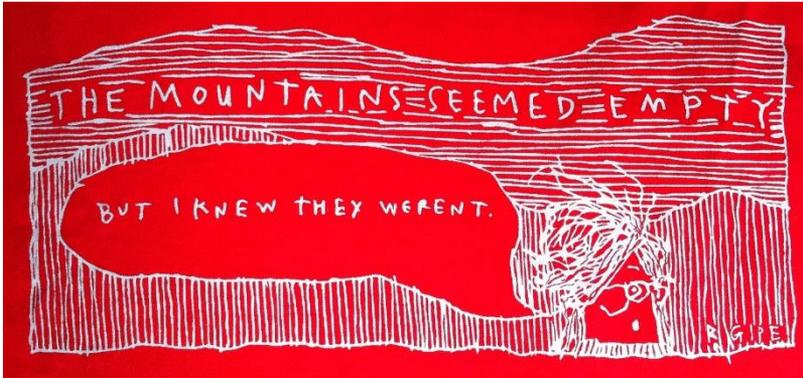


# Appalachian Young Writers' Workshop



2013 Student Anthology

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**Silver Angel**  
**Lakeisha Beverly**

A beautiful soul  
Full of spirit and wild dreams  
With hopes to be fulfilled  
Ambitious and fearless

A daughter, a sister, a friend  
Wore a smile that warmed the coldest of hearts  
Leaving a wake of happiness  
The light in the dark

The night matched the tragedy  
Permanently stamped in our memories  
A daughter, a sister, a friend  
Snatched from this world

A mistake to drive  
The level too high  
Crunched metal left the fragile beauty  
Tainted and lifeless

You should've stayed  
But mistakes happen  
And on that day  
The world lost an angel

Lakeisha recently graduated and is from Tazewell,  
TN.

**Uprooting**  
**Adele Cox**

Nothing in my life changes. The same boot-wearing, dip-spitting boys are always hanging out in the south corner of the Wal-Mart parking lot. Keith Urban and Dierks Bentley blare from the radios of their aged, rusting pick-ups. They lean against their trucks and cuss at families walking by. White-haired women hurry past, clutching their pocketbooks to their chest.

In this pass-through town some are rooted so deep it's nearly impossible to pull free. I see the faintest spark of hope in their eyes. The hope that they could become more than just a bagboy at the local Dollar General. The hope that they may soon break past the barrier of the city limits and explore the world outside.

Regret is already clouding their eyes.

But I lift my feet, one by one, uprooting myself from this place.

Adele is a 12th grader from Galax, VA.

**I Am Me**  
**Joseph Ellison**

I'm from a world we shouldn't know  
A home where it hurt to really show  
No one could see I'd hit so low  
I am me...

I'm from the tears of a broken heart  
Where stories would strike before they start  
Cruelty would pierce like the sharpest dart  
I am me...

I'm from pastures of green  
I'm from life never seen  
I'm from the shadow of the mountains  
But the darkest of shadows,  
Was the one cast over me...

Smoldering sun would burn me away  
Yet here is home, my heart will stay  
Maybe, I will have my day  
I am me...

Joseph recently graduated and is from Harrogate, TN.

## **Bully**

### **Grace Fitzpatrick**

High School. These two simple words mean something different to everyone who hears them. To some, they were the years when they made their best friends, or realized who their true friends were. To others, it was when they found out who they truly were and what they wanted to do with their lives. Some people even look back at High School and consider those the best years of their lives. But, no matter how wonderful those years seemed to you, there will always be a few who look back and feel only misery. Or some who can't look back at all.

In the back of the class room there was a desk. This desk was never once sat in on account of its broken, uncomfortable, and altogether disgusting look. Maybe that's why she was bullied. Her name was Maggie. She had just transferred and was a quiet girl. This made it easy for people to spread the rumors. You see, this school was boring and bland, and lies like this simply spread like wildfire. There were many different "theories" as to why she had moved here. The most popular was that the principal of her old school told her parents that she needed to transfer because of her smell. By the end of her first week, everyone had heard this...including Maggie. Some people would hear this and laugh along with the crowd. Some would get angry and try to get them back or start a

fight. And some...some don't take it well. Maybe it wasn't just because of the bullies. Maybe she had a rough home life. I'll never know. But that weekend she took her own life.

It shouldn't have to be this way. What you say matters. If you wouldn't want it said to you, don't say it to anyone else. Think about what you say, how it affects other people, and what the outcome may be.

Be a friend.

Grace is an 11th grader from Harrogate, TN.

**Mandolin**  
**Brittany Gray**

They stand together as a forest  
Harmonious in their movements.  
As they sway  
And tap their feet  
In the same hypnotic rhythm  
They stand free.  
Different as a birch and a pine  
Picking away at their own strings  
Making their own sound.  
Each one holds the instrument  
close to their bellies  
projecting such beauty  
That you can reach out and grab  
Like an apple on a limb  
That is as ripe as their melodies  
Their notes mesh as branches,  
Creating a separate togetherness.  
A gorgeous masterpiece  
amongst the mountain.

Brittany is a 12th grader from Arjay, KY.

**Scene from The Cost of Faith**  
**Amanda Johnson**

Michael's eyes glanced across the battlefield, watching the bodies of his fellow comrades and enemies fall to the ground. Patches of brown earth were dyed red with blood, almost as if the landscape itself had been wounded. The sun dipped in the sky, casting the day's last streaks of light into his eye. His breath hitching and heart pounding, Michael spotted a soldier twenty yards away. The boy aimed a gun directly between Cassandra's shoulder blades. A grin flashed across the gunman's face. He was no more than a boy himself.

Michael leapt from his place on the battlefield to standing behind Cassandra just before he heard the shot. He yelped and fell backward, knocking Cassandra onto the ground. She jumped up and turned around as quickly as she could only to find Michael sprawled out on the ground, a silent moan crossing his lips as he clutched his chest.

"Michael, what happened? Are you okay?" she asked, bending down to his face. She tilted her head toward his, her long, dark hair acting as a curtain to shelter them from the gory world hidden just beyond her thick curls.

"Yeah," he replied, voice rough against his throat. "Got a bulletproof vest on. Just stung like a bitch."

She exhaled, wiping sweat and dirt off her

forehead. “Do you need a hand then?” She offered hers as she stood.

He took her hand, cursing as he struggled to stand. As he slowly walked back to his position on the battlefield, hand on his chest, he saw Nikki narrow her eyes.

He shook his head, sighing as the memories rushed through his brain like lightning – memories of when they would talk until four in the morning, when they shared a long kiss and an ‘I love you’ every chance they could. Now she only gave stern looks whenever he was near Cassandra. But every once in a while, Nikki allowed him to put his arms around her, and for one single moment, everything would be right again. Until someone interrupted or Nikki pushed him away, and then everything would go back to the way it had been as their relationship slowly started falling apart once more.

Michael thought Nikki knew his romantic relationship with Cassandra was long finished. In fact, he was certain she did when they were home, planning their lives together after high school. In an alternate reality, he and Nikki would be freshmen in college and living together in Florida. Maybe he even would’ve decided to forgo his plan and propose to Nikki early, if only he would’ve stayed quiet. But now, on this battleground, giving their lives to something even they didn’t fully understand, Nikki seemed to rethink the concept.

He blinked a few times in an effort to drown out the thoughts before they became too much of a distraction. Once he focused his eyes, he saw the coward who tried to shoot Cassandra. Drawing his weapon, Michael singled the scope on the guy's chest and fired. The boy dropped to his feet in a heap, his body falling to the ground like dirty laundry.

Michael felt a pang in his chest, but he shook it off. The bastard deserved it anyway.

Hours later, when the sun had long disappeared along the horizon and the group made its way back to camp, Nikki went up to Michael and slapped him hard enough to snap his head to the side.

"Shit, what the hell was that for?" he asked, eyes wide as his hand automatically went to his face.

"For jumping in front of that bullet! Do you realize you could've been killed? And for what, for trying to save your ex-girlfriend!" Nikki shouted, pacing back and forth in front of him as she gripped her hair.

"Would you've rather me let her die, Nikki?" he screamed, voice cracking at the thought.

"I'd rather her die than you; I'd rather anyone die than you," she said, her tone turning to a soft whisper.

"I had a bulletproof vest on; I was fine. Cassandra would've been the one killed if I hadn't taken the bullet," Michael said, a lingering edge to his voice.

"What if he'd aimed higher and shot you in

the head, Michael? It's happened before, and you know that! You saw it yourself! How could you risk your life for her?" Nikki asked, glaring.

"Because I don't like seeing people get killed. That's why."

"You see it every day! We are in a war for God's sake!" she screamed again before taking a long breath and asking, "Are you still in love with her, Michael?"

Michael took a step back, shaking his head back and forth. "Excuse me?"

"You heard me. Do. You. Still. Love. Her?"

"That is the most ridiculous thing I've ever..." Michael started before she cut him off.

"Oh come on, Michael. You talk to her all the time; your eyes light up when you're near her; even when you saved her today, it was like you two were in your own little world. And most of all, you don't act like you love me anymore." Nikki said, tears building in the corners of her hazel eyes.

"You don't act like you love me either," he said, voice softening.

"I'm sorry I made you feel that way. I still love you, even now."

Ignoring her statement, he asked, "So what do we do?"

Nikki shrugged, a tear falling down her cheek. "I guess we say goodbye."

"Hang on, you're breaking up with me?"

"Unless you have a better idea."

Michael wanted to search every crevice of his brain for anything, *anything*, that would fix this. But after a few seconds, he simply said, “I don’t.”

Nikki sighed, nodding, as she kissed his cheek and walked away. Michael turned and went inside the ratty, camouflage green tent. Lying on the faded blue blanket with one of his shirts as a pillow, he fell asleep as a single tear made its way down his cheek.

Amanda is a 12th grader from Sneedville, TN.

**Moonlight Guardian**  
**by Sarah Linville**

I am the pendulum, swinging between divided shelters.  
One retreat offers relaxation, excitement at the other.  
Atop a hill, one sits with pride,  
Surrounded by more like it.  
On a slope rests the northerner,  
Commotion bustling inside.

Both hold love, and caring, and open arms to all.  
Both offer comfort to the less fortunate,  
to the lonely lost who fall.

As night falls upon deaf ears, the moon smiles with  
bright eyes,  
Whilst below its watchful gaze, we sleep contently as we  
lie.

The beds are warm; the storms are cold,  
Though we shall not ever dare complain,  
As our neighbors with their farmland  
are grateful for the rain.

So though we stand divided,  
albeit me, myself, and I,  
Our love shines across the boarders,  
Through the day and through the night.

Sarah is an 11th grader from Cana, VA.

## **A Book**

**Tori Lowrance**

In fifth grade  
I picked up a book  
Not thinking about the future  
Not a spectacular book  
Nor a dreadful book  
A book all the same

In sixth grade  
I checked out a few books  
From my new school  
New names and faces  
But words stayed the same  
Stories for me to fall into

In seventh grade  
I dropped some book  
From the top of a stack  
My friends picked them up  
And offered to help  
So I let them carry one

In eighth grade  
My floors had books  
In every corner  
And every space  
They stayed with me  
When reading was everything

In ninth grade  
A book disappeared  
And I couldn't remember  
The title  
Or the author  
But I read anyway

In tenth grade  
I'll find out the title  
And the author  
And I'll show the books  
To everyone  
Because it was great

Someday  
A book will be picked up  
By a little girl  
Who knows nothing  
Of all of the worlds  
And she will read

**Amnesiac**  
**Kathleen Minor**

The air was ice. It breathed around her ankles. Blood snaked across the floor, down the hall ahead of her, into the blackness beyond.

Away. They were gone.

Keide's hands shook at her sides. She swallowed. Hard. And turned.

Blood. Spattered up the walls, arced across the cold tile floor. She moved forward. A boy was still, lying at the end of the hallway.

*What have they done? What happened? What did they do!?*

The questions ran quick through her body, burning as her feet carried her forward. The boy's breath was hot, rough, shallow in the silence, clouding in the cool moonlight, shining down from the window above.

"What happened?" Keide whispered, hands numb at her sides, "Who are you?"

Clouds gripped the moon as she reached him. She didn't dare crouch down though.

His breath caught, wet in his throat, choking through the pain. One eye opened, scraping up the wall, through the blood, the blackness, to her face. "What have you done?" Barely there in the silence, drowning them both, "What have...you..." And his voice choked off.

The dagger was cold in the silence. Still against the frosted tile of the floor.

*What have you done?*

The question echoed in Keide's mind, beating at her skull, slicing every vein wide open, ripping the nerves up through her skin, cleaving every bit of it to pieces, throwing them at her, one by one, shards stuck fast in her skin. Deep. She took a step back. Swallowed.

*What have you done?*

And an answer came. Cold, callous as the moonlit night slid back down, through the clouds, across the boy's cold, dead body.

Keide looked up, into the night, his blood cracking against her cheeks, gray matter sliding, dropping from her bare hands, into the pool beneath them both, her own footsteps a trail of scarlet death behind her, through the school, screaming at her from the tile. The answer burned in her lungs, venom in the air.

"I *killed* you." Tears ran, fire through the blood on her cheeks.

"I killed my brother."

Kathleen recently graduated and is from Dalton, GA.

**The Walking Girl**  
**Aliyah Omar**

The girl walked  
She walked slowly and purposefully  
Her back was turned  
She didn't look back,  
nor did she want to  
She hated how her story  
always sounded so cliché  
Small town girl.  
Big dreams.  
Eager to get out  
But that's what it was  
The girl walked on and on  
She came to many places  
Big cities with big scenes,  
big lights and people  
with big stories to tell  
The girl walked quickly  
She didn't stop to notice:  
the hurting people  
the crumbling towns or  
the anger that seemed to fill everyone  
Not once did the walking girl look back  
Thoughts of the small town  
(with the closed minded people  
and the hateful hearts)  
were gone

The girl grew sad  
Nothing was like her dreams  
The posters pinned to her  
bedroom walls had lied  
These were not the towns of her dreams  
These towns were falling and heartless  
Unforgiving.  
The girl sat with her head in her hands  
Disappointment in her heart  
The girl had nowhere to go  
Everything was empty

Aliyah is an 11th grader from Middlesboro, KY.

## **Angelica Scott**

A land of brimstone, fire  
with a resounding field of ash,  
Burned.  
Just to find her.

Skies adorned in darkness, black  
And plains with pillars of smoke,  
Held,  
The heroine gone.

Legacy passed from  
father to son,  
mother to daughter,  
Sun to the stars"  
a profound pit of mercy.

History carved on the skin  
of the living  
through an endless war -  
forgotten and scarring.

Iron will and daunting fear,  
wrapped up in a single tear.  
Forgotten and hardened,  
with the thrill of days gone,  
the war wages.

Angelica recently graduated and is from  
Cumberland Gap, TN.

## **Drag Racing**

**Tim Slezak**

I love drag racing. The adrenaline rush I get from getting strapped into a car that's capable of reaching speeds up to 180 mph in a quarter mile stretch. I love starting off with a solid three second burnout to roast my tires. This causes them to get hot, which causes the tires to catch more traction. I love the burning smell of the rubber and the smoke that it brings. So much smoke that it blinds the audiences view of my car.

I love the screaming and yelling that the crowd causes as I pull up to the starting line in my '67 Shelby Mustang Fastback Super Sport. I love knowing that there is another driver on the other side of me, and that the only thing that separates us is a thin, white line.

Here's my moment. No matter how big the crowd is, once I'm at that starting point, it's just me and the finish line. I love the tunnel vision that occurs when I see the bright lights change rapidly from red, orange, and my personal favorite, green. Don't blink. You wouldn't want to miss anything. I love the slight wheelie that happens as soon as I pop the clutch, and the vibrations that quiver through my whole body as I take off.

It's just me.  
Me and that line.  
I love drag racing.

Tim is an 11<sup>th</sup> grader from New Tazewell, TN.

**Pyrite Night**  
**Jordan Taverner**

The first thing he said was  
I like this.  
My shirt.  
Thin rayon of night colored navy  
With entropic orange circles.  
Small, but charged  
With energy among the slumbering deep  
Of collared dusk.  
Studded  
With pointed buttons  
That drip down, down  
Like warm fireflies drifting through summer  
Golden  
Or rather fools' gold,  
A pyrite shirt.  
Or simply soaking up the surroundings  
Of a fools' gold night?

Jordan is an 11<sup>th</sup> grader from Bristol, VA.

**The Water That Was Once Blue Turned Red  
Acacia Tribell**

Sadden me up to feel in the emptiness  
Is the life I want all cold and bare?  
Do I get to feel that peaceful bliss,  
Or is there no one of even care?

People tend to treat me with my disrespect  
The marks from the blade will surely fade  
They don't even notice I want to disconnect  
I was brought here from my choices made

I held it within, broke down, and cried  
Oh inside, I feel as if I've died  
My dream is to not feel dead  
I just wish that I had said  
The water that was once blue turned red

It's now too late, I'm six feet under  
With wounds to be left unhealed and scarred  
Nobody can wake me, not even thunder  
You can now find me beneath my yard

I held it within, broke down, and cried  
Oh inside, I feel as if I've died  
My dream is to not feel dead  
I just wish that I had said  
The water that was once blue turned red

And now not a change was made  
The water is already down the drain  
Not a person does care and I am far away  
I'm emptier than even  
I will be like this forever  
Because

I held it within, broke down, and cried  
Oh inside, I feel as if I've died  
My dream is to not feel dead  
I just wish that I had said  
The water that was once blue turned red

Acacia is a 10th grader from Middlesboro, KY.

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The Appalachian Young Writers' Workshop is a seven-day residential writing workshop providing 10th-12th graders the opportunity to explore the craft of creative writing, learning from the region's foremost poets, fiction writers, playwrights, creative non-fiction writers, and lyric writers.

The AYWW is a collaborative program of Lincoln Memorial University and Humanities Tennessee.

For more information visit

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