

# The Conversations

In this section, the boundaries of comfort are pushed as we transcend the realm of social acceptability by sharing personal and societal truths. Some of these realities are not shared. They may be too hard for us to face—the truth of an unforgiving world being too much to bear. We may not be affected by them, and therefore do not think about the pain that others endure. Or perhaps we just do not want to realize that our beliefs may harm others.

When we share difficult stories, such narratives can pierce our souls and force us to think about that which we fear most. The pieces in this section force us to face our mortality, the discrimination of members of our community, and even our own contributions to injustice. We are forced to think, reevaluating what

is most familiar to us.

Each contribution reveals discomposure rather than idealism, breaching subjects such as war, mental illness, racial prejudice, and the loss of life. In “The Duality of Blackness in America,” Jazmine Richardson reminds us that racism persists, shaping the standards of professionalism. She shows how biases occur right before our eyes and how they can undermine an individual’s sense of self-worth. In “Emma,” Sage Okolo describes her own battles with self-image, chronicling her struggles with an eating disorder. “Prayer to God” takes a look into the pain that combat veterans experience, highlighting the fragility of the human mind, while Ian Manzares in “0 to 128 mph” comes to terms with the fragility of the human body through

Layout by Wallace Burgess. Photograph by Hanna Martin.

# We Don't Have

his fight with cancer. The section concludes with “The Conversations We Won’t Have,” in which the author describes her relationship with her parents and the taboo aspects of growing up.

When we share our personal experiences and in turn listen to the narratives of others, we are forced not only to recognize the marginalized voices and conversations in society, but also to realize the parts of life that make us uncomfortable. Whether we are the oppressed or the oppressor, recognizing this discomfort allows us all to grow.

—Wallace Burgess, Hanna Martin,  
and Grace Richardson

