Tranquility of Writing

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Mrs. Pelopida
Creative Writing
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## Reflection

*The Reflection*
“The only way out of the labrynth of suffering is to forgive”
- John Green, *Looking for Alaska*
Growing up as a teenage girl is typically defined as a nightmare when you throw wearing the right clothes, fitting in, and boys into the already daunting task, but Erin Foeri seems to have a hold on this crazy process. Erin is a sixteen year old girl who, in her own words, would describe herself as “I don’t know, unique,” a statement that could get anyone to crack a smile. To Erin’s friends, she is the sweetest girl someone would ever meet, always looking out for the interest of others, putting them before herself. Her friends know they can always count on her to be there for them and vice versa, her relying on them to guide her through her tough teen years. On the topic of growing up, Erin theorizes how her future years in college will be as she states, she “hopes to graduate with a degree that she is passionate for but also makes friends along the way.” A stupendous girl such as Erin will not have a problem making friends when she moves away. Erin, a bubbly, joyous, and kindhearted girl will have no trouble making new friends. Friends of Erin love her attitude toward life, always trying to see the positive in people, never failing to see the glass has “half-full.” It is difficult for one to pinpoint a single characteristic about Erin that makes her to remarkable. Perhaps it’s her thoughtfulness or her animated sense of humor. No matter the quality of Erin that one focuses in on, Erin will always be thought of with an infectious smile on her face, a smile that defines her as an all-around wonderful girl.
Anna clenched the bottle of Jack so tightly as she desperately tried to erase the last hour of her life from her past. Only he could make her feel this way. Only he alone was enough to make her feel as if her heart had been pried from her chest and demolished into a million pieces by some greater force that she could not rise above. With her back to her opaque walls, she let herself slowly collapse to the floor, burying the soft features of her delicate face in her hands as she wept over the love of him. When she was with him she felt complete, and sitting in her flat alone without him, she let the loneliness sink in and all her memories of him flooded her thoughts, only making her more confused. It was impossible for Anna to forget about the way he made her feel as if she was whole again. Anna was never the girl who would allow some guy to become the center of her world. She vowed she would remain independent when she started a new beginning in downtown London. But feeling the chill of the wall against her back, and the sharp pain of emptiness in her heart, she was faced with the brutal reality that that was the person she had become. Anna had been through this scenario before, ending the relationship with someone she cared about, but this time it was different. This time she felt as if someone threw a thousand bricks at her and aimed directly for her heart. This is why Anna never built her walls up, but somehow he managed to tear them down with ease. Ripped from her thoughts, Anna looked up from her tear stained baseball-tee at an old picture of him and her—a photograph of pure happiness. Instantly, Anna was shot back in time to the day when the photograph was taken. She stared with glossed over eyes at the picture, his arms wrapped tightly around her waist as she returned the favor, draping her fragile hands on his shoulders with painted smiles on both of their faces. Anna missed that smile, that feeling that he gave her, that feeling of indescribable joy, a
feeling of invincibility. Slowly, Anna managed to compose herself just long enough for her to
ghost across the room to that picture. She reached out with a trembling and grasped the frame,
slowly bringing it up to her tear stained eyes. Looking more closely at the photo only heightened
Anna’s self doubt. She ran her thumb over the glass of the picture frame, fondly remembering
the memory, wracking her brain for an answer and although she was devastated and torn up
inside from this day, she knew she had done the right thing. In her heart, Anna knew their
relationship would never last, that there had to be some storm brewing, that’s just how her life
worked. Matters took a turn for the worst, people stood in the way, and miscommunications led
to Anna and Tyler’s fall out. Tyler. Anna felt the tension behind her eyes rising, a tear
threatening to escape when she let herself remember his name. Taking one more look at the
photograph still held loosely in her hands, she brought it over her head, almost too ready to slam
it to the ground, wanting to hear the glass cover of the frame shatter into a million pieces, just
like her heart had been. With the frame held high, something snapped inside Anna and she
dropped to her knees. She thought back to the girl she was before Tyler and the promise she
made— to never become trapped by someone else, to remain herself. As Anna remained on her
knees in the middle of her flat, drowned in her own broken promises, she let a tear fall to the
hard wood floors, leaving a visual reminder of her heartbreak. She couldn’t do this anymore.
Anna had been through her share of hard times and she was not going to let herself be that girl
again— the girl who had felt so low that she hadn’t felt anything at all, that she felt numb. Not
the numb as if you were standing out in pouring rain for two hours, but the kind of numb where
you have emotionally exhausted yourself to the point where you don’t know what to feel
anymore. Reminding herself of who she truly wanted to be, that happy girl again, Anna picked
herself off the ground and rose to her feet. She glanced at the picture in her hand one last time
before placing it back to where it belonged. Anna felt the wetness of her cheeks slowly dry as she composed herself and reassured herself that she would be okay again. She would be fine in the long run, she just needed to give herself time to heal. She sat in the silence of her flat, wishing that someone would tell her she would be okay, wishing that someone would wrap her up in their arms and gently run their fingers through her hair whispering close to her ear “You’ll be alright.” But Anna knew exactly who she wanted that person to be and she knew that staying in her flat, reliving the past hour would only make matters harder on her. Trying her absolute best to keep her head held high and paint a smile on her face, Anna slowly brought herself upstairs to get dressed to head out for a coffee run at the local Starbucks. She threw on a pair of brown wool leggings and her favorite oversized sweater as she looked in the mirror and saw a different girl than the one only moments ago. She gazed in the mirror, looking behind the glass and behind the broken girl with a forced smile and saw a vision of her former self. Underneath her cheeks, dampened by a small trail of mascara, she saw a girl with a real smile on her face, a girl who was not going to allow herself to feel so low ever again. Taking a deep breath, Anna slipped on her shoes and headed back downstairs to brace herself for the cold winter air that London had to offer her. Grabbing her keys, she swiftly ghosted over to her front door, slowly opening it, knowing she’d be exposed to the outside world. She would no longer be in her own bubble of an apartment where she could keep all her feelings inside, no, Anna would immerse herself in the city that she had come to know and love over the course of only a few years. She grasped the brass doorknob with an unsteady hand as she opened up the door. With her eyes closed she breathed in the crisp cool air as the wind tousled her chestnut brown locks and braced herself for the rest of her day, vowing to push past whatever she had been feeling before. Realizing she would be okay and that she wasn’t an emotion wreck like girls her age had
been stereotyped as, she slowly fluttered her eyes open only to wish they had been closed again. Sitting on her doorstep with his strong back faced to her, head held low to the cold wooden stairs was Tyler. Millions of thoughts ran through Anna’s mind as she took in the sight. Tyler twisted his body in an attempt to look at her when he heard the sound of the door creak open and Anna’s heart stopped. The hope filled eyes she once knew had vanished, only to be replaced with darkened, redder from crying ones. His hair was a golden brown mess, looking as if he had run his hands through it a thousand times contemplating something that had been nagging at his conscience. He looked just as broken as she was merely moments ago.

“Tyler?” Anna questioned cautiously, building up enough confidence to say his name and initiate a conversation, but not enough ask him why he was sitting on her doorstep. His appearance took a toll on Anna’s emotions considering they had been running high all morning, but she swore to move on. Although, seeing him slumped on her doorstep ruined any chance of that happening.

He looked up at her with those tear stained eyes and immediately Anna’s heart fell into her stomach for what felt like the hundredth time that day. “I’m sorry,” he stumbled and tripped over his words, “I should leave,” he trailed off, bringing himself to his feet to make a quick get away.

He knew it was a mistake, a big mistake leaving her the way he did. After their heart wrenching screaming match, Tyler left, only far enough to get the space he needed. He couldn’t bring himself any farther than her doorstep because he knew if he drove down the streets of London without her, he would lose the one real thing he knew and held on to, although he’d never admit it. The truth of the situation was that Tyler was just as distraught as Anna was after their fight and when he fell to the cold surface of her doorstep, he couldn’t help but think of how
he ended up wallowing in his own regret. He thought of their argument and why they couldn’t just talk it out and make it work, why their fight had to keep escalating, why their voice kept raising in volume. Tyler remembered the late nights he had spent with Anna watching television, her legs draped lazily over his as he sat upright and she perpendicular to him. His thoughts traveled back to one particular night where they had been watching reruns of *Full House* and how the characters had always solved their problems effortlessly. Tyler thought about how he had hoped he and Anna could save their relationship by working out their problems like the characters on the show, but unfortunately this was not a 90’s sitcom and life wasn’t always that easy. If Tyler let Anna go he would be losing a part of him. His thoughts flashed back to when he first met Anna in a coffee shop. She was the girl who worked behind the counters and Tyler was just another customer. Tyler was always drawn to her bubbly personality whenever he would order something. He wasn’t quite sure if it was part of the job to act so outgoing but he liked it none the less. After Tyler and Anna started talking more Tyler was intrigued by her deep personality. Most of the girls Tyler had met or dated didn’t have much depth to them. They were all the same to Tyler, but with Anna it was different. He could tell that she had layers of emotions that he couldn’t wait to discover. Tyler quickly snapped out of his thoughts though and was transported back to the painful reality where he was walking away from all of those memories.

“Wait!” Not knowing why she said it, but glad she did, Anna stopped him from walking out of her life. They were both on the same page, not wanting to lose each other, but standing face to face after their emotional afternoon, they couldn’t bring themselves to say it. “Would, would you want to grab a coffee with me?” she offered with a shrug of her shoulders. Anna didn’t know what else to say, knowing that if she mentioned the last few hours emotions would
run high again. In her mind Anna saw this as a new start, two people meeting for the first time, rediscovering a light they both shared, but she also saw this realistically. They would never be able to get over the hurt without closure, and although offering him to a cup of coffee was not her ideal version of closure, it was the best she could come up with. She was at a loss of words but desperately needed to keep him from walking out on her like she feared he would. Tyler was confused at first, not knowing why she would offer him a coffee trip, but then he figured it out. He realized that she was just as upset as he was and that this was her attempt to patch together the broken pieces of their relationship. He knew it would take time, their fighting being the bomb dropped on their relationship, but it was definitely better than a goodbye.

“Sure, that’d be nice.” Tyler shot her a lopsided smile. It was a start. Anna believed that something had ended, but she also knew something had begun. They both shyly looked at each other, a pink hue consuming their faces with embarrassment. In the matter of hours they had become completely two different people, but looking into the same eyes they had so many times before they gazed into a new hope as well as a new beginning.
Why is it that every couple years, or even months, there is a new craze that, for a lack of better term, sweeps the nation? These crazes have passed through every generation, ranging from “Beatle Mania,” to “Bieber Fever,” from “The Harlem Shake” to dare I say it, “twerking.” As odd as these phrases of mass hysteria may seem, they occur in every aspect of our lives, especially in television. During 90’s, the “it” television series at the time seemed to be *Friends* and now, in 2014, the new “it” television show seems to be *Breaking Bad.* I walked into school one day and the only conversation I heard was of this show. As I kept hearing the name, I became more and more curious about what this show was about, and once my family decided to invest in Netflix it was the first show on my list to watch. As soon as I could, I turned on Netflix and scrolled through the “TV Series” category only until I found the show I was searching for. Within minutes of the first pilot episode the main character is shown frantically speaking into a camera, presumably filming a goodbye video to his family, wearing nothing but his tighty-whitey underwear. I had to do a double take, this was the show that was the center of everyone’s attention? I thought it was strange, but once I got passed the first episode I was hooked. The show’s plot line is like one I have never heard of before, which seems to be more fitted for a movie, but works in its favor a plot for a television series, always keeping the viewers locked in. The show follows the life of Walter White, a high school chemistry teacher who is unfortunately diagnosed with cancer. Already struggling to pay his bills, Walt, taking drastic measures, decides to put his chemistry knowledge to use by, in a strictly scientific matter, producing methamphetamine. Walt launches his plan into action by seeking out an old student of his, Jesse Pinkman, to be his partner and follow him on this risky adventure. Of course their endeavors
only become more and more perilous as the shows’ plot thickens, which keeps viewers along for the crazy ride. What really peaks my interest about the show, as quirky and nerdy it may sound, is how topics I have learned in school relate to this thriller of a show. For example, when Walt fully immerses himself in the drug dealing business, he chooses the pseudonym Heisenberg to mask his true identity. Heisenberg, as I have learned in the wonderful class of chemistry, is the last name of a scientist. Werner Heisenberg is the scientist who pawned the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle which states one may never point out the exact position and momentum of an electron in an atom’s orbital. If there is one thing that will stick with me from chemistry, that would be it. Furthermore, as I continued to watch the show, I found myself thinking about concepts I learned in my sophomore English class. Normally, one wouldn’t put a show about drug dealing and breaking the law together with English class, only I would to that, but as the show progresses the connection clicked. Towards the end of the series, Walt’s character progressively becomes more and more villainous, his attitude towards money, the business of dealing, and even murder growing ruthless. I couldn’t help but connect his character progression to Macbeth’s from William Shakespeare’s famous tragedy Macbeth. In Macbeth, Macbeth’s character changes from a seemingly naïve one, to a malicious one, yet at the end of the play, the reader and audiences still feel sympathy for him. Writing a paper about Macbeth as a tragic hero is what reminded me of Walt. Walt starts off as a character who you instantly want to help, considering his predicament. As the show progresses, there is no denying that Walt’s character changes and the viewer realizes that his character becomes more devious, yet at the same time the viewer still feels empathetic towards him, taking into account all he has been through. In this way, Walter White relates to Macbeth. Strange enough, Jesse Pinkman reminds me of Macbeth as well. Jesse, the skeptical youth who initially introduces Walt to the drug business is a
criminal, yet throughout the series, whomever watches the show views him as the protagonist. Strangely enough that is what conjures up in my brain as I watch a show about criminals who devise to deal drugs as their living. For those who haven’t seen *Breaking Bad*, I highly recommend it. Television has always fit a pattern when it comes to ones viewing pleasure. The viewer, normally, goes home and sits down at night, replaces and watches their favorite show, expecting to be met with the same static character they see very week. *Breaking Bad*, however, breaks this status quo, throwing curve balls at its viewers, where the characters change as the plot intensifies and the plot zigs when you think it should zag. Breaking the norm is a task that is always difficult and *Breaking Bad* handles it in an effortless way, never losing its audience as it puts its viewers up to the task of keeping up with its character’s stories, bringing them along for the crazy ride! What makes *Breaking Bad* such a phenomenal television series and this generations TV craze is the constant twist and turns it throws at its viewers. It’s strange to think that maybe when I am older, I will tell my children that the television series of my way was about a mad scientist who made the most vital decision of his life—to sell drugs.
A World of “M’s”

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I had done the unspeakable, committed the worst sin, although I had no feeling of remorse in my bones. Didn’t she know I had given her everything? Was she not aware that I had provided her with happiness and nothing but love and compassion all these years? I guess not. Feeling my blood start to boil and my fists start to clench, I planted my feet firmly on the rickety wooden floorboards, stood up and headed towards the basement. As I grasped the doorknob a feeling of overwhelming anger took over and replaced all coherent thought.

Madeline, the girl that consumed my thoughts for the last few years had betrayed and left me. Madeline, the girl whom I had fallen in love with had pried my heart out of my chest, like stealing a mother’s infant from her womb, and thrown it into the burning pits of hell, where it would stay until the day I die myself. A younger version of myself that had once loved Madeline was gone, and in its place stood a cold, brute man. I am not a bad person, I know that and will not allow myself to think otherwise, and I am inclined to preserve some piece of my past with Madeline, even if it must be a tangible reminder of her. I had single-handedly taken a knife to her back, stealing from her the life she stole from me. But before I could recover to hide my secret, I had taken my old letter opener that my father had given me, and gently cut away at her golden blonde locks. I would keep the luscious waves as a memory of my passion, not of her, but for her.

I am a lover, a man who keeps his heart open to others. Madeline proved to be the opposite, a woman who kept her heart far away from her sleeve, who kept it very well protected. Am I crazy? Do I possess an abnormal way of perceiving my own actions to justify them to be pure? I choose to think in contrast. I believe Madeline had chosen this path for herself, that she
intentionally wronged me for reasons that have no answer. Madeline is an enigma that will never be solved. The puzzle that Madeline is will never be put together again by someone attempting to crack her code. I believe that there are one million Madeline’s in the universe and that the world can and will endure without one more. Madeline is gone now, just a ghost of the past that will forever haunt my memory, but I must move on. She among the rest, is just another part of my collection, her body left to sink and disappear in the abyss of the ocean where I had left her. Every trace of her has vanished, except for my secret possessions— her gorgeous tendrils of hair that once cascaded down her back like waterfalls, and a letter. Madeline explains in the final letter of her hours that she had felt caught captive like some poor, innocent animal trapped in the confines of the steel cages in a zoo. So what I had done had been in best interest for Madeline.

If her wish was to leave, then I would let her leave, permanently. Madeline was part of my collection, a beautifully written paragraph to contribute to my life story. But, as noted before, I must move on. There must be more sentences and phrases out there that will better my novel and by a chance of fate, I might have found one. When I walked to the bank sometime after the “incident” I had let my eyes wander towards a beautiful woman, a women who might as well be my new paragraph. Her hair was longer than Madeline’s, and her eyes were a deeper blue. A blue that made me want to know her on all levels, even if I swore to never be involved with another woman again. Madeline was gone and seemed to constantly vanish from my thoughts as I watched a new part of my collection stroll casually to the bank every day. Madeline had been a part of my past that taught me to define my part in a relationship as the dominant player, and with her gone, I could start fresh.

The room’s cleaned out now and good as new. I shall put what she wrote and her hair up in the loft in the deed-box which will not be opened till my death, so I don’t expect for forty or
fifty years. I have not made up my mind about Marian (another M! I heard the supervisor call her name), this time it won’t be love, it would just be for the interest of the thing and to compare them and also the other thing, which as I say I would like to go into in more detail and I could teach her how. And the clothes would fit. Of course I would make it clear from the start who’s boss and what I expect. But it is still just an idea. I only put the stove down there today because the room needs drying out anyway.

-John Fowles, The Collector
Patrick O’Connor sat still in the uncomfortable hospital chair, staring blankly at the milky white walls of his wife’s dreary room. Room 317 of the east wing would be his new home as long as his wife, Abigail, would be residing there.

“Patrick,” the nurse’s voice emitted from the doorway, “Unfortunately it’s time for you to leave now. It’s past visiting hours,” she finished with a soft, apologetic tone. Patrick, however, didn’t move, he made no attempt to leave Abigail’s side. He gazed longingly at his wife, drinking in the same beautiful features he had fallen in love with years ago. He furrowed his wolf grey eyebrows and added a slight downward curve of his lips at the sight of his wife, ill and frail, lying in a hospital bed. He ran his left hand up the side of his face in discontent at the nurse’s words, brushing the bristle like hairs of his beard as his rough fingers trailed his profile.

“Do you know how we met?” Patrick spoke in a shaky tone, modulating his Irish accent up and down in pitch. The nurse was confused for a moment as to why Patrick would not respond to her, and even more puzzled as to why he responded in that way.

“Pardon me?” The nurse questioned, somewhat intrigued by what Mr. O’Connor had to say.

“Do you know how we met? Abigail and I?” He spoke in staccato, emphasizing each syllable.

“I’m sure I don’t,” she replied with a newfound gentleness to her voice. Yes, it was past visiting hours, but as she stood in the frame of the doorway and looked beyond Mr. O’Connor’s spectacles and into his deep green eyes, she could tell there was a story behind them. The crooked lines that were engraved in his face showed that Patrick had lived a long life full of
contentment with his wife, and seeing him sit there with the look of hope in his eyes, she couldn’t help but listen to his story. She paced towards the seat across from Patrick, her tennis shoes creating a light pitter patter against the cold tile floor. The nurse noticed Patrick’s smile at the realization that she wanted to listen to his story, and that the life that he and Abigail had together would never fade away.

“I was a younger lad, and my parents had taken me away with them all the way from Kilkenny, Ireland. We had moved to the ultimate place of opportunity—New York City. Life wasn’t ideal for an Irish immigrant, you know, but we got by on so many pennies and dollars each month. Anyways, as I got a little older, in my teen years, I was drafted into the war against Germany. At this point, Germany couldn’t maintain its power for much longer. Hitler’s attempt for a third Reich was failing.” Patrick paused to take a moment of silence and of respect for his fellow veterans who were lost along the way. Just as quickly as the moment came, it passed.

“Anyway, on my way to the plane, on the day I was leaving, I accidentally bumped into a young lady.” Patrick paused, and for a split second smiled fondly at the memory. “I had told her that I was terribly sorry and that it was my fault, as a gentleman should. Then she looked up at me with her big beautiful blue eyes. I even remember how her hair was that day, you know. Her brown waves were pulled back with a hairpin embroidered in emeralds. She was just breathtaking. She immediately apologized to me in return and I just stood there gazing at her. How foolish I was! But could you blame me? She had a certain aura about her that drew you in, a quality all men hoped to find back then, and I had stumbled across her, of course on my way to war. I had told her once again that I was terribly sorry for the inconvenience, to which she smiled sweetly in response. And I carried on with my day and started off towards the docking station.”
The nurse was astounded, not completely sure if he was done with his story. When she saw Patrick’s face light up as he gazed nostalgically out the only window in the room, the nurse, however, knew he was not finished with his story.

“Go on Mr. O’Conner,” she gestured for him to continue with his enthralling tale.

Patrick took a deep breath before responding, most likely an act done to calm himself down before his smile could curve any more than it already had. “Well, as I had mentioned, I had carried on my way towards the docking station. But my third step into my walk I found myself turning around and heading off in the opposite direction. I started to walk briskly, run almost, before I had tapped her on the shoulder, a little out of breath.

“‘I’m sorry miss but I didn’t catch your name,’ I asked her. I was so nervous that I had spoken to her in the form of a question rather than a statement. The three second pause she took to respond to me were the three longest seconds of my life.

‘Abigail, my name is Abigail,’ she finally responded, extending a hand for me to shake. I had told her my name and shook her hand politely. When I took her hand in mine, as cliché as it may seem, I did not want to let go. I wanted to follow her to wherever she was heading and leave the docking station behind me. It was then that I knew this was the girl I was going to marry,” Patrick finished his story with a lopsided smile. He started to stand as he reached for his cane and placed his plaid cap back on his balding head.

“Mr. O’Connor. I’m going to leave now, please be out by nine o’clock?” the nurse questioned. Patrick nodded his head slightly and thanked her from deepest place in his heart. Listening to his story influenced the nurse’s decision to let him stay, for she could see the true compassion he felt for his wife, and she was in no position to take him away from her. If he
wanted to stay late after hours with his wife whom he may not have much time with anymore she was going to allow it.

“I will, Nurse. Thank you. Abigail thanks you,” he spoke for her as she rested in her sleep-like state. The nurse nodded and smiled, closing the door behind her on her way out. Just as she shut the door, she realized that she had left her jacket in the room. She turned on her heels towards the room, but stopped as she approached the door. Through the little window in the door, she saw Patrick placing a soft kiss on Abigail’s forehead, simultaneously running a thumb along her hands that he held. The nurse smiled and started to walk away. She would allow her jacket to stay the night as long as Patrick O’Connor and his beautiful wife Abigail were there to protect it together.
CHARACTERS
ESTHER, seventeen year-old high school student
SELMA, seventeen year-old high school student, friend of Esther

In Esther’s bedroom, in which posters are stuck to the wall with brightly colored duct tape and photos of her and her friends are scattered all over her night stand.

Opening scene is a flashback to Esther’s childhood. Esther is found struggling to finish her homework with her friend Selma. Esther is looking blankly at her notebook, tapping her pencil as she becomes noticeably more irritated. Selma looks at her own notebook with a vacant stare, not interested in her homework, just as Esther is as well. Surrounding the two girls is a tower of various textbooks and binders, each labeled with the most monotonous classes (i.e Calculus, Biology, Chemistry).

As the sun is setting outside, the dim light shines through Esther’s bedroom window. The light reflects off of Esther’s stand up mirror, shining brightly against her baby-pink bedroom walls. The light of the sun highlights the trinkets placed around Esther’s room—a teddy bear given to her by her mother, photographs of her friends and family, a pile of clothes thrown into a corner, and a collection of CDs placed by her laptop, radio, and phone charger.

Esther becomes increasingly tired of attempting to solve her problem for Calculus class, sighs, and begins to place her books in her backpack. Selma takes note of Esther’s annoyance, releases a sigh of her own, and begins to mimic her actions.

Scene 1

Soft music is emitting from Esther’s radio.
ESTHER beginning to pack her textbooks and binders into her book bag becomes flustered attempting to cram all of her belongings into such a small, confined space.
SELMA taking note of Esther’s actions begins to pack up her own bag, a sigh escaping her mouth.
ESTHER [sighing] I quit. I can’t do this anymore.
SELMA [sarcastically] Really? I couldn’t tell?
ESTHER [a small laugh escapes her lips] I don’t understand how to do this! Mrs. Banks can’t expect to teach us something in the last five minutes of class and then come home, sit down, and finish this god-awful homework for three hours.
SELMA [realizing Esther has a point, lays back down on her bed, defeated] I know, it’s so stupid. At least we have each other to get us through that class.
ESTHER Yeah, whenever she’s not screaming at us to stop passing notes. [Esther lets out a smile at the memory]
SELMA [laughing] Yeah… [her voice trails] Esther what are we gonna do?

ESHER What do you mean? [jokingly] All we can do is try to survive the rest of this horrible year and hope we don’t fail our classes.

SELMA [exasperatedly] I am so done with this year. I feel like either I am getting smarter and everyone around me is getting stupider, or either I am getting annoyed with everyone for no apparent reason, you know?

ESTHER I understand completely. Like, remember yesterday when we went out to eat? It was just the two of us and what did the maître d’ ask? [in a deep voice] “How many?” [pauses and shoots the audience an annoyed look] And why did he do this? Because he’s stupid.

SELMA Right? Right?! Like, if he weren’t stupid, he’d say [in a deep voice] “Right this way,” not, “How many?” But he didn’t say right this way. Why? Because he’s stupid!

ESTHER I hate people. God, people are so frustrating sometimes. [begins to laugh] Like, the other day when I went toaster shopping with my mom—

SELMA [laughing in a mocking way] You went toast shopping with your mom?

ESTHER Yeah… well… Oh shut up. Anyway, I went toaster shopping with my mom [Selma begins to laugh again] and my mom finally picked one out and I was standing at the counter with her, and the toaster, and a salesperson came up to us and asked, “Can I help you?” What does he think he can do? I mean… I was standing right there! There was a toaster on the counter right. There.

SELMA [laughing] That so funny.

ESTHER It got worse. Then he asked my mom, “Can I how you something in a toaster?” I wanted to say, “Yeah, you could put your head in the toaster for me.”

SELMA Are you kidding me? That is ridiculous.

ESTHER I know right? I wanted to leave, but my mom being so nice was like, “sure why don’t we look over the toasters again.” Like, why mom. Why?

SELMA That’s the problem with this year. Adults hesitate to treat us like adults yet we are punished when we act immature [holds up air quotes]

ESTHER Let’s make a pact?

SELMA What do you mean?

ESTHER Let’s promise each other that we won’t be like that when we get older? That we won’t lose all common sense and end up doing things like repeating ourselves ten thousand times before our children want to punch us in the face.

SELMA [perking up a bit at the silly idea] Promise that we won’t treat our children like children when they’re seventeen and perfectly capable of doing things on their own?

ESTHER It’s a deal.

SELMA Deal.

Esther and Selma shake hands and laugh lightly, acknowledging the fact that their deal is a bit ludicrous.

End Scene One

Scene 2
Esther comes out on stage, she is now much older than before, in her mid-thirties. We are introduced to her daughter, Joanie, as Esther approaches her in her bedroom. Her room is almost identical to Esther’s old one, except for the fact that it is more modern.

JOANIE Mom, I’m trying to do my homework, so could you like, give me an hour?
ESTHER [sighs] What’s wrong now Joanie?
JOANIE [she is already fed up with her mother’s company] Nothing Mom, don’t worry about it.
ESTHER [trying to remain calm] You know Joanie, you know Auntie Selma?
JOANIE [not wanting to hear any of what her mother is saying] Yes?
ESTHER Well her and I made a deal one day. We promised each other that we wouldn’t ever treat our kids like children. That we wouldn’t baby them. So if you don’t want me to help you with it or anything else catastrophic that is happening in your life, that’s fine. But I’ll always be here. [Esther turns around and starts to leave when she is called back by Joanie]
JOANIE Wait… Mom?
ESTHER Yes sweetie?
JOANIE How did you do it?
ESTHER Do what?
JOANIE Just balance it all? Sports…. Stupid schoolwork, and just everything else?
ESTHER [smiling at her daughters innocence] Well, I didn’t have nearly as much as much on my plate as you do but I just took one day at a time. Don’t let all of your work weigh you down Joanie. You’re a bright girl. You’ll figure all of this out.
JOANIE [contemplating her mother’s words] Um, thanks mom.
ESTHER [giving Joanie a small hug] Anytime. You know when I was your age, I thought everything was stupid. When I was your age, I wanted to just stop working hard. So it’s okay sweetie, I understand how you feel.
JOANIE [surprised] Really? I always thought that when you were younger you were that really happy girl, that was friendly to everyone and was obsessed with horses.
ESTHER Not exactly. When I was younger I felt like I just wanted to graduate and get on with college. The glory years. [she adds quotations to “the glory years”]
JOANIE That’s literally me right now, Mom. I want to go to college and get out of this small town.
ESTHER Well, it can’t be that bad? Going to school in a small town has its benefits sometimes.
JOANIE Yeah like what? [she instinctively crosses her arms across her chest in denial]
ESTHER Well, the friends you make now will be your friends for life. It’s always nice to see familiar faces when you feel a little lost.
JOANIE Yeah, but I see the same people everyday when I walk through the halls. I’m surrounded by girls who block the hallways by standing in the middle of them like airheads and boys that walk too slow.
ESTHER [laughing at the way her daughter described her schoolmates] You know sweetie, these days are pretty insignificant. When you look back on it you’ll realize how much fun they actually were, [Joanie rolls her eyes not truly believing her mother] even though they may feel like hell now.
JOANIE Well when will hell be over?
ESTHER When you’re out of high school. But then you’re off to college and its not all play.
JOANIE [groaning] I’ll make it 75% fun, 25% work. [her mood changes, now laughing]
ESTHER [getting up from her daughter’s side, she lets out a small laugh] You know, I’m going to keep my promise to Selma and not say anything about that. You’ll come to your senses. But for now, it’s time for dinner so let go! [waves her hand towards the door]
JOANIE Alright, alright. I guess my math can wait.

Both Esther and Joanie exit Joanie’s bedroom and head downstairs for dinner.

End scene two.  End Act One.
Where the Sidewalk Ends

Shel Silverstein

There is a place where the sidewalk ends
And before the street begins,
And there the grass grows soft and white,
And there the sun burns crimson bright,
And there the moon-bird rests from his flight
To cool in the peppermint wind.

Let us leave this place where the smoke blows black
And the dark street winds and bends.
Past the pits where the asphalt flowers grow
We shall walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
And watch where the chalk-white arrows go
To the place where the sidewalk ends.

Yes we'll walk with a walk that is measured and slow,
And we'll go where the chalk-white arrows go,
For the children, they mark, and the children, they know
The place where the sidewalk ends.
I Am
Imitation of *Hanging Fire* by Audrie Lorde

12 March 2014

I am sixteen years old
and an actress
putting on a show for the rest of the world
Shielded by my vibrant makeup
as I take on the role of whoever I decide to become
I lost myself waltzing around in a masquerade that I can no longer partake in

I am sixteen years old
and an artist
Transforming my emotions into a tangible treasure
I feel every ounce of passion
course through my veins
as I realize my marvelous canvas is broken and torn

I am sixteen years old
and waiting
Waiting for the storm to pass,
for the weighed down clouds to release
their tears, unleashing a sigh of relief
Waiting for a single ray of sunlight
to pierce through the darkness

I am sixteen years old.
“Speak”

20 March 2014

Your voice is a powerful tool to use how you please
It can rise and fall like the infinite waves of a vast, blue, endless sea
Or the sun, burning bright with passion from the East, only to then cool with reassurance from the West
It can be soft like the flurries of crystal snow that floats and cascades down upon the ground on a chilled Winter day
Your voice can be strong like the pressure of the pouring rain beating down on a feeble tin can
On the other side of the blade, your voice can be timid and afraid, like a child running scared from a clown
Your voice can speak to others, convey a message, speaking from your heart
Your voice can dig to the depths of your mind, extract your desires, and shout them to the world
Plead those deaf to your voice to listen, no words to be unsaid. It is the unsaid that fills us with an overwhelming feeling of regret
The silence consumes us when we fail to speak, acting as a snake wrapping itself around its victim—precious words
The silence becomes so loud and we begin to lose our faith in our voice. We lose faith in ourselves

So use your voice, for it is your strongest weapon in the war of life
Ransom Note Poem

25 March 2014

Seventeen superheroes
secrets revealed!
The Fierce Queen
Wanted radiance, love,
and BEAUTY. Rendezvous
in FEBRUARY with Amazing

celeb Queen bee
REFLECTION

“Writing is a way to vent and express one’s true inner feelings. Through writing, one is able to convey thoughts that they have buried deep inside them.”
Sweeter Than PIE
16 June 2014

Writing is a way to vent and express one’s true inner feelings. Through writing, one is able to convey thoughts that they have buried deep inside them. I chose to take this class because I enjoy writing freely and not worrying about staying inside of the rigid PIE format that normal English class requires us to follow. It is much less monotonous and, for lack of a better term, boring. I knew going into this class that there would be a good amount of writing, that much was obvious, but I did not know how much this class would test my creative ability when given the opportunity to write about any topic. I found that I really enjoyed this class because it allowed me to do something I love, which is write, while expressing my individuality and creativeness. For this year my personal writing goal was to learn how to shorten my sentence structure while still maintaining a descriptive and eloquent tone of voice. When I write descriptively I find that my sentences become very long and I use commas too often.

I love to be descriptive when I write and for this reason my favorite assignment we did this year was the story we wrote based on a photograph. I thought it was interesting how I had to create a back story to a person based on a photo. That assignment challenged my creativity and I also was able to write very descriptively based on the contents of the photo. In contrast to the photo story, my least favorite assignment was writing the play. I had never written a play before, even on a small scale, so it was quite difficult for me to piece together. I did, however, enjoy performing the play with my classmates. I feel that if I were to write another play I would enjoy it more because I would know what lies ahead of me.

Throughout this year I have developed noticeable theme in my writing. I learned that as a writer I like to be as descriptive as I can and I put forth my best effort to paint a picture
in the readers mind. This changed my perception of the world because I learned to take an object and really appreciate its features by writing a descriptive paragraph about it. This class changed my perception of professional writing because I learned how painstaking it is to write a rough draft and read it over countless number of times in order to perfect it the way you want it to be. I feel that the editing process has helped me improve as a writer because I am more aware of my flaws when I write and therefore it is easier to correct them. I plan to continue writing in the future because I find it relaxing and enjoyable. This course has taught me that writing does not always have to be in a rigid structure where you have a point sentence, a piece of in text source, and an explanation or elaboration on the source. Writing can express who you are as an individual and that is something I loved about this class. I had a lot of freedom when I wrote in this class. I would relate characters to myself in some way which I find to be very personal and compelling in my writing. If I were to go back to the beginning of the year and change one thing about this class it would be that I would procrastinate less and complete my work well before it was due, not just with two days to spare. Overall I feel that this class helped me progress not only as a writer but a student and I will carry with me the skills I learned in this class into my English class when I am required to write in the format of “boring” PIE.