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## Section Intro: Chronicles of Endurance

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# CHRONICLES OF ENDURANCE



What does “Chronicles of Endurance” mean? We have defined it as encompassing the encounters, difficulties, and victories that shape our lives. The authors of the pieces in this section have used writing as a means to explore and understand the human condition—to be enduring—through the hardships that come with being alive.

These pieces, which explore a range of circumstances from being in the company of your loved ones to being in solitary confinement, have the power to encourage readers to understand and relate to the struggles of dealing with problems both known and unknown. They remind us of the interconnectivity of human experiences and the journey of life through moments of reflection and connection through the twists and turns along the way. They highlight the creation of relationships, the pursuit of dreams, actions and consequences, and the endurance of the human spirit.

They tell us that endurance doesn’t look like just one thing; rather, it enters someone’s life and fills the space that seems to have been emptied by adversity, grief, oppression, and anxiety. These authors pull at the seams of what we know to be endurance. They use experience and knowledge about their unique circumstances and thoughtfully write their stories for us.

Here, we ask that you reflect on endurance in your own life and consider it in situations in which you may never have considered before.

In “Art against All Odds,” Katherine Nikolau profiles one artist’s pursuit of creativity while in solitary confinement as Yuri Kadamov continues to create art even as his art supplies

are taken away. Nikolau dives into his creative process and inspiration as he waits in solitary confinement on death row. Nevertheless, he continues to create and endure.

“A,” written by Tim Gerken, is a sestina from a book-length collection that chronicles his life from 1984, the year he went on active duty in the Army. The piece captures bits and pieces of history, from AIDS in America to police brutality to war.

In “A Puerto Rico without Puerto Ricans,” Adriana Albizu Russe uses her writing to shed light on the relationship between advocacy, endurance, and identity in the context of Puerto Rico’s continuous fight for independence. She discusses the problems of colonialism while echoing a spirit of resilience and determination in moving toward the island’s future through personal experiences and familial traditions.

In “Dollhouse,” Olivia Rodriguez reflects on the magic of childhood, recalling the close bond she shared with her grandmother. The piece urges readers to come back to a moment in time when many felt carefree and grateful in a way that only children can. Rodriguez’s imaginative, bright, and nostalgic writing reminds us of the importance of slowing down and being present. It is memories like these that allow us to endure.

Finally, Surina Archey’s “Breathe” chronicles how she was able to connect with the world around her in Central Park. She acknowledges the damage that can be done from feeling emotions deeply and ultimately recognizes that this intense empathy is a gift that allows for a deeper connection to ourselves and the world around us.

—Yusra Khazaleh, Victoria Rea,  
and Laura Sassi Verzegnassi