



Creativity is not just
a talent but such
an delightful gift.

Christine Walengamina

Christina Klada

THE WRITE WAY

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Around the World - Worst Valentines Edition - students wrote about a bad valentines experience

The Valentine's Day Suit

By: Various Authors

"Wow Dad. This suit is really... something," said Mac.

"I know," said Dad, apparently ignorant of the concept of sarcasm, "I wore it on my first date with your mother." As Mac removed the yellow polka-dot suit from its mothball-smelling case, he realized that it was ruined. He couldn't help but be disappointed, because that was all he had before he went out and spent the rest of his Valentine's Day. At this point, the next best thing that he had was his dad's other suit—which was horrible as well. Maybe his date cared more about a person's insides than outsides. She'd certainly have to, because with what he was, there was no other option. Mac tried his best to look decent for his date with Stephanie. She was the coolest girl in his world history class. When he got there, she put her head down. She was usually so confident.

"Hey Steph! Are you alright?" asked Mac, his glittery red suit reflecting the warm restaurant lighting.

"I'm sorry," said Stephanie timidly. Mac glanced around as his stomach dropped. This. This is how a break up goes. He braced himself. "My dress is just so hideous. I'm sorry Mac." Mac hadn't even noticed Stephanie's yellow polka-dot dress.

"Hey, look at me, Steph." Mac gestured to himself as her eyes slowly met the aggressive glimmer of his suit. Stephanie giggled and covered her mouth.

"Oh thank God. We both look horrible."

Mac sat down, "Correction, our outfits look horrible. You look amazing." Fortunately for the couple, the Valentine's special steak offer looked and tasted much better than they did.

Valentine's Writing

Love Letters to random Objects

An Ode to a Puddle

By: Kimberly Posadas-Gonzales ('25)

For how I love the way you look
I'll rip out a page for you in my book
Whenever the sky brightens on you, my puddle,
I see my face in your reflection
I could sit for hours
Just admiring you in showers
With the ripples swaying on my skin
It leaves bullets on my grin
And maybe even on a sunny day
Could my love for you sway

Ode to Grid Paper

By: Natalee Darzentas ('26)

Charts
Tables
Bar graphs
Labels

Grid paper
Holding information
Organization maker
Boxes and lines
In rotation
Grid paper

Fright Club Writing Contest

Students entered Young Writers, Inc.'s Fright Club Mini-Saga Writing Contest. Students had to create a scary story using no more than 100 words.

Daniela Quinonez

Knock Knock

When I was 8 years old, I lived with my mother. We had a basement, but it never was able to open. The house we lived in was over 100 years old. So I never really bother going down there. Every night, though, I would hear knocking repeatedly. I asked my mother one day where the knocking came from. She didn't know what I was talking about. The next night I got fed up, so I went down to the door. As soon as I got there, the knocking stopped; everything was silent.

The Blackwood Forest

Justus Hunter-Kline ('28)

Ethan, a podcaster exploring the haunted Blackwood Forest driven by curiosity, camps overnight, only to experience equipment malfunctions, chilling whispers, and unsettling phenomena. His investigation leads him deeper into the woods, where he encounters a malevolent spirit with vacant eye sockets and a stretched smile. The spirit's terrifying presence, a cold touch, and Ethan's silenced scream confirm the legends. The next morning, his abandoned campsite and recording equipment, with a new episode titled "My Final Recording," reveal his mysterious disappearance, leaving his fate unknown.

Tap. Tap. Tap. By: Natalee Darzentas('26)
Submitted to the Irvington Spooky Story Contest.

This is an excerpt from the story:

I hung up and my ears, once again, filled with silence. I turned on the light I was in and sat down to breathe. For minutes I waited, holding my eyes on the darkness of the rest of my apartment, worried that even a speck of dust or trick of the light was something I needed to run from.

I sat, though I did not relax.

My phone's upbeat chiming ringtone rang though my apartment again, this time from the dark room.

Something in me, something learned from living in the age of technology, caused me to almost stand to pick it up.

I clutched my phone in my hand until my fingers would be imprinted with the outline of the volume button. I was holding this phone. It was real.

The terribly cheerful chime continued from the darkness, the tempo wavering, never quite right.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

I jumped.

"Hey man, can you get the door?"

My eyes grew wide with fear. Logically, this was Aaron, but I slowly backed myself to the corner of the room.

The chiming continued from the other room.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

Chiming.

Chiming.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

"I forgot my spare key, man!"

Chiming.

Maybe even a tap, tap, tap.

A Window Of Hope

By Christina K 2/21/2026

I walked miles and miles
Didn't know how to feel,
Intense strong of words
Hit me like a
wind. I sobbed
And sob and sob until
My eyes got dried and
Out of tears.

Days went by, then weeks,
then months and so and so
On. I fell down on my knees
I sob and sob till red blood.

Into the window that felt
Like the world's calmest
Place I've never seen
Before.

I drew for days and nights
While watch the world pass
By. Only to find out the world's
Happiest destination . A window
Of hope.....



Life of a Butterfly

By: Natalee Darzentas ('26)

Delicate I loom through sunshine
Children and adults all waiting in lines
They wait and burn the time they have
With each polite conversation
My life is halved

Two weeks you spend on fears and
doubts
Two weeks and then my life runs out
A butterfly won't dare to spare a day
As you ruminate your life away

Seasons pass
You feel it too
Dozens of me
The same old you

Vibrant wings you love to see
Vibrant smiles you hold beneath

National Poetry Month - April 2026

Pappou's Wallet

By: Natalee Darzentas ('26)

**I am the richest man alive
My wallet distends on every side
I can not afford extra goods
But I'm blessed with all the childhoods**

**My children's school portraits
My wife's bright eyes
My grandchild's small nose
I keep the moments in time**

**My wallet bulges with photographs
Moments money could never make last
I cannot buy many things
But I am rich in memories**



Love and Applause

By: Natalee Darzentas ('26)

**The roar of love
A bow well deserved
Theater
A unique love
One that can be heard**

**Arrays of seats filled
One story told
Hundreds of hands together
Two for each ticket sold**

**No onomatopoeia can capture the sound
The roar of love
A lost audience
Found.**



Inspired By Dice

Two dice were rolled with pictures on each side. Halloween stories were written based on the images rolled.

Sheep's Blood.

Story by Natalee Darzentas('26)

My hands were coated in the sheep's blood. The ruby gloves were illuminated only by the moon's dull glow millions of feet up.

I had done just what she told me to do to get rid of that thing, yet the leaves and thin maze of wiry branches rustled behind me.

I kept moving.

The compass froze my palm as the gold backing turned red.

I swear I'd followed the women's directions. The lamb was killed at supper time. I ensured that its blood drained quickly and fully. These were the directions I was told. Then I was to bring the body to my front steps and leave at nightfall. I was told not to return until the sun broke the moon's mystic seal over the sky.

Still it followed.

My mind roared with a million fears and possibilities as I moved swiftly through the trees, not daring to stay in one spot too long.

Maybe she lied to me, I thought. Maybe she was in cahoots with the thing.

Scary Stories

Students wrote scary stories and halfway through rolled dice to determine a new object to include in their story.

Worst April First Ever By: Kylie Tinker ('24)

I thought it would be a normal day. I was SO wrong. NASA just had to drop the bomb of the seemingly existing alien ships that people claim to see. It all happened so quickly. Everything went dark and silent; then it appeared. A massive ship. Slowly it came down. I swear there was a blast before it overcame me. Everything incinerated when it walked past. Watching my own body melt and burn up was traumatizing. Planet Earth was no more. Like a string of lightning. Here then gone.

No one believed in aliens until they came. Some even mocked NASA, saying they are lying and are dumb. It didn't help that the day the aliens invaded was April 1st.

On April 2, they began to realize. But that day was long gone now. He needed to focus on the task at hand.

"Well," Joe asked, "did you figure it out?"

"Not yet," Jorge replied frustratedly. "I can't tell what's in this thing."

"No one said alien autopsies would be easy," Joe said.

Joe wrestled with his fingers against the creature's exposed insides.

"Hun. A liver," he said bluntly.

"You sure?" questioned Jorge.

"Well, I mean..." Joe trailed off, setting down the still warm organ.

They both stopped suddenly. It had moved. Its fingers moved slowly like the phalanges of someone very old. Jorge and Joe looked silently at each other with wide eyes. They resolved, with only the bright lights and electrical hums as witnesses, that they would leave to hide away.

No more alien autopsies.



A Not-So-City Christmas

By: Andrew Kennedy ('28) and Others

"Ugh! I hate it when I have to come to these backwater towns for work," Lucy lamented "and especially on Christmas! I can't wait to get back to the city." As Lucy ended the call, she bumped into someone. It was a tall, handsome man, wearing a plaid shirt and jeans.

"Sorry," said the man.

"It's okay. Just keep your eyes up next time," said Lucy as she continued on her walk to the business deal.

Seems she has something to attend to if she's in that much of a hurry, but I should get going as I also have business to attend to, thought the man.

"Oh, you again. What's your name again?" asked the man.

"I am Lucy," replied Lucy.

"Oh, Lucy, got it. Where are you going Lucy?" said the man.

"I'm going to a nearby city to celebrate Christmas, because I can't stand my home town's Christmas celebration. It's quite lame." she replied

"Do you live anywhere nearby?" asked Lucy.

The stranger replied, "What's the name of the city?"

Lucy said, "It's the one next to this one." The stranger sat silent for a while, and he didn't say anything to Lucy about how bad that city is. Lucy kissed the man for no reason because we're Hallmark. Lucy asked him "What's your name?"

He said, "Buddy the Elf." She gasped, "Lucy, you brought back Christmas spirit. Thank you!"

Lucy replied, "Even though we've only known each other for 2 minutes, I know I want to marry you!"

"Now that you've brought back Christmas spirit we can!" exclaimed Buddy the Elf.

"By the Christmas spirit vested in me, by the power of Rudolph, I now pronounce you Elf and wife!" said Santa. And so Buddy and Lucy kissed, and their kiss had so much Christmas spirit that all the people in her big city, Bigburg, New York, went out and bought Christmas presents for each other.

(The screen fades to black with just the twinkle from their kiss remaining)

Trip Splash

By: Jamile Isidoro ('26)

It's dark. I can't see. I stumble in the dark looking for a light. Then I see the moon coming out of the clouds. The moon shines down onto the earth. There was something eerie about that light; it seemed too perfect. I then looked down from the moon to the ground when I saw red on my hands. My hands shake as the moon goes away and rain starts to pour. It's dark again. The terrifying darkness engulfs me while the rain drenches me. BOOM! Lightning strikes. I turn around terrified, and I see sheep on the ground. They are covered in red. Dead. I watched as the rain poured over the bodies and the blood turned over like wine. I shook even more than before. Shaking yet frozen solid with fear, I had to wonder what had done this. There were perhaps a dozen sheep with dead eyes limp in the clearing.

Wondering might kill me. Standing to think gave time, not to me, but to this thing that had killed the sheep. I didn't have the time to wait and become a pale, cold sheep.

Fear, feeling cold, helpless, hard wind, feeling lost, not knowing what to do.

I finally mustered up the courage to turn around and run back home, when I heard something over the howling wind. Between the patter of the rain drops, I heard the soft splash of footsteps on the blood-soaked ground. Now I really ran. I didn't want to find out what it was, at least not now. I prayed I wouldn't have to be found by someone else in the morning. I saw the safety of my porch lights then. I just needed to run a little further. Trip. Splash.

The sun rose and awoke me in a puddle. I must've hit my head when I fell. The sheep were gone. The ground was soaked with blood no longer, but my shirt was still stained red, and I would never forget.

Dark and Stormy Night

By: Andrew Kennedy ('24)

It was a dark and stormy night. In the middle of a lightning storm stood a lonely, little house. It was a sheep farm. All the sheep had taken shelter in the barn, or so they thought. BOOOM! The barn exploded as lightning struck, flinging sheep and splinters everywhere. The next day, as the farmer stepped out to inspect the damage, he found a blackened crater where the barn had been. The entire area was charred except for one white sheep, sitting in the crater. It noticed the farmer, but it didn't move, entirely indifferent to its surroundings. After relocating the sheep into his house, the farmer decided to call it a day. In the night he awoke many times to the panicked bleating of a sheep, but every time he checked, he found it asleep.

After such a disaster, and the amount of fire, I stood there, lonely, shocked, and scared, wondering in my head. As I kept going, not knowing what was to come, I started to ask myself questions: what was put in there for that lonely barn to explode like that?

There was more blood than I could imagine, and it grew worse the more I looked at the wreckage.

"Hey!" a voice rang from the treeline, and I turned to quickly face it. "What happened?" The woman was very far off from the remains of the barn but she sounded terrified. I remained silent, feeling the weight of death settle into the air around me.

She must have noticed my terrified expression, so she asked me "Are you okay?" in such a sweet and tender voice. My knees buckled and I fell down and didn't notice I was crying until any tears dropped on my hands. The woman held me close and took me to her house. She took care of me through the scary night.

All I Want for Christmas

By: Joe Cheever ('26) and Others

Gary had always imagined himself meeting that special someone but was unsure of when it would come to pass. He had just left work for his conference in Tiny Town without knowing how much his life was about to change. Donna, unlike Gary, wasn't so confident that she would find someone. She had always secretly hoped she would meet someone from a small town, so she was excited to take a trip to Tiny Town with her dad.

When they both arrived in Tiny Town, Gary was horrified at just how festive Tiny Town was.

The place was covered in decor. The town square looked like a Menards. Donna, on the other hand, felt that Tiny Town was so whimsical. There was love in the air. Donna's dad kept pushing her to walk up to every "small town guy" they saw. Meanwhile, Gary was being driven insane by Christmas carolers.

Then, Donna's dad pointed out Gary.

"Hello," said Donna. "I'm Donna. Who are you?"

"Gary," replied Gary, seizing his opportunity to look occupied so the carolers would no longer harass him.

"That's such a festive name!" exclaimed Donna. "You know, like Gary the Red-Nosed reindeer."

"Say, do you want to go get coffee or something?" said Gary, still looking to get away from the carolers.

"Sure!" she replied.

As they drove to the coffee shop in Gary's Prius, it broke down.

"What now!" Gary exclaimed.

He then got out to fix the car, and as his muscles bulged against his plaid flannel, Donna realized: *He's all I want for Christmas.*

"So what do you do in your spare time?" she asked excitedly.

"Well you know just the typical stuff like going out to the gym and whatever. I also like to read," said Gary.

Right there at that moment, Donna fell in love with Gary. She couldn't believe that she had found someone just like her. She immediately grabbed Gary and kissed him. "Woah," said Gary, "I like you too but I think we should take it slower." Donna giggled, "Yes, we should." Gary went back to his car and fixed it. Soon right after they got in his car and drove off into the snowy sunset. Years later they get married and live happily ever after.

Smalltown New Jersey Christmas

By: Natalee Darzentas ('26) and Others

Lillian had to make the biggest deal of Big Business Co.'s history. It was a big deal to work at such a big company in the biggest city you can think of, Big City, Illinois. Unfortunately, Lillian had to pair the deadline of the big business deal with the start of the very small Christmas parade happening in Smalltown, New Jersey, where her very small, old parents had gone after retirement. Lilly's parents expected her to be there to support their very small farm's float in the parade. Her parents grew potatoes, which were also fittingly small.

Mark was also in Smalltown, New Jersey, for the holidays. He was the biggest parade planner for Big Parade, Ltd., and he had been hired by the mayor of Smalltown to plan the parade.

"I can't stand all these kind Smalltown people with their community values," Mark thought to himself. "I just want to get done with this small Smalltown parade so I can go back to Bigsville, California."

Lilly got a call from her phone saying her mom DIED out of nowhere, so when she heard that, she went to a coffee shop to relax and cry dramatically. Meanwhile Mark walked by and saw her ugly crying and asked, "What's wrong?"

Lilly sniffled.

"I got a call that my mom died. I don't know what to do!"

Lilly began to sob uncontrollably. Mark felt horrible and tried to comfort her. He put a hand on her shoulder and said, "I know how you must feel, but I believe that your mother would want you to move on."

She sniffled and looked up at Mark.

"I suppose you're right," she said smiling.

"Why don't I take you out for some coffee and we can talk about your mom?" said Mark.

"I would love that!" explained Lilly.

Together they went to Sugar House and talked for hours. Right above where they were sitting was a mistletoe.

"Wow," sighed Mark.

"What?" Lillian asked.

"Oh...it's just...I felt Christmas in the air."

"Woah," replied Lilly, "What does that mean?"

"It's you," said Mark, "You're my Christmas! I'm going to add the final touch to the big Christmas parade!"

"What will it be?"

"You, Lilly. You will be the Snow Queen on the Kroger sponsored float, the biggest float in the parade!"

"That's such an honor. My mother would love this. She loved Kroger," cried Lilly.

The next day, Mark proposed to Lilly atop the Kroger float. They both felt it now; they felt the Christmas between them.

They both abruptly quit their big city jobs so that everyday would be Christmas in Smalltown, New Jersey.

The end.