

Once Upon a Word

2010/11

ANTHOLOGY

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The Rotary Club
of Burnaby



A Message from the Board of Education

Welcome to *Once Upon a Word*, a limited-edition anthology of poetry and prose by some of the most talented student writers in the Burnaby School District.

For writers everywhere, words are the building blocks of creative expression. And what enchanting literary structures these Burnaby students have built! Their words express ideas and conjure emotions. They make you think, laugh, feel and travel to another place or time.

For 25 years Burnaby's WORDS Writing Project has nurtured and celebrated young writers in the District. The continued growth and success of WORDS is thanks to the dedicated teachers who nurture the writing talent of our students; to supportive parents who encourage their aspiring young authors; and to committed sponsors who support youth, literacy, and community. We extend our gratitude to all of you.

This year's anthology features a collection of 81 works by writers from kindergarten to grade 12 in French and English. A panel of esteemed judges have chosen these works from more than 700 elementary and secondary school entries.

We hope you'll read *Once Upon a Word* – silently, aloud, on the bus, at the beach, or in your comfy chair. And please share this book with your friends and family so they too can be moved and inspired by the creative expression of Burnaby youth.



*"My artwork illustrates
the awakening of an imaginary world
through the power of words."*

Cover art by, Burnaby North Secondary grade 10 student, Annie Yu

To ensure students and the Burnaby School District do not contravene legal or copyright considerations, students published in this anthology and their parents/guardians have signed letters of authenticity confirming that they authored the original writing piece.

2010-2011 ANTHOLOGY
WORDS WRITING PROJECT

Once Upon a Word

Burnaby School District's **WORDS WRITING PROJECT** provides K-12 students the opportunity to become published authors. Each year, a panel of judges with a background in writing and communications reviews the submissions and selects the best student writing in each category to feature in the district's annual WORDS Anthology.

From stories of adventure, journeys of introspection, lighthearted poetry and verse that is deeply profound, the limited edition WORDS Anthology offers something for everyone. We are pleased to recognize the following students whose submissions were selected for publication in the 2010/11 WORDS Anthology, ***Once Upon a Word***.

Ages 5-7

Poetry

Ryan Goudron	Buckingham	Hockey
Brandon Hui	Cascade Heights	Sun
Alyssa Jung	Buckingham	Snowflakes
Lauren Thind	Cascade Heights	Chocolate

Prose

Joyce Xi	Clinton	Lovely Lily
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Ages 8-10

Poetry

Rachel Bellinger	Taylor Park	Fall Comes Fast in Spring
Rachel Chen	Chaffey-Burke	Ode to Rain
Eric Chiu	Brentwood Park	Maple Seeds
Isabelle Cosacescu	Clinton	Horseback Riding
Vera Kharitonova	Chaffey-Burke	The Bully
Jasper Liang	Marlborough	Time
Sophie Liu	Nelson	Get Real
Makaila Sherwood	Seaforth	Les fleurs
Trevor Tyner	Lakeview	There Was Once a Man Named Phil
Jimmy Yu	Clinton	Peregrine Falcon

Prose

Brendan Singh Gill	Lakeview	A Soldier's Evening
Michael He	Marlborough	Pourquoi il y a des Montagnes et des Nuages
Rachel Leong	Cascade Heights	Le Colombe
Cyrus Lum	Clinton	The Most Mysterious Monster in the Universe
Mercedes Schweighofer	Sperling	Trois façons de rendre ta petite sœur folle

Ages 11 +

Poetry

Isabelle Ava-Pointon	Seaforth	L'histoire d'un Perdu
Monica Hong	Seaforth	Le succès
Edward Jiang	Chaffey-Burke	General Relativity
Victor Lau	Stride Avenue	Invisible Ghosts
Dayna Louie	Chaffey-Burke	I Am From...
Masha Michouris	Stoney Creek	Thief of her Heart
Ariel Pan	Chaffey-Burke	Nature
Katya Suvorov	Cascade Heights	Elle tombe
Lasya Vankayala	Chaffey-Burke	Raindrop
Brendan Wong	Nelson	Northern Lights

Prose

Isabelle Ava-Pointon	Seaforth	Anne Boleyn's Final Moments
Calista Bashuk	Marlborough	The Jump
Emma Buchanan	Gilpin	Observer
Sabrina Ren	Marlborough	Her smiles

Grade 8

Poetry

Jazel Faltado	Burnaby Mountain	Dedicated to You
Sarah Hardjowasito	Burnaby Mountain	Word - Catching
Samantha Hill	Cariboo Hill	L'Antarctique
Alexandra Lee	Burnaby Central	Why I Love Piano Keys
Becky Tu	Cariboo Hill	Search for Fear
Olive Wang	Burnaby Mountain	I Had A Dream
Rachel Yan	Burnaby North	Olivia

Prose

Priscilla Choi	Burnaby North	Spero
Breyden Chong	Burnaby North	Hooked
Samantha Hill	Cariboo Hill	Nous pensions que nous le savions
Daphne Patterson	Burnaby Mountain	Picture This...
Alyson Williamson	Burnaby Mountain	Peace, as White as Snow
Nancy Yang	Burnaby North	Just a Little Unlucky

Grades 9-10

Poetry

Francisco Alviar
Carly de Bakker
Symphony Huang
Phoebe Joy Lim
Wingshun Pang
Jennifer Reid
Damian Spence
Rita Wang
Cheyenne Heenan
Destiny Hsu
Jaime Moore

Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Moscrop
Burnaby North
Burnaby South
Burnaby Mountain
Alpha
Moscrop
Moscrop
Cariboo Hill
Cariboo Hill

Procrastination
Stylistic Devices
Slumberland Musicale
Yes You Can, Sir
Chained
I am a Sharpie
Ever Desired, Never Forgotten, What Am I?
The Earth's Embrace
Le bord
Voler
Les Blessures

Prose

Meghan Arora
Noor Bhandal
Jacqueline Chang
Michelle Kuah
Phoebe Joy Lim
Natasha Williams

Burnaby South
Burnaby Mountain
Moscrop
Burnaby South
Burnaby North
Cariboo Hill

The Inside
The Sound of Acting
The Promise of Lost Time
The Waiting Place
Murder Least Foul
Piégé

Grades 11-12

Poetry

Vincent Chung
Jessica De Gaust
Eleanor Hoskins
Nelson Lu
Elio Pinoni
Ericka Rancourt
Jessica Santa
Matthew Smith
Shayna Virginillo
Jacy Zerb
Lily Zhang

Burnaby North
Burnaby Central
Burnaby North
Burnaby South
Alpha
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby South
Burnaby Mountain
Cariboo Hill
Burnaby South
Byrne Creek

Our Renaissance Man
The Diary of a Procrastinator
Mid-November
In Distress as the Cat Digests
A Picture in the Day
Blackbird
Speak Not
December Sun
Watch
Bi-"Polar"
Playground

Prose

Jordan Binotto
Adam Glass
Adam Glass
Joe Tucker
Dorothy Yang
Senica Masuhara

Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Cariboo Hill

Good bye
Magic Moments on a Suburban Street
Wet Nosed Stranger
Acrylic Memories
You and I Could Write a Bad Romance
Un monde de couleurs

2010/11 ANTHOLOGY
WORDS WRITING PROJECT
Once Upon a Word

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Ages 5-7

Snowflakes

Alyssa Jung
Buckingham Elementary

Snowflakes
Sparkly cold
Falling sparkling swirling
Catching snowflakes on my tongue
White

Chocolate

Lauren Thind
Cascade Heights Elementary

Oh chocolate, chocolate
you are as dark
as the
night time sky.
You are
sugary, creamy and delicious.
You are as
lovely as a
picture.
Oh chocolate, chocolate
you are as dark
as the
night time sky.

Sun

Brandon Hui
Cascade Heights Elementary

Oh the sun is so
big and shiny,
shimmers golden,
twinkles bright
and makes
you
squint
it's happy
and glows

Hockey

Ryan Goudron
Buckingham Elementary

Hockey
fun awesome
slap shot penalty faceoff
You can win or lose
period

Lovely Lily

*Joyce Xi
Clinton Elementary*

Lovely lily leaves float in a pond. The lily bud will soon become an enormous white lily. The little fish in the pond decorate the sparkling water. Bristly red edges decorate the lily leaves. The lily flower will look gorgeous when it has bloomed. There are palm tree reflections in the steady water. When I see this wonderful scene, I love it with all my heart. The lovely green lily leaves make a bed for a frog or toad. The white lily flower will soon become sweet perfume, fragrant enough to attract a soaring dragonfly.

Ages 8-10

Maple Seeds

*Eric Chiu
Brentwood Park Elementary*

Little helicopters
Whirling down
Twirling down
A never ending ballet
Dizzying off to sleep

Les fleurs

*Makaila Sherwood
Seaforth Elementary*

J'entends les fleurs qui soufflent dans le vent
Je vois les pétales rouges qui sont très belles
Je sens le pollen jaune dans les fleurs
Je touche les feuilles sur les fleurs
Je goûte la liberté dans l'air

The Bully

*Vera Kharitonova
Chaffey-Burke Elementary*

He walks with a stride
Pushes people
Into lockers
None of them
Making a sound
What's that I hear?
Someone said "No!"
A cry of pain
Was released
I couldn't watch
I walked
Away
Saying
"Next time I'll be brave."

Fall Comes Fast in Spring

Rachel Bellinger
Taylor Park Elementary

Shall I compare thee to a beautiful spring morning?
My mother picked apples in the orchard as the trees were green
And the apples were satin red.
And the pears were pine tree green.
The sun was a buttercup yellow.
The sky was as bright as a flashlight
As the seasons change, Spring becomes Fall.
The leaves turn chocolate brown and pumpkin orange
Falling down onto rickety old bridges
While a sweet scent of green tea rises from the calmness of the river
Crackling like a fire as
The blue sky blows cherry blossoms across the great blue sky.
The grass has received fresh cherries from the tree
And the dew sparkles like little diamonds!
The pond has a beautiful swan swimming gracefully
With her small family swimming in a straight line behind her.
If you really listen carefully you can hear wind chimes
Blow through the marsh as the crickets play their tunes near the river's edge.
See the huge weeping willows gently swaying like people dancing.
Oh, see how Fall comes fast in Spring!

Ode to Rain

Rachel Chen
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

Ode to rain,
Your wonderful scent,
Caresses me like a baby.
Your pitter patter makes me calm.
Your promising sight brings us life.
You and you alone
Provide life.
Without you nothing will grow.
Animals will die,
And all human races will be lost.
Your pure wetness
Combined with your mighty roar,
Will drown us out.
No matter what we do,
Nothing made is as great as you.
Nothing more powerful,
You're Mother Nature's best friend
And when you're done,
Done washing down our earth,
Your shower turns into a drizzle,
Then fades away.
The ozone seeps out,
My life continues.

There Was Once a Man Named Phil

Trevor Tyner
Lakeview Elementary

There was once a man named Phil
Who climbed up a very big hill
He tripped on a rock
And fell with a shock
And now they have to read his will.

Horseback Riding

*Isabelle Cosacescu
Clinton Elementary*

It makes me excited,
it makes me strong.
On the trail we trot along.
As we walk, it makes me feel free.
This is the happiest I could ever be!
As I get on,
I leave reality aside.
And I think about how happy,
This makes me inside.
As I get up on the saddle,
There is no more world.
Just us two,
A horse and a girl.

Time

*Jasper Liang
Marlborough Elementary*

I am time.
My friends are Clock and Watch,
And they love to represent me.
Clock is always **tick**ed off and Watch is a
fan of numbers.
Although they cannot see me, we still play a
lot together.
I am known for changing colors in the sky,
And letting people get ready for the season
outside.
I am always different in different areas,
So don't get mad at me when you travel.
I am always going forwards, so catch me if
you can.
If you want me to go backwards, you'll need
to be Einstein.
Young people ignore me, old people are
afraid of me.
But no mater how they feel, they cannot
stop me.
I am time.

Get Real

*Sophie Liu
Nelson Elementary*

Get REAL
Do you long for the best years of your life
TIME TO CHANGE
No Ifs, Ands or Buts
IT'S WORKING
that's what I thought
ZIP-A-DEE-DOO-DAH
Change is a
beautiful
THING
REMEMBER THIS MOMENT
OVER AND OVER AGAIN

Peregrine Falcon

*Jimmy Yu
Clinton Elementary*

Peregrine Falcons
disappearing
as quickly
as water
rushing down a waterfall
Perfect pilot
pleasurably catching prey
plenty of food
protecting its eggs
as fiercely as a pouncing tiger
Flying swiftly
through the sky
swooping down
skimming the surface of lakes
snapping up water,
a cool drink
Strong as iron
fast as light
Peregrine Falcons
magnificent creatures
Disappearing

A Soldier's Evening

Brendan Singh Gill, Lakeview Elementary

It was starting to get dark. As I looked towards the west through the bushes that I lay in, I could see the sun trying to hide at the edge of the earth. It seemed as if the sun was also taking cover from the bullets flying in the air. The color of the sky was as red as the battlefield. The sound of the bullets was still booming in the air as I came out of the bushes and moved up the battlefield to join my men.

Bullets flew close to my body barely missing me as I fired back. Dirt and sand were flying everywhere. As I took cover again in a ditch, I knew I was getting tired. I could feel the tension and ache in my muscles.

I took a deep breath and closed my eyes trying to remind myself of the purpose of the war. Not knowing how long I was going to last, I thought of my father who was also a soldier and had died many years ago in a war serving his country. The thought of death seemed too close and too real. I knew exactly what I had to do. I worked up the strength to reposition myself in the ditch and started firing.

The sun was now completely out of sight but the sky was still glowing red. As I watched the sky, a bullet came and hit my leg. I knew that was not good. I was in pain but the pain of losing the battle would be far more. I could tell from the occasional sounds of the fires that the war was almost over. I decided to drag myself out of the ditch. As I looked around I saw an enemy aiming a gun at me. He shot me and I fell to the ground. As I lay there taking my last breaths, I looked around at the other brave men that lay peacefully on the battlefield. For them, the battle of good and evil was already over. I knew soon I was going to be one of them.

My thoughts were interrupted by the sound of another bullet being shot. As I looked I saw the enemy collapse to the ground. I could see one of my men running towards me. As I breathed my last breath I smiled. The war was over.

The Most Mysterious Monster in the Universe The Black Hole

Cyrus Lum, Clinton Elementary

Buy Me. The Most Mysterious Monster in the Universe. The Black Hole
\$9,000,000,000

Tired of cleaning up your room? Nice to meet you. I am like a vacuum. I can eat up anything your vacuum can't eat. I am a silent and deadly beast. I am the greatest mystery in space. I eat light up for breakfast and stars for lunch. I absorb everything in my path. I have two brothers named Massive Black Hole and Super Massive Black Hole. I am the coolest phenomenon in space.

Contact Real Estate Agent _____

Pourquoi il y a des Montagnes et des Nuages

*Michael He
Marlborough Elementary*

Il y a très longtemps, il n'y avait pas de montagnes ni de nuages, juste la mer, la forêt des esprits et le ciel. Dans la forêt des esprits, vivaient 4 tribus d'animaux: les lions, les pythons, les tigres, et les éléphants. Le chef des lions, Linen le lion, disait au chef des pythons, Pipa, que les pythons étaient petits et faibles. Linen voulait qu'ils lui donnent leur territoire. Au même moment, les tigres disaient que les éléphants étaient comme des vieux grand-pères. Elikra, le chef des éléphants, était déjà engagée en bataille avec Tigund, le chef des tigres. Les lions se battaient eux aussi, avec les pythons. Les esprits du ciel essayaient de les empêcher de se battre, mais les animaux ont refusé d'arrêter. Ils ont répondu que si les esprits étaient si puissants qu'ils pouvaient joindre les batailles. Le chef des esprits était extrêmement contrarié. Alors les esprits ont attaqué les animaux. Zap!! Groar!! Finalement un esprit sage nommé Hoch a décidé de les arrêter tous. Alors il a fait des montagnes pour bloquer les animaux de l'un l'autre. Hoch a aussi créé des nuages pour bloquer les esprits. Les animaux se sont calmés et ils ont arrêté de se battre. Voilà pourquoi il y a des nuages et des montagnes.

La fin

Trois façons de rendre ta petite sœur folle

*Mercedes Schweighofer
Sperling Elementary*

La première façon de rendre ta petite sœur folle est de dormir avec ta sœur et d'aller faire pipi dans le lit et puis blâmer ta petite sœur.

Une deuxième façon de rendre ta petite sœur folle est d'aller au sous-sol quand ta sœur regarde la télévision. Tu mets le sous-sol en désordre et blâmer ta petite sœur. Quand papa vient, tu dis "c'était Sofia, elle était ici pendant tout ce temps".

Une troisième façon de rendre ta petite sœur folle est si ta sœur est sur les épaules de ton papa, prends son porte-monnaie et prend tout son argent. Remet son porte-monnaie dans la poche de ta petite sœur, et quand papa voit que son porte-monnaie est disparu, blâme ta petite sœur.

Et voici les trois façons de rendre ta petite sœur folle!

Le Colombe

Rachel Leong
Cascade Heights Elementary

Une nuit, quand mes frères et sœurs étaient endormis, et mes parents étaient dans leur chambre en train de parler silencieusement, j'ai regardé en dehors de ma fenêtre, et j'ai vu des choses que je n'ai jamais oubliées. J'ai vu les hiboux voler silencieusement. J'ai vu les chauves-souris manger des fruits. J'ai entendu beaucoup d'oiseaux chanter. C'était très bizarre, parce que c'était très tard dans la nuit, et les oiseaux, normalement, étaient endormis, à ce temps là. J'ai senti de l'anxiété dans l'air. Bientôt, j'ai su pourquoi.

Soudainement, j'ai réalisé que les oiseaux avaient arrêté de chanter. Les hiboux étaient perchés sur une branche, sans faire de bruit. C'était comme ils attendaient tous quelque chose. Mais quoi? Ma question était répondue tout de suite. Une lumière dans la nuit, très loin, s'est approchée. J'ai bientôt découvert ce que c'était. C'était une colombe, une magnifique colombe, avec une petite couronne sur sa tête. La couronne était la lumière! La colombe était magnifique.

J'ai remarqué que maintenant, tous les oiseaux donnaient à la colombe quelque chose. C'était comme si la colombe était le roi de tous les oiseaux. Les oiseaux offraient à la colombe de la nourriture, des petites branches, des feuilles, ou même des œufs. La colombe acceptait toutes ces choses, sauf les œufs. Elle ne les acceptait pas, en disant (en parlant pas comme les humains mais avec une langue que seule, les animaux, pouvaient comprendre), "Non, je n'accepte pas des œufs, parce qu'ils sont vos élèves. Je veux que le bébé dans l'œuf sache qui leurs vrais parents sont. Quand le bébé aura deux mois, donne-le moi."

Puis, les oiseaux ont formé une ligne. Je peux seulement prédire ce que la ligne était. Je crois que c'était pour montrer du respect envers leur roi. J'ai regardé la colombe pendant très long temps. Dans mon esprit, il me semble qu'une année a parcouru. Je n'ai jamais plus vu une chose de si extraordinaire dans toute ma vie.

Puis, la colombe a soudainement disparu. Tous les oiseaux étaient retournés à leur endroit normal, et tout était silencieux. Je ne sais pas si c'est vrai ou juste un magnifique rêve. Mais tout ce que je sais, c'est qu'après que je me suis levée de mon lit le matin, mangé le déjeuner, et allée dehors, j'ai trouvé la couronne de la colombe près d'un arbre devant ma maison. Quand j'ai touché la couronne, je me suis sentie heureuse.

Ages 11+

Thief of her Heart

*Masha Michouris
Stoney Creek Community School*

Once again,
he's in your mind,
breaking into your heart,
a **thief**.
Once again,
you let him in,
not knowing the consequence,
you stand and rely on him,
running to his side,
but you could never catch up.
Once again,
I stand there,
watching your heart get torn apart,
ripped,
and shattered,
and when I try to help,
you deny it.
And I stand out on the sidelines,
of the game, of 'love-or-lie',
'he's the one', you scream
'1 point for **her!**'
'it's 1 to 145, who will win?'
So I still stand there feeling denied,
and see him,
staring at you,
his eyes look so dark to me,
like a never ending passage to a world
of darkness.

Now dear friend,
I love you very much,
and I understand how you feel,
I'm not saying he's not the one,
I'm saying he's broken your **heart**
one too many times.

General Relativity

*Edward Jiang
Chaffey-Burke Elementary*

The law that says that
The stronger the gravity,
The slower time travels.
The law that says that

$$G_{\mu\nu} + \Delta g_{\mu\nu} = \frac{8\pi G}{c^4} T_{\mu\nu}$$

It was simple before,
But ...
Trust Einstein to
Mess it up.

Le succès

*Monica Hong
Seaforth Elementary*

Le succès, n'est pas seulement à propos
De la respiration
Ou d'avoir des amis
Ou de comment tu apprends
Ou de l'argent
Ou de la prospérité.
Le succès, est un but.
Chaque décision qu'on fait,
On voit le succès
Mais on ne sait pas ce qu'il est.

Raindrop

Lasya Vankayala
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

I raise my face to the sky,
looking at the grey blanket of clouds,
as they seal off the enormous blue expanse,
like a thick metal door.
A single drop falls,
A single,
glimmering...
Jewel,
Landing with a plink on my cheek.
I reach up,
brush it off,
It clings to my palm,
stubbornly refusing to let go.
I hold it up,
examine it,
see how it sparkles
in the dim light,
that broke through the barrier above.
I feel the wetness,
The cold caress of its touch,
As it sits perched on my hand.
Carefully, I blow on it,
watching it tremble,
as if afraid.
Smiling, I tilt my hand,
watching as it runs down my finger,
coming to a stop at my fingertip.
It hangs there,
trembling,
using all its strength to hold on.
But I'm much stronger.
I give my hand a shake and watch,
as it plummets,
like a shining stone,
towards the glistening grass.
At the very second that it hits the ground,
The clouds open up,
pouring liquid treasure,
onto the land below.

L'histoire d'un Perdu

Isabelle Ava-Pointon
Seaforth Elementary

Je suis un Perdu.
Toute mon histoire est
Oubliée.
Je traverse ces corridors sans fins avec un
sens
D'inutilité.
Pourquoi suis-je ici? Où est ici?
J'ai perdu ma direction et je n'existe plus.
Je suis seulement
Là.
Juste en train d'être, pour toute l'éternité.
Ici on n'entend rien, on ne voit rien, on ne sent
rien et on
ne dit rien on peut seulement penser
À propos de tout que pourrait arriver.

Invisible Ghosts

Victor Lau
Stride Avenue Community School

The Invisible ghosts that are supposed to
appear on Halloween are a myth,
not the truth. They live day and night, passing
through solid walls. Their hollow eyes
are soulless, seeming to watch even
in slumber. Appearance unknown, they only
show to those who are chosen. They
change their shape so easily from playful
friend to nightmarish fiend.
They are like feelings, there at one moment
gone the next, only to be felt,
never to be seen by human eyes.

Elle tombe

*Katya Suvorov
Cascade Heights Elementary*

Une goutte d'eau tombe des nuages,
Elle passe par des montagnes, couverte de
neige,
Elle entend le cri d'un oiseau qui vole haut
dans le ciel,

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

Elle peut voir l'océan bleu,
Les vagues frappent contre les roches,
Sentir l'eau salée,

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

Un grand coup de vent lui souffle vers l'est,
Où une forêt verte s'étend des kilomètres à la
ronde,

La goutte d'eau peut rehausser la beauté de
chaque feuille sur chaque arbre,

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

Le ciel est si loin,
La terre si proche,

Elle glisse entre les feuilles d'un grand arbre,

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

Il y a seulement quelques centimètres entre
elle et le sol!

Elle peut presque toucher la terre

Elle tombe, elle tombe, elle tombe.

Elle rapetisse avec chaque moment qui passe,

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

Elle tombe, elle tombe.

PLOP!

Northern lights

*Brendan Wong
Nelson Elementary*

Vast gleaming colours
Illuminating arctic skies
With tidings of joy

Nature

*Ariel Pan
Chaffey-Burke Elementary*

I see a never ending sea of green
thick enough
to build canopies
sheltering birds
with high clear voices.

I see the old, gnarled branches
tangled in a hand shake
of knobby fingers
and moss dyed nails.

I smell a damp, fresh scent
of the leaves,
filling me
with a clear, cool feeling
as if I'm engulfed
in silk curtains.

I hear the squirrels munching.
Finding something to satisfy their hunger
needs
used to be so difficult.
Now, all they have to do
is act cute
to earn handfuls of peanuts,
biscuits and other goods.

I feel the trees, animals
and the forest floor
all sharing a soul,
a hope
to have the land to themselves
as they did before
the humans took over.

I sense
nature.

I am From...

Dayna Louie
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

I am from the mouth watering California Rolls
clumped into groups of eight,
each stuffed with stringy imitation crab meat, cucumbers
and soft avocado.
From hundreds of slushy bubble tea flavours
and the pearl and coconut jelly getting clogged when sucked through my straw.

I am from elegant, fragile flowers,
exploding with the colours of fireworks and rainbows.
Tiny threads of hair tickling the slender emerald green stems.
And the web spinning,
eight legged creatures,
skydiving in front of my face.

I am from the sometimes dry,
but mostly damp,
grass under my cleats.
The graceful dance my feet and the ball perform when yearning for a goal.
From casting the line with a cube of cheese,
into the lair of the sly Ogopogo.

I am from the many stories exchanged
during huge family reunions for birthdays in the decades.
My heated cheeks and sweaty nose, escaping from my worshiping little cousins.
I am from the bellowing laughter
Erupting from my friends and me,
causing a dull aching in the side of my stomach.

I am from the sting in my eyes
when reading a suspenseful, intense book,
from the moment I wake up,
to the moment I go to bed.
From long uncomfortable plane rides,
flying to hot tropical destinations.

I am from the stitches that bond my stuffed animals to me.
Each filled with blurring memories of my childhood.
My marks of salty tears,
woven into each one of their furs.
The familiar scent indicating that they're mine.
Forever and always.

This is where I am from.

Anne Boleyn's Final Moments

*Isabelle Ava-Pointon
Seaforth Elementary*

I am stalked by shadows and I am afraid that I shall perish by the blade as those who have before me. Am I never to escape this prison's raw features, even to be comforted by the knowledge that I am doomed to walk these corridors 'till I am but a haunting echo of footsteps? I, for one can sense that my days here are numbered and that soon I might gain leave of this impenetrable darkness and enter into the eternal light.

Anne Boleyn, Queen

Her Smiles

*Sabrina Ren
Marlborough Elementary*

I looked up to a pair of concerned eyes and a crooked smile as I took the thermometer out of my mouth. She used her wrinkled hand to touch my burning forehead, I whined.

"Well, you are a strong little tulip!" she said cheerfully and handed me my lunch – chicken soup and salad, my least favourite lunch ever.

"The sooner you eat this, the sooner you will be up and about, instead of spending an afternoon lying on the bed feeling sorry for yourself." A strand of grey hair dangled in front of her face. I groaned loudly and picked up the spoon. She smiled.

Grandma has a nice smile; a smile that shows she's strong and modest. She grew up with four sisters and two brothers. She is a really smart person, always curious about the world, and she became a very successful person.

Life back then was not the same as today, it was difficult and tough. Money was tight, school was hard, but grandma never gave up.

Her first job began at a fashion designing company. She has a taste for style, and she made creative clothes for women in the 80s. I'm inspired a lot by her job and her fashion spirit. In fact, her job became my dream job years ago. Fashion isn't the only thing grandma taught me, of course. She also helped me learn math and science.

Grandma's always so confident. Even when she had cancer three years ago, she kept fighting on. She acted like she was in the best mood when I'd visit her in the hospital.

The memories of the first time I went to visit her in the hospital make my heart ache. Grandma looked pale and her hair was almost completely white. I blinked back the tears of shock when she looked at me with tired eyes. I warned myself I was coming to cheer her up; so instead of crying out loud, I forced myself to smile.

The nurse came in with a tray of carrots and cucumbers. Grandma whined.

"The sooner you eat this, the sooner you'll be up and about instead of spending an afternoon lying on the bed feeling sorry for yourself," I told her brightly.

She groaned and picked up the spoon. I smiled.

The Jump

Calista Bashuk
Marlborough Elementary

“Come on Calista ... just jump” my mother calls from below. She waits her turn to climb up the wooden ladder to the top of the bridge. She stands there with a smile on her face, exhilarated and refreshed, ready for more. I look down from the bridge to the dark cool water that feels warm on a hot summer’s night. Ducks are on one side, people watching from boats drifting in the water on the other.

My mother says in a reassuring voice, “let’s jump together.” We inch our way out onto the ledge of the bridge through a small gate. Glaring down, ten feet seemed more like 20 feet. There must be about 15 people here waiting to take their turn. I feel my head is filled with monkeys scurrying around. I am breathing faster and it feels like everyone is looking at me. I take a deep breath, thinking that I will jump this time but my body feels shaky and hot. I don’t even realize I am picking at my nails. I’m stalling and others are staring, waiting for their turn, impatiently. My mother, with a big smile on her face, trying to be patient, starts to count, ‘one... two... three...’ and neither of us jumps.

“Are you ready?” my mom asks. I nod yes but my body says no. She counts again, “one... two... three jump!” and my feet are stuck to the platform and then there is some kind of release, a spontaneous move that I do not remember telling my body to do, and my toes push off the platform. I feel my knees curl up towards my chest and I hug myself tight. Gravity is pulling me down in slow motion. My toes are in my view and then my feet and arms plunge into the cold water.

I am covered, sinking down further and further into the dark water until I come to a stop. I can see many white bubbles around me and pieces of seaweed. I feel myself pushing up towards the light, kicking my legs quickly, to move my head above water. I feel the sun beaming on my head, water dripping down my face while my body is blanketed with the cool, comforting water on that hot evening.

When I come up, my mother is watching me and beaming with pride. I feel as though I am in a Neutrogena commercial, the water cleansing my body from head to toe. “I love it!” I practically scream, gazing at her. It is like we are the only people in the world for a moment. It is our moment. Quickly, I swim to the ladder in delight. We jump again and again and again until it is too cold to bear. That’s when I realize how much fun my mom is, and how much she pushes me to try new things, and eventually (after my uncertainty) it becomes enjoyable.

Observer

*Emma Buchanan
Gilpin Elementary*

Her hair was fiery red, in great contrast to her dull, grey clothes. Her black boots clacked against the worn hallway floor. Her skin was pale, her fist clenched tightly around her book bag. She had wide, gorgeous, deep blue eyes that silently screamed one thing. New Girl.

I had heard things. Overheard, more like. I saw heads turn on her and only her, including mine. Yes, I saw and heard things that any casual observer would. Yet I saw more. I saw the other girl.

You couldn't tell exactly what she was thinking through those glamorous sunglasses, but you could take an amazingly accurate guess. Green radiated off her glasses, and I could only fearfully imagine what plan was forming inside that beautiful head of hers. I shuddered to think of those piercing green eyes. Yes, it radiated off her Barbie blonde hair, off her fashionable clothes and slender form. You couldn't tell exactly, but you could take a really good guess. Jealousy.

What happened over those next few months, few truly knew, but one thing all can agree on, the deep blue eyed girl was involved. I heard the talk, heard them whisper her name. I felt pity, and I tried to reach out to her. They began to whisper *my* name. I automatically withdrew my hand in friendship. I know that the jealousy I saw on that first day back was behind all this. I knew that the green eyed monster was controlling their every move. I saw and heard what any casual observer would see and hear. Yet I saw more. I saw her crying in the washrooms. I saw that fiery red be subdued willingly to a dull, mousy brown. She tried as hard as she could to fit in, but it never worked. That tore me up ever so slightly, to see that fiery flame be doused by the green monster. What amazes me is that though she cried and crumpled down, she never showed a hint of anger. She never exploded, never used her fiery flame to light a bomb. But what could I do?

Christmas Break came, and the rumours escalated. At one point, it became vandalism. As I walked to my house on a crisp December day, I saw writing on her house. I wanted to read no more than the first two words.

By April she was gone. Moved on, driven away. The flame was vanquished. The Barbie doll had won. Guilt bottled up inside of me for at least two weeks. I didn't understand then, but I believe I do now. One day, it was too much. I talked to the Barbie doll girl. I let it all out. The bomb exploded. The whispers became about me, but I walked with pride down the halls. That last part of the year, I stumbled around in a mix of numbed pain and pride. To this day, I still wish I had spoken. But I live. The blue eyed beauty still pops into my mind every once in a while. I hope that, like me, she has moved on. In the end who was I to interfere, but a casual observer?

Grade 8

Word-Catching

*Sarah Hardjowasito
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

The wind and I were restless today,
 So I decided to go word-hunting
 I brought with me
 A blank sheet of paper,
 And a pencil,
 And I searched and searched,
 But every time I spotted one,
 It flitted away
 Just out of my grasp,
 Too quick for my wandering mind to capture.
 It remained just so for the whole day
 Frustration mounting,
 My paper crumpled and smudged with effort,
 So I gave up,
 And sat back,
 Waiting.
 One by one
 They came
 Slowly and cautiously at first
 But, gaining confidence,
 They approached
 Swirling
 Twirling
 Dancing
 With
 Power.
 Some were gentle, others harsh
 Some powerful, and some joyful
 They gave me small tastes of the might they
 held,
 But they came freely
 Words that obeyed no master
 Followed no law
 They could come and go where they
 pleased
 And I could only wait for them
 To come to me.

Search for Fear

*Becky Tu
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

You search for a pattern, a familiar
 Line on my face, a sign
 That maybe I haven't changed, or
 At least there's still hope, somewhere
 Beneath all this make-up, the frozen ice
 That will surely melt under the sun
 But I've hidden well, the things
 We all hold most precious, the secrets
 No one should ever dare to discover
 It's buried deep inside, because
 I'm too scared, I shy away
 From my own fears, while
 Wondering why we all cry
 For someone else's pain, it's something
 We can't truly ever understand
 You search for a path, an answer
 To your desperate questions, maybe
 It could be found, someday far away
 But never here, where I fade
 Blending in to my surroundings, my dreams
 Of flying away and maybe, hear this,
 The courage to stand, to turn
 Around to face my own
 Lonely thoughts

Dedicated to You

Jazel Faltado
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Mistakes, Betrayals, and Lies....

We acknowledge the fact that we've done
these things before
And we admit that we are not perfect.

The mistakes we make are when we refuse
to listen to our conscience
And that is what leads us to regret.

We don't realize the consequences until we
are actually faced with it.
And that is when we regret and beg for
forgiveness.

What leads us to those mistakes and
regrets?
Betrayal that's one thing, but the biggest one
is when those few words slip
Out of our tongues and pile one by one until
it becomes uncontrollable.

Lies...

The lies that your conscience haunts you
with and the constant
Questions that you, yourself cannot answer.

You wonder what will happen when things
start to crash and burn
And what people will say when they finally
find out the truth.

When they do find out, the trust you've
worked so hard for gets shattered.
And in an instance it's all gone. And you're
left alone standing in the mess.

So you make up lies, betray, make mistakes,
and regret.

When all you had to say was two words to
fix it all.

I'm sorry.

Why I Love Piano Keys

Alexandra Lee
Burnaby Central Secondary

Because they beckon me to play,
And the shiny, ivory keys glisten,
When I lift the heavy, black lid,
Like a curtain being pulled away;
To reveal the show.

Because I can go from Mozart,
To Beethoven,
And back again.

Because of the mixture of white and black,
Of sharps and flats.

Because of the rush I get
When I finally,
Finally,

Memorize that one difficult song.

Because I can just imagine
The keys stretching out,
Becoming a staircase,
Leading to wherever I want.

Because they are my escape.

Olivia

*Rachel Yan
Burnaby North Secondary*

Your thoughts of the plastic-Barbie type
floating around in idle machinery.

A diminishing light bulb in the
corner of the attic.

Mind like a sieve,
the little things slip by, disappearing into
the hole of despair.

A child wading through calm waters at the
seashores,
don't go too deep.

An aging typewriter, a blanket of dust,
cobwebs, and memories.

Like a wilted rose stuck in its wintery state,
waiting for the first signs of spring.

A dog pawing frantically in the murky waters
to save its dear owner.

You are a ruby red cherry left with only a
stem and a stub.

The last Ferrero chocolate that everybody
longs for, taunting your taste buds.

You are the minor triad in a hauntingly
beautiful tune.

The forbidden fruit from the garden of Eden,
making mouths water.

You are the lacy black curtains that dance to
the whistling of the wind.

You are a jumpy flea, oblivious to the
differences.

A shopaholic in bankruptcy gazing at that
preposterously expensive Coach bag.

A mushy romance novel bursting with
innocence.

Sugary-sweet strawberry, ripe and fresh.

Dazzling angel of the Christmas tree,
protective ornaments gathered 'round.

The shimmering diamonds on the
chandelier, eyed enviously.

Queen bee, sitting in her honeycomb throne.

Juiciest grape on top of the grape vine, all
the other vines striving to be as divine.

L'Antarctique

*Samantha Hill
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

Le vent rigoureux qui siffle inexorablement
dans mes oreilles.

Le froid qui fait frissonner bien mes os.
Les heures passent lentement comme les
escargots qui se déplacent.

Il n'y a rien que l'œil peut voir,
Sauf une étendue infinie de neige.

Mais c'est beau!

Quand tout est calme, sans tempête.

Le soleil se montre comme et je le trouve
comme un paradis dans un désert.

Et réfléchit d'un éclat aveuglant sur la neige.

Je suis étonné par cette vue magnifique!

Je vois de temps en temps des pingouins
qui se dandinent nonchalamment,

À travers ce domaine d'hiver.

Où est ce lieu?

Cette région extraordinaire?

Cet endroit se nomme...

L'Antarctique.

I Had A Dream

Olive Wang

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

I had a dream, about you
You were on the stage
Doing your solo.
Shimmering in the deafening darkness
Was your cello.
But I could not hear you.
It was silent.

Remember how
I used to sit beside you
Listening.
My heart skip beats
For every new melody you taught me.

Remember how
I tried your solo,
You didn't know.
I tried to
Make it like yours,
Same beats, same tone,
So I could feel your breath
When I practice.

But you were in my dream,
On the stage.
I could not hear you.
It was silent.

Flash light on the stage
Dyed your hair, in my dream.
And this morning,
You took off your hat,
It was no longer mid-night-sky-black,
Like mine.

Remember we were on the bus,
Watching
The first sunset after 10 rainy days.
The bus went east.
You said
We are running away from the sun,
Since it's too beautiful.

And in my dream,
I was
After your solo
Running away from you.
But all my memories about you
Were chasing after,
Trying to put me under arrest.
They were like fishes swam into me
Under the deep blue ocean.
Bubbling, sparkling
Silver little fishes.
Bubbling, sparkling
Crushed my memories.

And I
All of a sudden
At the end of my dream,
Heard you.
It's your morning text waking me up:
Hey,
We have cello lesson today.
Don't be late.

Spero

Priscilla Choi, Burnaby North Secondary

«February 8th, year 2010», I scribble. My handwriting has no embellishments, unlike Aydan's which flourish beyond legibility. Frivolous. Day, night, black, white don't begin to describe our differences, siblings though we may be. Aydan and Ashleen, Gaelic for fire and dream. Our dad is a math professor but loves deciphering Gaelic. I prefer Latin and Aydan speaks English only because knowing a language is necessary for gossiping, her pastime. She's the "life of the party" with her dyed hair, earrings brushing her shoulders and movie-star makeup. I'm the freak of nature, the queen bee's hidden sibling.

Spe, spes, spero: The hope of, the noun hope and hope as a verb. All I can say is that hope is clichéd. I'm a misfit like my name: not Ashley, not Kathleen but both at once. Ashleen. Hoping does nothing except stopping your heart with eventual despair. I would know; I've tried everything. The world's shooting stars, won't bring Aydan back.

I squint my eyes blearily against the unmerciful flash of my clock: 8:30 AM. Fatigue forgotten, I scramble out of bed, stubbing my toe. Then I'm running to school, my toe throbbing with each step. I just make it to my class before the bell, only to get a test handed back. The numbers 64 glare red. I've never gotten anything lower than an 89 before. Still incredulous, I slump.

Lunch, I wander to the cafeteria, where Aydan's holding court. The social hierarchy is similar everywhere. There's the superficial queen bee, the one the posse revolves around. There are the attendants, who live to flatter, and then back-stab others. There are the pretty boys, without a coherent phrase in their heads. That theory's proven when I trip, courtesy of the school's heartthrob. His blue eyes might send the female population into raptures but then love is blind. He's perfect as Aydan's boyfriend, playing Ken to her Barbie.

"Watch it!" he mutters, two syllables becoming one.

Aydan's eyes narrow, reminiscent of an eagle in her eyrie. Cheeks flaming, I gather my books and leave. Having the ground swallow you could be useful...

Later, I'm writing when Aydan sweeps in. Against all hope, my heart stutters hopefully.

"Throwing yourself at *my* boyfriend isn't advisable. Why bother? He isn't gonna look at you twice," she purrs acerbically, leaning against the doorjamb.

I'm stunned. The first time she speaks to me in polysyllables and it's an accusation? I saw red. "*He* tripped me!. I don't moon over boys who can't speak properly. What do you see in him, or any of your 'friends'? Did you change so much you can't hear what's said behind your back? Oh wait: yes, when you saw that you want to be accepted by that crowd. So you traded who you were for someone they'd like." I spat, voice shaky with suppressed anger.

Her eyes widened, disbelieving, but I cut off whatever she might've said.

"I hoped that you'd change. I cried myself to sleep all of last year because you'd shunned me again. But you can still change. We can finish school the way you'd promised." My voice cracked.

Aydan still looked like I'd slapped her. Finally, I noticed she was dressed up. She must have a date. She closed her eyes and for a moment, I thought she'd listen. My body lightened. Then, the doorbell rings. Aydan looks outside. She turns around, her eyes hardening but not before I glimpsed her regret. And she walks away, shutting the door, her silence poignant. A goodbye, yet again, my heart flutters. And I remember a phrase from long ago: Shorn of Hope and by Hope betrayed, yet by Hope uplifted and finally, by Hope, is saved.

Hooked

Breyden Chong
Burnaby North Secondary

I witnessed the sinister and shadowed area. Glancing left and searching right, I spotted a gleaming silver crafted hook dangling from side to side in the water. My tail nearly got caught upon the spike as I abruptly swam out of harm's way. Circling around the spike, I studied the hook and caught a glimpse of a struggling worm wiggling frantically.

Suddenly realizing my extreme hunger, I turned my back and swam away thinking about the "deception" the aliens above the surface were trying to deploy. But the unexpected temptation for food wouldn't leave my mind.

I scrambled back towards the hook, eyeing the juicy worm with my beady eyes. Carefully, I nibbled at the worm, savouring the mouth-watering taste. I couldn't resist the flavor; I needed more. Gulping the entire worm and relishing the chewy texture, I sighed as my stomach felt satisfied.

Abruptly, as I tried to swallow, I felt a sharp pain in my throat piercing my inner flesh. I rapidly swam back and forth struggling to be freed. The hook sharply lunged upwards as if it magically came to life. My tail flipped as fast as rushing water; my mouth began to drizzle with blood.

Suddenly, I was dragged to surface above the water. My head thrashed back and forth desperately wanting to detach from the hook. The sun scorched my scales and blinded my eyes. I could hear vibrations of high-pitched laughter in the background as the alien reached for the line. I finally understood what it felt like before death. I could imagine my body being fried in a pan with salts and onions.

As I neared the alien's garlicky breath, I took the last amount of sheer energy I had left inside me; I furiously bit at his hand. The alien screamed with anguish and fell backwards towards the boat clutching his throbbing finger. The fishing rod miraculously dangled off the boat and sunk slowly into the water.

I was suddenly released from the dreaded hook and felt the crisp salt lake water once again caress my body. Never would I ever get caught in that ambush again. I'd rather stick to the pond where I belong and eat the small shrimp instead. Freedom...something I'll never take for granted.

Picture This. . .

Daphne Patterson, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Day breaks. Rays of light tint the gently drifting clouds pink and gold, banishing the rich azure predawn light to the western most corners of the sky. Proud and defiant snow-capped mountains cast quickly receding shadows over an awakening forest. A forest of steadfast trees, with gnarled branches reaching up towards a brightening sky. At their roots, ferns unfurl tightly curled leaves, flowers open wide, all to taste the glowing warmth of the sun. Common scrub intermingles with more exotic specimens. Bushes, too, are tangled in the undergrowth, several bearing luscious fruit. A tumbling river winds like a silver serpent between the ancient trees, pouring into a calm lake with tall grasses and reeds waving gently in the wind by the water's edge. The picturesque setting appears perfectly calm and still, but watch...

Colourful birds flit from treetop to treetop, replacing the secretive flyers of the night. Animals of every description lurk on the forest floor. Often a smudged print is the only indication of their existence, but they are there. Eyes gleam in the shadows, following your every move, and a few are bold enough and brave enough to emerge from hiding places. Insects fill the air in swarms, and near the lake crickets chirp in the grass. Once you have gone on your way, predator and prey once more continue their battle for survival.

The splash of water over river rocks, the whistle of wind through reeds, the muffled squeaks and growls of a community of animals – the sounds of a living, breathing forest resound on every eardrum. Yet these natural tones cannot mask the hum of energy that causes the earth to tremble beneath your feet. You discover this perfect exterior is only a shell concealing a more threatening reality.

The tension mounts. Each snap of a twig is enough to make you jump. Each flicker of movement is enough to make you gasp. Your instincts hint at danger. Your heart beats wildly. Your breath comes short.

At last you understand. It is useless to ignore the sinister truth. You cannot control what happens next. You turn around prepared to face all that you fear. . . .

You turn the page.

Peace, as White as Snow

Alyson Williamson, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

I step outside; each footstep comes with the satisfying crunch of snow. The cold air tickles my skin, numbing my nose. Every time I exhale a small cloud forms, then quickly disappears. I come to a field, the smooth snow is untouched. The nearby trees now bare of leaves are covered in snow. The snow glistens and twinkles in the slight shine of the moon. Hot tears roll down my cheeks as everything overwhelms me. I slowly walk through the snow, stop, and lie down. My arms and legs move up and down bringing forth the image of an angel. I pause and listen, the only sound is the snow gently falling to the ground, it covers my hair and clothing. I close my eyes, and breathe in and out slowly. My worries and problems silently slip away. All that is left, is peace. Then the wetness soaks in through to my skin, bringing me back to reality, in the distance I hear a voice yelling, calling me. All the troubles come back to me. I sigh, and get up. As I'm walking away, I take one last look back, remembering, savouring, every last bit, promising myself with a whisper "I'll be back." Then it's over and I slowly trudge up the path to the voice calling me home, leaving behind the peace, as white as snow.

Nous pensions que nous le savions

Samantha Hill, Cariboo Hill Secondary

Les personnes qui chantaient, les oiseaux gazouillants, le froissement des grands arbres dans le vent.

C'était le temps le plus amusant de ma vie et je ne pouvais pas croire que j'avais seulement 3 jours avant de partir.

Il a fallu de bons arguments pour convaincre mes parents que j'étais en âge d'aller au camp avec mes amies. Ils ont dû en discuter parce que je devais dire que j'ai eu un passé « flou ». Vous voyez, il y a quelques années, j'avais été impliqué dans une espèce de « problème » à l'école. Un enfant m'a ennuyé tant que je l'ai battu et j'ai bien gagné! Mais, mon école n'a pas aimé ce comportement et m'a expulsé. Cet incident a été suivi par de nombreux incidents graves.

C'était le temps pour le jeu de la soirée. Finalement!

Nous avons tous couru dans la forêt, prêts pour ce jeu. C'était un peu sombre, mais j'ai pu voir. J'étais une attaquante, alors je suis entrée furtivement dans la terre de l'autre équipe. Je cherchais et je cherchais, mais je ne pouvais pas trouver le cerceau!. Et où était tout le monde? Je ne voyais personne pendant, le qui me semblait une vingtaine de minutes!

J'ai haussé les épaules et je continué à chercher le cerceau, mais je commençais à me demander; franchement, où était tout le monde? Il a fait de plus en plus sombre. J'entendais des hiboux qui hululaient. Le cri des enfants s'est arrêté. Des grandes ombres noires dominaient le paysage devant moi. Je commençais à m'inquiéter. Est-ce que j'ai manqué la cloche qui a marqué la fin du jeu?

En pensant à tout ça, je me suis rendue compte que je n'avais aucune idée j'étais. J'ai presque voulu commencer à pleurer quand soudainement, j'ai entendu un petit froissement. Qu'est-ce que c'était ça? J'avais peur. J'ai regardé tout autour de moi quand –

-HÉ! J'ai tourné très vite. Une personne est venue me trouver! Finalement! J'avais si froid et j'étais si fatiguée. –Merci d'être venu me...j'ai commencé à dire.

-METTEZ VOS MAINS EN L'AIR! Quelqu'un a dit avec son revolver dirigé sur moi.

-Aaahhhhhhhh! J'ai crié, ne pointe pas ce revolver sur moi, s'il vous plait! Je suis innocente, je vous le jure! Arrêtez, arrêtez, je vous en prie! J'étais en larmes car je ne voulais pas être tuée.

-Tu es en état d'arrestation, l'inconnu a dit. Tu dois venir à –

Soudainement, le chef du camp est venu en courant. Qu'est-ce que c'est cette absurdité? Il a demandé. Je ne vous connais pas, il a dit à l'inconnu, et pourquoi vous tenez un revolver? Et Audrey? Pourquoi es-tu ici? C'est 1 heure du matin! Quand tout ceci sera fini, tu rétameras chez toi. Tu es dans le pétrin!

-Excusez-moi monsieur, mais cette fille a commis des crimes sérieux. Elle est en état d'arrestation, et je dois l'emmener au membre de jury, le policier a dit.

Nous sommes allés au bureau du camp et le policier a raconté les crimes que selon lui, j'avais commis. Mais ce n'était pas juste! Je leur ai dit que moi, je avais pas fait aucun de ces crimes! C'était quelqu'un d'autre! J'étais innocente. Finalement, j'étais excusée, parce que beaucoup de mes amis sont venus leur dire que moi, j'étais une personne gentille et fiable; et non pas une criminelle.

Je suis allée au lit, fatiguée et terrifiée. C'était une expérience troublante et je tremblais de peur quand je suis tombée sur mon lit.

J'y ai échappé belle car en réalité, j'étais coupable de tous les crimes dont le policier m'avait accusée.

Just a Little Unlucky

Nancy Yang, Burnaby North Secondary

I had just enough time to lift my head to look out the window to my right. I could see, through the cuss words written in thick, black sharpie, a hooded figure, jogging in the opposite direction that the bus was facing. I feel the breath knocked out of me because I could also see, in the stranger's hands, a familiar looking leather purse. I had just enough time to register my pink Hello-Kitty key chain attached to the side when I jumped out of my seat and pushed my way to the front of the bus towards the driver still waiting for people to board.

"My purse, it...got stolen!" I practically spat in the driver's face, not knowing how else to get him to understand the seriousness of the situation.

He peered at me, an amused expression on his face.

"Young lady I think you need to return to your seat," he replied in a thick Italian accent.

"I'm not kidding! Look that man over there is running away with it right now!" I pointed out the window.

He turned in the direction that my finger was pointing, and I watched impatiently as his expression shifted from confused to understanding, then to alertness as he registered the hooded figure. But almost as if a switch had been turned on, he turned his attention back to address an elderly lady waiting to show him his ticket.

I was not going to stand for this. Ignoring the annoyed expressions I got, I pushed my way towards the door and was ready to dash out to catch the thief myself, when I felt something slam into my sides, and feel the air crushed out of my lungs.

I looked around, confused, and could not believe it. The bus door had closed on me! I felt my face flood with bright red as I heard screams, giggles and repeated apologies from the bus driver as he fumbled with the door switch.

I closed my eyes, hoping that when I opened them, I would not be standing in between the doors of the bus being squeezed like a pop tart. I gasped as I felt the air flood back into my lungs and feel the jaws holding me captive finally loosen. The last thing that I remember doing before jumping, Tom-Cruise-style, out of the bus was shooting the bus driver a dirty look.

Even before I got onto the sidewalk I knew that all hope was lost, not being able to spot the hooded figure anywhere. Still I kept on running, dashing into stores, alleyways, and even behind hotdog vendors, looking for the thief.

Finally giving up, I crashed onto a park bench, panting and thinking about the embarrassment and misery this morning had put me through.

"Hey! Hey, come back here Pookie!"

Confused, I looked around for the unfamiliar voice, but instead found myself gazing down into the moist, chocolate-brown eyes of a retriever.

Lovingly, I scooped up the puppy, plopping it on my lap and began stroking its back while I waited for who I thought was the owner.

Maybe my luck is changing...

As I stared at it, its eyes shut and its back began to shake slightly.

Huh?

And just when I thought it couldn't get any worse...

It pooped on me.

Grades 9-10

Stylistic Devices

*Carly de Bakker
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

Procrastination

*Francisco Alvior
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

Procrastination
Re-adjusts my day.
Often, I
Can't, or won't,
Recognize
Any
Signs
That
I
Need to
Assess how I spend my
Time. When
I do recognize them, I
Often prefer....actually,
Never mind. I'll finish this poem later.

Slumberland Musicale

*Symphony Huang,
Moscrop Secondary*

Going to sleep is louder than waking up
It's when imagination boisterously comes to
work
Noisily preparing the recipe of dreams
Pots of thoughts, saucepans of recollections
All clang together in cacophony
Waking up is the ending of a play
The curtains of the stage are drawn closed
The dramatic dialogues are no longer
Silently and subtly, the dreamer returns to
reality

Writing a poem is a pest.
Using stylistic devices
And giving your best.
Maybe fitting in a rhyme or two,
But what about the rest?
Perhaps starting with alliteration,
For poems that pose a problem
With general formation.
It helps to have a theme,
Like the "fantastic fragmentation".
Or, you can compare using "as" or "like"
Because writing using similes
is as easy as riding a bike.
Unless it's too difficult,
Like doing an uphill hike.
There are devices galore
To use in pesky poems.
There must be a billion more,
That we should consider!
Like a hyperbole or a metaphor.
And before I'm left to hang;
I give special thanks to onomatopoeia,
Yet another part of the gang.
Because it allows this wonderful poem
To end with a BANG!

Les Blessures

*Jaime Moore,
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

Je baisse ma tête, en regardant ma main
des blessures rugueux comme des roches
déchiquetés
comme le playdoh qui était oublier dans les
rayons du soleil
comme un grand verre de jus de tomates
comme les morceaux de pain brûler dans le
grille-pain
comme un bol de céréale mis dans le micro-
onde
comme des feuilles effiloché, qui était a une
fois verte

Yes You Can, Sir

Phoebe Joy Lim, Burnaby North Secondary

You held me like a precious bloom
 And from your womb
 I was sprouted
 Are you proud of me?
 The day I was conceived,
 I could feel the vibrations of your laughter
 Against the skin walls encasing me
 You loved me, he loved me, and she loved
 me (To some degree)

As I grew I blossomed
 The sheer rate was awesome
 As it reached higher and higher
 Until I surpassed your balding head
 Instead
 I find it to be more beautiful
 Than that of a healthy one
 Because you had the strength to carry on
 Carry me on, carry me home
 Carry me so you won't be alone

I always thought it was spelled with a "k"
 But you see, the letter "c"
 Can have the same sound, Sir
 Or "-cer", rather
 The latter is correct
 The following is wrong: Kansir
 Cansir. Kancer. Cancer.

It comforts me to know
 Your bedside is a gallery show
 Of me and her and him and you
 Smiling at the sunset view
 Outside the house
 That has been void of your cleanliness
 For far too long

Is it selfish of me to want you here?
 Even when you suffer there
 I want you back to hold me one last time
 And then you can never let go
 And it will be hard for either of us
 To breathe because
 I can't live without you
 And you stopped living

"May I take her now?"
 "Yes you can, Sir."

Chained

Wingshun Pang, Burnaby South Secondary

Bruised, battered, no strength remains
 Her heart's encircled in constricting chains

The ache is there, buried deep
 Cruelly it gnaws at her
 Cruelly it feasts on her
 No escape but in troubled sleep
 Daggers of torment, poised at the ready
 To attack as consciousness returns, silent
 and deadly

The faint beating of her broken heart
 Struggling, still sounds
 Now bound and shackled
 Barricaded from this bitter love

Forbidden to be exposed, to be vulnerable
 again
 To fall

Suspended in gossamer
 Into a dream

Only to fracture as reality strikes
 Heady fantasies of happiness split at the
 seams
 Helplessly restless, in the night
 Splinters of anguish and hurt settle at her
 footsteps
 They prick at her soles
 Following a trail of crumbled desires
 It seems the ache will never tire

Just as-
 All breath is expelled
 Suffocation looms, imminent
 She swears
 A vow to boycott love (this torture)

She sees him the very next day
 An attempt is made to turn away
 But
 Glances collide
 One smile
 She's lost
 All vows and promises forgotten

I am a Sharpie

Jennifer Reid
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Movie star, Note taker, Musician, Poet, Psychiatrist, Planner, Writer and Artist.

I do it all, I am a Sharpie.

That's right, go ahead and laugh
I'm sure your familiar with my work
That assignment last week?

All me.

The moustache on that painting,
the one in that really fancy museum?
That was me too.

Oh wait, that was illegal you say?!

Well then that was my cousin.

He's a weird guy.

But back to me.

Remember?

I'm the one that marked your calendar, to make sure you didn't forget anything,
wait....what day is it?

Anyway, I was always there for you !

For you to hold, and to always make you shine your best.

Well, my best.

Lets face it, you aren't much.

Those doodles?

Mine.

That song we wrote?

Well, you weren't much in that either.

That was me.

You have to be familiar with my work, because you've been taking credit for it for years!

I am the movie star, note taker, musician, poet, psychiatrist, planner, writer and artist.

You are too.

But you wouldn't be, without me.

I am a sharpie.

Ever Desired, Never Forgotten, What Am I

*Damian Spence
Alpha Secondary*

Ever desired, never forgotten
Luscious delirious miraculous
Variable soul of nut or butter
With endless contours of depth, what am I?

Elaborate spell that melts in your heart
Endless dark with a flare of brilliance
Aroma lingering like sirens' calls
What is it this irresistible me?

Stupefying licking dripping flavor
Savour sweet or bitter always passion
Like catnip to the human soul am I.
What could I be that tasteth so divine?

Once consumed twice craved and thrice
addicted
Ambrosia irresistible to all
When you've tried me you always come for
more
Could I become your legal drug of choice?

Uplifting caffeine rockets up the spine
With energy exploding all over
Deep endless swirls of enveloping taste
You guessed it; I'm the chocolate you love.

Voler

*Destiny Hsu
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

Comme les anges au Paradis,
étendez vos ailes.
Attrapez le souffle d'hier
et volez à l'avenir.

Si vous êtes perdu dans la forêt
de votre désespoir silencieux.
Grimpez le tronc d'un arbre
pour découvrir le sentier
du ciel.

Encagé dans votre cœur
par la froideur qui l'entoure,
c'est comme une nuit éternelle
sans étoiles ni de lune.

Il existe aux profondeurs du cœur humain
des ailes d'ange
pour s'enfuir

pour voler.
Survoler la forêt.
Survoler la nuit.
Survoler le monde.
Voler.
Voler.

Dans tous vos souffrances
il existe une sortie
de ces nuits si
froides et longues.

The Earth's Embrace

*Rita Wang
Moscrop Secondary*

through the woods
on an adventure
we walk.
step into the forest
we have departed from the urban jungle of
our civilization,
into the arms of nature we throw ourselves
certain (hoping) we will be caught.
leaves here have all died ---
victims of time, the seasons.
occasional green meets the eye
clinging onto life
determined to survive, to defy
the natural order.
but alas, certain rules cannot be broken.
scanning further
eyes pick up an object so truly out of place,
an unwelcome guest --- pack of cigarettes.
reminder of humanity,
that we have not fallen through the fabrics of
the universe
into another realm completely.
anchors us to the metropolitan landscape just
meters away
waiting patiently on the other side of the
trees.
trees which act as a convenient curtain
disconnecting us from everything.

journey continues as
step by step I advance,
engulfed once again by the sickly sweet
perfume
of mother earth.
gulls circling overhead
unable to cease their playful banter;
scent of the earth bringing me ever closer to
the essence of nature;
branches dance a lively number to the rhythm
of a slight breeze;
the fervent symphony of the forest reveals
itself.
but

just as the majestic ending of the piece nears
as the coda is about to be sounded
--- an interruption.
distinct drone of an aircraft pulls me once
more
from the embrace of the forest,
of the trees and branches and leaves and
soil,
of the rocks and sticks and secrets
I had come so close to unlocking.
the key finally in my hands
only to be violently wrenched from my fingers.
a chance lost
never to be had again.

Le bord

*Cheyenne Heenan
Moscrop Secondary*

La clarté de la pleine lune me réveille de mon
sommeil agité,
Les braises couvent la cheminée mais je ne
sens pas la chaleur,
J'ouvre la vieille porte avec facilité,
m'exposant aux quatre éléments.
Le vent glacial me frappe avec férocité, mes
cheveux emmêlés me cinglent,
Les grands flocons de neige tourbillonnent et
tournoient à mes pieds nus.
À pas lents, je me trouve au milieu de la
clairière isolée,
Je m'assieds sur une souche solitaire,
regardant la neige qui tombe.
Le premier rayon rose se montre sur l'horizon
à moitié nuageux.
Le vent arrête, la forêt silencieuse, le froid me
transperce.
Le parfum vivifiant des pins et du matin frais
remplit mes poumons,
Un baliveau se débarrasse de la lourde neige
qui l'a courbé.
Je retourne à la cabane en bois et rallume
mon petit feu.

The Inside

*Meghan Arora
Burnaby South Secondary*

I sighed and stared out the window; just another boring day at work. I heard the door open and I looked up to see my uncle coming back from his lunch break.

“Any customers come by?” he gruffly asked. I shook my head; no matter how great our food was, we rarely had any customers. My uncle began muttering to himself, and I questioned myself how he could be related to my father. He was quite a grouch and very money minded. It was just his luck that he didn’t make much of it; and just my luck that I was stuck working for him.

Just at that moment, the door opened. My uncle and I whipped our heads around to see who had decided to drop in. A boy, dressed in tatters, and in his arms a small baby girl who was wearing ripped clothes that were obviously too big for her.

My uncle took one look at him and with a disgusting look on his face said, “If you don’t have the money to pay for the food, GET OUT.” I flinched as he raised his tone, and the baby girl started wailing in a high pitched tone.

The boy looked at my uncle then at me, with his big brown eyes. I looked away knowing that if I looked at the boy I would become emotional. His head drooped down in disappointment and he walked out with a devastated expression on his face and I felt a stab in my heart.

“It wouldn’t have killed you to give them some food you know” I mumbled.

“Where do you think we would get the money to feed them, eh? We are barely scraping it together ourselves, and I don’t owe those little meaningless children anything.” My uncle scoffed.

I stared at my heartless uncle. Did he really not care for any of the people suffering? I followed him into the kitchen. I was ready to start a fight and at this point I didn’t care if I was going to lose my job or not.

As I opened the door, I saw my uncle gathering some food. I would’ve immediately started throwing insults at the man, but I was curious about what my uncle was doing. He had just come back from lunch and couldn’t be hungry so soon.

I watched in surprise as my uncle put all the food in a disposable box and went outside using the back door. I sneakily followed, keeping an eye on him, making sure he couldn’t see me. I watched as he went to the boy and his sister who had just come in our restaurant, the ones he had spoken so rudely to. My uncle sat down the food at their feet and walked back towards where I was hiding. The boy called to thank him, but he only nodded his head.

Did my uncle actually have a heart? If so, why did he always act like he didn’t care? I returned to the cashier, and my uncle smiled at me! Maybe, he wasn’t exactly what I thought he was. His one small gesture had not only helped the boy and his sister, it had also brightened my day. Maybe I just never got to know him past that façade he put on for everyone else. Maybe he was someone else on the inside.

The Sound of Acting

Noor Bhandal

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

I've always wanted to act. Not just in some lame elementary school production of a Shakespeare play. Like, real live television. I saw "The Sound of Music" once. I remember pausing on Julie Andrew's face while she belted out a song about her favourite things. Even with the blurred image, that was the day I realized what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Obviously not singing to German kids, but to be able to laugh, cry, and yell, all in front of a camera. I realize that as a thirteen-year-old child with bad acne and frizzy hair, I probably should have just given up right then, but I didn't. On weekends, while my friends were having sleepovers, I would stay up all night watching films that were released before I was born, and taking notes in my dad's old clipboard. Hmm...I like the way Audrey Hepburn holds her cigarette. Or, Ingrid Bergman should not be wearing that dress. As if I were a fashion guru. If it weren't for my mother I might have been reading "Seventeen" magazines and painting my toenails with friends.

The day I told my mom that I wanted to act, she turned off the soap opera she was watching, dragged me to the community center, and signed me up for acting classes. At first, I was surprised by her quick acceptance, but then I devoured it. I took all the classes and workshops I could, and my mother loved that I was actually sticking with something. My friends thought it was the coolest thing ever, having a friend that could be hanging on to Brad Pitt's arm one day. The thing that I didn't mention was that I sort of, well, sucked.

I stood in front of the camera, lines memorized, and just waiting for the guy to yell "Action!" I started speaking but the words wouldn't come out. It was like they got stuck in my throat. I can't even remember my first line! Something about the importance of flossing and dental hygiene...? After standing still, for what seemed to be ten painful years, I bolted out the door, tears started to form in my eyes. I waited outside the front door until my mom came, fabricating a lie about how we were done early. That night, when my mom came into my room asking me what was wrong, I knew that I should just tell her that acting wasn't for me. So I did.

She asked if I really wanted to quit and I told her no, that I just wasn't good enough. She ignored my pleas to allow me to quit and dropped me off at my class the next morning. Mom said that if I wanted to act, then I *should* act. She told me to forget about not being good enough. Keep taking classes and I'll get better. I'm glad I listened to her because I did.

I did get better, and you know what? After several, excruciatingly long weeks, I was the best in the class. I smiled the brightest, I talked the loudest, and heck, I could even cry on cue! So thanks mom. Thanks for the support because if it weren't for you, I would be flipping burgers at Wendy's or worse, a lawyer.

The Promise of Lost Time

*Jacqueline Chang
Moscrop Secondary*

Who goes hiking at 5:30AM on a scorching summer day in Taiwan? I did, six years ago and it was a morning I'll never regret waking up for because that's the day I found you.

I was completely spent and the hike hadn't even started. Curiosity forced me to forge ahead to identify where those soft yelps were coming from. Lo and behold were three little stray puppies with their mother nuzzling them off the beaten path.

As I quickly made my way down, I noticed movement out of the corner of my eye. I stopped, looked and saw you and your two siblings again, hiding behind a few bushes. Only this time, I noticed your mother was nowhere to be seen. Slowly, I made my way towards the three of you with my hand extended. Your siblings quickly backed away, stumbling all over each other, but you, you cocked your head to the side, and looked at me with a quizzical expression. It was then that I noticed your black and yellow-gold fur, cute little ears and round orange eyes. But what caught my eye was how thin you were: I could count your ribs if I wanted to. Grandma already knew the question coming up my throat as I begged her with a pleading expression. She hesitated, but as fate would have it, I ended up carrying you home in my arms that day.

You were like a typical toddler: knocking things over, peeing in the house, you name it. When you grew older, you would put your front legs on the table and try to nip what food you could reach.

It's been years since I last saw you. Excitement overwhelmed me: I was anticipating this moment. You ran to the door looking like you were trying to remember something familiar, but couldn't quite put your paw on it. When you saw me you gave me that same quizzical expression as the first time we met. Immediately, I dropped down onto my knees. You came over, nose sniffing at my hand, remembering that scent. Before long, we were once again inseparable. Your fur through my fingers felt so smooth, your head in my lap rested so comfortably. Our time together felt so short. Soon enough, I had to leave again, crying as I said my goodbyes: promising to come see you again.

Daddy expressed concern because of your constant pacing, waiting for your morning hug. You refused food during lunchtime, even your favourite treat. All you would do is sit under the mango trees, where I fed you, played tag and where you slept peacefully at night with your head in my lap. Daddy thought that maybe you were confused and hurt by feeling abandoned by a loved one. I asked Daddy to scratch you under the chin and on the back of your neck while trying to explain why I had to leave.

Weeks have passed and you've adjusted well, resuming your daily routine without me, according to Daddy. I'm so happy and proud of you for moving on, but I just want to let you know that I miss you and I always will. Looking back at the pictures of us can't help but make me smile because of how happy we were. I know you're getting old, but I promise to come back and make up for lost time. Only this time, I will explain properly why I have to leave. Be strong and remember, I love you.

Piégé!

Natasha Williams, Cariboo Hill Secondary

«Evan! C'est le temps d'aller à l'école!» sa mère a crié. «N'oublie pas ton déjeuner, ni ton manteau. C'est froid dehors. Papa va te chercher après l'école. Oh, et mange tout ton déjeuner aujourd'hui!»

«Maman, je sais! Laisse-moi,» Evan a répondu, ennuyé. Il était fatigué de sa famille, qui le traitait comme un bébé. Il avait onze ans maintenant! Il est parti avant que sa mère puisse lui donner un baiser.

Plus tard, il était aux toilettes à l'école. Tout à coup, pendant qu'il se lavait les mains, il a ressenti un petit tremblement sous ses pieds. Puis, le bâtiment a commencé à trembler. Il a entendu des cris dehors. Un sens de panique l'enveloppait et il ne pouvait pas bouger. Il était gelé. Il a entendu un gémissement qui l'a ramené à la réalité. Il s'est tourné vers un petit garçon qui se trouvait dans la salle et l'a tiré au-dessous du lavabo. C'était juste à temps. Les tremblements sont devenus de plus en plus forts et le miroir est tombé à la terre. Les morceaux de verre brisés ont volé partout. Quelques uns ont coupé le dos d' Evan, qui protégeait l'autre garçon.

L'école était au milieu des améliorations de sécurité pour des tremblements de terre. «Apparemment, ils n'ont pas atteint les salles de bains,» était la dernière pensée réelle d'Evan. Il a fermé ses yeux et est entré un état de rêve. Tout autour des deux garçons, les murs tombaient par terre et le toit s'effondrait.

Après ce qui semblait être des heures, mais qui étaient seulement des minutes, les tremblements se sont arrêtés. Tout était silencieux. Les enfants sont sortis d'en dessous de leurs pupitres et sont allés dehors. Néanmoins, dans les toilettes, Evan et le petit garçon étaient encore sous le lavabo. Ils étaient trop effrayés pour sortir. Éventuellement, Evan a ouvert ses yeux. C'était très noir, mais quand ses yeux se sont ajustés, à la noirceur, il s'est rendu compte que l'enfant était le petit frère de son meilleur ami. Il s'appelait Connor et il avait seulement six ans. Connor était serré au mur et ses yeux étaient fermés.

Evan s'est rendu compte qu'ils étaient piégés! Il n'y avait aucune façon de s'en sortir. Des pièces de mur les entouraient et c'était très noir. C'était comme la caverne, la plus petite au monde. La seule lueur d'espoir était qu'ils étaient vivants. «Mais pour combien de temps?» Evan demandait, effrayé. Il savait qu'il ne pouvait pas montrer à Connor qu'il avait peur, alors il a mis un sourire sur son visage et a réveillé Connor.

«Connor,» il a dit prudemment, «on va être sauvé, mais on doit crier très fort, d'accord?» Le petit garçon a hoché sa tête. Les deux garçons ont commencé à crier et à hurler. Pendant qu'ils faisaient cela, Evan s'est rappelé du matin. Il n'avait même pas donné un baiser à sa mère.

Après ce qui semblait une éternité, ils ont dû arrêter. Leurs voix étaient rauques. Evan retenait les larmes et Connor s'était endormi. «On est perdu,» Evan a pensé. Il a du s'endormir, il pensait après, mais il s'est réveillé quand il a entendu quelque chose. C'était des voix! «On est ici! On est ici!» il a commencé à hurler. Ça paraissait des heures, mais éventuellement, les garçons ont vu une lumière. Finalement, ils pouvaient sortir! Evan et Connor ont couru vers leurs familles. Après beaucoup d'étreintes, Connor s'est tourné vers Evan. Les deux garçons ne pouvaient pas parler, mais quand ils se sont serrés l'un et l'autre, c'était tout dont ils avaient besoin.

The Waiting Place

Michelle Kuah
Burnaby South Secondary

Waiting. It's all we ever do these days. We pace, sit, and stand as we wait for the rain to fall, wait to find ourselves, and wait for them to come back. My mind drifts to a voice in my long ago past, barely a whisper.

"Many will enter the Waiting Place. Many never leave."

I look up at the people around me. It is like I am looking at mirrors. The faces are different, but the expressions are the same. Their eyes reflect my hunger back at me: the desperation, the complacency. How did I manage to get here?

The door slams, causing the windows to rattle. I stare after you, teddy bear in hand wondering what's in that suitcase that you dragged behind you. I don't understand what that noise is, like a dog's howling whine. Why does she cry? I sit by the door. Surely you'll come back.

~

I drop my bag on the floor, heading to the kitchen to prepare dinner – macaroni and cheese because I can't cook anything else. Very carefully, I set the table for three and sit. The front door opens and she walks in, the summer sun streaming in for just a moment. Wearily, she picks up the third plate and puts it away. We eat, as usual, in silence.

~

It's dark outside, shards of ice floating to the ground. The street glitters, still as death. The light flickers and I sit alone, an empty place to my left, an empty place to my right. She's stopped coming home, but she'll be back. I know you will too. At least, I hope. The light flickers out and the room is plunged into darkness. Still, I wait.

I am waiting for your return. It's been twelve years since the front door slammed that fateful day, sealing off the doorway between you and me: since you sealed off the doorway to living. I haven't moved, pretending that you're just out buying groceries, or stuck in traffic. I refuse to stop waiting.

So here I am in the Waiting Place, watching as the train pulls up and people get off, taking their seats beside me. No one gets on. I start to move towards the beckoning door, as I always do. This can be my way out of here. Out of the Waiting Place. Just before I step inside, I look back at the others, mindlessly staring at the fantasies playing in their own heads. How many times have I looked like that, lost in my dreams of what should have been? My eyes flicker to the empty train in front of me. It'll only be a few minutes before it leaves. I should get on. Who knows when the next one will come?

"If you ever get lost, just stay where you are and we'll find you," she says, a ghost of a memory.

I gulp. It's all that's keeping me from leaving. All that's making me stay. What if you do come looking for me? What if you come to get me and I've left?

How will you find me if I leave the Waiting Place?

Murder Least Foul

Phoebe Joy Lim
Burnaby North Secondary

“No one expects to be murdered. In old Horror B-movies perhaps, the suspense from the creeping expectation of murder worked. Now? Don’t expect to be murdered. If you do, you must be guilty of something, you must have done a wrong to the wrong person, and the only way you can make up for that wrongdoing is by giving up your life. So, if you feel there’s no need for someone to murder you, when you do get murdered, you die with an innocent, guilt-free conscious.”

Satisfied, the novelist took a sip of her non-fat vanilla latte, steam seeping from the opening of her Starbucks cup. She removed the cardboard cozy and felt the warm liquid soothe her cold, aching hands; a relief from typing. Another sip.

She heard them then; the footsteps. First the click-clack of heels echoed throughout the hardwood corridor, then a menacing pause, a shuffle, and the footsteps continued onto the carpet. She no longer found comfort in her drink, but clutched it tightly all the same. She didn’t dare turn around. In truth, she didn’t have to; she knew what was coming.

Thud! A heavy leather bag landed, nearly scathing her leg and crushing her toe. She recognized the worn vintage purse, the contours of scars on its ripened surface; the reddish splatters she suspected were blood, and the contents of the bag she remembered all too vividly.

“Claire” the woman said, her strident voice cooed mockingly. Claire wheezed as her nostrils were filled with the pungent odour of cat hair and the taste of smoke from the woman’s pipe.

“H-Hello, Gertrude...”

“That’s Mrs. Vandertramp to you,” the woman said with livid eyes; those same pupils framed within crepuscular horn-rimmed glasses Claire feared.

“It’s been a long time, Miss Clearwood,” said Mrs. Vandertramp.

“Not long enough,” Claire retorted silently. Not being able to stand her professor’s gaze, Claire looked back down to the bag, as if shackles attached her eyes to the purse. The teacher had noticed.

“Lesson one,” Mrs. Vandertramp came close to Claire’s ear, “START YOUR PATHETIC EXCUSE FOR WRITING!”

“Kyle waited, wishing that just for a moment the girl of his dreams would say the words he so longed to hear—“

“Idiot!” Mrs. Vandertramp pulled out the favourite from her collection of disciplinary tactics in her bag. “Show, don’t tell!” the familiarity of the cold steel ruler against Claire’s skin was like a soldier’s familiarity with war; at some point one thinks of it as a daily burden rather than an unpleasant option. Claire hit backspace and started over.

“Penelope was sobbing as the funeral manager tried to comfort her. “Your husband will always be in your heart...”

“You bring a new meaning to the word *cliché*,” Mrs. Vandertramp huffed, wielding the ruler high into the air. “Your parents must be so ashamed. I would disown you if I were them.”

With an iron *twang!* It smacked the throbbing surface of Claire's left cheek. Before she could erase what she'd written and start over, another heavy blow came to her right. "IGNOMINY!" and another hit, "DISGRACE!", and another, "EMBARASSMENT!" and before the ruler could smack Claire another time, she snatched it from her professor's wrinkly calloused hands.

"You..." Claire could feel the fury in the stygian coals below her teacher's pepper eyebrows. Mrs. Vandertramp charged. Alarmed, Claire stood and pushed her teacher backwards, the woman stumbling directly into the fireplace. Neatly, Claire sat back in her seat.

"No one expects to be murdered, but some people should." She typed. The novelist took a sip of her non-fat vanilla latte, and smiled.

Grades 11-12

Mid-November

*Eleanor Hoskins
Burnaby North Secondary*

Since I met you and winter settled shyly in,
the trees have turned, become new –

They are pairs of hands, wrists bound, thin
fingers reaching
Frozen mid-stretch in a struggle for
celestial sweetness and subterranean solace
nearly brushing these dreams from steady
torsos

My trees are as tall hearts,
pulsing imperceptibly on the grey curve of
their artery,
growth lying dormant at the tips of capillaries
Their veins clear the chill from the air,
bringing down the sun in silent rhythm
as we kick up the leaves on the sidewalk.

Our Renaissance Man

*Vincent Chung
Burnaby North Secondary*

He stands with a bright yellow shirt,
a red zipper runs down his chest.
His collar is a pristine white,
akin to his pale face.

His socks, like candy canes
extend from his yolk coloured pants.
On his feet, a pair of bright shoes
big enough to be known as tires.

His arms, striped like a criminal uniform,
only with red stripes; and the same colour
is stained in his hair, like tomato explosions
or the blood of his victims.

His face masked with a smile like no other,
with fat red lips and a welcoming grin.
He yells, "I'm fast and cheap! Don't be afraid
to march,
inside my place, through the double golden
arch."

December Sun

*Matthew Smith
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

As dawn approaches the only light
Is the flickering bright
Gleam of the solitary street light
I pass under as I walk down
The snow covered lane towards town,
All that can be heard is a baying hound
And the soft crunch of snow
The white wisps of my breath
Caress the cold air
As the sparrows fly
In the pink morning sky,
And the snow up on the hill
Glistens with the first rays
Of the December sun

The Diary of a Procrastinator

*Jessica De Gaust
Burnaby Central Secondary*

Yesterday and Today and Tomorrow
With the final creeping up on me
Too many chapters for me to process
And all my notes have foolishly disappeared.
I'm doomed. DIE! DIE! BIG TEXTBOOK!
Life distracts me from studying. I'm social
Procrastinator, who sleeps in class
And then frets about it later. It is an exam
Written by an idiot, full of guesses and
mistakes
Signifying failure.

Blackbird

*Ericka Rancourt
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

Apparently, people in other countries
Envy us
Because we are free.
Maybe I don't have iron manacles around my
wrists,
But I am nevertheless bound.
I am held captive by these steely shackles
That exist only in my head.
The most difficult age to be is a teenager.
We're old enough to know what we want
But still, all aspects of our lives are
Dictated by someone else.
When to eat, what to eat, where to go—
Everything we are told to "keep us safe"—
Look both ways, stop drop and roll, just say
no
Turn the other cheek, don't run with scissors-
"teenage boys are only after one thing"...
I hate trying to compromise because to me it
seems
That I'm always the one doing
All
The compromising.
I'm trying to break away without
Losing the people I love but don't always like.
Please just realize I don't want to hurt you.
I don't want you to worry about me—
But sometimes I need to make my own
mistakes.
I need to make my own decisions.
I need to crash and burn—
But most of all,
I need you to be there to pick me up, dust me
off,
And tell me its gonna be ok.

In Distress as the Cat Digests

Nelson Lu
Burnaby South Secondary

Alas! Poor Yorick I knew.
He was a lively hamster, that much was true.
To have him entrusted to me by my best friend,
I was ecstatic to take care of him this weekend.
But little did I know how things would turn out
When I left my house with the neighbour's cat lurking about.
I had kept the window open to let in some fresh air
And didn't think that anything else would enter my lair.
It is said that the cat will mew and the dog will have his day,
But this cat certainly did more than just that today.
The feline intruded and hunted as I was momentarily gone
And devoured the poor rodent that hadn't even lived until the next dawn.

Now, to be or not to be:
That is the question I ask of me.
Should I tell my friend where his pet went?
Or buy a replacement to retain his content?
The first choice would clear my conscience of this crime.
However, it might lead to undesirable whips and scorns of time.
If I should choose the latter decision
And cover up this incident with the upmost precision,
I would be lying to my friend and forever embrace guilt
For betraying the brotherly trust that we had long since built.
My eyes fix on the barren cage as I sit in contemplation
About the two agonizing solutions to this complication.
The news of his pet will cause him utter anguish and pain
And unleash a fury which no one can restrain.
But I must admit the truth, there's no doubt in my mind.
Sometimes, one must be cruel only to be kind.

A Picture in the Day

Elio Pinoni
Alpha Secondary

A picture with a camera
Is like a memory not lost,
With all of the colors formed in one,
Separating themselves with their own unique
lines
Like the sun peeking through on a cloudy day,
The click of one button, everything's saved,
Never forgotten
Always there for you
To remember that day,
When you took that picture

Bi-"Polar"

Jacy Zerb
Burnaby South Secondary

I've seen your beauty and might
The way you sparkle as the sun bounds off
you like a mirror
I've seen your elegant creatures walk on
you with pride
But then, I've only seen you when you're
most alluring
I've heard of your fangs, the frost bitten
peaks that pierce your relentless night
The angry ice that clings to you for life as it
takes the life of others
I've heard of your darkness that smothers
your terrain
And your selfish need for isolation
Yes, I have seen your beauty and might
But the rest of you leaves me cold.

Speak Not

Jessica Santa
Burnaby South Secondary

The lady doth protest too much methinks,
Often striking others with woe.
For there is nothing good or bad,
but thinking makes it so.

Her words feign daggers, but to her they
are feathers,
lest conscience does make cowards of us
all.

So Lady opens the drawer,
and thus releases her wall.

Skimming the needle and thread,
"give every man thine ear, but few thy
voice," she mutters.

With incessant thoughts, she gazes her
lips,
instigating nothing but shutters.

Brevity is the soul of wit...
A twinge of pain
Brevity is the soul of...
The taste of metal.
Brevity is the soul...
Quivering fingers.
Brevity is the...
Misty eyes.
Brevity is...
Silence.
Brevity...!

More matter, less art.

Playground

Lily Zhang

Byrne Creek Secondary

I used to believe that I could fly away;
that if I swung high and fast enough
I would magically
be free from my limited human body
and join the wispy clouds in
the radiant, azure sky.

I remember
being blissfully carefree,
running in uneven circles all around the
never-ending oceans of grass
with the benevolent sun beaming down on me,
providing a warm rush of energy.
Unburdened from all the worries of the world.

The towering monkey-bars always just out of reach,
even on tip-toes.
My gentle grandfather silently
raising me up,
up to meet the cold, yellow painted steel,
and up to attain this, at the moment, grand achievement.

The cool, silvery sand which my fingers ran through,
as I made instantly crumbling castles.
The warm breeze scattering my hair
like tentacles around me,
having a mind of their own to enwrap me—
protecting.

The tiny red ladybugs plaguing the grounds,
and my older brother laughing happily as he
captured them in his small, cupped hands.
The miniscule spots of white and yellow,
the daisies which I strung into chains
that hung gracefully around the neck of my then young mother.

But most of all, I remember
that life was simpler in those times.
And in vain I grasp for even a brief moment,
a flicker,
of the old happiness
I once felt.

Watch

Shayna Virginillo
Cariboo Hill Secondary

watch
her fingers move with consistency
the metronome matching her heart beat,
she feels every key
with a dot or a fill, perfectly timed ivory
watch
the playground swing always falls back as it
does forth
I can predict the wind in my face when I
lean backward
like that of a curtain being drawn across my
face
picture silence
remove all anxiousness
gray, this picture world is stay silent
you say balance is key
you say balance is key
to peace and equality, but I
will smash that glass half full and inhale the
chips
just to feel the sharpness on my flesh
I can not live with dust collecting on my
shoulders, I am
better than this
or at least worse, because
I can dance to any kind of music but silence
is the worst kind of criticism
especially when you are left breathless and
vulnerable
like when punched in the face
silence is the ultimate bystander
I would rather be wobbly teetering from no
balance
than be grounded
choking on tumbleweed so I cannot speak
watch
my body regulates but my brain is always
changing
nothing stays level

they say the characteristic distinguishing
humans from other species is
ambition
there is no resting on satisfaction
panting up this pyramid, this everlasting
climb
now, release everything until
sandpaper tongue because
the opposite of love is not hate
it's indifference
indifference
indifference is worse than if I held the sun
on the sensitivity of my
fingertips
and I would rather the sun because at least
I could touch it
but then watch
as balance keeps my body from being sick
works the complexities of an ant society
and disguises disturbances on a perfect line
take
awakens our slumbers and calms us at
night
I watch dust glide on sunlight
if this is all settling on stability
why can I not stand it when
my chin keeps level
I want it higher than another or
lower so my hairline is my smile
watch
time shooting spitballs in my face
possibilities meters away
floating was never an option
trade content for intense and
mediocre for greatness or disaster, laughter
or tears
just to feel my ribs rattle
I can't keep still
can't stay silent
can't just
watch

Magic Moments on a Suburban Street

Adam Glass, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

When I was younger I visited the Holy Land at least once-a-week. I used to journey to it every Saturday morning. I would start in Harrow and I wouldn't stop until I reached Highbury.

But I was only ten, and I wasn't allowed on the Underground alone. If the security guards caught me they would reprimand my parents – and my parents would scold me. So every Saturday morning, on my hands and knees, I crawled through the large thicket bush – collecting scars of commitment – crept quietly up to the tiny hole in the gate that no one knew about.

And then I ran through the gate and I got past the last security guard and suddenly I was one-on-one with the goalie, and it didn't matter the defender was chasing me – I was Thierry Henry and I couldn't be stopped. I dove for the train as the doors closed, and I scored! The crowd went wild as I made my way to Islington.

Avenell road was just another dilapidated street in North London. But about halfway down, hidden amongst the houses, were magical steps that stretched on unfettered. Every Saturday I would tentatively put my hand on the handrail, and I would coerce myself – knowing I could do it like I always did.

The top of the stairs was my least favourite part: it was where everyone was. Everyone else who had travelled to the Holy Land gathered here – bunching tightly, talking non-importantly. The East End entrance came into view, but it was too far away – on the wrong side of the crowd.

The crowd was heaving, bunching together with not even light making it through. And suddenly they were all defenders, but that didn't matter – I was Robert Pirès and I could breeze past them with ease; swaying to and fro, the flashing colours no more than the faces of cheering spectators. I didn't stop running until my shaking hand pressed against the inviting ice-cold entrance gate.

My friend's dad was that gate steward and he would let us sneak in to the stadium for free. I would always stroll along the concrete wall that bordered the pitch – running my fingers along the freshly-slicked paint and smiling at the players I knew. One time I was lucky enough to throw the ball to our captain, Tony Adams; he returned it and told me to keep it.

The crowd buzzed during the match, but I couldn't see very well. I would jump now and then, or climb on my chair until told off. But I couldn't see anything really – so I would run down to the front of the grandstand and I would sit next to the fat man. I didn't know him, but he came every Saturday as well.

But my favourite part was when the most magical things would happen.

We scored! We really did! And the fat man put me on his shoulders and bounced me around like he always did – and we sang with the other 35,000 fanatics. I didn't know the words, but that didn't matter – I was David Seaman and I could sing louder and cheer higher than anybody else.

When I was younger I didn't have many friends, and I didn't get to go out and play very much. But I didn't care; sat on the shoulders of the fat man I was the King of the World – I and every other fan inside that stadium: Arm-in-arm, knowing for just a moment, this was our year.

Que Sera Sera:

Whatever will be, will be.

Que Sera Sera:

'Cuz our home is Highbury.

Acrylic Memories

Joe Tucker

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

My fingernail digs underneath the crusted white lip of the paint container. I pull up, releasing the pressure on the paint, causing it to sign a wet speckling of Midnight Blue onto my face. The smell of acrylic paint and wood fills my nostrils.

“Hello again”

The brushes on table are old, their shafts are chipped and spotted with paint. Each bristle has been pressed into shape and left to harden by some infantile version of me, sitting on his mother’s lap, painting shapes on construction paper. The mid-day sun shining in through cotton curtains laid out my paper canvas like a map. Guided by my mother’s pearl-white hands, I set out the shores, the rivers, the mountains of my world. These moments of joy are stored in both our memories. The brush and I pause for a moment as we remember.

We remember, too, the flocking and polystyrene and pewter of the models I made when I was twelve. Little soldiers, elves, and orcs from Middle Earth come to my kitchen table to explore the cardboard castles I had made. Each brick and blade of grass was laid down with the tap of a brush. The walls and crates I made strained with cherry red paint; evidence of a twelve year old visions of war.

The glue, too, which I had inflicted upon these brushes without knowing the danger of it, sits between bristles that now will not budge or take paint. These fibres, now wired together in memoriam of some paper mache project, cause me to cringe.

“Sorry about that...”

I dip the stiff tip of the brush into the pool of creamy Ivory, just poured. It clings to the brush like a child to its mother. It reminds me of the preschool I went to. A chaotic, wooden place filled with colours and sounds and shapes that I have never experienced before. The white walls and brown carpet forest I was used to at home were so far from this place. Yet soon, it became my home. Crayons, bingo dabbers, and occasionally the notorious felt-tipped pen were all in attendance there. Those peers became good friends, mentors.

Now, I graduated. My manila paper has been replaced with a grainy canvas, my crayons have been exchanged for brushes. So we dance. We dance all over that canvas, trying on different shoes. Van Dyke Brown, Prussian Blue, and the unfortunately named Santa’s Flesh. In the end, the brush and I stand back and marvel at our masterpiece. The voices of model Orcs and Elves echo through the painting. Lines from valleys and ridges dreamt by a toddler strike through canvas. What we feel is the beauty of a reunion. A reunion of the hand to the brush that has played itself out on canvas today, ringing with the tones of our past creations.

I go to wash off the brush, who under the streaming pressure of the sink, once again becomes inanimate. The lids of paint containers are shut with a snap and are returned to their drawer. The canvas still glows with moisture, still smells of paint. I stand back a moment to look at what I – what we have just done. I wring my paint-stained hands and just

say one thing.

“Thank you.”

You and I Could Write a Bad Romance

*Dorothy Yang
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

Dear John,

It was with great dismay that I received your letter last week. Your callous refusal of my invitation to partake in a cinematic piece followed by an evening meal has caused me no small amount of distress. However, you are forgiven, as I know that as soon as I see that angelic face of yours I shall give in instantly. Besides, you were probably just busy studying for that Chemistry midterm; you are by far the most intelligent person I have ever had the privilege of encountering.

Speaking of school, I missed you at Physics today. And yesterday, and the day before that, even though I saw you speaking with our teacher this afternoon. Something about private tutoring, I think. Since I have gone to the trouble of rearranging my courses so that they correspond with yours, I'd expect that the least you could do was show up to the one class in which we sit beside each other. Are you possibly avoiding me? No, the thought rends my heart in two and so I will not think about it. Possibly you were just feeling unwell. Are you feeling unwell? Because if you are sick, I will gladly come over to your house and take care of you, and possibly tenderly stroke your fevered brow. It will be most romantic.

Recently I have heard that your father plans to cut down the tree outside your bedroom window. This is greatly distressing, since I have grown rather fond of that tree. Though if you would maybe answer the door or the phone occasionally I would not have to make use of that tree so much and your father can hack at it to his heart's content.

I am quite baffled at your determination to keep your contact information from me. As we are currently residing in the twenty-first century, I would think that e-mail would be a much more efficient means of correspondence, but if you prefer to communicate this way, then my love, it shall be done. Still, it is becoming rather difficult to discreetly slip these letters into your locker. Speaking of which, please enlighten me on the reason for your frequent dissatisfaction with your locker location. You have switched lockers six times in as many weeks. It is not really helping my situation. However I am delighted inform you that the locker next to mine is now empty as the former occupant of said locker has recently encountered a rather, ah, unfortunate accident. I end with these words. I know that most times you fail to reply to my letters, but I understand. You are a busy man and well, I am only the girl that adores you with every fiber of her being. Nonetheless I await your improbable reply with bated breath.

Unconditionally yours,
Natalie

Dear Natalie,

Please, for the love of all that is holy leave me alone.
John

Wet Nosed Stranger

Adam Glass

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Today I awoke with a stranger in my bed. It was a little bit awkward because neither of us was wearing a shirt – it wasn't so much that either of us should have been, but it just seems like common courtesy that when invading another man's bed to be at the very least clothed.

"You want some breakfast? Banana or sumfin?" No answer – well an answer but who even knows if it was to my question. He didn't really talk to me, just kind of existed and listened. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

He was lazed droopily across my pillow, selfishly forcing me awake on a Sunday morning. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

I couldn't stay mad at him long: reaching across I buried my face in his chest, contented.

"He's gorgeous innit?" my Mum had asked my Dad when we had arrived home that dusky summer's day.

"Juz keep 'im outta ma house. I don't cares for his like." Dad meant well but he was upset – he couldn't stand to see me under someone else's protection. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

Burying my head deeper into his chest, losing myself among the hair, I had never felt safer – happier.

After we had eaten, we went for a walk. He jogged up ahead whilst I struggled to keep pace. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

Returning an hour later, he strolled through the hallway – stopping to grab a drink – and deposited himself on the sofa. It was Sunday so he was going to sit there until the cows came home. We lived alone, so my afternoon was bare. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

Joining him on the sofa, I watched the padded football players jostling in a discombobulated manner to and fro on the television. Some of them were my age – certainly no older than twenty. He stretched towards me and laid his head loosely – teasingly – on my knee, his bony cheek fitting the groove as well as it always did. But it still tickled. I didn't like that, but I liked him.

We had met on that dusky summer day two years ago – he was the smallest and wasn't getting enough food. I nursed him then, and I nursed him now. Growing from the naked peach innocence of a puppy to the selfish arrogance of a two-year-old, he took me for granted – made sure I was his only chance in life.

And I don't like that, but I like him. No, I do like that; I like it a lot. And scratching his tummy while he snored contentedly, I knew he liked it too.

Un monde de couleurs

Senica Masuhara, Cariboo Hill Secondary

Je n'étais pas un enfant normal, Où au moins, les autres enfants pensaient ça donc avec le temps, j'ai commencé à le croire moi-même. J'étais différent donc les autres enfants ont gardé leur distance. J'ai adapté ma vie et j'ai appris à jouer tout seul, à exister tout seul.

Vous voyez, je voyais les couleurs quand j'entendais les sons ou lisais les mots. Par exemple, quand je lisais le mot, « livre » je voyais la couleur rouge foncée. Quand quelqu'un disait mon nom, « Pénélope » je voyais le violet qui transformait en rose. C'est étrange, je sais.

Au début, j'ai pensé que tout le monde ressentait la même expérience que moi. J'ai pensé ça jusqu'au jardin d'enfants. Avant ça les autres enfants étaient trop jeunes pour comprendre ou entendre mes paroles et ma famille les ignorait en pensant que j'avais une imagination vive.

Quand j'ai commencé l'école, j'avais si hâte que je me suis réveillée à 5 heures. Je savais que j'avais la chance de connaître d'autres enfants, et j'ai voulu savoir quelles couleurs ils pourraient voir. Je n'étais pas prête pour leurs réactions.

Ils m'ont regardé avec la peur. Quand j'ai demandé quel couleur ils voient quand il voyait la lettre « A » (pour moi c'est un jaune éclatant) ils ont tourné leurs dos. À la récréation, ils commençaient à courir quand j'ai approché. Personne ne voulait me parler.

J'étais vraiment blessé. Je n'ai pas compris ce que je fais ail fait mal. Je suis retournée chez moi et j'ai pleuré pour des heures. Puis, j'ai compris que c'était ma condition. J'ai juré de ne jamais parler de ma condition pour le reste de ma vie. C'était une malédiction et je l'ai détestée avec tout mon cœur.

Donc je suis devenu un ermite à l'école. Je suis resté tout seul. Mes amis étaient les livres et la musique qui m'a donné le plaisir avec tous les couleurs. J'aimais écrire et dessiner.

Mais j'ai détesté l'école et les devoirs. À mon avis, l'école est où ont a commencé tous mes problèmes donc je n'étais pas intéressée de tout. Mes parents et mes professeurs étaient inquiétés. Ils ont eu les réunions avec moi mais j'ai fait un serment de rester silencieux à-propos de ma condition pour toujours. Les réunions n'ont pas aidé. J'ai continué à avoir les problèmes avec mes devoirs et mes examens.

Finalement dans la neuvième année, j'avais un professeur de français qui avait la même condition. Elle m'avait observée beaucoup et puis elle m'a demandé d'avoir une réunion. Elle m'a demande quelques questions et puis elle m'a confié qu'elle pouvait voir les couleurs aussi.

Tout à coup, je suis sentie un soulagement. Je n'étais pas la seule personne! Je lui ai confié tout, comme mes problèmes avec les autres étudiants et mes ennuis avec mes devoirs grâce à ma condition. Elle avait une oreille attentive et compatissante.

Puis elle m'a dit qu'elle faisait partie d'un club spécifiquement pour les personnes avec la synesthésie Elle m'a invitée à joindre. Avec un peu d'hésitation j'ai dit oui.

Quand je suis arrivée, j'étais choquée. Il y avait beaucoup de gens dans cette salle! J'ai appris beaucoup aujourd'hui. Comme le fait qu'il y a beaucoup de types différents de la synesthésie. Il y avait les personnes qui pouvaient goûter les mots!

Mais le plus important aspect que j'ai appris était que je n'étais plus seule et j'avais les personnes qui comprenaient ma situation et qui pouvaient m'aider et me soutenir.

Good bye

Jordan Binotto

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

The chair I sat on was a pale blue. My shoes were black with orange stripes and white curly laces that were fraying slightly on the end. My Mom was wearing wrinkly blue jeans with a white t-shirt. Her hair was messy and dull; it loosely framed her puffy red face. She was still crying. The tears dripped slowly down her cheek, one by one flowing over her moving mouth. A mouth moving with the intent to explain, explain to us what had happened. Whatever the explanation was, it was lost on me. I wasn't paying attention. I was remembering. I remembered how cold the dirt was when we would sit in the garden. Just me and him. My hands would work tirelessly in that garden weeding tomato beds, picking radicchio and trimming the squash that grew in an intricate weave of flowers and vines. When we were all done he would look down at me with pride and joy in his eyes "Let's go eat lunch". For the rest of that week, all I could talk about was how I helped him work in his garden.

During the period he was in the hospital, we didn't stay in our own beds. My brother, sister and I would usually sleep with whichever parent was home. In bed was where we would talk about the serious stuff. We would ask how he was doing. They would say things like, "Oh, he's doing fine", or "He'll pull through". But you could tell. Whether it was the moisture in Dad's eyes or the fact that Mom kept adjusting the bed sheets. You could tell that we didn't know everything. Eventually we would all say goodnight to each other, shut the lights and go to bed. In the morning we would wake up and trudge along like everything was right with the world. But as much as we tried to not think about it, it would still be there, hanging over us like a big black cloud.

It's kind of like a cloud" my brother would sometimes say. And he would laugh and laugh. "Mah acourse it cover the sun but tell me" he would say "Can a cloud makea vino?" it was in the summer that the grapes would be perfect. They would hang off the beautifully crafted canopy all plump and juicy. We would pick them. Wash them and then crush them with our feet slowly turning them from grapes into juice. Then he would bring out the barrels, his old muscles still able to get the job done. We would fill them, pour the yeast in and bring them down to the cantina. When we were finished he would lift me up, his coarse hands gently gripping the sides of my small chest. This was when we would play the airplane game. He would spin me and shake me. We would dive, dip and roll. Never once did I feel like I would fall. I was always secure in his hands.

"Ma-wa-ha-cum" he would say "We are Italiano, we gotta eata meat!" This was the answer I got after complaining about helping make sausage. It was a yearly thing in my family. It was a time where we could all get together and have fun. My Aunty Angela was responsible for getting the meat. My Dad would clean out all of the machinery. My Auntie Mary would be in charge of coordinating all of the children. And he would be the ring leader of all of it. He would stand there as me and all of my cousins took turns on the sausage machine. Patiently watching over, instructing and correcting. It made him happy to see us all there and him being able to teach us things. It made us happy too.

The weather was cold and wet. It was the winter of 1997 and a storm was covering the sky during Christmas Eve. "Do we have to go" I asked. "Giordano you cuma with me we go feeda the ducks." Instantly I ran over and put on my yellow rubber gum boots. Feed the ducks had been apart of my life from the very beginning. One of my earliest memories is of me and him, sitting on a bench at the edge of Trout Lake. We would sit there for hours throwing bread into the water, laughing and staring up into the sometimes blue Vancouver sky.

The chair was blue. My hands so small and weak compared to his, sat balled into fists in my lap. Everything had taken on a glazed look due to the tears in my puffy red eyes. My Mom had finished explaining. Four days later the funeral was held and we got to say goodbye. "Goodbye Nonno, I love you."