

The Best of Zyzzyva, Winter 2009

Chasing Lights

By Megan Steiner

The lights chased each other across the ceiling,
As all three of us watched from the carpeted floor,
Each with our flashlight, yelling and screaming,
“I got you! I’m winning!”
And things just like that.
I loved those days
When we were young enough to have fun with
Just chasing lights
And
Draining every battery we found in the house
After leaving them all on,
With waking up Grandpa with our childish laughs
And falling asleep smiling.
What great childhood memories!

My Favorite

By Kristin Pionke

My favorite piece of artwork
Does not hang in a museum
Does not stand statue still
To be judged by every passer by

My favorite piece of artwork
Is freeform thinking in the most
Unconventional way
Absolutely abstract
Yet utterly flawless

My favorite piece of artwork
Did not start as a pure white canvas
But was always painted a beautiful
Shade of green
Always freckled by both the sun and the shade

My favorite piece of artwork
Was never painted with watercolors
But was instead tinged
The most radiant shades
By love in the purest of spectrums

Left Behind

By Russell Poniewaz

He patrols the beaches
Where so many comrades fell—
Now a memorial for the very same men.
The water no longer is seeping red—
He walks over motionless bodies,
Screams of agony in the distance,
Walking a path awaiting his own
Death, screaming for his family.
His dog tag falling from his grasp
Every so often, soon picking it back up.
He looks for a man who hasn't been injured
Someone who can share his fear with him.
He fails to find a soul, but keeps searching,
Endlessly looking for survivors.
Nothing is to be found now,
Maybe equipment if you are lucky,
A memorial site dedicated
To the dead, to him.
Nevertheless. People watch him
At times, they see him walking
Gun in hand, frightened
So very obviously. Sometimes
His gaze falls toward you,
He then smiles,
And fades away.

A Dying Instrument

By Kevin Schultz

A large brass instrument
Sits lonely on a rock.
Why don't more play it?
It is better than all the other brass.
Simple four letter name:

Tuba.

Simple, it has four valves,
Just like its name has four letters.
People pick others to play,
Like trumpet.
Trumpets are overrated; everyone plays them.
There's nothing special about them,
Unlike the big bass.
It is heavy, but you get used to it.
Seems to be a dying instrument,
Aren't many players.

Then again, so is music in school.
All the cuts, the push for academics
And getting an education.
No one needs the importance of writing
When they can't even express themselves.
Learn music, learn math as well.
Fractions get easier,
More of the mind is used.
But society has become stupid,
Focusing on trying not to be.
All that has been done
Is killing important culture,
Losing history,
And a major reduction
In tuba players.

Your Touch

By Dana Kornbeck

You touch is like
The wildest wind that
Blows on the darkest of
The full moon October nights

The swirling of the
Crisp autumn leaves and
The smell of the twigs burning
Flickering snaps of the glowing flames

The warmth comes and the warmth goes
Almost like Mother Nature
Blanketing herself
Around us

We lay out
All night long
Under the glowing of the moon
With the burning sticks and glowing moon

The only light we have
To light our path
And the fire
The only way to keep us warm

Unless Mother Nature
Is feeling generous that night
To keep us happy
And safe

Your touch is like
The wildest wind that
Blows on the darkest
Of the full moon October nights

Televizzle
By Tyler Dippel

We all gathered round
Gazing in amazement
At your gleaming black screen
And your shiny covering
With the push of a button
You came alive

You were a beautiful
Television
For years to come we watched you daily
And you gleamed back at us
Entertaining us night and day
Together
We watched the ball drop
On New Years
The Thanksgiving Day Parade
Sports of every kind
You were the greatest
Now you sit
Upstairs all alone
Watching us pass you by
Now obsolete
Covered in a film of dust
We no longer watch you
You watch us.

Sandra Lee, the Grandmother I Never Knew

By Jaimee Ballogh

I can picture it now.
You laugh with my dad
Hugging him closely
Ruffling his hair
And calling him Son.
You're a beautiful woman
Tall, slender, with curly brown hair
Probably very thin.
Through stories I know you'd have a glass in your hand
Clanking it as you laugh merrily.
Dimples line the side of your cheek
Making your eyes sparkle as you smile.
I can picture you raising my dad
To be as compassionate as he is
And raising him the "right way".
I can picture us meeting now
And you hugging me and welcoming me as if

We'd always known each other.
Grandma Sandra,
I know we've never met,
But I feel as if I've known you for a lifetime.
My dad is a composition of the things that you taught him.
And my, Grandma! You did a good job!

Unconditional

By Jaimee Ballogh

Valentine's Day left you sitting on my bed.
Whenever I entered the room
Your deep brown eyes
Would stare back at me.
The words "I love you" were sewn onto a heart
That you held permanently in your grasp.
You loved me unconditionally
And listened better than anyone.
We'd never even met before that day.
But there you were still.
I held you in my arms and whispered the words,
"I love you too"
Today one of your compassionate eyes
Was rudely stolen from you
By Cody, the black lab
Who's had it out for you since day one.
Black cotton-like material is sleeping out of your seams,
But still I hold you near
Because through it all,
You've never stopped saying it.
"I love you."

That's Not Fair!

By Jake Lubbert

Every day people ask him how he is
Every day someone will get his lunch for him
He can yell and scream at anybody he wants
 Without any consequence
 Including his parents

Sometimes girls that he has never met before
Will come up and tell him how
Cute he is
It makes me gag!
He gets free haircuts all the time just because
He's a regular
For some reason, he never has to pay rent
Where he lives
During the holiday season
He never gives anything to anybody else
And always receives the most in return
And every morning as soon as I wake up
Mom asks me
"Will you take the dog outside?"
And then I help him go to the bathroom!

Or Even at all
By Ashley Rios

I hate everything about you
I hate the way you talk
The way you say my name
I hate the way you look at me
And your smart aleck remarks
I hate the way you dress
And how you get along with my family so great
I hate the way you put my hair behind
My ear right before you kiss me
And when I get so mad at you but you make it
Impossible for me to say a word
I hate the way you hold me so tight
And always tell me good night
But the thing I hate the worst of all
Is that I don't hate you even a little
Or even at all.

"Magpie of my Eye"
By Emily Hattori

Beautiful baubles

Twinkling trinkets
Things that I liked most
As a child I admit
I was a bit of a kleptomaniac
Little things like
Antique keys
And plastic rings
And then that day
Those years ago
That great grandma gave to me
Her hairpin
That glorious floral-looking piece
It glittered and glistened and basked aglow
I didn't know what to do with it then
Until she fastened it to my hair
I played with it often
And kept it in my pocket at school
Just to look at the glitzy stones
And now it sits
And gathers dust
In a jewelry box alone
I've swapped it for plastic barrettes
And bracelets of silicone.

Sisterly Love

By Alyssa Wade

Your long red hair,
Perfect every day
That great big smile
Just moments after the tears
I never understood then
How you always looked
So darned pretty.
Then one day of snooping
I saw the bag of makeup.
What a mess I made on my face
And quickly washed it off!
The tears started flowing
And you held me close.

I never did tell you
Why my tears fell.
And as you grew older
I followed your steps
Each day wishing
I'd be exactly like you
My wonderful, beautiful
Perfect sister.

Dudey

By Sam Marx

OOOOHHHHH! DUDEY!!!!!!
We love you, little Dudey!
Your parents would always wail
When we entered your front door
Sweet innocent Dudey used to play with Barbies,
Used to eat sugar by the spoonfuls
And used to dress like an idiot for fun.
Dudey smokes Marlboros
And drinks vodka from the bottle
Dudey gets arrested and skips school on occasion
Dudey grew up and she's a screw-up
Dudey, I'm sorry.
I should've seen it but I was blind in love.
I left your side and look what you've done
It's too late now
I accept it all and go on as if it weren't my fault

Someday You Will Too

By Sam Marx

Paint on a canvas in the bathroom
Hold it up to the light, squint at your mistakes
How does it make you feel?
Use both bright and dull colors to tell a story
Wings of silver and pink flutter above a blackened,
Burnt rose
A patch of spring grass perks up high and proud on a
Sloping hill

Leading down to a dark valley, filled with thistle
Vines and burrs
Beautiful, wistful clouds sail by as they dump
Gallons of rain
Into a warm pool nearest a river of molten lava
It is what you make it
Sleep on it, spit on it, hug it, and let it collect dust
But do not throw it away

Grandma

Kelley Redmond

I remember visiting in summers
When my parents went away for the weekend.
You would always greet me with a smile
That wrinkled around the corners of your mouth
And made your green eyes sparkle.
You always had a plate of brownies
Sitting on the corner of the tiny kitchen counter
And you never cared when I ate just the frosting.
When you laughed you leaned your head back,
And those gaudy clip-on earrings
That could only look beautiful on you
Shook and jingled like dancing feet.
I saw you on Thanksgiving and
You're still the same
Sweet, caring person you always were.
You cooked a meal for thirty
In that same tiny kitchen.
And for breakfast the next morning
We ate brownies.
I licked the frosting off first.

The Girl and the Jug

By Megan Steiner

The old picture with the girl and a jug
It had hung in our living room since forever
I've always wondered where it came from.

The other Christmas, the one before last,
I was at Grandma's, not you Mom, but Dad's mom,
The dad you aren't married to.
We were watching old videos, the homemade kind
Of when Dad was little.
He was so cute, with his diaper and cowboy hat.
Living in the country with their horses and cows.
But I saw the picture, in one of the videos, it was hanging on his wall.
Dad's wall, the one you're not married to anymore.
I asked Grandma about it,
And she told me she didn't know what happened to it.
But I know she did, and I did to.
It hangs on our wall now, the daughter you no longer have,
The one Dad's not married to anymore. I told her

She looked surprised and walked away.
I always thought it was weird,
You keeping it all these years,
But I like that picture,
The one with the girl and the jug.
It fits in our house just right,
And now, it's the one thing there
That reminds me of Dad.

Train Wreck

By Krysta Johannsen

She walked down over the rocks
By the railroad under the bridge,
And she cried because she felt so calm,
Walking through all the dandelions and daisies.
Bad day, bad week, bad life, she thought,
As she stepped up onto the tracks
With a handful of rocks, and
She threw them away one by one.
She heard it coming and getting closer
But she couldn't feel it yet,
So she took more steps
And then turned around.
She jumped across the tracks

By the rocks under the bridge,
And she cried because she was alive,
Lying in all the dandelions and daisies.
She missed the brain, but was still a wreck.
But she never went under that bridge again
Because she'd rather walk over it,
So she can jump again if she wants.

Red Light, Green Light

By Krysta Johannsen

Stars and moon shine so bright
And he's driving me downtown at night;
His car stops at a red light.
He leans over,
 Grabs my face,
 Looks straight into my eyes,
 Closes his and kisses me.

Stars and moon shine so bright
And he's driving me downtown at night;
His car is stopped at a green light.
Cars are honking,
 Passing on the left,
 Their drivers yelling,
 Because he's kissing me.

Stars and moon shine so bright
And he's driving me downtown at night;
He'll stop again at the next light.

Into my Head

By Alyssa Weber

You always seem to slither your way
Into my head and into my dreams
 The white walls
 Remind me of your white teeth

As you laugh
At my dancing skills
The green grass
Reminds me of the time when I punted your slushy
And you responded
By tackling me into the grass
Of my backyard

The blue sky
Reminds me of your shiny eyes
And how whenever I look into them
It's as if I can see myself slithering my way
Into your head and into your dreams.

I Am Missing My Other Half

By Alyssa Weber

Where have you been?
My bust out dancing buddy
My Spanish class pen pal
My complaining comrade
My playing school colleague
My ice cream eating sister
My "You deserve better"
"You're too good for him anyways"
"You don't look fat in those jeans:
Amiga
My toilet paper partner
My "I cry, you cry" healer
My Forensics red ribbonist chum
My bad day crime fighter
My "I'll punch her in the face for you" companion
My Best Friend

Fall Flame

By Kevin Schultz

Out through the classroom window
Not far from the school,
Stands a maple tree.

Fall has fallen,
The leaves turn vivid colors.

Warm yellows,
Rich oranges,
Flaming reds.

The entire top looks
As if the leaves are aflame,
Burning the tree at the top.
But the fire is cold
Like the air around it,
Standing out from the green.

The flame dances in the breeze
Shaking gentle on the trunk,
Branches rock back and forth.

Soon all the trees like it
Will be engulfed
In the cold
Burning flame.

Temptation

By Melissa Schmidt

Every single day
I walk down the silent hallway
With my friends at my side
But I don't feel their eyes staring at me
But the eyes of the people
On the plaques hanging to my left.
I just want to go screaming down the
Hall yelling,
"Stop looking at me!"
Or to pull out a black Sharpie
And cover all their eyes black
so they can't see me anymore!