

2017-2018

Oxford School District
Art and Literature

ISSUE NO. 2

eloquentia



ELOQUENTIA

contents



Letter From the Editor
The Contract
Hurricane
Lunch with a Friend
Peter Rabbit
Best of Men
The Girl Watching Him Play
The Three Hunters
Ode to Past Self
Space Odyssey
Vertical Reasoning
Fairy
A Modest Proposal
Hibiscus Flower
The Shade
Stranded
Final Thoughts



Eloquentia

OXFORD'S ONLINE STUDENT
MAGAZINE

ELOQUENTIA

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Love Tsai

Welcome to the spring edition of Eloquentia! Our team has seen amazing work from students throughout the Oxford School District, and we are all very proud and excited for this issue.

Even as Oxford students faced finals, AP exams, and hectic summer planning, the drive to create art and literature led students away from the textbooks and into a creative state of mind-- Eloquentia has always felt that art as a creative release can do wonders for one's mood, productivity, and overall happiness. We're glad to see that so many other students value art as much as we do!

Throughout this issue, you will see poetry, short stories, and art from the inquisitive and curious minds of Oxford students. These students come from all over Oxford, each representing a different experience within the Oxford school district. Look through each submission; connect with the creators and their work. We think you will find that perhaps art is the window to the soul.

THE CONTRACT

HAYDEN JOSHUA EVANS

-Moscow, Russia

Adriana sat impatiently across from Vadim Pepov twirling her fork idly on her empty plate. Vadim was a stout and broad man who wore a tweed suit that didn't sit right on his stumpy shoulders. His thinning black hair was combed back and his beard appeared to be recently trimmed in a botched attempt to appear presentable. He was unattractive and made for unpleasant company, but she needed a broker and he could get the word out.

"So, Miss Janssen, How can I help you?" he asked, cupping his clammy hands together and leaning forward on his elbows with a sleazy smile.

"I would like to open a contract on Ivan Petrov," she said placing her fork on her plate and leaning back in her seat to escape the smell of his breath.

Vadim recoiled in shock at her request. "Ivan Petrov! Do you know what you're asking of me? In Portugal they call him Mensageiro da Morte, the Harbinger of Death. In France he is Chasseur D'hommes, the Manhunter. In Bulgaria they call him the Neukrotim, which translates to the Indomitable. Here in the Motherland we say Pravaya Ruka D'yavola, the Devil's Right Hand. The English refer to him as The Assassin as if he stands alone in his profession and makes all others sharing it meaningless.

He is the man criminals and governments alike fear. He is the untouchable and unkillable. To put a contract on this man's head would be wishing certain death on me and yourself." The Russian was pushing his chair back with a pale face. "I cannot do this."

"Let's not forget the debt you owe. You will do this for me or I will put up your name in a contract instead," she said with narrowed green eyes.

"He will find you," the Russian stammered.

"I'm counting on it," she said with a smirk.

"He will kill me to get to you."

"Then you had better run."

The Russian shook his head in confusion. "Why are you doing this?"

"I will concern myself with the why. You have only to worry about the what. Do this for me and your debt will be paid."

"But my family..."

"I will see that their needs are met in your absence. They will live out the rest of their days like royalty. I will make sure of that."

"You swear it?" he asked resigning to her will.

"Yes," she said and he sighed.

continued on next page

THE CONTRACT

HAYDEN JOSHUA EVANS

continued

"I'll do it."

She grinned in pleasure. "I knew you'd come around, Vadim."

"How much for him?"

Adriana thought for a second, then smiled and answered.

-Vienna, Austria

The first was meaningless. Many had tried to kill Ivan before. Friends and family members in hopes of revenge tracking down the murderer who killed their brother or sister or whoever. Ivan assumed this man was no different.

He seemed competent enough, but he was no professional. He was dressed casually in a tanned leather jacket and jeans. He looked just like a tourist. He even had a disposable camera around his neck, but a tourist wouldn't be tracking Ivan through the busy streets of Rosario staying only twelve or so yards away.

Ivan didn't let on that he had spotted the man. Instead he led the man on a merry little journey through the marketplaces. Ivan grabbed a peach along the way, haggling with the merchant to get it down to a reasonable price. After grabbing the peach, he picked up another trinket from a stall opposite the peach seller.

It was some worthless pendant that any tourist would be happy to pay for assuming it to be handcrafted, native Austrian jewelry. It was a profitable little scam, and Ivan was happy to give in to it to avoid draining suspicion from his tail.

After browsing at a few more stalls he made his way through the city streets wandering aimlessly as if to see the sights. After about an hour, he checked his watch and looked around purposelessly, appearing to his tail to be lost, though he knew the streets of Vienna quite well as he did most major cities throughout Europe. A moment later he confidently strode into a back alley, having seemingly discovered a shortcut back to his hotel to the tail following him.

He marched down the alley in no attempt at stealth and rounded a snag where the buildings lining two parallel streets didn't quite meet up at a perfect corner. He ducked around the corner of the snag and waited as his tail followed through the alley. The echo of the tail's shoes on the concrete gave him ample warning as to when the man would reach the snag where Ivan was waiting.

The man sped up to reach the corner as he could no longer hear Ivan's footsteps. He didn't want to lose the man he had spent all afternoon tracking. As he rounded the corner, Ivan whipped around it and jabbed a knife between his fifth and sixth rib on his right side. A look of shock swept over the man's face, and he collapsed against the wall of the building.

Ivan left the blade in his side as the man slid to the ground. He rummaged through the the man's pockets, tossing away a Beretta from the man's waistband and snatching his wallet from his jacket pocket.

continued on next page

THE CONTRACT

HAYDEN JOSHUA EVANS

continued

“Revenge or Reward?” Ivan asked him leaving the camera around his neck. It was just a prop. He hadn't taken a picture all afternoon. Ivan wasn't on it.

A look of anger crossed the man's face and he set his jaw. He was refusing to talk, claiming this minor victory against Ivan with his dying breaths. By withholding information he had won on this front. Not that it mattered if he won that fight. He was dead thirty seconds later, and Ivan was gone. The man was just a tourist who got killed during a mugging trying to take a shortcut to his hotel.

‘That's why you stay to main the roads,’ the police would say not bothering to search for his killer knowing it was a lost cause.

The second was a slight surprise. It was only two brief weeks after the first attempt at his life when he noticed another man shadowing him. This one fell somewhere between the first would be assassin's level of competence and being a professional. He wore neutral clothing dressed in a caramel suit with a brown overcoat like a typical businessman. He kept his distance while following Ivan even keeping a pack of cigarettes on him so as not to look purposeless while waiting on a street corner for Ivan to keep moving, but not even a long term smoker smokes three cigarettes in one sitting.

That was his first mistake. Competent but no professional.

Ivan led him on a similar tour of Vienna, grabbing a coffee and a magazine on his journey through the sights. He sat on a bench with faded red paint to read his magazine for a few minutes before making his way to the river to watch some of the merchant ships and freighters pass by.

As the evening wore on he grabbed a bite to eat at a local riverside restaurant enjoying some authentic Austrian Cod in a handcrafted tartar sauce while overlooking the bay. The man had the sense not to follow Ivan in but picked up on his trail as Ivan left the building.

Ivan stretched and started down a street parallel to the river lit by the dim glow of streetlights overhead. He wandered down the road in the cool evening air genuinely enjoying his leisurely stroll despite the threat of the assassin following thirty yards behind on the opposite side of the street.

Ivan stopped at a traffic light to cross the street and could make out the dim glow of cigarette embers in the distance. He crossed the street when the light turned and started down a narrow alley leading back towards the center of town. The man rounded the corner of the alley faster than Ivan had suspected giving up his thirty yard tail to stand a mere thirty feet behind Ivan.

“That's far enough.” The man said in a raspy voice. A few packs too many.

continued on next page

THE CONTRACT

HAYDEN JOSHUA EVANS

Ivan didn't turn around. He was sure the man would have a handgun drawn and aimed at his torso. If he attempted to turn on the man a bullet would strike his center mass before he could fire a shot from his own holstered FN five-seven under his right armpit.

"I know you spotted me. You did good blowing it off, but you saw me. One professional to another, what did I do wrong?" he asked starting a conversation; his second mistake.

"Too many cigarettes," Ivan said miming the motion of putting one to his mouth with his left hand. The man didn't notice Ivan's left hand not falling back to his side. Competent but not a professional despite what he thought of himself.

"I could just like to smoke."

"Possible but not probable, and if that were the case then there is no harm in suspecting you."

"I guess that makes sense."

"So it's an open contract?" Ivan asked though he knew already. With two assassins in as many weeks there had to be a contract. And it must have been an open contract because if it were a closed contract they would have sent professionals, not amateurs. He only asked the question to mask the sound of his firearm's hammer being cocked back.

"Yeah, open contract."

"How much am I worth these days?" He asked distracting the man so he wouldn't notice the tip of Ivan's gun protruding from a four inch slit cut into his overcoat under his armpit.

"Two point six mil," the man responded.
"Enough to retire on."

"You're not going to retire after me." Ivan stated firmly.

"And why is that?" the man asked curiously.

The shot echoed in the otherwise silent night.

Hayden Joshua Evans is a student of Oxford Virtual Academy. He submitted this piece to in hopes of "engaging the audience in my story and leaving them wondering what happens next."

hurricane

Hurricane

It's swirling, whirling, then it's all gone.

I don't know what is going on.

The tragedy and fear are strong,
and peace has withdrawn.

Rescue

The worst is over; it's a new day.

Now for healing is what we pray.

It's settling, the end to our doomsday,
but the innocence was stripped away.

Waterfall

Waterfalls stream from my mourning face.

The hole in my heart cannot be replaced.

The fresh wounds make the healing a chase,
and the past is impossible to erase.

Waves

Memories of you are ones with pain.

The hurt you caused rises and fades.

It's an endless cycle,
like getting lost in the waves.

Rain

I cringe each time I see falling rain,

Anticipating the future pain.

I've lost the past chains,
the end of its reign.

Elizabeth Marshall is an Oxford High School student, who wished to explore emotional trauma through a collection of poems.

short story

lunch with a friend

Aly Walters is an Oxford High School student, who wrote this piece to explore a relationship in which there is more than meets the eye.

WORDS BY ALY WALTERS

"Pass me those rolls."

Ava and I were sitting across from each other, situated on the edge of our sticky leather booth seats in our jean shorts. I tried to keep my knees as close to the edge as I could; if I stretched them out I'd kick over her purse.

She made a face at me, her pretty green eyes wild. "Pass me those rolls!" she said, and I passed them over to her expectant hand.

It was warm in the restaurant, evident by our thighs sticking to the leather, the way her coke glass was sweating, the way I'd shrugged my sweatshirt long ago, leaving me in a flimsy t-shirt.

"You know, I don't think I'm going to go with him anymore," she said quirkily her lip while she bit it, taking a generous slurp of the malt that sat beside her coke.

"Why's that?" I asked, raising my eyebrow as I looked at her. She'd been speaking nonstop about this new guy she'd met at the gym, talking about how hot he was.

"He looks like Derek."

"Oh no,"

She nodded. "I know, I can't believe I didn't see it before," She brushed some hair away from her face, newly chopped.

"When'd you cut your hair?" I asked, a little disturbed I hadn't noticed it before.

"Well I went to my grandma's and she knew I was stressed, so she asked me if I wanted to cut my hair so I said sure."

I squinted at her, incredulous.

She laughed and shrugged. "Believe me, I know."

When our fries arrived, I was quick to make my usual ritual of dipping them in my malt. Ava stared at me in disgust.

"I don't understand how you can do that Aly, it's not even good."

"Spinach and artichoke dip isn't good either," I responded. Spinach and artichoke dip was one of her favorites, which after eating it more and more with her had grown on me. But she didn't need to know that. "Girl," she said, shaking her head as she took another sip of her malt. "Do you wanna get some froyo after this?" Her eyes lit up, waiting for my answer.

"We need to go to the good place, not the one downtown. The one in Orion has the better peanut butter flavor."

She pursed her lips. "But I wanted to go get another fake tattoo at 'Soothe Your Soul'." She pouted. "Please Aly Wally, please.."

"You still have to pay for mine though."

Ava rolled her eyes. "You're making me go broke."

"Don't make bets you can't win. It's never over."

She glared at me. "Stop it." But then she laughed, and reached up to her ear to adjust her earring.

"When's your next trip to the tattoo shop?" Ava had gotten her cartilage piercing, and right before had talked about getting piercings all down her ear.

She shook her head, deep in thought. For a second she didn't speak, almost like it was a flashback. Then she shuddered. "Nope, your girl almost fainted."

"You didn't eat anything," I insisted, and she nodded.

"You're right, I didn't. But I'm too scared to go back."

We ate in silence for a little bit, picking at our fries, dissecting the burgers; she taking out her onions, me disposing of my tomatoes.

"What about Chris?" she asked me, winking slightly. She smiled at me, and when Ava smiled, it was hard not to smile back.

I shrugged. "He's with some chick at the moment."
continued

short story

lunch with a friend

Aly Walters is an Oxford High School student, who wrote this piece to explore a relationship in which there is more than meets the eye.

WORDS BY ALY WALTERS

continued

"That never stopped me," she claimed, looking down at her food. "You know, I always figured you guys would make it work."

"Not this time around," I sighed, taking a sip of my malt. Chris was probably the one that got away. No matter how long it had been, those feelings for him would never completely fade. Not to mention I hadn't been trying particularly hard to get rid of them, but they were also relentless on their own.

"He's your little man," she winked, putting her hand up so that it was about as high off the ground as the table. She wasn't wrong, Chris had always been on the shorter side, but it had never bothered me.

I rolled my eyes and giggled, dipping another fry in the malt. Ava made another face.

"You know what I want to do?" I asked her.

"Huh?"

"I want to go swimming. Like really bad."

"I want to play Cards Against Humanity," she said thoughtfully, grinning at me. "I kicked your butt last time."

She had; she'd ended with twenty

seven cards and I'd only gotten eleven.

"We had a bad audience," I justified. It was true; you had to have people who understood what was funny versus which wasn't.

"Talk to the hand," Ava insisted, picking up her coke and then chugging it. She coughed after, and for a second I feared she was choking, but then she began talking, eyes watering.

"Aly Wally, should I miss him?"

I knew who she was talking about. Her ex boyfriend, Sergeant Moron. Okay, that wasn't really his name. I think his last name was Jones, but he was a sergeant and he was a moron.

"No," and I shook my head. "We have your Derek doppelganger to worry about now."

"He wears sunglasses inside."

"You know what that means."

And we both exploded into giggles. It was an old joke I'd gotten from my father that I'd passed onto Ava right after she broke up with Sergeant Jerk. Only two types of people wore sunglasses inside, I'd said. Blind people and jerks.

"You know what I just thought of?" I asked her, and she stared at me.

"No."

I pulled out my phone and got on youtube, searching for the videos that made us both laugh every time.

She started laughing, clutching her sides.

"Oh dear god," she mumbled, between giggles. "Oh Aly, I don't know where I'd be without you."

I grinned at her, glad to be there in that stuffy restaurant. Glad to see her, to sit with her. To exist at the same time as her. She was one of those friends who had boundless stories, never a shortage of funny things to make others laugh. I was glad I was her friend, and truth be told, I didn't know where I'd be without her.



PETER RABBIT

BY ALEXIS MCGUIRE OF OXFORD SCHOOLS EARLY COLLEGE

You have had this plush Peter Rabbit doll for a while now. Almost a month and a half, and you swear that things have not been the same since you've gotten it. You swear that you have seen this thing move around your house, have seen it turn to look at you, and have occasionally caught it with the other dolls and stuffed animals you own. It has been frightening you for all these weeks and you can't shake the feeling that Peter is plotting against you. You should've seen the signs when you first bought the cursed thing at that dumb sale, but you were just too stupid to.

You had gotten it at a garage sale a month and a half ago. It was a Saturday and you decided to spend your day off walking around the neighborhood and occasionally stopping at garage sales to browse for some birthday gifts for family. The house that you had bought that evil thing was the last one at the end of the street in the way back of your sub and it gave you a very unsettling vibe as you passed it. The house was a musty grey, the windows still boarded from the last storm some even falling off. The lawn was pretty bare aside from the tables that held the merchandise the owner was selling. You weren't even going to stop at the house and just turn to go home until you met eyes with the owner. She was a very short, very old, woman. Her snow-white hair was pulled back in a neat bun, her eyes were slightly sunken into her sockets and she sat in a rocking chair on her porch with what looked like a little money box on the side table next to her. After meeting eyes with the owner, you felt obligated to at least look at the items the old woman had. If you didn't it would most likely sit on your subconscious for weeks.

Most of it was old, unusable trash, and had no interest to you. Until your eyes fell upon the doll. Among the piles of old records and some marbles, was the vintage Peter Rabbit doll. It looked brand new against everything else at the sale and a growing feeling of nostalgia flooded over you. You loved Peter Rabbit as a child and the thought of adding him to your collection of vintage dolls made you smile.

Though.....when you went to purchase the doll.....the old woman didn't remember having it. You remember her squinting at the doll for a very long time, examining every angle before she just amounted it to her children leaving it and her dementia getting the better of her.

continued

PETER RABBIT

BY ALEXIS MCGUIRE OF OXFORD SCHOOLS EARLY COLLEGE

continued

You wish now as you are on the kitchen floor, gripping your last chef knife, that you had seen the warning signs. You are shaking as the cries of what sounds like a dying animal came from your living room behind you and up the stairs by your front door. After several minutes you slowly turn around your island to see a small trail of blood leading to the stairs, but other than that...nothing. You take a deep breath and went out into the living room. Gripping the knife even tighter, you follow the trail of blood up the stairs trying to creep as quietly as possible. You follow the blood trail toyour collection room. This room in question is filled with all your old vintage collectibles that you have collected throughout the years and is usually firmly locked. Mostly because some of the things in there are pretty much priceless and you didn't want anyone breaking them or stealing them.

You slowly open the door and are absolutely horrified at what you found.

Within your collection room is the small doll table that you had gotten a year ago with blood stains smeared upon it. What looked like a dead raccoon is lying upon the table, blood pooling onto the floor. Looking around, the Peter Rabbit doll is at the center of the tiny table with some of your other dolls surrounding the dead raccoon. You are frozen in fear and you swear you could hear the subtlest of what seemed to be children chanting.

You scream and run out of the room, down the stairs, and out the front door. You are panting and shaking as you get in your car and drive. You have had enough of this nightmare that you have been living and you drive back to that house where you had gotten the evil, disgusting, doll.

You stumble out of your car and run up to the door banging on it. After a few minutes, the old woman slowly opens the door, her hair in curlers and her nightgown is down to her feet.

"What in the wor- Oh, it's you dear, why are you here at my place so early? I'm sorry but I haven't gotten anything else to sell you." You are panting, your hands in frantic motions as you spoke, "Mam...that doll....it's gone insane.....it's taken my knives....moved around the house....and this morning....IIfound it with some of my other dolls.....withwith....a dead raccoon. I know thatthis sounds insane....but I swear to god ...that that thing is possessed." You are out of breath, and your body is shaking even more than before.

The old woman stares at you with wide eyes, almost as if she is frozen in time itself. She mumbles something under her breath before ushering you inside. The house is quite small only with a couch and comfy chair in the living room and a small dining room table with four chairs in the dining room. She motions for you to sit on the couch and she sits in the chair. She takes a deep breath and starts with, "I knew one day this would happen, I'm so sorry that it had to be you, my dear." You are so very confused and your face obviously shows it, so she continues.

She tells the story of how she was a witch, "a good one so don't you worry your little head, I would never hex you." but the covenant she used to be in, the members all passed now, had accidentally summoned a monster from one of the darkest corners of the universe. It was called a Dwagma. It was a creature from what she described as the fourth dimension. It was a world filled with dark creatures looking to feed upon souls. The only way to get these souls was to be summoned by a witch into our dimension. Her covenant was trying to create a spell that they thought would help cure cancer. She told you that unlike most witches, they were very humble. Contributing to the local church bake sales, going to bingo, and just generally helping out the neighborhood. She didn't necessary believe in God, but she didn't want to destroy them if there even was such a thing either. She just wanted to be a good person and just generally help people in need. Though, the spell they were trying to create used a line from an ancient text that somehow predated the Earth itself. Their transcriber, Eve, translated the text incorrectly resulting in a portal opening between the two worlds. Luckily, the witches were able to close the portal before anything major happened. But before they did, a small creature from the portal managed to escape before the portal closed completely. Apparently, it had been in her house for years, locked in her basement closet. But when a couple of her sons in law came over to help her with the garage sale, it must have escaped when they went through the basement. According to her, the creature likes to take the form of familiar objects that bring a sense of peace to its prey. In your case, it was the Peter Rabbit Doll.

continued

PETER RABBIT

BY ALEXIS MCGUIRE OF OXFORD SCHOOLS EARLY COLLEGE

continued

She tells you that she transcribed an old passage from the same manual on how to possibly get rid of the being. Lure the being towards you with some form of death (a dead raccoon, skunk, etc), chant the words that she had given you written down in scraggly hand writing, then light the thing on fire. That, in theory, should get rid of the monster inside your home.

You thank her endlessly and wish her a farewell as you get into your car and drive home. Clambering up the stairs to your collection room, you open the door to find that the rabbit is gone. The rotting raccoon still lay within a pool of its own blood on the table, still surrounded by your old dolls. You snatch it up, some of the blood spraying onto the door, as you run down the steps in search of the creature.

“OH PETER RABBIT! COME GET THIS ROTTING RACCOON YOU SICKO!” you bellow throughout your home. To others, your behavior would have been seen as completely deranged as you keep shouting for “Peter Rabbit” most likely worrying your neighbors. But honestly, you could care less.

From some deep corner of your home, you could hear the creaking of the floorboards as you know the thing had heard your calls. When it finally turns from the living room, you let out a horrifying shriek, almost dropping the raccoon from your hands. The creature is pitch black in color, eyes almost on every end of its body purley white with small yellow pupils all staring into your soul. It is on all fours, its mouth open from the tip of its rabbit like-snout to the end of its chest. There is what looked like a mix of blood and saliva dripping onto the hardwood floor. It has long rabbit-like ears and deer-like ears sticking from the sides of its head. It lets out a blood curdling scream, seeming to explode your eardrums. It comes closer and closer, getting faster and faster as it does. You fling the raccoon to the other side of the room, blood smearing onto the floor. The creature looks at you and then to the dead raccoon slowly moving towards it. Panicked, you pull the crumpled up piece of paper out of your pocket and slowly make your way towards the kitchen. It watches you closely, all of its eyes following you as you went. Still facing the creature, your hand moves to the drawer containing the matches as you slowly pull it open. Feeling the matches with your hand, you snatch them right up pulling one out. The creature lets out what seemed like a low growl as it makes its way towards you. You quickly light the match and scream the chant as it starts to quickly make its way toward you.

“Oopara! Krunia! Aquera! Ghobb! Hоторa! Fresso!” With the last word, the creature cowers backwards as if it were in a great deal of pain and you throw the lit match onto the beast.

The screams that erupt are ones that no human would ever want to hear as the thing slowly melts into a black puddle in your living room, eventually evaporating into the air.

You are shaking and you run into the kitchen and spray the rest of the floor with water as it is slightly charred from the fire. You call up a friend and spend the night at their place that night, not wanting to be in the same house with the remains of that beast.

It has been around two weeks since the demise of the creature. Nothing weird or strange has been happening around your house and you are more than grateful. For around a week now, you and the old woman, Leslie, have been going out for coffee and tea at the local cafe. The events that unfolded two weeks ago had somewhat interested you into becoming a witch. You never wanted anyone to go through the horrible experience that you had and in your mind, becoming a witch like Leslie could potentially protect yourself and others from the awful creatures that lurked beyond.

It is Friday and you and Leslie were departing from your afternoon coffee visit. Since it is now the beginning of winter, the sun is already setting and the orange glow lights the frost-dusted grass. When you get home, the sun is almost below the horizon and the darkness of night consumes most of the landscape. You close your door and walk into the kitchen and go to pull your curtains closed. Just before your curtains are fully closed, you swear that across the street you see a little brown rabbit in a blue jacket staring back at you.



BEST OF MEN

JESS DEMPSEY

The best of men never last long
here. Do they?

We find their humors Hanging.
Their ideas no longer afloat.

We find Their words crashed and
burned.

Their purposes shot and forgot.

We find their ambitions stabbed
And their hearts attacked.
Their plans murdered.

The best of men never last long
here. Do they?

So we deal with the worst of
men

Worst: a means of survival.

We grow to be the worst of men
Just so we have the chance to
be.

Because we see

And we saw

The best of men fall.

Never mind it was us
Who are guilty of it all.



You can see the sad sitting in her eyes
and the love she tries to hide behind.
Smiles full teeth
while tongues slither and sneer
underneath.

Someone should paint her
right at this moment.
(Someone should paint the sky too,
not because of her, but because of you.)
Someone should paint her Disguise.
So, when they're done
she won't recognize
who she's become.

Someone should snap a picture.
and send it to her.
Flood her inbox
with all the things she's not.

She's not in love
and she's not smiley.
She's just a scared little girl
hiding.

I want her to grow up,
grow ten feet tall
and realize it all.

As if my words would change a thing
I write and I think:
"Don't watch him play his guitar.
Watch him play you.
Don't watch him strum a six string
while he strums your heart strings.
Don't watch him while he sings.
Watch for the little things."

But she's not even watching herself
So,
I'll paint her with my words
and snap her picture in my mind.
And let her stay a scared little girl.

And let her hide.

THE GIRL WATCHING HIM PLAY

WRITTEN BY JESS DEMPSEY

Poetess of "The Girl Watching Him Play" and "Best of Men," Dempsey is an Oxford Schools Early College student who uses poetry to explore and represent different facets of life.

THE THREE HUNTERS

ARTIST: HR OF OXFORD SCHOOLS EARLY
COLLEGE



A SCENE FROM THE LORD OF THE RINGS; ARAGORN, LEGOLAS
AND GIMLI TRACK THE ORCS THAT CAPTURED SOME OTHER
MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, MERRY AND
PIPPIN. VOLUME 03 • ISSUE NO. 10

Oh, hello there.
It's nice to see you.
I guess it has been a long time since we've spoken.
You're asking my advice on the future?
What you haven't seen yet?
Gosh, there's so much I should say.
What should I say?
What would I say if I saw myself looking up at me?
What would I tell her? If she knew, what would be done differently?
I guess...this is my ode to you, this is my ode to you.

Be ready for changes, they happen quicker than you think,
You will be really stressed, just remember to breathe and remember to blink,
Don't care about what others say,
Because in a while, they'll fade away,
You have no idea where your own mind will lead you-
Have a little fun every now and again,
And remember to watch who you befriend,
Because not every friend you make is true.
There's so many things that you will do,
So, this is my ode to you, this is my ode to you.

I see that same smile and those innocent blue eyes,
Just remember to eventually take off the rose-colored glasses you hide behind.
You'll face the world soon enough,
You'll have to learn how to toughen up,
Shield the glass with something stronger.
And though the glass will be hit and cracked,
You have the power to fight it back.
Let the scars remind you to fight a little longer.
I know at times you'll feel blue,
So, this is my ode to you, this is my ode to you.

It seems that soon enough I'll have to depart,
So remember, a letter or a number doesn't make you smart.
Don't worry about the little things,
Just go and sprout your wings,
Do not be afraid to be yourself.
Go on adventure, sing a song,
Remember what is right and wrong,
And don't be afraid to ask for help.
Hey, I know at times, life can feel like it's a zoo.
So, this is my ode to you, this is my ode to you.

As we say goodbye, while I know I've said a lot,
What you already know is not to be forgot.
Yes, the future is inevitable,
But know that you can always hold
The past and memory dear.
Some things are better left untold,
You'll understand this when you're old,
But realize there's nothing you should fear.
I think my time is up, this is my cue.
But remember my ode to you, my ode to you.
Best of luck to you.

ODE TO PAST SELF

By Sarah Loomis,
Oxford Virtual Academy

SPACE ODYSSEY

"LOOK UP IN THE SKY," THEY SAID. "IT WILL BE LIKE
NOTHING EVER BEFORE!" THEY SAID.
ALL WE HAVE HERE IS A BLOODY DESERT, 'CAUSE MARS IS
JUST RED.

SO WE WENT TO THE MOON AND THOUGHT IT WAS COOL,
BUT IT WAS ONLY USED FOR SCIENCE IN SCHOOL.

VENUS, NEPTUNE, AND JUPITER WERE ALL PRETTY AT FIRST,
BUT THE REALIZATION THAT WE CAN'T STAY IS JUST THE
WORST.

TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN AND WE ALL MELT,
TOO FAR AND WE TURN BLUE AND LOSE ALL WE FELT.

"THERE COULD BE LIFE ON A PLANET FAR AWAY."
THAT IS WHAT EVERYONE ON EARTH MUST SAY.

THROUGH THE TELESCOPES THEY HAVE ON THE GROUND,
THEY WOULD WANT TO BE IN SPACE AND FLY AROUND.

BUT THE BITTER COLD OF THE OUTER RING,
OR THE BLAZING SUN ISN'T WHAT THEY ARE WONDERING.

THEY WANT TO SEE THE UNIVERSE AND ALL THAT IT HOLDS,
AS IF THERE WERE A HUGE TREASURE OR A PLANET OF
GOLD.

THE PLANETS SPIN AND THEY NEVER CEASE,
BUT THAT IS UNTIL RAGNAROK AT LEAST.

IF THE END OF TIME WAS TO COME SOON,
AT LEAST I COULD TELL ODIN I SAW THE MOON.

vertical reasoning

I believe that I am a hard working individual and
that I function in everyday life.

Needless to say I make sure to do my best in

Everything I do. I know that some people say that I
have a large lack of

Energy and that I should slow my roll. They just lack
the knowledge of what I

Do day to day and how much work I put in.

And on another subject, I can't believe that some
people

Nag me so much about how I enjoy different

Activities than them. I mean come on, I just could
use some

Peace and quiet.

RISING STARS

RYLAN



K-8 STUDENTS ARE THE NEXT GENERATION!

Rylan Adams, a student at Oxford Virtual Academy, is just one example of the rising talent coming from Oxford classrooms

a modest proposal

-society's response to mental illness from a satirical perspective-

BY KIRSTYN MARTINO

There is an inevitable reality in this area that follows down the river. An abundance of inconvenience every single day. The poor teachers who must deal with the absent work of insomniacs who missed class. Unfortunate to they who paid for college to grade makeup work of a lazy teenager. Doctors clear a space in their schedule to speak with an over dramatic teen who can't give a presentation in front of the class. Eight years of schooling just to cure shyness. The worst of all, the parents and families of these sick, needy people are forced to legally deal with them.

I think it is agreed by all members of society, that the number of mentally ill citizens walking these streets is out of hand. We shall deem mental illness a term of the past. It is clear to all that any sufferer is faking, or just dramatic. It is indeed time to pay attention to the real issues happening in this world.

A proposal to make these useless bodies good for something. We shall separate them based on their imaginary problems. First, we start with the ones who claim to have any form of anxiety disorder. Panic attacks are just a made up word by people who don't know how to handle their emotions; social anxiety is just awkwardness; and separation anxiety is someone who does not know how to grow up. These awful burdens will all become useful to society by performing sexual favors for the most prestigious members of the government. Finally these people will be worth something.

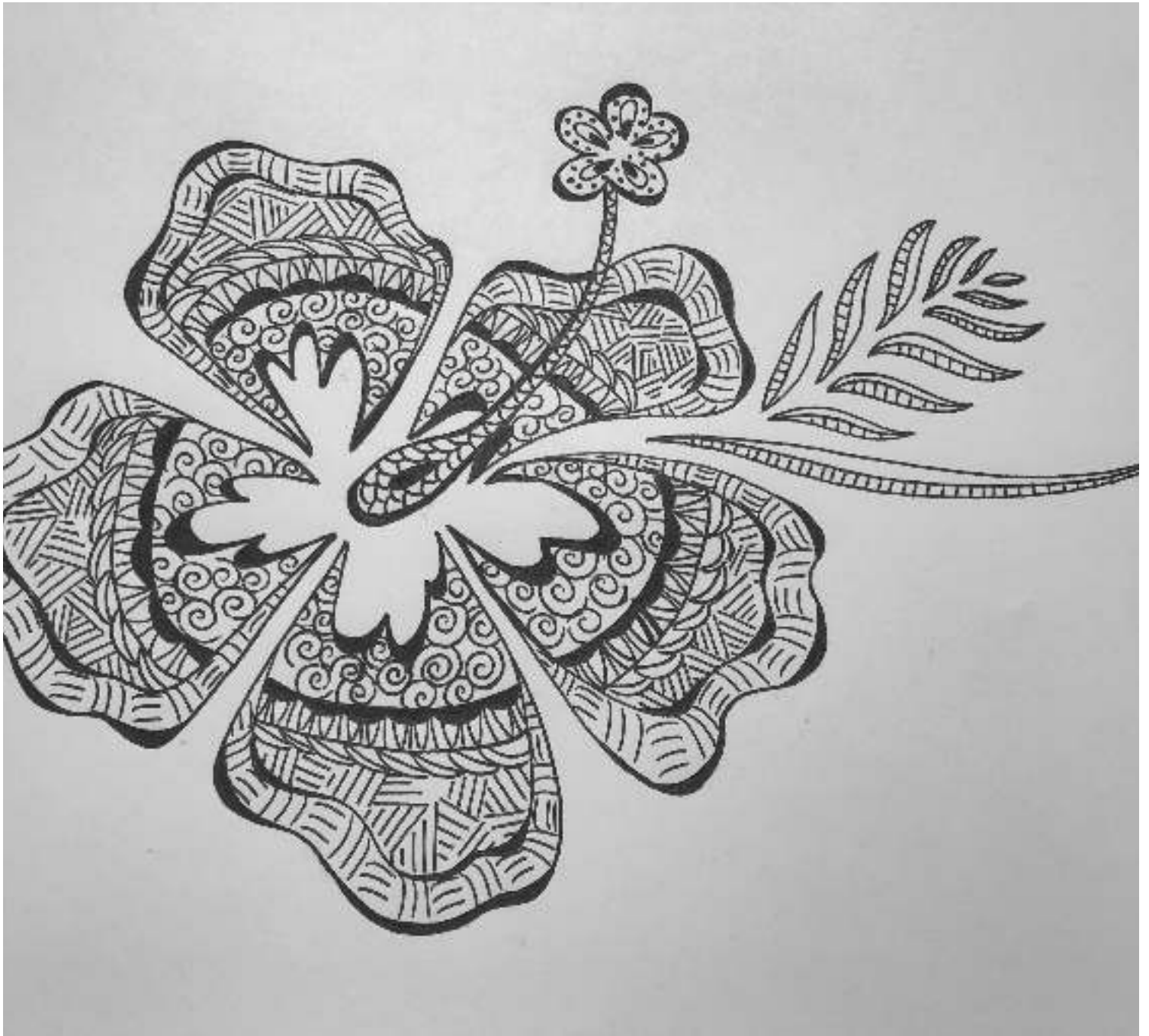
In addition, we shall take those attention seekers who refuse to eat, or even worse, those who stick their thin fingers down their acidic throats to create sores on their hands and lips, while catalyzing lifelong health issues for themselves. Bulimics, anorexics, and anyone else with a sort of "eating disorder" shall get what they are wishing for. We shall give them the attention they crave by broadcasting their so called struggles. On top of this, we shall encourage young girls and boys to look up to this way of life; skinny is the only way to be! Consequently, the rest of society will have more entertainment! Another point in this proposal which I offer regards the depressed state. Everybody gets sad and that's just part of life. One who claims to be depressed simply just needs a more positive outlook on life. I believe they bring it upon themselves by staying in bed all day and secluding themselves from society. How dare they claim sickness to cover up laziness! These people deserve not a bit of help from anyone! If one gets upset over nothing and hides inside for days at a time, they are no longer contributing to society but indeed hurting it. Therefore, these depressed people should be left alone and we shall let natural selection occur. If they choose to suffer then they will suffer alone.

Lastly, there is a whole group of people doomed to be psychotic; someone who can no longer connect with external reality. Sometimes these maniacs make up things that don't exist, or even see and hear things too. In no way can one claim these people to be beneficial to our society. Despite severity, anyone who has ever felt disconnected from reality MUST be locked up! When at their lowest point, feeling as though nothing is really happening, sitting across from their own family members with emptiness-as to a stranger-this is when they need to be taken away from their main source of love. We shall keep these people in all white rooms with no unnecessary items. They shall live here until they die.

In conclusion, life down the river south of Detroit will be much more meaningful after these changes. The burdens of the mentally ill will be lifted from society. The anxious will finally be good for something, and most importantly giving more power to the people who already hold the most. In addition, eating disorders will be much more prevalent and the statistics will just keep increasing! We will eventually have a society of sickly skinny millennials walking the streets because we shall romanticize starving for beauty. As these changes occur, people with depression will be digging themselves deeper into their illness with absolutely no help from society, possibly even encouragement. All mental illnesses including psychosis will be viewed as a choice. Instead of using the research concluded to bring actual medical care to these people, we as a society shall let them suffer as we mock them and force them to become beneficial to us all.

hibiscus flower

*by joelle ivory of oxford high
school*



SHADE

WE WATCHED AND WAITED
FOR THE MEMORIAL TO COMMENCE
AS THE CASKET WAS BROUGHT IN
WE STARED AT IT IN SUSPENSE
WHO WOULD IT BE?
WE WONDERED, AN ARTIST OR A KNIGHT
WHOEVER IT WAS
THEY WERE IN FOR QUITE A FRIGHT
NOBODY KNOWS IF THERE'S ANOTHER SIDE
UNTIL THEY WAKE UP THINKING: I THOUGHT I HAD
DIED
BUT NO NOT QUITE YOU SEE WE ARE HERE
THE PEOPLE WHO LURK THE PEOPLE WHO LEER
THE BREEZE YOU FEEL PASSING YOU ON A STILL DAY
THE SLIGHT TAP ON YOUR SHOULDER WHEN YOU'RE
WALKING AWAY

SO WHEN IT'S YOU IN THE CASKET
DO NOT BE AFRAID

WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU
COME INTO THE SHADE.

SAMANTHA BERRY OF OXFORD VIRTUAL
ACADEMY

stranded

OXFORD VIRTUAL ACADEMY

It was May 5th of the year 1959. The captain had told us we were to all board the ship at twelve o'clock sharp. I was going on a voyage to England to see my family. As I turned the corner of Mrs. Patcher's Bakery, the ship came into sight. As I walked closer and closer, the ship began to grow in size. The ship was like a giant, casting its shadow upon me. It was made of beautiful chestnut wood, which was engraved with detailed carvings of pirates tales and mythical sea creatures. The ship I was to board was a breathtaking sight. I got in line on the dock and waited to board the ship. This was to be my first time I ever set sail, but it would surely be the last. I got to the entrance of the ship and gave the short, shabby man by boarding pass. He stamped my pass and told me to board the ship. I think he could see the excitement in my eyes, because he gave me a big grin and under his breath, he let out a quiet, soft laugh. As I stepped foot onto the ship, I walked to the far-left side and leaned against the edge. I looked down at the water below, it was a beautiful, glistening blue. As I stared at its waves, it seemed to mesmerize me. I got lost in the way the ocean moved and how it spoke. For a second, it felt as if reality had disappeared. In this moment, I experienced the most peaceful, beautiful thing. I soon was dragged into reality once I heard "Set sail, set sail!" It had been about a half hour since everyone had boarded the ship and we were beginning the voyage. My heart raced with excitement and fear, this was the beginning of a journey for me.

The three or four days, I felt seasick and I threw up constantly. Along with that, I barely slept. I was miserable, and I began to regret leaving the shore. Days went by, and I slowly adapted to my surroundings. I threw up less and began to get sleep. The tenth day came around, it was going to change my life. On this day, the captain told us that a big storm was going to hit. Later in the day, around two o'clock, a monstrous storm hit. Three men were taken over board by the massive waves. We were all to go under deck for safety, but as we one by one began to flee down, the ship collided with a wave that you couldn't even see the start or end of it. The ship let out a loud screech and began cracking. It seemed to shatter like a glass that had been dropped. In an instance, we were all in the water swimming and fearing for our lives. The waves came over me, filling my lungs as they tried to eat me alive. I grabbed a broken piece of the ship to float on. The wood no longer looked beautiful like it had. I watched as men tried to get a hold of something to float on, but many couldn't stay above the water. I watched as the waves dragged them under, and they never came back up. The rest was obscure, because I can't quite remember. I woke up, and I was on land. No one else was around me. Half my body was on sand and the other was in the water. I managed to drag my whole body onto the shore, and I waited a few minutes until I gained more strength. I finally got enough strength to stand up. Fear filled me entirely and I began to panic. I needed to control myself, but I couldn't. In that moment, it hit me, I realized I was stranded and alone.



FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope that you have been inspired by the heart and dedication shown by Oxford's students. This summer, Eloquentia urges you to take a step back from errands and responsibilities. We urge you to take note of your surroundings, do some self-reflection, and create something new from what you find. Creativity can be found in even the most mundane subjects, and can transform even the least artistic person. Though we all have deadlines, things to do, and places to see, taking a few minutes out of the day for some art can do wonders for your productivity and overall well-being. And, in the fall, you can submit your work to Eloquentia!

ELOQUENTIA STAFF

MENTOR TEACHER: Michelle Green

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Love Tsai

SUBMISSION MANAGER: Hope Tsai

TEAM MEMBER: Maria Sobrino

more information surrounding Eloquentia (including information about submissions, deadlines, applications, etc.) can be found online at eloquentiaonline.weebly.com