

High's

Publication

and Writing

# THE PAW

Tualatin

Electronic

of Art



Karen Ortiz

volume three - issue three  
May 2011



Mark Roth

## THE PAW STAFF

SHIVALI KADAM  
GABBY MARDEROSIAN  
BOBBY BLACK  
ANN KUAN  
JONAH HOWARD  
JACQUELINE DAVIS

SENIORS:  
MARGARET CAMPBELL  
MELISSA AUST  
MADDIE RICHARDSON  
ADVISOR:  
SUSAN PAYNE

# Poetry

Anonymous

get over it.  
poems  
laced with the wispy strands  
of offense and regret  
that wrap around  
and weave through  
scattered and disjointed lettering

poems  
injected with the weak poison  
of defense through revenge  
which mean to bite  
and recall  
your words that have already  
been said

poems  
meant for you  
that you will never see  
and vindication  
that will never be mine

words birthed  
living  
growing  
dying  
rotting  
inside my head

# Sing

Anonymous

you  
sing.

you open your mouth  
and flood me air  
with song  
you force your poetry  
down others throats  
and they accept it blindly  
because they don't know  
that they have a choice

i  
write.

my pens slips across the page  
and silently whispers  
lies and truth  
my words rest in darkness  
concealed and timid  
and you have to pay and feel  
their bite  
because my thoughts  
aren't cheap



Just smile. Close your eyes,  
And everything is perfect.

You are completely alone,  
Or maybe not-  
Which would you prefer?  
Life can be any way you'd like it to be in your mind.  
There's nothing wrong- nothing you don't want-  
In the world that thrives behind your  
Closed eyes  
Because it doesn't exist.

Just as perfection is impossible in the real world,  
Imperfection isn't possible in this world of yours.

# Optimism

*Melissa Aust*

So smile  
Because everything is the way you want it to be.  
Be happy with your delusion.  
Why settle for reality?  
Why concern yourself with the way things really are  
When you can ignore it and pretend your lie  
Is the truth?  
Why cry or be angry when it's unnecessary?

Just smile.  
Or else.

Jesus Solis



Raul Bautista

# Goodbye

Hayley Leeper

“Is his picture still down the hall?”

“Lemme go look.”

So I did.

What stared back at me was a World War Two soldier boy, my great-grandfather from long ago, with a face to make Adonis feel inadequate. Dark eyes, a full head of thick, dark hair. What was most amusing about the picture was the extraordinarily minute smirk he gave, as if he had just told himself a joke before the photographer snapped the picture.

He looked so young, so full of potential. More than anything, he looked alive.

“Are you ready?”

“I guess.”

“Let’s go.”

We enter a hallway with low ceilings, ceilings that make my five foot five frame feel enormous. The air was humid and heavy and smelled of bleach and urine, and the colour on the wall matched. I felt immediately claustrophobic, but I shuffled with everyone else into his room.

When we entered, I was afraid, for a moment, that he’d passed already. The man in the bed didn’t look at all like the strong

young boy in the picture. He was small and as frail as a new baby bird who’d fallen out of its nest. His eyes were closed and his mouth agape, but there was nothing in his mouth at all. It was as if I was able to stare directly at the black hole that had been sucking away at his mind since I was small. The heavy quilt was pulled all the way up to his neck, but I could still make out his laboured breathing underneath it. We crowded around his bed, and we all wept for this fallen idol.

The main character of every tragedy has to have a fatal flaw, so says Aristotle, yet, if this man had one, not a single soul in this room had witnessed it. He had a true Christian tolerance, and always told the blunt truth, a stark juxtaposition to his wife’s hate and lies. And, I recall from my childhood, a sarcastic sense of humour.

Moreover, he’d shown three generations of women what it means to be a good man. To be a good person. He’d always done the best possible job he could for his family, even if that was just carrying mail.

And he had survived so much before this disease, this ugly disease that has had its bony fingers wrapped around his mind and has slowly been crushing it. He survived what many others could not. The Depression, the War, illness, accidents.

I remember stories he used to tell. He and his brothers only had one pair of good shoes they would share between them. His father was a butcher, though, so he was at least a bit more well-fed than most. He talked about setting a fire under his aunts house. He told us the only sentence he knew in French, an extraordinarily inappropriate one he picked up during the war.

I turned my eyes back to the man. Here he was, the remains of a hero, a record of history, and a soon to be forgotten relic, yet another victim of time.

He could barely remember any of us.

And my grandmother, a strong, opinionated woman who reaches only to my shoulder, wept the most.

“You can go, Daddy. You can go whenever you need to, you know. Close your eyes and go to sleep, okay, Daddy?”

In a voice that seemed to come from a cavernous hole deep in his chest, he responded.

“I love you.”

I watched as her tears fell onto the quilt.

This unrecognised hero, this fallen idol, this forgotten relic.

Logan Stewart



Makenzie Horlings

## BLACK TREE

May your roots wear thin as fire blazes over you,  
may the wind fuel the destruction,  
listen to the fire roar through the forest,  
let nature take its grueling course,  
let the mother char her trees and burn them to the ground,  
just as night falls letting the embers cool,  
standing tall alone in the darkness is a tree,  
chard with red glowing embers,  
the one that refused to fall.

May your roots wear  
thin as fire blazes over you,  
may the wind fuel the destruction,  
listen to the fire roar through the forest,  
let nature take its grueling course, let the  
mother char her trees and burn  
them to the  
ground,  
just as  
night falls  
letting the  
embers cool,  
standing tall  
alone in the  
darkness is a tree,  
chard with red glowing embers,  
the one that refused to fall.



The wind blows.  
The trees whine.  
And they make  
The whispers.

Like tentacles  
Crawling from the deep.  
Winding twisting with-  
ing  
Grabbing clutching bind-  
ing.

They hold on  
And never let go.  
Always there  
Always there.

Entering your mind.  
A disease that won't  
leave.  
A plague  
Of your thoughts.

The whispers never leave  
They always stay.  
You question everything.  
Am I ok?

Never trusting  
Never living.  
Always hiding.  
Always listening.

The whispers talk to you.  
The whispers lie to you.  
Lie becomes reality  
It's all you'll ever know.

They take  
What they want.  
What you have.  
Everything.

W

H

I

S

P

E

R

S

They're in control.  
They run the show.  
They whisper in your ear  
And you listen of fear

You ask yourself  
Why?  
Why  
you let them in.

You invited them.  
They ruined everything.  
They promised help  
To take nothing.

You embraced them.  
They used you  
Took you  
Consumed you.

Now you see.  
You're a slave to your mind.  
A prisoner of war  
A war that's over.

The whispers are quiet  
Cunning and kind.  
They trick you  
Say they're benign.

At first they help  
Then slowly drag  
You Down down down  
To your own personal hell.

Nothing is real.  
Everything is real.  
You don't know.  
You belong to  
The whispers.

# Father's Day

By,  
*Sincera*

In the mail the other day, I found a white envelope that contained a letter addressed to me. After opening it, I discovered that my presence was requested in a couple of months, on a day that had long been a question in my mind.

The third Sunday of June- Father's Day- is a day that has always been somewhat confusing. Perhaps this is because I never really understood the relationship a child has with their father or vice versa. On TV, kids with their fathers played ball outside or had nice discussions while sitting at the dinner table, but I didn't think that actually happened. I didn't really understand what Father's Day was for- but then again, how could I?

I never really had a father. Well, I suppose technically everybody has, at one point in time, had a father, but mine was never really in the picture, even when he lived in the same house as me. I remember him sitting in his 'office' all day, where he sat at a computer playing Solitaire for hours upon hours in his bathrobe. This is not a day, or a week, or a month situation I'm describing- this went on for years. I, however, never really thought anything of it. He was my dad, so naturally he must know what he's doing. Later, after my parents got a divorce, I still saw him somewhat regularly, mainly on weekends and on Tuesday nights for dinner. We'd go see movies, work on his fixer-upper house, occasionally go to the park- but mainly we watched TV, as it was his favorite thing to do. I loved him and our time together, but as I grew older I began to view him more clearly. To date, it's been years since I've seen him. This has been my choice, for one main reason.

My father does not love me. He never has.

I know you probably don't believe me, but it's true. You may say it's impossible, that I'm just

a self-absorbed teenager who doesn't understand what it's like to have a child, and that there's no way he could not love his own flesh and blood. Well, my father would agree with you- he certainly thinks he loves me. The truth, however, is that he loves himself more than he could ever love me. Whenever I doubt this truth, I remember that no one who loved me would have treated me the way he did: selfishly, passive-aggressively, hurtfully. So to answer your silent accusation- you're wrong.

To be honest, I used to agree with you too. I grew up thinking he was the perfect dad and a great man. Whenever my mother or sister made an innocent comment about this negative aspect or some behavior of his, I shrugged it off, and often defended him. Upon his request, I even promised to try to convince my mother to take him back. I was his loyal puppy for too long, but then slowly, over time and without my even realizing it, I began to recognize the signs. The way he would ask me my opinion to disagree with me; the way he would pressure me into doing things I didn't want to do (some trivial like which movie to watch, some more serious like not allowing me to go home until his time with me was over); the way he would manipulate me to accomplish his goals; the way he wanted to treat me physically like a child even as I grew too old. He lied to me, deceived me, yelled at me, hurt me emotionally and sometimes physically so that I often ended up crying after a day spent with him.

As I began to recognize the signs that I had previously been blind to, I also began to remember the way my life had been before, when he lived under the same roof as me. I was probably about 10 years old at this point, but still I was surprised that I hadn't understood the kind of man my father is while in my youth. Mostly they were small trivial things, not nec-

essarily bad by themselves, but together they painted a picture that hurt my eyes to look at. There were only pieces of different memories at first: the warm smell of brownies with a forbidding note next to them, laying in the dark in my bed at night and hearing strange music, feeling very hungry while watching late-night TV: random bits of that sort that were unconnected but all pointed me in the same direction. Eventually, though, the memories became clearer. I recalled the time my father made dessert and said that only he could eat it; late nights when he would stay up late watching Si-Fi movies loudly as I tried to sleep; a weekend when my mother went out of town and he forgot to feed my sister and I. Suddenly, I could remember countless little things that I never thought about when they happened- like whenever I wanted to sleep in my parents room I was always told by my father to sleep on the floor. I realized that I didn't like to share my opinion with anyone because I was afraid of being cut down or made to look stupid, and that if I couldn't do something well the first time I'd want to stop so that I couldn't be chastised for it. I remembered always feeling compelled to do something, like what I wanted didn't matter or like I should feel guilty for wanting something else in the first place.

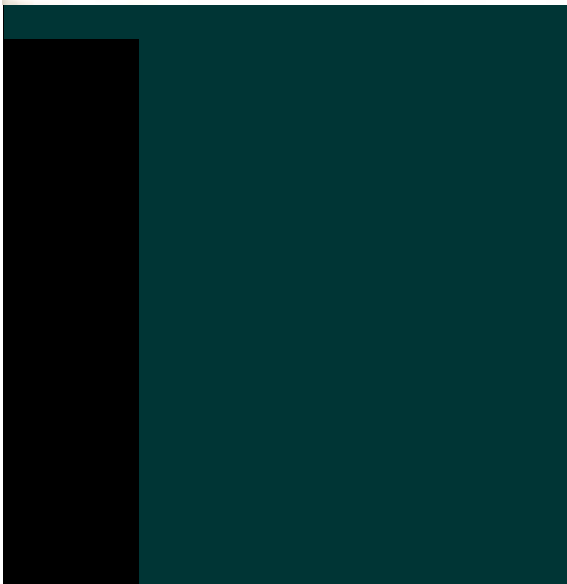
It was soon after my new revelation that I began to show signs of depression, but only ones I could see. I hid them from my mom and sister, sick at heart about what my father had put them through but even more ashamed that I hadn't understood him and had even defended him. For a while it seemed as though I had separate personalities: one was the blind little puppy who loyally visited her father; one was a painfully-sighted girl who mocked him mercilessly to her family; and one was a hollow-eyed ghost of a person who felt trapped and confused after constantly monitoring what she could and couldn't say and to whom she could and couldn't say it. I was a mess, but I didn't do anything about it for a few more years. The lies, deception, manipulation, and the hostility became too much for me to swallow with a

spoon full of the sugar of my passiveness. I wanted to throw it up: to end the pain, anger, resentment, and self-loathing that had become my shadow, but still I did nothing. Honestly, I didn't know what to do, or at least how to do it.

There wasn't really a single culminating event that led me to conclude that I would be better off without my father- there were many smaller ones that happened all around the same time. Then it was like a dark corner of my mind was suddenly illuminated, and I knew. I was about fourteen when I finally understood that he didn't love me: that he had never, and likely would never, love me. Those relationships on TV, while maybe overly-dramatized, were closer to the truth than I had thought as a child. And although it was my fault for believing in him and all of his lies, it was not my fault that he was the way he was. It's not my fault that he doesn't love me.

My father kept calling me several times a month, but I stopped responding to his messages. He acted as though maybe I just wasn't getting his voicemails, like nothing was wrong with us or with him. Eventually he began writing letters, which were less of a hassle to send roughly once a month than several phone calls. Even after not hearing from me for a while, it never occurred to him that he had done anything other than be a perfect father, let alone that he should apologize. Really, though, it doesn't matter, because I don't think an apology would be enough.

So when I read that letter from him the other day, with my child support check and yet another request to see me, this time on Father's Day, I didn't really hesitate. I stood at beside the kitchen sink for a few minutes, looking out at the cloudy day and thinking about all that had happened, but I didn't question what I should do with it. I threw the letter in the trash, and cynically whispered the words he probably will never hear me say again: "Happy Father's Day."





Mark Roth



# Believe

Melissa Aust

If you question everything,  
What has meaning?  
Tell me, what do you believe?  
When no stone is left unturned  
And all shadows of thought have been enlightened-  
Will you be happy then?  
Will you enjoy the unending doubt  
The constant questions,  
And the removal of all core beliefs?  
How will you feel when your heart and your mind are empty  
Because you couldn't stop the negotiation?

You lost control over all of your questions  
So that they grew rampant throughout your soul  
Took over your mind,  
Erasing all of your thoughts, clouding all of your judgments,  
And all that's left in your weak, deprived being is  
Nothing  
But questions  
Doubts  
Uncertainties.

Is this what you wanted?  
Are you happy now?  
Are you satisfied with what you've done?  
What's real for you anymore?  
Does truth even exist now?  
Will anything ever have meaning again?

One last question for you to answer-  
One last thing I'll ask you to consider-  
What do you believe now?

# Suprise

Hayley Leeper

She wrapped herself up in sheets as he got up to get dressed in the bathroom.

“So,” she asked, “Are you seriously gonna order a hit on your wife?”

He walked back into the room, adjusting his tie.

“As soon as I find a good hitman.”

“What about me?” she asked playfully.

“Aw, sweetheart,” he kissed her. “Who would be dumb enough to hire a lady hitman?”

She swiftly pulled out a gun from under her bed.

“Your wife.”



# I Want to Be a Ninja

Anonymous

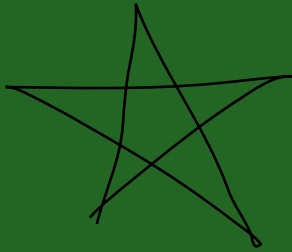
sometimes i love it.  
sometimes i would tear myself  
apart over it  
I would give up my life  
and my death  
to give into it  
to feel its spiked talons grip-  
ping my heart  
compacting it  
smaller  
tenser  
secure

sometimes i hate it.  
sometimes i pretend that i can  
flip a switch  
and know the truth  
I pretend that i'll live it  
that i'll morph into a reality  
and like a ninja suited in black  
escape the bonds  
of the lies  
which  
hold  
me back



# SERGEANT JAMIES

Johnny get your gun get your gun  
James, go get yours, too  
And remember first and foremost  
What the General needs you to do



Forget your kids  
Young and blonde and beautiful  
Plus two more shadows  
Faded from memories long ago  
Remember to tell everyone what you know  
As a boy you heard the story  
Slanted and distorted  
And filled with dulce et decorum  
Est pro patria mori

Tell yourself that it's for the best  
Tell yourself that you're as good as the rest  
Let yourself rest easy  
Until the shadows come back someday  
And really put you to the test



But for now, Sarge  
All you need to do is listen to the General  
Into foreign lands he'll have you charge  
Your boots will kick up the dust of far-off bases  
Because, as everyone knows,  
This is the best way to run from familiar faces

Hayley Leeper

# Shadow Hangs O'er

-Anonymous

How do you feel  
When that's not allowed?  
What do you do  
When time runs short?  
The clock is ticking  
Ever present.  
The shadow hangs o'er  
The executioner's ax.  
These feelings  
Are madness,  
This fallacy  
Of gladness  
It isn't real.  
I can't feel.  
It's drowning me,  
Holding me down.  
I want to help,  
I want to break free.  
I can't.  
It pushes me down.  
E'er maddening,  
Always fighting.  
The shadow hangs o'er.  
Like a guillotine's ax.  
Glimmering in the sunlight,  
It ne'er goes away,  
Watching, waiting.  
The Beast rears its head  
At the worst time,  
Always the worst time.  
Why can't it stay down?  
Why can't it stay dead?  
The ax hangs o'er it,  
and begins to fall?  
Instead,  
The shadow hangs o'er  
And it begins to fall.  
Slowly than fast,  
Faster, faster.  
'till with a thud,  
It finds its mark.  
The blade fed,  
It hides in the ground.



By:

# Sincera

## Promise

*Your plan will backfire, darling.  
You might not know it,  
But I do.*

*Every time you ask me to promise not to  
Do what I want to- do what I need to-  
The voices in my head grow louder, stronger,  
And they whisper to me, over and over,  
That it doesn't really matter.  
If I break it, and I do it,  
Then it's broken, it's done-  
Who really cares?  
You do.*

*So this is what I'm reduced to-  
Threats that neither hold weight themselves,  
Nor are they without gravity,  
And dark words scribbled chaotically on  
A clean white sheet of paper,  
Spoiling its purity, its happiness,  
With bleak rationality.  
And believe me, dear,  
I'm so sorry about that.*

*But don't worry about me.  
This isn't a warning, my love.  
This is a promise.*

You can't stop them-  
The whispers  
Of hate  
Of anger  
Of resentment  
Of disappointment.  
You can't stop them,  
Or quiet them,  
Or drown them out,  
Because they won't allow it.  
That's just the way it is.

They have always been there,  
Telling you how things are,  
And who you are,  
And what you should do.  
And you know you shouldn't listen-  
You try not to, sometimes-  
But in the end it just seems like  
You can't control them  
Because you don't own them-  
They own you.

You can fight, you can scream,  
But you know in the end  
You will give in,  
Succumb to their will, and  
Do what can't be undone-  
But that's just the way it is.  
You can't fight it,  
You can't ever win.  
So why bother?  
Your failed, feeble attempts  
To stop them  
To stop you  
Will only make it hurt worse  
When the inevitable occurs  
And you give in.

You can't fight it.  
I can't fight it.

## The Fight



*Logan*



*Stewart*



Grandma once said to me, “Sweetheart you can’t have it all, and sometimes you’ll fall, but no matter what always stand tall.”

I was but a child then-I’m a woman now..I don’t know when, nor do I know how I’ve gotten here, face down on the ground.

My soul is weak and my heart weighed down with despair-but pulling me up are grandmother’s words being there.

She didn’t see it then-but what do I know-that her granddaughter’s path was a different kind of road.

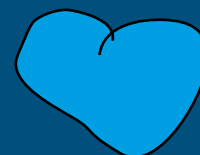
Neither bad nor good, but not what was expected-her love always showed and kept me protected.

Well dearest grandma is no longer here, but through her words of wisdom she’s always near.



*Her  
Wisdom*

*Ashley Springer*



## *The Truth*

They say there's an epidemic on the rise. One that's rampant throughout middle-aged men. Slowly trickling down to our societies youth.

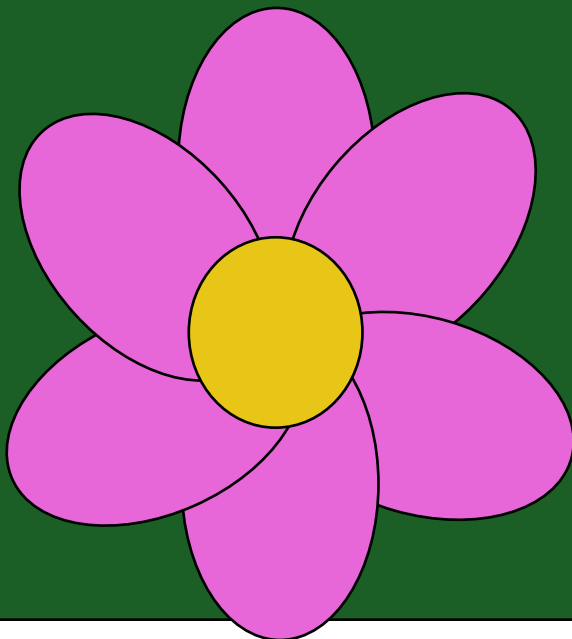
A disease corrupting minds of fertile molding, sparing neither sex nor age nor race nor religion. It's shut in the dark and hushed away. An abomination to those it touches... or so that's what THEY say...For I'm here to tell you the truth...the truth of a once-condemned minority.

I've witnessed ignorance dismiss this minority at first glance. I've felt the pains of loss, because some are too hard-hearted to open their mind.

Let me reassure you that this is not a cause for fear. No, its not something you catch or pass on. Rather, it's who we are...it's a natural born characteristic that makes us each unique. I look this misjudged character in the face every single day..and know what I see?

I see hope. I see love. I see compassion. I see unity & community. I see beauty. I see family.

Is this the monster overtaking your children?! hah. If this is my so-called "disease"-then call me terminal for there is no cure for being gay.



*-Anonymous*

Thanks for reading!

*Have a good  
summer!*



Brandon Phillips