



ABC CLARION

High school students are welcome to send articles or comics to clarionabc@gmail.com

Poetry Competition Third Place

Musings on a Muse

by Sydney Peng

If I ever met my muse,
I'd punch them in the face.
If any parent had a child anywhere near as recalcitrant
Then said parents would have to be a donkey and a
horse,
Because God, my muse is more like a mule
With how stubbornly they withhold inspiration.
They don't deserve ethereal statues
Carved in marble, and names that sound like poems—
Calliope. Thalia. Terpsichore.
If anything, they deserve a kick in the pants.
I can count the number of ideas
On one hand alone,
Because apparently nobody ever told them
That 'lightning never strikes twice'
Is, in fact, untrue.
My brainstorm monsoon season
Often undergoes drought instead
And sputters out into a mild drizzle
That loses to the neighbor's sprinkler.
I cast my net out for fish;
I am rewarded with a nice sunburn, soggy shoes,
And a patch of river reeds, if I'm lucky.
Sometimes I feel like I'm flinging
Paint at a wall and hoping that I get a masterpiece
Like Jackson Pollock—instead
It looks like either a murder scene
Or that my young cousin
Had rather upsetting stomach troubles.
I sympathize with Penelope, waiting for Odysseus to
return from the war,
Forever wishing for some spark to ignite,
A magnum opus borne from the gods.
O Muse, heed my message:
"I am unamused."

Judges' Comment:

"Musings on a Muse" is witty and chatty and clever. The allusions were a positive addition. It was quite clever.

Poetry Competition Second Place

Dissolution by Nicole Cheng

You're falling
into a world of despair.
You're gasping for some air
to fill your saddened lungs.
You keep falling
with no end in sight.
Your apathy has numbed your feelings
of terror and fright.

But at some point,
you
slow
down.

Everything stops.
The world freezes

for you.
Because you are your own universe,
and you are the center of the world.

So you are in charge.
You are in control.
Fate does not dictate your life;
you dictate your fate.

You don't need social conformities.
You don't need the approval of irrelevant bullies.
You don't need him.
You don't need to impress them.
You don't need to strive to be her.

You learn to strive to be yourself
which is far more important
and will be the key
to success and ipseity.

So your fears and anxieties
d i s s o l v e
into the essence
of your very being.

And really,
you've fallen through a vacuum of space
so that you could implode,
sending yourself flying in all directions
to form the very universe that is,
well,
you.

Judges' Comment:

The writer employed a variety of poetic devices/techniques. "Dissolution" uses imagery well and is didactic. Its strong ending helps move it from didacticism to inspiration.

Fatal Elections

by Nicole Cheng

The presidential elections scare the hell out of me. I am so scared. It is heartbreaking to realize how many Americans are rooting against me. They are waiting for me to fail. The results of this election will very well determine my entire future. For me, the split between Trump and Clinton is the divide that will dictate whether I can continue living as I have for the past twenty years of my life, or whether I will be kicked out of my house to be sent to a place I have no recollection of to make my "home."

I have been living life on the edge -- not because I am risqué and want the excitement. I am on the edge because I am not where I am supposed to be. Twenty years ago, my father paid a smuggler my entire family's life savings to provide me relatively safe passage across the border and into the United States. My father had made it into the States about a year before I did, with the intention of returning to Mexico with riches to support the family. But things didn't go as planned.

A couple of months after my father arrived on the other side, my mother realized that she was pregnant with me. I was my parents' first (and only) child. Very quickly, my father got the news and was overcome with joy and stress. There is inexplicable happiness that comes with becoming a parent, but there is no doubt that the stress of raising a baby and having the responsibility of another life is so intense. To ensure I would have a good, privileged life,

Poetry Competition First Place

You

by Jing Jia

I found you
As a uninvited guest
Cannot foresee and no preparation
Like an adorable boy abruptly woke up my soul
Catch that brilliant beautiful butterfly

I found you
As a meteor in the galaxy
Crosses the sky with the dazzling light
I swiftly took my camera toward you
But you suddenly disappear and no trace

I found you
As the fishes in the sea
Their sparkling scales
All tragic or joyous stories
I can hear the voice from the deepest in the ocean

I found you
As the tender green underbrush
A flower bud, a breeze and a whispering
The exquisite dew drops and the fresh soil
Rain-scrubbed sky and the freedom

Judges' Comment:

The judges liked "You" because the object of the poem clearly inspires the poet, who conveys that sense of inspiration as poems should, through images that show us rather than tell us.

In last week's issue, the article "A pickpocket's Confession" was accidentally accredited to the wrong person; it was in fact written by Sydney Peng. Sorry for the mistake.
-Editor

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