

Marisa Baldwin
Grade 10
South Kamloops Secondary
The Poisoned Cure
1

Here's the thing about death: it doesn't take away just that person's life, it takes away the life of everyone around them. When my brother died, I did too. And my mom and my dad and even the drunk driver who is now spending his life in a concrete cell. After my brother died, my mom and dad began fighting. My mom moved to her sister's house just out of town and my dad started working 12 hours a day. But this story isn't about my mom or my dad or even my brother really. This story is about how my life got so messed up I really almost did die, the physical kind of death.

I first met Brandy at my brother's funeral. Around her I seemed to forget about the pain of losing my brother. I invited her over; I didn't tell her how alone I'd felt since he died. We spent the night together and she gave me hope that my mom would move back, my dad would find a better way to cope, and that I would be able to fill this emptiness inside of me.

Soon we began dating. Everywhere we went was together, around her my pain washed away. Brandy was around 24/7 and for a while I thought nothing could get better.

I met Winston a couple of months later, halfway through my grade 11 year. I'd seen him around school but we had never met. He wasn't like Brandy; he was serious and calmed me down. I was beginning to feel the same pain I did before, except I was more alone than ever. As long as I was with Winston and Brandy my mind was off the pain.

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Winston and Brandy never got along. They both wanted my attention. I was starting to fear what I would become without them. It was around then the three of us went to a Spring Break party, where we met Lucy and Molly.

Lucy and Molly were twin brother and sister. Saying they were weird would be an understatement. I mean clearly it ran in the family, their parent's named their son, Lucy. They wanted nothing from life except to have fun. So that night, three became five.

We did everything together. We went wherever the fun was, we sought trouble. My parents were oblivious to it all.

One day mid June I got a call from my dad. Brandy, along with Lucy, Molly, Winston and I were on our way to a party. My dad said that the driver that hit my brother was arrested.

It was the first time in a long time I had actually felt anything. The last couple of months I had been able to block the pain but in that moment it all came crashing down. I felt as though I was drowning but had forgotten how to swim. We got to the party and I felt so lost. I wandered around for hours curious why everything was in slow motion. My head was throbbing. Everything was blurry.

I ended up back at the car and barely noticed Lucy getting into the passenger seat and Molly, Brandy and Winston hopping in the back. I got in the car and drove. Brandy and Winston were in the backseat yelling. Lucy kept grabbing the steering wheel. I was trying to focus on something other than the thunderous beat of my heart.

“Faster!” Lucy was screaming, but we were already driving at an alarming speed. He yanked on the wheel and everyone in the back began screaming. My head was ringing.

“Faster!” Lucy yelled again but when I turned towards the passenger seat I just saw my brother, his piercing eyes staring back at me.

“Mikey, slow down.”

I couldn't say anything, I wasn't controlling myself anymore. I was so numb. My brother's eyes flicked between me and the road.

“Come on kid, drive just like I taught you.”

I couldn't think. Or breathe. My vision was dark and all I could hear was the roar of my chest. My eyelids were heavy and for a second I closed them, needing it all to stop.

“Look out!”

I opened my eyes and saw Lucy sitting in the passenger seat, eyes wide. Through the windshield I saw my brother standing in front of the car, shielding himself from the impact. I tried to move but I couldn't. There was a loud crash, then everything went black.

The first thing I saw when I woke up was the look in my mom's eyes. It was the same look she had when she got the call saying my brother had been hit. I swore to myself that I'd never cause her that pain again. She explained that I was at the hospital and had hit a tree while driving drunk, then overdosed off a mix of laced drugs.

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“You’re father and I found some empty bottles of Brandy under your bed along with packs of cigarettes.”

I felt shame. It was the first thing I had felt clearly in months. It was also the first time I had been sober in months.

“Don’t worry mom, no more drinking, or smoking or....” She just stared at me with tormented eyes, “I promise.”

And I meant it, because when my eyes locked onto my backpack at the foot of the bed I felt no lure, only control. In that bag were fake friends wanting to feed off my pain. But to me, they may as well have died in the crash. No more Brandy, no more Winston and no more Lucy and Molly. Just me, my feelings and the promise I made to my mom. I knew then it was time to move on the right way, without the addictions.

And though I didn’t die a physical death, the past months I hadn’t been alive. It was time to move on; it was time to live.

Point of No Return

By: Morgan Beatty

He sat on the edge of the beach. Waves were slowly lapping into his boots. Milo couldn't care less because before him he was watching his nightmare. Dozens of families were saying their goodbyes. Milo could feel the love and sorrow in the air but he didn't feel it himself. In fact, he felt nothing.

Milo felt like a pen that has been used and once he died he will be disposed of without a second thought. He hoped it would happen soon for he was getting shipped off to the war front where he would be left to rot in the muddy fields. After all, there wasn't anything left for him here anyways. With no children as he was still a very young man and his wife who couldn't make it be with him here tonight. Oh, how Milo wished he could see her again. It had only been 12 hours since he had last seen his beloved wife but for him, it felt like forever.

Mrs. Elizabeth Adams was an amazing woman. She was an old book. Full of adventure and knowledge. Everyone who saw it had felt intrigued. They had to pick it up and read it. As soon as they would open this book that was rough around the edges from use they were intoxicated but the depth and precision. Elizabeth was one of the best people Milo had ever met and was the only woman he had ever loved. She did

everything she could to make her life, her husband's life, and everyone's around her life better. She could cheer up anybody with just a smile. Her smile was a lightbulb. It could light up the darkest of places in just a blink of the eye.

With all of this in his mind, Milo felt confused and lonely about why Elizabeth wasn't here with her today. She was the only reason Milo didn't want to return to this place of living hell. He had felt like his heart had been ripped out of his chest.

If he could only see her one more time. See her ability to fight and her cheerful personality. He wished he could see her smile light up this beach because as the goodbyes were slowly winding down the feeling of love and sorrow had turned into regret and Milo knew that even if Elizabeth could make everybody believe that they would return to their spouses and children soon they probably wouldn't. Milo also knew that if he didn't make it back home he could see his wife again and they would be together forever. Although in real life things are never that simple.

Free Women in Treacherous Times

Giulia Inoue-Cheng - Grade 10

September 1, 1923

My lungs empty, blowing out the flickering flames on my rich, red velvet cake. The sharp cacophony of applause and praise fills the air as I hold my pearl necklace back from the thick icing. Feeling the tight wrinkles forming on the corners of my eyes, my lips peel back without hesitation. Glancing at my family, I grin impossibly wider, anxiously awaiting tonight's endeavours. I silently plea with my mother to finish the eccentric ceremony but I just get a tight lipped head shake, telling me to continue being on center stage.

"Thank you everyone for being here; I can't imagine what this night would be like without all of you!" I shout into our packed living room, embellishing my words. The cool metal of the knife hits my damp palms as I cut the first piece. Smoothly cutting through the layers of sweet delicacy, I quickly guide the slice onto our special-occasion china, the delicate floral patterns swirling with the light cake. The clinking of porcelain and laughter reminds me of my need to go to my own celebration. Unhooking my legs from under me, my body jumps as I hear my mother say:

"Ruth Mary Coulter, don't you dare leave!". The uproar of communal laughter following such a strict tone makes my cheeks burn.

"I'm jus-,"

"No, I know exactly what you are going to do. It's your eighteenth birthday and you just got that new job at the telegram company, we need to celebrate! At least come open your presents before you sneak out your window." Sharp eyes soften when she sees my furious blush, bringing a long, rectangular box onto my legs. I drop my shoulders, only now realizing their tension.

"Thank you, mother" I mouth under my breath. Carefully, I peel the yellow wrapping paper off, the only sound ringing through the room in anticipation. The long gone paper reveals: "Chanel" in shiny, gold lettering. I make excited squeals that barely begin to express my happiness, but they're cut short when I open the box to see a beaded navy blue evening gown, the beads clinking together as I lift the silk by the sleeves. I cringe at the conservativeness of the cut, the bland colour

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The party was now only a steady hum under my bedroom door, the sliver of yellow from my ajar door lighting my movements. The bright wood of the branded box lifts as I grab the glistening material. With thread and needle ready, I fold the hem from ankle to knee. Sewing the edges quickly, I slip the dress on, feeling the slippery fabric hug my skin. Putting

on my necklace and feather hat sitting on my bed, I clutch the window sill tightly. Moving the pane slowly as to not make any sound, I feel the dewy grass beneath my feet and the cool night air hit my bare legs. The familiar combination of anxiety and anticipation barrels through me, and I sigh, seeing the bright lights of Mary's town car pull over.

September 1, 1932

It's gone too fast, that's the only thought plastered in my mind as I exhale deeply. Extinguishing the dense cake, I sit back, leaning my aching spine against the creaky wood of the chair. Small hands clap inconsistently while a heavy palm guides them. The beaming, toothy smiles of my remaining family encompass me.

"Mama, eat your cake! Or the debt collector will come steal it!" Proclaimed my little Jonathan.

"Jon! You are not allowed to say such things at the dinner table! Where did you hear that from?" Said Frank, scolding the merely eight-year-old boy.

"...I don't know, just from Aunt Mary."

"Ah, of course it was your Aunt Mary. It seems that even with the market crash, she'll always be outspoken, especially with the children" Frank sighed. With I glance I apologize, telling him with my eyes that I will talk to both before the day is done.

"Well, aren't you going to eat your cake?" asked my youngest, Anna, with her big, glossy eyes, questioning me.

"Yes, absolutely! Come here!" I grab their already sticky hands and reach for the butter knife. Enveloping their small hands in my own, I guide the smooth incision in the slightly stale cake. Mary, who lives only a few houses down, made it for me. Rounding up raisins to boil from every woman on the block for a few weeks, only to end up with a cake made with no milk, eggs, or butter. Feeling the slice give, I slide it onto our plates. Giving the first slice to Anna, watching her eyes light up. Then to Jon and finally, Frank. Seeing the latter's eyes shift sadly to his wrist, one of the only things we did not try to sell.

"Say goodbye to your father; he has to go to work."

"No, father! Can't you stay until we at least have to go to school?"



“Jonathan, what did I say about whining?” I scold, making sure that he replies with a curt head nod.

“Well, how about you finish your cake and I can walk you to school, huh? Frank suggests, giving both children playful winks.

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Threads snapping, the sharp sound of fabric ripping hits my ears as I pull my dress apart. When the market crashed, we were left with barely any money, rather we were in debt. To attempt to reach the positives once again, Frank and I decided to sell our life and the possessions it held. Around that time, I had lost my job as a telegram operator. It was my tenth year at the firm, and where I met the loves of my life: Frank and Mary. While Mary and I, who had been let go of too, settled into our new lives as housewives, my Frank was pushed down a position or two. Everyone had suffered, and now, we had to accept our new lives. One of the only things I kept was a small chest of dresses from my youth. I hope one day, when we have enough money to let Anna go out, she can live with the few things I kept for her. For now, clothing made out of old skirts will have to suit her.

September 1, 1943

Gold lettering greets me as I slid the light wooden box out from under my bed. For what feels like the first time, I lift off the box's top. The ageless and untouched dress pulls me back to a time of excitement, of opportunities, and of home.

“Oh, how I long to be eighteen again. Not for the tight skin or the parties, but for my family and the endless chances. Youth is forgiving.” I say, turning to my grown up Anna, almost now at the age of when I first lay my eyes on this wonderful piece. “You know, Anna, I don't think I will ever fit into this again. How about you try it on?”

“I couldn't, it's your birthday!”

“Yes, but I want you to have it, I was going to wait until your eighteenth birthday. But, who knows what will happen in the next few years. I want you to experience life to its fullest, even in this war.” Anna was clearly hesitating, surely intimidated by my prized possession. “Please, Anna. It's yours.” The quick nod allows me to find my own dress, leaving my daughter to her own devices. The house has been frantic the past few days, along with the bombings, letters from the army were coming back. Revealing the horrible outcome of their husbands and sons, many of the neighbourhoods women have flocked to my home. Why? I, myself am not entirely sure. But, news of my birthday has given everyone a distraction from the impending disaster that comes with a soldier in green and an envelope. With both Frank and Jonathan at war, it is my duty to remain for Anna. These days, the little

things are what are the most important in our lives. Cutting through my thoughts, the doorbell rings. That sick feeling starts to scratch at my skin as it always does when it rings. Was it Jonathan? Or Frank that had been shot down? But, I swing the door open to reveal Mary holding a beautiful, lit red velvet cake, followed by other women and children of our block.

“Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ! Thank goodness it’s you!” I curse loudly, teasing Mary’s unnecessary antics.

“Quick, make a wish!” Mary laughs.

And once again, air fills my lungs in anticipation before being released. Smoke and cheers prick my eyes as I express all the gratitude and tears I have left. From behind me arms wrap around me unexpectedly, with a quick turn I see Anna. Glistening and beaming just like I was just a short lifetime before.

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
1

## Missing Grandfather

Can you remember the time

When we held hands and jumped into the sea?

Flooding memories ride on the tide where we once had to say goodbye

But not forever.

Apart from my heart you were always a part of my life.

Through the struggles I faced,

Your resolution helped conquer the fears that held me.

With your song on my lips I now rise

Ashes in a grave back to dust as gravely broken mourners pass, alas

Each moment a million from the last.

Skies beckoning and calling my soul

Your tether loosens but the part of me that is forever yours remains truly so.

High above the world, you're higher still.

I wish that we could reach across the galaxies

Touching hands across infinite seas

Rekindling the moments we wasted together.

I miss your love and I remember

How you said colours are an image of song.

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
2

To Continue On

A concept that lingers on your tongue  
A taste perhaps bitter now that you've grown old  
This time you try to ponder, numb,  
How so much could have changed forever from  
The time when your mind arose  
Thinking of the past in the class sitting behind rows  
Of unruly schoolchildren, unable to find those  
Like you, as others who unkindly chose  
Beating you down verbally  
Abusing you physically  
Oppressing you regretting nothing not realizing  
What they are changing into  
Fact being that as the sand shifts  
They grow older, abandon their childhood and drift  
Into unknown waters but they adapt. And rifts  
Open between family, friends, neighbours and it's  
Open war  
Unstoppable  
Enraged, as the flames of indignation arise  
Knocking down the despised

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
3

What's wrong inside of them causes them to wrong those they've known forever  
Twisted to turn their backs as they attack and the sun burns black because it has lost hope  
Lost a hope that returns as the sun rises a new dawn is here  
A chance to start over and make peace  
Learn from those who hit you down and stand up again  
Don't be like them  
Because we want freedom  
The ability to say what we want  
Do what we want  
Love who we want  
Think what we want.  
Give us what we need to overcome  
Teach us how to stand for our beliefs  
Demonstrate how to live our best lives within the guidelines that allow us to do so;  
The rules that don't hold us back but instead  
They show us how to achieve our potential so we can step forwards in order to make this land  
where we stand a place of redemption and freedom  
There is always time to start again  
To continue on.  
We are not our pasts.

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
4

Alone // Isolated // Solitude

Can't breathe

Stifled cramped enclosed in my own small-mindedness

A prison built for one

Cowering in the corner

Wary of approaching visitors

No one touches me.

I built this prison with my own hands

I laid the foundations stone by stone

I toiled away long and hard all alone

Everyone else is gone.

Once more, solitude

Resting from the weariness that deadens me

Silent slumber an impossible reality.

No haunts and nightmares plague my mind

Instead, pleasant dreams of things I wish could be

But my heart aches when I wake up and realize

Nothing's true anymore.

Perhaps lack of happiness is worse than a nightmare.

Try loving and losing and you'll know for yourself

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
5

It's better to stay cold

Hard and unbreakable

Unbeatable

Untouchable.

Disappointment shadows my footsteps

I wander the lonely skies

But these are the days when no one cries

No one admits that they once had hopes, once had dreams

Of finding true love

Being happy ever after

But then they woke up.

Then it's just me once again

Solitary isolation left alone broken pieces

Shattered scarred soul gone, marred

Things of this world far away

Trapped in a spiral of indifference

Suffocating in listless silence.

The farther I fall the more I hear you

See you

Want to touch you

Wanting to reach out slowly

Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
6

Take your hand gently

For fear of scaring you away

I don't.

I can wait a little longer.

How long before my mind is truly broken,

How long before I begin to fall apart

Or maybe I already have.

It's hard to tell.

The dreams arise as I plummet

One moment euphoric, a time of lighthearted laughter

A joke shared between just us two

For one blissful moment it's just me and you

But then the distance between us widens

As I remember society's rules

As I hurry to hide how much I care

But you don't notice, because for you

There was never anything between us anyways.

How strange.

I spin around again wondering where to find you

Searching the non-existent crowds for you.

I'm slowly catching up yet you don't even notice



Ariele Purves  
Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary  
Three Pieces on the Abstract  
7

A tiny speck in an insignificant universe

But you mean the world to me.

Shattering inside, still waiting for the impossible.

I've been waiting patiently for years

I'm tired of waiting but you're so worth it.

If that moment comes and I hope that it will

You'll catch my eye and finally see

Finally notice what I've been waiting for you to notice

I don't want much more than this

I just want you to know.

But I can't ever tell you.

Perhaps you too are a falsehood

Yet another lie twisted into my imagination

Telling me that there's hope

Are you an illusion?

But for an illusion to exist

There must be truth somewhere

Illusion warps the truth which cannot be done without truth.

My head hurts

I should stop thinking so much.

Where can I find the answer

Ariele Purves

Gr. 10 South Kamloops Secondary

Three Pieces on the Abstract

8

To this paradoxical problem

That tells me you exist but not really

I seek truth yet it eludes me.

Light shines down

I can see it

I feel its warmth

I try to hold it in my hands.

You escape my grasp.

Someday no longer.

Renee Rogers  
Grade 10 South Kamloops Secondary School  
Scared/A Future to Behold  
1

## Scared

Please don't judge me,

Because I am oh so lonely,

And I get scared,

When the lights go out.

I get so afraid that I let it stop me,

Eat at me,

Consume me.

So please,

Don't,

Judge,

Me,

Because there's nothing I can do.

Everyone else has it so easy,

They glide through life like a breeze,

But here I am rethinking every conversation,

Like a broken tape on repetition.

Renee Rogers  
Grade 10 South Kamloops Secondary School  
Scared/A Future to Behold  
2

Just don't speak up and everything will be alright,

Just smile now and be polite,

Keeping everything uptight.

So please,

Don't,

Judge,

Me,

Because there's nothing I can do.

I'm afraid of the monsters,

The dark is where they muster,

More terrifying though is the light,

The light of a spotlight.

Up where it's so bright you can hardly see,

I feel a million eyes spy upon me,

It has my heart racing,

Hands shaking,

Palms sweating,

## A Future to Behold

Grey skies,

Oceans sucked dry,

There's a stillness in this poisoned air,

Under the heat of the giant sun's glare.

To hope would be pretentious,

This dying planet's restless,

The warnings were crystal clear,

That soon all life would disappear.

We did not heed these warnings,

Instead we let ourselves fall to mourning,

Everyone hoping the other would answer the call,

A fine excuse for keeping up this stall.

With corporate greed and misery,

Our cheapness going down in history,

Almost all in the race for the descent cash flow and fame,

Forgetting all about the earth from whence they came.

Renee Rogers  
Grade 10 South Kamloops Secondary School  
Scared/A Future to Behold  
5

Forests clear cut for that extra bit of change,  
The woods burned down out of mother nature's rage,  
The soil and air full of toxicity,  
Burning, angry and hungry.

We continued on with carelessness,  
It did not matter for we were crimeless,  
We had created a paradise,  
In spite of the north and its melting ice.

Those who proved us wrong were dismissed,  
To us they were that annoying cyst,  
Claiming it was within our ability,  
To be sustainable and still make money.  
We should have listened to their ruckus,  
Instead we went on to our crisis,  
And as we look upon this day,  
We see it's only full of grey.

So now that our story finally has been said,  
There's a calmness among us, the haunted dead.

Caitlyn Neufeld, Grade 10  
Kamloops Open Online Learning (@Kool)  
Tanner Diner Heist

Cars sped through the intersection as the sun beamed down onto the sidewalks. A girl stood at the corner glancing across the street at the Tanner Diner. Blue awnings covered the front doors that swung open every few minutes as people entered the diner. Tapping her foot she waited for the light to change so she could cross the road. The intersection traffic slowed down allowing her to jog across the road onto the sidewalk in front of the diner. She swiftly opened the door and strolled inside.

Counter seating was in the middle where black stools were pushed in at random under the blue tiled countertop. Blue booths lined the windows and on each table a napkin dispenser and ketchup bottle were placed at the edge. On the other side, tables were set in random order that made sense only to the waiters

Walking past customers sitting at tables, she turned behind the counter at the same time a relatively short man with dark brown hair came around the corner. Pushing his black rimmed glasses, he said “Cutting it close ain’t yeah?” Chuckling, she pulled the string on his apron saying, “Oh like you haven’t cut it close. Does last week recall any memories?” Rolling his eyes, he pulled the strings of the apron around his waist, “I had a legit reason.” Walking to the lockers in the backroom, she opened hers and shoved her bag inside, “Was the reason perhaps that you slept in?” she asked. Silence came over the two with only the sound of the occasional sizzle noise coming from the kitchen. The man pointed at her saying, “You’re a jerk, just to let you know.” Rolling her eyes, now wearing a apron around her waist with her red hair pulled into a low ponytail, “So I’m correct?” she said, with a smirk sprawled across her face.

“Number 32!” Grabbing the tray, the man slide past her, “I did not say that.” Crossing her arms, she took the other tray from the opening and handed to him, “Simon you so did.” Standing barley an

Caitlyn Neufeld, Grade 10  
Kamloops Open Online Learning (@Kool)  
Tanner Diner Heist

inch away, Simon reached around her saying, “I will not take these assumptions, Ember.” A sly smirk was seen as he passed her the coffee pot that sat in his hand.

“Number 12!” Grabbing both trays from the slot, Ember lifted the tray over his head, “That’s cause you’re too chicken to admit it.” Taking the trays to their tables, Ember leaned against the counter and starred straight at Simon. Smiling, he took the rag from his hands and flung it onto her face. “You’re just too chicken to let it go.” Quickly pulling the rag off, Ember *death glared* Simon who simply smiled at her.

The day went on, and by late afternoon the customers slowly rolled down to a trickle leaving just the cooks and waiters in the diner. Sitting in a empty booth, Ember tapped her pencil on the textbook in front of her. She waved as a coworker left the building, soon turning her attention back to the book in front of her. Scribbling down an answer, a shadow came over the book. “Got bored of your mandatory college work?” Simon said, chuckling slightly as he sat down across from of her. Silently agreeing, Ember looked up, “Professor Jensen been giving me extra work to do.” Shaking his head, Simon leaned his head back, “I wish I had your brains. It would make high school so much simpler.” Raising an eyebrow, Ember chuckled while returning to her work. “You’re gonna hate college with a passion then.”

Leaving Ember with a smile, she soon shivered as a brisk wind flew through the diner. Simon sat up straighter, glancing around. Ember glanced out the window, “Storm must be coming in.” Simon sat on the edge of his seat, looking out at the clouds and fog that quickly rolled in. The window was covered in black dust so thick that you couldn’t even see the sidewalk. Inching away from the window, Ember watched as Simon sat oddly still. Catching his eyes on a spot, Simon slide across the table and tackled Ember to the ground just as the window shattered across the diner.



Caitlyn Neufeld, Grade 10  
Kamloops Open Online Learning (@Kool)  
Tanner Diner Heist

Simon quickly stood up. "Get up!" In her scrambled mind Ember jumped to her feet only to stare at three masked people standing there. "Hand over the girl," the middle one demanded with a convincing voice, making it clear he was the leader. A mask covered his face and bright red ribbons were wrapped around his hands which were clenched in tight fists.

Simon slowly pulled out a pair of keys from his pocket as he said, "I will never hand her over." Ember caught eyes with the masked man, getting the feeling she knew him ran but this thought left her mind as the masked man stepped closer to Simon so they stood barely an inch apart. The masked man gazed down on Simon's head, a chuckle leaving his voice as he revealed, "I'm not asking permission, I'm demanding. Hand her over now and I'll take pity on you, or I'll force you." Clenching his fists tighter, dark smoke floated around his hand. "I suggest you listen to the first option," the man said. Snorting, Simon shook his keys and what he held in his hand was definitely not keys, but now a longsword.

Ember stared at Simon, mouth open as she watched the stare down between the two. Simon held his ground, not daring to make the first move. Suddenly the masked man pressed his hands together, and when they separated two swords were built by the black dust that once surrounded his hands. "What a shame. Grab the girl!" he yelled sending the other two into action. Suddenly black streams of shadows shot towards her grabbing both of her legs and arms. Little did she know that this moment would change her life forever.

Emma Rollins  
Grade: 10  
South Kamloops Secondary School  
The World Within Myself  
1

## The World Within Myself

*I'm not special.*

*I'm not interesting.*

she repeats it to herself.

over and over again.

two thoughts bouncing around like ping pong balls,

and never said aloud,

kept locked away into the deepest darkest places in her soul.

fighting to be heard,

creating a monster.

yet, the mirror.

seen it all.

the pillow.

heard it all.

she wishes for a love that would never come,

for how can she love someone,

when she doesn't love herself?

she keeps herself trapped,

scared to show the true.

Emma Rollins  
Grade: 10  
South Kamloops Secondary School  
The World Within Myself  
2

her soul,

lighting.

she isn't meant to be bottled.

her mind,

diamond.

she's meant to be adored.

her heart,

flames.

she isn't meant to be contained.

she is grace.

she is purity.

she is beautiful.

yet the only person who doesn't believe it,

is her.

the monster in her soul,

whispering always,

*you don't deserve happiness,*

*you aren't good enough.*

Emma Rollins  
Grade: 10  
South Kamloops Secondary School  
The World Within Myself  
3

She ran from what hurt her for so long,

all that haunted her;

every unbearable thought.

trapped,

as the darkness stalked her.

Drowning her.

No end in sight,

eternally broken forever,

predator and prey.

Yet there's light now,

the sun has come out,

and finally she finds clarity.

that monster is wrong.

so wrong.

her existence was based on one idea.

that she had to be,

“hot.”

the sun spoke down to her.

*My dear,*

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*you were crafted by the gods.*

*Made by pure sunlight.*

Clarity arouse in her.

*no she says,*

*I will not be "hot."*

the very ground shook,

the world's biggest mystery had been solved.

*I will be a tree,*

*generous and plentiful.*

she was glowing.

*I will be the mountains,*

*vast and complicated.*

Then she was shining.

*I will be the sea.*

*deep and powerful.*

Her light became so powerful then that,

the monster deep within her fled.

*I will make the darkest parts of hell sitting inside me quiver beneath my light.*

The space in her soul that was filled with foul hatred,

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had been replaced with love.

She created a beautiful place in herself,

that expanded outwards,

Infecting all that saw her light.

People asked and begged for her secret to happiness forever after,

she replied with sparks in her eyes.

*I searched for love all my life,*

*and when I finally found it,*

*it was not in someone else.*

*I found it within myself.*