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# windscript

The Magazine of High School Writing Volume 36, 2020

SWG  
Saskatchewan  
Writers' Guild

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Writers' Guild

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## MANDATE

The Saskatchewan Writers' Guild is a not-for-profit membership driven organization that strives to sustain and enhance an environment in Saskatchewan where writers and all forms of writing flourish; to promote the well-being of all writers; and to advocate on their behalf. The Saskatchewan Writers' Guild gratefully acknowledges the support of SaskCulture and the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust fund.



## WINDSCRIPT HISTORY

*Windscript* has been publishing the best of Saskatchewan high school students' literature since 1983 and was created by Victor Jerrett Enns, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild from 1982 to 1988. His enthusiasm and determination kept the magazine alive in its first two years until permanent funding could be found.

For twenty-one years, the magazine was distributed free to all high schools and libraries in the province. By 2004, funding sources were no longer available and the print publishing of the magazine was replaced by electronic versions on the SWG website.

In 2011, due to popular demand from students and teachers, as well as offering it online, the SWG was once again able to publish this magazine for promising young writers in print form.

## SPECIAL THANKS

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# EDITOR'S FORWARD

The invincible feeling of youth, and the tragedy of losing someone. Falling in love for the first time, and the peril of loneliness. Parents who betray you, and the healing power of art. Discovering new lands, new people, and missing old ones. Navigating relationships with friends, family, society. Ourselves. This is life. This is writing. This is *Windscrip*t, Volume 36.

I had read previous issues of *Windscrip*t so I knew the quality of writing that I would be reading and working with. But this time around was different. As an editor, I re-read and re-read all the of the pieces included here, and each reading brought a new layer of meaning, a new layer of appreciation. The writing inside these covers astounded me.

The themes explored are vast and complicated and deep. And I was floored by how these themes are explored. These writers used diverse and unique styles and techniques – they took risks. Some pieces challenge the reader, some nail the genre they're working within, and some are deceptively simple.

Editing this issue was not an easy task to complete (there were over 100 submissions!), but it was one that was exciting and personally enriching. The intensity with which these writers write is impressive. Their voices are loud, raw, and true. It's writing that's full of life, even when dealing with loss, regret, or death. Perhaps even especially so then. I'm happy I was a part of this year's edition.

Thanks ever so to the SWG for this opportunity; to Cat Abenstein for her guidance and support; to Shirley Fehr for designing the magazine and capturing its essence so fabulously and perfectly; and, to the previous editors for laying the path. Lastly – and most especially – I want to thank the writers. It was an incredible experience for me to read their stories and poems, and work with each one of them individually to exchange thoughts on their writing and on writing in general. Their dedication and passion are inspiring and infectious.

It was a joy and honour to edit *Windscrip*t, Volume 36. To those who are about to read the following pages: I hope you experience the same journey – the writing here will make you hold your breath, clench your fists, break wide open, and soar.

**Tara Gereaux**  
Editor, 2020

## a message from the youth poet laureate

Poet and publisher Ashely Obscura says in poetry we practice the kind of magic that will make us more free together. I believe this to be true of all writing. Language is the most fundamental tool of our culture; it allows us to share information and thus opens the door to the exchange of ideas. In our rapidly changing world, it has never been more important for us to listen to each other, hear each other's perspectives, and allow the power of our collective consciousness to drive us forward. The youth will always be charged with leading us into the future; it brings me great joy to know that in Saskatchewan there are brilliant, dedicated, creative, and liberated young people fearlessly (or despite fear!) producing art (writing!) and, in so doing, initiating the next phase in our literary history. Thank you to all the contributors in this issue for taking us by the hand and walking us to the next place we're going.

**Alasdair Rees**  
Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate 2019-2020

# 2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS

## JERRETT ENNS AWARDS

The Jerrett Enns Awards recognize excellence for high school student writing in poetry and prose named in honour of Victor Jerrett Enns, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild from 1982 to 1988. A third award for art was discontinued in 1996. Today, the poetry and prose awards continue to be presented, as well as an Honourable Mention in each category.

### Poetry

Winner

**"Adolescence" by Sohila Elgedawi**

Honourable Mention

**"Karachi Bazaar" by Warsha Mushtaq**

### Prose

Winner

**"A Cup of Black Breakfast Tea"  
by Sarah-Marie Nadeau**

Honourable Mention

**"Cutting Remorse" by Kamryn Heavin**

## CURRIE-HYLAND PRIZE

The Currie-Hyland Prize is awarded for excellence in poetry to a high school writer living outside Regina or Saskatoon. This award was established in 1992 by the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild and the literary community of Moose Jaw as a tribute to Robert Currie and Gary Hyland in recognition of the literary excellence they achieved in their many published works, and to acknowledge their commitment and generosity to their students and fellow writers.

### Poetry

Winner

**"and Red all over" by Emily Zbaraschuk**

Honourable Mention

**"You are Ours" by Brontë Slote**







# Adolescence

BY: SOHILA ELGEDAWI

There's something about being adolescent and it's not the drinking or the sex. It's testing that edge born from recklessness and looking death right in the eyes and saying, *I'm invincible*.

It's walking the streets until 3 a.m. looking at the weeping sky and wondering. They say reckless, we say free. We aren't chained birds yet. Let us throw our bodies and hearts until we shatter. See, the secret is to break yourself so much you can't put yourself together again. *Foolhardy*, they spit in our faces. *Daring*, we roar back. Our bodies light with the desperation that our wings won't fly us far.

There's something about lying in bed with the boy you love, his hands roaming down your body. He says he loves you, but you know it won't last. And yet you throw your heart into his and he does the same. *We're invincible*, his fingers say. You know he isn't the one, but right now he is and that's enough.

Our teeth break against beer bottles and the smeared lipstick looks like blood. We laugh still. Our tear-stained faces invisible, even to us. Lying in the burning wreckage of our lives. The fire burns and we're the ones who lit the match.

*Rain the ashes down, we say, We're untouchable.*

The day is a prayer and the night hours the salvation. 12 a.m. is sacred and so are the texts. The ones we exchange when everything sleeps, and the only light is from that tiny screen and the racing heart beneath. Our eyes droop but – *She needs me right now, I have to stay.*

There's something about being an adolescent and it's not the adventures, but the way we're emotionless and too full of feelings at the same time. Our only goal is to feel again.

# Karachi Bazaar

BY: WARSHA MUSHTAQ

These are the streets of the storytellers,  
who carry twigs from the arak trees in between their teeth,  
walk with gold- and silver-threaded chappals stolen from the skins  
of creatures claimed by the Himalayas,  
grounded by the forest and its monsoon rains.

These are the streets of the merchants,  
who are searching in quiet corners for warmth  
in a place bursting with clipped, luring voices,  
cotton, chiffon, and linen washed in a whirlwind of colours,  
little girls with bangles that topple from their wrists,  
and an ancient laughter that spans the seas,  
thick and smoky around the lips.

These are the streets of the children,  
who create memories in the trees and from the guavas  
smuggled into their mouths and the throats of their  
school bags, the soft palates of their flowy blue kurtas,  
flooding stalls of golgappas, samosas and naan,  
whose crunch carries their Dadijan's voice,  
and rests in their alleyway games, books,  
and dreams.

These are the streets of the heroes,  
who started just like you and me,  
girls and boys with hands painted  
in tamarind chutney and henna  
swirling like the sunrise  
and the Arabian sea.

## Narrow Night

BY: TRINA FRIESEN

Long, quiet tunnel  
Wind cuts my skin like a knife  
Darkness surrounds me

# Cutting Remorse

BY: KAMRYN HEAVIN

You barely knew one another. You didn't grow up together, or go to the same elementary school. She had her friends, and you had yours. There was no reason for your paths to cross. If you saw her in the cafeteria, you wouldn't have blinked twice.

That is, until this year.

This year you were in the same class. You sat next to one another every day. One of those days you leaned across the aisle, and the two of you started talking.

Your conversations were innocent, there was nothing special about them. When you talked, you talked about simple things: your likes, your dislikes, your hobbies. You didn't mention her at home, and you didn't mention her to your other friends. To be honest, you never really thought about her outside of class.

Then, halfway through the year, you were partnered together for a project. That's why you exchanged phone numbers. That's why you didn't think anything of it when she texted you that night. You expected the text to be something about the project.

You never expected the picture, and those six words.

You'll never forget the way the picture hit you. It was a punch in the stomach. You'll never recover from seeing those eight cuts she had slashed into her arm. The words she scrawled across the picture; they'll haunt you forever.

*I don't know what to do.*

Those six words. Those seventeen letters. That one text. Your life changed forever.

When she asked you not to tell, you promised you wouldn't.

But deep down, a part of you knew you needed to. You had learned about this in school for years, the results of self-harm. In the back of your mind, you knew it was going to end badly.

But you had already promised.

So, for days on end, you didn't speak. Not to your friends, not to your family. You kept your head down at school and your bedroom door closed at home. You didn't eat or sleep, you could barely breathe.

You were so damn worried about what other people would think.

This girl had chosen to tell you and no one else. What right did you have to tell anyone her business? You were half convinced that people wouldn't believe you anyway. What would they think of you then? Most of all, you were sure that if you told anyone, the girl would panic, and do something even worse.

But God, you were only fourteen years old. You had never dealt with any life and death situations. You had no idea how to handle it. That girl needed help, but so did you.

You should have told someone.

You should have told your mom as she walked past your room that night. You should have told her about the picture or the message or your promise. You should have cried, fallen apart. Your mom would have held you as you sobbed into her shoulder, you know she would have. Then she would have put you back together, and you both could have helped the girl.

You were scared, anyone would have been. But if you had told, that fear would have subsided.

Your mom could have called her

mom. Even though they were perfect strangers, your mom could have simply told her to check on her daughter.

It would have been the hardest thing you'd ever done. You would've had another sleepless night, staring up at your ceiling for hours. Your phone, silent beside you, would have tormented you. Because if your phone was silent, it meant her house was anything but.

And things wouldn't have fixed themselves overnight. For weeks, even months, you would have watched this girl. It would have been impossible not to look over at her during class to stare at her long sleeves, wondering if she was covering old scars, or hiding new ones. Wondering if she was still hurting, or if she was healing. Wondering if she was still lost, or if she had finally figured out the right thing to do.

But wondering would have been a hell of a lot better than never telling.

Because today, instead of walking into a church, you could have walked into class. Instead of seeing her face in a frame, you could have glanced over, and seen her next to you. And instead of one final goodbye, you could have had a million more hellos.

If you would have told, things would have been so different.

Because you would have given the girl you barely knew, the chance to wear a t-shirt.



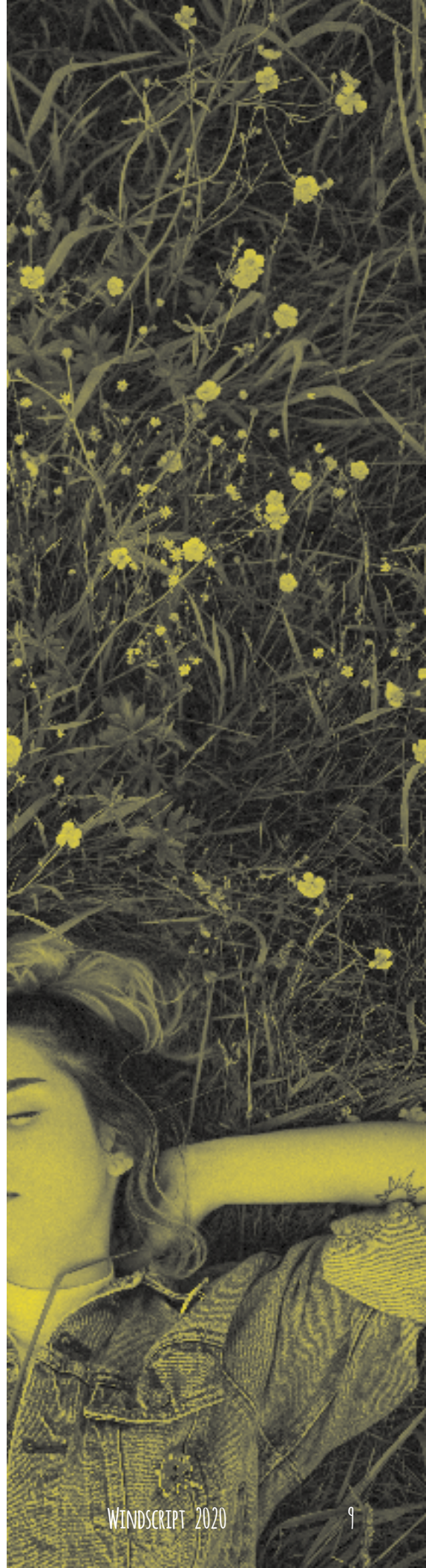
# Shapes in the Clouds

BY: CLAIRE NAGEL

I see shapes in the clouds,  
as I lay on my back.  
It's as if I am up there with them.  
In the trees I hear birds.  
The grass tickles my neck.  
I look up and nearly see her smiling back at me.  
If only I could tell her of all my happiness.

The ground is still damp,  
From the previous rain  
How I wish she could've been there  
to see it pour.  
Although she is gone,  
I believe she is with me.  
Forever and always,  
she will be in my heart.

As my eyes begin to water,  
as my vision slowly blurs,  
I give into the sadness,  
and I believe she is here.



# There will be days

BY: EMILY ZBARASCHUK

Life is a dealer,  
and sometimes the cards are handed to cheaters  
which means there will be days.  
There will be days that knock the wind out of you,  
leave you battered and bruised, shattered and abused,  
skin scraped and thoughts scattered,  
because life is a heavyweight  
with a suitcase full of punches. He's a boxer  
you can't sidestep or corner,  
he won't hear you cry  
*mercy.*  
There will be days that leave you  
like a broken-backed camel clutching at straws,  
trying to pinpoint what went wrong.  
A day will come when you'll know what went wrong  
and hate yourself for it.  
*Why couldn't you just go along?*  
You'll gamble for fool's gold, in the end you'll fold.  
There will be days when you'll want to implode  
because burning bright takes more effort.  
There will be days when your absence means less than you thought it would.  
There will be days.  
There will be days when all your bridges are burnt  
leaving you drowning in rubble, no support,  
no last resort. Days that leave you shipwrecked  
on smooth promises sharply broken,  
on all the lies softly spoken,  
on rocky deceptions, monstrous cliffs  
now in open view.  
You'll want to strangle the siren who lulled you there—  
who left you there. You'll find  
the world's no oyster—it's an ocean.  
And when sailors around you all see the warning,  
you'll mistake scarlet-stained skies for a beautiful morning.  
You'll confuse a hurricane's eye for the end of the storm,  
you won't give some clouds the respect they deserve  
and lightning will strike, at least once, sometimes twice,  
maybe more, and it will burn.  
But I can promise you this,  
you will learn.  
There will be days you'll learn how to weather life's storms.  
Stand tall in the thunder;  
you've been struck before,

ignore the command to shrink to the floor.  
So what if life's a boxer?  
You're allowed to fight dirty—  
but please, please, remember to show mercy,  
because you can wrestle beauty from life too.  
Because  
there will be days...  
soft days, warm days, bright days, lovely days, many days.  
Days that glitter with  
golden mornings and bronze evenings  
that refine into shining memories  
of laughter and hope and all things worth loving.  
These are the days worth living for.  
There will be days when you'll  
catch your breath and look around,  
newfound solid ground beneath your feet.  
You didn't drown.  
Climb those cliffs. Stand upon the bluff.  
You'll see the world in the clear,  
and realize the crash  
might've been worth it.  
From the heights you'll look at old ruins  
and dream something better.  
You'll lay a foundation, cross out  
your tallied failures, and rebuild your hopes.  
There will be days when you can't help but smile:  
you made it through the trial,  
*was it all worthwhile?*  
I hope you'll answer with a resounding  
*yes*  
because sometimes salt makes things sweeter—  
savour the contrast.  
Take the lessons you've learned  
from mistakes you've discerned  
leave no mess unturned and  
let the scars burned  
in skin and soul remind you,  
you got through it all.  
In the end, life's still a dealer,  
but he shuffles good in with bad  
and the thing about cards is that with a bit of skill,  
it doesn't matter what you're given—  
it's how you play your hand that counts.

# Manifest

BY: ANDREYA CASWELL

If I think about you  
    long enough  
        hard enough  
            burning enough  
You will show up at my door  
    with a handful of  
        indifference.  
I can bring you to meet me  
    but never convince you  
        to love me.  
I can manifest a million reasons  
        why I am your  
        Soulmate.  
I write them in the stars  
    but still can't bring your gaze  
        to read my lovesick  
        Constellations.  
I gave up on thinking of you  
    and you vanished in the sun.  
I now think of scars you etched in me  
        the hard enough I think  
        the deeper they become.

# A Cup of Black Breakfast Tea

BY: SARAH-MARIE NADEAU

A tense moment went by before I let out a long, calming breath. My shoulders slumped. My heart slowed from a sprint to a trot. I closed my eyes and begged my hands to stop shaking.

The shattered china was at my feet, lying so still, as if it too had been anticipating the loathing words and the raging fists. Shards were scattered across the yellowing kitchen floor, waiting to slice the silence open and watch it bleed onto the tiles.

Several seconds slipped away, and still no stir in the apartment, not even from the bedroom I knew she was sleeping in. Gingerly, I crouched down and began cleaning up the teacup I had dropped. My fingers evaded sharp edges while trying to not succumb to the fear. Blind terror at the thought of the woman waking up when that cup hit the floor. At the thought of her exploding through the bedroom door and glaring. The hate in her eyes as they connected with the crime scene. Me, among the precious china, committing a heinous act because everything I do is evil and to spite her. That is what she would scream with alcohol-laced breath, as her palm connects with my already bruised cheek, as my own words die at my lips. Corpses of broken pleas for a fair chance to explain would splatter on the ground as they plummet. I suppose, they would know, however, that their attempts were futile and their deaths were in vain. The meaning of

“accident” doesn’t exist within these walls. I know how she would delight in my knees bleeding as I fall to the ground. How she would kick me and order me to clean up my mess and my worthlessness while she stumbled back into bed, wearing the same black dress as the night before.

She didn’t wake up though, she didn’t burst through the door. She is asleep.

I quickly deposited the shards in the garbage and resumed boiling water for tea. Breakfast tea. Black. It’s what I’ve been drinking every morning for the past seven years. I used to wake up to pancakes and milk but when my father left just after my fifth birthday, big breakfasts had trickled down to cereal or dry toast. Then when I was six, the drinking got out of hand and the woman I had to live with simply forgot to buy cereal and milk and bread. I remember stealing money from her cheap purse and sneaking off to the gas station down the street. I could barely read, but I recognized the word “breakfast” on a small yellow box. I had bought it and scampered home. Since then, I’ve stuck with the tea. It’s easy to make and doesn’t expire.

A cup of black breakfast tea every morning had become the only reliable routine in my life. Even when the woman would bring home strange men at night and forget to give me supper, I could grab a chair to stand on to reach the top shelf, grab my small, yellow box and listen to the water boiling instead of

what was happening in that bedroom. The happy yellow box would say good morning to me on the cloudiest days, and I would look forward to every time I pulled the bright colour from the cabinets.

I grabbed a new cup and poured the hot water. Two small sips later, I felt a stabbing pain in my foot. One blink later, I see the blood oozing out from a large piece of china lodged in my heel. I couldn’t decide whether to swear because I’d missed a piece or because of the unexpected pain. In the end, I decided to swear because of the fact that our medical supplies are stashed under the bed along with a few bottles of illegal pills. I would either have to bleed out all over the floor, or disturb the woman and possibly suffer a bloodied nose.

I decided to take a chance on less blood.

A steady breath braced me as I slowly made my way over to the wooden bedroom door of the too-small apartment. My hand held the worn doorknob firmly, and I twisted it gently. I winced as the door creaked while I cracked it open.

When I opened my eyes, my mouth fell open in a silent gasp and I pushed the door wider. I didn’t notice as it slammed against the dirty wall, nor did I notice the dull ache of my injured foot anymore.

There she was. A needle still stuck in her bruised arm.



The woman was jerking on the bed and foam overflowed from her gaping mouth. She was incomprehensible, her grotesque yet soft choking noises were the only sounds as she convulsed and shook.

My first instinct was to slowly close the door and wait for it to be over. To go back to my tea and maybe reread the morning paper. To pretend like I was in complete ignorance. To burst into the bedroom maybe half an hour later. Call the authorities. Pretend that I was too late to save her. When I found her, she was already dead.

Just like that, I would be free. The woman who had forced so many tears from my eyes and inflicted so much pain in my short life, would be gone. She would finally get a horrible ending to her even more horrible existence.

I stared silently at the woman who gave birth to me. Who had nursed me. Played games with me before I could even talk. But I couldn't look away from that same woman who wounded me so deeply and starved me of more than just cereal and milk and bread.

I ached for the sound of the door clicking shut and for my nightmare to end. I wanted her dead and I have for years.

I reached for the doorknob.

Tears escaped my eyes one last time.

I limped to the kitchen and reached for the old bright red rotary telephone.

Three turns and the phone was waiting for someone far away to answer. Every move of my body and every second that ticked by felt mechanical.

I hung up the phone after a strong and kind voice told me to hold on, they

would be right there.

I had lived with a mother who let her daughter die everyday. It would be easy to become a daughter who let her mother die today.

However, I also knew while I felt nothing standing in that doorway, watching her waste away from the luring contents of an unclean needle, I was not my mother's daughter. I was the one who held her hair back while she leaned over the toilet that didn't quite flush right. I was the one who took the punches and the pain over and over without throwing it all back. Until that moment, I never had the courage to think of my mother as a small and broken woman who could be killed with something as insignificant as a needle. I had never thought about her as a human who is flawed.

Something changed in my chest. It changed the way I looked at the four walls around me. It changed the way I thought about her. It changed the way I saw myself.

I knew that I would be the one to make my children pancakes every morning. To never leave them for a drink when they cry from a nightmare or wet their bed. Never hurt someone that I am meant to protect. Never starve them of love. I knew that person I will become, would always do the right thing even though it hurts.

I sat down at the kitchen table and took a few more sips of my tea while waiting for the sirens in the distance to get closer. And somehow, I knew, that tomorrow morning, my cup of black breakfast tea would taste a little sweeter.





# St. Jerome in the Wilderness

BY: MYRA BUTTER

I am an unfinished painting.  
Behold the surface of my *non finito*,  
my graphite vision, swaying to the hum of my artist's whim –  
The Manchester Madonna.

I am like an X-ray,  
my loosely lined arrangement of design,  
composing my architecture's disguise.  
My sketches, suggestion enough of an earlier vision –  
The Death of Actaeon.

A challenge of beauty, my character unknown.  
A demand for imagination, an insight of innovation –  
The Flaying of Marsyas.  
I am an unfinished painting,  
an artist's true infatuation.

# Full Figured Female

BY: OLIVIA JOHNSTON

I do not  
    dream of having a different body  
    feel timid about fashion  
    or hide my curves under an oversized hoodie  
        (although they can be very comfortable)  
I have a chubby stomach  
    not six pack abs  
and my legs are as strong as the hate the media directs at us  
and my shoulders can carry the burden of the world's expectations  
I am a full-figured female  
    which make me as strong as a brick wall  
    facing the voice of public opinion  
My curves are a part of my identity  
    and they don't diminish my worth or beauty  
I speak for body positivity and acceptance,  
    not to glamourize obesity  
I wear what I want  
    without being restricted  
I can proudly walk out in my favourite shorts or a crop top  
    without feeling ashamed  
I believe in self confidence  
    not  
        **Slut**      **Fat**      or      **Body**      shaming  
And that society needs to have  
    more standardized sizing  
    and clothing for people of all shapes and statures  
Cellulite and stretchmarks are perfectly normal  
    and those bikinis are made for me and you too  
My chest is not flat  
    But my waist is quite small  
**And the best part is**  
    **I don't consider your opinion at all**

# Only She Knows

BY: SARA ROBERT

The plush emerald grass covering the land glistens under the setting sun's warm light. The light shines through the branches of the white blossom trees that arch over the winding stone path. The branches dance in the swift breeze as the girl stands perfectly still, seemingly listening to the barely audible whisper of wind. Her eyes are closed, her head cocked slightly to the side, her hands clasped together at her back, and there's a bemused and peaceful smile playing across her face. She stands on the tips of her toes while leaning forward slightly. Anyone walking by would wonder what she is doing, but the area appears to be deserted with the exception of the young girl on the stone path.

Presently, a singular white petal slowly floats down from above and lands on the girl's nose. Her eyes flutter open and she giggles before brushing it off and waving farewell to the trees delightedly. As the girl starts walking, her surroundings waken from their sleep, and birds chirp while jumping from branch to branch, tree to tree. The sweet smell of grass and blossoms fills the air. A rabbit hops out from its hiding spot in the bushes, twitches its nose while peering at the girl, and leaps across the path and into the lush greenery on the other side. Cricket symphonies start clicking their nocturnal songs in the tall grass on either side of the path. The sky, a beautiful abstract painting complete with every colour of the rainbow, is starting to twinkle with stars. The wind that had been gently billowing now ceases, and the girl's dress that had only moments before been swirling behind her as she walked, now settles to hide

her bare feet.

Further ahead, the path opens to a pond of shimmering clear teal water sprawling across the land. Its surface is so still that it looks as though it would shatter to pieces with a single touch. Above the glassy water stands an ancient stone bridge carpeted in a thick layer of soft green moss, with vines entwined between every weathered stone. As she crosses it, the girl is reflected in the still pond so that she looks to be walking both right-side-up and upside-down. She does not notice this, however, as her attention is on the fragrant field ahead that sprouts with flowers of rich vibrant colours. In the distance, snowcapped mountains stand with their heads held high, reaching up. The usually cream-coloured clouds in the sky are ablaze in deep orange and bright pink tones. As the sun sets, a bright, full moon lights up the sky and constellations splatter across the horizon.

Still following the path as it winds through the field of flowers, the girl heads towards a beach that spans to eternity on either side. Waves of salty water crash onto powdery white sand and roll back into the sea. Smooth black stones are strewn about the shore. As the girl's bare feet sink into the sand, she catches movement from the corner of her eye. From the sand emerges a tiny creature not completely discernible in the darkness at first glance. More of them appear to follow the first. As they waddle towards the water, it becomes clear to the girl that she is witnessing the birth of turtles. In small clusters, they start swimming uneasily against the constant ebb and flow of the waves, following the light provided

by the moon.

Soundlessly, the girl sinks to the ground without taking her eyes off the turtles. Despite her small smile, a tear rolls down her cheek and lands on the light fabric of her dress. Even as she gazes at the ocean, her mind is elsewhere, trapped in a moment, a place, a thought. Perhaps it is the darkness pressing down on her eyelids, or the exhaustion settling in her bones, or simply the will to better see what's in her mind - what she relives from her past - that compels her to close her eyes. If it is joy, sadness, anger or embarrassment that causes her cheeks to flush...

Only she knows.

# After all Those Years of the Same Routine

BY: HEIDITERFLOTH

I always ordered tea and he always ordered the coffee. I would have extra sugar, and he would tell the waitress he wanted his drink black like his soul. When we waited for our beverages, I would draw flowers and he would point to people around us and make up their depressing life stories.

Once our drinks arrived, I would say thanks and he would offer me some of his coffee. I would tell him that I didn't like coffee, and he would say that I would this time. I would reach out and he would place the cup in my hand. I would sip and he would smile. I would spit the coffee at him and he would laugh at me.

I would walk out of the restaurant with a spring in my step and he would tell dark jokes. I would shove him away but laugh anyway and he would shove me back. He would walk to the gate to his house and I would say bye and walk further.

Every time I walked away from his gate, I wanted to stop and go back but never did. Now, I regret that decision.

After all those years of the same routine, I wish that we were still close. Now we smile in the street but don't interact. We wave but don't speak. We just keep going our separate ways.



# Deaths

BY: ZARINE GRINDLE

Hello  
You are welcome to witness  
The deaths of this year  
The regrets of this year  
The bets  
The checks  
The never impressed  
Deceased  
And collected  
This year  
Take a seat  
Moan a sigh  
I'll show you statistics  
Of numbers so high  
Take a look  
Just a gander  
Of six hundred fifty-one  
Homicides in a country  
Whose citizens' lives  
Seem so comfy  
Though 2018  
Has had murders  
Steal our very lives  
Beavers and maple syrup  
Blind to see  
This is no joke  
Perceive your eyes  
To their mega  
Lies  
They  
Super  
Size  
The rare conditions  
Of each of the  
Assimilations  
Thanks for your  
Participation  
While I hide what I don't  
Want you to see  
So that you  
Side with me  
Hear me plea

This isn't  
How the world is supposed to be  
Please lay  
The whole case  
Out  
On one page  
So there is no dismay  
No need to  
Relocate  
Because they said it was  
My fault  
A problem I didn't even create  
I'm a court case  
Used as a scene on the  
TV  
To show who not to be  
But please  
Change the channel  
You'd be shocked  
With what you see  
Someone with a whole new  
Gravity  
A story ending  
Happily  
It's not just me  
Maybe I'm a different ethnicity  
Or identify as  
LGBT  
Or born of a land  
You stole from me  
I could have a new  
Gender identity  
Listen to me  
I am everyone  
You are me  
  
Excuse me  
While I join the leading cause of  
Lack of existence  
This is not resistance  
When the 2nd leading loss  
In a country of provinces

Takes 4000 of our youth  
Reliance  
A risk three times higher  
Since I'm the minority  
Without priorities  
Whose fate is supposed to be  
The world ending me  
Citizens don't exactly pity me  
But please help stop me  
From falling  
Into the hands of the big man  
Congrats to you though  
Being a straight white man  
In high school you were sports clad  
But damn  
Your whole life is what  
Your ancestors would deem perfectly  
bearable  
  
Our story will never be told  
Quite as  
Incredible  
The expected analogy  
In the world's worst apology  
There is nothing stopping me  
From taking my nation with me  
As I fall  
At the hands  
Of a man who should  
Take  
Care  
Of  
Me  
Few are left to help me  
Or save me  
So next time you pray  
Send out a hopeful plea  
Remember this blessing  
From me  
May the odds be in your favour  
Because me  
Is equal  
To we



# When the Land was Ours

BY: TAYLOR MCKENZIE

*When the land was ours  
Buffalo roamed freely.*

Warriors notched arrows  
with the fletching of birds.  
Arrowheads made of  
obsidian and flint  
that would be found  
buried in dirt  
hundreds of years later,  
put on display for  
the eyes of privilege to see.  
When the buffalo collapsed  
tobacco was sprinkled  
on the ground  
as prayer was spoken  
in a tongue that  
would later be whispered  
in the washrooms of  
Residential Schools  
only to be dying in  
the future generations.  
Now all they know is  
hello; *tansi*.

*When the land was ours  
We spoke our language.*

No pale hands  
to pinch the tongue  
of little ones.

*When the land was ours  
Our air was fresh  
Our land was green  
Our water was blue.*

An abundance of fish  
now they float up to shore  
water nearly as green as  
the grass once was.

*When the land was ours  
The earth was our mother.*





# The Cigarette

BY: CASSIE MEYER

On that first day, you lit a cigarette  
The sparks flew as you took a long, long drag  
My heart felt full as it filled with regret –  
Over my green eyes, my lids start to sag  
It all began when fall came – October  
As the leaves began to tumble and fall  
But we fell to pieces by November  
When the snow started to muffle your calls  
It's amazing how we love what hurts us  
Tobacco promises stained your teeth  
The time made my heart grow rimmed with rust  
All I craved was a slight sweet relief  
You once gained my trust with ease and grace  
One smile at me and my heart grew softer  
Now months later, that's not the case  
“Want a cigarette?” you always offer  
But things aren't the same anymore  
“You've grown cold,” he says, “what happened?”  
“You,” I think to myself – my lungs are sore  
Maybe from the smoke – or your use of “friend”  
I watch the snow as it falls about  
I finally realize I must go  
So I open the door without a doubt  
“Stay, I love you so much” – Oh is that so?  
One last drag of that dry disgusting smoke  
The hurt is worse, worse than these cigarettes  
So, at last I put it out, say goodbye  
You won't kill me, you won't be how I die

# and Red all over

(a reverse poem\*)

BY: EMILY ZBARASCHUK

everything is black and white,  
still. still  
streets, dark sky, blinding lights. the heart  
of the city  
throbbing. this pulsing sound  
like percussion in a symphony.

listen. a gunshot.

try telling the world  
it was just an accident.  
how will they react? will they be told  
I have a family.

listen.  
he had a gun.  
I had a family.  
fight or flight?  
I thought  
he had a gun.  
he seemed suspicious—  
I didn't think.

what went wrong?  
fear overtaking me,  
all I thought of was  
my safety.  
along with  
life,

liberty, and  
the pursuit of happiness.  
don't I have the right to  
bear arms?  
why must others  
judge. assign blame... guilt...  
fault.

his  
dying  
breaths are shallow, draining. I'm  
like a bird in a cage. my  
heart beats frantically,  
everything is Red, all over,

blood—  
another mark on this world.  
I have no chance to make  
a second amendment.  
it comes down to this: my story against  
his story.  
I hope the world doubts  
what happened was clear.

*\* Note: A reverse poem which is meant to be read from top to bottom, left to right, then read from bottom to top, left to right. Generally, the second reading of this type of poem "reverses" the perspective of the first reading, adding to the overall meaning of the poem.*

# Sugar Beets

BY: MADELYN KABAN

A steady, gentle hand on my shoulder nudges me awake. My eyes open groggily, searching for the small beams of golden light leaking through the cracked and worn edges of our home. My mother makes her rounds through the room, waking my four other groggy-eyed siblings. Maria, John, Larry and Linda stir one by one.

“Good morning, time to get up,” says my mother softly. “There is lots of work to be done.” She surveys the room to make sure we’re all fully awake before making her way back to the kitchen.

Our bedroom has a faint, yet wonderfully sweet smell of dirt, hay and a little bit of manure. The smell reaches my nostrils as my mouth stretches into a wide yawn, silently screaming for more sleep. I do not complain. My bare feet touch down on the floor and I leave my warm bed behind as I pull a shirt over my head. My siblings silently do the same, and one by one we file out of the room into the kitchen, where our father waits by the door.

Maria and Linda linger alongside my mother in the kitchen while John, Larry and I shove our feet into dirty, battered work boots. The base of my boot is peeling off, and both are riddled with holes that let in biting gusts of snow during the winter. I do not complain. John and Larry got new boots for their birthdays, but my birthday did not happen this year. I don’t think it was remembered. But my father is a very busy, hardworking man who must provide for our family, so I do not complain.

“Hurry up, boy,” says my father gruffly before exiting the room.

I jump to my feet quickly and follow him out of the door. I am not often called by my given name, Harold. Usually, it’s “boy” or “kid.” When my father gets upset, he sometimes uses other names that I have learned not to repeat.

I step outside into the brisk morning air. A gasp of breath escapes me in the form of a spiralling white cloud as the chill hits my lungs. The sun is just breaking over the horizon, its glowing streams lighting up the endless fields surrounding us. I sometimes imagine what it would be like to run through the tall, dancing green stems of the sugar beets until I can stand where the earth drops off and the sky begins. I immediately feel guilty for what my father calls “dense and foolish” thoughts and remind myself that there is work to be done.

We are harvesting the sugar beets today. The roots have already been lifted by a rusty old plough, pulled by our horse team. The beets had no chance against the strong, rippling muscles of our Belgian horses, their roots basically jumped out of the ground at the mere sight of these incredible animals. *Today, I think to myself, I wish I could be a horse.*

My job is to grab the beets by the roots and shake off all the loose dirt so that my brothers can follow behind and chop off the long, green stems using a beet hook. My father follows behind and forks them into a cart. Sweat drips down my neck as the sun burns through my shirt with its unwavering stare. My back aches and my legs threaten to give up as we finish up the last of a countless number of rows for the day.

We trudge back to the house, every inch of our bodies heavy and our feet dragging across the dry ground. My father follows behind me, so close I hear his steady breathing and almost feel it on my neck. I do not complain. I walk into the house and straight into the kitchen, the overpowering smell of warm potatoes and turkey producing a drug-like effect. I hear an outcry behind me, and as I turn my head, I realize that I forgot to take my boots off. I tracked layers of film and dirt from the entrance of our home all the way into the kitchen. I didn’t even have to see my dad reach for the strap hanging on the wall to see in his eyes the punishment that would immediately follow. I did not complain.

*This time wasn’t too bad,* I thought to myself as I shifted gingerly onto my side under the rough covers of my bed.

There was one time during a harsh, barren winter that my father was continually worried because snow had fought its way through the cracks in our worn roof and we were running low on food. The sugar beet crop had not been successful that season as tantrums of storms consistently payed visits to the land. It had been a long day in the field, and I could barely keep my head up as I dished up for dinner. My plate slipped from my clammy hands as I was heading to the table. It seemed to move in slow motion, seemingly floating to the ground before shattering into thousands of diamonds on our dull kitchen floor. He didn’t even bother going to get a belt. My body tenses as it flashes back to blow upon blow as I curled into a ball on the floor. Warm blood had run down my lips,



the salty, bitter taste pooling in my mouth. Whether it was dripping from my forehead, my nose or from inside my mouth, I was not able to tell. I did not complain. I went to live with my grandparents for a week following the beating to allow my father to cool off.

"He was under a lot of pressure and you should not have dropped that food," my mother said to me when I returned home. "He has the right to punish you as he sees fit."

The next day is a school day. We wake up before the sun to help father with some simple tasks before walking to our schoolhouse a quarter of a mile down the road. We are lucky to live so close. There are other kids that must leave much earlier than us in order to arrive on time. The boy who sits next to me in class is named Todd. He's a small boy, however, based on the size of his feet and his impressive lack of coordination, he has a real possibility of a growth spurt.

At lunchtime, Todd stands and makes his way across the classroom to talk to his sister. I watch as his overly large foot catches on the unsuspecting leg of Anna's desk. He lunges forwards. His face smashes into my desk and his hands reach out in a final attempt at self-protection, but he knocks my lunchtime meal all over the floor in the process. The crash silences the room and every set of eyes are drawn to the food scattered across the wooden floor. I make eye contact with Todd, his eyes widening in shock and apology. I look quickly around the room.

There is no teacher around. *Someone must give Todd a proper punishment*, I

think to myself. *How else will he learn his lesson?* "Look at all the food that has gone to waste!" I shout.

I rise to my feet and roll up my sleeves. Todd moves back a couple of inches. I close my hand into a fist and throw it at him, striking him across the face. I give Todd three more blows until I deem it is enough, until I believe he has learned his lesson. Then I stretch out my hand to him, as he had fallen over during his punishment, but he flinches away from me with a terrified look. As I turn away, I see the principal standing at the door, arms crossed tightly across his broad chest and a straight, emotionless expression on his face.

"Harold, follow me. Someone else send for the nurse, be sure that Todd receives treatment," he says.

I've never been in the principal's office before. It is a tidy and plain room without many personal belongings. A brown wooden desk and chair sit in the middle, surrounded by a green, faded wallpaper. Papers are stacked neatly on the desk and on the wall hangs a brown, well-used leather strap.

"Sir, he spilled my food all over the ground! He had to learn a lesson," I say, words spilling out of my mouth.

Slowly, the principal turns around and lifts the strap from the wall. Admitting to defeat, I hold out my bruised and battered hands and put my head down. The strap stings my hands, once, twice, I stop counting. I do not complain.





# A Feast for the Fathers

BY: SEIJA LIIMATAINEN

On the gravel road where long brown corn meets a flat grey sky, where the birds  
hang motionless in the air and languish in the pine trees,  
I met a brother in the corn, where I was told not to go.  
I met a brother dressed in black, with a sad face, hair so short I swore it was nearly not there.  
I met a brother with a white collar, looking lost.  
I asked him if he was looking for someone, in this place where nobody is.  
I met a brother looking for flesh in the place where no flesh is.  
He paid me an apology in his native tongue, laid his lips between my eyes.  
And all in black, he stepped forward and took me from the road, up onto his back.  
He hadn't taken me far along the gravel road until we met three fathers.  
Three fathers, robed in white, sat in a clearing.  
I met three fathers with white robes, white hair, and white skin, sitting among the white flowers, waiting for their feast.  
And the brother in black set me upon the white flowers and how he wept, for he had brought about my end.  
And upon the white flowers,  
Within the dead brown corn,  
Under the flat grey sky,  
I became a feast for the fathers.

4:00 A.M.

BY: TAYLOR MCKENZIE

young ears pick up lonely laughter. in an hour it turns to crying,  
then after sixteen minutes a welcoming yawn and eyes will close. the  
echoes of unfiltered weeps will suffocate in the polka dot curtains. it  
is dawn now, but the house sounds like midnight. loud tears come  
to a soft halt. beneath a blanket, a breath of relief. air drenched in  
disrupted sleep. on the road trip to dream world, traffic stops at the  
rustle of clothed limbs and staccato footsteps.

glass bottle shatters  
tsunami of liquor  
it smells like childhood

# To the Girl Who Reads

BY: CLAIRE NAGEL

To she who reads under the covers,  
a flashlight in hand.  
She soars on dragons,  
she dances through sand.  
She's powerful,  
living in her own little world.  
By gigantic cannons she has been hurled.  
She's flown with the fairies through the big, blue sky  
like a butterfly,  
gracefully fluttering by.  
With the witches she's done magic,  
with the werewolves she has run.  
She has fought with knights,  
under yellow stars shining bright.  
Many lives she has lived,  
countless times, she has cried,  
but soon she must return –  
she can't let reality die.  
But then she's back under the covers,  
a flashlight in hand.  
She picks up a new book,  
a new life has begun.  
To the girl who soars on dragons.  
To the girl who's danced in the sand.



# Final Stand

BY: MIKAELA MILLAN

It was the only scrap of identity the dead woman possessed. Her naked body had been stripped down, leaving nothing to the imagination. Dark bruises decorated her fair skin like tribal tattoos, and only closer examination would reveal what had been the final blow.

Rookie officer Rachel Verona stood above the body, twirling the large, blue-beaded hoop earring in her hastily gloved fingers, latex sticking to her damp palms. The smooth, grey pebbles of the beach crunched under the crime unit's booted feet, the warm ocean waves lapping quietly against the shoreline.

The sun beat down from the cloudless blue sky, a trickle of sweat traced its way down her neck.

There was nothing else left to discover here. She motioned for the CSI unit to move in as she ducked under the garish police tape that unabashedly drew attention to the tragedy held in its embrace.

She tucked the earring into a plastic bag, sealed it and scratched down its description: four slim gold hoops set in a larger, three-centimeter-wide hoop, with blue, silver, and bronze glass beads strung around them. A smear of blood decorated the hook, either the victim's or the killer's. Only time would tell. She scribbled her signature across the bag before peeling off her gloves and pulling her phone from her back pocket.

She sent a text to her supervisor, swearing to find justice and ease this burden hanging over the Jane Doe's family.

She would catch this one if it was the last thing she did.

\*\*\*\*

The victim's lips shone a peculiar shade of blue, a thin veil of frost curling around her bared skin. An earring hung from her left earlobe, just like the two victims before her. Another Jane Doe. Another family ripped apart and suspended between the cracks in time, waiting with bated breath, hating the uncertainty, hating not knowing what had happened to their loved one.

Detective Rachel Verona eased the hoop earring from the victim's ear, noting the rust-coloured stain similar to the previous victims'. She didn't need a test to know what the results would yield – that the blood did not belong to the victim. The blood sample belonged to a male and would match the other samples from previous victims, but no further information could be gleaned. Once it was secured in an evidence bag, she lowered the victim's eyes and draped a sheet over Jane Doe's body, shielding her from prying eyes.

Rachel tucked her hands in her jacket and watched her breath cloud around her head.

She closed her eyes, listening to the frigid navy waves crash against the pebbled beach, the sun shining weakly from the grey sky.

The shrill ring of a phone shattered the sombre silence hanging in the air. She dug her phone from her pocket and saw an unknown caller flash across the screen.

"Detective Rachel Verona," she said briskly, her patience wearing thin.

A taunting whistle filled her ear. The simple four note melody repeated over and over, stretching into an eternity. With a growl, she ended the call, the

lingering melody ringing in her ears, soaring across the ocean.

For three years, this monster had terrorized her city. She was getting closer. And she would catch him.

\*\*\*\*

Sargent Rachel Verona stared into the blank face eerily similar to her own. She slammed her palm against the cold steel of the coroner's table, an angry flush crawling up her neck. For five years this bastard had evaded her. Then, for almost a year, the Jane Doe killer had fallen silent. For a moment, everyone had breathed a collective sigh of relief, only to be shattered as another body had surfaced. This one. She backed away as the coroner came forward, metal tools gleaming in the harsh overhead light.

She turned on her heel and poured over the half-dozen unsolved cold cases left in the wake of the killer.

She was running out of time.

How long did she have before he struck again?

\*\*\*\*

Lieutenant Rachel Verona smoothed a graying wisp of pale blond hair behind her ear as she waited for the press conference to begin. She stepped forward as the commissioner called her name. Then the onslaught of questions began, falling from a hundred lips, swirling together until it was all a blur.

"It's been almost ten years since the first body was discovered and you are no closer to catching the Jane Doe Killer!"

"What's being done to protect our young women?"

"Nearly three-dozen women are dead!"

Their questions died away as Rachel's world slowed. The flash of cameras blurred as a taunting whistle cut through the indistinct chatter.

She knew that whistle.

That whistle that had taunted her for years.

Calls that only contained that whistle before hanging up.

A glint of blue glass shimmering like a beacon in the crowd drew her back to the cacophony of voices. He was here.

"Excuse me." She barreled her way through the crowds. Chasing. Gaining. Losing.

She arrived at the pebbled beach where all the victims had been discovered.

The scrape of a shoe against the shifting stones revealed their location. Too late, she whirled around.

\*\*\*\*

Lieutenant Rachel Verona lay still in the pebbles, waves lapping against her legs, her life-giving blood pooling around her head. The setting sun painted streaks of crimson in her golden hair, a rosy blush from the sun crowning the waves rolling onto the beach. In one hand she clutched an earring. In the other, a note:

*I did it.*

*I killed those girls.*

*I haven't been well for quite some time.*

*I can't beg for forgiveness, but I am sorry.*

The confession seemed to solve the case and gave an acceptable amount of closure to the grieving families.

But.

He lurked in the shadows.

Waiting.

Watching.

Turning on his heel, a jaunty whistle

in the air, he twirled a blue beaded earring around his meaty finger as he strode away from the crime scene. He was free. The cop was a distraction. A cover up. Nothing more than the latest victim. No one could catch him now.

He was free.

Finally, free.



# For the Sake of Progress

BY: THEOREN LUCAS MICHAEL

As I trudged through the cold sands of an empty and lifeless wasteland,  
my eyes were greeted by a terrifying, unspeakable sight that had to be scanned.  
Many weathered skulls and skeletal remains of human beings began to resurface  
as the howling wind blew away the pale sand that hid them under the earth's surface.  
The charred-black trees and the scorched grass began to tremble and shiver  
as they recalled the atrocities committed here that were unbelievably sinister.  
Upon viewing this, I began to realize  
there was a time when my ancestors once stood here and fought to survive.  
A time where the valleys and hills were once rich with life that strived to thrive.  
A time when the sounds of heartfelt chanting and prayers once filled the skies  
with feelings of hopes, dreams, and wishes belonging to the minds  
of countless, innocent First Nations lives.  
But all of this has now been silenced by the sounds of the misfortunate.  
All that can be heard is gunfire and the deafening whimpering of the unfortunate.  
All for the sake of "progress," they said.  
Nothing but senseless bloodshed.  
Negotiation was a loaded musket to them, built to ravage,  
ready to fire righteous prejudice on what they called "filthy savages."  
All for the sake of "development," they said.  
They succeeded in bathing the soil deep red.  
Much like the earth, the descendants of these tribes still bear the scars of the past.  
The pain and suffering still linger in their minds, the eternal trauma is here to last.  
Feelings of anger and sadness are too overwhelming for most.  
Many need to escape the cruelty of reality so they take a lethal dose.  
All for the sake of "advancement," they said.  
I wonder how many of my ancestors lay dead.  
All for the sake of "progress," they said.

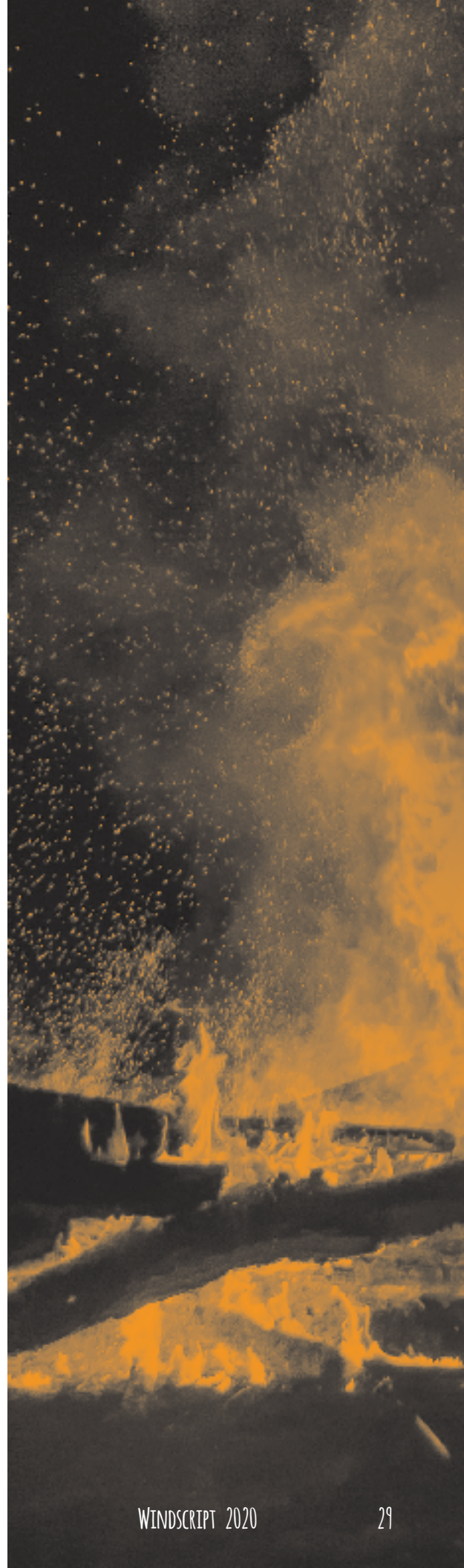


# The Beast

BY: TRYSTAN DUPRE

**I**t started with rain, lightly pitter-pattering on our roofs, barely noticeable. Then, as if the sky had become an ocean, it poured. Thunder crashed in the skies as if the mountains had collided, and lightning struck like the hail that pelted the ground. From the sky that had been blotted out by black clouds, the Beast came upon us. She shook the earth with each step, the rain that fell close to her turned to steam before it even reached the ground. The ungodly thunder was muted by her hateful roar. When her tail swung, neither man nor tree nor stone tower could withstand the force. We pelted thousands of arrows upon her, not a single one could pierce her crimson scales. We stabbed hundreds of times at her four feet, our swords bent and our armour melted, encasing our knights in steel tombs. We launched dozens of boulders at her with our catapults, we drew but a single drop of blood. When her blood touched the earth, it exploded into a mass of fire, launching men who were two hundred yards away flying, never to be seen again. Anyone closer was turned to ash. Raging, she heaved a massive breath of flame, melting stone and steel. The flames stretched near a thousand yards in each direction, leaving nothing but scorched earth behind.

Do you hear that? Rain, lightly pitter-pattering on the roof...



# Oblivious to Reason

BY: ANN STOPPLER

His eyes grew dark as the day was coming to a close. The sun lowered on the horizon as the reds, oranges, pinks and purples wavered, daring to disappear until the sun appeared again. A shadow cut his face, leaving half of it unreadable, almost menacing in the cool air of dusk.

"Your actions have consequences," he muttered to no one in particular. He threw an old, rotten wood plank in a pile. The impact of it hitting the others made it shatter like glass.

"You'll see whose actions have consequences!" he swore, ripping a new plank from the interior walls of an old barn and throwing it into the pile that he would have to dispose of later. He wiped the sweat and dirt from his hands on his ripped jeans. He had on no shirt, and the old work boots that he wore were too small but he was forced to wear them anyway. A little breeze danced into the barn with the smell of lavender riding along with it. He knew immediately what it meant.

"You know you're not supposed to be in here," he warned the brunette that stood in the doorway.

"Has that ever stopped me before?" she asked. Her heels clicked on the concrete barn floor as she walked toward him.

"I suppose not," he answered coolly, pulling at yet another plank.

"What's got you all worked up?" she asked, sitting on the one of the boxes piled to his left. He knew what little light that was left in the barn would illuminate her face and he might never be able to look away if he dared to face her. He was determined never to go there again.

"Did Daddy get mad at you again?" she teased.

He laughed despite himself. She always had that impact on him. It made him think of the princesses in the fairytales he used to read as a kid – carefree, simple, and all with "Happily Ever After." But he shook off the feelings that threatened to change his mind and turned toward her. "Go home, Anna."

"Why?" She tilted her head to the side curiously. "Awww, look at that. Big, strong Whisper is scared of little ol' me." She laughed again.

Heat rose in his chest and he turned back to the rotting planks. "Shut up, Anna. Just go home."

"I'm used to your moodiness and all, but seriously Whisper. This is a joke, right? Yesterday you were fine and now you're all, 'Go home, Anna. I don't want you here, Anna.' What is with you?" Her voice demanded answers and Whisper knew she wouldn't leave without them. He spun on her, and they were so close he could smell her lavender-scented shampoo.

"I would do anything for this to be okay." His breath brushed her cheek and she shuddered. Anna's eyes stared into his. They were unwavering, so unlike his own. He could describe every aspect of them – blue crystals like he had never seen before when the light shone on them just right, but at around midnight, they were a dark blue like the ocean, so deep he could drown in them.

"Why can't it be?" Anna's voice was barely audible, and had they been any further apart Whisper wouldn't have heard her.

He smiled at her and thought about how simple it could be if they were far

away from where they stood. He lifted his hand and brushed her cheek lightly with his fingers. "Anna, you were raised to be simple, follow orders, and one day marry someone of your class or higher. You were never meant to have anything to do with me. Your father will never allow this."

"Who said I'd tell him? We could leave. Go somewhere else where my father has no control over me or you or anything." Anna slid her arms around his neck. "I want to be with you. I don't care about the rules, the money or my status."

He shrugged her off. "That's great and all, but you make it sound as if we have a choice."

"And why couldn't we?"

"Because that's not how life works. We can't just take off and pretend everything is going to be *Happily Ever After*." There was that term again. It made Whisper's insides clench. "Your father has control of everything here, the economy and the *army*. He'd hunt us down to the ends of the earth and when he found us, you'd be locked away in someplace like a fairytale tower, and I'd be killed without mercy because they'll pretend that I refused to come back and I put up a fight, and I would. I would fight them. I'd take some of them with me because I'll damn them to hell with me! Is that really the life you want to live?" Whisper's voice was harsh, but he knew Anna couldn't see everything that could go wrong and she wouldn't – she's never had to worry about things other than what she had to wear in the morning, and sometimes she never had to worry about that either.

"Why can't you see how good it

could be?” She twirled around like a kid, ignoring Whisper’s harsh tone and deadly words. “I could leave a note or something saying that I’m fine but that this isn’t the life for me. Because honestly, Whisper, do you think I like being told what I’m allowed to do and who I’m allowed to love?” She walked up to him, taking his hands.

“Anna...” His voice shook as he prepared himself to break her heart, but she spoke first.

“Never mind, I should have known you never wanted me, not the way that I want you.” Anna turned to walk away, but Whisper grabbed her wrist and pulled her to him, wrapping his arms around her fragile upper body, imagining the scars that she’d endure if he was to say yes.

“Anna...”

“No, Whisper. It’s fine, really.” She ripped herself from his embrace and walked towards the doorway. “No one ever gets a happy ending, right? That’s what you think, right?” She turned back to him for a second, her eyes crystal clear, even with the tears pooling. “And maybe one day, Whisper, something will change. Maybe I’ll finally understand why you can’t have faith in someone else, and maybe I’ll find someone who’s willing to go to the ends of the earth for me.” With that final goodbye, Anna walked out of the barn, leaving Whisper to ponder her words, to regret his choices, convince himself he did the right thing, and then regret it when the sun comes up the next day. And every sunrise after.

# New York Subway

BY: SARAH-MARIE NADEAU

He sat in silence  
    eyes glued to his upturned palms  
His skin bearing the worn cracks of time  
    Hunched frame sinking deeper into a lost thought

His shadows exposed under a flickering fluorescent light  
    A grim curve of his thin lips from haunting memories  
Giving no notice to the whipping wind of a world around him  
    he was caught in his own hurricane

The train went on into the night  
    with no end in sight



# You are Ours

BY: BRONTE SLOTE

He was young, says the light in his eyes  
dulled by enlarged, incoherent pupils.  
And broken too, says the missing  
corner of his health card.  
He's been here before, says the man  
restraining his own little brother,  
exhaustion in his tone.  
They used to play wrestle, his skilled grasp says  
but now it holds tight out of necessity.  
If he lets go, say the ready legs, we will run  
and run until we cannot be found.  
He is familiar, say the nurses in his ward  
his kindness and manners masked his wounds.

People loved him, says the steady stream of visitors  
coming and going from his barren room.  
They're scared, say the panicked glances and  
demands made of the doctors.  
He was fun, say the children, remembering  
stories read to them and games played.  
They don't understand, say the things  
he will never be able to do again.

You need us, say the dark streets.  
He isn't there, says his indecipherable speech.  
Paranoid, says his fleeting gaze.  
Don't listen to them, say the voices in his breath, lingering on  
every single whispering sound.  
You are ours, say the people in the shadows  
You are ours



# Always in Between

BY: ZARINE GRINDLE

I'm not on any team  
for the need of diversity  
but you'd be shocked by the extreme  
to which this is the first to be true for me  
you see  
I was either the brown kid on the white bus  
or the white kid on the brown bus  
as if they didn't know the definition of  
métis  
in a reserve of a  
community  
look at me  
blue eyes and dark hair, which community's features do I bear?  
all cheek bones  
long limbs  
but can become the definition of white man on a whim  
despite what you see  
my language the perfectionist vocabulary  
so no one can undermine me  
and see  
the words like tansi  
and the urge to call awas  
lying underneath  
a culture  
buried beneath  
its own bodies  
a whole culture a cemetery  
I'm half of the supremacy,  
and half of an obituary

don't turn blind to me  
I wasn't blinded by your schools  
though I still would have  
disagreed  
for I was your servant  
bent down on my knees  
my cousins in chains and leads  
but my father's family who controls their needs  
split in half  
which way to go?  
for ancestors were such a crosshatched rarity  
likely formed from a  
man who thought himself a God  
and a woman whose legs couldn't quite run  
not fast enough anyways.  
at least he didn't hold a gun.  
so next time you look at me  
wondering to which community  
I stand in  
remember I have 2 feet  
and a lifetime of being pushed by both sides  
nobody wants a halfbreed  
silence me  
just like you silenced my father's ancestors  
who came before me



# On What Times Leave Behind

BY: GABRIELLE (GABY) BERG

Waking up in a ditch is weird, especially if you have no memory getting there. I think I can say that with confidence considering I'm currently staring up into a clear blue sky after waking up in, what I can only assume is, an off-road ditch.

The taste of dust coating my tongue, coupled with the blistering sun beating down on me, makes me crave a glass of water. From where I'm lying, I can see what looks like a rocky road about five feet away. I force myself to sit up, coughing up dirt that somehow made its way into my lungs. Despite the rather pleasant view I had looking up at the sky, the sight that greets my eyes when I take in my surroundings is uneventful. A sea of gold, brown, and green rows in every direction. Long stalks of produce sway slightly in the breeze, accompanied by the smell of manure. It's flat, to say the least, but it's what I'm used to having lived on the Prairies my whole life. No one else is around; I'm alone.

"Well...", I say aloud, hoping to end the suffocating silence, "I wonder how I got here." As I think back to what could have possibly put me in this situation, feelings of anxiety blossom in my chest. My breath quickens but I can't remember anything.

Before I have a total meltdown, I take a deep breath and reassure myself. "Calm down, dumbass. Your name's Seneca, you were born in Tisdale, Saskatchewan, you're 19 years old, and

the most embarrassed you've ever felt is when you peed your pants waiting for a roller coaster at Canada's Wonderland when you were seven." All of this is true, unfortunately, even the roller coaster incident. Strange it even comes to mind at a time like this, but at least it means I don't have amnesia.

A headache is beginning to grow from trying to remember, and since thinking is providing me no answers, I decide to get up and investigate why I'm here. Placing my hands on the dry dirt around me, scattered thorns and twigs press lightly into my palms. I push into the earth and move my legs, willing my body not to give out underneath me. Once I'm upright and the stars have left my vision, I take a shaky step towards the road.

"Hello?" I call out, willing anything to respond as I walk. Of course, only silence greets me. The higher vantage point that standing on the road provides only makes it more apparent how alone I truly am. Staring for miles without seeing anything in any direction puts an uncomfortable weight on my chest. It's as if an unseen storm awaits, creeping slowly towards me.

My view is still mainly farmland. The road I'm on looks decrepit, stretching past my line of view into the horizon. The only thing standing out from the flat that surrounds me is a cluster of greenery, maybe a 30-minute walk away. From where I'm looking, I make out a figure emerging from the trees. While I can't see any defining features,

I can tell it's a human. I call out to them and wave my hands in the air. The figure only turns and disappears back into the bush. Not seeing any other signs of life, I start to head towards the isolated green, praying for the help of the mysterious person.

As soon as I step onto the field—wheat, I think, maybe rye—my headache worsens. I push through it, hoping I can make it to my destination. Each step sends a shock of pain to my brain, clouding my vision. My thoughts are starting to flash by, memories coming and going as I put one foot in front of the other.

*The pain from breaking my leg... My first day of school... The blue stuffed bear I had as a toddler...* Everything begins to blur together as I walk; minutes phasing into each other, slipping away just before I reach them. Time ceases to exist.

I shut my eyes and stop walking.

Eventually, my migraine recedes, and I open my eyes. The sun is setting, turning the sky dark. With my head still foggy, my ears begin to work again and sense rushing water. I don't recognize where I am.

The field I was just walking on is gone and I'm standing by a stream flanked by plant-covered hills. The leafy greens all look the same, except for a large tree, almost touching the sky with its topmost branches. There's a small clearing near the tree's base, a few feet away from the water. I must have walked to the treeline I saw from the

road. It seems strange that I could have walked here without even realizing it, but I was probably zoning out pretty hard.

The person I saw earlier is nowhere in sight.

Walking, along with general confusion, has taken a toll on my body, and the urge to sleep is overwhelming. I make my way to the spot under the tree, my eyes forcing themselves shut before I even lie down. I fall asleep so quickly, I almost forget to question the strange lack of animals that I've encountered so far.

When I wake up, it's dark outside. Moonlight is shining through the water, illuminating it in a strange blue hue. My headache has lessened considerably, leaving only a slight throbbing behind my eyes. Turning to look at the tree, I notice a piece of paper in its roots. I don't remember seeing it before I fell asleep, but at the same time, I wasn't in the best headspace. Shaking that thought off, I reach to pick up the yellow-tinged note. On it, written in neat calligraphy, is:

**"Whenever his last day comes, the wise man will not hesitate to meet death with a firm step."**

*What the fuck*, is my only thought as I stare at the paper in my now shaky hands. I pale. "Am I dying?" I involuntarily say out loud. I stuff the paper in the pocket of my jeans, ripped at the knees in the name of fashion and covered in fallen leaves from sleeping on the ground.

I make my way towards the water, splashing some on my face to stop myself from spiralling. Looking at my reflection in the stream, I can't recognize the person looking back at me. I move my hand to brush my black hair behind my ear and the reflection mimics me. Looking into their eyes fills me with dread, I can't tell if that person is me or not. When I try to think of what I'm supposed to look like, I can't. It's as if I've etched myself out of my own mind. A pit sinks in my stomach.

I stand quickly, hoping that breaking eye contact with my not-me reflection will help, but the feeling doesn't leave. I try to remember something, anything, but my memories crumble and fall apart. Their remains scatter across my mind, flowing further and further away from me.

"I need to get out of here," I say to the tree, or maybe the water. I hurriedly make my way across the stream, my pants and shoes getting soaked in the process. A cloud moves over the moon, casting a shadow over the earth and plunging me into darkness.

*All of the things I don't remember, the entire life I lived, how could I just forget all of that?* There are too many thoughts going through my head as I push my way through the greenery. Tripping on fallen branches, I crawl, desperately trying to escape. As I start to see the end of the thicket, light rays signalling my escape, the scariest thought rushes through my mind: *If I can't remember it, did my life even happen at all?*

When I break through the plants, my mind clears. Fresh air blows into my lungs as I take in the view. I'm standing 15 feet away from a cliff's edge, overlooking a boundless prairie of colour. Walking forwards, I see the beauty laid out in front of me. Leaf speckled hills stretch below the cliff's edge, wildflowers creating ink drops of colour. Past the hills, fields of yellows and browns touch the horizon. My eyes land on where the sun barely rises, casting golden rays across the plains. I reach into my pocket, pulling out the paper.

The cool wind takes some leaves off the ground beside me and pushes my hair in front of my face, but I don't care. The worries I had are gone. Letting the paper in my hands go in the wind—not even remembering what was written on it—I have one last thought.

For once, I'm free.





# apology to my youth

BY: ANDREYA CASWELL

My beautiful sister, I'm sorry.  
For what, I'm not sure, but I am.  
Maybe for the fact that you'll grow up without the person who held you first.  
Or maybe for the fact that *every* single time I see you, you don't even remember my face.  
Maybe for the fact that by the time you're five, you'll know the feeling  
of a hand across your face better than you know how to spell your own name.  
By the time you're seven, you'll notice your clothes aren't as pricey  
as other kids', your shoes not as shiny.  
You might never know the names Nike, Guess, or Beats.  
But by the time you're nine you'll realize it's okay, not everyone  
is that fortunate, and in some ways, you're more so.  
Because in years to come, you'll learn that food on the table is greater than  
that new set of LEGOs.  
When you're barely a teenager, you'll help pay the rent.  
But, that same pain in your reddening cheeks will be the reason you know how  
to stand your ground when things get rough.  
You won't be lost when you move out, instead, you'll be ready.  
My beautiful sister, I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry for the way you're growing up  
but not for the person you're going to be.

# X without Y

BY: EMILY ZBARASCHUK

I wish you wouldn't talk to me that way,  
as if the two X's woven in my DNA  
are  
one, two—  
a third strike and  
"you're out!"  
And stop watching me like you do:  
as if I'm art,  
caged in a frame,  
free admission for your viewing pleasure:  
*Sit still and look pretty, darling.*  
I'm not a canvas to critique  
so control your sweeping gaze  
or you won't like what you see.  
When I speak my mind,  
instead of ridiculing,  
*listen.*  
Respect is a two-way street,  
so don't tell me I'm  
driving the wrong direction on a one way.  
*I'm not.*  
All I'm saying is I'm through.  
I'm through with  
sinking,  
crawling,  
pleading,  
grovelling for equality—  
Time's Up for begging.  
Now,  
with my head high and shoulders straight,  
I'm only asking  
to be more than the damsel in distress  
a princess in a tower needing rescue  
from a dragon you'd call independence.  
I'm only asking  
to be more than a captive of circumstance,  
chained by one chromosome you  
wave like a whip over my head.  
I'm only asking  
for a little give so I can gain,  
because what's  
humanity  
without progress?

# Adrift in Fantasy

BY: CHARITY KLASSEN

**T**iny snowflakes fell softly to the sidewalk. My boots made a steady beat as they clunked along the cement. My nose started to turn red from the chilly air. The cord that connected both of my ears to my phone stiffened like it had suddenly turned to stone. I watched my breath as it made a cloud of fog then vanished into the air around me. I was on my way home from school.

My eyes wandered from house to house like always as I walked down the quiet street. I took little notice of them until I came across a building I had always thought of as out of place, an abandoned school. The old building that sat in the middle of the block was always strange to me. From the outside, you could see a few windows smashed and broken, either from a foolhardy person or possibly damaged after a violent storm, never to be fixed. The red bricks held together stubbornly, but the edges had crumbled away from time. The school looked gloomy, as if it missed being filled with children who came to learn inside of it. There must have been so many stories of young kids with big dreams inside this box of bricks. Those people gave the building purpose, but now people only cover it with graffiti, giving it a gloomy and neglected appearance.

As I looked at the lonely school, something felt off about the area. It was wintertime so most of the birds that lived in my town had left by then, but I was certain I heard birds. These were not singing birds either like the ones you imagine. Instead, they were screaming. A chorus of them cawed

and squawked unceremoniously from the cluster of trees behind the school. I wandered closer and wondered why they were still here. Snow and ice crunched under my feet, but curiosity burned inside me.

When I ventured close enough, the chirping stopped. I peered into the hibernating branches. Oddly, I couldn't spot a single bird. Not a feather. Not even an abandoned nest. All I saw was a couple of lifeless leaves hanging off the twigs asking for the wind to free them. A few were rescued from the hibernating tree by a soft breeze as I turned to go. Across the street, I saw more trees, but these ones stood still like soldiers. They felt no wind, unlike the trees behind me. Confused, I turned back to my windy trees. I watched the wind batter their branches against each other as it began to pick up. There was something terribly off about the group of trees hiding behind the school.

*I'm not crazy*, I thought to myself, glancing from one group of trees to the other. The stormy ones started to shake off their frosty coats. The leaves melted into warmer colours as the seasons reversed. The closer I got, the more I felt the wind myself. It was warm and soft on my cheek, like lazy summer days. Soon the leaves spun terrifyingly fast. They multiplied at an alarming rate. The dusty brown turned to bright oranges, reds, and yellows. They circled around me and panic rushed through me. My heart pounded in my chest as I watched the leaves make me the center of a tornado. My mouth opened to call for help, but leaves covered it, making me choke on my own breath.

I tried to spit them off and scream, but they did not budge. Feeling dizzy and nauseated, I fell to the ground and the world faded into black.

Awakening, my eyes fluttered open to an emerald green forest. I was surrounded by trees that reached up to touch the sky. The dirt underneath me was as rich as dark chocolate. I heard more birds, but this time they sang an enchanting melody. It was the strangest, most beautiful song I had ever heard. Their song was completely different than the noise the first group of birds uttered. When I turned to look for these birds, I noticed they were not singing birds at all. Instead, little people with wings glided from tree to tree, weaving an intricate melody together. They sang with dissonance, but also in harmony. Their notes were legato, yet staccato. The song expressed sorrow, but also extreme joy at the same time. I thought I must have been dreaming because of how surreal it all was but I didn't think my mind had the capability to think of such a ballad. I reached out to touch one of the fairies, trying to find an answer. Lightly, I grazed its wing with the tip of my index finger. To my surprise, it felt like thick paper, and it cut my finger. The cut was small and thin, but it hurt badly.

I closed my eyes for one second, wincing in pain when the scene changed around me again. This time I saw a battle. Knights on horses charged at each other with swords clashing and determined expressions. A hill had grown next to me and bowmen rained arrows down onto their enemies below. I shrieked and crawled away. If the



fairy could cut my finger, I wouldn't want a sword doing the same thing to any part of me. I watched the battle in horror. Two soldiers who stood away from the battle caught my eye. One was dressed in shiny silver armor and blue fabric while the other was in red leather. They started by sparring with swords, but when one broke his sword and the other dropped his, it turned into a brawl. I watched them wrestle, paralyzed with fear. The blue soldier struggled to pin the red one down and soon gained the advantage. He raised a knife high above his head to deliver a killing blow. Terrified, I covered my eyes with my hands.

Soon, the sounds of metal on metal and men yelling faded away. I slowly uncovered my eyes and saw that my surroundings had changed for the third time. This time, the world appeared cold and hard. The floor and walls were made of smooth, unwelcoming metal. The lack of light did not help with the ambiance of the room. A steady beep pounded in the distance like a loud, leaky water tap. Down a hallway was a slight glow. Having no other plan, I followed the orange light to find a little room. There was a bed barely large enough for one adult to lie on inside the room. The floor space around this bed was hardly enough for one person to walk around. On the bed was a tired woman. Her hair was frizzy and unkempt, but her bright eyes shone like stars. Joyful tears rolled down her face as she looked up at the man standing next to her. The man looked as exhausted as the woman, but a proud grin was glued to his face. His eyes darted from the

woman's face to her arms and back again. In the woman's arms lay a small life, a baby. It had a dark tuft of hair plastered to its forehead, and it cried with all its might. The baby wailed, unable to understand why these large people could laugh and be so pleased while it was clearly unhappy. The little family was like a warm fire burning bright in the dark. One beam of hope among the harsh darkness.

Dizziness overwhelmed me and my sight left again. I heard my stumbling footsteps grow distant. Soon the sound of steps on hard steel morphed into the sound of crunching snow. Light filled my eyes again and I found myself on the steps of the abandoned school. In my arms was my notebook, open. Each page was covered with words. I ran my fingers down the inked pages and thought about the words I wrote. After a minute of reflecting, I closed my notebook and put my pen away. I stood with a pleasant sigh and reached for the sky. I rotated my wrists and grinned to myself. Clutching the book to my chest, I continued on my way home, anticipating what I could do with the words tomorrow.



# Contributor Bios

**Andreya Caswell** is a 17-year-old poet living in Saskatoon. She aspires to be a teacher of English and Drama, and help other students find their voice. Outside of school, she devotes her life to maintaining the magic of the Ness Creek Site in Big River.

**Ann Stoppler** is 17, currently in Grade 11 and focusing on achieving a career in law. She started writing in Grade 6 because of her love for books and decided to give writing her own a shot. Ann enjoys activities such as reading, writing, and volleyball.

**Brontë Slote** is a Grade 12 student from Bushell Park. She treasures her experiences travelling across Canada and the world. Brontë's writing is inspired by confronting important social, cultural, and mental health issues.

**Cassie Meyer** is a 16-year-old high school student who's always had a strong desire for writing and literature. Although her main focus now is getting her poetry out into the world, she hopes to become a journalist in the future, travelling and writing about current events.

**Charity Klassen** is a Grade 11 student from Kindersley. She spends her free time playing piano and singing, but recently she has started to write stories as well. Charity has always loved writing in school, but now she wants to share her ideas and entertain people through her writing.

**Claire Nagel** lives on a farm near the small town of Mossbank with her mother, father, and little sister. Her interests include reading, volleyball, curling, softball, babysitting, and horseback riding. She is 13 years old, and no, Claire is not addicted to her phone. She enjoys writing poems because nothing makes sense, yet everything makes sense.

**Emily Zbaraschuk** is a Grade 11 student who is passionate about the arts and mildly obsessed with Broadway musicals. When she isn't writing day and night like she needs it to survive, she enjoys playing piano, drawing, and spending time with her family (and cats).

**Gaby Berg** is a 17-year-old high school senior at Bedford Road Collegiate. Being in gifted education programs for most of her life, Gaby has a strong inclination for learning and a genuine thirst for knowledge.

**Heidi Terfloth** is a 14-year-old writer who lives in Saskatoon. She recently wrote a collection of flash fiction, which includes such topics as waking up as a panda, and talking with gum on a shoe. Heidi enjoys fencing, acting, archery, music, drawing, and drinking unseemly amounts of tea.

**Kamryn Heavin** is a Grade 10 student from Melfort. She loves a good pun and a sarcastic comment, as well as poutine and cherry Pepsi. Oh, and writing stories.

**Madelyn Kaban** is a young student-athlete who loves the outdoors and her dog, Scooter. She has endured having braces not once, but twice. She is very passionate about running. In fact, she ran so much that she fractured her foot. She eats beets because they can make you run faster.

**Mikaela Millan** is a senior at Tommy Douglas who always has her nose stuck in a book. When she's not reading, she's playing one of her four instruments, writing short stories and novellas, or listening to music. After graduation, she will be attending Millar College of the Bible and then university.

**Myra Butter** is a Grade 12 student attending Bedford Road Collegiate. She enjoys reading, photography, surrealism, and thinking. She writes short stories and journals in her free time, and procrastinates with *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius and poetry by Rumi. She hates writing about herself or acknowledging any aspect of herself.

**Olivia Johnston** is a strong-willed young woman. She has an incredible work ethic and is passionate about every task she undertakes, which has carried through to her unforgiving self-confidence as a proud affiliate of the plus-size community. She shows her personality through fashion and hairstyles now and will continue to do so after graduation.

**Sara Robert** lives in Regina, is in Grade 10, and attends Monseigneur de Laval PSQV. Sara has a profound love for reading and can often be found with her nose in a book while she should be doing her homework. She is a guilty procrastinator.

**Sarah-Marie Nadeau** has always had a keen interest in expressing herself through writing, visual art, and music. Having lived in western and eastern Canada, as well as the arctic region, she has been exposed to many cultures and people, who have greatly influenced her artistic style. She draws her inspiration from the many voices and stories that often go unheard.

**Seija Liimatainen** is a Grade 10 student from Lanigan. She lives with her mom, dog, and collection of houseplants. In her spare time, Seija enjoys making art, playing the piano, and reading. She attributes her writing skills to her mother's encouragement and her brain, which will never shut up.

**Sohila Elgedawi** is a Grade 11 student at Bedford Road. She enjoys reading and writing poetry in her free time. She also likes reading classic literature, music, and trying new things. She hopes to attend university after high school.

**Taylor McKenzie** is a 17-year-old high school student who lives in Prince Albert. She is Woodland Cree and a member of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. Her home is a reserve called Stanley Mission in the north. She loves painting, playing the piano, and learning languages.

**Theoren Lucas Michael** is a First Nations student who plans to pursue post-secondary education at the University of Saskatchewan, and a career in chemical engineering.

**Trina Friesen**, a 16-year-old high school student who has been in love with writing her entire life. She recently joined a creative writing course offered at her school. Through this class, she has been pushed to try various styles of writing and has discovered a new and profound love and passion for poetry.

**Trystan Joel Dupre** was born raised and hopes to god he won't die in Prince Albert. He's always enjoyed writing, yet only recently has he gotten good. At the time he is submitting to *Windscrip* he is 17, but due to his upcoming birthday, he'll likely be 18 by the time this is read so let's wish him a happy birthday.

**Warsha Mushtaq** is an emerging writer who has a passion for social justice. Born into a life of privilege and comfort, she believes story can broaden our perspectives and spread messages of hope, resilience, and equity. Growing up on the prairies, she has always loved reading, writing, and learning more about the diverse world around her.

**Zarine Grindle** is a high school student originally from Flin Flon, Manitoba. She moved to Regina with her girlfriend to broaden her horizons and experience life. Back home up north, she has four younger siblings, three turtles, two guinea pigs, a dog, and a preposterous number of fish.

**Since 1983 the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild has proudly supported the fresh, original work from students across the province in *Windscript*.**

**Thank you to teachers and librarians from these participating schools who encouraged students to submit their creations for this issue.**

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- Swift Current Comprehensive High School
- Tommy Douglas Collegiate
- Walter Murray Collegiate
- Weyburn Comprehensive School

## **Windscript Submission Guidelines**

**DEADLINE: JANUARY 15, 2021**

1. Submissions are open to Saskatchewan-based high school students.
2. Always keep a copy of your submitted work. Submissions will not be returned.
3. Writers must submit their own work directly submissions cannot be made by a third party (such as parent or teacher).
4. Proofread your manuscript.
5. Submit a maximum of six poems and/or a maximum of two prose works (each piece must not exceed 1500 words).
  - Do not put more than one poem on a page
  - Type each piece in 12 pt., plain text font (such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier), and double space
  - Number each page
  - Put the title on each submission and each page of the manuscript
  - Please format your file names as follows: magazine\_title\_genre (example: Windscript\_PoemOne\_Poetry)
  - Submit documents in .doc format only. Please do not submit PDFs
6. All work must be original from start to finish. Writers submitting plagiarized work will be banned from Windscript.
7. In a cover letter, provide the following information:
  - Your name, home phone number, mailing address, and email
  - The genre of writing you are submitting (fiction, poetry, nonfiction)
  - The title(s) of your poems or stories
  - The name, address, and phone number of your school and teacher's name and email address
  - If under 18, the name, email, phone number of your parent or guardian
  - A fifty-word biography written in the third person (if we publish your work, we will use this information so be creative!)
8. Submit by email to [submissions@skwriter.com](mailto:submissions@skwriter.com). Put Windscript in the subject line.
9. If your piece(s) are selected, they will go through an editing process with the Windscript editor before final publication.



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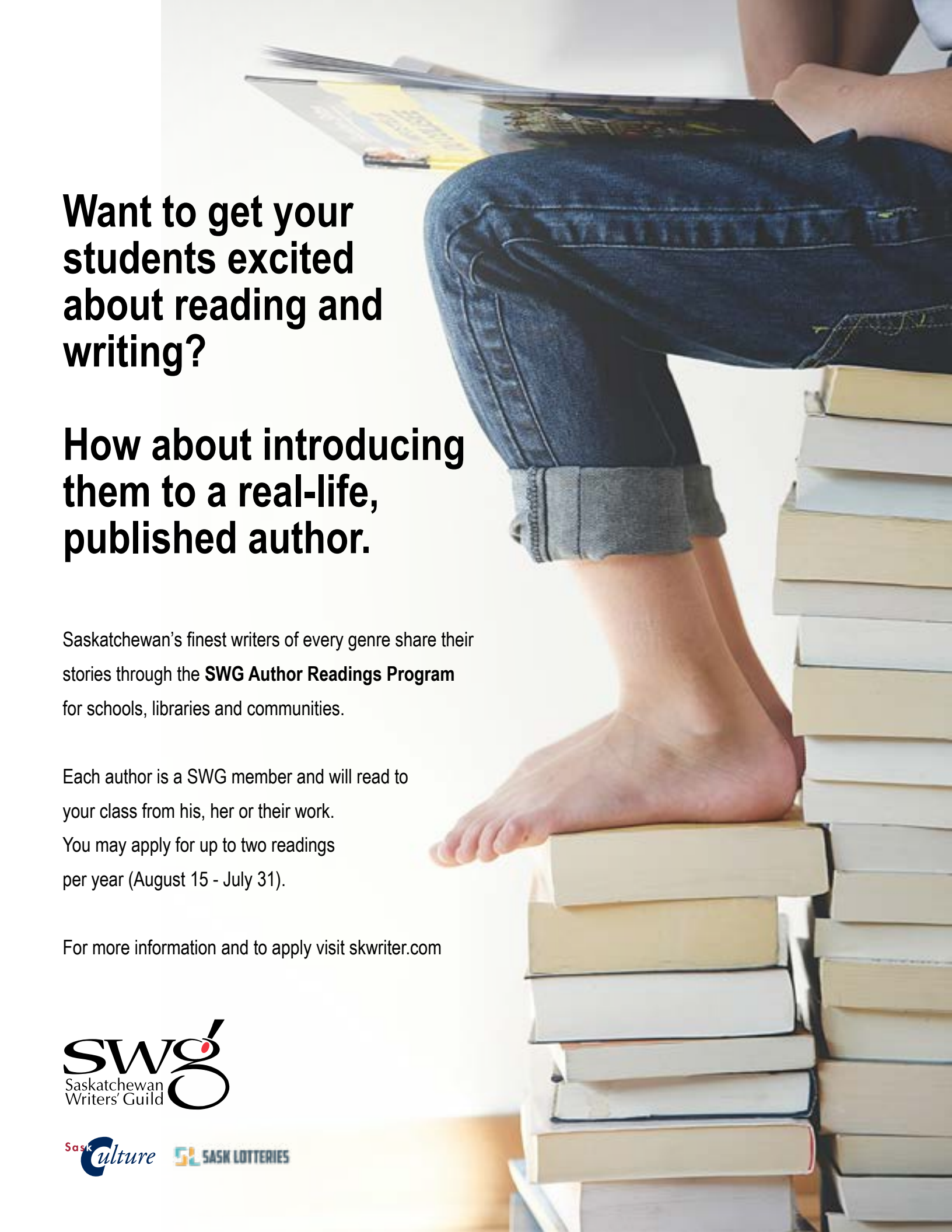
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