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Frederick Allyn was born in the year 1925. His parents were sturdy people: farmers, devout Methodists and southern democrats. Their sons were raised during the depression years, yet they made out pretty well. Their proudest and most treasured possession was the 200 acres that they owned and, in truth, this kept them somewhat above poverty in those years. They feared God, and they appeared at church every Sunday, scrubbed and starched. This man spent most of his childhood chopping cotton, husking corn, milking cows, and feeding hogs. When he came to school age, he went to a local public school—a three-mile walk on a dirt road. He did well in school and worked hard. He played football at his high school and was quite good: quick, strong, but he played with his mind—took calculated risks and, in turn, was looked at by scouts from the major North Carolina universities to play for their fledgling football programs. War in Europe was a topic of much discussion, talk of America’s neutrality, the Nazis, the invasion of France swirling about and whipping up frenzy in young men. When war was declared on Germany and Japan, men from this small town and the surrounding countryside flocked to volunteer. Frederick also signed up and became a United States Marine.

Frederick and his division were sent to the Pacific Ocean to fight the Japanese. He and his company bore some of the worst fighting of the island-hopping campaign, and they fought their way to an island not far from the Japanese homeland. They were ordered to dig foxholes every half mile or so across the ridgeline as a defensive position. He had been put with a street kid from New York City, a young man who enjoyed talking a great deal. Frederick was usually silent but enjoyed listening to this kid’s view on the world and his criticisms of the Marine Corps, the government, and the Catholic Church. They were good friends despite their being born in almost different worlds. Sometimes Frederick would sit and think while the world was dark and everyone else was asleep. He thought about a lot of things: why he was here, his family, playing ball, but mostly, his enemy. He had never seen a live Japanese soldier, never even seen a prisoner. He didn’t know their customs or how their lives were. He knew only that they were fierce soldiers who would prefer death over capture. He had seen their bodies, surely--- mangled, bloody. They were small with delicate features and round faces, reminding him of his little cousin’s china doll. He was thinking about that very thing on the night before the Japanese mounted the offensive.

The morning was clear, the birds were singing, the land was lush. This jungle was unscarred by fighting as there had been no offensive actions in this area. He woke up his foxhole companion. The New Yorker was not happy to be awakened and jokingly expressed this with a string of curses. The kid had just begun to vividly describe Fredrick’s heritage and upbringing when Frederick told him to be quiet. There was movement in the foliage, and they readied their machine guns for action. A few rifle shots went off from the brush, and he saw a scrap of Japanese uniform through the trees. Frederick began to fire, watching bodies slump in the underbrush. He couldn’t tell how many there were or how wide the offensive was, but he had to hold his position. He would see some movement and fire, see more and fire, see more movement and fire until something fell. He kept doing this until the kid touched him. He looked down and realized that the barrel had overheated and the gun began to jam. Just then, there was a metallic ping and a thud. He looked to his friend and saw there was bullet hole in his helmet. There was no time to grieve, so he picked up his rifle and began to fire. The Japanese had grown brave seeing there was only one American and ran out of the wood line charging him with fixed bayonets. Frederick would aim at one at a time and they would crumple like rag dolls after each shot. With the skills honed from years of shooting rabbits on the farm, he held them off, pulling magazines off his and his dead companion’s bandolier.
A grenade was thrown into his foxhole. He stooped, picked it up, and threw it back at the enemy. They were a lot closer now, having put on an extra burst of speed. He knew there was no time to grab his rifle, so he pulled out his pistol and began to fire. The impact of the big bullets knocked the soldiers on their back. His pistol was empty, and he looked around for another magazine. He glanced up and saw a bayonet no more than two feet away from him. He grabbed the bayonet in his bare hand and pulled the man toward him. He pulled him into the foxhole and finding no better weapon about, bashed the man’s head in with a large rock. The four that were behind him—he killed every one, led like pigs to the slaughter. The fifth one was coming at him, and Fredrick looked into his young, scared eyes. Fredrick thrust the bayonet into him. There was a low moan the boy made when the bayonet was twisted and withdrawn. He fell to his knees and looked at Frederick for what seemed like an eternity. Then he keeled over, and the life ran from his body.

A few hours later when the offensive was quelled, a messenger ran through the jungle and came upon Frederick sitting at the edge of the foxhole, blood on his clothing and hands. His friend was wrapped in a blanket beside the foxhole. Frederick sat motionless like the bodies of the dead enemies around him. When the messenger brought a Captain and a Colonel over to see what he had seen, Frederick had to be called a few times before he stood up and saluted. They asked him what his name was and what had happened. He told them his name and then fell quiet. The yelled and screamed at him and tried to make him tell, but he remained silent. It was pretty apparent what had happened, but they needed a first-hand account as there were no other witnesses. They sent a few men to hold that position in case of another attack and ordered Frederick to the rear. He would not move until the kid had been picked up on a stretcher, and he followed the body back behind the lines. He was silent as the medics bandaged up his hands and was also silent when he was questioned by the highest officer that could be found. They had him sit on a cot while they discussed what to do out of earshot. After brief conversation, they decided to send him home. He did not remember when he had cried last, and had grown up with the expectancy that men did not show emotion. He cried for the cold killer he knew he’d become. He cried for his friend. He cried for the Japanese, doing as they were ordered. He felt how impersonal this whole affair was, him firing and men dropping. After a few hours, he fell in to fitful sleep, dreams of when

Tyler Cauble
he was small and he played “war” with his brothers. All the other “combatants” were children, but he was grown with a real rifle in his hand. The other children were making gunshot noises and pointing their sticks at him. Then the children turned into the Japanese. He fired but none of them got hit. There were more and more, and they were close. Then he awoke.

There was a throbbing in his hands, and people were milling about his bed. When they saw he had awakened, three men in dress uniforms approached him, and told him that he was to go home and was a candidate for the Congressional Medal of Honor. The memory of the day before flooded into his mind, and Frederick was sick at the thought of receiving an award. He showered, shaved and dressed, and was put on a heavily armed convoy that traveled through the jungle. The sergeant that was his driver was a hardened veteran of many campaigns and did not speak because he had seen what the cold in Frederick’s eyes meant. The trip was uneventful, and Frederick was ferried to a large hospital ship that was bound for the states. The ship was a sanitary hell, with the stench of death winning the battle against the odors of antiseptics. The patients were in various states of agony, and the morphine could not dull the pain of the men who cried out in the night. Frederick slept on a bunk near the engine room. The churning roar somewhat soothed him. The only escape from the below decks was circling the top deck, watching the Pacific Ocean glide by. He spent most of his day on top, away from the misery. He disembarked in San Diego, and then traveled by train to Camp Lejeune where the medal hearing would take place. The hearing was mainly a graying committee questioning him about the incident of the machine gun nest. He said nothing, and they did not award him the Medal of Honor. Frederick did not care, and he felt that any medal would be a worldly reminder of what he had done. Because he would not answer, he was thrown in the brig and later discharged. He went to the station and took the next train home.

He had sent a telegram to his mother telling her when he would arrive. When he got off the train, it seemed as if his whole extended family was there to meet him. He did not seem to hear any of their questions or listen to any of their comments. He just got into the old truck and rode home. He had many times thought of this place when he was away, and it seemed just as he had remembered it. His brothers were glad to see him, and there was a flurry of activity around that house, dogs barking, chickens clucking. He made up happy little stories about what he had done, lies, stories for his brothers about how great “we licked ‘em.” Then his youngest brother asked, “Did you kill any Japs?” He pretended not to hear it and asked to be excused. That night if you listened, you might hear fervent prayers for himself, and everyone else.

The next morning he went to the bank and withdrew some of his accumulated pay. He had gotten three hundred dollars, which he immediately invested. He was a clever man, and he had three-fold returns on his money. He became wealthier every year and in time purchased a small house on the edge of town. He turned to alcohol to drown any memories of the war. He lived with a dog and tried to keep human interactions to a minimum. He woke up early, stayed up late, and was an excellent definition of the functioning alcoholic. On Saturdays, he and his dog would hunt quail or fish all day. He was owed money by many farmers, and he sometimes took payment in permission to hunt. He never ate the birds or fish but would drop them off at the doorstep of some poor sharecropper’s house that he knew would be grateful for the free meal. He never went to church, a bewilderment to the people in the town. On Sundays various groups would come by his house and ask him to join their churches. He would appear at the door drunk, and through the doorway, one could see empty liquor bottles on every piece of furniture. He would tell them maybe, but he never did. He was respected in the town because of his wealth and was invited to every social function by the “right” people. He politely declined every time.

When he did leave this earth, no one knew until the sheriff kicked in his door a few days after he was missing to find him dead. The only people that showed much emotion over the death were the ones who had inherited his wealth. His funeral was a simple one, a cheap headstone with few words. For his time on the earth, there had been much speculation as to why he had gone from the popular ball player to the drunkard recluse. He never spoke of the war; his secret and its demons left with his spirit.
Do we have to fall in love
To write a poem?
Why not just write about a dove
Flying gracefully over the church dome?

Do we have to endure a tragedy
To write a poem?
Why not just write about a beautiful melody
Sung by mockingbirds at home?

Do we have to be steeped in emotion
To write a poem?
Why not just write about the aviation
Of eagles in the azure sky of autumn?
Nothing Roars More Than My Grandfather’s Snore
by Van East

Nothing roars more than my grandfather’s snore.
   It comes from the couch, the bed, or the floor.
I can always hear it through my closed bedroom door.
   I try to roll over; it’s too loud to ignore.

   It starts as a murmur like a whispering child.
   Next thing you know it’s shaking the tile.
He rumbles like a freight train coming down the track.
   The only way to stop it is grandmama’s smack.

   It’s louder than an airplane taking off in flight.
Much louder than a fire alarm in the middle of the night.
My grandma says, “He’s purring. It’s just a family trait.”
   I guess when I’m a grandad, I’ll find out my fate.

Brandon Sauermann
The Melody
by Ryan Hill

It is there again,
The power to create music at the tips of my fingers
The sensations I feel as my hands caress those familiar strings
Producing sound even at the lightest touch

A staccato sea of detached yet serene melody and then
Smooth connected beats falling into an elegant sequence
Quiet pulses create a lulling atmosphere
Nearly an auditory slumber

And then
Distortion!
Suddenly a ferocious sound fills the void
Hands soaring across the neck as once sleepy strings cry out in a tempest of resonance
With the force of a car crash
Tranquility is vanquished

Yet the rhythm
It is still there
Through the harmonious pandemonium
The progression still reaches

My ears
One moment filled with a languid and soothing song
But now overflowing
Harsh vibrations meet them with every screaming note
To the world this beat is violent in nature
An ocean of appalling concrete slabs

Yet as this noise fills me
Tones both sweet and severe
It remains one uniform obsession
Music
“Aaaagghhhhh!!!!! My baby!”

It all started on Christmas Day of 1976 in Abbeville, Georgia, which is a rural town in the heart of the state. Art Vandelay and his best friend Jack Turner were playing in the yard when Mrs. Vandelay walked out the front door and shouted, “Arthur Vandelay!”

“Yes maam,” he replied.

“We have one more present that your father and I would like to give you for Christmas.”

He felt relieved because he thought the best present he would receive this Christmas was a pair of tube socks.

He walked into the garage and saw a brand new bike. He stood there with a big, bright smile on his face as his eyes examined the turbo 200 as it was called. It was the coolest new bike out there and everyone wanted it. It was burning red with sparkly white handles and a shiny bell. He beeped the bell a couple times and then took it for a test drive. He could feel the cool breeze flowing against his face; he loved it. Jack stood on the side of the road envying him.

In the next couple weeks, crowds of boys followed Art and his bike around looking at it with envy. After a while, school started up again, and he rode his bike to school because he thought he could get more attention. However, fewer people cared about it, for there was less time for fun and more time for schoolwork.

Finally, summer came, and Art was watching television with Jack and his younger brother Brooks. Evil Knievel was performing. In this stunt, he was flying over twenty cars with his motorcycle.

“Cool!” Jack exclaimed. “I wish I could do that.”

All young boys like to have a famous person to look up to. Some look up to an actor, athlete, or even a musician. Art wanted to be something cool. He watched Evil Knievel with amazement. He decided that he would become a daredevil.

The next day Jack came over and said, “You wanna play catch, Art?”

“Nah, I got plans today, maybe some other time.”

Later his next door neighbor John Jackalo came over and asked if Art wanted to go to the park.

“Nah, I got plans today, maybe some other time,” he responsed.

At least five other boys came over that day and asked the same question and were all given the same response. Soon enough, the boys got curious and had to know what Art was doing. Therefore, a group of boys went over and spied on Art, and there in his backyard was a jagged, wooden ramp. Art was riding up it and flying into the air. He finished off with a soft landing on the coarse grass. Art was peddling back around when he saw something rustling in the bushes. He jumped off his bike, walked over, and kicked into the bushes. Then he heard a loud “OUCH!” Then they came out of the bushes.

As all boys do, this group of boys tried to cover up their default and made up a story.

“We, uh, were coming over to, uh, give your mom some, uh, cookies because our parents wanted to cheer her up, uh, and as we were walking over here, I got pushed and, uh, dropped all the cookies, uh, inside these thick bushes.”

From experience the boys knew that no one could ever trick Art with a lie and knew that making up this story would be done in vain.

“Now, as ya’ll musta wanted ta know, I am goin’ to become a daredevil, like maybe, Evil Knievel!”
The Buckeye

Art thought that the boys would think he was cool and envy him, but it was the other way around. The boys walked away laughing hysterically, except for Jack who had watched Evil Knievel perform with Art and had wished in his own small, isolated mind that he could be like Evil Knievel, too.

The two of them worked together by bicycling over ramps with Art’s new bike. Art started getting great at this maneuver and then moved onto hopping over small objects, and then large objects, like crates and garbage cans. Once he had mastered getting high in the air, he started working for distance. Art thought to himself that he would teach those kids that laughed at him; they would look up to him and wish they could be like him. He had worked with Jack for almost a month now, and he wanted to test himself. He decided he had to do something cool to attract the kids’ attention; he would fly over people.

It was hard for Art to find people to be props for him at first, but with Jack’s help, a couple of people eventually did it. He showed how good he was and got the kids to trust him. The crowd started getting really excited with Art’s performance, when Art decided: “Tomorrow I will fly over any five people that would like to volunteer at Cosmo Park.” This was an amazing feat that he would accomplish, and the boys and girls had no faith that he could do it.

The next day, everyone was at Cosmo Park. It was like going to a football game. All the young boys and girls were on the side standing up, Joe Johnson was passing out candy, cookies, and juice boxes, and everyone was screaming. The only problem was that no one would be at the very end of the line. Jack asked big Newman Jenkins, who weighed the most in the grade at one hundred and ten pounds, to fall in at the end of the line.

“No way,” he declared. “Art will never make it and will land on me.”

Then one member of the peanut gallery stood up and said, “That is why we want ya to be at the end, so when Art fails, his bike will just bounce right off of you.”

Then everyone around him started laughing. Newman walked away shamefaced.

Jack already was one of the props, so he could not be the final one, and quite frankly, he felt scared himself. So, of course, as all older brothers do, he bribed his little brother Brooks into doing it.

“Hey Brooks, I will pay you a nickel to join in the line.”

“Oh boy, a nickel, yeah sure I’ll do it!”

This daredevil act was now ready to be performed, and Art started peddling as fast as he could. He started off the ramp, and while Art was flying through the air, a loud shriek came from the other end of the park. It was
Mrs. Turner and beside her ran Mrs. Vandelay. She saw the bike going up the ramp and Brooks at the end of the line. She felt sure it would hit him. This scream may have messed up Art and he took a seconds hesitation; therefore, he did not get as proficient of a boost as usual. It was falling right toward Brooks; it came closer and closer and closer. Then suddenly, his downward fall straightened out for half a second and missed Brooks’ head by a quarter of an inch.

The crowd went crazy; no one could believe that he had just accomplished this spectacular feat. Then the parents butted in and everyone froze. Mrs. Vandelay screamed, “Arthur Jackson Vandelay, you come here right now!”

She took a deep breath and then continued: “You could have hurt someone very badly just then, and I am going to take away that bike forever.”

“The word “forever” ran through Art’s mind a couple of times.

“Aw Mom,” he replied, “I knew I could make it. I have been practicin’.”

Nothing was going to change her mind though.

Art Vandelay was sad about losing his bike. It had also ended his chance of becoming the next Evil Knievel. He eventually got over it, though, for it was not hard since he had become a hero in the town among the boys and girls. He and his friends would always remember this event.

Austin Doebler
Gold Scholastic Award

Will Peffen
He always walked back and forth, not minding anything around him. He seemed to be in his own little world, imagining. It seemed to worsen every year. By the time he was eight years old, he secluded himself from anyone else, and was deeply intrigued by the simplest items: a screwdriver, headphones, and tissue papers. I realized something was very peculiar when he would not walk on grass and always took a step back when he realized he was near a wall. Once, some kids locked him in a closet, and he had the worst fit in years. Something was very peculiar indeed. But I think it mattered, the amount of time I spent with him, or he might not have remembered me and would have left everyone in the dark. At least he told me everything about it. It isn’t a lie; I’ve been there myself.

When he was young, he kept searching for me. I played with him every day—as soon as school ended. Out of all the people around him, it seemed he only saw me; in other words, I was his bridge to reality. The kindergarten disproved him as “unsocial,” but it really wasn’t his fault. He ended up going to a special school for the disabled, but I now think it worsened his condition. I was the only person to really get to know him, because our parents were always busy at work.

On his 13th birthday, we found ourselves singing the happy birthday song in a hospital room. I doubt he actually heard it. We brought a cake, but he couldn’t eat, or at least refused to. He stared at something for prolonged periods, then stared at another thing far away. He seemed to not be able to hear us, but asked where we were. We were confused back then. But I realized where he was. He was in his own world, a world which slowly engulfed his mind. A couple months later he was sent to another hospital in another state. His status had worsened, and now he was dormant. I was very busy then. Test after test bombarded me during high school. I was worried about my younger brother, but I never had the time to think about it.

He told me, “It was always there, my thoughts. I talked to it, and it replied. It was a real being, like an imaginary friend. But this was different. Sometimes it slept, and whenever it did, my senses returned to normal and the crazy things didn’t appear. Then it would suddenly be there, distorting things to look like hairballs or figurines.”

“You know, Steve, sometimes it got so bad that I wouldn’t be able to hear things anymore, or even see clearly. But somehow I enjoyed it rather than rejecting it. That’s why it’s getting worse.”

Of course, back then, I had no idea of what he was talking about.

“Well, if it is your imagination, you can control it, right?”

“No… it has a consciousness of its own. It does what it wants to do. I can’t control it. It’s rather controlling me.”

That was the last conversation I had before his condition worsened, and visitors were not permitted to enter. I was sure he was searching for me, even in his dreams.

******

By the fifth day, he was not in our world anymore. He had switched to a dormant state and was quietly sleeping. He had been engulfed by his imagination. He told me after his journey that his world was always changing. It seemed that every hour the world would collapse, and he would find himself in another. These worlds consisted of a combination of familiar places: our house, the park, oceans, mountains, and different dimensions
with qualities completely out of this world. Wherever he walked, everything changed. Trees turned colors and
turned to snakes; rocks floated and sharks roamed in the air, and snow of Styrofoam fell. In these worlds, he
had a curious feeling that I was or had been there moments before. He began searching. His imagination created
copies and made everything around him resemble me because I was the only thing on his mind. He searched
and searched, until he would finally give up. But he told me that whenever he gave up and sat down, he would
see something moving or a rustle in the trees, which he would chase for hours. His determination to find me
reached me here. His determination was so great that it penetrated the barriers between the worlds and directly
materialized in my dreams.

After two months of his being transferred to the hospital, I began having the same dream for the following
year. Because of this dream, I was able to experience the worlds he had created. The dream would start as a white
door appeared before me. I would open it, and always come to a gentle field with flowers and sparkling lakes--and
one beautiful house. It looked so simple and elegant it could not have existed in reality. I would always run to it,
open it, and come to a long hall with hundreds of doors. The hall would be dotted with foot prints, and I knew that
they belonged to my brother. It was then I realized this had something to do with him. In each dream I would enter
different world and couldn’t help thinking that my brother had been there moments earlier. There were subtle
signs which suggested the very path he had walked--and whenever I grew tired and sat down, there would be a
little bit of warmth left in that area, the same warmth that he had created when he rested. It was strange, but for
over a year I explored countless worlds. But it was a year later when I opened the door to the little house when I
found my brother, on the opposite side of the door.

I could not believe it. I didn’t know if it was my brother or just my dream creating him. “Is it really
you?”

But neither of us had the time to reply. It seemed that because he had finally found his goal, his imagination
began to scatter. The world dissolved into an array of blue and green, as a transparent floor became visible. On the
opposite side, it seemed to be a huge labyrinth of blue light as they interconnected into tiny channels and runways.
An invisible arm pulled my legs and tried to take me through the floor, but my brother held me, for he was immune
to the arm. As I struggled, someone yelled in a piercing, deep voice, “Tom! It’s collapsing!”

We didn’t know what was going on. But we saw countless white boxes, some big and some small above
us. They were slowly sinking down to the matrix of blue light. Above all that stood a man in a black suit, my
brother’s imagination.

“Find it! Find the key to the network of minds in one of these boxes before your world completely falls
apart.”

Now we could only see boxes. There were so many that the sky was covered up. And by now, some were
almost near the wall of blue light. We stood there, trying to comprehend what he meant.

The man yelled again, “There is no time to doubt. It is about ‘can or cannot.’ If this world collapses, you
will be severed from everything. You will be forever disconnected to everything; everything that depends on you
will be gone!”

My brother and I started to open box after box and realized one thing: almost all of them were empty. We
were opening the boxes so slowly that we could not keep up with the thousands of boxes being created every
second.

We couldn’t help but notice that the world was slowly turning into darkness. Every bit of light in his world
was dissipating. Even the man, his own imagination, was slowly fading. Now the boxes were hitting the floor of
blue light and were destroyed instantly. A small blue stream came from these boxes and joined the network.

The boxes were piling up on top of each other, and I realized that we were slowly sinking. I couldn’t stop
myself. I yelled once more, “TOM!” before I went right through the floor.

I woke up instantly. That day, I could not wait to go to sleep; even though I was sure his world would
collapse, there was a chance. But the dream did not come. The dreams stopped coming after the incident. And my brother did not ever wake up. He is still asleep to this day, never to wake. People comfort us by saying that he will wake up soon, but I know that he never will. His mind is gone, and all that is left is his body.

After all that, I felt very sad for a long time—I would not be able to see him ever again. But some parts of me were calm. I at least knew what had happened to him, unlike before. I still blame myself for not being able to find the key, but out of the million boxes, how were we supposed to find it? Now I am beginning to think that if I hadn’t been pushed out of his world, I could have been trapped in darkness forever as well. However, even to this day, whenever I go to sleep, I hope to enter his world once more.
I remember it as vividly as if it were yesterday. The year was 1941; I was finishing my senior year in the Pallaton School for Boys. The Second World War had been raging since 1938, and the draft had been reinstated by Congress. The school was covered in a gloomy sensibility, much like the icing on your cake for your 4th birthday, for we all knew what could happen to us this upcoming year. Pallaton was a boarding school located in New York, just outside the city of Albany. I was in a small class of only fifty-two other boys, three of whom I had already been acquainted with. I came from a small town in Missouri, called Trenton. Our family was a prominent one; my father had struck gold in the oil industry. My mother was one of the hardest working women I had ever known, and also the kindest. She had fallen ill the fall of 1935 with what would later be called Acute Lymphangitis, which is a bacterium that is fatal if it spreads to the body’s blood stream. She had always believed in me, and told me almost every day that she had big dreams for me. That year, I vowed to follow her will.

I had always been the so called “high school dream.” I made mostly A’s and some B’s, and was elected captain of our football team. We had many frequent encounters with our sister school, the Sherine Academy, also a boarding school. I was being scouted by many colleges, including Harvard and Duke. President Roosevelt had recently declared war against the Axis powers; our country’s security had been breached by the Japanese Navy. The following is but a short script of my diary.

April 23, 1942

We just landed on the banks of Rabat, Morocco. Being in a new country is an enlightening experience. It is ironic how we celebrated and drank tonight, but it will raise our spirits for the time to come. The lay of the land here is much different from home. I am used to green, rolling hills and the cool temperature of New York. Here all I could see for miles was the clayish-brown dirt covering the flat, treeless land. My perspective on this world has changed greatly. It is mind-blowing to think only four days ago I was sleeping in a bunk in New York City, waiting for my deployment. The food is much different from my high school’s cooking. I always had complained on how this seemed like fodder that wouldn’t be fed to soldiers. Now that I actually am in the army, I long for the explosion of flavor that used to be so bland. I really need my sleep now for I have no idea how strenuous this journeying will be.

April 28, 1942

After traveling for four days straight, only three hours of sleep a night, my body has become exhausted. I am growing blisters on my feet which will not stop bleeding, not because of the actual wound, but of the boots I must wear for walking. We actually have not encountered the enemy yet. As it is already three years into this atrocious war, the British tank divisions and the preceding U.S. tank divisions have plowed through and taken out parts of the German force, the Afrika Corps. We have been informed that we must cross a river tomorrow--without a boat. Some men are terrified, for they don’t know how to swim. Luckily, my father had the time in his younger days to teach us at the water hole on our farm. The problem is that we have so much gear to carry on our backs, I don’t know if I’ll be able to make it.

April 29, 1942

The losses today were just as expected. We came upon the Imini River and anticipated the fatal crossing.
I cannot believe I made it out of the water alive. I was fourth to cross the steady flowing river, the men in front of me celebrating; those behind me cheery, but still dreading their ominous fate. Our Sergeant had expected more deaths than those that occurred. The drop of ten percent in our men had actually excited him, for he predicted twenty to twenty-five percent losses. I am not the only one keeping a diary of what might perhaps be my last days. I sit here with three other men, all writing about the same subject that I am, but it is a shame no others record themselves. I have been so changed by the war I have changed the habits in which I conduct my life. I now wake up as soon as the sun cracks the horizon, not during the noon time. Before the war I had never touched a diary; in fact, I had made fun of the other boys at my school for owning one. Well, now I must rest. The sun has set and it is getting dark.

May 11, 1942

It has been over a year since I have last seen my family. The Axis is still strong in its attacks; we find it hard to advance through Hitler’s Afrika Corps. We have been paired up with the British 7th Tank Squadron, who greatly aids us in advancing across the open desert. We are equipped with twelve Mark III tanks, which each carry four soldiers. We also have two transport trucks driving us through the desert with a cargo of twenty-two infantry, two up front and twenty exposed in the back. Luckily, we have not encountered much resistance yet, there only being, give or take, ten men and a panzer on a reconnaissance mission. That was the first time I had ever shot a man. “Toughen up, son,” said my commander. “You’ll be seeing much worse than that soon.” I had been surprised when the German fell to my bullet. The shot had traveled clear through his helmet and came out the other side. I am one of the two men in our caravan that carries an M1 Garand, the rest equipped with newly made Thompsons or Grease Guns. The rest of their group did not stand a chance. Before the German tank could be readied, six of
our Mark III’s fired shots. I should rest easy now, for the desert has cooled down considerably, for we have yet another long day ahead of us.

May 17, 1942

The watch woke us up earlier than normal. We had received intel on a nearby city. It seems the Afrika Corps had invaded the region recently, only two days before. Our band had been traveling at a steady direction due east, but now we headed north to aid the usurped town. As soon as we were within range of the city walls, the man next to me was shot in the chest, the crack of a sniper rifle splitting the air. The medic did not have enough time to save the boy; the bullet had been too close to his heart. The others frantically scrambled, trying to hide behind the truck, one more shot in the back. We were gathered into groups behind the tanks, the bullets of several large caliber rifles ricocheting off the tough metal and whizzing into the sand. We stopped advancing from at least 100 yards away to regroup and strategize. Tomorrow we attack.

May 24, 1942

We woke up early this morning. The tanks fired up and took off, the foot soldiers not too far behind. We dare not risk riding in the trucks because of the snipers lined up on the city’s ten-foot walls. The tanks were the first to fire, knocking the wall down in several places. We ran through the holes, everyone scattering from the raining bullets. The commanding sergeant started yelling orders. “Patterson, get your ass over here! Hey Everett, Shepherd, Johnson, take cover behind the wall! Vasilefski, you better run into that building NOW!” He then yelled at me, “Jones, take out that sniper with your grenade!” I pulled the pin, and lobbed it over the wall. Two seconds later rocks, debris, and a human body flew into the air. We rushed through the cramped streets, encountering heavy enemy fire around every turn. Unfortunately, the Germans had the element of surprise, setting up all around in the ragged buildings; MG 42s peeked out at us from many of the windows. Our tanks could not fit through the many side streets we had to take. There was only one road for them to go down, and they wreaked havoc everywhere. The sergeant split his infantry into two groups, eighteen attacking west with him, twenty following me east. Much like the Romans, we divided and conquered. We suffered eleven total casualties and one wounded. The locals of the town came running out into the streets when the battle had ended. We were awarded with glory today, but you can never be sure what tomorrow will be like during a war like this. Tonight we set up base inside the fortified walls.

May 30, 1942

We were ambushed on a routine check-up on a nearby city. We suffered too many casualties to be effective now. The sergeant, two corporals, three tanks, and I made it out alive. Our men had not been prepared for this. Panzer squads came flying out of the buildings like angry hornets, decimating the tanks and the men in the vicinity. Other foot soldiers closed off the gates of the winding, narrow city, trapping off the rest of our troops. Luckily, we had split up into separate squads, half and half. Their plan had been almost perfect, except on foreseeing our troop divisions, delaying and confusing the soldiers. The tanks accompanying our group had enough time to knock down a wall and escape with the few remaining soldiers. I cannot believe how the Germans had defeated us so easily. Tonight will be a long night, for we cannot rest but must continue on to safety. There will be no guarantee of survival until the reinforcements from the 9th tank regiment can rescue us.

June 14, 1942

We have finally arrived at an American base camp. The sergeant was pissed at how relaxed and laid back these men were. I could understand what he was feeling; we had been out there fighting, losing all but a few of our men, while these doughboys sat there drinking coffee, as if they were sitting at home! He recruited the most fit of these reluctant men, for we must head on and take down the insurgents. We rested and filled up our supplies; there would not be another checkpoint for over sixty-seven miles.

June 21, 1942

One of our officers was overcome with fear last night and fled. This sent much fear about the two score men we had with us, for one fugitive ran off with our communications equipment. We now have no way to
communicate to base if we get attacked.

By now the objects of a civilian’s every day life have become sacred to me. The ability to eat out at diners, go to the movies with friends, play sports and have parties are distant memories lost to me now. I long to see my friends again, some of whom have also joined the war. It is now my turn to go on watch.

**June 30, 1942**

We ambushed a German force this morning. The outcome was fortunate, for we defeated the squad with ease. I was wounded, shot in the knee cap, and unable to walk. Sergeant Skeen decided that my wound was well enough for me to travel and sent me back to the nearest base. I am now waiting in the hospital; my left leg has been removed. The procedure was painful, and the doctors could only give me alcohol and morphine. Tomorrow a transport plane comes to pick up the injured and fly them home. The nurse has just turned out the lights; I know I cannot sleep tonight, for the pain I am feeling overcomes anything I have ever felt.

**July 13, 1942**

News arrived from the front early this morning. I feel overcome with sorrow. Although I escaped with my life, my regiment had been ambushed four days ago and completely overpowered. My sergeant and all of his men were announced dead, and I would have been one of them if it had not been for his tender, yet hardened heart that sent me home. At first, I had refused his offer, saying I could shoot from a distance. He eventually won the argument; I wasn’t accurate without a scope. Within the next week, I will be discharged from the army and allowed to see my family again. They moved me to a nice hospital located in Virginia. I will eventually receive the Purple Heart along with other awards, but these do not matter to me. I even had a call from the President himself! They symbolize nothing, but the lives that influenced me in my year and a half of service will always be in my memory.

*And When He Gets To Heaven,*
*To St. Peter He Will Tell,*
*“One More Soldier Reporting For Duty Sir,*
*I’ve Served My Time In Hell.”*
Christmas to Me
by Henry Beveridge

Christmas to me, is the memory;
Lights, presents, and trees
All trapped behind a locked door
And in my hand, a key
Rusted from the years
As the cool bronze clicked the door
That memory came into sight
The fire warmed me,
The cocoa filled my lungs
I saw me, as a child
Shaking my siblings’ beds
With hope,
That, St. Nick had come to visit
And as the giants would rise,
I’d run down stairs to see for my own eyes
When all the presents were opened, and the parties finished
My family would spend time together......
Where we would have our real Christmas

Clay McDonald

Paul Baker
Alliteration: Family Portrait
by Chris Goodrich

sciribbles scratched swiftly yet showing sufficient scrutinies, scrawled silently but seriously and self-consciously but seldom self-righteously,

create cobalt crayola curly Q’s that quietly cross the cardboard canvas, cyclones cruising their course carefully, and cleverly crafting a cerulean ceiling.

gliding grooves generate gobs of green grass that grow and genuflect in great gratitude to the gracious, glowing globe which grants that the grass’s germination goes for gillions of generations.

pretty pigments populate the picture with people, penultimately painting a plain portrait placed on a pretty property, positioned pleasingly, paying no penance for pushing proper proportions out the postern.

surely, a creation of great phenomenality

a memorial, immortal in my memory; a marker masterpiece made when I was minute keeps me mindful of my immaturity, maybe even making me mentally miniature once more

i fail to forget those figments of my family facing front with features flat and fingers forgotten; i can forgive myself for fabricating such fractured facets as fragmented faces and other forgotten fundamentals, for the feelings i find when i finish facing it fill me with fuzziness

every element of the image elates me; eventually i become ecstatic, energized and ebullient, my intellect effervescent, exporting excitement to every available entity, my exuberance endlessly effusive

nothing but nifty notions nest in my noggin, nary a negative bit of knowledge can negate my nicety

for a moment i forget everything negative

sadly, this canvas of good people must fade eventually, nothing
Lasts Forever

Chris’s poem is based on an elementary school portrait of his family.
The Sound of a Hunter
by Hayden Snyder

The man shot through the woods
As the great thunder rang all around
Every life fled as the bounty fell
So happy was the man who did not feel
His sound had struck its target
Cutting through every thing in its path
Like someone cutting a path of destruction
He carries his bounty with pride
Then taking home to retrieve the spoils
Again he spots another bounty
He shot again cutting through everything
The sound of thunder sounded in everything

Money Saved
by Jack Keller

Money is a precious thing
Slip through the pig’s slot
And day-by-day it shall rise.
Personal achievement is accomplished
And progressive advancement
Like that of growing maturity
Is gained.

Wasting is a foolish thing
Of all – temporary satisfaction
Nothing it brings but greed and desperation.

Money is all but a killing machine
Pulls values into the mud.
It has happened time and time before.

Be wise and be immune to such atrocities.
Be foolish and be dragged down into loneliness.
Money is a precarious benefit.
The Buckeye

Scott Gould

Connor Pagnani
I Step Right Up
by Will Granbery

I step right up  
Where the trail enters the forest  
Some may think I am a tourist  
I say to them no tourist am I  
For I delight in the birds and the sky  
In the forest I begin to weep  
I look around and see the stream  
Of flowing water and shimmering beam  
The astounding beauty of the trees around  
Knocks me off my feet onto the ground  
I think to myself  
Who could this creator be  
This puzzles me as I go on  
Eventually,  
I step right out of these woods you see  
And off I go to be and be

My Day
by Shelby DeWeese

My day wasn’t like the days you hear about the greatest generation.  
My day was my own and just as important.  
Just because we are not doing exactly what everybody thinks is right,  
Doesn’t mean it is wrong.  
All of my friends are here with me to wait out the long trip in cramped machines.  
Just to do something that everyone back home hates to a high extent.  
I might not be storming a beach or jumping out of a plane but I’ll tell you one thing—  
Just because we are not doing exactly what everybody thinks is right,  
Doesn’t mean it is wrong  
My friends, my wing mates could die at any time to protect the people who think  
what we are doing is wrong, but let me tell you one thing.  
It is a lot easier to say that what we are doing is wrong than to hear all of that hate and grief  
And still be able to go on with what we do.  
Just because we know how to be in flight and fight in a plane in a war in 2007.
Once Lost and Never Found
by Drew Lonergan

Once lost and never found,
My eyes aspire in deep desire.
I run to find the Nike sphere,
But it has disappeared and cannot be found.

I have grown and have become strong,
This moment is where I belong.
It drove out that aching pain,
My caddy must think it insane.

To stop in the middle of the fame,
And venture into shame.
From a heart broken at ending the game,
Once lost and never found.
Sibling Rivalries
by Tom Markham

Why must brothers fight one another?

Two brothers went their separate ways,
one in blue, the other in gray.
They met again that fateful day,
where, like strangers, they brutally blew each other away.

The rivalry rages on.

Two brothers lived together in Londonderry.
Though both feared the Lord, they hated each other bitterly.
Then one day, the cork burst free,
and Civil War broke loose in the Lord’s Army.

The spilling of blood is incessant.

Two brothers both loved the German fatherland,
but the Hammer and Sickle reigned with iron hand.
The Curtain was drawn by the Comrade’s demand,
and the brothers would never be equals again.

The battle continues to blaze.

Two brothers constantly fight without end,
while their Father looks down in grief.
Can two worldly brothers ever make amends
and make their Father above again pleased?

Marc Giguere
Flip
by Walton Macey

He jumps and makes the catch; you can’t help love watching him reach out to snap for the frisbee.

He is a blur similar of black and white. Who knew a dog could change direction so quickly like a squirrel zipping up around the branches. I let loose the alien spaceship and the chase is on.

The spaceship twists and turns, but he is with the frisbee every step of the way. Then he leaps.

His name fits him, for he indeed seems to flip in midair and grab the flying disc all in one motion.

And good old faithful Flip brings the frisbee back down to earth, and trots back, drops the frisbee and waits.

He looks at me, his sad brown eyes like Oliver Twist asking for more.

When Flip brings the frisbee down from the sky, he’s also bringing me back to reality. Where I don’t have a perfect life, I’m not the most popular guy, and don’t win team MVP.

Flip is fetching the frisbee from the sky, and me from impossible dreams and hopes. I should be thankful for what I have and remember my family, friends, and faith. And definitely Flip.
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.