



# Rugged

Bishop Dunne Catholic School  
Fall 2014

Artwork by: Cristian Aguilar

### **King of Kings - Marisa Nieto**

The love you give is unbreakable  
Caring for me every second of my life  
You look out for me more than anyone

Forgiving me every single time  
Seeing past all of my flaws and mistakes  
You send angels to keep me from falling

You created me to be like You  
To fill me with Your faith  
To give Your life for me

You are the Savior  
The light of the world  
The King of Kings

### **When the Snow Came - Mallory Curry**

When I woke up, there was snow. Snow meant clean air, families snuggled together, and no school. The squad and I bundled up and went outside to play for hours. Later at night, we sat around the fire wearing our Christmas sweaters and hung up our skates. I made hot chocolate with tiny marshmallows. Every time there was snow falling or resting on the ground was good to me. In the morning, a fresh blanket was waiting for us outside. We got dressed, ran outside, and made snow angels and had a snowball fight. At noon, we went inside to have lunch and warm up. I made little sandwiches and had chips for everyone. Then we sat around the fire and listened to it sing.

### **I Can See Their Faces - Abby Patrick**

I can see their faces  
Lost in history.  
I can see their faces  
Ravaged by time.  
I can see their faces,  
Like mine yet unknown.  
My eyes?  
My nose?  
My flesh.  
My heritage.  
Only the fading scribbles on their backs  
Alert me to the blood we share.  
Their black frames  
Protecting them from extinction.  
Shoeboxes hiding them away,  
Keeping them alive.  
Sitting in their carriages,  
Wrapped in mink.  
Sitting on their crumbling wooden porches,  
Now rubble.  
Noticing their faces  
Kissed by sun spots.  
Only by forgetting them  
May they remain alive, blanketed with dust and neglect.  
I can see their faces  
Left in the dark for none to see.  
I can see their faces  
Lost in history.

### **Two Truths and a Lie - Abby Austin**

At the beginning of every school year,  
We played a game  
To break the ice.  
Faces to faces, everyone a stranger.  
So we sat in a circle,  
And told each other lies.  
From our parted lips came spilling out the lies.  
What better way to start a new year,  
To bring previous discrepancies full circle?  
After all, what harm can come from a game?  
As the hour stretched on, the lies got stranger,  
Until we left ourselves skating on thin ice.  
Eyes darted from mouth to mouth, cold as ice,  
Trying to decipher the truths and the lies.  
We fidgeted and twitched, remembering our status as strangers,  
Knowing too well it couldn't stay that way all year.  
So we played on, pawns in a game  
Of our own design, taking polite turns around the circle.

Legs all crossed in a neat little circle,  
We tested our waters, and came crashing through ice,  
As we realized with horror, one cannot cheat at this neat little game.  
Two more people we had caught in their lies,  
Took them down and dragged them away, to be stumbled upon  
on some later day, some other year.  
Keep friends as friends, and the stranger a stranger.

As our lies began to crumble, we no longer knew who to call stranger,  
We scooted in close, sudden death round, not a sound in the circle.  
Seconds passed. Minutes, hours, a month, a year,  
And time froze, fogging our breath, edging our lungs with ice.  
We stared at the floor, at the space we created. In the middle sat our lies,  
Quivering and shaking. The final product of our game. Just a game.

This clever little game,  
Made to make friends out of strangers,  
Had us guessing at lies.  
We took sides with who we trusted,  
shunned who we didn't.  
We broke our circle,  
Shattered the ice,  
Ready, now, to start the new year.

And we realized, that moment we broke away from the circle,  
that our truths, not our lies,  
Promised to get us into trouble. This game that so expertly broke  
the ice,  
Would soon leave a dark circle under each of our eyes, sinking  
deeper and deeper for the rest of the year.

### **How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found Again - Sarah Hightower**

The wind blew her hair into her face as she strode down the street to the payphone box on the corner. It had not quite begun raining yet, but she took the precaution of putting her umbrella up to shield herself from the wind of the storm quickly moving in as well as the gazes of pedestrians walking by. But the street seemed strangely empty with the exception of a wiry black-coated cat curled beneath a bus stop bench. The watch peeking out of her sleeve showed just past nine. She stepped into the phone booth and stood for a moment, thankful for the small respite from the turbulent wind. Shivering, she pulled off her left glove and opened up her clammy palm to the chilled air. The blue ink on her palm had been badly smudged to the point that she could hardly make out the numbers she had scrawled in her already messy handwriting. She dialed carefully and waited for the click of the other end picking up. The cat's green eyes stayed on her.

"Hello? I—" she began but broke off and scrambled for her pen.

### **Awake - Sarah Hightower**

The house lays, lies white as the overhead moon,  
In a dark bed of dirt, among tall grass,  
Sagging beneath its own feathery weight.  
The branches of trees cast long spidery shadows  
Across the abandoned clearing in wait.  
The wind whistles through the trees;  
The spiders spin their webs.  
Mosquitoes drone towards the blue light  
Of the porch lamp with its low hum.  
While a cicada sheds its shell  
And leaves its old body behind.  
The static of a radio transmission  
Fades in and out.  
In the gaps, a small voice sings along  
To the fading tune.  
She brushes off the dusty furniture  
And mutters about how quickly the dust collects  
When you live alone.



By: Juliette Breeding

### **Out on the Countryside - Delaney de la Riva**

My family and I going out to the Countryside.  
I would rather spend it on my friend's resort.  
Instead, I have to spend the next three months in the barn.  
With cows, horses, pigs and hay galore!  
Without hot chocolate, snowman, and skiing for sure.  
How I wish I didn't have to decide: summer school or  
nothing.

Diving and driving down endless roads of nothing.  
I could've sworn scary things happened on the Countryside.  
I saw it in a movie with my friend for sure.  
All I could think about is that beautiful resort.

Snowman, buffet and sleeping galore!  
Why do I have to stay in the barn?

Can I sleep somewhere else besides the barn?  
My parents think I want to go back for nothing.  
That night, I dreamed of cookies, pies and chocolate galore!  
But reality struck me and still on the Countryside.  
Should I sneak out of this place and to the resort?  
Going to my friend's resort for sure.

The last airplane ticket will be mine for sure!  
No more muddy pigs, smelly horses and lazy cows for me in that  
barn.  
Living luxury and tranquility and mani-pedis at the resort!  
HAH! Imitating my parents: "Summer school or nothing."  
I'll just take my suitcases quietly and out of the countryside.  
More buffet and more sleeping galore!

I went on the plane all I thought about was skiing galore.  
I've never went skiing before but I'll give it my best for sure!  
I will never go back to that boring and dull countryside,  
Where I had to sleep on the dark and dusty barn, (Grrr!!!)  
Which sounds to me that I never had nothing.  
So who cares? I just landed at the resort!

My friend came by and my jaw dropped when I saw the resort.  
Indoor pool, awesome suites and cute guys galore!  
It sure beats the farmland that has nothing.  
I promise to have a lot of fun for sure.  
I wonder who got the chance to sleep in the barn.  
But there were some good moments at the Countryside.

The resort may have everything I could ever do in the summer.  
But, nothing compared to  
The countryside and the barn that gave me the best experience.  
Because I got to spend every galore with my family and that will  
never change for sure!

## Once a Year, Every Year - Kristen Wagner

Once upon a time, there was a young boy, a righteous boy, named Liam. Liam lived in The New Kingdom with his three friends, a dragon, a griffon and a dinosaur. The four friends saved the kingdom from monsters on dangerous quests and returned every time as heroes.

However, once a year, every year, a mysterious, faceless villain in a cloak would appear that Liam alone had to face. But the Hooded Figure would never try to steal the king's treasures; he never tried to harm the citizens of the kingdom; instead, the Hooded Figure would kidnap Liam's friends and try to harm them, and he tried this once a year, every year, and always on June 10th. Liam's birthday.



By: Aubrey Oliver

When the Hooded Figure first appeared almost six years ago, Liam enjoyed the adventure of a true challenge and accepted the Hooded Figure's arrival like a birthday present. But every year, Liam started dreading his visit more and more. At first, the Hooded Figure was harder to beat than the other monsters Liam faced but was still easily outwitted. Every year, though, the Hooded Figure got more and more challenging, until last year, Liam barely managed to defeat him.

And today was June 9th. Liam was turning eleven tomorrow.

Liam got as prepared as he could for the Hooded Figure's return tomorrow, but he still knew it was going to be very difficult to defeat him. This year, Liam wasn't sure if he was going to beat him.

## Memoir - Sarah Hightower

Small toys and trinkets line the window with the curtain pulled closed behind their backs. At the head of the line, the tallest in the height line, a small wide-eyed Japanese cat, raises its hand in greeting to those who catch its gaze as they pass by. I only get a glimpse of it but it lingers in my thoughts as our car continues down the sloping streets on its way to the Centro Médico in the middle of the city.

We sit along the wall in sea green chairs and I strain my neck to watch the TV in the corner, playing an American movie with Spanish voices dubbed over it, but yesterday's long day of travel and today's early morning catch up to me, and I make a pillow for myself on my brother's bony shoulder. When I was little, the dream catcher on the wall of my bedroom may have kept the nightmares away but did little to soothe a burst eardrum. My mother sat me up in bed and pulled a striped red and yellow pajama top over my head. The tight neck pressed against my ear and the aching made my head spin. I don't remember going,

but I remember sitting miserably in the hospital waiting room, her on the bench, me in the stroller, waiting for our turn. Red, yellow, red, yellow. I watched the stripes going down my legs, angry red and dingy yellow to match the throbbing in my ear.

## A Tale of Two Siblings - Abby Patrick

"You were probably so disappointed when I was born."  
"No, I asked for you for Christmas."  
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I imagine him holding me. Or maybe he couldn't.  
Maybe he could only stare at me. Me, this precious,  
underweight baby, too fragile to touch.  
He'd soon know the responsibility he now had.  
That he would mold me and shape me like Play-Doh.  
Teach me to play video games.  
Tell me what qualified as good music. Fight with me and prank me.  
Hug me and protect me.

His Christmas present came almost a year late, but Mom still made  
sure to wrap me up before he could hold me. The doctor even made  
sure to add a bow to hide where he'd accidentally cut open Dylan's  
present a little too early.

I still like to imagine that it all worked out like that. No tubes. No  
incubators. No bruises or blood. Everyone smiling at this healthy  
baby-version of myself. His scrawny, three-year-old arms and hands  
embracing me in my swaddled state. Our perfect family.

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"Dylan, I have Pokémon recorded. You wanna watch it?"  
"Yes!"

I press the "ok" button on the remote and the nostalgia hits.  
"I wanna be the very best.  
Like no one ever was.  
To catch them is my real test.  
To train them is my cause..."

Dylan and I yell the theme song at one another from across the house.  
Dylan runs into the room air punching and dancing with me. He  
runs through the entire place. Bedroom to living room to kitchen. He  
comes back and leaps over Mom's ottoman.

Face to face we yell it to each other in tune with the music. "POKE-MON!" And we sit down together on the couch and watch the show,  
just like we did when we were kids.

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"I hate you!"

"Fine! I'm running away." The threat, not uncommon, didn't faze me  
a bit. The door to my bedroom slammed as I climbed into my bed, vis-  
ibly upset at our fighting, seeking some sort of comfort. Mom and Dad  
weren't there so a pillow, blanket, or stuffed animal might suffice.  
As I wallowed in my state, I heard the front door slam. Shock!

First, I ignored it. Comprehending what the noise came from and who  
would have done it. Then, I peek out my blinds and see nothing.

He finally did it. He left. The horror and fear flush my face.  
I leap out of my bed, run into the living room, and look out of the  
glass in the front door. Nothing. I run into the office. Look out onto  
the street. Nothing. Run into the kitchen. Look out the front window in  
there. Nothing.

Tears stream down my face. I never really wanted him to leave. Bawl-  
ing, I clunk my body down onto the hardwood kitchen floors and lean  
my head up against the kitchen island, wiping the tears from my face,  
panicking. My heart beats out of my chest at rapid speeds.

I turn around and look around the kitchen, when I see a quick flash  
of something. I get up from my spot, and I find at the other end of the  
counter Dylan's smug, giggling face.

"I can't believe you fell for that!"  
"I hate you! Why would you do that? That was so mean! I'm  
telling Mom when she gets home!"  
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"Hey. Why don't you call me on Skype. I'm cooking dinner right now  
so it'll be easier."

"Ok. Talk to you in a minute. Bye." At his request, I go to my room  
and pull my laptop off of its charger. I open it and pull up Skype  
and ring him. That "bloop bleep bloop" tune playing as the call goes  
through. He picks up, and we resume our conversation. The closest we  
get to having a face to face conversation since he has moved into his  
new house.

“How you doing? How’s school?”

“Fine,” I say. “You?”

“It’s ok, I guess. Work is stressing me out.”

“Oh. Well, that sucks.”

“Ya. I guess.”

“How’s Dominic and what’s-his-name? Have things gotten better?” He had been going through some roommate trouble. Oh, the pains of adult life!

“They’re fine. It still kinda sucks. I mean it could be better. He just pisses me off. It’s time he moves out.”

“Ya, sorry. How’s Cody?”

“Awesome. He’s so fun. I just wish I didn’t have to be obligated to watch him when he gets left alone. You want to see him do some tricks?”

“Uuuuh...yes!”

He calls Cody over and has him do the staple tricks. Sit. Stay. Roll over. Shake. Speak.

“You wanna see something awesome?”

“Always.”

“Hey Cody, go close the door.”

“Nuh uh!” I see Cody walk into his owner’s room, his claws clicking on the wood floors. He disappears from the screen. Slam! “He can close the door?!”

“Cody, open the door.” I see the door creak open a couple seconds later and Cody walks out.

“No. Way.”

“Ya. Way”

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He runs into the living room. It’s a nice summer day. The first summer we’ve spent without a babysitter. I sit comfortably in Mom’s armchair until he comes in. He runs in yelling. I don’t know why. I haven’t done anything, again. I see his raging face and then I see in his hands one of his golf clubs.

“I hate you!” Not an uncommon phrase.

I scream, naturally. Who wouldn’t scream at his or her raging big brother with a shiny golf club in his hands. I burst out of the chair and run into the kitchen and around as he trails behind me, then run back into the starting point, into the hall, and into my room. I shut the door behind me and press my back to it to keep it closed. What I would give for a lockable door knob! I press my feet up to my dresser for extra leverage and press as he tries to come inside.

“Stop! Go away!” I yell.

After the struggle, he eventually goes away. I stay in my room for security reasons and just watch TV in there for a bit. Later, he acts like nothing has happened. I tell Mom what has happened, and he apologizes. I accept, and we go play. Patricks can’t stay mad at each other very long.

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Driving in his car, as the sun begins to set, we listen to the radio and talk about life – school, relationships, Mom and Dad. The 2001 Acura’s aging, leather passenger seat crinkles and squeaks beneath me. The wind whips my hair around my face, in through my window and out through his. His hair, golden-brown like mine, lightly flips up and down at the ends. He flicks the loose strands from his face as they tickle his cheeks.

“Now you feel my pain. Once it gets longer, it’s gonna look like this when you roll down the windows,” I say as I gesture to the matted mess of tangles I press down to keep it all out of my face.

We laugh and continue talking as songs change on the radio – Blondie, Depeche Mode, The National, weird bands I’ve never heard before. Then...it happened.

2001's classic feel-good punk pop hit "The Middle" by Jimmy Eat World began to play. The intro with its simple and recognizable guitar solo started. We both looked at each other with those eyes like, "Oh yeah. It's happening." D cranked up the radio and we both started singing at the top of our lungs. The notes travel out the windows inviting people on the sidewalk and cars at the intersections to join in on the fun. Smiling and laughing, the adrenaline coursing through my veins, I tap and bang on the dashboard. He does the same on the wheel. We dance around in our seats as we yell the lyrics at each other for the entire ride home.

"Don't write yourself off yet. It's only in your head you feel left out or looked down on. Just try your best.

Try everything you can. And don't you worry what they tell themselves when you're away."



By: Alesia Johnson

### Memoir (Excerpt) - Abby Austin

Christopher and I exchanged glances, knowing that soon Skyler would rat us out, and our game would come to an end. We kicked it into fast forward, determined to get as many jumps in as possible before we had to stop. We clambered up the stairs. Stopping at the seventh step, we looked down and then up at each other, knowing we had to go higher. We went up, crawling on our hands and knees, our toes bending against the edges of the steps as we flew upwards.

Seventh step.

Eighth step.

Ninth step.

Tenth Step.

We stopped and looked down, satisfied at last with the challenge we had put before ourselves.

Keeping with the order, I prepared to go first. I scrunched my legs down as far as they would go, expecting the springs I assumed made up my knees to carry me far. I balled my hands into fists, wrenched my elbows behind my back, and fixed my gaze on my landing spot. Straightening my legs, giving it all of the energy and strength I had in me, I jumped.

The stairs ended in a wall, with about two feet between it and the bottom step. I got all too familiar with that wall as I watched it fast approaching.

For the tiniest second, fear crossed my mind. Looking down, I thought for sure that I wouldn't clear the bottom step at all. I would hit the second or third step and then tumble the rest of the way down like a crash test dummy.

But all of a sudden the wall came at me too quickly. I could shift my head and poke it with my nose. I could fog it with my breath. I could trace all of the textured squiggles of the dirty white paint. I flailed. Panicking, I curled my feet beneath me, wrapping my arms around my knees, the perfect position for a cannonball into the deep end of a swimming pool. But instead of landing in deep water and swimming safely to shore, I hit the ground, our sad pile of threadbare blankets doing little to cushion the fall. My foot twisted beneath me, little prickles of pain tickling their way up my ankle. I sat curled up in the blankets, afraid to move.

## Victim of Unfortunate Circumstances - Abbey Patrick

She wriggles on the cold metal bench. It squeaks every now and again from the rain dripping from her lifeless brown hair. Strands hang down in odd places in her messy up-do held up by a broken plastic hairclip. Her milky complexion flashes in and out of the black cloud of people moving past her. Every couple minutes she jumps or twitches at the sounds of footsteps coming down the entrance stairs. But afterwards, she just leans her head back against the grimy subway tile and takes a breath.

She looks up at the ceiling as the intercom pings, and a woman's muddled voice announces an arrival. The girl ignores it.

A chilly breeze passes through her hair as trains pass, and she wraps her bulky, knit sweater around her body even more tightly. The left sleeve rises up as she squeezes, revealing the little purple and black spots ringing her fragile arm and wrist; tracing them with her right hand she looks back up at the entrance to her right. Pulling down her sleeve, she leans down to rub away the goosebumps on her leg, uncovered in the cold, and regrets not grabbing something warmer. She taps her feet against the floor and nudges the suitcase underneath her with her heel just to remind herself of its presence.

Tangling her hands together and twiddling her thumbs, she sets them on her belly and shuts her eyes. The hollow, dark circles surround them like a skull's empty sockets.

In the distance, a music note drifts through the noise of the crowd and grabs her attention. Turning her head in its direction she sees a trio of street musicians with their bucket drums and harmonicas. Her thin fingers trail and dance across her tumid stomach, the harmonica's tune reminding her of an article she read saying that music helps brain development in utero. She gives a tiny smile in their direction and winces at the tinge of pain on her mouth where he split her lip. She loses focus. She sucks on her bottom lip to ease the pain.

As her hands continue to caress her stomach she hums the tune of an old lullaby her mother would use to calm her to sleep when Daddy got angry. Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral, hush now don't you cry. It became her responsibility to sing it after Mom left. It usually came up after a night surrounded by Daddy's friends. They'd always peek at her in her room when they came over for a drink or poker night.

She feels it kick.  
"You like that song?"  
Kick!

The performers start to play a disjointed version of "Born to Run."  
Kick, kick, kick!

"You must really like that one," she responds to the baby. Craning her neck, the long chain of her necklace falls forward and swings beneath her chin. She leans back and fiddles with the locket. Her jaw hardens as she opens the heart. A & D in one half. His face in the other. His sick, green eyes and buzzed head. An old picture. She lifts it off over her head and sets it to the left of her on the bench, but she keeps two of her fingers entwined within the chain.



By: Shaina Adelman

## Short Story - Abby Austin

The boy had out grown his bike long ago. The screws and bolts had loosened over the years, and now rattled in their places whenever the bike moved. But the boy couldn't hear it over the wind slapping at his ears.

A long cement road cut through the marshes that stood between the houses that lined the swamps and the nearest town. Here, trees couldn't grow. Water and tall grasses stretched out to the horizon on either side, with long-legged birds hiding in the plants, creating ripples in the shallow water as they strutted about.

The air opened up, chilling the boy as it passed him by. The sun had started to rise by the time he made it out to the road. Everything became a fuzzy pink as the sun boiled up over the horizon.

As he neared town, the ground surrounding the road became more solid. A small construction site which had recently appeared at the edge of town came into view.

A group of men in hardhats sat around a large hole they had dug out of the earth, their feet dangling inside. A bright yellow backhoe loomed behind them, giving them shade from the sun. Barely even seven a.m., their faces already appeared tired. They passed around a small cardboard box, pulling out shiny new bottles of beer. Older bottles, half buried and covered with grime, sat in the dirt around them.

Daddy sat in the middle of the men, leaned back lazily with his hardhat propping up his elbow. He laughed, tossing a bottle into the hole and yelling for the box.

The sun kept rising.



By: Abigail Austin

Glass jars and aquariums lined the walls of the Louisiana Coastal Line Elementary School biology classroom. Preserved reptiles and rodents swam in ancient formaldehyde, staring out into the classroom.

The boy raised his hand.

"Yes?" the teacher asked, pulling a fresh piece of chalk from a drawer. She had short dark hair and light brown eyes the color of marsh water. The boy liked her.

"You said that crocodiles sometimes carry their babies in their mouths. Can't they get hurt that way?"

"Not usually," the teacher said, leaning against the chalkboard. "But sometimes inexperienced mothers will accidentally swallow one baby trying to make room for them all."

"Why do they do it then? Why take the risk?"

"Because it's the only way they know how."

\* \* \*

On the way home, the boy passed the construction site again. Daddy stood in the hole, his head barely visible over the edge. The other men stood on the rim, tossing old beer bottles they had collected from around the grounds. The boy could hear them clatter together as they hit the ground. He saw a flash of a shovel as Daddy dug the hole deeper. The men's boots kicked up the rich dirt as they stepped towards the ditch, sending showers of soil raining down on Daddy's head.

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The lights in Judy's store sign had gone out years ago, and a hurricane had torn off the plastic coverings, leaving the long bulbs exposed. They used to glow pink.

A bell tinkled as the boy opened the door, and Judy rounded the corner, pushing a cart full of crates of wine. Not much taller than the boy, she had a round shape, like a Christmas ornament, and her eyes disappeared into her cheeks when she smiled.

"Well look who it is," she said, "my favorite underage customer." She laughed.

She abandoned the shelf she had begun stocking and wrapped the boy in a hug. He hugged back.

"Hi Judy," he said. The mud on his shoes streaked across the dingy tile floor as he walked.

"Gettin' somethin' for your daddy?"

"Yes ma'am."

"Well, you know where it is. I just restocked so there's plenty of it."

The boy nodded and headed to the back corner of the little store where refrigerators lined the walls. Colorful boxes of beer sat neatly on the shelves, tall glass bottles and stout shining cans. One of the fluorescent lights in the ceiling had begun to flicker. The boy had a headache.

He opened one of the refrigerator doors, listening to the familiar suction noise as the door pulled open and the cool air washed over him. He liked to stand there for a minute before getting what he came for, maybe leaning in a little to feel the cold from the back of the freezer.

"I really wish you would come help me out here sometime," Judy said. He heard the squeak of her cart move down the aisles, but he didn't answer.

He grabbed two boxes from the shelf, the expensive kind, and took it to the register to pay. He gave Judy the twenty Daddy had given him and told her to keep the extra like he always did. Daddy never asked for the change.

As he pushed open the door to leave and the humid Louisiana air stifled his breathing, he noticed that liquor stores always had a certain smell, like brown paper bags and cold cardboard. He liked it.



By: Dan Le



*Rugged* is a collection of artwork and writings created by students of Bishop Dunne Catholic School.

**Fall 2014**