

Cameron is a resident of Hill Country Youth Ranch

## **Hill Country Youth Ranch**

A not for profit home for  
Neglected and abused children  
Of all ages

Providing counseling services  
Sports, academic education  
Nature awareness  
Animal care  
Living skills  
Spiritual guidance  
Dance, and graphic arts  
And so much more  
For those who need it most.

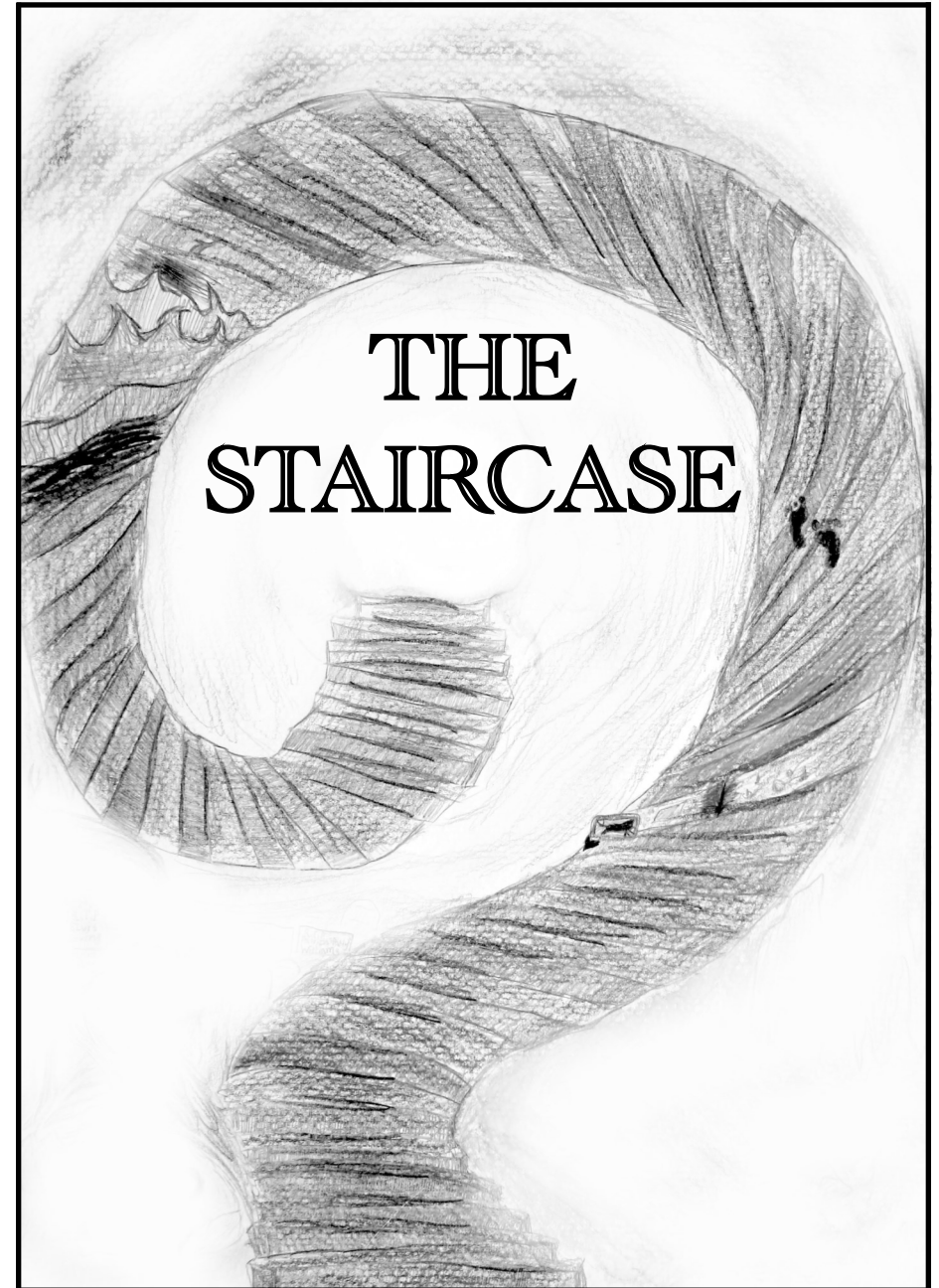
For more information  
or to find out how you can help:  
Call 830-367-2131  
Fax 367-6108

Or write PO Box 67  
Ingram, Texas 78025

Visit our Website  
[www.youth-ranch.org](http://www.youth-ranch.org)

E-mail: [info@youth-ranch.org](mailto:info@youth-ranch.org)

Copyright 2021 Youth Ranch Publishing



**Poetry and thoughts  
by Cameron Williams, age 14**

*Illustrated by  
Cameron Williams*

# THE STAIRCASE

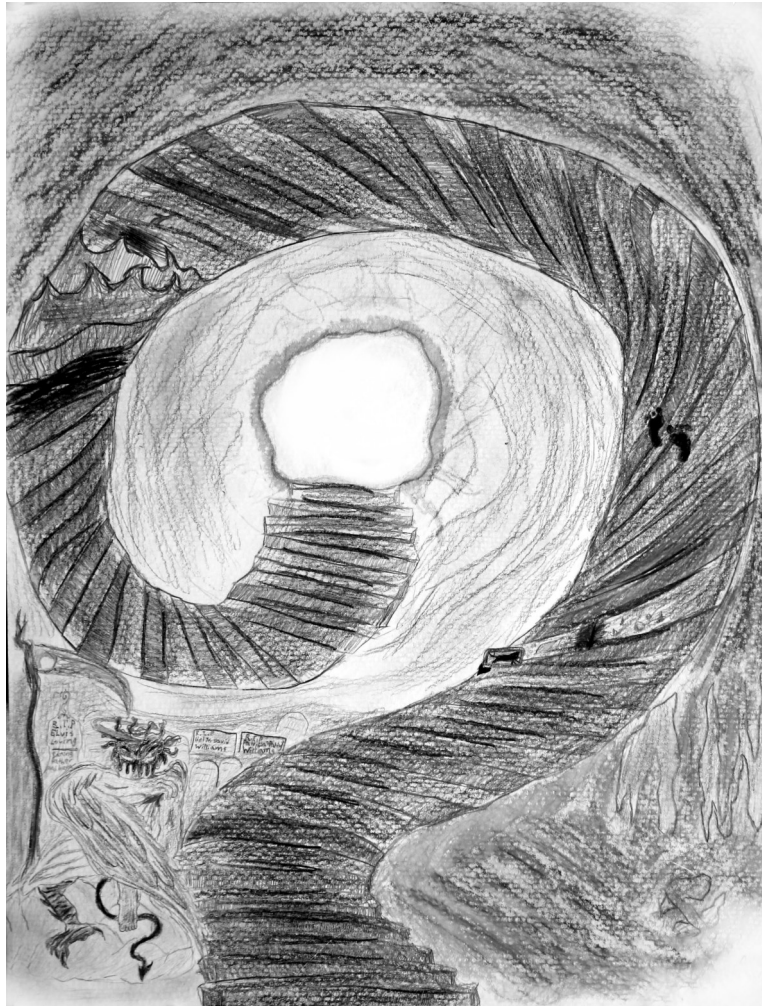
By Cameron Williams

**Life can be  
like a complex staircase**

*Cameron Williams*

# Contents

THE STAIRCASE.....	7
UNWANTED REPLACEMENT....	9
CONTROL .....	11
BLACK HOLE .....	12
SLEEP .....	14
EVER - FLEETING .....	17
OVERWHELMING .....	19
16 .....	21
PARALYSIS .....	23



## THE STAIRCASE

Life can be like a complex staircase.  
Each step you take is different from the last.

Some steps are greased, so you slip and fall.  
Some have tacks on them that fell out of your pocket,  
stabbing your foot when you look back at a step.

Some steps are from a time of weakness,  
so cracked rotten and broken that you fall into splinters.

Strangely enough, you still get up, and keep going.

Some steps help you get higher,  
close to the unknown goal.

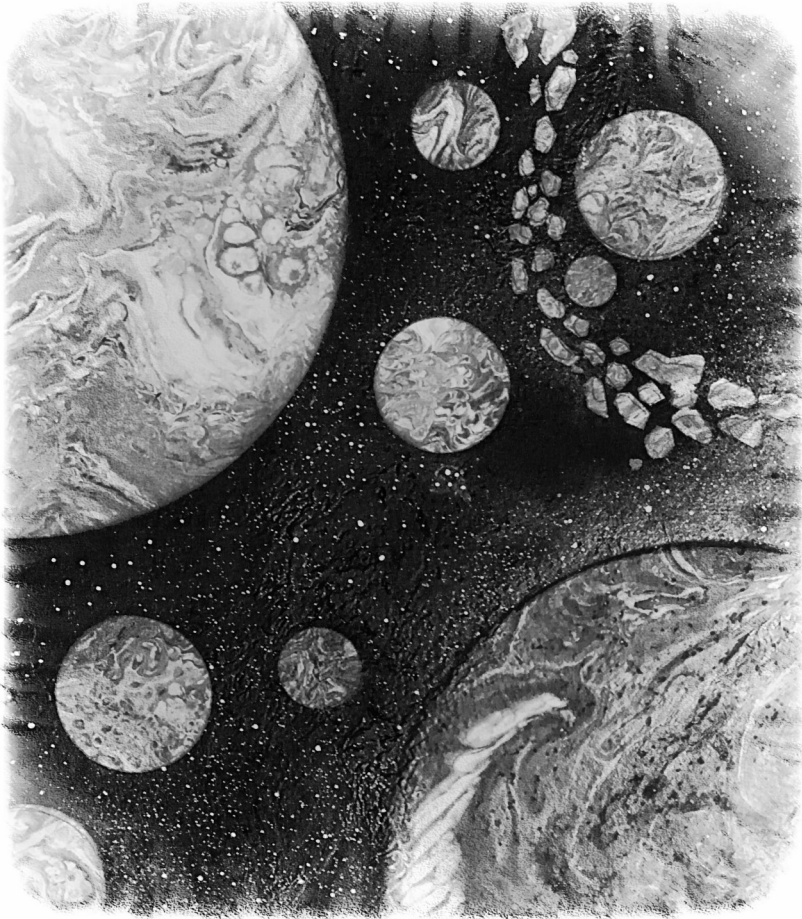
Uplifting steps are rare,  
so you learn to cherish them.

The painful steps aren't uplifting,  
so you do your best to get past them quickly.  
Shouldn't you cherish those steps too?

This staircase has a limit to its number of steps.  
So you look back, step onto the tacks,  
except now, you're fine with the pain.

The past is the past, and now you know your goal.

Completion.



## UNWANTED REPLACEMENT

I once looked back upon my memories of joy,  
searching for a very specific song.  
I could not find it in a section of joy,  
so I continued to search.

I would come to find  
that this memory had been replaced.

Of all the emotions to replace my joy,  
sadness had been chosen.  
Sadness to the extent  
of bringing tears to my reddened eyes.

As you can imagine,  
I was caught off-guard  
by a memory I loved and cherished so much to be *gone*.  
I did not like this replacement.

I thought it was intruding upon my mind.  
Who put this here?" I cried.  
I believed this to be unwarranted  
by any protection from harm.

The soreness in my throat was excruciating,  
to the point upon which I could not speak or talk.  
I pondered and pondered over the significance  
of why something I remember making me smile  
upon countless occasions,  
now made me cry.

Finally, after what felt like hours, I had my answer.

Loss.

Something so detrimental it stung.  
I lost a value of mine.  
A type of moral I felt pride in.  
The only way, being the hardest,  
to get back such a thing I treasured so heavily  
was thorough something so simple to gain.  
This simple thing, however,  
took years until I felt complacent with this memory.  
This loss.  
It was, and always has been . . . acceptance.



## CONTROL

Is it morally wrong to desire control?  
Control over my own life, my surroundings,  
and my emotions?  
Loving someone enough to give them control  
over aspects in my life?

How can I give something I don't have?  
I can't steal or borrow it from someone else,  
so how do I get it?

Why is it so important to me?  
What is the true definition of control?  
Is it to be able to impose your own will  
on something or someone?

Is it something one might find in themselves?  
That seems foolish.  
If it were as simple as looking in one's self,  
then why have I searched for so long?

Would that be equivocal  
to say that my efforts are in vain?  
How painful a realization that could be.

This is a concept,  
a peace of reality I've wanted so much, for so long,  
it has become more of something I've felt I needed.

This codependency concerns me.

Control, to me, is the most similar to happiness.  
For years, I have not had this.

Control never seems to be satisfying though.  
Instead, what if it was what was originally?  
A simple want.

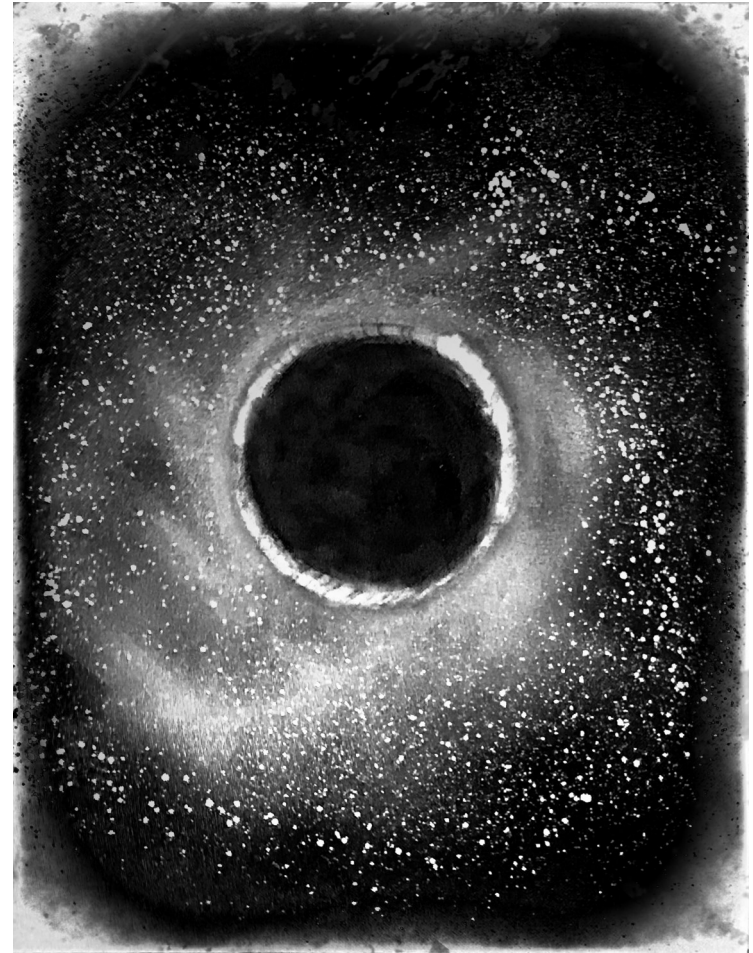
## **BLACK HOLE**

Every life has its own “Black Hole” . . .  
an event in your life that’s so stressful,  
so draining that you feel like you might collapse . . .

just like a star  
(it’s shining now  
but at any unforeseen moment, it could disintegrate).

However, there is one thing that we must never forget . . .

while every black hole draws in light,  
new stars are eventually created,  
with even more radiant light.





## SLEEP

It so often tends to avoid me.  
Is the reason restlessness?  
Nay.

Is the reason foreign?  
Of no sort.

Am I simply unbeknownst to the true reason?  
Perhaps.

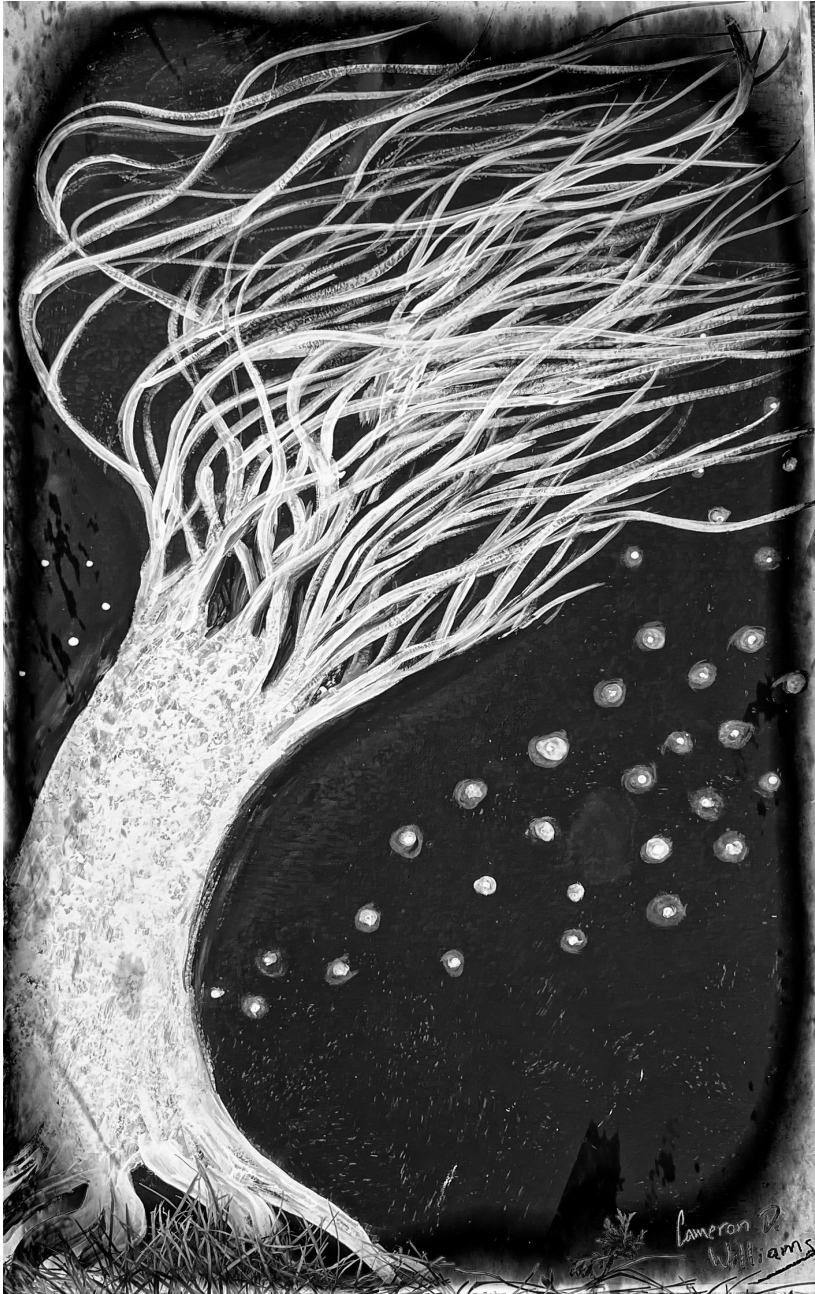
It is, it **MUST** be self-punishment.  
Who else could do this to me  
but my own subconscious?  
Punishment for my mistakes.  
My regrets.

What could possibly resolve this hate of mine?  
Perhaps my cruelest desire, vengeance?  
Or more?  
Perhaps all I need . . . is peace,  
through self-acceptance?

Or rather . . . could it be? . . .

Self-forgiveness.





## EVER - FLEETING

An instance of everything that ever was  
seems to pass quicker than I could comprehend.  
Everything that has been loved,  
Cherished, hated –  
it all fades so quickly.

I want something permanent, or rather, *untakeable*.  
Something that is mine and mine alone.

Many conversations I've had, I've forgotten.  
My memory, or mind, therefore,  
cannot be deemed as permanent or specifically mine,  
as I have shared pieces of intellect I possess with others.

At times I will purposely attempt  
to reduce my brain cells  
to forget this saddening requirement  
out of desire to fulfill my longings.  
This, of course, is unhealthy.

Concern for my health, or fear of harm,  
is what keeps this desire numb.

A contradiction of focus towards anything that is,  
in fact, not permanent.  
This contradiction, in turn,  
reminds me of my sorrows.

Not even that is permanent.

Is the longing for permanence itself permanent?  
No. It will fade like anything else.  
I am sure there is something simple that I am not noticing.  
Something ironic enough to truly be the answer.

One day, perhaps, I will know.  
Certainly however, not today.

While every black hole draws in light,  
new stars are eventually created.

*Cameron Williams*

## **OVERWHELMING**

In the dark, I sat.  
The rain poured on me.

I thought the rain would hide my tears,  
but I could still feel them.  
I sat in sorrow, begging for comfort.

Anything to bring me to peace.

I sat there, by myself,  
forced down by the weight of the rain and my clothes.

I cried and cried,  
seeking hope, love, some form of happiness  
to get me through this overwhelming sadness.

There I was, feeling unrepairable,  
until the tears stopped.  
I didn't believe they would.

When I looked up, I realized why.  
The clouds broke and let out sunlight.

When something is broken,  
it lets in light to places the light could not reach before.

The only way a wound heals is by breaking open.  
Light can only be reached when nothing blocks it.

If there was no darkness,  
how could we know what light was?

Everything that has been loved,  
cherished, hated –  
it all fades so quickly.

*Cameron Williams*

## 16

By 16,  
I want to have everything I've been wanting for years.  
A car,  
reliable friends,  
a good relationship,  
family, stable income,  
but more than anything else, I want freedom.

Freedom to make adult choices  
without the prejudice of  
"Oh you're a child, leave this to the grown-ups."  
Such a phrase is an intolerable disrespectful insult.

I simply wish to prove myself as mentally adequate.  
Am I rushing my life?  
No.  
I am but someone wishing to be acknowledged  
by society as an intellectual.

By 16, however,  
I will still be seen as unwise by adults  
who claim to be such.

Upon age 10  
I was already wishing to be 35.  
35 is the number which  
even the U.S. government respects.

Opportunities constantly present as one gets older.  
Jobs, places to visit,  
the possibility of having children.  
All of this is but a dream of who many call a child.

The concept which separates me most from this  
is quite unexpected.  
Ambition.

16 is the age where I may finally taste freedom,  
And the ability to choose my goals  
without being looked down upon.

## PARALYSIS

### *A PURE CAPTIVATION OF THE BODY*

During a time of sleep paralysis  
many find themselves in fear.

How strange, I thought.  
In this time I felt . . . wonder.

I couldn't move,  
concern edged my mind.

However, the foremost emotion  
was for me to investigate.

All I had been able to feel  
was a small part of the right side of my upper leg.

I attempted to move and could not.  
I thought to flex the part I could feel  
and the strangest event happened.

More of me awoke.

I was laying on my stomach, I knew for a fact.  
The head of one of my stuffed animals, Roxanne,  
fully awoke me.  
This however, was not the only thing that woke me.

My friend arrived from the hospital  
to announce he was back with a sprained wrist.

My words were overlapped and confusing,  
unable to thank him.  
He got the point, though.

Afterwards, I celebrated my awakening with sleep.

Is the longing for permanence itself permanent?  
No. It will fade like anything else.

*Cameron Williams*

Uplifting steps are rare,  
so you learn to cherish them.

*Cameron Williams*