

The Bottom Shelf
Review

Wilson College 2011

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Xiaomeng Li

I belong to the world

I belong to the world
I forget there are boundaries between countries
I forget to whom I should devote myself
But wait, I think I have a nationality

How many countries are there in the world?
Do I have to follow everything a country says if I belong to it?

Language. Power. Freedom.

I belong to the world
So do you
I forget the word “country” is what makes us different

Brandi College
Cries of Sorrow

Cries of sorrow rebound throughout
The night, relieving the souls of those
Who are weak, sad, and powerless.
The cries are of women, lonely children,
Hungry babies, and shameful men, who
Could not protect the family.
Cries are wept for loved ones who perished,
The ones who were innocent, the ones
Who had dreams and aspirations, and
The ones who had a life to live.
Tears fall for the ones who were brave,
The ones who risked their lives, the ones
Who found beauty in every living creature,
And the ones who actually cared and
Believed in survival.
Cries of sorrow flow for those who
Survived to tell their story, for those
Who want others to know what
Happened, for those who experienced
Brutal acts of violence, and for those
Who persevered through all kinds
Of pain, betrayal, and hell.

Brandi College

Behind A Frozen Fence

I stand behind a frozen fence,
Waiting for the pain to subside
From my many cuts and bruises,
And from the constant hunger I feel.
I wait for the day of liberation,
Whether it be from American soldiers
Or death.

I wait behind a frozen fence, hoping
To see my family that I think do
Not even exist. I long for my poor mother,
Ilzbieta, who cries at every single atrocity.
I miss my dear father, Peter, who worked
Well with his hands at carpentry, and my brother, Herman,
Who loves toy horses and chewing gum.
I wait through the endless days,
Praying for a ray of sunshine, but
None ever comes. All of my dreams
Have been stripped from my youth,
And now I seem as old as eighty,
Hobbling along with my back bent over.

The haze of the spring rain
Hovers over our heads, making our
Bodies quiver with shame and
Fear. It seems that only yesterday
I was a happy-go-lucky child, who
Dreamed of sweet chocolates and
Stories of fairies dancing in the forest.
I stand behind this frozen fence
Of Auschwitz, waiting for something
That will never come true. All I
Want is family, love, and freedom.
That is all I ask for. Oh, what am I to do?

Mallory Sunderland
Sunlight

Bringer of Joy,
Invoker of Light,
Beckon to see
what is Blazing bright.
A gift of Gods
or so it may seem
but perhaps it is something
much more Obscene.

Meta Porcella

Cicadas

Goodnight to the screaming cicadas.
They add to the soundtrack of nocturnal strolls,
Where concern for time is far from found.
Farewell to the mirages of the free road,
Sweltering under festival rays,
And shimmering like an ocean's vast horizon.
Goodbye, tiny fireflies that shine
For a private galaxy in my backyard.

Good morning to the bronzing leaves;
They fall in the silence of a broken summer.
Where carelessness ends, and chills
Bring my mind awake from comforted dreams.
Hello to the goose bumps crawling up my arm,
From crisp breezes through a last open window.
And fine greetings to golden cornfields,
With black crows balancing on thin stalks,
Under a bewitching horizon.

Only to fly away – scared by the blast of metal contraptions,
Stripping away the rows for another year to come.

Angella Dagenhart

THE STORM

Drip.

Drop.

It pours.

Slow, steady, drenching;

It lay in shimmering sheets.

More than that, which already saturated, can consume.

Swirling darkness heaves; limb rubs limb; shadow silhouettes flash in quick lightening bursts.

Furious thunder claps as apex's ecstasy finally passes.

Spent, it gives its last.

Swollen tears fall

Off buds.

Drip.

Drop.

Xiaomeng Li

Cloud

I had a green car
I drove it in a misty morning
Until I realized that,
I was driving in a big cloud

Sharon Erby

This Furnace Is Not Working

Wind roars across everything tonight
Even though
It was not supposed to.

Sometimes it dips and does
Surprising things like blowing
Out pilot lights in furnaces, turning
Homes into icehouses.

We have learned that ice works
On tongues that are bleeding
And metal coat hangers work
To hold up roaring exhaust pipes.
But we don't know what works now.

We say *we* because *I* doesn't reassure
On stairs lit only with a flashlight held by
Cold cold fingers.
We say *we* because then *I* isn't
The only one who gets blamed
For not remembering to change
The lone light bulb in the basement.
We say *we* because *I* gets weighed down
When children up stairs depend on
Only one to fix everything.

We were told cut tongues
Responded to teabags, that
Our exhaust system *passed* inspection,
That replacing our thermocouple *ensured*
Our pilot light would remain lit.

Well, then. Simply re-light the device.
We snap a match and expect to explode.
We snap another and another
And hope to.

Wild wind roars into Forever
And all we know is
This furnace is not working.

Christine Robinson

Haiku

A gentle spring breeze...

tiny ripples on the pond

ducks are swimming along

Angella Dagenhart

MISCOMMUNICATION

Articulate baited line cast
into shallow populous pools.
Bubbled synthetic symbols are the only reply.
Virtual napalm; acid burnt reality.

Amanda Kenney
Wisdom Speaks

I remain quiet
and patient.
I see my age in the lines along my skin,
yet each day is new.

Shh . . .
listen.
Wisdom tells stories.

I am strong.
The lines on my forehead are unmistakable,
but my laugh lines run deep.
Stories are told within these creases.

Quiet.
Wait.
Wisdom speaks.

Xiaomeng Li

Why remember

Why do we have to remember things?

Only other people should do that.

Because eventually we will forget everything

Only other people remember our things.

Laura Hans

Show Me My Maker

So, show me my maker
So I can so I can show her this hole.
It was filled with desires
That I made on my own.
But my soul has been cleansed
And this heart now rings true.
And is ready to be filled with a true love for you.

But you've left me alone
With this love which survives.
And my soul is awake, and alert, and revived.
Embrace this abundance
Let me share it with you.
Let us be one again
Instead of just two.

Please let me not love you through words anymore.
But, you've waited enough
And your heart's not assured.
So I'll bow to humility as my central virtue.
And breathe out the love that's still bound into you.

Cortni Quarles

Infatuation

It works rapidly—
Snatching up the strong and weak,
Bringing them to their knees.

The world,
Through my gray colored glasses,
Have seen finally seen color.

Like a striking flash
Of fluorescent light,
He caught my attention.

The sound of his laughter,
Like sugar sweet Sunshine
In the dead of night.

His smile;
That blinding white smile
Tastes more delightful than a rainbow.

In the middle of a raging blizzard
He radiates a warmth
That exudes more Passion than a hopeless romantic.

As nothing can mean everything
So is he in that sense.
Impressions are always to be glanced at twice.

Fresh rain
And the roughness of his hands
Melts and chills my insides.

Deep indulgent eyes,
Like intense liquid fires
Burn me carefully and slowly.

The size of the largest star
Added to the expanse of the galaxy
Does not compare to the touch of his kiss.

All that he is,
Meaning all that they think he is not,

Captures and astounds my fragile heart.
Focused and grasped
Time stops and for an instant;
I am caught by him.

Jessica Carnes

Best Time of the Day

His voice, like light during the night,
Chirps with faultless smile and word.
As my head, dead on my ancient pillow,
Wishes for slumber, his smile and word,
Like a pebble tossed into a pond,
Causes ripples of delight in the brain
Of my dead head. So soon, my voice,
Like light during the night, I hear smile and word
With him. Then, our chirps churn
The light that surrounds us, which begins a
Melodious madness of two harmonies, and we
Hold magic inside our hearts. I call for him, so
Softly, he hugs me bear as I close my eyes,
And with curt caresses, wakefulness wanes.

Samantha Ann Miller
Dreams that Never End

I have good dreams,
And I have bad dreams.
All day dreams,
And all night dreams.
Dreams that never end!

Dreams of sitting by the fire ,
Cuddled in your arms.
I have dreams of standing alone
In my own dark shadows.
Then you appear standing
Over me, watching me sleep.
Dreams that never end!

My mind is racing,
And pacing!
Don't know which
Way to go!
I have good dreams,
And bad dreams.
Thriller dreams!
Big dreams!
Little dreams.
Dreams that never end!

I see mama,
And my grandmas.
My brother,
And best friends!
They only appear,
As dreams now.
I will always love you,
And miss you!
And just want to be with you
Once again!
Dreams that never end.

I want to see you tonight,
My Darling,
I want to hold you tonight,
Real tight !
In my dreams.

Because,
My dreams just never end!
Cortni Quarles

Function

Tangled in the soft cutting string of his words,
I am powerless to the sheer dominance,
Of the stance he has taken.

Shrinking back from my own mind,
I find a sliver of complete solitude,
So eerily quiet that it is deafening.

And this is how it goes.

He runs scalding hot and bone chillingly cold, quickly,
I have not the time to prepare my mind,
Or body for the onslaught that will be inflicted.

Resting semi-comfortably between awake and death,
My knees drawn so far into my chest that my heart,
Which is already frail and weak, cannot beat.

And this is how it goes.

Blood and tears are his main forte,
And I produce them very well,
Like a never ending fountain.

And this is how it goes.

He never apologizes for his actions,
Not that I would expect or accept them.

And this is how it goes.

He says he loves me and I believe him.

And this is how it goes.

Jessica Carnes
A Slow Process

Let me out of this angry, godless gusts
Of swirling dust clouds and decadent
Emptiness. Please allow me to
Break free of the fascination with the frozen,
Black bareness I worshiped. My reverence gave
Me strength. God, superglue sickness begs me
To stay solid in this state; but I close my
Eyes to picture my climb out of hell.
Then I open them, and I'm kneeling at the
Soles of Grace. I realized Mercy merely
Desired my willingness.

Jyotsna Dhakal

She Dreams of Candy Dolls

Their long legs dangling,
Their round faces smiling,
She used to smile right back at them.
Well, she was a kid back then.

She used to stand and watch in awe,
Possessed by those long-legged figures she saw,
As she walked by those candy dolls,
Held by kids held by parents, in those malls.

“I cannot be them,” she had reminded herself,
“One must be satisfied with oneself.”
“But what if I just had a candy doll?” she had thought,
As she watched those kids and the toys they bought.

She's a grown girl now, a lady they say,
She's standing on her feet now, she has made her way.
A candy doll isn't in her list anymore,
But how it came to her dreams, she isn't sure.

“I'll buy my girl a candy doll,” she cries.
Heavy with sleep, in her bed she lies.
She drifts off to sleep like she always does,
And then she dreams of candy dolls.

Alexandre Howard

Lost

What are you longing for?
What is it you want?
I see you through a key hole.
I have been watching you
From here you look happy
Something is pulling your heart.
I feel your wander.

What have you seen?
Why are you the way you are?
You move like nothing else
Your intentions are different
From anywhere else
Something is pulling your heart
I feel your wander.

Why do you search?
Can't you see that you have it?
I hear your tears fall
You think it matters
Time doesn't compare to this
Something is pulling your heart
I feel your wander.

Why do you leave?
What will make you stay?
Don't hold onto what hurts
Keep only what is dear
Open your love and love all
Something is pulling your heart
I feel your wander.

Before your blood becomes cold, stop being scared and never push love away.

Perso

Ché stai volendo?
Che cosa c'è?
Vendo tu per buco chiave.
Sono stato osservando ti
Da qui appari felice.
Qualcosa è tirando tua cuore.

Sento va' giri.

Che hai visto?
Perché il modo in cui sei, come sei?
Ti sposti come nient'altro
Tuo intenzione sono differente
Da dovunque altro
Qualcosa è tirando tua cuore.
Sento va' giri.

Perché Cerchi?
Tu non puoi quel hai lo già
Sento tuo lacrime caduta
Pensi esso è importante
Tempo è non stesso a questo
Qualcosa è tirando tua cuore.
Sento va' giri.

Perché abbandoni?
Ciò che constringere tuo rimanere?
Non tieni quello che ferire
Tieni solo quello che caro
Aperto tuo amore a tutti e amore a tutti.
Qualcosa è tirando tua cuore.
Sento va' giri.

Prima di tuo sangue diventare freddo, smetti essere spaventato e mai spingere amore via.

Shauna Pieruccini
The Dinning Hall

Past the soups
Before that goop
You'll find the Fruit Loops

A staple in life
You won't need a knife
My life is in strife

When there are no more
You'll find that I swore
Ready to start a war!

I'll settle for Coco Puffs.

Suji Helmer

Proud

Proud to be ...

A new chapter
In our lives.
We determine
Who we are,
And what we will become.
We will assent
To change and growth.
The next few years
Will speed by.
Some may move on,
But those who
Truly know
Her worth
Are those who stay
For four years.
They are not just
Athletes, teachers, scientists, riders,
But accomplished women.
Wilson Women.
And boast we will
'Til the end of our lives

Hayley Glass
The Last Year

It started like always,
On a warm summer day.
A new group of freshman
Joined the ranks of the rest.
A bit of anxiety, a sliver of fear,
And a well of hope.
Hope for a year filled with success.
Their hard work will be rewarded
With pride in a job well done.
Excitement filled the senior class,
Excitement infused with fear of the next.
New opportunities, new experiences,
Just around the corner.
The real world waits with open arms.
Thus started the new year,
Both fresh and last.

Christine Callahn

An Educated Woman

Oh how I wait for that day!
When ceremonial robes shine and sway
And I receive that which no soul can take.
Infallible to wind, to fire, to decay

To stand in place where women's feet so proud have stood
To stand in sight of dreams
And say not could, or would, or should
Rather, can, and *will*.

Here I will stand *a woman*.

When the world said I couldn't
And statistics tried to spell my fate
I refused to sit ill-fated
So I will stand and I will be
A woman, educated.