Knightscapes
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CONTENTS

POETRY
Read It Till The End,  Thomas Corradino  1
Sonnet 1,  Michael Kohn  2
The Bastard of Suburbia,  Nicholas Binder  3
I Am My Mother’s Song,  Mercedes Gregor  5
A Star, Falling,  Michael Kohn  6
Woman,  Rudy Baez  11
Nature’s Fury,  Walter Clark  13
The Fall,  Meghan Tierney  14
Poem One,  Sara Henry  16
Walkin Alone…,  Rudy Baez  17
Has Anyone Noticed,  Dorothy Rudy  20
Eros & Aros,  LLC  21
The Lost,  Alex Luy  25
Barely There,  Meghan Tierney  26
Eight Ways of Looking at a Stream,  Steven Chung  28

FICTION
The Promise,  Brenda Cierech  8
Manuscript Fifty-Three,  Brian Hall  22
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Some teenagers think nothing of harming their minds
They try drugs of all kinds
Twelve and thirteen-year-olds are experimenting with pot
They know where to find the drug spot
A good percentage have already snorted coke
I assure you this is no joke
After their last line, they call, their friend Jack
To hook them up with some crack
Those who are looking for something beyond kin
Pump their veins with heroin

Now, allow me to project my voice
In clubs, ecstasy is the drug of choice
But there is a more powerful drug I can share
All you need is some time to spare
It is guaranteed to affect your minds
And will take you places with people of all kinds
Oh, what's this? You want some you say?
Well, first you have to do it my way
Sit down in the chair my friend
Hold out your hands

Take this book and READ IT TILL THE END
MICHAEL KOHN

Sonnet 1

I walked along a sightless shore,
‘Midst the thickest cloak of night.
Estranged from all I’d known before,
And yearning for the light.
My path obscured at every turn,
I lingered, still I could not see.
Faintly, though, I could discern,
Whispering footsteps next to me!
And upon that lightless shore, by dint of sound,
I met a soul as lost as I;
We drew each other close, and found,
A growing light! We had to cry,

“We precious two, whose spirits are together sewn,
Bear our light against the darkness, we shall never walk alone.”
The Bastard of Suburbia

Place the gear in overdrive
Take this slothful bastard for a ride
Swerve around the back roads for a while
See if a used but polished outlook helps that denial

Ache for another kiss
Grope the girl and express your bliss
Inspiration is slumming around here somewhere
Fake misery in the back seat for indifference doesn’t attract care

A suburban nightlife and cheap perfume doesn’t help one breathe
But neither does daddy’s BMW and masturbation dreams

In the house an empty screen waits
In a stained bed nightmares are the bait
Wake up when the world is at an end
Forget the ideals of a whored American

It’s an ugly image when we look in the mirror
Maybe it's because we defile our identity with fear
Sometime soon the words will describe this hell
But only write a novel if the suits promise it'll sell

Another identity to screw with your head
It's easier to bum around a place where people can’t see than worry about what’s ahead

There's a beaten boy across the sea with a vision of friendship that is better than you
He's alone in a bare room without food and no view
Somewhere a girl seeks a hold that you can’t afford to offer
Unable to take the hard way out you loose another word and scoff at her

So let's fuck this joint
Forget the madness you created and the get to the point
Spurn a good man's help and crash the automobile
Claw at the open wound before you can feel

Part of a tree the bastard of suburbia rests
Part of the windshield is where he's best
I am my mother’s song,
the song that was in her heart,
the lullaby she sang.

I am my mother’s last song of love,
the gift she gave to my father
on his marriage to the childless woman.

I am my mother’s lost lullaby and
I never imagined how much it must
have hurt to see her child go.

I am my mother’s song, rooted in a
distant world, the music she hears no more,
music she misses in her old age.

I am my mother’s last song, and
she may wonder now
where is that child-like music of my heart,
where has my child gone?
MICHAEL KOHN

A Star, Falling

I

Sterile blade, open the vein,
While I look the other way.

Stunning pain! And then the burst
Of rosy warmth, blooming about me
In the lukewarm water of the porcelain tub,
Swiftly losing heat in the autumn of the day.

Now sleeps the crimson limb, and soon my drowsy head.
Dull somnolence dissolves amid the smoldering dusk,
A dream of shimmering Rome, a pitiless bridge of stone,
That straddles the Tiber luminous, at idle eventide.

II

Here lies not the noblest Roman of them all,
How my grief ran over at my eyes!
Desiccated. I bore too great a mind, a burden.
My pride! I would not go bound to Rome, a bondman.

And I upon the verdant plain of Philippi,
The last of all Romans' blood before me, vanquished.
It pleased my country to need my death, and so I gave it,
Deceived. No worthier than the dust are we.

III

O, daughter of Cato! Dear to me as the ruddy drops
That leave my sad limbs— how noble, how seasoned!
Shall you never more commit your weak condition
To my raw cold embrace, my stoic disposition?

Shall we meet in twinkling constellations?
Secret sharers, glowing frozen, against the indigo heavens?
Come gently to me in death; let fall my lofty guard.
Come, come, peaceful death. Night hangs upon mine eyes.

IV

My sanguine water has lost its warmth, feeble heart still drinking.
Poor numb limbs cannot stir, languid eyelids sinking.
Winter's icy light darkening the room. My life's last calling,
Weary eyes drift heavenward, through the window, to a star, falling.
The Promise

In an age that has been long forgotten by time, at a place that no longer exists, there was an intricate balance amongst the dead, the everlasting, and living. The dead were beings that had at one time been members of the living race - no one lived forever. Once an individual's life force and body had been separated, he or she was considered dead. The dead dwelled in a place the living referred to only as "below." The living and dead existed on these separate planes, unable to communicate with one another, not that this small fact was significant. The living knew that once their life forces left their bodies, they would be reunited with loved ones. It was only a matter of time.

The everlasting consisted of beings that had always existed, they had never been born and they would never die. They were similar to gods and goddesses, except for the fact that they were not worshipped. Their habitat was referred to as "above." Each member of the everlasting race had a particular power, using these powers to affect the living. They had the unique ability of being able to physically move amongst all the realms.

The living were aware of the everlasting, and spoke of them often. Their lives consisted of in intricate blend of the everlasting's interference and their own freedom - a combination of fate and free choice. The living felt their freedom was precious, and were grateful that the everlasting allowed them such an honor. Although it was never clear to the living which parts of their lives had been fated, and which had been their own doing, they encouraged each other to use their power of choice whenever possible.

There was a woman, one of the living, who was known for the rare quality of possessing both inner and outer beauty. Usually the living were born with one or the other - it was rare to find someone who was blessed with both, or cursed with neither. It was her habit to swim in the clear, bottomless lake at the height of the day. There was no shade in this place, so this was a preferred method of cooling off, although this woman always did so alone. One day as walked along the soft green grass, a man joined her. She was surprised, but not angry. Her life had been a lonely one, as women and men alike were intimidated by her. Many men secretly admired her from afar, but as none of them bore her kind of beauty, they felt unworthy of her.

This man had gathered his courage for weeks before attempting to approach her. She was very shy, unaccustomed to speaking to strangers, so it was up to him to fill the silence with words. He told her who he was, what he did, and what his
Loneliness had once again become a part of the woman's life, but she bore it well. By the time they reached the lake, she was beginning to relax a little. They spent the rest of the day laughing, splashing, and enjoying each other's company. By the time the sky light was growing dim, the woman had fallen in love with her suitor.

It wasn't long before the two had decided to become life partners. They spent many happy years together. Unfortunately, it became apparent that the man's life force would be leaving his body much sooner than the woman's. Although an unusual request, the man asked the woman to promise him that she wouldn't become involved with anyone else. The woman readily agreed to give him her word. She didn't want anyone else. Besides, it had taken such a long time for one person to talk to her, she didn't think that another would during their brief time apart.

The time finally came for his life force to go below. Loneliness had once again become a part of the woman's life, but she bore it well. It was a bit more difficult now that she knew what it was like to have companionship. After a few years, she was once again accustomed to being alone. Little did she know that this would soon change - an everlasting had been watching her from above. He was thoroughly captivated by her. He was well aware of her promise to remain faithful to her life partner, but he didn't care. He wanted to make her his.

The seduction began subtly. He started "accidentally" running into her during her daily walk. She found herself attracted to this stranger. As an everlasting, he was incredibly handsome, and she had never met anyone with an appearance equal to her own. But she resisted the temptation to get involved with him. She hadn't stopped loving her husband, and certainly hadn't forgotten her promise to him. However, she reasoned that he wouldn't have wanted her to spend the rest of her time alive by herself. She decided that it would be acceptable to become friends with this stranger, as long as their relationship didn't go any further than that.

The woman resisted the everlasting's attempts at intimacy for many months while he tried everything he could think of. He had no intention of giving up, however, and eventually the woman welcomed him to her bed. It was never clear whether this decision was one of free will, or if the woman's choice had been a product of fate. Either way, the damage was done. She had broken her promise. Guilt was with her at all times, but the satisfaction of having a companion overpowered this feeling.
Meanwhile, the man's life force was below with the other dead. He missed the woman greatly, but found solace in others who were in similar situations. He made many friends in his new environment, including an everlasting who enjoyed visiting below. He often spoke to the everlasting about his concern for his still living wife. He explained her extraordinary beauty of the woman, and the fact that he had been her only friend. The man was worried that she was all alone once again. The everlasting did not like to see his friend in pain, and decided to check on the man's wife for him. This everlasting was the one to discover the woman's unfaithfulness.

Out of respect for his friend, the everlasting brought the matter before the high council above, demanding justice. The group of wise everlasting agreed that the woman should be punished for her infidelity. They also decided that the everlasting in question should face some kind of discipline as well, though his should be less severe. A representative appeared in front of the couple with the ruling the next day, their sentences to be administered immediately.

The woman's form was changed in accordance to the everlasting's instructions. She became much taller, grew a rough brownish trunk that thinned out into branches and twigs on top and roots on the bottom. She could no longer move or speak. The everlasting was confined to above for eternity, tortured by the fact that he could no longer be with the woman, though he could still see her.

The man was told of the events and wept at the news. He could have forgiven the woman, given time, but now he was cursed with the fact that he would never see her again. The woman, who was now what people in this time and place would call a tree, still lives, torn between her two companions. The beauty of her leaves still tempts the everlasting above, whether they are a bright green or blazing reds, oranges, and yellows. The living enjoyed this new creation, which provided shade during the hot days, something that they hadn't the benefit of before. But to this day, on the cold bleak days that come as the cycle of weather changes, the living look at the tree in pity. Her leafless lacy fingers gracefully reaching for the everlasting above, and her thick knotted roots yearning for the man below.
RUDY BAEZ

Woman

You are a creature of God,
A child from the Man above.
But you hide behind the disguise of mankind
And refuse to reveal your naturalness.
If God had intended to shelter our bodies by artificial means,
Then with clothing we would have been born.
So release yourself and expose your flesh.
Intoxicate me with the nakedness of your anatomy.
Give me the vision of the natural beauty you possess.
Allow my passionate drunkenness take this infinite journey.
Permit me this religious view of ecstasy and I will forever be yours.
Let me taste your fruit and I’ll give you my soul.
I can feel the blood rush within me as my member begins to stiffen.
In due time I will explode.
And like a volcano I will erupt.
Grant me permission to set free the pure ashes of human life
And I will send the fiery creamy liquid of my body
Within your pure, innocent, untouched flesh.
You will forever be stained by my powerful mark.
And I will be your eternal slave.
By Marilus Rodriguez

WALTER CLARK
Nature's Fury

White dust upon black asphalt…
Just another day in the life
Of a guy named Walt.
Black ice is soon too form…
The main mission is to get inside
And stay warm.
The weather looks like it'll never stop
Just like a perfect storm.
Rock salt hits the ground
Just making a grainy sound.
The earth is getting blanketed so fast
That it will never be found.
Cars zoom on the streets…
Like some steel greyhounds
Drivers not worried about
If they skid all the way through town
The sky looks like it is shedding frozen tears…
The air has not felt this calm in a few years
All you can hear is the faint whistle of the breeze
Just cold enough
That your ears are liable to freeze
But you are a part of nature
So you just say, Oh Please.
MEGHAN TIERNEY

The Fall

In autumn
the leaves give up their fight
and let go with a sigh.
Fallen soldiers,
casualties of cool winds bearing change.
They touch the earth silently,
dignified and beautiful.

In years past,
I walked the autumn streets
gathering leaves.
They were painted in the colors of the sunset,
brighter than any of my Crayola daydreams.
I lay among the beautiful dead
in fields of fading green grass.
My heart beat a peaceful funereal march.
I imagined myself a leaf,
the frost gradually sipping my color,
my soul slipping away.
The leaves and I -
grey winter corpses.

Now, I sweep the silent sun-kissed souls
into a neat pile of radiant colors.
Fill my starved eyes.
The mound is a kaleidoscope facing the past,
illuminated by an urge that has never burned out.
I want to rest with the leaves once more.
The intangible rod of maturity and poise
prevents me.

"It is silly to mourn for leaves,"
admonishes my mind.
My heart weeps in response,
"Our soul was once able to speak without shame."

I enter my home
like a sigh.
A bright orange soldier
clings to his sepia bed in my hair,
silently speaking my secret,
wordlessly betraying my fall.
Poem One

The chain around my heart
was made up of ice;
you tried to torch it
but it laughed at you twice.
So you took the long route
and warmed it up,
and it slowly melted
right into your cup.
You then drank it swiftly
using its powers for you,
Next thing to happen
we were through.
Now I search for the strength
to build a new chain,
to repel love, affection,
and most of all pain.
I’ll do what I must
for as long as it takes,
because life becomes a struggle
when your heart constantly aches.
RUDY BAEZ

Walking Alone...

Walking alone at night through the deserted streets of the Naked City
My motions stray as if in agony.
And my life seems to be coming to an end.
What else is out there for me to see that I haven't yet seen?
What else is out there for me to experience that I have yet to experience?
Life.
Life...Nothing.
Does it matter?
I've been walking alone all my life
So why should I stop now?
Why should I try to find someone, something?
Somehow?
Why?...Why now?

Walking alone at night in the mist of darkness in the realm of the City of Lights
Memories flow through the emptiness I feel inside my body.
And my soul is pained by the horrors
That I see.
Why shouldn't I give up?
Why should I try?
There is no me.
No one cares, everyone lies.
Why?
I don't know.
So I'll just keep on walking; alone
I'll just keep on contemplating; alone
There is no me.

Walking alone at night through the domain of the mysteries of the City that never sleeps
I see all that should be and all that should not be.
And I am terrified to death
That this night will be my last.
Why shouldn't it be?
Why should I live when everyone is dying...
Of aids, of cancer, of LONELINESS:
The innocent, the damned, the CHILDREN?
Shouldn't I suffer like the rest?
I am no better than you,
Or the lonely child who's abused by his mother
Or the bum sleeping on the stoop in front of my home.
Who am I?...No one.

Walking alone at night as I see the misery of the forsaken City of Dreams
That fills our minds with false illusions
That destroys our innocence and takes our souls.
And you ask why do I feel this way?
Because it’s the truth.
The truth that you and me and everyone refuses to admit.
We are deceived by the wickedness of life
And manipulated by the exterior glamour
That attracts us to the evil dimensions of our world.
So why should I allow this?
Why should I live?
I don’t. I don’t live;
Not anymore.
KAFKA KLATCH

"A REGULAR AT THE EXISTENTIAL CAFE"

FRANZ KAFKA!
IF YOU EAT
ONE MORE
CHOCOLATE
COVERED
ROACH...
YOU'LL TURN
INTO ONE....
!!!

By Shashi Ishai
DOROTHY RUDY

Has Anyone Noticed?

Earth is shrinking
under its people.
Children are dying
in the deserts man
has made.

Whispering small hands
are skeletoned translucent
around polluted dust;
while the media poisons souls
in tedium so deadly
that boredom rules
when blood filled
horror shows.
L.L.C.

Eros & Arson

It’s not that I doubt you.
It’s just that I know you—
and I know me.

As surely as a lit match and gasoline ignite furious infernos,
you and I would inflame impossible passions.
We would scorch each other’s flesh,
and our souls would suffocate
as we suck the air out of each other’s breath.

Oh, yes; I do love you.
And yes, I know that you love me—
but our love is the mother of ashes.

Such a combustible coupling would only smolder with enmity
and then blaze to a euphoric, erotic death.
Yes, euphoric.
Yes, erotic.
But death none-the-less.
BRIAN HALL
Manuscript Fifty-Three

It has been another week of silence. Nobody has visited or called me and that is how I want it to be next week also. I do not know how long I will continue this behavior since I do not have any desire to communicate with others. Eight weeks ago I abandoned the rest of my house and moved into the garage and sold my car, so it is spacious and provides enough room so that I can designate certain areas and corners for specific purposes' and furniture. Aside from my bed the garage has no other furniture. It is twenty-five feet by fifteen feet and approximately eight feet high. A few days before committing to my asceticism I notified a few friends that I would not be in town for several months, giving each one a different reason for my absence. They showed no concern for my so-called departure.

My intellectual sustenance in here depends on my fifty-three-book library, which consists of all my unpublished manuscripts. Perhaps I should simply say my fifty-three books, and not library, because it is not quite as organized as a library. But I still wrote them whether they are scattered or organized, so their placement does not matter much to me and neither does the fact that they are unpublished. Even though they randomly sit throughout the garage I know the exact placement of each book from wall to wall. If I was to close my eyes I could describe the position and placement of each which makes them as organized as a library for me.

My bed rests opposite the garage door and occupies little space. As I said it is the only piece of furniture in the garage so I do not have much visual stimulation, but I do not mind staring at the floor or the walls. I have discerned many qualities of these walls others may just overlook, as I have come to appreciate their function in forming this garage. In examining the walls they appear to be around thirty years old made of cinder block painted white with a rough and impenetrable exterior lacking the vitality and freshness found in many newly built garage walls.

They have an extensive amount of surface damage, such as scratches, small holes, peeling paint - which in some areas reveals a brown that was painted underneath - numerous hooks and nails, and semi repaired blocks that suffered more damage than others. These walls are the only means to exclude me from the outside. A year ago I decided to resurface the garage floor with white Linoleum to liven the atmosphere and right now it seems to be doing just that, creating an ultra brightness by reflecting the light emitted by the two fluorescent tubes above. Although there are several scuff marks from my shoes and dents and scratches
from things that have been dropped, these are unimportant and barely noticeable and do not detract from the floor's pleasantness.

My bed sits on a sturdy wooden frame with six inches of space between the floor and the frame, which would serve as good storage space if I wanted to hide something away. I sleep with a fitted sheet and a flat sheet and one pillow. I have two more sheets and four pillowcases placed between the mattress and the box spring which are enough to last me fourteen months or so, or maybe three years depending on how often I change them. But I rarely change my sheets, in fact I have not changed them since I left the house and I probably will not make use of the others at all.

Fifty-two books surround me as I rest in my bed on my stomach with the fifty-third book opened up in front of me. I plan to read it as soon as I finish writing in it. I glance in the corner of the room where five books sit in a pile. The topmost book is seven hundred twenty pages and is probably one of my worst written books in that its subject matter is not as scholarly as the four others are. The topmost book carries a bright red jacket that I designed with gold lettering. Along the top part of the cover reads, *The Brilliant National Best Seller*, and the title reads, *The Infinite Vacuum of Literature*, and a few inches below that reads, Winston G. Ingram, and at the bottom left corner reads, W.G. Ingram Publishing. I can remember the first sentence in this book, "There is no form of art that can escape itself before it is taken through infinite possibilities without any negation of its purpose and meaning, and this journey through infinitude is not possible. Only in creating a style of writing in a higher dimension can we escape this perpetual vacuum." This principle seems ambitious, but it is not quite clear what my intention was at that time. In fact, it was written some time ago so much of the theory and its principles are unknown to me and I would have to revisit the book to completely comprehend this statement.

As I lay on my stomach in bed writing in my book I hear a man and a woman outside conversing. The voices are indecipherable, but sound louder and louder, as if they are on my property approaching either the garage or the front door. They must have the wrong address or may have been misdirected. What else would compel them to arrive here? I remain still. I hear keys rattling and listen as the front door to my house is opened and then shut seconds later. I sit up in my bed and wonder who these people are and what business they have in my house. The voices stop, but I hear their footsteps as they pace inside my house. There is
nothing I can do about this in the garage. I resume writing in my book. I write the first sentence, which reads, “It has been another week of silence.”
ALEX LUY

The Lost

Words that have to be said are lost between maybes,
Symphonies just like heaven quiet down and slowly fade away,
All the news sides away from what is true,
The world can take bits of my soul, just to dance
It takes two to dance, which can make the remains just dull,
Sleep away the days and dream away the nights, but you do remain in the same place.
There’s no fire escape, but the regrets that came with your skin, are just sins that you can’t get enough of,
The unforbidden fruit with the bright flower you couldn’t resist,
Feelings like these come from people that Jesus couldn’t save,
But everyone’s soul goes so much higher than the sky above,
There will be no more remorse when those actions come, because they will sure become.
MEGHAN TIERNEY
Barely There

I was barely tall enough to see over the top of the table,
when I saw Poppy drink his corn flakes in his coffee.
Daddy said it had to do with having been in the army.
Soldiers did it to save time, or to create fewer dirty dishes,
or something like that.
I wasn't permitted coffee, or to ask my grandfather questions.
I never asked Poppy about the corn flakes in his coffee.
I did learn that corn flakes are not good in orange juice.

Poppy knew how to crack walnuts just so,
And never asked why I wanted the perfect half shells.
He knew that things that are important can be without reason.

I barely paid attention as Poppy showed me his trains,
perfect little models that performed little tricks.
Silently, I wished for my grandfather to leave the room,
so I could press all the buttons and blow the whistle.
I wanted to make the cows climb aboard and the logs roll.
And while I was being daring, I would touch the Mets man,
the little statue Poppy turned to the wall when the Mets lost a game.
I wanted to touch Poppy's toys, because it was forbidden.

I could barely believe my father used such a word
to describe my Poppy. Poppy, with flashing, onyx eyes.
Alzheimer's?
It was like a lie, something intrusive and dirty.
Poppy had simply forgotten his ATM pin number,
had merely lapsed on my name, and his wife's.
Poppy was just confused, or weary from sitting at home.
There had to be more hope than Alzheimer's implied.
I glared at Daddy through the thick rings of smoke
my grandmother spewed across the table.

Poppy never noticed when Grandmother slipped me
wrinkled dollar bills beneath the dinner table.
When Grandmother lost her sight, he upgraded me to Fives.

I barely heard my grandmother's hoarse voice
when she spoke to me on the phone that morning.
I was pressing a shirt absentmindedly, but listening intently.
We chatted about Easter, and where I might go to school,
and Grandmother coughed as she laughed.
Poppy had been sitting beside her when he seized the phone
from her frail hands, and spoke in an urgent whisper.
"Meghan," he said, in a rare moment of lucidity,
"I love you."

I was barely strong enough to push my grandfather,
in his wheelchair, towards the casket that held his wife.
Poppy had not recognized his own children,
or the nurse he had lived with for close to a year.
Many days. Poppy could not remember enough words to speak.
Now, he reached for his wife, whom he had not seen in six weeks.
He held her hand, and he wept, and he whispered to me,
"Where do you think they go?"

Poppy could remember the Italian songs he sang as a child,
and serenaded my mother to distract her,
while he undid the brakes on his wheelchair.

I was barely able to speak, choking back tears,
as I leaned over my grandfather's bed and held his hand.
He had never been so tiny, so pale and still.
"Poppy, it's Meghan," I whispered.
He remained motionless and silent.
"I brought you some corn flakes for your coffee."
Poppy lay limp, barely breathing.
"I have a sweet boyfriend, and he loves trains, like you."
My grandfather did not open his eyes.
I swallowed hard. "But, he's a bit of a Yankees fan."
Somewhere, deep in his throat, Poppy grunted,
and I was exultant.
STEVEN CHUNG
Eight Ways of Looking at a Stream

1
Among the somber pines,
The only moving thing
Was the golden stream.

2
Thirteen blackbirds land on a tree.
Thirteen blackbirds fall from a branch.
Fourteen white doves emerge from the stream.

3
Man's gold is useless.
Nature's gold is life.
The night's gold is everlasting.

4
Icicles cling desperately to the pines.
Shadows long forgotten wander through the snow,
Lost forever, knowing not where to go.
A dim light shines upon the frozen world.

5
The fool searches for the river of dreams.
The wise man builds on dreams of rivers.

6
As the stream flowed in an aura of enchanting light,
Even the lovely roses turned to witness its majestic might.
Mankind has crushed the roses of innocence with its hand.
The stream has turned black; cold is the land.

7
The stream is blue.
I feel blue.

8
We all live in the ocean.
But we must not forget we all started in the stream.