

2014

## Crayons and Shoestrings

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### Recommended Citation

Richmond, Elana (2014) "Crayons and Shoestrings," *The Messenger*: Vol. 2014: Iss. 1, Article 24.  
Available at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol2014/iss1/24>

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## Crayons and Shoestrings //Elana Richmond

To find ourselves, we must look inside for something that is no longer hidden where we thought it might be. For the self we find is never the self we seek. We search for the porcelain version of ourselves from childhood: Before love, before loss, before regret. The one who loved to read and write and think, before the world grew too cold. We search for this self because it is the only memory that we can be certain we do not regret. Before every action had a reaction, every decision had a consequence, and every path was lit with darkness. We stumble through the confusion in our hearts to bring ourselves back to that from which we came. But our hearts are too tangled, and one wrong tug could break them to pieces.

In childhood it all is so simple: Be yourself, do what you love, care for others. But reality twists these lessons into what we are forced to become: Be yourself, but only when it is what others expect of you. Do what you love, as long as it will make you rich. Care for others, but never more than you care for yourself. The Utopias of crayons and shoestrings wash away into the unbearable truth that sometimes our best isn't enough. That sometimes we must lose ourselves in order to feel.