Sam Casale

For my final project, I created a compilation of original music and poetry centered around my battle with mental illness, specifically in regards to seasonal depression and anxiety. This project, which I have titled “Forged by the Cold,” chronicles my own mental health in relation to the changing of the seasons and aims to capture the various stages of someone experiencing a mental crisis. While told through my own perspective, the overarching themes of fighting against and eventually coming to terms with one’s own state of self are universal. The denial of one’s own condition is heavily explored through song and poetry as the narrator speaks to a character continuously referred to as "you." This character represents ego, as a common trait in a variety of mental illness is the vilification and loathing of one’s own self. The selected work is titled “First Warmth (March 4th)” and occurs near the end of the project. Being the only piece to lack any words, this instrumental captures the feeling of peace and calmness of mind that words alone cannot describe.