

WRITER'S BLOCK

Nancy Butler POETRY

I am a senior English major and creative writing minor, graduating in May 2021. I am preparing for a career in editing, travel writing, and food journalism. The piece I have submitted is a free-verse poem. I titled this piece, "Writer's Block" because I often find myself overwhelmed when I try to write. When I compare myself to others and overly criticize my work, it inhibits me from creating anything. This poem tells my story of learning to let go. Trusting yourself is one of the most important pieces of any creative activity, as is not holding your work to an unrealistic standard. I hope that this poem inspires you to listen to yourself and know that you are fully capable of whatever it is you are trying to do, from writing a poem to winning the National Book Award.

I
My throat is dry.
I thirst for poetry.

II
"Find inspiration around you."
*A winter wind sends powdered snow
from the thin needles of the pine trees,
to rest atop your fresh grave*
"Find inspiration in activities."
*My arms alternately pull me
Forward, through the chlorinated sea:
a struggle for survival*
"Find inspiration in love."
*He stains the mugs with old coffee,
empty promises, and apathy,
but I'll love him endlessly*

III
If creativity flows from within,
why waste time looking outward?

My body is a poem.
Each breath a stanza, beginning and end.
Each heartbeat a rhythm, urging my story forward.
Each movement a metaphor, a connection from
nerve to muscle.

IV
"You are not trapped,
darling,
only untapped."

