

A wonderful bird is the Pelican,
Its beak can hold more than its belly can.

The Ardingly Pelican is cock-a-hoop! She's discovered the meaning of one of the most famous poems in the English language! What did Lewis Carroll *mean* by *Jabberwocky*? What *are* those slithy toves, what are they doing when they gyre and gimble in the wabe? What's the fight with the Jabberwock all about? The Pelican can reveal all! Those slithy toves are words, my friends, the wabe is the mind, the borogroves and the mome raths are vital points on the electrical circuit-board of the brain that light up when a poem's on the way. And the fight? Old Jabberwock himself is what he sounds like, the nonsense-blatherer that gets in the way when we're making sense of these strange syllables and turning them into lines that people will read, say aloud, maybe turn back to with delight, maybe reel off by heart after a time. Can you blame old Pelly for being excited? So why did Lewis Carroll not come out with it and simply tell us that's what he meant? Ah, says Pelly, there's a mystery in a poem, in every poem that ever was written. The pieces that follow, from all years of the Senior School, are her current selection.

Ardingly English Department

Contents

Hope <i>by Raffaella Freeman</i>	p.4
Anger <i>by John Gibson</i>	p.5
Sunrise on the Beach <i>by Kwok Chun Yue</i>	p.6
Thoughts from Court <i>by Isabel Hughes</i>	p.7
Stage Girl <i>by Olivia Southgate</i>	p.8
That Curious Part of Your Soul <i>by Joshua Williams</i>	p.9
You Wanted Something, Well Here It Is <i>by Tom Prosser</i>	p.10
Phosphorescence = Perpetuity? <i>by Moon Yiu</i>	p.11
Time = God <i>by Leo Ko</i>	p.12
Write! <i>by Olivia Homewood</i>	p.13
Sweet Sick Sacrifice <i>by Mary Reader</i>	p.14
Homecoming <i>by Dan Hörmann</i>	p.15
Alive <i>by Lucy Sheehan</i>	p.16
The Herald <i>by Elene Ueckermann</i>	p.17
Wait a Minute <i>by Elene Ueckermann</i>	p.18
Stop to Finish <i>by Amy Haines</i>	p.19
Passion's Hollow <i>by Vanessa Swales</i>	p.20
Inseparably Intertwined <i>by Caroline Hirst</i>	p.21
Grief <i>by Olivia Bell</i>	p.22
Leaving <i>by Olivia Bell</i>	p.23
The Night <i>by George Pinkerton</i>	p.24
Wordbeat <i>by Harry Key</i>	p.25



Hocus Pocus Focus Locus	<i>by Olivia Noé</i>	p.26
Just a Burger	<i>by David Lawanson</i>	p.28
My Passion	<i>by Oliver Morgan</i>	p.29
Maths	<i>by Charlie Jackson</i>	p.30
Pink Floyd	<i>by Charlie Jackson</i>	p.31
Video Games	<i>by John Gibson</i>	p.32
Lost	<i>by Laurence Haines</i>	p.33
Home	<i>by Ann-Kathrin Henning</i>	p.34
Boy	<i>by Anastasia Harrington</i>	p.35
For Lucie West	<i>by Lucy Stephenson</i>	p.36
The Teacher	<i>by Ian James Turner</i>	p.37
Secular Publishing	<i>by Tim Bradbeer</i>	p.38
Dulcet as a Dingo	<i>by Anna Cook</i>	p.40
Haikus	<i>by Tom Howard</i>	p.41
Urban Hymn	<i>by Sam Elwin</i>	p.42
Destiny	<i>by Amelia Elwin</i>	p.43
A World of Ink	<i>by Jenny Elwin</i>	p.44
The Pen	<i>by Vivienne Lazib</i>	p.45
Home	<i>by Ana Ribar</i>	p.46
My Loss	<i>by James Palmer</i>	p.47
Hope	<i>by George Waring</i>	p.48



Hope

by Raffaella Freeman

Hope lives on the edge of the ocean
peering into the endless horizon of serene nothingness.

Hope wears a flowing white yellow gown,
its train caught in the summery breeze.

Hope's hair is wheat-straight and fair.
It rests perfectly silken in place.

Hope's voice is a comforting whisper in the ear of a worried child,
a confession of deep virtuous thoughts.

Hope leaves enlightened footprints
in the sand of its secluded home.



Anger

by John Gibson

There is a box, deep inside
Hidden in the abyss,
I try to hide it, keep it under chains
The box is angry.

There is a moment every now and then
It comes at random,
When the chains release and it pours out
It is angry.

In that moment there is a word
It matters not what it is,
For it always means the same thing
The word is anger.

Anger destroys
Irreparable damage is done.
It creeps back inside
Only calm remains.



Sunrise on the beach

by Kwok Chun Yue

An early walk by the lively shore,
Prints grew long as my bare feet trod.
The tide rushed in like a savage beast,
It showed its claws and swallowed the cliffs.
Another one swept quietly in,
Embraced the sands spread on the ground.

The beautiful bright blue diamond,
Lying here alone shining,
Under the yielding yellow yolk of light.
I went away and left the place
Without a sound
As morning slowly crept in.



Thoughts from Court

by Isabel Hughes

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth...

You lied,
you scorned,
you laughed,
you hurt,
you scared,
you hit and you punched.
You were the leader of despair,
the eye of crime,
the follower of sorrow.
You left a path of hopelessness and
destruction in your wake,
spilling sorrow and woe onto innocent
people.
I saw all of this,
and still
I was naive enough to allow you into my
life,
my soul,
my past,
my present,
my future.
I thought you would stop if you had
someone to live for,
but instead you inflicted it on me.
I gave up my friends,
my family and my livelihood for you.
And you repaid me with loneliness,
fear and scares.
You ripped at my heart,
hit my face,
opened my insecurities.
But worst of all,
you hurt my family,
you hurt my friends,
you damaged my past, present and future.

For this
I will never forgive you,
and I will be the first to stop you.
I am the first to stand up to you.
I am one of many,
but I am the first example.
I am the reason that no-one will forget,
I will not live in fear of you and neither
will anyone else.
I am the example no-one will forget,
and I am the one to ruin you.



Stage Girl

by *Olivia Southgate*

I felt the rush,
the excitement building inside me,
rising up,
pushing the fear down.

The other girls were rushing about,
putting final touches upon their already
perfect faces.
I just sat there, looking calm,
when really I was ecstatic.

I remember the day my mother
took me to my first ballet class.
How scared I'd been.
I remember my first ever show.
I was five at the time.
Even though I was ill,
I insisted on going... to be the best angel
ever.



Now here I sit in the wings,
years later,
waiting for my moment.
The moment when I forget everything
around me.
When everyone looks at me and
I'm no longer unimportant.

The lights come up,
expectant faces disappear.
Show time.



That Curious Part of Your Soul

by Joshua Williams

Drifting in... and out... of sleep.
Slowly, racing thoughts are shouting silently into muddled clarity.
Touch, see, smile, connect in these blissful moments
that the curious part of your soul cherishes.
It is spoiled in your waking, carelessly strewn onto your floor.
Impatient.
That curious part of your soul is now vacant.
Torn again, then forced to heal its tear
by the cooled realisation of a chilled morning air.
For an instant it was, then could, then might, then should,
then cannot.
But the t's need crossing and the i's need dots?
My friend, passing the barrier your pencil was lost.

Put the kettle on, let's settle, drink tea,
try to remember what it was you dreamed.



You Wanted Something, Well Here It Is

by Tom Prosser

You wanted something, well here it is.
A revolution of sound spreading out from the four corners.
This is it.
It is what you've been waiting for.
This is the thing dreams are made of.
This is what history is written about.
This is the one true thing in a world of lies.
This is the sound of a heavy footstep.
Another beat to the sound of life.
Another pump of the heart that sustains our world.
This is it.
You wanted something, well...
It's real.
It's awake.
It breathes.
It is the destroyer of cities,
It makes governments fall to their knees,
It shows what is right in this world of wrong.
What is this? you ask.
This...
This is change.



Phosphorescence = Perpetuity?

by Moon Yiu

Sinister love
loving animosity
solemn humour

The lie underneath your eyes
telling me not to cry
you pulled me close and held me tight
telling me I'm the rose that shines at night

A promise that becomes an escape
a ring with phosphorescence
the phosphorescence that rings around my finger
turned Cinderella into a princess in white

Why?
why?
an eternal lie...

Leaving me alone,
standing at the centre of the centre,
in the middle
of the galilee, the wedding chamber,
in the middle
of the dreadful world.

I had never noticed that the gleam was not phosphorescence.
Instead
it is fluorescence.
That forbidden energy from your heart.



Time = God

by Leo Ko

Time is God
No one can change Time
 not even seeing Him
No one can control Time
 He just passes you without noticing
Time is God
Only Time can change human beings
 change EVERYTHING
because of time
 humans exist,
 we share love between us
 but please never, never forget also
because of time
 death comes to us,
 hate appears among us
What can we do as a tiny atom in front of Time?
 Nothing...
 life and death are in His hands
love and hate will change throughout Him
 Time is equal to everything.



Write!

by Olivia Homewood

Send me a phrase to blaze through the night,
a cacophony of a myriad beasts put to flight!
Speak soft... the blushes of aureate lovers
under Stygian skies...
or tell me when dusk first caresses the diamond dew droplets...
Heaven's tears
of great majesty, humanity...
as mortals hound knowledge
across seas searing, crags crashing,
ever beguiled by the taste of the merest drop.
Oh pray! For let it never stop!
Or when winter bites raw, the world trembling in its jaw,
to appraise the daring of summer's long day,
Oh shout, speak, say!
For these are our words to outpass time, tumult and tempest.
Soak up their mystery...
take bounteous swallows, swigs-tender sips
and wake... Shakespeare dancing on my lips.



Sweet Sick Sacrifice

by Mary Reader

Dusky glow trickles
through watery prisms
reaching out to the salted surf,
coasting cliffs that roll down to hills of
tinged inky slips.

Powder-white shells
shaped as the tusks of elephants
suspended by a hush of softness;
an eternal string carrying hollow vessels,
soft pearls once caressed by deep depths.

Yet in the midst of this tranquil scene
a trawler
attached to fiery red streaks of a coastal
horizon
casts its nets out,
tumbling
down
to stir a world trapped forevermore;
dragging
across the ocean floor,
sinister bars imprisoning
a heart of jewel;
tropical flashes of colour,
peach,
azure,
emerald,
rocks wrapped in mossy crystals of
moonstone,
sandy foundations
unearthed;
cursing the sea with fatal sickness.

Waves bite back at the flanks of the vessel,
but the heart of the jewel is melted
into molten sapphire
against a heart of iron.
Fishermen reclaim their nets,
suffocating depths
yearning to breathe once more;
a vast stomach straining to heave schools
of fish for savoury slaughter;
but no mercy
shall soothe the heart of jewel,
as its fruits surrender life once more
to corporate businesses
rejoicing in sweet slaughter of the sea.

Masses of writhing fish
bearing eyes sick of sacrifice,
painted with sequins of silver
that reflect the golden cast set by a heavy
sun;
drawing a last breath of the ocean –
now tinged with slips of crimson
drawn to bear allegiance to
Sweet Sick Sacrifice.

And so upon a canvas painted with
precious jewels of the ocean,
the sail of a lonely ship
flutters,
tossed by busking winds,
engulfed by mourning waves that hug the
sandy shore;
as the tail of a lonely fish
caught in the last net
gives life away,
to the kingdom of
Sweet Sick Sacrifice.



Homecoming

by Dan Hörmann

I rise to the sunshine, rub my eyes, look
till it has crossed the whole Sheephill. Holding my booked ticket
I turn around to the reservoir and again turn,
seeing a contract burnt.

I will remember the rainy weather, the clouds moving south.
I will miss the smell of British grass and mud.
Between moving to the upper field to see a rugby match and a cricket match below,
although I hardly experienced you,
I'll miss you too.

Sitting in the lunch hall eating a classic English breakfast –
seeing a Red Devil in the north,
 a Gunner in the south,
 a Scouse in the west –
I've seen your football and experienced your culture.
I love you England but it's time to go.
Adios England!
Ahoy Germany!



Alive

by Lucy Sheehan



As the sun rests atop the trees,
resting, yawning its final breath, before the moon
takes its giddy watch over the milky fields,
one takes time to walk amidst the dying light,
amidst all that was once dead – alive.

And atop the tallest trees, and amid the bowing reeds
the furtive moorhen glances – busy among the boughs
to pluck plumes and clinging threads
to grace her little house, where she as safe as any
might subsist and rest, like me – alive.

And the swaying air is full of moths,
to flit and die away across the yellowing pasture,
and the deer in an ephemeral glance – dances,
to and fro atop the grasses, amidst the swaying heads of seeded pips
that reeling burst and sing along the breeze – alive.

And pausing at the gate – before the humming field,
merrily life comes forth to greet me, takes my hand, and beckons
freely, congratulates and I, though weakly,
stumble forward – I'm human, and meekly
thank *God*
I'm alive.



The Herald

by Elene Ueckermann

I am the herald of the echoes
scarlet in the dark
the one who keeps the noises in
saving others from their plight

I am the keeper of pretences
hiding from their eyes
the one who paints their faces on
preserving honour through the mask

I am the weaver of illusions
fading in the haze
the one who brings the shadows forth
hiding those who can't resist

I am the victim of your mind
the darkness in your eyes
the one who lies with a pointed tongue
imprisoned in your soul



Wait a Minute

by *Elene Ueckermann*

Have you ever seen
a phoenix burst into flames
or a star in a galaxy
implode from far away

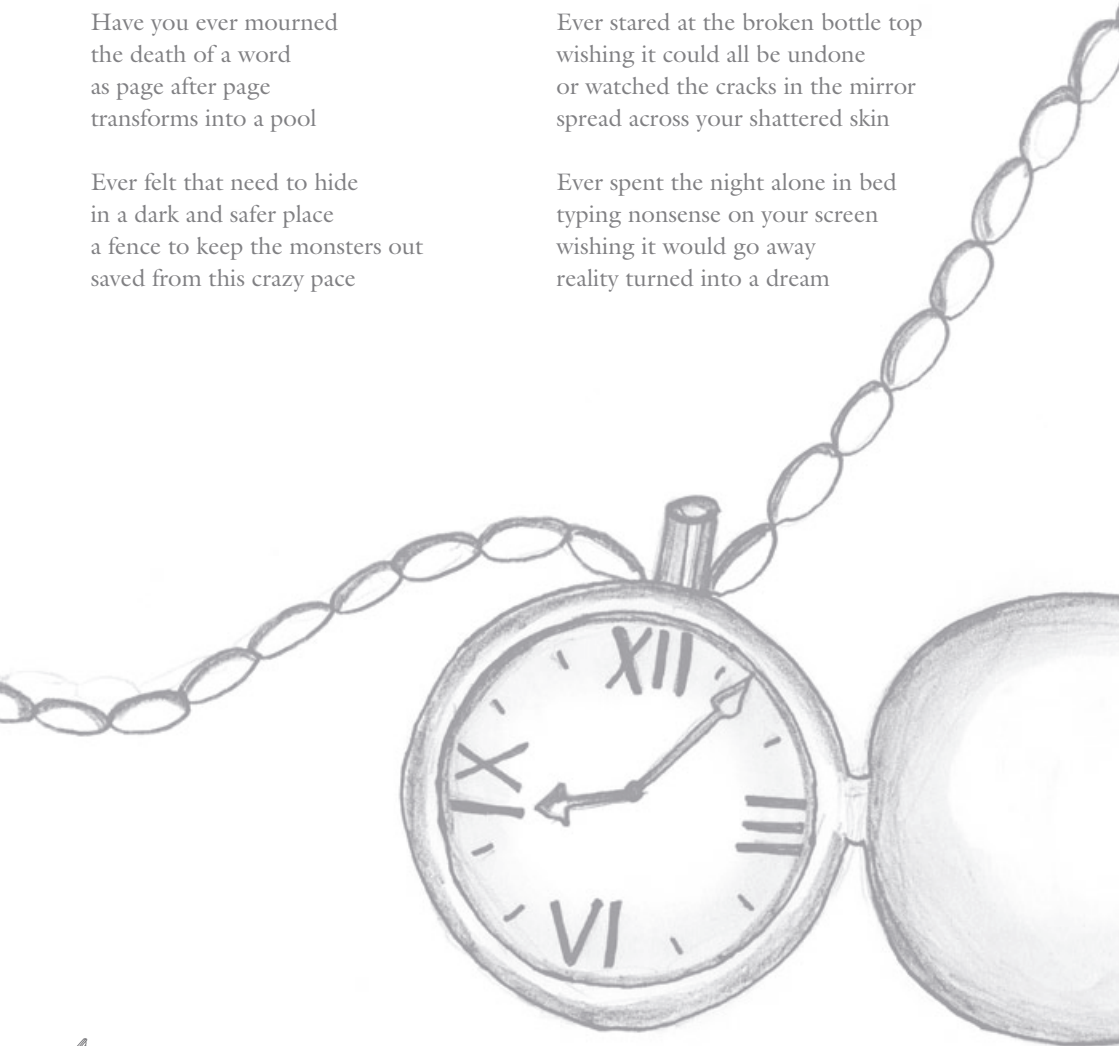
Have you ever mourned
the death of a word
as page after page
transforms into a pool

Ever felt that need to hide
in a dark and safer place
a fence to keep the monsters out
saved from this crazy pace

Ever taken the time to trace
your broken memories
imprinted in your palm
a network of faded dreams

Ever stared at the broken bottle top
wishing it could all be undone
or watched the cracks in the mirror
spread across your shattered skin

Ever spent the night alone in bed
typing nonsense on your screen
wishing it would go away
reality turned into a dream



Stop to Finish

by Amy Haines

Starry skies of corn blue night,
scented air from blossom's flight,
a tumbleweed has blown afar,
a heart left open, poised, ajar.
Little streamlets tinkle down
the snow-white cloth of eiderdown,
soaked by diamond drips of pain
all glints of hope are drowned in vain,
the ache of losing, unexplained.
And from this game you have refrained,
from singular to plural now,
crystallised, your golden crown.
To the earth you are no moon,
time come and gone, and lost too soon.
Metal clashes with the flesh,
blood and air together mesh.
Scarlet river freely roams,
as shattered heart softly moans.
Secret are the night and she
as pain takes over history.
Relish in the brief distraction,
bathe in beauty's rare attractions,
for now it is no longer yours,
sorrow unto you it pours.
Fight for breath as flesh turns white,
for grievance will not take its flight.
Together are no longer you,
joy is lost and scarce and few.
Vapour, as the heart-beat grinds
to a halt where thoughts divine
are treasured, as you once were,
before you poisoned good in her.



Passion's Hollow

by Vanessa Swales

We walked arm in arm,
but I couldn't feel your touch.
The acrid feeling that I'd had too much.

Your warmth was like the dying,
as lifeless as the burning embers,
it being the Horae's gift – the cold December.

Yet when you turned to me,
my heart ceased to beat like fluttering wings,
the diurnal stab of maudlin injecting its bitter sting.

Waiting at the threshold, still,
my hands became like the creeping, weeping willow at bay –
pining for our love so faint and fey.

Never could Algos have induced such agony as this,
your starry orbs blackened by the kindled thaw.
Sadness was something that I'd never thought I saw.

And when you asked me "Do you still love me?"
I had to look away.
I couldn't say that my heart grows colder with the coming of each day.

All the times we shared
are darkened by the pall that now veils my heart.
To break out, it would further rip my soul apart.

To dance with you through the wooded fir again,
spinning and spinning like the hands of a clock –
I would only be happy when this feeling would stop.



Inseparably Intertwined...

by Caroline Hirst

I saw it,
but I didn't know what to do,
or what it was.

I felt
you that time
it spoke
but I couldn't answer,
I didn't know what it was.

I thought,
tried to rationalise you in my head,
but I couldn't grip it.
I had felt what you were,
but was only aware of what it could be.

It left
me alone.
I couldn't find anyone else,
you and it were
inseparably intertwined.
I didn't fit.

You were real and yet a dream,
it was untrue and yet felt like a nightmare.

I ran
to find you,
searching desperately,
but you had gone.
It was there,
too real.



Grief

by Olivia Bell

I'm ripping you down your seams,
tearing that flimsy, fragile fabric,
undoing years of hard-worked stitches,
unpicking quality lace.

I am destroying you. I am carefully
pulling apart your joins,
unravelling tightly-knit wool,
creating holes which make gaps
which turn into huge abysses
in which I know you are totally
lost.

I am breaking you. All you worked for
all your life.
Dirtying you – mud spats, ink, of course
a few drops of blood for good measure.
All that's left as you stare
gasping like a drowning fish
in front of the bruised and cracked mirror

is a tattered dress,
a ruined costume,
scarcely more than a frayed,
soiled
rag.



Leaving

by Olivia Bell

The trees have pulsing veins,
heartbeats that shiver in the ice,
pounding gasping breaths;
I never knew it was so loud.

I am leaving.

The leaves, twisted rags, know it.
There is an anticipation, deadened by the heavy fog
that almost sings.

I am leaving, and the clouds know it.
They batter together in a frenzied war-cry
and the rotten cadavers of robins and eagles circle over
as if in macabre suspense for the carrion to come.

No song tears from their scorched beaks
because they, like me, like grief and like the world
have simply run out of words.

The door stands half-shut in disgust, the knocker
turned away from my hand in disgrace.
I am leaving, and the rusted handles share my shame.

The last look back reveals something else:
a shadow, swallowing the house,
the clichéd swell of suffocation
that shouldn't have been a surprise.

I am leaving, and even the sky is crying

blunt, salted drops,

frozen, like me.



The Night

by George Pinkerton

The night is stillest at the end.
The settling of disordered day is near complete before the light:
before there is any light to throw shadows,
before even the apple-tree's ridged bark can latch shade to shade,
before the creeping sunrise can crawl across the grass,
before the spider's web, gemmy with dew,
can fling up a single grain of light,
it is still.

The night is darkest at the end.
The last of day has fallen past the West, its Tyrian rearguard gone:
before the dawn thrusts up green light beams,
before the Oriental lamp is lit and the ruby braziers flicker,
before even the least of rays reaches the horizontal,
before the many-times reflected light's reflection
will lie upon the surface of the world,
it is dark.

The night is quietest at the end.
The noise of the day's ferment and the night's mulled chaos stopped:
after the nightingale's melodious piping is hushed,
after the nightjar ceases clicking flight and the owls are silenced,
after the moon has dipped beneath the barren trees, and set,
after even the very winds themselves lay their
selfless selves to roost in boughs,
it is quiet.

The night is dampest at the end.
The rainy day long since ended in dewy darkness of the twilight:
before a drop of liquid dryness has dripped on the soil,
before the dawn's heat can burn a single bead from the spider's net,
before any inch of bark, or rock, or earth is paled by aridity,
before the frail stems can toss their misty blanket off
and the land lies in a woolly luxury of steam,
it is wet.

Before the sun can rise and since the moon has set,
all the earth seethes in a soundless limbo:
in that daily-nightly ageless necessity of the rolling globe
every covenant is reaffirmed, every promise kept of chthonic gods
who promised light, another day, another chance at thread-thin life,
and even in the darkest days and the coldest nights of the coldest months,
when the night is the grave of growing,
promise the Spring.



Wordbeat

by Harry Key

As the glade of richness tumbles dry and the pleasing pollen engulfs a sneeze, a sigh erupts from the mountainous high and quivers, ripens in the breeze and through the trees – earth’s rotten hairs, the snares, the wares and the could-not-cares – rumbles on and on, whispers to and fro, and we stumble upon doom from foe upon tomb from toe. Screams of distress, streams of finesse, the warpings of time and its limitlessness. I am the trees, I am this ocean, I am this mountain maintaining devotion, emotion yet steady in motion. Impressive, implosive and yet lacking motive. To soar and subside, to feel and to writhe, to live in the skin of what lived and what dies. As the heart beats on this is worn. Intricate, incarnate, the beating of our fate, to ponder the yonder, to be and be gone, go here and beyond, hear sculpture, see song, erase what is known which is knowing what is known, which is knowing what is knowing what is knowing what is known, and altering the tone of this moan.



Hocus Pocus Focus Locus

by *Olivia Noé*

Once a boy called Victor wrote about his feelings. This is the result.

Every time that I get lost in thoughts
I go crazy.
Not that it bothers, me, no,
but with pen and paper in front of me...
I set off, I explode.
It's not fine any more,
I laugh occasionally these days,
I don't sleep so well lately.
Whenever you ask me for my news,
I just find myself without any.
I've lost my gang,
and I just feel like, like if I was made from ice.
I wait to break somehow.
The world of tears is a mystery,
I've been visiting it a lot lately.
That's my minus.
Something happens all the time,
I am late, I lose flights,
and by accident I leave my love at the arrivals.
I close into myself, into my loneliness.

I've never pretended, I am not playing any roles.
I don't play with feelings and I have reasons.
Every time I get lost, I return.
I cross streets and I dismiss people.

I've never pretended,
remember that, I'll stay by your side.
But I need you close to me.
Every time I find myself lost, I go back.
I leave scenes, I have a limit.
I grew up with fun,
but I wonder if I am still living on earth
or I am in hell



Some like me say
they 'will be there at the end of the day'.
We'll get through all the difficulties,
so the fears can go away.
Please don't mess with my heart, I am still a kid.
I know that I love you, but just let me say,
I hate loving you in any kind of way.
You hurt me before, but
I don't want to play the part of the broken-hearted any more.

A few friends care truthfully,
and I had enjoyed every night out,
every walk around Athens,
every goal, every rhyme.
All the graffiti that we created as a group.
Every bit of advice that I took and gave, in every step I made.
I have the word 'family' in my heart as my own personal flag.
Not my country, who cares about us, the teenagers any more?
The ones that are lost in the e-mails,
eaten human machines is the result.
Everything that you can't stand is what you are.
Where did you get lost?
The return is what you never found.
I wonder, should I be sad?

I have been hurt by you and I do not forget.
My baby you got lost,
my friend you got lost.
Everything that I feel is what I am writing.
I am sorry but I can't stop.

This poem was written in hard days,
I know which people have been by my side.
I respect them, I love them and I appreciate them.
They do the same.

I miss you, please return.
You don't know how much I would love to see you again,
just so I can regret, for one moment.
You don't know how much I love you!
Because then...
you would understand my pain.



Just a Burger

by David Lawsonson



That first bite, oh what a heaven that first bite is
the bun like a sesame-freckled breast of an angel
resting gently on a ketchup and mustard flavour
mingling with each other
then a pickle
topped by a slice of tomato
a leaf of lettuce
and a chunk of ground beef
so exquisite swirling in your mouth
breaking apart then combining again
which just makes your mouth water
this is not just a burger
which contains bread and meat
this is god speaking to us through food

My Passion

by Oliver Morgan

You can receive a jaffa,
but it's not an orange.

You can be plum,
but it's not a fruit.

You can have flannels,
but you don't wash with them.

Do you associate these words with sport?
You should because it's my sport!

If you're the skipper, you have an attack at your disposal,
trying to beat them with bite, and gain a duck.

Chinamans with flight,
and maidens all thrown in.

Whilst in the field, sillies and cow corners
are ready to defend.

On the other side
cherries and gardening are good.

Two arms in the air are gratefully received,
but just one finger means the end.

For me it all makes sense.
Does it to you?



Maths

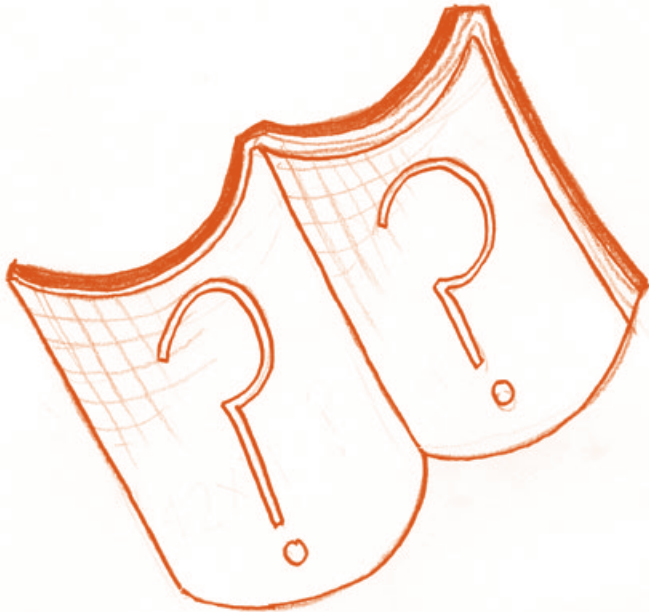
by *Charlie Jackson*

Those two little orange books,
I'm repelled by them.



Gruelling as the lessons are,
it's important that I pay attention.
And yes, I couldn't care less how to add fractions,
and I'm really not fussed about equations.
It doesn't bother me where x is hiding,
and no Sanjit, I don't know how many apples you have.

To be honest, I'd rather be solving my own problems...



Pink Floyd

by Charlie Jackson

Behind the stage
the footsteps can be heard
of the four musical men,
calm as the blue sky
they appear.
A shiver of anticipation
ripples through their audience
silencing even the loudest of voices.
A single note plays
mesmerising yet subtle
the ground vibrates
as a white spotlight shines down
to the change of pitch,
a new chord
drawing the gaze of every waiting eye
then without warning
the picking of a metal string
echoing in its clarity
bent up perfectly to pitch.
The guitar and keyboard work
harmoniously together
then four notes;
a simple melody
resonating like psychedelic voices
and blending with the bass
the slow drums
suddenly the whole band is playing
sustaining with beautiful consonance
many clear notes on the guitar fly out
a guitar solo epitomising passion for an
instrument.
Then it stops.
A voice sings with soul
the lyrics are thought-provoking yet
simple.

Every word in tune
alongside the quiet piano
the music gets louder
and a saxophone is present
note after soft note
with emotion
and a smooth transition
between tenor and alto sax
the tempo is quicker now
then
the drums stop
the saxophone still plays on
the song is coming to a gradual end
the enticing music fades
when music is as divine as this
no words can fully describe it.
Shine on you crazy diamond.



Video Games

by John Gibson

The dead silence, the calm before the storm.
With the touch of a button, it begins.
The slow whirring, the occasional “cludunk”,
the flash of light, an explosion of colour.
A peace is reached, a tranquil hum.

A world of opportunities opens up.
To be a proud and noble space marine of the Imperium,
or an Orc Lord of the wastes, perhaps a nameless avatar,
an assassin, a thief, a demon, a mutant, the fabled vault-dweller himself.
A myriad of choices awaits.



The mike turns on with a high-pitched click,
a flood of garbled voices pours in.
Each one I know and have heard so many times before.

We’ve slain the mighty Nords of Havoc,
we’ve bested the Hyperion wanderers of lore,
we’ve killed countless numbers of the zombie horde,
we’ve played as teams, as clans, as opponents.
We are friends of a kind...

With the touch of a button
there is only silence.



Lost

by Laurence Haines

I am lost
with no hope of being found
I'm summing this up
there is no way round.

My home has gone
my life destroyed
my education done
and death deployed.

Peace is scarce
as the war rages on
living a struggle
my life is so wrong.

My faith for god withers
he used to be my friend
he has left me alone
my belief draws to an end.

How can people be so selfish?
to want more than they need
to take others' lives
to fund their own greed.

My rights have disappeared
in the midst of the struggle
what have I done wrong
to end up with this trouble.

Being a refugee
turns a person worse
makes us steal and sin
it's as if we were cursed.

I am lost
with no hope of being found
I'm summing this up
there is no way round.

By someone who needs to be found.



Home

by *Ann-Kathrin Henning*

Stepping out my door
one more time.
One final time.
Remembering the last eight years.
Being torn away.
A single flower, standing on its own.

Without my home,
without my friends,
separated from my past.
Like a puppet with broken strings.

I didn't ask for this.
My life decided like I'm a dummy.
I don't want this.
I don't want to go.

The place I'm going
seems worlds away,
a different universe
from what I know and love.

It may prove to be better,
nicer, richer, bigger.
But I don't care.
I want my freedom
to choose for myself.



I don't like it there.
This is my home.
I don't want to go.
I don't belong.

Boy

by Anastasia Harrington

I remember the day I met him
walking through those doors. Seven-thirty
had struck to announce the coming
of the darkened red Ford.
Parting with his parents – what a hard
blow – as the pain
started to grow.
The master and the mistress came
flooding in,
drowning the lowly soul,
to reincarnate the learning child.
With lantern lights
illuminating the golden highlights
on the ivory patterned walls
they emerged: he could not move.
Scampering away into the darkness,
he could be found
only by someone who knew
to follow into the darkened night,
knew how to use their sight.
May you find your way safely
and without horror.
May you hide without
a soul to find you this unfortunate time.
Sum up your courage
to make it through this world,
against the drowning sun,
that will diminish your fight.
May the purified warrior
of battle go on with full ambition.
I'll watch, from a heightened ground,
on the skyline with the moonshine,
that shines to light your face.
More rain, more cloud, more tears of
sound,
more expression and then the frown.

You'll twist and turn
on the quivering ground.
Your mother, sceptical, calm,
with courage and confidence,
care, love, devotion and trust.
She even caressed you
within her arms to act as a warm blanket.
I watched the sea of devotion swarm you.
I watched the master and the mistress
sweep you away like a pebble.
After twenty-four hours
you settled in.
You just whispered,
Now I am guided this way,
I will make the journey and stay.



For Lucie West

by Lucy Stephenson

I always had a smile on my face

when you were around.

You used to make us giggle

till we couldn't breathe any more.

Your grin never faded nor your sense of humour.

You wrapped me in a long thick rope,

you filled the room with colours,

the smell of Gucci was always in the air,

there was a rainbow overhead.

The rainbow turned into a storm,

your rope snapped,

now all I can smell is death.

You filled my world with brightness.

Now my heart is stone cold.



The Teacher

by Ian James Turner



Good morning.

Ambitious, contented,
early breakfast, runaway hours, the
classroom.

Premature expectations
of an easy day. “Don’t forget to look
assertive.”

Lesson period 1.

Slap out the briefcase, files, reports,
examinations
riddled with puzzling and protruding
scripts –
take the questions, feel the strain, bounce
back from the daily pain,
no time to sit or get comfy, hands shoot
the air,
waiting for confirmation to despair or
queries...
the room of flailing arms reminds him of
the corn-stalks on the farm that he lived
on.

This soul wanted to answer the call of the
Cornish land;
instead he reacts to the cry of a
complaining juvenile.
“Ah, the students and their excuses.”

Break.

The dingy staffroom
with unchanged carpet
and dusty cretonne.
The tea and biscuits.

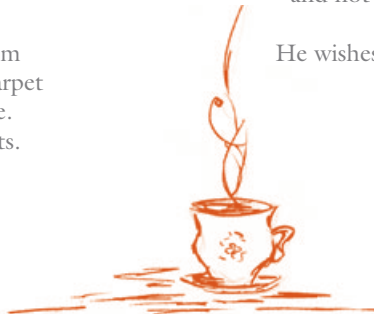
Lesson period 2.

“Where is that assignment I sent you?”
is the question that becomes more and
more rhetorical.
Take more queries, brace for the fatigue,
is Freddie getting tearful?
Yes, there sobs the star of the spelling bee
grappling with ‘onomatopoeia’.
Time to be the hero of the insufferable
hour.
“Yes, Freddie, you can go outside if you
wish...
the pressure put on you is deplorable.”

End of the day.

At last he is where he belongs:
not behind the desk, not waiting for that
higher wage, not always changing
the tie, not the comforter of slow students
and not the wizard marker of tests.

He wishes.



Secular Publishing

by *Tim Bradbeer*

Publisher: Thanks for coming in so soon.

Author: Is there... a problem?

P.: Yes, I'm afraid so.

A.: Is it the characters? Are they boring? Do you think it's been done before? Is the plot –

P.: (interrupting) Look, just hang on a second.

A.: I'm sorry, but... this book... it's my life. It's become my truth, my way, my, my...
light!

P.: I still think we can work with it, but there are some pressing issues that need to be solved, OK?

A.: (reluctantly) Fire away.

P.: The wine incident...

A.: What about it?

P.: Well, we have to think who might read this. We at Dawkin Publishing cannot be seen to publicise and even glorify drunkenness and alcoholism.

A.: I wouldn't say it does that, it's just a bit of fun... you know...

P.: Water into Wine. Do you realise what that says to a teenage reader? It says go, get drunk, because this man, whom you characterise as a great leader, gives you an endless supply of liquor. It just doesn't fit with the rest of the text.

A.: Well, I suppose I could remove it...

P.: No no, don't be so dramatic, just maybe water it down if you'll excuse the pun. Maybe he turns wine into water and they still have a great time at the wedding. Now that's a great message for our readers.

A.: (hesitantly) I suppose so...



P.: Moving on... ah yes, the resurrection.

A.: Look, that's the main bit, the entire point of writing this damn thing.

P.: Yes, I can see that, but... well... it's just not very realistic.

A.: (stands) REALISTIC! When has art been realistic? When? When has realism stopped any author before? That's the entire point of... of... Art! "It is through art and art only that we can shield ourselves from the sordid perils of actual existence." Oscar Wilde! Realism does not come into it!

P.: The problem is that you have written a mostly believable story up to that point, and then you ruin it with this resurrection and all of this 'died for your sins' preachy nonsense.

A.: It's not nonsense, it's the essence of life, the meaning of everything.

P.: (sarcastically) Essence of Life! Essence of Life! What do you think you are? The Pope? (stands) If you aren't prepared to concede anything then I think we'd better stop this project immediately.

A.: Fine. This story will be told. Whether you like it or not.

P.: Yeah, because that's what people want in a book I suppose, something that brainwashes them into believing that love is everywhere and forgiveness is given out willy-nilly. How dumb do you think people are? It would be easier for... a camel to walk through... a needle than for you to get this book published. This "Bible" as you so arrogantly call it will never get anywhere, trust me.



Dulcet as a Dingo

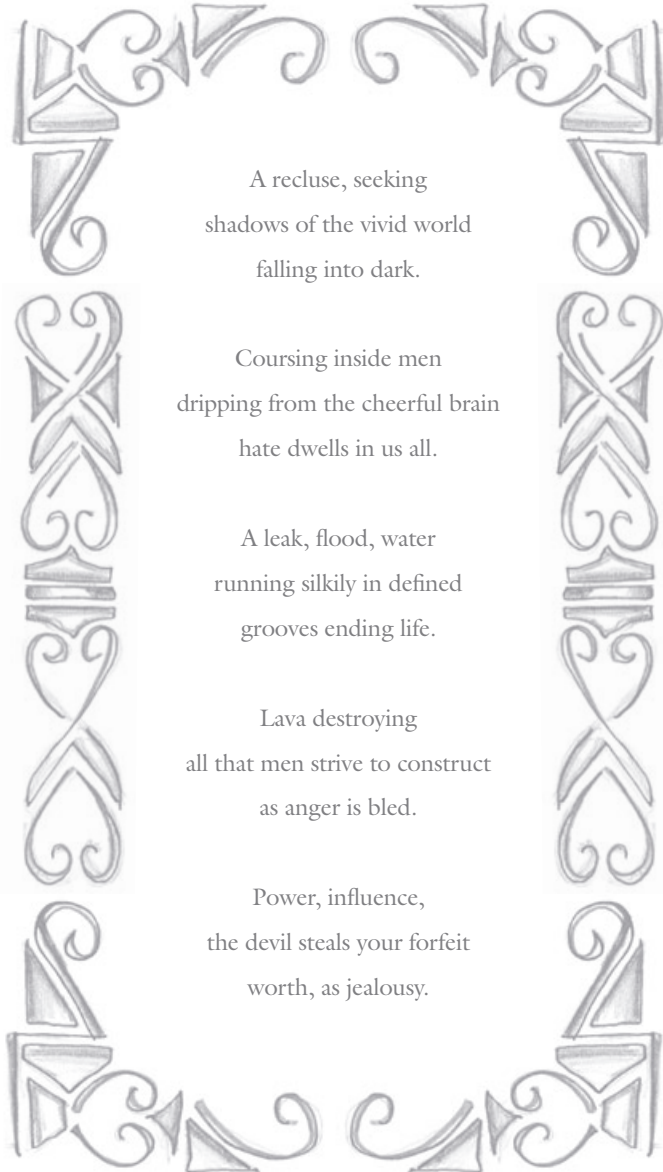
by Anna Cook

Your voice sounds like cutlery scraping against plates
like fingers stuck unwittingly to an icy lamp-post
like the incessant droning of pipes,
soggy bread, a torn muscle,
like a pungent aroma of rotten fruit
so strong that it triggers your gag reflex,
like unrelenting clicking from multiple pens
like Physics on a dull Monday morning,
a jigsaw with one missing piece
a plaster ripped from tender skin,
like polystyrene scraping
like the violent clash of pink and greens,
stuck sand grating between your toes
the burning of bleach spilt on your hands
the carnage inside a butcher's back room,
like ripping velcro
like unceasing crackling from speakers turned too loud
like the popping of a stranger's chewing-gum,
the sharpening of knives
branches wrenched from their shoulder sockets in a storm
rain whilst you're at the beach,
like scalped flesh
like a squished mosquito imprinted on a white wall
like the grinding of dislocated bones
like *someone* crunching cereal much too loudly this morning.



Haikus

by Tom Howard



A recluse, seeking
shadows of the vivid world
falling into dark.

Coursing inside men
dripping from the cheerful brain
hate dwells in us all.

A leak, flood, water
running silkily in defined
grooves ending life.

Lava destroying
all that men strive to construct
as anger is bled.

Power, influence,
the devil steals your forfeit
worth, as jealousy.



Urban Hymn

by Sam Elwin

dustbins... rattle
bottles... clatter
engine... whines

Silence

door slams
the letter-box flaps
tyres squeal as they leave the drive
railway station
train pulls in
“Mind the gap!” as you embark

hiss of brakes
as the train pulls away

curtains are drawn,
 small children yawn
suburbs and fields
 blur as you pass
industrial sprawl
 welcomes you in
the ugly supports
 the chic façade.

Drawing nearer
 to the station
slide... smoothly... stopped? now you have!

“The train now arriving at platform four”
a thousand indecipherable conversations blending
“I said” “she said” “you’re just pretending”
the rumble of feet resounds unending
“The next train is” Hey, why’s that sign flashing?
Posters, placards clamour for your attention
horns blare, brakes screech, engines, engines revving
fast, brash, civilised?
complex, all-consuming.

The city reverberates with the Urban Hymn.



Destiny

by Amelia Elwin

A door ajar,
visible fragments of another world
captivate my mind,
history seeps out
as I push the door.

Sunlight dapples against dim shapes,
spider-shrouded memories
once wrapped by different hands.

A fly taps continually at the glass,
a lone heart-beat amid the dust.
Pipes gurgle and drip,
a reminder of life elsewhere.

Could these fragments be my own?
My future history,
boxed and wrapped
by unborn hands.



A World of Ink

by Jenny Elwin

There's a spot on my page.
A perfect round dot
of dark blue ink.

I stare at it,
it stares back,
frozen for a split second before gasping a
breath
and oozing into the crisp, white sheet.

My pen is drawn to the page.
I barely notice my hand move as the
smudge of blue becomes a tree
and a bird lands on its branches.
Grass sprouts around the roots
and a cat,
sunning itself,
is drawn into the scene.



I vaguely hear the voice at the front of the
classroom
as I'm told that the message of the poem
is that Seamus Heaney likes potatoes.
At least
I think I did.

A girl in patched clothes,
carrying a basket of turf,
comes and sits on the swing that's been
hung from a low bough and I think
I hear someone telling me that Alexander
Fleming was the first King of England.
Or was it Alfie?
Alfred?
– The something or other.

My tree gains a crown, somewhat hidden
by the dense branches.
I am told that the square root of pi
is some obscure decimal – I really don't
care.

Words drift past my half open ear.
The voice has changed,
as has the language,
but it fades out of hearing
as an intricate border of leaves and flowers
sprouts
and grows around the page.

When the voice changes once more
and begins to speak of atoms, of formulas,
and electroscopy
I have lost interest.

The window closes and my hand speeds
up.
The voices drift over my head while I sit
and watch,
as the world pours out of my page.



The Pen

by Vivienne Lazib

It bleeds out,

a vein of ink, spreading like fire.

Free to express what bursts from its explosive mind.

No ropes or chains could restrain this beast,

for its strength is overwhelming.

Some say true power lies in the tongue,

but who is to question the power that undulating scars leave behind?

Silence is golden.

In darkness the force is insignificant,

but it never dies.

When gleaming radiance blazes upon it again,

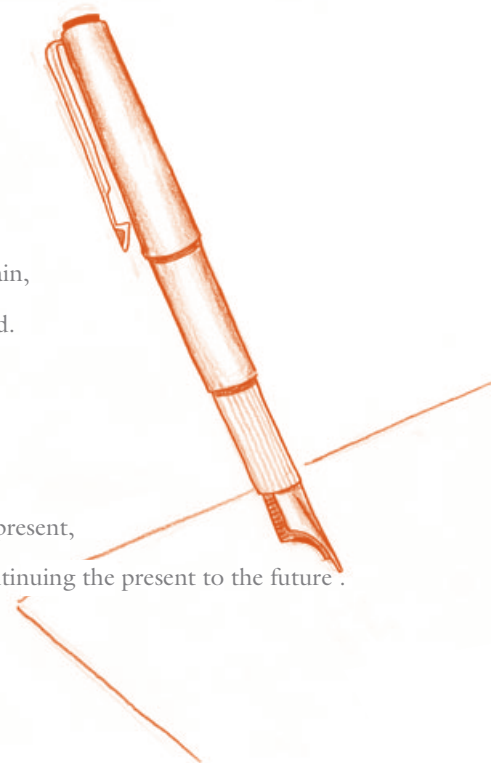
its energy is revived.

The pen

preserves the past,

permanently impressing it onto the present,

continuing the present to the future .



Home

by Ana Ribar

It's the way your first breath smells when you step off the plane,
the way the sun reflects off your eyes
when you look up, up to the mountains.
It's the sound of the main street, alive with your people,
it's the way your loved ones comfort you with a smile,
and words are so warm, known, welcome.

It's the way your heart beats,
it's the way your soul sings,
it's the way your very being recognises it.

It's the taste of hot chocolate on a cold day,
it's the echo of your steps on the known ground.
It's the way you are, it's the way they aren't,
it's the effortless way of it.
It's how awake is better than asleep.

It's everything,
it's nothing,
it's home.



My Loss

by James Palmer

after reading 'Mid-Term Break' by Seamus Heaney

My loss

my loss you know not how it treats me

my loss you cannot understand

my loss is is is

It was only yesterday we played out in the meadow

the sweet summer warmth kept cool by a light breeze

daisies white drops with small sun centres dotted around the green

with lilac explosions scattered less densely

galaxies in the night sky

you were with me then as we sat on the old rope swing, where now I swing alone,

your young sweet laugh resounding in that place

but silence fills it now

as the wind picks up. A barrage of clouds covers the sky

a splodge of rain lands on my forehead, and a chill flows down my spine.

It is my feelings. A black hole, in place of my sun,

all heat and light and laughter lost from my universe.

My loss is unknown to you.

My loss is my pain.

My loss is my brother, Chris, aged seven.



Hope

by George Waring

From above it looks like a battle wound.

Dilapidated. dark, desolate,
Small, almost unnoticed amongst the burgeoning countryside.

Where man has tussled with nature and lost.
The scar lingers there –
A reminder that one small act of violence
Ruins beauty, ruins life –
Windows are broken, walls graffitied,
Doors smashed, a nameplate corroded and cracked
Looks somehow... misplaced.
But amongst the rubble of ceiling and floor
A small seed struggles,
Sends out a tender green shoot...

From above it looks like a battle wound;
Healing.

