

Edition 2

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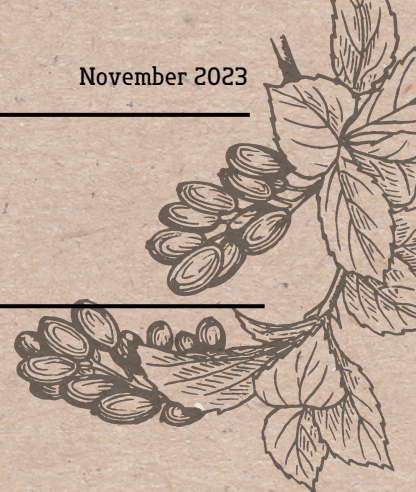
THE LAUREL



ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY

THE LAUREL

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THOUGHTS. THE PAST. THE PRESENT.

DEMARI SHINNERY

you did it
I'm proud of you
the pain you've suffered to get here unimaginable
The long days you've spent breaking yourself down
incomprehensible
You've grown so much it makes me wonder
how did you even get here?

I thought you hated this world
rebuked everything that came along with it
I thought you would always be alone
never to have friends
never to have people who care about you
never able to come out of that shell
I remember you being scared to walk on sand
A hermit you are no more, you're left a free
butterfly.

I thought you would be left stranded,
in the dark and cold ocean still unable to extinguish
the fires from burned bridges.
I thought your sanity would crumble.
I thought your arms and legs would be left white
from the blade.

THOUGHTS. THE PAST. THE PRESENT.

DEMARI SHINNERY

Fall

why do you keep getting back up?

I thought you hated your life.

what are you fighting for?

Are you happy?

I am.

I get back up to carry 2 villages on my back.

I hate this cruel world.

But i'll continue to run and smile,

for the people who taught me how.

I fight for them because they gave me the strength
to fight for myself.

So how did I get here you ask?

I'm not there yet.

ACTION

ROSE PFEIFFER

What are you afraid of?

Cloves of ginger,

Red soaked ribbons?

Look me in the eyes?

Tell me deep lies...

Shut me out.

Without a word

Without a warning.

Do you feel any guilt?

A single shred?

Passive aggressive

Not a word to my face.

Creeping behind scenes.

Guess what,

Now I took my leave.

I'm stronger than you

All your little glares,

Eyes lined in razors.

So, what if I'm different?

I know I am, and I'm glad.

I'm different than you.

When it matters, I tell the truth

I thought I could trust you.

I've found people who see me.

What about you?

Who am I kidding?

You stick to people just like you.

DESIRES TO DREAMS

OLIVIA FRANCIS

Our deepest desires turn to dreams.

People create this false world where opportunities blossom,

And everything is the way that it should be.

Why be in a cruel reality when you can create something better?

A place where anything can happen.

Somewhere you have dreamt of so much that you wrote about it in a letter

Our deepest desires can turn into dreams.

But is it worth your energy?

Should you wish for it enough to throw a coin into a river stream?

It may be time to let go of the world far beyond you.

It is time to come home to a place called the Truth.

Where everything is happy and sad, old, and new.

It is time to move on while you are still in your youth.

MOLLY MILLER

My jeans.

ODE TO LOVE?

KEYARA WINGATE

why is there no remorse
everytime you tamper with my sacred body
the immense thoughts simply feel - knife sharp
my body, my being, me... i am decrepit
is that what makes me unacceptable,
unworthy,
unloved - in a way that is so violent

i have this impulse to get up
but quietly i lay while your cannons fire into me.

THE CONSPIRACY

THOMAS PURSEL

It is important to note that the events that follow were the culmination of years prior. As an immigrant child, Nikita did not do very well to make friends in high school. As much as he tried to seem “American”, any attempt or adjustment to this new culture was contrived; his classmates saw through the whole thing. However, it didn’t stop Nikita from eating hamburgers. At least, if nothing else, he had that.

Nikita’s parents told him that he was better than the lazy Americans, and from the perspective of work ethics, well, there was no comparison. Nikita’s classmates all had the wonderful pleasure of having allowances, or working twelve-hour weeks, max. Not Nikita. Nikita worked at a gas station. When his coworkers saw a spill, they rubbed it around with their shoes—whatever soda had spilled might leave the floor sticky, but at least it wasn’t visible. When Nikita saw a spill, he busted-out the mop, and one of those yellow “caution” signs.

Unfortunately, no good deed goes unpunished. When Nikita used the red mop instead of the blue one, he was promptly fired by the manager, on account of the fact that “red mops are for the bathroom, numbnuts. You think people want to be walking in shit out here? Get outta my sight,” and if that wasn’t enough, Nikita didn’t have the chance to take off the grease-stained black baseball cap of his uniform. The manager's hand clamped down on his head, and removed it for him.

It was two hours until his shift was supposed to be done. Without anyone to pick him up, Nikita began the dangerous trek home along Route 62, all four lanes busy with the 9-5 workers coming home, and the shoulders were spontaneously busy with the likes of drunk drivers, road ragers, and street racers. After receiving two middle fingers and other such obscenities, Nikita decided that it would be a good idea to let the time and traffic pass by in a restaurant some ways down Route 62.

THE CONSPIRACY

THOMAS PURSEL

He stopped at Randy's Sammiches as the parking lot was filling up. Randy's Sammiches had windows on all sides, with that checkerboard diner pattern underneath, except it wasn't white and black, it was black and dark green. It reminded Nikita of the color of pine trees that he was so familiar with in Finland. Trees that he missed so much. Trees that he could climb one hundred feet high when he couldn't stand the world, so that the world couldn't reach him. The world couldn't climb like Nikita could. Well, there weren't trees like that on Route 62. There were gas stations, hotels, apartments, schools, and various shops and stores, all without ledges to grip, and not a single tree in sight. Only flat walls - walls that would do a better job keeping prisoners in prison (which Nikita supposed they did).

Nikita grabbed the over-the-top decadent golden handle of the front door and stepped inside. There were two employees standing behind the host stand, complaining to each other about their new uniforms. They were dressed in black shoes, black pants, dark blue shirts, white gloves, and goofy blue berets. Like the KGB. The door closed behind Nikita, and the hosts' attention was drawn towards him. They said nothing, only stared. Nikita held up his index finger, and the taller host grabbed a menu, and said "This way, bud." Nikita followed him to a booth, said "Thank you," to which there was no response. Aside from feeling awkward, Nikita was pleasantly surprised at the decorum of Randy's Sammiches. The booths were green, and the table in front of him glimmered off of the radiant chandelier lighting above. The chandeliers had crystals hanging from them, which was surreal to Nikita. This was a sandwich place for chrissakes. What the hell was going on? When he looked around, he saw diners wearing three-piece suits and dresses. Some poor fellow was being made fun of for showing up in a polo and jeans. Yet here was Nikita, with not even that; instead, his fashion was a greasy work uniform with a hole in the shoulder. The gas station's sewn in logo was slowly coming out. Nikita pulled one string out to feel less out of place, but alas, it led to another string coming undone. Nikita panicked over his attire for about two minutes, until a server came, wearing the same uniform as the hosts, but this guy had nerd glasses on, the kind with round frames and a bulky bridge. Nikita wasn't about to make fun of the guy, but he did feel a little bit better about himself.

THE CONSPIRACY

THOMAS PURSEL

“Start you off with something to drink?”

“What do you have?”

“Coke products, sir.”

Why did I ask that? Nikita thought. *I’m just going to get—* “Water, for me, please.”

“And for food?”

“What do you recommend?”

“I love our hot pastrami reubens. Can’t go wrong with that. Want me to put an order in?”

Chrissakes—Nikita didn’t want a reuben. Or any sandwich for that matter. What the hell was he even doing at a sandwich restaurant? A sandwich restaurant that he couldn’t afford?

“Um. No. No. No thank you. I’ll have. I’ll have a garden salad. Please?” asked Nikita, hoping the server would have mercy on his soul.

“Sure thing.”

In a few minutes Nikita was eating, constantly peering around his shoulder. When he felt that he was looking around too much, he took a sip of his water, which had no straw. A few minutes later the server came back, gave Nikita his check, which came out to twenty-eight dollars and six cents. Nikita did not leave a tip. What were they going to do? Take him to the gulag? They only looked like the KGB. That didn’t stop Nikita from walking out as quickly and silently as possible. He stepped on a loose tile, which creaked. Nikita abandoned his mission of being discreet, and loudly apologized to the host, who stared at Nikita confused.

THE CONSPIRACY

THOMAS PURSEL

A while later Nikita had made his way home along route 62, and two road ragers made him the recipient of middle fingers and honking. One such road rager was the manager who had fired him earlier. He was on his way to the bar, his favorite nightly passtime. When he finally arrived, he made the acquaintance of some fellows wearing blue berets, who were enjoying throwing darts in a loud, boisterous manner.

“Mind if I have a throw, gents?” said the manager.

“Sure, pal, always room for one more,” replied one of the fellows.

“Nice hat you got there.”

“It’s actually part of my work uniform. Speaking of work,” said the man who was now looking at his coworkers, “That guy who came in today was weird, wasn’t he? Some Ukrainian or Russian guy, remember?”

“Matter of fact, there’s some pretty weird Russian kid who used to work for me, believe it or not,” the manager chimed in.

“No kidding. Anyways, listen to this: the guy comes in, asks me what to order. I’m a server, by the way. Randy’s Sammiches. Stop in some time,” the man told the manager. “I tell him to get a reuben. Best thing we have. I eat ‘em every day on my break. And this *mother fucker* tells me he wants a *fucking* salad. Can you believe that?”

“You know,” said the manager. He threw a dart. It hit the blue dotted outer ring of the dart board. “I’ll bet you the guy you’re talking about is the exact same guy who worked for me. I fired him today, matter of fact. The idiot was using the red mop to clean the floor. The *red* mop.”

“Sounds like this guy all right.”

The manager pulled out a piece of paper from his pocket. On it was Nikita’s face.

THE CONSPIRACY

THOMAS PURSEL

“That’s the guy! The guy who ordered the salad!”

The group laughed’ Nikita’s very existence was the greatest joke in the world to them. The manager took the picture of Nikita’s face, walked up to the dart board, removed the darts, announced that they had a new target, hung up the picture, and laughed as the group resumed throwing darts.

The final road rager blazed through the same crosswalk Nikita was walking through. The horn blared and Nikita’s daydream (nightmare?) was (fortunately?) cut short. Situations of life and death have a spectacular way of relieving petty anxieties, if only for a moment. Nikita had returned home after walking for another fifteen minutes, and was greeted by his mother. She berated him upon discovering that he had been fired from his “easy job, so easy any dumbass American could do it.” After the lecture from his mother that ended with “I thought I had raised you to be better than this. Blame it on me, why don’t ya?” she stormed away, muttered something about a cigarette, and Nikita climbed the stairs to his bedroom.

His room was bright, with two windows, and it was perfect for all of his photosynthesizing friends. He sat at his desk, where a massive spider plant situated on top curled along the square edges. He told the plant about his day, and the plant sank as the burdens of Nikita’s world were piled on top of its stems. That was okay though, that was what the plants were for. Nikita didn’t need advice, he only needed to share the struggle.

A MOUTHFUL OF LANGUAGE

ABIGAIL TABER, POETRY EDITOR

A mouthful of language to swallow:
fearful of tear, tightening grasp,
crumbling lungs, anchored emotions;
Plunging down deeper in the abyss;
Ignoring elements, leaking eyes.
What English can do: thieving
the gleaming beacon from
above the broken surfaces.
Rough swells, breaking face only to be
tugged downward
towards the unknown again.
I resent you, water,
take me up and spit me out.
Leave me dizzy,
still sputtering out words.

REPORT

TYLER EVERETT, ASSISTANT EDITOR

Report/File/EmmitTown/Police.

A cop sees a kid walking at night. It's dark. The time is 1:20 AM. As he follows the kid he walks for 2 miles or so. He then turns around. The kid then walks the same back. What was crazy was that on the second night, he did it again. The third night, the officer yelled! Flash his lights and honked the horn. But no reaction.

Check-in on day 451.

“Ready For watch.”

End tape 47, Since start count.

Signed: *Officer. Window*

GOOD MORNING LETTERS

TYLER EVERETT, ASSISTANT EDITOR

He betrayed her and didn't have much growing up. So, everything changed when he found out the crown jewel in which she was. As he sat amongst the dead bodies of his brothers, blood began to drip from his nose, and tears fell from his eyes. In his hands was a photo of the single love of his life. The sound of fighter jets flying above filled the air like the smell of a burning fire on a cold winter night. The sound of distant cries from the unknown and now-forgotten friends filled his head. With nothing left to lose, he rose from his position. Grabbing his weapon, he loaded for round two.

Hours later...

He sat at the foot of the trench and looked into the horror. Knowing what it meant, he placed his letter among the bodies of the fallen. He walked into the mist.

Two months later...

He stood outside the farmhouse door and gathered himself. Knocking sounded, and his mother fell to her knees.

He spoke again, "I came back, my jewel."

BUFFALOVE

BROOKE JOHNPIER, ASSISTANT EDITOR

She lived in east Amherst. A suburb of Buffalo, all she heard and seen growing up was stuff related to Buffalo culture. Her family's favorite football team was the Bills, they were at every festival the city had, and they would stand in the bitter cold every New Year's Eve just to see the ball drop locally. The Jones's were your average Buffalo area family.

At the New Year's Eve ball drop in 2022, Chelsea Jones got her first kiss, and her first epiphany. Chelsea realized that she was going to have to go to college this year and leave all of the love she had for Buffalo at home unless she found the correct school. As her older sister, younger brother, parents, and herself piled into their GMC Sequoia, she began to think about where the best school would be for her to keep that "Buffalove."

Chelsea woke up the next afternoon and knocked on her older sister's door. About a minute passed before Christina would open the door.

"What?", Christina asked.

"Can I talk to you about something?" Chelsea responded.

"Why not?" Christina said as she opened the door wider and motioned with her hand for her sister to come in.

Chelsea sat in her sister's chair and tried to figure out how to form her question. Christina was pulling on a hoodie, one with her college logo on it, Rider University. Chelsea saw it and blurted out, "How do you function at a school that doesn't know or appreciate Buffalo culture?"

Christina looked at her. "What do you mean?"

Chelsea sighed. "What I mean is, how do you thrive so well in an area that's not like ours? How do you live without seeing red, white, and blue everywhere? Or more importantly, just the plain ol' buffalo?"

BUFFALOVE

BROOKE JOHNPIER, ASSISTANT EDITOR

Christina smiled.

“It’s different,” she said. “But I’ve gotten used to it. If it makes you feel better,” Christina said with a wink. “I’ve converted about 20 Jets fans to Bills fans after showing them how a home game in Orchard Park is done.”

Chelsea beamed.

“Really!?” she exclaimed.

“Yes, really,” Christina replied with a smile. “You have nothing to worry about pertaining to schools, trust me.”

And so, Chelsea did. She applied to every college that looked good to her, including some in other countries. As she got her acceptance letters back, Chelsea began to narrow down the schools that were giving her the best scholarships. The list got narrowed down to four, three of which were in other states, and one that was only an hour and a half away from her. Chelsea decided to have her parents take her for a tour at the one an hour and a half away. As soon as Chelsea stepped out of the car, she knew that this was the one.

Chelsea had been at school for about two months now and couldn’t believe how well the school fit her. They had Bills watch parties, and the cafeteria had events that showcased the Western New York area. More importantly to Chelsea, the Buffalo area. As she walked down the middle of campus in her red Buffalo sweatshirt, white jeans, and Ugg boots, she realized that St. Bonaventure University was her home away from home.

CONFIDENCE

BROOKE JOHNPIER, ASSISTANT EDITOR

Joey sighed as he looked at the photos of himself from a few months ago. In those photos he saw a man who was no longer existent. A man who was full of life, knew what laid ahead for him for his future, and most importantly, a man who liked how he looked.

Joey had been diagnosed with brain cancer two months ago. During the course of those two months, the cancer had rapidly spread, going from stage one to stage three. The chemotherapy wasn't doing anything, and the doctor's had just given him a maximum of two years to live. Joey's life was in shambles, and he felt like he was helpless.

Before he had been diagnosed with cancer, Joey had a dream of becoming a veterinarian. He wanted to help animals for a living and got accepted into one of the country's most prestigious schools to achieve that dream. Joey also had hair before being diagnosed with cancer. That was probably the thing he missed most of all from his life prior to cancer.

Joey turned away from the photos which showed him before shit hit the fan and got dressed for the day: an all-black outfit with a black beanie to top it off. Joey grabbed his backpack, slung it across his shoulders, and headed out to go to his first class.

When Joey arrived at what should've been his animal anatomy class, his professor wasn't the one that was standing at the pulpit. It was a man in a pink suit. Perplexed, Joey stood in the lecture hall aisle and asked, "Where's Professor Foxvog?"

The man looked up, smiled, and said, "You must be Joey. Please, have a seat."

The man motioned to the chairs in front of him. Joey shrugged, muttered "whatever," and went to sit down in front of Mr. Pink Suit. As Joey sat down, he got a weird feeling. He checked his phone to see that class should've started 5 minutes ago, and that he was late. But none of his classmates were in the hall, and no one was rushing in. Checking his email on his phone, he found no indication that class was cancelled for today. What was going on?

CONFIDENCE

BROOKE JOHNPIER, ASSISTANT EDITOR

“Um, sir?” Joey asked.

“Yes?” Mr. Pink Suit replied.

“Is this animal anatomy?”

Mr. Pink Suit laughed.

“Joey, Joey, Joey,” he said with a shake of his head. “Yes. Today was supposed to be animal anatomy in here, but there was a change of plans. And no, you aren’t missing class. Animal anatomy was cancelled today.”

“Then why am I here?”

“Because I’m going to teach you a lesson.”

Mr. Pink Suit sat down next to Joey, and with a remote control he pulled out of his pocket, he shut off the lights and turned on a slideshow that played on the big screen. It showed the life of a woman who was very successful.

When the video was over, Joey chuckled. “I don’t know what that was supposed to teach me,” he said. “But all I know is that that lady had a great life.”

“Yes,” Mr. Pink Suit said. “She did. But all her life she was fighting against something that wanted her to not be so successful.”

“What do you mean?” Joey asked.

“She had cancer,” Mr. Pink Suit said matter-of-factly. “And she had it her whole life. Even after the doctor’s told her that she only had 6 months to live.”

CONFIDENCE

BROOKE JOHNPIER, ASSISTANT EDITOR

Joey's mouth fell open.

"My point here is, don't worry about what they say. Just because they say you only have a certain amount of time left doesn't mean that you have to take it seriously. Also, let this show. The sweat under this thing is insane."

Mr. Pink Suit ripped off Joey's black beanie and threw it up into the chairs. Joey laughed and wiped away tears.

"Thank you," he said. "Thank you so much. I needed that more than you know."

"I know," Mr. Pink Suit said. "And so did Professor Foxvog. That's why he brought me here today; to help you."

Joey smiled, thanked the man once again, grabbed his stuff and headed outside. As the sun hit his bald head, Joey laughed freely. It felt great to have his confidence back.

UNTITLED

RYLIE HEFFERNAN, PHOTOGRAPHY & ART EDITOR



UNTITLED

RYLIE HEFFERNAN, PHOTOGRAPHY & ART EDITOR



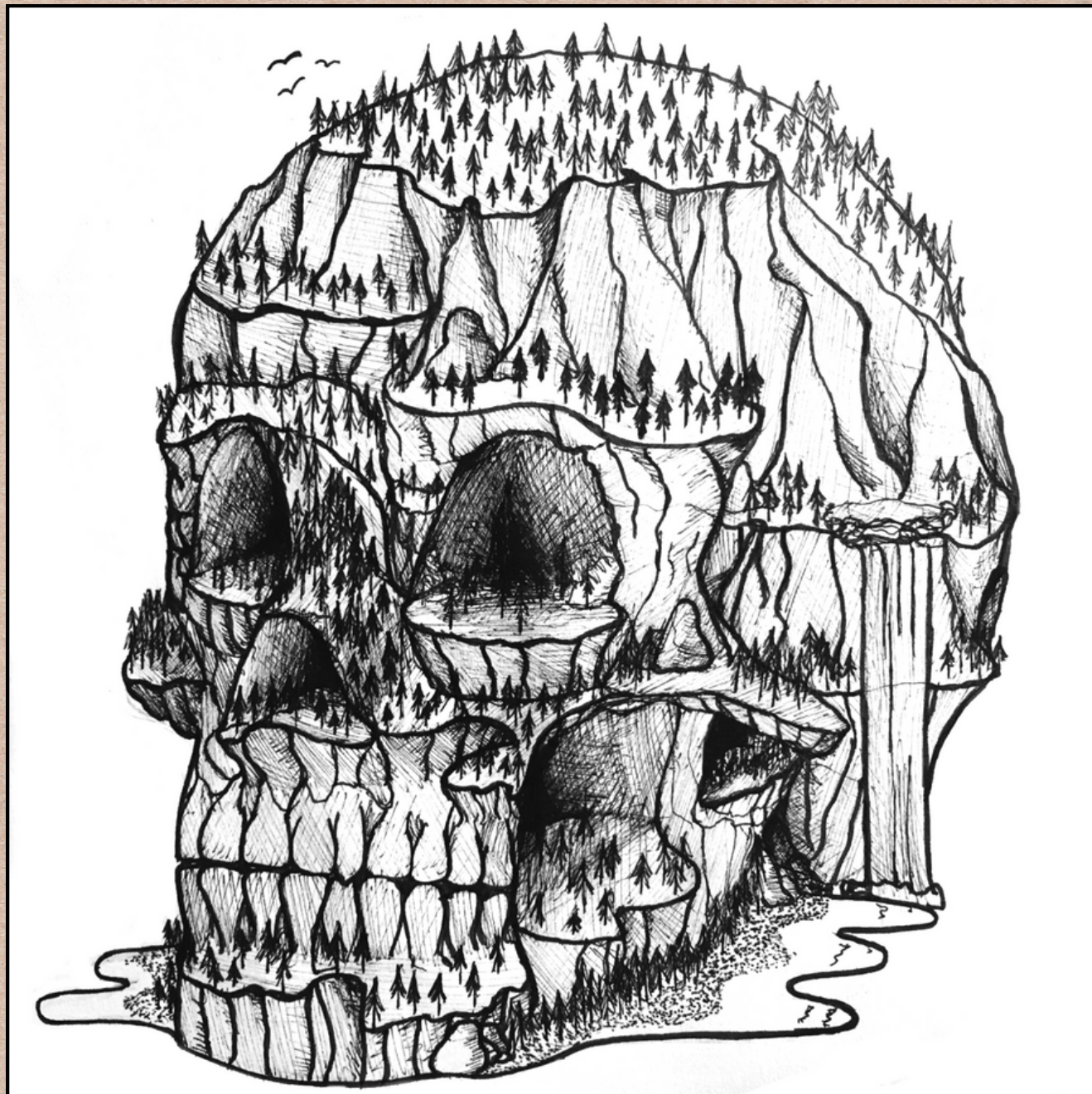
UNTITLED

KENDALL RICHARDS



SKULL ISLAND

CAROLINA BERLINGIERI



SEVEN LINKS

HEATHER AHERN, CLASS OF 2002

Linked by luck, chance or maybe the divine.

Connected via differing paths but somehow found themselves bonded together.

An illustration of relationships where one thing affects all others.

Holding tight. Standing in their individual power.

But far stronger together than they could ever be apart.

Supporting the weak links when reinforcements are needed.

Backed up freely & without question.

Depicting a sense of completeness.

Fullness. Absolute abundance.

Displaying love, admiration & human connection.

Tied to each other in a fortified way.

For always.

Forming a lifeline. As essential as a beating heart & air-filled lungs.

Unique, unconditional, unbreakable & indestructible.

These are the Seven Links.

ALL IS CALM... ALL IS BRIGHT

MARY SIEDLIKOWSKI, CLASS OF 1984



NO ONE LIGHTS A LAMP

MARY SIEDLIKOWSKI, CLASS OF 1984



BOOKSELLER

FRANKIE SUZANNE GARR, CLASS OF 1984



METRO STOP

FRANKIE SUZANNE GARR, CLASS OF 1984



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