

Summer 2006

Simon Says



Simon Says

Briana Lockett



Front cover- l-r Desja Cant, Dantelle Thomas, Whitney Henry, Rickia White, Javian Bryant, Maria Watkins, Derreon Jones, Shawntay Kent, Devon Hudson, Jacqueline Crawford, Charrice Dunham, Jay Jordan, Cameron Hilliard

WELCOME to the second 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. This year, fifth 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.

We have many friends who have helped to make *Simon Says* possible, and we would like to express our gratitude to them. Our sincerest thanks go out to the Herb Block Foundation, Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Children's Fund of Metropolitan Washington, Commonweal Foundation, Community Foundation of the National Capital Region, Fannie Mae Foundation, John Edward Fowler Foundation, Philip Graham Fund, Harman Family Foundation, Hitachi Foundation, International Monetary Fund, Junior League of Washington, Moran Family Fund, Meyer Foundation, Rotary Club of Washington, Wachovia Foundation, Wendling Foundation, Weissberg Foundation, the World Bank, an anonymous donor, the friends and family of Anna Su, Michael Joy and TSCJoy/Monterey, LLC, Sarah Booth and Bloomberg L.P., Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Karibu Books, GO! Creative, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Arena Stage, the Shakespeare Theatre, McGuire Associates, Joyce Page and Ms. Printing, Tollefson & Gustini Investment Management, our friends at Popeye's on Malcolm X Avenue, Ms. Shin's 6th grade class at Bush Hill Elementary School, Gregory Auger, George and Lenore Cohen, Fritz Edler, Tom and Carolyn Grey, Mark Hollinger and Kathy McNeil Hollinger, Frances Horn, Betsy

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1-5 Desja Gant, Armani McKinzie, Sha'ontia Hardy, Maria Watkins



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My Name

My name is midnight, because I hang in the shadows.
Yesterday my name was laughter, and I was a clown.
Tomorrow my name will be silence, because I will not make a sound.
My friends call me phantom—they think I'm a ghost.
My parents call me nightmare when I get on their nerves.
But my real name is magic, and I have a thousand emotions.

Jay Jordan

Into the New Year

Spinning the new year:
skipping the world,
dancing for all the boys and girls,
skating the ice,
starving the night,
sliding the moon,
bouncing at noon,
popping the popcorn,
dragging the horn,
smiling my smile,
winning everything!

Tiptoeing through the house,
racing a mouse,
stomping my floor,
flying through the door,
slithering under it all,
falling the fall,
struggling the most,
burning the toast,
gliding the glide,
fighting for my pride!

Whitney Henry

l-r: Devon Hudson, Derreon Jones, Cameron Hilliard, Jay Jordan, Javian Bryant



If

If I were a color, I would be the pink of a flower.
If I were a sound, I would be the sound of a cat purring in its good-night sleep.
If I were a season, I would be winter, so the children could play in the snow.
If I were a shape, I would be the square shape of building blocks.
If I were a holiday, I would be Christmas, and get presents all day.
If I were a verb, I would be singing, and everyone would hear my voice.
If I were a bug, I would be a ladybug, so I could soar, and
if I were an adult, I would do anything I want to.

Danielle Thomas

My Vision

On a hill of gold, my eyes began to get drowsy
The shadow rose while I fell asleep
My soul had to be calm
I saw bronze melt
All of those memories
My friends betray me now
I have emeralds and rubies
My vision is gone
It's crumbling
My fortune, I thought it was everlasting
but it was unbelievable
I cried, I heard my heartbeat
I couldn't believe it was poison

Devon Hudson

If I Were...

If I were a color, I would be
blue, like the ocean.
If I were a sound, I would be
a lion's growl.
If I were a season, I would be
summer, when kids get out of school.
If I were a shape, I would be a pointed sword.
If I were a holiday, I would be Christmas
and spend time with my family.
If I were a verb, I would be running really fast.
If I could be anything,
I would be invincible, and live forever.

Cameron Hilliard

Ashley Boston



Flying into a New Year

I'm flying into a new year;
I go with the wind
and the birds.
I finally see the new year—
It's smiling right at me.
I can't wait to see
all the changes,
but I am going
to stay the same.

Maria Watkins

The Prisoners

I hear an echo
while my heart skips a beat.
You may listen to the
dawn people weeping,
while you're walking
down the disguised hallway.
You may hear drowning voices
in a room so lonely and
filled with darkness.
But when they get out,
God will shine down on them.

Desja Gant

No Time for Tomorrow

No time for tomorrow,
'cause I'm feeling a little sorrow;
My head is hurting, my fruit is stolen,
and my cat is playing volleyball.
My laughter is unseen,
a stranger stole my mirror,
and it rained on my glory.
My shining star has darkened,
my heart is being plunged,
and my afternoon happiness is forgotten.
That's why I have
no time for tomorrow.

Rickia Wrice

Magic

I rise at the moment of glistening rain.
I see a misty fog surrounding me.
I see an illusion of sunlight rising.
I see the earth surrounding me,
sending me a message,
telling me I'm going very smoothly.

I hear the glistening rain howling.
I hear the misty fog all alone.
I hear the illusion of traveling
in heavenly silence.

I feel unspoken solitude,
fluttering in the silver mirror.
I feel an illusion of
splashing wonder,
of magic.

Maria Watkins

The Pretty Flowers

Flowers are full of wonder.
They light up like magic,
are pretty like blossoms.
and they sing me to sleep
when I hear their voices.
They glisten like glory,
shine like a shining star,
fill me with laughter.
They are precious,
like a golden stone.

Danielle Williams

Cameron Hilliard



My life as a child

My life as a child
is on a hill of gold.
My mom is rich
and my dad is rich,
like in rap songs.
My life as a child
is when I am asleep:
my soul is still
lit like a candle.

Javian Bryant

Cities

My life as a child is hard as a betrayal.
All winter we'll wander
in a red wagon
that is flames.
Black against the fog
and snow and shadow
on a hill of gold, shining on a palace,
I am a temporary citizen that lives on dawn.
I am angry now.
You ate cotton candy.
This is what cities are like in the afternoon.

Derreon Jones

Anything

If I were a color, I'd be pink like a pig.
If I were a sound, I'd be music on the radio.
If I were a season, I'd be winter because I can play in the snow.
If I were a shape, I'd be a heart necklace.
If I were a verb, I would be running so I can beat anyone in a race.
If I could be anything at all, I would be myself.

Desja Gant

Shadows

The room full of shadows is asleep
You don't want to awake it or your heart will beat
The everlasting shadow sings forever
You would think that the room is very clever
The shadows' pictures hurt me so
It goes down deep in me, really low
The ocean wouldn't even wash the pain away
It stays with me like a sudden memory

Rickia Wrice

Life

My life as a child is about emeralds.
My life as a child is about rubies.
My life as a child is about being a king
and living in a palace of games.
My life as a child is about
unbelievable miracles happening.
My life as a child is about
everlasting strength and forgiveness.
My life as a child is about
staying out in the moonlight, playing all night.

Cameron Hilliard



ShawnTay Kent

Boring

My life as a child
is dull and gruesome
My life as a child
is revolting and horrible
My life as a child
is miserable and boring
My life as a child
is negative, never positive
My life as a child
is over
Goodbye

Shatonia Hardy

Life as a child

My life as a child is like being in a palace
with glittering walls of diamonds.
My life as a child is like rubies
staring into my eyes.
It makes me forget forever.
My life as a child is like an ocean
filled with cotton.
Someplace rattling cans are calling me.
My bones are shaking.
My life as a child is a nightmare because
my brother and my sister
are like Hurricane Katrina
ruining my land.
Somewhere there has to be light,
or somewhere there is moonlight.
I wake up
It was just a dream
That's my life as a child.

Briana Lockett

Let it Burn

My life as a child is flames.
My heart always bursts into flames.
My softness is too soft.
My heartbeat goes baa-boom, baa-boom.
It's like people poison me to feel bad.
It's like a hurricane:
everything is flying and tossing together.

Soul music is what keeps me holding on.
I wonder if it will ever change.
My life is like a sad song
playing over and over again.
I need an inspiration to help me.

I am beautiful as a rose,
but the dark shadow keeps coming to keep me blue.
I've cried trying to get over it.
My life is wild.
My eyes redden up
when I fear I'm about to fall.
My life is unbelievable,
But I've got to let it burn.

Charnice Dunham

Derreon Jones



Summer

I always like summer best
because I can go to the pool and free myself
I can eat a sweet watermelon
I can swim in the ocean
I can be noisy all I want
I can laugh with my friends
and be wild playing outside
I can imagine that I sparkle in the stars
and I am sunlight
shining in the summer clouds
I like summer best

Danielle Williams

Memories

In the bright branches of the willow tree
I can see the clouds making memories of me
When my eyes closed, I fell right to sleep
And when I woke up, I saw a baby in the street
I thought I saw a charm from a distance away
But it was just a little rose waiting for me
In the bright branches of the willow tree
I see a cloud making memories of me.

Danielle Thomas

Walk Forever

Black against the fog and snow
everlasting darkness there
nowhere to go
Somewhere in the distance
it must be sunshine
My mind is crumbling away
no one to talk to, just silence
Something follows me in the shadows
I have no memory of my friends or family
All of my inspiration and
hope of getting out is gone
Trying to stay calm is like taking poison

Shawntay Kent

My Life Is Crumbling

My life is like a jet flying overhead
My life is like cotton,
because the good softness heals the pain
When my bones crack
they fly away like a gust of wind
When my eyes go to pain
I forget my visions
My life is wild, like a roaring jungle
with a staircase of nothingness.

Armani McKinzie



Ashley Boston, Dantelle Thomas

I Am Angry Now!

I am angry now
as my bones are thrown in the flame.
You think you know how hard it is
to be the oldest.
If you have siblings,
you're in a world of trouble.
You know, when you are always
blamed for something
your siblings did
and when you tell the things they did,
no one believes you.
Say if you go to the pool and your sister
does not know how to swim and you forget.
They try to follow us and jump in the pool
and they walk and drop and their eyes turn red.
When we get home, they
say they are hungry and they make
Oodles of Noodles and burn themselves.
You are really angry now, and wild
you tell them to go to sleep
and when they get older
they have memories
I am angry now, and I will always be.

Jacqueline Crawford

Four Cornered Room

In my four cornered room
There are voices in the first corner
In the second corner there are people screaming
In the third corner there is the color red
In the fourth corner is fear

Joe Payne

Winter

Black against the fog and snow
dark clouds are drifting from the distance
The drowsy clouds clash
The ocean blows the hurricanes away
The snow betrays us with coldness
It feasts on our bones,
freezing them
And then the freezing wind
blows across my eye unbelievably fast

Maria Watkins

Time Is Ticking

Morning is my favorite
It sparkles so bright
When I look out the window
I can see my shadow in the light
I hate dark time
It just ain't right
It's too noisy
and way too many fights
Memory erases, it has been 24 hours
I even forgot to turn on the showers
I start to remember, my mind is so sharp
When I turned around I broke the lock
Now I'm stuck in the bathroom
and don't know what to do
I'm clueless, mindless as a stringless shoe
there goes my morning
straight down the tube

Whitney Henry

Des'ja Cant



My Life As A Child

My life as a child is in the shadow
Stones hurt my bones
Poison in my heart
Silence in my vision
Clouds of darkness in my heartbeat
Feeling drowsy from my song
A candle of flames burning with sorrow

Jay Jordan

Time Is Wasting

Morning time is my favorite
It's just very bright
The sun can't stay out of my sight
Summer is very hot
The sidewalk sometimes burns
Now it's time to go to school
and you just don't want to learn
Friday is the best
It's time to get out of school
At 8:00 it will be time to watch the late night news
It is a bunch of darkness
Not very noisy
When I go to bed, my pillow is so soft
And I refuse to let it go

Danielle Thomas

Clearwater, Florida

In a world of four different seasons
summer is my favorite
I love spending my summer
in Clearwater, down in Florida
going down to the beach
seeing a sparkle in the ocean
with family and friends
seeing the sweet hot and soft sand
just comes back to me as a song

Jay Jordan

Summer, Saturday, Evening

Summer, Saturday, evening
I like to watch the sun go down
I can eat my mother's Saturday meal
I can listen to the birds chirping
I smell fried chicken and cornbread
I see my mother cooking up a storm
I can go outside and play with my most loyal friends
I can play spades with my brothers and my godsister and Jamella.
Finally, I can go to the movies and spend time
with my family and friends.
Now it's nighttime, I get in a hot shower
When I get out, it feels like a steam room
Then I eat again and watch TV
and I am the only one awake
Alone in a dark house
Quietly going to a deep, deep sleep

Charnice Dunham



l-r: Jacqueline Crawford,
Charnice Dunham

My Life

My life as a child is on a hill of gold
full of rubies and silence
with flames and emeralds.
My life as a child is a heartbeat
with charm and velvet
in a room full of shadows.
This is my life as a child.

Ashley Boston

Summer

I always like summer best
You can play double dutch
and hear the rope go tic-toc, tic-toc, tic-toc
I like to eat the sweet candy
my big bother brings me when he visits
And creeping through the house
to the porch to watch the moon glisten
and the stars at night twinkle
Waking up at 12:00 in the afternoon
cutting on music and starting to dance and sing
and putting on my sunglasses when I go outside
I love going to the beach
putting my feet in the ocean
and feeling the breeze
and the thing I love the most
is settling down, soaking in the memory

Shatonia Hardy

Friday

Friday is the best for me
I can't wait for some homemade ice cream
and when summer comes
I'll be at the pool
The water will be so cold and nice
When fall comes,
I'll be playing in leaves
like a little kid who's lonely and sweet
and when the moon goes down
I'll be sparkly like the ocean
and noisy like music
and laughing in the alley
It's all about Friday

Breyonna Douglas

l-r Whitney Henry, Dantelle Thomas



Looking Into a Face

Looking into the face
I hear voices
Looking into the face
the darkness comes out
Looking into the face
I have nightmares
Looking into the face
I worship the phantom
Looking into the face
I hear the wolves howl

Armani McKinzie

Favorite Times

My favorite time of the week is Saturday
because it's quiet
I always like summer best
because it is hot
and I can play and eat sweet ice cream
My favorite time of day is the evening
because I can see my mom and my great grandmother
and I can hear the baby cry and the dinner cooking
I can taste beef soup

Derreon Jones

Lost

If I were a color
it would be red, of the killing blood
If I were a sound
I would be a whistle
If I were a season
I would be summer, because I'm so hot
I am the pointy shape of a sword slaying a dragon
I am the Fourth of July, because I spark
If I were anything, I'd be stretchy
because people say I'm so tall
I'd stretch up to the sun

Devon Hudson

The rough faced girl

The rough faced girl
what a girl
I wonder what goes
through her mind
Her sisters are hard-hearted
and mean to her
Her face is rough
but her courage is tough

Anton White

Confused

If I were a color, I would be red
of a red, beautiful heart
If I were a sound, I would be the sound
of an empty beach
If I were a season, I would be spring
because I love to buy new clothes
If I were a shape, I would be the shape
of a beating heart
If I were a holiday, I would be Valentine's Day
because I love the feeling of love
If I were a verb, I would be skip
because skipping is like joy to me

Rickia Wrice



Breyonna Douglas

Unlocked

In my four cornered room
There is a heart pumping in the first corner
In the second corner there is my great mother
In the third corner there is puppy love
In the fourth corner is sky red
I locked myself in there by accident
I unlocked the door with my happy key

Maria Watkins

The Prisoners

On a private ship, held as a prisoner
I'm in darkness
I want to weep
It's so empty, I can hear my echo saying this poem
I'm lonely in the darkness
There's a phantom flowing around
I'm so scared I can hear my heartbeat
This is a nightmare
Somebody get me out of here
I'm turning into a stone
I hear voices with a little howl
Words are unspoken, my voice is croaking
I'm going to be extinct
I can't even think
I'm begging for mercy
I'm going to be damaged
My life is ruined
I listen to my voice
I am history, I hope to find out the mystery.

Charnice Dunham

Traveling Through The Dark

I was walking around in the forest at midnight.
There was only the moonlight.
The forest had me scared,
with the creepy sounds I feared.
I thought I saw a phantom hiding in the bushes.
I saw a shining silver pearl.
I heard howls all around.
I awoke in the middle of the night.
I was sitting in my room
my eyes afraid of darkness.

Jay Jordan

The People Next Door

The people next door are delicate.
Every time you spot them, they scatter.
Sometimes they might glisten,
and when you are talking, they always listen.
They grow blossoms in their back yard.
I ask them, "Can I have a moment?"
but those people beg like they are homeless.
They like to damage everything,
and when they do it, they sing.
They are filled with so much sorrow,
I think they will put me in their spell tomorrow.

Danielle Thomas

Jay Jordan



Kids Next Door

When I was asleep, I heard an illusion from the kids next door.
I went out in the distance and knocked on their door.
They said if you don't look in the mirror, you will die.
One moment please, so they snatched me into the house
and voices just started to come into the community
started to smash everything in the middle of the midnight.
They used their magic to destroy the monster
but they were too big and strong
and he couldn't answer the unanswered the question.
A stranger came up and answered the question
and killed them.

Anton White

No Time for Tomorrow

Last night I had a golden gun that got lost in the dark valley.
It looked just like a nightmare
I need that gun to kill my nightmare.
One midnight I shot my head when I was asleep.
I heard the echo all night long. I died.
I found my golden gun.
Now the nightmare is a night scare.
I have no time for tomorrow.

Derreon Jones

Black against the fog and snow
dark clouds are drifting from
the distance the droosny clouds
clash the ocean blows the
hurricanes away the snow
betray us with coldness
I + feast on our bones
freezing them And then
" the freezing wind blew
across my eye unbelievably

1-r Derreon Jones, Cameron Hilliard



Black against the fog and snow
dark clouds are drifting from
the distance the droosny clouds
clash the ocean blows the
hurricanes away the snow
betray us with coldness
I + feast on our bones
freezing them And then
" the freezing wind blew
across my eye unbelievably



back row, l-r: Whitney Henry, Javian Bryant,
Rickia White, Danielle Thomas, Charnice Dunham,
Jaqueline Crawford; front: Shawn'ay Kent

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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