

Grace C
Grade 8
Years ago and Imagine
South Kamloops Secondary School

Years ago

Years ago

She was shiny and new

Her smile brightened the day

Curly mane tamed by butterfly clips

And the sequins from her shirt glistened in the sunlight

Holding hands

Singing songs

As the night fell above them

Months ago

She was vibrant

Her hope radiated like the boldest of colours

A guide for the lost

Her hand extended

She sat in the bleachers

Surrounded by those who believed her

Weeks ago

She was whole

She dove in head first

She spoke her truth

Caution to the wind

She let them know

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Our hands together

She raised them high

Beneath the grey clouds and lighting strikes

As the rain twirled down like diamonds

Days ago

She was dented

Smile slowly faded

Hiding behind hoodies

She rushed from class to class

Sticky notes on lockers

Notes by notes

They pulled her apart

Hours ago

She was cracked

Her hope faded quickly

The most lost of all

She sat alone on the bleachers

Stared off into space

As she drowned in the words around her

Moments ago

She was shattered

The smile fled from her face

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She heard only their words

Lying on the floor

Head in hands

No one there to help

Now

She is patched up

Smile plastered on

They flock back

Leaving their knives aside

Now she sits surrounded

In the bleachers

Somehow she is still alone

Imagine

In the darkest of shadows

Frozen in time

The birds softly singing

A childhood rhythm

A child's toy tea party

Is set with a chair

Take a seat

Grab a treat

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It only seems fair

Just when you thought

This party would end

Who arrives but your imaginary friend

They sit staring blankly

Right into your eyes

And their thoughts

You can hear them

Like a nursery rhyme

Hear every word

There is never a lie

You run from your chair

There is nowhere hide

A hand holds your shoulder

This isn't the end

Now you will stay here forever

With your imaginary friend

Madeleine McGuinness
School
South Kamloops Secondary School

It's an overly large cement brick: crumbling at the edges, it looks as though it could be annihilated by the smallest whispers of a breeze, and yet, despite these imperfections, I love it. As I crane my neck, to see the topmost floor, I notice it has windows: So gray and boring that they blend right in with the rest, but they are there. Not a cement brick after all.

Some people hate the large gray building, others are terrified of it. I might just be the only person who is brimming with excitement at the prospect of entering. Of course, while most people are fretting about receiving good grades, to get into a decent college, my only goal is to make friends and enjoy being a teenager.

Clang. Clang. Clang. I would be embarrassed by my echoing steps, if there was anyone to hear them: the hallways are devoid of any living being other than myself.

The inside is equally as plain as out: no artwork, no event flyers, no photos, nothing brightens the walls, just painted gray cement and metal floors.

Somehow I eventually find my way, through the maze of gray, to my homeroom class. Despite the immaculate classroom, desks straighter than my hair and white boards paler than my skin, I sit at a desk and humming cheerfully.

Eventually a bell rings, and finally, *finally*, my first day of school begins.

“If I sit next to you, will you suck my blood?” asks a tall girl with a short wavy bob teasingly.

Madeleine McGuinness
School
South Kamloops Secondary School

“I think you’re safe,” I say, “I just had breakfast.”

She laughs slightly and nearly sits down before thinking of something else:

“Will you turn into a bat?”

“I am so short I am astonished you don’t think I am already morphing into one!”

This time sitting down fully, she extends a hand:

“Piper,” she says.

“Jaylynn”

“Nice to meet you Vampire Jay”

“You too Piper”

“Do you mind if I at least take my shoes off first? They take hours to clean!”

The kid doesn’t even get a response he just gets dumped in the trash. This mistreatment is so unprovoked, unfair and cruel that I nearly don’t react to it. Then I am infuriated.

“Hey you!” I say, ignoring Piper’s frantic head shaking, “Why are you tormenting him? He was not disturbing you.”

The bully gives a condescending look to the kid I help out of the trash.

“His dad has the most money in town, and if my brother is going to eat dinner tonight I’m going to need his allowance.”

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School
South Kamloops Secondary School

“Get a job if you need money. His parents most likely attained his allowance through hard work. Why shouldn’t you do the same?”

I don’t comprehend the look he gives me: Almost hatred, almost anger. Perhaps a touch of guilt.

Deciding he has been sufficiently reprimanded, I walk back towards Piper.

“Wow Jay,” she says, “We need to talk about who you argue with. The last kid to talk back to Jessie still hasn’t come back to school...”

My parents and I decide to spend a perfect warm-but-not-hot Saturday at the zoo. Gazing at all of the animals while eating ice-cream and chocolate chip cookies, my favorite snack, is a family tradition. We are sitting at the open fish exhibit that connects to the aquarium, debating whether we want to proceed to the tiger exhibit or the lion one, when I see Jessie chasing after a small boy about the age of five. It doesn’t take me long to infer that it is his little brother because of they’re similar rumpled dark hair and green eyes.

I watch as Jessie placates his brother by tempting him with ice-cream: they sit at a picnic table, with Jessie’s brother happily inhaling his treat. Jessie recognizes someone and quickly gets caught up in a conversation.

I am about to depart for the tiger exhibit when from the corner of my eye I see Jessie’s brother wandering towards a hole in the fence around the fish pool. In slow motion I see him lean over to gaze at the brilliant fish, dancing in the ripples of water, and tumble in head first.

Madeleine McGuinness
School
South Kamloops Secondary School

For the first time in my life, my legs don't trip over themselves as I dash to the fish tank and dive in to save the helpless five year old. The cold water is a sharp knife striking me in the face, but I ignore it, focusing instead on tugging the struggling form besides me towards the surface.

Arms are pulling me out but my lungs are too excruciatingly painful to help. Even when warm air fills lungs they still are inflamed. The realization hits me harder than the water did: It's happening again.

"You're awake."

"Yup."

"What happened?"

"I'm sick."

"Why were you at the zoo if you are sick?"

"I'm always sick."

"Go to a doctor."

"I have"

"Then why aren't you better?"

With a sigh I turn towards Jessie, who has been pursuing me since I returned to school.

Madeleine McGuinness
School
South Kamloops Secondary School

“When I was five I became really sick. Every doctor said the same thing; I'm terminally ill.”

“Oh.”

“My parents and I lived wherever I requested; when I was seven I spent three months living in a rainforest, when I was eight we toured Europe.”

“Oh.”

“Then I decided to try being an ordinary teenager, so we moved here.”

“You sound like you've just accepted it.”

“I haven't accepted it, I just don't feel bad for myself.”

“Why?”

“I don't want to waste my time wishing for things that won't happen.”

The quiet that follows is tense, making me regret saying anything in the first place.

“Why did you do it?” Jessie asks suddenly.

“Sorry?”

“Why did you save my little brother?”

“Anyone would've.” I reply

We stand there awkwardly and neither of us know what to say.

“I applied for a job at the zoo.” Jessie says finally, “I wanted you to know.”

Ironclad and the Cracked Mind

It was a dark and dreary morning, the scent of rainfall noticeable but not overpowering. As I woke up, I felt a strange energy festering in the camp, something was up, bad news was here. We were called to the square at 0600h and awaited our duties. Montgomery droned on in his melancholy tone until he said something that piqued my interest; *Action....Coming...Canada*. So this was it, Canada was finally going to enter the war. I mean don't get me wrong, of course Canada was going to help the British and French, but this soon? Was that really smart? What could you do though? To question the overlord was to have a death wish. Good thing we were bred for war.

As weeks turned to months, many of us Ironclads wondered if we would get to fulfill our life goal: to spill blood. Truth be told, I don't even know if the world knows that we exist. A mix between man and machine, we had triple the strength, dexterity, agility, and stamina of normal humans in the same sized package or, in Layman's terms, we were walking tanks. As children, we were conditioned to do two things: to serve and to kill. We were trained one on one to ensure compliance and were severely punished if we didn't listen. Each day we would assemble in the compound's square, get our assignments and then do our chores (from doing the laundry to making meals, we do it all.) and then train.

We don't know why we did it, we just did it. I mean we could overthrow our teachers or captors depending on who you ask but we don't. It's just who we are. Many of us are bored with the mundanity of our day to day life but I love it. It lets me think without having to think, if you

know what I mean. We don't have a library or, at least, not a normal one where you check out books and that type of thing. Instead we "rent" robots to read off information to us which is kind of cool but also a little bit creepy if you really think about it, anyways, what was I saying? Oh yeah, the library and how working can let me think without thinking.

While I'm working I have one of these robots following me around and teaching me new things. One flaw about most Ironclads is their sheer stupidity. I mean, they probably couldn't keep their heads on their neck if they weren't screwed on which is why I wonder if there is something wrong with me. I'm just you know.... Differences, believe me, IS a good thing. But still, no matter how different I was, I was still wired to kill, and by the sounds of it, there will be plenty of killing soon.

A shutter jolted me awake as we began our descent. This was it. Today was the day that we got to join the fight. I prepared my landing pack and got ready to drop. Alarms started blaring.

What was going on? Smoke began to fill the drop compartment, suffocating me and the other Ironclads. An announcement was made: "Critical engine failure, prepare for early drop" I strapped to the drop line and waited for the door to open. As soon as the door opened we ran and jumped, prepared for whatever was about to be thrown at us. I opened my chute a bit late and felt a shock wave go up my legs as I hit the ground. I ducked into some wreckage next to me. The

sound was deafening, a mix of small arms fire, artillery shells, and the wounded screaming. This was nothing like what they told us, no glory or simple victory; but instead suffering and loss.

I grabbed my cabal rifle and scoped out my surroundings. There was a body of a fallen Ironclad in a crater probably 20 meters to my left. I searched for other Ironclads in order to rally and advance together but found myself alone, surrounded by bodies and normals scampering around my position pushing on past their allies. I steadied myself and checked for injuries, Luckily, I seemed ok. I began weaving through wreckage and craters towards the supposed “Simple Stronghold.” Well, it didn’t seem so simple now that we were actually attacking it.

I stumbled upon an injured normal and checked for injuries, sadly his injuries couldn't be helped with modern medicine so I did what I had to. So this was war; all blood and guts but no glory.

I moved into a small village near the fortress in hopes of creating a rendezvous point for other Ironclads. I peered into a house and searched for enemies, clear. The next house was different though; as I walked through the doorway, a normal jumped at me with a knife and tried stabbing me but I was quicker; I grabbed his wrist and twisted the blade towards his heart and pushed. It punctured swiftly and without resistance. The normal made a strange wheezing noise and stared at me with a look of confusion, despair, and pain.

So this was who we were fighting, just normals fighting normals. What if I were him? How would I feel? We were both just doing what our leaders told us to do and I couldn't take it.

I let out a heart crushing cry. I ran, and continued to run from the battle, from that normal, from our leaders, and from everything I knew, because what I knew couldn't be the only things that are true.

In My Arms

She was across from me standing on the hillside- *our* hillside- her hair blowing in the wind. God, I missed seeing her, missed being near her. It had been only a week- had it only been that long? It felt like we'd been apart for months. All we could do was look at each other.

After what felt like an eternal minute of staring, she began to move toward me, swiftly, silently, and kneeled in front of me, her skirts pooling around her. She was fidgeting, looking down at her hands. She always did that when she was nervous or thinking or excited. She could never sit still anyway; she always had so much energy. Her shoulders began to shake and I was sad to see that it wasn't with laughter.

I placed a hand on her shoulder and pulled her towards me, laying her head in my lap. Gently, I ran my fingers through her hair, working out any knots I could find. It was obvious that, though she looked gorgeous to me, over the last few days she hadn't been caring for herself as well as usual.

All was silent except her sobs and my heartbeat, as if the whole world had been put on pause. I didn't like seeing her like this. It was almost more painful than not seeing her at all. I barely ever saw her cry, she was so strong, and now that it was happening, it was like a stranger was sitting in front of me. I didn't really know what to do to bring her, the real her, the happy her, back.

Out of ideas, I began to sing. It was an old song that my mother used to sing to me and my siblings, about two lovers separated by a raging river too fast to swim and too wide to bridge. Not being able to bear being apart any longer, they both jumped in together, met in the middle, and were whisked away. The original version said that they were dashed against the rocks, but my mother, ever the romantic, always sang that they were brought out to sea, where they lived by the seaside, alone together. My voice was average at best, but in this moment and with this song, it didn't matter.

She had quieted down by the time the song had drawn to a close, still curled up in my lap like a child.

"I- I'm sorry," she stammered out.

She paused for a moment, gathering her words.

"I ruined everything, didn't I? I ruined us, like everything that I touch," she continued, voice wavering.

"You didn't ruin us," I whispered

"But I damaged us."

"And what relationship comes without its damages?"

"But it was all my fault!"

"No," I leaned down, turning her face to look me in the eye, "never tell yourself that."

I took a deep breath. "When you were gone, I thought a lot. About you. Us. Who we are together, who we are apart. And you were right, I can be overprotective and a bit overbearing at times-"

"And jealous?"

"Yes, I'll even admit to being a bit jealous. The point is, neither of us are perfect, and the sooner we accept that, the sooner we can work on bettering ourselves, whether we are together or apart. You shouldn't have said those things, and... I'm not sure if I forgive you yet, but I shouldn't have given you a reason to say them in the first place"

There was a pregnant pause. I wondered if I'd been too harsh, but I figured that after what she'd said to me, she deserved the truth, no matter how hard it might be for either of us to hear it.

"I'm sorry," she whispered, "and I want you to know that I understand if you don't forgive me. I love you, and I want to be with you but... I understand if you need to walk away."

"No. I'm not leaving you," I answered, probably a bit too forcefully.

Tears were rolling down her cheeks. I swiped at them with my thumb as they traced their way across her skin.

"Do you think we can work it out?" she said after a long pause. She sounded like a child. Hopeful, dependent, vulnerable.

I thought for a moment. It's true that we would probably be different. This would not be one of those conflicts that would disappear. This would leave a scar.

"We can try our best," I answered finally, "But... I can't promise we'll be the same."

Her silence felt like a slap to the face, but then again this whole ordeal hadn't felt good either, so I guess I was going to have to accept that this would hurt for a while.

"What I can promise, though, is that I love you, and it would take a lot more than one argument to change that. And I won't deny that you hurt me, you really did, but I'd still walk to the ends of the earth just to make sure that I could hold you in my arms and see your smiling face again," I continued

"Hold me like this?" she asked, turning to meet my eyes once more.

"Yes, but hopefully with a bit less crying."

I couldn't see her face, but I knew she cracked a smile. And in that moment, even if there was so much wrong and so many things unsaid, it felt right. I had her back, and we could work it out, and even though I knew that we'd be fragile for a while I knew that in the end we'd work it out. But for now, it felt right, *We* felt right. And that was all I could ask for.

So we sat there until the sun went down. And I knew, despite everything, that there was no place I'd rather be.

Ariele P. Grade 11
Ins(Hum)anity
South Kamloops Secondary School

Reclining in a wicker chair, feet up, on the front porch. *The sort of day when one drinks cold tea.* According to the sullen orb lingering in the sky, it's afternoon.

"Hey, Jamie!" The second-story window of the house across from her flies upwards and hits with a bang before resting crookedly. Bright eyes peek out from beneath curly, brown hair as the face of a little boy pokes from the gap. The sunlight reflects off his teeth and he waves cheerfully at her. "Guess what?"

Jamie laughs and waves back at Ben. "Oh, I don't know. What?"

"Come over and see!" His head disappears and she hears small footsteps. Open flies the front door, blue paint peeling yet still bright. A couple of long flakes twirl away on updrafts. Jamie can hear him running about, and wonders what he's up to. It's nice, the sound of reality. She shivers, shrugs, and lets her thoughts breeze off with the wind. *With Ben, things can be normal.*

A smile quirking over her own face, Jamie steps off her porch, its ancient wood groaning. Except for Ben's house in front of her, all the others along the dusty street are quiet, the only movement a whisper of wind. "How much longer are you going to take?" she asks playfully.

Something like an agonized shriek splits the air. Slamming, the blue door shuts before Jamie can tell what's happening.

The weeds in her front yard wilt as the sun burns hotter, sky reddening. She now stands in the middle of the road, unsure of what to do.

Silence invades her mind once again, screaming with the most furious of voices.

On they continue.

Ariele P. Grade 11
Ins(Hum)anity
South Kamloops Secondary School

Louder, and more furious. Racing faster.

She can't stop them; all the huddling in a corner and rocking side to side doesn't make them leave. Her dry mouth aches and her swollen tongue runs across her teeth. Her hand wanders up to the back of her head and finds something slippery. Jamie cracks open one eye, intent upon examining the substance lingering in the lines of her palm.

Blood?

How did it get there?

Why won't the voices go away?

GO AWAY.

Jamie manages to stand up and stagger over to the cracked sink, the world tilting beneath her feet. The tap releases cold water; she withdraws her hands until the cold fades and she can put them in again, trying to scrub off the red.

There's more blood here. Spiderwebbed along the grout. A couple of drops on the mirror that reflects only a distorted vision of her frightened face.

Is that something behind me? Jamie twists around and inhales at the sight. Ben lies on the floor, his eyes open and mouth slack-jawed. Her heart speeds up and pounding fills her ears, blocking out the screaming silence inside her mind.

The muted gray of tile speckled with deep red. A small lake of the same red seeping from beneath his head. Blood on her hands.

His?

Ariele P. Grade 11
Ins(Hum)anity
South Kamloops Secondary School

She takes a breath. And another, as her lungs heave and she strains to inhale through tight-throated, gulping sobs leaving her shuddering and unable to stand. Down she kneels and watches the boy in front of her. Her fingers smear red across his blank forehead; like old words, an idea penetrates her thoughts and twists the hot knife of guilt deep in her chest.

"You're different, aren't you." Shadows of taunts rise.

Just like the others, Ben's dead. *They're all dead.* Jamie twitches; something hot rises in her throat. Glassy eyes shut.

Until... stone.

Immovable, cold, safe. Jamie stirs... *my fault.* Her eyes roam beneath her eyelids and a pale foam shows around the corners of her mouth.

"Officers." The voice of the policeman echoes around the sparsely occupied holding room as he scratches his poorly shaven chin. "Should we release this girl under the alibi of her 'problem', or do we keep her for the courts anyhow?"

"Mental illness isn't an excuse," another officer reminds him.

A woman speaks. "Exactly! Just because she has issues doesn't mean she didn't murder the boy. Her insanity makes her a danger to society." The three police debate among themselves as Jamie presses her cheek into the floor and its solidity, wondering *what comes now?*

Rolling over, Jamie looks up into the faces of the three, the loud one with grey stubble, the straight-backed young man, and the fierce-looking woman with her hair back in a tight ponytail.

Ariele P. Grade 11
Ins(Hum)anity
South Kamloops Secondary School

"I can hear you." The statement drifts between them as Jamie's unblinking eyes meet those of the woman. "Stop discussing me like I'm a broken object. Send me to court. Maybe they can sort out my life, because I can't, and no one else can... and I just don't know what to do." Her complacent expression seems to fold in on itself until she's crying, really crying, and letting everything out... the horror of Ben and *why can't my parents help me*, because they've gone too, and *I'm alone*.

She is alone in court. Standing before the judge. Watching the jury shuffling in across the marble floor, as they avoid her gaze like one does that of a homeless person in front of a gas station. The judge chews his unlit cigar, mashing it into a slimy pulp.

"Guilty." A thousand unspoken thoughts bunch together to form a whisper in Jamie's mind. *Capital punishment*.

Later, she sits on a plastic chair, the small room bleak as her situation. A one-way window in front of her, not Ben's friendly eyes watching her but cold strangers who will bear witness to her death. She ignores them, her own stinging eyes in silence streaming. Starting to cough, gulping, and trying not to panic, Jamie knows what comes now. For a moment, the lethal gas shuts up the voices and she's able to form a last coherent thought.

They've taken away my right to be human just because I'm different.

Or... maybe our differences are what give us humanity.

Aberfan's Mistake

The clouds were low and the air was heavy with moisture and the smell of wet moss. Outside, the windows were painted with frost. A natural spring ran below seven peaks of soil that stared over the valley with a sinister look. At the base, on the towering side of the valley, sat Pantglas Junior School.

On this crisp morning, the Probert family rose from their beds and got ready to start the day. The first to rise for the day was Joseph Probert. He rubbed his scruffy face and ran his rough working hands through his dark brown hair as he drank his coffee, black like the soot from a mine. His wife, Gweneth Probert, woke next and started preparing breakfast for their two children, Tommy and Pat. Gweneth untied her thick wavy hair which fell at the nape of her neck, hugging her chin. The smell of sizzling bacon, sausages, and thick, oatmeal laval bread ran through the kitchen and up the stairs.

"Brecwast yn barod," she called, and down the stairs the children flew. Pat sat with her hair up in a bun, slowly nibbling on a piece of bacon. Meanwhile, Tommy shovelled food into his face, his dark eyes bigger than his stomach. Joseph finished his coffee, and scurried out of the house to work, all the while thinking about how his boss had reminded him about the upcoming pay dock. The kids finished up their breakfast and got their backpacks ready for school.

At the mine, Joseph sat in his small office, reading over the complaints. They all said the soil tips at the front of the mine were reaching dangerous heights and, because of previous slides that occurred, people were concerned. Joseph thought about his options but knew they couldn't move the waste until they shut down production. And, if they shut down to move the piles, then he wouldn't have enough money to feed his family.

The kids put their school clothes on and raced to see who could get their rain gear on first. Pat smoothed her raincoat while Tommy stumbled down the stairs with his

hair spiked up in a mess and his coat on inside out. The dishes finished clanking and the sink gurgled, signaling for the walk to school to commence.

They stepped outside the tall brick house and were greeted by a hard slap of cold. The kids waddled in their boots and Gweneth's heels clicked on the stone road. After the 15 minute walk, they approached the peaked roof school. The bell chimed and the kids rushed into the school, leaving their mother deserted.

Once inside, they heard the rain bucket down, the drops like machine guns on the roof. The smell of chalk and books pervaded as the teacher scratched the plan of the day on the board and the students took out their books.

Joseph sat in his office, sighed, and inhaled the smell of old coffee and grease. An unsettling feeling filled his stomach. He shook it off and continued with his paperwork. The complaints mocked him from the corner.

The class sat at their desks attentive and ready to learn, safe and happy, surrounded with their friends. Soon, there was a low rumble of thunder in the hills and the rain really started coming down. Just as the teacher assured the children that that all is well, the lights began to shake and sway, and the ground shook with terror.

The students screamed.

A force pushed the side of the school and it crashed down like a tree in an avalanche. There was no explosion, just thick dirt. Air was gone, only mud to inhale, only shrieks heard. Mud piled over the school as the rumble slowly crumbled to silence.

The screams dissipated, like the lives taken inside. Complete quiet filled the town. Alarms blared at the mine. People ran in mass panic.

Joseph rose from his desk. The feeling was back, like a sack of bricks had smashed him in the chest. His heart dropped to his feet. Joseph knew he made a mistake.

Everyone froze, brains too flustered to fathom what happened. Then, the digging started. The mine workers drove down to start their job of digging, in a different form.

Muffled screams were heard. The crunch of the racing shovels boomed. Tears streamed down Joseph and the other miners' faces. Arms were tugged out as

screaming mothers watched. Coughing children covered in dirt were pulled out of the mound. One after another, bodies were discovered, like precious diamonds in a mine.

Joseph, frantic beyond life itself, dug, his face covered in darkness. His calloused hands bled, and every strand in his muscles ached for a second of relief.

Another miner called out to Joseph. His daughter was found. He hurled himself over and staggered at the sight of his little girl. Her neat bun had fallen out and her hair was knotted and caked in mud. He cradled her in his arms but no life hugged back. He ran with her limp body to the medics.

Gwyneth ran through the crowd, spotting her husband. She went white as Probert's final resident was accounted for. Little messy Tommy was huddled under a desk packed in with dirt, his hands on his face, no breath from his body. The busy little boy was busy no more.

The Probert's hearts were demolished at the loss of their kids. Joseph understood what was done. Guilt hung onto him and wrapped its ropes across him. The funerals came and went. The Proberts sat at home quietly, expressions blank, with no purpose to live for anymore.

In a garden with blue skies and beautiful pathways, splashes of blue, pink, red, yellow, and green exploded all around while delicate flowers and their sweet smells kissed the grave sites. Nearby the memorial site, the children played with their families. Tucked in, and up in a row of graves, the Proberts were reunited again.

Josephine B Grade 12
Two Poems on Growing Up
South Kamloops Secondary School

i miss the sun on my face

i miss the sun on my face

i miss its warm rays folding over my back
bare skin
damp hair

i miss how it candied the sagebrush-covered hills;
brown attempting green in early spring

i miss waking up
sleep deprived,
bright lines painted across my sheets
and twisting my blinds
feeling hopeful,
still seeing beauty in the dying flowers.
hope renders foresight sightless.

i miss the electricity of a new day
purple sky
potential
possibilities;

i worship the morning.
no peeling skin,
red face,
blistered feet,
stinging eyes.

but golden beams into windows sneak,
still exciting enough to convince.
whispering promises:
'this bright spark shall not inspire decay'

.

Josephine B Grade 12
Two Poems on Growing Up
South Kamloops Secondary School

a harsh day ahead is
~~implausible~~
~~improbable~~
impossible.

i miss being drawn out my door
into the heat,
pulled further
and further
into the hills,
following familiar footsteps
crunching ghosts of pine needles,
until the trees are few and far between
and the only sound is the rasping voice from the sky:
'naught exists but I'

i miss being unaware of the heat taking over:
unaware of the consequences

still trapped in the memory of
yesterday.
dehydrated,
seared,
vomiting up
dust:
a cooked body sobbing into the sand

yet

i miss its lingering presence when the stars cover the sky,
the cold winter nights, not quite so cold
below the mountains,
past the end of the trail i step off,
turning back home.

Josephine B Grade 12
Two Poems on Growing Up
South Kamloops Secondary School

childhood

my lungs suck air.
a winded donkey
sprawled on the concrete:
staining red under ripped knees.

blurry figures get smaller and smaller,
kind souls holding hands as they run onto grass,
around the corner and gone.
I fear that they looked back.