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Give Feedback

Jump over to the [Teen Writers Discussion](#) (bulletin board) to give comments and/or feedback on this or other pieces of writing.

Use the title of the piece of writing as your subject line.

Remember your **P's** & **Q's** when giving writers feedback . . . stick to **Praise** and **Questions!**

Light Years: a love song

i

Through the vacant sky we shot at night
 As years below our fingers interlocked
 And all (sweet waters) was, in love, forgotten
 We were living and dying together
 We were truly alone in the world
 Within the glass encasing that is passion,
 Beneath the sea of hope in which we drowned,
 Though that the dust has now cleared
 From the blackened day, it is apparent: fault
 Is nonexistent in situations as these: love
 We were lovers, yet we were stars, shooting
 Through the twilight sky at dusk and before
 The sun began to rise, beneath the solace of
 The afternoons which compromised our love,

And all throughout our dream-filled nights,
All throughout those lovely nights

ii

We did not die in vain, we did not die: we dimmed
We were stars and lovers unknown to the world
Whose sullen whispers started to emerge
We dimmed not overnight nor during day
In which our love first befell, fell from the sky
And they knew not, the milky clouds, the constellations,
All the souls that watched us burn in unison
She knew not, the great North Star, nor did they,
The estranged lovers, the sun and the moon
Only we knew the distance to the earth and how
Quickly one could plummet, though we knew not
That it would be us who would dim and fall-
Back to the obscurity from which we thought we came
Love held us in its grip, and no longer were we-
Free ungoverned beams, though we had grown
Lost light years, we were love-crossed stars

Chris
12th grader
Williston Park

About the author of Light Years. Chris is a student who lives on Long Island and loves poetry.

Chaos Collage

Platonic demons
cast away fragile lullabies
of darkened stars;
nebulae once forgotten in a drying sea
of humanity,

Distilled steps
falter -unaltered- egos,
as they decompose in society's rinds,
piled up on viole-n-t shadows,
looked over and glazed over
chaos begs to be remembered.

Stephanie
8th grader
Topeka, Kansas

Sometimes

I live lifelessly,
sometimes.
Wondering around, waiting:
for death, escape, suicide.
I am so vibrant,
sometimes.
Dancing my life rhythmically:
leaping, sashaying, swirling.
I am plain, normal,
rarely.
Attempting to overcome,
dancing, dying, and living.
I am not manic!
Shocking?
I'm an incoherent paradox,
with red hair, freckles, glasses.....

Katie
11th grader
Little Rock, Arkansas

Stitches

She draped herself
In black like pitch
The open wound
Was without stitch
She would cry
Herself to sleep
Until she fell
Into the deep
She awoke to this
And wished her end
An angel flew
It did descend
Carressed her soul
And it led
One million angels
Armed with thread
To close her wounds
And they did stitch
They lifted the drapery
Dark as pitch

Katrina
10th grader
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia

N.O.N.E.

A cold wind blows over NeverEver
The sun might never ever
Shine
Shine
Shine

Because when the night falls
The ties in hearts and mountains snap
And a deep river flows
Into me
Into you
Out of me
Out of touch
Out of touching you

The sunshine over NeverEver
Is a black day
And a blue night
Like a bruise on the cheek of the sky
And we hate the days here
Stars light
Sun blinds
Moon heals
Night falls
And Never
Ever again

Carmen
11th grader
Bowling Green, Ohio

About the author of N.O.N.E.: Having just started a new grade, I find new experiences and new people inspire new poetry. A basic formula too few people actually tap into...

In Too Deep

Somehow I lost my grip,
And now I'm in too deep.
My feet have left the sand,
And I'm in over my head.

You're scaring me,
And I don't know where to turn.
There's no one left to hear
My cries and screams for help.

Somehow I lost my grip,
And now I'm in too deep.
My feet have left the sand,
And I'm in over my head.

I should've left,
But I stayed for you.
I thought I could change you,
Save you,

But I can't save you from yourself.

Somehow I lost my grip,
And now I'm in too deep.
My feet have left the sand,
And I'm in over my head.

I'm helpless against the war you're waging,
Against me, the world, and yourself.
You're killing the ones that love you.
You're going to kill yourself.

I want to help you,
But I'm not strong enough,
To tow us both to shore.

I want to love you
Be there for you
But you're killing me,
With every breath that you take.

Suddenly I've lost my grip,
And now I'm in too deep.

Jamie
11th grader

About the author of In Too Deep. Jamie Smith is seventeen years old and in her junior year of high school. She has been writing poetry since she was ten, and has submitted additional poetry to poesie.com and darkpoetry.com

A Poem not Written on a Train

The man in front of me
Speaks of his pilot acting
As if it was Shakespeare in the park,
And I read the Times
Idly wondering if I should have stayed at home.
The landscape passes vaguely;
Changing from gray to gray.
I had no pencil,
So this poem was never written.

Vada
11th Grader
Harrison, AR

Walking Behind

I was always walking behind him
And he was always walking behind me
When it was dark we helped each other see

But it was always like that
Always walking behind
And I never really thought about it
But I guess I didn't mind

Until one day I stepped away
Took a breath and sighed
I didn't want to walk behind
I wanted to walk beside

So I left him standing alone
And I moved away
I didn't want to leave him
But I couldn't stay

I thought he would make it
I guessed he was doing well
But with no one standing behind him
Eventually he fell

Maybe I should have said something
Something before I went
Explained why I was leaving
Talked about the good times we'd spent

Told him that I loved him
Told him that I care
Maybe if I'd told him
Maybe he'd still be here.

Crystal
12th Grader
Australia

Colourful Hatred

From day to night,
And ocean to sand,
Life is restricted
By a social band.
Blonde hair, blue eyes,
A natural size eight,
Break the rules,
And suffer the fate.
So when did difference
Become a sin?
Will individuality
Ever win?
The world we know
Is a mixed up place,

More than just
A single race.
Failure to see
What lies within.
Racists of the world
Continue to fight,
Merely over
Black or white.

Angel
9th Grader
Sydney, Australia

Sonnet to One Lost, Yet Never Forgotten

I cannot read the poems of old,
Nor can I hear the love tales out of yore.
All such visions my mind may behold
Fills me with pining for dearest you all the more.
I must not gaze upon the crimson rose-
It but reminds me of your lips.
Nor must I wonder where that flower grows, Lest I die in want of your
sweetkiss.
I never imagined a day without you,
When I would see you every day.
Now I must realize that it is full true
That you have gone far, far away.
And still your memories I hold most dear
Though but a thought of you and I shed a tear.

Caleb
10th Grader
Seneca, Missouri

About the author of "Sonnet to One Lost, Yet Never Forgotten"

The one lost is in truth one never had. Perhaps she is many such ones - whom
I never had the courage to approach - that faded away and were beyond my
reach.

I Have Faith

What have I done to deserve this?
What did I do wrong?
Did you see this coming?
Have you known it all along?

Why did it have to come to this?
What's it all about?
When can I see you again?
When will they let me out?

Are the times we had all over?
Are the memories all gone?
Will you forget all about me?
Now that we'll part for so long

Did you, God, make this happen?
Because if you did, I swear
The prayers I say most every night
I know you didn't hear

I have faith in heaven
In angels you can't see
I have faith in God's good love
But god no longer has faith in me

Chastity
11th grader
Sweden

About the author of "I Have Faith":
I'm a heartbroken teenage girl ...

All About Me

I am in the garden of me,
tasting the bud of prosperity.
Having a sip of happiness wine,
doesn't it just taste divine.
Pulling a petal off the flower of love,
he loves me, oh yes he does.
Slowly climbing up that tree,
into a whole new world of uncertainty.
Swinging on the branch of exuberance,
as through life I do prance.

Swimming in a pool of me,
after all this time I'm finally free.
The cooling splash of achievement,
held in my thoughts with cement.
The bitter drip of unhappiness,
stamping out all the bliss.
The bucket of water droppes on your head,
when you realize that there really dead.
Dipping your toes in a new journey,
not knowing yet what that may be.

Climbing up the mountain of me,
in my world I'm carfree.
Then on the pebbles of trouble I do slip,
falling quickly it's quite a trip.
Then I catch the ledge of a helping hand,
slowly but surely I begin to stand.
Then continue on my journey to the top,
occasionally I'll make a stop.
But I'll never quite my quest,
to ultimatly be my best.

Tabitha
9th Grader
Columbia City, Indiana

About the author of all about me This is for adam, it's not a bucket anymore
but more of a drip. I'll never forget you and I'll miss seeing you on the court
everyday. i know your happier where you are.

Beauty Queen

Sleep beaten eyes
Gaze heavily at the dawn,
Frosty finger-tipped memories
Collide in pure hatred,
Crashing,
Crumbling down,
Broken shards of emotion
Scattered into numbness

Locks of curly cue disorder
Tumble softy down,
Neutralize the pain,
Naturalize the smiles,
Collapsed dreams
of butterflies and fairy pinks
made it possible
to be a Beauty Queen.

Stephanie
8th Grader
Topeka, Kansas

Life: In Theory

The Sun...
It is the light, but not the heart.
It is the warmth, but not the love.
For shall there be not a sun,
there shall not be light;
there shall not be warmth.

The Heart...
It is the life, but not the warmth.
It is the love, but not the light.
For shall there be not a heart,
there shall not be life;
there shall not be love.

The Sun is the light and the warmth.
The Heart is the life and the love.
Shall there be not warmth and love,
there shall not be light in the heart.

Brian
10th Grader
Terra Ceia Island, Florida

About_The_Author: I have been writing poetry for a few years. I live in sunny Central Florida, a place where I can extricate my thoughts from the every day events of life; then write them down in the form of a poem.

This Wound

This wound never closes,
it just stops hurting for awhile.
But then it rises up again,
like an unwaned bile.

Just as you think it's closed,
it's ripped open anew.
Bare to the world and it's unguarded thoughts,
only hurtful to you.

The words are spoken carlessly enough,
but inflicting just as much pain.
As if the words where mean't harm,
the wound hurts just the same.

Sometimes it's a smaller rip,
and only a tear escapes.
But in that moment that single tear,
a million pounds it weighs.

One day this place is just a place,
but one the next it's a sea of memories.
What no other eye catches,
My tear filled eyes see's.

But the trick to this sadness,
is to never let the wound close.
Let it seep when it needs to,
when it's dorment let it doze.

Tabitha
9th Grader
Columbia city, IN

About the author of This wound: This is to Adam. And a message to people to be careful what they say. Your words may add salt to open wounds

The Vagabond

Speak to me, the voice of poverty
I sit by the fire, struck by the flame and taken aback
By this sodden presence
Your voice so riddled with untold tales
I wait to hear them unfold, but the familiarity speaks in me
What I might soon know is so frightening
Open not your chapped lips, but speak with some of scarlet
O ghostly phrase of all things which are liberated

Yet not free

Speak to me softly,

I am an auslander to your ways

Be gentle within my mind

Do your rough hands know how to be gentle?

The answer rests in a warm, tender touch,

far too caressing to be sought by sandpaper fingers

Refrain from breaking this one

Your strange, dirty beauty is so raw

It fills the depths of twilight with unknown appetites

Ones which I would once wish nothing more than to deny

However, if anything was to remain

It would most certainly not be anything other than you

So I throw off my chains which are now nothing but warm air

Going to join you in the mouth of a promising face

So dirty is your smile, you sweet tempest-tossed vagabond

Why do you lure me so?

These are places I cannot inhabit,

I am an outsider, I come from a different world

But somehow you know me

Somehow you call me toward the place that is both our deaths

Perhaps because you can resist the toxic Eden no more than I

Demise awaits us in that landscape

So beautiful before my blurred eyes

So blurred before your beautiful face

Your skin is soft coated with weather

There is a crimson flag rising from your brow

One which I choose to ignore, which I pretend not to see

Though every time my eyes land upon its waving splendor,

exceedingly thin and frail in the wind,

It brings fresh tears of winter to rip at these weary eyes

These eyes which will die if they remember too much
So, my claimed and weathered love
I sleep with dreams of your face so close to mine
Waiting for a day that will never come
A day that will live only in the dew-drop land of sleep
And the wispy realms of a private paradise
Though I will awaken to truly see you
My eyes once again landing upon that exquisitely torturous stained face of
yours
But only in the dreams will the dirt be thinned
The real light shining through
Only in the dreams may we reside in the forbidden utopia
And only in the twilight
Will the cumbersome flag be gone so that I may lay claim to this purity
This purity which you try to hide
Do not hide from me
I want to know all of your tales
Speak to me, you, the voice of all poverty and wealth that I know
Please. . .

Lita
11th Grader
Bowling Green, Ohio

About the author of The Vagabond; accepting what I am has been the easy part. Accepting the decisions of others is much harder. There is nothing in the world that I will learn more important than that, and that is how I felt when I wrote this poem. I hope you can take everything displayed here to heart.

That Person

In everyone's lives there is "that person" who changes everything. Your view on the world, your thoughts on life, yourself. And that one person may stay throughout the entire course of your lifetime, or they can come and go as quickly as the sun rises and sets. Myself, I didn't know that person very long.

We met under odd circumstances. I was traveling with my friend's high school over spring break, and we went to Costa Rica for ten days. I became quick friends with a boy on the trip and, before I knew what was happening, sparks flew between us and we were dating. When we returned to Seattle, life went on for the both of us; he had his life with his high school and friends and I had mine. He invited me to his junior prom, and I gladly accepted; a freshman never turns down that important invite. That night was magical and it was the first time he ever said, "I love you."

He had a bad past, and I was the conservative little Catholic school girl.

We were from two totally different worlds but, as he put it, our differences complimented each other so well. We'd talk on the phone until two in the morning and have deep discussions about love, life and the future. It was a very emotional relationship.

At that point in time, I was going to a very exclusive high school, where everything different was bad; dating him was bad. He was not the Abercrombie & Fitch model that I should have been going with according to my friends and he was in rehab for drug use. Andy, though, showed me how to be myself again, something I'd forgotten in the six months I'd been at my school. I'd let myself be led into another world full of shallow, petty objects that didn't fulfill anything I needed. He opened my eyes to a whole new circle of people; people I had shunned because they weren't what I considered normal.

We dated three months before we broke up due to forces outside our control.

The relationship ended horribly, but somehow we managed to continue to stay friends, learning more about each other than we had by saying, "I love you."

We told each other the truths we'd been keeping for the past few months and spoke about where our lives were headed. For about three weeks we were best friends.

Then one night he decided to tell me something that changed everything. It threw my entire life into a whirlwind, just after I'd gotten everything settled. I was dating a couple of guys, living as a teenage girl should: in the moment. But Andy felt it was his duty to tell me that he still loved me and wanted to try to work things out. It was at this point that I started doubting the past few days; my new crushes, my happiness. Was it real? Or was I running from myself again, something Andy had taught me not to do?

Things went back to the way they were before. We were still close friends, only now I had to fight my feelings for him because, as I kept telling him, I didn't want to get hurt. "Let's give dating a try," I'd say to him over the phone. "Let's spend time together as friends and see where that leads us."

With all this new emotional trauma, I had to end everything with the two guys that I liked so much. They still liked me, and it was hard because I hung

out with them almost every day. I went to Greg's house and swam when it was sunny out, and Jesse—living two houses away from Greg—would come over as well and throw me in the pool. And then I'd go home at night, high off the feeling of liking two wonderful guys and return to Andy spouting compliments and his love for me. It was a confusing time.

He went away on vacation for two weeks, and so did Jesse. Greg was the only one left and we talked every night until one in the morning. Another pattern was starting. Unfortunately, I couldn't feel anything for Greg, and I knew that when Jesse got back...That entire relationship would be physical. No sentiment or deep insights as we laid beneath the stars...Just raw passion.

I didn't find that bad, in fact—in my current predicament I almost wanted that, opposed to worrying every day about Andy. Plus, there was always the fact that all my friends hated him. My best friend whined to me over the phone, constantly reminding me about our last relationship and how he didn't care about me. It was a hard thing to sustain.

When Andy returned from his vacation, I did the bravest thing I could have done: I turned him down. When he asked me to be his exclusive girlfriend again I looked him in the eye and whispered, "No." Tears followed, mostly cried by my eyes, along with questions and feeble answers. I told him how afraid I was to start what we had again because it had caused both of us so much pain to be together.

"But it won't be like last time," He'd promise. "We're both different now; you said that yourself! We can have something totally different."

I shook my head and told him it could never be different. We were both starting school, me at an entirely different high school than last year and we both had totally different agendas. He was the big time senior, about ready to say goodbye to everyone and everything. And myself...I was the sophomore, looking forward to three more years of friends, fun and finals.

He dropped me off at home that night and we kissed. It wasn't a last shot at trying to rekindle the passion we used to have but more of a farewell, because we both knew we were losing our other half.

We didn't stay friends. We talked for a week or so but then school started and our conversations got shorter and shorter until it was just phone tag and then even that faded. I wonder where he is now, how he's doing, if maybe he's thinking of me too, but I will never forget him because he changed my entire life.

I'd loved another guy before, but that relationship...It was a junior high thing, where love was just something to say. I truly loved Andy, because he taught me things about myself I couldn't have figured out otherwise. His compliments made me feel beautiful, his "lines" made my heart feel whole.

The dreams he had that he shared with me made me understand that someone could love me without it being a lie. He taught me that different isn't bad, that opposites do attract and can find happiness...Even if that happiness isn't forever.

I regret telling him no. I miss him; his voice, his eyes, his arms around me. I miss our discussions about "the serious things" and our naps that we took together. I look at the pictures I have of our one and only trip together, Costa Rica, and cry as I remember the romance we had on that trip.

I cry as I remember the memories.

I'm with someone new now, someone who I care about a lot. I'm at a new high school now, somewhere that believes different isn't bad. I'm a whole new person now, someone who isn't afraid to say what's on her mind.

I met "That Person" early on in my life, and there isn't a day that passes that I don't thank God for it. It's hard to imagine going through another year of disliking anyone, of shunning them, simply because they have long hair or don't dress in the "trendy" clothes. I know there will be other people that will send my views and feelings around like a carousel gone mad but, there is one thing that will never change...I will never meet another Andy. And he, of course, will never meet another me.

Caitlin
10th grader
Seattle, Washington

About the author of "That Person"...I'm a regular kid, saying goodbye to the blissful summer and hello to homework and sports. This story is dedicated to Andy, wherever he is...I hope the path he chose has led him to success.

My Mother In The Night

I hate the graveyard shift.

I was never an especially brave person, and sitting behind the counter of this seedy convenience store all by myself during the wee hours of the morning isn't exactly my idea of a great time, and is in no way shape or form worth the lousy six bucks an hours the manager paid me. Whenever anyone seemingly suspicious would enter (and at two a.m., a lot of people look suspicious) I'd ready myself to be shot or stabbed or raped or something.

This never happened, thank God, but what can I say, I was and overly cautious guy. I only worked the graveyard shift on Saturday nights, and all week I work from five to midnight and would dread the coming of another lonely Saturday night. I wouldnt've gone near this job unless there was nothing else available to unqualified idiots like me in this crappy town.

I never thought, not in a million years, that one lonely graveyard shift one warm night in May would change my life forever.

Business was slower than usual. At about one, a drunken trucker had bought some more booze and some doughnuts, a nightwatchmen who frequented my store bought his usual muffin and someone I suspected was a prostitute bought some condoms and a pack of cigarettes. That had all happened in about fifteen minutes. I had sat still, reading some cheesy Star Wars novel for almost two hours.

I was shocked when I heard the door open, and in walked my mother. I had worked here for almost a year now, and no one from my family had ever come to see me at work. I really didn't see much of her anymore. I had moved out after promptly flunking out of community college after high school and lived with a friend now in quite possibly the ugliest part of town. I was good about visiting for thanksgiving and I was only ten minutes away, but I thought she and my father hated me after seeing their firstborn child become a looser in the game of life.

"Wow," I said "I didn't expect to see you here, especially so late. Is everything okay?"

"Oh yes, yes, fine actually." She was a small chipper women who, when I was young often dazzling me with her energy. "I just decided I'd drop by to see you you're doing here tonight."

"Oh..." This was weird, but I accepted it as normal "Well, that's cool...So,uh how're things at home?"

"Fine. Your father says hello, he's allright and your sister graduates next month."

"Yeah, I know, you throwing a party or something?"

"Oh I don't know what your father is doing, I'm not real sure." My father was an overweight slob who cracks open a beer at eight in the morning. Why would he of all people be coordinating my sister graduation party? I didn't ask that question though.

"Okay, well I'd best be going, I've kept you from your job too long."

"Mom- there's no one here."

"Yes,yes I know but I'll be missed soon."

"Do you want anything? Coffee maybe?"

Her face lit up "You know what? That sounds heavenly? Light with a touch of sugar please."

I made her a cup of the finest roast we had to offer and even put it in one of those stupid gimmick collectable mugs with a dinosaur on it.

"How much do I owe you?"

"I'm sure the boss won't miss it. If he does, I'll buy it."

"Well thanks, I really must go now." As she headed out the door,coffee in hand. she looked at me, smiled and said "I love you."

"I love you, too, ma."

And she left.

I had just resumed reading my book when the phone rang. I almost didn't answer it, sure it was some kids pranking us again. But after about six rings, I picked up.

"Hello, J.P.'s discount deli-mart?"

First it was just labored breathing, then I heard my fathers voice, made raspy from years of smoking like a chimney. "Neil? That you?"

Now this was weird. "Yeah, Dad what's up? Why are you calling me here?" My father and I hadn't gotten along since I was about ten, and we probably wouldn'tve talked at all if we didn't respect my mother so much.

More labored breathing. Was he having a heart attack,I wondered? Had he

been hurt by someone? A million and one scenarios flashed through my head.

"It's your mother," He said. Now I could tell he was crying. In all my life I had never seen or heard this man cry. "She's dead. She died maybe an hour ago. I would've called earlier, but I was at the hospital." More sobbing.

"Dad, that's impossible she was just here. She just came into the store and talked to me. I gave her some coffee and she just left like two minutes ago. I swear to God I'm not lying. S-s-she was just here. I swear to you Dad."

"Neil, listen to me, she was walking to the kitchen downstairs and she fell. Broke her neck. She died an hour ago."

"No, you don't understand!" I began to wail. "My mother, you're wife, was here two minutes ago. I swear! I swear to you, dad on everything I own! I'm not lying! I-I-I-"

"That's enough! Stop it! She was not there at your disgusting store just now or ever! You disgust me, you and your pathetic lies! I dunno what you want, but don't you dare talk about your mother like that! I won't listen to this!"

Click.

I dropped the phone, shuddering. When I finally looked up from my world that had suddenly become so cloudy, I saw that ugly mug, dinosaur and all, filled with our finest roast, light with sugar, sitting on the dirty counter. Sometimes the night can be so lonley.

Jeffrey
12th Grader
New York

About_The_Author: The writer of this piece will one day, with some help from his friends, some far bigger than others, become the greatest writer to embrace the American persona since Will Shakespeare.

Waffles and Berries

It happened because the attention span of individuals has shortened to that of a goldfish's.

"Hello?" I answered in the most robotic norm. "Hey Steven, what's going on?" My friend Steven Forest, whom I have known for the past two years of my hectic young life, had grown extremely bored this Sunday afternoon.

"You're always bored, I'm running out of things to tell you. Have you finished your thesis on molecular configurations and answering your call in life yet?" No laughter. No snicker. Silence. "Fine, I'll be over in 5." A response. I hung up the receiver and proceeded upstairs to put on some pants.

As I stepped outside onto my porch, I caught myself between the heavy screen door and the old splintered wooden door: I could already see Steven walking up my driveway. He only lives 2 blocks away in our dull, inhabited by old folks, suburban neighborhood. I met Steven while walking my dog; he was searching for his forever-lost cat and we eventually spent the entire day together looking for Chubbs.

"I waited for 5, then started walking." said Steven in his charmless manner.

"Well I wasn't dressed yet, it's the last day of the long weekend and I haven't even eaten breakfast." I winced.

"It's almost eleven, you know?" he blatantly said to me as if I could not read the watch on my wrist. "Come on, I have waffles and strawberries at my place."

So we walked and talked about the usual nothing to his house. He lived in this grand old place that stands out from the rest of the worn down homes around. Steven lived with his mother, a divorcé before he could remember; He has no knowledge of his father, as far as he is concerned, his mother artificially created him and his father could be a Nobel piece prize winning astronaut. We began talking about how summer's about to begin and where our families plan on going and where we wished we were going. It was a short conversation that ended unfinished as we stepped inside his kitchen. His mother, who insisted to be addressed by her first name (but I never could) was gathering in the fridge. She was emptying the fridge and fruit and glass jars were all over the place, or perhaps she was emptying her groceries into the fridge, either way she was occupied for another mere half an hour.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Forest." I said to her. She was a very intimidating looking woman, always dressed to give a speech and lecture the world on its horrible social injustices.

"Oh well hi there! Came for the waffles?" She was a very nice person Steven promised, but I could never tell. She was very friendly with me, but at times I can see why Steven is the way he is. I ate her waffles and the aforementioned strawberries on the patio while Steven sat silently -not looking at me.

"What's the matter with you today? You're acting more pissy than usual."

"I'm not having a good day." He said looking at me, then just in my general direction. "I haven't been sleeping well."

I finished my waffles and berries and wiped my mouth with the cloth napkin.

There was a pattern of tulips and fishes on it - an odd combination, I remember thinking.

"I can't sleep at night either, the weather is too hot to sleep comfortably." He didn't look pleased with my response. "Alright, tell me why you haven't been sleeping well. I want to know." He was waiting to hear this.

"Well, I've been thinking a lot, when I'm lying there trying to find some peace of mind to get to sleep. But now, I can't seem to find that peace of mind anymore." He sounded deeply hurt. "There's so many things that bother me and I can't do anything to solve them."

An undisclosed amount of silence had to be passed before I chose to spoke.

The exact same thoughts my friend had just expressed have ran through my mind as well, but this was the first time Steven was at a lost. I was always the one that came to him with my problems and nervous dispositions.

"You can't just find peace." I started attentively. "You're too bottled up about everything. You really should open up more often."

"I am open. Just in different ways than you." There was no spite in his voice;

he was very open that way.

"Well then tell me some of these problems that keep you up at night. Even if you don't think anyone can help, it's good to let it out." I'm not sure why I was being so condescending towards him, I had never before, but he's never opened up to me until now.

"They're just stupid questions I keep asking myself...you wouldn't want to hear them." he said. I had never seen him so vulnerable.

"I can respect that." And I did. "But you're assuming I don't care, you want to talk about it and I want to hear about it." I was trying to be direct without sounding cold. I was not sure how to handle this situation with Steven, but he wouldn't look at me now. All he did was sit there in his elegant patio chair on his newly finished patio, behind his grand brick house that he never once enjoyed bringing friends to.

"I want to kill myself." he stated suddenly. He still had not looked at me.

He had now focused onto something under the table. Perhaps it was a giant beetle scurrying across the ground or some black worker ants making off with waffle crumbs. "I've been wanting to kill myself. It wouldn't make a difference if I was here or if I was dead. I don't think I'm here anyways."

"Steven, you are here." It was all I could say. Steven and I have talked numerous times about life and death, love and religion, everything that gets everyone down. Of course, we were amateurs and never talked without experience. We just enjoyed talking and trying to figure it all out.

"You and I both know God is dead, right?" I nodded in agreement with his bold and said-before statement. "But isn't love the power of God." I pondered that sentence. I still do.

"Love is what someone feels. God is what someone thinks." I protested.

"What does God and Love have to do with you feeling depressed?" He had now focused on me and forgot about the beetle and ants.

"If Love is God; then naturally God is Love, and Love is what makes life great." I stared at him. "But if God is dead, then love is dead, and life isn't real anymore. Therefore, I can't be here and neither can you. If there isn't life, there's only death."

"Jesus Christ, Steven, stop talking. Life is this, exactly what we're doing right now!" I screamed at him. "We're sitting here on a beautiful day talking about things that have been talked about over and over. This is life! Death is apart of life, not the opposite of it." He didn't speak anymore and neither did I.

"Hey Steven, would you and your little friend want to go see a movie?" Mrs. Forest interrupted our silence at a lovely time. "We can go see that new sci-fi flick everyone's chatting about, but we'll have to leave soon if we want good seats!"

It was a very sunny day, I clearly remember. We went to see that movie everyone was indeed talking about. The three of us sat there in that air-conditioned movie theatre, Steven and Mrs. Forest on either side of me.

That was the day the world ended.

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Amy
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Teenage Paranoia

We are treated like children, guided through life by our elders. We are continuously told that we are 'near adulthood', and yet are still treated like dogs trying to learn a new trick. We are all treated like thieves when we enter a local mall, and are awarded graciously whenever we are doing what is considered right. Blame it on what you will, teenagers are known for their spontaneous mood swings.

Few of us are proud enough to be able to look ourselves in the mirror and see our true selves.

Teenagers are self-involved, because they fear that if they lose control of themselves, that if for a minor second spontaneity kicks in, they will be considered different from the crowd. We are often blamed for all the evil of the world, and yet we are given the passage to the future. It seems that when a child grows up, the parents will lose control over them and become passive to what the teenager appreciates.

We are the blatant teenagers who disregard our elders and care for nothing but drugs, sex, and alcohol. Surely, much of this is because of the fear of not belonging. We will fall deeper and deeper under this blanket of insane corruption. We have been educated and told, strictly, over and again the difference between what is right and what is wrong. And, yet, we still do things that are wrong, even when we understand that they are wrong.

Delve deeper into humanity, do not blame the teens, do not blame the parents, blame humanity.

We are all to blame. We can all say that when the time comes we will not fall into the crowd, but the truth is there are many teenagers that are incredibly more mature than adults. We no longer stand as a brilliant society of mammals, instead we have become vicious restrictions to our own survival. Why is it that parents cannot openly talk to their children about certain subjects?

It is not easy existing as what we are. The dreaded schadenfreude of our culture has lead to the defeat of human individualism. Throughout history the prodigious thinkers who had the courage to act differently and speak as if there was no tomorrow, were the ones who furthered the era of humanity.

Without people challenging the social standards we would not have succeeded to this point in time. But what have we succeeded? We lived through a time where many were killed because they were accused of being witches; we have defaced many grave sites because of the fear of vampires; at one point we put all our trust in a corrupt church; we killed millions because of one man's crusade.

Who are we to say what is right? There is no reasoning for our existence, there is no reasoning for this shallow projection of misplaced faith. The

people have finally shot all their strength into the earth, defacing it for what it is. They have heard the angel of death speak of nature's wrath, they have heard of the irrevocable terror of John's Revelation, they have heard the grim details of Nostradamus, and yet they fear nothing but the sight of their lover. Those that are ignorant of the end, shall feel all that is theirs. All the implosions of incredible spectacle, will someday devour what is human. We will return to where we came from. Yet, does anything change?

If it is completely inevitable, then who are we to change nature's wish, who am I to claim to this one significant possession. For us to be so naive as to just stand here would be as if laughing in the face of death. We would be claiming that we were larger than the entire capacity of God, claiming that there was nothing but ourselves. We are making something incredibly angry. I can feel it. There is something inside that corner which cannot move and I cannot see it, but know it is there.

Inside my mind there are the thoughts of our drastic deceleration. There will be a day when we will all see the reasoning behind the reason why there is no meaning to life.

When that day comes, when all hell breaks loose, how shallow would you have to be to blame it on the teenagers? If God is good, how can he damn you to hell? Someday this will be ours to know and the atheists will finally return for us. When all is spoken, who is watching you?

"Pull me out of the aircrash*pull me out of the lake*cause i'm your superhero"

-From "Lucky" By Radiohead

Leslie
11th Grader
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Ms. Invincible Realizes

On her way down the short but endless hall, she realizes that there are some ugly possibilities ahead, that there might be some sort of blistering death behind the door at the end of the hall. She realizes that, to "Them" she is like a gnat crawling up the wall, trying to get to the bare lightbulb which may or may not be an insect's only definition of heaven. A pathetic, though morbidly amusing, sight. Especially right before it is crushed.

There is a good chance that they are going to tell her that she is no longer welcome in their organization, the organization that, such a short time ago, she sold her own little "business" to. People who are unwelcome in such a well-oiled machine of a company are disposed of in an unpleasant way that she knows of all too well. As she thinks this possibility over, she supposes that is what they are going to tell her; that she is should probably write out a will and pick out a plot in the local cemetery.

She chides herself for being stupid enough to believe that, once she had given them what they had wanted (her business, another piece in the jigsaw puzzle of total control) and they had given her what she had wanted (enough money to fill an olympic-sized swimming pool, which she could now afford), they would simply let her go on her merry way. How naive she had been, to think that they would let her go with the knowledge of what they were really

trying to do. Someone like her with that kind of information could be extremely dangerous to a secretive, illegal operation like theirs.

She realizes, now, with some dejection, that she could have been dangerous anyway, she could have been the porcupine in their balloon factory. Her uncanny business savvy and strong will could have probably toppled their near-monopoly over time, even though they did have more money. But, instead of waging a war against their domination of her industry, she chose to bow to the controlling forces of the Almighty Dollar. It almost made her sick, because she had once vowed that she would never sell out.

"Well", she sighs to inwardly, her hard-soled sandals smacking the sterile linoleum, trip-trapping toward fate with cloven a pair of hooves, "whatever happens, you can roll with the punches. You are Ms. Invincible, after all."

Of course, this is a silly thought, as she is not some new-age inner-city super-heroine with cosmic powers and a spandex jumpsuit. No, she despises spandex and has no supernatural abilities to speak of. Ms. Invincible is just a silly nickname she gave herself when she was just starting out on her own, some sort of power phrase to mask the weakness she felt then and feels now.

However, she is far from helpless. Her wit is as quick as a sprinter taking illegal stimulants, she has talked her way out of each and every situation that she is thrust into, and she has a seemingly never-ending streak of good luck. Running the seedy business that she does (or did, before she sold out), she probably would have not lived through her first day on the job without these traits. In her line of work, she made a new enemy every time she drew a breath.

Now, her hand resting on the stainless steel doorknob, thinking of all the skills she has, she realizes yet another thing, a thing that makes her draw an agonized breath. She realizes that, by selling her livelihood to a such a syndicate, a Cosa Nostra of sorts, in return for a gargantuan pile of money, she might as well have sold her soul. The metaphor rings painfully, sinfully true.

That business was what she had loved, what she had lived for, what had put the spring in her step and the twinkle in her eye. Yes, selling out was much like selling her soul. Along with the soul have drained her powers of intuition, lucidity, and good fortune . . . now, upon examination, she can feel the empty place where they had been. And these were the very things she would need to fend off the higher powers. So, by letting them purchase her murder-for-hire business, she has indeed let them manipulate her in the way that she used to manipulate others, and she, by her actions, has taken away the things that she would have used to defend herself from corporate wolverines such as these.

The vicious circles overlapping give her quite the migraine, and take away her last line of defense; her confidence.

Now, having now unwittingly disarmed herself completely, she opens the door. As she steps in, she feels more naked than the bare lightbulb that hangs from the ceiling like a condemned man. She steels herself, prepares to take whatever the committee seated in there are about to tell her or, more likely, do to her. Digging deep within herself, she finds that, indeed, she doesn't have anything left. Now, she is armed with nothing but a phrase she realizes that she no longer believes in.

You can roll with the punches.

You are Ms. Invincible, after all.

Lita
11th grader
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About the author of Ms. Invincible; she is a Junior at Bowling Green Senior High, with interests in music, drama, art, and English. She aspires to be a singer/songwriter, and a novelist in her spare time.

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