

Published May 31st, 2017

## Teen Writes

By Alexandra Reinecke



Alexandra Reinecke is from Westchester, New York. She currently resides in Lafayette, where she is junior at Campolindo High school. She writes every morning at 5 a.m. opposite a print of "View of the World from 9th Avenue" and consumes copious amounts of coffee. Her likes include maple-flavored anything and snow. Her favorite animal is a tiger.

Remain involved. But we are restless. As stressed as we are, with the concern we hold no less now than yesterday for our futures we are tired.

Bare legs and shoulders and the backs of necks flirt with heat. But we are contained in school. Removed, as we are always when college is in the question and SchoolLoop active, from full-fledged participation in the world's less-than-scholarly facets. We are trapped. Trapped in a version of academia which, in its weakness and indirection we would, if we had the privilege of caring any less, would disregard as absurd. With APs over, substance is gone, though stress remains. June is a word we reiterate covertly, a word covered with just one more set of chemistry problems, just one more essay, and yet as perceptibly absent as a jacket against the wind, as distant a scenario as trenches we've seen only in photographs or the grainy surface of mars.

When I got home from ball I found the kitchen door locked so that the room -island block, cabinets, the quiet squares of Dad's Buddhist prayer flags - despite the clarity and proximity with which I viewed it through the door's glass, was one to which I lacked access.

I had to go in through the screen door in my parent's bedroom, an entrance to our 1970s-windowed, Cape Cod-shingled anomaly of a house I considered a sort of metaphor.

A metaphor for the fact that we can meet summer, but not shrug off the final vestiges of scholastic anxiety necessary to experience it. The fact that we can order cold drinks at Starbucks, and listen to the hum of the AC against metal grates and eat frozen yogurt in the flavors of Maine and Minnesota's berries and yet we are separated from the feeling meant to accompany such warm-weather pleasures. The fact that we are away and apart.

In the morning, the sun was harsh on the prayer flags, the kitchen, and yet as I stood there I was glad. Glad to have gained access to that warm place. Content to stand - barefooted, sleep-deprived, haggard in a black Champion sweatshirt and smudged mascara - experiencing what I had been held away from. In the morning, I stood barefooted 10 minutes, letting the pools of light and heat make wondrous mod-dress patterns the color of lemon and eggshell over the necks of my feet. Sun-devoured. Glad. Content. So, I imagine, we soon all will be.

Recently I went to Senior Ball with my journalism friend. People wore fruit-colored gowns and skin-tone eye shadow and the restlessness which has plagued the upperclassmen - seniors and juniors alike - since the onset of May. With AP weeks over, gone is the substance which once occupied their classrooms, their 50 minutes designated academic expedition.

In APUSH - AP U.S. History - we research conspiracies where we once sat agape over footage of 9-11. Where a week ago AP Calculus poured over limits, derivatives and integrals, they now play kickball and plan "teach-how-to" projects for which the rules of poker and the steps in the assembly of a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich are topics neither of exception nor rebuke.

Students in AP Psychology research topics of choice; one friend researches psychopaths, another the case of a woman who, placed under hospitalization for said ailment, could only view one half the tiramisu on the hospital tray placed before her. AP environmental science is doing something related to the plastic which shackles Diet Coke cans and the polar ice caps; AP chemistry is a room kinetic only with the motion which dominates the projector screen pulled down for a series of Neil deGrasse Tyson and like-hosted movies.

We don't have direction. We are, however, under the guise of assignment sheets with steps and bolded words "still learning." The seniors look forward to polyester robes and white lace; the juniors to a year in which sleep runs like water and nerves aren't pulled like bungee cords. And yet we sit in classrooms empty with a lack in substance, a lack in order, being told to pay attention.

Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA