

Mountbatten
School
Poetry Festival
2016



*An Anthology of
Poems
Produced by students
in Years 7 and 8*

*With sincere thanks to
Mr Ben Parry
For judging this year's poems
and especially for taking the time to make helpful and
encouraging comments on so many of the entries.*

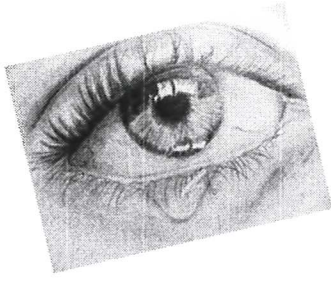
"Can I say how much I enjoyed judging these entries. I was really impressed by the quality: much thought has gone into the use of language, form and structure in these poems. It is a pleasure to see such poetic craft and such creative engagement with the written word in young students. Perhaps the most striking aspect of a significant number of these entries is the bravery shown to address serious and often complex topics, but equally the skill and linguistic dexterity demonstrated to do those matters justice without falling into cliché or tokenism".

Ben Parry

Poetry Festival 2016

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Earthquake Chile 2010

All was still, quiet, forlorn
Like the calm, before a storm
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

The earth shook, the sky rumbled
Pavements split, buildings tumbled
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

People screamed, yelled in terror,
Confused, helpless stuck in horror
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

Three minutes, that felt like three hours,
Of the sky raining rubble showers
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake nothing was right.

The floor was alive, a thrashing beast
As the nightmare spread to the east
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

From the coast a new devil arose
A powerful wave, drowning souls
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

After the tsunami died
The few lonely survivors cried
"There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right".

Those left alive, lived in sorrow
But the dead had a happy tomorrow
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right.

A broken heart is always alone
One cold half, never to be whole
There were no stars in the sky that night
After the quake, nothing was right

Like birds without any wings,
Flowers without petals, voices that can't sing,
The grieving homeless lived in vain
Never a star in the skies again.



A superb poem from one so young. This is a work of great maturity: the subject matter is handled with great conscience and care, the figurative language is both original and sophisticated, and there is evident mastery of bringing together the concrete and the abstract for genuine effect. The poet leaves the most powerful stanza until the end, leaving the reader as fragile as the poor victims.

Emmalie Niedrum
Year 7
First Place

Private Poet's Moonlight Serenade

Not so long ago in a land near here,
The Germans tried to take control and steer
A whole nation into fear.
What Hitler would do if he were to find the mere
Few left hiding where no person would suspect,
And how little his plans had taken into effect.

Between this all,
Were the English soldiers willing to fall
For their country they would stand tall,
For their country does call.
In trenches muddy and flea ridden,
From the gunshots they kept hidden.

Private Poet sat there and wrote,
To his sweetheart a loving note...
"The wailing sound of sirens
As they warn us again tonight,
As tracer bullets pierce the gloom
From here to the Isle of Wight."

Private Poet sat there and wrote,
To his sweetheart a loving note,
For she was his lifeboat.
He needed her to keep him afloat.
He dreamed of seeing his lover that night,
Suddenly a shell reignited the fight.

No man's land was a desolate maze,
Only a few hours earlier it had been a blaze,
And as the soldiers wearily gaze,
They were unaware it was only the first phase.
With nothing to hear but unbroken silence,
Did there have to be such violence?

Private Poet was no longer at his best,
For his country he took a bullet to the chest,
Blood stained was his vest.
He left the front line to go on rest.
For several months he laid down wounded,
But now recovered, his spirit was boosted.

But all too soon they were back on the list,
For their country must persist.
In patriotic spirit they raised their fist,
And were thrown back into the mist.

In time, the war would end,
But the harm created would never mend.

Rather than a general commentary on the horrors of war, this is a poem that follows a single protagonist through his experiences and is a far superior piece for it. Indeed, the excellent characterisation of Private Poet serves to accentuate the atrocities, heartbreak and futility of war. Unlike the situation in which the soldier finds himself, the rhyme never feels forced, providing a strong sense of a natural voice, making the poem all the more powerful and the experiences of the Private all the more real.

Lucy Rees
Year 7
Second Place

BALLAD FROM THE BAYOU

*The hurricane that changed their lives forever;
Who knew something so awful could be caused by weather?
Three months passed since he's seen his cousin,
So Mr Mullet and Ms Perez had a discussion.
But he'd have to tell her about the drowning of his mother.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*Ms Perez knew about the battle against the rising waters,
Mr Mullet had tried to save the two sisters.
He explained to her his shame,
But Ms Perez said he wasn't to blame,
Mr Mullet finally told the story of terror.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*He had gone to evacuate his aunt and mother,
But they refused to leave to go to somewhere other
Than the place they had lived all their lives.
They would stay put on August 29th.
They thought staying home would be much safer.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*At 9 a.m. came a sound like loud thunder,
Through the window came a wall of water.
Water poured through the gaps in the doors,
Mr Mullet had to get to where the life jackets were sorted.
They passed them out one another.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*Mr Mullet struggled to move the two sisters,
He was using all the strength he could muster.
He had been dealt an impossible task,
The worst of questions he could have been asked,
Should he save his aunt or his mother?
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*Mr Mullet and his mother stayed together,
And were whisked along the newly formed river,
Clinging to trees for several hours,
Battling against the storms' severe power.
They had to wait for a break in the disastrous weather.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*Leaving his mother, he swam a bit further,
To get a boat and some help from his brother;
And arrived, in a few minutes, back at the trees.
He rescued his mother, to her relief.
However, Mr Mullet was aware that there was one other.
The hurricane that changed their lives forever.*

*They went searching for the missing sister,
Discovering her lifeless body in the river.
The pain he felt was like a dagger in the heart;
The decision he'd made had cost his aunt.
Hurricane Katrina was a ruthless killer.
The Hurricane that changed their lives forever.*



In many ways this is what a true ballad should be. Established immediately through the plosive alliteration of the title, this is a poem about power: the power of nature, the power of love and ultimately the terrible power of loss. What sets this apart from other ballads is that the poet chooses to focus on a disaster at an individual level, highlighting the plight of a handful of protagonists battling not only the storm but their own instincts. The poem is realised through skilfully handled half-rhyme and a narrative that builds, like the hurricane, to a harrowing climax.

Tom Stanley
Year 7
Third Place

PLAGUE

In 1348 the year was grand,
Man had conquered all the land,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.



They thought they ruled all of the ground,
And nothing, NOTHING, could bring them down,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

But below the earth, Death plotted and planned,
He wanted to rid the earth of man,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

Death worked all night, and eventually,
He'd perfected his spreader of mayhem; a flea,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

The flea bit a rat, and the rat a man,
And so Death hatched his wicked plan,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

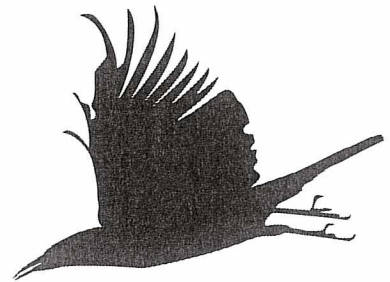


Many were killed that loved one another,
Father, mother, sister, brother,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

Black clothed birds flew in the streets,
Symbols of death, of the deceased,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

Posies of rosemary held in their beaks,
They thought it would save them,
They didn't last weeks,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.

Many were killed, Death's work was done,
He smiled to himself, the game was won,
All those killed were killed in vain,
As Death played his wicked game.



The moral of this story,
Is to never rise too high,
Or Death might cut you down again,
And your end will be nigh.

This story has no end to it,
But still you must remember it,
For all those killed were killed in vain,
When Death slaughtered us for the sake of
A game....

Mia Batchelor
Year 7
Commended

A Poem for my Uncle

It had started with those chest pains,
The doctors just couldn't explain.
You were there for my first breath
And I was there for your very last.

Before you knew it you were having chemotherapy
But to me it all just felt like it was the doctor's conspiracy.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

In your eyes I could see the pain,
The tears rolled down but they wouldn't refrain.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

It was your next session of chemotherapy
I held your hand tight and prayed desperately.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

I looked away as if I was hiding,
But I whispered 'keep fighting, keep fighting'.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

You had to have a stem cell transplant
I carried on holding you but then I said 'I can't ... I just can't!'
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

I noticed the paleness in your cheeks,
I reached for your hands which were so strong yet so weak.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

It lasted for a whole long year
Even then the cancer was not clear.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last

I whispered 'don't give up ...' As I looked back through the glass
But I never knew that moment would be our last.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

We all waited at home patiently and eagerly
But then my brother showed me somebody's Facebook status, 'RIP'.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

I fell to my knees and I was frozen in pain
But then those tears I couldn't refrain.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

I cry every time I think back to that moment
But at least now I know that you're in a much better place.
You were there for my very first breath
And I was there for your very last.

Nazia Rahman
Year 7
Commended

But Why?



An ordinary day, people having fun.
November 13th – a Friday their working day done
A city full of culture
A city full of life
Families together – children, man and wife.

Couples planning futures, shoppers taking stock
Fathers, mothers, daughters, sons unaware of impending shock
A city full of futures
A city full of hopes
None of whose predictions would be told in horoscopes.

People start running all around
Fireworks or gunshots are the only sound
A city full of panic
A city full of fear
People running, the mood becomes manic.

Running from the dark hole that's growing
Life becomes silent, the future unknowing
A city full of dead
A city full of wounded
Families grieving, others fled.

The sound of silence once again
Families torn apart, families in pain
A city full of loss
A city full of nothing
November 13th – disbelief for the suffering and cost.



Alice Stubbington
Year 7
Commended

Silence

Gun shots and bombs overhead,
Daniel and his family felling terror and dread,
Two doors down they heard the screams,
A baby and her mother being forced to leave.

The petrol fumes filled the air,
As the engine roared and started to blare,
Homeless children filled the streets,
Not knowing what they might meet.

Silence in the courtyard,
Silence in the street,
The whisper of the wind,
As death comes to greet.

Track after track and endless roads,
People standing row by row,
Children's faces washed out and pale,
With only the sound of the train on the rail.

Black and white clothes stood in a pile,
As guards looked at families beaming with
beguile,
In Daniel's hands lay numbers in a code,
His name forgotten, no one would know.

Silence in the courtyard,
Silence in the street,
The whisper of the wind,
As death comes to greet

Years have passed of pain and regret,
So far from, yet so close to death,
I wish I didn't say that Daniel would cry,
As off to the bunker to be left there to die.

Silence in the courtyard,
Silence in the street,
The whisper of the wind,
As death comes to greet.



Emily Applegarth-Jones
Year 7
Commended

Kristallnacht

Shot by our kind,
Blamed on us all.
Who knew that it was planned?
The Night of Broken Glass.

At least 50 men,
Their collars all turned up.
They rushed through,
Not taking care of you.
This still goes on and some are forced to be gone.

Buildings, ablaze.
The rubble – a maze.
It spread and spread.
Ninety were left dead.
This still goes on and hundreds are forced to be gone.

Fences stood in their way,
HER little girl screams in dismay.
HIS son is chased.
But they must make haste.
This still goes on and thousands are forced to be gone.

Knowing where there were headed,
Fear had been embedded.
To a camp of death and destruction.
A camp full of depression.
This still goes on and thousands are forced to be gone.

I hope you find the life in this story,
For the scenes were rather gory.
This is of a time when life meant death
Bodies strewn across the earth,
All forgotten as if from birth.
This still goes on and loads are forced to be gone.

We think we have learned,
We believe this couldn't happen again.
Yet this still goes on,
And too many are still forced to be gone.

Harper Towns
Year 7
Commended

For Orlando



*Two a.m. was when it started,
Into Pulse the gunman darted.
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*Rifle in hand and a mysterious device
Since when has being gay had a price?
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*Barricaded inside and taking hostages,
Locked the doors like a cage.
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*Guns shooting and people screaming,
Everyone running and tears streaming.
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*Fifty dead because of one man,
Really America? Still no gun ban?
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*136th shooting in America this year,
All of which cause just as much fear.
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

*Most brutal anti-gay violence act ever,
When will it end? Answer: Never.
Everyone dead will be missed,
Another shooting on the list.*

And the list just keeps getting longer.

Emma Jones
Year 7
Commended

2004 Tsunami Ballad

It was the day after Christmas
But how tragic it ends?
People lost their houses,
Their possessions and friends.
And they had no warning;
Nothing could remain,
How can we imagine,
The sorrow and pain?

The animals saw it coming
And they ran to safety fast.
The animals were lucky;
We humans wouldn't last.
'Cause we had no warning
And nothing would remain.
How could we imagine,
The sorrow, the pain?

It travelled 3,000 miles,
Even then it was still strong.
In fact, it had so much force,
The rupture was 600 miles long.
Yet, they had no warning,
So nothing could remain.
How can we imagine,
The sorrow and the pain?

227,898 fatalities,
All caused by one wave.
And yet, how many people Could
we ever save?
For they had no warning,
How could anything remain?
And can you imagine,
The sorrow and the pain?

Yes, it was the day after
Christmas
And, oh, how tragic it ends!
It's a miracle that
They still made amends.
'Cause they had no warning,
No, there was no warning.
No warning, no warning at all.



Alex Barnett
Year 7
Commended

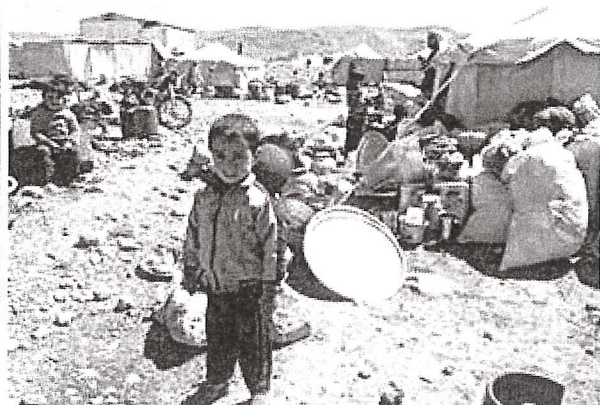
Refugees

I wandered through the paupered street
Where all the children wept,
I could not believe that beneath my feet
None of those children slept.

Hundreds and millions or so
All lying in sorrow and pity
For they all were forced to go
To leave their destroyed city.

Devastation and cries
Struggling to make it through
A camp filled with innocent eyes
But is all of this really new?

They wiped the smiles off their faces
They're all trying to be brave
This isn't like the human race,
Why are they taking them to their graves?



A genuinely moving, sobering poem that strikes at the very heart of contemporary political and social concern. The emotive nature of the content is kept in check by the pantoum form, cleverly yet subtly reflecting the confinement in which the refugees find themselves; the child-like abab rhyme scheme adding to the desperate sense of a lost innocence. Powerful work

Baylea Clothier
Year 8
First Place

Willow Tree

The west wind blew over fields of barley.
Showing beauty to dear old Charlie
This I saw, the golden sea,
Sitting beneath the willow tree.

It showed him love, it showed joy.
Many things it showed to this young boy.
I saw all of his time of glee,
Sitting beneath the willow tree.

Tis a shame for this could not last.
He sailed away on hull and mast.
Yet there was no protection for little old me,
Sitting beneath the willow tree.

He did return, but he was changed;
In factories and mines he was now claimed.
Charlie built tall towers for the world to see
But the cost of the willow tree.

And this, I say, unto you all,
The tree is but for your 'precious' fuel.
It will not come back, not for you to see.
Not the poor willow tree.



A narrative poem that skilfully evokes different feelings from the reader: joy, loss then ultimately despair as the poem moves towards its climactic warning. The personified journey of the willow tree is handled with great care and thought and as a poem it serves as a timely reminder that we must not take our natural resources for granted.

Oliver Ingoe
Year 8
Second Place

The Happiness Thief

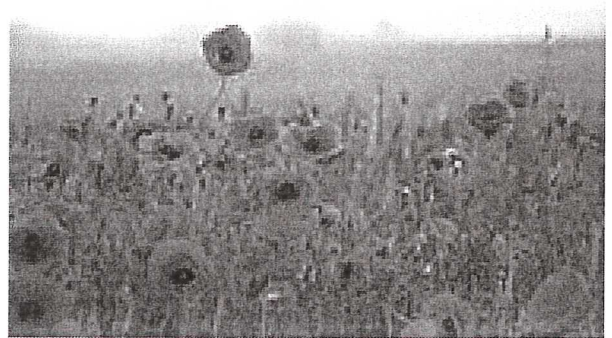
He knows that it is wishful,
Wistful thinking,
But still he stays awake –
Eyes unblinking.
He thinks: 'The shells might never go away,'
'But maybe I could, on one fine day.'

He reminisces about what used to be,
His house,
His home,
His family,
But none of that brings any relief,
As on rages the war, the happiness thief.

A sea of bullets engulfs them all,
The dreamers,
The brave and the honourable.
The man remembers who he used to be,
A man who ran for a newspaper every morning,
To just down the road and around the corner.

He doesn't want to breathe his last,
Not here, where a thousand shells blast.
He wants to go down the road and around the corner,
His heart aches to be away from the endless bloodbath,
Far from the mourners,
And back to his past,
Where he'll take the little ones to play in the park,
There will be no bloodshed, no friends of his dead,
But it's impossible.

A rather warm feeling spreads through his chest,
He falls to the ground, where he lies dead.
The dreamers, the brave and the honourable,
Bury him where he wanted to go,
And although he may have met his match,
He finally felt inner peace,
His worries finally ceased to exist,
While being ordered by a chief,
He found the relief
Which had been snatched from him by the happiness thief.



Georgia Barnes
Year 8
Third Place

The Dream

The trees are humming, calling to me,
Their branches gently caressing me
And yet they make a desperate plea,
Oh, how I care for thee...

The daisies, roses, peonies,
Sit waving gently in the breeze,
Though they wail in perfect harmony,
Oh, how I care for thee...

The restless, hurried honey bee,
Dashes about, dancing for me,
But still it wants to run, to flee,
Oh, how I care for thee...

And so I wander to the stream,
Tis the will of God that cares for me,
Here I feel the most at ease,
Oh, how I care for thee...

And so I must wake from my dream,
The noise, so fierce, is taunting me,
Smoke erupting from the factory,
Oh, how I do miss thee...

Megan Hornby
Year 8
Commended



Acceptance

We are all normal
And happy in our lives
Why do you care if we have husbands or wives?
Our choice does not affect you.

This is us
We were born this way
You think you may
Harass us and attack us.

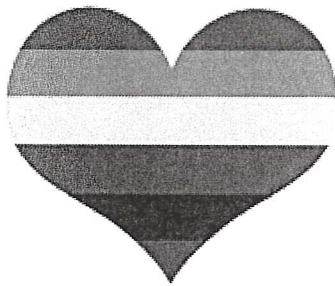
You live carelessly
You attack us endangered
You are the ranger
We are the armour leopard.

So innocent die
Because of those they like
Why do some think it's okay to strike?
Our lives are not their problem.

We are black rhinos –
We are Sumatran tigers
We have to live – to be survivors
While you hunt and finally kill.

So now some shall rest
But others fight on
We won't cheat or con
For the right of our lives.

Live life – let no dictator in
Have partners – let no-one judge
Have families – do not hold a grudge
People have their own opinions.



Phoebe Cambouropoulos
Year 8
Commended

DOWN IN THE TRENCH

In a war I will never forget,
Down in the mud of the trench,
Mud and wood beneath our feet
The coldness will not quench.

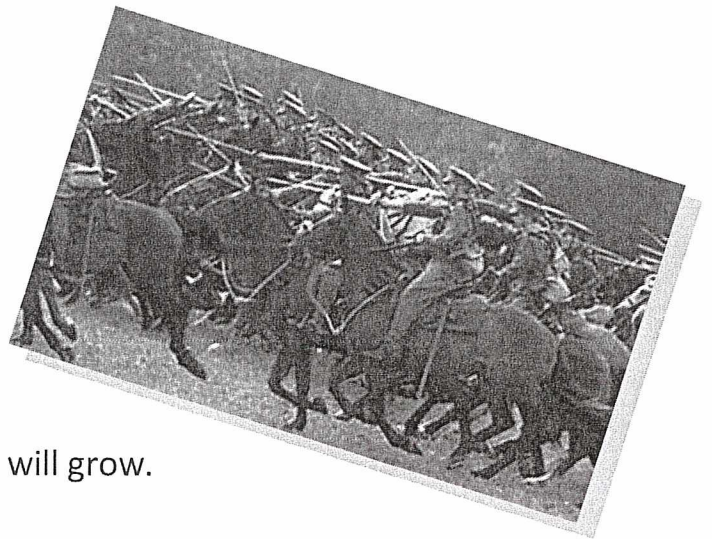
No man very loquacious
Unless we get letters from home,
Songs are sung to keep our spirits up.
All wishing we were free to roam.

Many a man I see falling – dying.
Friends, and
Foe,
Every loss is a mortal blow.

Man and horse fighting together,
Fighting as one,
A friendship with a horse will last forever,
Or at least until we are done.

I thought it would be an adventure,
I did it for a dare.
I thought it would be a dream,
It turned into a nightmare.

In a hundred years' time, here the poppies will grow.
For me it is time to die.
Over the top I go,
And find my final place to lie.



Abigail Walker
Year 8
Commended

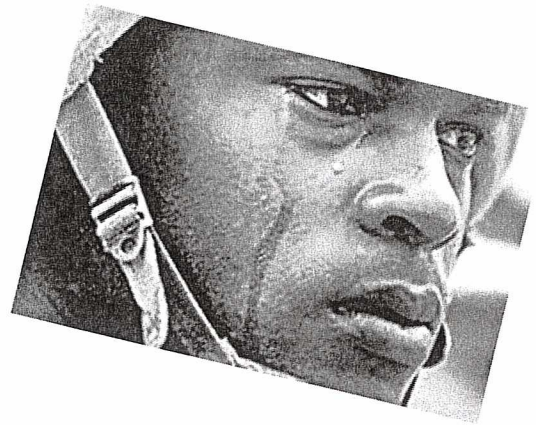
War Pain



My pain feels cold and selfish,
My pain extremely small,
My reality not important,
Compared to the ones that fall.

Young men with broken bones,
Their commanders lie in sacks,
Devastated parents,
Their sons will never come back.

Young men with shell shocked faces,
Growing old before their time,
Are living proof,
To this small pain of mine.



Jack McGowan
Year 8
Commended

In the Real World

The leaves danced in the Summer's breeze
As the days tumbled by.
The flower's petals fell away,
They were never going to last.

From far away you could hear
The children's happy laugh.
The new-borns shared a first smile,
As the older drew their last.

Never before could you see it.
Never before had you tried.
You blinded yourself from reality
And kept it all locked inside.

You tried to figure out
A way to make yourself realise,
By opening your eyes, you can see
What life is all about.

Louise Thompson
Year 8
Commended

ESCAPE

*The waves of insults and punches cracks
and box the walls of my spirit and soul,
My heart racing the speed of a demon,
As they stomp on my pride.*

*Their cold words infecting my heart,
Anger, jealousy and hideous thoughts.
Destroying my mental being.*

*I wished upon them a curse of infinite doom
For them and the generations beneath them.*

*But what kept me from going
Completely insane was the beautiful
And outstanding lady
who let me stay healthy
and alone with my thoughts.*

The lady was named 'Nature'.



**Ronald Labay
Year 8
Commended**