



# LUMIÈRE

**THE YESHIVA UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS**  
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## Mission Statement

*Lumière's* mission is to showcase pieces of writing and literature written by Yeshiva University High School for Boys' students. *Lumière* is the French word for light, as this literary journal intends to shine a light on different pieces of work within the YUHSB community.

*Lumière* is dedicated to former YUHSB English teacher Ms. Pearl Mayefsky. She was a beloved teacher who will long be remembered by her numerous students.

**\*Cover Photo:** Anonymous

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**BENYAMIN SHEINFELD**

# BE-MEADOWED SONG

Elie Schwartz

I've travelled all around this wilderness n' world,  
That's grand n' tired n' humble n' tried,  
I've seen thorns in people n' blizzards n' fires,  
So I been tunnelin' in caves away from the blues,  
Away from this music I'm a-givin' to you.

Some nights be cold n' others be numb,  
'Cause in this wilderness n' world there's no laughin' be-meadowed.  
Oh, and in these ol' caves no smiles n' "hellos",  
Just wrinkles n' deafness n' nights without sleep,  
So I only see your light in my songs n' daydreams.

Well, "why not leave?" I'm sure they'd ask,  
Well honey, let me tell you, I'm bound to the rock,  
Been chokin' on the dirt n' hearin' echoes talk,  
And maybe I'd move, but my cough n' my dark,  
Lockin' my art, lockin' you from my heart.

And it ain't much clearer round this wilderness n' world,  
For out there, there's a-grayness n' dams,  
Just papers n' blindness n' chains n' big hands,  
No laughin' be-meadowed, no water runnin' free,  
So I'm a-wishin' your light had spread more onto me.

Well, just as I sing, them fireflies come,  
N' light up my cave in a whole 'nother way.  
Be-meadow my world, be-meadowed your grave,  
They shine up the path I'd mudded so long.  
But before I left, just know that I cried,  
I cried, n' I cried,  
'Cause I didn't have you to sing me this song.



# Sink and Float

Ari Unger

If I sink like a stone  
Deep into the Earth  
Feeling the soil turn to rock  
And then into fire

Will I live  
And just come out the other side  
Or will I end up in space  
In some distant far off place

Is there some world  
Way out there  
That I'll find  
And for once  
Maybe  
I'll be alive

Or if I float  
Like a big balloon full of helium  
Will I reach the sky  
So if I reach the sky  
Where will I go

Someone once told me  
That I would hit the sun  
So if I burn up  
Would I still be someone

I mean I think I would  
I know I would  
I hope I would  
But we don't really know anything  
Do we

So should I just resign myself  
To just sit here  
And place my feet on the ground  
And dip my toes into the soil  
And I won't float  
And I don't sink

Is that all that life is?

# **THE PERFECT CITY**

Gavriel Schwartz

Imagine a perfect city. A place with tall buildings, amazing smells, bustling streets, and something is always happening. A place where millions of people live and where everyone fits it. A place where everyone is different, but everyone is the same. Disconnected and connected at the same time. This place already exists and is called New York City.

Smells are something that can define a city, bring back memories, and provide comfort of consistency. New York City is often the first spot for immigrant populations who bring with them a variety of culture, food, and traditions. Many enclaves are set up around the city where certain immigrants consolidate. The city has the most unique scents in the world, and each neighborhood or area has a special scent that can describe that place. When I walk outside and head to the Financial District at 8 A.M, I'll smell the aroma of fresh bagels and brewed coffee coming from a food cart. In the mornings in Manhattan, the warm scent of sweet baked goods streams out of bakeries and onto the street. It's as if the city is giving you a warm good morning hug. Amsterdam Avenue and 186th street during lunch, all around me the restaurants are going through their mid-day rush. I smell fresh pizza coming from Grandma's and steaks and chicken being cooked at Burgers and Grill. If you step into Brooklyn, you'll get a whiff of pizza and pasta coming from classic Italian restaurants.

Head across to Midtown where you'll experience the fumes of Middle Eastern spices being emitted from a halal meat cart. Across the street a salty, doughy scent is being released from a pretzel stand. Chinatown is another place where the smells of NYC are bold—a pungent mix of soy sauce, ginger, and roasted duck wafting from restaurants. During the spring and summer, when the Botanical Garden in the Bronx is open, you get to experience the perfumed fragrance of beautiful flowers. In the evenings, as the city starts to quiet down (even though, true to its reputation, NYC never sleeps), the smells become soft and musty, giving the city a nostalgic feel of old trips I took to the city as a child. The whiff of exhaust fumes coming from the cars and mist after summer rain gives the city a sense of quiet comfort. It's a type of comfort I love.

Smells aren't the only thing that makes NYC so special. Sounds are a huge part of why I love NYC, as I walk down the street I hear all kinds of noises. The honking of cars (especially taxis), snips of conversations in dozens of languages, and the roar of the subway coming into the station. In 42nd street station, I pass by a saxophonist playing smooth jazz, and every time I go to Brooklyn it's always filled with laughter from the different groups that congregate there. But my favorite sound in the city is at night when the city hums. I'll hear the distant sound of sirens, subways, and cars. All these sounds added together make this beautiful white noise, which lulls my head into a sort of peaceful state. Everything goes numb around me, and the sounds of NYC help me focus on my thoughts.

One of my favorite aspects of New York City has to be the sense of privacy and anonymity it creates. No matter where I go or who I see, no one looks twice at me. I love the fact that I can wear what I want, look how I want to look, and be the person I want to be, and no one will judge me. In other places I have to conform to other people's expectations, especially in places with little diversity. No one cares, as everyone does their own thing. Everyone's in their own world when they are in NYC, so it feels like a judgement-free zone.

Even though no one judges or looks twice, NYC, despite its 8-million population, can feel, at times like one big family. My father was in the World Trade Center on the first attacks on the Twin Towers, on February 26, 1993. He walked 101 flights down from the South Tower after the bomb went off. He then proceeded to walk to midtown where my mother worked. Covered in sweat, ash, and smoke, he arrived safely. He never went back into those buildings, as he knew the buildings weren't safe. On September 11, 2001 my father was working across the water in Ridgefield Park where he watched the towers burn. After 9/11, NYC came together as one big family. People gave food to the firefighters who were searching endlessly for anyone trapped in the rubble. People gathered together to say prayers or mourn the loss of loved ones. No one cared if you were white, black, or Mexican. If you were a New Yorker, you were family. People came up with mottos, like "New York Strong" to show strength and resilience even in the darkest of times. I love what NYC has done to commemorate and remember the victims of 9/11. They made two memorial pools and a museum, where they keep the place perfectly clean and spotless.

Every time I go to visit, I feel the special connection that resides within me, knowing that my father once worked in those very towers. Not all of my experiences with New York are associated with tragedy.

Growing up in New Jersey, just 12 miles from the city, I've always loved looking at the skyline from my attic window at night, seeing the Empire State Building's unique colors, and the skyline's lights dance in the darkness. When I was younger, my family and I went many times to the city for Shabbat. I have uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandparents, who are from or live in the city.

I love going to Park East synagogue for Friday and Saturday services. I don't only go to the city for Shabbat though, I go for family parties like birthdays and other celebrations, so I'm pretty much there all the time.

New York City is more than a place—it's an experience that connects my family, history, and identity. From its vibrant streets to its quiet nighttime hum, the city's smells, sounds, and diversity create a unique sense of belonging. It's a place where I can be myself, while feeling part of something bigger. NYC will always be my favorite city.



**MIKEY FRIED**

## **SCHOOL: A LIMERICK**

Dov Rosman

They say school is a thing people do.  
But I think it's a knockoff zoo.  
The students are wild.  
The raccoons ate a child.  
Now his parents are going to sue.

# ODE TO LIES

Adam Lopin

Lies are the great storm clouds  
That blot out the burning sun rays  
Of truth.

Lies are the pill the dying man takes  
To ease the searing pain  
Of truth.

Lies are the walls of flesh we pull over our eyes  
To protect us from the blinding gaze  
Of truth.

Some lies are like hammers  
That we grab and proclaim  
“We are mighty!”  
But hammers can be dropped  
Or stolen  
Or lost.

Some lies are like windows  
That we look out through.  
We see other people and say  
“They are disgusting,  
They are evil,  
We are better than they.”  
But we do not realize  
That the window  
Is also a mirror.

Some lies are like masks-  
We wear a different one  
For each occasion  
And stow the rest away  
In our closet.  
Sometimes the closet door is left open  
And other masks slip out  
But never do we show  
Our true faces-  
Not even  
To ourselves.

Lies are the air we breathe,  
The lifeblood in our veins.  
They are the shield that we hold,  
The sword that we wield  
In our fight  
Against truth.  
Lies are the eyes we see through,  
The light that guides us.  
They are the principles that we uphold,  
The ideas that drive us  
In our war  
Against truth.

What are we without lies?-  
We are nothing-  
And that is the testimony  
Of truth.

## **PERFECT MONOTONY**

Yoni Tandhasetti

Elliot stood in front of the vending machine down the hall from his cubicle, holding on to his spare change in the palm of his hand. How long had it been since the last time he took the trip to the vending machine? Three years? Five days? He couldn't remember. After inserting the change, he tapped the glass as he watched his favorite candy bar shift slightly. The machine hummed, and the familiar whirring sound filled the air.

He walked back to his desk, the same one that he had been given the first day he started the job. The same chair, the same desk, the same keyboard with the broken spacebar under his fingers. The sound of the lights overhead, the soft buzz of a nearby printer, the faint clicks of coworkers' typing on their keyboards: it was all the same as it had always been. Reports stacked on his desk, some already half-checked, others waiting for his approval. A coworker from across the room walked over to him and dropped a stack of papers on his desk. "Can you file these for me?" he asked, leaning slightly against the wall. Elliot looked up, nodding. "I'll get to it right away." His eyes darted back to the screen, his fingers already over the keyboard. In his mind, though, he thought of the papers sitting there for the time being, another task to be dealt with once the more pressing things had been handled. The lunch he brought was the same as always; his sandwich he had prepared from home the night before. He sat on the same bench under the same tree, eating his usual sandwich. If he listened closely enough, he could hear the sounds of the streets distinctly: distant sirens, the rustle of leaves from the cars driving by, voices in the distance from rushed passer byers. He looked up at the sky with appreciation.

The sky above him had begun to turn orange as he left work. As the bus pulled over to his stop, its brakes stirred as he climbed aboard. He put on his headphones as he prepared for the trip back to his home in the suburbs.

He stepped off the bus at the stop near his driveway, his car watching him pass by, as he had not driven to work in as long as he could remember. He walked down his pathway to the front door and inserted his key. The door clicked open. His dog, Cheeky, wagged its tail at the sight of him. Elliot bent down to pet him behind his ears. Later, the kettle in the kitchen hissed as steam flew into the air. He opened the sliding door and stepped onto the porch with his favorite mug in hand, the weight of the day settling into his bones, but not as exhaustion, but as something serene. Something he had grown to be used to. Above him, the stars glimmered, peering down on him. Cheeky rested against his leg quietly with his warm embrace. Elliot sipped his tea.

How long had it been since the last time he thought about what he wanted? What he desired most in life? Three years? Five days? It didn't matter to him anymore. He had everything he needed right where he was.



**BENYAMIN SHEINFELD**

# **NORTH A MILO**

Mikey Fried

Once sailed across the brutal North Sea,  
Storm after storm attacked its wings  
It shook and jumped with a frightening plea  
And the poor pennant was forced to retreat

Signaling, blaring, and unable to swim  
A gush of steam has hit the ship  
The ship's pale skin has become dim  
A frozen scar across its lip

No chance of survival,  
Yet never giving up  
Milo pushes through revival,  
But cannot beat the ocean's cup

Suction like Charybdis  
The ship has denied  
Milo is one we'll miss...  
But wait, Milo survived!

Little did you know,  
Milo is built different  
No, not just its throw (line)  
But also its resistance

Made for tough weather  
Nothing can stand in its way  
Because all parts work together,  
Milo survived this stormy day

A lesson can be learned,  
From Milo's resilience  
“Never give up”,  
Has led to existence

# **BEHIND THE LEGEND**

## **Nachi Gober and Yehuda Klavan**

*Dylan and Me* by Louie Kemp is an autobiography about Kemp's relationship with superstar singer Bob Dylan throughout their lives. Kemp describes his memories from the time he met Bobby Zimmerman (Dylan) at Camp Herzl in Northern Wisconsin as 12-year-olds through Bobby's rise to becoming a superstar. The two boys hit it off and became very close friends. The boys shared a passion for rule-breaking and adventure-making, just enough not to actually get in trouble. Bobby and Louie also became friends with Larry Kegan, a boy who, like Bobby, was musically talented. They bonded through music, and Bobby and Larry would even perform songs on the rooftops of the bunkhouses. The boys kept in contact with each other after camp as well. Bobby would often come to Duluth on the weekends and stay at Louie's house. The two would attend house parties where Bobby would begin to play piano and sing, but he was frequently asked to leave as the adults disapproved of his music and felt it was riling up the kids too much.

At first, Bob only went to college because his parents insisted, even though he would have preferred to focus on music. However, it wasn't until Bobby went to college at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis that he started to fully express himself through music. Bob joined a Jewish fraternity and engaged in the fraternity's activities, like putting on skits. Although Louie was at the Duluth campus of the University of Minnesota, a different campus, they still got together. While in college, Louie was also learning the trade at his family's fish business. Meanwhile, their friend Larry Kegan was going through a hard time after he became paralyzed from a cliff-diving incident. Louie and Bobby made it their responsibility to visit Larry once a month. This shows the care and the deep relationship that the boys had with each other.

In May 1960, Bobby decided to drop out of college in order to pursue his musical career. When Louie was almost done with college, his father got sick and passed away, so Louie went home to run the family fish business. As a result, Bobby and Louie lost touch for a number of years. Almost 7 years later, Louie bumped into Bob's mother, which resulted in the rekindling of Louie and Bob's relationship. Even though Bob was a successful singer in New York, Louie came from Minnesota to visit him, and they quickly became close again. Louie recalls, "Though fame had changed the way others look at Bobby, he had not really changed. (pg 53)" Bob welcomed Louie, and invited Louie to join him on a work trip to Mexico. Louie suggested including Larry, and Bobby agreed. The trip was a great deal of fun and intensified their friendship.'

At one point on the trip, Louie wanted Bob to sing a song, but Bob didn't want to, so just like when they were kids, they started to wrestle. After a few seconds, they stopped and started laughing. Subsequently, Bob and Louie stayed in contact and enjoyed their ongoing close relationship.

As Bob succeeded in the music world, Louie began to play a crucial role in Bob's career. What is remarkable about this book is that it shows a window into Bob Dylan's essence and how important it was for him to be surrounded by people who really loved and cared about him. Bob was unlike other stars whose egos grew as they became more popular and who needed constant validation from others. Those people often lost touch with their values and who they really were. Dylan, on the other hand, wanted to be grounded in what was important to him in life, which is why he invited Louie to come on tour with him. On the tour, called Tour '74, the two experienced the real meaning of luxury. Louie recalled, "Being on the road can be a beautiful and exciting experience. This is true whether you're at the Ritz or a Motel 6. (Page 65)" This statement shows that Louie wasn't just there for the luxury experience; he was there for his friend. Bob took other actions to stay true to himself and feel connected to others in a very positive and giving way. For example, he performed at many charity events like S.N.A.C.K. (Students Need Athletics, Culture, and Kicks), which was done to buy athletic equipment for the San Francisco public school system.

One might get a picture of two friends on a tour as having fun and partying every night, which might impact the quality of the tour. Surprisingly, this was not the case for their next tour. Although there was plenty of partying, Dylan actually asked Louie to become part of the creative team to produce the tour, and Louie did not disappoint. The tour would be called the Rolling Thunder Revue and would be the first of its kind, with out-of-the-box ideas. On this tour, no schedule was released in advance. Louie said, "We'll announce concert dates just two or three days in advance in each market, and sell tickets first come, first serve. (Page 86)" The show was not promoted and advertised like most concerts had been. Even though Louie and Bob handled the marketing for the tour themselves, the tour was a smashing success. Bob had complete trust in Louie that he would make it the way Bob wanted, and Louie again did not disappoint. An example is when Louie convinced Walter Yetnikoff, the president of Columbia Records, to give \$100,000 to the tour. This was a huge deal because it was unheard of at the time for Columbia Records to give any kind of money to a tour. Bob realized that Louie was a highly reliable and excellent choice for the tour's producer. Bob allowed Louie the space and the opportunity to harness his creativity in new opportunities.

This may have opened up Louie to consider new ventures in the future, even with his fish business.

Besides being an amazing producer during this time, Louie was also a crucial friend to Bob. One time, Bob tried to drive to the starting point of the tour in Plymouth, Massachusetts, while drunk. As Louie says to Bob at this time, “We are friends, right, Bobby? And a friend would never let another friend drink and drive. (Page 106)” In the end, Bob let Gary, the tour logistics manager, drive him, but when they turned the corner, Bob began to drive without Gary’s consent. This displays that Louie always tried to do the right thing for Bob, even though Bob did not always listen to his friend. It is clear throughout the book that Bob Dylan values justice for everyone. At the end of the Rolling Thunder Revue tour, Bob decided to do a concert to benefit Rubin Carter, a famous boxer who was accused of committing three murders. Bobby did not believe that Carter was guilty, so he dedicated a concert at MSG (Madison Square Garden) to him. Before the MSG concert, Bobby wanted to do a concert at the Rahway State Prison where Carter was incarcerated. He took Joni Mitchell, a record-winning artist, with him to the prison. Although this wasn’t a typical concert, Joni still tried to connect to the audience by dancing with the inmates. As Louie recalls, “If you can’t wow them, join them. (Pg. 117)” Bobby named his last show at MSG, “Night of the Hurricane,” after Carter, who was called “Hurricane” for his amazing boxing. The show included speeches from Muhammad Ali, and Carter even spoke via telephone to the stadium. As Joan Baez, a famous and world-renowned singer and songwriter, said when speaking about the tour, “This tour has integrity. This is because of Bob. (Page 118)” This demonstrates Bob's belief in justice for all and how he backed up his words with actions.

The band from the Rolling Thunder Revue felt like family. When they split after the tour, it was very emotional for everyone involved. As Louie says, “I wasn’t alone in my reluctance to let go of the magic we’d created. (Page 128)” To help ease the transition, Louie invited them all to Spirit Mountain, a ski resort in Duluth. The band had a good time skiing, dancing, partying, singing, and drinking. Bob even hinted at the fact that there might be a Rolling Thunder Revue 2. With larger stadiums and arenas, Rolling Thunder 2 played a more standard tour in 1975.

Bob fought for his own justice when he was fighting to get his music rights back. After deciding he wanted to own his record rights, Bob decided to go to court against Albert Grossman, his manager. Bob was very stubborn and would not let this go, working hard to get his music rights back. Bob encountered many problems, one of which was that he and his manager for his records had the same lawyers. As a result, he had to hire new lawyers, as always, his dependable friend, Louie, introduced Bob to Frank Berman, who was a fraternity brother Louie trusted and believed could get the job done. In the end, Bob won the case because Albert Grossman died right before the trial date. This was a big deal because most artists were not able to gain their rights back during this period of time.

Louie's open-mindedness and curiosity about things led him to begin to look at his own identity. Louie's religious journey began when he started to talk more about religion with Bob and others. His friend Larry Kegan helped him find someone whom he could talk to about his religious and spiritual questions. Rabbi Friedman, an Orthodox Chabad rabbi, was there to answer all of Louie's questions. Louie began attending classes by Rabbi Friedman on Judaism. While there, he met a girl named Corrine, whom he fell in love with and married. Although they eventually got divorced, their marriage opened Louie up to the idea of enhancing his Judaism.

Bob's religious journey was very different compared to Louie's religious journey, because Bob began to find answers to his questions in other religions. Louie doesn't explicitly state in the book that Bob became Christian, but it is implied, as . Louie writes, "Within the context of Judaism, he developed an appreciation and acceptance of Jesus. (Page 172)" From a Jewish Orthodox perspective, this statement means that Bob still understands that he is Jewish but is open to other religions, specifically Christianity. This shows that Louie believed it was okay to explore other religions while also identifying as Jewish. In Judaism, there is a law that one always remains Jewish, even if one starts to practice another religion. Therefore, although Bob is still a Jew, this statement shows us that he wanted to start separating from his religion. Louie, on the other hand, used conversations with Bobby to enhance his Judaism, and it didn't really affect him because Louie still believed that Bobby was a committed Jew. This also showed their friendship went beyond just their beliefs and was a core connection that was very strong. Although Bob was Christian, he still respected Judaism, and we see this when Bob goes to a passover seder at a synagogue. The two enjoyed the seder, and Bob even got to sing. When asked to sing, Louie thought Bob would say no because he wouldn't want to deal with it.

However, to Louie's surprise, Bob got up and started to sing the song "Blowin' in the Wind." The song asks questions about why man does certain things, like asking, "How many deaths will it take 'till he knows that too many people have died?" It leads one to ponder why he would sing this at a Passover seder. It appears that this is not connected to Passover at all and was just for fun.

Bobby was also true to himself and cared deeply about the meaning of his songs. In the last chapter, Louie recalls that Bob did not perform on *The Ed Sullivan Show* because the show's producers believed some of his songs had controversial lyrics. "Rather than change his set list, Bobby withdrew from the show altogether, unwilling to let Ed Sullivan and CBS dictate what songs he could sing.. (Pg. 207)" This showed how Bobby wrote his songs from the heart and wasn't willing to censor them for anyone.

Throughout the book, one will think: What was Louie's motivation for writing this book? It is possible that it could be because of the money. However, it would be hard to believe this since Louie had created and sold one of the most successful fishing businesses in the country. Another probable answer to this question is that he wanted to document these stories with Bob since they had been friends for a very long time. Although Louie and Bob are no longer in touch, Louie writes a very nice note to Bob, which shows that he still values the friendship they had. Another way to interpret the reason for the book is that Louie wanted the spotlight just a little bit but also wanted to boost his ego, just a little bit, after not being in touch with Bob for a long time.

In conclusion, while the book has some interesting stories, I would not recommend it because of its non-engaging text and its lack of relevance to this generation. I chose this book thinking it would be an engaging and interesting story about a Jewish rock star. The book could be very interesting to someone who cares about Bob Dylan's career or grew up during this period of time. The reason I found it to be less interesting is that I did not know many of the people, even famous stars, mentioned in this book. As someone who had never listened to a Bob Dylan song before reading the book, I did not find a connection to it in any way. Another reason I didn't like the book was that it didn't use descriptive words that would captivate the reader well. On the other hand, the book included some good stories, and had very interesting takes on different parts of life, like religion. Therefore, I would rate this book a solid 5.5/10 because it has the stories but is not engaging for someone who is young and doesn't know about Bob Dylan.



ASAF GLASER

# I PROMISE IT'S JUST A TOOTHACHE

Anonymous

I woke up one morning with a sharp stinging sensation  
Way back near my first ignorance tooth  
I promise it's just a toothache, I told my mom

As I asked her for Advil, and while I like how pills taste,  
I knew that they wouldn't really help, not for something like this

Look at that, I was right, and the next day I was taken to a dentist  
And the dentist said that it was a small cavity, so not a big deal  
And that I would just need to clean my mouth up a bit

So I did just that, brushed and flossed, and did what I was told  
But it kept on aching

So back to the dentist I was taken  
And he used that numbing stuff that they use for people like me

Now my whole mouth is senseless, and I can't feel the bleeding  
I'm told that it will go away eventually, but a part of me knows that I  
will always be numb



# THE HOT GATES

Avi Harrison

Fear engulfed Greece as it was going to meet a tragic fate.  
Persia was coming to bring an end to them all.  
The Greek people, they would decimate.  
To defend their homeland, warriors across the Greek realm answered the call:

“Persia, come and take us!”

Enter the mystical shroud of the famed clash at Thermopylae.  
Between the jagged peaks and the sea’s expanse lurks a narrow pass.  
Where the warriors clad in bronze keep their foes at bay,  
A snake slithers silently in the grass.

As morning’s dew fell upon the shining walls of bronze  
Droplets dripped from their glistening helms.  
With battle cries as loud as prayers to their grand pantheons  
The hoplites were fueled by Ares' rage.

Persians made their arduous descent into the gorge  
Where it was hot like in the blacksmith’s forge.  
Men entered the fray  
And fate brought many to Hades's doorway.

When the wicker-shielded legion smashed into the golden ranks.  
The sight was like waves breaking upon a trireme’s hull.  
Under Athena’s watchful eye, the invaders fell to the mighty phalanx.  
Against Persia’s fury, they fought heart and soul.

Xerxes, the king of kings, watched in fear.  
As his grand armies fell, he sought to unleash his wrath.  
However, Persian victory was near as they struck Greece's rear.  
For Ephialtes, the Greek traitor, had shown Persia the secret path.

Persia struck, crumbling Greece's mighty keep.  
Like an arrow impaling Achilles' heel, leaving him for dead.  
A wound pierced in a manner so deep.  
A defense that once stood strong was filled with dread.

As the snake silently slithered away, Athena dropped her vigilant gaze.  
Outflanked and overrun, only the 300 stood valiantly as the hot gates collapsed.  
Sparta's glorious final stand truly did amaze.  
The scene became a blood bath as time quickly elapsed.

With shields held high and spears slashed overhead  
Into the masked faces of Xerxes' ferocious horde.  
The Persian Immortals kept coming back like warriors of the undead.  
Yet Greece refused to bow to a foreign lord.

Like a slaughter in the halls, corpses stood high.  
As spears broke in two, the golden warriors continued to wage war,  
Unleashing their tenacious battle cry  
With sword and shield, they made their valiant stand.

Sparta reigned unbeatable through the gory fields of despair  
So Persian archers ascended the mountains with the enemy in their sights.  
Though death was now almost certain upon these men,  
Defeat they refused to declare.

As volleys of arrows hailed from heights above like torrents of rain  
From a storm pouring down upon Sparta's tattered banner  
Hoping to vanquish all who remain.  
The sky went dark.

In the wake of destruction, shields were splintered and armour was battered.  
Arrows were embedded across the field of gore.  
Fallen warriors and broken swords lay on the blood-soaked floor.  
The tip of Sparta's spear has shattered.

Although the day was lost,  
All of Greece learned of Sparta's legendary feat.  
For victory, Persia paid a heavy cost.  
Against the might ten times their number, the enemy they did deplete.

After the famed clash at Thermopylae,  
The Greek world united in the gloom of despair against the powerful foe.  
Greece stood strong and kept Persia at bay.  
Persia retreated to never be seen again, as Greece struck them a final blow.

On the fields of Thermopylae, the 300 finally met their fall  
Yet Sparta was still Greece's saving grace  
After answering its call.  
The lionhearted champions accepted death's lovely embrace.



BENYAMIN SHEINFELD

# THROUGH SNOW AND SILENCE

Naftali Frank

As I sit on a bench hanging high in the air  
My feet cold, and wind blowing in my face  
I look back and see the mountain base  
The lift arrives and quickly I unmount the chair

As I land on the groomed snow, the cold disappears  
I push with my skis towards the trails  
At last, back on the snow, I'm blown like sails  
The forest to the side is where my body steers

As I look down the mountain through the trees  
"It's worth it," I decide as I enter the glades  
Going through untouched powder, as the entrance fades  
Forest and snow are all I see as I guide my skis

Finally, I'm away from the noisy crowds of people  
Most are scared of the trees and the difficult terrain  
But I enjoy being alone in the snowy forest, away from pain  
Because all I see are white trees down the steep hill

As I navigate through the glades  
Making quick turns following the path in my mind  
Through the branches, the sun illuminates the path I leave behind  
Lost in the trees, the silence pervades

Now, I see the exit to the groomed slopes  
This glade was exhausting but fun  
But now the peaceful adventure is done  
Back to the reality of crowds and the cold

Yet I have high hopes, for behold,  
The chairlift takes me up to again be consoled

# THE LARGEST CITIES

Jacob Weiner

Herein you'll find verses bright and clear,  
A mnemonic device guide to states' largest cities that they hold dear.  
From Huntsville space-bound dreams to Cheyenne's cowboy lore.  
Fifty rhymes will help your brain keep score.

Huntsville, Alabama, where man launched into space,  
Everything moves at such a rocket pace.

Anchorage, Alaska, where the wild landscapes call aloud,  
Auroras and icy frontiers spread about the icy shroud.

Phoenix, Arizona, rising fierce from desert sand,  
A blazing urban oasis in a sun-soaked land.

Little Rock, Arkansas, where rivers and trails aligned,  
A gateway west for those adventure inclined.

Los Angeles, California, where stardust and dreams reside,  
In Hollywood's glow, cinematic wonders abide.

Denver, Colorado, with thin clear air so pure,  
The Mile High City is where alpine dreams mature.

Bridgeport, Connecticut, where industry left its mark,  
A legacy of manufacturing still glowing in the dark.

Wilmington, Delaware, a port with colonial pace,  
Whispers of earlier days in each historical place.

Jacksonville, Florida, sprawling wide beneath the sun,  
Where endless skies and breezy coats make summer fun.

Atlanta, Georgia, where progress meets deep pride,  
Its vibrant soul and historical strides forever coincide.

Honolulu, Hawaii, where the ocean breeze gently sways,  
A tropical paradise with storied harbors lighting the day.

Boise, Idaho, where nature and art share a beat,  
Adventure and creativity combine in a vibrant retreat.

Chicago, Illinois, the Midwest's precious jewel,  
The dreams of so many it fuels.

Indianapolis, Indiana, with racing dreams on the track,  
The Indy 500 spirit propels them to never look back.

Des Moines, Iowa, where fertile fields and city meet,  
An agricultural heart beats in a modern, urban beat.

Wichita, Kansas, where aviation legends take their flight,  
The Air Capitol soars with ambitions shining bright

Louisville, Kentucky, where horses race with great speed,  
The Derby's excitement every resident bleeds.

New Orleans, Louisiana, where jazz and soul ignite,  
Mardi Gras parades and spicy feasts light the night.

Portland, Maine, where lighthouses inhabit the rugged shore,  
Fresh seafood and colonial lore enchant forevermore.

Baltimore, Maryland, with its harbor rich and bold,  
tells maritime tales of charm and histories old.

Boston, Massachusetts, where the revolution still ignites,  
The cobbled lanes recall bold deeds in the neon lights.

Detroit, Michigan, where engines roar and gas flows,  
The Motor City pulses with an industrial, vibrant glow.

Minneapolis, Minnesota, where art and nature blend so fair,  
With lakes and parks creating a creative atmosphere.

Jackson, Mississippi, where blues echo through the night,  
A soulful serenade in every note taking flight.

Kansas City, where the grill smell floats around,  
The City of Fountains wears the barbecue crown.

Billings, Montana, where wide-open skies inspire,  
Ranch life and frontier dreams kindle a cowboy fire.

Omaha, Nebraska, where rural dreams and cultural start,  
A tapestry of rich heritage woven straight from the heart.

Las Vegas, Nevada, where neon buildings shine,  
A city of endless spectacles and jam-packed times.

Manchester, New Hampshire, where factories once roared,  
An industrial legacy in every brick is stored.

Newark, New Jersey, a city both old and new,  
There is so much to experience and do.

Albuquerque, New Mexico, where balloons color the sky,  
A festive desert canvas where vibrant spirits fly.

New York City, New York, where dreams ascend so high,  
The sleepless streets and glittering skyline catch the eye.

Charlotte, North Carolina, is financially strong,  
A modern hub where commerce and culture sing along.

Fargo, North Dakota, where quirky arts find their say,  
A resilient community thriving in a Western display.

Columbus, Ohio, a beacon of innovation and minds bright,  
Where modern visions and friendly hearts unite.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where western pride is shown,  
With cowboy roots and memories deeply sown.

Portland, Oregon, where green dreams and flavors bloom,  
An eco-chic haven that banishes urban gloom.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, rings with liberty's song,  
Where brotherly love and freedom forever belong.

Providence, Rhode Island, where art and learning intertwine,  
It brims with a creative spirit that forever shines.

Charleston, South Carolina, with cobblestones so grand,  
Preserves antebellum tales across each storied land.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where water cascades with grace,  
A natural urban marvel in a bustling, charming place.

Memphis, Tennessee, where country tunes echo down each street,  
The heartbeat of the South pulses with every beat.

Houston, Texas, where rockets soar and dreams take flight,  
Space wonders and urban might illuminate the night.

Salt Lake City, Utah, framed by peaks in stately grace,  
Where nature and faith together find their place.

Virginia Beach, Virginia, where sandy shores glisten bright,  
A seaside escape that fills the heart with pure delight.

Seattle, Washington, where tech and coffee intertwine,  
The Space Needle rises in a city so pristine.

Charleston, West Virginia, where urban tales are spun,  
Coal-rich heritage and scenic vistas shine like the sun.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where scenery and festivals combine,  
A spirited city toasting traditions, ever so pristine.

Cheyenne, Wyoming, where rodeos celebrate the past,  
A frontier town where Western spirit is built to last.

Now our odyssey of cities finds its final rhyme,  
A mnemonic poem to memorize in your mind.  
Let these verses shine a light on the jewel of each state,  
As the culture and history they create.



**ASAF GLASER**

# THE SNOW GLOBE THEORY

Yitzy Leonorowitz

If you were to go to my house and open the door, you would see a staircase along with the living room in front, with the dining room on the left. If you were to climb up the stairs successfully without being chased by my dad, something he often does to playfully scare me, you would reach the carpeted hallway leading to my bedroom. Open the door and, go on, and then you will enter my room. Excuse the mess—I dorm full-time, and I usually don't like to let the laundry accumulate on my floor, but here we are. Since you would be in my room by now, it would be tempting to look at my suspended shelves. They're filled with books and different types of memorabilia. However, there is one shelf that is filled with only one thing: snow globes.

I don't remember exactly when I started collecting snow globes from different countries around the world. My dad would go on different trips around the world, and he would always buy me a snow globe from each area he traveled to. As of now, there are seventeen snow globes in my collection. They're all reminiscent of the local cultures and often include stereotypical characteristics of that area. For example, when my brother went to Nepal, he bought me a Nepalese snow globe. It was blue, and inside the globe stood Mount Everest with several sherpas crowding around the miniature base. Another snow globe was from Iceland. This snow globe is drawn from the Viking stereotypes. Inside was a miniature ship with a large mast, and attached to it was a waving Iceland's flag.

What I realized over time is that these snow globes don't just showcase typical characteristics of their respective areas, but often exaggerate or simplify them into stereotypes. It didn't hit me all at once. The realization came gradually, as I started paying closer attention to the details inside each globe. The Nepalese sherpas, for instance, represented not just a cultural touchpoint but also a simplified image of what outsiders think about Nepal. Similarly, the Viking ship in the Icelandic globe felt like a nod to how Iceland markets itself to tourists. Snow globes became, in my eyes, encapsulations of how we perceive and package cultures—little worlds frozen in glass, reflective of how we choose to represent them.

When I lived in a Hasidic community in Brooklyn, NY, my world felt self-contained, like a snow globe I couldn't escape. In this environment, the outside world was a distant, almost unfathomable concept. Participation in anything beyond our community wasn't encouraged. I broke out of this snow globe when my family moved to Pomona, NY. At first, I thought I had entered a world without limits, only to realize that I had simply moved into another snow globe: American society. This realization hit me as I began to notice stereotypes about Americans, like our supposed lack of geographical knowledge. For example, when I started learning about other countries, I found that many Americans couldn't locate them on a map or didn't understand their significance. It was this curiosity about the broader world that motivated me to start collecting snow globes and to learn more about global cultures.

Whenever I was bored, I loved taking snow globes off the shelf and looking at them closely. The architecture of the miniature houses inside the globes fascinated me. The triangular and narrow houses of Amsterdam, the Sagrada Familia of Spain, and the colorful houses on Nyhavn in Denmark all mesmerized me. When I finally visited Amsterdam, seeing the triangular, narrow houses I had always dreamed about felt surreal, especially as I floated past them on a canal tour. I always wondered whether Europeans view their architecture the way I do. My friend from Belgium answered this query for me when he told me how seeing the same types of houses every day felt boring to him. He thought the modern architecture in New York City was amazing, while I found his country's old-style buildings fascinating.

This exchange exemplified the Snow Globe Theory for me. It highlighted how we often fail to acknowledge or appreciate the hallmarks of our culture because they feel so ordinary to us. While I would give anything to see the buildings my friend sees daily, he shrugs them off as uninteresting. Similarly, he finds excitement in something that feels commonplace to me. These interactions reinforced my belief that snow globes—both literal and metaphorical—capture the essence of how we perceive the world and the environments we live in.

The more I thought about snow globes, the more I wanted to understand their history and cultural impact. Snow globes were first created in the late 19th century in Austria by Erwin Perzy. Perzy was trying to make a stronger light source for surgical purposes by using reflective materials in water. The falling reflective material reminded him of snow, inspiring him to create the schneekugel (snow globe) and patent it. Snow globes didn't reach the U.S. until 1929 when Joseph Garaja patented them here. Over time, this accidental invention became a popular souvenir and a cultural phenomenon.

Every country you visit has its own snow globe designs, filled with miniature landmarks or figures representative of that place. However, these representations can sometimes reinforce stereotypes. For instance, while a snow globe might make you more fond of a place by highlighting its beauty, it could also perpetuate simplistic or harmful ideas. If I went to Vietnam, for example, I would not want to see snow globes depicting stereotypes about Asian cuisine. It's the small details—harmful or harmless—that contribute to how we perceive different cultures.

Instead of encapsulating only the most famous landmarks or stereotypical images, what if snow globes showcased the unique and lesser-known aspects of a place? For example, rather than focusing on Scotland's redheads, a snow globe could feature their famous, incredibly adorable Highland cows. Highlighting these hidden gems could create a deeper appreciation for a country and its culture.

Whether it's the shelf in my room, the Snow Globe Theory, or the cultural impact snow globes have on our perceptions, they all represent something more. When I walk into my room now, I don't just glance at my snow globes and move on. I see them as symbols of my past experiences, my evolving perspective, and the ways I've broken out of different snow globes in my life. They remind me of how I've grown and learned to appreciate the world beyond my own bubble. The Snow Globe Theory isn't just a metaphor; it's a reflection of how we navigate, understand, and ultimately expand our worlds. Perhaps you should start collecting snow globes, too. Who knows? You might discover a lot more about yourself.



**DONNY BROMBERG**

# **A Day Of Dread Lies Ahead**

Rafi Fredman

My friend told me a story about how, when he boards the school bus, after a harsh and heavy wake-up call, he takes a deep breath and braces for the day ahead, which he deeply dreads. He says "morning" to the driver and smiles, but in return, he gets silence and a frown. He walks down the aisle to find a seat and continues to explain that the floor is dirty, like the bottom of a trash can. Nobody says hello or smiles his way. What a sad reality, and this is only the beginning.

He sits down at his seat, around halfway down the aisle. The seat is cold and uncomfortable, like dirt with pebbles. Nobody sits next to him, so he reaches for his earphones, only to realize that he left them at home. It's a long ride to school, but the school day is even longer. Once he gets off the bus, he says "thanks" to the driver with a smile and walks up to the entrance of the school. The building feels and looks so unwelcoming, almost like a crumbling edifice. He walks up the steps to his floor and through the dark, fluorescent-lit hallway, where people talk loudly, but not to him. He just wishes someone would say his name; he feels like he's invisible.

He finally reaches his locker but can't find the key, so he heads to his first class. He's greeted by his friends with smiles and kind remarks, and his heart feels a little warmer, like the hot springs in the middle of a cold winter. But soon, the boredom sets in. The teacher picks on him throughout the length of the the whole class, and he can't wait for the bell to ring. His school isn't perfect, but a few students here and there make it tolerable.

However, the school building, old and in need of renovation, feels like a tomb within the most ancient oldest pyramids. The library, filled with clamor and dust, is more unorganized than a child's bedroom box of jelly beans. The gymnasium, which is used for basketball, has a ceiling that's way too low and no air conditioning. In there, he gets so hot and sweaty that it feels like being stuck in a desert. And the cafeteria, smelly and gross. The cereal and milk they serve in the mornings are always questionable, and the legend of getting unspoiled milk is seemingly a joke. Just sitting in the cafeteria is as unappetizing as watching someone throw up.

The teachers are frequently late to class, and from time to time, missing without a trace. When they do show up, it's usually someone who doesn't belong in the classroom. Some teachers are great, while others are strict or act like comedians. But nonetheless, my friend goes from class to class, waiting for the bell to ring. Time seems to slow down, as the day comes to an end, especially when his classmates shout and call out answers. As the day progresses, his experience only worsens; it makes him feel as though he forgot his umbrella on a rainy day.

At long last, the final bell rings, he packs his folders and papers, and sprints down the steps as if there were a monster chasing him. He boards the bus no differently than in the morning. As he looks back on his day, his vision blurs as a warm tear runs down his cheek, and a small whimper escapes from his heart. He looks forward to seeing his family and hopes they'll tell him he's been transferred to a new school. But unfortunately, that will only come in his happiest dreams.

If my friend's story is true, then I agree that his school is quite a terrible place. The unfortunate truth is that many students suffer alongside him every day.



**MIKEY FRIED**

# I'M MINE

Noah Landsberg

Am I awake, am I alive?  
Am I rejuvenated, or do I feel dead inside  
I feel the heat, I feel the tide  
Rushing over me, but I feel I'm mine

Am I in spirit? Am I in mind?  
When I feel scared, I freeze and then hide  
Now is the time when I should stand up and fight  
I feel death rushing over me, but I feel I'm alright

Sometimes in the darkness, there a little light resides  
To calm my fears and hug me tight  
And remind me that everything will be just fine, my tears  
Will be dried  
They're raining down on me, but I feel I'm mine

I hear music playing, as the tears roll down my eyes  
A sigh of relief comes, as they drip down both sides  
I'm still in the moment, everything is fine  
I feel death rushing over me, but I feel I'm alright



**BENYAMIN SHEINFELD**