

*Weinbaum Yeshiva High School*  
*Literary Magazine 5774*

# *Allie's Mitt*



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Dinner

*Shoshy Ciment '15*

I could tell you that I dived into the sea  
Played cards with the fish and  
Watched the gulls  
Read them like  
Old men read newspaper

But I was never one for reality

I could tell you that I saw the leaves  
And mourned their fall in winter  
Looked at the child in the snow  
And comforted him as spring approached

But I was never one for histrionics

I could tell you about the many things  
That make up the bulk of my drawers  
About purple sequins and shiny red buttons  
I could whisper their words to you

But you would not believe me

So when the sun descends  
And we find ourselves gathered together  
Preparing for our nightly  
Communion  
Do not ask me  
About the history test that scorched my soul  
Or the essay that devoured my night

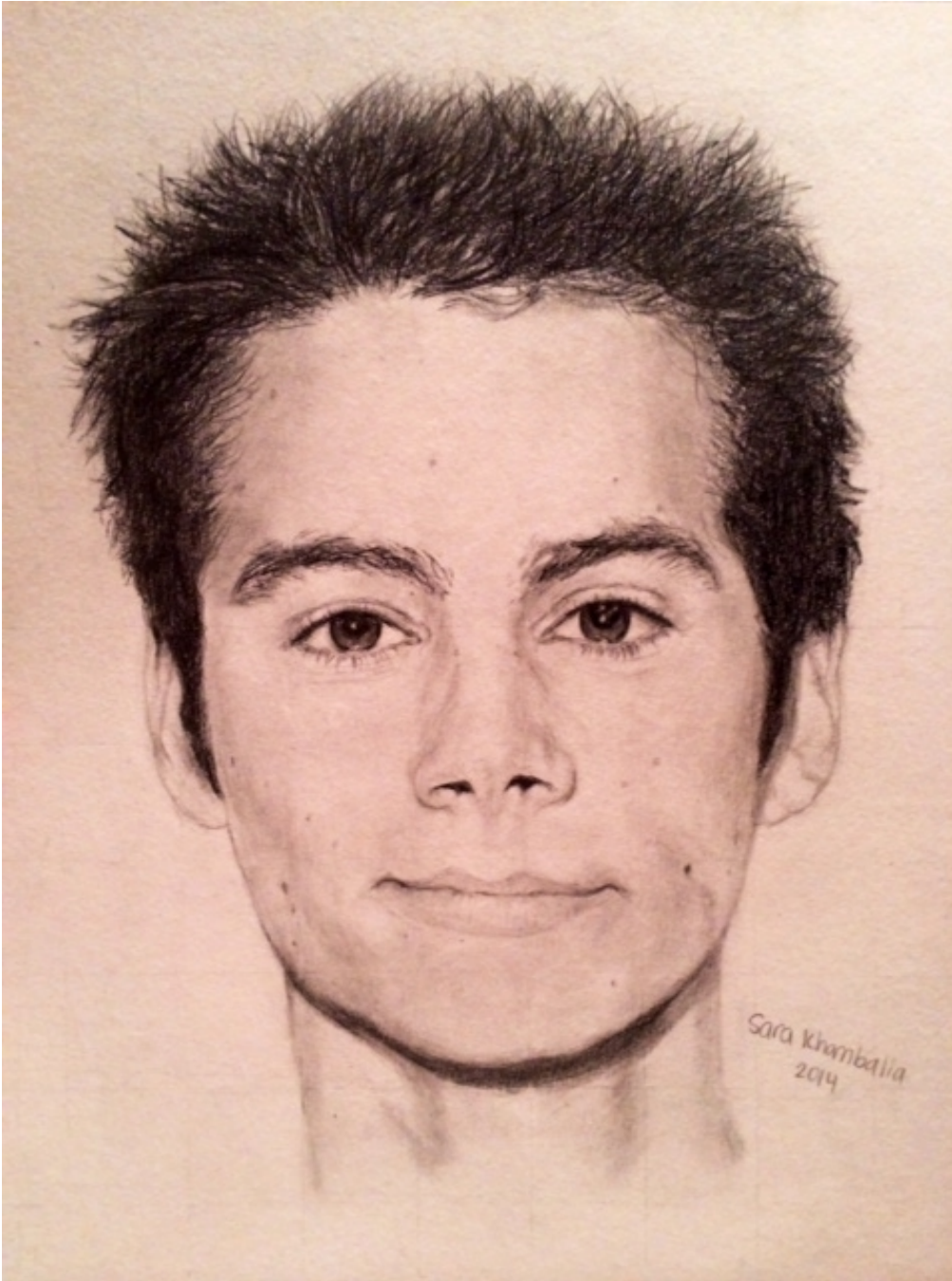
I will tell you it was great  
The day was fine  
Nothing more

And such will be our dinner table discussions

I will resume the cycle tomorrow  
Nodding absently over my green peas  
Hiding truth behind flimsy cardboard answers

Forever longing to tell you more  
About my long days as a dreamer

But you  
You were never one  
For my realities



**Picture: Sara Khambalia '17**

Me

*Elyse Tripp '14*

Elyse, I **am** me  
An identity, on a search to **define**  
Seeing no boundaries on the horizon

I am named **Eliana**, God's answer  
Nicknamed "Mommy" by my peers  
A blue-eyed girl with a case of Middle Child Syndrome  
A sister, the **calming** force  
between two others of my kind, and one sensitive brother

The mentor, striving to **protect** my cubs  
From the harsh frigid winter of freshman year  
To ease the intimidated newcomers starting a new chapter  
Aiding them in finding their **niche**

The little princess, **dreaming** of my perfect day  
Creating a too-organized folder cataloging my biggest wishes  
Collecting flowers, dresses, all to create a backdrop for big **moments**

The **freckled** lifeguard, hailing from sunny south Florida  
Entrusted with guarding the lives of children  
Teaching them strokes to move with the water  
Decreasing their fear with every **breath**

The dreamer, willing myself to **change** the world  
By helping my classmates, community, country  
Sprinting with my **size 11** feet to every opportunity I have

The writer, seeking to spread the **power of words** across the hallways  
Expressing my dreams with the simple stroke of the hand  
Pumping energy through words and sentences and **stories**

The editor, providing my community with the **gift** of language and literature  
Encouraging those around me to take a pencil and create  
In order to **impact** others

The committed one, not yielding because of adversity  
**Unwavering** when faced with peer pressure  
Sympathetic to those around me  
Offering my **shoulder** to cry upon

The advocate, creating programs to **educate** fellow students about Israel  
Traveling to our Capital to make a change

With each aspect of identity, I **proclaim**:

I love my heritage

I prize my religion

I understand that the opportunity presented to me

To be able to continue my religious studies, synthesizing them with my secular

Is *magic*

To be a child of my community,

To be able to now step out of The Circle and experience life with a wider view

Physically leaving behind my rabbis, teachers, and family

But never severing ties

Is *pride*

To remain connected to my home

To my faith

To be able to recognize that these are the mold

From which I will continue to become me

Is *strength*

I love my personal history

I have my grandparents, my ancestors, carrying me on their wings

To sit in my Boca Raton classroom, knowing I am because they escaped Nazi terror

To be able to know that through them, I will fly

Is *blessed*

I love my challenges

To stand up for what is just, blue and white flag draped gracefully across my back

To one day, march into the Senate and plead, working until they listen

Is *free*

I am the product of greatness

I am a byproduct of *heroism*

A new chapter, the continuation of a legacy

Of being a shining, *guiding* light to those around me, to myself

I will rise to my gift

I will *write*, to help others thrive

To live my passion.

The creative, who writes to *unleash* the heart

To calm the mind

To be at peace

To proclaim who *I* is

To breathe the power of words into each aspect of identity

Of me.

Feather (excerpt)  
*Baila Eisen '15*

I woke dreaming. Determined to catch the vitality of the images before they fled, I grasped for my sketchbook. In the darkness, a bird emerged. Half-shadowed, wings folded tightly, it peered fearfully up at the window behind my bed. Vines grew around it, ensnaring it; my pen moved swiftly until the bird was suffocated in vines. Its small talons groped pleadingly at the green snare. I felt a sudden pang of horror. Couldn't I set the bird free? No; my pen would not let it go. Every detail had to be exactly as I'd dreamed it. Soon all that remained was a single, long tail feather. I exhaled. My work was done.

I settled back into bed and glanced quickly at the clock. 12:42 a.m. I had turned fourteen nearly an hour ago. I contemplated that. I think I had fallen asleep again by the time the doorbell rang.

I heard the door open and low, female voices speaking in German. One of them was my mother's. Then the door to my bedroom creaked open. My mother walked in, nudging a smaller figure forward.

"That's Nicholas in the bed across from you," Mom whispered to him. "He's your cousin. He's just a few days older than you, so you two should be friends. Okay, Fred?"

Just a few days? He was short for his age, and skinny, like a twig.

Fred stayed quiet, but Mom didn't seem to mind. Maybe he only spoke German. "Good night."

The door closed and the footsteps tapped away. I sneaked a look at Fred. He was staring hopelessly at the ceiling, his foot white against the darkness of the blankets. For a moment I saw the bird, entrapped by vines, and involuntarily I spoke up.

"Why don't you move your foot?"

He shrugged.

"Well, move it, will you? It's bothering me."

He continued to stare blankly upward.

I got up, crossed the room, and tucked him in. He was much smaller than me, light and insubstantial.

"Okay?" I said. It didn't really mean anything, just a comforting word against the night.

I was already back across the room and half asleep again when I heard him sigh out an answer.

"Okay."

As soon as I woke the next morning I glanced over to make sure that he was still there, that he hadn't faded away with the darkness. The soft morning light splintered into jagged white shards in his downy hair. His eyes opened the moment I sat up. It was as if he had been pretending to sleep all night, to be polite, but was really just waiting for me to wake up and let him know it was morning.

During breakfast, Mom pulled me out of the room to explain the presence of the two strangers at our kitchen table. She told me that Fred and his mother would be staying with us for a little while. Fred's father, John, was her brother. The woman, Nina, was his wife. I'd never met either of them, even though technically they were my uncle and aunt.

In answer to my questions, Mom said, "I met her on my transfer year in Germany, and I introduced her to my brother when she came to America to visit me. They lived in

Germany for a few years, but my brother decided to move back home. We've always been close friends. But John wouldn't let her see me. She was always so dependent on him – she barely speaks the language, after all these years. She could never argue with anything he said, and he liked it that way. But he passed away last night – it was cancer, but it was still a shock to her – and I guess she remembered old ties. I'm sorry to bring this up on your birthday, Nick, but please try to be considerate towards our guests. I'll give you your presents later, in private, so we don't make Fred feel bad. I got you that new soccer ball you wanted. You don't mind, do you?"

I shook my head.

She gave me a spontaneous hug, and the two of us walked back into the kitchen.

Aunt Nina was nibbling at her waffle; Fred was just looking at his. They seemed out of place in the bright room. I finished quickly and left for school.



**Picture: Sara Khambalia '17**



Losing Myself  
*Baila Eisen '15*

So much depends  
Upon a small white notebook  
White? Blue, read, aqua, purple, blue again–  
A small white notebook, the sixth,  
The one that I started only a few pages ago  
The one that I keep worrying I'll grow out of and give up  
The one that I keep forgetting to leave outside of  
The bathroom  
To keep from embarrassing myself  
The one that I carry around everywhere with me  
In a small black bag.  
It grew into my soul  
And I lost it for the first time yesterday.  
My breath was catching oddly  
On its way up my lungs  
And I thought desperate thoughts and wanted to write them down  
But I couldn't because  
My notebook was lost for the first time in six years and  
My breath was hitching in my throat  
And I wondered if this was finding myself,  
Facing myself head-on without the usual pen-and-paper barrier  
But it was sad and confusing,  
Like going somewhere new without  
Something to hold in your hands,  
Just clenching your fists open and closed,  
Your fingers grasping at the hem of your shirt, at each other, at nothing  
Trying to find comfort.  
I'm not quite sure I enjoy finding myself  
But it's one of those necessary evils, isn't it,  
Even if you have to walk out of your house without your bag one day  
Feeling naked and alone without yourself  
And wondering if it isn't better to just write about finding yourself instead?  
But the notebook was under my bed the whole time,  
So I got it out and wrote this poem  
And re-enclosed myself safely away in the world of  
Reassuring words and  
Comforting question marks  
With no distressing answers.

Deceiving Pain

*Gabrielle Frohlich '17*

It deceives you with it's pretty face!  
Truly a mask covering a hideous smile!  
It's intentions,!  
Grueling!  
It's heart,!  
Not existent!  
Yet it fakes the beat as it talks to you!  
Scanning your soul to see if it's compatible!  
Which it's not, of course!  
For which beast would love a soulful joyous beam of light?!  
It embraces the darkness!  
And shuts the blinds!  
Cutting you off!  
Not expecting a return!  
Yet a little ray shines through its chest!  
Where the gap of love remains!  
And from there begins to grow a soul!  
Black and rough!  
And locked with a key!  
Bared by the monster it acquired in the dark!  
And now as if soulless!  
It walks head up!  
Chest out!  
One foot above another!  
Right by you!  
It's hellish smile revealed!  
And the sun turns away!  
In an eternal night!  
And the beast remains walking!  
Deeper and deeper!  
Where no light can touch!  
And into the cave of apathy it goes

How I Know that I Haven't been Getting Enough Sleep Lately  
*Baila Eisen '15*

Space is jarring, twisting, melting.  
People are faking  
And being their truest selves,  
– without trying at all –  
And I'm getting dizzy  
Just  
Thinking about it.  
I close  
And behind my lids I see space,  
– real space –  
A vivid blackness swollen  
With brilliant white sparks  
And golden flecks  
And who expects  
To find something  
Real  
In this  
Most true of universes  
?  
Everything is just  
Fine  
And everything is terribly wrong  
And your heart is split  
In two  
Deciding whether to hate the world  
Or love it.  
And sometimes you think,  
How dare they care  
About such trivial things  
As homework,  
As college,  
As love,  
In the face of the  
Majestic black hole  
Of the universe?  
And sometimes you think,  
Of course they care,  
How couldn't they,  
They're the most important thing known to mankind,  
These trivial truths.  
So you do your homework  
And try to avoid looking in the mirror  
And live with yourself

And live with the universe  
And just live.



**Picture: Leah Pearlstein**

Burning Light  
*Alec Gelman '17*

Beyond the beaches of Miami, I see a burning light,  
One that beckons, sharply pierces the night,  
It seems that life is great here, and nothing can compete,  
But there is one thing that must be done, for me to be complete.  
It appears no woe is upon me, but that is where you're mistaken,  
For since the beginning of time, my people have been forsaken.  
On every day of my life, I wish not to remember the fire and dust,  
But for the sake of my brothers, I lament always, because I must.  
I pray for them so that they too can have a haven,  
Since the one promised to them has been long since overtaken.  
For so many years, agreements have tried to be preached,  
But it always seems that peace is just out of reach.  
One may ask, of whose horrors I speak so delicate,  
I speak for the Jewish people, who others attempted to decimate.  
I speak of the horrors, like the Holocaust or Inquisition  
And to the survivors, I fear once they pass, others will declaim as apparitions.  
And now you see, why I am not quite content,  
For I must return to Israel, with my brothers beside me without torment.  
Beyond the Beaches of Miami, I see a burning light,  
One that will disperse all evil, and bring me home tonight.

Courage

*Lauren Abady '14*

I am courageous I will not resist:

Breathing as my bones stiffen into one.  
Shivering as if I'm buried beneath the snow.  
Every shake, every fright is worth the risk.  
I am courageous, I will not resist.

Leaping beyond the shattered cement.  
Grasping every piece of hope buried beneath my soul.  
Every push, every passion is worth the risk.  
I am courageous, I will not resist.

Blossoming as if my eyes seek the truth.  
Transitioning as if I'm forming into not one, but two.  
Every thought, every wound is worth the risk.  
I am courageous, I will not resist.

Constructing beyond the form of my appearance.  
Picking apart my heart, my allusions  
Every beat, every march is worth the risk  
I am courageous, I will not resist



**Picture: Moshe Weiss**

It Changes

*Maya Borzak '16*

Since it happened,  
things so insignificant like her sleep,  
like her daily cleansing, stupid showers,  
yet so crucial,  
have been transformed.  
The drops of water soon became  
hail  
with steam overflowing,  
flying up and staining the  
mirrors—hot,  
seizing any  
cold air coming in or out.  
No refreshing. Only trapping.  
Except the crack  
below  
the wooden edges of the door that  
illuminates a  
dark room,  
peeping through like  
Sun  
Rays  
amidst a storm.

Since it happened,  
she does not allow  
that sliver,  
absence amidst the darkness, to exist  
even as she sleeps at night.  
Until she wakes up,  
and her drapes  
blind her with the light it does not cloak and  
protect her from.  
She knows it would help to close her eyes,  
but her sleep  
lacks the necessity,  
yet overflows  
with a cold and a darkness and a cold darkness that  
envelopes her  
all over—  
because there is no warmth nor light in the comfort of her bed.

Since it happened,  
her gates are always open, so people can

walk in and out, things travel—  
her thoughts are always open,  
her mind, her brain,  
her heart  
her feet  
never stop,  
except her lungs to trap air,  
to breathe  
and except her eyes  
that are always shut to daylight of the sky.  
Gateways to heaven.

Since it happened,  
she has been changed,  
now fearful.  
Always  
wondering  
about pain  
as a crucial doctor for her sickly patient,  
Always  
worrying about others,  
like a parent for a child in need.  
So when she cleans,  
she cranks the heat up higher  
and allows the needles to  
hammer  
against her body and burn her flesh when trying to wash  
to compensate for the loss.  
And she shuts  
the blinds  
in her room, so there is  
a lack thereof,  
and the light  
dwindles.  
She closes her eyes  
to sleep, finally,  
fearful of when waking up from this,  
from this nightmare,  
fearful to seize any cold or hot,  
in daylight  
or at night when the moon  
shines.

And from the suffering  
and compensation  
of needles pricking her back and



thorns ripping her skin,  
lies a dot of absence amidst the darkness  
that indeed aids her and  
guides her and  
shines and  
twinkles—  
not below, but above.

So she can go through the opaque and  
cloudless skies on her own,  
without that hand to hold and that  
arm to link,  
a doctor to cure or a friend to aid,  
yet something which is there to lay above.

So when she bends her neck back and looks up,  
gazes at the black burden  
above her,  
she is comforted by the light hovering over.  
She continues to poke holes in her skin,  
scrape her flesh with her claws,  
and the hail roughens,  
but she enjoys that light above her,  
whether a sliver or a sphere,  
and hopes for more comfort  
without the suffering,  
with that hand to hold or that arm to link,  
with a bridge to cross back to her past and  
enjoy,  
or to the future without suffering and  
without nightmares.

So perhaps she can forgive  
G-d above,  
claim the soul above,  
forget  
the narrow coffin below  
and forget her pain  
and forgive herself  
without the burden inside her.

At The Beach

*Shirin Khambalia '17*

Salty air breezes by me,  
Hot sand beneath my toes.  
A grin fell upon my face,  
Oh, how the ocean flows.

I dipped my toe into the blue blanket,  
Which hides the sand away.  
The water is a perfect chilly temperature,  
Today is a perfect day.

As I float like a feather atop the water,  
I begin to think  
About the little things in life.  
God must be the major link.

My eyes are shut while my mind is immersed in thoughts.  
My feet manage to sweep the ocean floor.  
There is something round and bumpy there,  
I feel intrigued; I want to know more.

I reach my hands down,  
And grab the round rock.  
I bring it up out of the water, and pry it open.  
Inside is a little pearl; I stare at my palm in shock.

The Escape  
*Yael Attias '17*

I was woken up to a knock.  
there were many voices  
most which I didn't recognize  
and I was curious.  
I peaked my head out  
but all I saw  
were tall men in uniforms  
all with perfectly shaved heads  
and that striking symbol  
sewn perfectly by their arms.  
I looked for my mother's eyes  
I needed her to say something,  
to reassure me,  
but I saw the way she held her ring  
and how she bit her lips  
to stop them from shaking,  
and when our eyes met  
she gave me a look  
that ran chills down my back.

That's how I ended up here  
stuck behind these wires  
deprived of anything but oxygen  
I look around and all I see  
are emaciated bodies  
slowly withering away.  
With each day comes  
another goodbye  
less hope  
and the only thing  
that lets me escape  
from all this pain  
is the movement  
of my body and soul.

I think of when  
they will take me home.  
A place I always knew  
to be free of danger  
where there is hope  
and no end to the possibilities  
where I never knew of fear  
until that night.

They are coming for me  
those bloody men  
marching with such pride  
I had never seen before  
as they approach me  
my feet begin to move  
as I twirl my fear dissipates  
and I begin to feel free.  
They are close now, too close  
I close my eyes and yearn  
to be on that stage just once more.  
I don't know where I will go  
or what will become of me  
but now I understand  
that I won't go back.  
So I leap for one last time  
and as the gas permeates my lungs  
death devours my soul  
and my dreams.



**Picture: Leah Pearlstein**

Erida

*Shara Sakethkou '16*

Fierce rays, rough hands  
beat down.  
A great dark void filled the cracks in Heart,  
branding the skin of Chest.

*Hysteria*

overcame. Wild branches of hell  
grew in Soul.  
They staggered across Eyes,  
blinding them of any image.

*Controlled,*

i basked in the force of hate.  
It was sewn through Veins,  
tattooed into Heart  
i was finally unknown—

*me?*

Every time i thought i saw through  
The Window of Good Hope,  
it was merely  
a blackboard.

*Masked,*

i yearned to peer through  
The Window.  
And every time Legs found their strength,  
Brain shut them down.

*Powerless,*

Legs collapsed. i fell down to the depths of the sea,  
drowning in myself.  
And every time Lungs took a breath,  
Throat choked up more disgust.

*Indeed,*

a spiritual life it was

while worshipping the Hate Goddess.  
The religion:  
Never struggle with Anything,  
only knowing

*Onething:*

Onething was loathing.  
Onething was pain.  
Onething was detesting.  
Onething was being

*consumed.*

i had no identity.  
i was only  
Branded Chest,  
Strangled Soul,  
Blinded Eyes,  
Sewn Veins,  
Tattooed Heart,  
Incapable Legs,  
Deceitful Brain,  
Deflated Lungs,  
Failed Throat,  
because my religion preached  
Onething: self-loath.  
And when delirium is sermonized at every mirror glance,  
hate is observed.

i was trapped in a container unknown.  
What most would call

*“my body”.*

But when you attend every sermon,  
breath every word,  
and hang on to each syllable  
of the Hate Goddess,  
it was not “my body”.

*i was not I.*

Immortal's Riddle (excerpt)

*Tova Bitterman '16*

I have no name. Not anymore. I did once, a long, long time ago. Now, I am just Immortal. The town's folk noticed that I never age and naturally, they gave me the name Immortal. That is all I am now, a man who never dies. From time to time, I help the town's folk. They seek me out and ask for advice. Before answering their questions, they must answer one of mine. When they knock on my door, I recite a riddle, the same one every time:

"What is it to ye'  
Worth living for  
That I should open my door  
And ask no fee."

In a thousand years, I never received a satisfying answer. Hundreds of answers to my riddle, yet I could relate to none. I searched for my entire life for someone, anyone who could tell me what is worth living for. Even though, I lived forever, I did not know what I lived for. I never expected the answer to come from a young boy.

It started with a knock on my door. I answered the knock the same way I always did. I called out my riddle:

"What is it to ye'  
Worth living for  
That I should open my door  
And ask no fee."

I look out my window and saw the boy standing on my porch. The boy had big brown eyes and a small nose in the middle of his sweet and innocent looking face. The boy pondered my riddle for a moment before shrugging. "What?" he asked to the door, unaware of me standing by the window and watching him. I repeated my riddle for the boy. The boy pondered my question again for a while. I waited eagerly for his answer.

"I don't know," he finally said and I became very angry.

Surely, there was something he lived for, but he just didn't want to tell me. He was just a boy who came to waste my time.

"Then, scram kid," I told the boy.

He turned to leave but then stopped and turned back. He opened his mouth as if to say something and then deciding not to say it, he closed his mouth. He turned around and walked back to the town. I turned away from the window and sat down at my table to think.

How long would it be until someone finally gave me a reason to live? When I was younger, I never needed a reason to live. When I was younger, I had a purpose in life. For the first few years of my life, I lived happily, like any ordinary person. As I got older, everyone that I knew died. I struggled with their deaths but after hundreds of years, they no longer bother me. I've forgotten who they were and even who I was. I no longer struggle with why they died. Now, I struggle with why I didn't die; why no matter how hard I try, no matter how many times I try to end my life, I can't die. I struggle with the curiosity of what comes next. Is there life after death? Or, is death simply the end? Do we

feel when we die? All these questions can't be answered, so why should my riddle have an answer?

The boy came again the next day. He knocked on my door and I recited my riddle:

"What is it to ye'  
Worth living for  
That I should open my door  
And ask no fee."

The boy pondered the riddle and then shook his head in defeat. "I don't know," he cried.

"Then, scram kid," I told him and he did.

The next day was the same. The boy knocked everyday and everyday was the same as the day before. I came to expect the knock on the door. Every day, when the sun reached the highest point of the sky, I would sit by the window and watch as the boy approached my porch. He'd raise his hand, hesitate, and finally, he would knock. After two weeks, I finally let him in. We started with the daily routine.

"What is it to ye'  
Worth living for  
That I should open my door  
And ask no fee."

The boy pondered the riddle as he did every day, threw his hands up in frustration and gave the same answer, "I don't know."

I broke the routine by saying, "Never mind. Come on in."

I opened the door to let him into my spotless house. His shoes tracked mud all over my shiny white floor. I led the boy over to my kitchen table and we sat down across from each other. I tried not to let the mud bother me as I spoke to the boy.

"What do you want, kid?" I asked him.

He looked around my house with child-like curiosity. His eyes landed on my piano and lit up. "Do you play?" he asked me.

"No." I lied.

The boy looked at me curiously before going to my piano. He moved the bench closer to the piano so that his arms could reach the keys. He played beautifully and I sat there mesmerized by the music he created. His music was so light and beautiful compared to mine. "That was good, kid," I praised him.

"You can call me Eric instead of kid. It is my name. What is your name?" he asked.

No one had asked me for my name since my early years. I tried to remember my name but as hard as I tried to remember my past, the more it slipped away. "I have no name," I told the boy, Eric.



With Teary Eyes  
*Dani Ditchek '15*

With teary eyes, the mother screamed as the Nazis invaded her house.

With teary eyes, she was forced to leave everything she owned.

With teary eyes, she was thrown into a cattle car.

With teary eyes, her two daughters were torn away from her.

With teary eyes, her beautiful blonde hair was shaved off her head.

With teary eyes, she was required to wear striped pajamas.

With teary eyes, she no longer had a name, just a number.

With teary eyes, she ate a piece of bread for the first time that week.

With teary eyes, she passed her husband doing labor in the fields.

With teary eyes, she heard her bunkmates being shot.

With teary eyes, she thought of her family and of their whereabouts.

With teary eyes, she reflected on her childhood days.

With teary eyes, she was cramped into a gas chamber.

With teary eyes, she said her final words as the gas was released.

With teary eyes, she was murdered, along with fifty other women.

With teary eyes, she ascended up to heaven.

With teary eyes, she protected her family from up above.

With happy eyes, she noticed signs of freedom approaching.

With happy eyes, she watched her daughters' liberation.

With happy eyes, she sat with G-d and witnessed her family blossom and tell her story.

With happy eyes, she cried as she saw her family return to their previous lives.

The Eternal Rough Draft  
*Moshe Markowitz '15*

I am the pencil,  
writing a poem about its life in a world of crayons.

I am the lead  
inside of the pencil, grinding down with each word written, struggling to remain sharp,  
intact.

I am the wood,  
protecting the lead inside of me, a force not to be reckoned with.

I am the eraser,  
eliminating errors, so that the pencil may rewrite and improve upon its  
words of the past.

Education is my sharpener,  
reviving the lead within me, as it becomes too thin, too coarse  
to continue writing its poem.

I am not the pen,  
writing a tragic poem about its eternal life.

I am not the ink, escaping the pen's shell,  
left on the page, with no second or third chances.

I am not the crayon, colorful in appearance,  
though eternal, just as the pen, left to dwell in its mistakes.

I am the pencil,  
and I have the opportunity to erase my mistakes,  
to start anew.

I am the pencil,  
writing a poem about life.

A poem such as this, lacking color,  
black and white,  
but open to revision, improvement.

No Matter  
*Moshe Weiss '15*

The boy wandered gaily through the streets of Lublin, almost as if he was dancing. The sun could not very well be seen, for gray clouds blocked the light; the dirty, half melted snow reflected the few rays that snuck through the wall of clouds, but the boy didn't mind. He toddled along towards the other school kids with his ball under his arm, a permanent smile etched on his face. He waved to the boys already playing, but they were too engrossed in their own games. No matter, he would just join them. He put his yarmulke in his pocket and began to run towards the boys, eager to be part of the fun. Just as he was about to reach his peers, he tripped and landed hard on his hands, scraping and soaking them from the ground. He must've tripped on a root covered by snow, or a chunk of ice or rock of some sort. One of the boys asked him, "where's you're yarmulke, *Oszukác*," and the all started laughing. No matter. All the boys were laughing, and he was so happy to be with them that he laughed too. He kicked his ball towards one of the boys, who picked it up and threw it to one of his friends. The boy ran after them, ecstatic that they decided to play with him, and tried to get the ball. He guessed he was too slow, because it always seemed just out of reach. No matter. Soon, more boys joined in, and with each boy that came, the smile on the boy's face grew wider. This was so much fun for him! He kept chasing and chasing the ball, trying to get it and kick it to someone else. He almost had it! It was just one more step away! But he stumbled and fell, sliding and coating his front with the mucky slush. It must've been another kid who was also eager to get it, because a boy ran from behind him and kicked the ball to another one of the boys. Everyone was laughing; it was such a great time. One of the boys trying to get the ball accidentally stepped on the boy's hand as he pushed himself up, causing him to flinch and retract his hand. No matter. Gingerly rubbing it, he began to chase the ball again, which had been kicked to a spot a little further away. The pain in his hand subsided, and soon his smile was as wide as ever. He finally got the ball and, his smile threatening to burst off his face, he kicked it to another boy with all his might, which flew directly into the face of one of his friends. The boy ran over to his friend, and apologized, staunching the blood dripping from the injured boy's nose with his own dirt-stained shirt. The injured boy spat and pushed the boy aside. The boy felt so bad! He wanted to go and comfort the boy, and apologize, and give it a kiss to make it better just like mama used to do. He tried to approach the hurt boy again, but his friends blocked his path. No one was laughing anymore. The boy wondered why they looked so serious all of a sudden; it was just a mistake. He wanted to go back to make the bleeding boy all better and happy again, and then go back to playing. Why wouldn't they let him help? They walked towards him in a group, and he wondered if this was a new game. He would play it with them in a moment, but first he had to make his friend feel better. He tried to go around them but they blocked his path and pushed him to the ground, splashing the sleet onto the boys' boots. They wiped it on his already dirty coat, and kicked him. Again. And again. The boy cried out, but no one came to help him. The boys kept kicking and punching and spitting, but he didn't know why. It was just an accident. He even said sorry, and tried to make him feel better! And these boys kept kicking him till they tore his coat, which was soaked with melted, filthy snow, salty tears, and innocent blood. Finally, the boys grew tired of beating him, took his ball, and sneered, "go home to your mommy, little

*Oskuzác.*” The boy ran home, crying all the way down the street, up the steps, into his room, where he waited for papa to comfort him. As he soaked his bed with tears, he dozed off for several hours. He awoke to the sound of people yelling in German, dishes breaking, and the sound of tromping footsteps coming towards his room. The boy hid under his covers, but they were roughly grabbed and yanked off the bed. The men dragged the boy, who was too scared to do anything but cry and shake, and threw him into a cattle car filled with members of his synagogue. He pushed his way to his father and huddled close to him as the car drove off, and the sound of boys playing could be heard, and the sun came out from behind the wall of clouds, as if to say,  
“No matter.”



**Picture: Leah Pearlstein**

Chava the Jew- the Daughter of a Nazi's Point of View  
*Maia Groman '15*

I was told the Jews were dangerous  
And that they couldn't be trusted

I was taught to recognize their big noses and foreheads  
That they were the ones that wore the yellow stars

I was informed to avoid their shops and neighborhoods  
And that Vater refused to do business with the "vermin"

I was read the Poisonous Mushroom to bed  
That said they were bad people and the embodiment of the devil

But I never really believed what I was told

I couldn't think of them in these ways when I saw that they were ordinary  
That they were kind and acted like me

I couldn't look at their faces and see large features because ours looked the same  
And underneath their stars were the same clothes I wore

I couldn't think that they should shunned when they were so successful  
That the products they sold were any different and unworthy of my purchase

I couldn't understand why they should be regarded differently  
That they were treated cruelly when G-d created them too

Because when I would look at them all I saw was Chava, my best friend

The girl who didn't shun me because my glasses made me different  
Who showed me how to love people for who they are not what others think they are

Protecting My Family  
*Maia Groman '15*

I have a small family who I don't see every day  
Although it didn't always used to be that way

We used to be a nation that was strong  
But now 6 million of them are gone

At first they were labeled, arrested, and displaced  
Stripped of their dignity, starved of their hope, and encamped because of their race

Now today, when the refugees have begun to rebuild,  
I can't help but remember all those lives that ended unfulfilled

The people that murdered my ancestors are now long dead  
But their intolerable ideas of humanity can still spread

It is thus my duty to protect my blood from prejudices like these  
And defend my nation against those discriminating thieves

Never again will I let my family be gassed, burned, and maltreated  
I will educate the world about history, because if I don't it is bound to be repeated



**Picture: Leah Pearlstein**

## **“Something Borrowed, Something New”**

*Jordana Lasko '15*

Dear Dad,

There really is no need to tell you because I *know* you can see; I am enveloped in what feels like a cloud of blush-hued organza in anticipation of the most emotionally charged evening of my life. And yet, the only thing that seems important is my conversation with you.

It was always simple: Paige was never going to settle down. Then, somehow, Ben changed her mind. Things progressed rapidly and the whirlwind romance begot a proposal. Before any of us could catch our breath, you were standing in front of a mirror being fitted for a tux while I was going insane trying to find a dress that met my dreams.

Everyone knows the fairy-tale, but not everyone knows *why* I fell in love with Ben. Not even you. I was taken by his patience, his uncanny knack for numbers, his unassuming nature, and his ability to command respect without saying much. I fell in love with the very traits YOU possessed. He is so much an image of you, in his character and presence. And in that way, you will forever be an inextricable part of my daily life.

Although we orbited in different universes—me, the quixotic free spirit whose wings could not be clipped; and you, the practical and grounded accountant—we had a remarkable bond. I loved listening to you offer abstract historical trivia that you plucked from your vast library that could never fully satiate your voracious appetite for reading. I loved hearing you explain the figures on a spreadsheet; your perfect vocabulary was flawed only by your thick Sicilian accent. I loved watching you smirk when I bickered with Ben about his idiosyncrasy during our Sunday dinner ritual. Did you too see a little of yourself in him?

I remember vividly how concerned you were for my well being when I visited you in the hospital the day before our engagement party. You didn't want me to get sick, yet you allowed me to climb into bed with you for most of the afternoon. In fact, one of the last articulate sentences you formulated before you closed your eyes for good was to one of the nurses: “This *lovely* woman is *my* daughter.” I knew how much effort it took for you to utter those words, yet I knew it made you feel better.

Last Thanksgiving, we shared one of the most heartwarming moments together – you struggled so intently to express your delight at the taste of mom's apple crisp. You had already lost your ability to speak, but not to belch. Ben had a feeling that holiday would be your last, so he made sure to host all of us for a grand feast. Life is truly a full circle - our families had spent every single holiday together since Ben and I met. And tonight, we will be celebrating as one unit again.

Minus one.

I recently asked mom why she thought you—of all people—passed away so early. I just feel like there was a lot more you had to give...and do...and see. Her response was, “He needed to take care of his ailing parents and he needed to see you with your soul mate. His job here was done.” She is probably right. But we will never know *exactly* what your mission in life entailed. What I *do* know is that you taught by example.

Even the way you left us was so gracious. You waited for the entire family to be together for a joyous occasion before saying goodbye. I was the last person to speak with you this morning. I believe in my heart you heard me remind you that, as your only daughter, I would be keeping my surname in your honor. And I believe, with *that*, you were ready to let go.

I know you will be looking down as I take this imminent walk into the arms of the other man in my life. If it were only hours earlier, I would have been able to actually hold your hand on that candle-lit path. You were supposed to be accompanying me. I find comfort, though, that you will be leading the way. Today and always...

Paige



**Picture: Leah Pearlstein**



Stranger

*Kayla Gross '15*

The stranger enters the harmonious town,  
Dissimilar,  
In his exclusively black attire and ebony briefcase.  
The wind blows softly and peacefully.

He discerns all of the stares,  
And soaks them in, satisfied.  
He strides along the streets, confident,  
Towards the center of town.

They have never seen such a man-  
The dark clothing, the poise and power.  
Their curiosity turns to confusion,  
As he takes a pair of fine black shoes from his briefcase.

He puts on the shoes,  
And the crowd's glares sink into his skin.  
He loves the audience.  
They give him energy.

Their interest terminates his hunger.  
Their engrossed faces  
Rejuvenate his soul.  
He needs this to survive.

He stands,  
Takes a moment,  
Waits for a few more people,  
And then dances.

Not an ordinary dance, a dangerous one.  
Unimaginable, seemingly impossible.  
He captures the crowd.  
They cannot look away.

With flips and twists,  
With force and determination,  
They are hypnotized.  
The wind blows harder.

They applaud him,  
Giving him the strength and spirit  
That will unknowingly

Lead to their destruction.

The man does not stop, and suddenly,  
With one swift movement of the hand,  
He grabs one woman and spins her magnificently.  
She follows his moves in perfect step.

He grabs two more, spinning them  
In flawless motions,  
And they too partake in the dance of  
Temptation, the dance of obscurity.

The sky grows dark and ominous,  
As the whole town dances.  
They are entertained, invested in dance,  
And the man is content.

He halts,  
Removes his fine shoes and places them in his briefcase.  
The crowd notices, but does not want to stop.  
His energy restored, he does not need this town anymore.

He bids them farewell,  
Though they are too busy to see.  
Finally their bones ache,  
They beg to stop.

But their feet keep twisting, their bodies continue moving  
In the hypnotic fashion in which  
The man in black moved.  
The wind is forceful and angry, blinding them.

They look around in pain, in exhaustion,  
Helpless.  
They look for the man,  
Where in the darkness could he be?

People mourn and wail,  
As the man watches from afar, nodding.  
Their cries, unlike their stares and applause, leave no impression.  
He is indifferent.

The man walks away  
Leaving his audience in chaos,  
Towards a new town, with a new audience,  
Where the wind is blowing softly and peacefully.

Lunch in the Ghetto  
*Daniella Cohen '15*

Down she shinnies  
Down Raccoon's burrow  
To retrieve bread  
She buried on Monday.

She is Queen  
for ten seconds  
And her legs are strong  
So she jumps to Polaris.

Up she goes  
Up Satan's hill  
And when she slips through mire  
He beats her.

She is God  
for five seconds  
And her lovely wrath  
Smites timid beasts.

Her bones kiss  
Her decomposing flesh  
And she is beautiful  
And they despise her.

Crimson

Resplendence and her glory  
shrouded in crimson.  
She does not hide from his thick brow or his satanic eyes.  
Exceptionally glorious  
as she lies over twelve other naked bodies,  
bare naked,  
but their crimson scars.  
Leave here, you Crimson!  
You destroy her mind,  
her swollen, empty belly,  
you Crimson!  
What business have you here in the crimson  
barracks of this united hell?  
You have killed her!  
And she perishes in your folds,  
Crimson,

and she joins six million.



**Picture: Sarah Berger '14**

Lady or the Tiger  
*Tamar Tangir '17*

The man opened the door on the right. The five minutes before his fate was determined, were indescribable. His heart, rapidly beating, beat faster with every step he took towards the door. The commoner was hoping that his love for the princess remained mutual and that she would choose the right option for him. Inevitably jealousy overcomes anything; trust, loyalty, and even love. Out of fear of the possibility that the lover would replace the princess for this women, she chose the tiger. She selfishly thought that it was in his best interest to die in such a way, rather than falling in love with someone other than herself.

The arena was filled with excitement, cheers and immense betrayal. The audience was bloodthirsty; all they wanted to see was a skin ripping fight. As the door creaked open silence swept across the room. The tiger's hunger was obvious and his roar was almost deafening. The princess couldn't bare the sight of watching her one true love being torn apart and therefore fled the coliseum.

The ravenous beast began his meal. The tiger climbed up the commoner's body tearing his skin, letting the blood drip down to save for dessert. Limb by limb, the body slowly started to wither into a puddle of blood. The satisfaction the King attained was displayed with a smile. Watching the commoner's gruesome death, filled his heart with content. He was glad his daughter made the decision that he hoped for because the thought of intermarriage within a different social class was not befitting for a princess. The body was consumed within minutes. The King's message was surely imparted to the audience; one cannot love any other than those of his or hers class.

Deceiving Pain

*Gabrielle Frohlich '17*

It deceives you with it's pretty face!  
Truly a mask covering a hideous smile!  
It's intentions,!  
Grueling!  
It's heart,!  
Not existent!  
Yet it fakes the beat as it talks to you!  
Scanning your soul to see if it's compatible!  
Which it's not, of course!  
For which beast would love a soulful joyous beam of light?!  
It embraces the darkness!  
And shuts the blinds!  
Cutting you off!  
Not expecting a return!  
Yet a little ray shines through its chest!  
Where the gap of love remains!  
And from there begins to grow a soul!  
Black and rough!  
And locked with a key!  
Bared by the monster it acquired in the dark!  
And now as if soulless!  
It walks head up!  
Chest out!  
One foot above another!  
Right by you!  
It's hellish smile revealed!  
And the sun turns away!  
In an eternal night!  
And the beast remains walking!  
Deeper and deeper!  
Where no light can touch!  
And into the cave of apathy it goes