

# Sit in the Dark

by Alexander Schraedley

Sit in the dark  
No one else around  
Go off like a spark  
Leap off the ground

Fly through the air  
Right up through the clouds  
Without a care  
Without a sound

Realize the truth,  
Fall out of the sky  
Nothin' left to do  
But open my eyes

T'was all just a dream,  
A silly ideal  
I am not free,  
Nothing was real

Fall back to my life,  
Back to my pain,  
Warning lights  
Flash in my brain

As I cry alone  
So nobody hears  
Don't answer the phone,  
While I drown in tears

Clear my eyes,  
Stare up above  
Think about life,  
The future, and love

Can I find the truth?  
The people I've lost?  
Show me the proof,  
Tell me the cost

I'll do what it takes  
For those who I love  
No matter the stakes,  
No matter how rough

The path ahead  
The road I must take  
I'll fight 'til the end,  
Fight 'til I break

Sitting in the dark  
No one around  
Searching for a spark,  
Nowhere to be found

# **Sensitive**

by Alexis Castillo

They say we're sensitive, when we look for change.

When we became aware of the issues surrounding our surface, we were  
told to look away and silence our voices.

We call out the injustices that have been integrated into our daily lives

We call out the unfairness, it's do or die.

We tell victim's stories, and still they're invalidated.

Nobody listens, it's like to them we're children.

There hasn't been a generation, with so much change.

Yet still we're looked at like we've sinned greatly.

People are being seen, their stories are told, yet others choose that we  
must ignore

We call out the issues that have been passed down for generations, but yet  
still we're seen as an abomination.

Gen Z is the generation that will continue to make change, and we must  
continue to fight no matter what hate.

They can call us sensitive, but we can change the world.

Then we will truly be the ones who will decide, no more.

# Understanding You

by Angel Montero

One Who Acts so Cautiously  
But Doesn't Think At all

One Who Hides From View  
But Speaks in Crowds

One Who Wears all Black  
But Wears the Rainbow

One Who Speaks so Kind  
But seems So Rude

One Who Speaks of Peace  
But supports the Violence

One Who Can See so Far  
But Is Never Prepared

One Who Knows it all  
But Knows so little

One Who Can Lead a Mob  
But Follows Behind

One Who's seen by All  
But their True Self is Seen by None

One Who I only have One Question For  
Just Who Are you?

# Memory

by Arna Sarran

The crystal clear water in the ocean makes my eyes glister.  
Waves crash upon each other like a crystal shedding its flakes.  
Life seem so perfect, as it should  
I stand on the ramp, hovering over the seagulls as they eat Lays' chips  
The sun beams it's rays to the water making it shimmer  
The salty taste of the water leaves a bitter flavor  
Popsicles stand out, bright like a sweet syrup  
The fishes stand out, in the ocean like gems  
The beautiful reefs decayed, as if they were worn out.  
Boys and girls shout "Hip hooray" while I go for a swim in the ocean leaving  
my stingray flip flops behind.  
Sands on the beach are hot like a oven  
That glimmers under the sun.  
The crystal clear water in the ocean makes my eyes glister  
This memory can never be forgotten.

# What is Left Behind

by Carlianys Lopez

Moving  
Is hard

Leaving friends behind

I cried

Complaining without knowing  
Questioning their every decision  
Then realizing my parents intentions  
As I tried my best to hold back

Leaving our old life behind  
Waiting for better things to come.

# The Society We Never Knew

by Emma Leet

The society we never knew but we all live up to.

Since the time you opened those eyes,  
You were told you could dream, you were told  
to pick anything you wanted to undertake

You could pick a path full of adventure  
or schooling wherever you wanna go.  
But in the end it was soon revealed  
to be the honest side

Dreaming was nothing in a society like ours  
The path was already chosen to be straight and followed.  
Step by step you went on like a doll  
possessed by a spirit.

Dreaming was taken quickly from you as you grew,  
biting the poison fruit.  
You were trained to be different,  
someone who was perfect in every angle.  
Smart and pretty but these only came with price tags.  
These price tags were not just some printed money  
that grew on trees but your personality.

# When I Wake Up

by Keyani Dash

Some people live to eat  
Some eat to live

In the morning  
They struggle to stay awake  
No motivation to do anything  
Not even wash their face  
They put on some clothes  
And head out the door  
Turn on some tunes as they walk past their favorite store

In the morning  
They hopped out of bed  
Take a deep breath  
Then brush their head  
They wash their face  
And brush their teeth  
Make some food  
Oh how they love to eat  
Some people live to eat  
Some eat to live



# **A Fading Clarity of Identity**

by Sam Coffin

I look in the mirror, a person staring back at me  
The mirror cracks, confused on what it sees  
The reflection is fuzzy, am I nobody?  
The clarity, fading of who I want to be  
Is this the struggle of finding identity?

My earrings shine with illumination  
I look at my hair, it looks long, I see  
I look at my jeans, pink like a carnation  
But, does clothing define me?  
A stifled interpretation of who I long to be

# **My Mornings**

by Rachel Rodriguez

Wake up and stretch, rise and shine  
Friday morning, time for school  
Grab my phone and Check the time  
Perfecting timing - super cool.

Wash my face, making my face sudsy  
Take a shower and brush my teeth  
Brush my hair, it's all tangly  
I get dressed, wearing the same outfit as last week.

Wearing black pants and a blue shirt  
Now I have to hurry  
I go up to my cats, petting them goodbye  
I ran out of the house without a scurry.

I pack my bag without a drag,  
Drove to school in a flash  
Parked the car, then walked out  
Thank god I didn't crash.

# **The Dress**

by Sherlyn Chavez Rangel

Everytime I wear this dress  
I am reminded of all the memories  
We made when we hung out on that day  
But now I just stare at it sitting in my closet  
Waiting for me to throw it away

That was the person I was  
So much has changed and yet you don't know it  
Our memories won't go away  
But I didn't go to stay

# **Unacquired Love**

by Tiffany Saffo-Darko

You came and you left  
The world never asked for you  
Yet we paid the price

You got my hopes up  
You always did me so wrong  
Why did i trust you

It's like a thick fog  
Darkness encased around you  
It is lonely here

# Stimulation

by Tun Qua

The emotions that gather  
And the results that come after  
The rising fear and falling tears that splatter  
Feel like a mirror that'll shatter  
Any game I lose I swear it won't matter

The feeling in the air the same  
The sweat rolling down my face  
The beating of my heart always a awkward pace  
And the chills that give chase

Anything can happen at any moment  
Cant get caught lacking  
Can't freeze up and can't be slacking  
When the stimulation is over  
I'll feel a bit better

# The Burned Bridge

by McKenna Piper

My mother always taught me to never burn bridges  
it's always easier to rebuild than to start a new,  
rebuild  
rebuild  
rebuild.

Her words were ingrained into my bones long before I ever met you.  
Taking turns with our apologies and quick fixes  
never truly ever listening  
our twisted fate was sealed the moment we met.

When the flashbacks start to hit  
I get a nostalgic regret.  
Us sitting on her mid-modern-day carpet.  
You grabbed me in your arms  
the wave came over me,  
I swear you could hear my thoughts.  
I did not want to let go.  
I did not want to have to rebuild.

But even those moments,  
those good moments,  
filled with purity and innocence  
we're twisted with your calculated and cruel words.

And when I was faced with my choices  
my regrets and mistakes  
I knew what needed to be done  
I grabbed the match.  
I lit the flame.

I burned down our bridge.

Yes, I did what you could never do

I burned the bridge.

And in retrospect, my mother probably never could have ever imagined a  
“snake” like you coming into my life.

And though our old cobblestones are gone,

floating in the river of my tears

I can't help but ask about all the years

wasted and tossed to the side.

You play it all so nonchalantly.

And this bridge that once was a place where we grew and shined

is now a place of smoking ash and broken rocks.

Now time flies by, and I'm doing better than I ever thought I could be

but I can't help but ask,

did it hurt you as much as it did me?

Do you miss our old bridge?

# Home

by Murthida Salaou

I  
Love  
Africa

I love  
The clear blue skies,  
and  
The pretty colored fabrics –

I love  
The swaying green palm trees,  
and  
the fresh fruit –

I love  
The cool breeze,  
and  
The sound of laughing family.

I  
Love  
Africa

Even though everyone always wants to focus on its flaws  
Corrupt politicians,  
underdeveloped,  
bumpy roads,  
and poverty  
I love Africa's



Good and Bad.

I  
Love  
Africa

Even though I'm not always there  
It will forever feel like home

Because I have a community  
Where I don't stand out for my differences  
But I blend in and feel most like myself  
Because of all my similarities.

# Trapped

by Sam Coffin

The ocean engulfs me  
I look up, to see nobody  
Is this how it goes? Trapped where I lay be  
I know this can't be  
But, how do I penetrate the surface of this wretched sea?

I'm pushed down, a voice echos  
"When will you break through from where you hate to be?"  
The darkness surrounds me, a stabbing like arrows  
I recognize this voice, a voice majestic and mighty  
As the voice bellows, "You will one day break free"

# Places of Love

by Dylan Foran

I drive home on the same Sunday night streets,  
on dark winding roads that have felt my smiling eyes,  
past windowlit houses that have seen me, holding tightly onto the warmth  
in my chest that you have given me.

Every room, every place, we fill with our memories, with our love

Our Instagram chats  
You're beautiful name, stuffed with love,  
Over piles of perfect little poems  
"goooooodddMOOORRRninngggg you beautiful amazing person:)))"

Our calls  
Google meet, the soil of our love  
Where we try our best to connect through our distance  
Waiting for the weekend to come

Car rides together  
Your car or mine  
A party in a can by day  
At night, soft rumbling brings us to sleep in each other's arms  
Lights flashing by our peaceful faces

Malls of joy and overstimulation  
Movies with the boys,  
and the shock of Zendaya forgetting tom

The park on Laurel Street  
Where our paint and canvas meet

Where we laughed and we hiked  
cried and biked

And too, the neighborhood streets  
Sunsets are honey gold treats  
Where we walked, hand In hand  
Or hand in hand in leash

Your kitchen,  
Where our laughter fills the air  
Making food and family  
Frosting fresh baked cookies with friends and cousins  
Your living room  
Eating, then watching, cuddling, inevitably sleeping, loving  
Never finishing a movie or a show  
Sleeping tight together on that couch instead  
Of a much more comfy, queen size bed

Your backyard, full of love most of all  
Fun Summer swims, stargazing in fall  
Laughing and sliding and falling on ice  
Strawberries and brown sugar and biscuits so nice

Your bed  
Where we wake  
Wrapped in warmth  
Holding each other tightly  
Wordlessly saying " I am here, baby'  
"Through hurting hearts, self hatred and hardships,  
I am here."