

a small poem by Zoe B

today i counted my breaths,  
they were uneven,  
like tiny earthquakes  
i pressed a hand to my chest and tried to be  
small and  
enough  
at the same time.

Today i am not a fighter.  
I am not brave,  
My words can't reach you,  
My blade is short.  
Today i'm not perfect.  
I'm sorry.

Isn't it wonderful how wounds heal?  
How cuts become scars?  
Isn't it wonderful how humans can break  
How they shatter like glass?  
Isn't it wonderful how breakable we are,  
In every beat of our tissue paper hearts –  
Isn't fragility so beautiful?

## Teenager by Siyona N

I sleep late.

I dream big.

Someday. I know someday I'll be so much better.

Alone I am alone.

No one knows. They really don't.

Love. Friendship. Grades. Behaviour. Rules. Wrecked!

To bed every night. Secretly crying , no one knows.

We are not adults but are given adult problems-

We are not children but treated like children.

We are teenagers.

I am a teenager.

I want to be anything but a teenager.

For I once looked up to being a teenager. When I finally did become one I learnt the truth.

The truth.

Hidden truth.

The Sweet lies. Fairy tales.

They didn't tell us the truth! They hid it.

Children look to be us.

Adults wish to go back.

Teenager.

I make mistakes. Children make mistakes.

I am given problems. Adults are given problems.

Teenager.

I want to be anything but me.

Anything but a

teenager.

Not a teenager. Never again. Never a Teenager.

## Anyways by IW

You stayed.  
Even when I flinched,  
even when I attempted to build walls and called them 'boundaries'

You waited at the edges-  
of everything I was afraid to feel,  
eyes patient  
hands outstretched  
as if love didn't have to hurt to be real, to be true

Slowly, carefully, delicately  
I realised you might be right.

It happened quietly-  
a laugh that lingered, a shared smile, a glance out the corner of my eye,  
a morning where I wasn't afraid, a morning I found a 'good morning' text from you  
The way your hand found mine and the world didn't end.

I took a breath, then a sigh,  
let walls crumble, and soon start to fall,  
and let you finally see my world I tried so desperately to hide.

You don't run,  
don't laugh,  
you just smile, catch me by surprise  
I'm shocked you've stayed, so long, so watchful,

And now it's the simplest things that mean the most.  
Like waiting for someone who's trying to be brave-  
you smile and wait, even if I'm scared.

You stayed,  
Anyways.

# The Ashes by Max D

The Home of the finest and longest dating feud,  
We welcome you to a world of Fire and Ash.

I took my place on the battlefield,  
Preparing for what is to come,  
I had to hold onto my twitch and steady my shield,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

I looked at my captain and braced myself for what was and is to come,  
And I knew I wasn't just fighting for myself,  
My heart beating like the skin of the battle drum,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

One life,  
And what I did with it was up to me,  
I would dodge the shot from the bloody knife,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

I could either play attack or go on the defence,  
The power was in my hands,  
But if I decided to attack then I would have to hurdle the fence,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

Normally, music would ring out over the field for the money of the franchise,  
But I had to learn the hard way that this was a test,  
The ultimate test of the mind, soul and the view of the world I see through these two eyes,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

As I watched my fellow men fall,

I had to dig in and concentrate on the mission I had been trusted with,  
And watch the ball,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

The total slowly went up with the amount of blood that had been shed,  
So far, I realised I was our final line of defence,  
I had to fight for those that were already dead,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

My individual total went up, unmatched,  
Here I am a hero with heroics to my name,  
Then I realised, there I'm a force that nobody could detach,  
Before my three sticks got knocked down.

I had a feeling that even though I was a hero,  
This was a battle I may have won, but the war was a more bloody affair.

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### **THE ASH TREE by Bella I**

I sit, perched atop a cliff, the jagged edges cradling my splayed limbs.  
Biting cold rain splatters my closed eyes, accompanying the brown freckles  
that lay across my cheeks.

An Ash tree stretches out above me, its brittle fingers searching for gold  
sunlight and soft earth.

I lay on the endless blossoms of scattered dreams, the fresh salt breeze almost  
as ferocious as the sea crashing around the blackened rocks.

I open my eyes

I see sweeping dancefloors of grey clouds

I imagine my green clothed feet sliding over rain tipped skies.

I let one tear slip down my face, giving it to the sea, the ground, the rain, the  
sky.

The Ash tree looks down at my broken body, and scoffs.

### **An Extract from *Autumn Death* by Benji C**

I walk through the majestic woods as the deer prance. As I hike the trees tower  
over and the clouds darken the sky and my mood. But yet I go down the dry  
baked dirt ground. When I carry on, deer no longer prance and I debate to no  
longer hike. Yet I persuade myself to continue on.

I then reach a section of rocky terrain.

Not unusual.

But yet something feels ominous, maybe it is the lack of oxygen messing with  
my head or maybe ...it is the mysterious figure staring me down.

