

MIDDLE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
PRESENTS

# *KNIGHT WRITERS*



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# *FOREWORD*

In 2023, Middle Georgia State University students Greyson Jackson, Tabatha Mullis, Cady Sewell, Adi Soke, and Ashley Wilson led Wes Young’s Bleckley County High School Freshman Honors English students in discussing and writing about a selection of poems by former United States Poet Laureate Joy Harjo. Ann Williams—Assistant Director of Library Services for the Cochran, Dublin and Eastman campuses—presented on library services the BCHS students could expect to encounter at the institutions of higher learning they will attend after graduation. MGA students Lauren Matthews, Devin Smith, Haley Spires, Keiah Williams, Lea Faulkner, Katlyn Hernandez, Alexis Pate, and Dawn Raines were involved in the creation of this digital anthology of BCHS student writing under the direction of Dr. Mary Christian. Knight Writers provides exciting experiential learning opportunities for MGA English and Professional Writing students and is the highlight of my academic year. I am so pleased to lead such a valuable and rewarding project, and I hope you enjoy reading this collection of pieces from talented, college-bound high school writers.

Lorraine Dubuisson  
Associate Professor of English  
April 2023

# ***FALLING EARTH***

*BY: SETH ARNOLD*

Another empty night no roaring of ships flying overhead, only silence. I walk down the metal-plated hallway. Room two eighty-six pre-cataclysm history records. I went to an almost empty room and called out “Anyone here”, I knew he was here, he never left. He lives off knowledge he needs no food and water. I step in further before he replies “Over here” I followed the sound, walking through the maze of papers, books, maps, and whatever else was left of earth.

I found him at a tablet, with the loading screen. “You’d think with all we know that you could use a research tablet, without having to wait twenty minutes,”.

“Yeah” was my response. When dealing with Owen you just agree, otherwise you’ll spend an hour being interrogated for no reason other than disagreeing.

Seemingly okay with my response he begins "Pre-cataclysm before, ash became air, and the earth trembled”

I interrupt “And the sea retreated and the sun rose in its fury, and in its fury it beat upon land”. I look downwards. I had stolen his thunder, his story. I simply put it, “Yes I know, but continue”

He began again, “This is how one of the ancients described it”. A small beep cut him off as the tablet finished loading “see all it needed was someone to talk to”.

“What about the story?” I ask.

“Oh, it over there in block 459” he returned his attention to the tablet and began typing. His finger zipped across the tablet throwing word on to it with great precision.

I turned where he pointed and scanned the rows before finally coming across it. 459 Events of Falling earth. I clicked the button and read. The air filled with ash, a rough estimate of forty to fifty volcanos went off in a timeframe of ten minutes. The combination of smog and ash destroyed several ecosystems in western Europe. The ash and smog eventually contaminated rivers leading to the ocean after two weeks thirteen percent of sea life was killed. Oil tankers crash into a whale causing even more deaths. Air itself is a poison, steadily rising the death rate among humans. The only hope was Titian, a moon of Saturn. The colonization had been fourteen years in the making. In a desperate attempt to escape Falling earth there was a collaboration of the world powers ship previously used to ship supplies and would now remove a third of supplies for people. With a total of twenty-seven ships almost two billion people were transported to Titian. The limited resources caused a second decline in the population. The human population shrunk from nine and half billion to fifty thousand in the. It stopped, the book ended, it wasn't torn or just a break but it just stopped there, something was amiss. My mind raced trying to figure out what happened. Did we pick the best and brightest and kill off the rest or did they just starve to death.

Owen must have noticed the confusion on my face because he said "That's all we have, no one knows what happened after that. It's just a story, a record of what might have happened before the cataclysm wiped out most of our history."

I nodded, realizing that it was foolish of me to expect a clear answer. After all, we were living in a world where history had been lost and only fragments remained. Still, I couldn't shake the feeling of unease. The idea that we might have doomed ourselves by choosing only a select few to escape to Titan weighed heavily on my mind.

As if reading my thoughts, Owen said "It's easy to judge those who came before us, but we can never know what we would have done in their place. All we can do is learn from their mistakes and try to build a better future for ourselves."

I nodded again, grateful for his wisdom. Even though we lived in a world without much hope, it was comforting to know that there were still those who had not given up on humanity.

As I turned to leave, Owen called out "Remember, knowledge is power. Keep searching for answers and you might just find them."

With those words ringing in my ears, I left the room and walked back through the metal-plated hallway. Outside, the silence was still there, but now it was accompanied by a glimmer of hope. I knew that there were still mysteries to unravel, but with each new discovery, we were one step closer to understanding our past and building a brighter future.

# *THE PALACE*

*BY: CONNOR CAIRNEY*

I have a Palace, it's more than a home,  
It's a place where we smile and laugh  
When I'm here, I never feel alone,  
I create memories with my family, lasting forever

When I come back, from a long day  
I know that there is always someone to talk too,  
I never feel alone, in any way  
Someone is always there for me

I think about my childhood  
The good parts and the bad ones  
The exploring of the nature, in the backwoods,  
Memories like Christmas morning, very bright

And I can't forget about school,  
Waking up before the light comes out  
To a point where it's almost cruel  
But without it how would we learn

Or maybe memories of arguments  
That come up in a hurry, but can be solved with sorry,  
They sometimes can leave a mental monument  
Of forgiveness and moving on

But what is a Palace, is it something huge?

Is it a gorgeous mansion fit for a king,

Well I'll let you be the judge

But I think that doesn't matter, however big it is

What matters is who fills that palace up,

Is it happy people with loving hearts

Or sad ones that fill you like syrup?

Making you feel bad, no matter the houses beauty

So what is more important to you

Having a huge house with no love, or joy,

Or a regular house where you are together like glue

And you know it's got to be true!



# *A POEM*

*BY: JAXON DAVIS*

History makes us, history breaks us  
It forever shapes us  
Egypt and Rome, broken to roam  
Greece and Troy, soldiers deploy

Much blood lost, oceans were crossed  
Brothers made and Brothers betrayed  
King on his throne all but lone  
Loves his people but never shown

Enemies outcast, free at last  
Death has crept upon so fast  
The gate they guard  
Or the swindlers card

The great woods charred  
Myth or lore, they laugh no more  
Great tale his feats implore  
Leads the fight and glows of light

About his tale no more they write  
Never again shall they call his name  
Sons and daughter showered with fame  
History makes us all the same.

# A VIGNETTE

*BY: PRESLEY DUBOIS*

People say their sport is their everything. When they're down or upset, all they have to do is go to the batting cages, the basketball court, or go hit some tennis balls. Yes, for me, sometimes playing my sport is a relief, but more often times than not, it just makes me angrier. I'm not able to focus on my technique, or control my anger, so the ball flies out of the court, or crashes into the net. The difference is the ball falls, but it bounces back up. Just like that, it bounces up. Not like a bird, when it crashes, the wings fluttering, body limp, struggling to pick its head off the ground. The bird takes time to bounce back up. The ball does not.

In a situation like this, I feel more like a bird. When something knocks me down, it takes me time to get back up. Yes, that's a cliché, but it has meaning. Will I get back up? Yes, definitely. I will get back up because living life sulking and feeling bad for yourself is misery. I'd rather have one bad day than twenty. Some people constantly feel sorry for themselves, and they want other people to do the same. But the trick is, it's a mindset thing.

A lot of sports are mental games. Tennis is absolutely a mental game. You have to play point by point, thought by thought. Where a lot of people mess up (myself included), is they get mad at themselves for one little error, that in reality, won't cost you the match. What will cause you to basically forfeit a win is thinking, "You're terrible, you can't do anything right, you suck at tennis." That is where everything goes wrong. I have watched a teammate play an opponent that she could beat 6-0, 6-0, but she got in her head. She would get upset and start crying after one game, or even just one point. That messed up her game tremendously. After you do something wrong, you should stop and think of how you can fix it, not stop and think "My whole match is over now, because I can't do one thing right." One thing. It's one thing. It's extremely easy to correct one thing during a match, and if you can't correct it, just don't do it. If your forehand isn't as good as your backhand one day, run around and hit your backhand.

A lot of athletes, writers, everyday people get too worked up about one thing to focus on anything else. I think that's the lesson I'm trying to teach. Don't let one bad day, one bad hit, one mean person, ruin your week, month, or in extreme cases, life. It will get better, and one thing does not determine everything. We should be more like the ball, and less like the bird. Okay, I was wrong, my sport is my everything.

# *A STORY*

*BY: THOMAS EVANS*

“This is it,” Josh thought as his brother James had already passed away under the freezing blanket of snow. “How did this even happen? Just a few hours ago we were on our way to see our parents.”

“Get in, we're gonna be late!” Josh yelled as he was throwing bags into the trunk of the car.

“We have plenty of time,” James replied

“If we don't hurry we will be late, and we can't be late for our parents' party.”

“We won't be late, and even if we are, I'm sure they will understand.”

“They won't have to try and understand if we aren't late.”

“Fine.”

They got into the car and began the three-hour drive to their parents' house in northern Colorado.

“You know Josh, I wonder what would happen if, out here in the middle of nowhere, something happens to the car and we just end up stuck on the side of the road. Do you think that someone would find us out here?”

“No James, I don't think about completely irrational things.”

“I mean is it really that irrational, think about it, way out here where there is nothing around except for the occasional house like every five miles.”

“What makes you think something would happen to the car?”

“It doesn't really have to be the car, it is snowing and with snow on the road anything could happen.”

“You are completely delusional, I drive in the snow every day for a living, nothing is going to happen. You just think too much, nothing is going to happen.”

“Well maybe you just don't think enough.”

The next thing they knew the car was sliding off the road, and the heavily falling snow was already covering their tracks. The car slid off the road into one of the small Colorado treelines and they were gonna be trapped in the car if they didn't try to get out. They pushed their

way or of the car, which happened to be sitting in about three feet of snow. Once they were out of the car they were standing alone waist deep in snow, slowly freezing to death. They sat down beside the front of the car to try and keep warm from the car engine, but that didn't really help seeing how they were both dead in less than thirty minutes. James was the first to go, then not too long after that, Josh froze to death while lying close to his brother.

# *A POEM*

*BY: RYDER GARRETT*

It was an average day for George the Monkey, he had just finished eating a banana and was about to go to the grocery store. George pulled up to the store on his lawn mower ready to get some bananas. He entered the store and immediately started fighting the bag boys. George beat up every employee that he walked by until he got to the banana stand. George grabbed as many bananas as he could and then left the store. When he got to his bachelor pad in Miami there were over 3,000 people partying. George walked over to his fridge and grabbed an ice cold drink. He decided to talk to some girls while he was home. Every lady he walked by fell in love with him. He knew no girl could resist his charms. As he was talking to some girls, he heard a knock on his door. George put down his beverage and walked over towards the door, it was the police.

“Excuse me sir, are you George the Monkey?” said the cop who was standing at the door. George pulled out a banana from his back pocket and pointed it at the cop. The officer ran away as fast as he could before anything bad happened to him. As the cop ran away George laughed at him and took out a cigar. He went over to his couch and lit his cigar with a flamethrower he had found in between the cushions. George was living his best life, but that made him think. Was he really happy? George remembered all of the times that he jumped on the bed, fallen, and hit his head. George knew there was only one way he could become truly happy, by finding his abandoned father.

George packed his bags and got ready for the trip. George took off from his private airport in his private jet towards Brazil. It was a smooth ride for an hour until the plane made a sudden change in direction, down. George ran over to the cockpit and saw that his pilot was passed out. He looked around until he could find something useful. George knew he had to jump or he wouldn't make it. He grabbed a parachute and jumped out of the plane. The explosion of the plane caused George's parachute to send him off into the Amazon. George saw a creature flying towards him. He didn't know what it was, so he took out a laser gun and disintegrated it. George landed on top of a tree and then climbed down. George thought he was safe until he felt his monkey senses go off. He quickly jumped to the left as an anaconda struck where he was standing.

This snake had to be at least 25 feet long. George pointed his laser gun at the long creature but the snake ate it out of his hands. He knew only one way to beat the creature, by fighting. The snake hissed at him and went for another attack. George once again dodged his attack but this time he grabbed the snake from underneath. He started slamming the snake into the ground multiple times until he became bored. An hour later, George let go of the dead snake and grabbed his bags. He started following the river upstream until he found civilization. Hours passed by, soon it would be nighttime and George would have to set up camp. He gathered tree branches and big leaves from the forest and built a tent by the river. He made a fire with some sticks that he had found and the lighter from his back pocket. George watched the fire die as he went to sleep.

George awoke in the middle of the night to a luminous green glow coming from the river. He looked over at the water and hopped in. He walked towards the middle of the river and followed the stream for a little while. Suddenly as George took a step a net came up from under him and lifted up into the air. He was trapped. He saw eyes from every direction, he let out a scream and then was shot by a tranquilizer.

George woke up inside what he thought to be a temple. He was chained to the floor with light blaring on him. He screamed but the only sound that returned was his echo. A loud boom went off, like a drum being beat. Another boom followed and soon it became a continuous rhythm. Not long after the drum beat a chant started. It was monkeys, they sang

“Ooga-chaka ooga ooga, ooga-chaka ooga ooga, ooga-chaka ooga ooga, ooga-chaka ooga ooga”

The ground in front of George opened up and a pillar started to rise up. The light that was previously on George disappeared and multiple torches lit up around the temple. George could see all the monkeys that surrounded him. A monkey dressed in a 70’s glitter outfit with sunglasses on was on the pillar that was rising in front of George.

“I can’t stop this feeling.” The monkey sang, “Deep inside of me.” George was stunned he wondered what was happening. “Girl you just don’t realize, what you do to me.” The monkey kept singing and then a monkey band joined in at the chorus. George grew tired of this “monkey business” and broke the ground connected to the chain and used it as a weapon. George used the chunk of rock to break the pillar in front of him. The whole crowd stopped singing and charged George. He started to take out all the monkeys that charged him with his chains. George was taking out everyone until he saw a familiar face. George stared at the one monkey while he took out the rest of them. George knew who he was looking at, it was his dad.

# *LIVE*

*BY: ELLA GIBBS*

Live like it's your last days  
Forget the trauma, stress, and dismay  
Live like you have no tomorrow, and  
love like it too  
Live like you are a butterfly that has been set free from its cocoon, and  
fly among the fields and prairies  
Live like you are a breeze in the wind  
And a ray of sunshine that cast down from the heavens above  
Live as an adventurer that takes risks and worries none  
Live in the present  
For your past is gone and your future will come as it wishes  
Live without the weight of the world suppressing down onto  
your shoulders  
Cast your troubles into the wind and dwell in the sunlight  
Live like nobody's watching and do what you love  
Watch the judgment of others fall as a pillar of stone the  
more you come to recognize this  
Live carelessly but care for others  
even if they have wronged you  
Live fearlessly  
Live wonderfully  
Live life to the fullest  
Follow what you dream and run for them like  
you're chasing a star  
Live life as much as you can  
For it will be gone soon

# ***FIRE***

***BY: ZACH GILBERT***

Their backs were cold,  
But their faces were warm.  
They wore their coats,  
Yet left them unzipped.  
Around the campfire,  
That is how things are.

They face the heat,  
And turn from the cold.  
Fire is their friend,  
Just like the Sun.  
Night is their foe,  
Who wields weapons cold.

Fire fights against Night,  
Warming all who care for her.  
She battles to preserve life,  
And let her light shine.  
Fires is a friend that gives,  
If we give to her.

With Night comes a chill,  
Biting winds, and frostbite.  
Into their eyes,



Wind blows Fire's smoke.  
But still Fire fights the night.  
For Fire is a friend.

Fire is a friend,  
But don't get too close.  
Fire is always hungry,  
You need to give to Fire,  
But if you give to much,  
She begins to take.

You can try to resist,  
But you must be persistent.  
One minute is all it takes,  
'Til mayhem is unleashed,  
And you may have to kill her,  
Before she kills you.

Fire is a great friend,  
She gives to those that help,  
She protects against the cold,  
And she lights up the dark.  
But don't be fooled,  
Because Fire is a friend,  
She is also your worst enemy.

# *A POEM*

*BY: AVA HERRINGTON*

My Kitchen Table, it can be filled or empty.  
There may be arguments or pep-talks.  
It may contain friends or enemies.  
The choice is always mine depending on my mood.

When I am joyful, it is joyful.  
When I am sad, it grieves with me.  
When I am lonely, I can count on its company.  
When I am nervous, it calms me.

Often times fear and worry, my nemesis, plugs a cork in my mouth,  
Making it much too hard to spew out the truth.  
My stomach fills up with lies.  
It gets worse, much worse, all I ever want to do is blow the gaff.

I must stay strong.  
I must not commit treason.  
For my “friends” have given me a brutal reason.  
Once I spill, their faces will be stretched long.  
In an awful frown, causing me to be down.

Yet the glass bottle in which the cork encloses, begins to shatter.  
The truth has been let out, but not through my mouth.  
It is through the glass.

The Foods and Drinks of The Kitchen Table do not allow my broken pieces to roll off the end.

After collecting myself, I lay the pieces at The Kitchen Table's feet.

I beg for forgiveness.

The Kitchen Table forgives, and glues my pieces back together.

It knows I will mess up again and again, but it tells me time and time again that I will always be welcome.

My Kitchen Table is God.

It does not matter how much anyone messes up, you may always be saved.

The Foods and Drinks of The Table are family.

They will always keep me upright.

# *AN ADVANCED CIVILIZATION*

*BY: JONATHAN HOWELL*

How did they do it?

How did they know?

The impossible things they built

And their knowledge of the world we know

They had no computers

No calculators, nor cranes

They moved each block themselves

Through all the aches and pains

Twenty years of hard work

And one hundred thousand men

Just to build a tomb for the pharaoh

When he met his unfortunate end

They knew of five planets

And studied the night sky

Anything else you told them

They would probably deny

They had medical knowledge

Were taught about anatomy

Surgeries could be performed  
And they could cure a malady

The pyramids are mysterious  
How were they built?  
How were the stones precisely cut  
To give the structure no tilt?

There are many different theories  
From aliens to giant sand pits  
But it seems more likely related  
To math, science, and wits

So many ideas  
The world is left to wonder  
But without a time machine  
Everyone can only ponder

# A VIGNETTE

*BY: KAMARI MCNAIR*

I was so excited for my upcoming field trip. My parents were very busy workers, so we rarely got to travel anymore. But not only was I traveling out of state for the first time, I was traveling out of state *without my parents* for the first time. It took a lot of “I’ll be safe” and “I won’t walk away from a large group” before they actually even took the idea into consideration. Unfortunately, this trip wasn’t until the end of the week, so I had to struggle through two more days of school. *Two!*

The dreaded morning came. I walked through the door to enter the schoolhouse, all my friends had the same mugged face. Lunch was not so entertaining and recess consisted of lightly kicking a ball back and forth.

During fourth period, Mr. Johnson sensed the tension in his class and asked, “What is up with you guys today? Y’all normally aren’t like this.”

“Everyone is ready to leave school,” shouted Michael from the back of the class. The entire class agreed.

The next day was not any better either. If anything, it was worse. People fell asleep in class and no one bothered to play during recess. Silent lunch was never silent until today.

Again Mr. Johnson asked the same question and continued, “I know your trip is one day away, but can I get a little bit of your attention?”

One after the other, people started to fall asleep, and many detentions were passed out that day.

The next day, as you would expect, was completely different. Everyone entered the building with their suitcases. If you weren’t careful, yours could have been mistaken for someone else’s luggage. Nonetheless, we all gathered our stuff, loaded the bus, and enjoyed the field trip to our fullest extent.

# *A POEM*

*BY: SHEYLA MORALES*

A big orange ball of fluff struts through the room  
With his head held high and his tail straight up  
He purrs and yawns, and at his feet he grooms  
His small little face stares, you can see close-up

His nose sniffs his territory, thorough as can be  
His legs move towards the window  
His eyes scan around, landing outside on the apple tree  
He dreams of the outside world as he perches on a pillow

The big orange ball of fluff sleeps for the rest of the day  
With dreams filled with apple pie, apple crisps, and more  
He adventures and eats apples all along the way  
His small little face speckled with apple crumbs, which he ignores

His nose twitches as the he smells fresh apples, tart and green this time  
His legs climb the tree to be closer to his new fascination  
His eyes pick the right apple, the color of lime  
He dreams no more, eating the apple, feeling the liberation

The big orange ball of fluff has never felt this happy  
With a feeling of comfort in his new home, and he's proud  
He curls up and takes in the day as an orange little tabby  
His small little face looks up at the apple shaped clouds

His nose takes in the smell of the grass and trees  
His legs feeling the grassy grounds beneath  
His eyes close tiredly, content filling his mind  
He dreams no more, as he opens his eyes and almost cannot breathe

The big orange ball of fluff has awoken once more  
With a sadness creeping up inside a tad  
He misses his apples and freedom, now done for  
His small little face now frowns but it's not all bad

His nose smells the familiarity of his best friend  
His legs move leap towards her black boots  
His eyes look up at her face and he missed her in the end  
He dreams no more, but he needs her, not the fruits



# ***THE ANGER I FEEL***

*BY: MCKENZIE PERKINS*

The anger I feel is very strong,  
Though it does not last too long.  
Very soon it is long gone,  
But I still feel wrong.

I no longer feel mad,  
But yet I am not glad.  
As I write this on my pad,  
I read it sad.

I want to scream and shout,  
Though the words won't come out.  
I want to belt out the sadness that sprout,  
Though I don't know what it's about.

I am in despair,  
And feel as if it isn't fair.  
I am fully aware,  
That I should not care.

I still hold on tight,  
To my biggest fight.  
I try to make things right,  
Besides your despites.

I hold on to my hope,  
While I look though a scope.  
My hope for you not to be a dope.  
To help me find my cope.

I cuddle up with my dog to cry,  
For she makes me want to try.  
Try to not have my mind fry,  
In the hopes for you to apply.

In hopes for you to apply care.  
So I musn't have to stare,  
when you swear,  
That you wouldn't tear.

That you wouldn't tear my heart.  
That you wouldn't pull us apart.  
I beg for you to be smart,  
For you to call me sweetheart.

I beg of you to calm my rage.  
To calm my rage so you can engage,  
To get me out of my cage.  
And we can turn this page.

Turn this page of sickness.  
As the air thickens,  
You'd have to move with quickness,  
As our time slickens

Now our time ticks down.  
I fear to be the clown,  
Who isn't wearing a beautiful crown,  
But an ugly old frown.

You smile dearly,  
As I become less weary.  
I blush nearly,  
And begin seeing clearly.

You have made my day,  
As my feelings have washed away.  
The dearest bouquet,  
You gave me in full display.

The anger I feel always ends.  
The cause always depends.  
It could be a friend, or even a boyfriend,  
But in the end, I know I have made amends.

# *TICKING SUN*

*BY: ELYCE POTTS*

Some things never change  
Others never stay the same  
The world is always changing  
The clock is always ticking  
Yesterday was just one page of your life  
Each day a new page is turned  
And the direction changes

The sun never changes  
No matter what the sun shines down on all  
It sets and rises everyday  
Never changing when and where  
In the early morning as the sun rises slowly over the horizon  
The dew on the plants shine under the bright burning light casted by the sun  
And animals emerge from their hiding places  
To feel the warmth the Sun has casted throughout the morning air

As the clock ticks throughout the day  
The Sun works its way directly above the ground below  
And every little thing is trying to soak up the warm rays  
Before the clock chimes  
And it disappears again

For the working man

The summer Sun beating down is a curse  
While the heat of the Sun is greatly appreciated  
Until it is taken over by darkness and everything turns cold

The sunrise and sunset aren't close enough together during the week  
And on the weekends it seems as if the clock ticks faster  
Every moment spent in the sun in the sun is cherished  
And may each tick of the clock spent away from work  
Be joyful and warm

As the Sun falls to an end and the clock stops ticking  
The moon takes its rise in the midst of night  
People die and their pages stop turning and children are born everyday  
And new chapters of life come with the rise and fall of the Sun

Now we look back upon the past and the future ahead of us  
We see love and loss in both directions  
As long as the clock keeps ticking and the pages keep turning  
We will live to see the future of this new era  
And the Sun will still be burning as bright as ever when we are all gone

# A POEM

*BY: DYLAN STRICKLAND*

Sitting on the hilltop of the mountains of Scotland there was a Palace where there was a kid who lived there. One day he was wandering around the Palace and just so happened to end up in the throne room. He imagined his dad sitting on the throne and walked up to it.

A guard yelled at him saying, “Whoever sits on that throne is the King of this kingdom. It would be treason for someone like you to sit on it now.”

The kid backed away from the throne and apologized. He walked to his room as the hours started to become late. He sat on his bed and then he heard footsteps down the hall. He thought *no big deal*, then the footsteps turned to clanking, he recognized the boots’ sound and he started to worry. Then they stopped right beside his room. Then someone knocked loudly on the door. The kid opened the door to his room.

“Prince Lewis,” said one of the guards, “sadly, your father, King Lewis the Second, has passed and you are to become our new king. Please, follow us to obtain your new title.”

The kid got up from his bed and walked with the guards. “*What’s happening?*” he thought to himself. He walked to the doors behind the throne room.

One guard whom he could barely see said in a loud tone, “Ladies and gentlemen, His Majesty Prince Lewis the Third.” Then he stood aside and the guards walked forward and led Prince Lewis to his throne. The kid stayed silent as he looked into the crowd.

He saw his dad’s coffin and people standing and staring at him. A guard came up to him and whispered, “You may take your seat on the throne.” The kid sat down as someone started to walk forward to him with a crown. Then the crown-barer looked at him and placed it on his head. People clapped as he accepted the crown and then they grew silent.

A guard rushed over after a long pause and asked him, “Are you alright? You aren’t addressing the kingdom.”

Prince Lewis looked over towards him and asked, “Can I do it later?”

The guard paused, thought for a moment, and turned to the crowd of people. “Due to the recent events,” the Guard stated, “we must pause our ceremonies, in Honor of the Late King Lewis the Second. May King Andrew the Third’s reign be long and fair.”

Then a group of guards walked towards the leader of the battalion and asked the new king, “What do you want us to do?”

“I, I’m, I don’t--” the king stuttered.

The guard that was beside him turned towards the guards and said, “Kind Lewis is tired and wishes not to speak. I, instead, will lead at the moment. Please have one group guard the throne, another the casket, and another the king. Lead our new king to his room and grab his belongings for him. Thanks to my new rank as leading General, given by King Lewis, all commandments I say are automatically approved by our king.”

“But I didn’t say--”

“Guards, continue the work. I will personally bring the kind to his room.”

The guard walked out of the throne room and looked toward the king. “Your Majesty, let me help you in this kingdom, you are still learning the ropes and you might need my help--”

“What killed my dad?” The king interrupted.

“You are still a child, you do not need to know that type of information--”

“I am also your king--”

“And I am your advisor, ” said the guard.

“I don’t even know your name.”

“It’s Lennon Maxwell, now let’s move on.”

“Well Lennon--”

“You may refer to me as General Maxwell.”

“I am the king and I can do whatever--”

“And I can sit on the throne.”

The hallway was immediately silent.

“Well, here is your room, for tomorrow the palace will be in silence out of respect for your dad and then the next day you read the speech I made for you,” said Maxwell.

“And if I don’t?”

“Then I take your throne.”

Maxwell turned and walked away from the room and the night grew silent.

That morning, rain fell quietly and the palace was truly silent. The king walked to the gates of the palace and a guard stopped him and whispered, “General Maxwell said that you ordered no one to exit the palace today until night falls.”

“Well, that’s unfortunate, for my first day as the king I would like to walk amongst my subjects.”

“Well, General Maxwell, your advisor, told us you said not to let anyone out of the palace until nightfall.”

“Then I would like to speak to him.”

“General Maxwell is currently sailing to the nearby kingdoms to tell them the sad news, he said he left a note on your throne.”

King Lewis turned around and started walking towards his palace and walked into the doors, he walked towards his throne, picked up the note and read it.

“King Lewis,

“I have set sail across the Scottish kingdoms to let others know about your father’s departure. I will be back in two days. In the meantime, do not do any public actions today, and tomorrow I want you to read the speech I have given you, word-for-word. The speech will be in your room on top of your stuff.

“I wish you luck as king,

“General Maxwell.”

King Lewis turned around and headed to his room. He thought that Maxwell was getting ridiculous, it was his job to run this country not him, then he stopped by his mother’s room. He thought about knocking, but he didn’t want to disturb her. She wouldn’t want to see him anyways. He walked past the room and then he heard the door open.

“Lewis--”

“Yes mother?” he said without turning around.

“Is everything alright?”

He paused. “I wish not to speak right now.”

“Why did you send Maxwell to the kingdoms?”

King Lewis turned around and went into his mother’s room. “I didn’t send him anywhere, he insists that he knows what to do.”

“Speak against him on the throne.”

“I can’t do that.”

“You are the king, the law of this kingdom says ‘Anyone who sits on the throne is the king, and anything the king says on the throne is turned into law, so the guards are to protect the throne at all costs,’ so you should be able to just go to the throne and declare him a traitor.”

“Like I said, I can’t do that.”

“Well, have fun being a puppet.”

On that note King Lewis left for his room, and when he got there, he looked to see his speech.



“My subjects,

“It is sad that my father has passed, but as the new ruler, I would like to make some new changes to the kingdom. Our kingdom shall be independent, starting after the burial of the late King Lewis II. We do not need the other kingdoms, as we are the mightiest...”

King Lewis said out loud “I am not reading this! What is he doing? Trying to start a revolt?” King Lewis started to write a new speech and as he was writing night fell.

That morning he reread his new speech and walked to the gate.

“Your Majesty,” said one of the guards.

King Lewis nodded and walked into town. He walked into the marketplace and gave someone two golden coins.

“A loaf of bread please,” he said.

“That only costs one silver coin,” the bread seller said.

“I know,” said King Lewis.

The bread seller looked at King Lewis as he gave the piece of bread to him.

King Lewis turned around and walked back to his palace.

The guards stood at attention again and said, “Your Majesty,” as he walked by, and every time he nodded and continued walking. Then he heard the town bell toll. It was time.

Everyone assembled into the throne room and then, King Lewis walked to his throne. One guard said, “Ladies and gentlemen, His Majesty King Lewis the Third.”

Everyone got up and cheered and then King Lewis started his speech.

“My subjects,

“This week has been rather eventful, his Majesty, the late King Lewis the second has passed and we have rolled around to a new leader, but I would like to present to my subjects an idea. It is possible that King Lewis the Second, has sadly been poisoned. ‘By whom?’ you may ask. I believe that General Maxwell is our number one suspect.

“He has been running the palace ever since King Lewis the second has died. He has reason to kill our king. By royal decree, General Maxwell is to be arrested by the Kingdom’s guards.

“May my subjects live long, may the kingdom live long.”

And that was that. General Maxwell admitted to the poisoning and was beheaded. King Lewis’ Subjects believed in him and were faithful for the road ahead. King Lewis started his reign at the age of 13 and ended at the age of 77. Teachers today call him the “Greatest king to rule Scotland.”

# *EARTHLY CHILDREN*

*BY: JANA TOMLIN*

Roots twist deeply  
Branches reach for the sun  
Leaves run as far as the wind may take them  
I want my daughter to know the trees

Water in its lightest form  
Restless, always moving  
Filled and dark or empty and vibrant  
I want my son to know the clouds

Twinkling, a fragment of a diamond  
In sight, but never to be touched  
Burning, but it's warmth never to be felt  
I want my daughter to know the stars

The heavy foot of a noble elephant  
The intent of the stalk of a tiger's hunt  
The peaceful diet of a humble rhinoceros  
I want my son to know of life

The trees are struck down  
The clouds are poisoned  
The stars are in hiding  
The life is taken

The land is not a void quite yet  
But a step closer every day  
Fight for a breath in suffocation  
I want my children to know This Earth

# *WARMTH*

*BY: SCOUT TOTTY*

I hide in my shelter, my shell  
Despite ringing bells.  
Life draws me in  
And tells tales of my kin.

Embers crashing against their skin  
As Warmth pulls them in.  
Death is close and far away.  
Where is the right place to stay?

Fire flickering,  
The heat is sickening.  
Ash is mashed  
Into tales of the past.

Black angels awake  
As Warmth gives them a grotesque quake.  
They seek its life-giving wake.  
They live in the opaque.

Shivering, cold  
Death grows bold.  
It steals their souls  
While Warmth hides in the coals.

I am dragged out of my shell  
For Warmth my body yells  
While succumbing to the ringing bells  
And becoming faceless clientele.

Grasping for the finish line,  
I'm all out of time.  
Sweat drips down  
And closer death bounds.

The sun pulls me back.  
Warmth gives no slack.  
It pulls me into the black  
And Warmth attacks.

Life turns hot and scalding,  
For the cold, clammy fate I am calling.  
Heat is my fate.  
Warmth is my hate.

I crawl across a lonely yard  
Enveloped in the fantastical tales of a bard.  
A cool breeze offers relief  
And solidifies my beliefs.

Here death drew its knife,  
No Warmth or life.  
I romanticize.  
I am satisfied.

Slowly, my lips turn cold  
And death grows bold.  
My black angel crumples and shakes  
And leaves life in its wake,  
But first Warmth it must take.

As the black angel quakes,  
It gives before it takes,  
A fuzzy Warmth,  
A fiery hearth.  
Embers carry memories  
As I ride away on the centuries.

# *ASH*

*BY: CADYN WILSON*

Many families have a companion.

Yours may have one too.

Don't forget how much love they bring,

or you may not appreciate the

greatness that lies before you.

Ash is the name of my companion.

She showers the home with love and joy.

Her presence is what makes the house home.

# *THE KITCHEN TABLE*

*BY: GRACEE TURNER*

The kitchen table sat in the corner by the window.

It was never perfect.

In fact, there were many flaws.

The table legs had had broken off and put back on again,

But others had to be fully replaced with one from a different table.

The only table leg that was still remaining from the original table was almost at its end.

Wobbling and creaking when pressure was applied to it.

It was almost like it was screaming to be helped.

Nobody wanted to get rid of it though.

The table has always been falling apart.

It was slowly breaking in places other than the legs.

The platform of the table would squeak when there was too much applied to the table.

At family events, the table was the main gathering place.

It held the food and drinks.

It's where everyone sat down to chat.

Sometimes the kids would play with toys on the table.

On one occasion, the little boy and the little girl were playing with Hot Wheels.

The cars scratched up the table.

Little tan markings were seen engraved in the brown wood.

They kept it a secret for as long as they could.



They kept a floral table cloth on it at all times.

When Mom asked why, they said,

“It’s just much prettier.”

To which the mother agreed.

When the mother did find out about the scratches,

She wasn’t upset.

She found it quite funny how they kept it a secret so long.

They said sorry and that they wouldn’t do it again and most certainly wouldn’t lie.

The mother laughed it off and said,

“There’s always beauty in imperfections. There’s no reason to feel ashamed.”

The kitchen table was like a safe place for everyone.

No matter how messed up and broken it was,

Everyone was happy with it.

Nobody cared to try to fix it up when it was obvious it needed to be fixed.

That’s what made the table feel comfortable.

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