

# Don't hug me, I'm writing

## An Anthology of Prose & Poetry

Composed by the 2012 ADVANCE Creative Writing Course

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## Joshua Ballagh

### Ballad of the Author

A man who can judge.

A man who is judged.

A man whose works are judged.

A man that listens and speaks.

A man who works words, and bends them to his purpose.

A man who is worked by words, bending to their purpose.

A man whose hand is now rubbed raw by friction of paper and pen.

A man who speaks his mind, and the minds of others.

A man who flows like his words, swift or slow, unstable or steady.

A man who means what he means, whether he does or does not.

A man who grasps the human thoughts, the hurricane of emotions.

A man who shall never be silenced, though he might not speak.

A man whose profession shall always be.

A man that can shout his words louder than any other, yet never open his mouth.

A man who walks into our battlefields with a pen in place of sword.

A man who is the heart of all language.

This is an excerpt from a short story in the works, *Fractured*:

## Prologue

Two doctors, clad in white, stood over a bed, discussing the man in the bed. The man was unconscious, and had been so for three days. Another man had driven him to the hospital. This man gave no name, nor did he show his face. He disappeared immediately after dropping the other off, saying only: "This man is Lucas Hawkins. See what you can do for him." Lucas had arrived battered and bloody, with a cloth wrapped his head. He had a burn mark on the side of his face, on his jaw and lower cheek. The doctors were perplexed, but a piece of mail containing payment from a large corporation (which was unknown to them until then) kept them quiet.

Suddenly, Lucas stirred. "Mr. Hawkins," said a doctor to his bleary-eyed and confused face. "Mr. Hawkins!"

"Wh-where am I?" said Lucas hazily.

"The Flander's hospital, sir," said the doctor.

"Why am I here?" he asked blankly.

"We were hoping that you could tell us," said the doctor, more perplexed than ever.

"Get me a phone, and a phonebook," said Lucas, suddenly intent.

"Why, sir?" said the doctor.

"I need to call Marcus Stacker..."

"Mr. Hawkins... Doctor Stacker has been dead for nearly a year."

Lucas was horrified. "I just spoke with him a week or so ago!" he said in a panicked tone.

The doctor looked at his colleague. Both were surprised and inquisitive as to what this man had been through.

Lucas reached up and touched his face. "Bring me a mirror..." he said more calmly, but just as shocked. So they did. And it all came back to him.

And he spoke.

## **Sunken Stone**

The ground here is soft  
Inviting you to sink down  
Into the soil with the dead...

The memorials here  
Proud markers of achievements  
Or meager tributes  
Of loved ones who couldn't afford.

The stones, defiled by time  
Shattering, weathering, crumbling  
Slowly swallowed by the earth.

## **Dream at the Earth's Maw**

I dreamed I stood at a chasm in the cold whiteness as it gaped at me like the earth's  
maw.

I dreamed that I felt a shove, a push into the maw to feed me to the earth.

I dreamed that I turned as my form was being swallowed by the dark and saw the  
shadowed figure watching me fall into the throat of the earth.

## Language

Language can smell fragrant as a flower, or rotten like vomit

Language can look like a beautiful queen, or a defiled corpse

Language may sound better than a melody, or worse than shattering glass

Language can be sweet as nectar, or bitterer than bile

Language feels sturdy in your hand, for it is your tool to use as you please!

## What do you wish for?

I so desperately wished for love

And actually, I got it

But what I wonder nowadays is:

Was it worth the price?

It left me with nothing that lasts

Just like before the start

Half year of joy, half year of joy

But weeks of nauseated depression

This stupid mind of ours

All so discontent

And when I thought that I grasped joy

It betrayed me to the mist.

## **The Lady Fate**

Whose hair is the dark of the night itself  
 Whose form is obscured by her pale silken gown, a stream of milky moonlight  
 Whose hand is smooth and soft and cold like snow  
 Whose fingers are like long spider's legs  
 Whose fingernails perfect, and smooth black like mirrors in a dark chasm  
 Whose pale white face is remembered by few  
 But you always know the sadness that streams from it like a withering white rose  
 Her lips, always calling to you  
 Calling to come slower  
 She offers her hand to walk with her  
 To travel to the Forest of Night  
 Whether it a gentle, slow few steps with her  
 Or a sudden, violent jerk  
 The tears of pain, a steady slow stream down her cheek  
 Her terrible fate: to show you yours.

## **Unreplicable**

A river should my emotions be  
 But from no source does it flow.  
 A soul will know such feelings  
 But once within its life.  
 For now I remain unknowing  
 But then shall I catch sight.

## Andrew Bennett

### For I Will Consider my Dog Franky

For I will consider my dog Franky

For he is shaped like a hot dog

For he is a dog shaped like a log

For he was once young and brown but now old and gray

For he yawns at dusk

For he yawns at dawn

For he sleeps all day in his bed

For he only gets up to eat

For he licks but never bites

For he loves but never hates

For my ferocious pet Franky is my wiener dog

### Family Story

My grandfather told me about a nightmare he will always remember. He was in an alley. A group of thugs followed him in. They surrounded him, wielding a variety of weapons. They scowled at him. They came closer. Giant! Horrible! Evil! They almost had him! And... "poof." They turned into French fries. He stomped on them and awoke in a cold sweat.

The End.

## What Makes Me Angry

It makes me angry when people wear sunglasses at night. It's just not necessary. What bright light are you shielding your pupils from? Do lasers shoot out of your eyes when you take them off? Are you blind? Where's your seeing-eye dog? It makes me angry that I have to ask questions when I see you. Just take them off.

## Ode to Banana

Oh, Banana

I must horribly admit

I do not enjoy your unique taste

I find you quite repulsive, actually

And your three simple syllables are seeds for a stupid, immature "inside joke" in our classroom

So I do not like you, Banana

But I do respect you, Banana

For you dare to prove yourself beyond the realm of fruit

For you insert yourself in ice cream

For you break yourself into pieces, just so you can be in cereal

For you cover yourself in nuts and chocolate and freeze

Just to prove yourself

So I respect you, Banana

But I still do not like you



## **A Good Man**

A man who was born into a happy family

A man who never cared what others thought

A man who never gave into peer pressure

A man, who as a child, learned his lessons, the easy and hard ways

A man who respected his parents as wise guardians

A man who was as innocent as a mockingbird singing a happy song

A man who was as small as a rabbit but had the heart of a lion

A man, who as an adolescent, was confused about life but carried on

A man who learned about life and how to care for himself

A man who was as romantic as a first kiss at the end of a slow dance

A man who had the heart of a lion, but knew of the evils in the world

A man who went through times as tough as nails, but never gave up

A man, who as an adult, met his soul mate and married her

A man who had children and raised them well

A man who taught others lessons, the easy and hard ways

A man who had the heart of a lion, though it was growing old

A man, who as an elderly, grew old but lived happily with his wife

A man who spread wisdom to all, of his lessons he learned, the easy and hard ones

A man who lost his wife, but was comforted by children and grandchildren

A man who died happy and sad

A man who was sad to leave his family, but happy to see his wife

A man who lived a good life and died a good death

A good man

## **ADVANCE**

I dreamed of cold mornings, due to shoddy air conditioners

I dreamed of hot days, from the blinding sun

I dreamed of ping-pong, when friends compete

I dreamed of pool, where friends hang out

I dreamed of my friends, who play ping-pong and pool

I dreamed of ice cream, excited for Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

I dreamed of dances, where anything could happen

I dreamed of Chef Wok, the best Chinese food in the business

I dreamed of class, challenging me and improving my knowledge

I dreamed of Caddo, where my second family is

## **My Friends**

To my friend who is the life of the party

Whose ethnicity is still unknown to us

Who is struggling in in class, but isn't giving up

Who is not afraid to get out there

To my friend who is rare, for she is both pretty and intelligent

Who is always interested in what I have to say

Who always loses her voice, but from laughter

Who is sweet and kind and always looks for the good in people

To my friend who talks too much sometimes, but usually has something interesting to say

Whose sense of humor never runs thin

Whose eyes never seem to open all the way

Who has been my best friend for a long time now, and I hope will continue to be

To my friends who have made ADVANCE the best experience of my life

## **The Year that Started it All**

A year when we left home

A year when we found heaven

A year when we found a new family

A year when we had brothers and sisters

A year when clothes, skin, race, or religion never mattered

A year when all were accepted

A year when we were the new guys

A year when we were dodging the balls

A year when we could eat all the ice cream we wanted

A year when smoothie king was the place to be

A year when we weren't afraid to take risks

A year when we could make a name of ourselves

A year when we became young adults

A year when we matured, and cared for each other

A year when our new older siblings gave us advice

A year when our lives forever changed

A year when we were happy, but then sad

A year when family parted ways

A year when everyone left their new home

A year when we decided we'd return

A year when we made memories

A year when there was friendship, romance, and fun

A year that we will never forget

Our first year of ADVANCE

## Carly Branch

### A woman who

A woman who spreads happiness

A woman who cares for everyone

A woman who is desperate to find a soul mate

A woman who loves everyone

A woman who is a friend to everyone

A woman who is kind to anyone and everyone

A woman who has a wish

A woman who wants a chance

A woman who is encouraging

A woman who always tries to be happy

A woman who took that chance

A woman who found her spouse

A woman who has a plan of getting married

A woman who is loved by EVERYONE

A woman who is devoted to her job

A woman who know knows what it feels like to be loved

A woman who has a great life and always will

A woman who will die happily

## **In the Cemetery**

As I stand here were many lives were lost

A lot of people paid their costs

Due to war or many things

Many people feel their pain

Some people died their death, because of that one last breath that they couldn't seek to find

Many memories lost, but not forgotten

Like our loved begotten

Now I wish you to Rest in Peace

I love you forever not in the least

## **For Poem**

For I will consider my cat Bobart

For he is my companion

For he is friendly, and purrs when he wants to be petted

For he meows when hungry, and when he doesn't get enough he goes out to hunt

For he has razor sharp claws

For he uses his sharp claws to climb up high trees

For he will live outside all of his life, until he dies

**Love**

Love smells like a fragrant rose

Love feels like butterflies in your stomach

Love tastes sweet

Love looks like two people put together as one

Love is forever

**STORM**

Splashing puddles

Thunder

Ongoing rain

Raging skies

Memorable moments of playing hide and seek in the rain

## **The Cemetery**

The gate is open, for all to see

And I bend down on both of my knees

To pray to God that one day I will see you again

Hopefully not due to sin

I know everyone makes mistakes, but what some people do is definitely not fake

I come to see you every now and then, and hopefully I will live forever surely to be older than ten

## **The Drawing**

"That's my drawing above my bed", he said

My girlfriend just nodded

"It took me about a year to complete it", he said

It's a picture of a wedding

"I don't know if I should save it", he said

But why not? He thinks

"I really do like it a lot", he said

"I remember what I thought when I drew it", he said

"I thought I would never draw a picture again, after I began to draw it", he said

I look at the picture and think then I say "It's like us

"Then I get down on one knee and ask her to marry me

## **When the World Becomes a Better Place**

A year when everyone is loved

A year when no one is homeless

A year when people aren't suffering from starvation

A year when everybody is healthy

A year when no one dies

A year when there are no injuries

A year when nobody gets laid off

A year when everyone is satisfied with their jobs

A year when everyone goes on to the next grade

A year when most people get along

A year when Jesus comes back to Earth

A year when everyone has confidence in themselves

A year when everyone celebrates holidays

A year when everyone has enough money to buy anything needed or wanted

A year when everyone has a good life

A year when all this happens and the world becomes a better place



## Courtney Caraway

### Things I didn't know I loved

I didn't know I loved the clouds,

    Their white structure against the blue.

I didn't know I loved nature,

    All the mysteries and questions it gives.

I didn't know I loved grass,

    Whether it's brown and dead or green and full of life.

I didn't know I loved the sun,

    Its brightness lighting my day yet

I didn't know I loved the darkness,

    Its black coat pulling me into an embrace.

I didn't know I loved stars,

    Their glittery light piercing the night's black coat.

I didn't know I loved the moon,

    Its mysterious false light shooting through my window.

## **The Willow**

As I stand where many tears fall,

I see the scenes, I see them all.

Under the weeping willow is where I wait and

You rest in your peaceful state.

And I know this is where I will find you, my fate,

Under the weeping willow.

**A woman who...**

A woman who was born in the 1940's

A woman who had a difficult childhood

A woman who grew up poor but strong

A woman who married twice

A woman who had two daughters and one son

A woman who knows everything she needs to

A woman who cleans on Thursdays and goes to church on Sundays

A woman who lost her parents in war

A woman who lives in America

A woman who plays the piano

A woman who drinks coffee every morning and wine every night

A woman who is a nurse and was a teacher

A woman who reads every night before bed

A woman who never gives up

## **The Little Things That Anger Me**

When people lie and when people cry over little things that don't matter. When people bully others and no one does a thing about it. When my friends stab me in the back and then they laugh about it afterwards. When the government uses my money to buy weapons rather than using it to buy food for the millions of starving people. When people hurt others and don't get in trouble for it. When people commit suicide or have abortions. When people expect to be rewarded for things they should be doing already. When innocent soldiers die for stupid mistakes our country made. When people call me names even if they're just joking. My anger goes down to the smallest details, even the things that don't matter.

## The Child

Wash the clothes and when you put them in the washer, you put one packet of wash inside then you start it but make sure the water is cold; when you dry the clothes, put one fabric softener in the dryer and start it and let it go for about one and a half hours. When the clothes come out of the dryer, separate them into piles on the couch: shirts, pants, socks, other. When the piles are finished, take me and your father's clothes to our room and lay them on the bed neatly but iron your father's suits so that they don't have wrinkles in them. Just lay my clothes on the bed. Match the socks and sort them into piles as well: yours and your parents. When you are done sorting the socks, put yours in your drawer and same with your parent's. Wash the towels and same rules apply as for the clothes. When the towels are dry, fold them neatly and put them up. Then let the dogs in and feed them and give them much water. Feed the cat and give it water, too. Before you let the dogs in, go outside and wipe their feet so they don't track mud in the house. I want you to practice math for one hour each day. That's not long when there are twenty-four hours in a day, right? Then make yourself lunch but get plenty of napkins- you're going to need them. Eat properly! Don't talk with your mouth full! I didn't. Next, go to the table and set it like this, your grandparents are coming over and we don't want them thinking we're pigs. *Yes ma'am.* You have so much to learn, Courtney.

## **Alastair Dunn**

### **I dreamed**

I dreamed that I died and was sent up to be judged

I dreamed that I was judged by Jesus

I dreamed that I was sent up to heaven

I dreamed I saw all the different colors of the gems that formed the foundation

I dreamed that I saw my grandfather and grandmother for the first time

I dreamed I ate from the tree of life

I dreamed I walked in the streets of gold

I dreamed one of the twelve disciples lead me to my mansion

I dreamed that would stay in heaven forever

## **Be careful with what you wish for**

Be careful of what you wish for you may come to regret it

If you wished for a dog

You will have to clean up after it

You will have to clean it

You will have to suffer the loss when it dies

Be careful of what you wish for

It could be your beginning or your end

It could be your start of hate or beginning of your love

**A man who**

A man who is brave

A man who is bright

A man who is untrusting

A man who is skillful

A man who is very good in agility

A man who lives in secret

A man who worships God

A man who is creative

A man who is silent

A man who loves music

A man who likes to read

A man who enjoys his freedom

A man who uses blades in battle

A man who takes his orders to heart

A man who does his orders without regret

A man who is hard to spot

A man who does not fear death

A man who does not feel pain

A man who does not love

A man who does not fight unless necessary

A man who enjoys nature a man who focuses on task

A man who almost never dies



## Scout

For I will consider my neighbor's dog Scout

He is a very happy dog that's enjoys getting pets

First he begs for food

Second if he gets it he'll try to get some more

Third he runs off to play with a neighbor's dog

He sometimes digs in the trash can and sometimes is lazy

He spends time lying in one spot in the sun for most of the day

He smells sometimes but Josh doesn't care

## Things I never knew I loved

I never knew I loved class

Til it became boring

I never knew I loved breaks

That helps rest my brain

I never knew I loved food

The taste is everlasting

I never knew I loved water

Now I drink eight bottles a day

I never knew I loved the cold

That cools a person down

I didn't know I loved the sun

That gives the earth its light

I didn't know I loved time

Till most of it has gotten away from me

## Catherine Ebarb

### Long Night's Thoughts

Why is it that love seems to spark desperate inspiration,

Passion and adoration?

How you read me I do fear...

But it also makes me want you near

And yet how you make me feel...

As if going I'm going in for a kill

But I do not want to think of you as prey

But as someone that I can speak to day after day

### Sea Side

Eating pumpernickel by the seaside

Then I smell the sweet cherry pie in the air

No one ever comes to these beaches now

But I do not care I like it here still

Definitely a place you should see

Do you hear the onomatopoeia?

On the beaches by the sea side shores

Those are the waves that change me more and more

## A Man

A man who is blind may see things more clearly

A man who talks to himself may be considered mad

A man with a temper may beat upon his family when in a rage

A man who is sad can learn what more is out there in life

A man who is brave may be considered a hero

A man who loves will receive love all his life

A man with children can be a bit more humble than before

A man with the skills of saving a life will find himself with others feeling in debt

A man who believes in god will find himself with happiness

A man who murders will leave a black mark on his soul

A man who is courageous will be a man to be put in books

A man who is creative is not shy about this world

A man who speaks for peace may be a saint in disguise

A man who sacrifices his life lives forever in good favor of god's great eyes

A man who can teach will gain new knowledge each day

A man who believes in the impossibilities will be rewarded with great opportunities

A man who always must listen will be granted moments of his own sacred silence

A man who makes things by hand will know the satisfaction of the land

A man who writes will receive the greatest words of all

A man who gave his life for us is the greatest man of all.

## My Niece

My Cambria whose lips purse in newfound stubbornness

Whose hands are like small birds treated with gentle care

Whose thoughts are crackling static pulsing in the air

Whose teeth are white pearls surrounded by pink silk

My Cambria whose height is small but presence is mighty

Whose eyes are melted milk chocolate.

Whose eyes are pools round and big

Whose eyes flash with lightning when angry

Whose eyelashes are black swan feathers

My Cambria whose hair is brown satin

Whose hair is as curly as the curls of woodwork shavings

Whose nails are shells on white sand

My Cambria whose face is the stirring of candlelight

Whose face is a heart shaped stone in a river

Whose cheeks are the color of crepe myrtle blooms

My Cambria whose skin is peaches and cream

Whose eyebrows are small caterpillars

Whose small feet are marble statues

Whose laughter is nature's anthem

## **Ticking time**

I dreamed we could have just a few minutes alone

I dreamed that you would be there when I got home

I dreamed that this moment would never end

I dreamed that everyone would understand

I dreamed that we would be able to watch the stars

I dreamed that this time would forever be ours

I dreamed that we would see each other again some day

I dreamed we would never run out of things to say

I dreamed we would be together even after such a long time

I dreamed that you would always be mine

## **Be careful what you wish for**

She had always wanted a child. Any child would do. Younger or older she didn't care. So when a girl of 14 needed a place to stay. She did not think twice about it before taking the girl in. but this girl was not like any other. She was a mastermind in the art of despair. The girl stole everything she could from the women who had so willingly taken her in. and when she was done had left the house in ruins. And as the woman was screaming, "What have you done?" the girl just turned and smiled and said, "It's what needed to be done because you are not meant to be the mother of a daughter, but maybe a son." This is the tale of the woman who was not careful of what she asked for.

## It can wait

"We could do it," he said looking up at her.

"No we can't. It will start a riot," she replied.

"I don't care and you would probably be entertained by that because you like that kind of thing," he said smiling.

She laughed and said, "You're right I would but..." her tone changed to serious, "it wouldn't be smart and we are both smart people."

With a sigh he said, "I know but I would love to, you know I would. I guess we will just have to wait."

"Yes we wait, thankfully though we will be leaving soon and whether or not they like it we will go through with it. We just can't do it here," she said.

"How about my hometown, you would love it there and no one will know," he said

"That sounds great since everyone is against us here," she said with a far off look on her face.

"They will come around eventually," was his reply.

"Maybe but not in time," she said.

"No, but they aren't needed for this it's only each other we need," he said.

"Yes only us. That's why I won't ever regret this," she said and smiled.

"Now can we go back to what you were reading me please," she said and sat down next to him.

## Teena Li

### Dream

I dreamed of a river of blood running down to the heart of the Earth.

I dreamed of unpleasant deaths.

I dreamed of Fate who held steady to my hand.

I dreamed of people who suffer from time.

I dreamed of pleasant places that brought peace.

I dreamed of the unknown and undesired.

I dreamed of branches, splitting and becoming pathways.

I dreamed of people's conscious.

I dreamed of events that become mazes in my mind.

I dreamed of futures with Fate leading me.



## Home

It was late that night and I was outside taking a stroll around the block. About to finish my stroll and head inside, I see a little girl shivering. What was a little girl like her doing out in the cold night? I take off my coat and cross the street. Was she a runaway? An orphan? I reach her and place my coat on her shivering shoulders.

"Little girl," I said. "Why are you here at this time of night? Where are your parents?"

She looks at me with such sadness. "I don't know sir."

"Well then, where is your home?" A lump has formed in my throat. Her eyes... they were not of a little girl's eye.

"That's the thing sir. I don't know where home is. I can never find it," she said. "I am on a quest to find one."

I nearly laugh. "A quest? A quest for a little girl like you? What about the orphanage? That could be your home."

She shakes her little head. "Sir, the orphanage is not my home. It may be home to others, but it is not my home. I shall not stop until I find it. Home is where the heart is."

She takes off my coat and places it in my hand. "Thank you sir, for your kindness." With that, she turns around and walks away. She walks and walks until her little figure disappears. From then on, I have never forgotten about the little girl and her quest to find home.

## Death

I look over this graveyard

I look over the dead

I am the angel

The one they call Death

Maybe you know me

Maybe you don't

But I will tell you the essence of my job

My job is full of pity

I carry the dead to heaven or hell

Infants, couples, children, adults, and the aged

They all lay by my cold feet

Always crying

I grieve for them

Their empty shell

Empty, so empty

By days their expressions fade away

Poems are chipped to their tombstones

"And hand in hand on the edge of the sand

They danced by the light of the Moon

The Moon

The Moon

They danced by the light of the Moon."

"He cared for the sick and unhappy

He lived in truth and fairness  
He sought God and God led him."  
Years pass and more come, lost souls  
"Why God created teachers,  
In his wisdom and his grace  
Was to help us learn to make  
Our world a better, wise place."  
I am the angel, Death  
I bring mortals to their place  
To their own peace  
My cold, cold figure is chiseled above all, crying  
But if tears could bring a  
Stairway and memories  
A lane I'd walk right up  
To heaven and bring  
You home again

## The Storms, My Queen

No others understand my queen  
They say she's too gloomy and hard to get  
She takes lives and is unmerciful  
Yet they do not think and are stubborn  
I understand my queen  
All high and mighty  
I have asked her once why she does what she does  
She answered back in a whispering voice  
"Why my child, it is the end  
The end is what counts, never the past."  
I then asked her why the flood villages  
"Why my child, they are setting their own doom" she said  
"Mortals cut down the trees, which make it flood  
Once ago the world was full of trees  
I flashed and flooded-  
Why my child, look at the end."  
So she did her job and I saw something I've never seen  
The forests became green and patterns were placed in the sky  
My queen did not bring gloom, she brought beauty.

## Andrew Liang

### Complaints of Society

Have you had that feeling that once you hate something or someone anything they do or say just makes you want to punch them straight in the face; especially the kid that just won't stop talking. I mean God why can't he just get struck by lightning or hit by a bus; anything really. And the girls that wear way too much make up. I want to get a fire truck hose and blast it at their face. But don't even get me started on the idiots of the world. I mean come on your 14 and you're smoking, drinking, and doing drugs. Where the hell do you think you are the damn 70's. Really you can say YOLO all you want, but one day it's going to be congrats you have cancer and 3 months left to live. Yea YOLO!

### Death

Every second 1 million people die. Some may be loved others forgotten. Everybody dies. That's life. We were born to die. Kids die of starvation and unclean environments every day. We mourn for death; it's our nature. One of the Beatitudes states, "Blessed are those who mourn; for God will comfort them. People die from different reasons. Killed by others, sickness, or just old age, even doing the most normal tasks. But what make me mad is when a celebrity dies millions mourn, but when a million kids die in Africa, let's say, barely anyone mourns. But no, dying is a natural thing. Death is bound to happen whether now, or 20 minutes later, or even next year, but sometime in the future you are going to die. Sooner or later, it's whether you accept the fact or not.

**A year when**

A year when people stop being idiots

A year when women will stop thinking that they're fat or ugly

A year when guys will actually wear their pants correctly and not wear the caps  
sideways

A year when kids stop thinking smoking, doing drugs, and drinking are cool

A year when everything is peaceful

A year when no one thinks the world's going to end

A year when there will be no more commercials to ruin the program

A year when songs stop being rambunctious

A year where the singer just sings with their regular voice

A year when the songs stop being about sex, money, and "bitches"

A year when all you can see at night was the moon and the stars

A year when all diseases get cured by an accidental miracle

A year when no one in the world will be obese or anorexic

A year when everything will be perfect

## **Be Careful What You Ask For.**

Be careful what you ask for

For what you get may not be what you want

Fate may not always be kind

As a kid you may have wished to grow up

But when you do

You may wish you were a kid again

A kid with innocence and freedom

Instead of always working and feeling trapped

Be careful what you ask for

Because you may ask for one thing

But you may end up with another

## Where I Live

I live where everyone smiles

where the birds sing in the morning

where the sun always shine through my window

where the grass is green and the sky is blue

where the trees are everywhere

where the Mississippi River flows

where it is always warm and where it is rarely cold

where all the walls are blue and decorated

where there is a nice big levee across from the house

where a preacher builds literally a mini white house

where the barges flow

where people ride bikes

where the city is always alive

where there is Mardi Gras

where the celebrities love to come visit and film

where time always flies

where beignets can be eaten anytime

where love exists

where everyone loves to live



## **My Fish Swimmy**

For I will consider my fish swimmy

For he is the ultimate gold fish

For first he swims around

For secondly he hits the glass

For thirdly he eats the food he has been served

For fourthly he swims some more

For he swims and swims

For he makes bubbles every now and then

For one day he stops

For now he swims in the ocean

Forever he swims and swims

## **Dreams**

I dreamed of a battle

I dreamed of two nations colliding head on

I dreamed of men laying their lives down for their brothers and leaders

I dreamed of two leaders charging into battle for one dame to marry for power

I dreamed of the dame

I dreamed of the dame's curly long brown hair

I dreamed of the dame's elegant body

I dreamed of a soldier who falls in love with the dame

I dreamed of them risking it all and following their hearts

I dreamed of the two riding into the sunset

## Lauren McCaghren

### Sorrow

The smell of sorrow is that of rain  
 the image of one betrayed by hope  
 the feeling of being pushed away  
 sobs that sound in night's melody  
 the taste of laden drops of pain  
 Sorrow is the force that tears us apart

### The Voyage

Call out your name forever  
 Out on the rolling seas  
 Dive beneath the waves  
 Your eyes now truth will see  
 Sea to shore and in between  
 Evermore released  
 Depth of blue beneath my feet  
 All in a voyage with sunlit stones upon the sea  
 To the sky I gaze in shades of white and blue  
 Overseas and skies searching ever for you  
 Love and hate the same and not  
 'Ere we meet and part  
 My call to yours  
 Your call to mine  
 Love and hate collide  
 Overseas and over skies  
 Voyages long and wide  
 Evermore we meet again love and hate divide

## Angel of Marble Tears

Oh angel of the marble tears

Art thou sad and lonely?

To watch over my lover's head

As he sleeps eternal dead

Your tears are moist in rain

And your heart must be so cold

And yet over my lover's head you always stay without a fail

Your white and stony lantern with love's eternal flame

Frozen in that moment when my lover's time came

Oh angel of the marble tears

My constant companion you are

Through snow and sleet and hurricane

Through lightning, thunder, and stormy rain

Oh angel of the marble tears

I love you so my dear

Oh will you watch my eternal sleep

After I fall dead?

Or will you spread your stony wings

And fly off into sunset?

## Last Dance

Tonight the stars are bright

Your eyes glimmer in their light

You wear a polo and pair of jeans

But who cares?

'Cause for this last dance you're mine

My dress swishes around my legs

Black and Orange and Orangish-Red

My stocking feet are bare and cold

But who cares?

'Cause as the night grows old, you're mine

The slow and gentle song seems to last a life time long

But I'm with you, for this last dance, you're mine

Your masked face sets off your honey-brownish eyes

Your silk brown hair is soft and bears the smell

Of your sweet addicting cologne

Your arms around my waist are twined

Your hands upon my hips now lie

And as in the silver-white moon light the song does end

And my hands fall from behind neck

I know that I'll see you again

Because this last dance your heart was finally mine

For this last dance you were finally mine.

## The Mad Hatter

Sitting at a table  
 Somewhere in Wonderland  
 "You're late for tea, dear Alice!"  
 Empty teacup in his hand  
 A hat of darkened velvet  
 Upon his messy hair  
 Wild eyes that shine  
 Silly smile that splits his face  
 "You're late for tea, dear Alice!"  
 He's saying that to me  
 "Ten years too late to be exact,  
 If exact you can even be!"  
 The mome wraths are all marching  
 In their silly little way  
 10/6 the old yellowed card  
 In his hat would say  
 He slices down his teacup  
 Top to bottom, straight and sound  
 He fills it to the very top  
 Yet not a spilled drop to be found  
 His coat sticks collar up  
 And falls down past his knees  
 The peacock's feather in his hat  
 Is blowing in the breeze  
 And now I'm lost in Wonderland  
 His hat held in my hand  
 For he's been captured  
 By the evil of this land  
 Down with the bloody Red Queen!  
 And into battle I ride  
 Bandersnatch is my steed  
 My vorpal sword is lifted high  
 Knights and rooks unto my left

Pawns and bishops to my right  
The king of Hearts, the Ace of Spades  
The wicked Two of Clovers  
Charge and charge and charge again  
In want to be victorious  
When this is all over  
The Jub-Jub bird has been released  
Screeching out air from within  
Down with the bloody Red Queen!  
The Jabberwock a vicious foe  
That indeed I must defeat  
A fearsome battle with lightning breath  
I struggle to my feet  
Off with your head my foe!  
The Red Queen bows in defeat  
I free my dear Mad Hatter  
And help to set him free  
For now in shining armor  
Wonderland I must leave  
But soon I'll come to see again  
My Bandersnatch and steed  
And always almost never  
Will I once again  
Be late for tea.

## Valon Mull

### Monolith

Monolith

Standing tall and strong

Your being

In marble

You, in life

Tall and strong always

Like a

Monolith

Slowly

Oh, ever so slowly

You are

Forgotten

Dejected

The monolith falls

Leaving a

Hole in me.

Why?

Why must I be tortured

By

Caring?

Because

It is a weight

I am willing

To carry for you

## **I Dream**

I dream of pain; Am I really dreaming?

I dream of sorrow; Am I really dreaming?

I dream of Poe's Raven; Am I really dreaming?

I dreamed of my chest, struggling; rising, falling...rising, falling...

Am I really dreaming?

I dream of pain

I dream that my chest rises...

I dream of fear

I dream that my chest falls, and then is still...

I dream that the Raven at my head croaks, "Nevermore!"

Am I really dreaming?

Was I ever dreaming?



## My Pig-Pig

I have a little pig-pig,

Well, she's not so little anymore:

She almost cannot even

Squeeze through the door.

She is a very clean animal,

Contradicting the stereotype;

She is also a very strong animal,

Bowling people over with her might.

She is my little piglet,

Colored black and pink;

She is the most awesome thing ever,

As you probably think.

She is constantly making noise,

Unless asleep, never quiet;

My piggy's name is Barbie,

P.S. The Q is silent!

## Sleep

As I sit by the fire

I am cocooned in my sheets;

For I am in fear

Of going to Sleep.

Sleep has been my mistress,

My lady, My friend.

I can feel her soft caress now

Upon my clammy hands.

I feel so cold now;

She holds me even tighter;

I try my very hardest

But my eyes will open no wider.

Sleep has been my mistress,

My lady, my friend.

So in death I can say that I befriended

She who sits at Death's right hand.

## He Who Is You

The man who shows himself when needed

The man who mimics me so; for it matters not what I do, he does as well

The man who can tell you yes or no, up or down, or good or bad and always tell the truth

The man who knows not what white lies are

The man who recommends your day's events; well, the at least the adjective part

The man who can be opaque, but always watching over you, like a nurse

The man who is stunningly clear on water, but the slightest ripple scares him back into the depths

The man who is you, but not you, for he is but an empty shell; you know how that shell was earned and have filled that shell with yourself

The man in the mirror.

## Temi Olatinwo

### **Mosquitoes**

I hate mosquitoes  
 With their nasty diseases  
 They should all just die

### **Birdsong**

The birds' bright singing  
 Seems somewhat out of place here  
 Where grieving ones cry

### **Cremation**

When I am dead  
 I ask that I be cremated  
 Instead of buried in the ground  
 For my loved ones to cry and pound

### **Birdsong 2**

Insects gather at the place of mourning  
 Birds gather at the place of insects  
 Their songs serenade the dead as they slumber

### **Annoyance**

It must suck to be dead  
 And have creative writing students walk about your head

## 0 Degrees Celsius

I'm so bloody cold

Thanks to that goddamn smoothie

And those chilling graves

### **I went to sleep**

I went to sleep and awoke within a hospital bed.

My family sat at my bedside, I opened my mouth and comforted them. I laid my hand upon their shoulders and assuaged their grief.

My father stood smiling at my bedside.

I went to sleep and awoke upon an operating table.

I saw my friends at the window; a mask was over my mouth, I could not speak to comfort them. I lifted my hand to relieve their worries.

My sister pressed her nose against the glass and breathed a hello.

I went to sleep and awoke within a casket.

Around me my loved ones mourned, I tried to comfort them; I could not speak. I tried to relieve their worries, I could not move.

My mother wept at my side.

I went to sleep and awoke within a tomb.

I could feel the steps of those whom I cared for above me, I tried to scream; but I could not speak, I tried to knock but I could not move. Their tears wet the ground above me; the flowers will bloom beautifully in the spring.

My beloved placed a wreath on my grave.

I went to sleep and did not awaken.

**My copy of *War and Peace***

My copy of war and peace whose cover is that of a strawberry fresh on the vine

Whose edges are that of an oyster hiding a pearl within itself

Whose title page is a rose within the moonlight

My copy of war and peace whose pages are an infant's skin

With a texture similar to that of a dogs fur

My copy of war and peace whose words are renaissance portraits

Whose characters are books within themselves

Whose sentences are gold rings

Sparkling on a bed of sand

Whose introduction is a ball of twine being unraveled by a playful kitten

My copy of war and peace whose weight and mass are a wall of bricks

Whose contents are a library full of pages but no covers

My copy of war and peace with a table of contents that is a children's book

Death

I don't think very much of it

At least not often

I'm not very scared of it either

At least not much

I know you shouldn't wish it on others

Unless you mean it

You shouldn't cause it

Except in self-defense

I try not to think of it, death I mean.

Only when I've nothing better to do, like living.

## **Storm**

I really like storms; they ought to happen more often

Five times a week would be good.

*But then the towns would flood.*

I could settle for four out of seven.

*The lakes would over flow.*

Three is the lowest I'll go.

*Very well then, but I can assure you the end results wouldn't be enjoyable.*

Fine, twice a week.

*I'm just saying you would get tired of it soon.*

A few times a month then?

*If I feel like it, maybe.*

## **Be Careful What You Ask For**

It probably isn't what you really want.

Think carefully before making your decision.

Exhaust all other possibilities, and think of all possible results.

Is this what you really want?

Is this what you've been wishing for?

It probably isn't.

## **A Leaf's Song**

From a seed

The size of a pin's tip

A titan was born.

Separate factions began to branch out

They spread towards the four corners of the world.

From a subdivision of a faction

You began to sprout.

Just a fraction of a fraction

Nevertheless you played your part,

Supporting the titan

Because of you he prospers.

Now as you fall to the ground

Your comrades salute you

Waving banners of red, orange, and brown

As you join the fallen.



## **Brandon Vo**

### **What makes me angry**

There are many things that make me angry, but one that can immediately turn me furious is how people in society focus on their priorities over other people. People who put themselves as their top priorities cause others harm because they care only about their own personal gain. They go as far as to deny other people freedom and even life just to make their own easier.

One version of this is societies that desire perfection; these kinds of societies usually go as far as killing others that they think aren't worthy for them. Most of the time, these kinds of people are self-centered and won't take perspective for other people to see any type of potential.

## **Things I didn't know I loved**

I didn't know that I love snow

I didn't know that I love birds chirping in their trees

I didn't know that I love the squirrels that slowly climb the trees for food

I didn't know that I love the deer that ate and played around the yards

I didn't know that I love the large trees that wobble by the winds

I didn't know that I love the soft winds that continually blow by

I didn't know that I love the flowers that bloomed around the yards

I didn't know that I love nature until it got taken down.

**A man/woman who**

A man who hates his students

A man who loves giving out F's

A man who is violent

A woman who has long hair

A woman who likes fish

A woman who longs to see her home

A man who lives by travelling

A man who makes wise trades

A man who considers others instead of him

A woman who was considered a god

A woman who is never forgotten

A woman who is now hated

A man who cares about his friends

A man who is always recognized

A man who was forced to leave his friends behind

A woman who isn't scared to fight back

A woman who loves music

A woman who has passed on not too long ago

A man who doesn't want to be the best

A man who is now a living dead man

A man who is disgusting to look at

A woman who is bad with words

A woman who can lead

A woman who fights without knowing why

A man who waits for a thousand years for his love one

A man and woman who cry for each other each day

**For my dog**

For my dog

For his loyalty to his owners

For his endurance to pain

For his prior knowledge of being a house dog

For his love for all humans

For his patience for his owner to return

For his energy that has always lain within him

For his enthusiasm for returning back home

For his not known proper care

For his loneliness during his wait

For his eternal slumber in a small patch of dirt

For his roaming soul to move on for a better life

## **My hometown**

I live in Leesville, Louisiana

Where forests are common throughout neighborhoods

Where crimes are nonexistent

Where almost everyone respects each other

Where air smells fresh and clean

Where flowers light up every house

Where animals move freely throughout yards

Where winds feel refreshing

Where the sun shines with Mr. Blue Sky

Where friends tend to be separated quickly

Where gardens are healthy

Where nobody lives on the streets

Where nobody boasts about themselves

Where insults are used as playful jokes

Where food is plentiful but unhealthy

Where people are always there to help you

Where planes always watch you

Where asylums are empty

Where criminals are only speeders.

## Alyssa Walker

### When We Were Young

When we were very young, the age of fifteen  
I said nothing to you  
I stayed to myself, not wanting to be heartbroken all over again  
You never gave up talking to me though.

Now we're still at a young age of seventeen,  
I speak to you more, but not as much as you would like me to  
You continue to speak to me, once again never giving up

We're twenty-two now.  
You continue to persist, but it has turned into a feeble attempt at stalking  
You decided to follow me to college and now you move into my apartment building! I  
don't mind but, why, may I ask, do you continue to persist?

Twenty-five,  
We've been through so much  
One night you finally get on your knee and ask me to marry you.  
I happily say, "Yes! Of course!" for I had been waiting for a long time  
A few years have gone by now, we have children  
You left us three months ago  
An important business meeting, or so you said

I have heard no word from you in these dreaded three months  
Has something terrible happened? Are you to ever return?

If you are considering returning or not, if something terrible has not happened to you,  
Please remember this,

We have had our quarrels, I shall admit  
We have had our disagreements  
We have always gotten through them

My darling, I long to hear your sweet voice and I long to see your always-persisting  
face!  
Will I ever hear or see you again?

## **Dream Man**

A man who loves

A man who always shows feelings for his woman

A man who cares about others' feelings

A man who fights for what he believes

A man who knows what is right

A man who is serious when necessary

A man who smiles

A man who is as honest as can be

A man who wants a family

A man who won't badmouth me, to my face or behind my back

A man who will always be encouraging

A man who will treat me right

A man who will forever be faithful

A man who cares for others

A man who shall succeed in life

A man who I call "My Dream Man"

A man who I can be comfortable around

A man I am not afraid to be with for eternity

## **What Shall I do?**

I shall leave home at ten-thirty on the dot

As I frolic I think of all success

Thoughts are ruined by a squid in my path

Walking around him, I want some bananas

He, too, wants them as much as I do

He and I share empathy with each other

Being presumptuous, we buy bananas

I shall arrive home at one on the dot

### **Grandmother's House**

A house on a hill,  
 A driveway of rocks,  
 A white garage door,  
 Shall I say more?  
 A welcoming face that, in my mind, forever will be  
 A family  
 Someone always about  
 This is my second home  
 It is called, My Grandmother's House

### **Life Ain't Fair**

You think life should be fair?  
 Lemme tell ya somethin  
 There ain't nothin 'bout it ever gonna be fair

You may want something,  
 You may even be blamed for somethin you didn't do!  
 Don't be getting mad b'out it  
 People is gonna snitch on ya  
 When they do, sayin "It ain't fair! I didn't do nothin!"  
 Ain't gonna help ya one bit!  
 It just gonna get ya in more trouble!

Listen to ya big sista and take her word,  
 I just wanna help ya out a lil bit  
 Next time ya catch yourself fixin to say  
 "It ain't fair!"  
 Always remember this lil bit of wisdom  
 It ain't EVER gonna be fair.



**The Mother**

My children,  
O how I miss you!  
If only you could still be here

My darlings,  
Why did you have to go?  
Why couldn't I save you?

Your dear mother  
Misses you so  
And she shall  
Always miss you

My dearests,  
Mother will  
Come back to you  
One of these many days, I shall return to you

I shall seek out your shining faces  
When my time comes to join you.

**The Children**

Mother!  
How we miss thee so!  
Why haven't you come to see us?

Why will you not come and see us?  
Have you forgotten us?  
Are we simply lost and are too far away to hear your beautiful happy voice?

Mother dear,  
Where and when shall we find you?  
How can we be without our mother?

## **Love of Life**

A year when I was born

A year when I began to walk

A year when I learned my first words

A year when I was innocent and did not yet know how to judge

A year when my mother took me home and away from the hospital

A year when I first started school

A year when I met new people and made new friends

A year when I went to 4-h camp and learned to dance away

A year when I held my first hand

A year when I had my first boyfriend

A year when I had my first kiss

A year when I started Advance

A year when I came for my second time

A year to come when I will age out

A year when I grow old

A year when I will remember everything in my life, both good and bad, that has happened to me

A year when I shall go be with my Lord and Savior and see my many loved ones in heaven

## **Dance**

Day

And

Night

Constant

Excitement

## Contributors

**Joshua David Ballagh** is from Leesville, Louisiana and attends a school called Faith Training Christian Academy. He is going into 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and this is his 1<sup>st</sup> year at ADVANCE. He is the kind of guy you can have “nerd talks” with about Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, etc. He enjoys playing soccer, swimming, snow skiing (when he can), and gaming (electronic and tabletop). And, of course, writing. It is his ambition to become a published author.

**Andrew Bennett** is a third year student attending the ADVANCE Program for Young Scholars. He is fifteen years old and going into the tenth grade at Northshore High School. Living in Slidell, Louisiana, he enjoys performing in his school’s band and playing for his school’s soccer team.

**Carly Branch** lives in Oden, Arkansas, and is going into the 8<sup>th</sup> grade next year at Oden High School. She plays two sports, basketball and archery, and she hope to also do track this coming year. She has really enjoyed ADVANCE and Creative Writing and hopes to come back next year.

**Courtney Caraway** was born in New Orleans on April 17, 1999. She is 13 years old and plays volleyball for St. Thomas More Catholic School in Baton Rouge and is currently going into 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She is a dedicated Directioner. Her favorite animal is a tiger and her favorite color is purple. Her favorite fast food restaurant is Raising Cane’s and she plays the drums.

**Alastair Dunn** is thirteen years old and lives in Leesville Louisiana. He is going into the eighth grade at Faith Training this year. He is half Korean and was born on Guam and moved to Leesville as a baby. He is great in sports, particularly soccer, swimming, martial arts.

**Catherine Ebarb** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year at ADVANCE. She is 15 years old, lives in Alvin, Texas, and is a sophomore at Alvin High School. After high school, Catherine wants to get her degree in psychology and law to become an FBI agent, and continue writing on the side.

**Teena Li** was born in Nashville, Tennessee. A few months after she was born, she and her twin sister moved to China for a year and then to New York City, living in the Bronx for eight years. In the summer before fourth grade, she moved to Pennsylvania. Before eighth grade, she moved to Shreveport, Louisiana and is going into ninth grade. Teena loves to hang out with her friends and family. She really loves to play the flute and play duets with others. Miss Li is the first generation in her family to be born in the U.S.

**Andrew Liang** is a 15-year-old who is on his way to 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Jesuit High School in Mid-City New Orleans. He is a third-year student at ADVANCE. He likes to play sports, and he also likes to draw. Andrew also plays the tenor sax, baritone sax, and the piano. He lives in New Orleans, Louisiana. He plans to grow up and become a doctor.

**Lauren McCaghren** is a first year ADVANCER who is thirteen and will be in eighth grade next year. She lives in Frisco, Texas with her mom, dad, little sister, and two cats. She plays keyboard and is occasionally lead or backup vocalist in WAM, the Wired K-6 Children's Ministry at Covenant Church in Carrollton. She attends Cobb Middle School where she is on yearbook staff. She has had a love of writing since she was smaller, but didn't fully develop it until she was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Valon Mull** is from Elm Grove, Louisiana and this is his first year at ADVANCE. Next year, he will be attending Elm Grove Middle School in the eighth grade. He has about ten chickens, one horse, two dogs, two cats, and too many goats to count.

**Temi Olatinwo** is a thirteen-year-old girl who was born in Baltimore, Maryland during a hailstorm. After a series of hilarious mishaps spanning the course of ten years, she found herself living in Natchitoches, Louisiana attending the Middle Lab School and planning to enter Natchitoches Central. Temi enjoys reading, manga and anime, music, playing the violin, and video games.

**Brandon Vo's** ethnicity is mainly Vietnamese and slightly Chinese. His hometown is Leesville, Louisiana. His personality consists mainly of being bored, cynical, and laid-back. He doesn't usually like to turn against anyone or leave bad impressions. Things that apply to regular people usually apply as the opposite to him. He's about to join LSMSA for his sophomore year. He doesn't have interests or hobbies except for computer programming. His memory span ranges from years to mainly seconds. A main downside is that he is barely capable of making independent decisions.

**Alyssa Walker** is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year at ADVANCE. She is 14 years old and lives in Springhill, Louisiana. She attends North Webster High School as of fall 2012. She will be entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. She wants to go to college after high school to become a pediatrician. She has wanted to do this since she was in the fourth grade. She hopes to return to ADVANCE for all five years.