

Stella Jackson

Age: 17, Grade: 11

School Name: Hewitt-Trussville High School, Trussville, AL

Educator: Lacey deShazo

Category: Poetry

Hurricane Paradigm

Shifting Winds

revelations

happen in any place;

even on a normal walk

with your sister

under the stars

the sailor touched the sky,
noticed the slight
shift
in the guiding gusts;
adjusted the sails
accordingly, to stay
on course

ignoring the implications
that a storm would arise;
that the change had begun,
that the shifting winds
signaled the start,
and had planted
the first idea
in the mind-

(warning signs
of the future storm,
foreshadowing
of the future times)

Overcast Clouds

it became a footnote

but it opened the door,

if only a crack;

the shift underneath

slow and steady

the sailor tended
to her ship,
the ropes and rigging,
keeping the course
she was told to take;

while the graphite-colored clouds

piled up in the sky, gathered
to share rain and foster
lightning

She ignored it,
but inside?
watched it all,
with passiveness,
absorbed with other
matters of the mind

(later reflection:
how could she ignore
the foreboding, forthcoming,
hurricane?)

The Spark

*January 10th.
Not the 6th,
but related to it.
The perfectly constructed sphere,
fractured and fragmented
beyond repair.*

And the storm was suddenly
there
and the sailor
and the ship
in the midst,
of the rolling and roaring
of the waves-

Inside
finally dragged out;
the bubble, finally
disintegrated and gone-
the sailor,
shaken and bare,
astonished and frightened
by her own indifference
and callousness-

the spark,
ignited.

(forever thankful
for the downpour
and lightning)

Roaring Waves

*If this, and that,
had been a half-baked lie,
what else could be?
I opened my mind to knowledge
embraced curiosity
and rashly opened new scars*

that blindly-set course
was forever lost;
the sailor endeavored, in this chaos,
to find the right one;
no longer would she timidly
follow what others
told her to be.

ever-determined, was she,
to be open in mind
and discover
the right course.

travelled into the hull,
searched the annals of time;
examined (forbidden)
maps of new, and old,
and all the in-between;
those tomes,
like lightning strikes-

the knowledge filled her
like the roaring waves
from the monsoon;
she clashed with the sun
and argued with the moon,
shouted to the stars-

(knowledge is a burden,
it comes with a heavy price;
but it is worth
every
penny)

Ready the Sail

*and the months passed,
and I discovered poetry,
and my temper calmed,
and I remembered
peace*

the sailor emerged, alive,
the hurricane spent and sighing,
the ship, not broken and fractured,
but gleaming and more whole
then before.

She threw her head back,
faced the free sun,
and fresh breeze;
the glittering sea was before her;
she could be whoever she wanted to be

the course was set;
not the assuredly right one,
but the one true to her
calmed was the tide, and she;

accepted the world's complexity
and all it could be-

with open arms to the sky,
she now eagerly welcomes
the next hurricane.

(the ship is in your name,
and you are the captain;
who decides its course?

You,
and you
alone.

I wish you strong tides,
and gracious winds.)