

The Mirror



Sixth Edition
Spring 2016

Foreword from the Editors-in-Chief

Sometimes we take what we have for granted. Walking along the beach, seeing a beautiful sunset, and possessing the ability to speak our minds may go unappreciated, but imagine life without these beautiful gifts. Not everyone has the gifts and rights that we possess. We hope that this edition of *The Mirror* will remind you to be thankful for what you have, to stand up for others who are less fortunate, and to speak up for what is right.

~Kelly Esparza and Sophia Fox

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privileged pieces

Eliana Kontokanis

(privilege: *noun* a rare opportunity that brings pleasure)

pastel privilege streams and soars over my morning skies
with an eclectic elegance, dropping dew-soaked kisses.
i feel privilege in my right rib cage,
wrapping around each rung of my skeleton,
until i am tied up in the tenderness and trust.
my chest beaming as bright as a star!
privilege unties this universe,
s p r e a d i n g out its fingers and p e e l i n g back the dark shades
of ebony embarrassment against these affections--
i will not let that fear affect me any longer!
the *thud thud thud* of my thunderstorm heart is turned to tapping
when you hand me your privilege,
mangled and murky but mighty as ever.
it melts the ice of my leftover rib cage and illuminates these oceans,
washing with waves of wonder instead of worry!
making nights less like unlit hallways and more like secret days,
we use each other's privileges to p e e l back our darkest corners,
one by one s c r a p i n g pieces of polluted paper from our poetry,
revealing the metaphors and meanings we meant to mention all along.
don't ask me to write you a melody because it will only come offkey--
i will hum to the beat beat beat of this hallow heart!
hoping my privilege hushes you to sleep at home in its hold,
my eyelashes draw new designs of life to be determined.
i will look into our unlit hallway like a privileged legacy,
whispering stories of us.

A Poem for My Sister

Anneke Zegers

We are the light in the darkness,
The hope the world demands,
For the world is a dark place.
It seeks to remain dark,
So it strikes against the light.
The light fades.
The light is gone.
But it is not dead, nor lost forever.
It simply bides its time,
Changing other dark worlds, and being changed,
Until it is ready to return again.
Shine on patiently, lights of the world.



“Xan”
Mia Stephens

Where Privilege Lands

Anneke Zegers

Some privilege stands where it's deserved,
While some goes on a whim,
Being passed by karmic birth,
Or gained by treacherous sin.

The truth of passing privilege is,
Though painful may it be,
It always one day finds a host
With proper qualities.

We watch privilege travel between
Inept and bungling hands,
So only we will recognize
When it settles where it lands.

True, there are the abusers,
But there also are the saints
Who take the power that they have
And use it for real change.

Privilege, in all honesty,
Goes by another name.
It is the power we possess
Pitted in a game.



“Shades”

Julia Narvaez



“Untitled”
Michaela Mark

Five Foot Seven

Bailey Yates

I stand no taller than she
Yet our height difference is astounding
Our feet are spread the same width apart
Our legs and torsos the same length
Our necks push our respective crowns
To the graying clouds overhead
Our hearts could beat
Our minds could think
Our lungs could fill
In tune with one another's
Yet still our height difference
Is astounding
Five feet
Seven inches
She and I
This spacious nothing
Feels like miles
I stand no taller than she
This one so like me
Yet *still* our height difference astounds me.

Courage

Kelly Esparza

“Rose,” a voice said, causing me to look up. It was Esmaria from the kitchen. She, along a few other women, had decided to come with me to pick the berries today. “How long have we been pickin’?” Sweat trickled down from her forehead, and it settled just above her brow. She wiped it away with the thick cotton of her sleeve.

Looking up and squinting at the sun, I thought for a minute. “Judging by the way the sun sits, I’d say it’s about noon,” I spoke, causing Esmaria to groan deeply as she dropped a couple of berries into one of the baskets.

“Rose! Rose!” A small, familiar voice exclaimed. Turning and pressing my calloused hand behind me to stretch my aching and stiff back, I saw Sophia running toward me at full speed. Once arriving to me, she tugged my arm, pulling me along as she broke off into another run toward the direction she had just come from.

“Whoa, Phia! What is it? I have to work,” I said, groaning as she continued to pull me.

“We’re gonna miss it. We gotta see the meeting with Master Jones,” she said as if this explained everything.

I gave her a confused look as she hurriedly pulled me into the mansion. Letting go of my hand, she raced through the maid quarters. Breathlessly, I ran after her. Turning to me suddenly, she pulled me into a small room and came to a halt once we were inside.

After catching my breath, I asked, “What is goin’ on, Phia?”

“I was in the maid quarters today when I heard one of the other maids say to another that the master was gonna have an important meeting today. Look through here,” the little ten-year-old girl explained and pulled out a tiny, rectangular block of wood, allowing us to see into the next room where the meeting was being held.

“And how does this concern us? I don’t think we’re supposed to be here,” I whispered, looking through the small space. Sophia held her index finger to her lips.

“Shush, will ya? Listen,” she hissed at me and looked straight ahead into the space.

Master Jones strolled to a podium in the small room and cleared his throat, causing the crowd of men before him to silence themselves. “Gentlemen, I thank you for coming forth on such short notice. I have called you all here today for the purposes of my daughter,” the master said, adjusting his glasses. “You see, my beloved daughter, Kismet, has vanished.” Chatter began to rise in the room. Sophia and I exchanged a stunned look at each other, and then we looked back through the small space. Sweat began to trickle down my spine, and the color drained from my face.

“Gentlemen, please quiet yourselves. We need to find her as soon as possible. I need one of you to find my darling daughter and bring her home to me,” Master Jones continued. Then, at that very moment, I felt as if something had sparked inside of me as I tore my eyes away from the small space and dashed out of the room.

“Rose...?” I heard Phia inquire behind me, but I did not

look back at her. Instead, I swung the door to the meeting room open and rushed inside.

“I’ll go,” I blurted out without even thinking. The crowd of men turned and stared at me full of shock, but I did not pay attention to them. I merely stared at the master. Master Jones locked eyes with me, first full of surprise, but then out of irritation.

“What is the meaning of this?” the man demanded, his voice echoing throughout the room.

“Sir, I said I will go. I will find Kismet. We are friends, and she is very special to me. I will not disappoint you,” I said confidently. Then as if I had just told a hilarious joke, the whole room burst into laughter.

“*Friends?* You’re just a servant girl. Don’t make me laugh. Go on. Return to your duties,” Master Jones scoffed and waved his hands dismissively at me.

“We *are* friends though. Sir, I am certain I could find her. If you would just let--” I began.

“I *said* to return to your duties. Are you disobeying *your* master?” the man demanded. I wanted to argue with him and tell him that it was not fair, but instead, I just nodded.

“Yes, sir,” I said courteously, taking a handful of my dress and curtsying before walking out. Phia called out to me as I stormed down the hallway, but I did not answer.

“What are ya doin’?” Phia asked as she flopped onto my small bed later that evening.

“Packin,” I said in an abrupt way.

“For what?” the little girl asked curiously.

“I’m gonna find Kismet,” I said and looked straight at Phia.

“B-But didn’t the master say you couldn’t?”

“Yes, he did. But that isn’t stopping me. The whole situation is unfair. I’m tired of people telling me that I can’t do things-whether it’s because of the color of my skin, my social status, or my gender. It’s time to fight back,” I answered confidently. “My friend’s life may be at risk, and I have to find her.”

“But what if ya get caught?” Phia pressed.

“Then I must face the consequences. But that will not stop me. I am fighting back, and I am doing what’s right. It just takes a little courage,” I said with determination and left my room, walking purposefully toward my new adventure.



“Torn”
Julia Narvaez

It Would be a Privilege to Hear Catherine Dugoni

To this world and all its fears,
We must walk on eggshells
To prevent more tears.
Speak your mind!
It's yours to say,
You only have today.
Offend some, indulge others.
Stay away from the voice that smothers.
You can not please everyone,
But don't stay mum.
Your voice is a right,
Not a privilege.
But only speak,
When your voice needs to be spoken.
Filter your thoughts
And share the ones worth tokens
Of intelligence and compassion.
An empty, passionless scream
Changes nothing.
A driven, eloquent deliverance
Can inspire those who
Are too afraid to use their own.
Speak, not to be heard,
But to hear the cries of others.
It's only through communication

That voices are awakened,
That thoughts cease to be thoughts,
And that people have the privilege
To know you for your words
And not your screams of frustration.
Silence no more;
Open the door
to conversation,
To understanding,
To hope where hope was muted.
My dear, it would be an honor to hear.

The Fight Goes On

Kelly Esparza

Segregation,
Discrimination,
Racism,
Inequality--
The fight for equality is on.

“I have a dream...” Martin Luther King, Jr. began.

“Get up, stand up, stand up for your rights,” Bob Marley declared.

“Be the change you wish to see in the world,” Mahatma Ghandi said.

“Love thy neighbor as thyself,” Jesus taught.
The fight goes on.

Our history unfolds before us like a book,
Illustrating those who have bravely spoken, taken a stand, and acted before us,

So we may follow their lead.

The fight goes on.

Freedom of speech,

Peace,

Empowerment,

Equality--

The fight goes on.

New rights are gained, but problems still exist,
So now what?
Do we remain silent? No, we take a stand.
The fight for what's right never ends.



“Untitled”
Michaela Mark

Mistakes

Catherine Dugoni

We take our mistakes for granted,
Fearing that we are lesser for having committed them.
But can we not see that to be flawed
Is to grow, that to have fallen down
Is to rise higher than before?
It is a privilege to correct our wrongdoings,
To learn from our mistakes,
To better ourselves by learning from the past.
To fail is to be a step closer to achievement.
To learn is to know that you aren't the same person that you
were before--
And in doing so, we can find the beauty in our flaws.

Tides

Katarina Fernandez

“Katarina Fernandez?”

Jolted out of my novel’s imaginary world, I look up quickly, searching for the owner of the male voice. When I see the doctor hovering just outside of the door that separates the waiting room and the maze of offices, I slide my worn bookmark into place and stand, my hands instinctively smoothing my uniform skirt. My mom glances up from her phone and smiles encouragingly; we agreed that I would attend this appointment alone.

I take a deep breath in an unsuccessful attempt to calm my nerves and walk slowly towards the doctor who called my name. I’m standing in front of him too quickly.

“Katarina?” he asks, his voice quiet. It has a comforting depth to it, as if his voice was yarn that was spun to include a glimmering strand of tranquility that the rest of the world lacks.

“Yes,” I reply, nodding. That’s what happens when I’m nervous; I give double answers, afraid the first will be overlooked.

“Aaron Davis,” he introduces himself, offering his right hand. I shift my book to my left hand so I can shake it. He holds open the door so I can enter the labyrinth. I murmur my thanks, my head dipping as if I were bowing. Doubles again. There’s an awkward pause as I stand in the middle of the carpeted hallway, uncertain if I should proceed to the left or right.

“This way,” he tells us in his unique voice, leading me to the right. I follow him in silence. He’s different than I expected. His long grey hair is tied back neatly, and he wears a blue polo shirt.

But there's something about him that makes me feel that he is out of place in these hospital corridors, almost like he belongs somewhere else.

The door of his office is open, and he enters. I cross the threshold last, and my eyes take in the office that seems to perfectly match him. A window that takes up an entire wall is framed by blue and green curtains. A small couch and chair are crammed into a corner, children's toys spilling over from their wooden box and invading the rest of the office.

Another step, and I see that the wall above and around his desk is covered with posters of the ocean. But these posters don't have the word "breathe" written in cursive over a background of tan sand and fingers of white foam. These posters are wordless photographs of powerful blue-green waves, the sort of images that remind you why you are never supposed to turn your back on the ocean.

I sit down on the couch, and the questions begin. He asks me the questions I've heard dozens of times from dozens of professionals: how long I've been suffering from chronic migraines, the triggers, how it affects my daily life. I answer robotically, my responses worn from use.

Then he asks me a question that those dozens of professions have never voiced: "What have your migraines given you?"

I rack my mind for an answer, but nothing appears until the silent car ride home. My thoughts are usually a maze, a messy complexity that veils the rest of the world, but today I find them oddly quiet as I turn over his question. Images appear slowly like an advancing tide.

The quiet understanding when a classmate can't stop crying

because her head is throbbing.

The thankfulness for sight, the ability to walk, and the hundreds of other little things the rest of the world overlooks.

The knowledge of what it means to be avoided because others only see differences.

Looking out the car window as the world streams by, a revelation crashes like a wave on the sand, and I wonder for the first time if my medical condition is a privilege rather than a curse.



“The End”
Julia Narvaez