



Buoyancy

Floating is
sunset,
a perfect fall day,
leading my horse back to the barn,
red and orange leaves in my hair.
Sinking is
being unable to do my homework.
I don't know why,
so I can't explain why to my parents.
I just sit, staring at the screen.
Floating is
heading backstage
to eat Oreos with my friends
in an abandoned dressing room,
a standing ovation
still ringing in my ears.
Sinking is
a Sunday night,
closing my eyes to sleep,
knowing that the next time
I open them it will be Monday,
and the weekend will be over. ...

– NATALIE LEWIS, 15, NORWICH
*Excerpted; read complete poem at
youngwritersproject.org/node/44659*

ABOUT YWP

HOW TO JOIN: Young Writers Project (YWP) welcomes teens, ages 13-18, to join our free, online community of writers and visual artists. Youth who are 12 may join YWP with parental permission. Teachers are also invited to join to submit work on behalf of younger students for publication. To join or for more information, go to youngwritersproject.org.

HOW TO SUPPORT: Young Writers Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies solely on grants and donations for support. If you enjoy this monthly feature, please consider donating online at youngwritersproject.org/support. Or mail your gift to YWP, 47 Maple St., Suite 216, Burlington, VT 05401. Contact Susan Reid, Executive Director, sreid@youngwritersproject.org; (802) 324-9538.

SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH
THE OAKLAND FOUNDATION



“It Was All Yellow,” by Lauren McCabe, 16, South Burlington

Dying songbird

Please don't leave me,
you dying songbird.
Your song is still beautiful,
no matter the notes, no matter the order.
Please don't leave your rusting cage
via shoebox, my friend.
Please don't leave this big world behind,
you dying songbird.
I love you deeply.
Don't leave, you dying songbird.
I love you strongly.
At night, I don't whisper the thoughts
I have about you, you dying songbird.
If I whispered them,
they would weigh me down until
water flowed from my eyes unbidden.
Most other songbirds have given up
and now
sing when others ask them,
eat their food, drink their water,
flap their wings a few times as they
stand on their perch, waiting for nothing
to do something.
You are a dying songbird, and I
cannot ask you to stay in this rusting cage.
Please don't leave your rusting cage
via shoebox, my friend.
Please don't leave this big world behind,
you dying songbird. ...

– GIRIJA GRIFFIN, 16, MONTPELIER

*Excerpted; read complete poem at
youngwritersproject.org/node/44732*

Look up!

If you look up, look at the sky.
The clouds scatter over the sky,
like a shield from the sun.
The hue of the sky –
so beautiful,
so vibrant.
So, if you look up,
look at the sky.

– RILEY BERNATCHY, 14, CAMBRIDGE

Free write

To imagine.
To lose yourself
to thoughts of creation,
to dreams of coming times.
To think of life's past, future.
To avoid looking in front of you.
To envision what you think
should be happening,
you make yourself believe
that you are right.
You think today's life is in the past.
You envision today, just like yesterday.
You try to stall change.
You lose the fight.
You imagine winning.
You avoid.

– BENJAMIN WETHERELL, 12,
MONTPELIER

Plain sight

*If you want to find me, look
in places you can't
see, walking the tangle of crossroads.
Nothing is ever as it seems.
The sky is only so blue.
I woke up today, for you.
I've had to be my home,
a shelter from the debilitating storms.
There are words I wish I
could say, but it's so hard.
Dernière chance
pour un dernière chance.
Can you tell if I'm lying?
I've never been to heaven, but
some say it's a place nearby.
My head hasn't been quite right,
ever since this glass world shattered.
I've always stuck to my side
of the road, always stayed in
the right lane, I've always gone
with the direction of the wind.
It's just easier that way.
I've always let myself bleed in
order to keep you from pain.
I'll happily bring you flowers, dear,
if it'll hide my flooding hurt.
It's the sky and nothing more.
The fears we don't face today
will become our limits tomorrow.
I will distance myself if that
means it's easier to
say, “Au revoir, je t'aime.”
Music does not distract me, but
it keeps me from hearing you.
If you can't find me, it's
because I'm hiding in plain sight.
Look where you can't see.*

– SIRI DUNN, 16, MORRISTOWN

No more gentle good night

“Do not go gentle into that good night.”
Do not go peacefully, quietly,
carried by the soft wind as you sleep
under the dancing sky of stars.
Go fighting.
Kicking, screaming, fists flying
as you fight fate
under the watchful gaze of Father Moon
from his place amid the cosmos.
Do not surrender
to the tempting new dawn.
Grab ahold of the fleeting dusk
and refuse to let go.
Make such a ruckus,
even the dead are woken.
Until you, too,
escape from the grasp
of eternal slumber.

– MADDIE THIBAUT, 17, DUXBURY