

Words from the Woods

The Great Adirondack Young People's Poetry Showcase

2026



LAKE PLACID INSTITUTE
FOR THE ARTS & HUMANITIES



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LAKE PLACID INSTITUTE
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A Word from **Words from the Woods**



This program was initiated in 1998 by the Lake Placid Institute for the Arts & Humanities. It originated from the recognition that poetry is not only a fundamental literary art but also an accessible form of writing for students of all ages.

Over 400 poems were received this year from students living or attending schools in or around the Adirondack Park. This booklet is made up of poems selected for their special merit.

The 2026 Judges

Sophie Morelli is an Adirondacks-based poet with a background in writing and education. She holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature and Writing and a Master's Degree in English Education, both from SUNY Potsdam. She was an Anne Labastille resident in the fall of 2023 and has work featured with Querencia Press. She is the author of *Fathom* (Bottlecap Press) and *Other Hungers* (Ghost City Press).

Katie Turner is the Principal at St. Agnes School in Lake Placid. Katie has been teaching for almost 15 years and has previously run after school workshops in poetry and creative writing for elementary, middle and high school students. As a student herself, Katie enjoyed participating in Poetry Slams and writing contests. Katie is very excited to be a part of the LPI Annual Poetry Showcase!

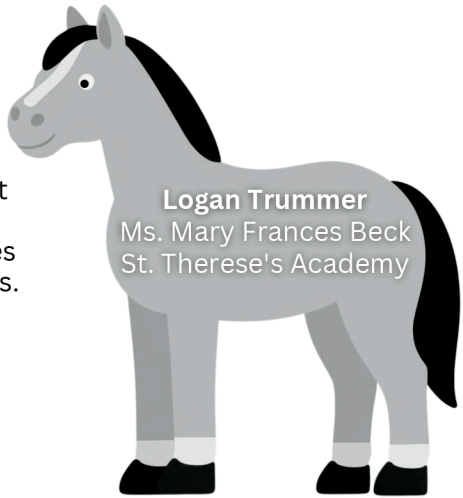
Erin Dorney is the author of *Yes I Am Human I Know You Were Wondering* (Autofocus Books 2025), and other collections of poetry. Her literary artwork and installations have been exhibited at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Hennepin Theatre Trust, the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, and Susquehanna Art Museum. She is the managing editor at Sarabande Books and lives in Western NY.

*We are honored to share Words from the Woods 2026 with you!
Some high school student poems explore mature and sensitive themes.*

SECOND GRADE

The Horse

One day there lived a horse,
The horse ran a course
The horse ran away from a cat
And then he fell on a hat.
Then the horse ran in the trees
And the horse tripped on fleas.
Then the horse found a lake.
And he itched and he baked.
Then the horse ate a fish,
And the fish made a wish
And that was the end.



Logan Trummer

Ms. Mary Frances Beck
St. Therese's Academy

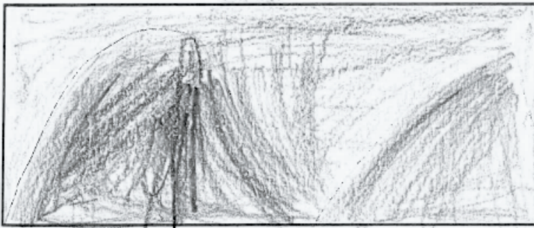
HAIKU

Beech Trees

Beech trees are dying

Bears, deer, chipmunks no beechnuts

Effects the forest



Amelia Ciccarelli

Ms. Margot Hens
Bolton

HAIKU

walking sticks

I'm a stick hunter
long, short, ~~thick~~, thin I'll find it
and use it for fun



Sophia Johnson
Ms. Margot Hens
Bolton

I LOVE YOU

When I was a little kid,
It didn't matter what I did if
I climbed too high and fell You'd
Kiss the hurt and make it
feel well. You've loved me from the
start, I love you with all my
heart.

Hazel Pierowski
Mrs. Natalee Colby
Lake Placid

By: Hazel.p

THIRD GRADE

Pink

I smell gorgeous cherry blossom perfume.
I taste strawberry cotton candy.
I feel a pretty silk dress.
I hear the pink sand swirling around.
I see my lava lamp on my dresser.

Wren Hameline
Ms. Jodie Bonville
Peru



Blue

Blue tastes like blue raspberry and smells like the ocean. I also like to watch the waves woosh. I hear the birds chirping and see the sun rise. I touch the chirping bird. I touch the warm sand. I see the sun rise in the sky. I touch the warm sand.

Natalee LaTour
Ms. Jodie Bonville
Peru





AN ICE CASTLE IS

As sparkly as a diamond
As cold as a winter storm
As tall as a tree
It is like a real ice museum
Then it gets knocked over and rebuilt every year.

Julius Barreto

Ms. Patricia McCormick
Keene



A Woodland Scene

The Apple trees with their heavy loads
Dropped to the ground so bare,
The sugar maples that lined the roads
Had leaves so crimson fair.
The Juniper bushes with bright blue berries
Were light in every way.
And as the day keeps going by
They seem to brighten every day.
The Cherry trees with beautiful blossoms
Like a sunset in a tree,
The pine tree has a merry glow
And needles down below.
A woodland scene is like a dream come true,
With crimson brown, red and blue.

Robert Goodwin

Ms. Mary Frances Beck
St. Therese's Academy

FOURTH GRADE

Snow

WINTERY WONDERLAND,
BEARS HIBERNATING, DEER MAKING TRACKS IN THE
SNOW,
SNOWFLAKES FALLING SILENTLY,
CHILDREN SKATING ON THE POND,
YOU WALK IN THE WOODS WITH ALL THE SNOW PILED UP
ON THE TREES,
SNOWBALL FIGHTS, MAKING SNOWFORTS, SLEDDING
DOWN HILLS,
THIS IS WHAT WINTER IS.

Soft
Newfallen
Owl leaves tracks
White

Hazel Blackway

Mr. Brad Clark
Keene

Snowy Walk

Stars glitter over head.
I want to be in my bed.
Memories flashing through my head.
Now the forest is growing dark.
I really really want a spark.
Flakes are falling on the ground.
I'm very very happy now.
Now my house is in sight.
I can finally escape the night.

Mars Ruby

Mr. Brad Clark
Keene



The Bump on the Road

There is one big bump on the road
That makes you go high in the sky.
It bumps you around so you can fly,
And that is not a great way to die.
So, I went to the house and said goodbye
Because I was gonna fly.

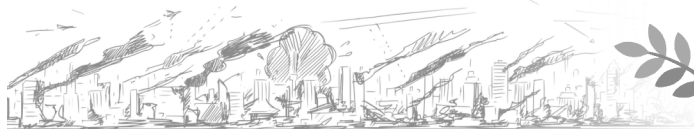
Giuseppe Lapka
Ms. Rosie Burns
St. Therese's Academy

The Beautiful Fall

Birds chirping
Fall morphing
Leaves growing
Pond whimpering
Rain not come
The lily pads are still the water is nice
Pines growing
Rocks are still
Leaves rustle with the wind
Pine needles come down

Lilliana Soto
Mr. Brad Clark
Keene

FIFTH GRADE



War and Peace

War heavily disturbs the nation
Peace looks alluring and reassures the villagers that war will not harm them
The peace reconsiders herself and doesn't know
Then war bashes into peace so there is no one to protect the villagers
When peace gets up she non violently pushes war onto his haunches
Then war withdraws so peace doesn't give him a lecture
While Peace tells him take heed and use non violent protesting like she herself
did to convince to use non violent protesting

Ellie Thivierge

Mrs. Kali Murphy
Colton-Pierrepont

Colors of Life

Somedays I feel **pink**
Cheerful and happy
Somedays I feel **green**
Filled with envy and jealousy
Somedays I feel **blue**
Sad and full of sorrow
Somedays I feel **orange**
Focused and serious
Somedays I feel **yellow**
Excited and thrilled
Somedays I feel **purple**
Nervous and anxious
I feel something new everyday
Each day is an adventure

Maddie Boushie

Mrs. Brooke Boudreau
L.P. Quinn

In the Adirondacks

Snowshoes and mountains are following the paths of ups and downs.

Leaves crunching beneath your feet.

The wind howling at the moon, like a sweet melody.

Snow leopards chasing, jack rabbits bouncing, and owls diving.

The sky is filled with stars and wishes hoping to make a dream come true.

Dogs barking and running free and playing together

Alexis Mitchell

Mrs. Paula Jones

J.M. McKenney



Hate vs Love

Hate traveled in the air. Love attends small but brave.
Hate walks to street to street. Love's journey is from door to door.

Hate shrinks. Love expands.

Hate observes. Love leads.

Hate leaves. Love stays.



Rosemary Cantwell

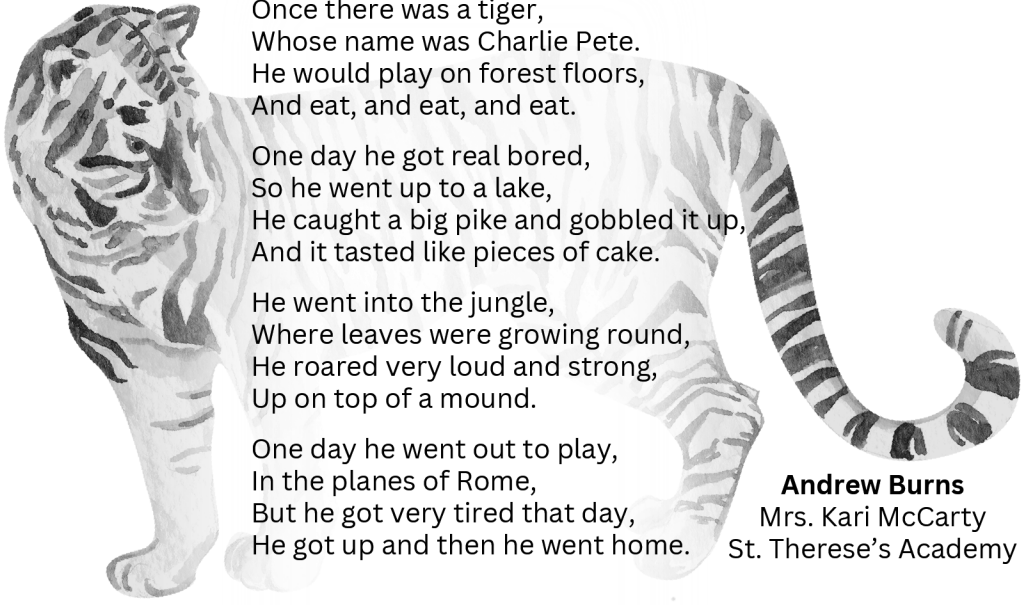
Mrs. Kali Murphy

Colton-Pierrepoint



SIXTH GRADE

The Tiger



Once there was a tiger,
Whose name was Charlie Pete.
He would play on forest floors,
And eat, and eat, and eat.

One day he got real bored,
So he went up to a lake,
He caught a big pike and gobbled it up,
And it tasted like pieces of cake.

He went into the jungle,
Where leaves were growing round,
He roared very loud and strong,
Up on top of a mound.

One day he went out to play,
In the planes of Rome,
But he got very tired that day,
He got up and then he went home.

Andrew Burns
Mrs. Kari McCarty
St. Therese's Academy

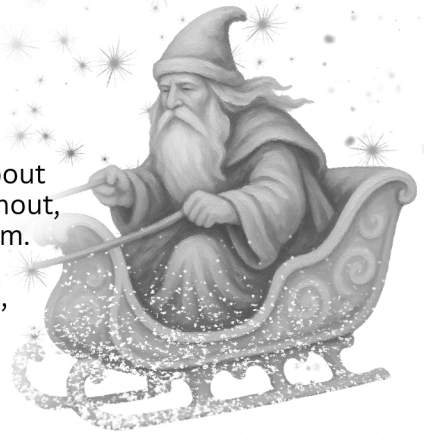
The Winter's Ride

A bitter cold blows across the plains,
As winter rides about the stiff terrain
Everything is ice and everything is frost.

The snow piles deeper as winter blows about
The snowplows try to chase me as they shout,
None want to come out in the Frosty storm.

And old man winter grabs with icy fingers,
All the houses in the snowy universe.

Winter is a stiff man of heavy frost,
Knowing not what he comes across,
And his overcoat's a big cloud of heavy snow,
Fragile ice are his boots and heavy hat,
His sparkly eyes are just as smooth as ice,
And his favorite drink is freezing slush.



Tyler Trummer
Mrs. Kari McCarty
St. Therese's Academy

Where I'm From

I am from changing weather,
from snowy mountains and falling leaves
I am from maple syrup jugs
(chopping wood, getting the first taste,
it smelled like a sugary warm hug in my gut)
I am from telling jokes,
Friends' laughter filling my head
with all the good times

I am from Sarah and Brian
from grandparents and siblings
I am from the ones who hug me and the ones who care for me
from the burns on my fingers and the cuts on my knees
I am from Keene
which is a wonderful place to be
if you are me

I am from the Ashes
whose hearts burned bright
and the Mousseaus
who are tough and courageous
I am from the haircut I gave myself
when my mom was working at the tavern, and
the Thomas thing my Dad pushed me around on

In the shed playing darts,
singing songs, and making jokes
I am from this learning,
these memories,
from laughter and fun
with my friends and family

Orion Ashe
Mrs. Megan Wellford
Keene



Jaxine Barreto
Mrs. Megan Wellford
Keene



Music

Music is the sound
that brings things to life.
The sheet music phrases
with a soft sound that's light

The notes on the page dance
echoing through the whole building,
with a calm and smooth sound
that's all, so fulfilling.

The sound of the notes ring,
holding all the curiosity that they bring.

Music is love,
music is life.
Music is something
I hold on to so tight.


SEVENTH GRADE

The Soldier

On the field of battle bullets fly
No thinking, instinct do or die
Hear and there comrades lie
Some held prisoners by a foreign spy
At last the enemy is almost nigh.

Over bodies of friends bullets are spread
Others pinned down by a fury of lead
Some lying on their death bed
While choppers fly overhead
Bruised and battered lie those who are dead.


At last the enemy has fallen back
While others lie dead in a stack
And now we must march with a field pack
Although the conversations lack
You know each comrade has got your back.



Gabriel Ermold
Mrs. Kari McCarty
St. Therese's Academy

Silent Glances

Oceans meet moss green
Whispering dreams
Red skies fading into the setting sun
Small gestures to someone
Deep brown soil and blossoming trees
Hands held under the table
Clear skies reflected in glass
Telling stories of faraway places
Tissue paper clouds and waves crashing on the shore
Those silent glances across the room



Ryleigh Bassarab
Kristy Bassarab
Homeschool
Keene

Conversation

I sat under a tree,
That had a bird
As I spoke,
It heard every word
Of the conversation I had with him,
The wonderful talented Uncle Jim.

A dog crept by
And sank in the grass,
About to leap on
The cat who passed
But then he stopped and watched him,
The infamous, daring Uncle Jim.

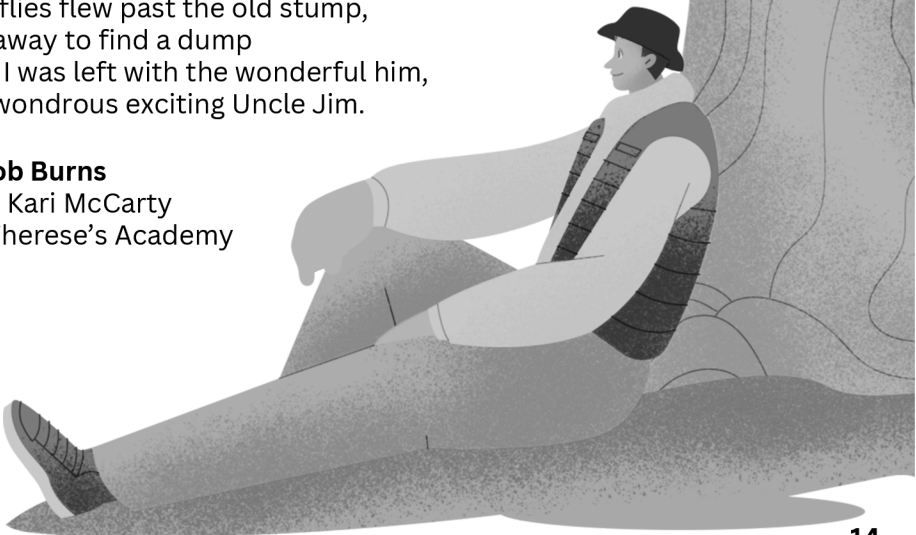
A turkey from a wood,
A frog from the bog,
A group of flies,
Which looked like a mob
All stopped and marveled at him
The crafty, brilliant Uncle Jim.

Then...
The bird opened his wings,
He flew away,
The dog leapt into a noisy fray,
The frog was bound for his bog
The turkey streaked behind a log.

The flies flew past the old stump,
Far away to find a dump
And I was left with the wonderful him,
My wondrous exciting Uncle Jim.

Jacob Burns

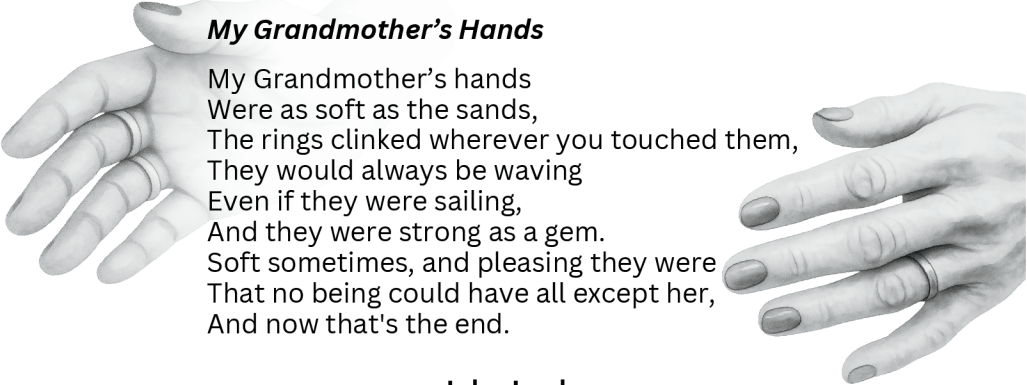
Mrs. Kari McCarty
St. Therese's Academy



EIGHTH GRADE



My Grandmother's Hands

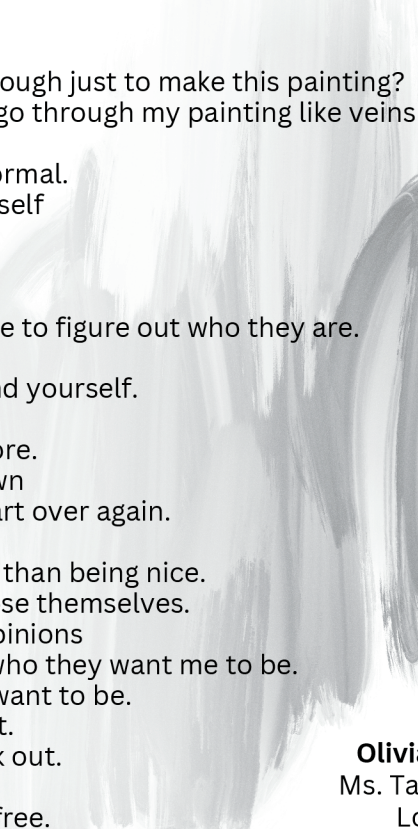


My Grandmother's hands
Were as soft as the sands,
The rings clinked wherever you touched them,
They would always be waving
Even if they were sailing,
And they were strong as a gem.
Soft sometimes, and pleasing they were
That no being could have all except her,
And now that's the end.

John Lapka

Mrs. Kari McCarty
St. Therese's Academy

To Be Weird is to Be Free



Paint my emotions
Pretty ugly colors.
What did they go through just to make this painting?
I want my emotions go through my painting like veins
All my fake smiles
I would love to be normal.
Rather than hide myself
I want vivid colors.
Alive like me.
I would love real me
Teenagers would love to figure out who they are.
You are 13
You try and try to find yourself.
But it's hard
You lose yourself more.
You get knocked down
Then you have to start over again.
Trying.
Being mean is easier than being nice.
That's how people lose themselves.
Teachers just give opinions
I do not want to be who they want me to be.
I want to pick who I want to be.
I want to be different.
I do not want to stick out.
I just want to be me.
To be weird is to be free.

Olivia Wambach
Ms. Tamara Combs
Long Lake

Your Best

If you always try your best,
then you'll never be done,
if you summoned all your thunder.

And if your best was not as good
As you hoped it would be
You still could say I gave
today all that I had in me.

Michael Heaton

Ms. Madelynn Maiolo
Adirondack



NINTH GRADE

The Shoes of a Father

See that pair of shoes?
Sitting right over there?
The old brown ones, size 13
They have seen everything
Been through the wear and tear
Creased and bruised all over
With the occasional hole
Its safe to say these shoes were well loved
They left the house every morning
Going to Albany and back,
With the occasional drive to the school
Always on the move
Never getting a break

See that pair of shoes?
Sitting right over there?
The shoes that have been a part of one's life
For more years than I have been alive
That somehow still work
keeping the cold air out
And letting the warm air sink in
With barely any sole in the shoe left
Making sure to keep supporting ones feet
Refusing to retire until they cant work anymore

See that pair of shoes?
Sitting right over there?
They tell the story of my dad
Who does everything he can
To help this family out
Providing love, warmth, and care
Wearing and tearing himself out
To make sure we are everywhere
Our crazy schedule demands us to be
Refusing to retire until he knows
That we will be looked after
And cared for everyday



Kenzie Gardinier
Ms. Kelly O'Brien-Yetto
Galway

CORRECTION

We apologize for an error on page 18 and are pleased to correctly credit these student poets:

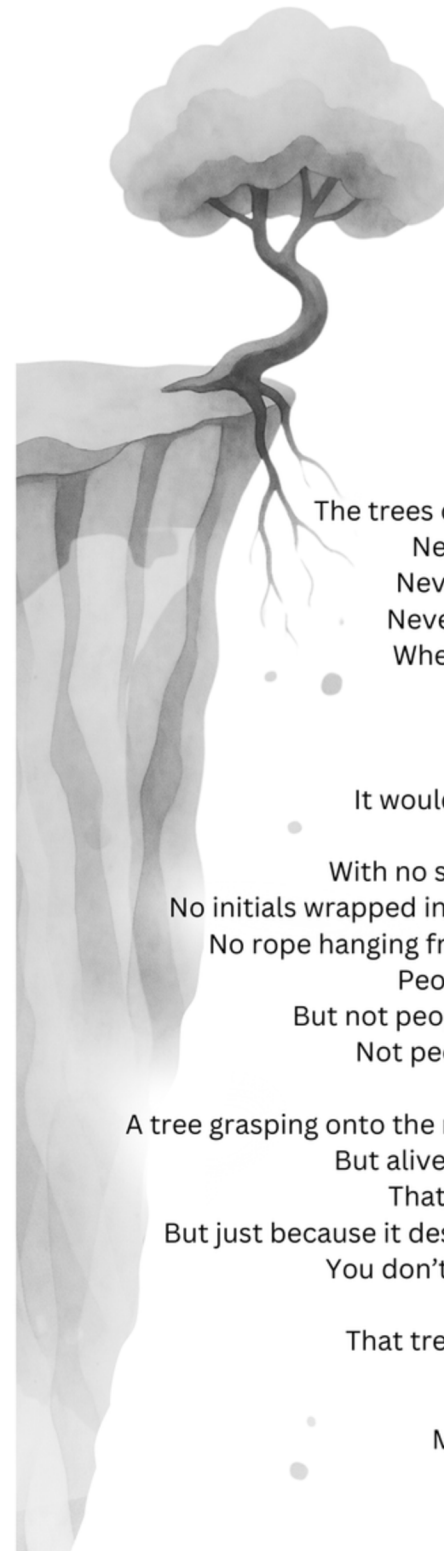
Please find **Ignored** by KCS ninth grader **Lucy Ayres** on the reverse side of this insert, and **School** by KCS seventh grader **Will Ruby** below.

School

Sitting down needing help
 As then you want to yelp
 All distraction nothing more
 As you are at the core
 You cannot do this, you know you cant
 People tease they laugh they rant
 It's easy they say
 they laugh or play
 But they don't understand, they never do
 But then they say well then why can't you
 The deadline a week from now
 As it blasts right past you, wow
 You have tons of homework, tests and such
 You're friends say it's nothing much
 Losing free time, filled with stress
 Everything feels like a big mess
 Once you're there you can't come back
 And then your schedule seems to attack
 Then you're there, just losing sleep
 And then, you hear a peep
 Someone wanting to help
 But you know you are too late you cry, you yelp

Will Ruby
SEVENTH GRADE

Ms. Erin Pelkey
Keene



Ignored

The trees on the cliff must be sad
 Never being loved
 Never being climbed
 Never being sat under
 Where kids will never
 Laugh
 Play
 Cry
 It would be sad to be a tree
 On a cliff
 With no scars from past stories
 No initials wrapped in a heart from a long forgotten love
 No rope hanging from where a swing used to sway
 People may drive by
 But not people that want to love you
 Not people that notice you
 No
 A tree grasping onto the rock with all its might just to stay alive
 But alive does not mean loved
 That tree must be sad
 But just because it deserves it does not mean it will get it
 You don't get what you deserve
 No
 That tree will never be loved

Lucy Ayres
Ms. Erin Pelkey
Keene

The Lost and Forgotten

Dust and rust
Sitting in silence
Until the bell tolls
Gusts of wind swirling about
People grazing past
Ignored and forgotten
Your keepings lost to time
Inside corners filled with grime
Used to be full
Then never seen
Locks keep you sealed
Lost potential
Behind empty eyes
Then they leave
They don't come back
Everything taken
The subtle hum in the warm air
Webs lurking atop the ceiling
Then the weather starts to cool
They all come back
Then you sit in silence
Until the bell tolls



Colton Forester-McQueer

Mrs. Heather McIlrath
Alexandria

Special Interest

Words play
ones that I've heard a million times
but I'm still decoding
Intricate words weave a story
that feels both familiar and thrilling
I rock back and forth
Stimming
Stories told though song
ease my mind
and make it race

Caroline Carr

Mrs. Heather McIlrath
Alexandria

TENTH GRADE

Where Peace Learns to Ache

I learned solace the way one learns night — not by choice, but by staying long enough for the dark to soften.

Love came quietly not to save me, but to sit beside the wreckage and saying nothing needed fixing right now.

Peace was never bright. It was the pause between subs, the way my hands stopped shaking even while my heart still did.

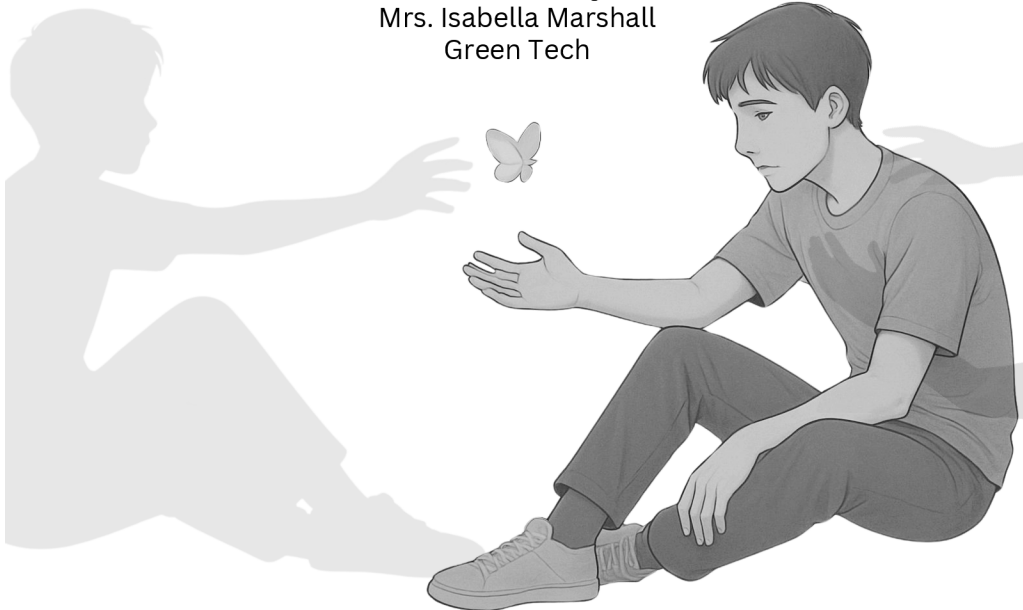
Despair didn't leave. It learned my name. It slept in the corners of my chest like a storm that knows it will return.

But love. Love taught me this: Even ruins can be warm, even broken things can be held without being asked to heal.

And solace is not the absence of pain, it is the moment pain stops demanding that I be alone.

Kaleb McCray

Mrs. Isabella Marshall
Green Tech



Swimming

The water, the cold chlorinated water that touches my warm skin that feeling the water gives me when I dive in.

My hair being tucked away in my swim cap, the feeling of the tight compression on my forehead, holding my goggles in place as I start to take my mark for the race.

Swimmers on the block, take your mark, beep.

The ringing lingers in my ear as my body dives into the water, the rush of adrenaline hits.

People say I notice these things because I'm feminine.

But I've always been super aware and an over thinker.

I am the only daughter, so maybe that's why I feel as I do.

Except when I'm there, the pool, the water.

Once I have the suit on and dive in for warmups everything washes away, even just a 2 hour session makes all the difference.

It seems as if I have an obsession.

I know I'm good at swimming, especially at backstroke and long distance.

It creates a distraction from the parts of life I wish would wash away, then turns on the competition.

Although it sounds as if it's a calming sensation, why aren't I good enough?

The competition turns into comparison.

Starting from a new position to even falling into new nutrition.

It's the distraction having a cause on the interaction between me and the water.

I can't tell the difference anymore.

So now is it even really a distraction or a satisfaction?

Phoebe Karkoski
Mr. Cliff Klingenberg
Moriah



Sticky Notes

I grab another sticky note
And place it on the table
I make a list of all the things I must do while I am able
One is for Math
One's for Global
I wonder how many sticky notes I've written on in total
There's three for home
And five for school
The amount of work I have cruel
A list for this
A list for that
I never get anything done on track
I show up to school and try my best
I'm sick and tired
I need to rest
I'm so exhausted
I've started to slip
Another sticky note will surely do the trick.

Orra Sprague

Ms. Erin Pelkey
Keene

Soccer

Walking to the turf to practice soccer,
I know the work I put in is going to matter.
Dribbling and shooting towards the goal line,
I hope that I would get better in no time.
Next morning feeling rough and sore,
In the next game I'm going to score.
As the opponent team got there we jogged around the field,
looking at the stands it just got so real.
The ball got passed to me across the artificial grass,
I was gonna give it back but that was my past.
Shooting towards the goal as hard as I can,
the ball swooshed in the net all because of God's plan.



Rylee Robinson
Mr. Cliff Klingenberg
Moriah

ELEVENTH GRADE



A Solitary Prison

Broken bars bend in place
a shattered space reflecting
a tattered and desolate past

Rugged metal moldings hold
a birdcage of isolation,
a solitary entrapment,
a sign of abandonment,

Rays of light bounce off
dust which settles in the empty
house of hardened concrete and softened memories,
peeking through the windows,
like an uninvited visitor,

Adorning the floor,
lie broken shackles
painted with cold grey stripes,
and morning sky palette which shines through broken confines

A bird will fly, when its shackles are broken;
A dog will rush, when its cage is loosened;
so too will the man soar, when his bondage
creases like the cold metal bars of
A solitary prison.

Noah LaSalle

Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown

The Imprisonment of Entitlement

"I felt like my life was in danger", my mind started racing and my heart started beating "I had never felt like that" I thought to myself.

Why was somebody from a similar area of me saying something like that?

"My school had never taken me seriously about the bullying", My mind started racing my heart started beating "but I had never felt like that" I thought to myself.

Why would somebody from a similar area say something like that?

"The police didn't believe me about what happened to me", My mind started racing my heart started beating "I had never felt like that" I thought to myself

Why would somebody from a similar area say something like that?

A sharp eerie voice cut in through my thoughts "Privilege is like taking off your shoes in someone's home". In my mind it was the stupidest analogy I ever heard.

Still why would somebody in my area say something like that?

I had never felt in danger?

My school has always done something about bullying when it came to me?

The police I thought would believe me?

But, I had never been a black person at a protest, someone from a low income family, someone that was sexually assaulted by someone that was highly respected.

Privilege is like taking off your shoes in someone's home. Going into someone's home with a sense of respect and understanding their perspective, helps with not being oblivious.

McKenna McGrath

Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown





My Words to You

Inspired by Maus 1 by Art Spiegelman and Prisoner B-3087 by Alan Gratz

They make up lies
They make us say goodbyes
They make us forget our names
They make us stay days upon days
They make us out to be tiny mice
They make us sleep with the whole supply of lice
They hurt us and make us work; they make us work until we hurt
They take our air and make it gas
They knock us down one by one until there's no one left that lasts
They scared us, ran us out of our homes
They made us separate, now we're all alone
They beat my father, all my brothers too
They slaughtered everyone I loved, if you were there you'd have been
slaughtered too
They wouldn't like your little arms
They'd make you quiet, still, and slow; disarmed
They would make you wish you were dead
They'd make you know things that were never said
They made the people watch in fear
They make us the enemy, they'll never be near
They made up lies, yet they're the enemies in disguise
They've done so much, we're still at zero
They make everyone think they're the hero
They try and try; they lie and lie
No matter what they do or say;
Worry not my family, I promise you'll be okay
For our Lord is glorious and will one day come;
Until then, close your eyes and imagine you're above the sun
Stay faithful, stay strong, and soon you'll be free...
Sincerely, Me

Kalley Denton
Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown

The Dad Who Stayed

There was a time I used to wonder
What that day would look like
White dress, shaking hands,
Soft music, shining light.

And in the picture little girls are told,
There's always one clear part
A father walking by their side,
Proud tears, a full heart.

But blood doesn't always mean
Someone chooses to stay.
And mine chose distance
Instead of me that day.

He missed the scraped up knees,
The birthdays, the games.
Missed who I was becoming
Didn't even try to learn my name
In the ways that mattered most.

For a while that truth felt heavy.
Like maybe I wasn't enough
To make somebody stay.

But then there was you.

Not by blood
But by choice.

You showed up.
Every single time.

You tied my shoes,
Checked under the bed for monsters,
Clapped the loudest at recitals,
Gave the steady, patient talks
When life got complicated.

You didn't have to be my dad.
You decided to be.

So when the doors open
And the music starts to play,
It won't be absence on my arm
It will be love that chooses to stay.

You'll walk me down the aisle,
Not because you're supposed to,
But because you earned that place
In every way a father could.

And when the dance begins
Daddy and daughter,
Spinning slow beneath soft lights
It won't be a space filled with longing.
It will be full.

Full of every bedtime story,
Every hard earned lesson,
Every "I've got you,"
Every quiet protection.

The man who shares my blood
May never know that song.
But the man who raised my heart
Will hold me where I belong.

And I am not missing something.
I am chosen.
I am loved.

And when you walk me toward forever,
Hand steady holding mine,
I won't be thinking about who left.

I'll be grateful
For the dad
Who stayed.

Kenzi Weston

Mr. Cliff Klingenberg
Moriah

TWELFTH GRADE

Dread for the Jews

Mournful days turn to longer nights
Countless hours to stay away from the fight
Never thought life would be such a fright
Torture and terror leave us in despair
Wondering if this world will ever be fair
With Jews wanting to be equal who knows if we'll get to see a sequel
Germans thriving with power leads to cold nights in the showers
Looking to the sky to find out why so many of us must die
Like summer to winter there's no stopping the snow
Wherever they look there's nowhere to go
Within several days they're all dispersed
Leaving many dead out on this earth
Hope for one day we all have worth

Zander Daniels
Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown

Unstuck

You overwork yourself
as if you are unstuck in time
Jumping from rigorous classes
To late night shifts
And running from strenuous practices
To your desk for midnight studying
So it goes
Carrying a load too large to manage
Like you are a bug trapped in amber
But your body is a machine
That demands rest for the cogs
So it goes
So rather than breaking your body
Allow it to slow down
Let time wait for once
As you possess plenty of it
So let the clock soften
For as long as you need
Because we know you will return
And when you do
We will welcome you back
And greet you with our hearts

Matthew Ryan
Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown

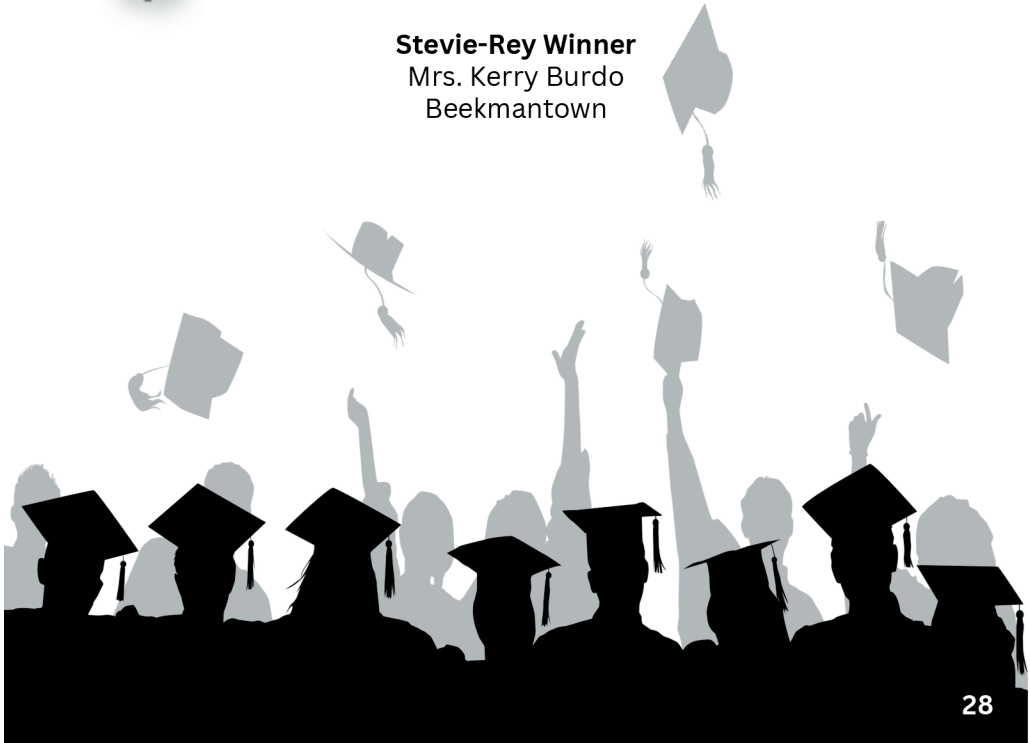


Graduation

Today's the day
you walk across the stage.
With the diploma in your hand,
you wonder where the time's gone.
You swear just yesterday,
you were a freshman
staring at your schedule,
wondering where in the world
your first period class is.
The memories of high school
fly by as you shake the principal's hand.
Tears in your eyes
as you throw your cap
into the air.
Happy, nervous, sad.
You feel every emotion
as you wonder where you
and your classmates will go
in the future.
You don't know
if you'll ever see your classmates again,
so you take a deep breath
and spend the last few moments together
With a smile on your face.

Stevie-Rey Winner

Mrs. Kerry Burdo
Beekmantown



Fake Masks

He wears his anger like a cloak,
Every word cuts, every silence burns.
I try with gentle hands and quiet words,
But peace has never touched him.

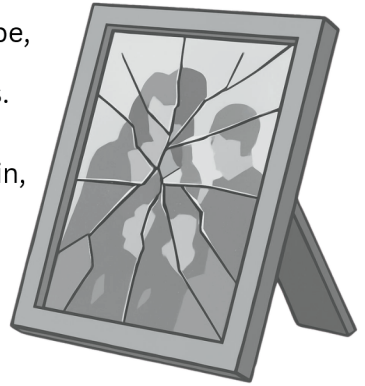
There's nowhere else to run, no door to save me,
Yet deep inside I know this truth;
I cannot stay where love is lost,
Where safety hides and fear has grown,

But you call yourself my stepdad.
Like the title makes you kind.
Like saying it out loud enough,
Could fix what's wrong inside.

I don't know the man you claim to be,
Just the storm that follows me.
Smiles like masks, words like knives.
Picking apart our fragile lives.

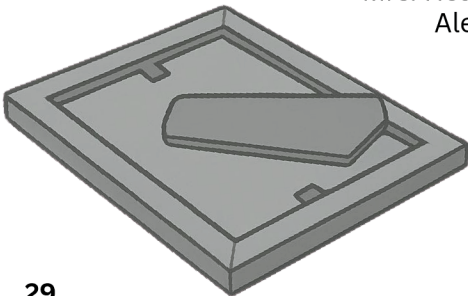
You wear "family" like borrowed skin,
But anger's always breaking in.
Every room bends to your tone,
Every fight feels overgrown.

I'm eighteen, tired, learning truth-
That love shouldn't hurt like proof.
And all I see, no matter I try,
Is someone fake... teaching me how not to lie.



Joey Sanders

Mrs. Heather McIlrath
Alexandria



Today, I Lay You Down to Rest

Today, I lay you down to rest
Here at the service for the dead
With all these tears I keep repressed.

The loaded gun I went to test
For the salute my dad had led,
Today, I lay you down to rest.

Nightmares that have not been addressed
As I lay restless in my bed
With all these tears I keep repressed.

I drive along the mountain crest,
Searching for the graveyard ahead;
Today, I lay you down to rest.

My days lie dormant, all abreast,
Mundane misery fills my head
With all these tears I keep repressed.

On this fresh grass, my feet are pressed,
“His time has come,” the headstone read.
Today, I lay you down to rest
With all these tears I keep repressed.

Annabelle Case
Mrs. Stephanie Coddin
Gloversville



You are now a published poet!

Many thanks to the educators, librarians, authors, artists, parents and friends who inspire our youth to express their thoughts, feelings and observations and make their voices heard!

We are always looking for ways to expand our Poetry Program. If you know of any schools, teachers, or programs that would be interested in participating in the future, please forward their information to us or have them contact us at

lakeplacidinstitute@gmail.com.

Thank you for your participation!



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