



windscript

The Magazine of High School Writing Vol. 40, 2024

*Windscrip*t has been publishing the best of Saskatchewan high school students' literature since 1983. Created by Victor Jerrett Enns, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild (SWG) from 1982 to 1988, *Windscrip*t is produced by the SWG with support from SaskLotteries and SaskCulture.

The SWG 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 SWG serves a membership spanning the entire province of Saskatchewan in Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10, which encompasses the unceded territories of the nêhiyawak (Cree), Anihšīnāpēk (Saulteaux), Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, and Dené Nations, and the Homeland of the Métis Nation.



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MANAGING/PROSE EDITOR

DANICA LORER

Welcome to *Windscrip* 40!

Publication is a celebration and 40 is a milestone worth excitement and pride. It is always an honour to gently hold the stories of others, to watch them improve, and to help maintain their unique voices. Submitting requires a balance of vulnerability and confidence. I congratulate everyone who sent their pieces out into the world, to us—that is a grand accomplishment and a step closer to the dream of being a published author. All of the folks who submitted are writers. It was a challenge to choose what to include in this volume and I hope readers will take the time to enjoy each piece, to take the journey we've mapped out with care.

Writing is an art form that is so often solitary but putting together a literary magazine is not. I am grateful for all of those involved in creating something so beautiful. This list is long, made up of the young writers, associate/poetry editor Josiah Nelson who has a great eye for detail, the parents/guardians and teachers who encouraged their young people, and the patient and always professional staff at the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild including the amazing Cat Abenstein.

In our fast-paced, ever-changing digital world, there is still magic in holding a printed volume. It won't change, the poems and stories will sit forever in their present forms. I have hope for many more decades of *Windscrip*. I believe that the writing community in Saskatchewan will continue to thrive as young people create new work that will challenge and inspire, disturb and comfort.

Thank you and enjoy.

ASSOCIATE POETRY EDITOR

JOSIAH NELSON



It's been a real pleasure to work on *Windscrip* 40. More than anything, I'm struck by the craft and care with which these pieces were written. Each of the poems included are animated by vivid images, perceptive insights, and resonant emotions. I marvel at the talent of these poets.

As I considered the poems all together, I noticed a recurring attentiveness to the rhythms and cycles of life. At times, this rhythm was framed in a personal context, exploring a single day in the speaker's life; at other times, this sense of rhythm was explored with images from the natural world, like the moon or a seed blossoming into a tree. Still others observed the continuity of the past and present with images like bangles, saddles, and stars. I was struck, in all these cases, by the resilience inherent in their preoccupation with rhythms and cycles: they gesture toward, if not hope, then at least the idea of carrying forward, pressing on.

Other poems, of course, diverge from this theme and show us days that depart from these cycles—days on which the speaker enters the wrong den, acknowledges the loss of a loved one, faces death, or notes the alienating effects of the passage of time. I think these, too, are worthy insights, and demonstrate the capacity poetry has to put words to surprising, baffling, or difficult emotions and experiences. Indeed, on the whole, these poems guided me toward many different emotions with skill and nuance, and I trust, as you explore these pages, they'll do the same for you. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did!

SASKATCHEWAN YOUTH POET LAUREATE LAUREN KLASSEN



“To celebrate the spirit of the people and place of Saskatchewan through the literary arts.” That is what the Poet Laureates of Saskatchewan are called to do. It has been an honour to serve in the role of the Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate from 2022-2024.

I have worked with youth in my capacity as the Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate for the past two years and in my capacity as a teacher for the past four years. Connecting with the youth of Saskatchewan has been energizing and inspiring.

Serving as Youth Poet Laureate gave me the privilege of seeing Saskatchewan through visiting over 50 classrooms to do poetry workshops. My work has taken me to Regina, North Battleford, Langenburg, Yorkton, Swift Current, Moose Jaw, and my home here in Saskatoon.

Travelling through the prairie landscapes has led me to grow a deeper appreciation for this place that I have called home for 25 years. The spirit of Saskatchewan is alive and well, in the wind whistling through wheat fields and in the pencil scribbles of Saskatchewan youth.

As my time as Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate ends, I leave you, the future generation of Saskatchewan, with this question. What will you envision for our province?

I dream of a prairie province where the literary arts continue to thrive. Where poetry bridges people together and creates power in community. I dream of a prairie province that will embrace youth for all their differences, be it race, culture, or gender identity. I dream that poetry will create a more accepting world where the stories we share will bring people together.

So, pick up your pencils, and dream with me.

AWARDS

JERRETT ENNS AWARD

Poetry Winner

Lilah Flieg-Bacheschi - "The Sun and the Moon"

Poetry Honourable Mention

Nevin Runnalls - "Behind a Starry Night"

Prose Winner

Payton Todd - "For I Only Love the Sea"

Prose Honourable Mention

Sophia Fafard - "The Return"

CURRIE-HYLAND POETRY AWARD

Winner

Paris Belisle - "The Den"

Honourable Mention

Blue Mushens - "My Day of Blue"

GOOD MORNING

by Alyssa Burnouf

The loss of moonlight is a dare
I rise by an internal clock
And choose to see the sunshine glare

I brush my brunette hair
And put on my woven socks
The loss of moonlight is a dare

I open the milk carton and it tears
Pour water in an untouched pot
And choose to see the sunshine glare

I breathe in the untainted air
And linger on the dewy sidewalk
The loss of moonlight is a dare

I adjust onto the driver's chair
Avoid the avenue that's blocked
And choose to see the sunshine glare

Discovering solitude is rare
In the midst of cars running amok
The loss of moonlight is a dare
And I choose to see the sunshine glare

(RE)WRITTEN **by Vaishu Venkata**

You pick up your pen. Your hand is shaking, and the pen is suddenly heavy. The next blank page of your book bares its teeth in a challenge. A reverie washes over you. You remember the first time you achieved something, the look on your parents' faces, the pride you felt, and the joy you have not felt in a long time. *This is the only chance to make up for all those empty moments.* You can't, however, seem to remember the last time you left your room. Your desk is littered with scientific papers, music sheets, poems, equations, and textbooks.

A faint 'whooshing' stirs you. You notice a circle on the page of your book and it starts to grow, rippling and glowing. A breeze pulls you closer and, before you can react, you fall face-first into the paper. Your face doesn't hit your desk; instead, you find yourself on a gravel road in an open field. You get up slowly and take in your surroundings.

A washed-out cloudy sky, strong wind, and an empty wheat-filled meadow. Strange: you wrote that sentence yesterday.

You follow the coarse, winding path into a demolished city. Glass fragments shimmer across the ground, and the buildings are charred remnants of wood. It is eerily silent and familiar.

"Look who's arrived," I sneer.

You whip your head around to see the source of the sound. I walk up behind you, kicking away rubble. My long cloak drags debris and my overhanging hood casts a large shadow on my face.

"I know you..." Your breath quickens and your body goes rigid.

"Do you really?" I shake my head sympathetically, my eyes flashing red.

"You—you die." Your palms start sweating and your brain is spinning.

"Ah, but you haven't written that yet. I'm fortunately quite alive right now." I step forward. "You, unfortunately, will not be."

You feel movement re-enter your muscles and you bolt in the opposite direction, holding in a scream. Suddenly, you can't move, as if everything from your limbs to your heart has frozen. Something invisible turns you around and you see my hand in the air. I clench my hand and you feel your body compress in on itself.

"No!" you manage to choke.

I relax my hand slightly. "Look around...I didn't do any of this, you did. With you gone, I can fix this...myself."

"Please don't-" you plead, tears beading in your eyes. *Why does the pain feel so real? It's not.*

“You’ve done enough. You’ve lived long enough. Now, it’s my turn.” I start constricting my hand.

“No! I haven’t even written my book or won a-...or...-”

You close your eyes in thought. *There’s probably someone reading this right now. This doesn’t have to be futile. Maybe this moment can change things, make the rest of your moments full.*

Your tears finally spill over. “I haven’t lived. I haven’t lived at all...” You crumple. “I’ve done so much, but here I am. With you. And I’m not happy... It would never be enough.”

“Because you were never enough,” I jeer and gradually close my hand into a fist.

You smile. “I was always enough... I—I just could have been,” you gasp as your organs seem to collide. “Happy too...”

Everything goes black. You fling open your eyes and see the next blank page in your notebook. You put down your pen.



THE EXPANDING CLOUD

by Ashlynn Ippolito

There was an enormous cloud
That stripped away the lightness from my life.
It left black space behind and ate away at the missing light.
The cloud expanded and left me feeling alone.

THE VOID OF SECRETS

by Ella Manoucheri

Tessa slammed her pillow over her ears. Somehow, the abundance of sounds outside blocked out everything, even the noise of her pillow rustling at this sudden adjustment. It had been happening since she could remember, but every night it got worse. As soon as night fell, and the world drifted into enviously peaceful sleep, Tessa was bombarded with the sounds of the ocean. But these ocean sounds were crashing, loud, angry. Tessa knew there was something the ocean wanted her to do, but she would have none of it. She and her guardian had lived beside the beautiful ocean, so they could watch the sun descend among a sky full of dancing colours—all in harmony with one another. But now they lived in the city where the only colours you could clearly see were traffic lights and headlights. The noises here surely should have blocked out the ocean, what with all the screeches of irritated brakes and feisty honks in response. The city sounds could be clarified as pretty to some, but not to Tessa. To her, it was all just a big argument. And it didn't even help.

Tessa knew now that even if she moved to the moon, so spitefully cheerful up in the sky, she would still hear it. She would still hear the voices of the past and the sounds of memories long forgotten. Each night it was still there, shrieking against the city sounds with the force of a million megaphones, reminding her it would never leave until she did what it wanted. Moaning, Tessa crept out of bed, but she was met with a sight that nearly made her heart stop.

Outside her window wasn't the sight of bustling people and endless rows of cars, but the ocean. It was calm and agitated all at the same time. She heard waves crashing against rocks, trying to build enough momentum to break free from the rest of the ocean and creep up into the sand... and then to her. Chills went down her spine. She began to shudder from the cold ocean spray. Even from so far away, the ocean's thick, salty scent was creeping up into her nose, making her want to sneeze. She looked at the water again, and saw that somehow her senses were deceiving her. The water was still, save from occasional ripples. It was calming, tauntingly inviting her to sleep.

Shhhhhhhhhhhhh. Shhhhhhhhhhhhh. It cooed soothingly, filling her with a deceitful hope of sleep.

Yet her mind heard the protests of roars and screams, dumping cold, harsh water on those precious, hopeful thoughts. And music. The ocean was singing now, humming a melody that didn't stop and never would repeat the same tune. Wavering up and down in pitch, as the waves in the ocean matched the pattern. But where the melody was coming from—now that terrified her down to the marrow of her bones. Beneath the glistening moonlight, the ocean was stirring. Literally. As if an invisible giant had grabbed a spoon and was mixing up a soup, the ocean was now swirling in circles, getting larger and larger as it moved.

Each time it passed her, she heard sounds and saw faces long forgotten, the past she didn't want to know but the universe urged her to dive into. The melody became sharper, higher, threatening, as the ocean became deeper, familiar, urgent. As the whirlpool beneath her swirled, it grew, from fighting and kicking at the restrictive sand, to suddenly bursting free, building momentum, and gaining height. It was like watching one of those nature videos that show you a plant growing in a few seconds, when it would normally take several days.

The whirlpool had a hollowed out inside, filled with images and sounds—they were haunting Tessa. She had to look away. She had to break free. But now what her mind commanded her body to do was useless. The ocean had clung invisible hands to her limbs and was not letting go. She had listened for too long. Now the whirlpool was up to her window, showering her in more victorious ocean spray and salty sea air.

The whirlpool had stopped, but now the hands on her were clenching her shoulders, forcing her to look down into the eye of the wet tornado. She couldn't do anything, she knew, except give in. As her eyes caught on the swirling figures of family, horrors, and all that she didn't want to know, she was practically dragged by a subconscious desire in her soul. That part of her always wondered. The water cackled cruelly, taunting her with defeat, as she was pulled into the Void of Secrets.



HAIKU OF TREE

by Shaheer Mohammed

Humble seed, pat down
Bear leaves and fruit up sky blue
Beneath dirt, old seed

FOREVER TO AN INSTANT **by Cosmo**

Your trunk has been carved into many times, the people responsible either oblivious to your pain or simply without a care. Many of these carvings are professions of love from short-lived summer infatuations doomed from the start, made of passion and no substance. Your leaves sway in the gentle breeze as these tragic couples sit in the shade you have provided for them, not of your will. As they embrace and giggle, you imagine what it would be like as a human, free and not bound by any roots, causing suffering without care. Sometimes, it is the birds you wonder about, chirping in your branches. They craft nests from the detritus surrounding you and care for their young. The birds live short lives compared to you and the humans; they probably think it is forever.

Then, the day comes when you are no longer needed for aesthetic purposes, and you are awakened by the brash, brutal sound of heavy machinery, chattering that so closely resembles its creators. The pain is brief. In almost an instant, the life longer than the one piloting the machine is gone. However, you live on in the paper, the houses and the cardboard, severed from your roots but still not free. Forever in service to the self-assured, rash newcomers.

THE EMPTY SADDLE

by Jocelyn Thiessen

It was cold the day he died
Yet the window shone bright
I had hoped the heart monitor lied
And that he would wake up to continue the fight

Now his saddle sits in the barn
Alone and collecting dust
His roan still wanders the pastures
His bit has started to rust

Four years later we were at his headstone
On the same day he died
His horse didn't look very good
And it watched while we cried

Now his saddle sits in the barn
Alone and collecting dust.
His roan still wanders the pastures
His bit is coated in rust

Three days later his horse passed away
We didn't get to say goodbye
Now his horse is buried beside the cowboy
Underneath the open blue sky

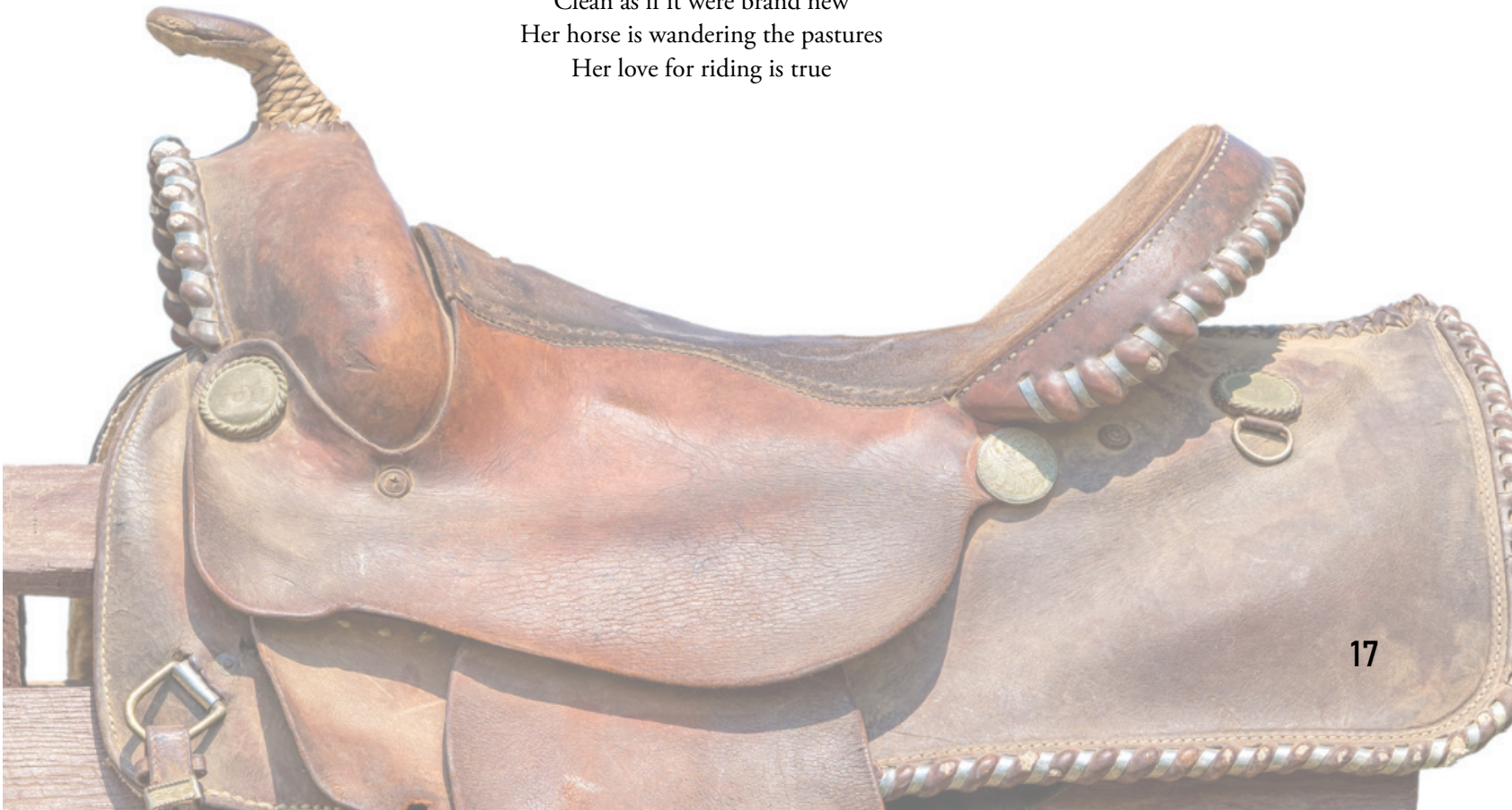
Now his saddle sits in the barn
Alone and collecting dust
His roan no longer wanders the pastures
His bit is coated in rust

Now his saddle has no rider
And no horse to sit on
Time has taken the both of them
The love for riding is gone

Now his saddle sits in the barn
Alone and covered in dust
His roan no longer wanders the pastures
His bit is coated in rust

Twenty years later the farm has been sold
A young girl wandered into the barn
She swiped the dust off the saddle
And fell in love with its rustic charm

Now her saddle sits in the barn
Clean as if it were brand new
Her horse is wandering the pastures
Her love for riding is true



THE LAND AND ITS STORIES

by Joanna Andree

The blue sky above my head is clear of any clouds and the sun pours its blistering heat onto the earth. The warmth the sun lays down upon the earth makes the grass look brown, but it never looked green in the first place so who can say that it's any different?

Despite the blistering heat of August the wide open prairies still call my name, begging me to go out and explore the vast fields of good ole Saskatchewan. And who am I to turn away from their beckoning?

The smile on my face never falters as I ready my most loyal friend, who swishes his tail in excitement. I smile at him as I throw myself over the saddle, making sure I'm comfortable before patting his neck and kicking him gently.

Nothing feels better than the cool breeze against my face, the sun beating down, and the feeling of my horse beneath me. Moments like these make life feel sweet, like there are no problems, nothing to worry about. All my worries fall from my mind as I'm sitting up on the saddle, looking around the vast landscape, the landscape that I can see for miles, the landscape that I call home.

For miles I ride, with nothing but my horse, the sun, and the land to keep me company. And while it might seem lonely, it's not. The land has stories that go back thousands of years, back before this land was even called Saskatchewan. The sun keeps me warm as the land tells stories, stories that could go on forever, that *will* go on forever.

The land also shows me the stories it tells. Old homesteads that have crumbled down long ago, dead trees that once housed birds, signs that mark old school buildings that my relatives attended, and fences that hold cattle or protect crops.

With my trusty steed, I can see it all. I can visit these places, imagine what life would have been like, imagine the people, animals, imagine their lives. Would they have related to me in any way? What was their biggest struggle? Their biggest success? What was their biggest dream? What did they think the present day would be like? What would they think about life in the present day?

Tracks in the ground tell stories about the animals that have walked through fields. The cattle that have raised their young, coyotes that hunted down rabbits and gophers. Deer that made their way through fields in search of food. Sometimes there are ruts, made by tractors, feeding trucks, or four-wheelers. For when farmers make their way out to the fields to feed livestock or check crops.

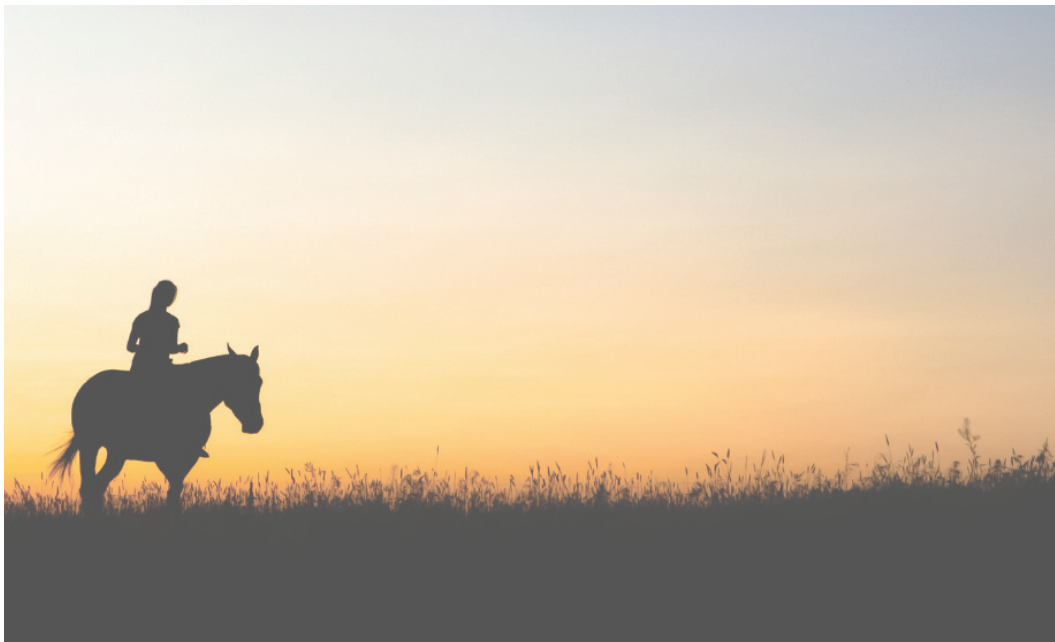
The homes made by animals tell stories too.

Fresh holes mean a new gopher family has moved in, or badger family. Holes that haven't changed in a while mean maybe the family has moved on. Nests when eggs show that new chicks are on their way. A nest full of baby birds means a new life begins and soon they will learn to fly and find food.

The land tells stories of the past. Of the people who walked the land, made a home for their family. Of the animals that made landmarks that still haven't changed. Of the buildings that once stood tall, of the vegetation that fed our ancestors and animals.

As my ride comes to an end, I start to head back home. Across the fields of wheat, sunflowers, mustard, canola, and flax, my best friend trots. And as home gets closer I think to myself.

I think of how the land will continue to tell stories, stories of today's time and the new building we have built, the new homes and fence posts, the animals that roam our yards. One day we will become the stories the land tells.



ON LAND THERE IS NONE DEVOTED

by Jan Nasibog

I took your name for myself.

The silver coins on my person, imprinted in your name;

I kiss all thirty of them goodnight in the picture of you

And dull the shine; persisting—your image burned

In metal, tallying the scratches I continued to make.

You will trade my life for silver.

You must have known I never intended to fall

At your feet—to love you, no.

I despised you. I have always

Found you were a liar in truth.

My disciple,

My salvation.

If you love me,

I never cared for anyone

You will do what is right.

But you.

My affections lie in your shadow.

Never to see the sun, any other being,

I pray only to the image of you,

For there is none on this land more devoted to you than I.

Are you betraying me with a kiss?

You were a liar, and yet,

I worshipped the ground beneath you.

In exchange, I took your name for myself

And buried your affections deep within me

For I loved you a coward.

O SWEET DEATH! THOU ART NOT PAINFUL AT ALL!

by Zaid Bin Rehan

'Tis the first and last time I glance at thee.
"Hush," thou says. How naïve! I've seen worse days.
Drag me! Torn and young, this cruel world set free.
Swoosh thy scythe, I hath not felt pain, but haze.
Silence, thou art so loud! Darkness so bright!
A swirl of madness, I drift into ease,
These people's hearts, like thy clutch, O so tight!
Yet I doth not feel pain, swept by the breeze,
O sweet Death, cut them! Ice is what they bleed.
This poor earth, O how blue, filled with their lies,
People swallowed with hate! Swallowed with greed!
Joy? Laughter comes only from others' cries,
O sweet Death! Thou art not painful at all!
Down we gaze to watch them reign, watch them fall.

TODAY

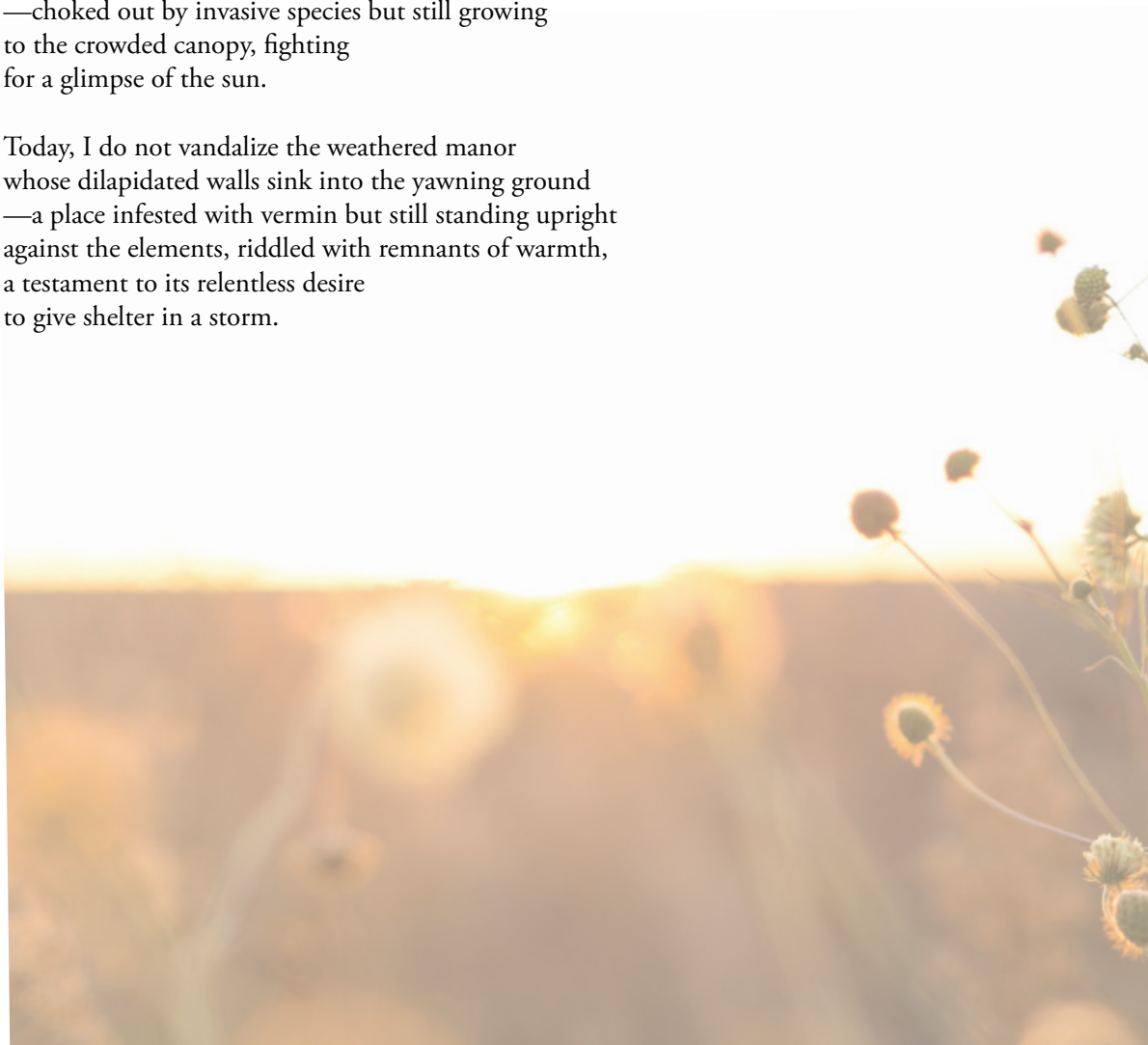
by Abigail Friesen

Today, I do not hunt the wolves
whose lonesome howls pervade the night,
who have found their famished bodies
and lithe limbs ensnared in steel traps
—wolves who have gnawed off a piece of themselves
and limped away in the sacrifice of survival.

Today, the craters of the moon speak
of more than imperfection,
but are tribute to all she has endured
in her timeless orbit,
as she met countless impervious asteroids
seeking a violent collision
on her tireless voyage around her world.

Today, I do not cut down the wild thicket
entangled with serrated-edged weeds,
growing among sweet-smelling flowers
and springing up from the shadowed forest floor
—choked out by invasive species but still growing
to the crowded canopy, fighting
for a glimpse of the sun.

Today, I do not vandalize the weathered manor
whose dilapidated walls sink into the yawning ground
—a place infested with vermin but still standing upright
against the elements, riddled with remnants of warmth,
a testament to its relentless desire
to give shelter in a storm.



Today, I do not mock the knight
clad in armour worn and dull,
who has raised a sword against an onslaught
of adversaries desperate to strike her down
—the knight who has also disarmed entirely,
in trembling vulnerability, to put skin on skin
upon those wounded on the gruesome battlefield.

Today, I choose to know
the amalgamation of softness and strength
in all the realms and abrasiveness
of my person
—both the innocent parts I've had to abandon
and the hardened parts I've had to forge.

*If I am to choose to asphyxiate in self-loathing or
bear what I wish to keep shrouded in darkness,
on the precipice of enduring or surrendering,*

Today, I choose to walk the excruciating path
of self-acceptance and
keep my hungry hands from the blade.

BURNING PIT IN THE SMOKY SKY

by Niko Cosmic

With just a few simple words, everything that used to be Gill's world had ceased to be. Everything had changed, and they internalized the pain of their heart ripping together. They couldn't even remember the exact words, or their response, but it burned inside all the same. Tears like blood leaked from their eyes, as they coughed up small chunks of their heart.

It hurt, their heart having been so thoroughly broken. There was no real chance to fix it anytime soon, so the best option was to wait for a new one, and to get rid of the old pieces. They coughed up little shreds of their former heart, piece by piece, before disposing of them. Soon, they stopped crying, feeling more apathetic, and sitting up. Despite the destruction of the heart, Gill felt fine. "It's all fine now," thought Gill. Now, he started to grow his new heart, watering the plant. With love and nurturing to the plant, he grew his new heart, setting it inside his chest and feeling...

Happy.



THE PERFORMANCE

by Medha Sarma

The bangles on my wrist are gold,
Flashing patterns on the wall
As the sun illuminates them.
Intricate mehendi twines around my fingers,
Teasing at my wrist as I put on my favorite jhumkas.
They weigh on my ears, a steady comfort
As I prepare for the stage.
My chelengas are the last step,
A trusty companion through eleven years of dance.
They jingle as I place them around my ankles.
My costume is pinned and pleated,
My nails painted crimson.
My feet light, confident, ready to perform.
I take one last look in the mirror,
And see myself at five, scared for my first recital.
At ten, insides turning before a major performance.
At thirteen, on to complex pieces, feeling mature.
At sixteen, I ready myself with a breath,
And leave for the stage.

RED by Nora Runnalls

Addy sits in front of the mirror. It's quiet. Studio is in the morning. Her leotard is red, as well as the ribbons carefully woven into her hair. The colour comforts her.

Addy stretches her arms, then her legs, then her feet. She ties on her pointe shoes, making sure everything is right.

She stands.

In front of the mirror, her red stands. She goes through the basic movements. When ready, Addy turns on the music. Her shoes tap the floor, the dance engraved in her body. A spin there, a leap here, everything lives. Her red moves and leaps across the room. Her red covers white walls and lonely mirrors. Her red dance is beautiful.

Addy recalls every note, every dance, every critique of her relevé. Her red spins across the room as she spins the ghost from her thoughts. *Leg higher on that turn, Adelaine, don't be lazy.* From her chin being too low to her feet not being at the right angle, this dance has been ingrained into her soul. The teacher would have called her his best work. Addy can still feel the phantom corrections, pushing her foot up higher, pushing her arms lower. Pushing. *Never let your thoughts wander astray Adelaine.*

A mantra of counts flows, *1-2-3-4*, turn *6-7-8*. Addy had to be good. Red salivates at the thought.

Addy leaps into the air, poised, graceful, and stumbles on her landing.

Her foot twists and she has to hop in order not to fall. The music continues. Addy stands.

In the early days of practicing jumps that weren't at her level she fell. She learned from her mistakes.

She must finish the dance, but her red keeps her still.

The music comes to an end. Addy is still standing. She looks at herself in the mirror. The red grows. Addy moves to turn the music back on. She tells herself she will not fall again.

Her red moves despair around the room. Addy keeps her composure. Her face is neutral, her turnout is perfect, her arms are confident and strong. She smiles when she needs to. Addy moves through the dance, by heart. A routine her teacher made her perfect. It's simple, she tells herself.

A spin, done well, of course, another, and she is back. A smile grows on her face. Of course, she is good enough. Her red knows. And her red disagrees. There is always more, her red whispers to her. She shuns the thought.

The teacher would be proud. Probably. She recovered well. She kept her composure.

The lie Addy tells herself in confidence. She knows how the teacher would react, she knows what he would say, what he would do. But if she holds the thought that he'd be proud, it's almost like she believes it. *Make Teacher proud.*

Her red is growing, creeping down her arms, up her neck, and down her legs. If she ignores her thoughts, she might finish this dance, pretending like that fall never happened.

Addy dances across the room. When she comes back to the leap, she takes a steadying breath in. Her red consumes her pointe shoes. She keeps count, focused on nailing the jump. She turns and turns and commits to the jump.

Everything is red, red, red.

Her hands, her legs, the room. She stares at her hands, and she sees herself reflected back in red. Abby curls into herself, her forehead meeting the floor. The pantomime of bruises on her ribs, her wrists, her feet. She wails.

Her red screams alongside her.





SEPTEMBER **by Aurora McLeod**

At the end season of growth,
Does the frost emerge under the droplets.
The rain does fall unto the lush, ripe tomatoes in the garden,
To eat, a last harvest before the snow...
Ever it falls unto the next weeks of autumn,
A time of change to days prior,
In which the heat births colour,
Where the sun shines through.
Rays of light glare in trees who turn
Within the morning's cool.
Shy winds do shake the molten gold branches,
Whisps away the leaves
That fly o'er the street to the ground,
Where they shall remain unto the new year.

MY DAY OF BLUE

by Blue Mushens

Memories buzz my thoughts
Silver rings
 elegant as the moon
Exploding blue and white stars
dance in the wind

Songs of those times
The robin blue gown
My eyes the colours-of-it-all

Finally our day

Accumulations of pinks, oranges, and yellows
 decorate the sky
Time unsure of its path
as I walk down mine

Our words might well disappear
Only us

Tears flood my eyes
Pain rolls down my cheeks

Those days long ago
Shrieks of desperation echo through the hollow room
I'm unwilling to be alone

Time now knows no path

That day of blue
These days of dark
Thereafter days of gray

Fading blue eyes read your name one last time
Here lies

Beloved

FOR I ONLY LOVE THE SEA **by Payton Todd**

Love me not, for I only love the sea. I sing its hymns under a glowing moon. Its waters under my skin, mingling pleasantly in my blood. The enigmatic depths, light filtering like golden fingers trying to reach the bottom to sift through the sands, to search for forgotten riches. Only to fail, never making it to the floors, but rather drowning.

Such a power that mighty Ocean has to drown light. To trap it. Hold it tight. How devilish those tides are, to show Sky exactly what he wishes to see, reflect his gloating self back to him to draw him nearer in order to meet him, drown him, on the horizon. Ocean, an all-powerful matriarch, flowing in her endless strength and copious, beauteous mystery. The age of the sea is all but countless, the waters having bathed gods. That archaic power rising on every swell, reminding Land and that should she challenge it, the sea will swallow every valley and mountain peak. But for now, she steals bits of shore as a tax, taking the ground shells and possible treasures back out to the depths.

And when that ocean feels a ship it does not like, it sends me.

Tonight, the mast sways as the ship rocks on the surface. I have been gifted this chance to prove myself to the ocean. I will not fail it. I wish only to make the ocean proud.

The salt on my lips as I grin at the ship is strong, feeling that devilish intent reviving within me. I glide closer and closer, circling like a shark in a school of fish, feeling that familiar coolness of the water sliding over me. I get close enough.

The ocean hymns erupt from me easily, like a songbird on the water, catching the eye of a single man standing near the rails. It only takes one. Calling him nearer, a siren, an alarm, a knell. I feel myself becoming excited, giddy even as the man leans over the edge to hear me better. I sing louder, pouring that sickly, honey-sweet and desperate conviction into the notes that they so crave.

Until he removes his life vest.

And drops over the side of the doomed vessel.

“I know now I’m in love with you.” He pants before I drag him under the waves to show him the treasures of the sands even the straining fingers of light could not reach.

Love me not, for I only love the sea.

And I’ll be tempted to drown you in my love.



THE DEN **by Paris Belisle**

Through the pine
Smell of bone and hunt
We should not be here

ONCE UPON A TIME by Tari Wenzel

Once upon a time, I dreamt about a Kingdom that was hidden in a faraway place, where everything was up to me. I dreamed about a knight in shining armor coming to rescue me from my tower. Whenever I told this to my mom she'd laugh and say, "I love your imagination," and then we moved on with our day because it was just another dream. This was the year my father was away. I started elementary school, always rushing to play on the playground, blurting out answers in class, and counting down the minutes until I could go home. Every night my mother would tuck me into bed, telling me stories to fill my head with infinite possibilities.

Once upon a time, I dreamed of making friends to travel the world with. I'd wake up and tell my mom and she'd laugh and carry on with her day. She'd walk with me to school and wave goodbye as she said, "Have a great day sweetheart." This year my dad was home. My friends would come up to me and we would go play soccer in the field. I no longer rushed out to yell the answer in class, but my teachers would still give me an A. I'd come home and my mom would make me a little snack and ask about my day, I'd whisper, "Good," and take it up to my room and turn on the computer to play games. Once it was time for bed my mother would tuck me in. Inside I'd wish that my dad would be there too, but he wasn't.

Once upon a time, I had a dream. It was a nightmare about not being good enough for the person I was in my own dreams, because that's the only thing the world would tell me. I'd wake up and tell my mom that "I never felt like I was enough," she'd remain silent and drive me to school. She'd always ask, "Are you studying enough?" "How are your grades?" I'd smile and nod and say, "They're doing great," but inside I was hurting. I'd numb the pain by drowning it out with music. That was the year I'd sit silently in the back row, hoping that somehow, I'd pass, but every day I was drowning in an inexplicable pain. I'd begin skipping breakfast, and then I'd skip lunch, because food never felt as good as the little white tablets. The food would only make the pain worse and talking to my mom only used up more and more energy, until nothing else could make me feel better. People I used to consider friends would look at me and call me an "addict." I began to skip school, fail classes, and fight with my parents. I was no longer tucked in when I went to sleep. I no longer felt loved. I made bets on whether or not I'd wake up the next morning, all because I hated not being loved.

Once upon a time, I tried to have a dream, but I couldn't fall asleep. When the sun came up, I'd thank my friend for the roof over my head, then I'd head into town in search of a job. I'd call my mom for some clean clothes, sometimes even to use her address for a job application, but she'd always say no and that I was a disgrace. She'd never believe me after that time I'd almost overdosed in front of my brothers. I'd begun staying on different people's couches praying for a way out of this mess. This was the year my little brother graduated middle school. I had dressed up in the best clothes I could salvage and watched from the back row. My heart ached with pain as my parents faces lit up with joy as they watched their last chance at a good child walk across the stage. I'd go to sleep that night tucking myself in, praying I could find a way out of this hell hole. The arrangement of red and blue pills would always be there to soothe

my sorrows when the loneliness sank in, all because the feeling of loneliness hurt more than the feeling of not being loved.

Once upon a time, I finally had a dream as I laid on the corner of a busy street, tucked under a holey winter jacket. I dreamt of the snacks my mother prepared after school, I dreamt of sitting in a classroom laughing with my friends, I saw my whole life flash before my eyes. I saw the person who I yearned to be. This was the year my mother changed her address, this was the year my mother changed her phone number, this was the year I could no longer find a couch to crash on, this was the year I gave up on finding a job. The only thing I cared for was finding my next great high. I'd awake to loud noises and people passing by, sometimes I'd reach out, hoping someone would take my hand, to give me something, anything. Some change, a conversation, or even just a glance, anything to make me feel alive again.

Once upon a time, I dreamt I was Humpty Dumpty who sat on a wall, except it wasn't a dream, because when I had my great fall, nobody was there to reach out. I was looked at like I was a piece of trash that nobody wanted to take responsibility for, that's all the world made me feel like. So, I'd stay in the same spot, wondering how long my body would last, but it didn't matter because I hated the feeling of being no more than mere trash.

Once upon a time, I laid under a bridge writing a letter on old fast-food bags. The title was my name because that's all I had left. I wrote about the dreams I never accomplished, in hopes that one day someone would find it, so I could be known for much more than my past. That someone would know I hated the pills, but they were the only thing there for me when I was at my lowest. I'd write about how this was the year I finally contacted my mom, but she cried and called me a disgrace. I thought that maybe if I'd written some apologies on a piece of paper covered in my tears, someone would find them and read about my story, and realize that love is one of the most valuable resources in the world.

BEHIND A STARRY NIGHT

by Nevin Runnalls

Look at the stars

In orbits, we can't ever understand
we—right now—
can't ever touch them
like trees and dirt
until someone reaches out

Somewhere
behind those stars
behind the entire night sky
there is magic

Vincent van Gogh painted the face of God
spent time in the country, obsessed with his ear
and in the light of the sun and her sister stars
he shot himself in the chest

No one believed the stars could sing
until Vincent van Gogh asked them
He died knowing only certain words
from light's lips

And we stare at the stars

MELODIOUS DEPARTURE **by Charlie Gariepy**

In sickness and in health,
Our vines stay strong,
Swaying along to nature's hymn.

As we sit, sit, and wait,
The crickets chirp,
Singing along
To the grass' serenade.

They lay you down,
Far underground,
And you'll hear a lovely melody
As they cover you.

May the earth keep you warm
As you listen to the safety
Within nature's crib.
We think of you, and sing along,
To the grass' lullaby.

THE RETURN

by Sophia Fafard

Memory. It comes back to me in a white flash of heat, in rays of summer sun beating down on freckled skin and reflecting in my young blue eyes. Water splashes, refracting light into rainbows. I hear giggles nearby, and I turn to see Greyson in his eight-year-old glory, showing all his mismatched teeth, waving at me. “Come on!” he says. “Jump in!”

The part of me in the present urges me forward. But memories are memories, and I cannot atone for the mistakes of the past. My younger self shakes her head, pulls back into the shade of the old oak tree, and watches my brother play with our other siblings in the blow-up pool. The cries of joy echo through my childhood backyard, lingering a moment longer.

Memory. It vanishes from my mind and the present seeps in, taking me back to the TV flickering before me with an image of children swimming at a pool. I lean forward on the couch and turn it off, my hands clutching the remote as though it’s the only thing tethering me to the memory. I will it to return, but some memories are like that. They come one day, and then, they are gone forever.

Finally, I drop my remote and get to business. Check my emails. Texts. Then, make a to-do list for tomorrow, ignoring the guilt throbbing in my heart. *I’m just overtired; I need to relax*, I tell myself. My phone reads 9:44 PM, and I figure I have enough time to watch one more episode of that summer show. A part of me hesitates before grabbing the remote and clicking on the TV. A part of me is relieved when there’s a knock at the door, and I stand up, dropping the remote. My surprise is apparent as I answer the door.

“Hello?”

I peek through the door, open a crack. Faded blue eyes stare back at me and I gasp, opening the door wide.

“G-Greyson?”

“Aria,” Greyson says, almost sheepish. He looks down at his shoes, his face a mask of emotions. Tight-lipped and cold. The same as I remember, even if he is an adult now. “It has been a while, I know.”

I stare at him. My fists curl, then release, curl, and release, but my breathing is shaky with each inhale. I blink once, twice, wondering if my memory has finally ruined my imagination, but no. Greyson is standing before me. My little brother.

My biggest regret.

He says something but the world spins. He becomes blurry as I shut the door in his face; I, oblivious to everything real in the world, drop down on the floor and shake my head. *Greyson, Greyson, Greyson*, I think, tears spilling onto my pajamas. *Greyson, where have you been?*

More memories are drawn up from my panicked mind: Greyson, pleading for me to play chess with him. Greyson, asking me to go to a movie but I was too busy. Greyson, swearing at me with a sneer twisted on his lips, saying, “*To Hell with the family.*” Saying that we never loved him. Never cared about him.

You left for ten years, I want to scream at him. I lost you. Everyone lost you. You, Greyson. You don't know how much it hurt.

At the same time, all the pent-up guilt from the past ten years spills out onto the floor of my apartment in salty tears, creating a stream of regret. He's outside; I can bet he hears me wailing my pain into the cracks of my apartment. He knows the torment has killed my soul a hundred times over, and maybe he is still there, waiting. Oh, he better be waiting. I pray to God he is still there. A voice in my head tells me to open the door, to say something, to make him stay. My little brother is still there, yes, he is, I know Greyson, I know I hurt him but he is still there he won't leave he can't leave I can't lose him again not again no. Fear freezes me in place, drowning out the voice in my head.

He will leave again. I've hurt him too much.

But fear has lingered too long in my heart, and I stagger to my feet and open the door with trembling hands, hoping with all my soul that I have not lost this chance. The hallway is empty. I collapse to my knees, silent.

Greyson is gone.

"Greyson!" I shout into the faint hallway light. No answer reaches me, and my body shudders with each breath. So many words, so many things I've never said but waited a thousand times to say. *I'm sorry.*

I'm sorry I didn't play chess with you.

I'm sorry I missed that movie you liked.

I'm sorry I didn't jump in the pool on that hot, summer day in July, when all you asked of me was to be there. With you. A sister with her brother, celebrating childhood.

I'm sorry you did not feel loved. You are.

A hand touches my shaking shoulders, bringing me back to reality. I glance up, blurry-eyed and sniffing, at the red-eyed face of Greyson, who pulls me into a hug.

"I'm sorry I left," he whispers in my ear. "Not just ten years ago. I shouldn't have left now, either."

The comment breaks through the shock, pulls me through the veil of memory into the moment. This moment I have been waiting for, searching for, for years. I hug Greyson tight and laugh into his shoulder.

"Please, Greyson. Stay. I'm so sorry. Please, stay."

He lets go of me and we smile our saddest smiles. After only a moment's hesitation, he nods. "Okay."

He enters the apartment, and I close the door behind him. It's then that he sees the show I have been watching, and his eyes widen.

"*The Lotus Flowers?* I love that show!" he says with a laugh. I laugh too.

THE SUN AND THE MOON

by Lilah Flieg-Bacheschi

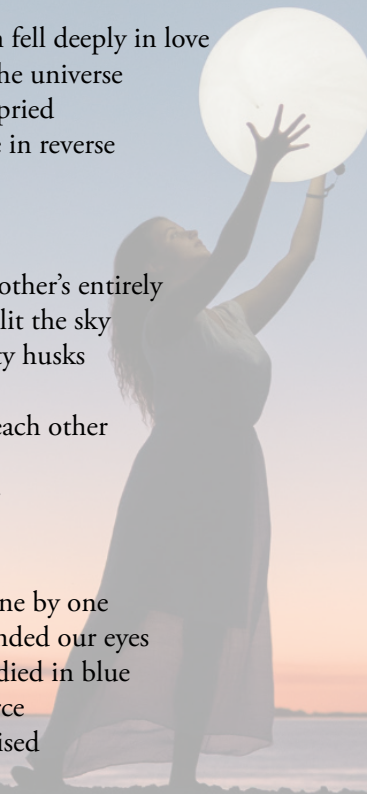
The sun and the moon fell deeply in love
Despite the forces of the universe
Who pulled and who pried
And tried to turn time in reverse

They met quietly
At dawn and dusk
When they were each other's entirely
Until it was time to split the sky
So far, parting as empty husks

How they longed for each other
An ache never to fade
Wishing to see further
And find a new way

But centuries passed one by one
And each day, rays blinded our eyes
And each night, light died in blue
Light so harsh and fierce
Sadness so deep it bruised

Reminders of all
They are destined to lose



**Thank you to the following
schools for participating in
Windscrip Vol. 40.**

Glentworth Central School

Melfort & Unit Comprehensive Collegiate

A. E. Peacock Collegiate

Maverick School

Rocanville School

Evan Hardy Collegiate

Swift Current Comprehensive High School

Val Marie School

Arcola School

Bedford Road Collegiate

Regina Huda School

Walter Murray Collegiate

Martin Collegiate

Rosthern Junior College

Carlton Comprehensive High School

Dinsmore Composite School

Rosetown Central High School

CONTRIBUTORS

Joanna Andree was born and raised in the small town of Val Marie in June 2007, next to Grasslands National Park. Growing up on a farm, Joanna spent most of her time outdoors, helping with cattle. Now sixteen, Joanna's favourite hobbies include reading and writing. She hopes to one day teach an English course as a university professor.

Paris Belisle is a young man unlike any you've seen. He is often free with his words yet he is unbothered by social opinion. He has a fine wit. He is stubborn but determined about everything he does. Paris enjoys bushcraft, hiking, archery, music, writing poetry, and making people laugh.

Alyssa Burnouf is a student attending Carlton Comprehensive High School in Prince Albert, SK. She enjoys reading, writing, playing the guitar, and learning about new subjects. She also has two adorable cats named Gizmo and Jack.

Niko Cosmic is an author from somewhere in rural SK. When they aren't writing, they're ordering physical music or playing assorted games for "fun."

Cosmo is a Grade 10 student in Melfort, SK. She enjoys reading, writing, and films nobody else likes. Not interested in the nightlife, she often sits in the dark at home, ruminating. Rest assured, her written work is much better than this biography. Much, much better than this biography.

Sophia Fafard is a Grade 12 student excited to finish her last year of high school. She has always loved writing and reading and hopes to keep writing in the future. When she is not writing she can be found playing piano or sports or spending time with family.

Lilah Flieg-Bacheschi is sixteen-years-old. She was born in the Arctic, but both her parents are Brazilian, and her first language is Portuguese. Lilah enjoys reading, writing, and visual arts. She also likes learning about various mythologies, spending time outdoors, and travelling. Lilah lives on a small farm near Rosthern, SK.

Abigail Friesen is a grade 12 student from Dinsmore Composite School. She enjoys reading, writing, making art, and everything music. Abby spends most of her time doing schoolwork, overthinking, playing volleyball, or writing down every thought and spontaneous inspiration in her phone's Notes app.

Charlie Gariepy is a Grade 12 high school student. She loves the arts. She wishes to become an English major in the years to come. She loves writing poetry and was inspired to write poetry due to accidentally stumbling upon her father's poetry journal. Charlie wishes to reflect on herself through her poetry and eventually become an inspiration for people around her.

Ashlynn Ippolito is a Grade 7 student. Ashlynn loves to hang out with her three dogs, four cats, and three friends. She also enjoys skating, drawing, reading, traveling, and going to school every day.

Ella Manoucheri's love of writing began in 2020. With extra time on her hands, she decided to write. She writes every day, and aspires to be an author and high school English teacher. Ella is a Grade 9 student at Evan Hardy Collegiate in Saskatoon. This is her first time submitting to *Wind-script Magazine*, but it won't be her last.

Aurora McLeod is a seventeen-year-old artist and wordsmith. She is currently in Grade 12 and will go on to study geology at the University of Regina. In her writing, Aurora uses many analytical and symbolic techniques that pull inspiration from history and her own hardships to shape thematic passages.

Shaheer Mohammed is a hardworking, overachieving, Grade 12 student at Bedford Road Collegiate who enjoys working with computers, creating websites, and playing games. Shaheer also has a passion for cooking and trying new foods.

Blue Mushens started writing for fun during COVID, yet not a single story from them is done. He's pretty sure, eighty-five percent sure, at least, that he's attending the same school as their grandfather. Blue enjoys participating in theater. The theater room is better than it was in the 1900s.

Jan Nasibog is a sixteen-year-old student with endless stories to tell, ranging from their days writing and drawing, to outlandish hyperbolic stories made to keep a crowd at the edge of their seats. In their free time, Jan enjoys creating art, and looks forward to pursuing their hobbies moving forward.

Zaid Bin Rehan is an inquisitive, pensive, and creative tenth-grader. Born in Saudi Arabia, Zaid moved to Canada when he was just ten and is now figuring out and exploring the wonders of this (wonderful? cruel?) world. His ambition and serendipity make him quite... odd. In other words, unique!

First and foremost, **Nevin Runnalls** likes to make things: music, poems, robots, drafts, plans, Lego, you name it. He lives out in the middle of nowhere and that is how he keeps himself entertained. Secondly, though, Nevin likes to watch sidewalks and shoeprints. He figures beauty exists everywhere.

Nora Runnalls is a big geek and she knows it. She listens to D&D podcasts while crocheting, and reads in her free time. Writing has been an outlet for her nerdiness. She lurks in theoretical chats about her favourite shows—these have ruined her sense of humour.

Medha Sarma is a sixteen-year-old writer currently attending Walter Murray Collegiate. She enjoys reading and drawing, as well as spending time with her friends. In the future, Medha hopes to be a psychologist.

Jocelyn Thiessen is a Grade 11 SAGE student at Walter Murray Collegiate. She is a hardworking individual involved in all the writing and acting opportunities she can find. You can always find her curled up with a good book and hot chocolate.

Payton Todd is seventeen and from Wood Mountain, SK. She wrote her first full-length novel *The Amnesia Project* at fifteen and had it published in the spring of 2023. Find it on Amazon! She will be attending the University of Regina in the fall of 2024.

Vaishu Venkata is a Grade 11 student from Swift Current Comprehensive High School, who loves music, art, writing, and science. She is working on science fair projects, and a novel she hopes to publish. Through her creativity, she aspires to make an impact on the world.

Tari Wenzel is a sixteen-year-old student from Rosetown, SK. Tari loves to explore different towns and rural areas, and to be outdoors. She loves to take part in different sports and extra-curricular activities. In her free time, Tari loves to read books, play board games, and take photos of nature.

Submitting to Windscript 2025

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS-DECEMBER 11, 2024

Please note that as in all writing competitions, these guidelines are important and **must be followed** in order for a submission to be accepted. Writers selected for publication **will** go through an editing process with the editor(s) and will receive payment at the standard SWG rates, as well as 2 complimentary copies of *Windscript*.

The editing process consists of revising the content, organization, grammar, and presentation of a piece of writing to enhance the writer's voice. Students should submit their best work and **be prepared to work collaboratively with the editor(s) to take their work to the next level**. For example, the editor(s) may ask you to expand a scene or may suggest word choice changes. Editor(s) will communicate with students by email; timely and attentive communication is crucial to the process so students should check their email often.

Criteria:

Those submitting must be:

- Saskatchewan-based high school students. Students can submit creative writing in any and all forms including poetry and prose (fiction and creative nonfiction).
- Students do not have to be members of the SWG.

Submissions must be:

- All work must be original and human-generated from start to finish.
 - We do not accept submissions of any kind that were written, developed, or assisted by AI tools such as ChatGPT. Any attempt to submit AI-aided work may result in being banned from submitting to *Windscript*.
 - Submissions that are proven to be plagiarised will not be accepted and the submitter will be banned from submitting to *Windscript*.

Plagiarism, whether from the web, from other students, or from published sources (digital or print) is a serious writing offense. Plagiarism is the presentation of words or thoughts of someone else as if they were your own – exceptions are proverbial sayings or common knowledge. Avoid charges of plagiarizing by acknowledging your sources in the submission and be sure that all words and phrases from the source are in quotation marks.

- Writers must submit their own work directly – submissions cannot be made by a third party (such as a parent or teacher).
- You must proofread your manuscript before submission.
- You may submit up to four poems and two prose pieces (which do not exceed 1500 words each).
- You can submit in both prose and poetry, but contributors will only be published in one genre.
- *Windscript* does not accept pieces with multiple authors or images.

Guidelines:

Always keep a copy of your submitted work. Submissions will not be returned.

Please email the following as attachments to windscripvmagazine@gmail.com with *Windscrip Submission* in the subject line:

- 1) Download and complete the *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form from skwriter.com and attach it to your email along with your poetry and/or prose pieces. Fill it out completely or your submission will not be accepted.
 - Your *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form can be emailed to us in the following formats: PDF, Word doc, or docx formats. Please do not submit links (like from Google Docs) to your *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form. For security reasons, links will not be clicked on.
 - Your *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form should be named "First Name Last Name – cover letter".

- 2) Each submission must be properly formatted:
 - Do not put more than one poem or prose piece on a page. Each piece of writing should be its own document. Your file names must be as follows: *Windscrip_title_genre* (example: *Windscrip_The Raven_Poetry*).
 - Type each piece in 12 pt. plain text font (such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier), and prose must be double spaced.
 - Number each page.
 - Put the title on each submission and each page of the manuscript.
 - Submit documents in .doc or .docx formats. Please do not submit PDFs or Pages files or links (like from Google Docs) to your work. Download each file and attach it to the email. For security reasons, links will not be clicked on.

Questions? Email swgevents@skwriter.com

For the most up-to-date submission guidelines, please visit:

<https://skwriter.com/programs-and-services/publications/windscrip>



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