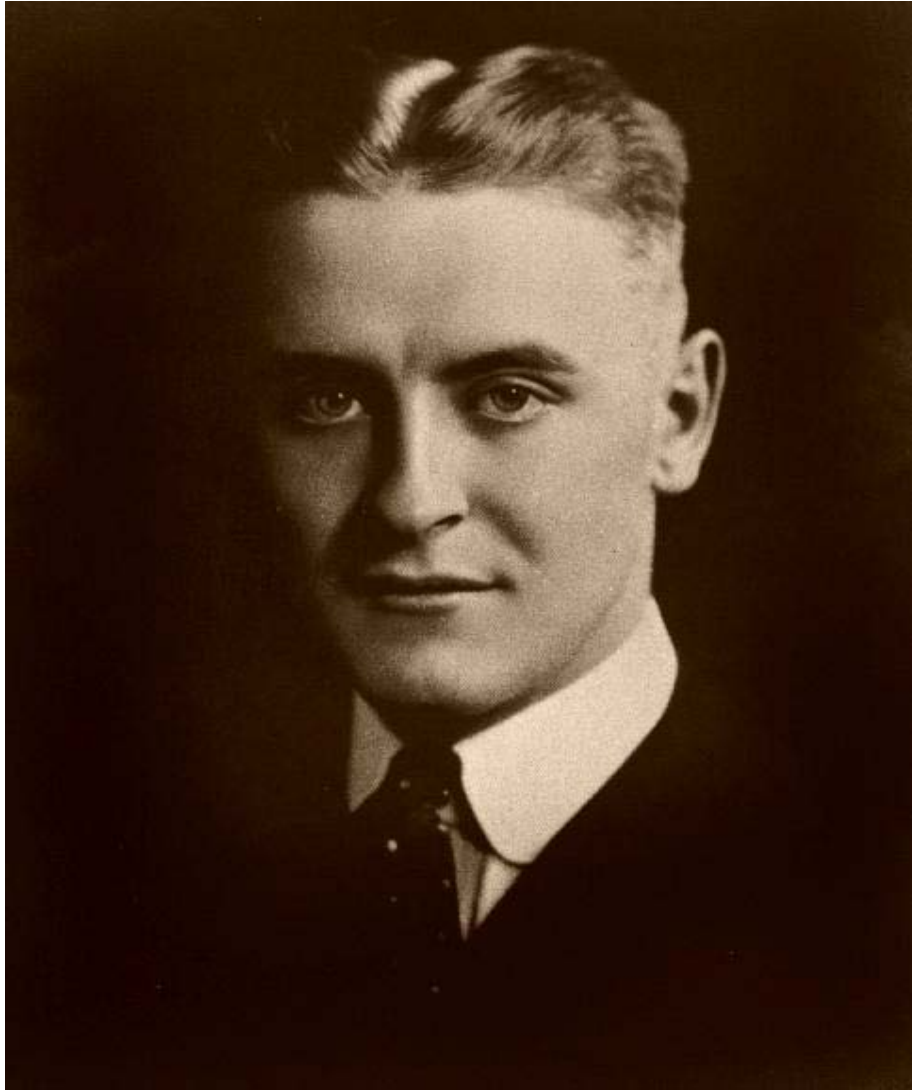


The Tenth Muse



*Science Park High School
2010 - 2011 Literary Magazine*

The Tenth Muse

"It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life...It understood you just as far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself."

-- F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

Club Advisor

Mr. Townsend

Student Editors

Jean-Carlos Arenas

Alexandra Melara

Marian Calle

The Tenth Muse is dedicated to
Mr. Townsend's 2010-2011
AP English Literature Students.

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The Beauty of Nature

By Daram Ramdin

The leaves on trees, the ever-growing buds,

The meadows green, the straightest river,

Great nature, unaffected by the floods,

You govern us all, the greatest giver.

Happiness unmatched, as you would dictate,

Frolicking animals, some here and there,

The balance of it can't be a mistake,

For the creation is without a care.

Necessary, though camouflaged you are,

The very essence of bliss through sight.

Human 'advancement' caused a feat bizarre;

The love of you today, not worth your might.

Alas, you have become a withered flower,

As we mortals witness with face dour.

Forever

By Jennifer Hayes

It is so strange how love can come this swift,

His mesmerizing eyes, his heart so vast.

He is not wrapped in ribbons, but a gift,

And feelings that I have will surely last.

When I first laid my eyes on him, I saw

That finally I found the one for me.

He is perfection and he has no flaws,

And to my heart, it's he who holds the key.

I never met someone like him before;

He knows the ways to make me feel complete.

His pleasing words are things that I adore,

And his pure, golden heart is just as sweet.

He is my world that's filled with happiness,

And feelings that I have are nothing less.

My Love for You

By Kevin Vasquez

From on her pedestal, I'll let her fall
To the cold hard ground where she once left me;
From her spotlight to me, I know she'll crawl
The zeal I feel will in turn set me free.
The tear in her eye I see falling down;
She looks at me, with eyes full of pain;
Puddles at her feet, I want the pain to drown,
Perhaps in those rivers filled with her rain.
Then I look past our past at the person
Standing before me, rather than behind,
Not feeling better, instead I worsen,
Instead of seeing, I have been so blind.
I think I see now, the person you are,
My love for you is constant as a star.

Eternal Love

By Monica Magalhaes

Walking through the garden, you bloom and shine;

Petals spread and my troubles fly away;

Bright red makes my thoughts tread out of line;

Tell me to leave you alone, I won't obey.

My own heart beats as your petals do burst,

But as the fall comes, you wither and die;

The ice all around, your red I do thirst;

I'm screaming, hoping you can hear my cry.

Then I see you growing in the sunset,

Loving you like I never have before;

Your cologne erases all my regret;

In this feeling, I live forever more.

No matter how many times you leave me,

My love for you will never go away.

Feast

By Karina Velastegui

Today is a day for all to take heed;
The rising sun excites only a few;
When appetites are given room to feed,
They swallow pounds of food until they spew.
I say this day I scorn, I vex, I hate,
The day arrives but for a common feast,
And one in which I'll not participate,
This fruitless feast that hides the foul beast.
So icy cold, so dry, so very bland,
The creature drowns in syrup, lying still,
Yet famished gluttons see it rich and grand,
This scrumptious game that pilgrims searched to kill.
But all participants will have their way
And never spare the turkey on this day.

What Life Will Be

By Gustavo Da Silva

I think from here to then and back again,
What life and all, it truly then will be;
My thoughts clouded with my sadness then
That thought should be chained and not set free.
Though only sixteen years, it's not so long,
I think every day about them all;
Sixteen years only, my mind is strong;
The more I think, the more I sense a fall.
Since God's creation, life's been in decline
With the fall of man, everything will end;
Nothing on earth is really yours or mine;
There is no point, because all is life's trend.
But with the end, everything starts anew;
How do we know if anything holds true?

Jamaica

By Danielle Peart

The trees are tall and dancing in the breeze;

The calming hot sun melts away your skin;

You hear sweet Caribbean sounds with ease;

The wonderful sea winds brush against your chin.

Your tongue dances with spicy jerk chicken;

All of your problems vanish like magic.

You will cry on the plane as you're leaving,

At least memories will make it less tragic.

The beaches are filled with heavenly waters,

The alluring nightlife has you grooving;

Leaving the festivities is torture,

To the reggae tune you can't help moving.

Leave your country do not put up a fight,

Jamaica's where everything is just right.

Love

By Angela Vidreiro

Even in the west, I watch how it grows,
This warmth comes along and wraps around me,
Humbly making friends from loathing foes,
It's loss more painful than any sting of bee.
This gives life to all things that have a dead soul,
Without it, a sense of things incomplete;
Its delicate touch fills up a hole,
Under its keen spell without a potion.
Yet, it allows you to make foolish choices,
Naïve, when in its presence, we can be,
It may leave us sometimes without voices,
Becoming an obsession and leaving debris.
So the question that remains, haunts us all:
Is love good or bad, need we build a wall?

A Thief in the Night

By Brionna Robinson

Every day that you do feel is perfect

Is a day that is closer to cold death.

It scares you to not take another breath;

It scares you not knowing what to expect.

Living every day might be your last,

Laughing, smiling, enjoying time with friends,

Hoping that every day time will extend,

And not take away memories of your past.

You start to feel like time is running out,

And you take the time to think about when

You know it'll happen soon, without a doubt,

When will it be that your life has to end?

You hope every day because you never,

Never want to leave this world forever.

Life

By Jagger Ferreira

To be dead is to be deprived of life,

No longer alive, not hello, but goodbye.

Twilight of your time, ending of your strife,

Taking your eternal place in the sky.

Loved ones around, remembering you,

Your good actions eclipsing the bad ones,

Don't want to be forgotten, trying to

Keep the legacy going through your sons.

My heart and soul in these lines do take flight,

In the poetic sky, alive I do stay.

Death is like a new moon shrouded in night,

Time brightens even the darkest of days.

A striking dusk becomes a breaking dawn,

And even after you die, you live on.

Love Lost

By Ashley Hemnarine

Winter's bound, for weather's predictable;
Your love is such, cold times always recur;
Predictable love's not invincible,
It's heartbreak plus mistakes, we just suffer.
Complained I never once did of your love,
Though distant, I think your feelings remained;
All dark clouds have silver linings above
Yet separation brings nothing but pain.
I sit and contemplate the stars above
When will my bad luck lead me to you?
Tired of these dark days poets write of
Love lost is common, ever loved is new.
Just have to be patient and wait for you,
My feelings remain, I hope yours do too.

Fighting Time

By Krishan Patel

It passes but do we even know,

It is irrelevant but important to most,

But if I close my eyes, I miss the show,

It determines if the destination is far or close.

Like an enemy in war, I battle this,

But without it, would precious earth be here?

If it did not stand, life is mostly peace and bliss.

It's the most important but never appears,

As it passes we all become tired and bleak,

In the midst of the army, I look and sigh.

There's no way to stop it, and if you try, you'll become weak.

As the battle rages on, time does fly.

Tick-tock, tick-tock, we see the enemy moves by,

I lose the fight and for this I cry.

Debate

By Thais Marquis

Debaters argue speeches so profound

We cannot dispute without a flow;

No fists, no curses, just the round;

When we fight for our causes, we glow.

Rounds are passion, the world in our hands now

To bring about change, I take the stand, here

This is real life; to the judges we don't bow;

The fire is building up, we have no fear.

Sometimes we will lose, others we will win.

Either way, we debaters don't give up,

Our aim, change the world, oppose worldly sins;

Ready for those break rounds, our close-up.

There's nothing that can stop us, not today,

This tricky battlefield will be our pay.

Moments

By Caroline De Freitas

The clock just ticks, it never takes a break;

If only I had control of the time.

I would rewind and fix every mistake,

But I can't so wasting time is a crime.

When you are younger, time isn't important,

But when you start caring, it flies by fast.

A real time machine would be brilliant

Because if I had one then time would last.

Sometimes I wish I could live forever,

That way I wouldn't always have to rush;

I wouldn't have to check the clock, ever,

And if someone rushed me, I could say hush.

But since that can't happen, I'm done waiting

For extra time when the current one's wasting.

Sonnet 451

By Kelvin Rivera

A fireman, I am a man of fire,
Of ash, of flames, of heat, and kerosene,
That uses these things to feed my desire;
It was a pleasure to burn everything.

5 A guy, I am no different from the rest
Who talk, and play, and watch, all the same way,
Because we can't have any uniqueness,
Who are all colored with the same dull gray.

10 A conformist, I do not dare to act
Against the government and all its laws,
To break the rules of my fireman pact,
Or hold a book in my compliant claws.

But when I saw that woman say, "Good-bye"¹,
This all changed, and I became a new Guy.

¹ In Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, an old woman makes her departure through suicide (Bradbury 39).

Changing Scenes

By Evelyn Diaz

A scorching, yellow face looks down upon me;
Delighted children running after
An ice cream truck.
Rays of sunshine seep through my curtains;
Spring has inevitably packed its bags, and with it
Leaving summer all alone.

New seeds of life restlessly peep through mother earth;
Streets filled with trees, and cherry blossoms
Inevitably suggesting that spring is in the air;
Restless days and nights of rain
As it get cooler, and snowflakes begin to fall.

I woke up early this morning,
I looked out the window and saw a blanket of white,
A silky, smooth sheet hovers over the ground,
Extending forever to see,
Bare branches reach out all over.

The air is getting colder
As the leaves change to shades of red and brown;
The winds strike powerful blows
As the night falls earlier,
I grasp my pillow tightly.

Abandoned

By Bhriana Smith

Birds are chirping and children playing.
The trees are very mature, so full of life,
And she smiles because she knows that though the end is so far away,
It is also so very near.
But for now, she can hide her worries behind a smile.

The trees silently weep as their leaves fall to the ground.
She could not help but feel glum;
The wind harshly whispers secrets about what is soon to come,
And as she always does, she smiles.

Everything is still.
The leaves have long bid goodbye;
The sun shines, though timidly,
And she is afraid.

She is afraid because she confided in summer, spring and autumn days,
But much like everything else, they have abandoned her.

Slowly she is overwhelmed by her misery,
To be forever buried in the silence of an answer.

Four Blessings

By Jennifer Castano

There is a new moon
And the sounds of robins publish the mark of this new coming.
Fall into spring, where new life begins;
Winds softly lie just as drunken butterflies conquer the meadows;
We will be awakened by a blossoming sun.

With healing summer heat,
Crowded beaches and the water glistening;
The sand between your toes only serves your peace and happiness.
Hearts beat with cheer, yet summer love has yet to come a-knocking.

The changing of various hues is a greeting to winter.
Haze and heat are replaced with a gentle wind;
Now at their calling, frantic squirrels make their rounds,
Such a glorious scenery is like an artist's canvas.

Deserted streets establish the turn of the season
And like Houdini, the sidewalks and lakes have vanished.

Calling, branches reach for warmth,
But they are only greeted by breath of winter.

Marian Calle

Mr. Townsend

AP English Literature

January 10, 2011

Comedy in *Hamlet*: A Social Critique

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* employs humor to effectively critique the social classes of his time. This is effectuated through the use of equivocation, word play, and exaggerated portrayals of the truth within the interactions between Hamlet and the Gravediggers, Osric, and Polonius.

Hamlet's interactions with the Gravediggers, which include instances of equivocation, are used to taunt both the Gravediggers, who are members of the peasantry, and Hamlet, a member of the aristocracy. In Act V, Scene I, the dialogue between Hamlet and a Gravedigger employs many instances of equivocation, such as when Prince Hamlet asks "upon what ground," for which the gravedigger replies "in Denmark." While this is obviously the literal answer, it is clearly not the one Hamlet was expecting. The Gravedigger has effectively taken advantage of the question presented by the prince in order to mock him, one of many instances in Shakespeare's works where the poor are shown as quick-witted. Conversely, criticism of the peasantry can be seen at the opening of Act V, Scene I. The play introduces "two clowns," implicating that the peasantry was ignorant or lacking in manners. When juxtaposing Prince Hamlet with the "clowns," one can see the stark difference in class and thus the inferiority of the gravediggers. These are instances in Act V where Shakespeare has effectively criticized both the peasantry and the aristocracy—but what about the classes in between?

Shakespeare introduces another character in Act V—Osric—to exaggeratedly portray the obsequious courtiers and thus to mock them. In a brief interaction with Hamlet, the fawning Osric is quick to change opinions in an effort to agree with Hamlet:

Osric: It is very hot.

Hamlet: No, believe me, 'tis very cold, the wind is northerly.

Osric: It is indifferent cold my lord, indeed.

Hamlet: But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

Osric: Exceedingly my lord, it is very sultry. (5. 2. 92-97)

Osric is capricious, becoming a symbol of the sycophantic courtiers of Shakespeare's time. This interaction is humorous for Hamlet is mocking Osric's inconsistent nature. Not long into the conversation, Horatio points out that "all [of Osric's] golden words are spent" (5. 2. 134). Osric uses flowery and flattering language designed to impress the prince at the start of their dialogue, but the prince and his friend Horatio soon realize that Osric does not know what he is saying; his language is as pretentious as he is. The character of Osric is incorporated in the play to exaggerate the portrayal of flattering, presumptuous courtiers whom Shakespeare presumably thought of as pathetic and insincere. However, Osric is not the only character in this social class that Shakespeare presents in a negative light.

Unbeknownst to Polonius, the father of Hamlet's love interest, he is being mocked during a conversation with Hamlet. When Polonius asks Hamlet what he is reading, Hamlet responds with the literal reply, "words, words, words" (2.2. 208). Reminiscent of the way the Gravediggers use equivocation to mock Hamlet, Hamlet uses equivocation to make fun of Polonius, a "tedious old fool" (2.2. 235). Hamlet is taking advantage of ambiguous language to tease the old man below his social standing. He uses humor yet again in the following lines:

Hamlet: Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here
that old men have grey beards, that their faces are
wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and
plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of
wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir,
though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet
I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for
yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab
you could go backward. (2.2. 212-220)

Prince Hamlet employs irony to mock the senility of Polonius, making him appear ridiculous and unflattering. He has effectively destroyed the image of this pretentious, self-proclaimed 'wise' old man, and therefore has also knocked down what the old man stands for—the sycophants eager to get in the good graces of the aristocracy.

The humor suggested in *Hamlet* begs the reader to examine the relationships between the characters: members of the peasantry, courtiers, and aristocracy. This way, the reader can acknowledge Shakespeare's evaluation of the social classes. Through the voice of the witty protagonist Hamlet, Shakespeare has created both a literary masterpiece as well as an effective social critique.

Alexandra Melara

Mr. Townsend

AP English Literature

March 11, 2011

Searching for Sanity, Searching for Meaning

For as long as man has been curious, he has searched for the meaning of life in his everyday actions, watching those around him and attempting to apply his observations to some preconceived notion about his purpose and adapting as his ideas and his environment change around him. In Dostoyevsky's Crime and Punishment, the main character Raskolnikov struggles to give purpose to his life as he deals with bouts of insanity, deep guilt and ultimately true redemption in order to atone for the actions he committed under an illusion of superiority.

Raskolnikov, deeply depressed and angry at the world around him, struggles to understand his violent emotions and ideas, believing himself to be a "superior man" and thus capable of overstepping the laws in order to achieve a higher purpose for his life. In succumbing to his anger and ideas of superiority, he commits a murder which he believes to be justified. Unfortunately, he finds that his impressions of supremacy were false and that he cannot deal with the ensuing guilt. In order to escape his reality and his terrible mistake, Raskolnikov falls into physical and mental illness, taking refuge in insanity and effectively removing any need for purpose in life.

Recovering from his stupor, Raskolnikov searches for meaning, yet again he must confront the horrible guilt that continues to haunt him. Attempting to escape his guilt and perhaps redeem himself, Raskolnikov begins to aid a poor family whose lives seem to be falling apart. He donates nearly all of his money to them and stays with the children as both parents pass

away. In aiding the family and becoming romantically involved with the family's eldest daughter Sonia, a sinner much like himself, Raskolnikov creates a temporary purpose for his life, once again distracting himself from the reality of his situation as he attempts to focus on his lover's guilt, even transferring his pain to her. Yet the guilt continues to haunt him, giving way to the paranoia and fear that grips his heart.

With the encouragement of Sonia, along with the pressure of his own fear and profound regret, Raskolnikov brings himself to confess his crime. With the help of Sonia, he convinces himself that he must confess in order to atone for his crime. Raskolnikov believes that in confessing, his anger and pain will decrease and that the punishment for the crime will be fulfilled. However, once again, he is incorrect. After being banished to Siberia, he feels the same pain and anger that weighed him down before. His sentiments of superiority continue to exist within him and his life once again has no purpose. Moreover, when he becomes physically ill, he realizes that Sonia has stood by him throughout his entire painful ordeal. Rather than sink deeper into illness and avoid finding meaning in life, he becomes healthy again and searches for Sonia. In loving her completely, Raskolnikov is able to cleanse his mind of his guilt and illusions, filling his heart with her love.

Raskolnikov acts on his ideas and presumptions of himself in order to give purpose to a life he feels has no meaning. However, in fully cleansing his mind and heart, Raskolnikov does not ultimately find meaning in life, but rather allows himself love and the opportunity to find purpose and contrition. At least, this is a step in the right direction.

Striking the Perfect Note

By Bhriana Smith

I love the theatre. In fact, I have always loved the theater. When I was a little girl, my mom would take me to see a Broadway show every single weekend. And there was nothing more riveting than to sit in the *front*.

But that has changed. Actually, a lot has changed. My father is a geologist and he constantly travels. I guess you can say that as a child, I moved a lot with my parents from upstate New York to Delaware to New Jersey to Long Island. So when my father told me that we were relocating, I was not shocked. That, however, changed the moment he told me that we were moving indefinitely to Berkley, California. Those names haunted me for many nights until we actually moved.

The move itself was not so bad. There were major changes in the weather. We moved in the beginning of December. Our new home is nice. It is cozy and has this warming aura surrounding it. It is also very roomy –there are five bedrooms and the only people living here are my mother, my father and me.

I have a skylight in my bedroom, which I have used as an escape from the rest of the bustling world in the middle of the night. There is also a dance studio in the basement (I forgot to say that I have been a ballerina since before I could walk). So, the house was serene enough to win me over. However, I can't say the same thing for my new school.

Berkley High: the school that is full of drama, drama and more drama. The school is so stereotypical, seriously. There are the cheerleaders, the “emos”, the computer nerds, the fashion “divas” and last, but never least, the jocks. I mean, you couldn’t forget them even if you *tried*. They are loud, obnoxious, heartless...did I mention obnoxious? Though, their leader is by far the worst.

Lucas Cook. Star of the school football team and eye candy to the entire girl population in school. To the school (and probably the world) he is a god. But to me, he is nothing more than a heartless prep that couldn’t keep a girlfriend longer than four minutes. My friend Ashley jokes about me eventually falling in love with him. Psh. Never!!!

I can’t explain it, but things have been weird lately. Everywhere I go Lucas just happens to be there. For example, yesterday I was walking toward my bus to go home and I saw him get on the same bus. I know that he lives close to my house, but he has a car. Everyday, he drives it to school. So why would he be on my bus? I didn’t bother questioning him about it. I haven’t said anything to him since I moved here up until that point, so why would this time make any difference?

“Azalia, do you mind teaching little Cindy some of what you know?” my mother told me the minute I came home from school.

“Is she Mrs. Maria’s daughter?” Mrs. Maria was my next-door neighbor and my mother’s good friend. She once told me that her parents are Italian, and that she moved to California when she was a small girl. I’ve been inside her house a couple of times before and I remembered that she told me she had a daughter.

“Sure, I don’t mind. Where and when do these lessons begin?”

My mother’s face lit up.

“Here and now!” she said with excitement clearly in her throat. Not even ten seconds after my mother’s overjoyed proclamation did the door bell ring, and in came Mrs. Maria holding hands with a little girl that was dressed in a frilly pink tutu.

“Azalia,” Mrs. Maria said as she entered through the door way. “This is Cindy...Cindy,” she looked down at her daughter who looked very afraid at the moment. “This is Azalia. She is going to be your teacher, so say hi.”

“Hi,” Cindy mumbled in the cutest voice I have ever heard. I looked at her with a warm smile. She was by far the most ADORABLE child I had ever seen!

“Well, I’ve got to get going. Your mother and I have a book club meeting to attend in less than an hour. I’ll see you later sweetie,” Mrs. Maria kissed Cindy on the head.

She turned to me, “Thanks a bunch ‘Zalia. I know you two are going to bond perfectly.” My mom kissed my hair. Both my mother and Mrs. Maria left, leaving Cindy and I standing awkwardly in the hall.

“You are going to be my student?” I tried to sound excited in order to make Cindy feel more comfortable, but my efforts were in vain. “You may not learn anything today, but I promise you that you *will* have fun,” and at that statement, Cindy began to smile. “Come with me.”

Once we were settled in the dance studio, Cindy really started to open up to me. I showed her how to fix her hair so that it wouldn’t be a nuisance when she danced and how to properly tie her flats. She may be only seven, but she is a *very* fast learner. We had spent over an hour making goofy noises, silly dance moves, and dancing properly, of course. My father walked in just when we were finishing our first session.

“Zali! Cindy! How are you lovely ladies doing on this fine evening? Have you any new moves to show me?” His voiced was slightly muffled at the end of his sentence due to my father’s horrible attempt at doing the robot. Poor little Cindy looked mortified.

“Dad, you are frightening Cindy!”

At the mention of her name, she looked up and unconsciously took two small steps towards me to lengthen the distance between her and my father.

My dad fixed his tie and fixed an apologetic look on his face that he directed towards Cindy -- “Sorry Kido” -- he cleared his throat. “Anyway... we were invited to have dinner at Cindy’s house tonight. Your mother said to get ready.”

“But I thought Mom and Mrs. Maria had a book club meeting.”

“They did...but they decided against it once they got there and decided to have a dinner party instead.”

“And just how many people are going to be there?” It’s not that I have anything against big gatherings. It’s just that if there are a lot of people, there is a high chance that I have to dress in semi-formal attire, which is something I don’t like to do.

“Hmm...” my father face seemed to be in deep thought. He then looked at me, “I’m not sure. But don’t worry about dressing formally. It’s a dinner party, not a ball. Unless you have someone you are trying to impress...”

“Don’t even finish that sentence.” Ugh, *fathers*. As I turned to go up to my room to change I thought about Cindy.

“Do you want me to take Cindy home?”

“You go get ready. I will walk her back over to her house.” Cindy looked at me with a small smile and spoke for the first time since she came to my house.

“Thank You Azalia. I had a lot of fun.” She had the most adorable voice I have ever heard...and she was missing her two front teeth.

“No problem kiddo. I will see you soon,” and at that moment, I ran out of the stairs and to my room to prepare myself.

I decided on wearing a black and red baby doll dress, black shorts and black flip flops with little red flowers. I put my hair up into a ponytail and let a few strands frame my face. Once I decided that I was presentable, I grabbed my sunglasses and walked out of the door.

My father waited for me at the front door. When he saw me he smiled and together we walked over to Mrs. Maria’s house. There was a cool, refreshing breeze. I saw the moon visibly in the sky, despite the time of day that it had been. My dad rung the door bell and not even twenty seconds later, Mrs. Marie answered the door. The aroma of breadsticks (yummy) smacked me in the face as soon as the door opened.

“Azalia! Doug! You’re here!” and she grabbed my hand and led me to the dining room where there were more people than I thought staring at me... great.

“Everyone!” Mrs. Maria said in an octave that I had no idea her voice could take. “This dinner party is a nice welcoming for Mr. and Mrs. Collins and their daughter, Azalia.”

I waved slightly as everyone say hello. I sat next to my dad and after the food was blessed we began to eat.

I have to admit, everything went smoothly. I met the Douglas's from up the street and the McDonalds that lived a few houses away from mine. Cindy showed me how to sing opera with water (which is *seriously* the second coolest thing since Hip Hop Harry) and her dog Minnie. The adults were all chatting nicely amongst themselves until someone mentioned the high school football team. That's when things started to get crazy.

Sid Cook was Lucas's (yes, the obnoxious prep from my school who just so happened to be present for this dinner party) father. He was talking to Mr. Douglas, who was Randy's (another boy who plays on the school's football team) father about the championship game that was scheduled to happen in the upcoming weeks. Apparently, Mr. Cook did not think that Randy should play, which made Mr. Douglas infuriated. After tossing a few threats back and forth, Mr. Cook stood up, as if to strike him, and I decided that it would be better for me to take my leave.

I couldn't exactly go home yet, since that would more than likely break Mrs. Maria's heart, so I went out into her backyard. It was completely dark outside, and the sky twinkled with the moon and stars. I sat down on the bench, wrapped up in my own state of mind, when I heard a noise next to me. I jumped when I saw Lucas, whom I thought did not come, sitting next to me and looking completely relaxed.

“Oh!” I jumped out of my seat. “I am so sorry. I didn’t know you were sitting here.”

“It’s cool,” he said in a deep, impassioned voice. I had seen Lucas around the school multiple times, but I had never actually had a conversation with him.

“You know,” he turned to face me, “You are one lucky lady.”

“How?” I had to quell my laughter from the whole “lucky lady” phrase.

“You are new to the school. You don’t have a reputation to uphold.”

He was still staring at me which made me slightly uncomfortable. “Your parents don’t push you when you do your dancing stuff.”

He did not just go there “It’s called *ballet*, hun” I thought to myself. Despite the scowl on my face a smirk appeared on his.

“Judging by the way your dad was speaking about you, Lucas, I take it that he views your football career much more seriously than my parents view my dancing.”

“He’s really not that great of a person!”

I looked at Lucas with awe written all over my face. Did he really just *openly* insult his father without any remorse?

“My name is Lucas, by the way.”

I laughed. “Like I didn’t know that already. I’m Azalia.”

“Beautiful name for a beautiful girl.” He mumbled as though I were not supposed to have heard that statement.

I didn’t let on that I did hear it; rather I just looked at him. He was looking at the grass and then closed his eyes.

“Hey, do you want to go get some pizza? My treat?”

At that comment, I couldn’t help but laughing.

“Are you serious? We came to a dinner party and now we are leaving to eat. Tell me that makes a lot of sense?”

“Well, I didn’t really eat anything in there.” He pointed towards the house.

“Maria was serving little French hors d’oeuvres that I don’t know how to pronounce.”

I looked at him and started smiling.

“Come on. The pizzeria has the best pizza in the world. It even plays the best pieces of Bach and Mozart.”

“What do *you* know about Bach and Mozart?” I didn’t know he was so...interesting.

He smirked at me. “They were my inspiration when I started to learn piano.”

“You play the piano? What else can you do, walk on water?”

He laughed the most adorable laugh I have ever heard.

“I’ll tell you if you accompany me to the pizzeria.” Without waiting for my consent, he grabbed my hand and gently guided me off the bench. We began walking in the direction of his car.

“You know we are going to have some explaining to do once we get back here,” I stated with a concerned expression on my face.

Lucas thought for a moment and shook his head “Nah.”

“What do you mean?”

“We’ll be *Bach* before they know it!”

And though that was the worst joke I have ever heard, I couldn’t help but laugh. Who knows? Maybe this move to Berkley will turn better than I thought.

The End