THE BUCKEYE
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Cover Art:
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Scholastic Art Gold Key Award

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**The Buckeye** is a magazine of writing and art from seventh and eighth grade classes at Montgomery Bell Academy. The title was inspired by the buckeye tree that stood in the grove on the north end of campus. It was once a familiar gathering place for both faculty and students.

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*Jack Pacconi*
He had been the ruler of a great kingdom; the king of a huge empire. All others bowed before his might and that of his brethren. But that was a long time ago.

Today, he was reduced to a lowly peasant. He no longer fought for his pride and title, no longer fought the young, fierce princes for glory; nowadays, he fought for scraps. Gone was his flaming cloak of splendors; now, he wore a tattered, mud-stained garment, without an ounce of its former glory. His castle lay in ruins, his brethren dead. He was no longer a king but a nomad – a lost, ruined soul.

His demise came, not in a matter of days, but instead over centuries. Centuries of the giants chiseling away at his empire before it finally fell, crumbling to dust. It started many moons ago when the world was still young…

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It started with the “Feathered Ones,” as his people called them. The Feathered Ones were giants. Massive in size, strong and sturdy in build. They walked on two giant, muscled legs, and had two more limbs hanging from their torsos. Their most distinguishing feature, though, were their elaborate headdresses adorned with the magnificent feathers of the mountain eagles. As big as they were compared to him, they were minuscule compared to his castle. His castle was made of thick, strong columns reaching up into the very sky itself. Seven in number, these columns were the very foundations of his empire, having existed since time immemorial. They were indestructible and colossal, eluding any sense of proportion.

For days, safe in the leafy ramparts of his castle, he watched these Feathered Ones. At length, it became apparent that these giants meant no harm. They lived in small dwellings made of wood and only took what they needed from his lands, never more. Additionally, they killed the fierce, cunning, four-legged beasts that attacked the king and his people.

For several decades, giant and king lived in harmony. Then one day, the wooden birds appeared on the horizon. These three giant vessels were first spotted by one of the scouts in his royal army. They were made of wood and had immense white sheets that allowed them to be propelled over the valtameri. 1

The valtameri... The endless body of water. He had lost many troops trying to cross it. Occasionally, the scouts he sent would return, weary and crazed; when interrogated, they babbled about how the water never ended. And yet, these wooden birds had appeared...

Hours later, they reached the shore. Out of the three wooden birds marched more giants, obviously the same species as the Feathered Ones. They had the same build and also walked on two legs. This being said, they were of a different breed. The Feathered Ones were simply dressed in the pelt of the forest deer. In contrast, these new giants wore colorful, ornate tunics and were flanked by rigid guards in armor made of a strange, shiny rock. This kiiltävä, 2 or shiny-rock, armor blinded the king and his people, and in their hands, the giants held sharp kiiltävä sticks and strange round tubes. Perhaps the most prominent difference of all though, was the pale color of these giants’ hides. Compared to the tanned, darker Feathered Ones, the armored giants were as white as ghosts.

The first signs of hostility came soon enough. When the armored giant leader came upon the Feathered Ones’ camp, it shouted out. Even from his vantage point, far above on his castle wall, the king could sense danger. The foreign giant ordered its troops to storm the village of the Feathered Ones, who

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1 Finnish word for ocean
2 Finnish word for shiny

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were thrown roughly out of their houses. He could see the conflict before it even started. A young and brave, but foolish Feathered giant armed with a bow climbed into one of the trees on the fringe of the village grounds. From there, it shot one of the armored giants. This giant stumbled forward, an arrow protruding from his neck, and then crumpled forward, eyes open in shock. Everything in the clearing froze and, for a long moment, there was a deathly silence. Then, chaos broke loose. The armored giants kneeled down and leveled their tubes. Loud cracks echoed through the air and puffs of smoke appeared at the end of the tubes. With each crack, a Feather One crumpled to the ground and lay motionless. The king knew they were dead from the glassy looks in their eyes. In a few short moments, the ground was littered with the limp bodies of the Feathered Ones. Afterwards, the armored giant leader yelled to his troops, and they filed back to their vessels. The wooden birds took off across the water, speeding toward the sunset, back to the land from which they came.

After this incident, nothing happened for a few years. All neighboring Feathered tribes refused to go near the clearing in front of the king’s castle; they claimed it was haunted, and told tales of the “Tall Pine” massacre. His people were accustomed to living with the Feathered Ones, and after the years of peace and prosperity living with the giants, his people weren’t used to being alone. Life went on though, and soon, they adapted to the new conditions.

Five years later, they were seen again. This time though, the pale giants came in seven wooden birds, not just three. The giants moved briskly with a purpose: soldiers quickly fanned out into the trees, alert for Feathered Ones, and numerous others, holding axes, followed behind. Those chopped down a large clearing, not far from his castle, and began building houses. Additionally, they plowed the dirt and deposited small seeds, something that he had seen the Feathered Ones do. A month passed and then two, and three, and four. The giants finished building their wooden houses, but these new homes were nothing like the small, rickety huts of the Feathered Ones. These houses stood tall and strong, with wooden beams laid in neat, firm rows. They radiated order and power.

Fall came, and crops were gathered with methodical efficiency. Wood was chopped, and piles of it accumulated in small sheds, ready to be fed to their roaring fireplaces. Houses were repaired and strengthened: cracks in the thick wooden walls were filled, and roof tiles loosened by fierce winds were fixed. Late into the season, another wooden bird arrived bringing more giants, food, and domesticated animals. There were the four-legged horses, beasts of transportation that were powerful and swift as the wind, and short, stout pigs with soiled, pink coats, constantly squealing and running helter-skelter.

Winter came, bringing with it harsh cold and much snow. The white crystals piled up around dimly lit houses, the red embers from their fireplaces growing weaker as the night progressed. The trees bowed in the harsh winds, bare limbs exposed to the cold. The ground froze under the layers of ice and snow; planting couldn’t begin until next spring. The landscape was painted a dull, bleak gray.

Spring came, and with it came five more vessels carrying dozens of pale giants. Along with them came armored escorts. These new pale giants doubled the size of the settlement and added several new fields. A military outpost was built, giant versions of the strange kiiltävä tubes were built and shone menacingly on the battlements. The wilderness was pushed back and with it, the Feathered Ones were forced out of their homes. Next came the dark giants, darker even than the Feathered Ones. They came in chains escorted by armored pale giants on a battered, grimy ship. On the backs of these workers, the settlement thrived: Dirt roads were paved for horse-pulled carriages. The settlement expanded to the coast, and soon, a port was created beside the valtameri. Wooden birds flocked to this area, carrying crates of shiny materials. Crops were no longer kept to backyard

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gardens but instead spanned acres. Strange crops were taken out on the wooden birds almost as fast as they were grown. Plants such as the one with a deep purple hue and another prickly, brown, withered stalk with fluffy white flowers.

Years passed and then decades. The settlement became a town: buildings were built taller and cleaner. Neatly cut lumber replaced rustic logs. A clear, hard material filled in windows. The giants’ crops thrived, and fields expanded across the countryside. Forests were razed, their wood contributing to new settlements. The four-legged predators of the forest became prey, falling to the invisible hand of the kiiltävä tube. The outpost became a fort and clashes with the Feathered Ones occurred regularly. Even though the giants appeared to be alike, it was hard to tell from their actions. They often fought each other and committed terrible acts.

Seasons came and went. The Feathered Ones’ attacks on the new civilization were reinvigorated with the realization that they would lose their homes. These attacks were quickly vanquished by giant ships bearing pale troops in crisp red uniforms.

More years passed. The pale giants became angry with the crisp, red soldiers. Violence soon followed. Fleets of warships dominated the horizon, and long lines of red could be seen across the countryside. The fight was a long one as giant shot giant, and fields were filled with the red uniforms. The kiiltävä tubes continued their cracking almost continuously every day.

Eight years later, the armed wooden birds left the horizon, journeying back to the homeland of the giants. New flags flew, every town donning stars and stripes.

Towns became cities, and boats transported food and goods down waterways. The metal horses were born, giant, tireless machines that belched smoke and traveled even faster than the fleet horse. The metal horses cut down the wilderness as miles of track connected the land from east to west. Mountains were destroyed and rivers were filled in to allow settlement. Forests were cut down, and large herds of shaggy beasts from the plains were killed.

The fighting started again pitting blue against gray. The fields ran red, and the cities were pulverized by constant bombardment.

A century of peace. But peace was a relative term. Weapons were built, navies strengthened, and colonies acquired. Natives shoved aside to make room for the “Great World Power.”

And then war. A war like none he nor the giants had seen before. Strange birds made of kiiltävä flew overhead, dropping canisters that blew outward with devastating force. Countrysides were ruined, plants decimated. The ground became uninhabitable for life, permanently drained of nutrients and baked to a crisp brown under the heat of explosions. The beasts of the forests were decimated along with the trees, their habitats ruined. No creature was safe.

Eventually, the world came to rest. New machines were built out of kiiltävä: colorful beetles with circular legs that crawled quickly over the many roads between cities. They belched smoke into the air, making it hard for his people to breath. Dusty particles floated everywhere. Giant factories that covered acres dumped their waste in rivers, and spewed smoke through large columns. Rivers ran dark with a greasy, gritty substance, as dark as the night sky. Nature died. Fish sank and floated limply in the bottom of rivers. Rivers that were no longer bright, and gleaming, and crystal clear. In the remaining forests, creatures struggled to adjust and survive, forced out of their original homes by the giants.

Then the valtameri rose. The coast shrunk. The life-giver shined brighter than ever. The hunks of ice that topped the world disappeared.

The giants tried to make a change for the better. The gritty dust

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stopped spewing. But eventually, the giants’ hunger for power won out. New machines were made, giant hunks of kiiltävä with complicated tubes connected in systems across the surface. They vaporized the valtameri. All life died there. The colorful fish dropped like stones: whole schools of them falling down and choking on the cold, rocky bottom of the pits. But the giants didn’t care. They burned the bodies of these once mysterious and awe-inspiring creatures. They built new cities where the valtameri once were, complicated hives of kiiltävä and glass.

The massacre came next. It started with the fall of his castle. The great stone-wood pillars of his castle, that had stood tall since the start of the world were finally felled. Seven in number, each as thick as ten giants, were chipped down by powerful tools with a searing, powerful blade. They fell slowly as if Time itself had stopped, appalled by this terrible deed. The king watched his castle, the only remnant of a once great empire, fall crumbling to the ground. Shattering into a million shards of wood upon impact with the cold, lifeless ground. His people, subjects and guards alike, threw themselves at the giants, trying to avenge the destruction of their homes. But they were cut down before they even got a few feet. He watched his son, heir to the throne, fall lifeless to the ground, a searing hole smoking in his chest. The ground was littered with the colorful coats of nobles and common folk alike; the giants killed indiscriminately. The king barely survived, crawling away among the corpses of his kin. His home and kin were gone along with his title and power. He was alone and powerless, forced to adjust like others before him.

Years passed. He was forever haunted by memories of the massacre. His once noble coat grew torn and tattered; his once sharp features worn and haggard. He was forced to fight the remaining creatures of the wild for scraps. One day, the orb flashed away. The bright, shining cheerful ball in the sky that had given warmth to his people. Soon, it was replaced by a harsh, white, cold light put in the sky by the giants. A shining, smooth white material replaced everything. The streets became the cold, hard material. The giants’ buildings were built taller and bigger, made out of the generic, sterile white. The only color that remained in a once vibrant world was white. The giants went on as usual. Soon, they forgot the lessons of their ancestors. This new generation of giants knew nothing of what the world used to be.

One day, the king gave up. He had nothing to live for. No longer wanted to breathe the gritty, oily air. No longer wanted to watch the giants destroy themselves. He longed to feel the cool, clean summer breeze once more. To see the vibrant flowers of nature. The blues and greens and reds and yellows. The cool, gurgling, crystal clear streams. His people. He closed his eyes...

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A small, limp form could be seen if one looked closely – not that anyone did anymore. There was no need to. It fell crashing to the ground and remained lying there, a still pile of dirty, bloody feathers. The last remnant of nature that hadn’t been destroyed by man. A lone red-tailed hawk. But it was gone now, and with it, nature itself. No one looked twice or realized its significance. It was just another piece of trash to be picked up by the garbage robots later.
Ashton Terrell - Self Portrait
Scholastic Art - Honorable Mention

Turner Kirkland

Lucian Brunetti

James Murff
“A Westerner’s Yin and Yang”

By Thomas McRae

Light flutters down to the front of my feeble hollow,
Showcasing my strengths and simplicity in being a son.

But if you look to my back you will find my shadow.

Dark from disappointment and pain left by the previous person to live here.

I try to detach from my shadow,
But I will forever have the dark sin slithering at my heels.

I feel as if the closer my shadow creeps to my feet the closer, closer it comes to my character.

Always in constant reminder when the sun falls
That the darkness can cloak my conscious.
And a moral compass is worthless if you don’t know the path which you walk.

Forever I will fear the fight between my front and shadow.
Second Place Poetry

“Rain”
By William Gu

Deep, dark clouds roll in,
The white chariot appears for an instant
The deep roar follows
Splish, splash
Orbs of water falling
The smell of copper filling the air
Wet, warm drops
Like the tears of a goddess
Giving small kisses on the heads of children
And umbrellas
Years and years past,
Always, joy would be brought to my face
To see the white chariot
And to see the dry dust to turn to mud
Years and years past,
From playing in the wet mud
To staying inside, reading and listening
But when the yellow sphere shows itself
And the black clouds disappear
New smiles other than mine
Creep up on different faces

Braden Ziegler
Exit 115 flew by me
a mile marker every minute
six billboards each plastered up with the face of some cheesy injury-lawyer
each saying “have you been injured in a trucking accident well no more suffering...”
looking up I saw the polluted sky
its blue-gray tint seemed to loom over you
No grass existed No trees were healthy
only miles upon miles of scorched earth covered in thick layers of Pavement and Concrete
then I woke up
I decided that I was not going to let this future happen that it was time to make a change
Honorable Mention Poetry

“Shakespeare’s Jester”

By Thomas McRae

Fully formed by letters in certain sequences, We, the silly yet sly jester, seem to be a simple servant from the swift glance of a script. But from a closer read you will find our distinct intellect submerged underneath stereotypes. Shakespeare has written our existence to be covered by the face paint of adolescence, but never the warrior paint we hear about in the hymns our heroes hum. He makes us dance before the fiercest kings to expose his flaws. Every joke, skit, riddle, and show we adjutant to amuse a aristocrat picks apart the perfect picture the king believes he needs to be. To give a sense of authority to the ignorant king we “slip” and lay our necks out on the fence so the vein and tense prince can strike us down hence building himself up. little does he know, we are master jugglers and all of our daggers hanging in suspense.

Shakespeare wrote us to lighten a mood and better his play, but when his quill drew open fields and wide skies, he sewed the jester's costume to his skin, and we can only be free once we grow out as men.

Ashton Terrell
“Old Hickory”
Scholastic Art Silver Key Award
“Open your books to page one,” said Mr. Arnold as he proceeded to write on the blackboard. The class did as Mr. Arnold instructed, and then started whispering amongst themselves. It was the beginning of their first year with him and they didn’t know what to make of him, aside from the fact that he was a crane. All students were skeptical of a crane as their teacher; they knew he was in for a rough year. Their previous teacher was a giraffe and he simply couldn’t persevere through the students’ persistent bullying. The least liked, Randy the porcupine, sat in the back of the class every year, but he decided to sit in the front today, just to give Mr. Arnold a hard time.

Of course he was first to point out, “But we’ve learned about our independence every year.” Mr. Arnold immediately threw his “teacher’s edition” book into the trash, slammed a seemingly ancient book on his desk, and roared, “No you haven’t.”

That shut them up:

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Dean would walk through the forest at night from time to time. He needed to escape the pandemonium of running an animal group. Dean along with his sister Daisy were the fierce and courageous leaders of the Zebras, who were smart, sneaky, and elusive traits. Dean never wanted to lead an entire species of their region, yet his sister dragged him into it.

“What am I getting out of this,” Dean said to himself. “With every task I tell them how to complete they come up with ten seemingly better ways to do it. Why should I bother? What do I have that they don’t have.”

“More than you think,” faintly mumbled the Crane who seemed to have appeared out of thin air. “The real question is, ‘what do you have that they think they--”

“Scram, Crane!” exclaimed Dean about to break a tear, obviously not in the mood for talking to anybody, especially a Crane. They were undermined by all animals, treated no better than the dirt they walked on. “If one were born a Crane it was for a reason,” all animals would preach (except the Cranes of course).

Little did Dean know the head Giraffe, Buster, was on the other side of the trees and heard Dean’s commotion. Out of pure instinct he ran to see what was wrong, as if he actually cared for an animal other than a Giraffe.

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“Students let me tell you something about Giraffes,” grimly stated Mr. Arnold. “They used to be the most merciless and egotistical monsters seen on this side of the Sahara.”

Randy gave him a long stare, saying more than words. Eventually he pompously said, “But Mr. Arnold our teacher last year was a giraffe, and he--”

Quick Mr. Arnold responded with, “Randy, just keep listening. As I was saying...”

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Buster sensed Dean’s presence and once again confronted him with his troop of Giraffes.

“You can’t hide, Zebra,” Buster said, chuckling and forcing a laugh out of his so-called friends. “There’s no escape, isn’t that right Buster,” said his right-hand Giraffe, Grant.

“Indeed. Now Zebra, we can do this the easy way or the hard way. Your choice.”

Dean facetiously mumbled, “Two choices! Wow Buster, that’s one more than I had last time!”

“What was that Zebra?” demanded daunting Buster.

There was complete and utter silence.

“That’s it. Get him, boys!” ordered Buster. In sync they stormed up

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to Dean and surrounded him with a tight circle. After the Zebra’s many shouts (which stopped mid-fight), they finally let up and ran away. Of course nobody noticed the Crane observing the whole scene. He peeped over the bush only to find Dean hopelessly lying on the dirt path, tied up in the legs and possibly unconscious.

Back at the Zebra’s valley Daisy could hear and feel her brother’s suffering and took a crew of zebras with her to check out the situation. They eventually found Dean when he started calling for help again.

“Oh my! Dean! What have they done to you?” exclaimed petrified Daisy. “Let’s get you back to the valley.”

It took Dean a couple of days to recover from the incident with Buster. Daisy went to greet him in his room the next morning to find him sitting with his back to her. Dean sensed her presence and immediately turned around and screamed, “Get out!” before she could open her mouth. She, just as petrified as before, bolted out of his room.

“How’s he holding up?” later asked a fellow Zebra.

“This is bad,” replied Daisy in dismay. “He appeared to be crafting something, and you know how he gets when he has a ‘good idea.’”

The remnants of a smile slowly drifted away from Daisy’s face. Both of them recalled the last time Dean claimed he had a revolutionary idea. He thought that in order to stop the Giraffes he should act like them for a while and see how bad it is. For weeks on end he treated the Zebras like Cranes. He puffed up his chest and acted entitled as they come.

The Zebra said, “Oh no. This is bad. Did he look rejuvenated?”

Daisy smirked and replied “If he were he was rejuvenated as a mad man.”

Dean eventually came out after five days of tenacious thought; he had devised the perfect plan. There was no stopping this one, he thought. Proud as ever (almost as if he were a Giraffe), he approached the patient Zebras. They were worried sick about him, but if they knew anything, it was to not disturb Dean in one of his thinking periods.

“I’ve got it!” Dean said delightfully as if everything were completely normal. “This is it.”

“Oh is it?” said Daisy with a completely straight face, which said more than her words. “I can’t wait to see what you’ve come up with this time,” she stated as she rolled her eyes to the other Zebras behind her, all of whom were attentively staring at Dean.

Dean immediately retaliated, “We’re going to--” The rustling in the bushes interrupted Dean. “Did you hear that?”

They all shook their heads and Daisy whispered to the others, “See? I told you he was crazy.”

“It’s nothing. Anyway,” Dean continued, “We’re going to attack. ‘Fighting fire-with-fire,’ right? I tried to craft this plan before, but we’d need a great deal more animals. Now I say we just go for it. I can speak for the lot of us in saying I’ve had it with those monsters of animals.”

There was rustling yet again. “Who goes there,” Dean asked. “There, behind the bushes.”

Slowly and steadily, a Crane appeared from the shrubbery.

Dean was furious. “This is it? This is what interrupted me? Well what do you have to say for yourself?”

“Trust me you don’t want to hear it,” the same Crane from earlier replied, quavering. “You, all mighty Dean, have it all figured out--”

Before he had the chance to turn back, Dean immediately stopped him saying, “No, go ahead. You’ve already intruded; you might as well speak.”

“I want to hear your previous plan,” replied the Crane, on the verge of fainting.

“I already said we don’t have enough animals,” said Dean.

The Crane shakingly shook the bush as more mere Cranes came about. The Zebras sighed together, but they stopped when the last Crane whistled. The abrupt siren triggered

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“Animals with Phones”

By Mauro Mastrapasqua

even more rustling. Over the course of a few minutes, Buffalo, Ostriches, Gazelles, and more Cranes emerged perhaps from thin air. Even a few Elephants showed up.

Dean’s jaw dropped. When he picked it back up he said, “I stand corrected... What is your name, Crane?”

“Rodger,” reluctantly replied the crane, still not forgetting where he came from. It occurred to him that nobody had asked him his name before.

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After a long pause Mr. Arnold said, “This, students, is the point at which the animals became one unit versus the Giraffes. Let me explain the groups for you, or at least the common stereotypes in those days. The Ostriches were not smart and easily picked on (not as badly as the Cranes, but no one was). The Gazelles were looked up to for their creative ability and quick thinking. The Elephants would try to appear tough due to their size but everyone pegged them as ‘softies.’ Last and somewhat least, were the Buffalo. They’d travel in groups to make themselves feel like they were together, but they’d keep their heads down. Buffalo were usually lonely and melancholy yet easily perturbed. Does that clear things up for you?”

They all reluctantly nodded except for Randy who said with a smirk, “What about the Porcupines?” as everybody groaned. There was silence until Mr. Arnold proceed.

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Dean dove right into his grand plan:

“First, Daisy, you, I, and some other zebras are to set up a foot rope trap tonight at the end of the field when the Giraffes aren’t present. We will line it across the end of the field so that they will trip and fall when it catches their feet.

“Tomorrow, ostriches and cranes, I want you to pretend to have a race. The Giraffes will be in the middle of the field, and eventually will stare at you. When they have your attention, Charlie, you are to fake fall and trip the others so the Giraffes have something to make fun of as a diversion.

“Then, Art, you will lead your gazelles and sprint across the field in a spasmodic manner to contribute to the diversion.

“Finally, Bubba, you and your buffalo will dash as quickly as your legs will carry you for the Giraffes. After being so confused with the diversions, the Giraffes will run to the end of the field, straight for the rope, where, zebras, we will tie up their feet and show them who’s boss. Is everybody with me?”

They all cheered in approval. In the midst of the commotion, Dean thought to himself, “these voices seem a little bit too high...”

That night the zebras did their part and set up their foolproof trap. The plan was well executed, yet they feel they had forgotten something; it seemed ominously quiet, and it all went suspiciously too well. But they neglected their instinct in anticipation and anxiety for the day they’d finally be equal and free from judgment.

When they arose the following morning they came to find that the Giraffes were not in the middle of the field where they always are!

“Where are they,” said Dean in astonishment. “I can’t believe this! Where could they--”

Dean was cut off by the dominating cry of a trumpet-like sound, and then it hit him.

“Daisy, we forgot the elephants!” Dean exclaimed.

“That’s right,” boomed Mike the Elephant behind him, surrounded by the Giraffes. “Do you have anything to say for yourself Dean? Is there any particular reason I walked all the way across the field yesterday just so I could hear you address the animals on what they were to do, by name?”

Dean remained shocked in silence. Before Mike opened his mouth again, a Vulture came by and made her presence known. From the blaring screech they knew it was Justice the Vulture; Everybody was afraid of Justice. She appeared to be just about the most merciless animal of them all. When she would swoop it was viewed as an omen, and the animals would clear out. Of course Buster

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knocked everybody down and pushed his way to the front of the line.

The Rebellion ran opposite from the Giraffes and Elephants, but Justice followed the Rebellion. When they couldn't run another mile, Justice gained on them and swooped down. They accepted defeat and covered their eyes.

Justice landed abnormally peacefully and said, “I want to work with you, Dean. Members of the Rebellion, you're not the only ones.”

It was up to Dean now to devise an even better plan that could take on more animals. He realized that just attacking wasn't going to do it. This plan must involve exposing their pride and taking away what they want.

Dean, still nearly speechless, said, “Well, Justice, you came at the right time. After seeing the Giraffes' and Elephants' reactions to your arrival, you are our secret weapon.”

“I am not here to make friends, Dean. I am here to end essentially a war that has been going on for as long as we can remember.”

“Perfectly well, Justice. I shall have a plan ready in no time.”

“I'll believe it when I see it, zebra.”

Dean was enthusiastic as ever with his new plan. He had taken a day to create the plan and a week to proofread it; there were to be no mistakes, especially not when Justice was involved. Yet again he called a Rebellion meeting and dove right into his plan:

“I have completely scratched our previous plan, except for two parts: there will be a race, and there will be a rope.

“Gazelles and buffalo, go represent the Rebellion and challenge the Giraffes to a race in the main field tomorrow. The real racer will be you, Charlie, but I will get to that in a second. They will be more inclined to agree if the competition is more challenging, for it would better display their self pride.

“Zebras and Justice we will go to the trees halfway lining the side of the field at the three quarters mark. There, zebras, we will set a rope trap in a circle to tie up Buster's feet. Justice you will gather bananas to place on the trap in order to tempt Buster to the trap.”

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Mr. Arnold stopped immediately stopped and said, “Oh students, I have forgotten to tell about bananas! Animals would value their bananas as you value your telephones now days. They would steal them from innocent animals to let them grow brown and eventually inedible, for they were not able to eat them. They were a symbol of power and dominance over all the other social class--I mean animal groups. Now where was I…”

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“Everybody else except for the zebras are to arrive for moral support,” continued Dean to their dismay. “Charlie you will represent us in the race only to evoke Buster's pride even more, whom the Giraffes and Elephants will obviously send to represent them.

“Justice will swoop down in the middle of the race and scare everybody, only pretending to scare us. Everyone will run off except for Charlie and Buster, who will be so far ahead of Charlie by that point. He will figure that he has time to steal the bananas and leisurely approach the trap, where the zebras will tie him up. Let's try this again. Is everybody with me?”

Every animal applauded Dean in his master plan to end the war. Rodger even swore he saw Justice break a smile.

And that was how it went down. There was the minor mishap of Continued on page 16
“Animals with Phones”

By Mauro Mastrapasqua

Grant’s trying to stay for Buster, but he just couldn’t bear to hear the screech of a vulture.

When Buster was tied up, the animals didn’t know what to do; they honestly did not think that they would have gotten that far. They made him swear to treat all animals as one and return all of his ripe bananas back--

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The bell had rung and interrupted Mr. Arnold mid-sentence. Of course the confused students immediately got up, or at least the ones that were awake. Mr. Arnold shut his book. He and Randy were the only ones left in the classroom. On their way out of the classroom, Mr. Arnold dropped his book, face open. He and Randy quickly bent over to pick it up, but Randy beat him to it.

Mr. Arnold anxiously said, “Put it down, Randy!” as he tried to snatch it from him, but Randy pulled away. He stared at the first page for nearly a minute. He then interrogatively stared at the crane for a moment, who was looking at his feet as he nervously paced from side-to-side. When Randy’s teacher reluctantly looked up, he met eyes with Randy, who stared inquisitively at Mr. Arnold and he gave a slight nod, scratching his head. They both walked away, each with a hint of a smile.

The book cover read, *Diary of Rodger Arnold*. That was all Randy needed to know.
August 26, 2017. “Sixth floor,” said the elevator. Norman walked his six-foot, 200 pound, muscular body off the elevator, said hello to the receptionist, and sat at his desk. He glanced around the room and caught sight of his best friend, Al. As Norman walked over to Al, the boss made an announcement. “Everyone needs to be in the conference room now.” Norman and his friend walked to the conference room together. Al asked, “So, did you do anything over the weekend?” As usual, Norman responded, “No I didn’t do much. I did watch the big game though. Did you?” Al responded, “Actually, I didn’t really have time because I spent the weekend at my beach house in California.” “Oh, that’s nice.” The two sat down in the conference room with all the others, and the boss began to talk. “Listen everyone, we had a pretty rough quarter, and I had to sit down to talk with my own boss. She said that as a result of our poor performance, I need to let someone go. Now, I don’t want to do this, but I have to. So, at the end of the week, someone will be gone.” The workers were all startled. “Now get back to work.” All the employees left the room in a grouchy, nervous mood.

August 30, 2017. The week had slowly dragged along like it usually did for Norman. It was Friday, and even though everyone acted like they usually do, they were all a little scared on the inside because no one had been fired yet. The boss walked into the office with a serious look on his face. He spent the whole day making a decision on who to fire. When he had made a decision around 4 o’clock, he came out of his office to let the person in. Everyone looked at him nervously. “Norman,” he said, “I need to see you in my office.” Norman slowly walked over to his terrible fate. The boss closed the door and told Norman to sit down. He said, “Norman, I am very sorry that I have to do this to you, but we’re gonna have to let you go. Listen, I think you are a great—” Norman interrupted his boss. “Please sir, just give me one more chance, this job is the only thing that I have going for me after the boxing career blew up and you’re taking it away from me.” There was a silent pause. The boss said, “Sorry, but I had no other option but to fire you. Your sales just weren’t as impressive as the others. I am sure there is something else out there for you.” Norman gathered his belongings and walked out of the office into the elevator with his head down. Al chased after him. Norman got into his dented, beaten down car and drove out of the parking lot. Al hopped into his car to follow him because he knew that Norman was going to do something to himself. He followed Norman until he abruptly stopped at the middle of a bridge over the highway. Norman got out of his car and stood on the edge of the bridge. Al screamed, “Norm, get off! Just because you get fired from one job, doesn’t mean you can’t get another job!” Norman, in tears, looked at Al and said, “I’m sick of this. I just can’t do it anymore.” He leaned backwards and fell off the bridge. Al was speechless. He got back in the car and drove to the road under the bridge praying he was somehow okay. There was Norman, lying motionless on the ground. Al stood ten feet away from him and stared. Twenty seconds went by, and then Norman started to move. “Norm? Norm, are you okay?” said Al. Norman jumped up and said, “I…I don’t know what just happened. I mean I feel fine.” Al was shocked. “I mean, are you hurting anywhere? Are you dizzy?” Norman was just as shocked as Al. “No I honestly feel just fine.” “Ok well, let’s get out of here and get you home I guess.” The two sat in the car silently until they arrived at Norman’s house. “What just happened? I mean you literally just jumped off a bridge and you feel fine,” said Al. “Hey maybe I have superpowers. Continued on page 18
“The Purpose of Power”

By Scott Wallace

Maybe I’m Superman,” Norman said jokingly. The two smiled at each other but then began to realize that maybe Norman does have superpowers. Al said, “I know this sounds crazy, but maybe you really do have superpowers. You may not want to do this, but can you please let me just hit you with something just to see?” Norman thought about it and realized he had nothing to lose. He doesn’t even have a job anymore! “Alright sure, go for it.” Al took the metal bat that Norman used as a kid and hit him in the head lightly. Norman was not hurt. This time, Al swung harder. Nothing. This time, Al swung as hard as he possibly could. Absolutely nothing came out of Norman’s mouth except, “I’m a superhero!”.

September 4, 2017. Four days had passed since Norman found out he was invincible. Al came over to talk about the future of the whole invincibility idea. Al sat down in Norman’s stuffy apartment living room and they started to discuss. “Ya know, we could make a business out of this. I mean you could fight crime without a risk of getting injured and we can get paid for it.” Norman thought about it for a second. “I have thought about that, and I think fighting crime and helping the citizens of this city would be great. So I think we should do this, but I feel like we shouldn’t have to charge people to help them out with someone who is doing harm to them.” “Oh come on Norm, you don’t have a job and you need some money. We can work together to make some cash off of this.” Norman was already set on his decision. “Sorry, Al, but I’m doing this for the citizens and to help, not for money.” Al was disappointed. “Alright, whatever.” The two spent the rest of the night talking sports and news.

September 7, 2017. Today was Norman’s first day. He wore sunglasses with a hat. Today, he would be walking around the city to protect the innocent from the bad. “Alright, just get out there and protect the people. If you see anyone in danger, use that nasty uppercut I know you have to take them out. Also, if the person you save offers you money, take it.” Norman shook his head. “I thought we already talked about this. I’m not taking money!” Then Al shook his head. “Your loss.” Norman walked out the door and arrived at the busy part of the city. He slowly walked by the local produce store scanning the area. He saw nothing and kept walking. As he was about to cross the road, he caught sight of a middle-aged woman being slowly followed by a man with a hoodie on. Norman followed. The woman turned into an alleyway and the man followed her. Norman knew this was no coincidence, he took a deep breath and sprinted into the alley to see the woman struggling with the hooded man. Norman ran up behind the man, tapped him on the back, and gave him a nasty uppercut as he turned around. He was knocked out cold on the ground. The woman stared at Norman, shocked. “You just saved my life! Thank you so much!” Norman looked down and said, “I’m just here to help.” Still shocked, she scrambled with her purse and pulled out money. “Here is twenty dollars, I know it is not much but” Norman interrupted here right there. “I’m just here to help. I’m not here for money.” Astonished, she said, “Well okay then. I’m gonna get going. Thank you so much!” “No problem,” said Norman. He felt amazing. Norman felt like a true superhero who just saved a life. He walked out of the alley and began his stroll again. Norman saved three other people in the same instance in five hours of patrol. At around eleven o’clock, he was making his return trip home when he saw five armed men surrounding three harmless children. Norman took a deep breath and walked over. “What is all this about?” One of the armed men said, “Beat it man. This isn’t none of your business.” “Actually, it is my business. What are you doing right now?” All five men turned around and the same man said, “Beat it I said!” He slowly pulled up his jacket and showed a gun. “No, I think you guys need to beat it,” said Norman. All five men pulled out their guns and shot. Each bullet bounced right off of Norman. The men stood there, amazed. “Well I have no choice but to fight I guess,” said Norman. He ran at two of the men and

Continued on page 19
delivered one massive punch that knocked out both of them. The other three charged at the same time while still shooting. Norman punched all three of them in the gut. The children smiled and ran up to Norman and hugged him. He truly felt rejuvenated. They offered him the money that they had, but of course he did not take it. Norman walked home to see Al sitting on the couch with a huge smile on his face. “Look at this, man, you’re on the news! Some woman went around talking about how you saved her, and now other people are talking about you saving them!” A grin began to grow on Norman’s face. He felt amazing for the people he had helped today. Norman sat down with Al and watched. The eye witnesses said that the mysterious man wore sunglasses. At the end of the interview, the reporter asked for a name for the superhero. The woman said the Sunglass Savior. “Dude how amazing is this! You’re a superhero!” “I guess so,” Norman said happily. “So how much money did you…” there was a silence between the two, “oh yeah, you didn’t take any money.” Norman felt no regret for not accepting money.

Norman spent the next couple weeks doing the same heroic acts as his name became more well known everyday. The Sunglass Savior was scaring away the criminals on the streets and lowering crime rates in a relatively dangerous city. Al and Norman would hang out every night, and Al would always criticize him for not accepting money.

September 30, 2017. Al was making his daily walks around the city as usual until he got a call. He pulled out his phone and saw it was Al’s mother. “Hey Mrs. Travis,” said Norman. “Hi Norman. I was wondering if you have seen Al recently. He hasn’t picked up his phone, and we were supposed to meet a couple hours ago. I’m just a little worried,” said Mrs. Travis. Norman had a bad feeling in his stomach, but acted like he wasn’t worried. “Um, I’ll go fetch him. He may just be working late or something and maybe he forgot his phone.” Mrs. Travis said thank you and hung up. Norman knew there was something wrong. Someone definitely did something to him. Norman ran to Al’s house and searched for any clues to where he was. Suddenly, his phone rang. It was Al! Thank goodness he thought. He picked up and nervously said, “Hey Al. A strange voice said, “I have your friend. Come to the abandoned factory near the grocery store. Come alone.” Before Norman could say anything, the man hung up. Al ran out of the house and went to the location. He came in sight of the factory, took a deep breath, and ran in. He came in to see twelve men with guns surrounding a helpless Al tied in a chair with duct tape around his mouth. “Alright, Mr. Sunglass Savior, tell me what the deal with your powers is, and we don’t kill Al,” said the man who was the obvious leader. Norman panicked, but he had an idea. “Well, my only weakness is my left thigh. But you have to shoot me in a very specific shot up close.” The men walked up to his thigh and Norman pointed at a specific spot. He said, “You all need to shoot at once so get real close.” They snuck in very close until they didn’t take their eyes off the thigh. In one swift move, Norman took two men out with a punch, took each of their guns, and shot three other men. Norman took six bullets to the face, but he didn’t feel a thing. Norman took three shots with both of the guns he had and killed six of the men. There was one man left, and he had a gun to Al’s head. He said, “I shoot if you take one more step.” Norman laughed and shot the man in the face. He untied Al, and they went home.

Neither of the men talked until they got back to Al’s house. Al said, “Ya know, this whole time, I’ve wanted to make a profit out of this whole invincibility thing, but it really isn’t about the money.” Norman sat down and smiled, “I told you!” Al grew a smile on his face too, but became serious again. “Now, I understand the purpose of the power.”
“Boarding School”

By Kyle Tavi

My mom pulled into the drive. The big, brown buildings stood ahead of us, as if daring me to enter. I took a breath. Opening the door, I cast a single, anxious glance at my mom. She nodded, urging me on. I hopped out of the car and slowly walked across the gravel path. As I neared the doors, I reached out to open them. They swung open before I could, revealing a short, balding man standing there. He was wearing a suit, with spectacles on the bridge of his nose. A flush of color seemed to be permanently etched into his cheeks, and when he saw me watching him, he made a show of tucking a handkerchief into his pocket.

“Mom,” I whispered out of the corner of my mouth, “I’m really not sure about this.”

“It’ll be fine, honey,” she persuaded, “Just make a few friends and focus on your studies, and you’ll be happy.”

Sighing, I turned back to the man at the door.

“Hello, my name is Theodore Simpson III. Welcome to Mershap School for Fine Boys and Girls. If you’ll just follow Cedric here, he’ll show you around. And you, Mrs. Johnson. It’s very nice to meet...”

I left the man and my mom, after taking one more glance at her, then walked over to Cedric.

“Hey, I’m Cedric, welcome to the school. What’s your name?” he said, extending his hand.

“Tim,” I mumbled, weakly meeting his grasp. I had never really been used to handshakes. I used to go to a public school, back in Maine. Now I had flown all the way to Oregon, to a school where everyone seems uptight and the kids even shake hands and all because of some stupid letter in the mail.

It had seemed like a great day. We had received my report card, which had consisted of all A’s, and my mom had been happy enough to let me play outside all weekend. Then came the letter. Apparently, I was doing significantly better than my class, because we got an invite to The Mershap School. I had been against the school from the beginning, but my mom instantly fell in love with the school. I protested, which only made her play the “dad” card.

“But honey,” she had said, “your Dad went to a boarding school and look how great he was.” My dad had died, two years earlier, so I couldn’t say no to her. And that’s what got me here; standing next to Cedric on my way into the fanciest, most boring school I would ever attend.

“Excuse me? Tim?” Cedric prompted. I had zoned out, thinking about that letter.

“Sorry. Yeah, I’d love to see the band room,” I said, rolling my eyes as soon as he looked away. As long as electric guitar wasn’t in the band, I wasn’t interested. But this kid seemed excited about showing me it, at least as excited as he seemed like he was going to get.

Walking down a dim lit hallway with wooden floors and patterned walls, I felt like I was in some sort of medieval hall, not a 21st century private school. We finally reached the band room, and I peeked my head in. It was a large room, well decorated and obviously valued at the school. A few kids were in there, sitting on chairs on a riser. There was a separate room with locker-like sections, holding multiple instruments. I saw tubas, French horns, trumpets, and every single other classical music instrument you could imagine. A few kids glanced up at me, frowning. Apparently I wasn’t considered "classy" enough for these snobs, even with my outfit. Whatever, though. It's not like I planned to spend much time in here.
“Boarding School”

By Kyle Tavi

“Wow, it’s, uh, pretty cool,” I said, stuffing my hands in my pockets. Oh, and the outfit I mentioned. My mom had made me wear khaki pants and a button up shirt, as well as a belt and a sweater. My usual long and free hair was cropped short, a constant source of itchiness. Cedric took one last look through his glasses at the room, sighing.

“Yeah, it’s so awesome. Okay, next. We are going to the dining hall, which is where we eat all three meals. The food comes from all over the world, so anyone with sense would love it. It is down the hall, over here, then into this hall, and... Here we are.”

By then, I had lost any sense of where I was; this fancy building was too much for my mind. I stopped trying to remember the way we came, marking it as a lost cause, and instead looked up at the shining brass doors blocking my path. They really were kind of beautiful, with a golden and brown mix, and pure, shiny knobs. I reached forward to open them, but Cedric held me back.

“Hold on. We don’t open these, we just knock,” he said.

Naturally, I lifted my hand and started forward.

“Whoa. Not that kind. The knocker is right up here.” He gestured to a spot on my right. Deciding I was either hopeless or too slow, he moved forward, grabbed the knocker, and knocked it three times. The door swung open, revealing a man in a suit looking down on us. He had his chin up, looking as snobby as all of the other people in this stupid school. We entered the room.

The first thing I noticed was the tables. They were circular and strewn about the room, with velvet covers and shiny silver tableware. I walked down with him, sitting down at a table towards the far right. A few other kids came and sat down, introducing themselves as Jeremiah, Andy, Jeff, and Carson. We waited for a few minutes, and then staff members came out of a door and served us. Placing a platter down on the table, a server glanced up at me. Then he opened the platter, revealing... some sort of fishy thing? This was nothing like my old school. The food wasn’t the best, but it was at least normal.

“What is this?” I asked nervously.

“Calamari,” the server replied, and then left. I decided to try it, so I took a piece and moved it towards my mouth. Right after it was in my mouth, Andy noticed me.

“Uh, that’s squid dude.” I spat out the food and started wiping the inside of my mouth with my napkin. I then tried getting rid of the taste with water, chugging it and spilling a lot of it as I did. I sighed in relief, and slumped down in my chair. I was relieved, until a lady tapped me on the shoulder. And man, was she furious. Without even speaking, she motioned for me to follow her. I did, and she led me into a room down the hall.

“Look at me, Tim,” she instructed. I did. She was an older lady, tall, gangling and stern looking. She was wearing a black dress with a little white collar, resembling the people in the pictures of what my grandfather used to refer to as “the olden days.” Now that I think about it, my grandfather actually lives in Oregon. He’s about a mile off from the school.

“Alright, this behavior is unacceptable. We cannot tolerate students like this, ruining the order of our school. It sets a bad example for our younger students, and disrupts your peers. Listen, this school has something we call a slash system. If you do something bad, you get a slash on your record. If you do something really bad, you get five. If you end up with ten slashes, you are expelled. We can’t tolerate this, Tim, so you need to learn to behave or leave.”

Or leave, she had said. Or leave...

“I understand, Mrs....”

“Maverick.”

“Maverick, but there is something I don’t understand. Really, Continued on page 23
“Boarding School”

By Kyle Tavi

What’s up with that dress? Are you from, like, the 50’s? That really would explain the looks, but…”

I know, I know. It was kind of stupid. Not exactly first class stuff. But, it did help me achieve my goal.

“Tim! How dare you! That’s one slash, now go to your dorm room, room 116!”

“Yes’m.” I said. I didn’t want to get her too mad, because she might figure out some other punishment. But here’s what I was thinking: If I get ten slashes, I can leave! Simple as that. No problem and no more of this school.

I walked out of the room and into the dorm section. I found my room, took out the key I had been given, and entered. There was a kid already in there, who was big, really big. I looked at him for a moment, and he turned around.

“Well, well, well,” he said, moving closer, “Who do we have here?” I took a step backwards and put my hand on the knob.

“Not so fast,” he said, grabbing my shirt, “Can’t let you leave ‘till you know the rules.”

I wondered how he had ever gotten into the school, thinking he was probably a teacher’s son. He barely fit the stupid dress code, wearing ripped khakis and a red plaid shirt with a skull undershirt that was only too plain to see.

“Rules?” I stammered. He gestured to the beds.

“There are two beds, one for me and one for my stuff. There is one floor, one for you and one for the rats.” He laughed, and released me. I grabbed my bag, which had been placed inside the room earlier, and took out my sheets. As I lay down on the floor, I knew I had to leave.

And fast.

When I woke up in the morning, I was prepared. I put on the darkest clothes I had, jeans and a black hoodie, and ran outside. You see, I’m a bit of an artist. So when I had packed, I had brought paints. Well, those paints were used well, and a giant mural on the front of the school became my masterpiece.

The mural itself wasn’t offensive or anything - it depicted a kid with a stack of books piled higher and higher, with a cute little speech bubble and the words "Get me out of here!" scrawled on it. No, the part I counted on getting me in trouble was the pain itself.

Soon, I was back in the woman’s office.

“This is completely unacceptable!” I knew. I had heard that speech before. I decided to let her know, by leaving the room. A few quick remarks and a handful of parkour moves later, I was back in her office for the final time - before meeting a single one of my teachers. My grandfather was there too, Dr. Francis Johnson. He talked to Mrs. Maverick, and we left. I thought I was in the clear, but when we reached his house he pulled out his phone.

“How long is Tim staying with me again, Ethel?” Then I realized. He had called my mom! Five dreadful hours later, I was in her car coming back from the airport.

“Thanks, mom! I hated that place. Going to Luke’s party is going to be so much better.”

She looked at me funny.

“Yeah, it will be… next year. You, son, are grounded.” I didn’t bother telling her that she was the one who sent me there in the first place. It wouldn’t have helped. Of course, I missed the party, and everything after that for about a month.

And so, that’s how two days of boarding school ruined my life.
“What is Love”

By William Burke

Is love a pops and a son playing catch with a ball and a glove?
Is love a boy and the girl he’s been dreaming of?

Is love a family adopting an unwanted hound?
Is love a boy and a girl holding hands on the playground?

Is love a nervous boy picking up his girl for prom night?
Is love a boy in a uniform ready to fight?

Is love a boy becoming a man?
Is love a boy making breakfast in bed for his girl in a pan?

Is love a boy giving up his coat for a girl that is cold?
Is love a boy and a girl on a porch growing old?

Is love a new father holding his boy?
Is love a busy man playing with a child’s toy?

Is love a father telling stories to his son about the war?
Maybe it’s just being good to the core,

Maybe, maybe that’s love.

Bennett MacCurdy - Self Portrait
Scholastic Art - Honorable Mention
“Examining Exams”  
By Frank Bass

The only hurdle between you and summer
Are your five exams oh what a bummer.
Math with Mrs. Qian seems all whole lot of fun,
but when exam time comes you will wish you could run.
Start studying early, don't try to hide
The beach is waiting, so is the tide.
The English exam yields a different surprise,
scheduled on day one so you won't have dead eyes.
The world will spin no matter what so dominate exams don't hit a rut.
Then there is science, you know what that means,
You can't watch T.V, even your favorite sports teams.
There's no avoiding exams whether you like it or not,
So get out there and study a lot.
“Untitled”

By Max Buenahora

Grass is greener than any emerald
The ocean is lovelier than sapphire
Sapphire and emerald are hard and cold
Yet it is them we strive to acquire
The most important thing should be our health
The thing which keeps us in this very life
And yet we waste it seeking petty wealth
Even when it fills all our lives with strife
The sun is brighter than any old gold
A rose is redder than any ruby
But sadly that is not what we’re told
Although maybe that is how it should be
Forget your gold, can nature not suffice?
The beauty of nature comes at no price

Cabot Hyde

Jack Flanagan - Photography

“Holding On”

Scholastic Art - Honorable Mention
“Death”

By Adam Wang

Oh Death you are the master of all time;
You strike with subtle speed for you are sly,
In minds of man you are a somber chime,
No one can flee your ever watchful eye,
You are the fear that drives us to our end;
Your unforgiving grip is cold and firm,
Even the strongest men are forced to bend,
And you appear to mark the end of term,
But you are what reminds us of our goals;
For life is short and all must find their path,
And you force us to keep pursuing roles,
And persevering forward through your wrath;
Oh Death, though dark, you give resolve in life,
So thank you, Death, for steering us past strife.

Eli Kampine - “Bones”

Clay Crawford

Will Montana
“The Woods”  
By Clay Crews  
Silently whispering tales of old  
the woods drive many mad  
truth be told  
but those who can outsmart her puzzle  
will soon be rewarded in the fame and fashion  
coveted by hunters of old.
“Top of the World”

By Sam Nissen

We are on top of the world, of one force.
We will suit up for the beloved nights.
Only time will tell which the better course,
The armored doves or the armored knights.

The great glory of the horrific rage,
On the top of the world, with a long life.
Or the life of a peasant, one long page.
We will all try, but we will get the knife.

One day we will be on the top of the world,
As long as we do not often boast,
But still we will be in chaos, twirled.

But that day is the day we learn the most.

It does not matter if we often rust,
Because we will still be the king of trust.

Joseph Robertson
Scholastic Art - Honorable Mention

Jack Flanagan - “A Nose Knows” Scholastic Art Silver Key Award
Life is like a map
   We try to find our way
But the one and only creator
   Helps us find it every day

Through good and bad he helps us
   To find our way again
Even though he sometimes hurts us
   He will always be your friend

The map has twists and turns
   It tries to throw us off our way
But if you look to the creator
   You will see him one day

I faced one big turn once
   I did not know which way
But I learned to look to the creator
   And, I think I know the way

The road is long and vicious
   Through experience I would know
When you are at your lowest point
   You will know where to go

The maps can be heartbreaking
   Like a bullet to the chest
But the creator has big plans for you
   And he wants you to be at your best

I know where I am going
   If I know the way to go
To a wonderful, beautiful, luscious place
   And when I get there, I will know
“The One That Stands Still”

By Ashton Terrell

I am the one that stand still in the ground,
But at times I whither when cold comes around,
And when I whither, I still bring joy
As parts of me fall off, and give kids a toy;
On the inside a year for a ring I trade,
But on the outside I never age,
My only hope is that I never fall,
But stand still and grow tall.

Yadev Surati
“The Pencil”

By William Curley

Like a tissue you are used,
Used and thrown away.
Always used, but never
Thought of, for another day.
Like an old human,
As you get older
You lose your point.
Different sizes and different shapes,
These are the things that make you great.

With your brothers and your sisters
You have helped on tests
You wrote the stories and the essays
You have tired my hand
And broken many times
But all in all
You are my friend.