



T · H · E  
**Loom**

The Lilian and Benjamin  
Hertzberg Palliative Care Institute  
Creative Arts Journal by patients, families,  
caregivers, and staff.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Jennifer Soto . . . . .	1-2	JD Elder . . . . .	31
Franklin Garcia . . . . .	3	Walter Simons . . . . .	32
Krystle Davis . . . . .	6-7	Jamie Hanfling . . . . .	33
Sade Morris . . . . .	8	Krystle Davis . . . . .	34
Anonymous . . . . .	8	Jamie Hanfling . . . . .	35
Jennifer Soto . . . . .	9	Allums Family . . . . .	35
Racheal Garcia . . . . .	10	Krystle Davis . . . . .	36
Anonymous . . . . .	10	Jennifer Soto . . . . .	36
Sade Morris . . . . .	11	Brendan DeGregorio . . . . .	37-38
Jamie Hanfling . . . . .	11	Anonymous . . . . .	39
Brett Hanfling . . . . .	12	Allums Family . . . . .	39
Lanier Regina Fowlkes . . . . .	13-14	Anonymous . . . . .	40
Garcia Family . . . . .	13-14	Jennifer Soto . . . . .	41
Krystle Davis . . . . .	15	Katlyn Garcia . . . . .	41
Jennifer Soto . . . . .	16	Katherine Garcia . . . . .	41
Sheila Wilson . . . . .	17-18	Yara Fahad . . . . .	42
Kyla Foster . . . . .	19	Anonymous . . . . .	42
Sidd Foster . . . . .	20	Lee Hanfling . . . . .	43
Jamie Hanfling . . . . .	21	Ali Hanfling . . . . .	43
Jennifer Soto . . . . .	21	Francisco Vargas . . . . .	44
Krystle Davis . . . . .	22	Family of Luis "El Gallo" Cajigas . . . . .	45-46
Yara Fahad . . . . .	22	Children and grandchildren of Michael Allums . . . . .	47
Camila Santos-Garcia . . . . .	23	Brett Hanfling . . . . .	48
Raymond "RJ" Garcia . . . . .	24	Sheila Wilson . . . . .	49
Sidd Foster . . . . .	25	Megan Rau . . . . .	50
Kyla Foster . . . . .	26	Halli Rosin . . . . .	51-52
Jamie Hanfling . . . . .	27	Sarah Yazdian . . . . .	53
Krystle Davis . . . . .	27	Maureen Leahy . . . . .	53
Chettina Brown . . . . .	28	Yara Fahad . . . . .	54

The front cover, back cover, and pages 29-30 were created by young adults that attended a memorial service in December 2016.



T · H · E  
**Loom**  
S T A F F

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Franklin Garcia

# Introduction

"I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness for it shows me the stars."

- American author Augustine "Og" Mandino II

It is an honor to introduce the fourth issue of *The Loom*, an amazing collection of original artwork created by our patients, their loved ones and our staff during this past year. As you turn these pages you will encounter the special people who have shared a piece of themselves in order to help create a sense of wholeness in the midst of serious illness.

People cope with illness, grief and loss in different ways. Many times it may be so difficult and frustrating to express the complicated emotions we feel. As *The Loom* illustrates, creating art is another way to give voice to the unspoken words of our souls, allowing us to connect immediately and deeply with ourselves and with others.

Art is also a powerful antidote for loss in that it can transcend time, and be preserved and shared with future generations. In these pages you will encounter awe-inspiring examples of how people can be moved to create lasting beauty in the midst of pain, and find celebration and joy in the depths of sorrow. Every single page in this issue beats to its own rhythm of lived experience. There is an 'aliveness' in these pages-- the pulse of creation.

A special word about the cover art...This winter, our Palliative Care group held its first-ever memorial service for young people who had lost a parent or sibling. We designed a service with art and musical elements, and created a safe space to reflect and remember. As one moving part of the service, we invited our young attendees to create a sky full of stars. Together, we created a dark sky to metaphorically represent the darkness that is experienced with serious illness and loss. We turned off the lights and shone flashlights into the darkness. Then each person added a star to the sky, representing not only their lost loved one, but also the wishes, hopes and dreams their loved one held for them. This mural of light in the darkness is the cover of this year's *Loom*.

As you find your way through the pages of this edition of *The Loom*, may you be open to experience the love, life and light that generated these masterpieces of creation.

Affirming my awe for the transformative power of the creative process,

*Rabbi Edie*

**Edith Meyerson**, DMin, BCC, Associate Director,  
Pastoral Counseling and Bereavement Services

# Letter from Guest Editor

From the New York City skyline on a crisp, clear night to murals spray-painted on the sides of buildings in the Bronx and Harlem, art is all around us. It shapes our environments and experiences. As an NYC native, I've always appreciated the arts. I love strolling through the MoMA and the MET to see what's changed since my last visit. When I stand in the Met with its high ceilings, looking at ancient Egyptian artifacts, it feels like I've stepped into St. Patrick's Cathedral or another sacred space.

I especially enjoy modern artists because I can relate to their stories. Some of the best artists create works that reflect their struggles and emotions. I may never reach the level of a Frida Kahlo or Yayoi Kusama, but I identify with art as an expression of pain and a vehicle for healing. There's something cathartic about starting with a blank canvas and pouring your feelings out as colors onto a page.

Back in October when an osteosarcoma diagnosis turned my world upside down, art therapy helped to lift my spirits and make me whole again. I recently came across this quote, which gives a fitting definition of "wholeness": "Wholeness does not mean perfection: It means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life."

I may be fighting an illness, but I have a peace of mind that allows me to overcome everyday challenges. Creating art helps keep me calm and inspired. Just as an artist can imagine a scene and bring it to living color, I too have the power to shape my own life.

Art therapy sessions with Sarah always put a smile on my face. Sometimes I was too sick to create anything, and we would just talk about my latest health updates or day-to-day struggles. Other times when I had more energy, I'd put some colors together on paper until it looked like something recognizable. On the following page are just a few of the pieces I've worked on. Over the course of my treatment, the oak tree became an important symbol of strength and growth for me. As you can see, it was a recurring theme in my artwork. Cancer may have confined my body to a hospital bed facing blank, off-white walls, but my mind and spirit were stuck on nature scenes and the great outdoors, and I used them to transport me to faraway places.

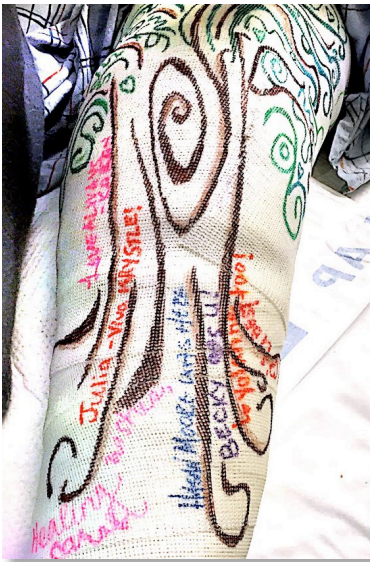
One time I tried to make ceramic “thank you” ornaments for my family, but they exploded in the kiln. Like life itself, art doesn’t always work out as you plan it, but it’s the feeling behind it that matters most (I put a lot of love into that fire!)

I also really enjoy making collages because I can take pieces of something old and create something inspiring and new. Collage making is a deep reminder that I can make something beautiful out of broken pieces. I start out with tiny fragments, but through creativity and faith, they always come together in the end. On page 26 you’ll find one of my earliest collages, which also showcases my desire to escape to the outdoors.

One of the silver linings of my cancer diagnosis was that I developed a much closer relationship with my family, especially my father whom I’d never grown up with. This Christmas he bought me a paint set, so I can continue to express myself through art outside of the hospital. I’ve used this art set during one of the most challenging times of my life, and like many artists, some of my best art emerges from times of pain and struggle. I hope the work of *The Loom* artists will inspire others who are trying to cope with difficult situations. If you look just a bit beneath the surface, you may find a deeper meaning to each piece. Enjoy!

*Krystle Davis*

**Krystle Davis**, Guest Patient Editor



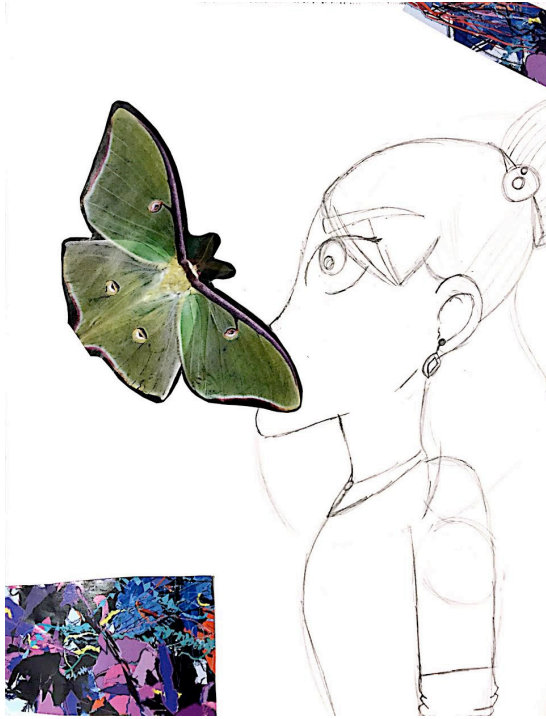


*Krystle Davis*



*Krystle Davis*





Sade Morris

find your courage

**difficult**

**KEEP MOVING**

Healing through encouragement, support

Strength, independence and quality of life

*Rewriting Your Present No Matter Your Past*

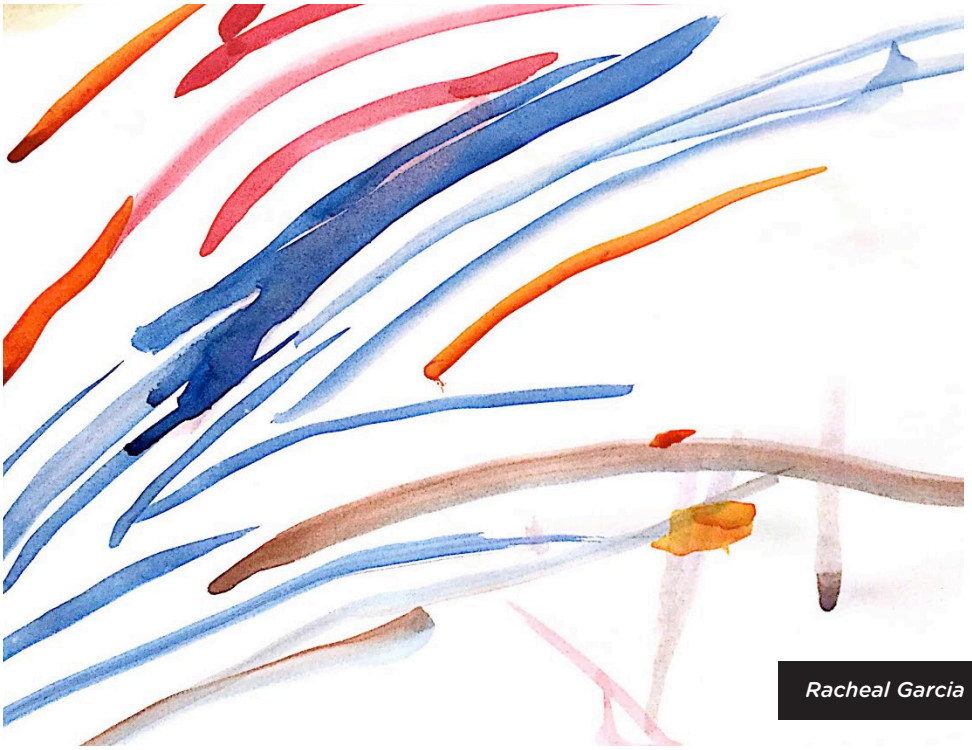
**progress**

**Life happens.**

Anonymous



*Jennifer Soto*



Racheal Garcia



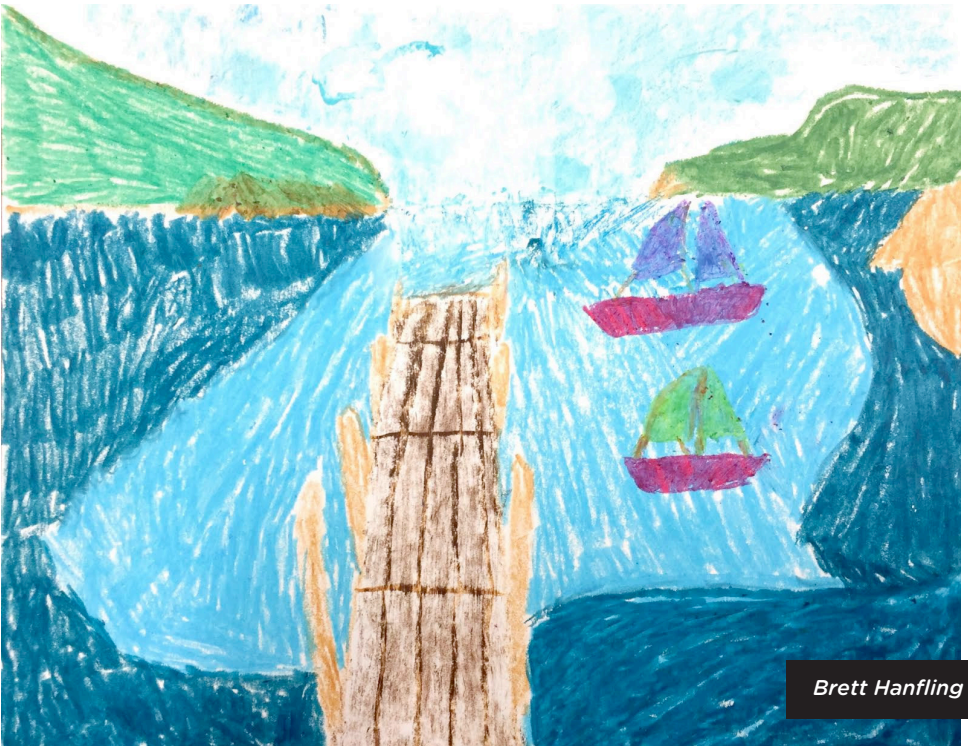
Anonymous



*Sade Morris*



*Jamie Hanfling*



*Brett Hanfling*



*Brett Hanfling*

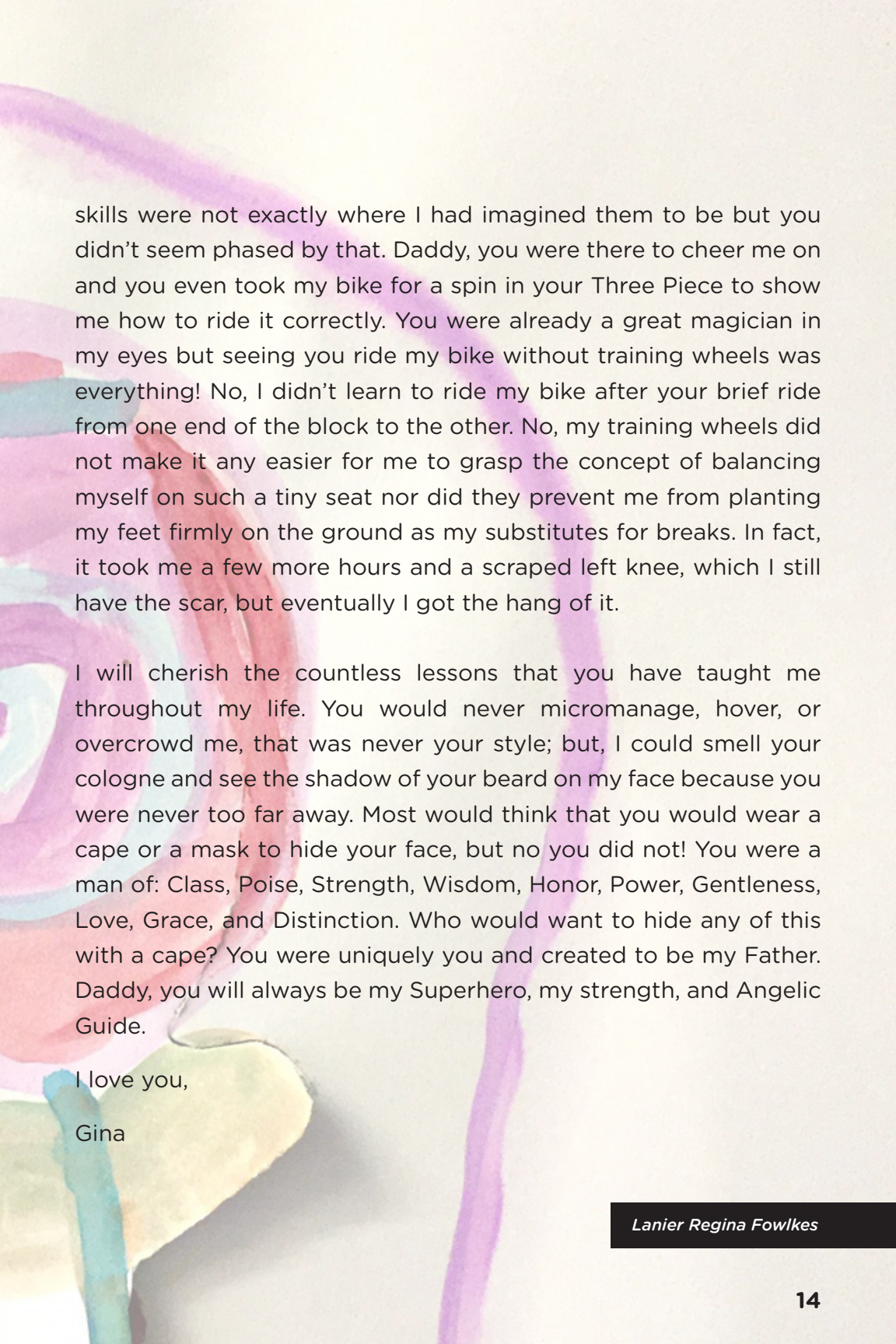


# *My Superhero Wears A Three Piece Suit*

When I didn't know if I could, you knew that I would. You were always the teacher who taught me to believe in life and miracles. You were not a man of many words but your silence spoke volumes. You always lead by example and sometimes even shared a soft smile. When I wanted something, you encouraged me to reach. There were twists and turns, highs and lows, and bumps along the way, however, deep down inside, I knew that you were nearby and I would always be safe.

I can recall you teaching me how to ride my bike while wearing a Three Piece suit. It was bright and sunny outside that day; even the birds were chirping and ready to be my supportive audience. We left the apartment with my bike and training wheels in tow and I could not contain my excitement! My bike was white and silver trimmed with purple and pink stripes but its best features were its white wicker basket and pink, silver, and purple streamers! I was ready! The sky, the sun, the birds, and my bike were all present to watch history be made that day.

I was finally going to learn how to ride my bike at the age of 12 and my Daddy, my Superhero, was going to teach me! Well, my riding



skills were not exactly where I had imagined them to be but you didn't seem phased by that. Daddy, you were there to cheer me on and you even took my bike for a spin in your Three Piece to show me how to ride it correctly. You were already a great magician in my eyes but seeing you ride my bike without training wheels was everything! No, I didn't learn to ride my bike after your brief ride from one end of the block to the other. No, my training wheels did not make it any easier for me to grasp the concept of balancing myself on such a tiny seat nor did they prevent me from planting my feet firmly on the ground as my substitutes for breaks. In fact, it took me a few more hours and a scraped left knee, which I still have the scar, but eventually I got the hang of it.

I will cherish the countless lessons that you have taught me throughout my life. You would never micromanage, hover, or overcrowd me, that was never your style; but, I could smell your cologne and see the shadow of your beard on my face because you were never too far away. Most would think that you would wear a cape or a mask to hide your face, but no you did not! You were a man of: Class, Poise, Strength, Wisdom, Honor, Power, Gentleness, Love, Grace, and Distinction. Who would want to hide any of this with a cape? You were uniquely you and created to be my Father. Daddy, you will always be my Superhero, my strength, and Angelic Guide.

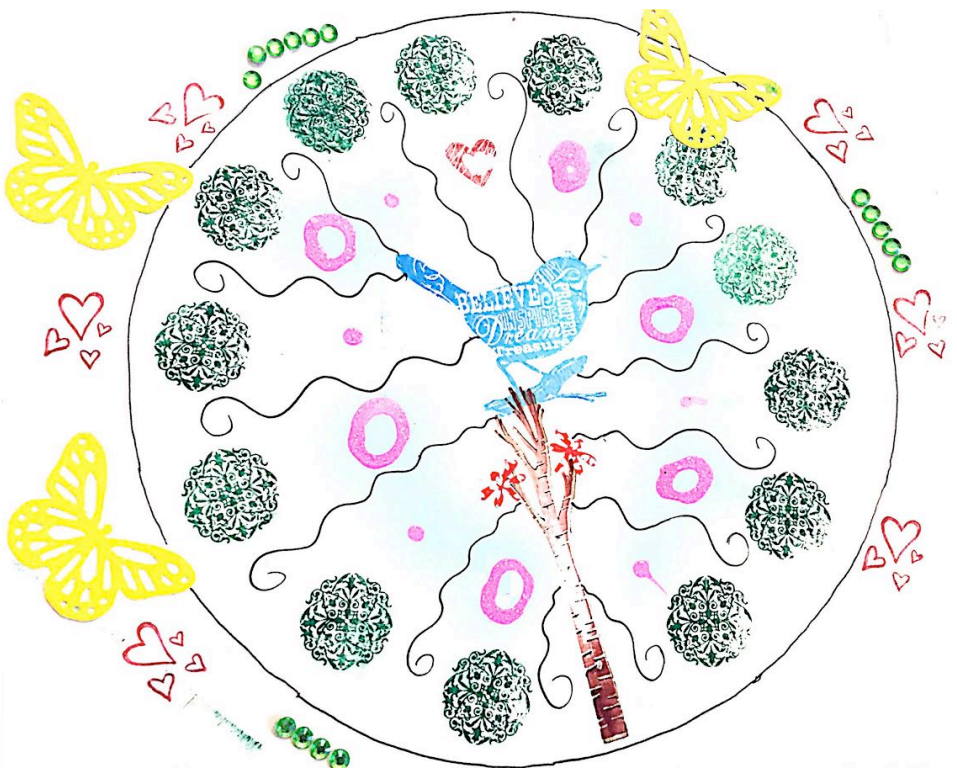
I love you,

Gina



*Krystle Davis*







Sheila Wilson

Good  
Morning

A child's drawing with the words 'Good Morning' written in blue and pink. The word 'Good' is in blue and 'Morning' is in pink. There are many small, colorful doodles scattered around the text, including a pink heart and various squiggly lines.

GOOD  
Afternoon  
TO ALL

A child's drawing with the words 'GOOD Afternoon TO ALL' written in orange, red, and green. The word 'GOOD' is in orange, 'Afternoon' is in red, and 'TO ALL' is in green. There are several colorful hearts and other doodles scattered around the text.

GOOD  
EVENING  
ALL

A child's drawing with the words 'GOOD EVENING ALL' written in blue and red. The word 'GOOD' is in blue, 'EVENING' is in red, and 'ALL' is in blue. There are several colorful hearts and other doodles scattered around the text.



Kyla Foster

# *Forever Loved...*

There is no solace, little peace of mind  
For those of us who are left behind  
Our time, our love, our hopes, our dreams  
As we, wait for a better day to come  
Left to wonder,"what if" our fervent plea  
That which can never be  
And never be again.....  
For you are Forever Love

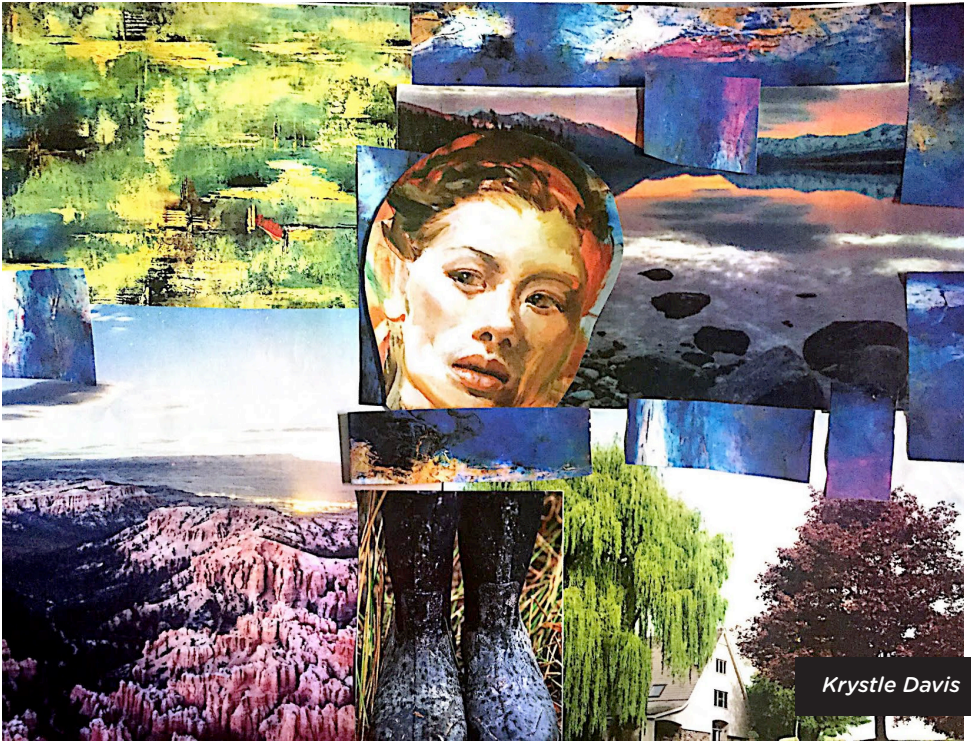
In the twinkle of the star  
We see you as you shine a far  
Feel your kiss in the breeze that blows,  
In laughter, a smile, your doggies nose  
Always with us, have no doubt  
For you, are Forever Loved



Jamie Hanfling



Jennifer Soto



Krystle Davis



Yara Fahad



Camila  
Daddy

Camila Santos-Garcia





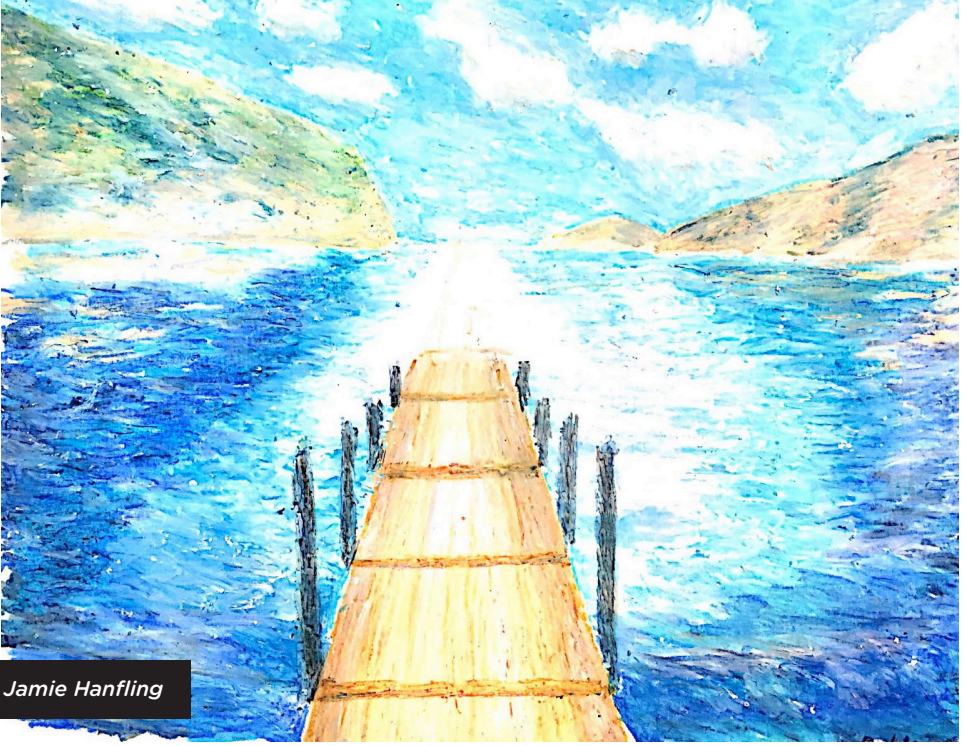
*Raymond "RJ" Garcia*

# *Time Doesn't Stop*

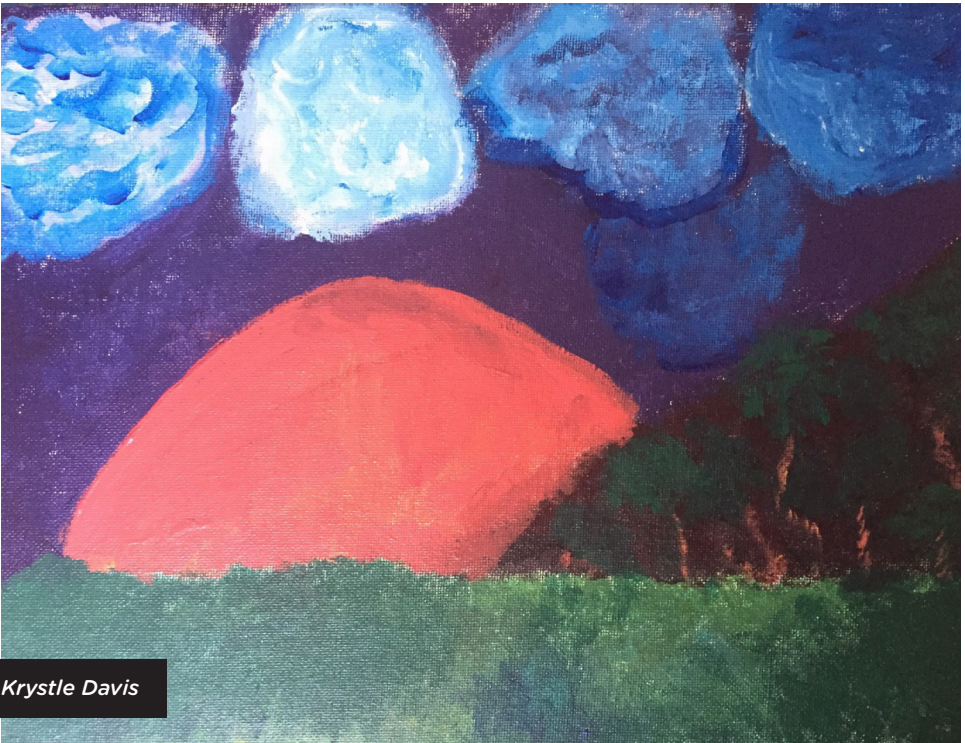
Time Doesn't Stop  
Neither Does the pain  
Time Doesn't Stop  
Neither Does the Sorrow  
Time Doesn't Stop  
Neither Do The Tears  
Time Doesn't Stop  
Neither Does The Joy  
Time Doesn't Stop  
Neither Does The Gratitude  
For All you Meant To Us  
For All You mean to Our World  
Time Doesn't Stop



Kyla Foster



*Jamie Hanfling*



*Krystle Davis*

# What Am I Afraid Of?

I fear that my boys will feel I let them down in some way.  
I fear that the weight of my worries wear on them each  
and every day.

I fear that my sacrifices will all be in vein.  
I fear that I won't live to see brighter days.

Did I hug enough?

Kiss enough?

Share enough "I love you"'s?

Did I devote all that I had for the sake of my two?

Did I let them know their dreams are always destined  
to become true?

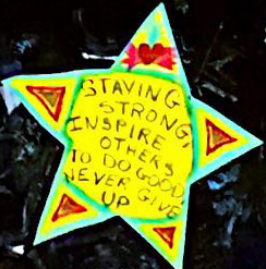
Will they become strong black men who won't have to  
fear men in blue?

Did I teach them pride, strength, and give them glory?

Will they be proud of their mother?

Will they tell my story?





# *It Was A Gift*

It was a gift, this thing you gave  
A song, some cooking, a greasy egg  
With goldfish swimming in olive oil  
I ate it anyway, It made me smile  
You taught me what it means to love  
And taught me how to rise above  
The noise to hear a simple tune  
To appreciate life In all its bloom  
And when I walk with my best good friend  
We reach a place where the path does bend  
We sit on the bench for a little stay  
Near that patch of green, where your ashes lay  
As music from a violin near by  
Might bring a tear into an eye  
But instead I find a peace out there,  
Because I know you're free—in the open air  
And time can't end what we did share  
all the love, and good, great care  
You see, my life was blessed  
Because you were there.



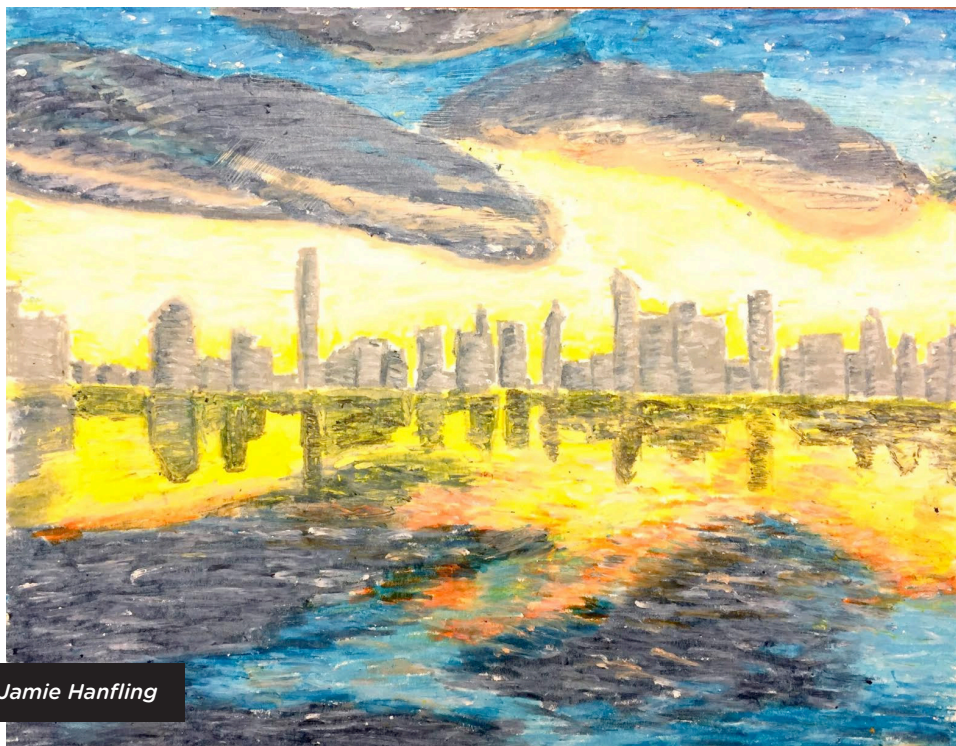


*A Day In The Country*



*Jamie Hanfling*





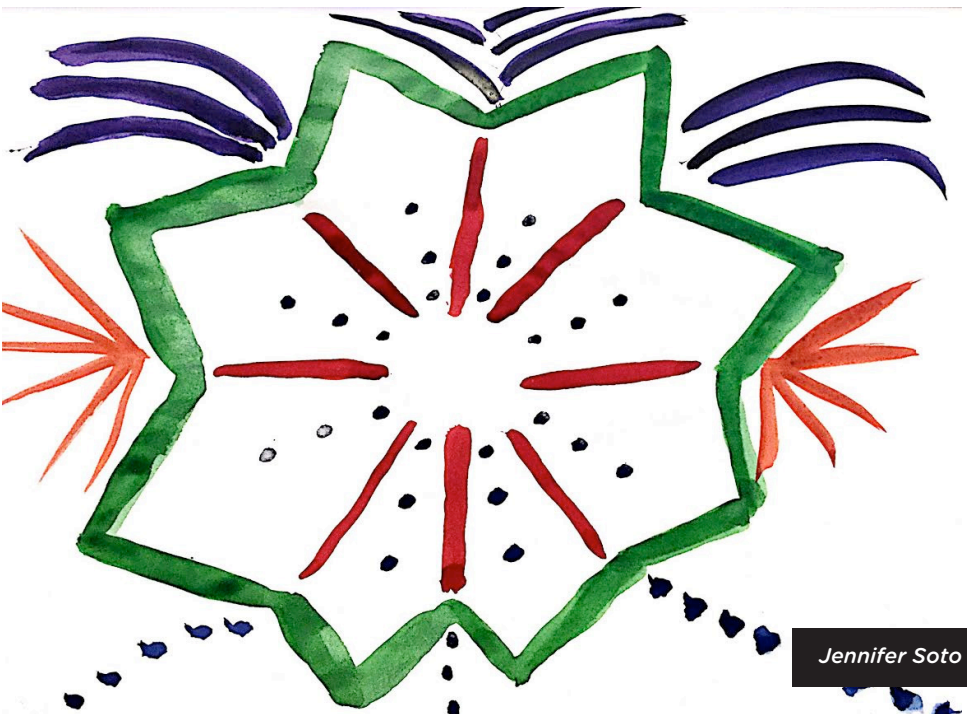
Jamie Hanfling



Allums Family



*Krystle Davis*



*Jennifer Soto*



# My First Friend



Mom Mommy Ma



Pain love memories



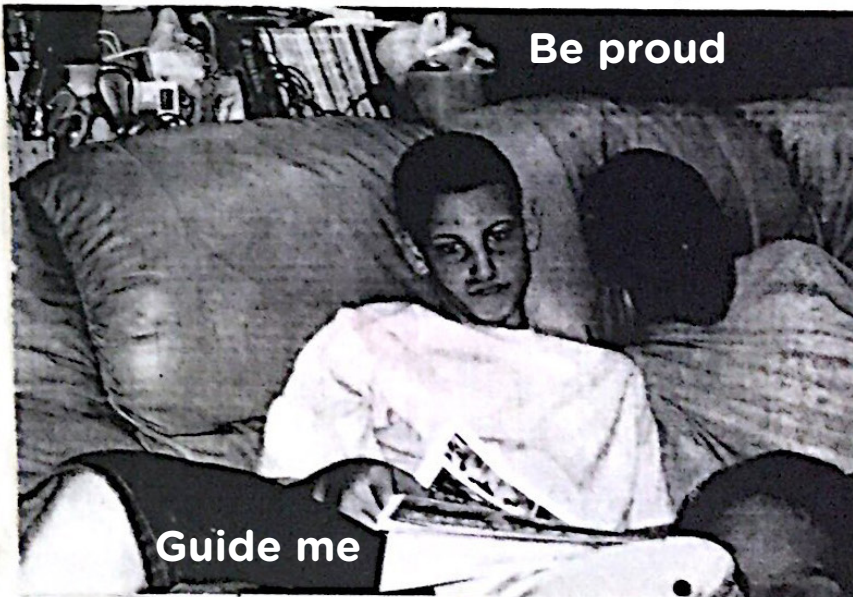
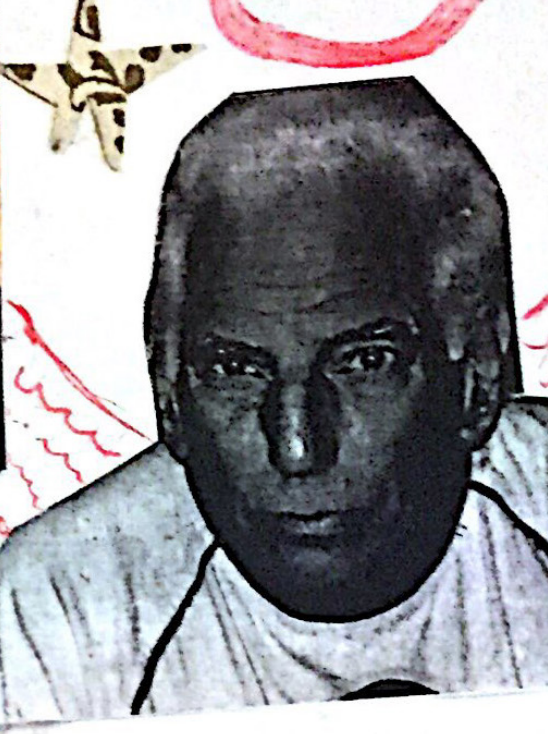
Time cut short



Brendan DeGregorio



Boy to man



Be proud

Guide me

Forever  
in  
my  
Heart



Forever





*Anonymous*



*Allums Family*





*Anonymous*

I Love you Grandma



*Anonymous*



Katherine Garcia



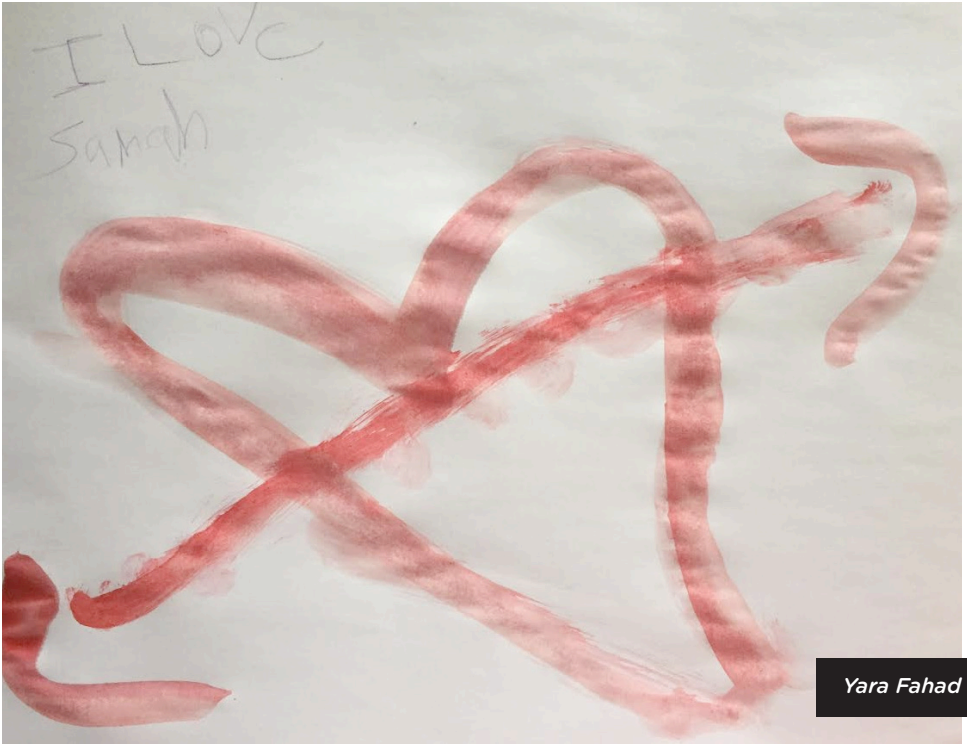
Jennifer Soto



Katlyn Garcia



Jennifer Soto



Yara Fahad



Anonymous



Lee Hanfling



Ali Hanfling



*Francisco Vargas*

NEW

Heart

A bright

"This is a happy go ot  
-D"

BOLD



Growing



Heart

"AT ANY GIVEN  
MOMENT YOU  
HAVE THE POWER  
TO SAY THIS IS  
NOT HOW THE



Family of Luis "El Gallo" Cajigas

STORY IS GOING  
TO END."

LOV

**YORK**

at light

the purpose of life  
is the expansion  
of happiness.  
Happiness is the  
goal of every  
other goal.



S



**GET UP,**  
stand up,  
**STAND UP**  
**FOR YOUR**  
rights. **GET**  
**UP, STAND**  
**UP.** Don't  
give up **THE**  
fight.

Music has power™

ve

Be part of  
something bigger

# Things We Love About Our Grandpa

1. That you took us to the pool.  
This was our first time swimming.
2. That he is special to me.
3. I like when you blow bubbles in the water.
4. Our fun trips to the beach.
5. For introducing us to mussels and seafood.
6. We will miss fun things like cooking and watching TV and the stories he would tell us.
7. You have shown me what unconditional love is.
8. I'm glad we are spending time together.





Brett Hanfling



A vertical strip on the left side of the page showing a microscopic view of tissue, likely stained with hematoxylin and eosin (H&E). The tissue shows various cellular structures, including what appears to be a glandular or ductal structure with a lumen, surrounded by a cellular wall. The nuclei are stained dark purple, and the cytoplasm and extracellular matrix are stained pink.

# BENIGN

**ACCEPTANCE**, alienation, alone, anger, anxiety, appointments, attack, before, BOND, broken, **burden**, CARE PACKAGE, challenge, change, **CHOCOLATE**, **CAMARADERIE**, **CONNECTION**, CONTROL, **damaged**, **danger**, darkness, death, defective, defense, DETERMINATION, discrimination, **distrust**, DOCTOR, doctor, doubt, **EXERCISE**, EXPERIENCE, EVIDENCE, fake, FAMILY, fat, fear, “**fight**”, **FLOWERS**, **FRIENDS**, frightened, GRIT, **GROWTH**, hazard, HEALING, heaviness, hoarseness, **HOPE**, **HUGS**, **information**, insecurity, **INSIGHTS**, insignificant, isolation, **JOY**, judgment, looming, lost, **LOVE**, **MEANING**, medication, OPPORTUNITY, **OVERCOME**, overwhelm, panic, **PATIENCE**, **PATIENT**, patient, PERSEVERANCE, PERSPECTIVE, pity, questions, **RECOVERY**, SAFE, scared, scars, secret, shadows, SISTER, sorrow, SOUL, STRENGTH, tears, tension, **TRANSFORMATION**, TRUE COLORS, unknown, VALUABLE, VALUE, VISITS, vulnerability, wait, weak, WINE, WIN, WONDER

# malignant

A vertical strip on the right side of the page showing a microscopic view of tissue, similar to the left strip. It shows a cross-section of a duct or gland with a clear lumen, lined by a single layer of cuboidal cells. The surrounding stroma contains connective tissue and some inflammatory cells.

*Megan Rau*



# A Work In Progress\*

Sister,

Big sister.

I've never known friendship the way I know your name.

The way our freckles create constellations among suns and  
sunspots in skies only one of us resides in.

The way the light left on in the bathroom leads me home like  
gravity pulling every molecule in my body reminding me  
to come home.

The way the light in my eyes burns stars in your atmosphere  
when I see you happy.

Things are different now but you were never one for planning.  
But know that I still have that friendship bracelet you made me  
8 summers ago.

And when everyone else from our small family joins me,  
When you are the last one of us tired but smiling,  
I'll breathe billowing clouds for you to rest your head on,  
I'll quiet the volume on headaches that make you want  
to go quiet,

As gravity pulls you to the beat of thumbs drumming,  
On plastic table tops and bedside railings,  
I'll open my arms and stay patiently waiting,  
To see you and welcome you home.

*\* Excerpt from a poem written from my brothers perspective  
as if he were able to talk to me right now.*



*Sarah Yazdian and Maureen Leahy*



*Yara Fahad*

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the generous donations of Joseph Hertzberg as well as  
Margaret and John Ruttenberg in memory of Marilyn E. Baker.

For more information  
and to inquire about submissions to  
*The Loom* please contact:

[Lauren.smith@mountsinai.org](mailto:Lauren.smith@mountsinai.org)

To all those who contributed,  
I am grateful for your courage to create art during trying times.  
You have transformed painful spaces of loss into resilient expressions of  
hope and love. Thank you for sharing your story with others  
and making *The Loom* a home where memory can live.

Working with you all and with an exceptional  
palliative care team has been a great honor.

With deep gratitude and love,

*Sarah*

To view the issue and past issues of *The Loom* online,  
please visit The Creative Arts Therapy and Child Life Program page:

[mountsinai.org/patient-care/service-areas/palliative-care/  
creative-arts-and-music-therapy-program](http://mountsinai.org/patient-care/service-areas/palliative-care/creative-arts-and-music-therapy-program)

