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SCRATCH

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SCRATCH

Where Childhood Ends

There's a place where childhood ends
And before adulthood begins,
And there, there is excitement and passion,
And nothing's more important than fashion,
And you eat everything in ration,
To be skinny and to fit in.

In this place there's no more turning back,
And the roller-coaster ride bends,
Past the point of no return
Where the fire in our hearts can burn
And we leave behind our concerns
In the place where childhood ends.

No, we can't walk away but we need to know
That there's always some place we can go
For our true selves to finally show,
In the place where childhood ends.

Rebecca Desjourdy

Ivelisse Desjardins

1993

I was so excited, happy and curious about my new adventure. When I was at the University of Sacred Heart back in my country, Puerto Rico, I decided to be part of a student exchange program. I was looking forward to going to the University of Missouri Columbia, even if it was a strange place for me. This was something I was determined to do.

Finally, the day arrived. I took a plane and arrived to St. Louis, Missouri. I remember taking a bus to the University of Missouri Columbia. When I arrived, I met my roommate and little by little I continued building new friends. I really met nice people that touched me deeply. I had the time of my life. This was the start of my independence and socialization.

Back in my country, I had a hard time being independent and building friendships because my parents were very strict and controlling. It was hard to make my own choices while I was living with my parents. This is why I decided to do this trip, so I could start making my own decisions and make friends. I had friends in my country too, I did have friends, but I couldn't go out with them like normal youngsters do. It was very restricted.

I arrived at the residence, and after I got settled and talked with my roommate, we decided to go to the residence cafeteria to eat. Inside the cafeteria, I noticed a visible division that I couldn't quite understand. The cafeteria was divided in

two. White people were on the right side and black people were on the left side. I was shocked. I couldn't believe it. In Puerto Rico, where I come from, we are all mixed. There is no racial difference whatsoever. I immediately said to myself, *so where am I supposed to sit?* I have white and black inside of me. What's more, I have aboriginal blood inside of me as well. Where was I going to sit? My roommate was white, and since we arrived together, I sat with her.

Later on, I met one of the nicest guys I've ever met in my life. His name was Anthony Love. He was black. So what? We became good friends. When the time came to go with him to the cafeteria, I sat on the left side, where the black people were. So what? Like I said, he was one of the nicest guys I've ever met.

One day, Anthony and I went to the cafeteria and I decided to do something different. I sat with him on the right side where the white people were sitting. Even though he wasn't very comfortable about it, he still sat with me. I wanted everybody to see that I brought a black person to the white side. Then other friends, including my roommate, joined us at the table. I'm so glad I did that. In my eyes, we are all equals, regardless of our skin.

Anthony was a gentleman who possessed high values and morals. He was a family oriented guy and he was just fun to be around. One day, I hope to meet him again in a place with no boundaries. I wish him all the best.

It all began slowly
Even if you never knew it would hurt me
This game you played,
Made me misled
Because on my birthday
You killed me in some way
By giving me this special gift
In me you made tremendous rift
This has been the start
Of something I couldn't thwart
First it was happening occasionally
Then it happened frequently
For you it was only a game
For me it was a shame
I became your favorite toy
Because I gave you that much joy
After using me and breaking my stem
After stealing my childhood memories and trampling on them
Like a waste you threw me away
You told me if I was talking of this you would gainsay
Then you're gone
And I didn't realize what was going on
Was I really free?
Or did I take my dream for reality?
Now that your game is over
It's time for me to be clever,
So that into your traps nobody else will ever fall
And that your life won't be worth living at all

Élisabeth Allard

Amber-lee Clifford

Let Lovers Lay

Forever lives both Love and Death
 For which people tend to forget
 That never have we lost either
 For they live on in us, until we too die.
 Then they are passed on to those we leave behind
 Certainly Loves have died, and love has died
 But never does memory forget these glorious wonders.

And Death, she lives seducing all she meets
 Though all hate the dancing Lady Death
 Upon meeting her they too fall in love
 And flock to her
 And lay with her
 To lay forevermore.

Let Lovers Lay in Cemeteries.

Does Love not follow Death in everything?
 Love is in fact a lover of Death
 For is it not true
 That we love more the dead,
 Forgive more the dead,
 Devote our lives to the dead?
 Then would Death not dictate Love?
 An abusive wife
 Pushing her lover about
 Forever claiming his friends from him
 Claim them as hers forevermore.



Mélanie Rose Trépanier

Cynthia Dawn Roy

AGELESS

“Excuse me... You?”

“Yes, Carla?” She gave a startled gasp, dropping the blue crayon on the floor as she leaned back in her chair. The young man looked up from his book with nervous eyes. Carla was scared, and he didn’t know why. “What’s wrong?”

“How do you know my name?”

“Well...” Joey sat there for a moment, thinking of a good excuse. “All the pretty girls are named Carla.”

“What?” said Carla, blinking those blue eyes. “You really think I’m pretty?”

“I think that you’re beautiful.” Joey flashed a smile before looking back at his book, a collection of short stories from Australia. As much as Joey loved Australia, he was not really reading. Hidden behind the pages of the book was an ipod, his baby-sitting saviour.

“No, you’re just saying that,” she giggled, flipping her hair with a flick of her wrist. “I don’t remember the last time a boy called me pretty...”

Oh bother! She’s flirting with me again! When Carla wasn’t busy with her coloring books or watching the Disney channel, her favourite thing to do was flirt with Joey. He was a young high-school kid who loved soccer and hated the Disney channel. Long blond hair flopped over his narrow face, and he had a little scar on his nose where a friend hit him with a shovel last year. Carla just thought that he was *so* handsome. Joey hated it. Sometimes she was really creepy. That was one of the reasons he was afraid to have friends over anymore. They just wouldn’t understand Carla.

A familiar rattling sound echoed through Joey’s empty house. Carla was shaking in her chair, trying to bend down and break free. He quickly put his book down and stepped to her side.

“What are you doing?” Joey cried, a little more forceful than he meant to.

“I can’t get out!” screamed Carla, banging on the sides of her chair. The straps that held her in place were too complicated for a girl like Carla to understand, and it made her so angry. She began to cry, her voice raging with terror and anger. “I can’t get out!”

“God in Heaven, help me!” Joey prayed desperately. He saw the crayon on the floor and put it on the table in front of her, but she flicked it away. Her face was turning red as the tears poured down. She was finding it hard to breathe, and Joey knew he had to do something fast. Without a second thought, he spun her chair around and flicked on the TV. As sing-a-long music filled the room, Carla began to breathe slowly. The crying died down as she swayed her head to the music. Within three minutes, she was singing along, the terror of the chair forgotten as she immersed herself in the world of Disney. Instead of going back to Angry Birds, Joey pulled up his chair beside Carla and for the next hour, they watched the children’s shows together.

As the front door opened, a dry voice called Joey’s name.

“We’re in the dining room, mom!” he replied, looking up from the dinosaur picture he was coloring.

“Your mom is here?” Carla asked, still working on the bird picture. “What is her name?”

“Emily,” Joey said quietly. “Her name is Emily. I’m going to

say hi.” Carla nodded without taking her eyes off her page. Joey stepped out of the room to greet his mother.

“Thanks for baby-sitting, Joey. How was she?” his mom whispered, leaning forward so they wouldn’t be heard.”

“Grandma had one fit, but I put on the TV and she calmed down good. We’ve been coloring mostly.” Emily slipped a twenty-dollar bill into Joey’s hand. “Thanks. What did the doctor say?” His mom shook her head, fighting back hopeless tears.

“Mom’s heart is so bad, she only has a few months to live. Don’t tell her though. She wouldn’t understand.”

“Grandma’s dying?” The words felt like lead on Joey’s tongue. Alzheimer’s was hard enough, but he couldn’t even imagine life without Carla, even if she thought she was a child. He was stunned. Without saying another word, he stepped back into the dining room.

“Little boy?” Carla said, sitting straight in her wheelchair. “I finished coloring the bird!”

“Wow! Great work! Help me with the dinosaur.” Joey sat back down and continued coloring with his Grandma. He knew she was eighty-six, but Alzheimer’s had rendered her ageless forever, and that was just fine.



Mélanie Rose Trépanier

Against the Wall

It hurts,
I don't know how I feel,
Sometimes I don't feel
Anything,
And I keep moving.
(or try to)

Three days of hazy memory
Of "forgetting" the problem,
And of terrible judgement.
Three nights of recklessness,
Three mornings of headaches and skipping breakfast,
Not my best three days.

Today, it's been two weeks.
And I don't feel any better,
I feel terrible.

Monday morning,
Awoken by reality,
The steam of the shower,
And the bitter November air,
I will have to deal with it today.

I can only hope that I will be okay.

Shannon Delarosbil

Ariana Sams

In memory and honour of Léa, and all those who are fighting or have fought until the very end.

I watch breathless leaves edging foreign grounds and witness branches losing their warmth. Through the bareness of an autumn, disrupted when you have swayed away. I hear you, standing fiercely, the most persuasive of all trees. I have withered, and have finely cracked, though the song of your voice, it tiptoes through this coarse breeze. Mistaken, it wasn't your turn to fade, although your colors linger, they resonate through the fall. Still, I am like frost on a windowsill, in hibernation, I do not wake. While I watch you dancing through a snowy sky, I am taking pictures in my mind. My eyes abduct this moment, of the world you were unable to foresee. I will taste gusts of life, while I listen and feel for the smile that was forever close. I am a jaded storm, which you know to sweep away. Stealthily, you have fallen, but footprints, you have left behind. I am tangled and crisp. Blown and torn, I am like paper through streams of rain. There are lucid skies after disaster falls, you have proved that there is a sun. I am a shiver, while you are comforting winds. You are ever changing; yet remain resilient and precise.

I once feared the loss of the sound of your voice. I envied a memory that would never be misplaced. I was scared to close my eyes, because perhaps you would not be as defined as I once remembered. I carry you as a feeling.

You are every single season.



Cruelty, thy Name is Death.

You, Dear Sir, with your pole upon your shoulders
Waiting – just waiting for Death
Your back – your poor back – weighed down by boulders
Ready to be put to Rest,
And she waits, taunting you
Teasing you with illness
But keeping you suffering.
How cruel she is!
For how she taunts you
Taunts your family
Getting their hopes up
That you will stay
But you won't, you know you are done
Your time has long passed
But here you lay, dear friend of mine
Lost in your mind, clarity gone, and memories
Running wild tormenting you
You are not fine
You wish that you could escape your mind
And there Death stands – taunting you
'Til you beg for her to take you;
'Til you beg those around you
You Beg to die.

Amber-lee Clifford



Cody Bailey

It was cold outside, but not as cold as her soul.

She was tall and had long dark hair, dark as the sky was, that night. The blackness of her eyes were like charcoals that burned the very essence of any who dare stare into them, yet she had a soothing gaze that could also heal a weary heart. Paradoxical was she, for one could hate her only with a lovers passion; she was heaven and she was hell, liberating, though somehow captivating, although not by force, but by will. She was proud, fearless, and young.

He, on the other hand, was a fool. And he knew it. He did not fall for this woman the way others had; he had tripped, stumbled, and yes, fallen, the only difference was he had done so off what seemed a bottomless cliff... Until now. How does one know if he's in love? It is not the feeling you get when falling, for at that moment your heart is ecstatic, it swells in your chest and adrenaline pumps through your veins. No, that is not when you know. It happens when that bottomless cliff now suddenly has a bottom, and you now because you've hit it. Your heart bursts, but not with joy this time; it is with the agonizing pain of having lost something that was never truly yours, without ever knowing that you'd have to give it back.

He was young, fearless, but in love.

It was raining, and it was getting colder, but she did not seem to mind, for icy was her very heart. The cold might have been the wind and the rain, or it could have been emanating from her. He would never know. She spoke to him in a detached manner, as if nothing really mattered, unaware or maybe slightly of her ponderous words, and with every falling raindrop he was reminded of her them; each piercing like a hundred needles, like a hundred knives. But she never knew, or she never cared. She spoke in empty promises, the only language that she knew, leaving him as deceived as her deceitful words.

Now the wind blew stronger to erase the pain, or maybe to remind him of it. It picked up the dead, motionless leaves that lied lazily on the ground, and for a moment, he felt like one of them; dead on the inside, but what other choice did he have that to keep on moving, pushed by this invisible force called life? Defeated, he let himself be carried; empty as he was, he navigated hazily, absent-minded.

They say death is the only thing we truly live for, and if that was the case, he couldn't wait to live.

Isabelle Martinez Gosselin

Maude Viens

When the world ended

And I was reading this passage, just like all the other nights before. Over and over again, the words flowed in my head; "... *And the earth was waste and without form; and it was dark on the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God was moving on the face of the waters*" (Genesis 1:2).

I cannot believe that human cannot break. Even a good material can smash if you put the right pressure at the right spot.

Unlike wood or gold, when the good pressure of sorrow is applied on the perfect sensitive spot, a human don't wreck, he becomes elderly.

Being an elderly person is when everybody can feel your pain because it shows on your face, your body, your breath... People can feel the weight of your torment just by looking to your old and crooked bones. The dreadful load of sadness you wear like make-up is cracking your face in deep cavities that big beauty corporations call wrinkles.

Like if "wrinkles" is a better word for old age.

Like if there was a good word for old age.

I am one of those make-upped old folk. On my vaulted back you can, if you are attentive enough, read the stories that I have been through; pain, solitude, anger...

I said that I could feel like God (God or whoever you think it is upstairs) because I am there, sitting on my old camping chair, with the holy book in my hands, a fishing rod fix on the dock, smocking a cheap cigarette. I was reflecting *on the face of the waters*, looking at a world that was *wasted*, a world that loses its *form*, a world where *darkness* sadly commands sometimes.

But you should have all seen that before; with a slight gaze in my vacant eyes or with a caress on my blackened hands.

You should have seen that, the only thing that is deep is the trenches that some men digged around people, so that nobody ever touched each other. so that nobody shares. so that nobody understands.

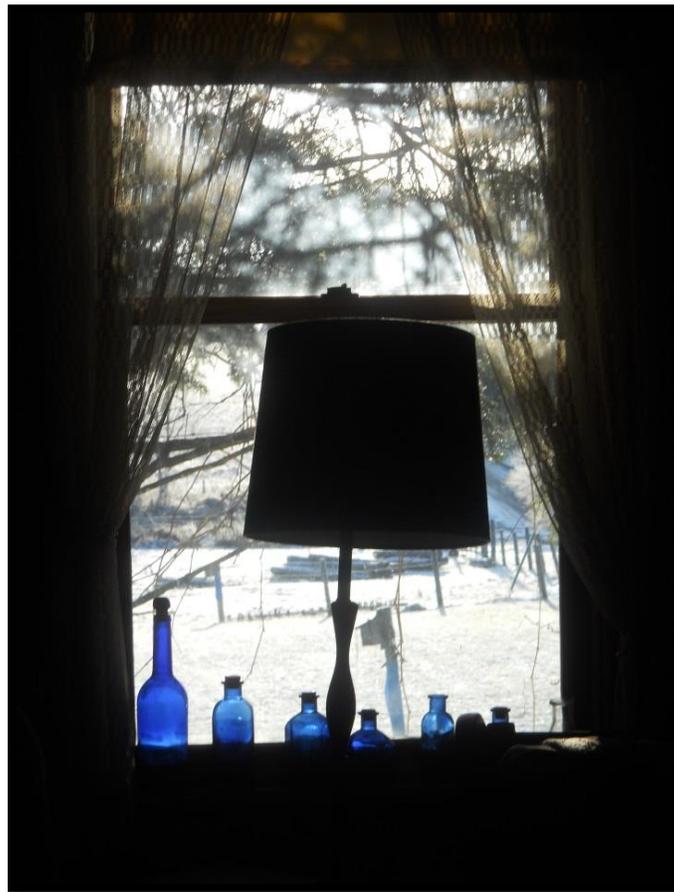
You should have seen that, the truly beautiful things are abandoned for benefits, so that some guys make more money. so that some men dig more and more around us.

You should have seen that, while I'm talking to you, our minds are taken away with big company trucks, so nobody think about it ever again. so that life goes on. mindlessly.

I said I could feel like God; I can only imagine. God must have blood in his eyes for spending all his time watching over us. God must have pain in his old elderly eyes.

I hope one day I'll see him. I hope one day God will smoke one with me. If God, as powerful and tired as he his, was sitting on the old log next to my chair, just next to the bottle of *Sherry*, I would ask him, just as simply as it could be; "How have you been?"

"...And on the seventh day God came to the end of all his work; and on the seventh day he took his rest from all the work which he had done." (Genesis 2:2)



Jaimie Cloutier Dawson

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Maude Viens was born and raised in Magog. During high school, she studied theatrical interpretation and participated in plays and animation of all kinds. Her passion for writing began when she was young but really took form when she began her study at Champlain College. Her goal is to obtain her college degree and attend Bishops University in Psychology.

Rebecca Desjourdy is studying to become a Special Care Counselor at Champlain. She has a strong passion for life and for helping people (hence the career choice). Rebecca loves to learn and enrich her life by discovering new countries and cultures. Overall, she's a happy-camper!

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