Voices from the Fringe

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The edge of one world may be the center of another.
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The edge of Madness
   Open wounds
Broken down in Sadness
   That all consumes

   Jagged mirrors
Reflect unshed tears
Voices echo in the empty halls
   The decay is setting in

   Fevered whispers
Of both Anger and Shame
   In the darkness
Rest beings with no name

   Soft walls of White
Yet chaos from within
Everything far too bright
   Sanity the only sin

   Spiraling down
Falling backward
Eyes open to look around
Back to reality and onward
I write my thoughts down because knowledge is found within all things, and knowledge is meant to be shared with all that listen.

People tell you that curiosity killed the cat, what they forget to mention is in its final moments, the cat found what it was looking for. The truth. Is that not worth dying for?

Sometimes I look up at the stars, and I wish that for one moment they would remember me when no one else will, that they will tell my story as they shoot across the universe in beautiful tragedy. It’s then I realize stars may have wishes too.

We pick our scabs to remind ourselves we are not perfect. We pick and scratch over and over, because we want that scar, that constant reminder that we are flawed, we are mortal.

Our hearts beat in rhythm; the moment our conductor, guiding every thump with its baton. We create our own beautiful symphony.

Does our conscious pick its moments to remember forever, or does it forget to take some of the notes?

I make constant decisions knowing the impact they will have on my life. Does that mean when I make the wrong ones I could possibly be destroying my life on purpose?

Do calculators always get the correct answers because they have no feelings, no sense of doubt that their answers are 100% correct? Or do they not get the wrong answers because we believe they can’t?
I want a snake because I know no matter how much time we spend together or how much I love him, if he feels mistreated or invaded he will always bite the hell out of me.

The stories of the Greek gods and goddesses prove that nothing is perfect. Mt. Olympus is no utopia.

I can hold on to this life as long as I can, but a life held on to is a caged bird unable to fly across an endless sky. Only when I let go of this life that I own is when I will experience past my own limitations.

Words allow our minds to transcend past the barriers of skin and bone. They are our gift to whoever is listening.

Bring the pain and the suffering, for when they are gone all that is left is my joy.

We come from a world where destruction is associated with end instead of beginning.

I have spent my life aiming for perfection. I have come to see that life is already perfect.
One night at the circus
The crowd gathers grand.
They are all excited;
In the bleachers they yell and stand.
Tonight’s a special night,
And no one yet knows why;
Outside it’s warm and humid,
The breeze a gentle sigh.

A ballerina dances without any thoughts,
Her brain is dusty, on the shelf.
The clowns are chased by the bull
And the strongman beats himself.
The circus tent is trampled down
As the elephants trot out of the ring.
The big black sky is revealed
And the moon begins to sing.

The sky is a burrowing cave,
No stars in it tonight.
The trees are silent, they listen well;
The moon is its own spotlight.
And as it sings its sonnet,
The trees start to hum along;
The wind is starting to howl
To this dramatic, catastrophic song.
Endless Possibilities ~ Taylor Brill
Where the Wild Is

By Tyler Redlich

The leafy vines of green weave through and throughout, twisting and breaking the locks and chains which have held a prisoner to his own flesh and bone. Inevitable light seeps deep into a ridged cracking conscious, revealing a simple truth. Soft winds blow tears to eyes washing away the thick dust which has blinded the senses. A hard sun beats down, a persistent presence on golden, broad shoulders. The wise trees whisper secrets of the past in a soft hymn. Life flows through veins an unstoppable river current: rough in impact but destined to calm. A resting being which lies within awakes, standing in awe at the raw beauty of life untouched. Enraptured by the passing clouds and infinite waves of green hills one finds himself in peace of mind, and in life. Spilling over the brim.
There’s no time to make rhyme,
no time for poetic expression
It’s so hard nowadays to make a good impression
To write something worth something, say something worth while
Hollow words, worth little more than a crocodile’s smile
It’s a trial
Finding the right way to say it,
day to day it
just doesn’t happen.
Time lapse, college apps, drawing out the maps
of the rest of our lives
Laid out, right before our eyes
You’d be surprised...
It can take a lot out of a girl.
I want to be an inspiration
to this nation
every little thing in creation.
I don’t want an imitation celebration
of elation,
I want the real thing.
But procrastination and obligation
leave me with starvation
for some renovation
to this so-called clock dictated,
frustrated,
slowly being wasted,
excuse for a life.
Do you ever think about WHERE your time goes?

Do you spend time HOW you can never get it back and even if you read this time is still passing and you can never spend it wisely.

Your time is like money. Each minute is valuable.

Time is limited and even as you choose how to spend each second.

Time/Progress ~ Stephan Stenger
Alarm.
Man wakes in cold sweat.
Turns on Fan.
Turns off radio alarm.
It’s the same droning station, the one about government and stock exchange.
Rolls out of bed.
Feels cool Breeze across face.
Brushes teeth while looking through mirror.
All the while listening to the hum of A. C.
Driving to work, listening to the same radio station: the one about government and stock exchange.
Turns up A. C. to drown out Terrorist bombing and recession.
Cool air makes him feel more confident.
Parks sedan.
Walking through parking lot, he is blinded by the window glare of his office building.
Stale cigarettes, oil, and latex propagate from cracked windows, but are swept away by Wind.
Sitting in front of computer.
E-mail in, e-mail out.
Funny mail makes him regurgitate laughter.
Half way through day, he turns on Fan.
Cool Breeze and subtle hum drown out the keyboard tap-tap of his
100 cube-prisoned acquaintances.
Walking back to car, stale cigarettes, oil, and latex linger in absence of
Wind.
Locking doors, Man turns A.C. on high.
Driving to Convenience Store, he thinks to himself...
At least my life doesn’t blow.
Parks sedan.
Walking to store, he passes cars that smell of fake leather and cheap
plastic.
Walks through sliding door.
He doesn’t trust people to hold open hinge door.
Takes out phone and dials the number he knows by heart.
No answer.
Re-dial.
No answer.
Returns phone to pocket.
Standing at check-out, Man hears a woman complain about five percent clearance.

Walks back to sedan.

Passes same cars.

Cars smelling of fake leather, cheap plastic, mid-life crisis, and compromises.

Driving home he passes a crushed and mutilated cat.

Instinctively, A.C. turns up, and it’s out of mind.

No thought spared for heart-broken owner of road-baked cat.

Arriving home, he enters into cool humming abode.

Calls out for one whose number is on his heart.

No answer.

Calls again.

No answer.

Must be working late.

Turns on Fan, out of clothes and mind.

Laying in bed, Man thinks...

At least I don’t spend my life going in circles.

Falls asleep to the hum of A.C.

Alarm.
This poem is obsolete
Right now, somewhere else, somebody is working on finding a way to improve poems.
Somebody is trying to build a better poem.
A poem that can be read faster
A poem that will last longer
A poem that will be easier to understand and still have a deeper meaning.
A scientist in a lab coat is trying to figure out how he can dissect a poem
He’s trying to figure out how he can take a poem and remove all quirks and flaws
He’s trying to make a poem that will do more
He’s trying to make a poem that’s easier to produce
He’s trying to find a way to make a perfect poem every time.
When he’s done he’ll build great poem-writing machines
With a few presses of a button he’ll be able to make any poem.
It’ll be the next big thing:
Professor Parchment’s perfectly poignant poems!
You’ll be able to buy them by the dozen at your local Walmart
If that’s not your thing don’t fret
You can find the upscale version at a fancy little place over by Market Street
(They are guaranteed to use longer words.)
Poems could be the up and coming thing.
There will be some losses of course.
The small time small poem companies won’t be able to compete.
Single poets writing individual poems will become a quaint novelty.
But look at the time saved:
No longer will students have to struggle to write works of art!
Creativity will come ready made and packaged by the dozen.
They’ll come in every style!
You’ll be able to buy boxes of limericks
Crates of sonnets
For the more adventurous you can buy free verse by the pack.
Even exotic poems like Haikus can be found if you know where to look.
Poems for the masses!
And every single poem perfectly made, no humans required.
“Beware the ethereal” I’ve always been told
“Beware what will not last forever”
What sense does that make?
Aren’t we all ethereal in the grand scheme of things?
Like a candle with only so much wax to burn before it snuffs out.
Should we beware life?
Love?
Happiness?
The truth is, it isn’t the ethereal we should beware
It is the tendency to overlook such things
Do not beware the ethereal
Cherish it
Remember it
And when it is time
Let it go
For the worst sort of life
Is the life unlived

Ethereal
By Jade Halliburton

Those Mornings ~ Feimei Zeng
The old man walked down the street: age had taken his ease of movement but could not steal the purpose in his gait. He paused occasionally to look around, but this street was no different from all the other streets. Devoid of people other than himself.

He remembered a time before empty streets. Remembering when was a different matter. The old man could not recall when people, who once could be found on the streets, were replaced by mindless husks that could mimic their predecessors in all mannerisms except thought. They were automatons, spending their time staring at the lighted screens which provided no mental stimulation. Time that was previously spent dreaming, planning, creating, questioning, thinking.

That was how it was everywhere the old man went. Most everyone had given their powers of thought to the lighted screens. Every now and then, the old man met another person like him: a fellow traveler searching for someone to have an intelligent conversation with. But they would either die or surrender to the false feelings given off by the lighted screens, leaving the old man alone again.

The old man knew that good things had come as a result of the lighted screens. Over time, the lighted screens became affordable to everyone; and under the glow of the screens, humanity came to only care about the necessities: food, water, shelter, clothing, lighted screens. Such a simpleminded society rarely fought. It made the old man question whether the power of thought was worth all the trouble. In the end, he always sided with thought. The world around him was stagnant. Without ideas, nothing changed. Without change, humanity
was bound to destroy itself. The old man was sure of that. However, he knew there was little that could be done to return thought to the human shells. They had enslaved themselves, only they could free themselves. He could only hope that someone would notice those whose minds remained free and would have their curiosity piqued by such a strange sight outside of a lighted screen.

It was this hope that kept him going even when he was lonely, even when his bones ached, even when the elements were unforgiving.
to wait

By Rachel Grove

I stand here
And I smile
And I wait
And soon
My cheeks will hurt
My feet will ache
My knees will lock
And I will want
To leave.
But for now,
I’ll stand here
And I’ll smile
And I’ll wait...
Just a little longer
Just until
My cheeks hurt
And my feet ache
And my knees lock
And I want to leave
Because it hurts too much
To wait.
I remembered her first crying sounds, her first screams as she came into her earthly life, her first gasp for air. I was there. The flow of joy from her parents as they beheld their child for the first time filled the room, and a sickening ebb ran through me as I stood there watching the couple holding the Assignment—MY Assignment. This was the child that I had been accredited to, to destroy the purity of her soul so that when she left from this world, she would join the ranks of the dark. A special hatred was held in my heart for this young soul since nine months previous when my Lord had given me this quest. Even the thought of ruining her soul over the course of her life gave me thrills. I stared at my Charge as her eyes opened wide for the first time, taking in her surroundings. Her eyes flitted around the room, from one wall to the other, from her parents to the midwife, and then landed dead on me. I was taken aback by her gaze. Never before had a human looked at me, not just in my general direction, but as if I was a tangible being. My Assignment’s eyes held me in a bond that I could not break, and as she did, a feeling as I had never felt before swelled up inside me, a strong emotion that pushed away my hatred for her, that flew the thoughts of her spiritual destruction out of my head. I had not known what this intense rush that streamed through me was. I know now, from the moment her eyes set upon me, I loved her.
I remembered her first years, the years when she could still glimpse me standing over her, intently watching her and devoting each precious moment to my memory. My Charge’s first few steps, her first words, all were engrained into me. Her childish innocence entranced me. Each time she learned something new filled me with a feeling of pride, for my Charge was learning each day. I would whisper soft tempts into her ear, playful disobediences such as to draw pictures on the wall, or to cry while her parents were in deep conversation, which would always give me pleasure. But when my Assignment’s parents would lecture her, shake their fingers, tell her no and raise their voices, a strong hatred would rise in me. Her loneliness displeased me. It shouldn’t have. A spirit such as me, with such a dark errand to perform, should pull happiness from the sadness of their Charge. Instead, I felt her pain and I felt pain knowing I was powerless to control it; I could not make her happier, but I loved her.

I remembered her years throughout grade school, where her innocence still shined throughout the others. Each new friend she made, each grade of which most were good and high above the rest, and every teacher who ever loved her, as most did, I still remember. During her third year of schooling, I experienced a new sensation. A boy her age, a small freckled face with red hair, became obsessed with
A Devil’s Attraction

my Charge. My Assignment had a habit of wearing her golden hair in two loose pigtails that were looped into braids, a common hairstyle for her age. The pesky boy enjoyed pulling on her hair so hard that it would yank her back or pull out the ties that held the pigtails together. The first time he had done that angered both my Charge and me, and without even a prompt from me, she lunged at him. After that day, I kept a sharp eye on the brat, watching his thoughts and his deeds. It soon became evident that he had developed boyish feelings towards my Charge, her name scribbled across his paper, his eyes on her throughout the teacher’s lectures. Seeing her name on his paper and traveling through his thoughts stirred me in a way where I was envious; another male had feelings, no matter how childish they were, for my Charge! The pest would continue to hold these feelings for her up until her fifth year of schooling and several times I had had to teach him a lesson. In the fourth year, the nuisance had cornered my Assignment next to the fence during recess and was calling her rude names. I could feel her sadness swelling; her delicate feelings being harmed by these words said by the boy that over the past year she too had grown fond of: tears building up in her eyes. Her pain angered me. It infuriated me! The heat of hatred flamed inside me and I reached out and shoved the boy to the ground. This stunned the three of us. The boy had been assaulted by a force he could not see, my
Charge had witnessed the pest fall violently down, and I had touched a human. I touched—my hands had contacted with his shoulders. This could not be. I had no body. I was intangible. But I was tangible, I had pushed someone. I stood above the boy for a brief second before turning around at the sound of my Charge’s gasp. I looked at her face; unexpectedly, our eyes met. Her beautiful light blue eyes stared into mine, widened in shock. Flashbacks of the early moments in her life ran through my head, the moments where she was able to see me constantly, the stages of her infancy. But those were gone, long gone. What had happened? I was a visible spirit in her eyes now, a man with dark ash hair and cold green eyes that had appeared suddenly to rescue her from her torturer. Our gaze held for a few seconds until her eyes blinked and I felt myself become numb again, the hatred burned out. To her, her rescuer had vanished; to me, I had receded back into my rightful, invisible state. The intense feeling I had experienced had forced me into another form, a more physical one where I could touch and be seen. I loved her.

I remembered her as she had grown into a young lady, her adolescent years where she had bloomed into a beautiful, intelligent woman. She was kind and social with all the girls and boys she met and the men of her age swayed and swooned as she would walk by. Her natural
beauty had become enhanced with time and the way she danced, her passion in life, was mesmerizing. Oh, how I loved watching her dance; her elegance on the stage would fill everyone with reverence. The air around her was majestic, calling all respect to her, but her eyes remained the same, those beautiful eyes, and the way they would look at one could light a fire in even the iciest of hearts. My Charge was gorgeous, exquisite, and engaging. Though she had aged a bit, her innocence stayed the same, still as bright as it had always been. Her innocence...I had forgotten my purpose here! I had grown so fond of her that all thoughts of destroying her had left my mind. I had stood next to her as she sat in church, listening to religious words, and I feeling sick from them. But had I cared? No. Had I whispered blasphemous things into her ear as she listened? No. I needed to reassess myself, remember what I was sent to do. She was my Assignment and should be nothing more. The utter destruction of her soul should be my only pleasure. This was a grievous conclusion to resign myself to, for I loved her.

I remembered the change in myself as she turned sixteen. Attractions toward young men had become a common thing for her to feel. Friends came and went, besides the few true ones, and she continued to become more and more angelic. I had put myself back
to work polluting her soul. Thoughts had run through her mind at inappropriate times, nightmares had haunted her, temptations to cheat on school work and sneak around were thrown at her, and she had been put into various situations where she had had opportunities to partake in sinful acts. Along the way, I had thrown trials at her, times where she had broken down and cried herself to sleep, and times where she felt hopeless. But she never gave in. Her innocence still illuminated as bright as the day we had first met gazes. Inflicting this pain on her hurt me; her sadness was still hard for me to bear. I longed to brush off her tears from her cheeks and whisper to her a promise that life would get easier, but I was restrained from it, until one lonely night. My Charge had been drowned with work and was going through a considerable amount of hardships with her closest friend. She had curled up on the corner of her bed, sobbing from the stress. I had caused this. The guilt rose up inside of me. The pain of her anguish tortured me, twisted me, and pulled out strong feelings for her. I reached out to her face and rested my hand on her cheek for comfort. I hoped silently that she could feel this, but the tears kept falling and her sobs continued. I pulled back from disappointment; my terrorized heart longed to help her. I wished I could cry, that I could call up the most powerful emotions so that she could feel me, see me again as she had done in her early years. It was useless; she was too
A Devil’s Attraction

far progressed in her life. So, for the rest of the night, I sat on the side of the bed watching my Charge cry herself to sleep, then watching her beautiful face as she lay there with the tear marks shining. I could not leave. I could not harm her tonight nor send her nightmares. Tonight would be peaceful for her. But I wanted her; I wanted her to be able to feel me. I loved her.

I remember these moments in her life this desperate night; she is seventeen now, her eighteenth birthday in just a few weeks. I stand outside her bedroom door in the sweltering heat, flames nipping at my neck vainly as if they think if they push hard enough, that I would feel them. I do not. I feel nothing. My hand holds the doorknob to her bedroom, the metal radiating from the heat of its surroundings. I hold it tight, clenching her bedroom door shut. I can feel the knob furiously rotating back and forth in my hand and the door being pulled from inside the room, trying to rip the door open and away from my grasp. I can see the flames reflected in it, how they climb up the walls and over the ceiling, how they dance across the floor, moving throughout the house. They remind me of the way my Charge would dance on the stage, gracefully yet efficiently. I can smell the aroma of burning items, my Assignment’s house and furniture, being consumed by the fire. I can hear the creaks and crashes of the house as numerous parts
fall to the power of the blaze, the sound of her banister as it gives way and tumbles, colliding with the lower floor. I am not concerned with the murderous fire but with my Charge who is digging and clawing at the door I hold shut, desperate for escape. I can hear her last crying sounds, her final screams as she departs from her earthly life, the flames crawling up her—her last gasp for air that is no longer there. I am there. I am the fire that consumes my Charge and I am here as her heart ceases to beat. It doesn’t matter though; I had wanted her, desired for her. Her dying scream is a melodic sound that the flames of the fire gleefully dance to. She is mine now. I love her.
What can I do in a lifetime?
The accumulation of memories...
The extraordinary people I have met,
The joyous moments I have experienced,
The wonderful places I have seen.
A cool breeze amongst rustling leaves,
The scent of the cold morning air.
What can I do in a lifetime?
How’s it going? I... I don’t know what’s going on, but I don’t trust them anymore.

Not well. The patient is currently suffering from extreme depression. The government, that is.

How long has this been going on? For years now they’ve been getting increasingly paranoid.

We’ve been monitoring this patient for years. They monitor everyone now. All the time.

Does he know he’s being monitored? They could even be watching me right now. I bet they are.

Of course not. The new regulations are very helpful. I think I make them a bit uncomfortable.

Indeed. We don’t need his permission to be able to help him. They say I think too much.

Now we can simply do what we know he needs. They say that I should relax, and trust them.

Are we ready to begin the operation? They claim to know what I need. What everyone needs.

All things are in place. Ready on your mark. They think they know how to fix everything.

Well, no sense waiting too long. They don’t know they’re creating more problems.

Begin the calming procedure in 3... You can’t tell people how to run their lives without losses.

2... Losses like free will and free thought. And without those, what’s the point of living?

1... I wonder sometimes whether or not anything will be done. Are these changes here to stay?

Calming procedure initiated. I... don’t know quite how I feel anymore.

Was the procedure successful? After all, they claim to be doing so much good!

It seems as though it was. And... I know some people would ruin their lives otherwise.

Wait. We’re picking up some resistance. But still... isn’t that freedom what makes us human?

It looks like he’s not entirely calmed. Isn’t the ability to think what makes life worth living?
I really am not sure which side I agree with.

There are no criminals anymore at least. Not since the new punishments.

Used to they’d throw you in prison to think about it.

Now they just overwrite your thoughts.

No more violent criminals. Such a good change.

And the streets are always clean and safe.

There’s no more war anymore either.

Maybe... maybe this isn’t so bad. Maybe it WAS right.

We may have lost some things, but look what we’ve gained!

Never before has society worked so well.

Surely losing a few freedoms is worth it.

After all, freedom doesn’t do a person any good if his life is terrible.

Even the monitoring doesn’t bother me too much anymore.

They’re just watching out for me. Keeping me safe.

I don’t have to worry about danger of any sort.

I guess it’s time to wake up and go to school now.

Time to leave the safety of my room.

I have to say: I love Big Brother.
A fresh spring rain,
Lovely garnet poppies
Dancing in the wind.
The grey sky is really
Just a vibrant blue,
Wanting of some ocean.

The dry grass
And parched earth
Soak up
The triumphant sounds
Of heartfelt comfort sent
From the eyes of the clouds.

Lily and Rose
Rise atop the branches.
Breezes stir up streams,
Fish flung pleasantly.
Energy presented at
A rejuvenating level.
Slammed

Care
Swear
Wear
Life on your shoulder
But don’t sluff it off

Pack
Stack
Tack
Those memories on the wall

Stall
Fall
Crawl
From the insanity of life

I keep running rhymes but what does it do?
Does it cure cancer?
Stop trees from getting ripped out
Habitats ruined
Does it stop kids dying from hunger while men are
Bathing themselves in money?

No
For they are just words
Strung together with a literary string
What we need to bring
Is change
Not just sitting and writing, thinking the words can do the fighting
But actually getting off that office chair
And giving a flying care
On the state of the world
Take a step back from our small lives
And look
  Look at the problems we’ve created
    Trash
    Cash
    Lash
  Ing out at society’s flaws
But who are we to sit on our principles
  Writing out on blogs
  Talking the talk
What we need is to take a few more steps and walk the walk
  Spread those wings of change
    Like the bald eagle
  Who was once threatened
Due to greed
  Of land and materials as humans take no heed
On the destruction we make
The lives we take
WE meaning every single person reading this
WE are the future
  WE are the green light that Gatsby saw
Now I can stand up here and talk, making beats
    Like the pounding of drums
But unless others take up the responsibility
  Share the plight
Nothing
  Will be done
It’s our time for flight
  Are you going to make the change?

Build up the courage and make an action
That causes a reaction
Affect a fraction of the world that needs our help
We sit in class learning trig
   While others our age are forced to dig
      Graves for their loved ones dying of AIDS
We have been given the chance to have our voices heard and out
actions noticed
So take that talented mind
   And make solutions

Are you going to make a change?
Rain

By Ella Watkins

Of the most beautiful
Rain is the most
It washes away footprints
In the sand on the coast
It leaves nothing left,
A clean slate you might say
Everything there has been swept away.

My heart has been rained on
Over and over again
I leave it outside
In the cold and the wind
Hoping the footprints you made
On the shore of my heart
Will finally be washed away
So I might have a clean start.

But they haven’t left
Your tracks are too deep
I sit here and wallow
Where once sat your feet
And hope that you’ll come back
And stand here again.

But the rain won’t wash you away
I try and I try
But your footprints still stay
Close to my heart
But oh so far away from me
Please rain, oh please
Wash away this agony.
You, the bird who never took flight
Never sailed into the night
A shame, for there’s much to see
You’ll never sail above the trees
Or float upon your cloud of dreams

You, the boy who stared at the wall
Afraid that he might lose it all
He always laid safe in bed
Night and day, never left
Ironically, he never slept

You, the seed that never grew
A flower that would never bloom
You stayed safely in the ground
Afraid someone would come around
And effortlessly chop you down

You could’ve been a beautiful bud,
But you were too afraid
You could’ve been a wonderful soul
But you were too afraid
You could’ve flown the highest
Flown above them all,
But you were too afraid
To fall.
Open a Window to a World of Possibilities ~ Brooke Brezette
Dreams

By Jade Halliburton

Once alive but nevermore
Shattered dreams
Strewn across the floor

What has been found
But forever lost
Stills our hearts without a sound

The darkness that travels
Through our souls
Waits inside until all unravels

What have we lost
In our lives?
We cover our hearts in winter frost

The vivid and light
Now tattered and gray
Fades quickly out of sight

The dreams that have survived
With a whispered word
Now forever can revive
Emotionless people: none are motionless. There are ones who walk. In an almost abstract formation, yet still far from random, there are ones who walk, calculating their positions. There is no contact. No skin softly brushing by cloth, no breath accidentally whispered into face. Do they think I am here? Do they think there is nobody around them? Do they think at all? Surrounded by people, I am alone.
I run.

A variety of glass staircases spin: transparent, minimalistic. Supported by thin cables, they are not made out of one uniform material. Reflective chunks of mirrors, misty sea glass, washed-out shards of wine bottles, they create a faintly colorful mosaic, yet the staircases are still far from artistic. Look at the geometric designs, glimmering and repetitive. The maps, the stairs, they drive my heart away.
They are infinite.
So many steps to take, I will end up nowhere.

Broken constants thrown into the air: torn into shreds. They were the laws I used to believe in, the statements I wove my life around. I look up at them, frozen in the air, and try to piece them back together. This is a gamble. This is completely ignoring better judgment. This is me, trying to fix our crashing world. A chilly wind blows away what I had tried so hard to keep. Gravity is gone. Asphalt crumbles into the sky—then cities fly.
Sometimes when we want something so badly, we tend to lose track of what it really was.
When you brought me here, you never told me it would be so grandiose, so complex, so miserable

in your mind.
Through the Blind Eyes of Life

By Robin Ahmadi

(to be read as a slam/political poem)

Blind to the origins, races, and ethnicities that label humans as unequals.
Blind to the religions, beliefs, and personal ideals that foster our hate of others.
Blind to the borders that separate countries from countries and men from men.
Blind to the currencies that lend us greed.
Blind to the pride produced from the profits we reap.
Blind to the shame perceived from the losses inflicted upon us.
Blinded by resolved issues.
Blinded by affection.
Blinded by unity.
Blinded by love.
The Phoenix Soul

By Cullon Oldham-Greene

The phoenix is a mythical creature that lives for 500 to 1000 years. It has a fiery spirit and a tail that streaks across the sky like the tail of a comet. When it is ready to die, it builds itself a nest; the nest will ignite, and the bird will be born again from its old ashes.

Going through elementary school, I learned quickly and easily. The teacher would be explaining how to multiply by double digits and while the class was listening, I’d be halfway down the worksheet. Everything just seemed natural as if I had been doing it for years. As I got older, I figured out that I was not the only one with this “condition.”

Reincarnation is the belief that a soul migrates from one life to another: this is also known as metempsychosis. The Egyptians would bury their dead with their riches and possessions from that life in hope they would carry these things with them to the next life.

Most Phoenix students have talents that come to us as easily as breathing. My ten year old sister has never had a piano lesson in her life, but can listen to a song and thirty minutes later can repeat the song on a piano. I know of a student who can fall asleep in math class during a lesson, but when the teacher passes out a quiz, he can ace it without breaking a sweat. Another student, with all of his insightful and ingenious ideas, may be a reincarnation of the great philosopher Socrates.

I guess what I’m trying to get at is maybe this is not our first time around the block? Maybe we decided to take our minds with us instead of the insignificant worldly items.

(This also explains our procrastination. We realize that school isn’t that important because we graduated a long time ago, and homework just isn’t as important as it used to be.)
Dear Yesterday,
Please don’t let me forget you.
I need my mistakes and memories of failure,
in order to succeed Today and Tomorrow.
Show me what I’ve done so I can do more,
And teach me ways I can visit you, without staying for too long.

Dear Today,
Refuse to be taken for granted,
And encourage my choice to love you.
Help me make you beautiful
So that when you become Yesterday,
I will remember you Tomorrow.

Dear Tomorrow,
Be nothing like Today
And everything more than Yesterday.
Teach me the value of time
As I appreciate your arrival,
Because Yesterday and Today both know, you can never promise to arrive.
Star Dancers

The day has just begun to end
The sun becomes unseen
The blue sky submerges into the dark the only light from moon beams

The creatures of the night
Emerge from their shadows staring up into the black sky
Every living thing some big and bold while others small and shy

The nightingales step up crickets alert and ready to play
Their peaceful concerto going across the land near and far away

Immediately everyone’s gaze falls to the black stage above
Shiny lights illuminate the night fluttering in like a dove.

The show begins at last the symphony misses part of song
For the star’s dance begins causing every one to watch in long

The performance starts with graceful swirls never missing a single stride.
Filling creatures with awe, their eyes growing very wide

The symphony becomes riveting the stars dance all the same
Flowing with the melody their movements prove their fame

The twinkling and glittering, a marvel to see
Leaving even a flawless diamond filled with jealousy
The audience’s heart leap with the continuous dance
Their constant swift actions cause the audiences eyes to prance

But suddenly it stops, the music rhythmic and slight
The star dancers halt and bow to the quiet night

Their light shines brighter then they suddenly vanish out of view
As the grass awakes to a blanket of fresh watery dew

The sun shines good morning to the awakening sleepers
While scurrying around are the midnight peepers
While the moon descends a mute farewell
The stars far gone, to far away to tell

A shroud of daylight cascades upon the awakened.
As The late night watchers descend into sleep, taken.
Let me tell you a story
Of a girl no more than ten
Who was thrown by the way-side
By those she thought accepted her.
Her peers she thought respected her
Abandoned her
Because a select few decided
That she did not belong.
Isolated
Alienated
By friend and foe alike.
Those years have passed
A feeling lasts
The question
Is Why?
So talk to me
Tell me.
I’m not looking for an apology
Just maybe a little empathy
An explanation
Given without hesitation
So that I
 Might find
Some closure.
Through the darkness of the night she wandered, looking for, looking for...

She traveled beneath stars, searching for, searching for...

The object of her search, a mystery, even for herself.

The unknown is part of the journey, an odyssey through the mysteries of time.

By Janice Jia
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