

# RIPPED, TWISTED, AND BURNT



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BY: JUSTIN GARRETT-KRAUS

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Warning: The contents of this  
may offend some people. read on  
with caution.

## Contents:

- 1 Titling the Alphabet
- 2 Flying on the Alphabet.
- 3 story chain
- 4 Lemmings
- 5 sweet Breath
- 6 Going Senile

# Titling the Alphabet

By: Justin Garrett-Kraus

Around

Back from a trip

Counting stars

Deifying ones capital

Electric cranberry juice "tests"

From here it's beautiful

God within

Hail your leader

It's alright, baby

Justin is my name

Killing your soul with greed

Laugh at yourself when you feel pride creeping up

My life, or yours

No one can survive without peace

Operation big boy

Presidents are in charge, but you can change that

Question yourself, your motives

Real sacrifices are out of love

Still on this road

Think for yourself

Under it all he's still a man



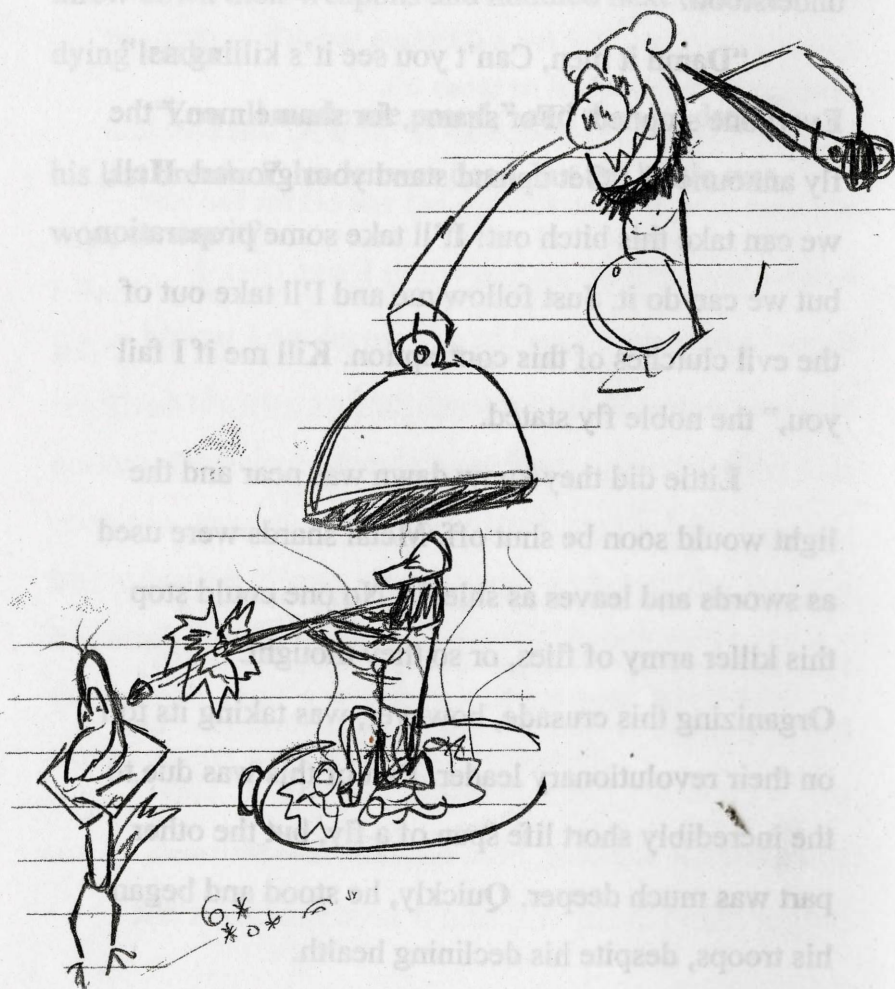
leaVes

Why can't I think of anything better than...

Xylophone

Yearly trips to a new world

Zany, zany, zany!



## **Flying on the Alphabet**

**By: Justin Garrett-Kraus**

A fly fell down, spiraling, smoking. Bugs were flying toward the light only to find instant retaliation from the aura emanating from this object.

Continuously flying, falling, until one of them understood.

“Damn it men, Can’t you see it’s killing us!” Everyone stopped. “For shame, for shame men,” the fly announced. “Get up and stand your ground. Hell, we can take this bitch out! It’ll take some preparation, but we can do it. Just follow me and I’ll take out of the evil clutches of this contraption. Kill me if I fail you,” the noble fly stated.

Little did they know dawn was near and the light would soon be shut off. Metal shards were used as swords and leaves as shields. No one could stop this killer army of flies, or so they thought.

Organizing this crusade, however, was taking its toll on their revolutionary leader. Part of this was due to the incredibly short life span of a fly, but the other part was much deeper. Quickly, he stood and began his troops, despite his declining health.

“Ready troops! Set forth towards the light my little warriors!”

Then it happened. Ultraviolet rays emitting from the device drew them in once again towards their ever-impending doom. Very much aware of this the leader yelled to close their eyes. Without warning the device shut off. X-static, yet worried, the soldiers threw down their weapons and huddled next to their dying leader.

“You all made me proud,” and then he drew his last breath. Z leader was dead, but the battle was won, or was it?



## Story Chain

By: Entire Class

**"It'd been fifteen years since I last had a drink," he said as smoke poured from his mouth. "then I saw it."**

**He described it to me as a huge ball, glowing, dancing. I really had no idea what the old drunkard was talking about, nor did I care. It'd been fifteen years for me too. But my addiction wasn't to drugs or alcohol, but the worst of them all.**

**"You see," I mumbled to the now unconscious old man who'd been talking my ear off for the last half an hour. "it all started** when I was two. I thought monsters lived in my closet, so I would always go and hide in my mother's room. She got sick of it the second night of October, or so she tells me, and decided that I needed to face my fears once and for all. So later that month, when I was fattened up on sugar and sweets, my mom told me to go to bed. I went to her room. She told me to go to my room to sleep, I couldn't. Then she gave me this big, blue blanket that seemed bigger than China, and said it kept monsters out

of my room. Since then," I uttered, finally taking a pause to sip the rum that had been wading in my cup, "I've been holding onto that blankets, clutching it to me every night and entrusting it to keep my monsters away. One jealous girlfriend stopped it though. She took my warm blue blanket fifteen years ago to try and end my addiction.

Without it I was lost. Demons crept into my dreams and evil demons hovered at the edges of my peripheral vision. For three months I lived in fear. My mother sent me to a child psychiatrist who looked like he would sprout teeth and horns and devour me. **So I've been seeing that same funny looking quack."** As I took another sip I realized the reason I have been having these nightmares of monsters is because my father is my quack. I met him years ago, that's when the dreams started and now I know my dad is the monster.

Lemmings

By: Justin Garrett-Kraus

I'm going to fly high,  
blown from the dandelion  
of Zion.

Let the breeze take me  
to the ends of the earth.

Flying high I see  
the people hide.

The people hide  
inside their burrows,  
like the rabbit.

Like the rabbit  
running from the fox.

Their lives have been  
spent running from  
the fire inside.

The fire inside  
budding from the lotus.

And so I fly high,  
blown from the dandelion  
of Zion.

I make my way to  
the dust.

And so shall you.

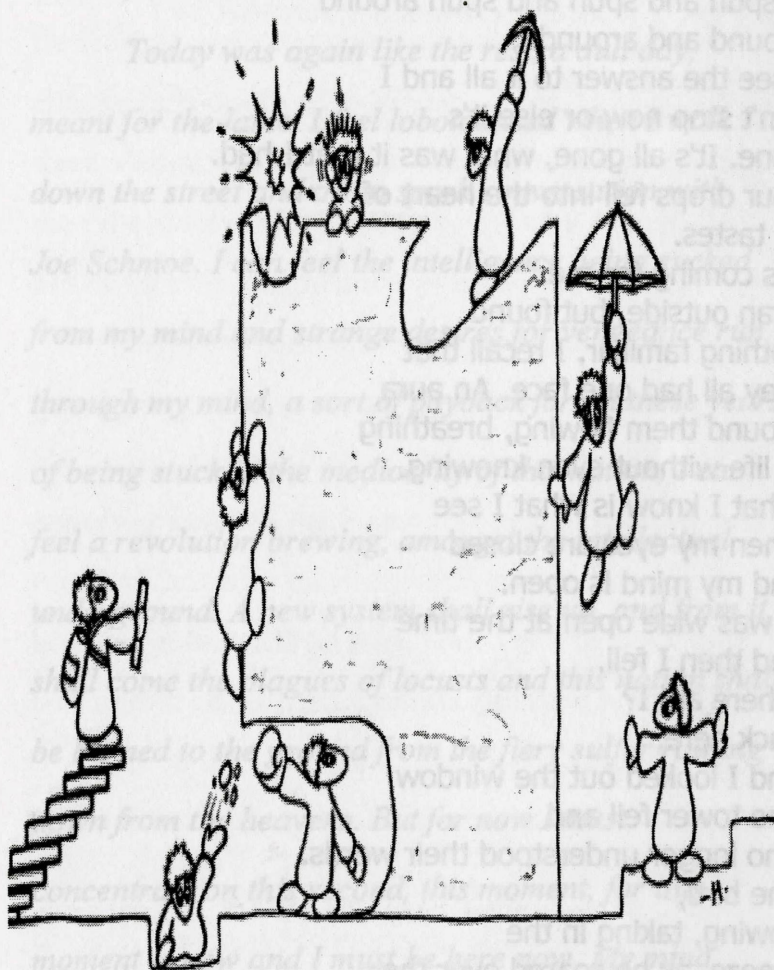
Have you seen the light?

Have you seen the dark?

Have you seen yourself,



in the sands falling?  
Or was your head buried.



# 10 Feet Breath

By: Justin Garrett-Kraus

I once saw a bird. It flew  
into a spiraling breath of debris.  
It spun and spun and spun around  
around and around.  
I see the answer to it all and I  
can't stop now or else it's  
gone. It's all gone, what was it that I had.  
Four drops fell into the heart of  
all tastes.  
It's coming for me.  
I ran outside, but found  
nothing familiar. I recall that  
they all had one face. An aura  
around them flowing, breathing  
in life without even knowing.  
What I know is what I see  
when my eyes are closed  
and my mind is open.  
It was wide open at the time  
and then I fell.  
Where am I?  
Back here.  
And I looked out the window  
The tower fell and  
I no longer understood their words.  
The bird,  
flowing, taking in the  
breeze, as he soared over the  
debris, was the only one  
who understood.

By: Justin Garrett-Kraus

*January 11, 1990*

*Today was again like the rest, a dull day, meant for the lame. I feel lobotomized when I walk down the street and try to spark conversation with Joe Schmoe. I can feel the intelligence being-sucked from my mind and strange desires for vengeance run through my mind, a sort of payback for all these years of being stuck in the mediocrity of this nation. I can feel a revolution brewing, amongst the intellectual underground. A new system shall rise up, and from it shall come the plagues of locusts and this nation shall be burned to the ground from the fiery sulfur raining down from the heavens. But for now I must concentrate on this second, this moment, for this moment is now and I must be here now. My mind continuously plots my next word, as well as my next movement, but even with the simplicity of my actions I have a hard time controlling them, it must be those*



*pills I ate earlier today. I had to do it. If they want a brain-dead asshole to run the store then, with the help of these Valium, a brain-dead asshole is what they'll get. I'm feeling extremely exhausted, so I guess I'll retire for now.*

John wasn't the typical know-it-all. But he was an asshole, a self-proclaimed "intellectual" whose rantings and ravings were usually brought about when someone questioned his motives. His diet consisted of fresh fruits and vegetables, all-natural fruit juices, about a half-ounce of marijuana a day, usually two to three Valium (or any other pharmaceuticals he had at the time) in the mid-afternoon, and about ten to fifty hits of LSD throughout the week.

When anyone first meets John, they tend to love his outgoing personality, his witty repartee, and his charming good looks. But, after a few minutes of conversation with the man, most people just turn and run. He knows people very well, and he knows just how to get under their skin, which is why most only talk to him about fifteen minutes in their entire life.

I, on the other hand, could not keep my mind very far from him. I found him charming in ways I couldn't even begin to explain. I came to know him through a mutual acquaintance of ours, Mary. She was little miss popularity and her spastic personality always kept the party going. At a party one night little miss Mary told me I had to meet this guy.

"You'll love this guy, he's crazy, just like

you!” she said slurring her words, with a strong smell of alcohol on her breath. “He’s over there, here, come with me.”

As we began our hike over the bodies passed out on the floor of this ritzy suburban townhouse, I saw a man dressed in what looked like the remains of an Armani suit. He was smoking a cigar, or so I thought, and pouring beer all over the victims of this party.

“Hey, John, I got someone I want you to meet!”

“Oh, Jesus, why the fuck are you here!” he said.

“Stop it, you know you love me.”

I could see his annoyance with this girl. I as well couldn’t really stand her either, but I definitely wouldn’t ever have told her. She was my ticket to popularity. She threw me at him.

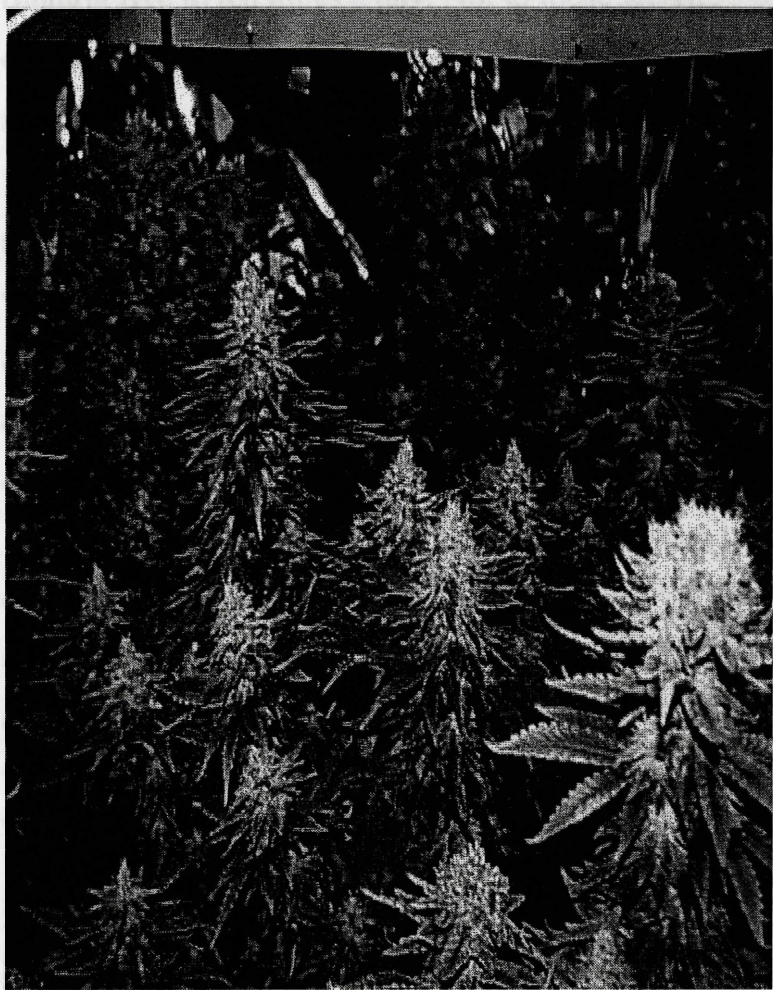
“This is Jasmine, but we all just call her Jazz.”

“That’s a nice name.” and as I looked at him he laughed. I couldn’t tell whether he was laughing at me or he was just laughing. I could smell his “cigar” now and was wondering if he was just high.

At that moment he grabbed my waist, pulled



me in close and kissed me. Before I knew it, I had 15  
pulled away and was coughing out all the smoke he  
filled my lungs with. I really didn't know what to feel  
about the situation, but by the time I could regain my  
composure I saw him slipping out the back door.



February 22, 1990

*Today was again like the rest, a dull day, meant for the lame. My mind has been racing for the past few days and I cannot stop it, not even with drugs. I ran out of work today. Maybe I should have shown up sober once in a while, but what a chore that would be. Talking to those fools who think their lives are in commerce. Work, buy, die, what kind of life is that. Slaving at a keyboard is no life for me. My efforts still go unnoticed, except for immediate acquaintances. The struggle continues. I can feel my mind slipping out of reality. Maybe I should stop putting mushrooms in everything I eat. I feel very lackadaisical, maybe I should retire.*

The whole next week my mind was wandering and wondering about when each day would end. My job was wearing me thin. Sitting in an office staring stupidly at a flashing screen of numbers and letters that needed to be sorted was my life. The days seemed to move slower and slower. I had begun to work as little as possible to get by and found myself running five to ten miles a day. Not to loose weight, or even to keep healthy, I ran for control, control of my life that I was loosing control of so quickly.

One day while I was running I saw a man sleeping under a tree on a bench. He was filthy, and was emitting a wretched smell. I thought to myself *how could someone let themselves fall so far down and still be able to sleep, knowing that they are at the bottom.*

Thoughts like this saturated my mind. *What am I working for if it deteriorates my already frail mind and body? Why do I senselessly throw away money on garbage I have no use for? All I need is water, food, and shelter, right?*

I was lost in this world and I was lost in my mind, and there was something I had to ask, and I thought I knew just who to ask.

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August ?, 1991

*I have seen the error of my ways. Last night and throughout the early morning I have been deep in trance and meditation. The lake I have been sitting next to for the past six months, day in and day out, opened up to me. The clouds, the rain, the sun, and all creatures of this earth fell into me, just as I fell into the knowledge of the lake. I saw for the first time the feelings of despair and misery I have built upon my weakened soul freed to the heavens. Rain fell from the sky, filling the lake with the fresh breath of nature and rained down upon me the essence of being. I saw the layers of time being peeled back. I saw a repeated cycle of death and destruction, but along with the death came rebirth. I began to see stages of life and death, to rebirth, and with each stage came knowledge of their lives. I saw them grow from young to old, developing their pattern. Each was different,*

*but each developed, adapting to its situation, learning from his past. And then there was nothing. I was one with the essence of all creation. I felt only love. And then I was hurled forwards, racing through time, to see the progression of knowledge and adaptation throughout civilization. Then there was nothing. I awoke, only to find myself sitting at the edge of the lake. The lake which showed me the path.*



I had no idea how to find John, except through Mary. I dreaded asking her because of her nature. I had to catch her while she was alone. If I came up to her while with people I had no idea what to expect out of her. Her ego was way above anyone else I've ever met, and if she felt threatened by you she would let you have it. Usually when around a group of attractive men Mary went from an already astonishingly low I.Q. to just dumb.

I figured I'd catch her at her cubicle as she was finishing up for the day. So, I closed the door to my office and began the trek to find maybe a clue as to where I could find John. I turned the corner to find a crowd hovering around her cubicle. I was about to turn when I noticed the usually emotionless faces of her fellow employees all had a sense of exasperation in them. I sped my stride toward the crowd to try to get a look at what was putting emotions on the faces

of these zombies.

I couldn't see anything, until the medics arrived. She was white throughout her entire body, and in one of her hands, she clenched an empty prescription bottle. I felt a rage build up in me. Now how was I going to find the answer to my problems? I couldn't have cared less about that pompous bitch or d.'ing on a bunch of poppers, but I did care about finding someone who seemed to not care about conventions, and I saw that in John. I had this overwhelming sense that he might have a bit of insight for me.

## Winter

*I have lost any sense of actual time. The colors of the trees changing are my only hint at the actual date. When I try to look at a clock or a calendar everything falls off the face or pages. I find this to be the greatest blessing ever bestowed on me. I have no time to worry about, only finishing my work. My writing has come so far, yet I have so much more to tell. It seems like an endless stream, but so is time, and isn't that the real fear of everyone. I shall show everyone that fear is nothing, and the answer is here in my words.*

*A young lady has been visiting me for some time, listening to me babble about knowledge, purity, time, and any other questions she asks me about. She also often asks me about my book. I told her it was the answer, but only when complete. Sometimes she brings me food and drink. I told her I need only water and bread, but she insists on bringing me all sorts of delicacies. In the beginning her incessant questioning seemed false and without hope, but she has learned very quickly the true meanings of the world and its people. She has a glimmer of light in her eye.*

*As I was walking home from that dreary*

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building, where Mary Walker was pronounced dead at 5:04pm August 23, 1998, I stopped dead in my tracks. I turned to my right and opened the door to the *Fox and the Hound* pub. I had a feeling that something was in there I needed. After three hours, the only thing I found was that five martinis was all I needed.

The next morning I awoke around five o'clock in the morning feeling my throat begin to open up. I ran to the bathroom but fell short at the doorway. Groggy and hazy, I opened up the cupboard for my morning kick, and found only dead mouse in the trap I had set. After a shower I decided that today wasn't a good day for working.

I pulled out my black sweat suit and headed out the door with no particular destination decided. I began running down the street and decided to run through the park at the other side of town, there was a lake there I was always particularly fond of. When I arrived there I couldn't run any farther and again felt that bitter taste in the back of my throat seeping up. I dropped to my knees and my previous nights binge of alcohol fell into the lake.

"Take a sip of the knowledge, it's pure."

The voice startled me and when I looked up I saw a man ragged with age. But within his uncrusted overcoat and tattered pants covering his thick boots I saw a frail figure of a man. His eyes were so light a blue they seemed silver and his face was carved with deep valleys of wrinkles that only accented his beautiful smile.

“That lake showed me the Universe.”

“How do you mean, Mr....?” I paused; gesturing for a name.

“I have no name young lady, I am everything, everyone, and so are you.”

His comment sparked my interest, maybe this man could give me some insight on the questions I needed answered.

“How so?”

“The world consists of being, the essence of all, the ultimate form, and nothingness, a lack of reason and purity from all that come from it. We are born of the essence and throughout are lives we lose this purity and reason. We lose are sense in the way of the light.

We are bound in the nothingness, the materialistic nature of this world. But you can find peace. I have

the answer and it is here, in these pages.”

He had a accent that was hard to understand, or maybe it was from too many drugs. That’s why most of these bums were out here; they couldn’t function in normal society any more.

He went on for hours, and I sat in astonishment of the brilliance and truths that came from this man.

He indeed had a perspective on life I had never thought about. Time, he said, was nothing more that a way to get lost in the day and tear you away from the reality of your existence.

“You must find the truth’s you’ve learned through the past, and preserve the present, then your path will unfold.” He uttered and stated he was going to retire, because the grass was too green.

Months went by like nothing. His lessons, though, were beginning to become more and more incomprehensible and full of abstract metaphors, if that’s what they were, and his speech was beginning to sound like that of the doped up junkies down in the subway. I could see that his admiration of me had grown and he would repeatedly state that I would be his messenger.

During the first few weeks of our “lessons” I

would bring him food, Chinese take-out, pizza, sandwiches, and fruits. At first he wouldn't except the offerings I gave and said all he needed was bread and water. So I would leave it there for him anyway and somehow it was always eaten. He told me that if one lives of delicacies, delicacies become nature and the simple life is impossible.

I often tried to get information from him about his past but he always replied, "The past is never-ending, as well as the future, so you must be here now."

When around him, I could feel my mind opening and this vast pool of knowledge pouring in. Since our meeting I had also lost track of time and any concept of reality, at least relating to work. It started a while before. I began showing up late to work and leaving when I felt as though I was no longer needed, which was usually a few hours later. That progressed into me doing all the work I felt I needed to do weekly. This work ethic fell short of my employers "standards" and was not just "let go," but outright fired. I had fallen behind on every utility bill. I lived without lights, water, and electricity, but managed to keep my rent paid with my savings. I



lived with only candles and a stack of books next to my bed, nothing else.



## Spring

*My messenger has been sent to me. The  
young lady who enjoys listening to my rants has  
turned out to be much wiser than any of the others  
I've talked to. She is the one who will carry my  
message across the universe for all to be saved. And  
since her visits I myself have been inspired beyond my  
belief. My work is nearly complete, and, with the help  
of my muse, shall be carried into the eternal.*

One day on my way to a meeting with my newfound savior, I passed a familiar face. John, the man I thought had the answer to my questions was plastered to a billboard. His face was fifty feet above me glaring down, with News channel 19 was written under his chiseled chin. I thought about who he really was and laughed.

When I reached the park I didn't see the familiar decrepit figure of my friend anywhere. I was wondering, and began wandering to see where he was. I began pulling aside bushes and looking in patches of trees to find him. Pulling aside a bush in the middle of the woods I found a clearing. It was arranged like a little house and lying in the middle of it all was my friend, my teacher, oh god, he taught me so much about this world, who would do this. There he lay with his neck slit, lying face down; his life spilled on the ground, staining it red. It still flowed from his neck seeping back to god, his life draining from his frail body. The glow in his eyes was gone, his face was emotionless, and in his arm he clutched his words, his words that had gotten me so far. I cried. Tears poured from my eyes, spilling my pain upon him.



## *Summer*

*The summer shall end soon and all will  
fall. My words shall spread across all time and give  
peace to the future. I just pray it will be done. I have  
faith in my pupil, who will soon be one with all. She  
alone has the power to spread my song. Just as the  
leaves are beginning to fall, so am I. I feel myself  
slipping into eternity and I shall soon join all.*

I returned home, leaving the park to return to dust. The smoke poured out of the woods choking the city, and only I could breathe free, for I knew he would spread his breath of smoke and fire over the entire city. I sat and watched as they all fled from the city, except one. Someone must stay to cover this tragic event.

I opened the book and found nothing but scraps, mostly pictures of animals and plants. And throughout it I found tattered pages of a journal. This was his message to the world, and I somehow understood. And then a page fell out. And all it read was

*Dear child,*

*The message is in you.*

I could no longer think with reason, so here I sit. Sedated along with all the others and I can't get out. His message was lost, along with me, deep in the underbelly of a prison, barred from the world. So here I sit, watching news channel 19, the announcer has become very familiar with my message, but is deaf to it's meaning.













Contents of  
this paper have  
ran out...



good-bye and



