

WOODRIDGE  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

# POEMS

2022 Adult Contest Entries



# POEMS

2022 Contest Entries

## WOODRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY POETRY CONTEST

WE ADMIRE THE CREATIVITY OF OUR PATRONS  
AND APPRECIATE THEIR GENEROSITY IN  
SHARING THEIR WRITING TALENT WITH THE  
WOODRIDGE COMMUNITY.

POEMS HAVE BEEN ENTERED IN FOUR AGE  
CATEGORIES, WITH A RIBBON AWARDED FOR  
EACH AGE GROUP, AND AN OVERALL CONTEST  
WINNER SELECTED.

THE RIGHTS TO EACH POEM SHARED HERE REMAIN  
WITH THE AUTHOR AND MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED  
OR COPIED WITHOUT THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION.



# ADULT ENTRIES

## 2022 CONTEST

Fred Bonanno	Angel in Racine
Lynn Panepinto	Behind Closed Doors
Ana Madden	Bye, my Butterfly/Woven Memories
Paul Engel	Empty Swing
Sabrina Kahren	Eternity Sits Sweetly
Patricia Sidlauskas Hiscock	Forever
Fred Bonanno	Funeral for my Past
Syreeta Williams	I want to be a dancer
Delia LaPorta	Life is a Beach
Patricia Sidlauskas Hiscock	My Grandmother
Delia LaPorta	Night
Karen Hurley Kuchar	On the News
Paul Engel	Red Song
Karen Hurley Kuchar	Redbud
Colleen Morgan	Rest
Phyllis Sinclair	Roses do Not Purr
Shannon Huang	Surtr
Syreeta Williams	Tangerine Sun
Angelica Del Pilar	Trials and Joys

# ANGEL IN RACINE

by Fred Bonnano

On a hazy warm midsummer day  
A chance meeting came my way

On a lonely street which bears no name  
Out of nowhere she came

She spoke so softly and so calm  
As she placed her flower pedals in my palm

Why was I the chosen one?  
To meet an angel in Racine

How could she fly with no wings?  
To deliver the message that she brings

My journey from God is still unclear  
But I faithfully go with no fear

She seemed so weary and yet so strong  
But I knew our time would not be long

She gave no name only her mission  
I tried to speak but could only listen

I felt a peace I never felt before  
I felt a connection even more

I close my eyes and look to heaven  
as the clock strikes eleven eleven

I wondered how I fit in this plan  
She said because you understand

Is it real, is it a dream?  
To meet an angel in Racine

When her deep piercing eyes met mine  
I knew I crossed the forbidden line

The heavens seemed much closer that day  
But I knew she could not stay

She was gone as quick as she came  
But her memory will always remain

# Behind Closed Doors

by Lynn Panepinto

No one knows the story of her.  
She stays hidden behind closed doors,  
With shattered dreams and torn hope,  
Leaving her without regard for life.  
Looking out the window she carelessly lifts another bottle to her mouth.  
Silent screams jar her; for a temporal moment she's shaken from within.  
Why...why do I continue this way time and time again?  
The yoke that started off small and light  
Is now overwhelming, heavy, and tight.

No one knows the story of her.  
Why won't she come out from behind closed doors?  
Contemplating the end and how painless it could be.  
Contemplating life and how endless it seems.  
Looking out the window she intentionally lifts another bottle to her mouth.  
Drowning out the silent screams and for a temporal moment she's wrestling within.  
Why...why do I quit and start back over and over again?  
The yoke has grown unmanageable, almost out of control.  
Feeding guilt and shame that now have their own role.

No one knows the story of her.  
Shackled and trapped behind closed doors.  
Wary of getting help, judgement looming up ahead.  
Fearful of staying hidden, ending up dead.  
Looking out the window she removes the bottle from her mouth.  
The silent screams now stop and for a temporal moment she is calm within.  
Why...why do I let this shame tell me to lower my chin?  
The yoke has a power that seems to seep through my pores,  
Time to let it go and come out from behind closed doors.

Surtr  
by Shannon Huang



*for all the hybrids*

“But where are you really from?”

with elevated heart rate & furrowed brow  
your stab at cross-cultural relativism  
will make Lovecraft run for hills  
I as monster & sinew stretch  
& spine uncurling & magma rising  
& fangs baring & claws clenching  
& grasping & reaching forwards blindly—  
blindly to that far lip of the rocky spur &  
blindly across the disorienting blur of slip space &  
blindly ignoring the boiling lake of fir beneath  
for bait, hung high centered in between is  
duly eaten. The world tips madly &  
it all splashes & sinks with a gurgle  
& a moment passes  
& then another  
until, from the other side I still  
& jaws creaking open impossibly wide  
& as Frankenstein-fire-serpent-horror-thing  
I roar quietly in response

I am from here

I am from here

2022

# **Trials and Joys**

## **by Angelica Del Pilar**

Come pick up your cross...  
College wrecked my mental health.  
I was not ready for it  
In the slightest.  
On top of grief I had coming into it,  
It was just different from high school.  
Classes rotate days, so people rotate.  
I never really had any friends.  
Loneliness is a beast, a dragon  
That is almost impossible to slay.

Why does no one tell you adulthood is lonely?

I became worse and worse as  
College dragged on. It seemed  
Like everyone else was getting jobs,  
Traveling,  
Making memories  
Buying their own place-  
And here I was  
Working part time, still at home,  
All my money going to bills.  
I became jealous of strangers, coworkers, and  
Cousins alike.

Jealousy consumed me like a snake devouring its prey.

And follow me...  
At my lowest point, I knew  
Something had to give.  
That's when my heart  
Kept telling me to  
Go to church.

I resisted for a while  
Since I didn't grow up with  
Religion and had no intention of  
Starting.  
But  
One day I stopped by  
A Catholic event for the free food  
And met someone who  
Led me to God.

God saved me  
From my worst parts.  
My jealousy went away  
After 5 or 6 months.

My anxiety is still  
Present  
But I'm learning to  
Live with it  
Through God's  
Grace and hope.

# FOREVER

by Patricia Sidlauskas Hiscock

Thank you God  
For the warmth  
Embracing me  
As I leave  
The comfort  
Of my dreams  
To live one more day  
To face  
The morning light  
To breathe the air  
You have given me  
When I thought  
My last breath  
Was gone  
Thank you God  
For the cardinal  
Waiting for me  
On the well aged fence  
Waiting with a  
Silent song to tell me  
Loved ones live on



# Rest

By Colleen Morgan

It's not so bad  
this aging thing.  
When I look in the mirror  
sometimes,  
I think, tomorrow  
the bags will be smaller  
I didn't get much sleep.

But  
they're still there,  
along with the  
drying skin  
and peachfuzz cheeks.

Ok. Tonight I sleep,  
at nine I think.  
Maybe for the whole week.  
That should do it  
It's the rest I need, that's all.

Are my cheeks drier today?  
And what's with this hair?  
And why are my hands so scratchy?  
This morning I snagged  
my best scarf.

It's that aging thing  
I guess.  
I just keep thinking  
It's the rest I need.

But...  
When I look in the mirror  
sometimes,  
I think,  
Whose body is this anyway?  
I don't recognize her.

# Redbud

by Karen Hurley Kuchar

Mother's Day tense  
with expectation.  
Will they call?  
Send a gift? I remember  
those early adult years,  
life consumed with  
concerns so removed  
from the home left behind  
and people whose love  
I took for granted.

I stand now in-between—  
knowing my mother's pain,  
helpless against  
the wave of my own.

Generational misses  
repeat themselves.

And then from their father  
a surprise gift,  
a redbud,  
my favorite tree.  
Spindly yet sizeable,  
early spring blossoms  
of impossible pink  
hug branches out to each twig.  
We plant it together  
in the backyard,  
roots deep  
in this nurturing earth.  
Its yearly blooms  
reminders of love  
we can take for granted.

# On the News

by Karen Hurley Kuchar

I saw babies today  
Sick babies tethered to tubes,  
held in mothers' arms

I was reminded of those days with Lily  
when we watched our newborn grandchild  
fight for her life while she slept

The babies I saw today  
lay on a concrete floor  
of a basement make-shift bomb shelter

Exhausted mothers by their side  
Tearful, they share their pain,  
their fear, their lives upended

Their own personal crisis  
now embedded in the destruction of war,  
testing the limits of human endurance

Lily is 10 now, she doesn't want to hear  
about those painful weeks  
we still hold in our hearts

I can only hope that someday  
the same will be true  
for the babies in the bomb shelter

# Life is a Beach

by Delia LaPorta

Strolling on the glistening sand Hoping to  
meet my love, my mate Scoping up a shell in  
my hand Knowing that He will be late Placing  
the shell near my ear  
Still on the lookout for him  
Ocean sound is all I hear  
Drawn to it, on a whim  
Wading into the water  
Glancing over my shoulder  
Taking steps I begin to falter Realizing I am  
getting older  
Falling into the cold sea  
The only one laughing is He

Night

by Delia LaPorta

Whispering cold winds Branches  
swaying in moonlight Create  
frightful shadows

Roses do Not Purr  
by Phyllis Sinclair



They wrap their slender silk necks  
with pale green thorns  
and cover their lips with the most outrageous  
vamp red lipstick.

They know how to choose perfume  
and suck honey out of rainwater.

# I want to be a dancer

by Syreeta Williams

I want to be a dancer.

Dancing is like ribbons, bows and bright colors to me.

It's kind of a mystical talent or gift you see.

I want to be a dancer. I want to be lifted up.

I want to jump, leap, stand and rise on my toes.

I want to have the perfect portrait like a super model pose.

I want to spin, waltz and plunge. I want to leap, swing, dip and lunge.

I want to twist, jig and jive. I want to step, spin, twist and glide. I want to dance, move and groove. I want to groove like nobody else groove.

I want be a dancer, and it is not because of the way that I move. I want to be a dancer because I just bought myself some new dancing shoes. I want to be a dancer!

# Tangerine Sun

by Syreeta Williams

The tangerine sun shines through a small yellow stained glass window

The green forest tree limbs lay beside a glitzing dusty shoe trail

Above little country houses with covered chimney tops blanketed sheets  
of winter snow slowly melts away

The calming warm winds of spring stand with opened arms to welcome

A new season

A new morning

A new second

A new day

A new task

A new dream

A new purpose

In time that ticks and tock to welcome the rising Tangerine Sun



# FUNERAL FOR MY PAST

by Fred Bonnano

I attended a funeral dressed in black  
I abruptly left but something called me back

I had to say goodbye  
I had to let it die

The time is now, it cannot wait  
It held me back, but it is not too late

It had its grip around my throat  
Left for dead, barely afloat

It dragged me down and gave me no hope  
At times it felt I was at the end of my rope

I was held prisoner in my mind  
Eyes were open, but I was blind

For so many years I held it inside  
I lied  
I denied  
In some ways I died

Time to look in the mirror and let it go  
Time to let my inner seed grow

Seeking guidance seeking direction  
This will be my resurrection  
Never question what could have been  
That will steal your soul from within

The dragon has been slayed  
No more am I afraid

As I lower the coffin lid  
This forever nightmare, I am finally rid

I am free at last, I am free at last  
I held a funeral for my past

# Eternity Sits Sweetly

by Sabrina Kahren

Eternity sits sweetly,  
within tonight  
and tomorrow.

A vision lost  
to the haze  
of a too busy world.

Interconnection lost  
in overconnection,  
when no one sees  
with their own eyes.

So eternity is lost  
in the quest  
to do more,  
and sincerest  
moments drift by  
because we cannot  
slow down  
and just hold them.

## Empty Swings

empty swings  
pushed by the breeze —  
granddaughters

by Paul Engel



*Notable 2nd*

# Red Song

the cardinal's red song  
in a  
gray sky

by Paul Engel

# My Grandmother

by Patricia Sidlauskas Hiscock

I picked up the apron and spilled  
All the dark rye crumbs from the bread  
You brought from overseas  
Long before my time  
Only then did I see  
Your freedom. An apron  
Full of crumbs from  
Another world  
A world I never knew  
I saw you grate potatoes  
With knuckles raw producing  
Potato pancakes and kugelis  
With bacon and globs of sour cream  
The old farmhouse where you tucked me in  
With your quilt and heated bricks  
And in the morning I would stumble  
Down the attic stairs knowing  
You were waiting with blueberry pancakes in  
The cast iron pan on the old wood stove  
And now the apron ties wrap around  
My heritage of faith, family, hard work and love  
Brought here from across the seas