





Injury to insult

Andrew Ban

The only time i insult someone is when
I get insulted that's why you should
Add injury to an insult
You have to stand up for yourself
When you insult them
Make sure to injure them as well
And don't just minorly injure them
Permanently damage them
So they don't have to come to school
So that they don't have to all this nasty homework
I wish I don't have to come to school anyways
I'm not sure about you
But personally i was taught to never take any disrespect from anyone
Me personally i would have to add injury to insult



unraveling

Sigrid Kim

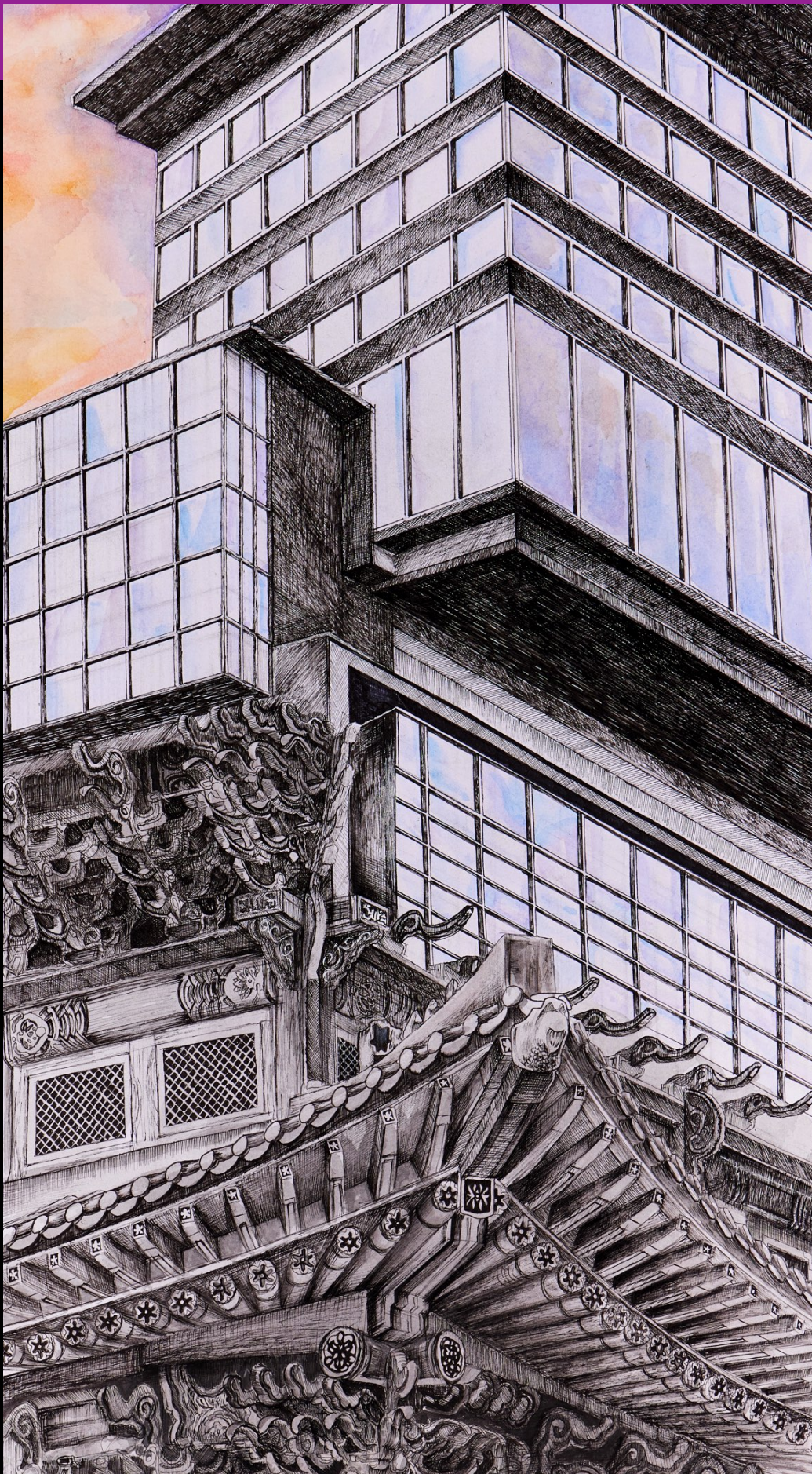
pick me up, put me in my place,
as i watch the dance of shadows
on a screen, a bustling square,
people drift like leaves in the wind,
each with a story stitched in fabric,
yet here i am, unmoving, sprawled,
a teetering stack of selves—
the window blocked, i swear i am clean,
just tired, just waiting.

i see them—a symphony of strangers,
they glide, they linger, they laugh,
but their joy feels like static,
distanced by glass and circuits,
while i am a pile of me's,
wrinkled in thought,
wondering how to pair my lives
with the rhythm of their steps.

but that's not really how i feel,
is it? if i level with you,
i've spent ages on this floor—
three hours, yes, but also an eternity,
where my friends saw through the pixels,
and i feared they wouldn't like what they found,
if only they'd lean closer
to see the mess of my heart.

each face in the square spins a tale,
but here, i sit—
both present and distant,
each pulse a reminder
that i am tethered by my own stillness,
as their lives weave around the frame,
and i ponder what remains hidden,
the unsaid, the unshown, the unseen.

and what of the implosion
if they turn back to see me,
each self whispering
in the silent chaos?
as the world moves on,
the distance stretches like a sigh—
the line between us thin as thread,
fragile,
waiting for connection
or a gentle unthreading



The Tank

Olivia Park

The mint-painted walls peel
And flower with Expo marker
Like fish, we flood the hallways
Schools of puny power
The tank runs out of oxygen,
And we float up for gasps of air
But gills are meant for water

Shedding Non-existent Tears

Austin Chung

Supposedly, an everyday morning
the same repetitive routine
Wake up, then take a cup
pour a glass of milk for the morning

It was no special action
just my hand sped too far
but once it started, it never stopped falling
till the glass lay flat on the table

the ringing bell constricted my heart
cause no matter what, I could only have
one cup of milk for every morning
nothing less, and nothing more

I look upon the white liquid
finding crevices on the wooden floor
A forgiving voice whispers in my head
it was bound to happen someday

but the more I stared at the mess I made
the greater wider the hole in my stomach became
so with a disappointed sigh, I wiped the mess
and left with just an empty stomach

Second Chances

Olivia Park

I've gotten, I know,
Another thousand chances.
But on most days I breathe better,
I'm still holding on for life.
Sometimes God should give us more time.



Helen Koh!

Sean Kim

Hey, Helen Koh!
From the Ghetto!
Were the daily shouts
From the school's crowd

Helen Koh an immigrant
Feared mockery was imminent
Her accent mimicked
And her dressed stripped

Helen Koh an orphan
Was aware she had no fortune
Her schoolback completely cracked
Shoes colored in sharpie black

She had vivid creativity
To escape her negativity
Diary and sketchbook were her friends
They showed her she was not at life's ends

Animals and dolls she whispered to
To explore and learn something new
She considered herself a mother
And a benevolent older sister

Dreamed of becoming pediatrician
A further path from her current position
Worked and studied despite poor mental health
Who would have thought she would ever climb to wealth

Though bullied and abused
With her body completely bruised
It seemed her dream some might say came true
As she got accepted to a university for the few

Her dream was close it seemed
But not everything is what you dreamed
The same misery there still was
Problems that would hold her jaws

Her friend she thought she could trust
Turned out he was just there to lust
Panicked and stressed as she was expecting
Realized soon she'd have to go through ejecting

Challenge it was being impoverished
But world improvement was what she cherished
Corruption and discrimination lies anywhere
A matter of fact that you cannot compare

Life of Helen Koh so brief
After all her agony and grief
Her body drenched down the Han
Now her story has no denouement



Lot

Jin-Woo Ahn

Lot of people have had
Own, exceptional, uncommon thing but
The eye is empty though.

If I view my eye,
Well, I cannot think of
Lot of jewel of mine.

But “lot,” not main now.
The main thing became, actually,
The fact that I know.

I find the view enjoyable.
Then what have led me
To this? They locate next

To myself. My book, my
Pencil, my clothing and my

The Silence Between Frames

Vincent Bae

A sun rises, golden and relentless,
Stretching shadows across cracked earth,
Figures bend like reeds in a river,
Their hands, callous and trembling,
Shape bricks from sweat and sand.

A lash arcs through the air—
A line of shadow spitting the light.
There is only the quiver of their shoulders,
The twist of pain etched into their backs.

A child stumbles,
Tiny hands reaching for a stone
Too large to carry,
Yet no one can pause to save him.

On the river, boats glide
Like phantoms,
Carrying grain, or perhaps something heavier—
The weight of an empire borne on broken spines.

A mother clutches her child close,
Her lips pressed to his forehead,
The gesture a hymn,
A prayer written in a language of touch.
She moves with purpose, with determination,
Her shadow slipping beneath the reeds,
A promise hidden where no one can see.

The river flows on,
Carving paths of hope through despair.
In the silence, the world holds its breath,
Waiting for a song to rise,
From the voices of the unseen.



Heat that never fades

Jennifer Choi

Anger doesn't wake; it's already there,
waiting to be seen and ignited to life.

At breakfast, she bumps into Frustration
knocking over a glass of water, and
Anger surges, slamming the door.

At lunch, when Joy tentatively tries to
break through, bringing light to her heavy steps,
Anger waves off with a dismissive hand—

At dinner, Regret inevitably joins,
But the questions always come too late,
as they always do.

Anger doesn't fade; she merely rests,
knowing she'll rise again with the dawn.

I sit at a table, holding a cold glass of water.
I push the crumbs of the half-eaten toast
Footsteps approach, then stop—
But I keep my eye fixed on the edge,
saying nothing.

Haircut

Pei-Chen Ng

My eyes focus on the chaos around me of barbers slicing hair with their
ginormous scissors, cutting away as if their lives depended on it.
Some blow drying the most perfect blowout I've seen to others looking like
Dora

The overwhelming sounds all at once made me want to reconsider,
but my mom had her arm around me,
making me unable to move.
To the left of me,
the boss is at the corner of the desk,
rocking back and forth on his chair,
waiting for his next predator.
His eye meets mine,
and I knew I was stuck there for good.

The grinning Chinese man welcomed my footsteps
as I nervously walked in with my mother on my side
His wide smile looks like a mask to lure me in
(Except for the fact that my mom forced me).
Every tooth of his was fake,
as the old hard plastic from the smoke breaks,
was already yellowing.
The breath of his was putrid,
making me want to gag when he was near me.

I get told to sit on those cheap chairs
with the synthetic polyester covering
to hide the stains and germs it has collected.
(I bet it never gets washed.)
The loud clock ticks,
And with every minute passing by,
I wish this misery was over.
Waiting felt so long
until I hear
that it's my time
which is when I wished the wait was longer.

He pulls me to the chair
that is made up of a soft, cushiony material,
relieving the tenseness of my back and shoulders.
I am in front of a large mirror,
looking at the background behind me.
Hair all over the ground,
products, and styling tools

I show him the picture of what I want,
And he nods in agreement which scares me.



Decompose

Austin Chung

Sitting alone at my desk
my head resting on my arms
I close my eyes and isolate
the hum of air conditioning

The buzz transforms into cymbals of waves
crashing onto the grainy sand ashore
The sun radiates with exhausting heat
in the freezing water, my feet submerged
keeps my subconscious at bay

I take a moment to behold the scene
one I will never truly see
the bells signal class, and the seagulls
caw their goodbyes as my vision blurs
back to the disappointing scene I started from.

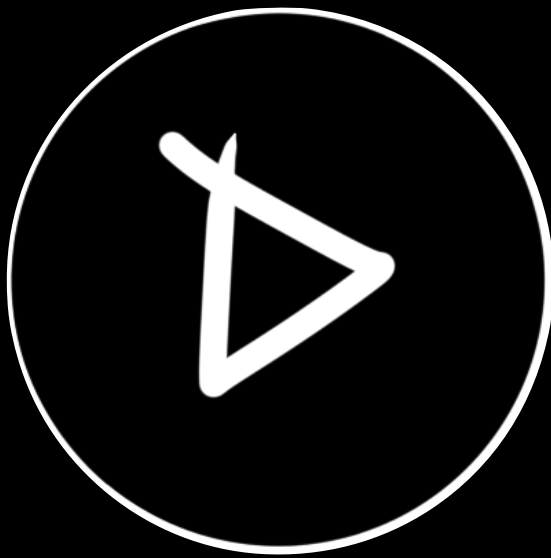
School

Andrew Ban

I wish that it ended. She keeps talking and talking. I'm not listening, who is? Nobody listening there, all sleeping. School is such a waste.

I wish that time stopped. I never thought it was fun. Schools should host more parties. We stayed there until 9. It ended in a flash.

I wish that he didn't. Throwing that beautiful ramen away. I'm inside the school starving. While he wastes that ramen. My poor beautiful delicious ramen.



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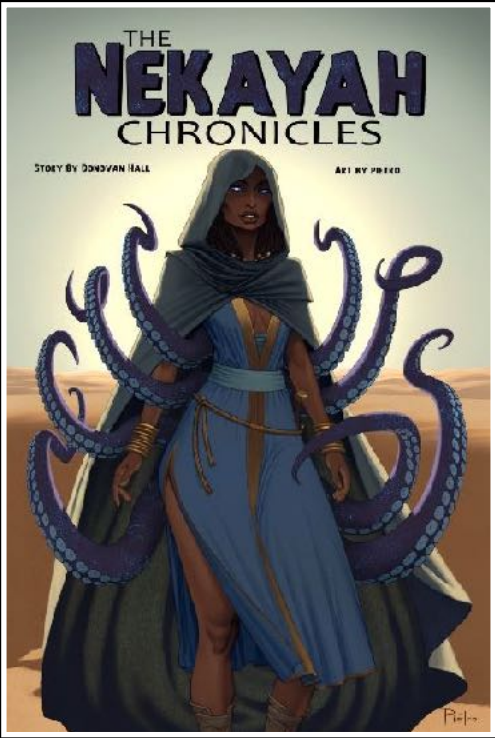
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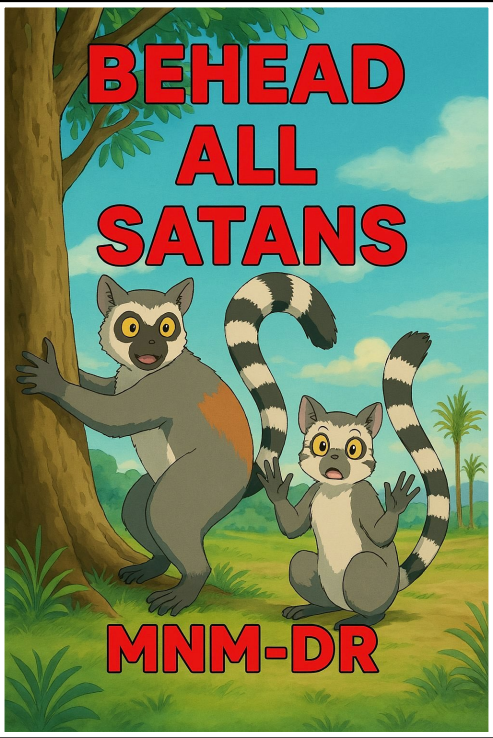
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