

Pen and Parchment  
Spring 2017



## First Day of School

*Dominick*

I thought it was so cool that every three years I had to switch schools. I started Jerome, and then TVES. After 5th grade I realized that I was growing up, and it was time for middle school. And then the day came. As soon as I got on the bus, I knew it was going to be a long first day. It was packed with high schoolers with mustaches and mouths like sailors. It was so loud that I couldn't even hear myself think about how bad this day was going to be. There was absolutely nowhere to sit. I had to sit with my "friend" who I pretty much have only talked to twice in my life. His breath smelled like the eggs my dad has every morning. And those eggs smell awful!

"How is your football team doing?" he asked.

"We're doing alright", I replied. The only time we really talked on the bus was on Mondays after my football games, which were on Sundays. Once I finally got off the bus and I walked into my new school, I had no clue where I was going. I just followed everyone on my bus to the cafeteria. The bell rang and I went to find my homeroom class. The hallway was sort of like the bus minus the high schoolers. There were kids that I had never seen in my life, bumping into me left and right. They were like a herd of cattle. Finding my homeroom was the easiest thing I had to do that day, and it was still pretty hard. The bright lights above me shined over the classroom. The summer air was moist and sweaty due to the ninety degree weather outside. We did a survey about ourselves. Then it was locker time. Mr. Daley briefly explained how to do it in class, but it was not nearly enough for me to learn. He gave me the combination to my locker and the certain ways to turn it. But it sounded like gibberish to me. I kept getting jealous of all my friends and classmates because they were getting theirs open easily while I wasn't making any progress. I had friends everywhere trying to teach me, but it was no use. I eventually had my friend do it for me so I could get my things. It seemed so effortless for him. It was like he'd done it a million times before. After countless tries of trying to open my locker, I eventually got the hang of it. After that was lunch. That was my way to unwind after a stressful beginning to my day. I finally got to just hang out with my friends. For the rest of the day I was counting

down the seconds on the clock. When the final bell rang, I realized that I had to go to the bus. But this time I just plugged in my headphones and zoned out the swears of the kids sitting behind me. Once I finished the week, I realized that middle school isn't that bad even though my first week wasn't a walk in the park. My teachers are really cool and I actually enjoy my classes. I feel more grown up here and that the best is yet to come.



The Chameleon, *Joey*

# Controlled

*Sophia*

Was in the kennel  
Man came along fell in love  
Love's not real  
Control is  
Worms came  
Were they ever really there  
Dog goes  
But you can never really get rid of a pet  
Bites  
Growls  
And  
Scratches  
But who still loves...controlled  
The man  
Who puts on a show  
Me us family  
Because...

If  
Being  
Controlled  
Is  
Being  
Happy

Then what can I do?



Dragon Family, *Kaitlyn*

## Eyes

*Taylor*

Eyes speak their own language,  
No matter what color, shape or size.  
For only eyes can receive the memories  
We all hold and prize.

Remember when you first rode your bike,  
The world rushing past?  
You forced your eyes open against the wind  
The bike wheels turning, fast.

Your eyes took in that fateful scene  
And the memory was sealed  
Until you rode back onto that same path  
And remembered the spinning bike wheels.

You'll never forget the chilly December day  
When you cut down your Christmas tree.  
The sight of the tree fully decorated  
Brought around a feeling of glee.

You won't forget the days at Grandma's  
Quaint, countryside home.  
The rolling hills and gentle streams  
Beckoned your eyes to roam.

Your eyes forever hold these memories  
And many, many more.  
The language that each pair of eyes speaks  
Is nothing we can ignore.

## Change the World, Change Each Other

*Elizabeth*

Before the crash I was a shadow. Not a pretty shadow like the one of a tree, but an unwanted shadow, a dark blotch on an already cloudy day. She was always trying to do good. Her favorite quote was "Be the change you wish to see in the world." It was written by Gandhi, and she lived by it. She encouraged me to follow it, but at the time I didn't want to; I didn't feel like I should.

4:02 pm, January 1

"You missed the turn. Just pull into the gas station and take a left at the light."

"Great, can you grab my phone?"

"Why? You're driving."

"I need to text mom that we are going to be late."

"Here do you want me to text her?"

"No, it's fine, there's no one else on the road."

I handed my sister her phone, I knew I shouldn't be letting her text while driving, but she was right. There was no one else on the road, and I trusted her. Besides, my mom would freak out when we got there if we didn't tell her we were going to be late.

I looked up from the book in my lap just in time to see us head straight into a telephone pole.

"STO-"

It was too late.

3:26 am, January 2

"What's going on? Where am I? Mom? Dad? Where's my sister? Hailey?" I spoke to the empty room. Was I in a hospital? It looked like it. The walls were white, bland. There was a small table full of flowers, a sink, and a couple of plastic chairs along the wall. I was definitely in a hospital. I had to call for a nurse and find out where my sister was. I reached over to grab the little black remote which I was sure would call the nurse. "Mmph" I looked down as I saw that my arm was slung up in a cast. "Great."

"You're awake!"

"Mom, is that you? You look like you haven't slept in days."

"It seems like days, but really it's a couple of hours. How are you, do you want me to call the nurse?"

'No I'm fine...Where's Hailey?" Tears began to stream down my mother's face. No no NO. This couldn't be happening. My sister was not dead. She couldn't be, I needed her, but if she was dead then it was my fault. I let her text mom. I let her crash into a pole.

"She's not dead...but she's also not in the best shape."

"What do you mean?"

"When you hit the pole, the airbags never deployed and she went through the window. It's a miracle she's not dead, but she's in a coma. The doctors don't know when she will be awake. It could be a couple of days to an entire year."

I sat there stunned while mom talked. A year. She could be stuck in a hospital bed asleep for an entire year. She wouldn't graduate or start college; she wouldn't go to senior prom.

3:29 pm, March 9.

It was another month after my sister woke up and she was making a quick recovery. She was back at school and although she was behind, she was still going to graduate with the rest of her class. We were getting along better than ever. She was helping me with soccer, and I was helping her with some of her school work. She inspired me to be better, and although she said I made a difference there was still so much left to do. Together we helped each other and those in need. Together we made a change.



## Where I'm From

*Griffin*

I am from the care given  
When I am at home,  
From the people I love,  
Even if my brother annoys me  
To death...  
I am from the shots on goal,  
That never ever  
Go in.  
I am from a dog as  
Fluffy and soft as a pillow  
Who begs to go outside  
To do nothing.  
I am from the sweet smell of pine trees  
At Burlingame State Park,  
And the sound of the fire crackling as I toast a  
Marshmallow  
In the dark.  
I am from sayings and stories  
My dad tells me  
Over and over  
Again until they're burned into my mind,  
"As the twig is bent the tree's inclined"

This is Bob.

Bob says hi.

This is Bob when  
the car comes by.



Bob, Andrew.

# Magic

*Paige*

Magic may fool you.

It changes appearances  
Thoughts and actions  
No two are the same  
It's purpose, to entertain

Things will look different  
Than what they seem  
One moment there  
Another, thin air

With a whip of a wand  
One swipe of the hand  
Straight out of a hat  
And just like that

Something new has come  
But new isn't correct  
"Different" is the right word  
To describe all that you heard

Nothing is predicted  
It's all part of the trick  
An outcome eventually will appear  
Watch, but don't interfere

Good or bad?  
It remains a secret  
We shall not know  
'Til end of the ongoing show

## Finding Appreciation

*Riley*

Carey slouched down on the couch and grumbled at the idea of having yet another family reunion. Her mom's seven siblings along with their children roll into the driveway with their annoyingly giggly voices and cheery spirits. It had been two years since she had seen them, but those years had unfortunately gone by fast and she was not looking forward to spending five straight hours with them.

"Mom! This is so stupid! What is the point of seeing them if they're just going to drive right on back to wherever they live happy lives without us?!" Carey screamed.

"Sweetie, they are my siblings and they hold a special place in my heart. Imagine if you didn't get to see Kendall and Owen everyday..."

"I would probably live a much happier life!" Carey mumbled under her breath.

"Watchya talking about?" Carey's younger sister Kendall said as she walked in on their conversation.

"Nothing, you little twerp. Mind your own business!" Carey shouted at her.

"Gees," Kendall said as she left the room.

"Now be nice. Back to what I was saying, you would probably feel very lonely!" her mother explained with soft words.

"Well I wish they weren't in my life! Everything would be so much easier!"

At that moment, the room went dark and a faint light flickered on in the corner and started to move, as if it were going towards Carey. As the glowing object proceeded to come closer, Carey could just barely make out a face, but it was not a familiar one.

"I am here to make your wishes come true!" the object said without any further explanation and with a flash, the lights came back on and Carey was in her living room once again.

"Was I dreaming?" Carey mumbled to herself.

"What was that dear?" said her mother.

"Oh nothing. Where are Kendall and Owen?"

"Who?" Carey's mother asked.

"My siblings, where are they?" Carey said not truly caring.

"You know that you're an only child silly!"

Carey then dragged herself up the stairs pretending to go along with what she thought was a prank. First she looked in Kendall's bedroom, but no one. Then she looked in Owen's bedroom, but still no one.

"I give up! Trying to find them takes too much effort!" Carey said as she wandered through the halls.

"Honey, are you alright up there? You seem to be talking to yourself an awful lot lately!" Carey's mother said, laughing to herself. Tears started to build up in Carey's eyes as she started to think that maybe this wasn't a prank after all.

"Now who will I have to play softball with? And who will I have to comfort me?" Carey said as she went through all of the thoughts in her head. Carey then dragged her feet as she walked back down the stairs and then walked outside and slammed her body into the old worn out hammock. For a slight moment, Carey's cruel, old self came through and she wondered if just maybe life would be a lot better if her siblings weren't around. But then, she thought about all of the fond memories she had with Kendall and Owen. Like building a treehouse, or pretending that they were pirates in need of a new ship. Or making ice cream out of snow, and swimming in the pond. Tears started to roll down her face even faster than before and now all she wished for was that the glowing object would come back and give her her siblings back.

At that very moment, everything went dark and there the object was, staring into Carey's eyes.

"Next time, be careful what you wish for and don't take your family for granted," whispered the object.

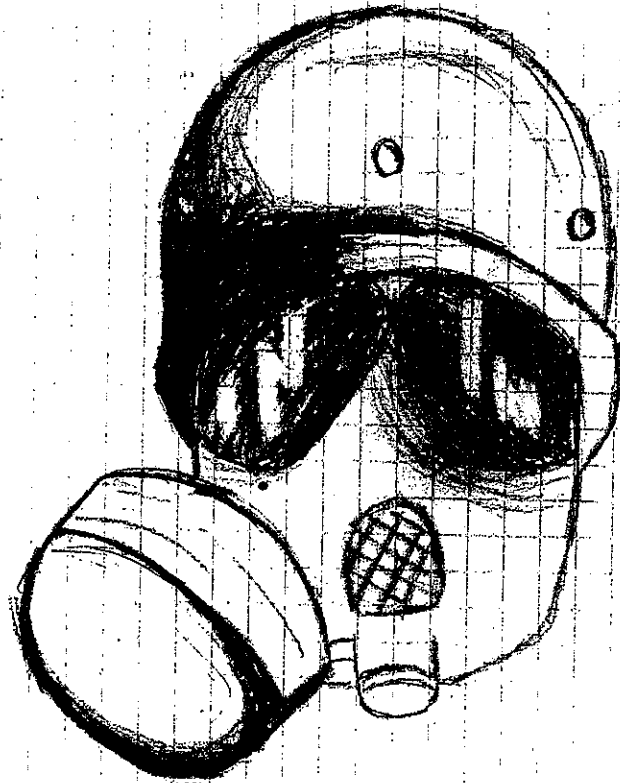
When everything became light again, Kendall and Owen were playing in the yard. Carey ran as fast as she could, with a smile as wide as the moon on her face, over to them and held her siblings close. She then ran to the kitchen and embraced her life. "You know what mom? I'm glad your siblings are here!"

## My Favorite Book

*Sam*

Recently, I was asked to write an essay about my favorite book that I had read while at NBIS. But I found it impossible because over the last three years at NBIS I have read more books than I can count, so it is impossible to choose just one book that has impacted me. There are just so many, from *A Dog's Life* to the *Wings of Fire* series, I was affected by books. If a book doesn't affect or change you in some way, then hasn't it failed at being a book? Bookworms and readers like me find it impossible to pick a favorite book because we often find parts of ourselves in every one we read. Every book tells a story and sends a message. You just have to find it. I've found though, that all the books we've been forced to read in school have had a similar depressing tone. From *Tiger Rising* to *They Cage the Animals at Night*, they are all really sad. But there are also sad books that I've read outside of school like *Hit and Run*. I've learned many lessons from books, and they have completely altered who I am and who I will become. The *Divergent* series taught me to be brave and not to take things for granted. The *Harry Potter* series taught me that love and friendship can overcome evil (and it's *LeviOsa* not *LeviosA*). The *Maze Runner* series taught me to keep moving forward; *Rooftoppers* taught me to never ignore a possibility (and always to aim for the middle pigeon). I could list lessons I've learned forever and never finish all the things books taught me. They have let me travel to hundreds of places without ever moving. I've been to London, *Pyrrhia*, *The Glade*, and many more. Books mean everything to me, and I'm proud of that. You meet people in these adventures that you'll never forget. They stay with you and change you for the better. All of them do, from *Scarlett O'Hara* to *Riddle Border*. Books are incredible things. These words and pages have the ability to make us laugh, cry, and inevitably scream and beg for more. But the best thing is that all the characters, the places, the scenes, the facial expressions appear a little bit differently to everyone. Unlike movies, we are given a basic description and then we get to open our imagination to anything. Just because the book ends doesn't mean the story does too. Closing the cover is just the cue for you to continue the adventure. The fact that I can't

choose a favorite book says more about me than choosing just one ever could. I enjoy books because of their hold on me. I love them for the characters and their sarcastic comebacks and the smirks I can see perfectly in my head. I pity people who will go their entire lives staring at a cell phone screen instead of a paperback, and it disappoints me to see that number growing. Books and their stories are immortal and if you join the story, then you are too.



Gas Mask, *Justin*

## Black and Blue

*Sheyenne*

Black and blue  
Like a bruise  
The conflict between  
Flooding the news

All of that tear gas  
A controversial risk  
Not enough probable cause  
For a simple stop and frisk

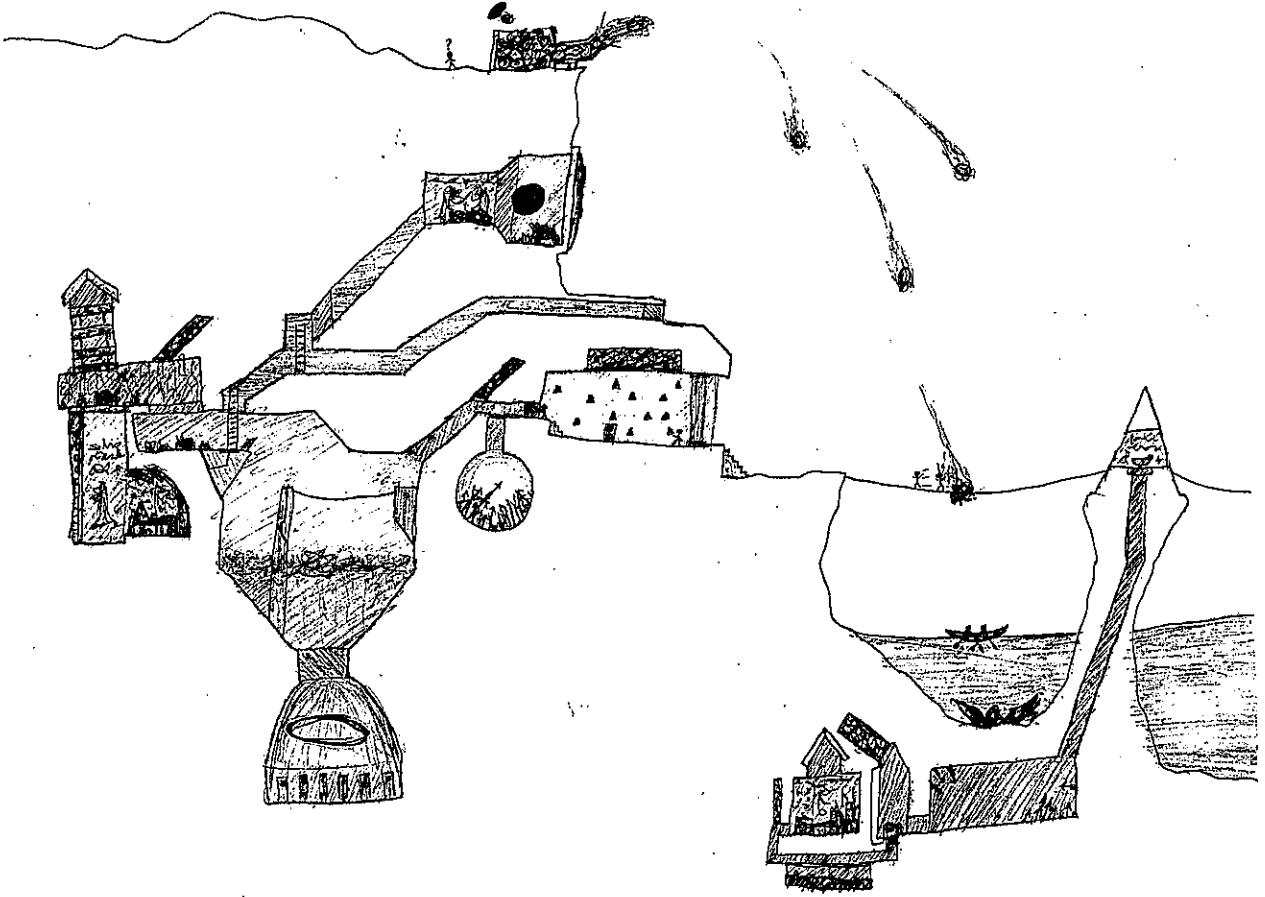
With all the riots  
That travel around  
The yells of protesters  
An all too familiar sound

So many blue lives  
So many black lives  
Spreading that hatred  
Hatred that still thrives

As the daughter of a blue life  
It's very concerning to me  
What my generation will live in  
And what the future of all lives will be

In the end a black life matters  
Just as much as a blue  
And a blue life matters just as much  
As the lives of me and you





Ancient Tomb of King Andrew I, *Andrew*

## Thinking Back

*Anonymous*

It's those cold winter nights that bring me back. The chilling sensation of a snowflake landing on my delicate, pale skin, and the warm arms of my dad around me. Looking up, I only saw the endless black night filled with an array of mindlessly beautiful shining stars. They looked as if they were in a high-def cartoon, if such a thing even existed. Admiring the way they twinkled in the dim light, I never failed to notice how unreal they looked, in all the beauty and exquisite brilliant white points. Thinking back, it wasn't just the view that awed me. My dad's care and love when I couldn't sleep at night, bringing me out into a winter wonderland and talking to me in his soothing voice, lecturing about the stars. Of course I wouldn't understand the adult vocabulary and scientific talk very well, and occasionally would drift into sleep as the sky closed its eyes, too. It may have been the pink Hannah Montana blanket that kept me feeling warm even as my nose and ears turned a fire truck's red, or it may have been the security and love I felt that blazed through my body, spreading warmth. Either way, I recount those reminiscent moments that bring me back to younger me, and I cherish the passion my dad took in taking care of me. Those times are long gone, as I've grown out of sleeping problems and my dad has grown less insistent in carrying his middle-school daughter out to gaze at the stars every night. However, I'll remember these moments forever, keeping them with a special lock in a special safe in a special part of my heart. It was the feeling of belonging and pure relaxation that I find myself missing and longing for once again. I hear in my dad's voice, although older and busier now, the same sing-song tune, crafting me a lullaby to catch some Zzz's, and it takes me back. While life goes on and changes, children grow up and become young adults, and time becomes faster and faster and faster, we need to remember to slow things down sometimes and bring forth our appreciation and thankfulness. Taking a step back to count my blessings is a wonderful, joyous feeling that begins on the foundation of childhood, family and love.