

# **WORD WARRIORS OF THE NORTH**

## **2010, INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CAMP – CREATIVE WRITERS**

under the direction of Charlotte Helgeson  
& Kathy Coudle-King

## Self-Selected Work by Camp Participants



**Kaylee** - I love to write. I've been writing since I was about eight years old, and I love it. I live in North Dakota, with my parents, one brother, and a dog named Kirby. I think my experience at IMC has changed how I write. I enjoy writing fiction, plays, and poetry. When I'm not writing, I'm on the computer, reading, drawing, or just hanging around.

### "Clock"

The hands of my  
Grandfather tell me  
two things, sometimes  
loud and sometimes quietly.  
The gears turn  
mysteriously...  
brain-washing my mind.  
Joy come when the day is new, but is  
sorrowful when the day is done.

### "Elevator Friends" (Part II)

Sam: (enters elevator and walks to push in her floor number) Finally, an elevator ride by myself.

Shay: (enters elevator and goes and stands close to Sam) Hey, how's it going. I'm Shay, what's your name?

Sam: (heavy sigh) I'm Sam, and you don't seem to believe in 'personal space' do you?

Shay: Personal space? Hmm...What's that? Anyways, what floor are you going too? I'm going to the very top floor, oh wait, I think you are too. This is so cool! Want to play an elevator game?

Sam: (groans) No. I just want to stand here and wait until I get to my floor and never see you again. If you do that for me, we can go out for ice cream after wards. Got it?

Shay: (nods stupidly)

*(a few floors pass and the elevator stops)*

Sam: What was that?

Shay: I believe the elevator broke down, just a guess.

Sam: (glares at Shay) I know THAT! But why did it break down?! Don't they know there's people in here?

Shay: (quiet for a moment then speaks up) Are you sure you don't want to play a game now?

Sam: (turns to face Shay) I am one hundred percent positive, I do NOT want to play a game!!!

Shay: Oh come on, don't be such a sour bum, play a game. I'll start. Tag, you're it!

Sam: (slumps in a corner and groans)

Shay: That's not how you play, you're supposed to tag me back!

Sam: (looks at Shay) I already told you, I don't want to play tag!

Shay: Ok, fine we won't play tag. How about 'I Spy' or 'Duck Duck Goose' or 'Hide and Seek' or-

Sam: Just be useful and press that button that says 'Call' on it, okay?

Shay: (nods and presses button) Anything to help a friend!

Sam: (groans some more and hits head on the back wall of elevator)

Shay: (goes over to Sam worriedly) Are you okay? Here let me see.

Sam: You're a doctor?

Shay: (smiles brightly) No, but I played one TV once.

Sam: (groans some more and hits head again)

*(The elevator starts to move down slowly)*

Sam: Why is the elevator moving down?! I want to go up! Not down! Did the people ever learn there directions in school? Up is up, down is down!

Shay: I think the elevator is mad at you for not playing a game with me.

Sam: (looks at ceiling) Why does this always happen to me? Why? WHY THE CRAZY ONES?!

Shay: (tears in her eyes) I'm a really nice person, you know! I didn't hurt you, you hurt yourself...and me!

*(elevator door opens)*

Shay: (runs out of the elevator, starting to cry now)

Sam: (stands up and brushes legs off) Thank you kind sirs, but which way to the stairs?

Engineer: (points to his left) Why was that girl crying?

Sam: She's just some person who wouldn't leave me alone, and started crying when I started yelling at the ceiling. (goes of to the stairs only to find Shay crying outside Sam's door) Shay? Why are you sitting outside my door? And how'd you know it was my door?

Shay: (looks up at Sam) It smelt mean so I knew it was yours.

Sam: (is quiet for a moment and bounces on her heels) How about we go get that ice cream I promised you? I'll pay, just no games please.

Shay: (stands up and sniffles) Double chocolate with sprinkles?

Sam: (smiles) Yeah sure. You know, you are you only person to ever talk to me inside an elevator, I guess I was just confused or something. Forgive me?

Shay: (nods and holds out hand) Friends?

Sam: (nods and takes hand) Friends!  
*(They take the stairs.)*

*LIGHTS. The End.*



**Margalit** - I have been writing poetry since age seven. Most of my inspiration comes from nature, though many of my pieces are strongly inspired by events in my life. I love philosophy, literature, art and music. Passion blooms from this inspiration.

### **"Human"**

I sit on my couch in the basement living room. We have company over-- someone's birthday. I play with the tan suede covering the furniture, rubbing it the wrong way to draw pictures. I feel a familiar twinge in my stomach. I focus on not allowing it to distort my smile. I turn to the person next to me for conversation, though I am anything but interested. I need a distraction, a sanctuary. I need to get away. My chest is heavy, my smile heavier. Somewhere on the outside, gifts are being opened. Sitting on my couch, in my living room, in my home, I am gone. I don't feel the twinge of warning, or the movement of my face as it goes blank. I don't see the people or feel the tan suede. I don't feel. Candles are blown out. My eyes open, my mouth responding to questions and my body moving, I am unconscious. A photograph is taken with my corpse.

### **"Fool"**

Puppet strings weave the spider's web  
 Seduce and contain me  
 Bind my wings with this subtle force  
 Keep me placid with your venom  
 and drink my smile  
 Where could I hide from so many eyes?

**Andrea** lives in Manitoba. She plays trombone, piano and can sing. She is 14 years old and enjoys writing fiction. Andrea is currently working on creating a novel or cartoon series. When not writing, she is drawing, hanging out with friends, watching cartoon shows, practicing instruments or participating in extra curricular activities such as Drama and Judo.

### **Senryu: Judo**

I know martial arts  
I could pin you in one throw  
So don't mess with me

### **"whistling grass" by Andrea Baldwin**

I am a blade of whistling grass that wishes to become a great singer in the wind. I flow with the wind, waiting for the wind to make me sing beautifully for the other blades of whistling grass. We are all potential musicians.

### **Clock**

The clock is patient.  
But time is non-existent.  
To defy time is forbidden.  
What is forbidden is ancient myth.  
From roman numerals  
To digital pixels.  
The clock stays stable,  
forever constant.  
Never change the unchangeable.

### **The White Rabbit**

The forbidden labyrinth was exactly where I did not want to be. I always thought the gardeners might just arrive around the corner to capture me. Well, it isn't frightening or anything, in fact it was a peaceful flowery hedge labyrinth. The scent of flowers of all kinds whipped through my small

nose like darts. I could only hear the sound of the soft wind and the ridiculous twittering arguments between the swallows. I hopped quietly through the labyrinth until I got to the garden. It always had carrots, cabbages and radishes. To taunt a rabbit with the fresh smell of garden vegetables is completely rude. Humans should know we just can not resist these delicious delicacies. I could no longer resist the challenging temptation. I swiftly hopped over to the radishes and started to nibble on one of the leaves. The delicacy of radish of course is nothing compared to the delectable taste of carrots. But, the gardeners must know this, so I avoided detection by nibbling on a vegetable not AS delectable as the carrot. Rabbits have always been the geniuses of the rodent family. I believe I must be the most sophisticated one of all. My nibbling came to a short stop when I heard the sound of crumpling leaves. My heart told me to hope its not one of the gardeners... but my head told me I'd better hop, skip and leap out of there. I slowly opened my mouth to reveal my glorious big teeth, I reached to nibble on the most spectacular radish, but I was faced with a problem. Four gardeners leapt out behind the grass hedge and encircled me so I could not escape. The gardeners looked like hillbillies in my perspective, their names even sounded like hillbilly names: Billy, Billy-Bob, Billy-Joe, and Billy-Ray. "Gotcha White rabbit!" Billy-Bob said while holding me by the ears. "Wow! we'll have rabbit tonight! WHITE rabbit!" said Billy-Joe with a very excited look to his face. "It bein' white has nothin' to do with it tastin' any

better. Am I right Billy-Ray?" Asked Billy. "Right, right," said Billy-Ray. I was surrounded by four ridiculous gardeners. I was in no position to be cooked improperly by these hobos let alone be picked up by the ears by their filthy hands. I lift my back paws and quickly clawed Billy-Bob's hands. "OW! It scratched me!" yelled Billy-Bob. I leapt away as fast as I could. I felt relieved to keep my life. But, I had just realized, I had but won my life back and lost my pride. I am now a humiliation of the rabbit kind, I was supposed to be the best rabbit. Oh, the humiliation obliterates me.



**Taylor** - I am 17 and beginning grade 12 in the fall. I started writing fiction and poetry when i was in grade 7. Since then I have written many stories, none of which are published, unfortunately. I am from Virden Manitoba. Like the upper Midwest, Manitoba can get cold, but unlike some people, i like the winters because it means I get to go snowboarding. This is one activity I do besides creating stories. My family consists of my parents and my younger sister. I enjoy going on family vacations, mainly Disney World, with them. I value my family and friends very much, spending time with

them is very important to me. Most of the time they are the inspiration for new ideas.

### **"Dream" by Taylor**

Shining against the vast clear sky, the yellow globe has risen, bold and proud. It's never-ending rays dance across the meadow. Dew shimmers off the petals, creating rainbows within the moisture. Lavender and Honeysuckle diffuse in the air. A solitary breeze sends shivers between the steady stems. Innocent simplicity settles upon the silence. A bell-like laughter disturbs the scene as a girl with curly blonde hair rushes through the meadow. The petals fragile hold is broken and delicately drift downward. A heartwarming smile adorns her face. The soft white dress swishes around her knees, obvious among the set. Playful and content she is at ease. A single piece of cotton

floats through the air, unique and alone. It wanders, pondering the world. Sliding by the girl it catches her attention, her laughter sings, extending her arm her petite hand reaches for the cotton. Escaping the grasp it sails away, pondering.



**Ashley**

### **"Untitled" by Ashley**

We all know that dogs are angels. They do amazing things like save people from burning buildings, help blind people "see" and other amazing things. But they also do something even more extraordinary, they love unconditionally. A dog will love you no matter what, and they ask so little in return. A hug and maybe a walk or two and you've paid them in full for their heart.

But how often do you see people return the favor? How often do people risk their lives to save a dog, a dog they don't even know? Would you throw yourself in front of a car, killing yourself, to save your puppy? Probably not.

Although a few weeks ago I saw proof that when those dogs are barking, and loving you with their entire heart that sometimes people are listening, understanding.

I was standing outside the local grocery store. I live in a small town in farming country so the streets are very empty. Our main street is the highway ,actually. But I was standing out of the grocery store, leaning up against a weather beaten lamppost that was well rusted. I think it was at one point green, maybe. The letters of the store now read nothing more than "S ORE". Seems fitting I thought; this town is full of poverty and uncaring people. As if he were reading my thoughts a homeless man carrying a small dog walked up to me and asked for some money. He was vile, smelling awful, like the boys' locker room and garbage. He wasn't much cleaner looking, with a long shaggy grey beard and tattered filth covered clothing. He had bits of food and leaves embedded in his beard. I wrinkled my nose at him and told him that I didn't have any money to give.

He persisted though, begging for just a few dollars to get some food from the grocery store. Exasperated I dug into my back pocket and produced two wrinkled and torn dollar bills with bits of lint attached. The man seemed so happy that I helped him out, and I have to admit, it felt kinda good. He hurried into the store to spend the money. I just continued my leaning. Why is it that when Moms say they just need to pick up a jug of milk they take half an hour and come out with enough food to last us for a year? Then the old man came out of the store. He was holding a small can which he then popped open.

Eww! I thought, no wonder this man smells, whatever substance he's eating reeks! I then noticed he put the can on the ground next to his small dog who started to eat it hungrily. I asked him why he didn't buy any food for himself, wasn't he hungry? The man nodded and said that yes, he was hungry; he hadn't eaten a full meal in days, but that his dog was hungry, too, and he had to "help the ones who can't help themselves." He smiled at me and picked up his dog who had just finished scarfing down the contents of the dog food. He asked if I wanted the change. I feebly shook my head and he turned away smiling.

"Wait!" I called after him. I invited him to lunch. My treat.



**Cimarron Shae** - while not living in her own world, is a writer. Most people enjoy her words; some do not – thankfully, she doesn't care about those people. When she isn't writing, Cimarron enjoys old films, animals, and naps. She is a freshman at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN. She has every intention of majoring in Creative Writing ... but

that doesn't mean she will. When asked what she wants to do with her life, she replied, "Make it mine."

### **"Fool"**

Fawning, pawing, seeking attention.

"Love me , if just for a second

I don't care if you forget my name"

Sights set, dead ahead

A swarm of killer bees

Little baby bees without stingers.

"Save me" he says, too courteous to swat them away

And then she walks in.

Necks snap for heads turning so fast.

The queen bee is here

Dismissing the fools from her court.

## "Train Station Romance" by Cimie

Time: late night/early morning

Setting: Metro station [Washington DC]

Woman is standing alone on dark platform, waiting patiently for next train. man approaches wearily and stands next to her. she does not acknowledge his presence. he looks over at her curiously, and realizes she has an extraordinary face. a few moment of awkward silence pass before he makes up his mind to break the ice.

MAN: Hello.

WOMAN: Oh, hello

MAN: Is the train running late?

WOMAN: (*shrugs*)

MAN: How long have you been here?

WOMAN: Half an hour, maybe?

MAN: It shouldn't be long now, then.

WOMAN: No, I suppose not.

They fall back into awkward silence. he fidgets, paces, whatever. A voice comes on over the loudspeaker. Voice can be real {3<sup>rd</sup> actor} or actors can react negatively to imaginary announcement: "The East Bound Train to \_\_\_\_\_ will be delayed due to debris on the tracks."

WOMAN: Oh.....

MAN: I guess we'll be here for a while.

She walks over to nearest bench, and sits down slowly, shaking her head. He follows her, and takes a seat across from her. They sit in silence for a beat.

MAN: (*extends hand*) I'm \_\_\_\_\_.

WOMAN: (*smiles, and takes his hand*) \_\_\_\_\_. Nice to meet you.

MAN: (*leans toward her*) So, what's a girl like *you* doing in a place like *this*?

WOMAN: I **was** on my way home.

MAN: Funny. I was on my way out.  
(*motions to a pile of baggage across the platform*)

WOMAN: I see. Going on vacation, I suppose.

MAN: (*stops smiling, and leans back in his seat*) No.

WOMAN: Oh.  
(*awkward silence. this time, he is still, and she is fidgety. time elapses...*)

MAN: I just left. I'm not going anywhere. But, I'm *here*. And *you're* here.

WOMAN: Unfortunately. I'd like to go home.

MAN: Unfortunately? (*leans in toward her*) Why do you say that?  
! CUE THE\*\*\* **intense** eye contact\*\*\*!

WOMAN: I...um... it's late.

MAN: It is. And it's dark.

WOMAN: It is.  
(*awkward silence!*)

MAN: You're beautiful.

She looks down at her clasped hands in her lap. He takes her face in his hand and lifts her chin so her eyes meet his.

Man: Here's lookin' at you kid.

*(smiles weakly )*

Casablanca. 1942. Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman. 3 Academy Awards –  
*(cups her face in both hands, and kisses her)*

After kiss ends, she sits dumbly until she realizes what just happened. She stands up, takes her purse, and begins to walk away. she turns around to face him.

WOMAN: You think you can just kiss me like that? We just met...underground....at three in the morning! Look at you... you must think you can have any woman you want, huh? Well, you know what, you're attractive, but you **cannot** do that!

He stands up, and grabs her arm, pulling her to his chest, she fights him, but he is holding her so tightly, she has no choice but to give in.

WOMAN: You need to apologize.

MAN: I have no reason to be sorry.

WOMAN: You...you... -

MAN: I.....?

WOMAN: *(pensively)* You're a stranger.

MAN: *(takes her hand in his and brings it to his lips)*  
I was.

WOMAN: I don't know you.

MAN: You could.

She pulls away from him, and stands awkwardly before him. he stands dejectedly, and begins to fidget as they fall; into another uncomfortable silence.

LIGHTS. THE END.



**Nathan**– 17. Every and any day: Ben & Jerry's, blue, Holden Caulfield.

Never: minivans, Stouffer's Vegetable Lasagna, physics.

### "Untitled"

Smack. Swash. Gulp.  
Sewage chortles down your esophagus  
in the rot of city day.

The clouds salivate  
gnawing at your fete  
sloshing baskets and blankets.

Marshes mucked  
Carcasses of coral  
sledges of sludge kelp  
pelicans basted in tar  
the Gulf gulps, chokes, and drowns  
Thank you, BP

"Or Case #147" by Nathan Curry

Fat jowl.  
corrugated thigh  
convex head  
dripping semiotic fluid  
an overtly portly boy born  
September 24, 1997 5:53 AM  
incisors to that-  
splice the maternal chord  
or just become the navel pit.

**Peter** - This is my fifth year at IMC. I turned 17 on the first day of Creative Writing Camp, June 27th, 2010. I live in Northwood where a tornado struck in 2007. My home was not damaged, but my school was completely gone. For that year I attended school in Hatton, ND. When I am not writing, my interests include helping my dad plant wheat on our family farm. I also am really interested in using various forms of technology, such as digital cameras, and analog cameras, and am slowly being converted into a Mac user, much to my surprise. I like to write scifi, horror and use fiction and screenplay formats to tell my stories. I'm a friendly guy, so if you see me be sure to say hello!

### **"Dimensions in IMC" by Peter**

I open a door.

It is a gateway to another world in the Peace Gardens.

I am standing in a room at the Burdick Auditorium.

It is to the bomb shelter.

Instead of going into the bomb shelter, I am being taken up a stairway to . . .

HEAVEN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

"I'll climb the stairway to heaven, cause heaven is where you are. "

I am climbing up the stairs; it seems like i'm climbing up a tunnel that goes upwards.

Suddenly I find myself in a huge shopping mall. There are hallways that take you everywhere plus three floors.

I walk around and finally discover that I made my way to the Mall of America.

I shop around for three hours until after buying a few DVD's at BN, I see another door that looks like the door to Howard Hall.

I open it and enter. I find myself in Howard Hall again.

The hall is empty and I can hear an LP player play the Radio edit of The Pet

Shop Boys song called "It's alright. "

"Dictation forces in Afghanistan, Revolution in South Africa taking a Stand, People in Eurasia on the brink of oppression. I hope it's going to be alright. I hope the music plays forever."

Suddenly, I see people dancing.

"All I need to do is find myself a brand new lover" plays on my I-pod.

I dance with everyone in the room.

### **"Keyboards of the Night" by Peter**

RADIO GUY (V.O.)

Now in this brand new show, we will be playing all of the british pop hits from the 1980's. For those techno people You get to be on our radio show as our callers. You even get a copy of our lousy trivia game. You are not all complete losers. You guys rock. because you all Dance to disco when you don't like rock.

Me

I'm sitting here listening to The Pet Shop Boys. Their Roland Juno keyboards speak "Every time I see you, no matter what we do. " sings Neil, "Every time, I hear your heart beat next to me. I'm in love with you, I mean what I say, I'm in love you and you don't know what it means to be with you. "

I really like that song. It reminds me of 1988. My favorite album they have is actually from 1987. Just listening to the synthesizers and the keyboards playing along with the Roland TR-90 drum machine that old Shep Pettibone uses. I listen to Howard Jones's song "Conditioning". It is a popular song from 1983.

My favorite song by Howard Jones is "Like to Get to Know You" from the movie *Better Off Dead*, you know, with Johnny.

"Four weeks, Twenty papers that's two dollars plus the tip. "

"Gee, Johnney, I don't have a dime."

"I didn't ask for a dime. Two dollars. "

Now I am listening to the remix of "Like to get to know you" from The 12"album. The CD was released in 1988. Originally it came out in 1984 on LP and cassette.

I love the remix of it:

"Don't want to talk about the weather, don't want to talk about the music, just wanna get to know you inside. "

Again they use drum machines. Well I have to go before they bust me for playing my music too loud.



**Donovan, 17, Bruxelles, MB**

### **"Song of Donovan"**

curtain fabric wearing thin  
from clenching hands that draw them in  
that tremble and shake

keeping flowers fading fast  
in window boxes boarded past  
the iris wake

weeping widows seed your eyes  
with focus to the ashen skies  
the embers of sun

losing out to losing ways  
the drapery falls to threads and frays  
now time has one

## Haikus

In the shadow's hand  
 Fallen leaves in silent frost  
 Sleep in winters grey

Dust covered suns blink  
 Flaxen stocks bow to their death  
 Harvest widows weep

### "Harvest" by Donavan Jonk

the breed beckons  
 like reapers in earth-stained robes  
 buzzards; clipping at the wings  
 thieves; pillaging the home  
 weaving their own string of life  
 under the cover of ash and dust that blinds the eye of god  
 who only spits and cowers  
 spits and cowers  
 moistening the sod

and the seeds of hate respond

settling  
 shifting  
 silent  
 embedding into the heart  
 into the blackish mud  
 as the planters await the calm  
 then emerge

now light adsorbs the earth

growth ensues, violently  
 the flock returns to find  
 wriggling vines  
 triumphantly in deep sundered lines

the grimly birds crack their teeth,  
hissing devilish winds  
one-thousand crooked necks that sing

"wrap the sun and moon in flesh; feed them to the hound"  
"fix a lightbulb in their place; never make a sound"  
never

and oh the vines or wrath respond!

the sour arms that climb evermore  
clawing at the heavens, past the reach of flight  
guided by the doctored light  
through the dust and vale of lore

to the godhead  
the hunched creator  
and tugging at his beard  
the plants sewed his chin to the very earth  
to the sickly masses near

\* \* \*

god sealed his mouth; men ceased to speak  
god cuffed his ears; men ceased to hear  
dropped to his knees; their legs fell weak

closing his eyes; they disappear



**Gregor** – 15, Fargo, ND.

**“Heartland/Heart” by Gregor Horvath**

When you're alone the world's dark,  
Your heart becomes a stone,  
You fall against the cold; hard ground,  
But on one's care is shown,  
The world seems cruel and unjust,  
No pity from above,  
But then that golden spark appears,  
Their hands outstretched in love,  
Then suddenly you're not alone,  
Their hand against your heart,  
You fall back to the hardened ground,  
But here's the happy part,  
With hand outstretched they pick you up,  
No longer do you hurt,  
You walk away with hands entwined,  
Forever heart and heart

**"We." by Gregor**

What a strange word for me.

We.

It seems like it's only ever been 'I' but now it's 'we'.

They say that I'm alone when I'm talking to him.

We.

But it's plain as day that they're lying.

We.

He follows me, always with me, no matter what.

We.

Right over there, ten feet to my left and two feet forward.

We.

I know the distance because he told me.

We.

The others keep saying that I'm alone, they joke and say that I need help.

We.

It's just one of those games though, like I used to play when I was younger.

We.

Where I pretend that I can't see one of my friends and everyone else joins in.

We.

Then I laugh along with the others, and I think how much fun it is to have friends.

We.

But it isn't funny anymore.

We.

It's a joke that's gone on far too long.

We.

It's just annoying now.

We.

I know that they can see him.

We.

They just pretend not to.

We.

I'm sure they'll get it eventually.

We.

For now, though, it's just you and me.

We.



**Josephine "Fino" – 14, Minot, ND**

**"Elevator happenings, Part I"**

Max: 4th floor please

Iggy: Okay, 6th floor, got it

Max: Hey! I said the 4th floor.

Iggy: Oh oops sorry. 7th floor got it

Max: (getting mad) Please, just hit the 4th floor button

Iggy: Okay, 20th floor, got it. Going up!

Max: (losing her cool) Are you an idiot? Can you read?

Iggy: (still calm) You should calm down.

Max: You should stuff it.

Iggy: What's your name?

Max: Why?

Iggy: I'm just curious

Max: (calming down a little) Max

Iggy: Do you like pie?

Max: (looking at him weird) I guess...

Iggy: Moo

Max: Are you okay?

Iggy: (jumps up and down) I love cake!

Max: (tries to push a button)

Iggy: (screams) DON'T TOUCH THE BUTTONS!

Max: (backs up to opposite wall) Okay...

Iggy: I like chocolate

Max: Me too...(looks at what floor their at) Finally, only 4 floors left

Iggy: Stop the elevator? Okay (pushes the stop button)

Max: (spasing out) Don't push that button! Help somebody! HELP!!

Iggy: (singing) Help I need somebody Help not just anybody Help

Max: What is wrong with you?!?!

Iggy: Nothing...

Max: Do you now how to work this elevator?

Iggy: No...By the way the building is closing for the weekend, I have to ask you to leave.

Max: What?!?! For the weekend?!?! Are you serious??

Iggy: Yes, and by the way (pulls sign off of Max's back) This elevator is out of order. Moo. (climbs through hatch at top)

LIGHTS.

THE END.



**Annie** is a 15 year old from Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. She attended her first week of Creative Writing camp at IMC this year and learned so much about writing that she won't ever be able to stop. She loves to read and write, exploring everything from poetry to playwriting.

### **“What did you dream?”**

I walked through the young forest, padding across the mossy floor. The filtered green light illuminated the small leafy undergrowth. I made my way between the widely spaced trees, following the natural avenue. A large mossy mound regurgitated its soggy interior over my foot. I continued exploring, walking over a decaying log covered in lichen, ducked under low hanging branches. Eventually, I end up in a damp, grassy clearing, closed in by scraggy bushes. As I stopped to take in the beauty of the moment, I noticed the tiny body of a bird, lying spread eagle, on the ground. The yellow of its belly and the underside of its wings poked through the dull grey feathers on top. It looked so gentle, in death, so calm and peaceful. The bleakness of its death became part of the circle of life, part of new beginnings. Became a part of dreaming.

### **Writing**

Like a river it runs,  
like wind it blows,  
ebb and flow of imagination  
coming from within

like a river it runs  
endlessly through the miles  
coming from a common root  
never truly the same

like wind it blows  
rushing through trees  
past every soul it travels  
though touches only one

ebb and flow of imagination  
endless deluge of thought  
first creation of the one  
to final destruction of the other

coming from within  
the element of thought  
always belonging  
yet never truly caught

**LeAndra (Latin, like a lioness)** - I live in my hometown minot, north dakota. I hate the city, but no where else would feel like home. I am a product of the nineties. I aspire to do something great with my life. i enjoy poetry and poetic prose. It's what I do, mostly. I was never really good with goodbyes. Enjoy.

### **"Untitled 2"**

Your words, from a valley deep within your heart, climbing the steady slope of your esophagus, to reach the top of your mouth, then breathed out into the world like a lone red kite.

### **"Untitled 3"**

This red ribbon, thread bare and faded, tied around my open heart. Not my actual thump thump beating heart, but one of a deeper meaning. Patiently waiting for the one with the scissors.

**"Untitled" by LeAndra**

If the city is for strangers like the sky is for stars,  
what does that make my hometown?  
I know I hate this place, but no where else would feel like home.  
These are my roots, the things I'm used to.

It's comforting knowing that each year the jocks will try to put on a new  
show,  
and the girls skirts will go up in an inch more.

But I know in life there's new places I wanna go.  
Certain things I want to venture,  
new things to try.

But I'll have to wait for the passing of time.  
I'm only fifteen after all.  
But till the days of suits and skirts,  
I plan to enjoy my youth.  
Not just certain things, but all of it:  
the broken hearts,  
the bad hair days,  
falling in love,  
and each change.

I know every single choice will affect my future  
and each small change will make a difference.  
I may be ambitious,  
but I will just have to wait.

But for right now,  
I'm only this age once.  
So I'll live it to the fullest.  
Build who I am and want to be,  
and prepare myself for what's coming next.



**Madeline Elizabeth**, - I live on a farm in North Dakota with my two brothers and dad. I like playing with my dog, writing fiction, feeding calves, swimming, playing soccer, playing basketball with my oldest brother, and playing piano. If you like vampire books then I suggest *The Chronicals of Vladimir Tod 1-4* its really good. I like reading books over and over again like *The Outsiders*. We read it in English, and I liked it so much that I bought it myself and re-read it.

### **A Tanka – “Untitled”**

Animals are born

time passes and they grow up

moms are protective

humans are the same way but

not so cuddly and fuzzy

**Molly** - Minot, North Dakota. I love music. I love to do whatever it is I want to do. My friends are some of my favorite people and I will defend them no matter what. I love coloring books, and crayons. I hate writing bios, so now I'm done. Peace, love, penguins!

### **"Mommy, why is the sky crying?"**

When we are little we live in a fantasy world  
 we think the earth shakes because  
 everyone jumped at the same time.  
 We think the chocolate milk comes from brown cows  
 and strawberry from pink.  
 We think there's a pot of gold at  
 the end of each rainbows with a leprechaun waiting there.  
 Me, I always wondered why the sky was crying.  
 Did some one break its heart? Why does it scream so loud  
 it goes boom and shake the house.  
 The sky's tears are washing over the ground.  
 Drowning the bugs. There families washing away.  
 I hope the sky stops crying soon.  
 I don't like the seeing it so sad.

### **"Love"**

What a strange word, use to be so powerful.  
 Now said to much. Now has no meaning.  
 no one ever means it. It's just said.  
 Love use to be the thing only a special someone said to you.  
 Now we have chubby little kids saying it about ice cream.  
 What does the word love really mean?  
 Love should be the tingly feeling  
 you get when you think of someone, knowing  
 they feel the same way or when you  
 just can't stop smiling, and there's no one around.  
 The feeling when you stare into the stars knowing  
 there's a person out there staring the same way,  
 thinking about you. The word love should  
 not be said by some little fat kid with a heart disease  
 eating apple pie. Don't just say it, mean it.

**Afton** was born in Portland, OR, experienced childhood in Rugby, ND and attended Wachter Middle School and Bismarck High School in Bismarck, ND. She love sci-fi, fantasy, Super Smash Bros., and the Poke'mon series. Her plans for the future are vague and abstract at best. When not writing, Afton enjoys gaming, walking, and having deep conversations with her friends. She thanks her father for never failing to tell a bedtime story, and her mother for support, and long, helpful talks.

### "We"

Your solemnsparklingwitty eyes p

e

e

r into my shiningdarkbrooding eyes.

With thatsimplelook, I fall through back all our days.

SUNSHINEraindancingGAMEStears&tag.

Then BACK f l u n g into ThisMoment.

When we are here together simply.



**Carly, 15,**

**"Untitled" by Carly**

A place back when  
you and i had each other  
a time  
i could count on you  
A world does surround us  
and you said you would fight  
You said you had wanted me  
You had said you were here just for me  
So what?  
What are you waiting for?  
What do you want from me?  
We both know what we want,  
Don't go  
Don't let me be hurt  
Don't go,  
Just don't say goodbye.

"



**Nick** – was born January 8th, 1992 and has been writing since 2003. He graduated from Magic City Campus in Minot, ND with a 4.0 GPA and shared valedictorian honors. He has \$13,000 in scholarship money to go to North Dakota State University and plans to pursue a degree in either Statistics or Chemistry.

### Novel Excerpt

"I'm glad you came, Sakuya."

I didn't say anything, I just looked into my lap. The carpet was a dreary bluish grey color, and wouldn't absorb a fall more than a blanket on concrete. A picture on the door featured a sailboat, with "Don't wait for your ship to come in, swim out to it." typed underneath. I had rolled my eyes as soon as I saw it. The walls were painted cream, the dim light illuminating pictures of the counselor; either by herself, with her family, or with an important school official.

"Some of your teachers are worried about you. Why haven't you been talking in class? How come you aren't often seen with anyone else? Are you sad? Depressed?"

Of course it would be about this. What else did I expect this meeting to be about? I shouldn't have even come in the first place.

"Are they really worried about me?" I slowly raised my head, and stared the female counselor right in the eyes.

"What?" she said, almost in disbelief.

"If they are concerned, why did they have you talk to me? Why didn't one of them pull me aside after class one day to talk?"

"Sakuya-" she tried to cut in, exasperated.

"It's because they don't care. They try to, but they just can't manage. They have so many students to worry about, tons of papers to grade, so little time, why bother with the personal problems of one? It doesn't affect them. No, they make these fleeting observations, convince themselves that something is wrong, than burden me to you like baggage."

She gave me a cold condescending stare, but I didn't break my eyeline with her. "Sakuya, I wish you would stop being so cynical and let me try to help you-"

"Help? Who says I need help? Just because society says I should be chatty and social in school, and I'm not, means I have problems? I don't fit the book, so now I need to be fixed because I'm not working properly?" One would think my voice would rise during this, but it stayed perfectly calm as I defended myself, showing just how much control I had over myself.

"Have I done anything wrong? Have I started any fights, or misbehaved?"

The counselor shook her head, her cold stare gone, replaced by sad eyes.

"My grades are alright, aren't they? Clearly, I don't need to talk to pay attention and do the work."

Again, she shook her head, this time a bit slower.

"And yet there's still a problem with me?"

She hung her head, avoiding my stare as she shook her head no one last time. "No, you're absolutely right. I'm sorry. We shouldn't have judged you like that."

I stood up. "Then I suppose we're done here."

"Yes, I guess we are. Thank you for coming." She fell back into her seat, weary and defeated. I stayed for a couple moments, watching as she sat in her chair, a look of deep contemplation on her face. Then I left, glad to have gotten that over with.

A few days later I heard that she had quit her job, and my respect rose for her. Not everyone can admit they help a person to feel better about themselves, rather than from an actual concern and obligation for that someone.

## Chapter 4

It was quite the winter day. I was shivering, even though it was a short walk from the car to the school doors. The wind was howling, blowing snow snakes across the ground. Along with my backpack, I had a few heavy textbooks in my arms.

I quickened my pace; I really wanted to get inside the warm school. In my haste, I forgot about the patches of ice that covered the sidewalk, and I couldn't see them with the blowing snow. I stepped on one, and went flying into the air banana peel style, my books flying into the surrounding white. I landed hard on top of my backpack, which luckily softened my landing a little but also sent a jolting pain through my back. I heard the muffled thump of my books landing in the snow.

For about a minute, I lied there in exasperation and pain, oblivious to the snow and wind surrounding me. "Why? Why did I fall? Why did that have to happen?"

"Let me help you up."

I painfully lifted my head up to see who the unknown voice belonged to. There stood a moderately tall boy, with dirty blonde hair that stopped just above his eyes. With a smile, He extended a gloved hand to mine.

At that moment, a sense of wonderment overcame me, as if I had just stumbled across a city of gold. Reluctantly, I grabbed his hand and stood up.

"Here are your books." He handed them to me.

Any words I wanted to say at that moment were stuck in my throat, so I just nodded and forced a small smile.

"I hope you're okay, that looked like a pretty bad fall."

The smile on my face grew slightly, and suddenly the words came. "Why are you so nice?"

"I-" The question was unexpected. "It's the right thing to do. If you see someone on the ground, you help them up. It would've been rude if I just would've walked by."

With those words of his, I felt a flash of light inside me, piercing my black heart for a moment.

"Why? Did I do something wrong?"

I shook my head. "No, it's just-I really don't like people. And I'm surprised that someone could be so kind to me."

Whereas any other person would probably take offense to those words and become hostile, the boy simply held his smile and said "Why do you hate people?"

He must've read my mind; he knew that I simply didn't dislike people, I hated them. With a passion."

"I don't think it's the best time to talk about it."

He nodded. "I understand. Maybe we could discuss it sometime. By the way, my name is Toby."

"Mine is Sakuya."

"Sakuya? That's a pretty name."

And with that final comment, my smile turned into a beam. "Thank you." And we walked towards the school together.

-----

It's odd, how Toby became the only friend to me through such a simple act of kindness, just helping me off the ground. Yet, those were some of the darkest times in my life, and what would be a flicker to someone else was a blinding flash to me. He was a person I'd talk to, someone I could confess in. While everyone else would ignore me, Toby would give me a smile to treasure.

We talked several times after that in private, over many things. He was a very tolerant and patient person, who didn't become annoyed with my outlandish beliefs. He was the one who most likely kept me here, before I found another way to leave.



**Kaitlin** - I'm from Winnipeg, Manitoba (which is in Canada, by the way) and I live there with my mom, dad, and sister. I am 17 and going into my final year of high school in the fall. I've always been a fan of reading and writing, especially fiction and short stories, but started writing more on my own in grade 8. Some of my other main hobbies are curling, piano and dance, which I have taken for 15 years.

### "Petit Soeur" by Kaitlin

A devilish grin appears  
on the face of an  
"innocent" child  
Her green eyes glowing  
with excitement.  
How will she make me  
lose my mind today?

'Fool around,  
never give her a break'  
she thinks  
grabbing my leg  
so I can't get away  
like a small child  
Acts like she's four  
rather than fourteen

But I love her anyways  
how can I not?  
Even if her temper is short,  
I am still shorter  
And even with all the bad,  
the good still trumps all

Sister, a blister  
on my foot or my hand  
Maybe things would be easier  
without her, but who knows  
how different my life would be?  
Besides, I would miss her too much.  
Love you Ally  
Ma petit soeur . . . My little sister.



**Courtlyn – 15,**

**“Bench Buddies” by Courtlyn**

Setting

Two guys sitting on a bus bench waiting for the bus.

Characters

Charles-A business man, not really affectionate, doesn't like to be touched, uptight

Willy-A touchy feely person, likes to get in your face, laid back

Charles is sitting on the bench. [Willy shows up and sits really close to Charles.

Willy: Hi! (Waves)

Charles: Hi... (Scoots away from Willy)

Willy: How's it going? (Scoots closer)

Charles: I was doing okay... (Scoots away)

Willy: I'm doing great! (Scoots closer)

Charles: That's good for you...

Willy: I know! So how is your day so far? (Gets into Charles' face)

Charles: Well, it was terrible, but it just got worse. (Leans away)

Willy: That's too bad... Want to talk about it? (Leans in closer)

Charles: Not really. (Leans farther back)

Willy: Come on! Talk to me! I won't judge!

Charles: Really, I don't want to talk.

Willy: No wonder you don't want to talk about it! You're all hunched backward silly! (Grabs Charles by the arm and pulls him upright)

Charles: That wasn't the reason I don't want to talk about it. (Willy pets Charles' hair)

Willy: But it's always better to talk about it. (Gets in Charles' face again)

Charles: Really, I don't want to talk about it.

Willy: Come on! Tell Ol' Willy your problems.

Charles: (Sigh) Fine.... (Takes a deep breath) First I found out i have a very contagious skin disease that only needs a few inches from person to person to give it to them. Then I find out my very garlic-y pizza (Willy smells Charles' mouth) had old pepperoni so I may puke at any minute. Also my water tank is broken, so i haven't been able to take a shower in three days! (Willy smells Charles) So that my friend is why I'm having a bad day.

Willy: (Scoots away) Oh, well, I see.

Charles: (Smiles proudly)

[Sitting in awkward silence until the bus comes. Charles stands up]

Charles: (Turns around) Aren't you coming?

Willy: I'd rather walk. (Gets up and walks away.)

LIGHTS.

THE END.



Laura – Kulum, ND

### **“Toilet Seats & Chewing Gum”**

Snapping his gun, leaving the milk out, leaving the toilet seat open. Don't the small things a person does...all the time make you feel as if you may...well, go insane? Or when he doesn't compliment you after you've spent two hours getting ready to go out to a supper you had to force to him to with you. So, you get to the restaurant but you can't possibly have a nice time because you know he didn't really want to come. In fact, you're pretty sure he doesn't want to be with you at all. Doesn't that make you want to well...kill a person?

Joe and I first met each other our senior year of college. We had been dating for about three months when Joe asked me to marry him. Back then, I thought it was cute...the way he proposed. He was so scared. He stuttered and mixed his sentences around. Looking back on it now, I don't think it was really cute at all. He's always nervous about something, it's annoying. He has this soft voice...I've never heard him speak up. I don't know if I would have said “yes” except that well...he was rich. When his

mom died in an car accident, he inherited everything. He was an only child, his dad left when he was very young he had told me.

We got married and about six months into the relationship, things started going from ok to bad and then worse and worse. Joe has so many bad qualities. He chewed loudly, never complimented me, never stood up for me. He's a mouse. Small and quiet and when he does make a sound-it's a timid "squeak"

But the worst thing was his lack of cleanliness. I try to keep the house as clean as humanly possible. The counters and sink literally sparkle when I'm done with them. I clean a lot, I stay home in order to clean. Obviously, this is very important to me. Joe doesn't care. He doesn't care about my feeling. He comes home from work, sits down in his easy chair with a bag of chips and the newspaper. I have specific spots where everything goes. Joe does not respect that. He leaves the newspaper on the floor along with the bag of chips, finished or not. I told him to pick up his messes , to stop chewing so loudly, to close the toilet seat every once in a while. But he didn't try, he didn't try at all.

Eventually, Joe took longer and longer to get home. He said he was busy at work. I don't understand why he didn't want to be with me. I was trying to make this relationship work, all he did was run away like a little child. The last days of our life together, he slept on the couch...of course

when I woke up, he was gone to work, the couch littered with his leftover junk.

How could you blame me? How could anyone stand that? Really, I'm surprised that the relationship lasted as long as it did. I saw the mess surrounding the couch...and finally, I had had it. I waited for him to come home...1:30 a.m.

"Oh, Hi...uh, what are you doing awake?" he said timidly

"Waiting for you."

"...why?"

"We should talk."

"Why now?"

"Why don't you care about me?"

"I do..."

"Then why don't you ever try to work on anything I tell you too?!"

Raising his voice, Joe said, "Why don't you ever stop telling me what to do?"

"If you fixed yourself, I wouldn't have too!"

"Fix myself?! I'm not a broken toy, I'm a person!" he yelled

Yelled. Joe has never yelled at me, and I don't react well when somebody is yelling at me. I was done with this. I walked to the garage where Joe kept the emergency gun. I took one glance at his face before I shot, eyes wide open, a confused and shocked expression. I smiled and then...

Joe was gone. The toilet seat is always closed now.

## OUR BAND

*It would be impossible to spend a week at IMC without being influenced by all the great music being made around us. So, in an effort not to be left out of the band, we created our own written version. Students were asked to personify an instrument. Because the instructors don't believe in restricting where an idea goes, some writers improvised on the assignment. Like a fine piece of jazz, that was just fine. Here are their compositions:*

### **"Guess what I am!" by Kaylee**

My voice is high and squeaky  
I'm very tall and skinny

My favorite color is black, no doubt  
With my lucky silver bracelet.

Even though I am quite boyish,  
I tend to wear a dress all the time.

I wear silver bracelets and earrings,  
And there's buttons up and down my dress

My light brown hair is usually wet  
And a head band keeps it in place

My worst fear  
is embarrassing myself in public

I'm always second to come out  
whenever we are in line

I love attention but  
people give me bad reputations

Oh look, it's show time,  
See you later!

*(Big Hint: I'm a Clarinet!)*

### **"Tuba" by Margalit**

Though her voice is distinct, one must listen to truly hear her. Her voice is throaty, smooth, and resonant, as she is trained in opera. Her sturdy build is hereditary, and her light brown hair is cut at the jawline. She adores the color red--passionate, vibrant, and piercing. She harbors a strong love of family--hers can be traced back to the mid-1800's (Some of her ancestors even served in the Civil War!). She loves jazz, ragtime, and big band music, as well as orchestral pieces. She is quite popular in the gentlemen's community, and is said to have played everyone from David Cribb to Øystein Baadsvik!

### **"Lucifer the Flute" by Andrea**

I tweet, I twitter,  
 I sing a sweet tune.  
 I find that people adore my song.  
 But,  
 My player for life  
 gave me a rather rude name.  
 My name, is Lucifer.  
 I think she hates me.  
 She never uses me to practice.  
 Her parents despise my screech.  
 But you know what?  
 I think its pretty.  
 So my knew name,  
 in my own opinion,  
 is Lucy.

### **"New York City, 1943" by Taylor**

It was a dark stormy night; everyone had just finished playing at Carnegie Hal and had agreed to meet for a drink down at the bar. Most of the instruments had made their way down including the widowed clarinet who would currently be gulping back a few shots of cleaner. her one and only love had just passed away in the war. She had been playing a minor tune on her keys for weeks. She never changed her reed and always wore black, things weren't looking up. Tuba the bartender had been the first one there to open up. He was a big Tuba and really shy you would never know that he had a witty sense of humor unless you got to know him If you looked closely you would notice his worrisome movement in clarinets direction, he'd always loved her.

A burst of major chords as loud as the thunder came through the door. Barie Sax walked through surrounded by a collection of flutes who tried to shine their silver coats in the light to impress him. His right hand man, Drummer, followed, always trying to gather some of the attention, by playing random patterns. The flutes would give him a few seconds, but always returned to flaunting over Barie Sax. Following close behind were Trumpet and Oboe. Now here was story to be told. Oboe was a strong headed lady, but was often still gullible and naive. Trumpet was secure and handsome, he wasn't very fond of Alto Sax's gang but hung out with them because Oboe was usually around. Trumpet's unrequited love had never been noticed.

Oboe sarcastically imitated the flutes with high pitches and then wandered over to Clarinet. The two wind instruments were cousins and lately counseling had become a part of the job. The night continued on, Barie stunned the flutes with his flirting antics while Drummer and Trumpet sat side by side discussing the night's performance. Tuba cleaned the cleaner cases, Oboe and Clarinet sat in a corner near the door talking about current problems. However Clarinet's tone was becoming flat and then sharp within a matter of seconds. It almost seemed time to leave.

Suddenly the lights went out when a bolt of lightning struck the town. The flutes squealed high pitches and tuba tried the string breaker. The lights flickered back on and everyone fell silent. In the back corner Clarinet lay on the floor, her keys torn off and perfect frame dismantled. She was beyond repair, dead. So many questions filled the room, no answers in sight. Who had killed Clarinet and... who am I?

### **"The Snare" by Ashley**

Hello my name is Snare, the Snare drum! Being a drum is hard! I mean people think the only way I can talk is by smacking me! It isn't nice crashing heavy sticks against me constantly! I mean I have feelings too! But no, all everyone cares about is the stupid flutes! Or trumpets, those dumb trumpets! Can't even keep up half the time!

I make this band! You'd be nothing with out me! I'm the heartbeat, you can't have life without me! But yet people hit me! They hit me hard and laugh with their friends!

I wish I could be a xylophone, everyone is so gentle with xylophones! They just love how pretty they sound! But nope, I'm a snare!

I guess it isn't all bad, I mean I do get to hang out with some pretty cool people! People who understand what it's like to have their faces smashed over and over with a stick! Like my buddy Bass drum, he's pretty cool!

One day we'll get all those stupid drummers back! We'll take those dumb wooden sticks and snap them in half! That'll teach them! I'm sick of having my poor face bashed in, I mean I was beautiful at one point, but those sticks have certainly done some damage! There are tons of dents and marks from people trying to hit me as hard as possible! You'd scream loud too if people were constantly hurting you!

The humans are always complaining about all the killers and people hurting other people! But do they care about hurting me?! A poor helpless Snare drum!

I just want to be accepted! For people to understand all the hard work I put in! I mean do you think these tight abs are easy?! No! I put in hours at the gym each day! And the percussionists just dismiss it and move on!

Yup, I'm a drum! Being a Snare isn't a great life, but I don't know what else there is! I don't think I could starve myself like a flute anyway! Oh well! I'll just hide their sticks when they least expect it!

### **"The Guitar" by Breanna**

if you know what to do -  
it's easy to figure him out.  
a heartthrob.  
a deep voice -  
he can seduce women like no other.  
a firm body,  
one that begs to be touched.  
popular, with a soft side.  
cocky.  
but a softie.  
a flirt.  
a lover.  
a charmer.

### **"Guess" by Cimie**

Her accent carried her words

Like a staff carries notes

She is tall

slender

& impossibly gorgeous

She glows, silver in the sun

Silver in the moon.

& she feels,

she's so sensitive...so, so sensitive

she sings freely... if you know her intimately enough

### **"Untitled" by Nathan**

Coquettish

black slacked swafting a cig through her nasal lobes

"Merlot. Oui." puckers mademoiselle

whose liaisons vaporate amidst the cabaret

Laissez faire.

"Tres blase." she scuffles.

top-hats extricate their marriages, their vaults, their names-  
quite debonair

-for an evening of chintz swank,

bamboo stir-fry (her lips curls)

and fornication.

Tonight this lanky

Edna St. Vincent Millay and Coco Chanel hybrid-

"Non. Simplement de ne pas bourgeoisie."

-squawks her spectacles

discriminates another pejorative

to claim the Mondrian

at the Galleria;

and another top-hat staggers

and the evening oboe squeals.

**"The Instrument" by Donovan**

She is a wanderer of sorts, swept from the East along the Silk Road,  
collecting dust that smoothes her voice with time. Hums an ancient song  
through the grey woods, sweet and raspy, she is heard. From afar,  
wavering in voice might suggest she falls to anyone's control, but her tongue  
is double edge. Rarely is she mastered, and never what she seems at first.  
She is slender and ornate, placid and intricate, but never demands  
attention; she earns it. The oboe graces the stage, evoking the past from  
the very air surrounding her five-thousand years.

**"Penny Whistle" by Josephine**

I am the penny whistle  
I play the Irish tune

I'm of Irish decent  
I'm a folk tale legend

My daughter  
has taken center stage  
Her daughter's  
standing right behind

I stand straight and tall  
On the sidelines  
I miss center stage

Most have forgotten  
But I still live  
with those who remember

I am the penny whistle  
I play the Irish tune

### **"Band" by Molly**

Embrace your feet and  
take a step.  
I think of you  
with deep brown eyes  
and a beautiful voice  
made by the angles  
with shaggy hair  
and strong legs  
a smile with bright white teeth.  
Playing my sweet melody with an ease  
with a plain white v-neck shirt  
and skinny jeans  
you are my best friend.

### **"Alto Clarinet" by Kaitlin**

You know, I am really tired of being so under appreciated. I mean, even though I am first chair, that doesn't make much of a difference. I'm really good at what I do, and without me, the band just wouldn't be the same. Even still, you'll be lucky if you actually know who in the world I am. I'm completely invisible. No one even knows I exist. I bet even if I made a mistake, no one would notice.

I guess I'm kinda lucky, in a way, because I am super skinny unlike some of the other instruments I know \*coughs tympani coughs\*. I'm not trying to be mean, I'm really not, but I mean come on, even you have to admit that Tympani's a little bit bigger. Even still, she gets way more attention than I do! I guess she is really shiny compared to me, seeing as my 'skin' as it were is kind of dull.

All of my sisters get more attention than me too, all three of them. Soprano isn't even first chair, for gosh sakes! She's only second, yet she still gets more attention than I do. I do realize she's more popular than me, and I'm okay with that, I just... I just wish sometimes someone would at least know my name.

I was at a concert once, where they had some of the 'less known' instruments show themselves off a little bit to see if anyone would be able to guess what we were, and you know what? No one had a clue as to who I was! Not a single soul. They could tell I was in the Clarinet family, I mean,

we all look pretty much the same, Soprano is shorter than me but both Bass and ContraBass are taller. It took practically the whole show for someone to finally guess who I was. Thinking of the words Alto Clarinet shouldn't be that hard people! Seriously, everyone always remembers Alto Saxophone, why can't they simply remember me! It really ISN'T THAT DIFFICULT!

\*squeaks!\*

Sorry about that, I was just using a bit too much air, getting frustrated and all. Maybe I just need to relax a little bit. I mean, there aren't many instruments in my band who are G major instruments. Sure, Alto Saxophone uses the same key as me, but we're actually kind of friends, so it's not that bad. After sitting next to him for such a long time, he's started to grow on me. I know he may sound like he's trying to top everybody, especially in a jazz band, but he really isn't. All he's trying to do is make the music sound good, just like everybody else. So it's really not so bad being me...right? Right. I'm just a diamond in the rough, that's all! A national treasure, just waiting to be discovered.

Thanks for actually listening, whoever you are. I just hope YOU remember my name now that I've talked to you for what seems like forever. \*yawns\* My gosh, I'm getting tired. All of this talking is really tiring me out, trying to stay in tune with a reed isn't easy, you know. I'm going to tell you my name one last time, just to make sure you don't forget, okay? Alto. Clarinet.

So next time you go to a band concert, see if you can find me. I'll be in the second row!

### **"Guess" by Nick**

I'm delicate, fragile, yet powerful,  
 Making my voice heard by all.  
 I can be very picky;  
 It's tough to get my tone right.  
 Hold me gently, don't wobble the bridge,  
 Tune me carefully, for I'm very fussy  
 Your fingers may slide uselessly at first,  
 And I'll screech, but play me right and  
 I become versatile and beautiful.  
 Listen to the rhythm, perform carefully.  
 Keep me looking right, pegs duped,  
 In tune, polished, not left in the cold.  
 I can be beautiful for you,  
 Wooing audiences with you at my side.

### **"Taylor Gibson" by Dallas and Afton**

He sits alone on the picnic table, chestnut locks falling on either side of his face. White teeth barely glimmer out of a small half-smile, as he plucks out soft melodies that float through the air and land among the branches, hanging on longer than expected. He watches the people pass him by with almost-black eyes, nodding at those who know him, and smiling at nearly everyone.

Friends and friends-of-friends stop mid-stride to listen to the sweet tune emitting from the guitar resting across his lap. At first the words slipping from his lips are soft and barely audible, but soon grow stronger and more confident. The crowd grows; all ears eager to hear this song from the quiet boy.

Intense eyes that seem to be far off in another world don't see the throng of people at first, but when the song ends, he finally notices their presence. Hesitant clapping soon turns into a thunderous roar as they all request more.

"That was amazing! I didn't know you could play!" some exclaim. From others still, "Who is that kid?" "That's Taylor Gibson," declares a familiar voice.

The boy looks around and finds the familiar face. A smile tugs at the corners of his lips, pearly teeth just barely peeking out.

The outgoing friend claps his shoulder and announces, ringmaster-style to the crowd, "This is: The One, The Only, Taylor Gibson!" Applause erupts again as shouts of "More! More!" rise from the people.

Taylor rolls his eyes. "C'mon, Leo, you gotta put me on the spot?" Despite his annoyance, the soft smile is back and he says, "Tell `em to be quiet if they want more."

With another showy introduction, Leo hushes the gathered crowd and slowly, gently, Taylor lets a melody drip off the strings and drift on the breeze. Notes tangle on cobwebs, and plop to the ground like fat, heavy raindrops. His mellow voice seamlessly captures the tune as his instrument harmonizes. The audience is clinging to this baritone voice as it melts away and its smooth accompaniment falls soft on the grass.

Meet the other participants who chose not to have work published in this collection but who wrote pages and pages during the camp. We promise.



**Mary Kathryn** - I am 15, i come from Spearfish, South Dakota, in the Black Hills. I am the only South Dakotan here in Creative Writing. I like to write lots of things, although I am not a big fan of essays. I have a novel that i am currently revising. I am also in Band, Choir, Art, Drama and I play piano, guitar, trumpet and sing.



**Dallas** was born and raised in Bismarck, ND attending Simle Middle School and Bismarck High School in Bismarck. She loves fantasy and Shakespeare. In the time that she doesn't write, she enjoys playing guitar, singing, and spending time goofing off with her friends. She thanks her parents for all their support in her crazy and less-than-logical ideas, and her friends for always being there when she needed them the most.

## THE INSTRUCTORS



**Kathy Coudle-King** is a playwright, essayist, and ever hopeful screenwriter. Her plays have been produced across the U.S., and she is the recipient of the Association of Theatre in Higher Education New Play Works Award for her play *Companeras*. Her novel, *Wannabe*, was published in 2000 by Creative Arts Book Co. (Berkeley) and explores growing up in a Cuban-American community in NJ. She teaches in English & Women Studies at UND, and is the director of the UND Summer Moviemaking Camps for Youth and Adults. She holds a B.F.A. from NYU and an M.A. in English from UND. Please visit her at [www.dakotalit.com](http://www.dakotalit.com).



**Charlotte Helgeson** - As the Director of the East Grand Forks Campbell Library, Charlotte D. Helgeson works with the Campbell High School Writers Group. Before choosing Minnesota as a place to work and write, she taught middle and high school English. East Grand Forks is where she gets her mail and works, but when she writes, she moves into the future, remembers the prairie, travels the mystical realms and explores a world between-the-lines.