

DRAW INSIDE THE BOX.



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## **Portland, Our Body Isn't On This Earth**

Shawntai Brown

It isn't dead either.

Smell the sulfur and brick,  
see the glass scattering like  
hail.

No one was expecting our anger  
to precipitate storm-heavy streets.

We prefer light showers  
misting. quiet. hushed songs,  
hymns our pastors and grandmothers  
hummed.

Until they found their heritage hung

And fried and  
Shredded

for postcards.

That's when we began wailing  
like winds through bricks  
that pushed us too hard,  
too narrow,  
and we had to break them.

---

**Dear Trees (like Aiyanas and Tamirs),**

Shawntai Brown

You are not disposable  
Not melanin and melancholy  
Or cracked bark  
Not limbs whipped by winds  
You are forest and fortress

They thin you out  
And you replenish  
Grow upwards  
Defy sky

Your leaves clapping like a choir

## **Rain Forest**

Ty Sisler-Richer

Rain does not fall in the forest  
The clouds are full of ash  
Cities surrounded in toxic fumes  
As money and sanity clash

Slash and burn turns day into night  
For the fires in the rainforest rage  
The world watches in helpless horror  
As we enter a new age

We just sit there and let it burn  
We let it burn for money  
We look the other way  
Who cares? Our lives are sunny.

Be the change. It starts with you.  
What will you do?

15

-M. Foster

It's a national epidemic, just like the Black Plague in the 14th century.  
Over half of the trafficking cases that were active in 2018 in the land of the free;  
They were human trafficking.  
Now notice how I said land of the free?  
Well are we really free if there's still human trafficking?  
It's a real epidemic; just like the spread of HIV in 1983.  
Take it from me;  
Because I was almost trafficked when I was 15.  
These people lie and are deceitful;  
And they're everywhere on this beautifully broken planet.  
I'm sorry,  
I'm not trying to scare you,  
I'm trying to get the point across to you;  
Like others tried for me.  
Look at me,  
I was almost trafficked at 15.

## **Dog Fighting**

Cambrynne Giem

You look right past my hungry eyes  
And yell at me if I make a noise  
My collar chokes me  
But you don't care  
All you care about is the money  
I am going to make you

But you don't think about the police find you  
You don't know about the jail time  
You don't care that your career could go down the drain  
All you care about is the money

But when the police do find you  
You plead guilty  
But all I hear are your lies  
Your just pleading to keep your money

You kept me in a wire crate that outgrew me years ago  
You don't care about my broken bones  
Oh, toughen up seems to be your favorite saying  
I've never seen a ray of sunshine  
All I see are the bloody scars  
The limp bodies of the unfortunate dogs  
Like rag dolls thrown to the floor  
To this day the memories haunt my dreams  
The owners curse because all they care about  
Is the money

I remember when I was in the ring  
It was a small cage  
No way out  
All so you could get some money

Let me ask you a question is the money worth it  
Is it worth losing your job, your money, your family  
You lost everything you own  
All for that filthy money

So I ask once again was it worth it  
Was the money worth it?



## **February 14th**

Chelsey Hertel

February 14th will never be the same.  
I thought it was supposed to be a day of happiness and love  
But instead a day of pain  
And this was not an accident  
But a tragic 7 minutes of sorrow  
But the sorrow lives on every day.

I don't care what you say,  
February 14th will NEVER be the same.  
You think I'm "overreacting"  
But I'm not  
I'm simply still aching  
Since what happened that day

And so I live for parkland  
Live for all 17 lives that were lost  
Because I might miss one day of school,  
But that's nothing compared to 17 people missing,  
The rest of their lives.

## Untitled

Jimmy Flom

Once plastic is manufactured, it's here to stay. Plastic does not biodegrade, instead it breaks down into small fragments that get into waterways very easily. The fragments are almost impossible to collect and can accumulate in birds, fish and other marine life. They block digestive tracts, diminish the urge to eat, and alter feeding behavior, all of which reduce growth and reproductive output. These plastic fragments will eventually end up in the food we eat. This won't just affect the fish, but it will also hurt the coral because the fish will not be eating all of the bad bacteria off of all the coral and this will cause some of the coral to die off.

Fish also mistake plastic for food daily. Plastic has been found in more than 60% of all seabirds and in 100% of sea turtles species, that mistake plastic for food. And when animals ingest plastic, it can cause life-threatening problems, including reduced fitness, nutrient uptake and feeding efficiency—all vital for survival. I have seen videos of fish that are being hurt by pollution like a sea turtle with a plastic straw embedded in its nose or a whale entangled in a fishing net, approaching divers that release it from harm. Some of these stories have a happy ending, but most do not. Every year, 8 million metric tons of plastics enter our ocean on top of the estimated 150 million metric tons that currently circulate our marine environments. Whether by errant plastic bags or plastic straws winding their way into gutters or large amounts of mismanaged plastic waste streaming from rapidly growing economies, that's like dumping one New York City garbage truck full of plastic into the ocean every minute of every day for an entire year! And that much plastic is bound to have an impact on ocean ecosystems.

We are just at the start of human pollution and if nothing is done soon then in the future it will be a lot harder to clean up our oceans. Many countries have already banned single use plastics and it's time the United States does the same considering that we produce millions of fossil fuels a day. We need to preserve our Earth for many centuries to come. It's time to take action and clean up our waters so our grandchildren can experience their beauty.

## **Silence Of The Lambs**

Eva Leirstein

A lifestyle of sustainability for you and me  
It means I give more than I take  
And leave it better than found.  
It means mother won't weep or bleed.

A conscious consumer at the store  
It means no animal tested brands.  
The line between pets and a meal  
It means a self set of morals.

No water to replenish the drought,  
Where would we be if we didn't eat meat?  
An infectious factory becomes the home  
Of what once was open land and range.

Leave the calve scared and trembling,  
Slaughter the family for an evening barbecue.  
Tear the skin, burn and wash it  
For a brand new leather bag.

Kindness is shown in many ways,  
when will we end mistaking habitats  
For a playing field of unfair advantage.  
Our freezers storing a carcass like a coffin,  
How will we know when to stop?

Scarred eyes, burnt fur, and tremendous fear  
It means chemicals not meant for their skin  
Cages and fight clubs of abandonment  
It means crime, abuse, and selfishness.

## **Water and Never Enough**

Jade Spurgeon

I am currently in a 15 foot deep hole digging, deeper to get well number 1 built in libya. Many people have asked to help but only one person can fit down this 5 foot wide well at once. It is 60 degrees out with a high humidity. I am covered in dirt wearing nothing but jeans and boots. Sweat is dripping from my body like a waterfall on a cliff. I have spent two days and I am almost finished. I have been digging manually because it is a cheaper method than drilling.

Before I started the well I looked around to see how the people of Libya were living. I was on the poor side of town and it looked awful. Many families stayed in one house because their house was destroyed. Everyone's faces looked sad and miserable. They were all calling for help, for some great person to take some time to help. I was the one who decided to take a chance. I could smell smoke in the air, I could feel the sadness in my body, I could hear kids crying, I could taste my mouth getting dryer, and I could see the dirt everywhere around me.

Their faces had the biggest smile on them. The biggest smile was the mother's smile, her smile was as bright as the sun. The mother was at first crying because after installing a tap inside their home, she would have to walk miles to get water. Each day she would walk miles to get water instead of working and earning a wage. This has been hard on the family because they don't have any money. These were some of her words, "I am just so grateful that Jesus was watching over us and decided that from all the hard work my family has done, from all the struggles, and from all the crying, Jesus has sent these wonderful people to help us with our pain."

## **Home Should Not Be That Hard**

Elizabeth Muscott

Driving down a highway in Detroit the traffic was awful. Backed up for miles we continue for hours moving little by little each couple of seconds. Right down the road was a man sitting on the sidewalk holding something.

“Hey dad? Mom? Who is that man?,”

“I’m not sure,” my dad replied. “He is homeless.”

I was young and didn’t understand what homeless meant.

“Grab the bag in the back behind you, we can give him something,” my mom says as we are almost right next to a man at a complete stop.

My dad looks at my mom and I hear him tell her how he probably is just looking for money to buy our drinks. My young mind thought the only drinks he would buy were water or juice. I handed my mom the bag that was lying on the leather seat behind me. We stopped directly across from the man who was holding the sign that read, *Hungry and homeless. Please help, God Bless.* My mom hands the bag filled with socks, gloves, a hat, a long sleeve, toothbrush with toothpaste, water bottles, and some cash. He looked at us, gave us a smile, and walked away without saying anything.

“I told you so Ann, if you would just listen to me shit like that wouldn’t happen,” my dad yells to my mom.

“If he needs something in there he has it. I didn’t give him just cash, it was fifteen dollars and you know what? He has some really nice things in there!,”

I don’t know what that man did to the bag of items he received but I can only hope he truly needed it.

In Petoskey I have personally seen some homeless people on the sides of the roads. After the incident when I was younger it was hard for me to be able to trust anyone in that situation.

A cold winter was coming in the area when me and my family were driving home from the grocery store. I remember specifically seeing a younger couple holding a sign with letters that read, *Please help us. We have a dog and children who are cold*. Holes in their clothes and unbrushed hair, I felt bad for them. I was thinking of what it was like to be homeless but everytime I did my heart would hurt. I kept looking at them when I noticed that they had some very nice belongings with them by their sides. Designer clothing, a nice purse with the women and with the man, a cleaned face while he was holding the dog on a leash. The stoplight went from red to green and I started to really think about if this was all just an act between the two people. I started wondering if they even needed what they were asking for. Questioning if they were just using the dog or the child as an excuse for others to give them things, I have never helped somebody like that. I bring what I can right to local places around Petoskey to do those things. As bad as I feel about that, I would much rather give back to somebody who needs it.

## **Don't Eat That**

Brinn Rider

I don't tell people I am a vegetarian because they assume I'm one of those activists that will preach to them to not eat meat. In reality, I wish I could get myself to eat it because instead, I have to overeat other proteins/vitamins to make up for the lack of red meat. However my brain knows better than to let me forget the images I have seen of factory farms.

I was sitting in class when a friend texted me a link to a video that was soon going to go viral. It was a video of fair life cows, a baby cow being heavily abused and thrown across the room, in a truck, etc. I didn't watch the whole video, I couldn't, but that was yet another reminder to myself why it is I can't get myself to eat any meat. It was later that day, at the dinner table when I told my mom I would cook up some tofu so she did not have to, since I wasn't going to eat the meat she prepared, and it wasn't her job to prepare another separate meal just for me. My dad said something about dinner being delicious, and offered me to try a "small bite". I passed on the offer, and looked at my sister and asked if she had seen the video. Turns out, she, nor my parents had seen it. I went into detail about the video, and the backlash fairlife is getting, meanwhile, my mom put her fork down absolutely nauseated. It wasn't my intention to make them feel guilty for what was on their plates, I was just trying to start a conversation. We coincidentally had Fairlife milk in our glasses that meal, and coincidentally they were all full still at the end of the meal, as were their plates. From then on, it made my sister nauseous to drink any milk after seeing that video (not that it had to do with milk production- it was meat- but it was a cow, and she was disgusted) and had not drank milk for the following 7 months. The point isn't that you see a video and make a life-changing decision to become vegan! Its that most people don't even know the process of the packaged meat that sits in their freezer, most people don't know the conditions these animals grew up in, and when people found out, they were livid for a brief moment, then totally forget the video existed after it was all swept under the rug from the big corporation.

Meat industries heavily mistreat these animals, loading them with steroids to the point where they can't walk, and if they could, they would be knee deep in their own manure. After doing several research studies on the effects of meat production on global warming, Timothy Searchinger, a Princeton University research scholar and co-author of the WRI report, said: "The single most important thing is to eat less beef, that is the overwhelming factor." While he found that "In the average American's diet, greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the food they eat is about the same as the emissions resulting from the energy they use," he said.

## **My New Name**

Mia Swann

-My New Name-

Mia

The name Mia is of Italian and Latin origin

The meaning of Mia is "mine"

It also means missing in action

I am the daughter of Melissa and Jason Swan

And the sister of Miranda and Madison

My family gave me the courage to put myself out there and to not care what other people say about me

I am kind caring and loyal

And someday, I will move to Grand Rapids and become a Cosmetologist

My name is Mia Marie Swan



## **Australia Wildfire 2019-2020**

Burnt paws climb a tree  
Tired feet hop away from the fire  
Terrified yips echo across the open field  
Koalas flee up a tree hoping for safety  
Choking on the smoke  
They don't know that up won't bring them to safety

The fire going on in Australia  
With record-breaking temperatures  
Temperatures so high they are generating thunder and lightning  
Smoke so thick that it is hard to breathe

The people keep all their belongings in their cars  
Ready to flee at any time  
They don't know where they will be the next day  
My cousins built water refuges for the animals  
The animals that have no where to run

Firefighters have been fighting this fire since September 2019  
This fire has almost completely covered the borders of Australia  
Estimates of over half a billion animals dead or dying  
So just be aware  
This fire was caused by extreme heat and drought

#prayforaustralia

## **Psalm 54**

Katie Thompson

I tried to tell you I was falling,  
But when I tried I was already there.  
I hit the bottom of a pit of love,  
And it echoed on the walls of my heart.

And for the first time i'm scared.

Now I'm not scared because I'm in love.  
I'm scared because im in love with you.  
Who am I to destroy a friendship  
we've worked so hard to build?

But maybe that's the thing.  
We didn't work for it at all.  
We just clicked.

To you we clicked as friends,  
But you grab my hand when I'm walking slow  
Lacing your fingers with mine pulling me to your pace.  
And our hands fit so damn well together,  
Almost like god had carved the shape of yours  
to fit in the mold of mine.  
And you hug me when I breathe sadness,  
Wrapping me in your warm embrace.

You know me  
Who I am, what I do, what I think,  
Even though all I think about is you.

You stack your legs on top of my bouncing ones,  
Trying to make them stop,  
And believe me you do.  
I worship a devil named anxiety  
And only you know how to pull me away from his control.

You say just friends.  
I agree lying to your face,  
Cuz my heart is trying to escape,  
Jumping out of my chest.

My feelings caught in my throat  
Burning the way my throat does when I try not to cry  
And im beginning to wonder  
If this is what it feels like to drown.

I'm in over my head trying to hide this from you.  
It's a decision between keeping it in my mind,  
Or trying to explain to you how I hit the bottom  
Of a pool of love, lies, and secrets I don't know how to get out of.  
But your pine needle eyes and soft smile remind me  
That even if you don't know the truth  
I should appreciate every moment I have with you,  
Because one day when my jaw unhinges  
and all my secrets fall from my mouth  
I won't have anymore moments to appreciate.

So here I sit on your couch,  
the velvet caressing my legs.  
The day-stars warmth kissing my skin.  
And the only thought in my mind is  
If light pours in or darkness floods out.  
But either way you're the light  
Of my darkness now.

-kt-

## **This is for You**

Kaitlyn Hammerle

This is for the absent dads  
This is for the loved and hated

For the brothers who protect  
And for the sisters who cower in fear at the hands of  
an unforgiving god.

This is for not only the kind hearted,  
But those who were born as kind souled.  
For the broken and the fixed,  
And for the brand new.  
Stare them down.

This is for the objects so easily tossed away  
As paper plates,  
Or as plastic cups blown into the wind.

Endless movement,  
For as long as there is wind,  
There is life.  
Stare them down.

This is for the picked on, for the bullied, for the discriminated  
against.  
For the boys who are girls and the girls who are boys.  
For the dysphoric and the euphoric.  
Stare them down.

Don't have a staring contest,  
Use your gaze as your weapon for your eyes are the windows  
to your soul and it is angry.  
Burning with rage.

For the underpaid and overworked.  
For the angry and for the mad.  
Stare them down.

This is for unity, even if it is dead,  
We weep at its grave and settle for no less,  
Than resurrection.

Never forget how it felt to sit in a car with unity.  
Blasting music,  
And screaming along with your friends you deem family,  
And family who you've put into the category of your friends.  
Stare them down.

This is for the people who still have hope.  
Who are still able to dream of a better future.  
This is for the leaders,  
The followers,  
The social media influencers,  
The sick,  
The poor,  
The hated and the loved,  
This is for you.

And you need to stare them down.

For this world needs people like you.  
The absent father who fought years of raging wars in court  
for you.  
The brothers so damaged from shielding their cowardice  
little sisters from not a god, because he does not exist, but a world without one.  
And not only the kind hearted,  
But the kind souled.  
Watch them fall  
And stare them down.

## **The Sky Is Green**

Kaitlyn Hammerle

When I was a child  
I was not like other little girls  
They spent their days doing hair  
Wearing dresses  
Playing princess.  
I believed, on the other hand,  
That I was a superhero.

My papa always told me I could do anything  
Be anything  
Choose anything  
I could make it happen.  
So I chose to save people

And as a child, my stuffed animals were the citizens  
And my brother was the captor  
I would fly through the bright green sky of the ground and in those moments  
I danced on the clouds.  
Through the eyes of a child, I saw a whole town  
Of people needing to be saved  
By me.

And though now I know that the ground is not the sky,  
I wish i could go back to my little world of villains and heroes  
So plain, so simple.  
There was black and white,  
Good and bad  
No grey area between,  
No limbo where we live in silence but strive for riots.

I want to be the hero I once was,  
Never failing a mission I set out to do  
Always impressing the people I wanted to impress most.  
My world,  
My town  
My bright green sky.

## **Untitled**

Katie Thompson

This is for you.

This is for the broken hearted,  
For the hurt,  
This is for the love birds who got caught and buried in the dirt.

This is for the forgotten kids,  
For pain,  
This is for the memory of the good old days.

This is for the nice guys,  
For burnt out lights,  
This is for the boys on the edge of taking their own lives.

This is for the hopeless romantics,  
For the honeymoon retreat,  
This is for the ones who have the notebook playing on repeat.

This is for the clingy people,  
For comfort,  
This is for the ones who hold tight to your shirt.

This is for the overthinkers ,  
For the fears they face,  
This is for those who believe it's their fault in the first place.

Inhale.  
Exhale.  
Repeat.

## Words of Illness Invisible

Alicia Whennen

Should I speak clearly then?  
Lay my intentions flat upon the table?  
Explain the pain in my chest,  
the inability to force myself out of bed,  
when fully able?

Should I communicate plainly now?  
No frivolous words to hinder my meaning?  
Explain the aching of my head,  
the weight about my neck, the inability to comprehend when usually able?

Should I utter concisely soon?  
No frill talks of walking upon the moon?  
explain the lack of room for imagination when it weighs so heavy,  
the anxiety in my chest, my head, rendering me a cavity?

Let us go then, you and I  
with my words spread out against the sky,  
like *A Starry Night* unfinished on an easel.  
My feelings but a smudge in the paint,  
the yellow streaks of starlight,  
trapped perfectly imperceptible.  
An illness, invisible.



## **Faith**

Alicia Whennen

Faith is just a word  
embroidered on a throw pillow,  
tucked safely on the window sill,  
in a room full for insomniacs,  
in a house built by trauma,  
on a street separated,  
in a country with women alienated,  
on a planet fueled by destruction,  
in a country with women protected,  
on a street secured,  
in a house built by craftsman,  
in a room full for sleeping,  
tucked safely on the window sill,  
embroidered on a throw pillow,  
A word, faith.

## **The Soul**

Margo Shuman

The soul is our essence  
The purest part of us  
The beautiful things  
That the world reflects  
The soul tingles with life  
When I see glimmers of joy  
I see a bit of my soul

People believe that they have a soul  
So why?  
Do so many feel out of tune  
anxious, depressed, or maybe  
Misplaced  
The spiritual answer  
Is souls connection  
Has it been lost?  
When it comes down to it  
You can't lose your soul

As I place my hands over my eyes  
I seldom see my soul  
Like on a permanently cloudy day  
You rarely see the sun  
I never see the sun in the dark  
I see my soul by glimpses  
Like seeing the sun dart between the  
leaves  
While lying under a tree

**I Got This** (a reverse poem)  
Margo Shuman

I got this  
Even if you think I can't do it  
I will prove you wrong  
Because I am stubborn  
I am determined and stong-willed  
There is nothing I can't do  
When I put my mind to it  
I can do many things  
I can bring in groceries in one trip  
Because I'm not a two trip dog  
I can reach the top shelf  
Because my climbing abilities are above average  
I can do all my homework in a day  
Because I am a nocturnal teenager  
Because the fact that I got this  
I will flip you the bird  
When you tell me I can't do it  
I'll prove you wrong  
Since I am spiteful  
I'll do anything you say I can't  
Because I am not a quitter

*(Now read from the bottom up)*

## **Path of Peril**

Arianna Lightfoot

Moonlit path of peril.

Darkness arises.

For the menace,

For it's gruesome.

## **Dear Healthcare Workers**

Arianna Lightfoot

I want you to know that you are doing a magnificent job of helping others. There will be a lot of people who keep their lives because of your help. There were a ton of other jobs that you could have chosen, but you chose to save other's lives. That job is a huge helping hand to others who are sick, injured, and suffering life-threatening risks.

I love helping others so much, and if I had the chance to I would be a baker, doctor, or surgeon. I would love to help those in need. If I had millions of dollars, I would give most of my money to those who need it more than I do. Most people just ignore the people that need our help, so I would help those in need of homes, money, food, and much more. There are a ton of things that a lot of people need help with, but most people don't know about it because they ignore the fact that those people exist.

Most of the homeless people that need help are ill or badly injured. Lots of people you think are doing fine are most likely homeless people, and thanks to you lots of people are getting what they need in life. This quarantine is probably going to help a lot of people open their minds to those in need of help, and that's all thanks to the needed help from others. If they didn't get the help they might have ended up homeless like those who already are, and that is going to help make them look into reality around them.

## **I Can't Breathe**

Amelie Mantha

I can't breathe.  
All I can ever do is  
Beg for equality.  
I wonder what it would be like  
If I had only said something more.  
Would anyone listen to me?  
I didn't think so.  
Millions of people outside raise signs saying  
"BLM" or "I CANT BREATHE"  
I just sat there holding a tiny BLM flag  
My parents would never let me go out there  
They think that there is no point.  
They think it's a risk, saying you could get hurt  
Don't they realize how big a deal this is?  
Don't they understand this crisis that was in?  
I take a deep breath, then walk to my parents  
"Mom"  
"Dad"  
"I can't breathe"  
Then walked out the door.

## **Be The Change**

Emma Saunders

Being the change  
Knowing you're different  
Willing to show you're different  
Changing the wrong  
Helping the helpless

But first wake up  
The note from the alarm you set  
Waking up to blue and bright light  
Finding another autumn day waiting

Go to school and learn  
Learning the problems of the world  
Wanting to help  
Not knowing what to do

People struggling for food  
You have food anytime  
Finding one fault in the world

Be the change  
Grow up to help not hurt  
Find solutions to problems  
Even when the problems don't affect you

Be that change

## Untitled

Brooke Lashuay

Leaves glint in the dusky light  
Embers float gracefully  
The grass glows in a red haze  
Clouds of smoke slowly drift into the sky  
She's a beauty in disguise  
The fire burns rapidly

Fleeing animals rush to escape  
Her deathly embrace  
The forest engulfed in flames  
Soon it'll all be gone  
All that's left are burnt skeletons  
Ashes and dust  
Ghostly remains of beauty turned beast

## Untitled

Abi Kuznicki

Loud cracking voices  
Muffled through a door  
I can't understand them so I shout  
Speak up!  
My blue bed soft and inviting beneath me  
And the warmth radiating off the sunshine on bare skin  
I am swallowed in global  
Echoing through the willows  
Change is needed  
I know, I know  
Be the change

My emotions swirl in all the problems  
But soothed by the soft lullaby of voices  
The sound of music is embroidering my soft mindset  
But I am jolted by rustling cats and bags and voices

The edges of reality fading to soft fuzzy  
Pictures playing in my mind  
My eyelids feel heavy and slow sinking  
Then my mind follows by renting my pillow  
To the string of stars and voices floating in uniform  
Around my sleepy head as I drift back to sleep  
My parade of dreams follows swirling into words of change

Global warming  
Natural disaster  
Coronavirus  
Health  
People waving with flags in war surrounding then with pain ridden voices

The world is flooded with voices  
If only someone would listen



## **I Am From**

Brooke Lashuay

I am from cracked windows  
My parents loud roars  
And i am from arms aching and sore  
I'm from broken chimneys and old flower pots  
Houses with secrets and fathers dark plots

I am from the crime scene that tore us apart  
I am from sister who got shot in the heart

I am from empathy in which he had none  
I am from the man who found that gun

We're a broken family with unknown origins  
We're from jail cells and poisoned oxygen

This poem I recited as we stood all in black  
That's when i realized  
I could never get you back

## **Moon**

Emma Saunders

When the blue-green liquid shines  
In the white moonlight  
The girl shivered when she dove in the water  
The moon behind her  
When she broke the surface  
To catch her breath  
Seeing dancing shadows on the wall  
Finding the moon up above  
Calling her home  
Her forever home in the stars  
For she is a star  
Dancing  
In her mother's light

## **Storm Houses**

Ainslee Glass

Ominous clouds boom  
Dark and grey  
Watching and laughing  
Almost bursting with tears

Children wait inside  
Waiting for grey to become blue  
Waiting for the laughter to cease

Many hands strike down  
They strike down  
But they do not grab

Laughter shakes the houses  
Children cry  
Mothers cuddle them close  
Tears drip onto their skirts  
Fathers watch out the window  
Watching the hands grasp for them

The hands grasp for things  
Things they can never reach  
They reach for the houses  
For the babbling brook  
For the long flowing grass

This earth will grab the hands  
Soak up the tears  
And absorb the laughter that shakes them

## Starting Over

Erin Lake

Away from it all  
That's what I would change  
When I walk in the doors  
No one would make me trip  
No one would yell at me  
No one would call me a name  
What I would change  
This time I would walk in  
They would not stare  
They would not laugh  
They would like me  
The way I am  
I would have a friend

1

2

Or 3

I would be wanted  
Not wanting to jump off a bridge  
I would feel welcome  
I would belong  
I would start over

## **Coral Reefs**

Mary Bartelli

Each penny thrown in the wishing well  
there's another great story to tell  
But for me it's the same old thing  
each penny that I bring  
I wish for the coral reefs to thrive  
And look even better by each deep sea dive  
But my wish will never come true  
without some help from me and you  
Coral reefs are slowly dying  
And this poem is my way of trying  
These reefs are starting to bleach  
By the hot water waves that they reach  
Corals make it safe and sound  
For the many fish swimming around  
They are part of our beautiful land  
So different and grand  
We know that they are there  
It's time to show that we care  
try keeping the water clean  
And picking up garbage that is seen  
Do anything you can do  
To keep the water clear and blue  
This time I threw my penny in the well  
It was a different story for me to tell  
I wish one day  
I don't have to throw each penny away  
my wish will of already came true  
Because of me and you

## **Dear People of the World,**

What are you doing?! Destroying the only habitable planet in this galaxy, apparently! Let's think about the logic of this for just a minute. If you destroy the only habitable planet in the solar system, you realize that then we'll have no place to go and we'll all die!

Rich folks are saying things like, "Well since I'm so rich, I'll buy a space station and live there!" Well then, maybe we'll need a different perspective for those who are insanely rich and insanely dumb \*coughs\* *Donald Trump*. If there is no Earth, then you can't buy your weird and exotic pets because they'll all be extinct! And it'll be the end to all of those ski trips to Colorado! WHAT A TRAGEDY! \*huffs\* Now that I've addressed those who are simultaneously rich and idiotic, let's continue.

I think it's about time to address those animal lovers out there. Personally, I love animals! So, let's talk animal lover to animal lover. If there is global warming, then all those cute little penguins and polar bear cubs will be similar to burnt! And if you're more of an aquatic animal lover like my big sister, listen up! Due to climate change, a huge portion of aquatic life will be lost! Heat plus water equals evaporation. So, a lot of the water will go bye-bye, and so will manatees and dolphins!

And how about all of the foodies out there, huh? Well, too much heat and not enough water means that there will be no more plants! No plants, no animals. No animals and no plants, no more food. No McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, BC pizza, or any of your favorite foods! No food, no life.

And for you \*ahem\* INTERESTING people who say that global warming was a scam created by the government to scare you, let's see if I can change your minds. Here's the first piece of true evidence, if global warming isn't real, then WHY did Club Penguin shut down, hmmm?! It's just pure FACT! And if that solid piece of evidence isn't enough, then don't listen to me, listen to the teams upon teams of scientists from around the world! They are in Antarctica this very moment just trying to find the key to stopping global warming! And, for you suspicious non-believers, water is drying up in Australia because of global warming. Global warming isn't propaganda, it's the cold hard truth!

Now, for the entitled Karens. Where to begin? NO, your can-I-speak-to-the-manager haircut cannot save you from global warming. NO, the Earth is a globe. NO, snorting essential oils won't save you. NO, being sassy won't stop the greenhouse gases from trapping in heat. And NO, we can't turn down the sun's heat just because you say we have to. Maybe the fact that it endangers your "precious little angel's" lives might make you care!

Now for you Sci-Fi people. I have nothing against sci-fi, first of all. I love the *Star Wars* series and *The Mandalorian*. But, while I don't rule out the possibility that intelligent life may be out there, I don't think that the aliens will save me from global warming! They most likely will NOT come and scoop you up and spare you just because you are a huge fan! Aliens might be real, but the possibilities that they know you even exist, aren't.

And, lastly, you semi-normal people. Finally, I can stop explaining basic knowledge! Thank you! We have to stop polluting our Earth. We don't have a spare Earth we can pull out of our back pocket if the first one dies, you know! Excess greenhouse gases are produced by lack of

plant life, smoking/vaping, smoking drugs, landfills, factories, cars, planes, trains, and boats! It's go green or go in the ground, people! So, I have a few suggestions for the human race. Be more like Mr. Beast, bring a community together to do some good for the Earth! Now, you don't have to do something as significant as planting 20,000,00 trees, but you can do something as small as planting a few trees in the park or recycling! Go set up recycling bins in the park, convince businesses to place recycling bins in their stores, plant some plants wherever you can, and don't smoke or vape!

And, for those of you that do smoke or vape, I know it isn't as easy as \*snap\* to quit. My aunt smoked, and she had to take it slow. Limit yourself to how many cigarettes you use per day until you're at zero. Lean on those you trust for some support! And, if it's really serious, there's always rehab groups to turn to. I know that going to rehab and admitting that you have a problem sounds hard, and it is, but it permits you to be surrounded by people going through the same tough transition as you! Not only will quitting smoking/vaping be good for the environment, but it'll also be good for your body! And for those of you that don't smoke/vape, don't start. It's just a really bad habit to get into. But I digress.

I know that the big shots that can make the laws to help the Earth probably won't read this, but even the little people still have a voice, even if it's small. Because if one person reads this and tells their friends, then their friends tell their friends, and pretty soon you have a whole community working to save the planet! And, if you use the internet to help spread, pretty soon you'll reach those big shots!

So, in conclusion... JUST STOP BEING IDIOTS WITH OUR EARTH, SOME OF US DON'T WANT THE END OF THE WORLD!

Sincerely,  
Kate. Hitts

## **Destruction of Nature**

Nae Carlson

Time's little hands tremble in fright  
Because nothing will be alright,

Stars twinkle, like diamonds in the night  
Now dimmed from pollution .

Trees tower high above,  
Saved us from the sun

Clear waters gleamed,  
Fish swam with glee.

Ocean floors sandy white,  
Now littered, its animals fight

Let's plant a better seed.  
Let the seed grow into beautiful place,  
A place where none of this will ever happen,  
Let's plant a better seed.



## **Have You Ever?**

Kadence M

Have you ever heard,  
Someone call another a name?  
Maybe you've heard of,  
It's just a game.  
If not, maybe so,  
Have you ever known,  
That is was happening,  
But you turned away?  
If you look,  
And if you see,  
Maybe you'll be looking at someone,  
Who is wounded,  
Like you and me.  
Have you ever wanted,  
To be heard or seen?  
Just find a good person,  
And learn to trust,  
Make sure their kind,  
Just like us.  
Have you ever met,  
A person so unkind?  
They wouldn't tell you,  
A good piece of their mind.  
They would take and never give,  
They would laugh,  
At you when you needed them.  
Have you ever trusted,  
Someone with your secrets?  
For them only to spray them everywhere,  
Leaving you in a mess,  
And unaware.  
Have you been,  
A kind person all the way through?  
Maybe since you have,  
I might find you.  
Have you ever?

## **Change**

Athena S

Change that I wish to see in the world is happiness.

I want this virus to end and for us to go to school again.

I want people to be happy.

I don't want people to blame the governor for this sickness.

I want people to be nice and happy.

I really want to see my friends again.

I hope this ends.

## **Be the Change**

Jaslyn B.

I wish that all people were treated equally, no matter what they're skin looks like. I wish that just because someone of color has a hoodie on, they wouldn't get patted down, or shot by a cop. This is happening all around America, and most cops that have killed an innocent black person, don't get any charges or any jail time.

Let's talk about George Floyd, brutally murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Floyd was laying face down on the hot cement while a cop had his knee on Floyd's neck, while George was repeating over and over I can't breathe. Floyd went unconscious yet still the cop kept his knee on his neck slowly letting him pass away. This man had kids, a job, and family and those four men took it away from him, because someone suspected he was using a counterfeit twenty dollar bill. This has happened to so many innocent black people there needs to be a change.

One time one of my family members was at a restaurant bathroom when she heard the person in the next stall whispering with her kid. The kid said "why are her feet brown," the mom replied with, " she was gardening, and her feet got dirty." I just sat there amazed that someone would actually say that. Like why does it matter we all bleed red.

Nobody is better than anyone no matter what shape, size, color, height, we are all equal and more people need to understand that. So many racist cops think it's okay to kill innocent blacks, because they have a fancy badge. They know they will most likely get little to know charges. We need to change that. If you want to help, be a part of the change text "FLOYD" to 55156 to sign a petition that will send a letter to Frey and District Attorney Micheal Freeman, calling for justice to Color of Change.

## **Say my name**

Abbie Ferella

5,172 reports of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls in 2016.

Night falls early and the wind cries thousands of native women's names.

We braid our hair.

We light sage.

We wrap in blankets.

We rise.

We wear our color red, hoping to bring back in all of the spirits of the women and children who have been taken from us so we can lay them to rest.

We dance until they are all home.

Say their names.

Tess, Dawn, Deborah, Almeda, Cary, Alicia, Deziree, Helena, Jamie, Barbara...

Say their names.

They will not disappear.

Say my name Waase yaaban pngishma kwe.

I will not disappear.

## **I Made This Poem**

Mary Bartelli

I made this poem  
To keep everyone warm on a cold night break  
To cover them with blankets and comfort  
So no one will shiver or shake

I made this poem  
To stop the plastic thrown into the sea  
So animals can live happily  
And so can you and me

I made this poem  
To make people smile when they feel low  
To make all people happy  
Our kindness we will show

I made this poem  
To help the world one person at a time  
And show that I care  
By making this little rhyme

## **Our Environment**

Abigail Wise

Broken Glass

Thrown on the grass

Our carelessness

Tearing up trees

The earth is diseased

I miss the good air I once breathed

We can fight it at least i once believed

Im suprised men still lived

If only the earth could be revived

We would all survive

Pollution is taking our earth for a test drive

So hold up and take five

Our earth needs to thrive

We can no longer pretend

The earth was our friend

I don't see how we could be so blind

And it's all because of humankind

Because we mined

So make a change

And save a mountain range

I need your help

I can't defeat this by myself

## The Poaching Project: Tigers and Elephants

Keira Bonney & Ariaahna Kantola

Do you know what poaching is? Well if you do, you know that it is horrible! If you don't, then we will tell you. Poaching is when a person kills an animal to take their tusks or fur and sometimes other things. In this article, we will be specifically talking about elephants and tigers, but there are other animals that people will poach besides them like sea turtles, gorillas, rhinos, and lions. What's even worse, is that most of the time they just leave the bodies to rot. Poachers kill the animals, then cut the tusks off, or skin the tiger, (or other things) then leave with their valuables.

Did you know that when an elephant dies, or is killed, the rest of the herd circles around the body and mourns just like humans? That makes it 20 times worse killing an elephant.

But most of the time poachers hunt animals that are endangered because they are rare, or the animals are hunted so much that they become endangered. Sometimes, the animals that are hunted to be poached even do go extinct.

Did you know, that dodos went extinct because they were poached so much for meat, that was why they went extinct? Woolly Mammoths too! (but for their huuuuge tusks!)

Also, have you ever heard of baiji dolphins? Probably not because they went extinct in 1984. People have been poaching since the 1800s and it just keeps getting worse. Soon we won't have all the animals we love like tigers, elephants, and lots more.

Did you know that about 1,500 tigers are poached every year? Isn't that terrible?

Something else horrible that poachers do is, to kill tigers they will kill an animal that tigers eat, put poison on the body then leave it out for the tigers to eat. Or if it's summer poachers will dig a small puddle then put water and poison in the water, and they might also end up killing animals that were just trying to get a sip of water on a hot day.

Did you know, elephant ivory is used for piano keys, billiard balls, and random trinkets for human enjoyment? What about the elephant's lives? I don't think toys and games are more important than a life. But, rest assured, now billiard balls are made of polyester nowadays.

Most poaching goes on in Zimbabwe, which is in Africa. The second country that has a lot of poaching is Kenya, which is also in Africa. More than half of the world's poaching happens in Africa because lots of animals there are rare or endangered.

In the 1830s, poaching big animals became illegal. They could kill small mammals, but not things like elephants, rhinos, tigers... ect. It is totally fine if you buy lucky soapstone elephants, but don't ever, ever under any circumstances buy ivory.

Did you know that tiger's whiskers used to be used to make people sick? In the old china days, people would settle a grudge by putting a pinch of grounded tiger whiskers in someone's drink to make them sick, because the whiskers would stab people in the stomach.If you ingest too much though, you could die.

Did you know that an estimated 100 elephants are poached per day? It's estimated that by 2040 elephants will go extinct if we don't do something and fast.

Now you know how terrible poaching is. If you see an opportunity to help animals in need of saving, do whatever you can. Because, animal's lives are just as important as ours. Remember, *never* buy any goods that may have harmed animals to be put in stores. And if you are ever going to a zoo, make sure it's one that has retired animals that are humanely treated. To wrap it all up, if you have any extra change, consider donating toward stopping poaching once and for all.



## **Recycle**

Mary Bartelli

When I look by the highway  
I see garbage on the ground  
I want the person who threw it to pick it up  
But no one is around  
I ask my parents why people would leave this  
It doesn't make sense to me  
I stare at the trash  
The trash I wish I could unsee  
When I'm sitting in class  
And don't know what to write  
An idea comes into my brain  
My head fills up with light  
I should write about the litter  
And how I know it should stop  
I start putting words on my paper  
Starting from the top  
I write on my paper  
Be the change  
Stop littering and polluting  
Don't make the world ugly and strange  
Pick up your own garbage  
And please start recycling  
It will help our world stay beautiful  
And that is an amazing thing  
Please don't litter in the ocean  
or on the ground  
We want to make animal habitats  
always safe and sound  
If you don't want your garbage to wind up on a shark's fin  
Take a few extra seconds  
And put it in the recycling bin

## **Siberian Tigers**

Rachel Dhaseleer

They are endangered  
Only 5,000 remain  
They are beautiful  
But only 500 live in the wild  
They live in Russia and China  
And if they die  
they will leave behind a scar  
Everybody will be hurt  
It will hurt the ecosystem  
People hunted them for their skins  
And their meat and their bones  
Their food is scarce  
They are depending on us  
They need our help  
We are running out of time  
We need to save them

## **Various Haiku**

Kaylyn M

Help the rhinos please  
Cutting off their horns is bad  
They don't deserve it

Cows are worse than sharks  
22 people die a year  
Sharks are not so bad

Help the tigers now  
They are very majestic  
Don't let them die out

Pandas are dying  
Because of habitat loss  
So so very sad

## **What If**

Taryn Carey

What if the sky wasn't blue,  
Maybe it was green or red.  
What if the world was as flat as a tire,  
Maybe as flat as a bed.  
What if the days were two minutes long,  
What if we couldn't sing a song,  
What if the houses were 5 inches tall,  
What if the world wasn't nice at all,  
What if everyone was as still as a stone,  
What if there was no such thing as a bone!  
Wouldn't the world be so boring,  
If there wasn't a world without **you**.

## **Mental Health Rap**

Olivia Pineda-Anderson

Our mental states aren't in a good place!

Depression got people down low.

Anxiety got everyone wonderin'.

Schizophrenia got people goin' insane.

Dementia got people forgetting and gettin' down low cause they forgot where to go!

Our mental health affects our everyday life, our thoughts, our words, the way we see the light!

Don't know where to go? Just come to me; you'll heal, You'll see; just come to me!

Not to mention, smilin' depression people can't show how they feel! K?

So try to help, help yourself, and others you feel are in need.

## **A Typical Teenage Love Song**

Olivia Pineda- Andersen

*Everyone has bad days once in awhile, but I get em' everyday when I don't see your smile. An' all that cutesiness love stuff it ain't true, when there's gossip goin' round, all round school. And I just want more laughter and long drives starin' at your charmin smile, hope to god that I will never lose you, all our adventures and laughter seem to have drive way' in the wind... I miss you, hate do admit it but, I love you. Mmmmm-mmmm. I love you...*

## **Ballad of Those Who Burned**

Kayden O'Neil

Ancestress knows that you're coming for her,  
For she is the holy spirit and knows when one of her children is going to betray her.  
People who torture a woman,  
Until she confesses to a crime she did not commit,  
Will come unto the wrath of the Ancestress.  
Many believe God is a man, but it is truly a woman,  
A mother of all flora and fauna,  
Tall, taller than the clouds,  
A voice of an opera singer, deep and enchanting,  
And wondering why,  
Why her creations hate each other.  
With divinity she can spell away sadness and sorrows that arise in a day's work,  
Fixed with simple elixirs.  
For those who have troubles deeper than she can fix,  
She suggests going to the doctor.  
And for parents that refuse to give their children treatments or vaccines,  
May her wrath intrude your short sighted brains.

## Untitled

Kayden O'Neil

The language of poetry is different,  
Some people understand, others don't.  
The language can be sung at the highest points in life,  
And be hummed during the lowest  
The language of poetry is difficult.  
It sounds like a foreign language,  
Being strung through our ears, making sense in the end.  
It sounds like the street side guitar player,  
Slicing through the silence with his poetry  
The language of poetry is rewarding.  
Seeing people stop and listen, on the edges of their seats.  
Many think "oh its a poem we don't have to listen",  
But other watch, staring waiting for more.

## **From Nothing**

Blake Brunmeier

I am from the woods  
From scraped knees and board games  
I am from a white house  
And a beautiful pond  
I am from big oak trees  
Whose children run and play in the yard under their branches  
I am from fishing for bass and homemade chili  
From Brunmeier and Piekos  
I am from freckles and long black eyelashes  
And from nature  
I am from Immaquarrun Il-forn pasta, ricotta, and perogies  
From moving to America starting a new life  
And from fighting for our country  
I am from the moments that last a lifetime, and lifetimes that last



## **The Apprehensiveness of Awakening**

Keegan Whisker

Anxiety is within  
Finding anything you can reach  
Crunching or softening  
Destroying and discarding  
Never erasing errors  
Because the erasers are gone  
Chewed to mush  
Spit in the trash  
Topless bottles spilling all over  
Caps folded in half  
Chewed and destroyed.

Anxiety is trimming your nails  
Never using nail trimmers  
Because your teeth work perfectly fine.  
Anxiety is panic  
Legs shaking and head aching.  
Anxiety is becoming ill  
Thinking you are sick, but you are not  
Making yourself sick because you think you are.  
Anxiety is your heart being broken  
Head pounding; Stomach exploding.  
Anxiety knows you've thrown up every single time.  
Anxiety knows you will throw up.  
Anxiety knows it causes your headaches.  
Anxiety knows you want to jump out the window  
Plunging your head in the snow  
Screaming to escape the madness.  
Anxiety is rolls of paper towels  
Sponging up your head  
Buckets of salty bullets pouring from your scalp.  
Anxiety is drinking energy drinks

Then indulging in a panic attack  
Heart beating faster than a fighter jet  
Feeling your heart about to explode  
Mind fogging, body shutting down.  
Anxiety is getting ready for the first day of school  
Happy memories coming to mind  
Instantly being swatted down by reality and life.  
Anxiety is doing the same thing every time.  
Vomiting in the restroom and acting like nothing happened.  
Freaking out cause your first grade is a D-.  
Seeing friends that were once your friends  
Maybe once best friends  
but you drifted to just friends  
but now you are strangers.

Empty  
Caitlyn Garner

