

FIRST PRIZE

A Second Later

one moment she was walking
down an empty street
late at night with no light
the quiet sound of feet

the next moment a car appeared
the driver far past drunk
forgot to stop a body drop
quickly thrown in the trunk

an accident turned to crime
from a small mistake
driving fast with eyes glassed
foot far from the brake

her parents may never know
what happened on that street
missing blonde dumped in a pond
a stain on the concrete

if she had gotten a ride home
if she'd looked before she crossed
months and years of endless tears
for a daughter who went lost

by Charlotte Cherkewski (Grade Nine)
Waterloo Collegiate Institute
Waterloo, Ontario



FIRST PRIZE

In Pallid Light

The ocean is halcyon tonight; near many a neglected sand dune,
The flowing plane in pallid light reflects the mournful midnight moon.

Near many a neglected sand dune, rippling surface of waters clear
Reflects the mournful midnight moon that's in its own turn dark and drear.

Rippling surface of waters clear, carrying a song of anguish
That's in its own turn dark and drear, is lifeless as the waves languish.

Carrying a song of anguish, the moon's reflection, faint but fair,
Is lifeless as the waves languish with a sorrow beyond despair.

The moon's reflection, faint but fair, shifted by pebbles tossed to land,
With a sorrow beyond despair, that adorns the lorn dunes of sand.

Shifted by pebbles tossed to land, again, once more, again, once more,
That adorns the lorn dunes of sand; the surface sends grief to the shore.

Again, once more, again, once more, the note of woe creeps from the deep;
The surface sends grief to the shore, lulling the waters back to sleep.

The note of woe creeps from the deep; and sent to the waves' bounds afar,
Lulling the waters back to sleep is the fate foretold by a star.

And sent to the waves' bounds afar, spreading before one's turbid eyes,
Is the fate foretold by a star; what's beneath the sad moonlit skies?

Spreading before one's turbid eyes, the ocean is halcyon tonight.
What's beneath the sad moonlit skies? The flowing plane in pallid light.

by Shawn Chang (Grade Ten)
J.N. Burnett Secondary School
Richmond, British Columbia



FIRST PRIZE

Madame Deficit

The queen
In her starched lace
And powdered wig
Her white evening gown
And gold and jewels
Ran through the courtyard

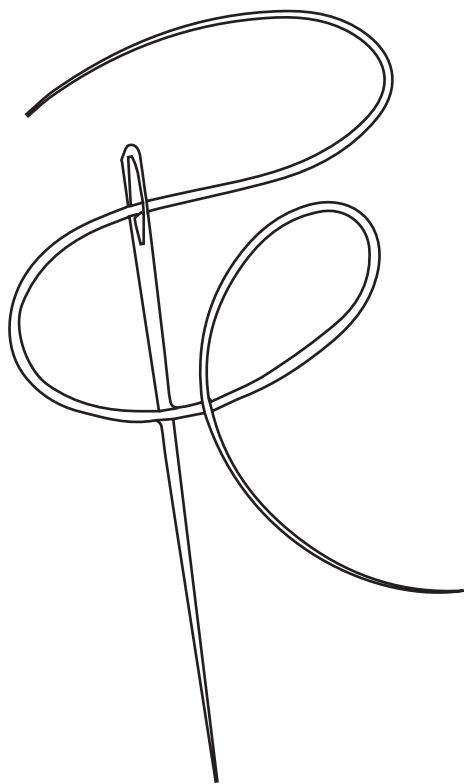
The yelling in the distance
Reminded her
Of the yelling
In the streets
That she had ignored

Her white shoes
Stained black with mud
The dainty hem of her gown
Discoloured
She lost
The white veil of innocence
That she had once
Hidden behind

And as the townspeople
Whom she had once
Looked upon
Seen starving
Battered
Killed
Descended upon her
Her pure white skin
Blossomed red

by Annie Lotochinski (Grade Eleven)
Swift Current Comprehensive High School
Swift Current, Saskatchewan





FIRST PRIZE

The Tapestry

I see them in his shoulders and
I see them in her smile,
I see them in the sidewalks
Lining every urban mile.

I see them in his collared shirt
And in her Sunday best;
The strings that push at every step
And pull at every rest.

These unseen tethers will not break,
They move in patterns indirect;
The spaces of this faded world
Are here for them to intersect.

The question is, what guides them?
Their anchor points I cannot see;
Their greater purpose still remains
An enigmatic mystery.

For do they tow us fully
In the waters of this stream?
Unconscious in the currents
Of a never-ending dream?

Or do they trail behind us?
Do we jerk them as we wish?
Are they cosmic fishing lines
And we their unrequited fish?

I do not know, I only know
That when they meet they blend
Experiences, memories
That linger to the very end.

Across this infinite divide,
To one another we are tied,
Faithless limbs in harmony;
The universe's symphony.

by Anthony Tan (Grade Twelve)
Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute
Kitchener, Ontario



SECOND PRIZE

Worries

Sitting by the window waiting
waiting for you to come home
home is a place of comfort
comfort in a place with shalom

As hours pass by
by the time night falls
falls into my heart
heart as loud as brawls

Still waiting there at dawn
dawn pouring out the sun
sun slowly rising as I wonder
wonder if you're having fun

Now I am desperate for your return
return into embracing arms
arms full of warmth and joy
joy that's yours is a charm

Where are you
you are my intention in this world
world of both darkness and beauty
beauty of a dancer when she twirled

Memories of you are woven
woven deeply in my soul
soul that is searching for light
light is its only goal

I have counted up these moments throughout the days
days of loneliness, aching for your presence
presence that has been taken away
away to somewhere, leaving me longing so

So many years have passed like this
this is what I want you to know
know that I am still waiting
waiting for you to come home

by Ivy Tran (Grade Nine)
Meadowlark Christian School
Edmonton, Alberta



SECOND PRIZE

How to Fly

When you think about flying, what comes to your head?
Maybe birds? Or planes? Or insects instead?
Believe it or not, this “flying” I’ve done,
And, just maybe, I don’t have to be the only one.

Let me tell you, it’s simple: I mount my old horse
After I’ve groomed him up clean, and shining, of course!
Then I whisper quite softly a magical word
That only he understands and can barely be heard.

When he tosses his head, I smile quite wide,
For we are off on our whimsical ride.
Slowly at first, we must make sure we’re ready—
Flowing smoothly and breathing steady.

But, in a moment, he’s running as fast as can be,
And we’re off, off! That horse and me.
The feel in my soul, the wind in his mane,
Two different creatures with passions the same.

Now, imagine this part, if you can, if you will,
It feels as though we’ve run up a steep hill.
But there is no hill, only fields as we rise
Higher and higher, into the skies.

I hold tight as we follow the wind’s steady lead,
Whispering praise to my breezy old steed.
We trample the clouds, this could never get old!
But soon we’re so high that our faces grow cold.

Sighing, I whisper the same magic word.
My friend flicks his ears to show he has heard.
We start down; soon, he gently touches the ground.
Slowing, and slowing, I hear his hooves pound.

He halts and I sigh; it’s time go home.
All things come to an end, as both of us know.
I slide off and hug him, my heart still soars high.
An apple, a farewell; that, friend, is how to fly.

by *Calise Jontz* (Grade Ten)
Anchor Academy
Salmon Arm, British Columbia



SECOND PRIZE

Boxed Home in a Sunny Field

I rested a hand on your polished surface,
Breathing in the antique wood, ghoulishly grinning.
Yet I dreaded trying you out, climbing in,
Tongue flicking at imaginary fangs, a sweep of cape;
Closing the lid into the tight deep dark, the everlasting night,
Costco lights like many stars—
Gone.

A laugh, making children shriek at my Transylvanian rising,
But that's not what sprung me up; rather,
Fearing a nailed lid, my age-old terror, panicked breathing at the thought.
Whispers of memory, at finality.
That nightmare waiting beyond the light, to be resigned to;
A lonely, broken ship into the sea mist.

I knew buying this home would be hard—but
Must mortgages make the tears fall, the palms sweat?
They sold you well: for a fair park in God's acre, with iron gates,
Quiet neighbours, fresh flowers—cut.
Mercifully, there will be few children next door,
Only their little, uncomprehending feet plodding above. . . .

I saw the bodies once in Mexico, retrieved from the desert,
Lank hair and shrunken skin,
And not but their rubber rain boots and clunky belts to say
That once they were quite like I; and I wonder
That you don't see those pale fists desperately pounding
At the inner lid as soil pours in,
Suffocating,

Or the bloody marks of split fingernails scratching at the wood,
Soothed at the end by that rich velvet lining, luxury at the last—
For here they aren't caressed by desert sands—
Plush against bones;
In ashes rippling with dust and maggot feet, running down
The disintegrated weave, crawling into my eyes.

by Sophie Charron (Grade Eleven)
Ashbury College
Ottawa, Ontario



SECOND PRIZE

Existence of Unreal Things

It's hard to believe that your body
is just a conglomeration of atoms and molecules,
dominant and recessive genes,
so beautiful you can't be real
and fraught with endless uncertainty.

But I see you. I see blue eyes,
half smirk, the stars
falling in unison when you sigh.

Hard to believe you
when you prove the existence of unreal things—
things to be ruined if they're ever touched.

You are beautiful in the dark,
a masterpiece in an after-hours gallery.
You are the disappearing sun, the unseen universe.

You are all
of these things
when I don't see you.

In the fractured morning,
full of too tired and too sad,
you look just like I imagine
the city of Rome once did
so very long ago,
where the skies were the colour of hell-flames,
but it looked so lovely—

beautiful,
on fire,
and just about to crumble.

by Samantha Santoro (Grade Twelve)
De La Salle College "Oaklands"
Toronto, Ontario



THIRD PRIZE

Disappearing Act

I stand in front of my class
Dreading this—and *all*—presentations.
I imagine disappearing.
Thoughts swirl like a tornado,
Creating chaos in my mind.

My arms begin to shake and shrink.
My eyes bug out in incredulity
As bones shorten,
Shift
And reshape.
My spine extends in painful lengths,
Unfurling a spiral tail.

Classmates stare
In shock as I transform
Before their eyes.
A chameleon.

I scream but no sound emerges;
No one can hear me,
See me.
My scaly exterior allows me to blend
Into my surroundings.

I have actually disappeared.

by Alexandra Williams (Grade Nine)
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Corner Brook, Newfoundland



THIRD PRIZE

Snow Day

Warm light peeks through the blinds on my window
When I open my eyes.
My feet hit the ground
As I jump out of bed,
And like the radiant sunlight,
I peek through the window.

I see white
Everywhere.
The road that is usually bustling with cars
Sleeps under its white blanket.
The neighbours' houses are like cakes
That have been frosted white.
The snowflakes float down from the sky,
Sprinkling white
Everywhere.

Much like the snow
Drifting over land,
My mind drifts.
Numb fingers build a snowman
With a beaming, crooked smile.
Adrenaline races through my veins
As I speed down the hill on my trusty old sled.
I smell the sweet aroma of homemade hot chocolate
With floating marshmallow boats.

A smile fills me up as I think:

Snow day.

by Katia Hughes (Grade Ten)
Colonel Gray Senior High School
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island



THIRD PRIZE

When I Was a Child

Once I was young, free
I traded it away, not realizing the cost
I was who I wanted to be
Now that child has been lost

Now I have stumbled into adulthood
And now I am trapped
I traded away my childhood
Now I must adapt

I must now be responsible
I wish I could again be free and wild
I'd trade anything if it were possible
To once again be a child

Now I have stumbled into adulthood
And now I am trapped
I traded away my childhood
Now I must adapt

When you're young you pretend
Pretend to be a grown-up
When the pretends come to an end
You've been tricked into growing up

Now you have stumbled into adulthood
And now you are trapped
You traded away your childhood
Now you must adapt

It happens to us all
We all lose it one day
The freedom from when you're small
You grow and it goes away

Now we have stumbled into adulthood
And now we are trapped
We traded away our childhood
Now we must adapt

by Holly Hamilton (Grade Eleven)
Kitsilano Secondary School
Vancouver, British Columbia



THIRD PRIZE

Confident Confusion

Quiet, tranquil,
My mind focused on Mussolini,
Nothing but the chime of my old, brown pendulum clock
Within earshot.

Echoes off the walls,
Throughout the hall,
Sound like the voice of my mother,
But I couldn't quite make out
The message.

"Get down here!"
Both hands first,
I lift myself off the floor
And scurry downstairs.

A look of desperation and confusion
Comes across her crinkled eyebrows.
"What is it?" I exclaim.
"She is gone, we need to find her."

Serenity, confidence,
My mind is at ease;
That's all I feel.
But why? I should be worried.

It doesn't make sense.
The numbness comes over me,
As this has happened many times before,
And she always comes back.
She always comes back. . . .

by Emily Campbell (Grade Twelve)
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Vancouver, British Columbia

