

CREATIVE GUTS

YOUTH  
ZINE

Celebrating the creative spirit of young creatives.



SUMMER 2023

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# CREATIVE YOUTH

Hello, Readers!

Every summer when we put together the youth zine, we're reminded why this zine is one of our favorites. We like to imagine the creatives featured in this zine, someday in the distant future, digging through an old box and stumbling upon this zine. For some, this may be the only time their work has been published (that's OK, and we're honored you allowed us to share your work). But for others, this could be the first of many times!

Some may cringe looking back at work created by their past selves (that's OK, too — we all do!), but every single one of the creatives featured in this zine should be proud. Sharing something you've made with the world is an act of bravery! We commend the young people who submitted to this year's zine for their courage.

In this zine, you'll find art created by young people ranging from 13 months old to 17 years old. The artists and writers featured in this zine come from all over the world representing three countries and five U.S. states. This zine includes a wide array of mediums from digital art, printmaking, poetry, clay, and paint to crayon, pencil, marker, food paint, and even sugar and "googly eyes".

Creative Guts' mission is about awakening creativity within people of all ages, but we have a soft spot for young people. We're proud to present to you art created by these gutsy young people.

Thank you to Creative Co-op, a strategic communications firm based in Exeter, NH, for sponsoring this year's youth zine. Without their support, this zine would not have been possible. Learn more about Creative Co-op at [www.creativeco-op.com](http://www.creativeco-op.com).

So with that, show us your creative guts!



**Laura Harper Lake**  
Co-Founder + Co-Host  
Creative Guts



**Sarah Wrightsman**  
Co-Founder + Co-Host  
Creative Guts

# Autumn

13 Months Old  
Fremont, NH



*For the Love of Nana, Organic food paint on canvas*

"This piece was independently created with a chaotic combination of two types of brushes, all ten fingers, and the artist's right foot. An extra piece of watercolor paper was then stomped on top to soak up the excess paint and make the process more physically engaging."

- Autumn's Representative

# Ronan

3 Years Old  
Frisco, TX



*Painted Turtles, Acrylic on wood*

“I like turtles and swimming, and I like that turtles like swimming, so I wanted to paint the turtles like the ocean.”

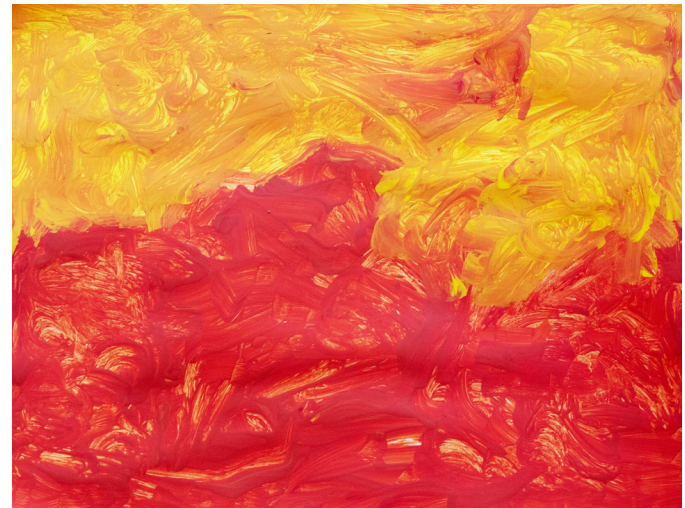
- Ronan

# Joe

4 Years Old  
Center Conway, NH



*Fadden Family Portrait, Pen*



*Just A Painting Of Art, Acrylic Paint*

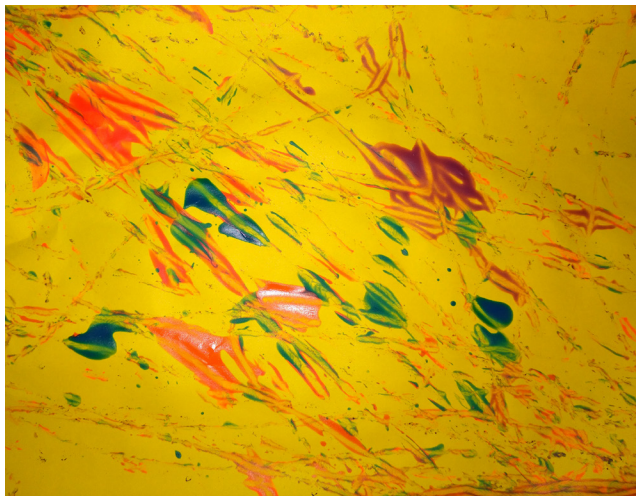
“Joe loves to paint and draw. When he paints he loves to mix colors himself. When he draws he loves to draw people.” - Joe’s Representative

# Alexandra

5 Years Old  
Greenville, NC



*I love Rainbows, Watercolor and pencil*



*Rainbow Marbles, Glue and marbles*

“My favorite color is rainbow. [The second image is] a camp art/science experiment.” - Alexandra

# Ringin

5 Years Old  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia



*Amphibious Tank Entering the Deep Ocean, Acrylic painting on canvas*



*Rooster in the Cornfield, Mixing water colour, oil pastel, and news paper on paper*

“I love to paint fish, squid, octopus, prawns, tank and chickens.” - Ringin

# Eliza

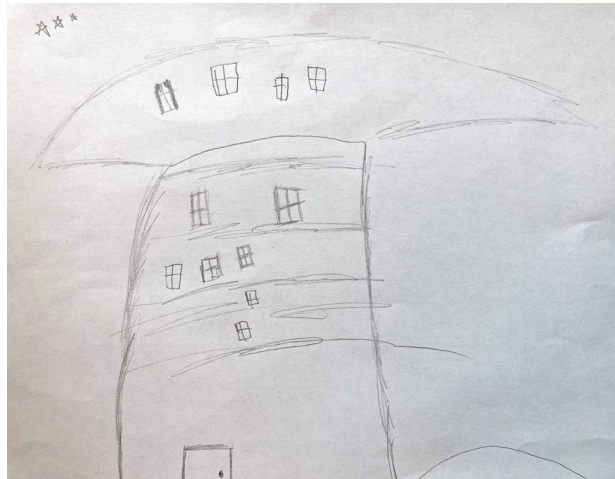
6 Years Old  
Durham, NH



Landscape at Night, Crayon and paint



Cardinal, Pencil, crayon, sugar,  
googly eyes, and paint



Cabin, Paper and pencil

“I love art because it makes me inspired and it gets so messy and that’s the best part.” - Eliza

# Khyriel

6 Years Old  
Frisco, TX



Spotted Rainbow Kitty, Mixed media



Self Portrait, Crayon on cardstock

“In my self-portrait, I’m wearing my favorite rainbow necklace and feeling happy because in kindergarten I learned that art is my favorite class, and that expressing my creativity is important to me. I wanted to make a special rainbow cat with sunglasses because cats and rainbows are my favorite.” - Khyriel

# Klara

6 Years Old  
Durham, NH

*Come Swing with Me, Poetry*

Come swing with me.  
Come on the swing with me  
Go a little high  
And just close your eyes  
Come on  
It will be fun!  
Don't worry  
It won't be scary.  
Go higher and higher  
Imagine you have wings!  
Flap your wings! Come swing with me!

“I love going on the swings, so I wanted to make a poem about how swinging makes me feel.” - Klara

# Eleanor

6 Years Old  
Lee, NH



Cityscape, Mixed media

“The city has such excitement and so many colors and shapes.” - Eleanor

# Katelyn

7 Years Old  
Salisbury, NH



*Seashell the Dragon Protecting Her Egg, Watercolor pencils*

“It’s about a dragons because they fit me. I love dragons.” - Katelyn

# Oscar

7 Years Old  
Allenstown, NH



*Dragion, Crayon and market on paper*

“This is a Pokémon called Dragion it is a made up evolution of Evie it is a dragon type it spawns in grim wood tangle in Pokémon sword and shield.” - Oscar



# Kartik

7.5 Years Old  
Rochester, NH



*The Angriest Flower, Part 1,*  
Markers on paper



*The Angriest Flower, Part 2,*  
Markers on paper

"I got the idea from a video during free time at school. Sometimes I'm an angry flower." - Kartik

# Cecilia

8 Years Old  
Durham, NH

## *What Is Black? Poetry*

Black is a crow, lonely at night.  
Black is warm, chocolatey delight.  
Black is evil, but nice too.  
Black is the type, that can't be gnawed through.  
Black tastes like my tongue, when I swallow.  
Black smells like a tree, that is hollow.  
Black sounds like the ringing,  
that doesn't appear in my ear when I'm singing.  
Black feels like Christmas night,  
the type after dawn we call twilight.  
Black is the end, very far from now,  
and I guess this is the end of this poem, so say WOW!

"It is a poem I made in school, and is based off of the color black." - Cecilia

# Iris

8 Years Old  
Amesbury, MA



*Princess Kuchiyama re-imagined, Mixed media*



*Beaver in Clay, Clay*

"I create whatever I am inspired to make by drawing, painting, and often reusing things from the recycle bin." - Iris

# Alice

9 Years Old  
Sainte-Geneviève-des-Bois, France



*The Electricity Girl, Colored pencil*



*The Bird-Half Rabbit, Colored pencil*



*The Totem, Sculpture, carton, plaster*

"My Totem stands for friendship. The rabbit, the cat, the bird, the elephant and the god have become great friends. That's why they are stacked and travel the world. The bird-half rabbit is a creature invented in my dreams. The girl is a superhero who has the power of electricity." - Alice

# Miles

9 Years Old  
New London, NH



A sunset landscape, Paint



Mountain landscape, Paint



Cubbi the Dog, Paint

“I like painting because you can do anything you want with the paints.” - Miles

# Chloe

9 Years Old  
Salisbury, NH



Sunset Mountain, Watercolor pencils

“It’s a landscape with the sun setting behind mountains.” - Chloe

# Delaney

9 Years Old  
Lee, NH

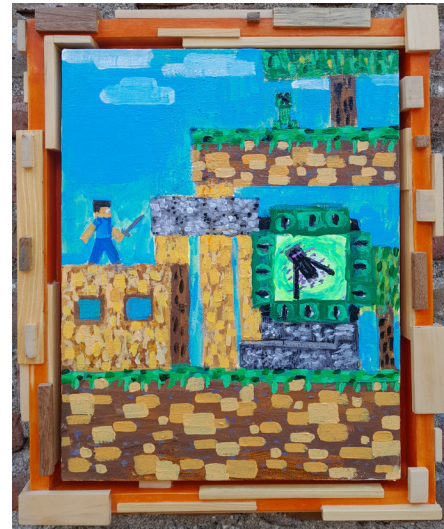


Flashlight, Mixed media

“A flashlight can create such a beauty when shining bright on an object.”  
- Delaney

# Asmai

10 Years Old  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia



Monsters Pixel Crossing Multiver,  
Acrylic on canvas



Golden Dragon Looking for  
Dragon Eggs, Acrylic on canvas



Toy Tanks, Acrylic on canvas

“I like to paint and start telling stories with my father and younger brother.”  
- Asmai

# Jesse

11 Years Old  
Hooksett, NH

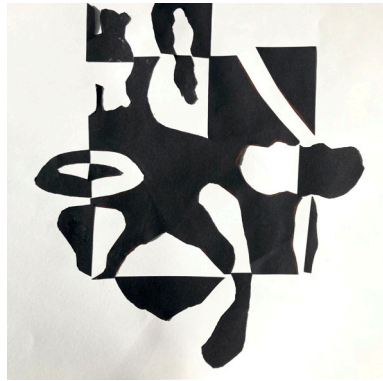


*Full Moon, Cyanotype*

“I like to make art about anime and I like to try all different ways to make art.”  
- Jesse

# Margaret

11 Years Old  
Concord, NH



*Chaos, Mixed media*



*Color Block, Digital*

“I believe that art is a magical and beautiful thing. You can express yourself in ways that you couldn’t before. Art is calming and relaxing. There are so many different kinds of art so you can choose whatever you want.”  
- Margaret

# Alieze

11 Years Old  
New London, NH



*Stripe, Print*



*My Self Portrait, Mixed media*

“Go art.” - Alieze

# Parker

12 Years Old  
Manchester, NH

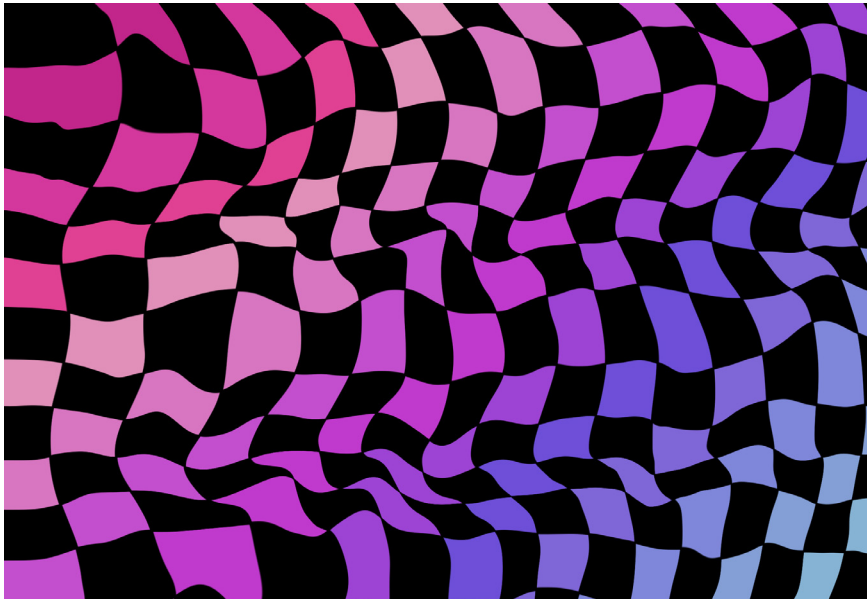


*Space Dinosaur, Colored pencils*

“This small doodle I did in art class shows a dinosaur with rocket feet in space.”  
- Parker

# Emmy

12 Years Old  
Derry, NH



Ombé Wave, Digital

“This piece was made on Procreate while I was doodling and found a cool art piece in it.” - Emmy

# Camilla

12 Years Old  
Manchester, NH



Commander Claus, Digital art

“I’ve been making lots of fanart for the Mother/Earthbound games recently after finding my art style! I’m still trying to get the hang of digital art, but I’ve gotten a few results I’m happy with (which is rare for me as i have low self confidence lol) and am excited to learn more!” - Camilla



My OC / Better Self, Milly! Digital art

# Kloey

13 Years Old  
Brookline, NH

Words, Poetry

## *Mental Fire, Poetry*

It took longer for me to  
write my name  
And read theirs.  
I struggled with  
b and d  
longer than they did.

They couldn't help me read  
and got frustrated.  
They weren't sure  
how to teach someone differently.  
Ignoring the issue,  
telling me I had all the tools I needed  
to read  
to write  
to figure it out.

I struggled while they watched.  
I cried trying to make the words on  
the page  
Stop marching around.

It felt like the words  
were teasing me,  
tempting me to give up.

I memorized books  
so I didn't have to read.  
Wrote on the walls when we ran out  
of paper,  
trying to fix myself.  
I felt impossible.  
This was all I wanted to do.  
But every time I tried  
It felt as if My brain was igniting into  
a million flames.  
While no one  
would admit I needed help.

I now know I had dyslexia.  
A learning disorder.  
I could've been helped.  
It felt like a mental fire.  
Like dodging  
little glass shards.

It felt like I was drowning  
trying to swim.  
Struggling in a kiddie pool,  
while everyone else was laughing  
in the deep end.  
They all got the help needed.  
They all had the right swimming  
instructors  
when mine had quit.  
So I struggled,  
teaching myself to swim.

## *Tired, Poetry*

This year I realized why I was unhappy  
because I was tired.  
Tired of  
hating who I was and  
Who I am.  
Tired of  
hating how I looked  
and how I look.  
Tired of  
not letting myself love,  
not even  
myself.  
Tired of  
being left out.  
Tired of  
feeling like I was being suffocated.  
I was tired of all this.  
of how you treated me.

Words hurt.  
They hurt me,  
and they hurt other people.

Words help.  
They can help you feel less alone  
and they can help you heal.  
they can help you when your eyes are  
wet,  
and when you are stuck in bed.

How people use words matters.  
You can use them to cut  
to slice  
to drag people down.

You can use words  
to kill  
to hurt  
to steal.

But you can also use words  
to heal  
to love  
to care.

So if you can use words  
for all these good things  
then why is everyone  
using there words  
as knives  
as weapons?  
The way you use your words matter  
so use them for good.

Try lifting someone up,  
maybe Compliment someone  
instead of calling them ugly.  
even if it's behind their back.

Stop using your words to  
stab  
poke  
beat  
and rob people of love,  
for themselves and others.

Because we all deserve love.  
We all deserve better.  
We all know what it's like to be called  
names,  
so why do we do it to other people?  
We all know what it's like to be told  
that we don't deserve what we have  
and that were ugly  
and not good enough.

So why keep going?  
Why carry on?  
Spreading rumors,  
spreading lies?

Why keep cutting people off?  
Why keep hurting people?

What's the reason for all the hate?  
All the destruction?  
All the lies?  
All the torment?

Words.  
They're your most powerful weapon  
of all.  
So use them,  
to help  
to hold  
to change.

"These poems are about struggles and overcoming them." - Kloey



# Symphony

13 Years Old  
Pembroke, NH



Violet, Digital art



Spider Symphony, Digital art

“Both these art pieces are original characters. I love drawing people, and often have fun adding unique features or stories to their designs.” - Symphony

# Failed Cartoon

13 Years Old  
Bensalem, PA



MrNobody, Digital art



GameNight, Digital art



Halloween Night in Town, Digital art

“My pictures are characters I’ve created based on my experiences with game play and legends of several multiplayer worlds. Each character has their own backstory that I create as well.” - Failed Cartoon

# Kai

13 Years Old  
Bedford, NH



*A Lonely Rose, Colored pencil*

“I wanted to draw a rose, so I drew it. At this time I was also experimenting with different color mixing.” - Kai

# Sam

14 Years Old  
Hollis, NH



*Crash, Photography*

“I was inspired by the story the subject tells.” - Sam

*My Life As I Know It, Poetry*

1. I feel my feet on the carpet as I smile
2. I'm learning to talk  
I'm learning to write
3. I know how to read  
And I have a love for dance
4. I'm bike riding  
I'm hiking
5. I'm not doing as much now  
my body can't take it  
I need to stop  
I hurt all the time  
I feel like I can't survive, not this way at least
6. I can't walk anymore and I hate talking this isn't like me but no one will tell  
me what's going on, not the doctors or my parents
7. I've been discharged from the hospital but not from the disease it won't  
let me go
8. I walk now but all eyes are on me and my fuzzy almost bare head and my  
awkward walk
9. My hair is growing in but wait, Are people looking at me?

10. I have a love for things again, especially dance  
But I still feel people staring at me asking, Is that the girl?
11. I can't get away from what happened  
it lingers on the nape of my neck and I still hear people asking, Is that the girl?
12. I'm nervous all the time I may look ordinary but I'll never feel it  
I will always be that girl I will always be that five-year-old girl driving to the  
hospital not knowing what's going on
13. Just as I feel people forgetting who I am, I hear, Is that the girl?  
I can't escape it just a stupid question I can't escape  
Why do I even care I've relearned everything and I should be ordinary now  
but,  
I'm not
14. I've finally learned how to deal with this question and it doesn't fill me with  
rage all it does is pass by me I don't feel it at the nape of my neck I don't feel  
hurt anymore and I know that  
I survived

“My art is a poem I wrote that is about my childhood. I grew up with cancer and this poem shows my growth as a person.” - Ella

# Lilah

15 Years Old  
Exeter, NH

*Her, Poetry*

Who is she?

She's been trying to figure that out for years

She burns, like an orchid in the desert sun

She falls, but gets up before anyone can notice

She puts up a front, so nobody sees how caring she actually is

She acts all tough and self-sufficient, because she doesn't know how to accept help

She sees all these imperfections

Yet he sees

the flower in the desert.

*The Secret of Life (by a girl who has no clue what it is  
but knows what she wants it to be), Poetry*

We always hear "time flies by"

But never the answer for how to slow it down

We rush through our days, cram the most of what we can into them, never take a moment to rest with the fear of not doing enough

But the key?

The key is doing less

Make time for you

Leave room for accidents

Leave room for adventure

Days go by, weeks fly, months in reply, but

The memories

They go on in supply

They happen in the flick of an eye too good for question

And someday

They'll be the moments you lived for

The moments that make up the book of life, the secret to it all

Yet you can't quite put it into words

So the words you're looking for, they may not exist but I think you'll all know it

You'll find it in your someday story

*What's a Soulmate? Poetry*

I've seemed to ask myself that since I was little

I always wondered what he'd look like

How I'd find him

Where we would fall in love

But you know what

I think it happens over time

You start it off small and slowly build it up to realize

You can't live without them

To you a soulmate has always been a best friend

But more

Someone you carry with you forever

Someone who never judged you, understands you, they know you better than anyone else

Someone who loves you unconditionally

And no matter what happens you'll always love them

Nothing can ever change that

They instantly attract and make it impossible to take your eyes off of them

They are like an angel sent just for you

They amaze you every day

They light up your life like the sun after a rainstorm

You can't remember life without them, they've made it impossible to sleep

And you can't help but wonder

How'd I get so lucky?

"My poems help me introduce my view of the world to people." - Lilah

# Aubrey

15 Years Old  
Auburn, NH



Old Dreams, Photography



Frozen, Photography

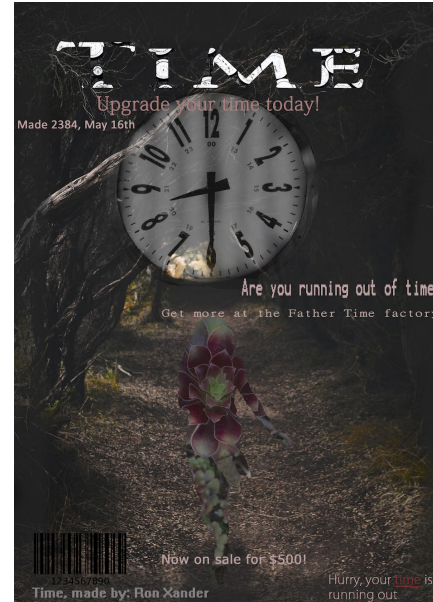


Falling Drop, Photography

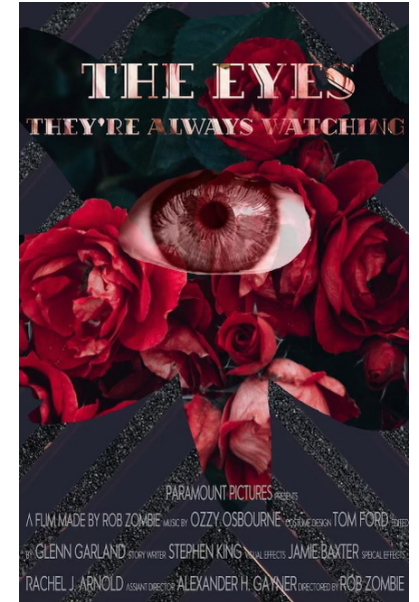
"I never really have an idea of what photo I'm looking to make, I just end up finding cool items to take photos of." - Aubrey

# Max

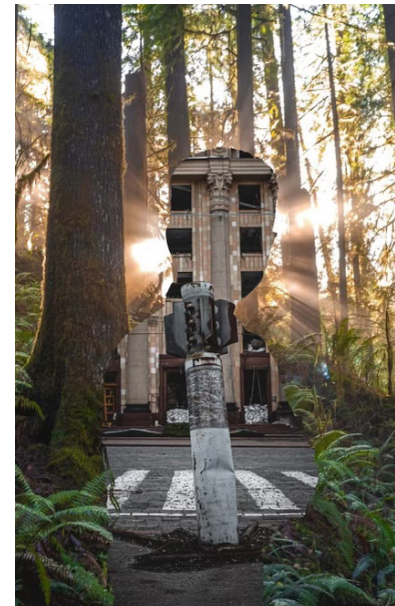
15 Years Old  
Auburn, NH



Time Magazine, Digital collage



The Eyes, Digital collage



Atomic Bomb, Digital collage

"This is a movie poster created about a horror film in which the main characters are being made to think they are hallucinating that they are being watched, but in fact there is a creature who is watching and hunting them down to sacrifice them." - Max

# Lorelai

15 Years Old  
East Kingston, NH

*The Promethean Code, Prose*

“Get out now!” Zoe’s yell rattles through my head. I grabbed the small data chip from the computer and wrapped it in a cloth. Climbing a few stacked boxes to the vent above crawling forward I fall out onto who knows how many mops piled in a small storage room. Seriously you’re one of the most high tech organizations in the world and you have mops, just get a thousand rumbas. For Hades sake it’s not like rumbas are an investment they can’t afford.

“Peter, what happened?” Zoe shouts again, “Keep moving. They know you’re there.” I snap out of my thoughts and stand rubbing my back slightly groaning in pain.

“Clam down, Z, you worry too much,” I grab the data chip off the ground tucking it in my back pocket. “We made it this far.”

Black smoke flows under the door. Pooling across the floor and climbing up the walls. I lose sight but stay frozen in my place facing the door pulling my shirt up over the lower half of my face blocking out the smoke.

“Oh Styx.” I whisper.

The door to the storage room fly’s open, cracking at the hinges.

I stare up at where the building disappears into the clouds. A car speeds by bringing me down to earth again. The crossing light flashes for me to walk. Crossing the building’s shadow presses on me, urging me through the doors. It’s loud and busy here, as it’s the only place in the world you could move up in the world. Away from the disease stricken and life sucking world down here. Up to the paradise in the clouds, Elysium, the city of the elite, city of the gods.

Most aren’t even allowed within 100 feet of the building, but today I get to go in. I have a chance to move up. Only the extraordinary get a chance like this. I never tried much in school but when my teacher told me that if I tried on those government assessment tests I may actually have a chance, well I was going to give it my all. I spent weeks studying and taking extra classes trying to soak up anything I thought could help my chances. If I moved up I could help people. I could make a difference in their lives, make them better than the hellish way of the world now. After all that work the tests were simple. I got my chance. I can’t waste it.

I gather my thoughts and make my way to the front desk. “Name,” a high-pitched squeaky voice speaks from behind the computer screen.

“Uh, Peter Provisa.” I say slowly leaning forward trying to see who I was talking to. I quickly realized that was a bad choice as a hand flings out, hitting my face and sending me back to standing up straight, staring at the back of the computer.

“Oh My Gods! Sorry sir!” The voice behind the desk squeaks out, stumbling over words, “I was just trying to give you your pass! See!” The hand flings out again holding a small identification pass attached to a lanyard. I cautiously grab the pass, hanging it around my neck.

“Thanks,” I look around and people start to stare. “Um, where am I supposed to go exactly?”

“There’s an electronic map on the back of your pass!” The voice is still loud and squeaky, the person obviously embarrassed. I mumble another thanks before heading for open space. I look down at my pass and turn it in my fingers studying it. Sure enough there’s a map on the back, I walk following the map, only looking up in quick flashes to ensure my eyes are not being deceived.

The small screen on the back of my pass is lit up with not just a map of the floor I’m on but everyone around me is resembled by small moving dots on the screen. The amount of technology needed to create something this exact is insane. I know Titan corp is one of the most advanced places out there but this, this is unfathomable. I enter the elevator, there’s no button for me to pick a floor but once the doors close I hear the shift of gears and feel it moving up.

As there’s really nothing for me to do I fidget with the pass discovering that I can zoom in and out on the map to see more of the building and even click on certain rooms. I click to the room it is leading me to only for the screen to light up red with access denied bleeding across it before the screen goes black and the elevator stops. Styx, was the pass connected to the elevator? If it was I need to find a way to get it back on before someone notices and thinks I broke it.

The elevator doors open.

I look around before cautiously stepping out into the oddly bare hallway with one door at the end.

I can hear people yelling inside. Their voices are muffled so I move closer, my curiosity getting the better of me.

“It could save thousands....greedy and selfish...only want to keep power...”

“...have no right.....I have done everything.....wanted to help...never meant for..”

I walk into a mop bucket that I somehow missed before. Why do they have a mop just sitting in the hallway!

“Who’s there?” Voice 1 bellows. I stay frozen, eyes darting around, looking for a way out.

The door opens.

I am now under one of the men’s desks while out searching the hallway. They didn’t see me, they couldn’t have, otherwise they would have called security by now. Their footsteps grow louder and the door closes with a click. My pass lights up again, not as bright as before and a message types onto the screen.

**Classified documents: Code #895155**

**Authorized personnel only**

“Open the code.” Voice 2 demands. The screen changes.

### **Identification**

It fills itself in while I assume Voice 1 types on their device. My screen changes again when a program loads in. The crack of wood and what sounds like hundreds of heavy footsteps fill the room. Shouts and the small click of handcuffs follow.

Sweat breaks out across my neck. What if they find me? What happened to voice 2? The light under the desk is too little, it's too dark. It's so tight I can't breathe.

My eyes make out black boots then black pants then the end of a gun barrel. The owner of them has yet to see me, his eyes straight ahead. Watching the eyes of the stranger, my body frozen and tense, not breathing. The world goes fuzzy at the edges

The eyes find mine. Silence. I am going to die. I am already dead.

He looks ahead again. He walks away. He doesn't kill me.

The world goes dark.

"Hey...wake up... you there, hellooooo"

The world focuses slowly. I am still under the desk. I am at Titan corp. Headquarters. The elevator malfunctioned. There was a stupid mop. There was a code. There was a man. He didn't kill me. There was a voice. A voice?

"Hello, good to see you finally woke up."

I jolt and pain erupts in my head. The feminine voice continues to speak, now freaking me out as there's no one in the room but me. "Down here. On the desk. The little robot. Helloooo. Are you blind or something?" Following the sound of the voice I find a small bundle of metal, almost in a spider like shape, staring back at me with a singular small camera eye.

"Who are you?" My voice comes out weak despite my best efforts to sound strong.

"I'm Zoe. You are going to help me, because I saved your life and you owe me." I can practically hear the smirk on Zoe's face.

I crouch to be eye level with Robo-Spider. "What do you mean you saved my life?"

"Seriously? I thought you were supposed to be smart? The guard who saw you and yet didn't kill you, he's a friend of mine. And he would have definitely killed you if it weren't for me. So, you're welcome." I think back to my near death experience, why would he not kill me? Is Zoe telling the truth? She has to be otherwise I would be dead there's no other reason why he wouldn't kill me.

"What do you need my help with?" I ask, still skeptical.

"That depends, do you remember the identification number for the code file?"

Do I? It showed up while I was having my little moment of panic, but do I remember it? I slowly lift my pass, turning it to see the dark screen. I picture the words as they were typed in.

"Open the code." Voice 2 demands. The screen changes.

### **Identification 952 7452 56**

"Yes," My voice is stronger than moments before, determined and unwavering. "I remember the code. But why do you need it? Why is that file so important that you're the second person today trying to gain access to it? I don't know what happened to the first person but can't imagine it was anything good." I have been lost all day. I want answers. I need answers.

"I'll answer your questions after you accept my deal." Zoe's voice has now changed to a more serious tone. "You help me get that file in exchange for me saving your life and answering your questions. Deal?"

Silence.

I accept her deal, I break the law, I become a criminal, I throw my chance away. I betray everyone who helped me get here. But isn't this what I wanted? I can help. But at what cost? Can it compare to all I sacrificed to get here?

I turn down her deal, I go to my interview, I take my chance. I make those who help proud. But is that what I want? I can help, that's all I ever wanted. I just never thought there would be another choice in what I do to help. It's only ever been this. Make it into Titian Corp. Then what? Did I ever actually have a plan after that?

I have a choice.

"Deal?" She says again. I think I heard a little fear in her voice.

"Deal."

She sighs, "Good, now take the earpiece from the robot and let's get you out of that office."

"So, you're telling me that this file contains everything to help balance education, healthcare, essential resource distribution and everything else. That sounds like communism, which if you have ever read a history book, that might not be the best outcome." I talk to Zoe while walking through hallways, Robo-Spider scuttles ahead checking for unexpected obstacles.

"No no no, the goal of the Promethean code is for more of a democratic society like ancient Athens or the Roman empire. That's why it's named after a titan from Greek mythology duh." She groans annoyance clearly in her voice. Every time she answers one of my questions I have about a billion more 'stupid questions'. According to her, my intelligence is not worth all the attention I get for it.

"Okay, point made, but why doesn't Titan corp release the file themselves? And why can't I just tell you the identification number and you use it to get the file instead of me running around like your own personal criminal assistant?" I accuse, beginning to hum to myself after not receiving an answer. I continue to follow Robo-Spider through empty winding hallways and stairwells. "Hey, how much longer am I going to be walking? I did not pick the right shoes to walk a marathon."

Robo-Spider stops outside a red door painted like fire in stark contrast to the rest of the off-white theme of the rest of the building. I step up to the

number lock on the door. No door handle.

"8-5-3-4-7" I jump at Zoe's voice, nevertheless I type in the numbers she gave me. There's a click then the door swings open.

"Holy Hephæstus," I step back a bit, the smell of chemicals and cleaning supplies hitting me like a truck. "What is this place, and why does it smell like that?"

"Doesn't matter, get in, someones coming down the hall." That jolts me forward into the room, the door shutting behind me just missing my heel. "Okay the person passed, do you see a computer?"

"You mean the ancient one next to some crates? Why do they even have a computer this old? It's practically useless." I brush some dust off the top, coughing up the dust cloud that followed.

"Just turn it on and log in under: A3135, password 8462" My fingers run along the outside of the computer stopping over an indent. Pushing down on the button I step back as it slowly comes to life the login screen appearing. Once in the computer starts to open and close tabs on its own till it stops, turns black, lights up with words filling the screen.

**Classified documents: Code #895155**

**Authorized personnel only**

The words hold for a minute before changing again.

**Identification \_\_\_\_\_**

This is it. I type in the code, load the file to a data chip, take the chip and Zoe will direct me from there. But why won't my fingers move? Why is it so hard to do this simple task? I have come this far, this is what I want. Just type the number, it's not that hard. No, more second guessing this was your choice. You want to help and this is how you do that.

**Identification 952 7452 56**

**'Promethean code' loading**

I quickly go through the process of downloading the file to the chip.

"Good, you got the file now, get out of there." Zoe demands her voice hard and not like the joking one she used while I was walking through the halls. Something changed in her voice.

I try messing with her like before, laughing. "Come on, Z. I made it this far and only come close to another human being once it can't be that hard to get back out."

*"Clam down, Z, you worry too much," I grab the data chip off the ground tucking it in my back pocket. "We made it this far."*

*Black smoke flows under the door. Pooling across the floor and climbing up the walls. I lose sight but stay frozen in my place facing the door pulling my shirt up over the lower half of my face blocking out the smoke.*

*"Oh Styx." I whisper.*

*The door to the storage room fly's open cracking at the hinges.*

*I do something either stupid or crazy, most likely both.*

*I run right at the door, startling those in the doorway enough that I am*

able to push through and take off down the hallway. "Zoe, where do I go?" My out of breath shouts receive no answer, "Zoe, help me. Z". The hallway ended with no way out. I am pleading at this point. I can hear the heavy footsteps behind me growing louder.

"Z" I whisper, almost crying. The guards catch up. There's 4 total, 2 point their guns at me and two grab my arms. The one with a tight grip on my left arm is familiar, he's the one who saw me in the office, he's Zoe's friend.

"Give Atlas the chip, Peter." Zoe's back. I want to be mad. I want to yell at her for abandoning me, but I don't. I slip the chip from my back pocket holding it behind my back hoping that Atlas is the name of Zoe's friend. Atlas takes the chip from my hand quickly slipping it in his pocket. "Thank you for your help, Peter. I promise the code will be sent out to the world. I like you Peter and I really hope you find your way out."

She sounds sad, like she's saying goodbye. But why would she-

"No!" I shout and yell, kicking and making my body as heavy as possible till I'm being dragged across the floor. The heavyweight hits the back of my head, the world going dark.

### **Zoe's Point of View**

The day Atlas brought me the code, I hacked the Titan Corp satellite and sent it to all tech servers across the world. The machines that control all human necessities have been re-coded to help improve conditions of living in the lower world rather than keep everything unchanging. The upper world 'gods' are having hissy fits about Lower world 'mortals' improving their lives even though the code has yet to change anything about the way they live.

It's been 5 days since I got the code. 5 days since Peter was captured. 5 days since Atlas told me the plan didn't work like it was supposed to. 5 days since I was told Atlas couldn't get Peter out. 5 days Peter has spent bearing an unknown punishment. 1 more eternity Peter will spend with his punishment. 1 more eternity I will spend regretting everything and nothing at the same time. I did the right thing. I helped the world, an overall good, but I can't forget Peter's pleading for help and his yell when he realized my betrayal.

I'll find a way to free you, Peter. Even if it takes an eternity.

I swear it on the river Styx.

THE END

"I wrote this peice for my English class and gotinspiration from a project in my Latin class."

- Lorelai



# Thuy

15 Years Old  
Concord, NH



*Fiddle or Violin?* Mixed media collage on wooden panel



*#StopAsianHate*, Mixed media on wooden panel



*Queen of Bleeding Hearts*, Mixed media

“Using mixed media materials, I create compositions that aim to raise awareness about issues that impact my daily life. I enjoy using watercolor, paper scraps, fabric, and random objects to add depth to my pieces.” - Thuy

# Evan

16 Years Old  
South Berwick, ME



*Collision*, Mixed media sewn

“Thank you to my mom for reminding me that art doesn’t have to be serious to be important.” - Evan

# Anelle

17 Years Old  
Dunbarton, NH



*The Birds Are Working*, Watercolor and colored pencil

“In a world where one can no longer see the ground, how can there possibly be time for play?” - Anelle



Creative Guts is on a mission to awaken creativity within people of all ages by curating an environment for connection, collaboration, and the opportunity for gutsy creatives to share their stories with the world.

We do this through programs, zines, events, and a podcast that is focused on the pursuit of creativity. Our interview-style podcast explores the roots of creativity, dives into the hearts of creators, and discover how creativity connects with the world around us.

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