



THE  
FIRST  
STORY  
RESIDENTIAL  
ANTHOLOGY  
2016



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**ARVON**

# FIRST STORY

*First Story changes lives through writing.*

We believe that writing can transform lives, and that there is dignity and power in every young person's story.

First Story brings talented, professional writers into secondary schools serving low-income communities to work with teachers and students to foster creativity and communication skills. By helping students find their voices through intensive, fun programmes, First Story raises aspirations and gives students the skills and confidence to achieve them.

For more information and details of how to support First Story, see [www.firststory.org.uk](http://www.firststory.org.uk) or contact us at [info@firststory.org.uk](mailto:info@firststory.org.uk).

# **First Story Residential Anthology 2016**

An Anthology

BY FIRST STORY STUDENTS

AT THE ARVON RESIDENTIALS

IN LUMB BANK, THE HURST AND TOTLEIGH BARTON

First Story Residential Anthology 2016

Published by First Story Limited

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**FIRST STORY**

Changing lives through writing

‘We all have a voice. Some never discover it. We all have stories to tell. Some never tell them. First Story has helped all these young writers to discover their writing voice, and in so doing has helped them discover themselves.’

**Michael Morpurgo (author of *War Horse*)**

‘First Story is a fantastic idea. Creative writing can change people’s lives: I’ve seen it happen. It’s more than learning a skill. It’s about learning that you, your family, your culture and your view of the world are rich and interesting and important, whoever you happen to be. Teenagers are under increasing pressure to tailor their work to exams, and to value themselves in terms of the results. First Story offers young people something else, a chance to find their voices.’

**Mark Haddon (author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*)**

‘First Story not only does an invaluable thing for the young and under-heard people of England, it does it exceptionally well. Their books are expertly edited and beautifully produced. The students featured within are wonderfully open and candid about their lives, and this is a credit to First Story, whose teachers thoroughly respect, and profoundly amplify, their voices. The only problem with First Story is that they’re not everywhere – yet. Every young person deserves the benefit of working with them.’

**Dave Eggers (author of *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*)**

‘First Story is an inspiring initiative. Having attended a school with a lot of talented kids who didn’t always have the opportunity to express that talent, I know what it would have meant to us to have real-life writers dropping by and taking our stories seriously. And what an opportunity for writers, too, to meet some of the most creative and enthusiastic young people in this country! It’s a joyful project that deserves as much support as we can give it.’

**Zadie Smith (winner of the Orange Prize for fiction and author of *White Teeth*)**



As Patron of First Story I am delighted that it continues to foster and inspire the creativity and talent of young people in challenging secondary schools.

I firmly believe that nurturing a passion for reading and writing is vital to the health of our country. I am therefore greatly encouraged to know that young people in this school – and across the country – have been meeting each week throughout the year in order to write together.

I send my warmest congratulations to everybody who is published in this anthology.

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

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**HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, Patron of First Story.**

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## Lumb Bank

# Aisha Aslam

FEVERSHAM COLLEGE

## Man is Made of Stone

People waste time

*Admi esa miti se bana hai*

*Amm lokh yahi tho karthe hein*

They let worthy time slip out their hands and vanish.

*Jese ke ek ameer admi pesa ko bhool jatha hai aur hod ko koh jata hai*

People waste time watching their

every move *har wakth*

every step *har gali*

every action *humaisha*

*Kya ye atchi baath hai ya pir galath?*

Is it not good to slip-up and fall to the ground?

Isn't that how children learn to walk then learn to run? Then to  
fall again and rise?

*Is dunya mein wakth ke jese kami aur nahi. Bijalee aur pani ke biger*

*koi reh nahi sakta – magar! bir bhi wakth aur mangtha hai*

Mauth ke hatho mein koi be nahi jana chata

Tharap te tharap te jee lehte hai.

People waste time explaining themselves

Admi esa miti se bana hai

People waste time trying to understand.

Admi esa miti se bana hai

People waste time frustrated.

Admi esa miti se bana hai

People waste time disappointed

Admi esa miti se bana hai

magar pir bhi ya hee insaan he jo pooch tha hai

'Where did the time go?'

Insaan, vaki, esa miti se bana hai.



# Alina Fiaz

BELLE VUE GIRLS' SCHOOL

## Together

All people different colours; brown, black, white, united as one  
Holding hands, singing and dancing, just like a rainbow  
We are all here.

Different races come together to celebrate this reunion  
No more sleeping late at night, no more worries  
We are all the same at the end of the day.

We will bloom just like a flower... strong, beautiful, bright  
And full of light!

We are the same in many ways like branches from the trunk of  
the same tree, different in sizes but from the same stand.

Individually we are weak and anyone can snap us but if we come  
together we are strong and no one could stand against us.

Happiness is a gift so take it.  
No more hurtful comments and tears running down soft cheeks  
We are different, but same in many ways.

Together we will help each other get through  
the difficult times. Wipe each other's tears and  
lifting each other up.

We all fall to the ground at some point in life.  
We all need to fall down lower than we ever have  
to stand up taller than ever before with our heads held high.

Struggles are a part of life we all need to see those gloomy days  
to realise what the happy ones look like and embrace them.  
So I implore you to remember this and take heed,  
We all make mistakes.  
But remember as ONE... together we can achieve anything!

And one day we will find the gold at the end of the rainbow of all  
the things we have achieved in life and we will shine brighter for  
those who need light and guidance. 'We will all shine together!'

## Batul Shah

BELLE VUE GIRLS' SCHOOL

### Just a Dream

Sometimes I have a dream, I dream of what I can do  
 Sometimes I wonder why nature is green and why the sky is blue  
 I wish I could just stay in bed because sleeping is my drug  
 I wish that I could always carry my blanket because it's the only  
     thing I like to hug  
 If I had the choice I would listen to music all day and read a book  
 Because when I'm doing this, there is no one that can get me off  
     the hook  
 But then I wake up and realise what the reality is  
 It was only a dream and it ended just like this  
 It was a dream that faded away just like dust  
 But if I had the choice I would just forget about the rest  
 Because the rest is just rust and stardust

## Imaru Lewis

HIGHGATE WOOD SCHOOL

### Statistics Don't Lie

FACT: Eleven–fifteen year olds are most likely to end up in car accidents.  
 FACT: You're 60% more likely to be attacked on holiday.  
 FACT: Ten percent of germs that result in your grisly death, can be caught on the tube.  
 FACT: Half of all deaths happen at home.  
 FACT: You are most likely to be murdered by someone you know.  
 FACT: Eating too much gives you cancer.  
 FACT: Eating too little gives you cancer.  
 FACT: Too much sunlight gives you cancer.  
 FACT: Not enough sunlight gives you cancer.  
 FACT: Red meat of any kind gives you cancer.  
 FACT: Phones give you cancer.  
 FACT: Juice is part of your five a day.  
 FACT: Juice gives you cancer.  
 FACT: We need air to breathe.  
 FACT: Unfortunately, air is cancer.  
 FACT: Plastic bottles give you cancer.  
 FACT: Antibiotics are quickly failing to fight diseases.  
 FACT: Death is inevitable, and if you spend your life trying to stay alive  
     you'll never live.  
 And that's the only fact worth knowing.

# Jennifer Templeman

BRIGSHAW HIGH SCHOOL

## Nightfall

When I get to be a composer  
 I'm going to write some music about  
 The darkness of night  
 and I'm going to have the soft glow of the moon  
 The light that holds you from complete darkness  
 The pin like hole in your subconscious  
 Like a light house at the shore  
 I'm going to make the obvious less visible  
 and the truthful lies brighter  
 The body off the voices hidden  
 The silence its amplifier

I'm going to have broken bones  
 and broken people  
 With scars that shine brighter than the moon  
 Invisible people  
 Voices louder than a horn  
 Drowned out by the silence of those who don't understand  
 Those who know nothing of the red  
 tears and silent cries at nightfall  
 In the darkness of the night

# Madeeha Mohammed

FEVERSHAM COLLEGE

## Torture

And I was here  
 My hands were free  
 But my heart was locked up in chains  
 As my imagination explodes, my skull tightens  
 My sight blinded by the blackness of my eyelids  
 My lips stitched into an innocent smile  
 My nose broken in the direction of destiny

As I open my eyes  
 I realize that they were caged as my tears struggled to escape  
 Unable to see the terrifying dangers of the world  
 Unable to see the breathe – taking beauty of the world  
 My face was painted with scars and freshly made cuts, showing  
     that I am not exactly who you think I am, these are not signs  
     of strength but echoes of my dark side  
 My lips were imperfect showing that I spoke the worst of  
     everything  
 I tried speaking  
 But I was tongue tied  
 In pain and sadness  
 The stitches unable to move  
 The cold blood tickle down my bottom lip  
 In pain, way beyond your imagination  
 My tongue was split into two, reminding me of all the snakes

My teeth as sharp as knives, reminding me of all those back-  
 biting moments and venomous words  
 My inner mouth was plastered with fresh blisters, reminding  
 me of how I set fire to people's worlds  
 My gums were made of burning coal, the burns of bad influence  
 I had on people

My hands were free  
 But my heart was locked up in chains  
 Pumping cold blood  
 I couldn't feel anything  
 No emotions, no fears  
 It stopped my heart from missing a beat  
 Protecting it from any warm emotions  
 It stopped my heart from violently breaking free  
 Causing it to break others  
 But it scarred me instead of them

This was me... skin deep

My hands were free but my heart was not...

## Maleeha Amin

APPLETON ACADEMY

### Mother Nature

It's so peaceful. Maybe even too peaceful.

Any kind of human activity, I have left.

I have left it all behind. Maybe I think it is good to leave it for good. I find the small little green leaves on the thin branches satisfying... yeah satisfying. It actually seems as if they're floating. Yeah it sounds silly, but it's true if you look closely and stay still, it's like they're dancing.

Although it's been a grey day and now it's still grey, there's some more darker clouds coming my way, which could possibly mean it could start raining. But I'm not bothered, I don't have a care in the world. Nothing can ruin my mood. It can't make me change my seat, however I could get ill and my mum will kill me if she finds out. But no I'll stay.

All of a sudden a cow looks at me in the funniest way possible, does it want to start something or what? I'm not doing anything, now it's gone with its mates. And now they're all looking at me the same way as the other stupid cow in the first place. But I'm good, nothing can ruin my mood to make me go in.

Oh great, brilliant why did you have to do that. The smells is so bad, oh God. It's so Goddamn strong. But that's natural, get used to it. Just think of it as fresh oxygen, yeah I'm good, nothing can ruin my mood.

Achoo! Crap my hay fevers acting up, I have that itch in my nose now. Great anything else. Ooo another ones coming...

False alarm. Just sniff it up, its fine. (Waiting 30 seconds)  
ACHOOO! That was bigger than I expected it to be. It's okay,  
nothing can ruin my mood to make me go in.

What the f\*\*k! Where's this wasp come from? God sake man  
can anything go my way, it's like mother nature wants me to  
p\*\*s off. It's gone... Wait, no it hasn't. Bloody hell! I hope it  
doesn't bring any of its friends. Shit, I spoke too soon. Five  
minutes go by of me squirming, yelling, shouting. They end up  
leaving yes! Hallelujah! As I said nothing can ruin my mood.

What's that in the sky, that doesn't look like a bird, or a plane  
or even Morrison's carrier bag. Is this it, it could be it. What if  
it's a UFO. God sake, I can't blame Mother Nature now. But I  
am getting quite peckish, yeah I'll go in.

## Maya Sourie

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

### Disengage

Lonely soul  
in the midst of the willows,  
feel the burning frost in your bones  
and desperate hunger in the furnace of your stomach  
for something much more than just food.

Free your spirit  
into the chilling mist that hangs  
about you, let your mind fly along with the wind  
and run with the stream  
give all that you are to nature.

Uproot the city from within you,  
blow away the signs of stress  
from having no internet access  
chippy down the road  
or missing the last episode of TOWIE.

Swap the crowded streets  
for a thousand trees, bright lights  
for the forest night life  
lurking with beasts  
but not the type that'll kill you just to get their hands on your  
possessions.

Hills tall as their towers,  
 roots twisted as their leaders.  
 Lay yourself down on Earth's bed  
 and be immersed in its silk  
 for you are now free.

## Ruman Yasir

DIXONS ALLERTON ACADEMY

### Animals Forever

Why are animals always together?  
 They fight each other  
 But they can't hurt one another.  
 They were brought up together  
 and it will stay that way forever  
 because more animals together  
 Is a lot stronger.

Why are animals always together?  
 They want to kill each other  
 But it will not happen because they have a mother  
 It is less likely to happen after supper  
 When they fight each other  
 But at the end they are all brothers and sisters from different  
 mothers.  
 Because more animals together  
 Is stronger.

But I still don't understand why animals are always together?  
 We should be the same,  
 Do what animals do, they teach us a lot  
 like always stay together  
 But one thing the animals don't tell us is why they are always  
 together

# Sarah Bibi

BELLE VUE GIRLS' SCHOOL

## Layers of Us

We are layered from the immature flower within us to the tunic.

The tunic, our outer layer, is our skin the palette of colour embellished onto our skin, we wear the tunic layer as capes our own heroes of our lives, our own choices, but no matter the colour of the skin, the inside is all the same. We have the same amount of scale leaves within our bulbs, that lead to the small immature flower.

The first scale leaf is fear. For some simple fear, for others fears of the unknown, fear of despair, fear of heights and just generally fear in itself. Whatever that fear is basically, it moulds us into who we are, some embrace the fear and become stronger and overcome the fear of being chopped on the board of life, while the rest succumb to fear and allow themselves to hurt and make others cry.

The second scale leaf is happiness. Again not really just pure happiness, maybe happy spending time with someone you love, happy because you got something nice, happy because today was a good day, happiness sometimes last but sometimes it does not. But that's life in general. Happiness is being washed after being picked from the dry earth, and smoothing the out the tunic, our cape, our identity, given life once more.

The third, fourth and fifth are always in a different order depending on the person, these three emotions under the first two scale leaf layers are, sadness, insecurity and confidence.

Sadness is maybe staying inside on a rainy day, maybe its listening to a sad song, maybe today is a sad today, or just been sad for too long. This particular scale leaf is withered in places and cracked, and this depends, no one wants a cracked onion, a useless husk that only dispenses tears rather than anything else. Depending on the person this can be third, fourth or fifth, a cracked scale leaf and the remnants of tear stained faces.

Insecurity, that person can play that sport better, or people are forgetting about me. I'm overly flawed, this scale leaf is worn down due to the thoughts of being inferior, of being less. And that means it cannot draw out its full flavour since it focuses on why it doesn't taste the same as the other layers rather than drawing out its unique flavour and making it its own. Individuality is something that defines us all, personality wise, appearance wise, and what we do on our short stay in the garden of life.

All these three layers are in different orders depending on that persons own uniqueness. Confidence is being able to be yourself, to realise, so what if I am a bit sweeter than the rest of the layers or maybe I'm a little bit rotten? I am myself and there is no one else like me, my taste is me and that cannot be duplicated. I am never going to subdue my flavour in a dish just because it will taste nice, I prefer to be raw so all my cracks can be seen, and I'm proud of them because they made my immature flower start to slowly bloom.

Some want to rot in the safety of a cupboard rather than seeing what the world has to offer them, some want to be cut and chopped into little pieces so there is only a slightly bitter taste and put in with the rest of the trendy vegetables, to be accepted as complete by the rest of the vegetables. What is right is not always the most popular choice, what is the most popular is sometimes not always right.

One day I want all of us to tear our layers apart to reveal the

immature flower within us, to let out all the emotions, to be raw  
and to be real, to say to the world this is the real me, and I'm not  
going to hide from a façade, that I'm ok when really I'm not, but  
as soon as the layers litter the streets, maybe then, somehow, the  
immature flower begins to weep tears of joy.

Tears for which allowed us our own individual freedom.

## Sophie Crabtree

APPLETON ACADEMY

### 'We Are Enough'

Each girl, boy, boy, girl  
Is enough.

Enough of the choking hairspray that glues girls together  
Or the strong, solidness of hair gel,  
Moulding and caging boys into fixed shapes.

No more hiding, peering from scorching fringes  
No more boys already assuming their defeat.

Let her shave her head  
Let him hold his face to the sky, streamed in tears  
Let her express art with her body as her canvas of exotic  
patterns and lyrical inks.  
Let him be as sensitive as a daisy kissing the breeze, the untethered  
rope of the circus tent beating against the torrent, the one  
who cries.

Let her be herself  
Let him be himself

For if the world is superficial enough  
As to say  
That to taste one sweet something,  
They must feel obliged to squat away her thighs or crunch away  
his belly,  
Then what have we become?



For we,  
Each girl, boy, boy, girl  
Are enough.

# Tayyiba Nadeem

GRANGE TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

## Home

home looks like a wooden pipe,  
a stingray floating through the waves  
home smells a bit like wine,  
also of fresh green leaves  
it sounds like bottles popping  
and the wind whistling beside your ear  
home remembers the day it popped out of a bottle and flew  
through the sky  
it remembers the children playing hide and seek around it  
it knows the secret of how its removal caused destruction  
it knows the secret of the stories that occurred beneath it.  
home is a special because it means celebration, mourning, loss  
and gain

## **Tyrell Hibberts**

DIXONS TRINITY ACADEMY

### **I CCAN NEVER GGO HOME!!!!**

im experiencing new things, but apparently I cant go home  
what the hell u talking about. r u stupid r u blown?  
I could go home but ive made a bunch of friends here  
do u think that I should just go off and suddenly disappear  
the ice cream was good but the ordering was a flop  
I asked for mint choc chip but it try to mug me with pear  
drop. unfortunately that little move didn't work  
so after this week im off to my home Bradford  
I said this already r u stupid r u blown.  
I have nothing else to say now lets eat watermelon

## **The Hurst**

### **The Great Dab**

## Adam Lawrence

LINCOLN CASTLE ACADEMY

### The Overseer on the Drive

O' watcher in the dark, you wake  
 Our dream of waking, we feel  
 Your chiselled stature  
 Gives us hope, gives us comfort  
 Gives us protection.  
 Protection from any lost soul that try's  
 To promote pain on the innocent beings of the Hurst.  
 Every day, every year  
 You look upon the drive  
 To warn the trespassers  
 That you're a secret Jedi  
 You're there for our arrival  
 And you're there for our departure.  
 You protect us and all  
 I can do is give you praise.

## Cameron Askham

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – RANSOM ROAD

### Inspiration Doesn't Come Easy

Inspiration does not come easy to me.

I am not one of these who are blessed with a 'Wonderful Idea Generator' in their minds.

In fact I'm sure you'll find that in my mind there are cobwebs and flies. Time flies in my mind as I thrive and I drive to find even a hint of idea or a pinch of desire, the fire that boils and coils within other minds.

This week I have been put in the most astonishingly beautiful place for I have faced the beauty and grace of a thousand different shades of green in the trees and I have witnessed the wind through my hair and with care I explored the an abundance of beauty. The bird's tweets are like music to my ears for they harmonize with the sheep's 'baa' and even from afar I hear...

A car...

And in brings me to the realisation that there is still some form of reality out there.

You see, although to me the sounds of the sea and the green of the trees will forever be the strongest form of medication that I am yet to encounter and find to rid my mind of the demons inside, oh will you please find somewhere else to hide.

But I am still yet to find an idea of what to write about.

Though I thank you nature for this opportunity to detox even if I do just re-tox when I find my home.

Thank you, nature, for now.

It's been a blast.

## Charlotte Brown

THE NOTTINGHAM EMMANUEL SCHOOL

### Freedom of Space

Racing, jumping, leaping  
 Among stars and stars  
 Planets the colour of blood  
 And mighty ships to sail the comets  
 Cyan, indigo and rose pink nebulas  
 A place without time and gravity  
 A never ending revolution against  
 The Alozon  
 This is space: an infinite hideout that death can't reach.

## Chloe Beet

FARNBOROUGH ACADEMY

### Spooky Poem

She began to get excited for the day,  
 Forgetting she'll have to pay.  
 The Emperor of evil, lurking behind her.  
 I need my freedom, I need my peace.  
 Please, I'm sorry, I want to be released.  
 I need to get her down to my knees,  
 I want to smell her oozing blood, fresher than leaves.  
 All she wants is to win the glistening, golden prize.  
 But, instead, she's going to have a frenzied fright.  
 Finally, he was ready for the bloodshed.  
 He can feel control gathering in his hands.  
 He can taste the fear, the end is near.  
 Blood pours out, leading to her death.  
 He puts the book down by her side.  
 When she wakes up, she will decide –  
 Who will be the next to die?

## Destiny Hall

FARNBOROUGH ACADEMY

### The Red Hot Buffet

Going up again and again with my plate piled like a colourful  
mountain  
I love Chinese and I love them all but what has the cost come  
up to  
As soon as I stepped into the heaven like place  
I knew that I was meant to be here  
All the different smells were fighting to get to my nose  
Though my favourite section ever is the dessert section!  
When the marshmallow and chocolate melted into my mouth I  
asked myself, is that real?

## Jasmine White

NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY SAMWORTH ACADEMY

### When I Fidget

I watch as I gently move my hands in front of my face. I never thought about how something so small, could reveal so much about a person. Two rings adorn my fingers, both chipped and worn with age. Everything else seems boring in comparison to their stones complexity. The numerous scars that litter my hands don't go unnoticed, pale and full of memories. They tell so many stories, not all of them are pleasant. My nails are short and mismatched, them being the subject of my nervousness. I use them when I talk, their movements are practiced and fluid. If my hand is held by anyone else, it is instantly engulfed because of how small it is. It fills me with the feeling of warmth and belonging. My hands may be small, but they've never let me down and they reveal everything about me. They tell all of my secrets.

## Jesse April

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – RANSOM ROAD

### When You Stop

Buzzing, rushing, whizzing  
 Things we do everyday  
 Running, huffing puffing  
 Our lives go a rapid way  
 What would happen if we paused?  
 Slowed down a little  
 Stopped rushing without cause  
 Appreciate nature  
 You'd think a week without Wi-Fi  
 Would drive one mad  
 A week of slowing down  
 Some might think it's sad  
 But when you think about it  
 All the things we've done  
 Dancing, writing  
 Just having fun  
 The people you meet  
 Creating a twist in a plot  
 All this happens  
 When you stop

## Josh Chapman

LINCOLN CASTLE ACADEMY

### If I Could Change my Dad I Would

If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, because my life has been a rollercoaster of emotions  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, what man tries to force their daughter into a car? But  
     I wasn't having that  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, no mum deserves to find out they've been cheated on,  
     especially on Valentine's Day  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, finding out he's been sent to prison was devastating  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, after he came back I realised who he was  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, this was going to be the hardest decision of my life  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, but I cannot so I've moved on  
 If I Could Change My Dad  
 I Would, but I've got my mum, and I've got my family

## Kaylee Hempenstall

NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY SAMWORTH ACADEMY

### Someday

I'm sorry that you're leaving,  
But I know that you'll do well.  
I'll always remember our inside jokes  
And the secrets I can't tell.

I don't think I'll find another  
Who makes me laugh the way you do,  
But I know that you've got to move on  
And I know that I should, too.

I know that I will miss you,  
Now that you've gone away –  
But I also know we'll meet again,  
Someplace  
Somehow  
Someday.

## Magdalena Czumak

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – RANSOM ROAD

### Why, Love? (English)

It's me, walking, alone  
Don't ask me for love, I once gave you – my love

Love, what is love?  
Why is love so hard?  
Why is love so sad?  
Why is love so beautiful?

What is, love?  
Is it just chemicals produced by our body?  
Does love of first sight exist?  
Or is it just our brain playing tricks on us?

Love is beautiful, but we will never work love out, we all want a  
someone to wake up the chemicals in our body... But why is love  
so hard to find and keep?  
– Why is it so hard to forget and easy to lose?  
– My new love, ask me for the feelings I never gave you before

## Magdalena Czumak

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – RANSOM ROAD

### Czemu, Miłość?

(Polska Wersja – Angielski oryginał)

To ja, idę, sama  
Nie pytaj mnie o miłość, którą już kiedyś ci dałam, mój  
ukochany

Miłość, co to jest miłość?  
Czemu miłość jest taka trudna?  
Czemu miłość jest taka smutna?  
Czemu miłość jest taka piękna?

Co to jest miłość?  
Czy to tylko chemikalia produkowane przez nasze ciało?  
Czy miłość od pierwszego wejścia istnieje?  
A może to nasz mózg płata nam figle.

Miłość jest piękna, ale nigdy jej nie rozpracujemy, wszyscy  
chcemy kogoś, kto obudzi te chemikalia w naszym ciele... –Ale  
czemu miłość jest taka trudna do znalezienia I zachowania?  
– Czemu jest taka trudna do zapomnienia I łatwa do stracenia?  
– Mój nowy ukochany... pytaj mnie o te uczucia których ci  
jeszcze nigdy nie dałam.

## Megan Sefton

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S ACADEMY

### The Better Wedding

The lonely young groom is sitting on the step,  
Crying 'cause the bride hasn't turned up yet.  
First comes anger,  
Then comes regret,  
Then comes vodka to help forget.

He wakes in the morning with the best man in his bed,  
A churning in his stomach and a pounding in his head.  
First comes confusion,  
Then comes delight,  
Then comes the wedding that turns out right.



# Nidaa Raoof

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – GREENWOOD ROAD

## The Hurst, Shropshire

Wonderful! Staggering! Tranquil!  
I'm in love with everything about this place!  
Why is it so wonderful?

It's beautiful.  
The nature surrounding the Hurst is amazing in every way  
possible.  
The trees perimeter us like tall looming guards.  
I feel safe here!  
The flowers, they're still, yet calm.  
The glistening sunlight shining above us, taking the darkness  
away from our lives.  
So, what makes it so staggering?

The big field areas & farms in the distance make me feel happy.  
I've never been anywhere like here.  
The people are amazing.  
Everyone here is my family.  
I love them no matter what.  
They help me, care for me, make me laugh, smile.  
I love them all so much.  
And why is it so tranquil?

The city can be busy, smelly & dirty.  
Here it's the opposite – it's perfect  
Its countryside area makes me feel as if everything I've ever  
done has paid off, & this is what I finally deserve.  
A holiday destination like paradise.  
It's as quiet and calm as night, when daylight is asleep.  
When everyone & everything rests from all things.  
It's almost as if I'm dreaming just by standing beside the Hurst.  
I love it here!

## Sara Rabhe

THE NOTTINGHAM EMMANUEL SCHOOL

### Now

The sudden need to remember  
to video tape it all  
to store each moment, each face  
and each landscape forever  
to keep the memory safe  
the experience new and fresh  
the powerful urge to see it all  
to witness the big, but also the small  
all things that go unnoticed  
to share with others, to discover  
there's so little time  
but so much to do  
step by step to be accomplished  
the glow of waking up each morning  
to jump out and be happy  
happy to have witnessed yesterday  
and be able to witness today  
you may have heard this before, but it's as true as the quote;  
the past is the past, but not forgotten  
the future is to come, to be awaited  
but now is a gift and that's why it's called the present

## Sonia Riasat

NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY – GREENWOOD ROAD

### Eden

A wreath of leaves adorns their head. Hair flows like a waterfall,  
crashing at their shoulders.

Dragging corpses that fell victim to monotone hearts and  
autocorrected emotions behind them; they make them pure  
again.

Hollow eyes. Different shades of Mother Nature running through  
each other.

Silhouettes of starved love echo through them; neglect streaming  
through the veins.

Life flows everywhere through them.

Survival strengthening them.

Memories, from children to dead bodies, are told on every scar  
on their bodies.

Death screams up their lungs; but silence is all that's heard.

No one listens to the birdsong.

# William Edwards

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S ACADEMY

## Rose of Love

Some say that love is like a rose.  
I, for one can relate to such words.

Within a garden of flowers, all thriving with beauty,  
You always find one that stands out to you.  
Some may be brightly coloured, humorous, or rich,  
But none of them would be as special as my rose.

Her long brown hair would sway in the breeze,  
Like the petals that would dance in spirals.  
Her hazel brown eyes glowed with passion,  
Just like the brightening joy a rose would offer.

The sweet smell of a rose,  
As sweet as her voice.  
How her soft hands would take mine,  
And say, 'Today, tomorrow, and forever'.

I saw beauty within the head of my rose,  
But yet, I was unaware of what was below.  
Sharp, and painful thorns,  
That would surely leave a mark.

And just like all flowers,  
Her love for me weltered and died.  
Though I fought hard to keep it alive,  
She had no intention of coming back.

Time after time I kept fighting, hoping my efforts would work,  
Until I stopped hurting myself, and finally let go of her.  
Soon after, the scars healed, where a rose once lay,  
And though my worries have faded, my hands are now empty.

But maybe one day, I'll find a majestic rose that is true to me.  
One that will stray from hurting me. One who's love will never  
wilt.

## Final Word

We asked everyone on the residential to come up with one word to describe their experience at Avon, here's what they came up with and their names;

Josh Chapman (Dabulous!)

Adam Lawrence (Fly)

William Smith (Willsterific!)

Destiny Hall (Family)

Jessé April (Fantabulous)

Sonia Riasat (Dab-tacular!)

Cam Askhem (Dank-Steve!)

Sara Rabhe (Radical)

Nidaa Raoof (Inspiring)

Kaylee Hempenshall (Dab-tastic!)

Jasmine White (Life-Changing)

Chloe Beet (Dab-iful!)

Megan Sefton (Unique)

Magdalena Gzumak (Unreal)

Charlotte Brown (Extraordinary)

**Totleigh Barton**

## Dan Powell

### Totleigh Barton Kenopsia<sup>1</sup>

Clouds empty the sky of blue, bring uniform grey,  
make presence an absence.

No voices now,  
savage, legit, ohmygawwwd all gone.

Even the quiet is emptied of the silent thoughts,  
the leaps of imagination that preceded such writing.

Rooms bear only faintest echoes.  
Faded-out conversations tremble in the empty dining room.  
The hollowed barn is haunted by whispers,  
the once vibration of ukulele strings. The shallow ceilinged  
kitchen,  
once sardined with limbs and lungs and fizzy brains, now a  
space to stretch in,  
a page to fill.

Stairs no longer creak with trainers, sneakers, flip-flops,  
slippers; no longer thump with thick soled stomp filled  
boots.

Timbers and windows shiver only with the faintest haunting  
now, thatched roof is no longer raised with the life of us.

But,  
we came, we saw, we wrote.

We were here, ohmygawwwd, we were here.

<sup>1</sup> Kenopsia; (n) the eerie, forlorn atmosphere of a place that's usually bustling with people, but is now abandoned and quiet.

## Aaliyah Pool

FULHAM CROSS GIRLS' SCHOOL

### Last Night

Last night I felt something a breath blowing at my ear, the dripping sound of the sink. I wake up, and nothing is there besides a girl across the room with blonde hair, bright blue eyes looking straight at me. Wearing a white dress, rocking in a rocking chair. I try going back to bed reciting Surah Fatiah repeatedly, once reciting six times. I look back the girl is no longer there. I hear a scream from the next room, It's my sister. I rush to the room seeing her lying on the floor with a knife that seemed to be forced into her heart. I pull it out before calling the ambulance but when they arrived it was too late.

That was the last I saw of my sister.

## Argtim Ibisi

SKINNERS ACADEMY

### Untitled

They sit together on a sofa. One they'd found outside earlier. Their hands and feet are still and resting.

Mannequins would make better company. They watch TV, moving images,

They're avoiding the other as much as they can.

The light is on, the blinds, closed

The breathing is steady,

But there are more sighs and yawns than words.

So many years of acknowledgement don't seem apparent. Like strangers from opposite corners of the universe with nothing in common,

Not anymore.

'Sorry,' says one.

The other one can't reply.

# Austeja Meskauskaite

GEORGE GREEN'S SCHOOL

## See

You see

What you see might not always be what others see

Let's take a bee; you may see it as that annoying bug you want to get rid of, yet another person may see the same little bee as a precious life.

That bit of food you just threw in the trash was just excess of what you had, but may have been a meal to a person who wasn't as lucky.

The shirt you just threw away may be in better state than the best clothes another person owns.

You see

Even as you say the sound C some may think of it simply being a letter, some may understand it as the concept of sight, some may think of sea, depths and widths it goes to.

You see

Every person limits their imagination and thoughts to a different level.

You see

Some people do not see beyond their nose, some are happy for smallest things they receive.

You see

The leftovers you threw away, someone may be thanking God for them.

You see

The bees you hate, they work hard every day, they keep the flowers alive, they make honey for us, one who cherishes them thinks beyond what can be seen.

You see

Those clothes in worse state than your thrown away shirt, the person who owns them may cherish them more than any designer clothes.

You see

The way you see things in life depends on what you allow yourself to see.

You see

The tiniest thing you view as nothing may be everything to someone else, so take a step back. Look at everything you have and be happy, let yourself be content with the things you have as you can't have better, or more, if you don't cherish what you own.

Give yourself a pat on the shoulder,

Tell yourself you're doing good, smile and just keep swimming.

## Bilal Mahmood

WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

### Thank You

As I dress I gaze out of the garden window. The neighbours slowly swaying to the rumble of an unfamiliar beat as the dog barks in it kennel. I close the curtains. I pick up my ivory toned long dress and slip it on, the silky cotton gently embracing my skin. I snap open my bottle of perfume and spray it around my body, the faint smell of last night's curry quickly transforming into the elegant scent of lavender handpicked from the Middle East. I then glide down the stairs and pull on my socks. My white trainers rest in the safe corner of the porch, away from the elements and numerous insects. I tie my laces, making sure to carefully tie the knots properly, or my mum would not let me leave the house before giving me a stern lecture on why it hurts when you trip over your laces.

As I venture to the mosque, five streets up, I notice a figure standing on the pavement. Bags packed with items hidden between the blue and black plastic. I travel closer and I recognise the figure is more masculine than feminine, his moustache covers his lips. His facial hair has grown out of proportion like that of weeds among crops. He wears a pair of black boots which looks like he carries and heaves rather than walks in. As I pass him he opens his mouth and asks me for some loose change, his accent seeming to be me more British than I expected. I reach into the right pocket of my dress and feel a handful of coins. I hand them to him. Followed by a pleasant smile. As I look back I can see that he is murmuring something that looks like a thank you.

## Brendan Croft

WAPPING HIGH SCHOOL

### Mephobia

I'm so awesome you can't handle it. I'm so awesome you  
could die  
I'm so awesome I got voted prom queen. I'm so awesome I  
don't have split ends. I'm so awesome I have wifi  
I'm so awesome Shakespeare's my dad. I'm so awesome my  
bladder is strong  
I'm so awesome because I have ten fingers and toes



## Caitlin Campbell

THE OXFORD ACADEMY

### Darkness

The darkness is a mystery, it's what fills our heads with horrid creatures. We are truly afraid of the things we don't understand, whether it's the darkness that comes at night or the wars that plague our lands. It is a common fear that never seems to go away, our minds will dance and create shadows of things that are not really there. Sometimes it feels like a prison, one we cannot escape and sometimes it frees us from the light which misleads us.

## Casey San-Tully

SAINT GABRIEL'S COLLEGE

### Uncle Bilal

Uncle Bilal preaches the word of Allah and how logic and science proves his existence. His words lull me away like lapping waves into a subconscious state. In this vast expanse of imagination I am omnipresent in the universe. Omnipresent, everywhere; imagine that. In the sky, in the water, in the earth. In every nook and cranny, every crack and crevice. Omni present, yet I shy from presenting myself. Invisible and all seeing like an impossible game of hide and seek. Omni potent, all powerful, capable of anything and everything. The world is literally whatever I make it. All powerful and impartial. I don't really interfere these days. Don't stick your nose where it isn't needed right. Easier to sit back and relax. Last couple thousand years I've been leaving them to their own devices. Not really a problem in my eyes might just be getting a little too old for this now. Billions upon billions of years do that to you... see, hypothetically I've been here since the beginning of the universe and possibly before that. I think I've earned the right to hang up the gloves. Now I sit and watch this reality—show myself? I think not... you see it's fun to test their patience. Wear their faith thin. Tell them I love them and split them up. Give them different identities of myself, give them conflict, hate and confusion to feed on. Give them disease, disability, misfortune and a handful of foolish megalomaniacs to ensure the most powerful countries are kakistocratic. Trump wants to build a wall lol. England's leaving the EU, top banter.

One of my viruses is making Brazilian kids retarded rahhh that's a madting still. This shit never gets old...

## Eliezer Akawako

SAINT GABRIEL'S COLLEGE

### Eliezer

Ebay charger, my name has become one, always seems to make to you broken. Long as I remember I had to constantly repeat my name

In instants I would avoid the name swap, rather be the mysterious guy then repeat myself. Exit to the next room without a problem

Zartan doesn't have this problem and his name is Zartan. Even my own family have got my name wrong, mum?!?!

Really? If you forget my name read my the first letter of each sentences

## Fatima Ahmed

WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

### Hatred

Hatred is every human's weakness. It's what separates the good from the bad. It's a crime that every moulded clay of a human being can commit. It's sad, it's sad that the four letter word 'hate' can define a person or how they feel about another. If you ask me, the word is just a monstrosity of letters.

## Nancy Uyiekpen

ABBAY MANOR COLLEGE

### World

A place full of love. A place full of hatred  
A place with lots of challenges  
A place where there is no mercy  
A place where people betray you for nothing  
A place where strange things happen everyday. A place where  
tomorrow is not guaranteed  
A place where we wish to end and start afresh. A place where  
talent is never enough  
A place where making a good name is the best thing to achieve.  
Can we make this place a better place?

## Saamia Mukhtar

SKINNERS ACADEMY

### The Elephant in the Room

A beautiful African sunrise, the entire spectrum of autumn colours spread across the clear skies. But that's not what woke the elephants.

There was a lion mother sleeping with her three cubs nearby, safeguarding them from the unpredictable surroundings. She woke up. She eyed the innocent herd of elephants.

But that's not what woke the elephants.

A classic desert styled truck pulled up nearby and three middle aged men emerged from the side doors.

That's what woke the elephants, but not what took them.

The three men walked to the back of the truck and pulled out a large bag of what seemed like weapons.

That's what made the elephants run.

## Sava Karim

FULHAM CROSS GIRLS' SCHOOL

### I was Wearing them the Day I Ran for the Bus

It wasn't an unusual occasion as I do this very often you see. But I will never forget that day...

As I walked to the bus stop proud of those pink, grey and navy polka dot converses on my feet I took a look behind me I saw the bus I needed to get to go to Westfield. I looked back ahead and I saw my friend. She was giving me the look I was dreading, the look that says 'You'd better run for that bus or I swear I will kill you.' So I pick up the pace faster and faster, faster and faster.

Until...

Tragedy strikes and I trip on my laces. Then I'm flying.

Then I'm not, I'm faced down on the floor. I make a list in my head:

Bus: Gone

Friend: Laughing her head off. Phone: Cracked

But my shoes: Utter perfection

# Shakila Akhtar

GEORGE GREEN'S SCHOOL

## KEYS

My fingers have a mind of their own. Every time I dare approach those dreaded keys my fingertips would twitch instinctively. The piano keys were my father, home late after a long day of work. My nervous fingers were my mother, missing her weekly book club so she could be home for my father. Her movements filled with trepidation – absolutely repelled of the piano keys. That's how bad I was.

My piano teacher was a Bob Seger fan. He also liked a bit of Oasis and Kansas. (Not in that order.) Maroon 5 every second Sunday, the Sunday in which he doesn't go to church. (Adam Levine shows too much skin boy!) James Bay was strictly for Bank Holiday Mondays. Coldplay was reserved for every second Sunday, the Sunday on which he does go to church. All this made our piano lessons very confusing.

I remember our first lesson, eight months or so ago. It was right after I had started to become sick. Sometimes he'd joke about how far I had come. No. It was an actual joke. Eight months of weekly piano lessons and I still couldn't play for shit.

He usually put me out of my misery after hearing he attempt to play for seven-eight minutes or so. In our last few lessons he would take pity and take over as soon as my mother had left the room. No words were exchanged as we swapped seats. His face wrinkles visibly relaxed as he sat in his rightful place. He wasn't perfect. The rough edges at the right times combined with his

eyes which were scrunched up like balls of paper, reminded me of eating toast with honey and sugar on Pancake Day when I was a kid. It was magnificent.

I remember our last lesson. He made a remark about my hairline receding faster than him. His head cocked to one side, the hint of a smirk playing on the corners of his lips, eyes crinkling at the edges. I burst into tears. He looked alarmed then hastily apologised. I wasn't crying because of his twisted sense of humour. God no. He's made worse cancer jokes. He started to play the piano.

## Shakira Irfan

WEMBLEY HIGH TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

### Brautu

Brautu is a man in his mid-twenties. He is a tattoo artist and plays the parts of giver and receiver. He is of white skin with embellished tapestry on every visible space. Brautu is in his green eyes and in the way he shaves his hair yearly for charity. His patience and forgiveness is the old bark on trees we carve initials on. Brautu stems from the way he thinks and feels, in the way his dinner is always a vegetarian option from that Japanese restaurant. It is the way he'd run with six dogs in the pouring rain. Brautu is a man in his mid-twenties and Brautu is too far away.

## Daniel Akerele

KING SOLOMON ACADEMY

### For the Slanting Ceiling in the Kitchen

For the slanting ceiling in the kitchen, that failed its mission to give me a concussion.

For the barn outside that didn't kill any birds this week. For the pod for being one of a kind.

For Aaliyah, who taught me how to play 'Mary had a little lamb' on the piano. I'll say the name right just this once, Seychelles not Seashells.

For Aurora, who somehow inspired us to write music. It's nice having a proper Italian when we play mafia.

For Austea who never got upset when we said her name wrong. I hope I actually said it right this time.

For Caitlyn who didn't mind when we woke her up to the song 'more than a woman' and discussions about baked beans. It was cool to have you join the guys for breakfast yesterday.

For Eliza, the female one, who has sadly left us. Thank you for organizing this wonderful week.

For Emily, who is probably the nicest person here and who introduced me to some of the best music I've listened to.

For Fatima, who still never told us to stop calling her a goat, and her motivation to take the throne from Eliezer. I admire that.

For Jasmine, who gave me the courage to write poetry for the first time. I like your Santa socks.

For Louise, who has the best hair I've ever seen on any woman.  
For Nancy, who had one conversation with me and understood.

For Pat, who let us use her kitchen and trusted us to not burn it down.

For Saamia, who is the only one I haven't really spoken too. I hope we spend more time together.

For Sava, who's always the first to get killed by the mafia. Your converses are lovely and you are just an amazing person all around, like the really best ever.

For Shakira, who has the most genuine smile I've ever seen, and shared part of her life without even needing to.

For Shakila, who stopped me from being bored on the coach, who seems to only know one funny joke.

For Steph, Stephanie of Corridor, Steph the Oz, Stepharoonie, who also isn't here tonight, we missed your excitement.

For Argtim, who is the best mafia player I know.

For Uncle Bilal, who taught me so much about the Qur'an and its relationship with science.

For Brendan, who had the courage to wear a dress and make up to perform for us. I admire that.

For Casey, who knows good music and has absolutely no shame. I also admire that.

For Dan, who helped me to tick off the one thing I wrote on the posters in the barn and just because we have the same name. I think.

For Elizer, who taught me to play the ukulele. Kind of anyway.

For Jay, who gave the guys fifteen extra minutes after 10:30 the first night.

For Arvon and Totleigh Barton who are untouched by WIFI and good signal

