

SONAR 2010
San Francisco Day School
Upper School Literary Magazine

Hathor

by Parker Dittmore

Hathor, Hathor oh Hathor, I would raise the pyramids for you.
I would build an ostentations temple for you so please come to me.
Or I will rant and rave and go insane,
without you I am nothing.
I see you at the council and I perceive a woman so gorgeous, divine and tranquil,
Like a lotus flower floating on the Nile.
Your golden hair spilling down your back like 24 karat melted gold.
Your eyes like crystal jets of the cleanest cerulean water.
Your lips so curved and pink, so soft to the touch.
Your eyelashes so fluttery like a butterfly of
the most beautiful kind.
Your body itself is so gorgeous, unblemished, tanned, so radiant and shimmering,
prominent in the middle of a crowd.
Your celestial character so heavenly and godly.
Oh Hathor I love you.

Incense

by Hailey Long

The sweet smell of incense
fades out of the air.

Spring

comes once again

I look up

there,

diving through the clouds

three geese

the shallow water reveals

the broken heart

of mine

happiness dies inside of me

sorrow fills me

not one gust can blow it away

I think

as the spring flowers bloom with every glance

I think

as a droplet of water falls from my eye

hope fills my heart

soon the sun will shine

Soccer Balls, Eighth Graders, and Pink Knees

by Christopher O'Brien

Sweat is dripping down my face, my lungs burn as I scream "Here is your help!" The ball comes whizzing toward me. The perfect pass. An easy goal. I wind back... and shoot; the agonizing moments pass as I can see the soccer ball flying in slow motion toward the goal. Then, GOAL!!!!!! I come running back up the hard cement surface of the roof. There are high-fives all around. Tiredly, I say, "goalie switch." As much fun as scoring is, the pipes is where I belong. Suddenly my perfect bliss is ruined as I see the worst sight! My most feared opponent running down the field with the ball, James Pritchett! The defense clears out, mumbling something about "not wanting to get hurt." Everything goes wrong: nobody has noticed as Aaron Moye takes the center position. James passes the ball to Aaron. It's just him and me. My whole body feels like it is going to shake to death. My knees are the worst. His face is calm; I wish I could say the same about mine. I just want to get it over with. He takes the shot... goal most likely. There it is again, the slow motion ball. And then... SAVE, fantastic save by me, the *5th grade* goalie, only *5th grade*. What!?!?!?!? Relief floods my body and I only have time to punt the ball down field. "But how?" I ask myself later. "How did I save that shot?" The delayed but not weakened force of burning in my knees comes and consumes my attention. I look down to see not one but both knees bright pink. They sting, but I'm used to it. As the pain subsides, Mr. Roberts announces, "Balls away." Everything is ok. Well, except for my knees.

One Million Roses

by Chrissy Warren

One million red roses.
One for each hour
I have lived
So many hours.

And one white one
For my death.

Now the roses sit here,
In a huge circle
In front of my coffin.

The White one in the center.
The eye of the hurricane.

You wade in to find
The white rose,
But it skips under the surface.

You dive for it,
But you are too late.

You are on the bed of roses.
The thorns go into your skin.
Red water gushes out.

It fades against

The matching backdrop.

Your carcass lies,

Lifeless.

You have fallen into

The rose's trap

Of beauty.

My Name

by Karson Daecher

Where is he? *Not he, she.* Um...right here. Awkward silence. That's why I dread having a substitute teacher. Hi, my name is Karson. Kirsten? Karson. Karen? Karson. Karson, Karson, Karson. Yes, it means "Son of Kar." Someday, I'm going to rewrite name.com just to change that. "*Daughter* of Kar," if you please.

I hate it when spell check changes my name to "Carson." I hate that squiggly red line. But I like it, too. So far I haven't met a single girl named "Karson," much less spelled with "K." And I'm betting it's going to stay that way. That's why my name is unique. *I'm* unique.

I've heard I could have been Kate. I'm glad I'm not. Not that I have anything against the name "Kate" or anything, it's just that I think "Karson" fits me better.

I'm not named after anyone like a lot of people. Karson is original; out of the blue. I like being special in that way. At family reunions, when someone calls "Karson," ten people don't turn their heads, just me. My middle name is where the "named after someone" formality comes in. Braun. I like that, too. Braun Karson. Karson Braun. That's me.

Ares

by Sam Denton

I'm Ares, God of war. As you can see I'm tall, handsome, and very handsome. I'm up here because I'm the one who will kill to get things done. No one likes me, and I'm very proud of it. Aphrodite was the only god or goddess who ever liked me. Everyone hates me, especially my sister Athena, who loathes my vain strutting and senseless bloodshed. I'm the son of Zeus and Hera who don't pay attention to me. They hate me, and wouldn't mind me dead. I hate them. They think they are the best but they are not. When the war of the Golden Apple started (you will hear about that little conflict later), I heard only the clashing of arms. I grinned with glee, put on my gleaming helmet, and leapt into my War Chariot. I ran into war with my best war buddies: **Pain. Panic. Famine. Oblivion.** I don't care and don't even know who won, but I just liked seeing bloodshed. The only problem with bloodshed is it messes with my pants, shirt, and my sweet, **sweet hairdo.** Even though I do love war, I cannot bear to suffer pain myself. I scream **so loudly** I can be heard for miles and miles. Once I ran home to big papa Zeus; he was disgusted with my carrying on and told me I was worst of all his children, reminding me to get it together...I am immortal, after all.

I killed Adonis because Aphrodite and I were secretly seeing each other. Stay with me here, it gets kind of complicated. Aphrodite was secretly cheating on Hephaestus but she loved me more, and eventually she secretly married me. How could she resist, considering my good looks and confident air?

Let me leave you with this advice: I am the god of war... **DON'T MESS WITH ME. I WILL KILL.**

First Snow

by Nina O'Brien

The flakes gently waft to the ground, dusting it like powdered sugar on a cake. In an effortless twirl, each unique bunch of winter is guided by the icy wind and swept away to another winter storm. The sound of laughter and heavy footsteps break the silence as a mass of eager children race up the newly snow-covered hill. Puffs of their warm breath fill the air as their panting lungs inhale the frigid mountain air. Some are making snowmen while others begin to build a sledding track. After many hours of joyful but tiring winter play, eventually the crowd of children begin to retreat, bringing with them hearts full of magic and contentment. With each hot chocolate mustache wiped from each face, they stumble up to their waiting beds. It has been the first snow and it has brought to us a feeling of delight, winter chill, and at last, sleep.

My Name

by Alejandro Sifuentes

When I think of my name the first thing I think of is...LONG! My full name is even longer than that, it's *Alejandro Tomas Sifuentes*. This is how I got that positively long name. On the night I was born it was a glacial and pouring night. Before I was born they decided to name me Alejandro. My dad was the one who suggested it and my mom was the one who thought it was too long, but eventually she caved in to it. So it was settled – my name was Alejandro Sifuentes...or was it? My middle name comes from my grandfather on my dad's side. I was his first grandson and his first name was Tomas, so therefore my middle name is Tomas.

I guess I am proud of my name, though, even if it's long. My last name, Sifuentes, has been in my family for as long as I can remember. But it doesn't represent my other hidden part of my name. Hernandez, that's my mom's last name. Her whole family is named Hernandez. The Hernandez family started out poor in a small town in Mexico. All of my aunts, uncles, and my mom went to school in the tiny school in the town. When my mom was ten, the Hernandez family "migrated" into the United States. In the United States my mom raised my two other brothers and me. That is why I am super proud of my family, the great history behind it.

Untitled Poem (about a fictitious sister)

by Holland Bool

What is my life? Ripped pages and erased words?
My trashcan is full of broken dreams.
Outside my window, I see blue skies and singing birds
I cry silently and in my head I hear her screams.
She's afraid what people think of her.
Too thin? Too fat? Do this do that.
That's all she hears and I want to cry for her.
I want to run away and hide. For her.
But I can't because I'm the strong one.
And when she's sad, I am sad. What she does, I've already done.
I live by her side, and she lives by mine.
I swear I see her smile, but she's showing me a sign.
She's the other side of me, the bad one, the obscured one.
And I'm the one who has to smile.

Window Frame

by Danny Fishman-Engel

*One night,
sleeping in that hotel,
In Denver.
As I try to fall into the realm of sleep,
I open the window shade.
The outside world,
At ten o'clock.
I watch the cars zoom by,
With that yellow light that turns everything black and white.
But I can't decide,
Do I open the window shade more?
If I do, the window frame gets in my view,
But it not,
My vision is constricted.
I rise and open the window shade more.
But that window frame...
Ughhh...
I watch the cars as they disappear into the black color or the window frame,
Only to emerge on the other side.
Once again I rise,
But this time, to close the window shade. Now my view is constricted,
I can't stand it.
After a few more repetitions of thie cycle,
I finally slip into my dreams.*

Untitled

by Charlotte Halifax

She felt the rush. It started from the tip of toes and spread like vicious wild fire through the rest of her body. By the time it had reached her stomach it had become the fierce push of waves of the ocean which left her feet light as a feather yet heavy as lead. Her arms became soaring wings as the rush reached them, and her eyes focused just as her mind seemed to float away. All this happened in a second: One breath and she was ready. She stepped on stage and disregarded the audience of many strangers and a few familiar faces; instead she spoke the same words that had been coming out of her mouth for three months. Just a few more lines of conversation with the haughty face across from her and then the stage was hers only. A few steps, stop, a line, a few more steps, and sit. Stand, gaze away, sigh, and begin. The twinkling notes on the piano drifted into the almost-silent audience. She opened her mouth and took a deep breath, tasting the music floating in the air. The song flowed and pressed into her head, but she wasn't intimidated. Instead, the rush came once again; stronger than before. Suddenly she was singing, her voice intertwining with the music of the piano. Then right on cue many voices joined hers, and the people that belonged to the voices followed. It was beautiful, glorious, amazing. And then it was gone.

Untitled

by Ethan Lampert

The day was hot and blistering. Along with the altitude, the fact that the air was thick enough to cut with a butter knife didn't help much at all for my already exhausted lungs. Another gust of wind blew against my face, bringing with it thousands of grains of sand. I tried to hold my breath as the sand rushed by so that I didn't get any in my parched mouth, but eventually I started feeling light-headed and had to open my mouth for air, sucking in a mouthful of dust. I could feel it coating the inside of my throat and nose, triggering reflexive levers in my brain, which caused by to cough up all of my lunch. As I wheezed and gagged, I fell to my knees. This was definitely hell. The wind died down, and I could finally breathe somewhat normally again. But I knew the next gust of wind was not far away. Kneeling there in the sand of one of the harshest desserts in the world, the thought slowly began to cross my mind that this might be the last hour that I ever lived. Thinking about by now frail body lying in the sand, limp as a rag doll, I also began wondering if there was any hope of ever being found out here, dead or alive. I got up and continued staggering forward, in the direction that I remembered coming from. The wheels of the massive truck would have made deep tracks in the soft sand, but by now the wind would have covered them up. I kept trudging, looking at my feet so that my eyes would see if I was falling or tripping, because my legs were too tired and numb to feel anything. Just then the wind came again. This time I ripped off my brown, tattered shirt and pulled it over my face so that I could breathe without getting sand in my lungs. Now I could feel the sand stinging my chest and shoulders, pushing me backwards. I fell to the ground again, burying my head and shoulders in the sand. This seemed to work as the wind went right over me, getting only a little bit down my pants. As the wind died down, I stood up and pulled my shirt back on. Then I noticed something that I hadn't seen before. Along the horizon the long stretch of sandy brown terrain finally ended and I could see a leafy green.

Sanctum of Secrets

by Jude Driscoll

It's raining outside,
This seems not to affect him.
The rain, sleet, and fog no matter how thick,
Will not break into his sanctuary.
He lies in there,
Alone.
His fingers tapping on the modest walls surrounding him,
In sync with the melodic drip of rain knocking on that small sanctum,
Wishing to enter.
This is where he is happiest...
His repetitive taps echo through the hideaway for hours
There is no time.
It frightens him,
The thought of his life out in the open,
Being dissected,
Played with.
Sadly outsiders may never read his life,
All those volumes tucked deep in his oasis.
Even so, maybe mystery makes the most memorable people...
The rain ends yet his tapping continues,
Another volume is finished, set on the hidden shelf.
His sanctuary is left intact,
Slightly damaged,
Never broken.
...Not yet...

Procrastination

by Jackson Karel

Procrastination

I am the one with sand and clay ingrained between his fingernails

I am the one who plays god

I am from laughter

I am looking at the afternoon honey sun dripping through the curtains

I grab the radiance of the worlogog and throw it into the fishermen's net

I am looking at deformed faces

Staring down the perfunctory abyss Procrastination

ethereal corneas radiate

I didn't not capitalize the last line to prove a point

I didn't because I'm lazy

The mollusk slid into the publisher's fax machine

It broke the flow of the poem

I was shy

Now I'm spontaniAPPLES

I will be shy again

Sonnet

by Charlotte Marshall-Fricker

Fear is the great, hungry plague of my youth.
It has clawed its way deep inside my bone.
Though it left me with hope to find the truth,
a painful longing to solve the unknown.
You preserve me despite this raging war,
Where shadows are fierce monsters in disguise.
Uncertainty still hides within my core.
My deepest of wounds are drenched with lies.
Yet you're the tide that strengthens with each wind,
The unstoppable force that pumps my blood.
You speak the questions whose answers I strive to find.
We are invincible against this flood.
We inhale the fumes of these cold, dark nights,
While once dismal skies reveal their strange lights.

Lemon Cookies

by Mikaela Symanovich

It was the holiday season, dolphin singers in crimson caps lined in fur, and the gym was scattered with tables in snow tablecloths for a Christmas event. Our third grade class, walking in an orderly line, passed the long table of cookies and muffins just outside gym door. Our eyes stretched open with desire, little mirrored images of cookies reflecting in them. I heard whispers of eager third graders as the line continued to walk through the gym door, even though our hearts were back grabbing two and three chocolate dipped Madelines. We were instructed to sit down on the gym floor while Ms. Burness chatted with another teacher, her back towards us.

Ms. Burness was my third grade teacher. She was the kind of teacher one hears about in the first grade, the kind of teacher that has announcements at assembly dedicated to her, and the kind of teacher that is beloved despite the “eyes in the back of her head.” She demanded recycling, was known for occasional hissy fits, and gave third graders amazing experiences they talked about for years after. She was also the teacher that I had been waiting for; my sister had been in her third grade class and loved her. Whenever I walked down the halls, passing her, there seemed to always be an aura of respect that emanated from her. My third grade year started extremely well, compared to the way it ended. And I joined the long list of past third graders walking away experiences that stuck in their minds for years after, only what I remembered wasn’t anything like what I had heard about.

I glanced around the room at the milky white tablecloths, and paper snowflakes. Suddenly, I recognized a classmate scrambling back from the gym door

carrying three cookies. “Here! Look what I brought! One for each of you, and one for me!” She exclaimed in a loud whisper, that made me question whether the cookies were off limits. I took the cookies, of course. Why would I not take angels in the form of chocolate chips and dark vanilla dough into my fingers, I thought. As I bit into it, unavoidable crumbs came tumbling to the floor. I quickly demolished the cookie, not noticing a few crumbs sprinkled around the floor. Even what my friend had left behind were more noticeable than mine.

Ms. Burness gave us directions to go outside the gym, and we started to get up to leave. Suddenly, those “eyes in the back of her head” found me, and her body turned slowly to stare at the situation of crumbs at our feet. Brown crumbs, unfortunately, are the easiest to see. “What do you think you’re doing?” Her words curled around a hint of disgust that only I heard, the way unintended emotions sometimes knock you unexpectedly hard. “There is absolutely NO eating in the gym. I never said you could take those. Clean it up right now.” As the chastisements were rolling off her tongue, I regretted taking the dessert. I suppose that the thought towards the way back of my head had been right all along.

I stuttered for words before finding, “I’m sorry,” and kneeling down to pick them up. Unfortunately for me, my two classmates also involved in the “crime scene” had sauntered away with our class out of the gym, making me responsible for cleaning up the mess. I grabbed at the crumbs, indignant that I was the only one cleaning up.

With a few crumbs unnoticeably strewn on the polished floor, I followed the class out of the gym, to where my grade was clamoring for the food laid out that we were *now* allowed to eat. The little sweet tooth inside my soul that will always be

with me reached my hand out for another cookie, figuring what had happened in the gym was over.

Her hand came down sharply. My mind, which had been prancing around in Candy Land, jolted back, and I looked up at her, seemingly looming above me. My hand stung, mostly with embarrassment and fear, rather than physical pain. She clasped my hand tightly making me uncomfortable; I let the cookie fall. I could barely even make out what she said as tears suddenly blurred my eyes. Her words came out even more deafening and sharp while they were in a low, quiet tone. I don't remember what she said to me, but I remember standing there, a moment in time, and she seemed so colossal next to my suddenly breakable frame. Her cutting words proved too much for the part of me trying to stay together, and tears bursting with a sudden anger and regret dashed down my cheeks. I remember distinctly being more angry than frightened, yet I knew that outright anger wouldn't get me any farther than my uncontrollable tears would.

So many nights after that day, I cried silent tears of an emotion that I couldn't name even then, not anger anymore, nor regret, acrimony, or sadness. It was a kind of feeling where I would never be the same carefree-scared-of-nothing-in-this-world-untroubled girl. That day was always crisp in my mind, tinged with bitterness. I let the silent tears fall, before remembering, *With a few crumbs unnoticeably strewn on the polished floor, I followed the class out of the gym, to where my grade was clamoring for the food laid out that we were now allowed to eat. I dipped my hand into the bowl, taking a cookie. Ms. Burness' hand came down softly. The warmth of it on mine startled me. "The lemon ones are better," she said, and her voice was interwoven with a forgiveness. It gave me one of those smiles that are small and seemingly insignificant, but give your whole body a quick tingle of love. She nodded*

as I reached out for a lemon cookie, and I met her eyes without fear, for they showed me that this was the time to start over, leaving regretful pasts behind. As I bit into the dessert, I felt the hardness that had formed melt, and the emotions from inside the gym slip away.

For so many years after, I heard all of the loving comments, wanting to join in, wishing that those experiences I heard about were mine. I listened to the love and poignancy that surrounded her memory in silence, soaking up memories that I felt should be mine. I heard the announcements at assembly and tagged along as my friends went trick or treating to her house. Time passed and the hardness I felt slowly dissolved, my pillow soaked up the silent tears for the last time, and my lamentable third grade year wore at the edges. Yet, I never forgot how I felt that day, my body burning to keep the tears in my eyes, and a whole mix of emotions that I never quite defined. Only nowadays, when I look back, I like to remember the lemon cookies.