

# dying light brighter than the sun



poems from the  
Spruce Street Secure Crisis Residential Center  
for at-risk teens



written  
in an Arts Corps program,  
Invisible Beauties... poetry for revealing depth, truth & meaning  
with Vicky Edmonds



Fall 2014 - Summer 2015







## Spruce Street

Located in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle, Spruce Street Inn's Secure Crisis Residential Center (SCRC) and Crisis Residential Center (CRC) provide safe residential services for at-risk youth who are in crisis. The center offers services for up to 18 youth in coordination with Washington State's Division of Children and Family Services. Spruce Street is one of a few select programs in Seattle that provides services to "street youth", chronic runaways, and commercially sexually exploited children.



## Arts Corps

Founded in 2000 on the principle that all young people – not just those with resources – should have access to quality arts learning opportunities, Arts Corps has grown to become the leading nonprofit arts education organization in Seattle. Starting with just a handful of classes at six partnering sites, Arts Corps now serves over 2,000 K-12th grade students a year at 30 sites. We place our classes primarily at schools and community centers serving low-income youth who often have no other opportunities for arts learning. Our programs cover the spectrum of arts disciplines from dance to visual arts to photography to music, and include popular classes such as Brazilian dance, theater, comic illustration, spoken word, sculpture and more. Our classes are proven to build creative habits – also known as 21st century skills, such as imagining possibilities, reflection, persistence, critical thinking, discipline – skills that build a lifelong foundation for learning.



## Vicky Edmonds

Invisible Beauties... poetry for revealing depth, truth & meaning

Vicky Edmonds is a poet & teacher who uses the written and spoken word as an opportunity for bringing our deepest truths to the page and to the world. She works with adults, adolescents, children, at-risk populations, schools, literary and arts organizations and hundreds of private facilities in the Seattle area, around the country and abroad. She has been writing as a healing tool since she was 11 and teaching poetry for the same reason for more than 25 years. As of this time, she has also compiled over 250 books of writing from the students she has taught.

"Invisible Beauties" is a series of workshops on using the art and practice of writing as an opportunity for looking further into the mysteries that are still unsolved in our lives. The intimacy of this kind of poetry, the essential need for it in our lives is to bring us back home to ourselves, again and again, until we can finally live there.



## Christina Nguyen

Classroom Assistant

Christina Nguyen is an aspiring poet, and artist with passions and dreams to accomplish. Grown up and raised around fierce activists and advocates from the Seattle community since the age of fifteen, Christina is empowered to search for and find her own voice using the resilient tools and new ideas she learns every day from her families in the organizations she works with at Arts Corps and Youth Speaks Seattle. She hopes to channel her energy to others to help find and use their own power in the voices they were born with through the magic of assisting poetry classes, carrying debatable yet enlightening conversation, and truly believing in others. She has been active with Youth Speaks Seattle since 2012.



## Ela Barton

Classroom Assistant

Ela Barton assisted in the classroom, brought her words and brilliance to us and typed all the poems for Fall 2014.

My family is like a war zone  
because all the pieces are scattered.  
My mom is like the bomb  
because she was the explosion  
that blew us apart.  
My sister is like the retrieval team  
trying to find survivors.  
My dad is like the ghosts of the people  
because you know he's there  
but can never find him.  
And I am like the target of the bomb  
because I get affected the most.

TeJuan

Today I feel like a plastic bag  
drifting in the wind.  
People walk by and don't care enough  
to stop me. I am just a piece of trash  
that pollutes and distorts the emotions  
of the people that actually care.  
There are holes in the bag  
so I can't even hope  
to catch their fears...

TJ

My family is like a turf field,  
pretty to look at, but not real.  
My Dad and Grandma  
are like the fake grass.  
They look nice and everyone believes it  
until they touch it.  
My Aunt and Grandpa are like the idiots  
who water the fake grass  
because they feed into the delusion.

Chloe K.

Today I feel let down  
because I was supposed to get out today  
but I knew this was gonna happen.  
So I guess my disappointment  
isn't from not getting out,  
but because I was right.

I feel like a community soccer ball  
that gets kicked around  
until they get tired, then left out  
until someone else gets the urge  
to kick me around.

Chloe K.

My family is like a collage of everything,  
both positive and negative and colorful.  
My mother is like an invisible marker  
because she never stuck around.  
My grandmother is like all the bright  
colors of crayola markers  
because she took care of me  
and pushed me to be me.  
My dad is like a knight with armor  
because he protected me from everything.  
And I am like the glue  
because I have to hold it together.

Djuna, Staff

Today I feel like a lock  
choosing who I get to block.  
Choosing who I will let see  
the treasures inside of me.  
My heart's shattered  
and completely crushed  
like the bugs I step on.  
Trials and tribulations  
have been chasing me  
ever since I was over 3.  
God testing me every day,  
I don't know if I want to stay.  
Sometimes I don't like to think,  
instead I'd rather drink,  
drowning all my feelings away,  
contemplating if I should stay.

Dominic

I lay in a bed of lies  
not knowing whether they're mine.  
And in my heart  
pain seems to take it's time  
which has turned my emotions  
as sour as limes.  
I see her deceased face  
which so closely resembles mine...  
My heart stops.  
The door to my mind  
is where depression knocks.  
But if I do what it tells me to,  
many people would be shocked.  
But just in case,  
I keep some rope and a chair in stock.  
In the end I'll decide to use them  
and I'll savor my few good memories  
until my last tick tocks.

TeJuan

I committed suicide  
and just stared at myself.  
I thought, "Damn, I just  
put my life on the back of the shelf."  
I thought of my family  
and tried CPR,  
but it didn't help.  
I'm dead and reality knows  
it's been felt because it shows  
me how I could've gained happiness,  
but instead, I'm dead  
and left lifeless.  
I look at my arms and all the knife slits.  
There's no use thinking about it  
because I'm dead and lifeless.

TJ

I like poems that rhyme,  
but I can't think of them all the time.  
I like to fight,  
but it's not always right.  
I hate to run,  
it's never fun.

Marco

My life is like a rolling river  
always on the move,  
hat can never stop and relax.  
When I think of my past I see a nightmare,  
as I drift away wishing I could wake up,  
but just a second too late.  
As I try to swim away from this river of  
darkness, I seem to be more lost.  
As I lose my conscience, as I move on  
leaving this broken mess behind,  
I wait for God's plan for my wholeness  
and pride.

D

My calm is like a turquoise piece of thread  
with all the layers peeled apart  
so what was smooth is now all knotted.  
My quiet is drinking so much caffeine  
I can sit still and count all my heartbeats,  
imagining I'm a hummingbird  
moving faster than anyone on the planet.  
My courage comes only when I know  
that at any moment I can pull  
all of my hair in front of my face  
like a curtain  
and hide from the world.

Syd, Staff

I feel like a lonely mockingbird  
sitting in a tree  
trying to figure out where to go.  
I feel like a snake going home  
then picked up by a hawk  
and getting taken away.  
I feel like I'm getting locked in a zoo,  
getting looked at and pushed around  
and carried back and forth  
from different zoos.

Carrington

Just think about it...  
Sometimes you have to fall down  
to learn how to get back up.  
Change your thoughts  
and you'll change your world.  
Trust is like paper, once it's crumpled  
it's not right anymore.  
One thing I have learned about life  
is that it still goes on.  
Sometimes you have to learn how  
to be the bigger person,  
know when to do the right thing,  
learn how to be there  
and take your friends by the hand  
before their hand takes their life.  
Learn how to stand for what's right.  
Don't love too much.  
Don't hope too much.  
Don't believe too much,  
because all that can hurt so much.  
Learn as you live, live as you learn.  
You have to be in charge of your life –  
you! Life is what you make it.  
Not anyone else – you!  
If you want to change,  
you have to be the change.

Shyi'a

Roses are red, violets are blue.  
I really love basketball  
and you should too.  
Basketball is my favorite sport.  
I really like dribbling  
up and down that court.  
When I go down the court  
with a basketball I feel like a bird  
who has just learned how to fly!  
Just be you, no one can be that  
better than who? Oh yeah, you!  
Ball is life.  
Sports is life.

Shyi'a

It's like I'm locked outside a door  
and I'm banging really loud  
but no one seems to hear me  
or let me in...

Shyi'a

From the depths of some divine despair  
a phoenix arises, fierce  
in her glorious beauty.  
The taste of ash  
like a breath of fresh air on her tongue.  
The smell of scorched earth  
embracing her and enveloping her  
in it's heat,  
cleansing her soul,  
inviting her back to the dance  
that is life.  
The wind beneath her wings,  
she takes flight.

Suzette, Staff

Roses are red,  
also are bloody roses.  
Violets are purple,  
also your face when you're sick.

Marco

I'm missing you...  
My days are gray,  
especially now that I can't see your face.  
Been locked up in a cell for 11 months,  
waiting to get out  
so I can smoke hella blunts..  
But when I got out,  
reality hit me.

Charlene

I'm Katie  
You can call me Kat...  
My addiction is unmanageable  
It can't be controlled as much  
as I want to try  
I can't because I'm powerless...  
Powerless over my addiction  
I try and I fall  
My life feels like an unending fiction  
Not knowing the difference between  
reality and actuality  
I decide to let the monster in me  
define the unknown  
Being too curious got me in trouble  
Although I thought it was okay  
to try something new  
If it weren't for my curiosity  
I wouldn't be in this mess,  
this unending nightmare.  
They say curiosity kills the Kat,  
and I'm slowly dying.

Katie E.

Puff Puff pass  
Smoke away the pain, the stress,  
leave it all behind for a few moments.  
When the high goes away  
roll up another j,  
let it take you away to a better place, to a  
place with no worries no stress, no pain  
to a happy place, a chill place. Then it all  
fades away  
and you're back to square one,  
so you twist up another blunt  
and smoke until you go numb.

Na'imah P.

Blades

Stuck in a hole  
Nowhere to run anymore  
I'm tired of hiding the real me  
Why am I still here?  
Fighting for what's right?  
I think not

My life is a curse  
I can't find the cure  
I'm in the middle of a maze  
No way out  
Darkness surrounds me  
The blades are my only friend now  
1 cut 2 cuts even 3  
No way to count all of them on my body  
My thighs, arms and now  
my stomach has cuts  
But no one ever sees them  
1 cut for how much pain I'm in  
2 cuts for the fear I've felt my whole life  
Even cuts for the names  
I've been called all my life  
I cut your name  
so I have a memory of you  
I trusted you, but you hurt me.

Batgirl

The skies are darkening around me  
I don't know where I'm going  
I need help by I'm afraid to ask  
Stuck in the storm  
The waves are crashing around me  
I'm a boat lost at sea  
The sand on the beach  
is just another storm  
The water is hitting me like rocks  
I'm trying to stand my ground but slowly  
I'm being pushed to the ground  
Sand is getting in my eyes  
I can no longer see  
I can hear the waves  
crashing along the shore  
Rain is falling from the sky like the ones  
running down my face  
I can't move anymore my feet are  
cemented to the ground  
Nowhere to turn to anymore  
I'm just a boat at sea.

Batgirl



Fear

Afraid of what is happening  
I don't know where I'm going  
It's all my fault  
What if I never get to say goodbye  
to the ones I love?  
I know I rarely say it now  
Too much shit has gone on in my life  
I've lost 5 people and I'm only  
14 years old  
4 to suicide and 1 to cancer  
I know others have lost more  
My 2 best friends died  
trying to save their families  
The 2 others were my family  
My cousin shot herself and laid dead  
for 2 hours in the bathroom  
before anyone found her.  
Even my mother committed suicide  
and blamed me for it  
She made my life a living HELL  
Always telling me I'm a mistake  
I should cut deeper so I could die  
Maybe I will one day  
But I know I won't  
I'm stronger than she thinks I am  
I'm strong enough to know  
that it's not the answer.  
Why am I so afraid?

Batgirl

Sage Star  
The way you helped me find all my  
Insecurities, helped me break my habit  
Threw them all away, but then you left me  
After all I was just a project to you  
Seeing how much pain  
you could put me through  
I'm tired of this  
I'm waiting for you to return  
But I know you won't  
So this  
Is my way of saying  
GOODBYE

Batgirl

When I was a child I was like an explorer  
always adventuring off and finding  
something interesting. As curious and  
nosy as I was, I was always knowing  
something I wasn't supposed to. When I  
was a child, I was like a skunk left alone  
and when someone came at me I would  
protect myself with spray of aggression as  
a defense mechanism. When I was a child  
I was like a tree tall and strong but when  
fall and winter came my leaves would fall  
and so would my spirits of ever getting to  
spend Christmas with my mom. When I  
was a child I was like a windshield wipers  
always wiping away my tears when my  
cheeks were wet because I felt alone and  
unwanted like the last puppy at the  
pound because I'm out of control and ugly  
and cost too much for my needs.

Katie E.

We awaken from the dark  
Love, joy, happiness, criticism, hurtful  
words all come in our relationship. We're  
young, we end up having kids at a young  
age. We make money in the wrong places,  
wrong ways. Some sell themselves, some  
steal and sell, some even kill. There's kid  
running round town bangin; A deuce, D-  
Dub, Cloverdale, Duce-8, all these gangs  
that you just end up in jail or dead.  
People wanna be so DW that there lavin  
and hurtin themselves and ourselves. The  
state of mind is just F\*\*\*\*d up. I will not  
raise a kid like that. Kids need to be  
taught to get an education, job to help  
their elders. Not to gangbang, run around  
carryin' guns wit em and shit. The  
lifestyle is hard. We need help. We need  
sympathy too. We need the care of love  
and we need to be happy too.

Amaziah L.

The life style

Us teens, having children at young ages.  
Don't mistake us not to be young and not  
raise our children. Before anything my  
kid will have everything. Even things not  
needed. My kid has all the Jordans, all the  
fits, all the kiks. That don't mean nothing.  
We could still be bleeding inside and out,  
left and right. Just by having nice things  
doesn't mean all our problems are saved.  
I'm walkin around with Jordans, silver  
chains around my neck, rings on every  
finger. I may seem rich, I may seem  
happy, not at all. Too many family  
problems and then I welcome a N\*\*\*\* into  
my life, I end up the game just for the  
thang, cookies and cream, apple pie is all  
they want. They don't want the child.  
They make a mistake. Some will be there,  
some will not. I will always be there for  
my child.

Amaziah L.

Enough is enough...

My little pipe dream turned into a crime  
scene. Doing anything I can to get a hit.  
Home invasions to hitting licks I know  
were the things I hadda fix.  
My addiction has control over me an I  
don't know how to tame this monster  
that's inside of me. I'm powerless over  
my addiction...This dope shit ain't no joke,  
gram after gram my pockets go broke.  
I'm nothing but a lil dope fiend, no  
wonder my family don't want me. I say  
"Just a lil line won't hurt," it turns into 10  
an a fifth Seagrams gin.  
Now I got my face in the dirt.  
Dream is slowly killing me, and I still  
don't know when enough is enough

Katie

Brother

You are a rose  
The most beautiful rose on the bush  
Guarded by thorns  
You are a stained glass window  
That everyone stares at from the outside  
But can't quite see through  
You are the crickets I hear at night  
A quiet chirping that seems never ending  
But never can find when I wake up  
You are the attic door on the ceiling  
Too far away to reach without a ladder  
You are the hum of a car engine  
Never growing louder, always fainter

Sydney, Volunteer

Kim Kardashian, I will run 300 miles in  
barefeet under water looking like 12  
years a slave with an asthma tank full of  
gorilla sharks on steroids racing the  
motherfucking mystery van from Scooby-  
doo in 1940's.

The middle of the world wars shot down  
by Tupac and reincarnate as magic mike  
trapped in a space ship flying back to  
earth looking worse than chief keef on the  
bad days. Run my ass butt naked around  
the world for as long as it takes, smell  
horse then raw fish that has been cooked  
uncooked unfrozen and laid out in onions  
for months, delete my twitter & facebook,  
looze both my socks in a dungeon in  
Africa just to take a seat next to your  
mother in sixth grade.

Xzavier W.

Thorns

I feel like 2 bouquets of roses thrown out  
after a shitty date.  
Stems broken, petals bruised,  
yet thorns in tact,  
Attacking anyone that tries to salvage me  
from the trash where I belong.

Double A

Suffering

Been through HELL and back  
Don't know where I am anymore  
A match is all I have left  
Light is burning but the wind is trying to  
blow it out  
No way to know when it is going to go out  
When it does I know time is out  
I can't stand this anymore  
Not knowing how much longer I have  
When do I get to say my good-byes?  
What if I don't?  
Everything will be lost  
Where am I going in life?  
I'm lost with no direction  
Struggling with my past  
Everything breaks me down  
I'm never happy  
All my smiles are fake  
No one can see my pain  
I can't cry or I'll get hurt  
I've been through so much shit  
Scars all over my body  
Thighs, arms even my stomach  
No one sees them  
Unless I let them  
I try to hide them  
It doest always work  
People see through my masks  
I can never let my guard down  
But I did once before  
I have a scar  
Caused by 156 cuts  
The cold blade  
Sliding across my arm and the blood ran  
down as the name came together  
"Devin" was a scar now  
Slowly fading away  
Nothing I can do  
I've never let my guard down after that  
That's exactly why I'm  
as f'd up as I am

Batgirl (CJ)

My mom is a strong person.

I respect her.

Imagine being in foster care all your life to  
have a baby girl at 17 (me)  
And have others try to take her from you.  
I know my mom fought for me  
She was a good mom until she turned 25  
That's when my life took a drastic turn  
downward  
When she got the call my mom changed  
She wasn't so strong anymore  
Breast cancer is a hard thing to go thru  
I'll never know all the things  
my mom had to endure  
But I know she went thru isolation, loss of  
friends and family  
She lost me and on top of that  
she had chemo and treatment  
It literally drove her crazy  
Everyone has regrets and things  
they wish they could change  
But hearing my mom say she wants to kill  
herself and she wants to die. ..  
Well at 10 I didn't really know how to  
answer that for her till this day  
At 31 my mom still is going thru  
treatment and still doesn't believe  
I love her or respect her  
It hurts to hear her say these things but  
she's been thru a lot  
So I don't blame her, all I ask is she just  
know in her heart that I love her and I  
can't take care of her, I can't even take  
care of myself at the end of the day  
I love my mom and I respect her  
I just wish she finishes  
and beats breast cancer  
Then we can just move on with our lives.

anonymous

My mom is the devil in disguise  
She is all smiles and laughs in public,  
But in private she is all sharp tongue and  
stinging words

My sister is like a hen, always herding her  
daughter everywhere, clucking at my  
mistakes.

My brother is like a sloth,  
Never moving from his Xbox or helping,  
My niece is like a young filly, thin and  
pretty, and always a joy to be around  
My dad is like a dodobird  
He doesn't exist anymore  
And me? I am like a donkey,  
Stubborn and rude and a jackass.

Double A

Depression

Stuck in the dark  
Nowhere to go  
I'm in a maze  
My whole life flashing before my eyes  
Nothing good  
Been bullied since 2<sup>nd</sup> grade  
Never lived with my mother or father  
Mom was a prostitute on the streets  
in Yakima  
Dad traveled from jail to jail  
Grandparents were my only family  
Moved from city to city  
From Washington to Oregon and back  
again  
Living with different relatives  
After my grandfather died  
I lost everything  
I didn't know where I was going  
What I was supposed to do  
Stuck in a homeless shelter  
for a month and a half  
No friends No family within miles  
Nowhere left to go  
Grandfather dead  
My biological father out of jail finally  
All my life  
Never any food

Counselors after counselors  
Heartbreak after heartbreak  
Nowhere left to go  
Uncle said for me to live with him  
So I did  
Only a mistake  
Look where I am now  
Scars all over  
Some will never heal  
Internally none ever will  
Nowhere left to run and hide  
I'm stuck in this black void  
No light at the end of the tunnel  
Not anymore  
I'm stuck  
And I only have myself to blame

Batgirl (CJ)

True beauty that lies with in your body,  
spirit and mind is so divine as they  
intertwine.  
And life may be getting scarier,  
jumping all the pot holes,  
breaking all the barriers,  
but best believe there are people  
who will still care for ya.

Skyker, Sleepy G

I guess I could say sorry but I wouldn't  
feel more secure. I don't know exactly  
what to say. This is bizarre

Gabriel W.

I like you. But I don't want to hurt you.  
See, the fault in our stars is the fear we  
feel inside. Why, I don't know. It just  
happens I guess. But I can promise you  
this. I will love you for all time. I will do  
my best not to hurt you. But I am only me.  
I am not perfect.

Mykayla F.

Climbing trees  
Playing spies and we weren't very sly  
Hide and seek in deep dark woods  
Books and pencils meant power  
Two best friends taught me  
mischievous and love  
Adults were a mystery I wanted to solve  
And already felt part of  
Building tree houses thirty feet high  
Only falling out of one once and then  
nearly dying  
Clumsy on the soccer field  
But a fish in my neighbor's pool  
And a monkey among branches  
Never afraid of the dark  
Until I got older  
And the graffiti in the abandoned factory  
Was more menacing  
than the smell of bat shit  
With adulthood came the demolishing of  
that moldy place, and so much farmland  
got paved over for crap warehouses that  
will hold cheap toys that command kids'  
attention, if only for a second or two, only  
to be tossed aside.  
When I was a child, I was sweet as candy.  
Everyone thought I was a milky way  
chocolate. Fun to play, love to smile,  
dance, sing until now  
I'm still milky way chocolate, like to play,  
smile, sing, dance. Only one thing wrong,  
I just change. They thought I was mean  
and evil and run and have no respect for  
myself or anyone else. But I always  
thought I was nice, good, smart &  
intelligent in everyway. But now that I  
see why they say I feel violent, cruel  
because of the way people make me.  
So I wish so hard someone could reach  
out and take my pain away and just set  
me free from the horrible slavery in this  
world we're in here today  
So I just wish and wish...  
Num just help me please and bring me  
back to my sweet candy could be.

June M.

My strength is like a pair of crutches.  
Helping somebody stand up when they  
need help.  
My love is like a child getting a puppy for  
Xmas.

Anonymous

Guns: "round 'em up, melt 'em down"  
My dad always says.  
So when anger and angst explodes out  
no lives are lost, no endless possibilities  
irrevocably curtailed by  
some douche bag with a grudge,  
or that kid no one listened to.  
Why not listen to kids before, not after-  
I don't want to hear anymore about,  
"so and so was a loner," or "so and so  
was popular, but had a dark side."  
These things sound reassuring out of the  
mouths of talking heads on CNN, but  
they're isolating, and that's lazy. What's  
the point of branding and profiling  
someone who's gone, who was so selfish  
to take others with them? If most  
murders are crimes of passion, why don't  
we make it harder to murder people by  
getting rid of guns? And in schools, more  
time for expressive art, less pressure on  
kids because too much pressure can feel  
like a loss of control which can turn into  
rage. Rage shouldn't explode out of a gun,  
but out of a pen, a guitar, a microphone  
-hell, even a good hard kick to a soccerball.

Charlotte, Staff

My care is like a power source.  
My care gives me courage.  
My courage gives me power.  
My power gives me determination and  
responsibility. My determination and  
responsibility gives me the care to care  
for my little sister.

Joemonkey

My friend-ship is like love. It's very delicate and taken for granted because of the lack of loyalty or trust. Might have problems but usually pulls through. It can be there very easily and can take a long time but if its there, there's no reason to hide. When its time to move on it breaks but never gives up and tries to find its place.

Zachariah S.

Nowhere...

I feel like the trees in a storm  
helpless and stuck breaking and bending  
A storm howling like wolves  
on a full moon  
Everyone scared and screaming  
at the top of their lungs  
The darkness is surrounding everyone  
No way out, we're trapped  
in the middle of a maze  
A light at the end of the tunnel  
is all we ask for  
We never see it, just like the end  
The isolation is closing in on us  
just like the walls  
Not knowing we're following our instincts  
Being torn apart like the petals of a flower  
as it dies  
Slowly but not painfully.  
Just like our lives  
We are like oranges and apples  
being squeezed to a juice  
Nowhere to go  
Nowhere to run to  
We are left for dead  
No more for us to do.

Batgirl (CJ)

My dreams are like the ocean that dances across my mind, whispering to the world to hold on, and giving me strength that wanders through my body like a hot cup of tea.

Dreams of hope and joy that one day I will be whole. Those that defend my honor with a armor of steel like the tall building's construction frames.

My determination falls short like the justice of the world. And only wisdom can make me stand and take the responsibility of everything that is on my full overflowing plate. While the power of others keep changing the rules.

Djuna

My trust is like a door, sometimes I'll open up for you other times you can't get to me to open.

My hope is as strong as the first flower that blossoms after a cold harsh winter.

My trust is like a rock, you can kick me around and I'll still be there, but as soon as you to skip me over water I'm sinking to the bottom never to be seen again.

Cashmier W.

Grandma you're my pencil and my paper. I need us to stay together. Even though sometimes I can't find you, you're always there. We had sometimes when our relationship got messed up but we always ended up forgiving each other and the mistakes are erased cause we can't let anyone or anything break us up. Without you, I feel like there's no point of me but than you call and help me try and never give up. You're my best friend and always will be until death do us apart. All our memories I will try to remember. Even if I forget, they still happened. I love you with all my heart and I will see you soon.

Zachariah S.

My voice is like a forest, sometimes it's  
barely a whisper other times it's a scream.

Jazmyne C.

I feel like a phone because everybody  
uses me. I have so many features that no  
one knows about or tries to figure out,  
doesn't even bother or take advantage of.  
And I'm different. Same in some ways,  
different in the others. I have feelings, I  
shut down when I'm mad, stop trying  
when I'm sad, freeze when I'm nervous or  
hesitate and work when I'm happy.  
People like to hit me, hurt me and bring  
me down, but after  
I reset and try to forget.

Zachariah S.

ICYUT

You're gone, but never forgotten.  
You showed me how to be strong and  
keep going on. You once told me it's  
tough to be tough. I've never got to say  
thanks for being there for me in the  
hospital, I'm happy as ever to claim you as  
my godmom because to me you were  
more of a mom than my own mother  
could ever be, and I love you for that.  
REST IN PARADISE CMJ

Barbra, B.

Today I feel like leaves on trees,  
throughout the season the colors change,  
as my mood changes and my feelings.  
When fall comes the leaves depart from  
the trees and people step on them just to  
hear the crunch. The crunch of the leaves  
are my aches, pains and my feelings.  
I feel like music that's missing a beat.  
I feel like a rat in a maze, so many options  
but the dead ends are everywhere I go.  
I feel like a jigsaw puzzle.

My family has a piece of me, and I have a  
piece of them, so we all are missing a part  
of each other.

Barbra B.

Today I am thinking of you.  
How could I forget?  
Because I'm far away?  
Because I do not see you as often as I  
wish?  
There's nothing in this world.  
That will ever make your sweet voice fade.  
The voice in my head I'm fighting for,  
though the odds are against us.  
And people try to stand against us.  
They attempt to wiggle in between.  
But as I told you from the start.  
I'll always hold you close.  
Protect you.  
Love you.  
Nobody will ever harm you.  
No matter how far I am.  
Especially when I'm close enough  
To feel your sweet breath exhale.  
My love for you is guiding me.  
Trying to see the light at the end.  
It's pushing me through the storm.  
The wind always attempting to break me.  
Hoping I just lie down too broke to move.  
Hopeless of our future.  
But nothing will keep me from you.  
Only God himself could separate us.

Johnathon S.

I'm locked behind the doors  
inside of a safe  
and I'm lost...

Batgirl

Night after night  
Through my endless prayers  
I look over at the bleachers, at the people  
rooting for our team, and at times I see  
nobody. Then I remember God is in our  
hearts through the time we're apart. In  
the evenings I watch the sunset to remind  
me of your beauty. I climb the tallest tree  
and look out at the landscape so perfectly  
sculpted. Just as you are a perfect  
creation from God. Perfect for me.  
I love you Kayci.  
I love you my sweet sky  
You are my best friend  
I couldn't find another  
Alone by myself in silence & sadness  
I feel empty, but with you I feel whole,  
Happy to see you when I can.  
I steal silent moments to myself to look at  
you, to watch you sleep.  
I find peace and happiness by your side  
I love the way you look at me, the way you  
smile, your laugh, I commit it all to  
memory. You give me strength  
when I'm weak and give up.  
You are my rock, my life, my one true love  
Dear sweet, sweet sky, I will love you  
always.

Kyla S.

I never thought I could give birth to  
perfection, but Son you have changed that  
thought. I've raised you as a single parent  
and never once did you complain that you  
didn't have this or that. You became my  
rock, the only thing that kept me on track.  
With open communication we flowed  
through every stream and never once  
went completely under. You are my  
strength, you protect me and stand up for  
me as if you are the older one.  
When I say perfection, its not like  
everyone believes it's suppose to mean.  
Perfection to me is you and all the things  
you are. Thank you for being you.

Djuna, Staff

Today I feel like the rain trying to break  
through the clouds  
Everything's up in the air, but I'm  
carrying this tremendous will to get  
through.  
Holidays are hard for me and my children  
because all of the elders are gone away.  
Finances are low and gifts are none.  
Trying to see if there's any help and the  
doors keep closing in my face. I'm strong  
and have been through it all, so I know  
that this is another stepping stone to get  
where I need to be.  
And on top of it all, its my wedding  
anniversary that's gone unknown and  
unrecognized.  
Its alright though, I will treat myself to an  
ice cream.

Djuna, Staff

I am a dandelion  
People say that I am a weed  
But I am a beautiful flower  
You can push me but I will come back  
So stop putting me down  
Then maybe you can see my beauty

Sierra

My head stuck in the fog  
Can't avoid the smoke  
Wishing and missing all the choices in life  
I could've had

Nate



My live feels like roses in a park that are  
getting the right amount of sunlight  
Today I feel like the sun shining  
without clouds blocking it  
Today I feel like a calm shallow river.  
It only takes one person to stand  
and make a difference.  
I want to change the world, it's not  
impossible just a lot of hard work.  
It's worth it.  
I hope that once I can inspire people and  
let them know that nothing is impossible.  
Believing in yourself is better than  
dreaming yourself doing something.  
Never ever waste a second, minute or hour  
holding back. If you want something  
then go get it because life is too short  
to waste time.

Shyi'A

To my mother-  
Dear Mom,  
I miss you a lot  
I really hope that you're doing your classes  
to get me back  
Without you my world is dismantled  
You were the pop to my corn  
The sugar to my high  
The sun to my light  
You made me try hard,  
not wanting to give up  
Just seeing you made me just want to spend  
my whole day with you,  
Not going to school,  
Not playing with my friends  
Just being with the woman  
I miss the most.

Shyi'A

Sin'Cere,  
You are like cotton candy  
Really sweet and soft

Keymani

I'm like the star that lights up the sky.  
I'm like the sun who brightens up  
everybody's day.  
I'm like the river that can't stop moving.  
I'm like a rick that skips through the water  
and never stops.  
I'm like a broadcast that will never stop  
talking.  
Behind my skin is a warm heart that keeps  
beating,  
Now who am I...  
Well I'm still trying to figure that out  
All I really know is where I want to go now  
am I wrong for trying to be something foreal

Shyi'A

This paper is my b-----  
I'll scare it with a lit wick  
I'm sick for every line spit  
Define, divine, and rhyme splits  
It's whatever fits  
Including knife and two slit wrist  
My paper is just the gist of this  
Bet you burn off a molar, glittering  
Just sitting watching me knitting life  
Leather face lacing on better face  
"This paper is my b----,  
I'll scare it with a lit wick"  
cuz I don't have the wits to take misfits  
and turn them into historic rich kids  
I miss this list of ridiculousness  
no risk surviving the unknown  
I'm thriving off a spinning dome feeling  
tipped almost home alas all grown  
An inhuman human being dead in my head  
Be founded, just to be founded  
between the trick walls tendering

GB

Beyond the lies  
There's a girl excited to see the light  
Beyond the light there's a girl  
Excited to see real life  
Beyond the shadow there's  
A girl ready to see true love  
Beyond the pain there's a girl  
Whose pain becomes real life  
Beyond the rain the girl  
Is ready to see some shine  
Beyond the shine sometimes  
Its shine becomes grey,  
But beyond the grey  
Its darkness becomes light  
waiting for the girl to shine on her own.

Tiffani

My love, the one and only thing I love  
Something sweet as candy, my son  
He makes me feel loved  
When my day is down  
He makes me happy, I love my son  
Being without him makes me feel unloved  
I miss my son

Keymani

Tina better than bobina  
I don't know Spanish but I gotta hand this to  
her massive ass alas lassie  
Finally lastly there's a big hole in my heart  
blasting careful guys mind state  
Keep in mind  
I always stay  
"I'll say"

GB

I am like a pit bull because  
People just automatically think you're  
"horrible"  
Or they just have the wrong impression until  
you know them

Tiffani

If my life was a harsh jungle,  
You'd be a compass guiding me to the  
safety I need  
If my life was a dog,  
You'd be the disease ridden fleas  
on my back  
Distracting and irritating me

Chloe

Dear Devin,  
Thank you for showing me the light when I  
was so blind to it  
Thank you for being only the person to not  
abandon me in my time of need  
Thank you for saying what you did  
and not saying maybe even some  
of the things you should have  
Also I am sorry for not giving you back your  
favorite sweat shirt  
Sorry for not keeping my promises  
Sorry for not being with Josh  
like I should be  
And not taking the time that I should  
And not showing patience to others  
like you showed me  
With love, always,

Chloe

Dear Jordan,  
I'm sorry for what I've put you through  
For the things I said in drunken rage  
For the people I know I've pushed you  
away from  
And for the things I haven't told you  
But also I thank you for keeping me safe  
when I felt that no one else could  
And for showing me things and places that  
I'm sure not so many others could  
Thank you so so much for introducing me to  
an intoxicatingly loving loud family  
That has shown me more love than any  
others on this earth  
Love,

Chloe

My love for you is like the ocean  
My heart is like water  
I'm sorry for all the hard things  
I've done towards you but your emotions are  
like the ocean  
High in the sky like raising my gun

Anonymous

If my life is like a bubble, you are the nails  
waiting on the floor to pop them.

Ian

Thank you mom for giving me a chance to  
live as your adoptive son  
I am truly sorry for not being able to  
understand all the good that you tried to do  
for me  
Thank you dad for building me up as a man  
for the last 14 years  
Still I am sorry you won't be able to see me  
fully grown  
Sorry for being really immature whenever  
you needed the big Ian  
The only Ian that could care for the family

Ian

Where would I be now?  
Not for you would I be dead, alive,  
a different character?  
I don't know but I do know I am happier to  
have you, Mom

Sebastian

My life, your gift,  
Mother to thrive,  
Pray I don't fall far from the tree  
As if Satan's seed,  
Filled me with greed,  
Let me live long enough to meet your needs

Marco

If I was a basketball  
You would be my hoop  
You have been there through my life  
You have been that person that always knew  
and could help me through paths and lead  
me to the right direction  
When I lay with you I feel tightened and  
secured  
I know you have always had my back and I  
am happy to be able to call you mine

Jordan

Anger and aggression,  
Find me depressing,  
Owned by possession,  
Follow mother in addiction,  
Cry for her three obsessions,  
Lost in all directions,  
Ask for God's face,  
My only question  
Proof of hope in humanity  
Losing all sanity  
Sibling rage cannot answer me

Marco

I've had many dreams of an axe in the rowd.  
I ran to it yet the missing was my foe  
What I needed to continue in this dream,  
still was missing  
Though I missed  
I kept the axe by my side  
It told me you don't miss anything  
for here comes the same moon your mother  
had seen when she began to bloom  
So do not worry for this bad dream will end  
and in the day you wake up to find your sun,  
a friend  
By the time I spent my words like arrows  
Outside now Babylon like slaves of the  
Pharaohs

Jaime

If my life was hell  
You'd be the devil  
A master of lies  
My life was like play-doh  
in your capable hands  
I'm a kid,  
Can't you see?  
I'm not yet ready to leave  
But had to grow to take care of myself  
Now look where I'm at  
Where you think I'd end up?  
Just like you?  
A drug addict in your juggled world,  
playing magic with our cat on the board.  
But no, I flew away to a more lovable world

Journey

Wondering about what to write  
Wondering about who to be  
How to be  
Overthinking  
Underdoing  
Stopped up and anxious  
Toying with the potential for authenticity  
Finding poetry?  
Digging shallows  
Not finding much

Joe, Staff

If my life was your couch,  
You'd be the pillow,  
Firm and supportive-  
That pit of comfort  
Only half way, though  
There's limit to the comfort,  
the harsh truth of distance like the scratchy  
wooden side I always flip over  
but I can be comfortable for a minute and  
allow some moments of fantasy  
half reality at most

Joe, Staff

Is she happy? Is she sad?  
The world may never know,  
But she knows  
Hi, I am Jordan  
But prefer to be called Marshelle  
I never know how I am feeling  
Sad  
Happy  
Depressed  
Joyful  
Tired  
Bored  
At school there are many things to be  
thankful for  
But at home you may never know  
Will I be hit now?  
Will I be hit later?  
Will they scream at me now?  
Or will they scream at me later?  
Will they spoil me?  
Or make me feel hopeless?  
I never know  
I try hard every day to keep on living  
But WHY?  
For that one person  
My little brother Tre  
My little brother Tre keeps me alive  
He is my joy in life  
I practically raised him  
He is loved harder than I am  
But I still love him  
Going days without seeing his is harder  
Then you think  
I feel lonely inside  
But I know the first opportunity  
I get I will squeeze him and hug him  
Because he's the love of my life  
The littler brother that I see as a son that I  
raised  
The one that I taught everything I know  
We are two alike  
I play basketball  
He plays basketball  
I eat a lot  
He eats a lot  
The relationship is what keeps me going on  
in life

Jordan

Pen seems permanent  
Shows when you draw  
Something happens  
That has to be perfect  
But I am not perfect  
Am just me  
Then people make white out  
And try to change with white out  
To make me perfect in their own vision  
But I am not perfect to everyone else,  
I can't be perfect, but I can be me

Sebastian

I swallow my fear  
Something I never thought that I'd have  
and opened my eyes  
Said it's about time,  
To kill you now and watch you die  
To see the light of life collide with mine to  
make me stronger  
As I stand  
That much taller than before  
The years that pass  
I hold the guilt upon shoulders  
For taking such an innocent life  
My only friends now dead and gone  
It's time to move on  
So I took the stairs and ran away into the  
night  
I gave up the fight  
The fight for life  
And gave myself away to the best of sins  
And that's the end of my case

Journey

Can I get some water?  
Cause I am about to spit fire  
I want to roll my life like a tire,  
No bumps because I don't like cops or opps  
I don't mess with snitches and I want god to  
grant me wishes if they mess with me  
Because I will never be a wannabe

Donovan

My voice is like a basketball  
Every time I shoot it  
I speak  
My voice is like a pen  
Waiting to write the truth down  
My voice is like water,  
Every time I talk it gets hotter  
I'm quicker than an otter  
I am your Darth Vader,  
also known as your father

Mikeal

My voice is like a bear  
Loud and strong  
My voice can be heard all around

Dominic

My voice comes out in sports  
Varsity since a 7<sup>th</sup> grader  
Basketball  
Track  
Swimming  
That's the only way I speak  
LOUDLY  
Everyone knows me for being an athlete  
Always cheating for the #11  
That's how I get out of the frustration  
and hurt  
Not a ballerina  
No more  
Jordan is all grown up

Jordan

Can I get some water?  
Because I'm about to spit this fire  
I get money as fast as bees go to honey

Jayquan

My voice is like a mouse  
Lost deep in a house  
My voice is like raindrops  
falling from the sky  
My voice is like a mouse not above a squeak  
My voice is like raindrops  
Falling away  
My voice is like a bubble  
Popping in an instant

Marda, Staff

Love is joyful and caring  
and it's so wonderful to have you  
You are beautiful and wonderful  
Don't forget that you can do anything  
you want to  
Just remember you're awesome and fun  
to hang around  
Don't forget that

Cassie

People don't see the struggle I go through  
They think they know me  
but they don't know me  
I been through ups and downs unlike you  
Being pulled by this thing called addiction  
It calls me in and I pull through, trying to  
say stop but the disease caught me head on  
I bet you never know or think about that, I  
bet you're sorry for the things you say now  
It's okay-  
Narcotics Anonymous has my back  
unlike you  
You stay, trying to push me  
But not no more  
I roll up to treatment before I roll to you  
You were dragging me to death  
Is that what you wanted?  
But sorry it's not what you want  
It was what I want  
I'm calling sobriety  
Something you wouldn't understand

Brittany

I see you for the first time  
not knowing how I feel  
Having mixed emotions  
Why did you walk out on me?  
Why did you leave me?  
Are you ashamed of me?  
Did you not want me?  
Why am I asking you why?  
While I'm sitting here looking at you,  
I see where I get my height from  
I see me  
When I look at you  
I'm your "baby girl" that you have not seen  
for 14 years  
Where were you when I took my first step or  
heard my first words?  
Where were you during father daughter  
dances at my school and our bond?  
I don't care if you were an addict  
You could have been there for me  
But where were you?  
Now I see you laying here in this bed  
Half way dead  
Was it worth it?  
Am I not worth the father love that I needed  
back then?  
You could have had me and drugs but you  
chose one  
It's okay if you put drugs before me, again  
I've already been through the feeling and  
it's going to make me stronger  
Dad, oh wait. Should I say Mr. Keith?  
I hope you get it through your head that I  
was worth more than the needle that you  
stuck up your arm  
I love you no matter what in the end  
I am still going to love you  
Do you love me?  
Do you hear me crying at night when you  
aren't there?  
Do you ever see how I felt and took things  
since I never had a dad  
I don't think so, because if you did,  
You would've come for me  
I see your lines on the graph  
Slowing down, and I see you now  
But won't see you again tomorrow

Keishana

As I sit under the bridge  
of sadness and doubt  
I hear the only thing that makes me  
go to sleep  
Rat squeaks, car honks, and splash of my  
own vomit  
The past and the present is like a rock on my  
chest and the thoughts of my fate  
being held to the wall with a gun to the head  
not knowing when the bullet will come  
But when all seems hopeless  
The only thing that held me, bathed me, and  
comforted me is my mother  
She is the wall that keeps me from the bad  
She is the brick wall that keeps me away  
from the wolf  
She is my cover to keep me warm  
and her arms are my bed  
and her soft chest is my pillow  
And she sings to me and I fall asleep

Aaron

It was too late  
I already left that Wednesday morning on a  
plane that would land 807.7 miles away  
Goodbye California  
I didn't even get to say goodbye  
That very day I was in the hospital and I got  
discharged  
I was there for overdose to try to end my life  
I wanted to say goodbye to the people that  
made me feel alone  
And the reason why I attempted suicide  
How dumb am I?  
Now that I'm gone,  
they've worried about me  
It's too late,  
I'm already gone  
Do I even have real friends?  
No.  
My family doesn't even call me  
I'm here alone  
No place to live  
And nowhere to go  
It's too late.

Ruby

The fear,  
It's always sad when someone has to die  
After they are gone  
Life slowly passes by  
A few quick speeches  
and a syringe full of death  
With that you just took your final breathe  
You always watched me as I grew  
Part of my story that no one ever knew  
And as I write this poem I realize  
that this tear  
is in memory of you  
and shouldn't be my fear  
Death shouldn't haunt the life I live today  
And I shouldn't yell my name in forte  
But just knowing that darkness  
is coming my way  
That any time can hold me down to lay  
Knowing that there's no way out  
No way to scream for help or even shout  
Stuck six feet under the cold  
and dark ground  
Alone, not to make a single sound  
This dark confusion that you speak  
Holds me down,  
I can't take a peak to look to search  
Of that light of day  
I'll be stuck only to lay  
Lay down without a way to stand  
All my memories are soon to forget  
I should have fear  
and should have fought them  
My fear that I can't help but stall  
And I'll live life like it's nothing at all

Halie

People tease each other  
People bully each other with mean words  
People cut each other out  
People step on one another  
No remorse- no worries  
Each person has their own agendas  
Words hurt

Marda, Staff

From early morning 'til end of day  
I put my heart into what I do  
From early morning 'til end of day  
I wish and wonder will these kids be okay?  
From early morning 'til end of day  
I think of the ways I can be  
of assistance today  
From early morning 'til end of day  
I am heartsick by their stories  
From early morning 'til end of day  
I wish there was a way to heal their pain

Marda, Staff

### Porcelain

A face of porcelain so clean  
So white  
No trace of the tears  
She had left behind  
No trace of the battle  
She tried to fight  
No trace of the words she had  
softly spoken last night  
She was so peaceful, right where she lay  
Though nobody knew  
what made her that way  
Everybody wished  
it was better she was there  
Where she lay  
Alone in the coffin  
Dawned in her new clothes  
A face of porcelain  
So soft but yet so cold  
No marks to show of the battle inside  
The marks covered up of the battle outside  
Nobody would listen to her battle- her fight  
Now she lay dead alone tonight

### Golden

My fear of aloneness is deep and cavernous  
An ancient cave, echoing to no one  
To combat the fear is to risk it again  
Sometimes, it's more comfortable and safe  
to let it be quiet  
I don't really know how widely and deeply  
The fear swells until I shout in the dark,

Try to connect  
Would I scare them away, if they knew too,  
How deep and how wide

Joe, Staff

I am something of great divine  
I am a gem. I shine like the sun  
On a hot summers day  
I will never parish nor break  
Whereas if I cannot be a gem  
I will be the rain. I will shed from the clouds  
Not because I'm unwanted but because my  
job here is done  
I will water the beautiful gardens  
And cause flowers to grow even in the  
darker places  
I will fall on epic kissing scenes  
Where people will become clichés  
I will feed the daisies and they will know  
That even being small has worth  
I will create puddles of water and add to  
wonderful oceans that people will swim  
through. When I am a puddle  
and I am stepped on,  
I may splash onto unaware bystanders  
For I am upset and that is my retaliation and  
misplaced anger  
If I can not be the rain I will be a weed  
Strong and bold  
Even if I am told that people are disgusted  
By my existence  
I will grow and grow  
My leaves will expand into grand beds  
for incoming seeds to rest  
And be reborn  
I will grow daisies and dandelions for the  
children who know of true beauty  
Children who will come and pick my  
dandelions  
Will be blown away by small kids as they  
run free and play  
They will be wished upon from the saddest  
of souls  
Even to the happiest of ones

Johnna Lynn



My fears are people  
Who laugh at me and my people  
And hurt them,  
Those people are what I call monsters  
Some died and others want to rise up  
And be the only hope for everyone  
But I fear for my family  
They are a beautiful garden that is dying  
I am the gardener  
Healing my roots but death and sadness  
consumes them all  
And I am the dying light  
but I am brighter than the sun

Aaron

Each day I wonder why  
Some days I want to cry  
Each day I wonder why  
How could I have done so little with my life  
Each day I wonder why  
My mistakes are like razors cutting me deep  
in my soul  
Snarling at me each day  
Time and patience they say  
My mistakes make me cry  
Can I make it through this stress  
Squishing me deep in my chest?  
Piling precautions like books on a shelf  
Pushing forward further deeper  
Seeping downward like a mudslide  
Landing on the floor and from high above

Marda, Staff

Father,  
I am here to make things better  
Not here to make you even madder  
I am open to the needy not here to take your  
useless beatings  
I am here to change the world  
Not to cover up all these sores  
I am here to dry her tears  
Not for you to be my fears  
I am here to live my life  
I am here to hide the knives  
I am here to stand up tall  
Not here to take these falls

I am here to make my days  
Not here to sit and be your slave  
I am here to be the one that flew  
Not ever would I be like you

Halie

You are the vulture  
that screams words of hatred at me  
You use your whip to hurt my body  
I was told your home would be safe for me  
I am not your portrait  
To paint with scars and bruises  
I wish you could see just how much pain  
You cause me  
Everything you said I believed was true  
I am not your punching bag  
To beat when you're sad or angry  
I am not a wall that you can hit  
When ever you feel upset  
I am not like my mother  
Or anyone else you choose to compare me to  
I am not the words you spew to injure me  
mentally  
And leave invisible scars inside of my mind

Johnna Lynn

Where am I now?  
Just another home out of thousands before  
But now I'll remember  
My mind is clear, my blood stream clean,  
And it's written down on paper  
All I want is a boy who will love me  
All I want is a man to keep me and love me  
Until the end of our days  
I can see them now, tiny little feet running  
around, little brown eyes open wide  
Seeing what we don't  
Depending on me to love them,  
I'm too young but I don't care what you  
think  
I'm a mom at heart and I know I'm ready for  
the biggest commitment of my life

Journey

Dad,  
You're gone from me  
And you are gone from my memory  
I don't know if I would call you Dad  
or a traitor  
There is one thing I know for sure  
I should rise up and not be an abomination  
I'm not your Frankenstein  
Someday, I hope you die  
Behind the prison bars,  
You have cursed me  
I hate when people call me Aaron B---  
I hate that name  
That name hurts me like a wasp sting

Aaron

Why is it that even when Boston is on my  
mind you seem to sneak your way on scene?  
I know he's way more important  
But the impression you left on me is  
unforgettable  
You brought so much pleasure  
You showed me a side of things I've never  
known  
Only seen from a distance  
And you took me through  
So now you see who  
I am sad to see you go

Journey

Once again...

Here we are once again  
Standing in silence  
With all the words left unsaid  
Dead heat fills every crevice  
One again there's pain  
Once again there's nothing left  
All the pain and sorrow I felt  
Is spilled out across the floor  
in a deep shade of crimson  
All the scars on my skin fade away  
Once again the demons have won

Shelby

## Happy Thoughts

You are like a fairy in a jar  
Full of glitter  
You are like colors full of happy things  
Colors all around the world  
Colors from a rainbow  
You are like gold at the end  
of the watery rainbow  
You are like the beautiful sun  
that shines everyday  
You are the music to my ears  
You are as beautiful as can be  
You are so handsome  
Handsome with your beautiful curly hair  
You are full of happy things  
You are such a nice person  
You have a great personality  
A beautiful self esteem

Shoon- Geela

And now I cry  
Quietly so no one will know  
Just how much I miss you  
All of you  
But most of all your soft, curly hair  
And gentle green eyes  
I cry for you Brandon  
And now I cry  
A shoulder, heaving sob  
In a place where no one will hear the pain  
in my voice  
Of losing you to my mother  
who never understood  
Just how much you mean to me  
I will always love you

Journey

My family is like the last old person to learn how to use the internet. We have our own way of doing things that worked for us for years. We run, climb, and ski while others sit and watch tv.

My dad is like a mountain goat- sturdy, quiet, aloof, and with an amazing ability to climb up steep inclines.

My mom is like a lioness- she does whatever it takes to provide for family, friends, and community.

My brother is like an old Ford truck- it takes a lot to get him moving but once you do, he's sturdy and reliable.

And I am like the sassy grandma from a sitcom that everyone goes to with their problems to vent or get answers.

Together we laugh at how different we all are, and then go on an adventure

Anonymous

My family is like a volcano, we erupt then later cool off then erupt again.

My aunt is like the lava, she appears to be rare but she is just the same as any other lava.

My cousin is like the dark smoke, mean and evil and keeps the lava hot.

My sister is like the rocks, hard outside but will move when forced by lava.

My brother is like outer layer of the volcano, barely noticed but is holding the volcano together.

And I am like the little grasses on the volcano, so small,

You won't even know I'm there.

We are a huge volcano, that erupts every time we are together.

Sarah

Who am I?

Really, who am I?

Am I the girl with too many bad stories?

Am I the girl who always feels lost?

With what will I really find my true home halfway across the country

Am I the girl who's desperately trying to climb up a flat concrete wall?

Only to have grit and dust coat my hands like a blanket of shame

Holes in my jeans

Who am I?

Bella is what I hold to, a name

But when I hear others speak it

It sounds foreign and strange

As though they hold up a blanket

Covering my face and tell me

To see the sunset

Who am I?

I'll figure it out one day

Bella

All children are born artists and they lose it along the way like snakes shedding skin I was born, embossed, bronze-cast in beauty and I lost it

Lost it along the way

We lose it along the way

And what are our options?

To find those snake-skin patches,

Stitch them together like continents

That accidentally lost gravity

for a split second

And slipped off the stitches

Stitch them into a single land mass,

new pangea

That I can call my body and reclaim

What was lost when I grew up

Underneath the seams,

You'll find what I'm becoming,

What time can't take away

What we lost along the way

Leigh, Staff

My life,  
Pretend you are in a room  
You've just been born and there is a door in  
front of you  
You walk towards the door  
You want to open the door but you can't  
Because there is another person on the other  
side of the door  
And if you try to open the door,  
that the person would hurt you  
But you still open that door  
And you had three scars afterwards  
You back away for a year  
Then you tried again, and had three more  
scars  
You tried ten more times, each time you got  
three more scars  
After those 11 years  
You didn't want to touch that door  
And then there was another person  
in the room  
And the person told you that there were no  
more monsters  
You didn't believe that person and you  
asked  
"Can you open the door?"  
She said "No" and you said "Why?"  
She said "because you have  
to face your fears"  
You reach for the handle, shaking with fear  
You opened the door and you were free  
And when you turned around,  
that person was you  
You helped yourself, you saved yourself  
You forgave yourself  
And you saw the monster  
and the monster was you  
You, smaller now,  
and you picked yourself up  
And you forgave yourself

Sierra

All I want in life is someone who  
understands  
What it's like to be tossed around like  
you're a piece of garbage  
Not wanted by anyone,  
Treated like you're something,

different than everything  
All I want is to be loved and cared for,  
What I give others as a sign that I'm there  
But instead in return  
I get torn. Not a doubt in my head  
But still continue the day  
All I want is to be known that I help others  
But still don't get it in return

Baby Girl

Wanted: Happiness  
I would trade so many parts of me  
If only to feel happy  
My sarcasm, my Netflix addiction,  
My endless love for ice cream,  
I used to have it: happiness  
But I lost it a few years back  
Been searching ever since,  
Having no work, no glimpse  
If anyone is willing to sell me theirs,  
I'd gladly pay good money  
Or perhaps a trade will do,  
I'd easily give my loneliness to you.  
I'm willing to pitch it if you're unconvinced;  
My loneliness is awesome- there are  
numerous pros and very few cons  
Pro: dogs are better than people  
Pro: no obligations to go out  
on a Friday night  
Pro: not sharing a bottle of wine  
and popcorn  
Pro: watching all the best shows on Netflix  
in a timely fashion  
Pro: not sharing your legs all fall / winter /  
spring  
Pro: buying ice cream and knowing  
no one will eat it all  
Pro: taking up the entire bed  
by sprawling out and sleeping diagonally  
And the list can go on, see?  
There are endless benefits to having no one  
to share your life with  
But at the end of the day,  
I'd still rather be happy

Rachel, Staff

Geneva was the name he gave her,  
She forgot what her name really was,  
Day by day,  
She lost herself,  
And started believing who Geneva was  
Changed her ways around town,  
Became known as a person in her gown,  
Never got the chance to know  
who she truly is,  
Got lost so easily in the harsh life,  
Who ate her soul alive,  
And yet she began to die,  
Til' the day she remembered her true name,  
And decided to change for the better,  
She couldn't take it anymore,  
To think he was so clever

Baby Girl

I am a window,  
In that window there are many stars  
For most people, but in my window  
I only have one star  
The star represents love and happiness

CC

I am a door,  
The door that has scratches,  
This is what you see:  
I have scratches from the problems  
I have chipped paint  
This is from all the fights  
All the imperfections  
But all you see is a plain door

CC

You wake up and smell the roses,  
But you're still in bed,  
And you take your morning doses,  
Yet you're still not fed,  
You put your day clothes on,  
And head down the stairs...

Baby Girl

I'm a robot with pieces I do not want  
Some are rusted, some are broken,  
some don't help me anymore  
but my problem is that  
I don't know which is which  
I have so many I can't tell  
But there's a story behind each one  
Sometimes they fade like scars  
But most of the time they are open  
Where everyone can see them  
Some people make fun of me for them  
But most of the time I get beat for them

CC

I keep losing my keys  
But on purpose each time  
I want to open new doors  
To allow your presence in but can't  
I've misplaced a place for you in my heart  
The ceilings in my heart have holes in them,  
Are leaking,  
And my buckets to catch them have turned  
into floods  
I'm swimming down this river  
To find you  
But it's engulfing me,  
My feelings are submerged in my throat  
I keep drawing maps and leave them in  
places unholy,  
So that I can find them once more,  
Every time I miss you-  
I find myself back to places we've been,  
Bus stops, gardens, and cafes  
Where we sat for hours  
And I learned you are such a great person  
Just not for me

Christina, Classroom Assistant

My confidence is shoved deep down  
in my pockets  
Even the laundry lint is above it  
If only I can find it under rocks  
In the pollen of flowers  
If my confidence were a seed  
It would be one that nobody has seen  
Invisibility-  
Walk down the street like you have a ruler  
taped to your back  
Like you are a dandelion about to sprout  
Stand straight like no one sees you  
Because if you are aware that people  
can see you-  
You'll wilt and you don't want the sun  
to burn you  
Your existence  
You want to be your existence  
You are sacred temple soul,  
Feel liberated

Christina, Classroom Assistant

We are like electrons  
spinning around the nucleus of this table,  
this city, this world,  
not touching, but moving so hopefully  
near each other,  
hoping for some of the warmth  
that comes from being so near,  
even when we're afraid to be here.  
We are like waves  
moving so separately in the ocean,  
some smooth, some angry,  
carrying all the weight of the rage and pain  
up from under the bottom  
to let it explode into the air  
instead of churning inside of us  
every second, unable to find our calm.  
We hit the shore and accidentally  
crash back into each other,  
but sometimes being thrown together  
is a closeness like medicine  
that we have secretly ached for,  
others that finally understand  
the kinds of storms  
that we've been through.  
We are like all kinds of things  
growing wildly in a field –

some of us have thorns  
and need them for protection  
to keep the blackberries of our love safe  
so not just anyone can steal them.  
Some are like soft grasses or small flowers.  
Some are thought of by others as weeds,  
but there's nothing there  
that wasn't put there for a reason,  
that doesn't carry it's own kindness  
and beauty into this world.  
You just need to look deeper,  
and you will *always* find it.

Vicky Edmonds, Teaching Artist

Who am I?  
I am black and blue and purple  
trying to bloom beauty  
instead of bruises...  
Who am I? I am a lost child  
trying to find my way home,  
to bring myself comfort  
when there's no one else to bring it to me.  
What's caught in my throat  
are the lies I still tell myself –  
"I'm okay, I'm good,"  
when I'm really coming apart.  
But maybe coming apart  
will help spill all this sadness  
out of all the parts of me  
till there are no more silent screams  
that I'm trying not to listen to.  
Who am I? I don't know.  
Some say I'm a soul  
but I'm still trying to find it.  
Is it tucked into the back pocket  
of my mind? My body?  
And how do I listen for it  
to find out who I really am?

Vicky Edmonds,

**Invisible Beauties...**

*poetry for revealing depth, truth & meaning*