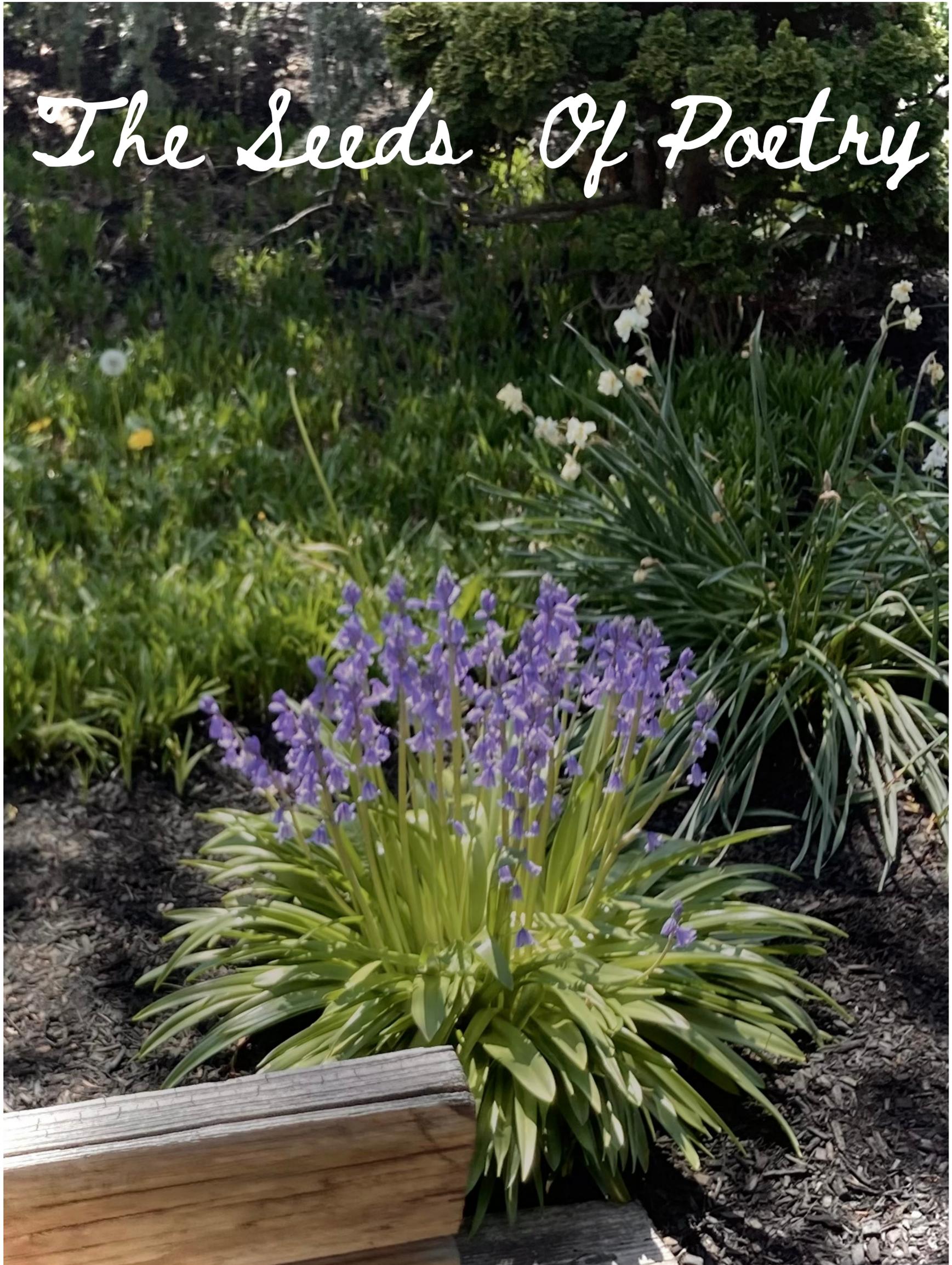


Poetry In Bloom 2023



A collection from the Young Poets' Society of Eastern



Poetry In Bloom 2023

The Seeds Of Poetry

Advisors

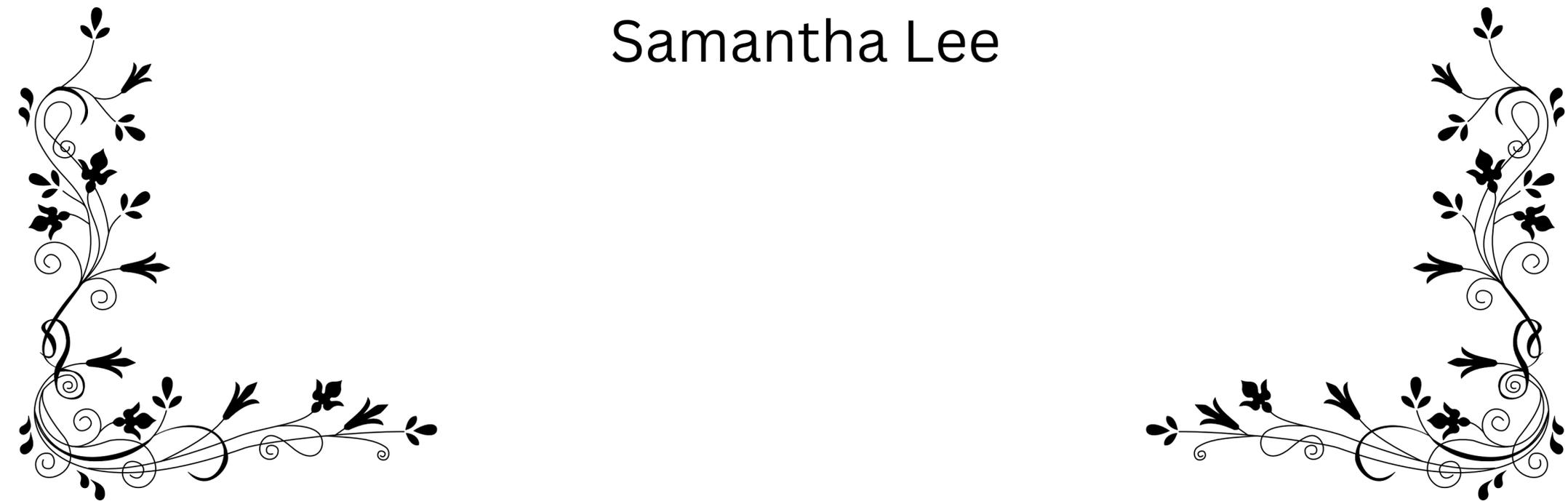
Mrs. Pomerantz and Mrs.
Steller

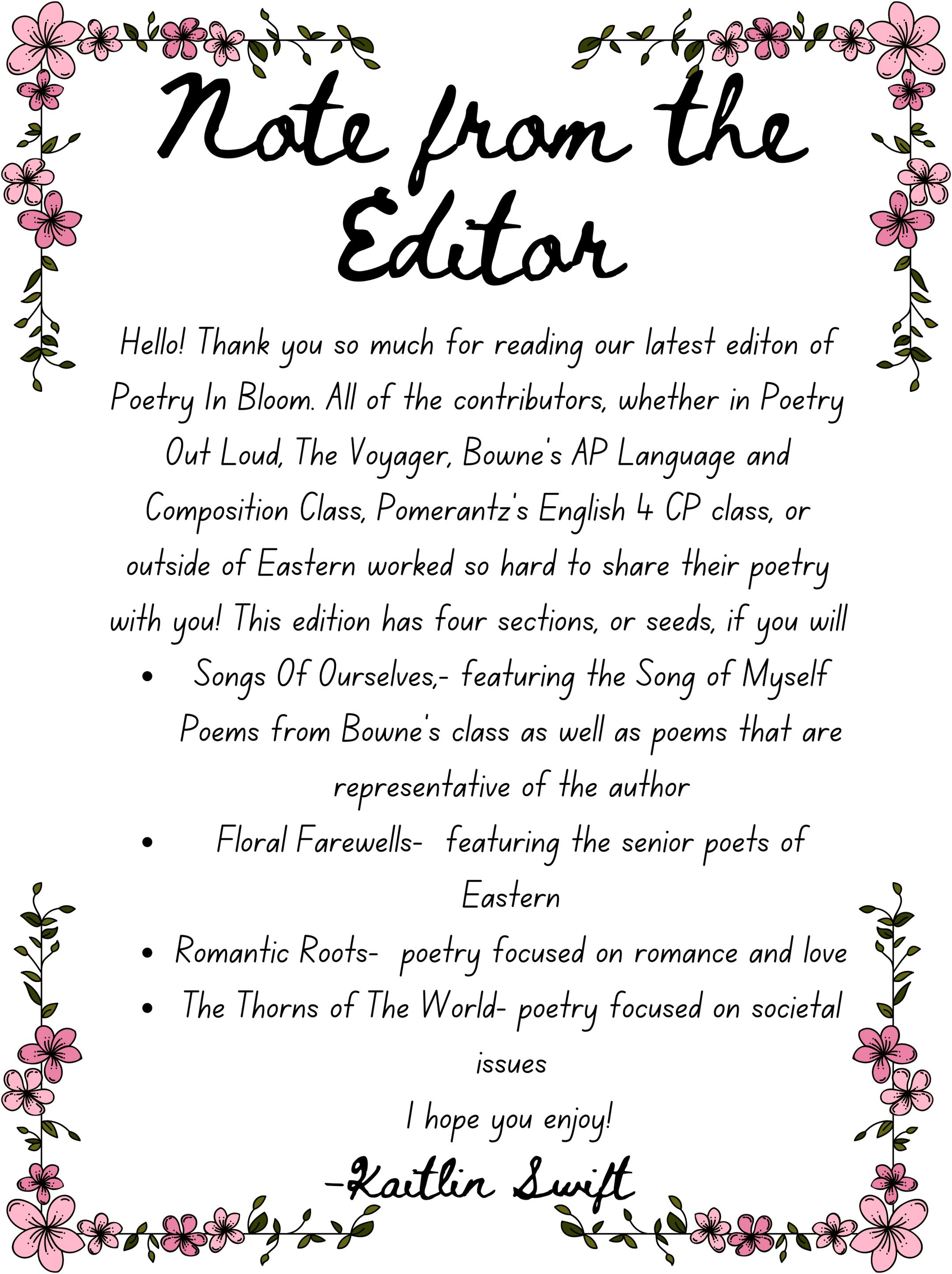
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Kaitlin Swift

Contributors

Mirabella Gibson, Lança Amankwaah, Naomi Diaz,
Anastasia Moreno, Molly Kalliny, Lisa Thompson,
Mahawa Bangoura, Kaitlin Swift, Molly Smith, Sarah
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Valles, Aubree Pote, Autumn Thame-Knox, Caziell
Cowan, Janah Hassan and Special to Poetry In Bloom,
Samantha Lee





Note from the Editor

Hello! Thank you so much for reading our latest edition of Poetry In Bloom. All of the contributors, whether in Poetry Out Loud, The Voyager, Bowne's AP Language and Composition Class, Pomerantz's English 4 CP class, or outside of Eastern worked so hard to share their poetry with you! This edition has four sections, or seeds, if you will

- Songs Of Ourselves,- featuring the Song of Myself Poems from Bowne's class as well as poems that are representative of the author
- Floral Farewells- featuring the senior poets of Eastern
- Romantic Roots- poetry focused on romance and love
- The Thorns of The World- poetry focused on societal issues

I hope you enjoy!

-Kaitlin Swift

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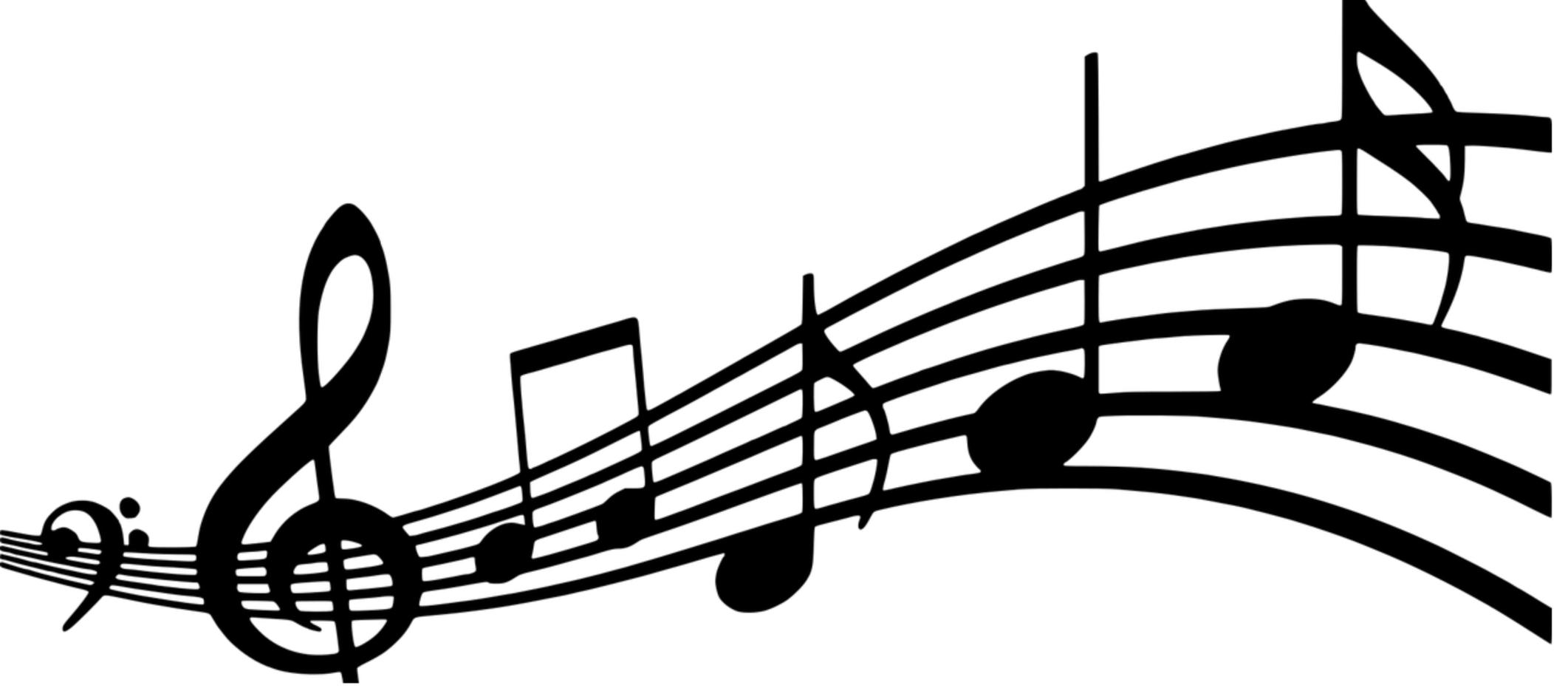
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Songs Of Ourselves





Song Of Myself

By Kaitlin Swift

I see a girl, criss-cross-applesauce on the rainbow rug, reading a Nancy Clancy chapter book—as the others read *The Hungry Caterpillar* and *No David*

She puts down the book, and beams at the ceiling with a smile as bright as her future

She scrawls in her notebook, inscribing stories of princesses with flowing hair, giant jungles, mythical magic, fairies and fantasy, anything and everything which crosses her mind,

The school bell rings, and she waits on the wooden bench,

As Pop-Pop snoozes on the couch, giving himself five more minutes until he drowsily drives to his granddaughter.

The years go by, yet there she sits, criss-crossed with notebook in hand,

Lounging in a field of sunflowers, golden girls stretching towards the sunlight,

Yet near the end of the field, they start to crisp, browning and browning until they reach the River Styx,

Slipping among the souls not to be seen until the afterlife

Her golden locks dance in the wind as she scrambles towards a blossom that blew away,

An invisible hand stops her from reaching the wilted willows,

Waving her towards the lively lake, babbling with a story to tell.

She steps toward the sunflowers to grasp her notebook and pen,

A stream of ink flowing like a fountain—beginning what would become a life long story.

The ink flows into the ground, creating roots of remembrance,

A sprout growing from the ground, feeding from fresh concepts

She writes of Pop-Pop, of the tides of the ocean, of wishes she wants to pursue.

Of justice, of freedom, of intimacy—romantic or platonic but true.

Time flickers on, and the sprout climbs higher and higher, reaching the very sky above.

Lines of letters, cacophonies of characters, symphonies of syllables,

Collect in one, rising to take this girl, now a woman,

Above to the glow of the stars.

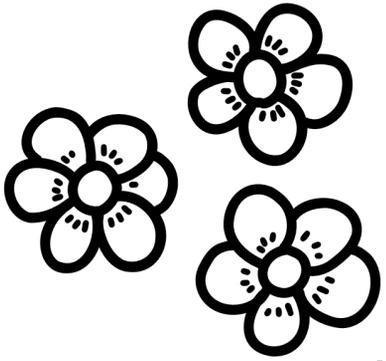
No matter where the journey takes this girl and her roots, she will always be known,

As the woman who, despite it all, reached her goal through relentless writing,

Earning her place in the galaxy.

Song of Myself

by Aubree Pote



Do you ever think about me?
When the sun melts into the horizon
Your head against your perfect plush pillow
Are you dreaming of me?
You are a void, a wide eyed gazed
That I will never make eye contact with
The captive stars in the night sky,
Are nothing but memories that we once knew
I feel you in the wind, aggressively comforting me in your
embrace

I see you in the mirror,
You are my reflection
I am as vibrant as a Daisy,
But when I look into that puzzling, peculiar piece of glass,
A gorgeous field of flowers surround me and I am no longer as
vibrant as I once was

You are my mother's warmth,
I hear you when she cries, I see you when she's broken
Are you the one that broke her?
The never ending river I'm rowing down is maturing swiftly and
more dangerous How can I escape the the raging, rapid river that
contains me?

This river is my sanctuary, it is as comforting as home
The captive stars may never recollect,
But I know my river will never stop flowing
You may not think about me,
But I think about you.

Not a moment goes by that I'm not thinking about you.



Song of Myself

By Autumn Thame-Knox

Inspired by a man, the song of myself sings
It hums the silence heard
As his breath held for 24 notes
Kept with the lyrics of me, an envious green lies
For the control of breath, my body yearns
Noteless, melodies soft morph into sharp cacophonies
Noteless, keys falter by the tug of dread
The song of me dies, noteless

Perhaps, at first the man struggled
Perhaps his song could also not wrangle
Perhaps too swift was the wind full notes that
Whistled tunes and played keys
Harmonies too tumultuous for his lungs
Perhaps their song a duet between I and he

Wondering, my mind asks
How held notes remained entrapped
Within, so easily, his score
How could one inhale the vicious strums
From the strings of his head
With impeding blows of brassy self-loathing
Wondering, my mind asks if his song sings differently

Sought by my own heart, are my own melodies
My own composition holds what now my body yearned
The song of myself reads a new note
Waiting, a new verse hangs, encouraging my grasp



Song of Myself

by Caziel Cowan

In a world of an endless sea of people, it's easy to feel small
Like those many fish in the sea, billions, billions—small and minute in the
surrounding swarm

Blue ocean crashes against me in a roaring storm, and my voice will never be heard

It's easy to feel like a iota of matter in the grand scheme of the universe

I'm not Atlas, who holds up the world or Prometheus that brought fire to man

I'm just one of those trillions of people that are, exist, and will die shortly in cold,
callous time

How I yearn to be timeless,

Humanity's timeless classics only dating back a few years while the universe's tall
tales of humanity's plunders and triumphs stretches on far longer than the nostalgic
melodies we latch onto

I wish to be timeless, like the forever people describe of old 70's pop

I wish to be that Dancing Queen that ABBA sung about so endearingly

In a waltz that never ends, leading the dance of forever

Distant and ethereally endless

I wish to be in a forever,

In a vessel that would carry me happily, one that I'll never have

That vessel that I'll never see in the mirror

Do people look at me the way I look at myself?

Do people see me for me?

What do I see when I look into that mirror?

I see myself in a mirror that lies,

that has one sided glass that will only show what it physically sees

I never want to believe it, I want to feel the shattered glass in the cuts on my
knuckles

How can I ignore this gaping hole in my chest?

The one that is filled with despair that I'll never ever figure out where I lie?

So mask for the world, let people believe in that femininity, that safe, comforting lie

But I can't stay in fear forever,

I can't change that mirror, but I can change my image

I can feel myself special in my own little world, shining and beautiful

Theodora or Caziel, who do people see me as?

Two sides, same coin

I am Caziel

Proximity

by Lanca Amankwaah

Close to touch,
yet always out of reach.

Always wandering,
looking,
waiting for the brief moment
that allows me to breath.

Finally,
in sight.

But quickly gone again
barely grasping my fingertips.



RIP Sleep

by Lisa Thompson

You know what I'd do to Sleep?

I'd stalk asleep

Kidnap Sleep and hold him for ransom

I'd question Sleep

Why can't I sleep?

Then I'd beat Sleep

Until Sleep couldn't speak

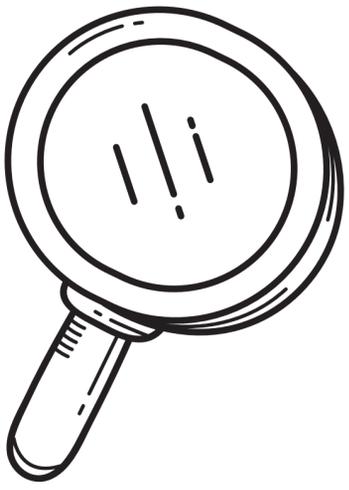
because I Put him to sleep

Sleep's catchin' Z's and I'm catchin' Sleep

Sleep can't catch me

because it's Rest In Peace, Sleep





Prettied

by Samantha Lee

Between everything and nothing, she exists.

Hunched over the ceramic rim,
she hates crepuscular porcelain.

Paler than the creams and charcoals,
lightening lightning: skin, teeth, and bone.

Paint in subterfuge, will you?

Slant eyes beckoning, welling,

as prickling bristles

languish at the back of her throat.

Conjured salivating acids taste disposable.

Weathered hands but potent words stalk her

consumption.

Are you as good as they say?

The quantifiable value fluctuates,
and her babbling rhetoric elaborates

like an oratory motorcade.

Orchestrated, her facade tangos
with the precision her razor holds.

Hello, beautiful.

Sawdust

by Mirabella Gibson

Ee-er, ee-er,
Back and forth I move my arm,
Time and time again.
This tiresome little saw I move,
Is a project once began.

I see the flakes of masterpiece
Fall to the floor.

Trickling, dancing in midair,
My project once wore.

“My little project is coming along nicely”,
I think to myself.

Just a few finishing touches here and there.

This beauty is my masterpiece,
A delicacy that will be shown everywhere.

My sawdust is a reminder of the craft
I once created.

It sits, reminding me of the patience
I had and waited.

The Time Machine

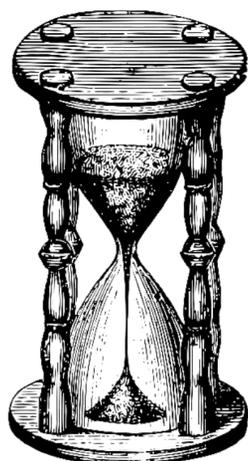
by Anastasia Moreno

Within the soul's echoing hall,
Resides a brass machine, standing tall.

An ageless relic, with gears so fine,
Humming the golden melody of time.

Yet we need no cog, nor whirling wheel,
Our minds, our hearts, hold a similar zeal.
For memories, like a mystic, silent stream,
Bear us back, in a gentle dream.

To the future, our hopes become the steed,
In the meadows of tomorrow, they plant the seed.
Guiding us forth through the nebula's gleam,
Each dream a whisper,
More powerful than the Time Machine.



Heart Of Gold

by Sarah Arnstein

The doctors said she was born with a broken heart
A hole right through the center
Yet her broken heart
is the biggest I know.

She spreads wisdom like disease
Like the seas
In a hurricane or storm
Spreading knowledge everywhere she goes.

Her words are pure power
How her
Words do impact
like a car crash
On the highway to my brain.

She makes me think, makes me grow
I just know
these wise words are dangerous
Her thoughts
So strong, too strong
For her own good.
Too much, get rid of them she would
If only she could.

Instead we share our thoughts
Help each other realize.
Through her eyes
I wish to see the world.

Her perspective
So mature and beyond her years
And old soul, such a gold soul
Has she.

That hole in her heart was put there
So another could one day fill
And he will
But he just must be good enough for her.

Harlem Street 155

by Molly Smith

this mind of mine is harlem street 155,
its defining signs
prying my kind to be fine for our time
or our age as the stage time defines.

in july's weeks harlem's trees never freeze,
which is so pretty,
yet so mean to you and me if our time were that tree.

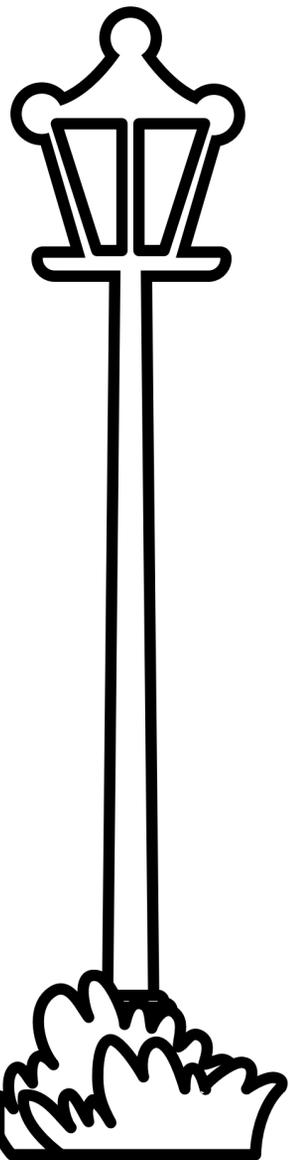
so we walk around to hop out of town
and believe that tree is our city.
and its seeds are for bees
and for artists with needs
and it becomes fun to wait for our breeze.

it's an apartment and a market
and a stage for late plays
that we never really leave,
because to leave is to seize
us as artists and needs
and time's very own chances to freeze.

but, sad new jersey teen, our time is that tree.

the fire hydrants the right of these signs
have no choice but to understand you,
for they, too, find what it's like
to be seen as a tired design.

you don't understand when you go see a band
and you stop since it's not for your kind.
but they design your mind to be fine all the time
when you've only just finished grade nine.



guitar strings picked sound strict to you now
when they once made the noise of pure joy.
your own voice is a vintage tinted candle
who bites its own bright light because of a fragile boy's freight.

but your fire lights desire.
when you eye your stuff with admire,
you're no longer so tired
and time is a liar.

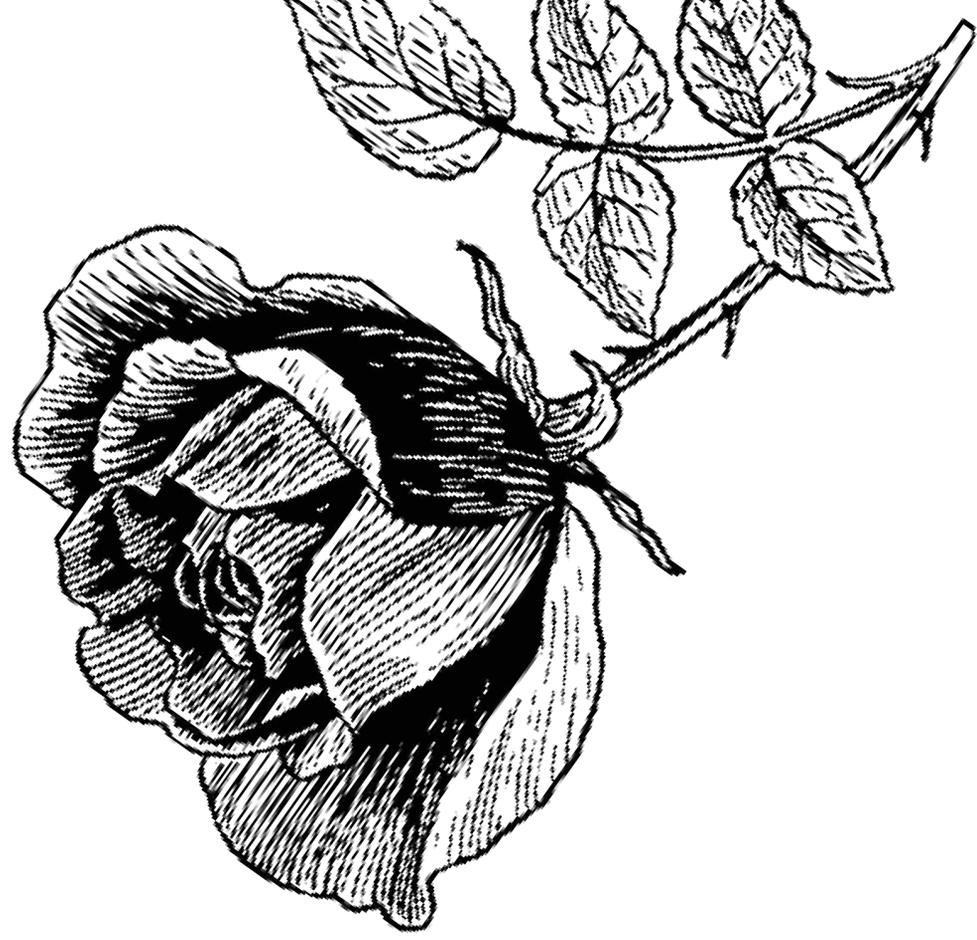
they say make yourself smaller to make yourself bigger,
that smaller seam being what they swear you should wear
to get better in eyes of their very rare care.
it's not care, it's their lie of our time.

you want back your blood those mosquitos sucked up
but you simply can't make their new taste
with no break to what's yours like your brain and your fate.

sad new yorker, they break us, but we renovate us.

but, if you see harlem, can you tell it i miss it?
itself and its signs and its lies?
to the wee tree i eyed on street 155,
i'm sorry we don't believe in you and i.





Floral Farewells



Miscellaneous

by Lisa Thompson

On the shelves rest my knick knacks

Dull and trite

On the shelves rest my interests

Abundant and bright

Forgotten are these things I've collected,

Disregarded and Abandoned

Remembered are their intentions, their uses

and delight

Yet they sit on the shelves, same old

positions

Yes the shelf is their home

or maybe their prison



Epilogue

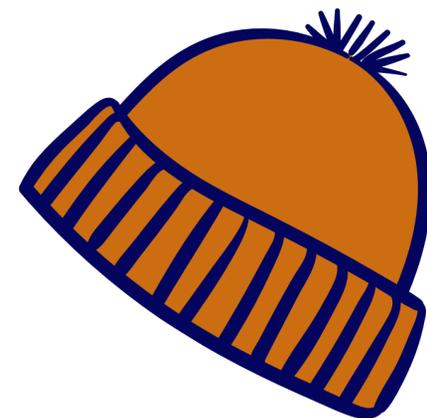
by Molly Kalliny

I'm trapped in a liminal space with you.
The excited cheers of a faraway football game
dwindle to a broken whisper.
There's nothing out here;
we wandered away just to sit
on a lonely bleacher
looming over an abandoned field
that has expended its usefulness.

Words can't describe the way I felt that night,
yet I still grasp at straws anyway,
hoping to understand the reason
you never made me cry.

It wasn't burnout. It was fallout.

I'm sorry that I'm not the person
I promised I could be with time.
That orange beanie I always used to wear
is nothing more than another loose hat
at the bottom of my drawer.
I haven't looked at it since.



There's something whimsical and odd about being trapped in a liminal space
with someone I once loved.
I was never trapped
until it all was over;
until it all unraveled
and slipped through my fingers.

I was never trapped
until my desperation
turned into a self-loathing escapade;

then I was trapped.

Because all that I found was the distant memory of that quiet November night,
and I was on the outside looking in.

Towards The Moon

by Anastasia Moreno



There sits a girl upon a hill
Gazing towards the endless sky,
Searching for a way to fulfill
Her heart, her soul, her mind—
A reason not to die.

Wondering who she is at heart
A flickering flame in the night's dark,
Dancing with the stars alone.
Her thoughts roam, seeking her part,
To uncover all that is unknown.

And as she dreams of love's embrace,
She gazes through an old telescope,
At Tranquility, her hopeful place.
She wonders, will she be the first,
To claim her place amongst the stars?
Or the first to die with little hope.

But someone found her,
Someone to not call her him
But to call her friend,
To embrace, to admire,
To dance with her amongst the stars.

And now, upon the launch pad of our friendship, we stand,
A ticket to the stars, held tight in our hand.
A moonlit scarab strong, toward the moon's desolate land,
Fueled by the trials that together, we withstand.

Our voyage traces the arc of an Ankh in the night,
Symbol of life, illuminating our flight.
With courage born from darkness, now bathed in lunar light,
We watch as our capsule makes its final, fateful right.

And in the moon's quiet majesty, you touch down, alone but free,
Reflecting the love that you have shown to me.
From the Earth to the Moon, through shared adversity,
My sister, my heroine, shining for all eternity.

And now we are joined forevermore
Not feeling so lonely anymore,
My heart is full, and I feel known.
We've found our path, our goal,
Our reason to keep moving,
Hand in hand, towards the Moon.



The Sun Burns Too

by Mahawa Bangoura

The first time you come over my apartment
I'm a nervous wreck.

I trip over my iPhone charger
and I move it, so you don't.

My hands are sweaty, my throat is scratchy.
I just hope it wasn't too different from what
you were expecting.

The living room doesn't sparkle
but I made sure to put all my dirty clothes
in the hamper.

I don't normally cook
but I hope you like your chicken breasts
with a little mustard.

When you come in
we sit in the living room
playing footsies
and watching TV.

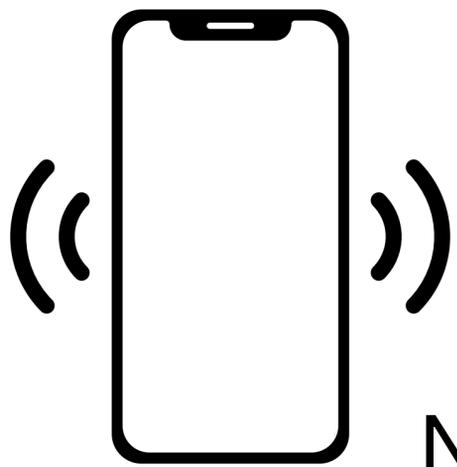
Movie after movie
your leg on top of mine.

My arm slung around the couch,
rubbing the ball of your shoulders.

Then, you call your mom
and tell her
that you'll be home around nine.



Yet, that's not true.
Not when the tv continues to play
and your hands run through
my long, black locs.
Nine-thirty passes and then ten
and you continue to overstay.
I don't want you to go,
I'd keep you forever if I could.
But I know you're young
only eighteen.



Your phone rings and rings.
None of them go to voicemail,
you answer each one.

Because you don't want your mom to over worry.
Yet, she's frantic on the phone.
You try to calm her down
but to no avail.

When she called in the past
did you answer, Wesley?
Why is she so worried?
What are you hiding?

You excuse yourself to the bathroom.

First door on your left
at the end of the hall.

Your phone rings again.

I hear you tell your friend
that you're alright,

because I'm your main squeeze.

That makes my chest puff
all happy with pride.

Then, you try to get out
but my bathroom door is broken.

Give me a second, I say,
gripping the knob, pulling it tight.

I push and pull, but the door won't open.

I don't see you
but I hear you.

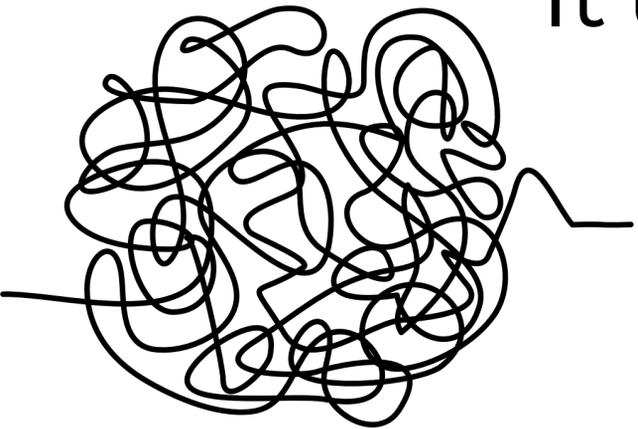


Your breathing intensifies
coming out like sharp puffs.

Get me out, you say.

And I try to twist and turn the knob
but nothing works in my favor.

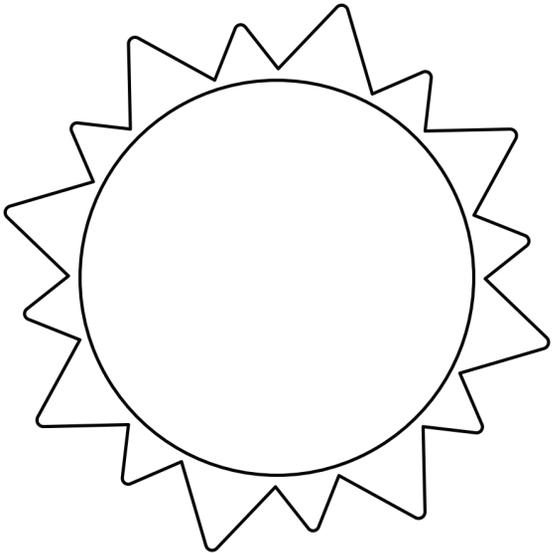
I stop and call my neighbor who
usually helps with this
until I hear you again.
Get me out, I think you start to cry.
You bang on the door.
Loud and strong.
I begin to break it down.
It unhinges from the top.



GET ME OUT!

Something inside you starts to untie.
I bite down on my lip
pull with all my might.
The door finally opens.

I run to you, but you're curled in a little ball
by the sink
arms tight around yourself.
I try to tell you that
the door needs to be reinstalled
but when you look up, your face says it all.



The sun burns too.
Red, hot, and angry.
Scorching to the touch
so, I leave you untouched.
I'm so sorry, I say.

You shake your head,
mutter the words again,
Get me out.
So, I drive you home.
Hold your hand all the way there
And I wonder where you went
when you were in my bathroom.

Before you go inside,
you squeeze my hand,
thank me for the ride
and tell me you're sorry.

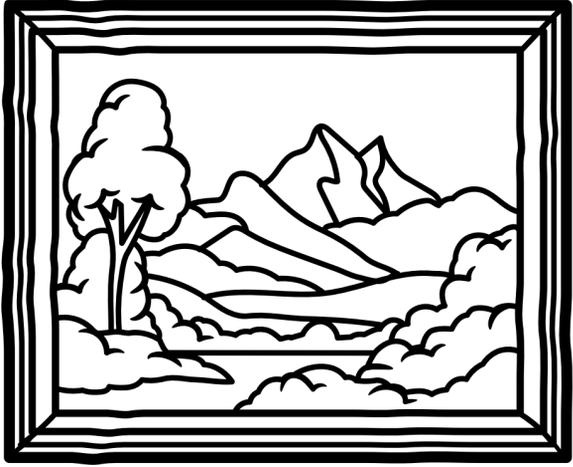
I got issues, you say.
I tell you, don't apologize.
I know that the sun shines
but also burns too.

And one day
you'll tell me
what
set you ablaze.

We Are Art

by Sarah Arnstein

“Why criticize art when it’s at its most authentic form,
For its presenting its natural beauty”



She asked me

I thought and contemplated
Coming to a blank answer
And then her words struck me.

For we

Pick others apart
Forgetting that We Are Art
A painting to be loved
A sculpture to be praised

We force our insecurities onto others
And act out of jealousy towards another
Going after those expressing their truest form as if it’s a crime.

If only we knew
That We Are Art.

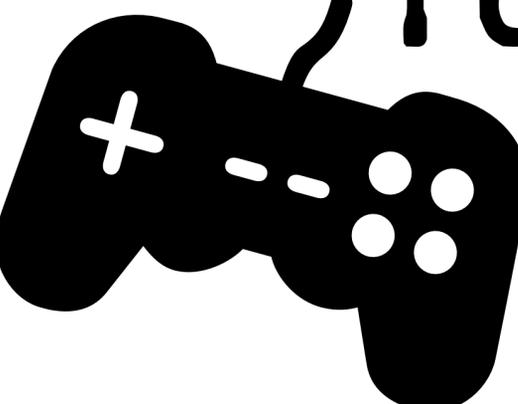
But how

Can I just be, authentically, me?
Being ourselves, I know, is scary
But the judgment is all in our heads
For our thoughts are the true enemy

We must learn to let go

And know

Just how beautiful we are
When we’re purely and authentically
Ourselves at heart.



It Is What It Is

by D'Andre Fordham

From an introverted freshman trying to survive,
To a senior who forms bonds and helps others
flourish,

The life of this particular highschooler
Was filled with growth, fear, joy, anguish.

But while he would regret it at times,
It was often also more than he could ever imagine.

This highschooler was a star,

Thinking he's alone to shine for no one to see,
But really, he forgot to check the many others like
him,

And how much light they got to see.

The highschooler wasn't always like that however.

He's mostly a goofball making jokes whenever.

He was giddish all day every day,
Whenever anyone grabbed their switches to play.

So he'd play. And he'd play. And he'd play.

It was always on the brain,
But the crazy part was it driving him insane.
But that insanity didn't stop him
From playing, and playing, and playing again.
That's what broke him out of his shell by the time
his sophomore year had its end.

Once his junior year began,
So too did his life make its plans.
Whether it be gaining friends to play with,
Or branching out into media more his bandwidth,
He started becoming the kind of person he
wanted to be with.

Then it happened, senior year.
His social life wasn't his biggest fear.
While he still struggled with hospitals and
memory,
He finally felt that star shining bright and free.
He loved that feeling, and he can't wait to evolve
more and freely.

Now that star shaped highschooler is Me.



I'm Fine

by Alondra Cruz

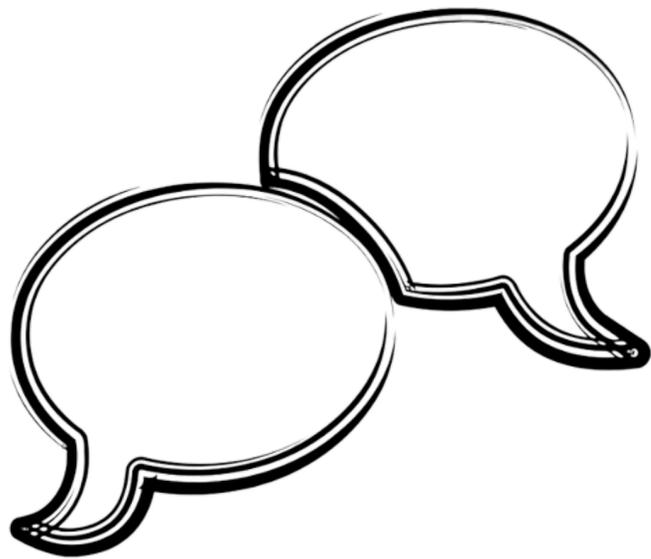
How are you?
No, really, how are you?
If you're fine then good,
But if you're not and you're
Just saying that, then stop...
Rethink, remind, and let it out.

It's fine if you start crying,
Because crying is one of the
Many natural reactions to this
Sort of remark.
So let it out.
Let all of it out.

Let all your aggravations loose.
Have your desperate cries reign free.
Allow your emotionless mind to
Break, so you can finally
Know what it's like to not
Feel numb anymore.

The brain rotting stress consuming
Our minds will only grow if
We let it.
So it's best to just give in to the
Tears, and let it out now before
The worst becomes a reality.

And to those who hate
Hearing all this sappy
Crap, then bear with me
For a second, because as
Much as I hate saying
This; it's true.



I'm not gonna say that everything's going
To be fine, because in
Reality, it probably won't.
Maybe. Maybe not.
I don't know.
I'm not a specialized
therapist, or anything
Like that.



I'm just a kid.
17 going on 18
I'm going to be an
Adult, but that doesn't
Mean I know how to
Be one.

But I have to try or
Else I, and many others,
Might end up on the side
Of the road, or hanging
From the ceiling, just because
The ongoing stress of trying
To be something we're not.

Our acerbic cries for help
Will only be blocked out,
Just so they can turn
Us into obsequious servants
For the higher ups to
Make fun of.

But as the days go on,
And the numbers rapidly
Decrease, then there will be
No one for them to taunt,
And exploit.

And do not say that you're
Fine when you're obviously not!
Because with each passing
Second, things get worse and
Worse!



I'm tired.
I'm tired of people
Saying that I'm fine.
I'm exhausted, burnt out,
And even frustrated.
Angry with the world because
Of... I don't know what.

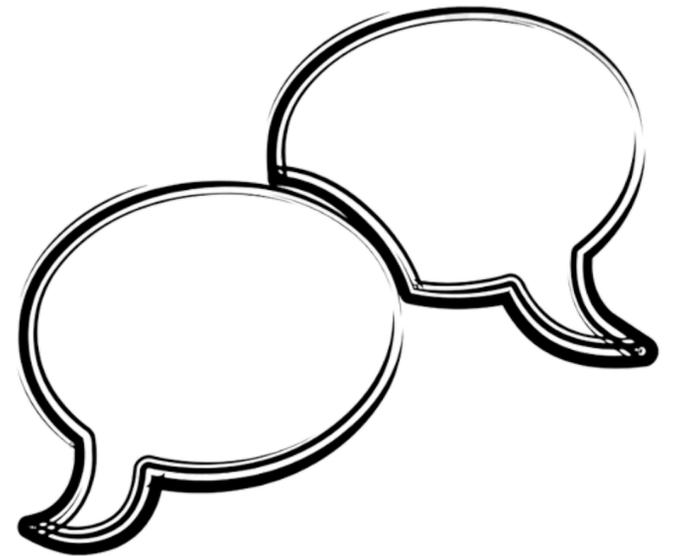
It just seems to me
That everyone expects
Me to do something, but I
Just don't know what.
They want me to wash
The dishes, do my homework,
Have good grades, get
A job!

Do this, do that!
But never; how are you?

I (try) to sit up straight,
I (try) to get straight A's,
And I eat most of the
Veggie's on my plate,
But I'm 17 going 18,
And I'm not sure if I have
The courage to do anything
Anymore.

The grand denials of my
Troubles were the start of
My problems, and they
Only increase the more I
Question if I even have them.
However, there appears to be
Some sliver of hope for me...

It might sound sappy,
But with the right people
To help me out,
I think I'll be okay.
I have my friends, my
Partners, my family,
And many other associates
That are willing to come to
My aid, if needed.



And when I'm finished
With this, I don't want
Hear your questions
Asking if I'm okay, because
With the deserved satisfaction
In my heart, I can
Finally say that I'm fine.

I mean,
sure, I might have
My ups,
My downs,
And even when things feel
Like they're upside down!
But I'm great right now.

So back to the previous
Question...

How are you?





Best Dog

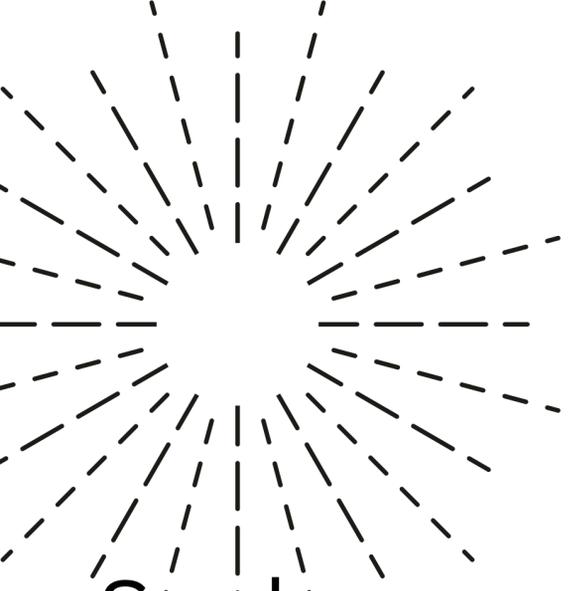
by Donovan Valles

My dog Bella was the most
Lively, loving, and loud dog that I
Ever had. She was always happy go-lucky,
Always full of energy, always joyful.
She always made my days so much better.
Seeing her run around inside, and outside
Always brought a smile to my face.
She was playful, playing with toys, playing
With other dogs, always playing with something.
She loved going for long walks, always got
Excited when someone put their shoes on.
Every time she saw a fellow dog or animal
She would always bark until they were out of view.
She would do this for years, but with years
Comes aging, and with aging came her time.
As the years went on she became less lively, less loud.
She stopped running around like she always did.
She became more weak and tired.
She wasn't herself anymore.
It got to the point where her back legs betrayed her,
And didn't want to work anymore.
No matter how many times she tried to get up
She just couldn't anymore.
We decided to relieve her of her pain,
And send her to a place where she could run
Again like she always did, where she could play
Again like she always did, where she could go
On walks like she always did.
We sent her to a place where she could be herself again.



Romantic Roots





Sunbeams

by Lisa Thompson

Sunbeams stream through the open window,
a warm breeze flows over me

My blinds chop up the sun, serve it to me in
sections

I am grateful, for the Sun has told me
Goodmorning

Her warmth washes over me, she's wrapped her
arms around me

No need for blankets or breakfast,
For she has fed me, dressed me, and put a smile
on my face.

But I cry every night she sets and takes her
warmth away

I sleep in my tears until she has risen and her light
wringing me dry, wipes my eyes and

It is a new day.

Aisle Nine

by Sarah Arnstein



I saw you in the grocery store
It's been over a year and I don't know you anymore

I was looking for the rice
And wouldn't it have been nice
If I found it and moved on.

But instead, here I stand wishing I was gone
Away from aisle nine

Feeling just fine
Without you.

But I snap back

And to my dread your glance attacks
My eyes, and it's too late to run
Maybe I'll pretend I'm someone
Else, but you're walking towards me now
Like you did for the first time on that
Hot August night

When our souls were fresh
Never wounded, never bent
Just two people, one connection
Rare as a drop in the ocean.

Oh then,

To go back to when all I saw you as

Was a fresh rose

Ready to be picked

But you died so quick

Yet your thorns stayed

And today

that's all I remember.

Your thorns still stab me in my memories

Oh, to go back

And never pick that rose, oh so red

But I chose

The wrong flower.

To this day, you hold

Too much power

Over me.

The bee never knows when the pollen is poison.

I'm frozen

Here, in aisle nine

When you walk up and say

Hi.



One Last Dance

by Kaitlin Swift

I sit alone, in the corner of the gym
Watching, as he dances
With that brunette girl, in her rich green dress
She's beautiful, I think, but I can't help but feel
jealous

A year ago, I dreamed that girl would be me
Swaying in his arms, and feeling my best
Spending the best night of my life with someone
Who wouldn't feel the same.

He never felt the way that I felt about him.
He was the love of my life, but I was just
A pawn in his game.

And now, I sit alone at prom
Wondering if he remembers
When he promised to give me
One last dance



My Sun Pendant

by Mirabella Gibson



You know what they always say,
Things come and go,
But my sun pendant hangs on like a best friend,
Sparkling and dazzling,
Smiling to others on my chest as I carry my body through the long days

This one day, though, was a good day
A type of day that makes you smile and reflect while falling asleep,
Her eyes stretched throughout the steps of the Day,
latching onto curious eyes.

“What a pretty necklace!”
“Oh my god I love your necklace!”
“Who bought your necklace for you?”

My pendant’s popularity sparked one Flirtatious interest that day
Her moment came in the nick of time,
When the hormones raging from his looks and words were making me
blush

“Who bought your necklace for you?”
“I did myself, actually”

She stuck out from other necklaces at the store,
Her magic,
Her flow,
Her majestic self,
Something I aspire to be one day.

During Twilight

by Janah Hassan

He wanted to spend time on his own

His face was solid as stone

Shining with delight as he saw the shimmer

And glimmer of the night

The gentle caress of the wind fluttered through
his hair

As he tried to utter how alluring the sky looked in
the midst of the night

The aroma of the evening air was assuring him
Of the beauty of twilight



Popcorn Poetry

by the Poetry Out Loud club!

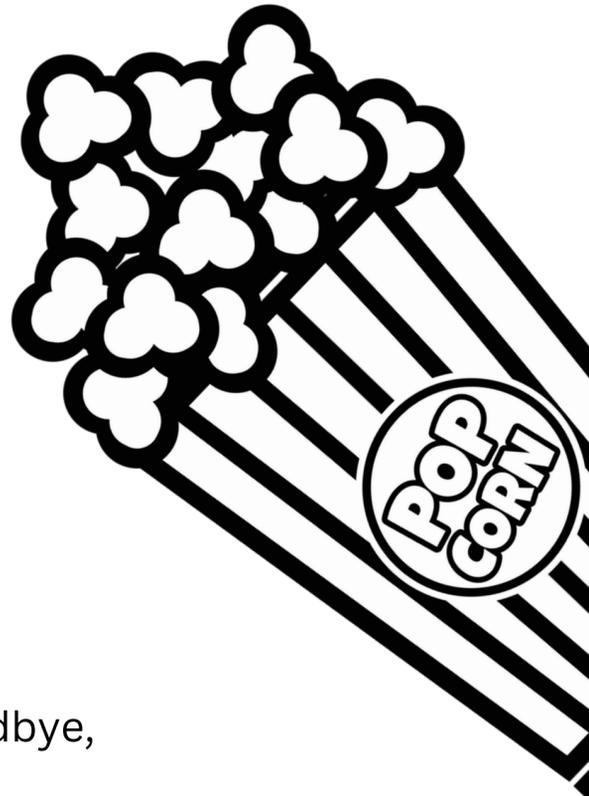
In a sea of flowers,
Be the bee who pollinates and spreads their beauty,
Fertilize the forest, for it has fallen,
Set like the sun to shine the next day,
Flowers float on the pond, seeding the air,
Water your garden of everlasting flowers.

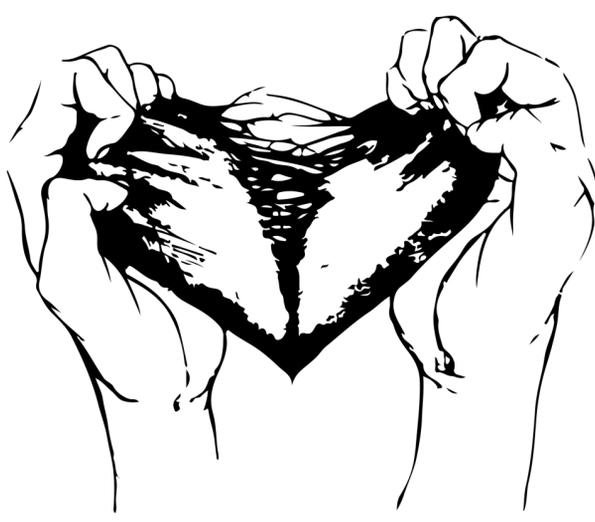
On my hands, I counted our days,
Few of my fingers rose,
And yet, there is no one else,
That my heart, for those few days would've chose
In my day, hands counted,
One, two, three, four,
And to back then, I have gone,
And have had to use my toes.

Like a hello that you know is too soon followed by goodbye,
Oh how I love my hellos,
And our goodbyes,
Why did you have to say goodbye,
Before I was ready to say hello?
Hell stand by as our love follows,
"Hello? Hello? Hello?",
I hear only of what I had wanted back then.

Light, but dark,
The sun illuminates the sky, but my heart hangs in gloom,
Is it in my room, watching as the sun departs,
Leaving my body in a tomb.
My heart takes the place of the sun,
It goes all around, circling.
Wanting and searching,
Dark, but light illuminates the earth,
I lay in the soil and am finally at peace.

Love burns with a passion,
Passion burns the love to ashes,
Kindness burns the soul away,
Until only a feeling of want remains,
Love's flames devour hatred's seeds,
And barren lays my creation like rotten leaves.





Covenant

by Samantha Lee

She entices sweet nothings
to slice through my heartbeat
draw ichor from places of iron.

i may melt Her gilded cage,
drown Her in debauchery and unthinking,
and toss the weights of the world off Her back
to map the scars.

perhaps kiss Her sun with blistering lips.
She looks like little icarus, poor charcoal feathers.

at least he jumped with wings.
so i'll sew left-handedness to the stump of Her
wounds.

and yet,
on Sunday She will stretch her limbs forward as if

to say
“touch me God”
or “i hope You can forgive me”

The Thorns Of The World



Bloom, bask, and decay

by Kaitlin Swift

Out of the desolate dirt life arises,
Growing and blossoming, from seed to sprout,
And from sprout to bud,
And from bud to bloom,

Blooming, basking in the sunlight, a flower shines,
Sealing its beauty fate in it's tragic state,
On the brink of life and death,
The blooms eventually decay,
The petals crack and fall of in the sun,
And although the flowers may not yearlong stay
They come back for perpetual fun



Dear God

by Kaitlin Swift

The woman lies in agony,
A stream of crimson flowing from a gash,
She caresses her son, and whispers in his ear,
Caressing his ebony hair and chestnut skin,
Suppressing his futile cries for someone, anyone
to save them,
She clasps her hands, deep in prayer,
Praying to a God she doesn't truly believe is
there,
Hoping if he truly exists he will spare her son,
From the agony she has had to endure.



We've Never Read About Two Princesses

by Molly Smith

Once upon a time there had lived
a princess in love with another.

One wrote a book
about journeys she took,
but the Urselas ripped out its words.

It was red and it bled vacancy
throughout our lesson plans.
They'd rather have seen
my friends and I bleed
than to know the red on their hands.

It was orange and it was citrus
made to fuel above the heat.
When they stuck with their mocking
and banned us from talking,
we would yearn for more vitamin D.

It was yellow and it shone its light
where we wanted to be if it happened.
We would break our new pens
and study 'til 10
hopping 10-year-late trains to Manhattan.

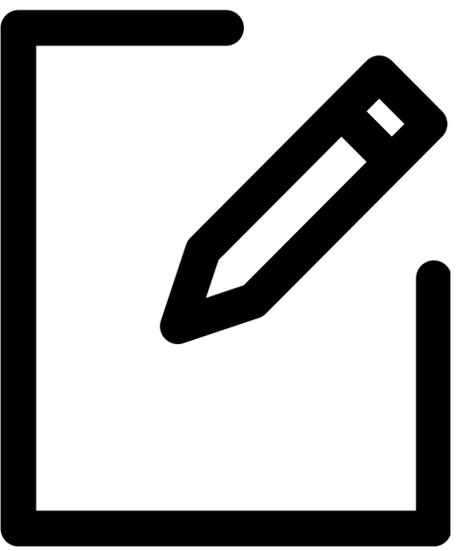
It was green 'cause it knew it had always been ready
and blinking to tell them to go.
They never opened eyes
to responsibly drive
or listen and get it and know.

It was blue from its cutouts, its rips, and its scribbles
and time spent on one hidden shelf.
The shelf was built by the senate,
"different time back then" generations,
that deemed it not fit for much else.

It turned purple because they had wanted that.
They took floors so their words could reach far.
They aren't people who share.
They aren't people who care.
They just can't have us know who we are.

Who reads the writer
and who writes the reader?
Is it us as our fighters
or them we call "speakers?"





The Creation

by Molly Smith

the need to create.

the need to sit flustered while indenting more space.

because even when words sit in your broken vases,
you'll never not have your own built-in safe spaces.

the need to consistently be teaching and seeing.

the need to gravitate towards a graduated version of
your very being.

the version of you that you sit overseeing.

one that wants nothing more than for you to believe
them.

the need to move on.

the need to sit with yourself and to locate what's wrong.

perhaps not as easy as said all along,
but a process not speaking of failure once done.

the need to recognize.

to recognize yourself in another's very eyes.

the figure of one so dejected and blind.

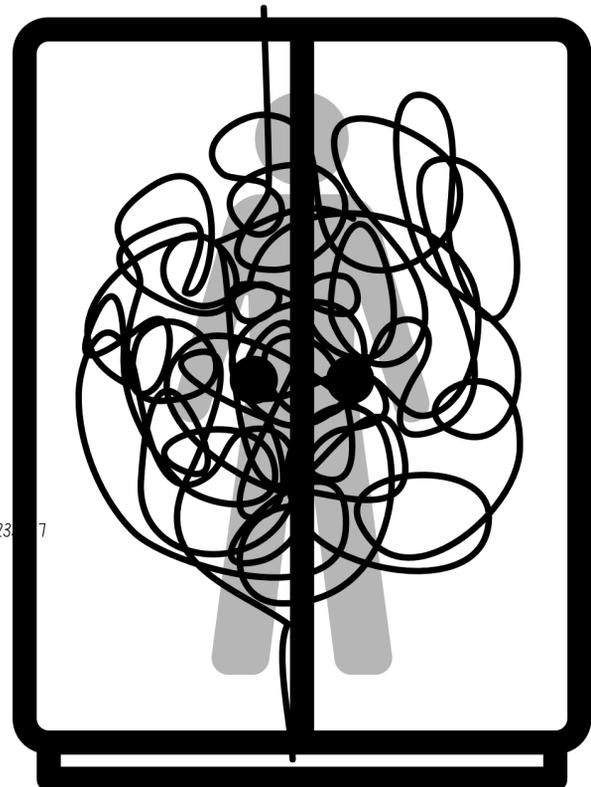
one surviving off other ones' strictly fed lies.

that one will say "hey, your creation inspires mine."

Open The Closet

by Naomi Diaz

“so you like girls now?”
my lola snarls
as she glares at me from across the dining table.
i look down at my plate
as it starts to rain
& the windows into my soul
sink
& become engulfed in an unshaken blur.
warm tears stream down my face
forming streaks of debris
tainting my soft cheeks.
i’m scared to let the real me show.
in efforts to patch up the cracking vase,
the ballon in my chest expands
with an inhale of sharpness.
i’m scared it might pop
if i take in one more gasp for air.
my lola urges again.
“so you liking girls now, eh?”
she asked again: “who did this to you?”
her gaze only picks up
the other side
through the traditional Filipino way.
she asks this
treating the news
like a tragic diagnosis.
as if this is something
i could control.
it’s not like
i woke up
and chose to be painted in the clown makeup
that only scrubs off
when it’s time
to open the closet.



this is a meal combo i indulge in
& the side dishes
of oppression are not optional.
i did not ask
for the manifestations
awakening excessive
discrimination
embedded in legislations
that rule the land
that is supposed to be that of
the “free.”
this nation
does not stand
with me
& apparently
neither can my own family.
i did not choose
for my fate
to be wrapped in the bitter reality
that i may never be able
to marry
the person
in my fantasies.
i did not ask
to like women.
& suddenly
i feel the balloon pop
as i gasp
& perk my chin up
to the monster.
my face still scarred
by the lashes of my frustrations.
i look my lola in the face:
“it’s true.”
the closet is
now open.

