

FIRST PRIZE

Windchill

Stray streaks of light
Pour into the misty breath of fall,
Wandering into tumbling droplets.

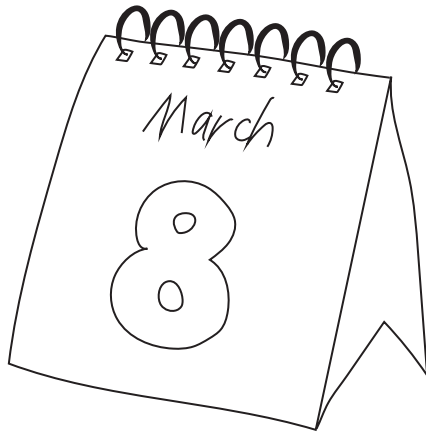
The world is a palette of gold,
Tainted with crimson, peach,
And shreds of brown.
Overhead, branches are laden with leaves once green,
Now a deep maple red.

All around, the stems tremble,
Shiver.
And one by one,
Detach, swaying gently to the ground,
Softly blown away by the wind's chilly exhale.

Frosted grass, sprinkled with stray leaves,
Slowly crumples in crisp silence.
Brisk.
Above, the snow-white clouds
Blend against the pearly sky.

The mellow breeze whistles,
Riffling through my hair,
Tossing it over my shoulder.
October,
It whispers.

by Angeline Yan (Grade Seven)
Bell High School
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FIRST PRIZE

The Calendar in the Corner

The day I entered your room,
A fluttering piece of paper caught my eye.
In the midst of the bright walls
Lay a blank calendar in the pitch-dark corner.

Did you know I took it?
Tearing through the pages,
The months go by
As a flip of the sheet.

Viewing the empty pages,
Why did you keep it?
Maybe . . .
Your relatives gifted it to you
At some lame last-minute reunion,
But you are conscious
Of the fact that you won't use it.

Does it feel fulfilling
Knowing that the calendar sits there,
Yet you neglect writing anything?
An hour passes, two, three,
But your pencil does not touch the paper.

I can imagine your day.
Morning is the blaring of the alarm clock,
Afternoon is the crunch of chips near the TV,
Evening is the splash of puddles,
Midnight is the brightness of the phone.

Are you proud of your habits?
Because a calendar
Reminds you of what you've accomplished,
Sprawled, forever taunting you.

I judge you harshly because
A blank calendar represents an uninteresting life,
And I've succumbed to the same fate.

by Vivian Ma (Grade Eight)
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SECOND PRIZE

Dreams in Black and White

I walk roads and streets, rain pouring on my head.
With everything around me, each drop is a dark, sad black that wets more than just my skin.
It wets my soul, my heart, my dreams.
I bite my tongue.
The metallic taste of blood storms my mouth,
like warriors in battle.
The clouds, they radiate a colour of sad, lonely white,
the colour of a pale, ill person.
I never wanted to see in black and white, but I do.
It started with only a quick glance
in the colours of black and white, but I got taken into it.
It sucks you in.
I splash through puddles that soak my shoes like sponges collecting water.
I hear children playing in pitch-black puddles
and cars splashing through the streets.
People say I'm amazing just the way I am,
but it's hard to believe.
A drop of water falls not from the sky
but from my eyes.
I fumble with the stone-cold black iron keys to my apartment.
I walk into my room decorated with clocks as black as night and lamps as white as snow.
I walk into my bedroom, my eyes now dark with tears.
I look around the room.
Black and white is everything in the room.
As I lie my head on the pillow, I see what I waited to see all day:
plumes of colour—
red, yellow, orange, green, blue, and purple;
circles and swirls—
the colours that make me smile,
the colours that make me laugh.
These are the colours I wait for.
These are my dreams.

by Heidi Burgert (Grade Seven)
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SECOND PRIZE

Cottonwood

Here I sit in my deciduous prison,
The tree I call my home.
With my siblings newly arisen, I await the time to escape.

Day after day, night upon night,
I begin to weave my cape
Of lovely soft threads, of a gentle, light white.

The leaves begin to darken, the sun begins to shine
More brightly now than it did before; could it finally be the time?

I am released from the prison;
An inmate no more, I leap from the tree—my prison, my home.

Aided by the breeze, I begin to fly,
Ascending into the cerulean sky.
The forest below me grows ever smaller
As the distance between us grows ever taller.
This feeling of soaring, dancing through the air
Is so wonderful, so incredible, nothing can compare.

Soon, my siblings are also at my side.
Our pale cloaks catching the wind,
We travel together, far and wide.

Alas, all good things must come to an end.
As I watch, my siblings, my friends
Slowly fall to the earth, their journeys over,
Gently nestled among the soft green clover.
I drift down as well.

An angel fallen from heaven unto the earth below,
I call out for help in this well-meaning hell.
But the wind has ceased to blow,
My wings have turned to dust.

The seasons fly by; time passes, it must,
Till one day I stand tall, arms reaching to the sky above,
Become the warden of the deciduous prison, the home I never loved.

by Naomi Yow (Grade Eight)
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THIRD PRIZE

Autism Lives in Me

Autism is not just a word,
Autism is real.
Autism lives in me.

It doesn't make me less different.
In some, you can see it;
In some, you can't.

Sometimes, I feel lonely.
Am I invisible to everyone?
I'm just three feet away, and no one talks to me.
I'm sad; it's always me. . . .

Autism has branded me.
Maybe I'm annoying or awkward.
That's me; just give me a chance
And get to know me.

Autism lives in me.
I'm smart, really good in math. I'm kind,
And a truthful friend.
I never give up.

Autism lives in me.
Autism will stay with me.
I have a dream that kids and people
Will approach me and just accept me the way I am.

by Sebastian Sell (Grade Seven)
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THIRD PRIZE

Graceful Pine

Graceful pine,
Swaying in the breeze,
You are the king of the forest trees.

Majestic pine,
Slender and long,
How do you grow so tall and strong?

Welcoming pine,
Giving shade,
Peaceful in a forest glade.

Morning pine,
Green and bright,
Standing to greet the dawn's first light.

Midday pine,
Spread your arms,
Shelter the birds and beasts from harm.

Evening pine,
Glowing in the sun,
Standing strong till the day is done.

Eternal pine,
Centuries pass,
Still, your tall, strong form stands fast.

by Vanessa Schattman (Grade Eight)
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