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## India Marie Bufkin

### *Obstacle Course*

To think of having a baby seems impossible;  
 Though the impossible becomes possible at times.  
 A baby bored me ... three others beforehand.  
 Starting at fourteen, ending at twenty-one;  
 The peak years for most ...  
 To have memories of just friends, the schoolhouse  
 and even prom.  
 Not for her, she talks of her babies' first words, steps  
 and siblings to follow.  
 Experiences of different men ...  
 Yet she doesn't remember being a lady.  
 Maybe, should've, would've, could've ... too late.  
 We were here, we had to be loved; we had to live,  
 make it, survive.  
 Even when she felt like she couldn't ... As we grew,  
 she grew.  
 She taught us and we taught her as well.  
 To many, she wouldn't have gotten the number one  
 pendant.  
 Yet to me ... I am here, I lived, I survived ...  
 If not for anything else except her babies;  
 I know through it is possible.  
 My mother lived through on of the toughest  
 obstacles.

**Rundell Burks**

*My days alone*

My days alone  
My heart aches

Longing for you  
With no end in sight

Wishing you were here  
Just isn't good enough

Staring at your picture  
Breaks me down in tears

I can't believe  
That you are gone

It's not the same  
It won't be the same

I miss you like crazy  
And I want you back

I realize what a fool  
I really am girl

I admit to say I  
Really am a fool

Just give me another chance  
To make things right

**John Capraro**

*All Those Years Ago*

Chasing dreams we skinned our knees,  
Playing under rustling leaves;  
With trees to climb and rocks to throw,  
And 'bestest' friends we grew to know.  
All those years ago.

On our backs and watching clouds,  
Sunbeams through a foggy shroud;  
Running on a cool Spring wind,  
A new day, we can start again.  
All those years ago.

And standing there, these years gone by,  
I smell the air, breathe out a sigh.  
My way through memories I wend,  
And feel I've found a long lost friend.  
All those years ago.

And so that field is quiet now,  
The trees that stood, all row by row;  
The only sounds that echo down,  
The ghosts of children, long since grown.  
All those years ago.

*Serenity*

Mist rolls across the still water of the lake.  
A loon trills to its mate.  
Golden rays through a foggy shroud cause a  
thousand glittering diamonds to wink at me from the  
glassy stillness.

Serenity covers me like a warm blanket.  
The breeze tickles my skin like a lover's breath.  
Leaves rustle, like the whispering of trees, and  
crickets share their song with the world;  
An orchestra of nature.

**Connie Clifton**

**WHEN  
I WALK THROUGH THESE DOORS**

I FEEL  
LOVE  
I FEEL  
WARM  
I FEEL  
BLESSED

**WHEN I WALK THROUGH THESE DOORS**

I FEEL  
CALM  
I FEEL

RELIEF  
I FEEL  
MY HEART AND SOUL BECAUSE  
YOU ALL ARE WITH ME  
I FEEL  
GOD IS WITH ME  
ANGELS ARE AROUND ME  
WHEN I WALK THROUGH THESE DOORS.

**MY HEART**

I pull my heart  
Along with me  
So it will not  
Break  
I will keep it together like  
A feather  
So you can not hurt it  
Be gentle when you get  
Close  
My heart is fragile  
It can burst at  
Anytime!

**Patrick Franks**

**WARMTH**

My love is a candle, lit,

Glowing, warm, so bright

But I forgot her birthday,

Now the flames gone out.

Good night!

**DREAM PREFERRED**

*(Inspired by Langston Hughes )*

What happens to your dream preferred  
Has it already rooted  
Though the stalk is now cut short?

Or do just the leaves fill this plant  
With no flower you can import

And now it hurts for living leaves have also been cut out  
But the pain of that sharp pruning--

Is it so,

This, slow,

sap,

will flow

And the blossom still, some how, come about?

**BALANCE**

The brain has no nerves,  
No feelings, this is known  
It isn't new---  
And the heart it has no thoughts  
It cannot think  
We know this is also true;

But, better life  
Can be better had  
Can we but balance the two!

**Jael Gardner**

*(Untitled)*

Orangey flames that leapt and nibbled at her  
Leathery calves, as she waited for that  
Humbling scream to escape her lips.  
Smoke and ashes crept upward towards  
Her mouth, as she kept it clamped shut  
Tight, lost in the want of sweet oxygen.  
In through her nostrils came the  
Smoke and filled up her lungs.

The throng about them drew tightly in  
Jeering at the poor woman as though  
She truly had done something wrong  
As though she were truly guilty of this

Atrocity. Not even the sky seemed  
To take notice of her plight, as  
The sky was shining and the clouds were  
Scuttling along just like  
Any other day.

"Die slowly and steadily  
Let the pain overtake you, you beast,  
You have not book spells to  
Save you now!"  
The crowd began to chant  
Arms flailing, eyes narrowed into slits.

The chants continued, and not a weary  
Eye seemed to notice as a final  
Scream escaped her lips and her body  
Went limp.

**Derek Hackett**  
*The Seed Waits, A Haiku*

The seed sits and waits  
Will he grow tall and mighty?  
The patient seed waits

**Gary Hackett**  
*The Vast Desert*

The sand burned  
by the sun,  
the scorpions are  
on the run,  
the sun sets as  
day becomes night.

The cactuses stand tall  
in the day  
and at night are  
hidden away.  
The wind blows  
sand, across the ground.

The heat goes on for  
miles,  
the dunes are rounded in  
piles.  
The vast desert falls asleep  
in the night.

**Diana Hage**  
*And the Truth Shall Set You Free*

Living in the shadow of other  
Desperately trying to succeed  
Despite the demons that haunted him

Why couldn't they see his need?

Oh, how he cried out for help  
Some understanding of his plight  
He did not want to turn to drugs  
But he could no longer fight.

Then he found salvation  
And only God would understand  
God would watch over him  
And lend a helping hand.

When he encountered another lost soul in his family,  
He tried to comfort him, couldn't they see?  
Then all Hell broke loose in his family  
And did the Truth Really Set Him Free?

### *BIRD BRAIN*

While squirrels have invaded the bird's domain,  
The birds are flying around their feeded.  
Why can't they attack these predators with their beaks?  
Why can't Jim Crow be their leader?

But no, they just watch the squirrels eat all their seed  
And wait patiently for them to fill their guts.  
I finally have to scare the squirrels away,  
Now the birds can feast and the squirrels can hunt  
down nuts.

**Linda Hicks**

### *Considering ...*

The torrential rain would linger into the evening of Valentines' Day. Its' thudding against the young woman's window woke her. Stay home, it said.

The perfect rain for lovers, pouring since the break of day, barraged the young woman with dread. Yet envy had not taken her heart, as much as lying had taxed her soul.

Of her man of valor, supposing, hundreds of miles away, what would she say- this time?

Without card, or flower, her desk alone would lack lovers' affection. Sending either to her person, a notion she quickly discards, as well as calling in sick which now warranted a note from her doctor.

From her cubicle she listened to the chatter of rearranged plans. Because of the rain some couples decided to stay home instead. In front of the fireplace with comforters and wine, alone snuggling, listening to the drenching rain outside- her perfect date if ever to be.

Hoping the incoming call would be he, the young woman answered the phone most professionally.

At the news of a loved one's sudden illness, the young woman's mustered melodic tone, for him who would never call, quickly drowns in sorrow.

Her dash to the hospital was in time to view her mother upon a gurney, wigless and shaven. Several vessels had burst in her head.

"Oh Lord," the young woman prayed, "bring her through. I never took time to say I love you."

The young woman's prayers did not alter God's plan. On Valentine's Day that evening, it rained until her mother passed.

Immediately her masquerade ended. So what if she didn't have a man!

**Teresa A. Matelic**

*Books*

Books book  
everywhere I  
looks books  
on the bed  
on the wall  
on the chair  
in the hall  
in the bathroom  
on the floor  
books books  
everywhere  
I looks books  
  
dream books  
poems  
plant books  
homes  
cook book  
novels  
sports book  
guides  
comic book  
self help  
pet care too  
everywhere  
looks books.

**Robin Morris**

*Wait*

It's a quarter past seven  
and you're not here.  
How many times have we gone through this?

You'll pick the date  
and on that date you'll say, "I'm coming,  
but I'm running a little late."

Lateness I hate!  
(I said I'd never wait on a man)  
Yet here I am waitin' on you

It's a half past eight  
and the hour you said you'd be here  
and there's still no sight of you

All I know is  
when that clock starts to chime  
you better be here at nine

If you're not here by then, babe---  
we are through

Cause I've been waitin',  
waitin' far too long  
and I'm tired of waitin' on you



### *Vanity*

Who are you to tell me that as a black woman I should have big hips and big thighs? Only for you to view me with your lusting and adulterous eye's

Is my inside inferior to my outside? Are you not bold enough to view me for who I am internally instead of what I'm working with?

Banging is banging but beauty is beauty and true beauty comes from within and just as beauty is in the eye of the beholder to the beholder belongs their definition of what that is

Do you behold me as a toy that can be played with and then be put back on a shelf or am I like a gift to you that you value and treat with the utmost respect?

Do you behold me as your black queen or just your main thing or is it that you're blinded by those superficial things that make you miss out on your good thing?

Would you love me if I was beauty but skinny?

Would you except me with my perfections as well as my imperfections but most of all could you love me for me? And if your answer is no then maybe you don't deserve me

### **Sona Patel** *Seasons*

The owls hoot at night and the sun still shines so bright.  
Everyone plays in the pool because it's summer.

No work, no school.

Then, the leaves start to crinkle. They go brown, old, and they wrinkle. School and work starts for all, because

it's the beginning of fall.

Then, you see something white and the sun never shines so bright. Snow will fall everyday, because winter has come

to stay.

Then come the April showers. After that come the May flowers. The flowers grow one by one, because spring has just

begun.

Then everything has grown and to you I have just shown, that the seasons will come and go. When do they come?  
You never know.

## **Black**

The doctor told me I'd be blind when I awoke. I knew by the sadness this was no joke

I had ten days till the surgery day came. Ten days till nothing would ever be the same.

I took in every sight there could possibly be, yet ten days went by too quickly for me.

The surgery happened through my eyes and down my back. When I awoke, everything was black.

## **Albert Mark Pringle** *endurance*

i'm the one thing in your life  
that keeps you from going insane and  
the same thing that drives you crazy

i'm the one thing that's lost  
in the heart of the faithless and lazy  
the same happiness & desire that brings you  
so much pain

i'm the courage that make you afraid to try  
taking your breath away till the day you die  
i'm the regret that you hold deep down inside  
overshadowed by the enlightenment of passion

inspired by motivation  
i'm the voice of hope  
that keeps your dreams alive

## *still dreaming*

is your life really what its worth  
or are you still other people first?

are you waiting for the sun to rise and shine or are you  
still waiting for your last chance

to come one more time?  
could this world be the only thing holding you back  
or are you afraid of reality too blind  
to face the facts?

is this all you ever wanted in life  
or are you having 2<sup>nd</sup> thoughts about  
thinking twice?

are you looking for something more than  
money power and fame  
or are you happy with what you can maintain?

could this be what you've been waiting for  
or are you still waiting for opportunity to  
come knocking at your door?

is your life really what it seems or are you still wishing on  
a star  
trying to wake-up from this dream?

**Andy Schuck**  
*The distance (a blues)*

The distance is:

Are we there yet? Are we there yet

Speak what is nothing

It's only what we feel that is difficult

Speak is what we ought to feel

It's the distance

Nothing is there yet

The first step is what we feel

Are we there yet?

The distance is only the first step

The distance is what we ought to say

Ought to say the 1st step is difficult

Ought to say the distance is nothing

Ought to speak what we feel

Ought is difficult

Ought is the 1st step

Are we there yet? Are we there yet?

The distance is the only step that is difficult

Speak first what we feel

The distance is difficult

not the first step:

Are we there yet?

Are we there

**Shalaka Shilotri**

**WESTLAND ---AN ALL AMERICAN CITY**

Every city has its charm

So as this city of Westland,

Where people think together,

And so are all working hand.

The summers are cheerful,

Winters are all busy;

Snow and spring play their part

With children enjoying being crazy

Families have fun,

With tall houses around

Cars and buses make

The commute goes fine and sound.

The markets and the grocery stores

Would always serve you fresh food;

All kinds of hotels and restaurants,

Are available for your mood.

Libraries, city club, open parks,  
Make this city pride;  
Where law is never taken for granted;  
And all citizens do abide.

Schools, colleges rank the best,  
With students of cultural variety;  
People with different backgrounds,  
Oh! What diversity

The city takes care of the environment,  
With lots of greenery and wildlife;  
Cultures and Events being celebrated  
Making holidays joy and alive.

As a person I am proud of,  
Being in the best hand (city council);  
For as living is concern,  
I would always prefer Westland.

**John Smolinski**  
*The Dance*

Two white butterflies weave and spin  
Around a fragrant flower's stem  
An exquisitely choreographed dance begins  
It's Mother Nature's plan

Around a fragrant flower's stem  
Flitting, flirting innocence  
It's Mother Nature's plan  
Tentative, the doorbell's ring

Flitting, flirting innocence  
"I'll be right there," is what she sings  
Tentative, the doorbell's ring  
His stomach feels the dance

"I'll be right there," is what she sing  
Pearl butterflies are sacred thing  
His stomach feels the dance  
She answers with a glance and grin

Pearl butterflies are sacred things  
An exquisitely choreographed dance begins  
She answers with a glance and grin  
Two white butterflies weave and spin

*Loon Lake (Kalamazoo, MI.)*

Armed with fishing poles  
Beer for insect repellent  
Hotdogs and canned  
Corn kernels for bait  
Three fishermen push off  
In a three dollar rental boat  
Its green paint flaking  
And peeling like ancient papyrus

Teasing visions bob across  
Their minds  
A fat catch of freshwater  
Sunfish, Bluegill, Perch

Maybe a plump Largemouth Bass  
Sizzling in a cast iron pan  
Reeled in from the grinning water  
Of Loon Lake

Loon Lake, whose name rose  
From local urban legends  
About the sanitarium, now just  
Crumbling torsos of concrete  
Cracked foundations  
And twisted chicken wire  
Once the tenant  
Along shores shaggy with fern  
And vine  
Alive with the feeling  
Of 'gitchee-goomee

Loon Lake  
Whose puppy waves softly lap  
Yellow, blue, black, green Speckled fish pirouette  
Mesmerizes fishermen  
Until daylight runs low  
And the sun finally flees  
Before the dark wall of Mosquitoes keenly zeroing i

**Teen Poetry Group (8.06.09)**  
*Exquisite Corpse*

When people put me on the spot  
The dreams of my life are in a memory of red light

Flashes, noise, metal, hurt.  
Song I sing words to all fight to see  
Another improbable flight- I find myself in  
These clouds and stars ... they're both teasing me to  
come and live  
I want to catch a train to the sky with them, but I lost  
my ticket:  
"The sun stops all and the sun is all to us to  
everything;  
Moon runs for cover behind mellow, wandering  
clouds."  
The sunlit rain drizzles out my tears yet ends the  
reliving of my fears.  
Fly with me to sing, only sing.

**Marquis A. Thurman**  
*And what we once had*

Now, along with tears,  
memories of a beauty  
of a night rising over and into gentle eyes  
with wake of the  
morning tide welled up in  
corner of my eyes. And those  
sky high peaks, where we once  
danced and spoke upon the greens,  
will be belittled to the waver and  
murmuring rumor of the skinless winds...

Now that you took to the skies,  
my heart will never explode

like a kaleidoscope with  
the intensity of a million  
rose petals rushing towards me...

Now that you left me the right to grieve,  
my irises quiver with sadness  
as tomorrow loses its fill.  
I feel the chill of life's danger  
and death's empty promises.  
I feel hot, cold yet still.

And all I can do  
is grasp the memories  
that we once had...

*Stars. Up. Above.*

If the sky  
could catch a smile  
would life  
be more worthwhile?

If the sky  
lost a day,  
would the world  
become a disarray?

And If the  
summer sky,  
had a big blue  
green eye,

on the grass,  
would you still lie?  
By the pressure,  
would you sigh?

Without umbrellas,  
would you enjoy its cry?  
For the first tears to hide,  
would you wonder why?

If I possessed  
a heart,  
I think I'd feel  
pretty smart

But I am  
just stain,  
with love  
as my pain.

And if I  
had a night,  
I'd lose myself  
in a write

but if I  
had a night,  
would I cut myself  
and lose might?

And scream  
in the sight  
of a human's

glorious bloody sight.

The pain,  
on this road,  
makes time  
bleed so cold.

Now time is  
dead,  
the term "pride"  
will live to dread.

Upon God's green mile  
would it be sinful  
to break  
a smile?

Because up there,  
in the sky  
something breathes,  
a lie.

And the twinkle  
in the skies  
reminds me of  
a corpse below flies.

Your heart,  
keep away.  
I am monster  
that has lost its way.

But maybe

I'll shed my flesh  
and more than  
what's the best.

Become more  
than gold,  
see what's  
been sold

to you  
I give my love.  
Will you stay and wait  
and see stars up above?

**Cheryl A. Vatcher-Martin, M.A.**  
*Petoskey Stone*

Shadows of blue reflect upon Lake Michigan with soft  
cream clouds,  
Ancient times created this majestic place,  
Carefully laid rocks and boulders,  
Shelters a hidden path to meditate upon the nuances of the  
day,  
Glistening brown and ebony spotted rocks, dot the  
scenery,  
As they are scattered along the shoreline,  
Smaller ones coexist with the smooth pebbles.  
Walking by the little nook of fresh water splayed nearby in  
a stream; thereby connected to our fragile resource along  
Michigan's coast,

Some species from long ago may still live and merge with newer algae of the fresh water as it laps along the beach, What happened after the ice age molded North American soil, temperatures changed, encrusting plants and animals, as a new history began and Michigan evolved. In the Upper Peninsula, the preservation of the pre-historic time exists, proving to mankind that life forms so long extinct, can still be found; such as a brown speckled Petoskey stone, some with complete fossils intact inside, A memory of a different time. As I hold one in my hand, a delicate fish fossil, from this lake, begs for me to keep her, don't lose me, and put me with the other stones. Stories surround us as we look around the ground, to see many life forms preserved in a Petoskey stone. These historic pieces share with us the perfect memory; a time when life was calm, and genteel, where man was careful to tread gently upon her soul, as we coexisted with nature, and respected her wealth of life as she whispered softly treat me kindly, and I'll look out for you too. The breath from the pre-historic bountiful fish emerged, as this fish playfully jumped high and dove back into the crystal blue lake providing us with a last supper; but, it was really only the beginning. A rejuvenation of life begins as the evolution of a new species overrides an older one. Climatic changes from the ice age leave behind clues, just as many more Petoskey stones have a story to tell, one of the mysteries that only Mother nature can explain; take a moment, reach within, and feel the tranquil moments as each day serves as a reminder

of how fragile life and our world really is.

### Haiku

white feathers in flight  
sweep angels across the sky  
a silent moment



**Peggy Zatkof**

***Time Machine***

Upon this feathered time machine  
I see your face again

Laughing, happy  
I touch your hair and feel your ski

You look so good and feel so fine  
And for this night you are mine

Upon your steed down the road we go  
And in my face the wind does blow

I hold on tight, not out of fear  
Knowing I must keep you near

But the sun comes up and ends the night  
And my time machine stops its flight

I'm in the now and not the then  
And what I've seen is what has been

And in my soul I hurt but smile  
Cause on my time machine

We'll ride again  
Another mile



**Westland Teen Poetry Group Magnetic Poetry**

Westland Writes ... Poetry



Westland Community Magnetic Poetry