"I'm a criminal, yes," I had pleaded to the judge, "But I'm only a criminal because I'm an addict. I'm not saying that makes it any better or excuses my behavior. I'm saying: this is what I do. This is not who I am. It's not me. It's my addiction."

And now, lying on a twin bed in my shared room in The Pacific Rehabilitation Clinic, I lie in wait for the sickness I've spent the past two years dodging. I wait. I smoke. I write. I sleep. I dream.

Last night I dreamt:

I'm seated on a couch, surrounded by a house party like something out of a John Hughes comedy, like something out of an '80s teen movie where the parents are out of town and the house is sure to be wrecked by the time the credits roll. The room is dim and misty with smoke. Drunken teenage stereotypes are in abundance. They line the walls, decked out in neon, denim, and high tops, grooving to Spandau Ballet crooning, "I know this much is true."

Beside me on the couch sits the teen idol that time forgot. She's got cherry heart shaped lips that match her freckled cheeks and her androgynous auburn hair that's shorn short in a way that makes her look like the prettiest little boy I've ever seen. Her earrings are absurdly large bedazzled pink peace signs. She's crowned with a black bowler hat like a

sexy hobo. She somehow embodies that impossible combination of both the most popular, unattainable girl on campus and the shy neglected girl lost in the crowd. She's portrayed both roles convincingly in films I've viewed too many times to count. I know every line of dialogue to both her films. Though I haven't seen either movie in years, there was once a time in middle school where I carried the teen idol's head shot taped to my binder in worship of the picture perfect prepubescent girl that I swore I was somehow destined to someday meet.

She's there beside me on the couch in the midst of this rocking house party and I tell her about the picture of her that I once carried with me from class to class and that impossible longing I felt for the first female I ever developed romantic feelings for on the face of the earth.

She tips her head, peace signs sparkling, her indifferent eyes gazing up at me from beneath the rim of her hat. Mildly curious, but mostly just bored, she says, "That's, like, totally tubular, dude."

And I wake up.

I'm seized, all at once, by a rush of pain. The torment washes over me as I awake in a chilling torrent of sweat that soaks my sheets and clothing, that tangles my intestines. My breaths are short and labored. There's an IV bag swishing above me, plugged into my veins, defending against dehydration. *Who put that there?* I wonder. *When did that happen?*

The patient occupying the bed beside me is also suffering the discomfort of detox. He's seizing in his own way—in the way that alcoholics do. Nurses are rushing in and out of the room, their shouting voices nauseating, crippling. I shiver, whimpering. Swaddled in sweat, secreting pure anguish from my pores. Still, I somehow managed to mercifully drift

back toward sleep, to that bottomless abyss that is dreaming --the only escape.

Last night I dreamt:

Saul's single engine Cessna sinks into the ocean, leaking gasoline that pollutes the waves, setting the water ablaze.

The sea is burning as I swim to shore. The Cessna sinks below the flickering horizon behind me. A dense ceiling of grey clouds blankets the storming sky. It was the storm that brought down Saul's Cessna. That and Saul's poor piloting skills. I'm pelted with stinging beads from above and the relentless tide is threatening to swallow me from below. I swim to shore, straining against the current sucking me back toward the flames. I make it to shore. My clothing does not. My slip-on Vans, my board shorts, and tank top are pulled from my body. Crashing waves pummel me, spitting me up onto the beach entirely naked and freezing my testicles off.

I'm nude and helpless on the storming beach and Saul's there with Jenny. Jenny's sitting in the sand. She's shivering in the stinging rain and screaming the way that girls have a tenancy to do in traumatic situations. Like after escaping the flaming rubble of a plane wreck and finding oneself stranded on some foreign shore amidst a raging tropical storm.

Jen sees me standing there and I feel even more naked and vulnerable with her gaze upon my bare body, but she doesn't seem to mind. She's actually relieved to see me. She calls out to me, waving her arms over her head.

I wake up with one arm raised and reaching out for Jenny.

I wake, arm raised, in danger of defecating and

on the verge of vomiting. My guts are all tied in strangling knots that raise my knees into my chest and have me rocking. When I'm using, I'm consistently constipated. I've spent the past two years backed up, shooting junk into my veins and without Junk in my system my bowels respond by evacuating, making up for years' worth of lost time.

My muscles are weak, too feeble to withstand the fevered weight of withdrawal. I barely muster the strength to roll out of bed. Crawling to the bathroom, I miraculously reach the toilet before it's too late and my bowels spontaneously release from both ends.

Sitting on the toilet with a trash bin in my lap, I heave and gush in guttural sync. I get it over with and crawl back from the bathroom with a spinning head, nursing a stabbing headache that pulls me down dizzy to the ground. Whenever I raise my head, attempting to lift myself from off the floor, the room starts to spin, turning my stomach, offsetting my center of gravity. I admit defeat; the vertigo is too great, and I crawl instead, back toward bed, where I nearly make it. But with no strength left to lift my feeble body back onto the bed, I crawl beneath the bed instead, where I fall back to sleep.

Last night I dreamt:

I had that same damn dream again, the one on the track field, where there's my old bully from high school that won't leave me alone.

The bully is taunting me, insulting me, and judging me until I finally give in and punch him. I hit him in the face, hard as fuck. Though my soaring fists don't faze the bully. He doesn't feel it. He doesn't flinch. His one reaction is to snicker, still provoking me, and I keep swinging with all my might at him to no avail.

Finally, I land an effective blow, breaking the bully's jaw, and the bully folds, plummeting backward into

the dirt of the track field. He strikes the back of his head, cracking open his skull, which kills him instantly.

The bully dies and I'm wracked with guilt and overcome with fear. Dark clouds bloom around me in the dreamscape. They close in on all sides, smothering me, ending the dream like falling curtains.

I awake in bed.

This is weird because I seem to remember falling asleep beneath it. Someone must have put me here. That someone must have tucked me in. And I rise to face the day feeling even more pathetic and shameful because of it. My body is heavy, lacking energy. My throat is dry. My voice is hoarse. It hurts to swallow. I lumber slowly out of bed, my clothes still saturated from sweat and stinking. And every action takes intense effort to move, to speak, to breathe, to be.

I daydream for a minute about making a break for it. Whenever I am alone for a second with my thoughts, my thoughts wander back to drugs and I begin to feel desperate to use, and I begin to plot. Maybe I could sneak off the hospital grounds, if only to score a hit to tide me over. And once I'm straight, I'll sneak back into the hospital and continue to undergo treatment while still under the influence.

But that was all wishful thinking. I can barely walk more than a few steps without collapsing from fatigue. Instead, I'm seated by an orderly in a wheelchair and ushered to the morning group therapy meeting.

I cannot keep my head up. I cannot keep my eyes open. I can only listen, which is really all that's expected of me. So, with zero options left and no energy to flee, I sit doubled over in a wheelchair as the voice of an "E-tard" named Gina tells me way too much about her traumatic childhood with her alcoholic father.

And it's all so depressing. And nothing good and everything bad. And people are crying and I want to cry.

Instead, I smoke. I gag, "I think I'm going to be sick" and I'm wheeled into the nearest restroom to spew the black bile of melancholy that's built up in my guts and then it's back to bed where I sleep; where I dream.

Last night I dreamt:

I stop to catch my breath in the courtyard of my elementary school. There's a gunman stalking the campus, taking lives. Children are scattering in every direction. They're screaming and crying for their "Mommies" and "Daddies."

There's a huddle of children following me because as far as I can see, I'm the oldest person present.

"Run for your lives, you idiots!" I order.

But they don't budge, not until I do. They follow me through the open double doors and into the cafeteria where I search for a place for us to hide.

I jog up the steps to the cafeteria's stage, thinking we could lower the curtain and hide behind it. The children behind me scream, and I turn to find a stereotypical ski mask wearing, revolver-toting gunman, aiming his revolver at me.

Bummer.

Helplessly, hopelessly, I raise my hands, surrendering. The children cower behind. I close my eyes. I hear a gunshot, more shrill petrified screams, and when open my eyes I see the color white.

Someone or something grasps me. I feel their arms wrap around mine. I can feel them. I cannot see them. I cannot see myself. I see only the color white.

I struggle against invisible arms clinging to my

invisible body and I hear a voice whisper, "Let go. Let go. You can let go now. It's okay to let go."

I give in, the arms wrapping tighter around me, and their embrace is comforting. I rest my invisible head on an invisible shoulder, finally at ease, not a care in world, not a worry. I see only white and I feel only peace.

I hear another voice. It's Jennifer's. She asks, "Did you have any beautiful dreams last night?"

And I wake up.

Someone, please kill me. I want to die. I can't go on.

In the dim morning light, an orderly asks, "Can I help you with anything this morning?"

I answer, "Will you please hand me a gun so I can blow my brains out?" But he doesn't because he knows I mean it. I notice my roommate—the Alcoholic. He notices me, mouthing the words, "Kill me." He raises a finger gun to his head, sealing our suicide pact.

In the cafeteria, after a single bite, I push away a cup of bland tapioca that upsets my stomach. I struggle to swallow and there's a throbbing twinge stabbing at the roof of my mouth. The cravings to use are gnawing, ever present in the back of my mind, while all other thoughts seem meaningless and dull. The physical withdrawal symptoms are winding down, while the psychological addiction remains as gripping as ever, begging me every solitary second to escape this place.

After all, who am I without my addiction?

The thought frightens me, as I can not summon a single answer from the limitless void of my imagination.

What will I do without it? Who am I, really, and what

is my life truly worth?

Roger—a balled meth head with meth mouth that's been here for almost a month—instructs me to follow him. He shows me the chore schedule. Every patient is assigned a daily itinerary.

"What's the point?" I mumble under my breath.

"What?" He barks.

"Nothing." I lie.

"The point," he explains, "is that you fill the empty spaces with something useful. You busy yourself. The point is that you force yourself. You show up. Then, at the end of the day, you look back at all the chores checked off on your calendar and you know you've accomplished something productive. Even if it's the most menial task. You start small, by scrubbing toilets. But then you start to apply that same mindset to everything. You make plans, you force yourself, you show up, and you achieve. Because without out force, there's no momentum and where are you without momentum? You're nowhere. You're standing still."

At the Morning Group Meeting, I'm able to ignore the undying hunger eating at me for a moment long enough to open up. I decide against breaking out of rehab as I stare out of the meeting room's window, studying the height of the pool decks wrought iron gate. I could easily scale that, but I won't.

At least, not today.

Because I don't know who I am anymore and think it's about time to face myself if only to find out. What if, for the first time in years, I chose honesty instead? What if I decided to be wholly honest with both the group and myself from this day forward, to stand fast in that honestly and simply allow the truth about myself to be?

And once I've admitted the ugly truths about myself that I've spent that past couple of years trying to ignore, I'm hoping that perhaps then I can finally begin to mend the old wounds of the past that have rendered me damaged and with any luck, I'll finally begin to heal.

I open up to the group about Jennifer—how Jenny shall forever remain a mystery to me. I liked Jenny a lot. I maybe loved Jenny. Jenny at least knew that I liked her. I could not keep my feelings hidden from her. Life was too short and I felt too strongly. I told her, openly, and she knew, though the feelings were not mutual. At least, not at first. If nothing else, Jenny liked that I liked her and that was enough for me for a while because I liked liking Jenny. I maybe loved liking Jenny. Though I'm still not sure why she would at least appear to choose me in the end. I can only trust that she did.

She could have just as easily chosen Saul, with his brand-new pilot's license and his father's Cessna, and his invitation to fly her free to Cancun for spring break. I cringe penitently despite myself when I recall how I had selfishly warned her, "If you take this trip with him, you and me, we're through. Our friendship, our 'bond', whatever you want to call it, it's over."

She'd said, "I'm not going with Saul to Cancun. He's flying me there but we're not going together exclusively. A bunch of us are going and this is something you know that I've always dreamt of doing. Why would you stand in the way when I've been handed this once in a lifetime opportunity? You're supposed to be my friend and supportive. And he invited you along too, remember?"

"Yeah," I grumbled, "But he only invited me because he thought it would encourage you. He knew I'd pass. The invitation wasn't genuine. He invited me so that he could say he invited me. He doesn't like me. Not really. And anyway, I don't trust him."

“Trust me,” she said, patiently. “Accept that I’m going to do this no matter what. But trust that you have nothing to worry about. Have a little patience and a little faith and when I come back,” she promised, kissing me for the first time. “I promise I’ll make it worth your while. Agreed?”

I nodded, surprised and overjoyed but unsure of exactly what she was promising. Whatever it was sounded worth my while and worth the wait, or so I thought. Because it’s been two years and I find that I’m still waiting. Because, as it turns out, Saul wasn’t the pilot he claimed to be and apart from a few scattered pieces of debris, his plane was never fully recovered and the bodies of both Jen and Saul are still missing as well. And I shared for the first-time during morning group how sometimes I dream that they survived, that they’re not dead at all but are surviving against the elements somewhere, stranded on some uncharted island. And until someone proves me wrong with indisputable evidence, I’ll continue to hope and dream of Jenny and will continue wondering what might have been had Jenny been able to fulfill her side of our agreement.

I share how it was on the night of Jen’s funeral that I smoked heroin for the first time with Jen’s younger brother Sid, of all people. I got high for the first time and attempted to stay high from that night forward until it was no longer an option and my body could no longer function without narcotics in my system. I was no longer chasing the high. I was running from the withdrawals. Now, after two years of chasing and running, with life leading me in a constant loop, I find myself surrendering to the group, surrendering to my addiction, surrendering with all that’s left of my pathetic wasted life with nothing but impossible dreams and irrational hopes left to carry me, to inspire me, to fuel me.

“I have hope,” I tell them. It’s nearly all that remains

but at least there’s still hope. After all, hope makes all the difference, is the dividing line between Jail and rehab; life and limbo; dreams and reality.

I tell them how I’m hoping things will turn out alright, better in the long run, and all starting today. And I hope, if I take things one day a time, moment by moment, breath by breath, hopefully someday soon, I’ll look back at long last and experience relief, and nostalgia, and even gratefulness for all of this suffering.

Last night I dreamt:

Jen, Saul, and I are still stranded, stuck wading around for rescue on the uninhabited shore of an uncharted island. I’m still stark naked, of course, and we’ve been growing bolder as the days pass, leaving the beach and heading deeper inland in search of sustenance. We follow the same path from the tree line framing the edge of the beach and further into the lush tropical jungle each day.

The storms have ceased. Out on the beach, the ceaseless sun’s scorching rays are beaming down on our burning skin. The sweltering humidity is collecting in the recesses of my reddening body, though the jungle’s dense canopy offers a much-welcomed relief from the harsh, unrelenting sun by splintering its light into narrow shafts that shone through the canopy’s crown to light our way.

Saul gripes pathetically as we trek, listing off all of the little luxuries we took for granted in our once everyday lives and now so mournfully missed.

“No sun block!” Saul whines, “No hairspray! No deodorant! No blow dryer! No toilet paper!”

“No tampons! No birth control! No internet!” Jenny lists along.

“No condoms,” continues Saul.

“No clothes!” I shout, annoyed at Saul who’s wearing his long sleeve shirt as a turban.

“Can I please wear your shirt, Saul?” I beg him.

“No way, José,” is all Saul has to say.

“You’re an asshole, Saul,” I finally admit. “I hate you! I’ve always hated you!”

“Deal with it,” suggests Saul, the asshole.

Jen is content to forage in just her yellow bandeau top and frayed denim cut-off shorts. She offers me her pink t-shirt to wear. I try it on, as I guess her shirt is better than no shirt at all. Only Jen is five-foot-five and I’m five-foot nine and her shirt is two sizes too small and made of a slim cotton-poly blend that’s cropped to bare her midriff. And by covering only my chest and shoulders, her cropped pink shirt somehow manages to emphasize my nakedness as opposed the clothing it.

Jen falls over laughing, down on the foot path, “You look like a little boy!” She laughs, staining her knees in the sandy crimson soil.

And I laugh along with her, feeling naked, helpless, lost, and stupid, marveling at her glistening countenance that I was content to wonder at until the day I die, no matter where I was or for how long.

I give back her shirt, “Thanks anyway,” I say, resigned to my state of nature, finally.

“I tried,” Jen shrugs.

“I know you did,” I smile gratefully.

Rolling thunder shakes the red earth. Lighting flashes and familiar gray clouds loom. They block out the sun as the ground beneath me quakes and fissures, giving way to reveal a bottomless black chasm.

Jen and Saul are quick to dive to safety as the jungle tears in two, as I fumble face first into the gaping divide where I hang, clinging by my fingertips to the crumbling edge of the earth.

I look down, kicking my legs, searching the sheer cliff face for a foothold, dangling above a void too deep for light to penetrate.

“Hold on!” Jen calls down to me, “You have to hold on for me! Please!”

“I c-can’t!” I cry, straining, losing my grip, “I can’t hold on any longer.”

“Hold on, please.” Jenny begs. “Don’t let go!”

“B-but there’s nothing left to hold on to!” I strain.

“Hold on!” Jen urges.

“I can’t!” I cry again as the earth gives way beneath my grip and I fall screaming down into the darkness and...

I wake up.

Above

Nicole Goya

The depthless azure of the sky endures our pain.
It overlooks the inflated spaces we occupy,
instead offering a sanctuary to jaded hearts.
Sometimes it is colorless, a great neutral
lack of emotion drifting effortlessly
beyond our explosive interactions.
Flames devour the dusk as we wind down
from exhausting hours, so that we may
indulge in passions far beyond our reach.
A backdrop to our mundane lives.
It remains, day after year after century,
to remind us how to find solace
at the core of our being.



Hawaii Surf Riders Logo

Anthony Diep

Hunger

Nicole Goya

Adding and multiplying behind my thoughts,
larger amounts than I can handle,
feeling empty after a full plate,
guilt and anger for the wrong choices because
there is not enough time to have it all.
I am bored, I am nervous, never a true reason.
Mixing this and that will not do,
the shadows disappearing and reappearing
with pains ignored and endured,
instinctive glances and silent judgments,
hands brushing against the stomach before dawn.
Pulling flesh back, sugar like an unwelcome
downpour on my head. It scampers around me now,
the ceaseless beat of worrying
has softened somewhat and my tastebuds
have awoken from a strange, deep slumber.
There are ripples across the surface of my brain
sometimes, and I can't hear the numbers anymore,
it is all a game, except
for my body glowing
amidst the ruins of four years.



Hawaii Surfriders Jersey
Anthony Diep

Māluualua 'O Hale-'O-Lono

Kaydence-Lee Woolsey

HWST 270

O ke au i kahuli wela ka honua
O ke au i kahuli lole ka lani
O ke au i kuka'iaka ka la.
E ho'omalalama i ka malama
O ke au o Makali'i ka po
O ka walewale ho'okumu honua ia
O ke kumu o ka lipo, i lipo ai
O ke kumu o ka Po, i po ai
O ka lipolipo, o ka lipolipo
O ka lipo o ka la, o ka lipo o ka po
Po wale ho--'i
Hanau ka po
Hanau Kumulipo i ka po, he kane
Hanau Po'ele i ka po, he wahine
("The Kalakaua Text")

The fame of the people derives from being descendants of La'ama'oma'o, the sorcerer who contained all winds in his polished gourd in a woven bag. La'ama'oma'o originated from the isle of Kaua'i, Kapa'a, devoted to his fishing craft until the wind of sailing clutched his heart with desire, and he set out in the midst of his line weaving. Some say that the incomplete fishing line of La'ama'oma'o became the reef off the coast of Kapa'a, hook included.

La'ama'oma'o sailed on his wa'a, Makani-a-ka-maumau (constant winds). He sailed to Kahiki, landing first at Piha'ena of Mo'orea, welcomed by the chief

there, Pilika'aiea. Next he sailed to Kahiki, Māhina, welcomed by the chief there, Lanakawai. Next he sailed to Ha'apūpuni, welcomed by Toketananā, and climbed to Fa'arumai waterfall. He next sailed to Tepati. Next to Papeari. Next to To'ahotu. La'ama'oma'o managed to visit every ahupua'a of Kahiki. La'ama'oma'o finalized his tour at Arue, welcomed by the chief Pōmare.

The night before La'ama'oma'o was to sail back to Hawai'i, while he was asleep, an urgent message reached the ears of Pōmare.

"The winds are gone!" Despair filled the voice of the messenger. "Each ahupua'a that this ta'ata (human being, stranger) visited has later reported a lack of wind upon his leaving. Reports from Mo'orea, Piha'ena are the same! This man may be the cause! Do not let him leave," warned the messenger, "until you discover the cause!"

Pōmare, deeply disturbed by this, called upon his guardian, a giant eel with bright black teeth and a large protruding lower jaw. He made offerings of coconuts, gourds of taro, bowls of hallucinogenic roots, and three canoes full of fish, and commanded it to slither around La'ama'oma'o wa'a for three days and nights. In the morning, as La'ama'oma'o was getting ready to set sail, he noticed the dark shape of the giant eels circling his wa'a, making it impossible to sail.

Frustrated, La'ama'oma'o called out to Pōmare:

Alas!
Who is most white?
Who is most salted?
Who is salted like eyes of green water?
White is his cowardice!
Nāna nō e malama, (He will take care of you)
This grand water.
Who saw Kahiki?
I see,
I see,
I see.
Eyes, eyes, eyes eyes.
Alas!
Who is most white?
As souls churn, so does leaves.
Large fern that covered the shadow.
Churn! Strong!
On the path to Kahiki.
Set firmly. Arue.
Alas!
E Pōmare!

La'ama'oma'o's mana could be heard and felt throughout Kahiki. Pōmare, unshaken, responded:

Gods, thee Ta'arua,
Spine of his beloved fin.
Finely woven, a luxury none find,
Single of great tide.
Tides rise,
Tides rise,
Tides rise more,
Tides calm.
Of the steep cliffs.
Guts of coconuts trees,
Breathe 'round the flurry of shimmer fins.
Light in the eyes.

Rush.
E Ta'arua.

E La'ama'oma'o.

Sure enough, a huge gam of tiger sharks came and made it seem like the giant eel was chasing them around wa'a Makani-a-ka-maumau and slowly being eaten whole. La'ama'oma'o's mana cooled and he stayed another day, waiting for the feeding frenzy and giant eel to leave. In the morning, La'ama'oma'o packed and readied to sail again, but saw that the giant eel was still circling his wa'a.

Again, La'ama'oma'o called out to Pōmare:

Alas!
Alas!
Who is most white?
Who is most salted?
Who is salted like eyes of green water?
White is his cowardice!
Pahe'e i ka ilikai, (Sliding on the sea)
This grand water.
Who saw Kahiki?
I see,
I see,
I see.
Eyes, eyes, eyes eyes.
Alas!
Alas!
Who is most white?
Open the no toothed smile.
Wedged between coral, bright red.
Churn! Strong!
On the path to Kahiki.
Set firmly. Arue.
Alas!
Alas!
E Pōmare!
Pōmare, again unshaken from La'ama'oma'o powerful oli, responded:
Gods, thee Ta'arua,
Spine of his short fin.

Sharp in clasp,
 Single of great tide.
 Tides rise,
 Tides rise,
 Tides rise more,
 Tides calm.
 Of the steep cliffs.
 Guts of coconuts trees,
 Breathe 'round the flurry of shimmer fins.
 Light in the eyes.
 Rush.
 E Ta'aroa.
 E La'ama'oma'o.

Sure enough, a huge school of 'ulua came and were chased by the giant eel around wa'a Makani-a-ka-maumau, slowly being eaten whole. La'ama'oma'o's mana cooled and he stayed another day, waiting for the feeding frenzy and giant eel to leave. In the morning, La'ama'oma'o packed and readied to sail again, but saw that the giant eel was still circling his wa'a yet again!

La'ama'oma'o called out to Pōmare:

Alas!
 Alas!
 Alas!
 Who is most white?
 Who is most salted?
 Who is salted like eyes of green water?
 White is his cowardice!
 Ma loko nō o kona mana, (Within his power)
 This grand water.
 Who saw Kahiki?
 I see,
 I see,
 I see.
 Eyes, eyes, eyes eyes.
 Alas!
 Alas!

Alas!
 Who is most white? Open the no toothed smile.
 Wedged between coral, bright red.
 Churn! Strong!
 On the path to Kahiki.
 Set firmly. Arue.
 Alas!
 Alas!
 Alas!
 E Pōmare!

Pōmare, yet again unshaken from La'ama'oma'o powerful oli, responded:
 Gods, thee Ta'aroa,
 Spine of his skinny fin.
 Sharp in clasp,
 Single of great tide.
 Tides rise,
 Tides rise,
 Tides rise more,
 Tides calm.
 Of the steep cliffs.
 Guts of coconuts trees,
 Breathe 'round the flurry of shimmer fins.
 Light in the eyes.
 Rush.
 E Ta'aroa.
 E La'ama'oma'o.

Sure enough, a huge school of scad fish came and were chased by the giant eel around wa'a Makani-a-ka-maumau, slowly being eaten whole. La'ama'oma'o's mana did not cool this time; it increased instead, and he was not going to wait for the morning. La'ama'oma'o grabbed his wind gourd and cut himself a long 'ohe (bamboo) pole, sharpened at the top. As soon as La'ama'oma'o saw the giant eel that circled his wa'a, he immediately opened his magic wind gourd and called forth all the winds of Tahiti, and commanded it to beat down and pin the giant eel. The wind immediately went out and pinned the giant eel

down. He took the long 'ohe pole and cut open its belly. Out sprang all the fish and sharks it devoured whole. It soon died, turning into what is now known as the Arue Fault.

Pōmare, seeing that La'ama'oma'o has indeed taken and commanded the wind, became enraged. Pōmare ordered all his men to seize La'ama'oma'o and his magic gourd. La'ama'oma'o, seeing that he was in danger, packed all his belongings, including the 'ohe pole he used to kill the giant eel. La'ama'oma'o sailed back to Hawaii. All along the way Pōmare and his men gave chase in their own vessels. Each time one of the vessels caught up to La'ama'oma'o, La'ama'oma'o cut

a piece of his 'ohe off and struck the enemy vessel. It wasn't until La'ama'oma'o reached Moloka'i-Nui-A-Hina did La'ama'oma'o manage to sink the last enemy vessel. By that time, he was extremely tired and hungry. He stopped at Hale-O-Lono, married the beauty of Kaluako'i, Kalua'oko'i, and remained there until he passed. He commanded that all his descendants would bear the name of one of the many winds of Moloka'i-Nui-A-Hina. His bones were to be placed in his magic wind gourd and given to Māui, and the final 'ohe segment that remained from La'ama'oma'o's battle against Pōmare's fleet was to be placed in the wind caves of Hale-O-Lono.

"The Kalakaua Text." The Sacred Texts, <https://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/ku/ku31.htm> Accessed 9 Feb. 2021.



*E ho'ohanohano 'ana i nā mo'olelo a me nā moe'uhane o ko mākou nā kūpuna.
 (Honoring the stories and dreams of our ancestors.)* Iwalani Clayton