As 21st century technology alters the habits of the younger generation, people are writing less than ever before; people tend to consider it a time consuming and pensive activity. Movies are replacing books as a main source of entertainment and social media is replacing journals as the main source of daily documentation. While writing can differ in form, as a generation living in a world of T.V. shows and video games, we must continue to write to educate others on the hidden realities of the world and to advance our skills in portraying them.

The hidden realities of the world are vast and infinite, but the more knowledge a person has of both current and historical events, the more worldly and empathetic he or she is. It is important for one to become aware of lifestyles and societies other than his or her own to become a good writer. As Isabelle Allende states in “Writing as An Act of Hope”, she “found that life became more comprehensive and the world more tolerable” when she began to write anecdotes of the past, recall emotions and pains, and tell the history of her country. Allende, as an author, also believes that “The writer of goodwill carries a lamp to illuminate the dark corners.” Illustrating everyday happenings and building on them using imagination is a writer’s way of informing their audience of realities they may not be exposed to. Both good nonfiction and fiction writers write pieces with the purpose to broaden their own and their reader’s ideas of common values, lifestyles, and people different from what is already known. To write well is to begin with a base reality and then add relevant but imaginative details that are required to portray the intended message. To Allende, that base reality is a world of “extreme poverty of the majority, in contrast with the extreme wealth of the very few”. To others, that base reality is different, which is why we must write to share our realities and expose our readers to become more worldly.
While revealing a base reality is the purpose of writing, to portray it may require diversion from the strict truth. This does not mean the purpose of writing is to lie about the world; however, we cannot rely on solely the “factual record” of events to portray extreme realities to people who have not witnessed them, according to writer Joan Didion. An innocent reader sometimes requires an exaggerated story derived from the truth in order to fully understand a foreign idea, practice, or culture. According to Didion’s “On Keeping a Notebook”, “a notebook is about other people”, but it is most important to “remember what it was like to be you” when writing. We must and do write to expose others to our own hidden realities and show what it is like to be us or the characters of our creations. However, “show them what it is like to be you” isn’t synonymous with “describe exactly what happened”.

Critics might argue that it is crucial to stay honest and true to the fact when writing. Donald Hall argues that “concentration on honesty is the only way to exclude the sounds of bad style that assaults us all”. While Hall emphasizes the importance of truth-telling in his piece “An Ethic of Clarity”, he is also a poet and creative writing teacher; poetry and creative writing are both forms of writing that are oriented around a base, true reality. Therefore, when Hall argues that writers must not lie to themselves or others, it does not mean tell everything exactly how it happened. It means simply know your purpose and express it accurately.

So, as we are living in the 21st century that overwhelms us with propaganda filled media, it is important to remember the importance of writing to reveal a hidden reality, whether it is your own or someone else’s; and, whether that hidden reality is a life of violence and war, a story of loss and regret, or a progression to an achievement, remember to show the readers what it is like to be you. Writing with this purpose results in a better cultural understanding of the world, by both the author and the reader.
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WOBBLE  ELENA EHRLICH

She carries sun in her eyes and the moon in her teeth.

When she remembers to fear, she’s fretful they might fall.

Blessed is the world in bathing its dark in her light;

Sunbeams flow from her fingertips and fall on marble countertops,

Sprinkled carelessly and generously as flour beneath a rolling pin.

A stumbling tenderness somersaults, slows, settles.

It knocks loose what had been so deliberately laid—doilies, note-

cards, Nonna’s clothes folded neatly with cat hair and care.

Appearances are rickety. Eyeliner smudges, lipstick smears.

Worry smooths edges, unscrews lightbulbs, and she knows.

She knows. — Poise has always been an act.

So what then, when her head bumps against the ceiling?

When her wrists peek from her sweaters, when she

Trades out the old for the tantalizing new? Let us

Be scared together tonight. Let her be scared alone.
Eyes Wide Shut is his Favorite Christmas movie. He needs to read more.

He’s in the second Act of adolescence and It’s rocky terrain.

Happiness is a Warm gun and he’s hesitant. Life will pass him by.
GOING THE DISTANCE
SILVER LINING
The street was a gathering of umbrellas. A large teal pressed against a street lamp, greys of all shades to match the monochrome cloud cover, a solitary red drifting through the crowd. He pecked listlessly at his keyboard, pausing to take bites from the apple upon his desk. Papers cluttered the workspace, almost completely obscuring his bag tucked in the corner of the room. Occasionally, his eyes drifted to the window, where he could no longer see the young woman with the purple moleskin notebook pause for coffee from the haggard sidewalk vendor. Two sugars, one cream. He wondered which umbrella mask was hers. The puddle lay undisturbed on the winding stone path, a looking glass for the curious redbud and splintered bench. A particularly daring petal might drift past the red umbrella to the sapphire pool, waltzing to the sound of tentative afternoon raindrops. She rested her pen and gently brushed the stray buds from the pages of her notebook. She glanced up from her lap, surprised by the silence of an empty playground. The sun dipped beneath the tangerine horizon as she waited in vain for the young man to pedal by on his three-speed bicycle. She pictured his small, black grocery bag, filled to the brim with a silver laptop and fresh produce. Always two ripe tomatoes, one gala apple. She thought of the roads he might take home.
In this moment
On the water
All my peace is mine
I float in my sea
My golden place to be
I bask in my ambiguous divine

Yet effervescent are these pearls for which we live
Tides are veiled and still again unmasked
To moore ourselves, shyly consuming, our task
The roping must be raw in simplicity
But labyrinth the sea on which we rock
Is it fear that tugs on us, so we veer off course
What force is inside us to find us our dock?

Such subtle shifts and my sails are turned
Do I let them? How to stop them?
Rarely is the road before me clear
Excepting firm denial of something, wrong, here.

What it is to be me I firmly recite
But how does one learn to live in the night?
A spec or a star?
I tire of the fight

Effervescent pearls, I say
Bah! life reduced to perfection
Is meek
Exalt the meandering river
Of seeking what to seek

My existence cannot be
Bobbing along inconspicuous sea
I find myself in living
Anchored and free
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS

BOYS WILL BE
KARLY ANDREASSAN
WHAT I WANTED TO SAY WHEN HE ASKED ME HOW HIGH SCHOOL WAS

by Brooke Patterson

High school is crying about boys you loved and girls who will never accept you. It’s locker rooms that smell of sweat and perfume, and those dark bags underneath your eyes that look just a little bit different when you’re tired than when you’re sad. It’s social media that makes you tear up with eighteen words and a photo, a photo that can ruin your reputation until you are the brunt of so many jokes that just your name on a post gets 200 likes (refresh, 201.) It’s girls with dyed hair stealing cigarettes from their parents and boys who need to wash their hair playing video games with greasy fingers and learning how to pluck your eyebrows and curl your hair the way the girl in your English class does. It’s breaking up with awful people and falling for best friends and getting your heart crushed and maybe crushing a few in turn because it’s not as if high school relationships matter anyways, even if he tells you so while slow dancing in your worn out gymnasium. It’s numbers being more important than your self worth and wanting to rip open your throat because your grades aren’t high enough but your weight isn’t low enough and learning that everything you ever cared about is just math and science. It’s knowing that even though bodies survive on water, yours is somehow making it through with just one coffee (one sugar, always just one sugar) and holding hands with someone just because you’re lonely. It’s the fact that this loneliness is the common denominator of anyone in the washed out hallways looking for a numerator and that we’re all just that damn isolated x variable. It’s being too old for the swings and too young for a job and being forced to ask when you need to use the bathroom and then spun around and asked to decide an entire life career. It’s laughing at a joke told by someone who only matters to you because you see them five days a week and searching for the scraps of your happiness in the cafeteria while you catch up on an assignment you never finished because you were up all night trying to breathe. It’s sadness and indulgence and ignorance and bliss and freedom and confinement and opportunity and heartbreak and it’s four years of your life that frankly you just don’t understand. They tell me high school is what prepares us for the real world, but oh darling, what do they think this is?
I am eight years old. My trembling knees bang together under my blue checkered uniform as I walk up the steps of the Holy Angels School in Kerala, India. Girls stare. Here I am known as the American, the odd one out. I raise my hand to answer the teacher’s question, only to be laughed at for my American accent. My dress is too short. My painted nails are too showy. I do not belong here.

I am ten years old. My eyes rest on the familiar multicolored tiles of Rashkis Elementary in North Carolina. Here I am the Indian. My food is too smelly, my skin too tan. The beautiful henna on my hands, painstakingly applied by my grandmother, is dubbed a burn of some sorts.

Yet, when I am dancing my Arangetram (Bharatanatyam graduation) at sixteen years old, I am comfortable. Sure, my lips are taut and quivering, my calves are aching, and my arms are strained—but I am comfortable. Comfortable in the role of Durga, the warrior woman, dancing with punctuated, sudden movements. Comfortable in the role of Sita, Ram’s gentle wife. Comfortable in my own skin.
UPLIFT

RACHEL STARR -- PENCIL
A SHOT IN THE DARKNESS

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

EMILY YORK
Deep Breath.
I run through a heavily wooded forest, feet pounding on the ground. I can’t quite see where I’m going but know that I have a long way to go.
Deep Breath.
I keep running. I can faintly make out the sound of small feet running just behind me. This terrifies me. I need to pick up the pace.
Deep Breath.
I try to maintain this impossibly fast pace but I’m beginning to feel my limbs beneath me give out. I attempt to slow down, hoping for a reprieve of sorts. I’m met with an immediate shove forward. It’s then that I realize I’m trapped. Trapped in these woods. Trapped at this speed I know I can’t maintain. I look to my left and right, begging for someone, anyone, to see that this is unsustainable. I’m met with the harsh, disapproving faces of many far bigger than I. Resigned to my insignificance I maintain the pace. Like a soldier. Like a pawn in a game with stakes much higher than my personal welfare.
Labored Breath.
My legs scream out in agony. Each step is a new step past my breaking point. I wonder now if even if I were to stop if I could ever recover. I look up now to see the beginning of the end of the wood. I can feel dread building up within me as I approach the end. What could possibly exist beyond this dark forest?
I attempt to draw air into my lungs only to find that I no longer can.
In a panic I reach the end and find myself staring into a deep, dark pit. On closer inspection I find that buildings of stone with tall spires lie below. Between the buildings I see students slightly older than me trudge from place to place carrying overladen backpacks. I look closer and am shocked by what I find. In their eyes there is no spark. No life. No dancing curiosity. In a way I see so much of myself. I am snapped from my observation by a small hand tugging at my sleeve. I twirl around to find that a small girl had been the source of the pounding feet behind me. When I look into her eyes I see something familiar. Bright. Something I had once seen in myself. Before I get a chance to recognize who she is she begins to pull me, attempting to urge me towards a new path. Something ingrained within me, however, refuses. I shove her away from me and look to the sky to see papers falling around me.
A
B
C
A
B
With a grasping breath I launch myself up from my bed.
I look to my phone to gauge how much sleep I got. It’s not nearly enough but it doesn’t matter. It’s time for class.
How black is the midnight sky
To those who cannot see the stars
Just us and the moon
Together into the infinite
Eyes ever so slightly out of focus
Pinpricks of light
Remain just out of view
And when the universe is a void
We are infinitesimal
Perhaps humanity has blurry vision
So our stars remain unseen
And our world
Seems very much alone
But all we need to do
Is put on our glasses
OVERCOMING RETROGRESSION

SOPHIA CHIZHIKOVA -- DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
a crow sang her sweet song and it all began.
the hum of your laundry machine was never
enough to cover the sound of your screams;
new beginnings, teal, periwinkle, peach, you
were never enough to fill an ocean.

your mother paces outside your bedroom.
strangers flit their eyes back and forth, back and forth, back
then you used to look them in the eye, but
now you’re stuck in yesterday--
breathe in, out, in, out, in, out, in
the second grade you broke your arm and forgot
to cry.
your sister forgets to call.
semper idem, semper idem (always the same)
LONG ANSWERS FOR SHORT QUESTIONS

BY BROOKE PATTERSON

DIGITAL ART -- ALICIA WANG
“Have you ever been in love?”

“I think I have preconceived ideas of love in my mind and I think that, in the heat of the moment, I mistook the knots in my chest for something resembling love. I think I’ve loved but I’ve never been in love, if that makes sense. And I think I’ve fallen, but never in love, only on the pavement with scrapes and scars on my hands. And I think it’s strange that red is the color associated with love, but is also the color of blood.”
SUBURBIA

NISHMA VIAS -- DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
SUNDAY MORNING CARTOONS

no outside force can harm the Coyote
the Coyote is far too wiley for that
beep beep
Adrianne Huang -- Ink
Observation
by Vibha Puri

I watch you out of fascination, not love. The way your eyes light up when people listen; your ideas flowing freely out of your mouth with no regard for time and space. The slight twitch of your mouth as you insist, insist that I am wrong, that you are right, that things are a certain way and if I could only just see it-- The mechanical movement of your tired limbs, jarring to the touch, jarring to my eyes; your eyes calculating, watching others.
FOUR
HAIKUS
ABOUT
A CELLO
AND ITS
PLAYER

YOUNGMIN SHIN

His eyelids flutter
Deft fingers slide down the board
Leaving fingerprints

Bow dives, comes back up
Every move releases force
A resonant tone

The moments connect
Songs of stars, and just for now
They are unearthly

Time’s up, so he hides
His secret identity
Under some textbooks
you looked through me.
your eyes—blue, green, brown, black—
scanning, glazing over.
no motion, dismissive motion.
satisfied by my marble skin, cold
words, insisting.

hello, hollow, how do you do? empty
words govern notes scrawled on paper,
the story of us; you started
a garden with your seed of ignorance.
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PRINTING BY STRAWBRIDGE STUDIOS
in the depth of winter

I finally learned that within me lay an invincible summer
-Albert Camus