WELCOME to the premiere edition of Simon Says, the Abram Simon Elementary School literary magazine, written and edited by the students of Simon Elementary. Simon Says is published through a collaborative effort between the school and the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop, an independent non-profit working to create a literary renaissance in Southeast Washington. In September 2004, after four years of providing award-winning programming at Charles Hart Middle School, the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop expanded to offer similar programs to students at Simon and at nearby Ballou High School. In the short time since the school has welcomed the program, fourth graders at Simon have devoted themselves to learning the joy of self expression and the power of the written word. Simon Says is the result of nearly a year of workshops with professional writers, giving our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be heard by an audience throughout the city.

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The No Real Friends Blues

There’s always no real friends.
People say one thing or another,
and it always leads up to something or other.
Friends say one thing to your face
and another to your back.
And a real friend wouldn’t attack
your feelings like that.
Fake friends try to cover up
what they’re really like,
and that’s why
I got the no real friends blues.

Curtisha Fletcher

I Got the Blues of My Brother

Me and my mom
were going to the mall
and we saw my brother.
We said “hi,”
and he just kept on walking.
I see him, like, every weekend.
He doesn’t talk to us at all.
We say we’ve got three brothers,
and one of them doesn’t exist to us.
His name is P.J.

Eunique Wimbush
Homework Blues

All this homework isn’t good for me.
Too much of it,
I can’t sleep.

I can’t sleep right,
I can’t eat right.
This is so wrong.
It makes me wanna fight.

Like I said,
too much of it.
I don’t like it,
not even a bit.

And when I finish,
I watch TV,
and then my mother says to me
Go to sleep!

Cameron Hilliard

Mean Sister Blues

My mean sister is mean.
I think there’s a good spot in her,
filled with fur.
Even though I love her very much,
sometimes I want to call the police on her.
Yesterday, my grandmother told her
to STOP!
She tried to put my head in the trash.

Devon Hudson
New School Blues

Have you ever gone to a new school?  
It was scary.  
Going to a new school might  
give you a scary blues.  
I know it gave me one.

A great idea is to go in with your parents.  
When you look at people  
they might look mean or nice.  
You can’t say, because the way they look—  
when you stare, they stare back,  
they stare back really hard.

Did you have friends at your old school?  
If you did, I’m sure you’ll miss them.  
I know  
I miss mine.  
At the end of the school year  
you might have some more.

I had a lot of friends at the end of the year.  
We did a lot of things together.  
I know  
you will have new friends.  
I’m sure you will do lots of things too.

Quenita Simms
The Writing Poem Blues

I was sitting in the room
having a good time,
when a lady came
and made us do some boring poem.
Something I wouldn’t even think about.
Something like this.

I would rather be playing cards
or running around like crazy
than sitting in a boring class doing a poem.

When she first walked in the classroom
I knew we had to do something like this.
When a poem came, I was mad.
And then my teacher said
“Wakenya, I know you can do it.”
When she turned her back,
I pushed my paper away from me.

Wa’ Kenya Middleton

My Rhythm

My family thinks
I am a bouncing rhythm.
My name is bouncing rhythm,
and if you see me
on the streets,
I am bouncing everywhere.
The echo is in my mind,
So I can’t
catch it out of my mind.

Michael Marbury
They Call Me

I am smooth like silk
and when I am walking
on the sidewalk,
I slide.

People call me queen of my room
because I do
anything I want
in my room

People call me heartbeat
because I am fast,
in a heartbeat
I am unseen because
when people look at me
they see air.

*Imani Givens*

When the wind blows

When the wind blows,
it blows the gold to me.
When I look at the color sky-blue,
it makes a rainbow for me.
The rainbow turns into demons,
I run like a jet,
the jet turns into a flower in a vase,
the vase turns into a circle of rings.

*Imani Givens*
Changing

What do I do when I see pink shoes
that turn into the white diamonds
that are now on my fingers
then turn into a unicorn galloping in the sky
and so much fresh air
that turns into magenta-colored silk
that turns into a little girl worshipping her heroes?
I said it was all an illusion
and I went back to bed.

_Curtisha Fletcher_

Unbelievable

I’m so incredible
and so divine
Everybody worships the ground I walk on
and I’m only nine.

I’m the biggest and baddest
no one can stop me, there is no way
I can pick up the sun
and throw it away.

And I’m so smart
I went to kindergarten before I was three
That’s the way
I want to be.

_Curtisha Fletcher_
My name...

My name sounds like singing birds swarming in the air.
It will also have its personality:
it will be sweet as a rose
in a movie star’s hands.
And my name has a smell—
it smells like a new coat
that has not been worn.
It looks like a kind schoolgirl.
My name feels like smooth sheets
that have just been washed.

_Curtisha Fletcher_

I have all sorts of names

I have all sorts of names.
My teacher thinks I’m smart
like a whip on a stick.
But my mother thinks I’m restless
like a bat in the dark.
My grandma has the sweetest name for me,
like an angel, she said, every single day.
My uncle thinks I’m so easy to scare,
like a mouse being chased by a .45 gun.
But that’s not all.
My friends have the worst name for me:
They think I’m a splinter in their side,
and think I think I know everything,
like the man in the sky.
I’m not sure what my name is really
but people keep labeling me
like I’m a big fat baby.

_Curtisha Fletcher_
Hoping

She has nothing,
nothing at all.
She lost everything
to her name.
Even her home.
She’s longing for something
she can call her own.
Reaching for the sky
she’s even had to lie
just to provide herself
with shelter and food.
Holding her hands up high
thinking,
maybe, just maybe,
she can touch the sky.
Give me a sign—
She always said,
“I wish I was rich
and had some money”
but she still has nothing,
nothing at all.

Curtisha Fletcher
Loneliness

I’m on a hill, far away from people.
I feel so lonely, but there’s something keeping me here.
When I come here, it feels like I’ve been desiring this place.
It makes me feel lonelier and lonelier.
I think in my head,
Am I lonely because of here, or is it the town?
When I leave here for town, will it drag me back?
Sometimes I feel so lonely, I want to cry,
But I hold it in and go back to that hill.
It calms me down.
I’ve made up my mind
It’s the town that makes me feel lonely.
That’s how lonely I feel sometimes.

Shawntay Kent

Pink horse jumping

I see a beautiful horse
crossing over a bridge
into a valley of water.

She takes a sip of the water
then gallops away
into the mist.

After a few moments
she hears delicate voices.
Then a girl in a pink dress
appears from out of nowhere.

But the girl was only an illusion.
Really, it was all a dream.

Shawntay Kent
Anger

Anger stays up two days straight.
He fights his sleep.
He gets baggy eyes.
He goes to work,
his boss asks him
Did you go to sleep yesterday?
He tells a couple of lies.
Today, he made a new day.
He wants to say
today is angry day.

Jayon Gray

Blue Green

I see a horse, jumping in a triangle
Then, on a sunny day,
a blue-green cheetah making an echo
All of a sudden
a three headed spider
crawled on a branch
with meatballs flying in the air
and the one eyed dinosaur
was moving
And then the world came to an end
and the world rose from the dead
and everybody was turned into babies
and the world was born again

Naaman Dudley
The Perfect Waters

It’s like floating in the dream of someone else.
And thousands of hands speaking to me:
I shall not harm you
and I’m so lonely in the dark world,
alone and treated like a slave,
pushed around and tortured.
This lady came and made a spell,
then I was the king of the land
and was treated with respect.
Now it’s so confused
that I think about a thoughtful dream.

Naaman Dudley

My name is unseen

My brother calls me Nightmare
because I drive him nuts.
When I step inside a hole
it feels like I am going down
deeper and deeper.
Now my name will be Tomorrow,
My name will be Voices All Around Me.
Today, my name is Unseen
because when people are around me
they seem to not see me.

Shantel Mitchell
What Do I See?

I see a girl with a rainbow shirt
And also, I see God
I’m worshipping God
Cherry blossoms floating in the air
I see people happy every day
And I see rainbows everywhere around me
I see the rain fall, and me swimming in it
I see a beautiful bridge
I see a rainbow horse.

Shantel Mitchell

Keontae the Great

I drive so great
I could hang fire on a house.
I’m so fast,
a Benz can’t even catch me.
I’m so strong,
I can knock over the monuments.
I’m so cold,
I could freeze the sun by blowing my breath.
I’m so flexible,
I could stretch to Pluto in a second.
I’m so good at magic,
I could turn Ms. Scudder into a rabbit,
and Ms. Nancy into a hat.

Keontae Rose
A Jumping Man

I see a man jumping off a cliff
because he's depressed
someone sold his house
when he didn’t ask them to.
His house is blue and his insides are blue.

Keontae Rose

Never give up

My big sister calls me annoying nightmare
because I sometimes scare her in her sleep.
My friends call me nuclear war
because I bring my big water guns and squirt them to death.
My mother calls me the howling tummy
because I’m always hungry.
My dad calls me the memory man
because I can remember what holidays and birthdays are which.
My grandmother calls me sweet little angel
because she never sees me do anything.
My mother calls me the brave knight
because I fight off bugs and insects.
My dad calls me stiff bones
because I have a lot of courage.
I think my real name is metal
because I never give up.

Cameron Hilliard
Clothes and the Moon

I made lizards into pants,
like in two minutes
I can jump up to the moon
and it’s not even night
I can walk to the moon
to get some cheese, without stairs
I can tell the clouds
to throw down some rain
and I pause the rain
to go out to play!

_Briana Luckett_

Kaleidoscope

My friend’s favorite color is yellow—
Circles of bowls of noodles
Deer being eaten by bears
Fires running out of windows
Hail drops on my nose, it hurts
Earthworms getting smooshed by sneakers
Green eyeballs blossoming in the wind
And splinters in my fingers
Plus voices everywhere.

_Briana Luckett_
The Unusual Foot

My feet are ugly
my toes are long,
when I wear thermals,
which I call long johns,
my feet still show.
I kick the ball
it’s pink and round
it’s stuck on the ground.
My leg is nerdy
my other leg is perky.
Even though my feet are long,
I wear long johns.
It’s like lucky
leaves on my leg.
A yellow color
will go to my head
I drink some lemonade,
it spills on my shirt.
I pick up some dirt.
It gets in my eye,
I start to cry
I look down
with a frown
because I have an unusual foot.

_Briana Luckett_
My Name

My name feels like a smooth pillow
with the sheets all nice and neat and
everything in place.
My name smells like roses
in fresh water
in a perfect vase.
My name looks like
robins in a tree
just being born.
My name sounds like
birds singing in the air
while the wind is blowing.
My name tastes like
oranges
fresh from the tree.

Briana Luckett

Bragging

I am invincible.
I can overcome any obstacle.
I have turbo speed to shoot across the ground.
I built the Statue of Liberty in one second.
I can lift up 5,000,000 Titanics with my pinky.
I can dribble the ball so fast, people think I went left when I went right.
I can crush any obstacle with my thumb.
I can destroy any obstacle with my head.
I can be invisible by saying invisibility.
I can turn a wolf into a cow.

Cameron Hilliard
One day

One day, I saw a pink cat
on a cloudy day.
The cat was running in circles.
Suddenly, he turned into a strange creature.
It was 12:00 in the dark,
bushes were falling, trees were shaking
I said, “Why is it doing this?”
The creator had echoed me.

Eunique Wimbush

New School Blues

When I went to a new school,
I did not know anybody
so it gave me the blues.

At my new school,
I had green beans for lunch
and I did not want them
and it gave me the blues.

At my new school,
I did not have recess
for a whole week
and that gave me the blues.

Tamiya Dudley
**Upside Down Sky**

It makes me frown  
when the sky is down  
Someone tell me, why is it upside down?

I might be lazy  
but inside I am just crazy  
I never saw anything in my life like this.

The sky is upside down  
with a twist  
It’s a kind of green that hasn’t been seen.

I know what I can see,  
but maybe  
someone hypnotized me.

I am so sad,  
I don’t know what to think  
It makes my head feel like an earthquake.

_Tyrik Brown_

**Dancing**

Girls in violet shoes  
dancing down the street.  
The girls came down the hill  
and find a jaguar on a sunny day.  
Then the girls see triangle stars  
turning into blue-green dandelions.  
The sun went home  
and they’re talking, having fun,  
and dancing.

_Tasheanna Johnston_
My name...

Tasheanna smells like sand in the desert, a new shampoo, like white rain. Tasheanna feels like a ball of string, or a soft bunny. Tasheanna tastes like teriyaki rice, spaghetti sauce. Tasheanna looks like a professional tennis player, or a cheerleader. Tasheanna sounds like a singer, like Tina Marie, or a movie star, like Denzel Washington.

Tasheanna Johnston

Words

I saw a blue cat with a cone and flowers on its head, running in the sun.

The cat was howling, and the blossom on his head was red.

And the cat grew big white wings and flew away.

And it was amazing.

Tamiya Dudley
What I Am Called

My little sister calls me nightmare because I make her life miserable. My big brother calls me splinter because I’m a painful person to him. Raven calls me loving because I’m nice to her. The police call me echo because I copy his every word. My father calls me weep because I cry when I don’t get my way. My mother calls me memory because I remember everything. My friends call me float because I’m very light. My teacher calls me Quenita because that’s who I am.

Quenita Simms

Lost

It feels like I’m lost in a tiny world with nobody here but me and some small houses. It feels like the world has fallen without me. I seek for people I talk while I walk I say hello, there is no response Next thing you know I am gone.

Devon Hudson
I Am Powerful

I’m a flexible, fast, and smart person
I like to take dance lessons
I can move my hips
I can stomp my feet
And I can make the dance compete.

I died years ago
But no one really knew,
I came back alive in one year or two.
I modeled down the fashion runway
And everyone jumped and cheered Hurray!

Hurray, hurray, and I said okay
I shined my hair
And fell off the stair
But no one really cared.

Quenita Simms

What I saw

I saw an orange dog
using a blue tree,
a car with square tires.
When the sunset came,
I saw a cow jump into it.

Devon Hudson
The Cat in a Kaleidoscope

A cat flies
in a yellow circle
and jumps
into a red hot sun.
It runs into a flower
blossoming in a heartbeat,
and it was
an illusion.

Kennard Brown

How wonderful I am

I’m wonderful, look at me
I’m beautiful
When I look in the mirror, I see
a girl with brain, with game, with change
I express my feelings
I’m just me
Last year, I was a model for the fashion show
I was moving my hips so bad
that everyone had their eyes on me
I had a pink dress
it looked like I was at a prom
when I walked on the stage modeling
I was nervous
Then I remembered that I was beautiful
and then I said, okay, I can do this
I know I can
I smiled, my teeth were shiny,
it looked like a sun in the building
When I got home I screamed.
It seems that I can dream.

Monique Boyd
My life is in the sky
My life is in the sky
You are in the sky
You are in the light
Your life is in memory
My life is a dream
It will never end
I try to go around it,
But it will never end
It’s like a window
It never ends
I am in the world
I try and try
It just will not end.

Kennard Brown

Untitled
Boxing through sunny rain
cloudy sky that has beauty in it
color that smells like cherry red on a bridge
with blossoming flowers blooming through the air
they feel like a heartbeat, glistening in the sky
they drown with beauty, silky delicate voices
becoming an echo of the beauty’s
texture in a nightmare valley
that had been unseen,
people waltz day and night.

The howl, in a black memory
that seemed to be the worst nightmare
then I humble myself
and say that a dream
just has to be unseen.

Monique Boyd
Anger

Anger got up and ate nails, boards, and anger soup. He had five kids that were born really bad. They threw rocks, ate cars, carried gasoline and poured it on trees and lighted them. They even beat up Happiness’ children. Anger wears bad things, like spiky shirts. At night, he goes to sleep in a bed with spikes. He and his kids don’t have nice dreams. Instead, they have nightmares.

Jay Jordan

Swimming

I picture someone swimming in water. When I see this person in my mind, it makes me think of myself. But there is something important about this person. He can see plants and life forms under the sea. He sometimes floats above the sea. He always wears his lucky boxers, number three. He thinks that the sea is the sky. He thinks the water is his mirror. He can always see his reflection. When he dives into the water, he can feel the nice cool breeze.

Jay Jordan
My Poem

I had a nightmare.
I saw a red blossom.
I can’t believe it.
That blossom just ran away from me.
I heard my heartbeat.
I used my memory,
And I remembered pink
snow is going to fall.

Ashley Boston

Anger

When anger gets up in the morning,
he eats a glass cup.
He gets mad every day,
soon as the children get home,
he beats them for nothing.
He lives in a dark cave with flies.
When he drives to work, he drives inside his job
instead of going to open the door.
Every night, anger gets mad,
so his wife left him for a rich man.

Ashley Boston
Calm

I feel like I am rolling in the ocean
and I feel like I’m up in a cloud in heaven somewhere.
I’m feeling happy, and I’m feeling like everything is alright.
Some things are azure and cobalt.
I feel it is beautiful, and some things are scarlet red.
Everything is luxury.
Everything is just right, and nobody is bothering me or messing with me.
I feel like I’m on a cloud.
I feel like I’m in my own little world.
Nobody is there with me, and I am by myself.
I feel like a little snail, slugging on the grass, minding my own business.
The things around me are azure, cobalt, and scarlet red.
There are so many things around me,
I don’t know what to look at first.

Armani McKinzie

Monique

My name smells like a newborn poodle.
My name sounds like a famous gymnastic teacher
Saying, “Do your best!”
My name feels like a shooting star
And someone is going to wish on it.

Monique Boyd
Your contributions help make Simon Says possible!

The D.C. Creative Writing Workshop is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality creative writing instruction to students in economically underserved areas of Washington D.C. One hundred percent of every donation goes directly toward our creative writing programs at Charles Hart Middle School, Simon Elementary, and Ballou High School, allowing our students to work with professional writers-in-residence in the classroom, the Drama Club, the Writing Club, and the Literary Magazine Club.

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