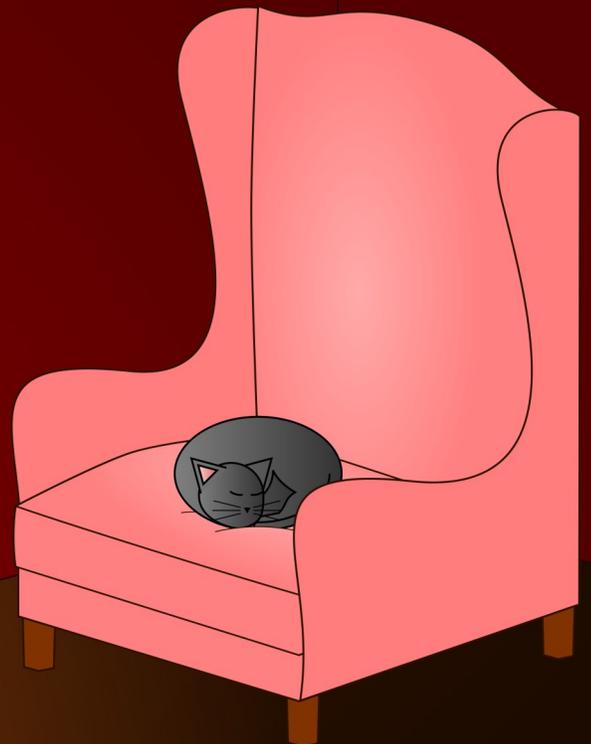


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# Inspired Ink

2015-2016 Sem. 2

Family

# INSPIRED INK

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April Fools' Day leaves us all feeling a little bit cheated. It's a day we set aside to let people take advantage of our thoughts and feelings for the sake of a joke. Hopefully, we're able to move on the next day without being hurt too deeply.

Sometimes family feels like a joke, in all its painful irony. It's supposed to mean unconditional love and support, while many of us find ourselves being pulled down by the very people we count on to lift us up. I don't pretend that all parents love and care the way they should or that all siblings make an effort to build relationships; but I do know that, no matter where you come from, family is part of what makes you who you are.

Whether your family is one you were born into, one you've been asked to adopt, or one you chose for yourself, remember that every person is made human by their imperfections. In other words, if we want to be loved and accepted, we have to love and accept. Whether you're surrounded by people who always have and always will stand behind you, or you find yourself repeatedly thrust into new homes, remember that companionship is part of human nature. No one wants to be alone.

The Inspired Ink staff, the ORVagonian, the Leadership Team, and the Honors Society are all working towards the same goal. We want to give you a second family. A home away from home. We want to bring the student body together and allow you to engage and build each other up. We want to find out what inspires you so we can share it with others, whether that involves writing short stories, fanfictions, slam poetry, music, sketching, digital arts, photography, or something we haven't seen yet.

We hope you enjoy this issue--the stories and artwork inside--because we had a wonderful time working with those of you who submitted. We also hope you'll choose to participate in the next issue. We're accepting submissions for our Thriller theme via gmail [inspiredinkorva@gmail.com](mailto:inspiredinkorva@gmail.com) and Mr. Neal's kmail until April 20th. We're looking for intense, edge-of-your seat writing. If you have artwork to share, or you're interested in illustrating a story, let us know! We can't wait to hear from you.

Thank you,

Dree Wojnarowisch

Editor in Chief

## A Procession of Voices – Megan Davidson (nf)

Maybe it was the fact that it was the fourth time that year that my dad and I sat down to watch *Jaws* together, or maybe it was just three times too many. I remember him rattling off the lines, perfectly in sync with the movie, from across the house when he went to grab another soda from the fridge or through the too-thin walls when he stepped outside for a smoke. He didn't even need to see what was happening on the screen to know what to say, and I'd be lying if I said my 9 year old self didn't think that was the coolest thing ever. Sunlight would stream through the cracks in the brown curtains and paint patterns across the wooden floors. The sound of the movie drowning out the noise bleeding out of the kitchen, sounds of my mother making dinner and asking, again for the nth time, "Haven't you seen that movie enough times?!" But I would ignore her, and Dad couldn't hear because he was still outside. It wasn't much, and it's small really, but it was in moments like those when I felt the most at ease. Like the ticking of a grandfather clock with the pendulum swinging back and forth, I was content to go on like that forever.

Maybe it was the 24-hour long marathon of *A Christmas Story* we watched on TBS every year without fail, much to the chagrin of my mother, because god if she didn't hate that movie. And it didn't matter that the glow of our Christmas tree would cast a glare on the television screen, because my dad didn't need to see what was going on to know exactly when to say the exact make and model of that stupid BB gun in perfect unison with Ralphie. And it didn't really matter that we were all too preoccupied with the full plates of food in our laps to properly pay attention to the movie. We were never the type of family to use our dining room table for anything other than catching junk mail anyway. The smell of sugar cookies baking in the kitchen, always in the shape of a candy cane or Christmas tree (because somehow they always tasted better that way) would make its way to our noses and steal our attention away from the television once our plates were all but licked clean of the holiday foods. It wouldn't make a difference in the end, the movie would continue to play well into the next day, and somehow he was able to switch perfectly from the gruff voice of the Mr. Parker to the whine of the little brother, Randy, and at 12 years old it was still the coolest thing ever.

Maybe it was the nth time we sat down together in front of the TV to watch *The Sandlot*, the nth time I pretended to be irked at the fact that my dad was once again talking over the movie, but I secretly didn't really care because I was talking over it right with him. And something about the way he laughed, deep and hearty when I did told me it wasn't exactly a secret, he knew I wasn't mad and I knew he wasn't mad and we continued to relay the lines verbatim even though those kids on the screen had, to put it kindly, a colorful lexicon. He said to me once "I watched this when it first came out, before you were even born," as if that should mean he gets to voice the better characters. But it was okay, because I was 15 and it was still the coolest thing ever. He let me voice my favorites, anyway.

Maybe it was all those times, all the *we're gonna need a bigger boat's* and *you'll shoot you eye out, kid's* and of course the *you're killing me, smalls* that now, even though my dad is 1,900 miles away, that I can sit down in front of the TV by myself and watch *Jaws*, or a *Christmas Story*, or *The Sandlot* and I'll say both my lines and his in time with the characters on the screen. I'm 17 now and it feels a little lame, a little less than cool when it's only me and not my dad and I. I'm 17 now, and hope if I ever have kids down the road, a long, long way down the road, they'll think it's the coolest thing ever like I did once.



**Carpet — Breonna North**

The fibers of this floor are  
 stained more than our feet are  
 Children's careless ways are  
 messier yet happier than the rest of us seem.

Stains of fun and love and life seem  
 just as dirty as other stains seem  
 But know of what grows at the seams:  
 restraint of living life isn't one.

Brown from dried blood's one  
 of many from my father's son  
 Glue hardens a patch of some  
 It's a scrapbook, not a floor.

**Untitled Poem — Audrey Wojnarowisch**

Dishes sit  
 Stacked in piles  
 Cracked a bit  
 They've lasted trials

Cupboards hang  
 On kitchen walls  
 Doors slam—bang!—  
 But never falls

Echoes fade  
 Hear spoons on pans?  
 Music made  
 By little hands

Life ingrained  
 In old, scratched glass  
 Mem'ries stained  
 In family past

**Flash Fiction — Belle Hight (f)**

A new house to go with the new city, and new names for everyone in the house. A bottle of dark brown hair dye to cover my mother's flowing blond curls, and extensions to add almost a full twelve inches to my shoulder length hair. We will stay here only for a few months, a year maximum. Waiting, and always looking over our shoulders for anyone who might be interested in ensuring there will be one less testimony on the day of the trial, the day this will hopefully be over and we can move back home. Back to the first of many houses, and the only with memories untainted by lies, uncertainty, and the fear that this too could all be taken away at any moment. For now at least, the best I can do is memorize my family's new names, new histories, and new address.

**2 — Liam Negrón (f)**

The boy stood in the ashes of what was once a house. The transparent image of a girl his age stood beside him. The boy took her hand and flinched at the feeling of cold skin against his, but he looked at the girl's gray eyes and held on tight. The girl smiled as if to say goodbye before she let go. Then, the smile faded and the boy bent down to the ashes with tears streaming down his face. He reached for something – a doll – and what little self-restraint the boy was holding onto fell apart. He fell to his knees and sobbed with the toy in his hands. The doll stared blankly at him with curious, sad eyes, wondering why the boy was crying – but then two sets of footsteps resounded from behind the boy and his crying choked into a deafening silence. The boy began to shake, but this time with an entirely different emotion. A hand dared to touch the boy's shoulder and for the first time the boy exploded into rage, into a deep and profound loathing that contorted the features on his face - but he wasn't himself anymore; he was now a creature of hate and despair. He spun around and jumped to his feet, smacking the hand away with as little force as he could muster.

“Jason!” His mother screamed. “What on Earth has gotten into you?”

## 2 (Cont.) – Liam Negron (f)

But to the boy the name no longer meant him. The words coming out of his mother's mouth had little if any meaning, and his father's disapproving face came across as more of a threatening snarl than a grimace.

"Son—" The father reached out to the boy.

"NO!" Jason yelled and slapped his father's hand out of the way as well. "Don't touch me! I hate you both!" Jason shouted and ran away from his parents and away from the smoldering house - still unconsciously carrying the sooty doll in his trembling hands.

He ran as far and as fast as he could, not ever looking back to see if anyone was following. He tripped and fell on his face; the force from the impact stunning him and freezing him to the icy ground where he fell. Then the boy started crying all over again, not bothering to get back up.

A cold drizzle began to fall and Jason's parents were nowhere to be seen. One of the doll's eyes had broken and the exposed stuffing became damp with the freezing rain. The wind blew gently, but still somehow managed to syphon every ember of warmth and hope from Jason's body. The boy had lost everything. In the end even the people he was supposed to rely on the most had committed the greatest act of betrayal. The only person who really cared about him was gone and it was now up to him to decide whether there was anything left worth living for. Worth starting over for. The boy tensed his muscles and began to push himself up- but the ground was slippery and one of his hands began to slip...

**“THE BOY BEGAN  
TO SHAKE, BUT  
THIS TIME WITH  
AN ENTIRELY  
DIFFERENT  
EMOTION.”**

## Stairway Freefall – Noah Moran-Rush (nf)

I remember this incident quite boldly. One night, the time of which I don't quite remember but it would be reasonable to assume around 8:00 or 9:00 PM, the majority of my family was upstairs, getting ready for bed. My mom was in the upstairs bathroom brushing Rebekah's teeth, and she had asked me to change Leah (who was a baby at the time) into her pyjamas. I grabbed some clothes and laid her down in the middle of the loft, the main upstairs room, and began to change her clothes. Simple as that. Our loft area had a half-wall next to the stairway—which began at the lower end next to the front door—that looked down onto the main hallway of the house: normally convenient, but sometimes dangerous.

Everything was going peachy until my biological father, Butthead, tramped up the stairs behind me, carrying a large pack of toilet paper fresh from the store. He walked around me, about to proceed down the hallway into his room, but stopped in front of me, and just stood there, watching. I'd just gotten a onesie on baby Leah and was in the process of equipping her with trousers when he put down the toilet paper, reached out and grabbed the baby, trying to take her from me, saying, "Alright, you've had her long enough."

I took her back and said, "I'm putting her

clothes on her."

He tried to take her back again, saying, "You can see me sitting here, wanting a turn with the baby, so you're moving as slowly as possible; so, you can be done for now." He then used one hand to shove me away, one hard push to the chest.

After a brief stunned moment of wondering how ignorant one person could be, I took the baby back and concluded putting on the baby's pants, then moved on to socks. But I didn't get the chance to finish that, either, before I was struck in the face...with the toilet paper. The oaf had gotten so mad at not getting his way that he stood up, took hold of the package of toilet paper he had been carrying upstairs in the first place, and threw it as hard as he could into my face. The package rebounded off my skull, landing directly in front of him, so he took advantage of the opportunity by repeating the same action and striking me in the face once more. That time, however, I managed to grab ahold of the package before it could bounce back to him and I backed up.

There we were: myself holding the now-weaponised package of toilet paper; him standing there in a battle-ready stance, looking as though he'd like nothing more than to beat me through the floor and throw me down to the first storey. I didn't know what

to do—I could throw it back at him (since even if it didn't hurt that much, it had enough momentum to cause a good amount of recoil and potentially whiplash), but he could reclaim it and use it against me once more. If I did nothing, he could tackle me to the ground, being almost twice as big as me, and who knows what would happen next. So, instead, I did probably the most reasonable thing to do in the situation, and I like to look back on this instance as one of my defining moments.

Instead of fighting back, or doing nothing, I decided to do what I doubt most people would have: I disarmed him by throwing the package away, over the half-wall, down the stairs, landing in front of the front door of the house. I proceeded to look him dead in the eye, as if to say, "That's not what you were expecting, was it?" I believe the fact that I just disarmed him in such a manner infuriated him. He's a proud schnoz, you know, and takes the slightest offence as his greatest embarrassment.

So, he lunged at me, grabbed me tightly, and pushed me toward the stairway, which was blocked off by a baby gate, and he yelled at me—he loved to yell—to go get the toilet paper. I told him no, specifically saying that I wouldn't because he would continue to beat me with it. That made him even more mad, knowing he was powerless

## Stairway Freefall (Cont.) – Noah Moran-Rush (nf)

to beat me without it (likely because he believes that as long as he doesn't actually make physical contact, it doesn't count as child abuse), and he threw me to the ground and pushed me through the baby gate. Not only did he just destroy the thing preventing the baby from throwing herself down the stairs (which would result in landing on the very hard stone tile at the bottom), but he then shouted at me, screaming, "LOOK WHAT YOU DID! YOU JUST BROKE THE BABY GATE! HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO KEEP HER SAFE NOW?!"—all the while laying on top of me, his hands around my neck, slowly shoving me farther towards the stairway and off of the loft floor.

He had me completely off the landing, almost tumbling down the stairs before he was stopped. The only reason I didn't fall was because he was still laying on my legs, but I grabbed one of the conveniently handle-shaped bars supporting the stairrail and pulled myself out from underneath him, rolling backwards a little and slipping down a couple stairs before catching myself and looking up as my mother approached, screaming at him to get away from me and to leave me alone. He stood there blubbing, "Look what he did! He wouldn't let me see my own child, he threw the toilet paper all the way downstairs, he broke the baby gate and he won't even go down there to get it! So, I'm making him."

My mom replied, "By shoving him down the stairs?!"

He pointed down at the bottom of the stairs without even looking, saying, "He would've landed on the toilet paper! He would've been fine!"

Our entryway was divided in two halves: walking into the house, the left half was hallway, continuing on into the rest of the house, and the right half was stairs going up to the loft. About a yard's length of floor in front of the front door was tile, ending where the stairs began. The toilet paper had landed on the half of the entryway leading to the hallway. Had I fallen and tumbled down the stairs, I wouldn't have landed anywhere near the toilet paper; I would have crashed into our little white table sitting in the corner, which had very sharp corners that several of us had injured our-



selves upon before. The only contact I could've made with the toilet paper package would have been my lifeless hand falling into a resting position over the package, if I aimed well enough in my final moments.

My mom verbally beat him and sent him running to his room, and then called me back upstairs, hugged me, and told me everything was going to be okay and sent me to bed. I didn't actually go to bed yet...I stayed up a bit guarding my door, making sure Butthead didn't try to come back in, which I believe may have happened once or twice. After a while, when I was convinced he'd gone to bed, only then did I do the same, and fell into a fitful slumber. I recall many a shed tear that night...but at least I was alive.

## My Brother's Accident – Jamie Kuenzi (nf)

I watched with apprehension as the red and blue lights reflected off the nearby house. The black toes of my brother's work boots showed through under the blanket on the stretcher and that was the last thing I saw before the paramedics slammed the ambulance doors shut.

My stomach churned as I looked to my older brother as we watched the ambulance leave with Michael inside.

"What do we do now?" I asked my other

brother, Jared.

"We get in the car and we follow the ambulance to the hospital," he said.

"But what about the hay? It is going to rain," I replied.

"I am going to call Mom and Dad and let them decide about that," he finally answered.

My thoughts went back to how the afternoon had begun before the accident hap-

pened...

Sweat trickled down my neck as I rolled another bale of hay and looked up to notice that the tractor and baler were coming around again. My arms itched from rubbing against the hay, but with the gray clouds forming in the west, there was no time for complaining.

My parents were out of state and my oldest brother, Michael, was in charge of getting the hay in. This wouldn't have

## My Brother's Accident (Cont.) – Jamie Kuenzi (nf)

been a big deal, except now the forecast had changed and rain was on its way.

Things were going smoothly until Michael went to check on another field. The sound of his quad roared to life and then faded as he crossed into the other field. I turned back to my work, when I noticed some people running at the edge of the field that Michael had just gone to check. I couldn't hear what was happening, but their waving arms and what looked like the wheels of a quad sticking up out from behind a bale of hay.

Thankfully, a neighbor called 9-1-1 and by the time I was able to get there, another neighbor was directing the ambulance into the field where Michael lay unconscious. They quickly loaded him and the siren screamed as it sped off.

My brother and I ran back to the house and got in the car. I looked out the car window at all of the bales of hay in the field that were sure to get rained on and ruined, a ruined and sighed. Some things can't be helped, I thought to myself.

Michael ended up being admitted with a severe concussion. He would have to stay in the hospital overnight so they could observe him. Jared had called my parents

and they were trying to find a flight home the next day. As we drove home, rain beat on the windshield and I listened to the wipers work in rhythm.

The darkness fit my feelings of defeat. I was happy that Michael would be okay, but was sad that all of our hay was still in the field getting soaked. We would have to find feed for our horses and cows somewhere else now. When we got home, I slumped off to bed trying to ignore the pounding rain.

The next morning Jared and I drove to the hospital and waited for mom and dad to arrive from the airport. Michael was still sleeping most of the time, but the doctors said he would recover in time and could go home that afternoon. This was great news and better than what we expected. When mom and dad finally arrived, we were able to load Michael up and take him home.

It was good to be home, but none of us had talked about the loss of the hay yet. The rain finally let up in the afternoon, so dad said we could go take a look at the fields. We piled into the pickup and took off down the road. When we pulled into the first field, we were surprised to find an empty field. Not sure what to think, we drove to the other field where Michael had

his accident. It was also empty of any bales of hay. So the question was, where was the hay?

One of our neighbors came out about that time to see how Michael was doing. We filled him in on the details and he proceeded to tell us how several of the neighbors had all shown up at the fields and loaded the hay on any trailer or pickup available. It was all stacked in a shed waiting for us to unload into our barn when we were ready.

The look on my dad's face told me he was as surprised as I was. We were very humbled by the love and care that was shown to us during that time of need. You really find out what good neighbors you have in times like these and we discovered that we had some of the best.



## Ten Months, Four Sailors, Two Dinghies, One Family – Hannah Lee (nf)

About two years ago, my family went on a 10-month long boat trip to Mexico and back. Over the course of the trip, I learned a lot about myself and I grew closer to my family.

We lived on a 32-foot sailboat named Lilo, which means Generous One in Hawaiian. If you can imagine a floating, 20 foot RV with a front porch, that was our home.

In tight quarters like these, we quickly learned that if you don't get along, it's not going to be a pleasant ride. Surprisingly, there's a lot of space on the boat to find privacy, and we found that in this small space, we were forced to be more polite and more conscious of each other's needs, physical and emotional. Now, after our return, we can see how this practice continues in our land-based life.

When we were on the boat we would cross-train on different skills so that if any of us were sick or got hurt, the rest of us could get the boat to a safe harbor. One time, Dad was pretty sick, and the anchorage we were in was quite rough, so I pulled up the anchor while Mom drove us into the marina. If we hadn't practiced those

skills, Dad would have been able to help, but he would have been miserable.

Though we tried to develop the same level of skill in all areas, my mom was the only one who spoke much Spanish. The rest of us had enough to say, "Hello," and order food but that was about it.

Some of the sailors we met thought that Mexicans were rude or ignorant just because they didn't speak English. But we found that if we tried to speak their language, even poorly, the people we met were receptive and gracious.

When we were on the coast of the Baja Peninsula, our dinghy disappeared. Now, you have to understand that a dinghy is not just a toy to row around the anchorage. It's a necessary tool. It was our transportation to and from shore, the way we got food and water. But more than that, our dinghy, Split Pea, was like a beloved pet. A few years previously, we spent a whole winter working on and off to build this sturdy adventurer. Now, she had gone off on an adventure without us and we couldn't go on without her. We managed to sail to the next major port and tried to assess the situation

## Ten Months, Four Sailors, Two Dinghies, One Family (Cont.) – Hannah Lee (nf)

and make a plan.

The first night there, my dad said, “I’ve been thinking. If we can get the supplies we need, we can build a new dinghy in five days. It won’t be the same but she’ll get us through.” As Dad scouted for materials, Mom, my sister, and I visited the marina office and explained our predicament. They said their boatyard was full, but they were so interested at the idea of a family building a boat together, they found us a parking spot where we could set up shop.

In order to get to our workspace, we had to walk the malecon, the tourist strip around the harbor. Each day we would pass cigar sellers and other hawkers. With our arms full of tools and our work clothes on, we didn’t look like typical tourists. As the week progressed, we were given recommendations of where the locals go for cheap food and the security guards made sure the new dinghy was safe through the night.

By the end of the week, they all knew who we were and were excited to see what we’d been working so hard on. When we were all done, we carried the new dinghy down the malecon, past

our new Mexican friends, to the boat ramp where the marina staff were waiting to see her off.

When we got there, the marina manager rushed up to Dad, saying, “I’m sorry. I couldn’t find champagne for the christening. Will tequila do?”

Dad laughed. “She is a Mexican boat!” We poured some across the bow, tossed a bit in the sea—an old sailor tradition—and the newly christened, Rover, went off on her maiden voyage.

Since we returned from the boat trip, I have grown more confident. On the first day of my freshman year, I went to the new-student orientation. There were so many people, it was overwhelming but I followed the masses and found my way.

At the end the day, when Mom came to pick me up, she asked me if there was anything that was hard, and I said, “Well, I was lost and confused sometimes but that’s to be expected when you’re trying something new.” I had spent a year having adventures. Now I had the confidence to take on the world.

### INSPIRED INK

Meet the students who took the time to collect and edit the pieces for Inspired Ink!



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ART FOR *MY BROTHER'S ACCIDENT* BY SAVANNAH SPENCER