

RENAISSANCE

CROSSED SABRES

'17-'18



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POLICY

Crossed Sabres encourages submissions from all LCHS students and staff. All works showcased in this magazine reflect the opinions of the individual and are not necessarily those of the staff, administration, or student body. Selections need to be appropriate for a high school student body and fall within the parameters of the Loudoun County School Board guidelines. All submissions are critiqued anonymously; are edited for spelling, grammar, and clarity; and are subject to approval by school administration. ☒

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

sarah van hook and elyse kimball

The Dark Ages ceased to exist with the birth of the Renaissance. Tribal clans evolved into one nation; medical innovations began to save lives; art was celebrated, not shunned; education became a human right, not a privilege; and most importantly, people internationally came together as one—as one voice, one movement.

Our country, now more than ever, seems to need a Renaissance of our own. The divisions between political affiliation, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality have become more prominent than ever, and it seems that many have forgotten that at the end of the day we are all American, and we are all human.

We named this issue of *Crossed Sabres* “Renaissance” because we wish to celebrate art and individuality again while reaching across the aisle and coming together as one school. Through this literary journal, we wanted to highlight our authors’ and artists’ enlightening artistic ability as they spill the journeys they have experienced on the page. As we leave Loudoun County High School and go off to college, we wish to unite people over a celebration of art and remind each reader that at the end of the day we are all Raiders.

Our magazine begins with pieces that represent rebirth, then transitions into pieces that represent the golden age, and ends with pieces that show enlightenment. At the end of our magazine, we have a collection of Golden Shovel poems, which are poems that include a bolded word at the end of each line that forms a line from a poem that the author admires. The inspiration felt by these students was included in the magazine to encourage other students in the same way, and hopefully start a personal “Renaissance” of their own. The Golden Shovel poems also represent the Renaissance standard of taking something old and making it new again.

This magazine was made possible by our wonderful sponsor Mrs. Egger and our hardworking staff members, all of whom assisted tremendously with the production of this magazine. ❧

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ADRENALINE

nicole kemon

Pitch black darkness living in the insides of the house,
its residents unknowingly trapped, enclosed,
with something lurking in its core.

Scheming and devilishly cackling,
she will haunt the people who dared to come in her home,
and make them wish they were never born...

Thump! Thump! Thump!


The muffled sound echoed through the silent night,
quietly climbing up the wooden supports and old plaster.

The noise disturbed my peaceful dreams.

Eyelids flashing open wide, I grabbed the blankets
a little tighter and shivered.



ABOUT CROSSED SABRES' HALLOWEEN CONTEST

Every year, Crossed Sabres holds a Halloween contest for which students are encouraged to submit Halloween- and Autumn-themed artwork and writing. The submissions were judged and the winners were immediately granted a place in the magazine. This excerpt from the narrative poem “Adrenaline” and “The Hand” were this year’s written and art winners, respectively. 

The p-p-pounding of my heart hurt my chest
as my breathing became a whiplashing tree in a storm.
The thumping was near, it was close.
I could sense its evocative being stir the stale air behind me.
It was in my room.
My knuckles gripped the blankets even tighter,
so that they became frozen white.
And I tried to tame the whirling, whirling, whirling fears
racing in my mind.
I trembled within the covers, petrified with fear.
My eyes burned, struggling to keep the tears in as I slowly
turned my head, afraid of what I may find,
on the other side of the bed.
Mother. ❧



SO TOO, BREAKS THE EARTH

brody graham

As breaks the heart,
So weathers the Earth;
So do the tears stream down
As valleys form
And their wails grate like sand against the stones.

Be wary rage as one should the eruptions of a volcano.
Be wary the stomps as one should the shaking quakes of the ground.

As breaks the heart,
So weathers the Earth.

Thus are the cracks in your pavements,
Thus was our Grandest of Canyons,
And thus...

DELPHI charles coleman

will be the shattering of
the World as the Sky
breaks the Heart of its Earth. 

CORINTHIAN

rj sison

Sears and crosses,
Star-crossed and evocative,
Work-worn and forlorn,
Lurched the lofty soul.

So studded sinfully
Budded I shine; a paradigm
Shift, paradoxical and pragmatic,
Ported the twofold time.

He wore flowers and fall,
Thin lightning intertwining
In movement, plow and hearth
In mind; heaven and earth. ✠

BEHIND THE GLASS

alison pichney

I was trapped, unable to breathe,
Forced inside a room with sickly things,
Things of old and nothing new.
My real life didn't exist,
Not yet, not ever.

Trapped inside a body – wrong and foreign,
Something so melancholy it was hard to focus,
Hard to be happy, hard to live.
The breaths came and went,
That was all it was...living was living



Until the day of discovery.

My answer was here, but nothing came easily.

My soul was trapped in a room behind a pane of glass, seeing
out, watching from within.

Society was a fickle thing, keeping me behind the glass,
Separating me from the one thing I needed:

Love and happiness.

No one knew, I was all alone.

A swarm of darkness filled the room behind the glass.

I knew one thing could cure the pain,

Something so simple, yet still impossible.

Now and then, I thought about it.

My metamorphosis was near, but still so far away.

My mind and skin were different.

They needed to meld, to unite in the middle.


I was so close to that opening in the void.

That pane of glass was closed, but not completely.

A rift was visible, a hint of light from beyond.

I reached for it, stretched for it.

My fingers slipped through the hole, an explosion rupturing the glass,

A metamorphosis...my rebirth into the real me. 

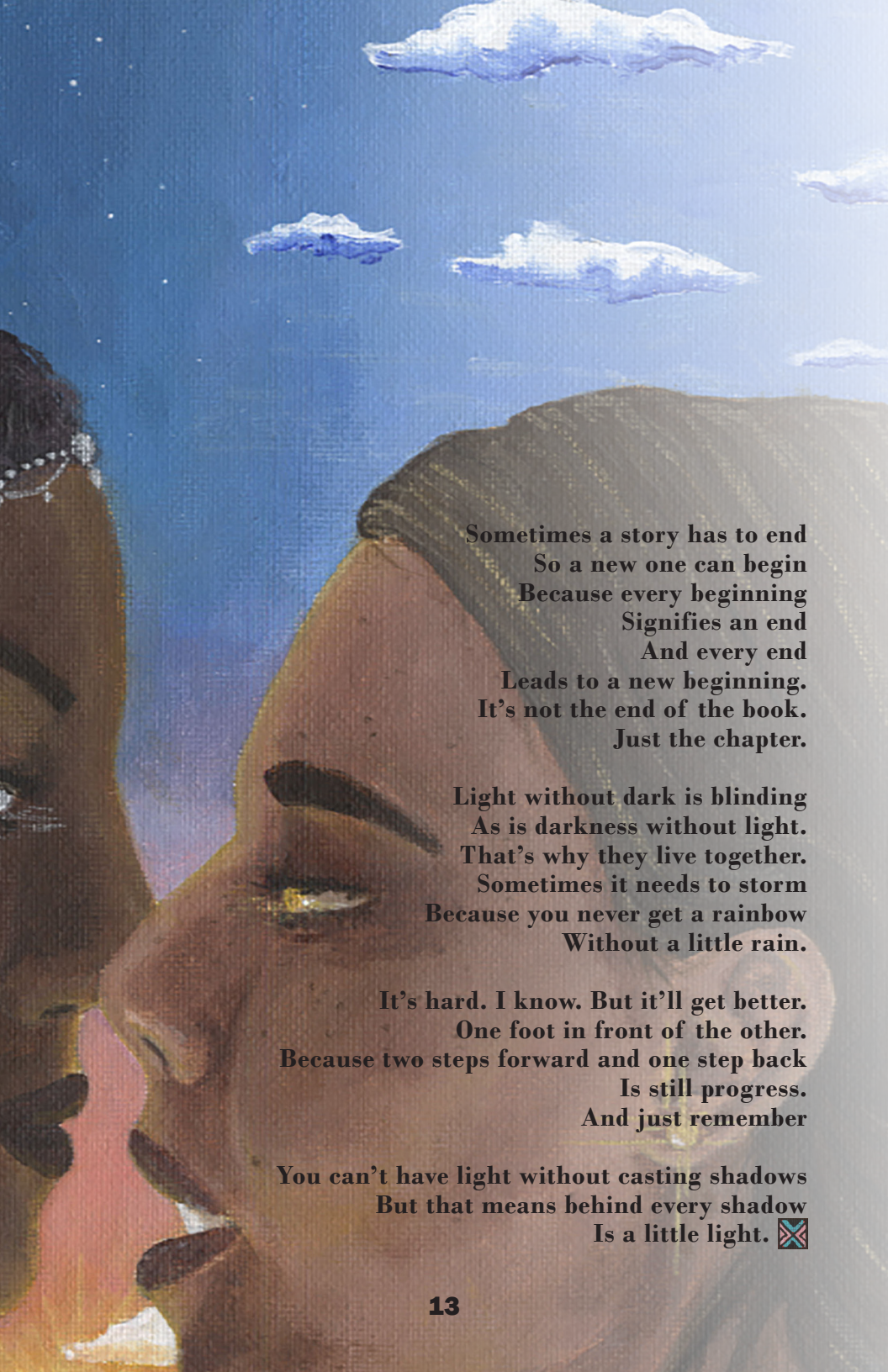


A NEW DAY

giana ferraiolo

Sometimes you have to turn the light off
Before the sun comes up again.
But even when you do
The moon and stars still light the way
Even if it isn't so obvious.

Sometimes the sky turns grey
And it rains and rains and rains
And it pours
And it never looks like it's going to end.
But once it does the grass turns greener
And the flowers bloom brighter
And the sun shines harder
Because that's what rain does.
It washes everything else away.



**Sometimes a story has to end
So a new one can begin
Because every beginning
Signifies an end
And every end
Leads to a new beginning.
It's not the end of the book.
Just the chapter.**

**Light without dark is blinding
As is darkness without light.
That's why they live together.
Sometimes it needs to storm
Because you never get a rainbow
Without a little rain.**

**It's hard. I know. But it'll get better.
One foot in front of the other.
Because two steps forward and one step back
Is still progress.
And just remember**

**You can't have light without casting shadows
But that means behind every shadow
Is a little light. ☒**

PERSPECTIVE

giana ferraiolo

I wish I was her
Because she always looks perfect,
No matter what she does.

I wish I was him
Because he's so smart
And aces all his tests without even trying.


I wish I was her
Because she's so athletic
With her varsity letters and scholarships, too.

I wish I was him
Because he's always surrounded by people
Who look up to him and want to be his friend.

But what I don't know is:

She spends hours every day
Trying to look that good
And never seems to think it's enough;

And he can't seem to
Get his grades high enough
To please himself and meet the expectations;



And she spends hours every day
Practicing and training
Just so she can make the team;

And he has lots of people
Who want to hang out with him
But nobody to really call a friend.

What I didn't know was:

Everyone is insecure;
Everyone has their flaws
That they don't let the other see.

What I didn't know was:

There is someone out there
Who wishes they were me,
And that's not just me being vain.

The grass is always greener,
And the sky is always bluer,
And life is always better
When you're not the one living it. ❧

LOST IN TIME

nicole kemon

It felt like a dream. I levitated mindlessly in the space, sinking further and further into the abyss until I no longer knew where I was. Then, the uproar erupted out of the silence. The bellowing, stomping, and foreign noises filled my ears like the roaring waterfalls of Neraida. What happened? Where am I? The clamor overwhelmed my being, and sent a tremble down my spine. Ever so slowly, I opened my eyes and at once was blinded by the colors. Did the enemy retreat?

The fiery reds and yellows glared at my warrior helmet like the blood-thirsty Ares. I clenched my eyes shut again and grasped my ears, but the noises and color would not cease. I retreated into a defensive position with my iron shield held high to ward off the evil noises and colors. I bowed my head and gripped my bloody sword tight, ready to strike.

Spartan soldiers with their primitive tricks cannot falter my fight. I will destroy the maker of these evil noises and colors and be victorious. The voice of a man spoke behind me, "Hey, are you okay!?"

My heart leaped. I rotated sharply and plunged my sword into the man's odd, cloth armor. He screamed in agony and as I proudly watched my victim fall onto the black ground.

"Die, filthy Spartan" I shouted, "the Cretan people shall be victorious!" I abandoned my fallen enemy and went in search of my remaining fighters.



Did my eyes deceive me? Was I not in Greece? I paused and observed my surroundings. Towering buildings reached for Mount Olympus in the starry night sky, and large, horseless chariots sped around me. The noise and colors struck fear into my soul as I froze, mesmerized by the racing contraption heading directly toward me. A woman screamed and quickly grabbed me out of the path of the powerful, metal beast.

“What were you thinking!?! That metro train would have killed you!”

“Train?”

“Um, yeah, the train. You know you should be more careful around here; this is New York, after all.” ❧

HOURGLASS

giana ferraiolo

Too young and carefree to notice or care about

The sands trickling down to the ground.

Unappreciative, fall faster please.

Running, leaping, not at

All hindered by the

Sand for now

Until

It starts to

Fall faster, fall

Harder, no stop in sight,

Until you can't move, can't see.

The end is in sight and you wish you

Could go back to the way things were back then. 

PAST THE DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL

stella celentano

A new door,
Down the hall, To the left.
Past fields and farms,
Around the corner, Through the tunnel,
Under a white ballot and a white jury,
Up and down.

There, a door rises
Through the now cracked floorboards.
The purest of doors glows with bold reds and purples,
With jazz and dance.
It stands pleading to bring a new life.
With barely a touch,
The door swings to replace its contents with pristine vitality.

Songs of joy
Ring through the streets,
As if they had long lived deep inside of southern souls.
As we sing of Strange Fruit,
We wear bright dresses,
More than old aprons,
And we hold up the new world in our softer hands.

May this fantasy never end. ❧

WHAT IF?

annie myers-payne

What if we accepted people for who they are?

**What if we believed that no matter who they are,
They really belong here.**

Could we change the world?

What if mistakes are made?

**What if we tried forgiveness instead of judgment,
And chose to love?**

Could we be stronger?

What if we smiled at those weaker than us?

**What if we gave to those in need,
And did everything we thought possible?**

Could we do more?

What if we were able to express ourselves?

**What if we stood up straight,
And said what we believed without fear of what may come?**

Could we be open-minded?

What if we have the ability to listen?

**What if we have patience,
And are there for anyone who reaches out for help?**

Will we have love?

And if not, we probably should. 



LET LOOSE **annie myers-payne**

20/20

giana ferraiolo

We used to know where our friends were
By looking for their bikes in our neighbor's driveway.
We used to have to wait
For our mom to stop talking to Aunt Carol
Before we could IM our friends.
We used to groan about only being able to
Talk to our best friend at school
And be grateful that we only had to
See weird Uncle Al at Christmas and family reunions.

Sometimes we had to write a paper
With paper books instead of pixels
And if we were bored
We went outside
But all hell broke loose if we weren't back
Before the streetlights came on.

Now we watch the world screech to a halt
And by that we mean everything happens at once
But nothing seems to happen at all
As people ignore each other in favour of
A small glowing box
And use pictures of faces
Instead of the real thing.

Maybe it's not all bad.
We don't have to rely on holidays to see our family
And long lost pals are a click away.
Forgot to make dinner? Just use the app!
Anything we want with a swipe and a tap.

But we still miss the way things were
Back before all these newfangled gizmos.
Before the harsh blue replaced the soft amber glow
Of our old street lights and reading lamps.
Before everything had to happen
Right

This
Instant.
Back when we could take a step back
And enjoy the little things.

But we're always looking back,
Aren't we?
To the "good ol' days."
But we never stop to consider
Maybe the good ol' days are now.
And it just takes time to realize it. ❧

MERLIN nicole garnhart





IRIS sarah golliver

ROCKING CHAIR

gianna ferraiolo

wake up, brush your teeth, do your hair, get dressed, go to school,
go to work, do your job, go home, make dinner, read a book,
watch tv, go to bed

wake up, brush your teeth, do your hair, get dressed, go to school,
go to work, do your job, go home, make dinner, read a book,
watch tv, go to bed

wake up, brush your teeth, do your hair, get dressed,
go to school, go to work, do your job, go home, make dinner,
read a book, watch tv, go to bed

every day, just the same, always doing, just the same
always wishing, for a change, every day, just the same

left, right, march, march to the beat, of your life
never stray, never different, every day, just the same

wake up, brush your teeth, do your hair, get dressed, go to school,
go to work, do your job, go home, make dinner, read a book,
watch tv, go to bed

Until one day you stop and wonder if there was really something
You could've done.

And you realize that every day was, in fact, different
And nothing was ever just the same.

Basic outline, yes, but every day was a new experience.

Every day was a gift.

And if I'd just seen it then, if I'd been the change
I wanted in my life

Maybe I wouldn't be in this rocking chair
So full of regrets, so full of remorse
Of a life wasted, waiting for something
well within reach.

Or maybe I took the right path all along
But ruined it by looking back
And wondering what could've been
Instead of wondering what could be. ❧

THOUGHTS

nicole contraras

What if we are not who we are
meant to be,

In a world that we are not
meant to be in.

We stand so close, yet we
cannot touch.

Who we are supposed to be
with

Is out there; maybe it's reality.

Love will be the biggest hurt
in life but

Have faith in it, always.

Most of all, allow

You to love yourself.

You were meant to

Be you, and fall

For the one you are so into.

Remember life will always
seem like a fantasy. ☒

MY HOME IN ASHES

AFTER MARGARITA ENGLE'S "MORE DANGEROUS AIR"

harrison rands

Isn't it fun to **pretend**

That some things don't happen? I like to pretend **that**

That fire never happened, the one that incinerated the **furniture**

That we played on when we were younger.

But now, that furniture is

Gone. We must pretend that memories

and ashes of our home are **enough.** 

WHEN I SEE YOU AGAIN

AFTER CLAUDE MCKAY'S "AFTER THE WINTER"

briana arroyo

One crisp Sunday morning, walking so gracefully
down the stone path, thinking back to all the adventures **and**

Memories we made together. Wondering why he had to take you
so soon, but at the same time I know we

Will see each other again. I know you **will**

Always be in my heart because in there, you are still alive.

Those special memories of you,

Always bring a smile, the same smile that I **seek**

And wish to embrace each and every day. As I walk across the
grass to the stone, that very stone I didn't plan on seeing
in the future, I gently place **the**

Delicate flower down. As I get up it hurts, my heart aches from
the grief inside it though no one knows how much pain
I'm in. I stay **quiet**

For I don't want to wake the angels among us as I let the tears
trickle down my skin onto her stone. As I turn my back
to walk back up the hill, I feel the agony within me, the
name of the love of my life and I will never forget, as I
walk back up the **hill**

Into the house where we first met. 



EXPERIENCE

AFTER CHELSEA WAGENAAR'S "THE SPINNING PLACE"

grace zeiter

Have a thirst for adventure. One that cannot be quenched,
not even by the most colossal **floods**.

Be eager for experience, to be immersed in **the**

Unique lives of others, watch their stories **unravel**.

Make a journey of your life, wandering down an endless,
winding **road**.

Broaden your mind through extraordinary sights,
alternative ideas **with**

Profound explanations, cultures and customs; **a**

Magnificent world with wondrous people,
all speaking their own fascinating **language**.


Feel the unity of the human race. Different, yet equal.

For when **he**

Or she is inspired by the earth's complexity,

and commits to a life of curiosity, one **cannot**

Smother their desire for adventure.

Pursue the discovery of a world that no one can **understand**. 

GROWTH lauren mccloskey

THE ROOF

AFTER JANE KENYON'S "HAPPINESS"

hayley dillenseger

It was hard for Jaiden to

See if his parents' cars were in the driveway
through the heavy rain.

If they were, then he knew he would be falling

Into deep trouble for being on

The roof last night, which is where he likes to go when the
Power goes out in the neighborhood. Crawling out his open
Window, he makes his way to the top and looks over at the
houses and city that resembles the sea. 🇺🇸

HUMANITY'S SECRET

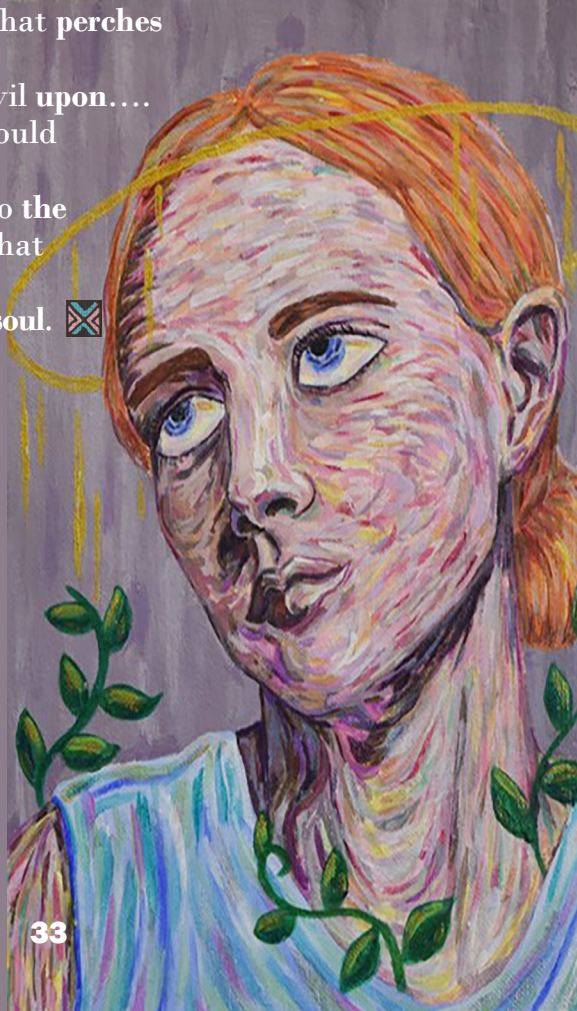
AFTER EMILY DICKINSON'S

"HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS"

giana ferraiolo

An oddity it is that we think and **hope**
For an answer, for anything other than what is,
To make a difference, to follow **the**
Road less travelled. But that's the **thing**.
There's nothing wrong with joy, with hope,
with laughter and fun, **with**
Everything that makes us smile,
only to realize under the frills and **feathers**,
There is a darkness **that**
Never seems to brighten, that **perches**
Waiting to strike.

Layer upon layer, evil **upon....**
But when anything else would
wither and perish,
we survive thanks to **the**
Crazy thing we call hope that
give us our peace of
heart and mind and **soul**. ☒



FLASHES OF BRILLIANCE

THOSE WHO INSPIRE

elizabeth peterson

Celebrate and appreciate those who inspire others,
because without them the world wouldn't be the same. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

IT'S AN IDEA

benjamin powell

All day, every day.
If I don't I can't, I won't be the best.
I can't go back to who I was.
Never let anyone stop me. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

WORLDLY HORRORS


grace curtain

Children know no difference.
Adults know no alternative.
As you grow up you realize
that maybe the spider under
your skin wasn't
the worst monster
in the world
after all. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿


TO THE LIGHTHOUSE **lauren mccloskey**




NEW BEGINNINGS
jake joseph

Entering the school for the first time,
Preparing to face those same colors on the battlefield,
Because they know that these aren't the same cracked,
 dull walls of the past,
But they are the new, smooth, reawakened walls of the present,
This is the starts of
New beginnings. 

MY MONSTER
jessie pekala

My monster does not live under my bed,
My monster is housed inside my head,
My monster calls to let me know
That he is right and I need to go. 

SEEING OVER MY MIND
mackenzie munn

It's our long talks in the car
 That continue to remind me how much you care.
 But what hurts me the most,
 Is knowing you'll chose her, and
 I'll still be by your side through it all. 

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BEAUTY IN COLOR **leah culbert**

