

Creators of Justice Awards 2021

Youth Category

HONORABLE MENTION

Jay-Lee Richardson (Australia): *A Pair of Men*
Caspian Hayes (Canada): *unfinished midnight*
Washam Waseem (Pakistan): *Suicide*

A Pair of Men

By Jay-Lee Richardson

A Young Man darts from side to side,
Stood up tall, chest out, arms to the side.
The Young Man stands: heart full of pride,
But when his future and opportunity start to coincide,
And when our eyes, eyes of others
stop to seek,
The Young Man opens his mouth to speak.

An Old Man limps lamely to get out of the way,
Eyes sunken, arms withered; like a dead rose in may.
He's exhausted rigid at the end of the day,
He looks in the mirror and what does he say?
Admiring the facial lines and stories for a treat,
The Old Man opens his mouth to speak.

The Old Man hears with no sound; looks with blind eyes,
Yet somehow he sees the truth behind their lies.
A wrinkled mouth for a thousand stories, its no surprise
he's drowning in fearful memories; he slowly cries.
The Old Man opens his mouth with a croak,
But the Old Man's hushed with a frog in his throat.

An Old Man—wise beyond his years,
Has lived though all the Young Man's deepest fears.
His life story will bring you to tears,
But the Old Man stops, before his peers.
He stands up tall: no longer weak.
The Old Man opens his mouth to speak.

A Young Man offers a hand to him,
No longer tearing each other limb from limb.
The Young Man opens an ear to him,
Listening to all the Old Man's sin.
And knowing full well the Young Man's eyes leak,
The Old Man keeps his mouth open to speak.

Jay-Lee Jane Richardson is a 16-year-old aspiring author who was the youngest person published in *The Monologue Adventure* 2019. She strives to move the audience and hopes her work evokes strong emotions in the audience which will urge them to reflect on themselves and the world around them.

unfinished midnight

By Caspian Hayes

i am the sum of my parts
know my heart, broken by hands much like mine
know my mind, twisted from borrowed quiet time
know my body, which i hate and love and hate again
know my spirit, which wants to rip itself into two too
see with my eyes, feel with my hands, exist with; in me
know one two five pieces of me; facets in every entirety

you see me incomplete in seconds
as if i am holed; not whole
like clocks care for anything other than the passage of time
trapped in a locked box of my own design, a cupboard filled with clothes
it creeps closer, this dread, till it'll soon past the line
i did not build these walls to keep me in
these city walls stretch to the sky to protect me—i whisper to myself
motives are useless in the face of actions

i glance at the flag on my wall; stripes in order
pink, white, purple, black, blue—like my motley of bruises
in the darkness, it bleeds into the wood; i haven't seen it in years
the sliver of moonlight creeps into my closet—i've never seen the sun
(perhaps one day i will, no—i know i will, but where will i be after?)
see it's never enough to light up a word, but there as my solace
it eclipses my judgement sometimes; makes me think everything's alright

my thoughts bleed onto ink- a pressure valve released
if i should have to keep it in, i will burst
the calm and quiet seep into the abyss; deep as dark pitch

ropeburn stays on for weeks, sticking to me like the borrowed time under my outfit
i chose to suffer, i soothe myself, i choose to say not a word
damned if you do, damned if you don't—binaries always seem to be my undoing
no light if my being's at stake, know not if i'll have to wait longer
so can i rest, my tongue still, swallowed a pill, signed a vow of silence
one piece of me nods, another pipes up, reminding me

that i am but the sum of my parts.

A Canadian high school student in their senior year, **Caspian Hayes** is your average genderfluid teen aiming to get into a decent writing program for university. Having been obsessed with poetry for as long as they can remember, Caspian loves to pour their heart onto the page—it's actually a massive problem. Their writing exists on a spectrum of introspective angst, macabre horror and sappy infatuated love poems, with not much in between. You can find more of their work on instagram at [@rumiwriting](#).

Suicide

By Washam Waseem

There are flames burning my eyes.
Negativity is making me lose my mind.
I have forgotten the meaning of my life.

Now, I am scared of the darkness and cannot even stay in light.
I have become like a loser and cannot fight.
It is all because I tried to kill myself by attempting suicide.
I had thought that it was the only solution to be kind.

But I had not been right.
It is showing me devilish signs.
I just thank God that I am alive.

But I am not happy because I cannot find a way to shine.

Washam Waseem is from Pakistan and has a keen interest in reading as well as writing poetry. Her favorite poet is William Wordsworth and her favorite poem is “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”.