

Acknowledgements

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BEYOND BLOOD TIES

Poetry
by
Johnston
High
School
Students

Edited by Rene Valdez and Lilia Raquel Rosas



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2006

Red Salmon Arts Mission

Red Salmon Arts is dedicated to the development of emerging writers and the promotion of indigenous, Chicana/o, Latina/o literature, providing outlets and mechanisms for cultural exchange and sharing the retrieval of a people's history with a commitment to social justice.



awards: the Louis Reyes Rivera Lifetime Achievement Award presented by La Causa and The Dark Souls Collective at Amherst College, Massachusetts in 2003; the Martin Luther King Jr., César Chávez, Rosa Parks Visiting Professorship Award given by the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 2003; the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture in 2004; and finally, Con Tinta, a coalition of Chicana/o, Latina/o cultural activists and writers, honored Raúl with the Veterano Writer Award in 2006.

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immigrant adults in Riverside, California; worked as a teaching assistant for the Department of History, Center for African and African American Studies, and Center for Asian American Studies; tutored for Intercollegiate Athletics for Men and Women; and worked as a supplemental instructor for UT Learning Center, all at UT Austin.

raúrsalinas

Xicanindio elder poet and human rights activist raúrsalinas is the Executive Director of Red Salmon Arts and Founder of Resistencia Bookstore, a literary venue and center for aspiring writers in Austin, Texas. raúl also conducts intensive creative writing clinics locally and throughout the country with disenfranchised youth. These clinics are held in conjunction with a variety of arts organizations, correctional facilities, and social service agencies. raúrsalinas' work with various political movements has earned him an international reputation as an eloquent spokesperson for justice and advocate for the challenges and struggles of youth. Through SOY, raúl has reached countless marginalized young people and trained other members of RSA collective to continue this invaluable work nationally. He has worked extensively with the American Indian Movement and the International Indian Treaty Council. raúl is the author of four books of poetry: *Viaje/Trip*, *East of the Freeway*, *Un Trip Through the Mind Jail*, and *Indio Trails* as well as three spoken word CDs: *Los Many Mundos of raúrsalinas*, *Beyond the BEATen Path*, and *Red Arc*. Most recently, the University of Texas Press published *raúrsalinas and the Jail Machine: My Weapon Is My Pen*, a collection of his essays, newspaper articles, and letters. Since 2001, he is an adjunct professor at St. Edwards University, teaching classes and seminars in incarceration and media studies. raúrsalinas is also the recipient of numerous

About the Editors and Facilitators

RENE VALDEZ

Hailing from East El Paso, Texas, Rene is a working-class Chicano cultural worker, community organizer, and media activist, who migrated to Austin in the late 1990s. He began as a volunteer for both Red Salmon Arts (RSA) and Resistencia Bookstore and is now the Administrator of RSA. Along with ensuring the cutting-edge programming and seamless daily operations of RSA for the past four years, Rene has co-edited several SOY chapbooks. He is also a poet/writer, who has participated in literary events such as El Festival de las Plantas and benefits for El Corazón de Tejas—Central Texas Chapter of REFORMA. He received his Bachelor of Arts in philosophy from the University of Texas at El Paso and was a founding member of the *Austin Javelina*, a community newspaper, and Free Radio Austin, an unlicensed neighborhood radio station.

LILIA RAQUEL ROSAS

A queer Chicana feminist, Lilia Raquel Rosas is originally from Albany, California in the San Francisco Bay Area but has lived in Austin, Texas since 1995. She is a volunteer at RSA and Resistencia Bookstore and was formerly the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) Center for Mexican American Studies Administrative Intern for RSA. She is a Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellow and is currently a doctoral candidate in history at the UT Austin, specializing in comparative ethnic and queer studies through narratives of sexuality. In addition to assisting with SOY programming, Lilia is experienced in other areas of public education. She has taught U.S. history, civics, and English-language classes to

Preface

I've known rivers:

I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of
human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

—Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," 1921

The collection, *Beyond Blood Ties*, marks the eighth publication resulting from the most recent Save Our Youth (SOY) writing clinics, which critically-acclaimed poet and international human rights activist Raúl Salinas has led since the mid-1990s. In itself, this is a significant landmark. But coupled with two twenty-third anniversaries—the founding of Red Salmon Arts (RSA) and the federal district court decision determining the "successful" desegregation of Austin schools—we find ourselves at cultural and sociopolitical crossroads. These crossroads allow us to reflect on the effectiveness of integration and the importance of local literary arts programs in refashioning the struggles of underrepresented people into new movements for social justice. The 1956 *Brown v. Board of Education II* decision urged for expedient desegregation. However, we still find the same lack of leadership, funding, and community-accountability at Johnston High School and other East Austin schools. Yet we cannot underestimate the role of projects such as SOY. They provide a response to the seemingly unchanging circumstances found in our public educational system.

Save Our Youth channels the energies of youth who are often viewed "at risk" and/or are from minority/indigenous communities to become leaders, thinkers, and writers. By working in middle schools, high schools, juvenile justice facili-

ties, and summer programs across the United States, the writing/healing workshops provide sacred, collaborative, and righteous moments. Youth not only learn the craft of writing, but also embrace the life stories where we write at our truest and best.

The writing clinics conducted with the students of English teacher Camille DePrang at Johnston High School represent another germination of this rigorous and holistic process, which encourages up-and-coming writers to confront even the most difficult parts of themselves and their communities. In the fall of 2005, Raúl, Rene Valdez, and invited guests looked to poetic expression to transform experiences of pain, violence, and alienation as well as those of joy, triumph, and intimacy into words that empower, liberate, and heal.

In *Beyond Blood Ties*, we find poems that address universal themes—war, family/friendship, and culture, in addition to individual topics that yield unexpected results. The young authors ask us to consider issues such as the futility of war, the rituals of culture, and the injustices committed by our government through their verses, images, and revelations. The writings further push us to contemplate our collective responsibility in building a more just and equitable society. In many ways, these works also adopt the same youthful wisdom and reverence conveyed in “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.” Langston Hughes wrote it when he was only seventeen years old and he dedicated it to W.E.B. Du Bois, his senior by thirty-five years. These students, similarly, were able to celebrate their own community elders like Sharon Bridgforth, Irma Flores, and Raúl Salinas in the culminating event, *Honoring Our Own: Youth & Elders Poetry Reading*. Their poems are a multivocal letter to their elders, who have heard them loud and clear.

Strategy?

Ceaseless violence
over nothing.
Widespread fear
in the bowels of society.
Clashing opinions
distort human morals
to eventual decay.

Yet,
war is vital to our existence.

America: My So-called Provider

Why do you lie to yourself?
 Why do you make yourself out to be right?
 What makes you think you can go in front of her?
 Then you lie to her?
 You tell her everything you've done for her,
 yet you seem to be on top.
 You stand against the enemy,
 then you go and feed them...hypocrite.

Mirth in an Instant

The sweetness of her soul,
 reminiscing in her presence.
 Her silent voice
 looms in the shadows of my mind.
 Her loving care for her family,
 the taquitos she made,
 every detail of her being,
 went into my mom,
 makes her memory bittersweet.

We would like to extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to a number of individuals: To Camille for the generous invitation to work with her students and the nurturing environment she sustained throughout the writing clinics. Many thanks to renowned poet/performance artist/teacher Sharon bridgforth and indigenous poet/librarian Irma Flores for their continuous and unconditional support of Red Salmon Arts. Last, but never least, un millón de gracias a los poetas de Johnston High School for their inspiring, remarkable palabras/words and their faith in the completion of the chapbook.

¡Luchamos con nuestra poesía!

—Lilia Raquel Rosas,
 Osten, Tejas,
 Septiembre 2006

Oscar Valenzuela

Oscar, that one guy, do you truly know him? Is he really that happy little chavalo you see everyday? Or is there something drowning? He creates a mist in his mind that leaves a wake of confusion. Reminiscence is the essence that solely clashes his emotions into his opinions ultimately breaking his balance. He's from Michoacán, the only Mexican who despises jalapeños. He grew up in Austin, Texas, and has carved some strong friendships that he hopes to hold onto till death. He loves his family, with that being said he considers friends an extended family. And, in his head, that's all that matters. But, what do you know? To you, he's still just "that one guy."



***Honoring Our Own:
Youth & Elders Poetry Reading***

Wrapped Up Fajitas

Your taste is delightful.
Perfection is for the skilled.
The darker the better,
Two shades of green
and maybe some heat.

Raging Leaders

Raging leaders in war;
 men are not men they become monsters.
 War is tragedy,
 we as people should be smart enough
 to spare lives and learn to be in peace.
 Families drown in sorrow,
 commanders envy Death,
 how many lives he takes.

Connections Are Endless

What are friends really for?
 How do you know when you have one?
 How are friendships broken up?
 Through betrayal, envy, maybe hate?

The interactions people
 give when friendships
 are broken or formed
 is what makes us human.

Through friendship we
 can connect verbally
 and nonverbally.

The connections are endless
 as if we talked
 through our spirit
 and let the feelings show
 through our heart.

Phylicia V. Marie Chekita Fabian

My name is Phylicia V. Marie Fabian, and I am sixteen years old. I was born in Austin, Texas and raised by two loving and caring parents. I was in my mother's stomach so I don't remember much. But I'm sure my mother's stomach was a better place. On the outside, life is just a big and hateful world. Some people and places are nice. I met people who have made a difference in my life, while others have just brought me pain. I had a good childhood. I was lucky in so many ways and I knew it. But as I got older, I realized how the world is rude and mean. My life became harder, and my dreams and goals for life were fading. I soon found myself in a hole that I created and I couldn't find a way out. I felt alone for the first time and also pain. I took in all hateful things people threw my way, but I remained strong when others were around. I would rather die than ever show them how much I hurt.

I never knew how to live until I met my friend, Angie. She was the one person who took the time to listen and was always there for me. She helped me see the light when darkness fell over me. She gave me a new meaning to the word called life. I was joyless, and wanted out of life. There were times when I wanted to take the easy way out of life. But what made me stop was the one person who understood and helped me. She was always there when I needed her and she never once turned me away. Even distance couldn't break our friendship. She made me see why I had to live again.

Was It Really Worth It?

Fight, Fight, Fight
stand your ground.
Protect.
Never give up.
Fight, Fight, Fight
people dying all around
some young, some old.
Fight, Fight, Fight
mothers losing children
children losing families.
Homes and lives destroyed.
Fight, Fight, Fight
people losing everything.
All hope is lost.
Wondering when it will end.

But in the end,
was it really worth it?

Eddie Treviño

Eddie was born and raised in Austin, Texas. He lives in a house full of Mexicans who were born poor but motivated to work hard and provide for their sons. Eddie has three brothers. They are close by blood, yet separated by hate and envy. As a poor kid, like any other, he wanted things like toys but couldn't have them. The day he realizes that he should be happy and value what he has, is yet to come. He knows he should be thankful for what he has, but still he asks for more. When this finally happens, it will be too late. Everything in his life will turn to nothing.

Family Is Hard to Let Go

Sweet and gentle,
I fear if I get too close I would be scarred emotionally.
The love for her in my heart keeps me from letting go.
Family is hard to let go,
especially when our blood is equal.
Losing family is like losing a piece of my heart,
it is irreplaceable.

Bonds that Go Beyond Blood Ties

Bonds that go beyond blood ties
 shelter us from this harsh reality.
 Friends are always there to laugh with you,
 hang with you or just stand there
 sharing the silence.
 Smiles are never lacking
 and boredom doesn't stand a chance.
 Laughter between us never dies
 even if the air is still.
 Jokes are found between
 the words we speak which
 only friendly ears can decipher.
 There are no good byes between us
 only "see you later."

D.O.A.

Staining the fields with blood,
 the pungent smell of gunpowder burning through the air.
 Children of a battle cry
 roaming the streets with bloodstained hands
 and hollow eyes.
 Children of a battle cry
 staring right through you
 over the barrel of a gun.

We Are the People of the World

We are the people of the world
 that the white people fear.
 They fear us because of our color
 or is it because of what we can do
 when we come together?
 We never stand alone in this world
 when we come together we stand as one.
 They fear that we can make
 a difference in the law.
 Or if we try hard enough
 we can change this country.
 We will not be kept in the shadows anymore.
 We will no longer be kept quiet.
 We will stand up for what we believe in.
 We will fight for what we know is right.
 We will make a difference for our children's sake.
 We will hide in shame no more.
 We will fight to be equal in their eyes.
 We will no longer be the filth
 they need to get rid of.
 We will make a difference.
 For we are the colored people of this world,
 that the white people fear.

My Grandmother

No one listens
to her now.
We think
she's gone crazy.
She says things
not really talking
to anyone.
I bet you
she is thinking
of grandpa.
When he left,
our worlds
fell apart.
He was the light
for all of us,
but mainly for her.
Her time will come
all too soon,
and knowing her,
she will be ready
to join her
one and only love.

My dad, your little brother,
little Osbaldo says many great things about you.
You took care of him;
kept him from getting killed
back in his Latin King days.
I thank you for that,
I owe you my life in a way.
I wish I could've done the same for you,
been there to protect you, save you from horrible death.
I wish I could've known you enough to say I miss you.
I wish I knew you enough to say I love you.

Jane 3:16

Today is a good day
because I am Jesus.
I am the son of God,
who is a girl.
I can walk on water, kinda.
I mostly specialize in small shallow puddles.

I am Jesus,
with long hair and an invisible beard.
I use my powers
to miraculously incite laughter from anyone.
Almost anyone.

I am Jesus,
close friend to Satan herself.
Today, I answer to no one
because I am Jesus,
female son of God.

Saray Rosales

Saray is sixteen years old and lives in a single house with her parents and brothers. She is allergic to soap. She was born and raised in Austin, Texas. She's a good girl. The End! Or so it would be if I wrote about her the way she was seen by strangers and family. Ask her and she will tell you these simple statements are irrelevant. She was born. She lived and then she was broken down and thrown away. She remained in a dull, colorless world until she snapped and said, "Enough!" She then broke the chains that held her soul, killing the prison of fear and guilt. The powers breathed life into her. Now she is truly alive, striving and fighting to be great, pushing back the demons of her past. She feels the gaping stare burning through the back of her head but she pays no mind. Numbness takes over as her laughter rings through the air. "She will be great," her parents say. "She's a good student," say teachers, "definitely going to be somebody." Personally, I don't think so; they don't see what I see. The laughter will die and the claws of the past will dig into her shoulders and pull her down into her prison, down to oblivion.

Requiem for a Stranger

So, how's it hangin', Tía,
out in the great beyond?
I hope the weather's o.k.,
you know, not too hot or anything.
I just thought I'd say, hey!
I wish I could've known you
laughed with you.

My Life

I sit here and watch the days go by,
and wonder about my life.
Sadness washes over me,
but I don't know why.
My joy of life is forever gone.
My dreams and goals slowly fade away.
Being happy almost everyday is a thing
of the past.
Pain is what fills my heart now.
People talk their mess
but what can I say or do.
It won't make a difference.
I won't show my hurt.
I will be strong in front of them.
But when night comes, I let it all out
the tears fall.
There are many times I feel,
I can't go on anymore.
I don't want to pretend anymore.
I want to be myself again without
being afraid.
I don't want to be put down for
showing the real me.
I want to live life to its fullest, but
in a world like this,
it is impossible.

Gardenia Guel

To know someone is just a figment of your mind. Can you really know someone? I say you can't. I know some of my history. For example, I was born in Laredo, Texas on March 25, 1990. But, how can I tell this is the exact date? I know I am into weird stuff. I love to read horror, adventure, and many books like that. Am I really a person or am I just another figment of my imagination? Anyway, my family is just plain weird, I guess. On my mother's side of the family, we don't get along at all. On my father's side of the family, well, we just don't care who is who. I don't know who all my relatives are and are not. I know some songs in Spanish, but where do they come from? How can I really know myself if I have no proof of it, only in my mind? Nothing else can explain life than my own memories. What do you know about yourself that is true?

¿Abuelita por qué?

*¿Abuelita por qué?
Why have you made my mom's,
aunt's, uncle's, and mi hermano's life miserable?
Am I the only person
who has the guts to stand up to you,
as my brother Federico had once?*

Gone but Never Forgotten

Grandmother
gone but never forgotten,
guilt enters my inner being.
I never took advantage of spending time with you
though I knew our time was marked.
I still put me before you
I just wish I could make it up
before cancer took the life out of you.

Waiting for a Fault

Crazy how different one can be.
Do you see that other person
when you look at me?
When you hug me,
can you feel my gaps?
When you kiss me,
can you taste my insecurity?
When I look away,
do you even stop to think
that you are the most beautiful person in the world?
I don't ever want to find that person
who hides behind your eyes.
Staring like a hawk
waiting for a fault.

Trini Rivera

I talk to myself. My alter ego is the DePrang mister. I wish that I were Ariel from the Little Mermaid. I am fascinated with twisted serial killers. I want to pet Stitch and I hate flowers. I love my boyfriend, whom by the way wears girl pants and I love my guy pants. Can you tell me who wears the pants in that relationship? Ignorant, paranoid, grudge bearing, A-hole to some, to most I am a loving, giggling straightedge weirdo.

Stubborn Ignorance

Mentally, physically
it's there.
And it's hard to get away from
when it's everywhere.
Starts as stubborn ignorance,
ends in catastrophe,
always here in the land of the so-called free.



I ask one more time,
¿por qué has hecha la vida de mi gente miserable?
I have no words to tell you
but if you keep it up
you will soon have no one to trust,
not even your own dogs.

A mi no me has hecho nada pero un día si lo vas a hacer.
I won't shut up. I just won't shut up.

My raza, mi gente needs me
especially the ones I love the most.

Por tu maldita culpa yo le tengo miedo.
A mi hermano, I am afraid of my own brother.
There are those who still love him even though
he would probably harm them.

¿Abuela por qué?
Tengo gotas en mis ojos.
So, ¿por qué has hecho este mal?

He Is Called Roberto Carlos Guel

His is called Roberto Carlos Guel.
 He is behind bars.
 Why?
 There is no one to blame but my grandmother.
 Roberto Carlos Guel,
 he is my brother and I am afraid to be near him
 or to talk to him.
 But no matter what,
 I know that my older sweet brother
 is inside that angry, brutal, selfish, paranoid, messed up man
 that my grandmother created.
 Should he be blamed for a crime he committed
 but doesn't remember?
 My grandmother, she gave her wings to my brother
 and he took them.
 And now he made Roberto Carlos Guel a monster that flies.
 The damage she did
 is not easy to heal.

As the sky rains out atom bombs,
 they let the blood spill
 through the memories that we've lost.
 Let the innocent die and the guilty kill,
 the children perish
 as the apathy rises over the breathing.
 Every pain felt deep
 underneath our bare skin,
 left by the rusting blade.
 As the good ol' American flag still stands
 behind the dead and the buried.
 Another fallen soldier without a name,
 another life stolen and torn apart.
 How many people
 shall we SACRIFICE for our greed?
 As the power in control sleeps easily
 and comfortable in silk sheets,
 as every human being outside of his riches
 lives in a battlefield.
 Just dying to live,
 so hard to survive
 the raping gunfire
 infecting and causing anguish,
 bullet holes left in our heads
 like a sweet kiss...now scarring.
 Breathing in a little more ruin,
 holding on strong to our gas masks.
 The dead wait uneasy
 for justice and liberty,
 while the living will never see hope again.
 Empty eyes that hold no future,
 reminiscing over our defeat and the loss.
 Holding onto my life,
 I'm going down in tragedy.

Remember to Forget

I see you through a painted glass,
 you can't see me anymore.
 I'm only a shadow to others around me,
 drifting alone all over again.
 You said you cared,
 you'd be in my heart forever.
 Now, just a fucking memory
 that I don't want to remember.
 Your face I despise,
 that look you carry in hollow eyes.
 I won't hold on to this,
 I must let go.
 I can't blame myself
 even though I ruined our joy.
 I am standing here again on my own,
 a photo of this damage I hold close;
 to forget once more.
 Today, I saw you through a painted glass,
 but you can't see me anymore.
 I'm only a shadow for you to forget.

The Ashes of Waking Empire

Hold onto your life,
 we're all going down in tragedy.
 Do you feel the flames
 from gunfire hitting our backs?

La Guerra

War, what is the point of it?
 War can bring the worst out of mi raza.
 Bush said if my people, mi raza, went to war for him
 that he will let them live in the United States of America.
 For what?
 So many people have already gone to war.

Mainly mexicanos and mexicanas.

All I know is that Bush is one big fat liar.
 Mi raza are not animals that go to war
 for some guy who does not keep his promise.

¿Pa' que es la Guerra?
 Sino pa' matar a otros inocentes.
 Según pa' defendernos.
 ¿Qué defendemos si matamos a otra gente?
 I hate all who start war for no reason.
 ¡Qué se los lleve a la chingada a todos que hacen Guerra!

War . . .
 La Guerra . . .

What is the point?
 ¿Pa' que es?
 All that start hell go to hell.

Angel Guerra

I am a full-blown Austinite, but I get lost. I like to fish but the fish are punks; they jump out of the water laughing at "ya." I made the first origami tadpole. You should try calamari. I move between aunts and uncles in different months. I will be eighteen August 2006. I am going to leave for Japan and China because I am really into anime and want to be an animator. I used to go diving in an eight-foot deep hole in the ground and walk in different directions just to walk. I like to play Yu-gi-oh. I was riding on the hood of a car; I fell and my elbow popped open. Half of my friends think I am crazy, and that I belong in a mental hospital.

Paper Shreds

We never got to meet.
 It would be different.
 You probably would have gotten to show me your art.
 You would have shown me how to hotwire a car.
 You shouldn't have died at the age you did.
 You might have joined the army.
 I'd be in a fight everyday.
 I fight to show that I can take you.
 Just to be thrown to the ground
 covered in blood, broken limbs
 only to grin knowing that we would do it again.
 You died at 12,
 my uncle Raymond Perez.
 I know you're watching
 helping my wings grow.
 I'll be with you one day.
 Just not right now.

A Letter I Never Sent

Dear _____,

The hurting I know that you still hold onto
 & your heart skips a beat or two.
 The eyes I once looked upon now
 fade away into the passing nights alone.
 I caressed the scars that you hid.
 I kissed the lips so rosy and marvelous.
 I remember the days spent with you
 seemed like they would never end.
 I didn't want them to end,
 so quickly and viciously.
 I brought you my heart to behold
 and save as a memory, to reminisce over.
 The last time I saw you,
 in my silence I said words that I never told you,
 too afraid to say.
 I wanted to hold you one more time before you left,
 I wanted to give you a goodbye that
 was meant forever.
 But, I didn't give you
 any words to save and adore.
 I only gave you a nod, tears in your face.
 You turned towards the train erased from my mind.
 Roses I never gave you, hope I never offered.
 And this letter that I keep close to me,
 that I will never send.

A Mourning that Followed

You were only a face without a name,
an image barricaded behind the dirt
they threw on your lifeless body.

They planted rocks above your lonely grave
& now you lie beneath the ground six feet under.

Crying silently, as the cool air of the morning
hits your broken coffin.

You were a voice without a name,
words drove your heart to collapse.

I cannot hold a remorseful tune
for the lost spirit that now lies in a damp ditch.

I only stand stiff along with my grieving family
as they hum their songs of loss
so one day you can hear.

Ode to a Tape Dispenser I Chewed Up during Class

The thing that is used to hold the tape;
it's been hiding in my pocket all day.
Yelling at the key & the embossed dog tag of Yu-Gi-Oh,
I told you to stop molesting the pencil sharpener.
Now look at you.
You're missing a side of your wall.
You taste plain & bitter like H₂O.
You're a bucked tooth pointy-nose bumpkin.
I am a couch ant with no couch.

The Lady in Front

My grandmother is gone.
 She stands by my uncle
 watching and waiting
 for the rest of us.

I have shed lots of tears
 not because she is gone
 but because I didn't
 get to say good-bye.

I hate hospitals.
 Not because they let her die
 but because they stole
 the rosary I gave her.

Cookie in Milk

It controls your mind.
 It bites and chews
 letting you know;
 word, fist, guns, and knives
 can kill you or your soul.
 It's that little sparkle in your eye.

Charlie Ramirez

Charlie was born on a soft night along whispers and cries of another April. He grew up with the likes of a teacher, his father. While at war with life, Charlie's father battled with work and the uneasy woman who had given birth to his first son. Along the path, Charlie ventured through tragedy and war inside his own home. Where could he turn at this time of war?

Charlie felt his heart closing and barricading itself behind all the rage and sorrow. After the passing of a few years, the life he knew slowly died, all of the mental wounds he suffered scarred. He discovered that his father had separated from the growing pain. Charlie followed the rules of life and the responsibility passed down by his father. He found it all difficult to comprehend but stuck through the living hell with his dysfunctional family.

Rising through the rushing years, Charlie and his family reached hope closer and closer until they had it all in their hands. Charlie believed and waited for better days to follow with each setting sun and rising moon. His heart felt broken; the memories of the past haunted him into death. He raised himself up from beneath the thought that drove him towards misery—reborn into a cure that freed him from mental loss—the pencil and paper.

The words Charlie wrote, he loved and breathed life into their "lungs." He overcame this ruin with his family. Tasting each bit of air, he felt a bit lively. Then came a period in Charlie's life when he became an outcast. He no longer wanted to be a part of normal society and did not want to be a follower anymore.