

Spring 2019

Caverns: Kentucky Middle School Poetry (Volume 2, 2019)

Roxanne M. Spencer Editor

Western Kentucky University, roxanne.spencer@wku.edu

Kelly Hancock Associate Editor

Cynthia Houston Associate Editor

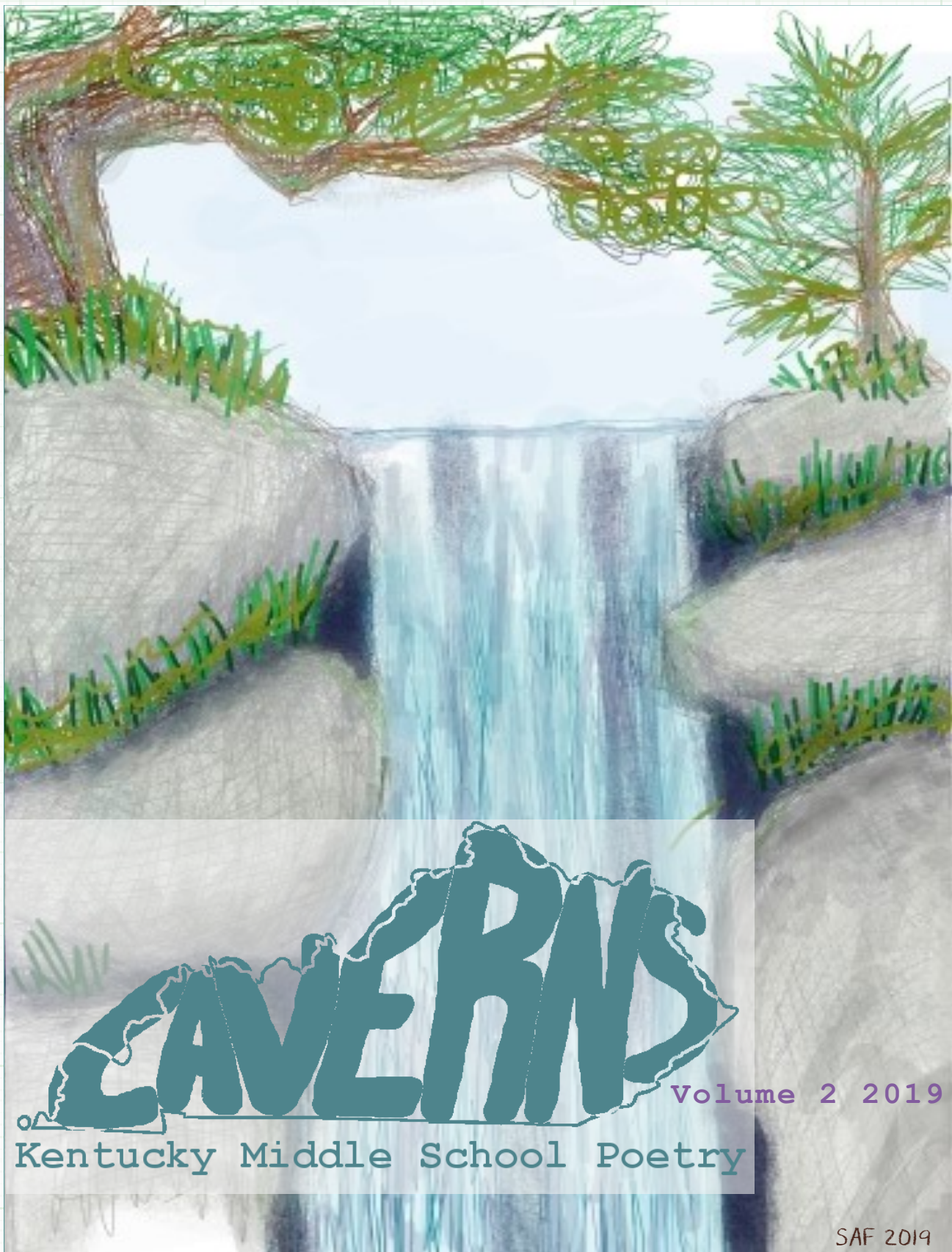
Amanda Kennedy Associate Editor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/caverns>

Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Spencer, Roxanne M. Editor; Hancock, Kelly Associate Editor; Houston, Cynthia Associate Editor; and Kennedy, Amanda Associate Editor, "Caverns: Kentucky Middle School Poetry (Volume 2, 2019)" (2019). *CAVERNS*. Paper 2.
<https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/caverns/2>



CAVERNS

Kentucky Middle School Poetry

Volume 2 2019

SAF 2019

Dear CAVERNS Readers,

We are very excited to present the second *CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry* collection! In this edition, you will find a collection of poems — and NEW! — flash fiction! — from middle school students throughout the Commonwealth, submitted during Spring 2018. The hardworking editorial board sorted through more than 150 submissions to find the poems that spoke to us most powerfully. Poems were solicited online through *Kentucky Teacher* and selected educator email lists. Our hope is for *CAVERNS* to be an annual collection of poetry by Kentucky middle school students. Our criteria for submission volume is available on the **Contributors** page (**page 85**).

The poems included in this volume represent openly expressed thoughts and emotions of middle school students. Selections were made based on the quality of the writing, and the editors did not discriminate based on content. Poems were submitted through the students' teachers, and parental permission was obtained before publication. Some poems treat disturbing topics that may be uncomfortable for some readers. We again include the list of **resources (page 77)** that may be helpful to parents and teachers for initiating discussions on difficult issues that are part of our young people's world today. See also our adapted **mini-lesson plans (page 81)**. We hope you find these useful for exploring poetry in your classrooms.

The editors would like to acknowledge the support of the Kentucky Reading Association and the Western Kentucky Reading Chapter of KRA, as well as the opportunity to make *CAVERNS* freely available through Western Kentucky University's TopSCHOLAR™; please title link above. *CAVERNS* is organized into sections, roughly based on the themes expressed in the poems accepted for publication. Student authors retain copyright to their original work.

We hope you will appreciate, as much as we did, the variety, the ups and downs, twists and turns, and reflections of life as seen through middle school eyes.

The Call for Poems for the 2020 edition of *CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry* is out! If you are interested in submitting a student or homeschooled middle grade child's poem, see the announcement [here](#) or please contact the editors below.

Sincerely,

The Editors, *CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry*, volume 2, 2019

Email: caverns.poems@gmail.com

- **Editor:** Roxanne Myers Spencer
- **Associate Editors:** Ms. Kelly Hancock, Dr. Cynthia Houston, Ms. Amanda Kennedy



Volume 2 Spring 2019

Kentucky Middle School Poetry

Contents

Greetings from the <i>CAVERNS</i> Editors	ii
Becoming	4
Shadows	23
Reflections	51
Resources for Students, Families, & Educators	77
Selected Poetry Books	79
Poetry Mini-Lesson Plans	81
Contributors	85

CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry, Volume 2, Spring 2019. Published 2019
with support from the [Kentucky Reading Association](#) and
the Western Kentucky Reading Chapter.

A free, full-text edition of *CAVERNS* is available from
Western Kentucky University's TopSCHOLAR™:

<https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/caverns/>



Cover illustration by Sue Ann Ferrell, and *CAVERNS* logo by Rebecca L.
Nimmo. Both are artists living Bowling Green, KY

Poems: Becoming

When the Clouds Break Apart in Winter

by Kathleen Bauer

Individual specks
of white
starring
in their own show
while spectators watch
all over the world.
Crystals glowing
in the light
of the sun
or by the glimmer
of the moon.
Small wonders
with the power
to excite, to generate
curiosity, to captivate
the eye.
Water, half-frozen
falling
from the mist.
Catch it if you can. If not,
absorb
with your eyes
the beauty of
snowflakes.

Little

by Abe Yates

It's the little things in life they say.
Stop and smell the flowers.
To the average person,
Their thirst for entertainment never ends.
A bucket with a hole in the bottom.
Constantly searching for liquid gold
To fill it with.

But when you think about it,
Water tastes good too.

Sitting inside, moving pixels
Across a screen at strategic moments
Can be exhilarating.
But for how long?

Our brains are designed to recognize patterns.
That's why we see faces
On the backs of people's cars.

So theoretically there should be
Some kind of limit to how many times
We can move the pixels, you and I.

(continued)

Little by Abe Yates *(continued)*

But what do we do then?
"Well I can't go outside..
It's too cold.
Besides, I wouldn't have anything to
Do but just walk around.
Where's the fun in that?"

We are but a speck in the whole
Universe, but as far as we know

We are the

Only

Speck.

Such a little speck, that's
Caused everything to have feeling
To feel what they feel every time they feel
Something.

The "little things in life"
As we like to call them
Are beautifully enormous
Compared to our chances of you even
Existing in the first place.

(continued)

Little by Abe Yates (continued)

With knowledge like that,
How could you ever squander an
Amazing opportunity to take a walk
Into town again?
Think about all the amazing things
You could see.
Like a bakery you didn't even
Know was there.
Maybe we should check it out sometime?

I could go for a donut. Or a doughnut.
Depending on if you live on my side of the speck,
Or the other side.
Maybe we should check it out sometime?

It's even better on a rainy day.
Being able to experience something
That completely changes the air around us
About once a week.
Snug and secure inside of what seems
To be the invincible bubble of our umbrella.

I'm putting on my shoes,
"Be there in a sec"
See you then,
On the other side of this speck.

Self-worth

By Chris Jones

Self-worth. You either have it or you don't.
Its when you say you'll get better but you won't,
When you let guys talk to you like a hoe and just let it go.
But it's more than that,
How are you just going to ignore the fact
That he only wants you for what's in the back.

Self-worth. You either have it or you don't.
You really like her, dressing nice to impress her,
Under a false manifestation of pressure in your mind.
You notice how other people treat her, verbally beating her,
But she doesn't seem to mind.
"Don't waste your time on girls that aren't right."
You tell yourself.
You ask, "Why like a girl who doesn't care about herself."
But you can't help your feelings.
Thoughts building up to the ceiling,
It's got you kneeling and praying for a girl that's just playing.
It's funny how that works.
Self-worth.

Distraction

By Dylan Harding

Here I Am,
Writing this poem.
Except I don't know,
What to write about.

Instead I think,
About anything except,
The task at hand.
What distracts me?

Basketball
A versatile sport.
Although I am tall,
I still stuck at basketball.

Stress.
I have this and that to do.
What can I do to fit in.
Am I good enough.

Am I a good enough Christian?
Have I disappointed God?
Has the lustful nature of males separated me from Christ?
What can I do to better myself.

(continued)

Distraction by *Dylan Harding* (continued)

I'm going to dominate at the game.
I'll weave in and out of defenders,
Take the game winning shot.
Everyone will love me.

I love music.
The classic rock,
The modern rap.
I love it all.

Baseball.
I can't wait for the ball to be in my glove.
Slinging 70 across the plate.
Hitting line drives like Ruth or Robinson.

When will i meet someone famous?
Today? Next year? Never?
Will they be as cool as they seem?
I shouldn't get my hopes up.

I am no longer distracted.
I have poured out my thoughts.
I can resume focus,
And finish this poem.

Don't force yourself to stay focused,
Your thoughts need rest.
Let everything flow,
And finish the test.

US

by Cory Ruble

Welcome to our generation
Where kids pretend to smile
They pretend to be happy
When in reality
There broken,
Beat,
Hurt,
Tired,
And they want to just give up

Welcome to our generation
Where kids self harm,
Starve themselves,
And make themselves throw up,
The generation that is willing to try and do good but in the end they give up

This is our generation
The generation that is trying
But get brought down by others
This is our generation.

The Darkness

by Danielle Trimble

She came out of the darkness,
and into the light.
She ran through the day,
And into the night.
She was quiet as could be,
and as fast as a tiger.
But at the end of the day,
she was the biggest liar.
She had many secrets,
and kept to herself.
She was put together,
like a book on a bookshelf.
Always afraid.
Never alone.
Out of the Darkness,
she sat on a throne.

A New World

Katherine Murphy

As I put the sunglasses on my round face
I noticed a shiver go across my body
I was very uncertain of what I might see
But when I put the sunglasses on my face
I felt relieved and a sudden joy came upon me
So "is this the real life or is this just fantasy?"

As I took the sunglasses off my face A
sudden feeling came over me
I felt sad and unwanted
The world felt dull and plain
There was nothing exciting or beautiful
So "is this the real life or is it just fantasy?"

I remembered that i still had the glasses
So I decided to put them back on
Once again I felt wonderful again
But this time the wonderful started to hurt inside me
So "is this the real life or is this just fantasy?"

So as all that joy started to hurt
I started to spin and spin until
I woke up and found out that it was all a dream
So was "it the real life or was it just fantasy?"

Lyric from "Bohemian Rhapsody" by Freddie Mercury.

Fake Friends

by Faith Worley

Worrying is all I do.
And now the sky is turning gray from blue.
With real friends you never need a break.
Fake friends are hurtful and only know how to take.
Some people will only love you as much as they can use you,
maybe they'll think again when they lose you.
And I know they won't regret,
Something I'll never forget.
There really was a time,
when they were kind.
But now I realize it was fake,
and they made the friendship break.
But that's okay,
because now I know,
That they were a fake friend anyway.

Failure

by Grant Wilkinson

Did you ever think
humanity's biggest disasters
teach us something?

Did the Titanic hit the iceberg
because it wasn't *unsinkable*
or that a new life would have been reached?

Did the Hindenburg explode
because of a student driver
or to teach us something about science?

Failure is the road sign and success is the road.

Not Real

by Katherine Murphy

As I command for better quality
It scurries away like light
Sometimes I get frustrated when it doesn't do what I ask
Although it does work quite fast
So is it the fake or am I?

It has all the qualities like me Yet I
don't know what it likes My robot is
the best of course
Although it's not so nice So is
it the fake or am I?

It watches what I do
Every step I take You think It
would get tired
Or want a break Yet It keeps on serving hand
and hand
So is It the fake or am I?

It wonders around Making sure I
don't notice Although I'm always
focused It treats me like royalty
Every step I take It even gets mad when I make a
mistake
So is It the fake or am I?

As It wanders around I try to sneak out
Breathing real slow until it comes out
It captures me all so sudden
Then it comes to me what might happen
So was It the fake or was I?

Remorse

by Alivya Aich

In this vast world we all call home,
there are thoughts we call our own.
We may share them with others, or maybe they shared them with you,
but not all would agree with what you and I may feel to be true.

This difference is not exclusively found in thought, as I'm sure you already know.
Although physical differences from person to person are to be expected.
Psychological and behavioral differences, on the other hand,
are differences that kids of any age can find difficult to truly understand,
like animals attacking their reflections in a mirror and not understanding why they seem to run into a
wall.

While this is true, and most come to understand it, in some way,
let's just say others have an... unconventional way of figuring things out.
Children have many different mechanisms for the differences they come across in their lives.

While these methods are often quite cruel or destructive,
like bullying others or developing an eating disorder because they've been told time and time again that
they don't fit the norm, they come to be a source of regret or displeasure for most involved.

There are the few, however, that never come to regret the actions
that have caused such pain.

Those are the ones that are truly terrifying.
They're the ones that will cause pain to anyone they can.
Never trust the ones who show no remorse.

Sky

by Angelica Gonzalez

The sky hovers
over the small building

The little clouds in the sky
Sit and make little figures out of themselves
To fool people of what they really are.

~~~~~

## Together

*by William Hagan*

There are those who want to see you suffer  
There are those that tell you lies to make more pain within your heart,  
but it only makes you stronger.  
Those who paint the walls crying for help....but it never comes.....  
Those who act erratically to get attention for their lack of it at home  
Those who you help will become stronger and together you can beat....  
Those who make you suffer....

## Flash Fiction: Becoming

### Tranquility

*by Taylor B.*

Her hand swiftly yet carefully scrawled across the page as she let her mind wonder to various places. She was content as she drew carelessly yet with purpose. As her hand danced around with the pencil drawing a specific image, her mind was racing with a million thoughts. A soft smile etched her features as she continued doing what she loved. The only sound being the pencil hitting the paper as she saw her drawing progress. She loved how natural gripping the pencil in her hand felt. Most of all, she loved how when drawing the world seemed to stop.

### Gus

*by Audrey Nealy*

On a wonderful, snowy afternoon our family decided to go visit a local animal rescue center. We could hardly wait to see what dogs were available for adoption! As we passed the different cages, we noticed a skinny, medium size, wirehaired dog. He had a frightened look in his watery, black-button eyes as if to beg, "Please take me away from here." We pulled him out from the cage and gave him lots of love and playtime. We knew right away he was the perfect dog for our family! We adopted him that day and named him "Gus the Great!"

## Break Up

*By Taylor Haney*

My eyesight blurred with tears as I looked at this boy who loved to hurt me. His smirk was sickening and his laugh, which I used to enjoy, had lost its allure. I felt my heart in my throat as I turned slowly without making a sound. My feet were heavy on the tile floor, and my legs were hard to maneuver. I imagined the light above me as the sun, and my mind daydreamed of the cool green grass and the cloudless, blue sky. The sun dried my tears, and I savored the blades of grass between my fingers.

## Ice Skating

*by Audrey Nealy*

I carefully put on my white skates. This was the first time I had ever been on the ice and I was very nervous! People were zooming past me as I began creeping onto the ice. I began hugging the edge, being very careful not to slip and fall. I began to get a little braver and started to let go of the edge and venture more out onto the ice. I felt so brave sliding my feet back and forth on the cold, slick ice underneath me. I was no longer nervous, I felt free on the glistening ice!

## Eyes

*by Maggie Jolly*

Eyes. Eyes are mesmerizing. Whether they are blue, green, hazel, or brown, they are all beautiful. Although blue eyes, especially with blonde hair, seem to be a favorite, I find all colors stunning in their own way. When you look in someone's eyes, it can reveal things about the person. The way that one uses their eyes to express their emotions is captivating. Everyone's eyes are different and they fit them perfectly. Some people have two different colored eyes. Some people's eye color changes. There are many eye colors and variations that are all beautiful in their own ways. Eyes.

## Gift

*by David Marquez*

The man sat waiting on the side of the walking path, holding out his bandaged hand and gripping a blanket around an close to him. Sitting, waiting through the cold and windy day, he began to hum a tune that he remembered from a long while ago. Although the cold and windy day was dangerous, people still walked in their normal busy life, passing by the man, who sat with his arm out.

The man started to lower his hand that extended out waiting for a helping hand.

Just then something dropped in his hand: a couple of metallic coins.

## Outside

*by Jacks Lancaster*

I was enjoying another game of Fortnite. I jumped out of the Battle Bus heading towards Snobby Shores. I had been jumping out of the Battle Bus for several straight hours now. I looked outside my window. The sun was shining, and the sky was clear of clouds: It was a beautiful day. I dropped my controller and hurried downstairs. I slipped my shoes on and ran out the front door. All of my neighbors were participating in a basketball game. I jogged over and joined them. I never realized that this reality was so much better than virtual reality.

## Poems: Shadows

### flame

by *Elijah Medsker*

I keep on having this same recurring dream.  
A dream in which I am floating.  
Floating above the anger, the confusion, the conversations, the madness.  
But as quickly as I am whisked away, I am quickly pulled back in,  
Expected to vanquish the things that were already vanquished,  
On my own time.  
High school graduations, proms, missed to satisfy, to quench that flame;  
Pushing and pushing and pushing until I can be pushed no further.  
That extinguisher is my mother, my father, my mother's father, and my father's mother, and I am done.  
I am not but a singular match, sparked on the intensity of my own families friction,  
I am a roaring forest fire, consuming the negatives thrown in my direction until I burst  
letting out the fiery rage known as me.  
But, no.  
I am only meant to be perfect.  
Do you not understand how that makes me feel?  
I am on the verge of suicide daily, dancing, balancing on that tightrope.  
Jumping from trapezes, wondering if I should even be alive.  
Sometimes I just want to casually walk off that rope and end my life.  
I'm trying to as cold-blooded as I can but seeing that smile, hearing that voice enrages me.  
Boils my blood.  
Makes the embers in my system jump for joy.  
Because I can't be perfect.  
I can't be the winning solution to the losing game you keep on playing.  
Playing until I don't feel my limbs.  
Until I bleed.  
And it seems you still lack understanding.  
I just wanna go back to *Under the Bridge and Heart-Shaped Box, blaring.*  
My sister's smiles and my brother's laughter.  
The unity of my two families, that were once one.  
A time where I wasn't pushed.  
Where I was wanted.  
Where I could just breathe without the flames.



## DEATH

*by Cj.Johnson*

Death has always been a mystery,  
Some people go face to face with death,  
Now let's make it history,  
As they take their final breath,

People think death is scary,  
But death means new life,  
Death should be described as lovely,  
But death by a knife,

Death by a knife means going to hell,  
People who kill should be afraid of death,  
Don't go and be sad and dwell,  
When they take their last breath.

~~~~~

Without You

by Savannah Cornwell

I sit in silence,
Consumed by my fear.
Missing your presence,
That has always been near.
For you have gone,
And left me here.
Now all I can do,
Is shed a single tear.

A Crime Committed

by Alessandra Samuels

I am the dream and the hope of the slave –Maya Angelou

After emancipation,
laws set in place dividing
who I am in half. My color
has been banned, and half
my world is still waiting
for their forty acres and their mule.
My existence prohibited,
yet I am a crime committed.
No more curls and light brown skin,
no more inhaling the air of two cultures.
Drinking from separate waters,
but at the river they're one.

Two love birds resisting
their love for one another.
Fast forward sixty years and
yet I am a crime committed.
If Jim Crow and his laws
would have seen what a mixture
of culture has become, maybe
his ignorance would have faded.
Halle Berry, Mariah Carey,
Alicia Keys, and our first
black president Barack Obama,
among others are the outcomes
of crimes committed.

(continued)

A Crime Committed by *Alessandra Samuels (continued)*

Jim Crow, you will see us rise
tying new cultures at the altar
mixing and stirring reality
into what it is. a crime
willingly committed,
a risk well taken

I am the dream of my ancestors
I am the hope of my people
The risk takers, the fight
for not only your freedom,
but for your happiness.
We will make it through
the one-day kinda people,
the patiently-waiting kinda people,
the criminals who made me
a creation from above
and bestowed the knowledge and gift
of rap, jazz, classical and salsa.
The criminals who infested
this world with colors no one
had ever seen before and I will
proudly yell to the skies,
I am a crime committed.

Crash

by Callian Kooistra

The door slams shut
The key goes in the ignition
Vrooom
Down the driveway
Onto the road
Into the moving traffic, full of lives

The trees zoom by
The leaves fly
But the danger of the road
No one can know

The rush of dizziness
The feeling of confusion
Can make a moving car
Into a moving death machine

A nice car ride
A beautiful vacation
Crash!!
Ruined in a flash

The sounds of sirens
The shrieking of fire trucks
The aching of pain
What has happened?

(continued)

Crash by Callian Kooistra *(continued)*

The sight of blood
The feeling of death
Where am I?
The trauma room

The rush of doctors
The feeling of needles
The crowding of surgeons
Will I survive?

The hate of waiting
The sense of hopelessness
Is she ok?
All you can do is wait

The creak of the doors
The unwillingness of the feet
Did she make it?
Soon you will know

The doctor tells you the news
You drop to your knees
Wishing for the pain to go away
Wishing that you can do anything to bring them back
But no one can do that

Lifeline

by Macie Daniels

I hear the sirens start to ROAR as my body slams against the cold floor
I feel myself slipping away even though my body is fighting to stay
My life flashes before my eyes as I resist my will to die
Guilt and regret travel through as my hopeful mind begins to lose

Without a hesitation or knock the paramedics bust through my door, even the lock
I began to see the light but am reminded by a strong voice why I'm here and why I need to fight
Everything begins to fuzz, were the drugs really worth the buzz?

I hear my mothers faint screams and that's when the fear and panic run all over me
One more chance, I start to pray, God PLEASE don't take me away
For I am more than the drugs I take and I will enjoy the new life I make
One mistake could end it all but I refuse to give up and I will stand tall
For those who say my life is at the end, just know my story is only about to begin

~~~~~

## Free Verse

*By: Aaliyah Garcia*

The ocean was harsh,  
And so was my sister.

She got offended about everything,  
Every little word that came from my mouth...  
It was as if the ocean pulled me in and drowned me,  
For my sister yelled over me.

## Death

*by Samuel Bingham*

The feeling before you're born is the feeling of non-existence  
When life is near but still very distant  
But what about when life is here but time's almost gone  
What will happen when you move on

Nobody knows what the future holds  
Nobody knows the one who controls  
Your clock is ticking slower, your soul is dripping away  
Nobody knows what happens when your soul fades away

~~~~~

Letting Go

by Kelly Keniston

Lifeless, crumpled bodies fall
to the ground onto the blunt,
yet sharp blades. Some listening
may just think of this as unsettling,
but they have the wrong idea.
It's only sudden detachment,
like a baby being weaned,
but this baby will not return
to its mother, for it is yet a leaf
drifting away from its tree.

Suicide

by Sierra Riley

The way you look at her
compared to the way you look at me
wow that's something I never thought i'd see.
All I wanted was for someone to care
Doesn't matter who or where
But now I see she's better than me.
But when you come running back to me
Don't be surprised when there is no one there
For you to leave.

~~~~~

## Depression

*by Matthew Johnson*

Darkness, death, skulls, and bones  
Don't feel mad don't feel sad but you can feel happy the sky is dark just like my soul the sky is dark but  
what is that white dot in the sky is it the moon or my spirit flying away why are pencils yellow why can't  
they be black like my soul i see all of these bodies laying on the ground there souls are black tears hit  
the ground everything turns black i'm blind i can not see a thing.



## One Mistake

*by Reece Estep and Morgan Flannery*

You chose to drink  
You chose to steer  
And you still got behind the wheel with no fear

Red and blue lights flash from behind  
But you refuse to pull to the side

Into the right lane and left lane you swerve  
You swore you never saw that curve

The bright headlights blind you in the eyes  
And you suddenly realize  
Your joyride has come to an end  
Then you finally comprehend  
This is something your cannot mend

Your body jerks from the collision  
Since you made that foolish decision

Now someone else has to play  
For the actions you have made

Because of you a life was lost  
A life with a great cost

## **No Escape**

*by Kaitlyn Longwith*

My heart wants to fall apart  
My soul wants to press restart  
My brain wishes it will all be gone  
But these hopes will never come

Feelings of hopelessness  
Dreadful anxiety  
Keeping me from my full potential  
Holding me down in a place of no escape

Panic  
Fills me

Fear  
Drives me

Forcing a mask  
That hides myself  
Keeping me stranded  
In this hopeless realm

Just a little closer  
Just a little farther

So close to escaping  
So close to rising

*(continued)*

**No Escape** by *Kaitlyn Longwith* (continued)

Then i am falling  
Falling again

Falling and falling  
Again and again  
This never ending cycle  
Of beginnings and no ends

The hope of escaping  
Drives me insane  
The thought of safety  
It fills my brain

But it is unreal  
Right there but so fake  
It's just a tease  
There is no escape

## Sometimes

*By: Megan Whitson*

Sometimes I lay still  
Too broken to feel  
The smile on my face  
I wish it was real

The crack in my voice  
You ignore it too  
Don't feel bad  
Nobody ever knew

Sometimes I look down  
Wanting to die  
"Are you okay?"  
I smile and lie

Maybe I'm okay  
Maybe I'm not  
One thing is for sure  
I miss her a lot

*(continued)*

**Sometimes** by Megan Whitson *(continued)*

The me I used to be  
Sparkling blue eyes  
No loneliness or sadness  
When the world was kind

My eyes are dull now  
A bleak grey blue  
"Are you okay, sweetie?"  
"What happened to you?"

"The world happened."  
Is my reply  
But that's not what I said  
I smiled and lied

Life was easier  
With stupid, gullible bliss  
I grew up too fast  
It's easy to miss

Sometimes I smile  
Sometimes I lie  
But every single day  
A part of me dies

## **Bullying**

*by Rachel Albertson*

The girl fears to go to school  
The girl fears to wake up in the morning  
She fears that if she looks at someone the wrong way what might happen

The girl cries herself to sleep at night  
The girl cares for everyone but no one cares for her  
The girl gets slammed into lockers everyday

Not only is this person at school  
This person has become a part of her life at home too  
This person bullies her online too

She is trapped in fear  
Her fear is like her own prison  
She can't get out of

## Locked Away

*by McKenna Knew*

At times I feel as a bird imprisoned in a cage  
Watching the world as it turns  
Reading the stories of life on an endless page  
Feeling my thoughts as they burn

The anxiety of the cage wraps tight  
Trapping inside my fighting will  
Though I try to escape with all my might  
Fears keeps my voice still

Eventually I stopped wanting to fly  
Drained of my reason to soar  
Happiness gone yet I will not cry but my heart can fight no more.

I have seen ridicule cause people's thoughts to decay  
So I make sure the voice inside my mind remains forever locked away

## The Hidden Annexe

*by Megan Whitson*

Two girls, two women  
Three men and a boy  
A cat was there too  
Destined to annoy

Cooped in a hiding place  
Almost two years  
The gestapo and camps  
Their worst possible fears

The two girls were sisters  
Nobody could understand  
How both were so different  
But came from the same man

Persecuted, beaten, killed  
That was their fate  
They deserved nothing  
Behind those barbed wire gates

*(continued)*



**The Hidden Annexe** by Megan Whitson *(continued)*

They were just people  
Just children and friends  
Hitler's obsessive hate  
Brought their tragic end

That man and his mustache  
So evil yet small  
His words strangled millions of Jews  
Scarring them all

A girl and her diary  
Our history's link  
To understanding the people  
Who Hitler called weak

Her story unfolds  
In a small attic above  
A story of fear  
Hopelessness and love

Only one man survived  
Seven were dead  
He reads her diary  
It unfolds in his head

A girl who was just like us  
Me and you  
The girls name was Anne  
A brave woman, a Jew

## Obey

*by Brayden Carson*

Living life in a dangerous way.  
You can't control it, that's all you say.  
This is the result of all of your greed.  
But go on right ahead, more is all you need.  
You know you didn't intend for this.  
Just another problem to add to the list.  
Ending it all seems much clearer.  
Face of disgust as you look in the mirror.  
Can't you see, I'm killing you?  
Not very long until your death is due.  
You've gone and thrown your entire life away.  
Now you're in my trap.  
You must obey.

You say it's all over.  
You say you're done.  
You've lost this battle. I've already won.  
I promised help.  
I promised only lies.  
You make me stronger as I laugh at your cries.  
You were wrong.  
It never was a phase.  
Now you're lost in my never ending maze.  
I promised life in an easier way.  
Now you're in my trap.  
You must obey.

*(continued)*

**Obey** by *Brayden Carson (continued)*

You came to me in search of relief.  
You're ending yourself, piece by piece.  
Continuing your life in pure misery.  
Now you have lost the will to be.  
    This isn't a dream.  
    This is all real.  
You can't comprehend the pain you feel.  
    All went wrong.  
    None went well.  
I have left you with life in Hell.  
    You need me.  
    Day after day.  
Now you're in my trap.  
    You must obey.

## Snow

*by Micah Patrick*

I see a red pickup truck  
With a yellow and green serpent  
Red and blue cross with stars  
A cigarette in hand  
The other hand in his pocket  
Which is worrying

Why is snow so perfect  
When it destroys plants and crops  
While dirt is despised  
When it produces those green leaves

When they see my face  
My hair, my hand, my eyes  
They think of dirt  
And how they despise  
But having that snow-like skin  
Means you can look down on dirt  
But step into my shoes  
And see how much it hurts

## Apologies Are Long Overdue

*By Xavier Tillie*

A student walked throughout the halls  
And other kids teased them  
For how they walked  
They talked  
Or how they behaved  
Not once did they think of what their words would do  
But now apologies are long overdue

One week later the students did not laugh  
They did not tease  
Now the halls were silent  
And full of misery  
All because those students had to be mean  
Not once did they think of what their words would do  
But now apologies are long overdue

The words of the students were not meant to kill  
With just a few words  
They ruined countless lives  
The student that once was happy could no longer bear  
The pain that their voices inflicted  
Not once did they think of what their words would do  
But now apologies are long overdue

That student could have done so much  
They could have been great people  
Could have changed the world  
But that potential is gone  
All because  
Not once did they think of what their words would do  
But now apologies are long overdue

## Flash Fiction: Shadows

### Bloodbath on Myrtle Beach

*by Landon Trinh*

The crystal clear water looked beautiful as ever. Not a thought of danger even crossed my mind. All around me, people having the time of their lives with smiles on their faces wider than I thought possible. After a wading in the water for an hour, my friends decided to walk back on the beach to tan. However, I stayed back. All of the families' faces changed when I felt a stinging pain in my leg. I did not think much of it. Perhaps, it was just a jellyfish. I looked down, and there was crimson water all around me.

### The Murder of Mary

*by Abygail Butts*

There once was a girl named Mary. Her skin was porcelain, blending perfectly with the white sleeping gown she wore every day. She was sickly and seemed to come down with something every week.

Mary was never very popular, so one day a gaggle of girls decided to play a prank on her. They decided to lock her in the classroom bathroom. What they didn't expect was for there to be an earthquake. Amidst the shaking and confusion, we heard a crash and a scream, once it was over, we sprinted towards the bathroom. Her cold, lifeless eyes stared at us.

## **Pirates of the Pacific**

*by Landon Trinh*

We were on a ship in the Pacific ocean on the way to Hougang, Singapore. We had been traveling for about three days. One night, we were attacked by a band of pirates. They snuck up on the ship and threatened to shoot everyone on board. The pirates went around searching for valuable jewelry and money. Being impatient, one of the pirates grabbed me by the neck and threatened to kill me if they didn't get any valuables. Tears began to stream down on my father's face. He stared at my sister straight in the eye and took her earrings.

## **Ghost**

*by Maria Crowe*

It was late on a summer night when Jason and his three other friends decided to visit the cemetery down the street. When walking they could feel the cool breeze brush against their faces, as they sat down around the graves. Jason decided to wander off by himself. Suddenly he felt a warm breath on the back of his neck. When he swung around to see what he had encountered, a white ghost-like figure appeared. He screamed with terror, and when he ran back to tell his friends, he realized he was the only one left in the cemetery.

## A New Profession

*by Abygail Butts*

A short, slender figure covered head to toe in body-hugging leather stood on the edge of a roof, peering into the jewelry store window from above.

He would show them that he didn't need them. If the heroes couldn't accept him and his dark side, then he would join the side where darkness is not only accepted, but cherished. *He had learned to embrace his dark side.*

Slipping the mask over his face, he was ready to go. He sat, patiently waiting after stealing what he wanted and deliberately tripping the alarm.

His old family wouldn't be expecting this.

## The Darkness

*by Trinity Besaw*

Eliza woke up to the screaming of her parents yelling at each other. She felt the tears falling down her face.

"Go back to sleep. Please go back to sleep."

In the morning Eliza woke up to the sound of the old apartment door opening. She walked out of her room. "Where is Daddy?"

"He left."

"Why?"

"Because of you. I always knew you were a mistake. Just like your father, a worthless piece of nothing."

Eliza ran to her room. She grabbed her cross and the photo of her father. And was soon surrounded by the lonely, emptied darkness.



## Incoming

*by David Marquez*

Loud crackles and booms scream within the field, dirt and dust flying everywhere. Men sit in dugout trenches waiting and holding out and waiting for the screams of the ever-advancing enemies to cease fire. High-pitched screams reign down, followed by loud booms, with shrapnel flying everywhere.

Men in the opposite trench run and scream, loading their machines with explosive devices, launching them out at the opposite trench.

Second by second the members of the trench disappear, narrowing down the few remaining members.

The last high-pitched device screamed through the air, ending all the men who hid there.

## The Tragedy of the Man in the Trench Coat

*by Landon Trinh*

After I hopped out of my car with my brother, we encountered a student wearing a trench coat.

"Hey, just go back home." said the other student.

"Why?" my brother said.

The student in the trench coat screamed, " Just do it!"

My heart sank in an instant. I knew exactly what he was planning to do. I urged my brother to get back into the car.

"Get in the car now!"

"Why? What's he going to do?"

"We'll be dead meat if we go into the school!"

Immediately, my brother and I rushed back into the car and drove home.

## Bad Cop

*by Nate Fattic*

I was driving around the city at night. The moon seemed as bright as the sun in the black sky. I drove around the downtown, driving past the bank. I saw four people dressed as superheroes inside the bank with a camera. "It looks like they're filming a movie," I thought. I started to drive home as my shift was ending. I got home, went inside, and saw my wife sitting on the couch with the television on. I told her, "I'm tired. I'm going to sleep early." When I woke up, my car — and my wife — were both gone.

## The Comeback

*by Abygail Butts*

The wind whipped through their hair as the dust settled. The tension was as palpable as the sense of familiarity between the two combatants.

"Don't do this!" the hero shouted, becoming rather desperate.

Continuing on as if the hero had never spoken, the villain shoved the civilians aside as they made their way towards the explosive.

"This isn't what your mother would have wanted for you," the hero stated in one last desperate attempt at appealing to the villain's humanity.

"You've obviously never met my mother," the villain shot back with a smirk, making their escape as the bomb detonated.

## Wolf Eyes

*By Katie Webb*

A young girl with red hair was walking through a forest. She was looking for bugs, frogs, and lizards to put in her new indoor habitat. She had her bug catcher. It already had a frog and two lizards in it. She was walking along a path when she stumbled on a paw print.

She set down her bug catcher and leaned down. She put her hand right next to the print. The paw print was twice the size of her hand. She quickly grabbed her catcher and turned around.

She was looking straight into the eyes of a wolf.

## Poems: Reflections

### Him

*by Kelly Frazier*

From Massachusetts to Kentucky  
An unordinary bond runs It is filled of mutual interests  
And so many bad puns  
"Let's meet again when I can drive"  
Let's camp on a sandy beach  
Let's see our favorite bands live



### Relieved

*by Gwen Munsell*

The bus gets to my house slowly.  
I am so ready to be home.  
I get to the front  
Ready to get off.  
Suddenly the whole bus stops,  
And I am jerked onto the floor.  
Everyone is laughing.  
I was so mad until I realized  
It was my turn to get off the bus.

## Messenger

*by Megan Whitson*

The stars stare back  
On this dark summer night  
The world is calm  
The moon is bright

I decided to step outside  
And smell the roses  
The ones that have lived  
And called to our noses

On nights like these  
I see her fading, smile  
I try to cry  
Here comes the denial

The tears will not come  
My heart will not break  
I see the fireflies  
The pictures I could take

I wake up to the sun  
Shining on my face  
I want to say I felt something  
But that was not the case

I felt just as empty as the night before  
Maybe even worse  
I cannot find a way  
To free myself from the curse

*(continued)*

**Messenger** by Megan Whitson *(continued)*

I wish I could miss her  
I desperately wish I could  
Something inside is holding me back  
From missing her the way I should

Am I really this heartless  
Am I really this mean  
My mother cries, I'm no comfort  
I'm not as nice as I seem

I look up and see a red bird  
These she used to love  
More than I love blue jays  
More than Janet loves doves

The breeze seems to pick up  
I smile to myself  
I walk back inside  
And grab the bird feed from the shelf

My mind goes back to winter  
When I was three feet tall  
She walks out into the snow  
And throws it to them all

*(continued)*

*Messenger* by Megan Whitson (continued)

She runs, I giggle  
We watch the colored swarm  
The wrens, blue jays, and cardinals  
And the feathers that keep them warm

I take a handful of seeds  
Now back to the present  
I walk over to the bird  
Her music is always pleasant

I move very slow  
And hold out my palm  
I looked into her eyes  
Suddenly all was calm

Those eyes they stared  
Hazel met blue  
Suddenly I felt more  
Than just a memory or two

The tears poured down my cheeks  
As her beak accepted the gift  
I feel a swarm of emotions and let the guilt lift

I had seen her eyes one last time  
Her smile was just as kind  
Her little messenger from heaven left  
Finally peace settled on my mind

## The Sorrows of Loss

*by Carter Durbin*

There, there, there you go  
Gone, gone at last,  
Gone at the sight of first snow

Now in the past, whatever shall we do,  
We greatly miss you,  
Thinking about all the time wasted, thinking, instead of paying our owed dues to you

Oh the time, where has it gone  
It was just last month that you were under our giant pine of a Christmas tree  
I've become so sad, you didn't even give us a hint,

Of your silent sorrow, of the burden you carried  
None of us even had a clue about your desperate troubles  
Heck, how could we, you never gave us a reason to need to seem worried

But we should have, for our incompetence is what took our beloved  
Our memories are now dark and gloomy  
I fear that they may never be replenished, our great plea for forgiveness has not yet  
been moved

Because what we desired most is now gone,  
We can pretend and search for hope to go on,  
But the truth is, our love and empathy for anything is now ...none

Gone, none, they're one and the same,  
Our hope and desire for anything,  
Is now prancing away...



## Books

*by McKenna Knew*

They are composed of letters  
That changed into words.  
They either made you feel better  
Or stabbed you like swords.

Made of thin pages  
But they still make you bleed.  
They are for all ages.  
They fill an empty need.

They cause a seed to bloom,  
One that will grow and grow.  
They take you from you gloom  
How do they always know?

They open your sheltered eyes  
To a never-ending sky.

~~~~~

Blizzard

by Samuel Patterson

As the mist cleared with a single throw,
there came the dove white snow.

It once again being covered,
the repeated motion becoming a show.

The flakes flew, blew, and blow;
for it was the fault of the wind,
and nothing would stop the show

Jax

by Nicole Mills

Jax, favorite		my Drifter.
Always away gone for good.		but never
quite where Jax		I never know
him be completely free.		goes, but I'll let
and the scar on his ear, for		I'll remember his fur
lose all my fear. My drifter Jax		when I remember I
Since he was young. I can't seem to remember a time he tried to misbehave.		has always been brave
He was a muse for me more than once and always came by for a hug. I've		
seen him at his absolute worst and helped him back on his soft, silent feet.		
Of course, as you	can see, he's just a cat, but to me	he's always
been way	more than that. That's	why I
Worry when	he's been missing for	too long.

What I See

by Savannah Cornwell

I look up at the sky and see waves.
I look down at the sea and see stars.
I see the world differently than most.
My world is neither yours, nor ours.
Where you see chaos, I see peace,
And where you hear quiet, I hear noise.

Over the years, I have grown quiet,
Scared of rejection of my thoughts.
I shy away from conversations,
Due to my past, ridicule that to me haunts.
I don't know what you see and you don't know me.
That's probably why I might shy away from you as well

You Have to Look to See

By McKenna Knew

She tried to be the sun
Warm, shining, loving and giving
She gave parts of herself so that maybe
Maybe she could make people smile.
Even though she soon forgot how

Now she's the moon
Cold, distant, hard, and dark
She gave so much that she lost her shine yet they didn't notice
So they kept taking and taking

They gave her nothing
And yet expected everything
So that's what she gave them
She put on a mask
So she could pretend to shine

They only noticed when she was gone
But it was too late
The sun fades away in the darkness
Taking the life with her
All she wanted was them to be proud

They ask why she didn't say anything
But she did
The sun makes no noise when it leaves
It only fades till it's gone
Only those who look seem to see

Plural

by Destiny White

What is it to tend the garden,
Is it to pick the weeds?
Nourish the roots?
Keep peace, getting rid of incendiaries?

The trees on the hill,
They are calm, healthy, and stand tall.
Not afraid to stand up,
Or any trace of the fear in losing it all.

Rooted they stick,
In the place they feel safe,
They are "home" a place that never ends,
Until as do they.

The trees. Plural.
Not alone,
For, how could one tree create everything the world wants,
Or the world needs.
One tree, could not create the oxygen,
Reduce the footprint,
Bring the joy.
Plural, is how the world revolves.
Plural, is how a garden grows.

Watermelon

by Danielle Trimble

Big and red.
Not sour but sweet.
Black seeds throughout,
delicious to eat.
Watermelon is good.
Especially in the spring.
Scoop some out,
but don't you worry.
Nor fear or doubt.
There's enough for us all.
Plentiful and sweet,
Watermelon is good to eat
And hard to beat.



Dirtbike

By Macey Noe

Feeding mixed gas is the special sauce.
It throws oil and its loud.
But it sure does attract the crowd.
Its fast and brings me joy.
You may get hurt but that means get back up and try again.
Make sure you get muddy.
When you fall down make sure you get right back up.

Fly

by Abby Taylor

Get out of my house you big ol' fly!
I cry and cry "Oh why, oh why?"
I don't want you here nor there.
It is just not fair. Nobody likes you,
So get out of my hair. I am not
Willing to share my house with
You. I don't like you because
My furniture is new!

So please
I will
Pay
If
You
Just
Stay
Away
You
Were
Never
Invited
Here
Anyway.

The Ship Ride Home

By: *Katherine Murphy*

The darkness is pitch black
Inside or out
I hear a wave that beams down
As I rock in the boat
So where am I
Am I lost?

As I lift up my chin
I sniff the air
It smells like sea salt
In the air I picture in my mind
Fish swimming *everywhere*
So where am I
Am I lost?

As I put my hands up
I feel nothing but darkness But then once I turn my head to the right
I notice something is wrong
I hear a big thud
And bang my head against a wall
So where am I
Am I lost?

As I huddle myself together
Like a round shape ball
I pray to myself
How I hope I don't fall
As I close my eyes
I notice a light
Is it morning or is it night
So where am
Am I lost?

The Message

by Danielle Trimble

I run with the wind.
I fly with the birds.
I have to send,
Yes, send a message.
To a place far away,
that's hard to reach.
Why don't you say,
come with me?
Just for the day.
Let's escape,
And deliver this message,
By running with the wind,
And flying with the birds.

~~~~~

## The life of me

*By Kelly Frazier*

Tears and hot tea  
Writing and music  
Drawing and dogs  
I think this sums up me

## What to Say

*by Rhiannon Harvey*

You sit and stare in despair  
wondering who really cares  
Your emotions run wild  
jumping back and forth, unable to smile  
You can't stand company  
alone is all you want to be  
"Please God just say something"  
is all you plead, is all you need.

No wonder you stay sad  
Nobody knows what to say  
Nobody feels this way  
And you hope it stays this way.

No person should ever feel your pain.  
No person should ever need to stray  
away from the crowd  
away from the people they love  
away from what makes you happy  
but you do, and it's okay.

Nobody understands  
nothing makes it okay  
nothing is the same  
and yet nobody knows what to say.

## Zoola Tufi

*by Kayla Runge*

There was once a day when I could walk,  
And not fear the shadows afar,  
When I could sleep in peace.  
Ever since July the tenth, I've had an issue  
with the one and only Zoola Tufal.  
She is fluffy and seems to be sweet,  
To all those who don't see the demon within.

Ever since July the tenth,  
she has lurked in the shadows.  
She has preyed upon my fears.  
She sleeps under the bed and whispers words of fear.  
She is terror itself, but no one will ever know.  
I have terribly mistaken this creature,  
It's looks have overshadowed its true form.

I long to tell my friends about the creature.  
She who hisses words of horror into another's ears.  
She who is in contact with darkness beyond us.  
Ever since that long day, I have lived like a Jack-in the Box,  
Waiting for the anxiety to become too much for me.  
I know I will dread leaving the beast to feed  
upon someone else other than me,  
But I must leave to find peace.

## **Still Beautiful**

*by Kathleen Bauer*

There once was a day  
when I had no courage  
to say, I am beautiful.  
Everything seemed  
to work out perfectly,  
like a sunny day with a breeze,  
then the breeze turned into a storm-  
and that wondrousness was gone.  
For a while I just thought  
it would soon be alright,  
but that moment never came-  
so I decided I am brave  
and if my life is turned upside down,  
I will turn it right side up again.  
As long as my heart  
and my mind are greater  
than what blocks joy,  
I am still beautiful.

## **Gone in September**

*By Kelly Frazier*

Let me tell you a story of a girl  
Who was laid to rest  
She wore a white dress And hid her baldness away  
She let the disease consume her  
"It's my time"  
The text is burnt into my head  
"Hello, it's her cousin, she's got a week to live"  
Then on September 15, 2016  
"hey, it's me again, she passed away today"  
Gone so soon  
Took my happiness to heaven with her

~~~~~

Land of the Free

by Nick Lashbrook

They force us to pay taxes.
We must obey the draft that they throw at our face.
Fresh lives turn to ashes.
This is just simple American grace.
God bless the fees,
and those who are depraved.
Land of the free,
and home of the brave.

Regret

by Landon Knuckles

Regret is a rock
Something always there
We pretend that it's gone but it's weight you share
It sometimes pulls you down
Makes you want to cry out
But it's hiding in your mind
Not to come about

You may try to discard it
Skip it, ignore it, throw it
But a rock is hard to break
You will quickly know
No matter how much you try, regret will always show

Luckily they're easy to learn from
Like rocks in riverbeds
Over time they slowly fade
And turn to sand instead

In the moment of realization of the mistake you just made
You're left in regret
No rectification ready to be made
I've never lived without it
The stench of regret makes me afraid

Regret is a rock.

Social Media

by Lainey Patterson

Addiction, mentally and physically dependent
Click, scroll, like, snap
Why care so much about an app?

Addiction, mentally and physically dependent
340 likes, 17 comments
Why care so much about that little moment?

Addiction, mentally and physically dependent
411,000 snapchat score
Mine's higher than yours

Addiction, mentally and physically dependent
Tearing us down
Until we wish we could disappear to a ghost town

Addiction, mentally and physically dependent
How many girls have cried?
How many people have committed suicide?

Check your phone every 1,2,5 minutes
Whether you realize it or not
You're probably addicted
To a monster in disguise
Social Media, a way to have a fake life

Boundaries

by Turner Buttry, Parker Coyle, Logan Turner

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
They contain us in boxes
Sometimes, we think of them as being obnoxious

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
Everyone comes across them
I wonder, where do they come from

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
Who knows when they'll let up
They contain our creativity and I'm just so fed up

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
Why are the privileges so unfair
Whenever people with sense complain about real issues the snowflakes just don't care

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
The ones you always be invading
Girl I think we fading

We talkin' 'bout boundaries
Stop crossing them
Before you get popped

Roads

An Ode to Robert Frost

By Kathleen Bauer

There is an old, worn road
that takes a straight line into town.
Few people take it,
because there is another road-
one shining-new blacktop
and fresh paint.
They don't realize my dusty little road
gets you into town faster.
No, they take the popular road,
the one with twists and turns
and none of the beautiful scenery
of the other one.
Eventually, though,
the new road
will become beaten and cracked
like mine,
and they will build another
to withstand an unknown amount of time.
Me, though, I
will still take the old, worn road
that takes a straight line to town.

Flash Fiction: Reflections

The Time of My Life

by Ethan Shell

With some of my colleagues, I went to the new attraction. In what felt like hours of waiting in line I was racing to the slide. I crawled my way up to the top, and began rolling. It was as fun as I imagined it, but suddenly I felt, and heard my arm pop, so I rolled on it. I went down onto it again and began to weep as I made my way to the bottom. When I got up my counselors gasped as they saw my misshapen arm, and all I could think was "Wow, that was fun."

Hero

By Nate Fattic

I finished eating breakfast on my balcony with my four year old son. He always enjoyed bathing in the sun. He would sometimes just lay on the balcony floor and absorb the sun like the balcony was a cool pool on a hot summer day. I went inside to the restroom, and while I was in there I heard a roaring commotion outside. I quickly rushed out, and my son's hands were barely holding on to the neighboring balcony, barely out of my reach. I looked down, and a man was climbing up level by level to save my son.

Different Experiences

by Derek Hahne

The first grade was a different experience for me since my parents got a divorce. My whole life got flipped. First the arguing, I would lay awake at night just listening to them bicker. I was scared to death.

Then he started to let his anger out on me. He would just scream at me about anything and everything. I could not sleep at night anymore because of his screaming. Then finally he was gone. My sister asked, "Where's daddy?" My mother responded sadly, "He's gonna be gone for awhile." My sister weakly responded, "Oh, okay then."

My Best Friend

By Kaylyn Keener

Old pictures bring back memories.

My loving, caring, inspiring, and heroic friend JuJu was the nicest girl. We made so many memories. When we went sledding, we went down the steepest hills. One time, we were about halfway down when we hit something hard; we both flew forward, but we were laughing, so we continued doing it.

We played together each and everyday until she was diagnosed with childhood cancer. We still saw each other, but not nearly as much. JuJu fought until she couldn't fight anymore. Sadly, Julianna passed away on December 26, 2017.

Old pictures bring back memories.

Gone

By Brooke Gilbreth

The American flag was folded in its special way after everyone came and sat down. I could see her trying to keep herself together as I looked over at her. She clung to her tissues. When the time came for us to share stories about my now dead veteran grandfather, I saw my dad get up. He spoke about the funny style grandfather liked his shorts to be. I looked back over at my grandmother as she had a few tears fall, but she still managed to laugh. I started to tear up as I realized that he was gone.

See You Soon

by Maria Crowe

At the age of four I experienced the death of my loving and caring grandma. I remember the long hospital halls and the gloomy lights over the hospital beds. I will never forget the look of depression on my dad's face when he told me my grandma had died. This is the moment I realized I would never get to spend another minute or even second with my grandma. Looking at the flatline on the beeping monitor, I knew she was gone from us. Even though I lost her on that day, she will always be loved and remembered.

Add Your Own Poems Here

Resources for Students, Families, & Educators

Information for At-Risk Youth and Families

- Bridges4Kids: Building Partnerships between Families, Schools, and Communities: <http://www.bridges4kids.org/At-Risk.html>
- Centerstone/Uspiritus (formerly Seven Counties): Not-for-profit community-based mental health services. Kentucky child and family behavioral health: <https://centerstoneky.org/children-families/>
- Clark, A. Resources to help your teen deal with harmful behavior and other risks. Understood.org. <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/teens-tweens/risky-behavior/resources-to-help-your-teen-deal-with-harmful-behavior-and-other-risks>
- Kentucky Department of Education Bullying Statistics: <https://education.ky.gov/school/sdfs/Pages/Bullying-Statistics.aspx>
- Kentucky Department of Education: Suicide Awareness: <https://education.ky.gov/school/sdfs/Pages/Suicide-Prevention-and-Awareness.aspx>
- Kentucky Horse Park Education Programs: <https://www.khpfoundation.org/programs/education>
- Louisville At-Risk Youth External Agency Funding resources: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/external-agency-funding-eaf-youth-services>
- OutwardBound. Intercept: Getting Stronger Together: Intercept Expeditions for Struggling Teens and Young Adults: <https://www.outwardbound.org/intercept/intercept/>
- PBS. KET. Cry for help. Teenage mental illness and suicide. List of links (2009; links may be out date). <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/cryforhelp/featured/resources-hotlines-and-web-sites-for-parents/8/>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center: Adolescents: <https://www.sprc.org/populations/adolescents>
- The Bureau for At-Risk Youth. <http://www.at-risk.com/>. Publishes character education curriculum and materials.
- The Mentor Network: Youth and Families at Risk: <http://thementornetwork.com/who-we-serve/youth-and-families-at-risk/>
- United States Department of Agriculture: National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant program: <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/children-youth-and-families-risk-cyfar>; University of Kentucky CYFAR grants: <https://hes.ca.uky.edu/content/children-youth-and-families-risk-cyfar>

(continued)

Resources for Students, Families, & Educators *(continued)*

Creative Resources

- George Ella Lyon official website: <http://www.georgeellalyon.com/>
- Kentucky Arts Council: <http://artscouncil.ky.gov/> and Creative Commonwealth blog: Building Vibrant Online Communities <https://creativecommonwealth.ky.gov/>
- Kentucky Poet Laureate 2017-18: Frederick Smock: <http://artscouncil.ky.gov/KAC/Showcasing/Poet.htm>
- Kentucky State Poetry Society: <http://www.kystatepoetrysociety.org/>. Poetry Contests page: <http://www.kystatepoetrysociety.org/contests>
- Kentucky Writes: Authors of the Bluegrass State: <http://libguides.uky.edu/c.php?g=223305&p=3202347>
- Kentucky's "Where I'm From": A Poetry of Place: <http://artscouncil.ky.gov/KAC/Vibrant/WhereFromAbout.htm> and Creative Commonwealth September 2015 blogpost by George Ella Lyon: <https://creativecommonwealth.ky.gov/2015/09/>
- The Affrilachian Poets: <http://www.theaffrilachianpoets.com/>
- VSA of Kentucky (Very Special Arts of Kentucky): Arts inclusion projects in Kentucky schools: <http://vsartsky.org/>
- Young Authors Greenhouse (Louisville): <https://www.youngauthorsgreenhouse.org/>

Teaching Poetry

- Edutopia: (Re)creating Poets: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/re-creating-poets-joshua-block> and Five Poetry Teaching Tips for New Teachers: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/poetry-teaching-tips-new-teachers-lisa-dabbs>
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)/ReadWriteThink: Poetry Lesson Plans (all grades): <http://www.ncte.org/lessons/poetry> and Lesson Plans Discovering Poetic Form and Structure Using Concrete Poems: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/discovering-poetic-form-structure-211.html>
- National Education Association (NEA): Bringing Poetry to the Classroom, Grades 6-8: <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/bringing-poetry-to-the-classroom-grades-6-8.html>
- Poets.org: Materials for Teachers: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/materials-teachers>
- Poetry Archive Lesson Plans: <https://www.poetryarchive.org/lesson-plans/age-11-14>
- Reading Rockets: 10 Ways to Use Poetry in Your Classroom: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/10-ways-use-poetry-your-classroom>

Selected Poetry Books

- A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms*, by Paul B. Janeczko
- A Poke in the I*, by Paul B. Janeczko
- A Maze Me: Poems for Girls*, by Naomi Shihab Nye
- Are You an Echo?: The Lost Poetry of Misuzu Kaneko*
- Black Girl Magic: A Poem*, by Mahogany L. Browne
- Booked*, by Kwame Alexander
- Bravo!: Poems about Amazing Hispanics*, by Margarita Engle
- Bronx Masquerade*, by Nikki Grimes
- Brown Girl Dreaming*, by Jacqueline Woodson
- City of One: Young Writers Speak to the World*, edited by Collette Dedonato
- Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States*, by Lori Marie Carlson
- For Teenage Girls with Wild Ambitions and Trembling Hearts*, by Clementine von Radics
- Get Lit Rising: Words Ignite. Claim Your Poem. Claim Your Life*, by Diane Luby Lane and the Get Lit Players
- God Got a Dog*, by Cynthia Rylant
- God Went to Beauty School*, by Cynthia Rylant
- Hate that Cat*, Sharon Creech
- Here in Harlem: Poems in Many Voices*, by Walter Dean Myers
- I Wouldn't Thank You for a Valentine: Poems for Young Feminists*, by Carol Ann Duffy
- Inside Out and Back Again*, by Thanhha Lai
- Keesha's House*, by Helen Frost
- Laughing Out Loud, I Fly: Poems in English and Spanish*, by Juan Felipe Herrera
- Leave This Song Behind: Teen Poetry at Its Best*, ed. by Stephanie H. Meyer, John Meyer, Adam Halwitz, and Cindy Spertner
- Love that Dog*, by Sharon Creech

(continued)

Selected Poetry Books *(continued)*

- Many-Storyed House: Poems*, by George Ella Lyon
- Poems from Homeroom: A Writer's Place to Start*, by Kathi Appelt
- Poetry Matters: Writing Poetry from the Inside Out*, by Ralph Fletcher
- Poet X*, by Elizabeth Acevedo
- Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes*, edited by David Roessel and Arnold Rampersad
- Poetry Speaks Who I Am: Poems of Discovery, Inspiration, Independence, and Everything Else*, by Elise Paschen
- Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States*, by Lori Marie Carlson
- Relatively Speaking: Poems about Family*, by Ralph Fletcher
- Roots and Blues: A Celebration*, by Arnold Adoff
- Side by Side: New Poems Inspired by Art from Around the World*, by Jan Greenberg
- Soda Jerk*, by Cynthia Rylant
- Somewhere Among*, by Annie Donwerth-Chikamatsu
- Song of the Water Boatman & Other Pond Poems*, by Joyce Sidman
- Stop Pretending: What Happened When My Big Sister Went Crazy*, by Sonya Sones
- Swimming Upstream: Middle School Poems*, by Christine O'Connell George
- The Black Poets: A New Anthology Edited by Randall Dudley*
- The Playbook: 52 Rules To Aim, Shoot, and Score in This Game Called Life*, by Kwame Alexander
- This Same Sky: A Collection of Poems from Around the World*, by Naomi Shihab Nye
- What the Heart Knows: Chants, Charms, and Blessings*, by Joyce Sidman
- Where I'm From*, by George Ella Lyon
- You Don't Even Know Me: Stories and Poems about Boys*, by Sharon G. Flake
- You Just Wait: A Poetry Friday Power Book*, by Sylvia Vardell and Janet Wong
- Your Own, Sylvia: A Verse Portrait of Sylvia Plath*, by Stephanie Hemphill

Poetry Mini-Lessons

Title/Topic	Finding a Purpose in Poetry (6-8 grade) (Could be adapted for upper elementary or high school as needed)
Time Allotted	30 minutes
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point presentation or purpose statements on the board • Poems
Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL10: Read and comprehend poetry. • RL5: Analyze a poem's form and structure
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will identify the three main purposes of poetry. 2. Students will apply these purposes to poetry that they are reading to determine what the author's purpose is.
Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use either the board or a PPT to go over three purposes of poetry: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. to create an image, b. to express a feeling, or c. to tell a story. <p>(<u>Note</u>: These may not be the only purposes for poetry; however, these purposes do cover most of the poems students will encounter, so it's a good starting place to have them start analyzing poetry).</p> 2. Read a short poem together as a class and determine its purpose from one of the three purposes that they learned. 3. Discuss why the purpose fits using evidence from the poem. 4. Have students work in a small group and read at least three poems that either you have selected or that they have selected and determine its purpose. If possible, each group should have different poems and they should not all have the same purpose. 5. Have students present at least one poem to the group by reading it, stating its purpose, and giving a reason for how they know that's the purpose.

Poetry Mini-Lessons *(continued)*

Title/Topic	Words Matter in Poetry (6-8 grade) (Could be adapted for upper elementary or high school as needed)
Time Allotted	30 minutes
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraphs or short articles • Highlighters
Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL10: Read and comprehend poetry. • RL5: Analyze a poem's form and structure • W4: Produce clear poem with a purpose. • W6: Use technology to publish writing. • W10: Write for specific purpose and audience.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will identify words with power and interest in paragraphs. • Students will use the powerful words to write a purposeful poem.
Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have students read a paragraph from literature, informational text, or even a monologue. (There are lots of readings that can work, so feel free to use something that covers a topic from science, math, social studies, or even language disciplines.). 2. Have the students highlight the important words. Words with interest, power, or punch. They should not highlight words like the, or, if. Model how to do this for students as needed. You might want to model the whole process of building a poem from a paragraph before having them try it alone. It will depend on the class. 3. Once students have isolated some interesting words, have them write a poem using these words. 4. Have them find a purpose for their poem. 5. Have them share their poem. 6. Students can take their best poem and type it so that it can be displayed. They may want to find an image that can go with their finished product.

Poetry Mini-Lessons *(continued)*

Title/Topic	Writing Poetry with a Purpose (6-8th grade) (Could be adapted for upper elementary or high school as needed)
Time Allotted	30 minutes
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point presentation or purpose statements on the board • Poems, paper, pens, or pencils
Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL5: Analyze a poem's form and structure • W4: Produce clear poem with a purpose. • W6: Use technology to publish writing. • W10: Write for specific purpose and audience.
Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will write a poem using one of the purpose statements. 2. Students will publish at least one poem.
Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Model writing a poem together as a class using a purpose statement. (I am writing a poem to create and image of _____; I am writing a poem to tell a story about _____; or I am writing a poem to express the feeling of _____.) 2. Have students create their own purpose statement and use that to write a poem of their own. Once they have a purpose, have them brainstorm a list of powerful words that could help them realize their purpose. Here students will generate their own list of interesting words. 3. Have them draft, revise, and publish their poem. 4. Have them share their poem.

Poetry Mini-Lessons *(continued)*

Title/Topic	Headline Poem Assignment 6-8 grade
Supplies Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • magazines and/or newspapers, • scissors, • glue, • envelope, • and a sheet of paper
Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a headline poem using words you cut out from the magazines and newspapers.
Time Allotted	Students have 2 class periods to work on their poems. Students may also work outside of class.
Guidelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use at least 25 words in your poem. 2. Use complete sentences that make sense. 3. Use correct punctuation. 4. Include at least three examples of alliteration in your poem. 5. Stay with one central theme. 6. Must be appropriate.
Helpful Hints	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try to cut out several words that start with the same letter or sound. This will help you when you add your examples of alliteration. 2. When you finish cutting out a word, put it in your envelope and write the word on the outside of your envelope. This will let you keep track of all the words you have. 3. Cut out more than 25 words in case some of your words don't work in the poem. 4. Don't paste any words to your paper until you have laid them all out and are happy with the final product. 5. Make sure you write your name on the back of the paper.

Contributors

The editors of **volume 2** of *CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry* are extremely grateful to the talented students, dedicated teachers, and proud parents who made this first volume possible. Poems were solicited during National Poetry Month, April 2017, by notices sent to **Kentucky Teacher** and selected education email lists. Poems were contributed by students through their classroom teachers and were selected from these Kentucky schools:

- Bullitt Lick Middle School
- Carter G. Woodson Academy
- Drakes Creek Middle School
- Farristown Middle School
- Graves County Middle School
- Hiseville Elementary School
- Leestown Middle School
- North Laurel Middle School

The poems appearing here were selected for publication in this first volume of *CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry* after extensive editorial board review, using a **rubric** adapted from **Christine Lewy** (2001). Criteria for publication were as follows:

- Original poetry only. No fanfiction or found poetry will be accepted.
- First publication (not previously published, even on any form of social media).
- Poems should convey a central idea, not just stream of consciousness.
- The editors encourage experimentation with established poetic forms, including original song lyrics.
- Submissions must be typed on accompanying forms.
- Original photographs or illustrations are permitted and must be submitted in .jpeg, .jpg, or .png format. Reduce the size of the original image in a photoediting program.
- Obscenities, offensive language, biased or bigoted slurs are not permitted.
- Maximum of 3 poems to be submitted per student poet, per issue.
- Poems must be submitted using the enclosed form through classroom teachers.
- Parent/guardian permission required before accepted poems will be published.

Poems for the 2020 edition of *CAVERNS* will be accepted April 1-30, 2019. Email the editors for more information: caverns.poems@gmail.com.



CAVERNS: Kentucky Middle School Poetry, volume 2, Spring 2019.
Published with support from the Kentucky Reading Association (KRA)
and the Western Kentucky Reading Council of KRA.

***CAVERNS* is freely available in PDF from**
Western Kentucky University's TopSCHOLAR™:
<https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/caverns/>

For more information, contact the editors at caverns.poems@gmail.com