



THE ANTHOLOGY

WRITERS IN THE SCHOOL

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The Anthology

Calhoun Writers in the Schools

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ISSUE FOUR: The Feathered Cougar

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The Anthology Issue 4

"Hope is the thing with feathers / that perches in the soul." - Emily Dickinson

"Poetry is an egg with a horse inside." - 3rd grader

As the pandemic of last spring became the pandemic of last spring and summer, became the pandemic of 2020 (and beyond), one of my chief concerns as I began planning to talk about poetry with Mrs. Taylor's EXPO students was - what's the point? What good could poetry, a new medium for most students and one which is often perceived as dauntingly cryptic, do for them? Wouldn't they benefit much more from something that would feel more familiar, some kind of writing which might feel more obviously gratifying? During one of the most formative years of their lives thus far, these students would absorb and respond to the pandemic and all its consequences, the murder of George Floyd and a nationally-reinvigorated reckoning with racial inequality, a contentious election season, and in February, a strange and distressing winter storm that knocked out power and water for days. At various points throughout the past year, many writers I know (and poets especially) expressed their disinterest in responding to the moment through writing, their skepticism about the capacity of the written word to adequately convey the pressures of the last several months (much less its capacity to actually *change* anything).

In short, I needn't have worried. During our first Zoom sessions together I wanted to emphasize that poetry is made of everyday stuff - our thoughts, our feelings, our friends, our family members, our pets - and that poetry isn't just a diaphanous little bunch of words that lives in a musty old literature or history textbook somewhere. How quickly these students took that notion to heart! In these pages you will find the full spectrum of human expression. Here, yes, are the reflections on what has been lost to the months spent in quarantine, the resultant sadness and regret. But here there are also odes (to cartoons, to friends, to food). Here there is love, anger, mystery, confusion. Above all there is humor and hope. As I have read and re-read these poems, I can't help but smile each time at the wit, the intelligence, and the good-natured spirit contained in these pages. Reader, I am so pleased to share these poems with you.

Oh, yes, that hope I mentioned. One of the poems we read this year (and one of the poems I was excited to find the students were familiar with) was the Emily Dickinson poem quoted above. I think you'll notice as you read through that 'hope,' in one form or another, weaves itself like a thread throughout much of the students' work. In the spirit of that hope despite often-dreary and ever-challenging circumstances, the special title for this volume of *The Anthology: Calhoun Writers in the Schools* is "The Feathered Cougar" issue. The title comes to us from Danny Ulyashev, a wonderful writer by the way, and I think it perfectly captures the effervescence of the Calhoun Cougars I had the immense pleasure of getting to write with over the past few months. The answer to the question that pestered me as the academic year began was ultimately answered in these students' own writing. Sometimes, the point of writing and sharing poetry is that it provides a way to carry on, to navigate our individual and collective trials. Or, in the words of the final poem of this volume from Wyatt Morin, "we will continue."

Charlie Milne

How to Fly

How do you fly?

You look up at the sky, it can be your own color

How do you fly?

You look for a butterfly sit and observe

How do you fly?

You fall over and over until you don't

How do you fly?

You can't

But you can try

You can't fly in your house

But you can fly in your mind

So why not?

why not try

why not live a good life?

why not live in a circle, or even be a spy?

Why not fly?

Jackson Sacharko

Trampoline 2: Electric Boogaloo

We jump as high as the sky
And go down as deep
As the sea
For none can stop thee

We battle and fight
And ask
What shall we do next
As we compliment the rest

We do our part
And hold down the fort
As we scream On Guard
And fight to dusk

As the hot day goes by
And sweat runs down our faces
We feel the bright sun
So time for some fun
We make rain come at us with our swimsuits on
To keep our clothes dry
And have some fun

The black surface is wet and we slip and slide
What was hot is now the purest of fun

The time goes by
But what feels like minutes has been hours

As the sun goes down
And the sky goes black
We all beg for more time

But were told no so we leave our home
We say goodbye for now our trampoline

Jackson Sembroski

Even Smaller Details

Just pay attention to those small details.
sometimes they stick out like a sore thumb,
other times they are harder to see. But if
you just lean in a little bit and look closer,
then I think it becomes easier to see those
small details. Some of those details you
can see, but other details you can smell.
But I think that everyone should pay
attention to those small details.

Devon Estrada

Odes

Ode to all the cartoons I use to watch
Ode to the rhymes I always try to make
ode to people who don't like cake
and ode to hanel and Gretel who just got baked

ODE TO JOE ;)
ode to joe
who is joe you ask
Joe is yo mama
that joke never is bad

Rebeka Shull

Middle School

The fuzzies in the hoodie pocket,
The rain racing on the window,
String fraying on your lanyards,
Dirt gathered up on the floor,
The dry erase marker gathered up on the desk,
The rush from the crowd trying to get lunch,
Your long hair getting stuck on the metal parts of the plastic chair,
The difference from the smell of each room,
The cold metal bars that hold up the desk,
Always really cold rooms,
Mystery stains on the ceilings,
Clocks ticking,
Writing on the bathroom stalls,
The quiet room when everyone's reading,
Some people being anxious about giving a presentation,
The volume in the cafeteria is always loud,
Being early to school and having to wait outside in the cold,
Seeing kids eat their hoodie strings,
Or pencil tapping on the desk,
Getting bored from listening to the teachers talk all day,
Some kids having large, bulky backpacks and other kids not having one at all,
This is middle school.

Danny Ulyashev

What I Will Never Forget about Middle School

Praise, Muse, the algebra teacher,
Way up in his classroom on the third floor,
As he passionately explains to his class, both through a Zoom meeting and in-person,
About the difference between exponential growth and decay.
Praise the squirrel that happened to be scurrying around on the window ledge just then.
“It looks like Mr. Squirrel wanted to learn algebra again today,” the teacher says,
As the entire class cranes their necks to see the bushy brownish-orange tail
And small, beady black eyes that poke from behind the frame of the large window.

Do not praise, Muse, the sticky wads of chewed gum on the undersides of desks,
The feeling of annoyance and dread that you feel when your reaching fingers make contact with
A flattened, putty-like object stuck to the bottom of painted wooden boards.
You almost feel like going to wash your hands, but you are too preoccupied to care much about it.

Sing, Muse, of the steady rhythm of the metronome in the band hall,
As the Wind Ensemble plays through their warm-up packet at the beginning of class.
Sing of the constant plink-plink-plink that is heard best by none other than the oboe players.
Very few in number, they are seated right below the giant speaker from which this metronome echoes.
Sing of the band director conducting at the very front of the cavernous room,
As the band progresses through their articulation exercise.
As quarter notes turn to eighth notes, and eighth notes turn into sixteenth note triplets,
He adjusts the roar of over 20 instruments
With phrases of “use faster air!” and “think of the note in your mind before you play it”.

Do not praise, Muse, the damp, musty odor of the upper Jones building bathroom,
And the hateful, inappropriate words scratched into the wooden bathroom stall walls.
Do not praise of the broken soap dispenser in the cafeteria bathroom,
Which sometimes went for weeks without any soap in it.

Tell, Muse, of the little tree by the tennis courts,
With its curved shape, bent slightly over the edge of Mounts Street,
As if trying to catch its breath after a long run.
Tell of the tall pecan trees standing like guards in front of the ancient brick facade of the Main Building,
The very same easily-recognizable facade that greets me every day at 8’oclock in the morning,
Something that will always remind me of my middle school years.

Arianna Brister

The Millipedes That Move the Room

I am sure,

very sure,

that there are many millipedes that haunt this school.

They hide in the crevices when people are watching.

All the nooks and crannies are their own dimension, and they come out when we blink,

sleep,

talk,

just when we aren't paying attention.

I know this because of the inhuman prints on the windows, the rug in second period that seems to move further up the room each day, the crawling all over my body I feel during big projects.

The millipedes are in the lamp that I swear was 3 inches to the left an hour ago.

The millipedes are in the gum on the breezeway, blackened from age and filth.

The millipedes are in my body, feasting on my thoughts.

They curl up around my brain like a boa constrictor.

My words get choked up and can't quite leave my body the right way.

The millipedes chew on the sweet parts, and things get lost in translation.

When silence hangs in the air like a fog, the millipedes are quick to latch on.

I know others see them too,

because sometimes I see someone holding their head in their hands like they'll lose it if they let go.

The millipedes move the room and make the walls close in on all of us.

On some days, when I'm feeling brave, I rip all their legs off and make them into serpents that cannot burrow into my mind and poke around my guts.

He deals with them by talking to his friends. Holding the millipedes in the light helps them die faster. Sometimes you need to ask people for pesticide.

She deals with them by closing off the hole that they slither from. It's good to deal with a problem from the source.

I know someone who locks the millipedes in a paper prison with a pencil.

Everyone just does whatever works for them.

But, I hope that someday, the world will lack the millipedes that lay eggs inside our eyes and throats and make our heads into their nests.

Jackson Burgess

The 'Men's' Locker Room

what a place to be
what a place to see,
It's also the place you pee

All the Dudes left and right
and If one has a towel you're in quite the plight

If they're weird and know how to tickle
I got to say you're in quite the pickle

Thwap thwap the towel goes
And if you look in the mirror there's
A red lump upon your nose

Max Briggie

You don't know what you've got till it's gone

You don't know what you've got till it's gone.
The times where we would run and play and giggle
about silly little things.
"Be home at 9" Mother called from the window,
Play with friends without a care in the world.

That was a long time ago,
Now you're expected to act like an adult,
Responsibility, care, do this and do that, homework, school, work.
No break
No friends
Nothing...
Go home and play,
Go out late,
Have sleepovers.

The Plague, It changed everyone.
You get sick, and die.
I just want to go back to the good times.
Pool parties, sports games, sleepovers, sleeping past noon, going back to school.
My friends are not the same.
I smile because I don't want them to see the pain in my face.
If you want to stop you have to put down the shovel
Don't you remember?
The good things we had
The relationship with your friends where you could sit in silence comfortably.

I just wish that we had that again
Together, laughing, joy
Now, we are
Alone, crying, sadness
Don't you remember?
We have changed...
You don't know what you've got till it's gone.

Joshua Swift

There is a plague that makes

There is a plague that makes
us sick

We stay home like turtles in their shells

The president acts like nothing happened like the world
is fine

Well if it

is then i'm the queen of england

But now a new president
arrived

The country is mending like a stitch being sown through torn cloth

how happy the world is ,

the lines waiting for the life saving cure the brings the world justice for we are saved the joy
of seeing friend and family once again for

Soon we will be free from the bonds of illness that hold us down

Wyatt Morin

Communism

Communism is like a field of potatoes

Your attention your work is needed everywhere

Four healthy full potatoes or a field of regular potatoes

Which can you sell for more.

Efficiency is better than comfort

Hailey Ramirez

My Room

My room is one of the most special places in my house.
The warm autumn smell of pumpkin.
The cozy feel with my yellow dim lights.
I can taste all of the meals I have eaten in there.
On the other side of the door, my brother is yelling at his
game, but on my side I play my music.
My room is one of the most magical places that I can be.

Madison Carter

Ukulele

Thin wood
shines with a glimmering sparkle.
Every tiny divet in its body,
Only visible when the light hits it just right.
The way every line and mark in the wood,
intersects with another.
A pleasing pattern.

Four strings.
Each one with a unique sound
Sound
The string never fails to produce a
Sound so beautiful.
As elegant as a melody a songbird never fails to deliver,
As smooth as weathered rocks at the bottom of a rushing river.

A sweet song, no matter the tune, the chord, the strum.

Claire O'Brien

Dog Days

The smell of stinky dogs fill the room and dog breath smells rotten
The silky smooth touch of dog hair on my skin as I feel him cuddle up in my arms.
I hear him sigh and cuddle back into my hands
The taste of coffee in the morning
I look down at my two dogs, my iced coffee and it's the perfect morning.

Eiyala Sawadivong

Diary of the Dog

Dear diary,
I ate the trash again.
The bald ape was very angry with me.
What am I supposed to do when
the neighbors knock on the door?
Sister got petted. I was jealous.

Dear diary,
Sister marked her territory again.
The bald ape came into the house
with a limp and was angry with her.
I got petted.
Today was a good day.

Dear diary,
The bald ape gave me a chewy
before he left for school.
I ate it and proceeded to devour the
recycling as well.
Sister marked her territory again.
The bald ape was pissed.

Dear diary,
I slept in a chair today.
The bald ape didn't catch me, luckily.
On the other hand, he might have suspicions,
but he didn't act on them.
Sister barked at the window a lot. Nothing was there,
I checked. Twice. Sister is annoying.

Dear diary,
I slept in a chair again. It was nice.
Sister was good again today.
We both got long walks when the bald ape got home.
I saw another dog through the fence, and tried to chase it.
The bald ape was mad.
Today was a good day.

Dear diary,
The bald ape sent me outdoors to take a crap.
I did as such then let him know
I was finished by slamming myself into the
Door repeatedly. When it didn't open,
I proceeded to lick my genitals.
When he finally let me in, I
Sprinted about the house.
I then licked my genitals. For three hours.

Rebeka Shull

Christmas at a Second Home

This is like a second home for me.
The smell of dogs and cigarettes aren't typically what you think of for a home.
Typically you may think of warmth and that good feeling for a home,
Or the energetic noises from younger siblings as they play with their activities of enjoyment.
But to me this is a second home when I visit once every year with my family.
I think of the joy in the air when I visit,
Or the sight of everyone opening presents together all curious about what's it going to be.
You don't hear anything because you're all caught up in the moment,
Looking at everyone around the room trying to see their reactions,
Getting that good feeling inside of you.
Once you snap out of it your hear the noise of the paper getting crumpled and thrown away
As well as the feeling of joy because it's time to go, pack up and leave.

Tieryan Quintero

Children Screaming

Children screaming in my ears

I wish they would shut up

Why won't they?

It was like static on a TV after

Your dad passed out for the fifth time

Or like when your mom would cut her finger

While making a microwave dinner

You never understood how she did that

Children of old are nothing more than

Cocky liars and children of young can only suck

On a pacifier...

A wilting lilac sits upon a table

You can smell the dead forgivingness in it

And you can almost touch the dead life that was once lively

A child knocks the flower down and is punished greatly

But does it really matter if the flower was bound for death

anyway?

In a world filled with death and despair should someone really have to

Take the blame for something they could not contain?

Maybe we should name it mortis which means death in latin

Carolina Cole

Mi Casita

I open the door, hearing the bells ring, notifying that someone has entered.
When I sit down it's bouncy, almost like a bunny in the springtime.

Seeing the shiny aluminum foil
wrapped around the hard shell makes my mouth water.

I open it and take a bite, hearing the loud crunch of the crisp corn tortilla,
And feeling the grease run down the side of my hand.

It tastes like home and colby jack cheese.

Closing time.
The smell of lemon Pine-Sol fills the air.
Hearing the bang of dishes reminds me it's almost time to leave.

I walk very carefully on the wet, freshly mopped floor.
Going in the back, I admire all that is done behind the scenes.
The words of another language enter my ears and fill my mind.

Goodbye, see you tomorrow when I hear the bells ring again.

Antonio Martinez

Love

I love my Family
More than words can say
More than I can even tell you
I love them all to the moon and back

I love my mom
She cooks me good food
She cleans even when she doesn't want to
In a place that I call home

I love my dad
He goes to work before the sun rises
He comes back when im asleep
The only thing I want from him
Is to spend time with him

I love my brothers
Even if their annoying sometimes
They always help me when I need it
My older brother helps me with my homework
And my little brother plays with me,

I love my family.

Jocelyn Brynard

How to Commit ☺ ☺ ☺

*A four-step guide to committing yourself to an idea.
(IMPORTANT STEPS HIGHLIGHTED)*

*The first step is to find an idea:
shape yourself around it, you will have to become it!*

*Second is to tell your mother:
She will laugh and say "It is a phase"
You will know it is not.*

*Third is to tell your father:
He will not care. He does not care.*

*Fourth is to sell your soul to The Devil:
He will assist you in your journey.*

*Good luck!
The Commitment Company
"We are committed to your life!"*

!!WARNING: SCHIZOPHRENIA AND PSYCHOTIC EPISODES HAVE BEEN REPORTED FROM PAST CUSTOMERS. DO NOT LET THIS CONCERN YOU!!

Arianna Brister

How to Lose Yourself

Tell yourself "one more day,
just one more day,
I must stay strong for one more day."
Tell yourself it will be over if you just get yourself together.
Tell yourself it will be over when you are slumped over,
crying like a small animal. A mouse.
Perhaps even a mouse has more dignity than you at this point.
You slave yourself to the next day.
"I'll keep going,
tomorrow surely can't be that bad."
You will be right. It's not bad, and that's exactly what makes it bad.
It's not good either.
It's just another day marked off the calendar.
Another wisp of productivity.
The energy is soaring out of your body like angels, but you don't even know where it is.
Tell yourself it will be okay, and it will all be worth it.
Will it with all your heart and soul, that you're sobbing at night for a cause.
Pray that you have given up the essence of what makes you you
for something that matters.
Like success, money, a partner, friends, fame.
Convince yourself they matter, even though they don't.
Lose yourself in aspirations that are not yours.
Follow someone else's dreams and lie to yourself.
Be someone that the voice that says to love yourself will hate,
all so that you can be one liar amongst many, crawling on top of one another like crabs.

Danny Ulyashev

Frustration Is the Other Thing with Feathers

Frustration is like the peck of a feisty, impatient chicken,
The uncontrollable feeling that comes after you spill an entire liter of water or half a pound of feed...
Directly onto your newly-washed pants.

You can only groan, sigh, and shout "Cleo, **DON'T DO THAT!!!**"
At the bewildered hen who'd just pecked you square in the back with her long, bony beak.
Instead of critically wondering "Does she do that because she's interested in my clothes?",
Or "maybe she's just impatient because I was blocking her way into the coop?",
The frustration shrouds my mind, and I can only think "**Why won't that chicken ever learn?!**".

As I storm back into the house,
I step onto several freshly-made chicken droppings, located right on our patio:
The one place where they are never allowed to be.
The poop leaves a rancid, brownish-green smear on the bottoms of my shoes,
And suddenly I feel almost angry enough to turn on the hose and spray water at our hens for it.

But as the water stains evaporate and feed dust brushes off,
The feeling melts back into the farthest corner of my brain,
And calm returns.

Silver Rahmlow

Icarus

How do you know if you're flying or falling?
Because I may have flown
Just a bit too close to the sun
Did I go too far?
Did I do something I shouldn't have done?
Should I have lived in ignorance until
Something forced me to open my eyes?
Because it was my choice to put on the wings
Made of fragile clouds and dreams of freedom --
I didn't have to fly.

but the warm sun of independence and knowledge was so tantalizing
and I was so very chilled
I flew higher and higher despite the warnings
the warm rays began to evaporate the clouds
turned from comforting to blazing, flaming
the dreams melted like fragile wax
the feathery clouds fell out of the framework
I think -- I couldn't quite tell.
I still don't know if I'm flying or falling --
the light and warmth clouded my judgement too much to tell
if my wings melted, or if I fell.
it was my choice to know what I know.
I didn't have to fly.

now the secrets of my own little universe
are all that i see
and i am blinded to the rest of the world
knowing what i know now i still ask myself
am i flying or am i falling
was i right to want to taste the fire of the sun
was i right to bite from the blazing cake of knowledge
because if im not that is my fault
it was my choice to don these wings
it was my choice to discover myself
it was my choice to try to help
and now i know im falling
alas.
i didnt have to fly.

Antonio Martinez

Colors

I feel the blue wind passing over me,
And the turquoise oxygen that I was breathing,
I could smell the black writing of my chromebook,
I could hear the magenta language,

And the green dream,
I could see the white clear gas,
Of a fart,
I could also smell the red disgusting fart,

I could feel the fresh pink breath of a gum,
And I could see the best baby blue days
Of my life.

Charlie Milne

Orange Weather

Orange weather
Hangs around
Until it's called by a song bird
Who lives on a tree
Outside a house

A traditional house
One on a nice neighborhood
Where no one will ever question it's place
One where there's never police
One where no one's suspicious
Except for the weather

The house that once had screams of joy and anger
The house that once was brought back to life
And now sits
Sits

And waits
For the weather
Waiting for it to come
Looking at the clock
Watching the strawberries
Wilt
Die
End

And the house knows that the weather won't come back
But to cope, it tricks its mind
Into sitting
Tranquilly
Seemingly knowing
It'll return

The house can feel it
Taste it
But the weather is gone
Just like the house

Bye --

The clock has been ticking
And it has been rotting
Tired, from all it's work
The clock has seen everything
And it knows what the house doesn't

The weather that brought the house life
And lost it too

The weather that left
Came from within a house

The weather isn't the wind or the rain or the clouds or the sun

The weather is the house

And a songbird called it

Tieryan Quintero

Green Guilt

My eyes traced the broken bottle as I dropped the wood
I had used to to smash the broken lies of a life
full of green bottles and flowers of blood.
Maybe the sea foam colored tiled floor of the chapel
I danced in would break in
once it realized the pains of the guilt.

You took my life away from those you needed it
With the instinct of a green tiger pouncing on a
Helpless mouse who I portrayed as if I was a actor
Of the church's play I once danced in, You broke the
Glass we once cheered over a table full of
Family and pigs who followed your every word

The blood ran down my hand as I picked up the glass
And carved the words of yourself into the green wall of
The bedroom we shared for years and years. My dress now red
And light green. I walked down the alleyway of a hallway we called a
Castle...It was all the lies that had built this castle and nothing
More.

I lied to those of our mercy and killed those who never wanted
More than what they had, The guilt I feel for my deeds are
Unforgivable and for I sit in this green castle on a green hill and
Take my own life as a sacrifice to those I have hurt. I lay as I stare at the green
chandelier, sparkling with my green guilt

Carolina Cole

My Blue Voice

My voice is like Avatar
walking in Pandora.
It has the sound of
blueberries, freshly picked
from the bush outside my
window. My voice crashes and
rises like the waves of the
ocean. It's as blue as the
chairs I get my hair stuck
on, but with a slight kindness
to it. My voice is blue but
not sad. It's the 5th color of
the rainbow. It's blue, even though you and
I don't physically see it. Unless
I ate a delphinium.

Braeden Clay

Love is like defusing a bomb

Love is like defusing a bomb.

You've got to know what

Strings to keep and which ones

To cut. However, whenever you

Cut one, there's a possibility that

It's wrong and can blow-up in

Your face. Love isn't for the weak.

It may just kill you.

Claire O'Brien

How to Tie a Shoe

First criss cross the laces,
Like your legs at kindergarten at carpet time,
Then tie,
Second make two bunny ears,
Like the ones I see running across my street,
Tie those together like the first tie,
Lastly, This is optional,
Like reading a book twice,
Repeat the bunny ears,
Like you put a song on repeat.
This is all helpful
Or you can just get
Velcrow shoes

Thomas Kleinsteuber

Maine

The smell of the pine needles,

The cozy little towns,

The green grass, in perfect unison with the blanket of leaves and pine needles up above.

Sticky tree sap annoyingly clings to my hands when I get back inside.

I don't notice

Whilst inside, I take a brief shower, followed by immediately going back outside again.

It was simple,

Yet, small details make it great.

Alexis Muniz

Oh, to Be a Japanese Macaque

Oh to be a Japanese Macaque
To live in very cold snowy areas
To be able to climb tall trees And to be adored
Being able to explore the forest and bathe in hot springs
Have tiny hands and a pink face
My whole body being wrapped up in a white soft furry jacket
To be able to know their ancestry and their ways of life
I want to go up one and have an unforgettable conversation
and to be able to hold an offspring
and to cherish it like its own mother
Oh to be a Japanese Macaque
to experience their pain in losing some of their lands
to know how they felt
when they had to experience their loved ones getting killed
I want to know how they keep on living and
be careful without getting in danger with our race
Oh to be a Japanese Macaque

Silver Rahmlow

The Fox

Red fox on the lake-bank, to where do you go?

What answers, memories, might you know?

Red fox on the lake-bank, from whence do you hail?

What secrets creep just past your tail?

Red fox on the lake-bank, who might you be?

What hidden things could you possibly see?

Red fox on the lake-bank, you mystify me.

Layora Corless

The Baby Deer

It is winter, the snow is falling, birch trees covered with ice and snow
The air is cool and crisp, the moon and stars shine brightly above
Outside there is bleakness but inside there is light and warmth
Christmas is sprouting in the distance sounds of noelle and sleighs on the roof
But the baby deer abandoned, next to the flow of water no one to feed it,
Is all alone, no Christmas for this child.
Its nose is red like Rudolph but its feet are cold. where is its momma? where has she gone? When will she
come back?..No, will she ever come back? The baby deer wails its sad tune awaiting his momma's call.
But she is long gone.

Thomas Kleinsteuber

Where I'm From

I am from The cold, crisp air
That feels minty cool when you breathe in
I am from The warm, cozy housing
To bundle up in when it gets too cold.
I am from Quiet calm streets with the distant buzz of streetlights
Oddly quiet yet calming.
I am from the sugary snacks
And enlightened faces.
I am from gray skies
Engulfing the world like a blanket
I am from layers of snow
Fluffy, crunchy snow
Many buildings clumped together
Houses on top of each other like a beehive
Walking to the bench at the park
With a *crinch crunch crinch crunch* under my feet
Taking all the little things in
That We take it all for granted
This is where i'm from
From cold
From calm
From happy.

Layora Corless

The Christmas Child

All alone, no Christmas for this child. Since I was young I could see peoples' flavors, their personalities

But that baby boy living on the streets looking for scraps. He's dirty he's grimy. But his flavor is that of a white rose and a green one, as well as a peach. Peculiar I was with the florist the other day and she told me a white rose means innocence and a green one means life.

Strange a baby boy on the streets with the best flavor I have ever seen.. Well I do have a few extra coins. I could... hmm, yes I quite like that idea.

There will be Christmas for that lonely child, this year and the next. "Hello" I said to the boy he replied saying "yes" as though I had asked him a question. "I said hello" I told him "Did you mistake my words?" I asked. But he boldly said "I did not but can you please explain what someone's flavor is?"

When he said this I thought "Are we the same" and he replied with a "yes". So I took this Christmas child his name now Noel for Christmas and his last name the same as mine. The Christmas bells ring and we celebrate. The birth of a family.

Together now, Christmas for this child indeed.

Joshua Swift

Knowledge

An erasure of "Hurricane Harvey: A First Person Account" by Henny Ephron

utilized for life saving

prevent future

tropical

disaster

come to terms with the measure of loss

hopeful

help

Hailey Ramirez

Olivia

We are always together.

There is nothing to do ever.

We always play our favorite games.

Telling each other our stories.

Missing each other at school.

Always and forever my number one!

Braeden Clay

Chelsea

Chelsea is as sweet as the buckets
Of candy bring home on Halloween,
Except with none of the nausea. She's
Like the rainbow that comes out after
The misery of the dreary rainfall. Chelsea
Is like a fairy tale that you just can't seem
To get out your head. It's almost as if she's
Become a part of you, like a happy virus. She's
Like a soft cloud that seems to hover over you.
Like an ice cream cone that never melts. And if
There's one thing I know it's this: I love ice cream.

Jocelyn Brynard

I Was Never Good with Words

My friend, considered
More in my eyes. He is
The voice that says
“Don’t do that”
In my head. I wonder
Why he decided to be friends
With me, but maybe
I shouldn’t question.

He is like a sky,
Bright. And his voice is
Strong, loud. That of a lion.
He is not masked. Not the
Anonymous face
I have written about.
He is the first flower in the
Bloom of spring, first to talk
And say “Hello!”

He is not the cold of winter,
His words do not cut.
His words feel like the
Breeze of spring,
A sense of reality but said
In a kind way.
He does not care what we think.

Madison Carter

Two Days

Glancing at the floor as we walk
I notice the speckled tiles zoom beneath us,
As our pace quickens.
We're almost out,

Almost free.

My eyes spot the door and I turn over to
My friend,
We share a grin and
Dash
Towards the door.

The chilly December air tickles my skin
And flows through my hair as we
Continue to run away.
Running away from the place we won't be seeing for another
Two days.

Ayumi Garza

Friends

Talking making jokes.

Poking fun.

Don't know when we're done.

No idea of the time.

Thinking of my next line.

Or the ties that will be severed.

For this is my pressure.

Max Briggie

At Home

Ahh saturday morning at home,
The smell of lemon cake and milk

The sweet tasting honey on my toast
The sound of the church bell ringing every hour
The Beautiful tulips blooming

For it was my birthday
And all was quiet

My father calls for breakfast in Dutch "Ontbijt is klaar!"
I sit down and listen
I eat and drink the milk and cake

I sit there quietly, peacefully
Waiting for people to arrive to my party

I hear a faint knock on the door
It was the mailman
With my hopes up it would be my friends
I rushed to the door
But no one was there

I don't mind having a quiet birthday
It does not bother at all
I just wanted to see if anyone would notice how beautiful the world really is

Alexis Muniz

Birthday

Today is an ordinary day for everyone else.

“But today is a special day for me.

I am very thrilled that today is the day I become older than yesterday!”

That's what I would've said if I was 8.

But now today feels the same as every other day.

I don't get as excited as I used to.

Many get excited about presents wrapped
with colorful paper with a very shiny bow on top.

But I don't.

Many say I changed over time but I feel the same.

Today is an ordinary day for everyone else.

I am “everyone else”

Timothy Stuart

Timeless Tales

Every time they talk
Every time they walk

Every time they Chant ChopSticks
I feel it in my bones
But now I know
every time It never ends

Ayumi Garza

The Intertwined Fate

PING PING PING BEEP The sound of fate is near.

Not for one, nor two or three

for all are affected

One drop

One flap

One to make all

And all make none

Well at some point

None will make one

One, one tiny minuscule thing

Will change the fate of time

Time, what is time anyway

Well time is you and me

Time is all one and none

Time is loved ones destined to go

Time and fate is all we have

And all time and fate have, is us

In a macharmonal cycle

Life Deaf Life

A dangerous game with time and fate

one as one

Timothy Stuart

Forever Lost

Forever Lost, Lost in my mind

I am lost in the sound of a song that was writing in me

I am lost within the memories, that shape and make me

I am lost in the days that just fly by

And I am Lost in the time that NEVER stops

For once I was alone but now I am lost

Devon Estrada

Paralyzed

Paralyzed scared to live, but scared to die
life is pain I buried mine
but it's still alive
where am I?
don't feel nothing wonder why
the race of life, time passes by
I sit back I watch it
Hands in my pockets
just watch 'em

underwater but I feel like I'm on top of it
I don't know what the problem is
I'm in a box
who locked me in
running out of oxygen
I'm paralyzed
Where are my feelings?
I no longer feel things
I know I should

Jackson Sembroski

Feeling Lost

I look up
my face wet, rain pours down from the sky
Like ideas, coming and going.
Like people living and dying.
I think about everything and everyone I lost.
Like losing your jacket on a cold day,
You always feel lost without the thing you want most.

Jackson Sacharko

Sky

With my friends we are high as the sky on the black surface
We call "a place of dreams"
Drowning in water as deep as the sea
And smells like chlorine
We fear we might die as
We battle with swords and scream "on guard"
And end the day having a good day.

Wyatt Morin

Continue

Though there is no hope we will continue
We will weather the storm
The Storm Blows
And we persevere
We say I'm stayin' Here
You will change me
But we will continue.

We hear danger coming
Then we see it
We say that ain't so bad
then it stares us in the eye
We saw it coming
bright as day
and now?
It bombards us with crushing blows
and it's gone, walked away
don't stop worrying until danger comes again

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