

# Gristle-Butter



Vibrations

A LITERARY 'ZINE PERPETRATED BY THE  
CHS CREATIVE WRITING GROUPS



# CONTENTS

Haylee Griffith (class of 2020) *Cover* ..... Front Cover

Xan Whitt, *The Fruits of Night* ..... 2

Annabelle Buyck, *Those People* ..... 3

Oliver Herron, *The Miscommunications of Love and Death* .....4

]Xan Whitt, *A Flame in the Beginning* ..... 10

## The Fruits of Night

A look into the starry sky of night  
Will bear you fruits that can be found nowhere  
Else in the world of light or in darkness.

The light that can be found at night is scarce.  
And every little bit must be sheltered,  
And held until the morning light shines through.

Throughout the night they shine the way over  
And under every bridge and stream they beam,  
Like headlights on a midnight road they glow.

Whatever they search and watch for must be  
More precious than a gleaming tungsten heap,  
For every night *incessantly* they look.

And those caught out on cold or misty nights,  
Use their light to find their own way back home.  
In these distant stars, wanderin' souls find hope.

Whether we one day pitch our tent out there,  
Or stay earthbound until our dying day,  
They shall shine the way to what is to come.

– *Xan Whitt*

# Those People

You know those people  
Whos voices are like butter and brass  
Unimaginable envy for the words they caress

You know those people  
Where you hang on to their every word  
Desperately trying to fulfill the theater of the absurd

You know those girls  
The ones with the hair with goddess curls  
So much wishing it turns my mind into whirls

You know those minds  
Smart beyond their years  
Their words coming out like a game of musical chairs

You know those people  
A jack of all trades, effortlessly graceful  
Wishing to be anything like them, so to the idea I remain faithful

You know those people  
The ones I wish I wish I was  
So to the people I wish I was I will continue this facade

– *Annabelle Buyck*

## **The Miscommunications of Love and Death**

*by Oliver Herron*

Jonathan wanted to die. Ever since the age of sixteen, he had wanted to die. Not because he was depressed or anything, but because he was fascinated with death. There were so many interesting ways to die, and he wanted to try them all.

Over the course of seven years he had tried to die twenty-three different ways, 103 times total, all of which have been failed attempts. It was starting to get annoying. Everytime he tried to kill himself he would miraculously be saved or somehow survive. Countless times he had been pulled out of the way of oncoming traffic, pulled out of the water, pulled off of building ledges, all the blades he could find were too dull, and couldn't find any bullets. Occasionally, he would even stop by the hospital and see if he could donate one of his major organs. At the same time, however, no one noticed that he was trying to die, even the nurses and doctors. The only one who ever did was his roommate, Charles, who had just gotten used to it and given up on trying to save him.

One specific time he tried to die by jumping off of the balcony of a hotel room, but it wasn't high enough. He landed himself in the hospital with a broken arm. This was the fourth time he'd been there this month. Each time he was there, he would end up with the same nurse, Maria.

“You know, I swear you just keep getting yourself in here to see me,” she would often flirt.

-----

The following week he paid a group of guys behind his apartment building thirty bucks to beat him up, which they did. Since he was still alive, though barely able to move, he called Charles to carry him back to their apartment.

“I’m not dead,” he wheezed.

“Such a shame...” Charles grumbled under his breath, “I’ll be down to get you in a minute.”

-----

About half an hour later, Jonathan was lying on the couch of their apartment with Charles putting bandaids on some of the cuts on his legs. Even though he knew he couldn’t save him from dying, he still cared for him. Besides, he needed someone to pay the other half of the rent. “They got you really good, man. I think you’re gonna have to go to the hospital again.”

“Why can’t the gods just let me die in peace?” Jonathan sighed. He was beginning to be able to move more on his own.

“I don’t know, but at least your rich parents are willing to pay for your medical bills. Besides, maybe this time you’ll be able to pick up that cute nurse.” Charles got up and walked towards the front door.

“Uughhhh.” Jonathan rolled off the couch and onto the floor.

-----

“Now Jonny, you don’t have to go getting yourself beat up for me. If you just asked I’d date you on the spot!” Maria said while wrapping bandages around Jonathan’s scraped and bruised arms. She

often called him Jonny, which he despised, but when he'd correct her she would just ignore him.

"Yeah *Jonny*, maybe getting a girlfriend will cheer you up so you stop trying to kill yourself," Charles chimed in. He was sitting in the corner of the room they got put in at the ER.

"I'll be happy when I'm dead," Jonathan remarked. He winced as Maria started pressing a bit too hard on a particularly sore bruise.

"Come on, just one date with me won't hurt. What's today... Thursday? We can go out this Saturday! We can go to the bar down on 54th street. It'll be great! Pleeeeaasseeeee?" Maria gave Jonathan puppy dog eyes.

He sighed. "Fine, but just this once!" Even if it didn't go well (or if it went *very* well), maybe he could convince her to commit a double suicide with him.

-----

It was not just once. Over the course of three months they had been on fifty-two dates, all of which Jonathan had been forced to go on. She didn't even repay him by committing a double suicide with him. Everytime he asked she would just laugh it off.

He had finally had enough. Tomorrow they had another date and this would be it. He was going to tell her he wanted to die and he was going to, whether she wanted to join him or not.

The small town they lived in (Oakland, California) was right on the edge of Yosemite National Park. There were many trails in the area that led through the woods to beautiful outlooks over waterfalls. That was where they were going.



A few times Jonathan had tried dying by jumping from a waterfall, but each time either 1. It wasn't tall enough, 2. He got stopped by some random bystander or 3. He got pulled out of the water at the bottom before he could drown. No one would ever let him die in peace. This time however, he would succeed.

-----

Today was the day. Finally, Jonathan would get his sweet relief from both Maria and life.

Charles drove them up to where they would go hiking. "Now, don't do anything too frisky, you two! Or do, I'm not your dad," he commented as they got out of the car.

They had been walking along a trail when they finally found the perfect place to stop and have a picnic. It was a clearing right next to a bridge that went over the top of a waterfall. There was nothing stopping you from standing on the railing of the bridge and jumping off. It was a beautiful, sunny day, too. The perfect day to die.

Maria had brought some ham and cheese sandwiches for them to eat. She insisted that he loved them because he ordered it a few times at the hospital, but they had actually just been for Charles. Jonathan hated them.

After eating in silence for a while, he decided it was time. "I um- I have something important to tell you, Maria."

"Oh really? I have something to tell you too! Let's say it at the same time, ok?" her eyes were gleaming with excitement.

Jonathan looked apprehensive. "Ok..."

"1...2...3! I love you!" Maria shouted.

"I want to die."

“You-what?”

“I want to die...”

Maria scoffed and crossed her arms, “You could’ve just said you don’t want to be with me anymore instead of being so dramatic!”

“What? I’m being serious. It has nothing to do with you. I just-”

“You just what?! You hate me! I knew it. You probably wanted to be with one of the other nurses, didn’t you? Well, you can have them! I’m leaving!” Maria got up and stormed off back down the trail.

*Well, that wasn’t as bad as it could’ve been,* Jonathan thought. Now that that was over, it was time to die.

-----

He got up and walked over to the bridge. Standing in the middle, he could see all across the valley. The scene was beautiful. A pristine mountain range; deep, green trees with a few spots of color poking out; the faint noise of birds over the thundering of the waterfall below; the sky a crystal blue with a few clouds dotted around; and a slight wind was blowing. A beautiful way to die, falling from a waterfall, surrounded by a gorgeous view, giving yourself back to nature.

Jonathan climbed up and stood on the railing of the bridge, took a deep breath, and let the wind push him over.

Falling. It always felt like it took years to reach the bottom. That’s probably why many people regret jumping. They feel their lives are so terrible when they are standing on the edge, but the fall takes so long and gives them time to reflect and realize they don’t want to die. But when you jump, there’s no going back. No calling 911, no being saved. Just falling. Just dying.

Jonathan had fallen many times now. It was probably his favorite way to die. The fall was always elegant and peaceful. It gave him time to think, too. To think about Charles and Maria, his family, and his life in general. There had been so many miscommunications between him and everyone else. At first, he felt a little bad for ending things with Maria like this, but then again it was her own fault for falling in love with a man who had already given his heart to death. Oh well, the fall would be over soon anyway.

The waterfall sprayed refreshing, cool mist onto him as he fell. He could feel the release of death coming near as it had many times before. Everytime he tried to die, though he may have mostly failed, a small piece of him would die inside. He was running out of pieces. This would be the last time he felt this again. He would miss it.

He closed his eyes, and finally, he hit the water below head first.

-----

He found himself waking up on the bank of a river. He rolled over and coughed water out of his lungs. *D-did I do it? Am I finally dead?!* He thought to himself.

He looked over to the side and saw Charles standing next to him. “Well I knew the date could be bad, but I didn’t realize it’d be *this* bad.”

Jonathan rolled back over onto his back and screamed: “FUCK!!”

## **A Flame in the Beginning**

Where does the fire come from?  
And why does it leave?  
Why does it feel so alive?  
I do not know.

When man came down from the trees,  
And started down the roads of progress,  
Fire was there watching, waiting, and helping.  
Helping man leave his violent nature behind.

When man huddled together in the night,  
Around its welcome flame,  
Fire was there.  
To shine away the fear of what was outside.

When man fought man,  
In their boats of wood,  
Fire was there to light the enemy aflame,  
And tear their ships asunder.

When man killed cities,  
In one fell swoop,  
Fire was there to clean up,  
All of the houses the uranium knocked down.

I do not know why fire comes and goes,  
Or why it does what it does when it stays.  
But I do know that it will take us down the road of progress,  
Then lead us back from where we came.

– *Xan Whitt*





# Featuring:

Annabelle Buyck

Oliver Herron

Xan Whitt

Madeline Dillon

*Cover image by Haylee Griffith*

Community High School  
of Arts and Academics



*Feb. 2021*