Interested in pursuing writing, working with experienced authors, and publishing your writings? Contact Candice Gibson in G129, at cgibson@bpcc.edu, or at 318-678-6364 for more information.
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Note to our audience: Some material is not suitable for young eyes, so parental discretion is advised.
Nothing I ever do is good enough.
If I'm old enough
To raise your own children
And even myself,
Why aren't I old enough
To do things on my own?
I want to leave
From all of you.
Fury rushes through my veins.
I'm so tired of being compared
To any child.
I'm no longer a little girl,
And no matter what you do
My wings are spreading high.
My eyes set on the abyss
Of my bright future.
Away I'll fly
Feeling the free wind
In between the dark crevices
Of my restless mind.
It comes quick and fast,
Speeding like a freight train.
It will surpass you
And every time you've held me back.
Let me go.
Set my soul free.
Lest it will burst from your unyielding grasp
And fly above the trees
Into the starry sky.
Once upon a time there was a beautiful little princess named Bella. She was loved by her family, furry friends, and most of all her mom. Bella’s mom told her every day how special and beautiful she was, but because Bella wore glasses, she had a hard time believing her mother. Bella thought she was the only princess in the world that had to wear glasses.

Every day Bella would wake up early, eat breakfast, and brush her teeth so she could get out of the house before her mother could make her put her glasses on. Every day her mom would stop her at the front door with her favorite book and glasses in hand. Bella would thank her mom, then head out the door, past the butterfly meadow, to the large oak tree by the creek where her furry friends would gather for Princess Bella to read them a story. Princess Bella really loved her furry friends, but oh how she wished the other princesses would accept her as much as they did.

The other princesses would gather in the butterfly meadow every day to run around the meadow and chase butterflies. When Bella would move closer to them to sneak a peek, they would call her names like four eyed princess and bug face. Bella would go home sad every day and tell her mom how mean the other princesses treated her because she wore glasses. Her mom would just smile and say, “Only the special ones wear glasses.” Bella would wipe her tears away and try to forget about the other princesses. Eventually she would drift off to sleep.

The next morning Bella’s mom woke her early. She had a surprise for Bella. She had made plans to attend the queen’s birthday celebration in town that day. Bella was so excited she could hardly eat her breakfast. This is all she could think about on the walk to town. When they arrived, Bella stood near the back and waited nervously for the queen to appear. As the queen approached and took her seat at the throne, the crowd cheered and danced with excitement. Princess Bella looked up at the throne and couldn’t believe her eyes. The queen was wearing the most beautiful pair of gold-trimmed glasses that Princess Bella had ever seen. Bella ran to the front of the crowd to get a better look. It was true the queen wore glasses. Bella walked up to the queen so she could wish her a happy birthday and give her the flowers that her and her mother picked on the walk to town. The queen leaned forward to thank Bella for the flowers and whispered in her ear softly, “Only the special ones wear glasses.”

Every day, from that day forward, Princess Bella was proud to wear
her glasses. She would go down to the large oak tree by the creek and read to her furry friends. The other princesses would still chase butterflies through the meadow, but this time, they all did it wearing glasses. Bella knew that her glasses were the only real ones, and that she was the one that was special. Princess Bella went on to live happily ever after.
The Quiet Game
Talisa Housley

My grandparents were our neighbors in a bigger house on a slight hill, they had thirteen kids together with a love that was so real.
My mom was the oldest, so she helped to raise the crew, so when she had her own, she already knew what to do.
This piece of land had a name, it was called the The Butler’s Place, to me a place of adventure, where we could play, relax, race…
I had some very good times here and also some bad, talking about certain things, might even make some mad.
But I really don’t care if they get mad or not, this is my story, my life, it’s all that I got.
I can remember one Christmas, we got everything we had hoped for, toys, clothes, toys!! What more could a child ask for?!
Me and my brother Fred, both got big wheels, oh we thought we were dreaming, this is how being rich must feel!!
We jumped on our big wheels and pumped our little legs, off we were gone, until all you saw was red.
That was the color of the dirt on the road to our house, we played good guy, bad guy and games of cat and mouse.
We had so much fun, those were the days, carefree wild and country, those were our ways.
These parts of my childhood make me smile with joy, the innocence of laughter made by a girl or boy.
At about this time, I must have been six or seven, how did this time of innocence slip to hell from heaven?
There was no running water in our house, our water came from a spring, there was a path in the woods, you could hear the birds sing.
The path went down this hill into the woods where the sun did not shine, it would break through the trees, but not for long periods of time.
The water we toted was good, it was always cold, we would bring back jugs, as much as we could hold.
I would speed by this trail on an adventure all my own, my big wheel was my car, I would act as if I’m grown.
I would get in my car and drive all over this world, pretending I was a star, the most famous little girl.
One day I drove by the trail, but someone called my name, I stopped to see who it was—from then I would never be the same.
I braked on my big wheel and pedaled back to the trail, back to the devil, back to my hell.
He said that he wanted to play with me, and asked if I wanted to play, and me being a kid, I happily said “okay.”
He told me this game is a secret, no one can ever know, he said, “if you tell someone I can’t play with you anymo.”
I swore I wouldn’t tell, I just wanted to play, little did I know what was in store for me that day.
He picked up my big wheel and toted it down the trail, I skipped along behind him, to my own personal hell.
We passed by the spring, but still he kept walking, I asked, “Where we going?” but he was not talking.
We had walked so far that the clearing was no longer in sight, I started to feel scared, this feeling was not right.
I stopped walking then, and said, “I’m scared I wanna go back,” he slowly turned around and asked, “really is that a fact?”
He said, “Well we are already here, but if you don’t wanna play we’ll leave,” he started walking back towards the trail, I caught up and grabbed his sleeve.
I said, “Okay we can stay, show me how to play the game,” he turned slowly and smiled widely and said, “You might never be the same.”
I quickly said, “Okay, tag you’re it!” As I started to run away, he grabbed my arm, “Not so fast lil bit. This is a different kind of game, let’s call this game house,” he was toying with me you see, in this sick game of cat and mouse.
He laid out the rules and said I had to follow them if I want to play, and me being a kid, I quickly said, “Okay.”
He said, “Rule number one, you can’t tell anyone about what we do, cause you will get a whupping and they won’t let me play with you.”
He said, “Rule number two, we might have to play without our clothes, cause if we get them dirty, then someone might then know.”
I giggled when he said this, and plainly pointed out, “My clothes are already dirty, what are you talking bout?”
He said, “Well it’s fine if you don’t wanna, I’ll find someone else to play,” I quickly said, “No, no, no we can play your way.”
He said, “This game lets us touch each other in places like we are grown. I said, “But aren’t you anyway?” He said, “No you’re wrong.”
He said, “I’m not grown right now, I’m just way bigger than you.” It didn’t sound right, but he said it, so it must be true.
He told me to take off my clothes and I did as I was told, he looked around the woods as I stood and held my clothes.
I didn’t know who he was looking for, but he made me lay down, then his big body was on top of me pressing me in the ground. This can’t be right I thought, this game is no fun at all, I wanted this game to be over, I wish my mom would call. He was doing things to me, and I tried to make him stop, but he wasn’t listening to me and this game was hurting a lot. He jumped up off of me, and made these weird sounds, I lay there terrified, on the cold hard ground.
When the noises he made were over, he quickly made me put on my clothes, he picked up my big wheel and repeated over and over, “no one can know.” We walked back up the trail, and he said, “You will start to like the game.” But I knew I would never like it, nor would I ever be the same. He stayed hidden in the woods as I walked out of the trail, dragging my big wheel behind me, like a big plastic tail. I looked back down the trail, once I was at the clearing where it all began, but he had vanished like a ghost, my new scary friend. This would happen again, more times than I care to recall until one blessed day, where my brother saw it all. He ran and told my mom what was going on, that my 17 year old cousin had me in the woods all alone. My mom, and my grandmother made him go away, they told him to leave, that he could no longer stay. My grandmother beat him first, she broke her favorite broom, as she beat him across his back and he ran all over the room. I was never taken to a hospital, like they do now, you just deal with the pain, you just figure out how. I don’t remember being asked, “How do you feel?” They just act like it never happen, like it wasn’t real. I was told to keep quiet by my molester, and now my family is saying the same, I guess I was still sadly playing the dreaded quiet game……
How Time Flies
Abigail Brown

Oh my how time flies.
But you lie at the back of my mind like a tumor.
Impressing yourself upon any chance I have of getting away, of making
my own way without you.
Ill forget for a while…
Your lying eyes and silly smile, but then, some tiniest ugliest little detail
of my present life sends me sinking back to you.
And I mean like a rock, not peaceful like a lily, but like a big heavy boul-
der tumbling down a mountain.
And Lord do I work on forgiveness, and I pray for resistance, but the
human side of me continues to be honestly disgusted by your guiltless ex-
istence.
I don’t wish death for you, but open eyes and a softened heart, then I feel
how hard mine is…and I have to count to ten so I don’t cry out loud. Or
scream and shout profanities at someone who will never hear me.
You never heard me.
You only turned from me and everything I offered.
Like a puppy I offered and begged, but you had long ago tainted what God
had once blessed. And I can forgive you for that.
If not for the crazy pain we caused and the slight twitch I’ve now devel-
oped due to all the times you couldn’t count to ten, I’d have never felt true
love and never loved myself.
In some backwards way, your deliberate hatefulfulness and lack of shameful-
ness has brought to me all the love I will ever need.
And then some.
I do pray for you; it gets easier to all the time.
I do hope that one day you will be different. But you don’t have to let me
know when it happens and don’t attempt at any kind of reconciliation.
Just pray that things are okay by then in the back of my mind, and that the
good Lord is much more kind than I.

Nichols
I Remember the Deceased Cameron Nichols
For The Great Deku Tree

Jessica Ingram
I sat like a lion, off in the distance, waiting patiently, yet eager for my next meal. I was King of the Kitchen, overlooking my domain, challenged by none and my appetite was feared by many. Perched high above my target, I began my stealthy approach. I set off with a brisk walk, my cat-like finesse leaving me silent to any onlookers, but my trip to the dinner table would be long; I needed snacks. My sense of smell kicked in to overdrive, for I had caught a whiff of freshly baked snicker doodles, lying in wait, only mere feet away. But, when one is an inch tall, nearly invisible to the world, those few feet turn into miles. I drew closer to my prize, my hyperactive senses giving me the details to help me better plan my attack. My mother’s cookies were gold, and before dinner time, they were guarded as such. The kitchen turned into Fort Knox. I picked up my pace. The heat from my luscious prize gave off heat waves like the Sahara Desert. I drew closer. The cookies high up on a cooling rack, screaming like children because they longed and begged to be eaten. I swear I could hear them calling my name. I neared the cooling rack; the bright stainless steel glistened in the artificial light. I had begun my ascent. Treacherous as it may seem, my journey upward was quite uneventful. I was almost there! The heat from the fresh, delectable, and sweet cookies was gently kissing my face. I made it! Unnoticed by any guards, I crept slowly to the cookies. I was there. I made my way to the edge of a seemingly ginormous pastry and grabbed two big handfuls of my treat. The cookie was moist and soft like a golden sponge. I hastily stuffed my face. I was on Cloud Nine, unaware of my surroundings completely. The matriarch noticed my presence. I was caught red handed. The sweet cinnamon goodness disappeared as I swallowed the remnants of my prize. The giant mother figure bellowed something inaudible but I knew I was in trouble. My mind was racing; I had only moments to plan my escape. I jumped from the cooling rack, diving faster and faster to the granite bottom that awaited me. I landed softly on a pot holder. I was saved and out of sight from the monster! But alas, I was hungry, yet again. The faint smell of enchiladas wafted to my nostrils and I was on the hunt again.

Next episode: The Dinner Bandit
BANISHMENT.
Benjamin Carlson

Banish what doth not belong, hatred, violence that carries on,

And albatross, that burdens thee may guilt rid conscience set you free.

Banish all to empty thoughts from flooded minds running off

And cast aside all you crave for clearer thoughts like light filled caves

so you may see what lies ahead; banish that what's done and said

and to smile more, banish 'way scowls that age an unfledged face.

Banish 'way what litters life, so what's good and right may thrive through strife.

Remember this, that less is more. Remember this, that less is more. Lesser weight lets songbirds soar.

So forevermore when fates go wrong, Banish what doth not belong.
ARE YOU CONNECTED?
“Daddy, why won’t you read me the story of the birdie man?” Brook asked as she curled up in her bed, her stuffed animals stacked high around her. She laid back against the bed, her copper curls fanning out against the white and light blue pillow.

“That is because you are too young to hear them. They are scary stories and,” The father started before being interrupted by his daughter.

“I’m eight tomorrow Daddy, please? I promise I won’t get scared. Mama said you would!”

“Did she now? Well that changes everything, now doesn’t it.”

“Really?”

“No you rascally liar,” he smiled and tickled her, her small face scrunching up in laughter as she squirmed under his strong arms. The mother came in hearing the commotion and leaned against the doorway smiling lovingly, watching silently. He realized her presence almost instantly and motioned her to join the two, which she did without any hesitation.

“Merida, you wouldn’t believe the lies from this little rascal! She claims that you said that I would tell her the story of the bird man.” He smiled big and looked into the eyes of his wife, and she met his gaze before looking down to their blue eyed daughter.

“Maybe you should. She will never give up until you do.”

“She does have your stubbornness. Well, I guess we should.” He got up slowly and grabbed a book from the library before padding down the end of the hall back to Brook’s room. Merida was now cuddled to her daughter, Brook’s wide smile was evident of triumph. He sat in the rocking chair next to Brook’s bed, opened the book and began to read.

“These are accounts of the men and women who experienced the horrors at Doctor Van Pierre’s estate in the metropolis of Hemingway City. After following leads on the disappearance of Todd Weiner, eye witnesses placed Van Pierre’s tan 1976 Plymouth at the crime scene. When entering, they followed the suspect down to the basement. He ran to a cell in the basement and threw open the iron door and unleashed a creature never before seen. The creature towered the officers at a height of around 6’7 and was covered in black feathers. This creature was wearing human clothing and had the lower half of its face free from feathers, and in its place, flesh. This first piece of evidence was found in a cell of an inexplicable creature that was Van Pierre’s latest illegal experimentation.
‘My memories are fading now. I can still remember her sweet voice calling out my name or even the small giggle of our precious treasure. If only I had cherished them more, but now the point is moot. Now it’s just me in this cell, engraving my story on these walls. The cell is small, at least seven by seven feet. I’m having trouble discerning the truth from my own imagination. One thing I can definitely remember is that I was an educated man, much like the doctor, who comes in every once in a while to ensure that I am still alive and also to record my progress. He started the treatments not long ago, and I know for sure that I’m no longer human. My fleshy fingers and toes have been transformed into long sharp talons, and all over my body I am growing long course black feathers. My eyes have curved and stretched themselves to nestle on the side of my head, the irises becoming overly large so that I no longer can see the whites of my eyes. Even the color has changed to a black that seems like bottomless pits. I can no longer cry either, despite my efforts to. I know, a grown man crying is not something that is smiled upon, but the pain of this transformation is too much to bare. Besides my eyes, my nose, mouth, and chin still show their peachy flesh color, free from my inky black feathers. My height is the same, if I have not gotten taller. I can see by the legs on my pants that they are getting shorter. I know that this will all be recorded by the doctor, but I cannot help but to put it somewhere.

I hear him coming now, the sound of his steps are at a faster pace. I can hear his panting and smell the adrenaline in the air. He’s frightened, and running from something. I can smell the sweat and adrenaline of others. The stomping of their feet is beginning to frighten me.’

After releasing this creature, it burst out of the small window, compacting itself up like a rat and taking flight with no thought. The doctor was astonished and even cheering on the animal. He then began hysterically crying and laughing before having a heart attack. On his person, they found charts claiming that this was the missing Todd Weiner, charting everything from temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, to urine and stool samples. It also charted his transformation process, day to day.” Brook’s eyes were wide and alert by the time he looked up.

“Are you okay Brook?” He asked, concerned for his daughter. She looked at him and nodded her head. “That doctor is mean!” “I agree, but are you going to be ok with me continuing the story Brook?”

“Mhmm,” she responded as she curled close to her mother. “Once the creature had escaped, there were many reports on his whereabouts, though many of these were either pranks or calls from people
who weren’t right in the head. Some reliable sources did confirm and chart his way, but it seemed like without the Doctors daily injections, the creature was becoming more humanlike as the days went on. After awhile the reports faded all together and all the people of Hemingway City breathed a heavy sigh of relief at the promise of the creature no longer stalking the night, and disturbing their happy lives. The creature has never made its reappearance, but some think he returned to his family and lives happily knowing that the horror is over. Be wary little children, for some day the creature may once again appear and then swoop down to grab you, then gobble you up.”

“What did happen to the birdie man, Daddy?”

“That’s for you to decide Brook, now get some sleep. It’s way past your bed time, and you have school tomorrow.” With that Brook nestled under the covers and closed her eyes. Merida and her husband got up and went back into their bedroom, and as he was getting undressed and into his pajamas, she looked at his bare back. Ragged scars trailed along his spine with small black feathers sticking up from the hair follicles.

“They’re growing back Todd. What are we going to do if you transform back?”

“That won’t happen as long as we keep pulling out the feathers. I love you and Brook, and I promise I will never leave you again.”
Egret's Stare
Benjamin Carlson

Foggy is the river's air
As currents pass the Egret's stare.

In dark gray days and frigid nights
When summer's passed and autumn dies,
The river's sounds are drowned a-breeze,
Howling through its bare bone trees,
And all of life seems dead and bare,
But there remains the Egret's stare.
I was part of the initial Marine invasion force participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It was 6:45 a.m. Tuesday, March 23, 2003, and we had penetrated the border between Kuwait and Iraq a few days earlier. The sun was just peaking over the horizon, and the air was a mixture of heat and smoke clinging to our skin. We had just executed a running firefight as we drove through the center of the city of Nasiriyah, Iraq. Throughout the firefight, I had been focused solely on what had been shooting at me from the buildings on either side of road. As the camouflage Humvee I was riding in flew forward down the flat-top, it rolled over something on the desert road. The almost anticlimactic thumping sound of the tires as they rolled over the object reminded me to focus, once again, on what lay ahead. I was as exhausted as a beaten prize fighter, and the only thing that kept me going was the ice cold adrenaline rushing through my veins. I did not know it at that moment, but I had just been introduced to Pancake Man.

As our convoy rolled into the city of Nasiriyah, the enemy engaged us in a running firefight, and we fought for our lives. As we returned fire on the enemy, we continued to push forward and out of the city. On the northern outskirts of the city we re-deployed, licked our wounds, and reconsolidated our forces, prior to pushing north towards Baghdad. Each vehicle in our convoy was directed into a herringbone position, facing partially forward and partially sideways onto both sides of the main road. I took advantage of the operational pause to get out of my Humvee, stretch, and to check on my Marines. Having completed the checks on their ammunition and welfare, I took a glance at the road we had just traveled up. It was then that I realized that the object that had reminded me to focus ahead was none other than a dead enemy combatant.

The first thought that came to my mind was that this poor fellow was as flat as a pancake. I was uncertain as to how long he had been there, but as I looked at his torso lying flat against the sun baked, black asphalt of the desert road, I knew that he had gone to meet his maker. He was definitely not going to walk away from this incident, live to grow old, and tell his grandkids about the day he made the mistake of taking up arms against United States Marines. I could only imagine that Pancake Man had made the fatal mistake of engaging the lead elements of our convoy and had been killed in the middle of the road. From there, it was a simple matter to deduce.
As the heavy tanks with their two-foot wide treads and other vehicles rolled forward, they each had run over his body until it was indeed, as flat as a pancake.

I could not shake that morbid sight out of my head. It reminded me of my own mortality, and that when the cold arm of death comes knocking, one does not always have a choice as to the manner in which they depart this world. The foul stench of Pancake Man on the road, as well as the sight of many of his dead comrades lying all over the area, was overwhelming. Flies were swarming all around them like vultures eager to feast on a fresh kill. Even though I was not responsible for his death, I was almost overwhelmed with a sense of guilt for having just ridden over his body in my Humvee.

After a short while, our convoy continued north on our rapid march towards Baghdad. I saw many more dead bodies and body parts along the way, but the vivid image of Pancake Man stuck with me like superglue. Even to this day I wonder, did he have a family who loved him and were hoping to see him again? Did they ever find out how he met his demise? That encounter on a desert highway made me feel lucky to be alive. Even today, when things are not always perfect, I am able to appreciate life when I think back ten years ago. I am reminded that God has blessed me. I am home with my family, and I am alive. For that reminder, I always thank God and say a little prayer for Pancake Man.
ARTISTS

Her family, who pushes her to better herself every day, inspires CARRIE DAYTON. Her biggest pet peeve is angry people--you know, the ones who aren’t happy unless they’re mad. Her dream job is to work in the medical field, and she has an irrational fear of bugs, but not all bugs, just the creepy ones.

ABIGAIL BROWN has been writing poetry since she was introduced to it. Now that she has gotten older, she doesn’t write as much although she still appreciates reading it. Abigail’s ability to reflect on her own writing, as well as her family, serves as her motivation. Could something embarrassing happen to this poet? How about spilling a drink on older men at your job as a waitress? I bet Ms. Abigail knows something about that.

TALISA HOUSLEY started writing poetry as a young teen. Her inspirations are her mother and writers like Stephen King, Dean Koontz, and Jeffery Deavers. Her biggest fear is worms--the smaller the worm, the bigger the fear. Her pet peeve is people walking in the kitchen while she’s trying to cook, and her proudest moment is becoming a mom.

JEFFERY ELLIS is an avid hockey player with a rare skill as a southern ice skater and has coached lacrosse, which has changed his life.

THOMAS TRACEY is not only an author, but also a former marine. He had his first Western Pacific deployment in January 1981. Now he spends his days at the glorious college BPCC. His wife Emma is his motivation, and his pet peeve is clutter. His dream job—and in this assistant editor’s opinion probably the coolest job ever—is to “get paid mega bucks to be a video game tester at home.”

BOBBY BRYANT has been drawing since he was about eight or nine years old but only with pencils since he never got the hang of painting. His favorite memory is when his boxing coach told him “God doesn’t make junk, but we can make ourselves junk by what we do and what we say.”

JESSICA INGRAM’S motivation is her boyfriend, grandmother, and Ansel
Adams. She one day hopes to become a National Geographic field photographer and writer as well as a voice-over actor for the hit animated T.V. show *Family Guy.*

**Cameron Nichols**’s creativity was discovered as a young child. His mother, who drew for him when he was young, motivates him. His pet peeve is people eating behind him, especially when they smack their lips. His dream job is to work at Disney.

**Alex (Alexandra) Sauer** first began to creatively express herself as a freshman in high school. Movies, books, wildlife, and nature inspire her. Her pet peeves are great books that are made into terrible movies, and she is irrationally afraid of spelling bees and that evil creepy guy that drills holes in your teeth. You know, the dentist? Isn’t it time for a check up, Alex?

**Gabrielle Reynolds** began to draw and paint at the age of six. She is most inspired by a healthy dose of daily life and anything with an interesting pattern or design. She is most annoyed by people who feign interest in a conversation or interrupt the middle of a sentence. Her biggest fear is zombies (LOOK OUT BEHIND YOU!!!), and her dream job is to teach in China.

**Brian Banks** is forever grateful to his eighth grade teacher Mr. Schaffer who motivated him to pursue art as a way of life rather than just as a hobby. He has had dreams he considers prophetic, for example, he dreamed he had cancer in his arm, and in reality doctors later discovered an abscess that needed to be removed. His dream job is to have a steady career as an illustrator.

**Jason McAlffey** began painting twelve years ago in high school. In the past five years, he has begun studying color in its many abstract forms.

**Benjamin Carlson** is inspired by everyone and has been writing stories since he first put words on paper. He also has the special talent of sometimes successfully solving a Rubix Cube.

**Ethan Easterling** is relatively new to painting, having started August 2012. He has a fear of clowns, but a fierce belief in God for whom he wishes to work for all eternity.
If you missed us this time around, you can start submitting your pieces for the fall! Just go to www.bpcc.edu/savoirfaire for submission guidelines or call 318-678-6364 for more information.