



**Sixth-Grade Poetry Anthology  
February 2021**

**Featuring original poems by  
Harlem Academy's Class of 2023**

**Many thanks to the Poetry Society of America  
and our visiting poets:**

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**Jive Poetic**

## **The Family Next Door**

### **by Chagus A.**

#### Chapter 1

I am in my house drinking a sweet creamy delicious cup of hot chocolate whilst watching my favorite TV show. There is a child that moved next door to my house is watching my TV through the window and I don't have a problem. The parents tell him to stop but he does it anyways.

#### Chapter 2

The same grounded child starts watching my TV again and I know what will happen next but I do nothing to stop it and the parents still yell at him. (pause) Oh well.

#### Chapter 3

I keep telling the child to stop watching my TV over and over again because he will get both of us in trouble. The snotty brat just says, its not like its illegal so whats the problem.

#### Chapter 4

The young child does it anyway and this time, I am getting screamed at as well about letting their child watch my TV and again, I should be responsible for something, their child did and he's just smirking and you know what, because these are the kind of people they are, they cause problems for their own satisfaction, not on such a huge scale now but still, its just not right.

#### Chapter 5

I start watching TV with my blinds closed so he can't see and I just ignore the parents because even though they know that their child, they just think that I am being mean to him by stopping

**Silence**  
**by Madisyn B.**

I am an **immediate symbol** of **silence**, tasteless and bland  
I simply would just rather listen than speak  
I don't see anything wrong with that  
But other people like my family and friends do  
My teachers **misunderstand** and  
My friends and family **assumed** that I **lack** an opinion in certain situations just because I would rather observe  
I still think that it's not fair to believe that.  
But I can't control what other people believe in  
Even though I kinda wish I did  
I think sometimes that if people know I'm quiet or that I would rather listen to a delicate bird chirping on a breezy cool morning my family and friends or the other people around me should at least give me more time to build up better confidence  
Like sheesh, give me a break. I'm trying my best to speak up more for myself  
I prefer to see myself as a kettle without a whistle or a toilet without a flush  
When I was younger teachers would say that I need to talk louder or more and if I face my shrieking throbbing fears it'll help me speak up more  
They didn't say my fears were shrieking and throbbing but that's what it felt like  
Well, I don't think that's true at all because I for sure know that didn't help me

**The Mindset of a Roach**  
**by Jah-Sire B.**

Maybe just maybe,  
I enjoyed killing that roach.(pause)  
He scared my kids,  
and chased me.  
He basically ran the place.  
He probably kept his parts  
clean. If I wasn't so hostile,  
he would have cleaned the  
whole house. But I've learned  
to play the game (pause) and  
To play it by the rules  
without shortcuts.  
But then, I have to think what  
if he did clean up.  
And what if it's not a him, what  
if I got scared by a lady  
roach. What does that  
make me? A roach to  
the roach? (pause) In the endgame,  
it's gonna be ok. I will  
get some repellents, or  
I will move. Most of them will  
be gone, but some will try  
to follow.

**Untitled**  
**by Seth F.**

I'm a basketball  
Passed around  
Nobody will put me in a basket  
When they shoot I move purposely  
Do I deserve being crashed around when They dribble  
I don't know  
But if this is how it supposed to be  
I can dream about being like the other basketballs  
In palms of superstars  
Lebron James  
Michal Jordan  
Kyrie Irving  
Maybe one day i'll be there  
With the famous players  
With the arena screaming DEFENSE  
But for now, I'm a streetball  
Get left at the park court  
I've been through rain snow sleet and hail  
I'm surprised I'm not broken into bits  
Shredded up  
They come early to shoot around  
I'm the last picked  
All the time  
The wind took me away  
To a new place  
Another park  
But this is a famous park  
I look around and I see my dreams  
Superstars  
I'm going to be in their hands  
The crowds roaring for the game to start

**Who?**

**by Analise F.**

I spot a delicate painting  
draped against the wall  
I didn't put it there  
But I still saw its clean glow of orange  
at the end of a long day  
The names forever unnamed  
saw something,  
something  
To unfamiliar to call beautiful  
(pause)  
Beauty is a concept but yet  
I still replace this sweet landscape  
Now settled in the dark storage closet  
In the very back of the house  
But always there  
Attempt something new  
Maybe it will be  
Something grand again  
(pause pt 2)  
The next day I switch the painting  
Back to the beautiful deep red and orange  
It once was  
Someone close knocks it off  
It's not mine but I'm still infuriated  
So I exchange it  
Again  
And again  
And again  
Wondering...  
how many times  
This will repeat itself

**A Source of Energy**  
**by SummerRae G.**

A fuel that goes by the name of energy  
Runs the empowerment inside of me  
With nothing left to move around  
I would only listen to the world's horrendous sounds

I didn't know being genuine was a crime  
Acting like flaws are grease and grime  
I love these petite things that make up me  
Confidence is charged with energy

Countless careers lay before you  
Actress or President, pick or choose!  
No job is seen as masculine through the right eyes  
Maybe a professor, talented and wise  
Grow up to be who you want to be  
That's with the power of energy

Try a new style, be unique  
Even if it's steampunk, vintage, or chic  
You're not a weirdo, that's just ridicule  
Disregard society, you look so cool!  
Your style is a stunning sight to see  
What you need is a burst of positive energy

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Your nothing close to a freak  
Not even a loser, sore and weak  
Reject every ounce of toxic masculinity  
Cheers to the power of energy!

**Murder**  
**by Jolein K.**

Written by the murder of crows who pushed me away  
from their tart messy words,  
Inflicted and used as their own pleasure  
Gawking at the ignorance that I call passion and smarts  
Pouring through the horrific cracks of our broken society

Don't claim scars and gashes  
That my injured pricked eyes may have seen  
Or mind wanderings that leave me back to promising

Perhaps you don't want me to fix the murder  
Perhaps I want it more  
But deserving is far from seeing the error in our ways

I am non-brainwashed  
From the rest of the world, uncaring and deliberately deaf  
I am boneless  
with cotton candy perfect eyesight clouding my vision  
My problems as large and everlasting  
as the dark ocean and transparent fake skies  
Will I be able to fix them?  
Or will the squawking of birds  
with poison blood, that fills their black and beady eyes  
No soul detected  
Be forced to "help" me

I can see,

The constant  
Drip  
Drip  
Dripping

I can see,

The hurt in the fully existing  
Yet hidden sour tears buried behind years  
of only perceiving the dark liquid  
oozing out of innocence and purity

Why can I see it?

The tiny drop that hesitantly comes through the cracks of the old tattered ceiling  
Maybe there is a flood behind it  
Maybe there's only a bucket  
Nevertheless  
I would be the only one  
Who knew



## **Assumptions** **by Sophie L.**

Adults assume children are the symbol of innocence  
Blissful and bright  
Dreaming of doing "Amazing things"  
Like being a millionaire  
Or traveling the world  
But on this earth  
I can taste the lies  
Like sour candy and ash  
Crackle my throat as I hear those words

I wake up and see the news every morning  
The death toll rises as my parents pour the morning coffee  
full-grown adults storming the capital  
As though they were I  
A whining child

Showing my ideas to adults surprises them  
As though the only thing they assumed was occupying my brain would be  
candy and videogames  
We all assumed that everything would be perfect  
Thinking that we would be able to live the commercial lives that we all dream of  
Completing goals that will never be completed  
Shouting "2020 gonna be my year!" and "It's just a flu."  
But as our world burned and crumbled before our eyes  
I can't help but wonder what they saw  
Was it the smoke-filled air?  
Or was it the oil that lay down their feet?

our dreams are harbored and slaughtered  
our minds are twisted to see only one narrative  
A deep tunnel with no end  
never realizing that there are so many more  
So I can't help but assume  
That like a bird's newly fallen feather  
We are disconnected from our Norm  
But still, we must go with the wind  
Let our fate fall with the snow  
And hope for better  
better than sitting in our homes  
trapped

Better than hoping that our president  
Doesn't slip up for the 600th time  
Better than thinking about removing a year from our history books  
Better than having to justify human life

So as our world keeps spinning and time goes by  
The best thing we can do is to not assume  
And let the world stay  
Unpredicted

**Untitled**  
**by Noah M.**

I went to a mountain on a bright Saturday morning  
I tried to walk up  
When i got close to the top  
I fell and scraped my knee and I felt a lot of pain  
I was hurt and bruised so I stopped for the day and came back tomorrow

I came back to the mountain suited up,  
It felt warm and uncomfortable,  
I tried to walk up the mountain but,  
the gear was heavy and wearing me out  
I made it to the top  
When i got there I was tired and had a headache

I tried a new mountain on the next Saturday  
I tried to walk up the mountain  
When i got close to the top,  
instead of going the dangerous way I went the simple way  
I made it, the view was lucent and beautiful,  
I was satisfied that I finally made it to the top

**Keep Pushing**  
**by James M.**

I try to strive to become better.  
Practicing through the pain.  
But I am willing to gain.  
Gaining skill  
Gaining in every way.  
Trying to become the best.  
Gaining feels like your favorite meal every day  
Keep pushing, so I can gain.

How much do you want this?  
How much are you willing to lose and sacrifice  
I'm working like I never sleep.  
I must keep repeating.  
I can't hit snooze.  
Your mind can't be fragile.

Staying on top of myself  
Having a positive mindset  
While pushing through it all  
Pushing through it all  
Pushing through is like having an aching tooth  
You have to push even though it hurts

**Growing Evolution**  
**by Alex N.**

I was human  
And then I was a flower  
I withered and became the ground  
I wizened up and became the Earth  
polluted  
Dying, and heating up  
I am a star  
I implode  
Into tiny bits of stardust  
And I burn up  
Into the Sun  
I am now The Sun  
Evolution you cant see, but still flickering  
Evolution that can hurt you  
But harmless for now  
It all shows in one way, shape, or form  
Evolution is bound to happen  
Although everyone's views are different  
It all comes to one conclusion

**Untitled**  
**by Kiana N.**

I was Totodile, firey and bitter  
And then I was a castanet, loud and noisy  
I was a chameleon, soft on the inside but tough on the outside, changing myself, but instead of  
changing my color to match things to stay hidden  
I change myself to fit in with everyone else  
Then I was a peacock, proud and tangy, not scared to show the real me  
I was a koala, lazy, and drained of energy  
Then I became a mink, with tons of energy

I was a fish out of the water, Hopeless and lifeless  
**Then I became the sun, feeling confident and bright**  
I was a star but with no light, bland and dark, shining but in my dreams  
Then I was the earth, Whole and full of life, lit up with joy  
I was a two-headed monster, but instead of disagreeing with the other, I'm constantly at war  
with my thoughts  
Then I was a Quokka, with a heart only full of happiness and joy  
I was a sprout, delicate and small, waiting for the right time to bloom into a sunflower  
Then I was a tree, solid and firm, standing tall with the strong winds trying to push me down  
I finally see what I want to be  
Not what I am meant to be or forced to be

## Oh to be a moldy sandwich by Mariah S.

its the wretched bacteria, living within me  
that makes me who i am.  
tart and malodorous

i'd actually satisfy  
if i wasn't a disgusting. moldy. sandwich.

if you're looking, you can always spot me  
in the abandoned alley trash bins  
where my biggest fans are flies

only praising my putrid scent.

and *this* wasteful life? not fair.  
i'm so sickening, useless disease;  
no, literally  
you can't disagree.

i could've, no, should've had a chance  
a chance of being useful  
if i were a human being  
everyone on this planet needs something to do  
to contribute to this world

but why do i strive to be  
the hangry humans, who brought me life??  
with the only intention  
to use me for their own purposes

their starved mouths  
craving attention  
fully consumed by hunger.  
with the only instincts to eat, eat, eat.

until a better substitute is found  
and i stay in the dark depths of the counter  
from the dull days and days of waste  
i become who i am now; a moldy sandwich

if the hungry ones ate me  
i'd finally feel used.  
but, some things i still ponder about.  
but what would happen?  
how would it benefit?  
wouldn't i just disappear into nothingness?  
wouldn't my dull life just end?

oh.  
well, so, sometimes being useless is right.  
there's not a reason anymore to put up a fight  
well, thats probably why  
it was meant to be. for:  
survival!

**The life of a car**  
**by Kennedy S.**

I am a car, yes a car  
You may think my life is very boring  
But, I have exciting things to tell yall nasty humans.  
Today my owner was SOOO mean because she  
Parked me outside in the freezing. cold. rain  
And didn't even think to park me in the garage!  
Nasty humans, I hate it.  
They sit in me with their dirty rears,  
roll my tires in mud and dirt,  
When I get too dirty, smelly, or even look the slightest bit bad, they take me to the excruciatingly  
painful CAR WASH!  
The bristles stick me in the trunk and the water gets in my eyes. DO humans KNOW I HAVE  
FEELINGS TOO?  
Finally after a while the smelly,mean humans abandon you for your Enemy LAMBORGHINI I  
swear  
It seems I'm not wanted...  
humans just leave you with a big blue sticker saying "CAR FOR SALE CALL ME"but, if your  
owner doesn't like you they take you to the dump and they crush you until  
You can't feel your toes, or even any part of your body  
Or, if your owner is nice enough they will  
Lend you to a close friend  
But, my owner gave me to her smelly uncle who eats junk in me,  
Sleeps in me and sometimes FARTS  
I have been counting the days my owner  
Comes back from her business trip toCanada  
BECAUSE I CAN'T TAKE this TOURTURE ANYMORE!  
AND I'M STARTING TO THINK I'M STUCK WITH HIM  
It's like a literal jail in here. Between me and the person who's reading this, I'm pretty sure that  
he hasn't taken a shower in WEEKS  
Recently I got a broken tire and I have been feeling so.... hollow  
Also, I'm pretty sure that my owners uncle rolled me in something squishy and  
I need to puke  
I have dreamed about becoming a lamborghini and it never worked. I GIVE UP!  
I wish that I were human also so I could just run away  
I'm way too clingy to be left without my dear owner  
Yesterday, I saw a car with shattered glass and the owner didn't seem to care much about it  
Ohhhh how I miss the taste of sweet perfumes and elegance  
But for now, I get the smell of rotten cheese and other stinky things.  
I'm starting to break down every night in tears which is making me spew out gas every time I cry.  
When I woke up to the smell of something fresh I was jumping with joy!  
I was reunited with my owner, and her uncle was never to be seen again!

**Change**  
**by Adeyemi S.**

I was a child playing with toy guns and friends,  
then I was put to the test as a general in the army defending my country in the war that has killed  
and injured many.

I was a blank canvas, just your average white piece of fabric.  
Then I was splattered, brushed and soaked into paint and became an exquisite and  
savory appetizer that your eyes will eat up.

I was an a rib cage for animals,  
Then I was seasoned, turned into a delicious, savory, barbeque, smoked, and tasty meal for all  
called ribs.

I was once a leg of a chicken,  
Then I was fried and and seasoned too be turned into one of the most popular foods in the world,  
They call me fried Chicken.

I was once forgotten foods thrown too enslaved people,  
Then they coaxed, immersed, and drowned me into a sauce with a variety of seasonings and  
called me soul food.

I was once an odd solid called jello, all kids would have me in their lunchbox at school. Now I  
am forgotten, bitter, tasteless , and rotten.

I was negativity bringing people down along with myself.  
Wrapped in warmness and acceptance I fought back but finally gave up to the power of  
positivity.

I was darkness in the night, causing no one to see.  
Then the moon and the sun came together to reflect light in the night causing me to die.

I am a divided country America is my name,  
I have dreamt and dreamt for the sound of peace in my name.  
Then I wake up to the reality of racism, discrimination and so much more.

I am evolution. I am that thing causing the good and the bad. Evolution tastes like a soft, moist  
homemade cupcake that fills your soul with joy. Evolution feels like the chill you get on a cold  
cold day. Evolution is disrespectful and rude, but also it is kind and helpful. I am unknown but at  
the same time popular. I am foolish but wise.

I am positivity. The one that makes all kind things. The one trying to fight negativity and  
darkness away from you.



**Above**  
**Joshua S.**

Rising high above the air.  
Like a shining balloon above the clouds  
People might try to bring this balloon down  
They may throw rocks  
at it and throw dirt  
But they'll miss,  
they can jump to grab it but  
gravity will weight them down  
they can climb to it but  
This balloon rise high  
above their reach.  
Off the concrete dusty  
ground this balloon rises.  
Through the air this balloon rises.  
Above the clouds this balloon rises.  
Into space this balloon rises.  
Through the sun this balloon rises.  
Into the stars this balloon rises  
because thats what the balloon is.  
Thats exactly what it is.  
This balloon is a bright shining star.

## **The Flaws That Shield Sidney S.**

They splatter poor in the dark **gut** of your name

Your shielding **skin** is your name  
Your name is your bitter purpose

That purpose is a bumpy **job**  
And that job is a heavy responsibility

Your **wealth** is your selfish **pride**  
And your **pride** means the whole world to you

The bitter pain that hurts the ones you love  
Leaves painful **scars** in their **minds**

Society teaches you that you have to get good grades to pass school  
And to meet your parent's frigid eye

But do our parents really know what goes on in our fragile minds,  
When we put our pencils to paper?

When we have to stay up late nights with heavy eyes,  
working our minds to its a solid core  
Just to hear "you could have done better".

It seems like they don't care what you go through to complete an assignment.

They just care if your work is submitted and is approved by the teacher.

They don't see the hard work it took you to get a good score on your report card.

They just care about how high the number is.

They always say "when I was your age I got straight A's".

Well, parents, did you have to do school in a pandemic?  
Did you have to sit in front of a screen for long hours doing work that you probably wouldn't get appreciated for?

Parents have to remember doing school during a pandemic isn't easy at all.  
Learning in front of a screen at home with a lot of distractions is very mind consuming  
Why is society teaching us these things?  
Do they not want us to feel good about ourselves?  
To feel that we deserve as much as other people?  
Why do people get happiness out of other's sadness?  
Are they going through something?  
Were they taught differently?