

The FINE ARTS INSTITUTE AT EAST HIGH Strand

KID

By Levi Gustafson

I want to be a kid again.

I want to be able to run around half naked,
without being thrown in an asylum.

I want to be able to explore life again,
without thinking with logic.

I want to be able to push the kid on the tire swing
because it is my turn, without being arrested.

I want my innocence again,
without everyone thinking I am stupid.

I want to ask question after question.

But I can't.

It's hard to grasp the thought that I can't start over.

Seconds pass and no one thinks about it,
but I do.

Like a handful of thin sharp sand, slicing and taking parts
of you away-- you can't do anything to stop it or slow it
down.

If you try, you only lose more and more,
until its all gone.

The Walk

By Sofia Gallus

I'm walking with -- no, not with, above -- Julianne. It's raining out, and we're walking down the street. Though she isn't talking to me -- and she hasn't talked to me since that one night in May when she was walking home drunk with her friends -- I still enjoy her company.

I listen to her talk into her phone instead. I'm sure she doesn't notice that I'm listening. I'm sure that she doesn't even notice that I'm here. She laughs into her phone and then appears to hang up. Thunder clatters above our heads, and so she rushes over to the side of the sidewalk, and I follow her, quickly and silently. She waves her arm in the air: she's calling for a taxi. One drives up on the curb, the wheels spinning in the water that has began to pool on the streets, spraying waves up onto the sidewalk. She thanks the driver as she slides sideways into the cab. I follow her into the car, thankful to be out of the rain. She tells the driver where to go, and as the cab gets back into the line of traffic, Julianne leans her head on the glass window. She watches as the wheels of the cab push the water away from the vehicle and onto the sides of the street. She doesn't notice me watching. It takes us around fifteen minutes to reach her destination. Julianne thanks the driver again, smiles at me, and then steps out of the taxi. I follow her into the building: it's tall, at least

four stories high. It's made of shiny black plexiglass, and if you look closely enough, you can see an office in each window. Every office is a little different. I've only visited this place a few times with Julianne before, but every time has been the same.

As Julianne walks inside, her heels click on the tile flooring. She makes me wait at the entrance, and then disappears inside the interior of the building for what feels like hours.

I watched people pass by me all day, walking in and out of the building. Some were short, some were tall. Most of them had friends like me that they left at the entrance, waiting for them to return.

After many people passed me by, Julianne returned like she usually did, looking significantly more tired than she had when she entered the building. As she approached where I was waiting, I felt the familiar excitement build up inside of me. I knew exactly what would happen next. She would walk up to me, and then we would walk out those fancy spinning doors together, and we would get into a taxi and go home, and I would retire for the night as Julianne made dinner.

And then suddenly, Julianne passed me. She walked right out the front doors of the building. It was no longer raining. The excitement drained out of me. I felt the cold metal walls of the bin Julianne had left me waiting in. The world shifted into perspective. I was small. I was left behind.

I was an umbrella.





Lady with a Bird—Charcoal study by Carly Mattern



Watercolor Study by Carly Mattern

Dreams

By Levi Gustafson

I dream.

But I dream different than others do.

What is a nightmare to most,
is a delightful release for me.

What others fear and shrink from,
I adore and inch closer.

I am not sick or crazy,
I am realistic and optimistic.

When there is good,
there must be evil.

Even in you
and everyone else.

You must balance these two everyday.

If you only show good,
you will lash out when you have too much evil.

If you only show evil,
No good will ever come.

Vendetta

By Levi Gustafson

People would treat me like I'm useless.
But that's better than when I found I have temptations.

When they would see me getting help,
it scared them.

Then they saw me as a burden.

A sickening disease or virus of unimaginable death.

It scared them.

They laughed at me for every imperfection.

Every scar. Every zit. Every blemish.

It scared them.

Then I left to finally get better.

They thought I was arrested or locked up.

It scared them.

When I returned and saw that they do it to others, to every-
one and anyone with a soul or face.

It scared them.

I spoke one word and walked away from it.

From all of them, I finally didn't care about the venom they
spit.

And one last time, I scared them.



Grapvine Dreamcatcher by Liz Grunwald