



The Beach Girl, by Vyshnavi Viju

July 2019 Summer Poems

Worry By Wilson Salazar Jr.

The cold tuesday seeped through
both sides of the tunnel embracing

the dark station in its nocturnal aura. The alabaster tiled walls blackened with rot. the train was not here yet.

there was something here lurking beneath a fog of uncertainty, waiting.

the cold tuesday still shrouded the station with an uneasy fear. I grew sick and watched as demons stood above me, judging whether or not I should flee or stay stuck to my mind. the train still did not come. the floor began to swell and breathe, scheming to eat me whole. I began to vomit nothingness. the fear was real but there was nothing to fear, the pain was real but there was nothing to hurt me. In seconds, a deafening silence filled the station, there was no rot, no demons, no breathing floor. it had only been an hour. the train had arrived.

Wilson is a seventeen-year-old Afro-Latino writer who currently lives in Andover, Massachusetts, but spent most of his life in Lawrence, Massachusetts where he grew up. He just graduated from Andover High. His favorite things are music (mainly hip-hop and 70s funk/soul music), reading and writing poetry, watching movies and playing video games. To others he is fairly quiet and shy— but very warm and welcoming when you get to know him.

swan song By Annie Williams

the day you kiss me is when i sing
the funeral song: goodbye to my mother,
to the lake i almost sank in the summer before,
to the hands i crashed into my wall,
to the sinews and vessels i've known so long.
after this there is no end, because

it's the end itself; a migration of memories,
until i lose my sight or my heart pulses
once too hard, until i veer off the shaking track.
this is me skinning existence until
it loses its meaning—i've learned
how to call myself real, and now that
you've seen me like a skeleton i
take back all of it. there's dust
on my fingers like yours on my body,
and the night collapses in, and with it, me.

Annie Williams is a sixteen-year-old high school junior from Ohio. She likes to read when she's not supposed to, and make Spotify playlists for every occasion.

I Don't Know Where I'm From By Chaeli Campbell

I don't know where I am from
Am I from waking up in the burning morning
and going to sleep in the dead of the night? Or am I from grandma's cooking, whisks
spinning, bowls clanking
In our tiny, warm kitchen
Perhaps I am from those bizarre summer excursions to
The roaring Barbados
The hilly St. Vincent
the aromatic Bahamas
Visiting, spending, making those nutty memories with my fam
As the rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at night
The fresh ocean breeze passes through our windows
And my aunts catch fish while my cousins fall down the stairs

Maybe I am from rich, snarling reggae blasting,” Don’t worry about a thing,
'cause every little thing is going to be all right.”

I’m probably from lofty Saturday road-trips with dad
To wishing, I was an ice cream sundae with a cherry on top daughter

I am from people judging me based on my looks
And me doing the same
I am from trying my best to please others
But they don’t do the same

I know I am from an
accepting community
where I am surrounded
By people like me
With the same dark skin
Making me feel at home
Even with the drama

But yet again
maybe I am from the split families who
Were never one
And you can’t forget about those nights of bawling in bed
Hearing that phone call
you’ve been waiting for only to hear
Why didn’t you call me
you did this
you did that
Why don’t you take the blame dad
every time I walk back into Golden Krust on

E Gun Hill Rd, in Bronx, NY
I hear," Oh you Delroy daughter."
Am I from waking up in the burning morning
And going to sleep in the dead of night?
I don't know where I am from.

(Attributions: Langston Hughes for: The rain plays a little sleep- song on our roof at night.)

Chaeli is thirteen years old and loves hanging out with friends, writing, and spending time with her family. The reason she loves all of these things is that she doesn't have to worry about anything and can just be herself. Writing helps her the most because just getting thoughts out onto the page shows her how much she's grown not only as a writer but as a person in general.

2019 By Annie Ma

I.

The air is dead in the city,
the politicians too.
Teeth click and babble wordlessly
and polished shoes flatten
dry leaves without a single crunch.
Only the silence screams.

The horizon stretches
along a single breath of wind.
A tuneless song chokes, and drowns
in the screeching of rusty gears.
Bloodied fragments of history have
long since faded into the cold.

II.

There is a fracture in the wall
where the universe ends.
A stray bullet. The scientist
discovers the future and returns to
scorched earth.

III.

Eventually, someone will uncover
a stack of glass bodies with dewy skin.
Ghosts sigh across their lips.
Here.

Annie Ma is a rising senior at The Harker School in San Jose, where she is an editor of the school's literary magazine, HELM. Her poetry, prose, and photography have won several Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. She is the founder and president of The Book Bank (www.bookbank.org), a nonprofit organization that serves underprivileged

communities by collecting and distributing free books to K-5 school children. Her favorite author is Jane Austen.

Magpie Mentality By Taylor Washington

there is a wish, call, and ache for something greater than you or i. a desire that seeps
over bones and coats the muscles, calling for more.

a wish for freedom, a call for adventure, and an ache so deep that embodies the forever
pining of human nature.

these are the fundamentals of which i am based from. my form, the cultivation of greedy
magpie feathers kept afloat by the whirlwinds of want.

i see and i want. i hear and i want. i want for wanting's sake. the desire for
something/anything greater that can lead me elsewhere and my pen to form words and
phrases larger than their lowercase prisons.

i nurture myself on a dream and base my ideologies on a blue bird known for its
viciousness. i keep myself locked in a box of hedonism. denying myself nothing, feeling no
shame but preparing for the guilt to come bearing down.

i call it magpie mentality, that wish, call and ache. that strange desire for something
more, for something shiny that i allow to propel myself forward.

this magpie mentality that i hope to lose myself in. shedding my skin and donning blue
and black feathers and a swooping viciousness, building nest from stolen shiny goods in

thorny bushes

this magpie mentality that i hope will allow me to embody my wish, call, and ache and
carry my selfishness as a weapon.

Taylor Washington is a novice writer listening to the same three songs on repeat. When she isn't scribbling down words only to scratch them out later, she's dreaming of a placid life in the middle of the woods. Aside from reading and writing, Taylor is also fond of lower case letters, Twitter and everything superstitious.

Disasters By Greta Starling

The Notre Dame Cathedral burned down. My friend looks bored in his picture with it and I will never be able to take a better one. The Twin Towers exploded before I was born. The Appalachians are shrinking and the ice caps are melting and Everest grows higher and less attainable every day and I want to travel the world but what if, when I'm ready, it's not there anymore?

a fire slowly

swallows my religion while

people are singing

Greta Starling is a teenage writer. She enjoys reading and writing; some of her favorite books are by Adam Silvera and Becky Albertalli. Her favorite poets are William Shakespeare and Natasha Tretheway. Follow her on Instagram at @greta_writes.

Honeyed By Sarah Blair

If my curls could talk, I know they'd say

"I love you Mama"

The night sky knots cover my scalp like a hive,
protecting their queen. My strands criss cross back as
far as my roots: over blood and chains
and homes and frames and seas and my dad:
standing with his hat in hand, rubbing his eyes
saying "How was your day?"

Sarah Blair is a sixteen-year-old aspiring student writer who continues to read, write, and breathe poetry. She resides in Troy, NY where she participates in spoken word slams and open mics.

Little Things By Sarah Posecznik

You like me

You like my purple hair

You like how my head barely bumps your chin

You like when I borrow your shirts

You like how on a hot day I'll peel off my socks and jump in the lake

You like how ticklish my scarred knees are

You like the goldfish-shaped birthmark on my back

You like how my eyelashes brush your cheek
You like the faces I make as I read a book
You like how I avoid the cracks in the sidewalk
You like when I blast the bass in your truck
You like how I grab your hand and don't let go
You like to steal fries from my plate
You like kissing each one of my freckles
You like how I call your name out
You like me

Sarah is a senior at Marcellus High School in central New York. She loves to paint and watch hockey with her grandfather.

Black Coffee & Sunshine By Mallory Schirm

Colors drip off your
fingertips like rain
drips off trees
after the clouds have gone.
Red reminds me of soft
touches and flushed cheeks,
of shared smiles and
quick glances.
Blue reminds me of the
cover of Macbeth,
open to show your
scribbled mess of black underlines
and notes and question marks.
I remember your hand writing steadily

beside me and
the whispered jokes that
float across the couch to me.
Green reminds me of
the hula girl that swayed
on your dashboard as you
took me to the botanical gardens.
Of the dollar bills that spilled
out of your pocket
to pay for books you knew
you'd never read.
Of your favorite shirt.
I remember your fingers running
through your sandy hair while you
drank black
coffee until the sun came up.
It was yellow, the day we decided to end it, the sun
coming in through the windows,
teasing us.

Mallory Schirm is a junior English major at Birmingham-Southern College. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the Southern Academic Review, an editor of the student magazine, and a Writing Center tutor. Although she prefers the literary aspect of the English major, she has just begun to dabble in creative writing.

Not Even the Palm Tree Noticed By Jaewon Chang

my house sat
lost in sight between

the palm trees
planted by mother
in her mid-thirties

I was like my father
venturing to lands without moving a muscle
each page was a new journey
to a strange land

I was sly
wondering
if I was who I am
or if I was who I wanted to be

I was like other boys
trapped in a world
where the sun
like a hummingbird
rises and floats away

I learn the faces of numbers
bodies to explore and tuck
I am an archaeologist
I dig and reason and find
history in whatever the earth
has swallowed

but one day a girl stands outside
of my house a blooming hibiscus
standing in the rain removing glasses
from my eyes

I can still see it
underneath the palm tree
I changed
not even the palm tree noticed

Jaewon Chang is a high school sophomore in the Philippines. He enjoys solving math problems and traveling the city on foot. His lifetime goal is to meet mathematicians and poets.

Water, Smiles By Zoe-Aline Howard

From the top of the lifeguard stand the world is
Pink skies and tan boys, is
Water, smiles.
She sits next to me, my best friend. Sixteen.
Ice cream melts in friendship bracelets
Down our wrists.
“Did you know they say you can see
The Milky Way here? It’s, like, the only place
Left in the country.”
Soft. “Who’s they?”
Beat. “My dad, I guess.”
I wipe my hand on the new sweatshirt.
Sticky. She considers this, watching the boys
Dive into the water a last time.
Dripping. “I wonder why.”
Fragments. “Light pollution.”
We speak in driftwood moments.
They strike empty pits in our stomachs

Like the last texts of the night.
Together. Not so.
Alone. "We have to be back."
Down. "Almost dark anyway."
The ghost crabs scatter at our ankles
In cell phone light.
Tomorrow will be better.
Tomorrow we will see the Milky Way before
Sunrise.

Zoe-Aline Howard is a Kernersville, NC local and early college graduate entering her college years with an Associate of Arts and high, high hopes. Beyond studying forms of poetry and reading fiction, she enjoys creating digital zines. In the fall, she will declare herself a Pre-Creative Writing major at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington and begin her literary journey in full force.

Dream Child By Norah Brady

I dreamt that I must swaddle a baby—
that his head was as fragile as an egg
and inside me was the seed of terror
smothering my heart with the deed of this body
the paperwork all there
that suffocating ownership that he

and I both shared—
mine and his, belonging to no one but each other.

Where was my mother
as I stared into the blank black eyes
of this child
his face too bright
like a pink planet tipped back into the embrace of a star?

Where was my mother
to teach me
how to cradle the yolk inside the skull?
How to live with this new object?

She was scared as well,
I know, alone in her hometown
she burnt my leg on a clothes-iron
and tried to say sorry a thousand different ways.

Just like the bee sting at the bay house
how the smell of palm-tree breeze and linen
carried me through the pain.
And now I forget the exact taste of it in my mouth.

I must now carry this body
through his life,
through his pain
in a dream world where the sky
is crumpled paper and rain and fire
and my child will be buried in snow
before I wake.

Norah Brady is an actor, writer, and space enthusiast living in Boston, Massachusetts with two cats and many, many books. She feels most at home at Latin conventions or walking through the woods, searching for the unknown. Her poetry and short fiction works can be found in Rookie magazine, Write the World's 2017 collection: Young Voices Across the Globe, and the Ekphrastic Review. Her work has also been recognized by the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.
