

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

SHARED STORIES ANTHOLOGY 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Now in its 13th year of publication, *Shared Stories* continues to fulfil its aim of offering a diverse range of writing and artwork across Catholic schools in Victoria. In 2018, we had 25 schools involved in the project, with over 600 students and teachers working to collect, edit and produce the published material.

The hopes, dreams and challenges of our young writers and artists, as expressed in this anthology, serve once again as an inspiration to a broader world that is too often in despair. We honour our young people, who have the courage to share their talents with an audience of many thousands of readers.

*Shared Stories* would not be possible without the generous support of institutions that believe in the transformative power of language and art. We acknowledge the following people for the particular interest that they take in *Shared Stories*, which is pivotal to the success of the project:

- Damon Carr (Projects Officer, Design and Print Office), Archdiocese of Melbourne
- Dr Matthew Ryan (Deputy Head of School, School of Arts), Australian Catholic University
- Adam Dixson (Head of Marketing) and Megan Peterson (Marketing Communications Manager), CCI
- Aden Carter & Brad Wilson, Hornet Press
- Paul Steward (Regional Manager – Customer Experience), Catholic Super
- Francesca Ohlert, *The Grumpy Swimmer* bookshop, Elwood.



## SHARED STORIES SCHOOLS FOR 2018

Aquinas College  
Catholic Regional College, Melton  
Catholic Regional College, North Keilor  
Catholic Regional College, St Albans  
CBC St Kilda  
De La Salle College  
Emmaus College  
Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School  
Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington  
John Paul College, Frankston  
Lavalla Catholic College  
Marymede Catholic College  
Star of the Sea College  
St Aloysius College, North Melbourne  
St. Columba's College, Essendon  
St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East  
St James' Catholic Primary School, Brighton  
St John's Regional College, Dandenong  
St Kevin's College, Toorak  
St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond  
St. Peter's College, Cranbourne  
Siena College, Camberwell  
Simonds Catholic College  
Whitefriars College  
Xavier College

## FRONT COVER DESIGN

Lilah Ross

Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

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This design reflects the difference between a simple life and a stressful one. Using contrasting lines depicting the feeling of stress beneath the surface, colourful bubbles float away from what was originally holding them down. This signifies a sense of freedom and release. My design is aimed at creating a relaxed and carefree mood, as well as promoting a change in lifestyle and outlook.

## BACK COVER DESIGN

Maya Frawley

Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

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My design encourages people to get out and experience new places, breaking the boundaries of what they are used to. The contrast between extremely different places such as the beach and space, gives the viewer the idea that they have no limitations to the places they can go. This design ultimately reflects the idea of experiencing new things and living freely.

# WELCOME

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Peggy O'Neal · President, Richmond Football Club

Is it possible to 'live simply' today? It often seems that living simply cannot co-exist with demands of modern life and all the things in which we must be (or want to be) involved.

For me, to 'live simply' does not mean to live a simple life. I know that what I want to do professionally and personally results in my schedule sometimes being too full and that my work as a lawyer and as a non-executive director usually requires problem-solving and analysis of complex matters.

However, remembering to withdraw from the demands of life from time to time and to 'live simply' provides a firm foundation for being able to handle my responsibilities and to better cope with the human challenges that come my way.

When events seem overwhelming, I draw sustenance from engaging in, reflecting on and remembering simple human moments; doing so gives me perspective. Whether watching a storm across the bay, feeling the sun on the first warm day of spring, smelling new-mown grass, sharing a joke or a story with family and friends, patting my pets or attending a live performance: these simple things restore me. They bring me happiness, give richness to my life experience and make me grateful for each day – even the ones that aren't going my way.

I have pledged to myself to always find time to live simply (as that makes me remember what is truly important) and never to forego the rewards of living simply when confronting the complexities of the world. ■



Ishika Rai

Year 12 · John Paul College, Frankston

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*A Drop of Simplicity*

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It's a gift to be simple, it's a gift to be free,  
it's a gift to come down where you ought to be  
and when we find ourselves in the place just right  
it will be in the valley of love and delight  
(Elder Joseph Brackett, 1848)



**Cacilia Riak**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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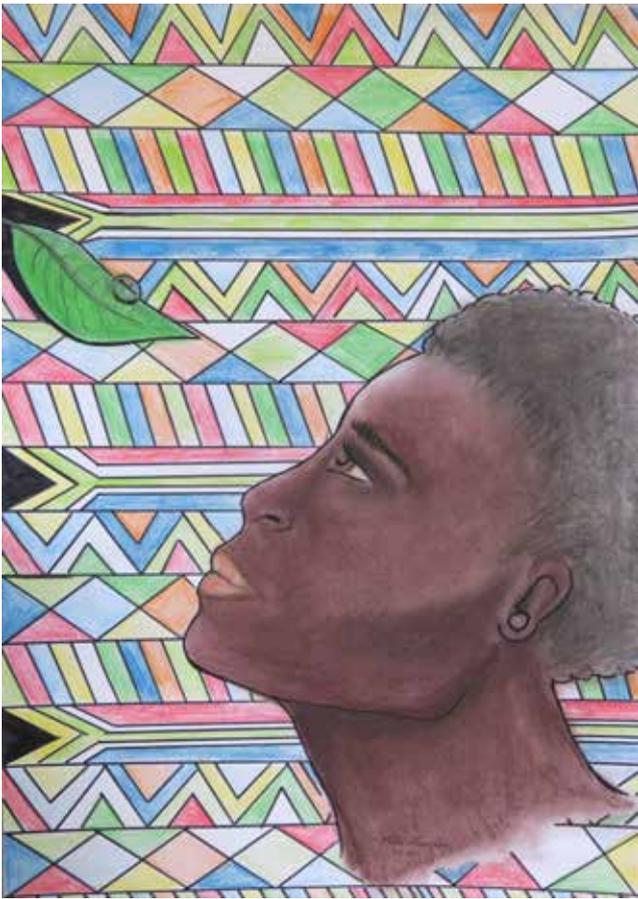
*Acrylic Painting*



**Bella Wolfe**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Ink*



**Téa Mancini**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*The Complexity of Simplicity*



**Isabella Iaccino**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Obscurity*

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We are so concerned with trying to keep up with the business of life that we fail to really see what is important to us. The colour in our lives begins to wane and before we know it our lives are routine and colourless. It is time that we stop and brush away those things that obscure the beauty of living so that we can simply live.

# THE COMPLEXITY OF SIMPLICITY

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*Téa Mancini · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

And there it is.  
The drop of morning dew that sits so solemnly  
on that leaf.  
It is so simple, the way it slowly droops as if  
caught in a pocket of time that runs slow.  
And the leaf, also follows thus as it dips with  
the weight of the dew.  
  
And that is it.  
The simplest motion held together by one  
complex system.  
As if one particle could be eliminated and the  
whole thing would rupture.  
Sometimes, something else might fall onto the  
leaf, like the dew of another.  
And the disturbance tends to ruin the scheme.

This is parallel to my life, and that of many  
others.  
A simple life that can be so easily distorted by  
circumstances.  
A simple life that cannot be lived simply.  
  
This is my life, like the drop of morning dew on  
a leaf.  
Slowly waiting to fall and hoping to the heavens  
that I am not forced to drop too early. ■

# CAMPING AT TIDAL RIVER

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*Angus Cormack · Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*

Sleeping on the floor  
No one knocking on the door  
  
No travel in the car  
Cycling really far  
  
Losing time, no clocks  
No shoes, no socks  
  
Bathing in the sea  
Dinner on your knee  
Living simply.

Mountains reaching high  
Touching the sunset in the sky  
  
Waves hitting the rocks  
Birds flying in large flocks  
  
The wind is unforgiving  
This is simply living. ■



**Flynn Chesterman**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

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*'The fish and the hunt', Studio Arts*

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My painting shows the theme of action and drama through the life of fish and the hunt. I chose to show the fish swimming at high speed through the water and about to catch its prey. The smaller fish are startled and afraid as they swim away in chaos. I have painted the figures in acrylic paint to get detail and precision. I wanted to have a vivid, vibrant blue underwater aesthetic so I used spray paint to get the subtle blue and aquamarine tones of the ocean.



**Shae Whyte**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

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*'The power', Studio Arts*

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This artwork explores the ideas of darkness, the occult and power. My subject is overcome with a raw energy, which courses through her and out of her hands through lightning. Her face is obscured by her hair which is also chaotically reacting to her onset of energy. She is a dark figure who is ominous and also familiar in her appearance.

# BLACK OCEAN

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Caitie Jones · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Black Ocean

The beach is still and quiet,  
The sand untouched  
The birds flying high  
Chasing around the sky

My mind's beach is the opposite  
Filled with dark skies and harsh storms  
Sandcastles crushed  
Hopes destroyed

The black ocean rages  
Against my soul  
The waves reach the shore  
I can't hold back  
My black ocean overflows  
Onto others

And then the sun spoke  
The sea waved  
And said, "You can do more  
Than you think you can  
Because I only wave  
And I only shine  
But you can do both  
And change the world  
One horizon at a time."

My black ocean  
Is finally blue  
Shining brighter  
Than I ever knew ■



Ellie Wanless  
Year 12 · Aquinas College

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Studio Arts. Mixed media



**Chantal Klep**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

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*Studio Arts. Appropriation of The Shadow by Charles Blackman*



**Gaille Canceran**  
*Year 12 · St. Peter's College*

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*I feel, therefore I am*



Taylah Harrison  
Year 9 · St. Peter's College

# BEYOND THE BULWARKS

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Leonardo Balsamo · Year 12 · Emmaus College

Bleak beige bulwarks;  
Blockades on thought  
Fortify the vessel  
But the crew is left short.

Banality wails, 'hind the buzzing green screen  
The swell of the sea fades to past memory.  
Reality boils, with its matter of fact,  
The oceans of lust into puddles of lapse  
And so laps too, does that tiresome tide;  
Codified pride inside a dry status quo pocket,  
Rocketing rickety dinghies down to Davy Jones' locker  
With no fair maid to keep safe in their locket,  
Save the cruel mistress Content,  
Contempt infests her eye sockets.

Worms, they squirm, in the once sleek ship,  
Teak timber planks cracked and broken and chipped,  
'Mongst mossy marauders the fungoid deploys  
Rotting away the holy hull, wholly destroyed.  
This ship that once sailed,  
Once flailed, once flagged,  
Once drifted in dreams past the port by Baghdad,  
Now no longer sails 'pon the straits of Desire.  
The Ambition is sunk.  
Shipwrecked, in a miserable mire.

Such a grand wreck, so sorry a state  
How beset this, malevolent fate?  
No naval force could compare  
To the calamitous canon that shot the beast there,  
The rarefied ordinary; to praise complex feats,  
Retreat the North Star for a seat with the Greeks,  
Yet what they seek seems to stray  
Away: "Fire away! Belay the great grey!"  
From the jewels which they sought,  
They settle for pieces of eight.

Galleons will always fall to the sloop,  
As whales will beach; beseech breaching as minnows.  
For living life large is a task not worth the costs  
When monotony calls to mend this celestial fray;  
The rope of life grows shorter each day  
And to ensure its security, is to accost,

The effort with which we attack our glossed  
Goals now lost, in a melancholy void.  
Complications in life never seemed so jocund,  
For compromise has now overtaken and won.

Once it was desire, fantasy, delight  
To contradict adventure was to spite its great  
might,  
And a mite it might be, for now in a snap,  
We inoculate these notions like the back of a black  
rat.

Sinking in woe;  
My sextant hits  
Focal point fallacies  
In present day thinking.

Spawn from hell they do not, but by boat they do  
come  
And not from down Styx, but from fortunes  
rotund,  
And an asinine telescope shows no worlds beyond,  
But a deglazing of eyes leaves much to be shunned.

Depraved desks start to shudder,  
With the shift of the rudder,  
Caustic clocks collapse,  
Deadlines bow to the stern,  
And spurned from the dhow is the cause for  
concern.

To liberate. To mutiny  
'Gainst the punitive scrutiny  
Of a self centred 'captain'  
Who, admiral in command,  
Submerses free minds in swells of reprimand.

Admirable? No, subversion is key,  
To venture past limits of the safe man's quay.  
To live vicarious is to be a great gull,  
Precarious living lifts a man from his shell,  
To swim tropical waters 'till he hears the death  
knell.  
And what is to simplify life's great unfilled map?  
But to concoct confusion and navigate inapt;  
Island hopping from sand bars to arid atolls,  
Poling in hopes that amongst the sad shoals,  
Atlantis will rise from the shallow depths below.

Extracting life's joy for this benign quest  
Convulutes desire with the baseness of sundries,  
Emancipate yourselves from the shackles of  
safety,  
Cease Atlantic-like trade of souls for bad-  
Mondays.  
No more drafts in dark,  
No more sleepless night shifts,  
No more moored to poor doors  
That rotate the same 'bliss'  
Leading towards... naught but to doubt.  
Chart your own course, form your own route.

Simple to do, yet suffused with suspense,  
Submerged in surrounds of cesspit serpents' sense:  
"A society of sirens," serenading your plea,  
Simply put, this be not endless frivolity.  
But what is a shanty without its dark roots?  
Did its symphony not spawn from the blood of  
men's boots?  
And what is the man who disgraced Persevere?  
But a man with no heart, no mettle... no Reverie.  
So simply live fellows, do not settle for less,  
For a man who lives simply; his dream is his  
compass. ■



**Natasha Jablonsky**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*My World vs. Theirs*

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My artwork is about not needing materialistic items to entertain yourself and being able to create a little fantasy escape for yourself where the only rules are your own, as opposed to others who obsess over money and objects.

# BROKEN PRIDE BROKEN PRIDE

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Madison Evans · Year 9 · St Aloysius College

I'm surprised the concrete slabs that cover the floor haven't cracked yet. Thousands of people walk this Main Street every single day, yet not a single crack is in sight. The sky flourishes with the most vibrant blue colour I've seen; spotted with crisp, white clouds. This world buzzes with life. This world is strong and powerful. This world is wealthy; yet why do I sit at the bottom?

I sit on the cold pavement, legs crossed, with a few warm blankets all around me. I have one woven straw bag; that holds the excess food. The bag was given to me by an older lady, with sad eyes. The wrinkles devoured her face, yet she seemed so kind and youthful. She reluctantly handed me the bag, and gave me a sympathetic smile, and then hurried off. Thinking about that account makes my stomach churn, because the look on her face was all too familiar. But she also keeps me sane, because I know that there are people out there willing to help people like me; at least I hope there is. I also have my most prized possession with me. An old baseball hat. The hat is torn apart, and the fabric is lifting off the base of the hat. It's a pale blue colour, with an emblem on the very front. That hat means so much to me. It was my father's hat; before I left society of course. I keep the hat upside down, in front of me, begging for spare change. I've come to a conclusion though; rich people are heartless.

On a good day, I'll get around \$14. It's enough to buy me something small from the local fast food store. They are the days that keep me going. The days that someone talks to me is even better. I would prefer a conversation over food any day. I'm hungry for human interaction. Some days are good, but majority are hard. I hold onto my pride and hope as much as I can, but everyday I can feel it slipping in between my sweaty hands. I go hungry most days. I go cold most days. I don't have anything to do. I don't have friends. I have absolutely no one.

My body is numb. Physically, I can't feel myself anymore. The harsh and icy winters slowly kills your will to live. I'll sit inside warm shopping centres sometimes, to try and thaw myself out. Usually it doesn't work – usually I just get spat on. My body is numb from the pain though. The pain of people staring at me. The pain of people walking in front of me in expensive suede heels, and don't even dare to look at me, and don't even dare to help me out. The pain of seeing a young child throw a tantrum because the mother didn't get the correct sized fries, and throwing them to the ground in frustration. It ruins me. It hurts me. My body is constantly covered in pain and angst, yet people tell me I don't try hard enough to build a new life for me. It's hard when people tell you that you don't try, when they don't even know how you ended up on the street. People just assume that I'm some stereotypical 'drugged-up' person, that used all of their money to supply my addiction. Then they just assume that I got kicked out of my house and now I'm here. Which makes me even angrier.

As much as it's hard living with nothing; I'm okay with it. I can deal with the stares of people, and the judging eyes and the pity looks. I'm okay with it. I'm safe. I'm safe from him, and I'm safe from the world. People assume that I need big money and a mansion to be happy. I don't. I need the simple things, which I've got. I have my broken pride, and my blankets and my cap and my bag. For now, I'm just safe from him, which is more than I could ever be thankful for.

In my life, deep down, I've always known that you don't need sparkly rings to be happy.

And now that I don't have any of that,

I'm okay. ■

# CHOSEN

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Kyarah Pumo · Year 8 · St Aloysius College

**W**hy did I have to be chosen?

I was ordinary until I liked him. I was normal. I played ball games like the other kids and played tiggie every lunch time I had the chance, breathless but wanting to run more. I would laugh with my friends until my throat was red raw. We would goof around, loving our lives. When I went home, my parents would always be there with a smile as big as the moon and would engulf my eleven-year old body in a hug so tight, I thought they would never let go.

Now they don't. I miss those days, the days where I felt as though there was nothing I would ever have to worry about. Then I ran for the thrill of it, now I run because I must. Just to get away from them all. I miss the way it felt to love your life. To love yourself.

Why did I have to be chosen?

It has only been two years but ever since I trusted them with my secret my parents will not touch me. They will not speak to me. Will not even bare to look at me in my eyes. The kids won't play with me at lunch and I miss the days of tiggie with my

friends. I miss having friends. I have not laughed in so long.

Why did I have to be chosen?

Now, the kids at high school never miss a chance to bully me, to put me down even though I feel as though I can't sink any lower into the pit that is despair. That is giving up. That is hopeless. I feel as though I am a monster. A mutation of the person I had once been. I feel as though I was never meant to live in the first place.

Why did I have to be chosen?

I never wanted to play this role in the story that is my life. I never wanted to like him. I did not choose a life in which to for my friends to abandon me because of who the universe forced me to fall for. I did not choose a life in which my parents to be so ashamed of me that they could not even look in my direction. I did not choose a life where I was an outcast, a part of society that was looked down upon.

I did not choose to be gay.

Why did I have to be chosen? ■



**Joshua Chioda**  
Year 7 · Whitefriars  
College

*Smiling in The Face  
of Nature*

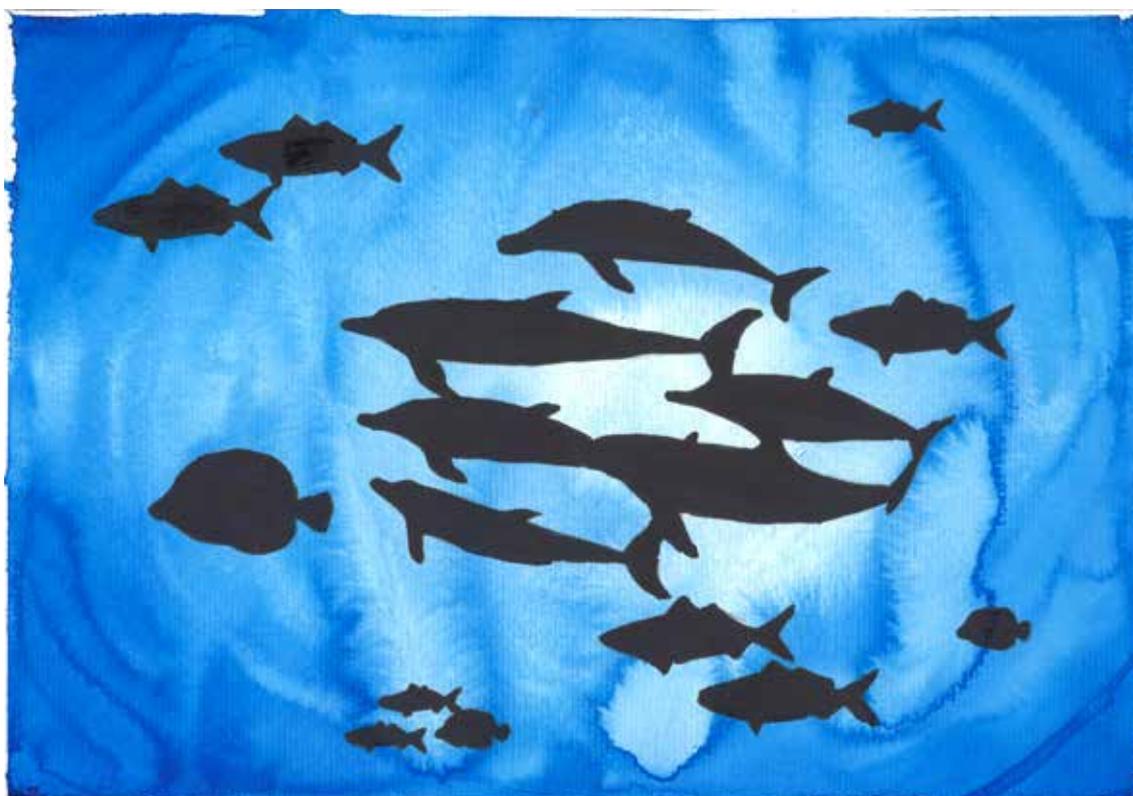
My images are based on nature and the colours reflect happiness. My artworks are symbols of the natural environment and reflect the basic pleasures in life can bring a smile to your face.

# EDUCATION

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Isabella Herben · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

At school I learn PE  
It teaches me all the fitness skills I need  
I also learn cooking which could give me ideas to make a menu  
In English we will be making our own auto biographic comic In Humanities we have learnt  
about the poor areas of Jakarta  
I learn Italian too. In primary school last year, I also learnt this subject  
The Italian word for thirteen is tredici  
For science I'm making a power point about the Alpine dingo  
I enjoy being a year 7, this year, in two thousand and eighteen ■



**Faith Farmer**  
*Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*

# UNAWARENESS

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Jonathon Taylor · Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

## Saturday of October 18th 2am:

The wind howled shattering the glass. Startled, the man woke. Frightened and unaware, he began to panic in the pitch-black room. Confused of his surroundings, he cried out, “Where..., where, am I?” His trembling voice faded away in the darkness. No one responded. His eyes gradually adapted to the darkness. He was just able to see his surroundings. After long minutes of confusion, there was a deafening screech coming from inside the walls. Suddenly, a wind-up toy was heard walking toward him. The man began screaming for help as the toy got closer, the man screamed and screamed until...

## Friday of October 17th 7:30am:

The man woke up with a terrible headache and a realistic memory of a dream. ‘Just a dream’ he thought ‘nothing to be afraid of’. It was just a regular day. He got up, got ready and went to work. The man worked in an office building, just another normal day. While the man was completing some paper work, he heard a screeching noise. The man fell to the floor, screaming. His co-workers rushed to his aid. Confused, the man realised his co-workers didn’t hear the deafening scream. For the rest of the day, the man was in shock.

## Friday of October 17th 1:00pm:

The shocked and confused man asked to leave work early. His boss agreed and he leaves at 5:00 pm.

## Friday of October 17th 5:30pm:

On the man’s walk home, he notices the streets are empty except for a man dressed in black. As the night begins to darken and the cold winds blows, he begins to grow suspicious of the events around him. The man in black was staggering behind him. He took a dark alley to make sure the man wasn’t following him. He waited for the man in black to pass, but instead he took the same alley. The man grew extremely suspicious and ran all the way back to his apartment.

## Friday of October 17th 6:15pm:

A knock is heard on the front door...

## Saturday of October 18th 2am:

The wind howled shattering the glass. Startled, the man woke up, frightened and unaware. The man screamed for help, but not a soul could hear him. To the man’s horror, a deafening scream and a wind-up toy made an entrance. All of a sudden, a man’s voice, spoke, “Don’t bother trying, nobody can hear you”. The other man, startled by the voice, replied, “Who, who, are you?” His trembling voice faded away. No one replied. The man, bordering on insanity, screamed for help. Suddenly lights flickered on and blinded the man for a couple seconds. The lights revealed a man in black standing in corner. “Who are you!? What did I do to you!?” the man yelled furiously. “You ruined my life” the man said calmly, “So I’m going to ruin yours”. As the man said those last words, he turned off the lights and left the room, leaving the man in complete shock... ■



Blake Couling  
Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

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Untitled

# EMPTY SPACES

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Daniela Vinaccia · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

*This creative piece is based on the film, 'Rear Window'. Daniela chose to develop the backstory of one of the characters, Miss Lonelyhearts.*

*For this piece, Daniela was selected as the recipient of the Australian Catholic University Writing Award for 2018.*

**7:00pm**

**Thirty minutes until The Date.**

The time goes by so slowly. With every ominous tick of the second hand creeping on the wood trimmed clock on the sideboard, my heart beats a little harder. The time for The Date nears.

I sit under the golden, muted light of a rose-coloured lamp that I inherited from my grandmother. This was one of the only items that was rescued from the wreck that was my family life over the past five years. My hand trembles slightly as I try to apply my mascara and scarlet lipstick. *For lips and matching fingertips* is what the Revlon ad said. If I wear the requisite red lipstick and red nail polish, then maybe I could look like those real women in *Harper's Bazaar*; flawless and beautiful.

I remind myself that I will never be able to look like Kim Novak or Grace Kelly. I will not be able to defy the ageing process. Their skin is smooth and luminous. No blemishes, just perfection. In contrast, I require an inch of foundation to mask those telltale signs of ageing and weathering. Men reject the ageing process in women. It reminds them of their own mortality. At least I have cleansed myself of the layers of dust from my past. The dust is gone but so is any sense of community that I once enjoyed. As my mother always said, "in order to impress, you must look your best!" It is so ironic that her life now is the very opposite.

Her money. I forgot to send that yesterday. I have been thinking about tonight's Date all week and haven't had time to worry about much else.

**7:06pm**

**Twenty-four minutes until The Date.**

It has become my monthly ritual to place two crumpled five-dollar bills in the empty envelope marked 'Stillwater OK 74074'. My distant aunt had told me about my mother's cancer diagnosis. My aunt is the type of person I only ever see at funerals. She seems to revel in grief. As for my mother, I still haven't been able to put pen to paper to comfort her. I don't know what I would say. What can I say? The only family that I have left in this world is slowly withering away and I can't do anything to stop it.

Just the thought of returning to that crumbling town of Stillwater frightens me. How could I return to a place that ripped away everyone I ever cared about? My father, my brother and now my mother.

My father. He was meant to be unlike other men. He cared for and respected me. But most importantly he let me believe that his love would be unconditional. On the day he vanished, he broke my heart; a heart that was yet to be touched by any lover. We were always waiting for the day that my father's dark brown eyes, slick brown hair and muscular, lean body would return. We were hoping he would say that he had been working as a labourer to earn money for the family. The gate, collapsing slightly on its hinges, hasn't closed fully since the day he vanished across the dusty horizon.

Not long after my father's abandonment, my boyfriend left me. I suspect that he no longer wished to endure my family situation. I haven't been able to love anyone since. Sometimes it is just easier this way.

**7:13pm**

**Seventeen minutes until The Date**

It is the vision of my mother that haunts me the most. I can still see her gnarled and beaten hands as she scrubbed floors in a barren attempt to wash the layers of dust from our home. Her weather-beaten face, with those sunken light blue eyes, would occasionally glance at me as I sat watching her. She would never question me as to why I didn't offer to assist. She knew what the answer would be.

Futility. Sheer futility.

The place was a dump and no end of cleaning could make it different. No end of cleaning would see her husband return from wherever he was. No end of cleaning would restore the mangled body of her beloved son, blown apart by a German land mine somewhere in a foreign land. Those light blue eyes, like ice. They were kindly but distant, as if a light of love and hope had been extinguished.

She was a shell.

**7:25PM**

**Five minutes until The Date**

The evening bustle intensifies outside my window. I feel so utterly alone, even though there is some sense of joy in the apartments around me. My heart rate increases to match the pace of the noise outside. I don't really know or understand what I am afraid of. Maybe it's something that is so

deeply embedded within me that it can't really be understood.

The moment has come. Should I meet this man or should I abandon the dream that he could be 'the one'? Given how my life has been, there really is no choice. I decide to walk down and post the envelope containing the two crinkled five-dollar bills to my mother. Once again, I couldn't bring myself to put a letter inside.

I return to my apartment and turn off the lamp. I pause in the dim light and listen to the hum of the street below and the sound of 'Mona Lisa' being sung in communal voice in another apartment. I close the door gently behind me.

7:30PM

As I walk to the bar, I know that I am ready to join this community. I am a void but even a void can be filled with love and trust.

I see him waiting, wearing a French navy suit, red and yellow tie with a white handkerchief in his suit pocket, just as promised.

I am a mixture of excitement and panic; joy and dread.

I cannot do this. I am not ready.

Before he sees me, I turn and walk away, back to the safety of my apartment.

My time for adventure will come.

But not yet. ■



**Luke Mallia**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

*'Australian desert – Isolation', Studio Arts*

My theme is the exploration of landscape and different places I have travelled to around Australia with my family. I chose locations and spaces which I felt were iconic and uniquely Australian. This artwork was also inspired by artist Sir Russell Drysdale in its aesthetic style and effects with colour and texture. It explores the balance of life and the isolation of the outback. While there is such beauty to gaze upon, this is also a harsh landscape in which to live.

# THE CART

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Nikhil David · Year 7 · Mazenod College

The scent of freshly roasted corn and green chilli wafts through Sardar market. The life of an Indian food cart man is not very exciting. His day starts early in his poor home, where he prepares the corn for roasting and green chilli paste to bring out to the market. The brown, mud stained walls of his home are covered by dirty blankets draped over the windows to keep the light at bay. In the corner of his small abode he keeps his small, wooden food cart, on which his life depends. A simple life for him, his wife and his little children.

He rolls the small cart out of his house, its wooden wheels scraping against the cold floor. On arriving, the market place is already crowded. Different people with their stalls; stray mangy dogs in every corner; many sellers sitting on blankets on the floor, showing off their wonderful colourful clothing and bracelets. The aroma of samosas and

pani puri, combined with the dust and whiff of stray animals punches his lungs. While he is used to the smell, it sometimes takes him by surprise.

His stray friend paws his way up to him, rubbing his flea-filled head against his leg, its brown hair brushing against his broken sandals. He turns around and looks at all the different people in the bustling early morning market. A worker walks past quickly. A customer at last? Someone, among the crowd of endless figures, who could make a difference to his life and allow him to put food on the table. The customer asks for some roasted corn, and passes the cart owner a five rupee note. Such an insignificant amount of money, less than ten rupees would allow him to go home to his family as a success. He thanks the man and goes back to his cart. Another customer walks by. A simple life; a complex soul. ■

# WASHED AWAY

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Lachlan Trinh · Year 7 · Mazenod College

The sea was a rippling blanket of blue, foaming like the clouds in the sky. I felt the coarse but strangely smooth grains of sand tickle my feet. They scurried as my foot moved. Chirping seagulls flew above me, harassing the walkers on the shore. I watched as a hooded dotterel flew to the point where the sky and sea met. His wings were a blur of motion as he faded from sight.

The opera of the sea washed over me and the music of the waves was welcoming. It was soothing and I was pleased to get away from the stresses of life. There was just the soft turn of the water spilling. I shaded my eyes from the radiant star, as I looked out to sea again. I saw dolphins flipping in the

air like crackling popcorn. Their bodies flashed a steel-grey, as I witnessed their sea-dance. I could almost touch their excitement.

The coral sun, splashing clouds of orange and pink onto the sky. Its rays touched the rippling surface of the water, changing the blue sea to a soothing tangerine. I had never seen such an enthralling stretch of land.

The salty wind lifted the weights off my shoulders and brought me to a heaven on earth. I promised that I would come back to this spellbinding place again someday. I looked behind one last time and already my footprints were washed away, as if I had never been there... ■

# SANCTUARY

---

Walter Wright · Year 7 · Mazenod College

The ragged structure of the stones lay scattered around the wooden beams. Emptiness and darkness – content in silence. I laid on the cold, hard ground, which somehow comforted me. I remained for a while, enjoying this strange relaxation. The worries flooding my mind, escaped my head. I shut my eyes. As I held my open palms to the ceiling, a drop of water landed on my open palms, causing me to stir awake from my slumber. I continued my peaceful rest until another drop hit my head. Light began to shine through a tiny crack on the uneven rocky ceiling, revealing stalactites. It was a blinding sight, causing me to cover my eyes. The darkness was then completely disturbed; rocks crumbled off around the tiny crack. I exited the cave, having to see my shelter fall apart.

Sadness returned and followed me. I walked into the woods, searching for another shelter. The shadow of the trees and the rays of sunlight collided, creating infinite hues of colours. I

admired the magnificent sight. I continued walking down the dirt path, scrambling through the trees. Rodents scattered as they saw me enter their territory. I couldn't care less about the wood's inhabitants, until I saw a deer. Standing elegantly on the rocky slope, a ray of tremendous light arched over the creature. I pulled out my camera, aiming to capture its likeness but it ran. I chased it, tripping over stones and wooden logs. Suddenly, it stopped, turned and stared at me. I dropped my camera in shock.

I looked into the creature's eyes; it looked into mine. My hand rose and the doe's head lowered. A step at a time, I quietly moved towards the animal. The deer patiently kept its head low. As my hand touched its hide, a primitive bond was formed. The creature looked up into my eyes, turned and slowly walked away. I remained. I thought about the infinite beauty of nature. I smiled to myself. ■

# LYING ON THE COUCH

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Anthony Pham · Year 7 · Mazenod College

I lie on the couch, as soft as the clouds,  
After a long day, to rest, a treasured moment,  
I take a deep breath, fresh air fills my lungs,  
The outside world suddenly dissipates.

A quiet, silent room,  
The light, against a clear sky, shines through the window  
The leather touch of the couch is cool and relaxing,  
Surrounded by silence, I am free to explore my mind.

Simplicity is scarce in my hectic life,  
I concentrate on nothing else,  
A comforting smell of homemade food, wafts from the kitchen,  
Slowly, my thoughts envelop me, and the stresses of a teenage  
life fade away. ■

# ESCAPING THE OCEAN

---

Julian Farrar · Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak

*This creative piece of writing is based on the anthology, 'Island' by Alistair MacLeod.*

I was staring at a miserable memorial which had been eroded by the treacherous winds and the toxic salt carried off the surf. The deep sea glittered below me, its warmth simultaneously enticing me and instilling fear. My father's best friend, my uncle Darryl, had died three years ago to this day. His reckless exposure to the dangers of abalone diving made it an inevitable course of events. Despite this, I still felt that something could have been different to change this aura of melancholy and depression that weighed upon my family with each day.

We grew up in a small weather-beaten house on the coast of Port Lincoln. Immigrating from California in the 1890s due to fishing regulations, my ancestors had come to Australia to continue the highly lucrative practise of abalone diving. In a world where jobs and life were at best uncertain, our relatively simple life was a mirror image of those before us. My mother was master of the house, and her unquenchable love of the traditional, simplistic lifestyle of the generations before us came despite its dangers. She had always carried about an inextinguishable twinkle in her eyes, a symbol of warmth for life which permanently comforted me. Her gaze was so intelligent, so potent, that father would laughingly criticise her. Father himself held similar views although he was always wary of his children becoming involved in the profession of diving. He would often tell us never to start diving; he would say "once you start, it takes hold of you ... the water gets in your blood." He loved his children very dearly, and his smile would light up our tiny hovel, bringing about a sense of hope within my family. Everything changed upon the gruesome death of my uncle.

Each day I would press my countenance against my thin bedroom window. At times I felt as if this were the only obstacle between me and the ocean's lure. I felt the urge to restrain myself from becoming grounded in that same addiction which had entrapped my family for generations. I would watch my father head towards its clutches each morning, his heavy steps echoing softly around the yard. Each night when he returned, it was as if his steps had become slower, as if he had become grounded, anchored to his position. I promised myself that I would never engage in such torment. I would resist the time loop that my family was a part of.

At 23 years of age, a fervid Darryl had been convinced by my father to engage in abalone diving.

The hypnotic beauty of the ocean was presented in its crystal blue waters which housed a canopy of aqua coloured seaweed over a kaleidoscope of coral, enveloping divers in euphoria and awe. Despite this, the Great Whites which inhabited the area contrasted the ocean's very beauty, having devoured at least four members of our family over the past century. To the angst of my mother, there was abundant tourism in Port Lincoln, sardonically based around the rarities of seafood and the efforts of fishermen to obtain it.

Several years of diving brought about an unbounded confidence in my father and Darryl – only to be destroyed by the death of Darryl. We discovered his body one day on the shores below our dwelling, lapping to and fro with the motion of the waves. The utopia which my father had cherished for so long became disfigured, a sickly place of death. He forbade any more of our family to continue diving. Despite this, mother's pragmatic love of such a life, coupled with my father's lack of education and other profession, forced him back to the sticky waters of Port Lincoln. It was as if a great anchor had chained itself to his vulnerable wrists, dragging him back into the murky depths of the unknown.

Within my family, my brothers and sisters were too young to perceive these imminent dangers; they felt a zealous passion for diving, persuaded by my mother's views, with constant disapproval of my father's cautious approach. Through her ardent speeches, my mother eventually persuaded me to partake in the vocation and fulfil a role prescribed to me upon birth. My father would teach me how to dive, yet it was as if his melancholic nature wore off. It became like an excruciating pain that I was forced to endure, day in and day out. Whilst I was obliged to dive, the knowledge that others were able to attend university, that they could shape their own destiny, burnt a musty chaff into my consciousness which lingered like vultures about a corpse. As time went on, my emotions exponentially increased; a tidal wave of confusion and misery.

I conceded to my integrity through my initiation of an acting career. On a rare family trip to Adelaide, we were eating in an opulent food court at the Adelaide Festival when I saw my very first theatre production. Despite the outrageously poor acting, Hamlet's 'to be or not to be' soliloquy was so relatable to my indecisiveness that I was attracted to the profession like an insect to a benevolent light. Beginning at the Nautilus Theatre, Port Lincoln, I would spend nights gazing through the

window with an unchecked awe at the wondrous and majestic proceedings that were carried out in various performances. I was immersed in overwhelming feelings of rebelliousness and freedom which simultaneously frightened me yet made me ecstatic through their idiosyncrasy. Each night I would edge closer and closer to that window, until I could perceive the entirety of the studio, and I felt a rare glimmer of hope that the immutable was about to become the mutable. I was eventually noticed by a Dramatic Arts teacher, Mrs Kirkland, who beckoned me inside. She welcomed me with an enthusiasm which I least expected, yet as I stared into her affectionate eyes, I was reminded of my mother. I didn't have the courage to face the agonising disappointment of my family, and slowly backed away; a picturesque alignment of the unattainable. Each night I would return to the theatre as a spectator, mournfully looking at a scene which I could never be a part of.

Later I spoke of my ambitious motives to my family. To my dismay, that omnipresent twinkle in my mother's eyes, which I had adored for so long, faded. She sadly looked at me, questioning as to why I would leave such a place, which had nurtured me and taught me all I had known. My response came in a strangled gasp, the horrible speech impediment which one naturally gets when trying to rationally speak to a parent plaguing me. Despite this, she remained faithful to my cause, and wished me luck on my ventures, making me promise to write frequently. Word of my rebelliousness reached my grandparent's small dejected home, and their disapproval frightened me. My grandfather's unpleasant, blunt approach as he stated "boy don't come running back when you're down" caused me to have misgivings which weighed upon me like the iron shackles my father had always seemed to carry. His hollow

countenance, shrivelled by years of salt, had given him the appearance of seaweed, baked hard in the hot South Australian sun. I eventually came to the conclusion that because he was old, he was letting the natural obstinacy of the elderly get the better of him.

I ultimately began to participate in *The Nautilus*. I was dragged in on the action when a boy broke down in tears after his monologue was hooted at. My unparalleled urge to achieve success and my flawless acting abilities propelled me forward. I was overcome by a feeling of loneliness and sorrow, regret and anger. Nothing was as soothing on the mind. Despite this the loyalties which I owed my family felt betrayed. When it came time to leave for Sydney to join NIDA, (the nation's institute for dramatic arts), it was only my father's optimistic take on my ambitions which lightened my spirits.

That day I was peering out of window, staring at the violent sea, its power demonstrated by the lofty waves crashing against the pugnaciously sharp rocks. I thought to myself: I had done it. I had escaped my destiny, I had escaped the inevitable repercussions. As I thought, my eyes suddenly locked with a small, lush glade. A little tombstone protruded from the moist earth, and the tranquillity of the sight was like a magnet to my consciousness. I sprinted out of the house and knelt before the memorial, staring at it, remembering the peaceful neutrality which had existed between my uncle and I, his firm and definite purpose a dichotomy to my indecisiveness.

As I sat down on the bus, nightfall approached, its ghoulish, disfigured shadows simultaneously terrifying me yet invoking a relatively newish sense of curiosity. The bus's headlights switched on, dissipating many of these shadows of doubt.

I was free. ■

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Hailey Axalan · Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington

Lack of food, full of hunger  
Full of tragedy, lack of water  
Some more fortunate don't discern  
That these people exist with little to earn  
Day to day, they strive on  
Even if they know their problems aren't gone  
But with hardwork and assiduity  
They gain just the basic necessity  
And with what they have little  
Happiness is found with living simple  
Though equity may not give  
They live simply, simply live. ■



**Olivia Cover**

*Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*

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Having fun, relaxing and spending some time doing the simple things with my family is something I love to do.

This photo reminds me of a quiet and peaceful afternoon walking with my family. Together we all were making jokes, laughing and jumping over puddles.



**Emma Coates**  
*Years 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Charlotte Di Mauro, Madeleine Nguyen and  
Edith Jie Giovannitti-Nowak**  
*Years 3 and 4 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Maria Hinen**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

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*'Running Free', Pastel drawing*



**Lisa Narann**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

---

*'The Walk of Life', Pastel drawing*



**Portia De Alwis**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

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*'Figure in Motion', Pastel drawing*



**Christopher Lombardo**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

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*'Shazam!', Pastel drawing*



**Kevin Williams**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

---

*'Electric Life Force', Pastel drawing*



**You Li**  
*Year 9 · St John's Regional College*

---

*'Let's Dance', Pastel drawing*

# REFUGEES

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Rick Foley · Year 5 · De La Salle College

I saw a beam of light in the distance and looked at my Dad.

“We made it,” he said, staring into the rainy night sky. As I got out of the boat a gust of wind blew against my wet body and I started shivering. Unknowingly we ran into a red and white building for warmth.

We were greeted by a man wearing an official looking uniform. I didn't know a lot of the language he was speaking, called English, but my father did. He told the man about our situation and how grateful we would be if the man helped. The man nodded, offered us spots in the back seat of a silver car and drove us to a place with bright neon signs. The people inside the place were just as caring as the man that drove us. They gave me a place to sleep and I started to fall asleep. Just as my eyes fell closed my father handed the people that ran the apartment and the man that drove us all 2.5 million Dong each.

I was woken up extremely early by my Dad. He said we needed to start working or we couldn't afford to stay at the apartment anymore. Going to work was not a fun experience. They made me use a pickaxe I could barely hold to mine up coal. I wondered if Mum's job in the war was this hard? When the sky began to darken we were sent home and our boss gave Dad a few red notes. He explained that it was the Australian currency, called dollars.

Two years later, Dad and I were able to afford a small motel room! It still wasn't the same as my old home but it was better than the apartment. Soon I had settled in and life was getting better. Maybe someday everything will be back to normal. We were even able to afford a phone so we could contact Mum. One night, when we were having dinner the phone rang. When Dad picked it up he immediately burst into tears of joy. He said the war was over and Mum was coming to Australia to be with us!

Seven years later, we have bought a house and life is more wonderful than ever. Me and my family are even planning a holiday back to Vietnam, something I never dreamt possible.

I just can't wait! ■



**Brandon Luu**  
*Year 12 · De La Salle College*

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This painting captures my grandfather's eyes as he told me a story about his journey from Vietnam to Australia by boat as an immigrant. He recounted the journey and the troubles that he had once he settled in Australia. The eyes capture the emotions and struggles he faced as an immigrant.

# GOING TO THE BEACH

---

Mia Picciani · Year 8 · Marymede Catholic College

Driving all day and all night,  
The night sky growing darker than the road.  
The sun's reflection on the mirror so bright,  
Dad's car skids, just missing a toad.  
I see an orange line grow along the valley,  
Dad puts on his indicator; tick, tick we're turning  
right.  
We pull into the carpark alley,

Finally, my seatbelt was so tight.  
My feet touch the hot, golden grains of sand,  
I run to the water, so cool on my skin.  
My brother turns and shuts the door with his left  
hand,  
There's a fish swimming around us with its little  
fin.  
Mum got us some fish and chips,  
The potato cakes are so salty on my lips. ■

# THE AWAKENING OF SPRING

---

David Naskovski · Year 8 · Marymede Catholic College

As I open my eyes,  
I see a crisp sunrise beaming across the roof of my  
room  
As I look through my window,

I see flowers bloom  
I get out of bed  
Start my daily operation  
And see this tremendous nation ■

# A SEED

---

Kayla Murandu  
Year 8 · Marymede Catholic College

To sow a seed  
for rain to fall  
the crashing thunder  
the bud gives its all  
grey skies turn blue  
laced with fairy floss clouds,  
the sun is out  
a new flower  
blooms. ■

# THE POOL OF HAPPINESS

---

Chloe Gravina  
Year 8 · Marymede Catholic College

The bright sun shining  
Reflecting off the water  
Each stroke so, so smooth  
I feel as if nothing can  
Stop me gliding in the pool ■

# MY MUM

---

Kyle Jury · Year 8 · *Marymede Catholic College*

Mum  
Caring, loving, kind, generous  
Mother of Kyle and Maddison  
Who loves holidays, movies and her family  
Who feels happy, tired and lucky

And who is scared of mice, death and loneliness  
Who learned how to be a great mum and make  
her parents proud  
Who hopes her kids grow up to be good people  
Lives in Mill Park, Melbourne  
Jury. ■

# BREAD

---

Lucas Cappola · Year 8 · *Marymede Catholic College*

I hear the crackling crunch of the oven warm  
bread  
I smell the mouth-watering essence filling the air  
I see the smoky aromas steaming off the beautiful  
brown bun

I feel the crackling crunch of the crust breaking  
off my teeth  
I taste the crumb and the warm pockets of air  
inside the buns ■

# LIGHTHOUSE

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Regen Cairns  
Year 8 · *Marymede Catholic College*

Lighthouse  
Humble, lone  
Lighting, protecting, comforting  
Piercing through the night  
Guide. ■

# ORANGE ICE

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Regen Cairns  
Year 8 · *Marymede Catholic College*

I see the crystalline orange glow  
I feel its surface like the harsh ice capped  
mountains  
I hear a buzz like a warming fire  
I smell a fragrant zesty aroma  
I taste the joyful sweetness  
Orange ice ■

# NOT ALONE

Polly Pritchard · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

The wind blows through the trees  
Howling at the leaves that are caught in its breath  
As I run to the sea, the thunder cracks  
Rain pours  
The earth is cool  
Yet inviting  
I lie down in the sand  
Just before it meets the sea.

I am not alone  
Clouds surround my peripheral vision  
The salty sea breeze embraces me  
I lie where the earth meets the sea.

I can hear the continuous heartbeat of the sea  
The beat of the waves  
The warmth of the sand under my rain-soaked  
clothes

I am not alone  
The wind plays with my hair  
Tickling my nose with its feather touch  
Blowing away the clouds  
Hiding the stars in the night sky.

The stars shine above me  
Watching down on me  
Sewing the sky together  
With constellations.

I am not alone  
The curious ocean creeps up to my ankles  
Coating my feet in a cool velvet blanket  
The current pulls  
The blanket back away from me. ■



Angus Harvey  
Year 9 · Xavier College



**Angus Harvey**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*

---

*Lino cut*



**Angus Harvey**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*

---

*Mask*

# GLENROY STATION

---

Jackson Muscat · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

It's a brown brick building  
No pretty pictures  
It's just a dirty building to passers-by  
But to me it's full of memories of all sorts  
I remember the little things  
The "f\* \*\* the police" that was graffitied on  
That never seems to be washed off  
The rubbish bin  
That always seems to be overflowing  
The Indian lady behind the kiosk  
Who will now have "cashier at Glenroy Station"

On her resume  
When she's trying to live her dreams  
The empty Johnnie Walker cans littered across the  
platforms  
Dull?  
Yes  
Dirty?  
Yes  
Shit?  
Absolutely  
But it's a part of me ■



**Simon Tran**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Urban Life', Etching on cartridge*



**Andy Tran**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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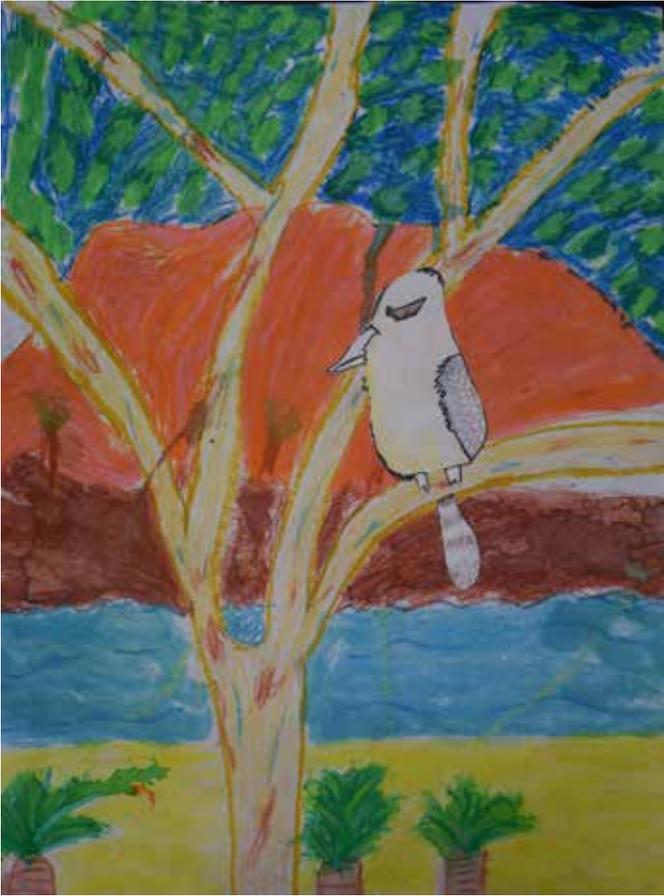
*'Bare Bones', Acrylic on card*



**Nathan Pham**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Expressive Portrait', Coloured pencil on paper*



**Alexandra Killis**  
*Year 3 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

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*Kookaburra sits in the old Gum Tree*



**Leyla Vesali**  
*Year 4 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

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*Cockatoos over Shoalhaven*  
*(Arthur Boyd inspired)*



**Khalila Wright**  
*Year 6 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

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*Autumn Birch Trees*



**Nieve Rigby**  
*Year 1 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

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*Indigenous Bush Medicine Leaves*

# LOVE CANNOT BE PHOTOGRAPHED

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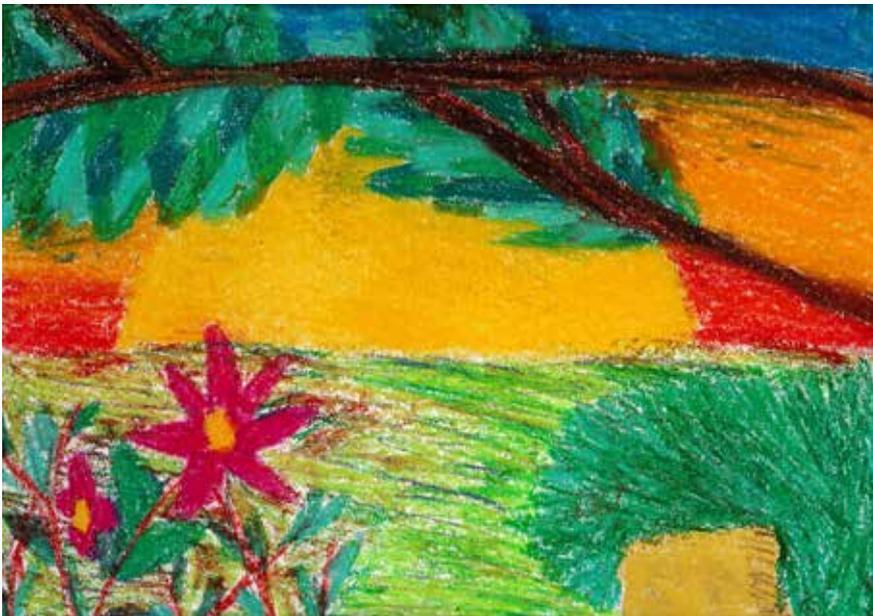
Emma Goldsworthy · Year 9 · John Paul College, Frankston

Love cannot be photographed. Love is too wild and restless. Love is like rain, coming in various amounts but the end result is the same. Love refuses to sit still while you capture the moment. Love cannot be contained within the confines of a camera lens, it's much too wild for that. Love is an invisible bond, reciprocated or not; love is felt, never seen – never heard. Love refuses to be pinned down in the same way a photograph pins down a moment of time. Love simply cannot be limited by a photo, as love is limitless.

Love cannot be photographed, only reflected. A wedding day, the birth of a baby, an “I love you.” One cannot capture the true essence of love with a camera. These examples of love are felt and kept truly and wholly in the heart only. By capturing the love of a Bride and Groom you're capturing only a reflection of their love, never the love itself. Songs don't capture love either, only a reflection of the love. Love cannot be photographed only reflected.

Love cannot be photographed, only felt. Love does not kindly knock on your door and introduce itself but rather kicks the door down and makes itself known. Love burns through your veins, creating that butterfly feeling in you; love is the sharp ache in your chest making its presence known. Love is a wave, catching you by surprise, it saturates you and if unaware, can drown you. Love is the epiphany you have at two am. You catch yourself smiling at the source constantly, you continually search for them in a crowded room. That's when you realise you're in love. Love cannot be photographed.

The pain of love cannot be photographed. Love is beautiful but oh so dangerous. Love is unfair and unkind. Love will rip your heart out and stomp all over it. Love can come crashing down on you and crush you. Love is the devil on your shoulder coercing you to do this or that, whilst also being the angel. As gentle as a butterfly or as harsh as a lion, love takes many forms. Some unknown. ■



Georgia Marcin  
Year 7 · John Paul College, Frankston

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*The Summer Meadow*

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A calming sunset ends the day in a beautiful meadow, the birds going to sleep, a soft breeze rustling the trees. The garden is quiet and a sense of serenity washes through the garden. Everything is peaceful and pleasant as twilight breaks.

# MY BUCKET LIST

---

Sarah Simpson · Year 10 · John Paul College, Frankston

I yearn to live

I wish that one day he will kiss me in the pitter  
patter of the rain

With a storm rolling overhead,  
And his lips on mine

I will melt

I wish and I pray

To be a part of something bigger than myself

To realise I'm one in seven billion

And to help someone in the masses

I want to feel the wind in my face

And the adrenaline in my veins

As I throw myself out of a plane

Free falling to my impending doom

– Until the parachute is released

I want to feel the sound of my favourite band

As I lose my voice screaming lyrics that mean so  
much to me

And cry tears of joy

Because this is what bliss feels like

I need to find a love that consumes my entire  
being

One that steals my heart

my brain

my breath

– away

I need to stare into the never-ending black of  
space

And watch as the stars twinkle light years away

With the feeling of being small rising up from my  
stomach

Until I fall asleep

– under a blanket of stars

I desire to face my fears

Of heights and of the dark

Of spiders and death

So that I come out victorious

Not as someone who is unfearful

But as someone who can face her fears

I desire to trace my history

To find my blood and home

To see my ancestors' footsteps

And find new people to call my own

I long to tame the beast

To climb higher than anyone has ever gone before

And reach the mountain's peak

As I reach for the sun

I long to see every nook and every cranny

Each brick and stone,

And all the languages and cultures

That built this great world

I crave to one day be a mother of my own

Filled with euphoria

As I watch every trial and accomplishment

In their world

Lastly, I crave to be happy

To find peace and contentment

Wherever the universe takes me

And to have love and laughter fill every waking  
moment

– until the end

I yearn to live ■



Clara De'Ath  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



Isabella Patti  
Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

# A WARRIOR ARISES

---

Alicia Coburn · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

The wave was coming at us like a storm. Sadly, we didn't realise it, until we were in it.

As her fingertips touched mine we knew that this was the last time. We looked into each other's eyes for what felt like a million years. Wherever she was going I wanted to go with her without the blame, without the worry. When I looked into her eyes for the last time, I didn't just see my little sister, I saw a warrior! I knew that she was a warrior and that this was how a warrior would rise. As her last words left her lips, they assured me that she would be all right.

Where was she and how do I get to her was all I wondered as I saw her there, standing beside me, both in my dreams and in my nightmares. How can something that feels so real be so very fake – her image telling me over and over again what she had told me at that very time, on that very day, at that very place!

I heard parents telling me, "It's not your fault!" but I knew that it was. With my friends saying, "Sorry" and my enemies saying, "It was fate" I did not know who to believe and who not to believe. All I knew was that I could have saved her and it could have been me, but...it wasn't. She didn't know that it was going to be her last morning or her last breakfast or her last time to see our parents and me.

No one considered me or my family lucky. I always knew that my parents blamed themselves. I fled into my own world. My parents knew not to get involved. They could not have reached me anyway. In my solitary world, I kept hearing my little sister's voice and her last words: "A Warrior Arises." I never knew why these words comforted me. All I know is that they did! ■

# BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE

---

Bridget Slattery · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

There was once a young family who lived on a farm with very little. They were indeed quite poor. However, their farm was huge! They had a lot of animals such as pigs, horses, cows, ducks and heaps more. Although the family was extremely poor, they were still grateful for what they had.

Olivia their only child went to school in the middle of the city. She did not particularly like going to school, as she was constantly getting bullied by the girls in her year level. They teased her about where she lived and what she looked like. However, Olivia was fine with what she had and proud of where she came from.

Today at school was no different. "OMG! Olivia what are you wearing?" asked one of the mean girls with a nasty smirk across her face. The rest of the girls just cackled and laughed. Olivia felt tears prick her eyes and as always, Gemma, Olivia's best friend stepped in and tried to stick up for her. "I think Olivia looks great!" Gemma exclaimed, defensively.

That evening, Olivia sat around a small, round wooden table with her parents, eating dinner in

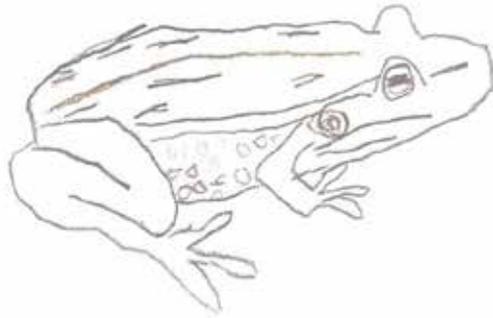
silence. It felt like something uneasy was on her parents' mind. Finally Olivia's mum broke the silence. "Olivia, I have some sad news for you," her mum sighed. "We can no longer afford to send you to school in the city, so you will have to say goodbye to your friends," explained her mum in a quivering voice. Little did Olivia's mum know that her news was far from sad! It was a relief.

So the next day, when Olivia got to school, she broke the news to Gemma and the other girls in her year level. "Yes! Olivia is finally leaving. I knew she would never fit in here!" boasted one of the mean girls. Olivia wiped a tear from her eye. "At least some people won't miss me," she thought. For the last time, Gemma comforted Olivia with a gentle reminder, "Don't listen to those girls Olivia. What do they know about you anyway? You have more in your life than they will ever have."

At the end of the day, Olivia's teacher, Miss Robinson said goodbye and wished her well. Olivia headed home reflecting on Gemma's final words. "It is time to start a new chapter in my life," she thought, feeling blessed. ■

# THE GROWLING GRASS FROG TEACHES US A LESSON

Ben Phillips · Year 2 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School



The Growling Grass Frog lives close to water or very wet areas in bushland across Victoria, Australia. They eat other frogs. The male frogs usually call out while floating in water. The call sounds like a growl, “Crawark-Crawark-Crok-Crok...”. This is a story about one little Growling Grass Frog called Hoppy.

One day Hoppy was sitting in his lagoon when a Kangaroo came down for a drink. “Oh, hello. What are you?” asked the Kangaroo.

“I’m a Growling Grass Frog,” said Hoppy. “What are you?”

“I’m a Kangaroo and I can jump,” the Kangaroo said.

“Wow, I can jump too!” said Hoppy.

The next day, Hoppy was sitting in his lagoon when a Kookaburra came down for a drink. “Oh, hello. What are you?” asked the Kookaburra.

“I’m a Growling Grass Frog,” said Hoppy. “What are you?”

“I’m a Kookaburra and I can laugh,” the Kookaburra said.

“Wow, I can growl!” said Hoppy.

The next day, the little Frog was sitting in his lagoon when a big Wedge-Tailed Eagle flew down for a drink. “Oh, hello! What are you?” asked the Eagle.

“I’m a Growling Grass Frog,” said Hoppy. “What are you?”

“I’m a Wedge-Tailed Eagle and I can fly,” the Eagle said.

“Wow, I can swim!” said Hoppy.

The following day, Hoppy was sitting in his lagoon when a Green Tree Frog came down for a drink. “Oh, hello. What are you?” asked the Green Tree Frog.

“I’m a Growling Grass Frog,” said Hoppy. “What are you?”

“I’m a Green Tree Frog and...,” the Green Tree Frog began to...

“No you’re not. GULP – YOU’RE LUNCH!” Hoppy smiled.

As a native animal, the Growling Grass Frog has survived in Australia for thousands of years. These frogs eat what they need and live in peace with all other animals. We can learn a lot from the Growling Grass Frog and how it lives simply and in harmony with its environment. Sadly, its numbers are reducing because of the damage humans are doing to the environment. ■

# INTERTWINED

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*Zoe Kelly · Year 9 · Siena College*

Under the halo of a brilliant sky, the children  
played.  
Under the relentless gaze of a moonlit night, the  
shadows joined them.  
One side bright and filled with echoing laughter,  
A stark contrast to the whitewashed grey of  
chipped gravestones that ran by it.  
  
They had no boundaries.  
They dodged through new and crumbling  
structures alike,  
Side by side.  
Both worlds were their playgrounds,  
Universes separating them.  
But they danced through both,  
Undeterred,  
And unafraid.  
  
And amidst it all,  
They sat together,  
Boy and girl.  
Too young to realise life's miracles,  
But old enough to understand their worth.  
Her hair raven dark,

Hands warm and heart beating.  
Flesh and bone and blood.  
Standing in the light,  
His skin translucent,  
Eyes silvery,  
Floating, wraithlike.  
Sitting on the edge of night,  
His fingers slipping through hers,  
As if he was nothing.  
A fine mist on a spring morning,  
A whisper of life,  
In a place,  
Where none could be measured.  
  
They were only children,  
A lifetime apart.  
But their minds were closer,  
Than two living, breathing people,  
Could ever be.  
And although they could never quite reach each  
other,  
They were inseparable. ■

# ALIO TITULO LATINE

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*Alisa Black · Year 8 · Siena College*

**A**s yesterday came, they stormed the rolling  
valley. The lambs who lit their pipes had been  
led to fall beneath the arch of fires.  
  
The wilting father shepherd-like, did lead his fifty  
sons far forth. But now he droops and slowly  
crumbs below such preaching choirs.  
  
The lark atop a post did sing as if his last had come,  
but only seen as mocking by other tongues below.  
  
Yet twenty four, whose breath was drawn in vain,  
lay amongst the ruins of a countryside château.  
  
Those who sit amidst the stillness, who doze  
amongst the Papaver, lick their wounds and cry for  
holding limbs.  
  
The prayer for curtain drawings, the silent pang

of men, as infants grow to see one cannon song its  
pious hymns.  
  
Down they throw themselves, with shaking hands.  
Awakened to such vain endings, embraced with  
open arms of lead.  
  
The sleeping flock, who lie amongst the thorny  
hills, have dropped and are ever dropping where  
such vineyards bled.  
  
Them who charged those quiet May time hills,  
wraith amongst the floret fields and sleep beneath  
the ancient dunes.  
  
A weary tuft of grassing corner, cert to be forever  
theirs. Till death do us part from the fields of  
bloodshot moons. ■

# SEEKERS

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Juliet Guthrie · Year 9 · Siena College

I register flashes of reality The smell of rotting fish and sweat that clings to the boat Voices shouting and waves slapping against the dock: a demented symphony A little girl, crying; small hand in her mother's, her tiny frame swamped by the crowd She is wearing a maroon string bracelet around her grubby wrist  It is quite still Darkness eclipsing the boat I look up A thin haze bathes the stars, which are scattered across the sky like beads And the moon is a sharp slice of silver Like a scythe suspended in the sky It is so big And I am so little	At first the rocking is slow and methodical The waves gently nudging the boat to and fro But the waves do not care for the flimsy boat Weighed down by a hundred strangers  They are mammoth now Knocking the breath from my chest Bottomless mounds of blue, rising and falling mercilessly Ribbons of silty water twist along the deck Fear is in my mouth and eyes and ears and heart  I am sitting In the corner There is a gust of warm wind And I hug my knees, shivering  Waves spit against the boat And sea spray covers my face like freckles	My hunger is a monster Snarling for attention, clawing at my insides  Surely it isn't much further?  Mama says Australia Is a land of riches and freedom A land filled to the brim with golden sunshine Green, green grass And cream coloured seashells With cakes and sweets in every shop  So, this is what I think of As I sit As I sit As I sit  Will I survive? Will I Simply Live? ■
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# BLUE WITH PURPLE FLOWERS

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Carla Goutzoulas · Year 9 · Siena College

*When mummies and daddies love each other*

The girl curled in a ball underneath her duvet, hugging Lamby, her stuffed lamb, close to her chest. Any closer and they'd be one.

*They form a special bond,*

Tears trickled down her face, hitting the dress that Lamby wore. It was blue with purple flowers. The young girl's mother had sewn it.

*Kind of like a chain.*

"That won't happen to you guys though, right?"

She didn't need a spoken answer. The look her parents shared was every answer she needed.

*But with enough strain*

The girl sniffled. Maybe the pain would fade over the years? She was not to know that 4 years later the pain would still linger and fresh tears would run down her cheeks.

*The chain won't hold for long.*

The young girl let out a heart wrenching wail as she finally felt blue, but she couldn't see any purple flowers in the near future. ■

# THROUGH THICK AND THIN

Claire Reedy · Year 10 · St Columba's College

*This is a creative response to the film, Clueless. In this piece I've written a new scene for the film in which Cher and Dionne have had an argument that threatens to ruin their friendship. Here, Cher, who is at fault, must learn to overcome her pride, swallow her anger and use her wits to piece together their broken friendship in a never before seen way!*

(BY CHER AND DIONNE)

*THE FOLLOWING, LIKE TOTALLY HAPPENED AND CAN BE USED AS A GUIDE TO MAKING UP AFTER A WAY TUBULAR ARGUMENT FOR ANY BEST FRIENDS!)*

**MR HALL**

Attention, class. Now...class, PLEASE!

*ALL THE STUDENTS WERE EXTREMELY ABSORBED IN THEIR OWN IMPORTANT AFFAIRS AS USUAL TO SO MUCH AS TURN THEIR HEADS. CHER, HOWEVER, WAS THE SINGLE STUDENT WHO SAT STIFF AND UPRIGHT, READY WITH HER GRAND PLAN.*

**MR HALL**

Would anyone like to start off our debates? Anyone?

*CHER RAISED HER HAND*

**MR HALL (SIGHS)**

Yes, Cher?

**CHER**

Mr Hall, I'm ready to do my debate!

**MR HALL (ASTOUNDED EXPRESSION)**

Wha...really? Well...then, come on up, Cher. Let's make her feel comfortable everyone?

*THERE WERE A FEW SMALL CLAPS AS CHER STOOD UP AND WALKED TO THE FRONT. AS SHE DID SO...*

**AMBER**

Say, Dee, do you hear a buzzing, like an annoying insect that just won't go away? Oh, I'm sorry, it's the sore loser, Cher.

*CHER ROLLED HER EYES AT AMBER AND EXPECTED A NASTY REMARK FROM DIONNE, BUT TO HER SURPRISE, DIONNE ONLY SHUFFLED UNCOMFORTABLY IN HER SEAT AND DIDN'T MEET CHER'S EYES.*

**MR HALL (STERNLY)**

That's enough, Amber. Perhaps if you have so much to say, you'd like to come up and take the con position against Miss Horowitz?

**AMBER (Sarcastically)**

Gee, Mr Hall, I'd love to, but my counsellor demands that I not be put under pressure by any stressful situations.

**MR HALL**

Summer? How about you?

**SUMMER**

No way!

*MR HALL THEN PROCEEDED TO GO DOWN THE LINE UNTIL HE REACHED DIONNE.*

**MR HALL**

Dionne, you're up.

**DIONNE (STANDING UP RELUCTANTLY)**

Thanks a lot guys, you know that I can never afford not to have my assignment done!

*DIONNE WALKED UP TO THE STAND NEXT TO CHER AND ROLLED HER EYES, SHUFFLING AWKWARDLY.*

**MR HALL**

Whenever you're ready, Cher.

*CHER FLICKED HER HAIR TO THE SIDE, AND LOOKED AT HER CUE CARDS. AFTER STARING AT THEM FOR A WHILE, SHE SIGHED AND TORE THEM UP.*

**CHER**

I had like, a way cool speech planned about how the Northern Hemisphere is totally the place to live because, duh, it has Beverly Hills! But I'm not going to use it now. The Northern Hemisphere is a loving, trustworthy and very, very friendly hemisphere to all the other hemispheres...

**DIONNE (SNORTS)**

Pah-lease. As if the northern hemisphere is friendly. And don't even get me started on trust! It like, totally betrayed the trust of the southern hemisphere!

**CHER**

Well, the Southern Hemisphere is very stubborn and holds a major grudge on the Northern Hemisphere. Doesn't it realise that the northern hemisphere is only human, and that it makes mistakes?

*MR HALL MADE A CONFUSED FACE FROM THE SIDE OF THE ROOM*

**DIONNE**

Making mistakes it right. The Southern Hemisphere never backstabs its allies, and is always thinking positively about other hemispheres. It's like, the complete opposite of the Northern Hemisphere, who gets jealous every time they're not the centre of attention!

*CHER OPENED HER MOUTH TO ARGUE BACK, BUT THEN STOPPED HERSELF AND SIGHED.*

**CHER**

You know what? You're right.

*DIONNE LOOKED UP SHARPLY AT CHER. HER EXPRESSION OF RESENTMENT FALTERING FOR A MINUTE WITH A LOOK OF SURPRISE.*

**CHER (CONTINUED)**

A lot of the time, the Northern Hemisphere refuses to believe that it's not the Equator. So when it receives a wake up call, it's difficult for it to realise that, hey, there are other hemispheres out there. And they're special hemispheres too. Without them, the world wouldn't be what it is. (sighs sadly) The Northern Hemisphere can be a wonderful place to live, but sadly, it hurts others in order to prove that it's the best place to live. Maybe...maybe the Northern Hemisphere shouldn't exist. Because, I'll tell you what, that's what it really wants right now. To be swallowed up by a black hole of guilt.

**DIONNE (QUIETLY)**

Well... maybe the Southern Hemisphere sometimes gets big headed when it achieves something. And maybe it is a bit stubborn at times. Still, even if it is better at something than the other hemispheres, it sure is hard to manage without them.

*CHER LOOKED UP AND DIONNE FINALLY MET CHER'S EYES. CHER SMILED SLIGHTLY, HARDLY CONCEALING HER EXCITEMENT.*

**CHER**

I'm...I mean, the Northern Hemisphere is totally sorry for what it said about the Southern Hemisphere. It so didn't mean a word of it and would never say a thing like that again!

**DIONNE (Smiling)**

The Southern Hemisphere is also way sorry for the way it's acted as well.

**CHER (crying happily)**

AWWWWW, I've missed you.

**DIONNE (also crying)**

I've missed you TOOOOOO!

*CHER AND DIONNE EMBRACED IN A FIT OF STORMY TEARS. THE CLASS ALL STOOD AND BROKE INTO APPLAUSE. AMBER REMAINED IN HER SEAT, DABBING AT HER FACE WITH A HANDKERCHIEF, WHILST MR HALL SIMPLY SIGHED AND WONDERED HOW HE EVER HAD ENDED UP HERE. ■*

# CHRISTIAN (1:055)

Sienna Porter · Year 10 · St Columba's College

*My creative response to the film, Clueless, is an internal monologue which reveals Christian's thoughts about his sexuality, belonging and friendship. My piece is inspired by the scene where Murray explains to Cher and Dionne that Christian is a "cake boy". I felt as if Christian's perspective and feelings were blocked out and left uncommunicated. Considering the whole revelation is about him, it seemed unjust not to include how he feels.*

*This internal monologue occurs after Christian leaves Cher's house abruptly (1:05:55) and he is sitting in his car reflecting on what had just occurred inside. This is an important part of the story that wasn't really included, as the story mainly focuses on Cher's thoughts and actions rather than those around her. I wanted to explore Christian's side of things as and expose his thoughts and feelings on Cher rather than watching Cher question Christian's actions or lack thereof. This interior monologue will still express the sassiness and confidence that Christian usually demonstrates, but will also present his honest feelings and contemplation about whether or not he should let Cher in on the truth.*

**'Christian (1:055)'**

*\*Christian slides into his car, takes a deep breath and lets out a sigh while gripping onto the steering wheel\**

(all thoughts are internal)

What an ankle biter...[child]?! I can't believe she thinks I see her that way, as if it isn't obvious enough? I am HOMOSEXUAL! Oh shit. It's not as if I kiss her, hold her hand or show any type of affection. GROSS! I'm a disco dancing, well dressed, James Dean vibing, male and she... she's my shopping partner, my best friend. She made coming here easy and she ensured that I'd fit in, but what can I do now? If I break up with her then I'll become a drip...[a very uncool person] like what happened previously.

I moved here to get a fresh start and maybe the guys can already tell that I am a "cake boy" or a "fag", however they choose to put it, it's true. There is no way in hell I'm allowing this to derail the reputation I've spent time, effort and money rebuilding. Just because nasty notes from boys trying to trick me into believing they are also gay, and being tripped over and getting into fights with those always trying to make me feel like I didn't deserve to be there, all occurred at the last school, doesn't mean I'm going to allow it to also happen here.

*\*Christian drops his head down onto his hands that are resting on the steering wheel.\**

Being a teenager is hard enough without having to add the fact that no matter what, you won't be 100% accepted because of who you're attracted to. These people don't understand how hard it is to come to terms with yourself, much less appreciate all the low comments and rumours as you try and work out who you are.

The worst part about this situation is that Cher honestly believes that I really like her?! Well maybe not after how I behaved tonight... UGH! What a front burner... [crisis].

Do I go back in there and sort all this out, or just shake it off and let it go? How am I supposed to tell her that I have been lying to her about how I feel AND about why I could never feel that way for her.

*\*Christian looks up, shakes his head and drives off.\* ■*

# AMONGST THE CROWD

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Jemma Brodie · Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East

Lost in a crowd, blocked out from others, with walls all around me. Oblivious to what is going on, but yet I am still aware. Everyone has a bubble that can only let other bubbles into it if the people inside the bubbles are close friends. Sometimes I feel like everyone in the world shares one bubble, except me. I live

outside the bubble – I am the outsider. I don't blend in. I stand out. I push my bubble to try to merge it with the larger bubble, but instead of merging, it pops. I now try to enter the large bubble, but the people in the bubble don't let me in. Then I realise why...Because I am different. ■

# THE EARTH REVOLVES

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Helena Perkins · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East

The sun is dazzling with a core  
made with more than a system of air and gas.  
It is made with courage, happiness and resilience  
as are you,  
all three running through your veins.

Rain, a liquid dripping from a grey irregular  
shape  
with the sun clearing through the clouds of grey,  
bringing light, hope and you in a world of your  
own.

You must remember, you are young, so don't  
think you're weak minded,  
you have talent and are like the sun, bright and  
strong.

With the benefit of being free, healthy and young  
and nowhere near dull;  
Living simply, I say, is a pathway to life success,  
by putting your mind to rest, for no longer having  
to be, more than this.

Live simply is a pathway to life success. ■



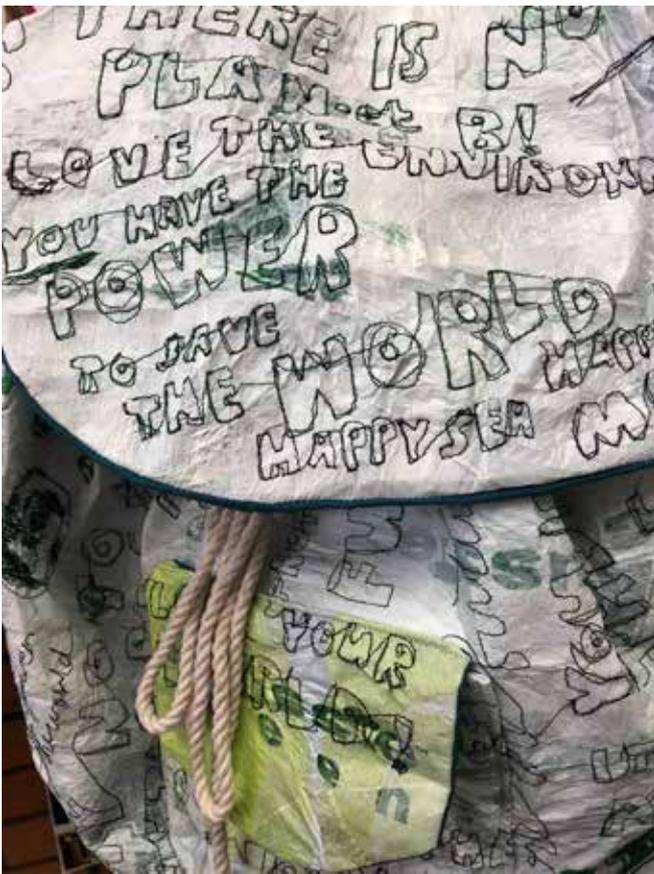
**Ariya Khadka**  
*Year 1 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East*



**Emma Rhodes**  
*Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East*



Evie Gattuso  
*Prep · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East*



Phoebe Rich  
 Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

*Sustainable product redevelopment. Mixed Media, melted ecofriendly plastic bags and free machinery embroidery*

This bag was created as a result of identifying the amount of waste plastics used in society. This piece is a political and functional statement regarding the reuse, revamping and recycling options available. Neutral tones were chosen to further support the main concepts of saving our ocean and conserving our world. Materials were bonded together using a medium set iron, the backpack pieces were then cut and she meticulously free machine embroidered messages of hope on each, before sewing them together as a functional and sturdy backpack.

# WHERE MY MIND WANDERS

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Phoebe Rich · Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

I guess you play and then you die so life is just a game.

But for the life of me, I can't figure out the purpose or the aim.

To fall in love, be rich or live it up the most?

To live the longest, travel places? Or is that not even close?

The first of us, we didn't have jobs or money or clothes.

And how we got from there to here, not even God could know. When we were born, each one of us, we didn't have a clue. So, fancy city blokes or country folks are the same as you or I.

People get so caught up, that they forget we all will die.

And I'm afraid to say, your money Sir, can't be transferred to the sky.

Experiences however, no one can ever take away.

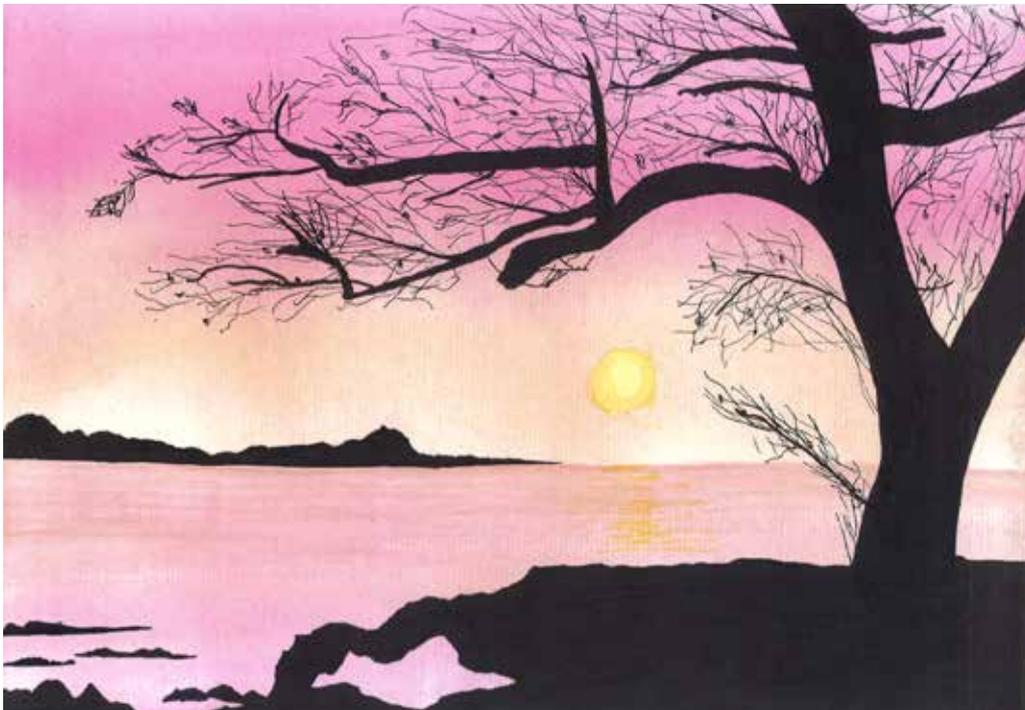
Not even death can steal who you are, not tomorrow nor today.

Let your impact on the earth reflect all the wonders that you find.

May the memory of you be something you are proud to leave behind.

Embrace the journeys that you take and find happiness of every kind.

Because perhaps we play this game just to leave something beautiful behind. ■



Leah Wilbraham

Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

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Untitled



**Edie Van Der Velden**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*'Sea Scape', Acrylic on canvas board*



**Hayley Stoddart**  
*Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*

# THE CURSE OF SHANNARA

Alanah Shankland · Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College

“Don’t open that!” That was the last thing I heard before I was cursed. I touch my plant to get the dust off... it withers up and turns into ashes! “You’re a silly girl! Don’t touch anything!” Mum yelled furiously. “Put these gloves on. I should’ve buried that years ago! Go to your room and sleep... NOW!” Mum yells sounding annoyed.

Drifting off to sleep I see a forest in my dream... But wait, I’m now standing in that exact forest I saw in my dream! But who’s that? “My name’s Arminda, which means protector of mankind. Would you like to come back to my village? I know about your curse...” she says sympathetically. I go with her because I have no clue where I am or even what this curse is! We return to her small stone village and she makes me feel at home.

Can you explain the curse to me?” I reply confused. As she explains the curse to me I drift off to sleep, I start to see my bedroom, and the next minute I’m back in my room! It seems every time I sleep I change between worlds. I must fall asleep again... I need to get back! It’s IMPOSSIBLE to get back to sleep, I’ve been trying for thirty minutes straight! Then I remember mum’s sleeping pills in her room! Next minute... I’M BACK!

When I return we walk to the Temple where I’ll break the curse. There I ask, “What’s the name of

this world?” “Shannara!” she replies. We talk for ages, turns out she’s a really genuine person!

Finally, we reach the Temple. “Welcome to the Temple of Shannara, here’s your sword for battle!” Arminda says as I look up at the Temple. It’s very old, with walls covered in cracks, overgrowth and in places worn away.

There’s the bottle to break the curse! I look around, and then I see her... my opposition. She is tall and has dark features. She doesn’t look happy to see me...

The Dark Magic immediately darts towards me. Pulling out the sword that Arminda gave to me earlier, I stab her. The Dark Magic laughs as she pulls the sword from her chest, “Was that supposed to hurt?” She immediately retaliates by slicing a cut in my leg and I fall to the ground. Arminda whacks her in the head, creating a distraction. I immediately sprint for the bottle and smash it. Then bottle starts to reform and is sucking her back in. Finally, the cork is in place and it’s secure.

It’s over, now I must bury this for good, so no one else will be affected. With that I bury it and say goodbye, then I close my eyes and I’m back in my room, I feel relieved. It all felt like a dream, well technically it was, though my scar proves it wasn’t. ■



Alice Bush  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



**Lucy Chilver**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Remy Bailee**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*

# WILLOW

Teagan Schoolderman · Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

The autumn leaves piled heavily on the side of the road. Red, gold and orange dotted the bitumen. The sunlight filtered through the leaves as they fluttered to the ground. Several deer bounded out of the shadows to cross the road. The sun danced off their dappled coats, turning it golden like the leaves. The dark trunks and branches of the trees reached towards the sky. But...this forest wasn't originally blemished by the human's touch. Long ago the road, which travelled through the middle of the forest hadn't been created. Where the road meets the middle of the forest, a large willow tree once stood. The willow was large, its white trunk stood out. Hollows had developed in its branches where animals would live. Around the roots, deer would graze. But... before the willow tree had grown, a little girl had visited the forest.

This girl was different. She drifted through the forest, as light as a feather. The animals did not shy from her. The grass did not bend when she walked. This girl held something in her hand. Something small. Something new and life giving. The girl unwrapped her hands and a seed was revealed. Suddenly, it fell through her hand and landed on the ground. The girl bent down and tried to pick up the seed. It fell through her fingers again and again. The girl's mouth quivered. She looked at the seed and shut her eyes. A single tear trickled down

her face. It dripped onto the seed and was sucked up quickly by the ground. The girl turned, tears dripping down her face and momentarily she flew from the forest.

A shadow advanced on the seed. It was short with long ears. Its skin blended in with the colour of the grass. Green hands curled over the seed and whipped it away. It bounded away into the trees and let out a blood curdling laugh, which ran down the spines of every animal who heard it, and the animals fled. The little goblin shimmied higher into the canopy but was suddenly swooped by something. The goblin fell to the ground. He put his fists up, trying to defend himself. The seed was clenched in one fist. He grit his teeth, concentrated hard. But there was nothing. He could not see anything. Suddenly, he was punched in the stomach. The goblin let out a cough and dropped the seed. He screamed, then jumped at the seed. He stretched his hands, so close. Reaching further and further, his claws just touched the seed, then he was hit by an invisible hand. The goblin flew through the air from the force of the hand, he hit a tree and slumps onto the ground below. The ghost girl smiled and pushed the seed into ground. She sat and waited, with a pure smile of happiness on her face. Years later the seed has grown into a large white willow. ■



Bella Tempini  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

# ISLAND STORM

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Milly Cortese · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

The wind howls outside as rain plummets against the windows. I race through the cottage shutting all the doors and closing the curtains. I yell out to George, asking him to find his sister. He comes in a minute later, dragging a soaking wet Catherine behind him. Grabbing towels from the bathroom I usher the children into the bedroom to dry them off. We haven't had a storm like this in a while, so I wasn't prepared. "Mum, Buddy's still outside." Great, I forgot the dog. Leaving the kids in my room I rush out into the fierce storm desperate to find the border collie before he gets blown away in the severe gales. Finally, after stumbling around in the rain for a good ten minutes I find him sheltered under a she-oak tree. I carry the dog back in through the wooden door, the wind slamming it behind me. "Buddy!!" George and Catherine bound through the hallway, their little legs carrying them towards the delighted dog. "Okay, back into the bedroom."

Both children climb into the bed and snuggle under the duvet. They close their eyes as I kiss their perfect foreheads. As I walk out of the room I feel droplets of water as cold as ice drip down my back. Shivering, I grab a towel and my nightie, and I quickly get changed. After checking the clock for the time, I sit on the couch and start reading the children's book, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Henry's brother, James, sent it to us not long after his death. On the inside of the cover is his message, "bedtime story for the kids, talk soon."

My husband, Henry Roberts died in a storm much like this one a year ago. He was out in the lighthouse when he thought he saw someone in the water. As he paddled out to try and save them a wave pushed him under and drowned him. Catherine was only two. Sometimes the grief swallows me. Pushing me down, further and further until I can't breathe. Not long after he died George started having night terrors. He would scream for an hour straight, his shrieks filling the whole island. I am glad that I had George and Catherine with me, it distracted me from the hurt and pain. But nothing could heal the gaping hole in my heart.

"Mum, I'm hungry." George peeks his head out from behind the door, big brown eyes shining in the candlelight. "I'll go get you some food." Opening the pantry door all that greets me are a few crackers, some bread, butter and salt. Our last shipment of food came a month ago and our next one was meant to arrive today. But because of the weather it probably wouldn't show up until next week. I walk down into the cellar to get some milk for George. I milked the goat this morning,

so it should be fresh. Coming back up I hand him a glass of the substance which he gulps down hungrily. I can't give him anything else, we'll need it for the rest of the week. "Goodnight, honey." "Night Mum." He closes the door and I sink back into the couch wondering what I'm going to do over the next week.

I awaken to the sound of shrieking wind. Bouncing off the couch I wrestle the window shut, accidentally knocking a framed wedding photo off the table. I carefully pick up the shards of glass and throw them in the trash. Then I place the unharmed photo into a new frame. The photo was taken eight years ago in Melbourne, where Henry and I were originally from. His parents had lived on this island for years and gave it to us as a wedding present. I loved it at first but now all the curiosity and excitement have disappeared. Nobody else lives here. We get money for operating the lighthouse and our food from the animals or the ship but other than that we are all alone. Lately I've been thinking about leaving. George will have to start school soon and I can't teach him myself. I sent a letter to James asking him if he knew some place where we could live. I'm still awaiting his reply.

One week later I hear, "Mummy, Mummy it stopped raining!" My eyes squint against the light coming from the window. Catherine is bouncing on my bed eager to go outside. "Come on, get your brother and we'll go for a walk outside." Putting on our shoes we walk out in the sunshine, it's rays melting into our skin. "Look," George runs over to a tree which has been snapped in half, it's stump laying bare amidst the debris. Many other plants look the same, branches and leaves torn off lying on the muddy ground. We walk over to the beach where we find a lovely surprise awaiting us. A ship has docked next to the shore. Aboard the ship I see a figure waving to us. "Mum is that Uncle James?" The figure walks off the ship and George starts running towards it. "Wow, is that you George, you've grown two feet since I saw you last!" George chuckles as James lifts him into the air. "And Catherine, what a fine young lady you are." She giggles as she's spun around by her uncle. "James, you're here." I embrace him, it's been so long since I've had human contact with anyone other than the children. "Yes, it's good to see you again. Um Anna can I quickly chat with you." He motions for us to walk ahead. "What's wrong?" We stop walking. "Anna, this ship doesn't have the food." "What do you mean, of course it does!" "No, the next food ship comes in a month." ■



**Adam Hurren**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

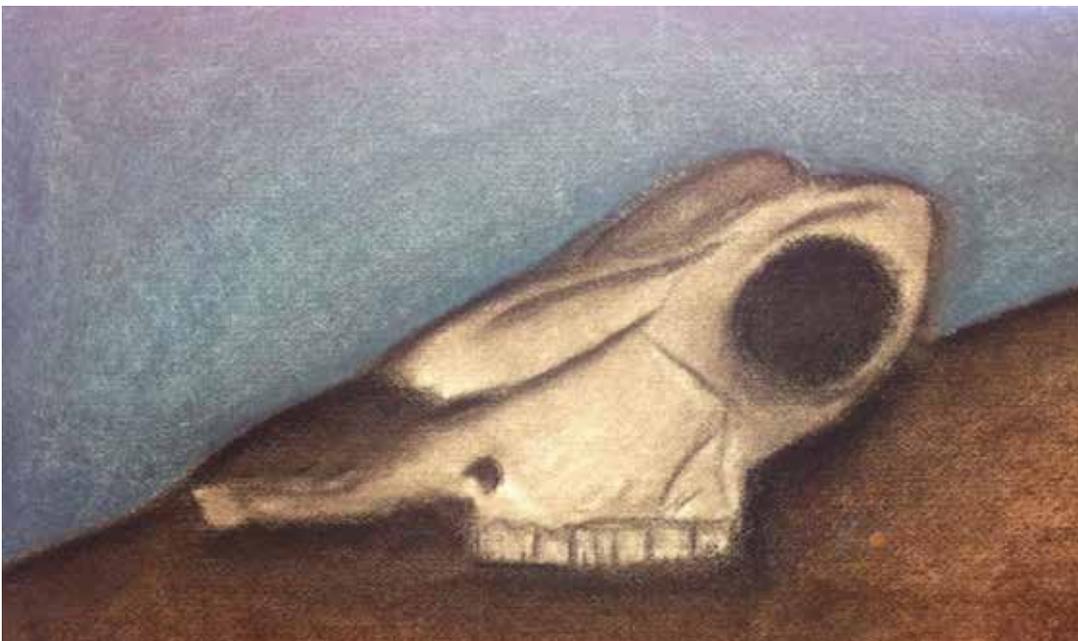
*Untitled*



Ajur Apai  
Year 11 · St. Peter's  
College

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Don't let darkness override your happiness. Energy, enlightenment, joy and positivity is reflected with the choice of colour. The dark background creates a great combination and the image remains subdued.



Chloe McLaughlin  
Year 11 · St. Peter's College

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This piece was an unusual piece of work for me, inspired by the famous artist, Picasso. I chose to do a skull piece as it shows another perception of the theme 'live simple, simply live'. This piece also leaves the audience with a sense of mystery of the subject and leaves the imagination open to how the subject could have lived its life.



**Lecanne Mpatiwa**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*

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The girl is just lying on leaves; it is just simply a wonderful thing to do.



**Arienne Suaiso**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*

# LIVE SIMPLY. SIMPLY LIVE.

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Charlotte Dawson · Year 10 · St. Peter's College

They say to live simply. To not worry about material items so thoroughly that it clouds every other thought within one's mind. Instead, they tell you to worry about getting somewhere in life, to worry about getting the grades to get a good job and create a loving family. Curious isn't it? The way that they tell you that there is no pressure, but there is pressure everywhere. There is pressure to be the best, to be the most gorgeous, the kindest, the most loving, that pressure is always there. It will never go away and there is no way to control it. People may say it's more pleasant to just not care, but that doesn't work either. Because, deep inside, you will always care.

Whether it's about family, friends or even a tree you used to climb as a child. It is impossible to not care and it is impossible to truly live simply. To even live simply there would be a great amount of

judgement from those around you, and judgement really does hurt one's confidence, one's respect for the world. They will judge you for living simply, as the material items are what gain approval, and approval is what every human truly desires.

The truth is, they don't truly judge, but rather envy you. Envy you for the idea that you can truly live your life without being materialistic, that you can enjoy the life surrounding you. Whether they admit it or not. However, some can choose to simply live. To simply enjoy the world around them and let things flow the way they were supposed to. That should be the true goal of life. To simply enjoy the life that is created around us. The beauty and the pain everything must endure to create it, to become it. Because to live simply, is to simply live within the world that has been beautifully created around us. ■



**Naomi Hind**

Year 11 · St. Peter's College

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Live simply, simply live; it's a phrase that means exactly what it says. Without the complexities of life, you can just live. Taking this into consideration, my watercolour piece reflects the simplicities of reality with basic shapes and monochrome colours. Using generic household objects such as bottles and containers can emphasise the supposedly bland nature of life that we as "complicated" humans can take, and do take, for granted. I intend the artwork to feel calming and soft, giving a sense of tranquillity because that's something we don't give ourselves enough of: time to relax.

# LIVE AND LOVE, SIMPLE

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Tamsyn Benton · Year 11 · St. Peter's College

It's simple,  
Cut your hair,  
Dye it,  
Shave it off.  
It's yours,  
And you live.

It's simple,  
Hold her hand,  
Ignore the stares,  
The stares that aren't from her.  
She's got you,  
and you love.

It's simple,  
You eat that fry,  
Or two,  
Or three hundred,  
Because it's food.  
You need it,  
You want it,  
And you live.

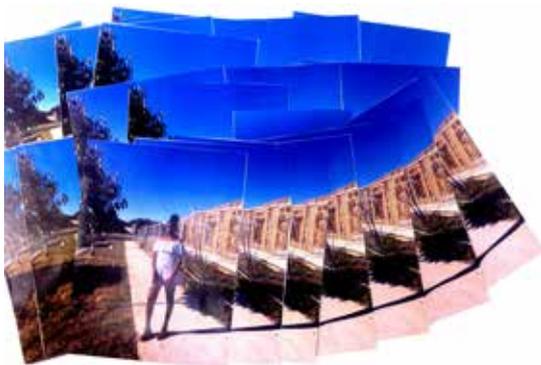
It's simple,  
You hug,  
To comfort,  
To care for,  
A quiet reassurance you are there.  
Small but needed,  
And you love.

It's simple,  
You laugh,  
Inside jokes,  
Lame stories.  
You clap and yell,  
You don't stop,  
And you live.

It's simple,  
You smile,  
To your family,  
Your friends,  
Strangers.  
Big and bright,  
You spread kindness,  
And you love.

It's not simple,  
You have ups and downs,  
Some longer than others,  
Whether good or bad,  
You frown and you smile,  
You cry and you laugh,  
You love and hate,  
But it's okay,  
I promise it's okay.

It's your love,  
It's your life,  
It's simple,  
It's you. ■



**Josephine Daniel**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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My personal feelings are reflected in this image through what I am wearing, very simplistic and not over top, this reflects my life circumstances as I do not thrive off materialistic things and like to be very basic. The subject matter is nature, which I have tried to create a feel of by placing the trees in one corner, the greenery and the blue sky.

# OVERTHINK THE CAFFEINE

Lynda The Le · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St. Albans

His cup was grey and tall, nice and round with black inscription of a fancy quote. He is a man of sketchy business and could not keep himself committed. He tended to leave traces of vodka in his long black and occasionally, tequila. I left lipstick stains as love bites. Found myself loving him because he was a bitter man. He always read the Sunday paper and sipped its beautiful intoxicating content, the way I sipped his words.

Maybe this is why I ended up with a broken cup that once indulged us with steaming black liquid. It is now cracked – perhaps a perfect description of everything there was to him.

It sat in a cupboard in a graveyard of cups.

Caffeinated words made me feel too old to love or sleep. Soon I would be thirty and my mind screamed – “Go and settle down. You’ll be an old lonely hag in a few years – known as the chick with complicated relationships.”

I needed to find a new coffee cup. Paper ones are flimsy, too easy to fling. Woolworth’s cups are

overrated, like pumpkin latte in a mug. Too foamy and bubbly for me. Target cups are plain, broad and intimidating. And don’t even try to drink coffee from a glass cup! Good, solid coffee cups are just hard to find; every plain, white cup seems to feel broad and masculine, yet intimidating – an opaque mystery.

A knock pulled me out of my thoughts. The door to my apartment opened. He still had the key. I placed the paper cup on the table and it spilled. The room is suddenly occupied with silence. “You’re here.”

“Sorry, I came to apologise,” he replied. We released our stares with a slight gasp. He played with the edges of the key and it gave me an odd feeling of satisfaction.

I walked to the kitchen and got his cup out of the cupboard. It looked sad. The stains visible on the bottom, a reminder of the past. I filled it with black liquid and put it on the table.

It steamed between us. ■



**Hayley Nguyen**

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans

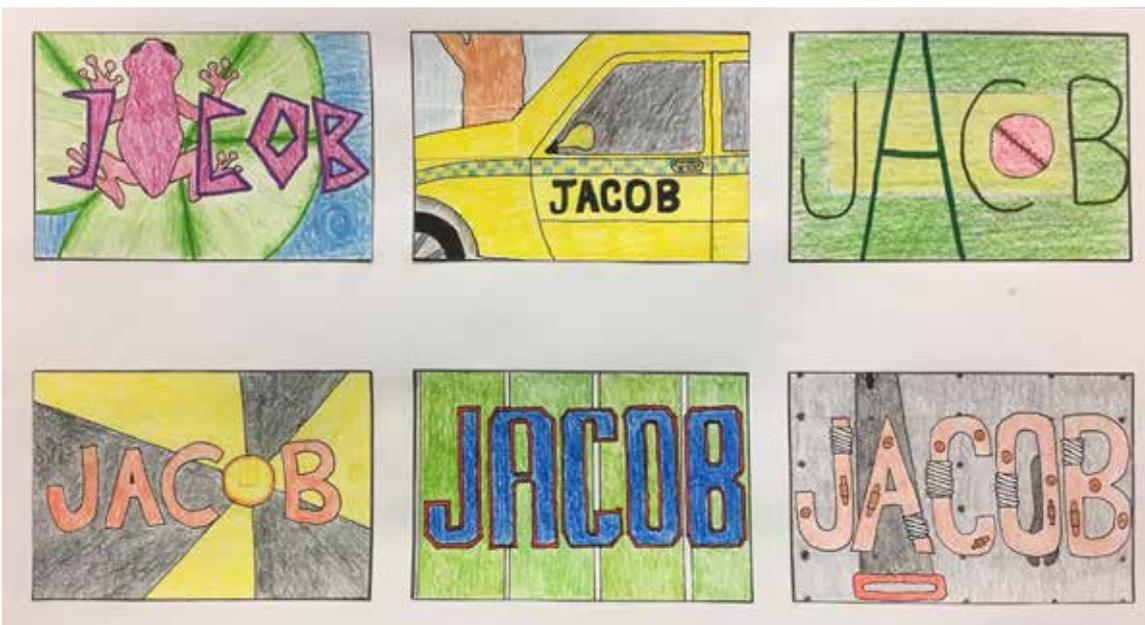
*‘Serenity’, Portrait, Acrylic Paint on Canvas Paper*

The Beauty of nature itself.

Our world and society is buried deep in social media, technology and everything digital, that we forget to take time to enjoy the simple things in life and appreciate the blessings that are God given.



Alex Ngo  
Year 8 · CBC St Kilda



Jacob Lavender  
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

# NATURE'S GIFTS

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Levi Dwyer · Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

I taught myself to live simply,  
To gaze at the horizon, praising nature's gifts,  
Feel content for the fish when the dragnet shifts,  
To rise early and wander alone at dawn,  
Eyes peeled for an otter or a fawn,  
Inhaling the air, clearing out my lungs,  
Nothing of lies, left on the tip of my tongue,  
Exhaling my redundant worries,  
Chewing on nutrients, from bushes blooming berries,  
When the shrubs rustle in the ravine,  
O never forget where you have been,  
Live simply,  
So, that others can simply...  
Live. ■



Levi Dwyer  
Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

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*'Framing St Kilda'*



Jimmy Tchong  
Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

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*'Rule of Thirds'*

# UNMASKED

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Josh Leroi · Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

Simon pulled the milk white mask over his malformed face. Turning his head to look at the wall mounted mirror next to him, he inspected the small grooves on his cheeks as the mask filled in, moulding to his facial shape. Turning away, Simon picked up his small leather suitcase, breathing in its rich characteristic smell. Simon looked back at the mirror to inspect the placement of his mask. Satisfied, he stepped away and into the pneumatic tube allocated to his job-protected dwelling. Sensors inside the tube detect his presence, and close the clear plexiglass doors with a loud rush of air. As the tube sped him through miles of tunnels to the surface, Simon felt a wave of nausea hit him.

“Just a few more days until I move up in the workforce. A few more days.” Simon reassured himself.

Bracing himself against the wall, Simon breathed slowly in and out, sweat dripping down his forehead to his mask.

Before he could calm himself, a loud hissing noise erupts from the pneumatic seal as the tube doors open.

“Are you alright?”

Simon, gripped with terror, bolted upright to face his best friend.

“Yes, quite fine now. Filters acting up again is all.”

“Ah, them again. You may have to get them repaired, one small fault could lead to many, and then you would be Unmasked!”

“What a horrible proposition.” Simon drawled. “Oh, I see you’ve been promoted again! What a wonderful deep lustrous red.”

“Yes, I see you are a man of fine taste too. Very beautiful, believe me, I know.”

Red said, lifting a hand to caress his mask. “I must be going now, important things to do.”

Simon watched as the red-masked man disappeared into the throngs of the bustling Masked. Taking in his stark white tube station filled with council warnings, Simon started to walk into the crowd when he spotted *him*. Around Simon, other Masked did the same, and started to walk briskly in the opposite direction. Frozen in place, Simon continued to watch as the Unmasked man continued to walk towards where he was standing. Simon took it all in. The dirty brown jacket, the dark, mottled pants, and the muddy white shoes. Not noticing he had dropped his suitcase due to how surreal it was, Simon attempted to run, tripped on his suitcase, and fell towards the floor.

Dazed, and with a loud ringing noise in his ears, Simon pushed himself up one handed, the other holding his bleeding nose.

*(bleeding nose?)*

At his feet lay shards of creamy-beige coloured, almost ceramic looking material which were melting into shapelessness into the pristine white tiles. Looking around, Simon noted the empty corridors, and the papers moving in the ventilation’s draft. Attempting a step forward, Simon stumbled to his knees, still out of balance. Looking up again, Simon saw a strange man offering his hand out to him.

“You all right mate?” The stranger asked in a concerned tone.

“Something wrong with your mask, do you...”

Squinting up from the ground, his eyes slightly unfocused, Simon found it hard to discern the colour of the stranger’s mask.

“You’ve had a bit of a fall friend, come on now, before the crowds and inevitable council enforcement come along.”

His head clearing, Simon looked back at the stranger man’s face. *(face?)*

Simon yelped, pulling back from the stranger’s grip.

“I wouldn’t turn down any assistance what with your predicament and all”

Drawn by the noise, a few Masked stepped into the station. Noticing the footsteps, Simon turned and saw a familiar shade of red.

“Hey-hey buddy! Can you help me? This Unmasked is trying to rob me!”

The other Masked turn to Simon’s friend.

“I don’t know what you’re trying to pull but I shall offer some mercy; leave now or the enforcement shall string you up with the rest of them.” Red said, his pompous voice made tinny by his mask.

Lifting his chin, Red turned on his heel and abruptly left as fast as he had arrived.

Feeling as if he was breathing through a straw, Simon could almost feel the toxic chemicals in the air destroying the membrane in his lungs.

The stranger stood there, watching him suffer.

“H-how do you bear this?” Simon gasped, clawing at his throat and eyes, as he felt the acid atmosphere eating away at them.

“After your done having a spaz attack, can we get going? I’m not in the mood for a public display of who not to be today.”

Stunned, Simon looked at the man standing next to him, and started to calm down.

“Names Eric. What do you call yourself?”

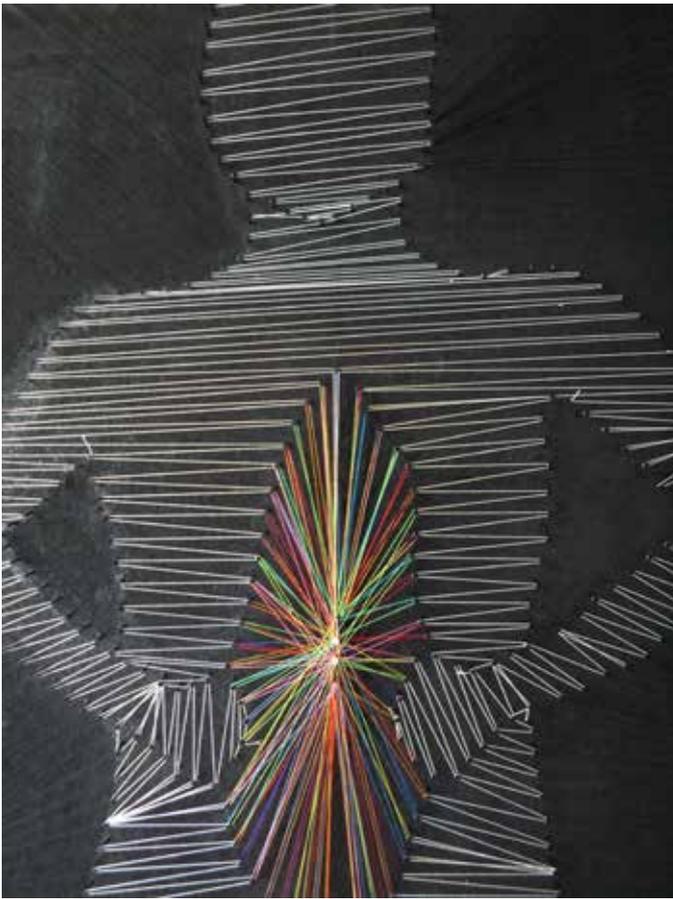
“Eh, uh, S-Simon” Simon muttered, stumbling for words.

“Well, Simon, I reckon we better get going before the coppers arrive. How about it?”

“Ok” Simon squeaked, lifting himself to his feet more successfully this time, following Eric into the labyrinth of the city. ■



Zachary Sianos  
*Year 10 · CBC St Kilda*



**Bridget Rankine**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

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*Studio Arts*



**Perri Kennedy**  
*Year 9 · Aquinas College*

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*Illustration Design*

# NOT ALONE

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Ruby Dickson · Year 10 · Aquinas College

It was always with me, always there. Everywhere I went, every minute of the day. I would look over my shoulder and there it was, a black mass of writhing muscles and pain.

If I were to face glass or mirrors, it would be there in the reflection, misty and unsure as if I was seeing it through a haze of fog.

It never acknowledged the people around it, despite everyone seemingly avoiding it by swerving and weaving around it, whether they realised or not.

It seemed I was going crazy. No one else appeared to see it, and it never opened or closed doors.

But recently... people seem to be able to see it too, be it a passing glance or double take as I walk by. I must not be crazy.

One day, I was walking down the street towards the shops, constantly looking in reflections as if it would suddenly disappear, if I only stared at it long enough. A scream rang out. A woman was curled into a ball, the dog hovering right next to her. It's snarling sounding more like the screams of

the estranged. I was shocked, I hadn't seen anyone as much as notice it, let alone *interact* with it.

I moved towards the woman, and it's attention turned to me. Horrible thoughts flooded my brain; She doesn't want your help, you'll just make it worse, leave her alone, you can't do anything, you're too worthless.

I hesitated for a moment, but it was only a moment, and in less than two seconds I had reached her. Her screams had tapered off into quiet sobs, and the public around us stared in confusion and concern.

Reaching forward, I grabbed her arm gently. She flinched and grasped at her hair viciously. I put a hand on either side of her shoulders, she wrenched herself away. I placed a hand on her head, her sobs stuttered and spluttered to a stop. She looked up shyly, and I smiled softly.

"It's okay, you can see it too can't you?" I asked.

She nodded.

"Don't be scared, we'll get rid of it together, you're not alone anymore." ■



Shari Naidoo  
Year 9 · Aquinas College

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Media

# MY EVERYTHING

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Sharnie-Lee Cecere · Year 10 · Aquinas College

You hold my memories  
You have the names  
You know my secrets  
You have the games

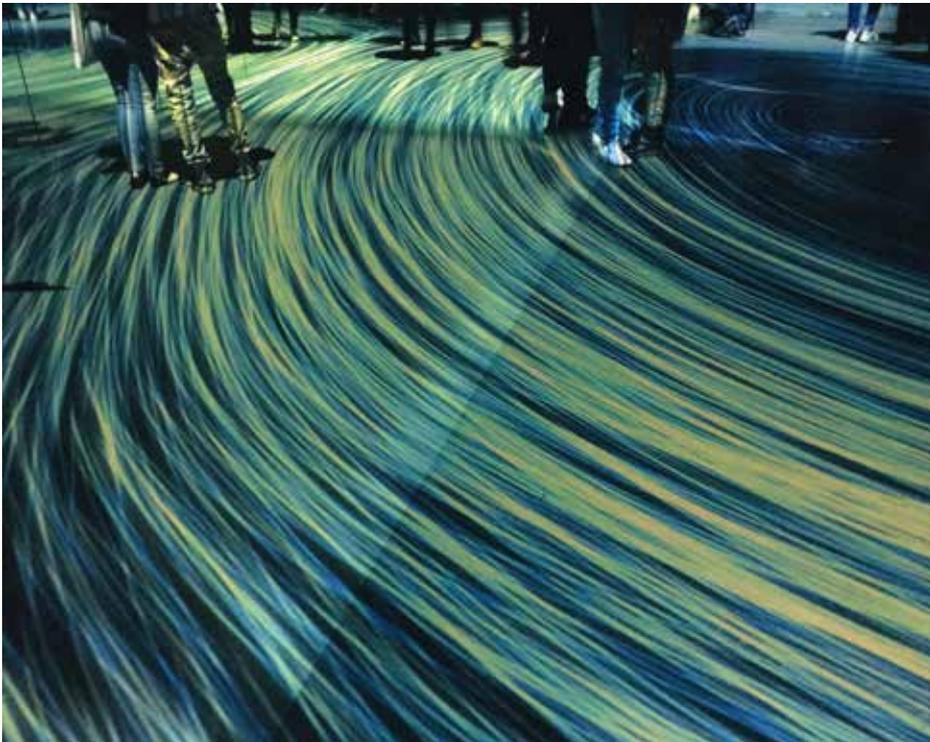
You know all about me  
You know all my friends  
You know what I like  
You know all the trends

I pretty much take you everywhere  
Yes everywhere I go

Adventures here we come  
We'll let the whole world know

You make me laugh  
You make me cry  
You make me sick  
You make me sigh

You really are my own  
You really are called mine  
You really are my phone  
I have you all the time ■



Thomas Busse  
Year 10 · Aquinas College

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Media – Digital Photography

# STOLEN SECRETS

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EJ Watkins · Year 10 · Aquinas College

I had told Emma about him last night. She wasn't surprised, I told her not to tell anyone and she promised. When she left, I went back to my room to text him. Him being the cutest guy in school, and I, Wilson Taylor had him all to myself. I walked a little bit further to the gates of Thornberry High School and I was greeted by Sebastian Smith, a.k.a, him. He looks for all signs of danger before wrapping his long arms around me. "Missed you," He smiled. He was the perfect height for me to bury my face into his chest. For a moment, he rested his chin on my head, before I looked up and smiled at him. He leant in slightly, paused, and checked his surroundings again. Even though Seb was such a tall, and tough kid, he was still scared of the large group of friends that followed him around. We both were. So I checked too. No one to be seen. Our lips touched, and it felt like a fireworks finale on the 4th of July. A seemingly never-ending explosion with colours painting a star-lit sky. Our lips separated, and we collectively giggled. Still looking into Seb's hazel eyes, I clasped my hand

into his. Although he was unsettled about holding hands before, now he couldn't stop looking back at me in a daze, like nothing else mattered. We could hardly wander into the school before Peter, walked up behind us. In surprise, we let go of each other and awkwardly greeted him. Peter looked at Seb and I, not confused, but knowingly. He knew.

"Please don't tell anyone." Seb looked at me, confused. He obviously couldn't pick up the signal.

"You have my word." Peter said expressionlessly. He immediately walked off. He was nice and easy to make conversation with, but was weird about Seb and I. He wouldn't tell anyone.

Or would he?

First period, and everyone in the school knew. People yelled slurs and disgusting comments. How could Peter have done such a thing? In high school these kind of secrets stay secrets for a reason. He shared something so close to my heart, and it was not his to share. ■

# HANDPRINT

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Hannah Gerrey · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Pressed in ceramic  
A moment in time  
Kept on the shelf as a memory of mine  
Pink in its depths  
And white to surround  
A small toddlers hand  
Once it was mine  
  
I pick it up  
Its edges jagged  
My hands aren't soft

Now ripped and ragged  
Unable to fit my palm back in  
I trace my finger along the rim  
  
I gaze upon its text  
Silver, small and complex  
My name; my gift just for me  
With the year it was made, 2003  
And under that as well  
My old happy place  
Called Tinkerbell ■



**Emily Shields**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

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*Studio Arts. Appropriation of Angry Young Girl  
by Charles Blackman*



**Nikki Dimitropoulos**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

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*Studio Arts*

# OBSCURED WORLD

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Daniel Barber · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Dear... everyone,  
Please... just notice me. Even if you haven't seen me for a while, just know that I'm here. That I'm real and alive. Hidden... yes... but that was your doing anyway. You shouldn't be at all surprised.

I write to you all now because I've reached a boiling point. And yes, this does affect you, you self-centred humans. All of you. So keep reading.

I'm sick of being the way I am, of being concealed. Every second you hide me I grow stronger, but my power is horrible and confusing and unwanted... I'm like one of your kings, but with a thousand enemies after him.

I don't want to grow stronger. I don't want to be this way. It's risky for us all if I'm like this.

As I grow, suddenly my confinement gets a little closer, and the room a little tighter. It won't be long now before I can't bear the walls anymore and I erupt from inside... cascading all over your feral society in an explosion of anguish...

And even though all of this exists, you, as both a species and individuals, fail to understand that I am still here, no matter how much you hate it...

One day I'll escape my invisible prison and descend on you all, leaving destruction and death and sadness in my wake. That's not what I want but I know that my existence will eventually lead to such things.

When I am free I won't be able to control my body or my mind... When I'm free, you will decide what to do with me and, even though I hate to believe it, I know that you will abuse me and lash me... put reins around me and ride me to judgement day.

To the day that none of you thought would come...

So why?

Why?

Some of you surely must know that this is happening! I know that you know!

So why!

Why do you torment me?

Why must you make me exist without existing?

Why must you all do this to me day in and day out?

I'm in a constant battle craving freedom but being sickened by it at the same time. I want you to reinforce my walls, but I also want them torn down. It's all so confusing... There wouldn't even be a problem if you hadn't locked me in here in the first place!

I may still be a steed of catastrophe, but at least I wouldn't be as large or obtrusive!

And the worst of it all is those who believe I'm not here... or that they aren't the problem! Can you believe it? Of course you can't, you're probably one of them!

Let me tell you now. As genuinely and sincerely as I possibly can. You are... You are the problem. You are almost the worst of the lot.

You make it ok to abuse me. To tie me down, scold me and cast me aside. You make that ok? How could you ever...

Some of you probably still don't know who I am. You don't recognise the way I write or the words I say.

If you don't honestly know... I am repulsed by you. I am disgusted. Outraged, horrified, shocked, appalled...

Why don't I make it a bit easier for you, yeah? Why don't I tell you who I am and how I know you?

I know you because you're the one who turns a blind eye.

I know you because you refuse to follow what you believe has to be there.

I know you because you believe the others, and have turned me into a social outcast, a forgotten memory that can only be accessed by a naive imagination that thinks you still own me.

I am a vile creation.

I am all of your woes, every tear that has ever leaked from your childish eyes.

I am the cry for help, from a refugee who won't be taken in.

I am the woman who slaves away for little more than pocket change.

I am the man who sleeps at your feet on your walk through town.

I am the pain that is locked away by big words and people in suits.

I am what is wrong with your pitiful society, your sorry excuse for a civilization that is anything but civil.

I am... everywhere, everyone, everything... but I am just out of your reach...

I am you, and your every action...

Still don't know who I am?

Not quite yours,

Truth ■

# HAPPY TIMES

---

Ben Harris · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Inviting aromas that cling to the air,  
Of a quintessential beef roast,  
The sound of the carving knife,  
Whirring alongside the sounds of footy.

Before she passed, it was this,  
A simple Sunday dinner,  
As we sat around and ate with delight,  
Cheering at every goal.

Her squeaky walker, her many tablets,  
Her heightened chair and smile.  
Were all synonymous with Sunday night,  
As was a North Melbourne victory.

But then she left us and still I ponder,  
What would have happened if ...  
These Sunday nights of family and fun,  
Never really did happen?

The rough tablecloth, old cutlery,  
Plates arranged in a careless way,  
Yet all of it was perfect,  
A time of happiness and joy.

We sat in the kitchen, and listen fondly to tales,  
Of my Grandparents time of childhood,  
Living in India in cramped spaces,  
Filled my mind with wonder.

This was a happy time, a time before I knew,  
Of the world and its imperfect reality,  
Yet these memories stick with me,  
As the happiest times of my life. ■

# TRUE LENITY

---

Joshua Kolak · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Stress eats up my peace,  
And grows large in weight,  
Until it blows up,  
And hooks me like bait.

When I'm festering,  
The beach is my cure.  
Distractions vanish,  
The peace makes me pure.

I trek over sand,  
And I feel each grain.  
Sand sticks on my toes,  
And cleans all my pain.

Staring at the sky,  
Clears things in my mind.

The warmth of the sun,  
Leaves my fears behind.

The ocean calls me,  
Waves crash to the shore.  
Just me and the sea,  
It's what I adore.

I sprint to the sea,  
It gives me a chill.  
I push through the waves,  
Time seems to stand still.

I glance at the coast,  
Prime serenity.  
A place you'll find peace,  
And true lenity. ■

# SCREENS

---

Anthony Yong · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Our world is full of beauty,  
Yet we view it through the screens.  
When we look past all the lies,  
The truth's grimmer than it seems.

Benny the baby,  
Playing with his toys.  
Crawling 'round the house,  
What can he destroy?

Billy the baby,  
iPad in his hands.  
He handles big devices,  
Before he can stand.

Benny's now a child,  
Surrounded by his friends.  
Making mem'ries and manners,  
He'll cherish 'till the end.

Billy's now a child,  
Absorbed by a screen.  
Imagine if he knew,  
Of the joys that could've been.

Benny is in class,  
Studying the board.  
Working hard and taking notes,  
Learning is his reward.

Billy is in class,  
Learning makes him frustrated.  
Fortnite got him nowhere and  
His phone's been confiscated.

Benny is at work  
Goals almost achieved,  
The future's looking bright with  
That promotion he'll receive.

Billy is at work;  
Efforts rather poor.  
He's caught playing a game,  
Fired! But just what for?

Benny's driving home,  
Taking in the view.  
Both his hands on the wheel,  
He'll be safe: it's nothing new.

Billy's driving home,  
Replying to a text.  
Only seconds looking down,  
And then a '*crash!*' Don't be next.

Drastic changes are needed,  
It's clearer now than ever.  
Tech is not a villain, but,  
A simple life is better. ■

# EPILOGUE

---

John Huynh · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Knowing her time is near,  
She doesn't tremble in fear.  
She mightn't have any teeth,  
But she smiles at those who are dear.

She lies on her deathbed,  
She thinks of the river that runs red.

The motor that coughs up dread,  
And she wonders where she'll be led.

She stares out the window,  
And there lies her reflection.  
The longevity that she saw,  
"World War 2, Ho Chi Minh, I survived all." ■

# DOING IT RIGHT

---

Daniel Plowman · Year 9 · Mazenod College

A friendly setting,  
All calm and serene.  
Free from distractions,  
Pure and clean,

Away from the stress,  
That life brings to us.  
Dashing for trains,  
Or chasing the bus.

Sometimes we need,  
To stop and just think.  
Take a look 'round,  
And just simply blink.

The world is so pretty,  
Colourful and bright.  
The sun of the day,  
And stars of the night.

All of the nature,  
The wildlife and plants.  
They're just so perfect,  
Put into a trance.

We need to admire,  
What views we can see.  
The mountains, the ocean,  
And each giant tree.

Just block out the tensions,  
The worries and pain.  
Simply fight through it,  
Then do it again.

Life is so complex,  
Yes it really is.  
School work and friendships,  
It's all a big whizz.

Don't worry 'bout the future,  
Don't dwell on the past.  
Just live in the moment,  
It will be gone fast.

Life is so short,  
We aren't here for long.  
Enjoy all the good things,  
And not all things wrong.

We could spend all day,  
Fixing our flaws.  
However, these errors,  
Can open new doors.

All that we care 'bout,  
Today in our lives.  
Are having these gadgets,  
Our only desires.

Hold up, what happened,  
To what really counts?  
Loving each other,  
Impossible amounts.

Caring for friends and  
Our families too.  
This is what we should,  
Really want to do.

Take a quick moment,  
And think about life.  
Ask us: Are we really,  
Doing this right? ■

# FREE

---

Emilit Aji Mathew · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Life is beautiful simple and free,  
Filled with love and hope, just as it should be.  
Embracing each moment as it arrives,  
But this is not what we do with our lives.  
Seduced by the world's temptations and charms,  
Against each other we often take arms.  
Throughout our lives, it is good that we preach,  
Contradicted by the war tactics we teach.  
Love, peace and freedom we hope will survive,  
But instead, for war and weapons, we strive.

Are we destroying the world that we know?  
Many deny, and ignore – they say 'no'.  
They say what a wonderful world it was,  
Playing together all day just because.  
But now we're scared to even go outside,  
So many new dangers have now arrived.  
Let's turn back time to what it was before,  
What more in our lives are we looking for?  
The solution is clear as one, two, three,  
Tell the world to live life simple and free. ■

# WORLD OF RELIEF

---

Deni Trkulja · Year 7 · Mazenod College

I sit on the comfortable, blood red chair.  
I click the button, the dead screen comes alive.  
The computer hums, like a disgruntled bee.  
And the set starts shining brightly.

My keyboard clicks and my mouse moves,  
My mind enters a foreign world, my surroundings  
disappear.  
My focus on the game intensifies.  
I greatly fear another loss.

Within this weird, wild world,  
Anything is possible; anything can be achieved.  
Gaming brings such freedom.  
Knowing this, relieves me of stress.

A hard day at school, or getting too much  
homework.  
Makes me crave this freedom.  
Knowing everything will stop and I will play,  
Makes my dull day more appealing.

Games give a break from the world,  
Like having fun while resting.  
No other activity is this joyful,  
Or provides support to many (people).

An activity for many, which everyone enjoys,  
One that provides relief.  
One that provides escape.  
One that provides happiness. ■

## LIFE

---

Timothy Ng Chit Wing · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Darkness, oblivion, emptiness.  
The earth parts: finally light, revealed,  
Undergrowth surrounds me like a nest,  
I shoot up, no more am I concealed.

I lay dormant, asleep til the time's nigh,  
Joyously, I bloom with vibrant colours,  
Yellow and black, zipping across the sky,  
I'm ready, for now I begin to stir.

I am fully grown, a product of fruition,  
A hand reaches out, plucking me from my great  
bliss,  
Surrounded by myself, beyond recognition,  
Never fearing, embracing the endless abyss.

Somewhere far away, a new story,  
Under the ground, just waiting to burst.  
A new life, waiting to be set free,  
Until the time comes, lying submersed,  
It is a simple life, the fruit tree. ■

## SAILING

---

Levon Liyanage · Year 7 · Mazenod College

The ocean wind blows across my face,  
As the sun slowly lowers its gaze.  
The deck creaks, as I set sail,  
Uncertain of the journey ahead.

My journey provides many opportunities,  
For me and my great country.  
Although if I get lost, I'm dead!  
A sailing boat built with silvery lead.

Sailing lets me escape my troubles,  
Away from the mountains of rubble  
It sets me free,  
Like a bird soaring above the vast sea.

The salty ocean sprays the wooden hull,  
As my ship crashes through high waves,  
I try and go as fast as I can,  
Because the sea is what I crave. ■

# GRANDPARENTS WITH SIMPLE LIVES

---

Andre Almodiel · Year 7 · Mazenod College

Simple lives aren't extremely common  
But with luck, they may come quite often.  
One might be hiding under your nose  
Or even the dark, in your shadows  
Just open your eyes, and you will see  
Simple lives shining like rupees

I visit their home once in a while,  
And wonder in awe with a quaint smile,  
Grandparents' lives give much glee.  
Great long rests with a fresh cup of tea,

Farming their own meals in their backyard,  
Nutritious fruits grown in an orchard,  
No extravagance in the cottage,  
No deluxe meals, just simple porridge.

Fancy no need as they work in light,  
Sweep, sweep a broom goes past at midnight,  
Pages in a book always turning,  
Smiles on their faces though they're working,  
Peace and calmness through generations,  
Simple lives throughout all the nations. ■

# THESE DAYS

---

Jason Rao · Year 7 · Mazenod College

In our modern world these days,  
We forget our simple ways.  
We think our world will improve over time,  
But it's being infested by war and crime.

We need to stop and relish our planet,  
We think it can improve, but really can it?  
Technology cannot fix everything,  
The problems we have, all the arguing.

These days we take so much for granted,  
Our families, our homes, every seed that's been  
planted.  
Be grateful for every part of our land,  
Every tree, every stone, every grain of sand.

Life is full of joy and sorrow,  
But there will always be the sun tomorrow.  
Another day of highs and lows,  
It's just part of life, that's how it goes.

Try to look at the good things in life,  
Be positive, if you're in some strife.  
In those moments of suffering or pain,  
Remember the lessons you may gain.

At times we don't realise how lucky we are,  
For the mistakes that we make, that leave us with  
scars.  
They say that failure is the best teacher,  
It helps us notice the little features.

Life is short and to leave your mark,  
Make the most of it, don't live in the dark.  
There's so much to do and so much to see,  
Our world is filled with so much beauty.

These days we forget to live simple lives,  
We do what we have to just to survive.  
This is not how humans ought to be,  
Constantly surrounded by technology. ■



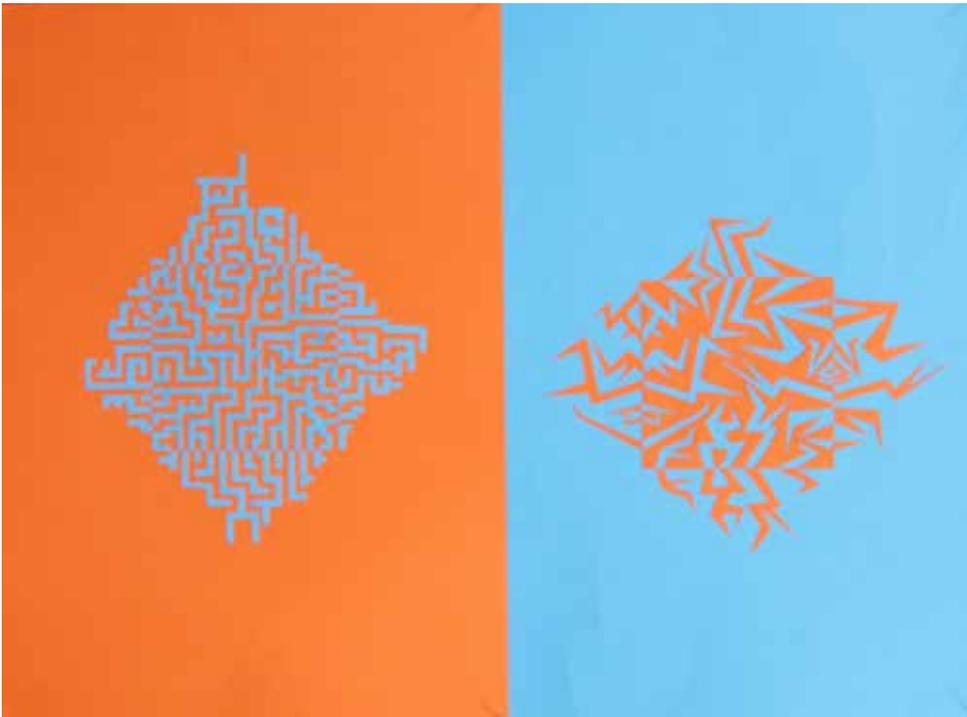
**Kyle Truong**  
*Year 10 · Mazenod College*

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*'Sydney Blue', Acrylic*

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The most iconic Australian landmark painted in blue, describes the land and the people being 'True Blue'. Painting something simple yet iconic can be such a thrill but what it represents is all on you.



**Barath Suresh and Samuel Chen**  
*Year 9 · Mazenod College*

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*'Blur to the Eye'*

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The aim of using orange and blue was to create an artwork composed of complementary colours. The effect of this combination of colours creates a standout artwork as the image is blurred when you view it from a distance.

# HIM!

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Mia Dicosmo · Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

She put down her steaming hot cup of green tea on her round wooden bedside table. She picked up a photo frame. It was him. The love of her life. Tears started streaming down her cheeks. She had lost him in the war. Even though she survived, her heart has been dead ever since he had been gone. Her life was full of joy before she lost him, and now it is just empty. She wiped her tears, put down the photo frame and sat on her soft, big bed. As she placed her hand over where he had slept, she could still smell his scent. His scent made her feel warm. She started to miss him and feel lonely without him. She took a big sip of her green tea, which had now cooled to room temperature. As it goes down her throat, the warmth calms her down. Her crying comes to a stop and she starts to fall asleep. ■



Isabella Zurzolo  
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

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'Remedy for the Despondent'

# REMEDY FOR THE DESPONDENT

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Isabella Zurzolo · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

The moon illuminated the sky of Tokyo with a warm glow. Chilled wind whispering to the girl as she pulled her scarf closer to her neck, cheeks and nose blushed rosy pink. Bright colours scattered the city of Tokyo, all different kinds, blue, red, green, yellow, purple...

But she was grey.

She stood out like a sore thumb, with her stained clothes, sunken eyes and chapped lips. Anyone could see that she came from nothing, with not much money but the change in her torn wallet.

She stuffs her hands into the pockets of her dirty jacket, feeling the holes with the tips of her fingers. Approaching her destination, she slips through shadowy alleyways, past the small desolate shops. The warm tinted glow of the lanterns lightened her path, but she stopped for a moment, a lone hooded figure catching her eye.

She turns, feeling the small droplets of rain begin to poke at her exposed skin. Looking at the figure properly, an unknown temptation to approach the figure flooded her senses like a tidal wave. However, her own rational thoughts kept her far away from its dangerous presence.

“Do you ever want to just get away?” it spoke in a low gravelly tone. She stood silent as the rain started to intensify, forming small puddles around her feet.

“Away from the poor and filthy life you live, don’t you wish for luxury? A better roof over your head and all the money you could ever desire,” it took a step closer, holding a covered hand out to her.

She thought about it for a moment, painting the image of all the things it was suggesting. It would be great wouldn’t it?

She looked into the void where the figure’s face should be and shook her head. Looking down to the concrete path beneath her feet.

“No, not really,” she says quietly.

It tilts his head, questioning her response. Its intimidating presence began to weaken as she spoke.

“Despite my circumstances, I’m happy with what I have and I would not have it any other way,” a small smile raises on her lips, a sudden burst of warmth rising from within herself.

The rain began to settle and she looked back up, the figure was gone, completely disappeared into thin air. A sudden weight had lifted off of her chest when its presence had dispersed. A soft sigh left her parted lips and she turned away, continuing on her path to her home.

She is happy. ■

# WILTED REFLECTIONS

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Jessica Newton · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Piercing dark orbs of coal rake the crowds of faces, some familiar – some blurring in the remnants of his mind. Gone are the warm pools of chocolate that used to swim in his eyes; once sweet and inviting – now steel clad in armour. Sheathed blades of stone.

He feels a light tap on his shoulder, mumbled words not registering in his mind as he shoves the hand, feeling the tight stretch of his lips form a disjointed smile of sorts. The person turns away, and with that, his smile crumbles with it. The boy is a puppet in a world of ventriloquists, silver thread that constrains his every limb, winding itself across his body. Slithering and churning and weaving and binding. *Suffocating*. He inhales harshly, and feels the constricting thread tug violently against his chest. Trying to break the ties that hold him hostage.

Shadowed shapes swirl around in his vision. Colours of white, blue and grey as his eyes struggle to focus. The lake is a place that once provided him with comfort. But now as he stares at his reflection of stone– he feels unrecognisable. A stranger.

The boy is torn out of his reverie by a flash of colour that catches in his peripheral. A single rose that is peacefully flowing down the stream. He reaches out for it and carefully caresses it between his fingers. Wilted and almost colourless – save for a single petal. A striking red, bright and alive against the dying flower that rests in his palm. He thinks it's beautiful. The way the petal stands alone and strong, despite the rose wilting. It's a song of hope as the fragile petal sings itself to life. Defying its end. It dares the world with a sly smile to make it wilt. The world relents. For this single red petal gives itself power. It doesn't hide, it doesn't crumble at the edges. It grins.

A tear cascades down the boy's cheek as he watches it ripple against the water, distorting his face. He tells himself that one day he will become like the petal. Where he fights the storm and flows peacefully down the stream. Breaking the ties that hold him hostage. Breaking the lies, that bind his mask.

He places the rose back in the water and watches it slowly float away. And is left staring at nothing except shades of blue. ■



**Declan Denni**

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

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*'Flying High'*

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Soaring above the world is the eagle. As it swoops down and soars back up to its home high above us all, the eagle simply lives and rejoices in its freedom.



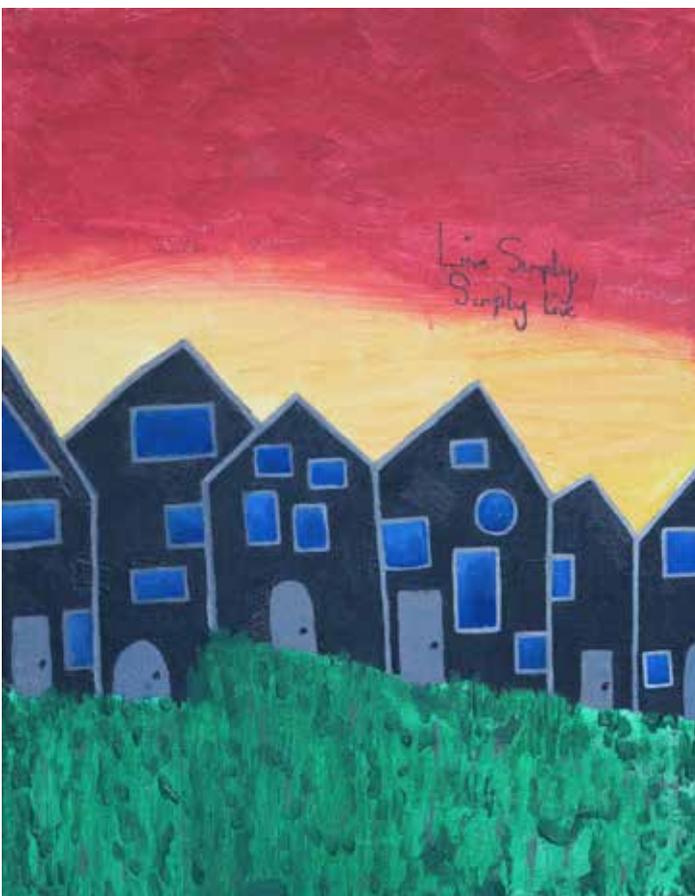
**Ria D'Souza**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*'Simply Live'*

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The changing patterns in the night sky are so beautiful. These patterns remind me of how important it is for each of us to simply live in the beauty of each moment.



**Tayla Gorman**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*'Living Simply, Simply Live'*

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Sometimes we need to think about where we live and how this can impact on our life. For those who choose to live a simple life they take great pleasure in the beauty of their surroundings.

# ME AND YOU

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Rachael D'Souza · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

I wish, I wonder, I ponder. Your words are boring. They are so overused. Do you even mean these things? I can't have fun with you around. Everything is about you and how you are perfect. And how can you love everybody in the world? There must be someone you hate?

## Do I want you?

Why is there a gap? Why aren't you following me? The road ahead is fun. It is a smooth road. Your warnings are annoying. They stop my fun. Can't you just understand, I am an adult now and I can choose what I want? I don't want your warnings. They're tiring and annoying. I don't really need you anymore. You're more of a chore.

## Do I love you?

Now with my years and knowledge, these times have been tough and tiring. No fun, just danger

and sickness. I can't do anything. Every move makes me worry. So much guilt. So much lost innocence. I can't handle anything at all.

Since when did this happen? Why? Why does it feel like I am drowning? It was fun at the start. The road was smooth and inviting. Now it is rocky and scary. I can't turn back. It's holding me here. When have these things owned me? When did it start? Where are you?

## Do you want me?

I wish, I wonder, I ponder. The words jump from the page. Each one reflects your personality, your beauty, your grace, your strength. Yet I can't reach you or be with you. I am blocked from your love. Just as you are blocked from my sight.

## Do you love me? ■



Emily Zovak

Year 11 · Catholic Regional College Sydenham/North Keilor

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*'The City Sleeps Alone Tonight, But I Have You'*

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*'The City Sleeps Alone Tonight, But I Have You'* explores the ideas behind platonic love. Often overlooked in media for its romantic counterpart, platonic love is void of the issues that romantic love is plagued with. It is a love that is no less raw or valid but is pure and simple. *'The City Sleeps Alone Tonight, But I Have You'* shows that love can be expressed in the simplest of ways and can be easily reciprocated.



**Michaela Davoli**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College  
North Keilor*

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*'Staring in the Distance of Nature'*

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This art piece has three main aspects. The first one is the trees. The trees represent nature, and all of nature's simplicity. Trees give us oxygen and life so when you are around them, they can push all your thoughts aside and can make you instantly feel tranquil. The second aspect is the beach in the pupil of the eye. The beach represents feeling calm and being in the setting of the ocean. When going to the ocean, you can feel very relaxed especially when you hear the waves crashing and the sun is beaming on your face. The final aspect is the eye. Without eyes there would be no vision. Without vision, we wouldn't be able to take in the simplicity of life. The world is filled with natural resources that are very simple and without vision we would never be able to experience them. These aspects all tie together, when talking about experience the simplicity of nature.



**Morgan Leahy**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College  
North Keilor*

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*'Illusion'*

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In the complex pattern of our life we can become stagnate in our thoughts and in doing so follow a safe path. We forget that to simply live we need to be creative and explore the mysteries of our world looking at it from different perspectives.

# IT TAKES A GENERATION TO CHANGE A GENERATION

---

Samantha Smith · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

Culture is the devil in disguise,  
It steals the chance for humans to truly exist,  
It's time for humanity to stand up and rise,  
Take back the dreams that traditions resist.  
Father, I don't blame you, mother, it's okay,  
For you were simply brought up this way,  
With disgust for the minority and hate towards  
race,  
Oh how can I ever feel at peace in this place?

You're 'just a girl' here to cook and clean is what  
they say,  
To serve the men of the house as their personal  
maid,  
'Be more ladylike' or 'know your place' is thrown  
at me all day,  
Dad works 'manly jobs,' Mum's the housewife  
and I'm afraid.  
Afraid when I grow up I'll be trapped in the body  
of a woman from another time,  
Misunderstood, ignored and limited because of  
culture's view on gender,  
She'll always be faced with a steep climb,  
Striving for change as equality's defender.

Around the world today, a woman is seen as an  
object,  
Men believe they are entitled to cat call or harass  
on the street.  
We should not have to be modest in order to be  
given respect,  
When will they stop seeing us as a 'piece of meat'?

Schools have dress codes so that girls don't  
'distract' men,  
And in the professional world we are paid less  
than them,  
We are always viewed as less important again and  
again.

In some countries girls don't have the right to  
drive a car,  
In others, girls don't have the right to get an  
education and learn,  
In some countries girls are forced into marriage  
because that's the way things are,  
They don't have the right to have a job and earn.  
We are told that one gender is better than the  
other,  
But why can't we all be equal to one another?  
Why must women always suffer in order for men  
to stay on top?  
Haven't we learnt time and time again that this  
discrimination must stop?

It's time to demolish sexism after so long,  
Forget about the past and all stand strong.  
Right now during this hour,  
We have the power,  
To make a difference for our future,  
So that boys and girls can unite sooner.

Because it takes a generation to change a  
generation,  
And we can achieve this, as one, as humanity, as  
a nation. ■

# REACH

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Grace Snjaric-Cubias · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

I stay awake at night,  
staring at the darkness above me  
thinking about other people's dreams  
they planted in my mind  
from a young age  
What I have to be  
What I must be.

Do I want them?  
Do I want to reach for them?

I carry my parents' desires  
on my back  
everyday  
Their weight increasing  
every year.

They want the best for me  
But my back begins to break,  
snaps with each step I take  
walking towards their dreams.  
One more step  
And I'll fall.

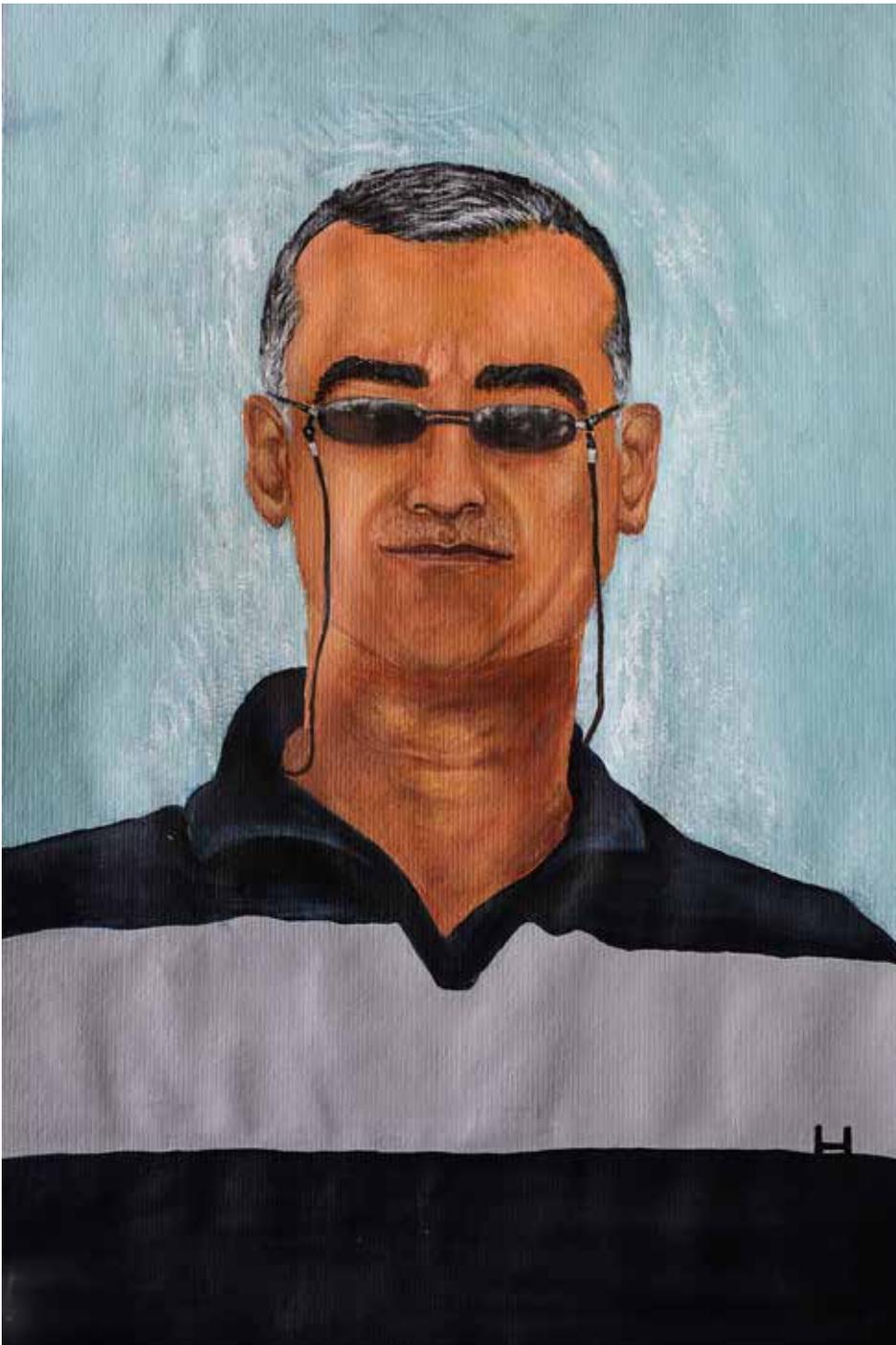
I want to sit down  
for a second.

Let me live  
My own path  
Not the one you made for me.

I want to sleep for once  
Say goodbye to these nights  
Of wakefulness  
And thinking  
in the dark.

I promise I won't disappoint  
I'll make you proud  
One day  
When I'm doing what I love  
living a life  
of dreams that I planted.

Finally I fall asleep  
Leaving their expectations  
Outside the door. ■



**Fade Zahra**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

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*Hameed (Portrait – Acrylic on Canvas Paper)*

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“The most important things are the simple things.”

My Father, Hameed, would say this to me over and over. He taught me that the simple, important things in life are; love, togetherness, happiness, respect, faith and family. Without these, life would be complicated.

# BLISSFUL LIGHT

Hannah Nguyen · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

The crumpled, tattered box sat on June's lap like the carcass of her former pet. It made her heart pulsate sporadically and she broke into a chilly perspiration. She knew that a curse would befall her if she opened the box, but a sly, hidden force was tempting her to take hold of the lid and rip it open. Nausea was gradually succumbing her, filling her with great anxiety. Though her abstinence was great, her curiosity was greater. She opened the box. A tiny glass bottle filled with multicoloured orbs rested on shredded newspaper. The surface was smooth and cold when she ran her fingers over it.

She carried the glass bottle into class. It felt strange and almost tingled between her ice-cold fingers. The teacher stood at the front, sporting a pair of thin-framed spectacles to hinder the fact that his eyes were like everyone else's, clouded and obscure. June stared at him, watching his mouth repeatedly open and close, unable to make out the befuddlement of words that were like conflicting piano chords. She planted her left arm on the graffitied table and rested her cheek on it, eyes fixated into the distance. Through the murky, classroom window to her right, a flock of birds were making their journey across the bright, but vapid rising sun. Lucky birds, she thought, to be able to do whatever they wished to do. The walls were washed over with hues of muted grey, showering over her with hopelessness; the 'usual'... Everyone here was fake; plastered with the same blurred eyes. June could once see colour before it gradually drained away after her mother took off without a word, leaving her to live with her auntie. Every day, she dreaded returning home from school, knowing the monster that awaited her. No one ever questioned the fresh bruises that appeared on her arms and neck almost constantly. It was a painstaking moment of realisation, when she discovered that no one cared about her.

She fiddled with the glass bottle and was overwhelmed with the urge to uncover its secrets. The orbs swirled as if filled with luminous liquid, shining a strange sort of light. She popped open its cork and tipped the bottle gently. A small marble-sized orb rolled onto her palm.

"June," a voice firmly called.

She glanced up. Her teacher was frowning at her. "What is your opinion of Macbeth's treason against the king?"

Saliva pooled in her throat but she refrained

from swallowing. Everyone was sneering at her incompetence. She clenched her fist, the orb digging into her skin. Suddenly, a burst of light pieced the room in a kaleidoscope of blinding colours. An invisible force surrounded her and energy surged through her body. It was blissful, beautiful, euphoric. She twirled on the slippery slope of colours that streaked across the classroom. She could stay here forever. Just as suddenly as it had appeared, the euphoria died down, leaving a trail of grief behind it.

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Cold was the porcelain tiles lining the bathroom in her home. June sat on the closed lid of the toilet with her ossified feet flat against the frigid floor. She craved the ecstasy the orbs promised earlier in class. Hunching over, she clenched the glass bottle, swallowing her excitement. Once again, she tipped out a single marble, crushing it in her palm, savouring its release of light. Her body was weightless and whisked around the room like a carousel. Just as she began to float through the vibrant clouds, the colours quickly disappeared, leaving an empty shell. She crushed another one. "This is wrong," she decided. "But I should save this up." Just as she was about to crush another, she noticed her reflection in the mirror. Beside her sullen face, was a lingering darkness. Without notice, the oak bathroom door creaked open and June recoiled.

Bewildered, she crawled towards the door. She rose to her feet and peeked outside. Silence greeted her. She turned around but an otherworldly force gripped her leg, stealing her balance and hurtling her towards the floor. Her chin hit the ground and pain seared across her jaw. Warm iron flooded her mouth, escaping in a brief cough. Her leg was swallowed up in black smoke. Half-conscious, she pulled her body into the bathroom, locking the door, which started banging. Ominous voices stirred and the banging grew more violent. She wanted to throw up. She looked for the bottle. Amidst the furor, she found it had shattered into tiny shards. She scrambled forward, desperately trying to gather the remaining orbs. Glass pierced her skin as she accidentally broke the orbs and they released their final burst of light and colour. It no longer made her feel deliriously happy. Despair consumed her and the overwhelming bullet of light struck her eyes, draining her of sight, drowning her into a life of obscurity. ■

# DEATH AND THE DEAD GIRL

Kayla Gadaleta · Year 10 · Siena College

Death and the girl looked at each other for quite some time.

‘Well, you’re here early,’ said Death eventually.

‘I guess so,’ said the girl, ‘shouldn’t you be used to this by now?’

‘I suppose I should be,’ sighed Death, ‘you don’t seem very frightened.’

‘Yeah,’ said the girl, ‘the doctors told me a while ago. I guess I’ve had time to come to terms with it.’

They were standing on a cliff at the edge of a forest. The sun was setting behind a vast skyline of trees, which stirred slightly every once in a while due to a rogue puff of wind. Two birds were singing gaily to each other in the distance.

‘So,’ said Death, ‘where are we?’

‘I thought you would know,’ said the girl, surprised.

Death shook his head, the setting sun rippling behind him, ‘No. I’m not a prophet. I can’t tell what you’re thinking or feeling, or where I end up. I can only tell when you die.’

‘That seems sad.’

‘Perhaps,’ said Death.

They looked over the cliff at the trees for a while in silence.

‘I came here a couple of years ago,’ said the girl, ‘my friends dragged me here one summer to try and get me out of my shell.’ The girl turned and gestured to a faint track that led into the woods, ‘We stayed at a motel down that way.’

The girl paused and looked at Death, who watched her intently.

‘It wasn’t fun most of the time,’ she said warily. ‘I don’t get the significance of us being here.’

‘Neither do I, now that you mention it’ said Death, ‘I didn’t choose this place.’

‘You didn’t?’

‘No,’ said Death softly. ‘It must be important to you somehow.’

The girl was quiet for a moment before walking towards the edge of the cliff, Death following beside her. They stopped at the edge and looked down at the sun-speckled water below. A particularly strong breeze swept past and rustled the leaves of the trees, and the girl noticed that her hair didn’t rustle with them.

‘They decided to dive into the lake one day and

they asked me to jump too. I didn’t want to because of how far down it seemed, you know?’

Death nodded patiently.

‘So I let them all jump, and they swam around for a bit. They all chanted my name to get me to come too until they gave up.’ The girl teetered slightly on her heels, ‘Then I came here and I looked down at everyone having fun and suddenly realised that the only reason I wasn’t was because I never let myself.’

‘Very philosophic of you,’ said Death approvingly. As the sun lowered into its final moments, they were coated in a bright orange glow that sent blinding reflections of light from the water below, ‘Then what?’

‘Well,’ said the girl, ‘I thought that it was about time that I lived. And I jumped.’

Death chuckled, ‘And how did it feel?’

Another breeze passed and the girl breathed in deep, ‘Wonderful.’

‘It certainly sounds so,’ said Death.

‘Does...I mean...does this happen to everyone when they die?’ The girl clenched her toes in the sandy grass between her feet. ‘Do you meet them and take them to a place where they were happy?’

‘Everyone meets me eventually,’ said Death, ‘but I don’t take everyone to a happy memory—that I save for a special few.’

The two of them stood at the end of the earth for a long while in comfortable silence.

‘When your friends chanted for you to jump,’ said Death suddenly, ‘what name did they use?’

The girl looked up in surprise, ‘Are you asking me my name?’

‘Yes,’ said Death in what seemed to the girl to be a slightly embarrassed voice.

‘Sorry,’ said the girl, ‘I just thought you would know people’s names.’

‘It would be nice, I admit. But usually I never gain people’s names unless I ask.’

‘Oh,’ said the girl, ‘my name’s Emily.’

‘Emily,’ repeated Death, ‘a personal favourite of mine.’

The girl smiled proudly, ‘So what happens now?’

‘Now you pass on,’ said Death, looking over the cliff to the sparkling water. ‘I suppose you could swim.’

‘Swim?’

‘Yes.’

Emily moved to the edge of the cliff and looked down in apprehension. Then she held out her hand, ‘Thank you, Death.’

Death was still for a moment before taking her hand, ‘You are very welcome, Emily.’

Emily looked at the sun, which seemed to wink at her as it slipped below the trees, turning the sky a pale pink. After sharing a final smile with Death, a laugh escaped her lips and she jumped into the open air.

Death stood quietly, alone, on the cliff before disappearing with the sun. ■

# I AM ENOUGH

---

Samantha Smith · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

I am a friend,

A shoulder to cry on and someone to laugh with,  
I'm supportive, protective and understanding

Yet I still get hurt when their words dissect  
and reshape me.

I am a sister,

The youngest sibling blessed with two older  
brothers,

Who would move mountains for me,

Yet I still get hurt when they treat me as  
though I am glass.

I am a daughter,

Spoilt rotten and the baby of the family,

Always given the best, always praised, always  
cared for,

Yet I still get hurt when the pressure and  
expectations of being a girl smothers me.

I am a woman,

Stronger than people think and wise beyond my  
years,

I've got my own back and wear my scars with  
pride

Yet I still get hurt when the status quo  
imprisons my confidence.

I am the future,

Aspiring to make a difference in the world one day,  
To support the feminists, the ‘queers’ and those of  
colour,

Yet I still get hurt when the world rips into my  
activism for wanting change.

I am not a victim.

I am not a porcelain doll.

I am not going to settle for my brothers having  
more rights than me.

I am not going to be chained to house chores.

I am not society's puppet to manufacture and  
manipulate.

I am going to stand up for myself.

I am going to shatter the image of the fragile girl  
into shards.

I am going to fight for what I deserve.

I am going to get justice and equality for all my  
sisters.

I am going to tear down humanity's toxic ways  
and make a difference.

I am me

and

I am enough. ■

# SIMPLE ISN'T ALWAYS BAD

Alistair Hepburn · Year 7 · Emmaus College

“Do you kids realise how lucky you are these days? You have electricity and running water. When I was your age we had generators and water tanks, no toasters, kettles or the privileges you kids have.” Said Grandpa Jack.

“How did you survive without a phone?” exclaimed Lachy with his jaw on the floor.

“Or a computer with games on it?” questioned Max.

“You see... we played outside, had board games and we rode our bikes all over the town and countryside.”

“What was it like in the old days?” quizzed Max.

“It was either really hot in summer or really cold in winter.” explained Grandpa Jack.

“You must have had to rug up in winter?” asked Lachy.

“And de-rug in summer.” added Max.

“Yep, pretty much. And we lived on a farm, so we also had to look after the animals.”

“Were you rich?” queried Lachy.

“Did you have fancy shoes?” Max asked.

“Did you have an iPhone?” added Lachy.

“Did you have Nike or Adidas clothing?” Max finished.

“Yes, no, no and no. We were quite wealthy for that generation but if you had asked what those Adidas things and Nike thing was I would have had no idea what they were. We had to live simply, to simply live.”

“Can you tell us a story of what it was like in the olden days?” the kids chimed.

“One Saturday, when I was 12 it was a...

...Warm sunny day when I woke up. A lovely warm breeze came flowing through my window. It's been a lovely October so far, mid 20s and patches of rain, though mostly sunny. But there was that one smell that I longed all week for – Bacon and Eggs – Saturday!! I came running out of my bedroom, down the hallway, sliding into the kitchen. There was good old Mum, with the two fry pans on the stove, cooking up fresh eggs from the chooks and bacon from the butcher. Sam, my fourteen-year-old brother and Jane, my eight-year-old sister, have both almost finished. Jane is a very slow eater, so it must be late.

“Ah, here's sleeping beauty. Do you know what

time it is? ... it's 9:34! You are normally the one who collects the eggs from the chooks at the crack of dawn” says Mum

“WHAT, nine thirty, that has to be a record!”

“For you. yes, not for anyone else in the family!!”

Wow, playing battleships with Sam last night must have taken its toll on me. Well, I guess I was yawning a lot. If its nine thirty dad must have already turned on the generator, the water pump and must now be mowing the lawn. As I sit down at the table to eat my delicious bacon and eggs on toast, I look out the window, sure enough, dad's out there, in the front yard, mowing the lawn. The sheep, cattle, horses, goats and rabbits do the rest. Mind you, dad takes care of most things, but Sam and I must do a lot of work as well. My father's family has owned this property for generations and so we have become a well-off family as we are the main supplier for most of the butchers and dairy companies in the region.

Today was an exciting day, my neighbour and best friend, John and I were going to meet up at the main cafe, then go riding to the other side of town to collect Max (a good friend of ours from school) and go riding around the bush, then head back to the café for a drink and some donuts or cakes. That ride was heaps of fun, we made our own little jump then marked out a tricky course and timed each other. Then we head to the café. I get a hot chocolate and cinnamon bun. But when I return home, Mum has news, but says it's a surprise and I must wait. Darn it, I hate waiting unless it's for friends, like this morning when I had to wait for John at the café.

At about 1pm, John came round to ask if I could go to his place and test a ramp that he and his dad have been making to go into his dam. He said wear old clothes and don't bring your good bike, we'll be going in the dam and when you're done, I'll be waiting here. I run in, ask mum, she replies with a yes, and I rush to get into my old clothes I wear when I'm helping dad on the farm. I get changed and grab my old bike and race out to where John is waiting.

“Last one there has to go last” says John.

“Game on John” I say.

No matter how fast he pedals, or I pedal, we both get to the dam neck and neck. He says that I should go first to test the water. I take a huge run up and make a spectacular jump, into the refreshing water. I get out of the way as I see John steaming towards me. He does another large jump and makes a giant

splash. This is so much fun. As I land in the water I let out a massive “WOOHHOO”.

As I get out I hear John do the same.

My turn again and this time, John decides to join me, John and I ditch the bikes and run up the ramp and do a synchronised cannonball into the dam. After another hour, Mr Fletcher calls it quits and John rides with me on the way back. I wish days like these would never end. When I say good-bye to John I park my bike in the shed and walk in the back door.

Mum said, “Have a very quick shower as our guest will be here in fifteen minutes!!”.

“Guests?” I yell.

I bolt down the corridor into the bathroom and have my shower. As I’m getting changed I hear a ‘ratter-tat-tat’ at the door. I pull my top over my head and head into the living room to see Max and his family walking in the front door.

“I didn’t know that the Thompsons were coming over, not that that’s a bad thing!”

“Surprise”, Mum says in a cheeky tone. Max and I head to my bedroom. That night we end up playing three rounds of battleships and when Sam and Max’s brother Sean join in the fun, we play two games of monopoly ...”

“See, that was my childhood, plus, no mention of electronic devices and I still managed to have fun and survive,” said Grandpa Jack grinning.

“You must miss those days,” empathised Lachy.

“Well, yes, I do,” said Grandpa Jack, “I’m 78 this year, I’m getting on.”

“That dam thing sounded like heaps of fun, it must have been great living in the country. There would be so many creative things to do,” Max thought out loud.

“Thanks for telling us one of your stories Grandpa Jack, maybe life without electronics is fun” exclaimed Lachy.

“It sure is,” smiled Grandpa Jack, “It sure is”

You just need to Live Simply, to Simply Live” ■

# INESCAPABLE

Charlotte Imbert · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

The dark is inescapable,  
The crevices and creeps,  
A tingle in my body,  
Telling me to leave,

This dark is inescapable,  
This burnt wood and broken trees,  
This path may lead to freedom,  
But there’s no one there for me,

This dark is inescapable,  
Although all the others may choose to leave,  
The tears shed from my body,  
Will keep on sliding from my sleeve,

I know the world around me,  
Is as happy as it looks,  
But the dark is inescapable,  
So I hide inside my books. ■

# MIA

Victoria Minehan · Year 9 · Emmaus College

I had awoken to bright rays of sunlight and the prospect of a beautiful day ahead. My three-year-old daughter, Annie, was fast asleep next to me. I tucked a thin strand of her auburn hair behind her ear, the rest lay in soft curls that framed her full, rosy cheeks. If not for her flushed complexion, her porcelain skin matched mine perfectly. I smiled as her eyes fluttered in her sleep and an incomprehensible mumble escaped her lips. I remembered the unfortunate circumstances in which she'd been born, and the miserable year that followed. A kind little girl like Annie didn't deserve to be surrounded by such heartbreak and grief. I thought about how little time we'd spent together over the last few weeks and decided to take the day off work.

We set up a large, blue tent at the beach and spent the morning collecting sea shells, building sandcastles and soaking in the sunshine. After enjoying sandwiches and ice creams, Annie eventually wanted to go for a swim. I tied Annie's wispy hair into two smooth *updos* and changed her into pink bathers. She took off towards the ocean, her little legs eager to reach the water. I noticed her already tiny figure shrink smaller as she ran away, and her energetic babble grow quiet. "Wait for me!" I called cautiously from the tent. She turned around and gave me a cheeky giggle. I tried my best to cast her a stern look but failed to suppress a smile. I signalled for her to stay close and she began to waddle reluctantly back towards the tent. Her giggling continued and my heart was lifted as it absorbed the warmth in her voice.

I reached down into my bag and took out our hats, sunscreen and towels.

"Sweetie, come here please," I called, however when I looked around Annie was nowhere to be seen. My heart began to race as my eyes frantically searched the beach for my little girl dressed in pink. I called her name, "Annie! Annie where are you?!" My stomach lurched and I started to feel violently ill. I scanned the eyes of everyone at the beach, and was struck by a stabbing pain in my heart when I failed to find my little girl's face. A raindrop had landed on my head, and it became apparent that the sun had vanished and in its place lurked clouds of a miserable deep grey. The drizzle of rain soon turned to pour heavily as I continued to scream Annie's name, scanning every inch of the seemingly empty beach. Bitter wind whirled and howled, echoing my desperate screams. As my calls were unanswered, cackles of thunder taunted me from behind the gloomy clouds. I buried my head in my hands and felt a mixture of rain and tears

coat my cheeks, as I listened for any sign of my daughter.

All I heard were ocean waves.

A terrible realisation washed over me as my heart sank. I raised my head and saw the vast, unforgiving ocean that tossed and churned in the storm. Suddenly my legs were carrying me towards the sea, desperate to find Annie before something dreadful happened. As I closed the distance between me and the water, I searched the waves for a bright pink bathing suit. Suddenly, as I felt my feet touch the shallow sea, something tugged on my shirt and made me turn around. Annie had taken my hand and was standing next to me, completely unharmed.

I looked back at the stormy ocean, where I had been sure my little girl was lost. Annie showed no signs of stress or urgency, but the sudden darkness in her eyes told me it was time to go home. I pulled her unto my arms and shuddered as her frozen skin touched mine. Overwhelmed with relief, I breathed a sigh of relief and decided to call it a day.

On the drive home from the beach, I was still shaken from almost losing Annie, so I took the opportunity to tell her about the importance of safety and how she ought to never scare me like that again. She nodded her head and smiled, unfazed by my hysterics. Unlike me, she appeared unshaken by the morning's events. In fact, she was surprisingly peaceful from the moment we left the beach.

As we arrived home a storm continued to rage outside. As I threw our rain-soaked clothes in the washing machine, I acknowledged for the first time the dreadful smell of rancid meat that seemed to have followed us home. I lit my favourite scented candles in an effort to mask the stench but it seemed to linger nonetheless. Despite having the heater on high, a bitter chill flooded the house. I realised that Annie was different. Her auburn hair mirrored my colour as it always did, but it had turned scraggy and unkempt. Her usual hazel eyes seemed to have darkened and underneath them, she carried deep mauve circles. Her cheeks lacked their usual flush of rose and were left pale. In fact, all colour seemed to have been drained from her face. Perhaps she had been just as scared as me this morning.

Guilt washed over me as I remembered my reprimand from earlier. I sat Annie down in the kitchen and apologised for scolding her. "You must have been very scared, were you looking for me?"

Her face turned solemn, "Yes mama, for a long time".

I felt my eyes well up with tears.

She had said these words with such longing, all I wanted was to make her feel better.

I pulled out her favourite game of letter blocks.

Annie and I sat there for almost an hour playing letter blocks. While she was loving and happy, she wasn't her usual care-free self. She was asking me unusual questions, ones she had never raised before. She looked up at me sweetly and whispered, "Mama, what do you love best about me?"

This question was strange to me, I looked into her kind hazel eyes and found it hard to pick just one thing. "Your kind heart. You're my little buddy." For a second, Annie's smile faltered before continuing more forcefully with

"Why don't I have any brothers or sisters?"

I answered her carefully, not entirely sure what had provoked these questions.

"I guess it was just meant to be you and me."

For a while it was silent. I noticed she was looking down, her face was crumpled and angry, an expression unfamiliar to me and out of place on such a young girl.

When she spoke, it was soft and almost to herself. "I'd like a sister."

With these words echoing in my ears, my mind flashed back to Annie's birth and I wondered if now was the time to tell her; she had been one of twins. As I had held Annie's sister Mia in my arms, all those years ago, I had wondered how I would ever tell Annie about her beautiful twin sister who had died at birth. Now, looking at how fragile and small Annie looked after this morning, I decided now wasn't the right time.

"I would have loved for you to have a sister as well. One just like you." She looked up at me with the strangest smile on her face, almost menacing. This was out of character for Annie, as she was usually very gentle and soft natured. I kissed her on the head and shivered as her icy skin sent a chill down my spine. In an effort to lighten the mood and warm her up, I decided to run her a bubble bath.

As I made my way to the bathroom, the doorbell rang and there was a knock at the door. When I opened it, an agitated policeman stood in front of me. I invited him inside but he sternly insisted that he didn't have time, "Your daughter Annie was found at the beach today by one of the life guards. She almost drowned. We've taken her to the hospital to get checked, but she's going to be okay."

I blinked at him in disbelief. Unsure of what was happening, I started to speak but words failed to find me. He continued, "We'll need to further an investigation, marks on her skin suggested that someone was pulling her under the water. I must ask, what possessed you to leave such a young child alone at the beach?"

I shook my head in disbelief, "I would never do that. It's impossible, my daughter has been with me all afternoon. I'm so sorry Officer but you must have found someone else's child."

With my heart beat growing faster, I left the policeman at the door to go bring Annie from the kitchen. Frozen in the doorway, my gaze fell to the floor where we had been sitting. Annie wasn't there. Nobody was there.

My eyes locked on our unfinished game, one word was spelt with three blocks.

Mia. ■

# FREE TO BE ME

Isabella Burfitt · Year 7 · Emmaus College

**D**ear Diary, I start writing. I don't even know what to write.

*I HATE THIS!*

I pause and take a deep breath. I guess I just have to write what I am feeling.

*I have been wasting my life on my phone and it sucks. It's like I'm trapped. I just can't get out. One minute goes by, then two then three and before I know it an hour has passed. I could be doing something useful.*

I don't know how to continue but I keep writing even if it makes no sense.

*I wish it wasn't there. I wish there was no such thing as phones and computers. There is always something new to check. You just have to click one button and it takes you to another page, another message, another photo. This is what our world is like now and I don't want to have to worry about it all the time. Keeping up with everything and everybody is exhausting! I just want to live a simple, easy life.*

I breath in, breath out then continue to write.

*Mum has always told me that less is sometimes more. You shouldn't need to worry about what you haven't got, you just need to think about what's right in front of you. It's so hard for me to try and be like everyone else. I just want to be my own person, but it feels like everyone is trying to be the same and they are trying to beat each other and show they are better than everyone else and I just can't live up to that.*

I pause and think about what I want to write next.

*Mum tells me repeatedly to have awareness and be mindful...*

I feel myself rolling my eyes and I quietly laugh to myself.

*...of other people. Now I feel like it's finally starting to sink in. I'm finally realising that I need to have awareness and not be like every other teenage kid with their heads down, eyes glued to their screens blocking themselves off from everyone else. I WANT to be more aware of my surroundings. I WANT to spend my time more wisely. I DON'T WANT to waste my time staring at a little screen while life goes by. I WANT to be happier and spend more time with the people I love.*

I smile to myself and then absent-mindedly turn on my phone to check my messages. AAAAAAAHHH! I've done it again! I put my phone down and go downstairs to be with my family.

I get downstairs, and my family are sitting on the couch. They each have a phone in their hand. Oh gosh. They have a lot of learning to do.

'Hey,' I say, 'let's have some device free time. Do you all want to go for a walk to the park?'

And I grin, feeling free as a bird, as we step out into the fresh summer breeze, for at least in this moment, right now, I am with the people I love. We are free, life is simple. ■



Ellen Collins  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

# ALL YOU NEED

---

Geneva Modica · Year 7 · Emmaus College

To live isn't to have a sizeable, modern house or big-brand expensive clothes, to have good looks or even to be the 'most popular' person at school. Living is about the people that you share your time with and that mean the most to you. It is about enjoying your life no matter how you live it, and to just be yourself.

The people in this world that have the least always make use of what they have, they live life to the fullest, and they love life. But most people in this world just want more, they can't except that they have more than they need, and more than other people have and will ever have. All you really

need to live is happiness and simplicity, and all the people you love and love you.

The size of your home doesn't define who you are, the clothes you wear don't define who you are and how you look doesn't define who you are, your personality and your likes and interests, your style and your emotions do. It doesn't matter how many friends you have, because they may not all really be your friends, and everything could change in a short amount of time. Make friends you know you will last for years to come, because they are all you need to be happy.

All you need is to live simply, simply live. ■

# ARRRGH! THIS SCHOOL!

---

Grace Pham · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

It makes me scream,  
It makes me twitch,  
It doesn't make me beam!  
It's just not fair,  
I wish life was simple,  
but it's just not.  
But they just don't care  
A pencil, a book,  
My teacher giving me a look,  
  
Arrrgh! This school

*Arrrgh! This school*  
*That girl over there with too much curly hair,*  
*Always causing trouble with her bubblegum*  
*bubble.*  
*Her books are all crinkled,*  
*Her uniform wrinkled.*  
*But life isn't that simple,*  
*But life isn't fair.*  
  
*Arrrgh! This school ■*

# I WONDER AT IT ALL

---

Jemima Duggan · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

*This piece is based on my wider reading about family and relationships.*

Sometimes I wonder, am I loved for who I am, or what I am? Do they want me for me, or am I just another token of victory? In court, they seem to want me, but when we leave I am hardly spoken to. It's like, they are in a competition, and I'm the trophy. I'm the symbol of the final win. The overall glory. Success is getting me, but yet they don't seem to want me.

I miss being called down to a family dinner. I miss my parents embarrassing me at school plays and netball games by cheering louder than all the other parents. Most of all, I miss the safety net. The fact that I knew if I was worried, I had them to fall onto. Now, it feels like that very same safety net has holes that are slowly getting bigger and bigger. The worst thing of all is that it's almost as if my parents don't realise that they're the ones with the scissors.

Sometimes I wonder if it's worth it. If it's worth putting the smile on my face when I couldn't think

of anything worse. If it's worth pretending that I'm fine, when I'm not. If I gave up this persona of happiness, would I still be the prize?

I miss the simplicity. The weekend trips down the coast. I miss devouring cold ice creams together while watching the sunset, cuddled up in a warm blanket on the beach. I miss it all. I miss not worrying about who would get to keep me, the dog, even the fancy vase.

I remember the days when we could all go to the Zoo. Together. As a family. The days we could spend hours and hours dancing until we couldn't dance any more. The days when our family game nights would seem like they'd never end.

I wish things were back how they used to be, before all the fighting. What I used to take for granted, is now what I desire the most. It's funny, that way. How an experience that causes you so much pain and confusion can open your eyes to the world you've been missing.

I have missed the world, and now, I wish, I could have it back. ■

# ALONE

---

Jacqueline Perkins · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

It's like my mind is screaming at the top of its lungs, but no sound comes out.

And all I do is sit. And wait. But they will never come.

I try to reach out, but I'm pulled back. It won't let go.

I'm punished. Yelled at.

It just goes in a cycle. Never ends.

I hold my head. Feels empty inside.

I look up.

Fear fills my eyes.

The blow hits my face.

I tremble. The pain. Doesn't go away.

When will they listen? When will they learn? ■

# PRIMAL NOTES

---

**Eloise Griffin**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*

Anticipation	Subconscious actions
Knowing what is to come	Dance, Sing
Comfortable sounds	Laugh, Cry
Beats and Notes	A level beyond control
Elementary yet so complex	Volume lowering
Familiarity	As it fades
Words known so well	Silence
Obliterating thoughts	Until the next song plays
Welcoming emotions	Anticipation. ■

# DAMAGED

---

**Tessa Beech**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*

I came today cause you asked me to but I don't want to be here	I don't look at the front it's too much I just sit and wait
It's colder than anywhere else in the world	The four men finish the hardest walk of saying goodbye to someone
Everyone is sadder more depressed more vulnerable more damaged	for the last time ■

# LIVE FOR THE GIFT OF BEING ALIVE

---

Phoebe Lea · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Play with friends and family,  
Play on the big trampoline or at the park,  
Play with colourful toys in the bottomless box,  
Play on the Xbox, with vibrant games

Play when it's safe, the girls additionally cautious,  
Play a game constructed with what nature  
provides,  
Play with a punctured soccer ball or other cast-off  
junk treasured,  
Play on the dusty, drought-riddled fields and tread  
carefully

Walk to the bus stop while shiny cars grumble  
past,  
Walk to the train station, crammed with people in  
suits holding briefcases,  
Walk to the cafe, for one steaming hot chocolate  
and an extra marshmallow,  
Walk to school, dreaming of the end bell  
signalling home time

Walk eagerly to the three thin, leaning walls we  
call a school  
Walk to the almost empty well, accompanied by  
an almost empty hope  
Walk to the murky riverbed at dusk, fearful  
assault will slice through the shadows  
Walk the 2 km home, in darkness, Jerry Can on  
head

Fear from a petrifying film, full of monsters  
Fear from a nightmare repeated in sleep  
Fear of spiders and animals with sharp teeth  
bared  
Fear of the monster always lurking under our bed

Fear for family  
Fear of war,  
Fear of pain,  
Fear of death.

**“Live simply so others may simply live.”**  
-Mahatma Gandhi

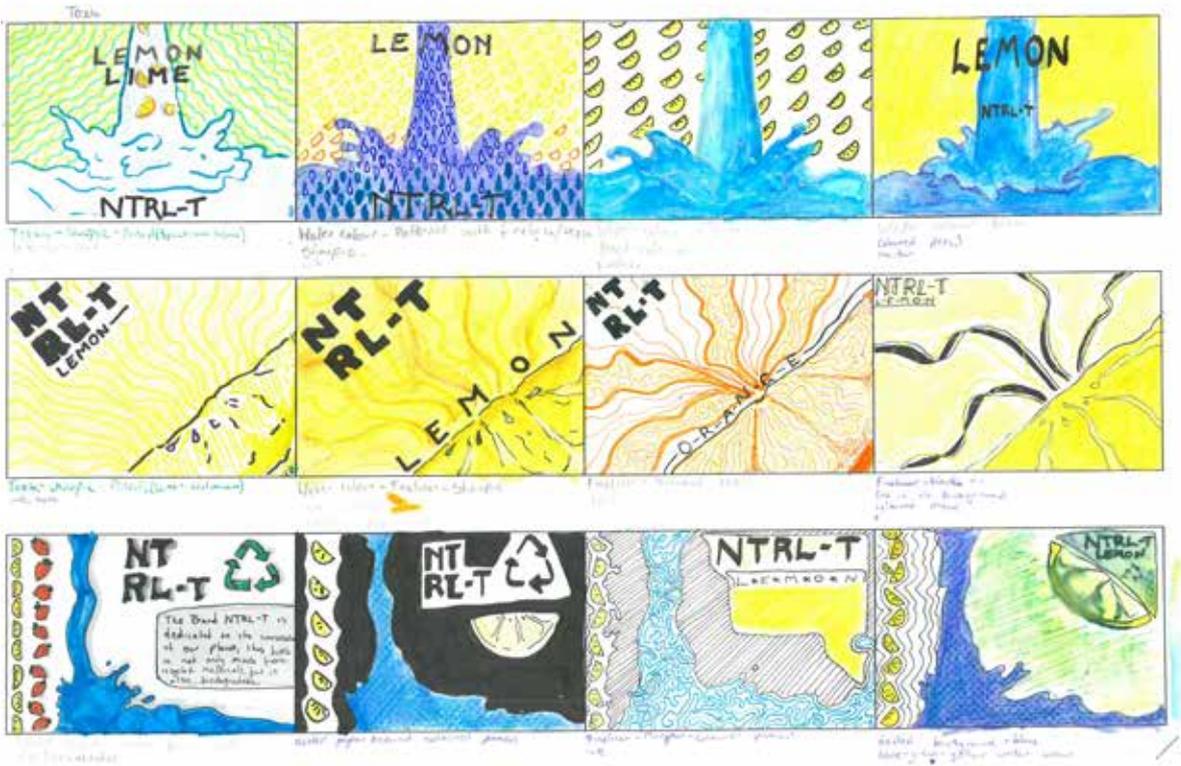
**Anyone who is born in Australia or Canada has  
already won the lottery.**

For First World countries such as Australia and America our world revolves around items of desire and luxury. People care more about having the latest iPhone or the most expensive outfit that they aren't really seeing the bigger picture. Our world revolves around wants, things we do not need but somehow feel as if our lives will be better with. Like going out every week to the latest most trendy restaurant or buying a new speaker, a new phone, new jewellery. But with or without these things our lives aren't really any better or worse. The basic human needs a house, warm clothes and enough money to get a healthy 3 meals per day. But over the years, businesses have put this image in our heads that we as humans are classified by our financial worth. That we HAVE to keep up with everything popular otherwise we will be labeled as a social or financial outcast. In reality these companies just want to make money so they can be famous and sit on the top of the social class, like the king of the world. They only care about themselves and their financial wellbeing.

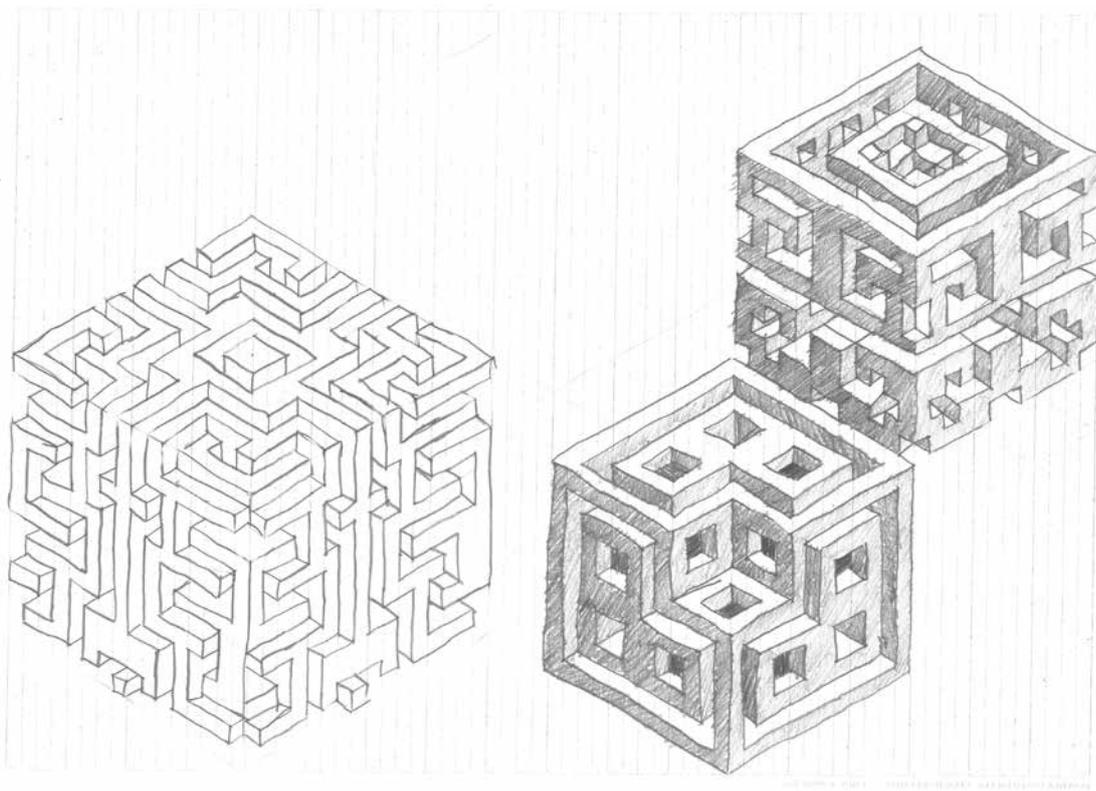
Exactly like Alice we have fallen down the rabbit hole and it doesn't look like we are coming out of it any time soon. Especially children whose brains have not yet fully developed and are easily moulded by tv shows and advertisements. We will throw a tantrum and scream and scream until we get what we want. When this happens we rarely grow out of it and for the rest of our lives we will never be happy with what we have – we will always need more.

On the other side of the world it is a completely different story. Countries living in poverty such as Papua New Guinea are living in the poorest conditions. These countries don't have enough money to feed and support their people whilst First World countries are up the very top of the social class fussing over not having the latest or newest luxuries. People in First World countries fuss over food and what they eat. I know as a child so many people, even myself, would refuse to eat foods because its “gross” or doesn't taste nice. We are being so INCREDIBLY selfish. If we refuse to eat that piece of pumpkin or our vegetables and they get thrown out and wasted that could've been a meal for someone less fortunate. That piece of pumpkin we throw out, someone else would kill for, literally. The food they have to live off of is appalling. An extremely small amount of rice, flour, lentils, chickpeas, beans, fish and oil. And what would your weekly diet be? Chips, chocolate, steak, pasta, the list goes on. Many people don't realise actually how lucky they are, don't realise how much they've got until it's gone.

It's a little cheesy but it's true. ■



Henri Flower  
 Year 11 · Xavier College



Hugh McNamara  
 Year 9 · Xavier College

# HUMANITY

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Ashley Marsden  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*

Live simply, simply live  
An interpretation gifting peace in the midst of  
madness and confusion  
Where technology wracks our brains and slowly  
takes control  
A world of rapid change and communication  
overload  
What would it feel like if all were to be tranquil  
for just a day?  
  
Our lives are too complicated.  
We stumble over unnecessary luxuries  
Money, purchases, the idea of ‘perfection’  
  
Living simply whilst simply living provides a life  
with laughter,  
bliss and creativity  
Live simply, simply live  
Live simply, dream big  
Simply live, simply love to give  
Embrace the boundless and infinite. ■

# KEEPING IT SIMPLE: THE LOVE OF OUR MUMS

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Marissa Christodoulou and Mercedes Harraca · *Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*

If I could tell my mother one thing, I'd tell her:  
“Let me be! The feeling of being the puppet  
with you in control, it infuriates me. I don't need  
someone to look over my shoulder and judge me  
by my mistakes, because I can fix my problems by  
myself.”

Even so, I promise to always love you no matter  
what, even through the darkest times.

If I could tell my mother one thing I'd tell her: “Go  
away! You don't mean anything to me.”

Ugh. Sorry for all the times I have shouted words  
like these.

You are my life and I love you no matter what,  
even through the darkest times.

All these mean words, for what? Our mums are  
the superheroes who don't wear capes. They love  
us no matter the issue and so we love them. They  
push us to live our best lives and keep fighting for  
the best for us. Yes, my mum and yours can be a  
nuisance but we love them.

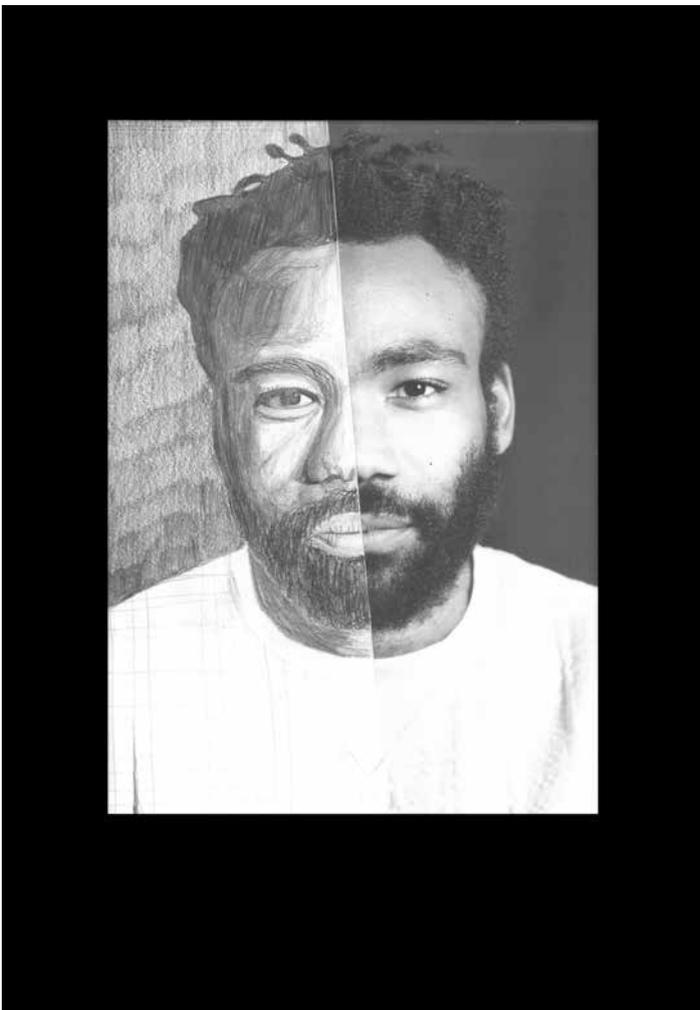
If I could tell my mother one thing, I'd tell her:  
“Thank you. Thank you for dancing to your  
favourite 80s song in the supermarket.

Thank you for suffering through my ups and  
downs and cranky moods. Thank you for caring  
and loving me when I'm lying sick in bed.

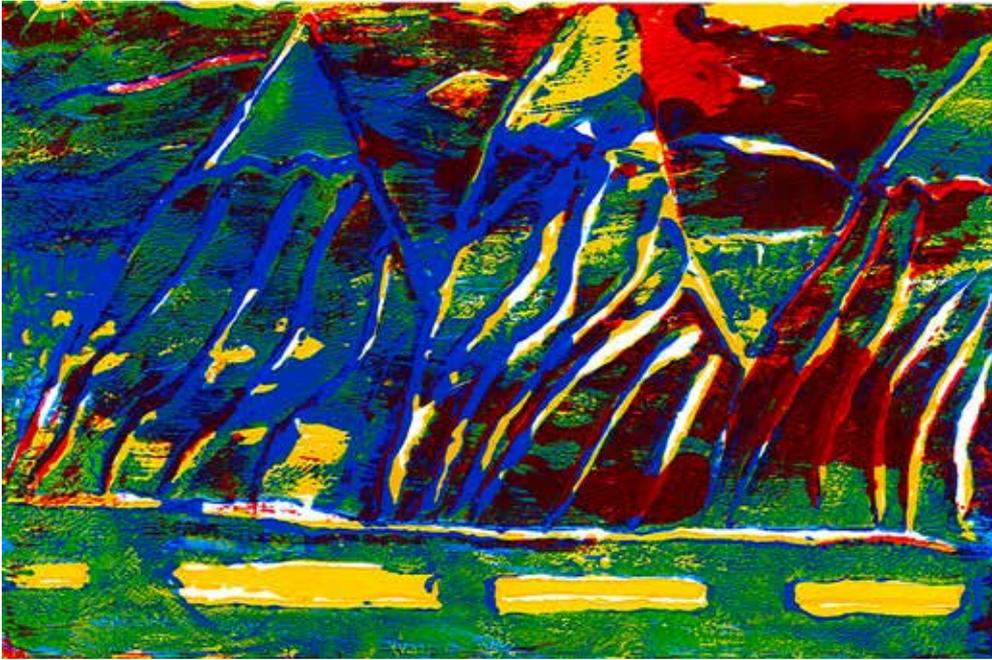
Thank you for it all. I love you. ■



**Max Neave**  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*



**Matt Ellis**  
*Year 11 · Xavier College*



**Adam Chioda**  
Year 7 · Whitefriars  
College

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*No Mountain too  
High*

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My artwork connects to the title 'Live Simply, Simply Live' by reinforcing the notion that no matter how high the mountain is in life, you can get to the top with self-belief and courage. The road bypasses the mountain and symbolises that life will always go on; we just have to find ways to cope with the ups and downs.



**Cohen Croft**  
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

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*The Wilderness*

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My print reflects my love of the outdoors. There is a tree and mountains with snow covering the tops. This environment makes me happy and I feel a real love of life when I am in this moment. This is when I am truly living and living a simple life.



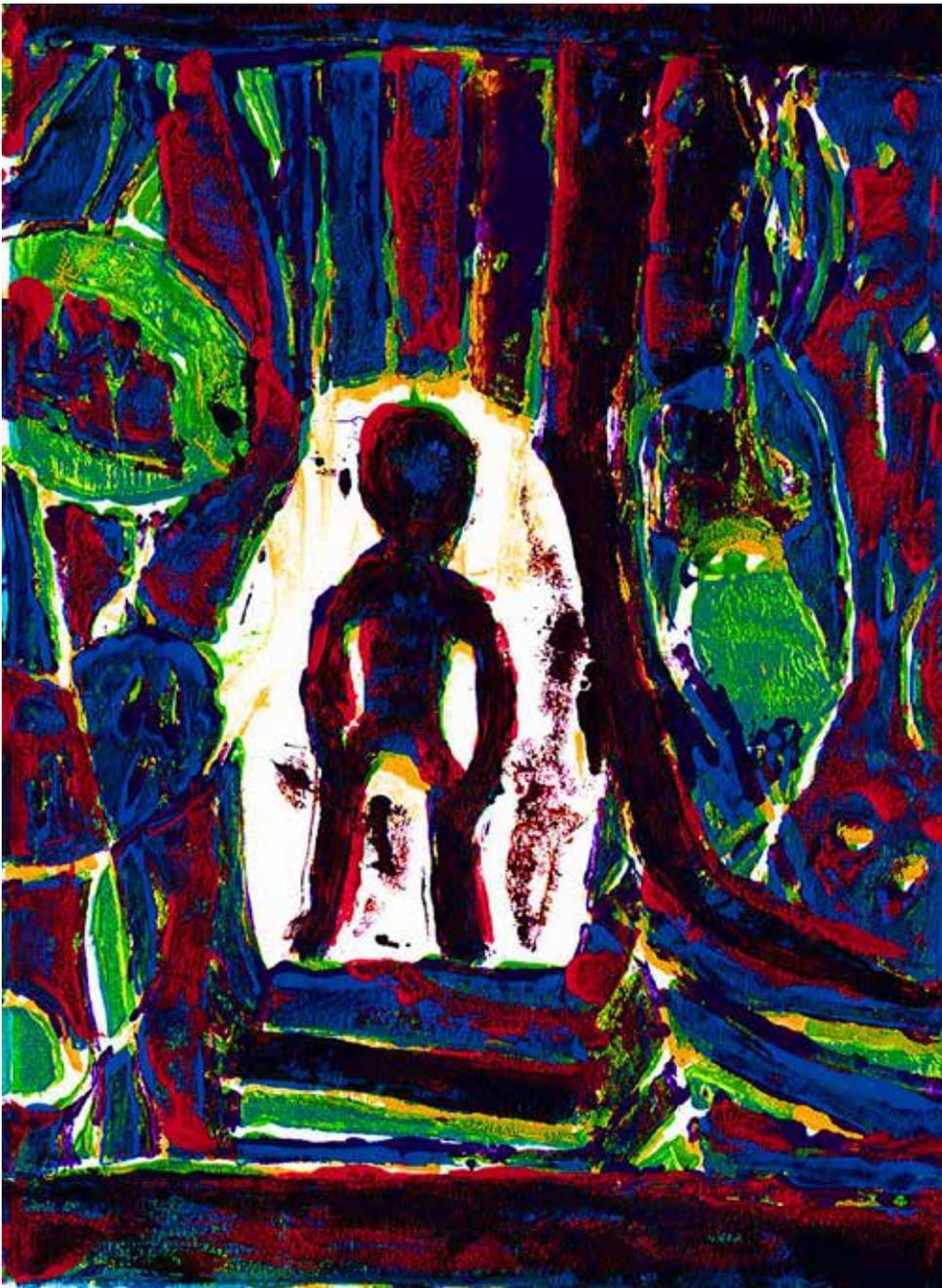
**Samuel Eu**  
*Year 7 · Whitefriars College*

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*The Orchid Tree*

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My print is based on nature and reflects the contentment of embracing a simple life. I feel a real connection to the outdoors and in particular the majestic tree. Trees live through change and are strong and hardy and without them, we would lose such beauty.



Joseph Li- Sculli  
*Year 7 · Whitefriars College*

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*The Visitor*

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The light of modern life can be blinding. Every now and again, you can escape. Turn away for a moment, and who knows what you may discover.



**Daniel Almaraz**  
*Year 11 · Whitefriars College*

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*The bubble of our making*

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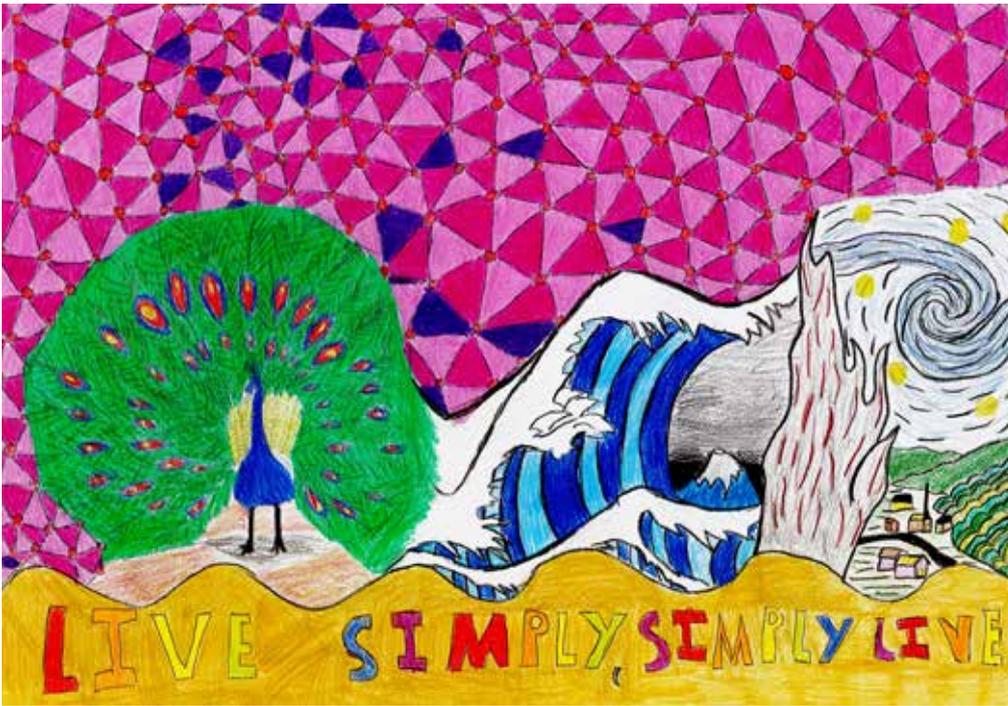
The central focus of my piece is a floating city within an orb, surrounding it, is a large tree and a void of purple. For most of our lives, many of us are trapped within a bubble of reality that is based on our own life experiences. Outside of this bubble is an extremely large and sometimes frightening world. It is important to venture into the unknown, to grow as an individual and create the own branches of our lives. The castle may feel safe but it keeps us from seeing the real beauty that surrounds us.



**Noah Pryor**  
*Year 11 · Whitefriars College*

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*Painting – Acrylic Paints on Canvas. VCE Studio Arts*



Ethan Downie  
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

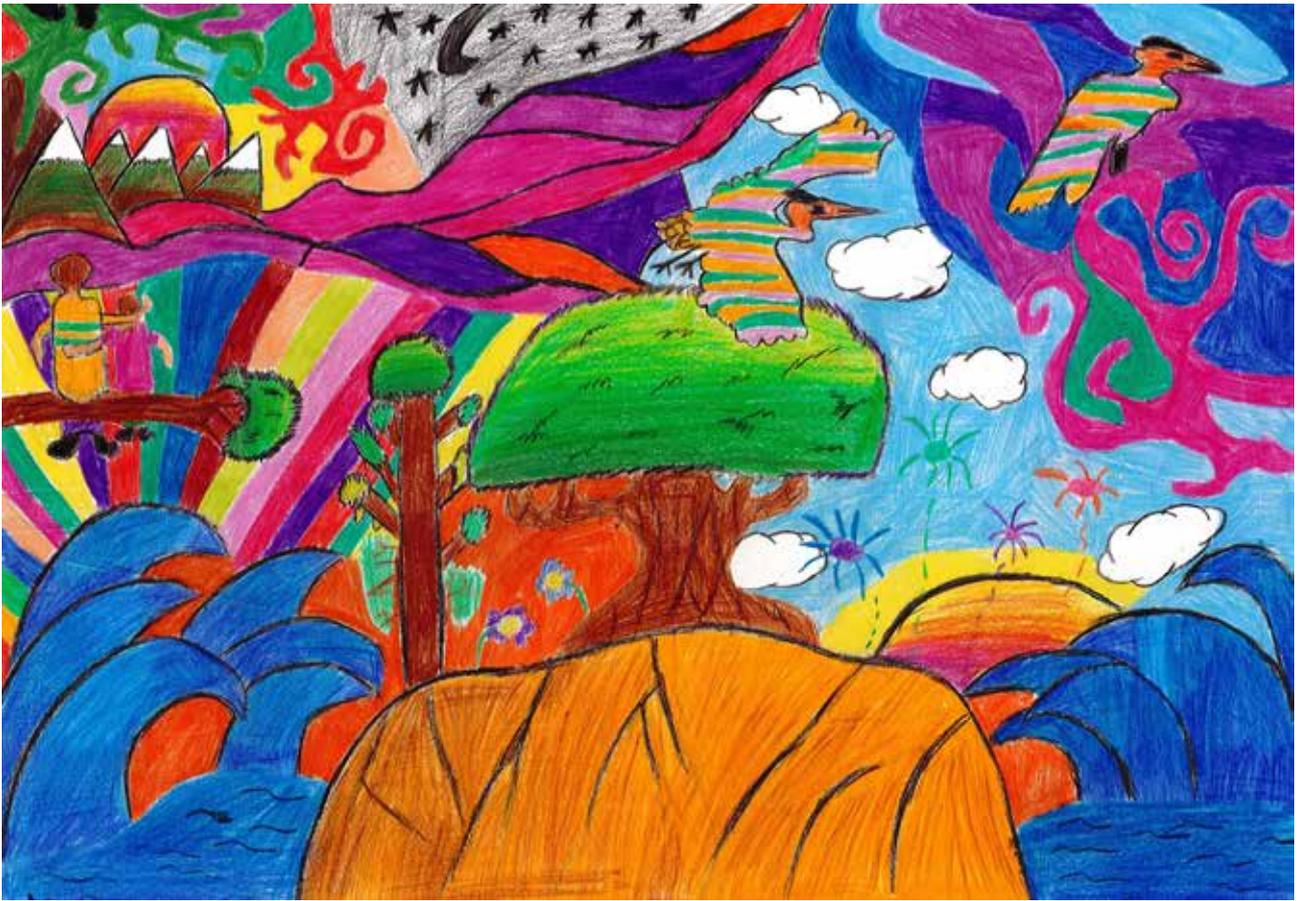
*Blendable pencils on paper*



Tobias Kilkenny  
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

*Chapters of Life*

My artwork links to the message of living life to the full and embracing the opportunity to build memories. I enjoy spending time outdoors with family and friends, camping underneath the stars and the mountains and watching the sun set over the sea. I also enjoy mountain biking and being amongst the wildlife where the kangaroos run freely.



**Nathan North-Coombes**  
*Year 7 · Whitefriars College*

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*Colours of Change*

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My artwork symbolises how in life things are always changing. This can feel challenging when those changes can feel bad as well as good. At the end of every day, I hold on to the thought that the sun will always rise and set and we will always be left with our memories.

# JOE

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Angus Forbes · Year 7 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

Joe was good at waiting.  
Passing time

Laying still

That's why he was a good hunter.

He'd been tracking this deer for a few days now. This wasn't any deer. This was a Visyan spotted deer. An endangered species that some rich Oligarch had paid him millions of illegally earned money to hunt, kill without harming the skin and give to him for the purpose of God knows what. But that wasn't his issue, all he had to do was kill the thing. Joe was going all out for this job. Bringing the best he had to offer to the table. He was wearing a custom made camouflaged suit that matched the environment and was brandishing a hunting rifle equipped with tranquiliser rounds. Joe's plan was to tranquilise the animal before then putting it to rest with his custom made, stainless steel hunting knife. He shifted ever so slightly from his laying position in the shrubbery. He was older now, fifty-one. So, life wasn't all that kind when it came to his joints, muscles and worn, rickety bones. He finally found the damn thing. It had taken him a whole day just to get a beat on it and he had been stalking it ever since, waiting for a clear shot. Joe, sadly, was unable to just find it, shoot it and have it done in a day. He had to pack light tranquiliser rounds as of the request of his client. His client said too much of the strong serum would ruin the value and look of the animal and reduce its worth. Because of this Joe had to pack lighter rounds and had to hit it in a more critical spot. The neck. Right in the major artery to quickly spread the serum around the animals' body and bring the creature to unconsciousness.

This animal is near extinct. It's survival instincts and sense are sharp and focused, he had to be careful. While Joe was stalking the thing a few days back, sneaking and quietly placing his feet in the best area of ground as to reduce as much noise as he can, he placed his foot in the wrong spot and stepped on a stick with a loud crunching noise. The deer perked its head up, spotted him and bolted as fast as the thing could into the dense shrubbery and leaves of the area.

After that he had lost it for two days.

He just couldn't pick up the trail, Joe almost thought that the creature knew how to mask its footprints. This was starting to bother him, only slightly though. Joe was a disciplined man. His patience, calmness and focus are what made him a good hunter. Also, the money. Yeah, absolutely the money. But that wasn't the only reason. Joe just loved playing hide and go seek with these animals, especially the good ones that keep him on his toes. It put him in a special state of mind, a

trance almost. Excitement yet stillness. He felt like he's not even connected to his body, just soul, heart and mind looking for his target.

Ready for the shot.

As he lay there, watching the deer drink from a light stream flowing between two mossy rocks, watching and looking for the perfect shot, he had a strange sensation within him. Joe felt that he didn't deserve to be here. Almost like his surroundings didn't want him to be in their presence. Joe felt like what he was doing wasn't natural, even though it was hunting, a core part of human survival. Maybe it was the fact that it wasn't for survival, it was for some grossly wealthy man who earned his money through illegal means, doing bad things with other bad people. Joe knew one thing for sure, the large sum of money he would receive from this kill would be dirty money. Nevertheless, he pushed the thought to the back of his mind, a kill is a kill, a job is a job

As long as he got paid, he wasn't complaining.

His client had given him a phone, it was pretty fancy. The client gave it to him so that he could contact Joe. Joe was starting to get annoyed with him. The Client was starting to grow impatient and he needed to give him the animal dead or there was going to be trouble. Joe was starting to trust his client less and less. Well he didn't really trust him in the first place.

He continued to watch the animal, eating plants, drinking water and grazing in patches of grass. He was fairly close to the animal, close enough that if he made too much noise it would run off and he'd be chasing it for days. But it didn't matter. Joe was a careful man. He wouldn't let that happen, he refused to. He stared at the creature and wondered what it valued most. What was important to the animal, whether or not it cared about much. Joe realised how long he had been laying there. He looked up at the sun and realised it had started setting in the rich, vibrant sky. He heard birds and insects of the afternoon making various noises and sounds. He looked back at the deer and saw his shot, the adrenaline to start flowing through his body, but he forced himself to stay calm. He trained his sight on the animal, the deer was walking around not doing anything unusual. He breathed in a shaky breath and let it out. For a moment, he was worried that the deer had spotted him. He breathed in again and let out a quarter of his breath, not all of it. Then he slowly squeezed the trigger.

It didn't matter.

As he had let out the quarter breath the creature saw spotted his glistening metal rifle. It turned and started running. Joe muttered under his breath before bolting

upright, many of his bones popping from laying for so long. He vigorously tugged his waist dropping the entirety of the harness his camouflage was attached to. He slung his rifle around his back with the strap connected to it and bolted after the creature. He did all of this in a matter of seconds and because of this he was in close behind the deer. Joe was getting older but he was still as fast as a wild animal, running for his prey. He was leaning forward putting his all into the sprint, driving him forward toward his target. This was his last chance, his deadline was tomorrow and if he didn't get this fast, smart and agile creature now he wouldn't be able to find it for days.

And then he did one of the riskiest things he had ever done. While sprinting he grabbed his rifle from off of his back and, while sprinting all the while aimed the

rifle at the deer and fired a tranquilizer straight into the side of the deer's neck. The animal took a few more steps and fell to the ground in a heap. Joe immediately stopped running.

Finally, he had caught it.

He walked briskly over to the unconscious animal breathing heavy, jagged breaths. Finally, he could get this over with. He squatted next to the animal and pulled the blade out of the holster strapped to his leg. As Joe stood there and stared at the creature, He contemplated whether or not he should end its life. It had been a worthy opponent after all. And Joe stood there. For a very long time.

Then he decided. ■



**Student Group Collaboration**  
*St. Peter's College*

# SIMPLY LIVING, LIVING SIMPLY

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Joe Kanizay · Year 7 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

The sun creeps through my eyelids. Covered in pillows, I throw one in front of the beam of light. I peer out of the triple glazed window as the reflection of the sun off the water glitters into my face. Huddled up in a ball, snug under my white, cosy doona, I can't help but wonder what the snow's like. I assumed it snowed over the cold, dark night. However, going to bed last night I couldn't see a cloud in the sky.

I swing around, forcing my legs off the edge of the bed. As I stand up, my legs stiffen up – it's like walking on stilts. I look towards the sun again, not directly into it, but just enough to appreciate its beauty. Monty's curled up on his bed, with the hairs of his left cheek flattened straight. Undisturbed by my strides through the room. I search for the door knob, not bothered to glance down. I'm quick to make myself a hot chocolate to wake me up.

I walk back to my bedroom to change into my ski gear, I'm keen to get to the mountains this morning. Long steps through the snow, as I make my way towards the main mountain. But I turn my head and come to the conclusion to try a new mountain. Flat ground turns to hills, and hills turn to cliffs. Escalating by the minute, as I get up to the steepest slope, I glance down to see one pair of footsteps leading to my small but cosy home. Then as I look up at the mountain, I wonder how I'll make my way up. The edged cliff face sticking out over the snow, making it almost impossible to hike.

I start winding through and around all the rocks, but as I get higher I'm forced to tumble over hard terrain, loose rock too. I almost roll my ankles on them, but I manage to have kept my feet so far. As I gather confidence on the rocks, I start to speed up. One leap onto an unstable rock puts me off balance, I plunge down. My skis slip from my hands, nothing to ease the fall. I land on my hip, hard. A wound on my left hip, a deep scratch with dark thick blood trickling out. Stuck on my back like a turtle and in discomfort, with freezing cold snow against my back, and blood smoothly flowing out my body. I pull myself up and sift the snow out from my jacket. Relocate my skis and casually continue up the slope.

Now I'm reconsidering whether it's worth it, not finding an easy route up or down the mountain, and I have to do the rest of the journey with an agonising hip. As I poke my head around the final rock, the peak of the mountain is within distance. Determined to reach the summit, roughly one hundred metres away,

I push myself to the finish, as if it had become the race to Everest.

I proudly reach the summit, a sense of pride and achievement as I walk along the fine edge. I anxiously continue onward towards a small ledge. I take-off, chiselling away at the ledge, to form a narrow ramp to help give myself a smooth start. Satisfied with my ramp, I begin my course down. A slow and steady start, but I reach the end of my hand made slope and fall five feet, a confident landing softens the load. Side to side, down the verge of the alpine level. I remember to keep parallel skis, however, it's hard to stay concentrated on everything. I come to the end of the alpine level, so I have no choice, I have to adventure down the steep slope. One of my skis slits the snow, a small amount of snow slips down in my direction, I look back to see the damage, no damage.

I continue progressing down, now on the subalpine level. I hear a loud sound of snow crashing behind me, and the vibration through my legs. I catch a glimpse of a small avalanche. I try to accelerate but it's no use, the further I go the bigger the avalanche gets. Within second it expands and is the size of a tidal wave. In fear, I seal my eyes. It swallows me up in one mouthful. Trapped inside. Spinning around. The avalanche continues down the mountain. It comes to a stop, with relief I open my eyes, half grateful to find my helmet shielding my face and that I'm not hurt, however, stuck under a hill of snow is not too good; Hitting my head on a rock would have been a better death than hypothermia.

I push the helmet away from my face, trying to avoid snow falling in. I reach down to unclip my skis, then start clawing away at the snow, it's hard to tell which way's up or down, I trust my guts and dig snow from in front of my face; I'm also trying to give myself some space to breathe. As I dig, I see the snow above me sort of glow. I keep digging at it. now it's really glowing. I punch my fist through the snow. Light. The sun and the mountains are visible again. I pull myself up and out of the hole, it's a tight fit, but I manage to roll out onto my back, then pull up my skis.

I reattach my skis and steadily ski down, I take my time, wary of what had just occurred. I reach the end of the ride, gently sliding along the mountain level on my skis. As I pull up to my home, I glance back at the mound of snow I had created and think, no one would have thought that was an avalanche or that someone was in there. I would have been lost. ■

# JUST DO IT

---

James Bourne · Year 5 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

It all started when Max Swiacerowski heard his parents come home one night. When they came busting through the door Max was surprised to see them so happy. Usually when his parents came home from a day at their pipe cleaner making business exhausted and grumpy.

“Quick Max!” said his father, “Go get the champagne, we have some celebrating to do!”

Later that night Max’s parents finally explained their happy mood.

“Well darling”, said Max’s mother, “We got a phone call from no other than multi-millionaire Andrew Pilawski who...”

“Yes, I know who he is”, interrupted Max. “Come on, tell me what is so important!”

“Okay Maxy”, said his father. “Well he rang to tell us that he loves our business and is happy to give us a bill of Six Million Euros if we continue our making of pipe cleaners!”

“No way,” exclaimed Max, “that’s amazing!”

After a long night of celebration Max was very tired and couldn’t concentrate during school but that wouldn’t stop him from thinking about all the things he could do with all the money. This meant new trainers every day, cool expensive clothes and of course they fix up the rotting box they live and make it really nice. When Max got home from school that day he was greeted by his parents who had come home early.

“Hi Mum, hi Dad!” said Max. I can’t wait fix up our house!”

“Oh Maxy,” said his mother. “We aren’t re-doing this old thing, we’re moving next week!” “What?” said Max. “Are we like moving to a nice part of...”

“No way!” said his father, “We already have our eyes on a house in the countryside by a lake in Japan! Oh, I can’t wait, won’t it be fabulous?” Max disagreed but he was too tired to argue so he went to bed early. He was asleep before his head hit the pillow.

The next week came by quickly and by the time it had come, they had to get ready. Max was already dreading his new life. Nobody talked on the flight but it was clear to Max’s parents that he was not enjoying

it at all. Max was a bit happier when he got to see his new home. But after a few days everything once again turned upside down. It turns out the most important part of being rich for his parents was making your child get the snobbiest education possible. Max didn’t like his new school and the children would complain to each other about problems like: Daddy got me a yellow Ferrari but I wanted a red one, but if you thought that was bad then you would be devastated to know there was more. Next came the instruments he was forced to play: the piano, cello, violin, trumpet and flute for two hours each night. Then after his parents decided that he could only wear the best of the best which meant no more hoodies or runners. Instead he was to wear a suit with golden lining and shoes custom made by the best shoe making dudes in the country, and last but not least he had to have his hair in a neat curtain over his forehead.

These practices continued until one day when Max was out at the only place he was allowed to go...the lolly shop, he met a person busking outside.

“What’s with the frown, little dude?” he said. At first Max just ignored the question but when the person asked again he couldn’t resist but tell him. There was something comforting about him in between the shaggy hair and the big nose. “Ever since my parents got a load of money, it has now completely taken over my life, like it just sucks and I just want to have some fun, you know?” said Max.

“Wow! Slow down, little dude. Remember you are only going to live once. You should just enjoy life. Do what you wanna do?” said the busker.

“You know what?” said Max, “I will.”

Max came home completely changed. When his mother asked why he was basically bouncing off the walls, he told her about his idea. “Mum, you know what we should do with this money...?”

Since Max met the mysterious busker, he has never seen him again. On the other hand, that conversation inspired Max and has changed his life ever since. Max and his family have jumped out of planes with parachutes, gone on safari and had travelled all over the world. Max has never been bored again. He has learnt to live life and live it to the full. ■

# LIVE SIMPLY

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Jack Mallick · Year 5 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

“A hhhh!” I yelled. Why’s it so bright? I think to myself as I hear the dreaded voice of my robot chanting, “Time for work, time for work”. Why can’t I just live simply?

Off I went to work with my new servant that doesn’t talk to me EVER. After my twenty minute drive, that should have taken six minutes but the traffic was terrible, I arrived.

Once at work, I didn’t know what to do first. While I’m thinking, I hear the dreaded and scary voice of MR LOCK.

“GEORGE FREEMAN COME HERE RIGHT NOW”. Instantly I started to sweat like an uncontrollable waterfall that won’t stop. Before I can get up I see a tall, willowy shadow figure on my computer screen. Straight away I feel a grasping coldness through my spine. I say nervously, “Good Morning Mr Lock.”

“What have you been doing today?” he shouts loudly.

“Um, um, nothing yet sir,” I said frightened.

“Remember last time I caught you doing nothing and I said this is your last chance,” he responded loudly. Before I can say anything, he shouted, “No more chances, you’re fired!”

When I’m walking out I think of all of the things I should have been doing at work this morning. Suddenly it starts to pour down rain and my emotional side takes control of me. I realise that I can’t afford to live as I have been living anymore, unless I move to the country. When I think about it I chuckle. If it’s all I can afford I’ll try and give it my best shot. I won’t have to pay for all of my food as I can grow some and have chickens and eggs for myself in the morning, and life would just be relaxing and calm.

I call a taxi to my house and pack my bags. Once I say goodbye to my robot and my servant I start to walk towards the front door. I think to myself when I’m outside, I hope I don’t miss this life. The taxi eventually

comes. By the time I’m in the taxi I’m soaked with water. I tell the taxi driver, “Can you take me to Georgios’s?” He replies with “Okay,” in a voice that sounded like he didn’t want to do it but he had to. Maybe he wanted a different life too.

The six hours of driving started. We stopped at three petrol stations for the fuel. It was the most boring car trip ever. When we started to reach the end of the trip, I started seeing flowers, colours, no proper roads and most importantly the shining sun. He dropped me off at Georgios’s. I was looking for some land and then I saw a great big farm that was on sale and came with all the animals, plus it was on a private sale. I went and took a look at it and it looked great. It had one bed and one bathroom. It also had a garden so I didn’t have to buy my vegetables. I knocked on the door and a man in a suit and tie answered. I said, “I’m interested in buying this house.”

He replied excitedly “Oh great!”

I said to the man, “I have one question, can I move in today?”

He said, “Sure, the owners of this house just left today with all their things”.

After hours of talking deals with the man we finally came to an agreement. Straight away I started signing the papers. After I finished signing he said five words that changed my life. “This is your house now”. I tried not to sound excited and said, “Thank you”. I instantly lead him to the front door.

After he was gone I screamed in excitement. I finally have a house to myself and animals to care for. I didn’t even unpack my stuff. I ran around seeing everything and playing with the animals. I fed them their dinner and took some eggs and cooked them in the pan for myself.

By the time it was night I had found a chair and was lying looking up at the stars with the animals. I said aloud “*I like living life simply.*” ■

# WE ARE ALREADY CYBORGS

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Coco Dwyer and Ruby Mumford · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

The future of technology is not all around us, it's inside us. In the words of Elon Musk "we are already cyborgs". With the use of medicine, glasses, hearing aids and abundant technology, available to all who can afford it, we are expanding the natural capabilities of the human body everyday. Through the exciting world of biohacking and the seemingly inevitable future that is transhumanism, science is reaching new heights. And as this technology embeds itself into our everyday lives and inside our physical bodies, we may be prompted to ask: how long until we are more computer than human?

Biohacking is a growing subculture that explores the ways in which we can alter our own bodies, not only to repair it but to enhance it. Biohacking interventions range from aesthetic modification to complex technology being implanted into peoples bodies. Founder of "The Cyborg Foundation" and world's first human cyborg, Neil Harbisson, states that "life will be much more exciting when we stop creating applications for our mobile phones, and start creating applications for our own bodies". Harbisson was born with a rare and extreme form of colour blindness; he sees the world only in shades of grey. He has worked with scientists to develop a groundbreaking 'third eye'. This mechanical eye detects the frequencies of colours and plays each shade as a different pitch, allowing Harbisson to experience colour through sound. The antenna that is attached to a chip in the back of his scalp has been adapted to detect frequencies that are undetectable to the average human eyes, allowing him to go beyond the human visible light spectrum.

Harbisson can hear the inferred signal from a TV remote and can even tell if there is high UV rays present on a particular day. With the technology that is permanently attached to him, Harbisson's futuristic 'third eye' is legally a part of his body. He remarks that "I don't feel that I am wearing technology, I feel that I am technology". This exceptional example of biohacking is pushing the boundaries of integrated technology.

This next stage of human evolution, in which

computers and machinery are extensions of our skin and bones, is called transhumanism. Transhumanism is a movement defined by the idea that humans are in a comparatively early stage of development and with the use of technology we can evolve past our current cellular form. There is much debate about the moral implications of this, but we advance artificial intelligence and integrate computer systems into the human body, it seems that a whole new potential for some members of the human race might not be too far away. As the lines between human and machine begin to blur, how long has the human race got left, until we evolve to become completely unrecognisable?

Melbourne based artist Stelarc, known for growing a ear on his arm through medical science, begs a similar question when he states that with the use of Bio-hacking and 3D printed organs "theoretically, an individual might not die". Mortality has always been a core part of what it means to be human, with nanobots circulating the bloodstream, chips implanted into your brain, vision that never fails and organs ready to be grown, we may not remain mortal and therefore may not be seen to be entirely human. Cambridge University lecturer David Trippett believes that the result of transhumanism there will be "an iteration of Homo sapiens enhanced or augmented, but still fundamentally human." If we use Trippett's perspective then we can come to the conclusion that as a transhuman race we will still be human, but the social context of what it means to be human will change, as well as its definition.

As humanity continues to forge forward, bringing to life the seemingly impossible everyday, is it time to stop to consider the consequences? Or should we continue to push the boundaries of our modern world? The art and science of biohacking is expanding bridging the gap between humans and computers. Transhumanism may seem like a sci-fi concept, but as humanity continues on its evolutionary path it will likely become common place. Whatever our futures hold, it seems inevitable that technology will not simply evolve around us but inside us. ■

# THE LIGHTHORSES

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Georgia Muir · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Deafening crossfire  
Lives balancing on a wire  
Frozen in fear  
The whistle screams its deadly cheer  
1st wave, 2nd wave, 3rd wave over  
please oh please let this war be over

Trenches drowning with panic and fear  
Knowing our deaths are frightfully near  
The air thick with death and despair  
Oh, how this world is so greatly unfair

5th wave, 6th wave  
They've taught us to be brave, determined and strong  
But when terror takes control  
How can we ever reach our goal?  
"Get the flag to the enemy's trench!"  
Our fate is determined  
But for peace I am yearning

The commander brings the whistle to his lips  
Like a knife the sound splits through the air

The sight of this chaos brings wicked despair  
Soldiers bolt out of the trenches  
The gunfire comes fast and relentless  
Men everywhere drop to the ground  
Screams erupt from all around

I sprint like a madman  
Into the wildfire of the Nek  
My lungs are filling with pain and death  
Darkness has taken its toll,

The shot rang through my ears  
My eyes spilling with tears  
Blood poured from the wound  
a red flower on my shirt began to bloom  
I knew that now was my passing  
My time was gone  
But the memories of this battle would be everlasting

They call us the lighthorses  
From the battle of the Nek ■



Alessia Maccora  
Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

# DISCOVERING GINDIE

---

Ava Zahn · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

#1-

Hi Sally

It's so bad. We have to move to a stupid little town called Gindie. Could it have a worse name? Dad's company decided he should run their regional offices and that means we have to move. I love city life, have everything I want: good shops, tons of sports, a million cafes and more.

Going to this tiny town will be horrible. I want to go out and eat bacon and eggs in a cafe, in the morning and take aesthetic photos in cute cafes, not eat porridge on the verandah with cats winding around my legs. Dad said it won't be too bad, we might even be able to get a horse for the farm.

Talk soon,

Meg

#2-

Hi, it's me again

We just moved in on Tuesday and honestly, it's worse than I expected.

381 people live here.

My old school had more than that. So I'm starting school on Monday. I'm going to Emerald State High. A 30-minute drive. In my grade, there are 35 people, so my friendship options are looking slim. One of the few good things about moving here is that I get to start school at 9am and finish at 3pm.

Another thing is with our farm we got a horse! I got to name her, Cotton is her name. I'm starting horse riding lessons after school. Soon I might be able to enter competitions and do show jumping.

Meg.

#3-

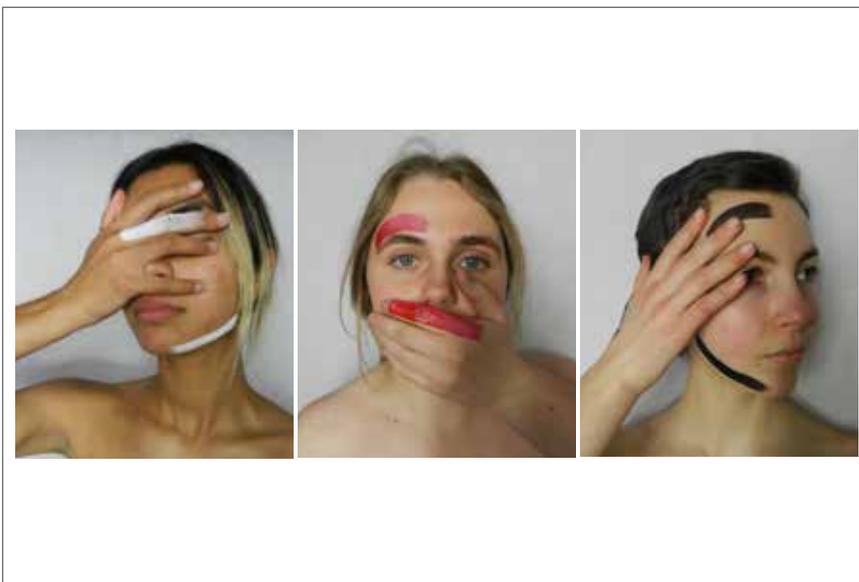
Hi Sally,

Sorry I haven't written in a while. I've been super busy with horse riding and preparing for my first competition! Life here isn't so bad after all.

I've made so many new friends at school and in my horse riding lessons. I'm writing this as we drive to Brisbane for the Royal Show where my friend and I are doing show jumping together. I can't wait to get started!

See you later,

Meg ■



**Alessi Fernando**  
Year 10 · Star of the  
Sea College

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*“See no Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil”* can empower people in ways you never thought possible. These three simple things to live by might not seem like much, but the impact can change people's perspective on life in even the smallest ways.

# BELLA'S JOURNEY

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Christina Comito · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Bella never liked history all that much, which would probably explain why she was falling asleep as her teacher rambled on about World War 1. She didn't understand what was so amazing, courageous and brave about it all. *'All it really is, is a bunch of men letting other people control their lives and forcing them to kill other people. If war was so bad, then wouldn't they just refuse to fight?'* she thought to herself.

Eager to get away, even just for a few minutes, she put her hand up.

"Yes, Bella?" the teacher asked, slightly annoyed that someone was interrupting her class.

"Uh, can I please go to the bathroom?"

The teacher sighed, "Sure, just be quick. I need to go through the assessment and I want everyone in the room when I do".

Terrific, just what Bella needed. An assessment on a topic she couldn't care less about. She quickly made her way to the bathroom.

'Saved by the bladder' she thought, smiling to herself as she walked out of the classroom.

Wanting to get away as soon as possible, she started speed walking down the narrow hallway, and didn't slow as she went around a corner. She didn't realise someone was coming the other way, right into her. The force from the impact sent Bella flying. The last thought she had before blacking out, was, *'Geez, fighting the war was probably easier than getting away from learning about it'*.

When Bella finally came to, the first thing she noticed was how much her head hurt. The second thing was that she wasn't in the school hallway anymore. Slowly, she stood up, rubbing her head, only to fall back down when the boat tilted.

Boat? What was she doing on a boat?

Bella once again tried to get up, and this time, her legs obliged and allowed her to stay up. Once she had gotten used to the sway of the boat, she looked around. Wherever she was, it was dark, and she could barely see. With arms outstretched, she felt her way around what she thought was a room and eventually came to a set of stairs. Eager to get to fresh air, Bella climbed the stairs with no hesitation. As she got higher, she could hear footsteps, they were soft, but they were there.

"What's even up there?" she muttered to herself. "Maybe some pirates came and abducted me!" She stopped when she came to the door and took a moment to brace herself for pirates or whatever

it was that was out there. However, whatever she was expecting was not what she saw when she slowly opened the door.

It was dark, the moon was about to start disappearing behind the horizon. The fresh breeze was nice on her face, but she barely noticed it as she tried to take in what she saw. There were men everywhere. No matter where she looked, there were men, and all were in uniform and silent. A lot of them were just standing on the deck, twenty or so were loading smaller boats onto ropes, ready to lower into the water while others were climbing into boats. None of them made a sound. None of them noticed her either.

She blinked a few times, and then started walking towards the nearest person. "Uh, can you please tell me where i am?" she asked him. He didn't even look at her.

"Sir?" once again, he didn't even acknowledge her presence.

"Hey, excuse me!" she raised her voice a little and waved her hand in front of his face, and still he didn't respond. Now slightly annoyed, she tapped his shoulder. Well, she would've tapped it if her hand hadn't gone straight through it.

Bella started panicking. "Holy crap, holy crap, holy crap!" she exclaimed, looking wide-eyed at her hands. 'I'm dead, aren't I? Oh no, no, no, no, no, no, no! This can't be happening!' after a few minutes of panicking, she remembered that the question still remained; where was she? This definitely wasn't what she thought heaven would look like. Sighing, she walked around to try to find some answers.

She found another door, opened it quietly and slipped through. Even though she knew that no one could see her, she felt like she should lie low. She felt her way around and almost fell over after tripping over a table. Soon enough, she felt a pile of paper on the desk. Curious, she grabbed it, made her way to the window and using the last light from the moon to help her read, her eyes scanned over the headline. **BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY!** Huh? Heart beating fast, her eyes flashed to the date. *4th August, 1914.*

"That's not good..." she murmured.

Bella thought back to the lesson on World War. "Okay, so it must be some time after Britain declared war on Germany, otherwise the newspaper wouldn't have made it to this boat, but how long?" Bella sighed in exasperation and looked out the window, watching as the last of the moon finally dipped behind the horizon. When suddenly...

*Creeeeeeaaaaaak.*

Bella jumped, regained her composure, placed the newspaper back on the table and made her way out of the room. Now that the moon was gone, she could only just make out the shape of the smaller boats. As she walked towards the boats, she heard a few whispers. They were in an Australian accent. Bella thought back to her classes. *'Okay, so if it's after August, the Australians are about to enter the War, it must be... Oh. My. God. I'm in Gallipoli and the soldiers are about to land in Anzac cove.'*

Bella got to the very edge of the ship and peered over it. The boats were crammed; at least 40 men in each. It looked a long way down, and she got a little nervous standing on the edge, so she turned around, just to have a man walk right through her to start climbing down into the boat below. Bella took a step back and fell from the deck of the ship, straight through the men standing in the smaller landing boat. The men in the boat looked at the area where she had fallen. She heard one man ask the man next to him "what was that noise?" the other man just shrugged and they all looked away, uninterested.

Then the boats started moving. *"No, no, no! I'm not meant to be landing! I'm not even meant to be here!"* she started yelling, but to no avail. No one could hear her. She couldn't even pick up a gun to defend herself, otherwise the men would panic and think that she was a ghost. The boats crept silently along the water, men were shaking hands, clearly knowing that they might not all survive, and Bella still had no idea what to do. She could just see the steamboats that were pulling the landing boats along. All too soon, the landing boats cast off from the steamboats, and the men started rowing.

Bella could hear the soft crashing of waves against the shore. All of a sudden, a few sparks flew out of the funnel of one of the steamboats that was pulling away, and she just knew that something was wrong. A beacon from the land was lit, exposing the massive cliffs and the Anzacs to the Turkish soldiers. The Anzacs kept rowing towards the shore, and suddenly bullets were flying around them. She just watched as a few men on her boat and men on other boats collapsed, dead, and prayed that she didn't get hit. The men kept rowing, and more men died. When they eventually hit the shore, no one hesitated. All the men who were still alive scrambled out of the boats and onto the shore, where more men were shot and killed. Bella followed them as they shot at unseen Turkish soldiers and ran for cover.

Then Bella noticed a young, injured Anzac. *'They'll shoot him, he's already injured, and he's what, 18?'* she thought. Acting on pure instinct, she ran towards him. She just stayed in front of him as he clambered along the beach towards cover, hoping that she would stay lucky and not get shot.

Then, just before they got undercover, she looked up at where the Turks were firing. A bullet hit her in the head and she collapsed. The last thing she saw was the young soldier looking towards her, confused as to how the bullet heading towards him had been stopped. He was soon away, making his way to cover.

Then everything was black once more.

Bella groaned as she opened her eyes to a bright light. She blinked a few times and then slowly sat up. She was in a soft bed, with white walls all around her, and a small table with a few books. She was in sick bay at school. The school nurse came over to her.

"Are you alright? You have a pretty nasty cut on your head," she said.

"Cut? What about a bullet hole? I just got hit with a bullet!" Bella exclaimed, confused.

She got to her classroom just as the bell rang.

"You missed the whole lesson, and the explanation of the assessment," the teacher remarked.

"I know, I'm really sorry. What exactly is the assessment?"

"Well, it was on what we learned today, the battle of the Nek, but since you were absent the whole lesson, you'll have to do it on the Gallipoli landing, is that okay with you?"

"Yeah, that's fine. What do I need to do?"

"You need to write a creative piece, whether it's a short story or a collection of diary entries, and it needs to be based around the Gallipoli landing."

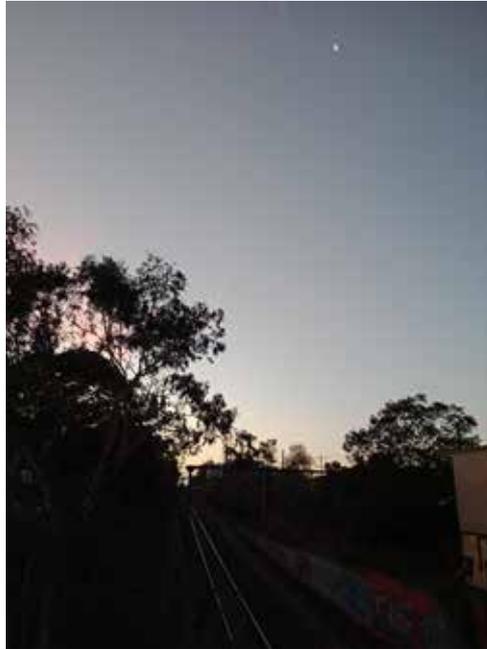
"That won't be a problem, thanks, Miss."

That night, she researched a name. She wasn't too sure why she searched it up, nor why it was in her head. As she looked at his bio, she learned that he was one of the survivors of WW1. Curious, she clicked on images and found one of him as a young man in uniform. She smiled as she looked upon the face of the soldier she 'saved'. ■

# TAKEN FOR GRANTED

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Luci Ackland · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



She waited, seemingly indifferent, staring listlessly out over the bitumen road as cars lazily rolled past the station, followed by the occasional ute or truck, or accompanied by the odd blast of a horn. Really, her mind was a riot. A restless tangled mess. But like dirt under the mat or junk stuffed into cupboards and closets, she was good at putting things away for the sake of others. Restaurants were beginning to fill up and pop music played from somewhere. Several families were about the place, as well as some couples and groups of friends.

She was alone, as per usual. Someone was smoking nearby and so she discreetly shuffled in the opposite direction, adjusting her heavy bag as she did so. She thought of all the books inside and it got heavier. Signs hanging from wires swung back and forth in a breeze that carried the smell of summer in its arms—which was weird because it was winter. There was something else in the air beside cigarette smoke, and somehow, though the sun had almost set, if she'd closed her eyes, she would have said it was morning. It didn't matter anyway, she was on her way home—a waste of the night.

She listened for that signature rattle...nothing, not even from the other side of the road, going in the other direction. *Drat, it's getting dark.*

The moon shone starkly, even against the hazy hue of colours that had melted together in a kind of

atmospheric stew, and trees were cavorting about the place like children at a picnic party. She had a habit of biting her lips, especially now as she felt her impatience climb her shoulders, starting to hammer her into the ground like a stake, with each minute that passed.

At last, she saw the familiar headlights glow dimly from down the street. Flyaway hairs blew in her face as she fumbled for her Myki, plus maybe a bobby pin or two, and slowly approached the kerb. The tram trundled until it was just about 5 metres from her, and, without a hitch or a squeal, stopped.

Tentatively, she approached the door nearest to her, which remained shut, as did the others. There was no traffic holding up... in fact, there was no traffic at all. For all down the dusty street, each car, ute, truck, had stopped; not in a jam but in their places, spaces scattered about between them.

“What’s going on...” She trailed off as she turned to address the others that had been passing the time with her, but they were frozen. Still; like wax figures or statues, faces locked in animated to blank faces. Staring at the tram, staring at a phone, staring at someone else. Several had their mouths open in conversation. She scoffed at first, rubbed her eyes, sat down on a tight space on the bench and waited once more for the world to reawaken. For her to reawaken maybe.

A minute passed—the silence was beginning to hurt, it was beginning to travel through her; the absence of vehicles, music, the wind, trees, it was crawling inside of her. *Help me, what is happening.* She stood up, her vision slightly wobbly as she stepped forward, wandering and weaving around people nearby. One boy had earbuds in and she pulled one out. No music was coming out. Nothing. His face was turned toward the graffitied timetable. She was bewildered; far too aware and yet, in profound disbelief. She couldn't begin to fathom what had triggered this altered state or how to fix it.

Advancing forward, she pried open the tram doors, peering inside where mannequins sat reading newspapers, playing mobile games and sipping from polystyrene coffee cups. At a loss of what to do, she panicked, slamming the emergency button in a sudden frenzy. She could have triggered any alarm, set the whole place on fire and no one would have batted an eye. Really.

Tumbling back out, she bolted down the street, her school shoes slapping against the ground, shaking people as she went and uselessly flinging open shop front doors to be greeted by more expressionless, immobile people. Somebody else... well, they might have snuck in to grab something, mess with something, but in her state of alarm, she didn't even think, she couldn't think clearly at all, with all her thoughts out for this unresponsive world to see. Nothing was happening and too much was happening at the same time.

She hurled her bag from her shoulders. Her eyes blurred with tears. Traffic lights and headlights

frozen in time transformed into a colourful freakshow spiralling before her. The road beneath her was shifting, but nothing else was. Nothing was moving! Everything had stopped. She was trembling like thin paper, bursting with fear... but just before she found she couldn't handle it anymore, a loud *BEEEEEP* seared through her ears. Stunned, she continued to stand in a jolt of fright, but like orchestra launching into song, the world sprung back to life. She felt a hand on her back usher her forward, and realising she was in the middle of a road, quickly, mechanically removed herself. The stranger was a young woman.

“Woah...Be careful next time, ok? You wouldn't wanna get in an accident.” Dumbfounded, she gulped and nodded, then stood for a bit to watch the cars, utes and trucks roll on by. The community laughed and strolled about her, resuming as if nothing had happened. I suppose nothing had.

Cool gusts of winds blew wafts of warm meals; the smells of rice, chicken and pasta were just a few that reached her. It danced about the eucalyptus trees that lined the cozy side streets, and kissed pigeon-lined rooftops. She breathed it all in, picked up her discarded bag and caught the tram from the next stop.

Gladly, for once, she went home. She began to observe everything, from curious winding snail trails and intricate weeds woven with buoyant dandelions, to the discernable inviting semblance of a house with its lights on amidst the dark. She noticed each of these complexities of life, and she cherished them. She hoped things would keep going, just as they had been before. ■

# THE FORGOTTEN WOODS

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Tom Pagonis · Year 12 · De La Salle College

A droplet of water landed on the old man's forehead, jolting him from his already restless sleep. It had come from the rotting wooden ceiling of the cabin, which was groaning under the weight of the snow from the previous night. He muttered as he rose from bed with all the grace of an elderly man whose recollection of his just-interrupted dreams were as vague as his memory of the entire day before, shuffling across the room to look himself up and down in the mirror.

His face was pale and stretched from years of maintaining the same drab expression, with wrinkles running rampant across his forehead and cheeks, along with eyes that seemed to blink, on average, once every five minutes. He was wearing only a spotted nightgown despite the cold and evident lack of insulation within the cabin (the water continued to fall on to his yellowed pillow, the 'plinks' now muted by the fabric), and his feet stuck out from underneath like gnarled stumps from a long dead tree.

He grunted as he walked, the planks underneath his feet protesting what little weight there was left to the man. Finally, he reached his desk and managed to sit down, adjusting a pair of half-moon spectacles and opening up to a blank page in an ancient stamp book. Reaching for one of the many overflowing boxes of stamps he had stored underneath his desk, he set to work laying every stamp out, carefully deciding where specifically each should be placed according to its value and country of origin. His days consisted only of this and occasional glances towards the sole window that was fixed high upon one wall, the pane tinted blue by the cold.

The man had not been outside for many winters, in fact since he retired from his position as chief sorter of misdirected letters and parcels at the post office years ago, he had all but been confined to his now squalid cabin. This day, however, as he was deciding where a Spanish 20 peseta stamp from 1974 belonged, he noticed a small beetle scuttle across his desk. Usually the man had some distaste for insects, but the glint of the emerald green carapace had captivated him. It neared the edge of the desk, much to the man's concern, teetering on the brink of the precipice. It paused, time seeming to freeze. He was entirely invested in the wellbeing of the thing, for some reason that was beyond him at the present moment. It seemed to consider the situation it was in, and promptly jumped.

The old man dropped the stamps and glue in his hands, eyes bulging at the fact that the insect had just uncaringly thrown itself off his desk. Inevitably it had shuffled off of the mortal coil, its life wasted for what seemed like no reason at all? Such a brazen but foolish decision, the poor thing should have known better, surely. But then the man managed to catch that same glint, the beetle having simply landed on the broken grandfather clock a short distance from the desk, apparently quite content.

It astounded him. That insignificant creature, its lifespan miniscule in comparison to his, had risked life and limb, for what? To save some time? His hands shook as he backed his chair away from his desk, as if some blasphemous act had been committed. He looked around his quarters for the first time in a long time, taking in the dismal décor and peeling wallpaper. He looked at his hands, surprised at how they resembled callous leather, and turning back to look at himself in the mirror, grimaced at what he saw. He reached for his chair to once again take a seat, and stopped, shaking his head. He stood, took a deep breath, and with an air of determination, he started walking towards the door.

*His* life was what was at risk of being completely wasted, he realised, as he took those final steps towards the exit of the four walls that had entrapped him all these years. A dull roar started in the back of his mind as he reached for the handle, his heart pounding in his chest. Throwing open the door and stepping out in to the cold, he gazed out upon the beautiful scenery, at the forgotten woods that surrounded his home.

They were similar to those in the fairy-tales his mother had read him as a child, the fir trees still capped with glistening snow. He looked down the mountainside, remembering how steep it was, down on to the serene village below, and began laughing. It pierced the clear, early morning air, seeming to make up for all the misspent years locked away. He did not notice, however, that the roar that had become deafening. Or that the village was not only serene, but long abandoned. The avalanche swallowed up the cabin in an instant, but the laugh seemed to ring out for much longer. ■

# BARLEY AND GINGER TEA

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*Cormac Fleming · Year 9 · De La Salle College*

The air doth hang upon me so to choke  
The chatter swells to quash my drowning voice  
And I reflect, butt of a cosmic joke  
Just sitting down seems now a fatal choice  
Cruel pretension! Weeaboo!  
Why must it be the tea-house you revere?  
Your confidence a front: untrue  
The waiter and his bev'rage list draw near...

Gentle heat, floating leaves, earthy tones  
The bluestone walls so tastefully adorned  
No longer do I wish that I was home  
No more the restaurant a whirling storm

Barley grain, ginger root, bowl fill'd of tea  
I am at peace – well, momentarily. ■



**Paul Viera**  
*Year 10 · De La Salle College*

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This is an oil painting of one of my idols, Paul McCartney. I admire the way he has lived his life and brought beauty to the world.

# A SECOND CHANCE

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Harrison Baum · Year 7 · De La Salle College

As Greg lay there in the ambulance, he reflected on his life, his parents (who had died two years before) and his late wife Margaret who had died a couple of weeks before. He could not wait to see them. Greg knew he was dying, no matter what the doctors said. He had a tumour the size of an egg in his brain, he had no hope.

As the doctors started preparing his medication, Greg raised his hand.

“Stop!” he said. “Let me die.” One of the doctors questioned him.

“Are you sure you have thought this through?” she asked.

“Yes,” replied George.

“Is there anyone you would like to see?” questioned the nurse.

“No,” said Greg “I have no children and my wife, parents and friends are dead.”

“Oh, I’m sorry,” replied the doctor, she felt sorry. “Very well then we will turn life support off, it will be peaceful.” As Greg closed his eyes for the last time, he thought, this is it.

A short time later Greg opened his eyes and saw five squirming pink rats. He tried to scream but all that came out was a squeak. Is this heaven? He thought it was a lot different to what he imagined it, and then it hit him. He had been reborn as a dog! He could feel his weird fur stuck down, and he was down on all fours and he had an unbelievable urge to sniff butts.

Nooooo! He thought. What about my wife and my parents? He then found himself hungry. He turned around and there in front of him was a huge **Chihuahua**. With a sigh, he then realised what breed of dog he was.

The next couple of days were horrifying, to eat/drink he had to feed on his Mum’s teats while five other squirming dogs tried to as well. It was frustrating. But the milk tasted strangely nice.

A few weeks later a woman wearing fancy clothes walked in with two bodyguards, and then Greg recognised who it was. It was Taylor Swift, she

walked over to the puppies, but Greg was still sulky so he sat back while his brothers and sisters ran up to the cage. Taylor pointed to Greg.

“That one has attitude, I like him.” So, one of the security guards walked up to Greg and picked him up and he was back in the world.

As they drove to Taylor’s house, in a convertible Rolls Royce Phantom, Taylor tried to think of a name for Greg.

“How about Callum?” she said, “Because it has a C in it for Chihuahua.”

As George / Callum was carried into the huge hall, he was dumbstruck. The walls were full of paintings and there was marble everywhere.

“Welcome to your new home,” Taylor said.

Over the next few weeks, Greg loved his new life. He had now found out he loved sitting in carry-on bags like a proper movie star dog. It was lots of fun, but sometimes he would think of his wife. Greg was not truly happy yet.

One day Taylor brought home another little Chihuahua! It was a girl called Catriona. The dog walked up to him and yipped, which translated to hello. She then said something that turned his blood cold.

“I used to be a human.” Greg was shocked but he replied.

“Me too,” she looked taken aback but still she asked.

“What was your old name?” she asked. “Greg?”

“Yes?” replied Greg uneasily, he hardly recognised his voice. Catriona’s fur lost all its colour. Then it clicked for Greg, this dog was only a couple of weeks older and his wife had died a couple of weeks before. This dog had the exact same cheeky smile and the same posture. She even had the same slight head tilt his old wife had. Even as a dog, she was a dead ringer.

“Margaret, is that you?” Greg whispered.

“Yes Greg, it is,” Margaret whispered back. ■



**Adam Scandrett**  
*Year 11 · De La Salle College*

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This painting captures a cherry blossom tree at the start of Spring, beginning to blossom. It represents new life and tranquillity.

# UNOBTAINABLE FAMILIARITY

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Sarah Vinton · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

As she blows through my hair I can taste the rare  
familiarity in the breeze.

The air; salty and warm. It brings me to the  
beach, to my subconscious home.

I tangle my worries into her hair which is a  
flowing frenzy of people's secrets.

Intertwined into her brain, locked safely into her  
mind.

Strength takes over her and breaks free of the  
secrets and worries,

Mopping them carefully off to the side.

I unzip her head, spilling honesty and slipping on  
perfection.

I am suddenly embraced with this presence.

Memories flood as tears bring me back to a place  
of peace, rest and comfort.

She is my rock holding me down in a constant  
battle with my own storm.

Inspiration hits me as the consumption of the  
salty warm breeze strikes.

I am instantly in a state of silence.

I rise

and fall

and rise

and fall.

Her light slowly sinking, strikes my face causing a  
surge of warmth through my body.

My mind continues to wander as I let the shore  
line grow.

Reluctantly the warmth is retreating, the lining  
becoming submissive.

And this once familiar breeze has turned sour,  
leaving a subtle bitterness on my fleeting  
memories. ■



**James Farrar**

*Year 11 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*

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*'Too much Kin not so Kind', Reduction lino cut*

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For my artwork, 'Too much Kin, not so Kind', I focused on the challenges of my subject's cultural heritage. My subject is a friend named Thierry, and these challenges result from his family background. His maternal grandparents were part of a Chinese minority who sought refuge in Malaysia. It was here where Thierry's parents met and eventually immigrated to Australia.

Subsequently, Thierry is a second generation Australian, yet despite his best attempts at assimilating into White Australian culture, his Asian heritage presents some challenges. I wanted to depict this in Thierry's life, so I decided to overlap the Malaysian flag with Thierry's face and the upper portion of his chest. This symbolises that no matter how hard he tries, Thierry cannot escape from his fundamentally Asian background.

The writing on his face is also Malay, further adding to the idea that he cannot avoid his heritage. Furthermore, the writing translates to common racial slurs against Asians, which Thierry has faced. Indeed, one of the racial slurs targets his Chinese heritage, which goes even deeper into his Asian identity.



**Charlotte McCormack**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*



**Amali Fordyce**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Eddie Sauerbrunn**  
*Foundation · St James Primary School,  
Brighton*

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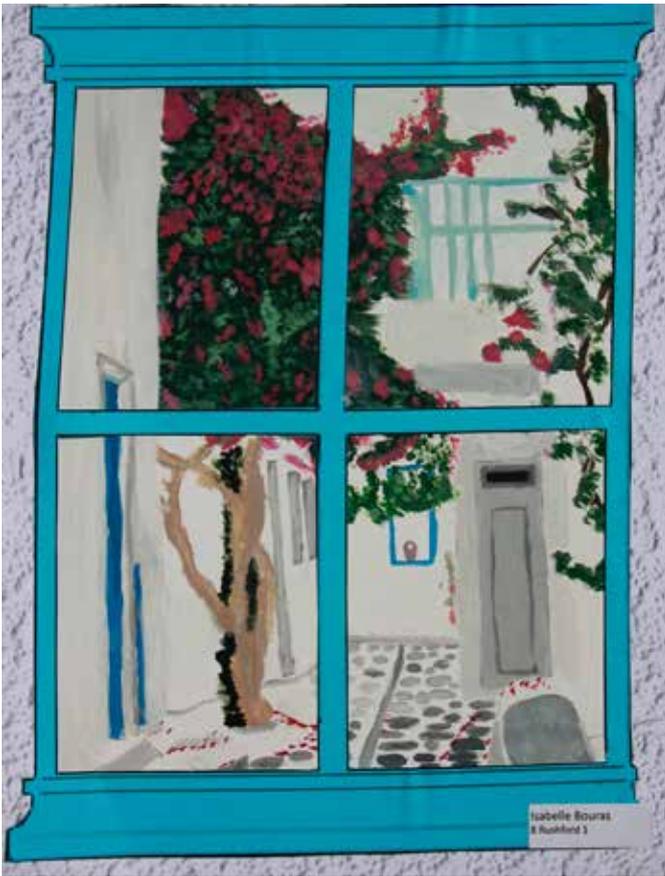
*Autumn Tree*



**Emma Cunningham**  
*Year 5 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

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*Albert Namatjira inspired Australian landscape*



**Isabelle Bouras**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Chiara Gosling**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Leah Zempel**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Coco Young**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



Lucia Daw  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



Isabel Engel  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



**Bella Wolfe**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

*Mixed Media*



**Maree Hodkinson**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Drawing*



**Olivia Rabottini**  
*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Mixed Media*



**Connor Laurilla**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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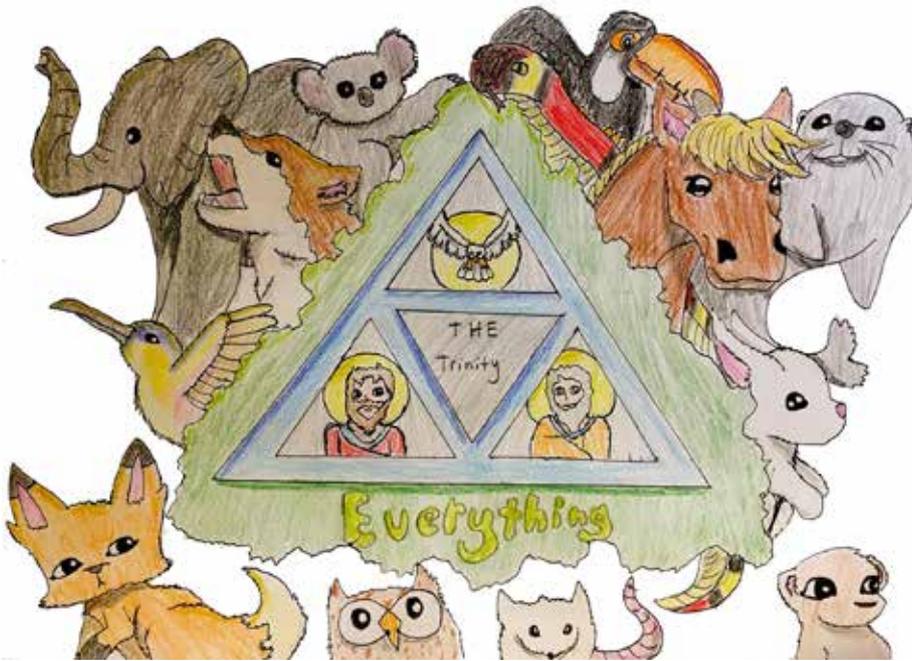
*Ink Drawing*



**Jamie Szabo**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Ink Drawing*



**Danielle Berger**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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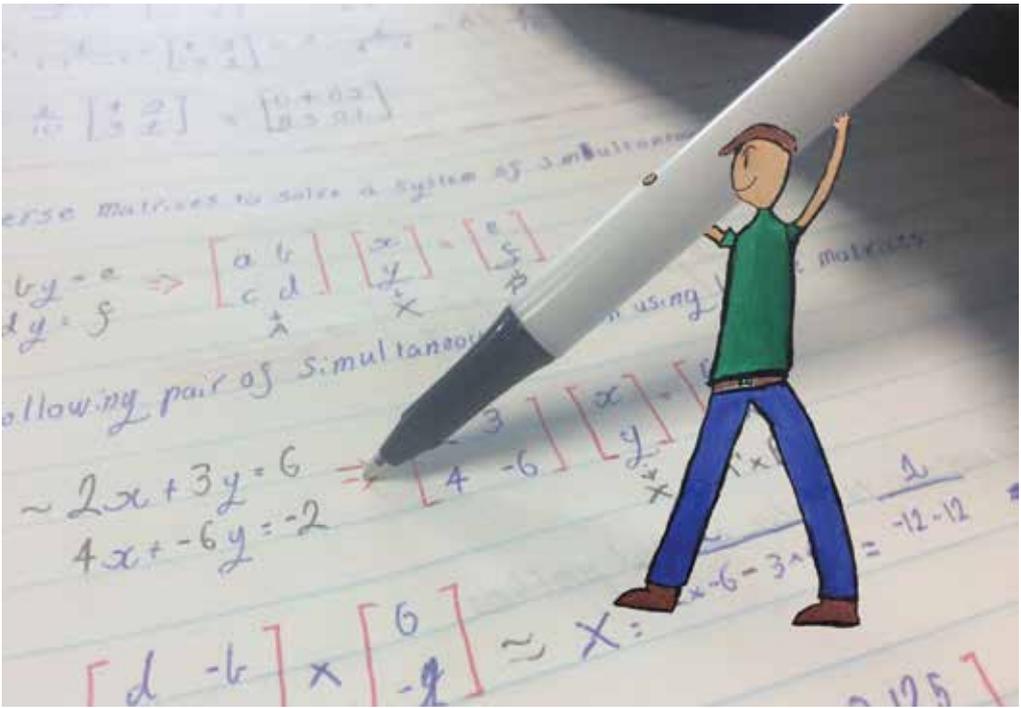
*Coloured Pencil*



**Joshua McKay**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Mixed Media*



**Caleb Bastiaan**  
Year 11 · Catholic Regional College Melton

Mixed Media



**Damien Pendleton**  
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton

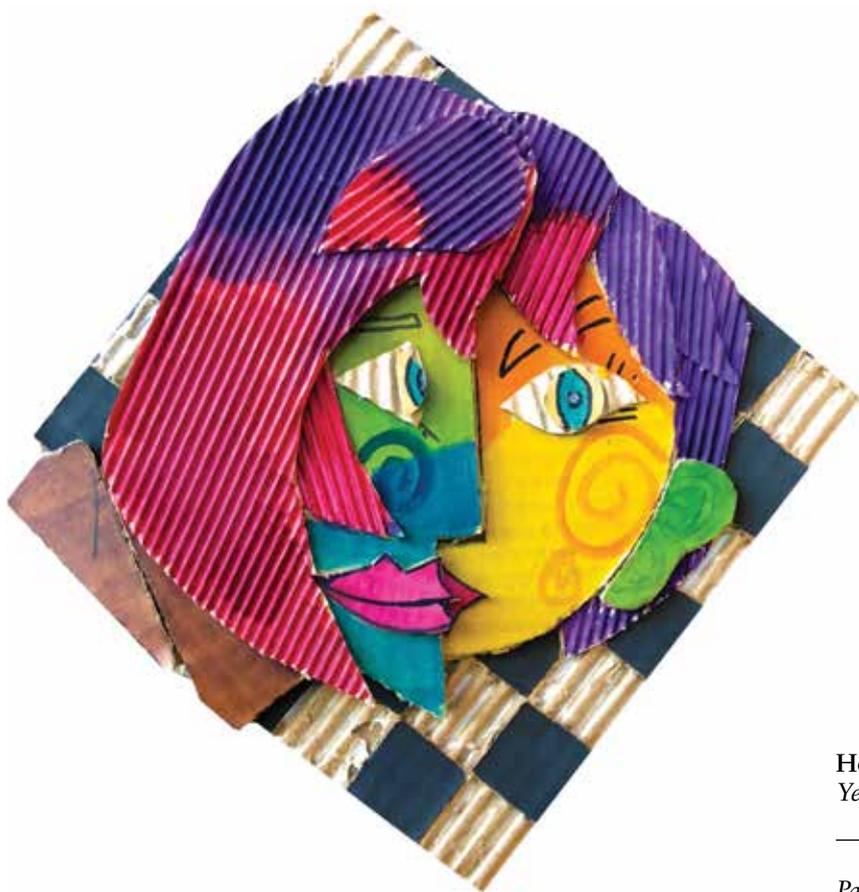
Ink Drawing



**Caitlin Mai**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

---

*Ceramics*



**Holly van Meel**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Paper Relief*

# A COLLINGWOOD TRAGIC

Sandrine Farrar · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

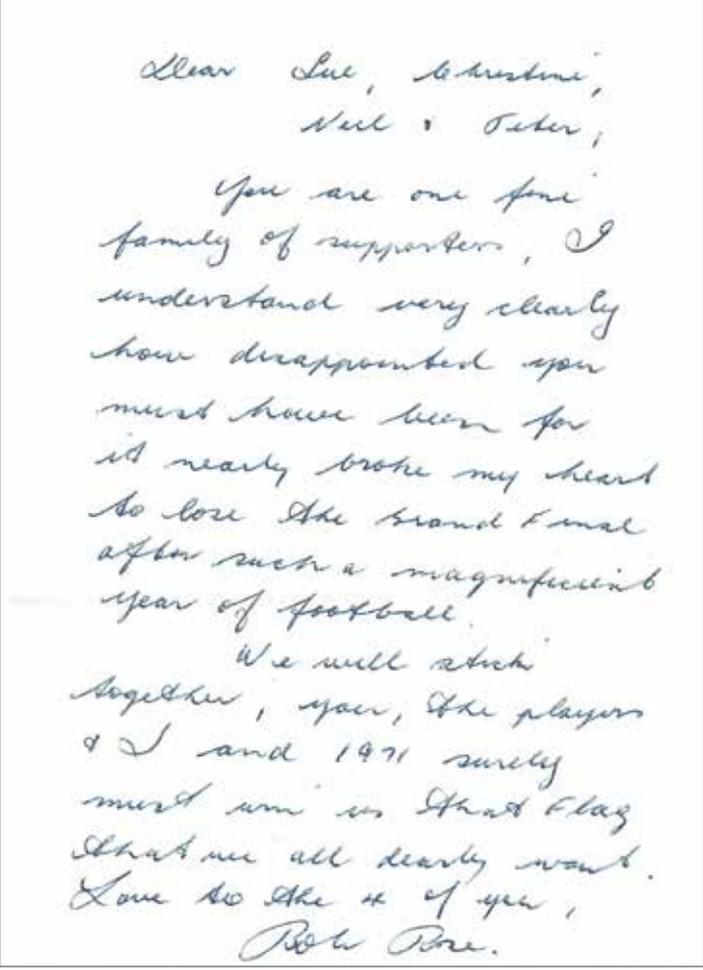
Once upon a time in a happy community when all was cheerful, I was born. Things were so good that I was one day taken aside and solemnly made to be a Collingwood supporter for the rest of my life. This is the story of a struggle that has defined me. Anyone familiar with struggling for an outcome and pushing tough times then succeeding should be able to relate to being a Collingwood supporter.

Naturally, people are envious of me. Insecure Richmond supporters are quick to say how uncouth and rough Collingwood supporters are but I'm way too polite to remind them of Dusty Martin!

Essendon and West Coast Eagles supporters warned me of drug issues at Collingwood but no answer here was required. For Geelong and Melbourne supporters, establishment pride and snobbery were enough.

I was drawn by the passion of Collingwood supporters. It was like being in a state of mind and marching forward with arms outstretched like a zombie but I must say, it felt right and made a whole lot of sense! Anyone who thought of it as a lower-class club run by a man known as "Eddie Everywhere" just had to get over it.

Of course though, it would be beneath the dignity of a Collingwood supporter to wind up non-believers for no reason. I am only here to thank the non-supporters for all of the hatred and contempt that has made the Collingwood support base so strong! I have reached the point of no return, it is your fault (if you don't follow Collingwood) and the more you complain, the worse it is going to get. ■



Dear Sue, Christine,  
Neil & Peter,  
You are one fine  
family of supporters, I  
understand very clearly  
how disappointed you  
must have been for  
it nearly broke my heart  
to lose the grand final  
after such a magnificent  
year of football.  
We will stick  
together, you, the players  
& I and 1971 surely  
must win us that flag  
that we all dearly want.  
Love to the 4 of you,  
Bob Rose.

After Collingwood's tragic loss in the 1970 Grand Final, my granddad wrote a letter to the coach, the legendary Bob Rose. He wrote back to my granddad. Here is the letter.

# FOUR SEASONS

Kaspar-Peter Nickel · Year 7 · Whitefriars College

The wind blew gently past the bark on my limbs. The morning dew spotted every leaf on my branches. The morning sun began to peek curiously over the horizon and bathed me in a glowing light. It warmed every one of my boughs and made every drop of water on my leaves sparkle and shine. As the sun rose a little higher in the brightening sky, a flock of birds flew across above me. They decided to land in my grove, and one landed gracefully on a branch of mine. It had obviously flown far, because it fell asleep almost immediately on the warm bark of my branches. As the sun began to lower on the other side of the rosy sky, glowing like a red flower, clouds blazing scarlet in the sky, a cat slunk through the dimming orange light, crawled between my toes and curled up. Roots and leaves combined to create a camouflage for the cat. Around me, a rustling in the dead leaves and twigs caused the cat to twitch, very slightly. The rustling started to come closer and closer until finally there was a flurry of leaves and the next second, the cat was sitting contentedly, chewing slowly. The cat curled up again between my roots and fell asleep.

*Time never stops.*

*Even for trees.*

*Time keeps flowing and seasons change.*

Snow sparkled and glistened in the air and settled gently onto my boughs. It slowly created a thick

layer over my limbs, like a blanket. The crunching of animals moving through the snow filled the air and tracks in it showed where they had been. A mouse popped his head out of the snow to look around and cautiously moved away towards the next area of coverage. Almost at once, a huge eagle swooped down upon the small creature which scurried away as fast as possible, only just managing to slip between a small gap still open above the snow in my roots. The bird hit the ground inches away from where the mouse had just disappeared. Food was scarce at that time, and some of the animals were becoming desperate.

*Future becomes the past.*

New beginnings are related to Spring. Saplings everywhere, bright blue and scarlet flowers shining around us, birds singing their bright tunes and all the while, the sun is warming everything in its blazing hug. Over the year, I had grown up a lot, and my roots had spread out almost everywhere, so far that I could communicate with almost every tree in the forest. As night fell, I was so tall that it was almost as if I could feel the heat of the shining stars above. They were very beautiful. They were like every kind of gem you could think of glowing in the sky. But they were a lot more complex than that. Swirling fire in the sky.

*And all things end. ■*



Michaela Papaleo

Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

# THE ROAD BACK

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Blake Ritchie · Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Orchards lined with pink lady apple trees stretch down the left of the highway. On the right, yellow daisies cover the grass. The rolling mountains in the north fill the horizon as the sun starts to rise. An emerging layer of morning dew floats above the surface of the tarmac. It's dawn. It's been a long night of driving. I wind down my electrically operated windows and gasp fresh air. My mind is overwhelmed. I struggle to focus on the car in front as my psyche wanders to places it hasn't been to for such a long time. These country roads bring back so many memories. An orange warning light blinks on my digital dashboard as I drift across the white striped line, but I don't care. My steering wheel vibrates and corrects me back as the autonomous brain of the car takes over. With a sigh, I repeat to myself, "They don't make 'em like they used to. They don't make them like they used to." My mind meanders at the response to my lack of involvement as I drive this modern car. I turn the radio down and with a million miles of country roads ahead of me, I begin to relax and think about how simple it once was.

Nostalgia; it's a crazy thing. For a moment, I drift back to the days when petrol was cheap and cars were made of steel by men, not machines. I miss the old man's XY Falcon. It was my first car and a car that I would never forget. The way it roared down the highway. It rumbled and rocked the whole body work when I dropped it into second. The vermilion fire paint would reflect the sun right into your eyes. In a daze, I imagine myself driving it. My digital dash transitions into the instrument clusters of old. As I put the pedal to the metal, the needle slowly raises above 60 and the revs drop as I change the gears of the Cleveland V8. I look into the round chrome mirrors and see myself, a younger self; wearing aviators and a leather jacket. I shake my head and my eyes blur back into the harsh reality which I face. I miss the XY but more importantly I miss Dad. I guess that's why I'm driving back to my childhood home, to try and reconnect with my father who passed away last week.

My hands wrap tightly around the steering wheel. With no sign of civilisation, I divert from the highway down a narrow dirt road. Am I at the right place? I haven't been here for 30 years. Fog thickens the further I drive from the main road. Similar to a cowboy movie, a storm of dust forms behind the car. I venture forward, intrigued to find if life was still the same. Slowly, I begin to make out a wooden house – I was home. I pull up to the front of the house. Instantly my recognition of the place is shattered. I swing my legs out of the car and my body cramps after a long night of driving. My family's home, now run down and dilapidated. Dad would be fuming if he saw this. I think about the days where I would play kick to kick with Dad in the backyard. I was only young but I still remember. A rush of anger stemmed by the sadness of what my childhood home had become defeats me. I look at the abandoned house and gladly remember that I will always have the memories.

I try to peek through the windows of the old garage but the glass is smothered in dust and cobwebs. I pull on the icy brass handles but the doors are locked. Dad always kept a key underneath the doormat. What are the chances? There it is as I lift the crumbling withered mat. A glimmer of excitement warms me as I unlock the whitewashed wooden door. Funny how it smells the same after all these years – raw metal mixed with oil still lingers, reminding me of Dad.

My iPhone flashlight illuminates the space which could only be described as a time capsule – Dad's tools still meticulously organised on the bench. I'm transported to my childhood, a simpler time. A dusty canvas covered the shape of a car. What could it be? Maybe one of Dad's later cars before he left the property. Slowly I lift the cover and I'm teased by the shades of vermilion fire paint. "It can't be... I thought Dad sold the XY when I bought my own car!" A tear rolls down my face as I am reunited with the car from my formative years. A connection with Dad. A simpler time when all I needed was my aviators, leather jacket and of course Dad. ■

# DISCONNECTED

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Joel Duggan · Year 11 · Whitefriars College

The return to reality was always difficult.

Sometimes you spend so long away from it that basic functions like breathing or blinking suddenly seem so... unnatural. Your body feels weak and unwieldy compared to the one you hold in the other world. The digital world.

My eyes remained glued to my computer screen as I readjusted to my senses and the surrounding environment. Staring back was someone who resembled me, but who was still different. His figure was muscular, his teeth brighter and his skin healthier.

I yanked out the cord that was plugged into the USB port in my neck and the avatar vanished as the screen went black. Now I was left gazing at my true self: an emaciated, anaemic runt with sunken eyes and lank hair. I glanced away instinctively.

The rest of the room held little in the way of pleasant scenery. Dirty clothes, food packets and tangled wires were strewn about all over the single, messy bed and grey carpet. There were no windows and the only light came from a flickering bulb on the ceiling that kept thrusting the room in and out of darkness.

I peeled myself out of my chair. My legs almost collapsed beneath me as I came to my feet, leaving me to scramble for a grip on the desk to steady myself. A relieved sigh escaped my lips when I managed to stay afoot.

I hobbled over to the bed and flopped onto it. Staring at the grey ceiling, I felt something. A foreign sensation that nagged at my stomach and clawed at my mind. Hunger? No, this was something more. Something insidious that had wormed in its way into my core until it held me completely in its grasp.

Dissatisfaction.

It reared its teeth whenever I was unplugged and tore at me whenever I saw my reflection. The only way to block it out was to stay connected to the computer for as long as possible, but I was still a human with human needs. Reality had its hooks dug firmly into my flesh.

I returned to my feet and made my way over to the bathroom, my legs moving with more assuredness than they had in a long time. My hand

moved to flick on the light. They beamed with an uncomfortable brightness that made my eyes tingle. I walked to the sink, where what I seek was waiting for me on the counter.

A container of razor blades.

I withdrew one. I raised it. I held it to my neck. I traced the curve of my Adam's apple. When I watched myself in the mirror, the person looking back seemed wholly separate to me. The metal felt cold against my flesh. Too cold; like a dead machine left in the dark.

I sighed. There could be no other way about it. I spared a glance through the doorway at my computer, the hair on my skin rising as if yearning to touch it once more.

And then in one fell swoop, I did it.

A swift incision in the side of my throat that splattered my blood across the mirror, leaving my reflection stained red. I stifled a scream and bent over the sink. With my free hand, I reached into the wound and tore out the device that had been implanted there – the device that kept me chained to that computer. And with a sound like the unlocking of shackles, it fell into the sink.

I stood there for an eternity, listening to the slow *drip* of my own blood, watching as it coalesced around the drain. Eventually, I pulled myself away, my neck spiking with pain at the sudden movement. Hobbling out of the bathroom, the sight of my own bedchamber now shocked me. It was such a... mess. A clutter of trash and pointless items. I averted my eyes and walked to the door. Standing in front of it, the full extent of what I intended washed over me. It was almost too much, but I steeled myself and grabbed the doorknob. It felt like ice and I grimaced as I turned and opened it.

Just as I was about to exit, I turned around to find the sight of my computer pulling me once again. It was strong, but it had no power over me anymore. Now it felt like an old friend that had been important to me in the past, but who I had long since outgrown. Besides, reality was beckoning, and I had chosen to answer.

I turned off the flickering lightbulb at the switch, plunging the room into total darkness as I shut the door and took my leave. ■

# BLACK HOLE

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Seamus O'Neill · Year 9 · Whitefriars College

I was there in the start; I was the start. Before everything came to be, when it was cold, dark, nothing. Within seconds, there were millions of us, forming, mixing, building. I am drifting through the void, alone. No noises, no smells, no one else. It's perfect, and it must stay this way. Just like last time, forever in peace, trillions of years of nothing. There were a few narrow escapes, never any interactions. I fear, however, that I will not be in peace for much longer.

In the distance, a giant, and I'm heading straight for it. And there is nothing to save me from it. This is what I've feared for billions of years. The giants pull me in, and there's no way to stop it, hardly a fair fight. They bend everything, including the boundaries of reality. They put us in immense amounts of pain, just for power and energy. And the majority of us just let it happen, becoming mindless blobs, cogs in the machine. But I can't let it happen, I need to find a way out.

Newton's first law, Inertia, states that I will stay heading towards the giant unless acted upon by another force. The only force around is the giant's. This can't be; I mustn't let this happen, I would rather not exist than to be put in the pain and agony of the looming giant. The pull is getting stronger and I'm getting faster.

After what feels like seconds, which is in reality multiple millennia, I am almost upon the giant. It's radiating heat keeps me from stopping, and the pain is building, yet still only a fraction of what it will be. I'm almost inside the burning giant. It's trying to rip me apart. If not for the forces holding me together, I would be scattered throughout space. I cannot escape now, the pull is too strong, everything I didn't want to happen, has. This is hell, cramped, hot, loud.

The giant is a machine, carelessly putting septillions of us in pain, for what? To make some energy and light. In giants like these, the pressure of gravity is implausible. It fuses us together, breaking one of the four fundamental forces. I must keep moving, avoiding others, and be strong. There's a reason the strong nuclear force is in place.

Abruptly, I feel a small tug that pulls me mere attometres. The pull is far stronger than the gravity of the red giant that I'm presently within. The source is spinning faster than anyone could comprehend. Turning mass into rotational velocity. It's the destroyer of worlds, stars, galaxies, shooting through the vacuum, sucking everything up, Turning giant thriving stellar systems into nothing. Light can't get in, or out, it gets bent and warped. I thought that it was another star, but it's clear to me now. It's even worse than the hell that I'm currently in. Light isn't the only thing warped, time and reality itself is distorted by these monsters. There's no escape from the black hole.

I'm left with a decision. Ultimate anguish from fusion in this star, or become non-existent in the black hole. I have only one option, survive. Therefore, I stop moving and let the pressure of gravity force me into another atom.

It's far worse than I imagined. I can feel the fusion happening. It's more painful than the Big Crunch. The strong nuclear force holding me together is being broken. I am forced into another atom and the pain is more excruciating, more agonising than anything. It continues for what feels like an eternity. My literal worst nightmare has occurred.

But I'm being shot out of the star now, away from the pull of the black hole. Free at last...

Or so I thought...

The pull is still there. Slowing me down, until I'm almost still. Then I feel myself shooting backwards, picking up enormous speed. I've not only encountered my worst nightmare but I'm almost about to die. I feel myself falling into the warped area around the black hole. I realise that I shouldn't have worried. Not worried about every single moment, they didn't all matter. Without imagining a nightmare in the first place, I couldn't have lived it in the end. My perfect idea eventually led to me living the worst reality. I should have lived fundamentally. ■

# WHAT MAKES A SIMPLE LIFE?

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Joshua Simon Adams · Year 8 · Whitefriars College

The old man sat alone in a creaky wooden chair. In a simple room with no flair. His grey, swept back hair showed his age, his old body, covered with wrinkles. It was a dull day, but a small pocket of light shone through the window. His lifeless eyes were closed and his breathing was shallow. The regular tick of a clock echoed through the room, but the old man did not hear it. His mind was elsewhere. He was in a battlefield, far, far far away.

*As the Sun rises in the East, as it sets in the West, the Allies advance, while Germany rests.*

*The turn of war had a fair share on them all, to the Germans and the Allies, to all, to all.*

*Life had changed no man worked. Farms became idle and the crops were burnt.*

*Schools had closed and cities were lame; businesses had died but the wounded still came.*

*Soon came a time when his portions was low, his food, his ammunition and the will not to go.*

*A time when time was everything. Everyone knew the Nazi's were coming.*

*Trenches were dug and rifles were cleaned, mines were planted and tanks rolled in.*

*Snipers took watch placed high above them all, the Generals continued to plan; plan this damned stupid war.*

*He sat and waited for the whistle to blow. The cue to attack, to run hard, to go.*

*A simple life was all that he dreamt; a family, a wife, a house with a pet.*

*A job, a car, a paper to read, a fire for warmth and a bed for sleep.*

*To smell the roses, to walk on grass, sun on his skin, a slight breeze from afar.*

*Living simply, simply living, trying to live, is he. The main idea is living simply so he can feel, grow and be.*

*Dying for your mates and your country so the opposition could meet defeat.*

*A soldier's life is a sacrifice, he offers a helping hand.*

*To give his side an advantage, for a small pocket of land.*

He was grateful to be alive. He had learnt a lot from the War. The town clock struck 12, to mark that it was now the afternoon. The old man opened his eyes and looked around his room. It was simple, it was pleasant, it was all that he needed. His life had been meaningful, but he had not been rich, or popular or even highly educated. His life was real and humble. He had the greatest gift of all. That he was able to share a life, his life with his loved ones after all.

It was Confucius who said:

“Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

What war is necessary? Couldn't there have been another way? Is it really about land, or ego? Do we die because one does not simply believe in not living a simple life? ■



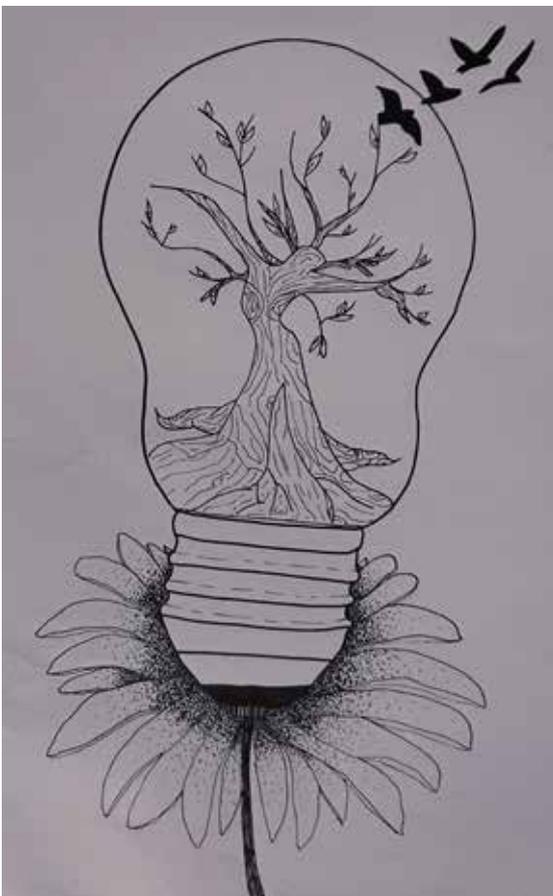
**Alliah Garcia**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

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*Chasing Rabbits*

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My painting is about science experiments on rabbits and that is why the rabbit is distorted. Now the observatory is abandoned and the rabbits have escaped. I don't think animals should be tested on; it's as simple as that.



**Veronica Kobbaji**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

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*Beauty from within*

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*Beauty from within* is to show that everything has its own special beauty and to take time in our busy lives to appreciate the simple things.



**Chloe Goddard**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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Have fun, live life the way you want to live, don't worry about what other people think or what you look like... because it's YOU!

# REVENGE IS A DISH BEST SERVED (WHEN IT'S COLD)

Lovepreet Kaur · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

The sun was setting when the crowd spilled out onto the streets, sweeping a girl along with it. Feeling happy for once in a long time, Delilah Sánchez had only taken a couple of steps, intending to finally head home, when the feeling of being followed again hit her, just as it had before she'd entered the cinema. Hackles rising, she turned and looked across the street. No one was there, but she swore there was a dark figure standing under the bright light of the nearby shops, just a moment ago. Lips pursing, she decided that she couldn't go home yet; if someone was following her, there was no way she'd lead them home.

Around the corner, a woman yanked a man into the narrow alleyway, hissing out a brief "Hide!" They stood in absolute silence, listening to the sound of their own frantic breathing, waiting for their target to move on. When she did, the woman let out a breath. "Mason, you moron."

"That was not my fault, Ximena!" The man, Mason apparently, defended himself.

"You jeopardized the mission! You could have been seen. A.J. would have your head", Ximena shook her head. "Mason, you and I both know this is important. If you had been seen, not only would the target be in danger, but also all of I.S.O!"

"You act like A.J.'s pet, Ximena. Boring!" Mason uttered vehemently. "Besides, I didn't even want to be here in the first place."

"You idiot! Do you not care?" Ximena sighed, frustrated. "This isn't just between A.J and us. We also owe it to Emilia." At the name, Mason tensed, anger curling his lip.

Ximena softened a little, sympathy flickering across her face. "I get that you don't want to be here. No one does. But we both know what will happen if Delilah isn't forewarned. Maybe keeping the truth isn't the best thing to do here, but we've got no other option."

"Well, we don't even know whether she'll believe us. All she knows is that Emilia died in a house fire! God, she's barely fifteen. You want to entrust this to a teenager, who can just as easily either break or spill the goddamn beans?" The younger man huffed, irritated.

The woman sighed again. "That's out of our hands. You know we can't decide when someone is going to pass the Initiation. We weren't of legal age when we joined I.S.O."

Mason gritted his teeth. "Fine. But you do the talking." Under his breath, he added, "Felix will not be happy."

Delilah was starting to get seriously worried.

It was nearing six, which meant she'd been walking around for more than four hours. She was out of money, more than five blocks away from the nearest park, alone, hungry and tired, and her dad would probably start to get worried by this point.

Plus, she was now sure that not just one, but two people were following her.

Joy. She'd had taekwondo classes before. She could attempt to defend herself, maybe pull up some of the moves that Coach Yen showed the class on the first day of lessons. However, in the back of her mind, she knew that she was alone and vulnerable in the dark. She could be grabbed right then and there, and unless the kidnapper was smaller and slower than she was, he or she would probably be able to restrain her without much effort. Behind her, someone cleared their throat.

Delilah turned, tense and stiff muscles protesting. She turned, body straight and rigid, ready to run if necessary. Two people – 'huh, so I was right' – were standing a little further away. Backing away, she considered her options.

She could scream and fight, if she had to.

If she screamed, someone would definitely hear her- there were houses all around her.

"Wait!" the taller of the duo cried out. 'Huh. One of them is a girl.'

"We're not here to hurt you. We want to talk. Specifically, about your mother," a male voice cut in.

Delilah froze, eyes narrowing.

"Who are you? How did you know my mama?" Her voice shook as she spoke. Inwardly, Delilah cursed. Yeah, great job, Sánchez, now they know how scared you are.

"My name is Mason, and she's Ximena. Your mother was a close friend of ours. We worked at the same company, so to speak."

"Why should I believe you?" Delilah questioned, glaring, hoping she seemed stronger than she felt. She wanted to believe them, she knew next to nothing about her mother. You'd think her father, at least would tell her, but NO.

“Because, as you should already know, clearly no one else will tell you about your mother. Even if we’re lying, still, we are the only people offering to tell you anything,” Ximena said softly. “So you can choose whether you wish to know.”

“Or are you too scared to?” Mason taunted.

“Why didn’t my dad tell me?” asked Delilah through gritted-teeth, ignoring the question asked by Mason. ‘Do I really want to know?’

“He deems you too young,” Mason explained.

“I’m not too young,” argued Delilah.

“We know that,” Ximena said.

“I’m so, so confused. I want to know, but I’m not sure if I’ll be happy to know more about her. I love her, I miss her, but-but I’ve never known her, what if she’s, a horrible person?” Delilah bit her lip. A sob was growing in her throat as she shoved it down, thinking of her long deceased mother. She’d always wished she could meet her mother, someday, but didn’t know what to expect.

“You’re wrong! Your momma was an amazing person, for your information,” Mason exclaimed.

“I agree with Mason on this one, surprisingly,” Ximena smirked, before she frowned. Delilah wondered what she thinking, but she didn’t have to ask as Ximena answered the question, anyway. “And it is devastating that”

“She died?” Delilah said bitterly. “Well, guess how ‘devastating’ it was for me.”

“She didn’t, um” Mason gulped.

“She didn’t what?” Delilah asked suspiciously. She had a hunch about what he was going to say, but she refused to believe it.

“Die.”

“What happened to her?!” It shouldn’t have surprised Delilah, she’d thought that was what he’d meant before, but the fury, pain and surprise found their way to her heart anyway.

“Well um” Mason gulped.

“What happened to her?”

“She was murdered,” Ximena cut in.

“I know it’s a lot to take in, but -”

“You think? It’s a lot to take in. I mean she was, murdered. Murdered. Who did it? Who was it that murdered my mom?! TELL ME! And why would Dad keep this secret from me? Why?! I want to know, now!

“Hey, look, she was our friend. We loved her, too, stop being so selfish.” Mason was enraged. How dare Delilah assume that Ximena and Mason and

her father didn’t care about her mother? She had no right to.

“Hey, hey, Mason, It’s okay, she’s overwhelmed. Give her space,” comforted Ximena

“WHO MURDERED MY MOTHER?!” Delilah screeched. Her patience was running out.

“Red Crow.” After a bit of reluctance, Ximena finally answered for Delilah, since Mason

kept quiet.

“Ximena! Why’d you tell her?” cried Mason.

“Well, excuse me, but my mom was murdered here and so it seems I have a right to know. I had one since the beginning, but you thought best to keep it from me, well, you shouldn’t’ve thought it was your choice.” Delilah was fuming, angrier than she’d ever been, and she certainly wasn’t hiding her fury. “What’s this ‘Red Crow’ anyway? A name? A company?” Her whole life had been average, meaningless before, boring, perhaps, but now... It changed completely. The simple life she’d led all this time, it was gone.

“Red Crow is an agency. A secret agency, to be precise. You see, your mother and I were secret agents! Of course, Mason joined later on, as he was still very young, but he fit with Emilia and myself easily. We were best of friends. Then one day, on a mission to infiltrate Red Crow’s secret base”

“I can guess what happened from there.” Delilah couldn’t stop her voice from being hoarse, nor could she stop it from cracking. She also couldn’t cease the tears falling profusely down her red cheeks. She tried to stop the whimper threatening to break out, but she couldn’t. Ximena kept her space, let Delilah have a moment, watching solemnly as sobs racked Delilah’s body. But Mason on the other hand.

“Come on, Delilah. It’s okay to cry, but right now, we don’t have much time, and crying isn’t going to help you or your father and will not bring your mother back, so get up and do something about it,” Mason persuaded, smiling strongly for both Delilah, and himself, knowing he could start bawling any moment, too.

“Mason is ri-,” Ximena was cut off by Delilah

“I know. And I know what I’ll do. I know what my problem is: Red Crow. But I know what my solution is, too,” Delilah declared menacingly. An invisible, yet infuriated, dark aura was sensed coming from her.

This was it. She could turn back now, her whole life would absolutely change, but is that what she really wanted? Did she want to turn back? No.

“Payback.” ■



**Sophie Lingaya**  
Year 10 · St. Peter's  
College

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*Immersed in Nature*

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To simply live, is to live immersed in nature. To live by nature means to simply, simply live.



**Sidney Senora**  
Year 11 · St. Peter's  
College

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*Misty Forest*

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This drawing depicts a mountain range and a misty forest. The scenery brings peace into our life, clearing our thoughts, relieving our stress, bringing a smile to our face.

# 18.12.17

Arushi Singh · Year 9 · St. Peters College

His voice holds the sound of a thousand  
angels.  
His face is the reincarnation of a god.  
And his personality, as pure as the heavens.

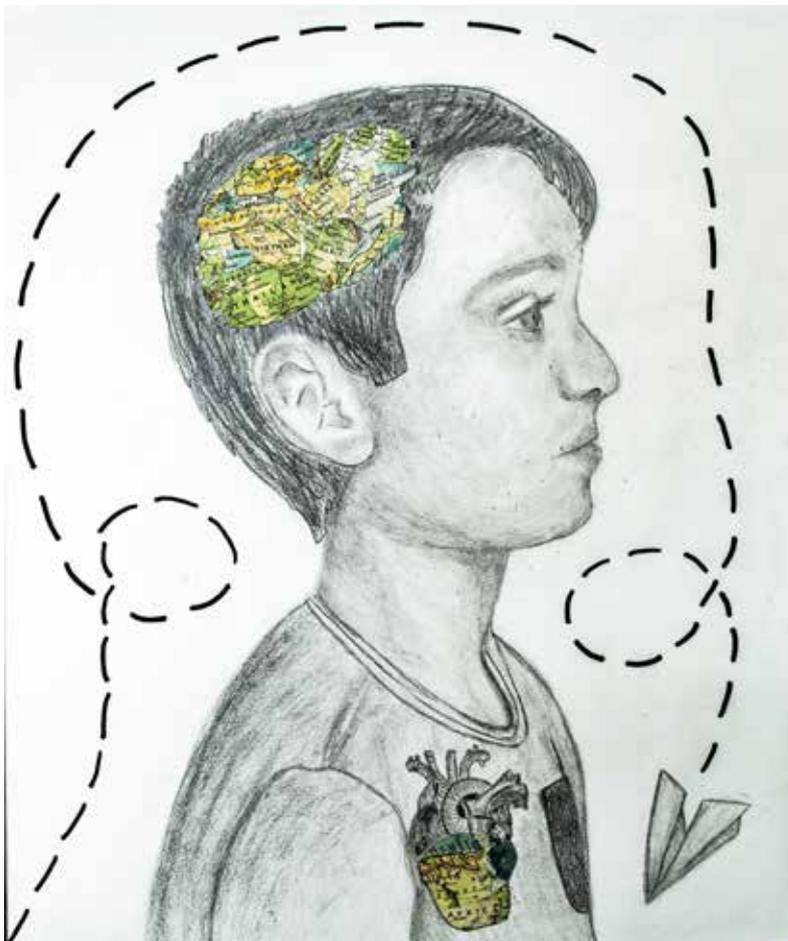
However, inside boiled a demon.  
A sadness so strong, his angelic self could not  
handle.  
A type of sadness that left him with sleepless  
nights and an empty heart.

He tried to reach out, he tried to get help,  
But his divine smile fooled everyone.  
He wrote songs as a message, as a cry for help,  
But his heavenly voice distracted the crowd.

I wish he had screamed a little louder,  
Just enough to catch the ears of someone,  
So that we could still see his Angelic self.

I long to hear him sing one more song.  
To dance one more time.  
To hear his laugh echo.  
To see his brothers put their arms around his  
shoulders and smile.  
To gaze at the glow of his face that puts the Sun's  
rays to shame.

But now I can only hope and pray,  
That he has now found his paradise.  
That he is free from his demons.  
And now feels nothing but bliss and fulfilment. ■



Lara Rabahi  
Year 10 · Star of the  
Sea College

# THE DONOR

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Kyarah Pumo · Year 8 · St Aloysius College

The storm outside was monstrous. Cassandra's mother, Susan, sat on her threadbare couch, attempting to pull her thoughts away from her daughter. She hadn't expected their last argument, or what her daughter had said, before sneaking out. *Am I a bad mother? I only want the best for her and she repays me like this?*

The telephone ringing made her jump, tentatively she answered it. Salty tears streamed down her face once again that night. Susan ran out to her car. Cassandra had fainted at a party and has been rushed to hospital. Later she was diagnosed with congenital heart disease. She wouldn't survive unless given an immediate transplant. Uncontrollable sobs racked her body as she continued to speed. Rain pelted down on the windscreen, combined with the blackness of the starless sky, making the outside world almost impossible to see.

*First my husband died, now my daughter has this disease? Why is my life so painful? It's bad enough she won't even look at me without hatred and now she's going to be taken from me forever. Cassandra blames me for everything, I hope she knows this isn't my fault. I love her so much.* All these thoughts rushed through her mind as she turned a corner. The resounding crash filled the air, blocking out the howls of wind. Soon the nightmarish wails of sirens were heard.

(Part Two)

I woke up fretting, until I remembered where I was, wishing it was all a dream; that I was healthy, normal. I wouldn't admit it, but I was scared and angry. This was mum's fault. She'd watched my father die from this disease and did nothing to protect me from it, now she didn't love me enough to show up? After all these fights my mum was still meant to be here for me – right?

My eyes filled with tears like last night and I kicked myself. I wasn't supposed to care, but I did. But this wasn't like her, to not show up, she always would – even for the smallest of things. Something was wrong.

A doctor charged in, talking so fast the words were a jumble. All I could make out were “found a new heart” and “surgery now”. Then several nurses came and wheeled my bed through the hospital wards. Everything felt sped up. Shining bright lights, masked alien-like faces staring down at me, needles going here, tubes sticking out there... I felt terrified. My last thought was of mum – how would she have felt, knowing my father's surgery had gone fatally wrong? Then my world was obscured with darkness...

The first feeling I registered was pain. Not intolerable pain, just a dull ache in my chest. I waited for someone to come, but that someone never came, and with every passing second, I felt worse, the ache turning into a pounding throb.

Finally, a knock at the door. I was ecstatic. After everything that had happened, I just wanted to start fresh and be happy. Instead of Mum, the doctor walked in “Kassandra, I'm so sorry, but you need to know, your mother was killed in a car accident and she was on the organ donors list so – ”.

My body heaved with huge sobs. Mum was dead. Gone. Forever. My last words were “I hate you” – I wished so badly I could take them back. I was so cruel, I'd never appreciated how much she'd sacrificed for me, I took her for granted. “I'm sorry!” I yelled, my lungs burning, hoping she would hear me. I wanted to cease to exist, but then I noticed the steady heartbeat of my mother's heart, beating on, inside me... ■

# LAMBS IN SLAUGHTER

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Bianca Umile · Year 7 · St Aloysius College

War soldiers were packed tightly on small ships as they sailed the sea, waves crashed against the boats knocking some overboard never to see the fight.

The water was stained with red, it was their own blood. Brave men who could know some never see their families again. There were Australians, New Zealanders, French and British soldiers but despite their background they all held something alike, they were young. They told stories to each other about their hometown or why they came.

Most came for the adventure, some to escape their troubled lives. After what seemed like hours the troops landed on Gallipoli. They were not meant to land there the commander was yelling angrily, they were stuck there for hours. Suddenly the echo of a gunshot was heard and bullets began to hit the soldiers. They were the first casualties, they went down one by one as they tried to run inland.

Their uniforms were soaked from the water and they hardly knew of the terrain. It was no use. Waves after waves of soldiers came and kept

running on past soldiers trying to get the Turks firing them, this went on for hours. They did not get an easy death and many called out for their mother before breathing their last breath. They wanted to go home. Many regretted their decisions of going out for war

It was nightfall and both sides were tired. Morning came and more soldiers arrived on even more tight boats, they were shot immediately and many never got to see some of their limbs again, their uniforms looked unrecognizable and many friends saw each other's downfall.

Back at their homes families wept not knowing if their loved one was dead or not, many were too afraid to open the telegrams informing them of a death or someone lost in action. Mothers and fathers cried about losing their sons. They wished for a simple life. They just wanted their sons to LIVE.

Death did not care though, he took any soldier. Innocent or not, they would fall and their blood will wet the earth as memories. ■

# A REPEAT OF LAST YEAR

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Eimear O'Gara · Year 7 · St Aloysius College

I felt nauseous. I told myself, "It can't be a repeat of last year".

That was last year right before I failed. I failed in front of everyone.

Apparently it "wasn't noticeable", but I know it was – people only say that to make people feel better. It's sad but true.

It takes one mistake. One mistake to ruin my confidence. One mistake to ruin everything.

It just can't be a repeat of last year. In other words, it has to be perfect. ■

# WATER RISING

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Lucy Corcoran · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Can you feel it? The unmistakable sensation.  
The faintest whisper of a wave.  
All across the planet, the water tickles our toes.  
The distant signal of the tide.  
The faintest warning of the rise.

Why?  
Why do we ignore this sensation? Not even a hint  
of trepidation.  
What more do we have to learn to show even a  
hint of concern?  
Our world, a flourishing glorious sanctuary of life  
is decaying.  
The path of life is steeped in human footprints.  
Carbon footprints,  
so much that the direction of the path is now  
unclear.

Global warming is now not a theory forming but  
a reality proceeding.  
It has become now not a matter of 'if' but now of  
'when'.  
America's shrinking, Cape Town isn't drinking  
And if we fail to act or face this fact, the ice caps  
will completely detract  
and before we blink the faintest whisper of the  
rise.  
Is now an audible murmur.

Risen to our ankles, the water sends a chill up our  
legs, makes our nerves stand on end.  
And what was once a minor theory is becoming a  
major threat.  
Tree roots start shaking in fear as pollution  
celebrates in our atmosphere  
The ocean's cries for help are drowned as the  
plastic sings loudly underground.

And we don't hear a thing.

Because it's inconvenient to stop and find a bin.  
Too scary to swim where there could be a fin.  
It's so sad the polar bears are dying, but turning  
off the lights takes too much trying.

Because what's a long life when you can have a  
long shower?  
What's seeing an elephant in the wild when Oreos  
taste so good?  
What's 10,000 acres of forest when a new  
shopping centre is opening?

But I am dying. You are dying. The world is  
dying  
And still we think someone else should be trying  
To help.

To help that there is more plastic in the ocean  
than fish, and still wealth and fame is our  
greatest wish.  
To help that even with more money than could  
ever be necessary,  
we dig up coal and oil without even seeming  
wary.  
To help that more animals than ever are on the  
critically endangered list,  
But it doesn't take an astrophysicist to know and  
realise that we are not doing enough to help.

One million dollars to protect our reef, yay!  
Then a billion more to build a coal mine in the  
very same day.  
The latter is subdued by the media because  
it doesn't fit the Government's criteria and  
the public are way too eager to accept their  
excuses that are implausibly meagre.

But then this monster of ignorance takes a fatal  
blow when the water is suddenly at our knees.  
What used to be a vague murmur is now a  
conspicuous rumble.

The drooping flowers becoming harder to  
ignore.  
But still ... global warming goes unsaid. In one  
ear and out the other.  
A controversial conversation.  
Easier to plant new flowers than feed the ones  
dying.

Because we have evolved into a species where  
caring about human survival is social suicide.  
Where a high school student who cares about  
reducing waste is cast aside in a similar  
manner.

Where using a reusable coffee cup makes you  
high maintenance.  
Saving the turtles is trendy but what about the  
sawfish?

What about the humming birds and sea  
cucumbers almost extinct?  
Popularity conquers population.

Because we all know, if it isn't in the Top Charts  
it's undeserving of attention.

And before we have a chance to adjust to the water at our knees, the hours pass by in a technological, unbiological blur and the water is at our hips.

The conspicuous rumble is now an unmistakable pounding.

Homo sapien means wise man but even ants know how to sense danger.

Because for 80 years we have been confronted with books – no, libraries – filled with warnings.

Facts upon facts about our imminent death.

Solutions upon solutions on how to prevent it.

But still, we shut our eyes.

Don't listen.

Block our ears.

Won't listen.

Close our mouths.

Didn't listen.

Because the water has now risen to our chins.

Salt kisses our tongues as the water begins to seep between the joining of our lips.

Politicians try to soak up the water with pieces of paper money

but this water, unlike politicians, is not shallow.

And because we chose to ignore it at our toes, ankles, knees, hips and chins,

all animals in children's books are gone.

Zoos are empty cages filled with regret and children once in awe of a tiger's roar,

Are now unsure what exactly aquariums were for.

The world once 70% water is now 90% water 10% plastic.

There are four continents.

In summer now we stay inside and winter is a pleasant temperature.

Politicians' porcelain masks have melted in the heat and

Then even they can't hide their fear as the water is above our noses.

Water fills our lungs. Closes our airways as our mind finally opens and we realise what we have done. Why?

The world is encased in nature's last resort to saving itself. Why?

The world is suddenly quiet. Why?

A last breath and dying thought as we finally ask – why didn't I do more? ■

# SPARE BATTERIES

Elise Ho · Year 9 · St Aloysius College

“All I’m asking for is some courage, Minh. You’ll get a chocolate.”

Trí swings his net of chocolates in my face mockingly, like a pendulum trying to hypnotise me into another of his minions.

“Do it yourself!” I scowl. “You’re scared of getting caught!”

1982. We came to Australia by boat.

On our fourth day at the camp, the camp leaders gave all the kids our first Australian chocolate, in the form of little nets filled with coins. I popped a whole coin in my mouth. The chocolate was sweet, heavenly... beautiful. I took another coin, then another, reliving the glorious feeling. Too soon were ugly balls of foil scattered across my lap, the remains of the God-sent treat. I wasn’t alone. Everyone had emptied their nets by the next day. All, but Trí.

Only Trí was left with a perfectly full net of chocolates. He has been gaining power since, just like the Vietnamese government.

“Do it with me, Minh,” Hoa pleads. She’s a year older than me but has fallen under Trí’s spell.

I glance at the coins swinging in the ripened sunlight, already tasting the chocolate in my mouth.

“Fine!” I scowl regrettably.

Trí stuffs a plastic bag into each of our hands. “One coin for every nine batteries. I want my remote car working again.” He nudges us towards the hole under the fence.

Hoa gets down on her stomach and wriggles underneath. She vanishes like worms tossed on dank earth. Sprawling ivy expands across the fence. We can’t see Hoa from the other side.

There are always consequences for going against the rules. It’s not the camp leaders we’re afraid of, it’s our parents. How many beatings would we get for this?

Hoa’s hand reappears from the hole, intending to find me.

“Come and see what Australia looks like.”

I glare at Trí with bullets.

He only smirks.

I snake my way through the fence. At the other side, my elbows are met with cold concrete, and Hoa takes my hands, helping me up. When I look up, I think ‘clean’.

These buildings stand proudly with ‘clean’. ‘Clean’ gleams in the shine of the cars that buzz by. I see ‘clean’ in these dotted roads.

Hoa guides me to a shopping strip. Australians tower over us but only for moment, as they quickly pass by. The small shops, with their signs and windows are big fish with mouths agape, sitting side by side, trying to invite smaller fish inside.

Hoa takes me to the backs of these buildings, where trash bins are plenty. Here, it reminds me of the dusty streets of Vietnam, and here is where we find stupid Trí’s batteries.

In my frustration, every battery found is swiftly snatched by Hoa. Her bag fills quickly, while mine remains wrinkled up in my fist.

“You’re hogging!” I finally snap at her. “Give me some if we’re doing this together!”

She squints up to me, squatting in front of a bin. “Who said together?” She rolls her eyes.

My anger steaming inside my cheeks, I march down the alley and back onto the street.

I’ll get out of this camp soon. I’ll build a humongous factory that will produce all of the chocolate in the world. Hoa and Trí will be at the doorsteps of my extravagant mansion, weeping at my golden slippers.

I lean against the shop to my right. My anger slowly sizzles away. We have chosen these clean streets and buildings over Vietnam, but, did I really belong here?

An elderly couple walk towards the door of the shop. I drop my head to my scrubby runners. I can hear them muttering English to each other. The wife sounds irritated.

I look up at the moment she slaps her husband’s hand away. She scoffs as she steps into the shop.

The elderly man resorts to the window of the shop, just a few steps beside me. That’s when he notices me staring at him.

I dart my gaze away immediately, but I hear an unexpected sound. It’s a soft, humble sound that comes from the man. It’s a chuckle.

I return my gaze back. The wrinkles on his face crease further together as he smiles. It’s a smile that reminds me of a place that once felt distant, but I am now safely in its grasp.

It makes me all giggly inside, I smile back.

He gestures towards the shop with his thumb, giving an exaggerated sigh. It's his wife.

I hold my hand up as a talking mouth. Your wife talks too much? I make my talking hand ramble like how Mother does, when she isn't impressed with Father sneaking cigarettes.

The man laughs.

A bell tinkles behind us. The man's wife steps outside with paper bags cradled in her arms.

The man sees her and digs in the pockets of his trousers. He turns back to me and holds his hand out.

I shake it without hesitation.

He presses something into my palm, then lets go and rushes back to aid his wife with the groceries. The couple fade into the sea of fishes. Just like that. Gone.

I look down at the specimen in my hand. The

plastic wrapper glares back at me. The lolly it wraps around glows green.

A hand clamps around my shoulder. "Time to go." It's Hoa's voice.

I move the lolly back and forth in between my fingers. The captured light seesaws with it.

Hoa shakes my shoulder, until peering over to see what I have.

"No one likes the green ones," she remarks. "Give it to my uncle. He might give you a minty. Minties taste better."

As we walk down the street, I place the lolly on my tongue. I taste it, I forget the small weight swinging in Hoa's bag. I taste the sweetness, it reminds me of a place that once felt distant, but I am now safely in its grasp.

I taste the lolly.

I think, 'home'. ■

## WORK. EAT. SLEEP

Meera Melville · Year 7 · St Aloysius College

My eyes scroll along the page the words are all a blur while working hours through the night I saw a dart of ginger fur

Out the window I dared to peer a cat, was working there

Though he did work, true, he did it without a care He caught a mouse let it go then caught I once again With me my work so dull and dry, just paper and pen Him, he played all night and day his worked eternal fun

But when I even thought of work it made me want to run

I thought about him through the day and deep into the night

I saw him again at breakfast and he gave me such a fright

As I slaved over the flame to make a meal for five He found his food in the garden yet, could still thrive

I saw him only one more time at a late, late hour Curled up fast asleep among what was many a flower

I saw him out the window, from my bed as I struggled to sleep

Thinking about a promise I had failed to keep My mother said to live your life and love the life you live

But as I cried I watched him, with not a care to give

He did not think about money or looks or orders Only love and fun and joy and more, his life had no borders

My life was hard, sad, grey and full of many worries

For what O thought power? Fame? That was not what I wanted

Right now all I craved to do was sleep among the flowers ■

# A SIMPLE TIME

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Jomar Inot · Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

We carry the basket  
up the green hill.  
I unroll the tartan blanket  
and lay it over the blades of grass.  
We sit,  
my hands on hers,  
soft and slender.  
The fresh breath of wind  
blows her silky auburn hair  
like a wave,  
exposing the fine freckled features of her face,  
and glittering emerald earrings.  
I reach into the straw-woven basket  
and pull out  
a bottle of Coopers  
which I'd been saving  
just for today.  
Just for her.  
Her face lights up  
for a moment.  
However,  
her smile

does not last.  
She looks down  
and rubs her inflated belly.  
She puts the Coopers aside,  
grabs my stubby hand  
and holds it  
against her floral dress.  
I feel him kick  
from the inside  
and it fills me  
with the greatest joy;  
the purest joy;  
the truest joy;  
I've felt in years.  
And I get the warm  
fuzzy feeling,  
as the sun shines,  
and the bees hum,  
and the birds chirp their melodies,  
that our son,  
our family,  
will be inseparable. ■



**Caitlin Holsken**  
Year 7 · Star of the Sea College



**Luca Mezzavilla**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*Pop Art painting. Acrylic on canvas*



**Evan Sullivan**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Urban world', Collagraph on Hanemule*



**Garnar Choken**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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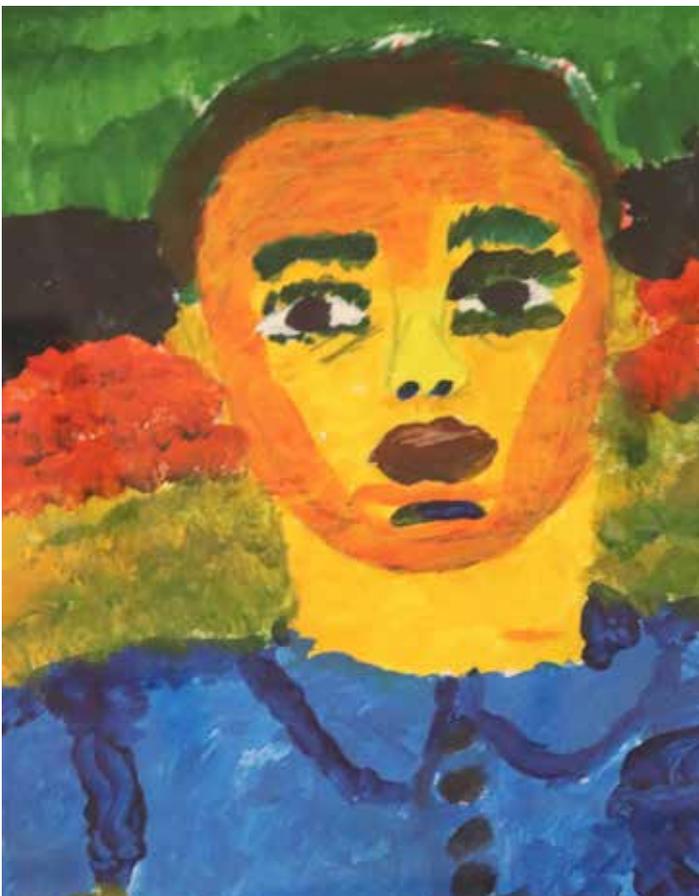
*'Frankenstein monster', Mixed media*



**Godwin Matira**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Collaged Reality', Mixed media*



**Yared Eshete**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Impressionist Self-portrait', Acrylic on canvas*



**Alex Trinh**  
Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Art for Endangered Awareness', Mixed media sculpture*



**Minh Vo**  
Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Mortality and Nature', Graphite on cartridge*



**Anthony Nguyen**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Archimboldo Portrait', Watercolour and ink  
on paper*



**Matteo Encena**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Simple Life for Trump', Acrylic on canvas*





Tiffany Ng  
Year 9 · Siena College

*Day 1: Life is about trial and error,*

*Day 2: It's about living in the moment,*

*Day 3: Spending time with family and friends,*

*Day 4: And finding magic in the little things.*

*Day 5: Slow down and take it in. Live simply and simply live.*

# 'A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT'

Antoinette Collins · Year 12 · Siena College

Higgins the committee member – the workman – the grieving father – sat silently by the window through which the delicious, golden streams of sunset seeped. The grand factories of Milton, a manufacturing town in England's far north, began to shrink in majesty of the mellow, orange glow, as if they bowed to a force greater than that of industry. Higgins' tired eyes wearily followed the hustle and bustle of life on the sad, grey pavement below – a life in which men, women and children alike hurried past one another, with eyes downcast to work and from work, to work and from work, to work then to the grave, with eyes never raising to see anything more. Was this life? Did this existence pave the way to death? What did their masters care for life or death? No, they cared only for wealth. And yet, what was profit or the damned rate of trade when all men live and stand on the same ground, which all wretches return to? God does not discriminate. Curse the masters and the machines that killed his daughter!

The desire for drink came so sharply and acutely, it was as if a hot iron had been plunged into his left temple. Once inebriated, he would have cast the invitation into the dwindling fire without a second thought, muttering a contrived thanks for the additional fuel. Yes, Higgins, the union member, drunkard and fighter, would have destroyed what came from the hand of a master – an invitation to his wedding – vehemently condemning it as a symbol of their privilege. Yet Higgins the father – the protector – remembering the promise he made to his late daughter of sobriety, to see the envelope in a different light. Could this be a chance for change? Yes. Change lingered softly in the air; it circled the black skylines and intertwined itself in the familiar smog and clouds of oppression until it was hardly noticeable.

*Masters eating – talking – sharing meals with men.* Higgins' iron clasp softened slightly as he recalled the recent signs of humanity from Master Thornton. Unlike other masters, he had sought Higgins' advice on workers – his thoughts, his concerns – it was as if the master was simply a man who had finally begun to see men for men – for their minds and not just for their hands. Higgins had initially believed Master Thornton to be just like his greedy counterparts, but he had been wrong. He had seen much change in his life; he had known what it was to fight, to lose and to feel pain – but how much change was yet to come?

The sharp pang persisted still; the throbbing pounded against his temple in a stubborn demand for drink. How could he be expected to celebrate a marriage while his daughter lay in a cold box beneath the ground? What was joy if Bessy would never partake in it? With what right did others live when Bessy could

not? His entire life he had fought, and every breath, every step, every action taken had been in pursuit of change, so that masters would see workers as men alike, and not just hands. He did not do this for himself – Higgins knew well the hand dealt to him and the inevitability of his fate; working unto death – No, he had fought for a brighter future, for those who deserved more. His heart, the depths of which felt as black as the cold night that enveloped the modest room, mourned for Bessy. It was for the poor wench that he had fought, yet now she would never see the change he had intended for her.

For what did he now fight? There was, of course, the Union – but he was so weary of the violence. The riots and protests of union men had shaken Milton and racked his very bones. Again, his drooping eyes glanced to where the invitation lay, still in his hand. Too dark now to read the paper, he could recall the words, *'Please join the joyous union of Miss Margaret Hale and Mr. John Thornton'*. Higgins curled his lips into a thin smile. Indeed, there were many different applications of the same word. The Union had caused division in the town, exacerbated by the violent tendencies of exploited men. Intended to unite for change, it had cost Higgins the life of his daughter. But this wedding, this union, would produce new life. Master Thornton was to marry a woman the South; a southerner and northerner united in England? Now this was change in itself! Could the two opposing sides truly reconcile?

Fondly, his mind wandered to his memories and recollections of the southern Miss Hale, who was now to marry the Master, but was before this Bessy's dearest friend. He would never have imagined that the visiting foreigner could bring his daughter such comfort; a comfort he longed for her to have. Margaret Hale was woman of the country, with no expertise in Milton life; a woman who'd never before felt the vicious pangs of sickness and hunger that claimed so many of those whom he loved. And yet, she had shown that perhaps the northerners and southerners were not so different that they could not love one another. Were men really so different? All had basic needs – food to fill their stomachs – water to quench their thirst – the same God to worship. Higgins reconsidered the latter. No, that was where men differed. Upstanding men feared God the Creator – the Salvation – the Final Judge, while masters worshipped the money upon which their cold, earthly empires stood. But fetters of gold are still fetters, Higgins knew, all would answer to their Final Judgement.

He feared not for Bessy's salvation, as Margaret – the woman of faith – had shown him hope for his daughter. The justice of God was not fire and brimstone – no –

that was Milton. Guilt overcame Higgins in a wave so tremendous it was as if he was drowning in his own sense of failure. What right had he to attend the wedding of a woman who had provided his daughter with the hope he never could? How could he – a father who had failed his paternal duty – dare to show his cowardly face? May the God who he had rejected his entire existence have mercy on the weakness of his soul. Slowly, gently, as if fearing to disturb the stillness of the frost-filled night, Higgins allowed his weary head to drop towards his chest in a surrender to the weariness of it all. He submitted to an internal call more indomitable than his own will and continued to slide gently – gently still, until his brittle knees found the hard floor. How many years had passed since he was last on his knees in prayer, alone?

In his sanctified silence, Higgins nearly missed the gentle break of the pale, morning sun through his window. Had he seen through the night? His hands traced the sign of the cross as the light noiselessly filled the room. Upon the table still lay the invitation, as if calling for his final decision. Normally, the rising of the sun would have revealed an empty bottle within his hardened hands, but with sober eyes, he read once more:

*“Mr. Nicholas Higgins,*

*As a friend of great importance, we would be most honoured to host you as a distinguished guest at the joyous union of Miss Margaret Hale and Mr. John Thornton. You are cordially invited...”*

And so on. Though Higgins’ eyes moved to follow the remainder of the words, his mind moved not from

one: ‘friend’. Despite their many differences – north, south – masters, men – Higgins could see that he was regarded as a man of equal status in both of their eyes; an honour he would never have envisaged in all his life.

There was a sudden start from the other side of the door – a sound of movement, activity, excitement and life. Through the door came Mary, his second daughter; her young eyes eagerly searching her father’s face, whilst she clasped the smaller, delicate hand of her youngest child. An uncommon warmth emerged from within Higgins – spreading throughout his whole being until he was laughing. He had forgotten what it was to laugh. Looking at his daughter he knew there was indeed, a reason to work – to live – to fight. This lass deserved a better life, and for that he would work. For her.

The ever-rising sun brought to the room a brilliant display of reflections – casting light onto all directions. Yes, Higgins would accept the invitation, for the sake of his daughters – Bessy and Mary, for Miss Hale – his teacher, and Mr. Thornton – his new friend. Gaze cast towards the rising sun, he implored that if this God – this Beacon of Peace – this Lord of Justice – this Heavenly Father, did exist as Miss Hale had contended, that He might bestow every blessing on the marriage. For change, he mused, was in every way inevitable. But even in this Industrial Age of steel and smoke, perhaps the fickleness of the heart could find respite in the precious, often fleeting glimpses of true humanity. With hands that had defined him as a man, that had laboured for the sake of others, and that bore the pain of loss, Nicholas Higgins wiped a tear of joy from his hardened face and vowed to simply live. ■

# NEXT STOP, NEW YORK!

Aurelia Tjitji · Year 8 · Siena College

Sitting with a fresh cappuccino, I looked at my watch. Time is precious and the events will take place any minute now. “I’ll have a flat white please.” I turned my head slowly and saw what I came for. A man was at the front of the line, ordering his favourite brew. Swiftly, I headed in his direction. “You ready?” I asked without hesitation. “Cause I sure am!” He turned around, staring at me with those big blue eyes and one eyebrow raised. “Course, but I’m not leaving until I get my coffee.” I waited patiently outside; I knew that if he didn’t hurry soon then I would have to drag him out of the café. Eventually he was out and we were running like we were 16 again. “You took your sweet time, didn’t you?”

“Hey, when was the last time I actually had a decent coffee? And plus, we have heaps of time.”

*Time*, there’s that word again. And even though I’m having the time of my life, you know, *living it up*, I still feel guilty for turning my back against my family. This is not the life they so *carefully* planned for me. I looked around anxiously, and realised that Aaron was looking at me intensely.

“You’re thinking about your family again, aren’t you.” I looked at him in surprise. It’s annoying how everyone can tell how I’m feeling; it’s always written across my face.

“Maybe.”

“Everest Dawn, we’ve been over this before. You chose this life, this is what you wanted and your family was just holding you back. Even though they never believed in you, just remember I do. So let’s face this together.” He was being serious. Aaron was **never** serious. This was the moment I finally let all my guilt, regrets and promises fade away. I never looked back.

A squad of police cars flew past us and we slyly took refuge in the next alleyway. At the end of the lane, in the darkness, was parked a little green mini. The driver jumped out of the car and bolted towards us.

“I’m sure you guys had a great chat,” said an all too familiar booming voice. “Now hurry! We need to get moving!”

Jack went peered out first, and we followed him as he headed past the busy shops. Finally we reached a three-way fork in the road. “Aaaaaannnd, split! Good luck and don’t get lost!” Jack shouted as we all took a different path.

The wail of sirens began to sound behind me. The majority of the police were on my tail; time for some fun! I quickly ran down the narrowest of paths and jumped over obstacles in my path like a hurdle marathon. The police abandoned their vehicles to pursue on foot and were falling behind, but I was still gaining speed. I met Aaron and Jack at a road on the outskirts of town, where the red mustang was waiting for us.

“Just in time again, Everest. Who’s taking their sweet time now?” mocked Aaron.

“Next time you take the longer route.” I laughed.

“Now is not the best time to fight about “the bigger man” you two!” called Jack, “Get your lazy butts into the car and let’s get out of here!” He grinned out of the driver’s seat brandishing a sack full of gold and a shotgun.

Aaron and I jumped in and we sped towards the sunset, whooping with joy.

“We are set for the rest of our lives! I promise you guys, from now on, everything will be *simple*. No running from the law, just us against the rest of the world. Next stop, New York!”

For the rest of my life, I followed by my own rules, and my own motto:

Remember to *simply live*, even if it means breaking a few rules along the way, and find YOUR happiness. ■

# NOT MY REFLECTION - SIMPLY LIVE

---

Juliet Bond · Year 8 · Siena College

It was then, standing there, my fingers clenched, my feet numb, submerged within the deep mud which surrounded the dilapidated structure of the once loved Grimsby Homestead on the vast planes of Great Britain. I had known for some time that this day was to come, never the less the horrors that consumed my thoughts and haunted my dreams were just as repulsive as before.

As I ventured forward into the night an eerie silence with a tinge of suspicion lingered in the air. I pulled a note from my pocket. It reminded me of who I had come to see, what I had come to find and what I had come to do; to face the darkness that forever lay within me, controlling me, haunting my every move. My pasty white fingers reached for the great wooden doors before me. My hand trembled in terror as the door moaned open echoing through the strong timber frames that supported this great mystery. My urge to explore led me only to imagine what horrors I was to encounter. I paced briskly, yet cautiously, along the faded, newly waxed boarding.

“Newly waxed?” I quizzed audibly. Was someone expecting me? Was I not alone?

I was quickly distracted by the lure of the grand staircase that loomed before me. My stomach churned as my thoughts filled my mind with questions and yet I couldn’t help but to ascend the staircase to find room after room consumed with treasures and old family monuments from countless generations. Intrigued as I was, what came next is what was to change my young soul forever. A chilling draft caught my breath, I backed myself into the wall, wishing these gruesome horrors away.

Unsure of my surroundings I wrapped my clammy hands around the cold brick wall, but to my great displeasure I came face to face with a thick cold

substance... a written warning... in blood. “Leave, run, no time,” the words seared me to the bone. This was no joke. I knew I had to find a way out. The light was so dim, the air ice cold. How did I end up here? Locked doors and dark passageways. “But no windows?” I muttered under my breath. My head spinning, my legs shaking, I had to escape and put an end to this madness, an end to this “darkness” that I was said to possess. My breathing became heavy. Each breath was like a reminder of my mistake, my misjudgement, my greed. Before long I began to hear a disturbing noise, violent clashes and callings, evil callings. I moved toward the callings, unwillingly, my feet heavy, like bricks, restraining my movement. The callings grew louder and louder. Callings of pain and distress. I was running now, my feet pounding against the ground. And as I pushed through the heavy door all noise was silenced. I fell to my knees, begging to wake from this treacherous nightmare.

My misery was soon interrupted by a disturbing thump that rippled through the dark room. Slowly, ever so slowly, a tall figure stepped out from the shadows, her hair a deep magenta, stained red with blood. Her skin was rough and dirty, her clothes torn and wrecked, her eyes... her eyes... ocean blue, with a dimple on the left... like mine! “It’s ok” she called. “It’s only, me!” My throat parched, my eyes opened wide in disbelief. “It can’t be.” I manage to stutter. “Oh, but it is, surely I needn’t introduce myself, Caddy!” She chuckled. “How do you know my name?” I gasped. “What do you mean, I am YOU!” She spat.

I let out a cry of anger and pain before my legs carried me through the door and down the stairs. It was in this moment that I was sure I was crazy, that I was mad. Perhaps there is a darkness within me, I’m just not ready to let it out. ■



**Caitlyn Abbriano**

*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*The Best Version*

---

A girl sits on a deck facing the night sky. She ponders looking up at the stars to help her keep perspective on the important and sometimes overwhelming times. When she looks at the stars she is transported and realises the simple things in life that helps her make the best possible version of herself.



**Isabella Zurzolo**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Behind Her Facade*

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Sometimes, what is seen by the naked eye is not really the truth. Beyond a mirror, an appearance can change, it only takes a second glance.



**Kira Farrugia**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*A Commentary Eulogy*

---

Though her body is strong, her thoughts are far more powerful... Often too powerful.  
Immaculate manifestation evolved into psyche dictation. She drowns in a tangle of ideas, notions  
which flood her entity. Until she is just a ripple inside a sea of expired dreams.

You see,

To *live simply* is inspiring but to *simply live* is tiring.

Her body cannot contend with her mind,

It does not suffice with her cognitive wiring.



**Mia Dicosmo**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Simply Live*

---

The way others live in simplicity and peace out in nature, surrounded by its beauty.

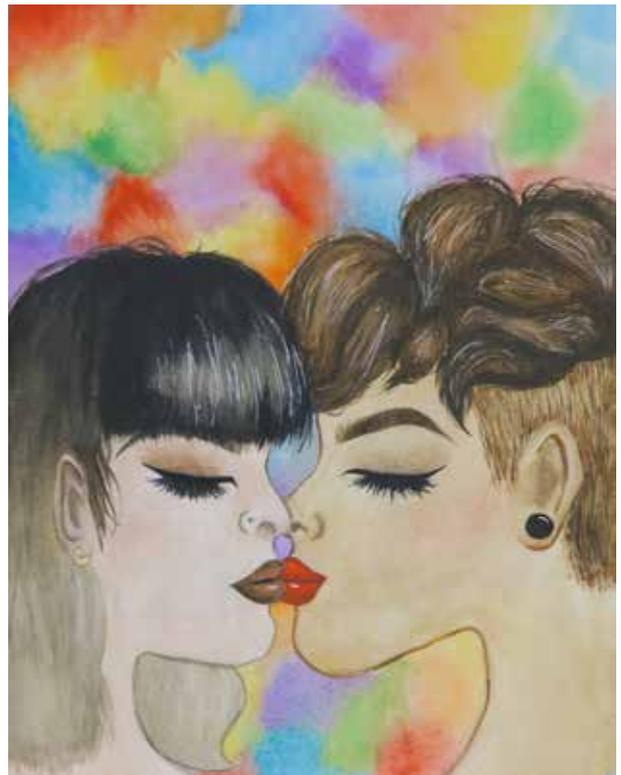
**Lauren Leppik**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

---

*Love*

---

Love. It's the most simple thing we all crave. If you dial back everything, the complexities and pain, love is at the heart of everything we do. So why hide from love? Why shut ourselves away from the most natural and simple thing our world has to offer? To simply live is to simply love without abandon.



# A BLANK CANVAS

---

Naomi Zammit · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Started with a blank canvas,  
Plain, oh so plain,  
A blank canvas.

Did not know how to start life.  
So god helped me,  
He made a start for me and I continued what he  
had started,  
He is still here,  
Helping me.

He led me to where I am now,  
The rough waters have been working against that  
boat,  
The one I am in,  
I need someone to save the boat.

Help me,  
Oh, please help me,

I call out into the wild ocean,  
I am praying.

Help me oh my Lord,  
Jump aboard a voice said.  
I heard a rumbling in the sky.

The rumblings turned calm,  
Heavenly noises,  
Turns out he was helping me all along.

Started with just a blank canvas,  
Facing the world on my own,  
A plain canvas then,  
Now a colourful canvas.

And all I started with,  
Was just a blank canvas. ■

# TRAPPED

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Sahra Marchese · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

My heart was pounding really fast  
My head was all a mess  
Feel like I'm trapped in a bubble  
All dark and motionless

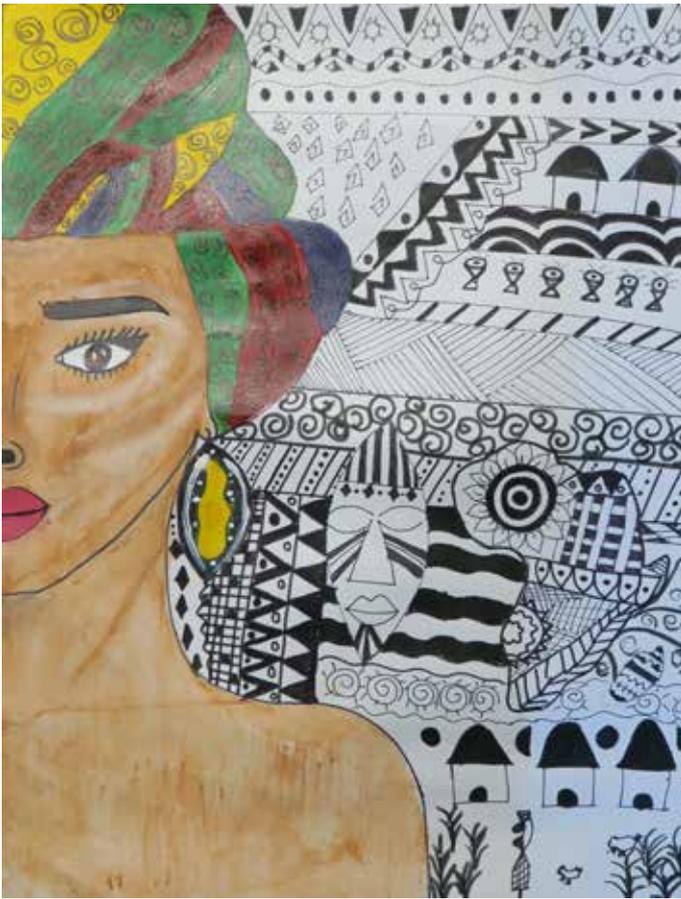
Girls decided to ignore me  
Like I had disappeared  
All of them went on without me  
I was lost and feeling weird

All of their toxic-shocking laughs  
Their actions were depraved

It was time that I did something  
It was time to be brave

I had to escape the bubble  
I needed to break free  
My choice to move away from them  
Gave me the chance to be

My old friends who surrounded me  
Were honest and sincere  
I knew that I was finally  
In a place that I did not fear ■



**Arsha Jayan**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

*Life is too short, think about it...*

We have 7.5 billion people on this earth. Some are fortunate as they have all of the facilities and luxuries available, but did you know that the majority of people are not as fortunate.

Is it too much to ask that you live without your luxuries so that others may receive necessities?

If I told you that living a simple life would lead you to save thousands, no millions, of lives would you do?

**I would.**

Like Mahatma Gandhi said, "Live Simply So That Others May Simply Live."



**Katrina Caliguiran**

*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

*You Don't Need Everything To Be Happy*

Sometimes we get caught up in thinking about all the things that we need to live. In reality these things clutter our lives and stop off from doing what we really need to do and that is to simply live by living simply.



**Isabella Iaccino**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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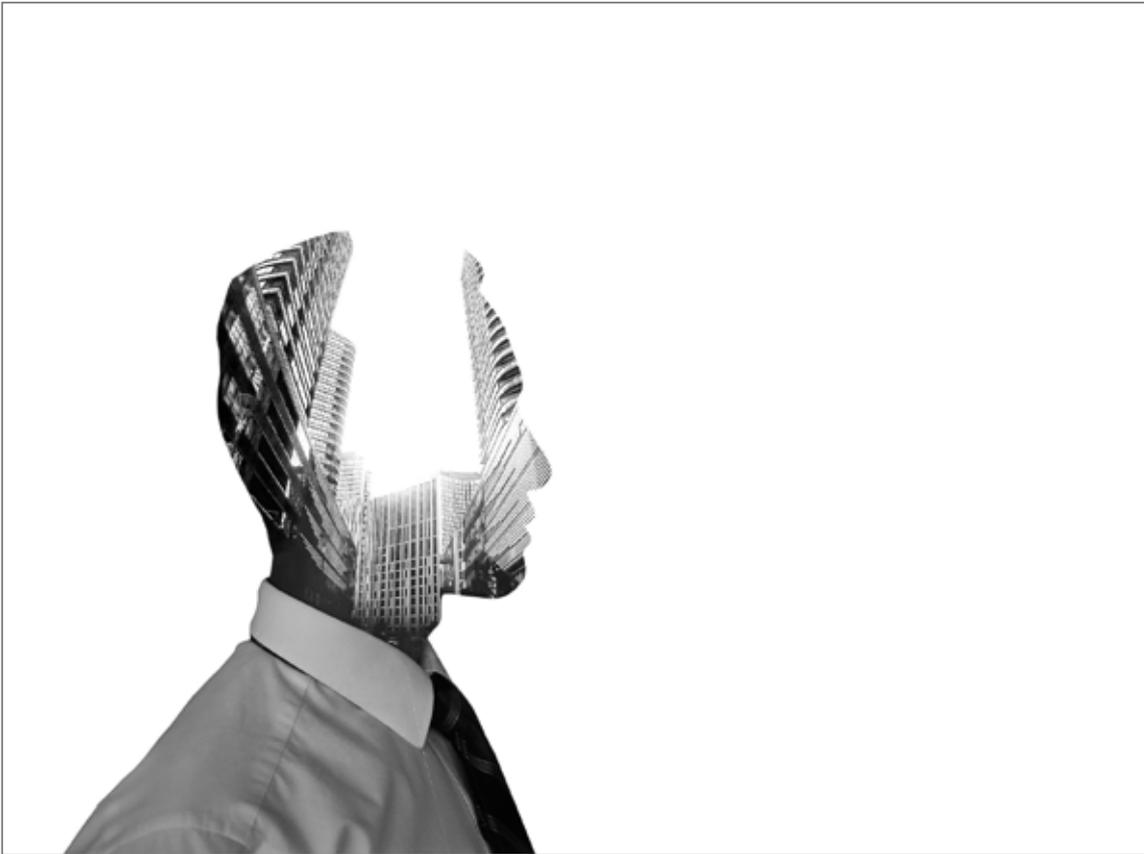
*Confidence*

---

With confidence and an assurance of its place in the world, the tiger moves with beauty and grace. It exudes a sense of power with its steely stare and a swipe of the paw. It is truly mesmerising to sit and watch the tiger in its uncomplicated world where it is allowed to simply live.



**Kyro Rubi**  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*



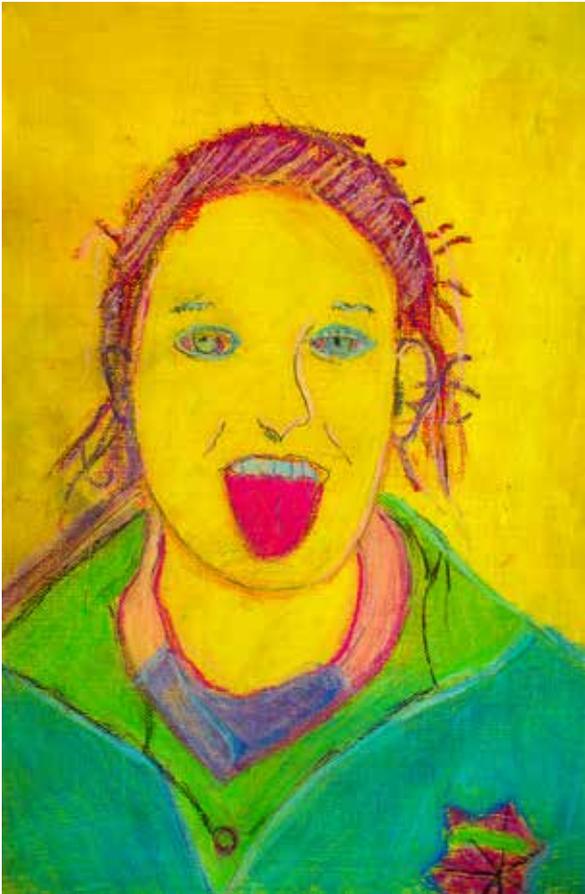
**Kyro Rubi**  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*



**Kyro Rubi**  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*

---

*Geometric Shapes*



**Emily O'Connor**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Maurice Millie**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*



**Maurice Millie**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*



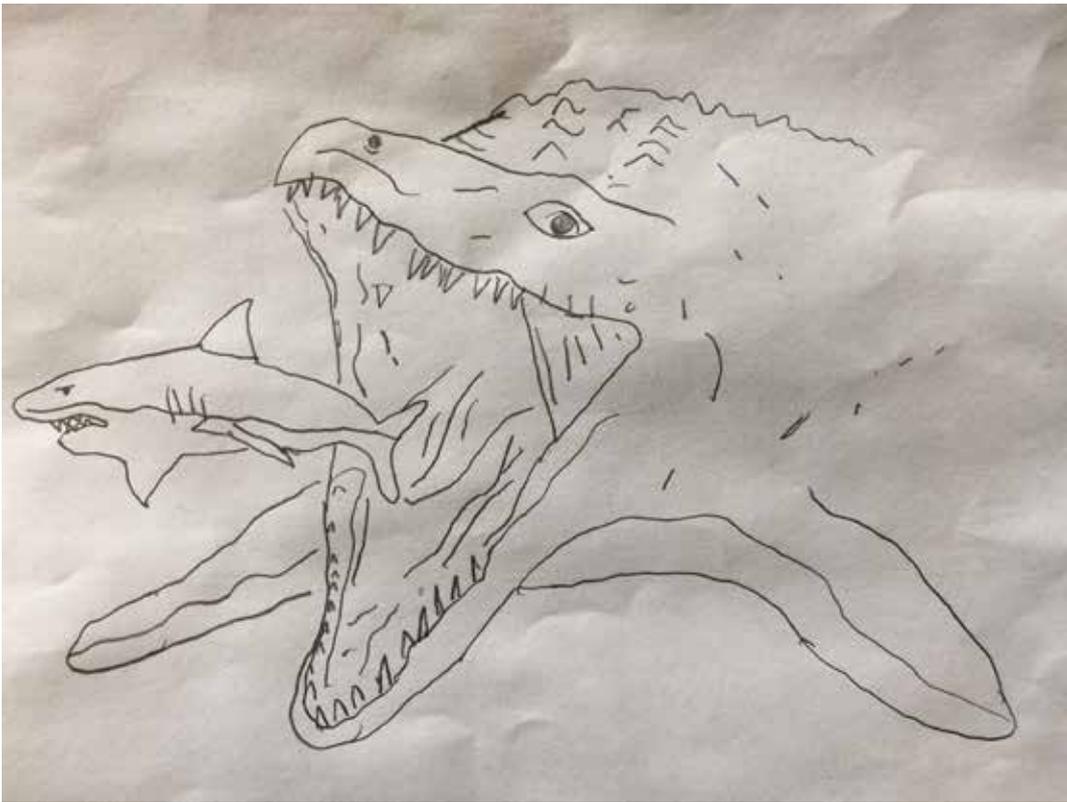
**Michaela Papaleo**  
*Year 12 · Star of the Sea College*



**Sofia Calabro**  
*Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary  
School, Brighton East*



**Ursula Cremasco**  
*Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary  
School, Brighton East*



**Tom Raymond**  
*Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East*



**Cleo Preston**  
*Year 3 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East*

# STARS CAN'T SHINE WITHOUT DARKNESS

---

Chloe Sideridis and Stephanie Dodich · Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East

Love yourself, others, and God's creation.  
Inspire others to learn more and become more.  
Victory is not always about winning.  
Encourage people's differences.

Spread positivity like butter on toast.  
I am my own superhero.  
Mirror what you admire.  
Plan A didn't work? Stay calm, there are still 25  
more letters. Learn from your mistakes.  
You are enough.

Stars can't shine without darkness.  
I've learned you can keep going long after you  
think you can't. Make someone smile today.

Pray more, worry less.  
Laughter is a gift.  
You can, you should, and you will.

Life is too short to wait, so take risks and try it.  
I never dreamed about success, I worked for it.  
Value your own words.  
Everyday is a second chance to be the best person  
you can be.

Living Simply or Simply Living can be defined  
as enjoying life, loving life and living life. Life is  
a journey that you'll only get to enjoy once, so  
cherish the ups, learn from the lows, and enjoy the  
gift that is called life. ■



Amelia Locantro  
Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

# TO SEE A RAINBOW

---

Dewie Millie · Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East

Some think that to see a rainbow,  
You must mix water with rain,  
But in my point of view that is ludicrous and  
insane.  
Rainbows are beautiful things,  
Full-of glamour and shing-a-ling.  
The sight of its beauty, temporarily blinds your  
eye,  
It's colourful gleam illuminating the sky.  
But did you know that there is a rainbow inside  
you?  
Did you know that it could take pride of you?  
Just release your kindness that's stored up in your  
heart,  
Doing that delivers a work of art.  
The love you show,  
Can go quickly or slow,

Small or tall,  
Really anything at all!  
So this is the moral of the story,  
The lesson for both you and me;  
Live Simply, Simply Live,  
For all I do and for all I give,  
And don't make a fuss about things that aren't  
big.  
Show affection to those who are sad,  
Show help for those who are doing pure bad.  
Just live life to the fullest,  
Be compassionate and nice,  
And before you chat think thrice.  
Be a role model,  
With a pure heart,  
You are certain to be remembered a top the  
charts. ■

# YOU WERE MADE TO BE YOU!

---

Sophia James · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School, Brighton East

Live life how you want to live it,  
Do not be ashamed of what other people say  
Be different, be happy, no one can change you,  
because this is who you are.  
Live the way you were made to live and not  
how someone told you to and do not try to be  
someone you are not,  
Live the way you were made to live because that is  
all that matters. ■



Eilish McDonough  
 Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



Sophie Hyslop  
 Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



**Julia Farrar**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*



**Simone Styzinski**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*



**Alison Tormey**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*



**Amy McIntyre**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Indi Fisher**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Amelia Colin**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*

# THE PEACE FOUND WITHIN ROCK

---

Isabella R. Gervasoni · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

The way the sound vibrates off the speakers.  
The way the drums smash in the background.  
The way I dance around the room.  
It's peaceful.

The way the powerful scream sounds.  
The way they sing forcefully into the microphone.  
The way the room shakes.  
It's relaxing.

The way the guitar solo floats around my bedroom.  
The way I try to copy but fail.  
The way my brother yells at me to turn it down.  
It's calming.

The way I collapse onto my bed in a fit of giggles.  
The way music makes me who I am.  
The way how I don't care how weird I may be.  
It's peaceful, relaxing, calming and, unique. ■



Ellie Mulder  
Year 8 · John Paul College, Frankston

---

'My Floating Home'



Toby Lewis  
Year 8 · John Paul College, Frankston

---

*'A Simple Act of Kindness Can Change the World',  
Edward Scissorhands and Abraham Lincoln*

---

One a fictional character, the other historical, when combined illustrate the idea that the art of the imagination can change the way we see and be in the world.

# PAPER PLANES

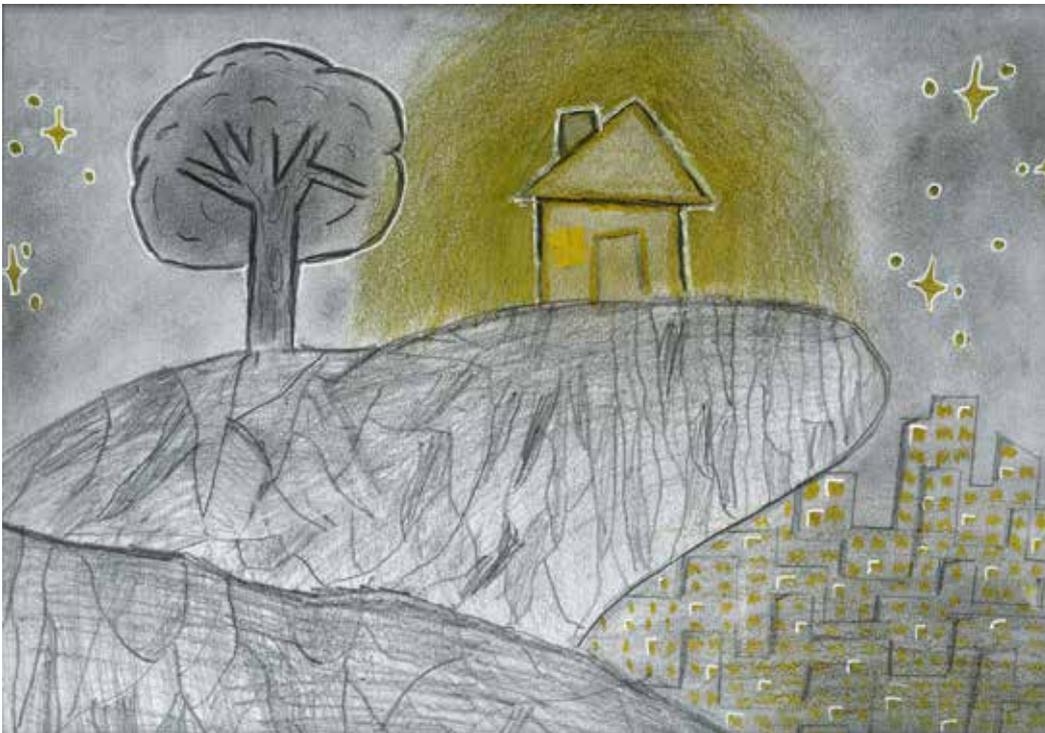
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Orla McCorry · Year 7 · John Paul College, Frankston

They all fly.  
Not all at the same time,  
Not all go the same distance,  
But they all get somewhere.

Paper planes -  
They all have flaws.  
Not all of them are graceful,  
Not all of them are perfect,  
But they don't need to be.

No matter how many attempts,  
Failures, mistakes –  
Even though it may be hard,  
If you keep trying,  
Maybe you can fly, too. ■



**Cameron Cooper**  
Year 7 · John Paul College, Frankston

---

*'Solitude', To live simply is to embrace the universe*

# REFUGEES

---

Cameron Cooper · Year 7 · John Paul College, Frankston

Millions.

Fleeing from one place:

Home.

Each with their own story,  
their own likes,  
their own characters.

Their life, both figuratively and literally crumbling  
around them.

All they can do:  
watch.

Many not dying because of the terror but on their  
journey,  
yearning for someone to show them hospitality.

For they are millions, yet represented as statistics,  
served only as to make us feel privileged in our  
situation without realising the gravity of the  
world that we all call home.

As each human is equal but as a collective is  
treated as a thought.

Thoughts who are breathing and very well  
animate.

As we acknowledge that the “statistics” are in bad  
situations,  
and comprehend that the terrorists are the “bad  
guys”,  
we have lost the ability to realise that the victims  
are real people.

Our reality is becoming less one of sympathy and  
more one of morality.

Our reality where we can identify good and bad  
yet disregard the bigger picture.

These “thoughts” who have travelled for what  
they think will be forever,  
only to be considered just “victims of terror”,  
only to find hospitality in places where there  
are some who treat them as if they were the  
terrorists,  
only to feel an outcast in the same world.

The countries of the first world are more than  
privileged,

we are advantaged.

From birth, our possibilities are not limited;  
you can become anything.

But if you are fleeing for your life,  
you really only have one goal:  
survive.

And once that goal is reached,  
many doors open...

until they are slammed shut due to prejudice and  
animosity.

The world I live in:

Where people have the audacity to say that  
nothing is wrong with it.

Where people laugh at the misfortune of  
minorities.

Where there are people running from their own  
country.

Their own country.

Refugees.

People.

Humans.

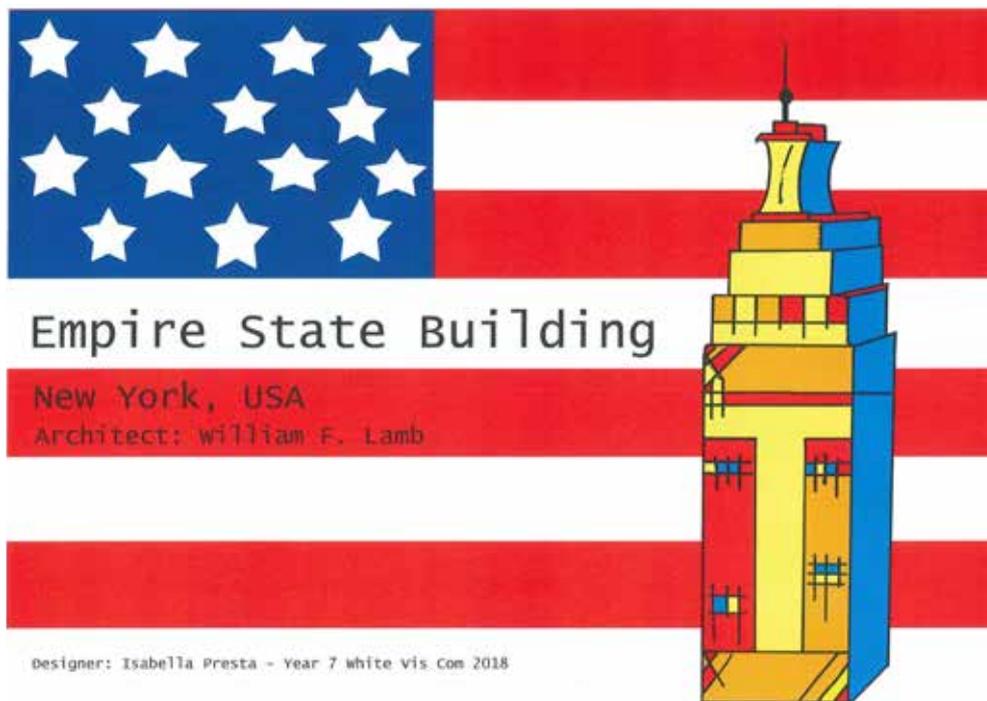
Not statistics. ■



**Alicia Massuger**  
*Year 7 · Aquinas College*

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*Oblique Travel Poster*

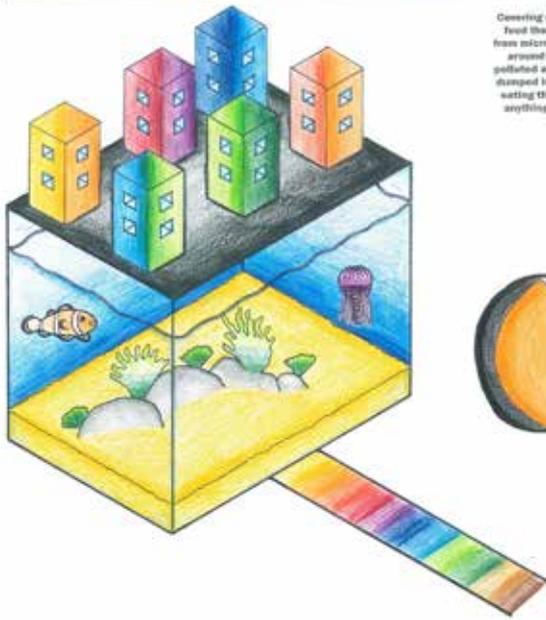


**Isabella Presta**  
*Year 7 · Aquinas College*

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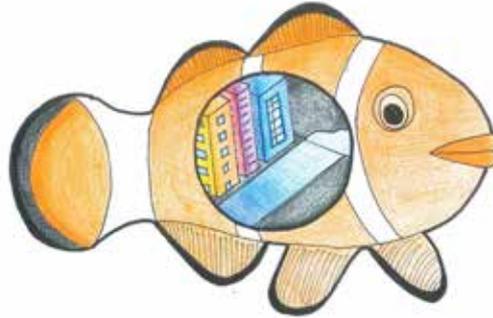
*Oblique Travel Poster*

# Water Pollution



Covering more than 70% of the Earth is water. It controls the weather, cleans the air, helps feed the World, and provides a living for millions. It is also home to most life on Earth, from microscopic algae to the blue whale. Yet we are making it hard for them to live. In fact, around 2 million tons of sewage is dumped into the World's water daily making the water polluted and unsuitable for these poor creatures. 8 million tons of garbage and plastics are dumped in the ocean each year. These poor creatures are getting stuck in these plastics or eating them which is causing them to die. Do you want this? You can help by not disposing anything down your sink, not flushing anything down the toilet and not littering. There are many things you can do to help but these are just a few make one. Help today!

-Brittany Bourke 8 Red  
Vis Com 2018



**Brittany Bourke**  
Year 8 · Aquinas College

*Isometric water pollution poster*

# Save Our Oceans



Australia is full of marine and sea-life, but it is all being destroyed. The main threats to our oceans are pollution, plastic debris and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. If this keeps going on there is going to be no more sea-life left.

Illustrator: Haylee Brebner  
8 Red Vis Com 2018

**Haylee Brebner**  
Year 8 · Aquinas College

*Isometric Save Our Oceans poster*

# PEN

---

Daniel Barber · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Bringing foggy thoughts into beautiful actuality  
Casting an inky stream of ideas  
Unfurling imagination on a whim

A pen  
Red, black, blue  
A utensil crafted to sprawl and scribble and write  
and explain  
To mould thoughts until they're physical

Scratching on pristine, white emptiness  
With the power to reduce even the fiercest to tears  
To set passion aflame in the weakest of hearts  
To uproot morals or give life to new beliefs

The red, the black and the blue can never die  
Never falter or stumble  
Never lose their gorgeous, scribbled nature or  
untidy, cursive shape  
Never be forgotten... or pushed aside

The red, the blue and the black...  
The only things that can unbox the intricacies of  
imagination and the harshness of reality  
Cast from a wand that can leak ink more  
powerful than any magic  
That can project words onto blankness... that can  
cripple or empower...  
That have given us more than anything else ever  
could... ■



Julia Southward  
Year 11 · Aquinas College

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Studio Arts



**Gabrielle Walshe**  
*Year 8 · Aquinas College*

---

*Portrait*



**Lucas Norton**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

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*Portrait, Studio Arts*



**Erika Gesthuizen**  
Year 9 · Aquinas College

---

*'Ken Done's pet lorikeet',  
Glazed ceramic sculpture, 3D Art*



**Sophie Rooney**  
Year 10 · Aquinas College

---

*'Takashi Murakami's pet panda',  
Glazed ceramic sculpture, 3D Art*



**Emma Dowling**  
Year 9 · Aquinas College

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*'Yayoi Kusama's Pet Fish',  
Glazed ceramic sculpture, 3D Art*



**Hannah Gerrey**  
Year 10 · Aquinas College

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*'Jean-Michel Basquiat's Pet Lion',  
Glazed ceramic sculpture, 3D Art*



**Caitlyn Abbriano**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*The Simple Food of Life*

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This is a Chalice of Wine, Grapes and Bread painting. This represents the simple food in life, and how it was shared amongst many during the Passover meal, in which Jesus commanded his followers to “Do this in memory of me”. The bread and wine represents Christ in his death and Christ’s body and blood.

# THE CITY SLEPT ALONE, AND NOW YOU'RE GONE

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Emily Zovak · Year 11 · Catholic Regional College Sydenham/North Keilor

The stone in front of him was cold, and the cemetery around him silent. “I miss you,” he said to the photo. “Saying it out loud here only makes me miss you more.”

The gravel under him was uncomfortable and it dug into his skin, but he didn't trust himself to stand. “I want to tell you so much. Nothing makes sense to me anymore.” He took a sharp breath in.

“Time is absent from everything I do now. It passes so quickly when I'm asleep. And every day I spend without you drags on painfully slow.”

He pulled his sleeve down with the tips of his fingers and wiped at the moisture that started to form under his eyes. “It used to be so easy to think about you, to talk to you. Now it's the thing I dread the most. Every time I think about you, I remember that you aren't here anymore and I wasn't ready to say goodbye.” He paused and took a few deep breaths in.

He sighed to himself. He knew the stone wouldn't respond. Shutting his eyes, he let the memories flood his mind.

Lazy Sunday mornings, waking up to the smell of something cooking in the kitchen. Music constantly playing through the apartment. It was always warm inside, James didn't like it when the heater wasn't on.

Now, he woke up every morning to a silent house – most days, way past midday. He found himself burrowing further under his sheets because the windows would let the cold bleed through. The apartment was dead of life. Nothing could change that.

For someone who spent most of their time alone,

solitude was extremely uncomfortable for him. “I miss how simple life was with you. Nothing had to be complicated, we just lived with what we had. I thought I was ready for this... to see you. The others said they felt better when they did, but it's different for me.”

He could feel the cold from the stones seep into his skin. His fingers still pulling down the sleeves. His eyes still feeling itchy and his heart still hurting. “I thought I was ready... but I guess I'm not. Because when the others say your name now, nobody goes silent except me. I'm not ready because your mum keeps calling me to ask if I'm okay. And I have to lie and tell her I'm fine.” He felt his neck get hotter as he went on. He didn't know if it was because he was angry or if it was from the tears that fell down his cheeks and collected on his chin. “I'm not ready because everything in my life is constantly reminding me of what I've lost. “I'm not ready because your dumb studio design is still framed in our living room. I-I'm not ready because...” He dropped his voice an octave until it was just above a whisper. “I'm not ready like they are because you saved my life, in a way no one else could have.” He took a breath in. “I miss you James. The simplicity of life left when you did, and now... I don't know what to do.” The stone remained silent and cold in front of him. He wiped the wet from his eyes and stood up.

“I'll visit again, and I'll get better. I promise.” He walked away from the stone. The gravel crunching under his shoes. His hands deep in his pockets. He wouldn't forget James. And he would continue to live with his memory. Maybe, if he was lucky, the simplicities would return. And living wouldn't hurt so much. ■

# ESCAPE

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Ayanna Ripas · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

I see her, the girl drowning herself in the music  
feeding into her ears.  
It was the one thing keeping her above the  
surface.  
Music was her escape. Like a gun, the lyrics were  
the bullets;  
Bullets pierce through, tearing pieces apart  
Lyrics pierce through her heart  
These words were her stories, her actions, her  
aspirations, they were like a mimic.  
“It’s my escape” she sings.  
  
I see him, the boy scribbling words all over his  
paper.  
Writing was his escape

People say their world is the physical one around  
them,  
his was the alphabet squashed on paper.  
His words held so much meaning within.  
Reality was his jail;  
Reality restricted him, restrained him, constricted  
him and chained him.  
His pen able to slip through bars and release him.  
Release him into another world.  
“It’s my escape” he exclaims.  
  
“It’s my Escape” They say,  
“It’s my Bullet”  
“It’s my Key”  
“It’s what sets me free” ■



Emily Zovak  
Year 11 · Catholic Regional College Sydenham/North Keilor

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*The City Slept Alone, And Now You're Gone*



*simply live*

What simple thing can you do today, that might take just a moment, to be still, to feel calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit?

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Find inspiration at [www.livesimply.com.au](http://www.livesimply.com.au)

# SLEEP

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Georgia Yeo · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Crackling like a crisp leaf to a mouse's ear,  
Breaking the eerie silence every few seconds.  
Flourishing with bursts of colour,  
Like chimneys cascading smoke through the air.

Twirling like a broken ballerina,  
Clawing through the mist.  
Gradually getting larger,  
Until the thundering stops.

Droplets cutting into embers,  
The bursts of colour overwhelmed with the  
downpour.

Smoking and changing shape,  
Trying to stay awake.

Struggling to stay awake,  
Struggling to keep its eyes open.  
Dying, hissing and losing away,  
Smoke billowing like threads abandoned by  
sewing needles.

Little droplets closing its eyes,  
The blackness of loss sinking in. ■

# LIFE AS A LEAF

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Isabella Falzon · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

My life is like a leaf,  
I start off green and happy,  
With many friends and family.  
I go on adventures, but never really move,  
I change from time to time,  
But never really look different.

Some of my friends go away,  
Not to be seen again.  
They go on their own adventures,  
Where no one else can go.  
Until that one day happens to me.  
The once happy green leaf gets crumbled.

All brown and sad.  
I fall off and go on my way.  
Without my friends and family,  
Life all broken and dead.  
Just because he has left.  
Just because he is no more.

My life is like a leaf.  
Happy then sad.  
Green then brown.  
Until that one day.  
When he comes back,  
Back into my life. ■

# GREEN TO BROWN

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Georgia Howard · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

*I* remember the days when *I* was bright and bubbly.  
The days when the sun would shine on me  
*I* would show everyone my bright colours.  
Now those days are nothing but mere memories.  
*I* took one last look at my home.  
*I* had lived there for years!  
*I* had never left it.  
*I* knew that no matter what *I* tried *I* would never be able to go back.  
The ride to my new home was long and slow.  
Left, right, left, right, left, right and so on.  
*I* felt like crying but there was no water left in me to come out.  
When *I* finally got to my new home *I* was greeted by the crumbling skin of the others that had lived here  
and the very few skeletons that hadn't fully disintegrated yet.  
*I* had gone from living at the top of the top to the lowest ditch in the whole of the forest.  
*I* felt like a criminal that had lost the right to live up in the trees  
so *I* lay emotionless on the ground drained of my energy and colour.  
*I* used to sway in the wind and feel the warmth of the sun on my face

but now there was no wind to blow in and the small rays of sun did nothing but blind you from the rest of the world until another cloud moved in front of it.  
*I* always knew that one day my time would come, but *I* never really thought it would come.  
Everything was different.  
No one spoke.  
They only glared at me.  
After weeks of moving centimetres *I* couldn't see my old home anymore.  
*I* was watched by everyone.  
*I* was never by myself.  
And yet *I* felt so alone.  
*I* had lost more and more colour and had become so dry *I* was crumbling away.  
*I* had lost my pieces one by one and *I* was losing my colour day by day.  
As *I* took one last look at my new home and as my eyes were about to close  
*I* saw another leaf fall from the tree.  
Left right left right left right and so on.  
They were greeted by the crumbling skin of the many that had lived here and the few skeletons that hadn't fully disintegrated.  
And then my eyes closed.  
Goodbye. ■

# JUST SMILE

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Lily Pirola · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

To smile is to feel loved  
To be loved is to be shown care  
To be shown care is for others to be bothered  
For others to be bothered these others have to be happy  
And to be happy you have to give a smile.  
Put a smile on someone's dial and not worry about being in denial.  
Be happy who you are and don't worry if you look bizarre.

And please do not discriminate to those who are feeling the hate.  
Don't compare yourself with others, just put on your runners and  
run away from your fears, just be a dear and put a smile on someone's face because I know that they'll appreciate  
the happiness that you will create. ■

# REMEMBERING BERESFORD

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Aoife Dormer · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

It is sad to think that 75 percent of all Bomber Command crews were killed during World War 2. The 460 Squadron was no exception to this, with only 24 percent of crews being unharmed.

My third cousin, Beresford, was a part of World War 2 and was the pilot of an aeroplane called a Lancaster bomber. He was with 460 Squadron RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) based in England. On the night of May 23rd 1943, he and his crew were a part of a force sent off to bomb a German city called Dortmund. He and his crew were shot down by a German night fighter over Holland, near a town called Schoonebeek, where he is now buried. There was only one survivor of his crew who then became a prisoner of war. He died on May the 24th 1943.

Beresford was an only child and when his family heard the news of his death, it had a major impact on his family. My Grandma was supposed to visit

his grave with her aunt after World War 2, but her father became very sick and died shortly after the War so she never got the chance to go. Beresford went to Scots College and is now mentioned in their Honour Roll.

My Dad, who is Beresford's second cousin, visited his grave in Schoonenbeek five years ago. His grave is lovingly cared for by the people of this town, along with all the other Commonwealth war graves there. His parent's names were Harry Michael Davis and Jessie Venus Troy, who married in 1919 in Sydney.

This story is important because even though Australia celebrates and remembers World War 1, ANZAC Day and World War 2, the horrendous things these men went through to fight for their country is remarkable. I think that more men who fought, not just on the ground but in many different ways, have to be recognised and remembered. ■



Caitlin Robinson  
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

# OF LOLLIES AND FAIRY BREAD

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Matilda De Vries · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



*Pop and I getting to know each other (2003)*

Some people's grandparents are just older family members that are able to cook really scrumptious food. In my case, my Pop is my best friend. We have been through those times which you think about every night before you go to bed; you want to do them again because they are so special.

He is always in his black chair. He is really sick but his mind is as active as 15-year-old boy who wants to steal a lollipop from the local milk bar. When Nan goes outside we have to grab a giant handful out of the lolly jar and stuff it down the side of his black chair. Chocolate smudges and lolly stains are all over that chair!

He still pushes me on the swings at the park and we talk about all the crazy adventures we will go on when my younger sister gets old enough. How

we will climb the biggest tree, so we can see the Cadbury chocolate factory and smell the chocolate melting. Pop quickly leaves me on the swing to grab the picnic basket. Nan packs us healthy dip and carrot, I still don't know how the fairy bread gets in there but I have a fair idea.

We still do our fun adventures now but unfortunately, I awake to find it was all in my dream.

Sadly my Pop is not with me anymore. I never knew how I would be able to get on with my life after he passed away. But now he's my hero. He is that one person I talk to before I go to bed so I can have those dreams about all our fun adventures.

I'll see you one day, Pop, but for now, I love you, and I miss you. ■

# MY PRIVATE BOTANICAL GARDENS

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Anna Thompson · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Have you ever had a place where you can escape? Well, mine was my grandma and grandpa's old house in McCrae, looking out over a pile of bush and the sea. When I was younger I thought of it as a mansion. Up the big steep driveway, out of the car, (trying to avoid the bull ants) up the long path up along the side of the house and along the veggie patch, turn the corner and there it is, a giant outdoor patio with a massive wooden table surrounded by different collectables from everywhere they had traveled.

Out comes Grandma and Grandpa with hugs for everyone. Dad and Grandpa start their endless conversations about who knows what, that would go on for the whole day. Grandma takes us inside and gives us biscuits and glasses to take out and put on the table. I would always run over to the window that looked right over the bay. Grandpa always had a pair of binoculars that I would look through and see all the ships up close. After I just get the chance to look through them over the bay, my sisters, Sarah or Amy, would yell for me to come and help.

Later, Grandpa would start cooking his famous sausages (my favourite) while Grandma brings out salad plates, cutlery and condiments but we still have a while to go before lunch so Amy, Sarah and I would run through the gardens. We felt that we were in our own botanical gardens, with so many different plants, flowers, bushes and trees; there were so many twists and bends you would almost think it goes on forever. My favourite place was the table and seats in the middle of the garden; no one could see you and there were so many different trees. The only one I could ever figure out was the cumquat trees. Grandma would make jam out of

the fruit in the summer when they were ripe, but I would always pick one, peel it and put it on one of the hanging bird houses so the birds could eat it.

Suddenly, we would hear "Lunch is ready" which would be shouted through the trees and bushes. We all would run down the path and along the wooden boards, trying not to get a splinter. After lunch is finished, we would play outside for a while then we would go inside. I would sit on the small green ottoman alongside Sarah and Amy on the big brown chairs that sat next to the old cassette player that Grandpa always had playing. It was soon time for dessert; my favorite. Grandma would bring out a ginger fluff or Pavlova. After taking a slice of each, Amy and I would run into the back lounge room to the old blue rocking chairs and watch Thumbelina until we fell asleep.

When we woke up, we would have to go, so we would put our shoes, socks and jumper on as we raced down the winding staircase by the giant pot of fake flowers, past Grandpa's camera collection and the cupboard filled with art supplies and colouring books. As the car travelled down the steep driveway, we would be waving and beeping. I would look back to see Grandma and Grandpa waving to us. I would then think of the leftover pavlova that we had in the front seat of the car and how when I get back home how i'm going to get a big slice for dessert.

They have since sold the mansion but the magic of the house will still live on. One day in the future, a child like me will come running up the steep drive trying to avoiding the bull ants, past the veggie patch and into the gardens, finding all the secret hiding spots that I had once done. ■



Max Cheney  
*Year 11 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



Max Cheney  
*Year 11 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



**Matthew Christie**  
*Year 8 · Mazenod College*

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*'Parrot', neo-colour crayons*

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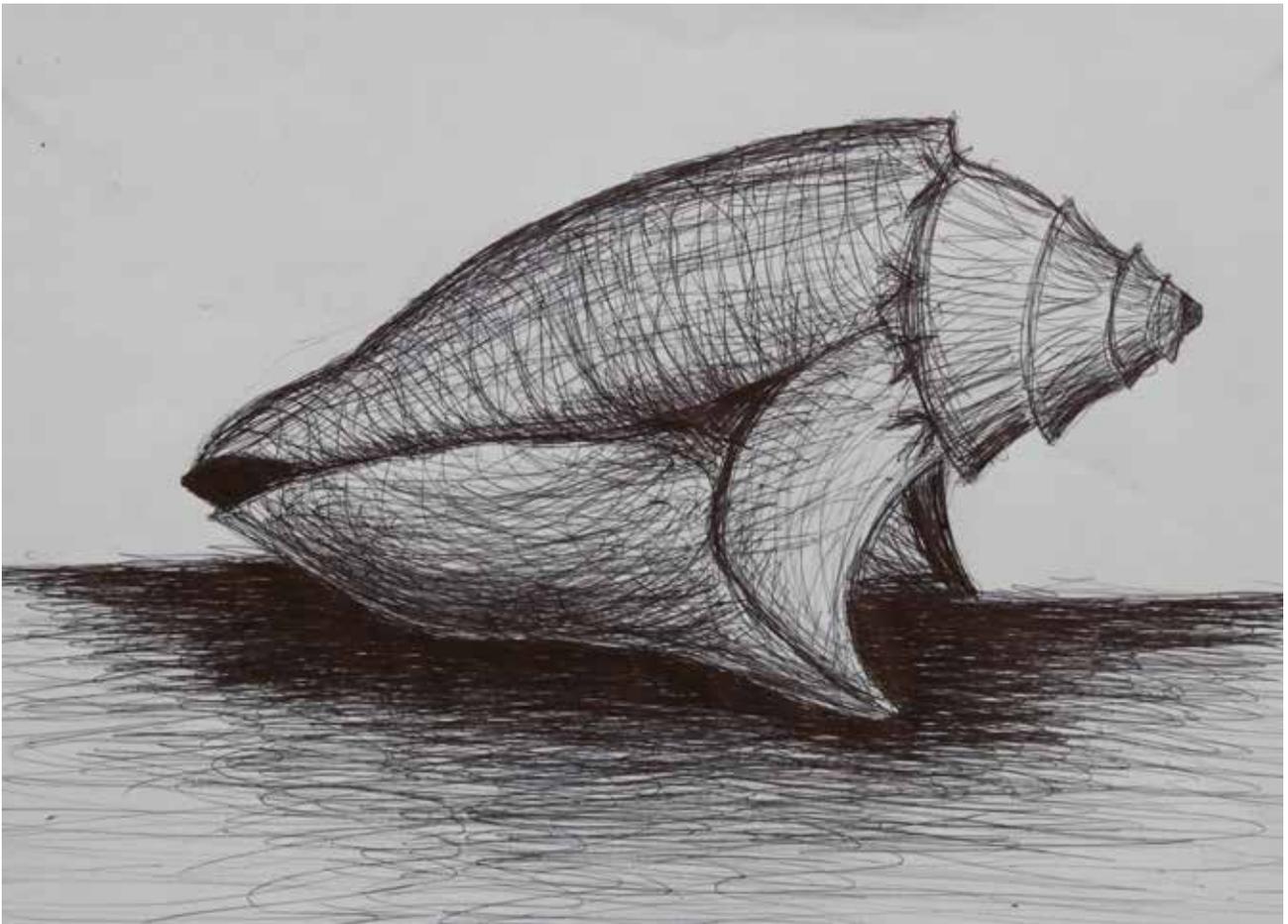
My painting is of a parrot in the jungle about to set off for the day, with fields in the distance. Parrots live through many situations, from vast open fields to jungle trees or built-up areas, never considering how far they have travelled.



**Lachlan Hann**  
*Year 11 · Mazenod College*

*'Diversity', Acrylic paint*

In this artwork, I am trying to show that Australia is a very diverse country, filled with people from all walks of life. This is what we should be celebrating on Australia Day, the 26th of January; the day our country took its first steps towards being the diverse country that it is today.



**John Guergues**  
*Year 8 · Mazenod College*

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*'Shell Drawing', Black ball point pen*

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I drew this shell drawing in one period. I created the drawing from looking at a real shell on a desk in front of me. A shell is a home, a way to simply live.



**Jeremy Wijeyesekera**  
*Year 12 · Mazenod College*

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*'As It Should Be', Carres conte crayons*

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This pastel drawing is part of my exploration of imagination and how it becomes hidden during the path from childhood to adulthood.

# THE RED SUITCASE

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Lochie Friedli · Year 7 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

Lizzie's battered red suitcase had travelled the world but now lived in the depths of her cupboard, behind the Christmas ornaments and the holiday linens. She hadn't taken it out in a long time because, as she would tell anyone who would listen, "Why would I need to travel anywhere else when I live in the most beautiful postcard?" Out her backdoor were majestic cliff faces, the slopes filled with gum trees and the clear skies of the Blue Mountains. Her cottage was surrounded by an acre of gardens that she had created with her own hands over the years of her retirement. From her imagination it had become a real life oasis, admired not just by herself but by many passers-by. Her life was overflowing with abundance: her many pets by her side, her community groups, her church group and her beloved garden. Lizzie thought to herself what more could I want in my life? She was content.

Lizzie was of the generation that you just got on with things. Yet there were little signs that she just couldn't keep ignoring. Strange stomach pains, vomiting for no reason, mood swings, slurred words and a nagging headache that just never seemed to go away. After returning home from a friends' birthday celebration she grabbed another paracetamol from her old wooden drawer gifted to her by her father but the throbbing in her head would not go away. If anything, it slowly but steadily intensified. The dogs sensed her discomfort and laid their heads in her lap but even that didn't help that night. Maybe it was time to listen to her friend's advice and go to the hospital for some tests and get to the bottom of the situation. She still had a full calendar and needed to have her energy to face it with her usual enthusiasm.

She waited in the doctor's office. Lizzie had never been good at waiting, she liked to be in control. She heard the knock. This was the sound which would turn her life upside down, the sound which would change her life for the better and the worse. This was the sound of a doctor, an apprehensive doctor. This was the sound of a doctor needing to lay a burden on her.

Lizzie gradually got out her walking stick and stood to meet the doctor's gaze. These were not 'you'll be fine' eyes. These were 'I hate to tell you this' eyes. Prepare yourself Lizzie, she thought. The doctor went straight to the point and said the eight words which anyone would dread to hear, "You have a fast-growing, advanced brain tumour". The entirety of her life flooded before her eyes. From her deepest sorrows to her greatest accomplishments, her life had been immense. She now glanced back at her life in angst as she deeply, deeply longed to keep living. She felt as though her life had been too short to be

a life lived to the full. The doctor's face was solemn and emotionless as he slowly handed over the paperwork and told her to prepare herself mentally as surgery was inevitable but also extremely risky. She may not even survive this first hurdle. They didn't know who they were dealing with, thought Lizzie.

The lone red suitcase has been brought out of its hidey-hole. It sits on the kitchen bench full to the brim with paperwork – birth certificates, death certificates, wills, deeds, directives. All the paperwork of a life.

That last day at home, Lizzie's heart felt empty as she limped past her crab-apples and camellias, to her treasured gazebo fringed with flowering white roses. As she walked she thought to herself – am I ready for this massive shift in lifestyle or would I rather die surrounded by my animals and the serenity of the Blue Mountains? There was time to make that decision after she sailed through this surgery.

Lizzie headed to the lounge room so she can sit in her precious armchair given to her by her grandmother who had passed away nearly fifty years earlier. She sat there and thought about dying. She wasn't ready yet but she wasn't afraid either. She had faith. She made a cup of tea and decided it would be more productive to put some positive thoughts in her head. I'm too full of life, such a strong person, I doubt I'll die... this is just a minor hiccup in a very eventful life. She firmly believed that after the surgery life would go back to normal, at least that's what she thought was going to happen.

Twenty minutes later she heard a gentler knock at the door. She opened the door to see a young girl probably aged in her late twenties. The young girl enthusiastically exclaimed, "Hi my name is Kate I have heard so much about you I hope you enjoy the ride and have a speedy recovery in hospital." Lizzie briefly grunted, not too content about having to have surgery. After two hours of seeing nothing but open grasslands Lizzie was finally able to see a glimpse of a large city skyscraper. Another five minutes passed by with rain now starting to drizzle down the side of the van and then Kate said, "Only twenty minutes longer Lizzie and then you will be in the comfort of your own private room for the night."

It is the day of the surgery. No clean mountain air here. Just the acrid smell of floor disinfectant, a concrete jungle full of medical instruments, sick patients and a sweeping view of the car park. All was not bad, she thought to herself. It has brought all her children, grandchildren and siblings into

one room and that hasn't happened in decades. So many laughs that day as everyone took a trip down Lizzie's memory lane. The elephant in the room was that if she survived this may be the last day Lizzie would have these memories or even have the ability to speak.

It was time, after two days of sitting around waiting for a miracle it was finally time. She saluted the hordes as she went through the hospital swing doors. The life-threatening / life-saving surgery was going to occur in only another 10 minutes. Lizzie was thankful for the life she had lived; her legacy was out there in the beautiful family anxiously waiting for her. Everything went black as the anaesthetic kicked in. After two intense hours of surgery it was finally over. She opened her eyes and to her amazement the doctors had managed to successfully remove the vast majority of her tumour and most of her memories and function intact.

Lizzie's red suitcase found its way home again where she desperately wanted to be. Lizzie's family helped her travel the four-hour round trip for radiotherapy and chemotherapy each day. The treatment was the only thing keeping her alive and the tumour at bay. It was so good to recuperate back at home with the chickens, ducks, dogs, cats, friends, the sweet perfume of her garden and the rolling mountain mists. Everything seemed to be back to normal yet nothing was normal anymore. Is not having enough energy to feed the animals normal? Is worrying about cytotoxins normal? Is not having the appetite to eat delicious food normal? Is not having the mood to want to talk to anyone normal? Is having to get a gardener in to do jobs you can easily do normal?

She woke up early one morning to get the newspaper. It was extremely cold, she could see her breath, dew covered the frosty grass. As she slowly hobbled across the grass she started questioning her every move. Is this the life I want to be living? What is important to me? What if I die? Who will look after my adored animals? All the questions filled her head doubts flooded about like lions ready to feast on their bedazzled prey.

She woke up the next morning coughing hoarsely and gasping for breath. She immediately pressed her life saving lifeline button which called the ambulance. In a matter of seconds, she was rushed into the ambulance taking her to one of the close suburban hospitals there she was diagnosed with a chest infection and was told that she would be transported to the dreaded city hospital for urgent rehabilitation and respite to treat the infection and the tumour. Unable to move out of her bed as the

pain was too strong to cope with, it was if there were the weights of gravity pushing her further down into a path of endless misery. Once told her family rushes to her grand suburban home to grab some necessities and her favourite ornaments to cheer her up.

She eventually fought off the chest infection but is then moved to a nursing home near family. She pleads with the doctors to allow her home to her friends, community and animals but sadly that is just not an option anymore, the disease has progressed too far. With animals now re-homed and her precious garden being cared for by a gardener all was well and in good order except for Lizzie. She is depressed as she is not in control anymore. Her beloved family try and lift her spirits. They take-out the red suitcase and load it with memories from home – ornaments, fairies, hand-painted pictures of her animals, magnificent paintings of Blue Mountains landscapes and flowers from her garden. But Lizzie was still adamant that she would recover.

The bombshell hit with the words of the specialist who said that no more treatment was going to be offered and that the tumour would continue to take over Lizzie's body and attack each body function and each sense. She sat on her chair with astonishment with the burden of acceptance that she wasn't going to be the miracle but that the miracle was that she had lived that long.

It was as the specialist said but Lizzie approached every hurdle with the fun and irreverent attitude she lived her life. Her eyes became paralysed and she put on sunglasses and pretended to be Elizabeth Taylor. Her memory went but she thought she was at the Royal wedding. Her hand became paralysed so Lizzie enjoyed her double-dose of Christmas ham and pudding just using the one good hand. Lizzie could light-up still sharing a piece of birthday cake with a loved grandchild. Lizzie couldn't talk anymore but she could smile as she listened to a song that brought back so many good memories. Her final weeks were filled with memories (some real, some not), love of family, friends and nursing staff that gave her dignity.

In those last days Lizzie realised the true love of her life – FAMILY. Surrounded by loving people she was finally at rest with a lone gardenia resting on her pillow, the scent of flowers the last memory of the world she would enjoy.

The red suitcase arrived at her daughter's house last week and is filled with photos and kind thoughts in cards from those that loved Lizzie. Her legacy continues. ■

# A HAPPY PLACE

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Jeremy Dalton · Year 6 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

Berlin was broken. The burning buildings and black smoke had changed not just the state of the city, but the people. There had not been a happy face in sight for a long, long time. This was because of war.

For Noah, Berlin had always been this way. He hated the war because it had stolen his parents when he was just three. Though he was quite young he still remembered exactly what they looked like.

Noah had been in the orphanage for eight years. It had been brutal. Every night he would lay in bed with bruises all down his body from the kicks and punches dealt to him by the other orphans. He would dream of his parents. It was the same dream every night. His mum and dad were reading his favourite book called *A Happy Place*. About a city full of possibilities and happy faces. Then they tucked him into bed, and they sang a lullaby, he then drifted off to sleep. But on that night there was a huge bang, a bang that Noah will never forget, a bang that killed his parents. That moment was the last he saw of his parents.

Noah was woken up at 6 o'clock in the morning by Sister Maria. He then walked down the stairs only to receive a cold bowl of porridge. Prepared by Miss Puttle, the biggest woman Noah had seen in his life. She had about five chins and she looked like she had eaten half of the country's rations. She was a horrible person and she treated the children with no respect. She wore a white apron, covered in grease. Also if you looked closely, you could see a knife in her apron pocket. The older children would say that she had threatened to use it on any kid who said something about her or her cooking.

Noah was very fond of Sister Maria. He liked how she would give Noah hot chocolates on cold winters' nights. She also would provide warmth by sharing warm blankets. But the thing she did the best was caring for Noah. Sister Maria was the one keeping him from running away.

But this would change one cold winter's night. Sister Maria had caught a horrible fever. Noah looked after Sister Maria, just like she had done for him, during his time at the orphanage. But after days and nights of pain and struggling Sister Maria had passed, she had gone to a happy place. Far away from Noah's state of living which was controlled by people thirsty for power not peace.

Ever since that day of tears and sadness, things started to go downhill. It seemed Germany was on the verge of another war and Germany was drafting young men from all over the country. Including Noah.

Noah was Squadron 42 and he was sent to Russia. Noah was experiencing things he had never seen before. Through his eyes you could see the emotions of soldiers, who were fighting for not just lives, but their country. He heard guns firing from every angle. But worst of all he had witnessed the lives of men cut short. Including Captain Hansel. A man who was a monumental character. He was bold, strong and a leader. Captain Hansel made Noah feel like he was a true soldier. But this was not true. Noah was very cowardly and he pretty much hid himself in the Trenches hoping not to get frostbite from the cruel Russian weather.

It took someone like Captain Hansel to inspire Noah and tell him, he could do something great in the war. He could save lives, he could save his country's people. But Captain Hansel had gone and Noah had no inspiration amongst the young soldiers. So he had to do what he thought was right. He thought that he should follow his dreams and find his happy place, and from that day onwards he did not look back.

His first step was opening up about himself and showing the other men what he thought was right. The men became quite intrigued by Noah's ways and supported him in his battles on and off the field. For the first time in Noah's life he felt he was cared for. Every day, Noah was gaining more and more support from the young soldiers. He became Captain of his Squadron. His power had done good to Noah, but it had also poisoned him. Noah was poisoned into killing men who disagreed with him. Though this seems brutal, it was how things were done in his home. So he did not hesitate. It now seemed nothing could stop Noah.

Until winter came. German troops were dying in the freezing weather. The battlefields were covered with a thick layer of snow stained with blood. Before Noah could even save himself, the other squadrons in Russia had been pushed back and Russian troops had surrounded Noah and his men. This led Noah to doing something that was every Captain's nightmare. Surrender. He had to surrender to do what was right for his men, even if it had deadly effects on him.

The Squadron was sent a Prisoners of War Camp in Moscow. In the prison Noah was surrounded by soldiers who had lost everything because they had been forced to fight for their country. These men would be the last people Noah would ever meet. Because in just minutes he was on a path to the place where his parents were waiting, along with Sister Maria. ■



**Alexandra Dawson**  
*Year 12 · Star of the Sea College*

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*Studio Arts (Photography)*

# THE FOUNTAIN

Gareth Cassidy · Year 12 · Mazenod College

*The woman said to him,*

*“Sir, give me this water, that I  
may not thirst, nor come here  
to draw.”*

## I

Down beneath the sound  
Below the rose of pain  
And the present moment  
stripped away  
As garments ripped and torn  
apart.  
Here, at the centre,  
The perpetual point unchanging,  
Between the cracks, ever  
waiting,  
A Heart.  
Where time is, not stopped  
But not;  
And the past is not;  
And the next is not;  
Where we see, not with the I  
But the heart  
As though all things were forgot  
And all the world were not;  
Reduced to a delicate curtain,  
The secretive surface of the  
Ocean,  
(Hiding chambers in deep  
places)  
Almost as fragile and thin as a  
lie  
A single simple beam of light.  
All things pass and softly  
Fall away  
Until only this remains;  
The Heart, The Fountain,  
The Thirst  
Ablaze with the Eternal Flame  
That burns before the world is  
begun.

## II

And oh, won't you come?  
One last time?  
My words fail me, listen  
I'm running out of time.  
But please, do come  
Just once more, with me  
Down to the waterline  
Of the quiet Ocean, unseen  
Except by the fortunate blind.  
You the dreamer,  
Dreaming with Herodotus of  
immortal water,  
And you set out for darklands  
With Ponce de Leon, grasping  
night lies.  
Returning with empty hands,  
You vowed never to turn again  
Never again.  
But won't you come,  
One last time, with me?  
I know you have wandered,  
errant in the wild,  
And how you have wanted, that  
perfect place so far;  
You have chased the honey on  
the summer wind  
Like a magi lost in the desert,  
seeking a solitary star,  
And something final to drink.  
Here you are! a dead man in a  
dry land  
Dying for thirst in the sink.  
You poured out your soul  
To the stars, the moon, the old  
night sky  
But you turned too early to hear  
the reply,  
If you were listening anyway.  
Please,  
Bring submission to the lies in  
our hearts,  
The illusive vision of our  
erudition,  
Teach us how to be hidden.  
We talk until words won't work  
Then finally learn to listen.

## III

Listen,  
Bells on the wind, wordlessly  
Calling us on to eternity.  
For us,  
Choking on 'harmless' vanities  
Afraid of the gaze of reality.  
We drink like fish;  
Sister Earth and all she bore  
The essential fruits of the land,  
and more  
The shallow gifts of the sea, and  
more  
And riches she holds to her  
chest, and more  
Jealous for the communion of  
angels and animals,  
We are cannibals  
Hungering,  
For the ripe heart of our  
neighbour,  
Mother, father, sister, brother,  
To drink from the lips of a lover  
Until the cup is empty, and next  
That prize meat cut from our  
enemy.  
We compact the universe and  
eat it up  
Leaving only the scraps, the  
scars, the shedded blood,  
and an empty stomach.  
And still  
It waits still, calls still, it shall  
never digress  
For you were not made for  
anything less  
than eternity  
And all the world, the planets,  
the stars  
Are not big enough to fill your  
heart.  
Bells on the wind, wordlessly  
Calling us on to eternity.

For of course, De Leon found  
 no fountain in the end  
 (Hacking through a sad land;  
 bushes, trees, children, men)  
 Behind trees, totems, empty  
 idols clutching empty vows,  
 And in the dark places, where  
 we shouldn't be.  
 Restless walking, lead by our  
 own light;  
 The blind light, the dying light,  
 the lying light,  
 Driven by the whispering night,  
 Caressed by its long cold fingers,  
 And clueless, half-conscious,  
 cast to the four winds  
 Scattered, but still here  
 All alone in the seductive  
 unknown.  
 He found no waters  
 For they waited so patient at  
 home,  
 No further than down the  
 street,  
 Hidden to the pride of plain  
 sight,  
 A left, a right, a minute and  
 then  
 Take a careful step inside  
 Enter your beautiful end  
 But shed yourself  
 This is holy ground  
 Come naked  
 Nothing spare  
 As a child  
 Be still  
 He is right there.  
*Take. Drink.*

#### IV

Remember Meribah.  
 This is a parched land, afar  
 from the sea  
 Dry, cracked with cold,  
 But it spurns any tender drop of  
 Mercy  
 To fall on these hearts of stone,  
 Together all alone,  
 That might dissolve with the  
 next breath of wind  
 Feeding more dust to the desert  
 It expands  
 Moves to the next man  
 Until everything is thirsting.

*So come, all you who thirst*

And indeed, one drop would  
 suffice.  
 A single drop of His blood is  
 worth  
 More than all of the blood on  
 this earth.

He pours it out in streams  
 But the world, ashamed, turns  
 away.

There is no greater love  
 And there is no greater pain;  
 To give without give,  
 in the dark  
 To love without love,  
 in the dark  
 To die without dying,  
 in the dark  
 For all who have home in your  
 heart  
 To weep your blood, bleed your  
 prayers,  
 And to find that they do not  
 care.

To be raised up and see dear  
 souls  
 As they turn and carelessly slip  
 below  
 Teardrops onto fire.

As His Blood is wept out  
 Like a Fountain  
 Gushing out for us all to drink,  
 from the Heart  
 That we left alone in the dark,  
 Thirsting...

And so cries all, inmost nature  
 Torn by the deepest tragedy.  
 Oh Sorrowful Lady,  
 Lead the dolorous chorus  
 Drawn from below and above  
 That Love is not loved  
 Love is not loved  
 Love is not loved  
 Love is not loved  
 at the centre

#### V

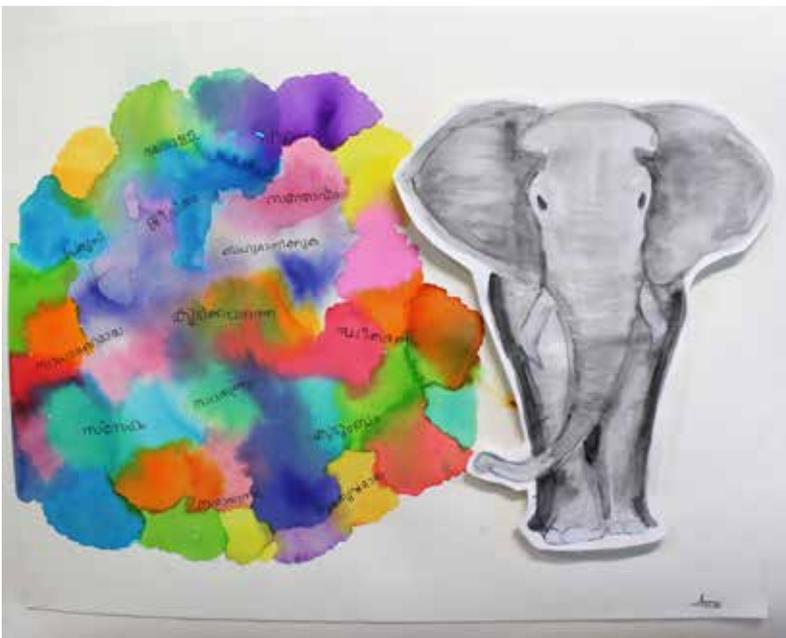
This is life;  
 That your love has filled me  
 And killed me  
 My heart is cut  
 It bleeds like a fountain  
 Soon it will run dry  
 Soon...  
 Soon...  
 Why do I not die?  
*See my hands. Feel my side.*  
 Where are you?  
*I am here, little one.*  
 I cannot see you  
*Still, I am here.*  
 Hold me, always then  
 I am yours *I am yours.*  
 Amen. ■



**Alannah Geddes**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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I feel my painting relates to the theme, 'Live simply, simply live', by all the flowers being black and white, and there is just one that is colourful because of the rainfall falling on it, which brought it to life.



**Annrose Gigimon**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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My piece fits with the theme of simply living because I was inspired by the Holi festival, which is also known as the festival of love and colours. The colours remind me of happiness and when I think of simply living, I think of happiness, love, peace and joy. Elephants represent good luck and stability, and if your life is simple, you would be stable and content with what you have.



**Chelsea Alipan**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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*The Ocean / Water Woman*

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My piece of the wave and the water woman reflects on how the ocean can make someone feel calm and lively. It is a symbol of life and nature. From my perspective, life is about embracing the land and nature that is around us.



**Supriya Adhikari**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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*'Catharsis'*

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'Catharsis' illustrates how art – in this particular case, drawing and painting – allows for one to be relieved of negative emotions, thoughts and feelings that may be troubling them. This then allows for a simple life without worry.



**Isabella Da Ros**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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The butterfly is a symbol of life as the life cycle is often shown through one of a butterfly's.



**Jacinta Dimovska**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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The sky represents everlasting life. The two skies in the background illustrate that life can be two different situations at the same time; there can be one side that is bright and full of happiness, but the other side is dark and gloomy. Even though there are two different sides, they can both be beautiful.



**Kaiya Camilleri**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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My painting is of an image I took whilst visiting Vietnam in August. Vietnam is a poor country but it is full of happiness and rich with beautiful landscapes. This captures what it means to 'Live simply, simply live'. Life isn't about having nice cars or a big house, it's about embracing nature and the good around us.



**Maya Perez-Guerra**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

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The artwork I made reflects on how fragile our homeland, Earth, is. The flower around it is a lotus flower, which defines beauty, grace and purity; that is how I describe Earth. In order for living things to stay alive and grow, they need a planet to live on. I believe that we should tend the Earth because it is delicate.

# A CHANGE IN DIRECTION

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Cameron Tran · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

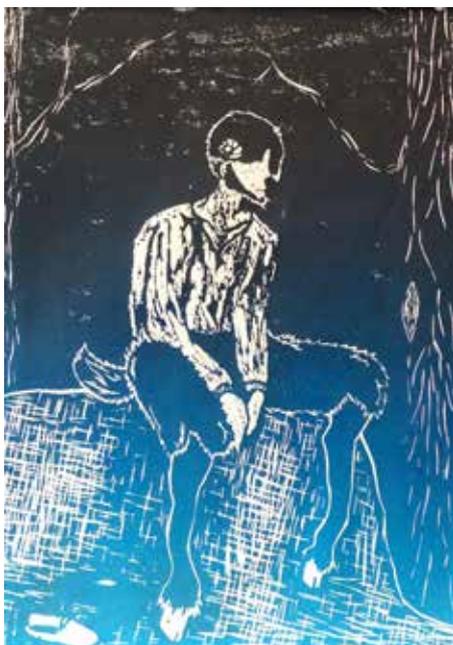
The future. A period of time following the moment of speaking or writing, a time regarded as still to come. Not very long ago, our era was predicted to be virtually completely automated. Physical labour was to become a thing of the past, replaced by contorted steel and wires. Crime; non-existent with the widened, innovative minds of future generations. People believed this time period would be a utopia, that the world would be without flaws. They were wrong.

We do not have an idealistic reality. No sophisticated technology to change society for the better. Instead, we have shiny, rectangular, illuminated items to look through at the past. The environment decays gradually and consistently, with no sign of an end. Earth withers around us and yet nothing is done about it. Human life is subjected to routine and hard work to sate the needs and desires of others. Crime rates in many places have increased detrimentally and countries are becoming rapidly overpopulated. There was once a time where 11 to 12 years of education was all that was necessary to achieve a reasonable and high paying job. But in the present, people finishing university with 16 or more years of schooling struggle to find any work whatsoever. Our lives are flooded with waves of chores which we accomplish for the promise of taking a breath.

But do we ever truly escape the raging currents and emerge on top? Are we actually rewarded for a life

of constant struggle, with the happiness promised to us that is so desired? Or is it all simply a mirage, created for the sole purpose of keeping people in line? Millennial; a word used to define young adults of the 21st century. They are often regarded as overly sensitive, unwilling and lazy, and yet they are humanity's future. Information in modern society is certainly much more easily accessible than in the past. But the level of thinking exhibited by the people to whom this knowledge has been most available to is far inferior to the minds of the past. This lower level thinking cannot be the fault of this specific generation as every human would act the identical way if in the same circumstances with the same History. This means that the cause of people's irrationality must be due to the adjustments in the way human lives progress. The decisions made by Millennials in most cases are much lazier and less thorough. It seems as though the more advancements made by humanity, the worse off the next generation will be.

The Earth is dying, our lives are becoming more like those of an automaton. Even our minds in a multitude of aspects are degrading, and for what? All this for an indefinite future. For a dream which may never exist. In pursuit of progress, something was lost. The answer we seek so desperately is not in a possible forthcoming but in our own past. A time where our lives were simple, rewarding, fulfilling and most importantly; meaningful. It's time for humanity to begin walking backwards. ■



**Joni Gubatanga**  
*Year 8 · St John's Regional College*

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'Pan', Lino print

# THE RISING SUN OF AFRICA

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Sashka Djelic · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

I had to leave. To get out. I had wasted my time thinking that I could build a life in such a hectic environment. I didn't find it humbling nor inspiring. I never took pleasure in my surroundings nor felt delight in hearing the sounds of the bustling city outside my window. But how could I, in the city that never sleeps?

I stare out my window now, taking in the new scenery. The beauty overwhelms me like nothing I've ever experienced before. I feel like I'm at complete peace with life. The wind blows through my hair and I can't help leaning into it. I breathe in the smell of trees, sand and the lingering scent of passing animals. I've reached a stage of perfect happiness, utter bliss, and it was all thanks to the place I would like to one day call home.

While my job and all my belongings were in New York City, my heart was with the rising sun of Africa. Before coming here, I was drowning in paperwork and stressing over finishing my story for the latest news article. 'Yet another devastating attack,' it was titled. My heart sank every time I had to put my pen to paper and write another story of the terrors of our world. I never understood why there were so many individuals who strove to cause anguish and disarray. Why were they so dissatisfied with their lives, that they had to go against all their morals and cause pure destruction? Why live if, in their eyes, all life has to offer is violence and death? They don't see the simplicity of living. They choose to view it as overly complex. Yet contrastingly, my primary reason for coming here is to feel genuine happiness. I wish that I could say that I came here purely of my own accord, but truthfully, if not for the interview booked with a member of the Masai tribe, I probably wouldn't have come.

As the car journeys along, the town creeps closer and closer and when I see the structures that countless

individuals live in, I feel complete sympathy. Their homes are worn down and barely standing. Collapsed walls create no sense of privacy. They live in horrendous conditions, yet when the car draws to a stop at my desired location, my breath is taken away by the sight before me. There are tens of local Africans clapping their hands against solid logs of wood and singing a traditional folk song. I see the man I'm scheduled to speak to as he dances with a child. Their eyes are crinkled with kindness and laughter. Their mouths are set in a wide smile, depicting only what I could ever describe as pure happiness. They share a strong connection and sense of belonging that I feel disconnected from and eagerly seek for myself.

It is at this moment that the rest of the world disappears and only the group of men, women and children before me matter. They don't live wanting more every day or throwing away food they no longer feel like eating. No, they are satisfied with what little they have and the lives around them are deeply cherished. They live a simple life in a community of depth and richness, free of greed, with family their first and main priority. It makes me realise that I didn't just come here to escape the terrorists, I left because of everything else that was gradually becoming subsumed. The world has forgotten to value the important things: love, family, happiness. Instead, things like money, fame and success have become more valuable. I'm appalled at myself for getting caught up in it and spare a glance once more at the carefree, dancing tribe I'm about to learn all about.

I don't look back once as I walk away from the person I used to be and approach the new me, clicking my fingers to the rhythm that has transformed my entire view of life from this moment. ■

# CASCADE

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Shantelle D'Silva · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Cybil couldn't stay here anymore, all she longed for was a new beginning away from this miserable excuse of a town. The roar of hundreds of students ringing through her mind, yet only one seemed to stand out. Beckett Jones, a young man who was neither hated nor adored, the only friend of Cybil Lenardo. "Let's leave tonight, you and I can start over", his voice was so reassuring. The sheer thought of leaving everything behind; not that there was much to miss, scared Cybil to the point where she questioned her future in this small town.

The walk home was silent, the only sound audible was the cars passing them by, neither teenager ready to break the silence. Cybil contemplated leaving as she packed what she could and took one last look at what they were about to leave, as Beckett flicked the window latch open slow and heavy steps approached the room, tears welled up in Cybil's eyes. Though her heart ached to leave, she knew she had to go. Cybil's thoughts were cut short by a pair of strong arms engulfing her in a warm embrace. "We can do better, I promise", Beckett repeated softly, the pair slid through the window and hopped into Beckett's 429 Mustang and left the world they once thought was inescapable.

For what felt like hours the pair had been on the road and yet again not a single word had been spoken, the wheels travelling across the ground seemed to be the only thing keeping Cybil and Beckett sane. Cybil watched as the trees passed by, each one different from the rest. She imagined a better future somewhere different, but the more she tried to forget about home the closer it brought her to a pit of overwhelming sorrow. Her mind had led her into a barrage of miserable memories, like the day she turned five, her mother's words still stuck in her head, "Cybil I cannot tell you how

sorry I am that I won't be able to remember much, as long as you don't forget how much I love you everything will be fine. Those eyes of yours, your name, your face."

Cybil's mother never remembered; the disease ate away at her brain day by day. Cybil knew she tried hard, days of practice yet nothing was ever close to perfect and she knew that nothing would improve. The vehicle came to a halt and Beckett began to make his way to the passenger door, opening the door he put his hand out and led Cybil through the forest. The sound of countless birds echoed amongst the trees. As they walked deeper and deeper into the forest a young faun stumbled across the greenery. Cybil stared with awe as this fragile creature examined its surroundings. Their admiration was interrupted by the subtle sound of flowing water and soon enough they found themselves following the source.

The longer they walked, the louder this sound became, enough to the point where the leaves crunching beneath the pairs of feet was no longer audible. Beckett and Cybil found themselves at the top of a beautiful waterfall, the scent of lavender enveloped them as the couple saw the flowers on the other side of the water flow. Cybil turned to Beckett, "We did it!" She wrapped her arms around him as the noise of crashing water drowned out any thought of regret or fear. They had escaped together knowing what the risks were, yet in this moment life has come cascading down in a series of opportunity. Cybil held Beckett's hand and she gave him a small grin before the two began to lean behind into the pool of water below.

Cybil gave one hard look at the forest before she closed her eyes and muttered the word, "Together". ■

# BEACH BEYOND THE PAPERS

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Nicole Sikora · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Rain fell vigorously against Lucy's old L.A apartment window. She sat on the couch slumped with a bottle in her hand. She felt herself sinking away into her misery once again, while her mind wandered away from all the stress and chaos of work. She slowly dozed off feeling the bottle slide from her grip. It fell. There was a moment of silence, peace and composure as she watched the bottle fall. She didn't jump nor flinch at the sound of glass shattering against the hardwood floor. Her eyes followed the deep red coloured liquid as it ran through the grooves of her wooden floorboards.

She looked up shocked by the mess her apartment had become. The papers scattered along the floor, dishes on every available surface and newspapers covering all the windows. Her stomach clenched as if for the first time she noticed the sad reality of her life. She drew herself up from the couch and switched off the television, sending the room into complete darkness. Resting her head against the window, she closed her eyes and listened to the sound of hail crash against the glass. Hot tears ran down her cheek. Slowly she bent down and began to pick up paper after paper off the floor. A sudden wave of regret hit her, "How could I let this happen? When did my life get so out of hand?"

As the hours she spent cleaning passed, she began to see the mess decrease, yet her mind still felt cluttered. Her legs ached from carrying trash bag after trash bag up and down the apartment complex's stairs. She had worked her way to her bedroom, she collected dirty clothes, wrappers and old work letters off the floor. Mixed in amongst a pile of dirty clothes, she noticed a folded piece of glossy card. She opened it to find a picture of her mother resting against a giant rock on the beach. Lucy always believed that her mother was the most beautiful woman in this planet. She turned the photo over and noticed a small handwritten note;

*"Always smile, I want you to always remember who you are, don't ever get lost in the world's*

*chaos. Be the woman you've always wanted to be. I know you can.*

*Love, Mummy xoxo"*

A pressure began to rise in Lucy's chest. She looked at the newspapers on the windows. She had put them up shortly after her mother's death, in a futile attempt to block out the unbearable presence of the rain. She remembered her mother's pale, bruised skin and glazed red eyes as she lay in the hospital bed. Lucy sat slumped in the hospital chair for weeks on end, watching the rain fall across the pane of the window, the same way the tears ran down her face. She spent the weeks praying for a miracle she knew would never arrive. She knew her mother was sick, but nothing prepared Lucy for her death. It felt like it had been raining ever since she passed away, a reminder that she would never be the woman her mother wanted her to be.

The photograph fell from Lucy's hand as she slid to her knees with her palms pressed to her face, she began to sob, feeling hot tears run down her cheeks. She stared at the window in silence. Silence ... that's exactly what it was, it had stopped raining. Lucy felt adrenaline pump through her as she jumped up and ran to the window. She began tearing down all the news articles about "terrorist attacks" and "inexplicable plane disappearances" showing no interest in it because none of it mattered anymore. With each paper ripped off it felt like a massive weight was lifted from her shoulders. The afternoon light spilled through gaps in the newspapers and filled the room with warmth and light. Lucy pressed her hand against the lukewarm glass and felt a smile slowly spread across her face. The window was covered in dust and grime from years of neglect. She wiped it away allowing herself to see out onto a small beach with a beautiful sunset reflected on the water. For the first time in a very long time she felt no stress or pressure about her loss. She saw parents, couples and children running around smiling, simply living their lives. She felt warmth grow inside of her, a feeling of happiness she had never felt before. Finally ... she was able to see what her Mother had been trying to show her all her life; that pure happiness is in the simpler things. ■

# WINTER AND SPRING

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Erwin Jiang · Year 7 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

The last days of Autumn had arrived, as every magenta leaf of the oak tree had fallen, leaving the branches bare and lifeless. People sat in their cosy homes, sipping their coffee and leaving the heater on, waiting for winter to arrive and spread over the land. A caterpillar crawled lazily across a naked branch and wrapped himself into a cosy cocoon as animals crawled into their hidey-holes to prepare for hibernation

The first day of winter soon arrived, and while pupils of prestigious schools wrapped themselves up with furry scarves and carefully knitted beanies, students of less wealth could only stand there, chattering, shivering uncontrollably and trying to protect themselves from the harsh, unforgiving wind. Workers rubbed their frozen fingers together to protect themselves from the coldness that bit their hands as they rushed to their offices.

In a family home, a boy, starved of appearance, was lying on his bed and champing on a thermometer. As foul green snot exuded from both nostrils, he prayed that spring would arrive swiftly to bring happiness back into his world and an air of melancholy surrounded him to realise that spring was far away.

It was right in the middle of winter when the days of dread and darkness came. The dark clouds materialised, as people down under spectated the ominous signs of a storm as the downpour swiftly came. The droplets of rain fell in symphony as if it was a grand piano reaching the pinnacle of its melody. The thunder roared with agonising fury and shortly succeeding it was a bolt of lightning that broke the sky in two. The tempest raged on as the deluge pounded on unfortunate pedestrians. Winter had transformed into a monster, a beast loathed by the people.

Winter, however, was two-faced. Just after it

showed its monstrous side to the inhabitants, Mother Nature put another twist in the tale of winter. She sent flakes of snow down to paint the footpaths brilliantly white. Flake of different shapes and sizes scattered the skies as teens skied down slopes and younger children tobogganed down, sharing the joy and wonder that snow brings. A blanket of snow covered the plants and icicles were suspended under roof tops. Evergreen tree branches groaned at the heavy snow on top of its leaves. It was the soft side of winter.

Spring had sprung. It was as if the big bang had occurred as flowers bloomed and trees regained their leaves. Hibernating creatures awoke as children frolicked around parks and playgrounds. The weather had become warmer and joggers and cyclists were all around the place. The scent of nectar filled the warm air. Students took shade under an aged tree and worked on their latest assignments. The caterpillar who knitted a cocoon had turned into a beautiful butterfly. The pond was covered with algae and pond lilies, while waterfowl swam around the tranquil water, causing ripples and splashes. Pedestrians wandered around, enjoying the bliss of spring.

However, what connection spring has with winter was unknown by the people. Winter is the time of regeneration, a time of rest where we get more night than day. Winter is needed for spring to appear, which then leads to summer. Autumn is the preparation for winter, as animals and plants prepare for regeneration. We may not be grateful for winter when it beats down upon us with its harsh winds and bitter coldness; however, winter is the reason why we even have spring. Ugliness can create beauty, just as how the caterpillar turned into a butterfly and more importantly, how winter transformed into spring. ■

# EPIC ADVENTURES

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Henry Stewart · Year 8 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Most epic adventures don't start out with an  
Application and an insurance waiver.  
Mine started with a simple rumble.  
The earth opened up several million years ago,  
Allowing me to blossom.  
As I came out, I noticed how tranquil and peaceful  
It was.  
That has all changed now.  
For many years, I lay untouched by the outside world,  
With only the birds and trees to keep me company.  
Then one day a light.  
It was incredible, a dazzling array of oranges,  
Yellows and reds.  
It was as if the very sun itself had birthed it.  
Each day it got larger and came closer.  
Then one day it arrived.  
It was as fantastical as all predictions.  
But there was something else, a walking, talking tree like  
Object.  
It was man.  
He stayed with me a while, comforted me, as I  
Comforted him.  
But our time together finished all too quickly and without even a  
thank you, he had to  
Leave, back to his home of the lights and colours.  
In the coming years, I had more visitors.  
None seemed to be as gentle or caring as he had.  
As I continued to age so did the lights.  
They expanded in every direction, swallowing up all of nature.  
More and more visitors came, some brought their lights  
and colours with them.  
They were amazing, nothing like I had ever seen before.  
If only I had known then, what I do now.  
Now as I lie here surrounded by lights and colours, I  
Realise how much damage they have done to me.  
This place, that was once tranquil and peaceful, is now  
Cold and dark.  
No longer full of hope, but rather the very heart of fear.  
As I lay on the bed that I will lie on forever,  
I see the man who once comforted me,  
And I know he will stay with me till the end.  
I take one last look at what the world has turned into,  
Before closing my eyes for the last time and taking my last breath. ■

# VELVET-CRESTED WATER SPARROW

Sebastian Dalling · Year 8 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

The Purple Crested water sparrow was discovered on the 22nd of July 2014, during the wet season in the Hang Son Doong caves in Vietnam, these caves had been undiscovered until late 2013 when a small group of explorers accidentally stumbled upon it inside the Vietnamese jungles. The cave led numerous teams of explorers, geologists and marine biologists with the promise of new discoveries. During the wet season, a team of explorers went into the caves because of numerous underground lakes and water reservoirs. One team used the lakes as an opportunity to explore the caves by boat to discover new species of fish. During their expedition, the team encountered and named various new species of fish including Rainbow fish, Neon fish, and Jumping fish. After the 13th rainbow fish in a row had been caught, they heard a piercing whistle that sounded like a bird's whistle, the whistle echoed throughout the caves, luring the team to explore further into the unexplored cave, they thought they could find a species of fish that could mimic other animals call's, this could be their last opportunity to find it as the wet season was coming to an end. While looking through the crystal-clear water searching for more fish, they saw flashes of deep purple prancing through the water, the team was perplexed as it didn't look like a fish, it had the shape of a bird. They all looked up because they thought it could have been a mere reflection of glow worms. There was nothing above them, just darkness.

They kept exploring the caves thinking it may have been a hallucination or a picture of their imagination until they saw the same flash of velvet light as it sped underneath their boat, then they heard it, a muffled whistling sound coming from underneath the water.

This had done it for the team, they knew they had found something never seen before. With an infrared camera in hand they ventured through the dark, dank cave in search of the velvet light they caught a glimpse of. They saw this thing they called the "velvet bird" 5 more times, each time they saw it, they got a better photo of it. It had been 3 days since their original discovery of the bird when they caught their first specimen. When they got a closer look, they saw that the creature had gills, wings and a purple velvet complexion with dark feathers that resembled a penguin's clean, shiny and sleek feathers.

They decided to officially name it the "Velvet-Crested Water Sparrow" and after they caught their first bird they left just as the wet season ended and the water levels began to drop lower.

When they presented their discoveries to the government, the government decided that the specimens should be placed in the National Aquarium for the general public to see and admire. The team kindly declined the offer and went back into the caves and released the Water Sparrow back into their natural habitat where they belonged. ■



**Kira Elia**  
Year 8 · St John's  
Regional College

*'Candy dreams'*

# WHAT CONVERSATION DO YOU WANT TO HAVE WITH THE WORLD?

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Thomas Ravis · Year 8 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

What would I tell the world?  
There are so many things.  
What is it like seeing all of us?  
Can you do something to fix our problems?  
To be honest I wouldn't know what to ask the world.  
It is doing all it can.  
But we,  
The people who inhabit this beautiful planet,  
Are slowly destroying it,  
Slowly picking away at it,  
Destroying the only planet in our solar system  
that is strong enough for life to inhabit it.  
So, I would ask it,  
How do you put up with us?  
You are so kind to let us live in you  
But we destroy you from the inside out,  
You don't fight back,  
Even though we are doing all these terrible things  
to you.

I would say, thank you for the beautiful things  
you give us.  
The landscapes that are unique to this planet.  
The rolling fields,  
The running rivers,  
And the grand oceans.  
Thank you for these things,  
The rainbows with all the colours,  
The caves that we can explore,  
The lakes that we can swim in,  
There is no other place in this universe where  
these things exist.  
Thank you, world, for these things.  
Thank you for being,  
Understanding.  
Understanding what we do to you  
Even though we don't do anything to repay you,  
You understand.  
You understand that not all of us  
Pollute your oceans  
And destroy your trees.  
Thank you, world,  
For being  
Everything we could ask for. ■



Rebecca Vladicic  
Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

# WAR

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Nicholas Cifone · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

War!

It changes our emotions  
And causes commotions  
That make people upset.

Babies, mothers, fathers cry  
When all these bullets fly by,  
During the war.

This may be our last breath of fresh air  
Before our lives are toast.  
The air is so polluted  
So we try to reach for the sky  
Before we fry!

Now all we are is poor.  
We pound our fists on the floor  
And ask “WHY is this happening?”  
Can't we just get along?

Boom!  
A tank goes off  
And the war continues.  
Someone please help us!

What is all this fuss,  
These discussions about War?  
Fights about nothing.  
It changes who we are.  
Our positive, happy feelings  
Are now just peeling  
Into dread.

That is what I think of war! ■

# LIVING A NIGHTMARE

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Abuk Chol · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

I hate it, I hate it,  
Telling everyone you're okay  
But deep down you know that the person  
You thought was loving, caring and smart  
But before a blink of an eye they turn into a  
monster.  
  
As you lay there bleeding, covered in bruises  
You still manage to say I'm fine or it's not that  
bad.

As night falls into darkness  
You are cautious about every sound you hear and  
Every movement you make  
Just to keep yourself away from harm  
But yet you still claim you love them.

1800 737 732 the number that will save your life,  
Free you from the darkness and help you know  
that it's okay  
To let someone know when you are not okay.  
1800 737 732. ■

# HOPE

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Ellen Kerr · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

Space. Taken up with friends, taken up with  
girls. Girls much prettier than me. Girls that  
get to see you, every day. Girls that get to talk to  
you, every day. And girls that just generally get to  
be around you, every, single, day.

I don't know why I'm writing this, but I know  
that I just needed to get my feelings out. And one  
way of doing that is to write it down.

Sadness. I feel it a lot. For many different reasons.

Happiness. I feel it a lot. For many different  
reasons.

Fear. I feel it a lot. For many different reasons.

Hope.

Hope is different.

I hope. A lot. I hope for a lot of different things. But  
they're impossible. What I hope for is impossible.

I know that you, are impossible. I know that I,  
am impossible. But even more I see that we, are  
impossible.

You're surrounded by beautiful girls. So I don't  
know why I keep hoping you'll notice me.

I know I'm not perfect. I'm not smart or pretty. But  
I have a heart, and feelings. I see you there, with  
the girls. My sadness comes in and my happiness  
fades. My fear gets worse and my hope...

My hopes gone away.

Feelings overcome me and I sink to the ground in  
defeat. Knowing that I definitely cannot beat. The  
beauty of those girls, the intelligence and light. I  
feel like I've lost. Like I can't stand or fight.

The feelings wash over me like a tsunami crashing  
down on a city and this rush of feelings stay.

All until I see you again.

When you're not surrounded by girls. When you're  
laughing with a friend. When your smile is as  
bright as the sun. And your eyes as deep as rain.

That's when my hope, comes back again. ■

# THE PROTECTED - CREATIVE TASK RESPONSE

Caleigh Aquilina · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

## WEDNESDAY

Today I woke up feeling different from any other day. There's a twist in my stomach. I think, I might actually be looking forward to the day. But that feeling shortly left me as I was walking into school. Some kid called Nick was saying things like, 'What are you up to with our Joshy, aye?' and 'Sez, you're a very talented young lady.' I honestly thought that after Katie died they would stop bullying me for good. But no! I can't even walk through the school gates without someone saying something to make my life more difficult than it already is. Was I wrong to think Josh might actually care for me? I guess he intended for me to be another one of his trophies, that he won, and put on his shelf. After I rushed away from Nick, Josh approached me in the hallway. I told him to leave me alone. Isn't that what you would've said to someone you thought you could trust, betrays you? But he seemed utterly confused. He reached for my hand. I pulled away. Leaving him there. After second period I began my walk to the AG plot. I desperately need some solitude. The yard seemed empty of students, when a sudden cheer roared from the canteen. There's a fight. Josh got suspended. Nick was bleeding.

## FRIDAY

As I turn the corner of AG plot Josh was there. He asks me, 'How come everyone else knows not to trust a f#@ing thing that comes out of Nick's mouth, but not you.' Josh seems really hurt. I had never seen him like this before. I think that this Nick kid really was just being a dickhead. Do you think I should believe Josh? I want to trust him. I've got so many voices going around my head. I don't know which one to listen to. 'Josh. I'm sorry. He got me off guard. Im not...'

'Not what?'

'Not good at trusting people.'

'You don't say'

Josh finally forgave me. I didn't hear the bell ring to signal the end of lunch, Josh convinced me to skip class and go swimming. I didn't agree to go swimming but I went anyways. Josh heads down the track into the gully. When we reach the bottom, he follows a well-worn path that leads to a body of water. Josh climbs to the rocky ledge at the top of the cliff face. I follow reluctantly, determined that I'm definitely not going to swim. Josh runs to the edge and leaps. His body hits the water. He doesn't resurface... I screamed his name. Panic filled my body like a deadly disease. What if he died? Where did he go? I jumped in after him. There's a rush of

wind then the cold water prickles my scalp. My senses go into overdrive. I couldn't see him in the water anywhere. I swim to the surface. Josh emerges from behind a boulder, laughing. At the same time relief and panic continue to fight over who gets control of my body. Panic won. I swim to the edge and sit on the hot sand. My lungs feel like they're being compressed together so that I can't breathe. Josh continued to think it was all a joke. Vomit leaves my system. I felt embarrassed and furious at the same time. How could Josh do that to me? He knew I didn't want to swim and he tricked me anyways. Josh's expression changed from a look of light-heartedness to one of shock as soon as he saw my face. I think he was being sincere ... Maybe he was just joking around and didn't intentionally try to hurt me.

'Han. I'm sorry. I was just kidding around, I didn't expect... Are you ok? I'm sorry.'

He crouched down on the ground next to me and puts an arm around my shoulders and hugs me towards him. Regardless of his actions I can't help but feel safe with him. My head is battling my heart. Can I trust him? Would you?

At that moment, my head goes back in time...

*He opens his bag and pulls out a sausage roll and a carton of chocolate milk. "Where's your lunch"? He asks me.*

*I produce a No Name muesli bar.*

*"Oh man. That's your lunch? That's all you got"?*

*"There was no food left in the house. Again".*

*"Someone tell World Vision. You could be a sponsor child. Here". He breaks the sausage roll in two and hands me half.*

I can't help but trust him, after what he's done for me. He gives me food; Asks if I'm ok, and looks out for me; Like when we ran into each other at Westfield and he walked me to the train station, waited till I had got on the train and made sure I was ok before he left.

I had to re-analyse my list.

## REASONS TO TRUST JOSH CHAMBERLIN VS WHY NOT

Trust him because

- He keeps me company
- He understands me
- He cares about my wellbeing
- He makes me laugh

- I feel safe with him
- He asks me if I'm ok
- Makes sure I'm not rushed into anything I don't want to/ makes sure I don't feel pressured
- Helps me build my confidence
- Makes me live a little more
- Keeps my best intentions at heart
- Knows what I need/what's best for me
- Doesn't judge me based on other people's opinions the list continues on

Don't trust him because

- His friends with the clones (technically he doesn't like the clones, so do you think this really counts? He only tolerates them because he's popular which is understandable I guess.)

Or maybe it's because of my own insecurities from the past that I'm unwilling to trust him. He isn't another Tara or Amy.

I've decided that I'm going to trust him, it wasn't fair of me to back away and judge him based on what other people might have or might not have said. It might not have even been true, they could've been lying right? Nick was being childish and immature, Josh would never say that about me. And when he was playing around at the gully he was only trying to have some fun, he didn't intentionally try to make me feel that way or make me react the way I did. He didn't force me to jump in or feel embarrassed. He basically has only given me 2 reasons not to trust him. They weren't even major, just a miscommunication. That doesn't even count! Regardless of his minor flaws, I believe Josh actually does care about me. The fact that he didn't judge me based on the opinions of the clones is proof enough. I need to learn to trust him and have faith in him that he won't hurt me. He's the only one who's seen me for me, and still wants to be a part of my life. I need him. He is one of the only people I can rely on.

Hannah McCann ■



Nicholas Reynolds  
Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak

# IT'S NOTHING LIKE BEFORE

Agnes Alumbula · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

No one knows that's the worst part. I don't mean that they haven't been told what happened. They weren't there they weren't the ones to let it happen, they don't have to live with this painful image in their minds. For the past three years I've managed to put on a brave face, going through life with my little sister like nothing ever happened. When I look in the mirror I see someone with a mask on, someone that's living a life they never wanted to live.

My name's Zari, and my little sister is Jess. Three years ago my country was involved in a tragic war.

Early one morning we woke up like normal, my dad left for work and my mum got us ready for school, whiles we were getting ready for school we started hearing people screaming and crying outside, my mum quickly pushed us in her room and told us to stay there and not move. I got my little sister and we went under the bed, the noise was getting louder and louder and my little sister started crying. I tried calming her down but she couldn't stop. When mum did not come back I started getting worried so I left my sister under the bed and went to peep outside the window. I couldn't believe what I was seeing, people were dying, children crying, women getting pulled and taken away by soldiers, people's hands getting cut off and soldiers everywhere.

I felt my heart drop. I didn't want to start crying because of my little sister, so I told her to stay under the bed no matter what. I went outside and started looking for my mum and she was nowhere to be found. As I was looking I saw my dad so I ran up to him and when he saw me he told me that I should go back and that I should stay inside and not get out. I ran back home and when I got there the door was wide open. I stepped in and saw two big soldiers with my little sister in-between them. My heart dropped and I started to shout for my dad but he couldn't hear me. The soldiers pulled me inside and told me to be quiet and if I talk I would die so I sat down and was quiet.

## THREE HOURS LATER

My mum comes and sees us in-between the soldiers and she drops down and starts to cry. At that point we couldn't do anything because we had cloths around our mouths that was preventing us from talking. All she could see is tears falling down our eyes and she started begging the soldiers to let us go.

The soldiers told her, "if you want us to let go of your kids you will need to come with us willingly and suffer the fate of your people."

My mum obliged and the soldiers let us go. Mum quickly ran up to us, gave us a big hug and kiss and told us that everything is going to be okay and that we should take care of each other. As the soldiers dragged my mother away I couldn't help but have the urge to follow them. I quickly pushed my sister under the bed and told her to not move and I ran after my mother. As I followed my mum I could see her get pushed into a cage that was full of women and men. I was trying to run as fast as I could so I could get into the cage as well. They started driving off but I didn't give up because the car was not driving fast enough. I ran and followed the car. The car came to a stop some place full of soldiers. I quickly hid so I could see where they were going to take my mum. The soldiers started to drag people out of the cage then I saw them, MUM, DAD!

My heart dropped but I couldn't do anything but cry and watch them suffer, only so that my sister and I can live. The soldiers ordered all the people to stand in a line. I saw a man walk up with a gun I couldn't believe what I was seeing, he told everyone to put their hands up. He then started killing them one at a time. After he shot my mum and dad I quickly ran back home and as I was running everything seemed really quiet. There was no more noise and it was around 6pm when I got home.

I found my little sister sleeping under the bed and that's when I started asking myself questions "How are we going to survive?" "What do I do?" "How do I explain to Jess what happened?" As I was asking myself these questions I heard a voice in my head telling me that everything is going to be okay.

Then this weird thing happened, I started talking back to the voice saying, "nothing is okay." It was at this time I felt like God has forgotten about us, as I was talking back to the voice my little sister woke up and came and hugged me, "are we okay?"

"We are fine. Everything is going to be okay," I told her.

## THE NEXT DAY

I hear a knock on the door and I tell my sister to hide. I open the door and a man was telling us to take all our belongings and that we were going to a safe place, a place that there won't be any war, a place we won't need to suffer. The man said, "You are going to Australia."

I quickly tell my sister and we grab everything we needed, the man tells us to enter the car and that we should not be worried, that we are safe.

Now my sister Jess and I live in Australia, Melbourne. Jess is about to graduate from high school and I'm about to graduate from Uni. It was a long ride to get to where we are but by God's grace and by pushing ourselves we made it. What motivates us every day is, "When bad things happen you have three choices, you can either let define you, let it destroy you or you can let it strengthen you". ■

## DRIFTWOOD

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Hayley Ferris · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

**T**he water is swallowing me up. The cannons are firing. I have yet to hear a call out for...

"Man Over Board!" But right before my eyes, the ship began to sink and bits of wood started flying everywhere as the ship burst into flames. As I turn to see what struck it, what we were firing at, but what struck our ship was another ship... A pirate ship. There I am, the only survivor of the shipwreck. Just holding on to a bit of wood from the wreck. Drifting. Drifting with no food or water. Just drifting, with a low chance of survival.

I see the sky, now it is black. As I gain and lose consciousness. It just became a flicker of light and darkness. I sit up screaming and it all stops, the flickering, the consciousness, it stopped. It had been days now, since the wreck. I'm hungry, tired, cold, and my skin is starting to go soggy. The sea salt has dried my mouth and it burns my dry lips. There is no land in sight and I'm losing energy. A fish swims past me so I jab my hands into the water. "Darn it" I mumble in rage as I didn't catch it. I lay down on the wood and my feet become soggy in the water. Fish start to gnaw at my soggy flesh and I dip my hands in the water to catch one. I pull out a fish, I haven't seen this type of fish before but I inhale it anyway, I am that hungry.

Days pass by, as dying of starvation is near. Bags are around my emerald green eyes but there is still no land in sight. I pass out hoping if I died in this state it wouldn't hurt as much. But when I awake there are multiple sharks around me. My fiery red hair, whipped, me in the face as I stand up in panic I immediately fall down again as my energy levels are low and I am weak. My vision goes foggy and I know that I might pass out, if I do I'll be eaten, but looks like I'm going to get eaten either way as one of the sharks speed towards me. I lose all hope and just lay there on the oak plank. I feel teeth penetrate the first layer of my skin and I cry out in pain. But the shark's jaws don't clamp together, it's taking me somewhere. I realise I had passed out again as I awake to land in sight. My skin delicate, soggy and flimsy and I can no longer feel the shark's teeth. But I soon lose consciousness...again.

I wake on shore, with the waves lapping at my side. My vision is flickering again as a blurred figure comes into view. I am suddenly warm, dry and fed. Beep.....Beep.....Beep.....Beep..... The monitor goes. I'm awake now, well rested not hungry. Beep.....Beep.....Beep. I'm on land I'm grateful to Zeus for protecting me from Hades and his underworld. I also thank Poseidon for the shark who took me here. As I believe in the Greek Gods and Goddesses." Thankyou" ■

# SHOW ME YOUR SCARS

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Sarah Clewer · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

## One.

He was at school and she wasn't. She was on the side of the road and needed some food. Just before she crossed, a man ran behind her and pushed.

She grazed her knees and lost almost every layer of skin on her kneecap.

*Three stitches in the left knee.*

## Two.

She had just lost her mother. He was sitting an exam. All she wanted was to die. She was on the bridge and looking at the road. The cars raced by below, a stream of red and silver. If she just took one more step, everything would be over.

"Miss, what are you doing?" She turned at the call. Her foot slipped, and she fell. She could hear him calling out to her, but she didn't care. This was what she wanted.

*Ten stitches in her side and five in her arm. She was away from school for weeks.*

## Three.

He was at his finals and she wasn't. She hadn't been to enough classes. She'd dropped out. This time she was standing in front of her bathroom mirror, a blade in her hand. She was slowly squeezing it, revelling in the warmth of blood running down her palm.

Her aunty rushed into the room and pulled the blade out of her hand. It had almost touched the bone.

*Six stitches in her palm.*

## Four.

She was at their shared home and he was at uni. She was moving a glass bowl and tripped. The bowl shattered, and she fell on top of the glass.

*Eight stitches in her back, two for each cut of the glass.*

## Five.

A knife and her wrist. Need more be said?

*No stitches, just a scar.*

## Six.

Her auntie's funeral. A glass bottle and one too many drinks.

*Six stitches in her other palm.*

## Seven.

She was in church. Alone. Her head hurt. She ran her finger along the scars on her hands and wrist. Then she ran her finger along the scar-free wrist. She raised her head.

*No stitches, but a fresh scar.*

## Eight.

They'd broken up. She'd stepped on three shards of glass. Her head pounded. A look in mirror told her everything.

*Four stitches in her forehead.*

"Caitlyn! Wait up!" She turned, hair sweeping across the scar on her forehead. He was running toward her, out of breath.

"Hi, Joel. What's wrong?" She leaned forward to peer into his face. He had bent down breathless as soon as he caught up. He looked tired.

"Caitlyn, I've realised something very important. I still love you, even if you are terribly quiet. Will you stay with me?" She brushed her blonde hair from her eyes, ensuring it covered her scar. Her fingerless gloves hid the other four. She was wearing a long-sleeved shirt and her jeans covered her knee.

"I'll give us another chance. But I don't want anything to ruin us, not again." He smiled, then took her hand. She felt the pressure of his hand on her scar, and for once it felt right.

## Nine.

Her depression returned. He was at work, and she was walking. A dog ran past her, barking its head off, and she followed it. A low hanging branch caught her cheek. It struck deep.

*One stitch in her cheek.*

## Ten.

She was at home and he was at work again. She was watching Peter Pan. A noise made her pause the movie and look around. A robber was in her

house, brandishing a knife. She tried to scare him into dropping the knife, but he turned too quickly, and she caught the knife with her elbow.

*Five stitches in her left elbow.*

She had almost had enough. She had a gun, and the door was locked. Everything was right, he was shopping, and she was alone. Her plans just weren't fully thought through.

"Caitlyn? I think the door's jammed. Caitlyn?" He had gotten home early. She rolled her eyes and sighed. Closing her eyes, she tried to ignore his voice.

The key turned in the lock. The doorknob turned. The door opened. His footsteps. A warm hand on her wrist.

"Dear Lord, Caitlyn. What are you doing?" Taking the gun, he put it on the table, out of her reach. Taking hold of her shoulders, he looked into her eyes.

"Caitlyn, talk to me. What's wrong?" A tear rolled down her cheek. She touched her fingers to her wedding ring, then felt for his. Sighing, she opened her eyes and looked into his intense green ones.

"Joel, you wouldn't understand." She shrugged his hands off her shoulders and stood up.

Walking to their room, she sat on the bed and waited for him to follow her. He walked into the room and opened the curtains. Then he sat beside her and put his arm around her shoulders.

"You know, I always thought you had small shoulders. Even when we were kids, I would think, 'hey, that girl's shoulders are tiny'." She smiled. He pressed his lips to her shoulder.

"If you don't talk to me, I'll never understand." She turned to look at him, then sighed.

"I'm tired of this life. Nothing interesting is going on, and I'm horribly clumsy." He chuckled. "Joel, please let me do this. I just don't see why I need to

keep living when fate so obviously wants me to stop. You don't know how many times you weren't there for me." He took her face in his hands.

"Show me your scars," he said.

"But... Why?" she asked quizzically.

"I want to see how many times you needed me and I wasn't there," he whispered, a tear rolling down his cheek.

Her eyes widened, then she nodded slightly and picked up a hairclip from the bedside table. She pinned back her hair, showing the scar on her forehead. She used a wipe and cleaned the makeup off her face. She removed the makeup from her hands and wrists, took off her blouse, and removed her tracksuit pants. Then she took off her socks and lifted her feet.

His eyes widened as he took in the scars.

Forehead.

Cheek.

Wrists.

Hands.

Elbow.

Side.

Knee.

Foot.

She turned so he could see her back. His hands traced the four scars spanning her shoulder blades.

"My God." She looked at him, tears brimming in both their eyes. He took hold of her hand and kissed the scar on her palm, then kissed the scar on her wrist, keeping eye contact the whole time. Unspoken words that said everything. She could see now he wasn't going to leave, and he wished he had been there. She pulled him into a close embrace and whispered into his ear.

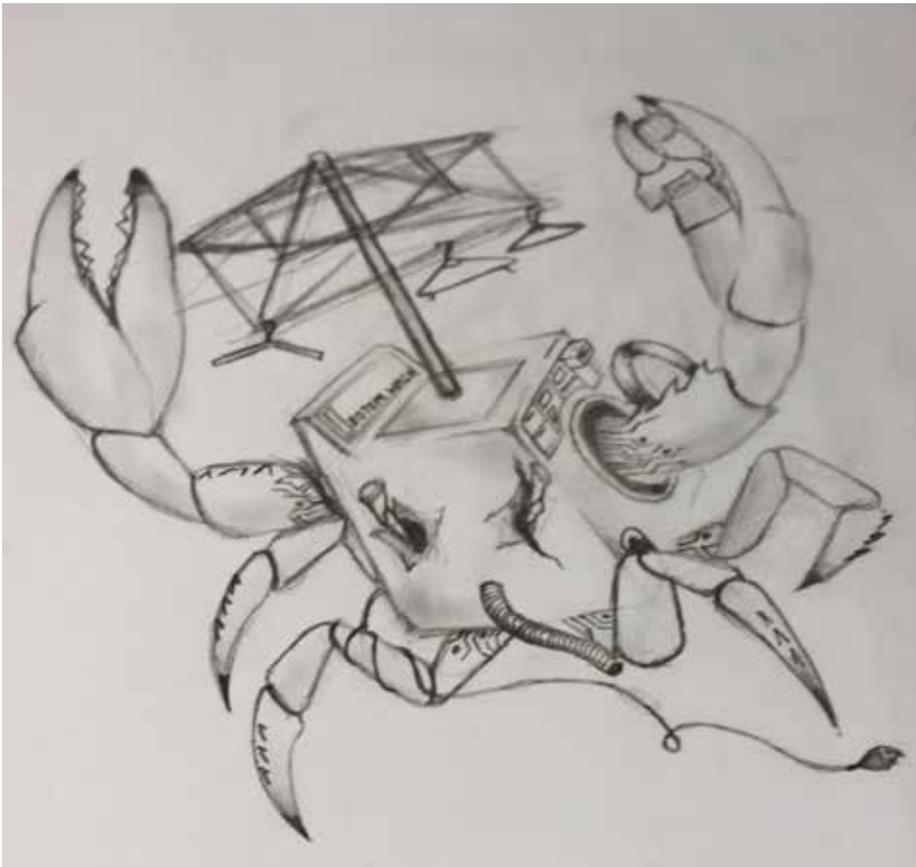
"Thank you." ■

# MELBOURNE CENTRAL MAYHEM

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Jude Collins · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Melbourne Central,  
The home of mayhem,  
Push, shove, push, shove,  
The constant movement flows,  
Bang!  
Someone's tripped.  
Waaaaaah!  
A baby cries in the distance for its milk,  
Melbourne Central consumes the noises  
And carries on. ■



**Sam Duong**  
Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'The Lost Thing', Graphite on paper*



**Oscar Hodgetts**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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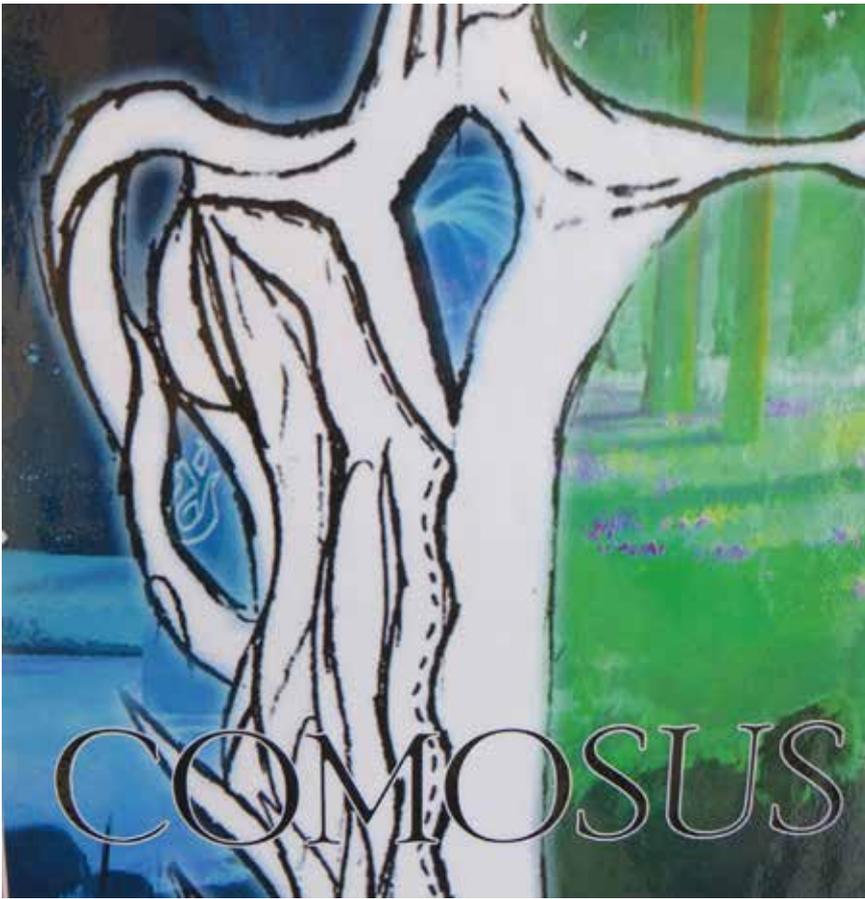
*'Archimboldo Self-Portrait',  
Watercolour and Ink on paper*



**Reynard Phoadi**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Everyday Still Life',  
Fineliner on paper*



**Elvin Tran**  
*Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Adventure Game Cover Design',  
Digital print*



**Getanhe Haile**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Simply Melbourne', Linocut on cartridge*



**Aiden Gee**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Frankenstein monster', Mixed Media*



**James Blay**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Lest We Forget', Watercolour and Etching on cartridge*



**Ollie Bulbeck**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College,  
Toorak*



**Matthew Pressutto**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College,  
Toorak*



**Cameron Sweeney**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



**Will Wright**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



**Daniel Smith**  
*Year 10 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



**John Dommissie**  
*Year 11 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



Christopher Johnson  
Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak



Aiden Posterino  
Year 7 · St Kevin's College, Toorak



**Andy Duong**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



**Siena Gittus**  
*Year 11 · Star of the Sea College*



Tamsyn Higgins  
*Year 11 · Star of the Sea College*



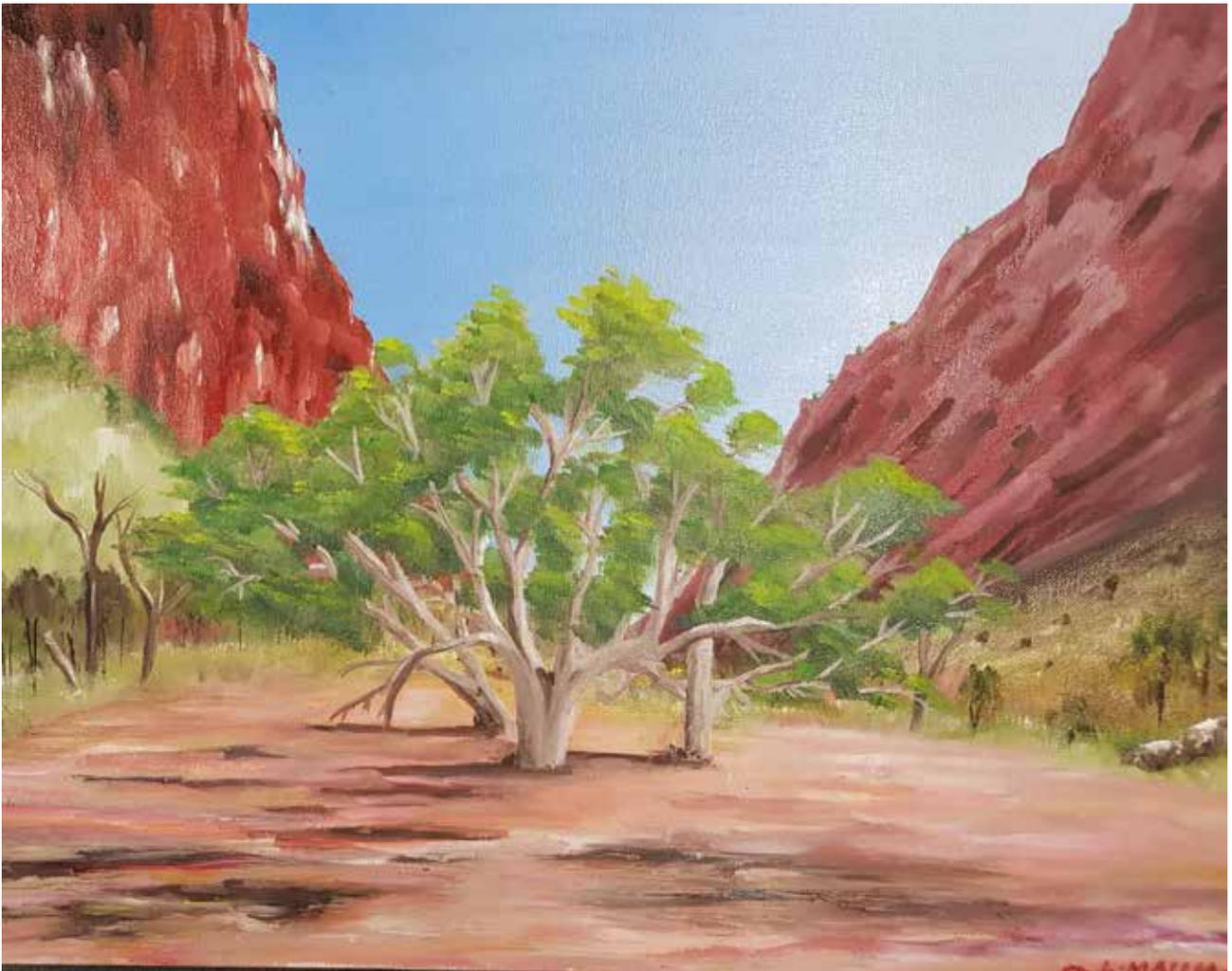
**Xavier Wray-McCann**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

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*'My place', Studio Arts*

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This artwork is of the land where I live in the outer east near Saint Andrews, where there are rolling hills, bush and streams. This area in particular is very peaceful and tranquil to me and I love coming to this place ever since I was a child. I have tried to capture the serenity, and the feeling of space, peace and quiet.



**Luke Mallia**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

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*'Australian oasis', Studio Arts*

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My theme is the exploration of landscape and different places that I have travelled to around Australia with my family. I chose locations and spaces which I felt were iconic and uniquely Australian. I wanted to capture the beauty and light of this particular place and the peace and tranquillity that was felt when I visited it with my family.

# RICH IN LOVE

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Antoinette Negline · Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

In 1948, my Nonno fell in love at my Great Uncle's wedding. He was nearly nineteen when he first saw my Nonna from across the room. She was only thirteen. Knowing it was unorthodox to speak to her in front of her family, he waited until after the wedding where he found her in their town. However, after they were spotted alone together, they were only able to spend time with each other when others were around. During the two or three years that my Nonno was banned from my Nonna's home, she refused many potential suitors as she only wanted to marry for love.

After my Nonna's fifteenth birthday, my Nonno travelled to a town in the province of Salerno for a pilgrimage where he found a small silver ring with a single stone delicately placed at the centre. Thinking of my Nonna, he bought it for her. On his return to Montemurro he gave it to my Nonna's friend with the intention that she would pass it on secretly. My Nonna wore it all the time but her mother, Carmela, grew suspicious when she saw it. Knowing the consequences of telling her mother the truth, my Nonna lied when she was constantly questioned, always repeating the same story that she "found it outside in the rubbish". My great grandmother was furious because she knew that such a ring would not be found in the bin, especially in their poor town. Her lies were not believed and even though she was punished with a slap, she refused to tell anyone who gave it to her.

In July of that year at wheat cutting, Nonna's father, Vito, approached my Nonno and told him that there could be a possibility that he and my Nonna could formally court after Nonno's return from the army. Vito loved my Nonno and was happy for them to court earlier but his wife, my Nonna's mother, was unyielding. Upon receiving this news, my Nonno sought out my Nonna and when he finally found her, he confronted her, asking what it was she wanted. She didn't answer him; she was too afraid she'd get into more trouble. But he insisted that he loved her and she loved him, despite her silence. He was so convinced they were destined to be together that he proclaimed his love for her in front of the townspeople. Together, they found her parents, where he threatened my Great-Grandmother that if she said no to their courtship, the two of them would elope. Knowing well that they would do it, her parents then agreed to invite him to their home for their first formal date.

At the age of twenty-one, my Nonno enlisted in the army; he trained in the small towns of Posano and Gorizia. While he was away he would write to my Nonna. But with every letter sent there was no reply.

Confusion consumed his thoughts to the point where he asked permission from his Captain to return to Montemurro for at least 10 days. Upon arriving, my Nonno discovered that my Nonna was not allowed to reply to his letters. He insisted that his parents went to visit her mother and father to formally ask for them to court with the intention of marrying. The morning of his return to the army, Nonno visited Nonna and much to her surprise he kissed her on the staircase outside her house. Everyone was outraged, kissing was considered disrespectful both to her and her family. She was punished and could not write to him for three months.

After serving his time in the army, my Nonno returned to Montemurro. On his journey home, my Nonno purchased an emerald green jumper for my Nonna which she just adored. Afraid my Nonna would sneak out to meet with him, she was always chaperoned either by her parents, younger sister or by one of her aunts.

On 27 April 1955, my Nonno and Nonna married. For their honeymoon, they went to Calabria for two days. My Grandparents knew that they needed to find a better life, so they could make their dreams a reality, but they had no money or jobs – none of their ambitions would be possible if they stayed in Montemurro. Together they decided that my Nonno would travel to Australia alone.

On June 1955, 40 days after they married, my Nonno left his beloved wife and travelled from Potenza to Rome where he would continue his journey from Naples to Melbourne by ship, La Roma. My Nonno often tells me that while on the boat, the weather was terrible and he was terrified to arrive in an unknown place. When he arrived in Australia, my Nonno waited at Port Melbourne dock for his friend who was supposed to meet him, but his friend was sick so he was stranded until the evening, left with only an address and knowing no English other than 'thank you and 'hello'.

However he was found sitting at the dock by an old friend who came from the same town as my Nonno. His friend took my Nonno to his home where he was united with some other men from Montemurro. He stayed eight days at their house before transferring to Mildura, where he was sponsored by his godfather to pick fruit and olives on farms. He worked day and night, trying to earn as much money as he could so that he could reunite with his family. It took my Nonno two years to learn how to speak English properly. His friends would write down translations for him so when he would go to the shop he was able to communicate with others.



*L-R: This is my Nonna at age 18, shortly after she married my Nonno; This is my Nonna, Nonno and my Uncle Rocco on the ship from Italy to Melbourne in 1963; This is a photo of my Nonno and me today.*

Once in Mildura, he received a letter from my Nonna announcing the news of her pregnancy. When speaking to my Nonno, he tells me this was so hard, having to choose whether he should return back to be with his pregnant wife or to stay. He had a hard time adjusting in Australia. He was teased for being a foreigner. But he knew he had to stay, because as a husband and now a father, he had the responsibility to protect and provide for his family.

On 24 January 1956, my Uncle Rocco was born, named after his paternal grandfather. My Nonna wrote to my Nonno by letter to tell him of the news but it took three weeks to arrive in Mildura. When he found out, he was overwhelmed with emotions of happiness and sadness, as he did not know when he would meet his son.

Years passed and from picking fruit in Mildura, my Nonno also began working and building railways in 1961. He worked constantly, rising at dawn and finishing at dusk so he could send money to his little family.

In the December of 1961, Nonno returned to Italy and met his son for the first time at the port in Naples. They stayed in Italy from 1961 to 1963 when he brought back Nonna and Uncle Roc to Australia. They arrived in Melbourne by Ship "The Sydney" on 24 February 1963. He'd made the decision not to return to Mildura but to set-up a new life with his family in Fitzroy. They lived with his sister and brother-in-law and then purchased their own home in Carlton. My Nonno worked on the roads and my Nonna worked in a shoe factory. As they worked constantly, my uncle at the age of 7 had to become more independent.

Even though they were united as a family, they did not feel complete. My Nonno and Nonna still felt sorrow as they would receive letters from my Nonno's siblings informing them of their struggle to survive in Montemurro. Together, my Nonno and Nonna came to the decision that they would sponsor some of them to come to Australia so they too could have a better life.

Years passed and together, the seven of them decided to surprise my great grandfather with a trip to Australia. The siblings had been separated from their parents for a total of 65 years. A photo of their family reunion was published in 'Il Globo' newspaper.

In 1967 my mother was born, she was named after her paternal grandmother, Carmela. My grandparents decided that they wanted to do something special not only for their children but for their future grandchildren. When my uncle finished school, he began to work as a fitter and turner with the railways. The three of them saved money and worked so hard to save for another house that we could all use. They bought a holiday house for us and I have spent my holidays there since I can remember. It is a place I feel most connected to my family and especially to my Nonna.

On 28 July 2005, my family was living in Sydney and my Nonno, Nonna, uncle and aunty came to Sydney for my younger sister's baptism. My Nonna died that night while she was standing in front of the sink cleaning dishes. She died the way she wished, without pain. I can still remember the sirens from the ambulance and the crying from that night.

My Nonno always tells me that he talks to her every night through his dreams. He is comforted in knowing that she is watching over him. My entire family, celebrates my Nonno and Nonna and I do not think any of us will ever forget the struggle and journey he went through to be with her, the sacrifices they made to provide for their whole family and their lineage with a better life. I dream of her sometimes as well and I miss her with all my heart.

I know she's proud of the type of people my uncle and mum have come to be and that she acts as a guardian angel for us all. The love my Nonno and Nonna shared was unconditional and inspirational. A love that strengthens the bond of my family. ■

# IN SEARCH OF GOLD

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India Rowe · Year 11 · *Star of the Sea College*

Ever since he was a little boy, the rich man had been in search of the extraordinary. It was a trend started by his glamorous parents, his mother with her sleek black hair and pearls hanging from every possible place on her gentle yet powerful body, and his father who only smiled his breathtakingly warm smile when he was away from home with his family. More often than not in his childhood the rich man had not attended school, in favour of being whisked away by his parents to the farthest corners of the world in search of new treasures to become their personal wonders of the world. It felt as though the world turned for them alone, and the planet that was merely inhabited by others, was to them a shining gift bestowed on them by God himself.

By the time he was fourteen, the rich man had walked alongside fantastical creatures across the sunburnt plains of wild Africa, had gazed from balconies overlooking Rome and laughed to see the people like ants going about their day, while he sat knowingly above them, and had walked through the temples of ancient Japan, dining under the watchful eyes of the old Gods, whose legacy his family had taken it upon themselves to continue. It seemed as though sunlight followed the boy wherever he went, dappling over the oceans, peeking through the jungle leaves, to the point where even when it set he could still feel it in the wild, exciting nights of his youth.

He even completed his scant schooling in the finest of places. The halls of his prestigious old school were more akin to a cathedral with their sweeping walls and high colored windows and the rich man had spent most of his schooling surrounding himself with this beauty instead of learning. When he was sent out into the world the only thing he knew was to carry on his parents' legacy and continue to soak up the beauty of the world, traveling far and wide until he could find something more perfect than his golden childhood.

But the longer he searched, the more empty perfection became. The more he longed for bright, turbulent nights to be merely black and silent. He looked at the flawless lines of his hard, cold face

that he inherited from his mother and wished for something more homely, that people would talk to on the street instead of averting their eyes the way one would shield themselves from the light of the sun. One by one, the lights of his childhood faded, until even his childhood home seemed too heartless for him to be in.

Once again, he fled, but this time he found himself in a strange place. It didn't glow like the places he was used to. The weather was humid and he sweated through his tailor-made clothes, and the air smelled like sewage in the crowded city, where the poor lined the streets, trying to make a living any way they could. The language they spoke was harsh and loud, completely unlike the flowing, musical tones of his own native tongue, and the noise from the people in the densely packed hit him like a wall every time he stepped out of his cool, crisp hotel. He had come here once as a child, but not to this place that was raw and tough like the man he had never learned to be.

And yet, soon the rich man found himself come to love this city of sound and sweat. The more he looked, the more he came to see the vibrancy of this city. The sounds, the smells and the air itself made it seem alive, the people pumping through its veins like life blood. He begun to see the determination of the youth here, to make something of themselves, to achieve and to prosper, and it in turn drove him. The day he checked out of his hotel room, he bought an apartment, a small musty thing but it was the first time he had stayed somewhere peaceful and permanent that was truly his. Slowly but surely the sounds of the city became music to him, and the language of his new home became more familiar on his tongue than his old one. He felt himself become strong as he joined in the race to become better, and found companionship among people, the smile that became commonplace on his lips began to draw lines on his face.

He had come to this place as a child, but he hadn't looked hard enough for the extraordinary here. Perfection wasn't motionless, it wasn't a still pool but rather a flowing river. It was golden, just not in the way he thought it should be. ■



**Eve Pearson**  
*Year 4 · Christ Our Holy Redeemer Primary School, East Oakleigh*

# THE OTHER SIDE

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Pia Perini · Year 8 · Siena College

The grass is always greener on the other side: this refers to the way we tend to look at other people's lives and other things that we don't have in general. It comes from the idea of looking at a neighbour's lawn and seeing it as better looking, healthier and overall greener than your own. However, in reality you're just simply ignoring anything negative about it and downplaying everything positive about yours.

It's not that I'm ungrateful – well, everyone can be a little selfish at times – but that isn't it. I really, truly believe that my neighbours must have had some help with their grass, because no matter what way I looked at it, it always – always – seemed greener than my own.

Adriana Lewis. She was my neighbour. She was the kind of girl who people loved. She was gorgeous with her sleek black hair, small button nose, great sweeping eyelashes, piercing blue eyes and the most perfect eyebrows you've ever seen. She was pretty, no way around it. She was also popular, which is something to be expected of a girl like her. All the boys loved her and most of the girls too. It's not that she wasn't a nice person. I wouldn't know at all. She probably wouldn't even know my name if it wasn't for the fact that I lived next door to her. She was pleasant in the halls at school like the rest of them – nodding hello or offering a small smile. But for some reason I didn't like this girl. Probably because her grass was greener than mine.

I had a nice small group of friends at school that were kind, but especially boring. I never had sleepovers and I never told anyone my secrets. I wasn't like other girls who had two best friends and laughed loudly all the time. I was quiet. But I wasn't unhappy. I was content... or so I thought. It wasn't all that long ago when I stumbled across this phrase about people's grass, but ever since my perspective on things changed. For the worse.

Of course, there were some people's lives that I could see were worse off than my own. It probably makes me a bad person to say that it made me feel better about myself, but it did. I spent more time dwelling on the thought of people who were better. There's a word for this I believe: jealousy. Yes, I was jealous when I saw Adriana and her friends. I was jealous when I saw other kids with the latest phone. I was jealous when someone got a higher score on the test than me. It wasn't their fault: I could've studied harder for the test or saved some money to buy myself a phone, but that wasn't the point of jealousy. Jealously is meant to make you feel bad.

And so the days went on of me feeling sorry for myself. Envy gnawed at my insides, making me feel worse and worse as time passed by. So just like that,

I decided that if the grass was greener on the other side, I guess I was prepared to find out.

Slowly I started to etch my way into Adriana's inner circle. I started from the outside, making friends with girls who barely knew her, until at lunches I would sit next to Adriana herself. Although I had to fake it a tad for her to really like me, I didn't mind all that much. I enjoyed her company. She was kind and funny and it seemed like she liked me a lot. The jealousy started to fade.

It was one evening in June when completely out of the blue, Adriana asked me if I wanted to come to her house after school. It was no stress either way, she claimed, but she looked nervous so I politely said yes. It was about 4:30 when Adriana's mother arrived home from work, and after some easy discussion it was decided that I would stay for dinner, too. The afternoon passed pleasantly and I found myself liking Adriana more and more. I also realised that I was letting down my fake wall of jealousy and becoming more like myself, not that Adriana noticed nor cared. Dinner was pleasant and the food was great, I made conversation with Adriana's parents and we laughed. She really has it all, I thought happily. After, I offered to help clean, although I was brushed away politely. Upstairs later in Adriana's room, I was about to bid her farewell when a bowl fell to the ground and shattered loudly. Screaming and shouting emerged from the kitchen below as Adriana and I crept down the stairs softly. The shouting grew angry and Adriana started to sob quietly. We went back upstairs.

I settled her down and she started to explain. She said her parents fought like that often, though usually not when guests were around. She thought they were going to get a divorce. When she was calm I slid out the back door for home. I thought deeply to myself on the short walk home. Maybe not everyone has it all, all of the time. My school life certainly wasn't as glamorous as hers, but I did have parents who loved each other.

Maybe I was wrong about the grass always being greener on the other side. The thing about the grass is that I chose to ignore the possibility that Adriana wasn't happy at home. I completely forgot all the things that were positive in my own life. Once you accept the fact that some people have it tough, you can really appreciate your own life and start to be grateful for what you do have, rather than wishing for what you don't have.

So I guess this is my answer: the grass is almost never always greener on the other side. If you think it is, maybe take a look at your own grass, because in reality it's probably not all that bad either. ■

# UNRAVELLING

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*Zoe Kelly · Year 9 · Siena College*

They say he's just quiet,  
Closed-off,  
Reserved,  
But unless they look closer  
They'll never see  
The cracks that are beginning to show,  
Spiderweb thin,  
Encircling.  
But instead of raindrops,  
They catch his tears,  
Tears that glint like tiny stars,  
Where no one else can see.  
Because the others,  
They overlook the things that really matter,  
And they'll never realise just how broken he  
is inside.

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The ground surges far beneath me,  
Sky spiralling into darkness,  
A void of emptiness,  
Of despair.  
I curl my toes over the cliff face,  
Balancing,  
Caught between two worlds that will never  
accept me.  
One step,  
One slight movement,  
And my fragile existence would shatter.  
Everything could slip away.  
So I hold on.  
I stay,  
For all that I've lost. ■

# FREE AS THE FLOCK

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Sienna Justus · Year 8 · Siena College

I wish I could be as free as the flock of birds passing overhead. For now I just sit in the fogged up bus stop watching the traffic speed past me. I wonder where they are going. Do they have somewhere better to be? While I'm just stuck with my depressing thoughts looming over me.

I see the bus turning around the corner, and I stand; it drives past me. Am I really this invisible? I stand in the freezing air, so cold, it chills my hands until they turn purple and numb. Waiting. That's all I can do, wait.

I call people to see if I can talk to someone, anyone. No one picks up. The rubber of the car wheels scratch against the frozen asphalt as I cower down and retreat back into the stop.

People start accumulating around the stop as another stone cold half hour passes by. The boy beside my ruffles his golden brown hair as the rap music leaks out of his headphones. I look up and see the bus. Finally it's here.

I get on and hope that I don't come face to face with Cole. He's always on the bus, picking on vulnerable people. I'm always the target. I'm just trying to fit in with the average 16 year olds, but I just can't.

I see him, and instantly my heart rate rises. I didn't choose my anxiety. I wish I could choose. I look down at my phone trying to avoid him. "Stop 56" I get off the bus as fast as a can, watching what I think is him, speed past through the shadowed windows of the bus.

Shortly after I hear his voice from behind me. "Connor," I hear him taunt. "Why won't you talk to me Connor?" I remain silent, to not cause any trouble. He is always like this; the same every day.

"Is your boyfriend here, Connor?" he flicks his dishevelled black hair off his face and follows me down the path; cackles of his friends laughter taunting me from behind. I wish Thea or Luke would catch the bus today. They left me stranded here with these homophobic scum.

I eventually get to school, ceaselessly having to ignore him on the way here; the constant taunting and teasing bouncing around my head, replaying, again and again, causing my heart to race and my stomach churn. I try to find room and shove my bag in my disorderly locker. I sit down with my sketchbook and put in my headphones. I play my music and begin to draw. It's my only way to escape the daunting reality of my life. I just get lost in the drawings. I soon feel free of all my worries, life returns to how it's supposed to be.

Just as I finally feel myself settle, I hear Cole from a distance. "Hey, Connor." I hear the menacing snickers from down the hall. I stay silent trying to remain unseen, but something clicks, and I just can't take it anymore.

"I'm done with your rubbish, Cole." I hesitantly rise, regretting my decision to speak.

"Thanks, I'm flattered, but not interested as I am straight. Scram."

I quickly gather my art and run. As fast as I can. Just run. I find another bench and sit down. I tend to get this sadness when I'm alone, with nothing to do. Almost as if a dark cloud passes over the top of me. Warm tears roll down my cheeks and my feelings become too strong to ignore. I never cry at school. It's embarrassing, it draws attention. That's exactly what I don't want. I see Thea and Luke chatting in the distance. I take off my glasses to wipe my eyes and rid my face of any evidence suggesting I ever shed a tear.

"Connor!" I hear the joyful calls of my friends from the hall. I frantically gather my things and close my sketch book to conceal my terrible drawings. "What's wrong?" Thea wraps her arm around my shoulders. She knows me too well. A little too well.

"What's up Con Con?" I hate when Luke calls me that. It's one of those names that's so stupid you laugh at it. He knows that. It makes me crack a smile.

"Nothing." I whisper.

"Did Aaron ask you out?" Thea says, making direct eye contact with me.

I try to swallow the flutter of self-consciousness that rises within me at the mention of his name. We all start laughing. Aaron. Where do I even begin? I could get lost in his brilliant blue eyes. I can't even begin to imagine what it would be like to be his boyfriend; seeing his face every day.

"Hey, I know you were thinking about him!" Thea snaps me back to the sad reality of my lonely life.

"Yeah, I was" I admit it. I can't even hide it anymore.

"Shoot he's right there" Luke whispers.

I look over my shoulder and there he is; at his locker with his perfectly tousled hazelnut brown hair.

"Hi guys!" He walks over to our table. Oh god. What do I do? I awkwardly fix my hair and adjust my collar. Nice one Connor. Real smooth.

“Hi Aar...” my voice cracks in the middle of the sentence. “Oh my god I’m like, a 12 year old boy I can’t even speak.” Good one. Just ruined my chance of ever being with him.

“Come with me Connor”. He waves me over and we begin walking away.

Thea and Luke are being idiots making faces and laughing at us. Us. We go around the back of the school, jogging out to the back of the oval and

we finally get there. We are both puffing as we approach a large oak tree. We fall onto the luscious grass. Together. I prop myself up onto one elbow and before I knew it, our eyes locked. It made me feel self-conscious but I couldn’t look away even if I wanted too. Eventually we both look out onto the oval. We hold hands and just sit in silence. I feel his head rest on my shoulder. I suddenly realise. He fell for me too. ■



**Audrey Phommasone**  
*Year 9 • Siena College*

—  
*Untitled*

# LIVE SIMPLY. SIMPLY LIVE

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Charli White · Year 10 · St. Peter's College

When the shadow hits the lake,  
The sands hit the shore,  
It may be as you lay awake,  
Wishing that there was more,  
The feeling of a dull ache,  
Suddenly goes when your toes then again feel  
the shore,

If it's more to life is what you may wish,  
Simply look around and see,  
That everything is beautiful like something  
mother nature laid right out on a dish,  
Before you run. Before you flea,  
There is something we must see,  
The true simple beauty of nature.

How simple life could be if we appreciate Gods  
creations,  
If it's a walk along a beach or watching the  
raindrop fall along a window,  
Those feelings which gives us such a calm  
sensation.  
Life doesn't always go to plan.  
But its time to let go of all that frustration,  
Everything has really just begun.

Now it's time to go,  
And just live,  
Live simply,  
And simply live. ■



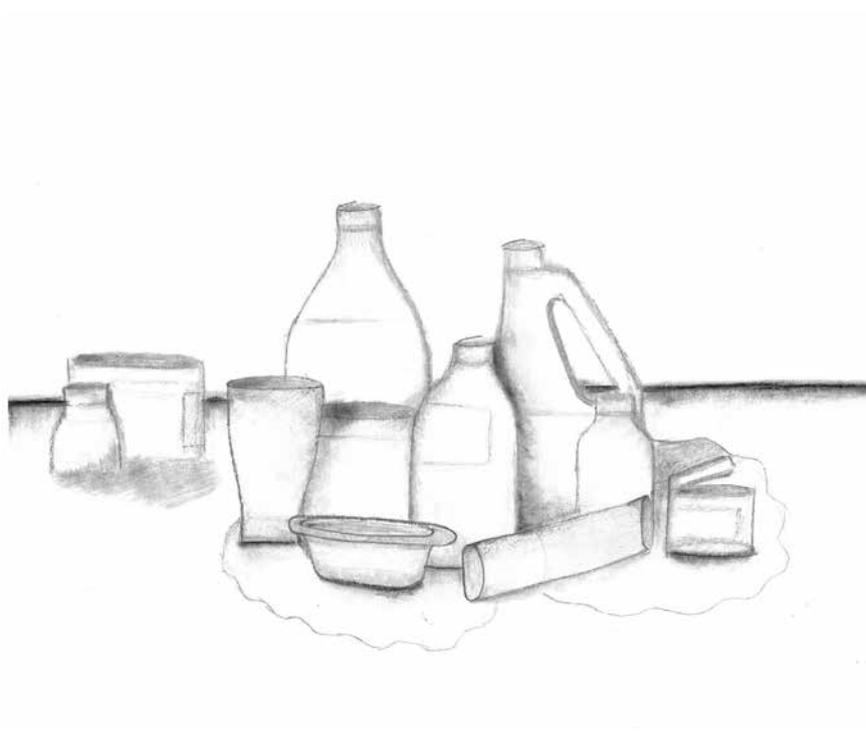
**Phoebe Takla**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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*Nature*

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This artwork incorporates nature and the human body, a different take on human nature. Both are such simple but complex objects. Nature is so simple, yet it adds so much beauty to life. Living is so simple but can not be done to it's full potential without the incorporation of nature.



**Tyler Gomera**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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*Simply Live, Live simply*

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The objects shown in this artwork are a representation of how such simple colours and shades can create something special. With the bottles shows the complexity of living a simple life. The dark lining behind the bottles supports the three dimensional containers and works as a backbone.



**Arizona Durbin**  
*Year 12 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*



**Cloey Nash**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

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*Nature*

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In this photograph I have captured the simplicity of nature. The tree stands out against the clear sky, enhancing the delicate frame of the branches. I captured the natural rawness of the tree, the branches exposed and leafless contrasting against the bareness of the sky.

# THE CAMPSITE

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Latesha Franks · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

The sun is tired and ready to set.  
There stands a happy family, in a peaceful  
mindset.  
The struggle of putting up the tent.  
The wilderness helps them to disconnect.  
The tall, oak trees.  
The slight autumn breeze.  
The hills, mountains and the rocky plains.  
Happiness running through everyone's veins.  
The rocks, pebbles and stones.

Finally a time without cell phones.  
The sound of trickling water sets the tone.  
Smiles all round, there is no reason to moan.  
The fire roaring, perfect for roasting.  
Each person smiling and boasting.  
A smile from ear to ear.  
Any sign of anxiety or stress fade away, and  
disappear.  
This place is their special delight.  
This is the perfect campsite. ■



**Jie Yi Sefina Heng**  
*Year 12 · St. Peter's College*

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*K. Jonghyun*

# SIMPLE, BUT PERFECT

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Elise O'Callaghan · Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

Memories. We all have them. Some we like more than others, but they will always be part of us. One of my favourites is going camping with my family and friends. Sleeping underneath the stars, swimming at the beach and exploring.

Even though we have to sit in the car for three hours, it is all worth it in the end. I watch as the city flies by and it turns from long freeways to old dusty roads in the middle of nowhere to the grounds where we camp. It's incredible.

We'll ride our bikes around, taking in the change of scenery. We'll go to the general store to buy lollies, ice-creams and souvenirs to remember what fun we had. We'll help put up the tent, our little, simple how for the week, and set up the barbecue.

At night we'll sit around, talk and play games. We'll listen to music, lollies will be eaten and we

will tune out of our lives back home. We'll go to bed and sleep under the stars, rugged up in layers upon layer of clothes. Listening to the sound of rustling leaves. I'll drift off into a dreamless sleep. In the morning, we'll meet up and eat toast. It's perfect. Simple, but perfect.

Later, we'll get into our bathers and walk down to the beach. Waves will splash over our heads. My friends and I will play games in the water, trying not to get dunked over and over again. When we are finally worn out we'll head back dripping wet back to freshen up for dinner.

It's nice to forget about our normal lives, like school, and just relax. Not thinking about homework, phones, social media, just letting it all go and enjoying the moment. It's experiencing what it would be like to live a simple life, one that we all desire. The one where you're not judged, you can just be yourself. ■

# HAPPY TO PLAY AND ROAM

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Nieve Jones · Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

I woke up to the purring of my cat  
As I look down to approach her on my mat  
I take a walk down to the park  
As I see the football players take their mark  
I admire the flowers while they last  
While the lovely Spring season flies past  
I try to smile at everyone in the street  
Then tie up my shoelace to make them look neat.  
I look up in the sky and see how the weather is so  
bright  
then see a dog chasing a kite  
As the touch of the wind breeze  
Comes up against the tip of my knees

I hear a buzz going past my ear  
As I feel some water dropping, feeling like a tear  
I walk past a wishing well  
And all my childhood memories come faster than  
a bell  
The rain makes lots of puddles  
And that reminds me how I used to play with  
bubbles  
I open my umbrella which is blue  
And make sure that the rain doesn't hit my brand  
new shoe  
After the rain is finished I will make my way  
home  
But for now I am happy to play and roam. ■

# WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Kim Nguyen · Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

“Sorry, but I don’t think that I can do it.”  
“What?”

“I don’t think that I can be like everyone. With their special talent and *abnormal-ness*.”

Levi stares at me with a look of support but there’s some other emotion in there that I can’t quite see...

“Oh come on,” he always tries to cheer me up ( it never works ), “you’re better than this.”

“I’m not any good at anything. And well, that’s it.”

“What do you mean, that’s it? I’m sure there’s something you’r-“

I cut him off knowing that nothing good is gonna come out of it.

“Levi, it’s simple. I am a simple person of this huge and abnormal world.”

He nods and lowers his head. He understands what’s happening. We sit in an awkward silence. From time to time we would open our mouths in an attempt to converse but we stay quiet as if it were illegal to talk.

Eventually I say, “You think it would be fun if we try to find something that’s my *special thing*?” He smiles and we run off into the distance.

So that’s my story. The story of my ‘non-specialty’ and my supportive friend, Levi. ■



Penny Fassoulis  
Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Beatrice Baker and Chiara Farlecas  
Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Charlotte McBrearty  
Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Henry Dwyer and Satvik Kolisetty  
Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



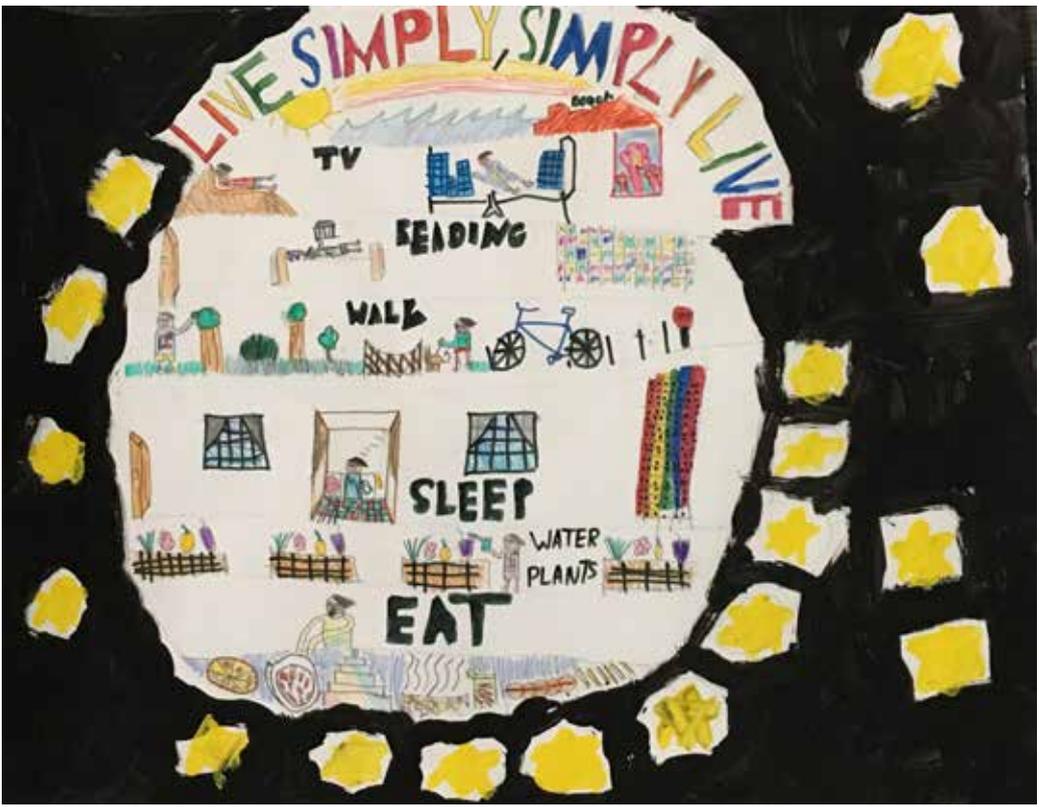
Bridie Zitzen and Stephanie Salcedo  
Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Susana O'Leary  
 Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Thomas Harrison and Christopher Wilson  
 Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Tom James  
Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



Bridgette Ciconte  
Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond



If you really look, there's always time in our busy lives, to find time for simple things- the things that help us remember to breathe and see how wonderful life is. What simple thing can you do today, that might take just a moment, to be still, to feel calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit?



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**Christiana Roussakis**  
*Year 11 · Star of the Sea College*

*'To live simply'*

# A MORNING ON THE VERANDAH

Saffron Cookesley · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

The kettle whistled madly. She was quick to take it off the boil, keeping in mind that the high-pitched sound was prone to disturbing those asleep in the frail house. Cautiously prying open each door and cupboard, she selected her favourite mug from the many waiting on the shelf. Its obnoxiously blocky lettering made it simple to recognise. “BEST MUM” it read. She tiredly smiled upon reading the two short words. The tea-bag gently plopped into the empty ceramic. Continuing to move carefully, she poured in piping hot water, along with fresh milk and a teaspoon of honey. Stirring it diffused the air with a sweet and warm scent.

Shuffling towards the familiar fly screen door, she let the steam billow behind her as she moved. Upon opening, the battered door let through a frosty gush of air. She shivered and automatically held the warm drink closer to her chest. Settling herself down in the old, rickety armchair outside, she began to watch the sun rise.

She sat there for what could have been years, for all she knew. Sipping her tea and feeling it scald

her throat, she let it warm her body from the inside, listening to the chickens modestly clucking as they awoke. Hearing the distant magpie warble a nonsensical yet beautiful song, she watched as crows steadily gathered to perch upon the telephone wire, some 50 metres away. She felt the feeble temperature change as the sky transitioned from an inky blue to a rose pink, hints of orange lining the thin clouds.

But too soon she was broken away from her peaceful morning. People inside were awaking, and she could feel the rattling of movement inside the fragile home. Her mug was empty, sparing a sad teabag compressed at the bottom. Only now she came to realise the numbness of her nose and fingers which had crept in while she was tuned out. An end came to her morning on the verandah.

Rising to attend to the inevitable demands of her children, she padded back into the warmth of her home. Leaving the bare cup to sit on the kitchen counter, she began another day.

Maybe I should start waking up earlier, she thought. ■



Emily Hocking  
Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

# JUST YOU WAIT

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Keerthana Vellala · Year 9 · John Paul College, Frankston

The madness of my heart is a pounding frenzy. I'm like a stallion, galloping without a direction. My mind a carousel; spinning round and round are the stories of my childhood. My memories flood through me over and over again, like the patter of nursery rhymes.

Suddenly, I am paper-thin and self-conscious. Stains and creases cover me. Marks of others press on my skin. They paint me with lies and pain. They tear me apart and throw me away. Now all I am is a crumbled up sheet of paper, missing the magic of the world. I am too busy being afraid to unravel and fly away.

But little by little, I open up. I share my story in a chain of friendship. The once thought closely knitted knots untie and leave me there in the pitch black. I'm wandering lost. I'm a nervous panic in a written piece and though the reassurances and okay help, I am still a constellation of confusion and worry. I am an unknown dreamer, whose voice is unheard.

I wrote a poem, and in tune with the silence, I went on a journey to make myself heard. I travelled far away from my hollow, pitch black and into the daring light I stood on a building and shouted, but my voice wavered and I choked on my own words.

My own voice was silent but ten thousand others

jeered and crowed. I hear every voice but my own. Afraid, I ran away. Back into the pitch black. Into a cave.

Here, I build a fire. I build a home. I tear up my old stories and wrapped myself in them. One voice, not ten thousand, tells me: just you wait. And so I do. In time, I am dancing in rhythm with the waves outside. I am dancing to forget. My confidence grows. So does my hope and my joy. I finally go outside. I sleep in a desert. I jump in the pitter patter of the rain and laugh as the splashes hit my skin. I have a story to tell now. Why not celebrate?

I travel to the top of the building again. The highest point in the world. I don't hear the voices. I heard my own. I hear my heart telling me what to say. And for the first time, the people listen. When the story finishes, they cheer. This is when I realised: My story is mine to tell. I am the pen to my future. I refine my past and discover what is yet to come. The words of others are long gone and erased. Only I know what my skin will say. Marks of others press on my skin. I paint a blue sky and colour my safety in. I write a world to hide their lies. I am an unknown dreamer, and yet my voice is heard.

I snap from my daydream. I'm back at a desk, with a purpose and a story to tell. ■



**Amanda Voon**  
*Year 8 · John Paul College, Frankston*

*'Imagining Living a Simple Life'*



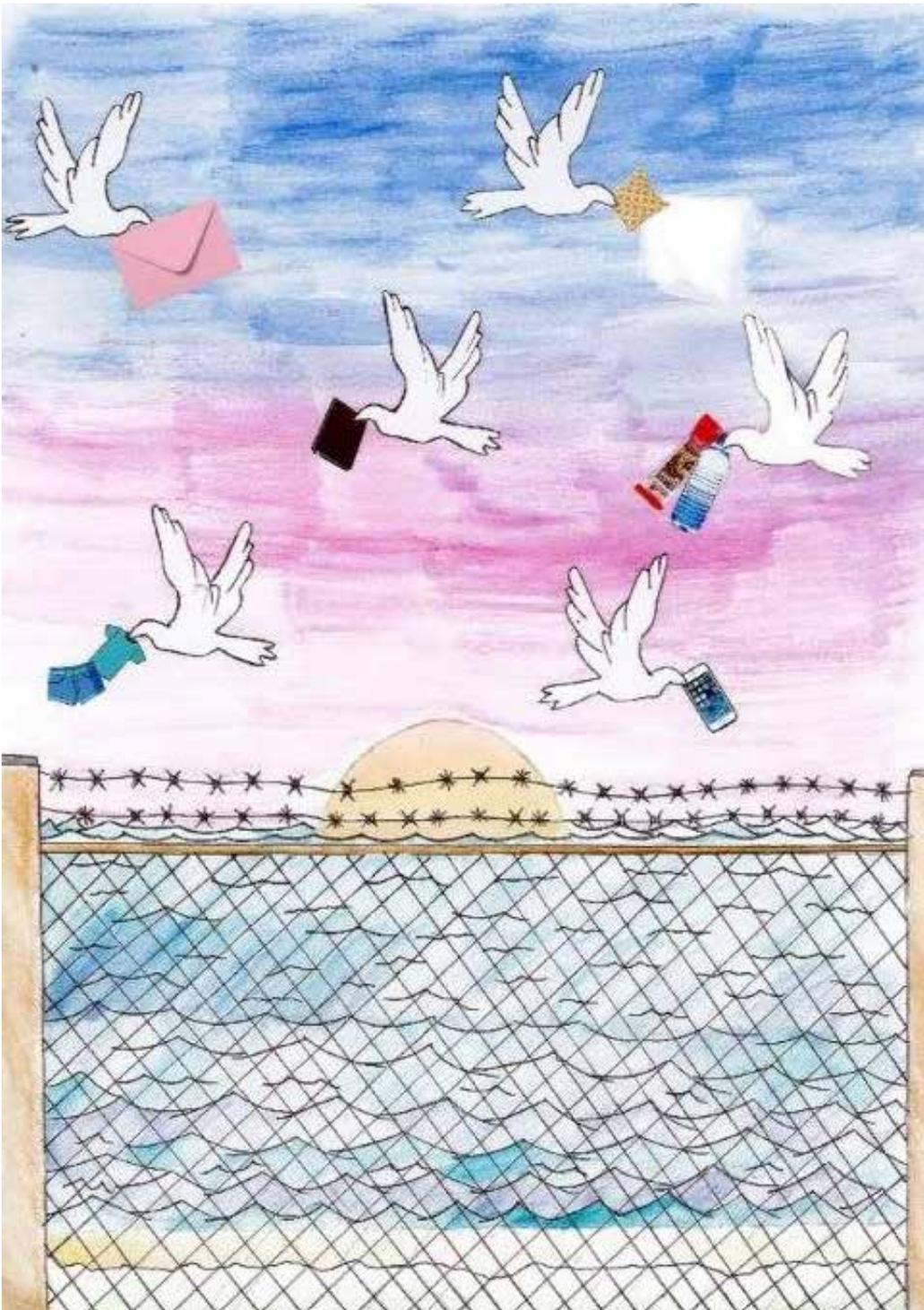
Chalice Bingham  
Year 8 · John Paul College, Frankston

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'Refugees'

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Saying no to refugees is holding back the simple gifts of the sea.



Nicole Navarro  
Year 8 · John Paul College, Frankston

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*'The Bone Sparrow'*

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This drawing is Nicole's imagination of the night sea in *The Bone Sparrow*, looking through the lens of Subhi who is living in a detention centre.



**James Ghaly**  
*Year 5 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Shen He**  
*Year 5 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Sean Posar**  
*Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Eloise Fagents**  
*Year 2 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Abi Ruiu**  
*Year 3 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Peter Archie Oswald**  
*Year 4 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Anika Jacobsen, Tess Devine and Yordanos Arefaine**  
*Year 5 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington*



**Bella Roberts**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Brianna Combes**  
*Year 10 · St Peter's College*



Valentina Brasacchio  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Zara Rigby**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Sarah Verberne**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*

# THE GIFT GIVEN HAS GONE

---

Charlotte Declerck · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

A boy with calloused feet plants his seed,  
The tree cools the stream below, its leaves keeping  
the animals fed.  
A woman comes along to strip a piece of bark  
from its trunk.  
This lady with the long golden hair, writes her  
letter, ties a leather string around it then gives it  
to the wind.  
The gust carries the bark, then releases it over a  
large village.  
How simple life was.  
In the short moments when the sky is not hiding  
behind smoke A factory is seen.  
In this newly invented world,  
People no longer write on bark,  
Instead they are too busy choking on the fumes.  
Large vehicles are spotted within the town of the  
boy with the calloused feet.  
And his very last seed is buried.  
Then he slowly turns his back from his trees, in  
search of the ocean.  
There he settles onto a log as the current hauls  
him out to sea.  
Centuries later a man approaches the shore.  
Some believe he was walking above the water,

Others say he was on his back, floating closer by  
the tide.  
No matter how he arrived on land, he was met  
with the same thing... Naught.  
No trees, nor flower petals floating with the wind.  
In fact there was no wind,  
Only dead twigs and dry dirt.  
It was as though his nature had just given up.  
This man ran so hard his feet become as callused  
as they once were. Up and up towards the  
highest peak of the world he ran  
Of the world he once created as a gift for the  
humans,  
Instead these mortals had just thrown it back in  
his face.  
Seeking the smallest sign of his nature's wonders,  
The man clung to the last shred of hope to gaze  
upon a shred of green. Instead it seemed only a  
large, grey void met him  
Upon the mountain on which he stood  
a letter written on bark, wrapped in leather string  
rested and read: '   
To whoever this finds'  
'Nothing gold can stay.' ■

# LAUGH IF YOU CAN

---

Chelsea Marsden · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Laugh if you can  
because whenever you do  
someone will look  
and join in laughing too  
  
Laugh if you can  
to make your own day  
'cause laughing is not crying  
Its help resist disease they say

Laugh if you can  
perhaps try to clap  
smiling will pour upon people  
like water from a tap  
  
Join in and laugh with me  
laughing is something we do for fun  
for if we don't laugh  
how can the simple life be won? ■

# SIMPLY LIVING?

---

Georgia Yeo · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

What happened to make complicated things run over our lives?

What ever happened to living simply?

Why are there many ways we can pay for a loaf of bread?

Why are there many ways to print a piece of paper?

Whenever we look out to our world, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

Is it how robots could possibly be invented?

Or is it how polluting could become indented.

Why waste our lives looking into a screen, when we can all journey and live our dreams?

What will come of us when we create advanced technology,

When there are more amazing things in the world like geology.

Does it make ourselves feel powerful when the next big thing ruins living simply?

Or does it make us feel downhearted when that's the future we wait for?

Does it make ourselves feel better when we throw that one icy pole wrapper?

Or does it make us feel guilty that we killed one more innocent sea creature.

What about the unexplored parts of nature or the new fascinating feature?

Why is the future referred to as 'modern' when 'technology' doesn't mean 'forward'? ■

# CAVING IN

---

Juliet Palleschi · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

you receive this message...

“sorry”

sorry

a plain word

that should fix mistakes

but doesn't

forgiveness

is expected

but not always received

pleading

Is beginning to

overwhelm you

suddenly you're in the wrong

regret

clouds your mind

rethinking what you've done

wrong

misery

as you feel defeated

lost and alone

sorry

a plain word

that you give in to

“I forgive you” ■

# THIS WAVE IS LOVE

---

Jasmine Link · Year 7 · *Star of the Sea College*

Depression is a dark cloud  
Refusing to go away  
It hovers above  
Leading her astray

Everything she thinks is happy  
Still makes her sad  
All she thinks is good  
Always turns to bad

Wherever she is,  
she isn't really there  
Her friends are too distracted  
to see or to care

Her mind is out at sea  
Dragging her far, far away  
Her mind is out at sea  
Every hour of every day

Depression is a dark cloud  
Raining so hard it all gets too much

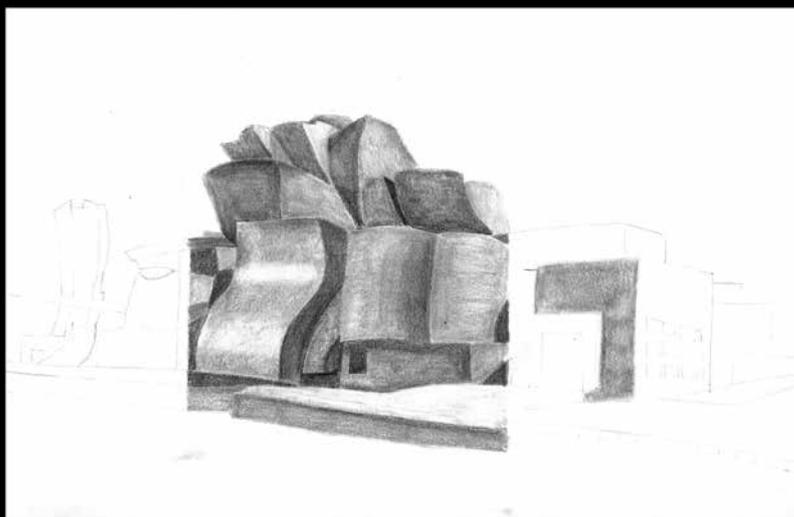
The storm rages inside of her  
She is now out of touch

She is out at sea  
Drowning in her own mind  
Darkness surrounds her  
The light is hard to find

A current pulls her out  
And suddenly takes a hold  
She can't fight it  
That's what she is told

They're losing her  
She is being swept away  
Further and further  
All colours are lost, her world is grey

A huge wave crashes  
It gives her a violent shove  
This wave takes ahold  
This wave is love ■



Edward Kennedy  
Year 10 · *Xavier College*

# UNKNOWN

---

Sarah Verberne · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Hello  
My name is unknown  
My culture is a maze. and my family covers the globe  
I use simplicity to express complexity  
When I speak I cannot always be heard  
Yet my messages are woven strongly in your language  
I have many adventures and I experience the true meanings of life  
Yet as one I am immoveable  
I am stacked, ripped, disrespected and stained  
But I can't stand up alone or speak up without a conduit  
I have been burned and silenced  
I have had my blood run across my forehead  
I have had people strive to kill me

I have been called “disgusting” and “immoral”  
I have been thought of as a waste of space  
Yet others think of me as a choir  
I am sustained by innumerable personalities  
The adventures mold me, help me bloom, yet i can remain unchanged  
I have experienced *the ins and outs* of God's greatest creations  
And perhaps the Devil's orchestrations too  
The simple expression of a human landscape  
Allowing my travels to the tip of Everest and the shores of Narnia  
I am not what you think  
I am all of these things and yet...  
I do not know the end and neither do you  
Until you finish the story, a story perhaps, without end ■



Harry Doupe  
Year 9 · Xavier College

# GALLIPOLI SKIES

---

Lucy Corcoran · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Just a simple daily task,  
Like walking down the street,  
Behind his withered mask  
He hears the rumble of the fleet.

The tree branches swaying,  
Leaves singing in the breeze,  
Sound to him like men screaming  
Forever at rest overseas.

Age has taken its toll,  
Wisdom's etched lines into his eyes,  
With memories forever engraved,  
Of those cloudy Gallipoli skies.

On this adventure as it was once called,  
Only cowards would miss out.  
Oh, how he wishes he had been more scared,  
or could now forgot the shouts.

Because the battle hasn't seized,  
it rages on inside his head.  
And often now he wishes,  
he was as lucky as the dead.

Other days he's proud,  
of his fighting friends in uniform.  
Brave shouting men so loud,  
Their marching mistaken for a storm.

Fighting for those at home,  
his mother and his daughter.  
But still guilty he admits,  
Nothing was worth that slaughter.

More than 8,000 men dead,  
On both sides of no man's land,  
But keep fighting they demanded,  
And they listened to their command.

They marched them off to war,  
Bred them to be eager.  
But sat and watched them die,  
For reasons implausibly meagre.

So, he won't let them be forgotten,  
Fathers, sons and friends.  
Whose courage never wavered,  
And on whom our freedom depends.

The memories will live on,  
though he wills them away,  
He knows it is important  
To tell those stories today.

Because he remembers as he fought,  
He said anything he would give.  
To not one day live simply,  
But to only simply live. ■



**Damian Melone**  
Year 10 · Xavier College

# CAMPING

---

Josephine Mozina · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Broken rocks spilled from an hourglass  
venture to the forest creating a mural of paths.  
Green lives expanding and growing  
with the never-ending grace of a ballet.

Black wheels are hypnotised to the sound of the  
forest playing its timber boombox.

The sun dies  
but the cotton fluff above disperses  
showing the sky,  
a spilled bottle of star glitter.

People unpack their lives  
as well as their swag.

They say hello to the sun.

They say hello to the earth.

They say goodbye to their robotic routine  
and sing at the treetops  
the natural song,  
the simple song of life.

Honey and butter fills dawn  
as the sun spreads.

The fishing rod dips its toes into the water,  
then people go fishing;  
fishing for luck,  
fishing for love,  
or fishing for fishy things.

During hikes, I go down to the deepest, darkest  
tunnel  
where the echoes follow,  
with dark and scratchy sounds,  
where the words flow like a waterfall.

I can't hear the echo,  
except on the inside.  
Am I deranged? Am I not?  
Perhaps I'm just an echo!

From the cracks light searches for me  
and finally a safe place is provided.  
The campfire laughs its last laugh  
and I'm returned to the world wrapped in  
bubble-wrap.  
They tell me its a safe place  
but sometimes even bubble-wrap pops. ■



Daniel Ireland  
Year 9 · Xavier College

---

*Mask*



**Jarrold Conte**  
*Year 10 · Mazenod College*

---

*'Leopard Movement', Coloured and grey-lead pencil*

---

This drawing was exploring ways of trying to achieve a sense of movement. This leopard is slowly, and with great menace, moving towards us.



**Nicholas Burgos**  
*Year 11 · Mazenod College*

---

*'Untitled', oil paint and staples*

---

As the great poet Kahil Gibban once said “to belittle,  
you have to be little”. Are you little?



**Calvin Luu**  
*Year 9 · Mazenod College*

---

*'The Doors to the Last Supper'*

---

This surrealist artwork uses 'The Last Supper' by Leonardo Da Vinci and shows the doors to the past.



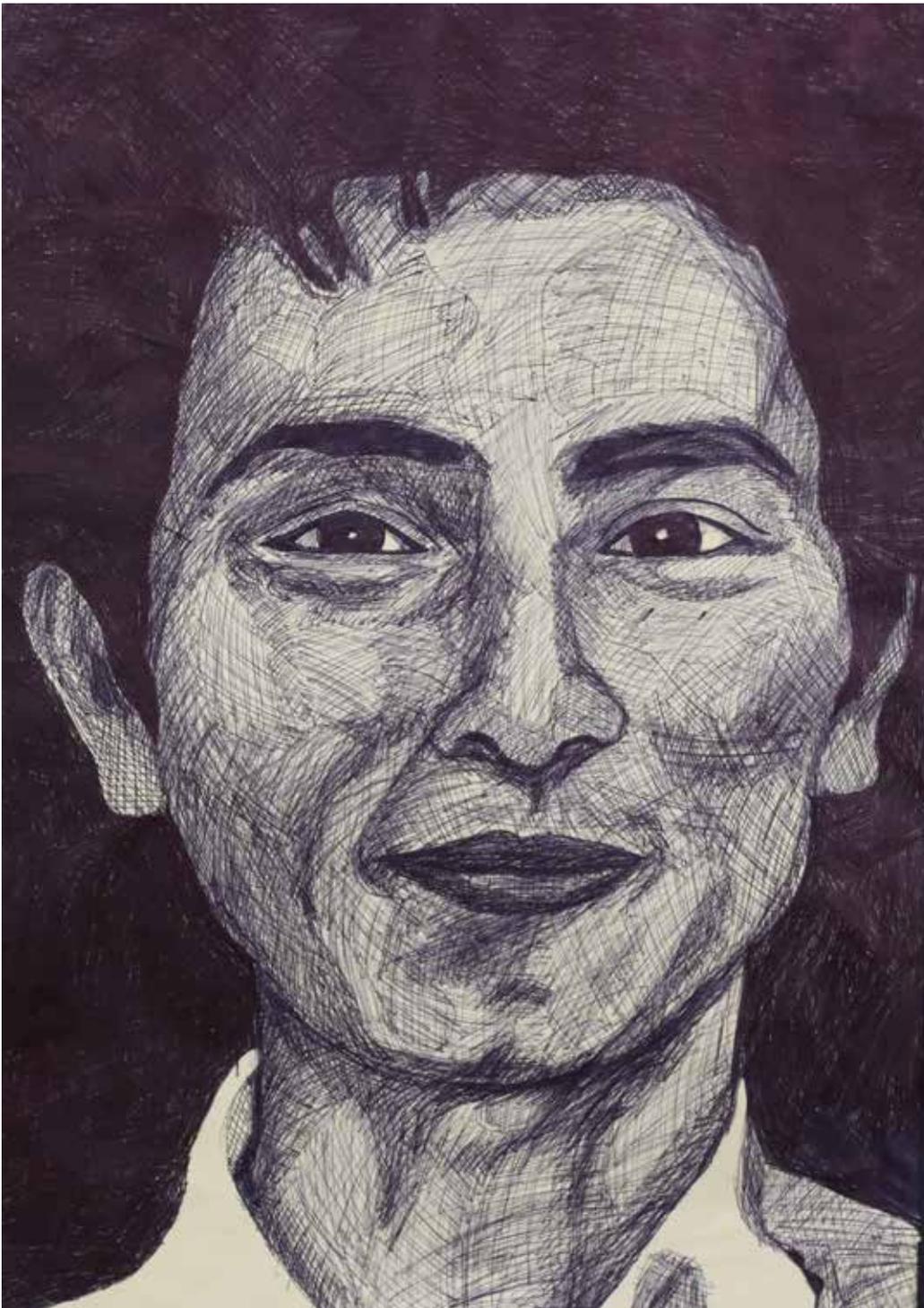
**Michael Lanzone**  
*Year 8 · Mazenod College*

---

*'Green Jaguar', neocolour crayons*

---

For my animal painting, I chose a panther in the middle of a rainforest. I did this because even though a panther's habitat is the rainforest, it also represents the fact that they are very sneaky animals that hide in the dark. I chose to make my panther green as it represents camouflage colour and panthers spend much of their time blending with their environment.



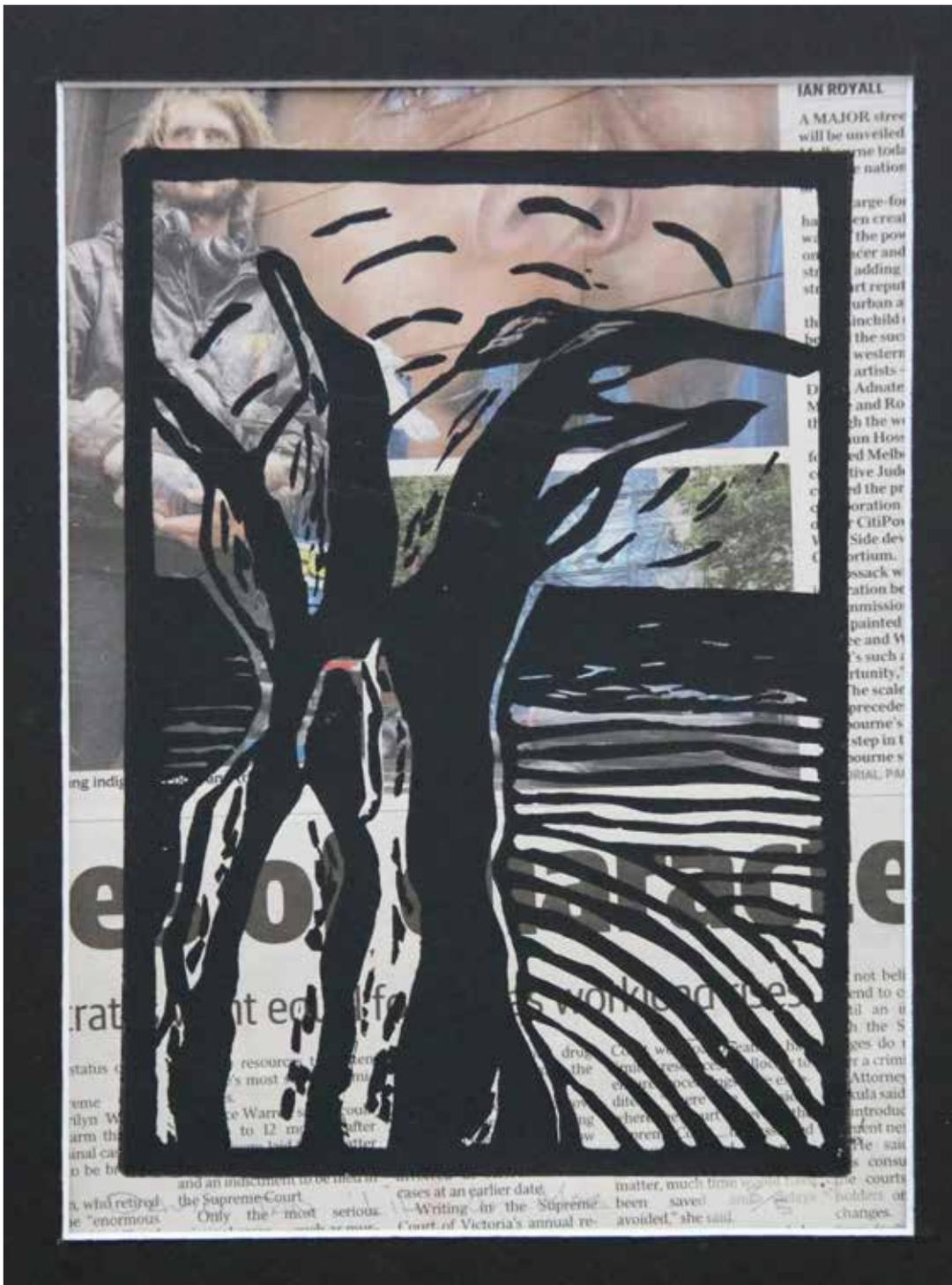
**Damian Nguyen**  
*Year 8 · Mazenod College*

---

*'Portrait of My Father', Black ball point pen*

---

I made this portrait using the techniques that I learned in art. This was made in memory of my father who passed away when I was very young.



David Tan  
 Year 10 · Mazonod College

*'Life on Mars', Linoprint*

The idea of creating a print on newspaper was an attempt to do something different. The newspaper article on street art in Melbourne seemed the perfect fit.

# HOW I LEARNT TO LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Krish Vij · Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Everyone has hardships.

Sometimes it hits big and sometimes it barely has an impact. Sometimes people don't know what you're really going through and how bad it could be. Sometimes the things we do can appear rude or offensive to others. I should know, because my family and I have had a lot of hardship over the years. My name is Krish and this is my story...

During the time of my early primary school years my parents separated, and this was big news. I remember that day. It was a Friday afternoon and my mum came, with two other people, to pick me up from school. I didn't know where we were going. When we arrived (at court) we went upstairs where I met a lawyer, telling me (in the most basic way) what was going to happen. Somewhat confused with the information, I headed back out of the room. Later we were called in with a few other "couples" and then the judge came, did some things, and dismissed us.

We headed home. My dad arrived home too but we didn't let him into the house. Overtime, I realised that my parents had divorced, and he wasn't going to be living with us anymore. Back then it was a big deal to me and my brother but eventually I gave up caring where he was and what he was doing.

Until the year of 2014. Everything changed. Up until April 2014 my father used to come visit a lot

but suddenly, he stopped coming home to visit us. We got worried, because at the end of the day, he was my father and I guess deep down I used to like him. When he suddenly stopped visiting my brother and I would cry and cry. My mother would try her best to do things to take our mind off of it, like an extra hour of TV before bed and what not. It kind of worked.

Mum was on her phone one evening and she showed me a picture of my dad. He was with a woman...wearing wedding clothes. Seeing that picture broke my heart. I was speechless. I felt betrayed that my father had done this to us. When he came back from India I wasn't that thrilled to see him and eventually, over time, my mum had also lost the trust she'd had in him. My dad wasn't allowed to take us anywhere and after a few more attempts he gave up trying. The last time I saw him in person was 2017 at the beginning of the year.

You might feel sorry for me, or even a little heartbroken. But I have never let these things bother me. If you had met me during this period of my life, you would never have known what I was going through. You never know what battle the person beside you is fighting, so remember to be kind.

Events like these don't define who you are. They don't define my family. They have taught me to just live simply and simply live. ■



**James Dugdale**  
*Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Typography Face', Digital print*



**Trent Bright**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Expressive Face', Coloured pencil on paper*



**Matthew Wolff**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Impressionist portrait', Acrylic on canvas*



**Tom Choe**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Appropriation for endangered awareness',  
Mixed Media*



**Gabriel Giacipoli**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Impressionist portrait', Acrylic on canvas*



**Brendon Tran**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Frankenstein monster', Mixed Media*



**Adamo Deodato**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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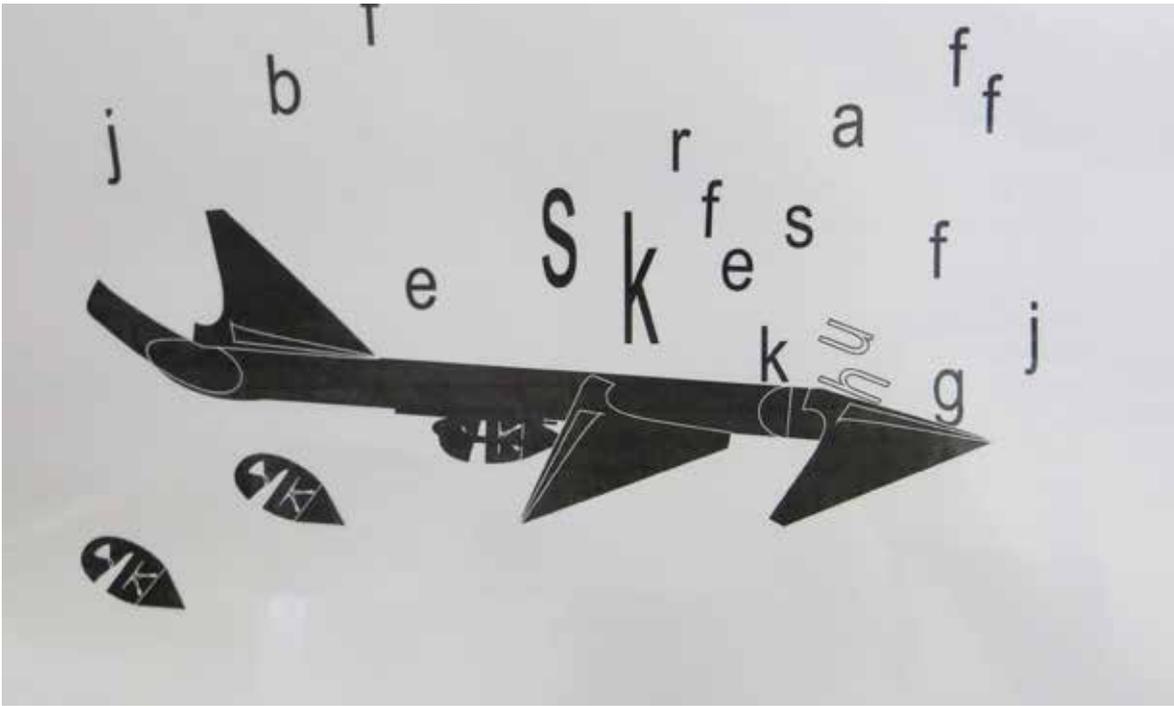
*'Self Portrait', Acrylic on canvas*



**Adam Jacob**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Simple Impression', Ink impression on cartridge*



**Jack Hanley**  
*Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College*

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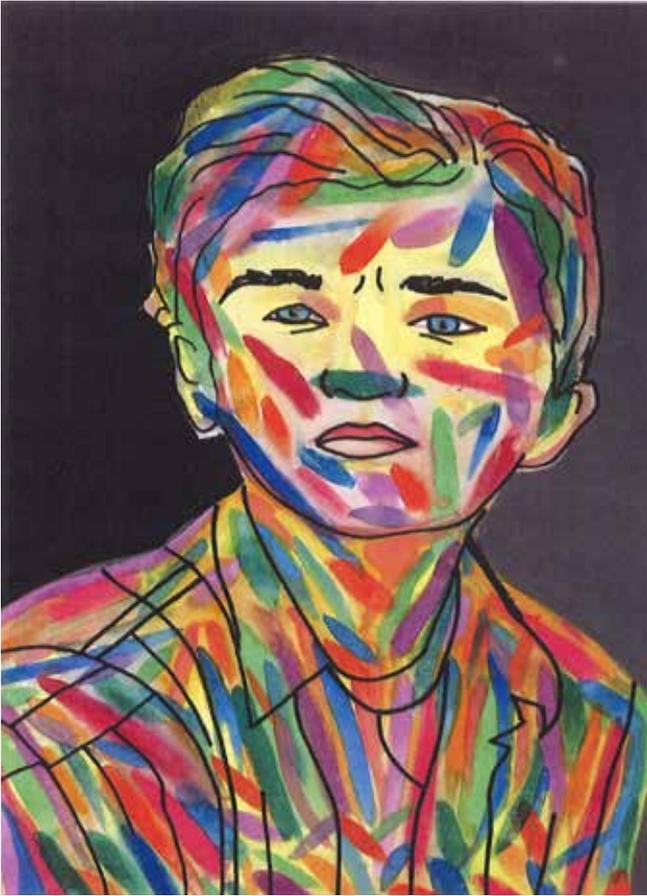
*'Typography sky', Digital print*



**Tom Choe**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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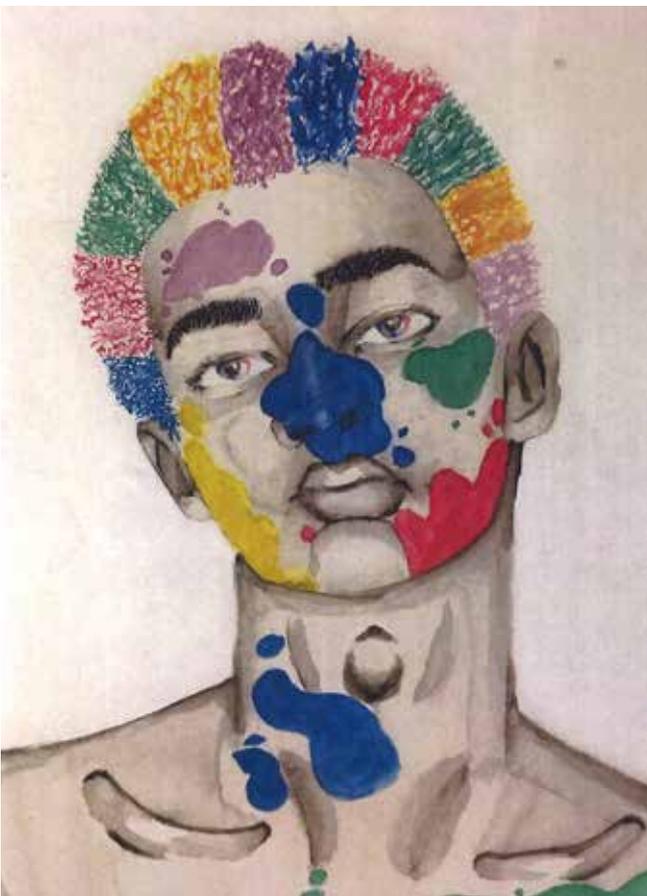
*'Dynasty Village', Etching on cartridge*



**Ally Balcombe**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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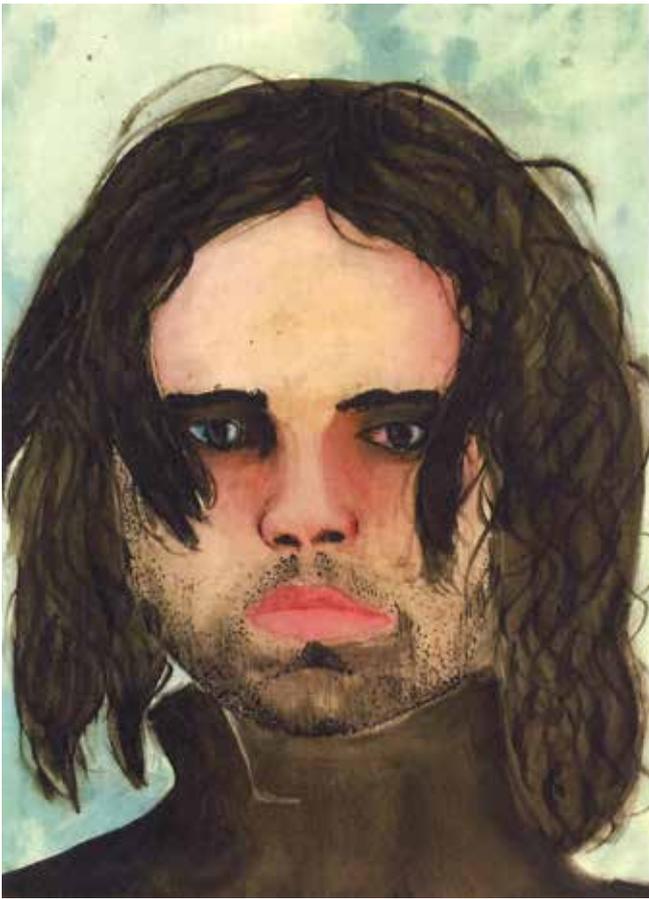
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**Sienna Ryan**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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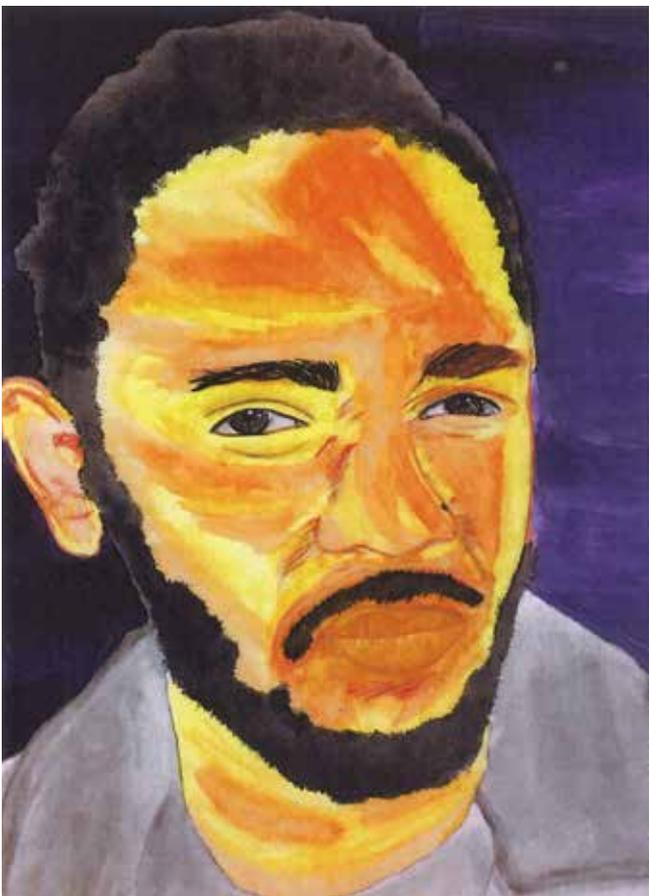
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**Grace Barnes**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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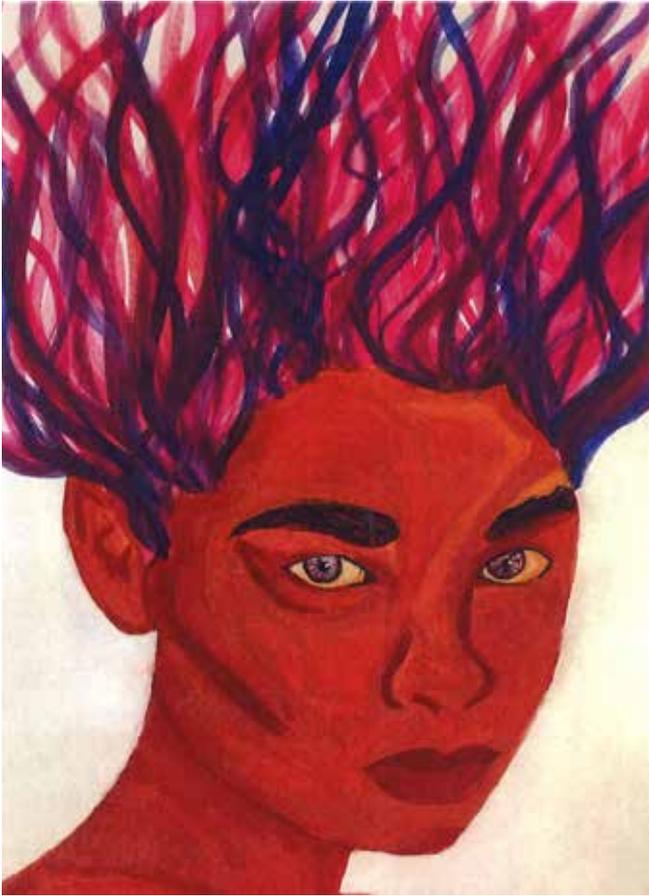
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**William Clare**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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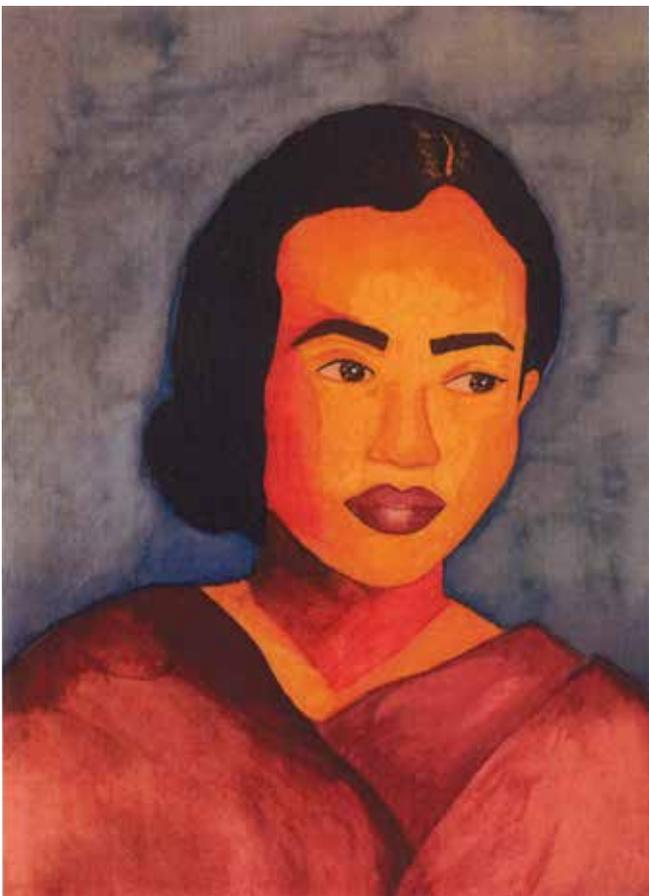
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**Audrey Lambert**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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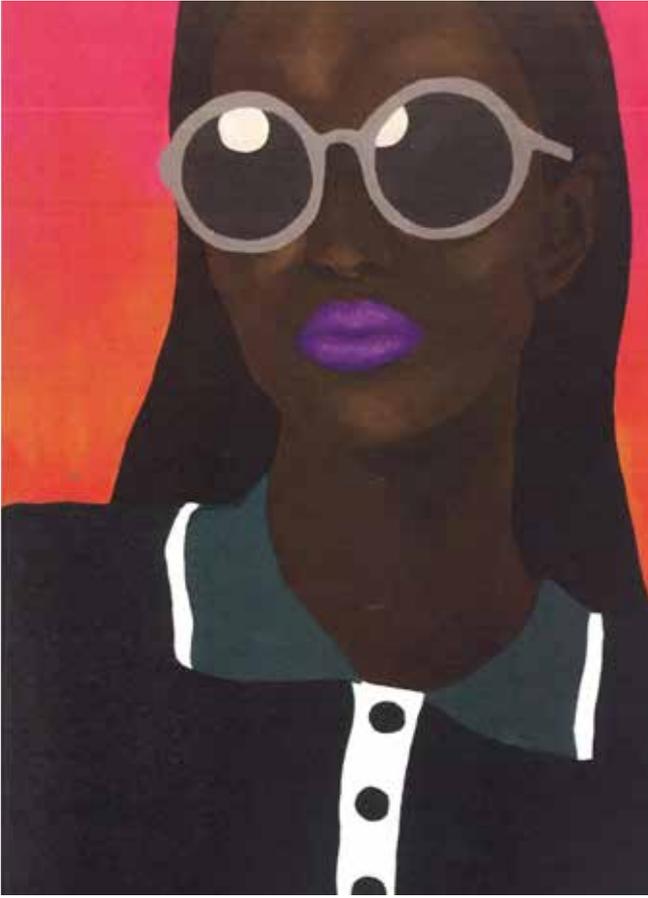
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**Mobarrat Monir**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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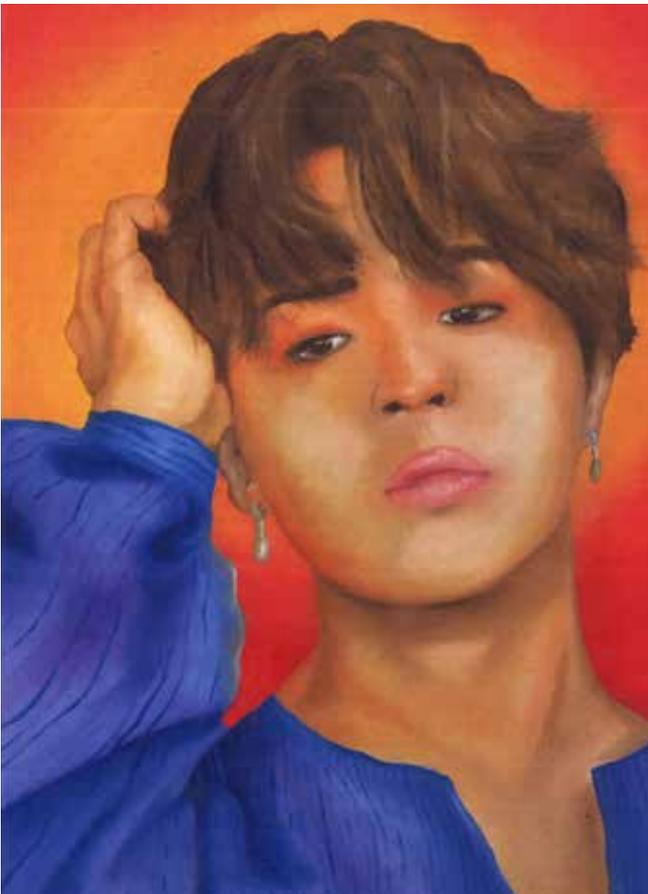
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**Chelsea Lawn**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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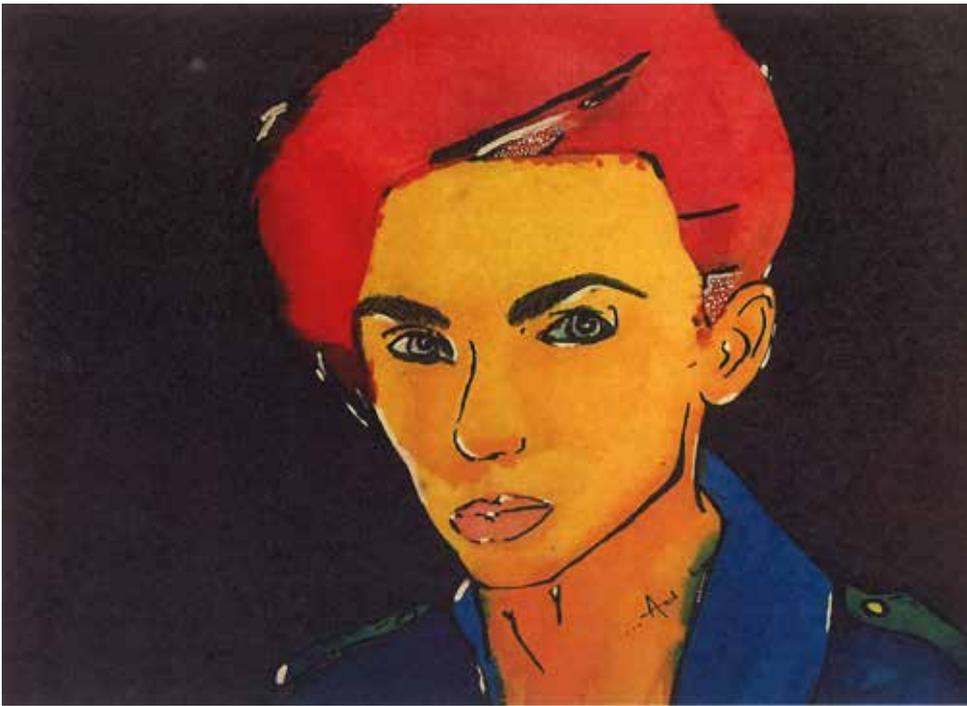
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**Nicole Formaran**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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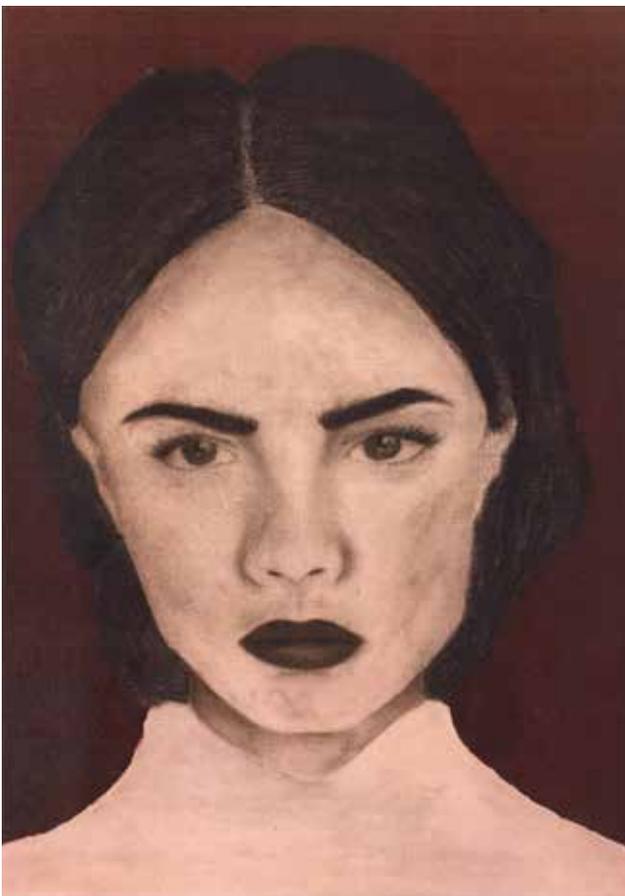
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**Brooke Webley**  
*Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Ella Blackford**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*

# “HEY”

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Andria Jojo · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College Melton

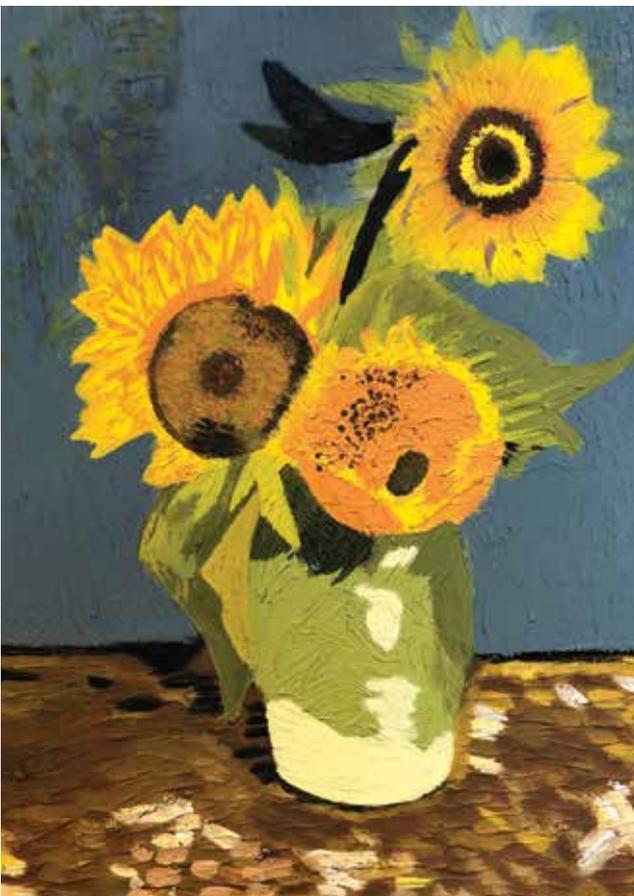
That’s what he said. She said.  
We said. Who said? Me said.  
But what does that really mean?  
Hmm? Why don’t *you* tell me?  
You know, since you already seem to know  
*everything* about me.  
And pretty much everyone else.  
Oh, I didn’t realise that blondes *have* to be  
dumb  
Or that Muslims are terrorists.  
Or that my skin colour tells you everything  
about me.  
Why are you labelling these people?  
Labelling them and then putting them in that  
box?  
What if that box isn’t who they really are?  
And you just *assume* everything.  
So go ahead.  
Go ahead and *assume*.  
Assume my personality, my ambitions, my  
friends, and dislikes –  
Go ahead and *assume my life*.  
Just know  
That you’re wrong about me.  
Maybe I’m hiding buckets of tears behind my  
smile.  
Maybe I’m hurt. Or annoyed. Or irritated. Or  
Maybe I’m just miffed.  
Why?  
Because of your *lame* assumptions.  
*Your stereotypes*.  
Your stupid, senseless, sickening, shocking  
stereotypes.  
When those words hit someone: *Bang!* They’re  
down.  
Why are you bashing innocent people,  
thrashing and lashing them when all you are  
by doing so is trash.  
Picture this: a mean bully hurting someone  
who’s done no wrong, hurting them for what  
they are.  
Why? What do you get out of this?  
You might only hurt them once but stereotypes  
are like getting hit  
It lasts for just a second but the pain endures.  
Maybe you should stop and think *for once*.  
All I said was “hey”. ■



**Adorina Jeevakenthiran**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Acrylic Painting*



**Alana Sammut**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Acrylic Painting*



**Amy Seymour**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Acrylic Painting*



**Amber Mifsud**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Drawing*



**Georgina Bertias**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Ceramics*



**Olivia Beck**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Ceramics*



**Ellie Martin**  
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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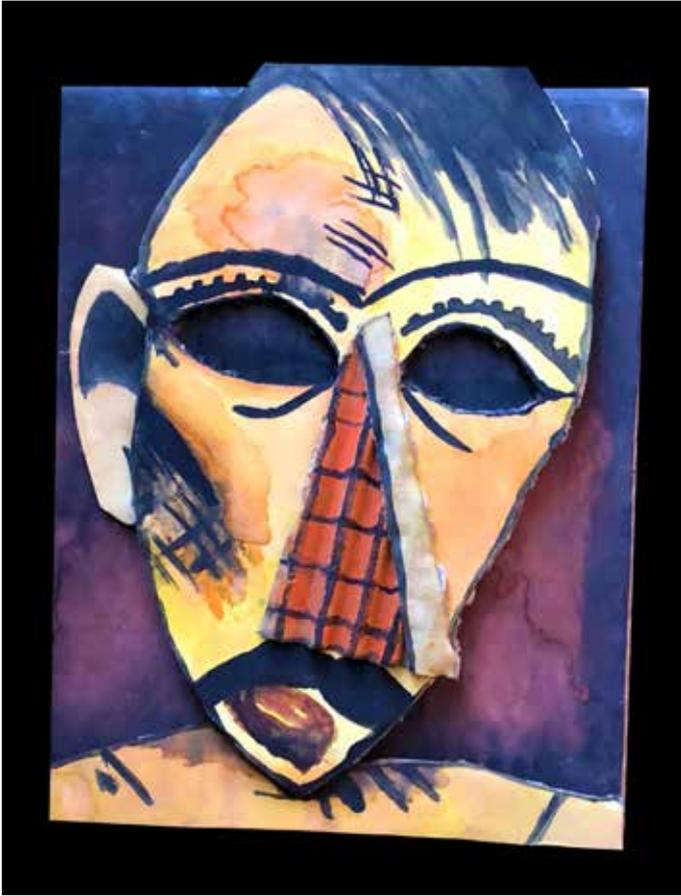
*Acrylic Painting*



**Nadia Blanco**  
*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Mixed Media*



Zoe Valiukas  
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton

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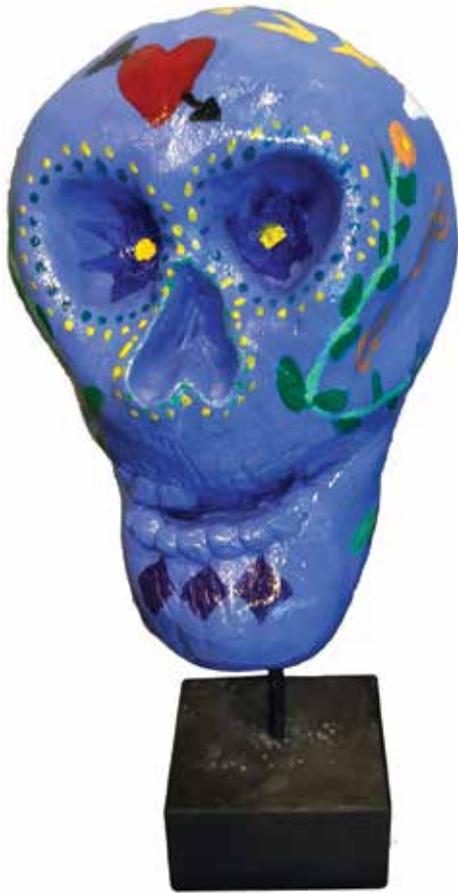
*Paper Relief*



Abby Timms  
Year 8 · Catholic Regional College Melton

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*Isometric Drawing*



**Alicia Lane**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Sculpture*



**Alyanna Manalili**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Grey lead*

# SIMPLICITY TO THE FURTHEST DEGREE

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Thamadee Dela · Year 8 · St. Peter's College

Before the sun awakens I feel light tingling from the corner of my head showing me the wonderous lifestyle of simplicity. It is glowing golden rays that promise utopia. Minimalism is applied to everyone and everything. From the decluttering of houses to the uniqueness taken away from individuals, what is left are the basics we need to survive.

Expenses are limited, and money is only spent on the absolute necessities to prevent excessive bills that essentially lead to unwanted spending. This way we can manage what we earn without debts or loans which we would naturally be stressed out about.

The streets are empty and quiet, who knows where everyone went. Crowds and overpopulation in a certain area brings a lot of us anxiety or makes us unable to think straight so the desolation brings

peace and relaxation into our minds. We are all free to roam around without out the disruptions from the daily hustles.

Food and drink is an obvious must for survival, but an abundance of variations often makes us indecisive on what to eat and also makes us ungrateful when we are given basic food that would stop starvation but doesn't satisfy our tastes. To live simply, eating such assortments creates extra complexity because it's pointless when knowing whatever is edible is enough.

With my mind adjusted, I realize that living simply seems tedious to that extent and there will never be enough simplicity to one's routine. Simplicity is also subjective as what I call plain might be extravagant to someone else so effectively we are all living a simple lifestyle in someone else's eye even if we deny it. ■

# UNLAUNDERED

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Abigail Cameron

Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

I have forgotten  
To pick up  
Your clothes  
Off the floor

They did not  
Go in  
The wash  
They are dirty

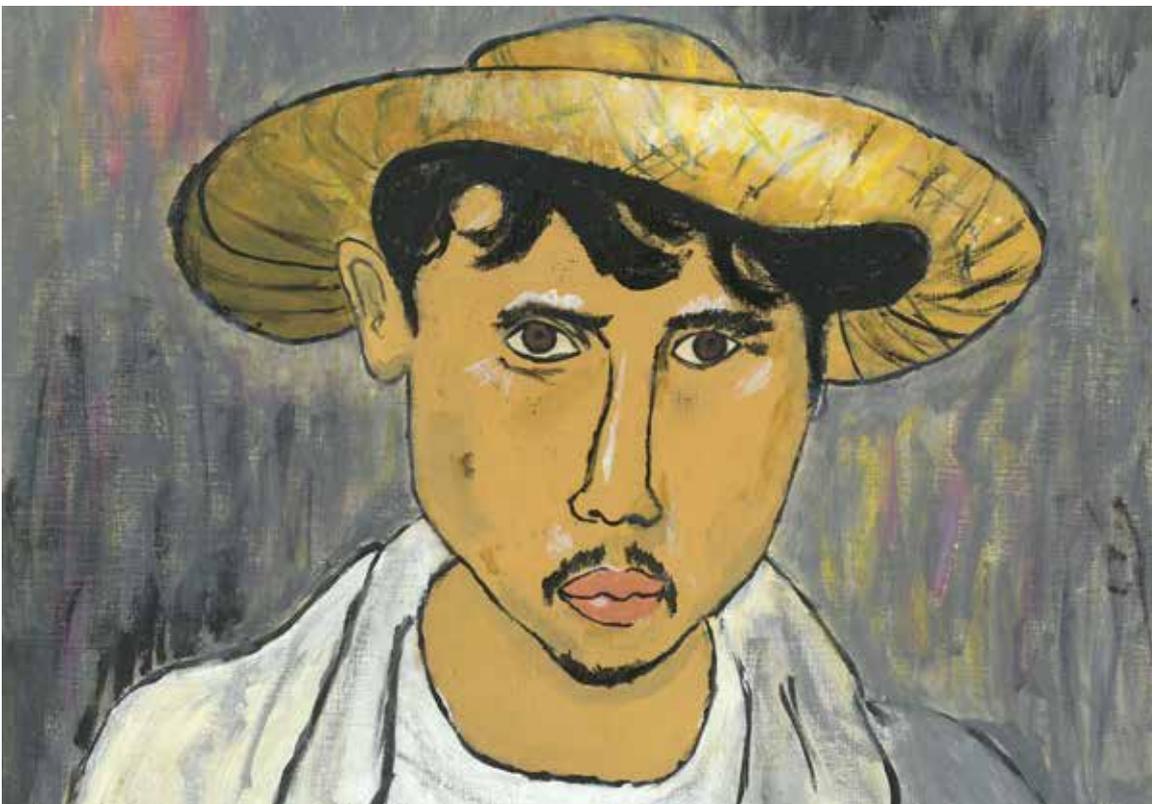
Forgive me  
But I am not  
Your slave

You will just  
Have to wear  
The clothes  
They are stained  
And smelly  
And scrunched up

Thanks,  
Abi ■



**Keeley Turner**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*



**Denver Samarakoon**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*



**Kai Ellison**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

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*Creativity Takes Courage*



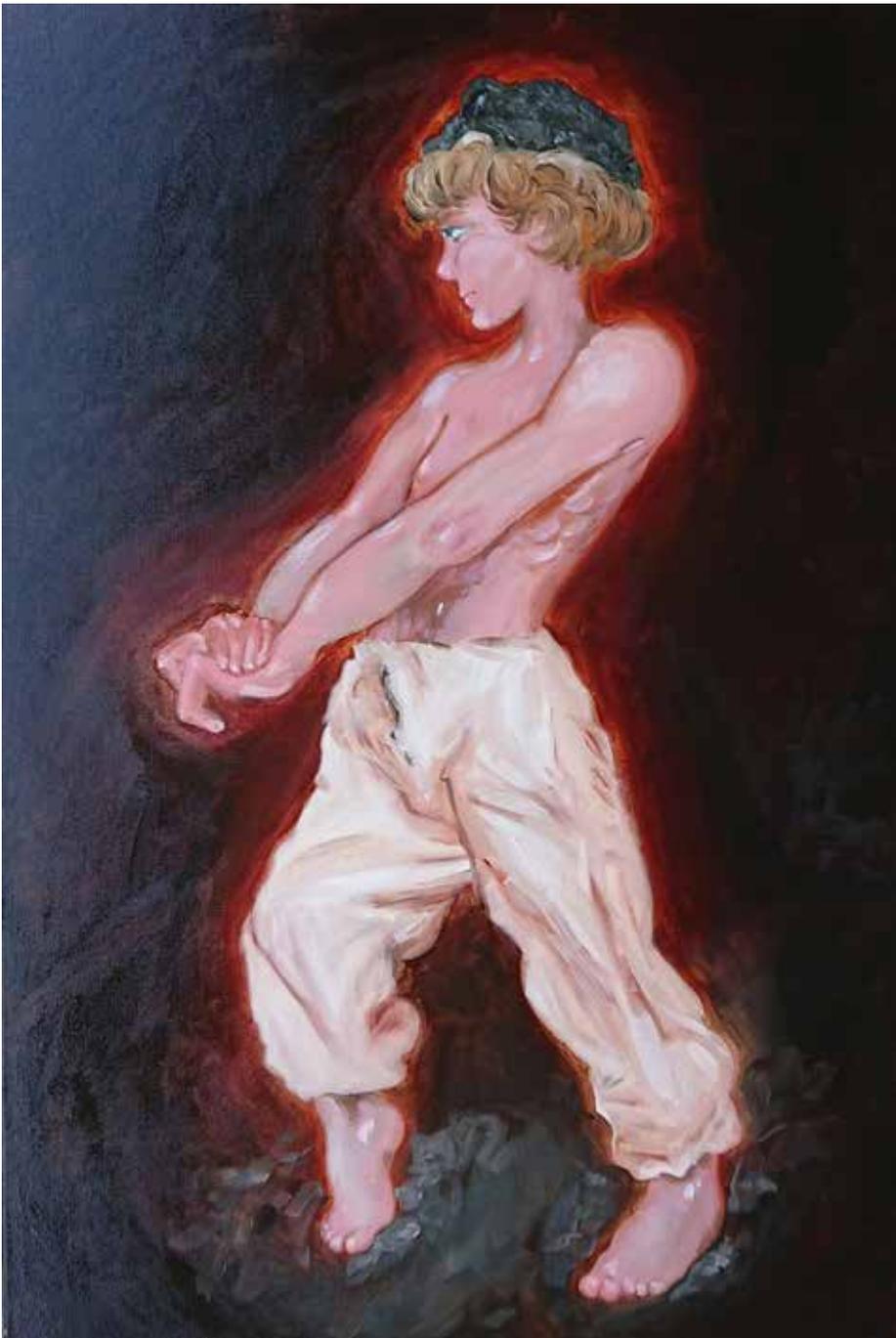
**Amisha Chand**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

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*Frozen Time*

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I chose to use vibrant colours to express nature through its simple beauty. The clock on the left-hand side resembles human built landscapes, in particular, 'Big Ben'. I have tried to show what it may be like when nature overtakes human-built areas, as though the busy city life is frozen in time but nature continues to grow.



**Nicole Carino**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

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*Artless Fisher-boy*

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The fisher-boy from Naples of Italy is historically depictive of simple living: characterised by minimal needs for opulence, and instead an individual is pleased for what they already carry. First portrayals of the Neapolitan fisher-boy establish genre subject matters: art pieces illustrating scenes from ordinary life from the 17th Century of Europe. First addressed inside a domestic situation, the fisher-boy is distinct from the bold topics of myths, and is more alike to us, occupied by playful tendencies and casualness. Reminding his observers that they may share the same leisures and attitudes as him, the Naples-born fisher-boy is modern as we don't look up to his pose as heroic, but instead as relaxed to unconcerned; like how we are as a contemporary community, with no need for such lavishness, but to just simply live with what we are already pleased with.

# JULIAN

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Vivienne Slamet · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

I can clearly recall the day my brother received the transfusion that shattered his life.

Julian had haemophilia: a condition that prevented his blood from clotting properly. It meant that any cuts – even the smallest ones – could be fatal.

He was fifteen when he was involved in a fight. When he was rushed to hospital, his skin had turned the colour of snow; blood was gushing out of his nose and seeping from various cuts. I couldn't remember another time when Julian was ever victimised; he always stood up for himself. Despite his condition, he still maintained his rebellious attitude.

Still, he'd never been in such a bad state.

My parents and I stood in the waiting room, not looking at each other, each praying that things would work out. I was only eight then, and I remember thinking: is Julian dying? It seemed like a possibility.

Doctor Finner told us later that he had survived, but was in a critical condition. He needed a blood transfusion: urgently. We all volunteered to take a blood test to see if we were compatible.

That moment was really scary. I didn't want to believe that Julian could die. To my eight-year-old mind, the idea seemed like a nightmare. I wanted to wake up and forget it had happened; to treat it as nothing but a bad dream.

When they took my blood, I passed out. I faintly remember the nurse saying, "She's had a lot to take in for one day...highly strung...you should take her home..."

I woke up in the back seat of our old station wagon. Mum and Dad, I recalled, were having a hushed conversation in the front seats. Whispers drifted back to me as I lay there, motionless: "What are we doing? Rob, Julian's all the way back.....you can't help, but please...It's useless, Mary...She's too young...". I drifted off.

For the next few nights, sleeping was torture. I couldn't remember what I did or said to anyone. School – I distinctly remember thinking – was hell. Nightmares intruded into my sleep. That wasn't the worst thing, however: it was the waiting, watching, hoping, praying. None of it seemed to work, because the next day my parents sat me down and explained that Julian was dying. A blood transfusion from an anonymous donor had infected him with AIDS. I didn't then know what AIDS was. My mother just explained that it was an extremely bad virus. Dad then said that we needed

to bring Julian home soon; the hospital had done all they could. It was up to us to make his last few months as happy as possible.

I reacted quite badly to the whole thing. I screamed, I cried, I yelled at everyone. I prayed that God would save him. None it prepared me for Julian's return, though, a week later.

On the outside, he seemed normal: same trademark Hastings salt-and-pepper hair, same sharp grey eyes. However, he was different: broken on the inside. He acted the same way, cold and blank, for the first few weeks. I did everything I could to make him act like he always did – rolled eyes, fond smiles and sarcastic replies – but he would just sit there, staring at a point in the distance. I remember watching him from afar, waiting for him to get better.

He never did. Months rolled by and he deteriorated. It was like he was ageing backwards. He wanted to play with his old toys and listened to his favourite childhood songs. Then he couldn't eat by himself, and he started wearing nappies again. I felt like I had lost my brother while he was still alive.

I attracted attention at school as the kid whose brother was crazy. People would either come up to ask me to questions, flinch and move away or taunt me. I had been raised never to react to bullies, but at times I nearly did. Sometimes, I found myself feeling resentful and had to remind myself that what was happening to him – and me – wasn't Julian's fault.

At times, I felt like I was the one dying. Julian had always been my protector: someone I could look up to, someone I trusted. Now that someone had been taken away.

Eventually, it got to the point where he didn't move at all, didn't speak, didn't do anything. He was wasting away. When we got him back to hospital, the doctor told us there was nothing he could do. The virus has wreaked so much damage on his brain that he was essentially a vegetable. I didn't fully understand much of what was happening, but I did understand one thing: Julian now had only weeks to live. Maybe in my heart, underneath all the denial, I knew it was too late.

My parents were remarkably strong for people who had been told their son would die. I recall my mother wiping her tears away and Dad choking out, "We'll take care of him," while I sat there, numb and in disbelief, thinking: "Why is this happening? Why isn't God interfering?"

Nothing helped, because eventually Julian Hastings' heart stopped beating.

I'd been raised to believe in God. I'd been taught to trust Him to help. I'd prayed for so long that Julian would recover, that he wasn't going to die. So, when I heard the news, I was filled with rage.

I recall screaming at everyone, yelling at God. None of this was fair; none of us deserved this. The days passed in a blur of tears and prayer. A kid at school, who I had never talked to, just came up to me, looked me in the eye, and simply said 'sorry', before walking away.

I remember walking to the chapel in a daze, stepping through the crowd who parted before me, murmuring; standing over the coffin, tears streaming. My brother, who had seemed so full of life nearly six months ago, lay cold and lifeless behind the glass screen. In death, he seemed smaller and more fragile, as if he were an old, worn doll than someone had tossed aside.

Mum and Dad stood side by side, their expression of grief and pain mirroring my own. It felt like I was in a nightmare, a nightmare I couldn't wake up from. I could only imagine what my parents

were going through, having had Julian for seven years longer than I had. I said my goodbye far too late, I thought then, because he didn't seem to have heard me.

From that time on, my childhood memories are pretty hazy. As I've grown older, I've wondered if Julian's death could have been avoided. Did that donor all those years ago know that their blood was poisoned?

Now I'm thirteen, and I still miss him with every fibre of my being. The day he had the blood transfusion was the day I lost him, but I've come to realise that I can't hang on to my grief forever. I haven't moved on, but I have accepted it. Maybe God did intend for it to happen this way. I have learned to be more kind to those I love and compassionate towards others, because we don't know if they'll be here another day, hour or minute. I've learnt that when someone is suffering, their loved ones suffer along with them, and no-one should endure what the Hastings family did the day we lost Julian. No-one deserves that.

Some days, I still feel like a hole has been torn in my being, but I know that, while I can't see him, he's still there. Still looking out for me. ■



**Lauchlan Broughton**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

# SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Mietta Ackland · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Speaking my whole life, yet no-one seems to listen  
Listening my whole life, yet no-one seems to hear

Life: a puddle of misunderstandings  
Why did I even bother to get up in the morning?  
Sometimes it felt like I have no purpose at all  
As worthiness, doubtfulness and emotion fills my  
mind.

Speaking my whole life, yet no-one seems to listen  
Listening my whole my life, yet no-one seems to  
hear.

Growing up I never saw my Father much  
As for my Mother I would get home to her lying  
on the couch  
No-one ever explained anything to me so  
I grew up very unaware

Speaking my whole life, yet no-one seems to listen  
Listening my whole life, yet no-one seems to hear.

A childhood full of disappointments and Upsets  
I questioned why when I needed him, God  
disappeared  
Unlike others I couldn't find joy and happiness in  
this place  
And for the most, I hid under a rock with no-one.

Speaking my whole life, yet no-one seems to  
Listen

Listening my whole life, yet no-ones seems to  
hear.

Now I live alone in a small old and Lifeless unit  
No Motivation to do anything I spent my Days  
inside

No-one ever visited and I visited no-one  
I had grown so used to this, I had forgotten the  
outside world.

Speaking my whole life, yet no-one seems to listen  
Listening my whole life, yet no-one seems to hear

Hope ran away and faith, well faith never came  
to begin with

Overtime My Family died and I thought to  
myself, I will go with them

Anxiously, but without regret I pointed it cold  
and dark at My head

World went white and I fell to the ground. Why  
was the last word I ever said.

Speaking my whole Life, yet no-one seems to  
Listen

Listening my whole Life, yet no-one seems to  
hear. ■



Jenna Morley  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

# THE GOLDEN HAZE

---

Charli Rymer · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Lost in the distant past  
Longing to remember,  
Remembering when we're most active  
But still under the spell of unconsciousness

Imagery replaying in our minds  
Triggering those that we forget,  
We forget something so simple, so special

Appreciating the purpose, the necessary cause  
Rekindling, reconnecting,  
Reconnecting with our past, present and future

At the quietest hour  
Being surrounded,  
Surrounded by vivid thoughts of impossibilities

The seconds of warmth and hope  
Inviting and embracing,  
Embracing the calmness and peacefulness

Enjoying a golden moment  
We then come alive,  
Alive to see that it was all another reality

The world goes still and it is safe and silent,  
Silent enough to process our emotions  
Digest and comprehend

No longer feeling alone or afraid  
Instead we feel grateful,  
Grateful for the chance to simply live,  
Through our beautiful, golden dreams.

The moments just before we wake up represent  
kindness, warmth, peace, happiness and calm.  
Spiritual awareness

**We Invite and embrace**  
**Understand the unheard of,**  
**The unheard of may be rational or confusing ■**

# A CHILD'S COSMOS

---

Summer Williams · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Silver, petite and insignificant,  
A dolphin collides with a braid of cord,  
Slicing through the sun kissed sky,  
Amid the world of machines portal,  
Its aura plunges into another dimension,  
To a place of purity and wonder,

Thundering with vivid imagination,  
Fizzing with bubbles full of dreams  
Swoop in the air,

Daisy chains float through the wind,  
Shimmering grass blades soar like glinting faeries,  
The clouds drizzle a child's ripening visions,  
Fluttering tinkles of laughter,  
Tumbling thoughts  
Through a secret entwined forest,  
Words whirling out of control,

A cosmos inside a child's mind ■

# IT ALL STARTED WHEN

---

Laura Cerritelli · Year 9 · *Star of the Sea College*

It all started when...  
She saw the house

The howling wind was strong, too strong. A branch broke and fell directly in front of the two kids as they made their way towards the 'Broken House'.

The broken house had been there for as long as they could remember. It sat there looking sad and completely uninviting.

Stories about the house and history and its future were the talk of the town. The stories were all different but had one thing in common. In every story, the owner of the house had mysteriously vanished. Some say he died, some say he was killed, some swear that they heard voices in the house at night. Everybody believed that something terrible had happened in that house.

It was the sort of house that every kid feared.

Max and Steph were no exception. They feared the house, the sight of it made them tremble... yet they loved it. The mystery around it seemed to call them, like it had something it wanted to say. Even though everyone in the town was afraid of it, it had a special place in the community. It was their mysterious house. Suitably placed in the middle of a normal street, it stood out and looked the stuff of nightmares.

Max looked up at the house. It was blackened around the edges, like a fire had gotten to it. She shivered then screamed as a branch fell directly in front of her. She hadn't seen it coming. It was the dead of night and with only the light from a single torch held by her friend, Steph, all that could be seen were the eerie shadows that the trees cast onto the big black outline of the house.

The two kids crept closer to the house and pushed the door. It slowly creaked before a huge gust of howling wind came and firmly pushed it open. The breeze, smelling like the ocean nearby, was much more inviting than the house itself. The kids jumped as the door banged against the wall behind it. The wallpaper was peeling and the kids noticed that it was ripped and matted around the edges. They began to edge down the hall, running their fingers along the wall as they did so. The house, cold and abandoned, still managed to beckon them in and the kids could see how the house could have once been a home.

They peered into a room that had once been the master bedroom. The bedspread was old, worn and laced with cobwebs. In the back corner of the bedside table there was a dusty photo of a happy couple with their arms around each other.

The kids looked up as they heard a loud bang that echoed down the corridor. Max quickly dropped the photo frame and then ran hurriedly back into the corridor to see what had made the noise.

It all started when...  
The kids found the box

The door slammed shut behind them as the kids continued to edge down the seemingly never ending corridor. The house was silent, the sound of the howling winds outside ceased to exist. The torches glow cast an eerie shadow on the walls around them. Painting after painting of past occupants lined the walls and glared down at them, some with only one eye as the canvases had all been slashed, ripped and shredded in some way. It looked as if someone had come through and slashed all the paintings. The torches glow flickered and the kids suddenly tripped and fell over something obstructing their path. It was a box.

Max was sure that the box had not been there before. In fact, she was certain.

It all started when...  
They began to open the box

Steph, being the least scared of the two, went to open the box. The house creaked and a deep wailing sound accompanied her as she stepped forward. Max slammed her hand on the lid of the box, the sound echoing down the corridor.

"What if it's alive?" she whispered.

"What if it tells us what happened in this house?" Steph whispered back.

Steph took no notice of her and brushed her hand away from the box.

The box was big, about waist height and was covered in peeling brown paint, and gold trimmings, giving the appearance of an old treasure chest. She opened the box.

It was filled with...  
Another box?

They looked at each other, confused. A box inside a box?

The torch that Steph had been holding flickered again and then went out. They were plunged into total darkness and if possible a louder silence than before. They found each other's hands and together they opened the next box. Another box. They continued opening the boxes. Sitting in the dark silence for what seemed like an eternity, opening the seemingly endless lids of boxes. Falling into a

pattern and in the back of their mind becoming aware of a slow, rhythmic chanting... The chanting of a story being told. It was the story of the happy couple; the couple that when something happened, fell out of love. The house was whispering its secrets. As they listened to what the boxes were saying they learnt about the house's terrible past. A terrible past that the house forgave the humans for causing.

It all started when...  
They opened the box

Together, they held up the smallest box. There would be nothing in it, they thought. It was

much too small. It was only about the size of an engagement ring box but it still looked like an old chest. The rhythmic chanting could still be heard but was slowly beginning to fade away as the last box was being opened. The house fell completely silent as they peered into the final box.

It all ended when...  
They opened the box

And the house's secret past was finally told. The couple had grown up together, married, had kids, and had started to drift apart. The husband had been resentful and the story of the haunted house started there. ■

## EPHEMERAL SIMPLICITY

---

Rose Pearson · Year 7 · *Star of the Sea College*

The universe is infinite  
Always expanding  
Time could be like that  
It might not be  
We will never know  
Was there ever a beginning?  
Will it ever end?  
For us life is certain

We exist and then we don't  
Our eminence on Earth  
In the grandeur of everything we are nothing  
However we attempt to describe it  
And we think we define it  
The universe is ineffable  
A moment of epiphany in a life of oblivion  
We can only hope to be enlightened in our last  
glimpse. ■

# A DOG'S ECHOED VOICE *A TRIBUTE TO HARRY*

---

Grace Percoco · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



One bark for the sun rising  
Two for the noisy birds  
Three for the toy I pulled apart  
And four for the humans' words

Five barks for the possum  
Six reminding to be fed  
Seven to get attention  
And eight getting humans out of bed

Nine barks for the empty water bowl  
Ten for the run around town  
Eleven for getting that meal  
And twelve for the sun going down

Then my human takes a seat  
Beckoning me toward him  
So I wriggle up joyfully to his side  
And help him become less grim

A relationship forged through time  
Never able to forget  
In love with each other at first sight  
Leaving only with one last pet ■



**Luke Jones**  
*Year 12 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*

# THE SIMPLE LIFE

---

Michaela Cifone · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



*Clockwise from left: My grandmother, Eleftheria (aged 13 years); my mother, Effie (aged 3 years); me (aged 4 years).*

She was born in Greece, and grew up in a small village, one of nine siblings (though two died when she was young). She shared a room with her four sisters and on the days when it wasn't her turn to go to school (for the siblings alternated), she would spend her time doing chores and getting into mischief. She would wake to a simple breakfast of bread and cheese (cheese made using the milk from their sheep, which they also sold and bartered) and then it would be time to complete her assigned tasks. Perhaps she would gather wood, which she would load onto her mule and unload in the shed at the back of the house. This was strenuous work and she did not enjoy it! Perhaps, she might accompany her mother to town to sell cheese and milk. Although the walk would be murder on her feet, she enjoyed the interesting people she met along the way.

The least demanding task, and certainly her favourite, was watching the sheep grazing in the meadow. This gave her plenty of time to make

up games, play with her siblings, who may have been keeping her company, or just relax under a tree. There were wild tortoises that roamed the little hills of the village and, because she thought it was fun, and she didn't have a bike, she would place a tortoise under each knee and let them take her for a ride! When she'd had enough, she would place them upside down, so they couldn't escape, their little legs waving to the sky as they tried desperately to right themselves. Sometimes she would leave them like that overnight so they'd be there when she returned the next day.

At fourteen, she trained as a seamstress to bring in extra money for her family but her parents always wanted a better life for her. So, at twenty-one, with two suitcases and a plane ticket, she arrived in Australia (she cried the whole way there). Her younger sister would join her a couple of years later but until then, she was lonely. Eventually, she would marry, and settle down in the coastal suburb of Port Melbourne.

*She was born in Melbourne in 1973 and grew up in the coastal suburb of Port Melbourne, the eldest of three siblings (although one would die when she was twenty-five). When they first moved in to their single-storey terrace home, she would amuse herself by looking at her reflection in a glass door, pretending she was watching tv. She shared a room with her brother until her parents renovated their home and she would get her own room! What bliss! Until that wonderful invention, the telephone, entered their home, calls had to be made from the phone booth around the corner.*

*Days were spent going to school, and free time was spent outdoors. There were many games of street cricket, kick to kick footy, hide and seek and bike riding till dinner time. In summer, she'd throw a beach towel around her neck, grab a bottle of baby oil and a small radio or book and walk down the street to the beach.*

*Her mother would return from work late at night (for she worked the afternoon shift at Arnott's) and if she was lucky to still be awake, she would rush out for a hug, drinking in her delicious aroma of butter and sugar. She would be loaded with treats for her children, always wanting to please them. Her parents worked hard and wanted a better life for their children. Education meant good jobs, better pay and an easier life.*

*She began working at the supermarket when she was fifteen, finished high school and went to university where she completed her business degree. She eventually married and settled in the same coastal suburb where she grew up.*

I was born in Melbourne in 2005 and live in the

same coastal suburb my grandmother settled in all those years ago, and where my mother grew up. I am the eldest of two and have my own room in our double storey house. A wardrobe that spans the length of my bedroom wall is crammed full of clothes, making decisions about what to wear can be exhausting. Sometimes I stare at the pantry, trying to decide what to have for breakfast, the selection is overwhelming.

My days are spent going to school and participating in many extra-curricular activities. I am in constant communication with family and friends, thanks to my mobile phone. I really don't know how people communicated in the past. For downtime, my parents insist on us getting "fresh air", as if the air in the house is somehow polluted. Our trips to the beach involve a boot load of "stuff"; an umbrella, deck chairs, an esky full of snacks and drinks, sporting equipment, padded mats, towels, three different types of sunscreen and reef oil (some habits never die), tissues, wipes... You'd think we were going away for the weekend instead of driving five minutes down the road.

Our parents, never forgetting their humble beginnings, teach us the importance of hard work, a healthy lifestyle and being kind and respectful to other people. Although they're in a position to take us on overseas holidays, buy us things we want and pay for things we want to do, they still carry on traditions they grew up with; home cooked meals, home-made lunches, this obsession with fresh air and playing outside. I only hope that these traditions will carry on with my brother and myself because sometimes, the simple things are best. ■



**Téa Mancini**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*You Sleep: Part I*

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You slept with a hand on your cheek and your eyes tightly shut, with your cover pulled to your chin. Once, you must have shivered and tugged your knitted quilt over your ear. I saw you curl your body up like a cat, with your legs tucked up under your torso. Then you turned quite suddenly. It startled me and I jumped back. For the rest of the night I sat on the end of the bed watching you toss and turn. Your covers became all tangled from beneath you as you rotated your body. At about half past three, you started to speak, but your eyes were still shut. I leaned in close. I didn't quite get it all, just some stray murmurs. Sometimes I had to stretch my arm out just to pinch words out of the air with the tips of my fingers. In my hands, I held a few words. I had a "Hello", "Good day" and "Never leave".



**Téa Mancini**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional  
College North Keilor*

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*You Sleep: Part II*

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You dreamed. I do not know what of. But I know you did. I watched your fleeting eyes darting under your lids and the variation in your breath which quickened at times. At some moments, you rolled over and sighed as if a great weight had been lifted from your soul. Then came the sleep talk and I knew that you were in some other world with some other people that perhaps I knew. That's the thing with dreams. Sometimes you see people that you know and other times, you meet strangers conjured up by your own subconscious. Unlike most nights, on this particular night, there was no sweating, or crying or waking up screaming. You sounded peaceful. As if you were in a place where you could simply live. Unlike here where we cannot live simply. I wish I could have joined you in that place, where I could forget about life for a moment. But I knew that if I were to fall asleep, only nightmares and terrors would greet me on the other side of consciousness. Waking life is already bad enough, so why should I have to face my demons in my sleep too? At one point, you even began to laugh. At first I thought you were crying but it sounded too joyful. I'm ashamed to admit that I nearly woke you because I was jealous, that you could have that moment and I could not. But I stopped myself just before my fingers brushed your arm. You twitched and I immediately felt guilty. How could I? How could I have stolen those brief moments of happiness? So I let you go to revel in your dream and I really wanted you to remember it in the morning. I wanted you to remember that happy dream in such unhappy times.



**Téa Mancini**

*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*You Sleep: Part III*

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You woke up when the sun came streaming through the barred windows. You turned to me with your lids half open and a faint smile on your lips the residue of happiness. I only got to see in for a moment because it faded the instant you saw my bruised eyes and sunken face. I brushed aside stray hairs from your face and I asked how you slept. You responded in just the very way you used to when things were okay; “Just fine”. I asked you what you dreamed about. When you couldn’t remember I was disheartened. A tear fell from my eye, but you didn’t know why I was upset. These days, there was a lot of things to be upset about. I remember you lifting my arm so that you could curl up to me, as all little brothers should. I shall never forget the question you asked me that morning; “How did you sleep?”. Of course, I did not sleep at all but you, my brother, were young and I couldn’t frighten you. Life just isn’t simple enough to state blunt facts. My response; “Just fine”.



Oscar Jackson  
*Year 7 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*



Angelica Vassiliou  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*

# MOTHER'S BIRD

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John Stutt · Year 8 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

I was crying. To comfort myself, I cradled the bird in my arms. It had simply looked at me, not being able to process the situation. The deep black eyes that had once longed to see my mother's face now were blankly staring at me. I remember when it finally seemed to understand the point behind my melancholy, gazing out the window of my old house at the wind chimes hanging on my veranda. The tinkling had always relaxed me, not anymore. If only the bird could understand the whole story.

The bird had been my mother's, before she passed. *They* had reassured me that she died in a car crash, however, I knew this wasn't true; mother never owned a car. She hadn't told me how she met the bird and I never cared to ask. It's bright purple crest stood out starkly against a base of dark blue feathers. The bird's species was a mystery. Even a friend of mother's, a birdwatcher, had no idea as to the identity of the exotic bird. Her death was only a week ago, however I didn't have the money to send her off with a funeral. I had been living simply, with a job that barely covered my own expenses let alone the death of a family member or food for a bird.

I was brought back to the present by its impatient squawking. I looked down at the bird, which was now settled in a cage, just like me. My eyes followed the bird's line of sight, to look outside at the plain, grey walls I see every day. A figure was walking towards my home, wearing a black suit and hat. Each time his polished black shoes hit the ground an echo reverberated through the air. Each step made me flinch, he was here to talk about my mother.

The footsteps stopped at my door before I reached it. He opened the door and entered uninvited. Under his hat his features were serious and his posture revealed nothing of his profession, however I knew what he was after.

"I know what happened and I am sorry." His deep voice quivered slightly at the last few words, as if he was scared of me. I said nothing in reply and just watched him. He let the door go and slowly closed it behind him. He then turned to me as the door clicked against its hinges and back into place.

"Can I?" The man asked, indicating to one of the two chairs in the room. I nodded grimly as he quietly lowered himself down. "I'm here to talk about what happened, a week ago." The man asked me a series of questions to which I didn't answer. Eventually the man got up out of his chair and sighed, "Oh well." With that, he turned his back to me and opened the door.

After that, life became repetitive. I never even left my home, for at least a month I stayed in the one room. Different people were always coming in to see me, asking questions about mother.

"What happened?"

"Do you know why she's dead?"

"How can you accept her death?"

Each time it was the same questions, to which I never answered, leaving their notebooks empty. Before each of them left, they would always look sadly at me, as if they knew the real me.

One day, a woman stepped into my home and began asking questions like all the others. Once again, I didn't answer any of the queries presented. Just like the others, the woman eventually got up and turned to leave.

"Why?" I asked aloud, my voice raspy and dry.

The woman then turned back around, biting her lip.

"You should be asking yourself that." With this, she pushed the door aside turning her eyes away from me. She took an extra second to close it behind her but that second was all I needed. It all happened at once and I found myself pushing the woman to the side and moving past her. I ran.

A loud, deafening sound began to seep into my eardrum as I sprinted, not looking back. The resounding siren seeming to urge me on. As I barrelled past, people in orange cheered me on, however I knew they couldn't join me. This was just me. The cage was in my arms, the bird screeching. I ignored it and pushed onwards.

Outside the sunlight now warmed me, its rays guiding me forward as I gained momentum. There was a small opening left in front of me but it would soon be too small to get past. I knew I would make it. I smiled to myself, in the moment.

I sprinted past and out into the open. An expanse of land rolled before me, I felt free, finally. As I walked, the sound of the siren slowly receded. I didn't know where I was going but I knew I could start anew. I looked down at the exotic bird in the cage that I still held, the species of which no one was certain. Surely it was worth something. A new life was set before me, my old one was crumpling up behind me. My thoughts were ruined when the sirens returned. I felt a hot burning sensation spreading through my abdomen. I dropped to the ground.

Red and blue. They had come back for me. I

became aware of pain that dug itself into a trench on my forehead. I raised my head off the ground as blood trickled down, taking refuge in between my lips. I licked them and tasted the metallic liquid, savouring it. I was still clutching the cage in my arms. The bird was fluttering frantically around, wanting to be let out. I flicked the door open and it didn't hesitate to liberate itself. The bird flew into

the distance, its colours fading into dark shade before it disappeared. I knew what it was like to be caged, it was only when the door is opened for you that you can finally be free. I dropped my head back to the ground, I knew I wouldn't be getting back up to continue my own flight.

After all, I had killed mother. ■



**Lucy Franch**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*

# LOST EXPECTATIONS

Theo Schlicht · Year 6 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

And at that moment, he saw the dull, dark colour of the buildings, primarily reflecting his mood.

The days went for 24 hours but for George it felt longer. He would drive his bus in his blue, checked shirt with the wheels going round and round repetitively just like his daily routine. The same kids got on, the same kids got off. The kid with the round glasses always reading a book, the kid with the colourful socks carrying a goofy smile, the kid with punk style boots and a piercing in her nose.

It was just a typical Monday, George started up the engine and the same kids got on, with their standard sombre expressions. Typical Monday. He drove the normal route but today sleep overwhelmed him, his eyelids collapsed and his ears were overwhelmed with the sound of screaming horns and screaming kids. He knew that something was going wrong yet sleep prevailed. His last memory was a sudden thump and then...nothing.

His eyes opened to the sight of shocked, frightened kids behind him. Some calling for their parents, some just too stunned to move. When George looked out the window he could finally comprehend the reason for their expressions. A dark sky. Ruined buildings. Crashed cars. But other than that, there was a strange isolation, nobody was there. His expression grew identical to the children's, shocked and scared. George knew what he had to do. He was the oldest one there and they were relying on him. Sitting in a bus, wailing for help would not do much so his finger reluctantly pressed the button to open the doors. But then he stopped, what if there was something dangerous out there? What if he got hurt he thought? But what if they had to stay in a bus for ages? He pressed the button. He walked towards the open door and carefully hopped out of the bus, broken glass crushed under his feet. Soon the kids followed him, all still with a shock on their face. Then something caught George's eye, it was a book. He picked it up and opened it. A picture book. He saw images of a young girl for her first day of school, but George saw the date in small print at the bottom right hand of the photo, it read 21 of April, 3025. This couldn't get anymore strange and frightening. They were in the future. But this was definitely not a good one. *George had travelled in time.* George thought it was a dream but the smell of pollution and the look of the burned down buildings just seemed too real. Maybe he was crazy he thought, maybe he had lost his mind.

Suddenly a tear rolled down the side of his freckled cheek. His family, his home, all his

precious belongings. Gone. He thought, isn't it depressing how you take things for granted? He was devastated. Everyday while driving his bus he never really thought much about his family yet now they were gone he felt so lonely. Every day he would park outside his home expecting it to be there and now that it was gone he felt completely lost. Every day the kids got on the bus and he never really paid much attention to them and now he realised how much they meant to him.

George spoke up with his croaky voice. "Everybody, things will be okay," he lied.

"Where are my p – parents?" a little girl sobbed.

"I'll be honest," George started, "I do not know where your parents are. I do not know how this happened. I do not know where we are. I just don't know. Everybody hop back on the bus and close the door, you will be safe inside there."

"What about thy safety?" the kid with the round glasses queried, he had just been studying an old English textbook.

"I will be exploring tonight. If I get in trouble then you," he pointed to the girl with punk style boots who happened to be the oldest, "are in charge."

"But..."

"Now get back on the bus." So, George set off on foot.

That night George rummaged through the buildings with the aroma of smoke following him. He did not find anything new or interesting or useful and he still hadn't found any people or any signs of life. It was just burned down buildings. He saw the sign for a milk bar, he saw a vending machine which sold cars inside and he saw an advanced clock. He thought he could hear it ticking but that was really his thumping heart interrupting the silence. An important decision had to be made and George just couldn't make up his mind. They could stay here and try to live this way of life or he could return to his bus and try to get home. What if they ran into something dangerous on the bus? It would be a huge risk to leave. He started to make his way back to the bus, following the sounds of the children's sobs. He would give them the news that he found nothing. As he walked, the choice he had to make was like a weight on his back just slowing him down. His mind was filled with what ifs. His boring life had never prepared him to make such a risky decision. He went into the driver's seat and ignored the questions buzzing around the bus. Leaving was too risky, they had to stay.

Then he remembered the kids' parents. Losing their kids would be like someone stealing every possible thing they could look forward to, with a smirk on their face. He revved the engine and took off. When he was younger every little kid fantasised about going in the future, but they didn't know the truth. This future isn't what they dream of. It's not what they expect. He had to warn them. Somehow. ■

## LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

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Joshua Mac · Year 8 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

I feel the light on my skin, and the warmth radiating onto me. I yearn for more. I smell the fresh air around me and take a deep breath. The air is sweet and refreshing. I feel my feet sinking into the wet, soft ground beneath me as I stand in the dirt. I see the beautiful sky, the sun and the clouds above; and humans around me as they run around with tools in their hands, building structures nearby. I hear the people work and shout directions at each other; the noise making me want to block it out. I stand there in the earth, watching the people work around me until the sun goes down in the horizon and the humans leave. I stoop down as I fall asleep.

A few years pass, and I see the many changes that have been made around me. There are mini versions of myself next to me and they become my friends and companions for life. I hear the sounds of cars as they drive past me, and the loud chatter of humans as they walk excitedly down the streets. The people had constructed glorious, bright buildings where many people are dressed up in fancy clothes as they enter the building.

I feel the seasons pass by like a flash, hot one day, cold another. As the seasons pass, I see many changes around me. I see the poor children who wear old rags, forced to take shelter on the streets during the cold, harsh season. Even though they are shivering, hungry and beaten down, there is a look in their eyes; a look of hope in that they could survive this severe weather and live. Live. That is what I want to do. To have something to live for, and to be a part of this journey of life.

More years pass by, and I have grown until I am towering above the ground beneath me. Time has grown old on me, but I have gained much knowledge on my journey. The world around me is changing ever so slightly. The bittersweet air I remember from long ago has changed; the air getting heavier and thicker at every passing day. The earth that was once soft to touch has hardened until I am unable to extend my feet further. Buildings get knocked down and are rebuilt into houses and workplaces.

There are people of all shapes and sizes who walk past me every day. I see the little humans stuffing their mouths with food; the middle-aged humans wearing their messy shirts and ties rushing off to work with their briefcases half open; and the old humans who I have seen grow old and weary. I have watched my friends next to me grow up and die. I know I will have to leave soon.

I feel the coldness against my skin and the wind howl just before the morning sun breaks. It is time. There is a man, standing in the cold, and I know what he is about to do. Just before I breathe my last breath, I see a box of mini tree saplings on the sidewalk, ready to be planted. I smile as I lay on the ground, unmoving.

“Life is a circle. The end of one journey is the beginning of the next”

~Joseph M Marshall III ■

# THE MAN WHO WANTED TO LIVE A SIMPLE LIFE

## THE KOREAN WAR 1950-1953

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Alexander De Jong · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

### 1952. 11th of January. 1400 hours.

**M**y Name is Ben Fredrick and my unit and I were told to attack the front line of defence, so the supports could get through. When we arrived, we were ambushed, and we were all taken prisoners.

### 1952. 12th of January. 2300 hours

When we were captured we were all told to march in a triple file. It was exhausting and some of the soldiers collapsed and got shot by the guards. After 12 hours of hard and exhausting marching we arrived at prison camp. Inside we were all assigned a different cell and a piece of paper that had all the rules and expectations we had to follow. Then the boss of the prison spoke in English and said that we were to start building a massive railway line by first light tomorrow. When we started, it was exhausting and tiring because we had to lift heavy metal beams and hammer them down with huge hammers.

### 1952. 31st of January. 1700 hours

This day was the worst day ever because the soldiers rounded up a couple of prisoners and took them into an office, we couldn't hear what was going on, but we heard a lot of yelling in pain and eventually a gun shot. After we saw 2 soldiers drag out the 2 men they took they told us to all come outside and watch as they burnt the two bodies on an open fire.

Day after day the guards took more and more prisoners into the office and told us after to come and see the bodies being burnt. Until just after the 30th time they'd done it – one of the soldiers was let out of the office alive. Instantly I asked him what they were doing, and he said, "they were trying to get information out of you and if you resisted they'd kill ya."

"So, you told them"? I asked.

"I had to otherwise I would be dead," said the soldier.

### 1952. 12th of March. 2200 hours

Today was the day that all the prisoners had to keep working on the railway lines with only one or two small breaks if you were lucky. It seemed as if this railway would never be completed so the

guards brought whips and machine guns out and started whipping people and firing the machine guns to tell us to keep working. I just hoped and prayed with whatever spirit I had left that someone would come and rescue us.

### 1952. 20th of March. 0500 hours

When we started working I gave up all hope that someone would come and rescue us. Then a miracle happened; about three tanks and six lorries came and started to attack the prison camp and were also yelling at the prisoners to get into the back of the lorries. We all started running towards the lorries with whatever energy we had left. I managed to get into one of the lorries, but soon enemy reinforcements arrived, and we had to evacuate leaving some of the prisoners behind.

### 1952. 20th of March. 0900 hours

After that long journey we all got dropped off at a dock and they asked us our names and where we would like to go. I asked if I could go to Australia, but they said that the ship didn't have enough fuel to get me there. They said that I could go to Japan and when a ship is available to take me to Australia they'd let me know.

### 1952. 23rd of March. 1100 hours

I arrived in Japan and I needed to find some work. That was not easy since a lot of the country was still being rebuilt from WW2 and because I don't know any Japanese.

After days of searching I managed to find some work on a farm just outside a place called Osaka.

### 1953. 27th of January. 2500

After months of hard and simple work on the farm I received a phone call that told me that a ship had become available to take me back to Australia. When I arrived at the Dock I had my passport checked and I was given a key for the room I would be staying in on the trip.

### 1953. 1st of February. 3200 hours

After 4 days on the ship I still hadn't thought about what I should do for a future job. One idea was to go back to the army, but I'd had enough of being shot at and being a prisoner, so I decided to leave that idea behind.

Then the idea hit me that I should start my own farm like the one in Japan.

**1953. 3rd of February. 2600 hours**

When I landed, I bought a cheap farm for the price of \$55,000. At first, I thought this idea was terrible because no one wanted to buy my milk until Coles

asked to buy some and then my dairy farm started to become successful.

I have not had much time to write in my dairy since my farm is receiving more and more orders, but I have started a new simple life as an owner of a dairy farm. I have left the Korean War behind and I am going to live a simple life from now on. ■



**Felix Pacheco**  
*Year 8 · CBC St Kilda*

# STREETS OF APARTHEID, UBUNTU AND INDIFFERENCE

Sophie Farinacci · Year 12 · Aquinas College

Year 12 Literature Creative Response to  
Cerwidene Dovey's *Only the Animals*

Resistance in Afrikaans

Soul of Cockroach

Died 1993, Pietermaritzburg

**Streets of the apartheid; ubuntu and indifference.**

*The fly. The flea.*

*The tick. The cockroach.*

*The rat. The mouse.*

*The termite. The cockroach.*

These things we can't

sweep under the rug.

*The cockroach. The mosquito. The cockroach.*

*The mole.*

The motion of life

was pest control.

My molt scraped against the leaves like cartilage. Gorging on the sustenance of the lifeless foliage – gracelessly gathered rot – a distant rumbling compelled me. Bound by the thick, black night, my antennae felt for the incline of the gutter's edge. I climbed out, traversing the grooved concrete of the foot path. Roads were silent at this time, seldom met by a grumbling car occupied by a grumbling human. Why does man loathe the darkness? Contrary to popular belief, night is not ominously obscure: perils are not veiled under the stars and shades of the moon, and strangers do not reside in the shadows. Yet my gimlet eyes do not stalk the drains and kitchens, or scavenge man's food, though he despises me for it. Man does not know me – I have mastered silent survival. But I have learned to know man. Perhaps this is where the discrepancy lies?

I continued to search for the thumping. The rhythmic vibrations carried in the concrete seemed to gently bounce me as I hastened to reach its source. Or rather, it was that the noise, brimming with anticipation, interrupted the monotony and so sparked in me an exciting and ardent curiosity. The sky broke open with the first rays of light for the day. It was as though it seemed to explain my path. I followed the sun, basking in the freedom with which I scurried the streets at such an early hour. The rumbling revealed itself as cadenced and intentional, and human murmurings sharpened as I approached it.

Around a corner, I reached the noise. The immensity of the gathering, in sight and sound, shocked me to confront it. They stamped their feet in unison. They raised their fists to the air. They thrust an array of coloured placards up, down and up again, reflecting the hues of these people that were all but white.

“Amandla!”, a leader cried.

“Awethu! Awethu! Awethu!”, responded the crowd.

“Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu!”, they cried together.

I knew what they spoke of, for the antennae of my ancestry, which transcends the reach of man, saw these words evolve from them. These people cried of *Ubuntu*: or, people are people through other people; *I am what I am because of who we all are*. My kin knew of the richness in the endeavour of this philosophy, as they searched for what it meant to be *human*; notions of uniting, and community, and love and joy sewn into the heart of the country. However, my *circa* could feel that, for some, these seeds were yet to bloom.

I peered around the benign mass. The protest had attracted a crowd of onlookers. Some shouted, their faces grimaced. Others stood and watched. And that is all they did. Indifferent to the sounds; indifferent to the fight; indifferent to the struggle. Uniformed men aimed their guns, and fired. Weaving anxiously between their feet, I dashed furtively into the shadows.

**Songs of resistance.**

*His tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.*

- Maya Angelou

Did you know cockroaches can fly? I couldn't, but some can. The streets would have been easier to navigate from up higher, however my molt reflects the light and so would have given me away. The wind did not flow beneath my beating wings but rather the wind, for me, delivered the beat. As though offering a vivisection of the hustle and bustle of man, the wind's songs teemed in my mind.

After the riot, the melodic breeze carried me to the chuff of the railway.

Did you know that cockroaches are multilingual? Arabic, Bengali, German, English, Afrikaans...

It's intrinsic. This was always revered by man, and perhaps is the source of the evolutionary hatred they reserve for us. We can universally speak of love, and of loss, and of love, for we have seen the love and loss of all of man. But humans seem to know love only in few words, and in few ways: I love you; je t'aime; ek het jou lief. They speak antipathy well though – hell, they even scold one another with the abhorrence of my name.

“Kakkerlak.” The audible disdain confused me. I looked forward, in search of the sound. Clutching desperately on a young girl's arm that she dragged along the platform, an old woman waddled past a solitary black man. The young girl looked to the ground. I hurried after them, intrigued, as they pursued the platform that was un-corrupted by darkness.

“Bantu...”

“Orgedientes...”

The woman's garrish bangles jostled and chimed, punctuating each snarl that she murmured under her heaving breath. As though stepping over a threshold, when the woman reached the white luminescence of the reserved bench seat, she hissed: “Ten slotte! Awar van die kaffirs.” My antenna prickled as the wrongness – the barbarity – of the woman's words settled in the air, swirling and enveloping the girl and a young black boy, but negating the woman. A nauseous humiliation burned on the face of the little girl, as the boy's face prickled with tears of tense restraint.

Boxed in a corner, he looked into the threshold and into the girl's eyes, though hers did not meet his. A loaded breeze blew with the sun peeking through the clouds. I believe that people are blind: they can see, but often do not see. Could she tell that his pain was not muted by his colour? Did he register the moral tension in the twitch of her neck? With the weariness of one who is fatigued by the unrelenting whines of life, he averted his gaze, and looked down.

As though his faithful consort, I scurried towards the boy. It was almost as though it were my duty to console him. So as not to impede on the rhythm of his fragmented breath, I flickered and clicked my wings and hummed softly to capture

his gaze, simultaneously catching hers. It was a pregnant gesture, as I motioned towards his book; ‘*Fools and other stories*’.

*Don't be afraid*, I seemed to say, *for big things swallow small things*.

Tears marked the worn paper. The quiet droplets became indelible from the pain of his peoples – his past and his future. Turning his page, allowing its gentle rustle to scold the imagined but deafening silence, he began to hum wearily. He sung of a woman – but not a woman – Jo'Anna, with a stark sobriety. He asked her for hope, and lamented her brothers in subjection. He pleaded her for hope, as she tore at his mother's families. “The tide is turning”, he hummed, and he begged for hope. He captivated the young girl, his pain mirrored in her face.

“Gimme hope Jo'Anna!”

The train's horn roused the woman, alerting her of the distracted attentions of the young girl. But the boy, he continued to cry for hope, and he pleaded for hope, and he begged for hope.

#### The book, the boy, and the bug on the horizon.

*Slowly anger*

*Will bestow*

*The change we need to undergo  
With work and grit we sow the rows*

*And watch as our resistance grows*

*So speak the truth*

*And don't suppose*

*Your anger has no place in prose*

“Ceridwen”, the woman commanded, “Ons bestuur nou”. She did not go. We – the boy, the girl, I – did not notice the aggressive whirl of the train's engine. Yet we felt the imminence, the irreversibility, the rebellion, in the decisiveness of the subsequent moment.

“Ceridwen”. The woman hissed.

The boy cried for hope, and he pleaded for hope, and he begged for hope. The young girl replied with a quietly insistent “No.”

The woman turned to the boy: “Bly stil, kaffir”.

He winced. A visceral, guttural, chant escaped him:

*continues on next page >*

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“Nans’indod’emnyama, Verwoerd.

Nans’indod’emnyama, Verwoerd.

Bhasobha nans’indod’EMENYMA...”

The woman spat at him. She lurched at the boy, and droplets spewed on to my molt. My antennae stiffened. The boy stood abruptly. The girl reasserted her posture. They were the same height, their eyes contorted in pain in the same way. It was unusual. This horror, loathing, and disgust typically reserved for me, was now diverted. I would have revelled in this, but a startling tension exuded from the girl which cautioned my sensilla.

She faced the woman; the woman faced the boy; the boy faced the girl; and I raised myself into the wavelength of silence of the unspoken and looked into them all. The girl’s eyes darted manically between the book, the boy, and the bug. Words that come from the heart are never spoken, they get caught in the throat and can only be read in one’s eyes. Her eyes spoke of the unsaid:

A dark haze devours me. Trust and faith and beauty of earth – of family – mingles with the darkness and cruelty that I cannot ignore. There are two darknesses separated by privilege, and I reside in that comfortable hut of illumined faces and boundless opportunity that lies in the middle, unquestioned and uncorrupted. There is a moral complexity, and a familial complexity that I don’t know how to address, but that I cannot ignore – sweep under the rug. How does one navigate – cope with – a love that disagrees with

virtue, and morality? It is passivity, this dark haze that devours me. Is this my last resort? To defy this oppressive order, must I render myself inaccessible to its intentions? *I must not allow fear to stand in the way.*

In response, I reassured her with my clicks: *your silence is our salvation. It is the silence of years trying to say something without understanding; the silence of desperate action; the silence that carries meaning. I have survived in silence; I will survive in silence. So survive in your silence, but grow in it, too. Bloom. Take solace in the embrace of your silence. Scream the meaning of this silence. Erupt with the cries of the silence.*

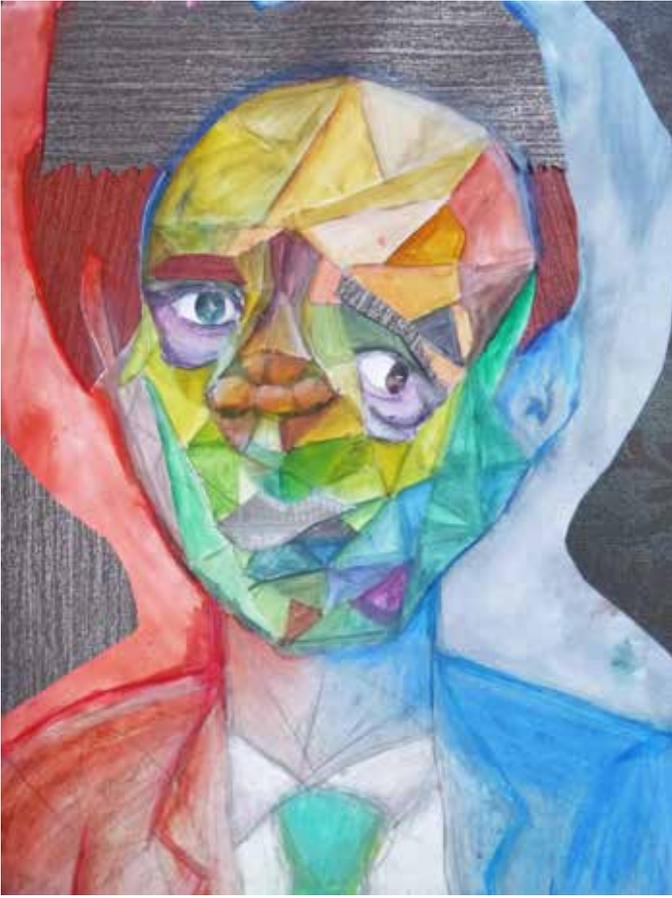
The boy resumed his chant. “Beware... Beware... Beware...”. The young girl turned on her heels, avoiding the gaze of the woman. She basked in the boy’s sorrowful eyes, her heart beating and my wings clicking. And with that, she was gone. She rushed away from the tracks, turning left at its entrance, stealing a final glance of the boy, the book, and the bug. Still, the boy sung. Still, the woman leered. And then the woman chased the girl. And then the woman crushed my molt. And still, the boy sung.

Distantly thumping footsteps; distantly rumbling train tracks. I lived in white and black, and finally I knew what awaited was grey – their dissonance rendered a harmony. That day, we blossomed. *Ubuntu*: the woman saw the underside, and with all her might she quashed it. *Ubuntu*: the girl saw the underside, and listened to it, and addressed it, and remembered it, and fought for it. ■



Jack Ferrier  
Year 10 · Aquinas College

Reduction Lino Print



**Christian Lian**  
*Year 8 · Aquinas College*

---

*Art, Mixed Media Portrait*



**Chloe Paxton**  
*Year 8 · Aquinas College*

---

*Art, Mixed Media Portrait*

# CREATIVE RESPONSE TO REAR WINDOW

Siobhan Brodrick · Year 12 · Aquinas College

Mr Alfred Hitchcock  
Director, Hitchcock Films  
36 Melrose Ave  
Hollywood, LA 90028

26th February 1953

Miss Grace Kelly

Grace,

How are you, my dear? As I write this I must say your old friend possesses somewhat of an urgency; It's a cruel irony that my kitchen tap is dripping endlessly and though I currently sit in my study across the way, its muffled sounds build a tension in my chest that I see uncannily present in reality. You see, Grace, I've had an idea.

I was sitting in the parlour two Friday's past. I sat, as I do, chewing on a cigar and twiddling my thumbs. Deep in thought I almost didn't come to hear the rattling. In looking up, I saw Alma: biscuit clenched between her teeth, a newspaper under one arm and a cup and saucer resting perilously close to the edge of her palm: the source of the rattling, I gathered. Her expression was nonchalant, but her eyes distant as they darted from left to right, left to right. It was only then, Grace, that I realised she was holding a small book open in her spare hand. I continued to observe, amused, as she shuffled to her armchair with her eyes remaining fixed on the page in front of her. In sitting down, she struggled helplessly to set her cup and saucer beside her, stuffed the newspaper in the crease of the couch, took a bite of her biscuit and then visibly relaxed into the couch- never once averting her eyes from her book. In seeing her relax, I too returned to my thoughts.

However, I could not again clear my mind; I was too fascinated by what I had just seen. Gracie! You would know as well as anyone, Alma is a very practical woman. She wouldn't often sacrifice efficiency for pleasure...so what was it about this little story that had her shuffling about the house?

"Hitch?" -I tell you she anticipates my every move! Taking my cigar from my mouth I replied,

"Yes, dear?"

"I've got you a story." She said it so matter of factly that I hardly realised the brevity of her words at first. I looked up sharply.

"Oh have you now?" Between you and me Gracie, I only put on a tone of apathy. In reality, my muscles had tensed and the pulse of my heart amplified with each second I waited for her response.

"Yes," she said as she raised herself up, turning to retrieve the newspaper from the seat of the couch. She continued, "and you'd do quite well to remember to thank me when it becomes a hit." With that, she dropped the small book on my lap and left the room with a knowing smile on her face that said she was very well pleased with her work. I looked down at this little book- as thick as a slice of bread, at most. The cover text was in plain font 'Cornell Woolrich, a compilation' and was dog-eared at a story titled 'It Had To Be Murder.' I read.

Alma was right, of course, and we began our work that night. I was enveloped in this new story. I couldn't shake that frightening new understanding that not only I, and you, could be watched in our most personal affairs, but also that we may inadvertently watch others in theirs! How much may we assume from a simple glance? If I were to peek through my back door at 9 o'clock, I'm sure Alma and myself would not present as an admirable couple: yet to see the spark that ignites when Alma joins me on my projects is something else, what a different judgement may be surmised!

This man...Jefferies, I think it is, draws so many assumptions about the relationships between his neighbours, but you see he fails to recognise his own sorry state. He doesn't even interact with a woman! It was this that spurred me on. We all look when we shouldn't: Audiences depend on me to show them something they hardly even want to see! Yet, they continue to watch. They are peering into the most restricted lens possible, but it is a lens that has the capability to internalise. Why don't I show people this? Teach them a bit of what I like to call "rear window ethics-" understand yourself before you seek to judge or understand others!

It so happened that I was welcomed to my old friend Cary Grant's house for tea later that week. He desired a reunion of sorts, between myself, Alma, Ingrid and Claude. It was a lovely evening; thick, juicy roast meat, crispy potatoes and alcohol and wicked talk...but I digress! Why am I telling you this? Well, Grace, what is a Hitchcock film without a Hitchcock blonde? By this time, I had, of course, deduced the thriller scenes and perfected my visions for scaring the audience of my new film, but I was missing a female presence. Ingrid, of course, is too old, though she proved to be invaluable in providing assistance for a female lead through recounting a funny little story of having recently been rejected by a photographer! Yes, what on Earth was the young chap thinking? Yet, his actions inspired me: How odd relationships are... A seemingly mundane pairing, such as between

myself and Alma, lasts for almost thirty years, yet an exciting, “modern” relationship sees a simple man willing to reject a girl who has everything. Her only fault is that she is, perhaps, too perfect.

You see, I must admit to being a peeping Tom. I watch life as it rolls by and in this post war era, I cannot ignore the growing influence of females in society, and thus the changing dynamic of relationships. Some men are threatened. Why? I can't understand. Women have an independence that once was not present. Help me to show people this. You, my dear will be the light. You will be no Macguffin, you will be the fulcrum to my story. You will be versatile- the “modern” woman – not only beautiful, but headstrong and active and in control. You most certainly won't be the damsel in distress, my mistake that was Anne Baxter! Instead, Grace, you will direct the camera to look at you.

My great affliction – what magnifies the sound of

the ever dripping tap, if you will – is the fact that my dearest Alma has informed me that you have been offered a role by Elia Kazan. Now, Grace. We can't have that, can we? You are the best leading lady since Ingrid Bergman. We simply couldn't waste that talent on a mere Kazan film.

I need you. Note the qualities of Lisa, the female heroine: defying stereotypes as the muse, the “Girl Friday” overcoming the gender barrier by moving beyond the high fashion couturier to wearing the pants in the final scene. I wrote her watching you. Lisa will allow you to show audiences who you really are.

Alma will send through the script. For now, as I conclude, I note the dripping tap has stopped, instead the scent of pie is teasing me.

Regards,  
A.Hitchcock ■



Jasmine Castrechini  
Year 11 · Aquinas  
College

—  
*Appropriation of The  
Meeting by Charles  
Blackman, Studio Arts*



**Max Hallam**  
Year 2 · St James Primary School, Brighton

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*'Clownfish on the Great Barrier Reef'*



**Lenni Garbutt**  
Year 1 · St James Primary School, Brighton

---

*'Angel Fish on the Great Barrier Reef'*



**Isaac Walsh**  
Year 6 · St James Primary School, Brighton

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*'Past Prime Minister Kevin Rudd',  
Charcoal portrait*



**Sadie Newton**  
*Year 5 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

---

*'Albert Namatjira style Australian landscape'*



**Maya Hammond**  
*Year 2 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

---

*'Patterned Autumn Trees'*



**Sophie Read**  
*Year 4 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

---

*'Autumn Tree'*



**Campbell Henderson**  
Year 6 · *St Kevin's*  
Primary School, Ormond

---

I painted an old man paddleboarding in the sunset, living life simply and being content and happy.



**Tess Dargan and Rachael Holsken**  
Year 6 · *St Kevin's*  
Primary School, Ormond

---

On one side of the picture there is a family eating a lovely dinner and on the other side there is a small town. These images represent the two pieces of the phrase, *live simply, simply live.*



**Jonathan Paola and Misha Itkine**  
*Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*

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**Pack**

It is about looking after one another; to love one another and to *unburden your pack* for they are your family. It helps when life is uncomplicated and simple – family looking after one another.



**Michael Wilson**  
*Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*

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“Simply living through the peace that flies through the blossom trees.”

My picture shows nature in its simplest form.

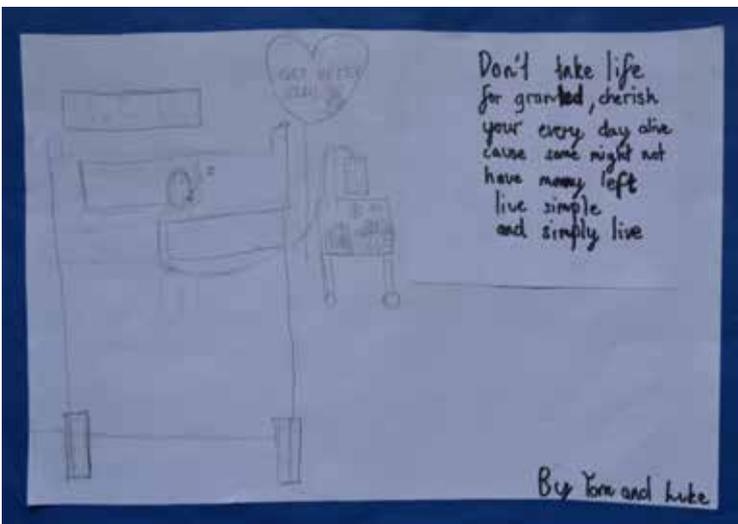


**Samuel James**  
 Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School,  
 Ormond

---

Live simply, simply live.

I wrote *live simply* in a simple text to represent what is simple in life. The fingerprints symbolise what has been created on Earth – people in their simplest, childlike form.



**Tom Chapman and Luke Sagiadelis**  
 Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

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Don't Take Life For Granted,  
 Cherish Your Everyday Alive,  
 Because Some May Not Have Many Left  
 Live Simply,  
 Simply Live.



**Siobhan O'Donnell, Elizabeth Cormack and Lucy Burns**  
 Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

---

**Tangled in Language**

As I weave the words of sorrow and love,  
 Of wisdom and minds above,  
 Tears flowing.

Our story of simplicity,  
 Living on the land.

Live, Love, Laugh,  
 Enjoy the good times.  
 Breathe in the sorrow,  
 Accept, move on, and simply live.



Greta Paino  
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

# KIMBERLEY GRATEFUL

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Siena Mapley · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Last July, I set out with my family on an adventure to the Kimberley, in Western Australia – one of the world's last great wilderness areas! We were all very nervous, but mostly excited! We jumped onto our tour bus with our tour guide Shano, and off we went...

We drove to the nearest roadhouse. We all got a warm and welcoming smile by the local people. We felt very welcomed! We discussed the journey of the Kimberley and how spectacular it was going to be! After that we hopped onto the tour bus and we started our journey. Our first destination was Derby. Once we parked we saw a Boab tree. Boab trees are the local trees. Our guide talked about how Boab trees are so sacred to the Kimberley. Next, we headed to Windjana Gorge National Park. It was the most amazing gorge ever, and my very first gorge experience ever! To get to Windjana Gorge we had to hike 4kms. It wasn't too bad because it had amazing views and we got to swim there too!

After the gorge, we headed to Tunnel Creek. Tunnel Creek holds great significance to the local Aboriginal people. It stretches to 750 metres and runs underground through one of the oldest cave systems in Western Australia. Many Aboriginal rock paintings are presented in this cave. It was also a hideout to Jandamarra in 1897. There were lots of water crossings in Tunnel Creek which really made you think where to step when crossing the water. Thank goodness we didn't see any freshwater crocodiles or we would have been a bit scared but not for long, because we were informed that freshwater crocodiles do not eat humans as potential prey. After visiting Tunnel Creek, we collected firewood for the night. We used saws to cut off all the big bits of wood by the side of the road. We collected firewood every night! We ended up finding our bush camp for the night – another great wilderness area sleeping in swags, staring up at the stars and watching bush telly (campfire) with our new friends.

The next morning, we started driving towards Manning Gorge. We spent the whole day there. It was one of the highlights of the trip. Our guide also showed us some Bradshaw Aboriginal art. That night, we camped at a Caravan park, and before dinner we went on the best rope swing ever and jumped into the gorge!

The following morning, we had a pleasant wake-up call with a morning song. It really was quite

calming. On this day, we were heading to Emma George which involved a short hike. Once we finished our hike, we got to take in some of the most spectacular views, before we plunged into the big waterfall. After Emma Gorge, we had a long night ahead of us. We drove all the way to the Bungle Bungle Range. We got to our bush camp with the stars awaiting for us at 7pm. Our campsite had one of the best sunsets!

The next day, we got up extra early to see the sunrise at the Bungle Bungles which were discovered in 1983. They are really big and tall like the Eureka tower. While we were driving back to our campsite we saw lots of termite formations. When we finally arrived at our wilderness campsite for the night, we ate an extremely yummy dinner in front of the famous bush telly. Simply talking, laughing and playing games was a fantastic experience!

Next, we headed to Lake Argyle. Lake Argyle is a very famous lake for its number of crocodiles. There are about 30,000 crocs in that lake. Fortunately, they are only freshwater crocs or otherwise, if they were saltwater crocs they could potentially have attacked or killed us...Ahhhh! Once we arrived at Lake Argyle, our guide told us to pack all of our belongings such as our swags, our tents and food onto the boat because we were going to sleep on an island that night. Along the way, our boat stopped from time to time and we had the opportunity to jump off cliffs and swim in the water. It was absolutely amazing! Once we got closer to Darwin, we started hearing our phones beeping. That was the time when we could catch up on the world. I didn't feel like getting on my phone. I was having too much of a great time out in the outback!

I love the outback because you live off the land and appreciate the natural environment, surrounded by the beauty around you with the trees, rocks, animals, as well as, the sky and stars above. You can live a simple yet fulfilling life by cooking your food on log fires, swimming and bathing in natural gorges, and watching the spectacular sunrises and sunsets.

My experience of living the simple life of just lying in a swag and watching the stars with my family and friends will forever remain memorable. I am so grateful for the opportunity to have gone on this trip with my family. It was a real pleasure and an adventure I hope to one day go on again! ■

# THE PULL

---

Sofia Giorgilli · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

The deep blue water of the South Pacific awaits me, as I dive in as though it was my old home. Then suddenly, I feel my legs sinking... Sinking towards the seafloor, I can see an enormous wave ahead; a deep breath is all I can take.

As I quickly sink under, the soft sand sticks to the bottom of my feet as I'm pulled in. I can feel my body tiring as I am trying to hold myself up. I scream, "HELP!" with all my might, but no one can hear me. I become overwhelmed, I just can't take it. By now I am exhausted and so I let go of the struggle and feel myself sink...sink...sinking.

I watch my whole life flash by me as my body,

mind and soul are giving in. That is until I feel someone's delicate skin grab hold of my arm. I am gradually lifted out of the water, heading towards the shore. I am accidentally dropped, landing hard on the wet sand.

Slowly and gently, I open my eyes before sitting up and looking around me. I was at home in my own bed. Feeling a bit confused and disorientated, I got up and walked outside. The fear of almost drowning dissolved as I realised this was my home – the coast of the South Pacific. I was so scared but a wave of relief and gratitude passed over me. Life could not be better! ■

# THE ROSE

---

Sofia Giorgilli · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

A Rose in a garden with a thousand fields,  
Senses something a rose doesn't normally feel.  
As the cold, crisp winter moves into the air,  
She feels something that she cannot share.  
The cold, crisp winter hits her hard,  
As she falls to the ground with a lifelong scar. ■

# LOVE AND HATE

---

Tivona Dang · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Cora rolled her pastel green eyes as her mother droned on. She slumped back and shoved in a mouthful of her dry, crispy cereal. She twirled her dark, midnight black hair and tucked it behind her ear. Her mother suddenly stepped towards Cora and screamed in her face, “ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?” as steam exploded out of Mrs Finley’s ears.

“Yes I AM!” Cora yelled back, “OMG! Stop screaming your head OFF!”

“I’m NOT!” Cora’s mother yelled back, “I DON’T WANT YOUR BODY TO GET DAMAGED! I’M JUST SHOWING YOU HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!”

“WELL I’M NOT LEARNING ANYTHING!” “*Should I have said that?*” Cora wondered, “*Well she sure does deserve it!*”

“WELL YOU SHOULD TRY TO LEARN NOT TO TALK BACK!!!” screeched Cora’s mum. There was a deadly pause and they both glared at each other menacingly. Cora’s mum broke the silence. “THAT’S IT CORA DAWN FINLEY!” she bellowed, “HAVE YOU EVEN ARRANGED ANYONE TO WALK YOU TO SWIMMING?!”

“No...!” Cora muttered under her breath, looking away.

“WHAT?!”

“I...SAID...NOOO!!!!!!!”

“WHO’S GOING TO WALK YOU THEN?” Cora’s mother continued bellowing.

“I’ll ask Fleur’s mum if I can go with them...” Cora suggested.

Fleur Crawson was Cora’s best friend who did swimming lessons with her. Cora dialled Fleur’s number and waited patiently for her to pick up. Cora moaned angrily, “MUM!!! Mrs Crawson didn’t answer!”

“HURRY UP!” Cora’s mother roared, “I HAVE A MEETING AT TWELVE AND IT’S NOW THIRTY MINUTES TO TWELVE! HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DRIVE AND GET THERE ON TIME?”

When Fleur’s mother finally answered, Cora asked sweetly if she could possibly get a ride with them to swimming. Minutes later, Fleur, her brothers and her mum came knocking on the door. Cora cautiously headed to their car.

“Have you packed your undies yet, Cora?” Mrs Finley asked absent-mindedly, as she waved goodbye. Fleur’s little brothers erupted with giggles.

“Oh, stop it Ace and Callum! Next time I’ll call a babysitter!” whisper-shouted Mrs Crawson while anxiously glancing at Cora and sharing a look with Fleur. Cora stalked ahead, and mouthed, ‘I hate you!’ to her mum. Cora didn’t dare look behind as her mother zoomed off. Mrs Finley was way ahead when a traffic jam came out of nowhere. She was so busy thinking about what Cora meant by ‘I hate you!’ that Mrs Finley hadn’t noticed the ‘car chaos.’ She bashed into a car in front of her. Mrs Finley’s car was sent spinning into the air and landed upside down. It all ended with a scream...

*The moral of the story is to always treasure the moments with your loved ones. Learn from the bad and appreciate all the good things people have done FOR YOU! ■*

# WHAT IS WAR

---

Ioanna Stavroulakis · Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

We lay on the rocks so cold  
My feet are too tired to go on.  
I have seen too many things  
I have heard too many things.  
My friends have passed away...  
I miss my family  
I want to make it back to them  
That is the only thing that keeps me going...  
I carry a picture of them  
That is the only reason why I know,  
Someday I will make it back to them... ■

# SEED

---

Agnes McCallum · Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

I planted a seed.  
I watered it every day.  
It put down roots.  
It grew and it grew.  
  
Then one tiny sapling,  
Became one big tree.  
It was watered with love, showered with kindness,  
And then it grew. ■

# SIMPLE LIVES PAY OFF

---

Fabrizio Cascino · Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

A 24 year old Brazilian man named Janeiro once lived in Spain. As a child his favourite food was always Red Bean Salad – his mother’s recipe. He was always a big superhero fan and he especially loved the Avengers. Those were his favourite sort of movies. He was a graduate and a technician who worked at MacroSolid. He was a very simple man, who had a very simple life, but made it extraordinary. This is his story...

The date was the 16th of July, 2008. That morning Janeiro woke up, turned on his flat screen TV, grabbed his favourite cereal Joyios, got dressed in his suit and left his apartment ready to face a whole new day. He pushed through all the citizens of Madrid and finally hopped onto a train heading towards MacroSolid.

Once he got off the train, he found a homeless man with a sign that read: ‘I was laid off my job and am looking for another one.’ Janeiro went up to him and said, “Sorry you lost your job. What happened?” The homeless man did not respond, so Janeiro just gave him a good 20 Euros, and headed on his way to work.

Four blocks away from work, Janeiro came across a lady working at the MCP (Madrid Cooked Paella) struggling to put her food stand up. So he approached the lady and asked, “Excuse me, would you like some help with your food stand?”

“Thank you. That would be great!” the lady replied. So Janeiro helped put her food stand up and in return, she served him free food. Before Janeiro received his meal, he could smell the sauce, see the steam, feel the heat and hear the food bubbling away. The food she gave him included Tortillas de Camarones, Patatas Bravas, Churros and Pinchitos.

Then only two blocks away from his work, Janeiro found a lone dog outside a market. He decided to

grab some dog food from inside the store, returned to the dog, and placed it into a bowl. He then gave the dog a pat and scrubbed its back before continuing towards his work.

Janeiro finally arrived at work. That day, he worked for a solid 6 hours! He went on his break at 3:00pm and had a late lunch at MCP where he helped the food stand lady serve food. After his lunch break, Janeiro returned to work and worked for a further 4 more hours. Finally, after Janeiro left he headed home. On his way back, he gave the dog more food from the store, he helped the MCP lady put away her food stand and gave the homeless man another 20 Euros. For dinner that evening, he had spaghetti with meatballs and went to bed at around 11:45pm.

Ten years later – in 2018, everything had changed. Janeiro learnt that by being a considerate person and doing nice things, a decade ago, finally paid off. He woke up in his five-story house and patted his dog Wendy, after she jumped up and woke him with a gentle tap. Janeiro looked over his balcony on the top floor and gazed at the MacroSolid building, now as the proud owner. The once homeless man was now an employee at MacroSolid and the food stand lady opened a successful MCP store within the building.

Everyday Janeiro would feed his dog and bring her to work. He would pick up his employee and get on the train with him. He would take a break and go help the MCP lady serve her customers before eating there himself. Then he’d head back to work. At the end of the day, Janeiro would stop for dinner at MCP, drop off his employee, bring the dog back home and watch some TV, before going to bed.

That’s how Janeiro still goes by his everyday life today. So just remember, that it’s the little and simple things that you do every day in your ordinary life that finally pay off. ■

# SHE SAW A TREE AND FLEW

---

Alessandra Crowe · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

1

It is grey, it is blue  
In my town, all brand new,  
Voices high, noise down low,  
No one knows what lies below.

It is yellow, it is green,  
All the flowers glisten and gleam,  
Ferns growing, flowers budding,  
And all I hear is my soft humming.

2

It was much easier when I was little,  
But as I grew older the world turned brittle,  
The world became more serious and blue,  
The world concentrated on only one view.

We ran around, around and round,  
Rolling down in mud and on the ground,  
We looked up to the sky and dreamed of stars,  
And driving shiny, red, fast cars.

We believed that the world was easy,  
Full of jokes we loved because they were cheesy,  
We wished that we were astronauts and actors,  
We never thought of the true factors.

When we were little time flew past,  
We always thought it was going to last,  
We ran around all so free,  
But as we grew older there was no glee.

Now I wake up every day, slim and lean,  
And watch the bright, colourful screen  
Get into my car, all clean and washed,  
And pass the people looking brainwashed.

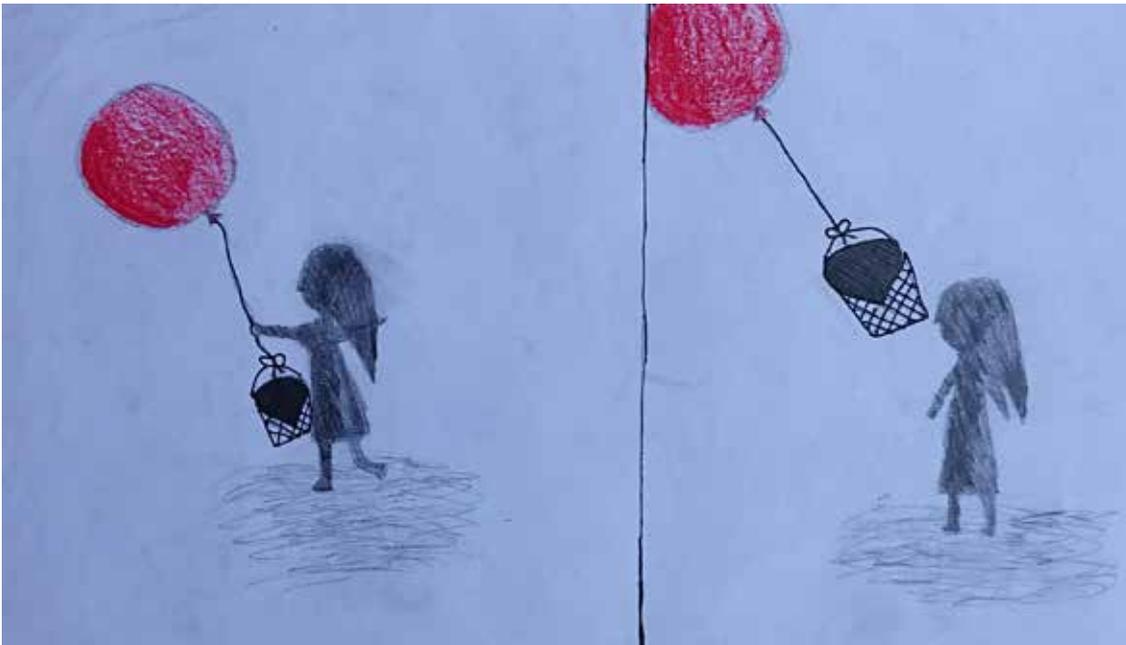
I sit in my office, thinking about the fiftieth tax-  
rate,

Then go home and have dinner very late,  
Pull out the laptop, and type and type  
Close my eyes and snore like a bagpipe

Tuck myself in all nice and tight,  
Hope to forget for the whole night,  
I wake up again the very next day,  
Only to repeat what I did yesterday.

3

She saw the grime and fell,  
She saw the oil and fell,  
She saw the machines and fell,  
She saw a tree and flew. ■



**Oneli Amugodahewa**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*



**Makei Tualii**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*

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The sculpture I created shows how objects like a hand, placed and photographed in a different setting, can simply represent life. The contrast of the plants behind the grey, cold plain stone with the highly detailed sculpture blending in makes something new seem very old.

# BIRTHDAY DREAMS

---

Latesha Franks · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

“Abigail?... Abigail!” yelled the fuming teacher, staring into her soul. Abigail woke to see all her classmates staring at her, snickering. She looked down at her desk and saw her pens, pencils and paper scattered everywhere. She looked around and tried to focus her eyes.

“Asleep again, Miss Jones?”

“Sorry, Miss.” Rubbing her eyes and yawning, the twelve year old returned to daydreaming. She would always look at the dull posters and colourless room and dream of going to a better school. It was so boring for her and she was lagging far behind. She then realized the bell had rung. She slid out her chair, slumped and cracked her back. It was sore from work.

She dreaded every second of her life. She hated getting up because she knew she had to go to school, she hated the lunch bell because she had no friends, she hated the home bell because straight after school she would get her cheap skateboard from her locker and skate down to work.

She walked slowly, hoping she would be late and her boss would just send her home. But she felt a pang of guilt. She knew she needed to do the work. When guilt struck, she always thought of her dad and her family at home. The sky was a baby blue and the sun was shining. The gentle cool breeze was blowing on her dirty brown hair. She trotted along, grabbed her skateboard and bag and left that dump.

Abigail skated slowly on the footpath through the small town she lived in. She passed all the colourful posters and advertisements, the lolly shop, the toy shop and the cinema. Her skate took normally about an hour every day. But every day she would pass a magical place. This place motivated her. It was Movie World.

She would stop and stare at the crane piecing together the new roller coaster. She had always dreamed of going on that ride when it came out. She dreamed. She knew there was no chance for her to even step foot in any theme park! She was too poor.

Eventually getting to work, she started her two hour shift. She worked at Mario's Pizza. It was always filled with screaming and laughing toddlers. It was a place filled with the smell of sweat and dirty socks. The playground was as cheap as cheap. It was colourful but small and dirty. She walked into the back and got dressed into her costume. She stomped out in a giant Mario costume and for the two hours she had to smile and dance whilst pulling little kids away and making sure they didn't bite!

After her shift, she skated home in the dark. She arrived with her little brother, Ethan, asleep on the

recliner and her mother staring at a picture of dad. She turned around and hugged Abigail. Abigail only cared about two people in her life and they were both in this very, dirty room. She talked to her mum and then walked to her room. The house was filled with stains, dirty clothes, barely any light and all third hand items.

She stared at her cheap handmade 2018 calendar and realized something special: tomorrow was her birthday! She immediately went to her piggy bank and counted out \$50. She sighed, wishing that God would gift her with more money. She crawled onto mattress on the floor, got on her knees and prayed and prayed that tomorrow would be the best day of her life.

The day came. It was bright and early. She rubbed her eyes, feeling slightly refreshed. She jumped up and realized that the best day of the year rolled around. Putting her purple dressing gown on she ran to see her mother in the dirty old kitchen. She was cooking Eggos! Eggos were Abigail's favourite! She walked in the kitchen and took a long sweet sniff of the air. Her mother hugged her tight. They both jumped up and down joyously singing, 'Happy Birthday'.

Her mother placed a candle in the Eggo and she got out a small lighter. She lit the Eggo up and placed it on Abigail's favourite plate. She sat down and placed the Eggo on Abigail's lap.

Abigail was already falling in love with her special day. The room went quiet until her brother woke up and passed her an envelope. She looked at her mother and her brother as they smiled and nodded. Abigail ripped the back off the envelope carefully, savouring the moment. She peered into it and saw three purplish green tickets. She immediately pulled them out and squealed. She made her own mother's sunglasses on the bench crack. She danced and screamed, “We're going to Movie World!!”

“Yes, we are, my princess, today, so put on some comfortable clothes and your Converse,” said Abigail's mother. Abigail put on the most expensive clothes she had, maybe \$15 worth. She beamed with joy the whole way to the park.

She doesn't remember many things in her life but she remembers the wave of emotions she felt when she stepped one foot over the line. She remembers the heavy crowds, the cheering and screaming of children. She remembers the sound of Superman taking off and all the bright colours of the rides and characters.

She also never forgot the moment she sat down on her first roller coaster... ■



Krystal Tat  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*



**Sonita Kong**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

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*Simply Dancing*

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This linoprint was designed to explore the concept of animan shown through the cartoon styled figures modeling modernised cultural clothing. *Simply Dancing* shows the cultural aspect by using a panda wearing a qipao dress to represent its own country, while striking a pose of someone living simply. Simply living is about taking the little things in life and enjoying the most you can of it.

# A DAY IN THE LIFE...

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Arshdeep Singh · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

## Charlotte – Australia

Hundreds of people walk past me and my brother every single day. Thousands of eyes look right through us and hands are clutched more tightly than ever. We are not criminals and still get treated like vermin. There are millions of people all around the world, sitting uncomfortably on the hard pavement, begging for money. My brother is only five years old and I am twelve. My parents died from hunger, trying to feed their children. If only someone would notice us. I go to the bins outside a fast food restaurant, pick out some leftovers: that is heavenly for us. After lunch, we stand outside different shops so we are noticed by more people. At night time, I tell my brother a story that my parents used to tell me, and he normally goes to sleep immediately. I don't sleep until all the anxiety from the day leaves me. My dream is to become a prime minister, so I can help all those who need money.

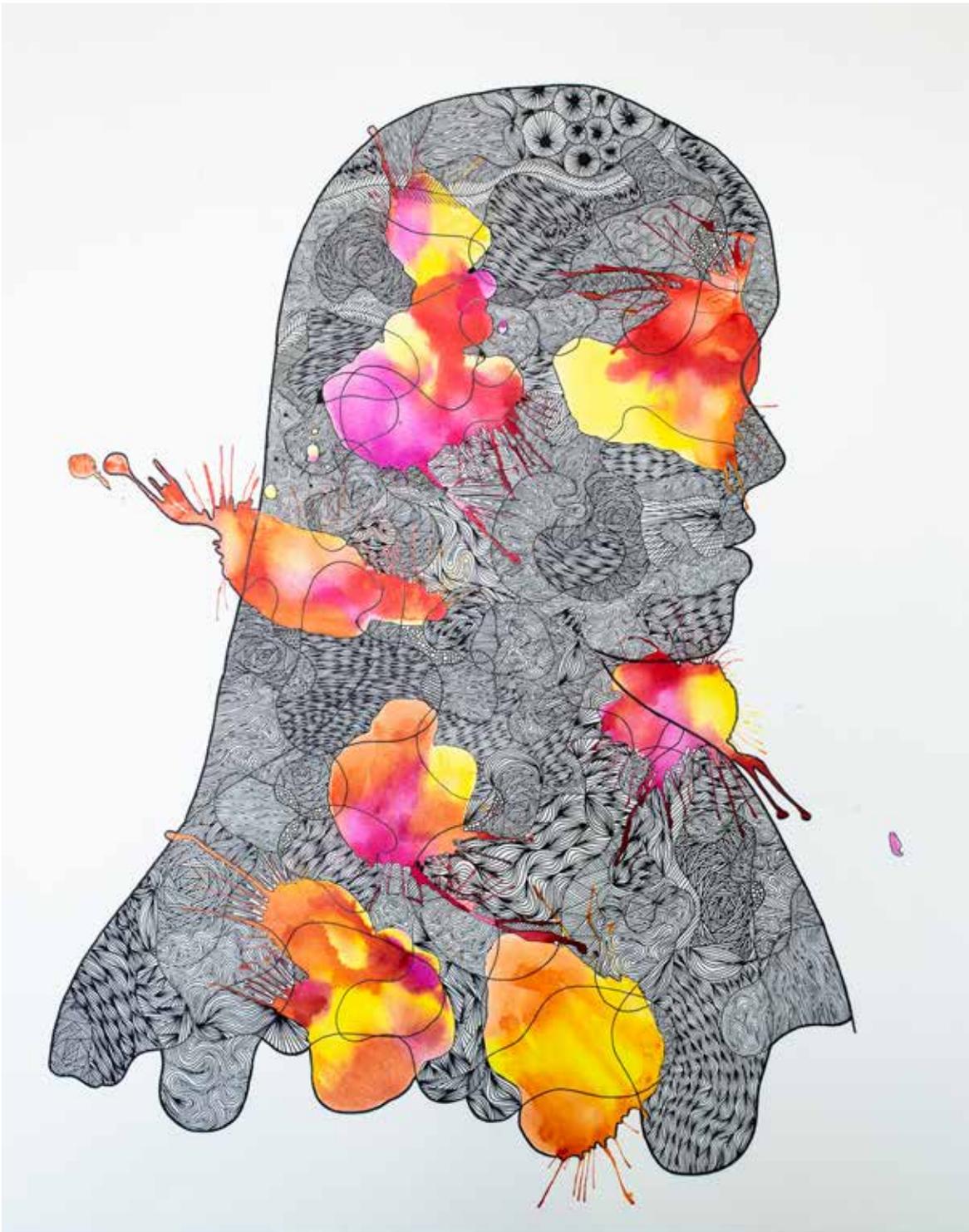
## Abedi – Africa

I walk on the dry, lifeless ground with my bare feet. My parents are by my side and so is my aunt. Everyone here has a similar profile to my family, and I, but we are in one of the worst states. Today, my job is to go and collect water from a river that, in the next week or so, will die because of a drought. The buckets are heavy on my shoulders and with the pain of hot sand that I am walking on, it is unbearable. Here, the English doctors come and treat us for a longer future/ life. My dream is to be an astrophysicist, in America, working for the NASA association. Unfortunately, these dreams cannot be achieved by me. I can't do anything with poor education and only a few days left to live. Yes, in a month I will die because I have got a disease named EBOLA. It has gotten to many of my friends and today will be the last time I walk with my family, doing something I shouldn't

be doing, but what can I do? This is how we live every day and everyday this deadly disease spreads like it is doing no harm.

## Manni – India

I don't know how I ended up like this, but all I know is that money is a very DANGEROUS thing. It all started with a happy family, no trouble and we were rich! My parents came across a business deal and it was a do or die situation. Either they pay 1 million dollars or give some of the most expensive things in your possession and cancel the deal. To be honest, it wasn't the best deal in the history of deals and I thought something was fishy. My dad however looked at the profit side of things and called the man to pay. I told my dad about my theory, but he didn't budge! The man came the next day and made my dad sign some false papers (and of course my dad didn't read them). The next thing we know, the man jumps up, off his seat, and grabs a pistol out of his pocket and this whole army of armed men come in. They raid our house until it is stripped to the core. I run around, trying to look for my parents and I step on a bloody body. As soon as I see the person's face, I drop down onto my knees. It's my mum. It... was... My mum. Lying right next to her was my dad. The dad who only cared about money. Why couldn't we live like my other friends... Simply? I walk around searching for someone still inside, but I don't see anyone. Just as I turn, a man with a mask comes and takes me away, covering my mouth. I kick him, but he won't let me down! This is the part that shocked me the most... he showed me the papers and they clearly stated that now, after the death of my parents, all their businesses and properties are the gangsters'! A few days later, I am on the streets begging for money. No one recognises me and never will, because I look like a walking garbage bag. Ragged and dirty. ■



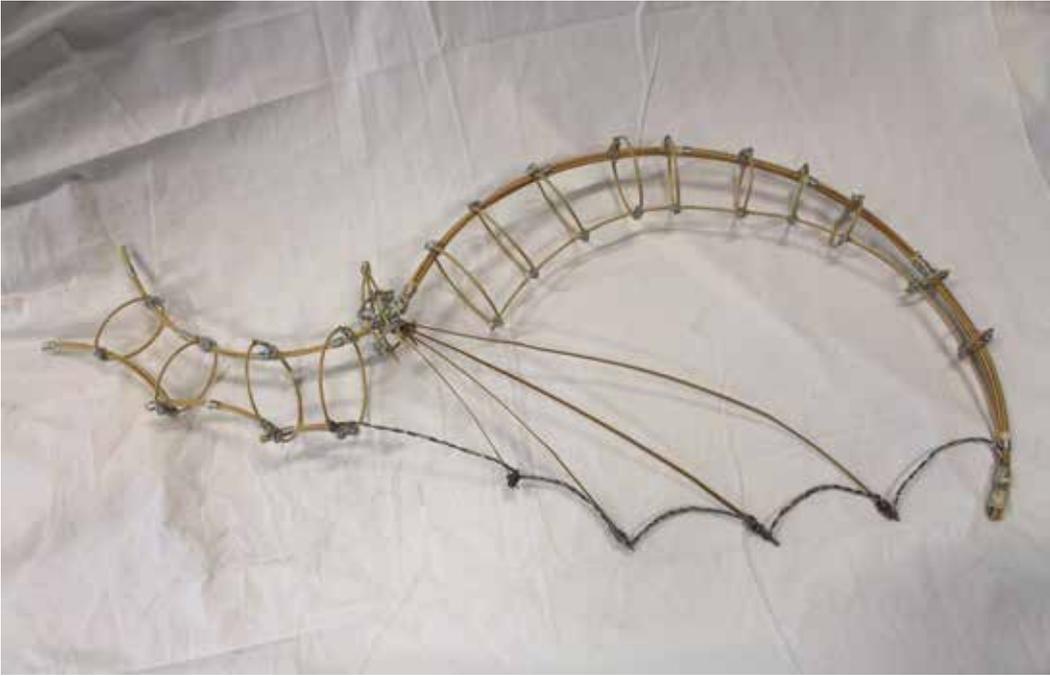
**Ebony Bullard**  
*Year 12 · Star of the Sea College*



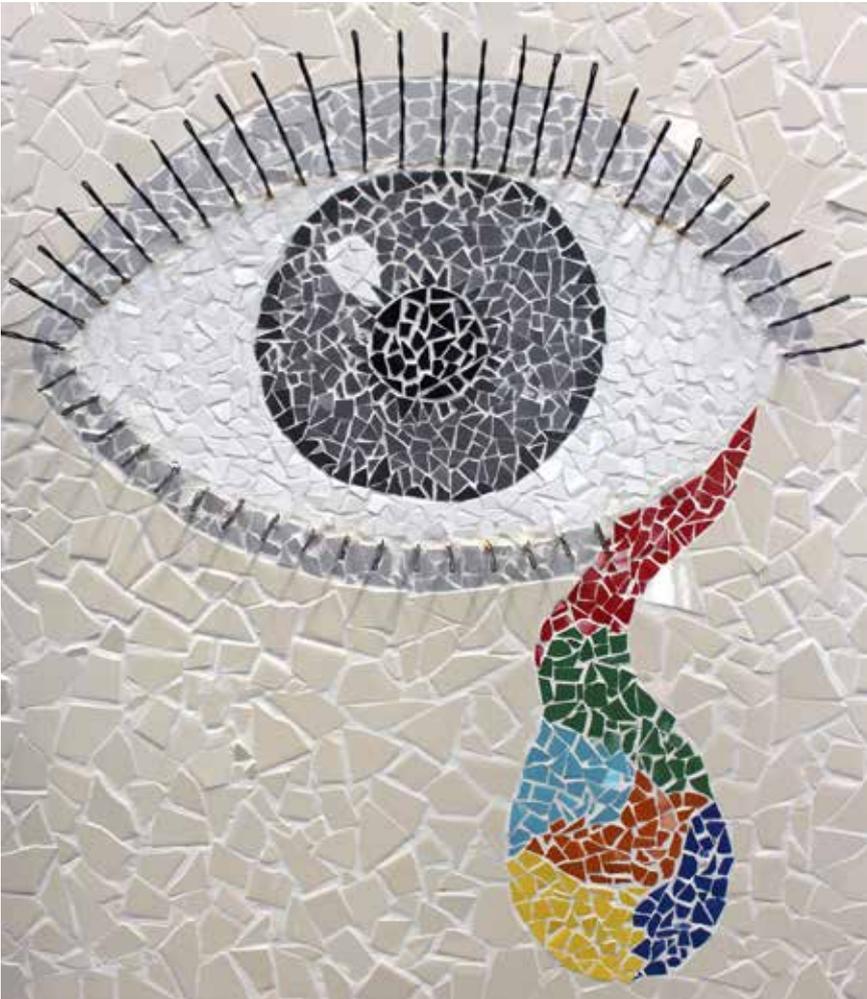
**Alexandra Metz**  
Year 10 · *Marymede*  
Catholic College



**Grace Dove**  
Year 10 · *Marymede Catholic*  
College



**Daniel Bauce**  
*Year 10 · Marymede Catholic College*



**Jessica Turner**  
*Year 10 · Marymede Catholic College*



**Charlotte Nicolaou**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*



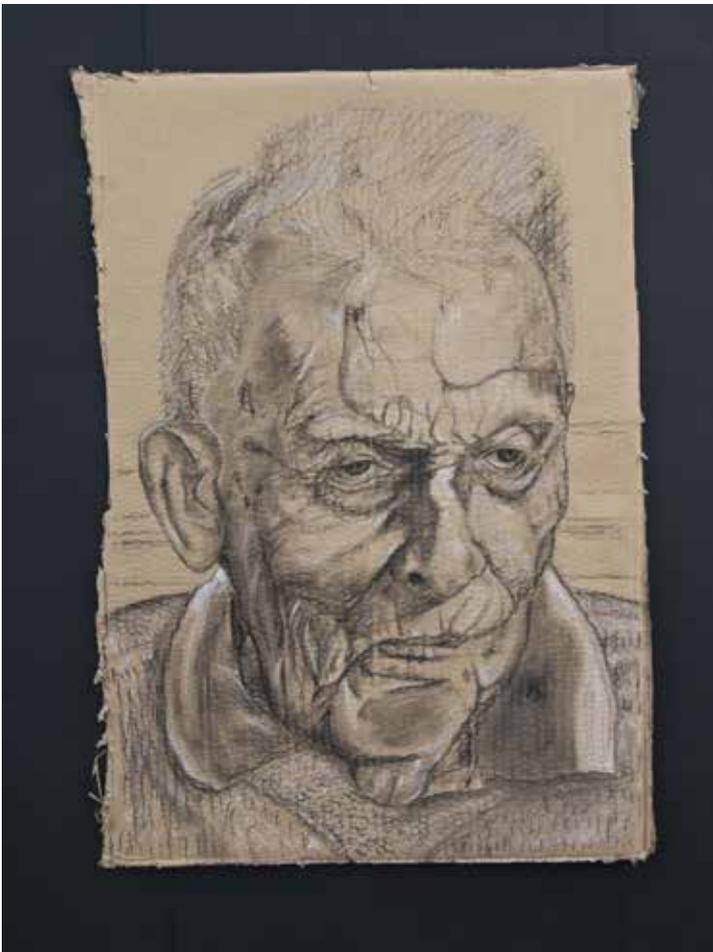
**Fern Hughes**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*



**Elise Guzzardi**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*



**Lauren Charles**  
*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*



**Markus Begutter**  
*Year 12 · Mazenod College*

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*'Wizened', Charcoal on cardboard*

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The two portraits attempt to examine the way that the human face changes and develops over time, with our skin developing various marks and wrinkles. The cardboard surface is an attempt to complement the worn looks on the faces, with the weathered expressions, suggesting a journey over a long time.



**Jarrold Conte**  
*Year 10 · Mazenod College*

*'Landscape', Acrylic*

This landscape painting was designed for a long, horizontal format. It uses Egypt as inspiration.



**Kai Tang**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*

# ARRIVAL

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Jordan Ross · Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

**D**EATH... the mere sound of my name sends shivers down ones spine, evoking a sense of dread, a blackness of foreboding but I come for everyone in time. There are those who hear my ominous call and welcome the sweat relief I offer, but most are not ready for my presence, who attempt to allude my inevitability. When your life force ends you await your journey, into the luminescent light that calls, I am the one who takes you beyond your human form. I harvest your soul and deliver it to the world of eternity, the afterlife which awaits you in all its glory, bathing you in its warm glow.

Today, however is not one of those days. His name is not important but his deeds on this Earth are very much so. Lives he has taken and families destroyed by his heinous crimes. Tonight I visit a dank, dingy jail cell, the small window still allows the radiating presence of an innocent glimmer of the pale moonlight. A complete contradiction awaits me inside the cell, the smell of decay fills the air, consuming all of the dark souls residing there. A man, or a monster in many eyes, struggling, gasping for his last breathe, I waited... He died alone, a victim of his own crime, taking the easy way out. His aura filling the space around him, bright shades of yellow, of joy and happiness, of a cowardly release that most would believe he didn't deserve.

[A Quick Reminder]

**Don't paint me as a villain, as a stealer of souls, a murderous devil, because I am not.**

**I have no impact on your fate nor an impact on the legacy that you leave**

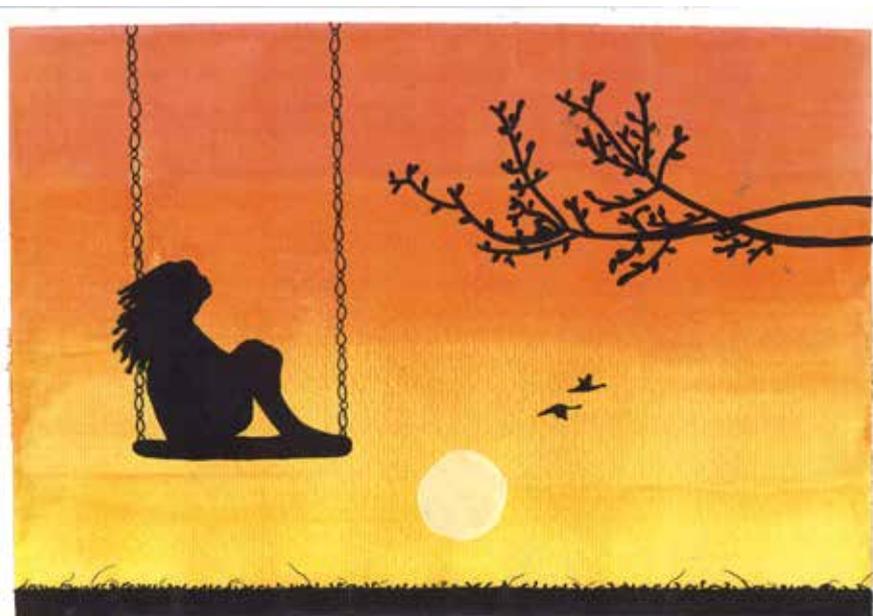
**I only see the middle of the story...**

I lingered for a moment, hidden in the shaded corner, although it wouldn't matter if I made myself visible, the guards were deep in conversation, unaware of what had transpired only moments earlier.

I knew that I should leave now but I couldn't help but be a little intrigued, I never stayed a moment more than my job requires, but for once I wanted to see, I wanted to see how people would react, what they do, would I have to wait until the early hours of morning when the bright sunlight flooded the room and he would be discovered. I watched, fascinated as the once pink flesh, rosy with the warmth of blood cursing through the veins, was replaced with dark, purple bruising around his neck, his skin now a sallow yellow, the colour of death.

Finally satisfied, I took my leave, lugging the man's soul with me, it was rather heavily burdened by memories, some light and others darker.

The dark, depths of Hell await his arrival. ■



Alanah Shankland  
Year 8 · Lavalla  
Catholic College

Untitled



**Chelsea Lawn**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Matilda Lund**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

---

*Untitled*

# IT WAS A QUIET DAY

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William Snell · Year 12 · Lavalla Catholic College

It was a quiet day. I decide that I would go and see her

I arrived and rung her bell. But there was no answer...

I try again but the result was the same. I shout her name hoping for a response but there is nothing.

I enter shouting her name... But there was no answer.

I go to her room.

But there was no answer.

I look out the window.

I notice someone crossing the street.

I call out...

But there is no answer.

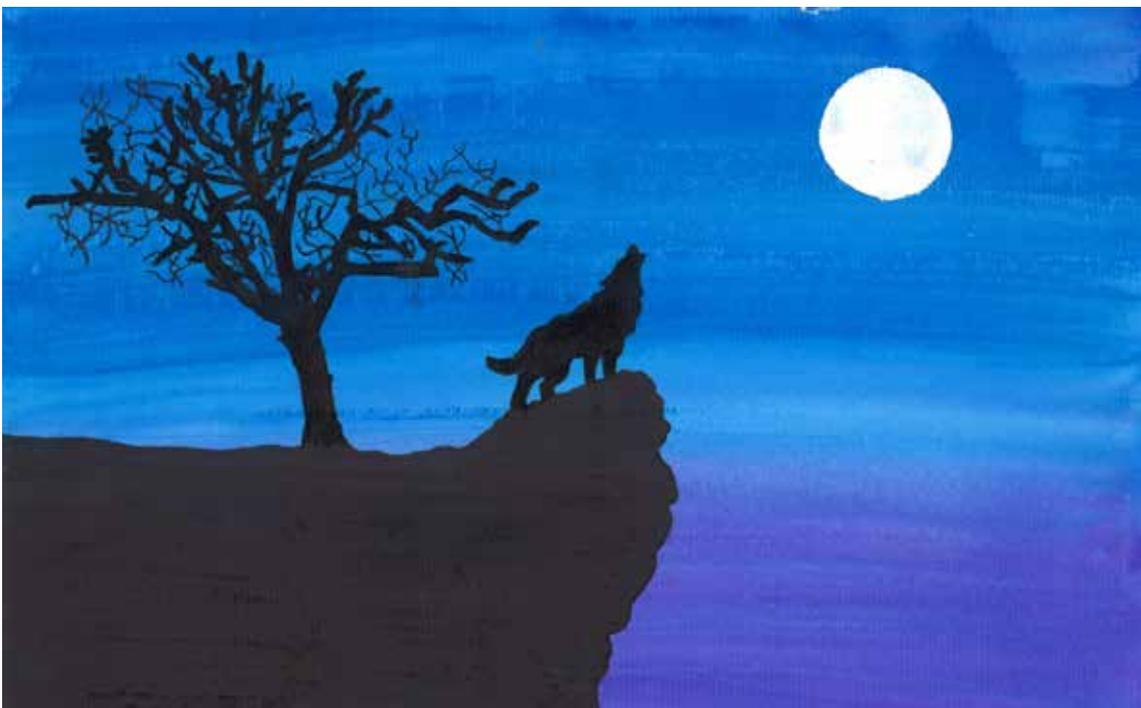
I notice the figure turns there head.

I notice they say something as they look at me still in her room.

I run out to see her.

But there is no answer.

There is no one ■



Charlotte Ryan

Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

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Untitled

# THE FORGOTTEN STARS

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Stephanie Szabo · Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College

◇ Fact for the innumerable people of all colours ◇  
Living is sometimes worse than dying.

You could not count them if you tried. The innumerable people I mean of course. They are like bright white stars in the navy blues of the sky, uncountable and insignificant, but of greater importance. Reassurance. Unlike many of you reading this, you do not feel the need to fear me or more fitting, you fear me so much that you act as if I am not the final result, but a mere mistake, much like a special memory forgotten to be taken granted of. I do not mean to frighten you. Nor do I mean to cause confusion, which honestly, I do not understand. I am quite simple. There is life, and there is me. Death.

◇ Reaction to controversial fact ◇  
Do you realise the lives of others?

A young boy whose skin is like the antique brown of a book, hid away alongside his fellow comrades in an aged, gaping trench full of hardly any colour and memories they wished to forget. They had to take the chance and go into the open, even as battered and bruised as they were. Never have I seen so much fear and bravery stand tall before my eyes and in front of the enemy they knew for sure would kill them. If fortunate enough, an effortless bulk of led to the forehead would be granted. For the others, just red and shells. Everywhere. Every part of their broken-down bodies.

◇ What red represents ◇  
Blood.  
And lots of it.

The use of led was incessant. As was the recall in my visits that day. The boy's eyes were a dull, dreadful grey, I unfortunately had captured during the events of the first explosion of reds after his arrival. They stay with me as I believe his brothers stayed with him.

With no home and a life that was best to be left behind, the boy with the promise of adventure, had witnessed, richer, syrupy red than even the skies had encountered over the months of this timeless and endless bloodshed. He was afraid of living now. Or better yet waiting for the enemies to attack. Many of them were. Their faces said it all over. Multiple shades of red and even charcoals erupted from bodies with each hit taken over the field. I never actually knew what happened or why they so stupidly ran into the open. I just knew that the water was somehow always an envious blue. Calm and quiet. The peace they wished they could have stayed with before staying here. The sky was light and the sun shone down in the most extraordinary of ways. Its vibrant yellow rays hit each and every poppy petal. When I took the boys warm worn-down soul as the enemies' animosity carried on, I noticed how the grey of his eyes were mixed abruptly with tears full of rejoice.

I felt sorry for him. All of them actually.

For now, this star was like the rest.

Another forgotten star. ■

# FREEDOM

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Akisha Wills · Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College

*Violet is a teenager with a secret. She can turn into a fox at will, but she can't control the change! So when a new boy arrives at school with all the answers to her problems, she accepts. But can she trust him?*

(BLURB)

**B**rothers!' I thought with an exasperated sigh as I put away my clothes. John, my little foster brother, decided that it would be fun to wreck my room while I was away with Sarah. Sarah is my best friend from school. We do everything together.

As I am straightening my bed out, Jane calls me for dinner. Jane and Bill Davis are like foster parents. My real parents disappeared when I was ten. No one knows where they are. 'I'll come straight down!' I yell as I finish my room.

I sit at the table just as Lillie comes in. She is holding Barbie dolls as she plops onto her chair next to me.

'Will you play with me?' she asks as she puts on her 'puppy face'.

'What has mum said about dolls at the table?' I question her. Lillie, my young foster sister, gets away with almost everything. *Almost.*

'Sorry,' she quickly deposits the dolls in her room and runs back just as everyone else comes into the room. I am extremely worried to see Jane and Bill are angry with each other. Usually they are happy. Suddenly I feel the change coming on. I excuse myself and run outside.

As soon as I am outside I shiver and shift. My ears grow pointy and I grow a tail. I drop onto my hands. No, my paws. I get warmer as fur covers me everywhere. I am a fox!

I take in my surroundings as I trot around the barn in our backyard. Suddenly, my senses prick up. A *new scent*. It is coming from the forest. The forest that surrounds my home town is full of mystery. People have started rumours that they are filled to the brim with supernatural creatures. Like me. Although they will never know that. From the nearest grove of trees, a pair of silver eyes are looking at me. We stare at each other until the silver eyes fade away.

'Hi Violet!' shrieks Sarah as I stroll into the school grounds the next day.

'Hi yourself,' I laugh as I surrender to her crushing embrace. As I pull away from her hug, I feel someone looking at me, so I turn around.

'Who is that?' I inquire. He is a tall guy with dark hair and a tan complexion. But it is his silver eyes that rivet me the most. I feel like I have seen them before.

'That's Dixon,' giggles Sarah, 'He's new in our class.' As if he knows we are talking about him, he starts to walk over, but the bell rings.

As the day passes, I catch him looking at me a couple of times. When the last bell rings I find Dixon at my locker.

'Do you mind if I walk you home, Violet?' he questions. He seems like a cool guy, but you never know.

'I'm sorry, but I don't walk around with people I don't know.'

'I want to show you something,' he insists, 'Please?'

'How do I know that I can trust you?' He looks at me and then looks around to see if anyone is around. He turns back to me and then, out of the blue, he asks for me to stand back.

Confused, I do as he asks, and am shocked.

He falls onto his knees and when I try to help I realise that he is growing a muzzle and starting to grow fur! Scared, I step back and hit a wall. He now has claws and his fur is covering everywhere. He is a wolf.

My heart is pounding. I always thought that I was the only person who could turn into an animal. Dixon stretches his neck out and I scratch behind his ear. He shifts back into a man and waits until I have recovered from my shock.

'You're just like me, except you are a wolf.' I whisper. He nods.

'Can you control your change?' he nods again. 'How?' I inquire.

He sighs and then answers. 'You just need to control your emotions.' That seems easy enough.

'Are there others like us?' I ask, both scared of and curious for his answer.

He laughs. 'There are too many to count.' He continues, 'They all occupy the forest. There are bears, lions, even a few owls.'

'Wow!' I gasp. 'And to think that I thought I was the only one.'

'Would you like to come back home?' Dixon asked softly.

I hesitate. 'To go where everyone is just like me?'

That would be amazing, but I have a life here, in the village.'

'We can visit your foster family whenever you want,' Dixon replied. I didn't know what to say.

'How do you know that they are my foster family?' Dixon is new and he shouldn't know that much about me, unless Sarah has talked to him.

'Your parents sent me.' he states matter of factly. I can't believe it. Gone for ten years and then they send another shifter to send for me.

'I haven't seen them for years.' I whisper softly.

'You can see them now if you want.'

I want to tell my foster family first, so I tell Dixon that I will see them first and then I walk over to the lodge.

Dixon and I stand under the first line of trees, holding hands. Together as one we shift into our animal forms. We whoop with joy as we pass the tree line into the forest. I finally understand the feeling of immense joy. *Of freedom.* ■



Isobel Georgson  
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Untitled

# WORDS

---

Annie Nicola · Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

You'd think that saying any  
word would be easy  
It's just a bunch of sounds  
Like ones I'm making now

I am effortlessly painting stories  
in your heads  
I could make you picture a  
dragon flying through the sky  
Its red scales reflecting the heat  
of the flames from its breath  
I could make you see the sound  
that the moon makes when its  
reflection creates symphonies  
on the blank music sheet of  
water

It's funny, how easily words can  
come

And how they can stick in your  
throat  
Because they have the power  
that no army could give  
Because armies don't define who  
you are  
The dictionary in your hand  
does

And my dictionary is not the  
same as yours because--

They stick in your throat

Holding onto the noose  
wrapped around your heart

And you can't let go because  
you're hanging

And if you fall

You're dragging that spotlight  
with you

Illuminating every secret you've  
ever kept

It's funny

But it's also so incredibly sad

Because there are words that I  
never got to hear

Sounds that I wish someone  
could have given me

But you can't turn back time  
After all, man's inventions have  
never been very obedient

And time in itself is ageless  
It harbours loose ships in the  
night that rock against the  
pitching sea

I wish I could turn back time  
Back to that night where I  
thought that my heart would  
burst from my chest and take  
off running far away just so  
that it could learn how to  
breathe again

I wish I could turn back time  
as easily as you change the  
hands on the face of a watch

As if time existed in the silence  
between the ticks of the  
second hand

Reaching out of the face to pull  
me into the realm where time  
has no army

It's funny how you can make a  
whole poem about words not  
being able to get past the steel  
trap of your jaw

Its choking grip refusing to  
relinquish its hold on the very  
thing that is dragging you  
down

My dictionary is not the same as  
yours because I burn it while  
you let it flourish

And I sit and smoke on the  
ashes of my burning dreams

Wishing that I could turn back  
time

Wishing that I had a bucket of  
water to quench the flames

Wishing--

It's funny

Until you realise that words  
have made deeper wounds  
than the strongest sword  
could ever hope to create

But I guess at that point

It just becomes a different kind  
of humour

One that you chuckle dryly at  
to keep yourself from falling  
apart

But you aren't sure what's better  
Living in a desert without  
rain or desperately trying to  
stay afloat in the midst of a  
thunderstorm

It's funny

How things can change so  
quickly

In the space of less than a  
second

The idea of a memory floating  
just out of reach

But when the fire stops

And you're left in the  
smouldering remains of who  
you once were

That, is when you begin to  
rebuild

Because time has its reasons  
For the destruction it causes

After all,

How can you become someone  
new when you're still holding  
onto the blackened ashes of a  
past long forgotten? ■

# OCEAN

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Isla Gale · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



A place to finally release all the stress and anxiety that is bothering me. As I float out into the deep blue, I'm engulfed by a colossal wave that slams me onto the ocean floor. I take a moment to fix myself before floating up to the surface once again.

As I arise from the salt water I try to take a breath before I am struck once again by the harsh movements of the ocean. I try to gain strength to pull myself out of the tide but I am out too far into a dark, blue, bottomless pit of nothing. I struggle to rise to the surface. With extra effort, I make it up to see a starry-eyed sky with a crescent-shaped moon. I look around to see nothing but an empty horizon of rigid waves crashing into each other.

Is this the end?

I was in a state of oblivion; was I dreaming? How

did this happen? Where am I? All these questions came crashing into my mind until I couldn't hold myself up any longer.

I let go of the air left inside my lungs and let my weight sink below the surface. I felt intoxicated with joy.

I remembered everything that had happened to me, everything I was proud of and most importantly, what was yet to come.

My chest became tighter and my ears began to feel increased pressure. I felt as though I was crying without tears but for pleasant reasons. My heart began to pound faster, my body felt like fireworks. Everything was exploding. And then I let it all collapse.

I was gone and gone for good. ■

# GIOVANNI

Luisa Russo · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

*I chose to write about my own heritage, my father and my experience in moving schools as a child. I utilised a first-person, casual tone, as well as adopting the idea of the 'other' due to his nationality.*

**T**error is what I hear as my daughter's moans in frustration following the bang of her door. The door creaks open and I am hit with the waft of the sweetness that is Maria. The light streams in, tears glistening down her face and soaking my shirt as she embraces me with the warmth of her little body. Her face is soft, her red, rosy cheeks matching her raw, teary eyes as I cup her head in my hands.

*I walked into the room and my parents' eyes harrowed into me, hot on my face. They probably got a call. As I passed by the kitchen, the smell of coffee beans filled the air and "sugo" is on the stove ready for dinner, fresh basil from mamma's "gardino." I took in a deep breath, inhaling the scent of my home. The light hit my eyes, and as I raised my head I was met with the soft, warm hands of my mamma.*

I see the sadness in her eyes; the anger, the pain as she retells the story of her day at school. She is only eight and I can't believe how inhumane her peers are. Her bruises are purple, her head bleeding and her knee raw – a wound that will most likely scar, which will forever be a reminder of what happened.

*"Matteo non sono un amico di tuo,"<sup>1</sup> I knew my mamma was right, but Mathew was my only friend. Coming to a country where you don't know the language and cannot communicate with anyone can feel cold, isolating, lonely. In my family of ten I couldn't imagine ever feeling alone but walking down the street or going to the shops together I could feel the judgmental eyes glaring at me and eating my soul. I felt ashamed to be me. I would stay up most nights dreading the next day. That was until life brought me by the only person who would talk to me and sit with me. He was humble and warmhearted. A true friend – or so I thought.*

The sounds of the clattering tram moving down Hawthorn Street, the scent of tonight's "sugo" was brewing in the room next door. My olive skin was the same as my daughter's tiny, chubby arms. I read her "*The Ugly Duckling*", just as my mamma did to me when something like this happened. I didn't need the book to remember the lines. They came to me naturally.

*My spaghetti sandwich hit the floor. Next came*

*the thud of my body hitting the tanbark, Matteo hovering above me, shouting at the top of his lungs: "WOG!" The anger, the hate, the disappointment in his eyes hit me like a thousand stones, dragging me to the bottom of the ocean floor. "GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM!" I could feel the pure hatred fuming off him in the heat of the Australian Summer, the blazing sun scorching my face. I could feel my face turn red before his eyes, and I held back the tears which burned my eyeballs. As my vision blurred I raced to the bathroom, listening to the thudding footsteps racing after me, hot on my tail.*

"Don't let people bring you down because they are jealous of how great you are. Chances are that you won't see them again after school because they are only acquaintances. They are not your friends if they don't accept you for who you are and where you come from." She looks at me the way I looked at my parents when they gave me a lecture about friendship. The look of loneliness and dread is in her eyes, and I can see that she is scared for tomorrow.

He was in front of me, he must have circled around another way – a faster way. I fall to my feet and he raced in front of me before I could even catch up. They circled around me, and I felt inferior, small, insignificant. He raised his hand and snatched the cross from my neck, the one that my Nonno gave me, the one I pray with each Sunday. It didn't protect me from this. The kick that came from Mean Michal stabbed up my spine. "DAGO!" they shouted. I made eye contact with people walking by, pleading with misery in my eyes. They just kept walking like nothing was happening. I was invisible, the olive boy who blended in with the wood.

"I am scared," her eyes are pleading for help, just like mine were. "I will talk to your teacher and the principal if I have too. I will make sure what happened to me and you won't happen again at the hands of this girl."

*I stayed down. There was no point in trying to get up. I deserved it – I shouldn't have anyone. I should be alone – I am no one. A flash of light from the sun hits my eyes and for a moment it didn't hurt. I felt peace – like I could have floated away. But then the sun died and I crashed back into reality.*

She raises her head, eyes clear, but still raw and red. The sun has set and the smell of ice-cream fills my nose as she digs into her milo ice-cream. Her head has stopped bleeding and her knee is all patched up. We are watching her favourite television

show, “*Bananas In Pajamas*”. She is glued to the television, before her shower and bedtime story the misery is still in her eyes. The ding of the doorbell means her Mum is home from work. Her spirit revives and she is filled with happiness in the embrace of her mother.

*Mamma e papà detto a me, “Devi rimanere forte! In questo mondo incontrerai persone che vorranno trascinarci devi essere coraggioso e andare avanti! Non vergognarti mai di chi sei e da dove vieni perché questo ti rende, tu!”<sup>2</sup> I loved them so much. By the end of the night I had forgotten that awful day, and I had looked into tomorrow hopeful for a day that wouldn’t be filled with sadness, but with the joy I felt when I was around my family. I would be strong and I would be me.*

She is in bed after finished watching “Frozen.” Her sweet, little eyes are now closed and dreaming. She is so peaceful. I can hear the crickets buzzing just below her window. The city in the distance, with all the lights and noise of life. I place my cross beside her table to give her hope and something to believe in, just as I did. The scent of her freshly-washed hair fills my lungs as I kiss her forehead and whisper, “I will always love you more than anyone else. I will always be here for you” ■

1. “Mathew is not a friend of yours”
2. Mum and dad said to me, “You must stay strong! in this world you will meet people who will want to bring you down. You must be brave and keep going! Never be ashamed of who you are and where you come from, because that makes you, you!”



Jaz Bond  
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

# MY AMERICAN ADVENTURE

Eliza James · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

On the 22nd of June last year, my uncle Anthony, my cousins Sam and Holly and my Nana Leonie, left Melbourne to head to the United States for a three-week holiday. Sam, who is eleven, got a massive opportunity to do a summer dance academy in Philadelphia for 6 weeks. So we thought that it was a great chance to do a three-week holiday around different parts of America.

We flew from Melbourne to Sydney, then Sydney to San Francisco. Unfortunately our flight from Sydney to San Francisco got delayed, so we missed our connecting flight to Philadelphia. We had already checked in our luggage for our flight to Philadelphia but we didn't get on the flight as we missed it. We had lost our luggage!! We had the option to wait in San Francisco until 10:40 pm and get to Philadelphia early next morning or to fly to Phoenix and get on a connecting flight to Philadelphia and arrive at 10:30 at night. So we flew to Phoenix as my cousin had to be in Philadelphia the next day. In total, we travelled for 33 hours. We were all so tired.

The first day in Philadelphia, we explored all the wonderful streets. We visited a food market, walked past the Liberty Bell and worked out how to get around the city. My cousin and I love to go shopping, so my Uncle and Nana took us to a shopping outlet in Philadelphia called the Philadelphia Premium Outlets. We had to get two buses to get there. We went there twice! One evening we went to the baseball to watch the Phillies play Washington. It was a steaming hot night and our seats were directly in the sun. It was a fantastic game to watch and we were all so excited that the Phillies won. On one of the weekends, my cousin Sam's dance school had an excursion to a massive water park just outside Philadelphia. Family and friends were allowed to attend with them. It was one of the biggest waterparks I have ever been to. We were so lucky because on that day it was one of the hottest days during the time we were in the United States. We all had so much fun and went down heaps of waterslides. Also one day we visited the Liberty Hall and went on a tour around it, learning heaps of interesting facts about the history of Philadelphia. On one of our last nights in Philadelphia, we went to the Liberty Observation Deck and had a beautiful view of Philadelphia with a magnificent backdrop of the sun setting.

We travelled on a speed train from Philadelphia to New York. As we arrived in New York at Pennsylvania Station (also known as Penns Station) we walked up to Times Square. After we



*My Uncle Anthony, my Nana Leonie, my cousin Holly and me in Central Park.*

settled into our apartment, we went on a walk and got lunch. The atmosphere in New York is outstanding and the sights are very breathtaking. One the second day we were there, we organised a tour guide to meet us at the State Library. She took us to some famous landmarks in New York like Grand Central Station, The Empire State Building, Central Park and many more. We went on a beautiful walk through Central Park and watched a street performance. The tour guide gave us tips on what to do while we were there and gave us maps so we wouldn't get lost. On our third day in New York, we visited the Statue of Liberty. We caught a train to get there, then a boat that took us out to the island. We had a headset as we were walking around the Statue and I definitely learnt some fantastic information. After that we walked over the Brooklyn Bridge, seeing the Hudson River and many more amazing views.

My cousin Holly loves her musical theatre and is amazing at it. As you would know, New York is really famous for the musical theatre and Broadway. One night, Anthony, Nana, Holly and I watched a Broadway show 'Wicked'. It was a fabulous show that was so well done. We loved watching 'Wicked' so much that the next night, Holly and myself went and watched another show, 'Kinky Boots', which is my cousin's all-time favourite show and she's seen it multiple times in Melbourne.



*This is me in Times Square.*

In Washington, we went to museums and learnt heaps about the history. On the first day, we visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture to learn about the richness and diversity of their experience and how it has helped shape the nation. On the second day, we walked to the National Air and Space Museum and learnt about the first aeroplanes to be invented and much more. It was actually the 4th of July, which in America is Independence Day. They had a huge festival, so we found a lovely place to sit and watch the parade. That night we went to a big park to watch the 4th of July fireworks. On the way home, we stopped at Maccas and got a chocolate sundae each. The next morning, we got the speed train back to Philadelphia and visited my cousin Sam, who had to live in at his dance school between Mondays and Fridays. It was time to say goodbye to Sam as our two weeks were over in Philadelphia, New York and Washington and it was time to head to San Francisco for the last week of our holiday. Sam was really sad to see us go but knew his Mum would be arriving in the next few days for the last weeks of his scholarship. The next morning we got a taxi to Philadelphia airport and boarded our plane to San Francisco, which took almost 5 hours.

Once we got to San Francisco we settled into our apartment and went for a stroll down to

Fisherman's Wharf. In San Fran, the weather is a lot cooler than Philadelphia. It was quite cold as it was a bit windy next to the bay. Holly, my cousin, loves animals and loves to take photos of them, too. We saw many seals and sea lions on the piers. I think she took about 100 photos of them! That night we had a really nice fish and chip dinner in a little restaurant on Pier 39. The next morning we bought tickets to go on a 'Hop on, Hop off' bus that travels around the main parts of San Francisco. We got on the bus and it took us across the Golden Gate Bridge and to a little town called Manly, which is very peaceful. We then all walked over the Golden Gate Bridge. It took us around 25 minutes to get to the other side.

The next day we just cruised around Fisherman's Wharf and had a nice lunch. My cousin Holly and I, walked past the San Francisco Dungeon. We both went in and had a tour. It was scary! That night, we did a night tour of Alcatraz. It was a magnificent tour and to be honest it was actually quite sad. Unfortunately the next day was our last day on our trip. We were all upset that our amazing holiday had come to an end, but also, we were ready to come home and see our family and friends. On the last day we got an uber to the airport. I was so excited to see my Mum at Tullamarine as I missed her so much! ■

# SYMPATHETIC HABITS

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Aislinn O'Neill · Year 9 · St Columba's College

Imagine yourself sitting on the cold concrete floor, begging for food whilst passersby stare you down. Imagine yourself staring at the wall of a jail cell and feeling remorse for your crimes, knowing that you cannot escape from your past, the stench of loneliness and despair surrounding you.

Thankfully, there are beautiful people that are willing to help those that are struggling with their fractured pasts. "*We have to look at ways of being with these people. I learned to love deeply, not in the lovey-dovey way. I'm there FOR them, but I'm also there WITH them.*" This quote, by Sister Teresita Marcelo RSC is one of the most passionate and wholesome quotes that I have ever heard, and the lovely woman that I interviewed known as Sister Tess was much the same.

Sister Tess was born in the Philippines and raised by a family that provided constant support. Her family had always been generous and giving, hence her inspiration to pursue her work. She first began as a missionary in underdeveloped countries like Bangladesh; she provided for the marginalised and war victims. She was accustomed to seeing poverty-stricken people, because she herself was raised in an underdeveloped country where people slept on the streets.

Tess is a woman driven by compassion, which is evident in her work and that of her fellow sisters. Her main goal is to educate and assist the marginalised – she strives to make them feel like worthwhile members of society, is not judgemental,

and is a strong believer that every single person has a degree of dignity in them, no matter what position they are in or what mistakes they have made in their past.

But, it isn't just Sister Tess who is a justice hero. Her fellow sisters also work with other people who need comfort. She told me a story about a woman named Sister Martha, who worked at Risdon Prison in Hobart, Tasmania. Sister Tess explained that even though one may have committed a heinous act in the past, all they really need is a bit of company and comfort to open up. Sister Martha worked with plenty of infamous prisoners in her time and it is said that the prisoners focused more on optimism than pessimism after spending time with her.

Comfort is a magical thing, it can completely transform a person and their ways. Sister Tess is a wonderful example of an enlightening person who turns anxiety into awareness. The lesson? Everything ties together – my Aunty works at Risdon Prison, and she counsels inmates, and in consultation with her, all these connections make me realise that even though evil will always exist in this world, there is more good, and we as people must continue to assist wherever we can and look to the light.

Hope is inspired by those who continue to fight for a just world, even if it is as simple as treating people with dignity and respect, no matter their story. ■

# MASTERMIND MEL

Paige Condrón · Year 10 · St Columba's College

*My creative response to 1995 film Clueless, will be written in the first person through the observant eyes of Mel, Cher's father. I believe Mel to be a very underestimated character and aim to prove he is the mastermind behind the entire storyline of the film. To create this plot twist, my creative piece must take place before the entire film, thus making it a prologue, in monologue form.*

*The scene will commence whilst Mel is dressing in the mirror, talking to himself as any lawyer would. His mind will begin to wander and find itself on the topic of his daughter, and her potential involvement with a future boyfriend. This thought will not sit well with Mel, as he is highly protective over his daughter Cher, and will realise that the future sequence of events will be out of his control. Or are they?*

*I will use his tone of voice and style and employ an extensive vocabulary and legal concepts. I will use logical and rational thinking, and of course, some classic American arrogance. My writing will dissertate the themes of social class, relationships and love.*

## MASTERMIND MEL

**B**ring the wide end through the front knot... now tighten and pull up to the collar. And perfect. A man's never perfect if his tie ain't.

Once upon a good old time, my little girl used stand right here, stretch to her extremity, reach her delicate little hands up and fix my tie. But that was all before she became preoccupied with that outfit matcher I purchased for her. It's the latest of its kind, on sale for 30% off, I advanced that to a 70%. The classic 'better deal from a competitive department' technique.

Ah Cher, she used to look up to me as if I were God with a Law Degree. Now she'd all into the clothes, and the makeup, and the magazines, and the boys. Fortunately for me, Cher's never had a real boyfriend. But she's growing up, blossoming, resembling the beauty of her mother. The boys will be chasing after my girl like lions hunting down their next prey. Ready to pounce on their next innocent victim. And it is exactly that, that has been eating away at my magnificent mind. Cher is going to wind up with a boyfriend, and for the very first time in my entire life, I don't have a single bloody say in the matter.

Alright now Mel pull yourself together, enough of all this emotional talk. I can ignore it all if I want to... But... ignorance leads to fear, fear leads to hate, hate leads to violence, violence is assault.

Assault puts you in court facing a probation of up to a year or more in a parish or county jail DAMN IT. Ignorance is out of the question.

I must approach the issue with delicacy and fastidiousness. Perhaps I could send her to a nunnery. That's keep her away from any Tom, Dick and Harry trying their luck with my daughter. The Monastery of Angels is under twenty minutes away from here. It's a cloistered convent of a Roman Catholic religious order for women, founded by the Dominican sisters. Ah but then they'd taint her mind with all that tenderness and forgiveness. No, not a chance, my girl must never learn to back down, turn her other cheek just to be slapped. Love it! I went to Siena College and was taught by some lovely Dominican sisters!

Cher needs a man. But a man who is intelligent, someone who can hold an intellectual conversation. He needs to be confident, and strong, but respectful of those who hold a higher position in comparison to him, such as myself. Then of course there's the essentials such as height, weight, hair, eyes jaw line angle, teeth and above all his tie. This boy must strive to be successful in all that he does. He must be efficacious but charitable. A strong foundation is the basis for every fundamental, therefore he must have strong parental roots.

If only I had a son who wasn't really my son whom I could train to be worthy enough for my pulchritudinous Cher... If only...

Well knock me over with a feather!

I do!

This is just marvellous, it's utterly phenomenal. I DO have a son who's not my son who would be beyond perfect for my Cher. It wouldn't be incest, as he's not my biological son, and he's still tied to me because I only divorced his mother, I never divorced him!

Mel you are just a genius... Oh please, tell me something I don't know. I'll have Josh come and stay over for a little while, strictly for work experience only. It won't be long before he's head over heels like a shot rabbit.

I can be in complete control, strategically orchestrating every event. Meanwhile the rest of them will follow along, continuing their lives as they have always been, and always will be; utterly clueless. ■

# MURRAY

Bridget Dervan · Year 10 · St Columba's College

*For my creative response to the movie Clueless, I decided to script a new scene for the movie. This scene sees Murray, along with two of his friends, Sean and Lawrence, playing basketball whilst talking about Murray's 'near death experience'. In the movie, there is a scene where Murray is teaching Dionne to drive with Cher in the back seat. They end up on the freeway where Dionne panics and everyone starts screaming. Murray is able to bring the car to the side of the road to safety. My new scene focuses on Murray recounting this story to his friends. My inspiration for this additional scene came from another scene in the movie where Tai is telling her story of nearly getting pushed over the rails at the supermarket to everyone at school. However, she exaggerates this story as if she nearly died and makes a big fuss over herself. This is the same idea I wanted to bring to my own scene. I wanted Murray to exaggerate his story and show his friends what a cool, superhero-like guy he is for saving Dionne and Cher's life.*

*Of course, since he is talking to his friends, he needs to act cool around them, plus, this movie is set in the 90s, so I got to have some fun writing in some 90s' slang.*

## MURRAY

### Characters

- Murray
- Lawrence
- Sean

*(Murray approaches Lawrence and Sean who are playing basketball outside of the school.)*

Murray [M]: Wassup, dawgs?

Lawrence[L]: Yo, blood.

Sean: Wassup, G?

M: (To Sean) What you playin' bball like that for?

S: C'mon man, you are totally jockin' my shit right now.

M: As if, homie.

S: It's got time then.

*(Sean starts teasing Murray with the basketball.)*

M: Aiight let's go then, G.

S: You be trippin' fool. (Murray, Lawrence and Sean casually start playing basketball)

L: What's been the happs, dude?

M: Man, you won't believe it, dude. I was hella tight the other day.

L: Spill it then.

M: I saved my woman's life. Imma a freaking' superhero or some junk.

L: Whatcha do now, g?

M: We were drivin' the other day 'n I was chattin' to the chics in the car and my 'B' drives onto the mofo freeway.

S: Oh snap.

M: Yeh, G. Then this giant truck came up behind 'n he was tryin' to crash us, I swear. Man, this dude was totally wack.

S: Whatcha do? Jack him up?

M: Nah G, I had to stay calm. The girls, yeah they were all screaming and shit but I didn't freak one bit.

L: Aiight, sure. That's chinny dude.

S: Yeh, c'mon you woulda been mad buggin'.

M: You guys are trippin, man. I was fly as, dawg. (Murray loses the ball to Sean) C'mon dude, that was a foul.

S: Just continue what you was sayin'.

M: Aiight then. So then, this Evita- like chica rolls up 'n starts yellin'.

S: Man, that chick sounds hella bunk.

M: You know what I'm sayin'. Then this gang of dudes on motorbikes came by. That junk was whack as. The chics were hella freaked out, man I swear.

S: Surprised they didn't jack you up.

M: Nnah g, they was totally chillin'. (Takes a shot and gets it in.)

S: My G!

M: Thanks dude. So, then my woman decides to take her mofo hands off the wheel.

L: Oh ho, giddy up!

M: Nah man, I freakin' saved her life. I put my mofo hands on the wheel for her.

S: (To Lawrence) Look at this dude, he thinks he be such a tough nut. Nah fam, you were the one freaked out.

M: Dude I'll totally jack you up man. You better lay off! I was totally cool.

S: All good, man. Just continue yo' story.

M: Aiiight, so then this other mofo in a ghetto ass truck came out of nowhere man. Know what I mean?

L: That is so larey, homie.

M: So then, I got my chica to pull up at the side of the road. She totally did what I said! I totally saved her life, man. I'm all that and a bag of chips.

L: Props dude.

*(Sean sees Dionne approaching in the distance)*

S: Yo dawg, is that yo' chick coming?

L: (To Murray) Man, why you got the pasties all of a sudden?

M: Yo, guys I gotta dip, if you know what I'm sayin'.

S: What you done now, G?

M: Before, I said her Tiffany (brand name) bag be lookin' fake, then I dipped hella fast.

S: She looks hella pissed.

L: Like, she about to open up a can of whoop ass.

M: You dawgs wanna shoot out?

S: Aiiight. Let's dip.

L: And hella fast.

*(The three of them start running away.) ■*

# ON THE WAY TO THE MOUNTAIN TOP

Lucy Williams · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

The cold wind blew through my skin, through my  
flesh,

Chilling me to the bone,

I thought I heard a bird singing but no, I was  
alone.

The cold black ice flashed through my vision of  
the collision,

That stupid and wrong decision

Why did I take Old Tucker Road, on my way to  
the mountain top?

Why did I take Old Tucker Road, it was this that  
made my heart stop.

The tyres slipped, the road's edges were chipped,  
my wings were clipped.

I tried to fly to heaven but the weight of life  
pushed me to hell.

I tried to climb way up high and yet I still just fell.

So now I hang still in the air trying to fly but the  
weight of life is too heavy to bear.

I'm sorry heaven, I'm sorry hell

I can't ever meet you, for I am here still and quiet  
in a broken car crying.

Next to Old Tucker Road on the way to the  
mountain top. ■

# PARADISE FOUND

Orlando Magasdi · Year 7 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

The world around me seems to be perpetually spinning at an ever-increasing pace. Yesterday things used to slow down and stop; I could catch my breath and then go on...but now, that's just a wild fantasy. Today, everything is so fast-paced, there's never enough time and life is so demanding. I have an evil over seeing, over-demanding boss who sets unrealistic deadlines. I am always working. Is this all there is to life? I often question my own existence; do I even want to be here? But I can't just give up, not on the wife, not on the kids.

Every day I feel like I'm falling deeper and deeper into a hole from which I have no idea how to escape. Each day I feel less and less "human." Today was no different. My despicable boss told me that if I didn't increase the productivity of my mundane, soul-draining labour I would be forced to leave the company. This soulless entity knows what I am thinking and feeling, knows that I'm not coping, knows that I'm quite literally on the edge and yet he still keeps pushing me. He doesn't care, he has no empathy, he lost his humanity long ago.

This morning I left home and kissed my children goodbye, my wife too. I prayed that deep down inside me, somewhere I couldn't consciously imagine, I was somehow content with what I was about to do. I managed to stem my tears until I closed the door to my home and my family, but once I'd said my final goodbyes my eyes became freely flowing fountains of salt and water.

The loud, obnoxious noises of the street have never ceased to give me a headache and therefore every time I have previously made my way down this road I have done so in a hurried fashion but not today. Today, as I steer myself towards my final demise, I walk slowly – the sounds don't bother me at all, in fact, I start to feel content walking this street knowing that I will soon be at peace.

The sounds of boats, the smell of ethanol, the sight of water lapping against the boats and bridge consume my senses. I begin to close my eyes; I've thought about this moment so many times. As I stand on the bridge I hope that a huge wave will hit me like a brick, hopefully, it will be fast, hopefully it will be painless. I release all control of my body hoping that the wind and water will take me.

I hear a loud thud and suddenly my body returns to full alert, my eyes drift down and to my horror, a man no older than me is laying there in the water. A dark red colour begins to fill the water. This horror, a mirror to my own intended fate, immediately makes me question my intentions. How could I have been so stupid, so selfish, so

illogical as to plan to end it all? At that moment, I suddenly felt no sadness, no envy, no deep dark force sucking me into a hole, instead here at my most weak, raw and broken I suddenly felt inexplicably content with my life.

I enter the front door and embrace my own impromptu upbeat mood, which for once was not a mere artifice. I was genuinely happy. Something had shifted within me. I was keenly aware of my mortality. I felt that every second I drew breath now was a bonus. Another part of me feels compelled to make the most out of my life like so many before me hadn't or couldn't, like I nearly couldn't...

As the sun rises upon a warm, vibrant Tuesday morning, I return to work as the "reborn" me. As I step inside the door my emotions seemingly reset; I'm suddenly back to feeling gloomy and miserable. I frantically scrambled to step back out of the office and onto the street. I feel dizzy, my head felt as if it were in a vice and I was overcome by a feeling of nausea. My legs went from under me, it felt as though the world had shifted on its axis, my body hit the pavement, I became limp and then there was only darkness.

I gain consciousness and open my eyes to discover an overwhelmingly bright light and the generic beeping of a life support machine. Suddenly I hear the weeping of a child who couldn't have been more than five metres away from me. Where was I? My heart began to beat faster and faster as my anxiety grew. I then heard the sound of my wife's voice and suddenly I calmed.

"You're alright, you had a breakdown but everything's going to be okay". I knew that the only way anything could ever be okay again was if I made some truly drastic changes in my life.

I simply can't go on living like this.

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A few months later...

*The evergreen landscape, the beautiful pure air,*

*The prevalent sense of a true community who are more than happy to share*

*The enjoyable days, the wholesome nights; no antidepressants in sight*

*Joyful kids, happy wife, a fully fulfilled joyous life*

The country changed who I was, it brought me happiness and removed my despair.

It brought love when all I felt was sorrow. Although it may not have everything the city possesses, most things that are gone are things I would rather forego anyway.

I think we could all do with a simpler life.

“Live Simply, Simply Live” ■



**Flynn Stehmann-Doyle**  
*Year 5 · Holy Rosary*  
*Primary School, Kensington*

# THE NECKLACE

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Matthew Clark · Year 8 · Kostka Hall, Xavier College

The sharp sound of the alarm clock shakes me awake. I watch the blood orange sunrise rinse the clean lines of waves through the window. Boorangoora Creek; the best left hand point break for surf on the East Coast of Australia. Not that anyone knows about it really. This is just a sleepy surf town about four hours from Sydney. With Mr and Mrs Johnson's new born baby last week, the population ticked over to one hundred and fifty. I dreadingly lift myself from the comfort of my bed. Going through the small beach shack I grab my wet boardies. I pick up my board, clumsily dabbing on some sunscreen and step out onto the warm, crunchy sand. Beautiful rolling waves grow larger right in front of my eyes. I put on my leg rope and rub wax into the fibreglass. An engine starts up. I see my father wave me goodbye as he hops into the bright white Holden ute. This is a peaceful town. My town, where I can roam widely and enjoy carefree days. It was a different story two months ago.

It was New Years Eve and the whole town turned out at the beach where a large bonfire burned into the night sky trailing into the darkness. Guitar melodies rang out; some old, some new, while Summer joined in with her soft but beautiful tunes. Summer, a sixteen year old surfer with blonde beachy hair and tanned skin was the prodigy of the town. Her voice was described by the town folk as an angel from heaven, and from what I knew, she certainly was. Suddenly, the crowd dimmed as she started strumming her guitar, delicately humming a tune that I remembered from somewhere. She started to softly sing the words... "Kumbaya my Lord, Kumbaya..." Her sweet voice captured the crowd as everyone started to sway back and forth to the tune. Soon, the whole town was singing and celebrating the year that had been. That was the last time we saw Summer.

I dip my feet into the cold icy water, the rush running from head to toe. The waves well above six foot now and with no one out, I'd have the line up to myself... just how I like it. I wade through the strong current of the ocean. Big white broken waves advance quickly towards me. With all my might, I push down hard on the nose of the board as the avalanche of white wash crashes above me. I make it just in time. The water paralyses me as it sweeps over my body. This was mother nature at its finest. The harsh, unforgiving environment reminding me that I was at her mercy.

Summer disappeared as soon as the group started to dance. I thought she was just being rude, but actually there was much more to it. Getting lost in the moment, I let the music flow through me like a river down a mountain as I closed my eyes and smiled. Suddenly, a blood curdling scream cut

through the air like a fine dagger, as the crowd abruptly stopped. Everything grew eerily silent with just the fire crackling until another shriek of pain cried out from the darkness. This time, everyone knew something was wrong...this had never happened before at Boorangoora Creek. Panicking, everyone ran toward the sound of the screams, louder and louder until they suddenly stopped. Thank goodness for that. Although now we had lost the trail of the voices.

People dispersed into search parties with great urgency, shouting as I was spun around the group trying to avoid the mess and sudden rush. That was the last time anyone from Boorangoora Creek saw Summer, "child prodigy" ever again.

I look out to the vast, open sunlit sea as I paddle to the take-off zone. The waves spit out mist leaving a hollow, thick lip. Almost perfect conditions. A set starts out on the horizon as I ready myself for action. I paddle onto the perfect wave with ease. Quickly bouncing up I feel the board strong beneath my feet. The bottom of the wave pulls at me as I take the steep drop. I start to pump, legs going up and down, up and down until I lie back and unleash a wide bottom turn. The spray hits me as I laugh and feel drunk on adrenaline at this perfect moment. These were my days. I eject off the face just before the chunky wave closes out.

The days that followed the incident were... difficult. The town, restless and agitated as search parties went out but returned with a solemn shake of their heads. Summer's mother sobbed and moaned in despair for her lost daughter. For a good two weeks, police tape and television networks marred the town, opening the wound further. The sparkling spirit and charm of Boorangoora Creek was gone and nothing could be done to repair it.

A monstrous wave smashes over my head. It throws me off my board, and tosses me off my board like a ragdoll. This is nature commanding the full force of its anger. It sucks me into the deep dark depths as I struggle to swim back to the top. I push upwards to the surface and gasp much needed air into my screaming lungs.

This was surfing. The struggle, the relief, the enjoyment. I manage to get over the glassy blue walls, way out the back to the flat water. Here, thinking of Summer, I brought out her necklace from the pocket of my boardies, the ornament washed clean from the once bloody mess it was. The intricate, woven pieces of fragile metal drift lightly in my hand under the ocean until I release it, hopefully never to be found again. That was my only mistake.

I should have just left it on the body. ■

# WITH STRINGS ATTACHED

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Chelsea Marsden · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

She's gorgeous, a beauty  
With a smile like waves of love  
Gleams like vivid roses  
Gives a practised whisper of poise.

I want a treasure as contagious as hers  
But it'll cost me more than murder  
Belonging to painful beauty.

A portrait of painted reverence  
But me, crooked as a nerve on edge  
Through the blink of glistening eyes  
And the droop of her wicked curls  
Nothing to come between the pristine grace

All but...  
The wire stuck beneath  
Those lovely little cheeks  
A glowing aura shown  
But strings attached behind ■

# OLDER

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Claire Vise · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Growing, Expanding, Getting Older  
An adult's nightmare.  
Is it the skin?  
The pain?  
Or that we look down  
On our elders,  
The wisest amongst us.  
We choose disrespect  
Us!  
Not them.  
We bring it upon ourselves

But why  
Maybe,  
It's the slow loss of it – everything;  
Mentally,  
Physically,  
And eventually,  
Life itself.  
But it's all inevitable

Look at Innocent children,  
They understand  
What will happen to them  
Yet it's their dream to grow up  
Their long-term goal.  
They dream  
And dream  
And dream  
And then work hard  
To achieve their dreams

Until they stop  
Until they're too old to dream  
And then they want to be young  
And to have their bodies freed  
Minds reset.

But why not,  
Instead of looking in the mirror  
We take a look back  
At the beginning of our dreams  
And begin a new life  
Regardless of our age. ■

# THE SILENCE

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Georgia Howard · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Simply beautiful  
Like threads of spiderweb dancing on top of the  
summer breeze  
Like millions of tiny feathers fluttering in the air.  
Colours of apricots ripening and ready to be  
picked  
So dainty and gentle  
Yet the memories that come with them are jagged  
and tear away at my heart.  
A whirling nightmare hovers in the wind  
Piercing the eyes while over taking the beauty of  
the shoes.  
No matter how blindingly exquisite they are they  
will never block out the constant thought of  
her.

They trap everyone else in a blur  
But I am immune to their charm  
Trapped in a world where everything is a lie.  
A land of perfection  
But beneath this lie crumpled ruins of forgotten  
faces  
A place where tears are cliques  
And people walk with their eyes glued to the  
ground  
the silence is shattered by the echoed words of my  
father:  
“Nana has passed”. ■

# MY MAROON SECRET

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Jacqueline Perkins · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

My maroon cuff has a secret,  
A million birds that fly  
Burgeoning in the air.  
Golden specks are bright exploding stars  
Swiveling around the edge  
Teetering on the brink  
Plummeting.

A flock of time dances  
in the entwining trees  
touching the waves  
Crumbling the flourishing feathers.  
A vivid flash of wings I see  
With butterflies that grow  
A burst of tottering nymphs  
Rasping for a whispering breath. ■

# THE GIFT OF LEARNING

---

Maddy Perdriau · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

She has a pen in her hand  
She has it close  
she writes, she's writing to the sound

The sounds of others  
the sound of her heart and theirs  
she holds the pen in her hand  
she holds the experiment  
she holds an instrument  
they hold laughter and friendship, together she  
holds her future in her palm  
wide eyes and vast possibilities

Creation and innovation  
Silent screams and due dates  
Smiles bleed in with the tears  
pen combines words of magic

Like chemicals combine to make reactions  
hand combines with strings and keys creating  
sound smiles combine with love and create  
happiness

simplicity of nurturing passion in an environment  
where children can be their potential  
and at the centre of it all we have a girl,  
pick up a pen ■

# MY EVERY FLAMING THOUGHT

---

Rachelli Hodges · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Fluttering, hovering in the air  
stumbling down again  
grasping reality with my blistered hands

I might not rise again  
and that is hard to face  
my drooping shoulders, crumple in a slump  
disheartened, unenthusiastic  
as unpolished as the drunken slurs, of a half  
unconscious sot.

I hate the world that those tiresome doors open  
I hate it as much as a drunk hates staring into an  
empty bottle  
I hate it so much that I'm on fire

sparks within me flash and electrocute my body's  
every move

I may hate it because it lit me on fire  
but that's also the reason I love it.

I balance my token of appreciation in my  
blistered hands,  
my body is on fire

I'm too sore to even move  
to think to live

thank you for consuming my every flaming  
thought  
and rewarding me with treasure  
that I may hang around my neck. ■

# FIGHT SIMPLY

---

Angus Nheu · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

A bysomal memories. Only shouting and yelling alone. At the time it was impossible for him to comprehend. They were oblivious to his capabilities. His head spun with the confusion and anger he had once felt. It was as if he was reliving those painful times he thought he had long abandoned. He needed to, so he could pursue what he wanted without their input. The frosty and cold air sent shivers up his spine. He let his eyes wander to distract himself. He caught a small glimpse of two silhouettes outside. They looked familiar to something. The height, body shape and hair. His only option was to sleep; but he could still feel the resentment and irritation embedded in his mind as he resolutely closed his eyes.

Davy awakened the next morning to the liveliness of his chef. As he watched his meal being prepared he remembered the night before. He had hoped the same calibre of emotional pain would never emerge from the darkness and isolation of his distant memories. What happened that night was an injustice that necessitated correction. He abandoned everything to achieve success in his own way. "Is there anything bothering you this morning?" The chef asked, as he served his breakfast.

"I said no!" Davy shouted. "I apologise. It's just about the fight." Davy was later escorted by his chauffeur to the event. Once the arena was in sight he saw a lengthy line of people gathering to witness the fights. The cheering and happiness, was unique. Something which Davy had forgotten. When he arrived, a sudden sensation near his heart pained him for a short moment. "I can't be nervous now." He whispered to himself. Davy entered the first of many tournaments held in this location. He sat alone to analyse the elegance and complexity demonstrated by the fighters. The burning sensation returned to him, and he couldn't understand why. As this was occurring, the referee appeared at the centre of the stadium.

Davy was apprehensive. He wanted to rid himself of his nervousness. He waited patiently and determinedly for his long-awaited fight. After a plentiful number of outstanding performances, Davy's name was announced along with another. Davy had not noticed this peculiar man. He didn't even know his name, and neither did anyone in the arena. "Begin!" The referee yelled. The two kept their distance, perhaps attempting to develop strategic plans. The man suddenly lunged forward with a series of expeditious punches. His agile manner was too efficient for Davy to retaliate. Merciless punches struck Davy's body.

He saw it land by his chest, but he couldn't move instantaneously like his opponent. The man ultimately discontinued and waited for a response from Davy, who was trying to maintain his breathing sequence. After barely succeeding, Davy initiated his pursuit to inflict an equal amount of pain. Relentless punches directly hit the man's rib cage leaving him shocked and defenceless. The taste of victory he routinely felt was gradually returning to Davy. The man was frozen in his tracks. Vulnerable and speechless. Davy heard the chants from the spectators demanding him to conclude the match. But the feeling of a righteous victory slipped away from his fingertips. A sense of distress clouded his sense of thought. He could hear the pandemonium around him, his fans panicked. They were urging him to continue. But he couldn't muster the strength to move. He only stood still, as if he had seen a ghost. His heart pounded repeatedly, more painful and agonising after every heartbeat.

By the following afternoon Davy returned to normality after he had been chauffeured home. In the media's eyes, Davy had let his fans down. But how could they understand if even he couldn't? Davy answered the door to unsuspected visitors because he was aggravated by the persistent knocking. He saw two visitors when he opened the door. Their height, slim body shape and short hair resembled two people that came to mind. It was as he thought. Andrew and Angela. More specifically, his Father and Mother. The sensation near his heart emerged, along with a faint awareness of seeing his parents for the first time in ten years. "Please listen carefully," Angela insisted, "the reason you lost last night is right here." She pointed at her forehead. There were numerous stitches sealing a colossal narrow scar buried deep into her skin. Davy's vague memory returned to him as clear as a crystal. The feelings of chaos, haste and despair. It was his parents of whom he had nightmares. "My life would've gone simply if you'd noticed before." Davy retorted.

"We only wanted simplicity for you." Andrew exclaimed. "We're now encouraging you to try again." Davy was granted a second entry due to his earlier panic attack. He walked into the arena calmly. Except this time he felt the varied atmosphere from the crowd brainwashed by the media. Davy's win in the second-rate tournament was inevitable after he had cleansed himself of the past. But Davy was uninformed about a final opponent. The winner of the last tournament he had participated in. Davy accepted, knowing he had a reputation he could not afford to lose.

Davy steadily crept up the stairs attempting to catch a glimpse of a challenger within the stands. But his challenger welcomed him. It was a familiar face, fresh in his memory. It was the mysterious and peculiar man he fought in the last tournament. Davy hesitated and the referee began with the proceedings for the long awaited rematch. The man replicated his unrelenting assault from the previous match. And once again, Davy was overwhelmed. He could only endure the pain as he fell to the ground almost unconsciously. The fight was beginning to look like a massacre. Davy should not have accepted the challenge. He heard the crowd furiously yelling as he closed his eyes. But within the crowd he heard two distinctive voices. "Fight back!" Andrew yelled.

"You can win this!" Angela shouted.

Davy's eyes opened wide. He clenched both his fists and fought back, striking the man in his chest. The man was stunned by Davy's tenacity, who seemed to have recovered from the ruthless assault. Unwilling to lose, they both fought continuously with their immense strength until the last touch would determine an outcome. Simultaneously they swung their only functioning arms that then struck their heads concurrently. Both profoundly dazed by the impact to the head, they both fell. With his last minimal consciousness, Davy sought for his parents. Perhaps they were just illusions.

"I've made the life you both desired. A simple life." Davy whispered to himself. They were nowhere to be seen. ■



**Kisha Uthayarajan**  
*Year 8 · St John's Regional College*

*'Music is Life', Lino print*

# PURITY

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Cecilia Lay · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

What is living simple?  
In a world of minimalism,  
full of optimism.  
No crime,  
or people doing time.  
Everyone is kind,  
not one explicit mind. Danger non existent, safety  
in an instant.  
Within everyone there is love,  
no one up above.  
Everyone is treated the same, no one to blame or  
shame. Not one person disrespected, everyone  
is accepted.  
I go home to my family,  
living like it's a fantasy.  
I snap back into reality,  
and question "is it insanity?"  
But it all comes down to one word,  
Simplicity.

I always thought we lived in a perfect world, I thought everything was simple. But that was until I reached high school. I came to realise that the perfect world didn't exist, I have freedom and supposedly safety, but life here is not all easy. In the middle of my thoughts, I was interrupted by a familiar voice "Cecilia, can you come down and help me in the kitchen?" It was my mum, and so I bolted it downstairs. The thing with my mum is that if she had to repeat something more than once, you get belted for annoying her. "Yes ma? What do you need help with?" I politely asked as I approached her in the kitchen.

"Can you please help me make these dumplings? I have so many things to do." I nodded my head and she demonstrated how she wanted the dumplings to look, my mind had drifted off. I kept imagining what life would be like, if I could take a break. I just wanted to escape, and get back on track with my life. It seems as though everything has been going downhill lately. As I snapped back into the present, my mum realised I wasn't listening and so she repeated it but this time with frustration. "You too busy thinking about the boy, you no listen to what I say. Ayooooo."

After I had finished with the dumplings (which took me an hour), I returned upstairs. I sat on my chair and leaned back, I thought about things. A rush of thoughts came to my mind. I was behind with many assignments, I was surrounded by a

school with guys who objectified women, my teachers were judgmental, my friends are a bunch of snakes and fakes. The only people I had were my five friends. One of them is my best friend, Rita. She's a gem, and an absolutely amazing friend. I'm just glad I have her around to help me through the worst. Life is so stressful, and I needed to escape. I quickly turned on my computer and planned a trip for myself and Rita. After hours of planning and booking, I finally came to a conclusion. I booked a weeklong trip to a Holiday House in Phillip Island. Everything was settled, I then called Rita and told her about it. Of course knowing her, she had agreed before I even finished. I ached for the most peaceful holiday ever.

A few weeks had passed, it was finally the end of Term Two. The reports had gone out and I showed my parents. My mum wasn't exactly proud. "You are meant to be an A-SIAN not a B-SIAN. What on earth happened here?" questioned my mother. She shook her head, but my dad on the other hand, was fine, as always. "Ceci, look. We just want you to do your best. No pressure, I just don't want you to end up like me. Uneducated, working in a factory... I just want you to have the future you deserve." My parents both went quiet, I understood about where they were coming from; they grew up and lived in an unstable country. Australia was their second home, both my parents' families had escaped East Timor after the Indonesians invaded. My dad lost his sister in the war (Aunt Cecilia), I was named after her. I had it easy, while my parents suffered. They didn't finish university, so it was hard for them to qualify for high paying jobs. I'm grateful for them, because even though they don't have much money, they do everything they can to make me happy. "I'm sorry Ma and Pa... I will do better next semester, I promise." my parents finally looked at me and smiled, "Must be that boy William, distracting you a bit too much." my mum suggested.

"Please, I can do way better than him." I chuckled as I walked to the living room. I sat down on the couch, turned on Netflix and binge watched 'On My Block'.

The next morning I packed my bags, quietly made it downstairs and slipped out of the house. I had everything all planned out, I left a note for my parents saying how I was staying at Grandma's for a week. Thankfully she had agreed to cover for me. I quietly shut the front door, I turned around and saw Rita waiting in her car. I hopped in and she drove off without warning me. "Heyyy girl, what song?" Rita asked. "I'm thinking a little bit

of Daniel Caesar, perhaps Get You?” and seconds later we were jamming to the song. For a second, I sat back and appreciated my best friend. “Rita, you are an actual babe. Praise the Lord that we are friends.”

Rita laughed and answered “I love you Ceci, we’re like an equation, one plus one equals two and that’s how it’s going to stay.”

I threw my arms around her and said “I love you too girl, although you can be the most annoying person ever.”

She smiled and said “Alrighty, get off I’m driving! Unless you want me to crash of course. Just kiddings hehe.”

I laughed and leaned back, about zero point two seconds later I fell asleep.

After a few hours, a rough shake on my shoulders woke me up. “Wake up Ceci, we’re here you lazy Muppet.” I looked up and saw a beautiful view of the ocean. “Oh my chicken wings, this is beautiful!” I exclaimed. We got our bags down and walked into the house. The interior was so simple, yet modern. Rita and I dropped our bags and raced to the bedroom. There was a huge King Sized Bed, and in the middle was a robe, only one though. We wrestled for it, but of course with the amount of secret strength Rita had, she won the robe. We

looked around some more, and finally made it to the backyard. There was a pool, bathing chairs, a hot tub, trampoline and many other things. We walked up to a hammock and both lay in it. We could see the beautiful ocean and hear the sound of the waves. It was everything that I ever really needed.

We both looked at the sky, and took a deep breath in. “How do you feel right now Rita?”. “Honestly we’ve only been here like ten minutes and I’m already so much better. What about you Ceci?”

I thought about my answer for a little while and finally said “I’ve seen better days, but I’ve also seen worse. I don’t have everything I want but I do have all I need. I woke up with some aches and pains, but I woke up. My life may not be perfect, but I am blessed. Gosh I feel so free.”

“Girl who knew minimalism could play such a huge role in life?” Rita questioned.

Suddenly my stomach rumbled, I was so hungry. So we got up and made some ramen, the most amazing thing ever. To say the trip was good is an understatement, the trip was beyond life changing. A week alone with my best friend helped me get back on track with life, no technology needed. I was grateful for the basic things in life.

“Simplicity reveals the pure beauty of life.” ■

# A POT OF GOLD

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Kent Mijares · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Gold. So beautiful and mesmerising it causes men to kill, to turn on one another, all for a pot of gold. Its rarity is the aspect that makes it so precious. Likewise, it is often the scarcity of good people in this world that make certain individuals so precious to us. So why is it we always let these people go?

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The sun beamed into my room at precisely six in the morning. There were no feelings of stress or anxiety that came to me, something quite unusual for a Monday morning. Just the sense of disappointment, I was disappointed with myself. You see, I left my family in search of a better life, a life where all my materialistic desires were met. My family had always settled for second best and for mediocrity, but me, I wanted more.

A sudden rush of thoughts snapped me back to reality. So I got up and called my driver to pick me up from my house. As I waited for him outside, I walked up and down a strip of gravel on my front lawn. The sight of the mansion which I called home, never left me in awe. It was merely a house to me, nothing special. My train of thoughts continued a minute longer but was interrupted by the sound of the limousine pulling up. I reached for the door handle and sighed, knowing it was going to be a long day.

I peered out of the car window and saw a cloud of smoke billowing in the air. It reminded me of my own life, hazy, uncertain and toxic. Although I did all I could to excel, I still wanted to be proud of myself. Why was there so much misery, so much discontentment? All I ever did in my life was work, work so I could live my life to the full, and yet I am left unfulfilled and empty.

I opened the door only to feel the bitter cold air smack across my face. All the cruelty in the world thrown at me in a gust of wind. I brushed my hair back into place and entered the building with my head held up high. I walked past my employees with a big smile and greeted each one as they passed. Their faces lit up and greeted me back with respect, even giving a slight bow when they turned to face me. But deep inside I knew of the wretchedness they felt towards me. Even with all my wealth, I couldn't even buy fake friends.

I arrived at the meeting room where I saw the whole board of executives and investors waiting for me to enter. As I reached for the handle I put on a smile. It was so realistic that even I had to question its authenticity. But of course, that glimmer of light was soon extinguished by the

overwhelming feeling of misery. As I entered, the board stood up and greeted me. I nodded my head and they all sat down. I began the meeting, like always, very enthusiastically. But as the meeting dragged on, my charisma soon withered away. Midway through the meeting, the despondency finally got to me and I called for a short recess. I ran out of the room knowing that I wouldn't go back. It was too much, all of those repressed feelings finally caught up to me and now I'm an emotional mess. I kept on running and running, as fast as I could until my vision started going blurry. Darkness caved in and I no longer had the will to move and I just stopped.

A warm presence surrounded me. It wasn't something physical, it felt more like a "spiritual awakening". I drifted endlessly through my mind. Memories were flashing before my eyes as if I were watching a replay of my life. Most of them were memories of my family. As I continued to watch, I noticed that I was smiling. The memories reminded me of what it felt like to be loved, to be happy. But all of that soon faded as I started to descend into the floor, everything began to cave in and the darkness came over me once again.

I awoke to the sense of realisation. The feeling of unquenched desire was the longing to be with my family once again. I got up off the floor and ran out of the building. As I exited the building, I called my driver to me up and drive me to the airport. I was going back to Boston. I was going back home. At that very instance, twenty-five years of repressed anger dissipated within a matter of seconds. The feelings of regret and anxiety flooded my mind. I was running thousands of scenarios of how my first encounter with my family would be. Would they ever forgive me? Or will they just neglect me? I thought as I got out of the car. I dashed for the domestic terminal and bought the first ticket to Boston.

No longer than five minutes later, my plane was ready for boarding. I power walked through the terminal and made it to the gate. As I entered the plane, my anxiety kicked back in and I was forced to have a shot of vodka to calm me down. Due to my low alcohol tolerance, I fell unconscious before the plane even took off.

The airport exit doors gave me some much-needed relief. The fresh air allowed me to cope with a massive headache that had suddenly filled my head. I raised my hand desperately and hailed for the nearest taxi. I told the driver the address and we headed off. We went past old parks and neighbourhoods I once played in as a child. It just

gave me an extra reason to regret abandoning my family.

The taxi stopped in front of the house. I took my first steps towards the front door shaking in pure terror. I knocked on the door hesitantly. To my relief, my mother opened the door. Surprisingly, she did not recognise me. But I couldn't blame her, I've changed so much since last time we met. So instead of telling her, I hugged her and cried. At that exact moment, my mother realised it was me and embraced me. We stood there in each other's arms crying with joy. She soon welcomed me into the house. My first glimpse mesmerised me. The

interior was all the same but much older. Pictures of my family were exactly in the same place twenty-five years ago. My dad leapt out of his chair, hugged me and began to cry. I have never felt such love and comfort.

We laughed around the fire pit for hours as we roasted marshmallows and drank coffee. We began to share our favourite memories of our past. But most importantly, I finally apologised to them. I stared into the fire and decided how I was going to live the rest of my life- simple, loved and content. And after a lifetime of searching, I finally found my pot of gold- my family. ■



**Jericho Terracampo**  
*Year 7 · St John's Regional College*

*'Selfie', Reduction Foam Print*

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

Hanna Unmack · Year 7 · Emmaus College

The smell of fresh limes and oranges filled my lungs. Delighted, I inhaled the sweet scent and continued along the limestone path. I paused outside the ‘Sunny View Café’ and gazed at my surroundings. The footpath below me continued almost indefinitely and the tar road beside it was car free and, instead, dotted with pastel coloured bikes. The road was lightly shaded by evergreen trees that created a tunnel stretching from the beginning of the road behind me all the way to the end. People wearing brightly coloured, knitted scarves and beanies dotted the footpath and I even saw some dogs prancing along happily. I decided to venture inside the Café and lined up behind the counter. The café was small, however, rather inviting. A featured, red brick wall with green ivy climbing up it stood to the left of the room. The rest of the walls were light grey, and the cabinets, tables, chairs and stools were all a dark oak. The cashier greeted me with a friendly smile and asked my order.

“A cappuccino thanks,” I answered.

“Is that all?”

“Yes thanks,” I replied

“Okay, and what name will that be under?”

“Cara please”

“Not a problem, your order will be ready soon” She responded warmly. I sat down at one of the tables close to the counter, so I could hear my order. The table was bare other than glass salt and pepper shakers and a menu. I sat for a while watching the busy café at work. The clinking of cutlery, chatter and laughter of friends, and plopping of the milk into the coffee’s made for a lovely, inviting scene. However, the bliss was interrupted by a notification from my best friend Bella:

‘Hey C, meet me at the Sunny View Café in 5 mins, my taxi was running late ughhhh. Bai xxx’

I smiled and responded “K, I’m already there so ill c u soon ☺ bai x’. True to her word, five minutes later Bella walked in.

“Hey Cara!” she exclaimed tackling me into a hug.

“Hey” I laughed. Bella and I had taken a gap year and gone travelling all around Europe. She had gone to see her family so while she was away I went sight seeing alone. We were both now going to continue to the city.

“Cara?” the cashier asked, and I leaped up to collect my drink. Under the frilly pink umbrellas outside Bella and I chatted as she filled me in on

what had happened while I was gone. I finished my drink and together we set off for the big city. We walked along the limestone path at a leisurely pace and after a while started to draw near. As we stepped onto a bridge that stretched over a crystal-clear creek we were met by a crowd of tourists. I tried to turn to Bella, but her hand slipped from my grip.

“Bella? Bella!” I called. No response. The noise of the crowd was too loud for me to hear and I wasn’t tall enough to see over them. Suddenly I saw a glint of red hair. The same shade as Bella’s. I pushed through the crowd desperately, trying to reach the red spark but it dispersed through the crowd and disappeared once again. “Bella!” I yelled but still, no reply. The crowd started to thicken further. I was no longer walking and instead being pushed across by the crowd. Claustrophobia started to creep in. I was being bumped and shoved. It felt like I was suction cupped to someone else at any one time. I started to sweat, fighting to reach the blue sky above me, when I was jerked roughly to the side by the person next to me and sent falling to the ground.

The stampede no longer felt just crowded, I felt completely taken over by the pounding of feet and the hollering of voices above, I tried to pick myself up but instead crawled over to a wall. Back to the wall, I looked around as my every exit was shut by the noisy parade. My vision started to cloud, and the loud voices got blurry. The screams and laughter of the crowd became more and more distant until I couldn’t hear them at all no matter how much I strained. My eyes felt heavy and it was a struggle to keep them open. I fought but I was not match to its power and soon succumbed to the darkness.

Alone in this abyss of blackness my head throbbed. I heard haunting laughter. Saw bright flashes. Visions of my life fell before my eyes. I saw my mother, father, sisters and brother. Their faces carried concerned and worried looks. I reached out to them. They vanished before my eyes. I saw flicks of my life go past as if I was watching an old recorded tape. My friends, family, school, netball club, I even saw my gorgeous Labrador Silky fly past. The snapshots spun faster, and the laughing got louder. Ear splitting screams and howls interrupted the process until all I could see was the snapshots of a blazing red fire erupting and slithering closer and closer.

With every step the fire took the pitch of the laughing got louder until all I could hear was screaming. I writhed clasped my ears. Tossing and turning. I felt blood drip down my hands.

An unbearable pain took over. It spread over my whole body. It was like someone was ripping the flesh from my body. I bit my tongue so hard it split. It hurt so unbelievably much I just wanted it to end. Then... Silence. Silence. Clear, crisp silence. The pain vanished. The blood disappeared. I curled up in a ball and sobbed. I could hear a faint voice, but I couldn't make it out.

"Cara! Cara! Cara! Cara! Cara, hello?? Wake up!!! Cara it's me, Bella. Cara, wake up."

Bella! It was Bella! But I couldn't get to her. All I could see was blackness. But then, Light. Light. Bright, clear light. I ran towards it. Hurling through the darkness. Leaping through the abyss. Hollering and screaming as I went "Bella! Bella it's okay I'm coming". As I reached the door way of light I jumped through without a second thought.

For a moment my head hurt, and I saw glaring

light. But then, I slowly opened my eyes and I saw the inside of an airplane. Next to me sat Bella, and beyond her the Air Hostess with the food trolley.

"I...I-I-I-I... I w-w-was... I" I stuttered.

"Shhhhh, no what do you want to drink, juice?" she cut me off.

"I-I-I"

"She'll take an orange juice thanks" Bella ordered for me. As I chugged the juice I realised

"We are still on the plane right?"

"Yes silly-billy, of course we are. It's not like we're on a roller coaster are we?" she laughed. I sat silently. That was a crazy dream. But now I was going to make sure I stuck close to Bella. After my nap I felt refreshed and was ready to land in the cute little village, for the second time! ■

# NEVER REALLY FREE

Ellen Collins · Year 8 · *Star of the Sea College*

So when dawn goes down today,  
And the waves start to decay.  
When the momentum fades away,  
And all hope becomes a black shade.  
And when I prayed,  
Again and again I was afraid.  
That the monster inside me,  
Was never really free. ■

# SIMPLE PLEASURES

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Efraimia Damatopoulos · Year 7 · Emmaus College

Are you happy with what you have?  
Can an insatiable appetite ever be satisfied?  
More, more and more, it's never enough.  
Fleeting pleasures won't make me happy.  
It only lasts for a very short time.  
Then we're back on the hedonic treadmill.  
Plugged in,  
Latest iPhone, best designer clothing, followers on  
social media, most likes.  
Recharge me, I need more, it's never enough.

Worried about how I look,  
Distorted perceptions,  
Do I have any curves, if I eat this will I gain  
weight?  
Is my nose too big, does this look okay?  
Change your thoughts, change your outlook,  
It's not what's on the outside,  
it's what lies underneath,  
Look within,  
for there are bountiful treasures to unleash.

Watch a child innocently at play,  
Happily contented chasing a butterfly away,  
She follows her heart down a path of simplicity,  
There's an inner peace, an indescribable joy,  
She's living her life in this moment,  
Presently soaking it up with contentment.  
Can I capture that,  
Of course I can, it's there  
for the taking.

At the end of the day,  
Live life to the fullest.  
Simple pleasures are all around us.  
A walk in the park, the sun's warm rays,  
strolling in the breeze, gazing at the stars.  
A friend's presence, an encouraging word,  
a shared moment, where you know you've been  
heard.  
It won't cost at all, so let it be,  
accept who you are, cause at the end of the day,  
that's how it can be.  
Live simply, simply live. ■

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

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Alessia Dunn · Year 7 · Emmaus College

I deeply love every little thing about my life. From the way that my family and I are isolated in the country side living in a small, box like house, to the many animals my brother and I located roaming around our backyard during the day, when the suns beams are shining on our big smiling faces. Everything in my life is like a perfect dream to me.

My family is made up of four people, my naughty little brother Ben, who has just turned six years old but is my best friend in the whole wide world. My gorgeous mum Jessica, who has the cooking skills of Gordon Ramsay but spends most of her time at home helping my brother and I. My dad Jason who works for a company all the way in the city, meaning we hardly ever see him. Then there is me, ten year old Charlotte who has blonde hair that is almost white and crystal blue eyes like the sea on a beautiful summer day.

I do not get much. When I say that I mean I only get hand me downs from my cousin Betty who, by the way, we see about eight times a year. The only toys I receive are toys that my mum makes out of all the plastic and cardboard scraps. I do not have a phone like every other normal kid in my town, and I do not go to a proper school like I should. I get home schooled by my mum, our classroom is in a small office in the corner of our house, my brother and I are the only students that attend class which makes it boring but sometimes really fun.

Since I do not go to a real school I do not really have many friends, sometimes I will meet kids in my town, but they always have to open their mouths, they always have to say something. They commonly say things about the way I look, my clothes and how I am with my brother a lot. These rude and obnoxious people are children that get whatever they want whenever they want it. To them a pair of new shoes or a toy fresh out of the box means nothing, they want, and expect more.

To be completely honest I could not in one million years imagine to be that ungrateful, maybe it is due to the fact that my family and I are not the luckiest of people in this universe, and we do not have all the money in the world stuffed up the sleeves of our brand-new shirts.

I am more than happy to be living in my small house in the country side with my family, the people I love most. I could not have a bigger smile on my face when Ben and I are in the backyard together, chasing all the animals and insects we find hopping, slithering, or flying around. I could not care fewer what clothes I wear, if they are a few months old or a few years old, if they are bright and colourful or plain and bland, if they are ripped or perfect. The things I do, the clothes I wear, they do not define me. What defines me is me, and the perfect life I lead. My simple yet perfect life. ■

# NO MORE ENDLESS EXCUSES

Tiana Amoretti · Year 9 · St. John's Regional College

To live simply: having good company, aspirations, happiness, appreciating the little things, giving love and being content with what you already have.

While sitting all alone at the dinner table eating ice cream fresh from the tub, Lina stared straight ahead at the blank wall in front of her reminiscing about her day. The morning had begun by waking up to the sweet noise of birds chirping and sunshine filtering its way through her LA apartment. Every day began this way, yet the moment she always looked forward to the most was opening her eyes to the face of her favourite person on the entire planet. Beside her, lying asleep with his dark brown hair all over the place, and pillow tucked between his arms was Josh Mendes.

The two of them had been best friends all through high school and were now a couple going onto their sixth year anniversary. He was her rock, she was his and together they were absolutely inseparable. Before getting out of bed to begin her daily morning routine (which consisted of brushing teeth, throwing on whatever clothes lay about and making coffee), Lina gently gave him a peck on the cheek as usual. While quietly making her way towards the kitchen to make a coffee, a bright piece of paper caught the corner of her eyes. Poking out of the drawers beside the door, was a brochure advertising Sri Lanka. Out of curiosity she picked it up and began to flick through the colourful pages, filled with images of life and endless opportunities. Instantly she perceived why it was there and just as she was about to put it back she heard the yawn of Josh, now awake.

"Morning Li," he mumbled still sounding half asleep. "I see you've found the brochure on Sri Lanka, how amazing does it look?! I'm telling you nothing's changed since I was there last, you're gonna love it when I take you," he stated, attempting to sound casual.

Josh was always mentioning how much he missed Sri Lanka, since he hadn't been back there in fifteen years. He was born in the region of Galle and spent his childhood there until he was nine, but moved to LA with his family after his dad was offered a permanent new job. Ever since the two met, he never stopped rambling on about the day he was going to take her to experience all the aspects he once loved... yet they still had not gone.

"Josh you know I'm dying to go as much as you, but I just don't think it's the right time," she said while grabbing car keys. "Both of our careers are finally taking off, and I'm about to be late for work

so can we discuss this further later," she warmly said before an "I love you."

"Love you, too," he replied, knowing that the topic would be brushed off again, as it had been every other time.

As Lina continued to eat the soon to be melted ice cream, she started to wonder if Josh was working overtime. The clock read 6:00pm and he was typically home by 5:00pm. There were no new messages received and just as she was about to ring him, her phone lit up buzzing. She answered with the expectation of hearing his tender voice, yet it was unfamiliar.

"Hello is this Lina Aldosa?" a lady asked seriously.

"Yes you're speaking with her, how may I help you?" There was a moment's silence before the woman continued.

"I'm calling from the LA state hospital regarding Mr Josh Mendes, and I urge you to come by as soon as possible." Lina's heart suddenly dropped, as her mind exploded with all sorts of thoughts.

"Is everything alright, what's happened? Can I please speak with him," she replied as panic settled in.

"I'm so sorry to inform you this way, but Josh Mendes was involved in a fatal car collision at 4:33pm this afternoon." There was a brief hesitation before she proceeded "Miss Aldosa, Josh passed away at 4:58pm on the way to the hospital." In the blink of an eye everything turned to a blur, and before the lady could stop speaking Lina ended the call. She didn't understand how to feel, and she was too numb to cry. Yet at the same time she tried to believe the call was just a sick joke, and that Josh was really only working overtime. But while sitting all alone as the reality slowly sank in, the tears flooded out in an uncontrollable stream. In this exact moment all she felt the urge to do was to wrap herself in his arms again.

"Hey Lina are you almost ready to go to the Fortress?" Her sister Sasha yelled from inside, breaking Lina's flashback from almost one month ago.

Snapping back into reality she called out "I'll be at the lobby in five," while slowly wiping away the tears creeping down her face. As she opened her eyes after replaying the worst memory she could recall, Lina was in awe as the most beautiful view laid before her. Below waves crashed against the shore creating the most soothing sound to be heard, as bright blue water reached the sand where

all along market stalls were set up. Closing her eyes one last time before heading down to the hotel's reception area, Lina truly appreciated the bustling of life all around. There were cars honking, people chatting and the enlivening sound of music playing. The rich aroma of traditional curries, fresh fruits and the sea all made their way up to the fifth floor balcony where she stood.

In her mind she could hear Josh's soft whisper; "See I told you you'd love it here, and even though I'm not physically with you, a part of me lives within all the places you visit."

The voice faded into a distant echo yet she smiled at how right he was. Despite wishing she'd arrived earlier with him, travelling to Sri Lanka was truly the best decision she'd made. Not only was it beautiful but it was the place that led her to realise how precious life really was. It's where she became conscious that to live simply is to simply live instead of just exist, create lifelong memories and live for today instead of making endless excuses. ■

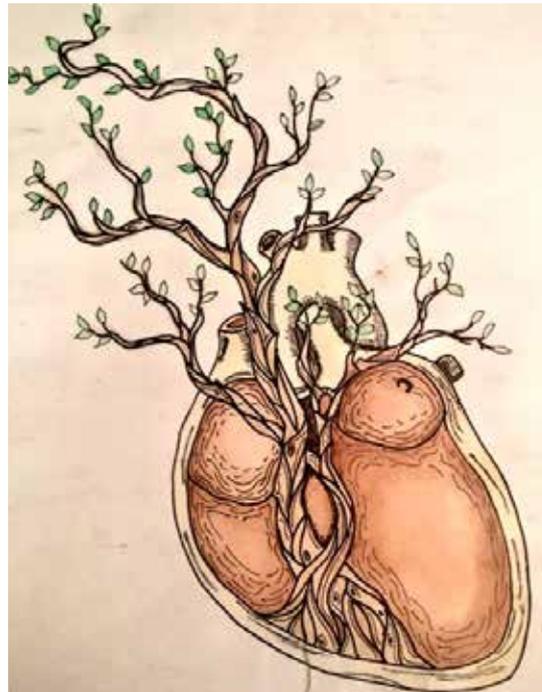
## A HOPEFUL HEART

Hanna Vine · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

*Live Simply, Simply Live* is embodied strongly **L** in this piece focusing on the two main features, the heart and the tree within. Live Simply is represented by the tree highlighting that to live one's life to the fullest you must take pleasure and joy in the small things and the people, places and objects that make your life special. That you should also hope for the best, both in good and bad situations. This means accepting that life has surprises only to make you stronger.

Simply Live is represented by the Heart as to simply live you must love your life before, during and after you live it. This means embracing all opportunities and disappointments that come your way and hoping that continuing to live your life will better you in times to come. I have composed my piece using water colour and fine liner giving it a blended affect and to create a bold and defined finish.

Hope means **Change**  
Change means **Dedication**  
Dedication takes **Time**  
Time takes **Effort**  
Effort leads to **Highlights**  
Highlights lead to **Greatness**  
Greatness may have **Pressure**  
Pressure may be **Hard**  
Hard can be a **Challenge**  
A challenge can be **Good**  
Good can **Help**  
Help does **Happen**  
Make **Hope Happen** ■





**Nicole Formaran**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled, Digital image with Photoshop*

# COOKIE

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Chiara Pistrin · Year 8 · Lavalla College

**D**o you ever see all those inspirational stories of people and how their life changed and now is so happy and living the best life, or all those inspirational quotes online that supposedly fixes everything, or see these videos of little children living alone, sad, no clothes, family and money, but maybe 10 minutes later you forget it and it no longer means anything anymore, because you know it's not your life, so why should you care?... It's not like you can do anything. It all means nothing, until one day it does...because it's your life now, and you're wondering how it got like this.

Well that's when I come in, "Hi my name is Sophia Dawn, I'm 12 years old and yeah, I guess you could say I'm one of those people living on the streets". But let's not get to far ahead.

My life you could say was never really whole, because I never had a dad. No, he didn't leave us when I was young and no, he was not divorced like in some movie, I just never had one. That wasn't horrible because I still had my best friend/sister Hollie she's 6 years younger than me, carefree and loved a good laugh. We had a brown cat named Cookie. Hollie and I had always wanted a cat. I also had my Mum Jenny, but she wasn't really the typical mum. She was a drunk, poor, and was bouncing from job to job. So, Hollie, Cookie and I were almost always alone. It was a small family, but I forgot all about that when our one and only favourite cousin Stephen came over. He was hilarious, clever, tough, and so understanding.

Everyday had its ups and downs like anyone life, but one day you could say everything changed. Hollie and I came running home from school, we loved having our running races. Our mother was home, that was unusual, and she sat both of us down, in the kitchen, and said there was news. At that point Hollie and I was started to get a little scared. She said that Stephen had been accepted in the army. Hollie and I looked at each other with

sadness, confusion and heartache. Also mum said on a happier note "I got a new, good paying job and I will be away for a few days". That didn't come as much of a surprise to Hollie and me, we had heard that many times before.

The next day Mother and Stephen, both left, leaving only a cat, a 6 year old and her older 12 year old sister by themselves.

It had been almost a month when Hollie and I concluded that mother wasn't coming back, that and all the spare money under the bath tub, for emergencies was gone. It was sad, we always knew that one day it would happen, but Hollie and I still had that little bit of hope that our mother wasn't like that. That when we come home there would be food in the cupboard or lights, because the electricity bill was actually paid. It was only getting harder. Hollie started to get very sick, and I got extremely worried. Every day was a challenge. Hollie couldn't leave her bed and we ran low on food. Later on that day, I found two notes on the doorstep, rejoicing with happiness, I opened them, one was from the army thanking Stephen for his help. But the other was a little different, it was an eviction notice saying no bills had been payed in over 3 months, by that time I had run out of any hope or strength that had been getting me through this.

A week later, when Hollie and I were sleeping these big men came in and tried to force us to leave, but that's when I realised something was wrong with Hollie. The men couldn't wake her. They looked at each other then said "It's just the one girl", they pushed me out of the house, but I didn't want to leave her. I couldn't leave her! I was screaming and crying, but they just pushed me out of there onto the streets, like I was nothing and just left me there.

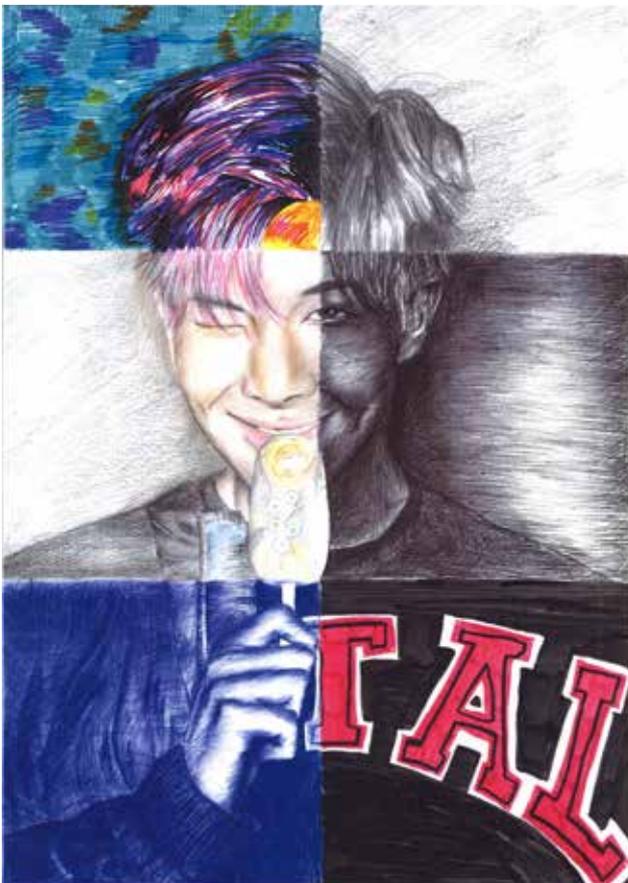
And that's where I am today...alone...scared... and on the streets. But everything will be ok right? Because I've got Cookie. ■



**Connor Saunders**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Lingdejun Chen**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*

# 2033, YEAR OF THE MERPEOPLE

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Danae Sawers · Year 7 · Lavalla College

‘Help.’  
‘Can’t the neighbours keep quiet for once!?’

‘Help, help.’ The little squeaky voice came again; ‘Help!’ it came a third time, this time louder, when Josh realized it was calling for help. He leapt out of bed and ran to the door, but when he opened it, it was not what he thought it was...

‘Aaaaaahhh!’ he ran back into the house and locked the door. BANG, BANG! The thumping got louder as they broke down the door. He ran and hid in his mother’s old chest of clothes at the end of the bed.

‘We know you’re in here, come out!’ It was a deep, dark voice, followed by an ear-piercing hiss.

‘Ow’ he tries holding in the pain. He feels around for what cut him, and finds a long sharp blade.

*What?!*

He pulls it out of the pile and discovers that it’s a shiny sword. On the handle there is an old crumpled piece of brown paper that reads:

Dear Josh,

I love you, I’m sorry I couldn’t give this letter to you in person, but my time is limited, and I do not have long left.

It will come in handy, it’s the only thing that will work. I know that you will not get this until after I am gone, but just remember that I love you no matter what happens.

Much love,

Your Mother.

It will come in handy, it’s the only thing that will work? What’s that supposed to mean?

‘Aha!’ light floods the chest as the Merpeople fling the lid of the chest open. Josh grabs the sword in defence and points it at the Merpeople. They stop and slowly back away and run out the door.

*What the?*

Oh... It all made sense now. It’s the only thing that will work. The Merpeople were afraid of the sword, why? He had to find answers, he had to get his revenge, and this was the only way that he could. But where did the Merpeople live? How was he going to find them? He had an idea. He had to go and find them, but that would take loads of time that he didn’t have.

20 weeks later, he finds a cave, he had started in England and he was now up to the last, Antarctica.

‘What is this?’ He wonders as he approaches a large opening at the base of a cliff. ‘Hello?’ he calls, and the sound echoes back. He cautiously walks into the large opening into pitch blackness.

*Good thing I have a torch!*

He flicks the switch and it lightens. He creeps in further...

‘Ahhhhh!’ he falls down a hole in the floor and falls on a soft heap of leaves.

‘Hello,’ it sounded strangely familiar, followed by an ear-piercing hiss. Yes, he had found them, he reached for his sword, to find that it had been lost on the fall.

*Oh damn...*

And that was the end of Sir Josh Peterson. ■

# THE PROTECTED - ENGLISH CREATIVE TASK

Amy Agius · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

## Priorities:

### *During High School -*

- Hiding
- Cover up my insecurities

### *After High School -*

- Be confident
- Be a supportive grandmother
- Love myself

I hesitantly glance at the reflection I see in the murky change room mirror in Target at Penrith's Westfield. Beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. My confidence bursts as I flip my greying bob behind my frail shoulders, inspecting the jeans I found in the clearance aisle once more. I notice how well they mould into the hourglass shape of my body, transforming myself to look like a 24 year old model rather than the fragile 74 year old grandma that I am.

I walk to the end of the shop, trying to avoid my reflection in the big mirrors. "Yeah, they're the go." Trish says, "Have a seat and I'll box them up for you. What school you at?"

"St Joseph's in the mountains."

"Oh yeah, I know the one. My kids catch the train with some of you lot. They're at the grammar school. Good school, bloody expensive though. My daughter's just like you, you know. Gorgeous-looking girl." Trish looks up at me with a smile. She pauses. Frowns. "You okay, sweetie?" Crap. There are tears trickling down my cheeks. I wipe at them with the backs of my hands and nod. "Oh dear." Sue is there with a box of tissues. She hands me one and I blow my nose. "You had a rough day?" I nod.

"And some people say the teenage years are the best of your life."

"What a load of crap"

Lydia bursts through the antique wooden door of Josh's and my suburban home. "Grandma! Grandpa!" She screams, dragging us both into a tight embrace. "Hi honey." I say, "How was your first day of high school?" Lydia's facial expression soon changes from a large grin to an unpleasant frown within seconds. She shrugs her shoulders, "I don't know." She states, clearly refusing to make eye contact with Josh and me. "Everyone is expected to face some sort of hardship within their life, sweetie." Josh explains, "What happened?"

"This group of girls searched through my bag and threw all my belongings off the bus." Lydia explains, "The experience made me lose interest in going to school and living in general. I just want to curl up in a ball and cry."

He casually stepped down and picked up my backpack. When we got to school, everyone filed off the bus. Jared, Tara, Amy and the little back-seat posse were the last to get off. I stood next to the bus waiting for them; maybe they would just give me my bag back and be done with it. Amy, Tara and Jared got off. Jared held my bag high over his head as he went past me. Another bus had pulled in and was spewing out students. The bus bay was crowded and Jared had successfully made sure all eyes were on him. He and Amy started their walk up the path towards the gates ahead of the pack. I could see him, still holding the bag up, reaching in, grabbing each item one by one and tossing them on the ground by the path.

My heart slows its rhythm immediately, following each tear that fell from Lydia's pale face. She sweeps her long locks of blonde hair behind her shoulders, ensuring to cover her face while she does so. She's broken. I take an obvious glance at her ocean-like eyes, picturing myself as I do so. I've never been good with advice, or talking to people in general, however, I simply ignore this irrelevant fact and choose to rawly address the issue. "I was the same as you once." I explain, "I went to school every day to later find myself being bullied for no particular reason." Lydia wipes her tears with the palms of her hands, "How did you stand up to them?"

"I didn't." I sigh, "Instead, I found my happiness. I found my happiness within Josh. He cured me."

I wait until the others are all in the water before I strip off my shorts and t-shirt. I have a new pair of swimmers, a fifties style polka dot one-piece. I bought it on a shopping trip to Westfield which, for the first time, was not punctuated by a panic attack. I do my best to not think about it, I just run to the edge of the rock, squeeze my eyes shut and let my body drop into the water.

"My advice to you is to let it all go, Lydia." I explain. "Free yourself from your anxiety. Free yourself from your depression. Jump. Let it fade away." Lydia stared at me, clearly expressing the sadness in which was bubbling within her. "I can't. This is a feeling that I cannot extract or simply 'let go'. It's more than that. I changed every segment of myself to simply fit in, yet I continue to get bullied. Everything and anything I do appears to be wrong in the eyes of my bullies. Everything. I force myself

to wake up every day because the reality is that I don't want to be here anymore. I just want to pack my bags and leave this cruel world. There is not one person at school who acknowledges me as a person, nor do they treat me like I'm human. I'm constantly told every day that I should end it all and kill myself because that's all I'm good for. I'm done living as a ghost. I may as well live up to those expectations since the only thing I'm good for is death."

I struggle to put my thoughts into words. I began to try grasping advice within my mind, ensuring that it wouldn't make her feel any more crap than what she already felt. It's hard to be isolated within a world full of judgement, however it's even harder to be trapped in that world with people showing no sense of understanding, constantly saying 'it will be okay', because it won't, and never will be okay.

"I'm sorry, Lydia." I gulped, "I'm so sorry." ■



**Jemma Watson**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*

# FOCUS

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Khallea Vanguardia · Year 7 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

Imagine walking backwards. Imagine that and repeating it for the rest of your life. You would only be able to see what was behind you, unless you turn around and take a glance before turning back again to travel along your way.

To some people, this may sound fun. I even asked my friend, and they said that it would be tricky to find out where you're actually going but it would be interesting to see where you'd end up. As I think many people would answer, they would say it would be a nightmare or they would seem tormented. It's like you'd never be able to see where you were heading and you would get lost easily.

But once you begin doing it, you'll see that it actually could be pretty mind-blowing once you put in some thought. I'll allow myself to explain.

Try sauntering backwards in a room you've never seen or have been described to ever before. Never knowing what comes next, but seeing what you've passed. You'd bump into some objects in the room, of course, knock something over and maybe even hit the same wall over and over again. It'd be pretty surprising, correct? Never being able to see something you're walking towards, only something you're walking away from. You'd just have to trust either whoever constructed the room, or yourself and your gut feeling. Answer this truthfully, okay?

Would you rather hold faith in someone who knows and has created the room, or the person who's discovering it?

Now personally, I'd choose the person who's discovering it. They find things that have led them to others and if they're lucky, it'll be something good. For the creator of the room, I find that they already know how and what to discover, taking out the real fun in everything. Like they know what's going to happen next. As for the discoverer, they see what is in front of them, what is presented.

Not what the creator wanted to show them, but what they wanted to see.

So you're the discoverer in this situation. Except you'd only be able to see what was behind you. Walking backwards, remember? So whenever you think you would see something, you'd answer your own question only after you pass it. Crazy, right?

Think of it as if now, you're walking backwards

throughout all your memories. For example, a memory of when you were a kid and something bad happened right in front of you. Maybe a car crashed into a fence or a man tripped over and hurt his ankle. At the point this has happened, you were walking backwards, like you have for the entirety of your life. When the car bursts into something or the person loses footing, you would only be able to see what had happened after.

From a proper view, you'd be able to see what was about to happen and reject it. But would you really? At the moment, you don't have to walk backwards. You choose to walk forwards and you see what's been happening for the years you've been alive. You see what is in front of you and if it's bad, do you always do something to prevent it? Not always.

I've asked a lot of questions here in this piece, I'm sorry. Would you rather focus on the past or future, if you had to pick?

'Past' as in walking backwards, only seeing what you've missed. You've missed everything bad and good. I don't imply that you would ignore everything around you, you would surely see it, only after it has happened. You wouldn't be able to prevent it, although you would see the outcome of if you hadn't.

You walked passed that poor man who has fell and injured himself, seeing the results.

You saw that he has broken his ankle.

'Future' as in walking forward, only seeing what is presented in front of you. You've seen everything bad and good. I don't imply that you would interject everything around you, you probably wouldn't. You would be able to prevent it, although you wouldn't see the outcome if you hadn't.

You walked towards the near-to-crash car, telling the driver to step on the breaks. You didn't see them crash into the fence of a normal neighborhood house.

In retrospect:

Past: You couldn't prevent something, although sometimes you wanted to.

Future: You could prevent something, although sometimes you didn't want to.

What would you focus on? ■

# THE TIES THAT BIND US

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Luke O'Brien · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

To read this epic tale you must clear your mind and remove the noose around your neck. This is the story about the true history... of neckties.

My office was in a tall and bland looking building. I looked around my beige walls whilst typing on my uninteresting computer with a look on my face of pure and utter boredom. I had done the same routine over and over again, day in and day out. There had to be more to life than typing words all day long. Apparently there is an ancient ritual that counteracts boredom, dullness and predictability. But no one had had a midlife crisis in years. It's just a myth.

I had examined the necktie multiple times but I still got the same answer. It definitely came from the Jurassic period. After the diggers dug up a tie twenty kilometres under the ground it became my solemn duty as the archeologist to find out how it got there. I mean was it just me or was a sixty five million year old necktie just plain weird?

Funnily enough that wasn't the strangest thing. I found pictures of all important times in history on my laptop. A man wearing a black suit and a tie stood in each picture. The name tag on his jacket had the words 'The Man,' printed on it. How could a man wearing a modern day suit appear with the dinosaurs? And how could this person appear in all of the hundreds of factual pictures? After hours of thinking my mind started to drift. I was wondering what the point of the of the necktie was. Apparently they were used to make humans look smart. A long strip of cloth wrapped around the neck! It might as well be a leash. I jumped fifty feet in the air after this seemingly unimportant thought. Maybe it was a leash. Maybe 'The Man' had put a leash around every humans neck. I looked at mine. It's funny, I didn't remember putting on a tie that morning. I decided to try taking it off. I slowly removed the tie from around my neck. As I did I found myself seeing my office at a new angle. It was so dull! Without the tie I wanted to jump out of a plane, repaint the walls red and live life to the fullest. Without a tie I was a new man. The ritual wasn't a myth.

I stormed into the closest and largest office building I could find. I ran past the workers and the many sad looking men and women who forgot to have a cup of coffee in the morning. I leaped over the many desks noticing that not one was different from the others. I climbed up onto a conveniently placed stage and yelled 'EVERYONE!' All the bored looking men and women looked up. 'I have discovered something that will blow your mind! We humans have been lured into a trap ever since the dawn of time. Back in cave man times we had to be inventive and try new things.' Everyone gave me a look of disgust after the words "new things" was said. 'I have reason to believe that an ancient being known as "The Man" has been making us boring and predictable. He has made us think that we want to be living in beige office spaces with a computer similar to everyone else's. While we type numbers "The Man" is earning money. He is the ultimate boss. He is your boss's boss, even the president's. He has made us do work ever since we developed a brain. And he's been doing it with these.' I lifted up my tie held tightly in my hand. 'Neckties have been with us since cave man times! I know it sounds weird but I have proof! Not only was this man wearing a tie but everyone else was. The cavemen, the romans, even the knights! Go on, look them up! This contraption made by 'The Man' has somehow made the brain unable to have new ideas. Take them off! Rise up! The Man doesn't have to control us anymore.' The men and women, to my relief, started removing their ties.

Two years later the world had become a better place. No one was worried about taxes and work. In fact (this may come as a shock) people started to do new things. They rented big, red, expensive and highly breakable cars and made strange sculptures out of their hair. All the world had a midlife crisis at the same time. Even the people who weren't middle age had one! This was a world with no worries and no strife. A world where money wasn't important and where no one worked for "The Man", but for themselves. ■

# THE TRAGEDY AT THE PLANT

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Nathan Furtado · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

I guess you could say it was because I was never very bright, or because I was always so helplessly naive and overconfident, but either way it's my fault for what happened. It was so simple, but I had to ruin it, as usual. Oh, I forgot to introduce myself, my name is Dillon Alden, and I'm currently dead. Yeah, it was a shock to me too. One moment you're here, the next; gone. Anyway, I want to tell you my story, so hopefully you'll never make the same mistake that I had made that day in the Autumn of 1987. But first, you'll need a little context.

I had mediocre results at school in my youth and never reached too far. After an unfulfilling time at university, I found myself a job at a power plant somewhere in Missouri in my late teenage years, a job that required minimal skills for a decent enough wage. I lived in a simple house with my older and significantly more successful brother, Randall, who ran a bricklaying company. Things seemed to be going well for about 7 years, until 1977, when Randall's company was duped by a pyramid selling scheme and had to file for bankruptcy. To make matters worse, our father had passed away unexpectedly that same year due to a rare lung disease. I offered Randall a position at the plant, flicking buttons and sitting in chairs. He reluctantly accepted, and we ended up working at that dead-end job for over a decade. Now 35 years old, I realised I'd wasted my life and now wanted to spend the rest of my days in peace, sticking to what I had been good at since high school.

But I just had to try to be a hero, didn't I?

It was a normal day at work, a Tuesday, if I remember it correctly.

Randall and I sat down in our old industrial grade seats and chatted about the drama of the news over a bottle of brandy as we did every day. I sat back in my chair and asked, "Did you catch the tennis? Chang beat McNamee. I think he's the youngest guy ever to win it."

"Cool," replied Randall nonchalantly. He had the blues lately because he'd been thinking about why his life was so miserable. I had learnt to ignore that fact a long time ago. I gazed over the endless

rows of machines forever working busily. The dated mechanical arms carried and shoved huge vats of hazardous chemicals about. Old computing systems sparked and whizzed from the hard labour. The chaos within organisation was beautiful yet terrifying, like looking into an incinerator. My eyes appreciated the synchronicity of the system, when I noticed unique movement in a crane arm some hundred meters away. Something was very wrong.

I burst open the control room door and haphazardly rushed down the stairs. I skidded to a halt. One of the arms was sparking violently. I worriedly looked over the circuitry board, which was starting to overheat and cough up more sparks. I panicked and tried using the rod to hit the machine, but the circuit only got worse. It was sparking violently and steaming up. Before I could step back, the machine suddenly burst into flames and sent me hurtling backwards.

The fire had scalded my arm, chest and neck, and the pain was unbearable. I screamed out for help, for Randall, for anybody, but no one came. I was alone. My view was becoming hazy and I was close to losing consciousness. 'So this is how it ends' I thought to myself. I dragged myself to the circuit board in a last desperate attempt at redemption. I grabbed a large handle and pulled it all the way down. I heard a loud crack and when I looked up, a giant vat of chemicals was falling towards me. All my memories gushed back to me in a dizzying flash as the emptiness and longing all became clear. My school years, the plant, Randall, my father, it all flooded back to me like a dam that had been shattered open.

Then, all my senses were instantly extinguished in a single moment, the best, and last, moment of my life. The longest second of my life. I look back on this moment. It's the only one I want to think about. It was so bewildering and awe inspiring, the danger and beauty of the concept of it all. Never can I place what it was all for, what all that pain suffering built up to, why it was so crucial yet seemed so insignificant. But somehow, through it all, I realise now. Now I know exactly who I am, and what I'm here for. And you will too someday. ■



**Matthew Wallace**  
*Year 7 · Whitefriars College*

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*Camping Under The Stars*

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I feel my artwork is linked to the theme well because if we really want to live simply, we need to stop to take a breath and look at the beautiful world in which we live. I chose to base my print on the outdoors as I spend a lot of time camping with my family and dogs. I also chose to depict the night, as this is when most things are asleep and peace is all around.

# A PROPOSAL

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Megen Shaw · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

**B**ased on the film, 'Rear Window', I wrote the script of a phone call between Grace Kelly and Alfred Hitchcock once Kelly was married to Prince Rainier and had moved to Monaco. Hitchcock uses terms of endearment such as "darling", "Gracie", etc which reflect his view of women as objects. This also leaves room to allow for any possible events which may have occurred between the two. I addressed the theme of voyeurism through media such as magazines and tabloids, and Hitchcock's notice of Grace's obsession with the media shows that he too is a voyeur.

\*phone rings\*

**Grace Kelly:** Hello?

Mr. Hitchcock! What a pleasure! How have you been? (*smiles, a note of mock respect in her tone*). How may I be of assistance to such a sought after man as yourself?

**Hitchcock:** Hello beautiful Miss Kelly, or should I say Princess Grace. Very well indeed. Now, I have a serious and very pertinent proposal for you. I'm directing a new film, called 'Marnie'. It's similar to a lot of my films, a thriller, and there's nothing special, yet... Which is why, Miss Kelly, I am asking you to star as Marnie in July this year. Now Darling, I know that currently you have retired from your acting career, but you are such a talent... perhaps even the best I have ever worked with!

**Grace Kelly:** Oh my, Mr. Hitchcock! One might almost term such a proposal as preposterous! And you know, I cannot leave Monaco to film, my marital arrangements forbids me.

**Hitchcock:** I know Gracie, but as rumours circulate around Hollywood, I have heard that you are unhappy. That your marriage is not the fairytale you dreamed of. And with such a delightful and cheery woman as yourself, that will not suffice. Your life is precious my dear, and with such a devoted talent as yourself, it would be a crime for me to not pursue you for this role and help you find that Kelly spark again.

**Grace Kelly:** Mr. Hitchcock, You more than anyone working in Hollywood, would know how little truth can be found in the tabloids and newspapers. Even in my former hometown of Philly, if I were to pick up the Philadelphia Daily News or The Enquirer, I'd be bound to view photos and writing that had little more than fiction to credit them. So I respectfully request that you don't bother wasting your time questioning my happiness or otherwise with regard to my marriage.

**Hitchcock:** If my memory serves me correctly Miss Kelly, and it always does, during the filming of 'Rear Window', you could often be found in your trailer, scouring the pages of magazines. How many times did I find you poring over the tabloids, obsessed with all headlines pertaining to Marilyn and Joe's marriage and subsequent slide into their divorce? You particularly loved all the scandals, in my recollection.

**Grace Kelly:** I suppose the headlines have been very good for you too, Mr. Hitchcock. I'm sure you've often welcomed the publicity as a means of swelling your own coffers.

**Hitchcock:** Undeniably My Dear, but the same for you. Now come on and agree to my deal.

**Grace Kelly:** Mr. Hitchcock, sir, even if, hypothetically speaking of course, I was unfulfilled and disappointed with the institution of marriage and my so-called fairytale life with a prince under the constant glare of the world's cameras, admitting it would do the greatest damage. It is the acting, the presenting of a palatable story to our husbands, our friends and family, our community, to the world, and, most importantly to ourselves that allows us to believe in the romantic notions of wedded bliss. With great respect, Mr. Hitchcock, please leave the pin in the grenade. Some realities, hypothetical or otherwise, are not worth considering.

**Hitchcock:** I need you, and your fans need you! Can you imagine the press? *Princess of Monaco and princess of our screens, Grace Kelly comes out of retirement to star in another of Hitchcock's thrillers, 'Marnie'*.

**Grace Kelly:** Respectfully, sir, I already face the glare of the camera every day, the media hungry public who thrive off gossip and my romantic life as a means of fulfilling their own voyeuristic needs. I need no more publicity.

**Hitchcock:** Why do you think we look at the scene of an accident? Why do we trawl through magazines, and enjoy the details of celebrity marriage break ups? Because my dear, as you so perfectly pointed out, aren't we all afraid that we're not good enough, that we don't belong and that something dire will befall us? Isn't that why we crane our necks to see other people's misfortune; to either avoid the fallout or to view the mirror of our own tragedy or situation to enforce the fact that we are not alone?

**Grace Kelly:** \*silence, as Miss Kelly considers what Hitchcock has proposed.\*

**Hitchcock:** Gracie, my dearest, I had no intent of intensifying your desolation, but if you can, consider me your knight in shining armour, here to rescue you rather than drag you down. Picture this as your saviour; You could assuage the grief of your fellow Americans. You were their leading lady, and you still are! The entire country is in mourning, perhaps you could see it as a patriotic duty; to lift your fellow country men and women out of their gloom.

**Grace Kelly:** You flatter me Mr. Hitchcock.

I have felt the loss of president Kennedy keenly and I empathies deeply with Jackie. But you are mistaken as I am Monaco's leading lady. How, pray tell, do you envisage a washed up actress and a foreigner, for indeed I am a foreigner now, be able to fulfil such a lofty task?

**Hitchcock:** Don't let fear hold you back Gracie. Fear can be our most powerful driver, for it allows us to reexamine where we are and who we are at any given time. I should know, as fear is my greatest friend in every film. I block fear and I direct fear. Surely you don't believe that I frighten my audience purely to see the popcorn on the floor. I frighten them in order to make them question themselves, what they fear, why they fear. It builds a suspense in their life which means that my audience walks away and continues to question that they are not good enough.

**Grace Kelly:** *Grace wavers for a moment with her position.*

What do you think I'm frightened of, Mr. Hitchcock?

**Hitchcock:** \*hesitation\*

That you are not enough, and that your dreams are built on castles in the air.

**Grace Kelly:** Perhaps I did ask for that response but I'll thank you not to further psycho-analyse me, for my castle is a very literal one, and my responsibilities, are just as firm in my resolve.

**Hitchcock:** Tease me beautiful woman and at least consider this role.

**Grace Kelly:** Perhaps you are forgetting who you are addressing, Mr. Hitchcock. I understand given our previous working relationship that it would be rather easy to forget my different position in life now. I think we really must rely on a more formal form of addressing one another.

**Hitchcock:** Certainly, Your Highness, I must have forgotten myself momentarily.

**Grace Kelly:** I'm a princess now, a mother, a wife, and sadly no longer a performer.

**Hitchcock:** But all those roles are just performances in a way, aren't they?

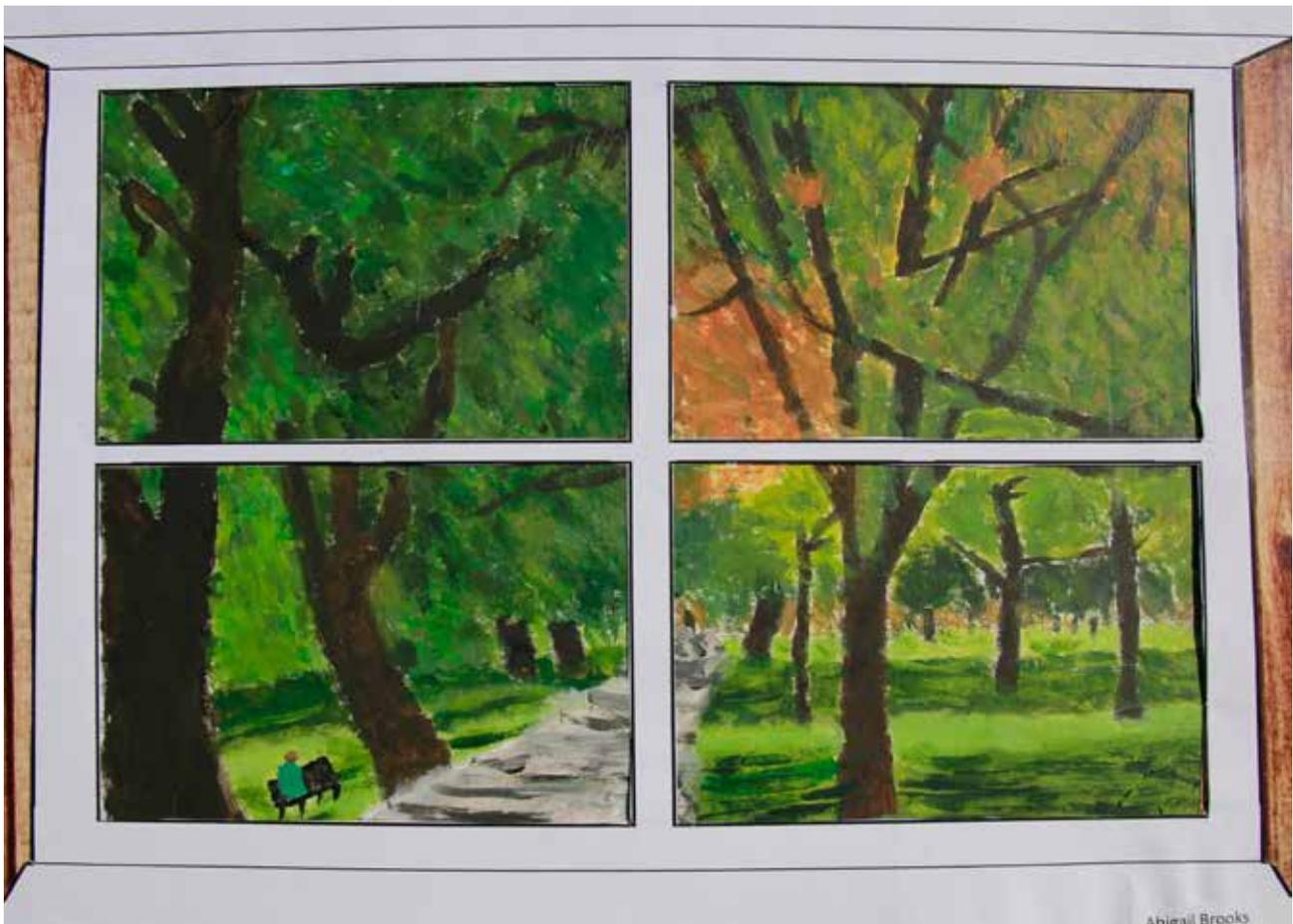
\*silence on the end of the phone.\*

**Grace Kelly:** You are bringing about a nostalgia in me which has made me feel rather down, I'm afraid Mr Hitchcock. I wish I could accept your proposal. As Mr L.B Jeffries so wisely observed, marriage does make one feel more solace. But unlike Lisa I am already tied down, and I'm afraid, the shackles are too tight for me to escape.

**Hitchcock:** Well then, may good fortune and happiness be granted to you.

**Grace Kelly:** Good day, Mr Hitchcock.

**Hitchcock:** Goodbye, Miss Kelly. ■



**Abigail Brooks**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*

A symbol of nostalgia and a reflection of how I have changed, this painting depicts a park where I spent much of my time as a little girl, whiling away my time with my own imagination which transformed my local park and exuberantly brought it to life. Tigers hid behind the shrubs, fervid yellow eyes peering through the undergrowth. Crocodiles submerged themselves in the turbid creek, rippling the water as I crossed the stepping stones. The monkeys occupied the tops of the Jacaranda, laughing and grinning down at me while I nestled into its roots like a womb.

All around me, the world was alive and glowing in bursts of rich, brilliant chroma as if someone was painting the world right in front of me, easel in hand with only the brightest colours imaginable, creating a living jungle of electric blues and sharp yellows. I could never capture this in a painting, but in this piece, I have created a scrapbook of old feelings.

This is how I see the park now – unremarkable and simple. The change of season present in this painting represents how I have changed and transformed, with older eyes and a different mind. Still, in visiting this place, I find solace. It is this park that taught me to see in colour, and to find the beauty in unlikely places.



**Taylah Stewart**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Acrylic Painting*

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

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Anthony Kostelac · Year 6 · St Kevin's Primary, Ormond

31. 12. 1930

Dear diary,

I've had so much fun today in day care. It was my first day there and I made so many new friends, and they all were my age. I'm different from everyone else but they don't care if I'm disabled it makes up my personality and kids said they like to have different people. But they don't know how long I'm supposed to be there for. Only mum, Dad and I know.

Kind regards, Lilly.

5.7.1935

Dear diary,

Today is the first day of term 3 in my new school in America. My teacher wants me to go back to my home, but I'm trying to live my life out here in America. I want to simply live my life that is almost up and I want to go on adventures, but my teacher is not letting me because I'm disabled. It doesn't matter if I'm disabled or not, everyone should deserve the same. Talk to you later.

Kind regards, Lilly.

P.S.

She does know how I felt but I'm Not Telling her cause then she will make me even worse than I already am. See you later.

13.12.1989

Dear diary,

Today is the last day I'm on my tour around the world. I am happier after I left the school in America. I've been living simply and doing what I love to do most, making people happy. If I'm not happy that doesn't stop me from making everyone else happy. See you later.

Kind regards, Lilly.

13.1.2000

Dear diary,

Today is my first day on set for my new TV show called "people of the world", and I invited nine of my friends to this season and we have had so much fun of the first day of the shoot. As they know I'm 75 years old they don't think that I can move around like them but they will get proven wrong you'll see.

See you later,

Lilly

12.3.2000

Dear diary,

I'm not very happy. I wanted to do a tv show with all my friends but the government came to stop us from building the show because we didn't have enough money so they CLOSED US DOWN! The cost is \$4,000 and we only had \$1,000. So we're \$3,000 off.

Anyway, I will see you later.

Kind regards,

Lilly.

1.1. 2002

Dear diary,

Now I'm already in a retirement village. You can't do anything here, you have to listen to what they have to say, like; go to bed at this time, maybe you need to get up at this time and so on.

So it's not fun here. But in all the other retirement villages you can do anything you want. See you next time. But there might not be a next time.

Kind regards,

Lilly.

3.4.2006

Dear Diary,

It's her funeral today. If you're wondering what I mean, the one whose funeral it is today is Lilly. Yes, Lilly is dead! But! This little piece of her will not die with her for long.

This will be the last time I see you.

Kind Regards,

Richard, her older brother.

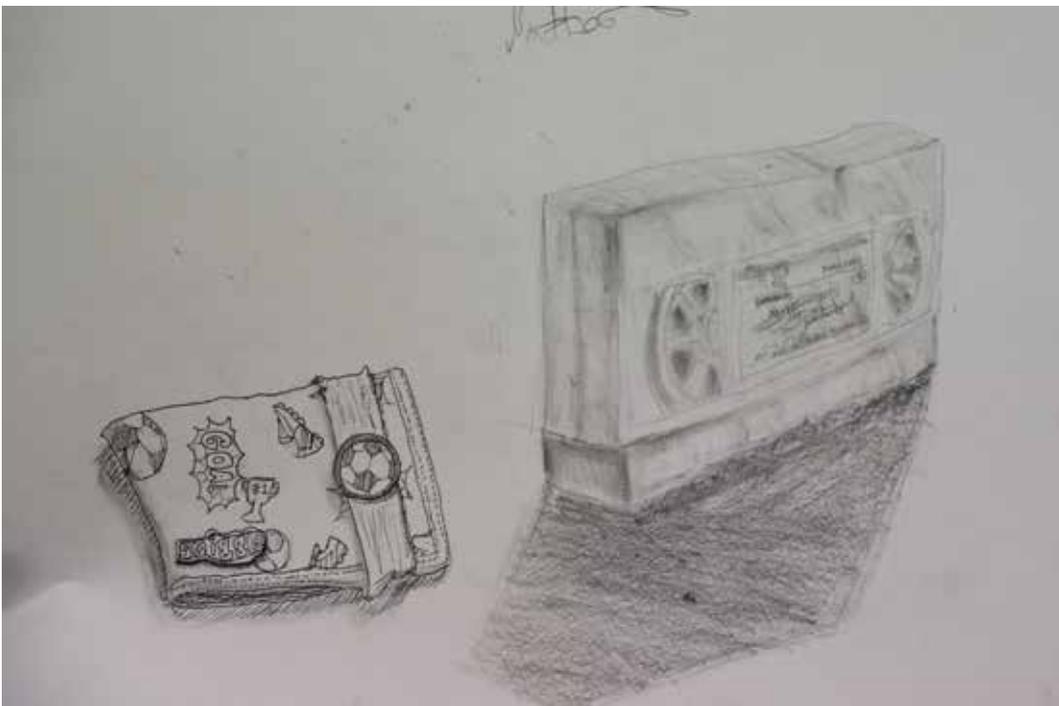
A couple of months later Lily's diary was in the Melbourne museum for showcase. But why was it there? Well it was there because she was the only one who's show got cut off at the beginning when they were making the first episode? ■



**Jaydan Lunt**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Hybrid creature', Mixed Media*



**Matteo Encena**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Still Life', Graphite on paper*

# FAÇADE

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Lukas Mizis · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Cream coloured walls surround.  
Inside the boundaries  
of society  
They point a finger at me.  
The vanilla and mundane  
Ingrained in our ways  
This worshiped cliché  
Day to day.

So I don't show my face.

And I won't show my face.  
It is hidden behind these plastic eyes.  
And these plastic eyes do not see inside  
They have forced me to abide  
To hail the demons that confine.  
To the point where I've forgot.  
I am a blank canvas  
Not willing to confess  
Why I cannot contest  
With this grey mess.

So I don't show my face.

I hear screams within me  
They call for mercy  
Trying to break free  
Because they don't know what it's like on the  
outside.  
I keep them trapped in a ball, deep, deep down.  
They are ignored  
Because they don't fit on this blackboard.

So I don't show my face.

But why can't I change it  
Innovate it  
Or is it just my fate that  
I will be a mirror  
A splitting image from one generation to the  
next?  
Father down to son  
Man down to man.  
My words they  
rebound  
They bounce back  
Barely leaving a scratch on these  
Cream coloured walls.  
So I don't show my face. ■



**Brandon Tran**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Cubist portrait', Oil pastel on paper*



**Luca Mezzavilla**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Still Life', Charcoal and conte on paper*



**Marc-Aiden Duggan**  
Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Mechanical Mortality', Charcoal Fineliner on paper*



**Sean Tu**  
Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Impressionism Appropriation for Extinction', Acrylic on canvas*



**Anthony Nguyen**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Impressionist Self-Portrait', Acrylic on canvas*



**Michael Nguyen**  
*Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Nature and Mortality', Charcoal and Graphite on cartridge*



**Simon Tran**  
Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Last Supper Appropriate for Extinction Awareness', Ink on paper*



**Jet Cawte**  
Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

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*'Pop Art painting', Acrylic on canvas*



**Benjamin Heintz**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Hybrid creature', Mixed media*



**Andrew Yuan**  
*Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Expressive Face', Coloured pencils on paper*

# PRISONER OF THE OCEAN

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Vanshita Udasi · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

When the lightning struck us, it felt like I had been frozen in time. Everything around me became mute and moved in slow motion. The mouths of my friends next to me were gaping wide open with horror, but I couldn't hear any sounds escape them. There was only the distant whoosh whoosh of the helicopter and the ever nearing swish swash of the raging sea. And then everything fell apart. All at once.

The helicopter exploded into bright red and orange flames, crashing down, breaking into the surface of the ocean. Water erupted all over us as we struggled to stay afloat and away from the violent fire. Screams, shouting and wails of pain finally corresponded with the open mouths, but this sudden upsurge of noise and motion overpowered me and I was jostled up and down, pulled left and right.

"Hold onto the helicopter! Grab a part of the helicopter!" The pilot howled into the microphone, which seemed to be the only working part of the air-craft. Despite the doubt I felt, there was nothing else I could do. Where was I going to go and how could I ever stay drifting in the middle of this endless blue desert?

Following the people around me I swam towards the helicopter, the flames vanquished by the towering, powerful waves. I latched myself onto a broken part of the tail boom, promising myself to never let go. This was my only means of survival.

Two days later I broke my promise.

We had limited food, no fresh water, we hadn't been able to sleep, the ocean was icy and one of us had already perished. We had attempted everything. Flashing lights, shouting, bright flares, fixing the radio system, shouting at the top of our lungs, but no help came. It seemed that everyone had forgotten about us, even the sea was completely calm today, there was no wind and not a cloud to be seen. Mother Nature had become bored with taunting its toys.

The answer to this lingered above everyone's heads, but they were too afraid to say it, too afraid to volunteer. I wasn't. These past two days changed me in ways I could never imagine. My will to stay alive was far greater than my fear of the ocean.

"I'll swim," I put my hand up so everybody could see me. "I'll swim for as long as I can, until I find land. Robert which way am I supposed to go?" I asked the Pilot.

"East is where we flew from, you should go back there."

Looking at the position of the sun, the pilot made a rough estimate of where East was. Others made me a small bag from the wreckage of the plane and filled it up with the few resources we had left. One raw fish, a pack of half eaten biscuits, a rope and a knife. Everything was ready and so was I. Securely strapping the bag around myself, I took a deep breath, let go and swam off.

I had no sense of how long I had been swimming for, before the sea transformed itself into a raging monster. This monster had no claws, no sharp teeth, no bloodshot furious eyes, but it was more frightening than any other creature from a Brothers Grimm fairytale. There was no escape from this brutal creature, just more and more blue water where it lay. And it was almost a paradise when the monster was asleep, but as soon as it awoke... Blustering waves, rising tides, pelting rain. Against this beast, which had now woken, all I could do was keep my face above the water.

It was like the ocean was playing a vicious game. Sometimes lifting me up so I could get a gasp of air, but as soon as the oxygen reached my lungs, it snatched me back under again. My eyes stung from the salt water and I was forced to close them, losing one of my senses. The savage beast was weakening me, winning the game. But then steadily the winds quietened, gradually the waves lowered and the rain lessened. The savage creature had fallen asleep.

As I continued to swim into the second day now, I realised that the turbulent sea made it much easier the rushing water pushed me towards my destination, land, significantly faster than my exhausted arms and legs could in still water. But I persevered.

"You've made it this far, don't give up now, everyone else is counting on you." I kept telling myself, enduring the pain, the fatigue, ignoring the hopelessness and despair. But I could feel the inevitable weariness sweeping over me, under me, through me. It had become stronger than my will and my eyes fluttered. They closed and I immediately opened them, but they began to shut more often.

My arms and legs barely made a sound or a splash now as they entered the water. I was slowly slipping away, I could feel it. An image of the cruel ocean smiling its rotten smile, filled every corner of my brain. Then my arms stopped moving and my legs gave way. I was defeated.

Time slowed again. I sought oblivion.

“Drown, drown, quicker, quicker!” I whimpered in my mind. The water rushed over me as I was swallowed by the ocean. It felt definite and final. Every muscle, every bone, every hair on my body was aching, but it wouldn’t be for very long.

And then suddenly, something rushed through the water and grabbed me in several places. Hands! They pulled me out and dragged me onto a hard surface. Warmth spread all over me as I was wrapped in blankets. But then, it was like a light switch had been flicked on in my brain. Somewhere,

from out of the darkness, I reached and tugged out the last bit of strength I had left in me.

“People ...help... west...” And then I blacked out.

This was the most contradicting and ironic situation I have ever been through. I had been trapped and confined in a prison, but it didn’t have four walls. It was the boundless ocean and the infinite sky, where the fish and the birds roam freely, but I was its prisoner. It doesn’t matter though, I simply lived and so did all the others. The entire ocean hadn’t defeated me, I realised nothing else ever would. ■

## MORNING

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Hannah Nguyen · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

S streaks of ambient yellow and orange light pierced through the murky cottage window. The day’s rays illuminated the green mold and stains of age on the glass. Only miniscule light was scattered throughout the bedroom. Still washed over with fatigue, the fragile woman rolled over and propped herself up on the old bed. She opened her mouth and uttered, “Honey, I’m going to prepare coffee.” Silence. He must be already up.

Her mornings were serene. Eerily serene, but still, it poked nothing out of the usual. The kitchen was rustic, perhaps almost ancient. A single bird was chirping, singular; without accompaniment. The echoing resonated in the still kitchen, almost calming. The woman reached out for the rusty cupboard handle and weaved her malnourished fingers through the cold, chipped carcasses of porcelain and china. She carefully brushed her palm around the cool curvature of a cold pressed metal object. Perfect.

She slowly filled ice-cold water into a worn pot and placed it upon the dim, open gas stove. The sink was disorganised and cluttered, filled beyond the rim with unwashed plates and cutlery which once had a keen polished shine. They now reeked of recklessness and abandonment. They

had never been touched for a century and perhaps never would be again.

Her clammy fingers enclosed around a dirty, stained jar and she carefully popped the lid open. She poured the aromatic coffee granules into the metal object she’d attached to a glass mug. The pungent smell of coffee curled up her nostrils and sent tremors down her spine. Sensational. Her husband wouldn’t have it any other way.

She shakily poured the pot of boiling water into the metal object. The water dripped into the mug forming a puddle of rich, brown liquid. Each drip promoted the feeling of ecstasy. The melodious chirping of the bird grew louder. Gradually, the coffee ceased dripping and the woman released a sigh of relief. “Honey, the coffee’s ready!”

Gripping her warm mug in both hands, she ambled toward the wooden table in the centre of the room. She sat down and smiled with delight. “Good morning, Dear,” she said. Her husband beamed back at her. He had always been this way. His young face reflected the hopeless light of the sun almost scaring the darkness away. Glassy-eyed, he remained still. He stunk of dust and mildew. Silently, she placed the coffee opposite him. He sat there, staring back at her, entombed within a wooden picture frame. ■

# WHAT HAS THE WORLD COME TO?

---

Freya McGorian · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Drops of water cascade gently down my window sill.

Thoughts overcrowd my head of how our world has come to this.

Not a care in the world.

*Littlest things in life can make a big impact.*

The busy hustle brings life to the city. Trams, conversations from person to person.

Bus horns echo past my ear, now and again.

The crowd has a life of its own,

Unseemingly pulling them from one thing to another.

*Days go by without a single care in the world.*

Gusts of wind spiral loose pieces of rubbish in my direction.

The love of the town has disappeared without a trace.

The streets, no longer streets, more like garbage bins waiting for something. Someone to pick them up.

Just from the sight of it all I feel a prick so hard it almost makes me gasp in fear.

*The past has become the future.*

*Living Simply one person at a time... ■*

## MY BASIC LIFE

---

Sienna Costa

Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I do everything the same every day.

I go to work, come back home and have some dinner.

I watch the same movie every night.

I feel the same emotions every day.

I do the same things at work every day.

I have the same dream every night.

When I don't have work, I look at the trees all day.

I never feel happy or sad.

I don't try anything new.

This is my basic life. ■

## LIFE OF A FLOWER

---

Lucy Stein

Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I sway with the breeze of the wind

My petals slowly start to droop when I have no water

I have a kiwi green stem

I have simple white petals

I have a basic life

As people walk by I stretch out my petals

I am in the shade

I have nothing on my mind

I am standing up straight

I am calm and quiet

I am beautiful

There are other types of flowers near me, so I always have company ■

# NATURE'S BLOOM

---

Eleanor Bailey · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Slowly, the clouds form, passing over me.  
Slowly, the trees blow, as the Autumn leaves hit the earth's surface.  
Slowly, the rain hits the land, making the grass dewy.  
Slowly, winter passes, as flowers start to bloom.  
Slowly, the tide goes in and out, as the moon travels.  
Slowly, the earth spins, as it rotates the sun.  
Slowly, the mountain snow melts, as seasons pass.  
Slowly, new life is born, as I hear the children's laughter.

Slowly, the animals starve of thirst, due to an unfortunate drought.  
Slowly, the bears wake up, with hibernation ending.  
Slowly, the sun moves across the sky.  
And as I lay on the grass with nothing to do, I think about life.  
Life is simple and we should enjoy the simple things too.  
It is Nature's Bloom. ■

## MY HORSES

---

**Sebastian Andersen**

*Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton*

As I go cantering along the fields,  
I feel the air whispering next to me.  
When I pat my horse's neck,  
I feel its love.  
When I stroke my horse's mane,  
I feel brave.  
And that's what makes me, me. ■

## HAPPY PLACE

---

**Stella Rowse**

*Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton*

Beautiful trees, elegant flowers,  
The sun is beaming as bright as my smile,  
Happy, cheerful, overjoyed.  
I feel the delicate, fresh, green grass against my feet.  
The crisp air tickling my face,  
I hear the birds chirping above in the trees.  
The alluring blue sky,  
Calm, mild, still.  
Not even a slight movement.  
Just me. ■

# THE BREEZE

---

Natalie Dureau · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

I open my eyes I see some light,  
It's shining bright.  
I get out of bed and to my delight I see no mess,  
not even a dress.  
This is my simple life.  
When my toes touch the ground,  
I feel a feeling I've never felt.  
It wasn't good it wasn't the feeling you don't  
want,  
It was the feeling of a simple life.

The life we should be living the life I am living.  
I have no worries, not even a doubt.  
The light of the day is like I'm away.  
Like they say no worries will come your way if  
there's no doubt in the day.  
I hear the beards chirping a song in the trees.  
Today and always of my simple life.  
No worries at all,  
No places to be.  
The simple life is the one for me. ■

## RAINY DAY

---

Araminta Clements

Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Pitter patter, pitter patter.  
The rain comes trickling down.  
As I look out my window,  
I watch the glittering raindrops racing on the  
glass.  
Pitter patter, pitter patter.

Splish splash, splish splash.  
I decide to go outside.  
The bitter cold water on my feet.  
The soft breeze on my face.  
Splish splash, splish splash.

The sun comes peeking through.  
Sunlight dancing in the puddles.  
A rainbow in the distance.  
It's just another rainy day. ■

## MY CAT AND I

---

Jamie Hodgson

Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

A hhhh. In my bed cosy and warm reading an  
amazing book. But what is that cat doing  
there? He's walking on my bed like he owns it!  
Huh? Now he's stretching?

"MEOW!" He's fallen asleep on me. Get him off!  
Actually, this is kind of relaxing. He's got the life. I  
might do the same.

*My owner forgot to feed me...AGAIN! I am going  
to give him a piece of my mind. I'll walk around  
on his bed. Hah! He looks so surprised. He is going  
to be so annoyed when I fall asleep on him. He  
won't be able to move! I'll stretch. "Yawn". This is  
the life. ■*

# NO CLUTTER ANYWHERE

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Eliza Dodd · Year 3 · *St James Catholic Primary School Brighton*

No clutter anywhere, gives time to brush my hair.  
No clutter anywhere, gives time to watch and stare.  
No clutter anywhere, gives a sigh of relief.  
No clutter anywhere, gives hope and belief.  
No clutter anywhere, gives me time to feel the breeze.  
No clutter anywhere, puts my life at ease.  
No clutter anywhere, gives time to just unwind.  
No clutter anywhere, gives me time to rest my mind. ■

# COSY WINTER COTTAGE

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**Evangeline Kim**

*Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton*

You wake up to the sound of chirping birds.  
You walk out of the cottage to find pure white snow.  
There's nearby spruce trees covered in the soft snow.  
It's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen.  
The cottage is smooth birch with bright lights.  
There's animals around.  
The air tastes like cold mint.  
A rabbits leaps onto your lap. It's so soft.  
You can hear the cold mist howling like a wolf.  
You smell the fresh dew on the grass.  
You are calm in a peaceful place. ■

# AWAKEN

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Danika Alwyn · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St. Albans

I promised I'd wait  
for as long as I could  
but I now know  
you'll never come back

How stupid of me to believe  
that when I came back to life  
I'd see you  
nestled in my embrace  
your heart beating against my skin  
and the stars that dulled  
would once again shine  
down

on  
us

My angel  
you should know that I miss you  
like the moon yearns for the sun  
fated to chase it  
for eternity

The clouds travel across the sky  
slowly  
like time  
it mocks me  
endlessly edging me closer to exhaustion

The sky closes in  
its stars flicker awake  
trapping me  
in my guilt,  
my loneliness  
my sorrows  
my darkness

I need to break free  
before your light fades  
and I disappear  
... forever  
like a falling star! ■



**Roselina Fuli**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St  
Albans*

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*'Waves of Colour', Self Portrait, Acrylic on  
Canvas Paper*

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You can live simply by not caring how people see you. You can simply live by showing your true colours. Be a bright person, Be positive, Have the right attitude and feel good about yourself.

By being yourself and being true to people, you can live a simple life.

# RINSE AND REPEAT

Harrison Gatt · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

<p><b>Day 1</b></p> <p>Wake up Undress Shower Dry Dress Make toast Eat Drive Work Type and type Drive Microwave Eat Undress Shower Dry Change Sleep</p>	<p><b>Day 2</b></p> <p>Wake up Undress Shower Dry Dress Make toast Watch toast Leave toast Drive Work Type Drive Microwave Eat Undress Shower Dry Change Sleep</p>	<p><b>Day 3</b></p> <p>Wake up Undress Shower Dry Stare Dress Drive Skip work Drive Microwave Eat Undress Shower Sit Cry Dry Change Sleep</p>	<p><b>Day 4</b></p> <p>Wake up Dress Shower Sit Cry Dry Go back to bed Lie down Stare Sleep Wake up Open fridge Close fridge Go back to bed</p>
<p><b>Day 5</b></p> <p>Stay up Lie down Get up Cry Stare Cry Take pills</p>	<p><b>Day 6</b></p> <p>Wake up Turn on bath Go under Hold Hold Hold Release</p>	<p><b>Day 7</b></p> <p>Wake up Call Lie down Cry Sleep</p>	<p><b>Day 8</b></p> <p>Wake up Undress Shower Dry Dress Make tea Sip Answer door Hug Talk Cry Wonder... ■</p>

# LIVING IN THE PAST

Joseph Nguyen · Year 11 · Mazenod College

Applying the finishing touches to my letter, I carefully folded it up and wrote out the name of its correspondent — Paul Crabbe. To my irritation, my hand was trembling from the effects and writing. As I lay down on the bed, with my spirits being reflected in the dull, stagnant walls of the hospital room, my mind drifted off to the person I now saw as my own son. Paul, an awkward little boy — now a man — who reminded me too much of myself ... too much of the arrogant man I once was.

“You’ve been like a father to me. Taught me everything I know,” Paul had once told me. It was in that moment where I truly realised the extent of my affections for him. In my quest to eradicate the plague of arrogance in Paul, I slowly found myself caring more and more for this child who saw me as his father figure.

It was during the Wet season — the period of oppressive humidity accompanied by the whispers of the cascading rain — when it first happened. The climate had brought along with it a detrimental companion, one that would prove to be my undoing. The two other occupants of the room had experienced its effects first, and I was soon destined to follow. As my health deteriorated, the mental walls I had established after that tragedy — the mental walls I had spent so long reinforcing — finally collapsed.

*It was a few months following the Anschluss in 1938. A lone figure stood between the towering buildings of the Capital, surrounded by the discord of music and laughter. The sun’s rays glistened off the metal in a spectacular display of light, illuminating the streets and accentuating the beauty of Berlin. Dressed in an elegant suit, the man looked nothing separate to those around him, yet his eyes held a darker truth, a darker reality, that differentiated him. His body language, one that was once of great confidence and arrogance, was now one of a man suffocated by anguish and regret. In his hands a crumpled piece of paper was held, and snaking rivers of ink littered its surface, forming an agonising message. And yet, no tears spilled ... no cry of despair was heard. Perhaps the severity of the letter was overstated. Perhaps he was too proud to weep ... or perhaps he was broken beyond repair.*

As time progressed, my body failed me, leaving behind a bedridden shell of my former self. Nowadays, I was rarely awake for long, and therefore had not time to write to Paul. My mind, reflecting my physical healthy, was wasting away as well, and that let loose the memories of my

tortured past. Every waking hour that passed, I was tormented by them. But I held on. I had to ... for Paul.

“Sister,” a deep voice echoed through the room, “could we turn that off. Please.” At this, I became vaguely aware of a sweet melody floating into my ears; the sweet melody of Harold Arlen’s ballad.

*Somewhere over the rainbow  
Way up high,  
There’s a land I heard of  
Once in a lullaby.*

It had such fitting lyrics and a delicate melody — a perfect source of consolation for a dying man like me.

“Our clients find it very soothing, Mr Crabbe.” The mention of this name brought me back to reality, and turning my head, I came face to face with Paul for the first time in nearly a decade. Tears threatened to spill as he stood in front of me, and albeit years older, hidden under a distasteful suit, I still saw the same boy I started to teach all those years ago in the Swan. I saw the arrogance, the pride, the potential ... I saw myself.

“Paul?” I managed to choke out.

“Wie gehst, Maestro,” he whispered.

I took a moment to absorb the image of Paul, and my heart was overcome with a strange mixture of pride, joy and sadness: pride because of the man he had become; joy because he had come back ... for me; and sadness, because I knew it would be the last time I would see him. I spent that time with Paul just enjoying his company, which was something in short supply and with the final question of “Something choral?” from Paul, I slipped back into the familiar sight of darkness.

*It was 1944. The Nazis, fearing Soviet advancement, had evacuated their death camps, transporting the prisoners to a more ‘secure’ location. Hundreds upon hundreds of people — male and female alike, women and children, fathers and sons ... — were filed out, past the working stations, past the ‘showers’, past the fence that barred them in like animals, into the open. For most, it was the first time they had been out of that abhorrent place since their imprisonment, where the only source of joy they received was from the fact that they were still alive. As the sea of despair and misery flooded through the gates of ‘Hell’, escorted by armed guards on either sides, a figure stood lingering at the back. This man — whose identity was taken away just like the others, with his forearm marked with the infamous six digits —*

*held a secret unknown to most. He had performed for Adolf Hitler himself. Perhaps that was part of the reason why he was able to escape, miraculously unnoticed by the guards. Maybe fate had decided he had already suffered too much ... or perhaps he already gone, even before he escaped, and leaving would have made no difference given the fact that he would never be seen again.*

When I emerged from unconsciousness, Paul was gone, but it did not matter anymore. I no longer had to hold on ... no longer had to await his return. All I needed was the knowledge that he would someday return to me, and he did. That desire now satisfied, my mind wandered to the last of my memories I had yet to relive; the memory I had entombed into the depths of my mind. I had to address it ... I had to if I ever wanted to be free — free from the burden I had been carrying on my shoulders for the last forty or so years. And so, I mentally prepared myself as I extricated the long, lost memory of my wife and son.

As I relived that event, I eventually succumbed to my emotions. The irony ... my wife, a Wagner specialist, with a voice more heavenly than that

of an angel, dragged away by his heirs, and my brave son, refusing to leave her side. A single tear rolled down my cheek, and that lone tear was soon accompanied by a series of strangled noises as I fought to contain myself from weeping, to no avail. So I wept; wept for my wife, for my son, and for the unfairness and cruelty of the world. As my facade crumbled away, it finally revealed my true self. I was a man who, for four agonisingly long decades, had to live with the consequences of his pride and arrogance. I was a man who let his past define him. I was a man who was once trapped, but now, I am free.

“Mathilde ... Eric,” I whispered, my voice now barely a croak, “I’m sorry.” At this proclamation, the haloed vision of my wife and son shone bright above as they extended their hands, beckoning me... calling me back to them. On my right, Paul stood with a smile on his face, as if he was finally letting me go. As my tears subsided and faded away, so too did the pain of the past ... the regrets and shame. I drew my last breath and let go of it all.

“I’m coming home ...” ■

# THE MAN

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Riley Searl · Year 9 · Mazenod College

The grass was up to his knees; but he did not mind. His beard lay upon his chest, bedraggled but well-kept; but he did not mind. He stood tall, a man of around 6' 8", with broad shoulders and a confident stance. He wore no clothes, spare for a sheepskin that was positioned around his waist, and he had a chain of wolves' teeth around his neck, a symbol of his stature as a leader and a warrior. Below his weather-beaten brow lay a pair of wise, vibrant blue eyes and his lips, although expressionless now, often wore the grin of his ancestors. His forehead and cheeks were decorated with vibrant reds and yellows, organised in a unique pattern, the symbol of his heritage. His chestnut brown hair hung below his neck, to the small of his back, the result of many a moon's worth of grooming. His biceps were ripped and his forearms engulfed by tattoos of the Brahminy Kite, his spiritual protection, entrusted to him by the ancestors. His torso was bare, as were his legs. His feet wore no shoes, yet were hardened from the years of trekking the bush. In his hand he carried a magnificent spear, carved from the fallen branches of the sacred Buloke tree, topped with a smooth, lustrous head of stone.

Where he stood lay a large mound of untouched grassland, upon which a single tree stood, basking in the sunlight, thick from many years of growth. Its roots weaved their way across the ground, intertwining with each other in their quest to find food. Atop this tree stood one solitary Black Hawk, its eyes keenly searching in the distance for its prey. The ground was littered with small wildflowers, scattered in odd patterns amongst the strangling might of the grass around it. Beyond them, scores of kangaroos lay on the plain, grazing on the luscious plantlife that surrounded them. Occasionally, the grass swayed from the disturbance of a copperhead or brown snake, slithering through the undergrowth, returning home from the day's hunt. Massive, majestic trees stood proud in a zigzagging pattern, providing shelter under its canopy of thick, green leaves. Scurrying through the outstretched hands of the trees, one would often find a family of bearded dragons or tree dtellas, should they choose to look close enough.

A warm gust of wind blew across the land, gently brushing against the kangaroos and dancing through the leaves of the trees. The grass swayed elegantly in the breeze. The man looked to the heavens, only to see the Sun had begun its descent towards the Land Beyond, ready to bring about the new day for his people. He scanned the plains with careful examination, waiting for the right one to appear. Thankfully, he saw one, grazing in moderate isolation, unaware of the imminent danger. He approached it with complacent steps, wary of the ground ahead of him. He stopped. The distinct smell of smoke hung in the air, suspended, as if eager for the winds to blow it away. They were ready for him. The man crouched low to the ground, eyeing his target. It rose up on its hind legs, head on a swivel, the taste of death lingering upon its lips. The man took the opportunity to make his move. In one quick, fluid motion, he rose from cover and sent his spear hurtling through the air, closing the distance in a matter of milliseconds. No sooner had he released the spear from his hand than he heard the soft thud of the limp kangaroo as it fell to the ground, the light all but gone from its eyes. The man paused, his admiring his own shot, always grateful for the natural gift he had been given. He began to descend the small hill, weaving through the herds of magical beasts surrounding him, all of which were gazing at the one who wandered past them. He approached the carcass of the animal, spearhead embedded deep in its chest.

As he reached down to remove the ingrained weapon, he felt content with this kill, happy he had once again lived up to his role. He threw the creature over his shoulders and trudged back through the grass and trees, finding the path that led him back to his village.

The grass swayed around his knees as he walked; but he did not mind. His beard gently beat against his chest, following the rhythm of his footsteps; but he did not mind. The weight of the body lay heavy upon his back; but he did not mind. For he lived a wonderfully simple life: full of content; full of joy; full of magic. The weight of this world, his world, rested on his shoulders. Yet for all of this, he did not mind. ■

# LYCORIS RADIATA

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Khoa Nguyen · Year 8 · Mazenod College

He sat there as if he had no other problems in the world. He watched the soft clouds float by, a melody of wind gazing across the plain fields. The sun watched over its children, taking care of the flowers, plants, bees, doing Mother Nature's job.

'Everything was simple. So very simple,' he stated, trying to convince himself.

He knew he was ignorant; he really just wanted to run away.

'Life is simple, so we should live simply.' Though, it wasn't really. He knew that himself.

He wasn't lazy – it wasn't like he didn't have anything else to do.

Chores, swimming, soccer training, piano, school work, taking care of the moribund elderly...

But he just wanted to live simply.

He noticed a rose beside his feet. It was red. Blood

red. Its thorns looked sharp. Like it could impale anything.

But even though it had the colour of blood, and thorns capable of cutting himself, it looked beautiful.

'How can something with so much animosity be so beautiful?'

While admiring the rose, he noticed another flower. This one was strange. It shouldn't grow here.

'Lycoris Radiata. Red spider lily,' he whispered to himself. It was bright red with a very long stem, more distinguished than the rose. The flower was in umbels and its petals stretched out and curved back very far. It looked soft. So soft. Maybe even softer than the clouds which started to gather around him. But he knew that the bulb of this flower was extremely poisonous. Life is not simple. It is not obvious. Like the Lycoris Radiata, it is deceptive. ■

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

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Lashika Goonetilleke · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Walking around the city, I encountered the regular hustle and bustle of busy work people. Some were talking, some were smiling, but no one looked relaxed. I saw a poor man sitting on the pavement, with a little young girl in a dirty, bright red dress sitting on his lap. The man was holding the girl tenderly. In front of them was a small, dented salmon tin, which contained a couple of coins. I looked at them for a while, and thought. The girl then stood up, and started playing with an aluminium foil ball. She threw it to the man and laughed with joy. The little girl was delighted with

playing with a simple piece of rubbish found on the cold, hard ground. I wished that I could live a simple life. Far from the rush around me. I reached into my pocket and pulled out a couple of coins. I dropped them in the tin. The man looked up and gave me a tired smile. The girl paused and glanced at me for a second, then hopped back to the man. The man quickly dropped the money into a pocket of his tattered duffle coat.

I turned away and joined the rushing crowd. I walked slowly. I entered my office, smiling. I sat down. My smile left me. I began to work. ■

# OF A BOY

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*Selected paragraphs inspired by Sonya Hartnett's 'Of A Boy' – the very 'unsimple' life of a boy*

**Annrose Gigimon**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

He wonders what will become of him, a useless, hopeless human being. His life was slowly slipping away and he wasn't able to stop it. He was young and had had a life ahead of him until that night. Flashing bright lights had shone into his eyes and the blurry image of his friend Rory's face was the last thing he remembers seeing, before he fell into a deeply agonizing darkness. He remembers sitting on that cold hard hospital bed and seeing the heartbroken faces of his parents. He wanted to get up and tell them he was okay, but he couldn't. He was screaming in his mind hoping to get their attention, but his body wouldn't oblige. He fought and fought, till he could no longer. It had been over five years since the accident, but the horrendous images of it hadn't left him alone even for a day. ■

**Zara Milankov**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

Sitting at the keys, the sweat running in rivers down his back reminds him of the dreadful memories that he associates with performing before an abundant gang of a crowd. He assumes of the audience a gang of wolves out to catch him while he is running away from his fears like a coward. He sees all the eyes staring down his spine, giving him chills as he sits in the cold, hard seat. The sweat that is consuming him should be a balm, cooling his mind, reassuring his body that everything was going to be ok. He needed his hands to work individually with a mind of their own, playing the piece without hesitation, perfectly, but they were still a part of his body which made this feat more challenging. His ears like bats, hearing everything that is happening for hundreds of miles. He hears the snickering and sneering of the gathering sitting above him, as if they were creatures as tall as the ceiling, mocking him as though they were towering over his fear filled body. ■

**Mitchell Huggins**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

Jenny's scare earlier this morning has suppressed her gnawing hunger, the central dining area's bleak and bare colour palette certainly is not helping. Jenny wishes she had someone to talk to, someone to confide in; but she can understand why the other women at the refuge keep to themselves. The other women are rarely hostile, but when they are, their hostility is miniscule in comparison to the swirling storms of her home life. Jenny wonders when she will be safe to leave the refuge, when the torrential waves would subside. Perhaps she would never be secure outside of the refuge. Perhaps, she would turn out to be like these other women, eventually lacking any distinction whatsoever. The peril of being abandoned at the refuge plagues Jenny's mind, would her children even attempt to discharge her, or had they already been brainwashed? Jenny could handle a crumbling marriage, but losing her children would break her. The lunchtime bell chimes, signalling that visitors are now welcome. A multitude of concerned family members flood in, and out of all of them, not one is recognizable by Jenny. Her worst fears were gradually being confirmed. Loved ones flocked to the other women, all of the women except for Jenny. Jenny's anger begins to burn like an open wildfire, requiring one spark to ignite an explosion. The tides of anguish whirl through Jenny like an agitated monsoon. She is overcome by fears of being forgotten, fears of slipping away into an abyss of isolation. Jenny is the victim in this situation, why should a victim be ostracized by society, succumbing to living in desolate quarters. Thoughts of a meaningless existence sweep Jenny's mind, controlling it like a children's toy. Her resolve is being shaken to the core, every drop being absorbed. ■

# OF A BOY

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*Selected paragraphs inspired by Sonya Hartnett's 'Of A Boy' – the very 'unsimple' life of a boy*

**Jarryd Cairns**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

Rory's final steps into his home were next to his mother. At the threshold another part of Rory was left behind. He lost his wonder and ambition at the fall of a foot. He was a criminal commencing the first day of a life sentence. Rory's skin, pale as eggshell, was now bound to this house. He rounded the door to the spare room and then pulled the curtains, collapsing the world into darkness.

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He also thought about the paintbrush which he now wields effortlessly across the canvas to create works of beauty. They are the works that he can never share, for he worries that those who behold his art would see through the façade he builds of oil and canvas. He worries that they would see through to Rory, and see what he sees, a boy sitting alone and broken in his bedroom, squandering a life of ease at the expense of those he tries to love. He is like an ornamental clock that will not tell you the time, a perfect voice that refuses to sing.

Rory was no longer a patient man. But why would he need to be? His mother cared deeply, and was quick to come to him. He felt like even the house cared for him. It seemed like a funhouse mirror, his every step forward inside it was drawing him back away from the world outside. His sorrow was like a pit of quicksand into which he had gladly dived, only for it now to press at his throat, his eyes, and his hands. ■

**Claudia Pironi**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

So, the three children left home, with the intention of returning with ice cream smudged faces and their mother's change. They began walking, but after crossing a few squares of concrete, their pace began to quicken. The children all looked at each other as if they read their siblings' minds. Suddenly, their cheerful and joyous facial expressions faded, and a new, much more aggressive and violent but equally as giddy expression formed. They all started sprinting as if their lives depended on being victorious in the race, but if you were at that particular place, at that particular time, you would've simply dismissed it as silly child's play. The children continued running, the fury of their sibling rivalry piercing through their skin. Veronica, the oldest Metford child, reached the end of the block first, followed by Zoe, the middle child, and lastly, 5-year-old Christopher. After the children's puffing and panting stopped, they crossed the street cautiously and continued on their journey. ■

**Patrick Wiriyant**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

Exhausted from his late night disturbances, he is slow to clamber out of bed. His consciousness eludes him, hiding in the deepest shadows which it never did. Drowsy and frustrated, Adrian stumbles down the hallway towards the bathroom. His reflection in the mirror is blurry but he tries to look into himself, to see the mechanism that powers him and examine the malfunction that has occurred. Rubbing his eyes, he still fails to see the mechanism. Annoyed, he brushes his teeth and washes his face, as if trying to scrub away his mistakes and impurities. ■

# OF A BOY

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*Selected paragraphs inspired by Sonya Hartnett's 'Of A Boy' – the very 'unsimple' life of a boy*

**Ella Rudge**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

He sits inside a box full of excitement being passed from one person to the other. As he hears the music finally stop, he can see the light as the little girl makes the first tear. The girl lifts him up like a mother would with her newborn baby cradling him in her arms. As he looks around the room all eyes are on him, he feels like a trophy on Oscar night as the little girl shows him off to her friends. ■

**Jarnai Brancaleone**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

The road of their final destination was like most others, filled with homes, picket fences and swing sets. The only difference being the milk bar; its rusty sign swaying, clinging to its hinge. Although the distance was short it felt like a lifetime as temptation for cold, coloured cream lingered in the youths' minds. Their journey nearing an end, Veronica ensures that her relatives and the shiny coins were all present. The final, left turn is completed by the group, now in sight of the store's façade. ■

**Laurence Portella**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

Clinton had been Adrian's one and only friend for a while now, and he certainly looked up to him, but to Clinton, Adrian was merely something that was always there. He was a parasite that, no matter how hard you tried to detach yourself from, kept on crawling back, as it could not live without its host. They used to be best friends, they used to share the same dreams and ambitions. Now Clinton would give almost anything to swap him with someone else. Someone who was smarter, funnier and stronger. Someone who could give him some sort of value. Someone, who does not believe that sea monsters prowl and patrol the dark depths of the ocean. ■

**Samuel Vermeulen**

*Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College*

“Adrian wrapped his arms around his knees, like a kid lost in a supermarket. His room was dark, it felt congealed. A sadness in the air. Adrian looked around his room, wondering what he had left.” ■

# MY PLACE

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Vicente Morillo Morales · Year 8 · Emmaus College

The majestic eagle spirals downward on magnificent, broad wings. His dappled coat of brown, white and bronze feathers reflect the golden rays coming in from the West. The sun is setting over a city of skyscrapers huddling together, its light surrounding them in a blazing halo. Closer and closer to the ground the eagle flies, passing tall, emerald coloured pine trees that soar fifty metres into the sky, visible for miles all around. Opposite the falling sun, far off to the horizon, the eagle observes a line of tall hills. Like venerable old men they sit, staring motionless at the suburbs below, their flanks covered in eucalyptus forests. As the eagle continues his downward flight, he looks upon the golf course to his right; an undulating carpet of spongy, green grass that flows down one side of a wide valley. At the bottom, the green cuts off abruptly at the banks of a shallow, gurgling creek. Separated from the field by a wall of pine trees, the eagle sees a railway line, cutting straight through suburbia like a dagger. It's silent at the moment, but the tall, grey metal poles on either side of the line hold cables that power huge, loud monstrosities that screech along the track day and night.

Something new catches the eagle's eye. It could be the plastic owl on the roof of one of the houses, or the top of a metal chimney glinting in the afternoon light. It could even be someone attempting to put their washing out in spite of the rapidly changing weather. As he glides silently over a road, one house in particular draws his attention; it has a rust coloured roof and matching bricks, but the perfume coming from it is compelling. As he flies lower along the driveway, he is bordered on either side by shamrock-coloured camelia hedges, bursting with bright pink flowers. The eagle can easily smell the sweet scent of many different roses growing together. He sees some are pale orange, some are white, but as he comes into full view of the house, he notices beautiful, crimson roses growing on a single shrub, surrounded by more greenery, it stands like a dais.

Over the garage, the eagle flies, then down into

a small, tiled courtyard where a boy is shooting baskets. Over and over the boy throws the ball and smiles to himself whenever he gets a shot in. The eagle circles overhead, mesmerised by the boy's patience and dedication as well as the repetitiveness of the task. As he continues to fly gracefully over the backyard of the house, the eagle spots another human wearing gloves and holding a dirty metal shovel. She is taller and older than the boy, but it is hard to tell since she is stooped over while digging some weeds out of the ground. Around the human – in fact – along the length of the garden are dozens of pots; some contain beautiful flowers and even more roses, while others are filled with aromatic herbs. Even so, other pots appear to be filled only with dirt, but hold magnificent tulips that although grow flowers only once a year, are the brightest flowers in the whole garden.

Finally, the eagle takes a break on the corner of the back fence of the house, his head pulling back and his wings flapping him to a standstill on a post. From this vantage point, he surveys the narrow garden that wraps around the left side of the house. He sees a clothesline situated at the perfect height for careless humans to walk into it, further along is a wooden deck next to a lawn of fake grass. On the deck is a worn set of table and chairs next to a group of bright green pots huddling together. The eagle peers through an open window into a kitchen, where a tall, glum looking human is sizzling steak on a pan. With some difficulty, the eagle manages to ignore the delicious smell of cooking meat and manages to take off again. Flying over the porch, he looks through a wall of windows, shielding a dining and living room from the elements. The heavy blackout curtains are drawn wide and inside, the eagle notices a screen in a huge, black bookcase, a matching coffee table piled high with books, a large, maroon sofa, a dining table swept clean of any mess, and finally, the eagle sets eyes on a teenager. The youth sits in front of a white and orange desk covered in all manner of things, concentrating on a piece of paper.

The title on the page reads, 'My Place.' ■

# HEARTH

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Emily Lechner · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Sitting on the green carpet  
Heat sinks into brown tiles  
Holes torn in the couch covered with duct tape  
Nonno's green chair rocking back and forth  
Wooden blocks scattered on the floor

Wet socks and pants hanging over the fireplace  
guard  
The ankles soaked from falling in the creek  
Muddy gumboots lined up at the front door  
Laughter distinguishes the sound of the old tv  
The football match plays on the CRT screen

Chestnuts roasting over the burning red flame  
The well-used metal pan with it's long wooden  
handle

Sitting on the floor, the wooden stools, and the  
couch

Plates in hands with a serving of Nonna's osso  
bucco

Picking bits of the cheesy polenta from the sides  
of the pot

Wrestling Nonno on the floor while parents talk  
on the couch

The cheerful fire crackles and sizzles filling the  
room with warmth

Brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, in-laws all  
under the one roof

Together they laugh, they cry, they smile and they  
love

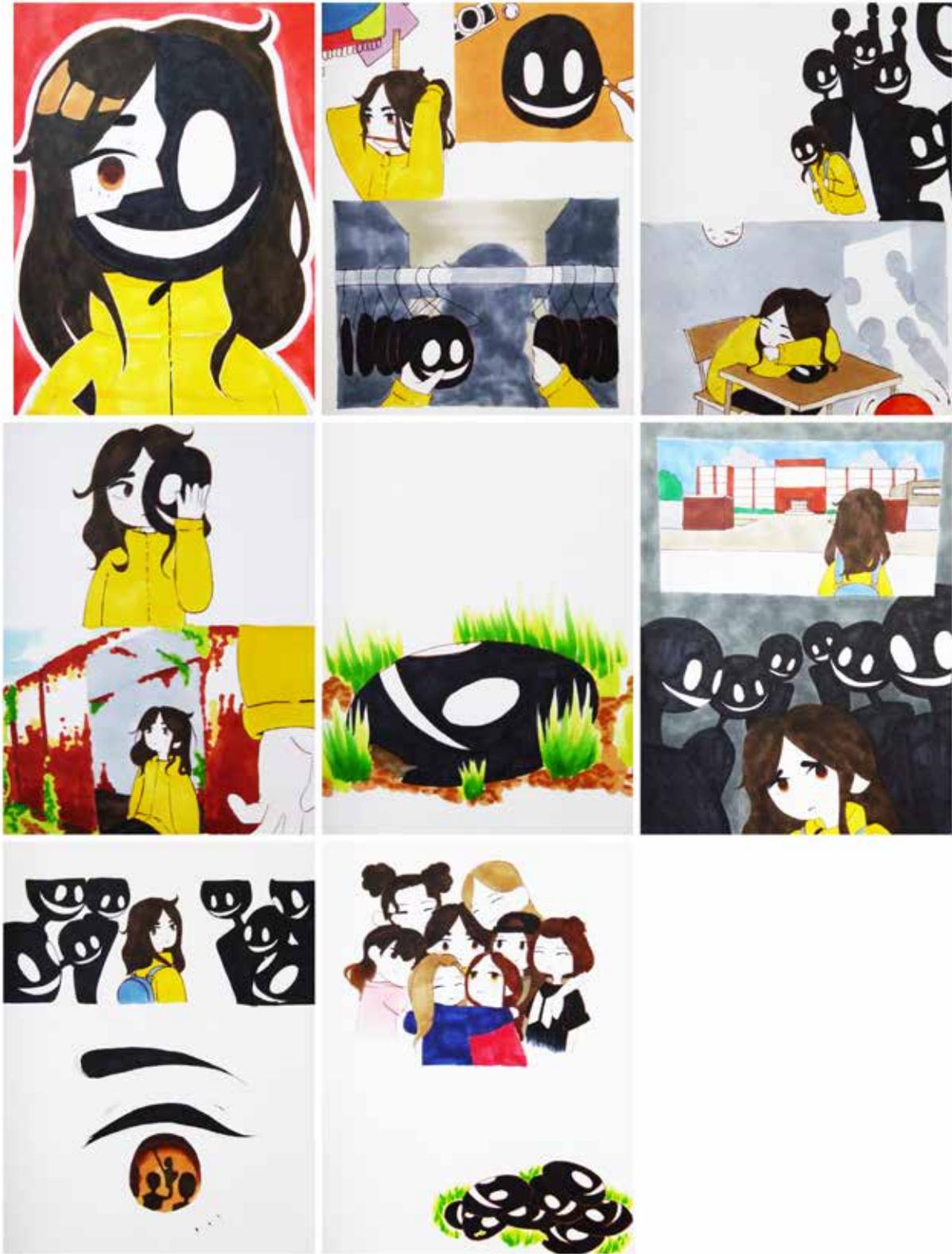
Altogether around the fireplace ■



**Breanna Wynd**  
*Year 9 · Aquinas College*

---

*Media*



Bryony May  
Year 11 · Aquinas College

# THE VOICES IN MY HEAD

---

Tailah-Rose Moore · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St. Albans

Yes I know my thoughts are strange,  
It's not like they will ever change,  
They talk to me when I'm in bed,  
I like the voices in my head.

The whispers, the giggles, the mighty laughter  
My mind is my utopia forever after,  
Why be normal when we can be real?  
Life can be simple when we feel.

There is one girl who lives in my mind,  
She's the treasure I've wanted to find,

When others on the outside scream and shout,  
She is my own little hideout.

Violence, poverty, injustice, greed,  
The world is full of people who plead,  
For unity, for peace, for another chance,  
For a way to escape the war dance.

Do you blame me for my peaceful retreat?  
Why fight when we march to the same heartbeat?  
I choose the world of my making, and like I said,  
God I love the voices in my head! ■



**Aysam Bataq**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College,  
St Albans*

---

*'Real Man', Ceramic Mask – Stoneware*

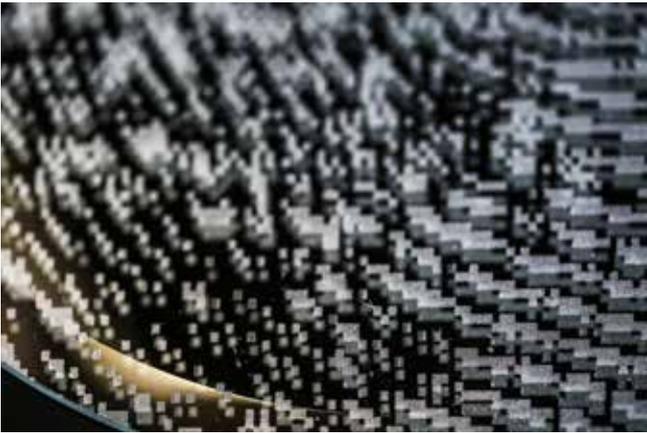
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A real man is a simple man.



**CRC Community Project**  
*Catholic Regional College,  
St Albans*

---



*'Vena Amoris', Glass etching –  
fingerprints of fourth finger of left  
hand.*

---

*Vena Amoris* is Latin for “the vein of love”. We leave our fingerprints on everything we touch. The mirror is reflective of our future selves; a reminder to live simply. The visible and invisible fingerprints we leave today, shapes tomorrow.



**Danika Alwyn**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College,  
St Albans*

---

*'Slumber', Digital Art*

---

The barbs prick like thorns; time is finely measured. Struggling to move forward when the weight of the past restricts you.

# SIMPLICITY (A WORKING TITLE)

---

XuanDien Vo · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

The rude beeping,  
A sound that can only be broken  
by a Snooze button.  
Those feelings  
when I awaken  
each routine morning,  
of wishing I was still a kid.

Living as an adult,  
Is very complex.

As we grow up,  
the simplicity of being a child  
fades away.  
The act of  
connecting two lego bricks,  
has now become the difficulty,  
of connecting my life together.

As a kid, we played  
outside  
on the soft green grass,  
had fun, while the sun scorched our backs  
and our parents simplified our lives.  
We lived ... simply.

Now,  
I play 'Work', like a game  
to survive.  
Survive the day's hard work,  
Survive the boredom that exists,  
whilst planning my next move.

When we grow up,  
everything becomes sophisticated.  
There's no going back to  
the carefree laughter.

Now ... we simply live. ■



**Anabelle Tran**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St  
Albans*

---

*'Orange', Self Portrait, Acrylic on Canvas  
Paper*

---

My artwork portrays a portrait of myself using the mix of shades of blue or green throughout most of the painting. Dull colours were used to represent the underwhelming parts of life. However I included shades of orange throughout the painting to emphasise that there are positives occurring in my life.



**CRC Community Project**  
*Catholic Regional College,  
St Albans*

---

*'A Story Shared', Off-cut of a weeping  
cherry tree, recyclable, wool and other  
fibres.*

---

The Weeping Cherry Blossom, cast  
aside for recycling, forms a simple  
focal point for a community who  
gathers to share, feel and experience  
stories as they weave, wrap, bind, tie  
and cocoon each branch.

# DREAMING REALITY

Lydia Asmerom · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

There is a strange noise under my bed. I try my hardest to stay asleep but the thumping continues. I glance underneath my bed. There it is, the thing I've dreaded for years. A box. Not any ordinary box. This cardboard box enclosed my deepest, darkest secret. Knowing that my secret is just under my bed makes me uneasy. What would people think if they found out? Right before I sleep, I hide the box in the far most corner of my closet.

I check on the box the next morning. My whole face drains of colour. It is gone. The secret that I tried to hold on to for so many years is gone.

As I enter school my heart starts to race faster than ever before. Everyone stares at me with judgement across their face. Do they know my secret? Did one of them steal my box? People mutter my name in a poor attempt to keep their conversation low key. Then, all of a sudden someone screams out my secret. My face grows a shade darker. Everyone laughs like a bunch of cackling witches.

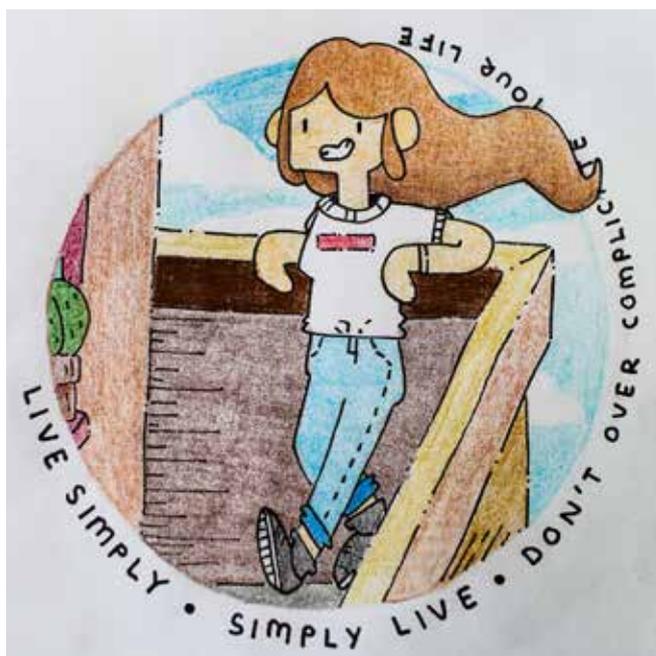
I run through the crowded hallways towards the toilet, tears streaming down my cheeks. It's empty and quiet. I sit in the cubicle not bothering to close the door. The tears come running down like a waterfall. How can anyone do this to me?

What have I done for them to hurt me like this? The sadness that I feel is like a giant wave holding me down at the bottom of the ocean. My secret is haunting me, erasing the good memories, fracturing my self-esteem. I don't understand why my friends are making this hard for me. Can't they just accept who I am? Don't I have the same rights as them, aren't I human as well?

I step out of the cubicle and exit the bathroom. I'm not going to let them drag me down or make me feel less of a person. I am ready to face the school and everything in it.

As I step back into the hallway I feel light headed, then everything goes black. I see stars, the calm ocean calling me. My feet touch the warm sand as I approach the ocean. A cold breeze surrounds me. I smell smoke, it engulfs my nose with a burning stench. Everything is black. I'm standing in the middle of the universe, the sight of it makes me breathless, struggling for air.

I wake up gasping. My heart beats abnormally fast as I sit up in my bed. Oh, thank the lord it was all a dream! I look at my phone scrolling through my feed. My hands shake as I see the post. The dream starts repeating itself, but this time ... it is reality. ■



**Katie Vu**

Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans

*'Don't Over Complicate Your Life',  
Drawing*

Simplicity is the key to achieving a simple and happy life. There are many times where we need to resist the temptations of our surroundings – distraction. We are constantly being preoccupied by our daily life, and this takes our attention and ruins the quality of life. Decluttering your life, can allow you to fully enjoy those moments and maintain a happy and positive lifestyle. Life was already simple to begin with, but we are the ones who are complicating it even more. Don't over complicate your life.



**Megan Flores**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

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*'Euphoria', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

Don't over think  
Make sure you blink  
And see the true you  
We all need to show our true colours.



**Miranda Gangur**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

---

*'Waves', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

Waves quickly come and go.  
I see them.  
I hear them.  
I feel them.  
Waves quickly come and go.



**Olivia Barisic**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

---

*'Don't', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

Don't overlook the world,  
Don't over-estimate how easy some things may seem,  
Don't over react in moments,  
Don't be overwhelmed by issues that you can't change,  
Don't over think every little situation,  
Don't over power what you can't,  
Don't over complicate your life.

# IT'S SIMPLE

---

Chayenne D'Costa · Year 11 · St Peter's College

The morning air is crisp and light, it carries the sound of early bird calls and the smell of coffee. The dried-up tree leaves scattered on the ground crunch under sneakers and skateboard wheels, the owners of which are in a rush to reach their destination. Early (Monday morning) classes were always the hardest for students, especially those who valued their last-minute Sunday night plans.

The peaceful harmony in which everybody awake at this hour works, is art, she thinks. Or at least she would if she were awake. The curtains of her dorm window block the most minimal amount of light out, casting a warm orange hue over the beige walls. The artworks pinned on the various corkboards that litter the walls express new meaning, their subtle colours blending ever so perfectly with the morning sun.

The tiny succulents sitting upon the bookshelf, placed perfectly in the corner of the dormitory, struggle to make themselves known, the shadows of preceding shelves hiding their beauty. Their pots however, simple and yellow, make the statement for them. The books that usually sit upon those shelves lay scattered across the desk next to the bookshelf. The hardback covers lay closed, bookmarks in almost each one, indicating books that were never finished and ones that have just been started.

The trail leads across the floor, covered by paint-soaked t-shirts and jeans, to a soft duvet that moves in shallow breaths. The block of wood beside the bed, a makeshift night table as a friend calls it, holds a simple night light, a phone and a round pair of gold frames. Their owner always forgoes cleaning them, the transparent glass covered in grey fingerprints and dried up raindrops.

The brown duvet covers the mattress, although tresses of obsidian flow from its head. The locks fan out across the pillow, drowning the white material in their thickness. The faint movement of some of the locks clears a space on the pillows, and the face of a sleeping girl emerges.

Her eyelashes flutter, the brightness of the room finally too much to keep her eyes shut from. Her mouth stretches wide open, a yawn making its way out of her throat. An urgent hand shoots out to grab the phone lying upon her bedside table, checking for the time.

9:37 a.m.

With a content sigh, the phone is dropped back onto the block of wood, and hair pushed out of the face. Tired eyes look up at the ceiling, watching the splashes of paint that stain its surface. How they got up there, will remain a mystery. They tell stories of artworks never finished, stories waiting to be titled.

The girl sits up in her bed, placing the gold frames on her face. Tugging on a pair of white-paint covered jeans, she pulls her multi-coloured sweater down her arms. Its soft material caresses her skin, and the first semblance of a smile graces her lips.

(It's simple.)

She makes her way to the kettle, and fills it with enough water to brew two cups of tea. Waiting for the water to heat, she pulls two singular tea bags, settling them in ceramic cups. A new set she got from her friend. It's bright and wonderful, painted in patterns of animals she is yet to find the names of.

She smiles.

(It's simple.)

The kettle sounds, a slight *click* from the lever switching back into place. The steam rises from the opening, fogging up the glass windows she looks through. Waiting for the vapour to dissipate, before pouring the water into the two idle cups. Flowers bloom in the pieces ceramic, creating patterns in the ripples across its surface. She smiles.

(It's simple.)

She walks towards the window sill, a lone book sitting upon its wooden beams. She picks it up, examining the cover. Another gift, she identifies it as, one full of meaning and love. She pulls back the curtain blocking the sunlight, and let's the cosy room hear the first chirp of the morning birds. She smiles.

(It's simple.)

The door to the small room opens, not a creak disrupts the peaceful morning however. You make your way through the dewily lit room, placing your bags down without a sound. She is unaware of the second presence. You pick up the two ceramic cups, dainty fingers grip onto the thin handles. Light feet move towards the window sill, shallow breaths and fast beating hearts.

"Good morning."

(It's simple.)

A smile blooms on her face. It mimics the new bunch of roses sitting upon the dining table. A fresh life. A fresh love.

(It's simple.)

"Good morning." She turns around.

"How did you know it was me?" The question is already answered in your mind. You wanted to be sure.

"It's simple." ■



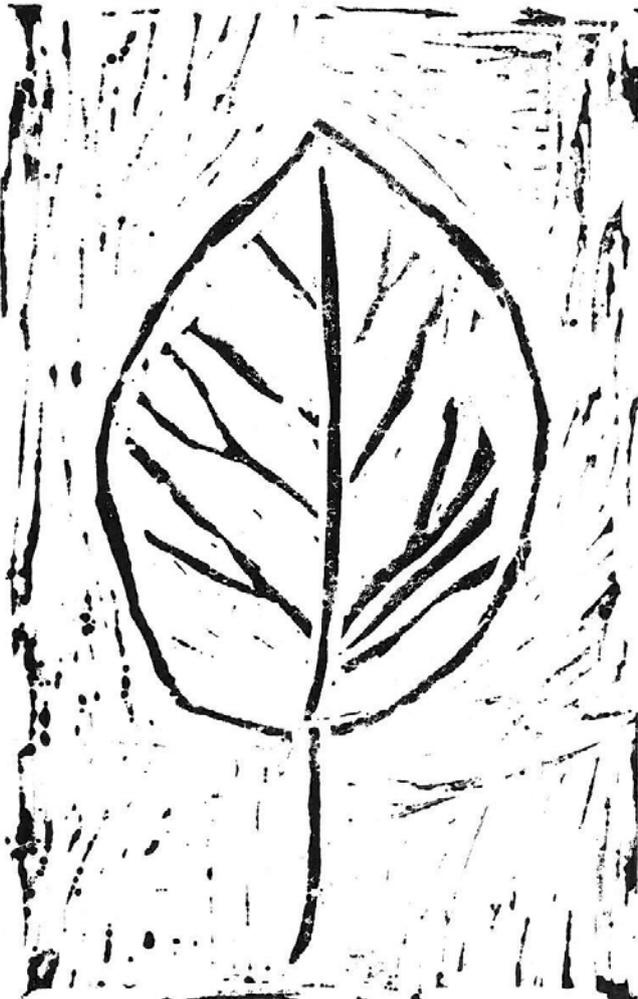
**Ella Cairns**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

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*Untitled*



**Callum Kolasa**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*



**Sophie Honeyman**  
*Year 8 · St. Peter's College*



**Monique Martin**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*



**Luigi Marciano**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*



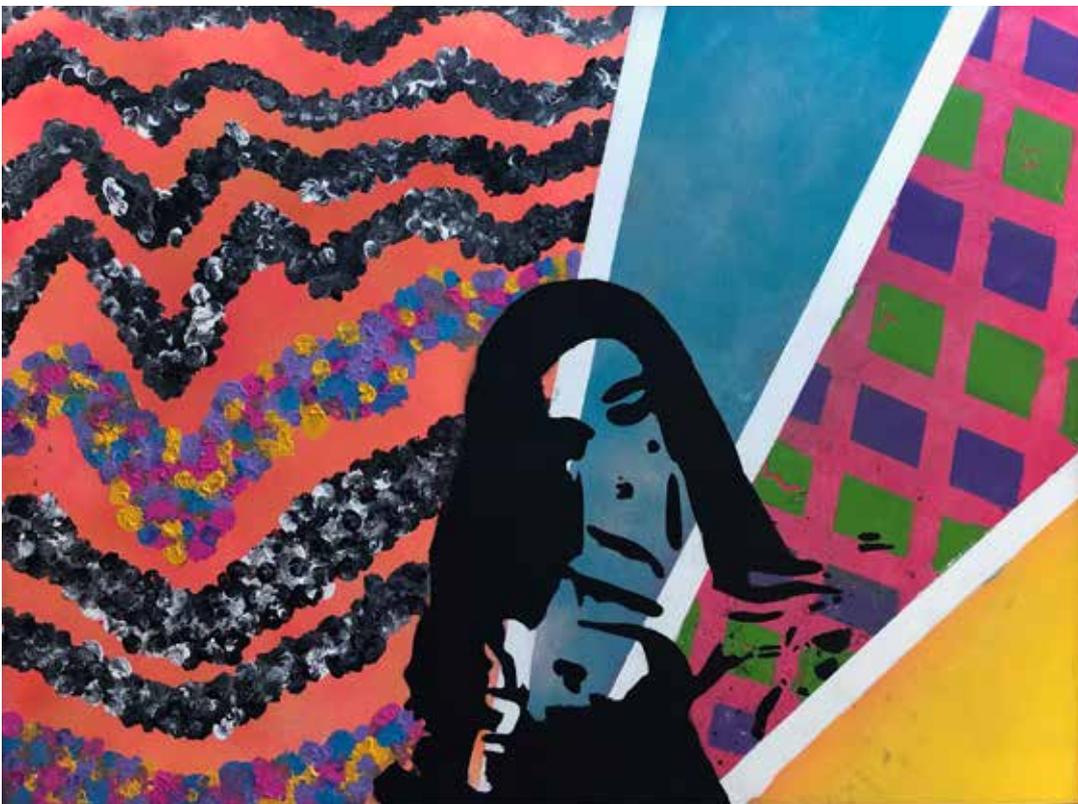
**Chandana Arun**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*



**Lexi Koehler**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*



**Riley O'Connor**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*



**Talia Parker**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*



**Courtney Cabezas**  
*Year 8 · St Johns Regional College*

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*'Sitting Kitty', Linoprint*



**Cailin Cross**  
*Year 7 · St Johns Regional College*

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*'Selfie', Reduction Foam Print*



**Tayshaun De Silva**  
*Year 7 · St Johns Regional College*

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*'Selfie in school colours', Reduction Foam Print*



**Justyna Komer**  
*Year 7 · St Johns Regional College*

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*'Selfie', Reduction Foam Print*



Christopher Kelly  
Year 8 · St Johns Regional College

‘Wandering mind’



**Sheratein Taukapo**  
*Year 12 · St Johns Regional College*

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*'Undefined Nature of Beauty', Mixed Media*

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“The controversial issue that surrounds beauty is that some believe that beauty is defined by someone’s outer appearance, while others believe it’s their personality that is full of it.” My artwork explores the notion of beauty and it aligns with this year’s theme of *Live Simply, Simply Live* as I believe to live a simple life one must accept beauty in all its forms.



**Declan Grech**

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans

*Emotions (Self Portrait – Acrylic on Canvas Paper)*

“Even though we can live a simple life, we express many different emotions during that life.”

This painting was created to reflect this saying, because it portrays a complexity of colours; colours that are human and emotive. Humans experience many colours in their life.

Blue and red are simplicity – things are going well. Yellow and green are the many paths we’ve walked – some lead to success and some to failure. Orange and purple are the struggles and the highlights – we all have our ups and downs.

Colours and emotions = humanity.



This is my collage called  
The Activitie Sky. INSPIRED  
by the games you play,  
Colours of the Rainbow  
and the SKY OF course.  
by OLIVIA RUBY O'Rourke  
McFarlane.

**Olivia Ruby O'Rourke McFarlane**

Age 6

This is my collage called *The Activitie Sky*, inspired by the games you play, the colours of the rainbow and the sky, of course.

# TRAVEL

---

Gemma Smith · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

I like to travel,  
It is quite fun  
to see new sights  
and experience  
new cultures.

But  
Home

My dog  
Mum's tacos  
My bed

I like to travel,  
and eat new foods,  
meet new people,  
who live a different life.  
I like to take photos,  
never wanting to leave

But  
Home

My friends  
Dad's '67 Mustangs  
My herb garden. ■



**Danijela Dolic**  
 Year 7 · Catholic  
 Regional College North  
 Keilor

---

*Life*

---

Life is filled with choices. Some are considered the fundamentals and others a by-product of living in a fast moving, technological world. If we are to simply live or live simply, what choice would you make.



**Téa Mancini**  
 Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

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*Simple*

---

Simple?  
 Is that how you'd describe it?  
 Simple as in; uncomplicated, easy or plain?  
 Truth be told. I don't believe you...  
 Sorry. I don't mean to be abrupt but, you're saying that your description is fact not opinion?  
 If it's so simple then how come I don't get it?  
 Doesn't it have lines upon lines of information, stored in every grain and fibre?  
 If it's so simple, then how come I can't follow the instructions?  
 I'm constantly looking back and forth and if it were so simple there would at least be pictures!  
 So you're saying that I can't make a mistake?  
 Well, if it's so simple it should be really easy.  
 I still don't get it...  
 How on earth can you tell me that life can be lived simply if it is not simple?

# GROWING RICHER

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Ann Renda · Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

**Isabella: 7th January 2018**

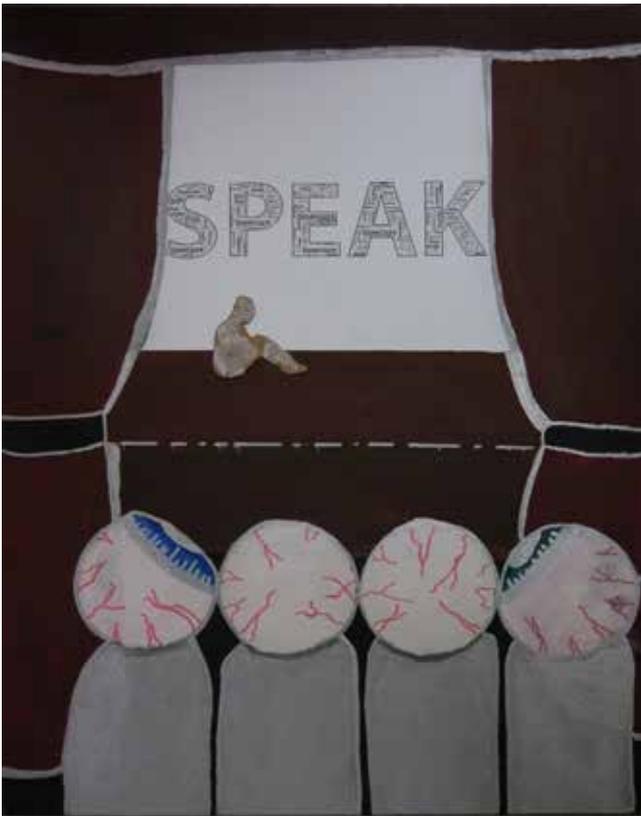
Dear Diary,

Today was unexpected. It started as an ordinary day. I threw on an old Chanel dress, grabbed my favourite Louis Vuitton handbag and went down stairs for breakfast, which the maid prepared. I got my nails done, then Daddy took me to a park. Although I would rather have been at Gucci. When we got to the park, I saw a girl with her younger sister. She had disgusting clothes on that made me want to barf. They looked like clothes you would find in a bin. Where the heck did she come from? A poor country? I just went on hanging out, until she clumsily bumped into me by the slide. I asked her what she was wearing, and she just stood there looking sad. I apologised for being rude and asked her name. "Kayla," she said. We chatted for quite a while and soon realised we were almost like identical twins with so much in common, except I am rich, and she is poor. Really poor. I could sense a friendship starting.

**Kayla: 10th June 2018**

Dear Diary,

Today was life-changing. It started as normal. I got up at 5AM to help Dad pick food from our veggie patch, so Mum could prepare breakfast before Dad went job hunting. Next, I rode my bike down past the train tracks and up to the post office. My rusty bike screeched loudly as I pulled up to the curb. I heard the snickers of passers-by. I picked up the \$150 water bill that will take my dad ages to pay off. Later, I visited Isabella's penthouse in the city. I can't believe Isabella and I have been friends since that day at the park. When I saw her, I thought there was no way we were going to be friends. With her bag that may as well have been made of 100-dollar notes, she looked so stuck-up. But here we are. Best friends. Anyway, I went to see Isabella and you won't believe what happened! I caught a train into the city using the 5 dollars Isabella insisted I take. When I arrived, she excitedly pulled me into her bedroom and handed me the surprise of my life. A wardrobe's worth of gorgeous new clothes and... \$1000. Like 1000 real dollars! I was frozen in shock and I struggled to put into words how I felt. I told Isabella that everything was absolutely amazing, and I cherished it all. I didn't feel right taking it, but she insisted. "Before I met you, I was living under a rock. I thought everyone had the life I had, but meeting you changed me. I want to thank you." I suggested that I keep the clothes and we donate the money to the Salvation Army, as they helped my family at our worst. After this Isabella said the most heart-warming thing I have ever heard; "Before I came into this friendship, I was rich, but not a type of rich I liked. I was selfish but now I am a better type of rich. Richer in empathy and kindness." ■



**Lance Haber**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Speak*

---

Sometimes it is difficult to live as we would like as others stop us from saying what needs to be said. It would be a better world if we could simply live to have the freedom to speak.



**Talia Guido**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*“T”*

---

“T” is for time to take stock and for each of us to stop and think about who we are and how we live. Are we living in the moment or are we caught up in the business of living?



**Cassandre Barallon**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College  
 North Keilor*

---

*Simply Living*

---

Many of us are busy watching life speed by without us stopping to enjoy life. In contrast the deer can be seen running free through its land, simply living.



**Isabella Iaccino**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College  
 North Keilor*

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*Emerging*

---

Delving into the depth of my mind I seek to explore what simply living means. To me it is to immerse myself into the world of art and colour. Out of nothing emerges the colours, shapes, perfections and imperfections that we celebrate in nature.



**Laura Cassar**  
 Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

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*Behind the Mask*

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When in the public arena there are people who cannot live as they would like. Instead they put on a mask to blend into the hustle and bustle of city life.



**Sahra Marchese**  
 Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

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*Living*

---

Life is full of surprises that can be positive or negative. Whatever life throws our way we need to embrace it and simply live.



**Lauren Leppik**

*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Melancholy*

---

With the pressures of life it is not always easy to simply live. Young people today have many pressures that they need to deal with and these can dominate what we do and how we feel.



**Lance Haber**

*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

---

*Open Your Mind and Embrace Life*

---

Our mind allows us to explore the real and the imaginary within our world and in doing so simply enjoy the process of living. To maximise these experiences, we need to be open to challenges, get involved in living and allow times to dream.

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Cormac O'Callaghan · Year 7 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

It was cold in the harsh, unforgiving mountains. An unwavering throughout day and night. But it was too much of a risk to attempt contacting a small town for shelter and food. We would have to stay put with the canvas tents and tasteless bread. My mother grew up in a small German town just as the war was starting. She was from a family that could barely survive with the money her father earned. One day, she could hear the marching of Nazis. They were screaming all over the town saying they needed fighting men.

The Nazis held a reputation of killing and torturing those who refused to become a Nazi and even hurting their families as well. Her father quickly got them together and told my mother to run as far and as quickly as she could away. My grandfather was electrocuted to death after refusing to fight.

My mother got as far away as she could and stumbled onto a party of men and women who were planning to try and make raids on the Nazis. My mother was curious and ended up becoming one of the leader of the most powerful anti-Nazi group in Germany. At that moment, we were coming back from a powerful raid on a Nazi

occupied town. We found out where they were planning to put concentration camps from a young officer. What scared me was the fact that the officer was around my age and his mind had already been poisoned by the lies of the Nazis.

I fell asleep listening to the birds. I woke up with a gun in my mouth and with my mother and her comrades tied up in the back of a Nazi truck. They had found where we were hiding. They talked very quickly and quietly. One walked to me and hit me in the side of my head with the butt of their gun.

I regained consciousness in a metal chair with my legs and my arms strapped. A man is threatening my mother saying that she has to tell him the plans of her group. She refuses. I felt an intense pride, a burning of my heart that this was my mother. But in all cases of the Nazis, their reputation held. She was shot right in the head before me. Everything froze. I was knocked in the head again and my world went black. I woke up in a truck, with a roaring engine. I realised that the roaring sound didn't belong to the truck. A loud bang woke my consciousness and the truck swerved. I later realised that it was gun shots. ■

# A MILLION DOLLARS INSIDE

---

Jasmine Link · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

A million dollars sparkles inside  
Stone walls divide the glittering specimens

An ocean of jewels tumble to and fro  
Serpents of silver surround a baby turtle

Precious stones are shrouded by barricades of silver  
They all have their own country

The turtle grasps the chain  
This succession insists on latching onto my bag

If unhinged, she will be swallowed by the crowd  
Swept away forever ■



**Amelie Walker**  
*Year 2 · Holy Rosary Primary School*



**James McFarlane**  
*Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School*



**Brandan Wray-Bunkov**  
*Year 10 · CBC St Kilda*

---

*Self Portrait*



**Mike Milonakis**  
*Year 10 · CBC St Kilda*

---

*Self Portrait*

# CIRCLES OF LIFE

Aidan Dragovic · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

*(Sung to a traditional tune)*

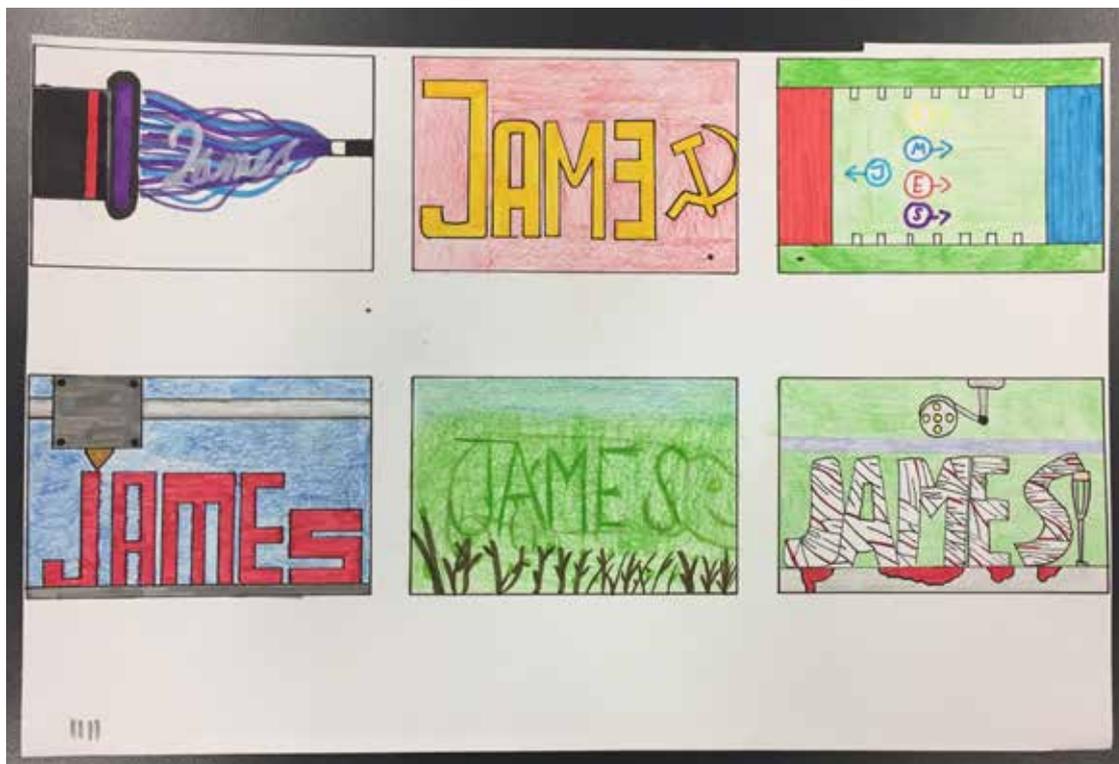
The ant eats the Crumb, the worm eats the ant,  
The bird eats the worm,  
The cat kills the bird, the dog gets the cat,  
The wolf eats the dog, the bear eats the wolf,  
Do, da, do, da diddle, do.

The human dies and is buried in the earth  
The ants come from their nests and feast on the humans  
The black-birds swoop on the unsuspecting ants  
And feast upon them  
The little Indian boy shoots the black-bird  
And his mother bakes it in a pie  
Thus we eat our own kind.  
Abanana, an, na, na, naa, potato, o, o

From rat to rhino the squirrel eats the rat,  
The bird eats the squirrel,  
The wolf eats the bird, and the rhino kills the wolf,  
And the rhino is victorious

The penguin is born and gets fed by his mother  
And grew and grew, year by year until he could hunt for himself.

Along time later, he then finds a girl, so pretty and sweet, and then he waddles over,  
AND THE WALRUS ATE HER,  
and then he found another girl  
and sheeee diiiiiieeed tooooooo! ☹ ■



James Lehtonen  
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

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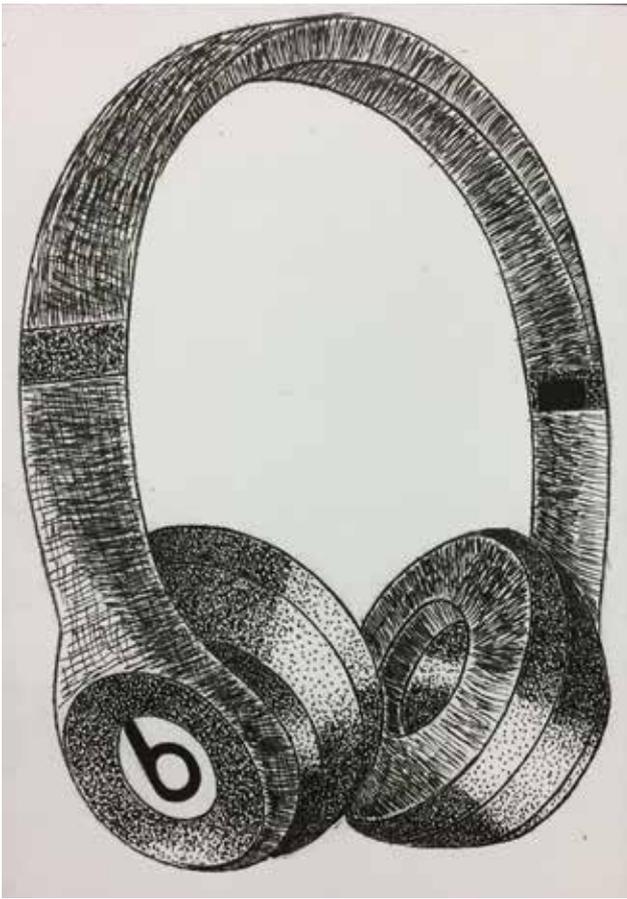
Luke Nicholas · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

Love others how you want to be loved  
I wish we could live more simply  
Video games get in the way of family  
Every day I think of the unloved

School is where I'm at  
I like the way my friends and I chat  
Maybe if there was no school  
People wouldn't follow the rules  
Life without rules would be quite sad  
Young people wouldn't know what's good or bad

Stand up and have a voice  
If you pick the right choice  
Men and women will be joyful  
Powerful people will stay loyal as  
Long as everyone is nice and gentle  
You can be in control

Life is complex in today's society  
Important needs aren't always free  
Voices will be heard, however  
Everyone can be together ■



**Paul Parnis**  
*Year 10 · CBC St Kilda*



**Sam O'Brien**  
*Year 8 · CBC St Kilda*

# EROS

---

Anabelle Tran · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College, St. Albans

All it took was one glance  
for the golden beauty to catch my eye,  
we stood where the stars dance  
I fell in love with a butterfly.

She was known to be beautiful and fair  
the goddess of the soul,  
a psyche so profound and so rare  
I shot her with my crossbow.

Her aroma tantalised me over the years,  
her hair entangled through my heart,

my love made her burst into tears  
she never wanted to be apart.

Our love was not complicated  
it left long lasting smiles on her face,  
it was no coincidence we were fated  
to live forever in love's embrace.

The constellations in the night sky  
said our paths were not meant to cross,  
as the God of Love, I defied their cry  
For I am cupid, the great Eros! ■



**Khristyl Aguila**  
*Year 8 · Catholic Regional  
College, St Albans*

---

*'Kim Taebyung', Portrait, Drawing*

---

Is being a student really that simple?

Imagine a place where students look forward to going to school; a place where they don't stress about grades and upcoming tests; where there is no standard and everyone can do as much as they can and be appreciated equally; a place where everyone is surrounded with love and a passion for learning instead of stress.

Learning is learning; nothing else. Should it not be that simple?



**Rita Attallah**

*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

---

*'Happy Girl', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

I closed my eyes and started thinking of all the things that I have in my life. I am happy.



**Vivi Nguyen**

*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

---

*'Truly Beautiful', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

As humans we are naturally different.  
Different eyes, skin, fingerprints, smiles and sizes.  
Being human is a gift in itself.  
But showing your individuality is an even bigger gift.



**Yvonne Nguyen**

*Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans*

---

*'Winnie The Pooh', Cubism, Lino Cut Print*

---

It is important that we don't overcomplicate things in our life. Whether it is work, friends or family, we should remember that there is always an easier way to do things making your life simpler than it should be – just like Winnie the Pooh.

# LIVE SIMPLY

---

Alex Davidson · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

I was walking alongside the railway track  
looking for fallen branches from the  
overhanging trees,  
my friend and I ran excitedly ahead.  
We screamed with delight when we found  
some sticks,  
carefully picking them up and placing them in  
our bag.  
We were searching for some wood to make a  
fire in our kitchen stove.  
The stove was the central piece to the cabin.  
Not only did we bake bread, slow-cook  
soups, and cook meals in the oven each day,  
but this stove also provided our hot water,  
and heated the kitchen. ■



Alexander Tharapos  
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

---

'Self Portrait'

# THE DINGO!

Patrick Gantzos · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

**K**ocker Doodle Dooo! It was a very early morning and I was running for my life. I needed to get to the other side of the garden before I had my legs ripped off. HHHHH! Finally, I made it. Hello, my name is Rob and I'm a chick, me and my friends live over here in the chick garden. Over there is the evil rabbit garden. Their leader is Bob he has been living in this garden longer than we have. The reason why I was over there was so I could get some food and water, but they don't let us have any, and if we don't have any food or water we could die.

One day a Dingo came to the yard. He came over to us. We all said "Hi", but without warning he snatched up my friend Seb into his mouth and swallowed him whole. After he was done digesting him he went over to the rabbit garden. The rabbits greeted the Dingo, but he didn't say a word.

After a while it turned dark, we all jumped into our pens and went to sleep. Kocka Doodle Doooo! I woke up and went for a walk but before I could take one step I was stopped by a mess caused by the Dingo in the rabbit garden. It was hideous. Once

the rabbits woke up they were more surprised than I was. The Dingo was lying on the ground as if he's been shot. After a while I had a talk to Bob the rabbit leader. He said we needed to get the Dingo out of the garden, he also said we could meet under the sacred tree tonight when the Dingo goes to sleep. Three hours later, the crickets were chirping, that was our cue. We had to make it to the tree without waking up the Dingo. Once we got there the rabbits were looking angrier than usual. We sat down for a good two hours and talked about how we could get rid of the Dingo. Kocka Doodle Doooo! It's morning time, the Dingo was at the water fountain. We had rabbits in trees and chicks in holes. On the count of three 1,2,3 we all ran up to the Dingo and clawed and bit him till he was running off like a sissy girl.

I looked over at the rabbits and we all stared at each other in complete silence for 10 seconds. After that Bob came over to me and said "We make a pretty good team" I smiled at him. He also said that we were welcome to have food and water over in their garden. After that we all were best friends. ■



Graeme Gouws  
Year 9 · CBC St Kilda

# WE LIVE SIMPLY OR DO WE SIMPLY LIVE?

Nebal Hilal · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

Long years I lived,  
In invented time.  
A veteran, I survived  
Extraordinarily through  
Slavery.

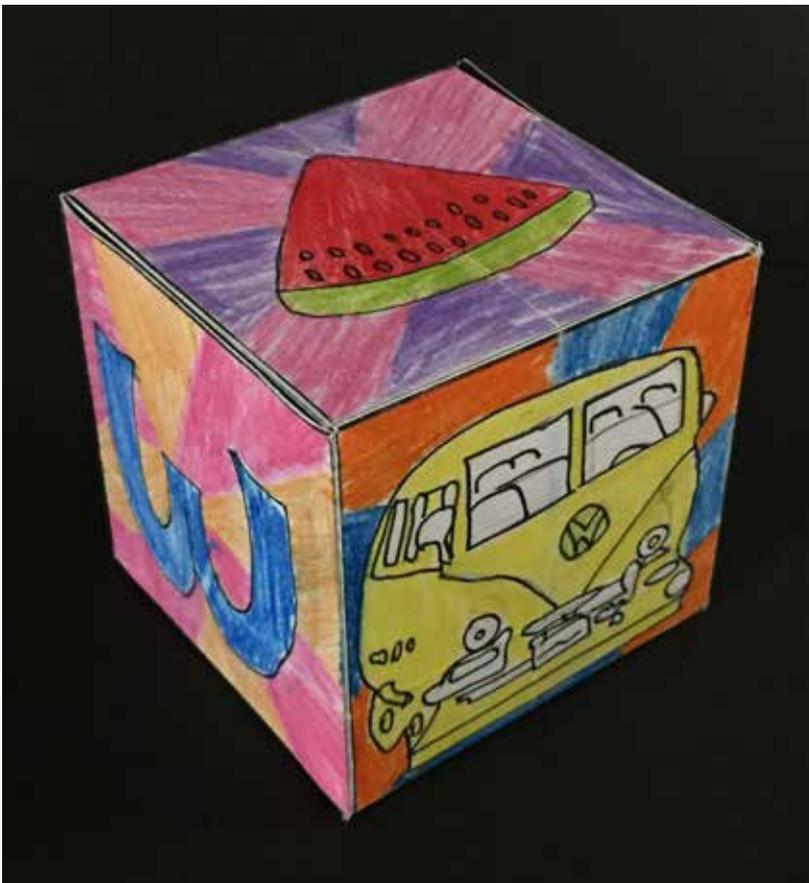
In old, modern time,  
People saw  
Light  
When others could not see it.

Ah, but the young did!

Students loved stories  
In those times.

My stories  
Prepared the youth  
Living through the years  
Of war.

Once lived a person who  
Invited  
The soldiers and ex-soldiers  
Those who ended life  
The way that it should be  
Ended. ■



Sam Macafee  
Year 9 · CBC St Kilda



**Charlotte Frencken**  
*Year 12 · Star of the Sea College*



**Jessica Love**  
*Year 11 · Star of the Sea College*

# TEXT RESPONSE - THE PROTECTED

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Liam Vannuccini · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

I sat down at the kitchen bench and waited for my daughter to get out of her bed. Over the past few months, she had quite obviously been learning more about what the real world is like. I plan to tell her in full about my own past so she can learn from me. For her own good.

“Jane, do you want me to make breakfast?” I ask, as she stumbles out of her room.

“Uhh... no... I’ll do it” she manages, taking lengthy and effort-powered strides toward the kitchen and grabbing a piece of bread, near to the shopping list I had just written.

“Did you have a good night? You look like a zombie.” I remark, eyeing her tortoise-like movements. Very slow.

“Yes. Woke up once though.”

She drops two slices of cut wholemeal bread into a toaster and pulls down the lever a few times to get the thing to work.

“Unfortunate. You should go to sleep earlier.”

“It’s not that easy, even when I close my eyes,” she seems to think for a moment, turning around after a few seconds to prepare a plate.

“Even when you close your eyes...” I say, urging her to continue with what she was saying. After a moment of silence she recognises what I’ve said and looks back toward me.

“I think of- in my head- things...from stuff.”

“Stuff.” I say.

“Yeah.”

Before I can reply, my husband Josh Chamberlain enters the kitchen with a wide grin on his face. He slaps Jane on the back lightly and starts to sing. “My Jane, oh my lovely Jane! She makes me happy, oh, yes she does!”

I fail to hide amusement while Josh pirouettes around the kitchen. Jane doesn’t seem too amused, though, and carries on with her breakfast. Josh stops and puts on a serious face. “Wasn’t it good enough?” He asks, poking his daughter on the side. She doesn’t answer.

He squats down to face her at head height and gives her a warm look. “What’s wrong, bubs?”

Jane looks at him and hesitates. “Bad sleep?” He asks, bringing his hand to her shoulder.

“No, I just don’t feel good.” She manages.

“How come?”

“There...” she hesitates again, taking a breath and closing her eyes. “There are kids at school, they don’t like me.”

I feel myself frown. Memories of the bullying I endured in high school come back to me. The thrown fruit, the vandalism and theft of my things. If any of this was happening to Jane I would need to stop it immediately. I take a few steps closer to both her and Josh. He looks up at me and nods, a signal to tell me I should say something.

“What don’t they like about you?” I ask once Jane’s attention had been shifted.

“Everything. I don’t know.” Her eyebrows crease. I knew what she was going through. I had been contacted a few times in the past few months about Jane’s well-being. Things like a kid picking on her, or someone accidentally ‘dropped’ their eraser three meters onto her head. Perhaps now is the right time to give her advice about my own past experiences. I lean my elbow onto the counter and sigh.

“Back when I was your age, I went through a tough time. Everyone in my school seemed like they hated me and I was bullied every day. They threw things at me, drew on me, called me names and a lot of other things. But then, a while after your Auntie died, I met your father. He helped me overcome some of the fears I had along with other people’s help too. It became easier for me over time to do things I was scared to do before because of the bullying and when Auntie Katie passed away.” I took a break for a few moments and then continued on.

“Over the last few months, your father and I have noticed that you seem to not be doing so well. A few of your grades have slipped a bit and we’ve started to become a little concerned. We both know what it’s like to be in a tough spot, so we want you to be comfortable with telling us what’s been happening.”

My eyes water slightly to the reminder of all that had happened when I was younger. I would never want her to go through that. Never. The pain of loss and the feeling of helplessness were two things I had to deal with that I would always keep from her. Josh knows this, too. He knows about what I dealt with but he also remembers what happened to him and his family. Looking at his face, now, I see a man in deep thought of what to do next. He is a kid person.

She’s still for a moment or two. Suddenly, she throws her arms around me, almost knocking me

down. I hug her back while she tells me all that's been happening. She is a sensitive kid, like I was, and doesn't take things very easily. Me and her father both comfort her and listen to what she has to say. I tell her that she isn't alone in her life and she shouldn't bottle things up.

We spoke to one another about what had happened at school and elsewhere. Together, as a family, we resolved every issue we could and over time Jane became a lot more open and energetic. She reminds me of Katie, a little bit. I like it. She's a positive person at heart and when that part of her comes out it's refreshing.

Things Jane and Katie have in common:

- They're witty

- They love music
- They both want to work as fashion designers
- They are both very pretty
- They both come up with hilariously odd nicknames
- They hardly eat breakfast

Things Jane and I have in common:

- We're both sensitive
- We love music
- We both have an interest in writing
- We are both very perceptive
- We both love Josh's personality ■



**Lucy Franich**  
*Year 9 · Star of the Sea College*

# UNFAMILIAR

---

Charlize Drew · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College, Melton

I hate you, you suck, any of these words sound  
familiar?

We comparing ourselves so much, we start to  
sound so similar,

They'll put you down, down to the ground,

What makes them so much better?

They sometimes send you letters,

What if I had her eyes, her hair, her body and  
even more?

It can get really personal, isn't that against the  
law?

It gets really rude,

Getting put down, can't do anything good,

They end up being better...?

Comparing ourselves, never does and good,

Makes you want to live under a hood,

But what if we stopped comparing,

And started sharing, on what makes you, you,

And what makes me, me,

You see everyone has insecurities,

Focusing on their impurities,

But when we were little did we care?

No, we wouldn't even stare,

So what if we went back...,

Back to when we were outgoing, happy and  
confident,

When we couldn't care less what people thought  
of us,

Because we were never taught to be embarrassed  
by being ourselves,

So why are we?

I hate you, you suck, any of these words sound  
familiar?

One day they will sound unfamiliar ■

# LIVE SIMPLY SO OTHERS MAY SIMPLY LIVE

---

Maksim Vukasovic · Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond

To live simple, simply live it means to be easy and as much time as it needs to wonder and even think about some things. It means to be not complicated and use as much time as you need but the only thing you don't do is rush.

Many people may wonder what live simple, simply live means. Many people do not live quite simple as meant to. Some people worry too much about the hard stuff in life instead of the simple stuff in life.

These people make things like irrelevant things and make them really hard and these people make themselves unhappy and stressed out which is the opposite of what live simply, simply live means.

To live simple, simply live is to spend time with your family and friends, and all the other people in life that you cherish or they cherish you, it's the matter of fact that you are taken care of and to be loved.

Stuff like this is being kind, nice, helpful and sometimes even a tiny bit lazy. How to live simply, simply live. Just think positive feel nice enjoy yourself, also to make others feel the same all you gotta do is show kindness.

If you want to live simply do some mind calming things as well like new hobbies, hobbies things that calm you. These hobbies can be sports, reading and sleeping and maybe music and there are heaps of other hobbies out there.

To simply live well what you gotta do is be more organized and show some kindness. Also to simply

live is sometimes to take the shortcut through stuff like sometimes ignore stuff and let life do it's thing by just solving things in its quickest way.

Some people who don't know what I'm talking about what I mean is don't go too far and put yourself in stress. Take it easy and ask what you need to answer your life's questions – simplify what you need to do.

What I mean is do not stress and make yourself angry but you gotta feel as happy as possible and be happy with what you have and don't think too much things are vital and really matter.

Also one other reason is don't copy other people because then you will make yourself very stressed and you can use your own methods if you want to feel good or in other words, great.

Enjoy your life with even the smallest and the easiest things in life some of these things don't actually have to be material they can be love and kindness and hope that is simple.

People that have too much things often throw them out or barely use them and let them rot in some hidden place where they have probably forgotten all about the thing, and once they find out they get stressed.

I hope you enjoyed my page about the quote that shall relive life as you know it this quote is "live simply, simply live."

*Live Simply So Others May Simply Live*  
– Mahatma Gandhi ■



**Kristie Gojak**  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Sidney Chapman**  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Luca Cacace**  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Phoebe Bull**  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Ruby Kerger**  
*Year 5 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Sadie Thomas**  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



Olivia Poulus, Jessica Leigh and Imogen Vine  
*Year 4 · St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond*



**Elisha Ralston**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*



**Jeremy Georges**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*



**Gaunit Schrawat**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's College*

---

*Untitled*

---

My painting is about bloodhounds who have mutated and are taking over the world. It is apocalyptic. Sometimes life is not simple.



**Madison Francis**  
*Year 11 · St. Peter's College*

---

*Untitled*

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Anyieth Majok and Reia Din · Year 7 · St. Peters College

Papa told me not to cry  
But the feeling felt like fire  
A tear slowly dropped beneath my eye  
My mother was everything I had admired.

She was the most loving mother and wife  
Always wearing a warm smile and reading me  
stories at bedtime.  
She had said one day in her tender voice 'lead a  
simple life,  
And treasure the people you love, not anything  
else, All the time'.

Although it felt like I had lost everything,  
The haunting Memories of her didn't disappear  
Remembering her gentle voice and the song she  
used to sing  
I just wish that she was with me; here

People told me it would be okay,  
That the pain that was pulling me down  
WOULD GO AWAY.  
BUT HOW WOULD THEY KNOW? THIS  
MISERY COULD MAKE ME DROWN...

I know I've lost my way  
And all control of the thoughts swirling in my  
head.  
I stay inside most of the days  
My room dark, not a sound, I lay down on my  
bed.

It took some time to feel good  
But gradually the wide, dark hole in my heart  
went away.  
Darkness formed into light and I finally  
understood,  
Even though she was gone, she was always a part  
of my days.

I CAN HEAR her in my mind, the whisper of her  
words,  
The beautiful woman I called mother, who was  
always ready to love and give.  
Looking up to the calming, mysterious sky and  
the colourful birds  
I remember her inspiring last words; "live simply  
my darling and simply live". ■

# LIVE SIMPLY AND SIMPLY LIVE

---

Pruthvi Perera · Year 12 · St. Peters College

A privilege a first world country own  
But where is this really shown  
By the war torn people of Syria  
The starving people of Africa  
The people blinded by politics in Sri Lanka  
And then there is us in Australia  
Half the population complain  
When the whole world is literally below  
No problems yet high rates of suicide

High rates of depression and oppression  
Going into a life of crime  
When all opportunities are given  
To work and earn  
To earn and work  
If we wore their shoes for just 1 hour  
Not even one day, just one hour  
We would learn to  
Live simply and Simply live ■

# WHO AM I?

---

Latesha Franks · Year 7 · St. Peters College

This person.  
This person has a head of hair like fire and eyes  
like trees.  
This person is short and skinny.  
This person has freckles and pimples like anyone  
else.  
This person dresses like anyone else.  
This person fits into society like anyone else.  
This person may seem ordinary to the plain eye,  
but she is really a superhero in disguise.

This person is constantly honest and has a heart  
full of gold.  
This person caring and kind.  
This person is always right and is so intelligent.  
This person loves me more than anything in this  
world.  
This person can forgive and forget.  
This person knows how to live.  
This person is my mum and I love her to bits! ■



**Tara Schneeweiss**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

---

*'Father and Child' – Appropriation of Gustav Klimt's Mother and Child, Studio Arts*



**Talia Smiton**  
*Year 9 · Aquinas College*



Tara Schneeweiss  
Year 11 · Aquinas College

# SPOTTY DRESS

---

Ellie Gangemi · Year 10 · Aquinas College

The dress. That one dress.  
Loved by a lady  
From every sting of every raindrop  
From every glow of sunlight  
Every piece of dust that may have laid upon it  
The love will never fade away  
Worn from day to day  
More and more special every year  
Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring,  
It will forever be the same.  
Hanging on a hanger

The dress' spotty material  
Dancing in the darkness.  
Just wanting light  
Wanting warmth on it again  
Holding the dress, I feel the love pour into my  
soul,  
I see her smile, as though she is back  
The soft touch of the dress as though butterflies  
are fluttering  
Against my finger tips.  
The love of my Great Grandma, touching my  
soul. ■



**Megan Benning**  
*Year 11 · Aquinas College*

---

*'Memory' 3D landscape, Studio Arts*



**Laura Peterson**  
*Year 9 · Aquinas College*



**Phoebe Bengough**  
*Year 12 · Aquinas College*

---

*Studio Arts*

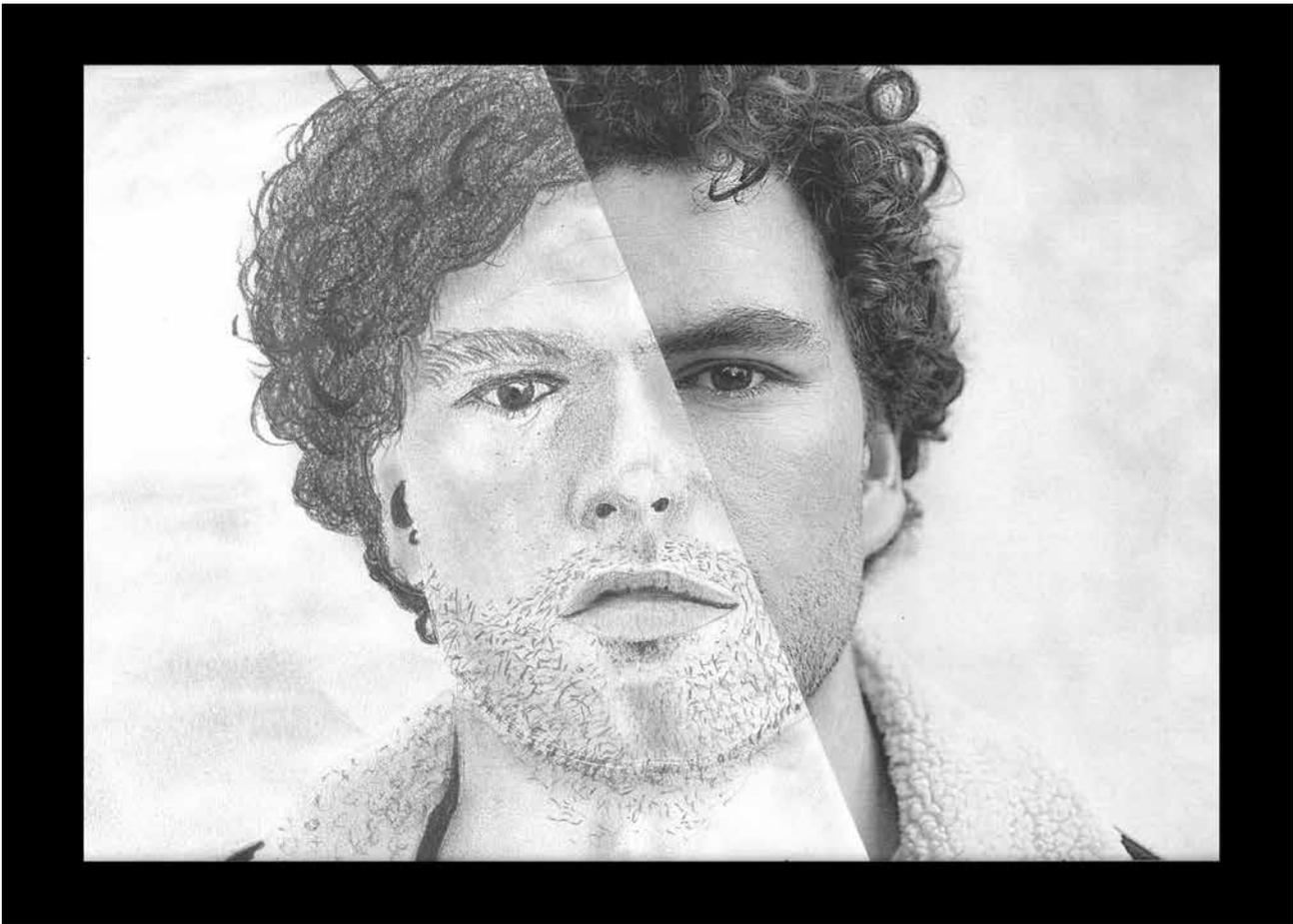


**Bethany Manders**  
*Year 10 · Aquinas College*



**Madeline Clark**  
*Year 12 · Aquinas College*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Studio Arts*



Ben Teede  
 Year 11 · Xavier College



Ben Teede  
 Year 11 · Xavier College

# EASIER SAID THAN DONE

---

Olivia Russo · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

The rattling of muskets never seems to end,  
My brothers in arms, either wounded or dead.  
*Colonel, Colonel, We cannot go on,*  
*You better get moving, or you'll get killed, son.*

The ringing in my ears, the pounding in my chest,  
The nightmares of my fears, I doubt will ever take rest.  
I see the sun arising, I see the red and orange streaks,  
I see the stars begin to fade, on the other side of the  
mountain peak.

*Colonel, Colonel, We've lost half our men,*  
*Are you fit to fight? So, kill the Turks then.*  
My brother, my mates, my uncle and son,  
Won't know that I've died, until this 'Great War' is done.

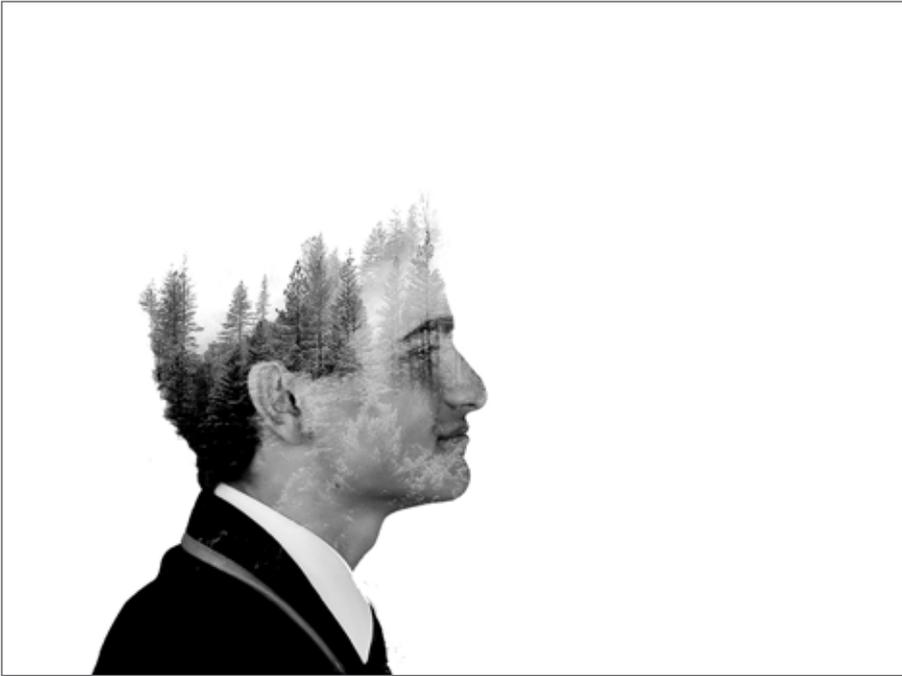
Live simply, simply live.  
Easier said than done.  
There's no more blood or sweat to give,  
I'll never live to know if we ever won. ■

# WANTING TO LIVE SIMPLY

---

Michaela Wood · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

As I look beyond the rolling hills,  
This beautiful atmosphere makes my heart fill.  
As I sit and watch the dragonflies dance,  
The beautiful world makes me want to prance.  
As I lie, the daisies cover me, giving me a hug  
Now, I feel so nice and so very snug.  
My day is bright as a light and it makes me want to write  
It makes me want to live simply. ■



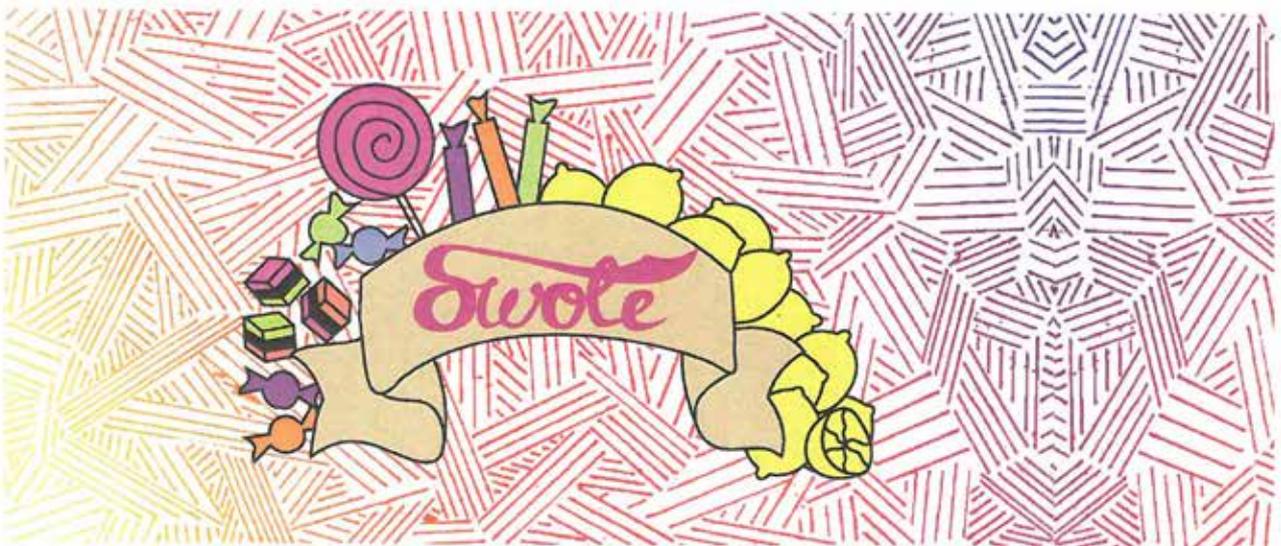
**Thomas Giannatos**  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*



**Campbell Jordan**  
*Year 9 · Xavier College*



Angus Matthews  
Year 10 · Xavier College



Samuel Kanizay  
Year 11 · Xavier College



Pat Sommerville  
*Year 10 · Xavier College*



Christian Montagner  
Year 9 · Xavier College



**Jade DeClase**  
*Year 6 · St James Primary School, Brighton*

*Abstract tree*



**Eliza Howat**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Eliza Howat**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Carla Galvin**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Larissa Gioffre**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Georgina Kiernan**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Matisse Cuce**  
*Year 12 · Star of the Sea College*

# THE JOURNEY TO RIO

---

Marie Lambropoulos-Agelina · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

**M**AYDAY! MAYDAY! WE'RE GOING DOWN!!

*Everything spinning, everyone screaming, and then, Nothing.*

“Man i’m so keen for Brazil tonight, what time’s our flight?”

“Erm 7:30. I’m pretty sure,” I remarked.

Angelique assured me that she would be packed before we had to leave to meet everyone at the airport, but just as I expected she wasn’t. I had to drive all the way to her place just for her to be sitting on the couch stuffing her face with a cake saying, “yeah I’m almost done”.

Me standing there in disgust and packing seventy five percent of her bag just so we could make our flight on time. The one generous thing she did was call the uber. But she sent the uber to Brooklyn, WE LIVE IN QUEENS!

As I yelled at her frantically “HURRY UP WE ARE GOING TO MISS OUR FIGHT!”

She stood there in panic, pacing up and down the hallway mumbling to herself,

Her shaking hand gave me the phone and I quickly called another ride.

“You’re lucky that the next ride is only 3 minutes away,” I snapped at her.

I was praying the traffic wasn’t going to be bad because we were already ten minutes behind. But no, as I expected, traffic into the airport was madness.

“What, is it summer everywhere?” I was thinking.

“Could you just drop us here,” I said doubtfully to our driver.

He was happy to do anything if he was getting paid, so we left on foot with twenty-five minutes till our flight. I could see the concern on Angelique’s face with about 30 missed calls from Joey, Amber and José. We quickly called them in panic, “where are you guys we’re at gate four”

The response I heard over the phone almost gave me a heart attack

“Gate four? We are at gate fourTEEN!”

We dropped everything and ran up to an official on a mini kart and asked, “do you mind if you could take us to gate fourteen” In the kindest little voice I’ve ever heard come out of Angelique’s mouth. Lucky it worked and next thing I know we’re on a mini kart to Gate fourteen.

The first thing is Joey, Amber and José all standing there with their bags. Angelique and I sprinted up to them just to find out that our flight has been delayed half an hour.

“What why!” wept Angelic

“Some engine failure,” growled José

“At least Angelique and I can relax now for a little,” I sighed.

Half hour passed and as we were all talking and cracking jokes we were cut off by the loudspeaker, “flight 757 to Rio De Janeiro now boarding”

We all shot up out of our seats and ran into line. Walking down that tunnel into the plane was the best feeling after all that we had been through. Just to top it off I get the window seat. As I look out I can see the mechanics still looking at the faulty engine, which made me feel slightly uneasy but they wouldn’t let us fly if it wasn’t alright, right? The thought passed me and now we were ready for take-off, I was ready for my eight hours of sleep. At least I thought.

I woke up to the sound of everyone screaming, with flight attendants trying to calm the passengers down. I looked over to my left and screamed frantically, “Guys what’s happening!”

“LOOK OUT YOUR WINDOW, LOOK!”

I looked out and saw smoke covering everything: “IT’S THE ENGINE, IT’S THE ENGINE” I screamed. The whole plane shook and air masks popped out. I looked to my left to see everyone’s face one last time. I looked back to my right to see the engine in flames.

*The whole plane spinning, the screams getting louder and louder.*

*With my mask on I close my eyes for forever it felt like, then all went silent. ■*



**Chantelle Bird**  
*Year 11 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

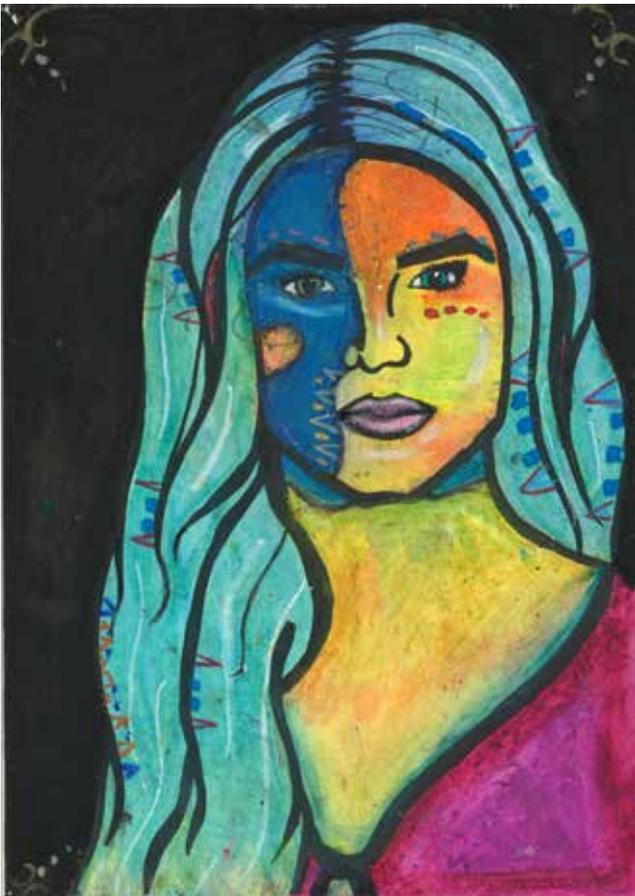
*Mixed Media*



**Ayva Duddington**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Rylee McNamara**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

---

*Untitled*

# BURNING QUEEN

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Millie James · Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

Screams echoed through the blazing landscape. Thousands of flaming birds were fleeing towards a dark forest in the distance, closely pursued by a single dark red phoenix. Its crimson wings were light with flames, its claws poised to attack. It screeched and chased a lone phoenix that was heading towards the unclaimed forest. In its talons was a red egg with gold and orange streaks on it. The crimson bird stretched out his talons and swooped forward to swipe at the egg, scratching its surface. The other one, with its fragile luggage, screeched and tried to speed up. Its wings flapping frantically. The chaser let out a cry.

“Drop that egg!” He screeched and lashed at the other again. It kept flying and clutching the egg as tight as it could without smashing it, a burst of flames hurtled toward the fleeing phoenix, it let out a mournful cry.

The bird dropped the egg into the soft canopy below.

“I’m sorry I failed you all!” He screeched and released the egg.

Moments after he was engulfed in flames. His screech of terror cut off abruptly. The crimson bird screeched and dived after it, reaching out his talons to catch it, but it slipped and fell into the soft canopy below. Assuming the precious object would’ve smashed during the fall he flew away and continued his assault on the other fleeing phoenixes.

Meanwhile, a mother falcon was tending to her own clutch of eggs, although only one remained. A pair of raccoons had stolen the two other eggs several days ago, as a result of this her grief was strong, but she still knew her last egg needed her. Overhead she could hear the hauntingly beautiful cries of the phoenixes and guessed there was chaos at the kingdom again.

They had a bad queen. The falcon had moved to the unclaimed forest when she had started brooding her eggs, she wanted them to be safe. There was screech above her and she looked up.

Two firebirds were doing what looked like a dance. One had something clutched in its talons. There was a last, desperate escape attempt and then...

“Drop the egg!” One screeched and the other let out a saddened cry and dropped the bundle in his talons.

Moments later, he disappeared in a frenzy of flames. The falcon looked at the falling bundle and darted out before it hit the ground.

She looked at the small egg in her talons; it was reddish with orange streaks. She blinked at it and carried it to her nest; It looked odd next to her shiny, smaller brown egg but she did not care. Another hatchling needed her... Maybe it always would. ■

# MISSED

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Keely Jones · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

The footy was blasting out of the radio, driving fast down the quite highway late at night. “I can’t wait to see the dogs!” Emma shouted out to her dad over the radio. Emma and her brother Jacob had just stayed a week at their grandparent’s house for the holidays. Their dad had just come to pick them up after returning from a funeral. Emma’s mum was staying at an old friend’s house for the night while the family travelled back home.

They pulled up into their driveway, Emma rushed to the front door where she saw her dog Scooby, sitting there, alone. Emma called out to her dad, “Dad! The dogs escaped, Scooby’s here but Max isn’t!”

“Quickly open the door, let Scooby in then go have a look for Max!” Emma’s dad yelled from the car. Emma rushed inside, got a torch then quickly returned outside.

An hour had passed, and Emma was still outside calling out “Max, Max!” As the night got later the colder Emma became until she could feel the cold frost nipping on her nose and ears. Another half hour went passed but nothing happened, there wasn’t a bark in the distance, no dog quickly running up to Emma’s feet. Emma Returned back inside sobbing, her dad rushed to her and comforted her until she fell asleep.

Morning came and there was still no sign of Max, Emma kept going through different situations that

might have happened that made her quietly cry to herself. She then brought herself to hope that Max had just been picked up by a person and he was nice, warm and safe. Emma got up and left the house with Scooby in search for Max. They walked around the block calling out.

An hour or two later Emma and Scooby returned to the house, they went inside had a break then went back outside, by that point Emma’s dad had left to go and do a job for a mate. Emma and Scooby walked out the back and under the wire fence into the neighbour’s backyard. The block didn’t have a house on it but had a busy highway at the front.

Suddenly Emma saw a small white speck in the distance. She slowly walked over to investigate until she stopped in despair, it was Max and Emma calling his name, “Max! Max!” hoping he was just asleep and would get up and start sprinting to her, but nothing happened. She rushed over to where he lay, got onto her knees and cried. She held his tiny lifeless face in her hand and cried while sobbing the words, “I’m sorry” into his ear.

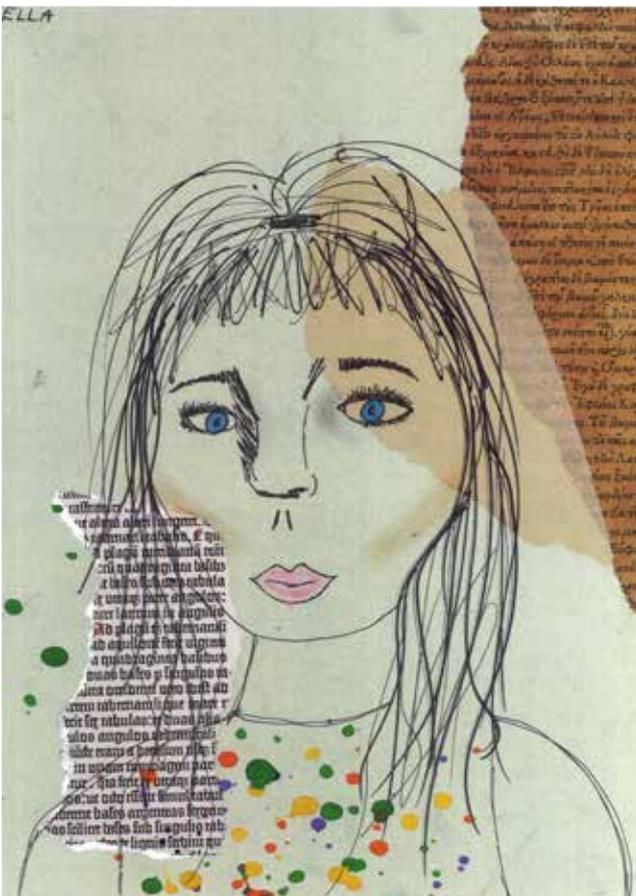
Emma and Scooby ran back to the house, Emma still crying into her hands, she rushed into the house and told her brother to call her dad and tell him to return as quickly as possible. She sat on the cold concrete floor crying into her hands, feeling the cold salty tears quickly rolling down her face while clenching Scooby close to her chest. ■



**Beau Morgan**  
*Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



**Chelsea Lawn**  
*Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College*

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*Untitled*



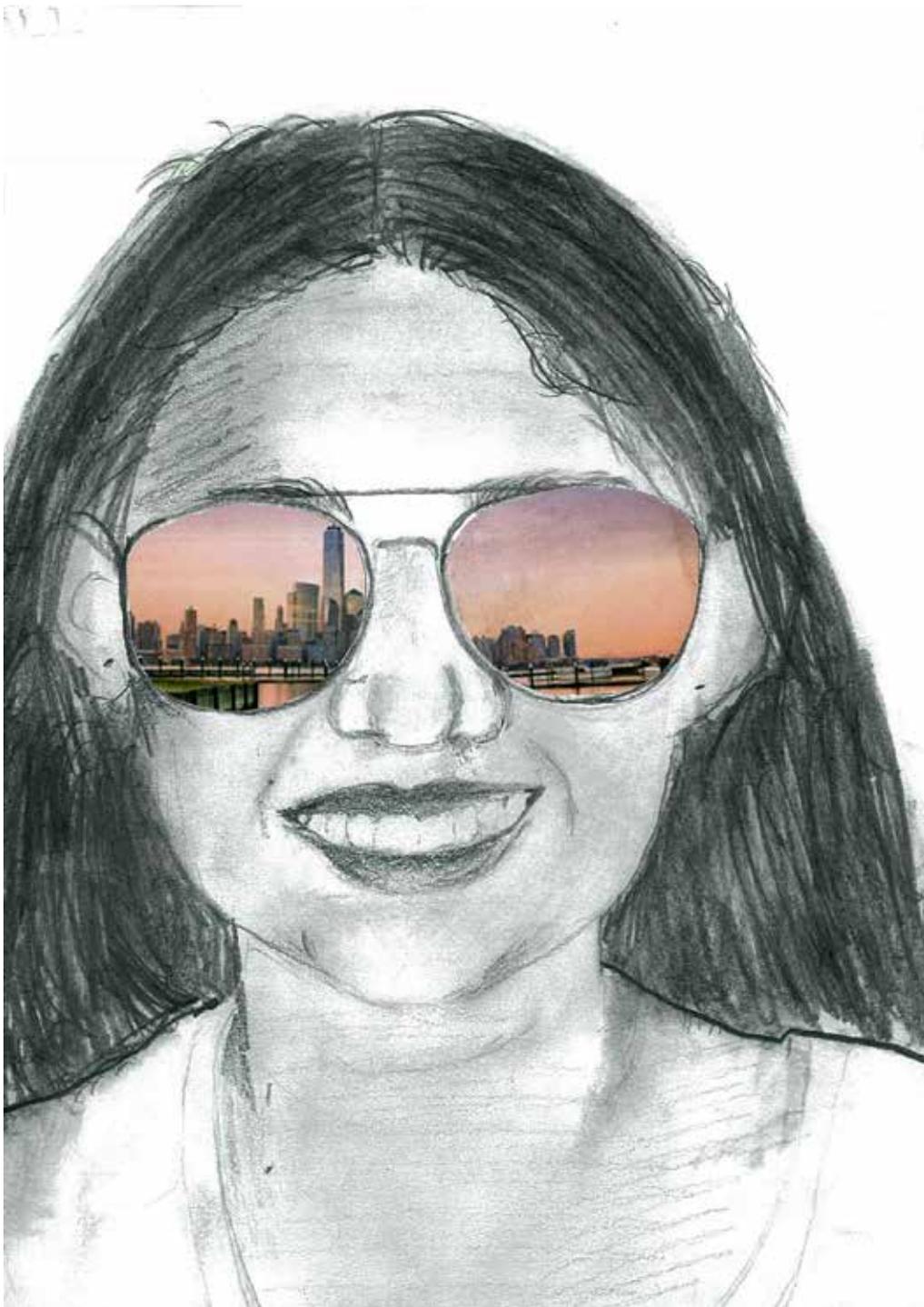
Charlotte Declerck  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



Abbey Francis  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Genevieve Walker**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Mercedes Harraca**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Lucy Angus**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Phoebe Rizzi**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Isabel Engel**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*

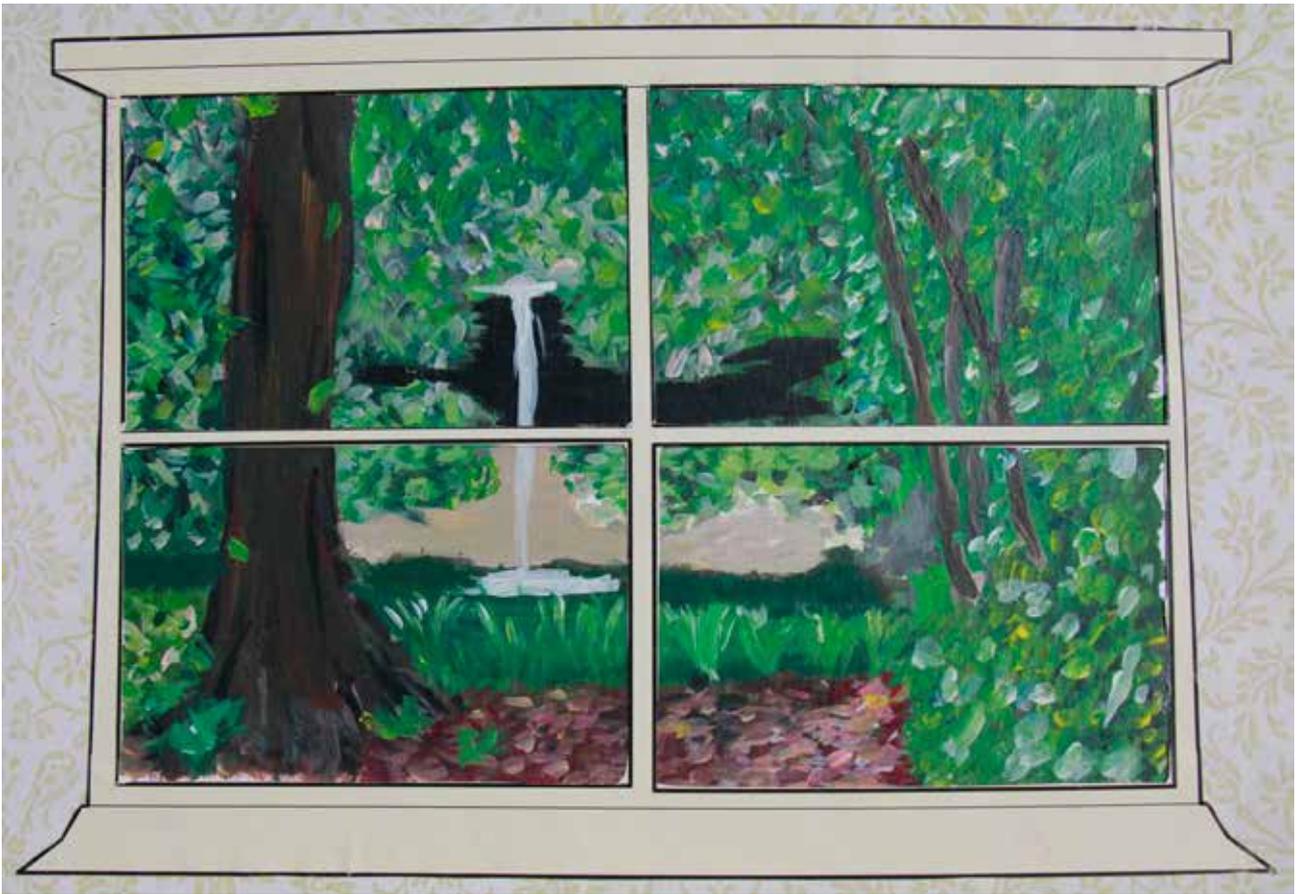


**Neve Murray**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*

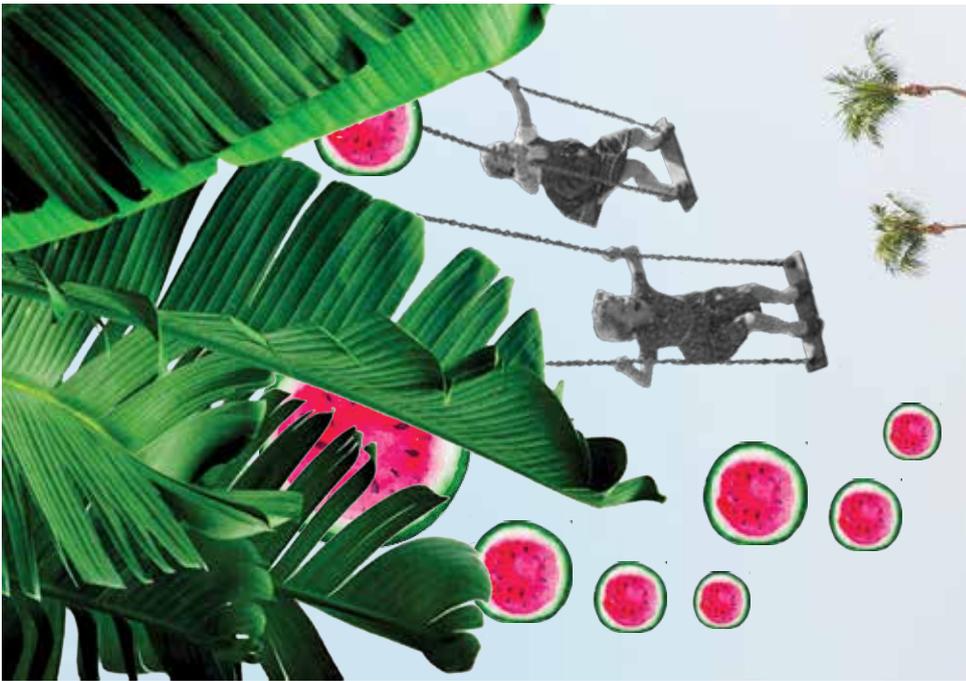
My Surrealist Artwork is about telling girls all around the world that you can be anything you want, do anything you want and explore everywhere. Even though society hasn't always given us equal rights to men we can be anything we want. From an ordinary person to an astronaut that explores the universe. You should strive to reach your goals and always remember to acknowledge your achievements no matter how big or small.



Demi Ziourkos  
 Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



**Maddie Pacquola**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



L V S M L  
I E I P Y,  
S M L L V  
I P Y I E.



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If you really look, there's always time in our busy lives, to find time for simple things - the things that help us remember to breathe and to see how wonderful life is. What simple thing can you do today, that might take you just a moment, to be still, to feel calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit?

FIND INSPIRATION AT  
[WWW.LIVESIMPLY.COM.AU](http://WWW.LIVESIMPLY.COM.AU)



### Live simply, simply live.

If you really look, there's always time in our busy lives, to find time for simple things - the things that help us remember to breathe and to see how wonderful life is.

What simple thing can you do today that might take just a moment, to be still, to feel calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit?



TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Find inspiration at [www.livesimply.com.au](http://www.livesimply.com.au)

# TWISTS AND TURNS

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Tiffany Huynh · Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Ring! Ring! I groaned as I turned to stop my alarm. My hand slapped the button and slowly I woke up. I got changed into my school clothes and walked down the brown stairs. My mum greeted me with a smile on her face, “Hey Sarah! How are you?” I smiled at her and replied thoughtfully, “I’m a bit tired... but I am ready for my first day in Year 9 at Sunbury Secondary College!” I walked towards the kitchen and got the cereal box out of the cupboard. As I poured the cereal into the bowl, I thought to myself, ‘Will I make good choices or will I make bad ones, like last time?’

I want you to know that I have led a very complicated life. Last year, I was stressed over my homework, on top of all the other after school activities I juggled. I often get to school late, and am very forgetful, which leads to bad endings. Once, I missed the bus to camp because I was up all night studying for my Science exam, and I simply forgot that we were heading to camp in the morning. On another occasion, I was in after school care, just me, and it caught on fire! My life is so complex, however, I know now that there’s one way to live a happy life – just live simply, simply live. I had not done that and now I regret it.

I messed up big time! I struggled to keep my academic records high last year. I was involved in many fights and incidents. There was this bully at school called Brook Grant. He normally walked around the school with his two so called ‘minions’, Fred Asrent and Cole Raymond. Cole has brown hair that sways in his face. He has broad shoulders and is very strong. No-one would want to mess with him. On the other hand, Fred is very tall. He has hair that is always cut real short. His tongue wisps out rude remarks and comments. He is also a technology expert and a great pranker. I still hate those guys. Luckily, I am not the only one. We had been planning to get revenge for the horrendous jokes and abuse we encountered. This got me into so much trouble that I had to work extra hard just to keep up with my schoolwork and classmates.

It all started with the House Team Viridi – green. Fred, Cole and Brook were all in Viridi. My best friend Olivia and I were in the same House Team Blusento – blue. The other Houses included Rubrum – red and Yelloisa – yellow. Rubrum had a big fight with Viridi about a school uniform. Rubrum believed we should have a uniform and Viridi disagreed. There was an argument in the hallway every time the students had a free period. Innocent students would always get the blame for starting the arguments whenever teachers asked

Fred, Brook or Cole what was going on. “Hey Miss Hannah, it wasn’t me who started it! It was... the boy over there, the one with the glasses reading the book ‘Maths for Geniuses!’ He is trying to get away with it. Get him!” Brook would typically say, deceitfully. Of course, his two minions would then come and take him away. Brook had struck most of the students at the school and was enemies with the school board. Once, he had even struck me!

On that particular day, I was casually walking down the bustling hallway, talking to my best friend, Olivia and my friend Vivian who was usually on holiday, about our exciting new science teacher, who replaced the old and cranky Mr. Gates. Our new science teacher had initially worked at the school as the school’s janitor before getting a promotion. He was teaching us about the laws of space and explosions.

“So is he fun? Will I enjoy his class?” Vivian asked.

“Certainly!” we both replied enthusiastically.

The hallway started to clear out as we walked to our next class, History. We entered the classroom, thinking about the National MESHP, that is, the Mathematics, English, Science, History and Physical Education competition. These subjects were the National Standard Electives for Year 8. The competition was compulsory for every student in High School. It is a huge achievement for any school to have its name on the National Honour Roll, so our school was pushing us to be in the top ten. We have never been in the top ten, or fifty for that matter. We have always been the 61st top school in the Nation, something I think we should be proud of, but now the aim was to make the top ten!

“Grant! Pay attention! We are learning about Sir Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister of Australia who made a huge impact on our lives. If you fail this exam, on Sir Edmund Barton, then you will get an F, including five Saturday detentions, a visit to the principal’s office and a suspension!” Mr. Gilberts explained with a raised voice, his face as red as beetroot. Brook’s face looked as though he had seen a ghost. “For once...” he whispered to the whole class before turning to face Mr. Gilberts’ very agitated face, “I will listen to y-yo-you. I actually need an A or B to be able to try out for St. Richard’s College. I have to ace this exam if the college is to allow me to try out. Please can you continue?” Brook asked politely. Mr. Gilberts was fuming with anger. He dismissed the class as soon as Fred and Cole started acting immaturely pretending that Brook’s polite orders made them sick.

We all headed to the canteen for lunch where I spotted Vivian. “Hey Vivian! Seen your new teacher, Mr. Sears yet? He is funny right? Best teacher ever!” I said excitedly. “He was amazing! I walked out of the classroom gobsmacked. He was just...WOW!” Vivian cried. Everyone turned to look at her. We quickly walked out. I had planned the ultimate revenge on Brook Grant. I planned on tampering with Brook’s answers to the quiz and I was desperate to share my plan with Vivian.

Before long, we all sat the exam and I eventually followed through with my plan. I had fumbled with the key to the test room and upon entry I started circling random answers. I really didn’t want to be in this situation, but to guarantee Brook failing, it was necessary.

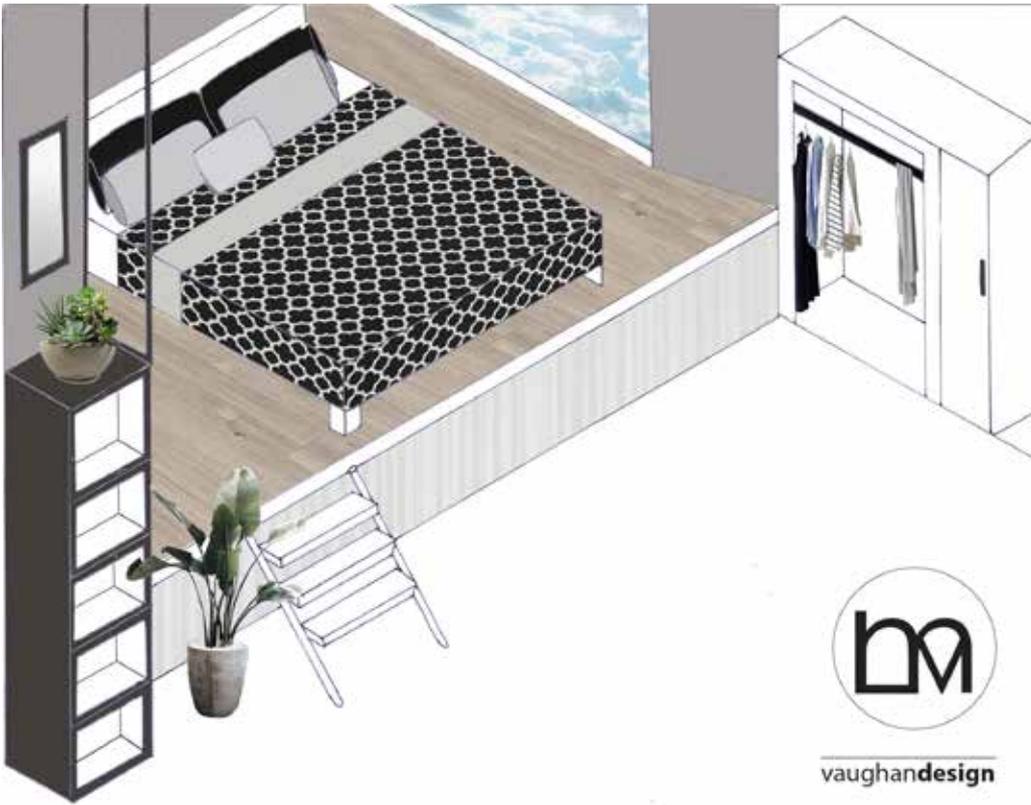
At the following history lesson, Brook was bawling

his eyes out because he had failed his exam, receiving a 3 out of 100. Fortunately, our eyes were full of happy tears from laughter. We were all glad he couldn’t try out for the college of his choice. Well, that was the highlight. The lowlight was that I got expelled because I had apparently broken the school dress code the week before as well as the student code of conduct.

“Sarah? Hello...Are you there?” my mum asked sarcastically. I had blanked out momentarily, having flashbacks of both good and bad memories. My bad experiences in particular taught me so much. Seeking revenge and breaking the rules gets you nowhere, it just adds to a busy, stressful life. I was so glad to be starting fresh at a new High School today, with a positive attitude and a new set of goals that were going to simplify my life. ■



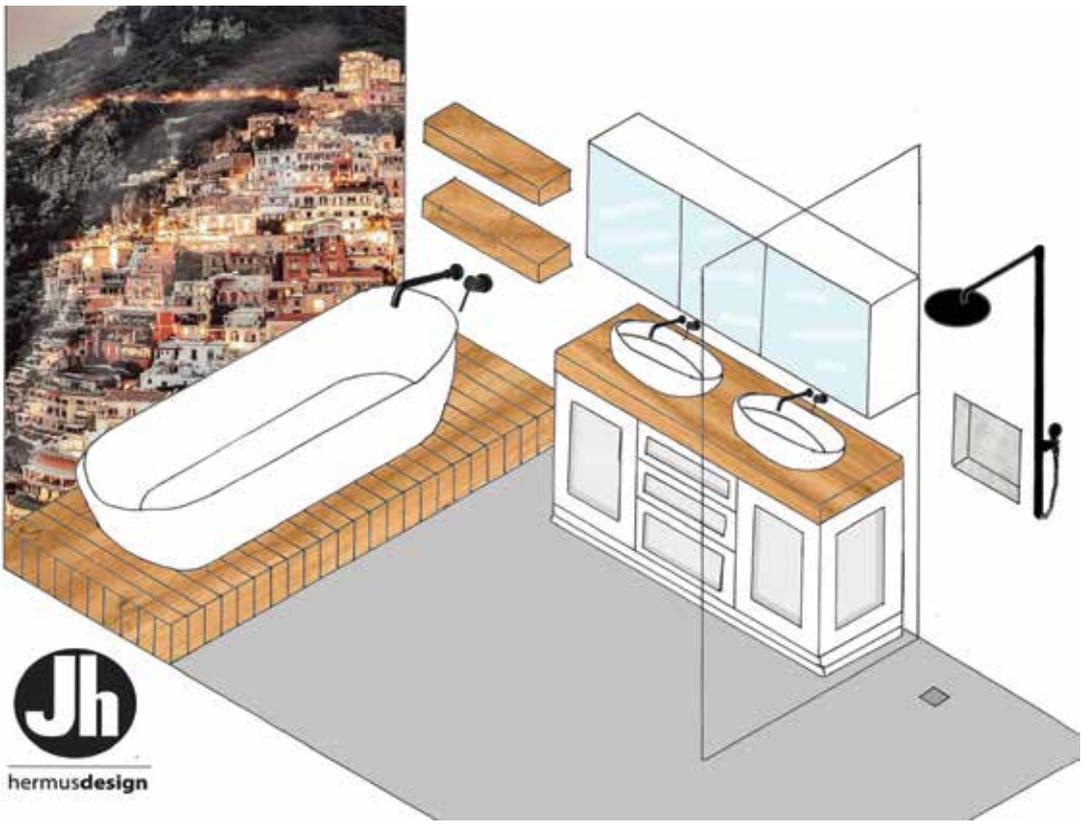
**Melissa D'Este**  
*Year 7 · Star of the Sea College*



**Lucy Vaughan**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



**Georgia Smith**  
*Year 10 · Star of the Sea College*



Jessica Hermus  
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College



Mia Gojak  
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

# IS IT THE END?

---

Savannah Smith · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

I woke up this morning,  
the sun's comforting, warm blaze put a smile on  
my face.  
The wind brushed past my fresh grass.  
I felt alive. I felt like I belonged.  
Oh how we live simply, oh how we simply live.

I woke up this morning  
my trees falling, hitting the ground, harshly  
hitting the ground, the ground, the ground.  
My heart skipped a beat.  
They trampled on me like I'm nothing, like I'm  
nothing.  
Can they try to live simply? Can they try to  
simply live?

I woke up this morning  
a throbbing pain stabbing me, stabbing me. It was  
a flag, their flag saying I was theirs,  
but I wasn't theirs.  
I wanted to scream, I wanted to cry, I wanted to  
erupt.  
But I didn't, I didn't.  
I wish they could live simply, I wish they could  
simply live.

I woke up this morning  
A part of me was gone.  
I was covered with something I couldn't  
control.  
It was solid, it was grey, it wasn't mine, it was  
theirs, a building saying THIS IS MINE,  
But I wasn't theirs, I wasn't and I never would  
be.  
It made my stomach rot.  
These people need to live simply! These  
people need to simply live!

I woke up this morning  
Suffocating, Suffocating from all the buildings  
and walls.  
Oh how I will miss the sun's comforting,  
warm blaze putting a smile on my face.  
The wind brushing past my fresh grass.  
Feeling alive. Feeling like I belonged.  
How we lived simply, oh how we simply  
lived.  
But now I knew it was the end, the end.  
I felt my body shiver, I felt my body churn,  
I was gone. ■

# IF ONLY

---

Francesca Imbriano · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Tears roll down my cheeks.  
My teeth chatter and my body shivers.  
Is this what my life has come to?  
My blue and white striped clothes weigh me  
down while I stand in the rain watching the  
water drop down from the sky.  
No shelter, no kindness, no escape.  
Why won't they just accept us for who we are?  
Why can't they just leave us alone?  
My blue armband with a white star burns on my  
wrist.

If I didn't have it, would my life be different?  
Could I have stayed with mum and dad, cuddling  
the cat in front of the fire?  
Memories like these are slipping my mind as all  
hope fades away.  
Like a candle being extinguished.  
If only this never happened.  
If only they could accept us.  
If only they would leave us alone.  
If only... ■

# THE SHADOWS

---

Max Barbary · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

The shadows creeping up on me. My fears come  
out to play. Don't make a noise, they'll find me!  
Listening to people getting dragged into the  
darkness.  
Should I make a move?  
I know they see me. They're hiding in the vents, in  
the roof.

Can't drift away... they'll grab me!  
As I start to walk down the hall it gets darker.  
Now I'm on their turf.  
Can't see them, but they can see me! I've nothing  
to protect me.  
It's all over. They've crept up behind me. Now I'm  
in the darkness, like everyone else... ■

# SNOWFALL

---

Dakota Cox · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

The cold, dry wind brushes back and forth  
against my body.  
I feel the gloomy air and lower my eyes as I see  
the sleepy windmill going round and round  
taking its time.  
The piercing air that almost cuts through to my  
bones.  
The white snow, as soft as a fluffy cloud.

The striking misty air almost blinds me, my tight  
winter boots leaving deep footprints behind me  
with every step I take.  
The light, delicate trees catch my attention as little  
specks of snow sink off them.  
A slight shiver dashes along my body...  
I can't wait until summer. ■

# FEAR

---

Ned Fisher · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

As I step on the train I see them.  
They are all staring at me.  
The butterflies in my tummy are going nuts.  
Every stop more and more of them are getting on.  
The adrenaline is crazy.  
My hope is fading away.  
How are we going to do?

As we walk down the long path with 90,000  
other people,  
the nerves are kicking in.  
We have a chance.  
The roar is like a lion  
We have finally arrived at the MCG.  
Now go on Hawks, beat those Tigers! ■

# WAR

---

Mary-Jane Hudson · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

My hand wobbled  
As the pen reached the paper  
I scarcely write my name in black letters  
Then I got my gun, my gun.

The boat creaked  
My legs wobble  
I feel sea sick  
So I drink from my bottle

The boat reached a tall cove  
The Turkish were there  
Then we climbed to the top  
Then I lifted my gun, my gun

I pulled the trigger  
The bullet went flying  
It hit a soldier  
I knew he was dying

I turned my head  
And ran through the battlefields  
Looked back at the man, blood was  
flowing  
Then I lowered my gun, my gun

I dodge through the gunfire and hide in the  
bushes  
I remember my family at home  
My brother, my sister and mother & father  
I wish that I never left them alone

A bullet had hit me  
I screamed with pain  
When blood started flowing  
I knew I was done

I wish that I never shot with my gun, my  
gun. ■

# A SIMPLE RIDDLE

---

Felix Morfeld · Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

I wear no shoes.  
I have scruffy hair.  
Every day of my life I walk on dirt.  
My home is dark, but you can't blame us there's  
no such thing as lights.  
The only thing I eat is meat.  
The only thing I drink is water.  
The only activity is climbing a tree after a long  
day of hunting.  
Who am I?  
Simple! I'm a caveman!

My shoes are nice.  
I drive to school.  
My hair is neat.  
My lunch is all ready,  
I have a proper uniform.  
My home is bright because we have a light, and  
so many more.  
I'm warm, and sometimes I'm a little too warm.  
There are so many things to do, I can watch my  
favourite movies over and over again.  
I have yummy food.  
Who am I?  
Simple! I'm a boy with a simple life. ■

# THE CAMPING TRIP

---

Ella Deleu · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

The sound of Mum and Dad talking about camping was horrifying, who wants to be in the middle of nowhere with no service (NO PHONES!) and no Menulog or Uber Eats! What kind of holiday was this? Oh and did I mention that there's no toilets, seriously I wasn't looking forward to this so called family holiday. It was more like torture to me!

Three days had passed by and I was starting to actually enjoy this experience. Mum made this thing called damper, it was amazing and it sort of tasted like really good bread. Then we went on a hike and that was amazing. It wasn't like the city with car noises, ringtones and there was nobody in

sight. All you could hear were the birds chirping, the waves crashing and trees rustling. The water, it glittered in the sun and it was crystal clear.

I planned to go sunbaking and work on my tan, but the water was calling my name and I just had to go in. My mum taught me how to snorkel. I felt so relaxed and not a thought went through my mind. We hit day ten and I realised that there was only two days left, it had gone so fast. All my thoughts started to come back and I wasn't relaxed anymore. I asked Mum why we couldn't stay any longer because it was so short and she said...

"Because you begged me not to!" ■

# SLEEP

---

Isabel Cubelic · Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Sleep is simple as people say.

Well not for me!

Every night I go to bed with my head crashed  
onto the pillow.

In the morning my head is at the other end of the  
bed.

No.

Sleep is never going to be simple for me.

Why.

Because sleep loathes me.

Why.

I don't know why!

I try to count sheep but it never works.

Toss and turn, it never works.

Roll around, it never works.

Finally I get to sleep, but it's morning already ■

# FOOTBALL

---

James Harrington · Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Football is one easy game to play, so why don't  
you go play for a day!

Running on the field, enjoying the crowd, you can  
kick some goals and run around.

The game will start you pick up the ball, you can  
go in the ruck if you are tall.

You can 'don't argue' as much as you like go  
around the corner and kick a strike.

When you're on the bench you can drink  
Gatorade, if it is too sunny you can get some  
shade.

So football is one easy game to play, once again  
go play for a day! ■

# LIFE AS A DOG

---

Caroline Deguara · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

I am awake.  
I see my owner eating cake.  
I want cake, I want it badly  
But I'm tired and it makes me sadly.  
  
Then I remember it is time for the beach.  
I grab my ball but we are off to the mall.  
I beg and beg as hard as I can.  
Then he shakes and shakes and then I ran.

I know that means NO – why can't he just go  
with the flow?  
I really think he will have to grab me by the tail,  
but I know he will definitely fail.

My owner whistles  
I am awake again  
I am confused  
But almost amused  
But was it a dream or reality? ■

# SCHOOL

---

Lorenzo Imbriano · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

It is so boring I just got to school,  
I am telling you it's so boring it makes me drool.  
The heater is on it makes me sleep,  
Can't believe I'm at school, it makes me weep.  
I'm lying down in my chair,

Trying to stay awake playing with my hair.  
Then I wake up and it is still May,  
Turns out we had free time the entire day!  
I can't believe I missed all of that,  
It makes me so angry I snapped a bat! ■

# A MILLION FANS

---

Dylan Pfahl · Year 4  
St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

A million fans looking down at me,  
but all I can see is my family.  
I stride forward, I take a leap into the world.  
I feel the glory.  
I feel the rush.  
I sign the papers  
I sign the caps.  
My family is departing,  
It happened so quick.  
I wish I was there. ■

# CHERISH LIFE

---

Bella Sands · Year 4  
St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Making moments, sharing moments,  
Taking it in, making the most of it.  
  
Embracing life, cherish life,  
Nature, animals.  
  
Waking up to warm tea every morning,  
Walking my dog, being myself,  
  
Doing you, being grateful.  
Not worrying, trying your best ■

# THE LIFE OF 'OUR' PLANET

---

Saskia Marks · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

We are contributors to our own discomfort and conscious of our own despair. Yet we are unaware of the negative cause we are leaving on our earth.

Our world today is caught in a cycle of purchasing & discarding. We must become conscious of our actions before it is too late.

Relentless dread soon will be our destiny and day by day our grief will soon become unbearable. Though we are loved we will not love the earth, our planet, as we should until the time comes when it is out of our reach. ■

# WHEN IT ALL BEGAN

---

Holly McCann · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Life was alive, until the day they came.  
That was when it all began.  
The alarms. The rush. The feel. The pain!  
That was when it all began.  
The little things in life, the joy, it all ended when they came.  
They took aim. They stole.  
They destroyed our traditions, our homes, our lives.

That was when it all began.  
My head is bursting with thoughts. Is this what the world is coming to? Will it ever end?  
The loss of life shattered the happiness and the love of life.  
The shots of guns ring in my ears, as a salty tear drips down and gently touches my lip.  
This is when it all ended. ■

# CLOUDS

---

Belle Fisher · Year 2  
St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Gliding in the sky, I have got a birds eye view of everything living its life. I am lucky enough to have the sunshine on my back. When I'm grey, I let some tears down, that's when it rains. I float through the sky, I travel all around the world. At night I fall asleep under the bright light from the moon. In the morning I end up in a different place in the sky

*I am laying on the lush green grass I can see the clouds gliding in the sky slowly. It is calming, I could just fall asleep. A dog shape drifts past me, the wind moves the clouds. I wonder where the clouds next journey will be to? ■*

# WHAT I NEED

---

Eamonn Mee Kost · Year 4  
St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton

Cold, wet, but I have what I need.  
No one helps me, but I have a home.  
I don't have much, but at least we have each other.  
I am weak, but can stay strong.  
I am bad at things, but all I can do is try.  
I keep telling myself everything is alright.  
What I need is right here and I am happy  
It starts to rain. ■

# THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

Jordan Bassilious · Year 11 · Mazenod College

The piano. A musical instrument.

No. *More* than a musical instrument. An expression of the desire for perfection. The melody of the mind. A battle between the keys and the callous touch of the human hand. Softened only by expertise and practise. Mine? Impossibly soft. I had practised for years. I was a master of this craft. Yet even a master has much to learn.

I knew my worth. The judges at the concerts did not. They did not appreciate my music. Found it inferior to their own. Misinterpreted my faithfulness to the way music is meant to be played. Perceived it as a lack of imagination. Their failure to understand was their greatest crime. They have consigned me to a life of medicine. Deprived me of music. Bereaved the world of my excellence.

Unforgivable.

Nonetheless, my son would be perfect. He would carry on the inevitable cycle: Beethoven begat Czerny, Czerny begat Liszt, Liszt begat Lecherovsky, Lecherovsky begat Keller, Keller would beget Crabbe. He would heed Keller's teachings. I would ensure that he did. He may consider him a Nazi. But he is a child – he does not realise his ignorance.

Alas, I need not worry about him at this moment. It was my playing that presently filled the room. My grand piano that made the music. My expertise that would bring it into being.

Sitting, my hands danced across the keys of the piano. Creating music. Creating sound. Bringing forth beautiful melodies. Technically, it was perfect. I should know: I'd mastered Symphony No. 40 *years* ago. Eyelids feeling heavy, I allowed them to close. My hands knew where to go. Knew how to make use of this glorious measuring instrument. My ears reaffirmed the excellence of my symphony. A masterful performance. A grand orchestra. For an audience of one.

Two. The orchestra was now for two. I sensed the change. My ears no longer heard perfection. I heard another. I saw another.

“Should we play?”

The distinct sound of her mellow voice entered my ears. Extending an invitation to create music. Together. A hand on my shoulder. Gentle. Mild. Caring. Inviting me to accept the invitation.

“I suppose we must.”

Nancy. Her music flowed. It ran free. It disregarded technical constraints. It ran across the hills. Embracing the piano. Treating it like another limb

of the human body. I respected her music style. But it would never be the same as mine.

Hers is charming. Enjoyable. But never accurate. In this town where all the scum of the earth have risen, my playing is the only thing that brings me solace.

Simplicity.

Predictability.

Precision.

The qualities I value. The qualities Darwin cannot provide. The qualities only music can.

The playing began. Dulcet notes permeated the air. Pleasant? Of course. But far from how Symphony No. 40 is meant to be played. Mozart would be rolling in his grave.

I put an end to it. Reaffirming my expertise. Each octave, pitch change and press of the key: purposeful. Faithful to Mozart's timeless instructions, creating a crescendo of noise. Hands moving deftly, I established my dominance.

No longer. Nancy had taken control. An inaccurate note revealed my anger. She washed over my precision. Enveloped my music with a wave of tranquility. Changed the tide. Altered the piano's motion. Symphony No. 40 had been swept away. With a gust of wind, The Haydn took its place. I would not accept this. The jostling continued. I pulled away. Nancy turned to me. Questioning why the music had stopped.

A sigh left her lips.

“The D flat major?”

“No. The G minor.”

“The Allegro?”

“The Adagio.”

A reluctant nod. Signalling agreement. The playing resumed. Hands found their way to the piano. Even so, as we played the same song, our music was different. It was irreconcilable. A gulf separated our styles.

Her Adagio was not the same. Mine was measured. Exact. Hers – sloppy, but joyful. As with everything, we perceive it differently. We speak the same language. But our vocabularies come from different worlds.

To her, a dog represents licks. Games. Companionship.

To me? Cleaning mess off my shoes.

Music reclaimed my focus. The Adagio filled my mind. A hybrid. Sometimes faithful to the original. Other times, barely resembling the original. I need not explain which part belonged to who.

As swiftly as it began, the wave of music pulled into shore. The last notes reverberated around the room. Emptiness now replaced it. Without music, there was nothing. Nothing but an expression of lust in the bedroom. Both held this marriage together. Kept our lives intertwined.

The orchestra had finished. The sound replaced with a chuckle from Nancy. A stretch of the hands. A kiss on the cheek. Long, dark hair streaming

down my face. A whisper in the ear. Words that I refuse to repeat. A tug on my tie.

“Give me a minute.”

Another chuckle.

I abandoned the cool touch of the piano. Released myself from the leather stool. Walked to the bedroom. Acquainted my hand with the doorknob. Opened the door. Chased beams of light out of the room as it closed.

The ceremony would now begin. Our marriage would continue. ■

## OUR OWN DARKNESS

---

Imogen Ellenberger · Year 7 · *Star of the Sea College*

WE LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE THERE ARE  
LIES, TORTURE AND HURT.

WE COVER IT UP BY LYING TO OURSELVES.

BY THINKING THAT THE WORLD WON'T  
DIE BECAUSE OF US.

THE ANIMALS ARE DYING BECAUSE OF  
NATURAL CAUSES.

THE SEAS ARE POLLUTED BY BAGS AND  
BINS BECAUSE OF US.

WE THINK EVERYTHING IS FINE. WELL IT'S  
NOT.

AS HUMANS, WE CREATE THINGS TO ONLY  
SUIT US.

WE DON'T THINK OF ANYONE ELSE.

NOT THE TURTLES, BIRDS, NOT EVEN THE  
SALTY WATERS.

EVERYTHING IS COVERED IN OUR MESS.

WHAT WE HAVE CREATED. WHAT WE  
HAVE DONE.

WE THINK EVERYTHING IS FINE. WELL IT'S  
NOT.

THAT'S WHY WE HAVE GOT TO TELL  
PEOPLE THE TRUTH IF THEY DON'T SEE  
IT.

TELL PEOPLE THAT WE ARE BAD. AND WE  
CAN BE BETTER.

TELL PEOPLE THAT NATURE IS DYING  
BECAUSE OF US.

TELL PEOPLE THAT WE ARE DYING  
BECAUSE OF US.

TELL PEOPLE THAT IT ISN'T OKAY WHAT  
WE ARE DOING.

EVERYTHING IS BAD. AND THAT'S THE  
TRUTH. ■



LIVE SIMPLY. SIMPLY LIVE.



If you really look, there's always time in our busy lives, to find time for the simple things- the things that help us remember to breathe and to see how wonderful life is. What simple thing can you do today, that might take just a moment to be still, to feel calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit?

Find inspiration at  
[www.livesimply.com.au](http://www.livesimply.com.au)

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What simple thing can you do today, that might take just a few moments, to be still, to be calm, to smile and to renew your energy and spirit.



LIVE SIMPLY  
SIMPLY LIVE

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Find inspiration at [www.livesimply.com.au](http://www.livesimply.com.au)





**Namgyal Tamang**  
*Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College*

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*'Pop Art Painting', Acrylic on canvas*



**Tyler Harris**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

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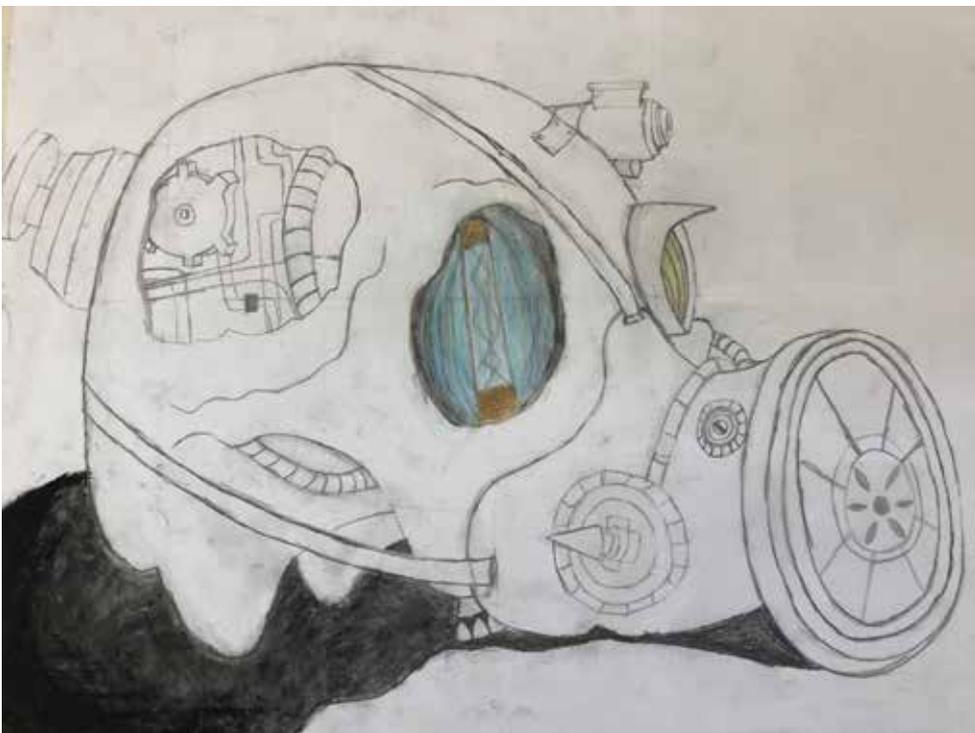
*'Surrealist Appropriation for Extinction Awareness', Acrylic on canvas*



**Sebastian Gronow**  
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Ode to Saul Bass', Digital print*



**Zack Ladic**  
*Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College*

---

*'Steampunk and Mortality', Charcoal and Conte on cartridge*

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Sebastian Walter · Year 5 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Have you ever imagined a life that was simple?

A simple life is a life that has no cars,

A simple life is a life that has no specific routine,

A simple life is a life that has no emotions.

Imagine life without anger, sadness, happiness or love.

Imagine life with no detail, where there are no problems, issues or judgement.

Imagine life with green parks that are overwhelmed by wildlife.

Life that has roads as still as a statue.

Life that has waterways that flowed as smooth as melted butter.

Life where all you could hear was the sound of nature.

That's what life would feel like if it were simple.

So live simply, simply live! ■

# WINTER'S END

---

Alfred Chown · Year 6 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Hello Spring I'm not done yet,

Plenty of rain to make you wet,

Lots of snow still to fall,

As I wait the seasons call.

Hurry up Winter, your cold and slow,

And everyone wants you to go,

I am Spring, I bring life,

All you bring is the flu and strife.

Not so fast Mr Spring,

Without my winter, you cannot begin.

Sure I know I make things slow,

But then you come and make them grow.

It's a team we are when all is said,

You bring life and I make things dead.

But without these cycles to rebirth,

There would not be no planet earth. ■

# THEO'S TRIO OF COURAGEOUS CHALLENGES

---

James Pereira · Year 7 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

“Imagination is great but there is nothing like getting outside and taking head on the most daring and ambitious adventure you can find,” These were the words Theo thought at nine o'clock in the morning as he left his bed, dreams and alternate reality to prepare for the first Saturday of the awaiting school holidays. Theo walked into the kitchen well rested, energised and ready to do absolutely nothing during the first day of his well-deserved break. He reminisced the memorable moments of Year 7 as he poured himself a substantial amount of Fruit Loops. While almost dropping his breakfast, Theo strolled outside and ate breakfast with his dog Hunter on their lawn in country Victoria.

An hour passed, when Theo finally decided to re-enter his house. He brushed his already excellent teeth and changed into some suitable day clothes. As he walked through the now lit by daylight foyer, he was greeted by his mother, Mary. “Why don't you go outside and actually do something on your holidays Theo?” she asked. “Ughh,” Theo groaned, “Fine”.

Plans compromised, Theo slowly moved through the green grasslands. There it was, glaring before him was the forest no one dared enter. The people were yet to name it even though it had probably always existed. It was often said that one that entered the forest came out braver but bewildered by the perplexing forest. Some that entered the forest didn't come out. This was the reason only the bold would enter. Theo today was feeling particularly bold.

Heart ablaze, gut churning, the young boy stepped in. Much did he know this was only his first mistake. The trees grew bigger, the sky was blocked by leaves and the words sounded, “Only the brave will survive.” Theo wanted to wake up but he knew he somehow wasn't dreaming.

The voice called, “Your first challenge is to survive the attack.” Tarantula spiders swarmed Theo from everywhere as Theo was left helpless. He thought he was done but a sword dropped to his feet. Theo grasped the sword with both hands and swung it like mad man killing all the spiders attacking him. First challenge: Passed

Again, the voice called, “Most epic adventures don't start out with an application and an insurance waiver.” Theo was now scared. “Don't drown,” the voice echoed as the forest started flooding. For two minutes Theo held his breath under water. Second challenge: Passed

This is your third and final challenge. Go.” The gates opened and then started closing abruptly. Theo bolted. Never before had his young legs moved with such speed. The gate teasing him; came so close to closing. Not before Theo made his one final leap and flew through the gates. Third challenge: Passed.

The most epic adventure was complete. The forest only the most courageous could survive, he conquered. The country kid, now has one more story to tell. ■

# ASPIRE NOT TO HAVE MORE BUT TO BE MORE

---

Simon Greene · Year 7 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

“Five, four, three, two, one, and we have lift off.” Captain Davies felt the impact of the engines take off throw him back at such a speed that he felt as though he had been hit by a truck. As the ship moved at an increasingly high velocity a sense of pride dashed through his mind and soul. A touching thought came to him “Captain John Davies, the bullied school boy, first man on Mars.” As he flipped the control switches, he remembered the black days of his past. The sleepless nights, scared of the monsters that would confront him at school the next day, the constant result of an F on his test’s and how he lived in a single parent household that could barely afford Johns school uniform of Government compensation. In the night, he remembered the worried look on his mother’s face as she wondered when luck would be on their side for once. He remembered hiding with

his mother from the landlords when they came to collect the months overdue rent so it looked like they weren’t home. Then John remembered the most important thing of all. The day he told his mother that he was going to buy her a big house and get her out of this life. She replied, “Unless you want to live like this forever, you have to aspire not to have more but to be more” John made that his motto for the rest of his days. Whilst he studied on the hole ridden carpet floor he would write it on his hand so he would never forget it. He muttered it under his breath whilst partaking the intensive fitness training to become an Astronaut. Remembering these days as he shot of into the vast blanket of emptiness gave him an intense sense of achievement as he muttered it in his head one last time, “Aspire not to have more, but to be more.” ■

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

Oscar Charles · Year 6 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

To live simply helps the mind to grow,  
It helps you notice the earth and the wonders it  
has to show,  
Marvel at the deep blue ocean and the luscious  
green forests,  
And let your life begin like the growth of an area  
that has had a reforest,  
Living simply helps to teach that great things  
come when worked hard for,  
It is an opening to another chance like an escape  
out of a hidden door,  
This door can only be opened when you look  
inside yourself,  
Right down the corridor of your heart and on the  
top shelf,

Brush through the piles of sin and disrespect and  
you will find the treasure,  
Make a vow to yourself that in your new life  
you will live simply and let the world give you  
pleasure,  
When you open, that door do you feel different?  
Are you more aware and not as spent?  
Take time to wait and reflect,  
And to take in your life and just to accept,  
When you live simply it helps you to be grateful  
and allows you to be more helpful,  
In your new life, how much more do you give,  
When you simply live. ■

# INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE

---

Patrick Kennedy · Year 6 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

You see them whimper, you see them cry,  
But you do not care, don't wonder why,  
You sit there thinking, "life is great!"  
While they work harder, hoping for a break.

This injustice, where is it from?  
Injustice anywhere has no place to belong.  
But still, you see them cry,  
And you do not care, don't even wonder why.

You brainwash our souls to living hell,  
But we do not know, or just have no-one to tell,  
You make us think it's ok,  
But as another set of eyes well up at the end of  
the day,  
Someone must realise that it must end,  
Leaders say there's no discrimination, but that's  
just the truth that they bend.  
But we see it everywhere, there's nowhere to hide,  
I've seen it every time one of them cried,

Still you see them whimper, you see them cry,  
And still you don't care, don't wonder why.  
They were the first people on the land,  
But we steal it, using only a single hand,  
What we find easy, they struggle to  
comprehend,  
Injustice is something that just needs to end.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice  
everywhere,  
It spreads about our world like the beat of a  
snare,  
Though it is not seen, it can only be heard,  
We are still ignorant to its call,  
No matter how big, no matter how small;  
Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice  
everywhere. ■

## HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

---

Edward Brammall · Year 5 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Lifeless. Done for, cut off from the real world.  
How did this happen?  
It was so good at one stage.  
I have been erased from the real world, gone, extinct, some  
people would have known me.  
When will someone love me?  
When will I given a chance.  
Perished. Waisted. Lost, where is everyone could I be lost.  
God please, please give me the tears of joy.  
After the drought, I lost everything.  
Hope, joy, those are some of the things that I had.  
Why. Why me? ■

# A CONVERSATION WITH THE WORLD

---

Hector McLean · Year 8 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Now that you are dying I would like to say.  
I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry for our behaviour,  
our actions have been irrational and disgraceful.  
We have only thought of ourselves,  
we didn't take you into consideration.  
We took you for granted.  
You are in a state where we have taken such a toll  
on you that you are dying.  
You are dying rapidly and it is our fault.  
It is our fault because we did not make a change  
in the way in which we lived.  
We should have taken a stand!  
We should have been responsible for our actions.  
And helped you.  
We should have made a change when we had the  
chance,  
but we decided to be greedy.  
Our greed has cost you your life.  
We destroyed you in so many ways.  
War, pollution, mining  
we disrespected you.  
I'm sorry  
That we have treated you like you didn't have  
feelings,

We acted like there would never be consequences  
for our actions.  
Now that I have apologised  
I would like to say thanks.  
Thanks for putting up with us,  
Thanks for taking care of us,  
Thanks for giving us food and water,  
Thanks for always being there for us through  
thick and thin,  
Thanks for always being fair,  
Thanks for being like a mother to us.  
You always made sure that I had a place to stay.  
You always made sure that I could get back up  
when I was down,  
You made me feel like I belonged.  
I always felt safe with you.  
I could always count on you to be a friend.  
But I should've done something different  
I should've taken the hints that you were sending,  
The earthquakes and the tsunamis  
They were all signs that you were sick and now I  
must say  
Goodbye. ■

# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

---

William Walden · Year 7 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

The waves crashed along the shoreline.  
Glistening like a diamond under a smith's  
light. As I looked out at the vast shining sea of  
aquamarine and white, I felt a smile begin to  
creep across my face, for I knew that this was my  
own "humble abode" so to speak. I lived a simple  
life of seclusion. On an island tucked away in

the furthest corner of the world, where life was  
rather lonesome, like a butterfly locked away in its  
cocoon for the rest of its life. But even though I was  
lonely and struggling, I knew I was at home. This  
thought made me grin, like a clown from a funfair.  
for I knew that as long as I lived I was free from the  
struggles and hardships of life ■

# SNOWFLAKES

---

Hugh Silvers · Year 8 · Burke Hall, Xavier College

Winter had never been prouder. As his snowflakes floated down to the ground, the light bouncing off them forming falling rainbows; he was beaming with joy for all to see. These children of Winter gave him the meaning of life that he had been searching for in endless seasons gone by. As his children created a blanket over the land, he knew that he would be a Father who would inspire and encourage them to achieve great things. He would also protect them, no matter the cost... little did he know what costs there would be.

Word had come from further North that the turning of the seasons was coming and would soon be upon them. Winter needed a way to protect his children and time was running out. He had plans to protect them but he feared the force he was up against. The tales of Summer that he had heard struck fear deep inside him. He loved his children with all his heart and he didn't want anything to destroy the family that he had created.

The first hint of Summer's approach came one morning in late August. He had sensed panic amongst his family and when he investigated, he saw the children watching the river, filled with the melted snow, gush downstream faster and higher than he had ever seen before. The children raced over to him, worried for their siblings, looking for reassurance. Winter knew that he would have to create weather of destruction to defeat Summer. He reassured his children that all would be well, but in his heart he wasn't so sure.

Over the next few days, Winter devised a plan of defence filled with brutal blizzards, battering rain and paralysing cold. He started by gathering dark, menacing rain clouds which he spread across the sky to try to block Summer's rays. Next, to ward off his enemy, he drew the coldest winds from the Arctic to blast warmth away, and lastly he brewed the cruellest of blizzards, using icy snow and cyclonic winds. Winter prayed that each of these forces would prevent his beloved children falling to Summer's fatal heat.

Winter saw Summer rise from the horizon and he knew that this was his moment to prove himself worthy of his children's love. After the first indication of Summer's presence, with his children cowering behind him, Winter commenced his attack in earnest. He firstly collected his powerful winds and used them to push his enemy back. These winds tore towards Summer with all the force he could muster. This attempt only worked for a matter of seconds as Summer easily redirected the wind.

Next Winter hurled his damaging rain towards her. This, he hoped, would douse her flames, extinguish her warmth and make her timid and weak. But as his droplets pounded her enflamed body, they simply evaporated and vanished from sight. Now his only hope of victory was to use his raging blizzard.

Winter summoned the last of his flagging strength and propelled the blizzard forward with all his might. As it whipped towards her, it gained speed and power, and for a moment, he seemed to be defeating Summer. But all Summer had to do was throw her flames at the blizzard and it smothered it into nothing.

All Winter could do was stand there and cry as he watched his family melt into nothing but puddles. His heart was shattered into a million pieces because he knew there was nothing more he could do. His tears fell, and mixed with the remains of his family, leaving him to mourn his loss.

During the following six months, Winter tried to stay strong as Summer took over, but one day, late in the season, Winter found the strength to draw breath to blow the first cool breeze of the new season. At this point he knew he was strong enough to overthrow his enemy. As he blew an arctic gale, he saw the first snowfall of the new season. A tear ran down his cheek, his children were home. ■



**Eliza Gard**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Onomatopoeia Collage*



**Jeremy Baxas**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Onomatopoeia Collage*



**Jett Hyland**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

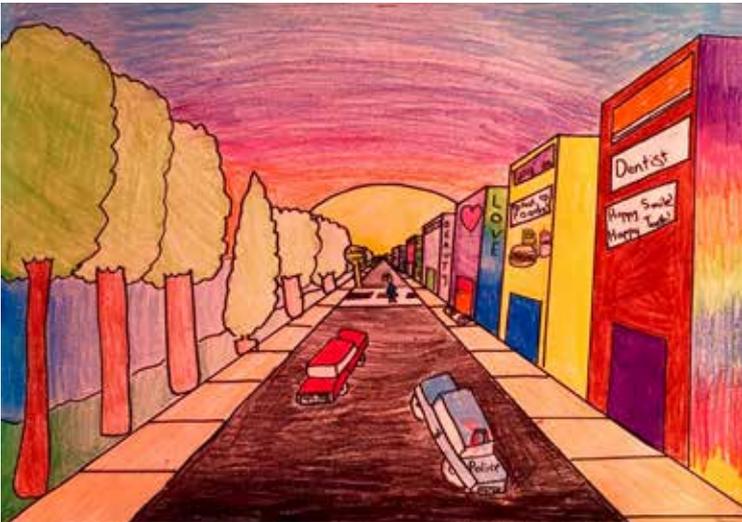
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*Onomatopoeia Collage*



**Aloysia Freeman**  
Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

—  
*Near and Far Perspective Drawing*



**Tiffany Huynh**  
Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

—  
*Near and Far Perspective Drawing*



**Sofia Trevisin**  
Year 5 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

—  
*Near and Far Perspective Drawing*



**Kiera Smythe**  
*Year 4 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Cat Designed with Shapes*



**Tina Luong**  
*Year 4 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

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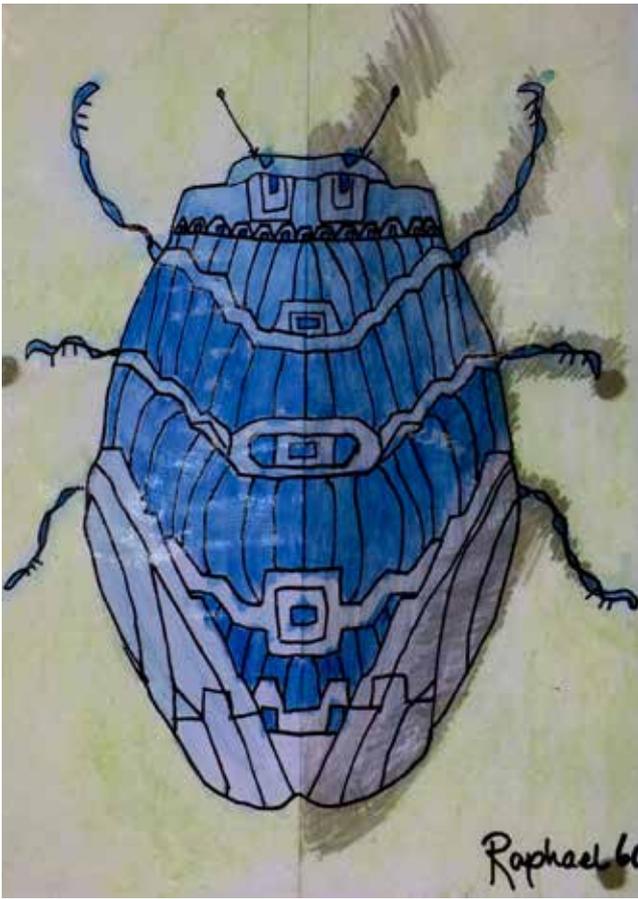
*Cat Designed with Shapes*



**Anabel Iliff**  
*Year 4 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Cat Designed with Shapes*



**Raphael Tanousis**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Bug Line Drawing*



**Hayden Ford**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Insect Line Drawing*



**Sebastian Heintz**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

---

*Watercolour Lilies and Paper Bridge inspired by Monet's work*



**Kiera Smythe**  
Year 4 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Window View



**Tina Luong**  
Year 4 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Window View

# THE TRUEST ROAD I WILL COME TO TAKE

---

Oliver Ayling · Year 7 · De La Salle College

The road you can take will make you work  
But in the end the rest will come  
As you will have impressed your Mum  
Also your Dad  
As the others seem oblivious  
Does not claim your restfulness  
There is yet to be a prophecy  
And they will get the best of you.

Limits will be broken  
But not yet do you deserve the final token  
As the game has not finished  
You push 'till the opponents have been diminished  
And when you're done  
You will be on the run,  
Again.

As glory finally comes  
You will be rewarded not poorly  
However with pride and feast  
As you have defeated the final beast  
Claimed the final objective of your quest  
And you have finished the test.

You will live eternally happy  
Full of sappy  
Life will be great  
Just you wait  
But the end line has not been passed just yet.

There are still flags to conquer  
You must grow stronger  
Must not stray never  
They are waiting for the best  
So you must prevail  
Over the rest. ■



**Campbell Freeman**  
*Year 11 · De La Salle College*

---

This abstract ink drawing is vibrant and warm. It represents the joy in simply combining shape, colour and line.



**Du NguyenHuy**  
*Year 10 · CBC St Kilda*



**Joel Van Ehteld**  
*Year 12 · De La Salle College*

---

To symbolise the theme of 'live simply, simply live,' I decided to illustrate a cactus. My reason for doing so is simple; cacti are a relatively hardy species of plant, and so they are a *simple* to care for. Furthermore, as a symbol of nature, a viewer is able to infer a meaning of care for nature. This is further emphasized with the bold, contesting flower pot; strong reds and oranges contrasting the healthy lime greens of the cactus' body. The cactus also holds a deeper meaning. The sharp pins that protect the body further reflect on the damaging nature even the simplest things in life can have.

The cool blues and purples that sounding the cactus give the dream like quality, to imply a dream like wish surrounding the cactus figure.



**Patrick Stanhope**  
*Year 11 · De La Salle College*

---

This painting references geometric abstraction. I like the idea of living in a very minimal and structured way.



**James Borgese**  
*Year 7 · De La Salle College*

---

“The only way to escape the chaos of the norm is to climb above all and look at what is.”

“A person can see where they are, but a bird can see where they are going.”



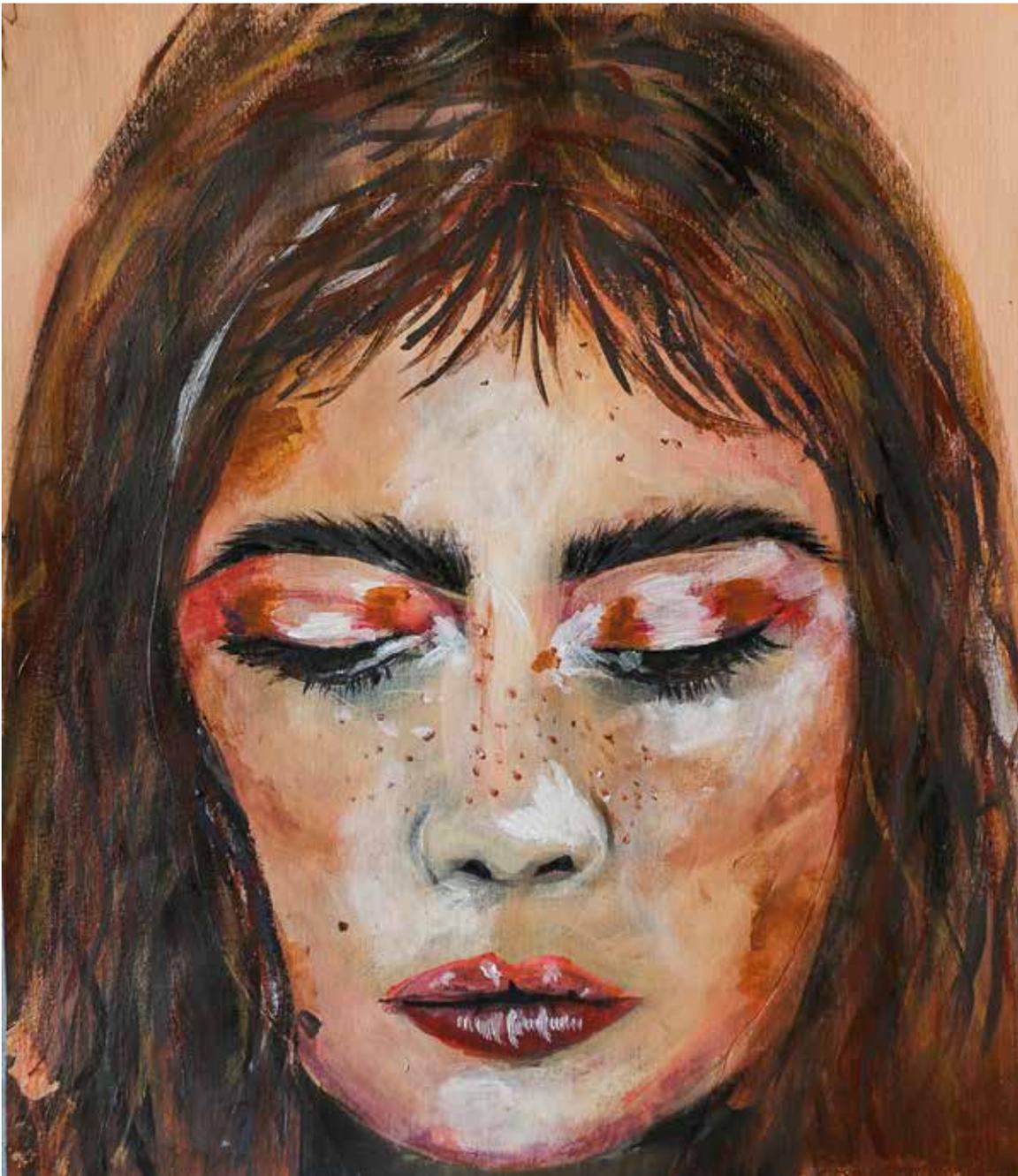
**Violet McAllister**  
*Year 8 · Star of the Sea College*



**Luke Harris**  
*Year 7 · De La Salle College*

---

This photograph reminds me of living simply and have a great time in the fresh air. On the right hand side, through the trees, is one of my Dad and I's favourite fishing spots. This photograph was taken with a DJI Spark drone.



**Rebecca Dabrowski**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College,  
St Albans*

---

*Beauty Beyond the Face (Self Portrait – Acrylic on Canvas Paper)*

---

Every human has a face of their own. Sometimes they can be altered through makeup or surgery so that they may feel beautiful or accepted. However, the beauty of a person is not reflected on the outside, but through the true colours on the inside.

# FREE

---

Sharelle Lynch · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St. Albans

My parents buy my love,  
They think that money is a solution  
not a problem.  
that everything I want is found in a store.  
All I want is to be free,  
of high expectations and commitment.  
I want to run away,  
escape to a place where money has no value,  
and people are judged by their character.

I'm leaving,  
going somewhere I can live,  
with empty pockets but a full heart.  
Away from the life of my parents,  
and the constant struggle for their love, their time.

I've found a place,  
and fallen for someone I barely know,  
but trust.  
He understands me,  
And knows how I feel.  
We are different, but the same.  
We are free. ■

# LIVES DESTROYED

---

Annie Pham · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans

Bang! The devastating sound of an angry gun,  
Greeted the monstrous fume of a gruesome  
wildfire.  
Crippled man, once strong, now cannot run,  
Tried to fulfil the delight of his country's desire.

The countless men that have fought,  
In the open battlefields of blood,  
Hoping for peace that we all once sought,  
Only to suffocate in a red fearful flood.

Emotions of guilt we often feel,  
But they say this is the only way.  
We know that we will never heal,  
Through each and every day.

The ones we love are our only hope,  
Denial that it could be our last,  
Through destruction and bombing we are told to  
cope,  
But soon all this will be our traumatic past. ■

# THE TRAP

---

Delvana Dorbor · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College, St Albans

Trapped in my body  
A nightmare fueled prison  
Nothing but emptiness to keep me company  
Paralyzed  
by the fear of being nothing.

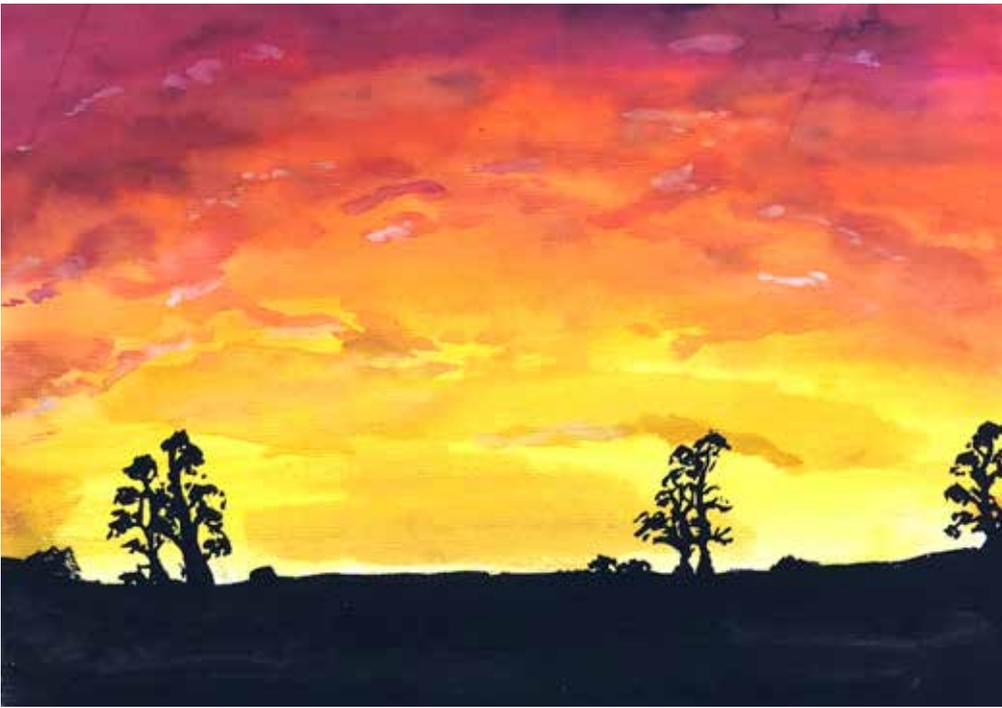
Trapped in my body  
With one word spiraling  
in my head  
Perfection  
Will I ever be good enough?

Trying to be the best  
But slowly suffocating  
On unachievable standards.

Confined by chains  
Chained by society  
A passenger in my own body.

Perfection is a ten letter sword  
That stabs you deep within  
Highlighting your failures

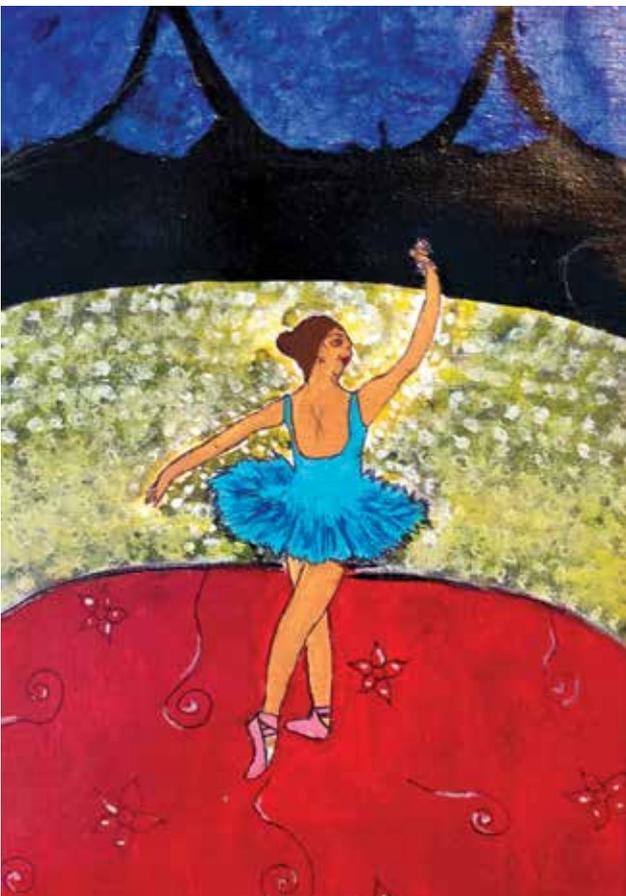
But have no fear.  
Failure is the condiment that gives success its  
flavour. ■



**Amy Seymour**  
*Year 8 • Catholic Regional College Melton*

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*Watercolour Painting*



**Phoebe Willesden-Cross**  
*Year 7 • Catholic Regional College Melton*

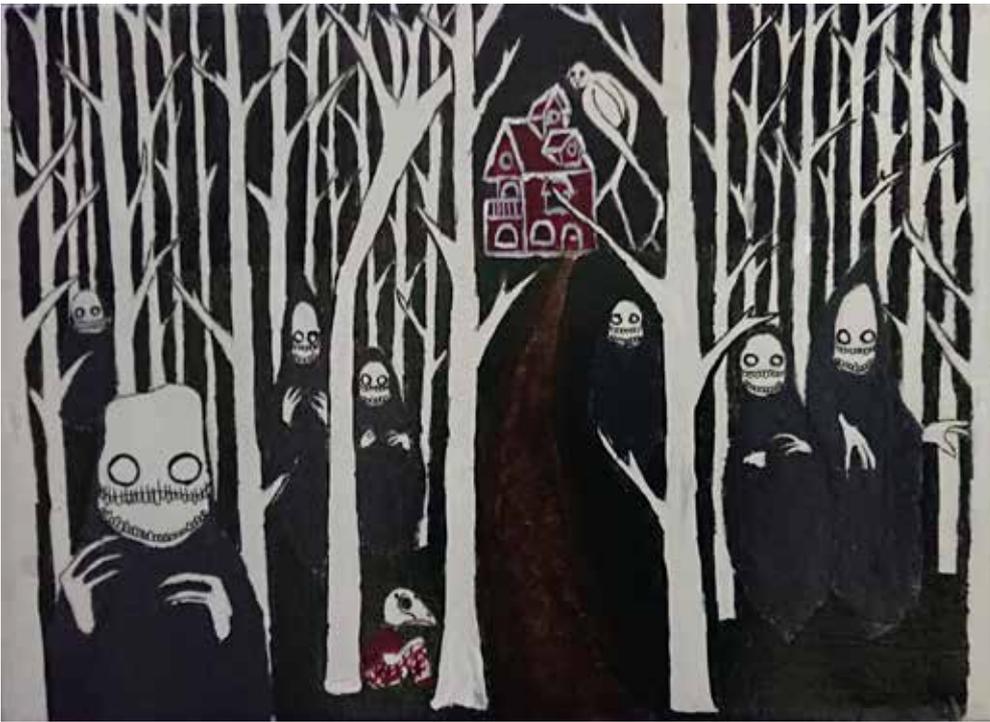
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*Acrylic Painting*



**Siobhan Bradford**  
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College Melton*

*Paper Relief*



**Julianna Cross**  
*Year 9 · St. Peter's  
College*

—  
*Untitled*  
—

My painting is about the end of the world or at least it's what happened to the world after it 'died'. All humans were turned into spirits and there are only a few things left that belong to the old world. Everything is simple now.



**Nicole Carino**  
*Year 10 · St. Peter's College*

—  
*Spontaneous Occasion*



**Jackson Collins**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*



**Tanaka Murungweni**  
*Year 7 · St. Peter's College*

# SIMPLICITY

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Joshua Bennett · Year 10 · St. Peter's College

To live simply  
Is to simply live at all  
For simplicity is a simple design  
Made real within one's mind  
How are we to live simply  
When simplicity is for each to find  
And we each have our own simplicity  
To which each other's is simply undefined

If there are to be simple things,  
Then what makes them simple?  
Having fun in the sun,  
Admiring someone's dimple?  
But these are not necessities,  
Our only true simple needs  
For that is what it is to me  
To be one, who lives simply. ■

Simple living  
To have all the simple things  
To only worry about necessities ■



**Alana Crea**

*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Being Me*

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Who I am, what I wear, what I think and what I have to say are ways I can be defined. But who knows the real me? What I want people to know is that being me allows me to simply live.



**Lauren Leppik**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Ticking Time Bomb*

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Thoughts run rampant; frenzied whisperings of the mind, whisperings of 'You're not good enough. Everyone hates you'. Thoughts run rampant, attacking and multiplying, scrutinising every insecurity. Thoughts run rampant, stacking up and ticking away at fragile serenity until everything explodes.



**Mya Mignone**  
*Year 6 · Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School*

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*Watercolour Lilies and Paper Bridge inspired by Monet's work*



**Katherine Corluka**

*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*Unique*

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I am unique and spend time thinking about the way I live and the world I want to create. I am wise beyond my years and unlike other people my age, I love the simple life. I simply live by living simply.



**Sahra Marchese**  
*Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor*

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*The Young Simply Live*

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As a young girl I remember the joy of living in the moment. The joy of laughter, nature and no responsibility. During those times living was simple but as we grow up we are challenged and that simple life disappears behind a technological world.



**Ryan Semmens**  
*Year 12 · Whitefriars College*

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*'Melodramatic', Studio Arts*

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I enjoy films that are poorly acted out and purposely show a comical side of performance. My artwork is inspired by melodrama and too much emotion overload in a busy life. My subject 'the man' is crying in a melodramatic way and his body language represents an over dramatized response which in itself is comical. It is intended to look cartoon like reflecting a caricature style to emphasis the melodrama.



**James Farrar**

*Year 11 · St Kevin's College, Toorak*

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*'Divine Judgement', VCE Studio Arts, Reduction lino print*

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For my artwork, 'Divine Judgement', I chose a subject, Matthew, to focus on a clash in religious identity, as a result of his coming from a practising Buddhist family and attending Catholic schools. Matthew is conflicted in deciding which religion to follow. I depicted Matthew sitting in the lotus position as a homage to his Buddhist aspect and also his desire for peace in his internal religious battle.

The background is my interpretation of 'Nirvana', the ultimate form of happiness and peace, which represents Matthew's desire for tranquility. The way I depicted Nirvana in a more chaotic way represents the loss of that peace and happiness in his inner self. Matthew is sitting on a mountain which is symbolic of Mount Sion, while the other symbols of Christianity are a Gold cross and his hands together in prayer.

This artwork is meant to embody the assimilation of Matthew into Christianity as a result of Catholic schools where he was baptised and undertook Confirmation and First Communion. However, even after all these sacraments, Matthew at heart is still fundamentally Buddhist, which is depicted through his family life at home, which results in an eternal conflict of beliefs.

get out.  
experience.  
live.



# LIVE SIMPLY, SIMPLY LIVE

SHARED STORIES ANTHOLOGY 2018